

France & Colonies Philatelist



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Some little-known Free French Colonial Material
Pictures by courtesy of Mr. Edmond Queyroy



Cameroon: Emergency revenue stamps made from postage stamps in 1940 to 1942



French Guiana: The postmark with "France Libre" above date; and the scarce airmail issue.



St. Pierre & Miquelon: The inverted surcharge on the 35c stamp.

(A comprehensive article on these and others of like nature and interest, by Mr. Queyroy, was in "Stamps" of May 28, 1949)

Photographs by Boutrelle.

Beautiful Clogging-Variety.

Mrs. Florence Beldy has shown your editor a copy of France No.267, the 50c Peace of 1932, on which clogging of ink on the plate has removed completely the letters P and O of POSTES, parts of the first S of that word, and both the flag and the vertical stroke of the 5. This is a used copy, found by her in late 1949 among an ordinary bunch of material.



Free French Double Surcharge from Saint-Pierre & Miquelon.

Mr. Edmond Queyroy furnishes us this picture of the only double surcharge in the whole set. (Boutrelle photo). We show it for two very good reasons:

1. A number of our members say that they are always glad to see pictures of the scarce ones which they may not themselves ever get to own.
2. As many false surcharges were put on the same basal stamps, a picture of a known genuine, enlarged to bring out details, is often a guide if a copy is offered.

MAURITANIA Post Office List, 1948

By Edmond Queyroy

The office listings for the various colonies in French West Africa, taken from Public Notice No.3273, July 17, 1948, have been given for four colonies. Here is the fifth section, which, like previous ones, will help in avoiding stamps on which illegitimate cancellations occur, and will indicate the offices in the colony since any of the post-war boundary changes.

Mauritania.

- A. Independent or "full" offices: no "head office" indicated in the notice.

Aiou-el-Atrouss	Mederdra
Akjoujt	Moudjéria
Aleg	Néma
Atar	Nouakchott
Boghé	Port-Etienne
Boutilimit	Rosso
Chinguetti	Sélibaby
Kaédi	Tamchakett
Kiffa	Tidikja
Maghama	Timbedra

- B. Subordinate or "Secondary" offices or Postal Agencies:
- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Fort Gouraud | branch of Atar |
| M'Bagne | branch of Boghé |

Further colonies will be listed in future numbers.

Group Members in the Autumn Shows.

Ben Reeves was show director at the Airpex stamp show in Chicago, Oct. 7, 8 and 9, 1949. This was a large, excellent show, held in connection with the American Air Mail Society's convention.

Miss Louise Clemenson took a Second Award at Stampex, Newark, N.J., Oct. 21-23 1949, for her Reunion. This collection had never been shown for competition previously. Stampex makes its awards on the "Open Plan", with the whole of the exhibition treated as one section, after Grand Award and special trophies. Thus a Second Award means that only 21 exhibits out of the 94 this show included, were judged better.

John J. Britt took the Charlat Trophy at the same show, Stampex, for "the Airmail Exhibit in which the Most Original Study is shown," with his essays and proofs of French Colonial Airmails.

Charles de Bretagne took a First Award with his France 19th Century, at the Sixth Dutchess Philatelic Society Exhibition, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., Oct. 29 and 30, 1949.

In each case the only judge opposed to such a high rating was the F. & C. Group member who was on the Board of Judges at these shows. He was overruled by the others.

Dates of Issue of the 40c Type Sage

In the American Philatelic Congress book of 1950, a comprehensive study of both the stamps in this value, Type 1 and Type 2, was published by me.

Therein I report earliest dates seen:

Type 1 (N under B), Oct. 7, 1878

Type 2 (N under U), June 15, 1882

Yvert France specialized catalog, 1935 edition, gives date of issue for Type 1 as June 1, 1878; but the 1939 edition, quoted by Dr. Chase in No. 48 on this journal, cites June 1 1876 for this stamp. There is no typographical error in the year in either the original French or our translation; it is 1876 in both.

Yvert gives June (no day stated) 1878 for Type 1, in both editions cited, as day of issue.

Since my Congress Book article I have found and own Type 2 with cancellation date Nov. 15 1881.

Earlier workers were much exercised over the supposition that the two types of the 40c came out simultaneously, or that perhaps the Type 2 went into use first. There were many ingenious explanations worked out (Summary of the matter is in Kohl Handbook, in section now in process of translation). If Yvert's 1876 date for Type 1 is correct, this all becomes obsolete. We do not appear to have any printed report of what evidence the Yvert 1876 date is based on.

For my own part, I don't believe any of the accepted dates for this value, in either type, is valid. Both June 1 1876 for Type 1 and June (no day given) 1878 for Type 2 impress me as merely guesswork -- based on careless reading of some indistinct postmark dates, or on printing errors in articles published years ago.

But I want to be show. Come on, come all.

Show me a Type 1 40c used before Oct. 7 1878.

Show me a Type 2 40c used before Nov. 15, 1881.

You may advance the date a few days in one or the other case -- but not from 1878 to 1876 -- not from 1881 to 1878.

----S.G. Rich

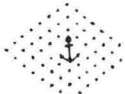
French Maritime Posts

By Robert G. Stone



It seems hardly possible to mention the highlights of collecting French stamps without bringing up the "maritime posts" or what we nowadays more precisely call seaposts. No other large maritime postal nation has made the philatelic evidences of its seaposts so obvious and charming for collectors. From the early times of the French postoffice, the logical French mind has tended to create distinctive postal markings for each special postal function. Although the British-government mail boats began regularly plying the seas over 150 years before those of France, they had never attempted to service mails on board for the convenience of passengers. But when the French "Messageries Maritimes" boats make their first runs in 1837 the pursers were acting as mail agents on board and were furnished with dated postmarkers containing the name of the boat - an idea which most other countries did not generally adopt until it was recommended by the U. P. U. after 1890. French-subsidized ship lines expanded rapidly after 1862, soon reaching across the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and even into the Pacific.

The postmarks inscribed with the name of the boat were widely used on these lines down to 1866-67. In some cases the name of the country or port of call was included in the inscription. Letters put on board loose at foreign ports or mailed on the high seas would be marked on the face or back with one of these marks just as though they had been posted in a postoffice in France. It takes no imagination at all to appreciate why collectors are seized with a glowing fancy for these marks once they have seen one on some old letter redolent of the sea and ships, of far away places and times. Yet this type of postal item would probably never have become so well-known were it not for a happy event of 1857. In that year the postal clerks on the mail boats began selling French adhesive stamps to the passengers, and a distinctive obliterator-the "anchor-in-a-diamond-of-dots"--was introduced at the same time for cancelling the stamps on letters mailed on board. Thus, from 1857 to 1866 these letters not only were postmarked with the name of the boat but could also be franked with French stamps (of the Empire issue) - truly a beguiling and for that period unusual combination. Covers or letters of this type are not necessarily rare - except with certain boat names and denominations of stamps -, and nowadays nearly every moderately-specialized collection of 19th Century France is graced by one or more of them. There were about 100 boats in all which had such postmarks in the 1837-67 period.



1862 1857 on
FRENCH SEAPOSTS -- Early types
-- Les Annales de Philatelie.

By 1866 the boats and lines had become so numerous that the postal administration decided a more flexible and complex system of postmarks would be necessary. Therefore they retired the marks containing the name of the boat in favor of a new series which indicated the line or route by a number ("No. 1", etc.) along with the tell-tale abbreviation "Paq. Fr.". In some cases the

port or country of call was still included as before. From time to time the size and style (shape and font) were changed. As there were ultimately about 35 designated lines, each with one to six boat or clerk numbers, and over a dozen major types of postmark, many ports, etc., one can readily judge what a large variety of such postmarks can exist. It is doubtful that any one has ever been or will ever be able to complete a collection of all known varieties of this series, which in fact with some modification is still in use on French merchant vessels carrying seapost service. New varieties are constantly being reported.

As we noted before, the French stamps used on the seaposted letters were at first cancelled with the anchor-in-diamond-of-dots, while the dated postmarks were struck (with rare exceptions) only on the letter. Stamps off cover with the "anchor" cancel are quite easy to come by, though they are sold for more or less of a premium over the normal catalogue value, depending on the issue and denomination. This use of the "anchor" continued to 1876 after which the stamps were cancelled with the sea-postmarks themselves. In theory, nearly all the regular postage stamps of France (as well as many French colonial stamps) issued from 1857 down to this day can be found on French seapost letters and with seapost cancels. Naturally those of the earlier, classic period (1857-76) are more sought after and valuable, but the later ones are by no means despised. Finally mention must be made of the fact that stamps of various other countries are sometimes found with the French seapost "anchor" or postmark - these came either from non-seapost combination covers franked with stamps of country of origin to prepay postage to the port and with French stamps to prepay ship postage to another port (prior to 1880 mostly), or from seapost covers mailed on board a French boat while in the harbor of a foreign country (U.P.U. regulation, 1890 on).

The French seapost cancel on a cover is not in itself proof of the latter having been mailed on board; for it has long been the practice to have the mails being sent overseas from land postoffices via closed pouches opened and sorted by the seapost agents on board who endorse these mails with their sea-postmark before repouching them.

We hope we have conveyed some idea of the vast scope of French seapost material and of the allure which it holds for all those collectors, amateur and specialist, who are not unresponsive to the double romance of ships and stamps. Alas, one does need some guidance to the details of such a complex subject. The complete authority is a rather scarce little booklet by Boursalet, Maréchal, Francois and Gilbert, "La Poste Maritime - Les Paquebots Français et leurs Cachets", reprinted from articles in the Annales de Philatelie, 1930-35. A condensed sketch will be found in Lesgor and Minnigerode, "The Cancellations on French Stamps of the Classic Issue 1849-76" (Nassau Stamp Co., N.Y., 1948). The specialized French catalogues offer useful but very partial listings. Mr. Hurt has outlined "The French Mail Boats from America" rather fully and concisely in the Philatelic Magazine for May 14, 1937, p. 468 ff.

(The End)

In the present monetary confusion, we are often impelled to ask, "What IS a Franc?"

Scott's Monthly Journal for January 1950 has an article by Rev. Ben Hamilton Jr., formerly a member of the Group, now a missionary in French Equatorial Africa, which sums up this situation very neatly, showing graphically the ratios of franc values, using the Metropolitan Franc, now 28/100 of 1 cent, as base. From this article, a summary is taken:

C.F.A. (French Colonies in Africa) used also in Reunion and St. Pierre-Miquelon, but not in Djibouti: 1 franc equals 2 Metropolitan francs.

Djibouti franc equals 1.16 Metropolitan francs---used only in French Somaliland.

C.P.F. (French Colonies in the Pacific)-----
1 franc equals 5.48 Metropolitan francs.

New Hebrides "franc d'or", most valuable of all, 1 franc equals 38.40 Metropolitan francs.

Good figures to remember when you are trying to figure face values.

---A.R. Fernald.

Help for Puzzled Ones.

Those among the membership who have puzzling questions about their stamps or covers that are within our field, can always get help via those of us who are carrying forward the work of this group.

If you will put just one question into your letter, keeping it specific, and will include a return envelope with postage on it, sending it to the Editor, it will be passed on to the one among the members who in his judgment can most likely answer it. We cannot guarantee that in every case we can get you the reply-- but we'll do our best. Sometimes the editor may find that a phone call to one of several people living in the area for which he doesn't have to pay tolls for phoning, will give him the reply to return to you.

Please respect the fact that we are giving a volunteer, unpaid service, by making your query definite and including the return envelope with postage on it. We can handle single inquiries-- but even two in a letter make it a burden. Send us another letter with the other inquiry, maybe two or three days later.

THE NEW SERVICE

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

Postal Stationery wanted-- France & Colonies mint, except Navigation and Commerce ("Groupe") type; entires only. Also commemorative post cards of France, mint of first day cancelled. Send on approval. P.W. Anthony, 60 Merbrook Road, Merion Station, Penna. (Member 279)

Wanted: stamps of General French Colonies issues, cancelled in Guadeloupe or Martinique; or anything of interest for a specialized collection of these islands. Wm. Schafer, Box 73, Astor Sta., Boston 23, Mass. (Member 403)

40c Sage Type 2 (Scott 95) wanted, with date in postmark before 1882. I offer 10c each, for those I can use, and 25c each for dates 1878 or earlier. S.G. Rich, Verona, N.J. (Member 2)

Photostat copy of the France and Colonies Philatelist No. 1 will complete your file. \$1.25 post free; cash with order only; and it takes ten days. Frank L. Browne, 2235 Lake Ave., Baltimore 13, Md. (Member 326)

NEW MEMBERS: Welcome --

(Elected Dec. 1)

416 Apfelbaum, Earl P.L., 1428 South Penn Sq., Philadelphia 2, Pa. (Stamps issued prior to 1905)

417 Bates, Chandler, P.O. Box 164, Gloucester, Va. (No specialty stated)

418 Blackstadius, T., Hovas pr. Gothenburg, Sweden. (No specialty stated)

(Elected Jan. 5)

419 Beal, James H., 200 Kenmore Ave., S.E., Warren, Ohio. (France, Dutch Indies, Mexico, numerous other countries)

420 Davis, Miss Mary B., 6, Prospect Terrace, Ramsgate, Kent, England (France, French Precancels).

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED:

Alder, Bradbury C., 444 Heath Pl., Hackensack, N.J.

Baldy, Mrs. Florence E., 713 North Walsh St., Carson City, Nev.

Bruckner, Alfred, 1910 South Hamlin Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.

Chadbourne, E.L., 30 Browning Road, Somerville, 45, Mass.

De Putron, John C., 411 South 13th St., Lincoln 8, Nebr.

Fuerst, Milton Jr., 738 Royal St., New Orleans 16, La.

Fuhrmann, John B., M.D., 5 Main St., Flemington, N.J.

Golden, Mrs. Maxine, 655 Bittersweet Pl., Chicago 13, Ill.

Hanson, Oliver G., R.D. 2, Box 194, Yankton, S. Dak.

APPLICATIONS PENDING:

Doiron, Miss Lucille A.

Miller, A. Robert

RESIGNATIONS RECEIVED:

125 Ohlman, Max, New York, N.Y.

241 van Straten, Dr. Leon, Melbourne, Australia.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

315 Davenport, H. Thomas, to 1921 East Atlantic St., Philadelphia 34, Pa.

289 Parkinson, Eric, to Box 8, Primos, Penna.

200 Thivierge, Albert, to 1 Ridgemare Way, Amesbury, Mass.

THE PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER at its December meeting reelected the officers of the previous year: Chariman, H.T. Davenport; Vice-Chairman, Miss Helen Feneberg; Secretary-Treasurer, Raymond H. Geiger. Members in the Philadelphia area not already associated with the Chapter should make contact with Mr. Geiger at 1312 West Rockland St., Philadelphia 41. Meetings are held at the National Philatelic Museum, Broad & Diamond Sts.

MOTION FOR BY-LAWS CHANGE:

Moved by Mrs. Stringham at the meeting of the Parent Chapter, March 5, to change the fiscal year from October-September to the calendar year. Duly seconded. This is the notice which is required for any motion to change a by-law.

The sound of the letter W in English, found in many names in French Africa, is represented by OU in French--Ouagadougou is pronounced as "Wahgah Doogoo" for example.