

# 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

## The French Levant Postmark Forgeries

By E. Tolkowsky

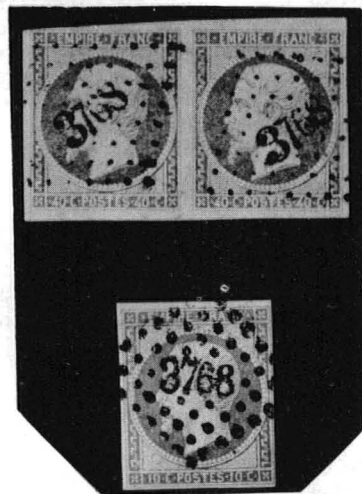


Fig. 1

Upper pair: obvious alteration of both 3 and "7" formerly 1. Lower stamp is a more skilful job with fancy head on 7, and 3 out of line

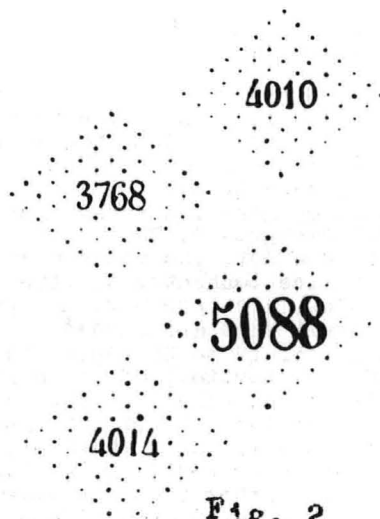


Fig. 2

Four falsifications

In the current state of philatelic research, we know of three groups of French Levant postal markings which attracted forgers. The first two are those of the Small Numeral and Large Numeral lozenge of dots killers. Among these, quite ordinary adhesives fetched relatively high prices, because of attractive cancellations. The third group is the circle town marks.

In the first group, forgers would scratch and retouch lightly-struck Small Numeral killers. Those most commonly known show the following "naturalizations":---

3168(St.Louis) into 3768(Jaffa). Fig. 1

3169(St. Loup) into 3769(Latakia)

The Large Numeral killers have been manipulated in far greater quantities than the small numeral devices. In this second group, heavily struck markings serve as the bases. Again, part of a numeral would be scratched out and retouched. The best known are:---

5080(Alexandria) into 5086(Gallipoli)

or 5089(Jaffa).

5083(Istanbul) into 5085(Galatz)

or 5088(Imboli)

5098(Izmir) into 5093(Mytilene)

or 5099(Sulina)

3106(Remiremont) into 5106(Tangier)

The change was made from a plentiful Levant killer number or one of France itself (such as Remiremont, 3106) to a hard to get Levant number.

There is an overlapping of interest, as far as Jaffa cancellations are concerned. They figure in collections of France and Colonies, on the one hand; on the other, they appear in the Forerunner sections of specialist collections of Palestine and Israel. Being so much in demand, prices have of course risen, leading forgers into temptation.

At some offices, only blue ink was used. When a black-ink cancellation is offered, the falsification is obvious. In such cases, the original marking was from metropolitan France, where, as a rule, only black ink was used.

Four such forgeries are illustrated in Fig. (Continuation on next page)

2. Others exist: namely 5087 in red and in blue, 5097 in black and in blue. 5106 forgery is in black and in red. Close examination often reveals that the numerals are unequal in size. In 5087, shown as Fig. 3, the 5 is definitely to be noticed as smaller than the 7.

Forged circular dated handstamps, some of which are pure fantasy, are generally made in one piece --- that is, with fixed date instead of with holes into which dating and timing slugs can be fitted. To this group, those of Monaco and Suez definitely belong. (Fig. 4)

In 1924, the the Société Française de Timbrologie celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, by sponsoring a famous catalog, now a cherished collector's item. This is the "Oblitérations des Bureaux Français à l'Étranger" by Langlois and



Fig. 3

Fig. 4  
Three false ones.

Fig. 5



Fig. 6

François, published by Yvert & Tellier at Amiens, France. Ironically, this very catalog, warning collectors against the malfeasance described, gave rise to further forgeries by photographic copying of its pictures to make replicas of them as faked-cancelling devices.

The dated town devices of Palestine have been studied with more attention than the others. The illustrations which appeared in this Journal of November-December 1955, reproduced from Bapip of London, all show respectively the same dates, on the spurious items, as those shown in the Langlois & François catalog. This fact was pointed out by Mr. S.N. Shure of Chicago.

The catalog pictures cancellations of three offices in Palestine: of these, the one of Caiffa (Fig. 5) and the two of Jerusalem (Fig. 6) have been forged. I mention that the catalog editors deliberately illustrated a 5 a.m. collection hour at Jerusalem.

Mr. J.H. Posner, Stoke-on-Trent, England, has an item from Jerusalem, showing a 7\* or 7 a.m. collection hour. Judging from seeing the stamp itself, it seems perfectly legitimate. But this fact is not made clear in the text as reprinted from Bapip. Here the writer would appreciate member's checking with their own albums --- and informing him. The collection hour shown is almost always a 19\* or 7 p.m. The fact that almost no letters were mailed normally after 7 p.m. and before 7 a.m. could explain the scarcity of this item; but hardly sufficiently to account for only one copy being in collectors' hands. Will readers please check?

Mr. Posner suggests that the 7 a.m. hour of collection was caused by some emergency. As the cancellation is dated 28 XII 1906, December 28, he mentions that the post-Christmas or pre-New-Year season was a particularly busy one for the French postal authorities.

Can anyone confirm these "temporary times of collection"?

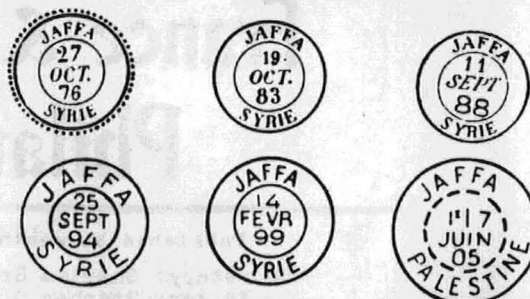


Fig. 7. The six French Jaffa postmarks.

Of the Jaffa markings, the pearled circular date is the only one surely known to have been forged. (Fig. 7). The writer would appreciate collectors' comparing the illustrations with the material they have. There may be more bad ones.

The drawings from Langlois & François' catalog were reprinted in the U.S. as illustrations in Billig's Handbook (Vol. 1, p. 169). That editor is to be congratulated on the astute way in which he deliberately misled any young hopefuls of the forgers' "fraternity." He replaced numerals in the top row with obviously hand-drawn figures. We compliment Mr. Fritz Billig for thus doing us all a good service. See Fig. 8.

This writer has also met with forged cancellations of Austrian offices in the Levant (Jerusalem and Caiffa); but such items are not in the scope of this article.



Fig. 8. Billig's pictures with numerals changed by hand.

#### "Intermediate Forms" By the Editor.

This matter of the existence of large numbers of stamps which do not conform to the "types" or "dies" into which numerous French stamps always are differentiated by the catalogs, has become a matter of real concern to me.

Take a common stamp like the 5 centimes 1907 green Sower, solid background. Two "dies", one with the Q formed by a dot, the other with this letter formed by a line connected to the loop or body of the letter, are reported. Also, other differences of a small sort are listed.

But any chance lot of 10 to 25 copies is sure to contain a goodly proportion, often half or more of the number, which cannot be fitted with exactness to either of the reported "types" or dies. The tail on the Q is not a "thin straight line", nor yet a dot separated from the body of the letter. Nor do the other features agree in always occurring with a dot-Q or a line-Q.

This seems to be the normal condition, with almost every stamp. A complete intergrading set of slightly different varieties, with forms that are "intermediate" most frequent, is the rule.



Report on Fipex:  
Many Fine French and Colonial Showings  
Scattered Through  
New York International, at Coliseum.

The exhibits of French Union countries were so scattered through various parts of the great Fipex show, April 28 to May 6th, that just to find them all would be quite a task. Unusual also was that the French countries' material in the show was almost wholly limited to early and recent material, with the period from near 1870 until after World War I neglected almost wholly.

Most of the exhibits of metropolitan France were difficult to locate, because the group of frames which held them was situated off in a far corner, on a portion of the third floor in between an alley of dealers' booths and the way into the lecture hall. The gap of a quarter mile from the end of the frame numbers at the north-west corner to this area in the extreme south-west was most confusing.

The air mail section, up on the fourth floor had some of the really choice French material. We noted Ballons Montés shown by Helen Novy, of New Jersey; a glorious showing of the Siege of Paris "pellicules" carried by pigeon post, which T.A. Matthews showed; in Victor Mawratil's fine airmail showing, one frame devoted to the 1927 first air mails of France with entire panes of both values on which the differences between the surcharging from subject to subject was clearly shown. Through various other air mail exhibits, French airmail proofs, colonial air mail proofs and the actual stamps, all figured.

The rather controversial air mail stamps of Cilicia, on which identification of the genuine is so difficult, were there. Clearly, if one of the lots was genuine, the other was bogus; but, despite this situation, neither exhibitor went to the trouble of getting a Foundation or Royal certificate.

In French Colonies, the showings all were by members of the Group. Chas. Neidorf had one specialism of Morocco; Robert G. Stone postal markings of Guadeloupe; Ralph Holtsizer a fine comprehensive coverage of Martinique and Louise Clemenceau some of her choicest pieces out of

her Reunion collection. Save for Mr. Neidorf, all won awards.

Metropolitan France had seven exhibits, which did not all appear as such. In particular, the four lovely frames of France in the U.P.U. Room showing by Bolaffi, were not listed as France at all. These included 1849 to 1871 material, with unused blocks of the 20c Empire imperf. and the 25c Alsace-Lorraine; big used block of 12 of the 5f Empire; etc etc etc.

The six listed exhibits included the Baudry collection, imperforates only; Robert J. Gill's fine early material such as two part sheets of the 5f Empire, unused, one perf. and one imperf.; a most interesting lot of French Prison Ships' mail of 1871 after the Commune by Sterling S. Taylor; the Baudry Alsace-Lorraine issues; plus two other showings which do not seem to require detailed mention.

Lesgor's booth on the main floor did a good share in attracting attention to French philately.

The Group's Lounge was without doubt one of the most attractively decorated and most friendly handled among the whole range of these. Miss Louise Clemenceau deserves special mention, along with Mrs. Paulette Neumann and Mr. Alan Fernald who ably aided her, for the fine work. Look at the report of your secretary, on the next page, to judge whether it was effective work.

Three members of the Group were on the Board of Judges. Of these, only one was assigned to the sections containing French and French Union showings--Mr. Domanski. Mr. Abt and Mr. Rich served on the section for General Collections.

We close this report with mention that a Gold Medal, won by Mr. Baudry and another won by Mr. Gill, for their early French, were the top wins in our chosen field. Of the Group members who showed in our field, two-thirds took awards. In other fields, several of our members also won.

--"Eyeing Spy."

Their Real Nature:  
The Arch of Triumph Stamps  
of France, 1944-45

By Frederic Muhlenheim.



Are stamps Nos. 2N1 to 2N20 of the catalog according to Scott, the 1944 and 1945 with the Arch of Triumph, really "Occupation Stamps"? ?

Surely nobody can believe that in 1944 there was war between France and the United States.

Yet "Occupation Stamps" always are made for use in an enemy country, occupied by a military force.

Let us consider the facts:

Twelve years after the glorious day of June 6, 1944, when liberation commenced, these stamps are still valid for postage, on any sort of mail in any part of France. If they really were "occupation stamps" of any sort, neither you or I would believe that France would continue to allow their use.

The recorded fact is that these Arch stamps were printed in the United States at the request of the French government. To make sure, I had written to the Secretariat of the P.T.T., Paris. I translate from a reply, dated March 2, 1956, a photographic copy of which is in the hands of the editor of this journal for reference and to show to anyone interested:

"Sir:"

"In reply to your letter of last February 20 I have the honor to inform you that the postage stamps "Arch of Triumph", printed in the United States, were put on sale on the following dates:

1st series, not surcharged,

Oct. 5 1944

2nd series, surcharged,

Feb. 12 1945."

"The placement of these productions in the Scott catalog is incorrect. The following statements of fact will enable you to decide this matter:"

"1). These stamps were made in the United States through the services of the military authorities and at the request of the French Government acting with the Allies."

"2). They were issued in France only on the order of the Administration of the French Postal Services."

"3). These stamps were used for supplementary supplies for the issues produced in France from the beginning of September 1944."

The rest of the letter does not deal in any way with these stamps or anything about them.

A correction of the wrong listing should be made without delay. The matter has been brought to the attention of the editorial staff of the Scott catalog earlier in 1956.

## \* SECRETARY'S REPORT

March 15 to May 15 1956

NEW MEMBERS: Welcome.

- 625 Hornberger, D.J. 186 Griswold Street,.....  
Delaware, Ohio. (France & Algeria).....
- 626 Zweifel, Ira 306 West 93rd. Street,.....  
New York 25, N.Y. ....
- 627 Boston University Philatelic Library,.....  
College of Business Adm.....  
685 Commonwealth Ave. Boston 15, Mass..
- 628 Chase, Abbott, College Highway, Granby, Ct.  
629 Segal, Alan R. 255 Cabrini Blvd.....  
New York 40, N.Y. (France).....
- 630 Berthelot, Lucien 44 Rue Jouffroy, Paris,  
17eme. France. (France Specialized)....
- 631 Lock, Nora 1224 St. Nicholas Avenue, 5-C,  
New York 32, N.Y. (France).....
- 632 Berck, Edouard 6 Place de la Madeleine...  
Paris 8eme. France. (Dealer).....
- 633 Behr, George 85 Rue Richelieu, Paris.....  
France. (Dealer).....
- 634 Garneau, Jean Jacques Dr. 1591 St. Louis,.  
Blvd. Trois Rivières, Quebec, Canada...
- 635 Scott, Miriam, Miss 23 Penarth Road,.....  
Cynwyd, Penna.....
- 636 Poe, Arthur 176 Old Indian Road,.....  
West Orange, New Jersey. (France & Col).
- 637 Kowal, Walter H. 1830 Norman Street,.....  
Ridgewood 27, N.Y. (French Oceania)....
- 638 Perneroy, Rander 444 East 65 Street,.....  
New York 21, N.Y. (General).....
- 639 Minnich, Robert A. 29 Franklin Tpke,.....  
Ramsey, New Jersey. (French Colonies)...
- 640 Shown, Hugh V. 431 N. Wenger Street,.....  
Mishawaka, Indiana. (France & North-Afr
- 641 Kline, Marvin 21-20 33 Road, Long-Island-  
City 6, N.Y. (France).....
- 642 Howes, Alfred S. 42 Fenimore Road,.....  
Scarsdale, New York. (France).....
- 643 Parshall, Walter E. 103 Spruce Street,....  
Bloomfield, New Jersey, (Monaco).....
- 644 Sharp, Harry 7523 Brentwood, Detroit 34,.  
Michigan. (France & Colonies).....
- 645 Montgomery, Robert A. Box 1102 Rochester 3  
New York. (France & Colonies).....
- 646 Lowery, M.L. 292 Livingston Avenue,.....  
New Brunswick, New Jersey, (General)...
- 647 Alleman, Dudley 207 Main Street,.....  
Hingham, Mass, (France Regular Issues).
- 648 Fite, George L. Dr. Nat.Inst.Health,.....  
Bethesda, Md. (France).....
- 649 Hare, Mark. L. 105-24 64th. Road, Forest-  
Hills, N.Y.....
- 650 Willard, Edward L. 225 Woodland Drive,....  
State College, Penna.....
- 651 Babbitt, Alfred E. 9 Read Avenue, Tuckahoe  
New York. (French Colonies).....

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

- 156 Hoefler, Otto to 6249 Chelton Drive,.....  
Oakland 11, California.....
- 590 Marlow, Henry A. to U.S. Operation-Mission  
to Iran.A.P.O. 205, New York, N.Y.....
- 604 Ketover, Richard to 129 Cooper Place,.....  
New Haven, Conn.....
- 574 Bouray, Alan to 6621 Community Drive,....  
Houston 5, Texas.....
- 533 Jones, Wm. G. Jr. Maj. to 489-A Lanier-...  
Court, Montgomery 5, Alabama.....
- 16 Musy, Jacques A. to P.O.Box 7333, Tampa 3,  
Florida.....
- 487 Abt, Henry E. to c/o The Town House,.....  
108 East 38th. Street, New York 16, N.Y
- 509 Cords, Albert L. to 1351 W. North Avenue,..  
Milwaukee 5, Wisconsin.....

- 383 Harvey, H.Holbrook to Box 1145 Main P.O....  
Los Angeles 53, California.....
- 497 Kesler, Robert L. M/Sgt. to 49 Greenway...  
Ave. Mt. Clemens, Michigan.....
- 596 Bregartner, W.G. to 14 Madison Avenue,....  
Summit, New Jersey.....
- 589 Muhlenheim, Frederic, to 515 East 13 St....  
New York 9, N.Y.....

RESIGNATIONS ACCEPTED:

- 501 Jackson J.T. 54 Woodcut Lane, Roslyn Ht.NY  
384 Hayes, Wm.J. 3157 Stone Ave. Omaha 11, Nebr..  
5 Fatoullah, K, 116 Nassau St. New York 38, N.Y  
226 Norton, O.S. P.O.Box 808 Manteca, Calif...  
347 Carpenter A.E. 804 Westview Ave. Phila, Pa..

DECEASED:

- 327 Geiger, R.R. 1312 West Rockland Street, ...  
Philadelphia 41, Penna.....

Respectfully Submitted  
Charles Bretagne, Secretary.

Excellent Serial in "Gossip."

Our member, Walter C. Utt, has been running a serial in Weekly Philatelic Gossip, entitled "Marianne in a Black Mood." This is the story of the war postal services of France. We note the first three sections in Gossip of March 3rd and 24th, and May 12, 1956, with only the period to 1870 covered thus far. This series of articles is really useful; we hope it will later on be assembled into a book. Your editor finds the factual statements on those matters about which he knows anything, correct and sufficiently complete in each case to avoid the least misunderstanding. The choice of what to omit seems unusually well made.

MEMBERS' APPEALS

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

Wanted--France Nos. 12 and 13 on cover, single or used with any other number; preferred single. Quote price; do not send covers. Charles F. Harrity, 818 Hampden Blvd., Reading, Pa. (Member 254).

Exchange: I have France B7 mint o.g., catalog \$4.00; B9 mint o.g. cat. \$12.50; B10 mint o.g. (thin spot) cat. 50.00. I wish to exchange for France C14 mint o.g., cat. \$32.00; C15 mint o.g. cat. \$24.. Allen P. Stearns, 240 Beale St., Wollaston, Mass. (Member 614).

Wanted: Exchange France and Free French colonial odd values to complete sets: Scott basis.. John Holmdahl, 2300 Dashwood Av. Oakland 5, Calif. (Member 260).

Wanted: Langlois & Bourselet's Les Obliterations des Bureaux de Poste des Colonies Françaises. Leo F. Goerthm P.O. Box 7, Avon Lake, Ohio. (Member 349).

Anything I advertised for in this column in the last year is still wanted, especially cover with Le Mans 1954 Auto Race pictorial postmark. S.G. Rich, Verona, N.J. (Member 2)

Will buy for Collectors Club Library: Brunel, 1928, Les Emissions de Timbres-Poste Français.; also the 1949 revised edition of Maury, Histoire des Timbres-Poste Français. The early edition of each is not needed. Editor, F. & C. Phil.: adlet a courtesy to our meeting host.