

France & Colonies Philatelist



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The TWO Variants of Type L. O. Merson

By E.A. Iliffe
(The Philatelic Magazine, June 2, 1944).

A close scrutiny of this large stamp shows a variety which is much clearer on the more decided colors, such as the 45c green and blue, 1900-06; and the 60c violet 1920-25.

The variety is in the fold of the sleeve, immediately above the left arm which rests on the handle of, presumably, a sword.

The illustrations show more clearly than a description, the differences between the two types, but a short attempt may help.

In Fig. 1, there is a thick line, the top of which consists of two prongs. This type goes with the wide fold in which two clear lines pass parallel up by the right hand side of the thick line, turning over to the right immediately above the exposed arm. There is also a short line above these two lines.

In Fig. 2, the prongs are closed or solid; and the left edge of the fold above the arm is carried almost to, if not quite touching the thick line, and has two short lines above.

At a guess, I should hazard Fig. 2 as being the improvement to save wear on fine lines.

Both varieties may be found on stamps of the same value, and the accompanying table shows the result of a careful study of my own copies, and checked by a friend who has far more specimens than I.

The 1917-20 issue on grayish paper does not provide such clear evidence; the coarseness of the paper affects the printing, causing difficulty in detection. Note the lake in the table.



As in former efforts, I do not claim that the table is complete, but collectors will be able to examine their duplicates and see that, as far as possible, they have one of each type, where two exist.

	1.		2.	
	Open	Wide	Closed	Narrow
	Lines	Fold	Lines	Fold
1900-06:				
40c red	x	x		
45c lt. green	x	x	x	x
45c dk. green			x	x
50c cinnamon	x	x		
1f lt. lake	x	x	x	x
1f dk. lake	x	x		
2f lilac	x	x		
5f blue	x	x	x	x
1917-20:				
40c red	x	x		
45c green			x	x
50c cinnamon	x	x	x	
1f lake	x			x
1920-25:				
60c violet	x	x	x	x
2f red			x	x
1925-28:				
3f deep violet			x	x
3f mauve	x	x	x	x
10f green			x	x
20f magenta			x	x

Note: Only the main color of the stamp is given.

FRENCH GUIANA.

List of post office, 1946--Courtesy of member Edmond Queyroy.

French Guiana

"Bureaux de Poste" (First Class Offices)
 Cayenne Iles du Salut Kourou
 Mana Oyapoc Regina
 (St. Jean; now closed)
 St. Laurent. Sinnamary.

"Bureaux Secondaires ou Agences" (similar to Fourth Class offices in U.S.)

Guisambourg Irracoubou Kaw
 Macouria Majanoury Matoury
 Montsinery Ouanary Remire
 Roura Ste. Marie Oyapoc

Inini

"Bureaux de Poste"
 Port Inini Secteur Ouest St. Elie
 (Secteur Centre; now closed)

Variety of the 80c on 1f Peace, 1937

Our member, Mr. Carl Stephenson, has shown us the 1f on 80c, Scott No. 333, with the 0 of 80c broken conspicuously in its northeast sector, on the vertical portion closest to the C. Out of the side of the 0 a chunk seems to be gouged at this point. The 8 shows starting of a break in the southeastern portion also. There may be some interest in establishing whether this is a progressive break, or whether it appears on a fair number of copies of the stamp. The one shown us is used, but without enough postmark to establish place or date, showing on the stamp.

Correction

In No. 26 (March-April 1946), on page 7, stamp of Gabon mentioned is Scott No. 49, not No. 40.
 ---H.A. Stringham.

First Stamps of France

By L. Van Stratten, D. O.
 In the Australian Stamp Monthly

FRENCH postal history dates back to 1627, when a regular postal service was organized to serve the principal cities of France; it was a very efficient service but very expensive. Not until the 8th March, 1848, did the Government of the day decide to reduce rates and employ the use of adhesive labels to prepay postage. This was more than eight years after similar legislation had been passed in Great Britain. In consequence of this decision a law authorizing the printing and use of postage stamps was promulgated on the 15th August, 1848, and four and a half months from this date the first French postage stamps appeared. Three months had been considered ample to choose a design, engrave it, prepare plates, print the sheets and finally distribute supplies throughout the country. It is easy to imagine the innumerable difficulties that must have been encountered—almost one hundred years ago—with unaccustomed printing methods and slow communications. The first French stamps, however, saw the light of day on the 1st January, 1849.

Perkins, Bacon and Co., of London, had achieved a notable success with the English "Stamp Post" (the Continental expression) and, logically, the French authorities approached them in regard to prospective French issues. The London firm were represented in Paris by M. I. Guiet, who advised the French authorities, after consulting with his principals, that it would require six months from the date of the acceptance of a design to execute the order, and at a cost of 450,000 francs (I have been unable to ascertain what this charge represented).

Meanwhile, M. J. J. Barre, engraver to the Paris Mint, who was already renowned for his engraving of banknotes, forged a number of English penny blacks and approached the authorities with them, asking whether they could detect any difference. No one could, and Barre announced that he would supply similar stamps for France at a much lower cost than Perkins, Bacon. When asked for a quotation he estimated that the cost could be reduced by 400,000 francs. Naturally the London firm were staggered when this information reached them, and immediately reduced their original estimate by one-quarter. The outcome was that Barre was commissioned to proceed with the work of preparing a die portraying an effigy representing Liberty and bearing the inscriptions "Republique Francaise," "Postes," and denominated value. But Barre



adopted the head of the Goddess Ceres—the Goddess of Agriculture and Abundance—preferring it to the effigy of a woman in Phrygian bonnet, and in spite of a great deal of controversy the Ceres head remained. This was not the first occasion upon which Barre had employed the Ceres head, as in the previous year he had used it in a successful competition for a coinage design and had it adopted. His stamp design being accepted, Barre was further offered the work of printing; this he declined, and suggested it be entrusted to M. A. Hulot, also of the Paris Mint.

M. Hulot had already achieved success by his secret "Galvanoplastie" (electrotyping) method in the printing of banknotes and playing cards, and considered the process of a suitable as well as an economical method for postage stamp printing. Although Hulot has sometimes been credited with the invention of electrotyping, actually it was only Hulot's adaptation of a discovery by Dr. Jacobi, a naturalized German-born Russian physician. Nevertheless Barre's art and craftsmanship and Hulot's skill and ingenuity form one of the greatest partnerships in the history of stamp production.

Strange to say it was not Hulot who carried out the actual printing; this was executed by M. Tacquin, albeit under Hulot's supervision, at the Mint. Most certainly Hulot himself prepared the plates. Toward the end of 1850 Hulot was appointed official director of the whole process of stamp manufacture and became solely responsible for every aspect of production. Up till 1847 stamp printing was carried out exclusively on hand presses.

As with some other countries, the standard catalogues do not list as No. 1, etc., the very first stamps of France, that is, they are not chronologically arranged, but listed in consecutive values, irrespective of the dates of issue. The 20 centimes black and the 1 franc carmine appeared together, as already mentioned, on

the 1st January, 1849. The 20 centimes was the postage rate for all France on letters weighing $7\frac{1}{2}$ grams and under, as well as a general rate for all correspondence of non-commissioned officers, soldiers and sailors. The 1 franc was for the prepayment of letters or packages weighing from 15 to 100 grams and portion thereof. No other value appeared until February, 1850.

Without question the imperforate Ceres issues are among the finest of all European classics. It is interesting to speculate what would the first postage stamps of France have been like had Perkins, Bacon received the contract and Humphrys been entrusted with the design and engraving.

In a letter written by Hulot (16th February, 1849) discussing criticism levelled at him for his charges, he compares his own which were from 32 to 40 centimes per thousand stamps, whereas Great Britain paid 1 franc per sheet of 240, that is, 2 francs 40 centimes per thousand, the franc then being the equivalent of 10d.

However, in 1869 Hulot's contract for the supply of stamps was revised and lowered, and the State claimed all plates in stock as its property, and Hulot had to supply a descriptive statement certified to be correct as to all processes employed in stamp production. This must have been a severe blow to so intense an autocrat who considered himself the sole master of the factory and all it contained. A tale is told of how he once refused to supply even a proof of any stamp to the Count Primoli, who approached him with a letter from the Empress asking that he might be supplied with a collection of French essays.

The above notes are compiled from many sources, but the story of Barre's penny black forgery was told the writer by Dr. A. J. C. Vaurie, the noted "Bordeaux" specialist. Dr. Vaurie has actually seen specimens of the forgery in the collection of the late M. Gerard Gilbert, who was one of the greatest authorities of French classic stamps.

The Blue 65c and 90c Peace (1937 & 1938)

We are indebted to Mr. Carl Stephenson of the Group, for showing us a number of copies which have interesting minor variants in the design. These two stamps can hardly be called by the color-name "ultramarine" by anyone versed in correct color naming--but that is not the main point here.

In all the copies shown, the arm outstretched across the stamp to the olive branch shows a sharp, heavy line just within its upper border. The numerals of value, the lower edge of the color ground, and the bottom line of the design, show this same additional characteristic -- to some or a large extent, varying between copies.

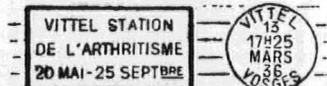
The upper corners of the stamps, except on two copies on which perfs cut the design off at top, show protrusion of the design into a sort of "horns," on these copies.

These variations are due to plate wear.

The copper electrotypes used for printing, go into a sort of "flow" of the metal under the repeated pressure from one direction during the inking and imprinting when a run is made. This flow produces the horns at the corners and the ridges on the edges of the inked portions which actually print.

Just back of the ridge, the normal and even surface of the electro does not come into contact with the paper. Thus an additional "white line" appears, as if the design were in part doubled.

This same sort of flow can be found on many French stamps, such as the 1900 issues. It has been mistaken for a "double entry" by those who are not familiar with typographic printing.



A French resort advertised the season for taking the cure for arthritis.
---Reprinted from "La Liaison."

"Catalogue des Etiquettes Aeropostales," by Frank Muller. 1947 edition, 288 pp. Published by La Maison de la Poste Aerienne, Paris. U.S. distributors: Jack Knight Air Mail Society (Earl H. Wellman, Editor-in-chief), Brookfield, Illinois. \$3.00 post free.

This new edition of the catalog of air mail etiquettes of the world's postal services and air lines that carry mail, is written in French by Frank Muller, foremost authority in all the world on this subject. The book lists over 1400 different types of etiquettes and illustrates almost 800 of them, so that collectors who do not read French readily can easily follow the catalog. The book is in a handy $6\frac{1}{4}$ by $9\frac{1}{4}$ inch size. It contains two and a half times as many pages as the 1933 edition. Issues of 140 different countries are listed, and priced in francs.

A new departure in this catalog is a listing of air line issues for the first time.

France was the first country to recognize a need for etiquettes: an issue was made for the Paris-St. Nazaire service inaugurated on August 17, 1918. The Postal Union Congress recommended in 1922 that member nations and their postal administrations issue etiquettes of uniform color, inscription, and design. With only one exception, etiquettes are invariably issued free of charge by the various postal services and by the airline operating companies.

---E.H. Wellman

THE NEW SERVICE

Wanted or exchange notices: 25 words or less, one or two insertions. Members only; no charge.

Wanted, for trade or cash: Many French precancels, anchor cancellations, colored cancellations, plate varieties, shades, etc. Carl Stephenson, Boardman Hall, Ithaca, N.Y. (Member 45) Correspondence invited.

Exchange wanted with members having general collection of French Colonies. I have a good stock of trading material. S.S. Kahn, 33-38 191 St., Flushing, N.Y. (Member 186).

Berck catalogue wanted. W. Waylette, 2433 Lafayette St., Bellingham, Wash. (Member 238).

Exchange wanted: Used French Colonies and cancellations--offer used French West Indies, Africa, Madagascar, etc. Basis Scott's. Roy N. Urton, 424 North Nevada Ave., Colorado Springs, Colo. (Member 121).

Will exchange Australian stamps for fine French items. L. van Straten, 71 Collins St., Melbourne, Vic., Australia. (Member 241).

I need any and all copies of No. 58 Scott of France (25c blue Ceres 1871) for plating and cancellations. Jacques Musy, Box 47 Planetarium Station, New York 24, N.Y. Will buy or exchange. (Member 16).

Old French covers, perhaps not valuable, will be sent for inspection. Would like French colonials in exchange. S. Boerner, 119 East Walters Ave., Port Washington, Wis. (Member 159).

Precancels of France wanted: Dated Bureau Prints--15c Postes Paris 1921 on G.C. paper; 15c Postes France 1921 on regular paper. S.G. Rich, Verona, New Jersey (Member 2)

THE FRENCH P.O. IN THE LEVANT Obliterations on the Stamps of France

by René Hineard.

First Period. Until towards the end of 1862.
Small Figure obliterations.

3704 Alexandria (1830—Mar. 1931)
3706 Beyrouth (1840—Aug. '14)
3707 Constantinople (1840—1920)
3708 Dardanelles (1835—July 1923)
3709 Smyrna (1835—Aug. '14)
3766 Alexandrette (Oct. '52—Aug. '14)
3767 Gallipoli (Jan. '52—Feb. '72)
3768 Jaffa (June '52—Aug. '14)
3769 Lattaquie (June '52—Aug. '14)
3770 Mersina (June '52—Aug. '14)
3771 Metelin (June '52—Aug. '72)
3772 Rhodes (June '52—July '23)
3773 Tripoli (Syria)

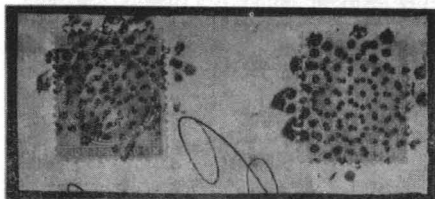
4008 Galatz (Nov. '57—Jan. '75)
4009 Ibraila (Nov. '57—Jan. '75)
4010 Ineboli (Aug. '57—Aug. '76)
4011 Kerassunde (Aug. '57—Aug. '14)
4012 Salonica (Nov. '57—1914)
4013 Samsoun (Nov. '57—Aug. '14)
4014 Sinope (Nov. '57—May '69)
4015 Sulina (Nov. '57—Ap. '79)
4016 Trebizonde (Nov. '57—Aug. '14)
4017 Tulcha (1857—Ap. '79)
4018 Varna (Nov. '57—Aug. '58)
4019 Volo (Nov. '57—1881)

Second Period. Until mid-1876.
Large Figure obliterations.

5079 Alexandrette (Oct. '52—Aug. '14)
5080 Alexandria (1830—Mar. '23)
5082 Beyrouth (1840—Aug. '14)
5083 Constantinople (1840—1920)
5084 Dardanelles (1835—July '23)
5085 Galatz (Nov. '57—Jan. '75)
5086 Gallipoli (Rodosto) (Feb. '72—Aug. '76)
5087 Ibraila (Nov. '57—Jan. '75)
5088 Ineboli (Aug. '57—Aug. '76)
5089 Jaffa (June '52—Aug. '14)
5090 Kerassunde (Aug. '57—Aug. '14)
5091 Lattaquie (June '52—Aug. '14)
5092 Mersina (June '52—Aug. '14)
5093 Metelin (June '52—Ap. '72)
5094 Rhodes (June '52—July '23)
5095 Salonica (Nov. '57—1914)
5096 Samsoun (Nov. '57—Aug. '14)
5097 Sinope (Nov. '57—May '69)
5097 Ordou (May '69—Aug. '76)

5098 Smyrna (1835—Aug. '14)
5099 Sulina (Nov. '57—Ap. '79)
5100 Trebizonde (Nov. '57—Aug. '14)
5101 Tripoli (Syria) ('52—Aug. '14)
5102 Tulcha (1857—Ap. '79)
5103 Varna (Nov. '57—Aug. '78)
5105 Suz (Nov. '62—Dec. '88)
5106 Tanger (Nov. '62—)
5107 Tunis (1852—July '88)
5119 Cairo (Nov. '65—Mar. '75)
5121 La Goulette (1867—July '88)
5129 Port Said (June '67—Mar. '81)
5139 Kustendje (Sep. '69—Ap. '79)
5153 Enos (Jan. '74—Ap. '75)
5154 Lagos (Jan. '74—1898)
5155 Dednagh (Jan. '74—Aug. '14)
5156 Cavalle (Jan. '74—Aug. '14)

Is it a French Cancellation?



A reader sends this piece with stamps which have a most unusual cancellation, to Les Ondes Philateliques, 1946 No.1-2, asking explanation of this odd marking. The stamps are Napoleon heads, one laureate, thus dating the piece as 1863 or later to perhaps 1871 (these stamps do occur used after 1870 while the supply lasted).

Variants in the Iris Type

The Iris Type, both the 1938-39 printings and those of 1944, show constant variants as follow:

- f of 1f thick
- f of 1.20f thin
- f of 1.30f thin
- f of 1.50f thin
- f of 2f thick
- f of 2.40f with cross bar low
- f of 4f thick.

--A.H. Weber.

"The Big Break."

When we showed this plate flaw on the 20c Laureate, in No.27, it was not clear just which the actual "Big Break" is. Accordingly, it is shown again, and we trust that a better printing of the picture and addition of the pointing hand will make Paul Senitz's picture entirely clear to all.



SECRETARY'S REPORT

Jan. 15 to Feb.15
1947

NEW MEMBERS: Welcome--

265. Sontheimer, Henry, 140 26th Ave., North, St. Petersburg, Fla. (France and Europe; no colonies).
266. Rothbaum, Richard E., 158 West 81 St., New York 24, N.Y. (France).
267. Milon, Pierre, P.O. Box 127, Fort-de-France, Martinique, French West Indies.

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED:

- Irvine, George J., 1736 Columbia Road, N.W., Washington 9, D.C. (France, Germany, U.S.).
La Rocque, William E., 5 Pickering St., Woburn, Mass. (France).
Ljunggren, Arvid, 97 Elm St., Medford 55, Mass. (France).
Handy, Merritt F., 539 Washington St., Brighton 35, Mass. (France; A.P.O. Cover).
Mullen, George, 93 Cross St., Malden 48, Mass. (France used).

APPLICATION FOR REINSTATEMENT RECEIVED:

107. Kohler, Jacob F., 31 Elijah St., Woburn, Mass. (France).

APPLICATION FOR CHAPTER CHARTER RECEIVED:

- French Collectors Group of Malden: Earl E. Hunnewell (257), representative, 69 Pleasant St., Malden 48, Mass.

RESIGNED:

202. Brack, Alfred F., Paterson, N.J.
109. Kessler, F.W., New York, N.Y.
138. Miller, Michael, Baltimore, Md.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

137. Hahn, Charless, to 5317 Kimbark Ave., Chicago 15, Ill.
238. Waylett, Wilson, to 2433 Lafayette St., Bellingham, Wash.

LOST MEMBERS: Mail, both first class and the numbers of the Philatelist, has been returned from the following members' addresses as we last have them:

103. Dow, Howard L.
189. Estep, A.L.
22. Ham, Philip M.
87. Lannen, R.L.
167. Pantell, Leon J.
64. Park, David W.
216. Quigley, Clarence L.
180. Sinsheimer, Maurice B.
160. Chatterton, C.M.

If any member can assist in locating an address for any of these, please notify the secretary -- a postal card will do--as soon as possible.

DUES for the current year, October 1946 to October 1947, have been billed to those members who have not already sent in theirs. Please send them now. This will help us complete this list of members now in preparation for publication and for which so many of the Group have repeatedly asked.