

France & Colonies Philatelist



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Martinique Issues a Semi-Official Pictorial Card to Celebrate the Rebirth of Saint Pierre, after the 1902 Volcano Disaster. Story on page 19. Photo and story by courtesy of Ralph Holtsizer

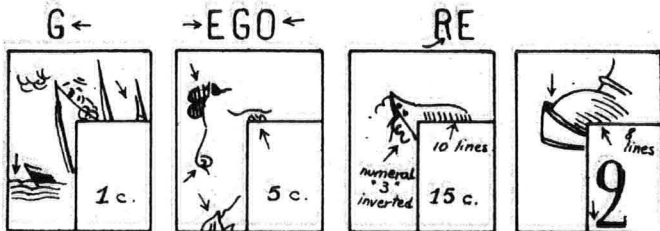
At the request of members, we reprint from 1945 and 1947 two articles which may help in avoiding being supplied with the wrong stamp or something that is not a stamp.

Forgeries of Diego Suarez 1890 and 1891

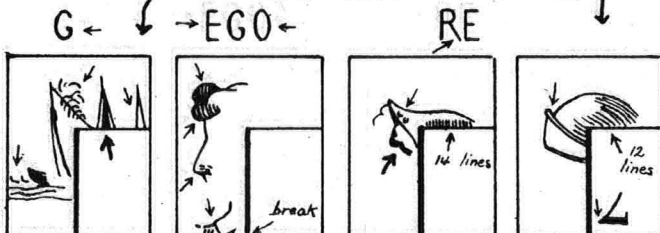
by Dr. A.J.C. Vaurie.

1890 - lithographed locally - the color of the ink is more gray than black. In the originals the frame lines around the numeral are of

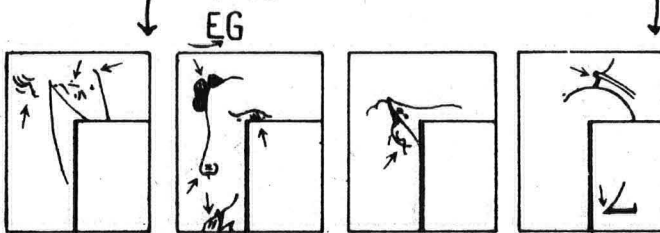
ORIGINALS



FOURNIER'S FORGERIES



PHOTOLITHOGRAPHED FORGERIES



even thickness. (See illustrations for characteristic signs of the originals and some of the common forgeries). The paper of some forgeries is yellowish. The Fournier cancellations are: double circle, 24 mm, DIEGO-SUAZ 1 SEPT 92 MADAGASCAR; idem 23 mm; idem, 15 MARS 90, 28 SEPT 91, 27 SEPT 90 - all in black or blue. The photolithographed forgeries are much better done than the Fournier and the frame line to the left of the numerals is sometimes of deceptive thickness though generally too thick. Some of these have received genuine cancellations!

1891 - 5 centimes lithographed locally -- There exist several forgeries; some are crude, but some photolithographed ones are very good; in these one of the signs is to check the figures 8 and 9 of the date; in the originals the 8 never touches the line above it and the 9 often touches, in the forgeries both figures touch. Also the printing is done with too black an ink.



← Date 1891 under
Numeral of Value

RECOGNIZING THE BORDEAUX ISSUE



Some of us, including those who would hardly be called mere tyros in French stamps, find the recognition of the 1870 Bordeaux issue one of the difficult matters. The situation grows more complicated than the catalog listings for France alone would indicate; the imperforates, issued in the 1870's for the Colonies, are more confusing than the early France issues. (Second Republic before 1852).

The first, and often the surest method, for identifying a Bordeaux Issue stamp, is that of recognizing its lithographed character. All lithographed lines have a typical "string of beads" effect; this effect is not present with lines made by any other printing process. The lithographic line shows this effect best on a thin line, as the outer border, but it is also, often, quite conspicuous in the "brickwork" that fills in the pendentives between the circle and the rectangular border.

Picture No. 1 is of a typical lithographic line. Picture No. 2 is of a typical typographed line.

No matter how poorly printed may be a Colonial imperf. of the 1870's, none of the characteristics of litho. lines show up on them.

I am informed by some students that in almost every case the outer border, the single separated line around the outside of the stamp, is thinner on Bordeaux stamps than on well nigh any Second Republic imperfs or on well nigh any Colonial imperfs of the 1870's.

From the Senf catalog of 1927 the following further "spot recognition point" is "lifted":

On the Bordeaux issue stamps the shading of the neck and cheeks consists of either strokes or short lines or continuous lines. On all the other Ceres head issues the shading in these parts consists largely of dots.

On certain values, the spacing of the words "Repub Franc", and of the two numerals of value and "Postes" at bottom, is reported to be not the same as on the other issues, in Bordeaux issue stamps--- but as this is not general, the distinction is of less use than expected.

Yvert's catalog, 1938 and 1939 editions, gives the following key characteristic:

"The easiest means of distinguishing stamps of this issue from engraved stamps of the same type, which served imperforate in France in 1849-50 and in the colonies in 1871-76, is to note that the wreath protrudes much less at the top of the head on the stamps printed at Bordeaux than on the others. (This does not apply to the first type of the 20c blue, Bordeaux)"

The comparatively rare Type I of the 20c in this issue is the only exception, therefore, to the key characters: flat wreath and shading in lines or dashes. However, its general look and shade and the lithographic character of lines on it will prevent error.

--S.G.R.

CARTE POSTALE

Ralph Holtzinger

5428 Walnut Street

Phila, 39, Pa

Clubs - Unis d'Amérique

Comité d'Organisation
des Manifestations Commémoratives
de l'éruption de la Montagne Pelée

(8 Mai 1902)

SAINT-PIERRE (MARTINIQUE)



Report on Translation of 1876-1920
Section of the Kohl Handbook, on
which the Group has work under way

Since mid-1949 work has been going ahead, by small instalments. The first draft is finished as far as 1910, and numerous pages therein have had their first rewrite.

The Collectors Club Philatelist is desirous of publishing this in the not too distant future. Fortunately, the long time taken has done no harm, since translations of Costa Rica, of the second half of Bremen (hanging over since 1927), and British Offices in Colombia, filled all the space that paper could give for Kohl material.

The same causes which have made No. 64 and this number of the F. & C. Philatelist so late, have prevented your editor from working at the Kohl Handbook translation draft during all of the latter part of 1952.

When the first draft is ready, copies of it will be sent to members of the Group who have special knowledge in the issues covered, for any and all suggestions as to correctness of fact, footnotes needed to care for information since the Handbook was written, etc. The original or first draft is being done in triplicate, for this purpose. There is much material, on the 1876-1900 issues for example, which came out in the London Philatelist and elsewhere since 1949, which must have footnote or "Addition" mention, and which changes the conclusions of Dr. Munk, writer of this section of Kohl.

Official Memoir on Pigeon Post of Paris in 1870-71 Has Been Translated.

Mr. George W. Angers, Springfield, Mass, who is well known as a student of Air Mails, sent us in May 1952 a copy of the translation which he and Dr. E.E. Thompson did of the Memoir on the Photographic and Administrative Section of the Service, by Telegraph Inspector DeLa Follie who was in charge of part of the work.

This 24-page booklet makes available to us numerous details which have hitherto not been mentioned by writers. It is a contribution to French philately as well as to Aerophilately.

The Martinique Card

This card, of which the front appears, actual size, on the feature page in this number of the Philatelist, is printed with the design in green, "Renaissance de Saint Pierre" in brown. The reverse side, which is pictured herewith, indicates the source and the semi-official nature of the card.

Mr. Holtzinger reported that he had just received this, July 18 1952.

The Balata postmark cancelling stamps is again struck, a day later, on rear of the card. The May 8 ornamental postmark, here apparently in use only as a "cachet" in the American sense of the word, shows below, apparently intended not to trench on the stamps, but actually nipping the bottom edges.

Martinique being now a "department" of metropolitan France, and not a "colony", using French stamps instead of its former own, we find the postage on this item is according to that situation.

Nothing indicates that there is special reason for the July 16 date of use.

Those 3 French Designs of 1900



MOUCHON

MERSON

BLANC

By BERTRAM W. H. POOLE

AFTER France's "Peace and Commerce" stamps had been in circulation for a quarter of a century, complaints about the suitability of the design suddenly appeared in the French press and elsewhere. It was implied that the design was hardly worthy of so great and artistic a nation as France, but probably the truth was that the public was a little tired of the same design for all the denominations then in use.

A comparison with the designs that followed within the next quarter century shows little if any advance in artistry. An unbiased observer might conclude that the changes made were really no improvement at all!

However, real or imaginary objections to the design were so prevalent that Mesureur, afterwards Minister of Commerce, interested himself in the matter. Mainly through his efforts, the Chamber of Deputies voted a sum of money in February, 1893, for a contest among French artists to "establish a new design for the postage stamps having a character truly Republican and modern and worthy of our Government and our democracy."

In February, 1894, rules for this competition were published, and on May 8 an exhibition of no less than 684 designs was held in Paris. None of this formidable array of original drawings was deemed suitable, however, and the judges decided that "in conformity with the public opinion they could not recommend any of the designs."

WHAT really expedited matters, finally, was the obvious fact that most of the plates then in use were showing evidence of wear. The powers that be either had to order the manufacture of new plates or do something definite about a new design.

The Exhibition year of 1900 was rapidly approaching. In June, 1899, Mougeout, the new Minister, and a very practical and efficient gentleman, invited a few celebrated artists to submit sketches so that work on

new stamps could proceed at once. When a decision was finally reached, three designs were chosen, instead of one, and they were the brain children of different artists.

For the lowest values—1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 centimes—a design submitted by Joseph Blanc was selected and the die for this was engraved by E. Thomas. It represents the device of the Republic. A winged female figure, presumably emblematic of Liberty, holds a pair of scales in her right hand to symbolize justice or Equality. In her left hand she holds a mirror, the symbol of truth, and an olive branch, the symbol of peace. At the right are two small cupids kissing each other and evidently meant to represent Fraternity.

For the middle values—10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 centimes—a design submitted by Eugène Mouchon was chosen, and Mouchon also engraved the master die for this. The design shows a seated female figure, typifying the French Republic, holding the hand of Justice and a tablet inscribed "DROITS DE L'HOMME" (the rights of man).

Preserver of the Peace

THE design for the remaining values—40 and 50 centimes, 1, 2 and 5 francs—was drawn by Luc-Olivier Merson and the master die was engraved by Auguste Thévenin. It is meant to represent "the Republic as preserver of the peace." The figure holds a sword across her knees to suggest the "Republic armed," and the numerous olive branches symbolize "Peace."

As so often happens with newly issued stamps, none of the designs met with public approval and, indeed, a formal motion for their withdrawal from circulation was made in the Chamber of Deputies. Though this motion was defeated, tinkering with one of the designs—that of Mouchon—started almost immediately.

Indeed the only one of the three 1900 designs that had any real permanence was that of Merson which was used for certain denominations for more than 30 years.

SCOTT'S MONTHLY JOURNAL

Supplement, Aug. 15 to Nov. 15 1952 to report
for June 15 to November 15, 1952

The Lesgor Contest

January 6, 1953 is the date.

This is the annual contest of the Group, 20th Century France, Offices, Colonies, Mandates and Protectorates. Every member is entitled to take part, for the prizes, philatelic items chosen because of their usefulness to the winners in each case.

No restriction in size of your entry, but much attention is given to the entry being properly one stamp in its specialization or one issue.

Chairman is Charles Neidorf. Please note what addresses to use:

Notify him if you are competing, and with what, at 127 Cannon St., New York 2, N.Y.

Send the actual competing exhibit to him Care of The Collectors Club, 22 East 35 St., New York 16, N.Y.---and send soon enough.

See Philatelist No. 64, page 15 (July- August, 1952) for further details.

In case of doubt, send your exhibit anyway. We will enter it and we will ship it back, lovingly and carefully packed. Have no inhibitions! The first Lesgor Award contest produced surprises.

Mr. R.H. Houwink, 9 Van Rensselaan, Zeist, The Netherlands, has sent us the first two units (Parts 1-2, 3-4) of his treatise in English on "Stamps and Posts of the French Oceanic Settlements." This mimeographed publication is an annotated catalog primarily. The greatest worth of the manuals is the explanation of causes or occasions for issues or values in terms of the postage rates or postal situations involved.

♦ V for Variety ♦

"A la Corne"

The most distinctive plate variety of France No. 33, the 20c blue on bluish Napoleon III stamp of 1863-70, is the one the French call a la corne (with the horn).



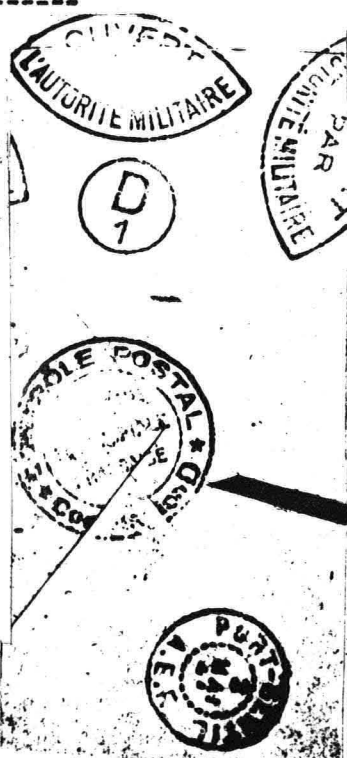
It shows a horn-like protuberance jutting out from the Emperor's nose-tip.

Collectors are fond of this old classic among the damaged clichés, and any French specialist would sacrifice his vin ordinaire for days in order to buy one—if he could find it. They are not really expensive (only 500 francs, used, in Champion), but hard to locate, and truly rare in pairs or blocks with normal noses.

When the stamp was first issued and the variety noticed, the anti-Empire newspapers maliciously made the most of it.

There is also an aux abeilles (with the bees) variety of this stamp, and the 1c olive green has an a la cigarette variety.

SCOTT'S MONTHLY JOURNAL



DECEASED:

332 Porter, W.H. Jr. R1, Centerville, Wilmington, Del.

CHANGE OF ADDRESSES:

280 Webb, W.C. to 38 Norman Rd. Newark 6, New Jersey.
306 Britt, John J. to 545 West 111th. St. New York 25, N.Y.
476 Walter M.C. Col. to 2014 Scroggins Rd. Alexandria, Va.
413 Rafferty John H. Jr. Capt. to 503 2nd. Ave. Bethlehem, Pa.
7 Morrison, J.A. to 727 Van Buren Ave. Elizabeth 4, N.J.

RESIGNATIONS RECEIVED:

104 Carter, Don. Dallas, Texas
109 Robeson, J.M. New York City N.Y.
474 Raymond, G.J. Ellington, Texas.

JOHN WEARE

Album pages are forever closed for our John Weare. He died October 28, 1952, after having been ill for several weeks. A veteran of World War I who had long lived in France, he returned to this country in the mid-1940's. Soon after he became a member of the Group, he took active part in all our dings. He has been one of those who maintained contact for us with many of the best stamp people in Paris.

Handicapped by an ailment which made walking a painful job, he nevertheless managed to reach many stamp gatherings. We shall miss his genial personality.

COMMISSION D CENSOR MARK from FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA.

By E. E. Keys.

In reply to my request in the Philatelist of May-June 1951, Mr. Paul Kalnozols of San Diego, Calif. has sent me covers showing the Commission D postal control mark of French Equatorial Africa. Thus ends a quest which last lasted for some years.

Since I already had covers with the marks of Commissions E and G's marks, I was quite sure as to the existence of D and F marks. When the F mark was reported, I asked help on the D mark. Perhaps the F marks are the scarcest: the only covers with it that I have yet seen are those from army men. Other covers from the same Fort Archambault show only Commission E mark, applied at Bengi.

One cover received from Mr. Kalnozols showed postmark "FERNAN-VAZ/A.E.F./1 MAI 41", addressed to Port-Gentil. The illustration shows the marks on the reverse side, including receiving double circle of Port-Gentil, dated May 3 1941.

Another of the covers was mailed at Port-Gentil on June 3, 1944, by registered air mail, to Geneva, Switzerland. Besides the Commission D postal control mark, this carries the little D/3 circle mark, and double-pointed ovals which tie the censor's tape to the cover.

These two covers indicate that Commission D mark was applied at Port Gentil. I do not know how scarce this is. I appreciate Mr. Kalnozols' help in finding these long-sought items.