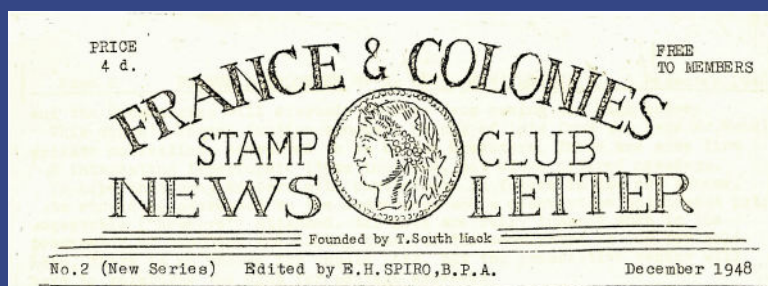


THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY

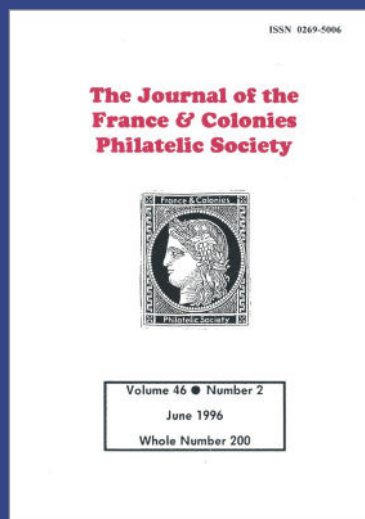


Above: Heading of Newsletter No.2 - dated December 1948. The foolscap Newsletter was printed on a duplicator, possibly a Roneo.

Right: Bulletin 100 - printed at 'half foolscap' - with card cover and ink mimicking the colour combinations seen in the Cérès issues of 1849 onwards



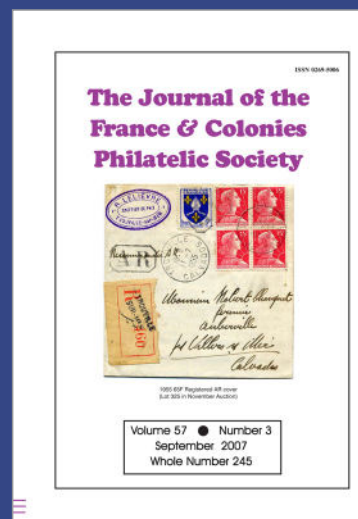
Bulletin 100
May/June 1967



Journal 200 - June 1996
From 1972 Issue 121/2 it
became known as the 'Journal'



Journal 227
March 2003
First full colour internal page



Journal 245
September 2007
First full colour front page

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

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

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

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).

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

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Contributions should be sent by email to Chris Hitchen at treasurer@fcps.org.uk

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, Lydiate, Liverpool L31 0BR (email: dparmley@jhgl.co.uk; tel: 07464 926250) according to instructions.

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

France: R N Broadhurst, 47 Bolton Gardens, Teddington TW11 9AX (tel: 020 8943 1421). (email: francestamps@tiscali.co.uk).

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

The Magazine Circuit

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

For further details contact the circuit organiser:

R N Broadhurst, 47 Bolton Gardens, Teddington TW11 9AX (email: francestamps@tiscali.co.uk; tel. 020 8943 1421).

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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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SOCIETY NOTES

The Future of the Journal

Firstly this is a plea for more articles.

The Society has close to 300 members, and the majority rely on a core of approximately 10 regular contributors to supply the articles. As the editor it is of concern whether there will be enough items each edition to complete even 48 pages - not the 60 which we have lately come to enjoy. The April 2023 edition is looking very bare - presently we have one article - albeit a very exciting one from **Chris Hitchen** on 'Underpayments on foreign mail'.

Please consider sending your contributions to Chris Hitchen at treasurer@fcps.org.uk or to me Jan Gane, at jan@fcps.org.uk for the forthcoming Journals. Any size articles are welcomed, as can be seen on page 154 - 'Mélusine' fitted in to fill a small space. Text needs to be in Word or plain text (even into an email if the item is short). Images at 300dpi need to be separate from the Word document otherwise they do not translate properly.

Secondly, a sincere thank you to those who have contributed and especially to the 300th edition. **Peter Kelly** and **Stephen Holder** kindly permitted us to re-visit two articles from the 200th edition. **Mick Bister** continues with his in-depth study of *Marianne de Muller* as does **David Parmley** with his light-hearted and well researched 'Show Business'. We start a new study from **Peter Kelly** on the 'Precursor postcards of France' and welcome **Dahlia Harrison** with her enlightening 'Emile Dupuis - A War Artist'. Our other regular contributors: **Michael Round**, **Edwin Voeman**, **Maurice Tyler**, **Richard Broadhurst** give us a very diverse 300th edition.

Finally, keep warm, keep safe, show kindness, and have a very happy Christmas. Let us hope that 2023 will be a healthy and prosperous year for us all.

Jan Gane

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome new members 1515 **Loïc Dufresne de Virel** (Oregon, USA), 1516 **Norman Stacey** (Wiltshire).

Members Deceased

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of member 665 **The Reverend Peter Brand**.

Future Society Meetings

The Northern Group intend to hold some meetings in 2023. Details will be placed on the Society website when dates are confirmed.

Lack of support has made it not practical to arrange meetings of the **London** or **Wessex Groups**. If any members are interested in meeting then consideration to resume these will be made if there is sufficient interest.

Annual General Meeting 2023

Notice is hereby given that the **Annual General Meeting** of the Society will take place at the Charlecote Pheasant Hotel, Charlecote (during the Annual Philatelic Weekend) at 9.20 am on Saturday, 11 March 2023.

Any member wishing to raise matters or put proposals to the AGM should submit them in writing to the General Secretary, Dr Andrew Telfer Brunton, The Ponds, Trevethan Close, Bolingey, Perranporth, TR6 0DH or by email to secretary@fcps.org.uk at least one month prior to the AGM. Members who may wish to put themselves forward to serve on the Committee or otherwise assist the Society are encouraged to contact the General Secretary.

Annual Philatelic Weekend 2023

Enclosed with your Journal are booking details for the Annual Weekend 10-12 March 2023, at The Charlecote Pheasant Hotel, Charlecote, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. Dinner, bed and breakfast for two nights: single £268, two sharing £318. Quote booking reference GA000318. **Please book before 31 December 2022** noting that payment is due in full at the time of booking and non-refundable. The AGM will also take place on Saturday 11 March at this venue.

Forthcoming Exhibitions

IBRA 2023 Essen Germany (25 – 28 May 2023)
<https://ibra2023.de>

MIDPEX 2023 (1 July) Warwickshire Exhibition Centre.

THE NORTHERN NATIONAL STAMP COMPETITION AND COIN FAIR (21-22 July 2023) at the York Stamp and Coin Fair York Racecourse. Entry deadline: to be advised.

STAMPEX (27-30 September 2023) including a national exhibition and competition. Entry deadline: 31 July.

Further information can be found at the APBPS website: www.abps.org.uk/forthcoming-exhibitions/

The following exhibition has not been listed on the APBPS website: however, members may be interested in the **PERTH 2023 NATIONAL STAMP EXHIBITION** in Western Australia (2-5 November). Closing date for entries is 28 July. The Exhibition is open to exhibitors from a country from which a commissioner or Accord judge has been appointed by the APF, whether they are members of affiliated organisations or not. Commissioners will be confirmed in the New Year. Further information and the prospectus is available at www.perth2023stampshow.com

SOCIETY NOTES

Packet circuits

Many members enjoy receiving the packet and it is intended to carry on with this service as long as it remains viable. Our two hard-working packet secretaries Rodney Gent and Richard Broadhurst are both willing to continue managing these for the benefit of those who wish to take them.

There are however two problems that are causes of concern:

- The service provided by the post office has become rather erratic and unreliable. This, of course, is not something within our control. There have been lengthy delays in packets going from one member to another and losses have increased significantly this year. Further industrial action will probably exacerbate matters. Whilst this situation continues it is essential that the packet is passed to the next member as soon as possible hopefully within a couple of days. Some members have been holding onto packets for a number of weeks and this is not acceptable. It is something that we will have to live with and hope that matters do not continue to deteriorate too much.
- Secondly mistakes by members taking the packet have caused considerable difficulties. Small errors have always occurred and have been adequately dealt with by our packet secretaries. Recently a packet valued at some went missing. An insurance claim was submitted but rejected by the insurers as the member who forwarded the packet omitted to obtain a Certificate of Posting. I was on the point of writing to the member concerned to ask for the amount of some for which of course he was liable. Fortunately, to my great relief, the packet suddenly appeared after it had been in the post for almost two months. Every packet contains a copy of the rules. These are not onerous and are there for the protection of everyone who takes the packet. Could members who take the packet please read them again and follow them to the letter.

Members are liable for the loss of any packet not covered by our insurance due to failure to follow the rules.

Chris Hitchen

President France & Colonies Philatelic Society.

Erratum

The Editor made an error in **David Parmley's** article 'There's No business like... Show business' in the August 2022 Journal #299 pp 88. Dorothy Fields was not commissioned to write the book *Annie Get Your Gun*, Dorothy in fact was the originator of the story and seeking merely a composer (which would have been Jerome Kern) and a producer. Following Kern's sudden death Dorothy stepped down to let Irvin Berlin write the music and lyrics himself.

BOOKS NOTED

La Variété POSTFS du 20c Empire non dentelé Type I by Joël Tête with preface by Guy Dutau. 95 A4 pp, hard cover, bilingual French/English; price 45€ franco or 67€ international colissimo; order from Joël Tête, 32 rue Guileran, 82200 Moissac or joel-tete@outlook.fr (bank transfer possible).

[Updated version of work by Jacques Fromaigeat, with new enlarged images of boxes 74 to 90 of panel D2, a selection of strips and blocks showing variations in printing, a table of earliest known dates and a market-based index of pricing.]

Maurice Tyler

Gefeliciteerd Edwin!

Edwin Voerman, our Dutch member and regular contributor to the 'Journal', has this year achieved considerable philatelic regard in the Duchy of Luxembourg. For more than 20 years he has been a keen collector of the Grand Duchess Charlotte of Luxembourg issues of 1921-1926 which he terms as "the last of the classics". With the assistance of three co-authors Edwin has now written and published in Dutch a two-volume 1200-page in-depth study of the stamps. In October, his books were displayed at *Differdange Philatelia* and he was invited to address the Luxembourg audience which included Isabelle Faber, a member of *Post Luxembourg's* chief executive. She applauded Edwin on his study saying that it had "touched Luxembourg so much" and was delighted to learn that Edwin was translating the book into French. Furthermore, she asked if the first copy could be presented to the Grand Duke Henri on the occasion of the National Holiday of 23 June 2023. Congratulations, Edwin, from us all on your prestigious achievement. If members are interested in pre-ordering the edition in French (350€) please contact Mick Bister at m.bister@btinternet.com for further details.

The precursor postcards of France 1873 -1878

Peter R A Kelly

Part 1

The aim of this article is to examine the impact of precursor cards on commerce and business generally, how they could benefit from it and how the Post Office was able to adapt to their needs and deal with problems that arose.

Background

Postcards (cards) had been in existence in several countries for some time before they were introduced in France by the Law of 20 December 1872. This had not been a straightforward decision as a previous application had been rebuffed and concerns had been raised as to the possible loss of revenue to the Treasury by introducing a means of correspondence cheaper than the letter rate. The cards were initially planned to be available on 1 January 1873 but this was deferred to 15 January.

The Post Office *Instruction* 72 of January 1873 outlined the *modus operandi* of the postcards.

1. The Administration will produce cards where the contents are open to view. They are to be sold at 10c for those sent within the circumscription of the same post office or within the fortified limits of Paris and 15c for circulation from one office to another in France or Algeria. Two different cards are to be produced to reflect these two separate rates with the necessary indications to support this. A space at the top right corner is provided for the postage stamps. The Instruction is clear that the cards can only be sold with the 10c or 15c stamps affixed by the Post Office or by tobacconists and others with the necessary licence. The cards were printed and distributed in large sheets that were divided up by the user or supplier.

2. The front of the card is to contain only the details mentioned above and the name and address of the person or business to whom it is to be sent. The back is blank and can be freely completed by the sender either by hand or print (*repiquage*).

3. The cards are to be printed by the Administration only and any other type of card or similar production must be paid at the letter rate.

Figures 1 and 2 are examples of the local and office-to-office cards franked 10c or 15c. The cards measured 120 x 78mm and they were printed by the *Imprimerie Nationale*. The initial demand for the cards was such that the



Figure 1

Rouen to Rouen 28 September 1875

10c card for use within Paris or within the circumscription of the sending office



Figure 2

Paris, rue Bonaparte (Star 15) to Poitiers (Vienne) 3 February 1875

15c card for use from office-to-office throughout France and Algeria

Post Office administration had to use an outside private printer (Figure 3) who produced cards with the attractive frame in “rocaïlle”, an elaborate ornamentation of the period. The result of this was that no less than 39 different models have been recorded. These can include different wordings,

frames, *millésimes*, and margins. Details of these are beyond the scope of this article and are covered in detail in the ‘Catalogue des cartes précurseurs de France et des colonies’ by Storch and Sinais, essential reading for those interested.

A change took place in 1875 when it was decided to produce a

single card that covered both local, territorial and foreign rates (Figure 4). These cards were dated at the bottom right-hand side of the card and there were frequent errors.

On 1 May 1878 the two-tariff rate system ended and the postcard rate was fixed at 10c for use throughout France and Algeria (Figure 5). On 1 June 1878 new postcards of a larger size (140 x 90mm) were introduced with an imprinted 10c of the Type Sage issue. This was followed up on 1 August 1878 by 15c postal stationery cards for foreign use



Figure 3 (above)

Paris, rue des Vieilles Haudriettes, Star 7, to Clermont-Ferrand, (Puy-de-Dôme)

15 July 1873

Franked 15c. Office-to-Office.

An official card. Private printing outsourced by the Postal Administration



Figure 4 (right)

Brusque, (Aveyron) to Lons-le-Saunier (Jura)

8 February 1878

Single card dates September 1876 to cover all rates.

Exceptional example of mixed franking to make up the 15c office to office rate

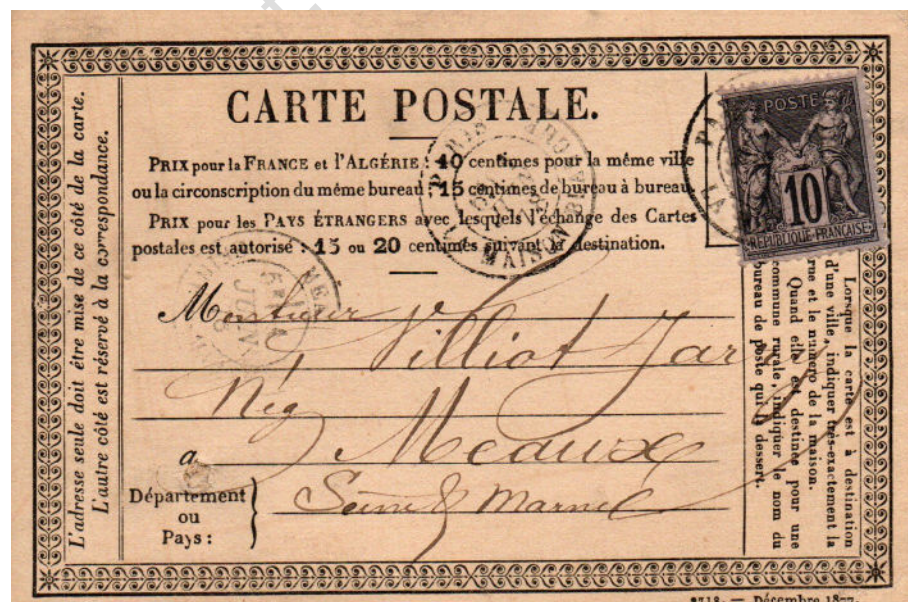


Figure 5

On 1 May 1878 the uniform rate for postcards was reduced to 10c for use throughout France and Algeria.

1 June 1878

Paris, La Maison-Blanche to Meaux (Seine-et-Marne)

Registered mail: Tariff of 1873

Local rate 10c.

Office-to-Office rate 15c.

Registration 25c.

Registration, it has to be said, was not widely used and is seldom seen except on cards sent out by the Réunionnais Insurance company in Rouen as a cheaper alternative to a registered letter. The cost of a registered postcard of 35c for local rate (Figure 6) and 40c for office-to-office (Figures 7 and 8) compares with a registered letter of 65c and 75c.

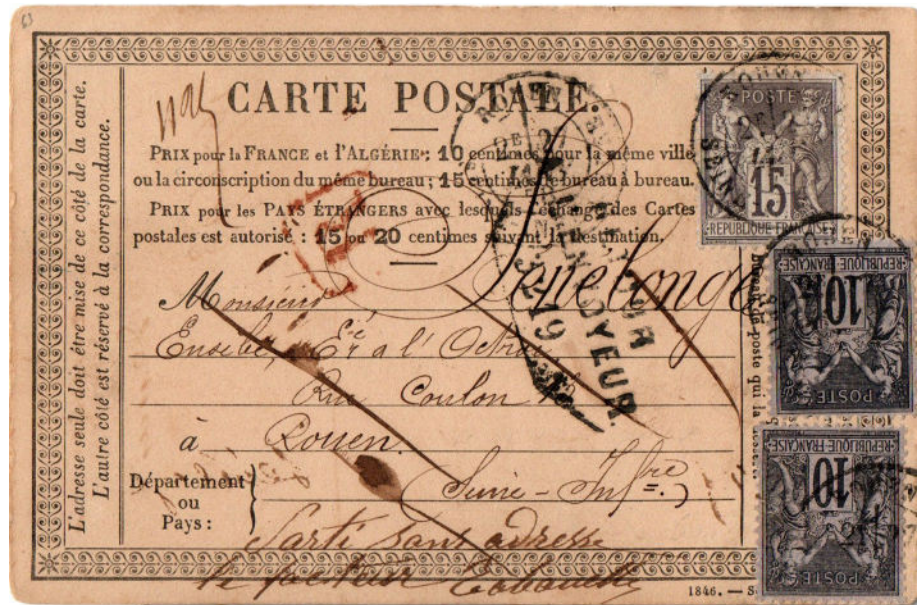


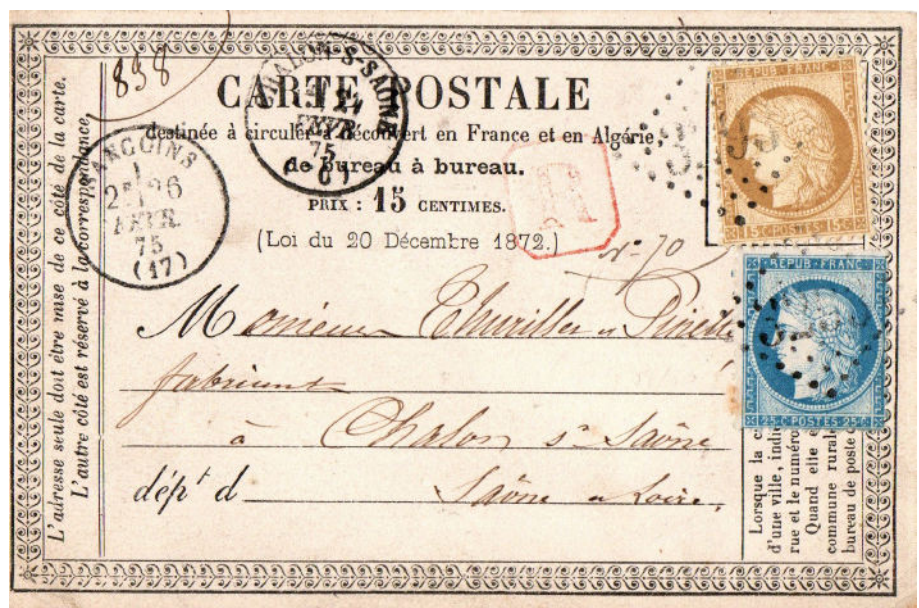
Figure 6 (above)
Registered local card from Rouen to Rouen.
27 January 1878
Franked 35c
Returned to sender
Marked "Parti sans adresse"



Figure 7 (left)
Registered office-to-office card from Rouen (Seine-Inférieure) to Firmi (Aveyron)
20 February 1877
Franked 40c
Returned to sender
Marked (on back) "Refusé"

Figure 8
Registered card from Sancoins (Cher) to Châlons-sur-Marne (Saône-et-Loire)
26 February 1875
Franked 40c

Announcement of a change of date of a board meeting and 35c cheaper than sending by letter



Taxation of cards

Postcards were considered as being a separate category of mail and not be confused with printed matter for the purposes of taxation. The rates of taxation most likely to be seen are 5c, 15c, 20c, 25c, 30c and 40c.

The tariff in force in 1873.

The unpaid letter rate was 40c and any unpaid card would be taxed at that rate. The regulations stipulate that cards be sold franked so examples of unpaid cards are comparatively scarce.

However, the *Avis Ministériel* of 26.10.1875 amends this by retaining the 40c unpaid rate for office-to-office cards and introducing 25c for local unpaid items (Figure 9).

The two normal postage rates are 10c and 15c and taxation arises where cards are franked 10c for a local delivery but are addressed to a location under a different post office. The shortfall of 5c is taxed at triple deficiency, therefore 15c (Figure 10).

Redirection of locally paid mail to a new destination outside of the post office circumscription required a payment of 5c. If this was redirected at the post office unpaid then the recipient would be taxed 5c (Figure 11).

Cards with samples affixed lost the right to a reduced rate and were taxed as unpaid letters, again reduced by the value of the franking, thus 25c or 30c (Figures 12a and 12b).



Figure 9

Unpaid card placed in the moveable box of a "voiture d'entrepreneur" operating between Aups and Draguignan (Var) and addressed to Annonay (Ardèche).

7 July 1876

Cleared by the Draguignan office which applied the BM mark.

Taxed 40c by the Annonay office being the unpaid letter rate (tariff of 1.1.1876) (ex Pothion)



Figure 10

Lille (Nord) to Armentières (Nord)
Insufficient postage for a card sent nationally (10c instead of 15c)

Taxed triple deficiency of 15c.

3 February 1877

Marked "Affranchissement insuffisant" in red. Locally made "15c" handstamp applied at Lille which is unique to this office

Figure 11

Redirection of a locally paid card from rue Bonaparte, Paris to a Paris address, redirected, (postman's mark) to St Sever, (Calvados).

Marked "Affranchissement insuffisant" by the Passy 2 office and taxed 5c to make up the office-to-office rate of 15c

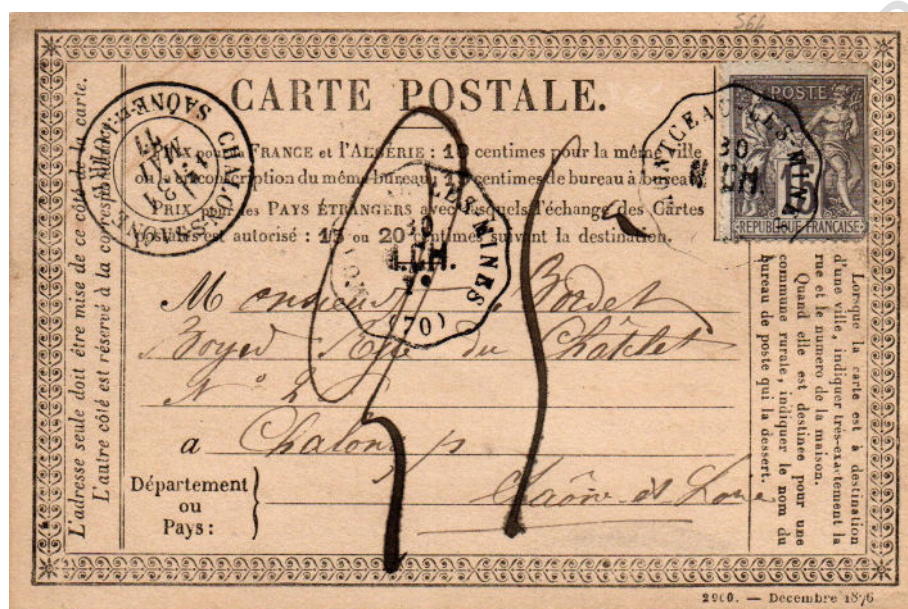
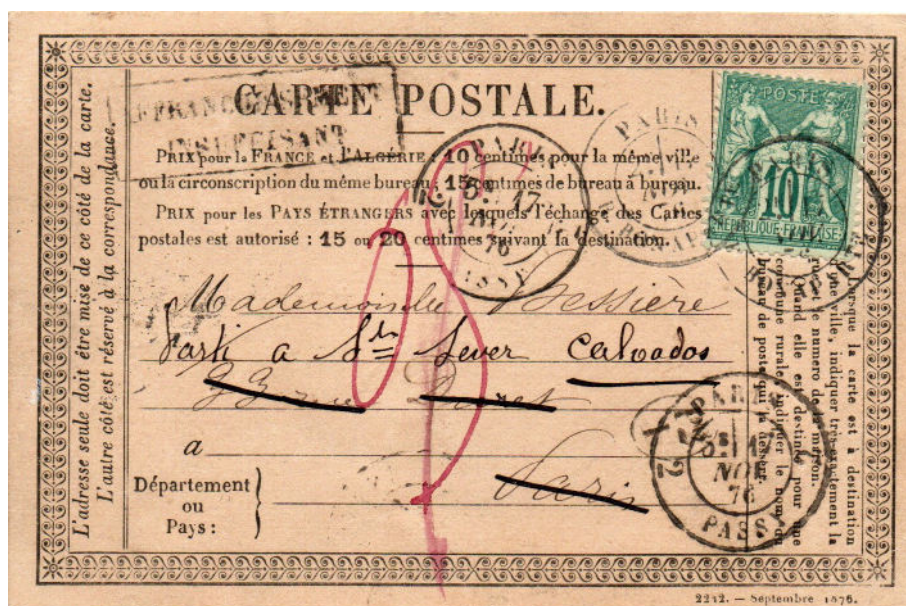


Figure 12a

Taxed as an unpaid letter because a sample of material was attached.

30 May 1877

Posted at Montceau-les-Mines on the Moulins to Chagny convoyeur, addressed to Châlons-sur-Saône.

Franked 15c for the office-to-office rate

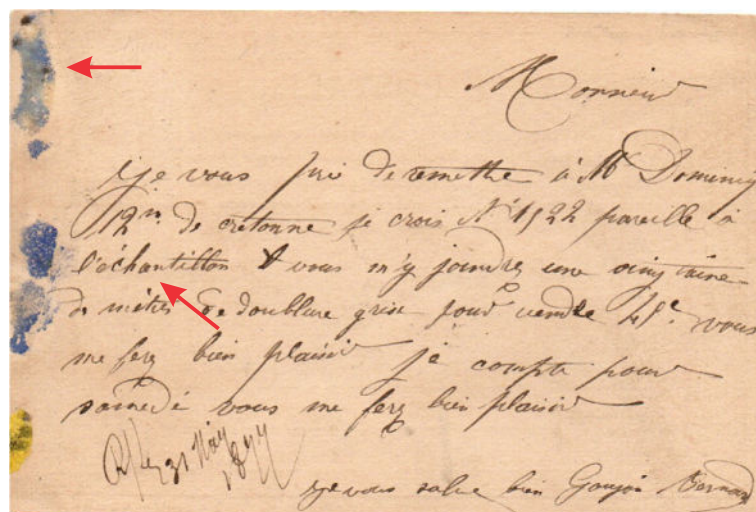
Taxed unpaid letter rate 40c less 15c paid = 25c

Figure 12b

Reverse of card with traces of material.

« Je vous prie de remettre à Mr Dominique 12 mètres de cretonne.... pareille à l'échantillon »

"Kindly forward to Mr Dominique 12 metres of cretonne..... like the sample"



Tariff of 1 May 1878

Introduction of unified rates. The postcard rate was now a standard 10c and the unpaid letter rate was 30c.

There was no further need for redirection charges. The taxation on samples attached to the cards was now reduced to 20c, ie 30c less the 10c paid (Figures 13a and 13b).



Figure 13a

Taxed as an unpaid letter because of the sample of cloth attached

Le Mans (Sarthe) to Rouen (Seine-Inférieure)

10 June 1878

Taxed 20c. Unpaid letter rate 30c less 10c paid = 20c

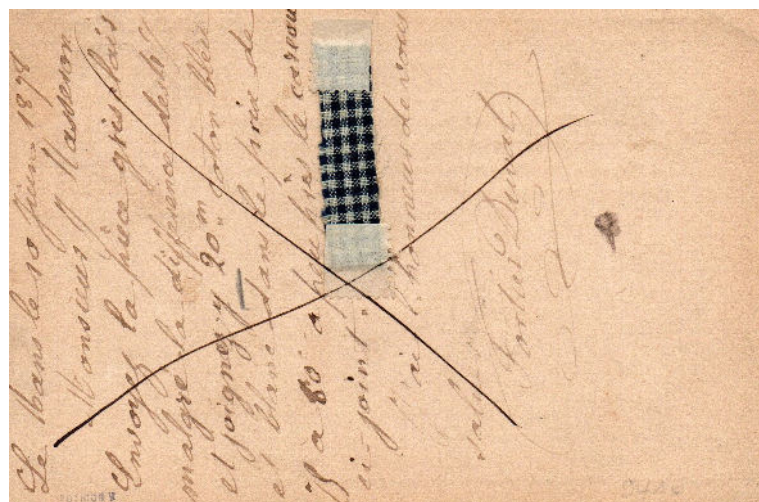


Figure 13b

«et joignez 20 mètres coton bleu.....à peu près le carreau ci joint... »
 « and add 20 metres of blue cotton like the attached swatch »

Secrecy

As the card is sent out open to view there is the question of secrecy. In the same way as post office officials were forbidden to open letters, (this had to be done by the *Rebuts* – the Dead Letter Office), they were also not allowed to look at the back of the cards. This is enshrined in the Decree of August 1790 and non-observance constituted a breach of the post office employees' oath. Given the nature of the commercial messages this did not really present any risk. In some cases, this was different for privately sent cards where legal complications had arisen (*Bulletin Mensuel* 46, *Instruction* 80, 1873).

The advantages of cheaper rates.

It can be seen that the saving is substantial up until 1 May 1878 and then less so. The main area of saving is the 10c on the use of territorial cards and a further 25c if registration is used.

In the table on the next page statistics are shown for the years 1873 to 1880 of the volume of letters and cards in circulation (source: A. Belloc: '*Les Postes Françaises 1886*'). The fears expressed by some as to the potential loss to the Treasury in introducing the cards was not justified given the incremental annual increase in the overall circulation of mail. From 1874,

Tariff of 1873	Letters	Postcards	Saving
Office-to-office	25c	15c	10c
Paris/Paris and Local	15c	10c	5c
Registration	50c	25c	25c
Tariff of 1 May 1878			
Letters	15c	10c	5c
Registration to 15.1.1879	50c	25c	25c
Registration from 16.1.1879	25c	25c	0

the number of cards increased steadily, reaching 9.8 % of the letters in circulation in 1877. It is not possible to work out what percentage of the cards were business orientated but the reduction of postage rates on 1 May 1878 will have made them less advantageous and seems likely to have been a

contributing factor to the percentage fall in the volume of cards in circulation from 1878 onwards. For the purpose of this study, and from the volume of material seen by the author, the assumption can be made that a sizeable percentage of precursor cards were business orientated.

Comparison of volume of postcards and letters

Year	Letters (000)	Cards (000)	%
1873	285350	16451	5.6
1874	291820	15847	5.4
1875	304865	20534	6.7
1876	310661	26004	8.1
1877	318659	30909	9.8
1878	355454	29567	8.3
1879	403853	26500	6.6
1880	438674	27571	6.2

How the Post Office adapted to commercial usage of the cards

The initial regulations controlling the use of the cards was quite clear. There was nothing to be written on the front of the card except for the name and address of the recipient and nothing was to be attached to the card. This meant that the details of the sender had to be given on the back of the card, using up valuable space for the message. This also created a problem for the Post Office where they needed the address of the sender - with returned mail, for example. Technically, any

breach of these requirements would render the card liable for postage at the letter rate. (Unpaid letter rate less the value of the postage stamp affixed.)

Some commercial cards began to appear with the details of the sender applied on the front by means of a rubber stamp but representations to the Postal Administration complained that certain offices had taxed the cards, treating them as unpaid letters in accordance with the tariff and instruction of



Figure 14

Use of sender's rubber stamp on the front of the card 16 September 1873
 Limoges (Haute-Vienne) to Roanne (Loire). Transit: Paris-Clermont TPO: 17 September.
 Received at Roanne: 17 September. Franked 25c for the office-to-office rate

20 December 1872 and para 3 of Article 221 of the *Instruction Générale*. The general thought process was that if businesses could put this information on the front of their envelopes, why not on postcards too. However, *Bulletin Mensuel No. 88* of July 1876 cleared this up once and for all confirming that the details of the sender could be added on the front provided that it did not interfere with the name and address of the recipient. This was seen as being a useful aid to the Post Office in assisting with redirections and was therefore of use not only to the sender but also to the Post Office. They made the point that the terms of the original *Instruction* of 20 December 1872

applied to other extraneous detail that could be added to the front of the card and did not apply to the name and address of the sender (Figure 14).

Even after July 1876 there remained, within the Post Office, a certain degree of confusion as to what was or was not allowed. Figure 15 shows a card dated 25 September 1876 posted at Paris-2 rue Milton, addressed to Nice and correctly franked 15c and yet it is marked *Affr; Insuff / P3* by the rue Milton office because the sender's handstamp just covered a part of the address. The distributing office considered this acceptable and did not tax the card.



Figure 15

A correctly paid card taxed by the sending office because the sender's stamp encroached on the address.

Taxation ignored by the distributing office.

26 September 1876

Paris, rue Milton to Nice (Alpes-Maritimes).

Franked 15c.

Office-to-office rate



Figure 16

Early use of a label on 14 July 1873.

by Tréanton Ainé, factors of Landivisiau (Finistère) on a card posted at Landivisiau for St Brieuc (Côtes-du-Nord)

The original instructions (*Instruction 72*) contained in *Bulletin Mensuel 46* of January 1873 called for cards to be not only stamped by the receiving and distributing offices but also by offices through which they passed in transit. The reality was that the presence of multiple stamps often obscured the details of the addressee and led to confusion. The *Instruction 116* of February 1874 restricted the application of cancellers and date stamps to the receiving and distributing offices but allowed marks relating to missents and redirections. **Figure 14** is a good example of this as it included the TPO (ambulant) stamp *Paris à Clermont*. The presence of this and the sender's own handstamp left little room for the distributing office (Roanne) who placed their stamp on the address.

From the start it was almost inevitable that commercial businesses would attach their own name, profession and address labels to the front of the cards. After all, it was something they could do on letters so why not on cards? It did not become absolutely clear that they could until July 1876 but the practice was tolerated by many of the post offices although there were instances where cards were taxed.

Bulletin Mensuel No. 88 of July 1876 also included the wording “*etiquettes*”, or labels, that could be stuck on to the cards with the details of the sender, profession and his address. The concept of actually attaching something to the card does, at first sight, appear to conflict with the stricture of disallowing anything of a personal or commercial nature such as samples that if attached to the card would forfeit the benefit of the reduced card rate and would be treated as an unpaid letter less the value of the franking, but this was acceptable. From this date on, the number of businesses applying these labels increased considerably. From a purely aesthetic point of view the labels are often attractive and add to the interest of the card (**Figures 16-18**).

The second part of this article will consider “*Repiquage*”, (the separate printing on the back of the cards by the user), privately printed cards and “*cartes annonces*”, produced by advertising agencies.



Figure 17
Label used on 14 October
1878 by Mercerie et
Bonneterie en Gros /
Guibert Dufour, St Amand,
(Cher) posted at St Amand
for Paris

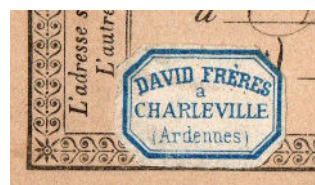


Figure 18

A selection of the considerable
variety of size, design and
colour of labels used



The 1944 Liberation stamps of Montreuil-Bellay

Mick Bister

“A stirring issue when Montreuil-Bellay was still healing its wounds after the ruthless repression of the SS, the explosion of ammunition trains bombed by the RAF and the hard battle led by the FFI.”

Pierre Simon, *‘Les timbres de la Libération sortent de l’ombre’*, Timbroscopie, date unknown

Part 1: The Local *Maquis* Overprints

I enjoyed reading Les Konzon’s article ‘Liberating France from Fascism, the postage stamp way’ published in the April edition of the Journal (N° 298) and it is so sad that Les did not survive to see it published. In his article Les succeeded in covering both a lot of ground and a large number of stamp issues including one facet which has always fascinated me, the so-called Liberation overprints. I am particularly drawn to the overprints applied to the 1F50 Pétain (YT 517) and I was delighted to see that Les not only illustrated several examples of this value but made reference to some of most infamous Liberation overprints, those of Montreuil-Bellay.

The Liberation of Montreuil-Bellay

Montreuil-Bellay is a small town in the *département* of Maine-et-Loire (not Creuse as stated in the Les Konzon’s article) located near the meeting point of two other *départements* (Deux-Sèvres and Vienne). It was a major Resistance centre right up to the end of the war and boasted one of the only airfields still intact and operational in a location that was favourable for Lysanders delivering or recovering agents and for the parachuting of weapons flown in from Britain.

Angers, the *préfecture* of Maine-et-Loire, was liberated by General Patton’s Third Army, XX Corps on 10 August. The population of Saumur, 50 kilometres upstream on the Loire, had hoped to see the American troops parade through their city soon after but the Allies reserved their forces for their advance towards Chartres and Paris leaving the *Forces Françaises de l’Intérieur* (the *Maquis*) to continue the battle¹. On 25 August, the liberation of Paris was announced whereupon Hitler gave the order to his troops to withdraw from the Loire and other parts of western France (Figure 1). The Germans detonated several bridges before retreating along the left bank of the Loire using cars, carts, bicycles and anything else they could steal with wheels on. The 135th Infantry Regiment of the FFI crossed over the river in small boats from the right bank and Saumur was eventually liberated on Wednesday, August 30.

The Germans continued their rapid flight eastwards through Maine-et-Loire into Touraine via, inter alia, Doué-la-Fontaine (liberated on or around 31 August²) and Montreuil-Bellay (liberated on 1 September).

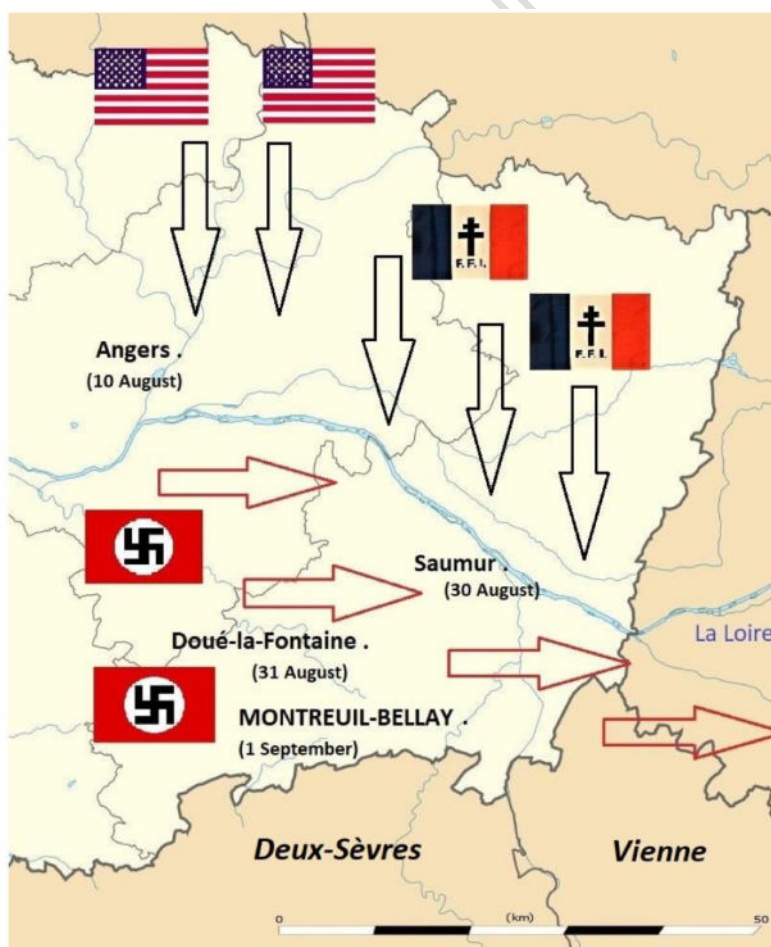


Figure 1
The eastern half of the *département* of
Maine-et-Loire
showing the retreat of German troops
and the dates of liberation

¹ “According to General Patton, the rapid advance of his army through France would have been impossible without the fighting aid of the FFI. General Patch estimated that from the time of the Mediterranean landings to the arrival of U.S. troops at Dijon, the help given to the operations by the FFI was equivalent to four full divisions”. *‘French Forces of the Interior’*, Military Wiki, Fandom

² A community was not officially ‘liberated’ until a new administration had been established by the liberating forces. In the case of Doué-la-Fontaine, there appears to have been some tension between the two parties as reported by the *sous-préfet* of Saumur on 15 September 1944. “The local leader of the FFI reported that he had taken charge of the Resistance in Doué, during the liberation of this town in order to avoid disorder. In fact, his initiatives do not appear to have been very successful. It seems that he wanted to personally replace the local authorities during the first days of the Liberation and that this attitude created a strained relationship between the FFI and the municipality.” Marc Bergère, *‘Une société en épuración’*

The Philatelic Response

On 19 August 1944, just nine days after the liberation of Angers, the local Regional Commissioner of the Republic³ published, in the *Bulletin Officiel*, an order designated as Decree CR N°27 and dated 15 August 1944 which would raise the spirits of the region's patriotic population especially the philatelists of Montreuil-Bellay.

The decree⁴ stipulated that:

“1 – The Head Postmaster of each of the *départements* of the Region must, upon receipt of this order, ensure that the RF overprint is applied to all postage stamps in stock both at the main and sub-post offices.

2 – The *Préfets* of the *départements* of Maine-et-Loire, Loire Inférieure, Indre-et-Loire, Mayenne, and Sarthe are responsible for the implementation of this order.”

The decree was signed simply ‘*Jacquier*’, the code name used by Michel Debré (Figure 2) when he was a member of the ‘*Ceux de la Résistance*’ network. Michel Debré later served as Prime Minister under de Gaulle from 8 January 1959 to 14 April 1962.



Figure 2
Michel Debré
Code name: ‘*Jacquier*’

No sooner had Montreuil-Bellay been liberated, than the mayor, Louis Trouillard, called together the members of the local Resistance committee and issued an open response to the Regional Commissioner's instruction as follows:

“The Mayor of Montreuil-Bellay approves the decision made this morning of 2 September by the Resistance committee of Montreuil-Bellay in accordance with the decree CR N°27 published in the *Bulletin Officiel* by the *Commissariat de la République* on Saturday 19 August concerning the RF overprint, signed *Jacquier*, Commissioner of the Republic. He requests that the RF patriotic overprint on the stamps issued by the illegal government of Vichy be dedicated to the Liberation of Montreuil-Bellay”

The document is signed by Louis Trouillard and stamped with his mayoral cachet.

Before we look at the overprints, we need to familiarise ourselves with some of the other players in the operation.

The Main Protagonists in Montreuil-Bellay

Louis Trouillard had succeeded Gaston Amy (Figure 3) as Mayor of Montreuil-Bellay and both had been involved with the local Resistance. Gaston Amy was the owner of a dairy and it was the deputy director of the local camp for the incarceration of nomads, a camp to which Amy supplied cheese, who offered him the opportunity to become involved in the network. Amy was also “*un grand collectionneur de timbres*”.



Figure 3

Gaston Amy and his wife, Félicie, before the outbreak of World War 2

Gaston Amy was not keen on getting in on the action, in part because of a condition (a stomach ulcer) which had forced him to resign from his responsibilities at the town hall. His covert role was limited to providing petrol to the Resistance which, because of his trade, was not closely monitored by the Germans. But, alongside his comrades, Amy was eventually arrested on the night of October 8/9, 1943, tortured and then deported. He died in Buchenwald, near Weimar, on March 11, 1944.⁵

Gaston Amy had a son-in-law called Georges Vassileff⁶ who was a printer and active stamp dealer. He worked from home rather than in commercial premises, firstly in Montreuil-Bellay, then in Saumur and finally in the capital. He was also a creative opportunist and first made himself known during the philatelic exhibition held in Saumur, August 1943, when he marketed sheets of stamps of the 70c Pétain, with the perforation ‘EXP.P.S.’ (Maury 511g). In 1949, he published a limited-edition album ‘*Centenaire du Timbre-Poste Français*’ containing his own creation of documents, essays and artwork. Because of his dubious philatelic activities, Vassileff was not held in high esteem by his fellow dealers. Nevertheless, in 1966, Vassileff, with Dr Duvergey and Pierre Mayer (publisher and specialist dealer in Liberation overprints), was one of the founders of the *Association des Collectionneurs de Timbres de la Libération*⁷.

Les Konzon claimed that “the inspiration for ‘*surcharges patriotiques*’ came from M. Vassilev (*sic*)”. This statement

³ Commissioners of the Republic and Regional Commissioners of the Republic were government officials appointed as representatives of Charles de Gaulle by the Provisional Government of the French Republic between 1944 and 1946. They held a rank equivalent to that of minister, were charged with re-establishing Republican legality and freedoms after the Liberation of France and answered only to de Gaulle. Most of them originated from the FFI.

⁴ Franck Dénéchère, ‘*Timbres de la Libération du Maine et Loire*’, April 2022. The actual decrees can be viewed on the following website: timbrlib49.e-monsite.com/pages/montreuil-bellay-proces-verbal

⁵ Alain Camelin, ‘*Présentation de quelques timbres et lettres: Les timbres de la Libération: Montreuil-Bellay*’ November 2009

⁶ Not ‘Vassilev’ as spelt in ‘*Le Patrimoine du Timbre-Poste Français*’ and cited by Les Konzon.

⁷ Christian Cense, ‘*Georges Vassileff: imprimeur, marchand de timbres, arnaqueur philatélique.. Vous connaissez?*’ October 2020 and Franck Dénéchère, ‘*Timbres de la Libération du Maine-et-Loire*’, April 2022



Figure 4
Liberation issues from, left to right, Ste Foy-la-Grande (Gironde), Cherbourg (Manche), Aigurande (Indre) and Tours (Indre-et-Loire)

unfortunately stemmed from a misunderstanding of the text in *'Le Patrimoine du Timbre-Poste Français'* edited by J-F Brun and published in 1999 which I will return to in Part 2. Suffice it to say that the initial concept of Liberation overprints had nothing to do with Vassileff and that they appeared on the stamps of France well before the liberation of Montreuil-Bellay. The earliest overprint recorded is that of Ste Foy-la-Grande which was issued on 12 June; other examples that predate Montreuil-Bellay include Cherbourg (20 July), Aigurande (18 August) and Tours (1 September) (Figure 4).

Such was the combined patriotic and philatelic enthusiasm of Louis Trouillard and Georges Vassileff that they and the Resistance committee of Montreuil-Bellay embarked on a

mission which has provided collectors with a wide selection of material to collect and study. Six different Liberation overprints were designed and applied predominantly to the Pétain and Mercury issues and to a selection of *Gerbes* tax stamps. Not all the overprints were applied to all the values but the 2021 edition of Martine Mayer's catalogue *'Timbres de la Libération'* lists sixty issues with overprints. Also listed are 'unissued' varieties including overprints on German Hitler Heads of which 16 different values are recorded. For this article though, I will focus on only the 1F50 Pétain value and the five applications as follows: the local *Maquis* overprint, the *département* RF overprint, the *garantie d'authenticité*, the patriotic texts and the *Trafic Clandestin Aérien* overprint (Figure 5).

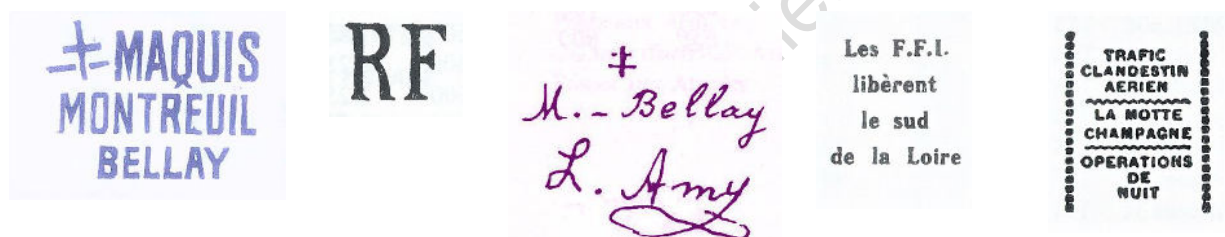


Figure 5 (enlarged)
From left to right: the local *Maquis* overprint, the *département* RF overprint, the *garantie d'authenticité*, the patriotic text and the *Trafic Clandestin Aérien* overprint

The Local *Maquis* Overprint in violet

On 2 September 1944, the mayor, Louis Trouillard, also issued a statement announcing an overprinted stamp commemorating the liberation of Montreuil-Bellay by the *Maquis*. It was a comprehensive document explaining the rationale behind the issue, the postal service it would be used

for, the manufacture of the handstamp and details of the stamp's availability (Figure 6). However, such was the mayor's impatience that this was not to be a stamp overprinted RF as stipulated earlier but instead a hastily prepared 'provisional'. The text reads as follows:

"The Mayor of Montreuil-Bellay advises that, with the Postal Service having been suspended for personal correspondence until further notice, an alternative provisional mail delivery service is currently in operation. Fearless volunteers from the *Maquis* (risking their own lives as the roads are mined) are taking on the responsibility of carrying private letters to Méron, Brossay, St Just, Fosse-Bellay, Courchamps, Le Puy-Notre-Dame, Cizay-la-Madeleine and Le Vaudelenay.

"Omitted from the itinerary are the likes of Douvy and Epieds which are not yet liberated. In order not to deprive the Treasury, despite the private nature of this mail service, the letters must be franked as usual with a 1F50 postage stamp.

"With our fellow countrymen no longer tolerating, since yesterday - the day of our liberation - stamps bearing Pétain's image, a makeshift but acceptable overprint has been produced from reclaimed characters cut from several old rubber handstamps to compose the words MAQUIS DE MONTREUIL-BELLAY and mounted on a piece of wood. To cancel these stamps, the Town Hall cachet will fulfil the role of a postmark.

"3000 (three thousand) copies of the 1F50 Pétain stamp have been overprinted in this way and are on sale at the Montreuil-Bellay dairy, the owner of which, Gaston Amy, Mayor of this town, and active leader of the Resistance was deported to Germany and died, at the age of 63, in the Weimar camp. He was a fierce opponent of the Vichy regime.

After use, the handstamp was destroyed."



Montreuil-Bellay, le 2 septembre 1944

Le Maire de Montreuil-Bellay

fait savoir que le Service Postal concernant la correspondance privée étant suspendue jusqu'à nouvel ordre, un autre service provisoire fonctionne actuellement pour l'acheminement du courrier. De courageux volontaires du maquis se chargent (au risque de leur vie, les routes sont minées) de transporter les lettres privées à destination de : Méron, Brossay, St Just, Fosse-Bellay, Courchamps, Le Puy-Notre-Dame, Cizay-la-Madeleine, et le Vaudelenay.

Sont écartées du circuit les communes de Dôuvy et Epieds, pas encore libérées. Pour ne pas porter préjudice au Trésor, malgré le caractère privé de cet transport de missives, les lettres doivent être affranchies comme d'habitude au timbre-poste de 1.50

Les patriotes ne tolérant plus, depuis hier, date de notre libération, les timbres avec l'effigie de Pétain, une surcharge de fortune, composée de caractères récupérés en coupant plusieurs vieux cachets-caoutchouc, et le tout monté sur un bout de bois, afin de composer tant bien que mal le texte : "MAQUIS DE MONTREUIL-BELLAY". Pour annuler ces timbres le cachet de la Mairie remplira ce mode à oblitérer.

3000 (trois mille) timbres à 1/50 Pétain furent ainsi surchargés et sont distribués par la Laiterie de Montreuil-Bellay, dont le propriétaire, Gaston Amy, Maire de la Ville, Chef actif de la Résistance déporté politique en Allemagne et mort au camp de Weimar à l'âge de 63 ans, fut un adversaire acharné du régime de Vichy. Après usage, le cachet fut détruit.

Le Maire,



Spécimens des 3 cachets de la Mairie



MAQUIS
MONTREUIL
BELLAY

Figure 6 (reduced)

Mayoral announcement of the first Liberation issue of Montreuil-Bellay, 2 September 1944

The announcement was signed by Louis Trouillard and a copy of the 1F50 Pétain, overprinted in violet with the words MAQUIS MONTREUIL-BELLAY and the Cross of Lorraine, was affixed in the bottom left-hand corner. The word 'DE' quoted in the statement had been omitted from the overprint due, no doubt, to the lack of space. The stamp was tied by two different examples of the mayoral cachet and a further impression of the overprint was applied to the bottom of the page. On the following day, a number of covers addressed to the villages being served by the *Maquis* postal service were franked with the overprinted 1F50 Pétain and 'cancelled' by the mayoral cachet using the same

violet ink (Figure 7). The mail was then delivered to the villages listed in the announcement (Figure 8).

Only a few stamps were overprinted at the time of the initial announcement and they were possibly from stock that was already held in the town hall.

The Local 'Maquis' Overprint in blue

At a later date, the full overprinting of the designated 3,000 stamps was undertaken but we do not know exactly when, where or by whom. Certainly, the concept had all the hallmarks of Georges Vassileff and his name is invariably associated with its realisation but it may have taken more



Figure 7

Maquis cover delivered to St Just approximately nine kilometres north-west of Montreuil-Bellay. Note that the overprint and the mayoral cachet have been applied in the same violet ink.

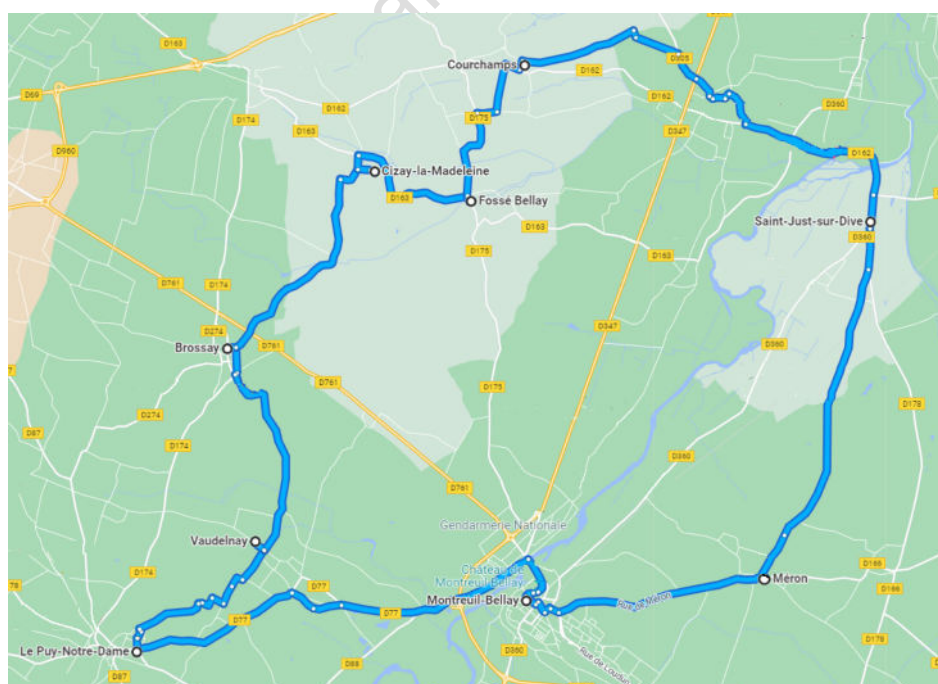


Figure 8

Map showing Montreuil-Bellay and the location of the eight communities served by the *Maquis* delivery. The 40 km circuit in blue is a hypothesis; there are alternative routes that could have been taken.

than one person to have individually overprinted 3,000 stamps with such a rudimentary handstamp. Maybe a team from the town hall or the Resistance committee, who knows? What is certain is that a different ink was used because, other than the few overprinted earlier at the town hall in violet, all the remaining stamps were overprinted in blue. The corner block shown in **Figure 9** is from a *feuille de remplacement* or replacement sheet. The sheet number 43981 has been deleted and replaced by another number beginning 185 which would have been the number of the damaged sheet it replaced. The overprint in blue has also been seen applied to booklet printings.

A purple ink though was used for the *garantie d'authenticité*, a handstamp comprising the Cross of Lorraine and the

signature of Gaston Amy's widow which was applied to the gummed side of each stamp (**Figure 10**) to verify its authenticity. According to Martine Mayer, the signature was only applied to stamps overprinted before the 9 September.⁸

None of the sources I have referred to quotes a date of issue for the blue overprint⁹ although we do know that the stamps were sold from the dairy of the late Gaston Amy. Most of the covers I have encountered are unaddressed, from the same standard stock of envelopes and seemingly cancelled by favour with a Montreuil-Bellay postmark dated between 12 and 15 September (**Figure 11**). Was the date stamp available at the dairy or was a 'philatelic counter' opened at the post office? I am still searching for an answer.



Figure 9

Block of the 1F50 Pétain with the *Maquis* overprint applied in blue and with a *numéro de remplacement*.



Figure 10

Reverse of the block showing the permeated blue ink from the overprint and the *garantie d'authenticité*, applied on the gummed side

Figure 11
Cover with 1F50 Pétain and blue *Maquis* overprint repeated in the gutter margin, cancelled 12 September 1944

⁸ Martine Mayer, *Timbres de la Libération* 12th Edition, 2012, Page 54

⁹ Although Martine Mayer lists only the blue overprint in her catalogue, in private correspondence (4 May 2022), she cites the existence of three colours, "bleu, bleu-violet ou violet".

Afterword on Gaston Amy

As reported earlier, Gaston Amy operated a dairy which was located just outside Montreuil-Bellay in the *lieu-dit* of Bourgneuf-sur-Pagé. Here he produced a local Camembert cheese of some renown which he marketed under such labels as *Royal-Amy*, *P'tit Amy* and *Le Bon Amy*. We also

know he was a keen stamp collector and therefore it is not surprising to discover that he combined his interests in philately and cheese production by commissioning personal vignettes to adorn his stationery such as this 1940 invoice below (Figure 12).

The image shows a reduced invoice from Laiterie Gaston Amy, dated 27 February 1940, addressed to Monsieur Pannetier. The invoice includes a table of items and a total amount of 509.05. To the right is an enlarged Camembert 'Royal-Amy' vignette, which is a circular logo with text and a central emblem.

	Gare	RIOM (P. de D.)	Doit
2 Caisses camemberts 120 à		4.20	504. "
2 Caisses à rendre			
Taxe 1%			5.05
			509. 05

Paielement en votre versement à mon compte chèques postaux à réception.

Figure 12

Reduced *Laiterie Gaston Amy* invoice and enlarged Camembert "Royal-Amy" vignette.

By now we are familiar with the signature of his widow, Félicie, which endorsed the Liberation overprints of Montreuil-Bellay. On the 1935 money order below, we see

Gaston's signature alongside the fiscal stamps in the bottom right-hand corner (Figure 13).

The image shows a reduced money order from Gaston Amy, dated 31 January 1935, for 218.050 francs. The document includes various stamps, including a large red 'CREDIT LYONNAIS' stamp and several smaller fiscal stamps. An enlarged copy of Gaston Amy's signature is shown in the bottom left corner.

Montreuil-Bellay, le 31 JANV 1935 B. P. F. 1.577.40

Au quinze sept 1935 218.050

Mandat à l'Ordre de CREDIT LYONNAIS la Somme de

Valeur reçue en Marchandises

A Montieur Debrasse

à Saint Michel et Orge (Seine-et-Oise)

Sans Frais - Motif du Refus.

Figure 13 (Reduced)

Laiterie Gaston Amy money order and enlarged copy of Gaston Amy's signature

Emile Dupuis – A War Artist

Dahlia R Harrison

Emile Dupuis was born in Orléans on 21 February 1877 to Charles Emile Dupuis, plasterer, and Anne Barthélémy at 3 bis rue Porte-Saint-Jean. Educated at the Municipal School, from the year 1891-1892 he took courses in drawing, architecture, modelling and stone-cutting. His work was rewarded with prizes distributed by the school in 1893, 1894 and 1895.



1. *La Bassée*, December 1914

The Battle of La Bassée, in the *département* of Nord, 10 October to 2 November 1914 was inconclusive.

2. *Lombaertcyde*, November 1914.

Now known as Lombardsijde or Lombartzyde, it is a district in the Belgian municipality of Middelkerke near Nieuwpoort in the province of West Flanders.

Emile Dupuis was exempted from military service in 1897 due to a deformity of his left foot. The census enumerator specified it as a “retraction of the foot following an infantile paralysis.” Dupuis worked as a designer-lithographer. In 1901 he left Orléans to work in Auguste Bénard’s studio so he settled in Liège, Belgium, and died there on 30 September 1958.

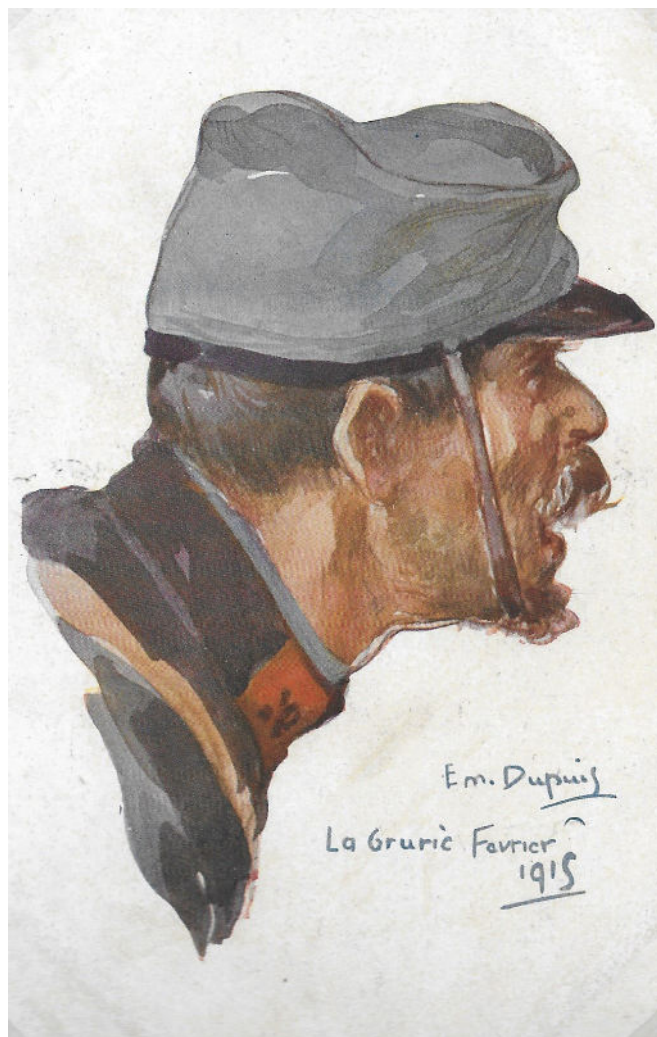
During the First World War Emile Dupuis produced illustrations for five different series of postcards, mainly in sets of twelve: *Nos Poilus* – soldiers at the front; *Nos Alliés* – the French Allies; *Leurs Caboches* – enemy soldiers of France; *Les Neutres* – satirical cards mocking the stance of neutral countries; and *Les Femmes Héroïques* – women of allied countries.

The postcards illustrated are all from the set of twelve entitled *Nos Poilus* – soldiers at the front, signed by the artist Emile Dupuis. All have *Carte Postale* and ‘Visé Paris published by Color Paris’ on the reverse and some are postally used in the UK between 1914 and 1917. They are displayed as per the numbers on the back of each card.



3. *En Argonne*, 1915.

The Forest of Argonne is a long strip of mountainous and wild woodland in north-eastern France, where numerous battles took place. The Second Battle of Champagne (25 September to 6 November 1915) was a German victory.



4. *La Gruerie*, February 1915. (a misspelling of La Gruerie)

The *Ossuaire de la Gruerie*, located opposite the Saint-Thomas-en-Argonne national war cemetery, near Vienne-le-Château, was created in 1923 after the remains of approximately 10,000 unknown soldiers were discovered after the war when the area around La Biesme and the woods of La Gruerie were cleared.



5. *Dans les Flandres*, November 1914.

The French lost at least 50,000 at Ypres.

6. Arras, February 1915.

On May 9, the Bayonne Legion, a French Foreign Legion infantry unit consisting of French officers and Polish volunteers, attacked the Vimy Ridge, located some ten kilometres from Arras. They succeeded in capturing German trenches, but with very heavy losses. Only 50 soldiers survived, with all officers, including the Legion's commander, Major Osmonde, dying in the battle.



7. Villers-Cotterêts, 6 December 1914.

The Battle of Villers-Cotterêts was a fierce rearguard action fought by English and Irish brigades against the German III Corps in the Forest of Retz, to the north of Villers-Cotterêts, leading to the retreat of the British with substantial casualties on both sides.



8. Hartmans Kopfweiler, Alsace January 1915.

The summit of Hartmannswillerkopf - known as the 'mountain of death' or the 'man-eater' - was the backdrop for dreadful battles. This promontory stands at 956m in altitude looking out over the plain of Alsace.

On the battlefield, 30,000 French and German men were crushed beneath a storm of steel. On both sides of the trenches, the men fought hard for this strategic observation post. In 1915 alone, the summit changed hands 4 times. The fighting continued throughout the War on this battlefield, torn asunder by shells, gas and flame-throwers.

9. Four de Paris, January 1915.

Le Four de Paris was a village on a road junction in the Argonne Forest. It was destroyed by intense bombardment during the First World War.



10. Bertrix, September 1914.

From August 22, the population of Bertrix in Belgium, known as the Bertrigeois, experienced the backlash of the battle with 2500 wounded being treated at St Charles Hospital, the church, the communal house and the schools. The villages of Ochamps, Jehonville, Assenois, Glaumont and Bertrix were occupied by German troops, resulting in 28 civilians killed and 59 houses burned.



11. Raniscapulo, November 1914.

This is a postcard sent by a father to his son at school: It starts: "Here is one of the French Colonial Troops – probably a Senegalese."

There were 21 battalions of Tirailleurs Sénégalais (BTS) in the French Army in August 1914, all serving in either West Africa or on active service in Morocco. With the outbreak of war, 37 battalions of French, North African and Senegalese infantry were transferred from Morocco to France.



12. Steinbach, January 1915.

Steinbach is to the west of Mulhouse in Alsace.

The storming of Steinbach from 25 December 1914 to 5 January 1915 was a siege that French troops referred to as 'The Hell of Steinbach'. Soldiers wrote about seeing whole streets alight, the heat from the flames burning their cheeks, the smell of noxious odours and of hearing nothing in the evening but crackling flames and collapsing walls. On 7 January 1915, an article published in *The Argus* stated: "Advancing step by step, the French found every lane an ambush, every cottage a fortress. Possession of a wall or a door became the object of furious hand-to-hand fighting."

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Marianne de Muller

Mick Bister

Part 3: the 6 franc issue (YT 1009A)

The ‘distributeur automatique’

The 6F issue is unique inasmuch that it was only issued as a coil stamp. It was an experimental creation designed to accompany the installation of a new type of electrically operated stamp vending machine described as a ‘*distributeur automatique*’. I have tried to obtain further information from the *Musée de la Poste* on how the machine functioned but apparently no details can be found in the archives. Furthermore, the museum does not possess an illustration of the machine. All that I do know is that by the 1950s the previous stamp machines which had been installed before the Second World War were now defunct other than a few in the main Paris offices. These older models had operated mechanically with the action primed by the insertion of the

coins and the dispensation activated by a lever depressed by the customer who then tore off the stamps. The so-called electro-mechanical automatic machine was primed in the same way but upon dispensing the stamps the mechanism guillotined them as singles, pairs or strips according to how the machine had been calibrated. The first of the new machines, installed at Lourdes in 1955 (Figure 1), was calibrated to issue a strip of 5 x 6F stamps upon the insertion of a 20F and 10F coin. In 1956, the same machines were recalibrated to issue a pair of 15F stamps in return for the same coins as described in the previous chapter on the 15F *Marianne de Muller*.



Figure 1

The main post office in Lourdes, illustrated here on a postcard from the early 1960s, is on the corner of the Avenue Général Baron Maransin and the Rue de Langelles and is where the stamps dispensers were possibly sited. It is located less than ten minutes' walk from the entrance to the pilgrimage site.

Further information from members would be appreciated

The die

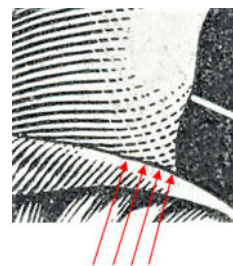
A secondary die was struck from the *poinçon définitif* and re-engraved with a new value but another feature can be detected if we look closely at the die-proof pulled from it (Figure 2).

Whereas in the original die, and hence in the 15F value, four lines of crosshatching emerge from the collar only three emerge in the case of the 6F value. This may have been due to insufficient pressure being applied in the copying process and hence the failure to pick up all the fine lines. An alternative possibility is that damage to the die necessitated some retouching and a line of crosshatching was overlooked. In an article published by Raymond Duxin in *Le Monde des Philatélistes* in May 1955, the engraver, Jules Piel, was reported to have twice encountered defects in the preparation

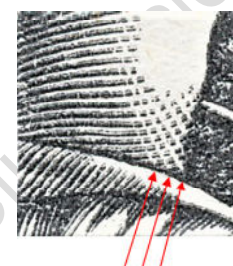
of the original die near the ear and at the base of the neck. If these areas remained weak it would explain the inadequate transfer of detail, or the need to retouch, during the process of making a secondary die.

A number of colour proofs were printed including the six illustrated on the following page with their ink colour reference numbers (Figures 3). In contrast to the 6F die proof, all the colour proofs, the *épreuve de luxe* and the subsequent printings display, to a greater or lesser degree, only two lines of crosshatching emerging from the collar with only a remnant visible of the one on the left. The initials in the captions indicate the name of the ink manufacturer (Lc = Lefranc; Lx = Lorilleux).

¹ De Lizeray, Blanc and Leblanc, 'Timbres de France Vol 7', Bulletin Philatélique du Midi, 1963



Four lines of crosshatching emerge above the collar on the original 15F die



Three lines of crosshatching emerge above the collar on the 6F die

Figure 2
Proof pulled from the 6F secondary die



207 Lx
Orange



434Lx
Deep orange



503Lx
Deep Violet



713 Lc
Blackish-brown

Above © Delcampe



122 Lc
Deep blue



702Lx
Dull plum

Above © Philippe Lanier collection.

Figure 3
The 6F colour proof in Lorilleux ink N° 521, violet-blue
Three lines of crosshatching emerge from the collar but that on the left is barely discernible

Édouard Bonnefous approved the choice of ink number 714 Lc and on 26 May 1955 signed a copy of the colour proof as the *bon à tirer* for printing to proceed (Figure 4).

At this juncture it is worth pointing out that the ink colour attributed to the 6F *Marianne de Muller* varies according to source and author. Jean-Luc Trassaert describes it as 'brun',

Yvert & Tellier as 'brun-orange', Maury as 'rouge-orange' and Stanley Gibbons as 'brown-red'. The *feuille modèle*, however, which records the date of approval, the date of printing and the withdrawal of the stamp (Figure 5) states the ink colour as 'bistre'.



Figure 4

Extract from the *bon à tirer*

© Archives of the Musée de la Poste

Figure 5

Extract from the *feuille modèle*
annotated *Bistre* 714

© Archives of the Musée de la Poste



Printings

To avoid wasting real stamps, coils of test labels were specially printed for use during the vending machine trials. Printed in red, each label displayed the letter H for 'haut' which indicated to the technician the direction in which to feed the coil into the machine (Figure 6). As a result of having been individually engraved onto the electro by hand, each letter H is different.

Production of the 6F coil itself is believed to have started on 7 June 1955; other dates which have been recorded are 17 June (Figure 7) and 26 October 1955. Jean-Luc Trassaert reports seeing a memo from the *Direction Générale des*

Postes stating that the coil would be available in rolls of 1000 and 2000 but there is no evidence to support the existence of the latter. The coils were attached to the central bobbin not by the stamps themselves but by a label in blue similar in design to those used as testing labels (Figure 8).

Two vending machines were installed at Lourdes (possibly also at Vichy) where, from 11 July 1955, the 6F stamp was available in strips of five (Figure 9). Four days later, 'official' first day covers were available on 15 July cancelled at the *Paris Recette Principale*. The P.T.T. was immediately criticised by collectors and dealers for restricting the issue to

Figure 6 (left)
Vending machine
testing coil



Figure 7 (above and right)
Imperf printings and printing date



Figure 8 (above)
Bobbin label attached
to end of coil



Figure 9 (left)
Strip of 5 as dispensed
by machine

Figure 10 (right)
Continuous coil of 11
as sold by dealers



one locality and this was partly rectified when the P.T.T. authorised the sale of complete coils of 1000 at philatelic counters elsewhere in France. However, such provision had been anticipated by an earlier decree dated 25 June 1955 and published in the *Bulletin Officiel des PTT*, whereby a 200F handling charge was added to the purchase which added further to the dealers' resentment. It did mean though that collectors could now purchase from the dealer a continuous strip of 11 stamps which was *de rigueur* among coil collectors (Figure 10).

Eventually a further 500 machines were installed across France one of which was demonstrated on 24 October 1955 in the foyer of the *Ministère des PTT* in Paris

during the *Exposition Internationale d'Art Graphique*. The event was marked by another so-called 'first day cover'.

Note the contrasting shades in Figures 9 and 10. As with the 15F *Marianne de Muller*, the variations in shade were only slight although Yvert & Tellier have in recent years attributed the listing YT1109Ae to the *brun-foncé* printing. The coils were printed on either a standard off-white paper or one treated with an *azurant optique* in order to enhance the brightness.

6,440,000 copies of the stamp were printed and it was finally withdrawn on 7 December 1957 (*Bulletin Officiel des PTT*, September 1957, Page 214) not 15 June as so often misquoted.

Malfunctions

Malfunctions can be expected during both the printing process and the vending machine operation. Shown are examples of a coil join (Figure 11), recto-verso or ink offset (Figure 12) torn perfs (Figure 13), and miscuts (Figure 14).



Figure 11 (far left and above)
The coil repair has been achieved by joining the two separated ends with the aid of a section of the testing label illustrated in Figure 6. The enlargements show the reverse and front respectively



Figure 12 (left)
The offset or recto-verso effect is caused by the transfer of wet ink from the underlying printing on the reel



Figure 13
Stamps have occasionally been encountered with torn perfs suggesting that they came from uncut sheets rather than coils. It has also been reported that a used horizontal strip of three was seen at Philexfrance in 1989 which later sold for 130,000 francs



Figure 14

The postcard to Geneva above has two miscut copies on the right and a mutilated copy on the left caused by a misfeed from the vending machine. The mutilated copy has been ignored in the calculation of the postage with the three remaining 'good' copies paying the 18F Foreign Postcard Rate

Postal usage

Singles or multiples from the strip of five stamps could be used to satisfy a number of tariffs including the following: 6F Foreign Postcard Rate (< 5 words of text), 6F Foreign Printed Matter Rate, 12F Internal Postcard Rate (> 5 words of text), 12F Internal Invoice Rate, 18F Foreign

Postcard Rate (> 5 words of text) and 30F Foreign Letter Rate (Figures 14-19). All these rates operated until 30 June 1957 just two weeks after the official withdrawal of the stamp.

Figure 15

6F Foreign Postcard Rate with fewer than 5 words of added text from Vence to Uccle, Belgium, 27 September 1956



Figure 16

6F Foreign Printed Matter Rate from Paris to London, 14 May 1956

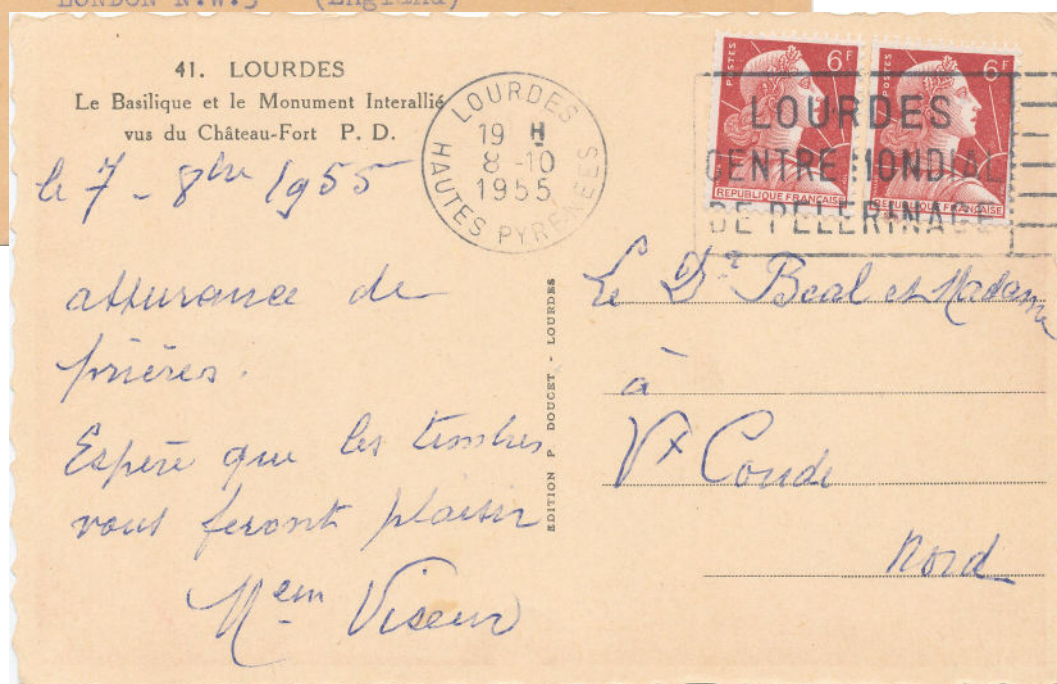
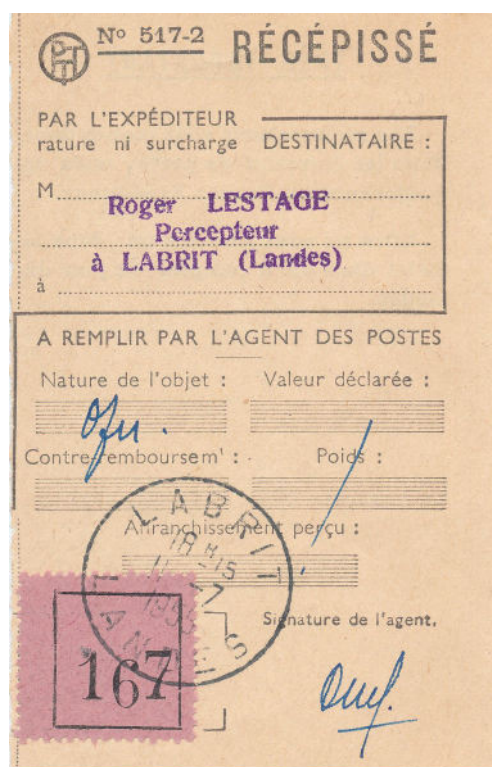
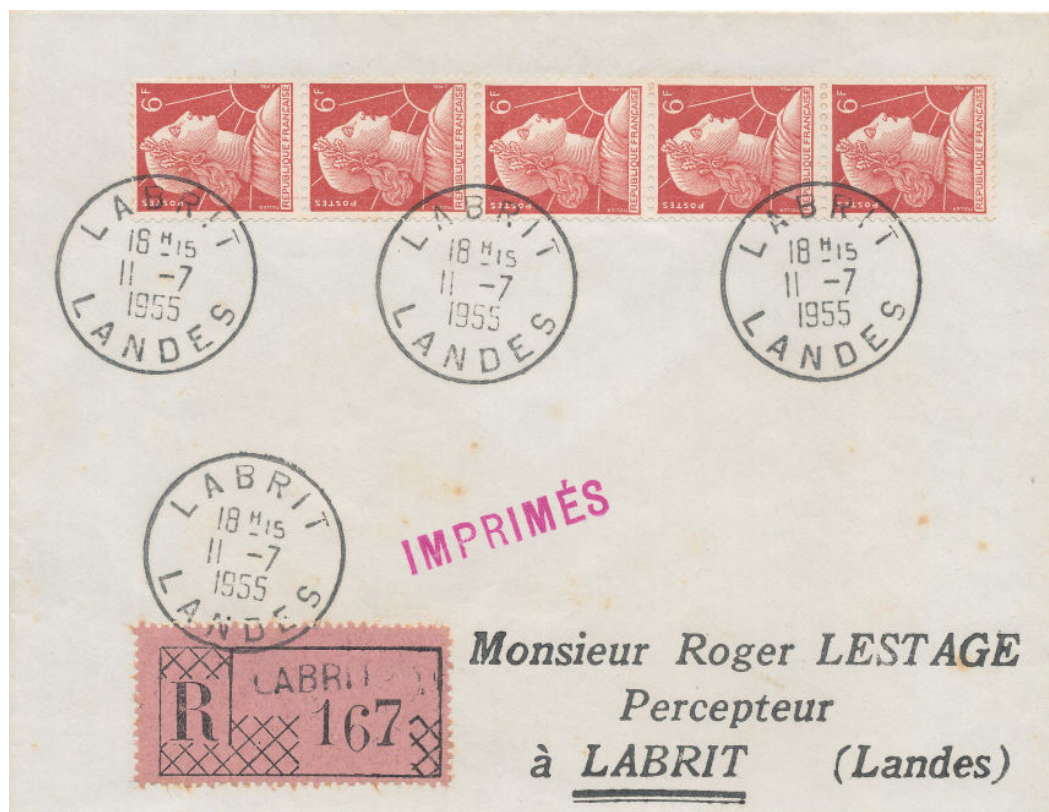


Figure 17

12F Internal Postcard Rate with more than 5 words of added text from Lourdes to Vieux-Condé, 8 October 1955



The town of Labrit in the address of the above cover is situated 160km north-west of Lourdes where the 6F *Marianne de Muller* had been put on sale. The most likely scenario is that the sender, Monsieur Roger Lestage, had been offered the stamps by a third party returning from Lourdes on 11 July 1955, the first day of issue. He was able, at the end of the day, to post the above cover to himself.

Figure 18 (above reduced and left)
30F Internal Registered Printed Matter Rate composed of 5F postage plus a reduced 25F registration fee for printed matter.
The cover bears a Type IV-17 registration label provided by the PTT to small firms and businesses for their own personal use.
The registration receipt, like the envelope, is dated 11 July 1955 at 18H 15. The item's category has been recorded in blue ink as *Opr* (*Objet à prix réduit*)



Figure 19 (right)
Possibly a franking to meet the 65F Internal Letter Rate (5th Step: 300-500 grams) although, if so, the item was overfranked by 1 franc.
Sent from Lure to an unknown destination on 24 July 1956

Although of a philatelic nature this is possibly a unique example of this particular rate on the first day of issue.

It is highly unusual to see a coil strip of 11 x 6F *Marianne de Muller* franking an item of mail in the 1950s. Such frankings were more commonly encountered in the 1970s onwards when stamp dealers were using up surplus stock to mail their catalogues.

There's No Business Like...

Show Business – Connections on French Stamps

David Parmley

Part 2

Having concluded the first part with a reference to television it is appropriate that we now move back in time to the invention of the cinema.

Auguste Lumiere (1862-1954) Louis Lumiere (1864-1948)

A single stamp issue of 1955 depicting the Lumière brothers celebrated the 60th anniversary of the invention of cinematography. In contrast to an earlier issue claiming the invention of photography for France this was a perfectly valid accreditation. Whilst there had been earlier experiments to create moving pictures including flick-overs (epitomised by the “what the butler saw” ilk), stitched-together stills, rotating magic lanterns and other optical illusions as well as partial applications of the whole process - the brothers created moving pictures, using continuous photographic film, which could be projected onto a screen; in fact exactly the same principles which are employed today.



YT 1033 / SG 1259

Although the brothers produced a number of 17m short films (running approximately 50 seconds) covering such intriguing topics as “workers leaving the Lumière factory”, “fishing for goldfish” and “horse trick riders” they did not see any future in the medium and declined to sell equipment to other aspiring film-makers, preferring to concentrate their efforts on a colour process which was perfected by 1907 and marketed as Autochrome Lumière. The Lumière factory continued to be a major producer of photographic products but the brand name disappeared from the market after the company was acquired by Ciba and a subsequent merger of Ciba with Ilford. Incidentally Ilford was the preferred photographic film used by Jean de Sperati in the production of the plates for his reproductions.

Gerard Labrunie (1808-55)



YT 1043 / SG 1269

on walks in Paris using a silk ribbon as a lead. Following

The centenary of the man who wrote under the pseudonym Gérard de Nerval was commemorated by a single issue of 1955. A major figure of French romanticism, his translations (including Goethe's *Faust*) introduced German works to French readers. He also worked (uncredited) with Dumas. He owned a pet lobster which he took

bouts of mental illness he descended into poverty and hanged himself.

It was his biography which inspired Vivian Stanshall to write the lyrics for *Dream Gerrard*. This was included in a 1974 album by sixties psychedelic pop group Traffic who had previously achieved three Top Ten hits. Stanshall, a genuine eccentric, had his own success fronting The Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band. They appeared in The Beatles' *Magical Mystery Tour* television film and were the house band in *Do Not Adjust Your Set* (ostensibly a children's programme which included some of the subsequent *Monty Python* cast and spawned the same). The Bonzos had a Top Five hit with *I'm The Urban Spaceman* and another success with *The Intro and the Outro*, a piece of nonsense which consisted solely of lengthy introductions of the band members followed by the thanks for their performances! It was Stanshall who provided the MC role and narration on Mike Oldfield's iconic instrumental album *Tubular Bells* – the album everybody owned; subsequently he performed spoken radio pieces including *Rawlinson End* which was adapted as a film *Sir Henry at Rawlinson End* starring Trevor Howard and Stanshall. Sir Henry made a later appearance in a beer commercial where he was played by Dawn French in reverse drag.

Grace Kelly (1929-82)

When planning this article I had assumed there would be a ready link to this section of the story and whilst I could have accessed the piece through Louis Armstrong (see later) I felt that owing to its importance both for our journey and for philatelic reasons you would forgive a slight detour while we take a trip on the Blue Train to Monte Carlo.

Grace Kelly was born in Philadelphia to an established Irish-German family and after appearing both on the stage (including *The Philadelphia Story*) and in over 60 television drama productions played a few supporting roles in film; her first starring role being nothing less than in *High Noon* (1952) opposite Hollywood great Gary Cooper. By 1954 she had won a best actress Oscar for her role in *The Country Girl* (opposite Bing Crosby), this being at the expense of Judy Garland who had been expected to win for *A Star Is Born*. After filming *To Catch A Thief* (for Hitchcock) opposite Cary Grant on the French Riviera she attended the Cannes Film Festival in 1955 where she was introduced to Prince Rainier III. From there the greatest real-life fairy story of all time developed – a Hollywood film star was to marry a sovereign ruler; one of the biggest international news stories ever.

Meanwhile Kelly had unfinished business in the movies. Her last film was to be *High Society*, a musical adaptation of



YT 473-477 / SG 578-82

A first day cover of the five “postage” values.

The cover is underpaid at 26F against the French UPU rate 30F. The tax is calculated at the double deficiency on the “fractional” basis, viz

$4d \text{ (GB UPU rate)} \times 8F \text{ (double deficiency)} / 30F \text{ (French UPU rate)} = 1.07d \text{ rounded down to } 1d.$

The T mark would have been applied in Monaco and the 1d IS (Inland Section) mark in UK (actually one would have expected to see the FB or FS (Foreign Branch or Section) mark.

Unfortunately the Postage Due label has been removed leaving the part Middlesex CDS.



YT PA63-5 / SG 583-5 The three “Air” values

The Philadelphia Story which had been previously filmed as a 1940 romantic comedy starring Cary Grant, James Stewart and Katharine Hepburn (previously regarded as box office poison – this film provided the antidote and the definitive 1999 American Film Institute listing of the greatest screen legends of American film history Hepburn is ranked first in the female list whilst Grant and Stewart are respectively second and third in the male list). Amidst the swirl of international publicity the question was “How could you top that?” - and how they tried! A cast of Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby (Sinatra’s boyhood idol), Grace Kelly, Celeste Holm and Louis Armstrong, a new Cole Porter score (which was actually supplemented by borrowing *Well, Did You Evah!* - with a revised lyric - from *Du Barry Was A Lady*, where it was introduced by Betty Grable and Charles Walters after realisation that there was no duet for Sinatra and Crosby) - all combined for a blockbuster musical. As *Variety* remarked, “solid entertainment every minute of its footage”. What a way for Kelly to crown her career! - topped off with a duet with Crosby singing the beautiful *True Love*. Coincidentally both *The Philadelphia Story* and *High Society* both feature another Porter song, *I’ve Got My Eyes On You* as a background theme; this had originally been written for a 1939 Fred Astaire film *Broadway Melody*

of 1940 which he introduced while dancing with Eleanor Powell. The title of one of the other songs from the show – *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* – was more recently borrowed as the name of a quiz show.

To commemorate the wedding Monaco issued a stunning set of eight values, each in the same magnificent oversize design. The recess printing (intaglio, taille-douce or line-engraved, to cover most of the philatelic terms) emphasised the opulence of the stamps. Coupled with this the face value of the three lowest values was 6F or about 2d (for our younger members born after about 1965 that is less than 1p) making them ideal material for the 6d (or even 4d) packets which were popular at the time and could be obtained at Woolworths, stationers, newsagents and even corner shops. Consequently some of these stamps graced the pages of every schoolchild’s collection (well every one I ever saw) and must have been the most collected issue then or now.

Once dubbed “Princess Grace of Meccano” by Eric Morecambe she proved to be exemplary as Princess Consort and was responsible for many good works socially and culturally in the Principality. Tragically the Princess was killed in a motor accident in 1982 aged only 52. Cary Grant was present amongst the royalty attending her funeral.

George Sand (1804-76)

YT 1112 / SG 1341



YT 3645 / SG 3960

George Sand, depicted on the 18+7F value of the 1957 series – Celebrities of the XIII and XIX centuries - was the pen-name of Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin. Her father was well connected as a sixth cousin of Kings Louis XVI, Louis XVIII and Charles X of France whilst her mother was a commoner; she was brought up principally by her paternal grandmother. Another issue of 2004 commemorated the bicentenary of her birth, this time with a more flattering portrait by Auguste Charpentier which hangs in the Musée de la Vie Romantique, Paris.

She became one of the most notable and popular writers of the European Romantic era, more renowned than Hugo and de Balzac. Preferring to dress in male attire she further shocked her society by smoking tobacco, with a preference for large cigars, in public. Although married at 18 she was separated by 1835 after conducting a number of affairs with more to come, notably with Frédéric Chopin between 1837-47. Sand was also a serial abuser of men.

She was a prolific novelist with about 25 adaptations for film or television. Among them were *Fanchon The Cricket* (USA 1915), the only film featuring all three Pickford siblings - Mary, Jack and Lottie (and some sources say Adele and Fred Astaire in their only film together); *Leonie Leo* (Hungary 1917), notable as the first film appearance of Bela Lugosi; *Mauprat* (France 1926), directed by Jean Epstein who we will meet later; and *Red Wing* (USA 2013), a western based on *François le Champi*.

Given her colourful personal life and association with notable people it is not surprising that Sand has often been depicted on screen, including *A Song To Remember*, a 1945 biopic of Chopin starring Cornel Wilde and Merle Oberon as Sand; *Impromptu* (1991), another Chopin biopic with Hugh Grant as the composer and Judy Davis as Sand; and a Sand biopic *A Girl Called George* (1999) starring Juliette Binoche.

Miguel De Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616)

The 1957 Celebrities series marked something of a departure as it featured foreign personages. Previously French issues had displayed a marked tendency to depict French subjects; that is apart from the Etat Français period when there had been a distinct Germanic flavour.

The 12F value featured Miguel de Cervantes, regarded as the greatest Spanish writer. He spent the greater part of his life in obscurity and most of his surviving work was produced in the last three years of his life. He is most

famous for *Don Quixote*, the first modern novel, which has inspired at least 25 films from as early as 1903. These include a 1923 British comedy featuring George Robey ("The Prime Minister of Mirth") as Sancho Panza who reprised the role in a 1933 version; a Spanish production of 1947 (the most faithful to the book); a 1973 Australian ballet version with Robert Helpmann and Rudolf Nureyev; a 2000 television film with a screenplay by John Mortimer (of *Rumpole of the Bailey* fame); and a 2010 3D version from Hong Kong. The book also inspired the 1965 musical *Man of La Mancha* which was unusually based on a television show and notable for the song *The Impossible Dream*. It gained five Tony awards (including best musical and best score) and its original New York run notched up 2239 performances. The musical was adapted for a 1972 film starring Peter O'Toole and Sophia Loren.

Another of Cervantes' books, *La Gitanella*, was adapted as an opera, *The Bohemian Girl*, which was subsequently filmed in 1922 (a silent opera, now that's a novelty) starring Gladys Cooper, Ivor Novello and C Aubrey Smith. A 1936 remake starred Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy in a bizarre concoction of sadism and comedy (a genre not frequently explored) and marked the final film appearance of Thelma Todd ("The Ice Cream Blonde" or "Hot Toddy" as she was affectionately known). A gifted comedienne, she had been teamed by Hal Roach with ZaSu Pitts in a series of shorts to create a female Laurel and Hardy; she also appeared with other comedy greats including Wheeler & Woolsey (a major inspiration for Morecambe and Wise), Buster Keaton, Charley Chase, Jimmy Durante and in two Marx Brothers films. Todd also took dramatic parts including a starring role in the original 1931 production of *The Maltese Falcon*. She was also a successful businesswoman but had been found dead from carbon monoxide poisoning after filming on *The Bohemian Girl* had been completed; although the circumstances were eventually deemed accidental the studio feared adverse publicity and her scenes were reshot except for a vocal scene.

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832)

Goethe, depicted on the 35F top value of the 1957 series, was a German poet, playwright, novelist, scientist, statesman and theatre director and critic. His best known work is *Faust* which has been variously adapted for the screen including no less than six times by Georges Méliès between 1897 and 1912; Méliès starred as Mephistopheles in the 1903 version.

There was even a 1960's musical comedy re-working of the Faust legend in *Bedazzled* with a script by Peter Cook (playing



YT 1134 / SG 1359



YT 1138 / SG 1363

the Devil) and score by Dudley Moore, his television partner (Faust) and Eleanor Bron. Goethe's poem *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* was adapted by Walt Disney as a comeback vehicle for Mickey Mouse whose popularity was waning. However the production costs soared so as to be unviable for a short

feature and the project was reworked as the 1940 full-length cartoon feature *Fantasia* which, although slow to make an impact owing to the war's curtailing European distribution, became to be widely acclaimed. It was followed up in 1999 by *Fantasia 2000*.



YT 3421 / SG 3704



YT 1171 / SG 1395



YT 1426 / SG 1671

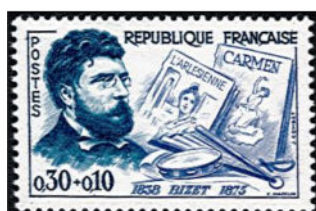
Henri Marie De Toulouse-Lautrec-Monfa (1864-1901)

In 1958 the Celebrities series reverted to those of French origin and the 35+15F top value of a group of more reserved characters was accorded to the rather more extrovert Toulouse-Lautrec. Born into the aristocracy he was unnaturally short and unacceptable to that society so preferred to live a dissipated life amongst artists and other bohemian types. Addicted to alcohol, he ensured a constant supply by using a hollowed-out walking cane which was filled with absinthe; he was also addicted to prostitutes and died at the early age of 36 from a combination of alcoholism and syphilis.

It is probably unusual to include an artist in a piece of this nature but it is his posters and paintings which provide a vibrant memoir of the entertainments of his time because, after all, there are only monochrome photographs and little in the way of motion pictures on record. When the Moulin Rouge opened in 1889 the artist was commissioned to produce a series of posters to publicise the venue; these and other paintings from life provide the valuable record. Among his works are depictions of singer Yvette Guilbert (and this features on a 6.70F/1.02€ value issued in 2001 marking the centenary of Lautrec's death); dancer Louise Weber (known as *La Goulue*, the glutton, and the inventor of the Can-Can); and Jane Avril, a more refined dancer. A 1F value of 1966, in the long-running Art series, shows a reproduction of 'La Serveuse Anglaise du "Star" au Havre' (the English Barmaid at the "Star", Le Havre).

Georges Bizet (1838-75)

Born Alexandre César Léopold Bizet he was a composer of the Romantic era, but despite having been a brilliant student and a notable pianist he achieved little success until his final opera *Carmen*, completed



YT 1261 / SG 1491

shortly before his early death from a heart attack. He is depicted on a 30+10c value of the 1960 Celebrities series. While *Carmen* remains one of the most frequently performed operatic works it is its adaptation as the stage musical and film *Carmen Jones* which is of importance to this piece. This was the result of a project, started by Oscar Hammerstein II in 1934 and originally intended for the screen, to write lyrics to Bizet's music. Adopting dialect from the deep South of the USA and faithfully following the original score it took the lyricist eight years to complete what was became a ground-breaking all-black musical in a contemporary setting of a parachute factory whilst *Carmen* was transformed from a cigarette maker into a seamstress. The show ran 503 performances on Broadway and starred Muriel Smith. The film version released in 1954 was produced by Otto Preminger with a new libretto and starred Dorothy Dandridge (the first Afro-American to be nominated for an Oscar but losing out to Grace Kelly), Harry Belafonte and Pearl Bailey (the only one whose singing was not dubbed).

Georges Méliès (1861-1938)

Now it's time to meet our old friend in person on a 50c issue of 1961 commemorating the centenary of his birth. He was christened Marie-Georges-Jean Méliès and started his working life in the family shoe-making business. Following military conscription his father sent him to London to work as a clerk for a family friend in order to improve his English. This allowed him to develop an interest in stage magic which was further progressed on his return to France when his father refused to support him in his desire to become an artist. After taking magic lessons he appeared in public as a professional magician. The retirement of his father in 1888



YT 1284 / SG 151

and the subsequent sale of his share of the business to his brothers enabled the purchase of the Théâtre Robert-Houdin. Over the next nine years he created thirty new illusions, perhaps the most spectacular being *The Recalcitrant Decapitated Man* in which a professor's head is cut off during a speech and the disembodied head continues to talk and then is restored to the body.

In 1895 Méliès attended a private demonstration presented by the Lumière brothers but being unable to buy their equipment developed his own. However by the time he had perfected this, more advanced technology had become available commercially. Between 1896-1913, whilst maintaining his career in magic, he produced over 500 films of between one and forty minutes and by using his knowledge of magic invented all manner of special effects as well as hand colouring. He made an early venture into sound, filming popular singer Paulus then having Paulus sing behind the screen while the film was being projected.

Although his films were often spectacular and enhanced his international reputation, many were also unprofitable and this led to friction with his partners in distribution arrangements. Unable to fulfil his contractual obligations

he became bankrupt and during the Great War the French army confiscated over 400 of his prints to recover silver and celluloid (used to make shoe heels). By 1923 the Théâtre Robert-Houdin had been demolished for the rebuilding of the Boulevard Haussmann and Pathé had taken over his Star Film Company, whereupon Méliès burned most of his negatives, sets and costumes; however over 200 of his films have been preserved.

By 1925 he was ruined and forced to eke out a living selling sweets and toys from a kiosk, owned by his wife (actress Jehanne d'Alcy), in the Gare Montparnasse. His work was rediscovered and promoted and he was created a *Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur* in 1931, the award being presented by Louis Lumière. Unfortunately none of this alleviated his poverty and he died in 1938, literally hours after another pioneer filmmaker Emile Cohl.

Having commenced this part with the invention of cinematography it concludes with a pioneer of the art but it is not so much a case of "It's not where you start but where you finish," but more a case of where you've been in between! So it's time to lower the curtain and await the next performance.

ALGERIA: a surcharged vignette

Michael Round

The basic vignette shown at right and enlarged is one of a huge range of publicity labels, dating from the 1920s and featuring "tourist" views of French and other colonies. They are quite common, and most of us probably own some. But a specimen bearing an overprinted date and charity surcharge struck me as unusual enough to deserve some research. For the information that follows, I am much indebted to this valuable website on francophone Cinderellas: <https://vignetteaec.com/>

The basic stamp first. 'La Belle France' (named here as part of the imprint, alongside the initials of printers Hélio-Vaugirard) ran to 33 series, plus an unnumbered one devoted to Indochina. Each series was contained in a booklet, comprising one or more panes of 20 different set-tenant designs, often in a choice of up to five different colours. Practically every series was devoted to metropolitan France, though individual series exist for Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and a selection of colonies gathered under the heading 'France d'Outremer'. In unsurcharged state, this



particular item would form part of Series 25, 'Algérie Centenaire': the overprint '1930' was always applied in red, whatever the colour of the basic stamps.

At some later date, a few series were surcharged *Au bénéfice des Déportés de la France combattante*, 5 fr. Was this another private enterprise, on the lines of the *Association des Dames Françaises* item recently described by John West?¹

¹ Post-Delandre Red Cross Booklets, John West, F&CPS Journal No 295 (April 2021), pp 34-5

The 70F *Pont Valentré* issue

Edwin Voerman



Figure 1a

12F *Pont Valentré* printed in sepia and blue-grey and issued on 15 October 1955, (YT 1039)



Figure 1b

70F *Pont Valentré* printed in black and green and issued on 19 July 1957, (YT 1119)

The 70F *Pont Valentré* stamp of 1957 (YT 1119) is related to the previously issued 12F value from 1955 (YT 1039) and shares the same image - the 14th-century fortified stone bridge which crosses the river Lot to the west of Cahors, and which has become the symbol of the city (Figures 1a and 1b). The 12F could be used, among other things, for franking a postcard with more than five words and, idiomatically speaking, as a collector you do stumble across them. The same cannot be said about the 70F stamp. Once, I was at one of the Paris salons where I tried to find this stamp on a letter in a dealer's box. It was in vain. A French collector standing next to me asked what I was looking for. When I told him that it was the 70F *Pont Valentré* single franking, he shook his head pityingly and said: "*C'est une chasse dure, Monsieur, une chasse très, très dure*". In other words: as a collector, you need a lot of patience for this gem.

On 1 July 1957, the postal rates for internal and international mail were raised. The letter rate for internal mail went up from 15 to 20 francs after having remained unchanged for eight and a half years (6 January 1949 to 1 July 1957). This had been an unprecedented period of calm for the French public with regard to postal rates.

Reverting to an earlier design is unusual for stamps in the series '*timbres touristiques d'usage courant*'. After the increase in rates of 1 July 1957, this harking back to an earlier design was not only the case for the *Pont Valentré* stamp, but also for the 15F *Le Quesnoy* (YT 1106) whose

predecessor in the same design had been the 8F value (YT 1105) (Figure 2) and the 35F *Bordeaux* (YT 1118) which had been issued earlier as the 6F value (YT 1036) (Figure 3).

This is, of course, no coincidence. Apparently, the Post Office was caught unawares by the rate increase, otherwise why did it revert to three previously issued designs? The Post Office must simply have had too little time to provide completely new stamps in time.

The 70F *Pont Valentré* stamp was issued on 19 July 1957 and withdrawn from circulation on 7 December 1957 after a remarkably short life span for a semi-permanent stamp. The 70F value became necessary because of the rate increase for heavier internal mail items. The face value of 70 francs was only appropriate for this type of mail or for special postal items to Morocco and Tunisia. All in all, it was valid for a very small proportion of the mail.

It is precisely because this stamp was applied to postal items of a higher weight band (4th Step Internal Letter: 100-200 grams and 2nd Step Internal Packet: 300-500 grams) that items franked with this stamp have rarely been preserved intact. These were usually large or heavy envelopes that were damaged in postal traffic even before they arrived (Figure 4). Moreover, in 1957 collecting stamps on letters was not at all common. The stamps were what mattered and that applied *a fortiori* to stamps that were somewhat less common. Many 70F stamps must have been cut out from the awkwardly large envelopes they were stuck to. Moreover,



Figure 2

8F *Le Quesnoy* printed in deep green and issued on 1 June 1957 (YT 1105) and the 15F *Le Quesnoy* printed in sepia and blue-green and issued on 19 July 1957 (YT 1106)



Figure 3

6F *Bordeaux* printed in carmine-red and issued on 15 October 1955 (YT 1036) and the 35F *Bordeaux* printed in deep green and blue-green and issued on 19 July 1957 (YT 1118)



Figure 4 (reduced)

Internal letter of the fourth weight band (100 to 200 grams). The damaged upper corners and the prominent vertical fold already show how vulnerable these kinds of large pieces are in use. Only a minority of such pieces have survived.¹

the 70F *Pont Valentré* stamps were in any case in limited supply. The printing of this stamp only amounted to a run of 9.6 million, whereas the printing of most semi-permanent stamps at that time regularly exceeded 100 million. The modest circulation is due to the nominal value of 70 francs. This is very unusual within the French tariff range and had a very limited direct application.

The use of this stamp on internal items of a higher weight band or on registered postal items to Morocco and Tunisia is listed in the '*Catalogue des timbres de France seuls sur lettre (1849-1960)*' by Robert Baillargeat published in 1996 by Bertrand Sinais (Figure 5). Yet this list is not complete, because there is another application of this stamp, namely

the franking of a cash-on-delivery card for internal use. (Figure 6).

As a result of the limited possibilities of use of the 70 F *Pont Valentré*, we encounter this stamp more often in combination with other values than as a single franking. After the changes in rates on 6 January 1959 only combinations with other denominations remained until the stamps were sold out completely. In combination with other denominations, the 70F *Pont Valentré* is therefore somewhat easier to find (Figure 7). That is not to say that such pieces crop up every day. A 70F *Pont Valentré* on its own or in combination with other stamps remains a real eye-catcher.

1119 70f Pont Valentré Noir. vert 57.31

Dates Tarifs	Intitulé du Tarif	Type	Poids	Ech.	Emis Retrait	Dates utilisation	Nbr jour	Cote
01/07/57 05/01/59	LETTRÉ Intérieur Ordinaire		100g 200g	4e	19/07/57 07/12/57	19/07/57 07/12/57	142	120
	Paquets - Poste- Clos Ordinaires		300g 500g	2e	19/07/57 07/12/57	19/07/57 07/12/57	142	120
	ETRANGER.Tarifs Particuliers MAROC-TUNISIE-Lettre Recommandée		01g 02g	1er	19/07/57 07/12/57	19/07/57 07/12/57	142	175

Figure 5

The listing of the 70F *Pont Valentré* on page 338 of Robert Baillargeat's tariff book.

¹ Many collectors still look at large items with disdain because they do not know how to arrange such a piece on an album page. A good solution is to put the whole piece rotated by 90 degrees on the left-hand page and on the right-hand page place a colour copy reduced to the usual manageable size that can be provided with accompanying text.

Figure 6 (reduced)

'Carte-lettre' designed as a cash-on-delivery card. This type of card had to be franked as a letter.

The designation 'lettre' indicates this.

The letter rate was 20 francs and the fixed fee was 50 francs making 70 francs. The rate was valid from 1 July 1957 until 6 January 1959.²



Figure 7 (reduced)

Registered letter sent on 12 August 1957 from Paris to Budapest franked with 70F *Pont Valentré* and 30F *Les Travaux Publics de France* (YT 1114). On arrival in Budapest the letter was returned as a result of a foreign exchange check. The inclusion of stamps, as happened in this case, was not allowed. The letter was returned to Paris with customs seals on the reverse. On the registered label is written "souche annotée". With this the post official indicated that he had made a note on the register counterfoil that the letter had been returned undelivered. The foreign rate was 55 francs for a second weight letter between 20 and 40 grams (see the inverted pen annotation "29" (grams) next to the blue arrow.) The registration fee was 45 francs making a total of 100 francs. Both rates were valid from 1 July 1957 to 6 January 1959.

² This is confirmed in 'Tables of French Postal Rates 1849 to 2011' by Derek Richardson on Page 41 where he also notes that the 70F rate could be achieved by the *mandat-carte* fee of 55F plus the postcard rate of 15F. Strangely, these Cash-on-delivery rates are overlooked in 'Les Tarifs Postaux Français 1627-1969' by Alexandre, Barbey, Brun, Desarnaud and Joany (1982).

Madagascar: Cataloguing the surcharges of 1998-9

Michael Round

Those of us who persevere with post-independence Africa will not have been surprised when Madagascar issued a sizeable batch of surcharges in 1998-9 – surcharges proliferate throughout the continent. Neither were we surprised as to their purpose – to cope with runaway inflation and rising postage-rates – nor at the random selection of stamps used for surcharging. African post-office policy tends not to withdraw unsold stamps after a set period of time, but to use them up as long as stocks remain.

We “modern Africa hands” also recognise that while the established catalogues are all good in their own ways, the quickest to catalogue new issues is generally Michel in Germany, followed – more or less closely – by Yvert et Tellier, then Scott in the USA and finally our own SG. Each publisher’s response depends on factors ranging from reliability of sources within Africa itself and proof of genuine usage through to in-house editorial man-power, or shortage of it.

We will surely all agree that the first requirement of a catalogue is to record what exists. So far, so (fairly) good: at the time of writing, Michel and Yvert list 35 different surcharges, while Scott list 26 and SG a mere handful.

The second requirement – or hope, if you prefer – is that holders of any stamp from this set should be able to identify and number it from the catalogue listing alone. Here, things are less easy. For instance, out of 35 stamps no fewer than 25 are surcharged 500Fmg¹. You have a loose one: which one is it?

These 500Fmg surcharges fall on stamps originally bearing 19 different face-values. Four surcharges fall on stamps originally denominated 800Fmg, two on 525Fmg stamps, two on 1140Fmg stamps, the rest on face-values represented only once. If you could only read those original values beneath each surcharge, identification would be very easy. Sadly this is not possible: the efficiency with which the



Figure 1

The 300Fmg and 400Fmg surcharges, in catalogue order

¹ Seven other stamps are surcharged 300Fmg, and three 400Fmg. They all add Madagascar’s parallel currency, the ariary (1ar = 5Fmg), though to avoid clutter catalogue listings leave this out.

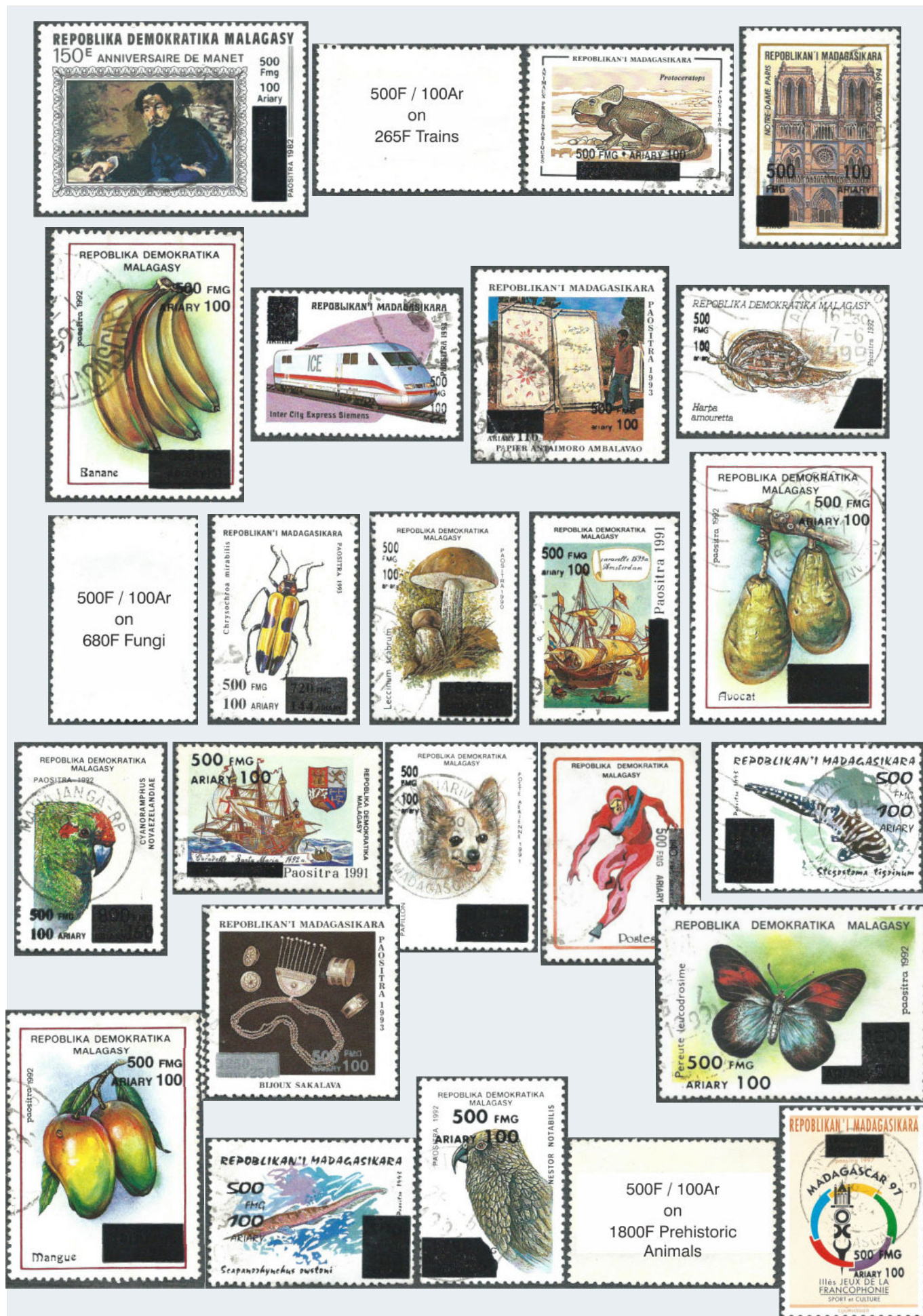


Figure 2
The 500Fmg surcharges, in catalogue order

surcharges were applied extends to the obliterating panels too, which are solid and quite impenetrable. Oh for a couple of thin lines through the old value, leaving it conveniently legible for posterity!

Cataloguers of surcharges have an obligation to identify each basic stamp; the simplest option is to state its catalogue number in brackets as part of its one-line description. Such entries are unimpeachably correct and complete, but your search is not yet done. Some basic stamps were originally issued as long ago as 1981 and 1982: their listings are therefore pages and pages away from their surcharged equivalents, meaning that to identify your stamp precisely you need to thumb to and fro among listings nearly twenty years apart - a time-consuming process when checking those 25 different 500Fmg surcharges.

The “traditional” way of listing surcharges works so well for 99% of the world’s issues that we can scarcely expect the cataloguers to do things differently just for the odd set that won’t conform. But given this particular set’s parameters, how else could things be done?

Michel helps in reverse, as it were, by listing after each *basic* stamp the catalogue numbers of any surcharges subsequently falling on it. This helps you know what’s out there, but does not help when approaching from the “already surcharged stamp” viewpoint. Scott, alone, provides the best solution: it illustrates surcharged stamps in full. The basic design is still recognisable despite being slightly faded down so as to make the surcharge itself clearer to read. I’m delighted that Scott do this but its listing, although incomplete (26 listed stamps so far, only 16 of them illustrated), already fills two columns. Few other catalogues have so much space to spare.

Yes, this set contains just three different surcharged values, and its original face-values are illegible and therefore unhelpful. But, as Scott shows, the illustrations remain clear and unambiguous. Here is a way forward: their range of subjects is so wide that the right single word added to each description could positively identify any one of them (and supply its catalogue number) at a glance.

Between them **Figures 1** and **2** show, in catalogue order, all

the surcharges listed in Michel and Yvert (save for three which I don’t own, and which I’ve represented by stamp-sized spaces in the relevant format). I devised these illustrations to be a useful “quick reference” until the whole issuing picture is finalised. If, for instance, the seven 300Fmg stamps that start **Figure 1** are successively described “300f on Jewellery, on Beetle, on Cathedral, on Weight-lifting, on Budgerigar, on Boxing, on Smilodon”, then there’s no need to consult previous listings at all in order to pinpoint the one you have.

If I were a true scholar, I would now provide a comprehensive table correlating the Michel, Yvert, Scott and SG listings of every relevant stamp both before and after surcharging. This could stretch through to Journal No 400, and drive our long-suffering Editor quite mad. Questions of copyright might also arise, and the listing may still be incomplete – Scott, uniquely, mentions “at least 11 further stamps” awaiting discovery and listing. Treat this as “the story so far”.

A final note, this time on arranging and writing-up: mounting these stamps in strict catalogue order would look messy and unsymmetrical. After preparing this reference illustration, I therefore remounted the set in chronological order of the basic stamps. I won’t waste space showing it, but will just explain that this placed stamps of similar design closer together (Jewellery, Parrots, Fruit and so on) and may be just the *mise-en-page* solution you need when mounting similar issues from elsewhere.

Catalogues consulted

Numbers in brackets are those allocated to the 1998-9 surcharges at the time of writing. Our thanks are due to each publisher for allowing us to quote them.

- Michel *Sud und Zentralafrika* 2002 (Mi 2099-2132)
- Yvert et Tellier, *Timbres d’Afrique francophone Volume 2, de Madagascar à Zanzibar* (Y&T 1681K-1681AV)
- Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue 2019, Vol 4B, ‘M’ (Sc 1472-90)
- SG, *Stamps of the World 2022*, Volume 4, Jersey to New Republic (SG 1329a/e)

2022 Europa (C.E.P.T.) Issue “Stories & Myths” – Mélusine



This year each issuing country based their designs on local myths and legends.

The 1,65€ French stamp depicts Mélusine, a legendary creature well known in the northern parts of France. Mélusine has a woman’s torso and a tail similar to that of a mermaid or dragon. Known as Merluisaine in Champagne, Mother Louise in Burgundy, Merlusse in the Vosges and other names elsewhere. Beneficent, she watches over the

home and the crops. Maleficent, she sows the plague.

Although a supernatural entity, she is given Christian values and virtues by most if not all writers of medieval literature.

The 41 x 52mm stamp was designed by Daria Schmitt and engraved by Pierre Albuissou. It had a print run of 720,000 and was recess printed. There is also a mini-sheet of 9 stamps with a print run of 80,000.

Jan Gane

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Celebrating the Past Early Use of Registration Labels 1900-1909

Peter Kelly

Peter Kelly has kindly given permission to reprint his article which first appeared in the France & Colonies Philatelic Society Journal whole number 200, published in June 1996 on page 58.

The Registration of mail in France dates from 1829 and this continued with a number of modifications until 1873.

The Law of 25 January 1873 brought in important changes in that it re-established the distinction between Registered and Insured mail and furthermore extended the system to cover other sorts of mail apart from letters.

From this date Registered and Insured mail were stamped with a boxed 'R' together with the handwritten Registration Number. The details were entered in the register and a receipt was given.

Each operation took a long time to carry out and the Administration looked to ways to speed things up, faced as they were with a growing volume of Registered mail.

A new Register was created which had numbered detachable labels corresponding to the number on the Register, part of which was attached to the item of mail and part of which was given as a receipt to the sender.

Initially, these were used for OPR (*Objets à Prix Réduits*) and they appeared in February 1900 following the issue of Instruction 511 of December 1899. Their use was restricted to:

- Printed Matter, Samples, Journals, *Papiers d'affaires* and assimilated items.
- Franchised mail.
- Where the Post Office deemed Registration to be necessary.

There were three types of label that were used in the first period up to 1909 and they all had in common the Registration Number and the letter 'R'. The labels for Paris had the name of the city in the top left-hand corner, leaving space for the name of the office or its identifying number in a circle to be added (Figure 1).



Figure 1

Paris Exposition Rapp to Vitry-sur-Seine.

Official Letter sent under Ministry of Commerce, Exposition Universelle, Paris (3) franchise.

The registration label is cancelled by the 'Paris Exposition, Rapp', this being the principal special office for the 1900 Universal Exhibition. The reverse is sealed by the official wax seal in red (boxed EXU / 1900)



Figure 2

Registered '*papiers d'affaires*'. Postage (*imprimés* rate 5 centimes + registration 10 centimes = total 15 centimes. Pionsat (Puy-de-Dôme) to Riom, dated 16 October 1900.

The Pionsat canceller is used to tie the registration label

The provincial labels had the whole space available for their branch handstamp (Figure 2).

A second label for Paris was brought out that was longer and narrower with 'Paris' still printed in the top left-hand corner.

In 1873, the Registration Fee for items other than letters had been set at 25 centimes which was one half of the normal fee

for letters. The 50 centimes fee for registration of letters was reduced to 25c in January 1879 but there was no corresponding fall in the OPR rate.

It was not until April 1898 that the OPR rate was reduced to 10 centimes and this rate remained unchanged until 1917.

Bibliography

- Dumont/Sauvanen : *Essai de nomenclature des étiquettes des services postaux et télégraphiques de France* (Union Marcophile 1984)
- Alexandre / Barbey / Brun / Desarnaud: *Les tarifs postaux français 1627-1969* (1982)

Celebrating the Past: Editors of the Journal

Members may find further details of the history of the various *Journals*, *Bulletins* and *Newsletters* published between 1949 and 1997 on the Periodicals page on the Website. Written and compiled by George E. Barker, FRPSL and typeset by Maurice Tyler it also contains the cumulative index of articles of that period.

Back issues of Journals from 2000 to 2019 are also available. A link on the front page of the Website is provided.

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Jan Gane

Celebrating the Past: Experts beware - A faked 1870 Alsace-Lorraine cover

Stephen Holder also kindly gave permission to reprint his article from page 53 of the 200th edition. Stephen had difficulty in locating the original scans - hence the reproduction is as it appeared in the original publication - in black and white.

For probably more than ten years I have had an attractive cover in my collection which has been included in several international exhibits, and which I have now proved to be a fabrication. It is an official cover with a printed heading of the *Procureur Impérial* franked with a 20c Alsace-Lorraine occupation issue with a very fine cancellation of Sarrebourg French circular datestamp type 16, dated 27 November 1870 (Figure 1).

This made the cover a highly desirable piece (and I paid quite a good sum for it in an international auction of high repute) as it showed the use of captured French datestamps

during the period of hostilities in 1870, before the arrival of the definitive German datestamps being prepared for use in the occupied areas. This was enhanced by the fact that it was a very fine example of a type 16 datestamp and from a town not often seen on the stamps of this period.

The interior of the cover was incomplete and no manuscript dates were visible as they had been cut away with the part of the letter which was missing. There were no other datestamps. The letter seemed to be a 'turned' one as it had originally been addressed to Altkirch and was now going from Sarrebourg to Mulhouse.



Figure 1
"Original" 1870 cover from
Sarrebourg

Figure 2
True original cover from Altkirch
dated 1858

The tying of the stamp was not quite perfect, and it seemed that the stamp might have been lifted for examination and replaced. However, there was something about it which had made me look carefully at it several times in the past, and I had in my mind that someone whose opinion I respected had warned me that there was some forged correspondence on the market with Sarrebourg type 16 datestamps.

As a result I had another very careful examination of the stamp and the tying. Under a strong light I could see that Sarrebourg seemed to be painted over an earlier datestamp, or at least enhanced, but, under stronger magnification against a powerful backlight, I could see what had been done was quite different. What I could see was a perfectly proper datestamp of Altkirch, apparently 6 November 1870, underneath the stamp, with the circular datestamp exactly overlapping and thus 'tying' the stamp to the cover, that is to say a stampless cover being dressed up to be a very desirable franked one.

It was time to take the Alsace stamp off and turn the cover back to being a perfectly correct stampless official cover of the war period in the occupied area, using a captured French datestamp, itself a very unusual and desirable piece. I did this successfully only to get another surprise.

I now have a very nice example of a 20c Alsace Occupation stamp with a fine upright Sarrebourg type 16 datestamp, a good item in its own right, and a pleasant but ordinary official stampless cover from Altkirch to Mulhouse, dated 6 February 1858! (Figure 2).

This cover has passed the scrutiny of a number of 1870 experts and international judges, myself included, and has been in several gold medal displays unnoticed. Maybe this can be a lesson to many of us; however much you may know your subject and know your own material, keep examining it in an objective way, as probably most important and serious collections contain little hidden 'nasties' like this within them!

View from the past: Martinique

Reaching the milestone of Journal No 300 invites some retrospection. **Michael Round** offers a contribution from the days even before Journal No 1.

Here's a philatelic soubriquet that may be new to most of us. Browsing (with great enjoyment, as always) through an old (1926-7) volume of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, I came across this advertisement, under the heading 'Latest S.G. Offers'. The design concerned is obviously that of 1908 (SG Type 13, Yvert type 'c'):

"Martinique, 1920 "Laughing Liz" type, surcharged.
10 on 2c., 25 on 15c. 2 unused, 7d." (*April 1927, p. 154*).

I knew that the 1947 (not 1908) Martinique type (likewise portraying a local, if different, girl) had been dubbed '*Le timbre qui chante*', its model being cabaret singer Jenny Anka, but this is the first time I'd heard the nickname 'Laughing Liz'. Was it widely used, I wonder?

This advertisement was certainly placed in a more exuberant, possibly less cautious era. Elsewhere in the same volume I read of Greek stamps (the 1911 issue) described as 'Mercury in "Pancake" hat' (p. 244); I read – questioning the reported casualty figures during a scramble for Egypt's new issues - of "the Egyptian loungeur who...is a tough fellow, and not likely to succumb in a mere riot" (p. 145); and I read of SG's new magnifiers commended - in its own house-organ, remember - for alternative uses as paperweights and "for hurling at unwelcome visitors and nocturnally vocal cats" (p. 218).



The "Laughing Liz" design.

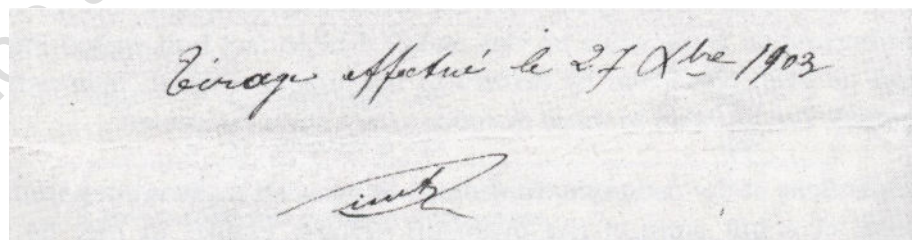
Oh, the joys we lose, when only the best bits of magazines are indexed and the rest is thrown away!

Côte d'Ivoire *Colis Postaux* CP9 and CP10 of December 1903

I was extremely impressed by the amount of detail mastered by Simon Binsted in his article published in Journal 299 (pp 84-87), but he referred to one anomaly that does not in fact exist. He writes (starting at the bottom of p85 left-hand column): "More intriguingly still, Herendeen reproduces a signed proof (Figure 2), bearing the words '*Tirage effectué le 27 X^{bre} (octobre) 1903*' which was some 51 days before the promulgation of the *arrêt* of 19 December 1903 authorising the new overprints with stars."

The date quoted is in fact the short form of 27 décembre 1903, not octobre, and this means the printing would have been carried out a very reasonable 8 days after the *arrêt*.

The reason for this misunderstanding results from the original Roman calendar having only 10 named



© The Parcel Post Stamps of the Ivory Coast - David Herendeen

months, starting in March, so that the names September, October (cf the words octet, octagon), November and December (cf decimal) signified the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth months. The French Post Office used figures in its abbreviations to indicate the name of each month rather than its position in the modern year. It is thought that perhaps the other two months were unnamed because nothing ever happened agriculturally in the depths of winter; the names

January and February were added later and the beginning of the year changed to January.

Interestingly, in Chris Hitchen's article on the Republican calendar (p 80, bottom of the left-hand column) he has correctly interpreted the manuscript date in Figure 3 (p 81) "18 7^{bre} 1794" as "18 septembre 1794" – though this is obviously an easier example for us to comprehend as Roman numerals are not involved.

Maurice Tyler

France: Le 'Burelé' à l'affiche

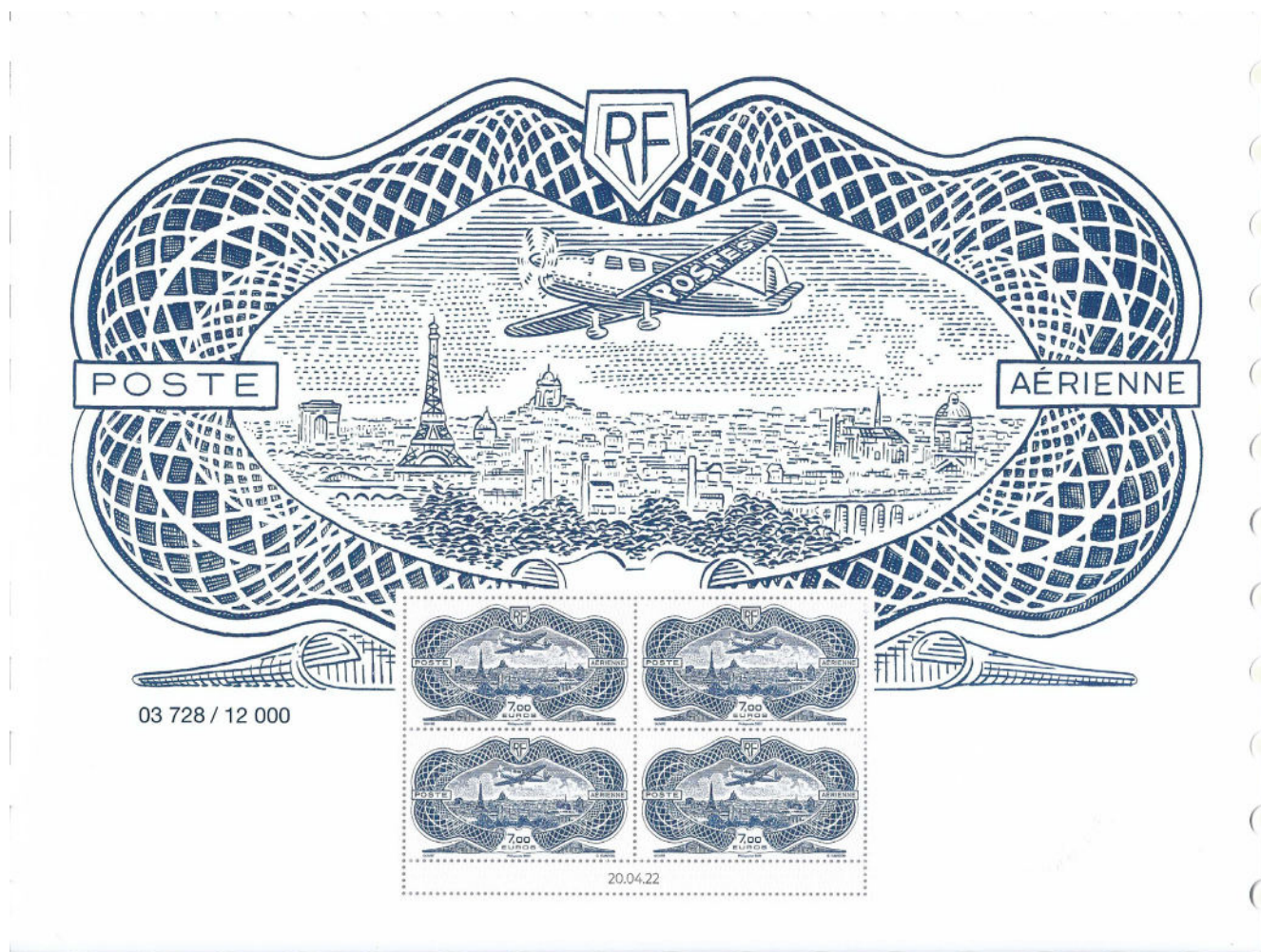


Figure 1 (reduced)

The *bloc-feuillet* issued in June 2022 at the Paris Philex stamp show features a reprint of the 1936 50F *Poste Aérienne burelé* "Aircraft over Paris" issue (YT PA15) in a block of four reproductions of the original stamp with *coin daté* 20-4-22.

The *bloc-feuillet* was issued in a limited edition of 12,000 numbered copies. It is printed on white paper and measures 210mm x 143mm with pseudo perforations all round (partly visible on Figure 1). Stéphanie Ghinéa designed the entire bloc; the background engraving (the *fond d'affiche*, i.e. all except the block of four stamps themselves) is by Elsa Catelin.

The stamps, each with a face value of 7€, are much lighter in colour than the 1936 originals. Original designer Achille Ouvre and engraver Gaston Gandon are credited at bottom left and right of the stamp respectively; the Philaposte 2022 logo is in the centre.

As has happened with previous limited-edition *blocs* issued at Paris shows, this issue was sold out within a couple of days leaving many collectors having to resort to dealers and the internet and pay up to 100€ to obtain a copy. The *bloc* was advertised for sale in the Philaposte brochure of June 2022 at 28€ but was unavailable to any new-issue subscribers as it had previously sold out.

Not for the first time has this stamp been reproduced. In the 1940s the Paris stamp dealer Edouard Berck issued a promotional label (Figure 2) identical to the original design except for the addition of his name and address - a very audacious move. It is to be found in two sizes; the larger version was printed in sheets of 25 with *coin daté* of 13-4-45. The wording of "expert" and type-face of the address differ between the two types.

Figure 2
Edouard Berck's
promotional labels

Richard Broadhurst

Post free mail to the *Sécurité Sociale*

In my article on the 15F Marianne de Muller (Journal N° 299), I illustrated a 1957 cover addressed to the *Sécurité Sociale*. The letter had been sent post free although the sender had added a 35F franking to pay the registration fee. I have since been asked for details of which postal decree authorised such post free mail to the *Sécurité Sociale* but I have to admit that I do not know. It's one of those cases of reading about it but then forgetting to record the source for future reference.

I show below another example of this postal franchise, this

time franked with the 1F *Le Touquet* on a 1964 cover. The item has been sent post free to the *Sécurité Sociale* but the sender has again paid the additional registration fee of 1F. In both the above cases, the letter would have been franked and registered by a counter clerk who must have been aware of its eligibility for postal franchise.

Does anyone else have examples of post free mail to the *Sécurité Sociale*, or even other similar organisations, and more importantly, can anyone quote the chapter and verse of the decree permitting this concession? Thank you.



Mick Bister

Channel Islands Specialists' Society

Our Society occasionally receives requests to promote other specialists' societies.

There are many close links between the Channel Islands and France. Those interested in the study of stamps, postcards and the postal history of these islands might be interested to look at what is offered by the CISS. Further information about the Society may be obtained from the website: www.ciss.uk

The cover at right was presented earlier this year at a display by one of their members and shows a scarce letter to Guernsey sent on a balloon during the Siege of Paris.



Our member Dahlia Harrison poses a question

I recently acquired the attached cover but it is the first time I have come across a blue rather than a red cross in relation to the wounded and POWs. All my books are Red Cross only with no reference to the blue so I tried to research it online. I know the British Blue Cross is for animals so thought France might be the same. However, I eventually found the site *Historique Croix-Bleue*. It appears to have been a

temperance society throughout its history - although there's nothing entered for the war years.

Any help that could be provided would be much appreciated

Please address any replies to Chris Hitchen at treasurer@fcps.org.uk



Joint meeting in March with the West Africa Study Circle

There will be a joint meeting with the West Africa Study Circle on **Saturday 4 March 2023** from 11:00 to 17:00 with a break for lunch. It will take place at the

Royal Philatelic Society London
15 Abchurch Lane,
London EC4N 7BW

The nearest tube stations are Bank, Monument and Cannon Street.

Refreshments will be provided during the day.

There will be a main display by Rob May of the WASC on Cameroon and another by our own Michael Round (topic to be confirmed).

Displays from other members are needed, up to 32

sheets of relevant material. There are plenty of angles on the philately of francophone West African and Saharan territories that would be relevant.

Could those intending to attend or able to provide a display please advise Chris Hitchen at treasurer@fcps.org.uk

The meeting room will be open from 10:30 and all members are very welcome whether they wish to display or just enjoy what others have brought to show. Past experience of joint meetings is that both groups of members find much of interest, enjoyment and friendship through such events.

Chris Hitchen,
President France & Colonies Philatelic Society.

BOOKSHELF

Compiled by Michael Round
A magnificent start

Les colonies françaises 1939-1945, Volume 1. François Chauvin.

Timbres magazine, Hors-Série No 7, November 2021. Card-backed, pp148. Price 9.90€
(within France) plus postage (elsewhere). Available through www.timbro.fr
or L'Echo de la Timbrologie, 2 rue de l'Étoile, CS 79013 -80094 Amiens Cedex 3.

Reviewed by Michael Round



I wrote a short notice on this publication in Journal No 298 and am delighted to be able to report further. M Chauvin tells the story of French Colonial issues clearly and carefully, setting the scene for the whole project, as it were, by starting not at 1939 (*pace* the front-cover title) but with the first omnibus issue, that of the Colonial Exhibition in 1931. The narrative underlines the increasing official awareness of stamps as propaganda tools (both commercial and touristic) as well as revenue-raisers. Much emphasis is placed on the design factor, practically every page adorned with mouth-watering and probably unique displays of non-philatelic back-up material – posters, tickets, leaflets and so on – into which stamp designers poured their skills.

The narrative is punctuated by stand-alone stories, on tinted pages. (A small quibble: the absence of page-numbers in just these places slows us down when thumbing through the book as a whole.) One valuable page is devoted

to the airmail “minibus” of 1935-40 (with those face-values like 1F90, already obsolete by the time of issue); another to an organization that may have passed many of us by, the *Ligue Maritime et Coloniale*, a powerful propaganda outfit promoted in secondary schools and which by 1931 had gained 550,000 members.

The range is immense. Of great interest to straight-stamps collectors is the section on the 1937 Expo miniature sheet issue – its 30,000 sets were vilified at the time and anyway cornered as soon as issued, to the point where the authorities considered reprinting a further 30,000 sets to meet demand, before abandoning the idea. As a warning to us all, the accompanying illustrations include, and draw attention to, favour cancels pre-dating the stamps’ actual issue (29 November 1937).

Pictorial stamps demanded much preparation. The lowest-value 1938 French Guinea design (YT type d, SG illustration T4) was wrestled into its final form with considerable difficulty: we see all the stages. The end result, although of negligible value, is a masterpiece of elaborate engraving. Mauritania, a colony requiring a strong military presence at the time, commanded much attention: 23 different designs were considered for the 1938 pictorials. Again, they are all shown here, prompting many thoughts among us – here as elsewhere - on what might have been.

Engraved, typographed and photogravure stamps are systematically discussed, along with their (not always enthusiastic) reception when first issued. Again, enticing back-up material enhances every page: this

book is a feast for the eye wherever you open it and a delight to any “source of design” fans. Philatelic surprises may occur anywhere: who among us knew, for instance, that sheets of the 1934 Oceanic Settlements pictorials came both with and without *guillochis*? And for the statistically minded, the first instalment of an Appendix lists every known *coin daté* for the relevant (engraved) issues of Cameroun, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Mauritania and Madagascar.

Bravely for the woke times in which we live, M Chauvin devotes a section to the genesis of, and thinking behind, the topless Girl with Calabash design of



Senegal (YT type f, SG T39). Nude natives –of both sexes – were a popular theme, and their propaganda potential considerable. Some of us will remember Sarawak’s similarly minded 50c King George VI pictorial, issued (so the story goes) to tempt young men to sign up and serve in a country populated by such exotic beauties. Artist Henri Cayon rehearsed the

Senegal design, as it were, through a triptych for Dakar's Town Hall and a front-cover illustration for the periodical *La Presse Coloniale Illustrée*. Yet again, all sources are reproduced here.

In an aside amusing to the unrepentantly broad-minded among us (my apologies to anyone else), we are invited to study the artist's signature to the 1932 Gabon Village design (YT type n, SG T23). Unusually, it reads just 'C.H. del'; M Chauvin claims that these initials have more than once been mistaken to stand for designer 'Cheffer, Henri'.¹ In truth, as he explains, the initials are those of Charles Hirlemann, the actual designer and an artist already notorious for illustrating more than 20 erotic and sado-masochistic novels. His name regularly appeared in full at the stamps' proof stage (as this book shows us) but was then quietly reduced to initials. It was thought not seemly for such a name to be shown in full on a respectable thing like a stamp – especially as many of those books illustrated by Hirlemann had been banned by the authorities!

This is a scene-setting volume: collectors of World War Two material must wait for future instalments. In a closing

interview, M Chauvin reveals that these will cover the Vichy era, North Africa, Indochina, Madagascar, St Pierre et Miquelon and the French presence in the Far East – depending, importantly, on how well this first instalment is received. I can't urge you too strongly to seize it while still available and I can't wait for the next volumes. Given the planned focus on World War Two, it would be a bonus indeed if M Chauvin could also cover the prolific 'France Libre' issues of French Equatorial Africa and the Indian Settlement.

¹ M Chauvin's text quotes the "censored" initials as reading 'CH. H', but the stamps themselves read 'C.H.' The misattribution to Cheffer is implausible, even so: why would the initials be reversed? Conversely, but equally wrongly, the SG French Colonies catalogue claims the designer to be neither Hirlemann nor Cheffer, but 'C Hourriez'. I am indebted to colleague Mick Bister for pointing out that SG's initial is wrong! G (for Georges) Hourriez was a designer well known to collectors (and catalogue editors) for France's Ceres, Mercure and Iris definitives, as well as certain contemporary colonials like the 1933 issue for Martinique – but not this Gabon one!

New-issue listings from Stanley Gibbons: August-November 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. Dates in brackets (month/year) after each country-name identify the last issue of *GSM* containing that country's previous update - though not always accurately, for reasons I explained last time.

You wait 23 years for a **Togo** Bella Bellow listing, then two arrive practically at once... The October listing supersedes the July one in recording every issue between the two quoted SG numbers, rather than a selection with gaps for stamps not yet received.

AUGUST 2022

Mali (no previous update noted). 2008 AIDS – 2010 50th Anniv of Independence (SG 1623/35)

St Pierre et Miquelon (6/2016). 2016 Ships – 2016 Christmas (SG 1236/52)

Senegal (8/2015). 2014 WWI Centenary – 2017 Fourth 'UNI' Conference (SG 1875/912)

Syria (7/2018). 2018 Damascus Fair – 2018 Day of Culture (SG 2502/27)

SEPTEMBER 2022

French Southern and Antarctic Territories (5/2022). 2017 Symbols, miniature sheet (SG MS812a)

OCTOBER 2022

French Polynesia (2/2022). 2017 Seashells – 2017 Humour (SG 1397/432)

Madagascar (6/2022). 2021 Primates (SG 1466/71)

Togo ("6/2011", actually 7/2022). 1997 Liberation – 2008 World AIDS Day (SG 2234/307)

Wallis & Futuna Islands (6/2016) 2015 Middle School, 2016 Ships (SG 1081/3, 1088)

NOVEMBER 2022

Andorra (French) (1/2022). 2021 Landscapes, 2021 Contemporary Art (F881, F884/93)

Andorra (Spanish) (12/2021). 2021 Sports – 2021 Diversity (SG 512/7)

Burkina Faso (4/2022). 2014 Symbols – 2019 Defence/Security Forces (SG 2020/34)

Mali (8/2022). 2014 Serval – 2021 Year of the Ox (SG 1637/MS1665)

Wallis & Futuna ("6/2016", actually 10/2022). 2016 Dance – 2016 Eat Better (SG 1089/92)

Michael Round

Yvert & Tellier 'Timbres De France' Catalogue 2023

Reviewed by Richard Broadhurst

Yvert & Tellier 2023 – Timbres de France, 884pp, 220 x 275mm format, in French.
Published by Editions Yvert & Tellier, 2 rue de l'Etoile, 80094 Amiens, Cedex 3, France.
Price 31,90€

A new look for the catalogue this year with a change in format: the size has increased to just under A4 bringing it into line with other recent editions published by Y&T. With the larger size there is a reduction of around 40% in the number of pages, from 1562 to 884. There are now three columns to the page which I find makes it easier to use but it does take up a lot of extra desk space. The only new area is a 30-page section on *Petits Chiffres* to complement last year's first-time listing on *Gros Chiffres*.

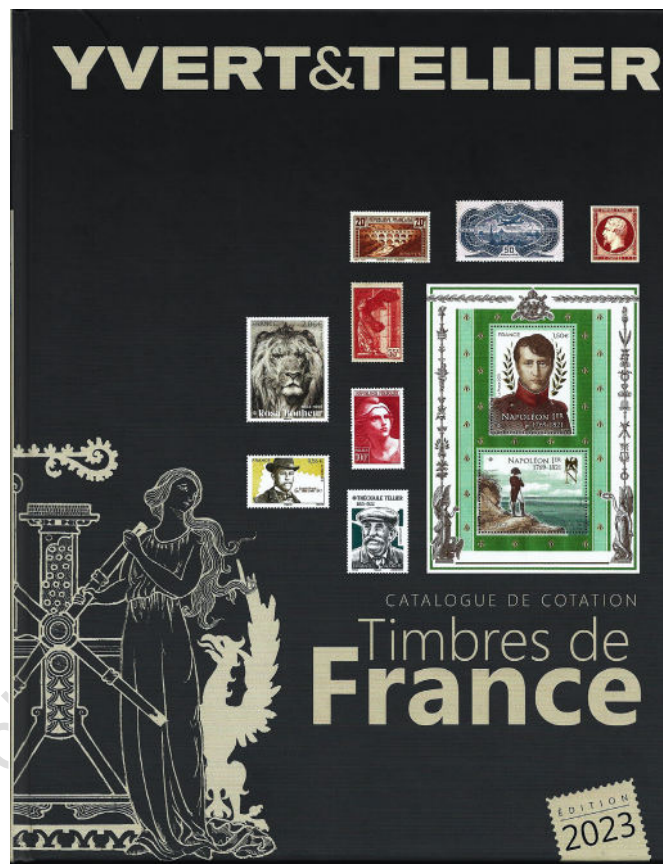
New stamps are listed to June 2022 with an additional 105 gummed stamps, 12 pictorial booklets containing 143 *autoadhésifs*, and 22 miniature sheets. The unnecessary listing of every single *Feuillet de France* (commemorative collector sheet) continues unabated and has now expanded to 72 examples from the 3 listed when this section appeared for the first time two years ago. The individual stamps from these sheets are already illustrated in the main listings and as before they remain unpriced.

The *Classiques de France* section now runs to over 250 pages and is greatly improved with in many cases an entire page being devoted to a single stamp. This has allowed the illustration of more covers, varieties, *blocs* and strips.

Once again there are very few price-changes until the 21st century apart from some of the early classic Cérés and Napoleon stamps. Some of these increase by as much as 500€ in mint condition, outside the scope of most collectors! Of note this year the early *Merson* definitives are given a boost in UM condition with the original five-value set (YT119-123) from 1900 up by 220€ to 4320€. The two *Mouchon* sets UM from 1900 and 1902 are also up by 70€ and 60€ respectively as is the 1926 third Orphans set UM (YT 229-232) by 20€ to 620€.

As usual the vast majority of increases relate to modern issues, most mint stamps from the last few years receiving a price boost. There are across-the-board price increases for recent *Timbres de Service*, *Bloc-Souvenirs*, *Poste Aérienne* and the *Lettre Suivie* self-adhesives.

Many of the *blocs-feuillets* rise in price again, mostly from 2015 onwards. The prime movers are the 2014 Cérés 1€ orange (YT F4871), up 30€ to 230€; the 2014 Cœur de Baccarat (YT F4883), up 25€ to 250€; and the 2015 La Libération (YT F4986), up 15€ to 180€ (this *bloc* contains the only source of the euro reprint of YT 739 face value 4€, alone priced at 65€). The 2018 Orphans *bloc* (YT F5226) is up 20€ to 120€ and the most unusual 2021 Bel Group *bloc* (YT F5484) featuring eight triangular cheeses (the only stamp from France to promote a current commercial product) increases from 18€ to 30€ - or 3.75€ a slice!



As noted last year the highly controversial 2019 "Valeurs de Cérés 1849" *bloc* (YT F5361A), which sold out within hours, remains unpriced in the main listings but is listed for the first time in the section *Ouvrages de Luxe* at 300€ from a face value of 19€, a very good result for those lucky enough to obtain one! I was amazed to find that the 2019 Cérés 170th anniversary *bloc* (YT F5305) is listed at 320€ from 100€ last year. However, on contacting my dealer friend in Paris I was assured that this was an error and the correct price should actually be 120€!

Marianne issues are as popular as ever. Each year various *blocs* and *carnets* are issued which contain a number of unique stamps. All the two-page *Carnets de timbres à composition variable* featuring reprints of classic definitives (YT *carnets* 1520A-1528) increase in price again, many by more than 25%. These *carnets* from 2015 to 2019, many of which have a face value of under 20€, are all priced at 100€+. The maxi-stamps from these *carnets* are scarce (only one copy per booklet); those from 2017-2020 increased by more than 50%. The two booklets from 2008 commemorating the European Union are up, YT *Carnets* 1516 red from 39€ to 56€ and 1517 blue up from 55€ to 76€. The two 2013 *blocs* depicting different printing methods on

Marianne et la Jeunesse definitives (YT F4774A and 4774B) increase by 25€ to 165€ each.

There was a general overhaul of the prices of self-adhesive stamps (*autoadhésifs*) last year and the only notable increase I spotted was of the scarce 2013 *Marianne et la Jeunesse* 3D stamp (YT 864A) rising from 32€ to 40€ mint.

It's understandable that with all the work involved in altering the format this year there are very few additions to any of the sections - apart from *Les Feuilletés Collectors*. These special sheets have only been listed up to 2014 in the past: this year they are listed to 2022 with over 200 new sheets added. The total currently stands at 481, which only includes the official ones from La Poste and not the privately sponsored sheets regularly issued for philatelic societies and other organisations.

The one downside I found, and it is a considerable one, is the dropping of the illustrated index of all the definitive stamps which used always to be found at the back of the catalogue. This ran to 22 pages in the last edition and is an essential tool for sorting the myriad values and colours from these complex issues. I can only assume that this is an oversight as it is unlikely that the few extra pages would have much bearing on the size of the catalogue. I have no doubt that many collectors, myself included, will lobby Yvert for its return next year.

The new format pushes the weight of this catalogue beyond the 2-kilo limit, and its postage costs to £7.95 (within the UK). Nevertheless, with its small increase of 4€ in the cover-price this year the catalogue is still excellent value and remains the best source of information on France stamps available.

Marianne l'Effacée!



Figure 1

The values to be withdrawn



Figure 2

The values to be retained

Under a complete rationalisation of the inland postal service in France, five of the current seven *Marianne l'Engagée* definitives (Figure 1) will disappear at a stroke on 31st December 2022 leaving only the 1€ orange and *Lettre Verte* (LV) green values (Figure 2), relegating this to the smallest definitive series in 175 years!

The new service will primarily be based around the LV value which will remain at its current price of 1.16€ but will revert to a three-day service (designated *jour+3*) from the current two-day one (*jour+2*). There is a proposal to instigate an on-line e-*Lettre Prioritaire* (LP) next-day service (*jour+1*)

but full details were not available at time of going to press.

The values to be withdrawn are 0.01€, 0.05€, 0.10€, *Ecopli* and LP. As has happened with previously withdrawn definitives a special limited edition of the *Ecopli* and LV values will be overprinted with the dates of operation: 2018-2022.

As was to be expected the *Ecopli* service will be withdrawn completely. It was basically another second-class service but less “green” than the *Lettre Verte*.

Further details to follow in the next journal.

Richard Broadhurst



*The President and Committee wish
all members and their families a*

*Merry Christmas and a
Prosperous New Year*

Joyeux Noël & Bonne Année 2023

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Maurice Tyler

Please contact me (maurice@fcps.org.uk) if you would like to see a particular article 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° 246 Jul/Aug 2022: Mon carnet de notes ... (Gomez); La croisière aérienne des trois cocottes (1933) (Sinais); Le 14 juillet [cartes postales] (Zeyons); 1938: Union internationale contre le cancer – Pierre et Marie Curie découvrent le radium, novembre 1898 (Chauvin); Le courrier «en» ses états (de La Mettrie).

N° 247 Sep 2022: Le cadre réglementaire du programme philatélique évolue (Mennessiez); Le millésime 2021 des TAAF (1^{ère} partie) (Dreyfus); Permis de chasse et Front Populaire (Danan); 1943: une Journée du Timbre clandestine à l'Oflag XVIIA (Sinais); La censure de la France Libre – Le Levant (1^{ère} partie) (Chauvin); Alerte aux feux [cartophilie des sapeurs-pompiers] (Zeyons); Remarques sur J.A. et E. Pichot [essais de timbres] (de La Mettrie).

N° 248 Oct 2022: Jules Védrines, le gavroche de l'aviation (Sinais); Paris, 1814: à la recherche des disparus de la Grande Armée... (Veglio); La censure de la France Libre – Le Levant (2^{ème} partie) (Chauvin); Le millésime 2021 des TAAF (2^{ème} partie) (Dreyfus); L'éphémère célébrité des femmes cochères et chauffeurs [cartes postales] (Zeyons); Remplaçants au Type II de la ligne 31 G4 à 40 G4 [25c Cérès dentelés-isolés] (de La Mettrie).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

N° 1974 Jul/Aug 2022: Jean-Jacques Renouard de Villayer, l'instigateur du timbre-poste (Galagain); Courriers du Transsibérien, de l'Europe vers l'Asie (Bonnet & Dutau); L'OP4/2020 du *Marion Dufresne* (Venturini).

N° 1975 Sep 2022: Magnac-Laval et la troupe (2/2) (Gibot).

N° 1976 Oct 2022: L'histoire de la poste d'Albi à Albi: de la messagerie royale à la Révolution (1) (Bastide-Bernardin); L'OP1/2021 du *Marion Dufresne* (Venturini).

Bulletin COL.FRA

N° 180 2^{ème} trim 2022: Guadeloupe le 10c rouge au type Groupe surchargé QUITTANCE (partie 1) (Dufresne de Virel); Kouang-Tchéou-Wan: Les difficiles débuts de la présence française dans la concession (1898-1899) (Bordeau); Réflexions sur le type Sage surchargé POSTE FRANÇAISE Madagascar (suite et fin) (Monteret); Un paquet d'Indochine en 1948 (Flotte).

N° 181 3^{ème} trim 2022: Guadeloupe le 10c rouge au type Groupe surchargé QUITTANCE (partie 2) (Dufresne de Virel); Premières liaisons maritimes avec Madagascar sous pavillon français 1881-1888 (Monteret); Hommage aux harkis, soldats de la France... quand la politique s'occupe des timbres... et déclenche une guerre postale (Liévin).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Vol 78 N° 3 (Whole N° 349) Jul 2022: New Finds in Old

Places: The Commune of Saint Louis on the Island of Marie Galante, Guadeloupe (Grabowski); AIR FRANCE Cinderellas – non-postal Labels Circa the 1940s-1950s (Taylor); Guadeloupe 1884, the first overprints (part II) (Bonnel & Buchheit).

Vol 78 N° 4 (Whole N° 350) Oct 2022: The Simart Buy Of 1982 That Led Me To Specialize And Exhibit The French Colonies General Issues: The Hidden And Bizarre Gems Of A "Mixed Condition" Cover Lot (Marra); The Rise and Fall of Tunisian Semi-Postal Stamps (Rasmussen); Early Tunisian Airmail (Rasmussen).

Documents Philatéliques

N° 253 (3^e trim 2022) Jul 2022: Lettres intérieures déroutées sur la commission de contrôle postal de Bordeaux en 1918 (Bourguignat); Dates d'emploi des timbres descriptifs et collecteurs de chargement à indicatif «lettre» dans les bureaux de quartier de Paris (Andrivo); Bandes phosphorescentes Pho E23: Incidents sur l'un des cylindres d'impression métalliques (Gervais); Siège de Luxembourg (21 novembre 1794 – 7 juin 1795) (Laporte); Le courrier, témoin de certains aspects peu connus de l'«État français» (Goanvic).

Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 390 (Sep 2022): Dans le piège des rafles d'août 1942, la famille Oppenheimer (Partie 1) (Neimark); Mise en œuvre des timbres mobiles sur des affiches produites par l'imprimerie Abadie à Saint-Gaudens (Galagain); Timbre à date du Paris insolite: Le bureau de poste du Palais d'Iéna (Lavenas); Mourir... Ou mourir au Mort-homme (Pleinfossé); Utilisation des timbres-taxe par les postes locales du Maroc (suite): Présentation et analyse d'une pièce exceptionnelle inconnue à ce jour (Hadida).

Le Maghrebophila

N° 38 June 2022 Griffes AR échappées au Maroc et au Congo Français (Lindekens); Entiers postaux «AVION» au type Pétain – 1941/42 (Panozzo).

N° 39 Sep 2022: Oblitérations mécaniques du Maroc – machine SAVANA (Guyaux); Maroc – ces villes qui ont changé de nom après l'indépendance (Benziane); Maroc – Date de la poste faisant foi (Guyaux); OUED-ZEM: une oblitération bien tardive (Benziane).

Cameo

Vol 23 N° 2 (Whole N° 116) Jun 2022: Registered Mail and the Cameroons Expeditionary Force Post Office – 1914 to 1916 (Bratzel).

Vol 23 N° 3 (Whole N° 117) Sep 2022: Togo – "Frauco" error reported in Stamp Magazine December 1933 & January 1934 (Czopek).

The Indo-China Philatelist and *Collectors Club Philatelist* will be detailed in the April 2023 - Journal 301 edition. [Ed.]

NOTABLE AUCTION LOTS

Lots 300A and 300B in the upcoming auction may be of special interest.

1949 was philatelically important for several reasons as it marked the 75th anniversary of the General Postal Union, later renamed the Universal Postal Union, which had been established under the Treaty of Bern in 1874 and is presently a specialised agency of the United Nations; many countries issued stamps in commemoration. For the French it marked the centenary of their first postage stamps issued on 1 January 1849 – the 20c black and the 1 franc in shades of orange and carmine of the first Cérès series. Closer to home it was the year the FCPS was formed.

The *Exposition Philatélique Internationale de Paris* ran between June 1st and 12th and to coincide with the event a centenary commemorative was sold. Based on the original Cérès design Pierre Gandon engraved a new die with a face value of 10 francs and the vermilion recess printed impression was produced in miniature sheets of 10 large perforated surrounds, on which the only other printing was

the legend '1849 – 1949', with margins all round and the legend '1849 – 1949' repeated in black over impressions 2 to 4. A single stamp was sold with a premium of 100 francs which represented the entrance fee to the exhibition. A commemorative postmark for the exhibition was based on date stamps current in 1849 using similar typefaces and used in conjunction with a reproduction of the grille lozenge used for cancellation of early issues.

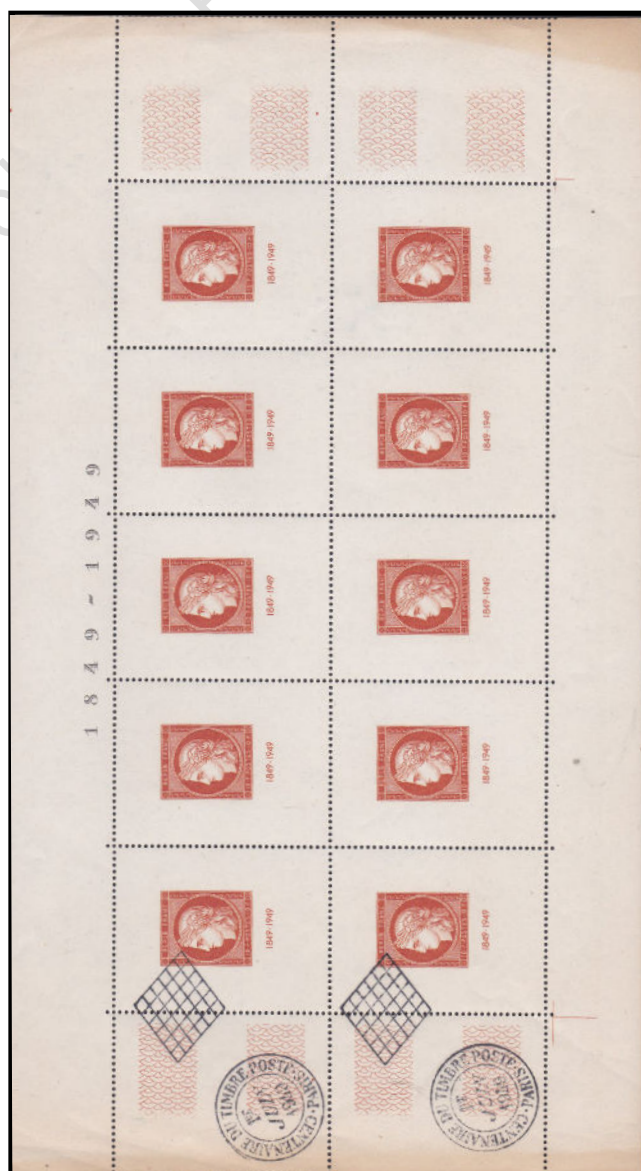
The stamp is catalogued as a single (YT 841, SG 1071a), a marginal strip of 3 with black legend as (YT 841b) and as a complete miniature sheet (YT BF5). Some 7.25 million impressions were made and those unsold at the conclusion of the exhibition were destroyed.

Complete sheets are infrequently offered and here is the opportunity to purchase unmounted mint and/or used examples. The mint is reserved for £225 against a catalogue value of €1000 and the used (which presents some toning in the side margins) for £130 against a catalogue value of €600.

David Parmley



100%



55%



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Copy

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Compiled by Jan Gane

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