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# The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



See article by Ashley Lawrence illustrated in colour on page 97.

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

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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.

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**The Journal**

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

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Northern Group: J P Maybury

Wessex Group: P R A Kelly / A J Wood

Scottish Group: Mrs M Pavey

\* \* \*

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# The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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## SOCIETY NOTES

### Letter from the President

As we approach the quiet time of the year, philatelically speaking, it is a good time to get up to date with one's reading and perhaps the right moment to remind all of you of the wonderful resource the Society has in our library, not only in the books that we have but also the magazines. The library is being added to all the time and last year your committee agreed to the purchase of some £700 of scarce out of print books as well as new ones. Use of the library has increased slightly but it is slender given the number of members. Do look at your library list as I am sure there is something there that you would find useful and enjoy.

Similarly the Magazine Index will enable you to locate articles on a very wide range of subjects and certainly, as one of the team of compilers, I was amazed by some of the articles written long ago which are of considerable use to me now.

It is also with great pleasure that I can report that Geoff Gethin is back from hospital and has resumed his role of Secretary. All matters relevant to this position should now be referred to him. Welcome back, Geoff!

While on the subject of Geoff, I can also announce that the Fakes and Forgeries book has now been printed and has started to be delivered to purchasers. This has been a major endeavour for Geoff over many years and has been supported by Maurice Tyler who has done an absolutely superb job on presentation and layout. Mick Bister has also been involved in proofreading the book and suggesting a number of improvements that have been incorporated in it. All details of the book are on the back page of the last Journal (N° 240) and members will have received a preferential price order form that has to be received with payment no later than 31 October. This book will be of value and interest to all who have an interest in postage stamps and philately in general. For your own benefit and that of your Society please do not miss this opportunity.

Now a word about our sister Society in the United States. As many of you know, we have maintained a very close and friendly relationship with them for many, many years. Chris Hitchen and I met with their president Dave Herendeen at Philatex this year, and while some of our members have formed relationships with their members, working together on different projects, there may be some of you who have your own projects underway which, for purposes of obtaining additional help or input, it might be useful for you to bring to the attention of their members. If this is something you would like to discuss, please contact me. I should also take this opportunity to thank Dave Herendeen and his colleagues for allowing us to use their table at Washington to display some of our wares and details of our society. Hopefully this will bring new members to our Society.

Finally, I am delighted to tell you that our Journal has won an award from ABPS for the best Specialist Society Journal, and a Vermeil was awarded to Maurice Tyler, our Editor, at Washington. Well done, Maurice! A well deserved accolade.

**Peter Kelly**

\* \* \*

### New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:  
1274 P H L Hills (Kent), 1275 W K (Bill) George (USA), 1276 A M Marks (Yorkshire), 1277 John Breckenridge (Berkshire).

\* \* \*

### Member Deceased

We are saddened to hear of the death of the following member, and offer our sincere condolences to his family:  
361 V S G Hatch.

\* \* \*

### Packet Secretary - France

Following the resignation of Mavis Pavey after many years of much appreciated work in this post, our member Bob Wood has offered to take over the position of Packet Secretary for France. After discussions by officers and committee members involving Mr Wood, he accepted the invitation to take over as soon as possible, and is in the process of receiving from Mavis all that is required to enable a smooth transition period.

His details will be found on the inside front cover of the Journal, but are given here for reference:

Robert G E Wood, 51 Longstomps Avenue, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9BY

Telephone: 01245 267949;

email address: robertwood731@btinternet.com

\* \* \*

John Mayne has sent the following comments in a letter to the Editor:

"It must be 20 years since it was decided to divide the exchange packet into two circuits, France and Colonies. Mavis Pavey took on the France packet and I became the first Colonies secretary. The packets make a major contribution to the finances of the Society and the duties of packet secretary are considerable, requiring daily attention. We are most fortunate to have had two excellent secretaries, Mavis and John West, over recent years.

"I question if any packet secretary has held the post for so long and those who contribute to or receive the France packet will wish to join me in thanking Mavis for her excellent contribution to the Society and send her best wishes for the future."

\* \* \*

### Scottish Group Programme

14 Oct 2006	Peter Maybury: Algeria to Independence
24 Mar 2007	Peter Brand: France at War, from 1700
12 May 2007	Mavis Pavey; French Philatelic Exhibitions

All meetings to be held in the Burgh Halls, Linlithgow, starting 2.00pm, with possibility of lunch beforehand at the 'Four Marys' just across the High Street.

\* \* \*

**Continued on cover page iii**

# A Postcard from the Belgian Congo via French Congo and the Sudan to France

Robert Johnson [with information from Richard Stock]



Figure 1 -  
Enlarged copy of the postcard



Figure 2 -  
Map of the area

The postcard illustrated was copied by Richard Stock the Sudan specialist for comment by me. What follows is as far as we have got and comments from members are now invited. Especially welcome would be copies of any other letters or postcards which have taken the Sudan and Nile route from either Belgian or French Congo.

**Background**

This postcard was posted in Matadi, Belgian Congo, on 10 July 1903. It is addressed to France. It bears a Sudan stamp and it is not known whether that was applied in Matadi or elsewhere *en route*. The logical route to Europe would have been by mail steamer on the Atlantic to Belgium, Portugal [via Cabinda] or to France.

Matadi as can be seen from the map is on the Congo half way between Léopoldville and the sea. Matadi is the highest point on the River Congo which can be reached by sea-going vessels. Other ports nearer the coast in Belgian Congo are Boma and Banana.

At the time of posting French Congo was not divided into the administrative areas of Gabon, Middle Congo and Ubangi-Shari-Chad. This happened in 1910. Chad separated from Ubangi-Shari in 1922. So at the time of posting of this postcard everywhere in French Congo was in *Congo Français* properly so called and this is reflected in the postmarks.

The area of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan by which this postcard entered the Sudan from either Chad or Ubangi-Shari was known as Bahr-el-Ghazal [Bahr al-Ghazal]. Bahr-el-Ghazal was leased by Great Britain to King Léopold of Belgium together with the port of Mahagi on Lake Albert on 12 May 1904. This lease came to an end in 1906 as part of an agreement with King Léopold that he could keep the lease of the Lado Enclave for his lifetime.

The Fashoda incident took place in September 1898. While the French Government instructed Marchand to withdraw from the fort at Fashoda, the French continued to press for a string of smaller posts that would have kept open a French Corridor to the White Nile. In March 1899 the French and British Governments agreed that the watershed of the Nile and Congo Rivers should mark the frontiers of the French and British spheres of influence. The point of this is that the French were not an unknown presence on the Sudan border and a route there from Brazzaville or Bangui is probable. The existence of regular postal services by such a route is speculative on the information or rather the lack of it that we have.

Langlois and Bourselet [1927] give the opening of the post office at Rafai [Rafay] as 1 October 1909 [six years after this postcard was posted] and of Sémio [Zémio] as April 1911 [just under eight years]. I have not seen either Sémio or Rafai used before on anything.

There is a cds on the card of *Haut-Oubangui Congo-Français*. Langlois and Bourselet say that this was used in Chad on mail originating in or transiting Ubangi-Shari. This postmark has been seen before by me on other covers.

Both Sémio and Rafai are on the road towards the Sudan. A regular postal crossing place for mail between French and Belgian Congo was Mobaye [FC] and Banzyville [BC] but this routing does not appear to be relevant to this postcard.

#### On the postcard

The back of the postcard has a picture of a boat on the Congo River and the caption reads *Congo Français – Matadi et le bateau holland Moriaan*. Underneath is a manuscript date 7 juillet 1903.

The postmarks are or appear to be:

MATADI 7 JUIL ?? [03]  
 BRAZZAVILLE 10 JUIL 03  
 H<sup>T</sup>-OUBANGUI 22 SEP 03  
 RAFAI 10 [or 13, 18 or 19] DEC 03  
 SEMIO 3 JANV ?? [probably 04]  
 BAHR-EL-GHAZAL 9 II 904  
 KHARTOUM 1 III 904

There are no French arrival marks. It is not known what mark is underneath the Sudan stamp but the stamp has been put over it so the stamp was probably not put on in Matadi. The size of the mark shows a French likeness as does its colour.

The manuscript endorsements [all crossed out] of Bangassou, Wau, Brazzaville, Bangui, Rafay and Sémio are in different hands although the ink appears to be the same for Brazzaville, Sémio and Rafay. No point is taken from the inks or hands at the moment.

#### Routes out of the Belgian Congo

There were four routes out of Belgian Congo following the occupation of the Lado Enclave in 1897: the Congo route to the west; the Congo route to the east; the Nile route; and the Uganda route [this latter is not relevant to this article]. The Congo route to the west was either direct by

boat to the open sea or the same via Brazzaville [and on to Bordeaux].

The first part of the Congo route to the east [circuitous and time consuming – a mail to Belgium took 95 days] operated from Rejaf [just below Juba] on the White Nile by foot to Buta. From there the mail went by boat. Mail from the Lado Region and the Uele Region went by this route while it remained open between 1897 and 1910. At times it was the only route available for mail from these Regions. From February 1897 to April 1900 the ‘sudd’ [waterlogged plant material] was an impenetrable barrier to shipping on the Nile. From late 1901 to early 1904 Léopold closed the Nile route to traffic due to a dispute with Great Britain. From December 1905 to May 1906 Great Britain closed the Nile to traffic. These political problems emphasise the importance of the Congo routes. Some mails seem to have got through via the Nile route despite the closures.

At the time of posting of this postcard the Nile route was closed to mail from the Belgian Congo and therefore the mail would have to have gone on one of the Congo routes or by an alternative route. While I cannot comment on the efficiency of any route via Ubangi-Shari or Chad to the Sudanese border due to the lack of information, if used, it was probably quicker than the Congo route to the east and would have intercepted the White Nile at a point above the Lado Enclave.

The post offices at Wau and Meshr er Req did not open until 1905 [so why the manuscript annotation of Wau?] and the Bahr-el-Ghazal cds was thought to have been used on the river of the same name [River of Giraffes] for mail posted in that region where there was no post office. It is not thought to be a true TPO cancellation by the Sudan collectors.

This is as far as we have got; comments, corrections and information will be welcome please. I do not understand why it did not go to France from Brazzaville which is across the River Congo opposite Léopoldville. Did it ever go to France at all? Has anyone got covers with the postmarks of Sémio or Rafai?

## Charles Blomefield

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## SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Dallay Colonial Catalogues

I was interested to read Michael Round's reviews of the latest French catalogues produced by Éditions Dallay (Journal 238 page 145 and Journal 240 page 50), as I purchased a copy of the *Timbres de l'ex-empire français d'Afrique 2005-2006* at the last Paris Autumn Salon. This volume continues with the excellent layout and listings of the various ex-African colonies.

However, there are two points that I have noticed. One is that the catalogue numbering is completely different to both Yvert and Cérès who must have come to some agreement to use the same numbers. In the case of

Dallay I believe this difference is due to a disagreement with Yvert, as I seem to recall a court case some time ago.

Secondly, on checking the Dulac London issue for each appropriate colony I discover that Dallay record that Thomas de la Rue printed all the various issues — whereas both Yvert and Cérès together with Stanley Gibbons describe printings by Harrisons for photogravure, and lithography by de la Rue and Bradbury Wilkinson, who also probably produced the General Colonial 1945-46 postage due set by typography.

Colin Spong

---

### Picture Postcard - “La barre prisonnière”

I am unable to come up with a good translation of the last six words in the caption of this picture postcard, date

stamped 6.1.03 at Nantes / Loire-Inférieure, and would welcome any help from members.

Bob Larg



The card is intriguing. What on earth are they doing? The translation is easy, of course, but what does it mean? “Military Life - During the installation (setting up?) - The prisoners' bar.”

“*La pose*” in a military sense can mean the placing of sentries. The “*jeu de barres*” and “*jouer aux barres*” (or even “*la base du prisonnier*”) refer to a traditional game called “prisoners' base”. Could this picture represent the game, used as a training exercise, perhaps during the setting up process? This is pure speculation, though the characters involved do appear to be soldiers or recruits and not prisoners (most unlikely in 1903 anyway).

After a period of reflection I remembered that I had a couple of training manuals on my bookshelves. One is the “Manual of Cadet Infantry Training” issued in 1919 and the other the “Cadet Training Manual” of 1933. They both describe a game called “Storming the Prison”. Could this be in preparation in the picture? The text of the manuals differs very little between the two versions, and reads as follows:-

“Storming the Prison.

“Organization.- One cadet is chosen as the prisoner and placed against a fence or wall. A semi-circle with a radius of about 2 to 3 feet is drawn in front of him on the ground

and, with the wall at the back of him, forms his 'prison'. About four-fifths of the players form the 'prison guard' and place themselves outside and fairly close to the semi-circle. The remaining fifth, or slightly more, who form the 'storming party', stand anywhere outside the semi-circle formed by the defenders.

"Method of Playing.- On the order 'Attack', the 'storming party' endeavour to touch the hand of the prisoner, who may facilitate this in any way he pleases, provided that he does not step out of his 'prison'. As soon as touched, the prisoner is considered to have been released, and the game

starts afresh with a redistribution of players in order to ensure variety. The game rather resembles a Rugby scrum with heads lifted.

"Variation - The game may be played without the use of a wall, in which case a circle is drawn round the prisoner and the formation of the defenders is correspondingly altered.

"Common Faults - Rough play."

This game appears as number 24 (1919) or 19 (1933) in a whole list of such games that can be used in military training.

Maurice Tyler

## Togo Taxe Marks

Jeremy Martin in *Togo - The Postal History of the Anglo-French Occupation 1914-1922* does not record the German boxed *taxe* mark in this period although I hold examples on two items both from Anécho, one a Dahomey overprinted 5c postal stationery envelope 30.12.1919 to Grand-Popo (Fig 1), the other a postcard 05.05.1920 to Lomé (Fig 2).

Since publication an additional *taxe* mark has been recorded, a straight 'T' applied to a stamp, Togo SG41 cancelled by German Anécho cancel 06.04.1922 (Fig 3). I

believe Jeremy and I hold matching covers suggesting philatelic contrivance.

This latter *taxe* mark has now come to light along with the German boxed T on a cover from Atakpamé 29.11.1927 to Havana, Cuba (Fig 4). This was backstamped at Lomé 30.11.1927 (Fig 5) and may have been routed via the Gold Coast, which would explain the manuscript 4d. Postage paid 75c was met by 8 x SG 63 (5c) with SG 70 (35c). If I read Derek Richardson's rate tables correctly, I understand the rate was 1F25.

John Mayne



Figure 1



Figure 2

Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



### Dahomey Cancels

I can report the use of the *Bénin - Télégraphie Militaire Poste N° 1* cancel on 02.10.1904. This was seen on a telescoped cover offered on eBay June 2006 (see enlarged illustration below).

This attracted postage of 15c met by Benin 5c Cérés 36 and Dahomey 10c Cérés 3, both cancelled by the strike. The cover was endorsed with a straight line **VIA BORDEAUX** not previously recorded by me and was backstamped at

Cotonou 02.10.1904 where it also received the octagonal **LOANGO A BORDEAUX L.L.N° 4** strike the same day, applied by *Ville de Maranhao* of Chargeurs Réunis.

Mail passed along the Dahomey coastline quickly and whilst it would be incorrect to suggest Cancel N° 1 was allocated to Cotonou, with it and the ship strike dated the same day it is, I suggest, a distinct possibility and a reasonable assumption.

John Mayne



This is another important cover as it adds to the details I've already noted [*in an article to be published in the next Journal - Ed.*] – (i) a new number, 1, (ii) a new place of origin, Cotonou – more on this anon – and (iii) a new latest date of use, 2 October 1904 (the “0” is missing from the “04” in the *ondulé* cancel).

My reading of the cover is that the letter was written at, or at any rate posted at, the Military Telegraph office at Cotonou, transferred to the civilian post office there and thence on to the *Ville de Maranhao* – all, as John says, on 2 October 1904. (Salles records that the *Ville de Maranhao* left Libreville on 30 September, arrived at Dakar on 11 October and finally reached Bordeaux on the 21st – Vol III, page 175).

The letter did not travel under the *Franchise Militaire* arrangements, which were not withdrawn until 1 April 1905 (Salles, page 172). If the writer came from the military he had presumably exhausted his free postage entitlement for the month; perhaps he was a civilian employee or had

simply handed his letter into the Military Telegraph office as being most convenient to him.

I assume that in believing that *Poste N° 1* may have been allocated to Cotonou John means on a permanent basis. In view of Cotonou's importance this is possible, but in the absence of documentary evidence I think we should be very cautious about this. To be reasonably sure we would need a significant number of covers bearing this cancel over a period of time; unfortunately this is unlikely to be forthcoming. (At one time I thought that maybe “*Poste*” could be read as “*Ligne*”; the numbered cachet identifying the line and being located at the most advanced point on the line at any one time – a conclusion reached by Crombez – but Tristant's analysis of the two 1899 covers from Fada N'Gourma in his *Feuilles Marcophiles* article shows that this is a non-starter, as mentioned in my article, still to be published.)

The **VIA BORDEAUX** cachet is unfamiliar to me, too. It's not in Salles – perhaps it was manufactured privately.

**Bill Mitchell**

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## French India Cover

I was interested to note in the June issue of the Journal (N° 240), at the top of page 59, an illustration of the 9F + 41F Aid to the Resistance stamp used on a cover from French India.

When I visited Pondicherry I enquired about the addressee G Krishna Reddiar because I have several covers addressed to him. I was informed that he had been a stamp dealer in Pondicherry; this answered a few questions that had been bothering me, such as why he was sent so many stamp varieties and unusual items like the above.

So far the only Aid to the Resistance stamps I have seen used in French India were on covers addressed to him, having been posted in Pondicherry and all dated 22.01.44.

As these stamps were not issued in French India we can only surmise that Mr G Krishna Reddiar had the stamps sent to him and, as any good dealer would, put them on envelopes and posted them to himself with their future sale in mind. The lower four values in this set also exist on cover dated 22.01.44 – the registration boxed R being the same as illustrated by Colin Spong.

Covers with these stamps affixed from French India, philatelic as they must be, are however somewhat scarce. I obtained mine from a Pondicherry dealer at London 2000 and have since then only seen one other, with the top value, in a dealer's stock. I do not think Krishna Reddiar produced many such covers.

**Ron Wood**

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## Puzzling Lautier Type A1 Postmark Date and Zero Levée

Some time ago I had correspondence with the US FCPS regarding the use of the Lautier type A1 postmark on a stamp (8 Dec 1882) one or two years before it is generally known to have been used (1884). This postmark from Rouen also carried the *levée* of 0<sup>E</sup>, i.e zero, normally only found on Telegraph cancels (?).

Stan Luft was sufficiently intrigued to contact *Les Feuilles Marcophiles* and now we have had an explanation from Monsieur M Maurizot (*Les Feuilles Marcophiles* N° 324, page 46) with amazing evidence that both anomalies are due to post office officials' errors. M. Maurizot illustrates a cover with a similarly dated postmark, also from Rouen, but there are backstamps of 9 December 1885 to prove

that it was an error – although the *levée* in this case is 18<sup>E</sup>. This is conclusive proof that the cachet was wrongly dated.

With respect to the zero *levée* Monsieur Maurizot also shows a cover from Lyon comparable to that of the Rouen mark which, it is suggested, is likely to be either a 10<sup>E</sup> *levée* with the ‘1’ unprinted or with the ‘1’ inadvertently left out.

Not perhaps world shattering news; but it has solved a long queried anomaly. Many thanks, Monsieur Maurizot.

This is also a cautionary tale to say that one should not always believe postmarks; but there, I am probably telling my grandmother how to suck eggs!

**Godfrey Bowden**

## Charity Label Paying Postage



The June issue of the Journal (N° 240) included an item from Michael Round on page 57 which illustrated a postcard bearing three non-postal adhesives placed among the postage stamps.

This prompted me to look at my own collection, and I found a cover (photocopied above) sent to the UK on 20

March 1946, where the sender has used a PTT charity label for 1 Franc together with three 3 Franc stamps to pay the postage of 10 Francs, the correct UPU rate for a letter to the UK weighing up to 20 grams.

He cunningly placed the label between two of the regular stamps and it was not spotted by the French Post Office!

**Bob Paterson**

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## FUTURE ARTICLES

Several members have fortunately responded to the editorial plea for more articles, and the following are awaiting publication in the near future:

The Penalty Taxes of 1910 and 1920: Part 2 (André Métayer)

Senegal - the 1902 "Letter in Circle" Cachets: a new explanation (Bill Mitchell)

Stamps meeting the Simple Internal Letter (LSI) Rate 1849-1949 (Godfrey Bowden)

Mail Order Manifestations (Bob Maddocks)

Regions ... and more Regions [Post Office Regions] (Michael Meadowcroft)

French Internment Camps - Chapter 17: Camp de Choisel - Châteaubriant (Derek Richardson)

Benin - Postal Use of Military Telegraph Date Stamps (Bill Mitchell)

Thanks to these contributors we have enough material to form the backbone of the next two or three Journals, but more will still be needed if we are to maintain the normal size of the publication at 36 or 40 pages. The more members willing to share their specialities or sidelines with our readers, the better for our Society as a whole.

**Maurice Tyler**

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## BOOKSHELF

### Fakes and Forgeries of 20<sup>th</sup> Century French Postage Stamps

by R G Gethin; pub. by the France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain, 2006; ISBN 0 9519601-5-6; A4; 152 pages stitched and with card cover. As publicised in the last edition of the Journal, the book is available for sale to non-members at £40 plus postage and packing but, as a concession to members only, a special price of £35 including p&p is currently being offered on orders received and paid for by 31 October 2006. Thereafter, members too will pay the full price. Obtainable from Peter Maybury, 18 Courtneys, Wheldrake, York, YO19 6BR (GB) [email: stock@fcps.org.uk].

Members who have attended the London meetings or the Society's annual weekends will be familiar with the conception and gestation of this publication.

At the annual weekend held in Leamington in 2000, the author Geoff Gethin treated the assembled members to a magnificent display of 20<sup>th</sup> century French forgeries. Each forgery was illustrated by a colour enlargement which enabled the viewer to identify the faulting features without having to squint and without having to rely on a magnifying glass. Geoff's display was received with much acclaim and, even before he had had the chance to dismantle it, he had been persuaded by the outgoing and incoming presidents to convert his display into a publication.

Thereafter, over the next five years, at London meetings and at annual weekends, members were kept up to date on the progress of the book and, in his inimitable style, Geoff teased and whetted our appetites with announcements of further discoveries and purchases and with samples of pages from his book. Now, six years on, the long awaited book has been published and if ever a book deserved a fanfare this is it.

The 152 page book has been printed by the same company that prints the Society's Journal and hence members will be familiar with the high quality of the paper and the crispness of the print. It is lavishly illustrated, containing nearly 600 coloured images. The pages have been stitched and glued and like any good reference book, it remains flat when opened. It is a real joy to handle.

The book begins with an Introduction and Preface which set out the background and rationale of the publication. Short but essential definitions are provided to enable the reader to understand the difference between a forgery and a fake. French philatelic terms are kept to an absolute minimum although one arguably untranslatable word '*fouillage*' has been retained and is explained in the glossary, viz. 'the relief on the gummed side of a mint stamp produced by the pressure applied by a typographical plate or forger's handstamp'. If anyone has a shorter translation of '*fouillage*' please let the author know!

The study is divided into three parts – Philatelic Fakes and Forgeries, British Intelligence and French Resistance Forgeries of WWII and Postal Forgeries.

The section on Philatelic Fakes and Forgeries starts with the Forbin forgery of the 1900 5F Merson and finishes with the forgery of the 1946 3F overprint on the 2F + 1F Anti-tuberculosis Charity stamp. *En route*, the book examines twenty-eight individual or groups of forgeries

and fakes including the 1914 10c Valenciennes Provisional, the 1923 Bordeaux Philatelic Congress issue, the 1927-1931 Sinking Fund series, the 1936 50F Plane over Paris and the 1941 *Paquebot Pasteur*. The WWII forgeries section examines all the British Intelligence Service forgeries of the Mercury and Pétain issues including the rarely seen 1F50 Pétain rose and the *Atelier des Eaux de Défense de la France* forgery of the 1F50 Pétain brown. The section on Postal Forgeries treats fourteen items including, *inter alia*, forgeries of the Sower, Pasteur and *Paix* issues and the post-war forgeries of the Marianne de Gandon, Marianne de Béquet and Marianne de Briat issues. If you want to see the full list of contents just click on the Society's website ([www.fcps.org.uk/Forgeries%20sample.pdf](http://www.fcps.org.uk/Forgeries%20sample.pdf)).

Each item is treated in considerable depth. Firstly, the author relates the historical background of the genuine issue and gives details of the stamp's *raison d'être*. Where relevant, printing methods and other technicalities are explained. The author proceeds to give the characteristics of the genuine stamp followed by the faulting features of the forgery or forgeries, as in several cases more than one forger has attempted to replicate the stamp or the overprint. Both the genuine and the forged stamps are illustrated by actual size photographs and by superb 400% enlargements. The author goes into great detail regarding the forgery by offering as many faulting features as possible, thus allowing for features that may be concealed by a cancellation. Where cancellations have been forged in an attempt to give authenticity to the issue on cover, e.g. the '*Île de France*' airmail overprint forgeries, these are described and illustrated too. The illustrations are, in the most part, excellent. They are bright and at a resolution that makes the essential faulting features easy to see. There are, however, cases where the shade of a stamp has not been accurately reproduced, but this does not detract from the objective of the illustration which is to display the faulting features.

The book is a delight to read. It can be read from cover to cover for the simple pleasure of learning about the history of France's infamous fakes and forgeries or just to appreciate the full colour illustrations. However, its main purpose will be for those who wish to dip into the relevant pages to ensure that they already possess, or are about to purchase, the genuine article. For collectors wishing to fill those expensive gaps in their 20<sup>th</sup> Century collections, the purchase of this book is essential and the cost of the book will be recovered the first time they are able to detect and reject a forgery offered to them by a dealer or on a website. Only 300 copies have been printed; ignore purchasing it at your peril!

Mick Bister

## A Forgery of the 1930 *Bureau International du Travail (BIT)* Overprint

The BIT was the permanent secretariat of the International Labour Organisation, an autonomous agency of the League of Nations. At the invitation of the French Government it met in Paris during April 1930. The BIT, based in Geneva, was accustomed like other League of Nations organisations to having Swiss stamps overprinted for use on official mail. This practice probably had some bearing on the decision to commemorate its Paris meeting by the issue of overprinted stamps. The event was commemorated by the issue of overprinted 50c Sower and 1F50 Pasteur stamps.

In this forgery (left):

1. The most obvious feature is the acute accent over the E of *CONGRÈS* rather than the grave as in the genuine.

Forgery



Genuine



This is a sample page (page 79) from Geoff Gethin's *Fakes and Forgeries of 20th Century French Postage Stamps*. It presents a reasonable idea of the depth and detail with which each issue is treated and the way in which faulting features of the forgeries are clearly explained. Mick Bister's full review on the opposite page shows how widely the book ranges, or members can refer to the Society website to see further examples of actual pages, including the full Contents page. The special offer for members, detailed in the enclosed flier, is valid until the end of October 2006.

**Bookshelf continued on page 103**

# The Penalty Taxes of 1910 and 1920

André Métayer

Translated by Mick Bister

In 1910 and 1920 preferential rates existed for visiting cards and business papers weighing less than 20 grams. But, if these rates were abused, sanctions were heavy. Not only was the tax for underpayment due but a penalty was also applied. In 1910 the penalty was 2F but following protests by the public it was abolished in early 1913. It was re-introduced in 1920 but at only 1F and lasted until the beginning of 1927.

## Part 1

### The 2 franc penalty tax of Article 50 of the Act of 8 April 1910



Figure 1 -

The visiting card bears a message of six words instead of the maximum of five under the terms of the 5c reduced rate, hence the straight line cachet  
**ART. 50 LOI 8 AVRIL 1910**  
 and the 10c double deficiency tax, ie  $(10c-5c) \times 2 = 10c$ , on the front.

The 2F penalty tax has been applied on the back.



Before this Act there was an even more complicated system in which any infringement necessitated time-consuming visits. Under the so-called contravention system, the addressee was summoned to meet the postmaster who notified him of the infringement; if he refused to pay he was obliged to provide the name of the sender unless it was already on the back of the card or envelope. The charge was a minimum of 3 francs plus administration dues and fees.

By the 1910 Act, it was decreed that the maximum weight of the basic letter should be raised from 15 to 20 grams without an increase in the rate. The next weight step would be between 20 and 50 grams etc. Furthermore, in response to persistent demands from the public, the Minister for Finance, Monsieur Millerand, decided to hold the reduced rate of 5 centimes for visiting cards and for business papers up to 20 grams. But in compensation for this favour, the Minister reserved the right to make the public pay dearly for the concession with Article 50 of the Act of 8 April 1910 which set out the following measures:

“Items sent through the post under reduced rate conditions ... into which have been inserted letters or messages which have the appearance of, or serving as, correspondence or which bear themselves, or on the objects they contain, any unauthorised text, are considered as letters and liable to a further penalty of 2 francs.”

Strict instructions were issued for the application of the above Article:

“Items to be taxed must be dealt with as follows:

“Once the infringement has been identified, the items of correspondence will be struck with the T (*Taxe*) cachet and will be endorsed, in such an evident manner that it will attract the attention of the receiving office, with the reference ‘**ARTICLE 50 DE LA LOI DU 8 AVRIL 1910**’ applied in red ink above the address. They will be dispatched to their destination under the same conditions as ordinary taxed items.

“Upon arrival, the said items will be franked with *chiffre-taxe* stamps of the following values:

- twice the deficiency for a letter of the same weight;
- the fixed penalty of 2 francs.

“They will be delivered like any other taxed mail. In the case of a refusal or if the addressee is unknown, deceased, etc., or gone abroad where French inland mail regulations are not applicable, the items in question will be returned to the sender or, if the latter is unknown, forwarded to the dead letter office.

“The office responsible for deliveries to the sender’s residence will undertake the return of the items to the sender after franking them for a second time with *chiffre-taxe* stamps representing double the deficiency of a letter of the same weight plus the

penalty tax, in the same way as when the items were offered to the addressee.

“If the sender refuses to pay the tax, the item will be returned to the office and the postman will immediately summon the sender using Form N° 505. When the sender presents himself at the office he will be invited to collect his item upon payment of the tax. If he refuses, he will be warned that the *Administration* is authorised to recover the tax in court. If, finally, the sender persists in refusing or if he fails to present himself at the office within four days, the postman will forward the taxed item to the *Directeur Départemental* indicating the level of solvency of the sender and, if necessary, the reasons which the sender gives for not paying the tax.”



Figure 2 -

The penalty tax has been applied to a letter found not to be in compliance with the reduced rate conditions. There is the boxed strike **ART. 50 DE LA LOI DU 8 AVRIL 1910** and the tax stamps have been precancelled.

ooooo0000000000000000ooooo

There is evidence that the application of the penalty tax was interpreted in a punctilious manner. Arthur Maury’s publication *‘Le collectionneur de timbres-poste’* reproduces in edition N° 378, 1 April 1912, a letter received from one of its readers:

“This is the story of what happened to a friend of mine who sent me a visiting card when I was getting married.

“The card bore the words *‘L’avenir est couvert de roses’* and was franked with a 5c stamp; it goes without saying that the envelope was unsealed.

“The card was delivered to me promptly, that is to say on the next day, with postage due amounting to 2F10.

“I thought it was one of my friends having a joke and as the postman did not want to relinquish this heavily taxed card (I can use these words since in actual fact the post office was demanding 2F10 for it and I could see in the corner of the address the written annotation *‘ART 50 DE LA LOI DU 8 AVRIL 1910’*), I refused to accept delivery. Unfortunately, the *Administration*, not wanting to lose out on its revenue, summoned the sender. He



Figure 3a -

The visiting card has been taxed on 2 January 1911 at 2F10 with 10c double deficiency, ie.  $(10c - 5c) \times 2 = 10c$ , and the 2 francs penalty tax. The manuscript *Article 50 loi du 8 avril 1910* has been written in red as stipulated in the regulations.



Figure 3b -

The addressee has refused to pay the tax and the card has been returned to the sender with a second taxation of 2F10 dated 4 January 1911 comprising a 10c *chiffre-taxe* representing the double deficiency and four 50c *chiffres-taxe* for the 2F penalty tax.

turned up at his local post office and demanded an explanation which was given to him straightaway.

“For five centimes, Monsieur, you are only entitled to five words of greetings.”

“But there are only five words. Count them!”

“To his amazement he had forgotten to take into account that *l’* counted as one word and it was due to this single letter that he had committed an offence under the Act of 8 April 1910.

“Therefore, had my friend sealed his envelope, I would have had only 10c to pay for underpaid postage. In the case quoted above, he was suspected of attempting fraud. Cost: 2F10

“Don’t you think this was an injustice to make someone pay so much for just one letter of the alphabet?”

“Since then, my friend has written up a special page in his album which he has headed:

INJUSTICE

Art. 50 of the Act of 8 April 1910

.....”

To make up the 2F10, combinations of different *chiffre-taxe* stamps can be encountered such as one 10c with four 50c or ten 20c and a 10c, but in July 1910 the 2 francs *Type Duval* in orange was issued. The stamp quickly became an object of contempt as the above letter demonstrates; Arthur Maury’s comment was that ‘as far as the PTT is concerned, too much writing hurts’.

However, procedures differed according to the size of the post office according to one PTT inspector who wrote in *'Le collectionneur de timbres poste'* N° 381, 1 July 1912:

“The 1910 Act had been in force for more than a year when I took my retirement. The larger offices would generally impose the fine if there was sufficient time to check reduced rate items without holding up the delivery. The same could not be said for the smaller offices where, during my inspections, I would find untouched stocks of the first supply of the 2 francs stamp, and yet it was rare during my two days' visit if I did not have to make the postmistress apply Article 50 of the said Act.

“One of them explained to me why:

“You don't honestly believe that I want to make myself unpopular with the residents of the village by sticking on 2 franc fines!”

“In some incoming mail I found an item which would put her on the spot.

“You are going to lose your good name,” I said to her with a smile.

“No, I won't,” she replied with the same bluntness ‘because everyone knows that there's an inspection going on in my office and it's the inspector they will blame.’

“This meant that she would continue as she had always done. I expressed my disapproval but I drew back from issuing a reprimand as all her colleagues in the smaller offices were doing exactly the same and at least she had been very honest with me.”

There were so many protests from the public that Monsieur Chaumet, Secretary of State and responsible for the PTT, tabled before the *Chambre des Députés* a bill proposing that visiting cards bearing only greetings, wishes, condolences, congratulations, thanks and other expressions of courtesy which failed to respect the restrictions of the reduced rate, should henceforth be taxed in the same way as an underpaid letter.

In response to the public's complaints, the Act of 24 December 1912 was passed modifying the sanctions applied to reduced rate items improperly sent through the post. *'Le collectionneur de timbres-poste'* N° 388 of 1 February 1913, reproduced the text:

“The *Sénat* and the *Chambre des Députés* have passed the bill which the President of the Republic proclaims as follows:

“Article: the measures in Article 50 of the Finance Act of 8 April 1910 are repealed and those of Article 9 of the Act of 9 June 1856 and of Article 9 of the Act of 25 January 1873 are reinstated.

“Through the measures of Article 9 of the Act of 25 June 1859, visiting cards bearing only greetings,

wishes, condolences, congratulations, thanks and other expressions of courtesy are, in cases of infringement, to be treated as letters and taxed only at twice the deficiency.

“This Act, deliberated and adopted by the *Sénat* and by the *Chambre des Députés*, will become State law.

“Signed in Paris, 24 December 1912  
President of the Republic: *A Fallières*  
Minister of Public Works, Posts and  
Telegraphs: *Jean Dupuy*  
Minister of Finance : *L Klotz*”

However, the precise date of the withdrawal of the 2F *chiffre-taxe* had not been officially declared, so the Under-Secretary of State for Posts and Telegraphs issued the following details which appeared in *'Le collectionneur de timbres-poste'* of 1 August 1913.

“ By Order of 21 January 1913, I have confirmed the withdrawal of the 2F *chiffre-taxe* stamp, redundant since the implementation of the Act of 24 December 1912 which, in order to combat abuse of the reduced rate, revoked the measures of Article 50 of the Act of 8 April 1910 and restored the contravention system.

“As a result, postmasters are to take the appropriate steps to return to the *Agence Comptable* all *chiffre-taxe* stamps of the said value which exist in their offices' stocks. The procedure will be conducted in the manner prescribed in Article 153 of the General Instructions.”

Article 9 of the Act of 25 June 1856 was reinstated and the following measures, published in *'Le collectionneur de timbres-poste'* N° 398, 1 November 1913, were prescribed for each contravention:

- Registration of written statement: 3F75;
- Fine of between 150 and 300 francs and rising to up to 3000 francs in the case of repeated offences.

Arthur Maury commented that, in practice, the *Administration* would always reach a compromise and the sender could get away with paying between 5 and 15 francs.

## References

*'Le collectionneur de timbres-poste'* published by Arthur Maury

- N° 358, 1 August 1910
- N° 378, 1 April 1912
- N° 381, 1 July 1912
- N° 388, 1 February 1913
- N° 398, 1 November 1913

*'Bulletin officiel des Postes'*

- March 1910, pp. 94-96
- N° 1, January 1913, pp. 19-21
- N° 5, 1920, pp. 203-204

# French Airline Network 1928

Pages from the booklet provided by Robert Johnson the cover of which was illustrated in the last Journal

**C. A. F.**  
**COMPAGNIE AÉRIENNE FRANÇAISE**

**POUR TOUTS RENSEIGNEMENTS, S'ADRESSER :**

A Paris : 25, rue Royale. ☎️ Égales 26-71, 09-52 et 59-01.  
 A l'Aérogare du Bourget : ☎️ Nord 58-08 et 95-80.  
 A Cherbourg : Office du Tourisme, 53, rue du Bassin. ☎️ 2-20 ; Aérogare : Quercenne (avion) ou Baselin (hydravions).  
 A Marseille : 2, La Chapelle. ☎️ 80-49 ; Aérogare : Marignane.  
 A Nice : Aérogare de La Californie ☎️ 52-71.  
 A Antibes : Aérogare d'Antibes. ☎️ 2 69.

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## HORAIRES ET TARIFS

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**6 PARIS-CHERBOURG**  
Correspondance aérienne avec les transatlantiques.  
Aéronefs à 2 ou 3 passagers. Hydravions à 2 passagers.  
Durée du trajet : 2 h. 30. — Prix (aller et retour) : 5,200 francs.

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**7 MARSEILLE-NICE**  
Escale sur demande à Cannes.  
Aéronefs ou hydravions à 2 passagers.  
Correspondance aérienne, à Marseille-Marignane, avec la Compagnie P.-L.-M.

M.	(2, 23, 26)	R.
170	☉ Marseille-Marignane. 09. 17	Nice..... 09. 49
	Nice..... 18. 30	☉ Marseille-Marignane. 21. 30

**Prix : aller 1,000 francs.**

Tous voyages aériens.	Le kilomètre..... Fr. 8	Tour de France..... 15,000
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Réseaux aériens 2

**AIR UNION**

### PARIS - MARSEILLE et LYON - GENÈVE

DESTINATIONS	PASSAGERS	EXCÉDENTS DE BAGAGES par kilogramme (1)	MARCHANDISES par kilogramme (2)	OBSERVATIONS
Paris-Lyon.....	525	0	0	(1) 15 kilogrammes de bagages gratuits. (2) Tout colis au-dessus de 1 kilo-gramme paie pour 1 kilogramme.
— Marseille.....	500	0	0	
— Genève.....	475	0	0	
Lyon-Marseille.....	375	0	0	
— Genève.....	350	0	0	

**SERVICE POSTAL AÉRIEN**  
En sus de la taxe postale ordinaire.

De Paris pour Lyon, Marseille ou Genève ou Marseille et vice-versa :

Jusqu'à 20 grammes, 0 fr. 25 c.; de 20 à 100 grammes, 0 fr. 30 c.; au-dessus de 100 grammes, 0 fr. 30 c. pour les premières 100 grammes, plus 0 fr. 30 c. par 100 gr. ou fraction de 100 grammes en excédent.

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### ANTIBES - AJACCIO - TUNIS

**SERVICE DES PASSAGERS**

Tarif : Antibes-Ajaccio.....	500	Alger et retour	700
Antibes-Tunis.....	1,300		2,300
Ajaccio-Tunis.....	500		1,500
Antibes-Tunis.....	500		

**SERVICE POSTAL AÉRIEN**  
En sus de la taxe postale ordinaire.

a) D'Antibes pour Ajaccio et vice-versa : jusqu'à 20 grammes, 0 fr. 25 c.; de 20 à 100 grammes, 0 fr. 30 c.; jusqu'à 200 grammes, 1 franc; au-delà de 200 grammes, 0 fr. 50 c.; par 100 grammes ou fraction de 100 grammes en excédent.  
 b) D'Antibes ou Ajaccio pour Tunis et vice-versa : jusqu'à 10 grammes, 0 fr. 30 c.; jusqu'à 20 grammes, 1 fr. 30 c.; jusqu'à 30 grammes, 1 fr. 50 c.; jusqu'à 100 grammes, 2 fr. 50 c.; jusqu'à 200 grammes, 3 francs; au-delà de 200 grammes, 1 fr. 50 c. par 100 grammes ou fraction de 100 grammes en excédent.

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**TRANSPORT DES MARCHANDISES**  
et des excédents de bagages au-dessus de 15 kilogrammes.

Tarif : Antibes-Ajaccio et Ajaccio-Tunis, 6 fr. le kilogramme;  
 Antibes-Tunis, 12 fr. le kilogramme;  
 Alpes-Tunis, 2 fr. le kilogramme.

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## MARSEILLE

46, La Casbah. Entièrement climatisé.  
 Téléphone 9-28, 34-53, toutes les chambres. C/o International des Voyages-S.T.S. 28, BERT, etc.

Tariffs and timetables of Air Union and Compagnie Aérienne Française

# HORAIRES

DIFFÉRENCE D'HEURES : 12 h. - Heure française et de l'Europe centrale  
= H. H. - Heure de l'Europe orientale.

## 16 PARIS - STRASBOURG - PRAGUE VARSOVIE - VIENNE - BUDAPEST - BELGRADE SOFIA - BUCAREST - CONSTANTINOPLÉ

Départ de Paris : Les passagers et leurs bagages sont transportés gratuitement à l'aéroport de Bourget. Les voitures partent du Grand-Hôtel, 2, rue Serbelloni, une heure avant celle du départ de l'aéron.

Service quotidien (dimanche excepté) entre Paris-Varsovie et Paris-Constantinople (par Bucarest).  
Service hebdomadaire entre Belgique-Sofia-Constantinople.

Alt.	(Heure française orientale)	(Heure française)	(Heure Europe orientale)	(Heure Europe centrale)
Paris-Grand-Hôtel	4h.	4h. 30	4h.	6 h. 15
Bourget	4h.	4h. 30	4h.	6 h. 15
Strasbourg	5h. 30	6h. 00	5h. 30	7 h. 15
Varsovie	6h. 15	6h. 45	6h. 15	7 h. 45
Prague (15. 30)	7h. 15	7h. 45	7h. 15	8 h. 45
Vienna (12. 45, 40)	8h. 15	8h. 45	8h. 15	9 h. 45
Budapest	9h. 15	9h. 45	9h. 15	10 h. 45
Belgrade	10h. 15	10h. 45	10h. 15	11 h. 45
Bucarest	11h. 15	11h. 45	11h. 15	12 h. 45
Constantinople	12h. 15	12h. 45	12h. 15	13 h. 45
Belgrade	13h. 15	13h. 45	13h. 15	14 h. 45
Sofia	14h. 15	14h. 45	14h. 15	15 h. 45
Constantinople	15h. 15	15h. 45	15h. 15	16 h. 45
Strasbourg	16h. 15	16h. 45	16h. 15	17 h. 45
Paris-Grand-Hôtel	17h. 15	17h. 45	17h. 15	18 h. 45
Grand-Hôtel	18h. 15	18h. 45	18h. 15	19 h. 45

# C<sup>ie</sup> Française du Tourisme

10, boulevard Capécillon, PARIS  
RENSEIGNEMENT  
SUR TOUTES LES VOYAGES

# TARIFS

applicables jusqu'au 30 septembre 1928.

DESTINATIONS	PASSAGERS	MARCHANDISES OU BAGAGES		LITRES (a) (contenance aérienne ou sur de la boîte postale internationale) par 30 grammes.
		Tarif I Moins de 20 Kilogr. par Kilogr.	Tarif II Plus de 20 Kilogr. par Kilogr.	
Paris-Strasbourg	Fr. 500	Fr. 1,50	Fr. 1,30	Fr. 1
Nuremberg	850	1,50	1,05	1
Prague	1.170	2,50	2,30	1
Varsovie	1.330	3,50	3,40	1,50
Vienna	1.530	5,50	5,25	1
Budapest	1.800	7,50	7,25	1
Belgrade	2.210	9,50	9,00	1
Sofia	2.425	11	10,50	1,50
Bucarest	2.900	15	13,50	1,50
Constantinople	3.450	19	17,10	2,50

(a) Pour assurer aux lettres aériennes une distribution immédiate des leur arrivée, on peut ajouter la surtaxe « par expédition » de 3 francs en portant sur la lettre la mention « par express ». Cependant les lettres aérées à destination de France depuis central sont distribuées sans surtaxe dès leur arrivée par un service spécial.  
(b) Jusqu'à 20 grammes, 0 fr. 25 c.; de 20 à 100 gr., 0 fr. 50 c.; au-dessus de 100 grammes, par 100 gr., 0 fr. 50 c.

## SERVICE DES PASSAGERS

Le transport des passagers et de leurs bagages, dans les voitures de la Compagnie, est gratuit entre les aéroports et les villes desservies.  
**Passage.** — Les passagers doivent être en possession d'un passeport régulier ainsi que d'un visa des pays survoies. Cependant, dans certains pays, et par suite d'une tolérance, les visas de transit peuvent être joints à l'itinéraire moyennant le paiement d'un droit supplémentaire (se renseigner aux bureaux de la Compagnie).  
**Vêtements.** — Pendant l'hiver, les valises des voyageurs sont chauffées; cependant, les passagers sont invités à se munir de vêtements chauds.  
**Appareils photographiques.** — Il est interdit d'emporter et de faire usage, en avion, d'appareils photographiques ou cinématographiques, sans l'autorisation des autorités compétentes des pays survolés.  
**Entente.** — Les enfants au-dessous de trois ans sont transportés gratuitement; de trois à sept ans, à demi-tarif et, au-dessus de sept ans, à plein tarif.  
**Billets d'aller et retour.** — Il est délivré des billets d'aller et retour, au prix de deux billets aller, d'un prix de 10 0/0.

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**PASSAGERS**  
FRET  
POSTE

**Imperial Airways**

38, avenue de l'Opéra  
PARIS (2<sup>e</sup>)

**LA LIGNE DES CAPITALES C.I.D.N.A.**  
22, rue des Pyramides, PARIS

**PARIS - STRASBOURG - NUREMBERG - PRAGUE - VARSOVIE - VIENNE**  
**BUDAPEST - BELGRADE - SOFIA - BUDAPEST - CONSTANTINOPLE**

**PARIS - LONDRES**  
**ANTIBES - AJACCIO - TUNIS**  
**PARIS - LYON - MARSEILLE**  
*et toutes autres lignes aériennes.*

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PARIS, 2, rue Scribe - 26, avenue de l'Opéra, PARIS

**AIR UNION**  
9, rue Aubor, PARIS

**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LTD**  
38, avenue de l'Opéra  
PARIS (2<sup>e</sup>)  
Vos services détaillés page 32.

**C.I.D.N.A. LA LIGNE DES CAPITALES C.I.D.N.A.**  
22, rue des Pyramides, PARIS

**RESEAUX AERIENS FRANÇAIS ET DES LIGNES ÉTRANGÈRES en correspondance**

— Réseaux français.  
— Lignes étrangères.

*Les numéros renvoient aux tableaux à consulter.*

**CARTE GÉNÉRALE DES RÉSEAUX AÉRIENS FRANÇAIS ET DES LIGNES ÉTRANGÈRES en correspondance**

Map of French and foreign airline networks in 1928

# *SS Normandie*

Ashley Lawrence



Figure 1

This article celebrates the French liner *SS Normandie* which, seventy years ago, set the record for the fastest crossing of the Atlantic Ocean.

During the 1930s *SS Normandie* was the world's largest and sleekest ship afloat, and the pride of the French shipping line Compagnie Générale Transatlantique. She made her maiden voyage from Le Havre to New York in May 1935. In 1936 she gained the coveted Blue Riband, the award of the prestigious Hales Trophy for setting the record for a transatlantic crossing. Further records were broken during 1937-38, as she competed with Cunard's *Queen Mary* to retain her title.

## Postage stamps



Figure 2



Figure 3

The French postal authorities celebrated the launch of *SS Normandie* by featuring the liner on a splendid stamp, Yvert 299, which was issued on 23 April 1935. The stamp was designed and engraved by Albert Decaris. It had a face value of 1F50, the correct rate for mail to be sent abroad, and first appeared in indigo blue to satisfy UPU requirements. Special covers were printed, and cachets were affixed to commemorate the liner's inaugural voyage from Le Havre, via Southampton, to New York between 29 May and 12 June 1935, as illustrated (Fig 4).

The stamp was reissued on 26 May 1936, this time in greenish-blue (Yvert 300) to celebrate the first of the Blue Ribands to be awarded to *SS Normandie*. Under the captaincy of Commandant Pugnet, the liner had succeeded in crossing the Atlantic Ocean, from Bishop's Rock in the Scilly Islands, off the coast of Cornwall, to the Ambrose Lighthouse at the entrance of New York harbour, in the record time of 4 days, 3 hours and 2 minutes. The distance of 3,044 nautical miles had been covered at an average speed of over 30 knots.

The aggregate print run was 20 million stamps, and they were withdrawn from sale in September 1937. However, Albert Decaris's design reappeared on a postal stationery card in 1939, this time coloured in vermilion, and with a reduced value of 1F25: one of a pair of postcards issued in France to celebrate the New York International Fair. The two stamps and the postcard depicting *SS Normandie* are illustrated above (Figs 1, 2 and 3).

## Albert Decaris

The designer and engraver Albert Decaris was born in Sotteville-lès-Rouen in 1901, and died in Paris in 1988. In addition to *Normandie*, his early works included "*Le Cloître de Saint-Trophisme d'Arles*" (1935) and the battleship *Clemenceau* (1939). Decaris quickly gained a reputation as one of France's foremost designers and engravers, and went on to design between 500 and 600 stamps internationally, of which 174 were issued by France. Among his most celebrated works were the Palais du Luxembourg (1946), portraits of the Emperor Napoleon (1951) and Leonardo da Vinci (1952), the series "Heroes of the Resistance" (1958), "Marianne de Decaris" (1960), eminent



Figure 4

Actors and Actresses (1961), Henri IV and the Edict of Nantes (1969), Le Pont Neuf, Paris (1978), and Art of the Engraver (1984), for which he won widespread praise and awards.

#### Technical specification

In 1936 *Normandie* was the world's largest and speediest ocean liner. She was the first vessel ever to exceed 1,000 feet in length. Weighing 79,280 tons, and with four turbo-electric engines producing 160,000 horsepower, the liner was able to carry 2,170 passengers, and 1,345 officers and crew, in unsurpassed comfort and luxury. Further details of her specification are set out in the accompanying table.

#### "Normandie" Specification

Length overall	1,029 feet
Beam	962 feet
Average loaded draft	37 feet
Gross registered tonnage	79,280 (83,423 after 1936)
Number of decks	12
Boilers	29 (plus 4 auxiliary)
Engines	4 Turbo-Electric, total 160,000 hp
Screws	4 3-bladed, 23 tons each, later 4-blade screws were installed
Cruising speed	29 knots
Top speed	32.2 knots
First Class Passengers	848
Second Class Passengers	670
Third Class Passengers	54
Officers and Crew	1,345

#### "Like a movie setting"

"Our departure was like a movie setting." So wrote Naomi Gordon to her friend Dorothy Horwitz in Chicago as the liner *SS Normandie* left New York harbour (see the illustration of her letter in Fig 5). A movie setting indeed!

In an age before air travel and the package holiday became commonplace, the voyage across the Atlantic Ocean offered an incomparable experience of glamour and excitement. To those passengers who were privileged to be aboard the great liner, smartly dressed in navy blue and white, festooned with streamers, and accompanied by the sound of a brass band, the departure must have seemed like a scene from a Hollywood film.

#### Ocean Liner Deco

*SS Normandie* was designed by Vladimir Yourkevitch. He had first made an approach to the British company Cunard Line Limited, but his proposed design had been rejected as being too radical. Instead, he was engaged by the French Line, and the hull was constructed by the Penhoët shipbuilders at St. Nazaire. No expense was spared, as the French were determined that their new vessel would reign supreme. Such was the efficacy of Yourkevitch's design that *Normandie* was able to match the great speed of Cunard's *Queen Mary* with one-fifth less horsepower, and thus a substantial saving of fuel. The ship's launch in October 1932 was attended by the President of France, M. Albert Lebrun, and by a great many dignitaries. As was appropriate to the occasion, Mme. Lebrun used the world's largest bottle of champagne for the christening ceremony. When the enormous ship slid down into the waters of the Loire, there was a huge backwash which drenched many of the spectators, and swept some of the workmen into the river.

The French Line engaged the finest artists and craftsmen to fashion the interior of *Normandie*, in order to ensure the elegance and harmony of design and function. The style was revolutionary: what became known as "Ocean Liner Deco" was emulated (with rather more restraint) by the builders of the great Cunard liners *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth*. The Chapel for first class passengers was decorated with ecclesiastical paintings by Léon Voguet and Lombard, which gave it a distinctive air of Eastern

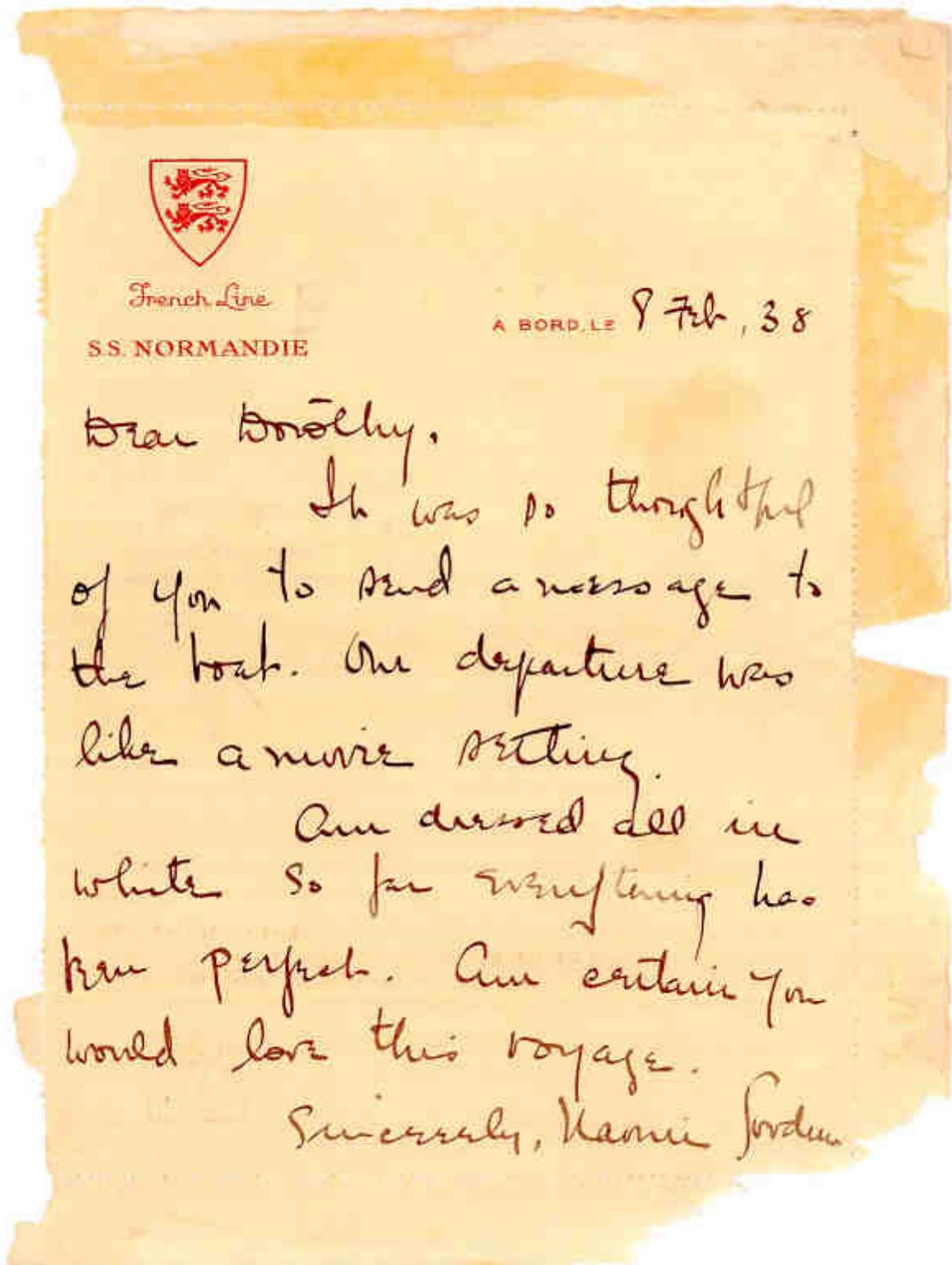


Figure 5 -

A passenger's letter written from the *Normandie* during the voyage from New York to Rio de Janeiro in February 1938

Orthodoxy. Alfred Janniot sculpted bas-reliefs in the dining rooms and banqueting suite, which depicted the landscapes of Normandy; these were modelled in gold, set against red marble. Léon Baudry produced a statue of "*La Normandie*". François-Louis Schmeid provided a massive painting of a Norman knight, which hung in the Grand Foyer on C Deck, and indeed much of the artwork reflected the rich history of the Provinces of France. The swimming-pool, measuring 82 feet in length by 19 feet across, was constructed by Victor Menu, and featured indirect lighting and blue enamel tiles.

The main dining room was 100 yards long, and measured three decks in height. Its chandeliers and light fittings were designed by Lalique (who else?) in a dazzling *art deco* style. Some of the pillars of illumination were over 15 feet in height, and admirers conferred upon *Normandie* the affectionate title "Ship of Light".

#### *Haute cuisine*

It is fascinating to study the menus. The range and quality of the foods, the delicacies and wines available to passengers aboard *SS Normandie* would be the envy of the luxury

# s/s NORMANDIE



## LE "SOLEIL ROYAL"

Vaisseau de premier rang, construit en 1690.  
Il était armé de 104 pièces de canon. Il prit part à  
la bataille de la Hogue sous le commandement  
de Tourville.

(D'après une gravure. - Bibliothèque Nationale)

# MENU

Figure 6



Figure 7

cruise liners of today. Regard a typical menu, say, Luncheon on 16 July 1936. This suggested that diners start the meal with *Hors-d'Œuvres à la Française*. The *Hors-d'Œuvres* comprised Green Olives, Celery, Ripe Olives, Artichokes à la Grecque, Muzzle of Beef Salad, Mayonnaise of Lobster, Cauliflowers à l'Allemande, Mortadella, Barquettes of Shrimps, Pickled Herrings in White Wine, Crabmeat Remoulade, Portuguese Salad, and Duckling Terrine aux Perles du Périgord.

For the main courses (yes, courses), the menu suggested and gave mouth-watering descriptions of the following dishes: *Sea Bass Grillé Provençal*, to be followed by *Le Poulet Sauté à la Louhannaise*, garnished with *Carottes Vichy*, and with *Salade de Saison*.

Diners who preferred a cold buffet could partake of Virginia Ham, Bayonne Ham, York Ham, Westphalia Ham, Prague Ham, Beef made in Jelly, Loin of Veal in Jelly *Printanière*, Cold Rack of Pork, Cold Chicken, Cold Sirloin, Terrine of *Foie Gras*, Saddle of Spring Lamb with Mint Sauce, Cold Young Turkey with Cranberry Sauce, Lobster Mayonnaise, and Turbot with Vincent Sauce.

There was a series of delicious desserts for those with appetite for more: a selection of Cheeses (no fewer than six listed); *Pâtisserie Parisienne* (assorted); *Glaces Variées* (Vanilla, Chocolate, Banana and Cherry flavours); and *Corbeille de Fruits* (an assortment of fresh and stewed fruit).

To end the repast, a selection of China Tea, Orange Pekoë, Vervain, Linden Tea, Mint Tea, Camomile, American Coffee, French Coffee, Sanka Coffee...

The menu cards were beautifully printed, and their covers depicted classical paintings, seascapes or gastronomic confections, many illustrated by contemporary artists (Fig 6). Naturally, the menus were changed every day. Those passengers who were privileged to travel First Class enjoyed a more extensive menu, with finer fare and rarer wines, than that available to passengers in Second or (the poor dears!) Third Class. There was a Kosher menu for

passengers who had special dietary requirements. For clients who could afford it, the French Line offered the finest of French cuisine and every modern comfort during their voyage in the world's largest and most luxurious ship.

#### Demise

Sadly, the Hollywood dream could not last forever, and *SS Normandie* came to a tragic end. She was in New York Harbour when war broke out in Europe in 1939 (Fig 7). In December 1941, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, she was seized by the US Navy, which intended to convert her into a troopship. She was renamed *USS Lafayette*, and in the following two months the artworks and internal fittings were removed and placed in storage, so that the ship could be made suitable for accommodating thousands of American GIs. During the course of this refit, on 9 February 1942, a spark from a workman's blowtorch started a fire aboard the ship. The incident was later described by Charles T Collins, an 18 year old ironworker:-

*I was working on a chain gang. We had chains around some pillars and eased them down when they were cut through. Two men were operating an acetylene torch. About 30 or 40 men were working in the room, and there were bales and bales of mattresses. A spark hit one of the bales, and the fire began. We yelled for the fire watch and Leroy Rose, who was in our chain, and I tried to beat out the fire with our hands. Rose's clothes caught fire, and I carried him out. The smoke and heat were terrific.*

In the event, it was the weight of water from the fire hoses, rather than fire damage to the vessel, which caused the hull to capsize. The pumping of water from the liner took 15 months, and cost \$19 million. The vessel was dismantled and sold for scrap in 1945; the remains fetched just \$161,680!

What a very different movie setting from those glory years of the mid-1930s.....!

*[The illustrated items are from the author's collection]*

# LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong

## Cameo: Journal of the West Africa Study Circle

Vol 9 N° 4 Whole N° 68 June 2006: Dahomey Bisects - Last Words / Lost Words (Mitchell); Cameroun – 1961 printings & availability (Bratzel); Togo - French Occupation Mail via Accra (Mayne); A.R.-Advice of Receipt (Richardson & Coles).

## Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 115 1<sup>er</sup> Trim 2006: Les Tampons d'affranchissement du Territoire de Memel [1921-1923] (Pineau); Double-surcharges du N° 7 de Martinique (Jouvent); La Dépêche de Shanghai (Cheung); Timbres fiscaux de fortune pour colis postaux de Tunisie (Flotte); Millésimes de Colonies Françaises (Peter).

N° 116 2<sup>ème</sup> Trim 2006: A.E.F: Les surcharges LIBRES et 24-10-1940 (Guillermain); Les colis familiaux des colonies (Hurpet); Le 80c Cérès surchargé Réunion (Fontaine); Les agences spéciales: l'exemple du Dahomey (Hurpet); Millésimes de Colonies Françaises (Peter). Les variétés du Type Groupe à Tahiti (Bessaud); Troupes françaises en Chine (Liévin).

## France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 284 (Vol 62, N° 2) Apr 2006: Progression of Small Town Cachets in Algeria & France: The Example of Beni-Saf, Oran (Lambert & Luft); Madagascar: Suspension of Postal Services (Johnson); Intervention in Italy: The French Brigade at Ancona [1832-1839] (Luft); Algerian Pneumatic Mail by Non-Pneumatic Means (Luft); Early Manifestations of the Rural Post in France (Luft); Indo-China: The Pétain Forgeries (Bentley & Dykhouse); Armées Alliées in Orient / Poste Aérienne (Sassover).

Whole N° 285 (Vol 62, N° 3) Jul 2006: French Somali Coast Censored Mail [1936-1945] (Morvay); Chargement d'Office (Kelly); Airmail Letter Rates from French Equatorial Africa to the United States in 1945 (Picirilli); Code Postal on Military Mail (Kinsley); Trials & Tribulations on Ordering Stamps from the French Overseas Territories (McGarrity).

## L'Écho de la Timbrologie

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

N° 1796 May 2006: Jean-Richard Lisiak, l'Illustrateur (-); L'entrée réussie de l'épargne postale dans le XX<sup>e</sup> siècle (Hella); La taille-douce dans tous ses états [5] (Marion); Sur la guerre d'Algérie (Mathilde); Francisque Poulbot: avec des yeux d'enfant (Dejy); Collection du 3<sup>e</sup> type [2<sup>nd</sup> part] (Storch).

N° 1797 Jun 2006: La taille-douce dans tous ses états [end] (Marion); De la CNE à La Poste financière (Hella); Sur la guerre d'Algérie [end] (Mathilde); Le pionnier du tout automatique [BAA=Bureau Auxiliaire Automatique de Montgeron] (Emmenegger); Au Patrim-

oine mondial (-); Collection du 3<sup>e</sup> type [3rd part] (Storch)..

N° 1798 Jul-Aug 2006: Assurer la pérennité avec modernité (Ben-Moha); Menton à la botte des Italiens [1940-1943] (Guzzi); Tombés pour la France [bataille de la Somme] (Monaud); Dreyfus réhabilité (Rosenberg); Collection du 3<sup>e</sup> type [4th part] (Storch); De Montgeron aux prototypes de demain (Emmenegger).

## Timbres Magazine

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

N° 69 Jun 2006: La Guyane: un «pays» méconnu et une poste qui l'est tout autant (Toulemonde); Cherchez...et trouvez!! (de la Mettrie); sur les traces des présidents de la République en voyage (PJM); Le 20 centimes noir: un retrait différé! (Prugnon); Les colis postaux en Alsace-Lorraine [3rd part] (Philomax, Lascombe et Bonnefoy); Les cent ans de Joséphine (Zeyons); Les griffes «affranchissement insuffisant» (Baudot); Le point sur les sùrtaxes maritimes (Prugnon); Philatélie et assistance sociale (Chauvin).

N° 70. Jul-Aug 2006: La poste en pays bushinengué [Guyane] (Toulemonde); Les premiers catalogues (Sanders); Une ténébreuse Affaire [Capitaine Alfred Dreyfus] (Amiel); «Missen to [absent à]» (Beslu); La religieuse du balcon de Pierre (de la Mettrie); Jean-François Baudot: «Redonner aux autres l'amour que j'ai reçu» (Michaud); Un mandat pour militaire (Prugnon); 1942: du Levant au Western Desert (Chauvin).

## The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol 36 N° 2, Whole N° 173, May 2006: Vientiane - Hanoi 1957 First Flight (Aspnes); Diplomatic Mail from Indo-China (Bentley).

## The Collectors Club Philatelist

Vol 85 N° 2, Mar-Apr 2006: Gleanings from the French Colonies: Use of the One Centime French Colonial Allegorical Group Type Stamp (Grabowski).

Vol 85 N° 3, May-Jun 2006: Gleanings from the French Colonies: Guadeloupe - The Ten Centime Rates (Grabowski).

## Documents Philatéliques

N° 189 3<sup>ème</sup> trim 2006: 1882: des affranchissements en numéraire dans les Établissements français de l'Inde (Slabbinck); Les timbres à date à numéro de Madagascar (Desnos & Varin); Les griffes ½ centime en plus de 1908 à 1919 (Saintoy); De quelques droits et taxes sur colis postaux d'Alsace-Lorraine (1919-1940) (Bonnefoy); L'Insuffisance d'affranchissement des lettres coloniales de 1849 à 1876 ou pourquoi faire simple quand on peut faire compliqué (Chauvet).

**Continued from page 89****Bookshelf - Books Noted**

*Catalogue des P.P. Imprimés et P.P. Journaux*, by Gabriel Dutripon, pub. Union Marcophile; 48 pp, A4, soft cover, illustrated; available from L Bridelance, 19 avenue du Châtelet, 77150 Lésigny; price 8€ + p&p. [All known varieties of printed matter and newspaper date stamps, catalogued by *département*, town, colour, dater, known dates of use, and a value index.]

*Catalogue des empreintes de machine à affranchir avec nouvelle légende "ERF" et "La Poste" (depuis Juin 2000)*; 40 pp, A4, 130 b/w illustrations, 230 prices; available from ACEMA, 270 rue Watteau, 76650 Le Petit-Couronne; price 10€. [Catalogue of meter stamps of France bearing the new legends.]

*Être facteur dans le Nord (1830-1940)*, by Mathilde Marguerit & Carlos da Fonseca, pub. les Cahiers pour l'histoire de La Poste; 212 pp, 170 x 240mm; available from Comité pour l'histoire de La Poste, case postale D 102, 44 boulevard de Vaugirard, 75757 Paris Cedex 15; price 6€. [Detailed study of the changing work and status of the postman in France.]

*Les "Luquet" en euros*, pub. SO.CO.CO.DA.MI; 52 pp, 145 x 207mm, b/w illustrations; details from SO.CO.CO.DA.MI, Jean-Claude Gagné, 18 rue Danièle Casanova, 77330 Ozoir-la-Ferrière; price 8€. [Study of sheet and booklet printings of these stamps in the series "L'impression des timbres français sur rotatives".]

*Les postes années 50*, by J-P Bertrand, D Bouquet & P Jalabert, pub. Visualia; 110 pp; available from Visualia, 57 rue de la Colonie, 75013 Paris; price 15€ + p&p. [100 photos depicting jobs in La Poste from 1950 to 1960.]

*Inventaire des marques postales et oblitérations des Basses-Pyrénées / Pyrénées-Atlantiques 1627-2005*, by Jacques Conséjo, pub. Amicale philatélique des postiers et télécommunicants d'Aquitaine; 743 pp, A4, 6810 illustrations in 10 chapters; available from the author, BP 769, 64107 Bayonne cedex, or from APPT Aquitaine, 13 allée Alfred de Musset, 33320 Le Taillan Médoc; price 59€ + p&p. [Monography of all 583 *communes*, covering postmarks, cancellations, entry marks, franchise marks, military hospitals, the *Poste Automobile Rurale* circuits, telegraph marks, temporary cancels, railway cancels, return to sender, etc.]

*Les Oblitérations de Tanger*, by Khalide Benziane & Thierry Sanchez; 68 pp, A4, 160 illustrations, estimated values; available from SPLM, 206 boulevard Péreire, 75017 Paris; price 25€ inc p&p in France. [Brief history of Tangiers with postal markings of the Local and *Chérifien* Posts, and British, Spanish, German and Italian posts; and bibliography.]

*Les timbres de franchise militaire au type 'les Emblèmes'*, by Lt-Col Pierre-Louis Follot; 152 pp, colour illustrations; details from the author, 4 rue Croix-Fauchet, 45000 Orléans; price unknown. [Covers Yvert Military Franchise stamps 11-12.]

Maurice Tyler

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## POSTAL HISTORY SALES

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## REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 13 MAY 2006

The President, Mr P R A Kelly, opened the meeting held at the Calthorpe Arms public house, 252 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1, at 11.30am in the presence of 14 members.

**(1) Apologies for absence** were received from Bill Mitchell, Ashley Lawrence, John Hammonds, John Simmonds, Derek Richardson, Peter Maybury, John Thorpe, Colin Spong and Alec Swain.

**(2) Minutes of the previous AGM** of 14 May 2005, published in Journal 237, were accepted as a true record of that meeting.

#### **(3) President's Report - Peter Kelly**

"2005 has been a very satisfactory year for the Society and I am pleased to be able to report that we have been very successful on a number of fronts.

If I have any 'theme' for my report, it is that the future of the Society lies very much in the hands of each individual member. When those attending the AGM listen to this report or others read it in the Journal, please give thought to areas where you feel that you can help. This contribution which we are looking for relates not only to the attending of meetings and supporting the packets or auctions, but also, and perhaps more important in the long term, helping with the running of the Society. As can be seen in the individual reports that follow, many of the officers are now past retirement age and some are actively seeking to stand down and retire gracefully to the back benches. They have served this Society well over many years but cannot go on for ever and without younger blood coming forward there is a serious risk that some of the splendid advantages of membership may no longer be feasible. If you would like to be a part of ensuring the future of the Society please speak to me or any other officer.

First of all, the Journal that ties us all together has been of a consistently high quality and we are indeed fortunate in having an editor of the calibre of Maurice Tyler. He is nevertheless dependent on members to submit articles and I extend thanks to those regular contributors who always seem to be able to find something of interest to share with us. With more than 380 members there should be others out there who could put pen to paper for all of our enjoyment.

The Society meetings continue to go from strength to strength with the exception of those in London where considerable concern has been expressed as to the fall in numbers, up to a point where the question is now being asked whether it is feasible to continue. The Southern Group under Colin Spong and the Northern Group under Peter Maybury both flourish as will be seen from their reports. Similarly the Wessex Group under Alan Wood and Peter Kelly completed their first full year and the Scottish Group under Mavis Pavey has had its inaugural meeting. With the exception of London this all bodes well for the future and new members have been recruited as a result.

The Society weekend, now firmly based at Charlecote has been a great success with Chris Hitchen and Peter Kelly

maintaining the very successful pattern originally introduced by our much missed friend Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith. The consistently high philatelic content and the great camaraderie of the meetings has made it an important annual date in our diaries.

The two packets continue to work well through the considerable efforts of Mavis Pavey and John West but the volume of the France packet particularly has declined with a resultant fall in commission for us. Mavis has decided that she would like to retire as secretary and a replacement is being sought actively. Our thanks to them both for their considerable contribution.

The auction has had less material submitted than in past years and this has affected the return to the Society. We are grateful to Mick Bister and John Hammonds for their work on this and for making it the success that it has always been. We should also not forget our auctioneer Alan Wood for his professional approach. However, both Mick and John wish to stand down and without new volunteers it seems unlikely that we would be able to continue with this activity for much longer.

David Pashby continues to operate our magazine circulation scheme successfully but this great service is certainly under-utilised which is a shame.

During the year we have continued to acquire books for our library which is a superb asset for our members, and through our librarian, George Barker, books may be borrowed and he will arrange for photocopies of magazine articles from our archive. Few societies can match this and we should all take full advantage of it.

During the year work has continued on our two publishing projects and as I write this, Derek Richardson's third edition of the rates book is now out and has already covered its costs. Geoff Gethin's book on Forgeries is about to go to the printer and will be available in early summer. We believe that both books will be a considerable aid to both the postal historian and philatelist and both authors are to be congratulated on their efforts. Thanks and recognition are also due to Mick Bister who has acted as referee to Geoff's book and to Maurice who has got it into camera ready copy form.

During the year the decision was taken to centralise our sales of journals, brochures and other publications, and this has been taken on by Peter Maybury. The results of this have been very satisfactory but the benefits will accrue in 2006. Our thanks also go to Len Barnes who is storing stock for us.

I would like to thank all of the Officers and Committee members of the society for their contribution during the year. I have mentioned many of them already but not Chris Hitchen, our Treasurer, whose financial management has allowed us to build a firm financial base which, in turn, permits us to consider other projects such as publications and development of the library. I would also like to thank him for the commonsense advice and support he has given me as President. Alan Barrett stands down as a Committee member this year and we thank him for his past services.

I believe the Society is in good health and serving its members well. All of us involved will continue to do this to the best of our ability but, as I have said in my second

paragraph, we need to look to the future in order to maintain it and future success will depend largely on those who follow us.”

**(4) General Secretary’s Report - given by Peter Kelly for Geoff Gethin**

“At the time of writing, our Secretary, Geoff Gethin is still in hospital and seriously poorly. Our best wishes go out to Geoff for his recovery and to Liz, his wife for whom this is such a worrying time. In Geoff’s absence Peter Kelly has looked after part of the secretarial function and we express our thanks to Liz for continuing to deal with new membership applications.

During the year to 31.12.2005 overall membership increased by 2 to 383. This welcome increase has stopped the slight fall, year on year that we have reported in recent years. We

have welcomed 23 new members, 7 have died, 6 resigned and 7 were suspended for non-payment. (This compares with 16 new members in 2004)

In the past, the General Secretary has given details of the London meetings held during the year, but now the Society’s activities are broken down into group reports these will be considered under items 13 and 16.

As usual, thanks go to Derek Richardson for his considerable contribution in maintaining the membership database and for his help with the distribution of the Journal.”

**(5) Treasurer’s Report - Chris Hitchen**

“2005 saw the Society make a small loss of £. For the past two years income has been sufficient for our regular expenditure but any extras such as new frames and the library has had to be taken from reserves.

Expenditure has been carefully controlled. The one significant jump is the insurance due largely to a change in the terms

offered for public liability insurance. Maurice managed to produce 4 excellent journals at a slightly reduced cost from 2004. Around £ received from advertisements also helped defray the cost of this major item.

Income from both the packets and auction dropped this year. These will always be variable and it is just unfortunate

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2005					
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>				<u>2004</u>	
Cash at bank					
Cash at building society					
Sundry debtors					
<u>DEDUCT CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>					
Sundry creditors					
Subscriptions in advance					
<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>					
Represented by					
<u>MEMBERS FUNDS</u>					
Uncommitted funds at 1.1.2003					
Year loss					
INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2005					
<u>Expenditure</u>			<u>Income</u>		
	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>		<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
Accommodation			Auction		
Journal 4 issues			Exchange packet		
Postage and expenses			Interest		
Display frames	-		Sale of publications		
Brochure publications	-				
Insurance					
Library					
Year loss (2003 surplus)			Subscriptions		

that all declined together this year. Supply of material and demand from members cannot easily be controlled.

Geoff Gethin's book on forgeries will be produced shortly and that will initially be paid for from the reserves. I anticipate that some £ will be used to publish it, money that will steadily be recovered from future sales.

The new PayPal account has proved very useful for payments by foreign members. It does however carry relatively high charges and those who use this means of payment should remember to add 4% to the amount to pay.

All debtors and creditors have been cleared.

#### **(6) Acting Auction Secretary's Report - Mick Bister**

"At last year's AGM I was able to present an upbeat report as, despite falling numbers of bidders and a reduction in the quantity of lots offered, the profits at the end of 2004 had nevertheless risen. I am afraid that I cannot report the same for 2005.

Due to personal circumstances I was unable to organise an August auction which meant that we were immediately reduced from four to three sales. However, in order to compensate for the loss of a sale I ensured that the three remaining auctions were large ones containing between 490 and 500 lots each and offering, in my opinion, a wide range of material at very reasonable reserves. The response from the membership though was very disappointing. The percentage of members bidding continued to fall and in 2005 the number dropped to an average of only 16.9% of the membership compared to 19.5% in 2004 and 22% in 2003. As a result, the number of lots sold in 2005 also fell to between 47% and 54% per auction compared to between 52% and 64% in the previous year. Furthermore, most of the bids were for lower priced items and it was disheartening to have to return to vendors high quality material that had remained unsold. I regret to report, therefore, that whereas the number of lots offered fell by only 16.7%, the profits last year slumped by 44% to just £

I am not sure how to address the situation. One reason for the decline is that members may not be finding material that interests them in the catalogues. Indeed, one member gave the 'inappropriate content' of the auction catalogue as one of his reasons for resigning last year. But I can only put into the auction the material which I receive, and gratefully so, from the vendors. I try to include a good cross section of material but I appreciate there is sometimes an imbalance when two or more members are selling off identical collections. This has happened recently in the case of postal stationery and modern stamp booklets. Another possible reason for the reduced interest is the expansion of on-line auctions such as eBay, Delcampe and Aucland which offer a quicker and more comprehensive service. I still argue though that the material we offer is exceptionally good value for money and is decidedly cheaper than equivalent material in commercial auction catalogues.

In light of these remarks, you will appreciate that we have now reached the stage where I must recommend an increase in subscriptions. These have been held for the past 8 years but are now not adequate to maintain the level of services expected by members. I propose the following rates for implementation on 1 January 2007.

UK	£13
Europe:	£17
Rest of World:	£20"

The acceptance of the Treasurer's Report and Accounts was proposed by Alan Barrett, seconded by Maurice Tyler, and carried unanimously.

At last year's AGM a proposal was made from the floor that an extra auction be included in the programme of the Annual Philatelic Weekend held at Charlecote. The proposal was discussed but had to be rejected for a number of reasons. Firstly, with this year's addition of the President's Display to the display programme, there would consequently be less time for members' displays and this reduction would be further exacerbated if an auction were also included. Secondly, a survey over the past three years' attendance revealed that only 4 regular bidders were present at the philatelic weekend and over 50% of the attendance rarely or never participated in the normal auctions at all. A third problem would be the provision of lots. Members of the Society who send me material to go into the normal auctions with a potential clientele of nearly 400 bidders would not be happy at having their lots offered to only 12% of the membership. Finally, there was already in place a successful second-hand bookstall held over the weekend and this could be developed further for the benefit of vendors and buyers of philatelic literature without encroaching on display time.

At the last AGM John Hammonds kindly offered to assist me with the auction with effect from last November when he began preparations for the February 2006 sale. I am indebted to him for the assistance he has given me. John has stated that he is willing to be re-elected for one more year and, despite last year's disappointing results, we shall both remain positive and aim to conduct three auctions in 2006. We ask that the membership continue to support us both by sending more material for the sales and by submitting more bids. However, we are still seeking someone who will replace us and take over the reins single-handedly and we would be delighted if a volunteer would step forward within the next twelve months. It is an exciting and satisfying job with opportunities of handling a great variety of material and corresponding with fellow members.

Thank you to all those who have participated in the auction whether as vendors, buyers or helpers and I express my special gratitude, as always, to Alan Wood for his sterling work at the front of the room."



“The attached accounts show that profit is down on last year (2004), but is above that of 2003.

It is good to see bank interest rising slightly. Receipts are down because I did not have more material to get into circulation, hence the reduction in commission received. The cost of postage goes ever upwards and this year the cost of stationery is up because I had to buy more address labels and parcel tape.

**(8) Report of Packet Secretary (Colonies) - John West**

“Circulation dropped from 52 to 48 packets for the accounting period with total insured value of £ (£ in 2004). This produced net sales after expenses of £ (in 2004 £) and after recovery of postage and insurance resulted in net commission of £ (£ in 2004). The balance of the bank account as at 31.12.2005 was £.

As there are 12 books in circulation at year end as opposed to 8 the previous year it is thought that 2006 is likely to produce a better year.

These figures have been achieved by tight monitoring of expenses.

There are four circuits in operation with varying results. The two circuits in the south (A & B) tend to circulate quicker because there is an element of passing on by hand and they are smaller, while those in the north (C & D) are more widely spread. I have tried to compensate for this by adding two packets to C & D during the autumn in the hope that this would encourage members to move them on more quickly knowing that a second packet was following. This has not proved successful and there have been delays and none have yet been returned.

The lack of material for the ‘France’ packet is a matter for concern. Last year the value of books received was only £, down from £ the previous year. My requests for material via the packets themselves seem to fall on deaf ears. Other regular vendors have either run out of material or had other problems this last year. I am coming to the conclusion the collecting of France is temporarily out of fashion and that people are not buying collections and passing on the unwanted parts.”

The reasons for the delay include careless addressing either to me or the correct addressee, once the post office have worked it out, or overlong retention by members, particularly when they buy nothing from it. Absence on holiday also takes its toll although the practice of ringing ahead to warn members that a packet is on the way has worked well and minimised the problems of delivery to an empty house.

It is rewarding to know that the majority of members appreciate the work involved in providing the packet for them and the compliments are always appreciated. Any comment or criticism is dealt with as best I can, I have, however, refused to adopt the practice, suggested by one or two members, of placing someone who spends a lot of money at the end of the circulation list. I adopt a strict rotational policy that gives everyone an equal chance. That policy will remain unchanged.

One improvement is that my telephone number is now included inside the front cover of each journal.”

Full financial details of each packet are available from the Editor if required.

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS FOR COLONIES PACKET 2005	
INCOME	EXPENDITURE
Total Commission on sales	Postage
Insurance recovered	Stationery & Telephone
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Balance sent to Treasurer</b> _____	

**(9) Editor’s Report - Maurice Tyler**

“Another year has passed in which I have received enough articles from members to sustain a healthy Journal, but again with very little material to spare. I would be delighted if those who have built up some interesting collections, or material that they have been able to display at Charlecote or at regional meetings, could find time to turn their material into a short illustrated article. I am particularly keen to publish articles on stamps rather than postal history, but any appropriate subject will be considered. Some members have already responded to my appeals, but I am sure there are more who could, without too much effort expended, turn collections into articles.

During 2005 there were the usual 4 issues, totalling 168 pages (172 last year) of which 8 were in full colour (12 last year), and 80,880 words (83,400 last year). The total cost of printing plus editorial expenses was £ less than last year

(which in turn was £ less than the previous year). I hope to continue producing some pages in full colour each year when the illustrations justify this and are of good enough quality.

I have attempted to keep the Society website up to date as far as information is concerned, and hope to use it for advertising our recent brochures, Derek Richardson’s Magazine Index and his Rates Book, as well as Geoff Gethin’s coming Forgeries Book (which is now ready for printing and will be published in July or August). The website has also proved valuable in attracting new members.

The Journal was entered into the International Literature Competition at Toronto in Canada during 2005 and won a Vermeil Medal. This is gratifying recognition that we are maintaining the high quality of the contributions submitted by members.”

**(10) Librarian's Report - George Barker**

"Library activity has been fairly normal, but with rather more than usual of what I might term 'non-library requests', to which I will refer later.

I revert this year to my practice of listing the loans separate from the "newer" photocopy requests. In 2005 there were about 40 loan requests for books etc and another 6 since 1 January to date. Photocopies totalled 83 in 2005, and 19 since 1 January, to date. This is a total of 123 (and 25) to compare with last year's figures (not broken down) of 80 (and 25).

A notable feature of the year has been the acquisition of many new items (books and photocopies or tear sheets) with large quantities coming from, in particular, Colin Spong and Bill Mitchell, who have always been generous donors to the Library [may I send them my personal thanks?], and even more books by purchase. I have been intending to issue a list of all these new acquisitions for the Journal but have been rather overwhelmed by the quantity. My list, in preparation, has reached about 110 items, and I've not yet finished!

**(11) Magazine Circulation Organiser's Report - David Pashby**

"As the figures show, there is a growing gap between receipts and expenditure. There are two reasons for this: an increase in postages, because I now have to post all four magazines, and a fall in the number of subscribers. In previous years, the shortfall was covered by reserve funds, which had accumulated to an embarrassing level, but these are now reduced to the point where I must keep a reserve to pay renewal fees before members' subscriptions have come in.

Receipts from subs this year were £117; magazine renewals and postages cost £211. I therefore propose to raise subscriptions by one pound per title in January 2007, and there will probably have to be a further rise in 2008, unless

Perhaps the meeting might like to let me know if it were best to start the preparation of a new Library List rather than insert a voluminous supplement in the Journal. I await your response.

I mentioned 'non-library requests' and by this I mean enquiries on the lines of "is there any thing in the library about ... X" or alternatively "what do you know about ... Y" (it being assumed that somewhere in French philatelic literature there is an article on "Y"). I try and give some help but do not feel it is my job to do other people's bibliographic research for them. If it is not in the Library List (whose subject index I hope can be improved with every new edition), I can't help - also I am quite busy myself!

I remind members that I am always glad to see members who can visit the library in Bradford, and if a lengthy stay is wished I can offer overnight accommodation. This would enable them to do their research work themselves, and discover the lesser items that have not got into the Society's magazine index."

membership builds up again. Fourteen people take both titles, eleven take one only. There were three resignations and two deaths this year, while one new member joined.

In past years, I have had to complain to the publishers about flimsy packaging that fell apart in the post. This problem seems to be resolved, for the moment at least, and this year's problem was with the local postmistress, who on no account wanted to cash a cheque when I needed to draw money for postages. Clubs and societies are not issued with cards to withdraw money, so I couldn't use the PIN number. It took several phone calls to Alliance and Leicester, and a couple from them to the postmistress, before this was sorted out."

**ACCOUNTS FOR THE MAGAZINE SCHEME FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2006****ASSETS AND RECEIPTS**

Carried forward from previous year  
Current Account on 10.5.06 (tel. communication)  
Deposit Account (statement 4.11.05)  
Subs @ £  
Subs @ £  
Interest on deposit account for year  
Sub overpaid  
**TOTAL**

**2005-6****2004-5****EXPENDITURE**

Sub to *Timbres Magazine* (2 copies, January 2006: 128€)  
Sub to *l'Écho de la Timbrologie* (2 copies, March 2006: 120€)  
Postages & incidental expenses  
**TOTAL**

**2005-6****2004-5**

ASSETS AND RECEIPTS  
less EXPENDITURE  
**CARRY FORWARD**

## (12) Sales Organiser's Report (Journals, Brochures, Books) - Peter Maybury

"The stock of Society Journals was transferred from HH Sales to Peter Maybury's home in October 2005, and the brochures and other publications followed early in 2006. A detailed inventory was made and a decision was taken to substantially reduce the levels of retained stock. A 'special offer' on the small format journals was promoted in the

December issue of the Journal, resulting in a large number being sold to members at home and abroad. The effect of this will be seen in the 2006 accounts. The remaining stock has now been culled to more manageable levels and further reviews and promotions will be ongoing during the current year."

## (13) Regional Group Reports

### Report of the Northern Group - Peter Maybury

"Four meetings were scheduled in Leeds for the season, plus the well regarded annual visit to Heaton Royds for the Bastille Day celebration. Numbers attending at Leeds remain constant and the innovation of an all day meeting west of the Pennines, organised by Peter Stockton, attracted "new faces" and was very well attended. The March all day meeting in Leeds was repeated, again proving to be very popular.

Detailed reports of the gatherings have appeared in the Journal during the year. All of the displays were presented by members and guests of the group, who continue to astonish with the breadth and depth of their collecting and knowledge.

As organiser I wish to thank all who have made the effort to attend our meetings, thus contributing to the success of the group.

Once again on behalf of the Northern Group, I wish to place on record our appreciation for the hospitality shown by Stephen and Judith during the invasion of their home last July."

The Northern Group programme for 2006-2007 was published in Journal 240 (page 38) with some amendments to details in this Journal (page 103).

### Report of the Southern Group - Colin Spong

"Four quarterly meetings have been held and details of these have been published in the Society Journal. Once again I am pleased to report that we have enjoyed some

good displays with an average attendance of 15 members and guests. I would like to thank those who have given displays and also the members who travel considerable distances to be with us. We are a friendly group and invite those who have not yet been to one of our meetings to come along. Finally I thank my wife Pat who looks after the refreshments for us."

The new Southern Group programme for 2006-2007 was published in Journal 240 (page 38).

### Report of the Wessex Group - Peter Kelly

"The Group met at Salisbury three times in 2005. These were all whole day meetings with an invited speaker in the morning and individual members' displays in the afternoon. Our three invited speakers were Ashley Lawrence on the Sower Centenary, John Hammonds on Airmails, and Peter Kelly on the Amazing Travels of *Type Sage*.

Members' displays have been of great interest and enormous range, providing opportunities for discussion from which we have all been able to learn something. The convenors have been encouraged by the level of interest and enthusiasm shown and the happy ambiance. On each occasion we have had an enjoyable lunch in the picturesque surroundings of the Mill Inn which is close to our meeting room. The average attendance including guests was 18.

Three meetings were arranged for 2006, on 4 February, 1 July and 7 October. All members of the Society and their guests are very welcome to attend meetings, and further details are available from the Convenors, Alan Wood and Peter Kelly."

## (14) Election of Officers and Committee

Those members listed on the AGM agenda as having indicated their willingness, if elected, to serve for the 2006-2007 season were elected *en bloc*, after a proposal to this effect made by David Jennings-Bramly and seconded by Godfrey Bowden was carried unanimously.

The current Acting Auction Secretaries agreed to act in that capacity for one more year, but are both anxious to find a member willing to take on this role on a more durable basis.

Mavis Pavey had already indicated that she wished to be replaced as Packet Secretary for France, but had agreed to continue for a short period until a new Packet Secretary was appointed. A possible replacement had volunteered and was currently considering the situation. [See page 78 of this Journal for the official announcement of a new appointment.]

The Committee for 2006-2007 is therefore:

President:	Mr P R A Kelly
Vice-President & Programme Secretary:	Mr A J Lawrence
General Secretary:	Dr R G Gethin
Treasurer:	Mr C J Hitchen
Librarian:	Mr G E Barker
Editor:	Mr M S Tyler
Acting Auction Secretaries:	Mr M L Bister
(by request not a Committee member)	Mr J N Hammonds
Packet Secretary (France):	Mrs M Pavey
Packet Secretary (Colonies):	Mr J C West
Committee Members:	Mr L H Barnes
	Mr J P Maybury
	Mr J Parmenter
	Mr C W Spong
	Prof W I Stevenson

**(15) Rule Change**

The following change in the Society's rules, notice of which had been given to members via the Journal, was proposed by Mick Bister and seconded by Len Barnes, and then carried unanimously:

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."

**(16) Any Other Business**

(a) Chris Hitchen raised the problem of attendance at London meetings, which had declined considerably in the last few years. A number of suggestions had been put forward by members previously, and after some discussion it was decided that the London meetings would in future be run on lines similar to the regional meetings, where Saturday would be the normal meeting day rather than Wednesday evening, and meetings at the Calthorpe Arms would rely more on members' informal 12 sheet displays than in the past. [*The London programme for 2006-2007 can be found on cover page iii.*]

(b) Alan Barrett expressed the compliments of the membership to those who had organised the sale of books and of material at the Charlecote Weekend.

(c) Chris Hitchen pointed out that the Society competitions at Charlecote now attracted very few entries, and that it was becoming more difficult to organise adequate judging. He suggested that the Committee should perhaps look at the possibility of having only one trophy awarded at the Weekend, the Jubilee Salver, to be judged by popular vote of those members attending.

(d) John Parmenter commented that it was not always easy to borrow a book from the Society Library, and hoped that these would be more accessible in future. Members present acknowledged the sterling work being done by George Barker in housing our vast collection of books and periodicals.

The President then closed the meeting at 12.45 pm..

PRAK/MST

## SCOTTISH GROUP MEETING OF 3 JUNE 2006

### Peter Kelly: The Amazing Travels of *Type Sage*

Sadly, this meeting was attended by only 4 members. Those who did not attend missed an absolute feast of philately provided by our guest speaker Peter Kelly, President of the Society.

Peter's display, entitled 'The Amazing Travels of *Type Sage*', really did cover countries from A-Z: mail addressed to countries to which you would expect French mail to be sent and to others more unexpected and rare. Peter explained fully the routes taken and why; shipping lines (not always French); rates pre- and post-UPU, and to those countries not in the UPU; weight steps, including probably the heaviest letter sent at this time; control marks;

redirected mail, misdirected mail, unaccepted mail, returned mail and an item recovered from a shipwreck.

The *type Sage* period lasted from 1876 to 1900 and Peter's display reflected this, showing on some items mixed frankings with stamps from an earlier period. To pick out single items would be unfair, as each sheet was a gem, and Peter's knowledge of his subject came through loud and clear. I think he learned one fact, though, from his visit, about Lord Kelvin!

The Scottish Group programme for 2006-2007 is published on page 78 of this Journal.

MP

## WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 1 JULY 2006

### Peter Maybury: Algeria to Independence / Members' Choice

Attendance was somewhat down due to holidays, other commitments and also the World Cup Football but 10 of us enjoyed a wide ranging and interesting display given by Peter Maybury on the subject of Algeria up to independence. This encompassed some of the early military mail and led us through the development of postal services and maritime transport up to 1960. The display showed that, although Algeria was considered as three *départements* of France, the postal system was by no means the same as in mainland France and there are many avenues of interest that can be explored.

After our usual excellent lunch at the Old Mill the afternoon was taken up by Members' displays:-

**Peter Kelly:** The development of mail services across the Sahara to and from Soudan and Niger;

**John Hammonds:** Algerian airmails;

**Peter Todd:** A letter to Ferdinand de Lesseps at Paris;

**Edwin Rideout:** Postage stamps of the French PO at Port Said;

**Brian Weeks:** Wartime mail - the Pétain régime in French West Africa.

**Bob Paterson:** New acquisitions including late use of a 25c Empire accepted in 1914;

**Alan Wood** finished off with a medley of small displays: Moroccan perfins, French Morocco WWI, *Bureaux*

*ambulants* (TPOs) of France, entry marks on mail from Italy and Belgium.

Our next meeting will be held on 7 October 2006 and our invited speaker will be Ashley Lawrence (subject TBC).

PRAK

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## NORTHERN GROUP METING OF 15 JULY 2006

### Bastille Day at Heaton Royds

Those attending: G Barker, M & M Bister, S Ellis, A Goude, R High, C Hitchen, S & J Holder, B Lythgoe, P Maybury, M Pavey, A Shepherd, P Stockton, M Tyler, P Watkins, J West, Y & R Wheatley, & guests M Cusworth and R Shiers.

Apologies were tendered by: R V Barnes, M Meadowcroft, D J Richardson.

Following coffee and biscuits in the garden, **Stephen Holder** opened the proceedings by welcoming everyone to the recently completed new meeting room, and noting that his sacrifices to RA had once again been favourably received in the guise of a most pleasant and sunny day. The order of displays (with lunch in the garden forming an interval in the middle) was as follows:-

**Chris Hitchen:** Paris, registered covers from 1873;

**Mick Bister:** 1F50 Pétain issues of WWII;

**Steve Ellis:** Central America, Line A maritime mail;

**Maurice Tyler:** WWI official FM cards;

**Mavis Pavey:** Wallpaper or modern postal stationery;

**George Barker:** French occupation of Syria;

**Ronnie Shiers:** French Polynesia Marquisas Islands;

**Paul Watkins:** Anglo-French mail;

**Tony Shepherd:** Guadeloupe, rural mail;

**Peter Maybury:** Bowes Museum Napoleonic letters;

**John West:** The French Connection, the story of a crime and its consequences told in stamps;

**Alan Goude:** Colony to colony mail;

**Tony Shepherd:** Guadeloupe, pre-paid letters;

**Martyn Cusworth:** Lati, South America to France in WWII;

**Peter Stockton:** Pas de Calais to 1965;

**John West:** Red Cross mail in the colonies;

**Brian Lythgoe:** French & British Cameroons, 1961;

**Mavis Pavey:** French naval bases;

**Peter Maybury:** Postcards from Algeria.

The meeting concluded with a resounding thank you to Stephen and Judith for their hospitality, not forgetting Marianne for her help with the catering, and the presentation to Stephen of a well deserved Society Long Service Certificate.

JPM

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## SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 5 AUGUST 2006

### Visit of the Forces Postal History Society

The summer meeting commenced with coffee and welcome from the Convenor. **John Daynes** opened the first session with a most comprehensive display of Military mail from the British Expeditionary Force in 1939 through to the Liberation of France in 1945. Various campaigns in between were seen including North Africa, Syria & Lebanon, East Africa, Madagascar *et al.* Whilst it was not possible to record all the fine material on display the following were noted from the first sheets: letter from Base PO N° 1 of 16.9.1939 to Ashington; a 1939 letter from RAF 18 Squadron at Beauvraignes, Air Component BEF, with French Censor N° 169 to Coventry; an 11.3.1940 cover from RAF B Flight Perpignan with locally made censor handstamp PASSED BY RAF CENSOR to Dawlish; Polish Forces cover d/d 1.6.1940 to Paris; and intercepted mail UK-Brazil d/d 6.6.1940 trapped in France, censored by Germans when France surrendered and arrived in Brazil 29.1.1941.

Other items seen included a Belgian Forces letter from St Alexandre, Gard, BFPO 37 addressed to Office of Verification, Carcassonne then forwarded to Oflag VIII/C at Juliusberg, Silesia; the essays for the proposed combined Anglo-French Government; and a Detained in France

during German Occupation letter to a member of the Black Watch, returned to sender 14.8.1945.

After lunch at the Half Brick, the second session was devoted to a magnificent display of Wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century by **Edmund Hall**, Vice President of the FPHS. When members were asked how many wars there had been during the century, they thought perhaps 20+, but Edmund replied 200! He began his display with examples from the Boer War, one of the covers going to G P Fleisoner, the Boer Commander; correspondence from the USA-Philippines, USA-Cuban, Boxer, Zulu, German SW Africa, Sudan, Russo-Japanese, and WWI conflicts, noting an 8.11.04 postcard from battleship Mikase and Russian pc from 219 Reserve battalion Eschelon 730, Vladivostok; Zulu, Turkish, Balkans, an Italian occupation of Kos cover from Battery 38 Regiment, with free postage. Two pc's from Czech Legion in Russia. Edmund then displayed items from Germany, the various plebiscites and "Border" campaigns after WWI, Anglo-Russian Campaign, Anglo-Irish, and IRA wars, Turkish-Greek, Chaco (Paraguay), Chile-Bolivia and many others up to WWII, followed by Suez, Korea, Falklands etc.

After tea, **Brian Baldock** gave the final display on Imperial Australian Forces in France. They arrived in Marseille from Egypt in 1916 and served in various sectors in France until 1918. Amongst the items shown by Brian were two illustrated postcards, one a patriotic "Advance Australia" and the other "The Aussies' Glorious Record"; a pc from Lyon without censor mark to Paris conveying details of the journey! Other items noted were a 1.11.16 letter with censor N° 2920 pink etiquette, Infantry C 108 FPO 6X addressed to a Ms Lily Bottoms, Melbourne [ex Emery]; a postcard from N° 1 Australian General Hospital, Argentières with censor 5104, sent via Fr TPO to Rouen General Hospital, taking over from N° 12 British Stationary Hospital, and a 1918 Xmas Greeting card from 15 Australian Light Trench Mortar Battery. The final display consisted of letters addressed to "Dear Lil" dating from June 1916 until 4.12.1918, Lil being a cousin in the UK of

an Arthur Leonard Hayley, a travelling salesman called up in the Australian Forces. His many adventures greatly enlivened the meeting.

In thanking the three members of the FPHS, Colin said that we had seen a feast of magnificent material that we all had appreciated.

Members present:: Michael Annells Michael Berry, Betty Blincow, Roy Ferguson John Hammonds, Bob Larg, Yvonne Larg, Bill Mitchell, George Nash, Barbara Priddy, Colin Spong, John Thorpe, John Yeomans; FPHS: Brian Baldock, John Daynes, Edmund Hall. Apologies received from Colin Clarkson, Michael Wilson; Guests: Frank Blincow, Jean Hammonds & Pat Spong.

The Southern Group programme for 2006-2007 was published in Journal 240 (page 38).

CWS

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## Charlecote Weekend 2006



President & Co-convenor Peter Kelly



An interval for viewing or relaxing



Ashley Lawrence, André Métayer, Lesley Marley



Brigitte and Robert Abensur, Skanda Vaitilingam

## Bastille Day 2006



Viewing the frames



An introduction by host Stephen Holder



Lunch in the garden

