

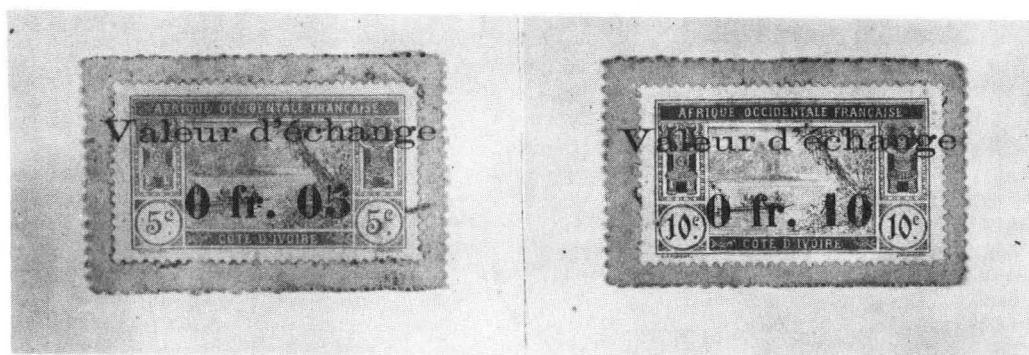
# France & Colonies Philatelist



Published bi-monthly by the France and Colonies Group

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## THE IVORY COAST 1919-20 EMERGENCY CURRENCY,

### --- MADE FROM STAMPS

We are indebted to our member, Mr. Leon Arnal, for the two illustrations herewith, photos that he had made of two items which belonged to Mr. Jean E. Castaignt, also one of our members, and which are now Mr. Arnal's. These Ivory - Coast items, though not expensive, are far from being common.

In late 1919 and early 1920 a scarcity, quite acute, of small change existed in this colony.

The authorities did what had been done some twenty years earlier in Rhodesia, for a similar shortage. They affixed postage stamps to cards to serve as money. But in this case, they were careful to surcharge them after affixing, thus avoiding any difficulties that might arise from later use of these stamps for postage.

There were three values: 5c, 10c and 25c.

The emergency currency was in use for a few weeks, and then withdrawn, presumably when the needed supply of small change arrived from some other colony or from Metropolitan France.

Very little has been written on these. Kohl Handbook, Vol. 2 page 342, and Scott's Monthly Journal, March 1926, are the only listed loci.

### Postage Stamps Designed by Mr. Decaris

By M. Respaud

Secretary-Adjoint of the Federation of Philatelic Societies of France

Translated by John Weare from a letter to him

You pointed out that the collectors of these stamps were surprised that on the airmail of 1000 francs could be seen a number of bridges spanning the Seine which did not conform to the reality. This stamp, like others of the series, (the 1949-1950 air mails) shows anomalies which have already been criticized by collectors in France.

100 franc stamp: Lille -- There are seen a certain number of monuments standing out from a mass of ruins, whereas there had been no particular destruction in that part of the city. The designer of the stamp, Decaris, replied that it was a stylization in which the important monuments of Lille were set out in relief, and in order to do that, he has to suppress a good deal of the surroundings of these monuments.

300 franc stamp: Lyon -- The two rivers, the Saone and the Rhone, have a size out of all proportion to the reality in the stamp. For truth they should be diminished by about two thirds of their apparent width to be in proportion to the tongue of land which separates them. The same reply as for Lille was had from Mr. Decaris.

1000 franc stamp: Paris -- Not only is the number of bridges inexact, but in addition the architectural monuments have been drawn out of proportion in order to give them more importance in the picture. Particularly, the dome of the Institute is nowhere near so tall as in the picture.

The choice of the tints for these stamps, lack-gray or blue-gray, do not seem at all a happy selection. Decaris, who recommended their adoption made the choice because he wanted to represent Paris in autumn. It happens to be quite true that Paris at that time of year is usually covered by a light mist which does give a gray-violet appearance to the distance.

Decaris has been in the habit of showing some rather charming fantasies in his designing. Did he not show, on the Stamp Day stamp of 1950 (No. B248 of Scott) a postman with the sun shining on his left shoulder while rain fell on his right one? He thus wished to show that the postman covered his route in any kind of weather.

### MEMBERS' APPEALS

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: Occupation stamps of Alsace-Lorraine 1870-71; interested in cancellations. Paul Baudry, 47 East 87 St., New York 28, N.Y. (Member 93)

The elusive early dated copies of 40c Type Sage, are still wanted, on or off cover. No. 74 (T-1) earlier than Oct 1878; No. 95 earlier than Nov. 15 1882 wanted. Price each item, please. S. G. Rich, Verona, N.J. (Member 2)

Have extensive M & U France for exchange to improve my French collection. Write; state your wants; will reply. Even trade, Scott 1952 values. Col. V. N. Scott, 1530 Hermosa Ave., Hermosa Beach, Calif. (Member 480)

### The History behind the First French Stamp

By Gustav Wittenberg.

Since England had introduced the uniform postage rate and the use of the stamp in 1840, similar movements in France existed, working for a similar form of the French postal system. But King Louis Philippe, his premier Guizot, and the government as a whole, were dead set against any change.

For one thing, they feared the diminished revenues that were bound to occur during the first years of a uniform low postal rate. Moreover, they had the privilege of a free franking system, which they abused shamelessly, cheating the country of hundreds of thousands of francs each year. Postal free franking was intended for official mail. But the aristocracy, as the ruling class, and the high officials, also used it for their own and their friends' private mail -- even their grocers and tailors took advantage of it. They shipped anything from a letter to a couple of horses by mail, free.

The proposed reforms called for a uniform postage rate for France, Corsica and Algeria; for heavy fines for misuse of postal franking; for faster service, simplified handling, and the use of adhesive stamps.

Such improvements could be realized, however, after the removal of the king and the advent of the Second Republic. Thus it happens that in France, it took a full-fledged revolution, with all its trimmings of street fights, barricades, and blood and tears, to produce the first postage stamp.

### F. & G. GROUP WINNERS AT THE EXSPA SHOW.

Of the major trophies at the Exspa show held in New York in August for the S.P.A. convention, no less than FIVE were taken by Group members -- though not all with French Countries' exhibits.

Highest win was by a new member, Dr. William Katz, taking the Best 20th Century trophy, that donated by Essex Stamp Club, with his showing of Sarre.

Your editor, S. G. Rich, took the Best in Slavic Language Countries trophy, donated by the Polonus Philatelic Society, for his Early Poland.

Your president, Louise Clemenson, took the trophy for the Best Exhibit by a Woman, which the Women's Philatelic Society of New York gave, for her showing of Reunion. With the heavy showing by the ladies, over 40% of the exhibits in the show, this is a really high prize.

Our own trophy for Best France or Colonies, was won by Charles Neidorf with his Tour Hassan issues of French Morocco -- on which the judges, not Group members, remarked that it was the most excellent showing of genuine research in the whole show.

The trophy for Best Foreign Essays & Proofs, furnished graciously by Chester A. Smeltzer, was taken by our member John J. Britt, with Airmail Essays and Proofs, including many from French countries.

The judges were none of them members of the Group. We want to emphasize this -- 100% outside judges gave our members 5 of the 18 trophies.

First award winners among us included Hermann Schloss; second award winners Ben Reeves, Mrs. Marcelle Hallis and your editor; and third award winners Agnes Burlingame.

### Our New Officers

At the annual meeting, May 6, 1952, officers to serve until May 1953 were elected:

President, Louise Clemencon  
Vice-President, Edmond Queyroy  
Treasurer, Dr. Robert L. Wood  
Recording Secretary, Charles Neidorf  
Corresponding Secretary,

Charles Bretagne  
Directors: Alan R. Fernald  
 Gustave Wittenberg  
 Benoni Bureau  
 Stephen G. Rich

President Clemencon appointed:

Editor, Stephen G. Rich  
Membership Committee: Adrien Boutrelle,  
 E. Queyroy, S.G. Rich.

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### A BORDEAUX ISSUE DISCOVERY IN 1952.

Our member, Mr. Ernest L. Rothschild, reports acquiring an earlier date of use than hitherto known for the Bordeaux 20c Type 2 (Report 2). On a cover front of this stamp, which he got from Dr. Carroll Chase, the postmark shows date of Dec. 10 70, at Fleurance (Gers). The previously known earliest date for this stamp is Dec. 11, 1870. There is no other marking on the item to corroborate this date, not even a date in ms., by the sender or recipient.

Mr. Rothschild points out that there is the possibility that the postmaster at Fleurance, in opening his office for the day, might have not attended to changing the date slug. Knowing as we do the precision demanded of the civil servants in France, it seems like importing the go-as-you-please happy-go-lucky ways of the older days in American postal service, to accept this as likely. (This last comment is by the editor, not by Mr. Rothschild).

If a picture of this piece would interest any of the readers, a letter or postal card to the editor might get it included in a future number of this journal.

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### Book Review

Monographie der Französischen Briefmarke: Bd. I (Forerunner to the Empire). By Wm. Hofinger. Luxembourg and Düsseldorf, Burg & Rein, 1949; 85 pp., plus 8 color plates and 15 postmark charts.

If you prefer to read German, this book, the contemporary of Kremer's early sections of his "French Philatelic Facts" will do the same job for you. In fact, it reads almost as if it were a Germanized version, translated and in part rearranged, of that series. Covering Second Republic and Presidency issues only, plus the marks on stampless covers back to days ahead of the Revolution, this book offers just one help beyond Kremer, or beyond the Kohl Handbook. The aid is the eight color plates, which serve to avoid errors in calling a stamp by a wrong and more valuable shade name.

As it is properly indexed, and much of the information is in tabular form, Mr. Hofinger's book may be very convenient for those who read German fluently.

But this work is not the great and vista-opening work that the uncritical reviewers in British stamp journals call it, or that German reviewers, blissfully unaware of what has been published this side of the ocean, have believed it is. It is an able compilation and coordination of information already in print, done by a man who knows the stamps in question.

S.G.R.



### The Lesgor Contest

To be held at Group Meeting, Jan. 6, 1953

Chairman Charles Neidorf of the committee to set up rules for this year's Lesgor Contest, states that the 1952-53 contest will be governed by the same conditions as for the First Lesgor Contest and will be actually held on Jan. 6, 1953.

No limit to size of collection or number of the pages in the entry is set.

Competitors may bring their material on Jan. 6, or may send it. Entries sent in should go to Mr. Charles Neidorf, care of The Collectors Club, 22 East 35 St., New York 16, N.Y. Be sure that you send in ample time.

Mr. Neidorf will arrange for returning exhibits promptly, and properly packed to avoid damage.

This competition is limited to 20th Century material, of France or any French Colony, Office Abroad, or Mandate or Protectorate.

The collections entered must be entirely new, and must not have been exhibited previously to the Group.

The prizes will be philatelic material, chosen so that each item is suitable for the interests of the winner thereof.

The Board of Judges will consist on persons not members of the Group, chosen for their knowledge and experience.

The judging basis is:

Original study and research...	60
Presentation.....	30
Value and rarity.....	10
Total points possible....	100

If enough exhibits are received, two sections, "One Stamp" and "One Issue" will be set up, each with its awards. If there are six or more competing entries in the contest or in each section, there will be three awards; if only four, there will be two awards; if less than four, only one award.

The entries are to be placed in the wall frames of the Collectors Club meeting room if possible, for the judges and the members present to look at them.

Our final word: have no inhibitions about your entry and its possible shortcomings. Please get a postal card notification to Mr. Neidorf that you will show, as soon as practicable. Send it to Charles Neidorf, 127 Cannon St., New York 2, N.Y.--- but be sure to send the actual exhibit, the package, to him at The Collectors Club, 22 East 35 St., New York 16, N.Y. Send it early, as postal service cannot be counted on to meet any date in delivering.

Editor's Note: You get this notice of the contest very late, through my fault only. Let that not deter you from entering, even "at the eleventh hour."



PHILA - TELLING

The summer recess in meetings gives a chance, to replace the usual news items in this column by an article: the rarities among the stamps of France, presented in order of their decreasing rarity. First I mention Scott No. 2, the 15c green tete-beche. Of this only one is yet known to exist. It is in a block of four on cover, in very poor condition. Next rarest is #8, the one franc vermilion tete-beche. One mint block of four is now owned by Mr. Champion in Paris. A less desirable cancelled block, is in an American collection. In this one franc is another tete-beche, the dull vermilion, orange red color, it is known in a horizontal strip of three, used, and also in poor condition. The next rarities are in my opinion, the #20 and 21, the 80c. and 1 fr. tete-beche mint block, used they are obtainable. The pièce de résistance of all rarities was void before its creation #10 tete-beche, this can be seen in an engraving plate in the collection of the "Paris Postal Museum". Shortly before this plate was to serve, it was void by the unexpected coup-d'Etat of Napoléon the Third. "There is a striking example of the impact of history", it deprived collectors of a fine philatelic rarity. Next in line, I believe that #43 the 20 centime Bordeaux, type I, and the #44, the 20 centime Bordeaux, type II, the ultramarine shade are rather difficult to find. Among these classic rarities may be included #J 8 of the postage due issues, in ultramarine, Mint or used, it is a gem. When the problem of rarities is debated, collectors will mention a stamp that they believe is truly a hard one to find in perfect condition, I refer to Scott #37 and mint. This stamp to my knowledge is rather more expensive than rare. One or more will be found, "mint & very fine", in two out of three Paris auctions. Among the modern stamps only 2 need be mentioned and classified as rare items. Eliminating the Air Mail, Ile de France #C3, C4 these really were overprinted. They have a high catalogue value, yet they are found in many New York auctions. The two I have in mind are: #254 the 20 franc Pont du Gard, perforation 11, the (Chaudron Clair) color. And the #251A, the 10 franc La Rochelle, the deep ultramarine color. I have detailed several of the rarities of the stamps of France. I hope you will enjoy these few lines, comments are always welcome in lieu of criticism, my aim is to serve and inform the members of the F&CG. In the year 2000, you will find many items now in your collection offered as great rarities, it is simply a matter of an indefinite period of time. So I'll say à bientôt

C.B.

New French Country.

Laos, now a separate stamp issuing unit, within Indo-China, has issued the Air Mail stamps for the usual rates, in the design here shown.

It's your editor's fault and all blame is too little. Everything was set to get this number out between the end of Exspa show in August and your editor's trip down east in September. But it didn't get done then. All fall, day by day, the office time has had to go to whatever might seem each day the most urgent matter not to lay over even another day.

But finally, after Dec. 1, we get this "July and August" number into press. That is why the Secretary's Report to Nov. 15 is in, this time.

If possible, we'll get caught up fully, with the next two numbers and the Jan-Feb. 1953 all in your hands before end of February 1953.

S.G.R.

\* SECRETARY'S REPORT \*

June 15 to November 15 1952

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NEW MEMBERS, WELCOME:

- 504 Elkins, Anna, 880 E 35th. Street Brooklyn New York. France Semi-Postals.
- 505 Grant, H.W. 991 Wadsworth Drive, North-West Atlanta 1, Ga. France only.
- 506 Libman, C.R. 6706 N. 15th St. Philadelphia Pa. France & Colonies.
- 507 Scott, A.M. 62 Lenwood St. Charleston, S.C. 19th. century Cancellations. France.
- 508 Goodman I.S. P.O. Box 133, Bloomfield, N.J. France.
- 509 Cords, Albert L. 922 North Fourth street, Milwaukee 3, Wis. Morocco & Local Issues
- 510 Daniele, Imeda, 376 Dulude Ave. Woonsocket, R.I. France & Colonies.
- 511 Martens, Céclie, 171 Phillips Street, Woonsocket, R.I. France & Colonies.
- 512 Hushebeck, H.R. Mrs. 105B Martin---Lane, Monroe Park, Wilmington, Del. Inini.
- 513 Simard, Gustave, Garneau Jct. 127, Quebec, Canada. General.
- 514 Sheindelman, Richard L. 115 Shoreham Way, Merrick L.I. N.Y. France & Colonies.
- 515 Josephson, Paul R. 1402 N. Kedzie Avenue, Chicago Ill. France & General
- 516 Braun, Lev. Dr. 50 Central Park West, New York 23, N.Y. France & Colonies.
- 517 Katz, Wm. A. MD. 140-30 Ash Avenue, Flushing, L.I. N.Y. Sarre
- 518 Touret, Francis A. Pittsfield National Bk. Pittsfield, Mass. France & Colonies.
- 519 Lavender, Gilbert, 4707 N. Springfield Av. Chicago 25, Ill. France & French Africa.
- 520 Ohlrogge, Wm. F. 60 Jackson Street, New Rochelle, N.Y. France.
- 521 Hoover, Norman R. 39 Union Sq. West, New York 3, N.Y. France.
- 522 Peloquin, Raymond H. 205 Gaulin Ave. Woonsocket, R.I. General.

RESIGNATION RECEIVED:

- 450 Hampson, Elmer, 3 Hillside Ave. Nutley, N.J.

DECEASED:

- 391 Weare, John, 457 West 57th. St. New York. New York.

CHANGE OF ADDRESSES:

- 1 Lesgor, Raoul to Holmes, New York.....
- 114 Meyer, Charles E. to 32 Depot St. Verona, New Jersey.
- 265 Sontheimer, Henry to 252 So. Lasky Drive, Beverly Hills, California.

Respectfully Submitted  
Charles J. Bretagne  
Secretary.