

FRANCE and COLONIES PHILATELIST

April 2013
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The Most Beautiful Bridge in Paris (*see page 36*)



The Era of the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type: The Five Centimes Printed Matter Rate – From the Common to the Uncommon (*see page 8*)

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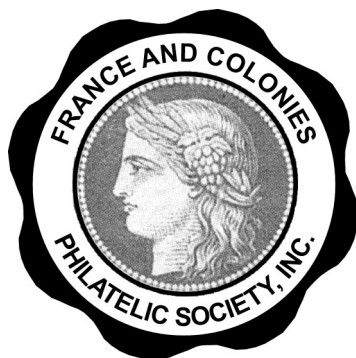
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Editorial

Business Continuity Revisited

Norval Rasmussen

In David Herendeen's editorial appearing in the January 2012 issue of the *FCP*, entitled "Business Continuity," he challenged the membership to adopt plans for the untimely loss of key personnel. What would happen if a major officer or the editor got hit by a bus, he asked? "The treasury is off in some city where no one but the treasurer lived. Bills may come due. How are they paid?"

"The president may have made agreements with other vendors. Will his successor know what they are? Where the documentation is?"

"The editor has all the working templates for the *FCP*. He may have a backlog of articles and other contributions. Where is everything?"

We have seen this happen.

The good news is that we have survived. David left us a largely completed January 2013 *FCP*, and fortunately, used software I am at least familiar with. Please note that there are two open positions on the editorial staff of this journal. I will maintain this position as long as the membership is satisfied with the product and continues to supply the philatelic content (note that I removed "acting" from my title in the masthead). I would like to see two volunteers step forward to fill the position of Associate editor and Assistant Editor (Modern). I do not know modern French material sufficiently to vet an article at the level this journal and this society have come to expect. That would be the duty of an Assistant Editor (Modern). The duties of the Associate Editor would be as much or as little as desired, but would include maintaining electronic and paper

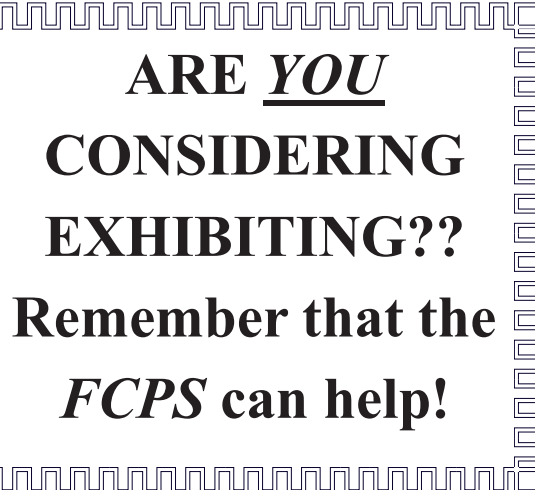
archives of material submitted for publication. In the event of my untimely departure, we would have at least as much to pass on as David had. If you have interest in either position please let me know at nrasmu@gmail.com.

In this Issue

We are again blessed with Edward Grabowski's efforts with another colonial article and Thomas Broadhead has shared his love and knowledge of the Paris bridges. Lewis Bussey shares a post card in a brief write up. I am also in possession of an article for the July issue.

Coming Soon!

Sandical is held January 24 through January 26, 2014 in San Diego, California. That is only nine months from now. Ken Nilsestuen is our judge so won't have an exhibit. I urge you to get your feet wet if you haven't yet. This is the perfect show to start exhibiting. The attendees will include many exhibitors anxious to offer advice. I am always amazed at how much I learn when preparing an exhibit.



**ARE YOU
CONSIDERING
EXHIBITING??
Remember that the
FCPS can help!**

The Most Beautiful Bridge in Paris

Thomas W. Broadhead (FCPS 2830)

And, now for something completely different. The pages of the *France & Colonies Philatelist* traditionally have been graced with fascinating articles that have brought to light important discoveries and reports of stamps and postal history. I have contributed in those areas, but lately have been drawn to the incomparable beauty of design and execution of French stamps, and on the side have become a topicalist. Pictorial stamps remind us of where we have been and pique our imaginations about where we wish to go. Moreover, they exquisitely chronicle important events in a nation's history, and whole collections can be made that illustrate those events.

Paris, France – the “city of light” is also a city of bridges. Straddling the Seine River, the French capital is connected above ground by 37 bridges (*ponts*), including 5 pedestrian spans (*passerelles*). A bridge across the Seine is documented from Roman times, and bridges today represent construction from the 16th to the 20th centuries. This abbreviated philatelic tour exposes the dearth of French stamps with images of Paris bridges leading to the more frequent recent images of the *Pont*

Alexandre III – the most beautiful bridge in Paris.

Bridges of Paris

The first French pictorial commemorative stamps were the 1924 Olympic Games issue, and the 25c stamp (Fig. 1) shows a background scene of Paris. This and subsequent stamps are notable for the accuracy of representation of bridges, which typically can be recognized from the number and shape of arches and other features and from other associated landmarks. It is this fineness of design and execution that makes the search for and identification of bridges all the more enjoyable.

In 1935, a set of illustrated postal cards showed an image of the Pont au Change (Fig. 2), but there was not a corresponding postage stamp issued at that time.

Another series of illustrated postal cards, also issued in 1935, showed several Paris scenes in the stamp images, but no bridges. However, the cachet-like illustrations included images of the Pont de Tournelle and the Pont de la Concorde (Fig.3).



Figure 1. The 25c Olympic stamp of 1924 shows a view looking east southeast toward the Île de la Cité, with the narrow arches of the Pont Neuf in the foreground, followed behind by the broader spans of the Pont au Change and beyond, the Pont Notre Dame. The image of the Notre Dame Cathedral further supports the recognition of individual bridges.



Fig. 2. Illustrated postal card of 1935, with the stamp image showing a view looking west to the Pont au Change and the Conciergerie.



Fig. 3. The Pont de Tournelle, with Notre Dame in the background.

In 1936, with increased use of airmail, including transatlantic mail to South America, several air-mail stamps were issued with a common central design of a plane flying over Paris (Fig. 4). The abundant, distinctive monuments and important buildings in Paris allow the single bridge shown to be identified as the Pont d'Iéna – named for the Napoleonic victory over Prussia at the battle of Jena, October 14, 1806. The same vignette was used for the 50fr “banknote” stamp, issued primarily for the high postal rates to South America.

More than a decade later in 1947, four stamps appeared showing images of Paris bridges, including the semipostal of Notre Dame Cathedral with the Pont de l'Archevêché in the foreground (Fig. 5).

The same year, with the 12th Universal Postal Union Congress in Paris, four regular postage



Fig. 4. A representational view of major Paris monuments (Arc de Triomphe – Eiffel Tower – Sacre Coeur – Notre Dame) in a view looking northwest, with the Pont d'Iéna at left.



Fig. 5. The north end of the Pont de l'Archevêché at the Île de la Cité.

stamps and one airmail stamp were issued to commemorate the event. The 4fr 50c stamp (Fig. 6) shows an image of the Pont du Change similar to that of the 1935 postal cards, and the 6 franc stamp (Fig. 7) shows the Pont Neuf, the oldest bridge in Paris. The 500 franc airmail stamp (Fig. 8) shows a spectacular view of the Île de la Cité and the north and south parts of the Pont Neuf, along with four other bridges that link the island to the main shore.



Fig. 6. View, looking west across the Pont du Change to the Conciergerie.



Fig. 7. View, looking west to the northern span of the Pont Neuf.



Fig. 8. The Île de la Cité, looking east-southeast. The two spans of the Pont Neuf are in the foreground, and on the left are the Pont au Change, Pont Notre Dame, and barely visible Pont Louis-Philippe, similar in perspective to the view on the 1924 Olympics stamp. To the right of the island is the Pont Saint-Michel.



Fig. 10. Bridges shown (bottom to top at left): Pont au Double, Petit Pont, Pont Saint-Michel, Pont Neuf (south span), Passerelle des Arts, Pont du Carrousel, Pont Royal, Pont de Soferino (rebuilt and now the Passerelle Léopold Sédar Seghor). At center, beyond Sainte-Chapelle and Notre Dame is the north span of Pont Neuf. Bridges shown (bottom to top at right): Pont d'Arcole, Pont Notre Dame, Pont au Change.



Fig. 9. Exposition Philatelique "La Poste Aérienne" postcard and label designed by René Cottet in 1943

The design of the 500 franc air-mail, attributed to Henri Gandon, may have been derived from a postcard and label for the Exposition Philatelique "La Poste Aérienne" designed by René Cottet in 1943 (Fig. 9).

In the years after World War II, as inflationary pressures mounted, a decision was made to issue a series of airmail stamps showing aerial views of major French cities. An unadopted essay of a 500 franc stamp (Fig. 10), created by Albert Decaris, shows an airplane above the city, with the Île de la Cité and Notre Dame cathedral as the focus. The geographic positions with respect to monuments and buildings, plus the number of arches shown on each by Decaris, allow a confident identification of each bridge.

Another unadopted essay by Decaris (Fig. 11) focused entirely on the Île de la Cité and shows 12 bridges, including the two spans of the Pont Neuf.



Fig. 11. Bridges shown (bottom to top at left): Pont Neuf (north span), Pont au Change, Pont Notre Dame, Pont d'Arcole, Pont Louis-Philippe. At upper center is the Pont Saint-Louis, connecting the Île de la Cité with the Île Saint-Louis. Bridges shown at right (bottom to top): Pont Neuf (south span), Pont Saint-Michelle, Petit Pont, Pont au Double, Pont de Archevêché, Pont de la Tournelle.

The adopted design for the 1000 franc, large format stamp (Fig. 12), was also by Albert Decaris. It portrays a very detailed view, looking west, with the Île Saint-Louis in the left foreground



and the Île de la Cité just beyond. On this, however, the Pont au Change cannot be found.

Subsequently, a small number of modern stamps have shown images of Paris bridges, including the Passerelle des Arts (1978), the Pont Neuf (1978), and both in the same image (2005).

Pont Alexandre III

In the late 19th century, Alexander III was the czar of Russia, having ascended the throne in 1881. Diplomatic relations between France and Russia were especially good during his reign, and a military alliance was signed in 1892. Both nations sent naval fleets for official visits to the other's ports in 1891 and 1893, and France's first illustrated postal card was issued in 1893 to commemorate the visit of the Russian fleet to Toulon. Czar Alexander died suddenly on November 1, 1894, and he was memorialized by black-bordered, mourning stationery issued by the French government and by private printers.

Russian foreign policy toward France was maintained by Alexander's son and successor, Nicholas II. Nicholas and the Czarina Alexandra paid a state visit to Paris in October of 1896, and several commemorative postal cards (Fig. 13) were issued to mark the occasion. A highlight of the

Fig. 12. Bridges shown (bottom to top): Pont Marie, Pont Louis-Philippe, Pont d'Arcole, Pont Notre Dame – all easily recognized by the number and style of their arches – and then the Pont Neuf, similarly recognizable. But the Pont au Change is missing between the Pont Notre Dame and Pont Neuf! Continuing toward the top are the Passerelle des Arts, Pont du Carousel and Pont Royal. The following three-pediment span is the former Pont de Solferino, which was demolished in 1960, replaced with a passerelle of the same name in 1961 (demolished in 1992), and then replaced in 1999 by the Passerelle Léopold Sédar Senghor (named in 2006 for the author and Senegalese president). In the far distance are visible the Pont de la Concorde, and finally the spectacular single span of the Pont Alexandre III.

“deluxe proof” in the issued color, sometimes found signed by the artist, Pierre Gandon. A “Collective Proof” was produced in two sizes, showing the final color and design of the Pont Alexandre III stamp, in addition to the regular commemorative issues for the CITT Conference. The rarity of the airmail stamp issue is the “Bloc Spéciaux,” printed in the issued color on stamp paper and perforated (Dalay catalog *Poste Aérienne* 6) ; 14 examples were printed.

Maximum cards (Fig. 15) show various photographic images similar to the stamps they bear.

Uses of stamps beyond their original period of issue and usage are of lesser value and typically are considered “contrived” or “philatelic” in nature.

Leaping ahead almost one half century, in the late 1990’s, France began issuing “Prêt à Poster” (PAP) or “Ready to Mail” envelopes, pre-stamped with no denomination. These had particular uses, such as up to 20 grams domestic rate. They are analogous to our current “forever” stamps in the US.



Fig. 15. Color maximum card with first day cancel, 13 June 1949, of the CITT and Petit Palais.

This example also has a first day cancel of June 13, 1949, from the conference, which was held at the nearby Grand Palais.

One interesting aspect of the 100 franc stamp is its postal history. There was no regular 100 franc postal rate or supplemental rate, so the stamp is typically seen in combination with other stamps or slightly overpaying an established rate. Single uses are uncommon, and usually show the elements of a rate that approaches 100 francs, e.g., for a letter weighing between 5 and 10 grams, sent by airmail to the United States.

In recognition of the classic French airmail issues of 1936-1949, a souvenir card with engraved images of non-denominated stamps was issued in 2004. These were destined to appear that same year on PAP envelopes. One of the 2004 PAP envelopes (Fig. 16) shows an engraved replica image, without imprinted value, of the 1949 Pont Alexandre III stamp. An enlarged image is printed on the envelope at left, and the envelope contained a card with a large printed image of the stamp. Unused examples are more common on the philatelic market than are postally used ones. More recent PAP envelopes have shown im-

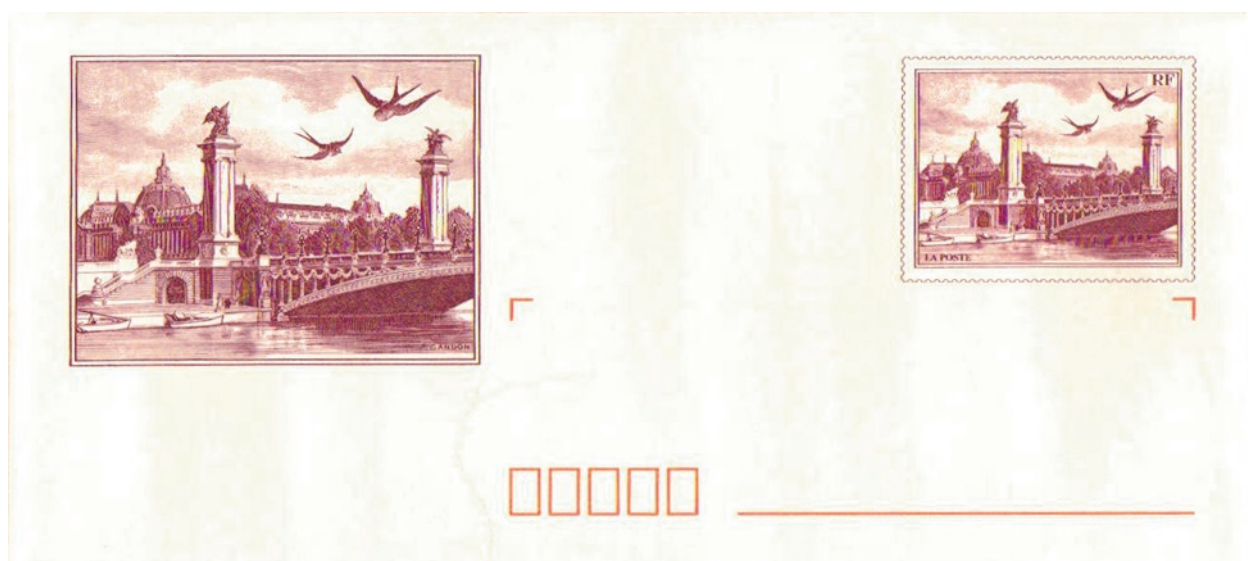


Fig. 16. PAP envelope of 2004, showing a modification of the 1949 stamp as the indicia and cachet.

ages of the Pont Alexandre III as cachet-like designs. A 2004 PAP shows a photographic image of the bridge, and the 2007 PAP shows a water color image. Pictorial stamps of 2008 and 2009 showed images of the Pont Alexandre III. The 2008 stamp (Fig. 17) shows the north end of the bridge, with the Grand Palais in the background. Attached to the stamp is a decorative, non-stamp label, which commemorates the 81st Congress of the Federation Française des Associations Philatéliques. The 2009 stamp (Fig. 18) is the only one to date that identifies the bridge by name and



Fig. 17. Stamp showing the north end of the Pont Alexandre III and the Grand Palais, with accompanying label.

shows the bridge looking south. It is a self-adhesive stamp, part of a pane of 20 that shows photographic images of Paris landmarks.

Computer printed postal labels are common throughout the world and are issued at Automatic Teller Machines. For French postal labels, several rates may be selected and thermally imprinted on these "vignettes d'affranchissement" (pictures of payment). In 2008, a specially designed background was produced (Fig. 19), showing a northward view of the bridge, for the annual Salon du Timbre and 81st Congress of the Federation Française des Associations Philatéliques. The most recent ATM postage (Fig. 20) showing a southward view of the Pont Alexandre III is the series issued in June 2010 for the annual Salon du Timbre. Several denominations could



Fig. 19. Northward view of the bridge (2008) on computer-printed postage.



Fig. 18. Self adhesive stamp from the 2009 sheet of Paris scenes, with a southward view along the Pont Alexandre III.



Fig. 20. Southward view of the bridge (2010) on computer-printed postage.

be purchased, each printed on a label showing the bridge, together with the Eiffel Tower.

Finding the images of Paris bridges and learning about the history of the Pont Alexandre III has further solidified my interest in the stamps of France, but now has beckoned me to return to traverse all of the bridges and passerelles (of which I can only admit to 9 at this time). There are excellent books, including *Ponts de Paris* (2007) by Hugues Demeude and Patrick Escudero and *Les ponts de Paris* (1999), in addition to very good web references, such as http://paris1900.lartnouveau.com/paris_les_ponts.htm. And for those who wish more of a multimedia tour, there are several videos, some with bridge photos, featuring the song “Sous les Ponts de Paris” on YouTube.

Tom Broadhead is professor of geology and director of undergraduate academic advancement at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He thanks faculty colleague and fellow FCPS member, Gerald Schroedl for providing important reference books and consultation.

We Get Letters

13th New Zealand National Philatelic Literature 2013 Exhibition Results

I just received the results of a major literature competition where our FCPS members did very well. There were 49 exhibits in competition at the 13th New Zealand National Philatelic Literature 2013 Exhibition. Topping them all was **Ashley Lawrence** with his *The Sower, a Common Little French Stamp* (reviewed in this issue), which received the Grand Award and a Large Gold.

Bob Picirilli obtained a large Vermeil for *Postal and Airmail Rates in France & Colonies 1920-1945*. **Chuck LaBlonde** received a Vermeil for *post D-Day Swiss Mail to/from Great Britain and the Americas*, as well as a Silver for *Swiss Post International Activity in Italy—the Baveno Story*. **Ed Werner** obtained a Silver for *Newfoundland Fakes and Forgeries*.

Last, but by no means least, **Maurice Tyler**, editor of our confrere journal obtained the Best Periodical and a Large Vermeil for his “Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society.”

Our congratulations to our good members and friends!

Stanley Luft (FCPS 915)

**Our next meeting will be at SANDICAL
January 24 - 26, 2014
San Diego, California.
Be there. Exhibit there.**

An Interesting Post Card

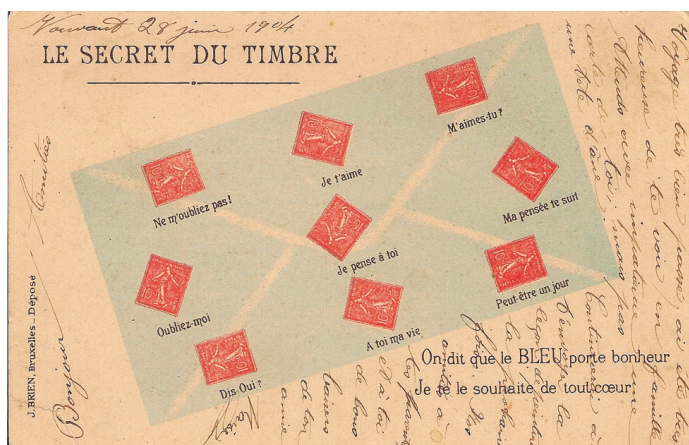
Lewis E. Bussey

An interesting post card, posted 28 June 1904 from Vouvant (Vendée) 13 km down the road to Fontenay le Comte, just north-east of La Rochelle.

This lovely card titled "Le Secret du Timbre" was printed in Bruxelles in two colors, rose and blue. It shows nine stamp positions and their intended meanings, including "me t'aime", "peut-être un jour" and "oubliez moi". None of these were indicated with the stamp placement on the card however when using a recently issue 10¢ rose-red Sower issue of 1903 (Scott 138).



The message reads: "Voyage tres bien passé, ai été tres heurause de te voir en famille. Attends avec impatience une carte de toi, mais pas une bête d'ane. Continuerai à t'envoyer la leçon de peinture la prochaine fois. Nos amities à tes parents et à toi de bons baisiers de ton amie. Marie"



Khereddine Airport

Norval Rasmussen



In 1926 the French company Air Union offered service three times weekly on the route Antibes-Ajaccio-Tunis. This was successful and in 1929 a second route, Tunis-Ajaccio-Marignane, began offering six flights weekly. A route from Tunis to Rome via Cagliari or Palermo also began in 1929

offering service six times weekly. These flights were by seaplane and the seaplane airport was located at Khereddine on the Lake of Tunis. Rail service took passengers from Tunis to Khereddine and this cover was cancelled



on the train with an undulating circular dates-tamp. This cover suggests that service to Milan was added by 1938 as evidenced by the receiving mark on the back of the cover. Milan's seaplane base was on an artificial lake built for that purpose in the 1930's. I chose to submit this cover



because it is one of two known covers bearing the Tunis to Khereddine train cancel.

The Era of the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type:

The Five Centimes Printed Matter Rate – From the Common to the Uncommon

Edward Grabowski

The five centimes printed matter rate (5c per 50g) effective during the period of use of the French Colonial Group Type (1892 – WWI) is undoubtedly one of the most common of the Group Type regular rates. It was applicable to such items as birth, marriage and death notices, visiting and greeting cards, printed lists of prices, advertisements, commercial bulletins and, of course, newspapers, all to be sent unsealed and open to postal inspection. Frankings were typically with 5c stamps (both the initial green stamp from the pre-1900 printings and the yellow-green stamp issued in 1900 and thereafter), and combinations of the 1c, 2c and 4c lower value Group Types. Frankings with five 1c stamps are the rarest, though still relatively easy to find. The 5c Group Type postal stationery envelopes are also frequently seen prepaying this rate. Frankings with the five centimes overprints created in 1912 on Group Type remainders from the various colonies close out the regular methods of prepayment for this rate. There were also a few special and unusual methods for the prepayment of this rate that will be noted at the end of this article. The 5c short message post card rate, technically characterized as printed matter, will not be considered at this time.

Typical 5c Rates

The 5c printed matter rate is amongst the easiest of the Group Type rates to find, along with the 25c and 15c rates that were applicable to

overseas and French Community mail. Examples of the 5c rate from the principal cities in the colonies are still common and inexpensive. The purpose of this article is to examine this rate in detail, from the more common examples to the uncommon examples which illustrate important aspects of French Colonial postal history. Even the common examples can be interesting if you are lucky enough to find ones still with their original printed matter. I find these personally particularly exciting, as the printed enclosures or attachments give a flavor of the times in the colonies. The example in Figure 1 is typical. It is a birth announcement posted from Majunga, Madagascar in June 1907 in which Madame and Captain Mercier are announcing the birth of their son Guy (Figure 1a) to their friends and associates.



Figure 1: Typical 5c printed matter rate from Majunga.

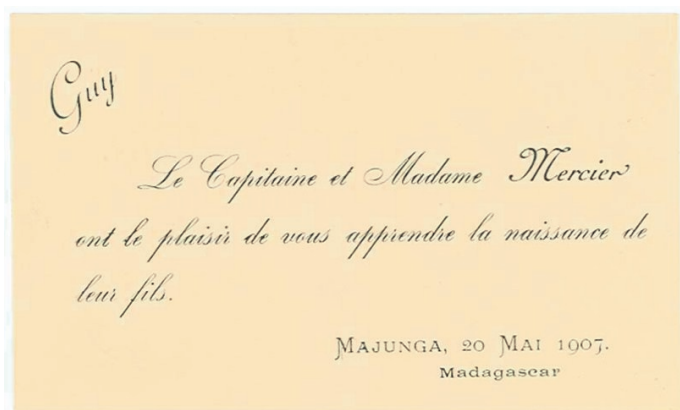


Figure 1a: The birth announcement contained in the envelope of Figure 1.

Shown in Figure 2 is an invitation to a ball (Figure 2a) posted locally in Papeete in July 1914. On a sad note is the notice of the death of

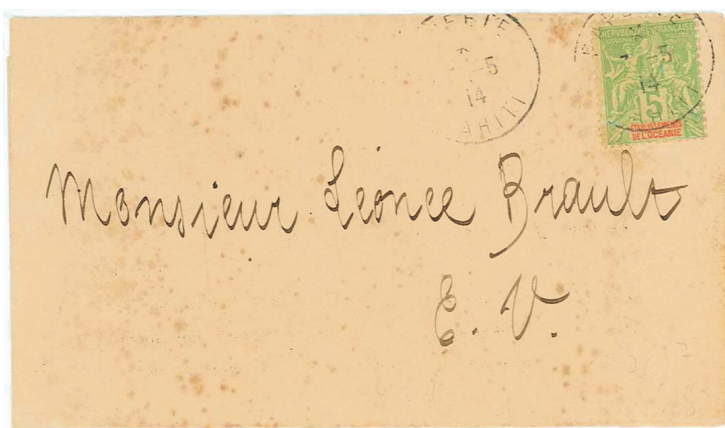


Figure 2: Printer matter sheet posted in Papeete in 1914.

one Monsiegnieur François-Xavier Corbet posted by his associates from Diego-Suarez, Madagascar (Figures 3 and 3a) during July 1914. Interestingly, this item was sent via Zanzibar (backstamped) enroute to Tanga in German West Africa, a most unusual destination for French Colonial printed matter. Also, it is franked with one of the 1912 overprints on a Grand Comoro Group Type issue, now valid throughout Madagascar and Dependencies with the completion of that colony's assemblage in 1911.

Advertising during the era of the Group Type came in various forms. The printed advertising

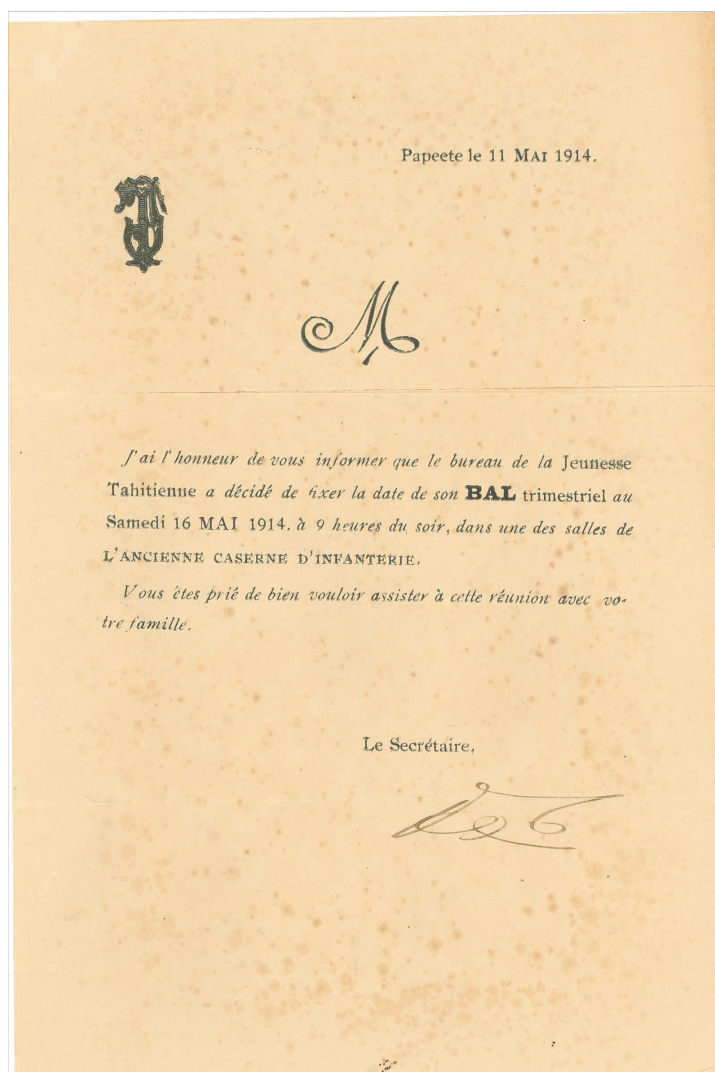


Figure 2a: Reverse of the sheet in Figure 2 showing an invitation to a ball.

card from the F.H Acker firm in Hanoi shown in Figures 4 and 4a also has its unusual aspects. It is not technically a post card, but actual printed matter. The 5c franking is with 1c Group Type and 1c Grasset Type stamps, and it was routed via an English ship, most probably through Hong Kong, enroute to England. Typical of printed matter of this period, the datestamp strikes are poor and there are no transit/arrival handstamps.



Figure 3: (above) Typical 5c printed death announcement from Diego-Suarez to Tanga in 1912.

Figure 3a: (left) Reverse of the sheet in Figure 3 showing the death announcement.

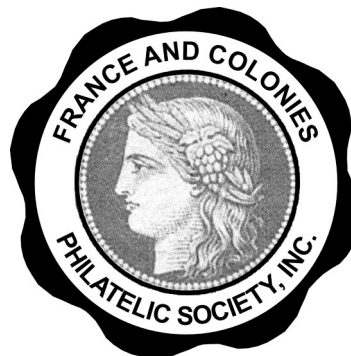
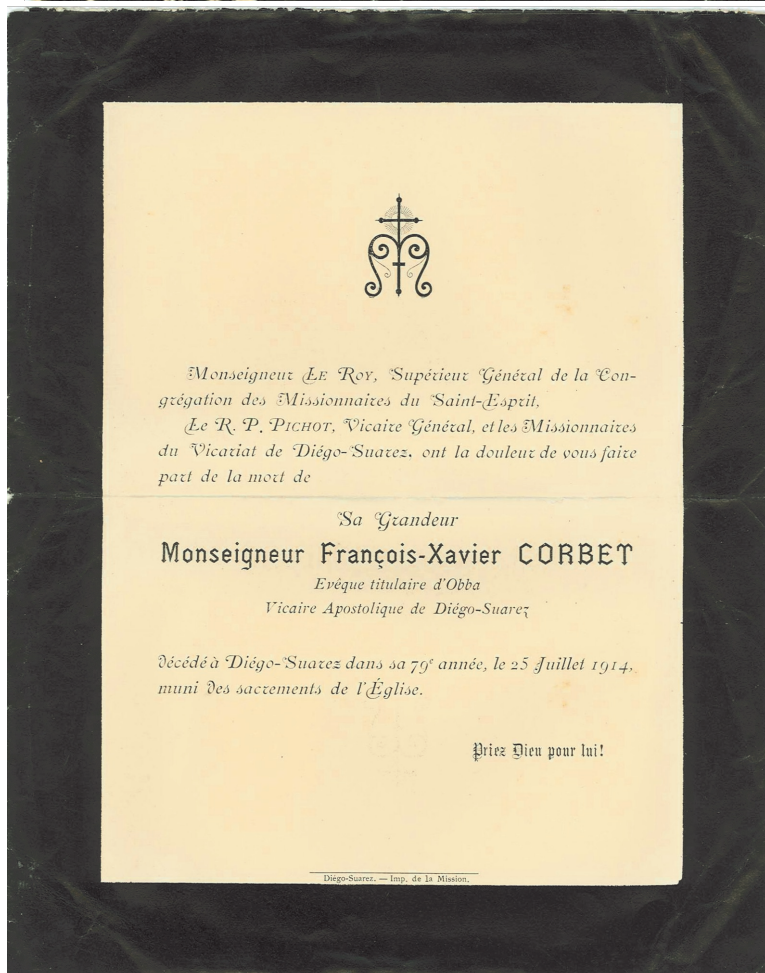




Figure 4: Commercial printed advertising card from Hanoi.



Figure 4a: Reverse of the card in Figure 4 showing the details of the advertisement.

Figure 5 illustrates a list of prices current posted from Pointe-a-Pitre, Guadeloupe in March 1894. Survival of newsprint from this period is very unusual. The **Paquebot Anglais** handstamp is not a postal handstamp, but simply a handstamp used by the sending firm to designate whether to use a British or French ship for transportation of the item. I have seen but one other similar piece from Guadeloupe in my travels over the past thirty-five years. The wrapper and contents shown in

to attest to its arrival. It apparently contained information on the Hanoi Exposition which was a large colonial fair set to start at the end of 1902 and celebrate French colonial success. Rounding out this section of examples is a complete commercial bulletin (Figure 8) from Saint Denis, Reunion in August 1906 with a wrapper band and sender's address. Complete bulletins and newspapers from the Group Type era are quite rare as the survival rate for these items was small. Not

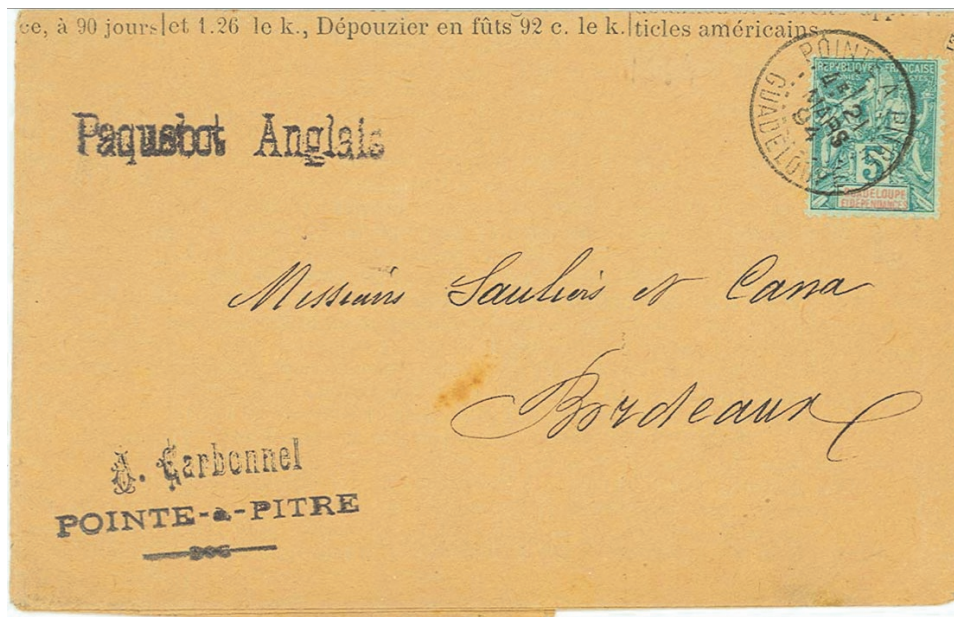


Figure 5: Commercial list of prices current from Pointe-a-Pitre, Guadeloupe in 1894.

only was the paper fragile, but there was no incentive to save these items on the part of the addressees.

Unusual 5c Rates

The 5c printed matter rates also offer the opportunity to search for more unusual items. Particularly important from a postal usage point of view is material originating in the small offices of the various French Colonies. As a corollary to rare origins, rare destinations can also be sought.

Figures 6 and 6a (on the facing page) have always been amongst my favorites. This printed matter piece was posted from the small village of N'Gomo, Gabon in April 1916 to the United States franked with a 1912 overprint. The survival of a wrapper band and its contents is quite unusual. What makes this piece particular interesting is that the sender was a stamp dealer/collector, and in the enclosed list of material available he is offering to exchange Group Type stamps! The wrapper in Figure 7 (on the facing page) was less fortunate as it has lost its printed matter content. However, it still has a few interesting aspects. It was posted from Hanoi in July 1902 to Manila, Philippines an exceptional destination for mail from Hanoi, Indochina. A Manila arrival also ties the stamp. It was forwarded to the USA, although there are no postal markings

Unusual cancellations and usages also occur on printed matter.

See you in San Diego next
January

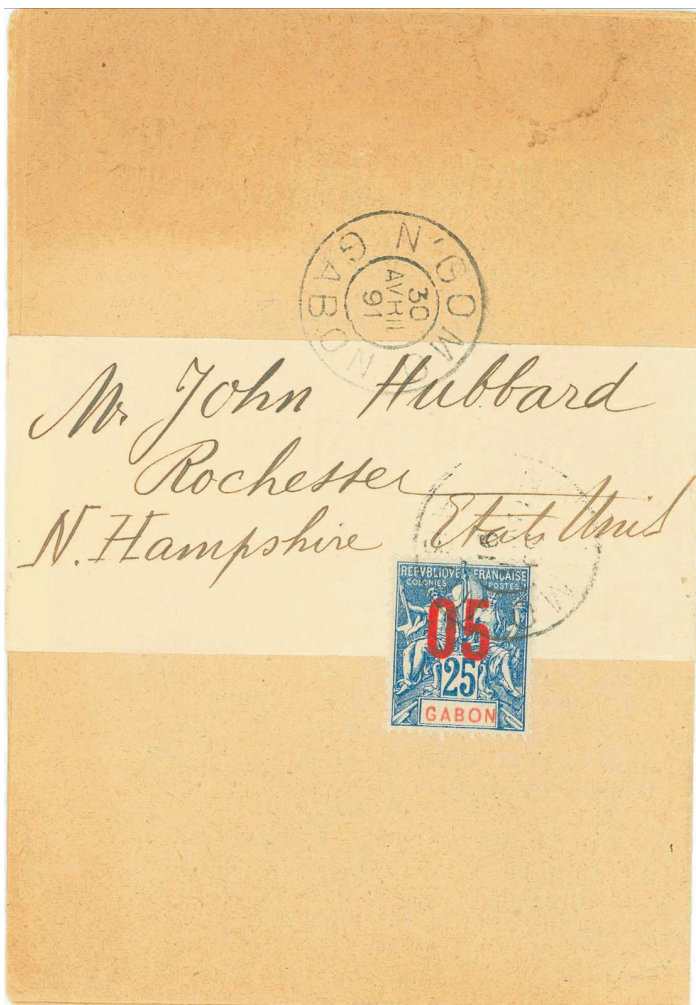


Figure 6: Wrapper band with philatelic advertising posted from N'Gomo, Gabon in 1916 to the United States.

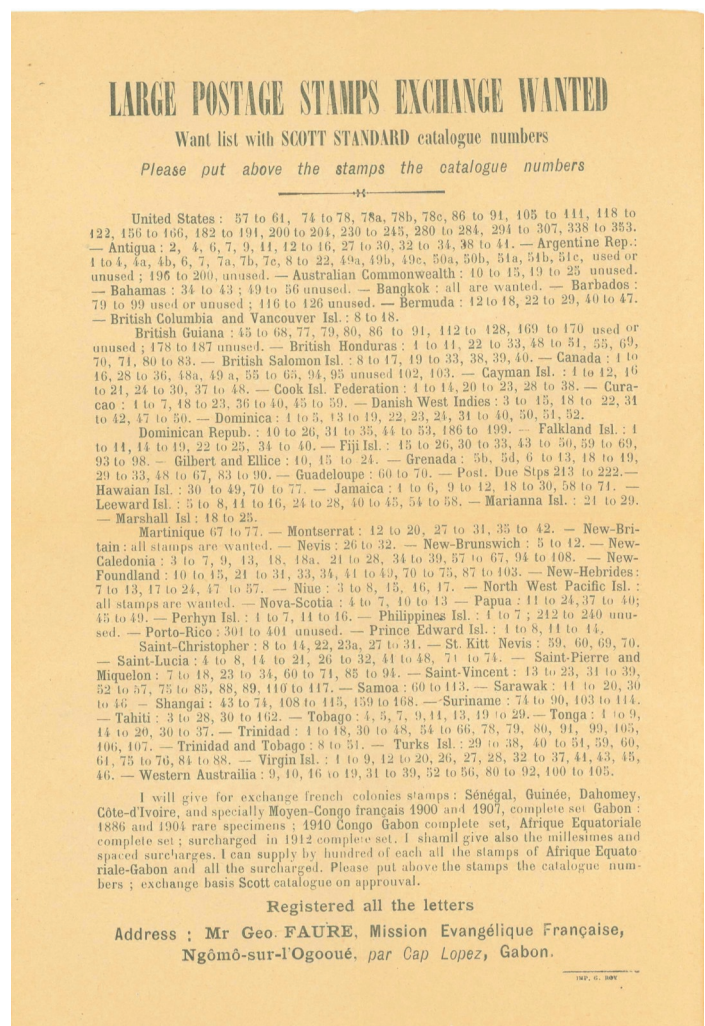


Figure 6a: Printed list of stamps for exchange, including Group Type stamps.



Figure 7: Wrapper band without contents relating to the Hanoi Exposition of 1902 - 1903 posted to the Philippines and forwarded to the USA.

Figure 8: Complete commercial list of prices current with wrapper posted from Saint Denis, Reunion in 1906.



An excellent example of a rare origin is the 5c printed matter envelope posted from Chingoni, Mayotte in January 1898 to Mamoutzou within the same colony (Figure 9). Given the date of posting, it undoubtedly contained some form of printed New Year's greeting. The 5c postal sta-

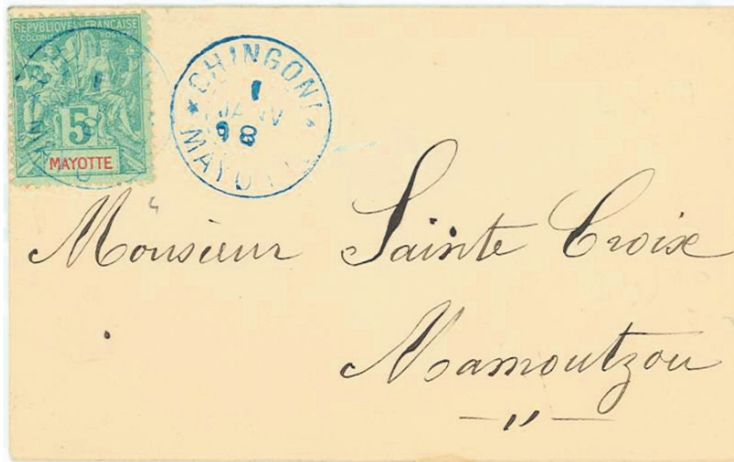


Figure 9: Printed matter envelope from the small office of Chingoni, Mayotte to Mamoutzou within the same colony.

tionery item shown in Figure 10 is one of my favorites with regard to rare origins and destinations. It originated in the small village of Houei-Say in upper Laos on May 10, 1905 and traveled via Luang-Prabang (June 10th) and Vien-Tiane (June 20th) most probably to Saigon where it proceeded to Bangkok (July 13th) by ship and then overland to its final destination at Chieng-Mai

(August 10th) in the Laotian part of northern Siam (Figure 10a). Regrettably, after this arduous journey of more than two months, it arrived without its contents! The envelope shown in Figure 11 (on the facing page) went on an equally difficult journey. It originated in the small village of Say



Figure 10a: Reverse of the envelope in Figure 10 showing the key Laotian transits and the Siam arrival.

in upper Dahomey on June 16, 1901 destined for the little village of Maninian in the upper Ivory Coast via Kankan, French Guinea. It transited via Diapaga (June 20th) and Konkouri (June 29th) enroute to Porto-Novo (July 19th) and the Loango a Marseille French Packet Line (July 20th). It arrived in Conakry, French Guinea on July 28th. No transit via Kankan in remote French Guinea is



Figure 10: Postal stationery envelope posted from the small village of Houei-Say, Laos to Chieng-Mai, Siam in 1905 taking more than two months to reach its destination.

present. Probably it was not possible for mail to transit via this route. The envelope was transferred to Grand Bassam, Ivory Coast on August 8th, probably on a local ship, and then to Lahou on August 18th. From here routing through the Ivory Coast to Maninian in the northwest part of the colony is uncertain. At this time mail in upper Dahomey was carried by runner, still making this an exceptional example of local colonial postal history.

We have already seen a few interesting destinations. Shown in Figure 12 is a 5c postal stationery envelope posted from the French Indochinese Office at Mongtze during De-



Figure 11: Postal stationery envelope from the small village of Say, Dahomey to Maninian, Ivory Coast. Routing uncertain – see text.

cember 1902 to Rabb, Hungary. Hungary is an uncommon destination for mail during the period of the Group Type's use, and when that mail is seen it is usually to Budapest. Transits via Hanoi and Haiphong, and a Hungarian arrival handstamp are present on the reverse of this piece.



Figure 12: Postal Stationery envelope from the French Office of Mongtze, China to Rabb, Hungary – a very unusual combination of origin and destination.

Sometimes unusual cancellations are present on these printed matter pieces. Shown in Figure 13 is a mourning cover from Guadeloupe franked with 1c and 4c Group Types cancelled by the old **GPE** lozenge. It is thought that this withdrawn canceller was brought into service during the period of the Group Type's use during times of high mail volume, and used to process printed matter.



Figure 13: Mourning cover showing use of the old **GPE** obliterator used for printed matter during the time of the Group Type's use.

Speaking of the use of old obliterations, the printed matter piece from Reunion (Figure 14 on the next page) illustrates another example. With the French Packet Line V octagonal datestamp adjacent to the stamp, one initially thinks that the stamp was cancelled with the anchor cancel used on the French Packets. However, a close inspection of the stamp (insert) shows that it was cancelled by the old 8 x 8 lozenge obliterator used during the period of the General Issues. The small village of Karikal, French India, just south of Pondichery, used a beautiful and striking boxed **INDE** cancellation during the 1890's and into the 1900's (Figure 15 on the next page). Examples of this cancellation are favored by both dealers and collectors, though it is rarely seen on printed matter as in this case. Finally a most curious piece is shown in Figure 16 (on the next page) posted from Saigon during April 1904. A 5c postal stationery cutout was used on a blank envelope to pay the printed matter rate to Tanan.



Figure 14: Use of the old 8 x 8 lozenge obliterator from Reunion used to cancel printed matter in 1898.



Figure 15: Striking boxed **INDE** obliterator used by the small village of Karikal, French India on a 5c envelope.



Figure 16: Illegal 5c postal stationery cut out used on a local printed matter piece from Saigon to Tanan (Backstamped). Apparently tolerated by the local post offices.

Normally this practice was not allowed in the colonies, but occasional examples are found as in this case.

Exceptional 5c Rates

Even within the realm of the 5c printed matter rates, it is possible to find some truly exceptional items. Figure 17 shows what appears on quick observation to be a simple printed matter piece from Reunion. It was sold to me as such. However, a close inspection of the circular datestamp shows it to be one of the military datestamps used in Madagascar during 1895 - 1896 when the French were on their military campaign from Majunga to Tananarive. This datestamp (**2 TOR ET PES AUX ARMEES 2 MADAGASCAR, 25 NOV 95**) was used from Majunga and what this

piece most likely represents is use of a Reunion Group Type stamp from the military post office at Majunga before the official formation of the colony of Madagascar in August 1896 at the conclusion of the successful military campaign. Apparently, someone was in possession of the 5c Reunion stamp in Majunga and used it to frank non-military printed matter that was accepted by the military post office in operation. As such, it probably represents the earliest recorded use of a Group Type stamp from the burgeoning colony of Madagascar prior to its official creation.

The next three items represent local forms created to inform the addressees of the arrival of mail/parcels that required pickup. Each, to my knowledge, is unique, and their use has not been recorded before. All were posted at the 5c printed



Figure 17: Printed matter envelope from the military post office at Majunga in 1895 franked with a Group Type stamp from Reunion, and tolerated by military postal officials who handled civilian correspondence at this time.



Figure 18: Parcel arrival form from the Service Colis Postaux in Nouméa, New Caledonia.

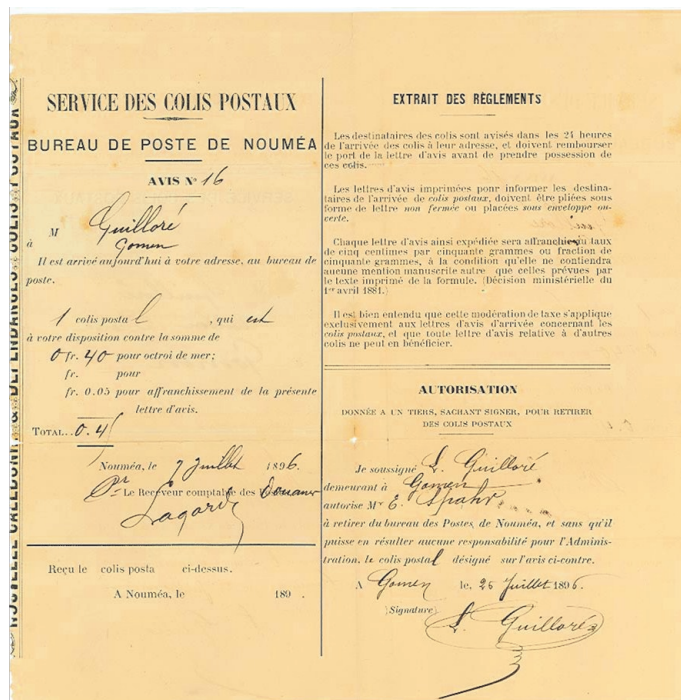


Figure 18a: Reverse of the form in Figure 18.



Figure 19: Similar form used in Reunion by the port at Pointe des Galets and the local railroad.

matter rate. The first (Figure 18 and 18a) is from the *Service des Colis Postaux* in Nouméa, New Caledonia sent to an addressee in Gomen informing him of the arrival of a parcel in Nouméa on July 25, 1896 and the charges due for the parcel including the five centimes postage for this notice. The second (Figure 19 and 19a) was created for similar use by the port (Port des Galets) and railroad on the island of Reunion. The third form (Figure 20 and 20a) is from one of the most un-

sual responses to shortages of Group Type stamps in any of the colonies. It too is from the *Service des Colis Postaux*, but on the island of Reunion. From December 31, 1900 until January 20, 1901 there was a shortage of low value Group Type stamps on this island. To meet this shortage the island's postmaster authorized the use of postage due stamps on local mail for a three

week period until the arrival of new supplies of Group Type stamps. This form was used during the three week period of the shortage and is properly franked with a 5c Type Duval postage due stamp. It was posted in Saint Denis by the Customs Bureau. The precise date is not readable.

During the early 1900's many colonies experienced a shortage of Group Type stamps, particu-

Figure 19a: Reverse of the form in Figure 19.

Figure 20a: Message on the reverse of the form in Figure 20.



Figure 20: Service Colis Postaux form of Reunion properly franked with a 5c General Issues postage due stamp during the three week period of shortage of low value Group Type stamps in this colony.

larly those values used on the most common types of mail. These included the 5c stamp needed for printed matter (including short message

post cards, which are not covered in this article) and the 15c stamp which corresponded to the French community rate. In response to this need, overprints on higher value stamps were often created locally. Many colonies, Indochina being a good example, responded properly creating only the overprints that were needed for actual shortages. Other colonies, Guadeloupe being one of the most outrageous examples, saw this need as a chance to exploit the philatelic market, and did so accordingly. Guadeloupe's excesses were so severe, that the local government was even reprimanded by the authorities in Paris. Illustrative of this period, Figure 21 shows one of the Madagascar overprints from this period (05/50) properly used on a printed matter envelope from Tananarive in November 1902 to France via the Reunion-Marseille packet. In general, these overprints are more readily seen on postcards rather than the other forms of printed matter.

Saving one of the best for last, one of the most unusual overprints on Group Type stamps was



Figure 21: Madagascar provisional overprint used in 1902 by the Protestant Mission.



Figure 22: Use of the 5/20 **Valeur** overprint on the 20c French Congo issue from July 1900 on a local printed matter envelope.

overprints on existing Group Types (5/20 and 15/30 with the word **Valeur** above the values) to meet this shortage. The printings were three hundred and nine hundred, respectively, and the stock was burned on July 12, when new supplies of stamps arrived. The overprints are very crude and were done locally. These are among the rarest of any of the Group Type provisional issues. Shown in Figure 22 is local use of the 5/20 overprint posted from Brazzaville on July 10, 1900. This example is one of two known exam-

ples posted to the same addressee during this brief period.

Clearly this article illustrates that collecting even one of the most common Group Type rates offers material of exceptional variety and interest. Possibly some of the readers will respond to our Editor with their own examples of unusual 5c Group Type printed matter.

done in Brazzaville, French Congo on July 9, 1900. There was an immediate shortage of 5c stamps used for printed matter and 15c stamps used for the French Community rate. The Lieutenant Governor, M. Cor, authorized provisional

Show Reports

FLOREX 2012

Orlando, FL December 2012

Silver to **Charles LaBlonde** for "The Postal History of Swiss WW II Cards."

Southeastern stamp Expo 2013

Norcross, GA January 2013

Gold to **Thomas Broadhead** for "France: The 1925 Decorative Arts Exposition." Also the American Philatelic Society 1900-1940 Medal of Excellence. Also the single frame Grand and gold for "Petite Messages: Development of Carte de Visite Mail in 19th Century France." **Eliot Landau** was in the Court of Honor with "Oh, Freedom."

Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition 2013

Sarasota, FL February 2013

Gold to **Lawrence Haber** for "Life and Times of the Half-Penny (decimal) Manchin."

St Louis Stamp Expo 2013

St Louis, MO March 2013

Gold to **Ralph DeBoard** for "The Postal History of Tahiti Through the First Pictorial Issue."

Garfield-Perry March Party 2013

Cleveland, OH March 2013

Gold to **Larry Gardner** for "The Postal History of the British Morocco Agencies 1907-57." Gold to **Paul Larsen** for "Federal Issues of the Leeward Islands: King George V Reign." Also the AAPE Award of Excellence-Title Page and the American Philatelic Society Medal of Excellence, 1900-1940. Single frame gold to **Paul Larsen** for "Leeward Islands Federal Postal Stationery of King George Reign: Registered Envelopes," which also received the Garfield-Perry Single Frame Second.

TEXPEX 2013

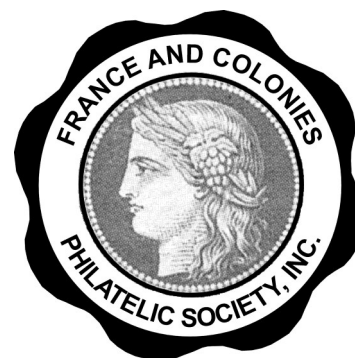
Grapevine, TX March 2013

Gold medal to **Ralph DeBoard** for "The Postal

History of Tahiti Through the First Pictorial Issue" Gold to **Charles LaBlonde** for "The Postal History of Swiss WW II Cards." Also a Vermeil for "The Suspension of US Mail to Switzerland 1942-1945."

13th New Zealand National Philatelic Literature 2013 Exhibition

Please see Stanley Luft's letter to the editor for these results, which he researched for us.



Membership Notices

REINSTATEMENTS

2016 Disler, Duilio M. F, Marly, Switzerland

NEW MEMBERS

3446 LaBelle, Robert L, Baldwinsville, NY

3447 Rueppel, David P, Lancaster, PA

DECEASED

3341 Jordan, Richard G.

President's Letter

President's letter

Hello from a still cold Akron, OH. This quarter I am happy to report that we have no world-changing news as we did last time. That's good and bad, of course. Many of us still miss Dave Herendeen's conversations and erudition, but life, we know, goes on. It was still a great shock and a great loss to us.

Ras is still our erstwhile temporary editor looking for a volunteer to take the job for a while. We have had one inquiry that shows promise, so we'll see what unfolds. Don't let that stop you from offering help as one of our associate editors, though. There are many ways to make a difference.

On the conversion of our journal to electronic format, there is progress but not much news. Mike Bass continues to work with the software folks, and I expect that I will be test driving the results before long. I sound like a broken record, but for those of you in the workforce, you may have been feeling the ups and downs of business. Mike is no different, and his business has been keeping him really busy. That slows us down on philatelic matters. Not to slight those of you who aren't working – we all feel economic changes in our own ways.

Thanks to all of you who have renewed your membership for 2013. The bad news continues, that we add new members more slowly than we lose current members. We're going to try something we haven't done for a long time, if ever. We are placing a full page ad in the Milwaukee APS Stampshow program in an effort to attract new members. In the past we have had quite limited success with manning tables at national shows (unless we are at one of our own meetings). We probably won't see a great groundswell, but we hope to attract people who

might not otherwise find our group. The cost is reasonable, about the same as a table, and we don't have to find members to sit at the table for several days. I hope there are many FCPS ambassadors there, though, explaining the benefits of membership to any interested collectors.

You undoubtedly realize that other philatelic organizations face the same issue. The APS has an active membership committee that is always looking for ways to increase membership. We all know there are collectors in our group we never meet and even more who share our interests and don't belong. Whether we can ever get those collectors to spring for dues in return for receiving our journals and enjoying our company is a seemingly unanswerable question. Hope springs eternal, that our hobby will include grow and the excitement we have will rub off on another generation.

So if you have any ideas at all to add to the discussion, please pass them along. We'll give them a try!

I hope you all remember that our next convocation will be at SANDICAL, January 2014. We have a hole to fill in our exhibits with Dave's loss. The show has asked me to judge, which I have accepted. That means that I also won't be trotting out my Algerian exhibit. So we need you to mount your delightful "collection" in a way that is an exhibit full of eye appeal. What better commercial for the joys of collecting French area stamps and postal history than to see the fantastic colonial bi-colors or the exquisite engraving of more modern French stamps? We've had great turnouts in the past and can do it again. In fact, there was a Jamet/Baudot sale this month that offered some of the finest artists' drawings and other archival material that I have seen in a long time. Beautiful sketches, some essays, and so on. I hope some of you were able to add to your collections and that you now can mount an educational and pretty exhibit.

I have had a very thoughtful letter from one of our members who expressed his idea that we lack enough attention to beginning collectors and those who aren't involved in exhibiting. We could use some articles that address more general topics, whether it's about a recent commemorative issue or perhaps a short piece about the rates for which the Navigation and Commerce stamps were issued. We depend on you, our members, to write articles for the journal. When you get tired of reading someone else's articles because they are outside your area of interest, that's the time to sit down with your album or a couple of interesting covers and write about what *does* interest you. It is your chance to inspire another member to add his or her own article, and to increase the diversity of our publication. Please give this some thought – a short article can be a matter of just a couple of hours of your time (and it is STAMP time!).

Go find a new member or two! We need replacements, and you are our best source. Also, please write an article for the journal. See you at a show soon?

1950's Journal Wrapper

Norval Rasmussen



Algerian Journal wrapper with the six franc printed matter postage rate paid by two coat of arms stamps issued in 1948 and 1949. This is a correct fifty gram rate for 1951.

Book Review

The Sower, A Common Little French Stamp

Stanley Luft

The Sower design of France was a long-lived (1903-1941) one, and is probably what most French collectors attempt to tackle when considering specialization. Even today one or more examples can be found in packets or mixtures. To say it was (and is) a major achievement of French stamp production and subsequent philately is surely an understatement. And, make no mistake, this book is an important and definitive work, albeit simply written by a master of the English language. My friend Ashley Lawrence's painstaking study of these stamps is a long in preparation labor of love!

As Ashley's title indicates, the Sower is even today an extremely common small-sized stamp. Whereas the Sowers (I prefer to use the plural) have been extensively studied in France by renowned philatelists since at least the early 1950's, this 2012 publication is both a culmination of their pioneering work and also the first detailed, comprehensive publication in the English language. Finally! Not only is it well written by a master of the language, it is a joy to leaf through and admire the excellent, nay superlative, 500 or more color illustrations, almost all of which are at full scale, and obviously almost all residing in the author's collections.

As an aside, I am a reasonably advanced Sower collector, but I specialize in, take pleasure from, and occasionally exhibit only a single face value, the 30 centime Cameo Sowers. Thus I envy Ashley for his superlative collections. He certainly has more available shelf space in his stamp room than I can afford!

Whereas the exacting details of this study,

,including the many tables, may be daunting to the beginning collector they will assist perfectly the advanced collectors who hitherto had problems understanding French (but will no longer have that excuse). At the same time, just perusing the illustrations may be quite enough to get beginning collectors excited and started on their way to collecting, even specializing in Sowers, which can be done as cheaply or expensively as one's taste and finances allow. Therefore it will serve both advanced collectors of this marvelous and varied material, and beginners about to consider to get their feet wet.

Ok now. How best to collect or write about the Sowers? One can do it by face value and Scott numbers, which makes absolutely no sense, or, better, chronologically as per the French catalogs (I am not familiar with the Gibbons of which Ashley makes some use). He obviously agonized for some time over arrangement, but it does seem to work: chronologically with important and useful asides, often humorous, to keep the narrative elegant and entertaining. Preliminary page *iv* explains his reasoning perfectly and is a "must read", as is every single page of this work, which explain in quite simple terms, the origin of the Sowers, how each value was postally used at a point in time, the politics involved, and much more.

In the first 15 chapters, Sower coverage is complete: sheet and coil stamps, booklets, stationary, usage, overprints, varieties, forgeries, shades and papers by year(s) of use, as post World War I small change, etc. Most importantly types and subtypes are distinguished on oversize cuts, not original by any means, but most necessary for their identification, and all present in one single publication. The only other source I have in mind is the price list of that now dead fine gentleman, Georges Monteaux, of which a few examples might still exist. But I digress.

Later chapters cover overprints and money stamps in great detail. Coverage of overprinted

stamps for use abroad is adequate, albeit unspecialized. There's even a long fascinating final chapter on Sower souvenirs and other collectables for the true aficionado. These 22 chapters are followed by 5 very useful and detailed appendices, particularly the ones on paper types and printing methods, a fine glossary of French philatelic terms, and a quite adequate bibliography. I must mention that Lawrence does a great job of cross referencing, should the reader get confused or lost. He is there for the reader every step of the way.

In summary, this is the only work in English to cover all one needs to know about the Sowers, for hesitant neophyte and specialist alike. As the Sowers recede to the distant philatelic past this should remain the definitive study for eons to come.

The Sower, A Common Little French Stamp by Ashley Lawrence, edited by Maurice Tyler. Published by the France and Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain, 2012. Perfect bound 11 3/4 by 8 1/4 inch format, 252 pages. Available from the society for £39.50 plus postage and handling by contacting R. N. Beroadhurst, PO Box 448, Taddington TW11 1AZ, Great Britain or by email to stock@fcps.org.uk.

Instructions for authors

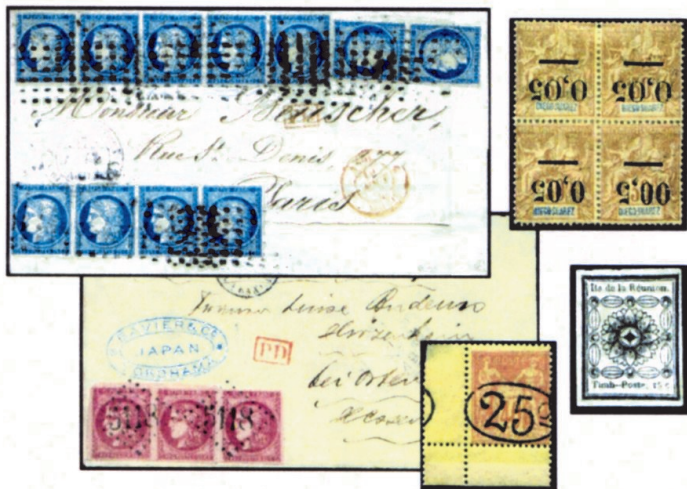
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