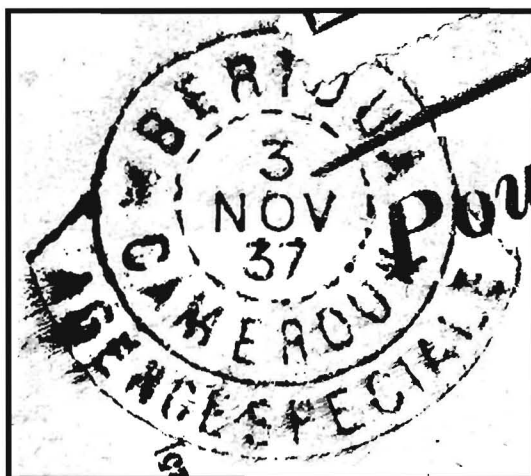




# FRANCE and COLONIES PHILATELIST

April 2008  
Whole No. 292 (Vol. 64, No. 2)



*Non-Postal Datestamps on Cameroun Postage Stamps and Mail.  
See page 3.*

**ATTEND THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**NAPEX, MCLEAN, VA 6-8 June 2008**

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*Figure 1. Non-postal use of the Bertoua Agence Speciale datestamp to denote that this official correspondence was exempt from postage and registration fees. The cover is postmarked Bertoua 3 Nov 37 (No. 49) and backstamped Paris-Caisse, Bureau Echange, 30 Nov.*



Figure 2. Agence Speciale (Bangangte, Messamena, Mokolo, Tignere) and Caisse d'avances (Sangmelima) handstamps on revenue stamps.

A variety of reasons help explain why at least 36 different *caisse d'avances* and *agence speciale* handstamps have been found on Cameroun postage stamps and mail. Such use is not often seen. These are discussed in the following sections and illustrated by representative covers.

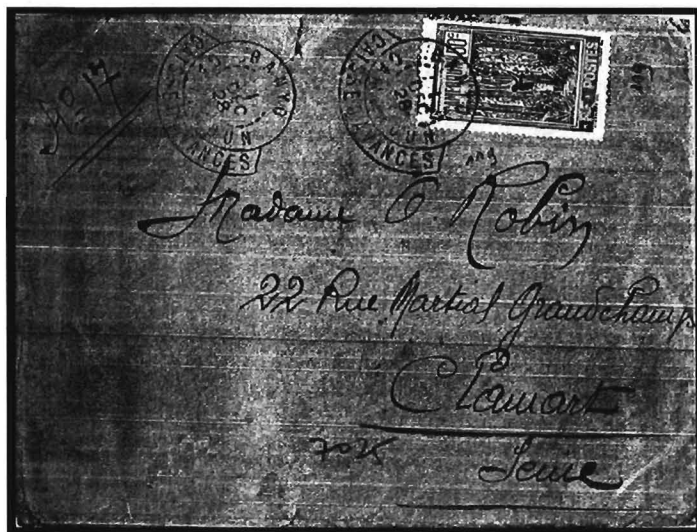


Figure 3. Postal use of the Banyo Caisse d'avances datestamp (No. 39) prior to the opening of a postal agency. Posted on 1 Dec 28, the cover is backstamped Clamart, Seine, 6 Jan 29.

### Usage Prior to the Opening of a Postal Facility

Although no official confirmatory documentation has been found, *l'agent spécial* and *le gérant de caisse* apparently handled mail at locales where there was no post office or postal agency, as indicated by the use of their dates-tamps on mail. The cover in Fig. 3 is postmarked Banyo Caisse d'avances 1 Dec 28. A postal agency had been opened at Banyo in November 1916 but then closed 21 May 1917. An agency was not re-opened there until 6 August 1930.

Similarly, the cover in Fig. 4 is postmarked in violet Guidder Caisse d'avances 5 Oct 36. A postal agency was not opened at Guidder until more than a year later, on 14 November 1937.



Figure 4. Postal use of the Guidder Caisse d'avances datestamp (No. 186) prior to the opening of a postal agency. Posted on 5 Oct 36, the cover is backstamped Garoua 7 Oct 7, Yaounde 12 Oct, and Bayon, Meurthe et Moselle 31 Oct. The sender was the Chef de la Subdivision de Guidder.

### Usage Subsequent to the Opening of a Postal Facility

Non-postal datestamps were also apparently used after a postal agency had been opened but before receipt of a permanent postal datestamp. The cover in Fig. 5 is postmarked Bafia Caisse d'avances 2 Avril 26. A postal agency was opened there on 27 February 1925. The earliest Bafia postal datestamp recorded to date is 30 August 1926.





Figure 5. Postal use of the Bafia Caisse d'avances datestamp (No. 27) subsequent to the opening of a postal agency. Posted on 2 April 1926, the cover is backstamped Bordeaux, Gironde, 5 May.

The cover piece in Fig. 6 is postmarked Fort-Foureau Caisse d'avances 6 Jul 32. A postal agency was opened there about three months earlier, on 14 April 1932. The earliest Fort Foureau postal datestamp recorded to date is 12 January 1935. The use of a Paris colonial exposition commemorative stamp is unexpected.



Figure 6. Postal use of the Fort-Foureau Caisse d'avances datestamp (No. 166) subsequent to the opening of a postal agency.

The registered cover in Fig. 7 is postmarked Mokolo Agence Speciale 5 Aout 32. A postal agency was opened there on 9 October 1931. The earliest Mokolo postal datestamp recorded to date is March 1934.

The cover in Fig. 8 is postmarked Bertoua Agence Speciale 28 Sept 28. One of the transit marks on the back is Batouri Caisse d'avances, also 28 Sept 28. The cover was posted after the postal agency at Bertoua was opened on 22 May 1928 but before arrival of the permanent postal datestamp, for which the



Figure 7. Postal use of the Mokolo Agence Speciale datestamp (No. 251) subsequent to the opening of a postal agency.



Figure 8. Postal use of the Bertoua Agence Speciale datestamp (No. 52) subsequent to the opening of a postal agency. On the back is the Batouri Caisse d'avances datestamp (No. 45) used prior to the opening of a postal agency. Also transit mark Vannes, Morbihan, 31 October.

earliest recorded date is 26 October 1928. The cover transited Batouri before a postal agency was opened there on 1 January 1929, so it was handled by *le gérant de caisse*.

One wonders why it apparently took so long to provide permanent postal datestamps. For each of the locales discussed above, plus others not depicted, the observation that each facility was a postal agency rather than a post office may be relevant.

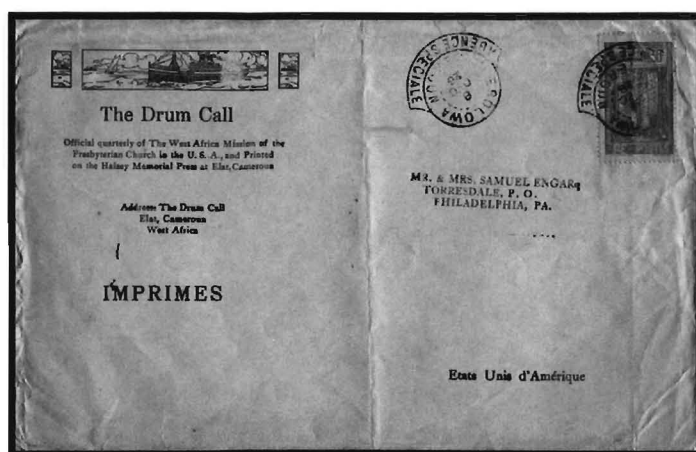


Figure 9. Postal use of the Ebolowa Agence Speciale datestamp (No. 149A) a decade after the opening of a post office.

### Other Possible Circumstances

On other occasions, the volume of mail or the impending dispatch time may have necessitated extraordinary use of a non-postal datestamp. The printed matter envelope in Fig. 9 is postmarked Ebolowa Agence Speciale 8 Dec 26. At this date, the Ebolowa post office had been open for more than a decade and a postal datestamp was routinely used; there was, however, only one available at the time. In addition to being a regional center of some size and importance, Ebolowa was the site of a Presbyterian mission station. Among the mission's activities was publication of the quarterly periodical, *The Drum Call*, which was widely distributed for many years to individuals and congregations in the United States and elsewhere worldwide. During the 1920s, mail was dispatched from Ebolowa once a week on Monday, arriving at Eseka on Thursday morning, in time to catch the train to Douala, arriving there at 6 P.M.<sup>5</sup> A tidy theory for use of the *agence speciale* datestamp was that the volume of mail was too much to process before the scheduled departure of the mails, and therefore *l'agent spécial* was called upon to lend assistance to the postmaster to meet the deadline.

Theory and logic tend to fall apart, however, especially when Africa is involved. 8 December 1926 was a Wednesday, and no mail was to depart for Douala for another five days! Alternatively, perhaps *The Drum Call* was ready for mailing, and *l'agent spécial* assisted the post-



Figure 10. Postal use of the Yagoua Caisse d'avances handstamp (No. 339). Without date.

master with processing in advance the large quantity of periodicals for dispatch. There may be other explanations. The matter rests there!

In the case of Yagoua, a postal datestamp may have been unavailable for an extended period of time. Admittedly, the volume of mail seen from this postal agency is small but, after more than 20 years of active searching, no examples of a postal datestamp have been recorded between July 1944 and mid-1955. Mail seen from the late 1940s and early 1950s is cancelled with either a Yagoua Caisse d'avances or a Yagoua Agence Speciale handstamp, without a date, such as the example in Fig. 10, struck in violet. The dates of posting can be approximated based on transit marks (if any), the postage stamps used, and the postage paid. These two non-postal handstamps appear to have done duty for an extended period.

For other locales, non-postal datestamps may have been used on a short-term basis, such as when the postmaster or postal agent was unavailable, and *l'agent* or *le gérant*, or perhaps another district official temporarily stepped in to handle postal matters and, for whatever reason, used his non-postal datestamp. This, however, is speculation on the author's part. A check of personnel announcements and postings in the *Journal officiel du Cameroun* may shed some relevant light.

*Caisse d'avances* and *agence speciale* datestamps are also found on loose Cameroun post-



Figure 11. Postal use of the Poste Administratif d'Ayos administrative cachet (No. 16) subsequent to the opening of a postal agency.

age stamps. For locations with only a postal agency or no postal facility, responsibility for issuance of money orders lay with *l'agent spécial* or *le gérant de caisse*.<sup>4</sup> The loose stamps may have originally been affixed to money orders issued at these locales. Alternatively, in addition to ordinary mail, the postage stamps may have been used in lieu of revenue stamps. Since the stamps are no longer attached to any documents, there is no way to know for sure.

To conclude with a different non-postal device that did postal duty, illustrated in Fig. 11 is a registered cover postmarked with a cachet that reads *Poste Administratif d'Ayos*. The registration label is handstamped 6 Août, and the Rennes backstamp is dated 9 September 1926. A postal agency was opened at Ayos on 20 March 1925. The earliest Ayos postal datestamp recorded to date is mid-1928.

Through the depicted covers and the discussion about the postal use of non-postal datestamps in Cameroun, perhaps the reader is stimulated to investigate and report on the use of such devices in other colonies and territo-

ries. The author welcomes additional information, insight, and examples of these attractive and fascinating but elusive datestamps.

### References and Endnotes

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The opening dates of postal facilities, the postmark numbers, and the dates of use are taken from this publication plus subsequent additions.
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4. Bratzel, M.P. Jr. *The Postal Tariffs of Cameroun under French Administration - 1916-1959*, MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 2007. vi + 215 pages. ISBN 978-0-9694026-4-0.
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# *The French Influence on the First Postal System of Ethiopia*

Alan J. Morvay (FCPS 1111)

*This article is a great example of a multidisciplinary subject about which we know little. While general French catalogs do not indicate any relationship with Ethiopia, this article certainly shows us a strong connection on many levels from postal employees, to stamp design and printing. The covers selected for illustrations are outstanding. They not only illustrate the variety of mixed frankings, but many have important historical subtexts. Bravo Alan! — Ed.*

## **Historical Background**

Ethiopia and Liberia were the only African countries to maintain independence during the nineteenth century colonial period. However, there was a dominant French influence on the formation and development of the Ethiopian postal system. Léon Chefneux, a Frenchman, was an advisor to Menelik II, Emperor of Ethiopia. He became the first postmaster of that country on 10 February 1893 when the Emperor authorized him to establish and operate a postal system as a private enterprise including providing postage stamps. The Emperor did not want to finance this service because he was convinced only foreigners would use it and, therefore, there was no real benefit for the local population.

## **Close Relationship with France**

Chefneux entered into an agreement with Arthur Maury, the well-known stamp dealer in Paris, to finance the printing of the first set of Ethiopian stamps and to handle its sale to the public. Chefneux also arranged to have these stamps printed by the *Atelier de Fabrication des Timbres-Postes* in Paris and persuaded Eugene Mouchon, designer of the Sage issues of France, to design this first issue. Early Ethiopian cancellation devices are similar in design to those used in other French colonies at that time, and the first handstamped overprint on the first issue was in French.

## **Multiple Franking Required**

In 1894 the admission of Ethiopia into the Universal Postal Union was blocked by Italy because Italy wanted to make Ethiopia a colony. Therefore, in order for mail to be sent out of Ethiopia additional stamps of countries (or their colonies) who were members of the UPU were required. Ethiopia's access to mail routes was primarily through the ports of Obock and Djibouti (both technically part of the *Protectorat de la Côte des Somalis*) and the Somali Coast stamps were generally added to those of Ethiopia.

From 1895 to 1898 there were only two post offices. The first was in the capital, Addis Ababa. The postmaster of this office was the Frenchman, C. Mondon-Vidailliet who was chosen by Chefneux. The second was in the border city of Harrar. This office was run by the French priests of the local Catholic Mission. In 1899 control of the postal service was returned to the government, and the Ethiopian Postal Service began operating the Addis Ababa post office.

## **French Office Reorganization**

Also in 1899, France established an independent post office in Harrar. A growing concern that Germany might be granted a postal monopoly in Ethiopia led France to open an additional post office at the French Consulate in Dire Dawa on 1 November 1906 and to place the post office in Harrar under its control. For political reasons the Dire Dawa post office was connected to the French post office through Port Said, Egypt, and the two post offices used stamps of both French Levant and Port Said. These offices were closed in 1908 during the reorganization period of the Ethiopian Postal Service which took eight months. Finally, on 1 November 1908 Ethiopia was admitted to the UPU.



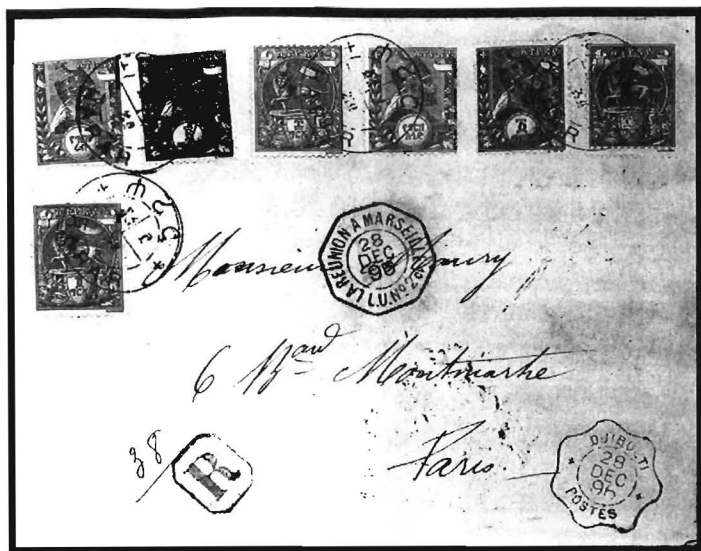


Figure 1a. A complete set of the first issue of Ethiopian stamps on a souvenir cover sent to stamp dealer Maury in Paris by Chefneux.

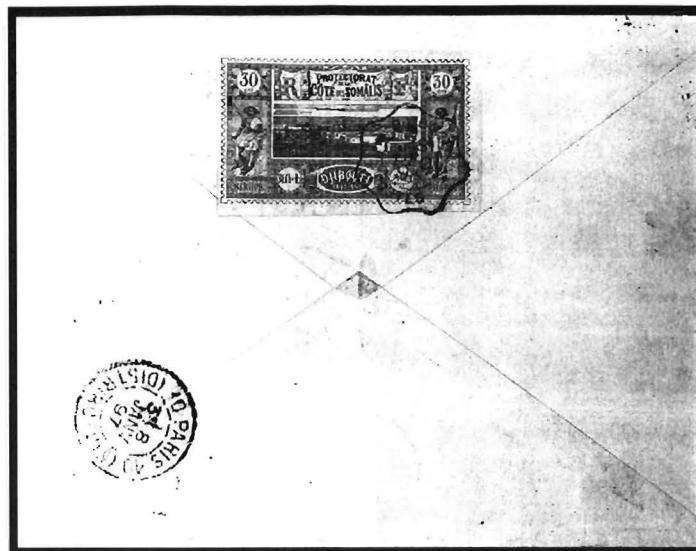


Figure 1b. Reverse of the cover shown in Fig. 1a showing 30c Somali Coast (Djibouti) stamp under-paying correct rate for a registered letter to Paris.

## Mixed Frankings

The following sections describe some of the interesting mixed frankings that arose on letters sent from Ethiopia prior to UPU membership in 1908.

### Ethiopia/Somali Coast (Djibouti)

Fig. 1a shows a philatelic cover that was mailed from Harrar to Paris on 28 December 1896. On the front is a complete set of the first issue of Ethiopian stamps (Sc. 1-7). This is an example of a *souvenir* cover mailed from Chefneux to Maury. It was sent via Djibouti on 28 December and it arrived in Paris on 8 January 1897. On the back, Fig. 1b, the cover was franked with a 30c Somali Coast definitive inscribed Djibouti (Sc. 14). While 30c would be the correct inter-colonial rate for a second weight letter, this cover was sent registered, and the correct rate for a single weight should have been 40c (15c + 25c).

### Somali Coast (Djibouti)

A letter mailed from Chefneux to Swiss telegrapher and postal employee R Mühle in Berne, Switzerland on 24 March 1899 is shown in Fig. 2. The letter was franked only with a 25c Somali Coast definitive inscribed Djibouti (Sc. 12), the correct rate for a single-weight UPU letter. It was cancelled in Djibouti on 31 March 1899 and



Figure 2. Somali Coast (Djibouti) 25c definitive used for UPU letter to Switzerland.

was received in Berne on 14 April 1899. Mühle later came to Ethiopia and became the second postmaster of the country.

### Ethiopia/Obock/Somali Coast

Fig. 3 pictures the front of a cover mailed from W. H. Ellis back to the U.S. in July 1904. The cover is franked with two Ethiopian definitives from the 1903 issue (Sc. 22 and 23) totaling  $\frac{3}{4}$  guerdie. An Obock 20c (Sc. 52) combined with two values of the 1902 Somali Coast definitive series: 1c (Sc. 34) and 4c (Sc. 36), pay the 25c international rate to the U.S.



Figure 3. Letter to the U.S. showing mixed franking of Ethiopia/Obock/Somali Coast. Correct rate for first-weight UPU letter.

William Henry Ellis was an affluent African American business magnate and Pan-African advocate. In 1903, accompanied by Haitian poet and traveler Benito Sylvain, he arrived in Ethiopia to meet Emperor Menelik. While Ellis had wanted to visit Ethiopia as an accredited United States representative, he had no official status or mission. However, he is credited with paving the way to the eventual diplomatic ties that were begun when a treaty was signed on 27 December 1903. This treaty was duly approved and returned by Ellis to Menelik for his signature. The cover shown appears to have been mailed shortly after his arrival back in Ethiopia.

### *French Levant/Obock/Somali Coast*

The large, heavy envelope shown in Fig. 4 was sent from Harrar to Berne, Switzerland on 16 December 1906. Mailed without Ethiopian stamps, it was franked with 2fr25c by a combination of a 1907 25c French Levant definitive (Sc. 29), ten 1894 Obock definitives (Sc. 51), and a 50c Somali Coast definitive (Sc. 44). This rate would represent the 9th weight step (120-135 grams)

### *Port-Saïd/Ethiopia*

Fig. 5 presents an official letter mailed from Dire Dawa on 16 December 1907 to Berlin, Germany. The letter was franked with 24 guerche (Sc. 76 and 77) and sent to Port-Saïd where it was franked with additional 25c and 50c values of the 1902-03 definitive issue (Sc. 26 and 29). The 75c rate is correct for the UPU registered single-weight letter.

### *Acknowledgements*

The author would like to thank **Robert Kinsley** for his help in preparing this article.

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5. Trissant, H., *Histoire Postale de l'Ethiopia sous le Regne de l'Empereur Menelik II*, Paris, 1977.



Figure 4. Letter to Switzerland 16 December 1907 showing mixed franking of French Levant/Obock/Somali Coast. Rate of 2fr25c would appear to be for the 9th weight step (120-135 grams)



Figure 5. Cover from Dire Dawa to Berlin, 16 December 1907. Shows mixed used of stamps of Port-Said and Ethiopia.



# Naufrage de la Russie

François Delpy (FCPS 3381)

Lorsque j'ai débuté la collection des timbres au type Sage, je me suis fixé comme règle de n'acquérir que des pièces de qualité et des timbres sans défauts. Vingt cinq ans plus tard ma collection comprend un certain nombre d'exceptions, dont celle reproduite ici (voir Fig. 1) portant la griffe rouge « Naufrage de la Russie » ..... La priorité a été donnée à l'histoire face à la qualité.

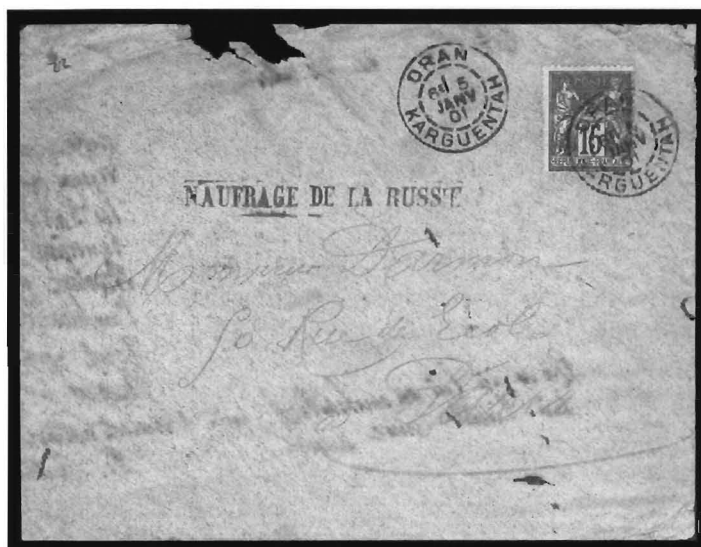


Figure 1. La lettre etudier et le navire « La Russie ».

## L'histoire de cette lettre

La lettre est postée le 5 janvier 1901 à ORAN (port d'Algérie près de la frontière marocaine) à la gare de Karguentah.

Elle doit rejoindre Marseille ou, une fois débarquée, elle empruntera le chemin de fer jusqu'à son destinataire à Paris.

La traversée ORAN – MARSEILLE s'effectue sur le navire La Russie, appartenant à la Société Générale des Transports Maritimes à Vapeur. Ce bâtiment a été ainsi baptisé en l'honneur de la Russie dont les liens avec la France sont alors très étroits.

Malheureusement dans la soirée du dimanche 6 janvier 1901 la mauvaise visibilité et le mauvais temps provoquèrent la confusion entre deux phares (Faraman et le Planier) et La Rus-

sie fit naufrage sur la plage de Farman un peu à l'ouest de Marseille.

Le navire s'échoua à quatre cents mètres du rivage mais le mauvais état de la mer interdit son approche durant cinq longues journées. La centaine de passagers et de membres d'équipage furent finalement récupérés sains et saufs le vendredi 11 janvier 1901 ainsi que la quasi totalité du courrier.

Ce dernier ayant subi un bain forcé ce sont les lettres présentes dans le milieu des liasses qui souffrirent le moins.

Le courrier ainsi récupéré fut mis à sécher, reconditionné, revêtu de la griffe rouge et réexpédié depuis Marseille.

Notre lettre atteint finalement son destinataire parisien le 26 janvier 1901. La griffe « Naufrage de la Russie » constitue une des premières marques de courrier accidenté. Enfin, une photographie du naufrage est montrée en Fig. 2.

## Sources

1. Maury, *Le Collectionneur de timbres-poste*, N° 243, janvier 1901, p.22
2. *La vie Illustrée*, N° 118, 18 janvier 1901, p. 252.



Figure 2. Photographie du naufrage de « La Russie ».





## The Carnet Corner

Bob Seeke (FCPS 1334)

Let's look at some cover varieties of the French booklet issued in 1998 to publicize PHILEX France 99 (Yv 3085-C4/ Ceres 523/Dallay 476). The figures show only the left side of the booklet cover to make it easier to see the varieties.

Fig. 1 shows the cover with the blue ink very pale; Fig. 2 shows the red ink very pale, and finally, Fig. 3 shows the red ink printed twice on the cover. This booklet also exists with the blue ink printed twice.



Figure 1. Pale blue ink (noted by arrows.)

[Although these figures are shown in gray-scale, the variations in shade and the doubling are quite easily discerned. — Ed.]

Printing quantities of varieties like these are not known, except perhaps to a few people. One has only to look at the relative catalog values for these varieties to judge their scarcity. Until next time, *bonne philatelie*.

Correspondence is always welcome. Please contact the author directly:



Figure 2. Pale red ink (noted by arrows.)

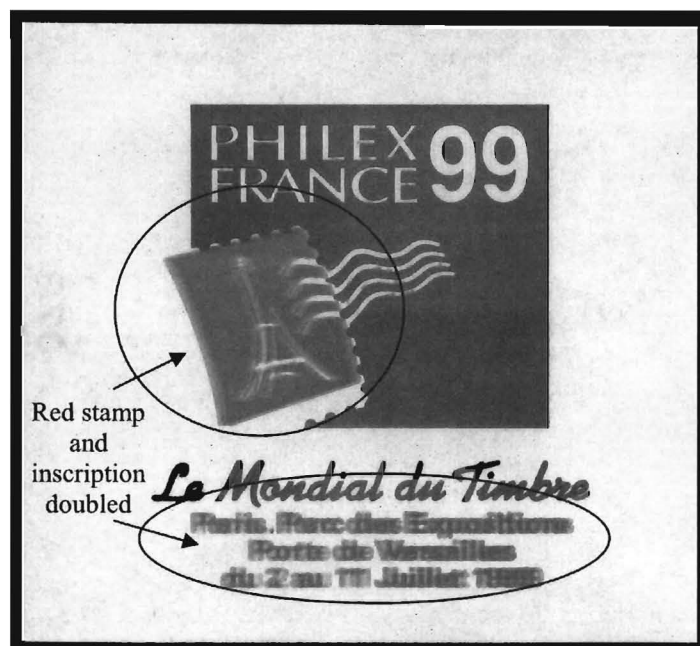


Figure 3. Red ink printed twice (noted by ellipses.)

Mr. Bob Seeke  
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# Guadeloupe Revisited

By Ed Grabowski (FCPS 1469)

As most of you know, my Guadeloupe classic collection was auctioned by the Shreves Galleries (now part of Spink) in December 2007. It proved a delightful experience, with the collection shown in London, Paris and New York, and the sale taking place in New York. I was pleased to join Charles Shreve and Olivier Stocker at the Paris Salon show in November to help present the collection. Olivier was able to arrange an interview with *Timbres* magazine during the show, and it subsequently appeared on French web TV. (See *FCP* No. 291, page 20) Ads were taken in all of the key philatelic magazines, with a major article appearing in *Linn's Stamp News* before the sale and a major article appearing in *Timbres* magazine after the sale, highlighting both the collection and the sale. As I told Charles, it was almost as much fun selling the collection as putting it together.

At this point in my collecting career, I thought that I was done with the Guadeloupe classics,

and I have been focusing on the Group Type issue as used in all of the colonies. Our Editor has just asked if I had a cover that might be highlighted in an issue of the *FCP*, and, by chance, a wonderful Guadeloupe cover showing the Eagle issue has just surfaced. It was somehow missed in putting all of the material for the sale together.

I believe that one of the key points which enabled the Guadeloupe collection to receive the *Grand Prix d'Honneur* at Washington 2006 was the strong showing of material from the many small villages present in this colony. Many of these covers were the only ones recorded or that I had seen. The cover that recently surfaced is from the small village of *Sainte Rose*, the northern-most village on the island of *Basse-Terre*. According to the standard reference on Guadeloupe written by Dubus et. al.,<sup>1</sup> the village of *Sainte Rose* had two large format datestamps (Type D in the book), and examples of both are extremely rare. They are of the

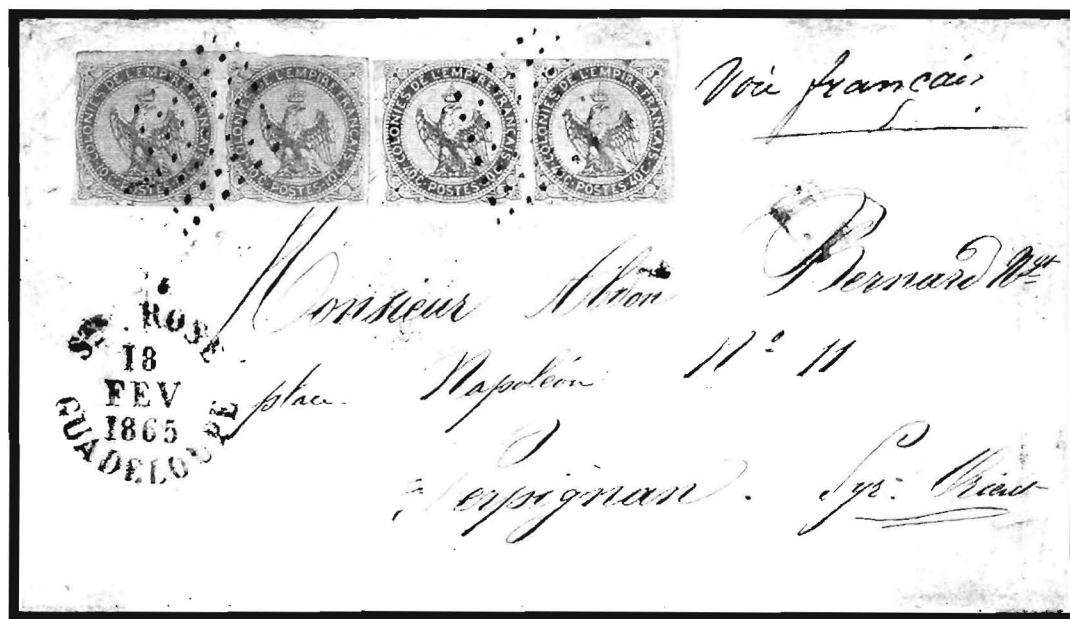


Figure 1. Cover from small village of Ste. Rose to Perpignon, France.



Figure 2. Reverse of cover showing transit cancels of **POINTE-A-PITRE** and the rare **MARTINIQUE LOUISIANE**. (Cropped from Cover)

same basic design, with the first (Type D1) having **STE ROSE (GUADELOUPE)** in the outer circle, and the second (Type D2) having **STE ROSE GUADELOUPE** with no parenthesis and a line under the **T** in the outer circle. The letters on the second type are larger than those on the first. Dubus, et. al. note that datestamp D2 was sent to Guadeloupe in 1865 and that it was first seen on a pair of the 5c Eagles from 1866. The letter shown in Fig. 1 was posted from Sainte Rose on 18 February 1865 at a double French Packet rate (2 x 50c), and is franked with pairs of the 10c and 40c Eagles. Each pair is nicely tied by the 7 x 7 fine points of this lozenge, typical of the small villages whose lozenge obliterations saw little use. It bears the Type D2 large format datestamp used in early 1865.

Even the reverse of this cover, shown in Fig. 2, is of interest. It bears a 19 February Pointe-a-Pitre transit, and a March transit via the rare **MARTINIQUE LOUISIANE** local packet (Salles<sup>2</sup> 1324) which was in use only between 1862-1865. All-in-all a delightful cover, and a great remembrance of the Guadeloupe collection.

## Reference

1. Dubus, L., P. Pannetier and A. Marchand, *La Guadeloupe*, A. Merchand, Paris, 1958.
2. Salles, R., *La Poste Maritime Française Tome IV - Les Paquebots de L'Atlantique Nord, Antilles-Amerique Centrale et Pacifique Sud Etats-Unis*, Reprinted by James Bendon, Ltd., Cyprus, 2000.

## TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2007 As of 31 December 2007

### ASSETS

Cash and Bank Accounts	
F & C Saving.....	20,822.66
F&C Checking .....	10,433.17
F&C Paypal.....	844.62
<b>TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts .....</b>	<b>32,100.45</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS.....</b>	<b>\$32,100.45</b>

### LIABILITIES and EQUITY

<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
Editor Expense .....	150.00
Prepaid Dues .....	5,108.00
Spiegel Fund.....	1,242.29
Vaurie Fund .....	19,522.23
<b>TOTAL Other Liabilities .....</b>	<b>26,022.52</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES .....</b>	<b>26,022.52</b>
<b>EQUITY .....</b>	<b>6,077.93</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY .....</b>	<b>\$32,100.45</b>

### INCOME

<b>Donations.....</b>	<b>762.00</b>
<b>Dues-Income 2007 .....</b>	<b>7,638.00</b>
<b>Interest Income .....</b>	<b>276.82</b>
<b>FCP Ad Revenue .....</b>	<b>750.00</b>
<b>Publications</b>	
Back Issues .....	109.00
Bordeaux.....	20.00
Glossary .....	10.50
Index .....	10.00
Lozenges.....	28.00
Transport Marks.....	5.00
<b>TOTAL Publications .....</b>	<b>182.50</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME .....</b>	<b>9609.32</b>

### EXPENSE

<b>France and Colonies Philatelist</b>	
Editor .....	952.90
Envelopes .....	197.59
Mailing Service .....	107.72
Postage .....	741.76
Printing.....	3,834.45
<b>TOTAL Philatelist .....</b>	<b>5,834.42</b>
Secretary, Corresponding.....	0.00
Recording.....	0.00
<b>TOTAL Secretary .....</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Treasurer	
Postage .....	165.80
Printing.....	91.86
<b>TOTAL Treasurer .....</b>	<b>257.66</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES .....</b>	<b>\$6,092.08</b>
<b>NET INCOME .....</b>	<b>\$3,517.24</b>

## CORRESPONDING SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2007

<b>Total Membership as of January 1, 2007: .....</b>	<b>403</b>
New Members during 2007 .....	19
Members Reinstated during 2007 .....	2
Resignations Received during 2007 .....	(14)
Members Deceased during 2007 .....	(4)
Members Dropped 2007.....	(34)
<b>Net Membership Loss for 2007 .....</b>	<b>(31)</b>
<b>Total Membership as of January 1, 2008 .....</b>	<b>372</b>



## *Stamp Issue Notes New Caledonian Philatelic Club*

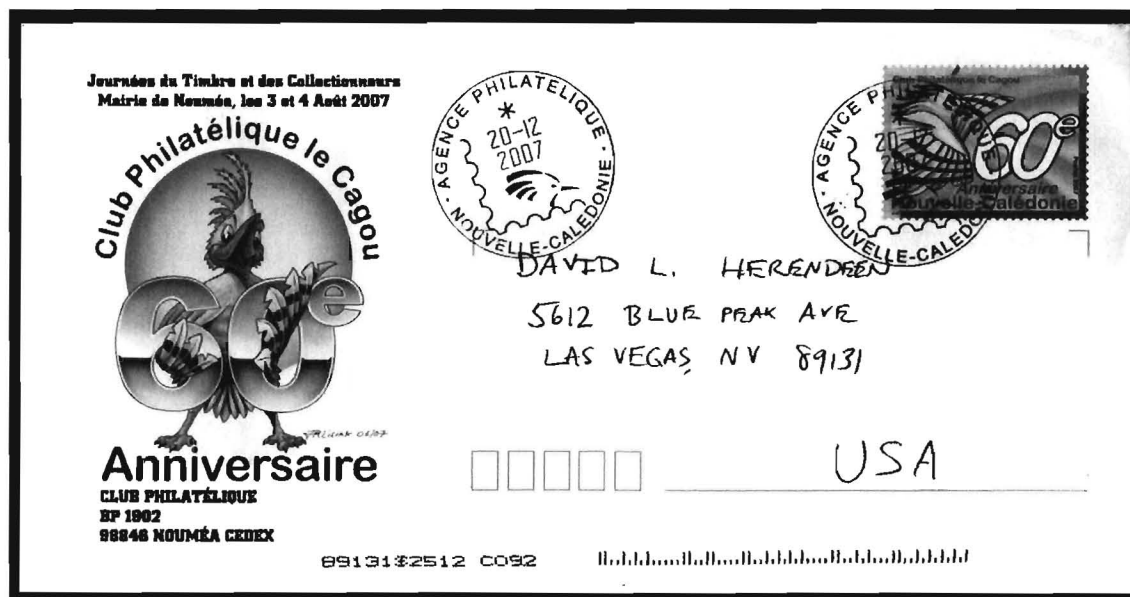
In what may very well be a philatelic first, the post office of New Caledonia issued a stamp for the 60th anniversary of *Club Philatélique le Cagou* last August. A special edition of 500 *Prêt à poster* booklets were prepared. As shown below, these had a beautifully designed cover. The two stamps, both having a face value of €0.60, were issued as a souvenir sheet. Also shown at the bottom of the page is a cover that was returned to me from Noumea. I prepared this in November when I was in Paris for the

*Salon d'Automne.* (See FCP No. 291, pp. 19-22.)

In writing about the Club, president **Alfred Roire** notes that it was originally formed on 20 May 1947 by a group of about 20 philatelists. Today, the club has more than 180 members. Their quarterly journal, *Le Cagou*, is a full color publication that includes all of the latest postal information for the islands, including details of all new issues. It also contains research articles written by members.



**Club Philatélique "LE CAGOU"**  
BP 1902 - 98846 Nouméa Cedex  
Tél/Fax : (687) 28 25 14 / 43 11 39



# Performing Philatelic Research

## *Le Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer: Aix-en-Provence, France*

*Marty Bratzel (FCPS 2394)*

*Long-time member Marty Bratzel, a frequent contributor to these pages, has agreed to help us with our project on describing how we might use many of the best philatelic libraries and research centers in the world. Marty writes about a site in France that should be considered by all collectors of French Colonial postal history. He previously reported on research at the CAOM in Issue No. 11, October 2000, of the Newsletter of the Study Group for Air Mail Rates in French Colonies to 1945.*

The *Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer* (CAOM) is a component of the French National Archives. Located in *Aix-en-Provence* since 1966, the CAOM brought together under one roof materials from several diverse sources, primarily:

- ♦ Archives and records of the French Ministry of Colonies and its predecessors, dating back to the end of the 17th century.
- ♦ Official records and documents of France's former overseas possessions, brought to France when these territories achieved independence.
- ♦ The records and documents of people – ordinary and eminent – who served France overseas, plus documents related to enterprises in French overseas territories.

The materials in the CAOM can be classified as “closed.” In this regard, the CAOM complements the *Centre des Archives Contemporaines*, located in *Seine-et-Marne*.

The CAOM has more than 42 kilometers of shelved documents holding:

- ♦ 100,000 volumes of books, magazines, newspapers, and official publications.
- ♦ 60,000 maps and plans of all descriptions, military and civilian, including fortifications, rivers, boundaries, and villages.
- ♦ 20,000 picture post cards, 60,000 photographs on paper, 15,000 prints on other materials, 20,000 negatives on film or glass, 200 kilometers of microfilm, and more.

The CAOM expanded into a beautiful purpose-built facility at 29 *Chemin du Moulin Detesta* on the grounds of *Cité Universitaire* in the mid-1990s. I first corresponded with the CAOM in 1991 and have visited the CAOM several times since then. This article endeavors to lead the reader through the conduct of research at the CAOM.

### ***Getting to Aix-en-Provence***

The nearest airport, *Marseille Marignane*, has direct connections with international hubs at Paris, Amsterdam, and London. *Aix-en-Provence* is also on the Paris-Marseille TGV (high-speed rail line), less than four hours travel time from the *Gare de Lyon* in Paris. The airport and the TGV station are linked by frequent bus service to / from the main bus terminal in Aix. The airport is about 30 minutes travel time, and the TGV station about 15. The bus terminal is about a 10-minute walk from *La Rotonde* and the *Cours Mirabeau* in the centre of this beautiful, historic town. A number of excellent hotels and restaurants are nearby. Convenient, pocket-sized maps of Aix are available.

### ***Getting to the CAOM and Opening Times***

The CAOM is located about 2 kilometers south-southeast of the centre of Aix, a pleasant walk any time of year. One approaches the CAOM through a gate in an ironwork fence, across a free, mid-sized car park. The CAOM is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, except for the first Thursday morning of each month (when it opens at 1:00 PM), the week between Christmas and New Year, and the first week of July (beginning with the first Monday of the month).



*The reading room at CAOM.*

### ***The Facility, its Contents and Use***

Through the doors, one enters a foyer with a reception desk. The staff are friendly and helpful — and patient — even if one speaks no French. Registration to use the archives simply requires filling out a short application form and showing photographic proof of identity, such as a passport. There is no charge to use the CAOM for one day (renewable once during the year). Currently, a pass for seven consecutive days costs 5€, and an annual pass 20€. Upon registration, one receives a permanent user number, which can be given at future visits. One also receives for that day's use a plastic card with a magnetic stripe — to request documents via a computer terminal — and a numbered seat assignment. Lockers are available nearby to store coats, lunches, and other items that are not needed or permitted in the reading room. Off the foyer is a small lounge with seats and beverage vending machines.

After registration, one proceeds up a flight of stairs, across a corridor that contains the card catalogue and computer terminals, to the main reading room. Upon entry, the staff desk is immediately to the left. The spacious reading room, well lit with a balance of natural and artificial light, consists of rows of tables with numbered seats and will accommodate 74 people. The most I have ever seen at any one time is about 30 to 40. There is also a microfilm reading room, a multimedia room, and Internet access. Power outlets are available for computers. At the far end of the reading room,

around a corner, is a service desk where one retrieves and returns requested documents.

The CAOM's holdings are organized into several groupings reflecting, in part, different collections brought together under one roof, for example, the library of the former Ministry of Colonies, held in Paris until 1986. All former French overseas territories are included, with separate listings for certain territories such as Algeria. Many, but not all, of the CAOM's holdings are listed in the card catalogue. Additional information about holdings is contained in binders and other documents near the card catalogue. Take time to browse and become familiar with the organization and content of the catalogue and the other access materials.

To locate a specific document, consult the card catalogue and the other records of the CAOM's holdings. Use of the card catalogue is straightforward and many of the cards are very well annotated, so that one can quickly determine whether or not a particular document will contain useful information. Each document has a unique identification and location number.

As an aside, having attempted searches on some poorly programmed computer systems, the card catalogue is a real pleasure! One can browse by key words, including permutations and combinations. The holdings are well cross-referenced, so one can be assured that no potentially relevant document is missed.

Document access is done at a computer terminal. The document number is entered into the computer, along with such information as the year (for a serial publication such as the *Journal officiel*) and a storage number (several documents may be stored together in a dossier, with several dossiers in the same carton). If all goes well, you will be advised when the requested material — possibly an entire carton containing your desired document, along with others — can be retrieved at the pick-up window, generally 30-45 minutes, depending on how busy the staff are. Several documents can be requested at the same time, so no great time is lost waiting. There is a daily limit on the number of documents that can be requested. If there are difficulties with entering the information into the computer, the staff are most accommodating to help.

When received, one can peruse the documents at leisure. If not finished at the end of the day, the documents can be returned to the pick-up desk and retrieved the following morning.

If one is familiar with the CAOM's holdings, one may reserve a limited number of documents to be available upon arrival.

Of particular interest to postal historians is the *Journal officiel* for each territory and other official publications such as the *Bulletin officiel de l'administration des colonies*. The government gazettes contain a wealth of postal information, such as postal tariffs, dates of post office opening and closure, postal routes, postal staff and operations, and much more. Some of the *journaux officiels* also contain ancillary information such as air line schedules and ship arrivals and departures, useful when tracking the movement of mail to or from an overseas territory. Among the other documents found were censorship procedures and reports of the censors — a fascinating read!

### **Document Reproduction**

When the condition and type of the document allows, photocopies may be obtained for a small fee. Photography and digital cameras — without flash — may be used. There may or may not still be provision for microfilming. The policy has tightened up over the years. My experience — when I first visited the COAM in the early 1990s, staff would photocopy documents without much hesitation. Upon subsequent visits, photocopying was drastically reduced, primarily because of damage that could result with placing bound volumes, newspapers, and fragile documents onto the photocopier bed, coupled with the damage that would result from the intense light of the photocopier itself. The alternative was microfilm. I turned the documents over to the staff with the requested pages marked with slips of paper. Some weeks later, back home, the reel of microfilm arrived. However, for whatever reason, a number of pages had been missed. A faxed letter to the Director of the CAOM brought a prompt reply — photocopies of the additional pages, plus an invoice. Top-notch service!

On subsequent visits, photocopying was essentially history — at least for the documents I

was interested in — as was microfilming. One could only request microfilming of an entire volume, or all the documents in a dossier, rather than a few select pages. In my case, I needed only 5-6 pages from a 1,200 page volume. A hand-held scanner was not permitted, because of possible damage to the document. Without a laptop computer or a digital camera, the alternative was to transcribe the desired material with pen and paper. I was advised, however, that pens and any other items that might damage the documents were no longer permitted in the reading room. I resorted to pencil!

The best option to obtain copies of desired materials is a digital camera, without flash. The reading room is well lit, so this should pose no problem.

### **Assistance**

The staff are helpful, but the CAOM is short-staffed and their time limited. Advance preparations are beneficial. In my case, prior to one visit, the specific information I was looking for would have been difficult to explain to a staff person, and would have taken more time than was available for me to ferret out. Therefore, through the exchange of letters and faxes (and now email), the assistant to the director kindly provided me with the name of a researcher who read and spoke English. For a fee, she did a lot of leg work prior to my arrival and presented me with what she had been able to find — in my case, photographs of a fort in Martinique where four Kamerun Germans had been held as POWs during World War I. Based on her research, we were able to conclude that the CAOM held no additional material in that regard but that further information could be found in the army and navy archives at Vincennes (another superb information source for the postal historian). Francs (then) and euros (now) well spent!

### **Contacting the CAOM**

The *Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer* has a well developed and easily navigable web site that contains useful background information, as well as links to other facilities of the French National Archives. As of this writing, portions of the site are being developed and upgraded.



The web address is:

<http://www.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/caom/fr/>

A free descriptive brochure is available upon request. Contact the CAOM at:

29 Chemin du Moulin Detesta  
F-13090 Aix-en-Provence FRANCE  
Telephone: +33.442.93.38.50  
Fax: +33.442.93.38.89

### *The Amenities of Aix*

Historic Aix has excellent reasonably priced hotels and restaurants, and there are ample opportunities for non-philatelic spouses and families to sightsee, including Paul Cezanne's studio. I particularly enjoy lounging at one of the open-air restaurants on the beautiful, tree-lined *Cours Mirabeau* with a *café espress*. With a car, one can explore the surrounding countryside — a major auto-rental outlet is located just steps from the front door of the Hôtel Saint Christophe, where I always stay. Tis charming hotel happens to serve the best *café au lait* that I have ever had! And, the Riviera is just an hour or two distant, easily accessible by car or train. You can get detailed information for this hotel by going to their web site:

[www.hotel-saintchristophe.com](http://www.hotel-saintchristophe.com)

or by contacting them the old-fashioned way:

Hôtel Saint Christophe  
2 avenue Victor Hugo  
F-13100 Aix-en-Provence  
Tel: +334.42.26.01.24  
Fax: +334.42.38.53.17

### *Conclusion*

To conclude, the CAOM contains few philatelic documents *per se*, but does contain a wealth of government documents and other information that is immensely beneficial to the postal historian. A visit will bring great rewards.

Please Exercise  
Your Right to Vote!

## *Some Recent Papers*

***The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society, December, 2007.*** Cameroun Taxe Marks (M. Bratzel), 'Detained in France during the German Occupation' - an Update (R. Reader), *Boules de Moulins* (A. Lawrence), and Printed Envelopes with Directional Markings from Saigon (I. McQueen).

***Documents Philatéliques, January, 2008.*** *Le poinçon au type Aigle* (M. Chauvet), *Origine et utilisation de timbres à date Poste aux armées T.O.E.* (J. Goanvic), *Mashonaland 1898. Une carte postale taxée conte son histoire.* (R. Abensur) and *Les envois urgents et les prestations spéciales en dehors des heures ordinaires d'ouverture des guichets postale suisses 1912-2004* (L. Vuille et F. Barnier).

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## TYPES AND SUBTYPES

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### **o,25 Marianne de Decaris**

**Type I:** (for sheets, coils and booklets of 20 stamps): gray lines in jaw are approximately equal in thickness (Figure 1a).

**Type II:** (for booklets of 8 stamps): complete gray line at top of jaw is thicker than the rest (Figure 1b). Not always clearly evident, and it's best to look also for one or more machine-cut booklet perforations.

S. J. Luft



Type I

Type II

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## Book Review

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***Cameroun in the Great War. Volume II. The French Navy and the AEF Columns / Cameroun : La Grande Guerre. Tome II. La Marine Française et les Colonnes de l'AEF.*** by Dudley Cobb. Published 2007. 132 A4-size pages, soft cover, perfect bound. 51 pages in English, 52 pages in French, plus 6 maps, 16 color plates, and numerous monochrome illustrations. ISBN 2-9511613-2-8. Available from the author at 49 rue Condorcet, 75009 Paris, France. Enquire about price and shipping cost.

Anyone with an interest in postal history, and especially military postal history, will appreciate all that the author, Dudley Cobb, offers us in this fine publication. As background, the author has embarked on a series about the military campaign and associated postal history in Cameroun during World War I from the French perspective. Volume I, released in 2004, focused on the French contingent of the Anglo-French Cameroons Expeditionary Force that landed at Duala in September 1914.

The scope of Volume II is well defined. It deals with the postal arrangements of the French naval vessels involved with coastal operations, and with each of the four columns that invaded Kamerun from adjacent French Equatorial Africa. The information presented is drawn from books published by senior military personnel involved with the campaign, the official war diaries of the military units, the logbooks of the French cruisers, among other sources. The key documents are in the French army and navy archives at Vincennes, the British National Archives at Kew, or the Guildhall Library, London.

For the navy, the author discusses free mailing (*franchise militaire*) privileges, the naval and other vessels involved, mail from naval personnel aboard the vessels, and associated hand-stamps, cachets, and markings. He also notes river operations which required use of shallow-draft vessels. In a similar pattern, the author

then covers each of the four columns from A.E.F. Specifically, he outlines the military operations, including places and timelines, mail, and associated postal and non-postal markings. Of interest is that most mail to and from the northern column was routed via Nigeria rather than Tchad and bears Nigerian postmarks. Each section is illustrated with covers and complemented with accounts and correspondence related to various senders. The use of color enhances appreciation of the subject. This reviewer also appreciates the detailed maps.

Cobb provides a useful service by describing how to confirm that a given post card or cover

originated from troops in the field in Cameroun as opposed to mail from locales away from the action and, hence, not truly campaign mail.

The author demonstrates quite clearly that this campaign, which lasted about 20

months, was complex and interesting. For instance, the logistics of communication and of moving men and materiel was daunting, to say the least.

Volume II is a superb example of what research into primary sources can yield and is a must for those interested in Cameroun. No one publication can completely cover even this relatively small theatre of operations during World War I. As such, Volume II complements not only Cobb's Volume I but also other publications, notably those by Bob Maddocks and Wolfgang Herterich, who have researched the historical campaign and the associated philatelic and postal history from the British and German perspectives, respectively. As such, each publication contributes to the mosaic that was the campaign in Cameroun during World War I, adding to our understanding and appreciation of this fascinating subject.

The author indicates that future volumes will address postal arrangements and occupation postage stamps for Cameroun after the start of civil administration on 1 April 1916. We look forward with great anticipation and interest.

Anon.

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*Volume II is a superb example of what research into primary sources can yield and is a must for those interested in Cameroun.*

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

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As I contemplate the wild weather here in Northeast Ohio (rain and 50s in the morning, three inches of snow in the evening), I think about the wild political campaign now unfolding in our great country. The candidates are running an incredible race, spending a lot of money, time and effort to achieve their goal.

We, too, have an election this year. It is time to return the rascals leading our society to their respective offices. I am most pleased to say that we have not spent a lot of time, money or effort on our respective campaigns. Nor are we rewarded with great power or influence at the end of the chase. We take on responsibilities for the success of our society, but we cannot achieve that success without active and interested members. Followers make leaders.

This election we found a new candidate for vice president, **Dr. Norval Rasmussen**. He's a long-time collector and exhibitor of Tunisia. I've known "Ras" for probably fifteen years now, and have complete faith in his abilities to serve as our vice president. He's a knowledgeable philatelist (Tunisia is not his only philatelic interest) and an interesting person, having spent much of his youth in North Africa.

The other names you should recognize. **Joel Bromberg, Bill Wallis, Ed Grabowski** and our director candidates have all served at least one term already; several have been active board members for much longer. The officers and directors of our society are a good group. I encourage you to re-elect them to their respective offices so we can continue along our new path to enliven our society.

We are always searching for members who are willing to contribute time and talent to our society. If you have any interest in serving as associate editor or as the assistant editor for modern issues, we would gladly consider your self-nomination. These positions are important to continuing the improvements in our journal. **Dave Herendeen** can give you an idea of the time commitment, but for all of us already serving in our official roles it is reasonable. A small investment of your time and knowledge can provide long term benefits for both you and our society.

## *This 'n That*

*David L. Herendeen, Editor*

A *grand merci* to new member **François Delpy** for his article on the wreck of the *Russie* (see p. 21). This represents the first article in French to grace these pages (at least in many years). Since we have always reviewed French periodicals and books, the tacit assumption has been that many of our members can read *la belle langue*. I'd be pleased to hear from readers as to whether they think that occasional articles in French would be a good addition to the *FCP*.

## *Help Us Grow*

*FCPS* membership numbers seem to keep dwindling. While this is common to most philatelic organizations, we need to stop the trend. Whenever you meet other philatelists at shows or club meetings, tell them about the *FCPS* and inspire them to join us.

Most interestingly, when I mentioned our upcoming trip to Paris, all of the French collectors and dealers expressed an enthusiastic approval. I think they share the belief that it is useful for Americans to see the vibrant, exciting philatelic world of Paris.

## *Our Annual Meeting*

As has been noted in earlier *FCPs*, our annual meeting this year will be held at *NAPEX* in McLean, VA from 6-8 June 2008. We already have a handful of exhibits with more being submitted. Visit their web site at:

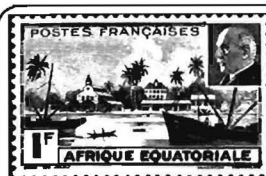
[www.napex.org](http://www.napex.org)

Here you will find information on the show hotel as well as the exhibitor's prospectus. Put this show on your calendar and come meet fellow *FCP* members

## *Election*

In his message, president Ken Nilsestuen has talked about the election of our officers and directors. You will find a ballot tipped into this *FCP*.

***Please exercise your right to vote***



## French Colonies

Common design Types

**1938 Marie Curie** Type CD80 VFNH  
Set of 21 Fr Colonial stamps (no France) \$245

**1941 Petain Issue** Complete NH set 48 stamps from 24 Colonies \$37

**1941-5 Cross of Lorraine** (Scott Type CD87) The complete Set  
of 71 stamps all Mint NH \$74

**1944 Petain Surcharges** (Semipostals) Complete set of 48  
stamps from 24 Colonies all Mint NH \$40

**1945 Felix Eboue** Type CD91 Complete NH set 26 stamps \$14

**1946 Victory** Type CD92 Set of 15 Mint NH \$12

**1946 Chad to Rhine** Types CD93-8 Complete set of 90 stamps  
from 15 Colonies all Mint NH \$120

**1950 Tropical Medicine** Type CD100 Complete NH set of 10 \$55

**1952 Military Medal** Type CD 101 Complete NH set of 12 \$96

**1954 Liberation** Type CD102 Complete set all VF NH from 12  
different French Colonies \$105

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