

THE PATENT

Monthly newsletter of the Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club

February 2023

Guest editor: Dick Colberg

Hello fellow collectors. The February meeting of the Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club will be held Tuesday, February 21st at the Lebanon Community Library at 6:30 p.m.

For the program, Dick Colberg will present his newly formed exhibit of the postal history of Condom, France. Admittedly, this collection started as a joke, but it has developed into a really serious study. Don't miss it. With luck we'll be able to use the new AV equipment in the library. If not, the material will be passed around for close inspection.

Our January meeting was a rousing success, led off by James Joppy's postcard of boxer Ralph Dupas and a tremendous amount of research. Thanks James. This was followed by a show and tell by others in attendance.

Well, the ground hog saw his shadow and now we're due for six more weeks of winter. The other noteworthy event this month is the periodic stamp bourse at the Farm and Home Center in Lancaster. It will be held on February 12th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Kevin Kellman, leader of the pack of dealers, will not be there. (So, no free pizza!) He is still recuperating from a nasty auto accident a couple of months ago. We continue to wish him a speedy and complete recovery. But please go and support the other dealers.

And watch this space next month for details of the Lancaster Stamp Show coming in April.

Thematic exhibiting 101

While attending the monthly meeting of my stamp club in France in November 2022, I learned a bit about Thematic exhibiting. Not sure I needed to know it, but . . .

I took with me a copy of my newly formed exhibit of Condom, France, postal history. I showed the cover in Figure 1 for which I could not figure out the destination town.



Straight line **CONDOM** (25 x 4) to ?. September 5, 1773.
Rate is 4 sols due, up to 20 Lieues [80 km.]. Tariff of 1759

Figure 1

Seeing it I think you can understand why! I showed it to my friend Yves, a knowledgeable collector, and he almost instantly came up with the right answer; Mont-de-Marsan.

Well, this aroused the interest of two others, Eric and Christine, club Vice-President and immediate past President, respectively. Christine is an award-winning Thematic exhibitor. Her topic is playing cards. Christine and Eric agreed with Yves's choice of Mont-de-Marsan. That mess of scribbling before the M of Mont is just an A (meaning to) and some scratched out excess writing. So, it's meant to say, "A Mont-de-Marsan". Mystery solved.

Then Christine, the thematic guru, really got into it when she viewed the rest of the exhibit pages. It turns out that I have three covers, all with different machine cancels, referring to Armagnac (the liqueur), for which Condom is well known.

The first, Figure 2, is a SECAP machine cancel denoting Condom in Armagnac. It seems that the little guy in the pictorial cancel is significant. Note that he is carrying a sword behind his back. A sword is referred to as a "rapier". There is a digestif, an Armagnac-based liqueur, called Pousse Rapière, Figure 3. But wait, we're not done! What is the significance of the guy with the sword? Kind of looks like one of the three Musketeers, right? See Figure 4. Well, Condom is located in the Gascony region of France, in the south-west corner of the country. Gascon is a reference to a musketeer. Thus, it all ties into a neat little bundle and a delight for thematic collectors.

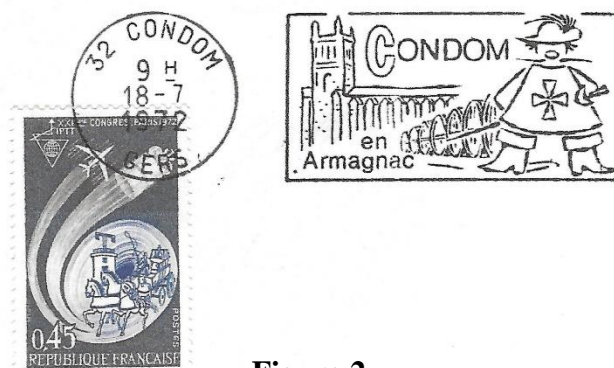


Figure 2
SECAP machine cancel



Figure 3
Pousse Rapière Armagnac



Figure 4
The Three musketeers plus D'Artagnan

Christine wasn't done yet! She spotted two more machine cancels denoting Armagnac. See Figures 5 and 6.

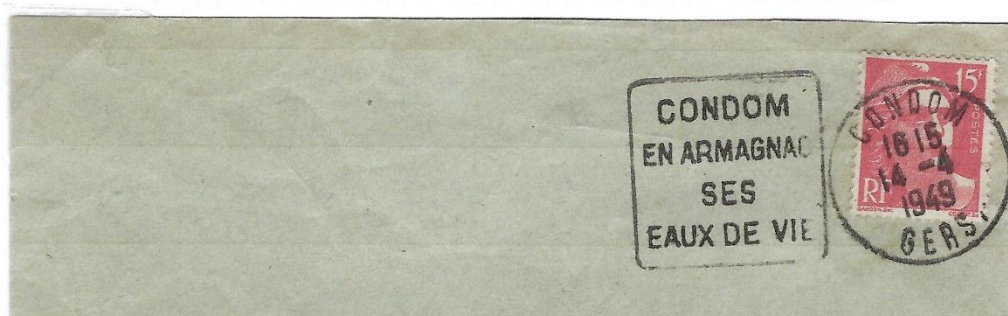


Figure 5
Daguin machine cancel



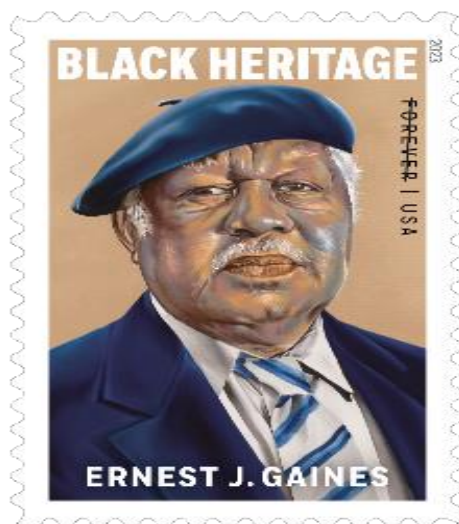
Figure 6
R.B.V. machine cancel.

In Figure 5 we have a slogan cancel: **Condom en Armagnac. Ses eaux de vie.** Eaux de vie can be translated as “waters of life” or “Brandy”, take your pick! Condom-en-Armagnac is just another name for Condom.

Figure 6 touts the Regional Exposition and Fair, the first week in September, that appears to have been going on for 700 years. Now that’s staying power!

I’m tellin’ ya, the stuff you learn when putting something like this together. And Yves, Eric and Christine exemplify the true spirit of philately in being willing to lend a helping hand and share their knowledge. What’s not to love about this hobby of ours?

U.S. Postal Service Issues Ernest J. Gaines 2023 Black Heritage Stamp



“No one should think that Black history is confined to the month of February, when evidence to the contrary appears everywhere and in every month. Black History Month is not a token,” says Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, national president for the Association for the Study of African

American Life and History (ASALH).” It is a special tribute, a time of acknowledgement, of reflection and inspiration, which comes to life in real and ongoing activities throughout the year.

Black History Month officially kicks off each year when the Postal Service announces the Black Heritage Forever stamp. The 2023 honoree is Ernest J. Gaines. The First Day Issue ceremony was held on 1/23/2023 at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Lafayette, LA.

He is 46th in the series of distinguished African American men and women who have received one of the nation’s highest honors appearing on a U.S. postage stamp. The first in the series featured abolitionist Harriet Tubman in 1978. Also included is Carter G. Woodson, the father of Black history and creator of Negro History Week, which later became Black History Month.

Adding a vital African American voice to American literature, Ernest J. Gaines brought worldwide attention to generations of men and women who asserted their own dignity in the face of racial oppression and violence. Gaines was born on Riverlake Plantation in the town of Oscar just outside New Roads, LA, where his family had lived in the former slave quarters for five generations. He moved to California in 1948, but for decades afterward, his fiction reflected a deep and unbreakable connection to the rural Louisiana of his youth.

After serving in the Army for two years and graduating from college, Gaines received a prestigious fellowship in 1958 to study creative writing at Stanford University. He published his first novel, “Catherine Carmier,” in 1964, but he achieved true fame, widespread acclaim, and a Pulitzer Prize nomination in 1971 with “The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman,” a novel chronicling the recollections of its 110-year-old African American protagonist, whose life spans slavery to the civil rights era.

In 1981, Gaines took a position teaching creative writing at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (then known as the University of Southwestern Louisiana) and soon became its writer-in-residence. In 1983, he published the novel “A Gathering of Old Men,” about a group of African American men who assert their humanity and pride in the face of long-standing prejudice and violence.

In 1993, Gaines published his most critically and popularly acclaimed novel, “A Lesson Before Dying,” about a college-educated African American teacher who provides education and inspiration to a young farmhand awaiting execution for murder. Over the course of their difficult visits in prison, they form a bond that shows both the need to resist those who would deny them their dignity and self-respect. In addition to earning the National Book Critics Circle Award, “A Lesson Before Dying” resulted in Gaines receiving a prestigious MacArthur Foundation “genius grant.”

In 2013, Gaines accepted the National Medal of Arts from President Barack Obama, calling it the greatest honor he had ever received. Today the Baton Rouge Area Foundation continues to endow an annual Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence, which recognizes African American fiction writers who are just beginning to rise to national prominence.

The stamp features an oil painting of Gaines based on a 2001 photograph. Mike Ryan designed the stamp with art by Robert Peterson. Greg Breeding served as art director.

The Ernest J. Gaines Black Heritage stamp is being issued as a Forever stamp. It will always be equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price.

Submitted by Jim Joppy

United States Postal Service, <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/national-releases/2022/1214ma-usps-to-issue-ernest-j-gaines-black-heritage-stamp.htm> accessed 4 Feb 2023

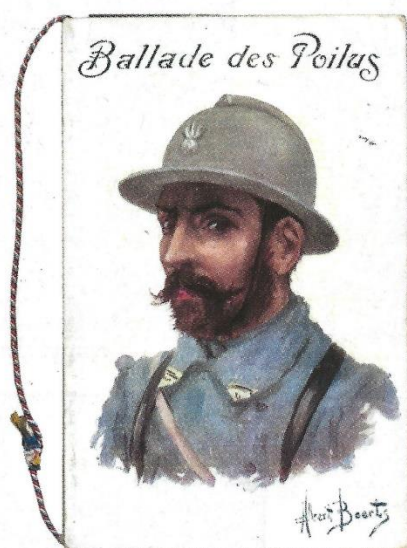
The hairy side of philatelic translation

By Dick Colberg

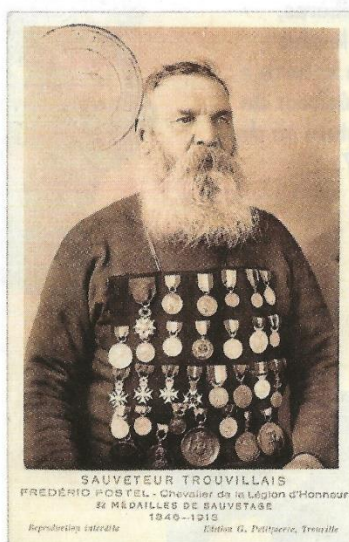
Part of the way I keep busy when I am in France is to prepare an index for two philatelic journals to which I subscribe. I have indexed about ten years of each one. For each article, I translate the title from French into English. This index is then fed to the APS and they enter it into their database so the articles can be searched by researchers. I just finished some of the work yesterday (*editor's note: November 10, 2022*), having included the November issue of one journal.

Last week I found an article that was very hard to translate (I found many this way!). It was a thematic article, well-illustrated by postcards. It was about WWI French soldiers, and referred to them as *Poilu*. Well, “poilu” means hairy. The only possible link I could figure out was that all of the soldiers had real bushy mustaches. So, I went with that. Yesterday at the Tabac while having coffee with friends I brought this up with a teacher who speaks pretty good English. She assumed it was used to describe the battle-weary soldiers who rarely had time to shave or get their hair cut. This sort of fit with my thinking and I felt comfortable with the translation I had used.

Yesterday afternoon, while sorting through some miscellaneous stamp journals for which I was not indexing, I found an article right on target. The term *poilu* does indeed refer to the mustached, bearded, soldiers! Figure 7 is a scan of some of the photos in the article. The guy at the left is a WWI soldier. The guy in the middle could have been in that war, though he died shortly thereafter. And, the guy at the right, (soldier?) seems to have been included just for his 1.35 meter long beard (just over 53 inches).



« *Ballade des Poilus* » carte postale chanson consacrée aux Poilus.



Frédéric Postel, sauveteur trouvillais, chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, 32 médailles (1846-1915)



Louis Coulon, ouvrier aux usines Saint Jacques de Montluçon, né le 26 février 1826 à Vandenesse (Nièvre). Il est ici en compagnie de sa nièce. Longueur de sa barbe : 1,35 mètre.

Figure 7

Calendar of Events

2023 Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club Meetings

Date	Presenter
February 21, 2023	Dick Colberg – Condom, France: A Postal History
March 21, 2023	
April 18, 2023	
May 16, 2023	Scott English, APS President
June 20, 2023	
July 18, 2023	Summertime Show and Tell – Part I
August 15, 2023	Summertime Show and Tell – Part II
September 19, 2023	
October 17, 2023	
November 21, 2023	Scott Ney – The peak of post-Great War Hyperinflation in Germany and Eastern Europe
December 19, 2023	Annual dinner, location TBD

The PSLC Events Calendar is located at the following link:

[Philatelic Society of Lancaster County – Award-winning, non-profit community organization dedicated to promoting stamp and postal history collecting as a hobby for education and fun. \(lcpss-stamps.org\)](https://lcpss-stamps.org/)

The Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club thanks the PSLC for hosting our affiliate page, which is accessible by clicking the following link:

[The Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club – Philatelic Society of Lancaster County \(lcpss-stamps.org\)](https://lcpss-stamps.org/)

