



France & Colonies Philatelist



A stamp that never was. Story on page 48.

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FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIST

USPS #207700

ISSN 0897-1293

Published quarterly by the

FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY, INC. (N.Y.)

Affiliate No. 45, American Philatelic Society

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April 1998 - Vol. 54, No. 2, Whole No. 252

Second-class postage paid at Bloomfield, NJ

Office of Publication: 103 Spruce St., Bloomfield, NJ 07003

An additional entry office at Platteville, WI 53818

Printing arranged by: Jay Smith, P.O. Box 650, Snow Camp, NC 27349

Dues \$11.00 per year. Parent Chapter and Foreign \$15.00 (plus \$5.00 admission fee)

A subscription to the *F & C Philatelist* (at \$11.00 per year) is included in the membership dues.

All communications about membership, subscriptions, publications, activities, and services of the

Society should be sent to the Corresponding Secretary,

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MARSEILLE and the "BOXED RF"

by Lewis E. Bussey (FCPS #2813)

Prologue

On 15 August 1944, the second Allied invasion front in France began in earnest with a massive amphibious landing, supported by naval gunfire and French warships. Troops came ashore along the Provence coast during "Operation Anvil." As American troops pressed Germans up the Rhône, two key objectives were liberated on August 28th by French forces: the naval base at the port of Toulon; and Marseille, France's major Mediterranean commercial port.

As Toulon was still littered with remnants from the November 1942 scuttling of the French fleet and wreckage from recent Allied aircraft bombings, it was only marginally usable. Marseille fared little better, having no drydock or major facilities for warship repair.

"Although intensive minesweeping and salvage operations were necessary before Marseilles and Toulon could be used, unloading of supplies in the larger port began as early as 3 September and in Toulon on the 4th..."¹

By March 1945 Germany's troops were beaten back to the Rhine River. Except for small coastal pockets on the Atlantic, France was liberated. Adjacent to Provence, Italy from Florence north was still in Axis hands, including the port of Genoa, just 280 km (170 miles) away from Marseille.

The newly reorganized and redesignated Allied Flank Force of US and French ships operated from Toulon and Marseille. The French warship contingent varied, but usually included 4 or 5 cruisers, 6 destroyers (all based in Toulon), a number of escort ships, patrol craft and minesweepers. The escorts and lesser craft, based in Marseille, patrolled the entire Ligurian Sea and protected convoys to and from North Africa.

Among Marseille based ships that I recorded mail from were Destroyer Escorts (DEs) *Algérien*, *Sénégalis* and *Marocain*, Submarine Chaser (*Chasseur*) *CH 121* and Submarine *Le Centaure*. The DEs were three of six US-built ships allocated to the French in 1943 and picked up in the US by their French crews in early 1944. They each crewed 216 officers and enlisted men. *Le Centaure*, one of four 1st Class submarines left in the fleet by 1943, escaped the German net at Toulon in 1942 and eventually underwent repairs and modifications in Philadelphia in 1944. She crewed 61. *CH 121* was one of 50 ships transferred to France in late 1944 and crewed 25.

French crews, utilizing liberty during US repairs to their ships, struck up many friendships, leading to correspondence following their departure. Mail from small ships' crews is scarcer than mail from cruisers and destroyers (which also were repaired in the US) as they had fewer sailors. The procedure, however, remained the same. After letters were written, US postage was applied. Either a ship or base cachet was added, and "RF" (*Republique Française*) handstamped on the postage. Usually the cover was posted at this first overseas location. French censors would survey the contents, and occasionally post the cover again. Mail was usually transported to the US by plane and often subjected to additional US censoring (usually New York City).

¹Morison, Samuel Eliot, *The Invasion of France & Germany 1944-1945*, Vol. XI, pg. 290, 1957.

"RF" Handstamps

The letters "RF" were applied to US postage on orders of the US Navy. Only permitted for North American postings from the Mediterranean Theater, the intent was to identify French mail and to facilitate their censoring. Directives required the sender's name, ship and rating. Approximately 450 "RF" covers are recorded over an 18 month period starting mid-1944, showing 11 distinct types. The first nine "RF" types were applied at North African postal bases or aboard French ships.

The French Navy began repairing, resupplying, protecting and defending as well as providing shore leave from their new European bases, starting September 1944. Major and minor ships (cruisers, submarines, auxiliary patrol vessels, destroyer escorts, etc.) began to show French return addresses. Thus a 10th "RF" type, Toulon, is recorded from 11 November 1944 to well after July 1945. (Scott's "Specialized" Catalog incorrectly states "RF" mail was used only in North Africa, and lists only 10 types.)

The 11th "RF", from Marseille, appeared latest in the war. One of the earliest (if not the first) photographs of this type was shown in *Stamps Magazine*, and described as a "stranger in the woodpile."² The "sans serifed" "RF" letters are uniquely enclosed in a 21mm x 11.5mm frame or box (Figure 1). "Scott" lists the boxed "RF" as CM7 (type g), *Cérés* as PA15B (Marseille).

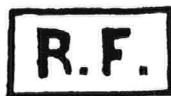


Figure 1. Boxed "RF".

This 11th "RF" is a limited use type, in that my recorded total of 14 such covers (plus an additional strike on piece) spans a seven week use (see census on page 37). The earliest two covers are dated 16 March 1945 (Figure 2). All

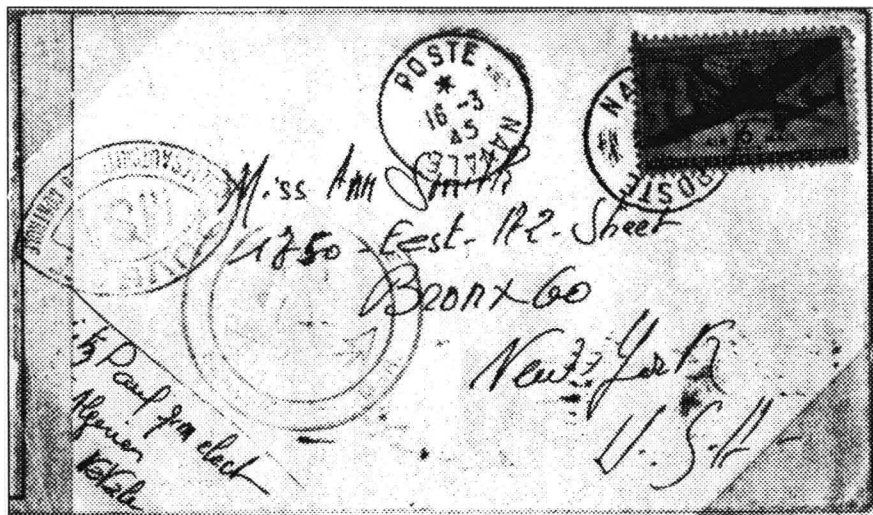


Figure 2. 16 March 1945 cover, with double strike.

were posted at the 6¢ per ½ oz. servicemen's preferential rate. All boxed "RF" handstamps but one were struck on the 6¢ transport plane airmail stamp of 1941. The exception (28 March, Ledeuil), was struck on the 1942 6¢ airmail stamped envelope. The few known, used, off-cover stamps give little detail, thus are nearly impossible to expertize and aren't included. Question marks represent unknown data.

²Phipps, Donald, "Stamps Magazine," pp. 90-91, 17 July 1948.

Census of the Type 11 Boxed Marseille "RF" Handstamp

Posting	Addressee	Sender & Ship	Censor	"RF" Color
16 March	A. Smith, NYC	Moritz, <i>Algérien</i>	MSA	purple
16 March	A. Smith, NYC	Moritz, <i>Algérien</i>	MSA	purple
28 March	A. Smith, NYC	Moritz, <i>Algérien</i>	MSA	purple
28 March	Ledeuil, Phil.	Vandan, <i>CH121</i>	MSA	purple
28 March	R. Malleterrn, (?)	(?), <i>Algérien</i>	(?)	(?)
29 March	D. Lynch, Balt.	Mabilioz, <i>Marocain</i>	MSA	blue/black
17 April	J. Taft, PA	Hailen, <i>Sénégalis</i>	MSA	(?)
23 April	M. Ropar, Phil.	Orsetelli, <i>Le Centaure</i>	P.Am	blue/black
25 April	(on fragment)	(?), (?)	(?)	blue/black
25 April	M. Ropar, Phil.	Orsetelli, <i>Le Centaure</i>	MSA	blue/black
27 April	Allavena (?)	(?), (?)	MSA	(?)
28 April	A. Smith, NYC	Moritz, <i>Algérien</i>	P.Am	(?)
2 May	M. Ropar, Phil.	Orsetelli, <i>Le Centaure</i>	P.Am	black
4 May	M. Ropar, Phil.	Orsetelli, <i>Le Centaure</i>	MSA	black
4 May	M. Ropar, Phil.	Orsetelli, <i>Le Centaure</i>	MSA	black

The Marseille "RF" is further distinguishable because the original ink color was **purple** (versus all others in black), a fact not mentioned in any catalog. It is a color that closely matches that used in various ink pads for censor handstamps. Perhaps that is what was used. The ink abruptly changed on March 29th to a blue-black color. Either the pad was refilled with black ink creating a hybrid color, or replaced completely. Four weeks later the ink color was totally black, indicating another refill or a new pad. The "RF" strikes are remarkably uniform, both in placement on the postage and application pressure. One of the March 16th covers has the only recorded double handstamp (Figure 2) of this type (an early application uncertainty?).

Cancels

The Marseille Naval Bureau, shut down by the Germans in 1940, reopened on 25 September 1944, two days after Toulon's. The naval cancel and datestamp (*cad*) used at this time in Provence are identified by **POSTE** at the top of a circle, and **NAVALE** at the bottom in a 360 degree arc. The star above the date identifies either Marseille (a vertical bar) or Toulon (a horizontal bar) (Figure 3). The Marseille's outer ring has a pronounced indentation above the **O** in **POSTE** (Figure 3).

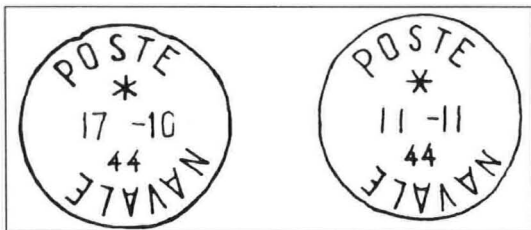


Figure 3. Marseille cancel and Toulon cancel.

The "RF" mails used the Toulon *cad* in late September 1944. The Marseille *cad* is first recorded dated 17 October 1944 on a cover from Submarine Chaser SC 522 (redesignated *Chasseur CH 111*). Usual French practice had two strikes of the *cad*, one tying the stamp, the second to one side on the envelope. Sporadic use of the Marseille *cad* is recorded over the next five months; however, covers from this period that bear US postage stamps lack "RF" handstamps. All boxed "RF"s are postmarked with the Marseille *cad*.

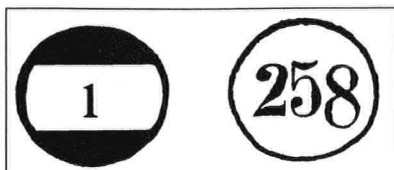


Figure 4. Marseille "Marques de Lecteur."

Censor's Handstamps, Tapes and Marks

Censoring was provided by the SCT (*Service des Contrôles Techniques*), a department within the French Censorship Agency.

"Once in France, the SCT, operating under ACG(F) [*Allied Censor Group, France*], set up 19 Regional Directorates and approximately 100 district stations with a staff that eventually numbered around 3,600. Aside from the eight Allied officers in Paris, additional men were attached to the SCT's seven Regional Offices, one each in Metz, Lille, Strasbourg, Lyon, Marseilles [*sic*], [Toulouse] and Bordeaux."³

Notwithstanding this fact, until mid-March 1945, the naval mail from southern France was generally sent through Africa (usually Casablanca or Oran) for posting and censoring. Four censor handstamps were assigned to the entire Provence area: **MS**, **MSY**, **MSA** and military censor **No. 13**, all used in the regional office of Marseille. Toulon had no censorship facility, and no known censor handstamp.

Censors opened the envelope at one end, read the contents for sensitive information and upon replacing the enclosure, sealed the envelope with a gummed tape. The tape was "tied" to each envelope face by a handstamped censor mark. SCT operatives applied their personal handstamps (*marques de lecteurs*) on the reverse side of censored envelopes. Those used in France (circles enclosing numerals, Figure 4), differ from those used in North Africa. Inasmuch as censor handstamps and tapes usually were paired, and can be chronologically distinguished, it is rare to find any mixed uses. Thus the combination of "RF", cancel, censor, tape and *marque de lecteur* can substantiate the mailing location and prove a cover's authenticity.

The earliest French mainland posting on US-directed mail has **No. 13** on a cover posted 30 September 1944 at Toulon. This censor marking (only in black ink) disappeared by early November from further use. Two others, **MS** and **MSY**, are not recorded on US-directed mail.



Figure 5. Marseille censor handstamp.

While other Paris censors used green or blue ink, **P.Am** is recorded only in black. (This use is also recorded on a few Toulon

Marseille "RF" mail was censored with one of two handstamps. The first, initially seen on 16 March 1945, is **MSA** (Figure 5). It is usually very lightly applied. Oddly, the second censor is **P.Am** (Figure 6), identified with Paris.



Figure 6. Paris censor handstamp.

"RF" covers.) The **P.Am** and paired censor tape (different than Marseille's) indicates the involvement of a separate set of censor supplies.

There is no logical reason for a Paris censor. The Paris Naval Bureau reopened on 20 October 1944 and the Division of Naval Posts was transferred from Marseille on November 1, 1944. However during March and April 1945 the following possible explanations come to mind.

- A Paris SCT censor was infrequently stationed in Marseille (perhaps traveling back and forth between the two cities).
- Marseille naval personnel were temporarily attached to the Paris headquarters.
- A temporary naval office of the Paris Naval bureau opened in Marseille.
- Possible indication of official mail.

I could wildly speculate that the Marseille "RF" handstamp was applied only at Paris! This could explain the Paris censor, Paris censor tape and the extremely low volume of covers recorded. The change in "RF" ink color may also be explained by some Paris intervention (i.e., "Directive: Use black ink").

³Giangreco, D.M., *Roosevelt, de Gaulle and The Posts*, p. 108, 1987; bracketed words added by LEB.

Fakes and Others

Several covers exist marked with what looks like a Marseille "RF", printed in black (Figure 7). Sometimes it is applied on the diagonal, at the envelope's top right corner. A Marseille *cad* is used, complete with indentation, but it is indistinct, and often missing the year date.

These covers, some dated December 1944(!), others from September 1945 to April 1946, lack sender's information, are usually addressed to an engineer "LeBerre," are uncensored and mostly typewritten. The larger box size, measuring a full 2mm wider and 1mm taller than the genuine handstamps, denotes this "RF" a fraud. The fraudulent "RF"s were used on French stamps and on revalued US airmail stamped envelopes (both conditions in conflict with legitimate "RF"s).

Why does this particular "RF" forgery exist on French mail dated long after the genuine uses? We know that George Mary was actively seeking "RF" mail at the close of WWII. Possibly a local "cottage industry" sprang up to meet his needs and those of others. A Marseille CTO block of eight US airmail stamps is known, seven of which are handstamped with this larger "RF". Other manufactured items undoubtedly exist.

Not to be confused with legitimate "RF"s and frauds are "RF" overprints used in liber-



Figure 7. Forgery comparison.

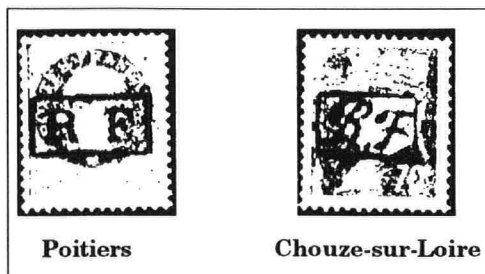


Figure 8. Other French boxed "RF" overprints.

ated France. Boxed types appeared shortly after the Normandy invasion in west-central France from Poitiers (two types, sanctioned by the PTT) and Chouze-sur-Loire (one type, unauthorized) (Figure 8). Although they bear some resemblance to the type used on US postage, all were used only on French stamps. The single Marseille-area provisional overprint on French stamps is an "RF"/Provisional Government/Cross of Lorraine" handstamp, in a full-stamp sized frame.

Epilogue

"By VE Day, 4,123,794 long tons of cargo and 905,512 troops had been landed at Marseilles [*sic*], Toulon and Port de Bouc; the lion's share of these at Marseilles. That one port, between 1 November 1944 and 1 April 1945, received on an average half a million tons of cargo and 54,000 troops per month."⁴

The final Allied offensive against Italy began in early April 1945. Until Genoa was liberated on 27 April, the port based and supported German torpedo-boat raids. Allied, and increasingly French, naval operations continued on a daily basis to limit German retaliation. In Marseille and Toulon, civil government transferred from the Allied Military Government to the French on 24 April. The German troops in Italy asked for an armistice on April 29th, effective on May 2nd.

By early May, Toulon, with its renewed ability to berth most warships, replaced Marseille as a French naval station. Marseille was used primarily for civilian and Allied military shipping.

The last two recorded Marseille "RF" covers were posted May 2nd. It is no great statement to say that this "RF"s demise coincided with the end of war in the Mediterranean, even though (spurious) use of other "RF"s lingered a few months longer. The end of the Boxed "RF"s is not as enigmatic as its beginning or its puzzling use, a puzzle that has yet to entirely fit together.

⁴Morison, Samuel Eliot, *The Invasion of France & Germany, 1944-1945*, Vol. XI, p. 291, 1957.

REGIONAL POSTAL MUSEUMS IN FRANCE (AND MONACO)

The regional postal museums of France and Monaco that were open in 1997 and should remain so in 1998, should you be visiting nearby, are:

Musée des Télécommunications en Flandre, Marcq-en-Baroeul (Nord Dept.);

Musée de la Poste... de Basse Normandie, Caen (Calvados);

Musée d'Histoire des P.T.T. d'Alsace, Riquewhir (Haut-Rhin) [your editor can attest personally to this being a rare treat-in combination with all the white-wine tasting in town...];

Musée Oscar Roty, Jargeau (Loiret) [presumably largely or entirely devoted to Roty memorabilia of the Sowers, etc. period];

Musée de la Poste, Amboise (Indre-et-Loire) [in another white-wine region];

Musée Postal d'Auvergne, St.-Flour (Cantal);

Musée Régional du Timbre et de la Philatélie, Le Luc (Var);

Musée de la Poste en Rousillon, Amélie-les-Bains (Pyrénées-Orientales);

Musée de la Poste des Pays de la Loire, Nantes (Loire-Atlantique); near the central P.O.;

Musée des Timbres et des Monnaies, Monaco.

(Courtesy of *Timbroscopie*, July-August 1997).

THE ELUSIVE SCOTT #Sla by Robert T. Kinsley (FCPS #2180)

Rue Drouot in Paris is a mecca for philatelists not just from France but from all of Europe, and consists of wall-to-wall shops of stamp dealers and auction houses. And of course such concentration of shops spills over to adjacent streets such as Chateaudun and Fauberge-Montmartre. I visited this august neighborhood late in 1995 in order, as one objective, to secure the examination by noted expert Roger Calves of a little known but listed variety of, what else, a French stamp. M. Calves authenticated as genuine two copies of this stamp, each used on cover, one of which I have since donated to the APS Expertizing Service.

Next I visited each dealer in that area, at least forty, including some of the biggest names in French philately. It doesn't take long to ask for a stamp and be told "sorry, we don't have it and moreover, we have never seen it." What is this elusive stamp? It is the 90¢ ultramarine Peace issue overprinted F (Figure 1) for the use of Spanish Civil War refugees interned in France, the variety identified as "point après F" by Yvert & Tellier and Cérès (Franchise #10a), as "stop after F" in Stanley Gibbons (#Mlla) and as "period after F" by Scott (#Sla) with a current Scott catalogue value of only \$18.50 used.

You are probably familiar with the other French franchise stamps, the ones overprinted F.M. (Figure 2) and they too have varieties, identified as "no period after M," so it is totally logical in searching for this refugee stamp variety to look for a period in the same location as on the other stamps. No such variety exists. Instead, the "point après F" refers to a plate flaw resulting in a distinct spot of ink at the end of the short lower bar of the F (Figure 3), occurring probably only once in each sheet of 100 stamps.



Figure 1.



Figure 2.

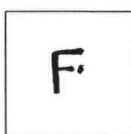


Figure 3.

As the Spanish Civil War drew to a close in early 1939, thousands of supporters of the defeated Republican forces, both civilian and military, fled across their border into southern France, and France quickly established a number of "beach" camps to house them. Although granting free postage privileges to internees is not new (for example, the U.S. in WWII grant-

ed free mailing to Japanese internees), it was unusual for France to decide to create and provide actual stamps. These "F" stamps were printed by rotary press in a quantity of 3.3 million (Richardson, 1986) on the 9th, 10th and 11th of May 1939. Such stamps, together with standard 110 cm x 145 cm envelopes in brown or blue, were provided to those refugees who requested them beginning in June 1939 at a rate of two per month, similar to the provision of military franchise stamps and envelopes, primarily for use on mail between camps or to refugee assistance centers in Paris.¹ These stamps were not available for sale to stamp dealers or the general public. The earliest reported usage is 17 June 1939. The inland letter rate increased from 90¢ to 1 franc on 1 December 1939 but mail from camps and worker groups continued to be accepted; unaffiliated mail required the extra postage (Figure 4).

The six largest camps,² most located along the Mediterranean shore, had their own postoffices and postmarks (Figure 5); a few other camps had separate identifying handstamps (Figure 6); but the majority of mail using this



Figure 4. The "F" stamp with added 10c stamp to make up the increased 1F rate, on April 1940 censored cover from Le Havre to Paris S.A.R.E. office.

franchise stamp came from refugees in Spanish worker groups (Compagnies de Travailleurs Espagnols) scattered all over France (Figure 7). Some camps, such as the notorious Le Vernet in Ariège, had conditions reported to be as bad as the worst concentration camps; it became known in the U.S. as the "French Dachau." Only camps with a mix of internees in addition to the Spanish refugees censored their mails (Figure 8).

Returning to the listed variety, if it is correct to assume that a distinctive plate flaw occurred only once in a printed sheet of 100, it follows that there could be at most only 33,000 original copies of the variety, and after more than 50 years, the survival rate would suggest that only a small fraction of that number now exists, reduced further by the fact that for most of the interim time very, very few philatelists even knew what the variety looked like. I communicated with Yvert & Tellier, Cérès and Stanley Gibbons and each responded that they had no information on how this variety became qualified to be listed in the catalogues. And who could top our own Journal editor who unabashedly stated "I'm terribly uninterested,"³ but that's what keeps a low catalogue value assigned to not just an elusive stamp but to a very real rarity.

Endnotes

1. The Spanish funded S.E.R.E., Servicio de Emigración para Republicanos Españoles [Spanish Republican Emigration Service]; and the French funded S.A.R.E. [Service d'Assistance aux Réfugiés Espagnols]

2. Argeles, Agde, Barcares, Gurs, St. Cyprien, and Septfonds.

3. While that statement *might* have been made when our author first proposed writing this article, editor's interest was increasingly piqued as each improved version of the article reached his desk--Editor

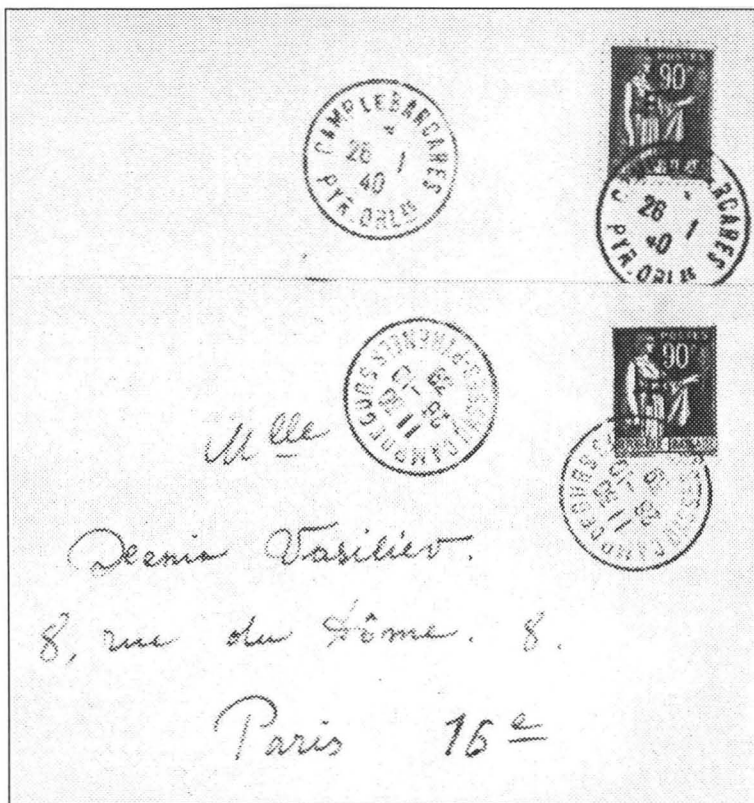


Figure 5. Two examples (Barcares, January 1940, at top, and Gurs, October 1939) of camp date stamps.

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 D. J. Richardson, "The History of the 'F' Stamp," *Jour. of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society [of Great Britain]*, September 1986.
 R. D. Shelley, "The Spanish Civil War Refugee Camps in France," *Linn's Weekly Stamp News*, August 15, 1966.
 R. A. Silverman, "French Concentration Camps--A Brief Political and Philatelic History," *American Philatelist*, December 1982.

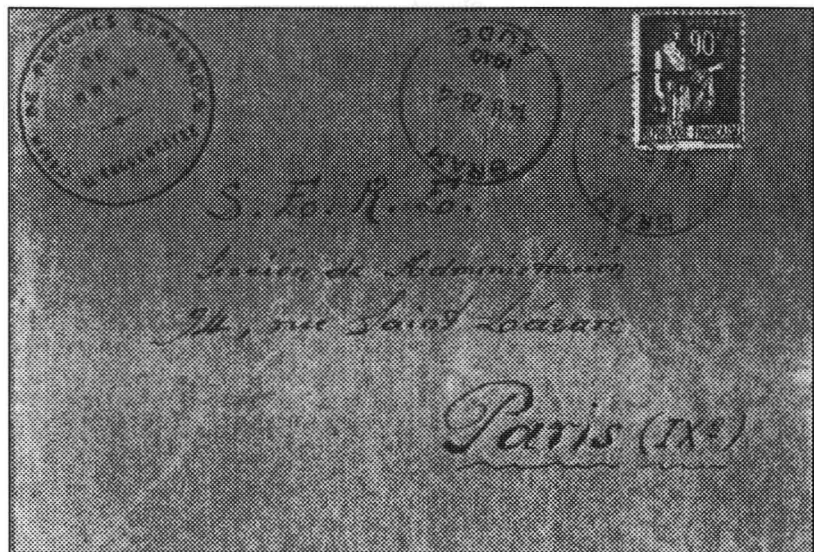


Figure 6a. Camp de Bram identifying handstamp on April 1940 cover from Bram (Aude Dept.) to Paris S.E.R.E. office.



Figure 6b. Refugee Center at Parthenay (Deux-Sèvres Dept.) [a smaller camp] receiving handstamp, on August 1939 letter from Spain.

Le Vaquemestre
F. M.
153^e Compagnie de
Travailleurs
S^TE LIVRADE

Figure 7. Example of a worker group handstamp.

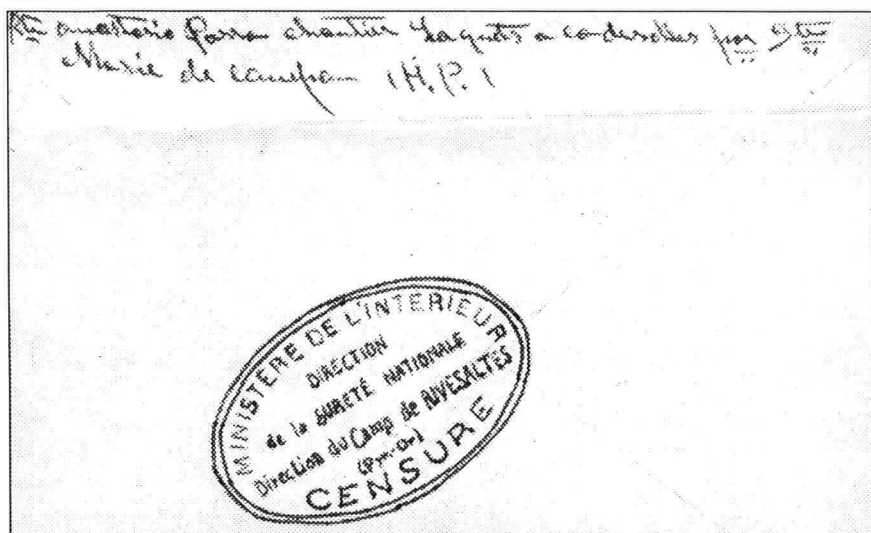


Figure 8a. Censor backstamp on letter from Rivesaltes camp.

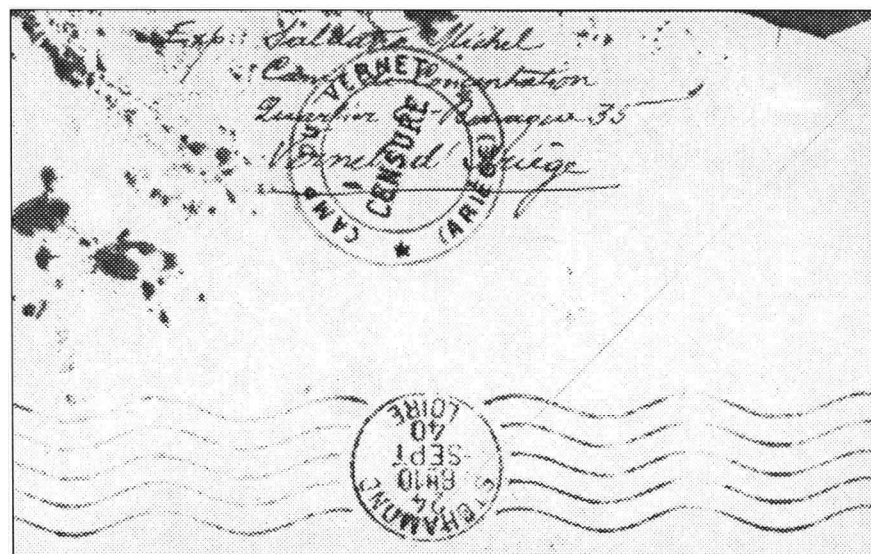


Figure 8b. Censor backstamp on letter from Vernet camp to Loire Dept.; arrived September 1940.

THE CARNET CORNER

by Bob Seeke (FCPS #1334)

Let's disgress from the mainstream of French booklets once more, and then I promise to return to the "real thing."

The illustrations are of the outer covers (Figure 1) and contents of a book-

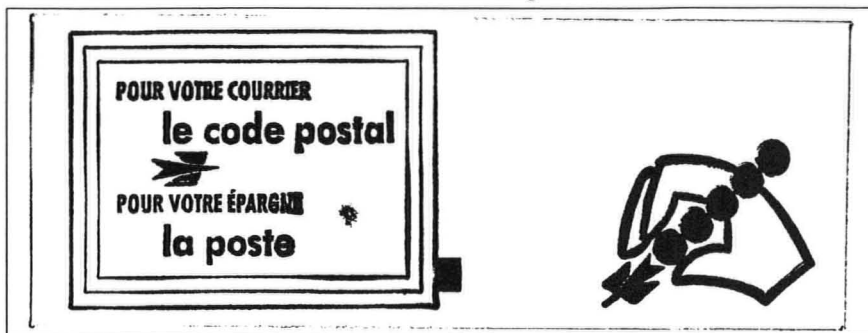


Figure 1.

let of post code labels (Figure 2). There are two panes of four labels each, and the dimensions of the booklet are the same as those of the booklets of 20

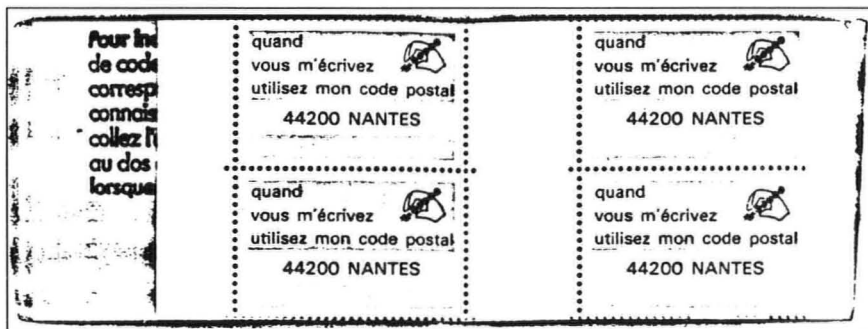


Figure 2.

stamps that were issued for the Cheffer, Bequet and Sabine stamps. All the post code booklet covers appear to have been printed in blue. The labels inside are known to me as being green, orange, blue, mauve and brownish red, the green color being the scarcest, and then the orange. Are any other colors known?

These booklets were prepared for a fair number of the larger towns in France. They were given to postal patrons and, as the labels are gummed, were meant to be stuck to the reverse of envelopes. Their purpose was to remind the recipient of the sender's post code. I believe they were printed and distributed around 1976 or perhaps a bit earlier. A more definitive date would



Figure 3. Lower left block from a sheet of post code labels.

be much appreciated, and will be shared with our readers.

Similar labels, and also a variety of other ones, also exist in sheet form (Figure 3), as self-adhesive stickers, and in other non-booklet formats. They apparently first appeared in 1972, and at least until 1979.

I have a few duplicate booklets, and offer them to our readers for a SASE. Unfilled requests will be acknowledged. Send to Bob Seeke, 110 Morey Park road, Nassau, NY 12123.

The new Marianne de Luquet stamps have been issued, and I'll be reporting on the booklet aspects of these in a near-future number (I hope). Until next time, *bonne philatélie*.

WE GET LETTERS...

[Regarding "The Stamp is Cheap, the Cover Isn't, in N° 251, October 1997, p. 124]: The first 4 points are valid, but I don't think they are the most important. Firstly, a dealer cannot afford to stock a cover which might sell for [only] about \$5. Most of my "pickings" come from dealers' "junk boxes!"

The most important factor is that these covers do not exist [in any quantity] because they were not saved in the first place. In the 19th Century and up to the end of the 1st World War, people saved letters and postcards, the letters usually being in the original envelopes. That was a great source for later collectors. Then they stopped doing that and lost was the source of supply. Even collectors didn't save the "common modern junk." As an example, I feel sure that many covers arrived at your home bearing the fractional stamps of the U.S. Transportation coil series. How many did you save? Today, few of these covers still exist, although the stamps were used in the many millions.

--Alan G. McKanna

* * * * *

[Regarding "Stamps as Money" in N° 250, October 1997, pp. 124-127]: While the only officially recognized encased postage stamp [for Monaco] is the 5c green type Sower [enclosed within a blank reading MUSEE OCEANOGRAPHIQUE/AQUARIUM DE MONACO], others that have been seen by me over the years are type Louis II 5c and 10c as well as type [Armories] 1c, 2c and 5c [all encased in same] enclosure of the Oceanographic Museum... I have carefully examined all I have encountered, and have not noted the "tell-tale" marks of their having been opened, with subsequent... substitution [of other stamps].

As to mounting and display techniques, I do the following: Taking two or three exhibition pages or similar thin cardboard which will equal or exceed the thickness of the *timbres monnaie* [which term I prefer to *timbres jetons*], I cut out squares in a pattern that will contain the [timbres monnaie]. I then paste the pages together and additionally secure them on top of a normal mounting page, creating recessed squares into which the [objects] are placed. The multiple-thickness "page" will still fit nicely into a standard sheet protector, and both the encased postage as well as items on adjacent pages are protected.

--J. M. Massler

On that same subject, Ray Gaillaguet advises that the unsold lots of encased postage stamps from the Sinais auction were remaindered by another Paris dealer with generally disastrous results. "The only items which sold well were the *cartes* ["booklets"] and the items in glassines [sachets]. Ray and Denise had to bid high for a number of the booklets and sachets, but we hope they'll really enhance their Sower exhibit, currently being revamped for PHILEXFRANCE 99.

* * * * *

As a recently joined member of FCPS, I would like to tell you that I am thoroughly enjoying the *F&C Philatelist*. It combines a variety of specialized information, across a range of collecting areas, with a nice telegraphic-style selection of news items of interest to members. The sense of humor conveyed by a number of regular contributors is an added delight.

I am a professor of mathematics, and I'd like to share with you three pleasant mathematical observations motivated by the October 1997 issue of F&C Philatelist. (1) Whole number 250 is twice five-cubed (2×5^3), a structure which helps make it an appealing numerical milestone. (2) For the Record item 750 has a nice numerical label too: two by three times five-cubed ($2 \times 3 \times 5^3$). (3) And I was delighted when I recently received my new membership number in FCPS, #3125, which is five to the fifth (5^5)! This is a wonderful collection of fives! "Give Me Five!"

--Roger B. Eggleton

* * * * *

Wallace Craig also wrote to say he enjoys the BALANCE present in our Journal's contents, particularly what's being written on modern material (such as the Sabines de Gandon). He read and appreciated Marty Bratzel's two short lead pieces in the January 1998, on World War II Cameroun, even before walking away from the post office. [Now that's being enthralled!].

A STAMP THAT NEVER WAS

The "stamp" that adorns this month's cover is actually nothing more than the extremely rare perforated essay for a 100F airmail stamp, proposed early in 1936 concurrently with the actually issued 50F value (Scott C15, Yvert Par Avion 15).

The 50F stamp (and the 100F project) were recess printed by the private printing firm *Institut de Gravure et d'Impression de Papiers-valeur*, specialists in security printing (both the 50F stamp and the 100F project are on paper with a rose security overprint to discourage counterfeiting). Both were taken into consideration by the PTT.

The *Musée de La Poste* at Paris owns a beautiful sheet bearing seven color

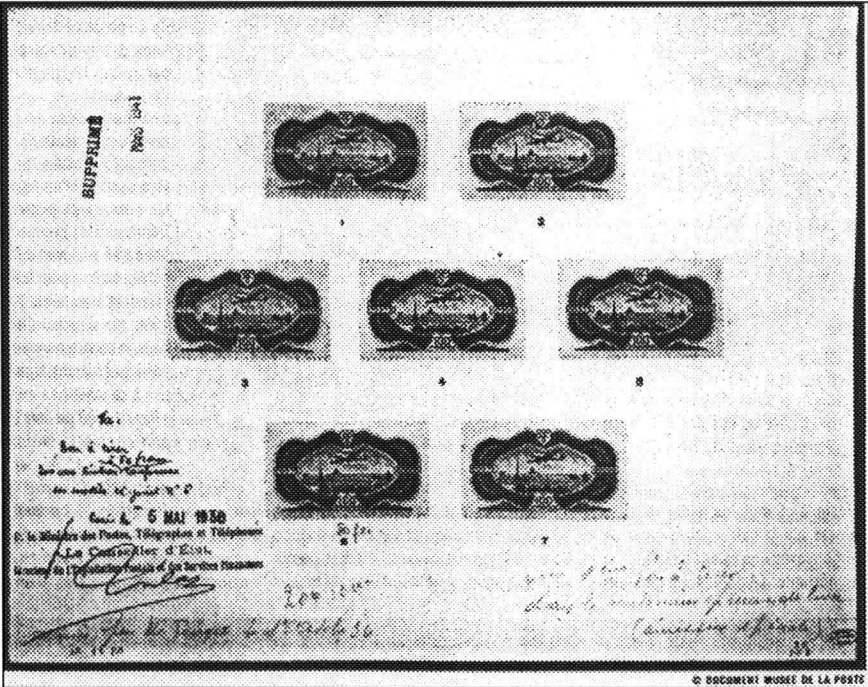


Figure 1.

trials of this 100F value and which is rather poorly reproduced here as Figure 1. It was approved for printing (as per lower left of sheet) by the PTT Ministry on 5 May 1936. But then came second thoughts. The green 50F value of the then current airpost series and the 50F security-printed blue and rose airmail were about to be issued, essentially simultaneously. Adding a 100F stamp would have been too costly for collectors in those Depression times. What's more, yet another 50F stamp, honoring Clément Ader, was also being considered at the time. It was eventually issued in June 1938 (Scott 348, Yvert 398).

These three 50F stamps were available only at larger post offices and all three sold rather poorly. They, and most other airmail stamps of the 1930s were ordered in January 1939 to be removed from sale. From hindsight, we can assume that very few 100F stamps—had they existed—would have been sold and used, except perhaps on philatelically-inspired covers of a few deep-pocket collectors of the late 1930s. (Abstracted in large part from an article by Michel Melot in *Timbroscopie*, December 1997). --S. J. Luft

AMAZING 1870-1871 WONDER STORIES--35

by Ernst M. Cohn (FCPS #1491)

Having amassed books, tear sheets and clippings about the Franco-German War since about 1963, I have quite a bundle of such material now and, in fact, have started to eliminate non-information that I kept originally for curiosity's sake. But I have not yet reached the point of eliminating *mis*-information and curious factual material that does not really contribute to the many facts about 1870/1871, which is quite a different thing.

Thus, for example, I have tear sheets of a catalogue for a mail sale that took place in December 1887 at Paris. One of the lots, #2226, concerns the newspaper *Le National* No. 1 (dated for 6 to 13 Nov 1870), in a blue envelope, its 20c Napoleon stamp canceled by the "1" star, a circular date stamp from Place de la Bourse of 7E/12 DEC 70 next to it, addressed to Monsieur Payen de la Garanderie, à Orglandes, par St. Sauveur sur Dome(?) [it is 50390 St. Sauveur le Vicomte today], Manche Department.

At the lower left corner of the envelope is a very clear, complete impression of a handstamp inscribed *Oesterreichische Zensurstelle - S.Z. - 1283*. Now, Austria was not involved in the 1870/1871 war, as we well know. It did participate in World War I and censored mail at that time. In World War II, it had already become a part of the Greater German Reich and hence did not have its own censorship markings anymore. This handstamp is obviously a creation of WWI, vintage 1914-1918, and the question is, how did it ever get on a *ballon monté*?

Let us first of all remember that the original French dated postmark is from the 7th collection period, the mail of which was not sorted until early the next day, i.e., in this case on 13 December 1870, though that makes no great difference in this case. The balloon *Général Renault* had left on 11 December. The next balloon, *La Ville de Paris*, flew straight into Prussia on 15 December and was captured partly in the Eiffel Mountains (one passenger and rope with anchor) and partly across the Rhine not far from Wetzlar (the other two aeronauts and what was left of and on the balloon). So this cover had been captured in Prussia and was presumably kept as a souvenir by one of the people who found it.

It looks as though it had remained in Germany for a few decades, finally having been put into an envelope during WWI to be sent to an Austrian phi-

latelist who might be interested in buying it for his own collection, or in selling it in his store or through auction to someone who collected such material. The cover had to pass from Germany into then allied Austria, at which point an Austrian censor opened the envelope into which it had been put, to examine the contents. And, in true bureaucratic fashion, he stamped not only the outer envelope but also the enclosed cover (and perhaps the accompanying letter as well) with his official censorship handstamp. He thus created what looks at first like an unexplainable oddity.

This particular issue of the French newspaper, i.e., with its Austrian WWI censorship marking, is also illustrated on page 109 of LePileur's *Les Aérostats Poste 1870-1871* [n.d., but printed in 1953 and sold by Au Comptoir des Timbres at Paris]. The author remained silent about the glaring anomaly which, though mentioned by the auctioneer, is not explained by him either. So this may be the first place where you can read what appears to be the only logical explanation of this oddity. Or do YOU have a better one?

TWO TYPES OF THE 1F RED IRIS?

The 1F red Iris stamp of France (Scott 378, Yvert 433) was printed in sheets (separated into post office panes of 100 stamps) intermittently between 15 December 1939 and 21 July 1941 (Figure 1). It was also printed in sheets for booklet stamps during 1-15 February 1940 (Figure 2). Because of the war and the fall of France in June 1940, booklets were never prepared. Instead, their stamps were eventually sold over the counter from panes of 80 stamps. Because of the differing sheet formats, the printed stamps had to come from different dies. But, there were no obvious differences that could be assigned to distinct types.

Then, in 1977 (if not earlier) Michel Trellis did notice a subtle difference. He found that the space between the **R** of REPUBLIQUE and the left stamp margin was about 0.35mm on stamps from sheets of 100 and only about 0.20mm on those from booklet sheets of 80 (Figure 3). [I find this spacing to be far from obvious.] He communicated this discovery to Pierre de Lizeray, the doyen of French 20th Century types and subtypes.

De Lizeray replied (26 May 1977) that indeed, sheet and booklet stamps of that period had to come from different galvanos prepared from different dies. In the case of the 1F Iris, the booklet-stamp die was copied from that for sheet stamps. Copies tend to be very slightly larger than originals and have to be filed down "to fit." To accomplish this, the copied die was probably filed along its sides and perhaps also at the top. The smaller spacing to the left of REPUBLIQUE was the result; the same may be true for the spacing above POSTES. In addition, the linework of copies tends to be thicker and heavier than in the originals. [I noted little difference in linework between the booklet stamps and at least the later (1940-1941) printings of sheet stamps.]

De Lizeray's letter and Trellis' explanatory notes were published only in 1997, in *Marianne* N° 45. I rather doubt that Yvert and/or Cérès will include these die types in future catalogues, considering the minute, seldom discernible differences between them. However, collectors should go back and re-open their albums in search for differences in the appearance of seemingly identical stamps that were produced in more than one format (i.e., sheets, booklets, coils, postal stationery) and that are not, as yet, repertoried as being of more than one type or subtype. "Lasting fame" may be the result!

--S. J. Luft



Figure 1. Coin daté block of 10 December 1940 printing from half-plate I of plate H + I [3rd press run from Press 4, Paris printing].

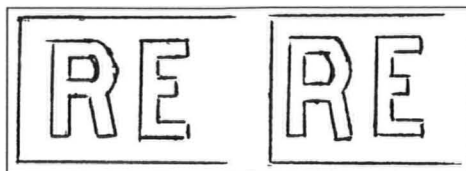


Figure 3. Copy of portion of Trellis' sketch showing difference in spacing between RE-PUBLIQUE and left margin, for sheet stamps (left) and booklet stamps (right).



Figure 2. Block from pane printed for unissued booklets in early February 1940.

RESEARCH HELP WANTED: FRENCH COLONIES METER STAMPS

Richard Stambaugh is compiling a catalog of the world's postage meter stamps which he and his co-author hope to publish in Year 2000. They need help with the meter stamps of the former French Colonies, especially those in Africa. Mr. Stambaugh wishes to establish sources for current metered mail of the former French Colonies and also to get in touch with collectors of these meter stamps. Please contact him at 613 Old Corlies Avenue, Neptune, NJ 07753, USA; e-mail: hcmrs@worldnet.att.net.

PRELIMINARY STAMP PROGRAM FOR PHILEXFRANCE 99

This program was released in September 1997 and, to date, there have been no changes. PHILEXFRANCE 99, the international philatelic exhibition in Paris, will honor the 150th anniversary of the first French postage stamps. Here are the stamps to be produced for the occasion:

- 6 December 1997: one stamp showing the red permanent-value Marianne de Luquet at left and the exhibition logo at right (see illustration);



- November 1998: set of five 3,00F stamps (selling at 25F) on the occasion of the 1998 Autumn Philatelic Trade Fair at Paris (the *Salon d'Autonne*); the extra 10f will contribute to the exhibition's financing;
- 1 January 1999: one definitive stamp at 3,00F marking the 150th anniversary of the 20c black Cérès (Scott 3, Yvert 3);
- 1 January 1999: two large format 10F stamps (to be sold for 50F), the extra 30F will (somehow) serve to gain full-time entry into the exhibition;
- [date not indicated]: Marianne de Luquet booklet with new cover advertising the exhibition;
- 2-11 July 1999: "an original and novel festive stamp" to be on sale only during the duration of the exhibition.

It's most unusual that no souvenir sheets or miniature blocks are included in this preliminary program. Only time will tell.

RANDOM EDITORIAL JOTTINGS

It's a good feeling to know that this Journal is being read and that occasional "special offers" are being taken up. Eight of you (thus far) sent your SASEs for copies of the short articles mentioned in the previous number's Announcements and News. Indo-China was favored over Reunion by a 3:1 margin.

We've received an unusually large amount of correspondence since the October 1997 and January 1998 numbers appeared. Comments of interest to our readers appear in this number's all-too-infrequent featurette, "We Get Letters...". Keep on writing!

I must have been terribly cavalier about the information picked up and then passed along in For the Record N° 756 (N° 251, January 1998, p. 27). One of our active researchers needs more specific data than appear in that note. Can anyone (I no longer have the reference) advise of (1) the exact date when the CFA franc was created, (2) what was its value originally in relation to the French franc [anything more precise than the 1.7 to 1, mentioned], and (3) exact date when this ratio changed to 1 CFA franc to 2 French francs. Bibliographic reference(s) also appreciated. Many thanks in advance!

Titles of some or most of our Regular Features tend to be pretty prosaic. How would you like to be "immortalized" by suggesting (and having accepted) some snappier ones? Sorry, no prize money...

For simple lack of space, and because too few items have surfaced, the "New Books, Pamphlets and Catalogues" listing will be held over to our next number. --S. J. Luft

MEMBERS' APPEALS

OFFER: Large stock of Paris covers from 1850s to 1876; Roman and block letter lozenges, Stars, wide selection of date stamps; mixed condition; from \$5 to \$40 each. Send want list to Tom Siddens, 745 East William St., San Jose, CA 95112. (Mb. #2932).

INFORMATION WANTED: Does anyone know the circumstance of a possible color error on the 75c carmine Sage (type I) (Scott 75, Yvert 71)? My used copy, which is uniform in color and doesn't appear to be a changeling, is dark violet and darker than the 5F violet Sage. Photocopy sent upon request. Bob Metcalf, 860 W. Moore Lk Dr., Fridley, MN 55432. (Mb. #1679).

OFFER: *Documents Officiels* for 1973, 1974 and 1975 (see the Yvert Catalogue for details). Contact Alex Krammer, 20415 Rancho Los Cerritos, Covina, CA 91724. (Mb. #3120).

WILL TRADE OR SELL: French aerogrammes, stamped envelopes, FDCs; also military covers, cancellations; POW mail, Navy ships, etc. Sorry, no lists. Mike Troubetzkoy, 3437 Taraval St., San Francisco, CA 94116. (Mb. #1843).

SOME SHOW REPORTS

- > **CHICAGOPEX '97** (Chicago, November 1997): Our society was well represented in Chicago, with all four exhibitors receiving Gold medals: Tom Siddens for "Cancellations on French Stamps of the Classic Period 1849-1876," Stan Jersey for "New Hebrides Islands, World War II Postal History," Lew Bussey for "French Naval Mail to America, 1943-1946," and Bob Kinsley for "The Conquest of Indo China 1861-1904." In addition, Eliot Landau showed his Abe Lincolns in the Court of Honor.
- > **Mid-Cities Stamp Expo** (Arlington, TX, November): Bob Kinsley received both of the Gold medals awarded in the one-frame competition, for "Ethiopia: Before Admission into the UPU" and "The Pacification of French West Africa."
- > **FLOREX '97** (Orlando, FL, November): A Display Class First to Cheryl Ganz for "U.S. Navy Blimp Mail."
- > **Collectors Club 1997 One Frame Competition** (New York City, late 1997): Award of Merit to Ed Grabowski for "Guadeloupe Printed Matter Rates."

- > VAPEX '97 (Virginia Beach, November): Gold medals to Tom Siddens for "Cancellations on French Stamps of the Classic Period 1849-1876" and to Steve Washburne for his Madeira postal history exhibit.
- > ARIPEX '98 (Phoenix, AZ, January 1998): Gold medal and Reserve Grand Award to Earle Plyler for his "The U.S. 2¢ Domestic Rate, 1892-1976."
- > SANDICAL EXPO '98 (San Diego, CA, January-February): Gold medals to Tom Siddens for his French Classics cancellations exhibit, to Eliot Landau for his U.S. Registry exhibit, to Stan Jersey for his Solomon Islands exhibit, to Roger Quinby for his Russia-used-in-Finland exhibit, and to Eliot Landau for a Philippines one-frame exhibit; Vermeil medal to Chuck LaBlonde for his Geneva postal history exhibit; and Silver medal to Bob Kinsley for his hirsute exhibit. Dave Herendeen and Stan Luft served on the jury.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

- > As an addendum to "A Guide to Collecting the Sabines of Gandon" which appeared in the previous (N° 251) number, the 1,00F red Sabine is reported (*Marianne*, N° 46, 1997) as having also been printed on laid paper: 14 November 1977 printing from RGR-1 press, 3rd press run.
- > In that same number of *Marianne*, Pascal Marziano indicates that the current internal postal rates within St. Pierre & Miquelon are far lower than those within France:

<u>Letters</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>St. Pierre & Miquelon</u>
	(18 March '96 Tariff)	(18 March '96 Tariff)
to 20 gm	3,00F	1,80F
20-50 gm	4,50F	2,60F
50-100 gm	6,70F	3,20F
Registry		
(minimum fee)	+15,50F	+12,00F

(10 April '97 Tariff)

The 18 March 1996 Tariff remains in force for France.

- > The reopening of the permanent exhibition halls of the Musée de la Poste in Paris has been delayed until the first half of 1999. The boutique remains open; certain other areas and halls are also open and are presenting temporary, chiefly thematic, exhibits.
- > The rather unusual, perhaps even disturbing to some, legend "*Pour Sauver la Race*" present on French semi-postal stamps of 1937 and 1939 (Scott B64-65, Yvert 356, 419) has nothing to do with racism nor does it evoke anything concerning the nearby Nazi and Fascist regimes of the times. Alain Chatriot, writing in *Le Monde des Philatélistes* for November 1997, explains it as simply a public awareness program against what seems to have been an epidemic of venereal diseases in the between-the-World Wars period.
- > The 1997 Grand Prix for philatelic artistry, awarded during the Autumn Philatelic Salon at Paris, went to the 4,40F Château de Plessis-Bourré, issued 24-26 May 1997 (for France) and to Mayotte's 3,50F Face of a Woman, issued 30 August 1997 (for the Overseas Territories). The salon or exposition, which was held 6-9 November 1997, attracted some 26,000 visitors, about the same as in 1996 but over a shorter number of days.
- > Through the American Philatelic Society, we have learned of the death, during 1997, of Jozef L. Kuderewicz of New Hampshire. Though not a member of our Society, Prof. Kuderewicz was a most learned and erudite man who owned and exhibited a first-rate collection of Polish postal history, including a number of Napoleonic-period military covers from (1) Polish units in the French armies and (2) the Grande Armée in Poland. Our very occasional correspondence on these subjects was always mutually beneficial.

- At November 1997's CHICAGOPEX, our Stan Jersey received the Military Postal History Society's Meritorious Service Award, for his many years of active service in that Society as a former president and director and as an exhibitor and writer. Congratulations, Stan!
- John Lievsay, long-time director and a former president of our Society, has been elected Chairman of the Philatelic Foundation.
- Pascal Marziano, editor of "Marianne," has discovered a postally used copy of the short-lived, 1,40F green Liberté (Scott 1795, Yvert 2186) that is totally bereft of its phosphor band. The item is a sheet stamp and was most likely printed on a TD6 press. Other examples of this variety should exist in someone's stock. (*Le Monde des Philatélistes*, January 1998.)
- "For the record," the stamp issued 24-26 January 1998 for the 200th Anniversary of the National Assembly actually commemorates the 200th anniversary of its use (ever since January 1798) of the former Palais de Bourbon as its permanent site. The original Assembly was first convened in June 1789, and this historic action has been commemorated previously on a number of stamps.
- The French Polynesian currency, the CFP franc (for *Compte Franc Polynésien*?) is currently worth about 0.055 French francs. In the next four years it is expected that the CFP will have its value fixed relative to the Euro, rather than to the franc.
- MARCOPHILEX XXIII, the annual postal history and cancellation exposition and bourse, will be held 10-11 October 1998 at Rouen. Unfortunately, I've been unable to determine where and when the 1998 exposition, bourse and Congress of French Philatelic Societies will be held. There's surprisingly little advance publicity for this major event, for which a stamp gets issued each and every Spring.
- The PHILEXFRANCE 99 brochures and preliminary application forms are now available. Inquire of your Commissioner; in the U.S., that would be George J. Kramer, 199 Charles Street, Clifton, NJ 07013. Entry deadline is June 30, 1998.

NEW ISSUES AND WITHDRAWALS

(Continued from N° 251, January 1998, p. 30)

France

- 24 (26) January 1998: 3,00F 200th Anniv. of the National Assembly [also see Announcements & News];
 - 31 January (2 February): 3,00F Happy Holidays (Valentine Day) greetings stamp;
 - 5 (9) February: 3,00F 25th Anniv. of the Mediator (ombudsman) of the Republic;
 - 21 (23) February: Stamp Day semi-postal (Blanc design) 3,00 + 0,60F; booklet of same at 22,80F [4 stamps at 3,00F + 3 stamps at 3,00 + 0,60F];
 - 28 February (2 March): 3,00F FRANCE 98 (World Cup Soccer) **round** stamp; 4,50F Abbé Franz Stock;
 - 13 (16) March: 3,00F Happy Anniversary greetings stamp.
- Withdrawals: 7 November 1997: 3,00F François Mitterand, 3,00F Employee Participation, 3,00F Centre Georges Pompidou, 3,00F National School for Bridges and Causeways, 3,00F St. Laurent du Maroni (Fr. Guyana), 6,70F Tavant fresco, 3,00F Millau (Aveyron), Stamp Day 97 (Mouchon design) 3,00 + 0,60F and 22,80F booklet; 12 November: 6,70F Art of Moninot, National Parks: 3-stamp set issued April 1996 and 4-stamp set issued April 1997, 3,00F "Puss in Boots" (EUROPA 97), 3,00F Philexjeunes 97 (Nantes), 3,00F Hommage to the French military in North Africa, 3,00F 70th Congress of French Philatelic Assoc., Versailles, 4,40F Chateau du Plessis-Bourré (Maine-et-Loire); 12 December: Marianne de Briat: 2,70F, permanent-value, and 3,80F, and all booklets of ten permanent-value stamps [booklets of 20 stamps and coils to continue on sale].

Andorra

- 14 (15) February 1998: 4,40F Nagano 1998 Winter Olympics;

- > 9 March: 30F booklet of ten Arms of Ordino self-adhesive stamps;
- > 30 March: 4,50F Chapel of Vila, Encamp;
- > 14 April: 5,00F 20th Anniv. of Rotary Club of Andorra.
Withdrawals: 7 November 1997: Hommage to President Mitterrand; Volleyball; 12 December: EUROPA 97 (two).

French Austral & Antarctic Terrs. (TAAF)

Withdrawals: 31 December 1997: all 1 January 1997 issues.

French Polynesia

- > 15 October 1997: Artists of Polynesia 85F, 96F, 110F, 126F;
- > 6 November: 600F Paris Autumn Philatelic Salon (Gauguin painting);
- > 3 December: 118F Children's Noël 1997;
- > 28 January 1998: 96F Year of the Tiger.

Monaco

- > 6 November 1997: 15F sheetlet for 550th Birth Anniv. of Botticelli;
- > 29 November: 3,00F 22nd Inter. Circus Festival, Monte Carlo; [the two 4,90F stamps for the Nagano 1998 Winter Olympics, reported in *FCP* N° 251, are se-tenant; plus sheetlet of eight se-tenant stamps for the Winter Olympics, in same designs as the pairs].

New Caledonia

- > 3 November 1997: 100F 5th World Conf. on Indo-Pacific Fisheries (sea horses); Art of the South Pacific: three at 100F each; Noël 1997: 95F and 100F.

St. Pierre & Miquelon

- > 19 November 1997: 3,00F Noël 1997;
- > 7 (12) January 1998: Marianne de Luquet definitives overprinted for islands: 1,00F, 2,00F, 4,20F, 4,50F, 5,00F, 6,70F; 3,00F Alain Savary (1918-1988) (former governor and deputy).

Withdrawals: 10 October 1997: 3,80F Customs House; 6 November: 1,00F 50th Autumn Philatelic Salon at Paris; 9 January 1998: Fish (four at 3,00F).

Wallis & Futuna

- > 15 October 1997: [face value of earlier-reported Karate at Wallis is 24F];
- > 6 November: Paris Autumn Philatelic Salon 350F and 1000F airmails;
- > 28 November: 800F airmail for 50th Anniv. of Death of Marshal Leclerc;
- > 1 December: 5F Campaign against AIDS;
- > 16 December: 710F airmail for Cent. of Death of Alphonse Daudet;
- > 24 December: 85F The Nativity at Wallis & Futuna.

REVIEWS

Reviews of Two Rossiter Fund Publications

The efforts of the Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund, established in 1985, are directed towards advancing knowledge about postal history. In 1997, it inaugurated an annual lecture that is also expected to result in a publication on the same subject matter as the lecture. Two of these books were published in 1997, one by the first lecturer and one by the third.

Barrie Jay, *Early Forces Mail*, ISBN: 0 9527177 4 3, xii + 57 pp., 8¼ x 11¼", softbound, 54 black and white (incl. maps) and eleven colored ills., £20 + s&h from Robert I. Johnson, Corresponding Trustee, c/o Osborne Clarke, 50 Queen Charlotte St., Bristol, England BS1 4HE; this book *only* is also available from L. H. Hartman, P.O. Box 36006, Louisville, KY 40233.

The main portion of this work consists of commentary about, contents of, and conditions under which folded letters of British military, both fighting men and prisoners of war, were moved in the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries. Included are the Thirty Years War, War of the Grand Alliance, War of the Spanish Succession, War of the Austrian Succession, Seven Years War, the miscarried invasion of England by France in 1796-1797, and prisoners' mail of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Also included are a brief description of the Rossiter Fund, foreword, preface, bibliography and index. The author gives sufficient details about each war and excerpts from many letters so that the reader can appreciate the way the writers thought, felt and perceived what was happening.

Spelling of the times is reproduced and indicates why not only we but also contemporaries had difficulties interpreting writers' ideas. The problem is not only one of orthography but also of usage, e.g., "a letter from the general off which I sent you a double." That surely is not a "doubloon," which the author mentions as a possibility yet himself doubts, but merely a duplicate or a copy. Then we find Bebrick (Biebrich) and Mentz (Mainz), but no identification on a contemporary map of the river that flows past Dettingen (the Main). One wonders how the troops ever found their way around.

A particularly haunting letter is one written by Phil Browne, who fully expected to be killed in the battle that was about to be fought. Fortunately, his premonition was wrong and he returned to England unscathed.

The involved plan for the 1796 invasion of England and its utter failure were novel to me and, though not postal as such, deserve to be known by anyone interested in history. Equally new were the detailed provisions established at about that time for treating prisoners and their mail. Whereas French prisoners, e.g., were entitled only to beer as far as liquid refreshment went. English prisoners could be given either beer or wine. And as for Frenchmen held by the British, they "must not write home to France without prior censorship by the Commissioners of the Transport Office..." One wonders how they censored mail prior to its being written.

Incidentally, one non-military cover is shown, captured by the British on its way from LeHavre to Philadelphia and released by the Transport Office after censorship for carriage to the U.S. It arrived at Boston, where it received a rare censorship marking, used during the War of 1812, showing that it was — Examined/Marshall's Office Massachusetts.

Paper, printing, and illustrations are of very high quality, making this book a first-class addition to libraries of those interested in the postal history of wars generally as well as one or more of the ones covered. --E. M. Cohn

François-Xavier Piat Dewavrin, *A Crimean War Study By a Postal Historian*, 64 pp. (incl. covers), 6 x 8¼", saddle-stitched, many ill. (in color on outside covers), £10 + s&h from Robert I. Johnson (address above), limited supply available.

The author has written this work in English but, as in all scholarly French works, the table of contents is in back, just ahead of the bibliography and acknowledgements.

The main portion of the book contains some 60 topics, so that each covers about one page, with covers illustrating many of them. Not being a specialist in the Crimean War, I was amazed to see that a lot of pertinent French and British covers went to or from the Baltic, rather remote from the Crimea but involved in the war because of the blockade of Russian ports. Some of the mail even passed through Scandinavia. For blockade reasons, too, an Allied fleet operated from Valparaiso (Chile) through the Pacific all the way to Petropavlovsk and past Sitka down to Sausalito near San Francisco. Covers sent through the Mediterranean also were war mail. It was, as the author says, the first world war.

One cover that is illustrated is addressed to Sarry Sabal, a place the author could not find on any map. I could not find it either. Then I tried phonetics, remembering the problems people of those days had with spelling, and I came up with a wild guess that this place may be the one that is spelled Sebastopol on the map. What do *you* think?

The back of the book shows illustrations of 32 stamps in color, mint and used, being pictures of stamps shown in black and white in the text portion.

Printing, pictures, and paper are of high quality, printing errors are few, references in the text to most illustrations are missing. The shortcomings are quite minor, as are some awkward English passages. They do not detract from an excellent study of the postal history of a war that was, in fact, much more complicated than its name implies. This book is important to postal his-

torians of wars, Great Britain, France, the Pacific, the Mediterranean, the Baltic, not to forget the Crimea and Black Sea. The author has written a seminal work on early postal history.

--E.M. Cohn

Theo Van Dam, *War Dates 1839-1859 * 1959-1979--A Geographical and Chronological listing of Wars, Revolutions and Major Political Events*; 110 pp., 8½ x 11", soft cover, spiral bound; 1997; \$23 postpaid in USA and Canada, \$25 elsewhere, from Postal Covers, P.O. Box 8809, Anaheim, CA 92812-0809.

Another tour de force from Theo Van Dam's computer date base! This latest "War Dates" extends coverage at both ends of the earlier (1996) 1859-1959 timeline, with over 3,000 additional dates listed. However and unless one happens to specialize solely in 1839-1859--or in 1959-1979--postal history, *A Century of War Dates and more! 1859-1959*" (previously reviewed and still available) remains absolutely necessary.

Like *A Century of War Dates...*, this work contains a wealth of useful information for France and Colonies collectors (and, of course, of other areas as well). I've made good use of Van Dam's works for updating my exhibits and for preparing (some day!) a revision of the book *A Chronology of French Military Campaigns and Expeditions with their Postal Markings...* In addition to the usual and expected bellicose events, the author includes dates of commercial treaties, of the imposition of protectorates, and of declarations of independence.

Each of the two 20-year sections has its own separate, detailed index of several pages apiece. There is a too brief one-page bibliography on the final page of the book.

Some of the type printed too lightly in my copy, and some of the words end perilously close the spiral binding. As per the companion "War Dates" volumes, the quality and usefulness of the maps leave much to be desired. Better, more detailed and legible maps undoubtedly would have increased the price of the book. I recommend having a good atlas handy in conjunction with using this and earlier "War Dates."

The author is to be applauded for making his date base so readily available, in a very easy-to-use form.

--S. J. Luft

Dudley, Cobb, *Cameroun: The 1940 Overprints*; 112 pp., 21 x 29.5 cm (A4 format), softbound; 1997; £25 (+£2 in Great Britain, £2.50 European Union, £3.50 elsewhere), by major credit cards or draft in sterling; from Albion Bookshop, 29 Albion Street, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 1LX, Great Britain [phone and Fax obtainable by request from your FCP editor]; also enquire of James Bendon Ltd., P.O. Box 6484, 3307 Limassol, Cyprus, or from Boule-Monaco Collections, Boite Postale 282, MC-98005 Monaco Cedex.

In very recent years there has been a wealth of scholarship on that seemingly minor geographical and postage-issuing entity, the former French mandate of Cameroun. And, rather than being written by Frenchmen, much of it has been the work of "anglos": R. J. Maddocks of England; our own Marty Bratzel, an American working in Canada; and now Dudley Cobb, an Englishman residing in Paris just a short walk from the Rue Drouot (what inspired good fortune or planning!).

Cobb's monograph consists of 37 pages of English-language text separated from 42 pages of French text by 24-full-color plates with bilingual captions. Each of the 38 stamps, from the seven designs available in Cameroun, that were overprinted with the date 27.8.40, or with +5FrS/SPITFIRE, or for revenue use, etc, is shown at full size or larger, in colors that are extremely faithful to the originals. All known settings and variants of the overprints are shown, many in full post-office panes or multiples, with a few on-cover tossed in for good measure.

I make mention of the color plates first, for they most likely would first engage the reader's eye. A two-page concordance (Cérès/Yvert, Gibbons, Scott,

Michel catalogues) is given only in English, but any French reader can readily follow it. Then comes a historical summary of the reasons behind the overprints. On 27 August 1940 (hence the 27.8.40 on many of the overprints), the then Col. Leclerc (the future marshal) "took control of Cameroun for the Free French in a bloodless coup" (p. 9). The local overprinting at Douala was more politically inspired than actually necessary, given the relatively large stamp stocks at hand. Detailed studies of the complexities regarding the trial overprints, settings, quantities overprinted and delivered, varieties, plating, issue dates, etc., occupy pages 10-40 (and their French-language equivalents farther on), followed by a one-page bibliography. I learned from page 34 that the +5 Frs./SPITFIRE overprint on the Waterfall design was ordered so that 4,000 sets (total surcharge of 80,000 francs) could be sold "to raise funds to purchase a Spitfire aircraft to be presented to the government of Great Britain."

The French text appears to be a literal translation of the English one (or vice-versa?). It lacks only the listing and concordance mentioned above. But it includes the French text (pp. 104-112) of six official orders and printer's notes that are relevant to the production of the various overprints.

This monograph has been nicely produced, on slick paper with sewn signatures, by Boule-Monaco Collections, and the color plates are of the firm's high standards of recent years.

This is the definitive study of the 1940 Cameroun overprints. It includes previously unpublished(?) correspondence, and accepts, modifies, enlarges upon, disputes, or refutes earlier writings on the subject (including some of Cobb's own). It is unfortunate that it probably will find only a very limited audience of Cameroun enthusiasts and reach even fewer libraries—philatelic and otherwise. But for those with more than a passing interest in Cameroun philately, it will prove to be an invaluable addition to their bookshelves.

--S. J. Luft

FOR THE RECORD

- **758.)** Bruno Mattei sends us, via Ed Grabowski, these blowups (Figure 1) of two of Senegal's unissued 1943-1944 Vichy printings (Cérès 179, Scott design A29 [modified]). Note the significant differences in the two **40c** of tablets in lower right. Upper stamp appears to be the variant one.
- **759.)** From a study of contemporary letters and documents [*presumably lodged in the Musée de La Poste in Paris*], A. de La Mettrie advises that the new 25c Cérès stamps of 1871—printed from the old 1849 plates—were **supposedly** printed with extreme rapidity and quantities were already available in at least one Paris post office on 31 August 1871. This, however, remains a mild exaggeration on the part of Barthes, the then director of the stamp printing works as, to date, no usage of the 25c value is known predating 4 September 1871. Additionally, very few are known used prior to 10 September (some doctored covers are known, showing earlier dates). (From *Le Monde des Philatélistes*, January 1998).
- **760.)** A study of *coin datés* (dated corner blocks of rotary-press stamps) reveals some curiosities regarding printing dates, as indicated by R. Vacheron in Bull. 110 (September 1997) of SO.CO.CO.DA.MI.—the specialist society for the study of *coin datés* and *millésimes*. The 5,00F Caravelle airmail's 2nd press run took place only on 23 February 1960. The same one-day-only printing happened for the 2nd press runs of the Council of Europe 0,60F and 0,25F stamps, printed respectively 12 and 13 April 1965 on press TD6-2. Upon termination of printing the 5F yellow-green Gandon (Plate E+F, 2nd press run) on 31 May 1946, the same press was used later

that day to print the green F.M. stamp. The 10c and 3F Duval dues (Plate A+B, 15th press run, and B+C, 7th press run, respectively) were both printed on Press 15 and only on 17 January 1942 (but which was printed first?). And precancels of the 1F Cérès de Mazelin (U+V, 1st press run) and of the 3F rose Gandon (Q+R, 1st) were also printed on Press 15 and only on 17 April 1946 (again, which came first?). There are many other such little oddities to be encountered in the world of *coins datés*.



Figure 1.

F.C.P.S. OFFICIAL

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The Society recently received an invitation to participate in "The Universal Stamp Image Database Project." The goal of this operation is to "assemble the largest, most complete file ever compiled with the color images of every philatelic specialty topic," which "will be an image catalog available on the Internet worldwide." The Society's Board tends to be decidedly antediluvian about such things, and, as I expected, gave no serious consideration to our participation in such an undertaking as a Society.

Personally, I believe this proposal merits further discussion. With high-quality color scanners now costing just a few hundred dollars, and with the increasing availability of storage devices big enough to hold large numbers of scanned pictures, the production of stamp image data bases is becoming relatively easy. Having these available over the Internet also seems a logical development. How, and by whom, the costs of creating and accessing these data bases will be paid is unclear, as is true also for many other anticipated services on the Internet.

To the extent that my collecting in the French area is restricted to material from the 1940s or earlier, I feel little enthusiasm for a stamp image data base on the Internet. If such images are sufficiently precise to permit the identification of those varieties that are now obscure in the printed catalogs, or for plating purposes, they are likely to also provide a means for the production of dangerous fakes. However, I also collect the vast array of stamped envelopes issued by Bulgaria in the last forty years. These issues, which number in the many thousands, are not fully catalogued, and to the extent that they are, only a few are pictured. Here I am extremely interested in the idea of an image data base on the Internet, both so I can be certain that I have properly identified the material listed in the catalogs, and so that I can share the many varieties I own that are clearly not in the existing catalogs.

I am not at all certain that a single consolidated stamp image data base is the best idea, however its creation and use may be financed. Perhaps the future will be one with many specialized stamp-image data bases, each on its own Internet site, and with one or more central sites providing links to them. If any of our members are interested in being involved in the creation of the Universal Stamp Image Database, they may write me and I will send them a copy of the solicitation, with the understanding that I know nothing more about the proposal than what is contained in their letter. --Dick Stevens

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The annual meeting for the presentation of reports and election of officers and directors will be held at 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 5, 1998, at the Collectors Club, 22 East 35th St., New York, NY.

BALPEX '98

The France and Colonies Philatelic Society will be one of the featured Societies at BALPEX '98. This World Series of Philately show is now held on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday of Labor Day weekend, September 4, 5 and 6, 1998, at Hunt Valley, Maryland. Fuller details of the Society's activities will appear in the July *Philatelist*.

Ed Grabowski, 741 Marcellus Drive, Westfield, NJ, is coordinating the France and Colonies exhibits. Anyone interested in participating should contact Ed for an entry form, or the BALPEX Exhibit Chair: Patricia Walker, P.O. Box 99, Lisbon, MD 21765-0099, Tel. (410) 442-1034 or Fax (410) 489-5318.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1997

Total Membership as of January 1, 1997:	630
Total New Members for the Year of 1997:	47
Total Reinstatements for the Year 1997:	10
	57
Resignations Received for the Year 1997:	11
Total Deceased Members for the Year 1997:	8
Members Dropped for Non Payment of Dues, 1997:	48
Members Undeliverable as Addressed, 1997:	1
	68
Net Membership Gain for the Year of 1997:	0
Net Membership Loss of the Year of 1997:	11
Total Membership as of December 31, 1997:	619

MEETING OF 2 DECEMBER 1997

It was a "bring your latest purchases along" program and a number of members responded accordingly. Martin Stempien, just returned from the London show because he expected the NYC show to be a bust, was able to go through the stock of a friend and purchased an unusual **AVIS DE L'EMISSION MANDAT DE POSTE INTERNATIONAL**, which is an advisory of the receipt of an international money order. It was posted from London to the Receiver of Posts in Paris. None of those present could remember seeing one of these before. Martin followed with a letter posted from Argentina to France via Ligne J which bore a rare **PAYS ETR P FR BORDEAUX** entry, which according to Salles (#1047) was used but a year, and thus is quite a nice marking to have on a letter.

Dick Stevens followed with the Martinique Antilles Tercentenary 50c stamp used singly from Martinique to Madagascar, certainly a very unusual 20th century franking. Dick also showed a properly backstamped printed matter rate from Martinique franked with the Martinique **01/2** overprint with a 4c Dubois to prepay the 5c printed matter rate. Walter Parshall, in a nostalgia

vein, then passed around a number of articles based on interviews with Herb Block and Greg Mozian from the early 1980's. It was nice to remember once again the strength of the older NYC philatelic market. He followed with an insured money letter from Monaco franked with Alberts (10c + 10c + 40c) with the number '7571' in the cachet on the reverse. Walter suggested that this could be a unique usage with this number. He concluded with a proof of the 1000F airmail showing the Princess and Prince of Monaco printed on blue cloth!

Yours truly ended the evening with a number of new items. The highlights included a 1904 double-weight letter from Pondichery to Bordeaux franked with two of the 0,15/25 Group Type overprints, and a 1906 printed-matter item from Tahiti franked with a cut-out of the 5c printed matter Group envelope because of a shortage of stamps due to a flood. Such is known from March 5-8, 1906.

--Ed Grabowski

MEETING OF 3 FEBRUARY 1998

It was originally announced that Dick Stevens would talk about Postage Due covers from Martinique at the Meeting of 2 December 1997. The combination of a belated arrival of the group eating dinner together, and a considerable discussion of Society business, left little time before 9:00 P.M., so only a sampler of covers was shown, and the full discussion was held over for another meeting. That time arrived on 3 February 1998, when the hoped-for speaker was indisposed, so Dick brought back the Postage Due covers.

Martinique Postage Due covers are a limited topic because there are so few around. The catalogs list 32 postage due stamps in three issues by Martinique, as well as 34 General Colonies dues in three issues, which could have been used there. Most of these are essentially unknown used on cover. Covers from Martinique with postage due stamps applied in other countries are about equally scarce. However, it doesn't take many postage due covers to make a talk, inasmuch as so many require extended discussion.

The General Colonies dues issue of 1894-1906 can occasionally be found on covers used in Martinique. By far the most impressive item shown from this issue was a 1927 cover from Barbados, franked at the 1 penny domestic rate, rather than the 2½ pence foreign rate. In French currency the deficiency was 90 centimes, doubled to 1.80 franc, and paid with a pair of 10 centimes, two 30 centimes, and two 50 centimes. The cover also bears a distinctive T-in-Heart due-marking from Barbados.

The first dues issue of Martinique are the overprints of 1927, and they are very hard to find on cover. The one example shown was an unfranked local cover from Trinité to Saint Pierre in 1932. It bears three copies of the 20 centimes due, the proper amount; unfortunately they are not cancelled. The Martinique dues issue of 1932 is the only one that is relatively easy to find on cover, although many are philatelic creations. One interesting cover was mailed from Mexico with a 10 centavos stamp; it bears a Mexican T marking, with an amount of 20¢, presumably 20 centavos. The recipient in Martinique got a bargain when he was charged only 20 centimes, since the Martinique franc was then worth only around one-tenth of a Mexican peso.

A 12-stamp set of postage dues for general use in the Colonies was issued in 1945. They are rarely found used, let alone used on cover. One cover was shown, mailed from Washington, D.C. on 12/23/1946, with only a U.S. 3 cent stamp. It had been struck with a New York duplex T 20 centimes marking. These are centimes of a "gold franc," and a manuscript shows that that was equivalent to 7.80 francs in current money. The cover bears a 5 franc due of the General Colony Issue, plus 30 centimes, 50 centimes, and 2 franc values of the Martinique dues of 1933. Unfortunately all but a corner of the 30 centimes stamp has been torn off and is missing. The last Martinique dues set appeared in June 1947, only a few months before the replacement of Martinique issues with French stamps. The only covers available for display were two, probably originally part of a larger set, with various denominations, addressed locally to M. J. Hudry in Fort de France and postmarked 31-12-1948 -- clearly philatelic.

--R.M. Stevens

NEW MEMBERS

- 3155 BODOW, DONALD M., P.O. Box 270458, San Diego, CA 92198. (Cancels And Postal History. Indo China. Philatelic Literature.)
- 3156 FISHER, EDWARD F., 1033 Putney, Birmingham, MI 48009. (General France: Used. Modern France: Mint - Used - On Cover.)
- 3157 SHRIMPTON, PETER E., 830 Northwood Loop, Prescott, AZ 86303-6377. (General France: Mint - Used. Regular Issues: Classics 1849-1876: Used. 1870-1871 Issues. Sage Type 1876-1900. Modern France: Mint - Air Mails. Souvenir Sheets.)
- 3158 EMERTON, ALVIN, 132 Pleasant View Ave., Braintree, MA 02184-1319. (General Collector: 19th Century.)
- 3159 TAYLOR, LYNN R., 4107 E. 2nd Ave., Spokane, WA 99202. (General Collector: All Issues. - 19th Century - 20th Century. Topical: Railroads. General France: Mint - Used. Railway Posts. Classics 1849-1876: Mint - Used. 1870-1871 Issues. Alsace-Lorraine. Dues. Sage Type 1876-1900. Modern France: Mint - Used - Blanc, Mouchon & Merson

- Types - Sowers - Air Mails - Coils. Special Issues: Telegraph - Revenues. French Community: Offices Abroad. CFA Issues. Saar. Colonies General Issues: Mint - Used. Colonial Provisionals. Group Type. All Colonies and Territories. Philatelic Literature. Exchange.)
- 3160 SOLE, M.A., Post Office Box 773, Bonita, CA 91908. (General France: Mint - Used. Classics 1849-1876: Mint - Used. 1870-1871 Issues. French Community: Offices Abroad. CFA Issues. Andorre. Monaco. Saar. Colonies General Issues: Mint - USED. All Colonies And Territories.)
- 3161 SMITH, MICHAEL R., 176 Reed Road, Sparta, MO 65753. (General France: Mint - Used - On Cover. Classics 1849-1876: On Cover. Air Meets. First Flights. French Community: Offices Abroad. Colonies General Issues: Mint - On Cover. Dealer: Part-Time.)
- 3162 EUBANKS, RUSSELL, 408 West Water Street, Pinckneyville, IL 62274. (Topical: Literature - History - Stamps - Postal Cards - Related to the various Marianne Issues.)
- 3163 FRACHON, JEAN-CLAUDE H., 2408 "A" Street, Antioch, CA 94509. (General Collector: All Issues. General France: Mint - Used. Classics 1849-1876: Mint - Used. Alsace-Lorraine Dues. Sage Type 1876-1900. Modern France: Mint - Blanc, Mouchon & Merson Types - Sowers - Air Mails.)
- 3164 TERRY, DAVID L., CMR 456 - Box 96, APO AE 09157. (Modern France: Mint - Sowers. French Community: Offices Abroad. CFA Issues. Colonies General Issues: Mint - Used - On Cover. All Colonies & Territories. Canceled And Postal History. Indo-China. French Offices in China. Laos. Vietnam. Cambodia. Philatelic Literature.)
- 3165 COLLIER, RICHARD A., 65 Cableknoll Ln., Moreland Hills, OH 44022. (General Collector: All Issues.)
- 3166 KLEJMENT, ANNE M., 2018 Stanford Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55105. (Classics 1849-1876: Cancellations. Sage Type 1876-1900. Modern France: Used - Blanc, Mouchon & Merson Types. Sowers. Gandon, Marianne du Bicentenaire. Colonies General Issues: Used. Indo China.)

CHANGES OF ADDRESS AND CORRECTIONS

- 2966 WEDEKIND, WAYNE D., 3856 Tomahawk Lane, San Diego, CA 92117-5851.
- 3142 WARD, JEFF, San Diego, CA 92128-6004 (Change Of Zip Code).
- 1080 O'HARA, JOHN B., Wynnewood House - Apt. 406, 300 East Lancaster Avenue, Wynnewood, PA 19096.
- 1017 ROBBINS, LOUIS K., P.O. Box 20731, Park West Station, New York, NY 10025-1516.
- 1887 PARNIAK, MICHAEL A., 825 Desmarchais, Verdun, Quebec H4H 1S7, Canada.
- 2856 CLARKE, WALTER S., 42 Liberty Court, Carlisle, PA 17013-9256 (Change Of Zip Code).
- 2405 GRAY, BETTY E., C/O Mrs. M. Edwards, 84 Prescott St. - Apt. 36, Cambridge, MA 02138.
- 2662 RAOUST, MAURICE P., 1164 Pond Cypress Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 23455.

RESIGNATIONS

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2960 BEWLEY, DAVID R. | 2083 BORNSIDE, BETTE B. |
| 1593 KOHAGEN, ROGER A. | 1564 RAVACON, PIERRE T. |
| 1485 RYBALKA, MICHAEL | 2686 ST. CLAIR, JOHN M. |
| 623 WHEELER, ELENA L. | |

DECEASED

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 285 MINSKER, JOHN H. | 818 ROSENTHAL, SOLOMON |
|----------------------|------------------------|

DROPPED FOR NON-PAYMENT OF DUES

Bill Bartlett, Christian Beslu, Mark Blaser, Roland F. Boulet, Clint Burgess, Mark S. Burnett, Edric Druce, Gerald L. Emerson, William L. Evans, Joseph C. Flay, George T. Gray, Anthony J. Grecco, Rudolph S. Hoppe, Sylvain R. Jakobovics, Norma Jalonen, Steven T. Knee, Matt. Korwin-Chromecki, Peter C. Lampen, W. J. Macomber, William F. Mann, Alfred Mazur, Robert A. McDonald, Evelyn McMann, John Miatch, Francisco D. Morineau, Nat C. Myers, Jr., Jacques Nolet, Michael H. Olevnik, George Olshevsky, Chul H. Park, Norval L. Rasmussen, Charles Reisman, William H. Shafer, Sr., Donald Shaw, Jean-Georges Simioni, Sergio Sismondo, Dr. Henry Stein, Robin T. Sulsona, Robert Tran, Roger A. Walker, Lee Williams.

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

In Bill Mitchell's addendum to Tom Marra's article in N° 251, January 1998: p. 19, fourth line from bottom: read "query" rather than "quest"; p. 20, fifth line from bottom, read "air surcharge from French West Africa to France," not "air surcharge to French West Africa." Sorry!