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# France & Colonies Philatelist



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We have a France & Colonies Group Lounge at the A.S.D.A. Show, 71st Regiment Armory, 34th St. and Park Ave., New York, Nov. 20 to 23, 1953. Everyone is invited to use it and meet the local members who will be there.



## I N D E X

Nos. 1 through 70 of the F. & C. Phil.  
(Vol. 1 No. 1 through Vol. 12, No. 4)

By Catherine W. Menninger.

## Locs are by volume and page:

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## \*\* S E C R E T A R Y ' S \* R E P O R T \*\*

July 15, 1953 to September 15, 1953

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NOTICE \* NOTICE \* NOTICE

The entire eleven volumes of the France & Cols. "Philatelist" are still available to members...  
 Send \$12.00 to your Secretary. Single Volumes, are priced as follow: Volume #1, \$2.00 all the others, from Vol. 2, to Vol. 11, \$1.00 each...  
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Respectfully submitted  
 Charles Bretagne  
 Secretary.

M E M B E R S ' A P P E A L S

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

Wanted-- France Historical Album (pub. Barclay Press, Montreal). Prefer new, but acceptable used copy might do. H. Hilton Jr., c/o National Bank, Jackson, Mich. (Member 526)

Wanted for study: dated corner blocks, also full sheets of France 263 (2fr. Arc de Triomphe). Will pay postage both ways. Will purchase any quantity of used multiples. Charles Neidorf, 127 Cannon St., New York 2, N.Y. (Member 364)

For publication in this journal we want ten short articles, with or without pictures, on any Colonial stamp subjects (We have oodles of copy on Metropolitan France). Editor, F. & C.P. Yes, we can use longer colonial articles and some on offices abroad, also. S.G. Rich, Verona, N. J. (Member 2).

Still chasing the elusive copies of the 40c Type Sage with very early postmark dates: 1878 and earlier on the N under B; 1880 and earlier on N under U. Fancy price, as for fine unused copy, paid for any item earlier than dates now known. S.G. Rich, Verona, N.J. (Member 2)

E D I T O R I A L

The Group is very much indebted to our member Mrs. Menninger for the arduous and helpful task which she has done in compiling the index to the France & Colonies Philatelist. Now any member can readily determine whether the matter he wants to know about has been treated, where the article is, etc.

Mrs. Menninger did us an index for the first 39 numbers, which we published in No. 43. That index has been consolidated into the current one. Thank you, Mrs. Menninger.

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## French Radio Features Stamp Program

Of particular philatelic interest is this French slogan cancellation noted recently by Henry M. Goodkind of New York City. The translation of the text is, "Listen to the radio every Sunday for the Philatelic Courier" and this indicates that a weekly program of news of interest to stamp collectors is broadcast by Radio Paris.

Western Stamp Collector

From THE STAMP COLLECTORS' FORTNIGHTLY.

AUGUST 8th, 1953



# FRANCE

## Second Empire Centenary

By PATRICK HAMILTON



With unanimity of opinion, strikingly at variance with that prevailing today, the people of France had, in December 1848, elected Louis Napoleon, the nephew and step-grandson of the great Napoleon Bonaparte, as President of the Republic, with a clear majority of three and a half million votes. Three years later, by the now celebrated "Coup d'Etat", Louis Napoleon made an end to constitutional government and by another plebescite this action was approved by the immense majority of 7,439,216 to 740,737.

Not satisfied with the bare possession of absolute power, Louis Napoleon hankered after the pomp and circumstance enjoyed by his great ancestor, and decided to re-establish the Imperial dignity. Yet a third plebescite was held on 21st-22nd November 1852, and by an even greater majority the Second Republic came to an end, the Second Empire was born and the Consul-President became the Emperor Napoleon III, this change of style being proclaimed on 2nd December, the anniversary of the Coup d'Etat.

On the same day, a decree was promulgated ordering that in the future all stamps and coinage should not only bear the effigy of the Emperor, but also be inscribed "Empire Francaise".

The designer of the first Empire postage stamps was Jean Jacques Barre, who had been responsible for the previously issued French stamps. Mons. Barre took as the basis of his design the Ceres type of 1849-50 which he adapted by the substitution of the Imperial portrait and the alteration of the inscription across the top to read "EMPIRE FRANCAIS", the space at his disposal precluding the inclusion of the full inscription as decreed. This final design, which was broadly similar to the 10 and 25 centimes stamps which had been issued for the Presidency in 1852, but without the engraver's initial at the foot of the bust, was submitted to the Emperor and approved by him with the concurrence of the Empress.

The first postage stamps of the Second Empire were issued a hundred years ago when, on 17th August 1853, values of 10 centimes and 1 franc were placed on sale. These were followed by a 40 centimes on 8th September,

and a 25 centimes on 3rd November. This completed the current series, the previously issued 20 centimes stamp having been withdrawn in 1850 and the 15 centimes on 1st July 1853, as revision of postal rates had rendered these values superfluous.

All of the stamps in the "Empire" series were electrotyped at the National Mint in Paris under the direction of Mon. A. Hulot, in sheets of 300 arranged in two horizontally disposed panes of 150 on surface tinted paper. These were divided vertically into issue sheets of 150 before being placed on sale; as in the case of previous French stamps, these sheets were imperforate.

At the beginning of July 1854, new rates of postage authorised by a decree dated 20th May came into force. The basic inland letter rate was reduced from 25 to 20 centimes and the rate for letters weighing between 15 and 100 grammes became 80 centimes instead of 1 franc as heretofore. At the same time a registration fee of 20 centimes was introduced, before this double ordinary postage had been charged, and prepayment became compulsory, the addressee being liable for one and a half times the due postage on all unpaid letters.

These changes called for the issue of two new values, 20 and 80 centimes and the withdrawal of the now unnecessary 25 centimes and 1 franc denominations. The 20 centimes came first, being placed on sale on 1st July 1854, being followed three months later by the 80 centimes.

Later in 1854, on 4th November, a new value was added to the series. This was a 5 centimes to prepay the rate on "Cartes de Visites" circulating locally. The last value in the Empire type did not appear till six years later and was then very much overdue. On the 25th June 1856 a printed matter rate of 1 centime per 5 grammes had been introduced, and a newspaper rate of 2 centimes for 20 grammes with an additional centime for each additional 10 grammes had been imposed. As the lowest value stamp available was the 5 centimes, these had to be prepaid in cash until, under terms of a decree dated 17th October 1859, the issue of a 1 centime stamp was authorised; this appeared on 1st November 1860. This

completed the "Empire" series.

Before we consider the individual stamps, it must be noted that the Master Die of the series was retouched as regards the Emperor's hair and the shading of the neck. In consequence, all plates made subsequently are from the retouched die, Die II.

All of these stamps were issued in imperforate state, but for the sake of convenience several firms used their own private perforations and roulettes. The most important of these was the house of Susse Freres, Stationers, of Paris, who produced a perforating machine on the lines of that used by the British Post Office. This they offered to the French government, but their proposals were rejected on account of cost; they were, however, officially empowered to perforate the imperforate sheets of stamps issued by the post office for their own ends.

Having failed to get the government to adopt their machine, it would seem that Susse Freres used it as an advertising device to build up good-will, for they circulated postmasters offering to perforate their stamps for them and to supply them with perforated stamps—"commes les timbres Anglais et Americaines"—without extra charge. To describe their work as being like the British and U.S. of the period was something of a stretch of the imagination, for although the principle was the same, the Susse machine produced very large holes—a gauge of  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 7$ .

In the meantime the authorities at the Mint had not been idle and had evolved a comb machine gauging  $14 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ . This was used during September and October 1862 to perforate supplies of all the values then current, the 1, 5, 10, 20, 40 and 80 centimes.

There is not very much point in listing all the shades which may be found, for they are all in the catalogues; nor is their space in an article of this nature to detail the many minor electro varieties which exist, particularly in the 20 centimes. There are, however, one or two items of interest outside the catalogue which the collector may find of interest.

First the celebrated tete-beche varieties which are a feature of early French stamps. In the imperforates these are only found on two values, the 80 centimes (where the 150th impression in each issue sheet is inverted) and the 1 franc (where stamp number 131 in each sheet presents a similar variety). In the perforated series, stamp No. 150 in the right issue sheet is inverted, and we find this variety also in the 20 centimes, which is of course from Die II. In one printing stamp 20 in one of the sheets is inverted, and in another printing the cliché affected is No. 90. In yet another printing there are three inverted impressions, Nos. 10 and 33 in one issue sheet, and No. 51 in the other.

Besides varying greatly in shade, the paper also shows differences in texture. Among the imperforates, the 1, 5, 10, 20, 40 and 80 centimes being found on thin paper, the 80 centimes on very thin, and the 20 and 80 centimes on thick wove paper.

Another matter worthy of mention is that among the "shades" listed there are two deliberate colour changes. The first printings of the 5 centimes were in deep green, and this was found to be confused under artificial light with the 20 centimes; in consequence on 1st May 1860 the administration decided to change the colour to yellow-green. The progression of the 80 centimes from shades of carmine to rose was also intentional, by a decree of February 1860.

The scarcest of the Empire series are of course the two values, the 25 centimes and the 1 franc, which were

only on sale for fourteen months before being withdrawn. In anything like fine condition these two items take a lot of finding. Apart from these, the only stamps which are scarce in used state are the 20 centimes stamps printed in error on the green paper intended for the 5 centimes. Most of the mint command high prices, but on numbers printed the 25 centimes is every bit as good as the 80 centimes in carmine, while the 1 franc is ten times better than either.

It is in the field of cancellations that the observant collector may pick up real bargains in this issue. Look out for these stamps cancelled with the lozenge of parallel lines used in the Papal States; this and "C E R" in a lozenge of dots comes from the French military occupation of Rome.

The letters "AC" followed by one or two other letters again in a lozenge of dots are postmarks of the French expeditionary force participating in the Crimean War. Similarly "AA" followed by another letter or by a number and a letter denoted the Army of the Alps, the victors of Magenta and Solferino. Other military markings found on the Empire imperforates are "CESA" Syrian expedition of 1856, "CEC" plus another letter, Chinese Expeditionary Corps, 1860, and "C.E.M." plus another letter for the ill-fated Mexican campaign. These last exist on imperforates, but are also found on the perforated stamps.

Finally, 10, 20, 40 and 80 centimes imperforates were regularly issued and used during 1860-63 in Cochin China; these are found with the cancel "CCH" in a lozenge of dots. Though not so scarce as some of the campaign markings, the Anchor markings from mail boats which are to be found on both the imperforate and the perforated stamps in this type are quite good property, especially on covers.



Courtesy of The Stamp Wholesaler.

"Are you the gentleman who's been finding errors in the catalogue?"

FRANCE -- Experimental type,  
Dunkirk & Arras R.P.O.

-- Langlois and Bourselet  
in Les Annales de Philatelie.





## Chandernagor: French India

Chandernagor, which three years ago voted itself out of the French Colonial possessions and back to its native India, was a tiny settlement about 20 miles above Calcutta on the banks of the River Hoogli. Its area was only three square miles and its population in 1926 was 26,506, of whom all but a handful of French officials and business men were native Indians. (The total European population of all the French settlements in India was only about 300 out of 400,000). As can be imagined, therefore, the postal importance of Chandernagor was not large, and stamps bearing the postmark of the town are comparatively scarce. The circular date-stamp most usually met with shows at the top "INDE" and around the lower part "CHANDERNAGOR" in seriffed capitals, with a dotted circle enclosing the middle space showing the date. Separating the two words are two fleurons, or (in rare cases) two stars.

Although this cancellation is seldom met with, the writer's collection contains the following specimens:—

1c. Ceres (S.G. 19); 4c. Ceres (S.G. 21); 15c. Ceres (S.G. 32) (with stars); 4c. Peace and Commerce (S.G. 55); 25c. Commerce (S.G. 74).

The 4c. Ceres is something of a mystery, for, according to Yvert, "it is believed that the 4c. was sent only to Cochin China, and all obliterations other than those of our Indo-Chinese possessions are considered to be false." It is an undoubted fact that the cancellation usually found on this stamp is that of Saigon, Cochin China; but the Chandernagor cancellation on my mystery specimen is obviously genuine; the letters are right and are in the right places; the overall size is right (faked date-stamps often fall down on this elementary point); the circle of dots shows the correct number of dots and in the right places in relation to the lettering; and (most convincing fact of all) there are portions of two strikes on the face of the stamp (faked cancellations always limit themselves to one, for obvious reasons).

If the cancellation is genuine, what can the stamp be? It might conceivably be the corresponding 4c. issue of France (S.G. 180 or 181) with the perforations cut off, but what would be the object of cutting off the perforations of a French "used abroad" of such rarity? There is no trace of perforation in my specimen, and on the contrary the bottom edge shows an irregularity for about 2mm. as if the stamp had been torn apart from its neighbours and perhaps squared off with scissors afterwards.

The 4c. Ceres of France was issued 15th May, 1872 and exists in two shades—clear grey and "yellowish-grey with metallic reflections" (according to Yvert). The mystery stamp is yellowish-grey, but has no trace of "metallic reflections". The normal colour of the 4c. Ceres of French Colonies is described as pearl-grey in the list in Yvert, but as yellowish-grey in the text following the list, from which the quotation given above is extracted. It was issued in September, 1876.

Now the date of the mystery stamp is only half shown, but appears to be (1, 2 or 3) 1 (AU) G (7) 2, and so would be too early for the official issue in 1876. It is, of course, conceivable that the year is not 72 but 82, but by that time two further issues had replaced the Ceres, namely the Sage type and the Commerce type. Still, examples of late usage of earlier issues are not uncommon; the writer has a specimen of the 4c. Eagle type clearly postmarked Reunion: St. Denis: 22 DEC. 89.

These are the facts, and if any reader can offer a convincing solution it will be gratefully received by the writer.

A. Broadbent.

In Stamp Collectors Fortnightly, May 30, 1953

## Help for Puzzled Ones.

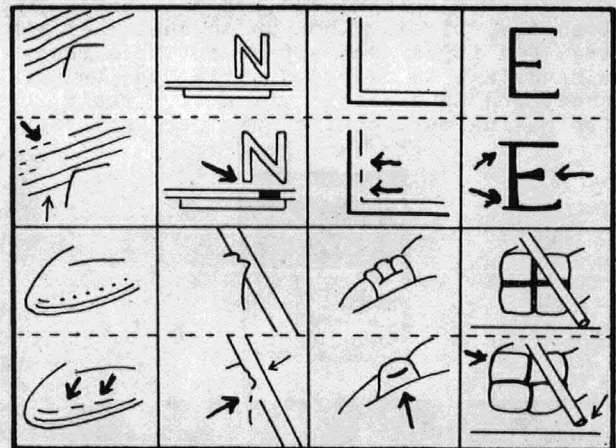
Those among the membership who have puzzling questions about their stamps or covers that are within our field, can always get help via those of us who are carrying forward the work of this group.

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.

## Forgeries of the General Colonial 1881 Issue

1881-86 DUBOIS TYPE. (Scott's Commerce type). The whole set was forged by Fournier. See diagram for a few characteristic signs -- (arrows point to discrepancies in the forgeries) -- the lines behind the hair, white bar under "COLONIES," lower left corner frame, final "E" of "REPUBLIQUE," shading of the right forearm, the hair projecting over flagstaff, ornament on



right arm, ropes on bundles and end of flagstaff touching.

There is another set of forgeries perforated 12 instead of 14x13½ in the originals. Other signs of these forgeries are: a contour line to the flag, hair covers entirely the flagstaff, the white line under "COLONIES" is shaded strongly underneath and at right, there is only one line of shading on the right forearm, etc...

Bear in mind the characteristics of the forgeries when coming to the surcharges of the individual colonies; if the stamp itself is a forgery, why bother about the surcharge?

Rerun from 1945 and 1948  
in this journal.

Rerun from our May-June 1945 number and still a full, valid correct statement of the situation.

### About the "Richelieu" Overprint.

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

The known facts are:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



### SELDOM SEEN

These are the first stamps of Tahiti, with a striking resemblance to American precancels: their surcharge format is that way. Shown by courtesy of Harmer Rooke & Co. from an auction catalog of 1947.

Look again at the November 20 to 23 notice, top of front page.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

This is on page 20 of this issue instead of in its usual position.

## MEMBERS' APPEALS.

On page 20, in this number.

### Combination Empire-Republic Covers

Especially in 1871, but not limited to that year, numerous covers went through with Empire and Republic stamps used together. The rate to the United States is frequently made up with an 80c rose Empire Laureate and a 40c Republic. The Empire 80c stamps were on hand in quantities to fill all needs on this value until some time in 1872.

These combination covers are not very scarce and do not command a high price in the market, except when some special feature adds to their value.

## Courageous Battle of Free French Is Recalled By Bir-Hakeim Issue



Western Stamp Collector

From Agathon A. Aerni, Gimbels Stamp Department and Jean Gosset comes the illustration and data about the stirring story of the battle of Bir-Hakeim.

Lybia and Cyrenaica were the scenes of many battles in the 1940-42 period and in the latter year the Suez Canal was in danger. The "Afrika Korps" under the command of Field Marshal Rommel and Italian troops made their way to the frontiers of Egypt. Bir-Hakeim became the first victory of the "France Combattante," under General Leclerc.

The Bir-Hakeim stamps marked the 10th anniversary of that battle. The stamp was issued in Paris on June 14, and elsewhere in France June 16.

The story behind the issue is one of a destroyed house and a sort of fountain in the middle of an immense desert which was exposed to violent winds of sand, for that was Bir-Hakeim. In 1942 it became a sort of cardinal point covering the southern flank of the retreating allied

troops. 3600 men, under the command of General Koenig, received the order to bar the way to Egypt by defending this wild, windstruck spot that was Bir-Hakeim.

From May 27 to June 10, 1942 the French soldiers endured the siege of two German and Italian divisions. Continuous bombardment marked the warfare and three different times on June 1, 3 and 5, the enemy tried, without success, to obtain the capitulation of the French troops. The heroism of the French soldiers was marked by a special communique of the British High Commandment, and in 1943 a monument was inaugurated at Bir-Hakeim, in the middle of the cemetery where the deserted house had once stood alone. The monument bears an immense Croix de Lorraine (Cross of Lorraine), the emblem of the "French Combattante." Now in 1952 we find the monument reproduced on the stamp which honors the courage of the men who fought at Bir-Hakeim.