

France & Colonies Philatelist



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Secretary: Charles Bretagne, P.O.Box 30, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Editor: Stephen G. Rich, P.O.Box B, Verona, New Jersey

Advertising Stamp Booklets Issued by France

Samples, specially cancelled with a special
device
to forestall postal use
of contents
..From the collection of Charles Bretagne.



40c Sower vermilion. Stamp issued May 25 1946.

Full contents of booklet--double pane.

Doubly cancelled:

Rubber handstamp in purple:

Carnets de Timbres Poste * Publicité*

Administration de Postes & Telegraphes

Black, metal handstamp:

Timbres-Poste * Agence* 18-6 26



50c Pesce red. Stamp issued in Sept. 1932.

Full contents of booklet--double pane.

Cancelled:

Wavy border metal device, struck in purple
rubber handstamp ink:

Agence Comptable des Timbres Poste
21 Mar 34 Paris

Story on page 10.

The Sample Advertising Booklets.

France's advertising booklets would make an excellent small collecting field by themselves, especially if such items as a whole pane used with advertising border, on a cover, can be got for one of more of them. To understand what is the significance of the Sample Booklets that we picture on the front page, some knowledge about the advertising booklets in general is useful.

The advertising space was sold, not only on the pane margins, but on the covers. Hence we have various combinations of border and cover advertising of "publicity" as it is called in French. In negotiating with advertisers, or in getting the bills for space paid, samples of the booklets were evidently needed. These, if not postmarked or otherwise annulled in value, would involve giving away of valid postage.

The government offices in charge, Agence Comptable des Timbres Poste (literally Business Office for Stamps), accordingly used devices on hand for their office purposes and with wording accordingly, on the stamps in such samples. The resulting panes, booklets, or even single ones of the stamps from them, are fairly comparable to anything that has been overprinted "Annulé", or "Specimen." While deprived of validity for postage, they have not been merely cancelled---they have not done postal duty but carry this special invalidating marking. No validity for or use for postage is indicated by any of such cancelling devices applied thus.

Mr. Bretagnes two booklets which we picture are among the few such pieces that have become collectors' possessions. Each is a complete booklet of 20 stamps in two panes, with cover, usual French size of booklet. The advertising on the covers extends to full pages, and is for various firms other than those taking space on the pane margins.

PHILATELIC TERMS ILLUSTRATED



From Green Isle Philately, Nov. 1954

This large block of 1c Empire Laureate, used on a journal by "Annulation pour les Inprimés" pre-cancelling, illustrated by us in No. 79, has come to America and is now in the Charles Bretagne collection.



France Used in the Overseas Departments

Continuing the reports which have appeared in Nos. 73, 74, 76 and 78, by courtesy of Messrs. Paul C. Delaize and Robert G. Stone, we add these new items:

Guadeloupe use: (joint report)

Marianne de Gandon 5f light green
 Cellimene 8f (Type A231 of Scott)
 Hernani 18f (Type A233 of Scott)
 30f Centre Int. d'Etudes Romanes Tournus

Martinique use (Delaize's report)

Marianne de Gandon: 6f green
 10f violet
 15f red
 15f blue (on cover)

Caen 50f

Bearn arms 1f

Lille air mail 100f

Abbaye de Saint Wandrille 25f blue

Porcelaine et Cristaux 40f (On cover)

Liberation 15f (on cover)

French Guiana use probably (Delaize's report)

Marianne de Gandon 10f violet

Information and Correspondence Wanted.

Our new member No. 605, Mr. E.F. Keys, of 38 Warraroong St., Beverly Hills, Sydney, N. S. W., Australia, makes his special field of interest "anything issued in the Colonies since 1939 and which has not reached the status of 'listing in the general catalogs.'" He specially cares for information on the "Oeuvres de Mer", of St. Pierre Miquelon; the "Ente-Aide Français", of Senegal; unofficial handstamped "France Libre" overprint items; and the like.

Little or nothing about these has appeared in this journal; certainly nothing of enough note to figure in our cumulative indexes.

Members interested are asked to write to Mr. Keys (not to be confused with the other member, E.F. Keys, Harvey, Ill.), indicating that they do so from this notice, and citing their number as a Group member. The 10c Airgram letter sheet which can be had at any post office, is useful for speed, when you do not have anything that is to be enclosed. This goes to Australia for 10 cents; as against 25 cents for a regular airmail letter. Airmail takes 6 days from almost any U. S. point to Sydney, as against 25 days or more for ordinary mail.

San Francisco double oval "bumper" cancelling on New Caledonia stamps of around 1900 is known as a result of "Paquebot" mailing there when a letter was put in ship's purser charge, to be put ashore at port of arrival.

Trends in French Philatelic Literature.

By Robert G. Stone

Probably 98% or more of the worth while literature on French and French Colonial philately appears in the French language. Though I am aware that a considerable number of the F. & C. P. readers are fluent in French, it is safe to say that a majority of us are not in this class.

Even fewer are those who regularly read or obtain philatelic books and magazines from France. It should be obvious that the serious student of French and Colonial stamps or postal history will be shutting himself out from much information of value, otherwise difficult to obtain, if he does not use the pertinent literature in French. It is the same situation, for a Frenchman not reading English, who attempts to specialize in U.S. or British stamps.

To be sure, we are fortunate in having some fairly good handbooks and articles in English, on certain areas of French and French Colonial philatelic facts. Some of the French catalogs can be used without reading French. But one must not be so naive as to believe these are complete, entirely accurate, and up-to-date on any phase of the subject(--as what book ever is?). They may be adequate for some purposes; but the more advanced one's interest becomes, the less works of this type can be depended upon. Then one must dig into the scattered sources in French magazines, special books, brochures, and original official documents.

The writer had opportunity to judge the truth of this during the last few years, while surveying all the information available on certain French and Colonial issues. Moreover, much important material, that was not in either French or English handbooks and catalogs, was found in French philatelic magazines. It is no new discovery that handbooks and catalogs tend to lag years behind, in incorporating results of philatelic research!

In the light of these remarks, perhaps a sketch of our impressions of the scope and the tendencies of French philatelic literature may be of interest to F.&C.P. readers. This can be done conveniently under three headings:

Handbooks and Monographs.

Catalogs.

Serials.

But first permit us an observation on a general characteristic of French philatelic literature:--it is largely devoted to French stamps and postal history, and more national in its emphasis than those of the U.S., Great Britain, or Germany, for example.

Handbooks and Monographs

The first really monumental work on French stamps was Marconnet's "Vignettes Postales de la France et de ses Colonies" (2 vols., Nancy, 1897). The author was a provincial and a true "amateur," whereas the philatelic publishing leadership has theretofore rested in Paris dealers like Maury, Mahé, and Leroy. Maury had collected vast amounts of information and had scattered it through his own magazine over five decades. But his book, "L'Histoire des Timbres Poste Français" did not appear until 1907. It is indicative of the greatness of these two classics that they are still much referred to by students for details not found in any other works. Yet how different the two are--one does not really duplicate the other. There are also the older works of Georges Brunel (1896) and Leroy (1892)--general, anecdotal and historical in

treatment, and very elementary in technical matters. There have been no more such single books "of the grand scope" except for a rather superficial one by Demoulin: "Les Timbres- Poste Français" (1933). The "revised" edition of Maury issued in 1949 omits a lot of the old edition, but adds hardly any new material, while most of Maury's errors stand without being corrected.

Specialization in research on French stamps has developed so rapidly from the basis of Marconnet and Maury, that in recent decades practically all the handbooks have been restricted to special phases of the field. These specialized books are numerous and many of them rank with the best works of this class in any country. To be noted first are the works, rather few in number, which attempt to treat comprehensively all French stamps for a given large period of years. For this purpose, it is usual to consider such periods as 1849-76, 1876-1900, and 1900 to date.

On the 1849-76 period there is the very original though uneven work of Serrane, "Catalogue des Timbres Français 1848-70" (1929). Brunel's "Les Emissions des Timbres Poste Français de 1849 à 1900" (1928) is in the vain of his old book of 1896, literary and popular. Nor is V. Robert's "Les Timbres de France 1849-72" of much consequence. More recently, Volume VI-1 of G. Bertrand's "Mémorial Philatelique" deals with this period; it is just a compilation, not thorough but gracefully written and nicely illustrated. Bertrand's Volume VI-2 on the 1876-1900 period is much better: in fact, useful even to an "expert." For the 20th Century as a unit, which is more popular with collectors, there are only more specialized works, such as Baron de Vinck de Winnezele's "Les Types de Timbres de France 1900-1938" and his "L'Impression de Timbres Français par les Rotatives."

Since 1920, original treatises on particular stamps or issues, on postal markings, and on special aspects of postal history, stamp manufacture, etc., form the greater part of the French philatelic books other than catalogues. In this period there has been a steady trend in French philately toward the study of postal markings, originally started by Maury with his famous catalog of 1898 (revised 1899, supplemented 1905, and revised 1929 as the "Catalogue des Estampilles.") And since the last war it seems to be the predominant field of interest among the serious collectors and students in France. The 19th Century stamps themselves hold less and less interest as it becomes more difficult to discover new facts about them. Only the study of plate flaws and reconstructions, for the "blues" (20c Empire, 25c Ceres 1872-76) is popular in this group. However, the highly specialized study of 20th Century issues proceeds apace. Pure postal history is also attracting scholarly attention.

These tendencies are naturally reflected in the book lists. On the other hand, more compilations of condensed information on the stamps are being relegated more and more to the "documentary catalogs", which the French have brought to an advanced art, instead of to the traditional handbooks and monographs.

We will now list some of the specialized books which we believe are worth noting:

On STAMPS (France):--

- P.Dillemann: "Description Generale des Timbres Poste de l'Emission Bordeaux (1929)
- F.Doé: "Les Chiffres Taxes de France (1929)
- G.Dumont et R.Janet: "20 Centimes Empire Lauré (no date)
- Baron de Vinck de Winnezele: "Les Coins Datés des Timbres Français." 2 vols, (1933, 1934)
- (Same)---"Les Impressions des Timbres Français par Rotatives" (1950)
- (Same)---"Les Millisemes des Timbres de France 1900- " (1933)
- A.Suarnet: "Toute la Gamme des Varietes des Bleus de France." (1947)
- (Same)---"Les Bleus de France" (1950)
- F. Serrane: "La Reconstitution des Planches de l'Emission Bordeaux" (1926)
- (Same)---"Les Timbres Bordeaux" (1935)
- (Same)---"Les Timbres Taxe Carrés de France." (date not at hand)
- E.Blanc: "Les Bleus de France." (1951)
- (Same)---"Les Anciens Timbres de France et Leurs Obliterations." (1946)
- P.Germain: "Le Cérès de 1871 au Type I" (2 vols., 1953)
- H.Lorne: "Monographie de l'Emission de Bordeaux" (1951)
- P.Bouvet: "Le 5 Centimes de l'Empire" (1951)
- G.Bertrand: "Memorial Philatelique Vol. VI-3, La France--Taxes, Télégraphes, Etc." (Date not at hand)
- L.Barrier: "Essai sur les Semeuses" (1950)
- I.de St.Price: "Etude sur les Vieux Timbres de France" (1946)
- F.Noel: "Les Timbres-Journaux de France et leurs Obliterations 1850-1908 (1952)

On POSTAL MARKINGS (France--general discussions with or without catalog):--

- F.Doé: "Les Estampilles Postales Françaises" (1900)
- L.François: "Les Cachets et Obliterations de la Poste aux Armees 1849-70 (1929)
- S.Strowski: "Les Estampilles Postales de la Grande Guerre" (1925)
- (Same)---"Les Estampilles Postales Françaises au XX Siecle" (1933)
- G.Tournier et S.Strowski: "Les Obliterations Mechaniques Françaises" (1927 and Supplement, 1928)
- Ph.F.de Frank: "Les Marques Postales de la Grande Armée par son Histoire" (1948)
- M.Langlois et G. Gilbert: "Catalogue des Estampilles et Marques Postales d'Alsace et de Lorraine 1848-1870" (1937)
- M.Langlois et L.François: "Les Obliterations des Bureaux Français à l'Etranger" (1924)
- M.Langlois et E.Veneziani: "Nomenclature Générale des Bureaux de Poste Français --1849-76" (1926)
- Maury, Rénault, Devoitine, et al.: "Catalogue des Estampilles et Obliterations Postales de France" (1929)
- V.Bourselet, Maréchal, François et Gilbert: "Les Paquebots Français et leurs Cachets" (1936)
- J.LePileur: "Les Marques Aeropostales de France et colonies" (1936; supplement 1939)
- R.J. Beaudoin et G.Pierre: "Les Obliterations de Fortune et Affranchissements Exceptionnels de la Guerre 1939-40" (1946)

M.Aurand: "Contributions a l'Etude des Obliterations de Paris sur les Timbres au Type Sage" (1953)

On POSTAL HISTORY (France):--

- L.Dubus: "Les Acheminées ou Forwarded Français (1944)
- E.Vaille: "Histoire Générale des Postes Françaises". (6 vols. so far, 1947 on)
- (Same)---"Le Cabinet Noir" (1950)
- (Same)---"Histoire des Postes Jusqu'à la Révolution" (1947)
- (Same)---"Histoire des Postes Depuis la Révolution" (1946)
- P.Maincent: "Génèse de la Poste Aérienne du Siège de Paris" (1951)
- (Same)---"Textes et Documents pour l'Histoire Vrai de Ballons de Siège (1952)
- J. LePileur: "Les Aérostats Poste 187-71" (1952)
- L.François: "Les Correspondances par Ballon Monté du Siege de Paris" (1925)
- G.Brunel: "Le Poste a Paris depuis sa Création jusqu'à nos Jours" (1920)
- E.Blanc: "Bibliographie Française des Postes et de la Philatelie" (1949)
- Soc.Phil.Havrais: "La Poste au Havre des Origines a nos Jours" (1951)
- L.Lutz: "La Poste aux Lettres a Metz depuis l'Antiquité jusqu'a nos Jours" (1951)
- (Many studies of a type similar to the last two titles are now being published for the various Departments and cities.)
- Les Ponts: "Etude sur les Messageries et les Postes" (1950)
- L.Chamboisier: "La Poste à Paris pendant la Siège et sous la Commune 1870-71" (1914)
- A.Lerallé: "Les Armées de la Révolution et leurs Marques Postales" (1954)
- H.Truc: "Poste Aérienne Française" (1952)
- G.Chapier et Drain: "Les Documents Postaux de la Guerre 1939-45" (1953)
- G.Tournier: "Les Postes Françaises en Italie sous la Révolution et le 1^{ier} Empire 1792-1815" (1929)
- B. Laurent: "La Commune de 1871. Les Postes, les Ballons, les Télégraphes" (1934)

On FRENCH COLONIES (Stamps, Markings, Postal History):--

- A.Brun: "Les Timbres de Tunisie" (1933)
- C. Exelmans et O.de Pomyers: "Maroc, Postes Françaises" (1948)
- G.Tournier: "Marques Postales Militaires de Maroc, 1907-31" (1931)
- M.Langlois et V. Bourselet: "Les Obliterations de Bureaux de Poste des Colonies Françaises" (1927)
- (Same)---"Afrique Occidentale Française" (Supplement, 1937).
- Baron de Vinck de Winnezele: "Colonies Françaises et Bureaux a l'Etranger, Etude de Timbres Surchages, 1852-1919 (1928)
- O.de Pomyers: "Les Timbres du Gabon 1862-1936" (1936)
- (Same)---"Les Timbres de la Reunion 1851-1939" (1939)
- (Same)---"Les Premiers Timbres de Tunisie (1849-88)" (1935)
- D. Ernst: "Etude sur la Serie Tour Hassan 1934-44" (1947)
- M. Jurion: "Les Timbres de Colonies Françaises: Nouvelles Hebrides" (1928)

The Catalogs.

The catalogs form perhaps the most remarkable group of French philatelic contributions. The tradition for this goes back to the 19th century but it has flowered especially in the last three decades, because of the economic pressure for conciseness, at the same time giving expression to the Gallic love of logical and clear arrangement. Maury early showed the way in regard to postal markings; while the Yvert et Tellier's specialized catalog of France and Colonies has become a model for a documented catalog of stamp issues.

Over 50 years the "Yvert Specialized" gradually evolved into a masterpiece of its type: combining accuracy, up-to-dateness, good judgment and thoroughness, with clarity in description & in arrangement, great economy of space, and convenience. But, alas, it is a unique work.

Maury's style of cataloguing postal markings evolved into a type of combined documentary -- descriptive work, which is now very numerous and the most characteristic of recent French philatelic publications.

The commercial priced-catalogs of dealers, are likewise well developed in France. The "Yvert et Tellier-Champion" catalog has long been a favorite among many collectors in all countries, for its inclusiveness and close-to-market pricing. (Realistic pricing has always been a feature of most French dealer catalogs, even the specialized ones.) Air mail catalogs of Champion, Silombra and Muller, are also internationally respected. Among the better-known firm catalog limited in coverage to France and Colonies are: Yvert et Tellier, Ceres, Thiaude, Berck, and Gallia.

Some of the more important specialized catalogs, mostly documentary in type, will now be listed:

- A. Forbin: "Catalogue Prix Courant des Timbres Fiscaux de France et Colonies Françaises" (1937)
- J. LePileur et al.: "Catalogue des Ballons Montés du Siège de Paris 1870-71" (1847)
- E. Locard: "Les Vieux Timbres de France" (1943)
- (Same)---"Les Émissions Générales des Colonies--Catalogue Documentaire" (1944)
- M. Benatar et L.A. Guigue: "Les Timbres-Poste de Maroc" (1930)
- C. Bonnafeux: "Catalogue Spécialisé des Timbres-Poste du Poste Locale de Maroc" (1953)
- Assoc. des Coll. d'Entiers Postaux: "Catalogue des Entiers de France, d'Algérie, des Colonies Françaises, Pays du Prot. et sous Mandat, Pr. de Monaco, et du Terr. de la Sarre". 6th Ed. 1949; Supplement (1951)
- Edition Échangiste Universel: "Catalogue Spécial des Timbres d'Alsace-Lorraine, leurs Oblitérations, 1870-71" (1937)
- E. Barthélemy: "Catalogue, Oblitérations spéciales temporaires, France et Colonies Françaises" (1946)
- Editions de Graouli: "Catalogue des Marques et Oblitérations de la Poste Maritime Française 1780-1935" (1936)

E.H. de Beaufond: "Catalogue des Oblitérations de Timbres de France 1848-1876" (1947)

(Same)---"Catalogue des Marques Postales et Oblitérations des Bureaux Spéciaux 1785-1876" (1952)

(Same)---"Catalogue des Marques Postales dites 'Noms Revolutionnaires' 1793" (1945)

Ch. Ab der Halden et E.H. de Beaufond: "Catalogue des Marques Postales et d'Oblitérations d'Algérie 1830-76" (1949)

A. Rochette: "Catalogue des Étoiles de Paris 1852-76" (1950)

C. Chase et E.H. de Beaufond: "Catalogue des Cachets des Bureaux Ambulants de France de l'Origine à 1900" (1951)

J. Pothion: "Catalogue des Oblitérations Françaises Gras Chiffres 1863-1876" (1951)

C. Chase: "Catalogue des Cachets des Courriers Convoyeurs, Boîtes Mobiles, et Gares" (1954)

P. Maincent: "Les Aérogrammes de France, Leur Catalogue" (1947)

(No author name): "Catalogue des Cachets Allemands d'Alsace-Lorraine de 1872-1918" (1951)

H. Lorne: "Catalogue des Cachets de Bureaux de Poste" (1954)

L.J. Moutafoff: "Marcographie de France" (1954 and to be continued)

(No author name): "Catalogue des Oblitérations d'Alsace-Lorraine sur Timbres de 1849-71" (1953)

E.H. de Beaufond: "Catalogue de Marques Postales des Départements" --- a series of books now being issued, by different authors for each Department; those for Corse, Haute-Garonne, Herault, Manche, Nord, Pas-de-Calais, Var and Comte de Nice have already appeared; generally cover 1800's to 1876. (1945 to date)

H. Menard: "Catalogue Préoblitérés: France, Alger, Monaco, Tunis" (1952)

A. Lafon: "Catalogue Complet des Oblitérations Illustrées de France et de l'Union Française 1898-1951" (1952)

The Serials

The philatelic serial (mostly periodic) publications in France have not been numerous. It seems that since the earliest days (the 1860's) usually not more than two magazines at a time have been able to maintain a wide circulation. Once it was Maury's Le Timbre Poste which dominated the field. Since before the turn of the century L'Echo de la Timbrologie has held the lead. In the last 30 years only L'Echo has been a consistent vehicle of original and worthwhile articles. The Revue Philatélique Française, once a fair rival, has long ago disappeared. A few of the many other periodicals which have meanwhile come and gone were of note: the Quinzaine Philatélique and Cahiers Philatéliques, for example. At present, in addition to L'Echo, La Philatélie Française and Le Marcophile are published.

The files of L'Echo over the years represent a storehouse of important original material. They are a "must" for the real student of

France and Colonies philately, because much of this ore has not been smelted down into the handbooks and catalogs -- take the long serial (1938-48) article of Bouvet, "En Marge du Catalogue France et Colonies," for example.

La Philatélie Française, the organ of the French federation of stamp clubs, devotes itself to solid material, more often in the form of concise summaries on certain topics rather than original research. It is neither for the beginner nor the highly advanced collector, but for the "average" collector who specializes in France and Colonies. Le Marcophile is a house organ of E.H.de Beaufond, but accepts brief contributions from outsiders on French postal markings, in addition to his offerings of literature and covers or stamps for sale. The auction house L.Miro puts out its catalogs in the form of a magazine with articles, called Sélection, as does Jamet in his Spécialités.

The Publishers and Publishing

A word about the publishers: at present only three or four organizations in France are regularly publishing much of philatelic importance: the old firm of Yvert et Tellier in Amiens, the Editions de Beaufond in Paris, the Groupement Philatelique Française, and the firms in Bischwiller (Bas Rhin) which have supported the Echangeiste Universelle there for many years. Many others occasionally publish something. The house of Yvert et Tellier holds an unique place in philatelic publishing; no commercial firm in the world has for so long (60 years plus) published such a quantity of philatelic works of such consistently high standard. It is hard to imagine what French Philately would be without it.

It is unfortunate that the economics of publishing in France have long been unfavorable to printing of high quality for philatelic works. Many valuable works have appeared in rather flimsy form. Also the editions have been generally small, so that they quickly go out of print. When in print they sell for very reasonable prices in France, but when imported through book dealers and when obtained second-hand, the prices in U.S. are apt to be much increased.

Interested readers are advised to subscribe for Le Marcophile, which regularly lists and offers the works in print, as well as the second-hand ones.

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.

Would like to get rid of accumulations, of common French stamps--mostly Sowers in quantity, not picked for cancellations. In exchange, I want \$1.00 catalog value of your duplicates for every \$2.00 catalog value of my stamps that you want. Jacques Masy, P.O. Box 9, Trumbull, Conn. (Member 16)

Would like to exchange about 2000 of my France & Colonies duplicates with another member. Dr. Lev Braun, 50 Central Park West, New York 23, N.Y. (Member 561)

For study purposes I am buying copies in bad condition of the France 5 Francs Empire, paying appropriate prices. Tears, thin spots and other defects do no harm for this purpose but prices need fit condition when you offer. S. G. Rich, Verona, N.J., (Member 2)

Editorial "Investment Value."

One or two requests have come in, to comment on the "investment value" for French and Colonies stamps. We are most reluctant to open up this topic. For one thing, the Group has, from our start, consistently tried to steer clear in all our doings and writings, of the monetary or the commercial side of French philately.

But there is another fact. There is nothing new or unusual to say on the subject. What is true in other fields holds for ours. Stamps of Metropolitan France increase in actual market price faster than most of those of the Colonies -- even as with other countries and their colonial possessions. As elsewhere, there are special exceptions to this rule.

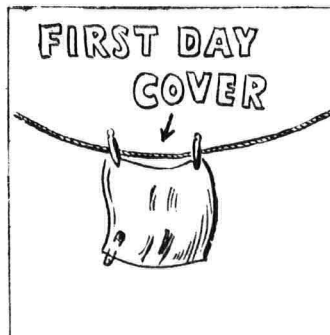
If you buy fine copies of items that sell at \$1.00 and up, paying attention to condition, and buy over a wide range of issues, the normal 3% to 4% per year increase of market value of all good stamps will apply in our field. What will fail to materialize, or be a loss, on some item will be offset by more than the 3% or 4% a year on others. We know of no reliable information, whether used or unused items are safer, whether 19th or 20th Century material performs better.



Can Anyone Identify This Cancellation on the Sage 5c Green ?

Our member, Brig. General M.C. Walter, sends in this picture, diameter 26 mm. of a 3-nested and W1 over d target, on the regular 5c green, Type Sage type 2. We have it identified as German, and most likely Prussian. Can anyone help with more information? Suspicion is that stamp was not hit by French cancelling, on letter to some point in Germany.

PHILATELIC TERMS ILLUSTRATED



From Green Isle Philately, Nov. 1954

**Portuguese Enclave in French Dahomey
Using French Colonial
Stamps**

From Western Stamp Collector,
Oct. 21, 1952

World's Smallest Colonial Possession

By LT. G. J. RAYMOND, USAF



In studying a list of Portuguese possessions some months ago, the author of this article was startled to see listed there a possession never seen in previous lists: Fort Sao Joao Baptista de Ajuda. Its position was given as on the west coast of Africa, near the border of Nigeria, west of Lagos. A microscopic examination of a detailed map, however, failed to reveal it; no encyclopedia mentioned it, and reference books ignored it completely. Aha! Perhaps here was a rare postmark to add to the collection!

After months of research and many fruitless letters, a letter arrived from the Ministry of Overseas Territories, Lisbon, Portugal, and at last it became clear why letters addressed to the Postmaster, Fort S. Joao Baptista De Ajuda, West Africa, were returned by the Post Office endorsed "No Such Country," etc. Alas! there was no post office. But, shades of San Marino!—here surely was the smallest inhabited colonial possession in the world!

Fort S. Joao Baptista De Ajuda is located in the French colony of Dahomey, West Africa, and is about 18½ miles from the village of Cutenu, on the coast. The nearest town is that of Ouidah, through which all mail is sent and received, and thus the fort uses the stamps of French West Africa. Illustrated is a portion of a cover which was at last received after many unsuccessful attempts, postmarked at the tiny Ouidah post office. Mail must pass through rarely, at least from the small Portuguese garrison of troops. It must be small, for Fort S. Joao Baptista De Ajuda, for all its long name, is only 329

feet long, 329 feet wide! Within an enclosing wall there is a garden and the residential home of the Portuguese commandant. A garrison of Portuguese Colonial troops is quartered somewhere within the walls, presumably in a wing of the residency.

The Fortress of Sao Joao Baptista de Ajuda was built in 1680 by Bernardin Freire de Andrade and Jacinto de Figueiredo de Abreu, both governors of the Portuguese island of St. Tome (St. Thomas) in the nearby Gulf of Guinea. This region was first discovered by unidentified Portuguese navigators in the years 1471-1481.

For two centuries this fortress was a very important center of Portuguese influence in the kingdom of Dahomey. In the last century it became part of a Portuguese district, attached for administrative purposes to the colony of St. Tome e Principe. At the end of the century, in accordance with a boundary treaty with France, Portugal withdrew its claim over territorial districts in Dahomey, retaining only the fortress, which is no longer connected in any way with St. Tome e Principe. Thus here remains what surely must be the smallest inhabited colonial possession in the world.



Something on which to feast your eyes. 1891 5c black of the local print of Diego Suarez.

Courtesy of
Harmer Rooke & Co,
from a 1947 sale
catalog.

Nice Combination Cover Front

Shown to your editor (who is trying to get it from its owner) cover front, Reims April 23 1930 mailed with full booklet pane 10c and single 5c Joan of Arc, to Bruxelles, Belgium. The pane shows margin marking 11010 8 and the vertical heavy dash on southeast corner of margin.

**New Coil of the
15c
Ultramarine
Marianne de Gandon.**

The
15c
of
this
type



Mr. M. Respaud, our member in Courbevoie, has shown us the new endwise coil stamp in the new current type. This 15c, which is somewhat of a lighter shade than the usual 15c ultramarine, was issued in late 1954 or early 1955 in coils of 1000. These were used in an experimental cdl vending machine at the G.P.O. in Paris.

The stamps can be recognized instantly, since there are differences at bottom.

The names of Gandon and Cortot at bottom are each 3mm longer than on the regular stamps. But one does not need to measure them. They extend beyond the stamp corners just enough so that they can be readily noticed. On the regular 15c they come even with the corners.

Because these are coils made of stamps with perforations previously applied, there are not the straight edges as on American, Canadian and Swedish coils. But the copy shown us can be identified as a coil with sureness. On both sides, the perfs are cut, not torn, at ends of the teeth. On this copy, one one side, cutting was so close that the perf. teeth are reduced to almost nothing.

As with all previous French coils, the cut edges through perfs. on opposite sides, are the identification.

Thank you, Mr. Respaud.



Not too often seen: 40c Empire with Suisse private perf. on cover from Paris 1861. Courtesy of M. Jamet.

**Article in "Stamps"
on Ballons Montés.**

In connection with the new 1955 12 plus 5f stamp with the 1870 Siege Ballonn shown, there appeared in "Stamps" of Feb. 26 1955 an article on Ballons Montés, of likely use and interest to many of us.

5c.
R

Two Colors of Reunion's 5 on 30c 1885.

The 5c on 30c Empire Laureate imperf., which Reunion made in 1885, is listed as "brown" only in Scott and Yvert. Gibbons lists it on "drab" and on "bistre brown" 30c stamps. But in Scott the basal stamp is listed in both "gray brown" and "dark brown". Your editor recently had an S.P.A. sales book, from which he plucked a copy in the "drab" or "gray brown" color-- the 5c on 30c Reunion; not faded; not damaged, but exact match for unoverprinted 30c's.

For Our Members Interested in Seaposts

In 1954, Mr. Robert G. Stone sent on for your editor to see, several number of "The Seaposter" the official paper of the Maritime Postmark Society. These numbers contain items of French and French Colonial nature. Memoranda of these have been made, for use in connection with any other information on the same points, for use in possible future articles in this field.

We report that Seaposter of Nov-Dec. 1946 has an excellent article on the eleven postmarks of the ill-fated steamship "Normandie, by G.J. Lard. Several of the octagon machine marks are shown by pictures.

Particularly valuable are the various short notes, which deal with French postmarks taken incorrectly as being ship marks because a word or words in them seem to indicate such origin. Thus, the receiving mark at Le Havre with reading TRANSAT. in it, is a type case. Various offices, such as Cherbourg, Paris, Boulogne, had marks with "Paquebot" or "Maritime" in them. These were in use in what we might best speak of as the ship mail sections of the post offices.

Another puzzler is the postmark from Indo-China, reading SAIGON MESSAGERIES MARITIMES. It is not a ship mark at all. It is the postmark of a branch of Saigon P.O. in the office of that shipping firm. We take this from the Seaposter, with gratitude and acknowledgements.

In Memoriam: Dr. Pierre Bouvet

Doctor Pierre Bouvet, who died recently in Paris, was one of the great modern philatelists, of France and of the world. He had been for many years a Fellow of the French Academy of Philately, and was one of the members of its Expert Committee. Though a graduate in medicine, he was a dentist by profession, and by general consent was one of the best in Paris. His great specialty was the 19th Century Colonial stamps of France. Herein he was the authority and his opinions were regularly accepted. He had unique access to many official records of the Post Office Department and of the printers of French stamps.

With this as a background, he wrote learnedly of the early French issues and their methods of manufacture. A great deal of this material had never been published until he wrote the results of his researches. His collection of French Colonial stamps, in particular, was very rich, especially in unusual pieces and in the domain of postal markings. He was always happy to aid other collectors, as he was not one to hoard information. His loss is a serious one for philately. It is to be hoped that the documentation he had not had time to publish will not be lost. Perhaps the French Academy will aid in this work.

----- Carroll Chase

French Consular Cover from Cape Colony

It looks like just a lovely 1855 cover with a block of four of the 1d white paper Triangle, Cape of Good Hope stamps. But it is addressed to the French Consul General at Capetown, from the French Consular Agency at Port Elizabeth in the Cape Colony, as folded letter with the Consular Agency printed heading on the inside. The letter is in French, on consular business. Your editor owned it many years before discovery by him that it was something French.

* SECRETARY'S REPORT *

Feb. 15, to May 15, 1955

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME:

- 605 Keys, E.F. 38 Warraroong Street, Beverly Hills, Sydney, N. S. W. Australia... (France & Colonies - France Libre)...
- 606 Chender, J.L. 333 Central Park West, New York 25, New York. (France).....
- 607 Martin, William C. 87-34 115th. Street, Richmond Hill 18, New York..... (France & Postal History).....
- 608 Graham, Richard B. 259 E. Dominion Blvd. Columbus 14, Ohio..... (France Used & Postal History).....

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

- 61 Stone, Robert C. to R.D.1, Box 540..... Clinton, Maryland.....
- 357 Bretagne Charles to Post Office Box 30, Poughkeepsie, New York.....
- 439 Kerns, Jack T. to 3504 Highland Avenue, Manhattan Beach, California.....
- 526 Hilton, Homer Jr. to Union National Bank, Marquette, Michigan.....
- 538 Patton, Edward to Post Office Box 177, Ketchikan, Alaska.....
- 543 McDowell, Robert E. to 2212 Fairland Ave. Louisville 18, Kentucky.....
- 565 Grill, Herman to 219-82 75th. Street, Bayside 64, L.I. New York.....
- 574 Bouray, Alan to 1237 Coolidge Avenue, Wichita 3, Kansas.....
- 575 Herson, Julian M.D. to 540-B Aldine Ave. Chicago 13, Illinois.....

Respectfully submitted
Charles Bretagne, Secy.



Part of a cover from Jerusalem via French service in 1876, cancelled at Jaffa. (Courtesy Robson Lowe)

France Articles in the Mercury Stamp Journal

Beginning in No. 32, December 1954, and with two more portions in Nos. 33 and 34, the latter just of press and competing the serial, France to 1875 is treated with insight and knowledge by Mr. Edwin Mueller. The stampless period is treated; postal history bulks large; postmarking is given plenty of discussion.

This is one in a series on the various lands of Europe and their classic issues.

The summary of information, and the way in which matters hitherto left unrelated are here brought together, make this serial useful for almost any collector.

The three numbers can be had from the Mercury Stamp Co. 522 Fifth Ave., New York 36, N.Y. for \$1.00. An excellent investment for anyone that is trying to find his way among these issues.