

# France & Colonies Philatelist



Published bi-monthly by the France and Colonies Group

Secretary: Charles Bretagne, P.O.Box 67, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Editor: Stephen G. Rich, P.O.Box B, Verona, New Jersey



## Crimean War Cover

Sept. 15, 1854, just 100 years ago. A registered letter to Paris, 40c postage, with the killer AOGI, for Armee d'Orient Garde Imperiale, small letters and field office postmark of the same reading.

Without any further description, this was shown in Robson Lowe's "The Philatelist, June, 1954. We reprint it with thanks.

## Honor to one of Our Members.

Dr. Carroll Chase, whose studies have let light into so many dark places in philately of France, is the 1954 recipient of the Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award.

The actual bestowal will be at the Collectors Club Dinner, Oct. 23, 1954. A number of us are to be there, to honor Dr. Chase.



## Essay and Proofs of French Colonial Stamps Before 1935

By Robert G. Stone

The study and collection of proofs and essays of the earlier issues of the colonies is practically virgin territory. We do not consider here the proofs of the Ceres, Napoleon and Sage types of the General Issues of the colonies, as they are really French proofs. Some specialists in individual issues or colonies have noted the existence of proofs; but no general view nor any listing of them has been attempted, at least to our knowledge, beyond the very spotty information in Yvert & Tellier's specialized catalog, France & Colonies, Part 2.

An interest in proofs and essays as a class by themselves has not yet developed among French collectors to the extent found among those here in the U.S. (We except the collectors of made-for-philatelists de-luxe proofs of the colonial issues since 1940). As a result, very little is known about colonial proofs as a group, though proofs of French stamps have been extensively studied.

From time to time during the last few years, we have seen a number of rare unlisted French colonial proofs which could be had for very modest sums, because they are not known or appreciated. The following notes attempt to give some idea of the kinds of proofs and essays that exist for the colonies, and their rarity.

Unfortunately, the French terminology regarding proofs is vague and undifferentiated--every thing is called simply an essai or épreuve..... often with insufficient description to determine their real nature. We have therefore adopted our own terminology.

### The Essays

Two types of these are known for the colonies: the artists' original drawings or paintings (both rejected and accepted designs), and what for want of a better term we may call the "die essays" of rejected dies. This sort of material is mostly unique and held in official archives or museums; but some has fallen into private hands.

The artists' paintings of the colonial stamp designs would be very interesting to examine in comparison with the engravings or other printing material based on them. In this way one could appreciate better the factors that determine the appearance and "quality" of the stamps. However, mention should be made of the fact that some of the dies were engraved by the artist himself, in which case it is possible that no finished essay may ever have been made.

Essays do not generally exist for the various type-set stamps and overprints of the colonies since these were composed "on the spot", or in accordance with written instructions.

Two "die essays" exist for the Eagle Type of the General Issues:-- one of them a lithograph ---or so it is said!

### The Proofs

The proofs are of many types. Most of them probably exist in philatelic hands, though by no means easy to find. There are three general classes of material under this heading: the die proofs, the plate proofs, and the proof sheets.

The die proofs are in general the most varied and common of all the colonial essays and all the colonial proofs. However, the unfinished engravers' proofs are great rarities, when they exist at all.

The so-called de luxe artists' proofs, usually black on white, with large margins bearing a signature, are perhaps the best known type, though before the 1930's they are all rare to very rare. They probably exist for all issues printed in Paris, including the Eagle series.

Some are with value; some without value; and some are in various issued or unissued colors.

During the 1930's began the practice of issuing the de luxe proofs in considerable quantities, culminating finally in the 1940's with their actual sale by the post office ---- as if they were stamps!

There are also rare die proofs in black on india paper without value, with wide black border banks; sometimes signed, sometimes not.

Color-trial die proofs are found, in many forms: on china paper, on india paper, on card, on ordinary paper; pasted up on card or on ordinary paper; without value; with value (rare), in black, in unissued colors or shades, in the issued colors and shade, with (rare) or without signature, etc. Margins, often with color border or ink smudges, are generally large, but some have been trimmed (more or less). Colors tend to be deeper, stronger, or more brilliant than those of the stamps.

It is interesting to know that many of the colors not issued in the design-type of some particular proof, were used for issued stamps in other design-types within the same issue. In the bicolored pictorial issues (1900 on), with many denominations, long series of color trials were usually pulled before final choices were made. Hence these are more often seen than are other proofs, of colonial issues.

The plate proofs are not easy to distinguish from trimmed die proofs, nor from cut-outs from sheets that were made for other than proofing. (See Pseudo-Proofs, below) Generally they are found as singles; though some multiples are known. They come on ordinary paper, as well as on a thinner paper, white or tinted (this last if of issues intended to be printed on colored paper). Both issued and unissued colors are found. Plate proofs were numerous of some of the early issues, such as the Eagles; but they are very rare or non-existent for many of the later ones.

Proof sheets (or panes) were made of typeset stamps and of settings of overprints. With few exceptions, these issues were printed locally, and proofs of most of them do not seem to have survived. An interesting example is the proof pane ("report") of Guadeloupe's 30c postage due of 1884, with pen corrections to certain of the subjects\* written in the margin (ex Dwight). This might be considered as an essay, since after the corrections had been made, the printed sheet differs from the proof. Some copies of the 25c Guadeloupe due of the 1877 issue, known on rose paper, are regarded as proofs.

### Pseudo-Proofs

Much confusion is caused by the various kinds of imperforate sheets of issued stamps, especially in the cases of stamps which normally are perforated.

There are, for example, the make-ready ("decoupage") sheets. Sometimes cut-outs from these look very much like die or plate proofs. These are in fact plate proofs, since the imprints are taken prior to the regular printing or production of the stamps. But it seems to

\* These are commonly spoken of as changes made "on certain clichés." But as this was a type set production, there were no clichés. ----- Editor, F. & C. Philatelist.

be the convention among French philatelists to consider them as something apart from regular proofs. Normally the make-ready has parts of the design for each subject cut out. Thus the source is identified immediately.

Imperforate imprimatur sheets, printed in small quantity for presentation and/or for official record purposes, have been made of many colonial stamps. They can be mistaken for proofs in some cases; though usually the presence of gum gives them away. However, as long as proofs are not popular with collectors, it is customary for the merchants to argue that imprimaturs are varieties of the issued stamp, rather than a form of proof. Witness, for example, the imperforate sets of recent colonial issues that are being liberally offered as scarce "stamps."

On the other hand: certain alleged "errors" --actually "imperforate stamps" of some early issues have been exposed as nothing but proofs. However, there are genuine errors of lacking perforation, in the colonial 20th Century issues (see Y. & T., or Thiaude catalog), as well as probably some in the Dubois issue.

Finally, printers' wastes with double impressions, inverted, displaced or missing centers or printed on both side, etc. have sometimes in error been called proofs, either by intent or by ignorance. Possibly some of this material is from proof impressions; but in most cases it is certain that the facts are otherwise.

#### ----- Detail Correction: Faïdherbe Bridge

The word "French" in the phrase about "western French Sudan" in the article in No. 76 was inserted by mistake, in typing up the article. Mr. Roberts was using "Sudan" in the older and generic sense. --Editor, F. & C. P.

#### ----- A Travelling "Shades" Display.

By John B. Morton

A real service to collectors of the earlier issues of France, perhaps before 1876 and maybe even up to 1900, and to those who have trouble to know the "Colonial Colors" of the same types used imperf. in the Colonies, would be a display set up and written up, which could be circulated among the members.

The stamps would be identified by their proper shade designations in each case.

This could be circulated to the members of the Group on payment of mailing cost, plus or without a fee. Personally I believe that a fee should be charged, since there would be a certain amount of work and possible expense, entailed in preparing and maintaining the exhibit.

Badly damaged copies of the stamps could be used, to keep down cost. These probably could be obtained as gifts. In this respect I can make a few contributions. Of course all copies should be unfaded and not discolored. But tears, thin spots, or corners missing, would not affect the usefulness of the shade specimens.

Probably anything done along this line would have no effect on listings in Scott or other catalogs. But I suggest that some of the major professionals should be consulted, in an effort to secure their agreement with and support of these color designations. A further objective, should be the use of such designations in the auction catalogs, especially of the few and far-between ones that offer French material of major importance.

(All we need is someone who will volunteer to make and circulate such a display. -- Editor F. & C. P.)

Standard Postage Stamp Catalog, 1955, 111th Edition, Volume 2. New York, 1954, 1198 plus 11 pages. Scott Publications Inc.; \$5.

This year Scott published Vol. 2 before the corresponding Vol. 1. Why this was done, is not our concern; nor do we know whether the new order of volumes is to be permanent.

For us who care for the French countries as our main interest, there are some changes that attract notice. Martinique's former "first dues issue" has vanished, as such fakes should long ago have done. The note as to its deletion is a tactful understatement. Likewise, some really old mislistings, such as the old No. 23d of Obock (clearly something that never existed) and Senegal's former No. 30, which was clearly only No. 23 badly printed, have been removed. Credit goes to the Scott firm for initiating these two changes.

In our field, there still is need to replace a fairly large number of word, damaged, even originally crude or erroneous cuts among the overprints of the Colonies. Some captions for cuts still need to be made correct; but in at least two such cases we know that information on the matter came to Scott's too late to use in this edition.

Pricings seem to have been raised mainly on unused 19th Century items of France. For some of the colonies, there has been a little well-advised adjustment of prices, some up and some down, more nearly in agreement with the actual relative scarcities of the stamps. Obock has, for example, had this treatment on some earlier items.

By and large, the pricings do continue to bear the same old haphazard and unstated relation to actual market. This reviewer holds that almost every price increase in the 1955 catalog would better have not been made, so that decreasing discounts would bring catalog and market closer. In no case does he know of any stamps, on which the price was raised, selling at the catalog quotation or within even 25% of that, for no matter how fine a copy.

Aside from the French countries, the comment to be made is that the growth in size of Vol. 2 could have been restricted by transference to Vol. 1 of the several American countries which are in Vol. 2: Iceland, Greenland, Curacao, St. Pierre Miquelon, Surinam, etc. But maybe that is too much to hope for.

Much needed changes, such as putting French Morocco into its proper place instead of among the "French Offices, and the corresponding act of intelligence for Spanish Morocco, have not as yet been done, though urged for some time past. Likewise, Iran is still in as "Persia" (sic!).

Just as for the previous two editions, one is compelled to say: Better, but not yet enough better.

----- S.G.R.



By courtesy of H.R. Harmer, Inc., we show the 2f 1918 French Military Air Mail in the Orient, the rare imperf., from a recent sale. We also show the very scarce 1f of this set. This service at the end of World War I operated briefly, on the route Istanbul to Bucharest.



More Port de la Rochelle Small Varieties

Our member, A. M. Scott, reports the Die 1 stamp with two small varieties:

One copy has the ladder in the center of the 0 broken at top, with one rung missing and half of the next rung below also missing; some of the shading is absent in the normally solid part of the semicircular top end of 0. The upright lines of the 0, while shaky, are fairly straight.

The other copy adds to the ladder breaks one in the left upright, below the remnant of rung next to top. The bottom of ladder has lost its feet. Left upright of the 0 is dished in, near bottom; but top of 0 is normal.

On both copies, the numerals are thinner than on Types 2 and 3, and far from being as clean cut. Both are in pale ultramarine; both show a serif on E.

Mr. Scott also reports two Die 3 flaws:

One copy shows outer line at right of 1 with a break near bottom.

The other has the outer line of stamp broken above CH of name "Cheffer."

Mr. Scott regards all these varieties as --- "just more worn plates. This agrees with what Mr. Hieber, and Dr. Wells quite clearly are in full accord for the ones they reported. See No. 66, page 22; No. 61, page 2; No. 26 page 8; and Vol. 3 No. 5, Mr. Jervis' article, for reports of other varieties on this stamp. Your editor has the same view of all the variants as the other writers.

MEMBERS' APPEALS

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

Wanted: A complete set of the "1849 Lady" labels printed at the Citex 1849 stamp show; or will buy individual colors separately. Rolfe B. Daniels, 2697 North Beachwood Drive, Los Angeles 28, Calif. (Member 545).

Exchange: Used stamps of Canada (current issue), Cuba, French Colonies, and the world, for stamps of France I need. Norman M. Dodge, YMCA, 1736 G St., N.W., Washington, D.C. (Member 542).

Wanted: a nice cover or two of France Type Sage 1f, Scott 76 or 84, single copy used alone on cover--single copy, used alone, preferably on a cover not over 3 1/2 x 6 inches. Name cash price when sending. S.G. Rich, Verona, N.J. (Member 2).

Wanted: Tahiti B1 unused, the 1915 Red Cross on 15c blue Oceania, Submit with price. Fred Hieber, 4045 N.W. 22nd Court, Miami, 42, Fla. (Member 212).

The Martinique Mont Pelee in eruption fancy cancellation is wanted, preferably on a business cover as shown in our No. 63, page 10, is wanted--submit with price. S.G. Rich, Verona, N.J. (Member 2)

Cover wanted, preferably small and plain, of the Le Mans July 1954 automobile pictorial cancellation well struck. Submit with price, to the Editor, F & F Phil.

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SECRETARY'S REPORT

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July 15 to Sept. 15, 1954

NEW MEMBERS, WELCOME:

- 578 Skupniewicz, Ed. 959 No. Leavitt St.,.....  
Chicago 22, Illinois. France.....  
579 Broadbent, Arnold, 5 Oakley Street,.....  
Shrewsbury, England. Fr. Col. Gen. Issues.  
580 Farrington, J.A. Jr. New Hope, Penn. ....  
Postal Markings, Flating, France only..  
581 Watt, Myrtle I, 214 Union Street,.....  
Johnstown, Penn. Laos, Cambodia, France,  
582 Parkes, Eugene, 117 East Royal Street,....  
Richmond, Mo. France & Colonies.....  
583 Revare, Jack, R.D. 2, Richmond, Mo. ....  
France & Colonies.....  
584 Williams, Winthrop W. 135 Byxbee Street,..  
San Francisco, California. France only,  
Special Cancellations.....

APPLICATIONS PENDING:

- 585 Mestel, Clifford A. 4120 Logan Avenue,....  
Canton, Ohio. France & Colonies, FDC...  
586 Whetstone, George W. P.O. Box M, Palmer,...  
Alaska. French West Indies.....  
587 Miller, Andrew J. 54 Ellington Street,....  
East Orange, N.J. France & Colonies....

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

- 8 Kremer, Brainerd, to 43 Glenwood Road,....  
Upper Montclair, N.J.  
86 Kepner, E.E., to 1865 Chickasaw Ave.,.....  
Los Angeles 41, Calif.  
90 Segnitz, Paul H., to 6191 Third Ave. South,.  
St. Petersburg 7, Florida.....

CHANGE OF NAME:

- 586 Mrs. Emily C. Wright, to Mrs. Emily Kremer  
(address unchanged)

RESIGNATIONS RECEIVED:

- 164 Weinstein, Meyer, 530 D. Grand Street,....  
New York 2, New York.....  
506 Libman, Charles R. 6706 North 15th. St.,...  
Philadelphia 40, Penn.....

NOTICE:

The following members will be dropped from the roll, for non payment of dues for the year, Nos. 168, 303, 307, 312, 346, 349, 361, 377, 396, 418, 439, 446, 447, 455, 498, 506, 515, 525, 539, 541, 583 and 482.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charles J. Bretagne, Sec.

New Caledonia 1903 Jubilee Surcharge.

Adding to what was given in No. 75, on how to know the real from the imitation: information has come to us since then. In the bad ones, the letters of SEPTEMBRE are at even spaces from each other, while in the actual stamps spacing is uneven. Examination of known good and bad copies, to check this, shows that in those which are good, P is noticeably close to T; also a tail of R is short, turned slightly down. In the bad ones, head of eagle seems to be drawn in far more detail than in the real ones.

There seem to be a fair number of the bad ones still about. Some are on genuine stamps of Group Type; others are on Fournier imitations.