



**CHANNEL ISLANDS
SPECIALISTS' SOCIETY**

December 2020

Volume 39 No.4

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS SPECIALISTS' SOCIETY

Founded in 1950 for the study of the stamps and postal history of the Channel Islands

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Honorary Life Members:

Michael Wieneke

Membership is open to all interested in Channel Islands stamps and postal history, postcards and ephemera. Membership application forms can be obtained from the Membership Secretary or downloaded from the society website at www.ciss.uk. Exchange packets are circulated regularly. A postal auction is held twice yearly. A 36-page colour journal is published quarterly. Meetings are held three or four times a year in London and the Provinces.

ADVERTISEMENT RATES IN LES ILES NORMANDES

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SUBSCRIPTIONS and STANDING ORDERS

Will members please note the following points:-

1. Subscriptions, which are due on **1st January**, should be sent direct to **Mark Bailey** and **NOT** to any other officer of the Society. A Subscription Invoice will be sent in the December issue of the Journal.
2. All members may pay by PayPal. The amount will be the appropriate subscription rate plus an amount to cover the PayPal fee. Send your PayPal payment to treasurer@ciss.uk
3. Overseas members may still pay by STERLING cheque drawn on a U.K. Bank. Non-sterling cheques and non-sterling currency notes will no longer be accepted. Money Orders in sterling currency are acceptable.
4. Members who have not paid by **14th February** are assumed to have resigned.
5. Standing Order forms should be **sent by members to their own bank** and not to the Subscription Secretary.

Subscription rates for the year 2021 are:-

Countries	Class of postage	ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES in pounds sterling
Zone 1: Great Britain and Channel Islands	2 nd class Letterpost	Ordinary Member aged under 65 years, £25 ; or if choosing electronic copy of quarterly journal, £20 . Juniors, Members aged 65 years and over and Registered Disabled, £15 ; or if choosing to receive electronic copy of quarterly journal, £12.50 .
Zone 2: Europe and Rest of World	Airmail Printed Paper/ Small Packet rate	Ordinary Member, £30 ; or if choosing an electronic copy of the journal, £20 .

Note: from 1st January 2019 there has been no Life Member category.

We are pleased to welcome the following new member:

2195 John Reynolds, Norfolk.

CONTENTS

Secretary's Clipboard	3
Competition Day.....	4
News of Members.....	5
Michael Wieneke - My life as a Philatelist.....	6
Obituary – The Late Keith C. Raymond.....	8
Alderney Cover Posted Out of Course – September 1952	9
Some Occupation items recently acquired in France by our French member, Henri Chartier, in St Malo	12
A 1944 Belgium to Jersey cover with INACHEMINABLE cachet	22
Jersey Barred Oval handstamp	26
The Leyton 'Air Mail' cover to Guernsey dated 10 June 1924	28
Forthcoming New Stamp Issues in 2020/21	35

Whilst every care is taken in the production of this Journal statements expressed in articles in *LES ILES NORMANDES* are the sole responsibility of the author(s) and are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor or by the Channel Islands Specialists' Society neither of whom can be held responsible for the accuracy of the information therein or any consequence arising there from

Late Robert Porter

It is with deep regret that we have to record the death of Society Treasurer, Robert Porter. Robert passed away peacefully at home on Wednesday, 14th October from cancer. Robert joined the Society in 1988 and served as Treasurer from 1999 until his death. Our deepest sympathy and condolences are extended to Pauline and family.

Editorial

This is a packed edition incorporating a range of news, announcements and interesting articles. This also records the introduction of a new category of membership – Honorary Life Member – which has been awarded to our German member, Michael Wieneke, for outstanding services to the Society and to Channel Islands philately in particular and for his occupation knowledge and outstanding contribution of specialist knowledge to so many members.

SECRETARY'S CLIPBOARD

by Richard Flemming

The Covid-19 pandemic is still having a big impact on the Society with no members' meetings held since February of this year. Still, behind the scenes, the Executive and Full Committees have been active, striving to improve the membership experience within the Society. There have been significant changes made to the Society's website, having moved to the new www.ciss.uk link. Here you will see that the "Topics" page has been re-written and the layouts of the "Homepage" and "News" pages have seen many additions too. The Covid-19 pandemic has also hit our proposed 2021 programme hard. Please see the "Programme" page on our new website and changes listed in the **"Forthcoming Meetings"** below.

On a positive note, we have seen the launch of Roger Harris's two-volume book titled *Pioneer Aviation in the Channel Islands*. Further details are on page 34, the inside back cover of this edition and on-line.

Finally, on behalf of all the Committee members may I wish you a Merry Christmas and peaceful New Year and let us hope that we will soon see the end of this pandemic and get back to some normality. Take care and keep safe.

Forthcoming Meetings:

6 th February 2021	Member's Competition Day
17 th April 2021	Member's Meeting: Theme: Smaller Channel Islands
23 rd – 25 th July 2021	Member's Weekend Meeting at The Three Swans, Market Harborough
25 th September 2021	Annual General Meeting plus auction and displays

PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE www.ciss.uk FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION ON HOW EACH MEETING IS BEING MANAGED.

All members' meetings are normally held at the Royal Philatelic Society London, 15 Abchurch Lane, London, EC4N 7BW.

COMPETITION DAY - 6th February 2021 by Alan Whittaker

Unfortunately, as Covid 19 has caused us to cancel our normal meeting at the Royal, the committee has decided to still hold the Annual Competitions, but in a different way.

Members may submit their 16 sheet entry in photocopy or printed scan format with the pages numbered at the top left for the judge to view them as you intended. These should be sent directly to the Competition Secretary who will forward them to our judge for marking at home. Entry form and Competition Rules are now available to view on the Society website **or by application to me by post as below**. It will help preparation if all entrants could complete the entry form and send to the Competition Secretary prior to the closing date for entries, to arrive no later than 31st January 2021, please send to: **A. Whittaker, 48, Northlands Road, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 5SD**. It is hoped that entries, results and judges' comment sheets will be returned to entrants by 16th February.

Our annual competitions will once again be judged by Graham Winters. Members who have entered previous competitions have found Graham very helpful with his comments and advice, which has helped them to go on and improve their entries, and enjoy the experience of putting together 16 sheets from their collection in a manner that helps with the way they write up their collections.

Please consider entering one or more of the Society competitions. This years' competitions are for: Stamps, Postal History, Occupation Postal History and Markings, Open Philately, Ephemera and Previous Winners.

We hope some of our new members will be tempted to enter, If you have any questions or need advice please contact me at competitions@ciss.uk **or by post to my address as above**.

Note: The competition rules were also published in *Les Iles Normandes* Volume 35 No.4 in December 2016.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Michael Wieneke recently gave notice of his intention to resign his membership at the end of this year due to the restrictive impact on travel to the United Kingdom with Covid19 and Brexit. His exemplary service to the Society and contribution to Channel Islands philately generally prompted two Past Presidents to refer this to the Executive Committee to consider his membership for the future and the need to retain his constant contributions and expert Occupation knowledge for the future benefit of our membership.

Thus, a decision has been made by the Executive Committee to introduce an Honorary Life Membership category of membership for exceptional expertise, varied and learned contributions to the future of Channel Islands philately and postal history. The first member to be accorded this honour will be Michael Wieneke of Cologne, Germany.



A small group on a tour of German Occupation structures on the coasts of Jersey at the CISS Silver Jubilee 1975 weekend meeting at the Mont Millais. (L to R Gill Parsons, David Winnie, Pat Gurney, David Gurney, ? , ? , John Owens, Ian Griggs, Ted Watkins, Mick Waters, David Parsons, Sandra Waters and Robin Merson). Can anyone help with the two unknown faces?

Michael Wieneke - My life as a Philatelist.

In 1968 I swapped my German collection for a collection of “German Occupied Territories” because I could not afford the expensive sets from Germany and the Occupied Territories in those days were quite reasonable. I also then only earned about £40 per month! In 1969 at a stamp show in Dortmund I met a stamp dealer named Jakob von Uexkull just returned from the C.I.



where he had purchased a complete set of registered Occupation covers from the Sub-Offices. He told me there were more varieties of the Occupation stamps than listed in the Michel catalogue and there was a special catalogue called the “Newport-catalogue”. Thus I started a specialised C.I. collection. In 1975 Joan and I spent our “pre-honeymoon” on Jersey where I met Roy Moore (Collectors Emporium), Bill Newport (who made me a member of the CISS) and George Robbe. Now I became a specialised collector. Beside C.I. my second specialised fields were Croatia and Bohemia and Moravia. Because the stamps of the Occupation territories became more and more expensive I sold most parts of my collection and only kept C.I. and Croatia beside my East German-collection. In 1976 Joan and I went to Guernsey for the first time, here I met Ernest Baker and we became friends for life and still are friends with his family. He had splendid memories and I learned a lot about the Occupation period from him. I also met Richard Heaume (Occupation Museum in Forest) and he opened the doors of the Greffe, where I was entitled to research the files of FK 515.

In 1979 Heinz Möhle and I wrote a new edition of the German “C.I.-Handbook” and for the first time this book also had chapters about the Postal History.

In the late 1990s Leopold Mayr and I started to write the new handbook for the C.I. Occupation, which we were able to publish at the end of 1999. In 2004/2005 together with a collector-friend I started to write the German handbook of Croatian Postal History, which was published at the end of 2006. I have also had many articles published.

When the FGCI was founded as a legally registered stamp collectors society, Leopold became chairman and Tony Peters and I formed the rest of

the board. When Leopold married, I took over as Chairman of FGCI until we had to close the society due to a lack of interested members.

In 1992 I became a member of the German BPP and registered expert for C.I.-Occupation and some years later I became registered expert for Croatia too. Due to my cancer-surgery, I finished expertising at the end of April 2015, but stayed a member of BPP as “Senior”. I also sold my collections of the C.I. and of Croatia. I only kept my collections of the Baltic (Estonia, Lithuania and the Feldpost-collection of the Baltics in the German Army) and also my collection of East-Germany.

I remain a member of many collector societies, where I also worked on the board of the following societies: Feldpost 1939 – 1945: Chairman and Vice-Chairman (for some years) of Yugoslavia: Vice-Chairman and Manager of the Croatia-study group (for some years), Estonia (now Baltikum-Society) Vice-Chairman/Secretary (still acting).



As a Customs officer I worked as an Investigator in the fields of Economic Crime. I did investigations in illegal trades with East Germany (now called “Schalk-Business”), Origin Fraud (the reason why I was in the Far East for investigations) and in Proliferation (Illegal deliveries of knowledge, technologies and materials producing weapons of mass-destruction, i.e. ABC-Armaments. Most investigations were classified up to “Top Secret”.

Congratulations to Gerald Marriner FRPSL awarded a Vermeil (81 points) for his Postal History entry **The German Occupation of the Channel Islands** at Estonia 2020.

Gerald Marriner FRPSL had the honour of giving an online presentation to Fellows and Members of the Royal Philatelic Society London on Thursday 12th November when the subject of his presentation was ‘**The German Occupation of The Channel Islands - Disruption to the Mail Service.**’

Phil Dunn of 12, Wyndham Crescent, Burton-upon-Trent DE15 0DF
Tel: 01283 845190 would very much like to obtain a copy of **A POSTCARD CATALOGUE OF HERM ISLAND AND JETHOU** by Jon Aitchison and Mark Bailey, if you have a spare copy for sale.

Obituary – The Late Keith C. Raymond

Keith died on the 13th April 2020. He was a keen collector of Channel Islands postal history and renowned for his displays of quite unusual and remarkable items of Channel Islands postal history on many occasions.



Brought up in Beckenham, Keith attended Whitgift School in South Croydon and spent his working life as an aviation re-insurance broker at E.W. Payne, subsequently Sedgwick Payne often travelling to meet his European clients by train rather than plane which was always a cause of some surprise!

A Freeman of the City of London, Keith was such a good listener and interested in everything, from family and friends to business, sport and politics, avidly reading the Telegraph and the FT every-day from cover to cover. Amongst his many interests were sailing, painting and watching cricket whenever he could. A member of Surrey/The Oval from boyhood and latterly an MCC Member at Lords.

Keith met Joy playing tennis in Sanderstead, they married in 1957 and honeymooned in Jersey where they returned to for many family holidays.

Of course, collecting Channel Islands postal history was a passion, travelling to fairs all over the UK and Europe, building a wide and interesting collection. Keith was one of our characters and renowned for showing us some remarkable items from aviation and other postal history aspects, well known for his enjoyment of a good lunch and fine wine, he would arrive at meetings well after lunch and a head would appear quietly around the door with a broad smile to the full acclaim of those present!!

Keith and Joy enjoyed many cruises, the Baltic being one of the favourites. Retired at 59 giving him more time to devote to his interests as well as family, extended family, colleagues and friends. He continued to meet old colleagues/friends for regular lunches in London and as a member of Probus where he and Joy enjoyed numerous trips in the UK and Europe.

Keith had a never-ending capacity for interest and love in all those close to him and our thoughts and good wishes are extended to Joy after 63 years of devoted marriage, daughters Sue and Cath and grandchildren Ellie and Joe.

Alderney Cover Posted Out of Course – September 1952

by David Winnie

I have recently purchased the cover shown below which, although philatelic, is rather nice and most unusual.



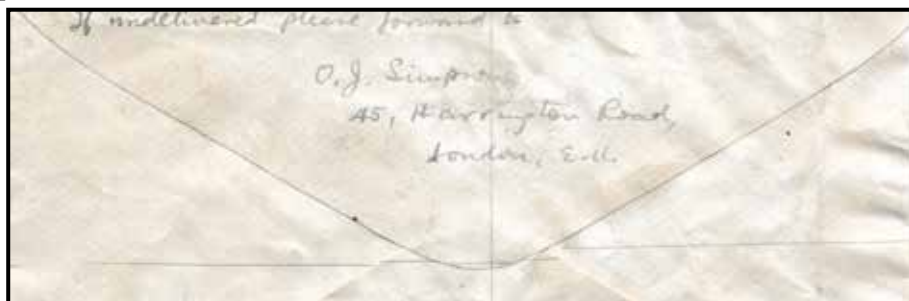
It has been sent by the late John Simpson, one of the two founders of our Society and Past President, to himself at the Seaview Hotel in St. Helier. Should the cover be undelivered, his home address in London has been recorded on the back flap. As the cover had been marked with blue lines and posted in a letter box, it therefore received an unframed two line “**POSTED OUT / OF COURSE**” handstamp in violet which was in use in Jersey during the 1950s. It then acquired a **JERSEY 22** registration label which was the usual label associated with **POSTED OUT / OF COURSE** mail at the time.

When the cover was posted in Alderney, GVI definitive stamps totalling 6½d for postage paid have been cancelled by Alderney double circles on the 4th September 1952. However, the registration rate was increased in

May 1952 and therefore the correct rate for this item should be 2½d for the letter rate plus 6d for the registration fee, totalling 8½d.

The surcharge should be double the shortfall of 2d = 4d and initially, this was recognised by the addition of a **4D/TO PAY/409** instructional mark in red. However, this mark has been 'cancelled' and initialled by the Post Office in St. Helier, and a **3D** surcharge IN RED applied on top of the previous instructional marking.

I do not understand why the surcharge was changed and would be pleased to receive further guidance from members to chairman@ciss.uk. In the meantime, it fits rather nicely into my Alderney Sub-Post office collection and is a clear and excellent example of an unusual handling of a letter posted out of course.



2021 GUERNSEY MONTHLY MEETINGS

CISS and RPSL members are welcome to attend monthly meetings in Guernsey, contact John Triggs on 01481 725847 or guern1974@cwgsy.net for details.

Meetings held on last Friday evening of the month, starting at 7pm now in the Sark room at Les Cotils Centre, St Peter Port. If you are on Guernsey why not come along. Next dates are:

**29th January, 26th February, 26th March, 23rd April,
28th May, 25th June, 30th July, 27th August, 24th
September, 29th October, 26th November.**

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PAST JOURNALS and BULLETINS.

The Society has a good stock of past issues of the **Bulletins** and the Journal '**LES ILES NORMANDES**'. The **Bulletins** are available at £0.50 each, and the **Journals** at £1.00 each, postage and packing is extra. The indices to both the Bulletins and Journals can be found on the website; www.ciss.uk

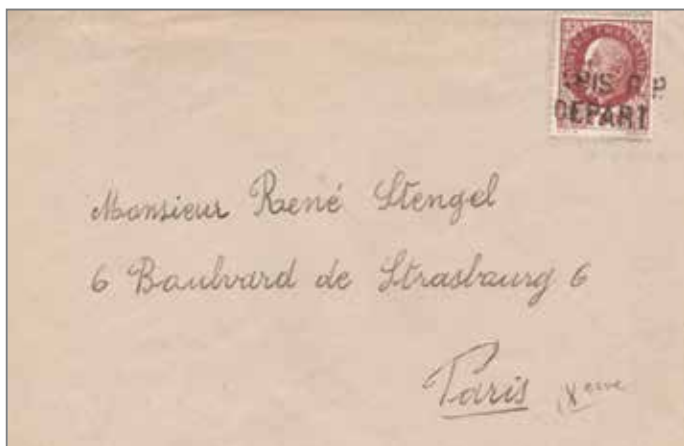
To enquire about past issues please contact, Mark Bailey at 36, Jerrymoor Hill, Finchampstead Wokingham RG40 4UG or email:

membership@ciss.uk

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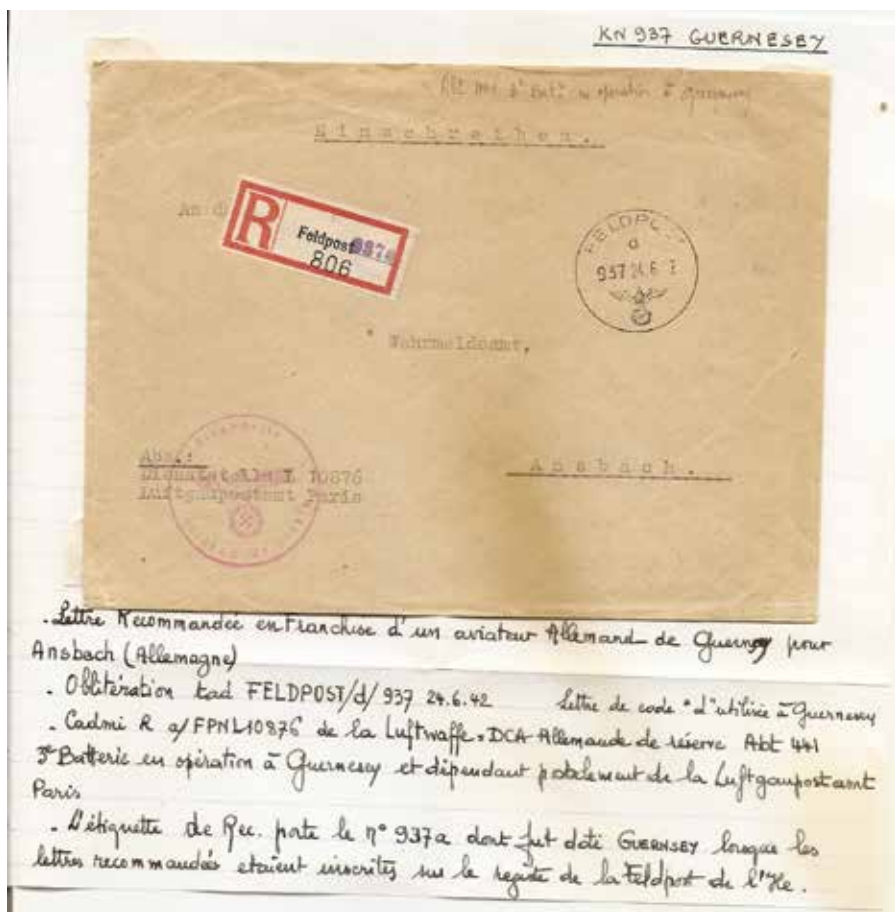
12

For comparative purposes Gerald Marriner has provided a similar cover from the same correspondence as Henri's covers, from Albricht, an O.T. worker in Jersey, to Stengel in Paris. Neither of the covers are dated.



Gerald's cover has a different cancel – 'PARIS R.P. /DEPART' whereas Henri's has two PARIS CENTRALISATEUR cancels. As can be seen on the reverse Gerald's cover was not opened by the censor, receiving the red circular A.x. handstamp in Paris. Henri's cover was opened by the censor in Paris and re-sealed with the German OKW censor tape.





Again for comparative purposes Gerald Marriner has sent one of his German registered military feldpost covers. Like Henri's, this cover has the 937a Feldpost registration label and is dated March 1943. It is addressed to the Criminal Police in Berlin and was sent from feldpost no. 29339 B – 9 KOMPANIE 111 Btl IR 583 stationed in Guernsey from December 1942 until May 1945. Henri's cover is dated June 1942 sent from a German Luftwaffe unit – Feldpost no. L10876 based in Guernsey. 937a registered military covers from the Islands are not scarce at all and Gerald has two in his collection and seen several others during the past 20 years.



Michael Wieneke comments that 'whilst there is nothing particularly special about the Organisation Todt letter from the van Huffel-correspondence which is well known and the registered 937a Feldpost letter also from a well known correspondence, the piece below is another story. Unfortunately I cannot see very much on that piece. The Mont Martin-cancellation shows the known date (12.8.40) and looks genuine, but it's impossible to check the 3d-stamp by the scan. The Newport-piece referred to in his 1970 book is contrived, or politely said 'cancelled to order' when Newport visited that office. A genuine cover once was sold by Derek Tomlin which I think is now in the collection of Ron Brown'.



In this context readers interested may wish to refer to page 124 in William Newport's book *Stamps and Postal History of the Channel Islands*, also to pages 193 and 194 in the *Stanley Gibbons Channel Islands Postal History Catalogue* and pages 157/9 in the *Stanley Gibbons Channel Islands Specialised Catalogue of STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY* second edition.

Editor.....This is an interesting piece that requires some careful investigation. In looking at the scan of the piece with a magnifying glass it

is impossible to tell whether the stamp is actually tied to the piece as one can depict the ink of the postmark on the perforations, but not seemingly reaching onto the piece? This is not helped by the top edge of the stamp lying on the fold in the envelope! Another curiosity is the fact that the script on the envelope flap is written so that it might be easily read when the piece is displayed. I suppose one has to ask whether this might be the work of a philatelist??

Looking at the postmarks under a magnifying glass from the scan it is again very difficult to discern whether they are the same or slightly different.

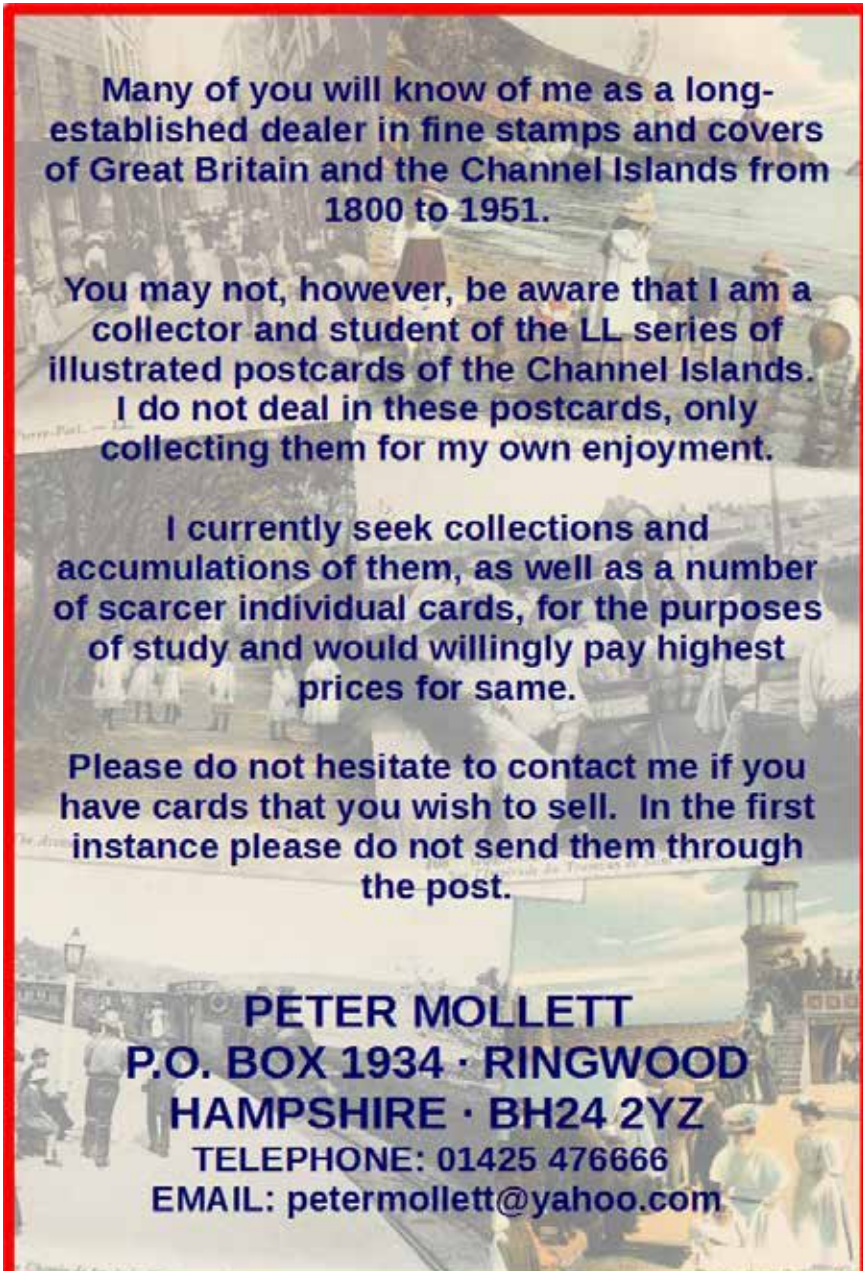
An interesting piece, the original of which needs to be carefully compared with the very few other known examples!

I will be interested to learn the views of other members please especially those with a close interest in the Occupation period and will be pleased to publish your thoughts in a future Journal. Can anyone report an example in their collection? Please let us know!

Ron Brown also writes re Montmartin-sur-Mer:

The initial occupation of the Channel Islands was by elements of the 216th Infantry Division, which was a part of the German Army of occupation in France. The division's Feldpostant (Field Post Office) was established at Montmartin-sur-Mer, a small fishing village some six miles south-west of Cherbourg on mainland France. Mail from the forces on the Islands was collected and transported back to Montmartin-sur-Mer for cancelling.

On the 12th August 1940 a German Feldpost unit arrived at the Feldpostant at Montmartin-sur-Mer with Jersey civilian mail comprising some 1500 letters and 200 packets, which had not been cancelled on the Islands. For some unknown reason the Germans handed the mail to the French Postmistress in the village who cancelled them with the normal datestamp for Montmartin-sur-Mer and forwarded them with the French mail. This information was recorded by the late Bill Newport as told to him by the Postmistress from the official records. Apparently two datestamps were used so that the large influx of mail would be dealt with quickly. Both Henri's piece and this cover have the second type measuring 3mm between MONTMARTIN S/ MER and MANCHE.



Many of you will know of me as a long-established dealer in fine stamps and covers of Great Britain and the Channel Islands from 1800 to 1951.

You may not, however, be aware that I am a collector and student of the LL series of illustrated postcards of the Channel Islands.

I do not deal in these postcards, only collecting them for my own enjoyment.

I currently seek collections and accumulations of them, as well as a number of scarcer individual cards, for the purposes of study and would willingly pay highest prices for same.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have cards that you wish to sell. In the first instance please do not send them through the post.

PETER MOLLETT
P.O. BOX 1934 · RINGWOOD
HAMPSHIRE · BH24 2YZ
TELEPHONE: 01425 476666
EMAIL: petermollett@yahoo.com



This is the only known genuine cover bearing the Montmartin-sur-Mer datestamp from Mme Le Guennic, Jersey to her husband, an assistant engineer with the French armed forces. It bears 3d postage which on mail to France had been increased from the day of occupation, 1 July 1940, from 2½d to 3d. However, when mail could eventually be sent to France the postage was the German rates of 15pf for postcards and 25pf for letters. Note the manuscript *F M* is for Franchise Militaire – on active service, the boxed **RETOUR / A L'ENVOYEUR** (return to sender) and the **INADMIS / RETOUR A L'ENVOYEUR**.

Editor's note: The sender's details on the envelope flap are in the conventional style!

I am also showing below a similar cover to Henri's example shown on an earlier page from the same correspondence which has only one strike of the **PARIS CENTRALISATEUR** handstamp cancelling the French 1F50 postage stamp. Unusually the sender did not put his address on the back of Henri's example, but from mine we know he worked for Organisation Todt company KURZEL.



Organisation Todt labourers in Jersey had to use Postbox 190 St Malo as their address. Letters from Jersey had to be paid at the French inland rate of 1F50. Mail sent via the Postbox was first sent to Paris where it received the **PARIS CENTRALISATEUR** cancellation and was then transferred to the French postal system for delivery.

The reverse side of this cover is shown on the next page featuring both the sender's address postbox 190 DO St Malo and the German re-sealing tape

where it had been opened, censored and re-sealed at the Paris Primary Censor Office.

The letters DO in the address refer to the construction company Kürzel.



This cover has a Certificate Nr.230787/2 dated 23.7.87 issued by Heinz Möhle.

In this connection Joe Miére of Jerrsey gave me a ‘never to be forgotten’ quote – *“We heard a commotion coming from Victoria Avenue (First Tower, Jersey)....passing along the Avenue we saw groups of about fifty people in each batch. They were shuffling along and in a terrible state, many dressed in rags and most of them with no footwear. These groups were being herded along by OT guards who were armed with long wooden staffs and pick handles. These brutal guards did not hesitate to lay into these poor people”.*

A 1944 Belgium to Jersey cover with INACHEMINABLE cachet
by Geoff Corey.



I acquired this cover last year and in the mean time have from time to time endeavoured to determine the precise meaning of the hand struck cachet **INACHEMINABLE**, but without definite success. The cover was sent from Bruges, Belgium to Jersey and the cancel is dated 14 June 1944. It was opened in Paris and has the usual Geoffnet resealing tape and strikes of the red Wehrmacht cachet on the reverse. The front also has a boxed **RETOUR A L'ENVOYEUR** and a straight line **INACHEMINABLE** cachet. By the time this cover was posted in Belgium the Normandy landings had taken place some eight days prior. It is therefore not surprising that it received the **RETOUR** Cachet, but why the **INACHEMINABLE**? It is suggested that a likely translation of the cachet is "Not Deliverable" and that would of course make sense, but is it correct? In a final endeavour to clarify the meaning I contacted Michael Wieneke (again my thanks for your help, Michael) and his response was that "not finished" was possible, but that he had never before seen this cachet on Channel Island WW2 mails. He also observed, *"In May 1944 many railway-lines were sabotaged by the Resistance to block the German supply connections. When the invasion*

took place, only military mails were of importance and were sent via Le Mans to St Malo, civilian mail did not have any priority and was only delivered "if possible". Taking all facts into account, I think the letter was blocked due to the Invasion".



Clearly my first question is..... can any Member precisely translate **INACHEMINABLE** please?

Secondly..... do any other members have covers with this cachet and..... lastly where were both of the cachets likely to have been applied?

My own guess is either in Paris after censorship or at one of the Channel Ports, but is this correct? Your views will be most welcome.

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DISPOSAL OF YOUR CHANNEL ISLANDS COLLECTION

If you or your relatives wish your collection to be sold for any reason the Society can help you by arranging for its disposal within the C.I.S.S. through the Society's auctions and circulating Packets which can provide:

- 1. Best realisation of value to owner or dependents.**
- 2. Demand for Channel Islands material remains high.**
- 3. Modest commission on sales of only 10% plus 2% insurance.**

Several collections have been sold successfully to the benefit of the owners. If interested, please contact our Secretary

**Richard Flemming at secretary@ciss.uk
or by telephone 01455 613826.**

ANY UNWANTED SOCIETY JOURNALS?



Please do not throw your Journals or old Bulletins away. Send to the Membership Secretary, Mark Bailey 36, Jerry Moor Hill, Finchampstead Wokingham RG40 4UG for recycling to others.

Jersey Barred Oval handstamp by Nick Stuart



I bought an entire letter at the Room Auction at the CISS meeting earlier in February of this year, the front and back are shown on the next page.

It is dated 7th August 1855 and has a QV 1d red-brown star p16, small crown watermark which was issued between 1854-57 and the cancel clearly shows four bars at the top. The width of the cancel is 22.5mm and the height of the numbers is 7mm.

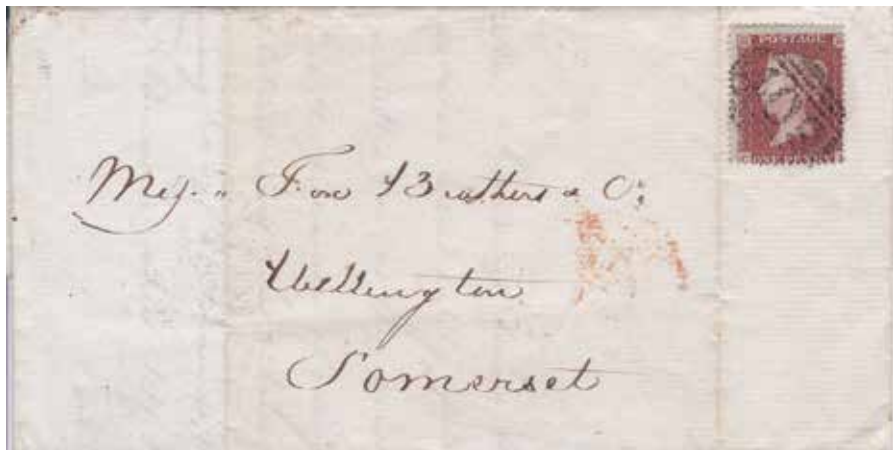
According to the information in Gibbons Channel Islands Postal

History catalogue of 1991 the 4 bar cancel was used in 1844 and then the cancel appears to have lost the top and bottom bars as per type JC30 from 1844-57. Unfortunately the bottom bars of the cancel are incomplete so it is not clear if there are 3 or 4 bars.

I have checked a pamphlet written by Newport & Simpson; it is undated, but was one of a series of six published by CISS in the late 1950s. This one *'The Numeral Obliterations & Instructional Marks of the Channel Islands'* details the various types of obliterator.

O.W.Newport's *'Stamps and Postal History of the Channel Islands'* was published in 1972 and he repeats the information from the pamphlet. It shows the first type, a standard 3 bar top and bottom mark. This is like the one I have, but without any comment about 4 bars top and bottom as per the SG Catalogue published in 1991. The first type was in service between 1844 and 1857 when a re-cut version was introduced in July 1857. On reading the SG catalogue it appears much research had been done since Newport's book as three extra variants of the single oval obliterator had been identified, but all of these are post 1860.

When the image shown above is enlarged, it clearly shows a 'bump' above the top flat bar. The question to all members - is this a true four bar obliterator and, if so, does any member have an example in their collection? Please let the editor know.



Front and back of the letter.



The Leyton 'Air Mail' cover to Guernsey dated 10 June 1924.
by Roger E Harris



The Leyton 'Air Mail' cover - front.

I was recently asked by some members of the Society to comment on this Guernsey 'Air Mail' cover that was sold in the Argyll Etkin auction of 6 March 2020.

I have been researching airmails and pioneer aviation to the Channel Islands for over 45 years and have recently finally completed my "opus major": *Pioneer Aviation in the Channel Islands*, with some 580 A4 colour pages in two volumes containing more than 1,100 illustrations of Channel Islands aircraft, airmail covers, timetables and other ephemera, so I was obviously very interested when this cover was offered by Argyll Etkin as I had no knowledge of such a flight on this date.

I asked Argyll Etkin to send me scans of the cover (both sides) and of the accompanying cuttings and photographs that purported to support it. Unfortunately all the accompanying documentation referred to the service when it was inaugurated in 1923 by the British Marine Air Navigation Co.

Ltd. and nothing related to, or explained this cover of 1924 when the service was then being flown by Imperial Airways Ltd.



The only known commercial photographic postcard of a Sea Eagle in B.M.A.N.Co. colours produced by 'The Regent Series'.

In 1923, the British Marine Air Navigation Co. Ltd. inaugurated a passenger service to Guernsey with three Supermarine Sea Eagle flying boats, flying from a slipway at Woolston on the River Itchen near Southampton to St. Peter Port harbour. The B.M.A.N.Co. had also been interested in obtaining a contract with the Post Office to fly airmail to the Channel Islands as they thought this would be more lucrative and consistent than relying on passenger demands, especially in winter, but the Post Office was not interested because the aircraft were fragile and the seaplane service unreliable.

Following recommendations to the Government by the Hambling Committee in December 1923, the B.M.A.N.Co. was one of four cross-Channel airlines that were amalgamated to form the state subsidised Imperial Airways Ltd. in 1924. The new airline had a monopoly, but to earn a one million pound subsidy from the government it had to maintain a service to the Channel Islands with "sea-going marine aircraft".



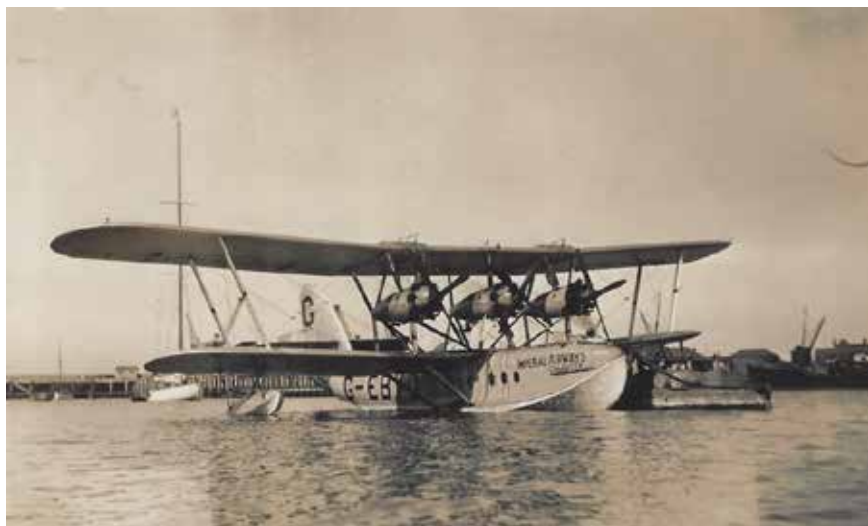
**Imperial Airways Ltd. Sea Eagle G-EBGS on the apron in front of the Woolston seadrome inherited from B.M.A.N.Co.
This is an Imperial Airways Ltd. publicity real photo postcard.**

Imperial Airways Ltd. came into being on 1 April 1924, but an industrial dispute with the pilots over pay delayed the start of their services for a month until 1 May 1924. From this date, two ex B.M.A.N.Co. Sea Eagles flew twice a day to Guernsey, but within a few days one of the aircraft was out of action and the service and timetable disintegrated so much that in the whole of 1925 they only managed to fly three passengers.

In 1926 Imperial Airways Ltd. also experimented with the unique Supermarine Swan, but this was a cynical exercise to learn all they could from flying a seaplane service while obtaining the government subsidy as the timetable consisted of one flight a week to Guernsey, and by 1928 the airline employed only one seaplane pilot and had only one Sea Eagle left flying.

In 1928 Imperial Airways Ltd. acquired two new Calcutta flying boats for the trans-East Mediterranean leg of their proposed service to India and they first flew them on the Guernsey service purely to obtain experience. Once

they had leant all they could from flying Calcuttas to the Channel Islands they moved them to the Mediterranean and relinquished their government subsidy and monopoly for flying to the Channel Islands.



A very rare, real photo postcard of Imperial Airways Ltd. 'Calcutta' G-EBVG moored in St. Peter Port harbour in the summer of 1928.

Imperial Airways Ltd. was solely interested in the lucrative Royal Air Mail contract to India and Asia; they were never interested in bidding for an airmail contract for the Channel Islands as they knew the Post Office would never give it to them as they found it impossible to maintain a regular service.

The Post Office never awarded an airmail contract to any airline flying to the Channel Islands until an airport was built that would guarantee a regular service (1937 in Jersey and 1939 in Guernsey). Even though Jersey Airways Ltd. had spectacular success from December 1933 with a service from the beach at West Park, the Post Office would still not award them a mail contract because their timetable was inconsistent as it was governed by the state of the tides.

The Leyton cover



The reverse of the Leyton cover showing the rare single circle GUERNSEY M.O.O. cachet used as a receiving datestamp.

So what is the story behind this cover?

1. One very useful asset that the Airmail postal historian has from this time is that the local newspapers in the Islands were passionate about aviation, and recorded daily almost every aircraft that landed on an Island, including its departure airport, the details of the pilot and the names and even addresses of the passengers (no such thing as data protection in 1924!). A “First Airmail Service” that was acquired by paying an additional 2d would certainly have been mentioned in the Island press, but I have been unable to find any record of this anywhere.
2. By June of 1924 the seaplane service was already totally disrupted with one or other of the two Sea Eagles intermittently out of service and both seriously affected by the weather and fog. The service was meant to be twice a day, but on average they flew less than two flights a week and at the end of the year had only carried a total of 73 passengers to Guernsey.

3. I have not been able to verify if a Sea Eagle flew on 10th or 11th June. There were no other seaplanes capable of flying to Guernsey at this time, but as Imperial Airways Ltd. had the monopoly, none other would be permitted to fly commercially anyway.
4. Because the service was so erratic the sender of the cover could never be certain that there would be a flight for his cover to connect with.
5. The cover states that the “fee” was an additional 2d. This fee was paid for with a stamp so by implication it was the Post Office charging the fee, but the Post Office never charged any additional airmail fee for letters to the Islands.
6. For the Post Office to charge an additional fee for this “new service”, it would have to be an official service with some sort of notice, advert, official notification or announcement made, but I can find nothing, and this cover is the only indication of such a service to ever come to light.
7. The notation about the fee and postage on the cover is in the same black ink and handwriting as that of the address, so was written by the sender, not a post office official. This is very irregular and unheard of.
8. This cover, once posted at Leyton at 11.45am on 10 June, remained in the possession of the Royal Mail and was not handed to a pilot to carry as it was still in the post when it reached Guernsey.
9. The timings of despatch at Leyton at 11.45am on 10 June and arrival in Guernsey on 11 June (unfortunately the arrival time is not on the post mark) coincides with the normal delivery journey by the overnight mail boat.
10. The cover bears two blue Air Mail etiquettes, but airmail flown to and from the Islands has never required the application of the blue Air Mail etiquette although some people have, over the years, mistakenly applied it.
11. Flown special covers carried by a pilot on a flight would be placed in the mail upon arrival at the destination airport or landing place, but this cover shows that it entered the mail at Leyton and was never handed to a pilot for transmission or delivery.

12. I did wonder if this cover had been flown on some other UK airmail service on 10th June and had a delivery address of Guernsey, similar to known Channel Islands covers flown on the 1911 Coronation flights, but my researches revealed that there were not only no special flights from Leyton or anywhere else on 10th and 11th June, but that there were no special flights in the whole of England throughout 1924.

13. I can only conclude that as this cover was never flown by any airmail service, it was purely the concoction of some philatelist who for some reason wanted to mark the start of the air service even though this had been a month earlier on 1st May. There was certainly no airmail service or even a commemorative airmail flight to Guernsey in 1924.

The Guernsey Arrival Post mark

What is very strange and possibly the only exciting aspect of this cover is that the Guernsey arrival datestamp on the back of the cover dated 11 JU 24 without a time slug is actually a cancellation datestamp of the **Guernsey Money Order Office** (GUERNSEY M.O.O.). I'm not an expert on this datestamp, but would assume its use as an arrival mark is relatively rare.

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