

France & Colonies Philatelist



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The "France Toujours" Issue of French India

Translated from L'Officiel de la Philatelie,
June 15, 1946



Much has been written on the "Free French" stamps. But there is one issue which all the catalogs, and in particular that of Yvert & Tellier-Champion, do not mention despite its unquestionably official origin. (Scott mentions this issue only in a note after No. 209 in the 1949 and 1950 catalogs--Editor, F. & C. Phil). By courtesy of one of our correspondents, we now are able to give all exact information, about these stamps. The surcharging of them marks the faith of a handful of French people in the future of our eternal France.

The postal administration of French India, at the request of the Minister for Colonies, has had printed a report of the surcharged issues which appeared in the years 1941, 1942 and 1943. From this report, which is in our possession, we have taken the section about these "France Toujours" stamps. (Section B of the report).

STAMPS WITH SURCHARGE "FRANCE TOUJOURS" (One issue only.)

By government order of March 6, 1943, there was approved the surcharge "France Toujours" on the following stamps of the older issues of French India:

a). Ordinary stamps:

- 200 stamps of 2 caches
- 200 stamps of 3 caches
- 200 stamps of 6 caches
- 200 stamps of 12 caches
- 200 stamps of 15 caches
- 200 stamps of 18 caches (1)
- 200 stamps of 20 caches
- 200 stamps of 1 fanon
- 200 stamps of 1 fanon 2 caches (2)
- 200 stamps of 1 fanon 6 caches
- 200 stamps of 1 fanon 12 caches
- 200 stamps of 1 fanon 16 caches

200 stamps of 2 fanons 12 caches
 200 stamps of 6 fanons 6 caches
 200 stamps of 1 roupie.
 200 stamps of 2 roupies.
 200 stamps of 3 roupies.
 200 stamps of 5 roupies.

b). Stamps of the 1937 International Exposition:

200 stamps of 8 caches
 200 stamps of 12 caches
 200 stamps of 16 caches
 200 stamps of 1 fanon 12 caches
 200 stamps of 2 fanons 12 caches

c). Stamps of the New York 1939 Exposition.

200 stamps of 1 fanon 12 caches
 200 stamps of 2 fanons 12 caches

Pondichery, February 29, 1944

Chief of the Postal Service

F. ANCLA.

Seen and certified as correct.

Pondichery, May 24, 1945,

The Governor of French Establishments in India,
 Signature and seal.

(1) Really there were two stamps of 18 caches surcharged, 100 copies only of each: 18 caches red and bright red and 18 caches on 30 centimes red and black.

The red surcharge on the 18 caches was practically invisible on this red stamp: only 100 copies were thus overprinted. To complete the 200 copies, the 18 caches on 30c was used. Thus the set includes 27 stamps instead of the 26 mentioned in the notice.

(2) The 1 fanon 3 caches is really meant.

The surcharge, which we picture at the head of this article, was applied in red on 21 stamps, but in blue on the following 6:

Ordinary stamp: 1 fanon

Exposition of 1937: 8 caches

16 caches

1 fanon 12 caches

New York Exposition: 1 fanon 12 caches
 (Only five stamps are listed thus in the original article, which gives them exactly as here translated.--Editor, F. & C. Phil.)

No complete unused set exists. Collectors who had the good luck to be able to secure the "France Toujours" stamps, hastened to have them cancelled on a cover so as to guarantee their authenticity by the dated postmark. Unused stamps are few in number, and certain values can not be priced in that state.

We believe that we can state that the "France Toujours" series in one of the rarest in a collection of France and Colonies. No doubt, if some day the complete set, on cover, is put on public sale, it will go for over a half million francs. (About \$4,800.00 at the exchange when this article was published.--Editor, F. & C. Phil.)

(Article initialled R.M.D.; notes
 1 and 2 initialled N.D.L.R.; no
 other by-lines at all)



The pictorial postmarks of the 1947 Air Week and 1947 Philatelic Exhibition at Nice.

Timbre à la Grenouille
 (Frog Stamp)

Said to be unique among stamps by "topical" fans who collect Animals, this French Guiana due stamp (the whole series) stands alone as figuring a frog in the design.

(Picture by courtesy of the S.P.A. Journal)



Book Review.

Retouches et défauts de clichés des timbres de France 1849-1950. By André Suarnet. 106 pp., paper; 1950; Editions Gallian, Provins, (Seine-et-Marne), France. 175 francs (\$1.00).

This recent work has one conspicuous merit. It assembles in one place practically all the information needed for collecting plate flaws and plate repairs on French stamps. Previous works have been limited largely to the Ceres and Empire issues; this covers everything.

However, the book is mistitled. Varieties such as defective prints, bisects, tete-beches, and "oversize stamp" on the 10c Empire perforated, which certainly are not flaws or repairs, of clichés or anything else with which to print a stamp, are included. "Printed on back", also "Offset on back" find places in the issues of 1876-1900 as Mr. Suarnet lists them.

The book is "very uneven." On some issues it is a glorious job; on others it hardly even scratches the surface. In particular, critical evaluation and coordination of the varieties of various chroniclers or discoverers, seem to be needed. The same variety is listed twice, under two names, several times in the book.....more often in the 20th Century portion.

Our member, Mr. Ernest L. Rothschild, whose loan of his copy for this review deserves our special thanks, has this to say:

"The author does not recognize all those inking varieties such as 'white patches,' etc., which are offered by some of our finest dealers at one to three dollars (2 cent items)..... It lists varieties with prices, without quoting the price of the normal stamp. If one has no French catalog of last year, it is hard to judge how rare or common a variety is..... The material is not very well organized. You have to search for an illustration, and it is not always evident if a number refers to an illustration, and Yvert number, or what else."

Is the information reliable?

Your reviewer, sampling it by that about the Sage issue which he collects, about the Blanc-Mouchon-Merson issue on which he is working in the Kohl Handbook translation, and checking with what stamps he has of this latter, finds that Mr. Suarnet has assembled what is the accepted "standard" information. You won't be led wrong or astray by Mr. Suarnet, because he does not, anywhere, add in new facts. But you will have just the "regular" information and no more.

Mr. Suarnet also calls an ink blot by various names, such as "strawberry" or "bomb", so that it is not always clear just what the variety or flaw really is. In this he follows the accepted names for particular varieties on particular stamps among collectors in France.

Don't be repelled by the shortcomings which are mentioned. It's a useful book when you have learned your way around in it.

---- S.G.R.

FRANCE'S 500 FRS. U.P.U. AND 1000 FRS. AIR MAILS

By H. D. S. Haverbeck

We confine ourselves to only two of the recent French air post stamps, the 500 franc Universal Postal Union 12th Congress Commemorative, and the 1,000 franc issued in December, 1949. We do this for several reasons; both are fine examples of the engraver's art, and are a new departure in plate form, in addition, they arouse the feelings of a philatelic connoisseur.

The 500 franc stamp commemorating the 12th Congress of the Universal Postal Union which convened in Paris, was issued May 7, 1947. It was line engraved, printed on white wove paper and is perforated 13. The design and the engraving is by the famous artist, Pierre Gandon. The vignette shows a dove with spread wings hovering over the Ile de la Cité, the island in the river Seine which is the heart of Paris. The plate from which these stamps were printed is arranged in a manner which is new. The plate consists of two vertical columns of five stamps separated by a gutter whose width is 30 mm. between the stamps and 26 mm. between the vertical perforations. The spacing between the stamps in the vertical columns varies. Between the first and second it is $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm., between second and third 4 mm., between third and fourth $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm., and between fourth and fifth 4 mm. This vertical spacing is important to note because it unwittingly makes it impossible for more than one stamp in each column to be perfectly centered. At the bottom left corner of the sheet is the sheet serial number, applied by a numbering machine. In the center of the bottom gutter margin appears another number, the significance of which is obscure. On the sheet examined, it appeared as "IN 1" and is impressed by typography.

The perforation method used in separating these stamps is also an innovation. It appears to be a guillotine perforation gauging $13\frac{1}{2}$. It was applied in one operation and was so arranged to accommodate six stamps, thus leaving a fully perforated bottom margin. The constant measurements of this perforation are 52 mm. wide and 40 mm. high. Thus it can be seen that with the irregular spacing of the subjects on the plate, it is impossible to obtain perfect centering of more than one stamp in each column or a total of two stamps on each sheet.

The design and engraving are one of the finest examples of the work of Gandon. The combination of the fine engraved lines and the etched foliage makes a very pleasing and striking work of art.

The 1,000 franc air post stamp issued on December 13, 1949, is another exceptionally beautiful work of art. It is the work of Decaris and Combéthoe. The design consists of an impressionistic morning scene over the Ile de la Cité, Paris, framed with wings and arabesques. The frame is also symbolical of the age of the city of Paris inasmuch as it incorporates a conventionalized ancient sailing vessel with the wings of modern air transport; and in the bottom of the frame the motto of Paris, "Fluctuat nec Mergitur" is repeated twice.

This stamp is line engraved, printed in two colors on bluish, handmade granite paper. The perforation gauges $13\frac{1}{2}$. The format of the sheets is the same as with the 500 franc U.P.U. stamp even to the width of the gutter and the measurement of the

guillotine perforation. However, the spacing between the vertical stamps in column is, in this case, similar throughout, namely, 4 mm. Consequently, the centering comes uniform in the sheet.

The top and bottom margins bear impressions of concentric arcs and in the upper and lower right margins can be seen position lines. The serial number of the sheet appears in the lower left corner, while in the lower right corner appears the date December 12, 1949, expressed as "12/12/49." In the center gutter of the lower margin appears the typographed numbers, in this case, observed as "IN 5."

For these 100 stamps, the guillotine perforating device has been modified in that it does not perforate across the central gutter as is the case with the 500 franc U.P.U. stamps discussed first.

These 1000 frs. stamps are printed in two operations, one plate bearing the vignette and one the frame. The color used for the vignette is a violet black, while the frame is printed in deep olive black. It is impossible to tell from the examination of the stamps in which sequence the printing occurred. But the techniques of engraving employed in the frame and the vignette are so different as to afford a very pleasing contrast.

The engraving of the vignette is almost entirely made up of ruled lines. The depth of cut has been controlled in such a manner as to very closely approximate a fine etching, and, it is my belief that the engraved lines have been strengthened by etching. The variations in depth of line impart the effect of viewing the scene through an early morning mist.

A comparison of the two stamps will point out the differences between the techniques of Gandon and Decaris. Gandon's work shows the effect of strong light, as well as a great contrast between light and dark, while Decaris favors the technique of graduated shadows to heighten engraved lines, which seems just as effective in bringing out the subject as the use of contrast.



Reprinted from our March-April 1947 number
by request of some members.

Covers with Stamps Affixed on Both Sides

Our member, Mr. E. F. Keyes, poses a problem: How to mount covers which have stamps on both sides or interesting postal markings on the back, so that both sides may be seen. His problem arises from covers of the French Colonies during World War II. This problem faces almost every one who collects covers, at some time.

The plan that seems to work best, in most cases, is to cut a window in the album page. The window needs to be even and rectangular -- the corners should be rounded off to prevent start of tearing at those points. The window is best only large enough to show what you want, on the back of the cover. The cover is mounted directly over the window.

Provided your pages are of good heavy stock, like Scott's Douglas or Ne Plus Ultra, no more need be done. If you use lighter pages, you may have to reinforce the page around the window.

Provided a cover is badly frayed at several edges, it may be best to open up these edges, to lay out the cover as a large flat piece, and to mount it alone on an entire page. In such a case, good sense indicates reinforcing (on the inside) the one fold which is not slit apart.

Some few collectors have devised means for mounting covers, either in a transparent holder or "au naturel", so that the left end only is fastened down, by a strong hinge on which the piece may be swung to see the back.

On mounting over a window, it is probably the safest plan to use art corners, perhaps cutting off their bases so they do not lap within the window, and putting a thin card within the cover to make it rigid enough to stay in place. When a cover is laid out flat, twelve to fifteen of the least peeling stamp hinges, five along the top and the rest spread out along the others of the edges, will usually hold it safely.

Fontainebleau Stamp

The official notice regarding the release of the "Fontainebleau" commemorative of France is now to hand, and, as reported in Stamp Mirror, dated January 13. Reprint in sheets of 50 from a design by Decaris.



12 Fr. bistre: Main Facade

Favourite residence of the Emperor Napoleon, Fontainebleau Castle has had a chequered history. It was originally built by Francois I who demolished the original (Feudal) structure, and enlisted the chief artists of the Renaissance for the decorations. Its final aspect together with the plan of the gardens, was created by Henri IV, whilst Louis XIV used it as his autumn residence.

The castle was little damaged by the Revolution, restored by Napoleon and was the scene of his abdication and farewell. With its many priceless art treasures and variety of decoration it forms a true museum of French Art.

THE NEW SERVICE

(We continue this name although this service has been running for over four years)

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

Wanted: Covers of France and/or the French Colonies with military postmarks dated 1942 to 1945, whether with or without stamps. E. E. Keys, 14742 Center Ave., Harvey, Ill. (Member 246)

Wanted: Paris Star Cancellations with numbers especiall 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34. Please offer with price. W. H. Schilling Jr., 722 2nd Ave South, Minneapolis 2, Minn. (Member 29)

Wanted: Letters-in-lozenge cancellations on France 19th Century. Price each item, please. C. Bretagne, Box 67, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. (Member 357)

Have you stamps by Pierre Gandon? Send me a postal card with Scott numbers and years of issue. Elmer Hampson, 3 Hillside Ave., Nutley 10, N.J. (Member No. 450)

Still wanted: Formula card with the 20c rate paid by a single 20c Type Sage stamp. S. G. Rich Verona, N.J. (Member 2).

SECRETARY'S REPORT

November 15, 1950 through January 31, 1951.

NEW MEMBERS: Welcome:---

- 456 Eastman, Lester L., 54 Woodruff Ave., Brooklyn 26, N.Y. (No specialty stated)
- 457 Mitchell, Harrison D., 4903 Deal Drive S.E., Washington 20, D.C. (France, Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana)
- 458 Muhlenheim, Mrs. Germaine, 617 Vone St., Chattanooga, Tenn. (France, Colonies, and several countries of Europe)
- 459 Willis, Mrs. John T., Forestburg, Texas. (No specialty stated)
- 460 Gannett, Taylor W., 901 North Wayne St., Arlington 1, Va. (France, 19th and 20th Centuries)
- 461 Naudet, Louis C., 65 Nassau St., New York 7, N.Y. (Wholesale dealer, France & Cols.)
- 462 Robbins, Miss Elsie, 3330 North Bouvier St., Philadelphia 40, Pa. (No specialty stated)
- 463 Robert, Miss Josephine, 24 Romaine Avenue, Jersey City 6, N.J. (Oceania)
- 464 Tilg, George F., 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N.Y. (No specialty stated)

RESIGNATIONS ACCEPTED:

- 70 Tisserent, George, Ozone Park 16, L.I., N.Y.
- 352 Reilly, Frank F., Hempstead, L.I., N.Y.
- 115 Speculand, Joseph, Woodside, L.I., N.Y.

DECEASED:

- 80 Hall, Lewis W., Boston, Mass.
- 415 Gentner, August, South River, N.J.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

- 39 Balme, Joseph P., to 18 York Road, Willow Grove, Penna.
- 93 Baudry, Paul, to 47 East 87 St., New York 28, N.Y.
- 287 Bond, William H., to P.O. Box 565, Lafayette, Louisiana.
- 55 Maurer, Xavier, to R.D. 2, Pine Bush, N.Y.
- 404 Schauer, V.E., to 926 Spaight St., Madison, Wis.
- 301 Simon, Bernard P.C., to 415 South Avenue, Toledo 9, Ohio
- 53 Thieffels, Rev. Henry P., to 646 Monroe St., Detroit 26, Mich.
- 36 Thomas, Bernard, to 110 Valley Road, Brookmont, Maryland.

LOST:

- 413 Rafferty, Lt. John J., Jr.: mail returned as undeliverable, from last known address, 728 Adams St., Port Townsend, Wash.

THANK YOU for your kind and thoughtful holiday greetings, received from the Misses Burlingame and Clemenson, and the Messrs. Boutrelle, Fernald, Lake, Mary, Queyroy, Rothschild, Rich, Schloss, Wood and Young. A belated but sincere New Year wish is extended to all the membership.

DUES: A reminder---If you have not already received your 1951 card! Bills for the current year were included with Philatelist No. 54. Your prompt attention will be very much appreciated, and will ensure your membership for 1951 and subscription for the F. & C.P. Please make checks to the order of "France and Colonies Group" (Postal notes should be left blank), and mail to Mrs. Helen A. Stringham, Secretary, 34 Minerva Ave., Menasquan, New Jersey.