



# France & Colonies Philatelist

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## Flammes Illustrees

(WHAT TO COLLECT NEXT — No. VIII)

Frederik S. Eaton (#707)

### Introduction:

In December 1964 your editor printed a most provocative, if brief, article with title same as the sub-heading above, in our F & C PHILATELIST. That excellent article seems to have engendered a series which has embraced the following titles of side-lines of French collecting:

MAR 1965 Unusual Cancellations on XXth Century France.

JUN 1965 What to Collect: Suggestions from One Collector.

OCT 1965 French Red Cross Issues.

APR 1966 Proofs and Essays.

JUL 1966 Stamps with Inscriptions on Back.

OCT 1966 "Les Tableaux"; Precancel Varieties; More on Proofs & Essays

Consequently this writer terms the following sketch "Number VIII of a series."

### Preface:

A few general remarks to introduce and illuminate the subject.

If a collector who matured in the United States thinks that the acme of specialization is represented by a study of plate varieties on 1c or 3c 1851 and 1857 issues of U. S. stamps, or by the nine varieties illustrated in the U. S. Specialized Catalogue of the 2 cent carmine 1912 to 1920, as examples of specialization in adhesive stamps, or in the postmark category, by such fields as New York Supplementary and Foreign Mail "killers" of 1871-7, Packet can-

cellations on incoming foreign mail, or Mississippi River Packet Boat Postal Markings, to cite only a few, we can say to him: "Mister, you've got another think coming. Turn to France; you ain't seen nothin' yet!"

Specialization, in every conceivable field of French philately, is, actively, and by large numbers of collectors, carried out to a higher degree than in any other country we know, Germany and Great Britain being no exception.

Readers of today's French philatelic press are well aware of this. Examples are the still-continuing discoveries of new true plate types of the Blanc and Sower issues by DeLizeray and others; the almost too-involved study of French booklets, if carried to its ultimate and complete classification and study; or the coils that don't look like coils at first glance, to cite again just a few in the XXth Century period.

Marcophilie, as the French term the broad field of postal markings, goes far beyond the 19th century topics mentioned in the catalogues and with which most of us are more or less familiar.

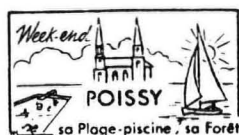
There are, as with us in the U. S., mechanical and handstamped cachets for First Day Covers and for special events. Philatelic, to be sure—the word used here in the slightly derogatory sense of the purist.

Then there are the *Flammes*. The word "flamme" comes as you might guess from "flame," referring to the original wavy lines, flag, or supplemental forms streaming off from the dated town postmark, as with our own flag cancels or today's slogans.

Until very recently when there took place a great acceleration in the issue and use of *Flammes Illustrées*, the commonest were the non-illustrated *flammes*; a rectangular, usually boxed, brief slogan of stereotyped and rigidly edited format.

The "*Flamme Illustrée*" we are discussing is an illustrated *flamme* where we find a 24mm by 40 to 45mm rectangular pictorial marking, mechanically applied, generally boxed, with accompanying dated town mark cancelling a stamp. This *flamme* illustrates and advertises the beauties, products, his-





tory, attractions, and "advantages" of the town whose conventional cancellation forms the supplementing half of the entire postal marking.

There are (or were) 5 types of these imprints, classified according to the make of cancelling machine, but about 94% of all flammes illustrées employed up to July 1964 are of one type known as SECAP. Off hand there appear to be none of other than this type issued during the past two years, although older flammes of the other types are still in occasional use.

In what form are these collected?

They may be collected as "coupées": cut fragments approximately 2x4 inches (5x10 cm) in size—a piece just large enough to show the complete flamme, cachet and adhesive stamp, surrounded by a decent margin. This form of collecting has the advantage of small bulk, and is a size which permits of moderately satisfactory display in a stock-book-type album. Cut-out flammes are generally cheaper than those on entire envelopes.

The perfectionist and the serious marcophile will have none of this cutting. He wants the complete envelope, regardless of any handicap of bulk. He prefers the permanent mounting of two, or at most three, envelopes to a single loose-leaf page. "The" catalogue (of which more later) states, and we translate literally "the flammes cut out are, with rare exceptions, destitute of merchandizable value"; but you will find that dealers and trading collectors ask 50 or even more per cent of the price of entire envelopes. (Many French collectors prefer "coupées".) This same catalogue adds: "The prices apply to entire envelopes in a good state of preservation, without having addresses or commercial corner cards invading upon the impression of the flamme." To all of which the writer must add two requirements of which he was very early made aware: (1) that the envelope be of white paper, and (2), more obvious, that with rare exceptions, the imprint of the flamme be sharp and clear. (A few towns seem never to have met this desirable qualification!)

Next you will ask HOW these are classified in collecting.

Possibly the least intellectual presentation, but that followed by most of the serious collectors, is a purely alphabetical (by towns) mounting. This is the arrangement of the "official" catalogue of S. C. O. T. E. M.: the French "Société des Collectionneurs d'Oblitérations Temporaires et Mécaniques à Flamme Illustrée ou Stylisée" (which is in words so like our own English, that there seems little need to translate). Each flamme, though arranged by towns alphabetically, has a catalogue number which was given chronologically (as it was issued). Therefore Chablis, for example, with two flammes, lists first in 1961 as No. 1028 and then in 1963 as No. 1339.

Some collections are distinctly topical, as i.) cathedrals, ii.) all buildings and structures, iii.) landscapes, iv.) historical topics, v.) economic and industrial, vi.) vacation spots, etc.

Many collect by departments, as do the older postal-marking collectors with pre-stamp, lozenges with numerals, etc. They strive to complete a (or all) department(s).

A few mount their flammes chronologically from No. 1 to the most recent catalogue number. There is a chronological listing for cross-reference in the back of the catalogue.

One exception to the alphabetical listing of the catalogue should be mentioned. Flammes of multiple use (same design employed by different towns) have a separate and well-subdivided-by-type section in the catalogue.

The "official" catalogue mentioned above is in its second edition—1964. With 30 supplements it would appear to be ready for a new edition, which would please many, for its prices on all but the commonest items are admittedly too low, and make it difficult to sell at a realistic value. But the recent proliferation of flammes has delayed this necessary task. The catalogue is edited by Arthur Lafon, so is equally referred to as Lafon's or SCOTEM. It was published by *Le Monde des Philatélistes* at 30.00 francs (discount to subscribers of this publication). Supplements appear monthly in this periodical. (See FCP, No. 123, Jan. 1966, page 111).

There is another catalogue edited by a M. Robert in which the classification is also alphabetical, but first within departments. This can be an interesting supplement, just as an American stamp collector might wish to own a "Minkus," but it has notable errors of omission, and appears not to be at all

"official" in France. Catalogue numbers quoted appear always to be those of the S.C.O.T.E.M. or Lafon catalogue.

To complete the "how to collect" subject, we can only report that much experimentation and correspondence has indicated that two (European-sized) envelopes secured to an 8½x11 inch loose-leaf page by gummed and transparent corners, seems best, simplest, and most economical.

We were continually warned against shoe-box collecting, although such seems a most natural way to start, and is the obvious "place" from which to mount one's acquisitions.

The catalogue lists, where such exist, several different town cachets that may accompany a given flamme, as

BLOIS R. P. / LOIR ET CHER

BLOIS GARE / LOIR ET CHER

BLOIS RIVE GAUCHE / L. & C.

The specialist collects all these variations! He likes an older rather than a later use of a given flamme. He collects stampless covers of official mail, though valuation of these is still a moot point. Latterly the newly required department numbers are found as a part of the town cachet (18 Bourges, rather than just Bourges). Changes of office and of department are found in the accompanying town marks, as Sud Finistère instead of Finistère, and 91 Milly La Foret / Essonne instead of Milly La Foret / Seine Et Oise. Such are collected by the very serious specialist.

But do not become frightened by these specializations within the specialty which have been mentioned. Many, probably most, collectors are content with one example only of each distinct pictorial or stylized flamme. Such a collection is a joy to behold, and easily passes the supreme test of a collection which this writer feels is met when a collection can be shown to a non-philatelist without the latter being rapidly bored by the presentation!

The ne plus ultra of flamme collecting is on maximum cards with an allied (by subject and scene) adhesive stamp and illustrative flamme. These are catalogued in the S.C.O.T.E.M. book and are rather expensive.

To date about 2000 flammes illustrées have been issued. By far the larger number catalogue 0.60 F (12c) or less. Some catalogue up to 80c. Very, very few; the truly rare and either early or temporary ones may list as much as \$5 or \$10. These last are very difficult to obtain, and are actually as scarce in number as 1 franc vermilion 1849 stamps.

Subscribers to certain periodicals may obtain packets of "new-issue" flammes at very moderate prices, barely enough to cover costs of envelopes, postage, and secretarial work. This makes easier the keeping up with new issues.

In general, and because of universal price rises since 1964, flammes illustrées are sold close to SCOTEM catalogue values. Liberal French postage rates for small packets by sea mail (so much cheaper than our own 3rd and 4th class) permit low cost sending of this material to the U. S.

This is a very popular branch of "marcophilie" or philately in France today. Literally thousands collect. The waste basket of a business office is as important to such a collector as is the specializing dealer. Countless philatelists who are numbered as serious collectors of stamps or postal markings have turned also to flammes illustrées as a most interesting topical study for relaxation, fun, and enjoyment of what is shown. Often they have made this another specialty subject of deep study and sub-division in pursuing here too, the ultimate.

A word of warning: once you have become interested in this branch of French philately you will never tire of it and you probably could never quit collecting. The bite is very contagious!

## Early French Ambulant (Railroad) Postmarks— The Story of a Collection

John R. Waterfield

About thirty years ago, after browsing around and deciding to enlarge and concentrate on one particular phase of my collection, I came to the conclusion that 19th century French cancellations would offer a wide and interesting field for research in philately as well as an insight into the history of that period.

Consequently I started to amass a collection of the large and small numeral cancellations. I found that each post office in France had a number, small-sized numbers being used until January 1863 when they were replaced by large-sized numbers. The two sets of numbers which were used by the then existing post offices totalled about ten thousand.

In acquiring and working with the more common stamps of that period, on and off cover, I noticed that almost every cover and many of the stamps carried "ambulant" (traveling post office) cancellations or date cachets.

Since my knowledge of this type of cancellation was limited, it became a challenge now to look around for sources of information. Through the courtesy of our local librarian I was able to procure a history of French railroads from the library at the University of Illinois. This book, which was published in 1865, proved to be a great source of help because it covered the exact period in which I was interested.

Then I drew a large map of France and with the help of a French-English dictionary, plotted the various railroad lines existing at that time, as well as filling in some of the details of their development. Sometime later I was able to acquire a map of France printed about 1865 which also showed the various railroads.

A friend of mine who is a printer was kind enough to print about a hundred copies of the above mentioned map for me. These copies I used as pages for mounting the various stamps carrying the railroad cancellations. My next step was to trace on the map, the lines between the terminal points covered by each cancellation, and mount the stamps with a short description at the top.

About fifteen years ago, I secured a copy of Raoul Lesgor's book on French cancellations 1850-76, and a little later, was lucky enough to find an unpublished manuscript covering early French cancellations by Dr. Carrol Chase (later published as a book by E. H. de Beaufond).

During this time while accumulating stamps and covers of this period and carefully sorting them for items of interest, I found that I was able to build a rather comprehensive collection of ambulant postal information.

In developing a collection of this sort the prime requisite is patience, but it can be augmented without too much of a strain on one's budget. One does not need to depend on "hard-to-come-by" rarities. True, these finer items are desirable but are not necessary if unobtainable, to this type of collection.

A study of the items in my possession brought to light a few facts which, as yet, I have not seen in any other material.

One such item is that the highest postal-team letter found in the postmarks was the letter "M" indicating that the largest railroad postal team, or "brigade" as they were called in French, numbered eleven people. (I have never seen the letters "I" or "J" used). One other fact brought out by the study was that when the directions of the postal trip indicated by the lozenge cancellation (on the stamp) and the accompanying dated postmark (on the cover) differed, the latter was found to be the correct one in every case. This was determined by examining covers with the same point of origin and des-



Lozenges used on ambulants to cancel stamps: left, Paris to LeHavre (1852); right, Erquelines to Paris (1855)

Ambulant postmarks, team letters at bottom; inner circle for night runs, octagonal for day.



RR junction sorting office mark of Bar le Duc (#305)



Postmark and lozenge of Paris RR station: Gare De L'Ouest



Rouen station postmark



Postmarks for pick up by Boite Mobile (movable box on wagon, train, dock, or boat)



Postmark of Courrier-Convoyeur on Honfleur to Lisieux run (an agent giving more limited service than an ambulant)



mination but having opposite directions indicated by the cancellations and dated cachets. For example, cancellation "MMC" (Macon to Mt. Cenis) and the Mont Cenis à Macon postmark, show opposite directions but the postmark was correct, for the letter was mailed at Mont Cenis and delivered to Macon as indicated by the pick-up and delivery postmarks of those places also on the cover.

Following are a few drawings of the more common types of "ambulant" cancellations and related postmarks of the early period (to 1876).

Compiling this collection has been most rewarding. It has been a source of ever widening interest and knowledge in this particular field, and it will never be complete because I keep finding items of interest. If one may inject a mercenary note, with the value of French stamps riding the crest at the moment, I am sure my collection has increased in value through the years, for not only have early French stamps become more desirable but collecting ambulant marks is now a standard specialty in France with specialized books and catalogs listing them.

### References

- Lesgor and Minnigerode: "The Cancellations of French Stamps of the Classic Issues 1849-1876." New York, 1948, R. Lesgor. (Chapt. 4, pp. 41-50).  
 F. Billig: "Philatelic Handbook," Vol. 3, Rev. Ed., (Pp. 75-76, 151-7).  
 Dr. C. Chase and E. H. De Beaufond: "Catalogue des Bureaux Ambulants de France de l'Origine à 1900." Paris, De Beaufond, 1952.  
 Dr. C. Chase: "Catalogue des Cachets des Courriers-Convoyeurs de l'Origine à 1900." Paris, De Beaufond, 1954.  
 E. H. de Beaufond: "Catalogue des Oblitérations des Timbres de France 1876-1900 Emission au Type Sage." Paris, de Beaufond, 1960. (Pages 143-179).  
 J. Pothion and P. Lux: "France—Bureaux Ambulants 1845-1965." Paris, 1966. La Poste aux Lettres, 17 Faubourg Montmartre, Paris 9.  
 J. Pothion and P. Lux: "Catalogue des Cachets Courriers-Convoyeurs-Lignes 1877-1964." La Poste aux Lettres, Paris, 1965.

## CURRENT JOURNAL ARTICLES

### Stamp Collecting:

- #105 (1966): Newport: "Postal history of Mont Saint-Michel" (p. 863).

### Perfins:

- #75 (1966): French official perfins.

### L'Entier Postal:

- #6, June 1966: Stibbe: "Les Premiers cartes des colonies Francaises."

### French Polynesia Newsletter:

- #45 (Dec. '65): "Experimental flight Tahiti-Easter Id.-Chile"; "Experimental flight Raratonga-Tahiti";  
 #46 (March '66): Houwink: "Postal affairs in Fr. Oceania in early years of 20th century (from Annuaire de Tahiti)"; "Coins datés of French Polynesia issues (II)"; "Special indication cachets of Papeete";  
 #47 (May '66): "Early 19th cent. letters from Polynesia"; Peace: "Selective bibliography of philatelic literature on New Hebrides"; "Inaugural flight Oct. 1953"; "Further special indication cachets"; "Raratonga-Tahiti experimental flight";  
 #48: (July '66): Peace: (cont.) "Bora Bora";  
 #49 (Oct. '66): "A problem of the Papeete p.o. in 1896"; Peace: (concl.); "Raratonga-Tahiti flight"; "PAA Papeete-Auckland inaugural flight"; "Experimental American Samoa-Wallis Is. flight."



## NEW BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, AND CATALOGS

- "Catalog Cérès 1967, 25th Ed." (With collaboration of Mr. Miro, Robineau, and Roumet). 404 p. 5.60Fr p.p. Editions Cérès, 25 Rue du Louvre, F75-Paris 1. (A standard cat. of France and colonies, considerably expanded this year in sections on early France, early colonies, balloon posts, 1870, and modern varieties, the latter now priced both mint and used.)
- "Berck—67 France Spécialisé Catalogue." 25th ed. 1966. 5Fr. Editions Berck, 6 Place de la Madeleine, F75-Paris 8. (Specialized somewhat for 19th Cent.; 20th Cent. is more topically arranged, emphasizes de-luxe proofs, non-dentelées, 1st day covers, etc.; includes Colonies general issues only, Europa, and Andorre.)
- "Catalogue Thiaude 1967, 52nd Edition" (France, Colonies, French Community, Saar, Monaco, Andorra). 368 pp. 1966, 4.50 Fr p.p. H. Thiaude, 24 Rue du 4-Septembre, F75 Paris 2. (This edition greatly reorganized, with new highly specialized listings of the Ceres 1850; prices greatly raised from '66 and more near the fast-rising market than some other cats.)
- "Catalogue Yvert et Tellier 1967, Tome I, France et Pays d'Expression Française." 584 pp. 1966, 4.50 Fr. p.p. Yvert et Tellier, 37 Rue des Jacobins, F80-Amiens. (More varieties of early France and Colonies listed this year, prices added for cancelled with petit and gros chiffres, balloon posts section greatly revised.)
- "Catalogue Georges Montaux France Spécialisé, Avec Illustrations des Types Multiples." 10th Ed., Nov. 1966. 120 pp. 3.50 Fr. Georges Montaux, 3 Square de L'Opera Louis-Jouvet, Paris 9. (Covers 20th Cent. only.)
- "Catalog 'Créateur 1967!'" 1st Ed. 1966. 44 pp. 3.50 Fr. Published by "Créateur," 143 Rue du Crimée, Paris 14. (A new catalogue, covering France 1940-66 only, in considerable detail, with all the side lines, also Unesco, United Nations, and Europa.)
- "Catalogue des Plis Aeropostaux de France, 1959-65." J. Houlteau, Cercle Aérophilatelique Française, 22 Rue de la Mer, F44-Pornichet. (First-flight cachets and covers sent via jet service.)
- "L'Index Philatélique de France et Variétés 1849-1966." By Maurice Peemans. 88pp. 1966, 3Fr. M. Peemans, 56 Rue du Faubourg-Montmartre, F75-Paris 9. (Priced catalog, chronological order, Europa, OTAN, 1st-day covers.)
- "Timbres et Types, Vol. VI. De Tout en Peu." By Pierre de Lizeray. Brochure no. 85, Le Monde des Philatelistes, 7 Rue des Italiens, F75-Paris 9. 6.70 Fr p.p. (Continuation of series of articles from Le Monde, dealing with studies on 20th century France.)
- "Les Meetings d'Aviation de 1910—Paris-Madrid-1911, Nancy Aviation 1912, Union Postale Interplanétaire." By P. Muller. 24 pp. 1966. Brochure no. 86, Le Monde, 7 Rue des Italiens, F75-Paris 9. 4.70 Fr. p.p.
- "Les Trois 10c Semeuse Camée a Inscriptions Grasses—Les Quatre Présentations du 0.25 Marianne de Decaris—Les Carnets de Huit et Vingt Timbres; Nouveau France 1960; Nouveau Sigle de PTT 1961; France 1963." By Jean Boblique. 1966. Brochure no. 87, Le Monde, 7 Rue des Italiens F75-Paris 9. 5.20 Fr. p.p. (Reprints of articles from Le Monde.)
- "Marques Postales et Obliterations des Bouches-du-Rhone 1700-1876." By G. Honnorat, G. Combes, and J. Brun. 1966. 175 pp. Publ. by G. Combes, 60 Rue Paradis, F13-Marseille 6. 37.50 Fr. (A very detailed thorough work.)
- "Cochinchina." By H. v. Rudolphi and K. K. Wolter. Heft #S26, Schriftenreihe of the Neues Handbuch der Briefmarkenkunde. 9 pp. 1966. DM 4.80. From

- Andreas Salz, 846 Schwandorf i. Bay., Brennestr. 1, Germany. (Covers period 1860-91 in fairly detailed fashion but not exhaustive nor any new information.)
- "Johanna (Anjouan)". By H. v. Rudolphi and K. K. Wolter. Heft #S27 of the Schriftenreihe of the Neues Handbuch der Briefmarkenkunde. 4 pp. DM 2.80. 1966. From: Andreas Salz, 846 Schwandorf i. Bay., Brennestr. 1, Germany. (Covers period 1892-1908, not much more info than in Yvert spec. and Langlois et Bourselet.)
- "Poste Maritime Francaise, Historique et Catalogue, Tome V, Les Paquebots de l'Extreme-Orient." Dec. 1966, 225 pp. By Raymond Salles. 50 Fr plus 3 Fr post. The author: 74 Rude la Tour, Paris 16. (The 5th vol. in this great work, will specially interest collectors of Indochina, India, Ceylon, China, and Japan. 350 figures, 12 maps, over 3,200 voyages of the packets listed, down to 1941. All items priced.)
- "La Poste en Alsace au Cours des Ages (Des Origines a 1870)". By M. Dupouy. 1966. 71 pp. Soc. d'Ed. de la Basse-Alsace, Strasbourg.
- "2eme Supplement au Catalogue des Flammees Illustrees J. Robert." 15 pp. 1966. J. Robert, B. P. 36, F42-Saint-Etienne.
- "Priced Catalogue of Postal Stationery of the World." Edited by Ed. Fladung. Sect. 3, Cameroon to Czechoslovakia ( \$3.00; Sect. 4, Dahomey to Dutch New Guinea, \$2.00. Sect. 5, East Africa to Ethiopia, \$1.50. 1966. (1st Ed.) Higgins and Gage, Inc., 25 No. Santa Anita, Pasadena, Calif.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

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Our member Robert S. Gordon, received the 1966 Phoenix Award which the Arizona Philatelic Hall of Fame presents annually to a non-resident of Arizona "for outstanding contributions to the advancement of philately in U. S." This was in recognition of his prolific and scholarly writings on various philatelic subjects published over the years.

Our frequent contributor, Jan Kindler, was the author of a very interesting and detailed study of 'Caveat Emptor—The Life and Works of S. Allan Taylor' (infamous counterfeiter of stamps) in *Philatelic Literature Review*, v. 15, no. 2, 2nd Quarter 1966.

The long-expected first flight of Air France Paris-Shanghai took place 19 September using a Boeing 707. A rectangular cachet was used on the first-class mail sent via this flight.

An "Association des Collectionneurs des Timbres de la Liberation" (ACTL), is being formed by specialists in this field. The office is at 3 Place Rohan, Bordeaux (G) 3.

The Philatéc stamp is now selling for over 45fr, the sheet for over 275fr, and the Tableaux series for over 45fr. Only 50,000-70,000 Philatéc sheets are thought to be in existence intact and there are certainly more than that many serious 20th century France collectors.

On the occasion of the Journée du Timbre last March 19, the Association des peintres, Graveurs et Créateurs de Timbres-Poste published for sale to collectors a 4-page folder in which a number of illustrations are printed in

color, showing an engraver at work, the *Journée du Timbre* stamp of 1966 with its special cancel, the portraits of all the stamp designers and engravers photographed while at work in their ateliers, and the text by Pierre Gandon, president of the Association, on "Plaisirs du Timbre." The proceeds were for benefit of the security and retirement fund of the Association. Sold by P. Gandon, 4 Rue de Furstenberg, F75-Paris 6 at 12.50 Fr. p.p.

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The Grand Prix Europa 1966 award voted by visitors to the Concours last fall went to the "Nouveau-né" painting stamp.

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The PT has designated a new class of postoffice, called Guichet Annexe Rural (GAR) which gives enlarged services to small settlements, approaching the services of a recette.

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The French Polynesia Newsletter just issued its 50th Whole No. in December—and celebrated by including a cumulative Index of nos. 24-50. Our congratulations to its devoted editor Dr. Rouel Houwink.

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The Aeropex show and 6th F. I. S. A. Congress last June 7-13 in New York City, had a goodly representation from France. The Grand Award, Best in Show, went to Mon. Jean Gravelat for his Pioneer Flights. And silver medals went to Henry C. Dupont for his United States (RF overprints), to Maurice Brossier's French Pioneer Flights. Bronze medals were awarded Louis Lutz for his 1870 Papillons de Metz, to G. Y. Carnot for Madagascar, and to H. C. Dupont for his booklet on the RF overprints. J. Houlteau was the Commissioner for France and Henri Trachtenberg, well-known Paris dealer, attended. Air France issued a special cachet for the 20th Anniversary of its first Paris-New York flight and had a display. (Courtesy Aerophil. Annals.)

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La Société de l'Arc-en-Ciel, 13 rue du Mont-Cenis, F94-Ablon-s.-Seine, is reported to be the only one in France devoted to non-postal vignettes, locals, fiscals, etc.

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R.M.X. of the S.O.C.O.C.O.D.A.M.I. writing in a recent *Le Monde*, asks us to pity the poor French post office window clerk (guichetier) because of the large number of different stamps he has to keep in stock. On 1 Sept. for example, the average window in French p.o.'s had 7 stamps of 0.25 face, 10 or 11 of 0.30 (many with surtax in addition), 6 or so of 0.60, 8 or more of 1.00, plus odd values, air mails, etc. The clerk has nothing to say about what stamps are issued to him but he has a lot of the work connected with selling them.

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The Friends of the Musée Postal have donated to the Musée a curious and probably unique item: a stuffed pigeon which presumably left Tours 23 Nov. 1870 on a flight released by the agents of the telegraphic service of the government. Attached to the bird's tail is a roll of microphoto pellicules destined for Paris. It could be the pigeon baptized "Gambetta" in the books on the pigeon post of the Siege. The pigeon is displayed by Musée in a special case to prevent its deterioration.

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In *Feuilles Marcophiles*, no. 168 (March '66) pp. 7-18, there is a thorough review and quotation of all the French postal regulations that affect philatelists in obtaining cancellations, flammes, first-day covers, etc., many collectors having met difficulties and misunderstandings with p.o.'s about this. It seems that the PT authorizes the p.o.'s to cancel loose stamps and stamps

mounted on piece or cover, with 1st day cancels and to put covers in the mail to receive flammes illustrées or 1st day cancels. But otherwise the p.o. cannot mail covers sent to it under another cover, nor cancel stamps or paper "to order" with ordinary postmarks.

Since booklets of 20 for typo stamps are no longer being printed (after end of 1965), only booklets of 10 and 20 of the Coq type are now being issued (without any private advertising and with standardized covers), as well as some booklets of 4 of the annual red-cross issues. Hence the variety in booklets is now diminished greatly for non-specialist collectors. The Coq booklet stamps, however, are very interesting for the technical student as they come in multiple cylinder "types" and other minor variations (see the articles and books of De Lizeray).

On the occasion of the 150,000th transatlantic crossing made by PAA World Airways on 10 Nov. 1966, the PT put a commemorative cachet on ordinary letters and postcards and registered mail sent to U. S. by that flight and for which the senders requested it.

## F. & C. P. S. OFFICIAL

### NEW MEMBERS

- 1037 HURLEY, John M., 666 Old Main St., Rocky Hill, Conn. 06067. (Indo-China, Annam, Tonkin, Laos, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Cichin-China.)
- 1038 FORTIN, Miss Marguerite, 824 Murray Ave., Quebec 6, Province of Quebec, Canada.
- 1039 SCHNEIDER, Irv, 2731 Sonata Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43209 (French Colonies)
- 1040 CLOVER, Richard S., 3505 Orchard Road, Huntington Valley, Pa. 19006 (Classics, Commemoratives, Cancellations, especially Ambulants and Traveling Post Offices.)
- 1041 DOBIN, Paul, 5500 Greystone St., Chevy Chase, Md. 20015 (Gen. France)
- 1042 FAHS, James R., 109 Rockingham Drive, Windsor Hill, Wilmington, Delaware 19803 (General France)
- 1043 FRENKEL, George P., 4326 West 132nd St. No. C, Hawthorne, Calif. 90250 (Singles mint and used France only)
- 1044 WASSERMAN, Morris, 2917 Broom St., Wilmington, Delaware 19802 (General France)

### CHANGES OF ADDRESS

- 786 SIMMONDS, Wm. E., P. O. Box 4006, University Station, Minneapolis, Minn. 55414.
- 1008 LIVESAY, John E., 131 Longfellow St., Hartsdale, N. Y. 10530.
- 923 LANCE, Jack, P. O. Box 2327, GPO, New York, N. Y. 10001.
- 936 SIMON, William R., 3843 Irongate Lane, Bowie, Maryland 20715.
- 266 ROTHBAUM, Richard E., 24 Old Country Rd., New Rochelle, N. Y. 10804
- 993 KOLODZIEJ, Paul, 951 John St., Joliet, Illinois 60435.
- 1007 CLEMENT, Curtis H., Jr., 412 Bradshaw Ave., Haddonfield, N. J. 08033
- 986 WHITE, Kenneth L., 711 S. Fir Ave. #2, Inglewood, Calif. 90301.
- 915 LUFT, Stanley J., U. S. Geological Survey, 22 Commonwealth Avenue, Erlanger, Kentucky 41018.

## COLLECTING THE CLASSIC FRENCH

Fred Kramer\*

Although I have been a stamp collector since my early school days, it became apparent to me many years ago, that one cannot build up a worthwhile and interesting collection unless one specializes and concentrates on a few fields.

France has become my main interest in the past five years; I had travelled extensively there and its illustrious history fascinated me since my youth. I never found satisfaction in collecting stamps just to fill the empty spaces on album pages. I needed something more challenging. I wanted to study the old issues, read books about them, get acquainted with their cancellations, varieties, etc.—and how fortunate is the collector of France for having such a voluminous literature available to assist him!

France I collect from its earliest "marques postales" to the present, but two issues always caught my special fancy, namely the 1849 and the Bordeaux. Being condition conscious, I include in my collection only pieces which fit the description "very fine to superb." Needless to say, it frustrated me when I acquired stamps described as "very fine" only to discover thin spots, repairs and sometimes a layer of stamp paper skillfully removed. Another field which I found challenging were the major shades and color varieties, which I would like to describe a little in detail for certain examples because readers might be interested in them.

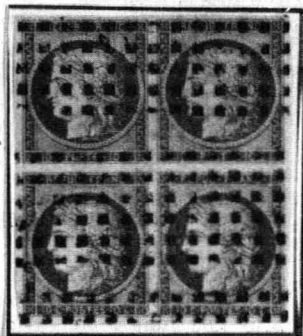
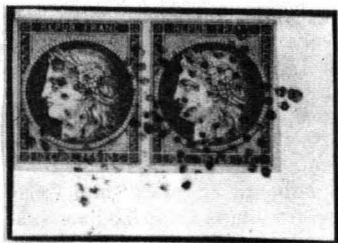
Speaking of the 1849 issue, two values gave me particular concern, about which even the experts here in the U. S. show a great deal of confusion. They are the 20 centimes black and the 1fr carmine-brown. Yvert lists for the 20c two major shade varieties—"noir sur chamois" and "gris noir," both of which are very scarce. Practically all stamps described as such in our auction catalogs are nothing else but reprints or proofs. The scarcity of the "chamois" is best illustrated by the fact that it has been seen on covers only during May and June 1850. The real chamois must be brownish on the surface and the paper at the back of the stamp MUST ALWAYS BE WHITE. The chamois is thus merely the strongest degree found of an oxidation of the varnish coating with which the printed side of the paper of all the early Ceres was treated before printing. The "gris noir" is a variety by itself; it should be called more exactly a "gris brun," because there is a tinge of brown in it.

Most of the 1fr carmine-brown which I acquired are nothing more than a red-brown variety of the carmine color, which Yvert describes as "carmin-foncé." The real "carmin-brun" is actually a variety of the first issue (vermilion) and is exceedingly rare—the total printing together with the regular vermilion and the vermilion terne is estimated at only 300,000. In my opinion this stamp is listed incorrectly in the catalogs; it should be a variety of the vermilion and not of the carmine.

The Bordeaux issue of 1870, although its printing was not large, is easier to acquire in very fine condition because the margin between stamps is much wider than on the 1849 issue. What an array of beautiful colors and shades exists in this issue! Some are major varieties and scarce. For the longest

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\*—Fred Kramer, our readers will recall, is one of our members who covered himself and FCPS with glory at INTERPEX last Spring when he won a Gold Medal for Best In Show in the France and Colony Awards and a Silver Medal in the Overall Interpex Awards, for his France first issues and Bordeaux. Several prominent philatelists who have served on international juries assured us that Kramer's exhibit was outstanding by any standards and well merited the awards. See pictures in FCP #124, p. 138-140.



- 1) Cover to Besançon—an unusual combination of 25 centimes 1849 issue with 25c Napoleon “Republic Francaise”.
- 2) (left) 10 centimes bistre—1853 “Repub. Franc.” with BLUE lozanges petits chiffres—possibly unique with the BLUE cancel.
- 3) (left) 25 centimes—1849 issue—with RED lozanges petits chiffres “2738”—few copies are known with this RED cancel on this stamp.
- 4) (center) Pair 10 centimes bistre—1849 issue—with Paris “etoile” cancel. This stamp was not too frequently used in Paris—Yvert prices the “etoile” cancel at 450Fr against 175Fr for the regular cancel.
- 5) (right) Superb Block of 4 of the 10 centimes 1849 issue—“annulé rouleau de points.”

time I was looking for the variety of the 80 centimes which Yvert describes as “groseille” (red-currant color). About three years ago an auction house listed in its catalog a cover with the 80 centimes as “color somewhat faded.” I purchased the lot—unseen—and sent it to Paris for expertizing. To my great surprise it was returned to me as being the “groseille” and extremely rare on cover!

No doubt most collectors of the Bordeaux are familiar with the various “reports” (transfer blocks identified by secret markings). A few years ago I purchased two covers with the 4 centimes (in combination with siege of Paris



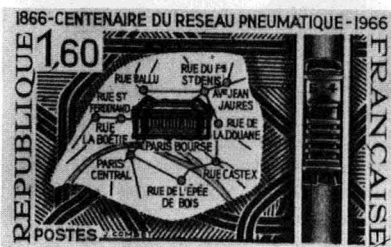
and Napoleon laureated issues used during the stamp shortage in September 1871). It turned out that both 4 centimes stamps were Report I, which Yvert now prices at 1,350 Fr.

These experiences then are some of the rewards when specializing in a country and studying its stamps, which far outweigh the sort of frustrations which I mentioned.

## France New Issues 1966

(continued)

- #23. 24 Sept. (1st Day Paris and Strasbourg; general 26 Sept.) Two stamps: 30c and 60c, Europa—1966. Recess, blue/red. Des. G and J. Bender, engr. Combet. Vertical format, 50 per sheet.
- #24. 22 Oct. (Paris; gen. 24 Oct.) 1.00 F. Vitrail de la Sainte-Chapelle (paintings series). Recess, red, violet blue, blue-black, yellow-green and bistre. Horiz., 25/sheet.
- #25. 5 Nov. (Clermont-Ferrand; gen. 7 Nov.) 0.40 F. Vercingétorix (great names in Fr. history series). Recess, bistre, blue, green. Decaris. Horiz. 25/sheet.
- #26. 5 Nov. (Reims; 7 Nov. gen.) 0.40 F. Clovis (great names series). Recess, red-brown, black. Vertical, 25/sheet. Decaris.
- #27. 5 Nov. (Paris and Noyon; 7 Nov. gen.) 0.60 F. Charlemagne (great names). Recess, red, bistre, and violet. Decaris. Vertical, 25/sheet.
- #28. 11 Nov. (Paris; 14 Nov. gen.) 1.60 F. Centenaire du Réseau Pneumatique. Recess, blue-black, havana, deep brown. Combet. Horiz. 50/sheet.
- #29. 19 Nov. (Bort-les-Orgues and Lanobre; 21 Nov. gen.) 2.30 F. Chateau





- de Val. Recess, bistre, green, blue. Bequet. Vertical, 50/sheet.
- #30. 19 Nov. (Aubusson and Saint-Céré; 21 Nov. gen.) 1.00 F. Tapisserie de Lurçat. Recess, black, blue, light bistre, deep bistre, red, green. Decaris. Vertical, 25/sheet.
- #31. 5 Dec. 0.60 F. Usine Marémotrice de la Rance (for opening ceremony). Recess, blue-black, deep green, bistre. Haley. Horiz., 50/sheet.
- #32. 10 Dec. (Marseille; 12 Dec. gen.) 1.00 F. H. Daumier's "Crispin et Scapin" (great paintings). Recess, blue, light bistre, deep bistre, red, black, green. Gandon. Horiz., 25/sheet.
- #33. 10 Dec. (St.-Etienne; 12 Dec. gen.) Two stamps: 0.25+0.10 F. Ambulancière, 0.30+0.10 F. Infirmerie. Recess, deep green and red, and blue and red. Piel. Vertical, 50/sheet. (Benefit red cross). (Booklets and CFA overprints also available.)
- #34. 17 Dec. (Saint-Lo; 19 Dec. gen.) 0.20 F. Blason de Saint-Lô. Des. M. Louis. Heliogravure. Silver, red and blue. Vertical. (For regular issue series). 100/sheet.
- Ca. 15 Dec. Special Christmas and New Year souvenir sheet for benefit of the Musée Postal. The "Le Nouveau-Né" painting stamp issued 27 June is shown in three impressions on one sheet: at left the impression from one 3-color part of the press, the center one of the other 3-color press, and at right the complete impression as issued. Sold by subscription orders at any French P. O. from 14 Nov. on to 14 Jan. 1967, for 5 fr. each plus postage. Foreign orders to be sent only to R. P. des Postes de la Seine, 52 Rue du Louvre, Paris 1 (intern. reply coupons accepted).

#### France New-Issue Program For 1967

The Minister of the PT has announced the preliminary stamp program for 1967 on the occasion of the 20th Salon Philatélique d'Automne on 10 Nov., as follows (usually some additional stamps are decided on later):

Stamps with surtax: (7)

Journée du Timbre: Facteur du 2nd Empire.

Celebrated personages (4): St. François de Sales, Beaumarchais, E. Zola, A. Camus.

Red Cross (2): works of art.

Stamps without surtax: (25)

- 1) Art series ("paintings") (4): Portrait of Francis 1, Ingres' "La Baigneuse," D. Rousseu' "La Carriole du Père Jundet," detail of a vitraile or objet d'art.
- 2) Great names of French history (3): Hughes Capet, Philippe Auguste, Saint-Louis.
- 3) Tourism series (for regular use) (7): La Baule, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Morlaix, Hôtel de Ville de St.-Quentin, Chateau St. Germain-en-Laye, Vire, Cathedral of Rodez.
- 4) Commemoratives and miscellaneous (11): Winter Olympic games 1968, Universal Exposition Montreal, Congrès des Sociétés Philatéliques at Tours, Prof. Ramon and bicentenary of the École Vétérinaire d'Alfort, Nungesser and Coli, Esnault Pelterie (Salon de L'Aéron. et de l'Espace), Europa (2), Grand Pont de Bordeaux, Congress of Union Européenne de Radiodiffusion, 9th Congrès Intern. de Comptabilité.

Andorra (7).

Three UNESCO official stamps will be issued by France on Dec. 17, 1966, to replace the present ones. The design shows a symbol adopted for the Alphabetization Program. Values are 0.25, 0.30 and 0.60 Fr. Des. and engr. by Combet, monocolored, recess. Horizontal 50/sheet. Sold at several French P. O.'s but can be used only at UNESCO office, Place Fontenoy, Paris 7.