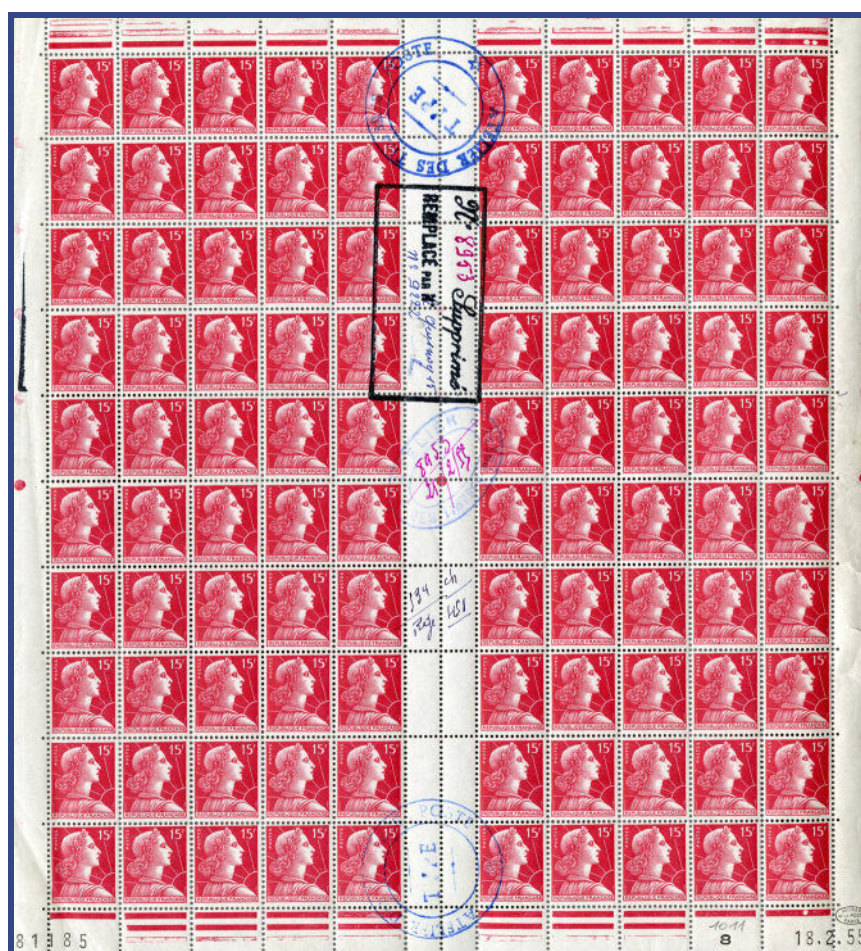


# THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY



A *feuille-modèle* (© Archives of the Musée de la Poste) on which was recorded, during the stamp's period of usage, its ink number 451, its accession number 8953, its date of registration 21 March 1955, the cachet indicating its withdrawal and details of the stamp replacing it, in this case, the 15F Le Quesnoy. This spectacular piece forms part of Mick Bister's account of *Marianne de Muller*.

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**THE FRANCE & COLONIES  
PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN**  
**Society Website: [www.fcps.org.uk](http://www.fcps.org.uk)**

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**The Society**

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

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

**2022-23 Annual Subscription Rates**

United Kingdom: £16.00, Europe: £23.00, Elsewhere: £27.00.

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

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

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**The Journal**

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Text must be submitted in Word and images attached separately as jpegs scanned at 300dpi.

**Auction and Exchange Packet Sales**

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

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

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

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**The Magazine Circuit**

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

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\* \* \*

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

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

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

# The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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**August 2022 • Whole No 299**

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## SOCIETY NOTES

### The Future of the Journal

This issue again includes a varied mix of articles. Whilst most are from regular contributors there are some from those who have ventured into print for the first time. Appeals for articles have been made regularly and produced a modest response, but more will be needed if we are to continue with three Journals per year. It is encouraging that there is still so much interest in the philately and postal history of France and the francophone world in this country. There is still much to explore and I know from displays that I have seen and articles that have been published elsewhere that there is ample scope for members to produce items of interest for the Journal. All contributions large or small are welcome.

We are fortunate to have an excellent and hardworking editor in Jan Gane. It is vital that she receives support from the membership to maintain the standards we all enjoy. Please contact Chris Hitchen at [treasurer@fcps.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@fcps.org.uk) with any items intended for publication or ideas which you would like to discuss.

\*\*\*

### Annual Philatelic Weekend 2023

Peter Kelly (see opposite) outlines his thoughts on the Annual Philatelic Weekend, and David Parmley writes on the future of this important event in the Society's calendar. Advance details for booking are given on page 99.

\*\*\*

### New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome back members 180 H V Hilton (Wolverhampton), 1511 Roger Lawson (West Sussex); and new members 1512 Christian Schunck (Obing, Germany), 1513 Richard Berry (West Sussex), 1514 J-R Olivier (Réunion).

\*\*\*

### Members Resigned or Retired

The following members have advised us that, sadly, they will not be renewing their membership: 1094 Roy Ferguson, 1487 Derek Hart, 1503 J Mackey, 1507 Greg Redner, 1197 R Stock, 1381 DH Trapnell.

\*\*\*

### Forthcoming Society Meetings

**The Northern Group:** 15 October 2022 - in Rotherham. Contact Steve Ellis for further details.

**The Wessex Group** - nothing imminently planned.

**The London Group** - nothing imminently planned.

As and when future events occur they will be promoted on the website.

\*\*\*

### Donations Board at the RPSL

The Society made a donation to the Royal Philatelic Society funds appeal for its new premises. There is now a board in the entrance lobby listing all societies who contributed including ourselves. (Chris Hitchen apologises for the awkward angle).

\*\*\*

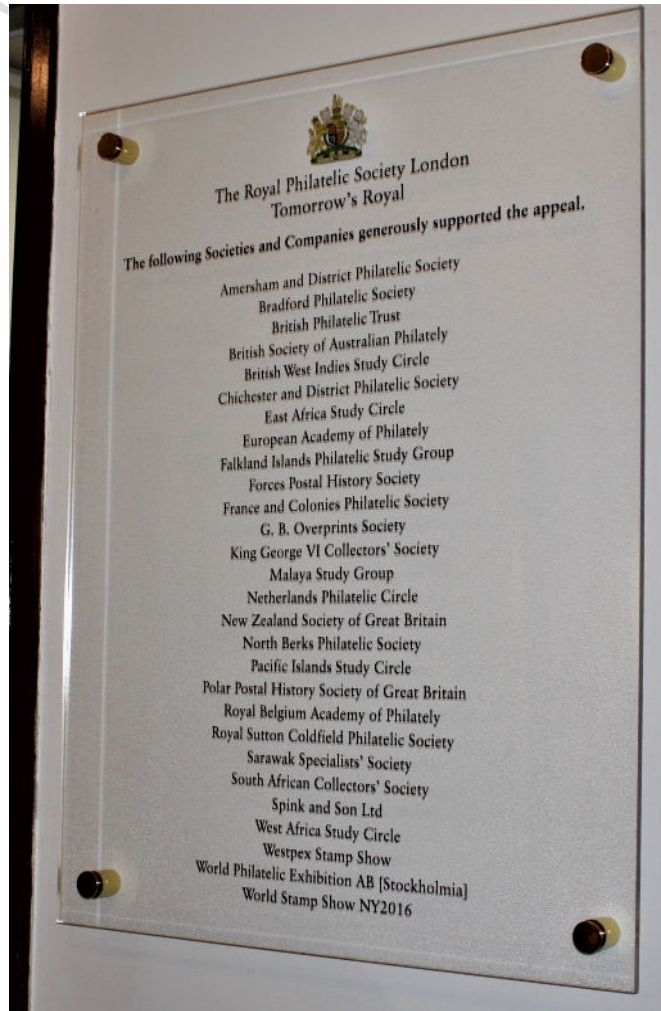
### Letter to the Editor

Peter Kelly writes:

I receive a number of philatelic enquiries of one sort or another from members and non-members and while I know the answer to some of them I often have to refer to friends and colleagues for their opinions. I enjoy this because it all helps me to broaden my own knowledge. This brings me to the point I would like to make.

Over the many years that I have attended or co-convened the Society's annual weekend meetings this has (for me) been undoubtedly the greatest benefit I have derived from my membership. Not only have I seen some extraordinary displays over the years, but I have also found the bourse and dealer presence extremely useful allowing me to purchase both philatelic books and material and also to dispose of items I no longer collect. Perhaps the greatest benefit has been the friendly discussions with other members and the ability to exchange views and ideas, many of whom have become good friends over the years. I know, for certain, that I never come away from one of these meetings without having learned something new. I think this is a wonderful service provided by the Society and wholeheartedly recommend anyone not having attended one of these meetings to give it a go.

\*\*\*



## SOCIETY NOTES

### 150th Anniversary of Postcards

2023 will mark the 150th anniversary of the introduction of postcards in France. **Peter Kelly** intends to present an article on the precursor cards for the Journal and invites other members to join in and make their own contributions. These could be in the form of articles or short items that would fit into “*Au coin des néophytes*”. Anyone keen to contribute should contact Peter with their ideas in order to avoid any duplication.

\*\*\*

### Praise for our Journal

#### THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY

N° 298 – Avril 2022

Nos amis britanniques de la Société philatélique France & Colonies n'en finissent pas de nous surprendre par leur maîtrise de sujets qui impliquent une bonne connaissance de l'histoire et de la langue française. Leur bulletin (exclusivement en anglais !) s'ouvre sur une présentation des lignes aériennes postales de l'Afrique-Occidentale française à la Suisse pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Puis, il y est question des dangers et des difficultés du transport maritime à La Réunion avant l'ouverture du Port, en 1886. Un article revient sur la Marianne de Muller – et les divergences entre sources. Sont ensuite passées en revue les marques de censure militaire britannique à Madagascar, du 16 septembre 1942 au 30 juin 1943. Autres sujets abordés : les timbres de la Libération ; le roi Louis-Philippe ; l'avenue de Laumière dans le 19<sup>e</sup> arrondissement parisien  
**Contact :** Ch.-J. Hitchen  
36 Everton Road  
Croydon CR0 6LA – Royaume-Uni.

The July/August edition of *L'Écho de la Timbrologie* has featured our Journal again in its regular column *Bulletins de clubs* with a résumé of our April 2022 edition.

Editor Sophie Bastide-Bernardin writes “Our British friends never cease to surprise us with their mastery of subjects that involve a good knowledge of history and of the French language. Their Journal (exclusively in English) opens with a presentation of the French West Africa airmail service during the Second World War. Then, there is the problem of the danger and difficulties of maritime transport in Réunion before the opening of the Port in 1886. An article reviews the Marianne de Muller issue and the discrepancies

between sources. British military censorship marks in Madagascar, from September 16, 1942 to June 30, 1943, are then reviewed. Other topics discussed: stamps of the Liberation and the Avenue de Laumière in the 19th arrondissement of Paris.”

Thank you again Sophie for highlighting our Journal.

\*\*\*

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Please support the  
forthcoming auction on  
17 September 2022.

There is something for  
everyone with over 800  
lots to choose from.



### Philatelic Congress of Great Britain

This year's event is being held at the Jurys Inn Hotel, 245 Broad Street, Birmingham 8-11 September 2022. The theme of the Congress is going to be “Organised Philately” – how our hobby is organised in different ways. During Congress there will be input from local, specialist, national and international societies, the philatelic trade and international philatelic organisations demonstrating what each type of society or organisation brings to the hobby – and displaying what is collected.

Congress is spread over four days. You can attend for the whole of the event or as a day visitor if there are any particular areas of interest on any of the days. Also, the traditional Congress banquet is being held on the Saturday evening and again you can book for this quite separately if you would like to attend.

The booking forms and programme can be found on the ABPS website: [www.abps.org.uk/congress](http://www.abps.org.uk/congress) or for more information contact Steven Harrison, Chairman of ABPS, at email: [sharrison500@btinternet.com](mailto:sharrison500@btinternet.com) or 0121 313 0671.

\*\*\*

### Forthcoming Exhibitions

STAMPEX Autumn 2022 (28 September – 1 October 2022)  
British Design Centre, Islington, London N1 0QH

LIBEREC 2022 Liberec, Czech Republic (13 – 16 October 2022). [www.liberec2022.eu](http://www.liberec2022.eu)

SOUTH AFRICA Cape Town, (8-12 November 2022)  
[www.capetown2022.org](http://www.capetown2022.org)

MONACOPHILEX 2022 (24-26 November 2022) Terrasses de Fontvieille, Monaco. Includes three philatelic exhibitions: India, Napoleon Bonaparte and 100 Iconic Items. [www.monacophil.eu](http://www.monacophil.eu)

IBRA 2023 Essen Germany (25 – 28 May 2023) UK deadline for entries is September 2022. <https://ibra2023.de>

MIDPEX 2023 (1 July 2023) Warwickshire Exhibition Centre.

YORK STAMP AND COIN FAIR (July 2023) To be held at York Racecourse. Entry deadline: to be advised.

BOSTON 2026 World Expo, (23-30 May 2026) Boston, Convention & Exhibition Centre. [www.boston2026.org](http://www.boston2026.org)

Further information can be found at the APBPS website: [www.abps.org.uk/forthcoming-exhibitions/](http://www.abps.org.uk/forthcoming-exhibitions/)

# Marianne de Muller

Mick Bister

## Part 2: The 15 Franc issue (YT 1011)

The *bon à tirer* authorising the printing of the 15F value was signed by the *Sous-Secrétaire d'État aux PTT*, André Bardon<sup>1</sup>, on 4 February 1955 (Figure 1). It consists of a colour proof annotated with the Lorilleux ink reference N° 451, *rose-carminé*. The *Musée de la Poste* in Paris holds a number of rejected colour proofs (Figure 2).



Figure 1

Extract from the 15F *bon à tirer* © Archives of the *Musée de la Poste*<sup>2</sup>

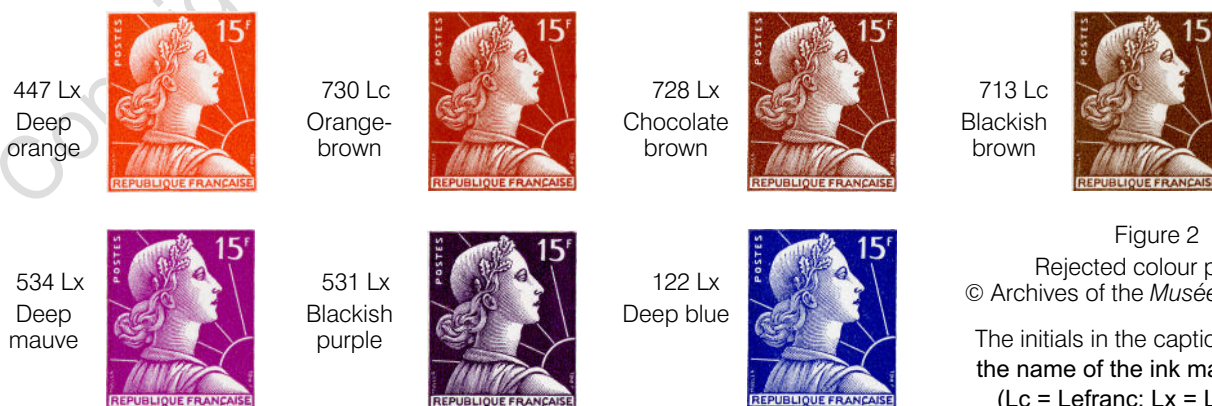


Figure 2

Rejected colour proofs  
© Archives of the *Musée de la Poste*  
The initials in the captions indicate the name of the ink manufacturer (Lc = Lefranc; Lx = Lorilleux).

<sup>1</sup> Jean-Luc Trassaert, in his *étude* published by *Le Monde des Philatélistes*, attributes the signature to Bardon's successor, Edouard Bonnefous, and claims that an *épreuve de luxe* was used and not a colour proof. Figure 1 proves the contrary.

<sup>2</sup> Please note that colours are slightly intensified in images provided by the *Musée de la Poste*.

Printing began on 16 February 1955 and continued until 15 May 1957 during which sixty-one cylinders on four rotary presses, N<sup>os</sup> 6, 7, 8, and 9, were used to produce 4,435,000,000 stamps. Each cylinder was composed of two electros identified by letters, eg A+B, C+D, E+F etc, and printed two sheets of 100 stamps per revolution. A sheet off

Electro B from the 18 February 1955 printing was used to create a *feuille-modèle* (Figure 3) on which was recorded, during the stamp's period of usage, its ink number 451, its accession number 8953, its date of registration 21 March 1955, the cachet indicating its withdrawal and details of the stamp replacing it, in this case, the 15F Le Quesnoy.

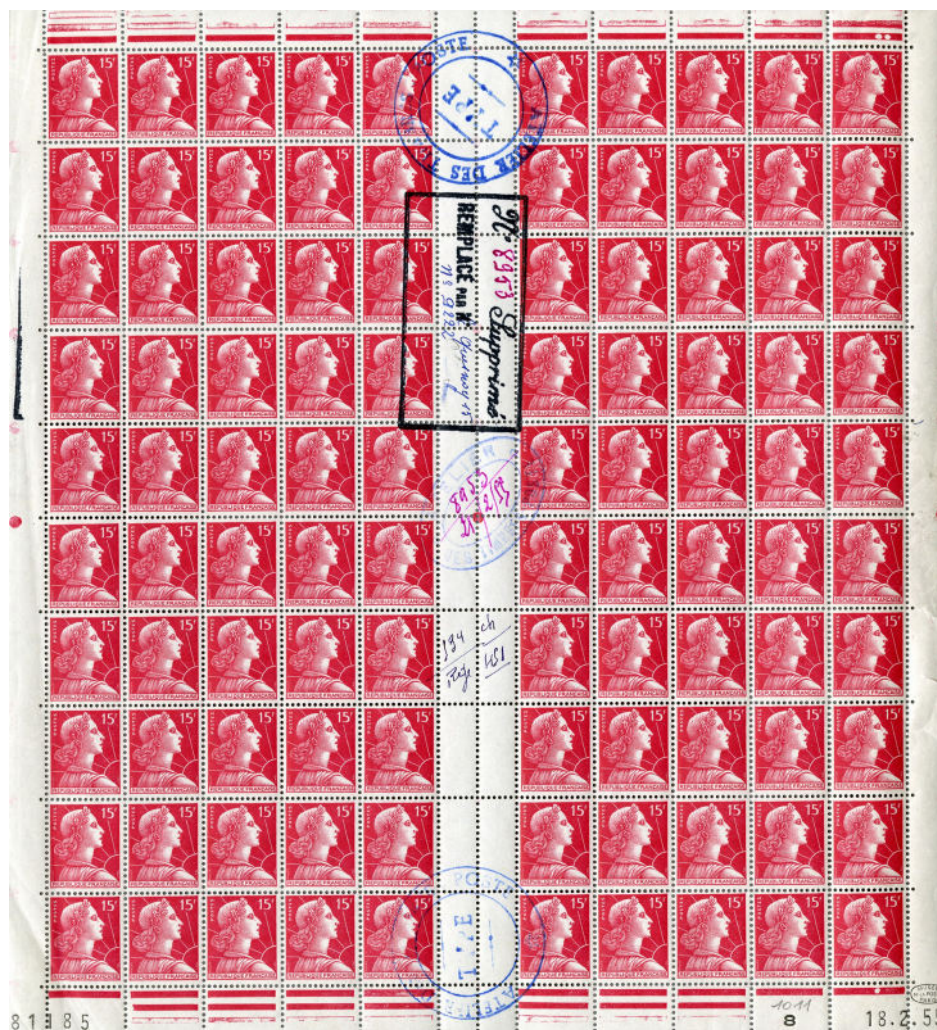


Figure 3

*Feuille-modèle.* © Archives of the Musée de la Poste

Cylinder T+U produced the longest, although not continuous, run using different presses between 21 June and 8 December 1955. The shortest printing was on Cylinder CV+CW on Press 9 which lasted just one day, 25 March 1957 (Figure 4). No explanation has been given for such a brief run and one can only assume that

there was irreparable damage caused to the electros.

Shades vary from pale rose to deep carmine but, in reality, the differences are quite subtle. Nevertheless, the pale rose shade is distinct enough to be listed as a variety in the 'Catalogue des variétés de France' by Wanos and de Belleville (Figure 5).



Figure 4

Single-day printing of Cylinder CV+CW



Figure 5

Printing in rose pâle (W&B 1011e)

### Cylinder C+D

With such an extensive printing, it is not surprising that mishaps occurred during the preparation or operation of the presses. One such example is evident in the printing off Cylinder C+D which took place between 22 February and 14 March 1955 (Figure 6a-b). As a result of unequal expansion

of the surface of Electro D (single dot) during the curving process prior to its mounting on the cylinder, stamps in the lower rows vary in height from 21.5 to 22.5 mm. In contrast, stamps from the accompanying Electro C (three dots) are constant, measuring 21 mm in height.



Figure 6a  
Dated corner blocks from Cylinder C+D printed on Press N° 6



Figure 6b  
Stamp from Electro C alongside stamp from Electro D illustrating the difference in height, measuring 21 and 22.5 mm respectively

### First day of issue.

The 15F *Marianne de Muller* was issued on 22 February 1955 less than three weeks after the signing of the *bon à tirer* and only one week after the commencement of printing. *Le Monde des Philatélistes* organised the signing of first day

covers by the stamp's designer Louis-Charles Muller and its engraver Jules Piel (Figure 7).

The stamp was issued to meet the 15F Internal Letter Rate, first step 0-20 grams, (8 December 1951 to 30 June 1957).



Figure 7  
First Day Cover cancelled at the philatelic counter at Paris *Recette Principale* signed by the designer and engraver.

## Booklets.

The booklets were printed from 9 March 1955 to 9 May 1957 and first put on sale in April 1955. There were four booklet

models during this period (Figures 8a-8d) with a variety of advertisers on the inside and outside covers.



Figure 8a: Model 1  
Series S 16 (indicated in the north-west corner) with a three-line heading was a continuation of a run which originally contained the previous 15F *Marianne de Gandon* with advertising on the stamp margins for *Excel* and *Bic*. The *Marianne de Muller* stamps retained the same 'pub' in order to fulfil the contract.

Series 16 was printed from 9 March to 3 May 1955

Figure 8b: Model 2  
The second series, S. 2-55, introduced a new numbering system incorporating the year of printing together with a new cover design specifically for promoting PTT bonds.

Series S. 2-55 was printed from 6-15 April 1955 and put on sale for one week beginning 18 April 1955



Figure 8c: Model 3  
A return was made to a traditional cover design with series S. 3-55 when a design incorporating the new PTT logo was introduced together with details of postage rates. Shown here is S. 1-56

Series S. 3-55 to S. 6-56 were printed from 12 May 1955 to 21 June 1956.

Figure 8d: Model 4  
From series S 7-56 onwards, the heading was made bolder and the postal rates were omitted in order to create a less cluttered design. The dot after the S in the series, introduced in series S. 2-55, was also removed.

Series S 7-56 to S 6-57 were printed from 20 June 1956 to 9 May 1957



S. 2-55

S 14-56

With dot after S

Without dot after S

Eight booklets were printed per revolution of the cylinder with each booklet containing 20 stamps. A sheet number and printing date appear in the lower margin of every fourth booklet (Figure 9). To offset the printing costs, companies were invited to advertise in the booklet margins. To promote the scheme, the PTT would send a sample of a booklet with

the stamps overprinted ANNULÉ (Figure 10). In the case of the 15F booklets, sixteen advertisers took advantage of this facility namely *Assurances Générales-Vie*, *Avia*, *Bic*, *Excel*, *Grammont*, *Hahn*, *Jif-Waterman*, *Liebig*, *Lincoln*, *Primagaz*, *Provins*, *Rolla*, *Satam*, *La Slavia*, *Whip* and even the PTT itself (Figure 11).



Figure 9\*

Booklet from Series S. 7-55 printed on 17 December 1955 with 'pubs' advertising Grammont and Bic products



Figure 10\*

Booklet from Series S 6-57 with 'pubs' advertising La Slavia and A.G. Vie products overprinted ANNULÉ



Figure 11\*

Booklet from Series S 10-56 printed on 9 October 1956 with 'pubs' promoting the Postal Museum and airmail services

\* Booklet reduced to 75%

In the case of one series of booklets, S.6-56, printed between 17 May and 21 June 1956, the PTT was unable to obtain sufficient advertising. The right-hand pane was devoted to advertising *Bic* products but the left-hand pane carried only advertising at the bottom for the town of Provins. Failing to find a third advertiser for the top of the pane, the PTT was obliged to fill the five vacant spaces with marginal bars normally seen in sheet printings. The *Syndicat d'Initiative* (Tourist Information Office) of Provins immediately took advantage of this by creating so-called

'private' booklets of 10 stamps to promote their *Fêtes Belle Époque* celebrations which took place on 23 and 24 June. Two types of souvenir booklets were created.

The first batch consisted of 500 copies<sup>3</sup> of the S.6-56 booklet from which the right-hand pane with the *Bic* advertising was removed. This revealed the inside of the back cover on which there was an illustrated advert for rose bushes which in turn complemented the middle Provins 'pub' describing the town as the '*Capitale des Roses*' (Figure 12).

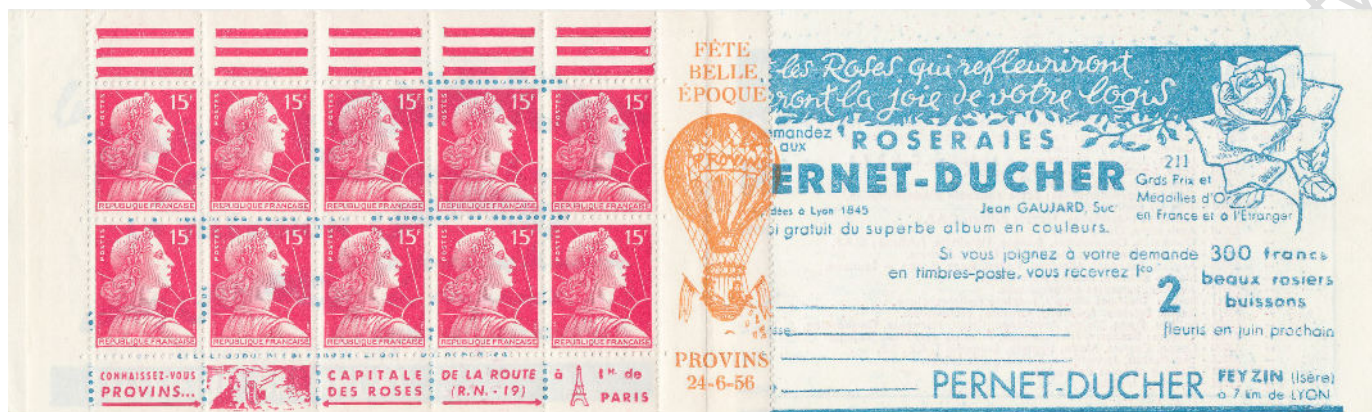


Figure 12\*

'Private' booklet of 10 stamps created from S.6-56 by the Provins tourist information office.  
Orange cachet in gutter margin

The second batch was more ambitious. The left-hand pane was removed from the original booklet and remounted in a locally printed souvenir cover (Figure 13). 500 copies were produced

with the serial number printed on the inside of the back cover. As with the first batch, the pane of stamps was tied to the cover by a *Fête Belle Époque* cachet but on this occasion in bright red.



Figure 13\*

'Private' booklet of 10 stamps in souvenir cover N°38/500  
Red cachet in gutter margin



<sup>3</sup> Some sources say that fewer than 200 booklets were created this way

\* Reduced to 75%

### Coils

The earliest recorded date of printing is 22 September 1955 and the uncut sheet is held in the *Musée de la Poste*. Trassaert believed the coils could even have been printed as late as 4 January 1957. They were dispensed from the same automatic machines introduced in 1955 at the time of the 6F *Marianne de Muller* issue (to be described in a forthcoming chapter).

The 15F coil issue was on sale from March 1956 and the stamps were dispensed in pairs upon the insertion of one 10c and one 20c coin (Figure 14).

### Postal Stationery

15F postal stationery envelopes and postcards were printed off flat plates although the envelopes were not available to the general public. Businesses could supply their own stationery stock to the PTT for the stamp to be added. These are known as envelopes '*timbrées sur commande*' or 'stamped-to-order' (Figure 15). Postcards were printed only after the creation of the 15F internal postcard rate on 1 July 1957 and were put on sale to the general public from January. Companies personalised such postcards by adding their own text. Stationery treated in this way is known as '*repiquage*' (Figure 16).



Figure 14  
Coil strip of 11 and pair dispensed from machine



Figure 15  
Stamped-to-order side-opening envelope from the Caisse d'Escompte de Paris



Figure 16

Standard postcard with repiquage applied by the company Avenir-Publicité. The printing applied to the back of the card can be seen offset on the front left

***Fictifs sans valeur***

From 1932, vignettes inscribed 'SANS VALEUR' and printed in the same colour as the stamp they represented were supplied to P.T.T. postal training schools for trainees to use in practical sessions (*cours pratiques*). In the case of the 15F *Marianne de Muller*, a new *fictif* was not required as there was still sufficient stock of the printing made on 16

January 1950 at the time of the 15F *Marianne de Gandon* (Figure 17). The stamps were printed off two cylinders, one applying the frame and the text and the other the value. The position of the value is not constant and is sometimes in a slightly different shade.



Figure 17  
Vignette used to represent the 15F *Marianne de Muller*.  
Note the different settings of the figure '15' in relationship to the text

The cover below (Figure 18) bears a strip of five *fictifs* applied to a PTT envelope and cancelled CLERMONT-FERRAND COURS PRATIQUES 25 October 1955. The 75 franc tariff is composed of the following charges:

Internal Letter Rate, 2<sup>nd</sup> step, 20-50 grams: 25 francs  
Registration Fee: 35 francs  
Advice of Delivery (AR) Fee: 15 francs  
Total: 75 francs.

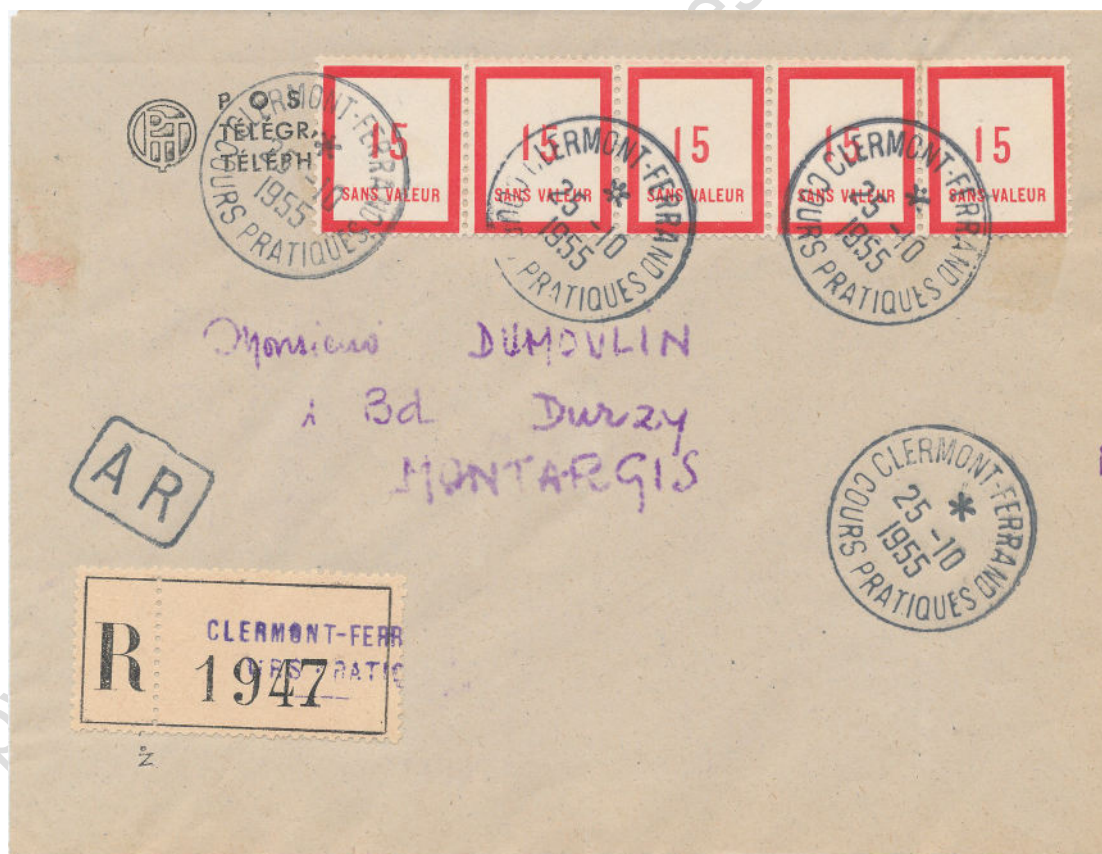


Figure 18  
Cover created using five *fictifs sans valeur* representing the 15F *Marianne de Muller* during a *cours pratiques* exercise conducted at the Clermont-Ferrand training school

# Postal usage – seul sur lettre

The principal usage of the 15F *Marianne de Muller* was to meet the basic internal letter rate but, used alone, it served other purposes as illustrated here (Figures 19 to 22).

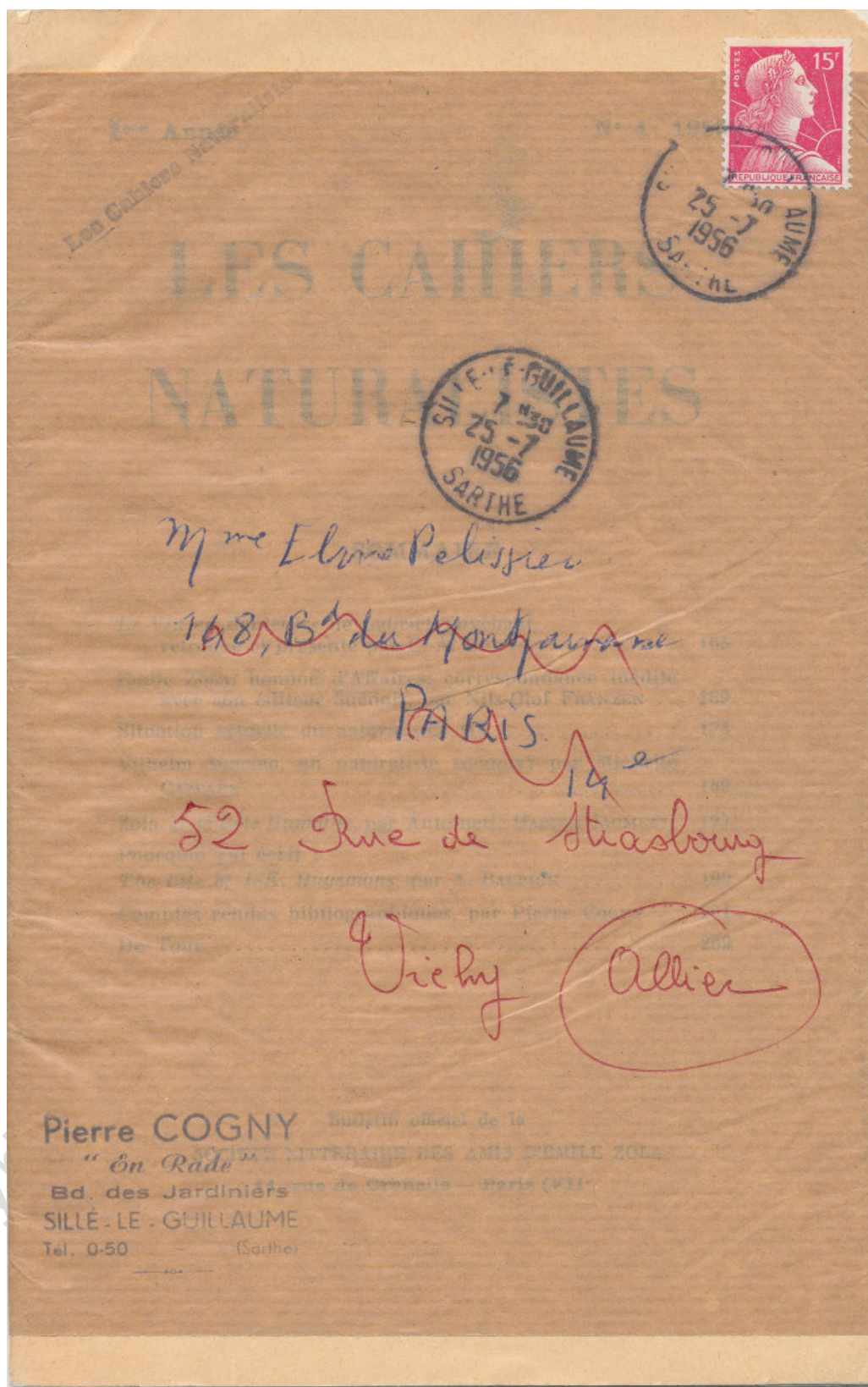


Figure 19  
Internal Printed Matter Rate,  
3rd Step (50-100 grams) on 1956 wrapper

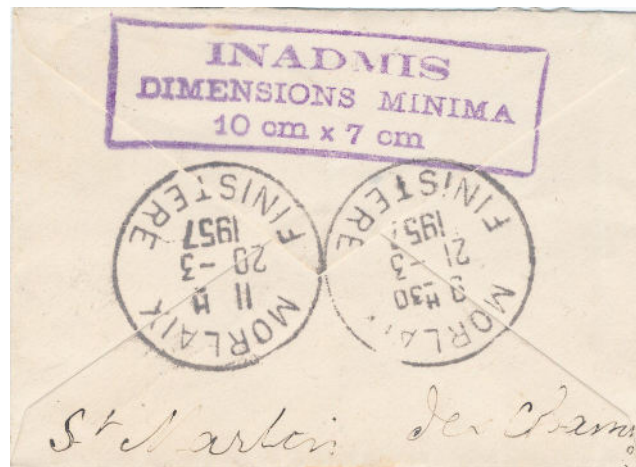


Figure 20 (above)  
1957 Visiting Card  
Rate (> 5 words of  
text) returned to  
sender for failing to  
meet the minimum  
size of 10 x 7 cm



Figure 21 (left)  
Tolerated usage on  
1957 postcard from  
Monaco to France



Figure 22  
1956 Inter-territorial  
airmail letter from  
Guadeloupe to  
Morocco with  
Basse-Terre  
boîte mobile mark

Postal usage – multiple frankings (Figures 23 to 25)

Figure 23\*  
1956 cover sent to  
Paris and thence  
forwarded to Spain  
after application of  
second 15F stamp.  
Note the contrasting  
shades



Figure 24\* (left)  
1957 Sécurité Sociale post  
free official paid letter with  
franking required solely for  
the 45F registration fee



Figure 25 (right)  
1956 Paris pneumatic  
post, 60F rate for  
the 2nd step,  
8-15 grams

\* Cover reduced to 90%

# Réunion Maritime

## The Difficulties and Dangers of Maritime Travel

### Part II. War in the Indian Ocean 1794 - 1814

Peter R.A.Kelly

The previous article (F&CPS Journal 298) outlined some of the difficulties facing any form of maritime transport operating in the Indian Ocean and specifically with the island of Réunion. This covered the difficulties created by the topography of the island itself and the ever-present dangers of ocean and climate for sailing ships and indeed the early auxiliary steam vessels.

This concluding article examines the effect on Réunion of wars waged in different parts of the globe that had direct consequences for the island and, in particular, the inability to be able to communicate with the mother country. For the purpose of this article the period under consideration dates from around 1794 to 1815.

Going back in time a little, in December 1776, Louis XVI, with a view to improving communications with the Colonies, decreed the establishment of Royal mailboats (*paquebots du Roi*) to serve all the French Colonies. This was to include four mailboats to service Île de Bourbon (now Réunion) and Île de France (now Mauritius)<sup>1</sup>. The theory was good but overall proved too difficult in practice and the whole system was abandoned in July 1788. As far as Bourbon / Réunion was concerned only two or three letters are known. One from Bourbon to Île de France is illustrated here (Figure 1). All communication then depended entirely on merchant shipping and the occasional warship calling at the islands.

As far as Franco-British relationships were concerned, any hope of tranquillity between the two countries came to an end in 1793 with the rise of Revolutionary and Imperial France. It put Great Britain on a war footing again and attention was now given to the need to protect the East Indies trade as the revenues from British Colonies and interests in the Far East were of critical importance. The British naval presence in the Indian Ocean had lessened and the departure of Admiral Cornwallis in 1794 left the region bereft of British warships even though it was known that war had been declared. It was clear that something needed to be done in view of the risks to commercial trade and protection

of Britain's position in India, and a squadron of ships under Admiral Rainier was posted to the Far East.

While Indian trade was a monopoly of the East India Company there was an abundance of other trading vessels, all of them requiring protection. Protection was the stated object of Admiral Rainier's command in the Indian Ocean in 1794 but an element of that protection was interpreted as being the need for offensive action by depriving the enemy of bases from which to attack. The area of operation was enormous, running from the Cape of Good Hope and as far East as the China stations. There was no British base between the Cape and Madras.

In 1796 a French naval squadron was dispatched to Mauritius and two years later there came the French invasion of Egypt. At the same time France was actively employed in attempting to undermine the British position in India by supplying officers and aid to Indian States who were independent of East India Company control.

The situation of France was in some ways better in that they occupied Bourbon and Île de France and this was important in the supply and relationship they had with the French outposts in India. Mauritius had an excellent harbour in Port Louis (Port Nord Ouest in Revolutionary times). Their main problem was that they could not feed themselves and relied on Réunion, Madagascar and French and American (neutral) vessels. The other point is that Mauritius and, to a lesser extent, Réunion were principal bases for French naval vessels and also the *corsaires*<sup>2</sup> that wreaked havoc with the merchant shipping to and from the East.

It was evident that Great Britain would react to Revolutionary France's colonial ambitions by increasing protection of the trade routes, blockading where possible and generally opposing France in any way possible. One of the first steps was to occupy Trincomalee (Ceylon) from the Dutch, with its excellent all-year-round harbour. The hinterland was not productive there apart from wood and water.



Figure 1

*Paquebots du Roi. 'Île de Bourbon'*

A letter written from Rivière d'Abord (Saint Pierre) on 18 August 1788 to M. Ferry, living in the house of M Du Clot, behind the house of M Sitot, 'Île de France'

<sup>1</sup> The island of Réunion was originally known as Île de Bourbon, but named Réunion in 1793. Between 1801 and 1810 it was known as Île Bonaparte, and between 1810 and 1848 the island was again called Bourbon. (See end of article). The island's official name of Île de la Réunion has stood since 1848. The island of Mauritius was given its name by the Dutch in 1598 but when they abandoned the island the French occupied it and called it Île de France. In 1814 it was ceded to Great Britain and returned to its original name of Mauritius.

<sup>2</sup> Île de France was a major base for '*corsaires*' sailing under '*lettres de marque*'. These were, effectively, a government license for private persons to attack and capture vessels of a country at war with France (thereby including East India Co vessels). They were usually financed by "investors" in their different missions, and were therefore acting legally under French law.

The situation was far from being one-sided as there remained French warships in the area to which could be added the activities of the *corsaires*. This did mean that communications between France and Île de France and Bourbon were extremely difficult and the position was made even more serious when Britain retook the Cape of Good Hope. This important staging post between Europe and the Far East had been Dutch until it was captured by British Forces in 1795 but was returned to the Dutch in 1803 as part of the Treaty of Amiens. It was retaken by the British in 1806. The value of the sheltered port to the British navy operating in the Indian Ocean was considerable and it acted as an additional layer of risk to France's communications with its Colonies.

French warships and *corsaires* based on Île de France were an increasing source of concern and the possibility of an attack by the British was something that had been discussed at length but was turned down for a number of reasons. The

encircling reefs were uncharted and there was a belief that the island had a much larger garrison and more artillery than was the case. This probably resulted in a greater degree of blockading.

Details can now be given for two successful attempts for mails from Bourbon and Île de France to reach France.

The first is a letter sent from Île de Bourbon to Toulouse in France on 19 January 1805 (Figure 2). At that time Bourbon had no postal markings and little by way of postal services. The letter was handed to the captain of the French Navy corvette *Diligent* who carried it to Lorient, where it arrived on 15 April. It was stamped with the entry mark 'Colonies par / Lorient' and taxed 9 décimes for the journey to Toulouse (weight up to 6 grams and distance 600-800 km. = 8 décimes plus 1 décime for the 'voie de mer' or maritime supplement.) Such are the simple facts apparent from the front and back of the letter - but closer study has brought out all of the elements of a story. This can be considered under different headings.



Figure 2

Period of the blockade.

A letter of 19 January 1805 from l'Olivier, Bourbon to Toulouse, carried by the corvette *Diligent*

a l'Olivier Île de Bourbon le 19 janvier 1805

arrivé par le Diligent de Lorient le 15 avril

### Communications in 1805

At this time scarcely any French vessels called at Bourbon. The possibilities for trading in the Indian Ocean and the three-month voyage from Bourbon to France were fraught with danger with blockades and patrols in evidence both in the Indian Ocean and along the coastlines of France and Spain.

Much the same dangers would have applied when the ship approached France, particularly along the Bay of Biscay and the French coast. In early 1805 the main British naval interest lay in the Mediterranean and the southern coast of Spain but this did not mean that the French ports were not closely watched. A captain had therefore to be both skilful and fortunate to make safe passage under these conditions.

### The letter

This is written by J.B. Villèle from his residence at L'Olivier, Bourbon to his father in Toulouse. Villèle had followed his older brother Joseph to Bourbon. Joseph was a French naval officer who had gone to sea with Admiral Saint Félix. Saint Félix had been arrested and imprisoned by the Revolutionary forces as much for fleeing from the revolution as for a wish to see the world and Joseph Villèle became enmeshed in this misadventure. They fled together to Bourbon accompanied by Denis Decrès who later rose to be Minister of the Marine under the Empire. J.B. Villèle followed the example of his brother in marrying into the Desbassyns family, a prominent clan in Bourbon considered

to be the sixth wealthiest family on the island, this fortune being amassed from their sugar plantations. They were descendants of early settlers on the island but were also known for the harsh treatment meted out to the slaves on their plantations.

The letter makes reference to the health of members of the Desbassyns family and mentioned that it was through one of their number that this letter was to be handed to the *Diligent*. The letter opens with (my translation):

*“Another little letter which will reach you, if God pleases, by the naval ship of war ‘Diligent’ which, we are told, will call at St Denis at any moment....*

*“....We are sure you will have written to us as often as we have to you and it saddens us to know that none have arrived. Scarcely a vessel from France has called at the island in the last year. Only some American ships and these do not carry any mails. We have not missed any opportunity to send our news to you.”*

It can be seen that *Diligent* provided an exceptionally rare opportunity for Villèle to communicate with his parents in France. Only two or three vessels are known to have sailed from Bourbon to France in 1805.

The letter deals mainly with domestic matters including the birth of a daughter which would have been of the greatest interest to the writer’s father. There is a long section devoted to feeding the child with cow’s milk, which seems to have been considered as a new concept, and which had proved to be beneficial both to mother and daughter.

### The ship

The *Diligent* was a 16-gun brig weighing 160 tons, built at Le Havre and launched in 1800. She entered into service in September 1801. In 1802 she was dispatched to the East Indies to carry the news of the Peace of Amiens and stayed there until 1804. She returned to France in January 1805

from Île de France and Bourbon carrying Colonel d’Arsonval, the Town Major at St Louis, Île de France.

After a three-month voyage the ship reached Lorient successfully, having avoided blockades, enemy vessels and other difficulties. She was refitted and sailed to the West Indies as part of the Jean l’Hermite Division and, after a false start when she had to return to Concarneau for repairs to the mast, rejoined the Division on 6 January 1806. In the course of the months that followed she called at Cayenne and Guadeloupe. Her luck finally ran out towards the end of 1806 when she was taken by the British off Porto Rico. She was renamed HMS *Prudent* and served with the British Navy until she was broken up in 1811.

The second letter (Figures 3a, b and c) from M. Déchézeaux, a shipper at Port Nord Ouest (later, Port Louis), Île de France to a merchant friend, Armand Frère at Bordeaux, from where the letter was directed to Melle (Deux Sèvres). The letter is written in two parts on 3 May and 5 August 1806 and the manuscript mark show it to have been received on 27 November. It entered France at Bayonne and received an early ‘*Colonies par Bayonne*’ handstamp, and then the *deboursé* stamp of Bordeaux (32) before being forwarded to Melle. The letter was taxed 5 décimes (tarif of 1806: postage 6g up to 200km = 4 décimes + 1 décime sea postage = 5 décimes).

In the first part of the letter dated 31 May 1806, the writer confirms to M. Frère his last letter dated 21 December 1804 (30 Frimaire An 13) that was carried successfully from Île de France to France by the corvette *Diligent*. The *Diligent* is known to have sailed from Réunion sometime after 19 January 1805 and since then there was no other opportunity, saving neutral vessels, who, he claimed, “throw the mail overboard and, in any case, were unlikely to sail to France.” (Author’s note: These neutral vessels would be most likely under an American flag.)

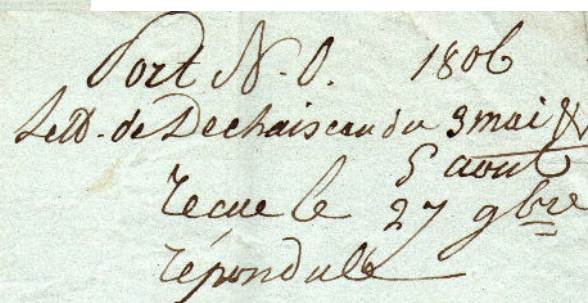


Figure 3a  
Front of the two-part letter written on 31 May 1806



Figure 3b and 3c

Reverse and inside of letter showing additions of 5 August 1806 from Port Nord Ouest, Île de France to Bordeaux and redirected to Melle



He goes on to say that M Frère's letter of 9 August 1804 (21 Thermidor An 12) arrived with the *Bellone* and thanks him for the price list contained in it.

The contents are of interest and relate to the financial state of Île de France under the blockade. The economy of the island was affected by the fact that the godowns were full of material to a point where cargos were being sold by auction. As there had been a considerable amount of speculation on the arrival of goods, many of the merchants who had made forward purchases were caught short and consequently unable to honour their commitments. Many of them were in deep financial difficulties and particular reference was made to M Couve de Murville (a family name well known in recent times) who had racked up massive debts.

The writer then went on to describe the two violent cyclonic storms that had struck Bourbon on 20 February and 8 March 1806. These had caused a great deal of damage including the loss of 10 vessels and their crew. Many buildings were destroyed and as many as 200 had perished. The plantations suffered badly. Between a quarter and a third of the coffee crop had been destroyed or ripped out. Sugar cane had not been greatly affected but three-quarters of the clove crop was lost. Food sources too had been severely damaged and this led to prices being doubled. Maize was selling at a premium of up to 35%. The cotton and indigo crops were lost totally. He writes:

*"the flourishing country that you saw is now in a deplorable state and it will take eight or nine months to repair the damage. This has been the worst year possible given all the calamities. The food shops are empty and as they are unable to pay no-one will supply them."*

The plantation owners were not able to pay their slaves and had been obliged to send them out to private individuals to find work and food.

For some time, the Prefect had been expecting the return of Admiral Linois with prizes [seizures from enemy ships] as more than a year had passed since he left the colony, but he had not sent anything. News gleaned from M. Coquerel

aboard another vessel confirmed that he had met Linois with five prizes - but en route for France. Déchézeaux hoped that he would get what he deserved.

*"The corsaires had also not been successful apart from the Henriette and Rey et Bonnard. [actually Rey, Bonnard et Cie] The Bellone had not covered its costs. She is at sea again together with other vessels. Two of our frigates are going to try their luck and will sail with the same objective. If they do not get lucky the Treasury will be bankrupt."*

Déchézeaux also commented on the position of America which was continuing to ship goods to Île de France and referred to communications received from New York and Philadelphia about trade in general and Île de France in particular. The market was so weak that sellers had been forced to halt sales and close their warehouses. There was also information about a naval squadron coming to the aid of the island. This turned out to be three frigates of which one was taken at the Cape.

Then, on 8 January 1806 the British took the Cape, landing 5000 men of whom 3000 had re-embarked for a 'secret expedition'. This was of concern to Île de France hitherto unaware of any Indian plans against 'corsaire' activity.

*"But we were reassured by the presence of Villamez circulating in the Indian Ocean with 2 frigates and 6 vessels and L'Hermite [Jean L'Hermite, q.v. above under heading 'The ship'] with a single vessel and two frigates destined for our shores. These should be sufficient to end any hostile projects that the British might have in mind."*

(Author's note: This did not happen. The naval division under Villamez sailed from Brest on 13 December 1805 for the Cape. They were off the Cape on 17 February 1806 that was now in British hands and in view of this, changed directions for Brazil.)

*"All of the above did not stop the British from maintaining a presence off our coast that called a halt to our shipping with Bourbon and Madagascar and it*

is Madagascar in particular that is of concern because of the lack of rice, so important to us. You can see why we need peace with England. Oh! That we could achieve this aim and allow our capitalists to open their coffers that have held their piastres in captivity for more than a year.

The news from America in January leads us to believe that they have imposed a general embargo on the whole world. That is all that it needs to revive our speculators who are ready for this. The problem they have with the English has brought the shipment of colonial merchandise to a standstill, especially when two ships that I sent out have been forced to unload their cargo on account of the risk they would run if they are to reach Bordeaux.”

The second half of the letter is dated 5 August 1806.

“The corvette whose departure has been delayed gives me time to say that no ships from America have called here for nearly four months and this tends to confirm the existence of the embargo, we also lack the ships from the North but as we had been well provisioned there has not been a great increase in prices. In general, business is so dead that a considerable number of merchants have closed their doors. We are without news from France and the English do not leave our coasts and they have made frequent incursions into Bourbon and Madagascar, that has overwhelmed our shipping and has left us short of food. Our corsaires and frigates have taken modest prizes that are blocked at Grand Port and Saint Paul, blockaded by the English and God only knows when they will be able to reach our port. Some sellers are ready to trade at Bourbon; at Grand Port one of the prizes of our frigates is about 17000 cases of tea that will, no doubt, be sold cheaply in view of the enormous tax on this article in France.

Signed Déchézeaux.

These two letters provide us with an eyewitness account on the situation facing Réunion and Mauritius in 1805 and 1806. From purely a postal historian’s viewpoint the difficulties in communication, particularly with France, the mother country, are self-evident. Ships from neutral countries such as the United States could carry mail, but they would not call at French ports.

The situation after 1806 was, if anything, worse for the blockade became stronger. One of the key elements, as has already been touched upon, is Britain’s possession of the Cape, providing it with a superb base for operations in the Indian Ocean. Bourbon had been renamed Île Bonaparte but this was not to last. British naval forces under Commodore Rowley were strengthened in 1809 and it was difficult for France to respond to this as their regular naval strength was

weak and the number of active *corsaires* had diminished. Britain was concerned about French involvement in India and had considered for a long time that the French-controlled Mascarene Islands constituted a threat.

The first British attack on Bonaparte took place in December 1798 and in August 1809 the small island of Rodrigues was occupied. This was to be the jumping-off spot for the planned invasion of the island. The Invasion of Bonaparte took place in two phases between September 1809 and August 1810 when the island capitulated and its name reverted to Bourbon. Later that year the Île de France was also taken, despite the surprising defeat of a British naval squadron, and its name was changed to Mauritius.

The occupation of the two islands lasted for five years and by the Treaty of Paris in 1814 Bourbon was returned to France while Mauritius remained British. The following year Napoleon landed in France in February and this was the start of the 100 days that culminated in the Battle of Waterloo. The island had, again, to be returned to France although little had happened there during the period of the 100 days.

During the British occupation a military post office was opened on the island and a special postmark was produced “Bourbon / Post paid”. Very few examples of letters bearing this mark are recorded and the one shown here (Figure 4) was sent by the postmaster (by coincidence, Thomas Kelly, but no relation to the author!) on 6 May 1813 to Cape Town, receiving the “Ship Letter / Cape of Good Hope” stamp and was taxed 2/-.



Figure 4  
Bourbon under British occupation  
Letter of 6 May 1813, cancelled *Bourbon / Post Paid*.  
Sent by the postmaster, Mr Thomas Kelly to Cape Town  
with the *Ship Letter / Cape of Good Hope*  
receipt stamp and taxed 2/-

After 1815 trade with and from the island slowly picked up but it was not really until the 1820s that one begins to see a more substantial volume of mail. The first postmarks of the Bourbon post offices appeared from 1829.

# A study of the François Fournier forgeries of the 'Navigation and Commerce' issue

Simon Binsted

## Foreword

A little more than 20 years ago, I finally found the time to revisit my grandfather's collection of (mostly used) 19<sup>th</sup> century stamps from most of the French and British West African colonies, where his father had been a pioneer cotton trader from 1875 to 1907. Whereas I certainly remembered the collection (and the wonderful, exciting stories of his father's time in what was indeed Darkest Africa) from when I lived with him as a child in the 1950s, I had stuck the albums in a trunk in the attic many years ago because I had a career to attend to.

On re-opening the albums, I was once again fascinated by the family history surrounding them and even though I was a complete amateur, I became determined to improve and expand the collection to what I now fondly imagine is something of a definitive study of the contemporary postage of the whole area, today comprising some 3,500 stamps, postcards and covers each one with its own 600 dpi. scan and (where necessary) detailed spreadsheet notes, plus a comprehensive research library to match.

Since the collection I had inherited consisted, *prima facie*, of genuine stamps steamed off private business and family correspondence, I had quickly started to notice that some of the stamps I was acquiring from dealers and collectors looked a bit odd and slowly began to realise that there were a few forgeries out there and I was often being taken for a ride. I also noticed that although there are many crude and obvious forgeries which are fun to have, there would appear to be many thousands that are not so fun, being very clever copies of valuable stamps that can cost a collector dear – and the huge majority of these from West Africa are to be found from the French colonies. Stamp catalogues, with their tiny reproductions, are useless for reference and stamp forgery sites are not much better, because none of them allow one to magnify the scans. To illustrate the point, it is a fact that my copy of the 2014-15 Maury catalogue helpfully shows a picture of a Congo Français *Colis Postaux* N°1 which, incredibly, is a clear reproduction of a Fournier forgery!

The most prolific forger of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was undoubtedly François Fournier in Geneva, although he claimed to be just a purveyor of "art works" for the "common man" for an accessible price. Altogether, he is known to have produced reams of sheets of a stunning 3,671 different stamps from all over the world and just in my small area of interest, there is not one single week of the year that goes by without my seeing at least one of his creations being offered on the internet (and often by leading specialist dealers) as genuine and at market price. Some are even

offered as "signed" and many bear what appear to be genuine signatures from well-known AIEP experts. So, *caveat emptor*, let the buyer beware.

## The 'Navigation and Commerce' forgeries

One of Fournier's most widespread series of French colonies forgeries is the 'Navigation and Commerce'<sup>1</sup> issue designed and engraved by Louis-Eugène Mouchon and issued in Paris first in 1892 (with later colour changes, at least for the African colonies, in 1900). Some refer to these as the Hirschberger forgeries, Hirschberger having taken over Fournier's business when he decided to retire. They may well be so, but there is no conclusive evidence that he was the author of these fakes, so many authorities fudge the issue by calling them the Geneva forgeries.

The series was the first generalised series issued to the colonies to copy the, by then, well-established British idea of "one design fits all" with separate colony names being used in a two-part printing process, the individual colony names being added at a second operation. The series had (eventually) 15 values: 1c, 2c, 4c, 5c, 10c, 15c, 20c, 25c, 30c, 40c, 50c, 75c and 1F stamps were issued to nearly 30 French colonies and postal concessions all around the world, and a few colonies had 2F and 5F values too..

In the main, I get the impression that many collectors do not take a lot of trouble in checking this series too closely, mainly because of the widespread and universal nature of the issue. There must have been millions of these stamps issued and used for well over 15 years and even the higher values are not that rare. However, many of the settlements and concessions were small and short-lived and, given the occasional blip in the postal administration, there were inevitably a goodly number of local overprints executed *ad hoc in situ*. Some of these are exceedingly rare and much prized by collectors, with some being marketed now for thousands of pounds. So, it is better for all that the collector has some way of assessing whether he has bought a dud or a treasure. After all, Fournier was no slouch in gaily producing his own versions in an age where detailed printed information was unavailable for comparisons to be made.

Before we examine the detail of the printing, I should like to highlight a few points:

I have divided the illustrations into three rows of two, marked 1 to 6 with an identifier LH for left-hand and RH for right-hand. The LH scans have the Fournier forgery superimposed on the genuine article; the RH scans have the genuine stamp superimposed on the forgery. This is done for maximum clarity of the magnified image.

<sup>1</sup> This design is also known by collectors as the Type 'Groupe allégorique' or simply the Type 'Groupe'. The Stanley Gibbons catalogue succinctly describes it as the 'Tablet' issue.

I have ignored for the purposes of this study both the face-value numbers and the colony names, although you might well note the slight differences of some of Fournier's numbers and letterings.

I do not have the privilege of having a full set of forgeries for each colony and since I prefer having used stamps in the collection, nearly all my forgeries are "used" and often Fournier was clever enough to place his "cancellations" to hide his worst engraving errors. Hence, I have used my examples from Côte d'Ivoire and have chosen the various sections purely for the best clarity of image and absence of

"cancellation" marks that would obscure the detail, hence the odd colour combinations.

Finally, in doing all the above I discovered something new (at least for me!) and that is that not only are Fournier's printings not uniform in size, some being infinitesimally larger and some being smaller than the real thing. In addition, the perforations vary too, so that one forgeries website's assertion that originals are  $13\frac{1}{2} \times 14$  and the fakes are normally  $14 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$  is simply not true and are useless for reference. So, on to the scans:



Genuine

SCAN 1LH

Forgery

- In general, Fournier's lettering is not as crisp as the original and slightly bloated. The genuine Q appears to be standard throughout the series and is slightly canted on the RH side whereas the forgery's is narrower. The central lateral of the E of COLONIES is shortened. (This is more noticeable in 2RH). COLONIES is not uniform in size and the C and the S are wrong.
- The right hand of the female figure round the staff clearly shows three fingers and a forefinger, the forgery does not and her left hand is shown as a blob without fingers. This is one of the main errors of all the forgeries and is easily spotted.
- The *pointillé* background in the forgery is indistinct and more random. (This applies to all parts of the stamp).
- The top of the central staff is flattened in the genuine, with three distinct rings below. In the forgery the top comes to a peak, and the top ring is very unclear.
- The eyebrows, ear and lips are distinct in the original.
- The shading to the right of the flowing hair is blurred in the forgery. Ditto the cloak under her right arm and her nipple has all but disappeared in the forgery.



Genuine

SCAN 2RH

Forgery

- Again, the lettering is bloated and the last E malformed. Both the S's and the E of POSTES are wrong.
- The shading of the forgery of the male figure's neck, on his right shoulder and round and below his chest is not clearly defined in the forgery and the fold of the cloak below his left shoulder is wrong.
- The face is entirely wrong. In many printings of the forgery, the fringe of the hair on the forehead shows as a dotted line. The eyes are blobs and the lips are an indistinct straight line. The wings of his hairpiece are ill-defined.
- The caduceus emerging from the cornucopia of the forgery has the staff too far to the left.
- The cornucopia itself is the other key element of the most noticeable differences. The original has the small fruit showing distinctly above the rim and fruit above clearly defined. Not so in the forgery. In some printings of the forgery, the top two elements on the LH side appear as one.



Genuine

SCAN 3LH

Forgery

- The shading and design of the cloak on both sides of the female figure, on her lap and in between - and round - her legs, are poor.
- Once again, the right hand of the male figure on the staff has a thumb but no fingers. This is also one of the more noticeable errors.
- The top of the LH ornament at the side of the value box has no curl at the top and is hidden by blurred shading. The lines of the value box are poorly defined.



Genuine

SCAN 4RH

Forgery

- The shading of the male figure's chest, midriff and right leg is either non-existent or ill-defined.
- The robe on and around his lap and legs lacks definition.
- The *pointillé* background is especially poor.
- The curl at the top of RH ornament at the side of the value box is curled upwards.



Genuine

SCAN 5LH

Forgery

- The RH foot of the female figure lacks an ankle bone and the inner fold of the cloak above is a blur.
- The delineation of the gunwale of the boat's prow lacks definition in the forgery and the shape of the oarport in the woodwork is reduced. The shading lines on the blade of the oar have been redistributed
- The white frame line below the oar is much thicker in the forgery.



Genuine      SCAN 6RH      Forgery

- The shading above the heel on the left foot of the male figure is ill-defined and blends into the space where the *pointillé* background should show clearly.
- There is a white spot in front of the toes and the surround shows as a dark shadow.
- The delineation of the gunwale is now shown as a white line.
- The line of the prow is lost in a blur below the Mouchon oar and the shading of the sea above the oar is ill-defined.

Of course, once one starts examining the detail of the two engravings, more and more slight differences can be spotted by the enthusiast, but the main differences that I have highlighted are relatively easy to spot. They show even in a 300 d.p.i. scan although 600 d.p.i. is obviously better - which is how I discovered my first bad purchase below!



#### Michael Round comments:

Fournier's colour-matching was not always convincing, especially – and luckily so, given their high catalogue value – among the 2F and 5F values. Here are some examples

(illustrated below): in each case the genuine is on the left, the forgery on the right. Note also the differences at the corners between (genuine) comb and (forged) line perfs.



# The Republican calendar in France

Chris Hitchen

The French revolution saw many reforms introduced which were intended to be based on science and rational concepts rather than what some regarded as ideas drawn from religious superstition and the now abolished monarchy. One such was a new calendar which was brought into use in October 1793 but dated from the autumn equinox at midnight on 22 September 1792, seen as the birth of the French Republic. The Convention had voted the abolition

of the monarchy on 21 September 1792.

Fabre d'Églantine, actor, poet and playwright, created the names of the months, now based on the agricultural year and seasonal weather and readily understandable by most of the population. Every day of the year also had its own name in an effort to do away with the names of the saints and anything redolent of the old régime. The 9 Vendémiaire now became parsnip day, whilst 8 Nivôse was manure day.

|             |                              |                            |
|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Vendémiaire | The month of the wine grapes | September 22 to October 21 |
| Brumaire    | The misty months             | October 22 to November 20  |
| Frimaire    | The chilly month             | November 21 to December 20 |
| Nivôse      | The month of snows           | December 21 to January 19  |
| Pluviôse    | The rainy month              | January 20 to February 18  |
| Ventôse     | The month of the winds       | February 19 to March 20    |
| Germinal    | The month of new life        | March 21 to April 19       |
| Floréal     | The month of flowers         | April 20 to May 19         |
| Prairial    | The month of green fields    | May 20 to June 18          |
| Messidor    | The harvest month            | June 19 to July 18         |
| Thermidor   | The month of heat            | July 19 to August 17       |
| Fructidor   | The month of the fruits      | August 18 to September 16  |

The republican year was now made up of 12 months each of 30 days. That left 5 extra days or 6 in leap years which were added to the year end. These were first named the *sans-culottides*; a decision of 7 Fructidor An III (24 August 1795) changed that to *jours complémentaires*. The *sans culottes* were the lower classes who had launched the revolution. They usually wore long trousers instead of the knee-length breeches usual at court.

Figures 1, 2 and 3 are a letter dated 18 Septembre 1794 at the top left and at the top right 1<sup>er</sup> sans-culottide l'an second. The 18<sup>th</sup> is actually the second extra day but the day of the month

struck on the back confirms that it was posted on the first. This was posted at the *Hôtel des Postes*. Whilst that office was largely concerned with the General post it did have a counter for local letters from around 1788. It sometimes used this hand stamp PBG, the precise meaning of which is still not known.

Hand stamps used by the Committee of Public Safety, from 1793 to 1795, were the first to incorporate either the name of the new months or sometimes the day of the week. Figure 4 is dated le 3<sup>e</sup> jour complémentaire de l'an 3 de la République une et indivisible.

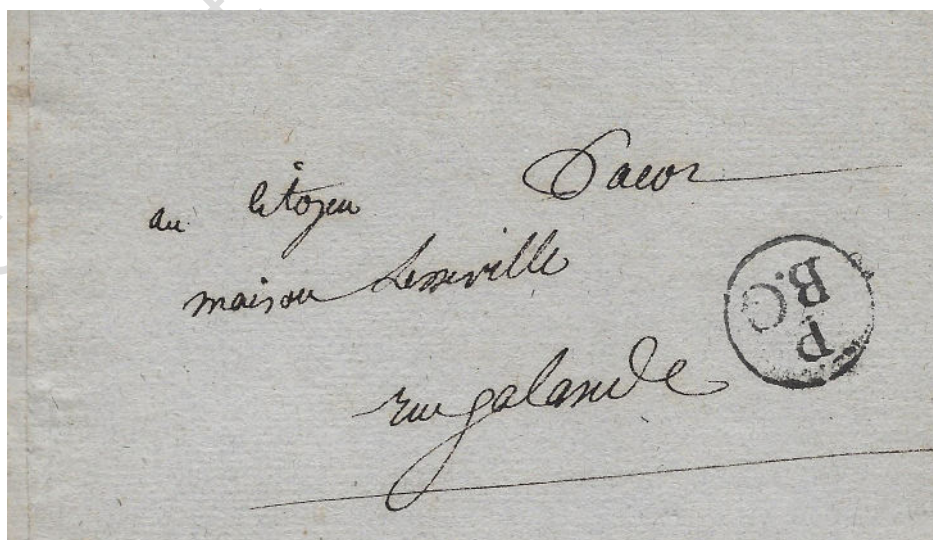


Figure 1

1 sans culottide an 2:

A local letter posted at the *Hôtel des Postes* handed in at the counter for mail within the city, and struck with the hand stamp PBG.

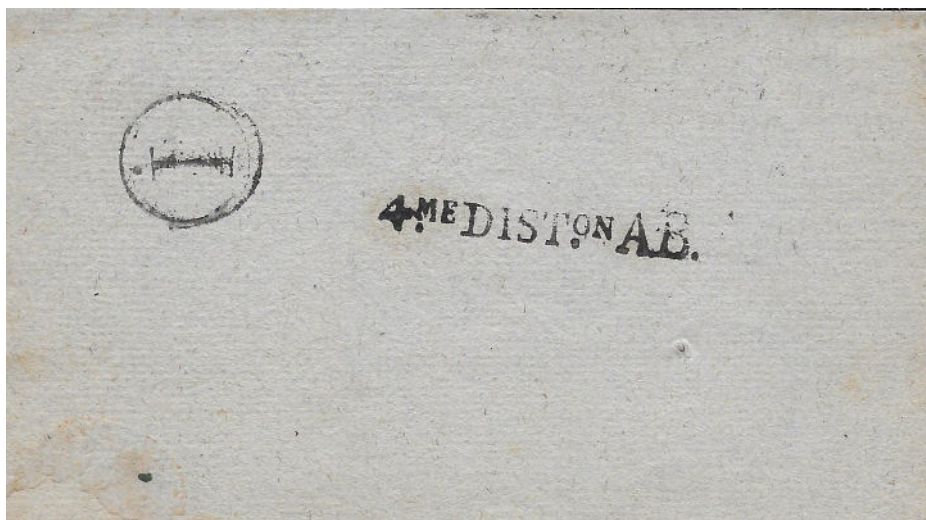


Figure 2

1 sans culottide an 2:  
the reverse with the day of  
the month 1 and 4th delivery  
of the day

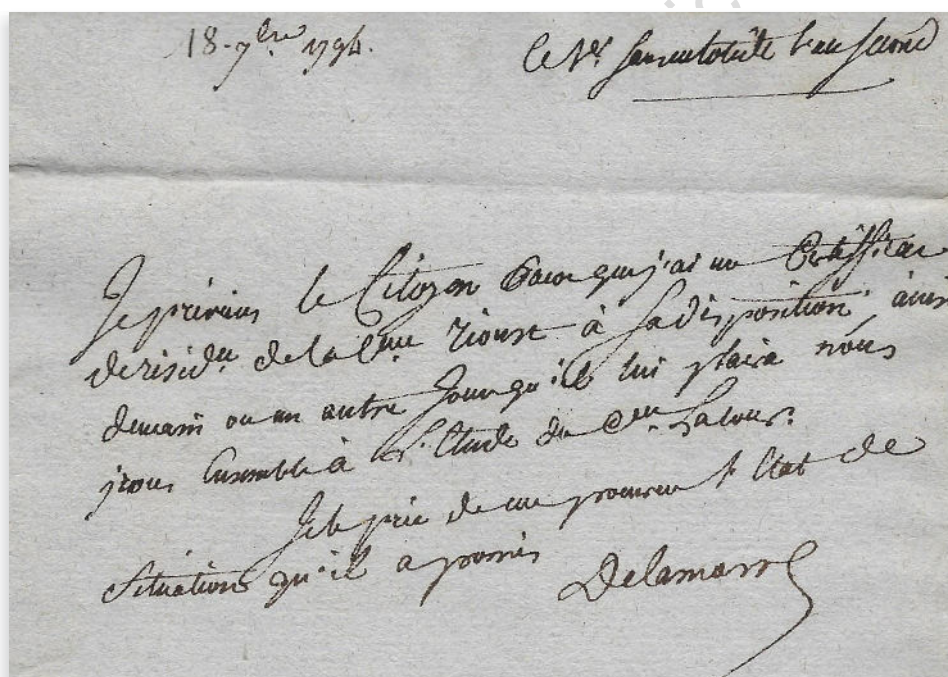


Figure 3

1 sans culottide an 2:  
the contents with the dates at  
the top



Figure 4

*Comité de Salut Public 3 Complémentaire*  
(19 September 1795)

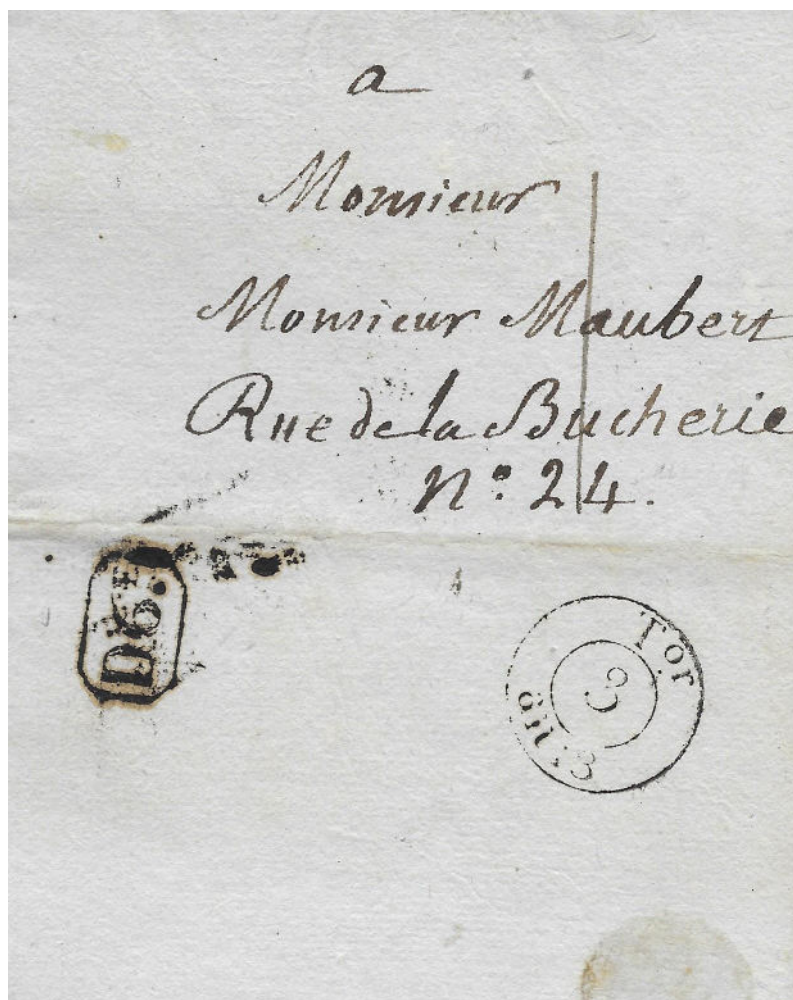


Figure 5

A local letter posted at Office D on 3 *Thermidor an 13*  
(22 July 1805) Postage of 1 décime to pay

Date stamps for use on the arrival of letters were first issued in Paris in September 1802 (Vendémiaire of the year 11) and these of course used the revolutionary calendar. **Figure 5** is

a letter posted at Office D during the 6<sup>th</sup> collection and delivered on 3 *Thermidor* in the year 13. One handled by the Poste Restante on 5 *Frimaire an 14* is at **figure 6**.

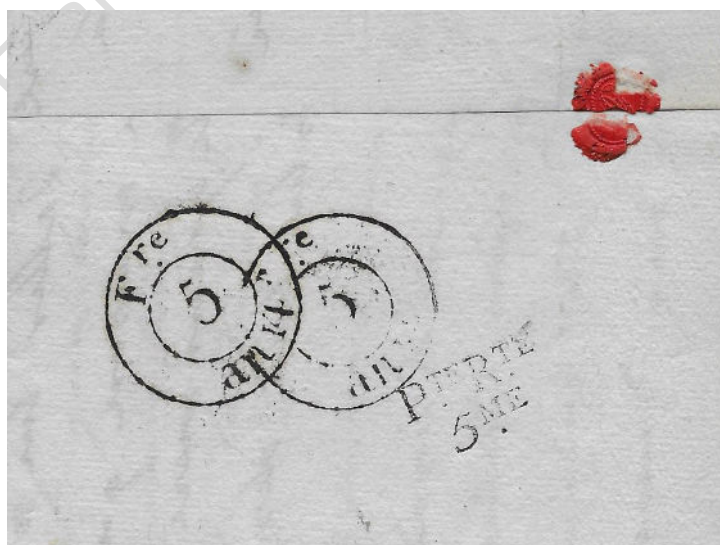


Figure 6

5 *Frimaire an 14* (26 November 1805)  
Poste Restante 5th collection

There was only one leap year when date stamps were in use and that was the year 1803. So on just one day there was a complimentary day 6 - the 23 September 1803. **Figure 7** shows the date stamp used for local letters in Paris with *Jour complémentaire 6 an 11* in black. **Figures 8 and 9** are the front and reverse of a letter from Cherbourg to Paris with the arrival stamp *Jour complémentaire 6 an 11* struck in red. Years 12 and 13 only had complementary days 1 to 5.

The greatest drawback of this calendar was that it was purely French and out of step with all the rest of Europe. In the early days of the revolution, when France was

concentrated on its own survival, that was not of great concern. However once Napoleon was in power and began to conquer large parts of continental Europe it became a serious hindrance. On 11 Nivôse of the year 14 or 1 January 1806 the Gregorian calendar was restored.

Republican dates can be readily found on the internet. The Librairie Historique R. Clavreuil published a *Concordance des Calendriers Grégorien et Républicain* in 1963.

Republican days can be found at [https://artofmemory.com/wiki/French\\_Republican\\_Calendar\\_Day\\_Names/](https://artofmemory.com/wiki/French_Republican_Calendar_Day_Names/)

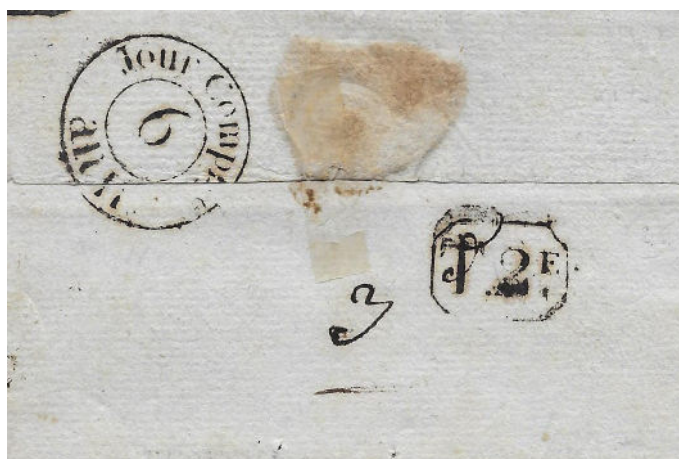


Figure 7  
*Jour complémentaire 6 an 11*  
(23 September 1803) on a  
local letter posted at the *Hôtel*  
*des Postes*

Figure 8  
A letter from Cherbourg to  
Paris which arrived on *Jour*  
*complémentaire 6 an 11*  
(23 September 1803)



Figure 9  
the reverse of the letter with  
the arrival date stamp  
*Jour complémentaire 6 an 11*  
(23 September 1803)

# Côte d'Ivoire *Colis Postaux* CP9 and CP10 of December 1903 as listed in the 2022 edition of the Yvert & Tellier *Colonies Françaises Catalogue* Simon Binsted

Simon Binsted offers a personal view of some Ivory Coast rarities, as they appear in the catalogue.

## Foreword

Many avid collectors of 19<sup>th</sup> Century West African French Colonies will have heaved a big sigh of relief when seeing that Yvert et Tellier have at last changed their previous byzantine – and extremely confusing - industry-standard classification of many of the stamps of this whole area. Dealers and collectors alike rely on not just the ability to

exactly define their stamps, but also their relative scarcity so that they can buy and sell at a fair price.

Alas, collectors like me, who work with detailed self-calculating spreadsheets and instantly-visible attached scan references may well have been pleased initially, but then will have realised that they have literally hours – no, days and



Figure 1

Ivory Coast, *Colis Postaux* 4 Francs on 15c green (YT CP9) and 4 Francs on 30c carmine (YT CP10) (enlarged)

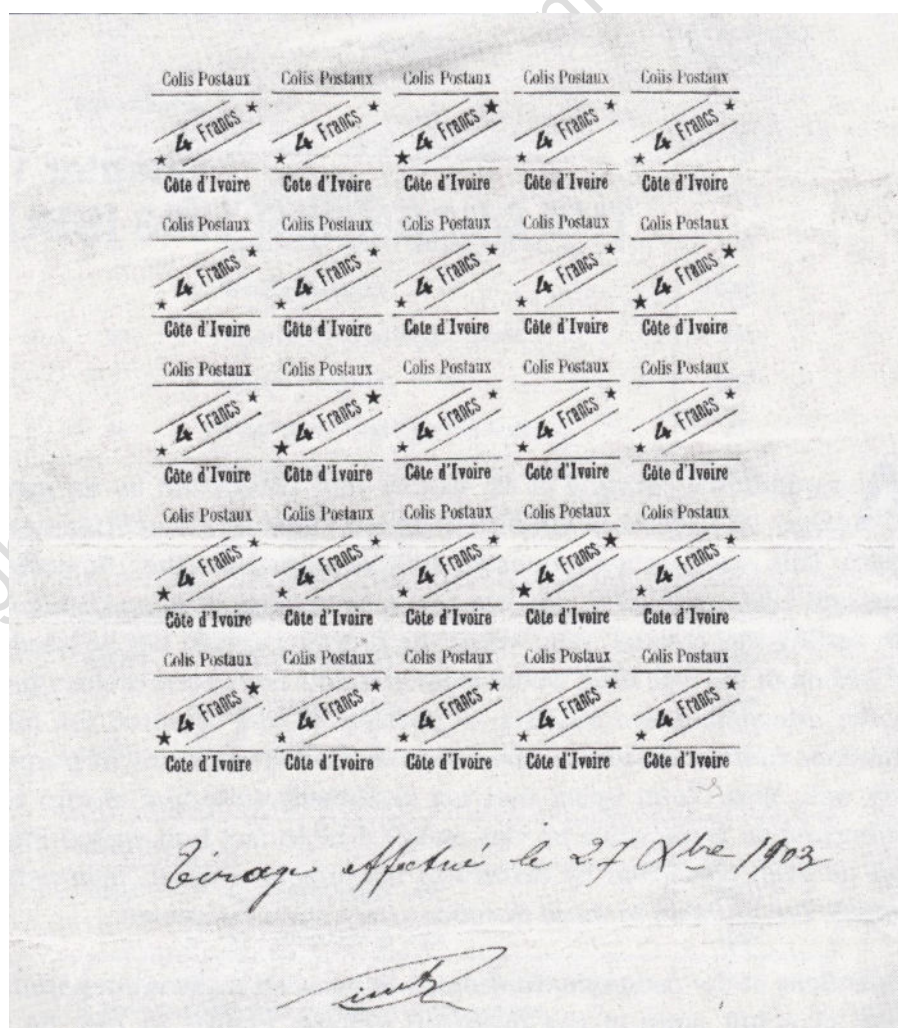


Figure 2

Proof of the forme used to apply the overprints to CP9 and CP10 issues

days - of work in front of them, in changing both the spreadsheets themselves and the scan reference numbers accordingly. It was thus that when I started labouring on re-referencing my Ivory Coast Parcel Post stamps, I began to see that all was not well and that Yvert et Tellier seem to have confused themselves - as well as everyone else presumably - when listing and pricing *Colis Postaux* 9, 4 Francs on 15c green and *Colis Postaux* 10, 4 Francs on 30c carmine (Figure 1).

### Printing plates

YT CP9 and CP10 are the third issue of parcel post stamps dating from December 1903. The issue used the same type for the title overprints 'Côte d'Ivoire' and 'Colis Postaux' as in the previous July issue (YT CP7 & CP8), leading to the conclusion that the same type slugs were perhaps recycled, as might have been sensible and understandable. But for some unknown reason their positions were switched showing 'Colis Postaux' at the top and 'Côte d'Ivoire' at the bottom.

In his excellent, in-depth study of February 2001 *The Parcel Post Stamps of the Ivory Coast*, David Herendeen, the acknowledged expert on these stamps, has an intriguing supposition. He writes: "Was Clozel (the Côte d'Ivoire Postmaster) upset that his (assumed) underling, Martin, had authorised an issue while he was away<sup>1</sup> (in France)? If he, in fact, had visited Paris, had he been convinced by dealers to manufacture more 'interesting issues'?" but he adds that "The answers to these questions may never be known". He does, though, confirm that the new formes or plates were used for printing both CP9 and CP10. More intriguingly still, Herendeen reproduces a signed proof (Figure 2), bearing

the words "Tirage effectué le 27 Xbre (octobre) 1903" which was some 51 days before the promulgation of the *arrêté* of 19 December 1903 authorising the new overprints with stars.

### Number of stamps issued

The *arrêté* authorised the printing of 2,000 overprints on the 15c green and 1,800 overprints on the 30c carmine; Herendeen is the only authority who confirms these figures. Yvert gives no figure for the number of overprintings of CP9 15c green and an astounding 6,000 figure for their carmine CP10! Maury just notes "sheets of 150" which is not very helpful. Where Yvert get their figures from I should be interested to know but (as we shall see later) Yvert's own pricings strongly suggest that the evidence is against them and that Herendeen is right.

### The varieties and their plate positions

To appreciate the problems with the numbering and pricing in the latest Yvert & Tellier catalogue, one must first look at the composition of the 25-stamp pane as illustrated in **Figure 3**. The pane that you see is the left-hand pane cropped from a double pane of 50. If you compare it with the proof shown on page 84 you will see that the varieties and their positions are identical which is what one would expect.

Since the distribution of varieties is *exactly the same* for both the 15c green CP9 and the 30c carmine CP10, I shall refer only to the catalogue listing of the former in my exposé.

If you are reading the Journal digitally, it will be useful to use the magnify facility on whatever device you are using, so that you can see clearly that the types which are positioned as follows:



Figure 3

Pane of 25 (enlarged) of the *Colis Postaux* 4 Francs on 30c carmine (YT CP10)

© Roumet Histoire Postale 2017

| Catalogue N°      | Variety                                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| YT 9<br>Position  | Two small stars<br>1,4,5,6,7,9,11,13,15,17,18 and 22-25 |
| YT 9a<br>Position | Two large stars<br>3,10,12 and 19                       |
| YT 9b<br>Position | Large star on left and small star on right<br>16        |
| YT 9c<br>Position | Two large stars without accent on Côte<br>21            |
| YT ??<br>Position | Two small stars without accent on Côte<br>2,8,14 and 20 |

Note that the variety of 'Two small stars without accent on Côte', which is clearly identifiable in both the proof and the sheet in positions 2,8,14, and 20 is not recognised by Yvert. On the other hand, Yvert lists two varieties which do not exist and for which, therefore, positions cannot be quoted:

|       |                                                                               |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| YT9d  | One large star on left, without accent on Côte                                |
| YT9ba | One large star on right (not included though in its YT10 listing counterpart) |

<sup>1</sup> The July 1903 4 Francs on 60c - maddeningly and confusingly - numbered CP11 by Yvert & Tellier

| Côte d'Ivoire Colis Postaux - December 1903 issue                       |                   |              |                                                     |                                     |       |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Printing Plate Composition and Yvert & Tellier Catalogue Pricing Survey |                   |              |                                                     |                                     |       |       |
| YT CP9                                                                  |                   |              |                                                     |                                     |       |       |
| N° of panes                                                             | N° types per pane | N° of stamps | Type                                                | YT N°                               | Mint  | Used  |
| 80                                                                      | 15                | 1200         | 2 small stars                                       | 9                                   | 200 € | 200 € |
| 80                                                                      | 4                 | 320          | 2 small stars, without accent on Cote               | Not listed                          |       |       |
| 80                                                                      | 4                 | 320          | 2 large stars                                       | 9a                                  | 350 € | 350 € |
| 80                                                                      | 1                 | 80           | 1 large star on left                                | 9b                                  | 600 € | 600 € |
| 80                                                                      | 1                 | 80           | 2 large stars, without accent on Cote               | 9c                                  | 600 € | 600 € |
| 80                                                                      | 25                | 2000         | All types                                           |                                     |       |       |
| 80                                                                      | Do not exist      | 0            | 1 large star on left, without accent on Cote        | 9d                                  | 340 € | 340 € |
| 80                                                                      | Do not exist      | 0            | 1 large star on right                               | 9ba                                 | 600 € | 600 € |
| Possible Se-tenant pairings                                             |                   |              |                                                     |                                     |       |       |
|                                                                         | 5                 | 400          | 9 + 9a horizontal                                   |                                     |       |       |
|                                                                         | 5                 | 400          | 9 + 9a vertical                                     |                                     |       |       |
| 80                                                                      | 10                | 800          | sub-total                                           | 9aa                                 | 650 € | 650 € |
|                                                                         | 5                 | 400          | 9 + small stars without accent on Cote, horizontal  | Not listed - or listed also as 9aa? |       |       |
|                                                                         | 5                 | 400          | 9 + small stars without accent on Cote, vertical    |                                     |       |       |
| 80                                                                      | 10                | 800          | sub-total                                           |                                     |       |       |
|                                                                         | 2                 | 160          | 9a + small stars without accent on Cote, horizontal | Not listed                          |       |       |
|                                                                         | 2                 | 160          | 9a + small stars without accent on Cote, vertical   |                                     |       |       |
| 80                                                                      | 4                 | 320          | sub-total                                           |                                     |       |       |
|                                                                         | 1                 | 80           | 9 + 9b, horizontal                                  | Not listed                          |       |       |
|                                                                         | 1                 | 80           | 9 + 9b, vertical                                    |                                     |       |       |
| 80                                                                      | 2                 | 160          | sub-total                                           |                                     |       |       |
| 80                                                                      | 1                 | 80           | 9 + 9c horizontal                                   |                                     |       |       |
| 80                                                                      | 1                 | 80           | 9b & 9c, vertical                                   |                                     |       |       |

Figure 4

Survey of overprint varieties and se-tenant combinations with the inconsistencies highlighted in green

### Survey and analysis

Figure 4 summarises the contradictions between the varieties that actually exist and those which Yvert lists. The survey of overprint varieties is calculated on the basis of the existence of 2,000 CP9 overprints (80 panes) but we are aware from the details examined in the section on the number of stamps issued that there were only 1,800 of CP10 printed (72 panes). So, to save laying out another survey, for every number shown in the three left-hand columns just count on there being 10% fewer of each type of variety and 10% fewer of each type of *se-tenant* pairing in the case of CP10.

### Pertinent observations regarding valuation

- Figure 4 shows the valuations attributed by Yvert to the varieties of CP9 but what is so remarkable is that Yvert attributes the same valuations to the varieties of CP10 despite the difference in printing numbers. Is it really conceivable that the demand for, and existing supply of, every single one of the different varieties of overprint, after almost 120 years, whether mint or used, whether the green CP9 or the carmine CP10, are so identical that Yvert is able to price all CP9 varieties and its CP10 equivalents with a simple copy-and-paste process (except, curiously in the case of the *se-tenant* CP10aa for which Yvert has spotted an anomaly and the current price is a more logical 650€)? The obvious fact is that
- there are 10% fewer of any CP10 variety available in each and every case.
- Following on from that thought (and always accepting that Yvert may know better than I the supply and demand of each individual stamp), are the price proportions between the various types correct, considering that there are *prima facie* three levels of availability - 1,200, 320, and 80 - for the singles? The normal overprint “two small stars with accent” seems to me to be over-priced and all the others (where mentioned) are radically undervalued. Or is Yvert just taking a stab at it?
- The identification numbers do not tally with the facts. There are 15 stamps with two small stars plus a further 4 also showing the “without accent on Côte” variety that Yvert has completely forgotten. Or, are we to suppose that all 19 are available from them at the same price? I would suggest that the rarity of the  $\frac{320}{2000}$  item is somewhat greater than the  $\frac{1200}{2000}$  one. In any event, this variety must be identified separately, because it also has a special incidence when considering the *se-tenant* varieties below in Point 5.
- CP9d “large star on left, small star on right, without accent on Côte” variety is nowhere to be seen either on

the proof (Figure 2) or on the sheet (Figure 3). Therefore, it can only exist as a forgery. Is this why it is illogically priced lower than a genuine variety? If so, I cannot understand anyone being in the market for a 340€ forgery or even less for 680€ for the two colours. Similarly, Yvert has listed a CP9ba (but, curiously, not a CP10ba) “large star on right, small star on left” variety at a formidable 600€. Again, it is featured neither on the proof nor the sheet.

- 5) Yvert price one sole *se-tenant* variety, CP9 + 9a pairing, as CP9aa. But what price are the progressively much scarcer permutations of the *se-tenant* pairings that they overlooked?
- 6) And..... just for the record: the survey statistics for the *se-tenant* pairings only give possible combinations. In other words, 800 copies of the pairing CP9aa cannot exist. Neither, in fact, can 400 because in all cases physically cutting a horizontal pair will negate the cutting of a vertical pair and what's more, physically cutting one out of the five horizontal pairs will negate one of the adjacent horizontal pairs and the same applies to adjacent vertical pairs. So, for example the *real maximum availability* of any one combination type may hover around 5% of the sub-total figures shown depending on how every sheet was cut up at the Post Office counter. There are a lot of singles out there (Herendeen estimates around 75%) - and singles negate pairs and, of course, used examples negate mint examples.

**Michael Round** adds a footnote:

“Simon is to be congratulated on drawing attention to this surprising error in the Yvert [2022] catalogue (the omitted variety “two small stars and no accent in ‘Côte’ ”). Surprising, because it is clearly listed in the pioneering work

on the subject by Baron de Vinck de Winnezele *Colonies Françaises et Bureaux à l'Etranger, Etude des Timbres Surchargés...* (Brussels, 1928), a listing duly taken up by the Yvert ‘Specialised’ catalogue of 1932. More surprising still, this variety was still being listed in the Yvert *Colonies Françaises* catalogue for 2002: the editorial layout there differed in grouping all the missing-accent varieties (on whatever stamp) together, but the two-small-stars-without-accent is present and correct, on both values too, equally priced at 270€ M or U as compared with 170€ M or U for the normals. But although serious, an omission is all that it is – there can be no question of Yvert taking the trouble to list, describe and price a forgery.

“The ‘large star at right’ is not mentioned in either of those early sources, and its inclusion in the new Yvert is a mystery.

“It is true that Yvert’s prices for varieties are the same even though CP10’s exist in smaller quantities than CP9’s. (This was so in 2002, as I stated above.) This could be simple supply and demand: maybe these are the prices that the same few collectors in the world would pay for either value.

“Yvert’s prices for *se-tenant* pairs are certainly inadequate, given that only three such horizontal pairs could exist even in an intact sheet. The price for CP9+9a, cheaper than two singles, must be a simple typo. The more realistic pricing of 650€ for the *se-tenant* pair CP10+10a may be the result of a one-off auction realisation, recorded in the catalogue as a possible yardstick for similar items. But a listing of every conceivable pair – horizontal and/or vertical - would become impossibly cumbersome (as well as unrealistic in terms of actual survival, as Simon points out). And for editorial consistency, the same might then be expected of Guadeloupe, whose nightmarish 1903 overprint combinations (compared with which the Ivory Coast issue is simplicity itself) would fill a whole book on their own.”

## Manuscript *chiffres-taxe*

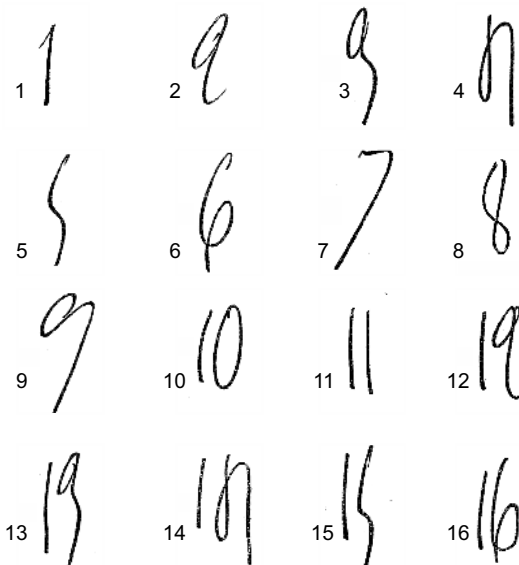
I recently received an enquiry from Stan Challis, past editor of *Irish Philately*, requesting how French numerals were written pre c1850 (as seen on postal history items addressed into France). Mick Bister kindly sent Stan a scan of the post-office document published in the *Dictionnaire Philatélique et Postal* published by the *Académie de Philatélie*.

The manuscript was to be applied in blue from Paris post-offices and black ink from other offices.

I thought other members may be interested in the document. Rather than risk copyright infringement I rearranged the figures and information so that it didn't contravene the *Académie's* intellectual property.

**Jan Gane**

Examples of tax markings expressed in Décimes



# There's no business like...

## Show business - connections on French stamps

David Parmley

The title is that of an Irving Berlin song, one of three written over a weekend, for *Annie Get Your Gun*, a 1946 musical. Berlin had been engaged to write the score following the sudden death of Jerome Kern, who was originally to have written the music. Dorothy Fields, originally commissioned to write both book (with her brother Herb) and lyrics stepped down to let Kern write the lyrics himself, as he preferred. From being a number for Ethel Merman to belt out on Broadway it became an anthem for the cause and both musical and song spawned eponymous films. Astonishingly the song was nearly dropped as Berlin feared the show's producers, Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, did not like it but that was not the case – they loved it and it would be difficult to find two better judges of a song.

On a philatelic note *Annie Get Your Gun* was based on *Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show* which featured a depiction of the Pony Express implying that Bill Cody had ridden for the service; however extensive research has produced no evidence to substantiate that claim.

So what is show business? The term was coined by Florenz Ziegfeld Jr, famous for his *Follies* revues and films and drawing from numerous definitions it can be said to be “the entertainment business, especially that part that is considered to be popular but not very artistic or serious; theatre, motion pictures and television; radio, carnival and circus; popular music; public entertainment.”

After all philately is an entertainment so it is appropriate to examine the regular issues of France (excluding “*Collectors de la Poste*” and suchlike which have little more than appendix status) in more or less chronological order and see where their paths cross with show business.

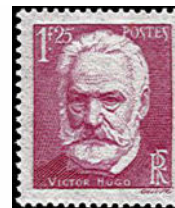
### Victor Hugo (1802-1885)

The 1933 ‘Famous Frenchmen’ set included the 1F25 depicting Victor Hugo who reappeared in quick succession in 1935 (commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death) and on charity issues in 1936 and 1938 to raise funds for unemployed intellectuals – for example impoverished artists (painters etc, not artistes) who received 6F per day in support. He also appeared on a 1985 set of famous writers.

Hugo is considered to be one of the greatest French writers in all genres of literature but for our purposes two novels are of interest. *Notre-Dame de Paris* was adapted as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* for at least 10 films and a musical featuring such notables as Lon Chaney (*Man of a Thousand Faces* as described in his biopic) and Charles Laughton (who had previously appeared in a film version of *Les Misérables* before being cast adrift in an open boat in *Mutiny on the Bounty*) as Quasimodo – the deformed bellringer. *Les Misérables* has also been the source of several films but more importantly was adapted, via a concept record album, by



YT 293 / SG 518



YT 304 / SG 529



YT 332 / SG 565



YT 383 / SG 605

Claude-Michel Schönberg and Alain Boublil into a musical. After translation into English by Herbert Kretzmer it opened at the Barbican Theatre in 1985, later transferring to the West End to become the longest-running musical there and the second longest-running in the world. (The longest in the world? – wait and see!). It has been translated into 22 languages and seen by audiences totalling over 70 million in 44 countries.

### Cardinal Richelieu (1585-1642)

Immediately following the 1935 Hugo issue Armand-Jean Du Plessis appeared on a stamp commemorating the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of l'Académie Française. An unlikely suspect for our theme Cardinal Richelieu is recorded for posterity impersonating Petula Clark singing *Downtown*. This appeared in a sketch entitled *Historical Impersonations* in an episode of *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, a BBC comedy series which ran for four series from 1969 and propelled nonsense into the stratosphere of hilarity; this sort of surreal anachronism would be commonplace for a show which is considered to have had such a profound influence on comedy as to be comparable with the influence the Beatles had on popular music.



Cardinal Richelieu  
YT 305 / SG 530

### Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850)

Yet another charity set in 1939 (again for the benefit of unemployed intellectuals) and partially reprised in 1940 featured Honoré de Balzac, a prolific author and founder of Realism in European literature and whose works influenced Emile Zola, Charles Dickens, Gustave Flaubert, Henry James and filmmakers François Truffaut and Jacques Rivette. Over 20 of his works have been adapted for film or



Honoré de Balzac  
YT 438 \ SG 647 YT 463 \ SG 667c

television including *Illusions Perdues* (*Lost Illusions*) – a 2021 big-budget production – *La Belle Noisetteuse* (*The Beautiful Troublemaker*), with Jane Birkin and Emmanuelle Béart and *La Cousine Bette* (*Cousin Bette*) by the BBC with Margaret Tyzack, Helen Mirren and Thorley Walters.

#### Stendhal (1783-1842)

A 1942 stamp commemorated the death centenary of Marie-Henri Beyle, better known by his *nom de plume* Stendhal and best known for *Le Rouge et le Noir*, variously filmed as in *Scarlet and Black* by the BBC with Ewan McGregor, Rachel Weisz and Stratford Johns (the latter famous for *Z-Cars* and various spin-offs).



Stendhal  
YT 550 / SG 755



Gounod  
YT 601 / SG 812



Molière  
YT 612 / SG 824

#### Gounod (1818-1893)

A small stamp appeared in 1944 (one year late) to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of composer Charles-François Gounod a composer – his *Funeral March of a Marionette* has been immortalised as the theme tune for *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, a long-running television series made in the USA.

#### Molière (1622-1673)

A 1944 set featured Celebrities of the 17<sup>th</sup> century including Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, better known by his stage name, Molière, and regarded as one of the greatest writers in the French language and world literature. He is the subject of a 1978 biopic whilst more than a dozen films based on his works are recorded. The three on *L'Avare* (*The Miser*) include a 1908 short by Georges Méliès, a pioneer of the early cinema.

#### Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923)

In 1945 a single charity stamp celebrated the centenary of this great actress's birth (a year late, as for Gounod, which seems to be getting to be a habit). Born Henriette-Rosine Benard she appeared in many popular plays, including those by Hugo (who we have already encountered), Rostand (who we will encounter) and Sardou. Not averse to playing male roles, a two-minute scene with her playing Hamlet was

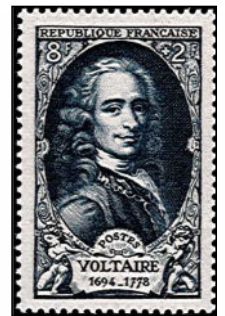
filmed and shown at the Paris Universal Exposition of 1900 with crude sound provided from recordings on wax discs. Commercial film success followed in 1912 after American pioneer Adolphe Zukor filmed scenes from her stage play *Queen Elizabeth* in London. These were shown with colour tinting as *The Loves of Queen Elizabeth*. Zukor made over \$US60,000 from the venture enabling him to establish his Famous Players Film Company which eventually morphed into Paramount Pictures. Oscar Wilde wrote *Salome* for her and at the age of 55 she leased a theatre in Paris renaming it the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt (now the Théâtre de la Ville). A cake, Torte Sarah Bernhardt, was named for her. Making several world tours during her career she was also one of the first prominent actresses to make sound recordings.



Sarah Bernhardt  
YT 738 / SG 950

#### Voltaire (1694-1778)

A 1949 charity set featuring celebrities of the 18<sup>th</sup> century included an 8F + 2F value depicting François Marie Arouet aka Voltaire (an anagram of the Latinised version of his surname). A prolific writer in most literary forms, his satire *Candide* was adapted as a musical by Leonard Bernstein. Whilst the original 1956 version was critically acclaimed, it was a flop, but a 1974 revival with a new book and high-concept staging was a success, winning four Tony awards (from seven nominations) and a special award for outstanding contribution to the artistic development of the musical theatre.



Voltaire  
YT 854 / SG 1082

#### Alfred de Musset (1810-1857)

By 1951 the charity series had reached Celebrities of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 5F + 1F value showed Alfred de Musset, a romantic poet, dramatist and novelist whose works have inspired numerous foreign language films. They include the Italian historical drama *Lorenzaccio* (based on a play about Lorenzino de Medici), two versions of the comedy *Mimi Pinson* (based on his poem) and most recently the 2015 French romantic dramedy *Les Deux Amis* (*Two Friends*) based on the play *The Moods of Marianne*.



Alfred de Musset  
YT 891 / SG 1113

#### Paul Verlaine (1844-1900) and Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1918)

Two stamps from a 1951 set of three featured the above. Verlaine was a civil servant turned poet associated with the Symbolist and Decadent movements. Eventually descending into poverty he was rediscovered and acclaimed the Prince of Poets. Some of his work has been set to music and a pop group is named for him. One of his poems was the inspiration for Debussy's eponymous *Clair de Lune*.



Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud  
YT 909 / SG 1130, YT 910 / SG 1131

Rimbaud was a poet who had sought inspiration from Verlaine and the two embarked on a torrid affair. This ended with Verlaine shooting Rimbaud, for which crime he was imprisoned at Mons. Retiring from writing at the early age of 20 Rimbaud became an explorer and merchant, dying at 37. Some of his poems have been set to music and there are numerous documentaries in which he has been played by such as Terence Stamp (now there's a philatelic connection) and Leonardo DiCaprio. He also influenced the work of Bob Dylan and is mentioned, along with Verlaine, in one of his songs.

#### Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880)

In 1952 the Celebrities series was still in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 8F + 2F value depicted Gustave Flaubert, the leading exponent of literary realism in France. He is most famous for his début novel *Madame Bovary*, filmed or televised eight times providing starring roles for Pola Negri, Jennifer Jones, Isabelle Huppert, Edwige Fenech, Frances O'Connor and Mia Wasikowska as well as supporting roles for the likes of Hugh Bonneville, Van Heflin, Louis Jourdan and James Mason. It has also been the basis for *Anuradha*, *Maya Memsab*, *Save and Protect*, *Unholy Love* (released in UK as *Deceit*) and the 1970 British blockbuster *Ryan's Daughter* (Sarah Miles, John Mills, etc) winner of two Oscars.



Gustave Flaubert  
YT 930 / SG 1151

#### French Theatre



YT 944 / SG 1165



YT 956 / SG 1163

During 1953, when the Celebrities series contrived to mix up the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries but providing nothing of interest to our cause, four stamps relating to French theatre appeared and, as we have already treated two of the

writers, the illustrations of their works, albeit a little highbrow for our consideration of the more or less vulgar, might as well be shown. The inscriptions on the stamps are self-explanatory.

#### Jules Verne (1828-1905)

Another single, issued in 1955, marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. The second most translated author in the world ranking between Agatha Christie and William Shakespeare his colossal output included a series of 54 *Voyages Extraordinaires* in collaboration with his publisher Jules Hetzel; his son continued the series after his death. The best known of these have generated numerous film adaptations – *Around the World in Eighty Days* (7), *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (9), *The Mysterious Island* (10), *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (7), as well as another 32 films from the balance of the *Voyages* and other works. *Michael Strogoff* generated another 9 films. The 1902 short (but unusually long for the time) adventure film *Le Voyage dans la Lune* (*A Trip to the Moon*) directed by and starring Georges Méliès was inspired by Verne's *From Earth to the Moon* and *Around the Moon*; it was probably the first "feature film" as we might understand it but certainly the first to achieve international success. The trip was not made on gossamer wings but in a capsule fired from a cannon. This piece of history can be viewed on YouTube. We encountered M. Méliès earlier while discussing Molière and he will re-appear fairly soon (that's called a trailer in the trade).



Jules Verne  
YT 1026 / SG 1251

#### Television

A single stamp had been demanded by the government minister responsible in 1954 simply to represent a homage to television. A change of government led to delays and a requirement to simplify the design which was eventually issued in 1955.



YT 1022 / SG 1247

Television had commenced public broadcasting before the war and following on from the introduction of gramophone records, cinema and wireless continued the enormous expansion of the audience for show business. We read earlier that 70 million had seen performances of *Les Misérables* worldwide in a little under 40 years but if we compare this to an audience of 28 million in the UK for a single one-hour broadcast of the 1977 *Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show* then it puts into context this effect.

Now, as they say in the business, it's the End of Part One and more next time.

## SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### A dispute between neighbours '*La crise franco-monégasque 1962-1963*'

During the international Cuban crisis, which brought the world to the brink of war in 1962, France and Monaco managed to create their own. To the world it was a ridiculous storm in a teacup, but those involved took their disagreement very seriously. But by the spring of 1963, the dispute between the two countries was resolved. Monaco made some fiscal concessions and gained a new constitution. The principality was then able to continue its stormy economic development since 1949 uninhibited. France had asserted its authority. No one could have predicted beforehand that things would get so out of hand, but the two protagonists, General de Gaulle

on the one hand and Prince Rainier III of Monaco on the other, guaranteed spectacle and intransigence. The former thought he was a prince and would soon become emperor, and the latter was a prince by birth and believed it himself. At its height, the crisis threatened to have major economic consequences for the principality. The cost of postage was also affected when Monaco and France suddenly became foreign to each other. A feast for philatelists, of course, but for Monaco's economy, and especially for local workers and French commuters, the fun was soon over. Let's look back at what exactly was going on.



Figure 1

Letter from Toulon to Radio Monte-Carlo cancelled 9 February 1963 during the height of the crisis when Franco-Monagasque mail was subject to foreign postal rates © Jan Heijs Collection

#### Causes of the crisis

The crisis was triggered by two major irritants between the two countries. First, there was the dispute over control of the radio and TV stations operating out of Monaco. Radio Monte-Carlo (RMC) (Figure 1) and Télé Monte-Carlo (TMC) extended most of their coverage into the large French *département* of Alpes-Maritimes in which the principality was embedded. Although both the RMC and TMC were indirectly under French control, this could not prevent satirical programmes that were not broadcast in

France being hosted by RMC and TMC. This way, large groups of French listeners and viewers could get to know programmes that the French government was unhappy with. A financial coup in 1961 brought both stations into French hands. The Monegasques did not accept this. On 14 January 1962, Rainier issued a decree restoring Monaco's ownership of both channels on the grounds that the transaction had been illegal. With this decree, Rainier interfered directly with the French interest in direct control of the stations.

A second cause of friction between the two countries was economic. Before the Second World War, industrial activity in Monaco was practically non-existent but, since Rainier III's accession to the throne in 1949, the economic development of the principality had increased dramatically as a result of not levying any direct taxes. This proved to be an irresistible competitive advantage over the French motherland. Many new companies settled in the principality and in their wake followed thousands of French commuters who saw themselves exempt from paying social security contributions compared to their colleagues in France. Moreover, holidays were longer in Monaco and the employees enjoyed more days off due to all kinds of public holidays that were unknown in the mother country.

In addition, the withdrawal of France as a world superpower resulted in the return of wealthy inhabitants from distant regions. They would rather settle with their money in the fiscally friendly and French-speaking Monaco than in France itself. On top of that came the French President's chagrin about the Prince's American personal advisor. De Gaulle thought that his presence in the principality affected France's sovereignty over Monaco. The continuous attacks by the OAS<sup>1</sup> on his life, whilst the larger part of the French refugees from Algeria were avoiding French taxation in Monaco, combined to create a certain irritation in the General, which manifested itself in the unshakeable idea that something had to be done about the principality's tax laws.

#### The crisis is a fact

Rainier's decision of January 1962 to reverse the French takeover of control of the RMC and TMC stations had initially gone unnoticed. The former French Minister of the Interior and the then Minister of State of Monaco, Émile Pelletier (1898-1975), was the first to realise what Rainier had done; Monaco had started proceedings against France

to regain control of the two stations. During a meeting between Rainier and Pelletier, who asked the prince for clarification, the conversation got so out of hand that Rainier fired his Minister of State on the spot and threw him out of the palace door.

Pelletier went to Paris to seek redress from the French Prime Minister, Michel Debré (1912-1996) and trouble broke out. France now wanted to show who was the real boss in Monaco and demanded the revision of the existing 1951 treaty with the principality which laid down the economic, commercial, financial and fiscal rules between the two countries, and started negotiations for a treaty revision. There was no escape from this. Rainier turned to the French press to clarify his position but with no effect. The parties could not reach an agreement and, on 3 April 1962, the negotiations between the two countries were broken off. If no solution were found within the next six months, and by 11 October 1962 at the latest, France would consider the 1951 Treaty null and void.

As early as 9 April, France began a series of smaller revenge operations. It became more difficult for a Frenchman to settle in Monaco, prescription drugs from the principality were haggled over and traffic between the two countries was made more difficult. The residence of Monegasques in France was also limited in duration because they were now considered as foreigners. French pressure on Monaco gradually bore fruit for, on 19 September 1962, negotiations for a new treaty were resumed. Initially, it looked as if agreement would be reached before the fateful French deadline of 11 October. The Monegasques accepted the introduction of the principle of direct taxation of companies, but drew a line when the French proposed to retroactively deprive newcomers from France in Monaco of their tax advantages. Monaco could not betray the trust once given to its inhabitants and broke off negotiations.



Figure 2

Wrapper from St Germain-en-Laye to Monte-Carlo, meter stamped and cancelled on 17 May 1963, the penultimate day of the punitive rate, and taxed 50c double-deficiency upon arrival in Monaco

© Jan Heijs Collection

<sup>1</sup> OAS: *Organisation de l'Armée Secrète* was the largest and most violent secret right-wing extremist terrorist organisation in post-war Europe, active in France and Algeria, aimed at the independence of Algeria.

Letter from Paris to Monte-Carlo cancelled 7 February 1963 and taxed 50c double-deficiency upon arrival in Monaco

Immediately after the dreaded date of 11 October, France closed its border with Monaco and sent six customs officers to check commuter traffic to and from the principality. This led to traffic jams of astronomical proportions. The torrential downpours that came with the autumn added to the suffering. On 14 October 1962, mail traffic to and from Monaco was subject to the foreign tariff. On 13 October, Rainier addressed the people of the principality: "Monaco had gone to extremes to reach a solution. The country simply could not allow itself to be robbed of the source of its prosperity". For a while, the possibility of declaring the country independent at the UN was considered, but this proved to be a step too far. In the meantime, the pressure on the principality ensured that Monaco received a new constitution that was much more liberal than that of 1911 and which gave women an equal place. Thus, Rainier kept his citizens united around the throne while the economic pressure on the country continued to increase.

Out of necessity, Monaco reopened negotiations with the French in December 1962. They could no longer afford to let the economic damage continue because several companies had already had to close their doors and fire their employees. The border controls were lifted. On 18 May 1963, a new agreement was reached between the two countries. France had succeeded in introducing a significant change in tax

legislation with its neighbours without destroying the country economically, while Monaco was able to continue its vigorous development. Internationally, the dispute between the two countries had long since ceased to attract attention. Even the local press was lukewarm about the outcome. The newspaper '*La Patriote*' announced the end of the crisis with a single sentence: "From today you can send your letters again at the usual rate of 25 centimes."

Pre-paid letters affected by the dispute between France and Monaco are encountered from 14 October 1962 to 18 May 1963 (Figures 2 and 3). During this period the previously agreed internal letter rate of 25c was replaced by the 50c foreign letter rate. The Monaco authorities taxed underpaid items by a double-deficiency charge represented invariably by the 50c *Courrier à cheval du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* issue (YT Taxe 61). It goes without saying that many Monegasques in that period carried their outgoing mail themselves to France or had it brought across the border and put it into the French post at the usual domestic rate of 25 centimes. On balance, postage paid items from the above period are therefore rather scarce and so thank you to Jan Heijs for making the depicted pieces available.

Source: 'Les Alpes-Maritimes et la crise franco-monégasque de 1962 par Jean-Remy Bézias'. Cahiers de la Méditerranée 74/2007.

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## The Winged Victory of Samothrace

Edwin Voerman told the story of ‘*The Winged Victory of Samothrace*’ in Journal 287 of August 2018, pages 63-66. David Parmley added some covers in the following issue (Journal 288, December 2018, pages 132-133). I have some items to add to the discussion.

In summary, two stamps were issued, valued at 30c and 55c, showing the Greek statue of the *Winged Victory of Samothrace* (YT 354-55; SG 586-87). The statue is displayed

at the Louvre. These stamps were issued as fund-raisers for the national museums and were sold at the Louvre and two other museums from 20 August to 16 November 1937.

Initially, they were only sold individually attached to a museum postcard priced at 70 centimes each, making the total cost 2 francs 25 for the pair. After complaints from collectors and dealers, the stamps were soon sold separately in mint condition provided a postcard was purchased with each one.



Figure 1  
30c and 55c values  
on Musée du Louvre  
sheet

**Figure 1** pictures the two stamps attached and tied to a souvenir sheet of heavy paper which, oddly I think, is gummed on the back. It is cancelled at the Louvre on 16 October 1937.

Does anyone know how much this card sold for? Was it sold in lieu of the two postcards?

**Figure 2** shows two postcards that apparently went to Denver, Colorado in the USA franked with only the *Samothrace* stamps. They were cancelled on 1 December 1937, well after the sale period ended, at Tonnay-Charente, a commune about 100 miles north of Bordeaux in

southwestern France near the Atlantic Ocean. No postage due markings have been applied.

The messages are written in French. The one franked with the 30c stamp has the requisite five words saying, “Remembering my granddaughter.” Appropriately, the picture on the card is a Velasquez portrait of Infanta Margarita Teresa of Spain at the age of four. The card franked at 55c has the message, “I will write these cards soon to show that I am still thinking of all of you. Maman<sup>1</sup>.”

<sup>1</sup> The cards are definitely underfranked for the period and should have been taxed on arrival. They should have been sent at 35c for the foreign postcard rate (up to 5 words of text) and at 1 franc for the foreign postcard rate (over 5 words) – Ed.

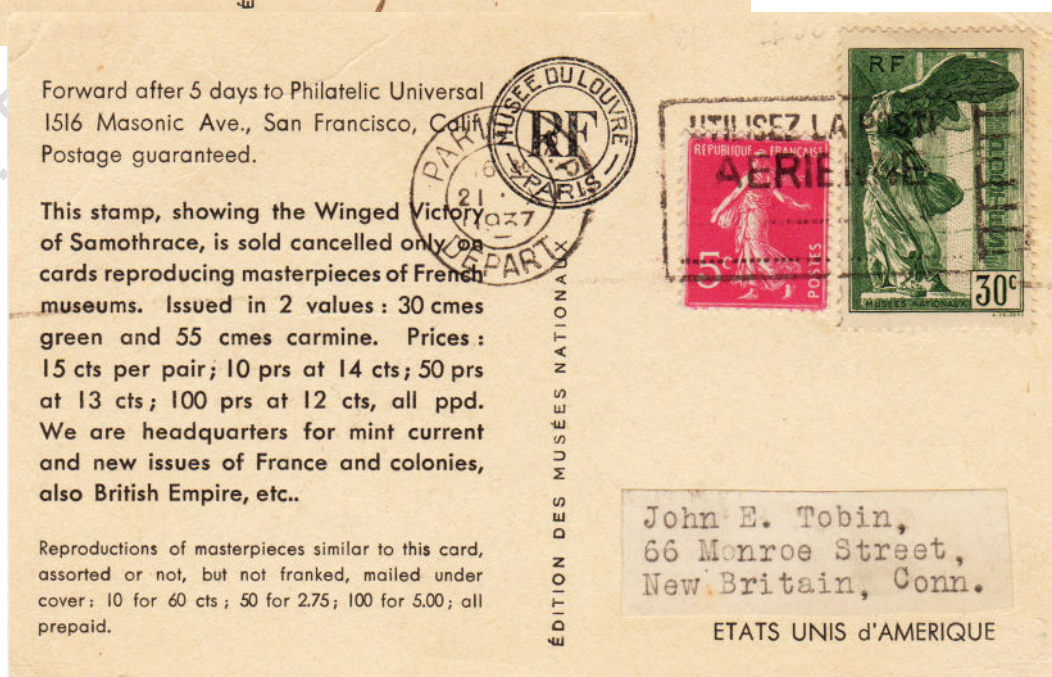
Finally, David Parmley showed a preprinted card from *Philatelic Universal* in San Francisco offering the stamps that were “sold cancelled only on cards”. His card does not have a date, and he speculates that it was sent before the rules changed to allow mint stamps to be sold. In **Figure 3** I show an identical card clearly cancelled 21 October.

Apparently, the dealer continued to use the preprinted cards in spite of the rule change in August 1937. I would assume he offered his clients mint stamps as well, if he could get a large enough supply.



Figure 2  
30c and 55c values on  
untaxed Musée du Louvre  
cards to Denver

Figure 3  
30c value uprated to  
35c on preprinted  
stamp dealer's card  
cancelled  
21 October 1937



## A Question via email - London to Tunis via Marseilles

We recently received an email from **Norma Nieson** in Oregon, USA who wrote:

“I have two or three items in an exhibit I am reworking that took paths to/from/through France. I greatly enjoyed viewing the Zoom meeting (#9) that dealt with mail between Marseilles and Tunis. Alas, it did not answer my questions about the cover (**Figure 1**), that left London and

went through Marseilles to Tunis. But it certainly supported a conclusion that the individuals in your group would be able to add to my own understanding. I hope you will allow me to ask the larger group to tell me more about the rates and routes in 1859.”



Seal of the Association for the  
protection of Commercial  
Interests as respects wrecked  
and damaged property.

Lloyd's London.

Dated March 31st 1859

Figure 1

**Peter Maybury** replied: The letter was pre-paid to Marseille, but not inscribed with the postage paid in London. Single letter <¼ ounce 15d. (1s.3d.) - London to Calais 5d. + Calais to Marseilles 10d = 15d.

PD in oval = paid to French exit border.

Route: London - Calais - Paris - Marseille - bateau à vapeur (steamboat) to Philippeville (Algeria). Change to the bateau à vapeur - Tunis (French Consulate) n.b. Mail had to be collected from the Consular office.

France to Tunis unpaid. Rate: French tariff of August 1st 1849. 30 centimes per 71/2 gms delivered within the limits of the port of disembarkation. Thus a 2nd weight step letter charged 6 decimes (2 x 30 centimes).

**Peter Maybury**

## A Question from the Forum - A redirected cover to St Nazaire

**Norma Nieson** subsequently joined the Forum where she writes: "I was thrilled to find your group over the weekend as I'm certain you have knowledge I lack.

"One element of the feedback I received at London 2022 (LV) was that I needed the same description of rates/routes on more pieces. With examples from around 80 countries in a display (open) class exhibit that is a fairly daunting task. Still, I have a few French items that are interesting and that seems as good a place to start as any. I have two items sent months apart in 1873 from London to Nantes, but the individual had moved on and resulted in a redirected cover that is particularly involved.

"I have identified the Paris - Bordeaux Convoyeur but looking at a map, the fact that anything going to Nantes (or on to St Nazaire) went through both of those cities raises more questions than answers.

"Let me start the discussion by asking which of the markings present are part of the 'normal' routing of mail from London to Nantes during this time? That would separate out those involved with the redirection.

"Any help you may be able to offer would be most appreciated."



Reverse

**Chris Hitchen** replied:

Here are the postmarks listed in chronological order. Some are indistinct but they appear to be:

Calais entry mark 27 August 1872

Paris – Bordeaux travelling post office 27 August 1872

Nantes 27 August 1872

St Nazaire 28 August 1872.

So, Calais to Paris TPO then part way Paris – Bordeaux TPO then to Nantes and then St Nazaire. There is no redirection charge in France. An item has to be handed back to a postman or taken immediately to the post office with the new address. If it is put back into a post box it is treated as a new sending. This has been done properly so no extra postage was required.

The tariff of 1 July 1870 set a rate of 3d from England to France. This has been paid cash in London and the 3 is the British confirmation of the amount paid. Alongside is the paid hand stamp of Lombard Street in the City where it was posted.

**Chris Hitchen**

# **The future of the Annual Philatelic Weekend**

**David Parmley**

On page 100 of this Journal there is a report on the 46<sup>th</sup> reunion held in March but this event, referred to as the highlight of the society's year, is under some pressure as attendances are declining and as a consequence the number of displays is reduced.

As a "new" member of only twelve years I have attended eleven events and witnessed the number of displays reduce from 26 in 2012 to 13 (plus the AGM) this year; in the same period the attendees declined from 46 to 14 plus some companions. During my membership the society library has been dispersed (for want of a member to house it), available society publications have dwindled (but there are reasons as other subsidised routes to publication have become available), the frequency of the Journal (and consequently the auction) has been reduced from quarterly to three editions per annum and the attendances at regional meetings have become sparser (members do have other interests and in my case the Saturday scheduling of Northern meetings does present a conflict). However, on the plus side the circulating packets (one for metropolitan France and another for colonies) are well managed and remain popular, the Journal presentation and content remains excellent and we have enjoyed the introduction of Zoom meetings which allow a greater degree of commentary.

In order to relieve some of the pressure on Chris Hitchen, our President, Treasurer and acting Journal manager, I have agreed to take over the administration of the weekend whilst Peter Kelly will remain as co-convenor responsible for display selection and timetabling.

I think it is important that members should be aware of the work the committee has done in order to consider the future of this event and the discussions which have taken place in order to try to secure its future.

It is necessary to job back a little as it is impossible to assess the effect that the Covid situation has had on attendance. The event had been held at the Charlecote Pheasant Hotel near Stratford-on-Avon for many years but its management had been seeking to concentrate on more lucrative functions such as wedding receptions and were taking a dusty attitude to our event. For reasons which we might now ascribe to the deteriorating financial position of the venue the catering offered had declined and meeting-room charges were increasing. As a consequence an alternative venue was sought and for the 2020 reunion we transferred to the Abbey Hotel at Redditch. Unfortunately this was immediately prior to the first Covid lockdown and the hotel suffered from an enormous level of cancellation. Whilst the facilities and surroundings were pleasant the location and catering were not; it is likely we did not experience this venue in its best light.

The March 2021 renewal was abandoned owing to Covid but as it was likely the Summer would present an opportunity there was a circularisation of the members to

assess interest. 28 members (some with companions) expressed positive interest and the event was arranged for July. Although those numbers were not achieved (due to continuing and considerable anxiety surrounding Covid and travel problems for our European members), 16 members plus guests did attend.

To summarise the recent discussions, we first considered locations and there were suggestions that a city centre (London, Birmingham, Liverpool, York and Worcester were proposed) might present a convenient option with proximity to mainline railway and ready opportunities for the entertainment of guests. Whilst these were positives, such venues would be more expensive both for room charges and meeting-room hire, plus car-parking constraints (and likely high charges) for those motoring to the event (probably the majority). In the end it became obvious that we already had an ideal location in Charlecote with its proximity to Leamington station (a short bus or taxi ride away), incredibly comprehensive motorway access and the attractions of Stratford-on-Avon and its environs, including various National Trust properties. Catering had much improved and the experiences of 2021 and 2022 had proved excellent.

Moving on to the format of the weekend, there was no dispute that the displays were the primary attraction and that to maintain the quality and quantity a realistic attendance level was a necessity. Based on the 2021 research it ought to be reasonable to expect between 25 and 30 members under "normal circumstances" which, it is hoped, now and will obtain. There can be no member who cannot put something together and they can rest assured that it will be of interest as they will see that all levels of study are accommodated in the programme. The bourse always provides a wide variety of material for purpose and as it is all "priced to sell" there is a lively interest in the offers.

We have previously tried a written quiz but that did not engender much interest. Other suggestions put forward included guest speakers or guest displays. The informal setting of the dinners does not lend itself to guest speakers whether they be philatelic or celebrity and there are also the costs to consider. More viable might be an auction which could form an evening session; this would need to be combined with a postal element and restricted to about 100 lots (so as to last an hour or so) and as it falls outside the auction schedule might entail circulation costs, although it could be circulated digitally. So this remains under review.

The committee does not claim to have considered every possibility so that any ideas or suggestions from members would be gratefully received.

So now onto the sales pitch. Details are not usually circulated until the subscription renewal is posted out with the December edition of the Journal. However we have decided to give you advance notice which you will find on the following page:

## 2023 F&CPS Philatelic Weekend Friday March 10 to Sunday March 12

Charlecote Pheasant Hotel CV35 9EW Tel 01789 335960. Dinner, bed and breakfast £134 per night single, £159 per night double/twin, quote Booking code GA000318.

When bookings are made please be kind enough to advise [dparmley@jhgl.co.uk](mailto:dparmley@jhgl.co.uk) so that we can monitor attendance (alternatively by telephone 07464 926250).

If you are intending to be a day-visitor please advise accordingly.

There will be a nominal £10 charge collected at the event to cover tea, coffee and refreshments. Bar lunches, which can be ordered in advance, are also available.

I am sure that all our members wish to see this event continue and prosper. It's in your hands! Any member contemplating attending may rest assured that they are promised nothing less than an enjoyable and convivial weekend.

### The 0,40 Chapelle Notre-Dame du Haut Ronchamp coil – a dorsal number variation?

Most collectors will be familiar with the dorsal numbers encountered on the gummed side of coil stamps. From 1962 these numbers were printed on every tenth stamp and from 1986 on every fifth stamp. They served an accountancy function so that when the post office worker or *tabac* owner opened up the dispenser he could see how many stamps remained on the *roulette*.

Trials were conducted in the early 1960s using the Palissy *fictif* and then tested on the 25c *Coq gallois* (Figure 1). The numbers were initially printed in green but once the scheme was fully approved the numbers were thereafter printed in red.

The same typeface continued to be used until the 1980s when a switch was made from the original classical font with serifs and ball terminals to a cleaner and less ornate style. The change took place in March 1986 during the printing of the 1F80 and 2F20 *Liberté* coils (Figure 2).



Figure 1  
Original typeface  
printed on back of  
Palissy *fictif* and on 25c  
*Coq gallois*



Figure 2  
1986 revised  
typeface printed on  
the 1F80 and 2F20  
*Liberté* coils



Figure 3  
Original typeface on 1968  
Ronchamp coils



Figure 4  
Newly discovered typeface  
on Ronchamp coil

The printing of the experimental 0,40 Chapelle Notre-Dame du Haut Ronchamp coil in 1968 falls in the period when the original classical typeface was being used. However, there are two differences. Firstly, the numbers were printed in pairs. This was because the same overprinting cylinder used for the smaller definitive stamps was being employed. Secondly, the numbers were invariably positioned in the lower half of the stamp (Figure 3).

Recently though, I have come across an example of the Ronchamp coil printing with an accountancy number unlike

anything that I have seen before. The font is larger and rounder and closely resembles that of the 1986 typeface. It appears as a single figure top centre of the stamp suggesting that a new cylinder had been prepared specifically for this stamp format (Figure 4).

Can anyone add light to this discovery? It is the only copy I have seen and its application looks very professional. Was this new typeface part of the 1968 experimental coil programme and, if so, have other examples been seen? Or, is my stamp the product of the *Imprimerie Jean Taureau*?

Mick Bister

## REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### 46th Annual Philatelic Weekend, 11 to 13 March 2022

This year we managed to revert to our usual March slot for our weekend meeting. Once more we returned to our usual venue at the Charlecote Pheasant for what proved to be a most successful meeting despite a number of regretted absences. It was generally agreed, after discussion between those attending, that the standard of the hotel and the excellent meeting room dictated a return next year from Friday 10 March to Sunday 12 March 2023.

**Saturday morning** began as usual with the Annual General Meeting (see the report on pages 103-106) followed by our regular programme of displays.

**Steve Ellis** began with a display on the Carriage of Mail between Cuba and France between 1795 and 1895 and illustrated the many different routes utilised, the means of carriage and the associated postal history markings. Examples of carriage: by private ship, either direct to France or via other countries such as Spain, England, Belgium, Holland and, of course, America. A number of different contract services were also covered in the display, including Empresa, Balguerie, RMSP, Antonio Lopez, Cunard, Compagnie Générale Transatlantique and others. Forwarding agents and special cancellations were also displayed.

**Peter Kelly** continued with a display of 8 frames of mail from and to post offices of five communes on the island of Réunion covering the period from the 1830s to 1940s. We started with Saint Paul, the ancient capital of the island, whose post office opened in 1830, by which time Saint Denis had become the principal town. Early examples of mail showed that post offices often took matters into their own hands by producing their own individual stamps and directional marks as well as using different ink colours. Of particular note are the *Correspondance d'armées* handstamp and special "PP" marks.

The second and third communes shown were those of Saint Philippe and Saint Joseph at the southern end of the island. This was a sparsely populated area because of the active volcano, Piton de la Fournaise. It was because of this that the railway terminated at Saint Pierre and Saint Benoit, requiring a "*diligence*" to carry people and mails between those two points. Unsurprisingly, not a lot of mail is seen from these communes.

The fourth commune covered was that of Saint André, a well populated and important centre for the sugar cane plantations and vanilla for which the island was, and still is, world famous. It was explained that many different crops had been tried, especially coffee in the early days, but experience showed that only sugar cane was robust enough to survive the severe tropical storms. This commune, situated in the windward (eastern) part of the island was one of the first areas to be cultivated and was home to wealthy citizens owning vast plantations and refineries. There has always been a steady volume of mail seen to and from the Saint André office since 1830.

The final commune shown was Salazie which also incorporated Hell Bourg. This is one of only two communes whose boundaries do not touch the coast. Salazie was a small village whose post office opened in 1836. But the commune's claim to fame lay further up the road into the hills at Hell Bourg (named after an early Governor of the island) where hot mineral springs were found that led to the growth of a sizeable village around what became an important spa centre. This attracted local wealthy people keen to escape to the cool mountain climate as well as tourists from far-flung places, as can be seen from the postcards they sent home. It also became a place for convalescent soldiers from the Madagascar campaigns of 1885 and 1895 suffering from water-borne diseases. This gave rise to military concessionary mail and the office used the Hell-Bourg *Correspondance d'Armées* handstamp in different ink colours on outgoing mails. After a time the springs began to decline and were further damaged by a dynamite attempt that failed to restore them. Finally in 1848 a landslide caused by a cyclonic storm finished them off.

After viewing and coffee **Rodney Gent** presented the history of the postal connection between Guadeloupe and Martinique from the 1840's. It included items associated with the destruction of the Martinique capital, St Pierre, in 1902. The development of Paquebot services and the expansion of the airmail network covering the two islands during the 1930's -1940's were also included.

**Stephen Holder** then showed some of his collection of Syria at the time when its postal services were effectively French.

**Peter Stockton** rounded off the morning with a selection of Second World War interrupted mail both International and Domestic. Items were shown which were in transit on 1 August 1940 when postal communication between the Occupied and Free Zones was prohibited, requiring such letters to be returned. A letter destined for Italy during the Battle for Sicily was returned "*Relations suspendues*". The German censor at Cologne marked a letter for inadmissible contents and the letter was then sent back. The display continued with three "*Laissez-passer*" permits authorising holders to cross the Demarcation Line of 1940 and concluded with mail from several "*Frontstalags*" the early Internment and Prisoner of War camps situated in France.

After lunch the programme resumed with **Steve Ellis** showing cross-Channel mail related to British and French railway companies and their shipping subsidiaries, utilising additional material in the form of maps, postcards, advertising material, fiscal stamps and even a paper bag!

**Paul Watkins** then continued with two offerings:

1. Pre-stamp covers of Bordeaux 1579 – 1850 showing the development of the 'B with *fleur de lis*' mark in use 1704-92, '*port payé*' marks, the first *petite poste* (1766-95) with examples of all three offices, the second *petite poste* (1795-1822), registered (1798), messenger services including

‘corbillard’ items and a ‘Duforest’ FAC on a 1751 letter from Martinique.

2. WWI postcards, correspondence and photographs illustrating the work of Lady Hermione Blackwood and Cecily du Sautoy nursing wounded soldiers in France and post-war at the French Red Cross HQ in Reims working with refugee women and children – one of whom they adopted.

After a break for viewing and more refreshments **Colin Pease** gave us a display of early French aviation postcards from 1901 tracing the development of the aeroplane from the ability to fly a few hundred yards, to cross the Channel and then to become armed in the First World War. Material from the various air fairs between 1909 and 1930 was also displayed.

**Gwynne Harries** followed with the pneumatic post in Paris. The installation in Paris of a tubular express postal transmission system driven by air pressure was started in 1866. The experimental tube was established between the telegraph office at The Grand Hotel and Place de la Bourse. The display attempted to show the progressive extension of the system which eventually became available to the public in 1879 and which, by the end of the century, covered all areas of Paris. We were shown examples of the development of the postal stationery during the period of public use from 1879 to around 1910 including examples of the various printings and values dictated by the changing postal rates at the time.

Initially the messages carried were called telegrams up until 1896 when the word ‘pneumatic’ was adopted. In many respects it was the internet of the Victorian era. An example of a ‘pneu’ written in English was highlighted whereby the sender stated that he would be visiting the addressee at 16.00 in a message only sent at 14.00!

The display also demonstrated the requirement that each item of mail should show the two-digit number of the office of dispatch in the top left-hand corner, preceded by the dispatch number as recorded in the daily register. This also helped in the identification of the various cancellations used, an area of the display that Gwynne stated he wished to develop further.

A very successful day concluded with **Andrew Telfer Brunton** and ‘The *Facteurs Boîtiers* and Their Origins’.

This display included examples of early mail from *Bureaux de Distribution* offices with Type 22 postmarks and a wide range of mail, covering a period of nearly 90 years, from, or to, *Facteur Boîtier* offices. Examples of Type 23, 24 & 25 postmarks and the three Lautier varieties of Type 84 postmarks were shown. Registered examples, insufficiently paid mail, mail to and from *Facteur Boîtier* offices, both outgoing and incoming mail from foreign countries, mail with additional railway postmarks, and military mail were also included in the display.

**Friday and Saturday evenings** after dinner produced a good number of smaller displays and were very well received. **Steve Ellis** examined the pneumatic postal system in Paris, and a range of foreign destinations served by ships of *Messageries Maritimes*.

A display of French Postage Dues on cover was given by **Peter Stockton** starting with examples of letters sent “*Simple Taxe*” under the Law of 29th March 1889. Various handstamps were shown indicating application of the Law which required recipients to pay only the single postage due on items sent unpaid from certain Government departments. This was followed by *Types Duval* and *Gerbes de Blé* (Wheatsheaves) adhesives on cover.

Other post-prandial displays shown by **Gwynne Harries** were a presentation of Newspaper stamps and 18 century *Petite Poste* covers. The newspaper stamps included an example of the closest thing to a ‘first day of issue’ with a perforated example on the periodical dated February 1869, the month in which it was first issued, and also examples of the 1 centime *Sage* issue in pairs.

The re-occupation of French Indo-China by French forces after the Second World War was the subject of **Peter Stockton’s** second display on Saturday evening with mail cancelled by *Bureau Postal Militaire* and *Poste aux Armées* offices. Mail from soldiers of the Foreign Legion was shown stamped with additional postage for overseas destinations concluding with an item from a member of the *International Commission for Supervision and Control* established after France departed the area.

**Paul Watkins** showed cards of the *Pont Régemortes* in Moulin – partially destroyed by the French army in 1940 and in use during WWII as a joint German / French checkpoint and, later, as the exchange point for inter-zonal mail.

### Sunday

**Paul Watkins** started off with the definitive stamp issues of WWII: a display aiming to clarify when, how and why the stamps were issued with examples of their use on cover, ranging from the first *Type Iris* of 1939 with its green and red 1F stamps (originally intended for use in the two zones of occupation) to the profusion of provisional stamps of 1944-45. The development of the internal letter rates of 1F, 1F50c & 2F was illustrated, with comments on the poor provision and distribution resulting in shortages of stamps – and some unusual ways of coping with this; also the ‘problem’ of over-active stamp collectors depleting supplies and the PTT’s attempts to control sales. A wide range of usages was shown including less common items such as the 50F *Pétain* whose sole regular use was to pay the fee for the PTT’s stamp subscription service, the 10F *Arc de Triomphe* on a double-weight registered cover and the 20F *Marianne de Dulac* value on an airmail cover to Pondicherry.

**Stephen Holder** produced a selection of pages and reference materials which he used for ‘expertising’; the early stamps of Réunion, especially Nos 1 & 2 and the various fantasies, reprints and forgeries; followed by a few standard pages of other 19th century Réunion issues.

After viewing and morning coffee **Andrew Telfer Brunton** showed us *Sabine de Gandon*.

The *Sabine de Gandon* definitives of France were issued between December 1977 and 1981. The display included a sunken die proof, signed by the designer, Pierre Gandon.

Philatelic documents indicating the reasons for each new set of values being issued were included. Examples of *gravures* issued by *La Poste*, the stamps with normal and “Tropical” gum, imperforate stamps with or without phosphor bands, coil stamps, some illustrated First Day Covers and five complete sheets were displayed. The variable paper types and phosphor bands used were also illustrated as were some of the varieties.

**Chris Hitchen** followed with ‘Special offices in Paris’ from 1790 to 1840 and some franchise items from the Revolution. The turmoil during that period led to a large influx of people to the capital and a great increase in government business. To cater for these new postal needs the post office opened offices for different government bodies. As regimes changed so did these offices. The *Assemblée Nationale* was the first, followed by the *Convention* and then the *Conseil des*

*Anciens* and *Conseil des 500*. These then became the upper and lower houses of the government, which in due course became the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. The government, and after the restoration the Court, also had their own offices.

**Steve Ellis** concluded with an unusual sixty-sheet display of transatlantic routes which called at French ports, using postal history, postcards and ephemera to illustrate sixty different routes.

The following members attended all or part of the weekend.

Maurice Alder, John Allison, Steve Ellis, Rodney Gent, Gwynne Harries, Chris Hitchen, Stephen Holder, Peter Kelly, John Parmenter, David Parmley, Colin Pease, Peter Stockton, Andrew Telfer Brunton, Paul Watkins, Jeny Wolvers.

**Chris Hitchen**



Left: Rodney Gent Right: members enjoying one of the talks

## NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 4 April 2022

### Members’ Displays

The Northern Group held its Spring Meeting at Ravenfield on April 2nd. It was a great delight to see old friends again and, even better, we found we had acquired a new one: **Jeff Moysey** who had “come over the hill” (the Pennines) from Gee Cross. The local members all mucked in and quickly got the room sorted. Good Yorkshire organisation. Mind you, those from over the hill worked just as hard. I must especially mention here **N. Angell** whose useful van brought the display boards and **Roger Clapham** who valiantly ran the kitchen providing coffee, tea and biscuits.

We had five displays. **Steve Ellis** began with a new one he had created: Maritime mail from Cuba. We had never realised there were so many routes by which to move mail from Cuba to France both by private shipping and by packet boat. The charges were eye-watering. A fascinating display.

**Alan Goude** followed on with St Pierre and Miquelon covering 1982-1990. It was an amazing display of taxed

letters. SP&M had mutated from being a DOM to being a TOM. DOMs use French tax stamps but TOMs do their own thing. Alan has certainly produced an intriguing display.

He followed this with what he has done “in lock-down” – filling in French postal operations outside France such as Alexandretta, Arad and so on.

This was followed by **John Morton** with a display on the Second Republic and Empire covering the development of the rates until the separation of the paid and unpaid rates.

We finished with **Roger Clapham**’s display based on the Oradour stamp. It was well accompanied and researched with photos of the German officers involved and scenes of the devastation. A sobering end to the displays.

**John Morton**

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 12 MARCH 2022

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Society held at The Charlecote Pheasant Hotel, Charlecote, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV35 9EW in the presence of 14 members.

**Members present:** Maurice Alder, John Allison, Steve Ellis, Rodney Gent, Gwynne Harries, Chris Hitchen, Stephen Holder, Peter Kelly, John Parmenter, David Parmley, Colin Pease, Peter Stockton, Andrew Telfer Brunton, and Paul Watkins.

**Apologies for absence:** Mick Bister, Richard Broadhurst, Jan Gane, Ashley Lawrence and John West.

The President introduced the meeting and welcomed those attending and opened proceedings at 9:25 AM. The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting of 11 July 2021 had been published in Journal 297, December 2021 and were accepted as a true record of that meeting. There were no matters arising from the minutes not already on the agenda.

- 1 President's report – Appendix 1
- 2 General Secretary's report – Appendix 2
- 3 Treasurer's report and accounts – Appendix 3
- 4 Auction Secretary's report – Appendix 4
- 5 Packet Secretaries' report:
  - 5.1 France – Appendix 5a
  - 5.2 Colonies – Appendix 5b
- 6 Magazine Circuit Organiser's report – Appendix 6
- 7 Journal Manager's report – Appendix 7
- 8 Editor's report – Appendix 8
- 9 Website Manager's report – Appendix 9
- 10 Election of officers and committee members

**President** – Mr Chris Hitchen; **Vice President** – Mr Richard Broadhurst; **General Secretary** – Dr Andrew Telfer Brunton; **Treasurer** – Mr Chris Hitchen; **Auction Secretary** – Mr David Parmley; **Packet Secretary (France)** – Mr Richard Broadhurst; **Packet Secretary (Colonies)** – Mr Rodney Gent; **Journal Manager** – vacant; **Journal Editor** and **Website Manager** – Mrs Jan Gane; **Publications Officer** – Mr John Parmenter; **Committee members** – Messrs Mick Bister, Peter Kelly, Steve Ellis, Ashley Lawrence, Maurice Tyler, Paul Watkins, and John West. These were proposed by Peter Stockton, seconded by Gwynne Harries and elected unanimously.

- 11 Any other business – nothing was brought up by those in attendance.

Alan King had given his agreement to continue as examiner for the accounts. Chris Hitchen proposed that he be accepted for this position and this was agreed unanimously.

The AGM concluded at 10:05 AM and was followed with the announcement of the literature award winner.

### Awards

The winner of the **Literature trophy** was announced by Steve Ellis and went to David Hogarth for the most enjoyable article in the Journals of 2021 on the Atlantic pockets in France 1945.

### Appendix 1. President's Report 2021

Firstly may I thank all those who have so ably maintained the Society's activities and services over the past two difficult years? Members have been able to enjoy the benefits of membership much as usual and there has been little noticeable reduction in what the Society offers.

The Colonial and France packets and the auction have all enjoyed successful results in 2021. Richard Broadhurst, Rodney Gent and David Parmley have worked most diligently to provide the service our members have come to expect. Physical meetings reduced but some have now resumed and the convenors of these are to be commended. We started Zoom meetings to compensate for the lack of our usual meetings at the beginning of the year and these enjoyed a modest success. However the last by Ed Grabowski attracted only 14 participants and no further displays have been offered by UK members. If offers are made then I will resume these. Ed Grabowski has offered further displays and these are of a very high standard, however we should not rely on him entirely.

Jan Gane has continued to produce high quality Journals on a regular basis. Whilst Mick Bister has stepped down from the post of Journal Manager he has quietly continued to check and edit many of the articles offered and his continued assistance has proved invaluable. Somewhat in the background David Hogarth and Michael Round diligently proof-read everything in order to maintain the Journal's high standards. It would be useful if other members were prepared to offer assistance with the initial appraisal of new articles submitted. There is still a lack of sufficient articles and we continue to rely too heavily on those who do make regular contributions.

Andrew Telfer Brunton has successfully taken on the task of Secretary and deals with the steady flow of queries we receive.

As I mentioned last year there is very much a need for offers from members for assistance to run the Society. All current Officers have agreed to continue and our services are totally reliant on their ability and willingness to carry on.

Chris Hitchen  
President F&CPS

### Appendix 2. Secretary's Report.

Despite lockdown the Society has had a number of queries and requests for advice. I am grateful to members for assisting me in replying or directing those questions to appropriate authorities.

We have had three new members since the last AGM, sadly three deaths and five resignations.

As with other societies, we get bombarded with junk emails which remain tiresome despite filtering and blocking of offenders.

Dr W A Telfer Brunton,  
March 2022

**Appendix 3. Treasurer's Report and Accounts 2021**

On expenditure the cost of meetings has increased considerably. This was anticipated following the decision that we really should hold our usual weekend meeting last year when circumstances allowed. This meant paying a much higher price than usual for the use of our regular meeting room at Charlecote in July 2021. Given our good level of reserves this was felt to be a sensible decision to make. This year the cost of the weekend will be somewhat lower although still rather more than pre-pandemic.

The cost of distribution of the Journal has increased by some £300 as postage costs have gone up significantly. It is

something that we will simply have to live with as it is outside our control.

Those factors will mean a rather higher level of expenditure than in previous years. Whilst income should remain around the same depending on the performance of the packets and auctions in the current year.

Nevertheless, given our healthy reserves, I would recommend keeping 2022 subscriptions at a maximum of £16 UK, £23 Europe and £27 overseas.

Chris Hitchen  
Treasurer  
12 March 2022

**FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY  
BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2021**

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at bank  
Sundry debtors

2021

2020

DEDUCT CURRENT LIABILITIES

Advance weekend payment  
Due to auction account  
Subscriptions in advance  
Magazine circuit float

0.00

0.00

0.00

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TOTAL ASSETS

Represented by

MEMBERS FUNDS

Uncommitted funds at 1.1.2021

Year loss (2020 surplus)

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Examined by Alan King Chartered Accountant Poole, Dorset 24 February 2022

#### Appendix 4. Auctioneer's Report 2021

Lots offered averaged over reflecting an increased number of vendors and 250 lots from the George Nash disposal on behalf of Chichester PS in the late Summer sale.

Overall over 45 percent of lots were sold resulting in an increased surplus to the Society.

The increase in lots offered has led to an increase in printing costs but the opportunity to include illustrations, kindly proposed and facilitated by Jan Gane, has been of benefit and generated interest.

It remains to thank all the vendors and bidders who have supported the auction during the year

David Parmley, January 2022



#### Appendix 5a. Packet Secretary's Report (France)

I am pleased to report that 2021 was another busy year for

The recipients of the packet stretch from the Orkney Isles to Cornwall and Northern Ireland. The packets contain a wide variety of material from classic issues, postal history, back of the book and an increasingly popular modern selection of stamps, blocs and carnets. There really is something for

everyone! It is a very useful way for members to obtain good competitively priced France material.

Currently we are able to accommodate new members who would like to receive the packets and we would also be delighted to receive more material to sell, especially anything unusual! For those who have not participated before it is an excellent and enjoyable way of both buying and selling stamps. Further details are available from the Secretary.

35 active members.

Richard Broadhurst, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022

## Appendix 5b. Packet Secretary's Report (Colonies)

members and ended with 34 which was also encouraging.

The circulation of books was mercifully serious-incident free – however, one member reported receiving a damaged packet which appeared to have a liberal coating of pesto on it. He said that he did not examine it too closely, and who can blame him? However, the use of a trusty Tesco freezer bag to protect the contents worked and the books were unharmed.

I am now able to offer cash transfer for purchases which may well save costs soon as banks are apparently moving to charge per item for processing cheques. An increasing number of members are taking advantage of this service.

The year ended with a supply chain problem which cannot be blamed on a container ship having a love-fest with the Suez Canal. I have not been able to send out the first sending of the New Year because a shortage of available books. This will doubtless be resolved soon but it does show that if you have material to sell then it will get out onto the circuits quickly.

Rodney Gent, 7 January 2022

## Appendix 6. Report of the Magazine Organiser

We subscribe to two French stamp magazines: *L'Echo de la Timbrologie* and *Timbres*. The magazines are distributed monthly and are much enjoyed by the recipients. We are able to accommodate any new members who may wish to join the circuits. Further details are available from the organiser.

Richard Broadhurst, 27th January 2022

## Appendix 7. Journal Manager's Report

I took over this role on a temporary basis when Mick Bister had to step down last April for health reasons. However much to my relief he has in fact continued to carry on with much of the work involved. With Jan Gane as editor and Michael Round and David Hogarth as indefatigable proof readers it has been possible to produce Journals on the regular basis expected by members.

There has been a good range of articles and my thanks go to those who have provided contributions for our readers to enjoy. As usual new material is always needed so please consider what you could provide for other members to benefit from. We all collect and it should be possible to write even a short snippet on items that interest us and their appeal.

No one has come forward to take on the post of Journal Manager. Whilst Jan Gane puts everything together she does need material to be edited and ready for printing when it is sent to her. I will continue to do this, in the absence of any other alternative, but some assistance with the initial appraisal of articles submitted would be welcome. Anyone who could do checking of articles for accuracy and presentation at an early stage should contact me.

Chris Hitchen, March 2022

## Appendix 8. Editor's Report

Since the last AGM (eight months) we have produced two Journals, both 60 pages – covering ten full-length articles, 33 shorter articles, plus three full-length book reviews, recently published articles and various reports.

One element that is necessary for a successful Journal is excellent proof-reading and our Society is fortunate that we have David Hogarth and Michael Round to fulfill that task – I am in awe of what they do. The other necessary element is interesting and diverse articles – all beautifully illustrated, so thank you to everyone who has contributed.

I also thank Chris Hitchen for stepping into the role of Journal Manager due to Mick Bister's retirement from the position. The dynamics of working closely with Chris are quite different from liaising with Mick and the transition has gone very well. Peter Kelly is trying to assist Chris with gathering articles with *Au Coin des Neophytes* that he introduced in the August Journal. Maurice Tyler and Mick Bister are both quietly in the background assisting, thank you.

It's an Editor's plea - the Journal needs more articles. Some of the most interesting articles I read in other Journals are 'Why I collect – what I collect'. I would like to see that as a regular feature.

Jan Gane, March 2022

## Appendix 9. Website Manager's Report

The website gets a new content overhaul three times a year with information from the current Journal. Likewise, any new information or Zoom videos that come along gets updated, as do all internal software upgrades. There are ten Zoom meetings on-line and I'm behind with loading the last meeting.

I would like some new images of physical meetings showing activities as those on the site now are two years old.

The analytics - China visits us! Although possibly looking for ways to infiltrate the system – we had one small breach in security, but the service provider alerted us to that and locked the site so one of the passwords was changed from eight digits to a more complex and impossible remember new one and we have since had no further incidences.

In the eight months since the 2021 AGM we have had 1194 new visitors with approximately 10% returning. Almost 27% of our visitors are from the USA, approximately 16% from the UK followed by Germany and France 4 to 5%. 54% male visitors, 22% over age 45 – but the cynic in me suspects those under 45 are hackers. The most popular pages are the Journals – back issues/list of contents, Auctions, List of publications and the Zoom pages.

Sadly, as mentioned in previous years' reports – the Forum is underutilised. Surprising really when last year's lock-down could have made good use of it.

Thank you to everyone, especially members of the Committee for their help throughout this last year.

Jan Gane, March 2022

Chris Hitchen

## NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 10 JULY 2022

An example from the New Caledonia display: Franked with the 40c Roadstead at Nouméa paying the letter rate and the 1F Barque President Felix Faure paying the 1F registration charge. This was a short-lived rate of about 3 months and covers showing it are seldom seen.



The traditional Bastille Northern Group meeting was treated to a great variety of displays.

A rarely seen 88-sheet display of French revenues started us off, with seals, stamps and documents from the eighteenth century onwards. The display included examples of *effets de commerce*, *timbre fiscal*, tax on *affiches* (displaying of posters), both national and local examples, *dimensions* (tax on paper), *copies* (tax on legal work) and finally *quittances* (receipts).

A lesson followed on the printing of stamps of the 1900 issue of Blanc, together with Mouchon and Merson types. Included in the display were adhesives, covers and postal stationery with examples of *millesimes* and varieties, plus those issued for use at the foreign post offices.

We saw a postal history display which examined the markings, both manuscript and cachets, applied to mail crossing a border (either into or from France) with the purpose of indicating whether the mail had been pre-paid – either to the frontier or the destination. This would have been in contrast to the normal practice of sending mail unpaid and a charge being levied on the recipient. The display showed examples of markings generally applied and those specific to particular locations. It also examined the various *AEF* and *AEJF* cachets and the cachets applied to mail carried at reduced rates from areas close to the

border (known as '*limitrophe*') such as *DEP. LIMIT*, *R. FRONT* and *R.L.*

Moving on to the Colonies, we saw a comprehensive display of the early adhesives used in Guadeloupe, with types Sage, Ceres, Dubois and Tablet. The overprints were examined, including an unusual '5 on 4c' *essai*, of which only 150 were considered to have been issued.

This was followed by a postal history display from New Caledonia, with the use of *Tablet* issues for different rates, plus the 1905/7 New Caledonia issue, the Red Cross issue and the 1928 definitives. Registered, airmail and local rates were shown. The display finished with military stamps and the cachet used when there were stamp shortages.

Finally we turned to social philately with a look at the politician and author Victor Hugo. Initially considered an enemy of the state after Napoleon III gained power he then had to leave France first for Belgium and then Guernsey. Aspects of his life were explained with adhesives, covers, postcards and even cigar labels.

Another very enjoyable meeting closed with a discussion about the frequency of meetings to be held in 2023.

Northern members are requested to email me with their thoughts and preferences.

Steve Ellis.

## BOOKSHELF

Compiled by Michael Round

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

### French Transsaharan Mails and History, Post Offices and Communications in Niger

Peter R.A. Kelly FRPSL, FSPH

Card-backed, A4 180pp in full colour.

For further details, abstracts, costs and postage rates, please see F&CPS Journal 298 (p.49) or contact the author: peterkelly35@btinternet.com

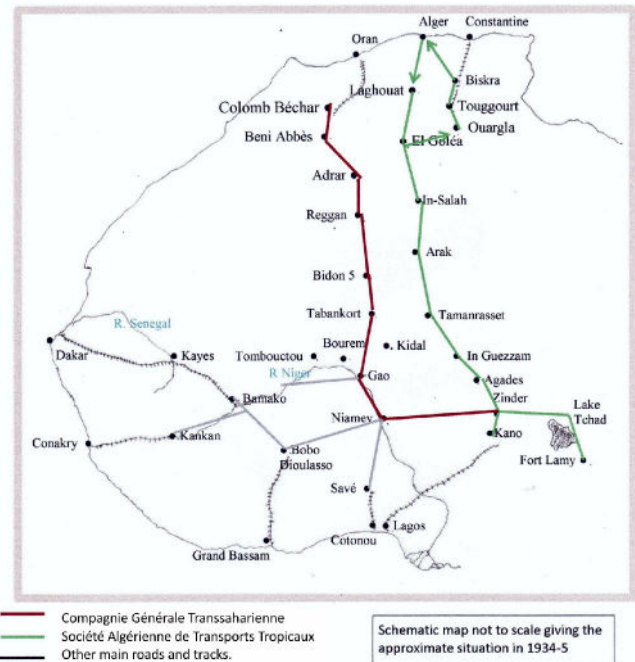
#### Reviewed by Michael Round

*This review is also appearing in CAMEO, Journal of the West African Study Circle. My thanks to the editors of both journals for their co-operation. -MR*

This is the final part of Peter Kelly's trilogy that also includes *Dakar to Tombouctou: Communications and Postal History in French Soudan*, reviewed by me in F&CPS Journal No 289 (April 2019), pp 45-6, and *The Development of the French Postal Communications in the Algerian Sahara*, reviewed likewise in F&CPS Journal No 295 (April 2021), pp 51-2. Both of those earlier books are still available from the author.

Despite Peter's generously compiled Bibliography, this new area is one not much known about by general collectors – particularly, perhaps, the first part. (Punctuation of its title notwithstanding, Peter's book is in two parts: one on the transsaharan mails, comma, the other the history of Niger.) Yet this was a busy and fast-moving part of postal history. As Peter remarks in the Introduction, "Up until the end of the first World War [transsaharan] mails were carried on foot or by camel or horse. Within the short space of 25 years regular mail flights across the Sahara were in place. Despite this, some of the terrain in Niger is such that camels were used into the 1940s." If that doesn't intrigue us, then nothing will.

It is fortunate for the rest of us that Peter's indefatigable research can be backed up by so much philatelic evidence. This "illustrates easily", as it were, turning this quite splendid publication into as much a mouth-watering coffee-table book (all those wondrous covers!) as an exhaustive and comprehensive reference volume of statistics. Maps are here in profusion, carefully colour-coded so as to outline the route taken by individual covers in a manner that would recall bus-stop timetables were it not for the colossal distances physically involved. Those of us for whom sub-Saharan Africa is more interesting than Saharan (shame on us!) will be tempted to read Part Two first, and swiftly be reminded that Zinder is no less than 900km from Niamey, and N'Guigmi (the office closest to Lake Tchad) a further 600km away. No wonder a letter posted from Zinder to Paris c.1905 took at the very least 52 days to arrive – and that's without encountering local hostilities en route. Who knew, either, that the territory known as Benin, with its own



'Tablet'-type stamps and all, was renamed 'Dahomey' "to avoid confusion with territories nearby"? The logic of that escapes me for the moment, unless the confusion would be with Benin City in Nigeria.

Back to the Sahara. Peter builds a painstaking picture of gradual progress in ways to carry mail across this huge and forbidding place. The authorities juggled with different types of vehicle, always having to factor-in the costs of back-up vehicles, vital at every point in the journeys. Different organisations jostled for postal customers as alternative routes were tried out: one by-product is a feature likely to apply not just here but anywhere in the world where mail was being pioneered, namely the occasional perplexingly routed and oddly franked cover devised and sent purely to test out a possible new delivery scheme.

Once the airmail services begin, we approach more familiar territory. Statistics and general background information prevail notwithstanding, to the benefit of us all. The scope of the book running to 1948, World War II receives its lion's share of attention. Even this remote part of the world was by no means unaffected, as Peter's account makes plain. (One tiny detail among many to affect postal delivery was the increasing shortage of fuel for mailboats.) Open the book at any page, and fascinating facts, maps and contemporary photographs will jostle for your attention. Peter's workload must have been prodigious, and the result should be loudly acclaimed.

Presentation is lavish. The title is - praise be! – on the spine; the book is perfect-bound but I am delighted to report that it has not started to come apart despite my rigorous handling. In such a dense and close-packed narrative, a few very long sentences would have benefitted from splitting, as would the most meticulous of punctuation in order to keep the story flowing. A few place-names in the same sentence may waver between French and English spellings – tradition versus strict editorial consistency, as usual. The false double ‘S’ in “transsaharan” invites hyphenation in a way that, say, the word “transatlantic” does not – yet the French spell it without hyphen, so who am I (or my laptop spell-checker) to argue? Less debatably, siting main page 1 on the back of preliminary page ‘ix’ has caused all the following even-numbered pages to fall on the right, the odd-numbered on the left, so that the page-numbers themselves appear at the binding edge rather than the fly – a slight hindrance until you get used to it. Otherwise, this is a gold-medal production.

Buy, read, marvel and learn.



Registered letter of 4 April 1934 carried on the first official journey of the *Société Algérienne de Transports Tropicaux* motor vehicle service from Zinder, Niger across the Hoggar and Sahara. The line initially ran fortnightly from Zinder to Alger via Agadès, Tamanrasset and In Salah during the cool period from October to May. Received at Alger 17 April.

Franked 1F75. Postage 50c - on reverse (Tariff of 9.8.1926) + Registration 1F25 (Tariff of 31.1.1933)

## PRESS RELEASE FROM THE CHANNEL ISLANDS SPECIALISTS' SOCIETY

### Delivered by the Hotel's Care The Private Postal Services of French Hotels in Jersey Roger E. Harris

In the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, four French hotels in Jersey offered a postal service “by the Hotel’s care”, whereby letters posted in the hotel mailbox would be taken by hotel staff and posted in the *Boîte Mobile* of the mail boats for France or they would be taken to the Jersey Post head sorting office for sending on the next mailboat to France. These envelopes were required to be hotel stationery which acted as adverts for the hotel, but they also alerted the Post Office that they should be sent direct to France rather than routed via England.

When the photographic postcard became popular at the turn of the Century, the hotels extended their service to postcards posted in the hotel mailbox but – as they were not identifiable hotel stationery – they devised their own cachets that they applied to the postcards, after posting in the hotel mailbox, to identify them as French hotel postcards. Although these cachets acted as adverts for the hotels, they also ensured that the postcards were routed straight to

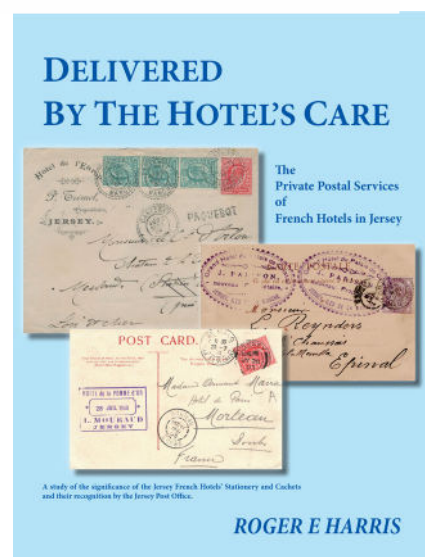
France either in the *Boîte Mobile*, or when they were recognised by the Jersey Post Office, in the mail bags routed by the French boats.

This recognition by a State Postal Service of private stationery and private cachets as instructional marks for the post office sorters is possibly unique in world postal history.

Roger Harris commenced a simple catalogue of the various cachets used by hotels in the Channel Islands on postcards at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and developed it into serious research with very interesting results when he observed that only four hotels in Jersey actually used the cachets and that they were only found on mail addressed to France.

Roger’s research compiled in *Delivered by the Hotel’s Care* illustrates all the different cachets as well as hotel stationery, gives a short history of the hotels and describes the other cachets that have been recorded.

This 93-page book is available from the Channel Islands Specialists’



Society (C.I.S.S.). Standard price of £18, (£5 to C.I.S.S. members and £9 plus p & p to F&CPS members). To order contact C.I.S.S. Book Secretary, Richard Flemming, via e-mail: books@ciss.uk or write to 64 Falconers Green, Burbage, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 2SX, U.K. Please specify if you are a member of C.I.S.S. or F&CPS when ordering.

## The Postmarks and Postal History of Cameroun under French Administration - 1916-1959

M.P. Bratzel, Jr

Published by MPB Canada 2021. Hardback, pp xiv + 481 (A4 format) plus pp 658 on a searchable CD.

Weight, 2.02kg. Price: £25 plus P&P (U.K, £3.50; Europe £14.50; USA £33.50 Rest of the world £31.50). Orders and enquiries to: Martin Bratzel, 1233 Virginia Avenue, Windsor, Ontario N8S 2Z1 Canada or [marty\\_bratzel@yahoo.ca](mailto:marty_bratzel@yahoo.ca)

Payments via PayPal to [martin.bratzel@yahoo.com](mailto:martin.bratzel@yahoo.com) For other payment options, please enquire.

### Reviewed by Michael Round

Diehard 'France-only' collectors among us, and members merely skimming the Journal (for shame!), may not be too familiar with the name of author and frequent contributor to it Marty Bratzel. Let there be no doubt: we are in the safest of hands here. Marty is probably the No 1 Cameroun collector in the whole of the English-speaking world. Just one statistic among many will confirm his standing as a philatelic scholar; his forensic examination of the sterling surcharges of 1961 (YT 320-38, PA 49-51a; SG 286/97; Scott 343-51, C38-40a) ran to no fewer than 15 articles in CAMEO, journal of the West Africa Study Circle, over a 15-year period, 2004-2020 (Ref. 1).

For most of us, that project alone would have kept us in philatelic credit for the whole of our lifetimes. But it was, and is, just a tiny part of Marty's indefatigable output: the Bibliography to this new publication includes an awe-inspiring quantity of previous books by him, one of them – under his co-authorship - a direct precursor to the one under review (Ref 2). Precursor, yes, and infinitely slimmer: that one filled 83 pages, this one no fewer than 495 – plus a further 638(!) all put onto a CD-ROM to save the postmark listings from being swamped by back-up information, valuable nevertheless and with copious extracts from the *Journal Officiel du Cameroun*.

Card-carrying Camerounians will already have examined Marty's own flyers (see previous Journals) detailing the scope of this magnificent work. The country's complex British-French-German history is comprehensively explained, and boosted by 11 colonial-period maps. Due attention is paid to both world wars and their inevitable corollaries, internment camp mail and censorship. Airmail of course plays an important part. Postal services are treated with similar care; I was particularly attracted to the 22-page section headed 'Cross-Border Mail', describing the formal postal connections established early on between Cameroun and neighbouring territories. Much of the attraction – here as throughout – is heightened by a frankly awesome range of illustrated covers (Marty must have examined hundreds of thousands of them) that threaten to turn the book into a "coffee-table" production as well as a work of superb scholarship.

Ah yes, covers. Anyone among us puzzling over hitherto inexplicable cancellations will almost certainly find similar ones illustrated and explained somewhere here. The list of 98 postal establishments (each with its own collectable postmark or postmarks) runs alphabetically from Abong Mbang to

Zoetele: postmarks from busy places like Douala and second-city Yaoundé fill page after gloriously illustrated page.



Illustration from page 158

Happily, there's space for fake, fantasy and bogus cancellations too. Some of these are amusing rather than dangerous: examples of both are usually tucked into each relevant postal establishment's page, but a hugely important section, one destined to be thumbd to extinction by anxious collectors and would-be investors alike, is awarded separate treatment. This is the plague of forged 'Duala' German-style cancellations. They often fall on those costly 1916 *Corps Expeditionnaire* and *Occupation Française* overprints (YT 38-52, Scott 101-29, SG 1/29), and their pedigree – or otherwise – can determine whether the overprints on which they fall are likely to be genuine or not.

Work of this stature comes but once per blue moon – snap it up forthwith. Your postage bill might be eye-watering, but even when added to the cost of the book itself - sturdily hardbacked as it is, and on glossy paper throughout – this is a steal at the price. I've handled books of similar quality costing three times as much. It's another feather in the cap of author and Stuart Rossiter Trust (financial supporters) alike - and a sweep-the-board gold-medal literature award-winner, or I'm no judge.

### References

1. Cameroun - Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961. Bratzel, Marty. CAMEO, variously from Vol 8 No 3 onwards, and summarised in *ibid.* Vol 21 No 3 (Oct 2020).
2. *Les oblitérations du Cameroun – 1914-1960*. Bratzel, Maddox, Kraja 1990.

[Don't be too slow in ordering your book - Marty tells me that two-thirds of the print run has already sold. - Ed.]

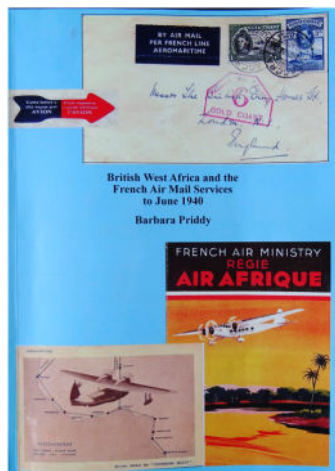
## British West Africa and the French Air Mail Services to June 1940

Barbara Priddy (2002)

Reviewed by Brian Livingstone

*This review is also appearing in CAMEO, journal of the West Africa Study Circle. Our thanks to editor Rob May for kindly sharing it.*

A4 format, card bound, 82pp, fully illustrated in colour. Published by and available from the West Africa Study Circle ([www.wasc.org.uk](http://www.wasc.org.uk)) Price £16 + p&p (£2.15 in UK). ISBN978-1-905647-33-0.



I must first declare an interest here. I do know this author quite well and admire her knowledge. This book is a compilation of articles she has written for CAMEO.

Until the war changed everything, French airlines had West Africa largely to themselves and the British Colonies had little alternative but to work around that if they wanted mail to be carried by air. The only other European prewar line along the coast was Deutsch Lufthansa whose primary purpose was to forge good relations between the Nazis and sympathetic South American governments. However, they did stop at Bathurst in Gambia before crossing the Atlantic to Brazil and so their service seems to have been preferred once it was going from 1934.

Tracking the paths of covers to and from the West African Colonies requires much knowledge of French Airline schedules and routes as well as the GPO advice provided to the colonial post offices. Barbara's book brings together previously published information from several sources and makes it readable and available to the less specialist collector. Surviving official documents leave gaps so the evidence from well postmarked covers is just as important. The author has her own extensive collection of these and uses them to fully illustrate what was happening and to guide you through the complex mixture rates and possible routes that applied.

In fact covers are most important for this study and most F&CPS members will have some. It is well worth checking them out in this book. The author emphasises certain items that she has never seen and so your specimens may fill significant gaps.

In the event, air carriage provided by the French to/from Dakar did not save much time because the connections did not fit very reliably. Mail could sometimes face nearly two weeks at Dakar waiting for the boat onwards to Gold Coast or back to the UK. Commercial users soon realised that it offered little advantage over steamers (especially the express service). Thus the volume of mail carried even at Christmas

was never very large and most of the surviving covers are philatelic. But the stories of these covers can be complex and the best delivery arrangements were often obscure even to the postal officials.

Two changes around 1934 speeded up the air mail service. The French service was extended to cross to Brazil from Dakar, using faster planes with a bigger payload. Secondly, Deutsch Lufthansa commenced its service to South America using Bathurst in Gambia as their jumping-off point. Covers will reflect these changes although commercial use was still poor.

The inauguration of Aeromaritime flights from Dakar to Pointe Noire in 1937 potentially improved communication because they called at Takoradi. But for Nigeria, steamers remained the best option. Also, by this time a new route was opening which both the GPO and colonial post offices were under pressure to use and under separate pressure to avoid.

This was the transsaharan route, a joint venture between Air France and Sabena in 1935. There was a stop at Zinder in Niger. This was within driving distance of Kano, so at last Nigeria had a practical air connection which in turn had rail connection from the coast and which might be quicker than depending on the ships.

The new service offered to accept mail to and from the UK and there was much public pressure to use it. However, British Imperial Airways was finally about to open its route from Khartoum to Kano and the official pressure was to wait for that (it opened in 1936). In the meanwhile, a lot of mail went illegally, carried by hand to Zinder for the Sabena service. Barbara illustrates covers marked to show the Nigerian PO's attempts to avoid using the French service. The post office reached a compromise by allowing the Sabena service to be used, but only at an extra charge. The short-lived Elders Colonial Airways (part-owned by Imperial) also improved Nigeria's connections to Accra in 1937 and Takoradi in 1939. Thus, there is much to study because of this competition and, again, it is well illustrated and detailed in this book.

Finally, there are the events of 1939-40. Those of 1940 were so rapid that services were cancelled with minimal notice. Barbara deals with this by quoting from the official documents to give the sequence of events, though the time covered was relatively brief.

There are still discoveries to be made about what was carried and - despite official restrictions - when. Anyone with even a single relevant cover should consult this book to find out more about it. Although the author admits she has not done the original research here, she has brought the dispersed data together into one place and beautifully illustrated it, which makes it a pleasure to read.

# LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Maurice Tyler

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

## *Timbres Magazine*

N° 243 Apr 2022: Marcel Doret: entre exploits et drame (2<sup>ème</sup> partie) (Sinais); Quand les Américains s'intéressaient à nos entiers postaux (Gomez); Les premières machines en service en Tunisie (Hervé); Les drôles de vignettes de la liaison Marseille-Alger de 1926 (Sinais); Les septennats et premiers quinquennats de la République (Zeyons); Diverses lettres et ressentis variés (de La Mettrie).

N° 244 May 2022: Charles Van den Born: les tribulations d'un aviateur belge en Indochine (Sinais); Nos chères abeilles [cartes postales] (Zeyons).

N° 245 Jun 2022: Gravure: quand la modernisation passe par le numérique (Gomez); Écrire en foire de Beaucaire... par le plus ancien bureau temporaire civil de France (Veglio); Les surcharges fiscales de la Lorraine allemande (Danan); La petite histoire des timbres des Congrès de la Fédération (Sinais); Les cartes postales des centenaires (Zeyons); Lettres en «Valeur déclarées» (de La Mettrie).

## *L'Écho de la Timbrologie*

N° 1971 Apr 2022: Spéciale Coq de Decaris à 0,25F (Avenel); Comprendre les annulations typographiques de journaux (Galagain); L'OP1/2020 du *Marion Dufresne* par temps de covid (2/2) (Venturini).

N° 1972 May 2022: La simple taxe (Bastide-Bernardin); Chronologie des oblitérations mécaniques et zoom sur les types de flammes (Ferret); L'OP2/2020 du *Marion Dufresne* (Venturini).

N° 1973 Jun 2022: Lettres adressées sous initiales et sous chiffres par la poste restante publique et privée (Vanpeene); Le synopsis en philatélie compétitive, un outil à maîtriser (Sorbara); L'OP3/2020 du *Marion Dufresne* (Venturini).

## *Bulletin COL.FRA*

N° 179 1<sup>er</sup> trim 2022: Guadeloupe 1884 premières surcharges (suite et fin) (Bonnell & Buchheit); Shang Hai Bur. Français – Un cachet plein de mystère (Bordeau & Delaux); Les permis de conduire de l'État du Viet-Nam (1949-1955) (Wiert); Réflexions sur le type Sage surchargé POSTE FRANÇAISE Madagascar (Monteret); Octobre 1942, double taxe de dédouanement sur un paquet familial de Dakar pour Bizerte (Flotte).

## *France & Colonies Philatelist*

Vol 78 N° 2 (Whole N° 348) Apr 2022: An Unusual Cover Sent from Rupert's Land to France in 1863 (Bohn); France and Colonies Used Post Office Postal Stationery Wrappers: Challenges for the Completist (Courtis); Saint-Pierre et Miquelon – 1885 – The 5/4c type 2 (Tillard); Guadeloupe 1884, the first overprints (part 1) (Bonnell & Buchheit); Further Comments on the 1936 Vimy Ridge

Stamps of France Posted from Armentières (Marra); Type Merson Reappeared as a Revenue Stamp (Rosenblum); Those Jacques Combet Essays [Monaco] (Kudzma).

## *Documents Philatéliques*

N° 252 (2<sup>e</sup> trim 2022) Apr 2022: Le Sahara, territoire indépendant de l'Algérie? (Goanvic); Camp du Pas-des-Lanciers, un timbre à date éphémère (Gigues); Timbrage d'un bureau de passe de quartier de Paris en 1877 (Estel); Le contrôle de la garantie (Bonney); L'intégration postale des États romains à l'Empire français (1809-1810) 2. Un processus complexe (Veglio).

## *Les Feuilles Marcophiles*

N° 388 (Mar 2022): De l'interdiction à l'autorisation faite aux mineurs de retirer des correspondances en poste restante (Curgy); Affranchissements avec timbres découpés par des distributeurs privés: précurseurs méconnus des «roulettes» (Goutay & Catherine); Marques de franchise des chemins de fer militaire en Rhénanie (Partie 3) (Jusserand); Un bureau de poste de Verquière, un receveur distributeur prudent mais mal informé! (Flotte); Les machines à oblitérer obtenues par la transformation de machines à affranchir NEOPOST de la série IJ et Pitney Bowes de la série DM (Partie 4) (Guillard); Timbre à date du Paris insolite: Les entités postales du Printemps (Lavenas).

N° 389 (Jun 2022): 1943: un Américain à Compiègne! (Flotte); Taxation: retour à la méthode moderne (Bonney); Les Agences Postales modernes (Lavenas); Timbre à date du Paris insolite: Le bureau de poste de la Maison de la Radio (Lavenas); Les épidémies de fièvre jaune d'importation (Partie 2) (Dutau); Dans la chambre du Receveur... ou la sécurisation des Valeurs! (Chouteau); De la difficulté de fabriquer les couleurs pour les timbres-poste de 10c et de 20c de l'émission provisoire dite de «Bordeaux» (Curgy); Petit colis et tramway à Mulhouse (Flotte); De l'usage des timbres mobiles en Seine et Seine-et-Oise (Galagain); Utilisation des timbres-taxe par les postes locales du Maroc (Hadida).

## *Le Maghrebophila*

N° 37 Mar 2022: Cachets de l'action psychologique – guerre Algérie (Liévin); Algérie – les timbres non émis depuis 1962 (Roujon).

## *Forces Postal History Society Journal*

N° 330 (Winter 2021): The French Navy overseas patrol vessel *Champlain* (Schreiber); The French Revolution 1789-1791 (Cowlin); Civilian mail through a WWI Field Post Office (Ritchie).

N° 331 (Spring 2022): The NO-mark on Military Mail in Salonika in WWI (Gassmann).

N° 332 (Summer 2022): Operation Atalanta (2009): The French yacht *Tanit* hijacked by Somali pirates (Parren).

## New-issue listings from Stanley Gibbons: March - July 2022

Here are references to items catalogued in supplements to *Gibbons Stamp Monthly (GSM)*. Some of these supplement entries can be extensive, supplying much specialised information in one place. **Ivory Coast** features strongly this time, with nearly a hundred new issues recorded in the May issue and a few more in July. Most importantly, **Togo's** 'Bella Bellow' definitives are listed at last, an important series first appearing as far back as 1999 and containing no fewer than 37 values – not counting a few extra millésimes and two types of UV overprint not yet included.

### MARCH 2022

**Chad** (10/2021). 2010 Trypanosomiasis – 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence (SG 1075/82)

**Laos** (7/2021). 2017 Costume – 2019 Antique Tools (SG 2273/MS2309)

### APRIL 2022

**Burkina Faso** (11/2014). 2011 Burkina/German Co-operation – 2014 Postal Delivery (SG 1985/2019)

**Central African Republic** (no previous update noted). 1994 Catholic Church Centenary – 1996 Flora and Fauna (SG 1541/673)

**Comoro Islands** (no previous update noted). 2019 UPU, 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (SG 1012/6)

**Congo (Brazzaville)** (no previous update noted). Additions into listing: 2005 Fruits – 2006 Arms (Woman holding tablet) (SG 1521/33). New listing: 2006 Senghor Centenary (SG 1535)

**FRANCE** (10/2021). Addition into listing: 2018 ASPTT Omnisports (SG 6366a). New listing: 2019 Porcelain Painting booklet (SG 6719/30)

**French Polynesia** (6/2016). 2016 Ships – Birds (SG 1371/MS1396)

**New Caledonia** (1/2017). 2015 Yam Cycle – Chateau (SG 1633/4a)

Dates in brackets (month/year) after each country-name identify the last issue of *GSM* containing that country's previous update. Any contradictions among them (as with Ivory Coast's July listing below) arise from the fact that individual Supplement entries are set up many months in advance and published not in strict chronological order as soon as ready but shared out evenly among component countries and according to limitations of space: the July Ivory Coast instalment here would have been composed long before the May instalment went to print.

### MAY 2022

**French Southern and Antarctic Territories** (6/2020). 2019 Ships – King Penguin (SG 886/MS888; 2020 Amethyst- 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (2<sup>nd</sup> issue) (SG 889-MS925, excluding 913/24, reserved for UNESCO Heritage booklet)

**Ivory Coast** (1/2004). 2003 Anti-AIDS – 2019 EMS Anniv (SG 1295/392)

### JUNE 2022

**Lebanon** (12/2017). 2018 St Valentine's – 2019 Sami Solh (SG 1618/34)

**Madagascar** (no previous update noted). 2009 World Post Day – 2020 Gandhi (SG 1412/65)

**Mauritania** (no previous update noted). 2016 Ancient Cities – 2018 Chinese Medical (SG 1077/80)

**Morocco** (1/2018). 2017 Shark – Children's Drawings (SG 1457/72)

**Niger** (7/2009). 2011 Tourism – Algeria Co-operation (SG 1332/7)

### JULY 2022

**Ivory Coast** (referenced "1/2004" though see May 2022 above). 2019 Gandhi – 2020 Pres. Ouattara (SG 1393/402)

**Togo** (6/2011). 1999 Free Trade (SG 2236/8) plus Bella Bellow definitives (2239/56, 2267/70 and 2284/96).

Michael Round

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## Books Noted

*Le Transsibérien, régularité et irrégularités dans le transport du courrier de l'Europe vers l'Asie* by Brunot Bonnet and Guy Dutau. 244pp A4; price 70€ (+p&p); available from Brunot Bonnet, 6 allée du Transformateur, 14100 Lisieux or brunot.bonnet@orange.fr

*La Commune de Paris (18 mars – 28 mai 1871)* by Raymond Sené and Jean-Jacques Curgy. Price 25€ (+p&p); available

from Dominique Bidault, 6 rue de la Croix Blanche, 91490 Moigny sur Ecole.

*Émission de la Caisse d'Épargne d'Évreux (Libération)* by Philippe Rochey. 82pp A4; price 24,55€ (inc p&p); available from P. Rochey, 17 rue de la Dîme, 14280 Saint-Contest or rochey.ph@wanadoo.fr

Maurice Tyler

## AU COIN DES NÉOPHYTES

The aim of *Au Coin des Neophytes* is to encourage members to share items of unusual or interesting elements of philately from their collections. They do not have to be great rarities. Please submit items for this section to **Peter Kelly** by email at peterkelly35@btinternet.com



### Réunion to Montevideo

The letter chosen this time is a registered one sent from Réunion in the Indian Ocean to Montevideo, Uruguay. One of the pleasures in understanding destination mail is to be able to track the exact route taken and perhaps even the ship that carried it. This is often difficult as it may require a knowledge of the postal routes and practices of other countries. Another good reason to belong to our Society for if we do not know the answers we often know people who do! In the case of this letter, posted on 12 May 1892 at the main post office at Saint Denis, it has been carried by French mailboats for the entire journey to Montevideo.

On 13 May the letter was received by the Messageries Maritimes (MM) Line U mailboat *Rio Grande*. This line operated as an annex linking Réunion and Mauritius with Mahé in the Seychelles, where (from 1888 to 1895) the MM Line T line that ran from New Caledonia and Australia to Marseille used to call. The *Rio Grande* reached Mahé on 17 May and mails were transferred to the Line T mailboat *Australien* that sailed for Marseille on the same day, reaching the home port on 30 May.

On arrival in France the letter was sent immediately to Bordeaux via Cette by rail. The date stamp of the TPO

between Cette and Bordeaux has an octagonal inner ring showing it to be a day rather than night service on 30 May. The next day the letter was in the hands of Bordeaux *Étranger* (faint date stamp of 31 May).

It remained in Bordeaux until 5 June when it was passed to the mailboat *La Plata* of the M.M. Line J operating between Bordeaux and Buenos Aires. It sailed on 5 June, reaching Montevideo on 28 June as is evidenced by the receipt stamp of the Montevideo office.

The letter was franked 55c instead of the correct 50c comprising 25c postage (tariff of 1.10.1881) and 25c registration (tariff of 16.1.1879). The 15c *Alphée Dubois* postal stationery envelope is accompanied by a 5c of that issue and a 30c imperf colonial *Sage* overprinted "Réunion" plus a similar stamp surcharged "5c. / R". The purpose of the "Réunion" overprint was for identification in view of the traffic in currencies at that time. The 5c surcharge was authorised in view of stamp shortages in the Colony in 1886.

**Note** All of the shipping information is taken from Volumes 3 and 5 of Raymond Salles' *La Poste Maritime Française*.

Peter Kelly