

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Issued on 22 January 2024, the *bloc* commemorates the departure of *Marianne l'Engagée* and the arrival of *Marianne de l'Avenir* - Marianne of the Future. Other issues are shown on page 49 of Richard Broadhurst's article on the new definitive.

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

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

All inquiries about and applications for membership should be addressed to the General Secretary by email or to the President: C J Hitchen, 36 Everton Road, Croydon CR0 6LA

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

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

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

France: R N Broadhurst, 47 Bolton Gardens, Teddington TW11 9AX (tel: 020 8943 1421).

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Colonies: R Gent, 17 Malmains Way, Beckenham BR3 6SA (email: Rodney.gent1@outlook.com; tel. 020 8650 7695).

The Magazine Circuit

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

For further details contact the circuit organiser:

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* * *

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

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

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

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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THE NORTHERN NATIONAL EXHIBITION 2024
(19-20 July) The 2024 Northern National Exhibition
will be held at York on 19-20 July 2024.
More details at <https://www.abps.org.uk>

EUROPHILEX 2025, Birmingham (7-11 May) the next
UK International with FEPA patronage and with FIP
recognition of all classes. www.europhilex2025.co.uk
Entry deadline: 8 May 2024.

SOCIETY NOTES

Editorial

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition. I'm pleased to report that at least two members responded to my Why I Collect What I Collect, the first of which from **David Prendy** is on page 44. David doesn't have a computer or typewriter and sent his article to **David Parmley** who very kindly typed it out and sourced the images for inclusion. **Jill Whitten** also responded and her article will be in August's issue.

Jan Gane

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome new members: 1531 **Martin Taylor** (Leicester); 1532 **Nick Martin** (Cirencester); 1533 **Rory Morrissey** (Leighton Buzzard); 1534 **Norman Elston** (Wiltshire). Welcome back to 1500 **Shivshanker Nair** (London).

Members Resigned

The following members have advised us that, regrettably, they will not be renewing their membership: 1501 **Gerard van der Ree**; 1510 **Michael Peddar**. Sadly, 337 **Gavin Fryer** RDP, resigned in December 2023 and has since passed away. His full obituary is in *The London Philatelist* for March.

Members Deceased

It is with great sadness that we have to report the deaths of members 205 **Edward Leonard**; 303 **John Hammonds**; 922 **Bob Larg**; 955 **Steve Ellis**; 1237 **John Allison**. We offer our condolences to their families.

Future Society Meetings 2024

THE NORTHERN GROUP will meet on 13 April 2024 – at Ravenfield Parish Hall, Birch Wood Drive, Ravenfield, Rotherham S65 4PT. Contact and enquiries to **Roger Clapham**, Tel: 01709 527673. For more details email. racogler@blueyonder.co.uk

Other meeting dates - 21 July and 26 October 2024.

No other group meetings are presently scheduled for this year.

Interesting Website Link

From time to time interesting items of a philatelic nature pop up on unrelated websites - one such is about how younger people are using technology to enhance the enjoyment of stamp collecting.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-49632306>

SOCIETY NOTES Continued on page 18 »

France & Colonies Philatelic Society Secretary

Our current secretary, Dr A J Telfer Brunton intends to step down this year in order to pursue other matters with which he is involved. The Society will therefore need a replacement and any offers to take over should be advised to the President Chris Hitchen at treasurer@fcps.org.uk. The bulk of the duties carried out by the Secretary are listed below. If necessary the role can be split between those matters concerned with membership and the more general duties that a secretary carries out. Anyone interested or able to do all or some of this work can always discuss it with the President or current secretary.

Membership Secretary Specification

The Secretary is the first point of call for non-members with enquiries of whatever nature on French philately or the society itself. The Secretary may well not be able to provide all the answers immediately and should consult with colleagues as appropriate.

New applications for membership go to the Secretary whose email address is on the form, and written ones can be sent to the treasurer if an applicant does not wish to use email.

Regular notifications of new members, changes to members' details, resignations and deaths are circulated to all committee members. In 2023 some 17 memos were created. The number would depend on activity recorded.

Three Journals per year are sent to members. The return address for those that cannot be delivered is that of the Secretary. Any returns need to be investigated and that could well require liaison with colleagues. The usual reasons are an address change which has not been properly advised or sometimes a death which has not been notified. If a correct new address can be found then the Secretary should post it to the member concerned.

New members who join during the year are entitled to all Journals produced in the current year. A very small number of extra Journals is therefore ordered with each printing. All surplus Journals, auction lists, fliers and so on are sent by the printers to the Secretary. Journals should be retained for 18 months for use as samples if appropriate, to fill in the requirements of new members and replace any that fail to get delivered.

The above largely covers the role of membership secretary. A full General Secretary would also take on standard secretarial duties as set out below.

Arrangement of committee meetings and minute-taking.

Organisation of the AGM which entails collection of all Officer Reports and passing these to the Journal Editor for publication.

Maintenance of Society records.

OBITUARY

Steve Ellis

1951-2023

Steve Ellis became a member of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society in March 1994. In 2020 he was invited to join the committee and in 2012 he took over the position of Auction Secretary which he held until 2020. He became Vice-President of the Society in 2013 and then President from 2014 to 2017. From 2015 to 2023, he was Convenor of the Society's Northern Group and also organised the awarding of the F&CPS Literature Trophy. In tribute to his tireless service to the Society, he was presented with the Geoff Gethin Award¹ in 2020. Steve was also a fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London and secretary of the Postal History Society.



Steve studied Geography and Economics at Leeds University, which set him up for his future career in traffic management. He joined the National Bus Company in 1973 as a senior management trainee with West Yorkshire Road Car where he eventually became area traffic superintendent for West Riding. Moving to the Potteries, he was appointed assistant traffic manager in 1982. As a result of the privatisation of the National Bus Company, Potteries Motor Traction Limited was created in 1986 when it was purchased by its management and employees. The buyout was led by three senior figures including Steve who was by now chief traffic manager. He became managing director until he retired.

While at university, Steve developed several interests. He was a keen cricketer and became a life member of Derbyshire County C. C. He acquired an affection for real ale and became an aficionado of Chamay Trappist beers. His main love though was jazz and throughout his life he would travel across the United Kingdom and Europe to visit clubs and attend jazz concerts.

Steve was also a man of deep faith. He was a regular member of the congregation of St Andrew's church in Sneyd Green, a suburb of Stoke-on-Trent. He was a member of the Parochial Church Council for over 35 years and acted as both churchwarden and treasurer. He was a lay preacher, led Alpha Courses, ran house groups and, during Covid, organised assistance for the local community. He was an active supporter of the Five Talents charity which provided support for savings schemes, literacy training, numeracy training and business training for communities in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and other impoverished parts of the world. At his own expense, Steve would visit these countries to advise on and see for himself the work that was being done. He also ran the Scripture Union stamp bureau and would acquire stamps from friends, including members of the F&CPS, which he would soak, mount and price up. In almost 25 years, he raised over £43,000 for the Scripture Union.

Visitors to Steve's home would recall that every flat surface was invariably covered with stamps waiting to be sorted but these, of course, were not what he collected himself. After his retirement, Steve developed a serious and passionate interest in postal history. His main focus was nineteenth-century French Transatlantic Mail which he displayed regularly at Charlecote and at the Society's regional and Zoom meetings. His display at the annual Bastille Day Meeting in Bradford was always one of the highlights. His other collections included French Ambulance Mail, Insufficiently Paid Mail, *Boîtes Mobiles*, Mediterranean Paquebot Mail and more recently, Railway Mail with a particularly emphasis on the Mont-Cenis Railway².

Everyone who knew Steve will remember him with great affection. He engaged himself fully with the Society and always found time to share his knowledge and enthusiasm with others. He died far too young with still so much more to contribute to his family, to his church and to the philatelic world. He will be sorely missed.

MLB

¹ The Geoff Gethin Award is the highest award made by the Society in recognition of outstanding service given by a member over a period of years.

² Several of Steve's Zoom presentations can be seen at <https://www.fcps.org.uk/index.php/meetings/zoom-meetings>

Development of Airmail Services in Réunion

The *Bateau – Avion* Period, 1932 – 1939

Peter R.A.Kelly

It was not until 1940 that direct airmail services were available in Réunion. The purpose of this article is to examine the means by which it was possible for Réunion to use airmail services to Europe via Madagascar or Africa.

In 1932, mail from Réunion was carried to France and elsewhere by the Messageries Maritimes Ligne de La Réunion à Marseille. The mailboats called at Tamatave and Diego Suarez (Madagascar), Zanzibar, Dar-es-Salaam (Tanganyika), Mombasa (Kenya) and Djibouti. The average scheduled journey time was 32 to 33 days although this was not always strictly adhered to because of the different cruising speeds of the vessels. The service was fortnightly.

Phase 1: Connection with the Imperial Airways Cape to Cairo route.

In October 1933, Imperial Airways aircraft called at Nairobi (Kenya) with a scheduled time of seven days to Brindisi and an onward service by rail to Paris. The service was twice weekly. It was possible to send mail to Mombasa or Dar-es-Salaam and then inland by Wilson Airways to Nairobi, a monthly service from April 1932. The Messageries mailboats took around 14 days to reach Mombasa and then a further day to Nairobi. It was therefore theoretically possible to get a letter from Réunion to Paris in 22 days if everything worked perfectly.

This could represent a saving of more than 10 days for Réunion and at least 15 for Madagascar. An example of

mail having used this route is shown in **Figure 1**; the journey time was 24 days.

It can be seen from this that both Réunion and Madagascar were seriously disadvantaged by the length of time it took for their mails to reach an airline and a British one at that. The distances were considerable; Réunion to Madagascar is 940km and Majunga, (Madagascar) to Mombasa is 1465km.

Madagascar is a very large island, some 1600km from one end to the other. Communications there were difficult with limited rail services in the upper central part and between the capital, Tananarive and the port of Tamatave on the east coast. Communication was either on foot, by vehicle or by coastal steamers. It is not surprising that, at an early date, there was an interest in local aviation but long range across the ocean was not an option at first.

The Governor General of Madagascar, a Monsieur Cayla, was keen to put in place an air service as other test flights had shown what could be done. He was largely responsible for the Ministry of Colonies agreeing to lend them two Salmson trimotor planes. These were brought back to the island by two experienced pilots, Assolant and Lefèvre. In the last stage of their journey they separated, Lefèvre returning via Broken Hill (Rhodesia) and Assolant via Dar-es-Salaam. The decision was made to link with Imperial Airways at Broken Hill. The company started by the two pilots was the Service de la Navigation Aérienne de Madagascar (SNAÉM) or Régie Air Malgache.



Figure 1 (reduced by 5%)
Meung-sur-Loire (Loiret) to
Saint-Denis
17 October 1933.

Carried by rail to Paris (cde Paris-Avion 17 October). By rail to Brindisi 18 October.

Brindisi – Nairobi. Imperial flight AS138. Arrived Nairobi 25 October.

By rail to Dar-es-Salaam cde 26 October

Dar-es-Salaam – Réunion by Messageries Maritimes. Arrived Réunion 10 November.

Journey time: 24 days

Franked 2F55: postage 50c. (tariff of 9.8.1926) + air fee 2F00 (tariff of 25.6.1932) – overpaid 5c.

Phase 2: Introduction of an air service between Madagascar and the Imperial Airways at Broken Hill, Rhodesia

A weekly service by Air Malgache between Ivato (the airfield for Tananarive) and Broken Hill commenced in July 1934, operated alternately by Assolant and Lefèvre. The route included landing at Mozambique, Quelimane and Tete. The journey time between Madagascar and Paris was 8-10 days.

This marked the generally accepted start of the *Bateau-Avion* years for Réunion. This has been studied in detail by Dr. Joany in his book of that name and is valuable in that he gives the dates of the departure and arrival of Messageries Maritime mailboats between Réunion and Tamatave. Salles gives departure dates from Réunion but not arrival dates at Tamatave. It is the view of the author that the real start of the *Bateau-Avion* period is two years earlier as outlined above in Phase 1.

It was now necessary for Réunion to send its airmail to Madagascar to link in with the departures of the Air Malgache planes for Broken Hill, designed to connect with

the Imperial Airways timetable. The journey time to the port of Tamatave was about 6 days plus a day to Tananarive / Ivato: theoretically 17 days to Paris compared to 33 days by sea.

This was the first regular airmail service open to Réunion and it saw quite a lot of use although the air supplement of four francs on top of 50c postage for a saving of a dozen days or so was not popular. Postally, it was a complicated journey with six separate manoeuvres required from the moment the letter was posted until its arrival in France to which have to be added weather conditions and equipment issues. The illustrations that follow (Figures 2-4) are fairly typical with journey times of between 20 and 23 days.

On 10 May 1935, Assolant and Lefèvre received two Bloch 120 planes, considerably more powerful than the Salmsons, with the result that the journey time from Tananarive to Broken Hill was reduced to only two days with an overnight at Lumbo. The statistics are interesting inasmuch as from 1 March to 1 June Air Malgache carried 60,000 items of mail.



Figure 2

Paris to Saint-Denis, Réunion 5 October 1934.

By rail to Brindisi. Imperial Airways AS189 to Broken Hill (18 October).

Air Malgache to Tananarive (19 October). Rail to the port at Tamatave (21 October).

Tamatave – Réunion by Messageries Maritimes, Ligne de Marseille à La Réunion.

Received at Réunion 25 October.

Journey time: 21 days.

Franked 4F50: postage 50c (tariff of 9.8.1922).

+ air fee 4F00 per 5g (tariff of 1.7.1934).



Figure 3

Pointe-des-Galets, Réunion to Le Havre 5 November 1934.

Carried by Messageries Maritimes Ligne de La Réunion à Marseille 'Amboise' to Tamatave (9 November).
By rail to Tananarive / Ivato. Air Malgache – Broken Hill (15 November). Imperial Airways AN193 Broken Hill -Brindisi (20 November). Rail to Paris. Received at Le Havre 22 November. Journey time: 23 days.
Franked 4F00 instead of 4F50. Taxed 1F00. Postage 50c (tariff of 9.8.1922) + air fee 4F00 per 5g (tariff of 1.7.1934).



Figure 4a

Saint-Denis,
Réunion to Marseille
22 February 1935.

Carried by
Messageries
Maritimes Ligne de
La Réunion à
Marseille 'Bernadin
Saint Pierre' to
Tamatave (1 March).

By rail to
Tananarive / Ivato.
Air Malgache to
Broken Hill
(6 March).

Imperial Airways
AN218 Broken Hill
– Brindisi (13
March). Received at
Paris 15 March.

Journey time:
22 days.

Reverse of cover -
over the page



Figure 4b
Franking on reverse
of cover illustrated in
Figure 4a.

Franked 5F75:
postage 50c
(tariff of 9.8.1922)
+ registration fee
1F25
(tariff of 18.7.1932)
+ air fee 4F00 (tariff
of 1.7.1934).

Phase 3: Madagascar linked by air with Air Afrique and Sabena at Elisabethville, Belgian Congo

While all this was happening, France and Belgium were also developing their own networks.

Air Afrique extended its line from Alger to Brazzaville (French Congo) on 2 March 1935 while Sabena, slightly ahead, had opened up its line from Brussels to Léopoldville

on 23 February. From 9 November 1935 Air Afrique extended its route to Elisabethville as well. While this was a through flight back to Marseille and Brussels for Sabena, the terminus for Air Afrique was Alger and from there mails were transferred to Air France who flew them to Marseille and later to Paris.

Figure 5 (reduced by 5%)

Registered from Saint-Denis to Paris
14 May 1936.

Transit: Pointe des Galets
14 May.

Carried by Messageries
Maritimes 'Leconte de
Lisle'

Departed Réunion
20 May, arrived
Tamatave 26 May: Paris-
Distribution 6 June.

Journey time 17 days
(from date of sailing).

Franked 9F75: postage
50c (tariff of 9.8.1926) +
registration 1F25 (tariff of
18.7.1932) + air fee
8F00: 2nd weight step,
5-10g = 4F00 x2 (tariff of
1.7.1934)



The door was now open for an all-French route from Madagascar to Europe and a further reduction in journey time. *Air Malgache*, under Assolant and Lefèvre, now gave notice of termination to Broken Hill which had served them well. The company concentrated on a new route for them, essentially an extension from Broken Hill to Elisabethville. The service would be a weekly one, linking with the alternate weekly flights of Air Afrique and Sabena. The journey from Madagascar to Elisabethville took two days with overnight at Mozambique.

The situation operationally for Réunion remained unchanged, continuing to use the Messageries Maritimes *Ligne de la Réunion à Marseille* mailboats as far as Tamatave. Then, as before, the mails would be taken from Tamatave to

Tananarive by rail.

The timing had improved again and the schedules now were as follows:

Réunion – Tananarive 7 days

Tananarive – Elisabethville 2 days

Elisabethville-France 6 days

A total of 15 days was now possible. (Figures 5 and 6)

It is always difficult to be precise about the timing as much depended on the reliability of the different connections as well as mechanical and weather difficulties. To get a letter from Réunion to Paris during this period there were no less than five transfer points so it is a considerable achievement for all concerned.



Figure 6a

Registered airmail from the Cabinet Office of the Governor of Réunion (see 6b right) to Paris 20 January 1937.

Transit: Pointe des Galets 20 January. Paris-Distribution. 4 February. Official franchise. No postage or registration fee required. Carried by 'M.M. Général Metzinger'.

Departed: Réunion 21 January.

Arrived Tamatave 27 January.

Journey time 15 days.

Franked 12F00. 3rd weight step, 12-15g = 4.00 x 3 (tariff of 1.7.1934).

Figure 6b

Cachet of the Governor of Réunion on reverse of cover.





Figure 7

Incoming letter from Paris to Saint-Denis 20 December 1935.

Air France, Marseille to Alger 21 December. Air Afrique, Alger to Elisabethville 30 December.

Air Malgache, Elisabethville to Tananarive 6 January 1936. By rail to Tamatave 7 January.

By Messageries Maritimes 'Porthos' Departed: Tamatave 15 January, Arrived: Réunion 19 January.

Journey time: 30 days.

Franked 4F50: postage 50c (tariff of 9.8.26) + air fee 4F (tariff of 1.7.1934).

The journey of 30 days illustrated in **Figure 7** is an example of this with 8 days of delay at Tamatave awaiting the Messageries Maritimes mailboat for Réunion. However, things do not always go quite to plan. This is a case in point: the fourth Air Afrique flight of the new schedule encountered severe delays around Fort Lamy and this threw the junction with Air Malgache at Elisabethville. It ended up as a thirty-day journey.

Up until the end of 1935 the average journey time was in the region of 21-23 days but there was a sharp improvement from 1936 when the average fell to 15-18 days. Better planes and route improvement were factors in this and over the coming years both Sabena and Air Afrique continued to fine-tune their flights. From 1936 both companies were scheduled to link Madagascar with France in 8 days. Air Afrique transferred mails to Air France at Alger for transfer to Marseille. Sabena called at Marseille and Brindisi on the way to Brussels. The time between Réunion and Madagascar remained the same. Flights left Madagascar on a Thursday and arrived in Europe the following Friday.

In January 1937 the Laurent/Touge/Lenier test flight on a Farman 199 reached Mauritius from France in record time. (The outward journey to Madagascar was achieved in a record time of 3 days, 6 hours and 55 seconds.)

On the return journey it reached Réunion on 20 January. The journey out did not carry mails but the return did and the Réunion letters carried back to Europe and other destinations can be considered as the first Réunion airmails. This event was celebrated by the issue of Réunion's first airmail stamp, a 50c was overprinted "RÉUNION-FRANCE/PAR AVION/ROLAND GARROS". There was no air fee charged. The stamp was only used on this flight. The plane did not leave until 25 January because of a delay in the overprinting of the stamp and made a slower, more relaxed journey, reaching Marseille on 10 February (**Figures 8a and 8b**).

In September 1937, Air Afrique acquired Régie Air Malgache/SNAéM and in the following two months, together with Sabena, made further route changes backed up by more powerful aircraft. The result of this was to reduce the journey time from Tananarive to France to 6½ days. **Figure 9** shows a letter of June 1939 with a journey time of 11 days from Réunion to St Quentin.

During all this time Réunion continued to use the Messageries Maritimes *Ligne de La Réunion à Marseille* to connect with Madagascar and this sea leg now represented almost half of the total journey time to Europe. Air Afrique was keen to extend its own line to Réunion and on the 8 July

1938 carried out a trial return flight from Tananarive to Saint Denis. This was on a Bloch 120 piloted by Avignon with Dagnaux, the managing director of Air Afrique, as a passenger. The aircraft carried an extra fuel tank which Dagnaux had to pump throughout the more than six-hour flight. The return trip on 12 July was also successful. Mail was carried on both flights at the normal letter rate of 65c.

(Figures 10 and 11)

In March 1939, Sabena terminated its service from Elisabethville to Madagascar and was replaced by Air Afrique.

On 3 September 1939, two days after German troops entered Poland, the French Government decided to suspend all air flights with immediate effect. A further article will examine the situation of Réunion during World War II.



Figure 8a

Registered letter carried on the Laurent/Touge/Lenier return trial flight to France, 25 January 1937.

Addressed to Oudja, Morocco.

Reached Marseille on 10 February.

Fez 13 February, Oudja 14 February.

Journey time 20 days.

Franked 1F75: air postage 50c + registration fee 1F25.

Figure 8b
Cachet of the Service des Postes, Ile de La Réunion



Figure 9
Airmail from
Saint-Denis to
Saint-Quentin, Aisne,
21 June 1939.
Transit: Marseille,
Gare-Avion 1 July.
Received at
Saint-Quentin 2 July.
Journey time
11 days.
Franked 4F55, but
should have been
3F90. Postage 90c:
(tariff of 2.12.1938) +
air fee F3.00 (tariff of
1.9.1937).
(Sender not aware
that airmail stamp
combined postage +
air fee).
(Note: Réunion
introduced its own
airmail stamps in
1938 despite still
relying on
Madagascar for air
service.



Figure 10
Air Afrique trial flight with boxed VOYAGE D'ÉTUDE cachet from Tananarive, Madagascar to
Réunion and back.
Outward 8 July 1938. Return 12 July.
Franked 65c postage (tariff of 14.8.1937) with no air surtax applied.



Figure 11

Air Afrique trial flight with ornamental VOYAGE D'ÉTUDE cachet from Tananarive, Madagascar to Réunion and back.

Postage and flight details as in Figure 10.

Inset: Tananarive departure cachet on reverse of cover.

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OBITUARY

Robert Dillon Larg

24 April 1931 – 23 December 2023

Bob joined the Society in 1992 and soon became very active. He had a wide variety of philatelic interests although his collections of France were probably amongst his favourites. Whilst he hailed from Kent and for many years was a keen supporter of the Kent Philatelic Federation he retired to Worthing. There, along with Colin Spong, he did much to guide and help our Southern regional group. He regularly attended our

annual meetings at Charlecote and was always eager to present a display. The name of his house in Worthing, Dar-es-Salaam, always intrigued me. It was a reference to his working years when he spent some time in East Africa working on railway administration. His contributions to our meetings will be greatly missed.



Chris Hitchen 5 February 2024

The 12F Antoine-Augustin Parmentier¹ (with an introduction to the designer and engraver Henry Cheffer)

Edwin Voerman



Figure 1 (enlarged)
The issued version of the Parmentier stamp (YT 1081 SG 1306).

The Parmentier stamp (a non-surtaxed pictorial) was issued on 29 October 1956 in an edition of 2,600,000 copies, and withdrawn from sale on 23 February 1957. Due to the superior quality of the engraving, this stamp was awarded the *Grand Prix de l'Art philatélique* 1956. This was a tribute to the designer and engraver, Henry Cheffer, towards the end of his life.

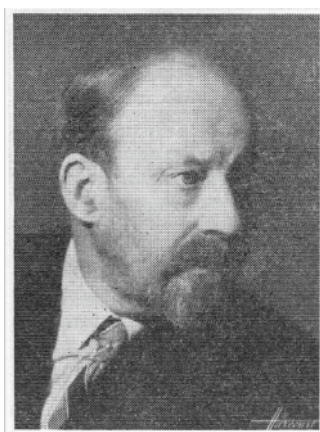


Figure 2
Henry Lucien Cheffer (1880-1957).



Figure 3
10F Port de la Rochelle
(YT 216b SG 474).
20F Pont du Gard
(YT 262a SG 475).



Henry-Lucien Cheffer (1880-1957)

Henry Cheffer² was a multi-talented artist who was introduced to the art of engraving at an early age through his father, a cousin of the sculptor Auguste Rodin. In 1898, the young Cheffer began his art training and as early as 1906 he received the *Prix de Rome*, a major award that underlined his exceptional talent. Cheffer began his career as an illustrator. Up to the end of his life, Cheffer (seen in [Figure 2](#))³ not only engraved highly successful stamps in which the portrait plays an important role, but also featured buildings, landscapes and other subjects. Among the best-known first stamps that Cheffer designed and engraved for France are the 10F *Port de la Rochelle* and the famous 20F *Pont du Gard*, both from 1929 ([Figure 3](#)).

Cheffer did not stop at engraving alone, he also drew and

painted. In fact, he mastered all techniques. Henry Cheffer was part of a generation of very talented colleagues such as Raoul Serres, Abel Mignon, Antonin Delzers, Achille Ouvre, Jules Piel, Pierre Munier, Gabriel-Antoine Barlangue and Charles Mazelin to name a few. All of them have left stamps of great aesthetic value to us.

Cheffer's first stamps saw the light of day in 1911 but they were for foreign clients. It was only in 1928 that he started working for the French Postal Service. Cheffer understood the art of portrait engraving like no other.

The ten-guilder banknote called '*Zeeuws meisje*' (Zealand girl) for the Netherlands ([Figure 4](#)) and the portrait of Queen Wilhelmina on the 1923 Jubilee stamps for the Dutch colonies ([Figure 5](#)) testify to his great skill in portrait engraving.

¹ Cheffer's Christian names are variously given as 'Henry', 'Henry Lucien' and 'Henri Lucien', with or without a hyphen. 'Henry' (without 'Lucien') seems the most-used version. Also some sources credit Parmentier as being a Baron. He is ennobled as such in the publication '*Portraits des hommes illustres*' and also in the titles of two early 19th century portraits. One, painted by François the Elder in 1812, hangs in the Palace of Versailles but the gallery's inventory omits the honorific.

² M. Nowacka, 'Henry Cheffer (1880-1957)', *Timbres Magazine*, Nos 153 and 155, 2014.

³ Photo accompanying Henry Cheffer's obituary in the '*Revue des PTT de France*, mai-juin 1957, p. 54, Administration Française des P.T.T.'



Figure 4 (reduced by 5%)

Ten-guilder banknote printed at Joh. Enschedé of Haarlem and issued in 1924. The portrait is from the hand of Henry Cheffer. The note has become known as 'Zeeuws meisje' (Zeeland girl).

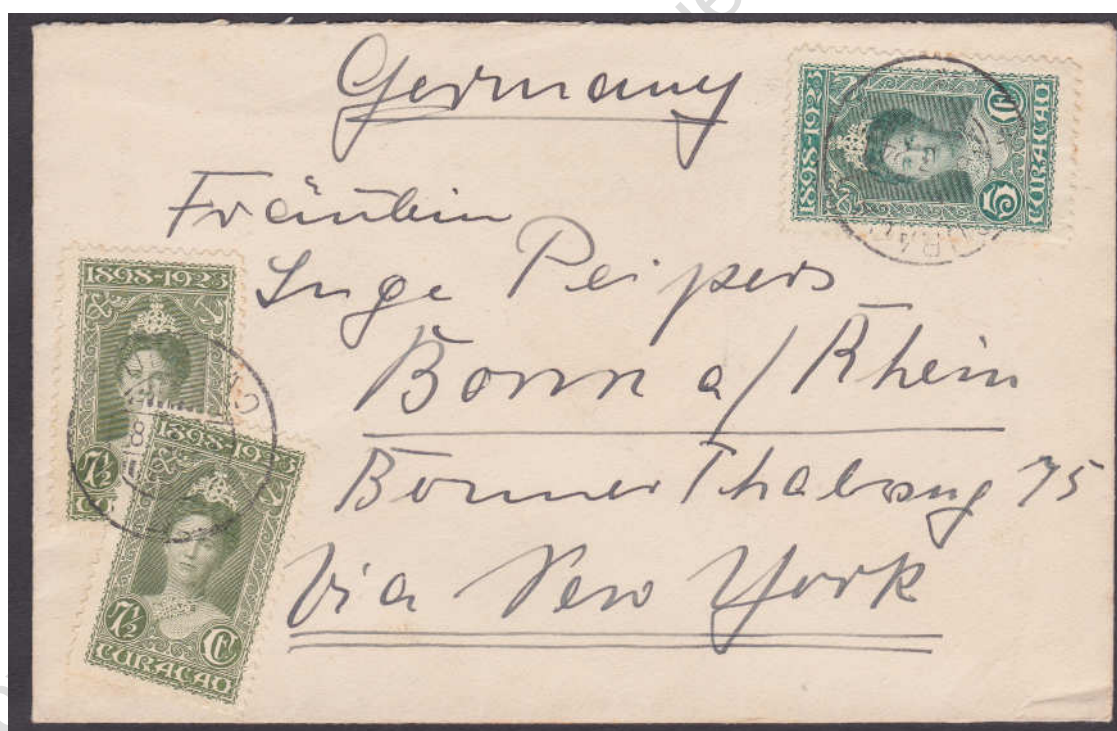


Figure 5

Portrait engraving of Queen Wilhelmina by Henry Cheffer for the colonial Coronation 25th anniversary stamps for the Dutch Indies, Curaçao and Surinam (1923).

The Parmentier stamp was one of the last that Cheffer engraved for France. After this, four more stamps by his hand appeared. Of these two were produced during his lifetime, the portraits of Chopin (YT 1086) and Antoine Bécère (YT 1096). After Cheffer's death, another stamp with the portrait of Pierre Brossolette (YT 1103) and the stamp of Brest (YT 1117) were issued. Both stamps will

have been very far along in their preparation when Cheffer died on 3 May 1957. Until the very end, the master operated at the peak of his skills. The *Marianne de Cheffer* design, not issued until 1967, was posthumously awarded the *Grand Prix de l'Art philatélique* 1967. It was the first time the award had been given posthumously and the first time it had been given to a definitive issue.

Antoine-Augustin Parmentier (1737 - 1813)

Antoine-Augustin Parmentier was a military pharmacist who played a significant role in reducing the regular famines of his time by promoting the potato and developing its uses. He had already brought his achievements in food science to the knowledge of King Louis XVI and in 1785 the potato was introduced as a food. The great importance of his insights was only really appreciated by Napoleon, who had many armies to feed. Under Napoleon, Parmentier was appointed Inspector-General of Health in 1803 after having held many important posts before that time. Parmentier is still known as a selfless man who tirelessly and successfully fought the

indifference and stupidity of his contemporaries. He has many articles to his name on agriculture and viticulture in general, but mostly on potatoes; over 150 titles of his appeared between 1771 and 1812. Although he was not the discoverer of the potato, he managed to improve and promote its use and thus became the great fighter against the regular famines in France. That a stamp was dedicated to him should not be surprising (Figure 6).⁴

The decision-maker(s) responsible for the final colours of this stamp must have faced a difficult choice, because the colour proofs are in fact all equally beautiful (Figure 7).



Figure 6
Artist's proof in green.



Figure 7

Five colour proofs of the Parmentier stamp. The last image is the final version of this stamp executed in two colours (red-brown and violet-brown). This stamp is catalogued as a 'non dentelé'.

⁴ Prof. Alb. J.J. Van de Velde. Antoine-Augustin Parmentier and his predecessors. (12 Aug. 1737 - 13 Dec. 1813). Reports and communications of the Royal Flemish Academy of Language and Literature 1937.

Usages of the Parmentier stamp

Because of the lack of a charity surcharge, this stamp is in principle somewhat easier to find on cover than charity stamps such as the '*Hommes Célèbres*'. Special stamps without a surtax were as easily used for franking all kinds of

postal services as the so-called '*usage-courant*' or definitive stamps. In 1956, these stamps were of the *Marianne de Muller* type.



Figure 8
Domestic
postcard with
more than five
words sent on
1 March 1957
from Guillestre
(Hautes-Alpes) to
Paris. Rate 12
francs valid from
6 January 1949 to
1 July 1957.

Figure 9
Invoice duly sent in
an unsealed
envelope on
30 November 1956
from Estissac (Aube)
to Auxerre (Yonne).
Rate 12 francs valid
from 6 January 1949
to 1 July 1957.
Although even in
1956 the name of
the *département* was
almost always
added to the
destination, this was
not yet prescriptive
as we can see here.
It was only in the
1960s that
addressing
regulations were
greatly tightened.



The recently published catalogue for postage stamps used alone on mail ‘*Catalogue des timbres de France seuls sur lettres (1900 - 1973)*’ by Jacqueline and Pierre-Henri Cotte lists a dozen uses for this stamp, three of which are for domestic traffic and seven for foreign. The reader will find

here all three domestic uses (Figures 8-10) plus an example of the issue uprated (Figure 11). Of the foreign possibilities, there is only one shown (Figure 12). Use of the Parmentier stamp on mail with a foreign destination is scarce to rare. As a result, the price of such pieces can be quite high.

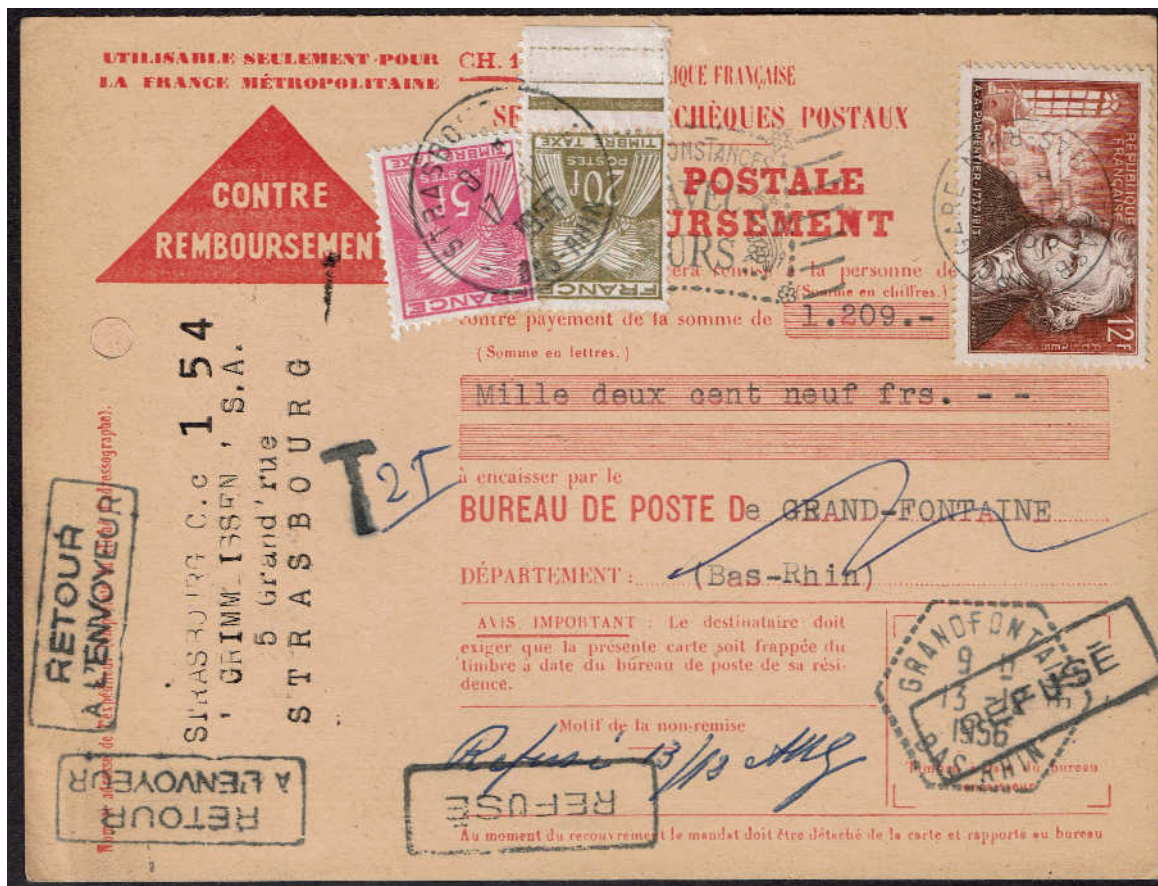


Figure 10

Cash-on-delivery postcard sent on 11 December 1956 from Strasbourg-Gare (Bas-Rhin) to Grandfontaine (Bas-Rhin) for collection by the Post Office of a sum of 1,209 francs. The collection attempt came to nothing as the addressee refused to pay. The card and the merchandise to be delivered were taken back to the Strasbourg office of departure and, for the effort made, the Post Office charged the company Grimm-Issen SA a so-called *Taxe de Présentation* of 25 francs.

Figure 11

Small domestic letter sent on 19 January 1957 from Béziers (Hérault) to Mulhouse (Haut-Rhin). The Parmentier stamp was supplemented with a 3 francs *Blason d'Aunis* stamp (YT 1004) to meet the 15 francs letter-rate. This rate was valid from 6 January 1949 to 1 July 1957.





Figure 12

Printed matter wrapper of the second weight class (50 - 100 grams) sent on 22 November 1956 from Paris 51, Rue de Provence, to Ham-sur-Heure (Belgium). Rate 12 francs valid from 1 May 1951 to 1 July 1957. No arrival cds.

SOCIETY NOTES Continued from page 2 »

Society Notes

More Interesting Website Links

Our new member **Ran van den Boom** suggests that for those that can read Dutch or are able to translate the pages into English the CFV Marianne site shows that the issues of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon and French Andorra of 2023 may be of interest. <https://www.cfv-marianne.nl/nieuwtjes-saint-pierre-et-miquelon-2023/>

<https://www.cfv-marianne.nl/nieuwtjes-frans-andorra-2023/>

For those of you on Facebook there are several stamp-specific groups that may be of interest including French Colonies Stamp Group which has 3,000+ members; French Stamps - *Timbres Français* 400+ members and *Maximaphilie par Les Maximaphiles Français* 100+ members.

Zoom Programme

The first meeting for 2024 was on 13 February with a splendid display based on one single stamp - 50c Jeanne d'Arc issue of 1929 by Mick Bister. If you have access to a computer I urge you to view it at:

www.fcps.org.uk/index.php/meetings/zoom-meetings

Society Website

Because the software (Joomla) that is used to run our website was being phased out in August 2023, the Society engaged a website design company to upgrade it. This was completed at a cost of £2,250. Previous upgrades had been completed almost *pro bono* or at 'mates' rates'; sadly both avenues were unavailable. The software was necessary, and is something that is required every two to three years.

Such are the vagaries of computers. The upgrade went well but when the next update was performed the website crashed to such a degree there was only one page visible. After many hours searching and asking questions on various computer groups by me and many additional hours by the developers it was finally sorted out in March at an additional cost of £1,300. We sincerely hope future updates will be stable.

The plea is - is there any F&CPS member who is Joomla proficient who could help with further software updates. It would be entirely *ad hoc*. I stress *this is not for day-to-day design and content updates, this is only core or development help*. If you are, or you know anyone who can do this work for 'mates' rates' could you contact me - jan@fcps.org.uk please.

Jan Gane

Marianne de Muller

Mick Bister

Part 6a: the 20 franc issue (YT 1011B) – Sheet, coil and stationery printings

The basic letter rate had been raised six times between 1945 and 1949 but, due to a slightly more stable economy, the 1949 increase to 15F lasted over eight years. Nevertheless, inflation still existed and by a decree issued on 26 June 1957 post offices were advised that the new rate would be increased to 20F with effect from 1 July 1957.

Preparation for the new stamp had commenced in May if not earlier. The choice of colour was reached not by pulling colour proofs from the 20F die but by revisiting the remainder 18F Type II colour proofs pulled when selecting

the colour for the postal stationery postcard¹. The blue chosen for the 20F value, Lefranc ink N° 135Lc, was not dissimilar to that chosen for the 18F postcard, Lefranc ink N°134Lc. The catalogues are divided between determining the new shade as being blue or ultramarine.

The 18F colour proof, in its new guise as the 20F *bon à tirer*, was annotated to indicate its potential face-value and was signed by the *Secrétaire d'État aux PTT*, Eugène Thomas, on 3 May 1947 (Figure 1).



Figure 1
18F colour proof used as the 20F *bon à tirer*².
© Archives of the Musée de la Poste

¹ See Part 5: the 18 franc issue in Journal N° 302, Page 74

² Please note that scans emanating from the Musée de la Poste tend to amplify the ink colours

Printing Proofs and Colour trials

A 'master electro' of fifty clichés (Figure 2) was built but not assembled on a cylinder. Instead, it was used on a flat plate press to print proofs and colour trials. This configuration will have been seen before in the production of the 18F Type IV value.

The two plate proofs below are printed in black ink and are imperforate. The block of 20 is printed on ungummed greenish paper; during the 1940s such plate proofs were printed in black on pink paper. The strip of 5 on gummed white paper (Figure 3) could be interpreted as a colour trial rather than a plate proof but it is very unlikely as black ink is normally reserved for test printings known as *tirages de service*.

The reason for printing colour trials, if that is what they are, from the same master electro is not clear. The colour blue of

the 20F value had already been decided upon using an earlier 18F die proof so what was the purpose of producing alternative colours after the event?

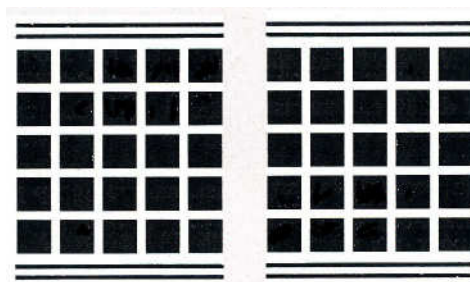


Figure 2

The configuration of the 'master electro'.



Figure 3

Printing proofs in black.

Figure 4
Colour trials
resembling
issued colours



These so-called colour trials can be divided into two groups. The inks shown in **Figure 4** are not unlike those selected for present and future printings. The two blue trials are comparable to some of the shades which occur in the 20F printings as will be seen in the ensuing pages. The deep green ink is virtually identical to that used for the 18F issue of 1958 and the two red trials are a more intense shade of the forthcoming 25F issue of 1959 which will be studied in a later chapter.

Figure 5 illustrates a range of unadopted colours. Without any Lefranc or Lorilleux ink references available to me I can only use my SG Stamp Colour Key to attribute the following colour descriptions: mauve (strip of five), dull purple, blackish purple, light green, green (strip of five), turquoise-blue and pale turquoise-blue.

G rard Gomez, a corresponding member of the *Acad mie de Philat lie*, has formulated an alternative theory for the existence of these so-called 20F ‘colour trials’. When he discovered a strip of five in blue on a fellow collector’s website, he observed that it had four marginal bars at both the top and the bottom (**Figure 6**). This led him to draw an interesting comparison with the trial printings of the 12F booklet that were studied in Chapter 4 of this series of articles³ and which show the very same arrangement of four marginal bars at the bottom of the pane (**Figure 7**). Although the folding format of the 12F booklet was ultimately abandoned, M. Gomez wonders if a second project had been taking place for a similar booklet containing the 20F in blue but which had not materialised?⁴ Certainly, no one can dispute the similarity between the two printings.



Figure 6 (left)

Strip of 20F trial printing with upper and lower groups of four marginal bars.

  Marianne de Muller:
muller.j257.fr/20-f.htm



Figure 5

Colour trials in unadopted colours.

Figure 7 (right)
One of the four trial printings of the 12F folding booklet likewise showing four marginal bars at the foot of each column of stamps.

  ‘Carnets de France 1940-1965’
Yvert & Tellier, 2016



³ ‘Marianne de Muller Part 4: the 12 franc issue (YT1010)’ Journal N 301, April 2023. At this juncture I need to admit that in this chapter I erroneously assumed that the set of four trials was held in the archives of the Mus e de la Poste but unavailable. I have since been informed that they are in a private collection.

⁴ ‘Un carnet unique en son genre’, G rard Gomez, Timbres Magazine, December 2021.

To support his hypothesis, M. Gomez has created a diagram (Figure 8) which represents the layout for a potential printing of the 20F folding booklets displaying the group of four marginal bars at the bottom as in the trial printing of the 12F booklet. The top row of marginal bars would be removed to allow the plates to be abutted together on the cylinder.

Collectors may get confused when purchasing imperforate printings of the 20F *Marianne de Muller* in blue because not only were there imperf printings in sheets of 50 as part of the 'colour trials' but there were also imperforate sheets of 100 printed off Cylinder G+H on 24 June 1957 (Figure 9). According to Jean-Luc Trassaert, twenty such sheets were printed, one of which was retained in the postal museum archives in Paris.

Figure 8 (above)
Theoretical layout of the
20F folding booklet
showing columns with
four marginal bars and
the position of the text.

© Gérard Gomez,
Académie de Philatélie

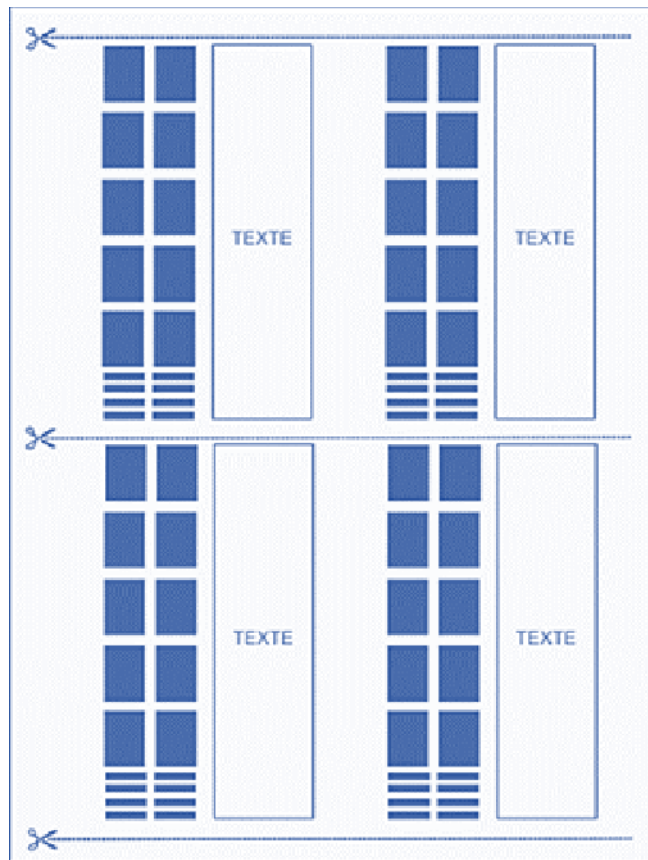


Figure 9 (left)
Complete sheet of
imperforate stamps
(reduced).
© Archives of the Musée
de la Poste

At a glance one can see a significant distinction. The marginal bars on the ‘colour trial’ printings are in solid colour and the purchase of an imperf 20F with this feature guarantees its origin. In contrast, an imperf stamp with a partially printed marginal bar is from the definitive rotary sheet printing. **Figure 10** shows a single stamp from my collection alongside the dated corner block of the sheet held in the archives which identifies it as being from position 97.

To be absolutely certain of having an example of the definitive printing, a dated corner block or a sheet number block will guarantee its origin. **Figure 11** shows a corner block in my collection with the sheet number 65335 alongside its near relative, with sheet number 65325, in the *Musée de la Poste*.



Figure 10
Left: imperforate stamp from Position 97. Right: Dated corner block.
© Archives of the *Musée de la Poste*



Figure 11
Left: Sheet number 65326. Right: Sheet number 65335.
© Archives of the *Musée de la Poste*

Sheet Printings

Production began on 13 June 1957 and continued in three phases until 14 March 1962 using a total of 38 cylinders on seven rotary presses, N^{os} 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. A total of 2,750,000,000 stamps were printed. The stamp was issued on 22 June 1957 shortly after the death of its designer, Louis-Charles Muller, who died on 23 May. A sheet printed off Electro G on 24 June 1957 was used to create a *feuille-modèle* (Figure 12) on which was recorded in the gutter margin its ink number 135Lc and in the oval cachet its

accession number 9209 and its date of registration 9 July 1957. Its replacement on 1 December 1959 by the o,20 *Semeuse* was recorded in the rectangular cachet.

Three types of the 20F design have been identified. Type I was used for the sheet, coil, postal stationery and the majority of the booklet printings. Its features are described in Figure 13. Types II and III will be studied in a later chapter.

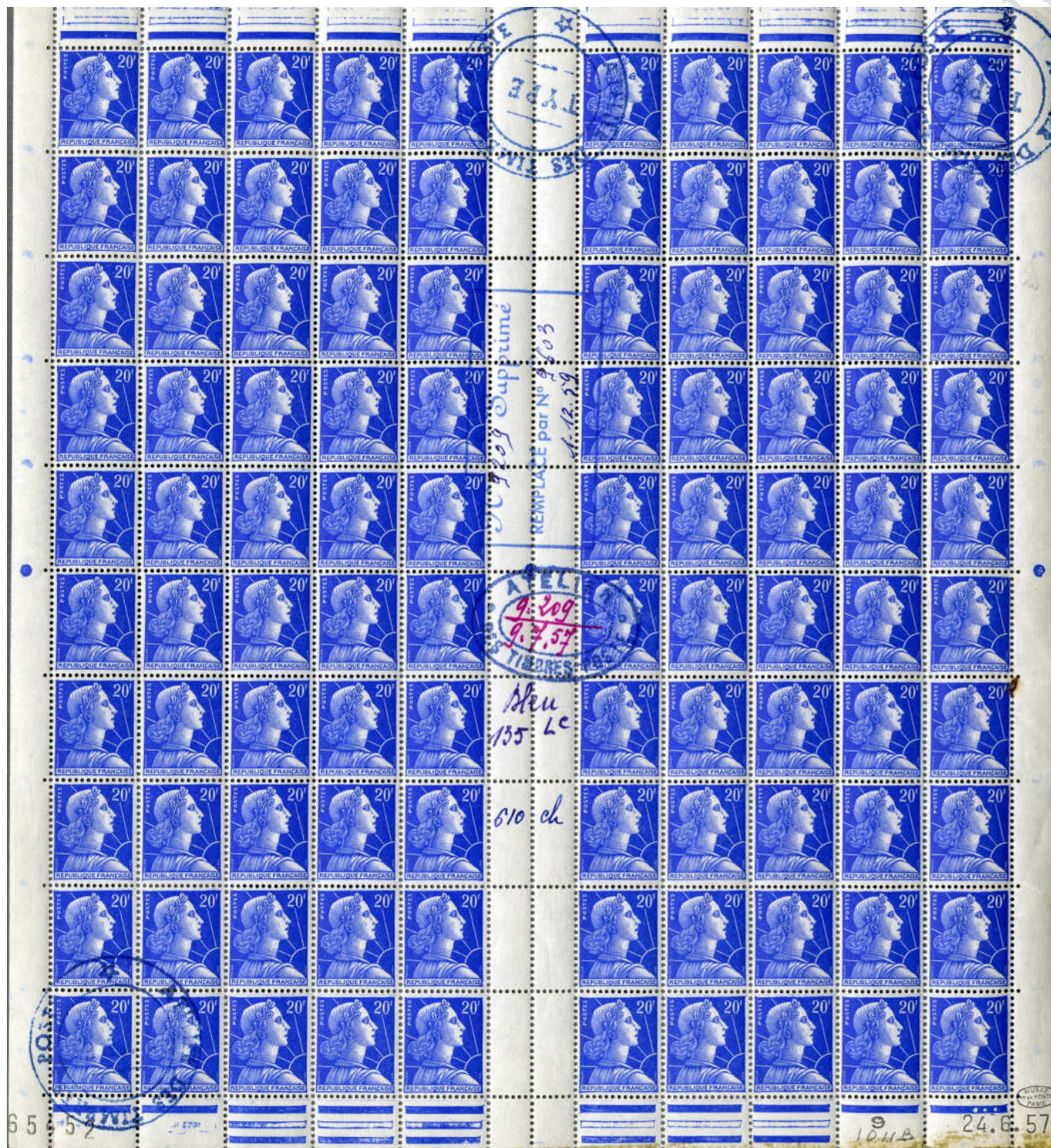


Figure 12 (Reduced)

Feuille-modèle.

© Archives of the Musée de la Poste

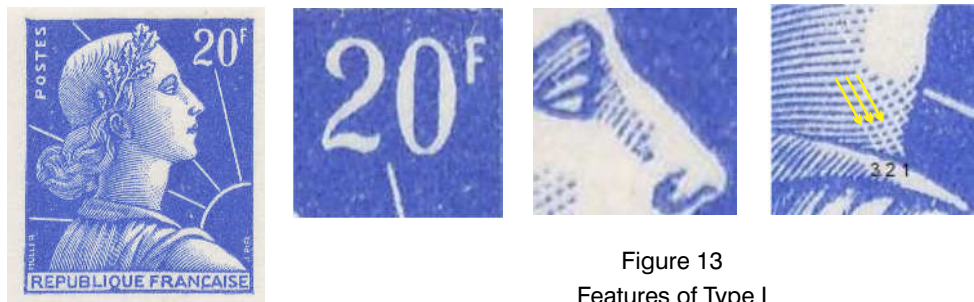


Figure 13
Features of Type I

- The base of the figure 2 is blunt at the left
- The shading on the nose extends more than halfway
- Three lines of white cross-hatching emerge from the collar

The printing of the 20F in sheets extended over three periods of postal rates. The first period of printing from 13 June 1957 to 2 January 1959 corresponded to the basic Internal Letter Rate and the Foreign Postcard Rate (>5 words) which were in force from 1 July 1957 to 5 January 1959. Presses 6, 8 and 9 operated simultaneously on the first day (Figure 14) with the remaining presses being commissioned as and when required. Press 3 commenced on the second day of printing, 14 June 1957, but only operated for two weeks up to the 1 July (Figure 15). In fact, this brief appearance was the only one made by Press 3 in the entirety of the *Marianne de Muller* production. The last printings in this period, on 2 January 1959, were on Presses 7 (Figure 16), 8 and 9. In all, 37 cylinders were employed, identified from Cylinder A+B to Cylinder BP+BQ. Printings of Press 3 and printings dated 2 January 1959 are much sought after by collectors.

The second phase of printings from 5 January to 6 November 1959 corresponded to the Internal Postcard Rate (more than 5 words) which was in force from 6 January to 31 December 1959. Only one cylinder was employed, Cylinder BR+BS, and it was used intermittently during the year on Presses 5 (Figure 17) and 8.



Figure 14
First day of first period, 13 June 1957.
Electro E of Cylinder E+F on Press 8.



Figure 15
Only printing of Muller issue on Press 3
from 14 June to 1 July 1957.



Figure 16
Last day of first period,
2 January 1959.
Electro BH of Cylinder BH+BI.



Figure 17
Second period.
Electro BR of Cylinder BR+BS.

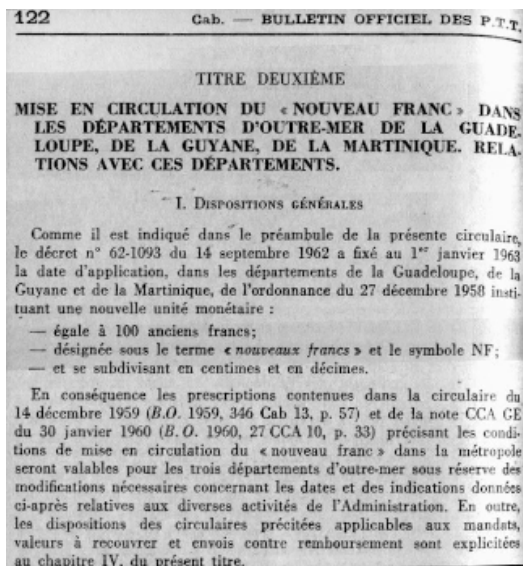
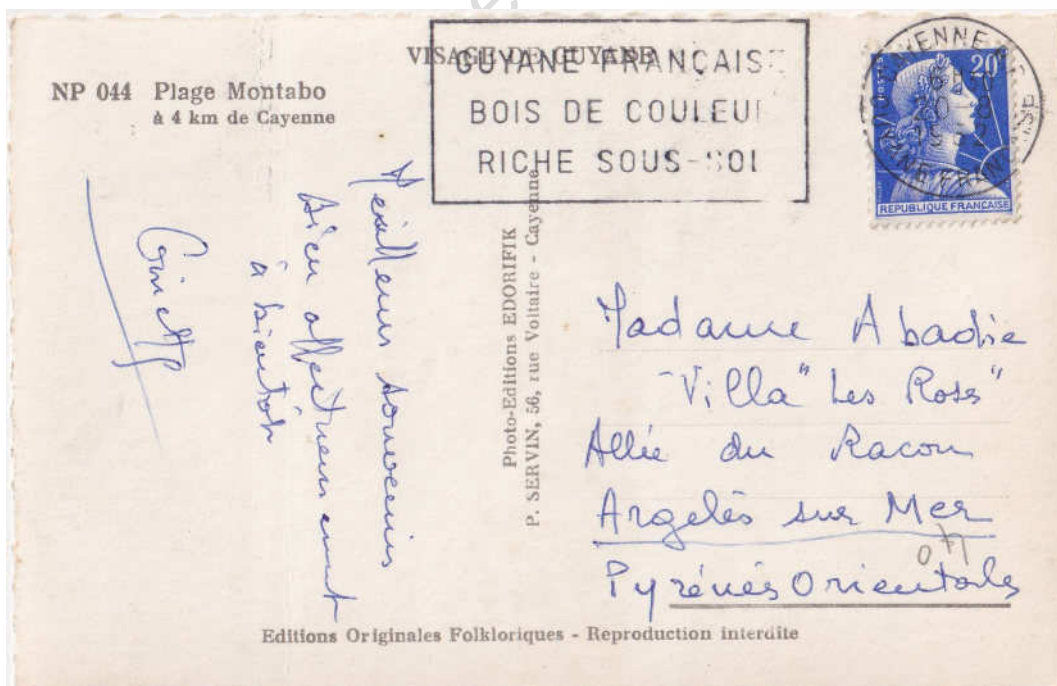


Figure 18

Extract from the *Bulletin Officiel des PTT*

© Marianne de Muller: muller.j257.fr/20-f.htm

Figure 19
Third period
Electro BU of
Cylinder BT+BU.Figure 20
Postcard from Cayenne
in French Guiana to
France with 20F
Marianne de Muller
cancelled 20 August
1962.

Overseas Départements 1960-1962

After decades of demoralising inflation⁵, the French Government reached the conclusion that the only solution was to revalue the French currency. Proclamation N°58-1341 was issued on 27 December 1958 stating that the new monetary unit, the New Franc, would be the equivalent of 100 old francs and that it would come into use on 1 January 1960. The proclamation explained that the new currency would be adopted by the metropolitan *départements* and those in Algeria and the Sahara, as well as in the Overseas *Départements* of Guadeloupe, French Guiana and Martinique and in Andorra and Monaco. In contrast, Réunion and the Pacific Territories would retain, for the time being, the CFA franc (*Communauté française d'Afrique*) which would be worth 0,02 NF and the CFP franc (*Colonies françaises du Pacifique*) which would be worth 0,055 NF.

France issued its first NF stamps on 2 January 1960 but the introduction of the new currency was delayed in the three Overseas *Départements* of Guadeloupe, French Guiana and Martinique who retained the old franc. A further Proclamation, N° 62-1093, announced on 14 September 1962 and published in the *Bulletin Officiel des PTT*, declared that the New Franc would circulate in these *départements* with effect from 1 January 1963 (Figure 18). During this period of extended use of the old franc, remainders of the 20F Marianne de Muller issue, plus one specific printing on 30 October 1959, sufficed to serve the regions but a shortage in 1962 necessitated a third printing using a new cylinder, Cylinder BT+BU on Press 4. The printing lasted just two days, 13 and 14 March, and is the rarest of all Marianne de Muller dated corner blocks (Figures 19 and 20).

Having said all that, there is another, but less convincing, reason that has been voiced for the existence of this isolated printing. On the 4 October 1957, on Press 6, a single printing of the 20F value was overprinted 10F CFA (Figure 21) for use in the *département* of Réunion where the *Communauté française*

⁵ The extent of the deterioration of the French Franc can be measured by comparing the Letter Rate in France with that of Great Britain between 1900 and 1960. In that period the rate increased from 1d to 3d in Great Britain, i.e. threefold. In France it increased from 15 centimes to 20 francs, i.e. one hundred and thirty-threefold!

d'Afrique currency was being used until the island adopted the New Franc on 1 January 1975. A year later, on 15 October 1958, a much larger printing took place simultaneously using three cylinders shared between two presses, N° 5 and 8. The sheets were subsequently overprinted 10F CFA. In 1962, the printing on Press 4 took place with the intention of the stamps being overprinted again for use in Réunion. Some sheets were overprinted but once the quantity required was reached the remaining sheets, without the overprint, were put on sale in French post offices.

Ink Shades

Several shades can be encountered in the 20F sheet printings but the names attributed to them can be very subjective – one man's 'ultramarine' is another man's 'bright blue'. Jean-Luc Trassaert states that the colour can vary from light blue to deep, almost blackish, ultramarine. In Wanos & de Belleville's *'Catalogue des Variétés de France 1900-1964'*, the authors conclude that there are seven shades that can be identified as follows: *bleu clair*, *bleu*, *bleu-noir*, *bleu-outremer*, *outremer*, *outremer vif* and *outremer foncé*. You will be able to detect some of these shades in **Figures 14 to 17** although I have not bothered to identify them as such in my collection. There is one shade though that has merit and that is the 'blackish blue' or '*bleu-noir*' which when you find a copy is easy to distinguish. I would love to find a dated corner block to establish the date of printing but I must content myself with a strip of three (**Figure 22**). A copy of the lightest shade I have found, *bleu clair*, is also shown but I have to declare that neither shade has been expertised.

Coils

Unfortunately, there are no records of the coil production in the *Musée de la Poste* so it is not possible to ascertain when the printings took place. They were sold from July 1957, from the same type of automatic machine introduced in 1955 at the time of the 6F *Marianne de Muller* issue, and were dispensed singly upon the insertion of a 20c coin. (**Figure 23**). A complete coil of 1000 could be purchased at the post office for an additional fee of 300 francs (*Instruction du 20 juin 1957*).

Postal Stationery

There were two distinct printings of the 20F postcard. Jean Storch and Robert Françon⁶ describe the 1957 printing as a blue stamp on *rosé* card and the 1959 printing as a deep blue stamp on light *chamois* card. This would imply that there was one printing to serve the overseas postcard rate and another for the later internal postcard rate although this may not necessarily be the case.



Figure 21
10F CFA overprint for use in Réunion.



Figure 22
Printings in *bleu noir* and in *bleu clair* ink.



Before any new stationery postcards were put on sale it was common practice to dispose of earlier stock uprated with an adhesive. For example, remainder 12F cards were uprated with a 3F stamp to meet the new 15F rate and the 18F and 15F cards were uprated with 2F and 5F adhesives respectively to meet the 20F rate (**Figure 24**). More often than not, it was the Coats of Arms issues that were affixed to the cards before sale. Jean Boblique⁷ reported this practice as still being observed at the *Recette Principale*, in the Rue du Louvre in Paris as late as May, 1958. As a result of this operation, uprated cards are more common in 1957 and 1958 than the 20F cards and only by 1959 are both types of the latter more frequently seen. The two printings are very distinct (**Figure 25 and 26**) and although the standard size for such stationery is 140 x 100 mm my 1957 printing is 139 x 100 mm and my 1959 printing 141 x 98 - but that is probably due more to mechanical imprecision than human design. The cost of a 20F postcard was 22 francs.

As with previous issues, a number of cards were customised by companies with a *repiquage* applied by a local printer (**Figure 27**). In addition, a wide variety of private '*timbré sur commande*' or 'stamped-to-order' stationery was produced comprising postcards, envelopes of all sizes and reply paid cards. Some of these printings were quite small and previously unrecorded designs are still being discovered (**Figures 28 to 30**).



Figure 23 (right)
Coil strip of eleven.

⁶ 'Les entiers postaux de France et de Monaco' Jean Storch and Robert Françon, 1998

⁷ 'Les "bleus" de la Marianne de Muller', Jean Boblique, L'Echo de la Timbrologie, 1969



Figure 24
15F remainder
stationery postcard
uprated with a 5F.
Saintonge to Romania,
cancelled 13 March
1958.



Figure 25
First printing of 20F
stationery postcard with
blue stamp on rosé
card, signed by Jules
Piel, engraver.



Figure 26
Second printing with
deep blue stamp on
chamois card.



Figure 27

Standard *rosé* postcard with *repiquage* printed by the hosiery manufacturer originally known as LA BONNETERIE ALSACIENNE, but later renamed La Bonnal, and today Labonal. The cards accompanied orders dispatched by the firm and were completed and returned by the recipient as an acknowledgement of receipt. The reverse of the card is blank.



Figure 28

Recently discovered stamped-to-order envelope commissioned by La Fermeture "Chic" with address printed in the same colour as the stamp. To date, it is the only example known.

© Philippe Lanier collection



Institution de Retraites et de Prévoyance
des Voyageurs, Représentants et Placiers
(I. R. P. V. R. P.)

63, Rue de Prony

E

PARIS XVII^e

Dans
l'année qui

Cette

défectueuses, sans que nous ayons à participer aux frais de démontage ou remontage.

En aucun cas nous ne saurions être tenus de remplacer l'appareil complet.

Le bénéfice de la garantie ne pourra être accordé qu'après examen par nos Services techniques de la pièce reconnue défectueuse.

Avis important :

Notre garantie ne saurait couvrir :

- Un usage anormal de l'appareil ou un défaut d'installation ;
- Les légers fendillements qui peuvent apparaître (même dès la mise en service) sur une pièce émaillée. Ces craquelures étant le résultat de la différence des coefficients de dilatation qui existe entre la fonte, ou la tôle et l'émail, mais ne nuisent en rien à l'adhérence de ce dernier.

Figure 29 (above)
Large-format envelope
(155 x 121mm) stamped to
order for the I.R.P.V.R.P.

CARTE POSTALE

EXPEDITEUR

Nom et adresse complète
de l'utilisateur :

DESTINATAIRE :



PIED - SELLE

Service Garantie

7, Rue Adolphe-Mille

PARIS (19^e)

TRÈS IMPORTANT : À détacher suivant le pointillé et poster
sans affranchir dans les 10 jours suivant la date de l'achat.

Figure 30 (reduced)
Reply-paid guarantee postcard
stamped-to-order for the
Pied-Selle stove manufacturing
company.
© Delcampe

Fictifs sans valeur

With previous *Marianne de Muller* values, the postal training schools were able to use remainder stocks of the *fictifs* that had been printed at the time of the *Marianne de Gandon* issues. In the case of the 20F *Marianne de Muller* though, a new *fictif* was required and the stock was printed in one day on 7 October 1957. A two-cylinder press was used, one cylinder printing the frame and inscription, the second cylinder printing the value. Although the printing only lasted one day, it is apparent from the change of value position (Figures 30 and 31) that the electro printing it was replaced during the day.

The item below (Figure 32), designed to resemble a registered packet, is franked with three *fictifs* and cancelled ORLEANS CENTRE D'INSTRUCTION, 4 April 1962. The franking, in old francs, does not correspond to the 1962 rates even when converted to the New Franc introduced two years earlier. The nearest tariff at the time would have been 0,45 postage (20-50 grams) plus 0,75 registration fee totalling 1,15 NF.



Figure 31

Fictifs printed off Cylinder A + B on Press N° 6 with figure '20' set low and slightly to the left.

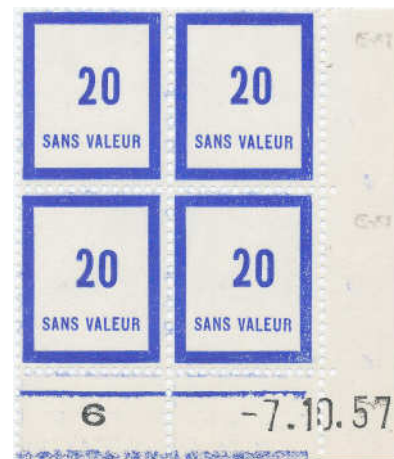


Figure 30

Fictifs printed off Cylinder A + B on Press N° 6 with figure '20' set high and to the right.

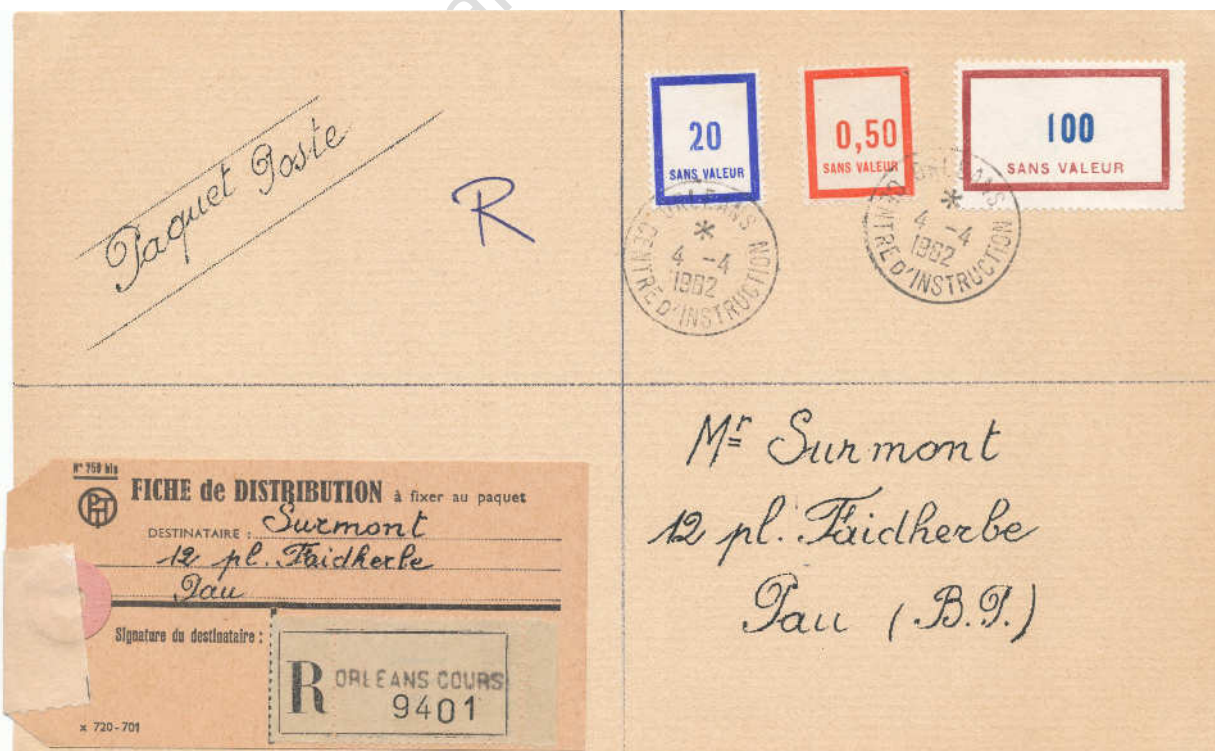


Figure 32

Cover (reduced) franked with three *fictifs sans valeur* including one representing the 20F *Marianne de Muller*.

Precursors of the French postal card

Frans Jorissen

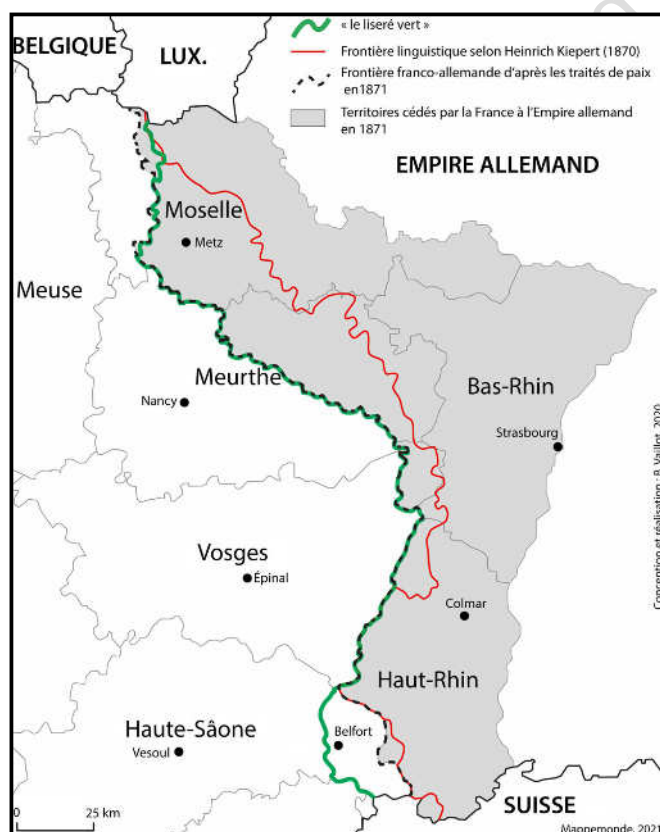
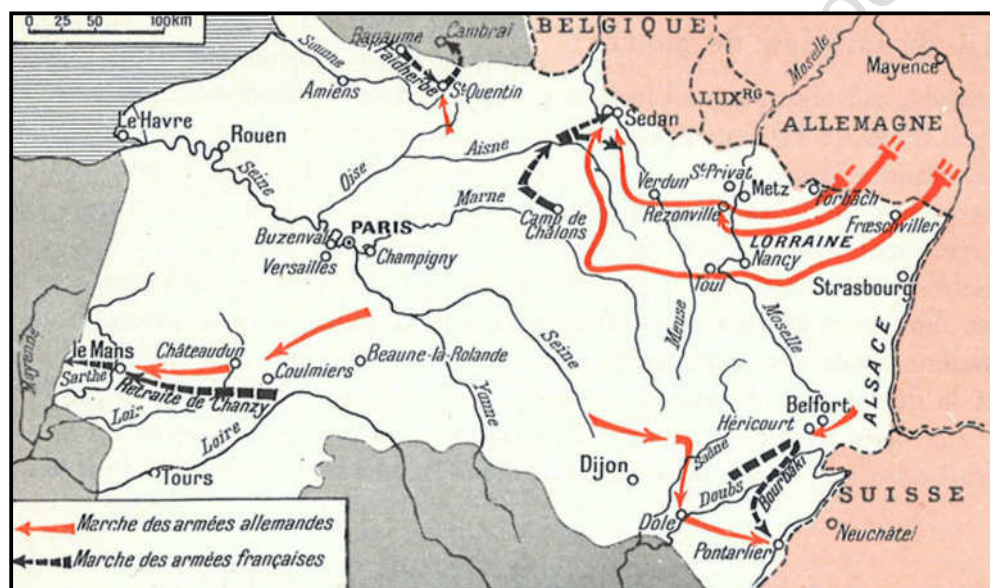
Part 3: The German occupation stamps

In the previous article, we saw that the German military postage-free cards were the first real postal cards to serve on French soil. After France declared war on Prussia on 19 July 1870, German troops invaded north-eastern France in early August 1870. Very soon, most of northern France was occupied (**Figure 1**). As we have already seen, the German military post was remarkably well organised, but the

situation was very different for the civilian post, as French postal employees mostly refused to work for the German occupiers. In this context, on 13 August 1870, Dr. J. Rosshirt was appointed in charge of the civil post in the occupied territories, with the dual task of organising it and making it profitable.

Figure 1

Area occupied by German troops during the Franco-German War of 1870-1871¹



As early as 6 September 1870, Berlin announced the issue of special stamps for the occupied territories in France (**Figure 1**), as well as for Alsace-Lorraine (**Figure 2**), which had been annexed by Germany. These new stamps (called occupation stamps or stamps of Alsace-Lorraine), were printed at the Prussian State Printing Works in Berlin and had a postage value in French centimes. Between 6 and 10 September 1870, five values were issued (1, 2, 4, 10 and 20 centimes), and on 9 December 1870 two more (5 and 25 centimes). With the exception of the 25c stamp (which did not exist in France), all values had the same colour as the corresponding French stamps. Nevertheless, the rates in the occupied territories were different from those in France. These stamps served until 24 March 1871, when the French postal service was restored. Only in annexed Alsace-Lorraine did these stamps remain valid until 31 December 1871, when they were replaced by stamps of the newly created German Reich Post Office.

Figure 2

In grey: the Alsace-Lorraine region annexed by Germany²

¹ https://www.herodote.net/Introduction_la_guerre_en_bref-synthese-543.php

² <https://journals.openedition.org/mappemonde/6440>

Although in German-occupied territory and annexed Alsace-Lorraine, postal cards were mainly sent by military personnel, who almost always benefited from free postage; there was, of course, also civilian postal traffic. If civilians used postal cards, they had to be franked with the newly issued occupation stamps. These could then be "normal"

(German) postcards (Figures 5 and 6), or, alternatively, military postage-free postcards, which of course had to be franked in case of civilian use (Figures 3,4,7 and 9). Since the use of postal cards was still virtually unknown in France, such franked postal cards used by civilians are rare.

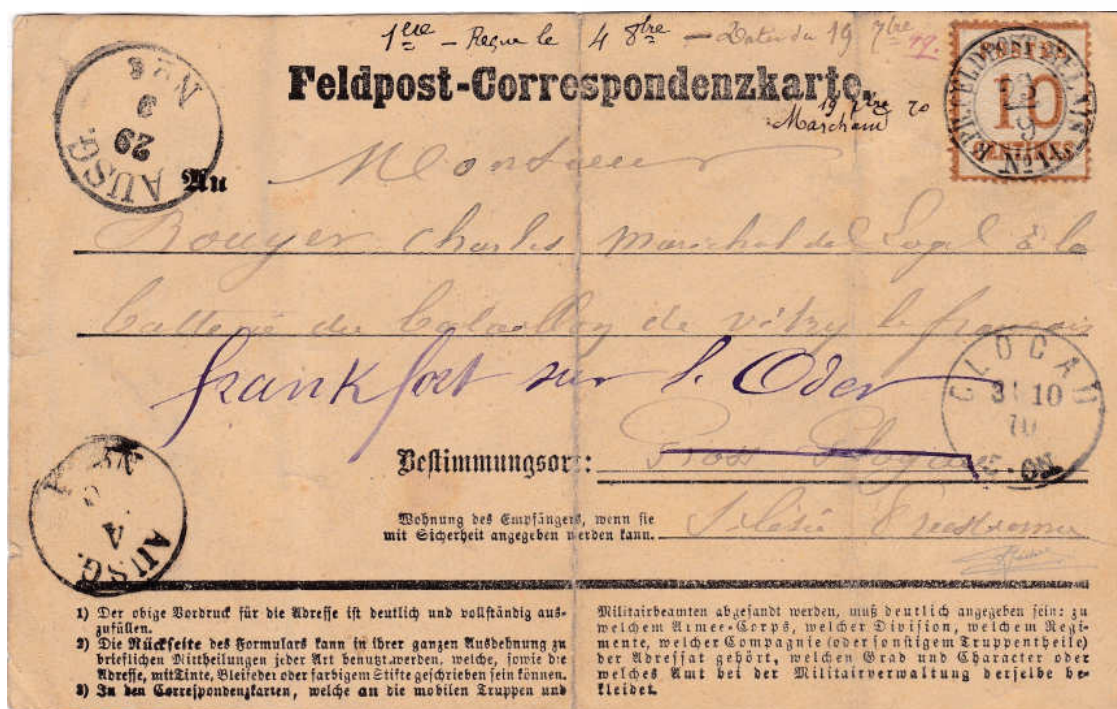


Figure 3 (reduced by 10%)

Military postage-free card franked with a 10c occupation stamp, sent on 23 September 1870 to Glogau in Germany, and forwarded from there on 3 October to Frankfurt an der Oder. The postcard, written on 19 September, was received on 4 October. The occupation stamp was cancelled with a date stamp of the Prussian field post "K. Pr. Feldpost-Relais N° 14". This postal relay was located at that time in Blesme, some 10 km NW of St Didier, in the occupied part of France.



Figure 4 (reduced by 10%)
 Military postage-free card franked with a 10c occupation stamp, sent on 15 November 1870 from Wissembourg (in annexed Alsace-Lorraine, some 30 km north of Strasbourg) to Mainz in Germany. The occupation stamp is cancelled with the date stamp of the Bavarian field post "K. B. Feldpost Relais N° II", which was located in Wissembourg.

In Germany, until 1872 the postcard rate was the same as the letter rate. Initially, the letter/postcard rate **in the occupied territories** (and in annexed Alsace-Lorraine) was 10 centimes, both to Germany (Figures 3-5) and within

these territories (Figure 6). The rate to unoccupied France was 20 centimes, while initially French rates were still used for scarce mail to foreign countries.



Figure 5
(reduced by 10%)
Normal postal card from the North German Postal Territory, franked with a 10c occupation stamp, sent on 30 November 1870 from Brumat (in annexed Alsace-Lorraine, some 10 km north of Strasbourg) to Weilburg in Germany (30 km north of Frankfurt am Main). The occupation stamp was cancelled by a new date stamp manufactured by the German civilian postal administration.



Figure 6

Normal postal card from the North German Postal Territory, franked with a 10c occupation stamp, sent on 30 December 1870 within the annexed Alsace-Lorraine, from Epfig (some 30 km SW of Strasbourg) to Colmar, also in Alsace. The occupation stamp was cancelled by a new date stamp manufactured by the German civilian postal administration.

In annexed Alsace-Lorraine, special foreign rates were introduced on 22 November 1870 (Figure 9), as we know from the rediscovered postal manual of Merseburg in the former East Germany. A special local rate of 5 centimes was introduced at the same time (Figure 8).

On 13 January 1871, postage from the occupied territories in France and from Alsace-Lorraine to Germany was raised

to 15 centimes (Figure 7).

In Alsace-Lorraine, we see that from October 1870 the military cancels gradually disappeared, and stamps were increasingly cancelled with newly manufactured date stamps of the civilian post (Figures. 5-6). Normal postal cards of the North German Post Office area also became widely available.



Figure 7

Military postage-free card franked with two occupation stamps, of 10c and 5c, sent on 2 February 1871 from Epinal (occupied part of France) to Erfurt (Germany). From 13 January 1871, the rate to Germany was 15c. We see that this postal card was still handled by the military post in February 1871, the stamps being cancelled by a date stamp of field-post relay N° 66, based in Epinal.



Figure 8

Private card of the "Société des Amis de l'Instruction", sent locally in Mulhouse on 9 December 1871, and franked with a 5c occupation stamp. The stamp is cancelled with the newly made horseshoe cancel of Mühlhausen (Mulhouse).

Extremely rare use of the local letter rate of 5c for a postal card. Given the short written text indicating place and time of the upcoming meeting, the sender apparently did not dare to send this card as printed matter (rate 4c).

In this period, some years before the formation of the General Postal Union (UGP/UPU) in 1875, postal cards to foreign countries were almost always franked according to the letter rate, as stipulated in bilateral agreements. Figure 9 shows an exceptional example of a postal card from the North German Postal Territory, franked with occupation stamps and sent from annexed Alsace-Lorraine to Switzerland. For a long time, no official text was known about the special rates for letters abroad that, given the

letters found, applied in Alsace-Lorraine. Only after the opening of the borders of the former East Germany, an old postal manual was found in the city of Merseburg, which listed a decree of 11 November 1870 with new tariffs for letters abroad specifically for **annexed Alsace-Lorraine** (Spalink, 1999). These rates were different from the old French rates, which were applied by the German postal administration in the **occupied part of France** during the same period.



Figure 9

Military postage-free card, franked with a 25c occupation stamp, sent 16 January 1871 from Strasbourg (annexed Alsace-Lorraine) to Basel (Switzerland). Arrival (reverse) 17 January 1871. Specific rate for Alsace-Lorraine: 25c for a letter (or postal card) to Switzerland. Only one other postal card is known for this rate.

Mauritania, modern varieties



The 1960s recess-printed pictorials of **France** are very familiar, and so are some of the colour varieties arising

from their manner of production. Best known, perhaps, is the 1F *Le Touquet* of 1962, whose 'Beach in green' variety has achieved catalogue status (SG 1550a, YT 1355b).

Such varieties exist among the former colonies, and it may just be their comparative unpopularity which has left them undiscovered hitherto. They lack nothing in visual spectacle compared to their metropolitan equivalents: the 25F Patas Monkeys from the **Mauritania** 1963 definitives, shown at left (SG 173, YT 173), are just one of many from this set alone. (Note the near-total absence of red-brown on the right-hand stamp.) Those of us who may have acquired it, ticked it off in the catalogue and never given it a second glance might like to look again: variations nearly as good exist on the 0F50, 1F50, 3F, 4F and 5F values too.

Michael Round

There's No Business Like...

Show Business – Connections on French Stamps

David Parmley

Part 6

Although the general theme of this story is basically light-hearted there is a serious matter which concerns the (British) Post Office and, after all, that is the foundation of our hobby. Following the introduction of the Horizon financial accounting system in 1999 numerous discrepancies in sub-postmasters' accounts were revealed, and the Post Office prosecuted about 900 personnel damaging their reputations and depriving some of them of their livelihoods, in some cases their liberty and in others their lives as well as forcing many to repay substantial sums relating to alleged shortfalls.

The surprising thing is that the Post Office knew there were flaws in the system as did Fujitsu, the tech giant who installed the system and provided evidence regardless to support those prosecutions. At no time did it occur to anyone that this level of defalcation in a population which had been stringently vetted before appointment was a little unusual. In a group action, around 500 sub-postmasters managed to clear their names, but the resolution of this shameful and gross miscarriage of justice was proceeding at a pace which might be achieved by a heavily sedated sloth. But all that was to change – in the opening days of 2024 a four-part television drama revealed the full horrors of this affair, the final episode attracting a staggering ten million viewers. This had the result of accelerating the action to something like the speed of light (well, for Government and the judiciary whose wheels grind exceeding slow at the best of times).

We often refer to the power of the press but in this instance it was the power of the drama which, after all, is one aspect of show business.

HENRI POURRAT 1887-1959

A writer and folklore collector, his birth centenary was commemorated on a single 1F90 value of 1987. After leaving school he commenced a career in agronomy but soon contracted tuberculosis. When sufficiently recovered he wrote in collaboration with his friend Jean Angeli (who adopted the pen-name Jean l'Ollagne). Unable to serve in the Great War (in which Angeli was killed), Pourrat was bedridden with Spanish 'flu and did not fully recover until 1926. A devout Roman Catholic and supporter of the peasantry of the Ambert region where he was born, he urged a return to the soil following the decline of the countryside both during the Great War and the economically difficult period which followed.



YT 2475 / SG 2777

His literary works ran to some 100 titles, and he achieved recognition for his *Les vaillances, farces et aventures de Gaspard des montagnes* (The Mighty Deeds, Pranks, and Adventures of Gaspard from the Mountains). Published in four volumes from 1921, this was awarded the Grand Prix du Roman by the Académie Française. There were four subsequent prizes from the Académie as well as the Prix Goncourt, Légion d'honneur and an honorary doctorate from Trinity College Dublin. After World War II Pourrat produced his magnum opus, *Le Trésor des Contes* (the Treasury of Tales), a collection of over 1000 folk stories gathered from the Auvergne and published in thirteen volumes between 1948-62.

Works adapted for films include *Gaspard des Montagnes* (1965), *Le Chasseur de la Nuit* (1993) and *Le Pharaon, le Sauvage et la Princesse* (2022). Considering Pourrat's active

period and the dates of the films it is reassuring that film-makers are exploring untouched material and if that stems the flow of remakes, so often much inferior to the originals, then that can only be a good thing.

BLAISE CENDRARS 1887-1961

Born Frédéric-Louis Sauter in Switzerland, Cendrars became a naturalised French citizen in 1916. His birth centenary was marked by a single 2F value of 1987 featuring a Modigliani portrait. An early modernist poet, Cendrars served in the French Foreign Legion during the Great War until losing his right arm at Champagne in 1915.



YT 2497 / SG 2792

Between the wars he travelled extensively and became involved in the film industry in Italy, France and USA directing *La Venere Nera* (1923), which appears to be a lost Italian film, and co-writing the screenplay for *Sutter's Gold*, a 1936 US production starring Edward Arnold and based on the start of the 1849 gold-rush.

1990 CELEBRITIES SERIES – GRANDS NOMS DE LA CHANSON FRANÇAISE (Figure 1)

This series comprised six 2F30 + 50c values issued singly in sheets and se-tenant in a booklet format.

ARISTIDE BRUANT 1851-1925

Born Louis Armand Aristide Bruand, he left home aged 15 following his father's death, pitching up in Montmartre where he found the opportunity to show his musical talents. Although middle-class he adopted the patois of the district, in which he sang of the struggles of the poor, creating the *chanson réaliste* genre. Developing a song and comedy act he



Figure 1
1990 Celebrities Series – *Grands Noms de la Chanson Française*
YT BC2655 / SG 2985a

was engaged to appear at *Le Chat Noir* club and in his distinctive costume of red shirt, high boots, black velvet jacket and red scarf soon became a star of Montmartre. He befriended Toulouse-Lautrec who frequently painted him to appear in publicity posters.

He opened his own club, *Le Mirliton* in Montmartre in 1885 where he performed solo as well as acting as Master of Ceremonies, introducing the other acts on the bill. He specialised in jokes at the expense of the upper-class members of the audience who were slumming it in Montmartre.

MAURICE CHEVALIER 1888-1972

Born in Paris, Chevalier was a child performer but worked in menial jobs as a teenager before briefly becoming the partner of Fréhel (the biggest female star in France at that time) in 1909. She secured for him his first major role as a mimic and singer in *L'Alcazar* in Marseille for which he was critically acclaimed. Breaking with Fréhel, from whom he had acquired a cocaine habit, in 1911 he became the dance partner and lover of Mistinguett performing at the *Folies Bergère*.

At the outbreak of the Great War Chevalier was on national service and, already in the front line, suffered shrapnel wounds in the back and was taken as a prisoner of war. Whilst in Germany he learned English, and his drug addiction was broken for want of supply. Mistinguett was able to exert some influence on her admirer King Alfonso XIII of Spain and through his intervention Chevalier was released in 1916.

Returning to Paris Chevalier became a star at the *Casino de Paris* where he entertained British and American troops. Discovering jazz and ragtime in 1917 he travelled to London where he was a success at the Palace Theatre. He subsequently went to the USA where he met composers George Gershwin and Irving Berlin and, developing an interest in acting, brought the French operetta *Dédé* to Broadway in 1922. This was a success and a major milestone in his career.

Whilst his early parts in silent films were unsuccessful (and indeed he had rejected an offer from Douglas Fairbanks to



YT 2649 / SG 2985

co-star with Mary Pickford) the arrival of sound movies lured him to Hollywood where he starred in *Innocents of Paris* (1929). His next two films, *The Love Parade* (1929) and *The Big Pond* (1930) each brought him 1930 Oscar nominations for Best Actor which award was won by Lionel Barrymore.

At a time when musicals were unpopular Chevalier starred in *The Smiling Lieutenant* (1931) with Claudette Colbert (probably the greatest female film star to hail from France albeit she emigrated in 1906 at the age of three and became a naturalised US citizen in 1912). This was Paramount's highest grossing film that year. Following on from that success, the next year he was paired with Jeanette MacDonald for *One Hour With You*, another success, and *Love Me Tonight*. The latter (with songs by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart) is, as an integrated musical combining songs and dialogue, considered one of the greatest film musicals.

In 1934 Chevalier starred in the first sound version of Franz Lehár's *The Merry Widow* (again with Jeanette MacDonald) and then signed with Darryl F Zanuck at Twentieth Century (one source quoted MGM but that is incorrect) for *(The Man from the) Folies Bergère* (1935, with Merle Oberon and Ann Sothorn). The longer title refers to a simultaneously produced French version with French female leads supporting Chevalier. Although intended solely for the European market this French version featured topless dancers and caused Zanuck trouble with the censors. In a year which saw the releases of *Top Hat*, *Roberta*, *Naughty Marietta*, *Gold Diggers of 1935*, *Go Into Your Dance*, *Broadway Melody of 1936* and *Love Me Forever*, the film, incidentally the last to be released by Twentieth Century before its merger with Fox, was somewhat overshadowed but remained Chevalier's personal favourite and was remade as *That Night in Rio* (1941 – Carmen Miranda) and *On the Riviera* (1952 – Danny Kaye). Not bad for a film based on a stage production *The Red Cat*, which ran for only thirteen performances on Broadway.

Despite being one of the highest paid stars in Hollywood, Chevalier was notoriously careful with money – redolent of his poverty in early life. But there had been a dispute over star billing for *Folies* and Chevalier returned to France to



YT2650 / SG2986

resume his music-hall career marrying the dancer Nita Raya in 1937. His position during the war was somewhat ambiguous but his popularity in the US was affected by a charge of collaboration (even though he was acquitted) and exacerbated by his communist sympathies. However, once the McCarthy excesses had diminished, he was welcomed back to the US and in 1957 starred in *Love in the Afternoon* with Audrey Hepburn and Gary Cooper followed by *Gigi* in 1958, which is covered in the essay on its author Colette. *Gigi* won a record nine Oscars (without even a nomination for an acting award) and at the same ceremony Chevalier was given an honorary award for his fifty-year contribution to entertainment. The Oscars record would not stand long as *Ben Hur* received eleven Oscars the following year.

Of his thirteen subsequent films made up to 1967 the best known is probably *Can-Can* with Frank Sinatra, Shirley MacLaine and Louis Jourdan. This was based on the Cole Porter stage musical with some songs deleted and substituted with earlier Porter hits. It was reportedly the highest grossing film of 1960 but early estimates were subsequently downgraded.

Throughout his life Chevalier had suffered bouts of depression: he attempted suicide in 1971 and following complications from kidney failure died on the first day of 1972.

TINO ROSSI 1907-83

Born in Corsica, Constantin "Tino" Rossi was a tenor who sang in the cabaret style, recording over 2000 songs. Selling over 200 million albums but largely forgotten nowadays, his most popular recording *Petit Papa Noël* sold 30 million copies alone. He also appeared in over 25 films, the most notable being the 1954 Sacha Guitry production *Si Versailles m'était conté...* (although translated as *If Versailles were told to me* the English title is *Royal Affairs in Versailles*) in which he played *Le Gondolier*.



YT 2651 / SG 2987

EDITH PIAF 1915-63

Named for Edith Cavell (the British nurse executed by the Germans in the Great War) Edith Giovanna Gassion took the stage name Piaf (a French name for sparrow). Regarded as France's greatest popular singer she specialised in *chanson réaliste* and torch songs, often autobiographical and reflecting love, loss and sorrow. She was abandoned by her mother at birth; when her father enlisted in the army her early life was spent with her paternal grandmother who ran a brothel in Normandy. It is said that she was blind from age 3 to 7 and miraculously cured on a pilgrimage funded by the women engaged in the brothel.

Aged 14 she joined her father in his street acrobatic act which toured France and she began to sing in public until 1935 when, after a failed relationship and a child who died in infancy, she was discovered by nightclub owner Louis Leplée. He bestowed the name *La Môme Piaf*, introduced her to the trademark black dress and launched her before a

celebrity audience accompanied by a band led by Django Reinhardt (illustrated on page 43). This led to the release of two records later in the year. In 1936 Leplée was murdered by gangsters with earlier connections to Piaf and whilst she was accused as an accessory she was acquitted. This created considerable negative publicity and required much effort to clean up her image.

Her career developed during the occupation period. She performed in top nightclubs and high class brothels of Paris, becoming friendly with Maurice Chevalier. These performances inevitably led to accusations of collaboration and she had to testify to a legal trial but with support from a former Resistance member she was exonerated. She resumed her career including performing for Allied forces and at the Moulin Rouge, both alongside Yves Montand who became her lover - until he became almost as famous as she was, at which point Piaf broke it off.

In the 1950s - after an initial lukewarm reception in the US, where audiences had expected a more spectacular performance and were abashed by her simple presentation - she became admired with many television appearances and two performances at Carnegie Hall. At this time she helped launch the career of Charles Aznavour, of whom it was said that you only needed to hear him sing to smell the garlic.

Notable recordings include *L'Accordéoniste* (1940), her signature tune *La Vie en Rose* (1946) - which entered the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1988 - *Hymne à l'Amour* (1949), *Padam, padam...* (1951) and *La Foule* (1957). Her only entry in the UK charts - *Milord* (1959) spent a couple of weeks in the lower reaches of the 1960 Top Twenty whilst Elvis enjoyed a nine-week run at the top with *It's Now or Never*. *Non, Je ne regrette rien* (1960) may currently be heard in a television commercial for bleach but was more fittingly used as the introductory theme for the Rugby Union World Cup in 2023. Between 1955 and 1962 Piaf performed several series of concerts at the Paris Olympia music hall in an effort to save the venue from bankruptcy. Excerpts from several of these concerts are preserved on vinyl recordings (latterly transferred to CD) and have never been out of the catalogue.



YT 2652 / SG 2988

After her death from cancer at her Riviera villa her body was smuggled back to Paris so that her legion of fans would think she died there. Tens of thousands thronged the streets for her cortège, bringing traffic to a standstill for the first time since the end of the war, and 100,000 fans attended the funeral ceremony at the cemetery. She was initially denied a requiem mass as she had divorced and re-married but the French Catholic Church recanted fifty years later and in 2013 her mass was held in Paris.

Edith Piaf also appears on a 2012 0,89€ value (Figure 2) se-tenant with a 0,60€ value featuring American jazz trumpeter and composer Miles Davis (1926-91) as a musical Celebrities issue. It was also a joint issue with the USA, an



Figure 2
Issued as se-tenant YT 4671 / SG 5202a
Piaf YT 4672 / Davis 4671

early example of these projects which have become common in recent times. Such issues seek to reflect areas of commonality between the counties involved and use similar designs to illustrate the connection. I am not altogether certain what Edith Piaf and Miles Davis have in common other than both were musical performers.

JACQUES BREL 1929-78

A Belgian singer and actor who composed and sang theatrical songs, initially achieving fame in Belgium and France and later throughout the World. Not academically accomplished, he started work in his father's cardboard factory and devoted his spare time to *La Franche Cordée* – a youth organisation dedicated to philanthropic work.



YT 2653/ SG 2989

In 1952 he began writing songs which he performed for family events and in Belgian cabaret. Although his immediate circle disliked his austere lyrics and strongly emotional performances he performed for radio and in 1953 signed a recording contract with Philips who released *Il y a* on 78rpm. A 1954 appearance in the *Grand Prix de la Chanson* was a flop but did lead to a request from Juliet Greco to sing and record one of his songs – *Le Diable (ça va)* – and later that year Brel performed at the Olympia Theatre in Paris as well as releasing his first album of nine songs on a 10-inch LP (a format infrequently encountered).

His work improved by formal music training and professional arrangement. His commercial breakthrough came in 1955 with the release of *Quand on n'a que l'Amour (When You Only Have Love)* which reached Number Three in the French charts even though the format (a 45rpm 7-inch EP usually including four titles) was unusual for chart success. By the end of the fifties he was hugely popular and had given up accompanying himself on guitar to concentrate solely on his vocal performance. The 1960s brought international fame including his first US release, a compendium of previously released Philips tracks. The American poet and singer Rod McKuen was translating Brel's lyrics into English and many notable performers were recording and achieving success with the English language versions.

By 1967 Brel had retired from public concert performance and would record only four more albums during the last

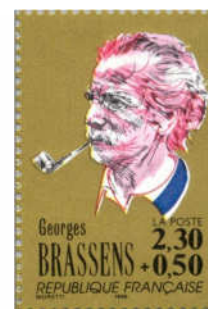
decade of his life. His attention turned to the translation and adaptation of the stage musical *Man of La Mancha* into *L'Homme de La Mancha*. This opened in Brussels in 1968 and ran for 150 performances until he tired of playing Don Quixote, and was the only occasion he used other than his own music. Between 1967 and 1973 Brel appeared in ten feature films, directing two and providing the soundtracks for several others. The most successful was *L'Aventure, c'est L'Aventure* released in 1972 and also starring Johnny Hallyday, the French pop singer who has been described as "bigger than Elvis in France but unknown in the rest of the world". His 1973 film *Le Far West*, which he also directed, was nominated for the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

Brel devoted his later years to his passion for sailing but in 1977, whilst his existing catalogue was selling a million copies a year, recorded his final album *Les Marquises*. Even with a subdued publicity campaign, this attracted advance sales of a million copies. He died of natural causes the following year and was buried in French Polynesia only yards from the grave of the artist Paul Gauguin.

His legacy is enormous, his songs being translated into 95 languages and recorded by a veritable galaxy of singers far too numerous to list - notably *Le Moribond* (1961) (in the English version *Seasons in the Sun* this was a worldwide hit for Terry Jacks in 1974 and a UK Christmas Number One for Westlife in 1999) and *Ne me quitte pas* (1959), translated as "Do not leave me" but the English lyric version is *If you go away*. Various versions of the latter account for more than 1,400 commercial recordings and you might think that was a record but in reality it's miles away. In 2017 Guinness World Records admitted 67,591 recorded versions of *Summertime* composed in 1934 by George Gershwin with lyrics by his brother Ira and DuBose Heyward for *Porgy and Bess*; if that is not enough the Summertime Society identifies over 80,000 versions!

GEORGE BRASSENS 1921-81

A poet and songwriter, he became an iconic figure in France and one of their most accomplished postwar poets. His work includes about 200 recorded songs, (with a further 50 unfinished) and the setting to music of poetry by, among others, Victor Hugo, Paul Verlaine and François Villon - each of whom we have met earlier - and Louis Aragon (1897-1982) who appears in a Henri Matisse sketch on a 2F50 + 50c value in the 1991 Celebrities series of French Poets, shown below.



YT 2654/ SG 2990



YT 2683 / SG 3015

His songs have been translated into over 20 languages and are performed worldwide. Brassens appeared in one film – the 1957 René Clair production *Porte des Lilas* (released in US as *The Gates of Paris*) – starring as Artiste, an impoverished old man. This was Oscar-nominated as Best Foreign Film in 1958 and won other awards.

MAURICE GENEVOIX 1890-1980

A single 2F30 value of 1990 commemorated the centenary of his birth. A veteran of the Great War, he wrote of his experiences in the tetralogy *Ceux de 14* (*The Men of 1914*) – although largely forgotten it is probably the greatest French work on the subject. His 1925 novel *Raboliot*, about the life of a poacher and which won him the Prix Goncourt, was filmed in 1946 and again in 2008 for television. He was interred in the Panthéon.



YT 2671 / SG 3006

JACQUES PREVERT 1900-77



YT 2685 / SG 3017

One of six 2F30 + 50c values in the 1991 Celebrities series featuring French poets depicts Prévert from a Picasso drawing. As well as a poet he was a screenwriter who worked firstly with director Marcel Carne and their 1945 *Les Enfants du Paradis* (*Children of Paradise*), set in the theatrical world of Paris during the July Monarchy (1830-48), This was Oscar-nominated for best original screenplay and frequently appears in various lists of best films. He later worked with Paul Grimault including adaptations of Hans Christian Andersen tales for animated or mixed action films.

GEORGES AURIC 1899-1983

The 1992 Celebrities series comprised six 2F50 + 50c values issued in sheet and booklet formats; one value illustrated Auric, a serious composer who later enjoyed a long career as a film composer, initially for eleven films in collaboration with Jean Cocteau. Later he scored films in England and USA and is probably best known for the 1950 British production of *Moulin Rouge*, directed by John Huston and starring José Ferrer as Toulouse-Lautrec and Zsa Zsa Gabor as Jane Avril. Those masters of the horror genre – Vincent Price and Peter Cushing – both appeared in supporting roles. The film featured Auric's song *Where is your Heart?* which became very popular.



YT 2751 / SG 3017

JACQUES TATI 1907-82

Since 1944 France has annually issued stamps with a premium to support *Journée du Timbre* (more recently

termed *Fête du Timbre*). This type of issue is sometimes referred to as a semi-postal but users need not worry if it is thought this implies delivery of an item only halfway to its destination. The 1993 issue of a 2F50 + 60c value (figure 3) – issued both in sheet form and in a booklet se-tenant with the same design minus the premium – depicted “*Le Facteur de J. Tati*”, adapted from the poster for *Jour de Fête* (*The Big Day*), a 1949 comedy film about a bumbling rural postman directed by and starring Tati. After attending a fair, taking too much wine and watching a documentary on the US postal service the postman makes hilarious efforts to speed up his own deliveries.

Born in France, but of Russian, Dutch and Italian ancestry, Tati was a mime, film-maker, actor and screenwriter. After an early career in semi-professional rugby with Racing Club de France he moved to the stage. He came to prominence in 1935 after appearing in a concert to celebrate the SS *Normandie* capturing the Blue Riband for the fastest Atlantic crossing. He was notable for his “*Impressions Sportives*” routines in which, for instance he played both the boxer and his opponent or each of the ball, the tennis racquet and the player. These were much admired by Colette who was a great supporter of his work.

During the 1930s he became involved in film, playing in numerous shorts. After a brief war service, curtailed by the occupation, he returned to the cabaret stage. In 1946 he set up a film production company, directing and starring in the short *L'Ecole des Facteurs* (1947). This won the Max Linder Prize for film comedy and was to provide much material towards *Jour de Fête* which was planned to be the first French feature shot in colour. Unfortunately the Thomson colour process proved unworkable as prints could not be made but luckily Tati had shot simultaneously in black and white. The film, unusually released first in London, was to prove very popular in France and was awarded *Le Grand Prix du Cinéma Français*; unlike his subsequent films there were many dialogue scenes and it also won the prize for best original screenplay at the Venice Film Festival.

His second feature film *Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot* (*Monsieur Hulot's Holiday*) was released in 1953 and is a lampoon of the rigid social and political strictures in France. Widely praised, it was Oscar-nominated for Best Original Screenplay, won other awards, became an international hit and remains one of the favourite French films of the period; it is currently part of the rolling schedule on *Talking Pictures* (Sky channel 328). Cited as the most radical innovation in film comedy since the Marx Brothers, its influence was still seen in 2007 when Rowan Atkinson appeared in *Mr Bean's Holiday*.

The follow-up was delayed following a serious motor crash in which Tati damaged his left hand. It was not until 1958 that M. Hulot was reprised in the colour feature *Mon Oncle*, in which Hulot struggles to come to terms with France's obsession with modernism and American-influenced consumerism in the context of his relationship with his nine-year old nephew. The film was hugely popular and an international success, winning the Oscar for Best Foreign Film and other prestigious awards including the *Grand Prix* at Cannes. On accepting the Oscar the Academy offered Tati



Figure 3: YT 2792 / SG 3116 with premium YT 2793 / SG 3115 without premium

any favour within their gift and his simple request was to meet Stan Laurel, Mack Sennett (of *Keystone Cops* fame and celebrated in the musical *Mack and Mabel*) and Buster Keaton, the latter reportedly saying that Tati's work with sound carried on the true tradition of the silent cinema.

Casting aside the characters of the Postman and M. Hulot, either of which could have generated highly profitable series, Tati embarked on his next project, *Playtime*, a 70mm colour production nine years in the making and released in 1967. At the time the most expensive film made in France, it was shot in a huge futuristic glass and steel "city" constructed outside Paris in which Hulot (as a non-central character) and a group of American tourists become lost in a place where only memories reflect the spirit of the old Paris

and characters are subordinated or incidental to the robotic, modernist environment. Although critically acclaimed (as recently as 2012 it was placed 42nd in a list of the 50 greatest films), the film was a commercial failure which bankrupted Tati and his production company.

Tati's last remaining film of note was the Dutch-funded, Italian-French comedy *Traffic* (deliberately so titled to reflect a 'franglais' air) released in 1971. In it M. Hulot re-appears as a bumbling auto designer driving a gadget-filled camper-van to a motor show. Opinions differ but a blockbuster it was not.

It is reflective of the quality of his work (he made only six feature films) that Tati so frequently appears in lists of the top 50 directors.

Guy de Maupassant
YT2799 / SG 3131Jean Cocteau
YT2801 / SG 3133Marcel Pagnol
YT2802 / SG 3134André Chamson
YT2803 / SG 3135Marguerite Yourcenar
YT2804 / SG 3136

FRENCH WRITERS

The 1993 Celebrities series comprised six 2F50 + 50c values each featuring a French writer. These were issued in sheets as well as se-tenant in booklet format. Five of the six values are of interest.

GUY DE MAUPASSANT 1850-93

Henri René Albert Guy de Maupassant Sanchez, to give him his full name, was a protégé of Gustave Flaubert and was a master of the short story of which he wrote 300 – many set during the period of the Franco-Prussian war. His style was efficient and depicted the fortunes of life in a disillusioned or pessimistic manner, particularly where characters were impacted by events beyond their control.

I recall watching an eponymous series made in 1963 by Granada (based in Manchester) for Independent network television, dramatising his short stories. Each of its thirteen episodes featured two or three tales. In addition his works have provided the basis for approaching forty films.

JEAN COCTEAU 1889-1963

The name of this French poet, playwright, novelist, designer, film director, visual artist and critic has cropped up earlier. He was at the forefront of surrealist, avant-garde and Dadaist movements: his twelve films made him one of the most important figures in avant-garde cinema. His first film, released in 1932, which he wrote and directed was *Le Sang d'un Poète* (*The Blood of a Poet*), an early surrealist/avant-

garde production featuring music by Georges Auric.

He did not return to film-making until 1946 but in 1940 wrote the enormously successful play *Le Bel Indifférent* for Edith Piaf (who was to die one day before Cocteau). His films included *La Belle et la Bête* (1946), again with music by Auric, and both a commercial success and recognised as a French Classic; *Les Parents Terrible* (1948) - adapted from his own stage play with music by Auric, his own favourite and generally considered his best work; and his final film *Le Testament d'Orphée* (1960) in which he starred alongside Picasso, Charles Aznavour, matador Luis Miguel Dominguin and Yul Brynner, who partly financed the production.

In 1955 Cocteau was made a member of the *Académie Française* and the Royal Academy of Belgium and during his life had been Commander of the *Légion d'honneur* and Honorary President of the Cannes Film Festival as well as numerous other prestigious appointments.

MARCEL PAGNOL 1895-1974

Has been covered earlier when he appeared in the 1986 issue for the fiftieth anniversary of French Cinema on YT2437.

ANDRE CHAMSON 1900-83

A French archivist and writer, he was elected to the *Académie Française* in 1956 and nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature. Two of his novels were adapted as TV movies but more importantly he was President of the Jury at the 1958 Cannes Film Festival.

MARGUERITE YOURCENAR 1903-87

A Belgian-born French writer who became a US citizen in 1947, she was the first woman to be elected to the *Académie Française* in 1980 and was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature. Two of her novels were adapted for films – *L'Oeuvre au Noir* (*The Abyss* 1988 – not to be confused with the 1989 sci-fi of the same name), about the 16th century Inquisition, and *Le Coup de Grâce* (1976), about Bolshevism in 1919 Latvia.

DJANGO REINHARDT 1910-53

A single 4F20 value of 1993 commemorated the 40th anniversary of this Belgian born gypsy jazz guitarist and

composer of over 100 songs. He was christened Jean but adopted his Romani nickname. His early life was nomadic and in his teens was appearing in touring shows. At the age of 18 he was injured in a caravan fire and lost two fingers of his left hand. Remarkably overcoming this handicap he developed a technique to play the guitar and pioneered a unique style shimmering with vibrato.



YT2810 SG 3138

He soon had a solo career in Parisian clubs and in 1934 teamed up with Stéphane Grappelli (who we will meet later) to front the *Quintette du Hot Club de France* (comprising three guitars, violin and double-bass) which made him an international star. Django also played and recorded alongside American jazz performers including Coleman Hawkins and Adelaide Hall.

His compositions, including *Daphne*, *Minor Swing*, *Belleville* and *Nuages* have become standards of gypsy jazz and a 1942 biopic was made of his life. The Hot Club created a style of jazz which was uniquely Gallic with no trace of American influence.

In the years before the war Django had toured the UK where he had entertained packed houses including the London Palladium, and was touring with the Quintette on the outbreak of war when he immediately returned to Paris. Given his Gypsy background, the occupation made France a dangerous place for Reinhardt and although the most famous jazz musician in Europe he was continually under threat, but continued to perform. Having survived he rejoined Grappelli in London in 1946 and later that year toured the USA debuting as a guest in Duke Ellington's band.

He retired in 1951 having recorded a total of 900 sides on 78rpm gramophone records. A French record company has attempted to assemble a complete discography on a 40-CD series. Just the thing for the long winter nights!

Well, that's another stage in our journey completed but we'll be back on the road again in the next edition.

Postal Markings of Le Havre

Keith Smith, a former member of the Society, is offering for FREE a 36-page illustrated index of the hand cancels and commercial markings of Le Havre including *Journée du Timbre* (lately termed *Fête du Timbre*), *Premier Jour* and special commemorative cancels.

The illustrations at right (not to scale) are an example of approximately 120 postal markings. Although the quality is not very crisp, collectors may find them useful for easy reference. If any member is interested in viewing or acquiring the list please contact the Editor - Jan Gane at jan@fcps.org.uk for details.



Why I collect what I collect....



YT 970 - SG 1166



YT 971 - SG 1167a



YT 972 - SG 1168



YT 973 - SG 1169



YT 974 - SG 1170



YT 1020 SG 1166a

Beginnings

I have been collecting the postage stamps of France for some years.

Before that I had been a 'general' all and everything collector from my boyhood.

After we moved away from London to one of the 'New Towns', on his visits our Grandad would bring my big sister and myself an envelope full of stamps from the post room of where he worked at Shaw Diamonds.

Many years later, on a visit to the 'Little Perforation' stamp shop in Wormley (Hertfordshire), proprietor Mr Leadley showed me some stamps that changed my view on collecting.

They were the 1945-55 Yvert Nos 970-74 and 1020. I thought they were wonderful. What attracted me to them was their overall style. In fact, from the 1920s through to the 1960s so many of France's issues just looked so good. I was hooked!!

I much prefer fine used stamps with a clear readable postmark. To me, this gives them a little more history, as in time, place and location.

I hadn't really thought about specialising as such until I saw a lovely page of 'Marianne de Gandon' laid out with various colour variations at the collectors' market by the Embankment, London.



I picked up the page and admired it, but decided not to buy it there and then for some reason. By the time I returned to the table a little later it, to my regret was gone!

I then promised myself that one day I would like to do something similar ... one day. But never got around to it.

That was until I noticed in our Winter 2019 Auction one of the lots was for 2000+ 'Marianne de Gandon' of various values.

I placed a bid never thinking I might win it, but you never know and guess what? I was lucky enough to win it. That was January 2020.

While I was thinking "When am I ever going to find the time to properly look through and sort them out?" the world then got turned upside down! I was furloughed from work and we were under lockdown.

Not only did I have time to sort through them for colour variants, but also much more besides. Nearly all of the stamps were off paper. So, with those that had a clear postmark I decided to see if I could find one for each day/date of the year. I did well. I am now within 79 dates of completing a year.

Then I also thought, "I wonder how many of them are from the then 90 departments". I now have 82 of these plus a few overseas as a bonus.

Lastly because I have a love of Paris I looked to see how many of the *Bureaux de Poste* within Paris were in service during the 'Marianne de Gandon' period. I think there were about 150, of which I found 78 so I have a way to go yet.

So while doing all of this, not only did I keep my mind active but I also learned many interesting things about this stamp that I was unaware of before. Some discoveries I made by myself, but also through correspondence with our society, of which I am very thankful.

This to me has not only been fascinating, but it has become a labour of love and is on going.

I am not sure if this is what you are looking for as an article about 'Why I collect what I collect' but if so you are more than welcome to use it.

David Prendy

[Thank you David, it is the ideal article for letting other members share this wonderful hobby. I hope it encourages others to participate in sharing why they collect. Ed.]

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Discovering post boxes in ‘*La France Profonde*’

John Morton

Back in 1996, my wife Christine and I bought an old house in the Lot Valley and set about exploring the area. To the north of the valley lay the Aubrac and the empty acres of the Cantal, Lozère and north Aveyron. The land rises quickly to over 1300 metres and is covered thinly with a network of hamlets and villages. We quickly realised that they had an amazing selection of post boxes ranging from early wooden ones to items looking distinctly Art Deco and super modern specimens often alongside disused boxes dating from way back.



Figure 1

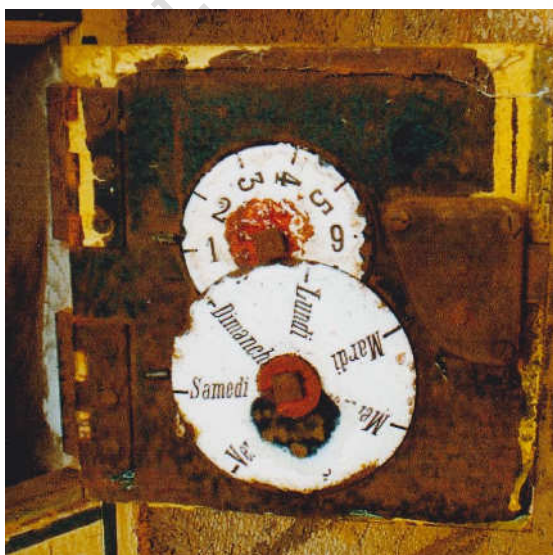


Figure 3

As I understand it, all 44,000 communes were equipped with a box shortly after 1830 when postal services were laid on for every commune. The number of communes has now dropped to some 36,000 due to depopulation in the hills caused by the collapse of local industries, leaving boxes in places which are now hamlets and no longer independent communes. This article is by way of a memory of a situation that is steadily changing as modernisation catches up with even the remotest places.

Early boxes were usually put in a public place – church porches or on the wall of the *mairie*, the town hall. We did find a good number of exceptions to this rule though.

The box in **Figure 1** is set in a wall close to a farm gateway at Graumont in the Lozère. Its collection mechanism, which reads “*La levée de * est faite*”, is present at the lower right



Figure 2

corner but is covered. The new information is that the collection is at 11^h45 Monday to Saturday. There is no Sunday service. The Main Office is in Nasbinals.

The box in **Figure 2** is an early wooden one found in the church porch at Réquistat in the Cantal. It has a *BOITE AUX LETTRES* sign across the front. Its Thiery mechanism, for indicating when the next collection is due is still in use.

We found this unfortunate box (**Figure 3**) situated in the church porch at Aurelle-Verlac in the Aveyron. It was marked “*Boîte supprimée*” and the door was left open. A modern box by the road-side had been set up.

The *Postes* believe in reusing useful things. **Figure 4** shows a *Boîte Mobile* which I suspect was once used on the local bus service, now defunct. It had once been attached to a local public oven (until it fell down). Now it is attached to a modern conglomerate wall in Grezettes in the Cantal. The wording at the bottom tells the public “not to drop either local letters, newspapers or printed matter into this box.”

Figure 5 illustrates a L Delachanal Paris box set in a house wall at the hamlet of Belv  zet which, at the time, had just a

single permanent inhabitant. It is, however, on the pilgrims’ route to Compostella. The collection day is marked as being Saturday so the photo must date from before 2006 which marked the end of Saturday collections. The wording tells when the last collection was made and when the next one is expected. **Figure 6** shows a Dejoie of Nantes box dated 1956. The collection time mechanism is out of use. The actual time is taped on.



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

Figures 7 and 8 illustrate modernisation at Pierrefiche. The old box (right) has lost its door and been replaced by a very modern Dejoie Box (below). The Post Office is now inside the supermarket. **Figure 9** shows a repaired Dejoie box with a recycled door found at Prinsuejols in Loz  re. The blue box in **Figure 10** is a Foulon box and its picture was brought to me by the daughter of a postman who was presented with the box on his retirement. It is now on the wall of his house.



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13

Jabrun in the Cantal has lost its wooden box which has been replaced by this new green polyurethane box with a yellow door (Figure 11). Out in the countryside, box walls have appeared (Figure 12). The yellow box is for posting mail in. Each householder has a key to their own box and the postman is able to open every box.

Last but not least is a highly decorative post box (Figure 13) to be found near the cathedral in Le Puy-en-Velay. It is still being used by the public.

I hope you have got as much pleasure as we did from these happy wanderings.

John and Chris Morton

A letter from Chad to China

Fort Lamy to Shanghai, nearly 20,000 km for 150 centimes! According to the backflap, the writer's address was Fort Lamy, some 750 km west of Abéché. We do not know on what date it was written. The cover is franked with three copies of the 50c 1931 *Exposition Coloniale Internationale* issue for Chad and endorsed 'via Abéché – El Fasher – Khartoum' and this route was followed according to the backstamps. In terms of distance from Abéché, it is 150 km to the border town of ADRE 20 DEC 31. From there it crossed the border to arrive at GENEINA FORT 23 DEC 31 (it is only about 40 km). The postmark indicates ABECHER / OUBANGUI-CHARI TCHAD 11 DEC 31. Was this letter hand carried to Abéché from Fort Lamy?

The transit from Genina Fort was via EL FASHER 3 JAN 32 from where it probably went to the railhead at El Obeid

and by train to Wadi Halfa, via Sennar and Khartoum. There it was put aboard the river steamer for Egypt, receiving the mark SHELLAL-HALFA T.P.O. N°2 20 JAN 32. From Shellal, it would have been sent to Cairo by rail and then on to either Port Saïd or Suez for transit to Shanghai on the next French packet. There is an indistinct Shanghai machine receiving mark on the reverse of the cover. The letter was opened by the Chinese officials and resealed with two of their OFFICIALLY SEALED / POST OFFICE bi-lingual labels tied front and back with unreadable oblong handstamps.

Even in 1931, moving mail from the Middle of Nowhere was often very complicated and inevitably took a very long time. This letter from the French colony of Chad, right in the centre of Africa, is no exception. The writer could send it via

either the French route through Cameroon or the British route through Nigeria, both taking many days to get to the coast. For its destination, the French concession in Shanghai, it would need to get to France before being put on a steamer due for the Far East.

The alternative chosen by the writer was much more direct. In the early 20th century, the route for many Muslims trekking to Mecca for the Hajj had become centred on Abéché and by the early 1930s it was possible to go by truck from Fort Lamy and on to El Fasher and El Obeid where the train, if they could afford it, would take people on to Suakin for the crossing to Mecca. The journey from Fort Lamy to El Obeid would take no more than 30 days, probably over 90 days on foot.



This was the obvious route for our letter since it would save trekking down to the port at Douala on the Atlantic coast some 1,150 km (from Fort Lamy) over very difficult terrain with few roads and taking 30 days or more. It would avoid having to wait for a ship to Marseille – a voyage of over 9,000 km and takes 20 days – and avoids waiting for the ship to the Far East and a 2,000 km voyage across the Mediterranean to Port Saïd – another 8 days. That is a total of over 13,000 km over at least 58 days, whereas the route through Sudan and Egypt would be only about 4,700 km and saving at least 15 days. According to the date stamps the letter took 41 days to get on to the TPO and was probably at the Suez Canal within another 2 days.

Paul Grigg



Above, reverse (reduced).



Right, postmarks (full size).

Marianne de l'Avenir



Figure 1

On 7 November 2023, in something of a surprise announcement, France acquired a new definitive series. The design was chosen by President Macron and is to be known as *Marianne de l'Avenir*: Marianne of the Future. It was designed by Olivier Balez and engraved by Pierre Bara. According to the designer, it “symbolises momentum to the future.”

This is the 18th series of Marianne definitives, the first being *Marianne d'Alger* in 1944. It is also the smallest, consisting of just five values: 0.05€ bistre; 1€ orange; Lettre Verte (LV), 1.16€ green; Lettre Internationale (LI), 1.80€ purple; and Lettre Services Plus (LSP), 2.95€ turquoise. Since their introduction, postage rates have risen: from 1 January 2024 LV rose to 1.29€, LI to 1.96€ and LSP to 2.99€. With no 0.01€ value there is considerable annoyance amongst the public that it is not possible to make up certain rates exactly - they have to be rounded up to the nearest 5 cents.

All values are available both gummed and self-adhesive. The LV and LSP values are also available as roulettes with two sides imperf. In addition there is a *Bloc-Feuillet* (Figure 1), a *Bloc Souvenir* and a *Carte pré-timbrée* LV which will be available for a limited period. During the 76th Salon d'Automne in

Paris, and for the first time ever, La Poste issued an undenominated souvenir euro note featuring the *l'Avenir* head (Figure 2, below).



On 22 January a further bloc was issued (featured on the front page) commemorating the departure of *l'Engagée* and the arrival of *l'Avenir*; it contained one example of the LV stamp from both issues. Furthermore, the recently issued two-page booklet in the series *Carnets de timbres à composition variable* (Figure 4) was reprinted, the maxi-stamps pane this time containing a 2.32€ green *l'Avenir* stamp alongside the *Cérès* 3.70€ value (Figure 5). The second pane consists of six LV stamps se-tenant with six *Cérès* 1.80€ stamps (Figure 6). Finally, to



Figure 4 (reduced)

leave no stone unturned when it comes to cashing in on the collector, a new 28€ *Affiche* (poster sheet) with the usual block of four 7€ maxi-stamps was made available - but only by special telephone order - on 5 February 2024.

The *Marianne l'Engagée* series will be short-lived. First issued in 2018, it will be withdrawn from service on 31st March 2024 if stocks are not previously exhausted.

Richard Broadhurst



Figure 6 (reduced)

Figure 5

Praise for our Journal

Thank you to the editor, Sophie Bastide-Bernardin, for highlighting our Journal in the February 2024 edition of *L'Écho de la Timbrologie*:

"Our British friends, in love with the philately of France and her former colonies, published in the summer a very eclectic edition in the language of Shakespeare. Mail from Yokadouma in Cameroun was discussed together with the difficulties of its transportation from and within 'the middle of nowhere'. We saw more of the links between showbusiness and French stamps (Part 4). We found particularly interesting the article on the adoption of stamp vending machines in France of which one example was illustrated on the cover. This edition also launched the first part of 'The precursors of the French Postal Card'."

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY

AOÛT 2023 – N° 2 / 302

Nos amis britanniques passionnés de philatélie française et des anciennes colonies françaises ont mis en circulation, l'été dernier, un numéro très éclectique – toujours dans la langue de Shakespeare. Il y est question de Yokadouma au Cameroun et des difficultés pour faire circuler du courrier depuis ce lieu situé « au milieu de nulle part », et à nouveau des liens entre les timbres français et le show business (4^e partie). Nous avons trouvé très intéressant l'article sur l'adoption des distributeurs automatiques de timbres en France, dont un exemple est donné sur la couverture reproduite ci-avant. Ce numéro est aussi l'occasion d'aborder les précurseurs de la carte postale française.

Contact : Chris Hitchen – 36 Everton Road – Croydon CR0 6LA – Royaume-Uni.

Chambre des Députés

Palais Bourbon was originally built for Louise Françoise de Bourbon, daughter of Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan. The palace was completed in 1728. It was nationalised during the French Revolution and used as the meeting place of the Council of Five Hundred.

The Neoclassical facade was modified by Napoleon's

architects by adding Corinthian columns and pediment to mirror that of *L'Église de la Madeleine* (Church of the Madeleine), facing it across the Seine beyond the Place de la Concorde.

During the Third Republic (1871–1940), the *Palais Bourbon* was the home of the Chamber of Deputies.



Church of the Madeleine
Reklamemarke
(Advertising Cinderella)
for the Golden Rule
Foundation, established
to "aid in the alleviation of
human suffering"
Image © Ebay



Above: Mint
divided back
postcard from the
series
"LES EDITIONS
ARTISTIQUES Paris
et ses Merveilles
LIP".

Published by
J. Cormault, imp.
3 Cité Bergère,
Paris.

Posted at Rue de
Bourgogne, Paris
4 August 1905,
paying the 15c
>15g rate, 01-05-
1878 to 16-04-1906.

Inset - reverse of the
cover showing the
embossed emblem
of the *Chambre des
Députés*

Jan Gane

The 'POSTELEC' experiment 1985 to 1987

Following my query in Journal 303, further information has emerged courtesy of two readers in France, Jean-Paul Fournier and Laurent Bonnefoy of the *Académie de Philatélie*, who had received complimentary copies of the Journal.

One drew attention to a reference I should have checked – the rates 'bible' (*pace* Derek Richardson): Desarnaud's *Les Tarifs Postaux Français 1969-1988*¹, the more elusive second volume of the great work by Alexandre, Joany *et al* – sitting on my bookshelf. The service is noted on pp 144-145 – with an illustration, no less.

Another useful pointer was an article² in *'Le Monde des Philatélistes'* by Jean-Claude Coulon which outlined the service and which is illustrated below. It was an experiment launched by the *direction des postes* at Morbihan from 16 December 1985 and confined to Brittany.

The bones of the service were as I surmised. The sender of a letter paid 5 francs at a PO counter, the clerk completed a red label which was expected to be affixed to the reverse with the edge labelled 'POSTELEC' overlapping on to the address panel, unless an envelope was large enough to accommodate it on the front. This was completed by the sender with the addressee's telephone number. The letter was to be handled with a degree of urgency. At the receiving office, a clerk telephoned the addressee – twice, if there was no initial response – to elicit the preferred delivery method. Options included collection from the office, normal delivery, special delivery (for an extra fee), holding at the office or return to sender. If a second call was unsuccessful, the letter was forwarded with the normal post.



© J-C Coulon and *Le Monde des Philatélistes*

The experiment was not popular. Apparently, very few commercial examples are recorded – M. Coulon (1992) said he had seen only one, illustrated in his article. Philatelic usages such as my example probably predominate.

It seems as if the service was quietly withdrawn in 1987 – or was it? Let us know...

Paul Watkins

¹ C. Desarnaud: *Les Tarifs Postaux Français 1969 – 1988* (1989) published by Brun et Fils

² J-C. Coulon: 'Postelec, un service resté secret.' *Le Monde des Philatélistes*, No 462, April 1992

More Mauritania...

More shades to look for in modern Mauritania. See page 36 for comment by Michael Round.



Mauritania 1963,
1F50 (SG 167, YT 167)



Mauritania 1961
4F (SG 136, YT 144)

BOOKSHELF

Compiled by Michael Round

Yvert & Tellier '*Timbres de France*' Catalogue 2024

Reviewed by Richard Broadhurst

Yvert & Tellier 2024 – *Timbres de France*, 908pp, 220 x 275mm format, in French.

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

Price 32,90€

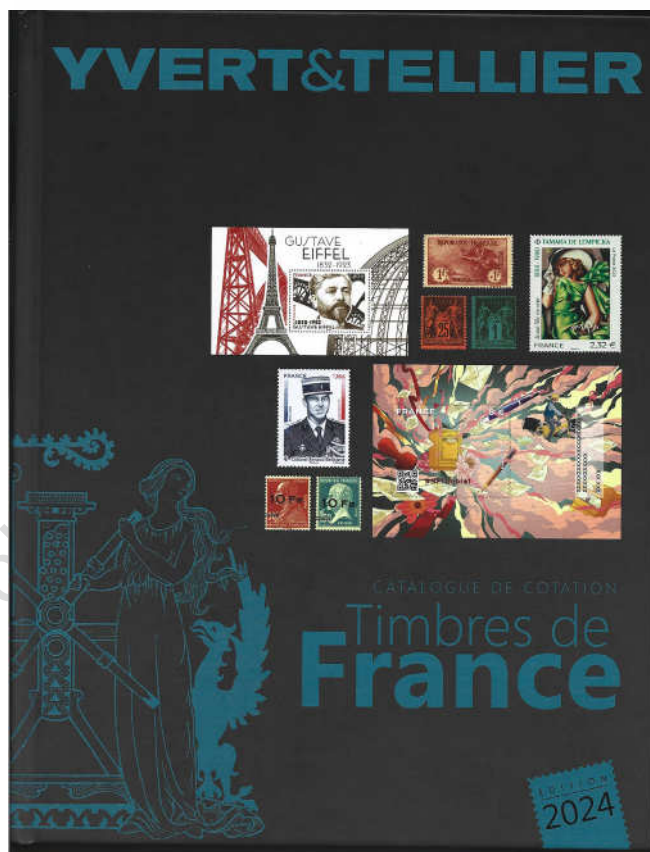
This is the second year of the larger format catalogue. With an addition of just 1€ to last year's price it represents excellent value and is a most informative and entertaining read. As well as listing all the basic stamps, *blocs* and *carnets* there are numerous sections on "back of the book" items including *Colis Postaux*, *La Réunion CFA* surcharges, experimental vignettes and *Timbres de Grève* and *Guerre*.

The current edition runs to 908 pages, an extra 24 from last year. In my opinion it has now reached its optimum size and weight. Given the huge number of new issues every year it is hard to see how much longer the catalogue can continue as one single volume listing all issues from 1849 to date. This may well be the time to contemplate splitting it into two parts. My suggestion would be to have Part One from 1849 to 1999 and Part Two from 2000 to date which would contain all the euro currency issues.

There are rarely many alterations in the period covered by what would be Part One: all the additions and price changes occur with the modern issues in Part Two. You would be able to keep Part One for a number of years and obtain Part Two annually. For those who purchase the catalogue each year it seems a waste to have to discard a catalogue where around 500 pages hardly ever change. In an effort to keep the weight and size down a noticeably inferior quality of paper has been used this year which I find makes it difficult to separate the pages when turning over. In its favour it lies perfectly flat when open but does take up a lot of desk space.

There are a number of new sections this year. Firstly a section on *Type Sage, utilisation des timbres seuls* (used singly) on various types of mail. The segment on *Entiers Postaux* has been considerably expanded with more illustrations and an informative page explaining the many different types. Recent issues of the catalogue only listed items up to 2011 but this has now been brought right up-to-date to reflect the variety of designs used on modern prepaid letters and cards. It is many years since such a full listing has appeared. Fifteen pages have been added with sections like *Prêt à poster*, *Lettre suivie* and *Distingo*.

The section on *Carnets et Ouvrages de luxe* has had a makeover with many new illustrations. This is the place to look for those limited-edition special booklets and sheets which were not on general release to collectors and are not to be found in the main listings. A new category has been created this year to cover the recently issued limited-edition *Séries Affiches* (postersheets), miniature sheets containing a block of four stamps which first appeared in 2021 with the



Marianne l'engagée 7€ gold stamp YT AFF5534A.

New stamps are listed to June 2023 with an additional 89 gummed stamps, 19 miniature sheets, 13 *bloc souvenirs* and 12 pictorial booklets containing 138 *autoadhésifs*. The section on *Feuilles de France* (commemorative collector sheets) has now increased to 113 examples, up by 41 from 2023. It seems to me quite unnecessary to list and illustrate all these as all commemoratives are now issued in this format. The individual stamps from these sheets are already illustrated in the main listings and as before the sheets remain unpriced.

Individual stamps from certain unique special issues, such as the 2014 Red Cross anniversary *bloc souvenir* YT BS95/95A and the 2020 *50 ans gravé dans l'histoire* booklet YT 4024, have not previously been listed in the main catalogue. This has been rectified with the stamps illustrated but not priced.

The *Classiques de France* section (which now runs to over 250 pages) is greatly improved, practically every stamp having an entire page to itself. Some considerable price increases among the 1849-50 *Cérès* issues YT 1-8 were the only changes noted.

In terms of general pricing I noted a little tinkering here and there with stamps of the 20th century, but the vast majority of prices remain unchanged. As usual most increases relate to modern issues. Continuing with the formula used in the past, mint stamps from the latest year are generally priced at twice face value and then receive a boost to three times face when more than a year old. Although there is a welcome slight upwards adjustment for some used stamps they still remain at ludicrously low rates. As I have mentioned before, it is considerably harder to find used commemoratives than mint but the catalogue prices just do not reflect this. This may be in part due to the fact the most collectors in France favour mint over used, the opposite being the case in the UK. Most French dealers do not stock used except CTO where the price is the same as mint. Credit must be given to the recently published Stanley Gibbons France catalogue (reviewed below), where the price of used is taken far more seriously. To give two examples at random: the 2020 Rosa Bonheur YT 5561 (SG 7179) is priced by Yvert at 3€ and £11.50 by SG, and the 2017 Guynemer air stamp YT PA81 (SG 6266) at 5€ in Yvert and £23 in SG! Perhaps somewhere between the two would be a good compromise?

There are not quite so many price-changes this year where many stamps have reached their optimum level. Nevertheless, there are still some very worthwhile increases. In particular the short-lived *Marianne L'Engagée* issue (which will have been discontinued by the time you read this) sees all values increase, especially the scarcer self-adhesives and some 'Philaposte with an "a"' stamps, by as much as 100%.

From around 2006 to 2012 there was a trend to issue some commemoratives as self-adhesives in addition to the gummed sheet versions. These were not generally available and were probably only taken up by a small number of collectors. Some of them are now very scarce indeed and have prices reflect this. For example the 2008 Art stamp *Honoré Daumier* YT 224 with a face value of 1.33€ now reaches an astonishing 295€, up by 15€. There are some other art stamps with more modest values and I would recommend trying to obtain any you are lucky enough to find in dealers' stocks at a reasonable price.

The overlooked *Lettre Suivie* items all benefit from further upward movement. Most *blocs souvenir* show increases from 2016; of particular note is the 2018 *Marianne L'Engagée* set of

four YT BS145/145C, up 20€ to 65€, while the 2021 *Peugeot* YT BS186 doubles in price to 30€. In the *Blocs-feuillets* section the 2016 UEFA *bloc* YT BF137 reaches the dizzying heights of 240€, from a face-value of just 5€. The *Poste aérienne* limited-edition 2021 Saint-Exupéry *blocs* now catalogue at 80€ from 48€ for bloc F86 and 130€ from 100€ for bloc F89.

The infamous 2019 "*Valeurs de Cérès 1849*" bloc YT F5361A, which sold out within hours, is priced for the first time at 380€ but has a price tag of only 300€ (including the illustrated booklet) in the section *Ouvrages de Luxe*. No doubt this anomaly will be corrected in future editions - with a face value of just 19€ this must represent one of the best returns of all modern issues.

The most spectacular price increases are once again in the two-page *Carnets de timbres à composition variable* featuring reprints of classic definitives YT C1520A-1531 first issued in 2015. The three booklets from 2020 to 2021 are now each catalogued at 100€, from 45€ last year. The 2022 *Semeuse camée* YT C1530 is up from 45€ to 125€ and the 2022 YT C1531 *Liberté de Gandon*, listed for the first time, is priced at 150€ - a 650% increase over its 20€ face-value!

The *carnets* being the only source of maxi-stamps, with only one copy of each per booklet, these stamps are much sought after and have all had substantial increases - for example the 2022 *Semeuse* pair YT 5069/10 has increased from 21€ to 80€. I have previously tipped these stamps and I see no reason that they will not continue to increase in value considering the very small number issued.

There are a couple of continual annoyances. One is that the initial face-value of TVP stamps is not given. The other is the omission of dates of issue in the main listing: this would seem to be fundamental in such a comprehensive publication. There is occasionally some discrepancy about the actual date of issue in France but it is worth checking the section on *oblitérations premier jour* which does give the dates of first-day cancellations. On a positive note I am very pleased to say that after last time's disappointingly omitted illustrated index of definitive stamps (*Types et timbres d'usage courant*), this has now been reinstated.

Finally, I suppose it had to happen, but there is now a section for the recently issued first *Crypto-Timbre*, featured on the front cover. Whether this will catch on, who knows?

Stanley Gibbons Catalogue, 'France'

2nd Edition (published September 2023).

xxxi+543pp, 170 x 240mm. ISBN-13 978-1-73986-968-7.

Weight 1.12kg. Price £42.95.

Reviewed by **Richard Broadhurst**

Just when you were waiting for one France catalogue from Yvert & Tellier to come along, another one appears from Stanley Gibbons (SG)! It has been eight years since the 1st edition was published in 2015. The catalogue includes additional listings for Andorra (both French and Spanish)

and Monaco. There are separate sections for Council of Europe, Unesco, Vichy issues and Balloon posts. Stamps are listed up to April 2023 with 1,724 added since the last edition, an average of 215 per year.

This is a soft-cover publication on good-quality shiny paper but unfortunately it does not lie flat when opened. It features an attractive 1F lined Sower in blue on the cover, a fitting tribute to late F&CPS member Ashley Lawrence which I am sure would have delighted him. A nine-page article on his favourite subject 'The Sower' is reproduced from articles he

wrote for *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*. Our own society has also taken a full-page advert, skilfully designed by fellow members Mick Bister and Jan Gane.

Comparisons with the Yvert & Tellier (YT) *France* catalogue, reviewed below, are unavoidable. In general terms SG is good for basic collectors but lacks the depth of YT, especially in the “back of the book” areas. It is more akin to a French version of SG’s *Collect British Stamps*.

It is a shame that more work has not been undertaken to enlarge and enhance the catalogue in the eight years since it was last published. In particular it would be good to see a specific glossary of French philatelic terms, something that is totally missing, unlike the YT publication which runs to 12 pages. There are many mysteries confronting collectors of France, but all that is provided is the standard set of guidelines which appear in all the SG catalogues.

There is a very simple Design Index for the stamps of France (though not for Monaco or Andorra). Annoyingly, it is placed near the centre of the book which makes it difficult to locate. This is where my main complaint arises in terms of identifying stamps. SG’s limited rather than comprehensive illustrations can lead to great confusion in sorting out individual stamps, booklets and sheets.

YT illustrate every single stamp but SG still use the formula “as Type 490” for Tourist Publicity and “as Type 491” for Art stamps, some sixty years later. This has little relevance when modern Type numbers have reached beyond 2,500. Individual stamps from definitive series are all lumped together, some with multiple suffixes, rather than being listed in chronological order. One point in its favour, and something not found in the YT catalogue, is that SG very helpfully gives prices of TVP stamps at the time of issue.

YT takes over 250 pages to elaborate over the complex classic issues, but SG condenses them into just five pages. This provides only the most basic of checklists for the 200 or so stamps in this section. Whether many readers will have recourse to some of them - for example the 1F orange-vermilion *Cérès* of 1849 SG16, now catalogued mint at £127,000, up by £17,000 - is another matter! Most other classics remain generally unchanged in price apart from the 1870 *Cérès* Bordeaux printings, all of which see increases. It’s worth noting at this point that up to the year 1940 SG’s mint prices are for mounted, something to bear in mind when comparing with YT.

In the “semi-modern” period (1900-1950) there are few significant price-changes apart from some trivial tinkering, but there appears to be no overall trend. The notable exceptions are the 1917 Orphans set SG 370/7, down by £250 to £3250 mounted mint (which more or less reflects the YT price) and most of the 1950s Celebrities sets of six which are up between £5 and £25. The 1936 Air set of seven containing the elusive 50F green (SG 534/40) is down £100 both mint and used.

From 1950 onwards the tinkering continues with many stamps down by 5 or 10p here and there. Quite what the point of this is I cannot imagine. Set prices are no longer quoted for most definitive sets which is probably reasonable, given that the 1982 *Liberté de Gandon* set, for example, contains



more than 36 stamps.

The section on Philatelic Documents runs to 14 pages: this is something that YT dropped some years ago. These sheets were sold at a premium by La Poste and suffer the same fate as GB FDCs, i.e. more or less given away after a year or two by dealers at stamp fairs. It is astonishing that there are still some around who collect them!

In the modern period SG do not split the various types of stamps into different categories as YT do at the rear of their catalogue. The exceptions are those for Council of Europe and Unesco which are listed separately - but only up to 2015. There is a considerable mix-up here where six years’-worth of new issues have been missed out completely and only a handful are listed after 2020!

The modern period is a complicated area with limited editions and one-off items released by La Poste. I found a considerable number of errors and omissions. For example, self-adhesive versions of commemoratives from 2008 onwards miss out the very scarce 2008 Art stamps. Many others (for example SG 4651/3) are mixed up, giving the ordinary-gum price for the more expensive self-adhesive version.

The listing of *Marianne l’Engagée* is confusing. Type-numbers are given but not noted in the listings, and no mention is made of overprinted versions. The 2020 reprint of the 1984 *La Gravure* commemorative (SG 6868) is listed as a single stamp, ignoring the miniature sheet it came from. The 2021 Lined Sower from the special sheet is illustrated under Type 2539a but there is no listing or price for the sheet or the stamps. The 2016 UEFA Football stamp (SG 5948) lists only the 1€ value, not the 2€; the miniature sheet is priced at £16.00 as opposed to 240€ in YT. The 2016 St. Valentine issue (SG MS5988) only mentions the single-

colour *bloc* and not the more expensive multicoloured one. The 2016 'Anniversary of the Peace and Commerce issue' prices individual stamps the same as the *bloc* of 20 (SG 6070a) at £5.50. YT price this at 100€.

Otherwise, SG price modern stamps much higher than YT. The general factor is five or six times the face value of mint stamps. YT are much more conservative with two or three times. The same applies to used. To give a few examples: 2000 Air "Couzinet" (YT PA64), 7.00€ in YT, £23.00 in SG; 2022 Philatelists Bloc (SG MS7272), 40€ in YT, £110.00 in SG; 2021 Landscapes self-adhesive set (SG 6960/71), 9.60€ in YT, £60.00 in SG!

Having said that, it is encouraging to see that SG price used copies mostly the same as mint. Considering the difficulty of obtaining recent used stamps at all, this makes a good deal of sense. YT have always priced used ridiculously low. One

area where SG have not caught up with market prices is with the unique pairs of stamps issued in two-page booklets since 2017. For example, the 2015 Marianne d'Dulac pair (SG 5866-9) is priced at £12.00 as against 80€ in YT.

For all its faults SG *France* is a decent catalogue for the average collector. Its better points are the fact it is in English and you can readily understand what the stamp subjects are - and it gives the dates of issue, something that YT still do not do. Perhaps the inclusion of Andorra and Monaco (basically a carbon copy of previous editions with little in the way of price-changes) will make this a worthwhile purchase (even at £42.95 against the much more comprehensive YT catalogue at 32.90€), particularly for English-speaking collectors of France.

Fellow F&CPS member Michael Round also reviewed this catalogue in the December 2023 issue of Stamp Lover, organ

New-issue listings from *Gibbons Stamp Monthly (GSM)*:

December 2023 - March 2024

Compiled by Michael Round

These listings can contain much specialised information in one place. Dates in brackets (month/year) identify - if not always accurately - that country's previous appearance in the *GSM* supplements. Thanks, as always, to Stanley Gibbons catalogue editors Hugh Jefferies and Clare de la Feuillade for permission to quote these details.

DECEMBER 2023. French Southern & Antarctic Territories (3/23). 2020 Victor - 2021 Fauna (SG 914/MS949 + booklet SB11). **Wallis & Futuna** (11/23). 2018 Bastille Day - End of World War 1 (1120/9).

JANUARY 2024. FRANCE (8/23). 2023 Le Paix - Bicycle Tourism (7449/509 + booklets CSB247/9).

FEBRUARY 2024. Tunisia (8/21). 2010 Youth Olympics - Arab Women (1735/40); 2019 Artists - 2020 Architecture (1982/2005).

MARCH 2024. Andorra, French ("1/23", actually 9/23). 2023 Lake Moreno - Jaume Ribá (F918/29). **Andorra, Spanish** (9/23). 2023 Black Redstart - Christmas (539/49). **FRANCE** ("8/23", actually 1/24, q.v.). 2023 Disney - King Charles VII (7510/MS7563 + booklets CSB250/2). **Lebanon** (6/22). 2019 Mother's Day - Evangelical Church 1635/68). **Monaco** ("9/23", actually 10/23). 2023 Tennis - Maria Callas (3508/20).

Books Noted

Acheminement et distribution du courrier, transport des voyageurs, des passagers et des marchandises sur lacs, fleuves, rivières et canaux by Jean-Jacques Cury; pub. Société des Amis de la Poste (SAMP); 44pp A4, ill. in full colour; price 30€ + p&p; details from Dominique Bidault, 6 rue Croix Blanche, 91490 Moigny-sur-École or dombidault@wanadoo.fr [Numerous aspects of water-borne traffic including pre-stamp era, *boules de Moulins*, mail delivery during floods, steamers.]

Catalogue des marques postales d'accidents ferroviaires de France et anciennes Colonies by Bertrand Sinais, Alain Jacquart & Francis Bouloux; 138pp A4, ill. in colour; price 30€ + p&p; available from Club Philatélique Rémois, Maison de la Vie Associative, 122bis rue du Barbâtre, 51100 Reims. [First edition since 1933; details of mail involved in railway accidents with table of values.]

Cours des Carnets et des Publicitimbres 2024-2025 pub. ACCP; A4 format, spiral binding; price 30€ + p&p;

available from ACCP, Jacky Girard, 157 avenue de St-Augustin, 11100 Narbonne. [Updated edition with new valuations; includes *PAR AVION* and *colis postaux* labels, fiscal and telephone stamps.]

Marianne – Les visages de la République by Monika Nowacka; pub. Musée de la Poste de Paris; 52pp A5; price 12€; available from Musée de la Poste, 34 boulevard de Vaugirard, 75015 Paris. [Details of changes in the representation of Marianne since 1944 fully illustrated, including stamps, sketches, rejected competition entries, colour trials, dies, artists' proofs.]

Le livre des timbres de France 2023 by Benjamin Peyrel; pub. Philaposte / Éditions de la Martinière; 152pp 250 x 235mm; price 25€; available from bookshops or website of La Poste. [Annual collection of stamps of France.]

Maurice Tyler

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Maurice Tyler

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

Timbres Magazine

N° 261 Dec 2023: «Votre mission, si vous l'acceptez...» - Lavalette, directeur général des postes de Napoléon (Veglio); Les Polonais en France pendant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale (1^{ère} partie) (Sinai); Algérie 1945-1958: philatélie et timbres à surtaxe (1^{ère} partie) (Chauvin); Des perforations officielles pour les non dentelés fiscaux (1^{ère} partie) (Danan); Le Théâtre des Bonshommes Guillaume – divertissement à l'Expo Universelle de 1900 (Lacroix).

N° 262 Jan 2024: Rétrospective des émissions 2023 (-); L'Algérie (1^{ère} partie) (Coutant); Algérie 1945-1958: philatélie et timbres à surtaxe 2^{ème} partie (Chauvin); Les Polonais en France pendant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale (2^{ème} partie) (Sinai); Cartes postales surprises et mystérieuses (Zeyons); Rebuts? Ne pas jeter! (de La Mettrie).

N° 263 Feb 2024: A propos du ballon monté nommé le Daguerre (Cury & Bisson); Michel Legrand: la musique de film, un pont entre deux arts (Mennessier); Le raid Casablanca-Toulouse (12-14 mars 1919), acte fondateur des Lignes Aériennes Latécoère (Sinai); Algérie 1945-1958: philatélie et timbres à surtaxe 3^{ème} partie (Chauvin); Les Polonais en France pendant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale (3^{ème} partie) (Sinai); Rôles d'équipage: des variétés multiples pour un timbre unique (Danan); La lecture et les femmes [cartes postales illustrées] (Lacroix).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

N° 1988 Nov 2023: Lettres simples de et pour Périgueux, sous la Monarchie de Juillet (Bastide Bernardin/Valdenaire); La philatélie, un monde de couleurs tout en nuances (Galagain); Les courriers de l'OP 4-2022 du Marion Dufresne (Venturini).

N° 1989 Dec 2023: Les essais des premières émissions fiscales (Danan); Essais en mer, campagnes océanographiques et OP 1-2023 du Marion Dufresne (Venturini).

N° 1990 Jan 2024: L'art du timbre-poste gravé en taille-douce, un patrimoine vivant (Rabier/Bastide-Bernardin); Les émissions du programme philatélique officiel de 2023 (Bastide-Bernardin); Hivernage 2020 en Terre Adélie (Venturini).

N° 1991 Feb 2024: Surcharges de 1885 pour Saint-Pierre et Miquelon (Tillard); Les cartes d'abonnement aux timbres-poste français (Lherbier); Polaires: Campagne d'été 2020-2021 (Venturini).

N° 1992 Mar 2024: L'IDTimbre, une réponse philatélique souple, pratique et rapide (Parquet/Bastide-Bernardin).

Bulletin COL.FRA

N° 186 4^{ème} trim 2023: Le courrier du Corps Expéditionnaire Français en Tunisie {1881-1884} (suite)

(Baudens); Décryptage d'une lettre de 1876 pour un missionnaire norvégien à Madagascar (Monteret); Découverte d'un nouveau timbre à date CORRESP^{DES} ARMÉES L. M. N° 2 (Pennacchiotti); Réunion n° 9 essai de reconstitution de la surcharge 10c. R (Pelorce); Le bureau indochinois en Chine de Pakhoi, une surcharge très baladeuse (Bordeau); La première liaison aérienne Hanoi-Tokyo en juillet 1940 (Ferrien).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Vol 80 N° 1 (Whole N° 355) Jan 2024: The End of the French Colonies Imperial Eagle Era: Late and Very Late Use of the Eagles (Marra); Follow-up Visit to the Musée de la Poste (Tricard); Newly Discovered Additions to the 19th Century Postal History of French India (Marra); Tunisia Local Scenes Issue of 1926 (Rasmussen).

Documents Philatéliques

N° 259 (1^{er} trim 2024) Jan 2024: Crète 1899 – Utilisation de l'émission locale anglaise dans les bureaux de poste français (Abensur); Affranchissement en timbres non oblitérés (Désarnaud); La presse taille-douce six couleurs n° 1 – Une presse reflet des évolutions technologiques (3^e partie) (Gervais); La correspondance avec la France des Français en Chine 1939-1946, 2^e partie: après Pearl Harbor jusqu'au rapatriement (Goanvic).

Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 395 (Dec 2023): Le premier timbre NFT français a été émis (-); Honneur aux cuistots... et aux vagemestres! (Albaret); Un affranchissement à 1F 62c (Gasqui); L'émission Coq et Marianne d'Alger, ses emplois exceptionnels (Blanc); Poste maritime française, La Société l'Europe: Le Havre-St Petersburg 1840-1852 (Abensur); La liaison maritime à vapeur Le Havre-Hambourg 1835-1853 (Abensur); Timbre à date du Paris insolite: Le bureau de la Bourse du Commerce (Lavenas).

Le Maghrebophila

N° 44 Dec 2023: Les timbres-poste émis au Maroc de 1954 à 1982 (Lemrahi); Tunisie – Marcophilie: un problème de timbre de Boîte Mobile par la voie de terre (Debon).

The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol LIV N° 1 (Whole N° 261) Jan 2024: Letter to Trần Văn Hửu [Feb 1945] (Düring).

Vol LIV N° 2 (Whole N° 262) Mar 2024: Location of Inverted "INDO-CHINE" (Dufresne de Virel); Status Report on Early North Vietnam Varieties and Errors (Düring); External Use of 12-cent EF Postal Card (Bentley).

Collectors Club Philatelist

Vol 102 N° 6 (Nov/Dec 2023): Morocco and the United States: The Surprising Similarity in the Color Inks and Their Meaning (Hadida).

Cameo

Vol 25 N° 1 (Whole N° 121) Jan 2024: Cameroun –
Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: Update (Bratzel).

Forces Postal History Society Journal

No 337 Autumn 2023: A Napoleonic War item (Vogel).

N° 338 Winter 2023: Napoleonic Wars 1802-1815
(Cowlin); Compulsorily Registered Mail WWI [to France]
(Grimshaw).

N° 339 Spring 2024: Napoleonic Wars 1802-1815
(Cowlin).

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