



Published bi-monthly by the France and Colonies Group
Secretary: Miss Helen V. Anthony, 24 Franklin Place, Montclair, N.J.

FRANCE RF'S ON MERCURY

Philatelic Magazine

MARCH 9, 1945.

The "RF" Overprints by the De Gaulle Government
on Remainders of the Petain Printings of the Mercury
type, with Notes on the Printing Plate of the 50 centimes

By SGT. N. G. ELDERKIN

(with the British Liberation Army in France)



The issue of the four low-value "Mercury" (modified) type overprinted was on sale at large provincial offices on Dec. 12, 1944.

The sales have been limited to five sets per applicant, but I have been able to obtain a sheet of each value on loan to note the type shifts and varieties.

I might add that I have made a prior inspection of at least ten sheets of each value, and I am only noting those varieties which exist in all sheets inspected.

The four values are 10, 30, 40 and 50c., Colours: blue, red, violet and turquoise-blue respectively. The overprint is applied to full sheets of 100, two panes of 50 (5 x 10) with a gutter of stamp-width between. The overprint consists of the letters "RF" on top of the original inscription "Postes Francaises." The type is 2.5mm. high, and the width of the overprint is 4mm. It is printed in block, sans-serif letters without stops.

The following are the varieties found in each value:—

1. 10c. blue. Plates 3 and 4, dated 5.8.44 in lower right-hand corner.

Stamp 44 in the sheet, overprint very faint, and decidedly to right of normal position.

2. 30c. red. Plates 2 and 3, dated 8.1.43.

Stamp 96 distinctly heavier type for overprint, and this is very noticeable in the full sheet.

3. 40c. violet. Plate 4, dated 14.11.44.

No general varieties, but a few misplacements in different positions on each sheet, as if the type was very loose.

4. 50c. turquoise-blue. Plates 3 and 4, dated 27.8(?).44 (may be an "8" badly worn, or a "6" indistinctly printed).

The paper in this value is very different. The lower values have a semi-transparent thin hard white paper. This

value is printed on a thicker and softer paper, with a decidedly yellowish-buff tone.

Stamps 67, 88, 95, 99 and 100 have the overprint much lower (3 to 5mm.) and nearly central on some stamps instead of normal position.

No. 45 has the lower arm of the "F" missing entirely.

Printing Varieties

(Plate 3 only. Plate 4 is normal in all respects)

By the appearance of the whole sheet, the plate seems badly worn.

All ten stamps in first vertical row at left, and the lower three in the adjacent row, are in a definitely deeper tone, as if this portion had been completely renewed.

In stamp 56, the "0" of "50" almost missing, with the exception of a small curved-shape piece at bottom of the value-tablet.

In Nos. 69, 93, 94, 98 and 100, the "0" of "50" is a definite "C" with clear-cut ends. I have inspected this variety under a strong glass. Each stamp is the same, with full colour in the space between the ends of the apparent "C." To a stranger to this issue it gives an impression of being a 5c. value if seen detached from the sheet.

Being a surface-printed issue, it appears that this variety is worth noting, as it occurs in the same position on all sheets of Plate 3 that I have had the opportunity to inspect. The variety being placed in different positions on the sheet with the normal ones interspersed seems to suggest some other reason than the breaking of a figure in the plate. If two dies were used, it seems improbable that they would be used together in such a haphazard fashion. Maybe some more advanced readers would like to give an explanation. I should be pleased to hear if they could.

Nice. We have to thank M. Camille de Rhynal (Nice) for the copy illustrated. He says this overprint made on the day of Liberation, contrary to many others, had no publicity nor official patronage, having been prepared clandestinely before the Germans had departed. The inscription, if not entirely clear in the illustration reads (under the Lorraine Cross) "F.F.I./NICE/LIBRE/28-8-44." M. De Rhynal does not state to how many values it was applied.



LIBERATION
OVERPRINT
OF
NICE

From
Philatelic
Magazine
April 6, 1945

Liberation Overprints

An article by Lt. Frank Teixeira and Harry Weiss, in "Weekly Philatelic Gossip" of May 5, 1945, is an essential source of information for all who are interested in this group of stamps. To the list given in our article in the March-April number, these authors add several offices and various items of information. We list these alphabetically by office names, to fit with our previous list:

Annemasse: The Petain 80c was overprinted as well as those previously reported. The 1.50 f and 4.50f come with inverted surcharge.

Baccarat: Surcharge "Baccarat Libre" and "1-11-44" in two lines. Apparently unauthorized. On Petain 60c, 70c, 80c, 1f, 1.20f, 2f, 3f, 4.50f, 5f. The 1.50f comes invert, also se tenant with the unsurcharged stamp.

Bellegarde: Surcharge "Bellegarde 8-6-44 et 16-8-44." On Petain 50c, 70c, 80c, with extra surcharge varying from 1f to 10f for local relief.

Bordeaux: The 1f and 4f come with invert overprint and the 1.50 with double overprint. The three overprint types come in combinations of 2 se tenant; all three not seen together on one strip or block. There were also special printings of 950,570 and 380 sets in the 3 types, on the Petain 50c, 1.50f, 2f, 3f and unlisted stamps in this type: 30c lilac, 1f ultramarine, 5f bright red. Se tenant pairs of two types exist in this series: also.

Bourg d'Oisans: The 3 values are reported as all on Mercury issue; only 500 of each made. (The issue is clearly speculative--Editor F. & C.P.)

Chablais: Overprint "Chablais Libre F. F. I. 17-8-44." On Petain 60c, 70c, 80, 1f, 1.20f, 1.50f, 4f, 4.50f. Listed under Thonmin in Gossip. Note that we listed it without date in our precious article; we followed Harris in this.

Chambery: The overprint comes without date line on Petain 1.50f, 4f, 5f; dated on 4f, 4.50f., also dated on several other stamps not definitely given.

Chatellerault: The 1.50f Petain comes with double surcharge in black. Error F.R. for R.F. occurs-- not stated on which stamps.

Cherbourg: Issued at main post office. The 1.20f Petain was overprinted, as well as those previously reported. The 1.50f comes with the surcharge inverted. Also reported from Val de Sair station of Cherbourg are the Cherbourg 80c, 1f, 1.20f, 2f, with the regular surcharge.

Chouze-sur-Loire: Overprint script R. F. in box. On Petain 60c, 70c, 80c, 1f, 1.20f, 1.50f, 2f, 2.40f, 3f, 4f, 4.50f, 5f.

Collognes: Surcharge "28-8-44 Liberation F.F.I. Fort L'Ecluse" in several lines. On the Mercury 10c, 30c, 40c, 50c blue green; Petain 60c, 70c, 80c, 1f, 1.20f, 1.50f, 2f, 2.40f, 3f, 4f, 4.50f, 5f; 1941 commemoratives 5f, 10f, 15f, 20f. Nothing as to authorization reported.

Cursai: "R.F.", not described, on Petain 60c to 50f (apparently entire series)

Curzay: alternative spelling of Cursai; see that office in our previous article and this.

Decazeville: Initials in surcharge stand for "Comite de Liberation du Bassin Houillier." The Petain 80c was overprinted as well as those previously reported.

Ecluse, Fort L': See Collognes.

Fort L'Ecluse: See Collognes.

L'Ecluse, Fort: See Collognes.

Lille: Issue reported at 70,000, including 1,000 without F, 2,000 without R, 1,250 invert surcharge.

Loches: Values other than the 1.50f Petain exist: not yet reported which stamps.

Lyon: Initials reversed, "F.R." exist on the Petain 1f, 4f. The Mercury 40c, Petain 1.20f, 3f, 4.50f exist se tenant with unsurcharged stamps. These varieties are not excessively scarce: 500 to 2500 copies of each known.

Marseille: Surcharge "R.F. Gouvernement Provisoire" with cross of Lorraine. On Mercury 10c, 30c, 40c, 50c, Petain 60c, 70c, 80c, 1f, 1.20f, 1.50 f. Nothing stated on authorization.

Measnes: The Petain 1.50f comes with the surcharge inverted; also invert se tenant with a normal stamps.

Niort: Both sizes of surcharge are found on both the entire Petain set previously reported, and on 4 values of the Mercury type (no mention of which value). Apparently the two types were set up together in the same form for a printed job.

Oisans: See Bourg d'Oisans, correct form of office name, in this and earlier article. In Gossip article this form, Oisans, is used.

Poitiers: The 1.50f Petain comes se tenant with unsurcharged stamp. Many varieties occur in the surcharge.

Pons: All items exist with inverted surcharge, the two types of surcharge se tenant, as well as other varieties (their nature is not stated).

Salins: Surcharge large cross of Lorraine. On Petain 1.50f, 4.50f. Both exist with invert surcharge. Nothing stated on authorization.

Salon B-d-R: alternative name of Salon de Provence, which see, earlier article and here.

Salon de Provence: Surcharge "R.F.", with extra face value surcharge for relief, on 6 of the values. On 1941 commemoratives, 5f, 10f, 15f, 20f; Petain 60c, 70c, 80c, 1f, 1.20f, 1.50f, 2f, 2.40f, 3f, 4.50f, 5f. "Three miscellaneous varieties or types also." No further information given.

Saverne: Surcharge "R.F. nested with large V" on various German stamps of 1941-44 ----- 40 different items. Issued Dec. 7, 1944, when this town in the Department of Bas-Rhin was taken.

Thonon-les-Bains: alternative form of name of Thonon. Apparently not a separate issue but an office of use of the Chablais stamps.

Thorens: Surcharge "Thorens Liberee 14-7-1944 Vivre Libre ou Mourir F.F.I.. On 4 values with additional surcharge for relief: not stated which values, with or without relief surcharge added. Nothing as to authorization.

Tours: Surcharge "R.F." reported as boxed or "in medallion." The Petain 60c, 80c, 3f, were overprinted as well as those previously reported.

Val de Sair: See Cherbourg.

As readers have been most charitable about typographical errors in our own article ("Corss" for "cross" being the most conspicuous), it is hoped they will be equally kind to the authors of the Gossip article, who suffered in the same way at several points. We take this occasion to

note two other typographical errors in our own article:

Under Poitiers the final statement should read: "...not the 50f, says Harris."

Under Cherbourg where it reads "1.50f," of course "1.50f" is meant.

We extend our cordial appreciation to Messrs. Teixeira and Weiss for their well-taken comment as to speculative nature of many of the items in the Liberation issues, and their fine caution about the ease with which counterfeits might be made. We learn from the Gossip office that their article was written and in the hands of the editor several weeks before our article was even written.

Annual Meeting --Officers Elected

On Thursday May 3, the officers for 1944-45 were elected at the Annual Meeting. Reports of officers for the year ended were received. The new officers are:

President: Ensign J.B. Kremer 3rd (now on active service in the Pacific).

First Vice-President: Stephen G. Rich

Second Vice-President: Dwight B. Ball

Recording Secretary: George Mary

Corresponding Secretary: Helen V. Anthony

Treasurer: Paul Baudry.

Till President Kremer returns, the other officers will keep affairs going. Vice-President Rich has appointed himself as editor of the Philatelist for the year.

Paquebots de la Mediterranee



Referring to Dr. Vaurie's article on these, F. & C. Philatelist, Vol. 3, No. 4, May-June 1944: a later use is reported. Your editor has seen the rectangular boxed type B, but 30 x 13 instead of 28 x 13 mm., in red, on a letter from Smyrna to Marseille, postmarked "Smyrne Turquie 22 Dec 76" usual double circle in black, franked with the 30c Type Sage (Type 1 or Remade Die). Who can cite us later dates, or dates after 1873 on any other types?

Reports Wanted:-- French Louisiana Covers.

We are pleased to ask all members to help by sending reports of any covers they may have, from Louisiana when it was French before 1803, to Mr. Harry M. Konwiser, editor of the United States Stampless Cover Catalog. Mr. Konwiser is preparing final copy for a new (4th) edition of this catalog, and desires to have the report on Louisiana, especially the early covers, as full and complete as possible.

He says:

"Give exact reading of the two mark, using capitals or lower case exactly as they appear, neither adding nor ignoring punctuation; size of mark in mm. to nearest whole millimeter, both height and width; date; rate marking and whether manuscript of handstamp; color of each marking, even if it is black."

His address is 181 Claremont Ave., New York 27, N.Y.

Every contributor of information will get mention in the list of collaborators which will appear in the published volume.

France Airpost Stamps

Scott's C1 and C2



By "Spying Eye."

Reprinted from the S.P.A. Journal, March 1945, by courtesy of author and editor.



GENUINE

Wing spread: 12 mm.
Length of fuselage from the tip of propeller to rudder: 11 mm.
Tip of left wing: Round.
Tip of right wing: Tapered to a point.
Shading lines in fuselage: Nine lines.
Tail wheel: To the right of t of Poste.
Length of "Poste Aérienne": 21½ to 22 mm.
Space between the two words: 2½ mm.
Letters P and A: 2½ mm high, well shaped.
Bottom of types: cut fairly square, in line.
Apostrophe on letter e never touches the letter e.
Dot on letter i is square.
Top of first vertical stroke in letter n in Aérienne well shaped, round.
Ink used for surcharge: dark blue, jet black.

FORGERY

12½ to 13 mm.
12 mm.
Flat.
Round.
Seven lines.
Directly above t of Poste.
22½ to 23 mm.
2 mm.
3 mm. high, not uniform.
Bottoms of types round, out of line.
Apostrophe always touches the letter e.
Dot on letter i is round.
Top of first vertical stroke of letters n in Aérienne pointed.
Grayish blue, grayish black.

Compare the shape of the cockpit of the plane in the genuine and the forged overprint. The stamps are of the 1900-1920 regular issue, overprinted with a plane and text in dark blue on the 2 fr. and in jet black on the 5 fr. value. The forged surcharge is usually on used copies of the genuine stamps. On all copies seen by us, the forged surcharge is on the top of the postmark. This is very distinct especially on the 2 fr. value. Collectors should be especially careful in purchasing used copies of these stamps. Judging by the measurements taken of the various catalog illustrations, the genuine surcharge, and the forged overprinted stamps, we came to the conclusion that the forged surcharge is copied from the distorted illustration of one of the popular stamp catalogs.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DIAMOND

Print Variety on 1.50f Iris Type

Mr. Louis Moonitz, Castle Point, N.Y., showed your editor two copies of the 1.50f Iris type of 1944 in dull brown red, both used in 1944 or early 1945, which illustrate an interesting form of variation in printing. One shows the regular reasonably clear printing, with a few of the white letters partly clogged by gummy ink. The other is a "dry print", not merely underinked --- it shows a pronounced textile effect, like the mark of a handstamp struck on a pad of ribbed fabric. This effect shows over most of the design.

About the "Richelieu" Overprint.

During 1943 and early 1944, there was quite a little discussion of the "Richelieu" overprint put on the then obsolete 1.50f red brown Petain stamp of France. Only brief mention of it was made in this Philatelist, because interested and informed members of the Group were compiling two articles, which appeared in "Stamps" during Feb. 1944 and "Gossip" during May 1944. Requests for information continue, however.

The known facts are:

The "Richelieu" rubber handstamped overprint was strictly unofficial, applied by persons in New York not connected with any organ of French government (of any of the then existent sections -- De Gaullists, Giraudists, Petainists), in mid-1943, on stamps bought up along Nassau St. and uptown stamp dealers' row. The device was then put aboard the battleship "Richelieu."

No cover is yet known on which the stamp with "Richelieu" overprint actually paid postage or any part of postage.

It has been disavowed as unknown, illegal and unauthorized, by the French authorities.

Covers bearing it show it cancelled by favor or by accident only. Its standing is exactly an airmail etiquette made out of an obsolete stamp, but unofficially made.

The same overprint on stamps of Senegal and Mauritania is of the same origin and standing, but is on stamps still valid at the time.

Any catalog listing does not affect the case but is simply an error-- whether in the "Air Post Catalog" or in any present or future book published in France.

The price is today being pegged by those who wish to see it "legitimized", and who are buying up all copies, bidding them up to what they aim to charge for it, as they appear on the market.

The handstamp is reported still to be in existence, and in hands in which it could be used for making more copies or other varieties.

Mr. Marshall T. James of Suffern, N.Y., has announced the engagement of his niece, Helen Van Zile Anthony of Montclair, N.J., to Mr. Clarence F. Stringham of Montclair, N.J.

Milwaukee Chapter

In March 1945, just too late to announce in the last Philatelist, a Milwaukee Chapter of the Group was organized. Ben Reeves of Chicago was instrumental in getting the new chapter under way. The officers elected are:

Chapter Chairman.....Paul H. Segnitz

Chapter Secretary-Treas..Kenneth Olson

Additional Governor.....Karl Zapp

Those in and near Milwaukee who care to get notices and attend meetings should get into

touch with Secretary Olson at 835 North Cass St; Milwaukee 2, Wis. Meetings will be held often; and it is hoped that the new chapter will take an extensive part in the next stamp exhibition, now being promoted by the Milwaukee County Council.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

March 1 to May 31, 1945

NEW MEMBERS: Welcome.

- 200 Thivierge, Cpl. Albert, 146th A.A.F. Unit, (F.T.R.), Selfridge Field, Mich.
- 202 Brack, Alfred F., 9 Ann St., Paterson, N.J.
- 203 Deutsch Mrs. Edna E., 6020 Fifth Ave., New York 20, N.Y.
- 204 Seed, Allen H., Minneapolis Civic Council, 1210 McKnight Bldg., Minneapolis 2, Minn.
- 205 Keel, J.L., P.O. Box 687, Wilson, Okla.
- 206 Duerr, Paul, 68 State St., Albany 7, N.Y.
- 207 Kiehl, George F., 603 Prairie Ave., Glen Ellyn, Ill.
- 208 Pollack, Herbert, M.D., 5343 Cornell Ave., Chicago, Ill.
- 209 Anderson, M.R., 621 Lenox Ave., Daytona Beach, Fla.
- 210 Marsh, Prof. George E., 630 F St., N. E., Washington 2, D.C.
- 211 Boucher, Dr. Romeo, 1058 rue St. Denis, Montreal, Que., Canada
- 212 Hieber, Fred, 4045 N.W. 22nd Court, Miami 37, Fla.
- 213 Kiefner, C.H., R.D. 12, Box 580, Houston, Texas.

NEW CHAPTER: Welcome.

The Milwaukee Chapter; K.F. Olson, Secretary, 835 North Cass St., Milwaukee 2, Wis.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

156 Hoefler, Otto, from Santa Susanna, Calif., to Ensign Otto Hoefler, 446300, Camp Endicott, ODT-E4L, Davisville, R.I.

----- N O T I C E -----

If this copy is marked in red at this point, your dues are in arrears--and no further copies of the Philatelist will be mailed you until you are reinstated.

We have gently reminded you before, and will be greatly disappointed if you don't wish to continue with us.

DON'T let your membership lapse.

Any constructive suggestions will be welcome from any member.

DON'T let your membership lapse!

The secretary's address is on the front page and please allow sufficient time for the mails to reach. Also, there are times when immediate reply can't be given.

THE PHILATELIST:

Volume 4, No. 2, the number with the article on the Liberation Overprints, has met with the widest interest and approval among philatelists scattered over the entire country. Copies are still available at 25 cents each, from office of the Secretary

Back numbers of Volumes 2 and 3 are still available, either singly or 25 cents each, or in sets at \$1.00 per volume of six numbers.

Vol. 1, No. 1, is out of print, and another number in Vol. 1 will probably be exhausted ere this notice appears. The other numbers in that volume can still be supplied at 25 cents each.