

France & Colonies Philatelist



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Secretary: Charles Bretagne — P.O. Box 30, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
Editor: Ira Zweifach — 336 Central Park West, N.Y. 25, N.Y.

THE 50 CENTIMES SOWER DESIGN BOOKLET

RAOUL LESGOR

The series of booklets of the 50 centimes Sower design (Scott #146a) is the most important group of booklets issued by France to date.

The period of production and usage of the 50 centimes sower design booklet extends from July 1926 to April 1932 and coincides with the period of modernization in the methods of stamp printing which had started in 1922. This modernization consisted of substituting the fast and efficient rotary press printing for the flat plate process which had been used exclusively until then. To be sure, the new process had been in use for several years for stamps prepared in sheet form, but due to the limited demand, the booklets continued to be printed by the very slow flat plate process until 1929.

During the Joan of Arc celebration in 1929, there was an interruption in the manufacture of the 50 centimes Sower design, while the Joan of Arc commemorative was sold almost exclusively in sheet and booklet form for several months. The Postal Authorities took advantage of this lapse to experiment with a faster method of printing booklets, and by the end of the celebration, they were ready to use the rotary press process for the preparation of booklets.

Thus, its existence being astride of this period of trial and error, we find the booklets of the 50 centimes Sower bridging the gap between the old and the new. Its design was slightly altered for the different plate composition, and although they are mere retouches of the original Roty engraving, they seem closely related to the changes that occurred, and deserve to be indicated as different types. I have adopted and copied, with his permission, the discoveries made by my friend, Pierre de Lizeray, in articles published in that excellent monthly publication *Bulletin Philatelique du Midi*.

Type I.—Dont in bonnet. (Absent in all other types.) Lower end of diagonal stroke of both R's of the top inscriptions terminates below the level of the other letters. The solid color area directly underneath the base of the diagonal stroke of the "R" is broad. The triangle of color in the upper half of the "A's" is fairly large. (See Figures Type 1.)



Type I



Type I



Type I

Type II—Lower end of diagonal stroke of "R" of "REPUBLIQUE" nearly level with base of the vertical stroke. Solid color area under and to the right of the diagonal stroke is narrow. The triangle of color in upper half of "A's" is minute. Inscriptions thicker than in the other types. (See Figures Type II.)

Type III—Type III is not described in this article because it served only for stamps in sheets.

Type IV—The lower ends of the diagonal stroke of both R's terminate below the level of the other letters. No solid color area below diagonal stroke of first "R." Left frame line very thick. Fourth white line above top of the sack of wheat thicker than others. (See Figures Type IV.)

Following, is the sequence of issue, and the periods of printing:

Type I—Flat plate printing. With advertising on the panes and on the cover. Printed from July 1926 to June 1928. Serial numbers 107 to 149, also with indices and names of cities or departements.

Type II—Flat plate printing. With advertising on the stamp panes and on the cover. Printed from June 1928,

Over.

to October 1930. Serial numbers 147 to 221, also with indices and names of cities and départements.

Type IV—Rotary press printing. Experimental issue. No advertising on the panes, and postal recommendations only on the front and back cover. No serial numbers.

Type IV—Rotary press printing. Experimental issue. With advertising on the cover only. Printed from January to May of 1929. Serial numbers 161 to 169.

Type IV—Rotary press printing. With advertising on the panes and on the covers. From June 1929 to June 1931. Serial numbers 176 to 243, also indices and names of cities or départements.

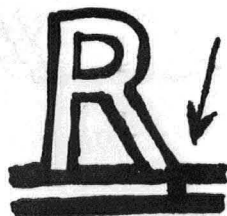
Type II—Rotary press printing. With advertising on the panes and on the cover. From June 1931 to April 1932. Serial numbers 138 to 263.



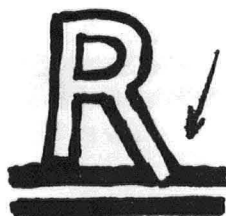
Type II



Type IV



Type II



Type IV

There was another interruption of printing the 50 centimes Sower booklet during the Colonial Exposition of 1931. During this interim, booklets of the 50 centimes Fachi Woman, Scott's #260a, were sold exclusively. After the Exposition, the Sower booklets were again in production until they were superseded in 1932 by the booklets of the Laurens design (Peace Type).

The distinction of the dies will help in making collections of the stamps with attached labels. In the case of Die B, used for both flat and rotary press booklets, it may help to know that due to the bending of the plates to fit the rotary rollers, the stamps are slightly clongated, perhaps by one-fourth of a millimeter above the dimensions of the stamps printed on flat beds.

In complete booklets, the indentification is very simple. All flat plate products have a vertical gutter 10 millimeters wide, crossed by the horizontal perforations. The panes are stapled to the cover. The rotary printed,

on the contrary, are glued to the cover, and the middle gutter is 20 millimeters wide, but not crossed by the perforations except in two or three very rare cases which have been reported, but which I have never seen.

The experimental booklets of 1929 are slightly different, in the sense that the middle vertical gutter is only 10 millimeters, but glued.

The sheet markings are of no importance whatsoever in the classification of booklets, and are of interest only to the advanced specialist. They add a certain degree of rarity, but little else. For the sake of the record, however, it behooves me to describe these sheet markings.

In the case of the flat plate printings, one booklet of six will have no vertical perforations in the top margin, and one booklet out of six will have a series of letters and numerals under the left pane. These come from the top and bottom of the sheet of six double panes of booklets, respectively. The numerals and letters found in the bottom of the sheets indicate the day of printing, the press, and the press operator.

The dates of printing, the "coin dates" of French philately, do not appear on booklets of the 50 centimes Sower. Beginning October 7, 1932, these dated corners were applied to the booklets of the 50 centimes Peace design, but not before. The series of numerals printed in black at the left of the booklet are mere bookkeeping. Until October 7, 1932, only the experimental booklets of 1929 will feature them; one booklet out of every four.

The advertising on the stamp margins (Fig. 4) were not an integral part of the plate, but were separate electros adjusted to the plates as needed. The four margins of a booklet may be devoted to a single advertiser, or a combination of two, three, or even four. This accounts for a lot of different advertising until of four, so that for the 50 centimes Sower alone, no less than fifty combinations have been recorded. These are, as a rule, the ads of well rated, nationally known products of or industries, in contrast to the firms advertising on the covers which in many cases had no more than local appeal. The stamps with the ads were printed at the government printing shop, the covers by the contractor, or "concessionaire," as he is called in France.



Fig. 4

Complete listings of the advertisements appearing on the stamp panes, as well as their coincidences with the serial number or other indications appearing on the booklet covers, are available in printed form, although spread throughout several books and publications. A complete, or even a partial listing of the covers themselves does not exist at his time, but several efforts are being made in that direction, although it may take some time to have the complete picture.

The covers bearing advertisements have a serial number generally reading vertically at the upper left corner of the front cover (Fig. 5). In some rare cases, this serial number may be located inside the cover, and in at least three cases, there is no serial number at all. In addition, in many instances, the serial number is replaced by the name of a city, or the name of one of the eighty-nine geographical subdivisions of France, called "departements." At other times, reading horizontally in the upper left corner, are to be found a single or pairs of roman capitals indicating a region, "N" for North, "E" for East, "RP" for Region Parisienne, and several others. We may accept the theory that if the booklets bearing simple serial numbers were placed on sale indiscriminately all over France, those bearing the name of a city, departement or region, were sold at post offices in the designated location. In many cases, especially when the cover bears the name of a city, the publicity displayed on the covers is for firms identified with that city or region.

What were the reasons for these confusing serial numbers, names, and indices? We may safely assume that each identifies a certain advertisement or combination of several advertisements appearing on a particular cover. In most cases, it did not have anything to do with the advertisements appearing on the panes' margins; it was mere bookkeeping for the contractor, a documentary reference for his files.

To illustrate, let us take the case of the 50 centimes booklet bearing the advertising of the "L'AME LE COQ" on all four margins of the pane. We find: nine booklets with different serial numbers, twenty-three booklets with regional indices added to the serial numbers, nine booklets with the name of a city, and finally, two booklets with the name of a departement, for a total of forty-three different booklets for a single type of pane advertisement. Granted that this happened to be a fairly large advertiser, some more modest advertisers appear only with covers of one or two serial numbers. Furthermore, I took the trouble to check all booklets of the 50 centimes studied here, and I discovered that the fifty or so different marginal advertisements were housed in about 200 different covers, for a grand total around 800 different booklets for this value alone.

In addition to the foregoing, there are the so-called private booklets, and the privately printed booklets, but these offer no problems, and they will be reviewed at a later date.

I have started to establish a list and description of the covers, and to date have succeeded in coralling about

half of them, I am helped in this undertaking by two interested New York philatelists, and hope that we shall be able to complete this study in the not too distant future. Any help from readers of this article, or booklet collectors, will be greatly appreciated.



Fig. 5

The purpose of this study is to give a general outline of the issues, not a description of the varieties to be found. The varieties recorded are mostly accidental, and a complete list is an impossibility. There are imperforate booklets and also part perforated. There are varieties caused by damaged combs in the perforating machine. There are also varieties created by careless cutting between the panes, and lastly, folds and other freaks.

The colors vary from pale rose-red to red-carmine, and vermilion, and one rare yellow-orange shade. There are thick white or yellowish as well as thin white and thin yellowish gray papers.

Both as collector and a dealer, I have handled and studied the stamps of France for nearly forty years. I have acquired a certain amount of working knowledge which I would like to place at the service of our members for whatever help I can be. I also would like to hear from collectors who have made some personal discoveries that they think should be recorded. There are still many problems in the collection of French stamps which can be solved by a few sincere and hard-working students.

CORRECTION

Due to a printing error one of the drawings used to illustrate Mr. Lesgor's article on the "20F Pont Du Gard" which appeared in issue #107 of the "Philatelist" was printed upside down. To clear up any mystification, we herewith reproduce the figure right side up.

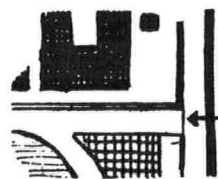


Fig. 4

THE MILITARY FRANCHISE IN THE FRENCH COLONIES

ROBERT G. STONE

Most collectors of French colonies and of France are aware that French Government officials and military personnel have long enjoyed certain privileges of postal franchise, but perhaps few of them are familiar with the conditions under which they apply.

We shall discuss in this article only the so-called military franchise (*affranchissement militaire*, or *franchise militaire*), commonly abbreviated FM, which is legally distinct from the conventional free franchises (*franchises de contre-seing*) for government civil officials. The latter go back to very early times and became one of the great abuses of the Bourbon era and down to 1871, since when the published lists of officials authorizing the franchise have been very limited. Most official mail now requires adhesive stamps. The military franchise is of more recent origin, and is of two types. One derives from the law of 23-27 June 1792 and applies to peacetime, the other started with the Decret of 30 May 1871 and applies to wartime only. The latter has been renewed in various colonial campaigns (Africa, Indo China, Madagascar) and in World Wars I and II; it gave a free franchise with very few restrictions, similar to that of the U.S. military during the World Wars.

The military franchise of 1792 is a limited one, and still in force. The Law is very brief so we will quote it (translated): "The letters addressed to the armed personnel (*armees*) will be taxed in conformance with the tariff of 1791, up to the last postoffice of the frontier, but without adding the tax for the transport from the frontier to the armed personnel when they are in foreign territory)). This was sooner or later interpreted to mean that all French military personnel serving under arms (*AAsous le drapeau*) in the colonies, at sea, or in foreign countries had the right to send and receive ordinary letters at the inland French rates prevailing. At first all officers were included but the Decret of 9 Feb. 1810 limited the franchise to sub-officers, soldiers, sailors, and marines. It is to be noted that the franchise did not apply in reverse; that is, a soldier in France could not enjoy the franchise rate on mail sent to him from the colonies or by him to the colonies, but it did apply from one colony to another, as well as from overseas to France. The FM is something that has mainly to do with the colonies. In the colonies it was not only soldiers and sailors who had the right of FM, but also the cadres of certain kinds of officials under quasi-military status, such as chaplains, public-health guards, etc., attached to military posts.

The actual charge for the military franchise of 1792 has varied from time to time, in part following the ups and downs of the French inland rates. Because the French inland rates during the Revolution and down to 1849 were not "flat" but depended on the distances

between postoffices, it was not practicable to follow the 1792 Law literally. Therefore, in the Law of 5 Nivose V (1796) the franchise rate was set arbitrarily at 15¢ per letter. The Decret of 9 Feb. 1810 raised it to 25¢ per letter. This was lowered on 1 Jan. 1849 (Decret of 24 Aug. 1848) to 20¢, raised to 25¢ on 2 Sept. 1871 (Law of 24 Aug.), and lowered on 1 May 1878 to 15¢ (Decret of 16 April). (The raise in inland rates on 1 July 1850 was not applied to the FM.)

Until such time as the colonies had established a post office system which was able to accept prepayment on letters to France and other colonies, the FM had to be collected as due on arrival. Evidence of entitlement to franchise would be an endorsement by the Commander of the sender's unit, written or stamped on the back of the letter (envelope). From 1 July 1856, however, the unpaid franchise mail began to pay a penalty, as did all unpaid mail in France, the rate being 1½ time the paid rate, i.e., 30¢, and after 1878 it remained at 30¢ for many years.

After the colonies established their own internal postal tariffs (1853 or later) the FM mail originating in a colony and addressed to France, or to the same colony or another colony, was charged at the domestic rate of the particular colony. However, the inland rates in the colonies were identical to those in France except during the periods 1850-54 and 1871-78, when they were less. From 1871 to 1878 the colonial inland rate was generally 20¢ whereas the French one was 25¢; several colonies, however, belatedly raised the FM to 25¢ to match the French rate (e.g., Guadeloupe in Dec. 1876½).

Since 1910 the domestic rates have steadily risen and the FM accordingly.

The FM was from the first valid only on ordinary letters of the lowest weight-step (simple), which was 0-7/5 grams up to 1860, 0-10 gr to 1878, 0-15 gr to 1910, and 0-20 gr 1910-. A Decret of 20 March 1888 required that in the colonies the FM mail must be franked with colonies stamps only.

Regulations generally required the franchise mail to be transmitted only in French mail packets, or naval vessels, though some special arrangements were made (as from French India and Tahiti) where the French packet services for many years did not reach all the way. This policy, incidentally, is one of the reasons for the special series of postmarks, reading "Correspondances d'Armees" (or "Corr. Militaires"); if the mail clerks could see the special mark they would not put the letter in the bag to go via British packet, etc. More likely,

Over.

MILITARY FRANCHISE – continued

however, the main intent of these markings was to show that the office of origin had accepted the letter as privileged under the franchise rules, else it might be charged due on arrival. (The term "Correspondances d'Armees" had been in use by the postal service since early in the century to refer collectively to mail under FM.) When France and colonies joined the UPU in 1875-76, the FM was not affected because it was limited to transport via French vessels. This limitation caused complications in case of those colonies not reached by the French packets. From Tahiti, e.g., an extra charge was made to cover the passage by foreign vessel to Panama – but paid by the receiver of the letter not the sender. French Naval and merchant vessels were too infrequent for regular mail service at these remote colonies.

The "Corr. d'Armees" postmarks were first distributed (from Paris) to a few colonies and mail packets on an experimental basis in late 1862; then in 1856 they were given a wide distribution lasting down to about 1900. The instructions of the Minister of Colonies of 30 Oct. 1862, furnished to the postoffices whenever they were sent any of these marks for the first time, required the postoffices to strike the special marks in blue ink only, to forward all FM mail by French boat only, and prevent abuses. However, the postal clerks often forgot about the blue ink and even to use the marks, because actually the sine qua non for passing such mail was that the sender's name and the endorsement (contre-seing) of his chef du corps must be on the back. Often too, the marks were used indiscriminantly on all kinds of mails – at Fort de France, Martinique, for example, the "Corr. d'Armees" postmark was for several years in the late 1880's the only postmark which the postoffice there used! Therefore, collectors cannot rely on the presence of a CA mark to prove it was FM mail – the postage rate and the endorsements on back must be the real evidence. The endorsements often include a fancy cachet of the vaguemestre or of the commander of the outfit. The use of the CA marks was very irregular in time; during certain periods at a given place they might be rather common and in other periods very rare or non-existent. We can only speculate on the reasons: variation in numbers of military personnel on station, loss the marks, whims of the postal clerks, etc. Most of the CA Marks were used by regular postoffices, including some on board the mail packets and in consular offices abroad, as well as by some military postoffices. Of course the CA marks were issued only to offices near where troops were stationed or frequently passed through. The military-camp and field-campaign postoffices normally used marks of a different sort, reading "Corps Expeditionaire", "Postes aux Armees", "Tresor et Postes", "Vaguemestre", etc., which do not have anything specially to do with the FN, but indicate merely posting in a military postoffice. Likewise French naval vessels and bases had postoffices using marks inscribed "Postes Navales". During wars

and campaigns most of the mail from these military postoffices was free franked; but in the Indo China and Madagascar campaigns these offices served the civilian population as well, as that much adhesive stamped mail is seen from them.

The CA postmarks all contain either the name of a town country, ship, or packet route, as that in general there is no ambiguity as to where the mark was used. However, R. Salles (Specialites, No. 1, Nov. 1953) has shown that the mark reading "COR. D. ARMEES/ INDO – CHINE" when dated during 1862-66 was used only on the French Packet boats calling at Saigon and Shanghai, rather than in Indo China itself.

In 1900, as we know, France began overprinting several French stamps with "F.M." for use on the military franchise mail. These stamps, however, all were issued to accomodate a change in the law, passed on 29 Dec. 1900, which provided that soldiers and sailors on duty in peacetime had the right to send two letters per month free, in addition to the usual FM. The overprinted stamps were to show this free franchise and thus represent no face value. A Circulaire of the Ministry of Colonies dated 18 June 1901 gave instructions on the use of the overprinted FM stamps in the colonies (Pub'd in Bull. Off. des Col., 1901, p. 846). With the Introduction of the FM overprints use of the CA postmarks soon ceased, though we are not certain that the two events are related.

In 1946 special stamps without face value were issued for the FM. The present use of these stamps and application of the FM appear to be more liberal than in the pre-War period, judging from the fact that I have seen the stamps prepaying airmail to U.S., sometimes with and sometimes without additional postage (see my notes in France and Col. Phil., #97, v. 17, #1, Jan.-Feb. 1958, p. 2).

YVERT & TELLIER ERRS

An error, long perpetuated by the Yvert & Tellier Catalog, continues to go uncorrected. Under TUNISIA, page 408 of the current edition we read: 1931-33. Types of 1926-28. Engraved. Perforated 11.

178 5f. rose

179 10f. black

180 20f. dark brown

Under this listing we note the following; "The numbers 178 to 180 are of a format smaller than #§ 175 to 177." CORRECTION PLEASE!

The 5 franc stamp, whether perforated 11 or 12½, is exactly the same dimensions as #§ 175-77. Only the 10 and 20 franc stamps are smaller – in fact much smaller.

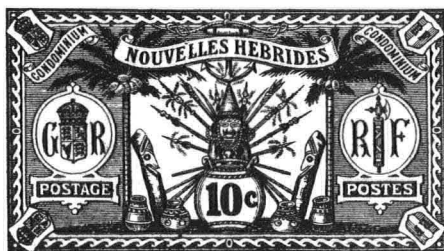
These values come in two really different types not varieties. Member, Charles Neidorf and I discovered this condition about ten years ago, but so far have seen no mention of it anywhere. It is time an effort was made to rectify this catalog mistake.

R. L.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE 1911 ISSUE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES

NATHAN HALS

Long neglected, the 1911 issue of the New Hebrides provides some fascinating problems both in printing methods and usage.



The collector who passes from the stage of mere accumulation of material to that of being interested in one aspect, such as an empire or continent, or country, comes into a new world in which the asking of questions and getting their answers can be a game, and so come to the point of being an expert. In specializing in one country the collector need not become insular, for in the search for knowledge the parallels of experience in other countries can answer questions. Too, of course, each country has an individual brand that adds to its interest.

The first Condominium issue of the New Hebrides was that of 1911, the first four issues being of two sets each of New Caledonia and Fiji overprinted provisionals. The agreement between France and England provided that the French design the Condominium issues, and England would produce them under Crown Agents' supervision. The design was by J. Giraud of Vila, New Hebrides, and the order was placed with Thomas de la Rue & Co., Ltd. whose Leonard Vincent Phillips engraved the die. The order was placed in 1910 with the idea of having the stamps ready for March 1, 1911 in order to celebrate the admission of the Condominium to the Universal Postal Union on that date.

The design, modified slightly in Paris, represents an excellent compromise and furnishes an idea of the Condominium, — a conjoint Anglo-French control for the benefit of the natives who gain protection without the risks of citizenship in either country, — in which the vignette shows native artifacts of the "Talking Drums", an idol, and spears, and the panels have the English and French symbols. It was too bad that bi-lingual stamps were not issued, but two separate language series satisfied nationalistic feelings. However, it must be understood that we do not have here a "British colonial" and a "French colonial" issue, but a Condominium issue sold indiscriminately out of one post office under one authority. Catalogue separations are unrealistic.

The production of the stamps brings us to the necessity of defining terms, and we find in this case that a glib acceptance of certain things does not imply

any corollaries. These stamps were recess printed, but not from engraved plates. The simplest way to explain this is to describe the process of production: —

- (1) Skeleton Master Die. Engraved in positive, had the design, but the name, value tablets, and spaces for the coats of arms were blank.
- (2) Working Die, in negative, obtained from a transfer. On this was engraved the name and coats of arms, the value still left blank. There were two of these, one each for the French and English series.
- (3) Lead moulds, in positive. 30 moulds were made in a coining press for each plate, and bound together 3 x 10.
- (4) Electrotypes Plates. The moulds were placed in the bath and electroplated with copper, the copper peeled off, backed, trimmed and checked.
- (5) The values were pantographed into the plate, so that there were 11 plates for the French series, and 9 for the English. Guide crosses and marginal lines were engraved directly on the plate also.
- (6) The plates were "steel faced" which means that chemically deposited iron crystals coated the surface to give good wear. This produced the "spiky" appearance of the finished printing.
- (7) The plates were used in a flat bed press to produce recess printed stamps.

It is to be seen that the process described is the same as that for typographed stamps, except for the printing method. The term "steel facing" is here explained for the first time.

De la Rue not only produced New Hebrides stamps by this method, the "master-plate" which gave rise to the term "copperplate" that was retained for describing steel plates later, but also those for British colonies and did not abandon the method until about 1922, though the 1924 reprints of New Hebrides were by the original method.

The characteristics of recess-printed stamps from such plates are to be understood by considering the near perfection of the same type of printing from steel plates. The steel plate is of a good uniformity of surface, smooth and flat so that when the ink is wiped off no pockets remain except where they belong, in the recesses; the subjects are entered upon the plate by rocking them in, and misplaced entries that have been incompletely re-entered may be found on occasion.

The 1911 issue exhibits minute ink pulls around the edges of the recesses in the plate and there are numerous plate scratches which look like long ink pulls. These scratches are constant. The ink has a crystalline

FRENCH AND RELATED

PHILATELIC DUBIETIES

JAN KINDLER

The First of a series on the fakes, frouds, fantasies and dubieties relating to French postal issues....



The extent to which humbug postage has invaded their specialty is not, I think, generally known to collectors of French philatelic material. We are all familiar with a half-dozen or so of the famous dubieties: the so called "local issues" of the Commune; the fake Prince Eugene proofs; the doubtfully legitimate Castellorizo overprints; the outright fraud of the Richelieu surcharges.. flamboyant peaks on a long and bumpy range of speculations. But it is with surprise that we discover the full extent of that range. If we count all varieties of every questionable issue relating to France, we will find they number into the hundreds, all of them stamps that are not stamps.

Among these are some who's legitimacy, though questionable, has been sanctioned by time and ignorance. Others, widely considered unsound, have real claims to authenticity. And still others are ubiquitously recognized as pure fantasies. Our purpose in this study is neither to grant nor withhold certification from any of the items examined, but to present the facts as known to us. We hope, in time, to treat every issue of interest to collectors of French postage — without, however, rehashing in detail those that have been well documented by others. In such cases we will synthesise the salient facts, but first concern will be to present the lesser-known bits of flim-flam to all.

The first specimen in our rogues' gallery is pictured here and it is a slick little impostor. For years it has masqueraded as a rejected essay. To call it bogus is perhaps too strong a charge. But it is not, and never has been, what is commonly claimed for it. A fantasy bearing the characteristics of a philatelic dubiety, it is entirely unofficial and privately issued. Although meant to look like a postage stamp, no effort was made to pass it off as such — and for good reason.

The circumstances were these: M. Ermel, director of the banknote printing works, in hope of receiving the contract taken from Hulot, had Camille Chazal make up the above design and caused 50,000 copies to be printed in various colors. No administrative authorization was ever given and the project was entirely a private specula-

tion. As it happened, nothing ensued from it. That it was never intended to be an essay, as we understand the term, is clear from the use of the word "France" instead of the usual and official term "Republique Francaise." Nevertheless, the item is invariably offered as an unaccepted essay. For this reason purchasers could be said to have been swindled except for the fact that most dealers are unaware of the conditions under which the item appeared. It would best be classified, I think, as a bogus essay — not because it was initially intended to pass as such, but because of the terms under which it has been passing ever since.

NEW HEBRIDES — continued

As seen in the catalogue, both series were on multiple Crown CA paper, but the French protested this, and at the first reprinting of the French series the Crown Agents supplied paper with "RF" watermarked in the sheet. Because of a fair supply of provisionals the postmaster did not place them on sale until July, the French series being sold July 12th and the English July 25th. However, the French series was sent to Paris for distribution to Vila and the Agence des Timbres Poste Coloniaux placed them on sale in Paris on March 11.

These details of the stamps, and others unmentioned, are of no interest except that they apply to stamps that were used for 14 years in both issued form and surcharged. As the New Hebrides are part of the South Pacific complex of islands whose common point of interest lies in Sydney as a commercial and communications center, it is easy to see that there would be much of interest in the uses of the stamps — the sea posts, etc.

Several vessels in the inter-island service had postal agents aboard and maritime postmarkers. In addition, mail landed at Vila from ships that had picked up letters from outlying points were usually struck with the Vila date stamp in blue. Often, the New Hebrides stamps are found cancelled at Sydney, having been picked up en route by a vessel. This being before the establishment of the modern PAQUEBOT date stamps, causes a search of shipping lists to learn what lines and vessels gave service.

In a country like ours where the telephone frequently replaces the mails, even for 3000 miles, we have no concept of the importance of the mails in the Pacific islands. But out there where they are the life-line of commerce and communication a long-lived issue of stamps can be assembled into a picture-story through their cancellations. The designs and printing might be dull, but never their use.

appearance from the character of the iron surface; there are no re-entries of any kind, and plating is virtually impossible because of the variance from sheet to sheet. Only one stamp, the 1d., has been traced through its successive printings from 1911 to 1924 because of a repair to the lower left margin line which shows a fanning of hesitation marks, but its position has not been established.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

To March 1, 1961

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME:

- 778 Burnand, L.W. Jr., SSG.4080th. CSG Box 225/2, Laughlin AFB, Del Rio, Texas. (Gen. issues, precancels, annule, specimen, telephone, telegraph, newspaper, taxe, CFA - no colonies)
- 779 Lindgren, R.L., 194 Eggleston Ave., Elmhurst, Ill.. (France general, no colonies)
- 780 Olmstead, Chauncey L., 2 Cottage St., W. Brookfield, Mass. (Metropolitan France)
- 781 Lively, Chester Al, Lt. Col., 624 S. Jefferson St., Junction City, Kansas. (Cathedrals & Chateaus)
- 782 Keizer, Fred, 84 Lawrence Ave., Brooklyn 30, N.Y. (Used airmails, especially flown covers)
- 783 Foley, Joseph H., 5010 38th Ave., Hyattsville, Md. (France & Colonies)
- 784 Bern, Arthur, 85 Rosemary Ave., Buffalo 23, N.Y. (Morocco, French, Spanish, British, German & Independent)
- 785 Martin, Irving, 3808 Columbia Pike, Arlington, Va. (General)
- 786 Simmonds, Wm. E., 1705 Hill St., Ann Arbor, Mich. (France Exclusively)
- 787 Neuville, Rivhmond H. Jr. Lt., USS Roberts (DE-749) Fleet P.O., N.Y. (French Oceania & Laos)
- 788 Steilberg, Ernest K. Jr., 3104 Harrodsburg Rd., Rt. 2, Lexington, Ky. (General)
- 789 Menard, Jean-Paul, 1684 Wolfe St., Montreal 24, PQ. Canada. (French Colonies & France)
- 790 Durant, Richard, 425 Lincoln Rd., Grosse Point 30, Mich. (French Colonies in Africa)
- 791 McCargar, Dean, 361 N. 26th St., Corvallis, Ore. (Islands in Indian Ocean, Colonies on West Coast of Africa, Madagascar and its administrations, Reunion, Somali, Early postal history, Ships, etc.)

DECEASED

- 227 Burlingame, Agnes, 3500 Fillmore Ave., Brooklyn 34, N.Y.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

- 480 Scott, V.N. Col., to 10362 Chaney Ave., Downey, Cal.
- 666 Bryan, Bill Lt. Col., to 530 S.E. Leland St., Roseburg, Ore.



MEMBERS APPEALS

Want and exchange notices only: members only; no charge; one or two insertions only. Those who reply will please offer only what is asked for.

WANTED: France postage dues on cover in Millesime Pairs or Corner Date blocks. Submit with lowest net price. A. P. Merrick, 7204 SE 32 Ave., Portland 2, Oregon. (Member 743)

WANTED: France to USA 19th Century covers. Submit with lowest net price. A.P. Merrick, 7204 SE 32 Ave., Portland 2, Oregon (Member 743)

WANTED: France and Colonies early issues to 1949 only at wholesale prices. Including regular, commemorative, semi-postal, airmail, airpost semi-postal, postage due, military franks, occupation, official and newspaper. George M. Pacheco, 4477 Sierra Drive, Honolulu 16, Hawaii (Member 755).

BUY OR EXCHANGE: Any French colonies in Africa except Algeria, Tunisia or Morocco. Also want Reunion, Madagascar, French Guiana, St. Pierre & Miquelon and Laos. CANCELLED ONLY. Have vast ammount of mint and used duplicates for exchange - also better stamps. Helge Plougmann, P.O. Box 3174, Cape Town, South Africa. (Member 714)

EXCHANGE: Have several thousand Sages to swap for general foriegn - or what have you? Jacques A. Musy, P. O. Box 7, Valrico, Florida. (Member 16)

EXCHANGE: Have a few thousands of France #58 (25 centimes blue) to swap for what have you in general foreign - basis Scott. Jacques A. Musy, P.O. Box 7, Valrico, Florida (Member 16).

WANTED: Will buy all Obock and Somali Coast triangles, mint and used, very fine to superb, at reasonable prices. Send stamps and/or description and prices. C. H. Adams, B. P. 2085, Tangier, Morocco (Member 688).

WANTED: French rocket covers and early New Mexico covers. Mrs. Isabelle Boffin, 3501 Anderson Ave., S.E. Albuquerque, New Mexico (Member 577).

WANTED: Source of postally used stamps of the new African Republics. Rolfe B. Daniels, 123 S. Alexandria Ave., Los Angeles 4, Calf. (Member 545).

WANTED: APO 418 covers (French Guiana, World War II). John M. McGarry, 189 Ashuelot St., Dalton, Mass. (Member 710)

WANTED: Madagascar, 1891 Type-set issue; on cover, and in blocks. Homer Hilton Jr., Union National Bank, Marquette, Mich. (Member 526)

WANTED: APRES LE DEPART marks on metropolitan, consular office and colonial covers. Details first, please. Reg. C. Morris, RCA(GB) c/o RCA, Riverton, N.J. (Member 724)