

France & Colonies Philatelist



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Prussian-Cancelled French Stamps

on November 1850 Cover



The cover here illustrated was mailed in Lebach in Prussia, on November 23, 1850, to a French destination. Apparently some stamp was in the upper left corner. Whether it was the 50

The cover here shown was mailed at Lebach in Prussia, on November 23, 1850, to a destination in France. Clearly some stamp was in the upper left corner. Whether this was another French stamp, or the Prussian 6 groschen stamp issued on that day, we do not know.

At Lebach, the nested circle killer, numeral 816, was used in black on all the stamps, and the town mark in black applied. Three days later it reached France via the Forbach exchange office, and received the red entry mark as shown.

The black P.D. marks would indicate that it was fully prepaid when mailed.

The mailing office, Lebach, was then about 10 miles from the French frontier across the Saar

country. The writer, a Frenchman, wrote to the mayor of his home town for replacement of his lost passport. Name of town of address no longer is decipherable, as it has been very carefully erased. Final letters "louis" can however be made out. Thus it could be Fort Louis, Saint Louis, or Saarlouis. As the contents indicate that the writer was an Alsatian, Saarlouis may be taken as more likely. The other two offices are outside this area.

Neither Mr. Raoul Lesgor, who provided this item, nor the editor, have information about the rate for this letter, nor whether combination Prussian-French franking would be required for such a missive. Whether the French stamps paid postage within Prussia by complaisance, or were ignorantly affixed and needlessly be the sender cannot yet be stated.

If any reader can give us further relevant information, we shall be glad to publish more on this cover in a future number.



Retouches --- Oh Yeah?

Like member Carl Stephenson, your editor is increasingly skeptical about the alleged change in the Sower Type, which the Scott Catalog and other sources tell us was made by retouching on the 10c and 35c. See note in Scott after France No. 184 about Nos. 162b and 175b.

No matter who is asked for them, copies with such variations visible simply do not show up.

Do the retouches show on proofs only?

Or are the so-called retouches merely plate wear, like the "doubling" seen on many of the other stamps of this same period.

In any case, isn't retention of mention in the catalog merely misleading collectors?

Can some member supply us with pictures that show the retouches, and a definite story on the subject, with dates at which retouched stamps of these values were in use (actual postmark dates) and so forth? We'll publish it.

Faulty Cataloguing of the Arc de Triomphe Stamp?

As mentioned in a recent article about this stamp in the American Philatelist of Jan. 1948, (Vol. 61, No. 4), varieties of the Arc de Triomphe are discussed at length in Yvert's specialized catalog of France, and in Baron de Vinck's great book on Twentieth Century France. These two listings each give five variants, called A to E. I have called the presumed new variety the "Type F."

Scott does not mention any types or variants of this stamp; nor does Lesgor. Baron de Vinck tells us that certain of the varieties occur from defects in the relief on the transfer roll. Mr. Pouget, director of the French stamp printery, further writes that the Baron had consulted with his staff: that his information can be considered official.

It is urgently suggested that Mr. Lesgor and Scott Publications Inc. both at least mention these types-- since they not only are constant, but are recognized by the makers of the stamps.

---F.E. Sellmansberger.

Some Undercatalogued Used Stamps Of Guadeloupe 1905 & On: By Robert G. Stone

We well know that Scott's as well as many other general catalogues have long tended to list modern French colonial stamps at the same price used and unused and to base these prices mainly on face value plus the market supply and demand value for the stamps in mint condition. As long as there are large mint supplies in dealers hands, or the stamps are still for sale in the postoffice, this practice is both understandable and natural. However, the actual scarcity of these in used condition is seldom properly reflected in the catalogues, even after the mint wholesale sources have dried up. The feasibility of dealers and collectors sending mint stamps to the colonies for cancelling is said to stabilize the used prices at the same level as the mint prices. Since this excuse does not seem to apply generally to stamps of other countries, we suspect the real reason for the linkage of used and mint prices lies in the lack of a strong demand for used copies.

Those collectors who desire or prefer used copies of French colonials, especially postally used from the smaller post offices, are well aware that many of the current as well as obsolete stamps are very hard to find so used in American or European dealers' stocks. This scarcity applies to denominations used largely on inter-colonial or local mail, those used for rates in force only a short time, and those subjected to frequent changes in color of stamps for a given rate (however common). Followers of the catalogues cannot have failed to notice how prices of a few denominations of French colonies have sky-rocketed soon after they were superseded by new designs, colors or rate changes. These catalogue changes reflect the continued demand for complete mint sets, which wholesalers can no longer fill at a few percent over face when some values become obsolete in the postoffice.

The result has occasionally been ludicrously unfair to collectors of used stamps. For example, a few years ago Guadeloupe Scott's No. 74, the 50c grey-green of 1905, suddenly went from a few cents to over a dollar, used and mint. It had been superseded by the 50c deep blue of 1922 and the 50c violet of 1925. As it was printed in millions of copies and used plentifully on foreign mail, it is still one of the commoner in used state. In our opinion it is not worth over a quarter used. But Scott continues to quote a dollar, having reduced it from \$1.50, the present mint price. In most cases the catalogue favors the collector of used stamps. In France the used copies are priced by some catalogues, such as Thiaude, somewhat higher than the mint ones, except for the very commonest postal rates, which are lower. It seems even these catalogues are not attempting to indicate real scarcity of used values but rather the extra cost to dealers of having uncommoner used values cancelled to order.

Returning to Scott's catalogue, we note among Guadeloupe pictorials (1905 on) for example, that numbers 64, 67, 68, 72, 73, 77, 86, 90 and 132 are very much undercatalogued used-- several of them are truly rare used. Likewise, many other numbers are somewhat undervalued used (60, 61, 75, 87, 88, 89, 98, 109, 111, 116, 126, 128, 130). On the other hand, some scarce

used values are properly quoted (81, 82, 94, 95, 122, 123). A few are too high (82, 124, 129). The commemoratives, semi-postals and 1943-45 issues are apparently somewhat scarce both mint and used, and the catalogue is probably about right on these. All postage dues are scarce used and considerably undercatalogued in that condition. One should note that since the advent of international air mail service, the high values of the colonial sets have become relatively much commoner used than before.

We venture to predict that the regular Free French colonial sets of 1942-46 will soon rise rapidly in market value both used and unused, now that new sets are superseding them after a relatively short period of use, in some cases only a year or two. Also the demand for them in sets will increase when some of the leading pre-war albums return to print.

R.F. *R.F.* (RF) [R.F.] RF

An Old Ghost Bobs Up.

Many of the readers of this journal noticed in "Stamps" of May 22, 1948, an article on the R F 's on U.S. Airmail Stamps, which were given much notice in the stamp papers in 1945.

Our newer members may like to know that with Nos. 22, 24 and 36 of the Philatelist, they have the full story and can laugh at the uninformed treatment of the subject in "Stamps."..... not to mention the naive assumption that these R F marks are surcharges.

The "R F" mark on U. S. airmails is strictly a cancellation.

It is a cancellation and never anything else. This has been fully established, has been in print in this journal and the Air Post Journal; surely it might be expected to be known by all.

The author in "Stamps" forestalls what any one might say against his article, because he asks for help and information. Your editor has leaped to the opportunity. We hope that we can soon number Mr. Gable among our members.



The New French Colonials.

Mr. Stone's excellent article in No. 35 may seem cryptic at one point, in the second paragraph. At his suggestion, we therefore reprint this sentence in expanded (or corrected) form:

"Although the various artists and engravers who worked on them display different styles of design and execution, there is a prevailing contrast between them and the designs of the Free French era."

The contrast with the Free French era styles is what Mr. Stone wished to emphasize. As this sentence was printed, it might seem to indicate that the Free French sort of design had been kept in use. We are glad to make the exact meaning clear.



Essay



Issued Stamp

Senegal 100 Francs Airmail.

Referring to No. 27, May-June 1946, in Mr. P. G. Almsy's article on this stamp, a comment is in order. This is from Aerophilatelists, Inc.

As the article stands, it might confuse some as to just what particular piece is the one, of which Mr. Almsy says: "This was never put into circulation as a stamp."

He refers definitely and solely to the Essay without colony name, with lengthened runway, and conspicuous shadow of the plane taking off.

The design in the original form was used for several other values, as well as for stamps of other colonies in French West Africa ("AOF").



F. & C.G. Member
(obviously bored
with the circus):

"Haven't you a nice
mint Dahomey 400 f.
airmail with you?"

THE NEW SERVICE

Want or exchange notices; members only; one or two insertions only; no charge. Those replying will please offer only what is asked for here.

Reunion No. 201 needed by H.R. Bieber, 648 N. 11th St., Reading, Penna. (Member No. 77).

French Colonials for exchange with any member who will contact me. Benjamin Wyche, Box 1960, Winston-Salem, N.C. (Member No. 299).

Sell me covers of the Type Sage 20c (in both colors), 1f, 2f, or 5f Type Sage used alone..if you have them used alone on cover. S.G. Rich, verons, N.J. (Member No. 2).

Will exchange for French stamps, good quality foreign. Rudolph Rager, 821 Woodland Ave., Valley City, N. Dak. (Member No. 304).

Exchange for stamps of France with any member, medium collector; all countries, basis Scott or de Brimont, all countries; have many duplicates. Especially want Merson Type, France Nos. 126, 132, used. Monica Mellish, 407 W. Magnolia Ave., Centralia, Wash. (Member No. 290).

I wish to buy a small French collection. Submit with lowest price. Rudolph Rager, 821 Woodland Ave., Valley City, N. Dak. (Member No. 304).

Precancelling in France includes not only the well known rollers of 1893, the 1920-22 dated Bureau Prints and the later semicircle Bureau Prints-- but the newspaper headings printed over stamps from 1869 on.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

March 15 to April 30, 1948

NEW MEMBERS: Welcome ---

- 315 Davenport, H. Thomas, 2000 East Madison St., Philadelphia 34, Pa. (France and Colonies)
- 316 Fernald, Alan R., 17 Washington Square So., New York 12, N.Y. (France, Canada)
- 317 Grimley, Roy J., 254 Prospect St., Ridgewood, New Jersey (U.S., Switzerland, France)
- 318 Mortlock, Derek G., Box 371, Arabian American Oil Co., Dhahran, Saudi Arabia (France, Colonies, 1849-1875).
- 319 Novotny, Edward, Jr., 4371 West 25th Place, Chicago 23, Ill. (French Colonies, especially St. Pierre-Miquelon).
- 320 Portmess, R.C., P.O. Box 115, Clayton, Ga. (France & Colonies, etc.)

APPLICATIONS PENDING:

- Baughman, R.W., 155 East 51 St., Long Beach 5, Calif.
- Gilbert, Raymond H., 105 Maple Ave., Glenbrook, Conn.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS: (Others please notify your Secretary if you have moved).

- 268 Burd, E.G., to 3715 North Monroe St., Tacoma 7, Wash.
- 71 Metzger, Harold M., to R.D. 8, Box 640, Tampa 4, Florida.
- 204 Seed, Allen H., Jr., 932 Northwestern Bank Bldg., Minneapolis 2, Minn.
- 264 Voos, Daniel W., to c/o Philatelic Literature, P.O. Box 300, Canajoharie, N.Y.
- 178 Weber, Adolph H., to 110 Ardmore Road, Berkeley 7, Calif. (Change of postal zone number, 7 in place of 8).

FOUND:

- 294 Miroff, M.M. Address: 3641 Barry Avenue, Los Angeles 34, Calif.

RESIGNATIONS ACCEPTED:

- 253 Kuklinski, Richard, Chicago, Ill.
- 245 Stone, Marshall H., Chicago, Ill.

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS (previous listings wrong)

- 286 Ness, Ole, 3818 Mound View Ave., North Hollywood, Calif.
- 304 Rager, Rudolph R., 821 Woodland Ave., Valley City, N.Dak.

DUES: Is your number on this list of the ones who still have not attended to paying for this year?

1	5	6	30	66	72	80	89	94	95
96	97	110	120	127	150	154	156	163	164
166	181	186	187	190	192	198	207	208	209
210	215	218	230	231	234	238	241	242	250
251	252	255	258	260	261	263	268	270	274
275									

May we hear from you by check or postal note?
"Do it now, before you forget."

HELP WANTED:

The supplementary pages of Numeral Cancellations have been very popular with some of our newer members. The supply has given out on some (in fact, many) of the earlier pages. Orders for back issues have to be filled without a full file of cancellation sheets.

Are there are members who have these sheets, who either are not interested in the stamps on

which they are found, or who have copies of the books from which the list is compiled?

Sheets needed: Pages 2, 8, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 23.

Please send the Secretary a postal card.
Postage will be forwarded to you.

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP.



France 5 Francs Empire

Compiled by S.G. Rich

Are there really two types of the 5 francs 1869? Is there really a separate variety, in which the "5" and "F" are in blue? Or is the statement in Lesgor's catalog about the "slight variations" a sufficient statement?

Scott lists two types. German catalogs list three.

Your editor has seen, in collections lately exhibited, a fair number of the 5f stamps.

The conspicuous facts that emerge from the material seen, are:

1. The height and width of "5" and "F" vary continuously and smoothly, from 3 2/3 mm. up to 4 1/3 mm., with the majority of copies close to 4 mm. You can make up a continuous series which shows heights 3 2/3 mm., 3.8, 3.9, 4 mm. even, 4.1, 4.2 and 4 1/3 mm.

2. The "5" comes, in all variations of the height, with flat top and with curved top.

3. In at least several variations of height the 5 comes with short top or flag as well as with long flag. The short flag appears curved rather than straight. Short flag reaches only to above inner edge of lower loop; long flag to above outer edge of lower loop.

4. No work on plating the varieties of "5" has been published. But pictures of multiples in magazines and auction catalogs show short and long flags set-tenant.

5. Blue printing of "5" and "F", in contrast to the usual violet color, exists. No experiment has yet been reported to determine if this is a fade. Exposure of a damaged copy of the regular violet print, to sunlight for 60 days, would do the trick: part of the "5" and "F" protected by black paper from light and the rest exposed, can settle the matter.

We don't hope to get the Scott Catalog to do anything about this. "Our Mr. Luff" wrote what is at present the listing, said Hugh Clark some years back; therefore, for him "the listing as it now stands" was sacred, unchangeable. Maybe the new management will work with facts instead of retaining and old inadequate statement. (One member assures us that the present confusion is from a period before Mr. Luff wrote the catalog at all).

The First Commemoratives.

Mr. P.H. Thorp, of Netcong, N.J., well known student of and dealer in U.S. envelopes, assures your editor that the 1876 Centennial Envelope of the U.S. was issued May 10, 1876. This is three days before the earliest exact date known for a Type Sage stamp.

Just the same, the Type Sage still are the first commemorative adhesives.