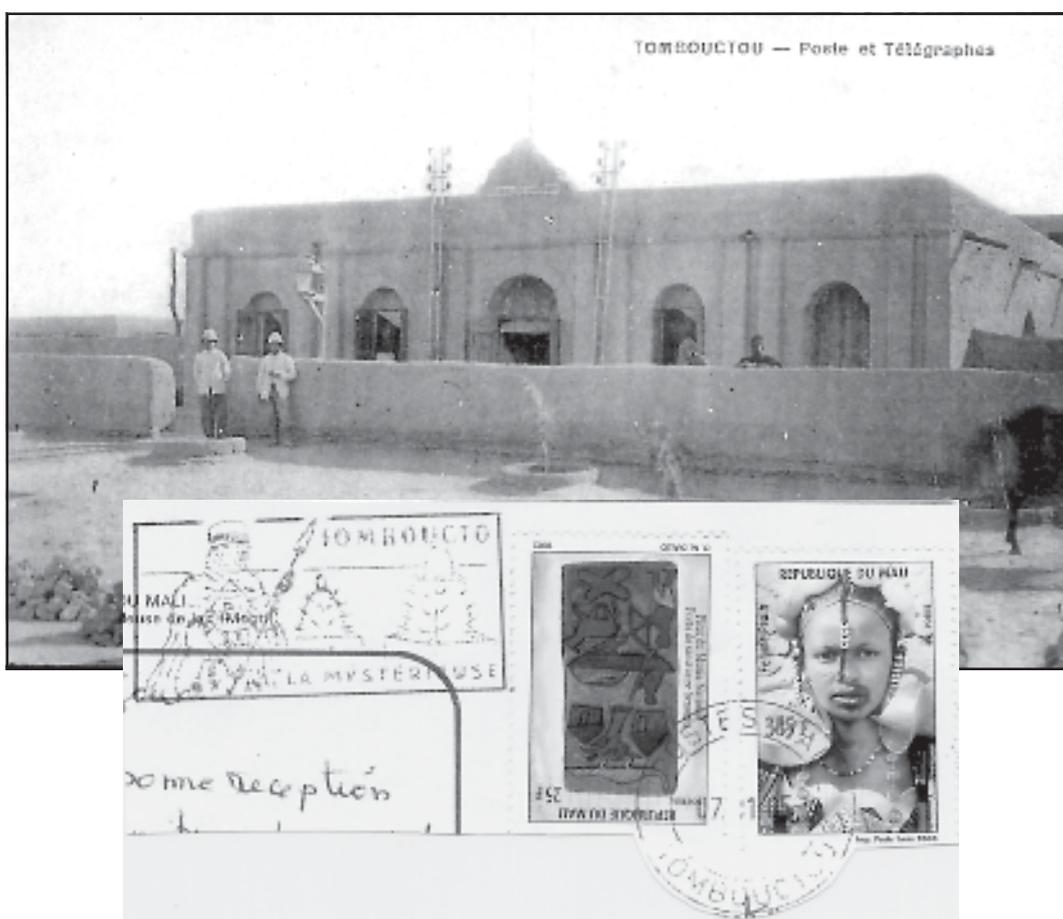


ISSN 0269-5006

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



Postcard by Delay, Paris, of Timbuctoo Post Office in the 1920s(?)
and the modern special cachet of Timbuctoo (see article inside)

Volume 56 ● Number 1
March 2006
Whole Number 239

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

Officers

President, 2005-2006: P R A Kelly, Malmsy House, Church Road, Leigh Woods, Bristol BS8 3PG
(email: president@fcps.org.uk)..

Vice-President, 2005-2006: A Lawrence.

Programme Secretary, 2005-2006: A Lawrence.

General Secretary, 2005-2006: Dr R G Gethin, 5 Meriden Close, Bromley, Kent BR1 2UF (email: info@fcps.org.uk).

The Society

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

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

2004 Subscription Rates

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

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

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

The Journal

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

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

Distribution: D J Richardson and M S Tyler.

The price is included in members' subscriptions.

The contents are copyright.

Auction and Exchange Packet Sales

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

J N Hammonds, 31 Wheatsheaf Close, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 5TH, according to instructions.

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

France: Mrs M Pavey, 15 St Ronan's Terrace, Innerleithen, Peeblesshire EH44 6RB (Telephone 01896 830120).

Colonies: J West, 5 Highbanks Road, Hatch End, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 4AR (Telephone 0208 428 4741).

The Library

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

Librarian: G E Barker, 520 Halifax Road, Bradford BD6 2LP.

The Magazine Circuit

The Society subscribes to two French philatelic magazines, and has circuits organised for those who wish to read them. For further details contact the circuit organiser:

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

Journal Correspondents

Paris: J M Simmons

Southern Group: C W Spong

Northern Group: J P Maybury

Wessex Group: P R A Kelly / A J Wood

Scottish Group: Mrs M Pavey

* * *

When writing to an officer of the Society, please do not mention the name of the Society in the address. Requests for information should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

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

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

Editor: M S Tyler, 56 Mortons Fork, Blue Bridge, Milton Keynes MK13 0LA
E-mail: editor@fcps.org.uk
Society Website: www.fcps.org.uk

Volume 56 Number 1

March 2006 ● Whole No 239

CONTENTS

Society Notes	2
New Members	2
Deceased	2
Society Rule Change	2
Proposed Increase in Subscription 2007	2
Change of Address	2
Philatelic Honours	2
Packet Secretary for France	2
Articles	14
Title of the Journal	14
China Philatelic Society of London	14
Exhibition Successes	14
Displays by Members	14
Guadeloupe Airmails (A Shepherd)	3
<i>Cécogrammes</i> (M L Bister)	11
French POs in China - 1903 Provisional Dues (J Barefoot)	15
Modern Post Offices in Mali and in French Polynesia (R J Maddocks)	17
Mauritania — the Bogus “KRONFA” Cancel: A New Discovery (W G Mitchell)	22
List of Recently Published Articles (C W Spong)	24
Latest Society Publications	25
Carry on Searching (D Jennings-Bramly)	26
Shorter Items - including Questions and Answers	27
French Postal Practice in a former Colony - Chad (J D Moffat)	27
Bibliography of Philatelic Literature of French Colonies (P R A Kelly)	27
The Dead Letter Office (A J Wood)	28
Islands On The Air (W G Mitchell, M S Tyler)	29
French PO in Shanghai (W G Mitchell)	30
Airmail Cancel of Saigon (D Taylor Smith, R Bentley)	30
<i>Après le Départ</i> Marks used Overseas (J Yeomans)	31
Île de France Catapult Mail (P Zatulove)	32
British Cameroon Stamps (R F May)	32
The World's First Airmail Postcards (A J Wood)	32
Togo 1921 “Mandate” Issue - Update of Earliest Recorded Dates (E J Mayne)	32
Bookshelf	33
“ <i>La Poste en Moselle 1940-1945, Tome II</i> ” (reviewed by R E Reader)	33
Books Noted (M S Tyler)	33
Reports of Meetings	34
Northern Group Meeting of 5 November 2005 - B Lucas: Pneumatic Mail (JPM)	34
London Meeting of 30 November 2005 - Mrs L Marley: Montargis (MST)	34
Southern Group Meeting of 7 January 2006 - Members' Displays / New Acquisitions (CWS)	35
Northern Group Meeting of 14 January 2006 - An Hour with C S Holder / Members' Choice (JPM)	35
London Meeting of 25 January 2006 - (1) M J Berry: Île de Ré; (2) M Annells: French Railways (MST)	36
Wessex Group Meeting of 4 February 2006 - C W Spong: Madagascar PH / Members (PRAK)	36
May 2006 Auction - Selected Lots (M L Bister)	cover page iii

SOCIETY NOTES

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1265 R A Smyth (Belfast), 1266 J B Rawlings (Middlesex), 1267 Mrs Victoria Pye (France), 1268 D Atkins (Kent) [*rejoining after time spent abroad*], 1269 M P Brindle (Norfolk), 1270 J C Bohn (USA), 1271 Roger Clapham (Yorkshire).

* * *

Deceased

We are all very saddened to hear of the death of Peter Pavey, husband of Mavis, our France Packet Secretary, who, although not a member himself, was a regular attender with Mavis at our Annual Weekends and thus very familiar to many of our members. He will be sorely missed, and we offer Mavis our deepest sympathy in her unexpected loss.

* * *

Society Rule Change

At the AGM on 13 May 2006 the following change in the Society's rules will be proposed:

Rule 5: The following shall be added to this paragraph: "Committee business may be conducted by correspondence provided that all members of the Committee have the opportunity to express their views and if necessary vote on proposals. Notwithstanding this there must be at least one Committee meeting per year."

* * *

Proposed Increase in Subscription 2007

Our Treasurer has announced that at the AGM this year he will be proposing an increase in subscriptions for 1 January 2007. He points out that increases need to be applied so as to maintain the rates for at least 5 years in order to avoid messy and confusing changes at too short intervals. Taking that into account, an informal proposal made recently by the Editor (see below) will not quite be sufficient.

The Post Office, for commercial reasons, is driving up first class and foreign rates much faster than second class. This will unfortunately penalise our overseas members who do not benefit from our full range of services. This will have to be accepted because we cannot supply the Journal at less than cost. As a rough rule of thumb, our aim should be to cover Journal costs with the subscription income. Any other income can go to other costs. The Journal is by far our largest item of expenditure.

Chris sets out below the UK subscription rates since he has been Treasurer. The current rates were set in 1998 and by 2006 will have covered 9 years. If one takes inflation to be around 3% then a UK increase to £13 is quite reasonable, he points out. His proposals will allow a small margin for future postage increases. If the Post Office are unreasonable then a rethink may well be necessary.

UK subscription:

Pre 1984	£5
1984 to 1989	£6
1990 to 1992	£7
1993 to 1997	£8
1998 to 2006	£10

Proposals:

	Journal cost	Postage	Total	Current subs	MST proposals	CJH
UK	£8.50	£2.32	£10.82	£10	£12	£13
Europe	£8.50	£5.15	£13.65	£12	£15	£17
World	£8.50	£8.18	£16.68	£15	£18	£20

* * *

Change of Address

Len Barnes, our committee member in charge of the sales of our "Subject Index to Four French Philatelic Magazines 1946 to 2000" has moved to the following address:

32 Belvedere Road
Bexleyheath
Kent
DA7 4NX

* * *

Philatelic Honours

Our President **Peter Kelly** is to be congratulated on being elected *membre correspondant* of the Académie Philatélique Française.

* * *

Packet Secretary for France

Even before the devastating occurrence announced on this page, Mavis Pavey had decided that, for personal reasons, she would like to resign from the post of Packet Secretary for France. We are therefore urgently seeking another member to take on this role as soon as possible. If you think you can find the time to help the Society with this activity, which raises a significant amount of money and helps to keep subscriptions comparatively low, please contact the General Secretary or the President (addresses on the inside front cover of this Journal) in the first instance. Advice on the tasks involved and the amount of time needed to carry them out will be willingly given by John West (Packet Secretary for the Colonies) or - in due course - by Mavis herself.

* * *

Exhibition Successes

The following member gained an award in the French Philatelic Championships at Nancy (May 2005):

Robert Abensur: 3rd Prize in the 12/24 Class for "Le tarif de Nivôse An IV".

* * *

Continued on page 14

Guadeloupe Airmails

Anthony Shepherd

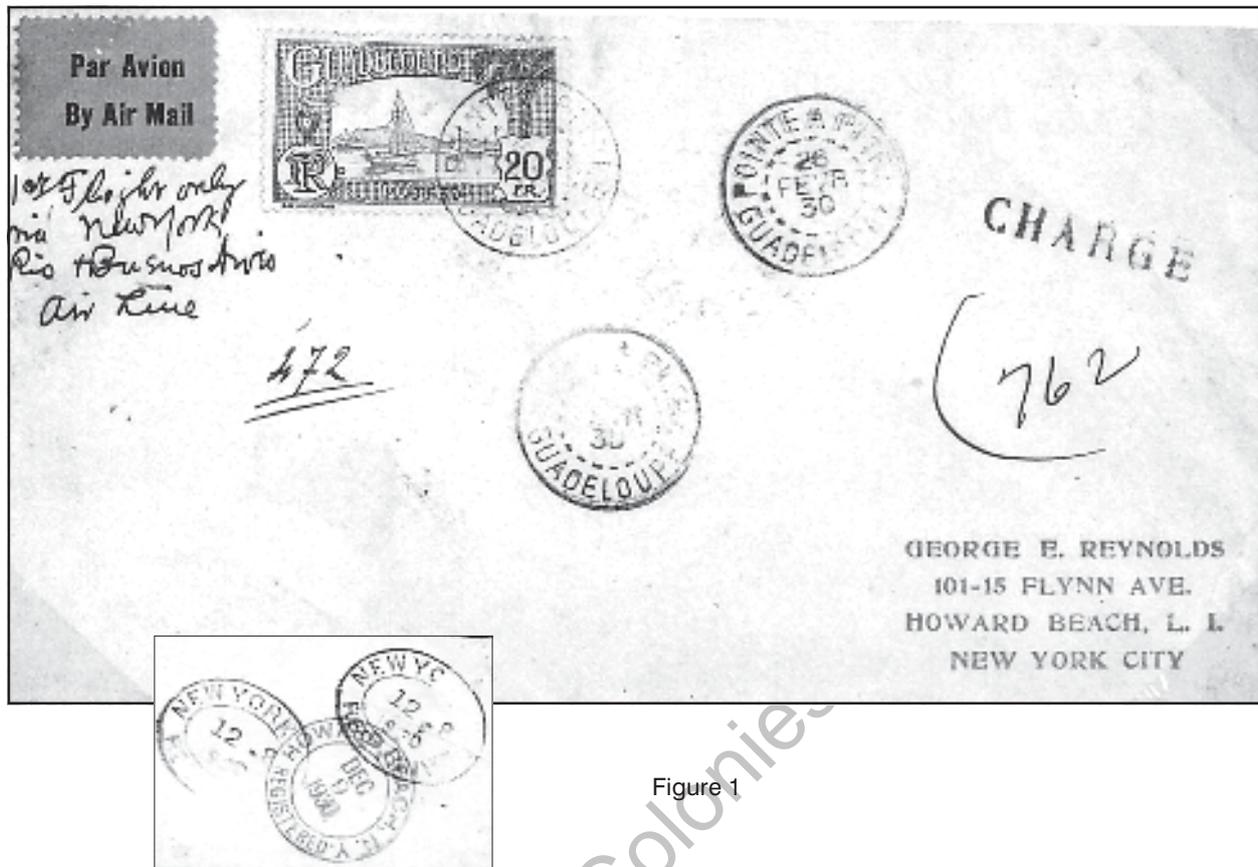


Figure 1

This article is based on a display given to the France and Colonies PS at the Charlecote Philatelic Weekend 2005. The period covered by the display depicted the development of the transmission of the mails by means of air transport from 1930 to the early World War II years.

Shown on the opening sheet was a cover carried on the epic first mail service operated by the New York - Rio and Buenos Aires Airline, the mails being transported from South America via the Caribbean region, this flight occurring from 19 February 1930 to 26 February 1930. As this Airline had not signed an agreement with the US postal authorities, mail carried by this company and addressed to destinations in the United States was held by the US Post Office and delivered at a later date.

The NYRBA Airline was bought out by the Pan American Airways in mid-July 1930, PAA having gained the US Post Office contract for the airmail service in the Caribbean and South American regions. Pan American Airways became the main airmail transporter for the Caribbean and South American area for many years.

The illustrated covers show the early period of Guadeloupe's airmail postal history. **Figure 1** shows a registered cover postmarked Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, 26.2.30, handstamped "Chargé", endorsed in manuscript "1st Flight only via New York Rio + Buenos Aires Air Line"; the cover is rated at 20 francs. Also illustrated are the cover's backstamps: New York 8.12.1930, Howard Beach, N.Y., 9.12.1930.

Figure 2 shows a cover from Fécamp, Seine Inf^{re}, postmarked 3.7.33, endorsed "Par Avion" per label, and rated at 5 francs; the cover is addressed to an officer serving on board the CGT Steamer at Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, the sender directing the letter via airmail for a speedy passage to reach the recipient before the SS *Alabama* had left port. The normal surface postage on a 15g letter at this date was 50 centimes, plus an airmail surcharge of 5 francs; in this case the letter was underpaid 50 centimes, charged 1 franc postage due on arrival, the postage due labels being postmarked Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, 17.7.33. The letter's route is interesting: steamer Le Havre to New York, USA; via rail New York to Miami, Florida, USA; airmail to St Johns, Antigua, BWI; via inter-island steamer to Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe. At this date Pan American Airways had not negotiated landing or airmail carrying rights with the French government, hence the last section of the transmission via surface.

The French government was slow to make use of the airmail service operated in the Caribbean area by Pan American Airways, the reason being that a French airline had already established an airmail service in Venezuela and northwards to Trinidad, BWI – this company being the Compagnie Générale Aéropostale. Plans were made to extend the route northwards to the French Antilles, and to expand the routes southwards to link up with the already established South Atlantic Ocean route via Natal, Brazil - Dakar, Senegal - France, thus having an airmail service to and from France and the French Antilles.



Figure 2

Aéropostale went bankrupt in 1933, and all plans for a French airmail route southwards ended. The French government began exploring the use of the Pan American Airways airmail service by the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique. Owing to “red tape” on the part of the French government in the granting of landing rights and the airmail carrying contract, a false start was made in April 1935. A series of first flight covers is recorded to several destinations within the Caribbean and South America, but as no airmail contracts had been agreed between France and some of the countries they were addressed to, they were only

carried by air to Trinidad, BWI, and forwarded by surface mail.

The cover illustrated in **Figure 3** is from Guadeloupe to Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana, postmarked 26.4.35, registered and rated at 8 francs 50 centimes. The cover is endorsed “First flight Guadeloupe - Dutch Guiana” and also travelled via Trinidad, as France and Holland had already agreed airmail and landing rights; in this instance the cover was transported all the way via air, and bears an arrival date stamp on the reverse of 1.5.35 at Paramaribo.



Figure 3

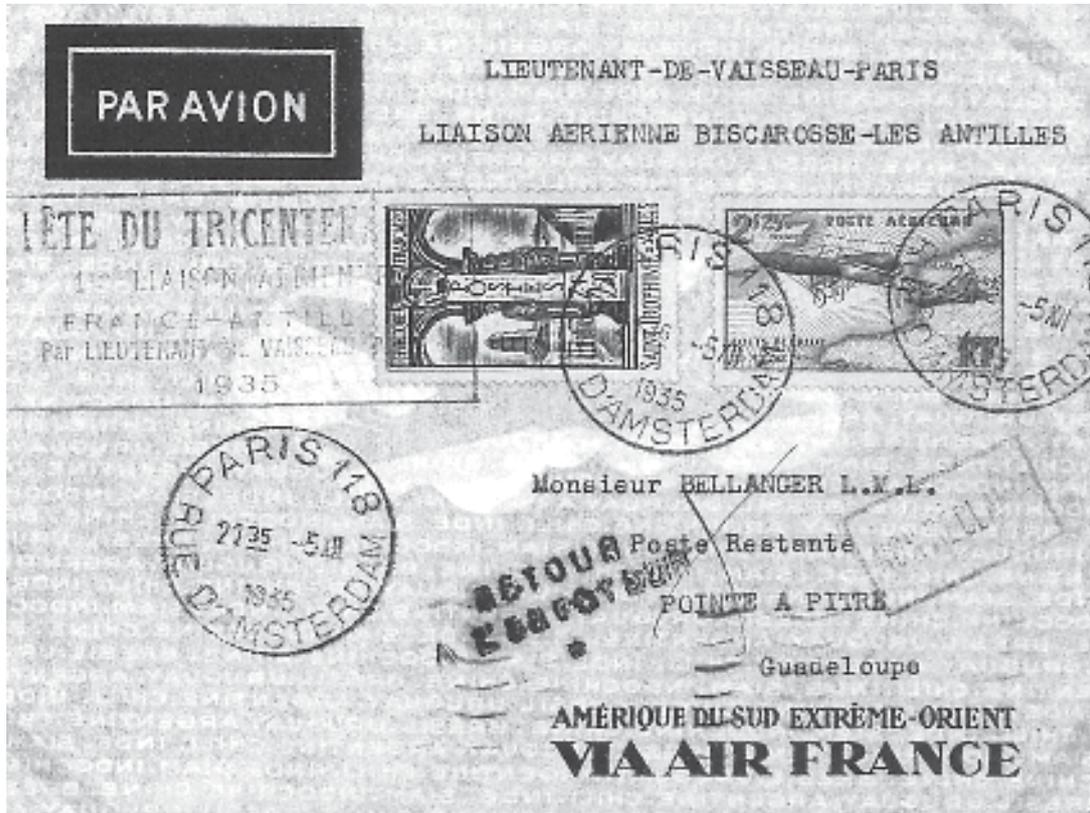


Figure 4

The next phase in the story of the airmails of Guadeloupe concerns the flight of the Latécoère 521. This seaplane, the "Lieutenant de Vaisseau Paris", was for its time a large six engine 37 tonne aircraft, designed for the trans-Atlantic crossings, and intended to carry 70 passengers on trans-Mediterranean routes and 30

passengers on trans-Atlantic routes, plus a large amount of mail. The Latécoère 521 was to make its first trans-Atlantic flight during the celebrations for the tercentenary of the colonisation of the French West Indian Colonies of Guadeloupe and Dependencies, Martinique, and French Guiana.

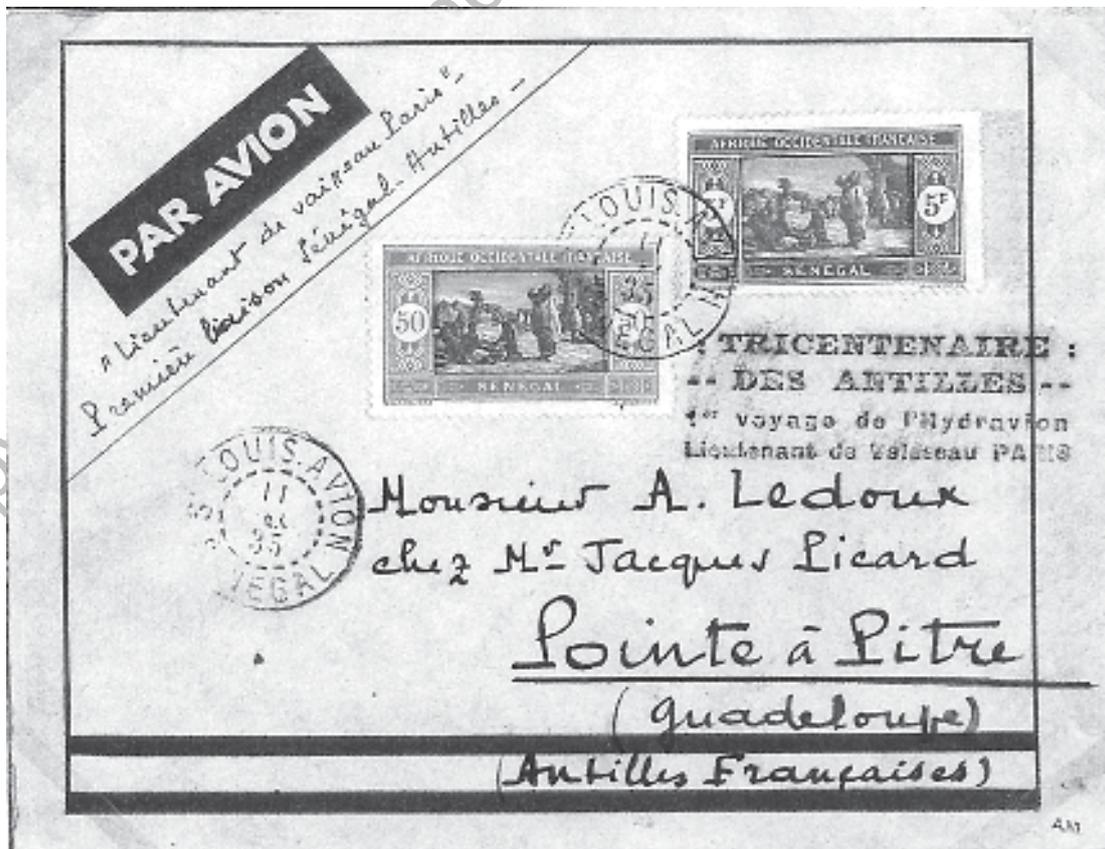


Figure 5

On 8 December 1935 the “*Lieutenant de Vaisseau Paris*” Latécoère 521 departed from Biscarosse near Bordeaux for the French Antilles, the route being trans-Africa to Dakar, Senegal; trans-South Atlantic to Natal, Brazil; northwards via Cayenne; thence northwards to Martinique; and terminating at Guadeloupe. Covers carried on this first flight from France to the Antilles were endorsed with a special handstamp “*Fête du Tercentenaire / 1^{re} Liaison Aérienne / France - Antilles / par Lieutenant de Vaisseau Paris, 1935*”. A special handstamp was also applied on covers posted at Dakar, Senegal, for the section from this town to the French Antilles, as shown in the covers illustrated in **Figures 4 and 5**: the marks applied in France were in red, and from Senegal in black ink. These covers were back-stamped on arrival at Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, 28.12.35.

The Latécoère 521 departed from Guadeloupe on 2 January 1936 and travelled northwards to the United States to carry out a series of exhibition flights. Whilst

moored in Pensacola, Florida, USA on 4 January 1936 the seaplane was damaged and sunk by a typhoon. Mail prepared for the return flight of the Latécoère 521 from the Antilles to France had to be sent by surface route, and the two covers in **Figures 6 and 7** depict the routes used. Figure 6 shows a registered cover postmarked at Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, 10.1.36, directed northwards via Antigua, BWI, thence to be flown north via Pan American Airways to Miami, USA, per rail Miami to New York, onward by steamship to France, arriving at the letter's destination on 26 February 1936. The cover is franked with a full set of the Guadeloupe Tercentenary commemorative issue to the value of 19 francs 15 centimes. Figure 7 shows a cover franked at the correct rate of 5 francs 50 centimes, posted at Pointe-à-Pitre on 11.1.36 and intended to be flown to France via the “*Lieutenant de Vaisseau Paris*” Latécoère 521: in this case it was carried by the CGT Steamer “*Cuba*” direct from Guadeloupe to Le Havre, where it was transit marked 27.1.36, arriving in Paris on 5.2.36.



Figure 6



Figure 7

In March 1936 a series of trial airmail flights was carried out by a Lieutenant Henri Jegou of the Aéronautique Navale Nationale, piloting a Laté 38 seaplane. This series of flights was intended to examine the possibility of establishing an inter-island airmail service within Guadeloupe and her Dependencies, and between Guadeloupe and Martinique. The first of these experimental airmail flights was carried out on 10.3.36, this being a flight between Guadeloupe and Martinique.

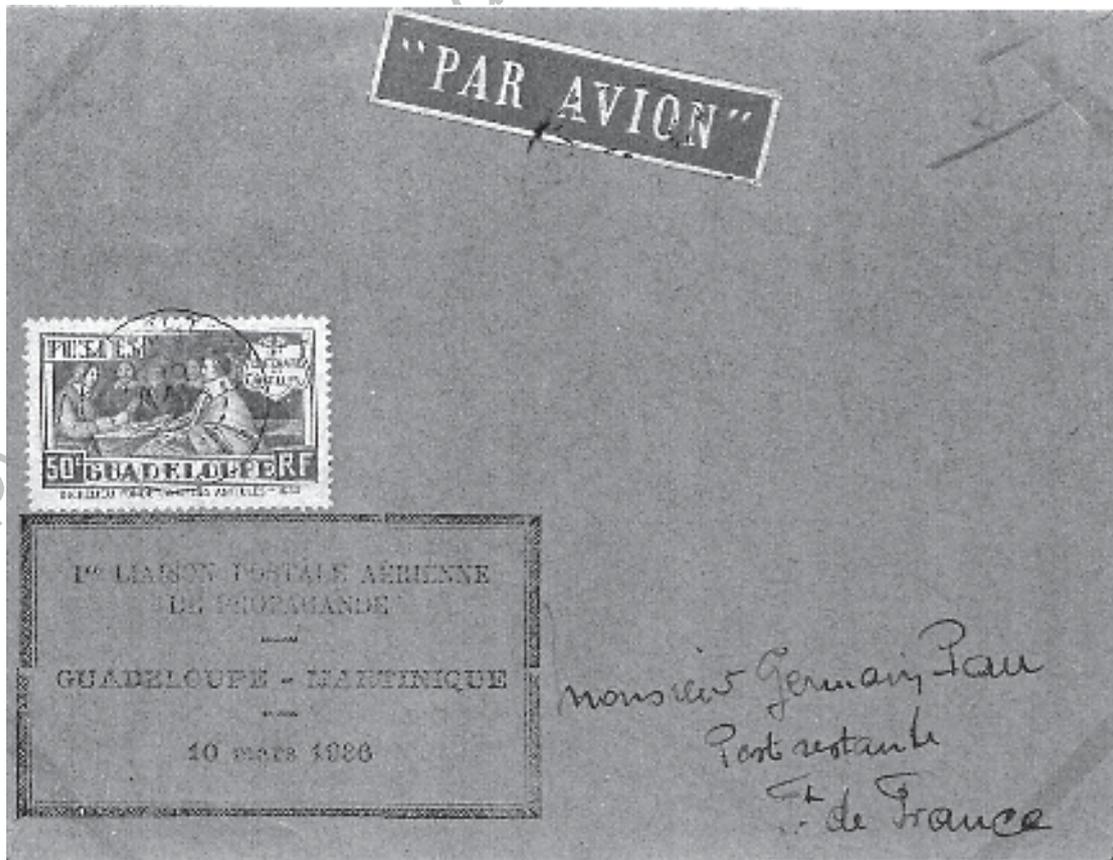


Figure 8

Figure 8 shows a first flight cover from Basse-Terre, Guadeloupe, to Fort de France, Martinique, postmarked 10.3.36. A special rate of 50 centimes was charged on these first flight letters, and a cachet was applied in black, "1^{re} Liaison Postale Aérienne de Propagande / Guadeloupe - Martinique / 10 mars 1936", the cover being back-stamped on arrival at Fort de France, 10.3.36. During the following months a series of first airmail flights was carried out between Guadeloupe and her Dependencies of the Îles

des Saintes, Marie Galante, la Désirade and Saint Martin. **Figure 9** shows a cover carried on the return flight from St Martin to Guadeloupe, postmarked Saint Martin, 8.7.36, endorsed with the handstamp "Première Liaison Aérienne / Saint Martin - Pointe-à-Pitre", rated at 1 franc 15 centimes, back-stamped on arrival at Pointe-à-Pitre, 9.7.36. It was found that this intended inter-island airmail service was a drain on the Colony's finances and commercially unsound, which resulted in the service being terminated in late 1936.



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11

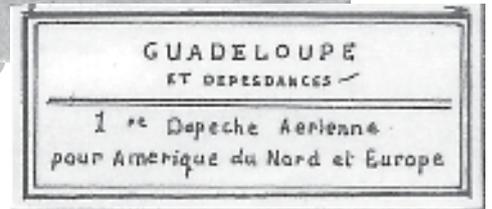


Figure 12



Figure 13

In July 1937 the French Government and Pan American Airways reached agreement on landing rights and airmail acceptance to and from Guadeloupe. The official start of an assured airmail service by Pan American Airways is stated to be 1 August 1937. Illustrated in **Figure 10** is an incoming cover from St Johns, Antigua, BWI, postmarked St Johns, Antigua, 2.7.37 and back-stamped on arrival Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, 2.7.37. The letter is rated at 8 pence halfpenny, and it can be assumed that this letter was carried by Pan American Airways on a pre-regular trial flight, with the cover being endorsed “First Air Mail Antigua to Guadeloupe”.

Figure 11 shows the official first flight cover, endorsed with a cachet in black, “Guadeloupe et ses Dépendances / 1^{re} Dépêche Aérienne / pour Amérique du Nord et Europe”, the route northwards being via Antigua (BWI), St Thomas, San Juan (Puerto Rico), Port-au-Prince (Haiti), Puerto Taraja (Cuba), Miami (USA), New York, thence per steamer to Le Havre, and arriving in Paris on 16.8.37. The cover is postmarked Basse-Terre, Guadeloupe, 1.8.37, and is rated at 5 francs 25 centimes, the postage being calculated at 65 centimes per 15g letter, with registration fee 1 franc 50 centimes and airmail surtax 3 francs 10 centimes. The letter was 16 days in transit.

The final section of the display is represented by Figures 12 and 13. The cover shown in **Figure 12** is postmarked Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, 18.6.1939, and endorsed

with the cachet “1^{re} Dépêche Aérienne / Guadeloupe - France / via Etats-Unis - Açores”, this cover being carried on the inaugural trans-North Atlantic service by Pan American Airways. This service was carried by the PAA “Clipper” flights, the route being via New York, the Azores, Lisbon, Marseille, Paris. The cover illustrated was transported by the “Atlantic Clipper”, and it is interesting to note that the postage paid is 90 centimes per 15g letter, plus 15 francs airmail surtax, the letter being in transit 6 days.

The first flight cover in **Figure 13** was carried via the new northern route operated by Pan American Airways, using the new transit terminal at Foynes, Ireland (later known as Shannon). This northern route went via Newfoundland – Foynes – Southampton – Paris. The cover illustrated is postmarked Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, 22.6.39, and is rated at 17 francs 50 centimes. Normal postage at 90 centimes for a 15g letter was charged, plus 1 franc 60 centimes registration fee, with an airmail surtax of 15 francs. It is endorsed with the cachet “1^{re} Liaison Aérienne / Guadeloupe - France / via Terre-Neuve - Irlande”, the letter being undelivered in Paris and returned to Guadeloupe. This northern route was only used during the summer months.

With the onset of World War II, and the fall of France in June 1940, the transmission of mail by air became difficult, and the wartime and early post-war airmail story of Guadeloupe is another period to be considered at a later date.

Cécogrammes

Mick Bister

Figure 1 - Braille messages accompanying philatelic *cécogrammes*

My article on *cécogrammes* in Journal N° 235 (March 2005) has prompted a couple of interesting responses. New member Mike Fox of Crawley has contacted me to say that he has ten postcards and covers with *cécogramme* connections. The items all date from 1939 and are clearly philatelic having been issued at stamp fairs and on various commemorative occasions. Eight of the items have been franked at 3c using combinations of the 1c Sower, the 2c Sower, the 2c Mercury and the 3c Sower. On the reverse of

the postcards is a small strip of brown card punched with a brief text in Braille and inside the covers is a larger piece of brown card, similarly punched in Braille, and positioned to make the text readily visible when the unsealed envelope flap is lifted. The postcards have IMPR. p. AVEUGLE / À POSTER MÊME / AVEC TAXATION handstamped on the front whereas the envelopes have simply the cachet IMPRIMÉS. The handstamps can be found in black, blue or red (Fig 1).

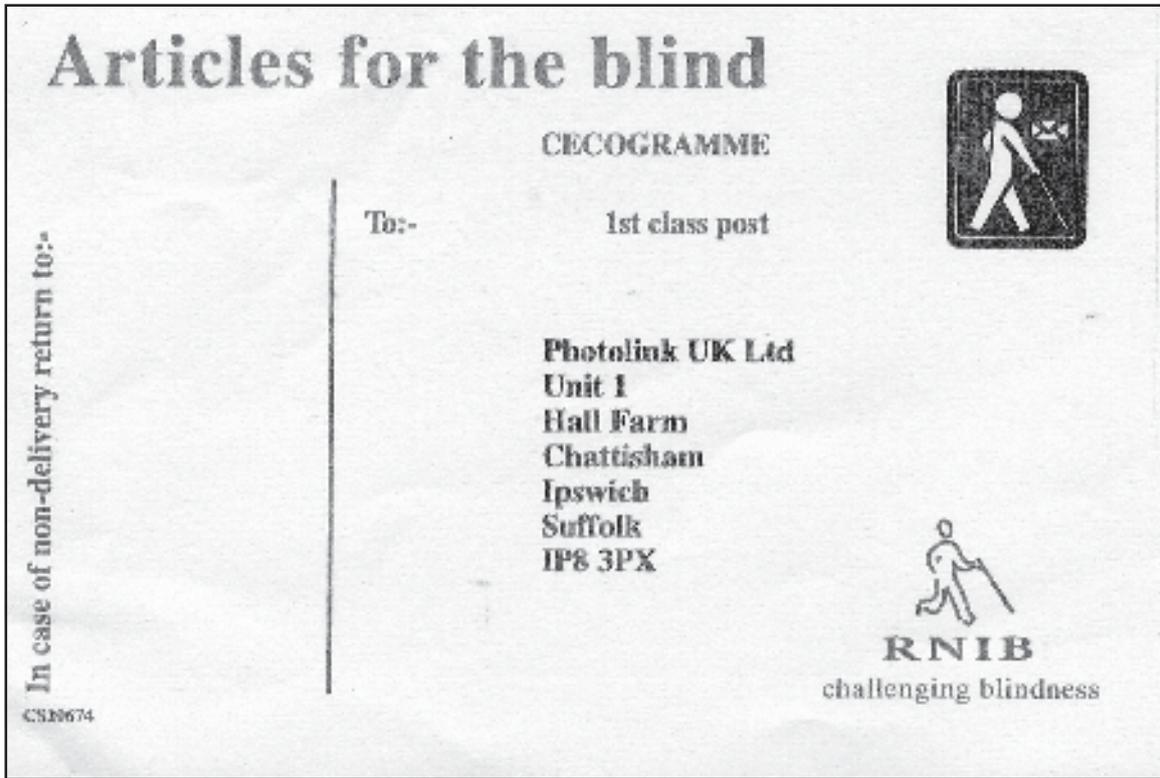


Figure 2 - Philatelic *cécogramme* franked at correct 2c rate

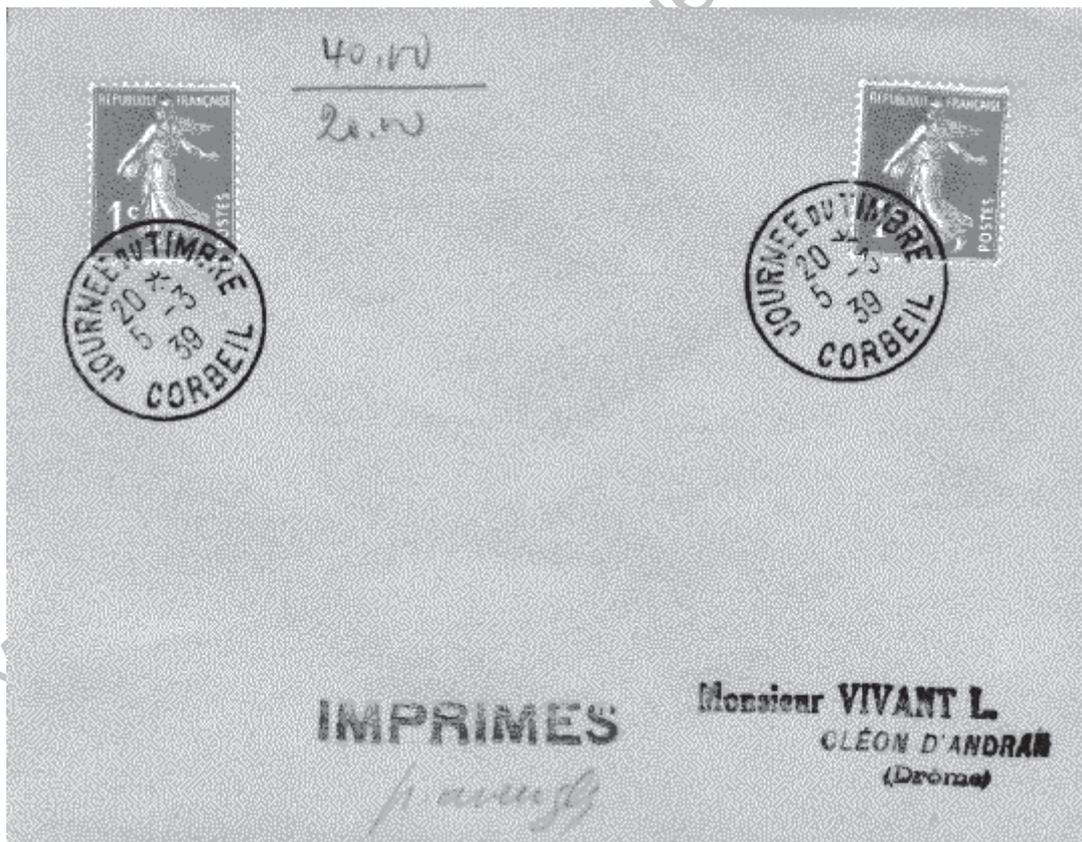


Figure 3 - RNIB self-adhesive *cécogramme* address label

Examples that Mike has shown me include items cancelled at the Foire de Paris, the Exposition Industrielle et Commerciale at Nevers and on the occasion of the Centenaire du Chemin de Fer at Mulhouse. I have two similar items, the 1939 Congrès de Versailles and the 1939

Journée du Timbre at Rennes. Two other examples have appeared in past Society auctions. In February 2002 a card cancelled at the 1939 Exposition Niort was offered; a year later a card cancelled at the 1939 Concours de Gymnastiques at Besançon appeared in the August 2003

catalogue. What is interesting is that all the items seen so far seem to be the confection of the addressee, Monsieur Lucien Vivant of Cléon d'Andrian in the Drôme.

Unfortunately, all the above mentioned items are franked at 3c whereas in 1939 the basic rate for a *cécogramme* was only 2c. All the sources quoted in my previous article support this although there are differences as to how many grams could be sent (Joanny and Baillargeat say a maximum of 20 grams; Alexandre, Brun *et al* say up to 500 grams). Only Joanny records the existence of a 3c rate for a *cécogramme* weighing between

21 and 100 grams which is evidently not applicable to the philatelic items in question.

However, amongst these philatelic items two of Mike's covers are of greater significance. Both of them have been cancelled on the occasion of the 1939 Journée du Timbre, one at Cannes and the other at Corbeil. They are both handstamped IMPRIMÉS in red and under the strike has been written *p. aveugles* in pencil. Although philatelic, the redeeming feature is that they have been franked with the indisputably correct rate of 2 centimes (Fig 2) and are therefore of much more interest to a *cécogramme* collector.



Figure 4 - French *cécogramme* vignette from coil

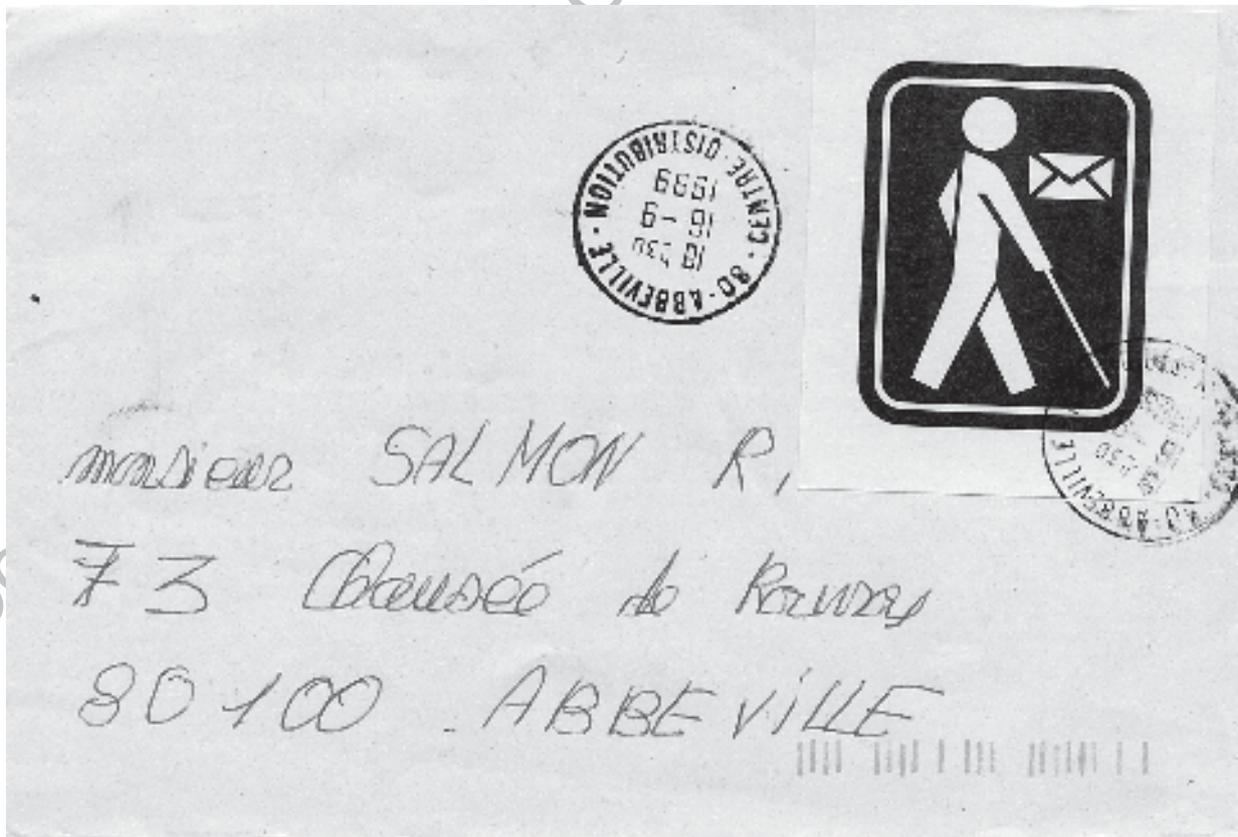


Figure 5 - French *cécogramme* vignette from sheet used on 1999 cover

Our Society's Librarian, George Barker, has also contacted me and pointed out that the expression 'cécogramme' is not confined to usage in France. In Great Britain too, mail sent by and intended for the blind can be dispatched post free(*) provided that the item is clearly identified by the word *cécogramme*. I presume in Great Britain the acute accent is not obligatory. The French term has been adopted internationally as French is the official language of the UPU and is the international postal language used on labels, especially those applied to mail going abroad.

George has shown me a self-adhesive address label which members of the RNIB can obtain from the institute for a small fee. It bears the wording **Articles for the Blind – CECOGRAMME** and displays a printed 'stamp' depicting an envelope and a man with a white stick (Fig 3). The label can be affixed to packages containing Braille texts, printing plates, cd-roms or cassettes.

I have since contacted the *Association des Donneurs de Voix* at Evry, one of the major institutions for the blind in France, to enquire if they use or issue similar address labels. In reply they sent me a self-adhesive vignette cut from a coil, much larger but identical in content to the 'stamp' printed on the RNIB label (Fig 4).

I have also managed to obtain in auction an example of a similar French vignette, but this one is gummed and cut from a sheet, used in 1999 on a letter from the local branch of the *Association pour le bien des aveugles* in Abbeville (Fig 5).

This leaves a long gap of forty years between 1959 when the free post was accorded and the above 1999 usage of the *cécogramme* vignette in France. I wonder if any of our members know what was used in the intervening years to identify such mail.

(*) Ruling at the UPU Congress in Brussels, 2 January 1959.

SOCIETY NOTES

Continued from page 2

Articles

Your Editor is always looking for articles to publish, and the stockpot is at present running dry. There is enough material in hand to fill the next issue of the Journal, and even possibly the one after that, but then there will be problems unless there is a response to this plea. Articles on stamps in particular (rather than postal history) would be welcomed by members, according to remarks I have overheard, but any topic will be considered.

Have those of you who have displayed, either to other societies or at Charlecote or one of our regional meetings, thought of turning the display into an illustrated article? This could be done without too much extra time in preparation, and as Editor I would be happy to try and transform raw material into a presentable shape. The Journal has maintained a very reasonable number of pages per issue for many years now, and I would hope to see this continue, but it does need input from members.

* * *

China Philatelic Society of London

John Barefoot, the Editor of the Journal of Chinese Philately, who is the author of the article on pages 15-16, can be contacted at PO Box 8, York YO24 4AR.

* * *

Title of the Journal

A number of members have commented on the proposal to change the name of the Journal to something more memorable/snappy. Several have said they would be happy with the suggestion of "The Sower" (and others have dismissed that name), some have suggested other names (Marianne - which is used elsewhere - or Courier or Correspondant [French spelling] for example), and a significant number have vehemently opposed the idea of change altogether. There will therefore be no change in the near future.

* * *

Displays by Members

Peter Kelly spoke to the Académie de Philatélie on an episode in the postal history of Réunion (1857 - beginning of a regular line from Réunion to Aden) on 5 November 2005.

Mick Bister was invited as a member of SO.CO.CO.DA.MI. (Société des Collectionneurs de Coins Datés et de Millésimes) to exhibit in the Cours d'Honneur at the Congrès-Exposition Interrégional held in Roanne on 5-6 November 2005: his two displays were the 50c Jeanne d'Arc and Marianne de Muller.

* * *

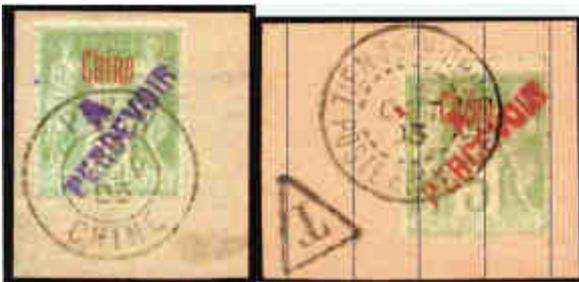
Fench POs in China - 1903 Provisional Dues

John Barefoot

France was among the several Western nations making "unequal" treaties with China in the 19th Century. These opened the doors to trade, and a key step in the process was the opening of foreign post offices in several major cities of China. For France, the first two were in Shanghai (French Post Office opened November 1862) and Tien Tsin (16 March 1889). Peking followed a little later, along with Hankow, Chefoo, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and the Arsenal-Pagoda. Later, a further seven offices were opened around Canton on the southern coast (see the *Journal of Chinese Philately* #356 for information on the missing figure of value varieties).

At first, stamps of France were simply used there, and can be recognised by the special cancel ("5104" for Shanghai) or steamer transit cancels. In 1894 regular "Peace & Commerce" stamps were overprinted "Chine"; in 1902 a special printing was made of the Blanc/Mouchon/Merson series incorporating "CHINE" into the design; Indo-China stamps were then overprinted "CHINE" as administrative control centred on the Indo-China area; finally the Blanc series gained further surcharges until the final curtain came down in 1922.

Matching overprints were made for postage due use between 1901 and 1922, but in 1903 there seems to have been a shortage of supplies, and a number of provisional "A PERCEVOIR" overprints were made in Peking with handstamps on existing stocks of regular postage stamps.



These have only been seen with PEKIN and TIEN-TSIN postmarks, which suggests their distribution was fairly localised.

The A PERCEVOIR overprint was applied individually by hand, the small version horizontally (since it nicely fitted the stamp), and the larger version diagonally reading up, as it was a little too long for the stamp in other positions.

Red and violet inkpads were used almost equally for most values, and for a couple of values a "black" inkpad also entered the arena (only a couple known from older literature; actually, this might be mixed inks on the same handstamp). Perhaps the handstamp operator wanted variety, or two employees worked at the same time, armed with different inkpads. The existence of two slightly different types of handstamp for both the small and the large version lends a little weight to this suggestion. Or, maybe, there was a philatelic influence too? As always, a philatelic article throws up as many questions as it answers.

For most values, a small number of cases occurred where the A PERCEVOIR cachet was applied inverted. From

the small number of cases, but the even spread of values, one may suspect that this was to please collectors rather than just by chance. Gibbons does not mention these at all, but Yvert says "the majority of values exist with handstamp inverted, worth 40% premium" - without elaborating which values do exist.

Boule, the French auction house, broke up a fine collection of Chine overprints in their sale of 18 June 2004. In particular there were quite a few of the inverted A PERCEVOIR issues and, as even Yvert is reticent about which values exist inverted, it seemed a good idea to record these rather elusive issues in the *Journal of Chinese Philately*. The list may not be exhaustive, but it is a good beginning for these relatively obscure and difficult issues.

First, the horizontal overprints :



5c yellow-green, violet overprint inverted (Yvert 6Ba var, Boule lot 1094).



30c brown, red overprint inverted (Yvert 9 var, Boule lot 1099).

Secondly, the diagonal overprints:



5c green Peace & Commerce, red overprint inverted (Yvert 13 var, Boule lot 1109).



15c blue Peace & Commerce, violet overprint inverted (Yvert 15a var), also the same stamp with red overprint inverted (Yvert 15 var) (both stamps formed Boule lot 1109 but only the violet overprint was illustrated).



5c green Blanc, red overprint inverted (Yvert 17 var, Boule lot 1109).



Another 5c Blanc with red overprint inverted and also the first "A" more or less missing (Yvert 13 var, Boule lot 1117).

For more "missing A" varieties, see below.



10c Mouchon with red overprint inverted (Yvert 18 var), along with a normal, collecting postage due on an unfranked postcard (Boule lot 1123).



The missing "A" variety seems to be a worthwhile constant variety which is seen in three cases in this auction, yet is not mentioned in Yvert or elsewhere. It seems to be more than a matter of chance - not a question of dry inking, more that part of the surcharge has been cut away or has fallen off - for a tiny fraction of the missing letter can just be made out under magnification in each case, as shown above.



5c Blanc with violet overprint. the first "A" more or less missing (Yvert 13a var, Boule lot 1120).



15c Mouchon with violet (towards a reddish shade) overprint with the first "A" more or less missing (Yvert 19a var, Boule lot 1126).

Photo acknowledgements are due to BOULE, 10 rue de la Grange Batelière, F-75009 Paris.

Addendum

In the last issue of the *JCP* (above), we ran an article listing varieties on the postage dues. It seems these issues caught the attention of early collectors, since the varieties were saved in collections and passed on to posterity. However, the early collectors were stamp collectors in the simple sense of the word, and most of the used examples of this issue were cut off letters and kept as stamps on small pieces.

In those times, some collectors wanting used stamps simply purchased them at the post office counter, stuck them all on a large sheet of paper, and had the postal clerk cancel them right away. That ensured nice cancels and a 100% survival rate. Today, we rather look down on such usage. The group in the Boule auction is sufficiently large to give us some feedback about how they were collected. The used ones on piece show a variety of different cancel dates, and a variety of types of paper were used to carry the stamp. Furthermore, some are on portions of postcard, and in this case each in the top right position of the card, applied diagonally, which was a practice used fairly often by postal clerks applying postage dues on unstamped mail. All this points to the stamps genuinely being used on unfranked or underfranked mail; in other words, a completely legitimate issue, used correctly for its purpose.

This is an interesting point, as it would make surviving entire covers rather rare.

Our CPSL member Mr Ikenberg has responded with one of the Peace & Commerce issues on cover. This shows the postage due with red overprint applied to a full cover locally addressed to a person at a *poste restante* address at the German post office. One wonders if the writer ever intended using a stamp, as the written address fills most of the space available on the front of the cover.

The Boule sale contained only one whole cover (a postcard with two of the Blanc issues, illustrated above), compared with 18 items on piece. This may reflect the collecting preference of the vendor in question, but it does point towards the availability of material: entire covers must be rare.

Do any other readers have entire covers or cards showing use of these Tientsin provisional dues? It would be interesting to see examples.

---ooo000ooo---

This article first appeared in the Journal of Chinese Philately Nos 357 and 358 of April and June 2005, and is reproduced here by kind permission of the author/editor and the China Philatelic Society of London [see page 2 for address].

Modern Post Offices in Mali and in French Polynesia

Bob Maddocks



Timbuctoo Post Office in November 2004 –
shown on the left, in premises shared with BHM Bank



Timbuctoo Post Office postmark 24.11.04

In early 2004 I spent some time in French Polynesia and, later in the year, paid a visit to Mali – more particularly to Timbuctoo (or Tombouctou as the French called it), following the Niger from Bamako, via Segou and Mopti. Except at Mopti, which post office I did not get to see, I took photographs of the post office buildings for my general interest, though I do not collect the stamps or postal history of Mali. I thought readers might perhaps be interested in seeing these – especially members who have a special interest in the countries concerned.

On the front cover of this Journal is a photocopy of an unused French colonial period viewcard of Timbuctoo Post Office dating, I guess, from the 1920s. I have nothing else to warrant a comprehensive article on this period; but I have added a modern special cachet used by the post

office there. This shows an armed (with a spear) Tuareg and minarets with the words “*Tombouctou, la Mystérieuse*”.

During my visit Timbuctoo was hot (42°C+) and sand blown; a once fabled city of mystery and inaccessibility is now a shadow of its former self. For an old coaster such as myself the interest lay in the former residences of the first European explorers known to have reached Timbuctoo – a Briton, Major A G Laing (1826), a Frenchman, René Caillié (1827), and a German, Heinrich Barth (1853) (see page 19).

The present post office is in premises shared with a bank. Several bags of mail lay piled up behind the counter awaiting a plane to Bamako. Air Mali had gone bust, and I understood charter flights (private) for passengers and cargo were spasmodic in arrival and departure. I hope you like the colourful attire of the post office staff!



Timbuctoo Post Office staff in their finery, in otherwise very austere premises



Segou Post Office – built in the French colonial period



(above) Bamako General Post Office – built in the French colonial period, around 1945

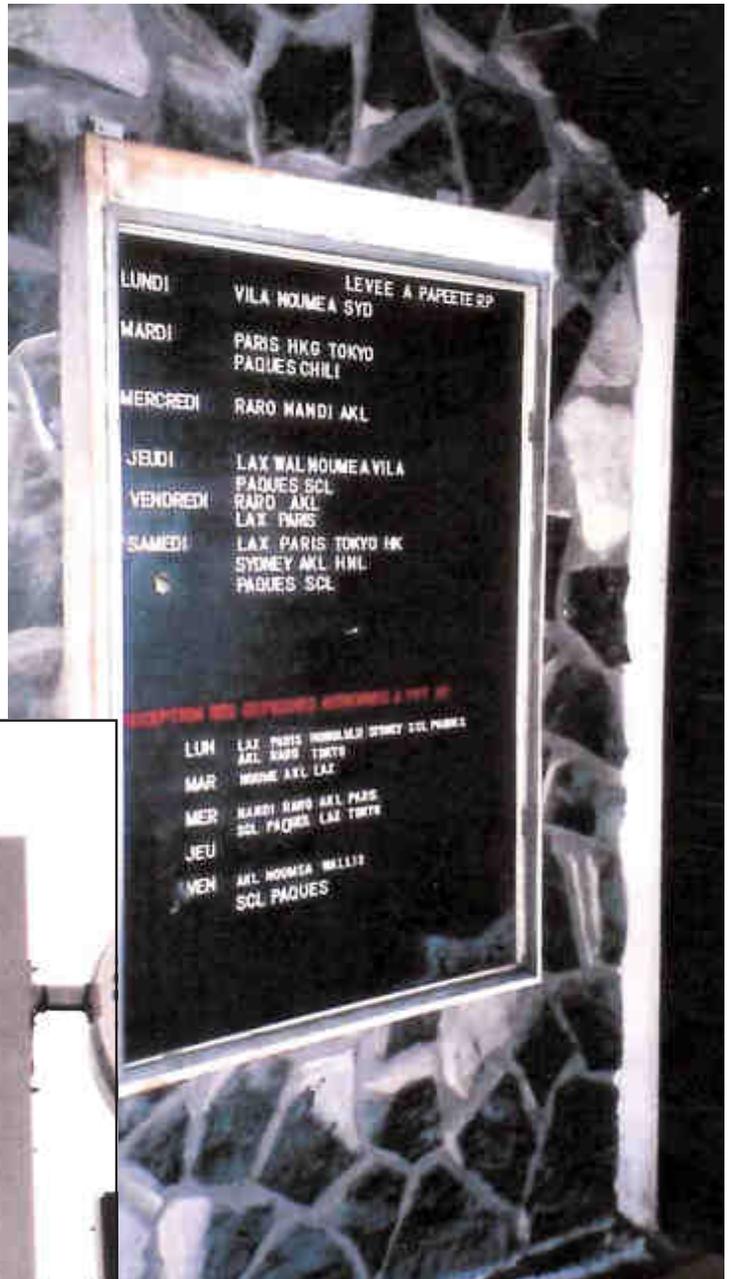
(below) Main Post Office, Papeete, French Polynesia – this is fairly new; the old colonial post office on the same site was demolished



(above) Plaques commemorating the 3 explorers mentioned in the text

(right) Mail flight schedules in/out shown at Papeete Post Office, February 2004

VILA (Vanuatu) NOUMEA (New Caledonia)
SYD (Sydney)
HKG (Hong Kong)
PAQUES (Easter Island)
RARO (Raratunga) NANDI (Fiji) AKL (Auckland)
LAX (Los Angeles) WAL (Wallis & Futuna)
HNL (Honolulu) SCL (Seychelles)



(left) Sign outside Bora Bora Post Office – partly in English!
I asked a simple question - what does the 'O' stand for? but could not get a simple answer! I would guess 'Océanie'



Exterior of Bora Bora Post Office
in French Polynesia, February 2004



Interior of Bora Bora Post Office
in French Polynesia, February 2004

Mauritania — the Bogus “KRONFA” Cancel: A New Discovery

Bill Mitchell



Figure 1 –
KRONFA cancel on
5c Faidherbe stamp (Yv 4)



Figure 2 –
KRONFA cancel on
4c ‘Merchants crossing the desert’ issue



Figure 3 –
The postmarks “extracted” from the stamps

In our article on the Post Offices of Mauritania, Laurence Lainbert and I mentioned the bogus cancel of Kronfa. It is inscribed MAURITANIE / KRONFA and is always dated 2 OCT 06⁽¹⁾. I have a part strike on the 5c Faidherbe stamp of that year (Yv 4) formerly in Laurence’s collection (Fig 1); recently I have added, courtesy of Jim Moffat, another example, this time a part strike on a stamp not issued until 1913 — the 4c of the Merchants Crossing the Desert issue (Yv 19) (Fig 2). Maurice has managed to bleach out the design of the stamps (most of it in the case of the 4c, which has a black centre) to enable a better examination of the cancels to be made, and these are illustrated as Figure 3.

Comparing the two, it seemed to me that the “2” on the 4c (which is all that can be read with any certainty on the dater block) indicated, as I think would be expected, that the canceller was the same in each case and had been mutilated to disguise the fact that it was dated prior to the issue of the 4c stamp — the month has been almost completely excised and the year seems to have been altered; it could possibly be “30”. As regards the relative position of KRONFA and the dashes immediately above, they do appear to be similar; and in both cases the “0” is broken in much the same place.

As I have never been particularly adept with a magnifying glass I thought it would be as well to get a second opinion, and I showed the stamps to David Jennings-Bramly, who does not collect French Colonies but has always been interested in forgeries. I am most grateful for his conclusions, which are (I have made good his abbreviations) —

“The authenticity or otherwise of the postmarks on the 4c and 5c Mauritanie stamps is beyond me, I know nil about French West Africa stamps. However, I will comment.

I find it odd [that] both have only partial strikes placed where they are – as if originally on vertical pairs that have been separated.

The 4c: i. The figure 2 in the postmark doesn’t look French to me.

ii. The N has a deformed left leg and appears [to be] at the wrong angle to the centre of the postmark and to the letters on either side of it.

iii. The O is apparently broken between 10 and 11 hours..

iv. The inner ring ought to be *perlé*, not dots and dashes. I know that dots can appear to be dashes if the postmark is skewed, but these two marks do not show another sign of skewing.

The 5c. The same i to iv apply and therefore I conclude that both postmarks are from the same marker.”

He added two further comments.

“a. The marks are to me thick lettered and I would expect thinner at that time; the ink looks thick, like not properly rolled out printer’s ink.

b. The 06 [on the 5c stamp] are the wrong shape and size, the 0 is narrow; the 6 is too wide and the loop is wrong; the figures are placed at an angle to each other whereas both should be upright.”

Many thanks, David. I’m sure that you won’t mind my saying, as regards your point iv, that dotted inner circles were obsolescent in colonial cancels by 1906, although they are known used as late as 1920. They were gradually



Figure 4 –
MAURITANIE handstamp
from the COL.FRA Nomenclature

replaced by two types – continuous circles from 1881 and circles of dashes from the following year⁽²⁾.

A point which I did not make to David, because it was not relevant to the question of whether both strikes of the bogus cancel came from the same device, is that the person responsible for its manufacture was apparently unaware of the fact that early Mauritania handstamps have a continuous inner circle; an example is shown in Fig 4. This cachet has an outer diameter of 25 mm, the town name and MAURITANIE are separated by what appear to be colourless crosses, and the continuous inner circle is fragile and frequently damaged, sometimes giving the effect of dashes. The cachet with the true dashes has an outer diameter of 24 mm and no separating device.

The “*Mauritanie – Essai de Nomenclature des Timbres à Date 1890 à 1975*” by Jacques Merot⁽³⁾ illustrates as many

date stamps as are known – there are many gaps – but unfortunately does not include known dates of use; the earliest example illustrated of an inner circle of dashes is dated 6 May 1916. I have been unable to find anything earlier in my collection.

References

- (1) See the Journal for June 2004 (N° 233), note (10) to Table 1 on page 47.
- (2) See the first instalment of the long article “*Essai de Classification des Cachets Postaux Français d’Outre-mer de 1876 à Nos Jours*” by Henri Tristant which appeared in *l’Écho de la Timbrologie* between November 1954 and April 1956; these details can be found on page 420 of the issue for 30 November 1954.
- (3) *COL.FRA Bulletin Hors-série* N° 15–2, 1997.

FRENCH STAMPS MINT & FINE USED

**I specialise in very fine used stamps of France from around 1900 to date
and also have good stocks of unmounted mint from around 1940 to 2000.**

**If you send me your wants lists using either S.G. or Yvert numbers
I will price up and return to you.**

Special rates for F&CPS members.

References available.

Please ask to be put on my mailing list for regular Special Offers.

I also stock a wide range of “back of the book” material.

Richard Broadhurst

Unit 10 Teddington Business Park, TW11 9BQ UK

Tel: 020 8977 9665

Fax: 020 8977 5687

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong

Cameo: Journal of the West Africa Study Circle

Vol 9 N° 3 Whole N° 67 Jan 2006: Sénégal 'Aviso Postal' Response (Kelly & Millet); Cameroun - the 1/-sterling Surcharge (Bratzel et al); 1961 Buea, Cameroun FDC backdated (Wright & Bratzel); Togo WW1 censored mail (Mayne); Dahomey Bisects - the final word (Mitchell); PanAm FAM 18 & 22 "Via Natal , Bolama" (Ince & Priddy).

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 114 4^{ème} Trim 2005: L'expansion de la Présence Postale Française en Chine du XX^e siècle et les Timbres à date (Chane-Tune); Millésimes des colonies françaises (Peter); Viet-Nam: Carte franchise des îles & pénitencier de Poulo-Condore (Hurpet); Nouvelle Calédonie: Les variétés 81 à 87 (Bessaud); Les avatars du Gabon-Congo (Codou); Madagascar: Lettre chargée (Varin); Compléments aux Hors-Série et Ouvrages: Haute-Volta: Essai de classification des oblitérations (Bouerat); Guyane: Compléments au Hors-Série N° 25-1 (Simon).

Documents Philatéliques

N° 186: articles were detailed in the last issue of the Journal (N° 238) but were erroneously ascribed to N° 185.

N° 187 1^{er} Trim 2006: Autour des lettres en franchise provenant du château de Marrac (Lissarragues); Lettre d'Haïti pour la France par la voie de Saint-Thomas (Desarnaud); Les griffes et mentions manuscrites en rouge ou en bleu sur les lettres en provenance ou à destination des pays situés en dehors de l'Union Postale [1875-1892]: le tableau C (Abensur); Étiquettes/Bulletins de réexpédition suisses [formulaire 214] 1878-1912 (Barnier); «Commissario di sanità di Molo Nuovo» ou l'histoire d'une lettre purifiée à Gênes mais qui aurait pu l'être à Marseille (Dutau & Slabbinck); Courrier d'un déporté de la Commune à la presqu'île Ducos [Nouvelle Calédonie] (Millet).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 282 (Vol 61, N° 4) Oct 2005: French Marcophily - Pre-revolutionary Military Markings (Luft & Kinsley); Re-use of the Boxed Registration Handstamp in the Colonies (Spong); Togo in World War I - The French Occupation Issues [Earliest dates of use, an update] (Mitchell); e-Bay revisited (Grabowski); Middle Congo - an Unrecorded Paquebot Cancel (Mitchell); Alan G McKanna [1925-2005] (Luft); Marc W Martin = Remembrances (Grabowski); Jerusalem - The Early French Post Offices [Revisited] (Luft); French Postal Rates - 01.03.2005 Tariff (-).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

Permanent features: Actualités, Prêt-à-poster Florilège de PÂP, Variétés, Anomalies, Cartes postales, Comment ça marche?, Flamme, Livres, Maximaphilie, Thématique.

N° 1790 Nov 2005: Françoise Dolto et Jacques Marette: Réunis à travers la lettre (-); L'histoire d'un graveur et de sa Marianne à la Libération (Hella); Marianne de Dulac, plus belle sur lettres (Jamet); les lettres des colonies générales: Des raretés parfois ignorées (Millet); Les explorateurs européens dans le monde (Monaud); La franchise des troupeaux de bétail en 1914-1918 (Danan).

N° 1791 Dec 2005: La série « art deco » [1] (Storch); Un Fol homme s'est envolé (Perez); Petite histoire des courriers égarés (Hella); Une agence en suspens (Benhamou); Des raretés parfois ignorées [cont./end] (Millet); Mises au point (Danan); Les enveloppes à tête des compagnies d'aviation (Emmenegger).

N° 1792 Jan 2006: Claude Nougaro, Dis, l'artiste, dessine-moi le timbre de tes rêves.. (-); Le mandat: une solution aux transferts d'argent (Hella); La taille-douce dans tous ses états [1] (Marion); La série « art deco » [2] (Storch).

N° 1793 Feb 2006: Dans un bureau pionnier [bureau de poste, Paris] (Dejy); Péripéties d'un formulaire...multiple (Hella); La série « art deco » [3] (Storch); Fermeture définitive [Bureau postal militaire de Creil Air] (Benhamou); La taille-douce dans tous ses états [2] (Marion); Ricqlès: du nouveau! (Avzarndel); Post-Expo 2005: libre service affranchissement (Héron & Gengembre); Pour la réponse seulement (Sinais & Carde).

Timbres Magazine

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

N° 63 Dec 2005: Les timbres de grève (Franceschi); 2,20F Liberté: les premiers carnets ouverts (Bernadet); Pierre Béquet, une vie partagée avec la gravure (Decaux); TSF, radio et phonographes (PJM); II faut de l'adresse...même en philatélie (de la Mettrie); Cartes Postales: Les grands magasins pour le bonheur des dames (Zeyons); Les marques de port payé du XVIII^e siècle (Baudot); Et le titre? [cartes postales régulièrement affranchies mais taxées] Prugnon); Des sardines bienvenues dans un colis de Lisbonne (Chauvin).

N° 64 Jan 2006: Parcours de collégiens de Nîmes à Sydney (Garrigue); Carnets: Le Maroc (PJM); Les Marianne de Béquet (Decaux); Polynésie: les oubliés des catalogues (Beslu); Lettres refermées par l'administration (de la Mettrie); Taxée pour insuffisance de surtaxe! (Prugnon); Les premiers pas de la collection des marques postales (Baudot); Première liaison aérienne directe Djibouti-France (Chauvin).

N° 65 Feb 2006: L'eldorado des collectionneurs! [Guyane] (de Pellinec); Pourquoi pas collectionner les timbres fiscaux? (Spano); Marcophilie et géométrie! (de la Mettrie); 1906-2006: en route vers le pôle Nord, sur les

traces du prince Albert 1^{er} de Monaco (Michaud); 2,20F Liberté: les premiers carnets ouverts 2^e pt (Bernadet); Quand un «brav' général» ébranle la République (Apaire & Sinais); Cartes postales: Paris, le retour du tramway (Zeyons); Une lettre française pour Neuchâtel (Prugnon); Pérégrination marcophile (Boudot); Timbres coloniaux: publicité et trafic interzone (Chauvin).

The Collectors Club Philatelist

Vol 84 N° 6 Nov-Dec 2005: Gleanings from the French Colonies: Manifestations of Madagascar Numeral Cancellations and the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type (Grabowski).

Vol 85 N° 1 Jan-Feb 2006: A Turned Cover from Guadeloupe in 1864 (Grabowski); Napoleon's Russian Campaign and Fieldpost to Holland from the Second Grande Armée (Adema).

The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol 36 N° 1 (Whole N° 171) Jan 2006: Hanoi Entrepôt Postmark (Bentley); Rural Post Cancel from Savannakhet (Drillien); New Navy Post Office Number 91 (Bentley); Last [*not "lost" as reported in the last Journal!*] Stamps of South Viet-Nam, Part 2 (Dykhouse).

LATEST SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Subject Index to Four French Philatelic Magazines 1946 to 2000

compiled by Derek Richardson

Published in 2004, this Society Brochure N° 8 devotes its 52 pages to a categorised list of articles from *Le Monde des Philatélistes*, *La Philatélie Française*, *Timbroscopie* and *L'Écho de la Timbrologie* over a period of 55 years. Indexed under more than 250 subject headings, the titles cover nearly all aspects of the stamps and postal history of France and her Colonies. The principal sections of the book are headed Préphilatélie/Marcophilie; Timbres d'Usage Courant; Timbres Semi-Modernes 1910-1940; Timbres - Autres Sujets; Affranchissements; Oblitérations des Timbres Français; France - Sujets Divers; and Timbres et Marques Postales des Pays d'Expression Française.

Once identified from the listings, any of these articles can be recovered and read, either by borrowing the magazines concerned (in the UK only) or by requesting photocopies of the relevant pages, from the Society's Librarian (details on the inside front cover of this Journal) who will give details of charges for this service. The book itself can be purchased at the very economic price of £6 plus p&p (at present 90p within the UK) from Len Barnes, 32 Belvedere Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 4NX.

Tables of French Postal Rates 1849 to 2005

by Derek Richardson

An enlarged and revised edition of Derek's well known lists of French postal rates, Society Brochure N° 7, has just been completed, and should be published by the time you read this notice. It is a very handy A5 in format, and gives extensive details of rates, both internal (from 1849) and foreign (from 1876), in the form of easy-to-read tables. The first two editions of this book contained 54 (+ 6) pages and 66 (+ 6) pages; this new edition contains 96 (+ 4) pages and has been thoroughly revised throughout. The first part, on internal rates, includes such sections as local letters, postage due, registration and insurance, bulk mailings, advice of delivery, visiting cards, express fees, debt collection, *mandats* and postal orders, airmail supplements, pneumatic post, and postal services for the blind. The second section, on foreign rates, repeats many of these headings and adds a few more: letters and postcards, registration and insurance, printed matter and samples, airmail supplements, small packets and postal packets, express fees, *cécogrammes*, newspapers, books and brochures, parcels.

At the present moment the exact price of this new edition is still being decided, but it is intended that a flier with the full details of how and where to order the book will be included with this Journal. It is hoped that copies will be printed in time for sale at the Society Weekend at Charlecote.

Fakes and Forgeries of 20th Century French Postage Stamps

by Geoff Gethin

One or two final touches are being put to this monumental new work that has been some years in the making. In A4 format with a card cover, it totals 148 (+ 4) pages with illustrations in full colour on nearly all pages, most of them 400% enlargements of the stamps concerned. Starting with philatelic forgeries from the 5F Merson of 1900 to the Liberation period of 1944-5 and even the 1946 overprint on the 1945 2F + 1F anti-tuberculosis charity stamp (110 pages in total for this section), it moves on to the British Intelligence and French Resistance forgeries of World War II (13 pages) and postal forgeries (24 pages) from the 10c rose Lined Sower of 1903 to the Marianne de Briat stamps of 1989 to 1997. There is also an Introduction, an Epilogue, a full Bibliography, and an Appendix briefly listing the forgeries of 19th century stamps of metropolitan France.

Once again, the price of this astonishing work is still being discussed by your Committee, but it is hoped that the book will be published this summer. Full details will - hopefully - again be given in a flier enclosed with the June issue of the Journal.

Carry on Searching

David Jennings-Bramly

The telephone chirruped. I answered it. The voice at the other end said "David, I've found it." Rockets whizzed up and I with them. At last, 30 and more years of fruitless searching and yearning gone, forgotten in a nano-second. A copy of the forged Levant Yvert N° 26, at last!

The ceiling had luckily checked my upward rush, so bumping against it, effervescing with excitement, I asked "Is it postmarked Dirre-Daoua, with a single ring of *tirets*?" "No, it's a double ring, the outer solid, the inner dashes ,

and the place name and country unreadable." "Send it to me." "No, I'll hold it till Monday, so that it won't hang around in the post office over the weekend." And then – "I'll send you a photostat, should arrive by Saturday." Click and silence.

There followed feverish euphoric anticipation during Thursday afternoon and evening. Friday arrived for me at 2.20hrs and my vigil ended near noon on Friday. I ripped the envelope open and extracted the promised photostat, reproduced here.



Up, *loupe*, and at it! Black postmarks on a black and white photostat are difficult, especially when indistinct like this one. I can only find "SA" with an apparently clear space before those two letters. What office can it be?

The French Levant stamps were used in Ethiopia in three offices, viz. Addis-Abeba, Dirre-Daoua and Harar. The only office with the letters SA in its name between 1900 and 1935 is BADESSA. The use of French Levant stamps ceased during October 1908 when Ethiopia joined the UPU: the earliest known strike of Badessa is more than 20 years later.

Turning the stamp this way and that, I peered at it. Suddenly a cold chill gripped my heart, and I was totally *bouleversé*. The false postmark was and is SALONIQUE TURQUIE!! Goodbye, Levant Yvert 26 – How do you do? Levant Yvert 21 forged 1 franc missing the 4 piastres change of currency overprint.

This variety has not been recorded for the genuine stamp. The forgery joins the Levant 2 francs forgery missing the 8 piastres, first recorded by me in our Journal N° 180 (page 82) of 1991.

The quest goes on.

POSTAL HISTORY SALES

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

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

Send for your free list to:

M D PIGGIN

Thatchers Lane, Tansley, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5FD

Tel. & Fax: (01629) 56293

E-mail: michael@mdpiggin.plus.com

The Dead Letter Office

(N° 421 bis.)

OUVERTURE DES REBUTS
conformément à la loi.

M.

DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE
DES POSTES AUX LETTRES.

REGISTRE D'AVERTISSEMENT.
Folio *2*
N° *115*

Paris, ce *15* *gbre* 18*81*

*Paris d'ailleurs
nouveau timbre*

16... du Mois *février*
ANNÉE *1816*

TIMBRÉE
DU BUREAU DE... *Mamers*

COPIE DE L'ADRESSE.
M. Adolphe Bourletton
Mullier
a Leval

incertain

et votre signature

demeure

(1) Si vous vous déterminez à retirer cet objet, il est indispensable que vous mettiez sur votre

Vous êtes averti de la part de MM. les Membres du Conseil des Postes, que la lettre dont la date, le timbre, et la copie de l'adresse, sont indiqués ci-contre, a été trouvée dans les rebuts ouverts suivant la loi.

Elle paraît signée du nom de Godet et partait de la Commune de Mamers

Elle contient une assignation en original et une incluse

*Elle vous sera rendue, en justifiant de la même écriture ou signature à la marge du présent (1), et en acquittant le port de *deux* dont elle était taxée.*

Vous remettrez le présent avertissement au Directeur des Postes de votre arrondissement, qui nous le renverra à Paris; et ce sera à lui que nous ferons passer l'objet qui vous intéresse, pour vous le transmettre.

Nota. Ceux qui se trouvent à Paris ou dans la banlieue, pourront se présenter eux-mêmes à l'hôtel des Postes, rue J. J. Rousseau, au Bureau général des Rebuts, avec le présent avertissement, sans lequel il ne sera rien délivré.

FAUTE DE RÉPONSE À CET AVERTISSEMENT, LES OBJETS SERONT BRÛLÉS, APRÈS LES DÉLAIS PRÉSCRITS.

Les Membres du Conseil des Postes,
MOLLIÈRE-LABOULAYE, BOULENGER, GOUIN.

Notes. Si cette lettre n'est pas renvoyée, la réclamation restera sans réponse.

P. S. Ceux qui sont domiciliés à l'étranger renverront la présente, avec leur réclamation, à leur correspondant à Paris.

Figure 1 - Form contained in the cover opposite

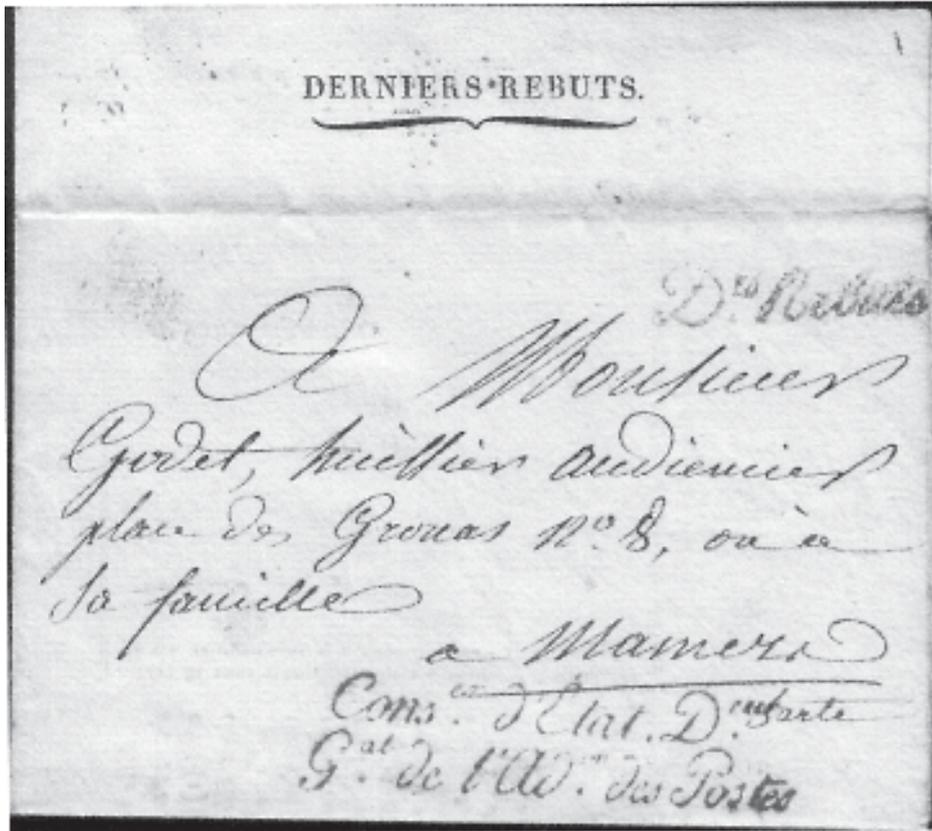


Figure 2 - Notification of dead letter

More than a year after being posted an undeliverable letter from Mamers (Sarthe) was opened in conformity with the law and, in 1817, notification made to the sender or a member of his family.

On payment of the postal charge of 8 décimes the item could be reclaimed. Failure to respond to this notification would result in the object being incinerated. The notification and contents are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Alan Wood

Islands On The Air

Richard Wheatley wrote a piece in Journal 238 (page 149) entitled "One of the Islands On The Air".

One of the three Islands On The Air mentioned at the end of the article (A54, Mafia Island) was once briefly a stamp-issuing territory, and another (A52, Juba Island) is part of another even more short-lived stamp-issuing country; the name of the third (A51, Los Island) does not appear on any stamps but, unlike the others, it does have a French connection. The following notes are taken in the main from "The Stamp Atlas" by Stuart Rossiter and John Flower⁽¹⁾.

Mafia Island is off the coast of the former German East Africa and was occupied by the British in December 1914 as a base for attacks on the German cruiser *Königsberg*. German East Africa yacht stamps and stamps issued for the Indian Expeditionary Force overprinted MAFIA in a variety of styles were used for a couple of years or so from early in 1915; they are listed under Tanganyika in the SG Part 1 catalogue. Strangely, although the island is large enough to be shown on most atlases, its exact location is

not quoted in the big "Times Atlas of the World", but an old Philips atlas gives it as 7°50' S, 39°48' E.

Jubaland was a province of Kenya ceded to Italy as from 29 June 1925 and incorporated into Italian Somaliland on 30 June 1926. Prior to its cession to Italy it used stamps of British East Africa; thereafter stamps of Italy overprinted OLTRE GIUBA were used until the colony ceased to exist. It is now part of the troubled Somali Democratic Republic. I cannot find Juba Island even on the big "Times" Atlas; there are several offshore islands but none have a name resembling Juba in any way — a coastal town, Jumba, could possibly be in fact on an island. Its location is given as 0°13' S, 42°38' E.

Los Island(s) (Îles de Los) are located on the other side of Africa, off the coast at Conakry in the former French colony of Guinea, whose stamps have been used there — Bouérat⁽²⁾ records post offices on the islands at Fotoba, Kassa and (Île) Tamara. Here again, the "Times" Atlas doesn't give a geographical location, but Philips gives it as 9°30' N, 13°50' W.

Bill Mitchell

⁽¹⁾ Macdonald & Co (Publishers) Ltd, London, 1986.

⁽²⁾ "Guinée Française - Essai de Nomenclature des Bureaux de Poste 1885-1958" (COL.FRA Bulletin Hors-Série 17-1, Paris, 1997).

Further details of these islands can be found on the IOTA website, as follows. The letters AF in the reference numbers stand for Africa.

AF 051 (Guinea, Atlantic Ocean): Guinée-Maritime Province South group (= Los Isls [namely Blanche, Cabris, Corail, Kassa, Rooma, Tamara])
 09°03' - 09°52' N – 013°20' - 014°00' W
 [Note: not Tombo on which Conakry is situated]

AF 052 (Somalia, Indian Ocean): Indian Ocean Coast South group (= Juba Isls [namely Dargaas, Guumme,

Jofay, Juula, Koyaama, Tandraas])
 00°45' N - 01°43' S – 041°35' - 043°35' E

AF 053 (Djibouti, Gulf of Aden): Gulf of Tadjoura group (= Maskali, Moucha)
 11°27' - 12°00' N – 042°42' - 043°15' E
 [Note: not Boutres, Diabie, Waramous]

AF 054 (Tanzania, Indian Ocean): Mafia Island (= Barakuni, Mafia, Njororo, Shung-mbili and satellite islands)
 07°30' - 08°10' S – 039°35' - 040°00' E
 [Note: not Boydu]

Maurice Tyler

French PO in Shanghai

In Journal 238 (page 159) Malcolm Givans posed two questions about a French Shanghai postmark and a *taxe réduite* handstamp. The answer to Mr Givans' first question will be very familiar to collectors of French postal stationery. Metropolitan postage rates applied equally to French post offices abroad and indeed throughout the French colonies and other overseas territories (provided they used French currency). On 16 April 1906 the basic French internal (ie "French Group") letter rate was reduced from 15 to 10 centimes⁽¹⁾ (the effective date overseas may have been somewhat later). Rather than incinerate existing stocks of 15 centimes postal stationery envelopes and letter-cards their face value was reduced to 10 centimes by the simple expedient of an overprint which reads TAXE REDUITE / À 0^f 10. The ACEP catalogue of French colonial postal stationery⁽²⁾ lists the following for the post offices in China, all on the "Mouchon *retouché*" type imprinted stamps –

CL (<i>Carte Lettre</i>)	6	0.10 sur 15c rouge sur gris
	6a	<i>idem</i> , surcharge bleue
EN (<i>enveloppe</i>)	6	0.10 sur 15c vermillon sur vert, 123 x 96mm
	7	<i>idem</i> , 147 x 112mm
	8	<i>idem</i> , sans inscription à l'angle supérieur gauche, 123 x 96mm
	9	<i>idem</i> , 147 x 112mm

It would appear that the blue overprint exists only on the letter-card and that there are three different types (II,

VIII and IX), but these are illustrated in the France volume of the catalogue which I don't have. As is shown in the letter-card illustrated in Mr Givans' article, the "inscription" in the upper left corner of postal stationery items makes provision for the name and address of the sender. At the time of Mr Givans' letter-card (1907) the basic foreign letter rate was 25 centimes⁽³⁾, hence the additional 5 and 10 centimes adhesives.

My collecting interests are far removed from the post offices in China, but I do have among the oddments accumulated over the years some examples of Shanghai postmarks. Nearly all of them have the month in italic type, but two have it in Roman type — the dates are 15 July 1901 and 21 September 1905. In case it is of interest, I also have Roman type on cancels of Fou-Tchéou (27 April 1903 and 12 August 1904), Han-Keou (13 June 1905) and Peking (22 April 1901).

References

⁽¹⁾ Richardson, D. J — *Tables of French Postal Rates 1849 to Date* (F&CPS Brochure N° 7, second edition 1996), page 4.

⁽²⁾ Association des Collectionneurs d'Entiers Postaux — *Catalogue Spécialisé des Entiers Postaux des Colonies Françaises, Bureaux Français à l'Étranger et Territoires Occupés ou Sous Mandat*, 2001.

⁽³⁾ Richardson, *op cit* page 42.

Bill Mitchell

Airmail Cancel of Saigon

With reference to the air cancel handstamp of Saigon shown by Ian McQueen in Journal 238 (pages 152-153) – what a wonderful cover this is! I will write to Bill Robertson personally about the high value of the obligatory tax stamps, which we both like.

The airmail cachet was certainly cancelled at Saigon; there was no international airmail service to Hanoi until 1939, although a weekly service did exist from Saigon in 1931.

The route from Saigon to Hanoi was a long and tedious one by rail and road: rail to Na Trang, road to Tourane, rail to Quang Tri, road to Vinh, rail to Hanoi. That would have taken 3 days.

To get to its destination the cover went via the Yunnan railway, which ran from Haiphong, the port of Hanoi, to Kunming, the main town of Yunnan province. Hokow is on the Chinese side of the border between Yunnan and Tonkin. The letter reached its destination on the morning (10am) of the 25th. The "24" refers to the 24th year of the Chinese Republic, which is 1938.

This railway is metre gauge and single track the whole way, and it climbs to 2000 metres. Gradients are 1:150. The weekly express service covers the 762 km in 22 hours, at an average speed of 35 kph. It took 10 years to build and opened in 1910. There are 107 bridges or viaducts. The service can only run on pneumatic tyres.

David Taylor Smith

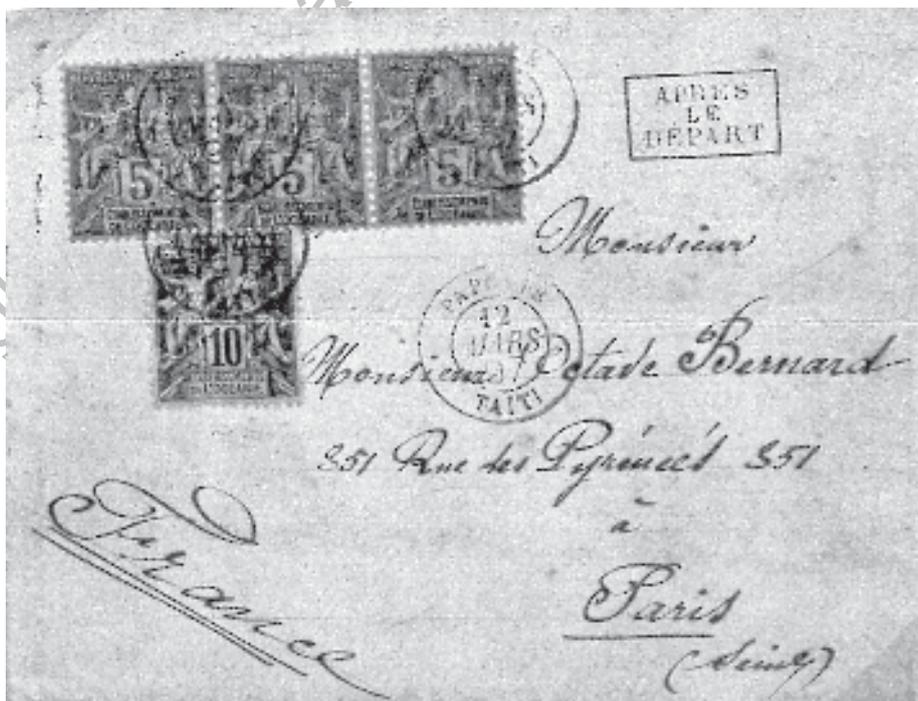


Regarding the question on page 152 of Journal 238 about where the “air cancel handstamp was applied”, I am not aware that such a marking was regularly used in Saigon. The Trans-Indo-China Railroad was built in sections. It was completed in 1936 and was the subject of a commemorative stamp set (Scott 200-02, C18) that gave the construction dates as 1901-36.

Even so, by the early 1930s through mail was achieved through a combination of train and motor vehicles that connected the rail sections. Illustrated here is a postcard dated 1929 that advertises the passenger service between Saigon and Hanoi in 60 hours. By mid-1935 it is safe to assume that a mail connection could usually be made in a couple of days or so.

Ron Bentley
Editor of *The Indo-China Philatelist*

Après le Départ Marks used Overseas



Here is yet a further example of the *Après le Départ* mark, used in Tahiti on 12 March 1897, with a Paris arrival date

stamp on the reverse of 20 May; the cover is from Tony Eastgate's collection.

John Yeomans

Île de France Catapult Mail

I was preparing an exhibit that includes a page about the catapult mail from the *Île de France* on 23 August 1928, and on your website came across the mention of an article by David Hogarth in Journal 231, and was then directed to a follow-up comment in Journal 232.

I must thank your committee member in charge of publications Peter Maybury, general secretary Geoff Gethin, and editor Maurice Tyler for their prompt replies to my query, with scans of the appropriate articles that have helped in my research. I have also become aware of an English edition of *Timbroscopie* from 1986 at Capex;

but I should be grateful for any further information in English that your members could suggest for the complete story of the *Île de France* catapult overprint.

Thank you for all your concern about my questions. I think I have verified my information which was mostly from memory. I wanted some documentation and now I have it. You must have a very scholarly society. Your helpfulness to each other is very impressive. If my interests leaned to your field I would not hesitate to join. Meanwhile I will suggest membership to anyone focusing on France or the Colonies. *Bonne chance!*

Paul Zatulove

British Cameroon Stamps

With reference to the query from a Michel Collet in Journal 238 of December 2005 (page 132), I can inform him that the British Cameroons UKTT set is readily available from small auctions (such as Cambridgeshire Philatelic Auctions, 27 Fore Hill, Ely, Cambs CB7 4AA, or

Philangles, Carson House, 44 Legh Street, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 1UJ) and dealers in the UK, as mint or used basic sets. The only value that will be a challenge is the 2d type A, which turns up from time to time, but where there are only six mint copies known.

Rob May

The World's First Airmail Postcards

In Journal 238 of December 2005 (pages 133-140) the late Ernst Cohn recounts the history of the first airmail postcards authorised by the French Post Office during the Franco-German War of 1870-71.

In spite of the first batch of such mail falling into enemy hands postcards continued to be used until the end of the siege, but they do not appear to have been popular with the besieged Parisians. Genuine cards should not be confused with the fantasy philatelic cards produced after the war by Maury.

An analysis of data provided by sales catalogues has been made to determine the relative scarcity of flown postcards from besieged Paris in 1870-71. With a total of 2420 items flown from Paris offered in 26 Parisian sales catalogues from 1996-2005 only 76, or 3.2% of the sample, were postcards. Of these five were described as being visiting cards. Based on these figures it was not surprising therefore to find that in three private collections of mail from the Franco-German War each possessed just two postcards. The conclusion is that on this evidence postcards are over 30 times scarcer than the letters.

Alan Wood

Togo 1921 "Mandate" Issue - Update of Earliest Recorded Dates

In Journal 225 of September 2002 (page 115) Bill Mitchell wrote a piece that included an updated list of the earliest recorded dates of this issue.

Having acquired on eBay a registered cover – albeit philatelic and therefore not really worth illustrating here – I can now report the use of the 40c, 45c, 50c, 75c and 2F values at Anécho on 13 February 1921.

Sent to Saginaw, Michigan, and arriving 21.03.1921, the cover also carried the French registration label M&W RF1a. The previous latest date recorded for this label was 21.11.19.

Interestingly the sealed envelope contained details of a sale of collections by auction by M. Bernard Porignon 19.02. and 26.02.1921 in Brussels. The cover however was sent on the instructions of Henry Hooreman, also of Brussels.

John Mayne

BOOKSHELF

La Poste en Moselle 1940-1945, Tome II, by Alain and Stéphane Demeraux (SPAL [Association des Spécialistes en Marques Postales et Oblitérations d'Alsace-Lorraine], 2005.)

Volume I of this book was reviewed in F&CPS Journal N° 235. It was devoted to the cancellations and registration labels used in Lorraine in 1940-45 during its annexation by Germany. Volume II has now been published, just as Volume I is close to running out of print. The new volume is devoted mainly to the postage and other stamps and stationery of annexed Lorraine, to the various types of mail and services, to travelling post offices and finally to the censoring of mail. Certain parts of the book have been written by experts in the field of study under discussion.

The book is divided into the following sections:

- The Hindenburg postage stamps and postcards of Germany overprinted 'LOTHRINGEN' (issue, usage, varieties, perfins, forgeries, demonetisation, valuation for mint and used and used on cover). (20 pages)
- German postage stamps used in Lorraine (including Nazi party, official and fiscal stamps). (5 pages)
- Postal and other rates for home and abroad (including a French translation of German terms for types of mail and postal services). (19 pages)
- TPO cancellations (each with illustration, first and last reported date of use and valuation), plus map of the railway network (taken from Charles Michel). (27 pages)
- Post Office markings and handstamps (e.g 'return to sender', 'postage paid'). (2 pages)
- 'Postage Free' markings and handstamps on official mail, mail from German postal employees sent to work in Lorraine, mail sent with the postage to be paid by the addressee and *Feldpost* mail. (14 pages)
- *Dienstpost* mail. (8 pages)

- Franking machines. (4 pages)
- Hitler stamps overprinted 'METZ 3' for use with the *Écho de Nancy* newspaper. (11 pages)
- French Censorship, 1939-40 (with listing of all offices). (16 pages)
- German Censorship, 1940-44 (with details of the markings of the five offices that censored Lorraine mail). (40 pages)
- French Censorship, 1944-45 (with listing of all recorded offices). (6 pages)
- The United States Army Post Office in Lorraine, 1944-45 (listing of all APOs, the units using them (where known) and the places and dates of stay). (4 pages)
- The Liberation overprints of Metz and Forbach. (5 pages)
- Iconography (a gallery of items of interest). (12 pages)

The book is a synthesis of old information and new research, all presented in a clear user-friendly fashion. It is in A4 format like Volume I, but it is not ring-bound, having instead a more traditional binding. It has 196 pages and contains many outline illustrations of date stamps and handstamps and over 100 often coloured illustrations of covers, cards, stamps and other items. Its very first illustration is of the famous hammer used at Metz to apply the rare hammer date stamp depicting the German Gate with the small letter 'a' alongside. The book is available from Alain Demeraux, 6 rue du Dauphiné, 57600 Forbach, France. It costs 45€ (or 35€ for members of SPAL), plus postage and packing of 6€ for destinations abroad.

It is understood that prisoner-of-war camps in Lorraine, which it was originally intended to include in Volume II, will now be dealt with in a further volume.

ooooooooooooo

Books Noted

Les oblitérations des postes françaises du Maroc entre 1852 et 1956, by Thierry Sanchez; 196 A4 pp; available via SPLM, 206 boulevard Péreire, 75017 Paris; price 36€ (+ p&p outside France). [Summary of types of markings; study of over 410 postal installations and over 1100 markings (840 illustrated); railway markings; valuations; bibliography.]

Oblitérations manuelles du Var – Timbres à date hexagonaux, by R Gregnac-Daudemard; available from the author, "Colline", boulevard des Arbousiers, 83120 Sainte-Maxime; price 8.50€. [About 50 loose sheets in A5 format dealing with all known cancels of this type in the *département*.]

Une histoire du timbre-poste, by Michel Marmin; pub. Collection Chronique; 240 pp 230 x 295mm; available from the Musée de La Poste, 34 boulevard de Vaugirard, Paris 15^e; price 31€. [The history of France as seen through the chronological history of French postage stamps.]

Catalogue spécialisé des timbres pour colis postaux d'Algérie, by Jacques Dudoy; pub. Édition Phil-EA; 52 pp 290 x 294mm; details from Jean-Pierre Lamarre, 29 rue Jacques-Louis-Bernier, 92700 Colombes; price 33€. [Second edition of detailed catalogue of the parcel stamps of Algeria.]

L'occupazione italiana di Mentone (1940-1943), by Gianpaolo Guzzi; pub. Éditions Vaccari, 2005); 90 A4 pp; details from Vaccari, via M Buonarroti 46, 41058 Vignola (Mo), Italy; website www.vaccari.it; email info@vaccari.it; price 25€ + p&p. [Franco-Italian postal history of Menton under fascist administration for 3 years, including French translation of Italian text in last 12 pages.]

Glossaire philatélique illustré sur Napoléon Bonaparte, by Paul Michel; 580 A4 pages; details from the author, Mas Evesque, 30340 Rousson; email michelpaulfr@yahoo.fr; price 48€ + p&p. [Chronology of life of Napoleon Bonaparte; 6100 philatelic items listed by country and date; section of colour illustrations; index of people, places and events, with philatelic references.]

Maurice Tyler

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 5 NOVEMBER 2005

Bernard Lucas: Pneumatic Mail

Present: George Barker, Steve Ellis, Bernard Lucas, Peter Maybury, Michael Meadowcroft; John Morton, Tony Shepherd, Peter Stockton, Richard Wheatley and John Whiteside.

Apologies: R Barnes, A Goude, S & J Holder; Yvonne Wheatley.

Bernard opened the first session with a detailed explanation of the history of the system in Paris from its inception in 1866 to its demise in 1984. Mention was also made of systems in Berlin and Vienna and the advantages of the “*pneu*” against the single line telegraph system when it opened to the public in 1879. Three of the actual cylinders were produced together with maps of the system showing the stages of its development. We were shown the two types of stationery produced in 1879 with rates equal to five times the ordinary postage rate. Interestingly they were printed with *type Sage* “stamps”, the specially commissioned *Chaplain* dies not being ready in time. We were then taken through the evolution of the system, with

mail destined for outside the system, mis-postings, *boîtes mobiles*, reply paid items, usages at the specially opened seven offices at the 1900 Great Exhibition, higher weight items postage due, and *poste restante*. Registered items and the 1927 “telephone call” rate when 2 offices were flooded brought the session to a close.

The second part covered the period from 1941 to 1984, and we were treated to many unusual and rare items, including material from the collections of John Hammonds and Jack Alvey, neither of whom were averse it seems to “working” the system. More registered items, meter frankings, *Caisse Nationale*, express and official mail led us to 13 March 1984 when the system closed to the public. The final two frames were devoted to the systems in Marseille which lasted from 1910 to 1964, and Algiers where it most probably operated purely as a messenger service..

An appreciation of Bernard’s display and erudite presentation was given by George Barker.

JPM

LONDON MEETING OF 30 NOVEMBER 2005

Lesley Marley: Montargis

Lesley first distributed a sheet giving a brief history and description of the town of Montargis, which is situated about 110 km south of Paris, as a background to her display. She explained that she had first become interested in this town in the *département* of le Loiret after accompanying a school exchange visit, and had since developed her collection of mail to and from Montargis over many years.

The display started with a manuscript 1717 marking, and moved on to a postage due marking of 1781, and a 1784 cover from a convent at Montargis to London. We then saw examples of straight line marks, others with the *département* number added, Revolutionary terms and dates, amounts added in manuscript for extra weights, date stamps of types 11 to 17, and a conversion of the rate into *Groschen* at Aix-la-Chapelle.

1849 saw the first stamps, and these were shown in various combinations covering the rates for different weights. There were also picture postcards of the barracks at Montargis, one with its military cachet, a call-up card, a temporary cachet of the Army hospital, and a card and envelope for prisoners in the town. The first session of the display continued with Return to Sender covers, registered post, postal stationery cards, a plan of the railway with postcards and photos of the station, *courrier-convoyeur* marks, a prepaid card, free postage for official mail, a mark of the Centre de Chèques Postaux, and advertising slogans for the Trade Fair Exhibition and Antique Fair.

The second session on what is known locally as the “Venice of the Gâtinais” began with the legend about a Montargis dog illustrated on a postcard. This was followed by some more philatelic items such as 1873 postcards authorised for France and Algeria, 1c printed matter rate for a 1902 card, and the 5c tariff for a 5-word card.

Then came some ancient and modern photos and cards showing views of Montargis such as the canal, revealing how little had changed over time. Other exhibits included machine vignettes, a customs label and AO vignette, and noted differences in modern illustrated *flammes*. We saw examples of exhibitions in the town from different years (1966, 1976, 1983, 1986, 1988) with specimen cachets. These were followed by picture postcards of flooded streets, old carriages, and a bridge built by Eiffel; designs (one signed) by Pierre Béquet; machine cancels; *Journée du Timbre* cards; views of the statue of Mirabeau and of the canal port.

In order to fill the final frames Lesley displayed a few items from her Whaling collection with a French connection, including Monaco views (such as the Oceanographic Museum); picture postcards and stamps showing Prince Albert I^{er} whaling, showing his scientific interests; commemorative stamps and special cancellations on this topic, including the Oceanographic Institute in Paris.

Lesley was thanked by Chris Hitchen for what had proved a most varied and interesting display of material.

MST

SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 7 JANUARY 2006

Members' Displays / New Acquisitions

The Organiser welcomed nine members to the first meeting of the New Year, and the following gave displays:

Yvonne Larg: Monaco Hotels
Bob Larg: Military Postcards pre-1914
Michael Annells: French Airmails
John Yeomans: Two queries from French India
Bob Small: French Aviation Meetings 1922-34
Mike Berry: Île de Ré and *Ballons Montés*
George Nash: WWII POWs and Liberation Mail
Roy Ferguson: Maximum Cards 1940-1950
Colin Spong: Madagascar - French Civil Censorship

Members present: Michael Annells, Michael Berry, Roy Ferguson, Bob & Yvonne Larg, George Nash, Bob Small, Colin Spong, John Yeomans; and Guests: Graham Both [looking for the Sussex PH on the wrong day!] and Pat Spong who looked after the refreshments. Apologies from Betty & Frank Blincow, Colin Clarkson, Geoff Gethin, John Hammonds, Bill Mitchell, Barbara Priddy, John Thorpe, and Michael Wilson.

The next meeting was arranged for Saturday 1 April 2006 when the Organiser of the Northern Group, Peter Maybury was coming to display material entitled "What I collect".

CWS

NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 14 JANUARY 2006

An Hour with Stephen Holder / Members' Choice

Present: George Barker, Robert Barnes, Steve Ellis, Alan Goude, Stephen Holder, Judith Holder, Ken Howitt, Bernard Lucas, Peter Maybury, Tony Shepherd, Richard Wheatley, John Whiteside.

Apologies: N J Martin, M Meadowcroft, P Stockton, P Rooke, Y Wheatley and R Stock

The 1st session of the afternoon was devoted to a most erudite display of the stamps and postal history of the Cameroons presented by **Stephen Holder**, in which he covered the nine periods of the area's postal history with stamps and covers from the pre-colonial era, through the French, the German and the British involvements to the present day republics. Needless to say, an excellent selection of books relative to the subject was made available for all to peruse. Tony Shepherd expressed the appreciation of those present for a truly fine display of rarely seen material.

The 2nd session opened with an unusual and fascinating contribution from **George Barker** on the subject of Euro Happenings, a look at the issues and rates relative to the euro/franc, according to La Poste. Trans-Atlantic mail

post-UPU with covers bearing either US stamps or cancellations was **Steve Ellis'** contribution. He was followed by **Ken Howitt** with the ?experimental route Dover-Boulogne during the period January 1848 to February 1849. A reprise of the history of the *Bureaux de Passe* 1864-1882 was **John Whiteside's** subject and **Richard Wheatley** produced one of his more succinct displays with a single sheet bearing an 1884 Dutch East Indies ps card posted in Marseille.

Bernard Lucas continued his almost forgotten (by him) treasures theme of *Type Sage*, this time used on cover, with many interesting destinations e.g. Persia. **Robert Barnes** took us to Senegal via the various overprints and village postmarks on detached stamps. A *pot pourri* of French Guinea was **Alan Goude's** subject with covers to Majorca, Greece, Corsica and other destinations, plus TPO marks and postal stationery, followed by sheets of most of the stamp issues. Last, but not least, was **Peter Maybury** with a selection of military mail from the period 1880 to 1900, and maritime mail between Marseille and the ports of Italy.

JPM

Charles Blomefield

Dealer in French Stamps and Philatelic Material
 Chipping Campden Gloucestershire GL55 6PP

Tel: 01386 841923 Fax: 01386 841937 e-mail: blomefield@aol.com

Website: charlesblomefield.com

Callers by appointment only; orders may be made by telephone, fax or e-mail
Special discounts for F&CPS members

I hold a very comprehensive stock of France with many rarer items, both used and mint. Please telephone or write for my full price list which covers all issues from 1849 to 2003. The 2006 Yvert France catalogue in hardback is available at £15.00 post free.

LONDON MEETING OF 25 JANUARY 2006

Michael Berry: (1) Île de Ré; (2) Balloon Mail

Michael started by explaining that he had had a house on the island for 14 years, and that he normally spent 3 months of the year there. Flights to the Île de Ré have become very easy, and there is now a bridge from La Rochelle. It has become a more and more popular destination for the French and in the summer almost sinks under the weight of the visitors. In the past, salt and (rather poor) wine have been its staple products, and there is also a useful oyster trade. Other trading has taken place there, and it has been used for the shipment of prisoners.

Disinfected mail from the West Indies was shown, taking the route Martinique - La Flotte - Marseille. We saw a wide variety of mail dating from the 1700s to about 1900, mostly from St Martin, but also from La Flotte - marks from the villages are extremely difficult to find. The letters

inside the covers were often displayed in addition, many of them solicitors' letters, and had been translated by Michael into English.

The second part of his display was concerned with balloon flights in the Siege of Paris, after the Prussians had besieged the city by 19 September 1870. He recounted how these flights took place at first by day and later by night as well, using coal gas in the balloons that were manufactured in the railway stations.

The collection started with the second balloon, the *Ville de Florence*, and included such items as a card from the only unmanned balloon, the SC mark on one cover, newsletters such as the *Gazette des Absents*, a picture of an anti-aircraft gun used to shoot down the balloons, and the very last balloon, the *Général Cambronne*.

Michael Annells: French Railways

Our second Michael of the evening told us that he would be covering mail that had (probably) travelled in France by rail between 1836 and 1906. The early railways usually followed the stage coach routes, and the first major catastrophe occurred in 1842.

Thus we saw a variety of lines and routes, with *bureau de passe* marks, TPOs and other items including some cross-Channel markings in black or red. One envelope had been produced for the 1851 Exhibition in London, and there were two unusual essays of railway marks. 25c plus the

route was marked on one cancellation, and there was one cover with complex re-routings.

Among items that we were shown were a Lyon - Marseille *Rapide* mark, another *Spécial* mark, and examples of the three different types of *bureau de passe* marks, that sometimes appeared on the stamp or on the back of the envelope.

At the end of the displays, that were attended by a disappointing total of 8 members including those displaying, Maurice Tyler thanked both Michaels for what had proved a very interesting and worthwhile show.

MST

WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 4 FEBRUARY 2006

Colin Spang: Madagascar Postal History / Members

15 members and one guest attended the first meeting of the year and we were pleased to welcome **Colin Spang** as our main speaker. Colin's display on aspects of Madagascar postal history included a comprehensive display of railway TPOs up until independence, and also a good showing of early airmails. Colin's presentation of this excellent display was of great interest to all those present, as proved by the amount of discussion around the frames afterwards. This was followed up by a display of "*Jusqu'à*" and other marks by **Ian McQueen**, an acknowledged expert on the subject.

After lunch at the Old Mill inn the following members displayed:

Ingrid Swinburn: "French censored mail mainly from the Colonies during WWII";

Bob Paterson: "The 1849 Centenary Commemoration Book";

Ashley Lawrence: "An 1870 letter written in old German from a French chateau commandeered by a Prussian lancer";

Lesley Marley: "Albert I work in the Monaco Oceanographic Institute with the emphasis on whaling";

George Nash: "Recent acquisition of WWII POW mail";

Chris Hitchen: "Special offices and franchise mail from Paris";

Gavin Fryer: "Classic imperforate stamps on cover";

and **Alan Wood**: "The Allied army of occupation 1815-1818".

The following members attended: G Fryer, C Hall, J Hammonds, C Hitchen, A Lawrence, P J Lawrence, Mrs L Marley, J J Martin, G Nash, R Paterson, I McQueen, C Spang, Mrs I Swinburn, B Weeks, and A J Wood.

Apologies were received from Peter Kelly, attending a meeting in Paris.

The next meeting of the Group will take place on 1 July 2006 and our invited speaker will be Peter Maybury who will display the "Postal history of Algeria".

PRAK

May 2006 Auction - Selected Lots



1919 French Occupation of Arad



1878 Gustave Bossange private formula card



Île Rouad forgeries

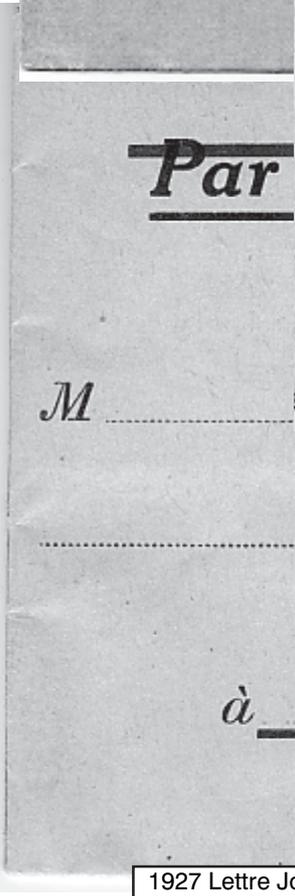
1880 Sage issues paying 2nd late collection



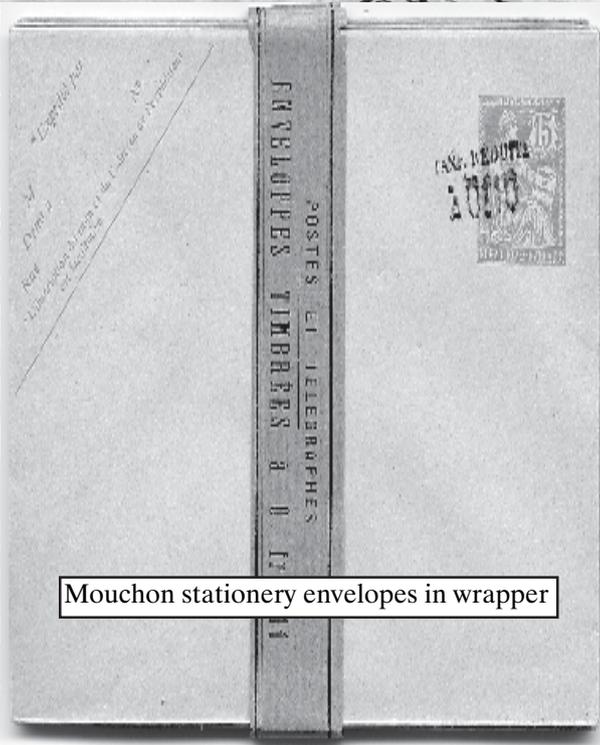
1F Napoléon deep carmine



1894 mandat



1927 Lettre Journal de Strasbourg balloon cover



Mouchon stationery envelopes in wrapper

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Brochures

- No. 1 **The Pneumatic Post of Paris** (Hayhurst 1974) £2.50
One of the very few available works on this fascinating subject
- 3 **The Postal Markings of the *Bureaux de Passe*** (Robinson 1977) £2.00
A must for the railway postmark collector
- 4 **The Legion of French Volunteers 1941-1944** (Reader 1981) £2.00
- 6 ***Le Type Paix*** (Richardson 1983) £2.50
- 7 **French Postal Rates – 1st edition** (Richardson 1992) £3.50
- 8 **Subject Index to Four French Philatelic Magazines 1946 –2000** £6.00

other publications

- Ref. OP1 **The Development of Rates of Postage – France** (Smith 1981) £3.00
- Ref. OP2 **A Handbook of French Philatelic Studies - Society Journal 128 - (1974)**
Contains 17 splendid articles by eminent philatelists, see below **: £3.50
- Ref. OP3 **Les Feuilles Marcophiles N° 238** with F&CPS members' contributions (1984) £1.50
- Ref. OP4 **The Pigeon Post into Paris 1870-1871** (Hayhurst 1970) £2.50
- Ref. OP5 **Cumulative Index to Society Periodicals 1949-1997** (Barker 1998) £4.25

** Cross Channel Posts - J.H. Levett. Channel Islands: the French Mails - O. W. Newport.
Les grandes heures de la Poste à Lyon - G. Chapier. The Cérés Issues; the tête-bêche & the
"Commissure" - P. De Lizeray. The War of 1870 - Dr. Fromaigeat; J-F. Brun; E. M. Cohn ; Dr. H. Gachot.
Cancellations on Colonies General Issues - R.G. Stone. Saar and its Posts 1670-1959- Mrs. D.M. Green.
Aviation & Air Mails of France - F.J. Field. A propos d'une lettre Franco-Britannique et
Aéromaritime - Dr. R. Joany. Agences consulaires en Amérique - R. Salles. Pratiques & the
disinfection of mail - D. Vandervelde. The "Blanc" issues for the French Offices abroad - G.E.Barker.
Les Timbres-monnaie - J. Pothion. 50 centimes red "Semeuse lignée" Type IIa - M.L. Bister.

ALL SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY and POSTAGE & PACKING

Enquiries to: Peter Maybury, 18, Courtneys, Wheldrake, York YO19 6BR (G.B.)

e-mail stock@fcps.org.uk

~~Please do not send money, you will be invoiced~~