



France & Colonies Philatelist

THE HAND CANCELLATIONS OF ALGERIA, 1830-1962

by Laurence H. Lambert

APPENDIX I.

RARITY AND PRICE GUIDE FOR ALGERIAN CANCELLATIONS ON COVER

The value indices provided in Tables A and B following are intended for those who do not have a clear idea as to how much they might expect to pay for a cover bearing a certain cancel or cancels of Algeria. Table A is an index of approximate rarity and availability, and the indices should remain relatively stable. Table B translates the rarity index of Table A into a 1991 dollar value. These dollar values will change with inflation and other variables.

The prices shown are for clearly readable cancels of the common post offices on reasonably attractive covers, stampless or franked with common stamps. An exception to this is some of the services cancels that are not commonly used on covers. For these, the indices are for cancels on wrappers, documents, or large fragments, so that the complete conditions of usage are visible. For the standard cancel types, covers of Algiers (ALGER) and Oran can be obtained for prices lower than those indicated.

To meet the criteria for the pricing index, a cancel need not be perfect; but the cancel type, office of issue, department, and date must be beyond doubt. Partially struck, faint, and smeared cancels are reduced in value. Superb cancels increase the value. Different cancel types of the same post office appearing on the same cover increases its value, as does a transit or receiving cancel of a different Algerian post office, if they meet the stated criteria for appearance and readability. The author's own rule of thumb is to add at least half the value of additional cancel types. For example, a cover with a Type D cancel of the city of Milianah, only, is valued at \$30 from the Tables. If this same cover also bears

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a GC of Milianah and a Type E receiving cancel of the city of Djidjelli, it could then be considered to be worth at least \$47.50, using Tables A and B.

The values shown for the PC and the GC are for clearly readable common PC's or GC's on cover, without an accompanying cancel which meets the stated criteria for readability and appearance. With a good accompanying cancel, figure the value as indicated in the previous paragraph.

The cost of a cancel on cover from a rare post office could be many times the value shown in the tables, which are for the most common post offices. This is easily understood when we are aware that a city such as Algiers, with a population of 20,000 in the 1870's, used the GC for the full period of 13 years, while Attatba, a village of about 300, used the GC for only two years.

In completing this rarity index and valuation guide, the author has made use of indices and guides compiled by the French authors, current asking prices and auction results, experience in acquiring covers, and in the case of some of the rare and unique cancels, extrapolation.

TABLE A. RARITY INDEX FOR ALGERIAN CANCELLATIONS

Cancel Type	Rarity	Cancel Type	Rarity
A	19	N2	2
B	Rare	N3	6
C	11	N4	1
C2	18	N5	5
D	13	N6	2
E	10	N7	3
E2	17	N8	11
E3	18	O	16

FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIST

USPS #207700

Published quarterly by the
FRANCE AND COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY, INC. (N.Y.)
 Affiliate No. 45, American Philatelic Society

July 1991 — Vol. 47, No. 3, Whole No. 225

Second-class postage paid at Bloomfield, NJ
 Office of Publication: 103 Spruce St., Bloomfield, NJ 07003

An additional entry office at Platteville, WI 53818
 Printing arranged by: Jay Smith, P.O. Box 650, Snow Camp, NC 27349

Dues \$11.00 per year. Parent Chapter and Foreign \$15.00 (plus 50¢ admission fee),
 \$4.50 of which is for a subscription to the F. & C. Philatelist.

All communications about membership, subscriptions, activities, and services of the
 Society should be sent to the Corresponding Secretary,
 Walter E. Parshall, 103 Spruce St., Bloomfield, NJ 07003

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TABLE A. RARITY INDEX FOR ALGERIAN CANCELLATIONS

Cancel Type	Rarity	Cancel Type	Rarity
E4	17	O2	14
F	11	P	12
G	11	P2	10
G2	11	Q	9
H	16	Q2	7
H2	14	S	Rare
I	11	S2	18
I2	9	T	12
I3	11	U	13
J	9	V	11
J2	8	V2	11
J3	11	W	6
K	14	W2	5
K2	15	W3	4
L	13	W4	5
L2	11	W5	4
L3	13	W6	3
L4	16	PC	13
M	3	GC	11
N	1		

TABLE B. INDEX VALUATIONS

Rarity Index from Table A	Approximate Value (dollars)	Rarity Index from Table A	Approximate Value (dollars)
1	1	11	20
2	2	12	25
3	3	13	30
4	4	14	40
5	5	15	50
6	6	16	60
7	8	17	80
8	10	18	100
9	12	19	150
10	15		

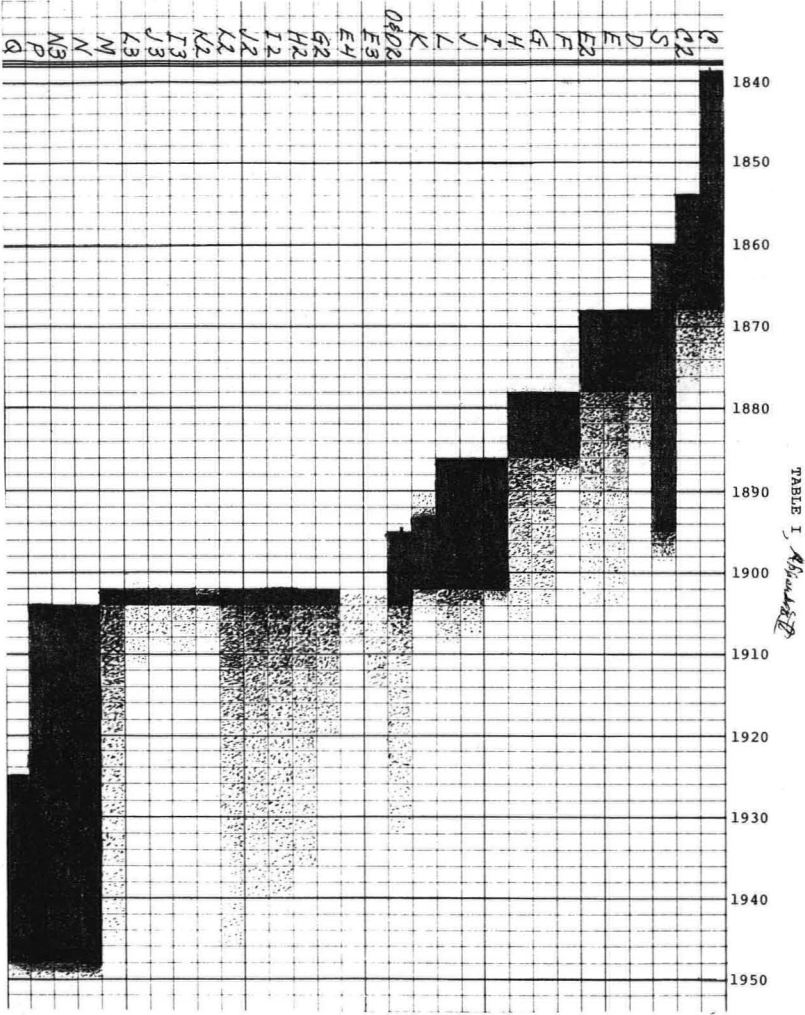
APPENDIX II.**PERIODS OF USAGE FOR THE CANCEL TYPES OF ALGERIA, 1840 - 1950**

Table I provides at a glance the approximate periods of usage of the cancel types of Algeria. There are two periods of usage for the cancel types, a primary and a secondary period. The primary period is defined as beginning when a new cancel type comes into usage, and ending when that cancel type is superseded by a new one. A period of secondary usage exists because the use of the old cancels did not cease abruptly when they were superseded. The period of secondary usage is defined as beginning when a cancel type has been replaced and ending in the year of the last known usage of that cancel type.

The author has not found among the existing literature any significant documentation to indicate the dates of last usage for the cancel types. Thus, the dates indicated in Table I are based on the author's own knowledge and should be considered approximate.

Some of the cancel types are omitted from Table I to avoid making the table too cumbersome. Not included are Types A, B, L4, S2, N2, N8, the services cancel types and any of the cancel types that came into usage after 1930. The periods of usage for Types A and B are clearly indicated in the *F&C Philatelist* of October, 1990; Types L4, S2, N2 and N8 are unique; the services cancels are not well known; and usage of the types instituted after 1930 extended to 1962.

In Table I the cancel types are indicated along the left margin, and the decades are indicated across the top with a vertical line for each two-year period. The period of usage



for each cancel type is represented by its individual bar graph, black for the primary period and with dots for the secondary period decreasing in density as usage abates.

The author is still engaged in extensive research on the various cancel types of Algeria and invites correspondence or questions.

APPENDIX III.
DOCUMENTED LAST DATES OF USAGE FOR EARLIER ALGERIAN
CANCEL TYPES EXTENDING BEYOND 1904

We have seen in Appendix II, Table I the primary and secondary periods of usage for most of the cancel types of Algeria. The secondary period of usage terminates with a projected last year of usage for each cancel type. We have indicated that these last dates of usage are approximate.

For the cancel types of 1902, and for Types J and L of 1886, Table II documents the last dates of usage actually known to the author, along with the name of the post office for

which these dates are known. For most of the cancel types, the author believes that later dates eventually will be documented, perhaps at post offices other than the ones listed. The author would appreciate contact from anyone having cancels with later dates than those given in Table II.

TABLE II TO APPENDIX III

Cancel Type	Last Known Date of Usage	Post Office of Last Known Usage	Authority for Last Known Usage
E3	1913	Duquesne	Published estimate
E4	1906	Bordj Menaïel	Published photo
G2	1913	Oued Amizour	Author's collection
H2*	1933	Hammam Meskoutine	Published estimate
I2	1935	Constantine-Coudiat	Author's collection
I3	1908	Alger-Bourse	Author's collection
J	1906	Touggourt	Author's collection
J2	1938	Er Rahel	Author's collection
K2	1906	Chebli	Published photo
L	1906	Cap Matifou	Author's collection
		St. Ferdinand	Published Photo
L2	1943	Lannoy	Author's collection
		Yusuf	Author's collection
L3	1908	In-Salah	Author's collection
M	1943	Medea	Author's collection
O2**	1920	Bone A	Published estimate

* The author knows that Chekfa and Fontaine du Genie used this type until about this same date, or later.

** The author has seen this type struck on a stamp issued in 1930 but could not identify the office or year date.

CORRIGENDA TO PREVIOUS ARTICLES

F&C Philatelist #222, October, 1990:

- (1). Page 117--Petits Chiffres number 4447 is OUED-EL-HAMMAM, not QUED-EL-HAMMAM.

F&C Philatelist #223, January, 1991:

- (1). Page 11, Paragraph 4--Delete the parenthetical statement with regard to Figure 5 and Type J.
- (2). Page 11, Paragraph 5--Since submittal of this article for publication, the author has learned that usage of cancel Type 02 extended at least until 1930.
- (3). Page 14--The titles of the first and third works in the list of references should have the word "Bureau" changed to "Bureaux."
- (4). Page 15--The title of Figure 10 is: Examples of cancels of newly occupied oases having the name of the military region at the bottom of the cancel, rather than a Department name.
- (5). Pages 16-17--The map is Figure 9: Map of Algeria showing the three Departments and the vast Territoires du Sud.
- (6). Page 19--The description of the two covers should be reversed.

F&C Philatelist #224, April, 1991:

- (1). Page 36, Figure 3--The two cancels illustrated at the bottom are Type Q.
- (2). Page 36, Paragraph 1--The author knows of usage of cancel Type N7 as early as 1936.

- (3). Page 36, Paragraph 2--Oversight by the Allies began on November 15, 1942. Mail service to Europe was reopened on January 15, 1943.
- (4). Page 36, Next to last sentence--The reference is to Type N8, rather than Type N7.
- (5). Page 40--The illustration is Figure 7.

1880 — GUAYAQUIL TO FRANCE VIA THE UNITED STATES

Dr. Martin F. Stepien, Jr.
Philatelic Foundation, N.Y.

In 1871, the United States signed a postal treaty with Ecuador. All well and good, you say, but what does that have to do with France? Directly, nothing, but indirectly it provided another route for mail from the western coast of South America to reach France and the rest of Europe. It allowed mail to proceed to Europe from Panama without having to wait any more than a week in Panama for a ship. Once a letter reached that point it could go by British steamer to London, French steamer to St. Nazaire, German steamer to either Hamburg or Bremen, and now by American steamers via New York, and thence to Europe. Such a treaty would also be useful for getting mail from American shipping and business interests in the Southern Pacific back to their home bases in the United States and was probably the real reason that the treaty was enacted.

In 1876, however, when the General Postal Union came into being, the United States was the only member country in the Western Hemisphere. Because of this, mail channeled to Europe via the United States from a non-member country in South or Central America was able to travel at a lower rate than mail directed via the British, French, or German services. Nevertheless, covers from the west coast of South America via the United States, paid or unpaid, to France are seldom seen. The author knows of only two covers, both of which were part of the DeVoss "Via Panama" collection, that show this routing, and neither of these show a postmark of the office of departure. Because of the way they were marked, they probably originated in Ecuador.

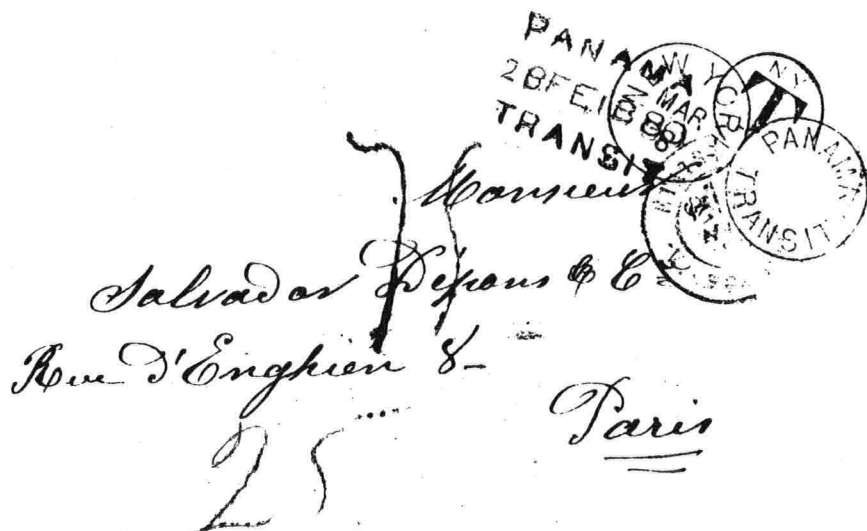


Figure 1

Figure 1 shows the front side of a third cover addressed to Paris, now in the author's collection. While many of the postal markings are struck over each other, it is fairly easy to separate and explain each one. In this case, however, the departure stamp is to be found on the reverse (Figure 2): the departure stamp of the British Consular PO in Guayaquil dated 23 February, 1880. The cover was carried north to Panama by the Pacific Steam Navigation Co., where it received the transit date stamp (28 FEB 1880) of the British PO in Panama (typed as in Figure 3).



Figure 2 (enlarged 155%)

PANAMA
26MRI849
TRANSIT

Figure 3

Because the writer of the letter made no specific statement about which service was to be used to carry the letter to Europe, the Postmaster at Colon, on the Atlantic side, made the decision to send it by the earliest sailing, an American steamer to New York, rather than to wait for one of the ships sailing directly to Europe. On arrival in New York, two more handstamps were applied to the cover.

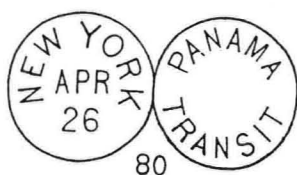


Figure 4



Figure 5

The first iterated that the letter had come from the west coast of South or Central America, and had crossed Panama to the Atlantic side on its way to New York. At the same time, it dated the New York transit (8 MAR 1880) of the letter on its way to Europe. The second handstamp (Figure 5), introduced at the time of the General Postal Union, indicated to the country of final direction that the letter was unpaid to some extent. In addition, the blue crayon figures '25' were put on the cover by the New York Exchange Office to represent the debit on the recipient (and his postal authority) for the charges to get the letter to New York: 25 centimes. The letter was put into a closed bag and sent by steamer to England where it was sent off to Paris where both the blue entry postmark (Figure 6, Salles No. 1791) and the red handstamped postage-due figures of '75' centimes applied.



Figure 6

This was the actual payment exacted from the addressee. A similar letter carried by British packet from Panama directly to Europe would have cost the addressee 1 franc, 60 centimes, more than twice the amount for the trip via New York, by French Packet it would have cost 1 franc, 20 centimes. Why this cheaper route via the United States was not used more often to get mail to Europe from the western coast of South America probably rested in the fact that there were only two long legs for the voyage via British or French services, while that via New York had three--all of which added up to more chances for delay in getting the letter and the information it contained to Europe. However, if all connections were optimal, the transit times to Europe by each of the four services were one or two days more or less than 25 days for the transit from Panama.

The 75 centimes postage-due is arrived at by adding the transit debit, 25 centimes, to the amount collected in France on an unpaid letter from the United States at that time: 50 centimes. Were this cheaper route called for, or used more frequently, we would probably see more covers showing this series of markings.

Until Ecuador joined the Postal Union in July 1880, the Ecuador-United States treaty covered mail between Guayaquil and New York. Under the treaty regulations, Ecuador was responsible for getting the letter to Panama and paying the transit charges across the isthmus. The United States was responsible only for that portion of the trip from Colon to New York. The '25' transit debit on France represents payment only for this portion of the trip. Whether the sender actually paid the earlier portion of the postage from Ecuador to Panama is not evident on the letter itself, nor do either of the two in the DeVoss collection show any prepayment. So who actually paid this amount is a moot point.

A WORLD WAR I BALKAN POTPOURRI

by Richard M. Stevens

In this article I will describe four items I have recently acquired, all associated with the French troops on the Balkan Front in World War I.

The postcard shown in Figure 1 is the first item I have encountered showing the presence of French military personnel in Montenegro. This Montenegrin picture postcard was sent from Cetinje, the capital of Montenegro, to Marseille. At the upper right it is endorsed: Mr. Goref Jean, Detachement Francais, Cettigne (Montenegro). The message is dated 26-8-14 and reads (in part) "We have left Scutari and arrived at Cettigne... Here we are at war against the Austrians." The postage has been paid with a 10 para Montenegrin stamp of the Issue of 1913, tied with a typically illegible Cetinje postmark, and a clear transit marking from the Greek post office at Thessaloniki, dated 28.AUG. 14.

According to Joany, French troops received the franking privilege as of August 5, 1914. Although the sender refers to the French "Detachment" at Cettinje, he does not indicate any military rank. The French had had personnel at Scutari, as part of an international police force which took control, after the Montenegrins were forced to evacuate at the end of the Balkan Wars. Perhaps this French Detachment at Cetinje was drawn from those men. They would have been accustomed to franking their mail with the local stamps.

This card was sent southeast to Salonika. Normally foreign mail from Cetinje was sent through Kotor, but this was now enemy territory. A routing through the Montenegrin port of Bar, or even an Albanian port, would have been much more direct. Probably these Adriatic ports were blockaded by the Austrians. This is another reason to believe that the French Detachment was made up of personnel already in Scutari when the war broke out and not men sent from France to Cetinje via Scutari.

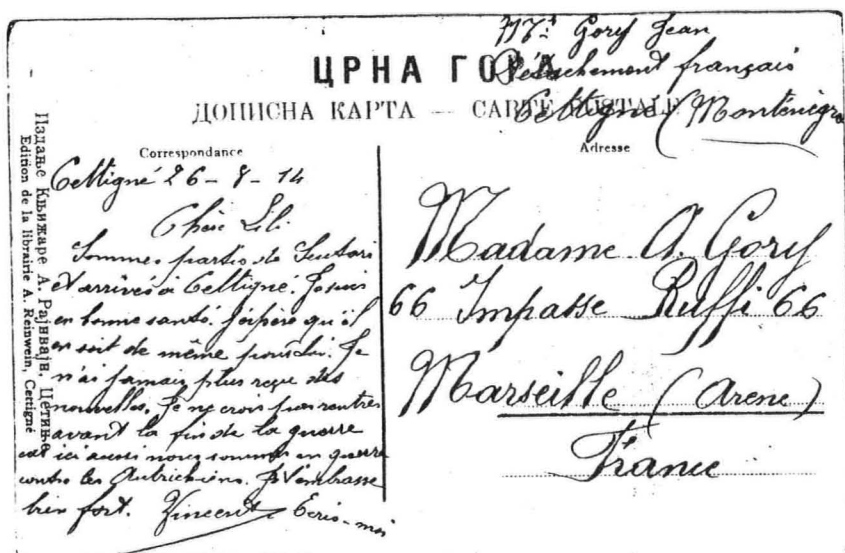


Figure 1

--- * ---

During 1914 and 1915 both the British and the French sent medical workers to help in Serbia. The Mission Medicale Française en Serbie used a variety of handstamps on their mail. They were also the subject of one of the more common of Delandre's labels. In Figure 2 is a multicolor postcard that was prepared and sold for the benefit of the French Medical Mission in Serbia. The text says that it shows a watercolor, after a photograph taken at Kraljevo by the Baronne d'Ange d'Astre, Infirmière Major de l'U.F.F. The subject is described at the bottom: A Serbian peasant going home from the hospital with his son, whose legs have been amputated; after the trip, the father took his son's place in the army.

The card was actually used from Easthampton, Long Island, in August 1917. The message is written in Italian, but gives no indication whether the card was acquired in this country or brought back by a traveller from Europe.

--- * ---

In Figure 3 is one of the vast quantity of covers sent by Serbian military personnel to the Consul Voegeli at Weesen, Switzerland. The majority of these envelopes contained postcards to be mailed to addresses in Occupied Serbia. The return address shows that this cover was sent by an officer with the Serbian 2nd Army (Post Office No. 222). As usual for registered mail, the stamp has been cancelled by Tresor et Postes 504, the French military post office set up to handle mail from the Serbian Army. At the left are two different Serbian registration handstamps, with one crossed out. The use of such Serbian handstamps is typical for letters mailed during August 1918.

The unusual feature of this cover is the Serbian censor marking. The Serbs used rectangular handstamps, with a two-line Cyrillic inscription, and a number, with or without parentheses at the right or left. The handstamp on this cover has been poorly struck in violet and is barely visible in the illustration. These handstamps were probably made of rubber and frequently show severe deterioration. Apparently the censor realized that his number was illegible in the handstamp, so he wrote it over in blue crayon. The original



Figure 2

handstamp was probably No. 59; it is too blurred to be certain. The handstamp No. 59 is known to have been used at Post Office No. 222 during 1918. I have seen at least 500 examples of these censor markings, and this is the first instance I have seen where the number was added in manuscript.

--- * ---

Of these four items, the cover in Figure 4 qualifies most clearly as a new discovery. In the July 1988 issue of the *France & Colonies Philatelist*, I wrote about the various French stamps used at the Serbian Ministerial Post Office at Corfu (where the POSTES SERBES marking was applied). At that time the 10 centimes postcard was the only postal stationery I had seen, and an example was illustrated in Figure 2 of that article.

In Figure 4 is a 15 centimes stamped envelope with a 25 centimes stamp added. It has been used to pay the 40 centimes registered letter rate to France. The postmark is dated

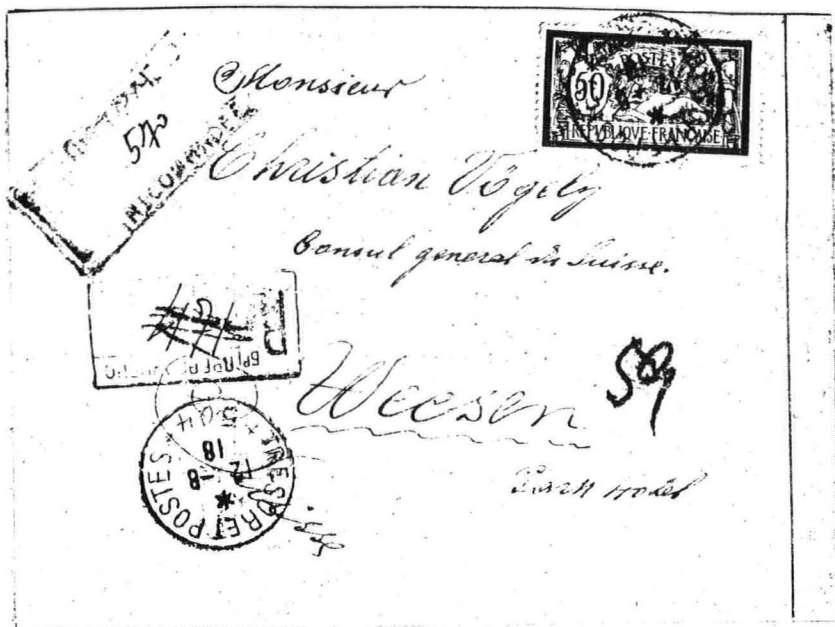


Figure 3

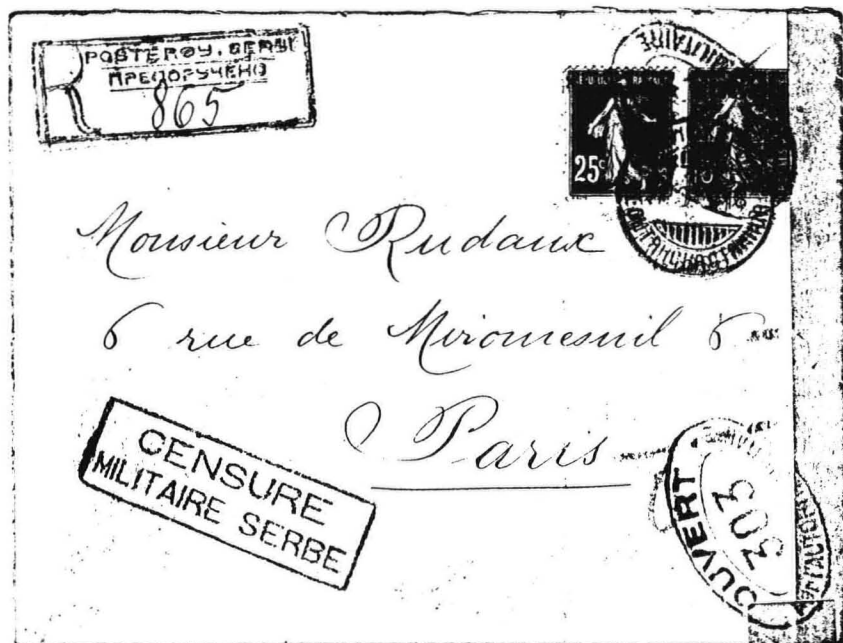


Figure 4

21.9-918, which is rather late, but still a few days before the dates found on many obviously philatelic creations. I doubt the envelope was sold at the Corfu office; probably it was brought by someone who had been in France. I see nothing about this cover to suggest that it was philatelically inspired.

I should note that this cover was most certainly a "discovery" for me. It appeared last year in a French Sale where it was illustrated, but it was not described as postal stationery. I studied the photo, thought that the 15 centimes stamp looked a bit peculiar. (The 15 centimes stamps used at this office were typically printed on a very brownish GC paper.) I bid on the cover because it was a combination I did not own, paying a less common rate. I was just barely successful, with a tied bid. Even after receiving the cover, I looked at that "peculiar" 15 centimes stamp several times before I realized it was extraordinary: it was printed on the envelope.

ON PARLE PHILATÉLIE ICI

By J. Jose Martin

The Fédération des Sociétés Philatéliques Françaises just concluded its 64th annual National Congress in Perpignan, France from 18-20 May 1991. The show was held in the Palais des Expositions, an ample well-lighted hall with good security. There were 1,170 frames in the competitive classes, as well as two class d'honneur, one for youth and a literature competition. The dealer bourse had fifty firms and a few postal administrations represented. Many local and national stamp clubs had booths where wine, sweets, and philatelic conversation were dispensed with equal ease. Local produce and handicrafts were also offered at stands representing the Pyrénées Orientales. The restaurant was consistently booked and there was ample seating for relaxing or conversation. There was a first day of issue ceremony for the 2F50 Perpignan stamp. Entry to the show was free and complimentary; bus service was offered from local hotels and the train station. The Palmares was sold out even before the show opened and over seventy individuals, societies, and organizations donated medals and other awards. There were daily excursions organized to the Musée Postal D'Amélie Les Bains-Palaïda and other local cultural sites. The 96-page show catalogue featured an excerpt from "Histoire Postale et Marcophile des Pyrénées Orientales" by René Abelanet and Henri DuBois. The impressive jury was chaired by Gabriel Gourin, President of the Federation des SPF. This show is the French equivalent of the APS Champion of Champions annual National exhibition and was superlative in all respects. Bravo and merci to all the organizing committee with a special praise for Marcel Sabardeil who was everywhere doing just about everything.

The most gratifying aspect of this show was that all the top people from French philately were present and that all had time for conversation. This author spent nearly three hours with Robert Françon, one of the two authors of the most widely used catalogue for postal stationery. He was present as a member of the Jury and provided enormous help in answering our many questions that, of necessity, cannot be fully addressed in a general catalogue. To collectors and students of French philately, the bourse was wonderful regardless of one's budget. Every one of the nearly fifty dealers had something for the most demanding specialist. I found more "little" pieces in Perpignan than in attending two-years worth of shows in either the States or Spain. All those items too inexpensive to appear in auction catalogues and not valuable enough to take to a show in the U.S. were available. We ran into Alain Millet and many other old friends and acquaintances. The British FCPS held a meeting at the show as did many other clubs and study groups.

Having just become a member of the "Cercle de Philatélie de Menton," I went to the Palmares with Michel Giribaldi, our President, in hopes of attending should there be space at this sold out affair. We were indeed fortunate and were seated at a table with postal historian Dr. Christian Rachou. Others seated at this table were all the presidents of the stamp clubs and societies from Cannes, Nice, Antibes (the area of my interest). The dinner was held in a magnificent sixteenth-century church, the Chapelle St. Dominique, and music as well as traditional dances were served as accompaniment to a delicious meal complete with champagne and two types of wine. The price of the dinner was 250F, quite modest compared to the quality of the evening. At the conclusion, each male attendee was gifted

a 'porron,' the local carafe filled with a regional vintage and topped with a catalan cap decorating the cork while the women all received a basket filled with a sampling of paté, honey and other local products and baked goods.

Knowing that many of our members would benefit from attending and exhibiting at the next French Congress Show, I inquired how foreign exhibits could qualify for exhibition. There are generally two requirements for acceptance, membership in the Fédération des Sociétés Françaises and a qualifying medal at the French local or regional level. However, medals received in the United States will be recognized, though individual membership in the Federation will be required. Further contact will be made with the Federation and hopefully the 'policy' will be formally enumerated and provisional entry forms provided in ample time for next year's exposition to be held 7-9 June at NIORT near Bordeaux.

Some statistics on the exhibits and awards follow:

Golds--15 total; 4 in postal history, 2 aerophilatelic, 2 traditional, 5 thematic.

Large Vermeils--13 total; 5 postal history, 2 air mail, 3 traditional, 2 literature, 1 thematic.

Vermeils--35 total; 15 postal history, 8 traditional, 7 thematic, 1 literature, 1 junior.

Large Silvers--65 total; 25 postal history, 3 air mail, 19 traditional, 10 thematic, 1 literature, 1 junior, 1 stationery.

Silvers--33 total; 9 postal history, 8 traditional, 3 literature, 5 junior, 3 maximaphily.

The Grand Prix went to Andre Fontaine for his Paris stars on cover, traditional.

Many of the thematic and postal history exhibits were given special prizes.

KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Many years ago I walked into Herb Block's office and was asked "What do you think of this?" as I was shown a cover from Bavaria with year date of 1870. I did not know anything about the subject so admitting my ignorance was easy. Herb pressed the item into my hand and directed me to the library saying, "You can read, can't you?" Quickly I discovered that the adhesive had not been issued until 1872, shrewdly I replied that the item must be a fake. I was then told that the town from whence the cover was sent was very small, perhaps having only a dozen letters a year pass through. The postal official at the time was very careful to change the month and day, not so the year. A genuine cover evidencing laziness.

As I have been a philatelic student for more than thirty years, if I have learned anything, it is to never say never. As an exhibitor for the past ten years, learning what items are considered exhibitable is quite another matter. The purpose of these words is to give courage in showing those border or fringe items that are sometimes zinged by others.

My area is Monaco, as many know, and the examples alluded to all come from this small Mediterranean principality. The five franc rose, Albert I stamp of 1891 exists with perf. 11. All who know recognize the history of this as coming from a stolen imprimatur pane of twenty-five that was perforated "dans la nuit" by employees and with machines of the PTT in Paris. While the perforation was to be sure unauthorized, nothing about this item is false or counterfeit. Contrary to the opinions held by many of my esteemed colleagues, I feel this item should be shown with proper notation for both its historical and curiosity value.

Specimen overprints of the 1885 Charles III series have been removed from one International gold exhibit on advice of a member of l'Académie de Philatélie. As all Monagasque items emanated from the PTT in Paris at this time, the specimen overprints fall into this category. Two types of overprint exist, a script and a roman type. These correspond to types recognized both as valid and genuine on French stamps of the period. No official correspondence coming from Monaco requesting or authorizing these items has ever been located and therefore their "legal" existence has been questioned. Care needs to be exercised with these specimens as most found are forgeries. The fakes exist in red, inverted, etc. As the stamps are genuine and the overprints were made at the PTT, I once again feel that they should be shown, especially when bearing the signature of no less an expert than Roger Calves.

Twentieth century surcharges are yet another "fringe" area. Specifically, the 1924 Monaco series where my love of varieties has led me into deep, uncharted water. While two settings are noted of the 45 centime on 50 centime brown, only one is noted for the other two values. Naturally I have found more than one setting over thirty years of looking and have questioned prior published articles that state the "certainty" the quantity of double-surcharged specimens that exist. If one sheet went through twice, who is to say that two did not. As the 75 centime on 1 franc double was discovered in America, the Gallic mentality resisted recognizing it for almost fifteen years. Research is something to be shown while exhibiting or so say FIP rules. Unfortunately, timid feet following the "experts" will only show recognized items and forfeit their opportunities.

In conclusion, let it be said that all is not known on any subject. As Herb used to say, "An expert is only someone with the courage to be wrong." An opinion after all is only an opinion, it is never a fact. This truth has been evidenced many times and the experts rarely all agree anyway. A tip of the hat in parting to those fellow travelers like Ken Kutz and others who persevered with both items and methods that may not be "approved" or popular as YET. See you all in Granada '92.

Jerold M. Massler
Apartado 545
Seville 41080, Spain



THE FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN DESERT SHIELD (1990-91)

Thanks to Bertrand Sinais and J.M. Sitarek ("courrier du désert") in the March 1991 "L'Echo de la Timbrologie," we now have a preliminary picture of the role played by French naval and military units in the Persian Gulf during August 1990 - February 1991.

Operation "Salamandre" inaugurated the French presence on 13 August, with the dispatching of the carrier "Clémenceau," guided-missile cruiser "Colbert," and supply ship "Var," and the period includes a slogan machine cancel from 1 September for the "Clémenceau."

Enforcement of the ensuing naval blockade of Iraq was entrusted to Operation "Artimon" in the Gulf and the Red Sea from 25 August. Ships serving in "Artimon" from late summer 1990 into early 1991 are: oilers "Marne" (with Bureau Postal Navale N°64 aboard) and "Durance"; escort destroyers "Doudart de Lagrée," "Commandant Bory," and "Protet"; depot and repair ship "Jules Verne" (with its own postal agency aboard); supply ship "Rhin"; anti-submarine frigates "Jean de Vienne" and "Lamotte-Piquet"; anti-submarine corvette "Montcalm"; guided-missile squadron destroyer "du Chayla"; small destroyers "Maître LHer" and "Commandant Ducuing"; landing ships "Foudre" and "Orage"; hospital ship "Rance"; plus a number of merchant ships used to transport personnel and supplies. Slogan cancels and ship markings abound.

Land and air forces formed Operation "Daguet." Bureau Postal Militaire (BPM) 640 was opened end of September at the Saudi king's HQ. BPM 640A entered service early October at "Daguet" GHQ at Riyadh. Later in the fall came BPM 640B at Yanbu on the Red Sea, 641 at Hufuf (Saudi Arabia) and, for the very minor protective Operation "Busiris," 642 at Abu Dhabi. Handstamped cancels prevail, but BPM 640 made use of the older model "mute" Poste aux Armées machine cancel 13-31 Dec. 1990 (apparently uncommon), and then a new BPM 640 machine cancel from early January 1991. Postal-sector numbers run from 85750 to 85799. The free franchise was accorded on 17 January 1991; but Michel Melot in a similar article in "Timbrologie" for March 1991 says 24 January.

Mail from France was sorted at Paris Tri Armées and sent largely via civilian air services, less commonly on military planes; packages went mostly by sea. All mail from the Gulf to France was presumably sent on military planes.

—S.J.L.

SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT MAIL ON THE "PIPER 1"

by Ernst M. Cohn

In "THE OCTOBER BALLONS MONTES" (Brown, Cohn, and Walske, "New Studies...", Vaurie Publ. #6, 1986, pp. 50-53), I stated that the only certain "Piper 1" mail consists of postcards with the cachet "Trouvée à La Courneuve/Le 10 Oct. 1870." I wish to apologize to my readers and state exactly the opposite:

"All postcards with the bogus cachet
certainly did not fly on the Piper 1."

I shall give the complete proof of the bogus nature of that cachet elsewhere. Here I want to tell only about one procedure that shows that this cachet cannot possibly have been an official one. The reasoning used might interest and amuse the reader.

Some time ago I became suspicious about whether this balloon really had carried normal mail, i.e., mail bagged in post office bags. None of the contemporary sources mentioned anything about its mail, if it mentioned the balloon at all. Steenackers, the government delegation's head of postal and telegraph operations, names it in his 1883 book and states expressly that it carried no mail. Then the Mangin table of 1900 suddenly changes that to 70 kg. My doubts arose on account of the table's many errors.

Doubts were allayed when I remembered that a contemporary German source mentioned that on the 9th they were still reading some of the 30,000 letters that had just come to them from a Paris balloon. That could only be from the "Piper 1." At, say, 2g per letter, that would make 60kg, quite close to what the Mangins claimed in their table. That would mean that all of the officially bagged mail got away in the balloon.

Since Piper claimed that he buried a large batch of letters near where they landed between the lines, those must have been what the French call "plis confiés," i.e., mail personally entrusted to Piper and/or his companions.

Let us assume that that is what happened, and that this batch was salvaged by members of the free corps stationed near there. What were the characteristics of 1870 plis confiés? They consisted pretty much exclusively of letters (not cards), since people really were not used to sending cards and preferred folded sheets in envelopes, no matter how thin the paper. Also, because such letters were given to balloonists to mail outside Paris, they bear no Paris postmarks. That is what the soldiers would have found and taken to a post office.

The "Trouvée..." cachet, however, occurs (thus far!) only on **cards postmarked at Paris before that flight**, thus providing that none of these cards could have been aboard the "Piper 1."

There are other reasons for declaring the cachet to be bogus and to have originated in the second half of the 20th century. That does not keep it from changing hands at fancy prices, most recently for 35,770 French francs at a Paris auction.

Having fallen for the ruse as thoughtlessly as everyone else for several decades, I hasten to correct the record now and hope that specialized works that list this imposter will continue listing it, but with a warning that this is a private, bogus cachet, probably put together with a child's printing set. If people wish to continue paying such prices, they will at least know what they are buying, provided they read the literature.

Considering that there is no Paris marking of any kind on real plis confiés from this balloon, nor any marking from outside Paris that would identify the captured ordinary mail from it, we must regretfully conclude that **there is no way of characterizing a cover as having flown on that balloon**, unless the text or other specific marking of a pli confié, appropriately dated, might also mention one of the balloonists as its carrier.

No such cover appears to be known thus far, so that no prices can be quoted for "Piper 1" mail. This is, therefore, an example of a balloon, known to have carried both ordinary and personally entrusted mail, from which no identifiable piece of mail appears to have survived.



THE COMBINED U.S-FRENCH STEAMSHIP SERVICE FOR ARGENTINE MAILS 1867-1870

by Jeffrey C. Bohn

In 1867, a combined U.S-French packet service was established for the transferral of mails between the United States and Argentina. The northern portion of this service was provided by ships of the U.S.-Brazil Steamship Line operating between New York and Rio de Janeiro, while the southern leg of each trip was entrusted to the French Ligne K paquebot (later Ligne J) sailing between Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires.

The first official notice of this combined service appeared in the August 1867 issue of the "United States Mail and Post Office Assistant (1)," wherein the following statement appeared:

Rates of postage to the Argentine Republic, Uruguay, and Paraguay, by the direct lines of American and French mail packets via Rio De Janeiro (Brazil).

We are requested to state that an arrangement has been concluded with the French Post Department for the regular transmission of correspondence between the United States and the Argentine Republic, Uruguay, and Paraguay, by means of the American line of mail packets plying between New York and Rio de Janeiro, and of the French line of mail packets between Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires via Montevideo.

The correspondence conveyed in either direction between the United States and the countries of the La Plata, above named, will be subject to the following rates of postage (United States and French) viz:

For letters, weighing...

¼ oz. or under	18¢
over ¼ oz. and not exceeding ½ oz.	25¢
over ½ oz. and not exceeding ¾ oz.	43¢
over ¾ oz. and not exceeding 1 oz.	50¢
and so on for greater weights, adding 7½¢ for each additional ¼ oz. and 10¢ for each additional ½ oz. or fraction thereof.	

For Printed Matter (newspapers, pamphlets and periodicals) weighing...

1 oz. or under	4¢
over 1 oz. and not exceeding 2 oz.	5¢
over 2 oz. and not exceeding 3 oz.	7¢
over 3 oz. and not exceeding 4 oz.	8¢
over 4 oz. and not exceeding 5 oz.	11¢
over 5 oz. and not exceeding 6 oz.	13¢
over 6 oz. and not exceeding 7 oz.	14¢
over 7 oz. and not exceeding 8 oz.	16¢
and so on for greater weights, adding 1½¢ for each additional ounce or fraction thereof and 2¢ for each additional weight of 4 oz. or fraction thereof.	

The above rates cover the United States and French charges only, to or from port of debarkation or embarkation in countries of the La Plata.

Prepayment is required on both letters and printed matter sent from the United States. New York is the United States office of exchange for the mails transmitted under this arrangement.

Postmasters will levy and collect postage accordingly.

(1) Gayler, J., "United States Mail and Post Office Assistant," New York, August, 1867, reprinted by the Collectors Club of Chicago, Chicago, 1974, page 330.

Note that the afore quoted letter rate structure is actually a combination of the 10 cents per ½ ounce U.S. ship rate (2) plus the 7½ cents per ¼ ounce French paquebot rate from Rio de Janeiro to Montevideo and/or Buenos Aires. However, since prepayment from the U.S. was required to be made by postage stamps, and the U.S. had no ½ cent stamps, the actual single letter rate of 17½ cents was increased to 18 cents. Double weight letters (between ¼ and ½ oz.) were charged correctly at 25 cents (10¢ U.S. ship + 15¢ French service), but the charge for triple weight letters was again increased from 42½ cents (20¢ U.S. ship + 22½¢ French service) to 43 cents.

7½ 15 22½

Figure 1. Accountancy markings applied by the New York exchange office, showing the U.S. credit to France on prepaid letters addressed to Uruguay and Argentina.

Several southbound covers carried by this combined service from the U.S. to Argentina are known franked at the 18¢, 25¢, and 43¢ rates. All of these bear a currency marking (Figure 1) that indicates what portion of the prepaid amount was credited to France. These credit markings were applied in red ink at the New York exchange office. Many of these southbound covers also exhibit one of the interesting French maritime markings (cachets de provenance) shown in Figure 2. These markings were applied on board the French paquebot and usually bear the date of the ship's departure from Rio de Janeiro. All known examples of these cachets are in black ink.



(a)



(b)

Figure 2. French cachets de provenance applied to letters from the U.S. that were carried by French paquebots from Rio de Janeiro to Montevideo and Buenos Aires.

A complete sailing list of the southbound packets involved in this combined service is presented in Table 1, beginning with the departure of the steamship "South America" from New York on 22 August 1867, and ending with the departure of the "North America" from New York on 23 December 1869. The elimination of this combined U.S.-French service to Argentina coincided with the abrogation of all U.S.-French postal agreements on 1 January 1870. Note that although the U.S.-Brazil Line steamers and the French Ligne J paquebots both continued their normal operations well after January 1870, both postal administrations were forced to rely on British service to complete the U.S.-Argentina connection.

The New York departure dates of the U.S.-Brazil Line steamships shown in Table 1 have been gleaned from contemporary newspaper accounts (3). Unfortunately, similar information concerning the arrival dates of these ships at Rio de Janeiro has not been found, despite repeated attempts to locate pertinent Brazilian records. As will be discussed later, these arrival dates may be an important clue to the understanding of why some southbound covers do not show the cachets de provenance of Figure 2. The French steamer sailing

(2) This was the rate by U.S. mail ship to foreign countries with which the U.S. had no postal convention. It comprised both the ship fee and the U.S. internal postage.

(3) The New York Times, Inc., "The New York Times," New York, 1867-1870, with a compilation of sailing data by Richard F. Winter.

TABLE 1 SAILING LIST OF THE SOUTHBOUND STEAMSHIPS
FROM NEW YORK TO BUENOS AYRES

U.S. STEAMSHIP	DEPART N.Y.	ARRIVE RIO		FRENCH STEAMSHIP	DEPART RIO	ARRIVE B.A.
South America	22/8/67	?/9/67		Aunis	22/9/67	29/9/67
Guiding Star	23/9/67	?/10/67		Aunis	22/10/67	29/10/67
North America	23/10/67	?/11/67		Aunis	22/11/67	29/11/67
South America	23/11/67	?/12/67	*	Aunis	22/12/67	29/12/67
Mississippi	26/12/67	?/1/68		Aunis	22/1/68	29/1/68
Merrimack	23/1/68	?/2/68		(1)	22/2/68	29/2/68
South America	22/2/68	?/3/68	*	Aunis	22/3/68	29/3/68
Mississippi	23/3/68	?/4/68	*	Aunis	22/4/68	29/4/68
Merrimack	23/4/68	?/5/68	⊙	Aunis	22/5/68	29/5/68
South America	23/5/68	?/6/68	⊙	Aunis	22/6/68	29/6/68
Mississippi	23/6/68	?/7/68	⊙	Aunis	22/7/68	29/7/68
Merrimack	23/7/68	?/8/68	⊙	Aunis	23/8/68	29/8/68
South America	23/8/68	?/9/68		Aunis	22/9/68	29/9/68
Mississippi	23/9/68	?/10/68		Aunis	22/10/68	29/10/68
Merrimack	23/10/68	?/11/68	⊙	Aunis	22/11/68	29/11/68

dates have been taken directly from Salles (4), and show, with the exception of one round trip from Rio to Buenos Aires, that all Ligne K service was provided by the paquebot "Aunis." When the Ligne K was abolished in late October 1869, the itineraries of the Ligne J paquebots were extended to include the ports of the La Plata region, and the cachet de provenance shown in Figure 2b was introduced.

Figure 3 illustrates an example of an 18 cent rate letter from San Francisco to Buenos Aires, sent via Panama to New York, and forwarded to Brazil aboard the U.S. steamship "South America." Note that the New York exchange office applied the "7½" cent credit marking in red ink. This letter arrived at Rio de Janeiro in time to catch the southbound

(4) Salles, R., "La Poste Maritime Française," Volume III, Paris, 1963.

South America	23/11/68	?/12/68			Aunis	22/12/68	29/12/68
Mississippi	23/12/68	?/1/69	*		Aunis	22/1/69	29/1/69
Merrimack	23/1/69	?/2/69			Aunis	22/2/69	29/2/69
South America	23/2/69	?/3/69			Aunis	22/3/69	29/3/69
Mississippi	24/3/69	?/4/69	(*)		Aunis	22/4/69	30/4/69
Merrimack	23/4/69	?/5/69			Aunis	22/5/69	29/5/69
South America	24/5/69	?/6/69	*		Aunis	22/6/69	29/6/69
North America	23/6/69	?/7/69	(*)		Aunis	22/7/69	29/7/69
Merrimack	23/7/69	?/8/69	(*)		Aunis	22/8/69	29/8/69
South America	23/8/69	?/9/69	(*)		Aunis	22/9/69	29/9/69
North America	23/9/69	?/10/69	*		Aunis	22/10/69	29/10/69
Merrimack	23/10/69	?/11/69	*		Gironde	20/11/69	26/11/69
South America	23/11/69	?/12/69	(*)		Estramadure	19/12/69	26/12/69
North America	23/12/69	?/1/70			Amazon	20/1/70	26/1/70

KEY: (1) Service provided by a Brazilian steamer

* Letter recorded from this sailing, without cachet de provenance

(*) Letter recorded from this sailing, with cachet de provenance of Figure 2

sailing of the "Aunis" on 22 June 1868, at which time the cachet de provenance of Figure 2a was applied. Apparently, no additional Argentine postage was required for the delivery of this letter within Buenos Aires.

An example of a 25 cent rate southbound cover from the U.S. to Argentina is shown in Figure 4. This letter originated in Boston and was sent via the steamship "Merrimack" out of New York on 24 July 1868. The New York exchange office applied the red "15" to indicate the appropriate credit to France (in cents) for the Ligne K service. On arrival in Rio de Janeiro, the letter was transferred to the French agent on board the steamship "Aunis," where the Ligne K cachet de provenance was applied with the departure date of 23 August 1869. The "Aunis" arrived in Buenos Aires on 30 August 1869, and this cover was placed into the Argentine post for delivery to Rosario, where a collection of 10 centavos (blue crayon 10¢) was apparently required to pay the local postage.

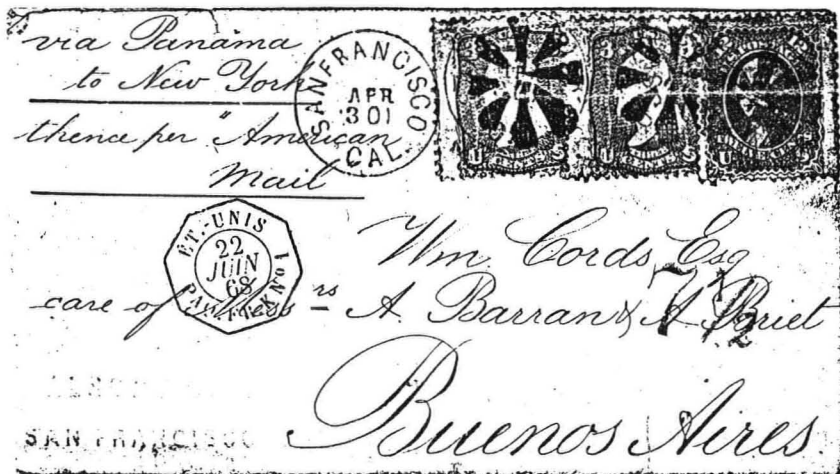


Figure 3. An 18 cent rate cover from the U.S. to Argentina showing the 7½ cent credit to France, and the cachet de provenance of the Ligne K paquebot "Aunis." (Schnell Collection)

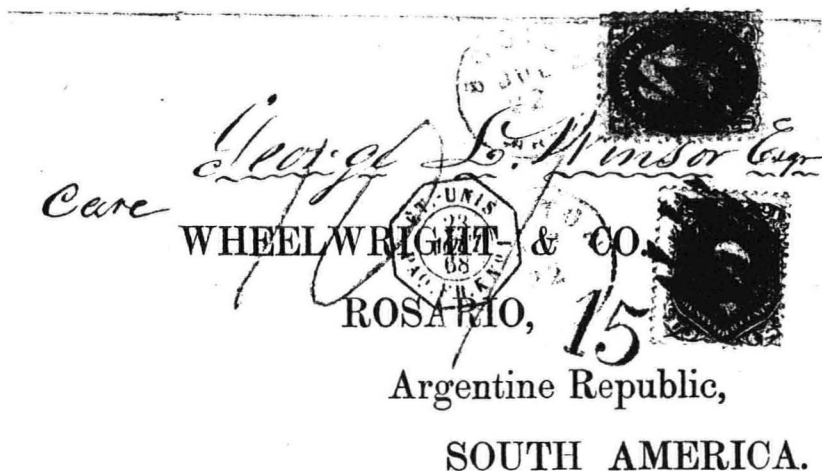


Figure 4. A 25 cent rate cover from the U.S. to Argentina showing the 15 cent credit to France, and the cachet de provenance of the Ligne K paquebot "Aunis."

Another example from the Wheelwright correspondence is shown in Figure 5. This is a triple rate, 43 cent letter sent via the steamship "Mississippi" out of New York on 23 March 1868. The correct 22½ cent credit to France was applied by the New York exchange office in anticipation of the French paquebot service from Rio to Buenos Aires. Unlike the covers in Figure 3 and 4, however, this letter does not show the Ligne K cachet de provenance of Figure 2a. Was the omission of the cachet de provenance marking just due to an oversight of the agent on board the "Aunis," or is it possible that this cover was not sent via the Ligne K service to Buenos Aires? It has been speculated that the

"Mississippi" may have arrived at Rio too late to catch the Ligne K sailing for Buenos Aires. This theory is plausible considering the fact that, although the N.Y.-Brazil steamers were scheduled to arrive in Rio on or about the 20th of each month, even minor incidents during the long voyage from New York could invoke a two (or more) day delay in the arrival date. Presumably, the Ligne K paquebot left Rio de Janeiro on or about the 22nd of each month, whether or not the U.S. steamer had docked. Therefore, if the U.S. packet was late in arriving at Rio, thus missing the departure of the French paquebot, alternative arrangements would have to be made. The mail could either be held at Rio de Janeiro for one entire month until the next southbound trip of the Ligne K steamer (doubtful), or forwarded to Montevideo and Buenos Aires via any available ship. If the latter scheme was employed, then the Ligne K cachets would not be found on such covers.



Figure 5. A 43 cent rate cover from the U.S. to Argentina showing the 22½ cent credit to France. This letter may have arrived at Rio de Janeiro too late to catch the southbound sailing of the "Aunis," and as a result, did not receive the cachet de provenance of the Ligne K paquebot. (Paliafito Collection)

When the Ligne J paquebots began to provide the transit service from Rio de Janeiro to Buenos Aires in November 1869, it was anticipated that this change would have a minimal impact on the combined U.S.-French service. In practice, however, it is highly probable that the southbound mails were directly affected, in that the Ligne J steamers were now scheduled to depart from Rio de Janeiro on the 20th of each month, rather than on the original Ligne K departure date of the 22nd. Since the U.S. steamers were still scheduled to arrive at Rio on the 20th, even the slightest delay would have prevented the transferral of the southbound mails to the Ligne J paquebot.

Figure 6 shows one of the few known examples of a southbound cover struck with the Ligne J cachet de provenance of Figure 2b. This 25 cent rate letter originated in Vallejo, California on 4 November 1869, and was sent overland to New York, where the exchange office correctly applied the red "15" cent credit to France, and placed it aboard the steamship "South America" bound for Rio de Janeiro. At Rio, the letter was transferred to the paquebot "Estramadure," and the Ligne J cachet de provenance was applied with the 19 December 1869 departure date. The Ligne J "Estramadure" arrived in Buenos Aires on 28 December 1869, and the letter was delivered to the British Consulate as addressed.

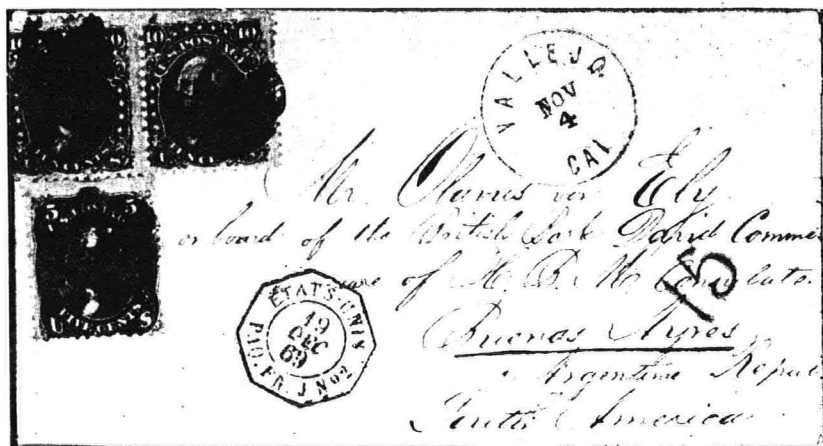


Figure 6. A 25 cent rate cover from the U.S. to Argentina showing the 15 cent credit to France, and the cachet de provenance of the Ligne J paquebot "Estramadure." (Ex Woollam Collection)

The changes in the Ligne J schedule discussed above, combined with the fact that only three southbound Ligne J sailings were even possible during the period of this combined U.S.-French service (see Table 1), probably account for the relative scarcity of the Ligne J cachet de provenance. Much of the speculation concerning the absence of these cachets de provenance on known southbound covers might be eliminated if the arrival dates of the U.S. steamers at Rio could be accurately determined. Any information from readers of this article would be greatly appreciated.

No official French version of a postal agreement authorizing this combined U.S.-French packet service has been found, so it can only be assumed that such an announcement was made in August 1867, and that it outlined the following estimated rate structure for northbound mails sent from the La Plata region to the United States:

For letters weighing...

7½ gm or under90¢
over 7½ gm and not exceeding 15 gm	..1F30¢
over 15 gm and not exceeding 22½ gm	..2F20¢
over 22½ gm and not exceeding 30 gm	..2F60¢
and so on for greater weights, adding 40 centimes for each additional 7½ gm and 50 centimes for each additional 15 gm or fraction thereof.	

For Printed Matter (newspapers, pamphlets, and periodicals) weighing...

up to 30 gm (inclusive)18¢
over 30 gm and not exceeding 60 gm	...26¢
over 60 gm and not exceeding 90 gm	...34¢
over 90 gm and not exceeding 120 gm	...42¢
over 120 gm and not exceeding 150 gm	...60¢
over 150 gm and not exceeding 180 gm	...68¢
over 180 gm and not exceeding 210 gm	...76¢
over 210 gm and not exceeding 240 gm	...84¢
and so on for greater weights, adding 8 centimes for each additional 30 gm or fraction thereof, and 10 centimes for each additional weight of 120 gm or fraction thereof.	

Presumably, the French Consuls and/or packet agents in both Buenos Aires and Montevideo operated exchange offices that could accept and process mails for this northbound service.

Although prepayment was required on all southbound mail from the U.S., existing material indicates that northbound mail could be either prepaid to destination in the U.S., or left entirely unpaid at the discretion of the sender. On prepaid letters, France was to credit the U.S. with 10 cents per 15 grams for the transit services provided in carrying the mails from Rio de Janeiro to New York. On unpaid letters, France should have debited the U.S. with 7½ cents per 7½ grams for the paquebot service from Buenos Aires or Montevideo to Rio de Janeiro. In most instances, however, France debited the U.S. at an 8 cent per 7½ gram rate for unpaid letters, and utilized the various handstamps shown in Figure 7 to indicate this debit.

8 16 8 16 9N

Figure 7. Various accountancy handstamps applied by the French exchange offices, showing the French debit (in cents) to the U.S. on unpaid letters sent from Uruguay and Argentina. Debit markings were often applied in manuscript, as well.

A sailing list of the northbound steamships providing the combined U.S.-French packet service from Buenos Aires to New York is presented in Table 2, beginning with the departure of the Ligne K paquebot "Aunis" from Buenos Aires on 12 August 1867, and ending with the sailing of the Ligne J paquebot "Estramadure" on 30 December 1869. As in Table 1, the French steamer sailing dates have been taken from Salles, while the Rio departure and New York arrival dates of the U.S. steamers have been taken from contemporary newspaper accounts.

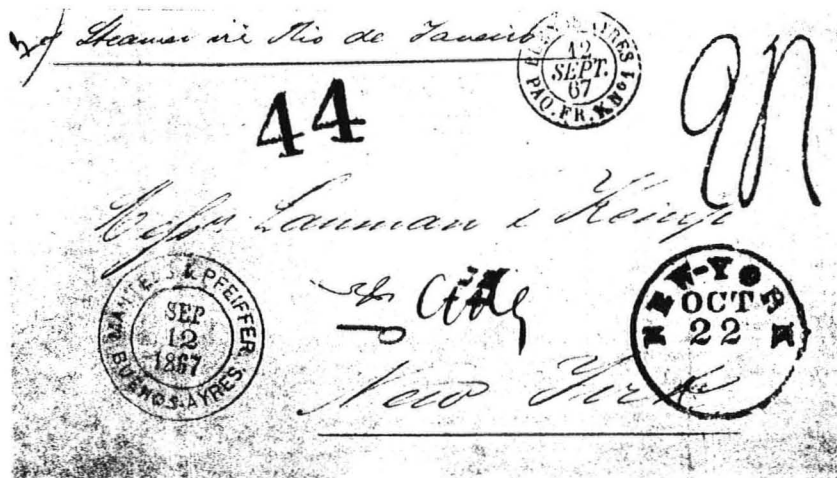


Figure 8. An unpaid, triple rate letter from Argentina, sent to the U.S. by the combined U.S.-French packet service. (Ex Hahn Collection)

One of the earliest northbound letters recorded from this combined service is shown in Figure 8. It is an unpaid, triple-rate letter from Buenos Aires, sent via the Ligne K paquebot "Aunis" to Rio de Janeiro, and via the U.S. steamship "South America" from Rio to New York. This cover bears the Ligne K cachet a date of 12 September 1867, as well as a "24" cent debit handstamp applied in black ink. On arrival in New York, a collection of 44 cents was required to pay the U.S. postage (20 cents), plus the 24 cent credit to France. Note that the southbound triple-rate letter shown in Figure 5 required a prepayment of only 43 cents, while this northbound cover was charged 44 cents on delivery. An extra penny was due on this letter from Buenos Aires because France debited the U.S. at an 8 cent per 7½ gram rate instead of the correct rate of 7½ cents per 7½ grams.

(To Be Continued)

1992 PHILATELIC PROGRAM (First Part)

Stamps with Surtaxes:

Stamp Day (window services at post offices)

Famous Persons: French musicians César Franck, Erik Satie, Florent Schmitt, Arthur Honegger, Georges Auric, Germaine Tailleferre.

Red Cross issue

Winter '92 Olympics: Cross-country skiing, artistic skiing, alpine skiing, running of the Olympic Flame.

Stamps without Surtaxes:

Contemporary European art

EUROPA '92, on theme of 500th Anniversary of discovery of America

French Nature series: Humid-zone plants (4)

Various commemoratives: Year I of the Republic; 4th Centenary of birth of Jacques Callot; Congress of French Federation of Philatelic Societies at Niort; role of France at Seville International Exposition; 5th Special Olympic Games at Tignes-Albertville.

FOR THE RECORD

(Continued from FCP #221, July 1990, p. 90)

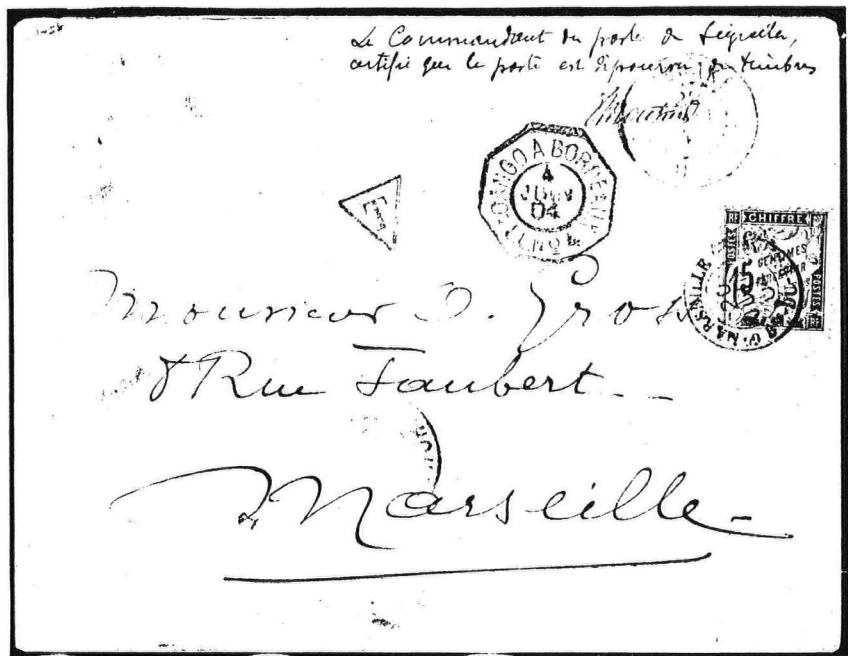
►572). Jack Blanc, in the February 1991 "L'Echo de la Timbrologie," reminds us that letters franked after 1 November 1944 with the newly-demonetized Pétain stamps were not always necessarily refused by the P.T.T. and returned to sender (or dead-letter office). Some letters did pass through the mail, albeit generally with a 2x penalty tax. Blanc shows us one such mailed in July 1948 from Aube Dept. to a government office at Troyes, Aube. In this same number, J. Dumont ("du paquet-poste au colissimo") provides a good historical summary of the evolution of parcel-post service since the 1950s, including examples of labels and markings used.

►573). Member Bob Kinsley has an article on "The French Connection" in "Menelik's Journal" (quarterly publication of the Ethiopian Philatelic Society), v. 6, no. 1 (April 1990). Said connection is the major influence of France upon Ethiopia, at the turn of last century, in matters postal and otherwise. And Bob has a larger, well-illustrated account of postal doings and shenanigans in French Somaliland—basically the story behind his awards-winning exhibit—in the April 1991 "American Philatelist." Well worth reading!

►574). Another French-Ethiopian connection, or at least one with Djibouti, is covered by Nachum Kaplan in "Menelik's Journal," v. 6, no. 3 (September 1990), wherein he describes "Ethiopian Flights and Air Mail Service 1929-1935." Most of the first pilots, mechanics and mail planes were French and the then connections with the outside world were via Djibouti. "Menelik's Journal" is lovingly edited by our member Huguette Gagnon.

►575). The general instructions of La Poste are very clear on the subject of cancelling mourning envelopes. They are to be pulled from the automatic cancelling system and cancelled either by hand or through a non-slogan machine canceller—but not so as to delay their transmission. This is to avoid the possibility that some jocular or offensive flamme or slogan could show up on the envelope to the chagrin of the recipient.

Yet another new service category has appeared in France. Merchandise (but not letters) may now be sent (since April 1990) by the less expensive Service Avion Lent (slow air mail service) or S.A.L., on a space-available basis. S.A.L. stickers are in existence.



►576). Ed Grabowski sends us another of his Colonial finds (Figure 1). This spring 1904 letter should be the earliest known from Seguela, Ivory Coast. It was written at the time of military operations in the region and some 3 years before the earliest recorded (1907) Seguela postmark. In upper right is the endorsement: "The commander of the post at Seguela certifies that the post lacks postage stamps." Letter thus sent unpaid, first date stamped at Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire, 22 May 1904 (+ T in triangle); other Ivory Coast transit markings added, and then the octagonal Loango à Bordeaux, 4 June 1904 packet marking. Only the single tax (1x domestic letter at 15c) was charged at Marseille arrival, 20 June 1904. Ed believes this is the first recorded example of this type of treatment of unpaid mail during the Group Type period.

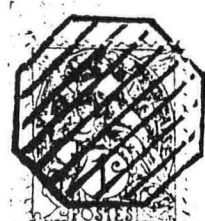
►577). Anyone who has collected convoyeur-station covers and their cancels knows that names of the stations representing line termini, which are shown in larger characters across the middle of the date stamp, are usually abbreviated. But did you know that there are some 700 such abbreviated town names? That's what's stated in L'Echo de la Timbrologie for December 1990.



Paris 1898.



Paris 1900.



►578). The Bulletin Officiel des PTT for May 1898 stated that printed matter within unsealed envelopes and franked with 1c stamps could be distributed by private enterprises as long as the stamps were "cancelled" by markings that do not resemble official PTT cancellations. The reason for using distinct markings was to alert concierges and other agents that these under-franked items could not be forwarded or returned through the mails, should the recipient be unknown or deceased or have moved away. (Henri Chirici, "Oblitérations privées," *L'Echo de la Timbrologie*, November 1990). Examples from Paris and perhaps elsewhere are shown here. Most commonly used by the Société Commerciale de Publicité (S.C.P.), 89-95 Rue d'Amsterdam, Paris, between 1898 and 1907. Strikes usually in black, but also exist in blue and violet.

►579). Dr. Jean Storch and Jacques Bidet began an ambitious project to document Henry Cheffer's illustrious career as a painter, illustrator, and stamp engraver. The serialization of "Cheffer - à la découverte d'un génie," later "Cheffer superstar" in *Le Monde des Philatélistes* ran from the November 1990 to the May 1991 issues. Over 180 sketches, essays, labels, proofs, and approved postage stamps are illustrated, many for the first time and most in good details.

Cheffer (1880-1957), a relation of Rodin, was born in Paris and studied at the Beaux-Arts, receiving the Prix de Rome in 1906. His first experiences with designing and engraving stamps were for the Kingdom of Persia in 1911. Cheffer also, during his long career, engraved stamps for Belgium, Luxembourg, Monaco, and a host of other countries and colonies, as well as some of their bank notes.

Strictly an intaglio engraver, Cheffer was unable to prepare any French postage stamps during the strictly typography pre-1930s period. His design for the 1929 Orléans (Jeanne d'Arc) competition was rejected. His first French postage stamps became, therefore, the 20F Pont du Gard and 10F La Rochelle (1929). He continued engraving the beautiful stamps of France until very shortly before his death. His classic, finely detailed designs for the Marianne that bears his name were released 10 years later.

►580). The 2,30 Marianne de Briat, France's current definitive for the domestic letter rate, has been forged and used during winter 1990-91 at Marseille. It was laser-printed, and can be distinguished from the intaglio-printed genuine by being perforated 13, by irregular teeth at all four corners, very white paper, and lack of phosphor bands (R. Charbonnier, *Coll. Phil et Marco*, N°89, January 1991).

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS



► On 24 May the 3.50 Roland Garros Tournoi du Centenaire was issued. On 1 June the 2.50 Tour d'Auvergne 1743-1800, Arbres de Libération, Gendarmérie Nationale, and Saint Just appeared. On 3 June the bloc for the Bicentenaire de la Revolution Française was issued consisting of 4 stamps of 2.50 each (separately issued on 1 June as listed above). On 22 June the 4.00 Wasquehal Nord (touristic series); on 6 July 4.00F La Vallée de Munster

and 2,50 Carénau. To appear on 15 July a 2.50F Gaston Febu's "Livre de Chasse" (in helio). On 3 August 2.50 + 0.20 Ski Artistique - Tignes (FDC sold at 15F) and on 17 August 2.50 + 0.20 Ski Alpin - Val d'Isère (FDC sold at 15F).

► Andorre--13 May a 3.20 Petites ampoules from the tombs of Sant Vincenc d'Enclar was to be issued.

► Monaco--on 26 April 2.30 and 3.20 Europa stamps with space themes. On 26 April also, the Le Corail stamp.

► New Caledonia--on 15 May 12F and 35F Melanesian houses.

► Polynesia--15 May an 80F Centenary of basketball; 5 June 17F and 21F birds unique in the World; 4 June 700F Centenary of arrival of Gauguin at Tahiti. (The 2F paysages stamp has been re-issued with new perforation.)

► Wallis et Futuna--28 April a 235F for 150th anniv. of the martyr of Père Chanel; 24 May 250F for Roland Garros tournoi de centenary.

► St. Pierre-Miquelon--3 June 10.00F Aero club "Piper Tomahawk."

► The Musée de la Poste is issuing a series of documents of souvenir nature analogous to the Documents Philatéliques, titled Collection Historique de la Poste de France--the current Bicentenaire bloc, Wasquehal Nord, and Vallée de Munster are now available in this format (sold at 32.50, 27 and 27F respectively, also the Ski Artistique and Ski Alpin (32.50F ea.).

► The election for the best stamp of the year was one by the Redon "Profile de Femme."

► The majority of French commemoratives issued since early this year have sported 2,50 values, though the letter and printed-matter rates have remained at 2,30 and 2,10 respectively. Is La Poste preparing for a mid-1991 rate increase? They've been very close-mouthed on this.

► New-format SECAP machine cancels appeared late April in several provincial towns in France. The date stamp portion now consists of double circles with total diameter slightly larger than for the previous single circles. The 5-wavy-lines killer portion appears to be unchanged. Where pictorial (flammas) or boxed slogan portions are used, date information no longer appears at the bottom of the rectangle. Ultimately 700 machines in various P.O.s will be replaced with the new type.

► Special cancellations were available at each stop of the 20-car long Club Coubertin train, between 23 January and 18 February 1991, as it crisscrossed France from Paris to Albertville (main site of Winter 92 Olympic Games) to Amiens. The cancels were applied to mail deposited at the corresponding train stations and also in the mail box installed in the "La Poste" car. This is part of La Poste's contribution to publicizing the coming Winter Olympics.

► Since 9 January, the CCP N° of the Service Philatelique de la Poste is Paris 80 048-48 C; payments should be made to the order of "La Poste."

► When the domestic letter-rate went up on 5 January 1992 from 1F to 1F50, local shortages of the 1F50 value resulted. The PTT tolerated the use of bisected 1F stamps, to make up the extra 50c, at a few post offices (Paris included) for a brief period. The philatelic value of such covers should not be much more than a few hundred francs.

► French stamps bearing "NOV 1943" inked on face may be considered to be Liberation precursors, concocted in Corsica between the 4 October 1943 liberation and the introduction from 6 December 1943 of Free French Algerian stamps (Coq and Marianne issues). However, use caution before investing!

► For Christmas 1990, La Poste preprinted 650,000 cards from Le Père Noël to the some half-million children who had written him--in care of the center for mail recovery at Libourne.

► The flat-plate booklet of ten self-adhesive stamps at 23F was re-issued with a new cover late in 1990. The new text includes 11 January 1990 postal rates to 100gm and publicity for the Winter '92 Olympics.

► The 1990 Grand Prix for Philatelic Art were awarded last December. For the Overseas Depts. to French Polynesia for the 58F "Le monde Maohi"; for Europe to a Swedish booklet honoring the 250th anniv. of the Royal Academy of Arctic Sciences; for France for the sextet of French singers (semi-postal issue). No prize was awarded for the former French African countries issues.

► Since April 1986, experimental automatic machines have been dispensing postage due (timbre taxe) labels at Lyon RP, Lyon-Beauvisage, Villeurbanne (all in Rhône Dept.) and

Vienne, Grenoble, and St.-Martin-d'Heres (in Isère Dept.). Apparently few such stickers have been run off and fewer still collected.

► Here are a few more acronyms to be found on current and recent French circular date stamps:

ACR = Agence Comptable Régionale

CESA = Centre d'Exploitation Postal des Services Ambulants (used at Paris Evangile)

CETIP = Centre d'Exploitation et de Traitement Informatique de la Poste

CFTR = Centre de Facturation et de Recouvrement du Téléphone

CRIT = Centre Régional Informatique des Télécommunications

DAPO-BO = Direction de l'Approvisionnement des Postes - Bureau d'Ordre

DRT = Direction Régionales des Télécommunication

Please don't ask us for translations or for functions; we have no idea either!

► OKPEX '91 (Oklahoma City, April 5-7): Member Bob Kinsley showed his French Somaliland, which received a gold medal. Total of 7 golds and 10 vermeils awarded. Earle Plyler and Stan Luft served on the jury.

► Philatelic Show '91 (Boxboro, MA, May 3-5): A gold medal and the Reserve Grand went to Steve Walske for Atlantic Mail: France to the U.S. A silver medal went to Bob Kinsley for Coiffurately (ahem!). In total, 17 golds and 12 vermeils awarded at the show. Splendid!

► ROMPEX '91 (Denver, May 17-19): A gold medal and the Reserve Grand went to Stan Luft for the 15c Sage 1876-1901; vermeil medals to our indefatigable Bob Kinsley for French Somaliland 1890s-1940s, and to Lewis Bussey for French Naval Mail to America, 1943-46. In addition to the above-named trio, also present and observed were most of the APS officers and staff including Keith Wagner; Alex Jackson also present. Total of 8 golds and 9 vermeils awarded.

► PIPEX '91 (Seattle, May 23-25): Earle Plyler's Two Cents U.S. - Rates, Indicia and Stamps received a vermeil, while Bob Kinsley's French Somaliland garnered another vermeil; Huguette Gagnon received a silver-bronze for her Liberation of France 1940-1945 and another silver-bronze for editing "Menelik's Journal." All three were present. A very fine showing of pioneer French South Atlantic flight covers was presented by Robert Spooner in his vermeil-winning Air Mail Competition Across the South Atlantic. Be sure to see this exhibit when it comes to your town, Total of 7 golds and 9 vermeils. Stan Luft judged philatelic exhibits and the literature entries.

► NOJEX '91 (Secaucus, NJ, May 25-27): Jury member John Lievsay reports 8 golds and 15 vermeils, with Ed Grabowski's Gradeloupe exhibit obtaining a gold medal and the Reserve Grand on its very first appearance in competition.

► The Preliminary Stamp Schedule for 1991 was announced last February. The issues for January-July have already been announced in the April and current *FCPs*; for the rest of the year the program is as follows:

August-none.

September--10th Congress of World Forestry at Paris; Nature series: Pyrenees bear, land turtle, beaver, kingfisher.

October--Work of R. Matta; Cent. of the Ecole Spéciale de Travaux Publiques; 30th aniv. Amnesty International.

November--Bicent. of death of Mozart; Red Cross-Toulon.

December--Work of Rouan; Ski Artistique - Tignes; Ski Alpin - L'Isère; Carrying the Olympic Flame.

***** F.C.P.S. OFFICIAL *****

President's Message

As I am sure many of you noticed, the entry forms for the Stephen G. Rich Memorial Exhibit were not generally delivered until after the planned date had passed. As a result there were no competitive exhibits entered. At the time of the Directors meeting on 11 June, we did not know of any members who had definitely planned to exhibit. As a result it was decided to cancel the competition for 1991. Since then I have received a letter from one member who had an exhibit ready. If I am informed of at least three members

who wish to enter exhibits, I will recommend to the Board that we reschedule the Rich Exhibit in the fall. Anyone interested should contact me directly at the address on the Entry Form.

Once again, at the Society's Annual Meeting in May, the present slate of officers was re-elected with no changes. The Treasurer's Report for 1990 appeared in the last *F&C Philatelist*. I am happy to point out that last year's dues increase was sufficient to restore the General Fund to a positive balance. The financial results were actually somewhat stronger than I had expected and leave us in a good position to pay the increases in postal rates and other expenses.

Meeting of 2 April 1991

Collectors Club member Ed Epstein joined us this evening to review part of his collection entitled THE OLYMPICS IN FRANCE. France has participated in all of the Olympic Games since 1896, including Moscow in 1980. As of 1984 France has won 184 Gold Medals, 155 Silver Medals and 153 Bronze Medals in Olympic competition.

France's Baron P. de Coubertin (b. 1863) was the father of France's participation in the Olympics. He was an educator who campaigned for reform in education, including physical education. He was fascinated by athletics, particularly the old Olympic Games, and supported physical fitness and amateur athletics. Ultimately, he became Secretary to the newly formed International Olympic Committee, and then rose to its Presidency. The first stamp to honor him was from Haiti in 1939. France so honored him in 1956, and Ed showed a number of de Coubertin items including die proofs, FDC's and color varieties. A collection could have been done around de Coubertin, with Hungary, San Marino, Turkey and Greece having honored him. His heart, as requested in his will, is buried in Olympia, Greece.

Ed then covered all of the modern games, spotlighting them with material relating to France and its participation. Stamps, proofs, covers, cancels, etc. highlighted the presentation, right up to the French issues of 1990-91 for the winter games of 1992.

— Ed Grabowski

Meeting of 6 May 1991

Tonight's speaker was Mr. James Francis, who is Chairman of the APS Committee on Paper Preservation. Jim is an MIT-trained chemist and currently works for EXXON. He has been making a detailed study of the factors necessary to insure preservation of stamps and covers. He passed on a number of pointers towards preserving our materials. His best advice was to carefully watch your collections over time, and if any changes are noted, act quickly. Humidity (>60%) is a principal villain as it encourages bacterial growth, commonly known as foxing. There are no good methods for removing foxing. Low humidity (<40%) is also not good as stamp paper and glue shrink at different rates resulting in gum cracks and ultimately paper cracks. He recommended the firm of University Products to get materials for humidity control and other preservation materials.

Mounts are another area of potential problems. Most modern mounts are good, with those of Mylar D (used by the Library of Congress) preferred. Old mounts are generally a disaster with a multitude of problems. Best to get your stamps and covers out of those old mounts as fast as possible.

Be sure NOT to use rubber cement for any of your philatelic work, and if you need tape for repair of covers use 3M Archival tape in place of anything more common.

The big question with paper is the pH (relative acidity with a pH of 7 being neutral). Any paper with a pH of 4 or below should not be used for philatelic storage. Pens are available at modest prices to easily determine the pH of paper. The Collectors Club of Chicago, via the Arthur Salm Foundation, has just issued Report Number 1 on all of the pages used for philatelic mountings. Copies are available for an SASE. If possible, paper can be soaked to remove acidity, but if this is not possible a spray called WEI TO, available from archival houses, can be used to safely remove acidity.

A long question, answer and discussion session followed the presentation, indicating the great interest in this topic.

— Ed Grabowski

NOTE: The current officers were re-elected at tonight's Annual Meeting.

Meeting of June 4, 1991

June 4 had been planned as the date for the 1991 Rich Exhibit. As a result of the delayed appearance of the April Bulletin, members did not receive the entry forms until too late. To fill the gap, Dick Stevens and John Lievsay presented non-competitive exhibits.

Dick Stevens showed two frames of material from the Balkans during World War I. The first half of the exhibit contained covers from French units operating in Serbia and Montenegro during 1914 and 1915. The most important unit was the French Medical Mission in Serbia which used a wide variety of handstamps with inscriptions in French, Serbian, or both. These markings served as return addresses, censor markings, military free-franks, or a combination of these. Some covers were sent through French military or diplomatic channels and bear only receiving markings in France; others were sent through the Serbian post office and bear their postal and censor markings.

There were also French air units in Serbia during 1915. The second half of the exhibit followed these units, as the defeated Serbian army was evacuated through Albania to Corfu, and then re-established on the Salonika Front. One cover showed that a French air unit, supposedly working with the Serbs, was already at Salonika in January 1916 several months before the Serbian armies reached that city. The exhibit was completed with a few covers from other French units aiding the Serbs on the Salonika Front.

John Lievsay showed a few pages from his thirty-volume collection of the 25 centimes Perforated Cérès Issue of 1871-76 and related material. The display began with mint singles of all three types as well as imperforate singles from both the printings for General Colonies Issues and the 1887 Granet reimpression. The page was completed with a pair on a nice cover (ex. Stone) from St. Claude, Guadeloupe. Two pages followed with proofs and essays, from both the 1850 and 1871 printings, with some multiples, and the rare carmine, and blue on yellow from the Germain collection. Tête-bêche pairs were shown from both the 1850 and 1871 printings, including an 1871 pair on registered cover.

The affranchissements of September 1871 were represented by a cover with the 20 centimes Siege and a bisected 10 centimes, used on 19 September. A group of four covers showed examples of both the 25 centimes military rate and the 50 centimes civilian rate, and both from France to French Guiana, and from French Guiana to France. An ex-Schatzkes combination franking cover was mailed from Nossi-Be with two perforated 25 centimes and an imperforate 20 centimes General Colonies issue, all cancelled with the NSB lozenge.

Mindful of his forthcoming visit to Tokyo, John concluded the exhibit with some covers showing usage at French post offices in the Far East. The first originated at Osaka, Japan and was carried by military courier to the French post office at Yokohama where it entered the regular postal system. Two others showed the printed matter rate from Shanghai and the 35 centimes rate from Shanghai to Hong Kong.

Please see the President's Letter above for a further discussion of the Rich Exhibit.

—RMS

NEW MEMBERS

- 2881 BRYANT, J.B., 240 Scarlett Road, #2007, Toronto, Ont., Canada M6N 4X4 (Telephone and Telegraph - Specimen, Annule, Fictifs. Andorre. Colonies General Issues: mint - used - on cover. Colonial Provisionals. All colonies and territories.)
- 2882 ARNOLD, Col. Stanley, P.O. Box 16064, Fort Harrison, IN 46216 (General France: used - on cover - dues - cancellations. Modern France: to 1975 - semi-postals - air mail. Occupation. Offices Abroad. CFA. Andorre. Monaco. Saar. Colonies General Issues: used. All colonies and territories.)
- 2883 KUERTI, ERNST M., 4530 N. Knox, Chicago, IL 60630 (General Collector: all issues. Colonies General Issues: mint. Algeria. Cameroun. Chad. Dahomey.)
- 2884 BELLINGER, ROBERT C., 615 E. Broadway, #206, Long Beach, CA 90802-5126 (Cancels - Postal History - Stamps & Covers of Cambodia.)
- 2885 OWENS, JOHN MICHAEL, 2630 Mayfair Ave., N., Seattle, WA 98109 (General Collector: all issues. Philatelic literature.)
- 2886 BUREGA, PAUL M., Box 15765 - Merivale Depot, Nepean, Ont., Canada K2C 3S7 (General Collector: Philatelic literature.)
- 2887 CORREL, FRANK D., 3505 Turner Lane, Chevy Chase, MD 20815-3213 (General France: used - on cover. CFA. Stamps and covers of St. Pierre - Miquelon - Reunion - Somali Coast - Inini - Kouang - Tcheou and others. Former West African States.)

- 2888 ROTAR, PATRICK JOHN, 525 132nd St., SW., #P204, Everett, WA 98204 (General France: mint - used.)
- 2889 DELAGE, SERGE, 607 Burno Drive, Palatine, IL 60067 (General France: mint - used - on cover. Classics: used. Modern France: mint - first day covers. Franchise Militaire - Liberation issues - Expositions, special and temporary bureaux - Essays - Deluxe proofs - Imperforates - Artist's proofs and color trials - Occupation issues - covers preferred. Alsace Lorraine. R.F. overprints. Liberation: on cover. Scott Numbers: 612-3-4-5, 624 on cover. Centenary International Exhibition, Paris 1949. Also plate varieties #58 Scott 25C Cérès dentelé 1871 on cover preferred.)
- 2890 EVANS, MICHAEL, 50 Salisbury Ave., Toronto, Ont., Canada M4X 1C4 (Artist's proofs and color trials. Andorre, Monaco.)
- 2891 FISHER, ROGER K., 1456 Crestwood, Joplin, MO 64801 (General Collector: all issues. Mint - air mails. Colonies General Issues.)
- 2892 WESSMAN, DICK, 703 Pinehurst Dr., Clinton, MS 39056 (General France: mint. (Scott Specialty Album Issues after 1900) - Pre-1900 issues collected in used condition and mint.)
- 2893 HUNDT, SHARON, 6713 West Trail, Edina, MN 55439 (General France: mint - used.)

REINSTATEMENTS

- 2074 ALEXANDER, WARREN, 36 Everett Rd., Carmel, NY 10512 (This is a new address.) (General Collector: 19th Century. General France: on cover, stampless covers. Postal history in general.)
- 2746 HARDER, EDWARD J., 5300 Maryman Road, Louisville, KY 40258 (General Collector: all issues. France: mint - used. Booklets. Telephone and telegraph - Parcel post - Newspaper - Revenues. Offices Abroad. Colonies General Issues: mint - used. All colonies and territories. Dealer: Part-time. Philatelic literature. Exchange.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS AND CORRECTIONS

- 915 LUFT, STANLEY J., 16291 West 56th Place, Golden, CO 80403
- 1521 BLECHER, FRANKLIN H., P.O. Box 41-4067, Miami Beach, FL 33141
- 2733 BELL, SCOTT H., 1111 Army Navy Dr., Arlington, VA 22202-2027
- 2516 BIRD, WARREN, 35 Stoneridge Place, Durham, NC 27705-5562
- 2206 SLATTERY, JAMES M., 1648 N. Alabama St., Indianapolis IN 46202-1503

RESIGNATION

- 2441 DJERAHIAN, LEON

MEMBERS' APPEALS

- *****
- *****
- *****
- WANTED: France and Algeria "Colis Postaux" issues inscribed "Livraison par Express" (only). Quote giving Yvert or Cérès nos. --Louis K. Robbins, 2112 Broadway, Rm. 412, New York, NY 10023. (Mb. #1017)
- OFFER: Selling my Monaco collection. Send for inventory list. Also Austria. --Jack Revare, 4410 W. 112th Terrace, Shawnee Mission, KS 66211. (Mb. #583)
- WANTED: Postally used stamps of Algeria prior to 1962, on or off paper, wanted in any amounts. Also, stamps of France with Algerian cancels, 1876-1924, wanted. --Laurence H. Lambert, 1519 Scenic Drive, Rolla, MO 65401. (Mb. #1594)
- OFFER: "Documents Philatéliques," official issues of the Musée de la Poste, each document comprising a particular French stamp in proof and a single as-issued stamp affixed and with FDC, contained in folder with description, history, etc., of the stamp. The collection (one set) available from no. 1, 1973 to 1985 complete. Details and price on request. --George M. Chandler, P.O. Box 20325, Indianapolis, IN 46220. (Mb. #2846)