

influence in the production or use of the stamps. Our series, therefore, will not end in the same year for each country, but somewhere between 1870 and 1880 or even a little later. We have included all countries of Europe, which were independent or had their own postal service before 1875. There are 61 "countries" involved, including those who had no postal service of their own during the classic period. For convenience, we have separated the stamps of Alsace-Lorraine and Lombardy-Venetia, although they were philatelically only special issues of another postal administration. But we have left the stamps of Basel, Geneva and Zurich with Switzerland and those of Moldavia and Moldavia-Walachia with Rumania, because they were forerunners of stamps for the whole country. We have excluded Azores and Madeira, although the Scott Catalog considers the former—contrary to all other catalogs—as a European country. The series will bring the countries in *alphabetical or almost alphabetical order*, as necessitated by the available space. The various stamp issues are dealt not with the country which *issued* them, but with the country where they were *used*; therefore the various foreign post offices in Turkey are considered with this latter country, because this makes postal conditions more easily understandable and less complex. We will deal not only with the *stamps* themselves, but also with the *postal stationery*, as well as the *pre-stamp postmarks* and the *cancellations*, to give the most complete picture possible. We will also reproduce *photos* of some unusual and infrequently seen items of special interest for each country. Short hints concerning the existing *philatelic literature* in the field will also be given, to enable the collector to acquire additional information.

We have always been and are still of the opinion that the collector should not be regimeted by telling him what he should collect and what he should not. We believe that a collector can even find satisfaction in collecting stamp issues which were solely made for his collection and have never seen—at least not in any significant quantity—their supposed country of origin, if he knows these facts. But we will always oppose philatelic business which is based on misrepresentation, by offering unfinished stamps without perforation which have never been sold for postal purposes as rare varieties, or cut squares from postal stationery as rare imperforates or mini-

ature sheets. Some people are as happy with costume jewelry as others are with rare gems set in platinum. But anybody who tries to sell the former for the latter would quickly go to jail. As long as the same rules do not prevail in philately, we will advise collecting classic stamps which we can be sure are postage stamps and not mere labels to rook the unwary.

#### I. ALSACE-LORRAINE

We start on our road with a "country", which existed as a stamp-issuing unit for sixteen months only. It is not even a "country" in the regular philatelic sense. The so-called stamps of *Alsace-Lorraine* are in fact a special issue of the postal administration of the *North German Confederation* for those parts of France which were occupied by German troops during the Franco-German war of 1870-71. Only after the peace treaty of Frankfort was signed which ended the war and gave Alsace-Lorraine to Germany, did the occupation stamps cease to be valid in other parts of France and therefore really became a stamp issue for Alsace-Lorraine. In any case, in a strict philatelic sense, there was never a stamp issuing country of Alsace-Lorraine and when we nevertheless use this name, it is for convenience only, to separate this *first European occupation issue* from the other less interesting issues of the North German Confederation. Incidentally, the various general catalogs also go their own ways. Scott lists the stamps, as does Yvert, under France, occupation issues, while Gibbons, Michel and Senf put them under North German Confederation as a special issue for the occupied parts of France. Only Zumstein lists the stamps separately under the country name, Alsace-Lorraine.

Alsace-Lorraine, the border region between France and Germany, has changed hands several times during modern history. When the Franco-German war started on July 19, 1870, it was a province of France, forming the French departments of Bas-Rhin, Haut-Rhin and Moselle. It covered 5,605 square miles and had almost two million inhabitants. The capital was Strasbourg, the main occupation of the population agriculture, but with a growing industry (iron and coal). The German armies, consisting mainly of Prussian troops, with contingents from Baden, Bavaria and Wurttemberg, occupied during August 1870 almost all of Alsace-Lorraine, except the fortresses of Strasbourg and Metz; the former

capitulated on Oct. 27, 1870, the latter on Oct. 30, 1870. The war ended with peace preliminaries, signed on Feb. 26, 1871. In addition to a large sum paid for reparations, France ceded the province of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany.

The re-organization of the disrupted postal service in the German-occupied provinces of France started in August 1870. On August 24, 1870, a postal administration at Nancy was established and the postal service resumed as a branch of the fieldpost, supplied to the German troops by the postal administration of the North German Confederation. On Oct. 6, 1870 the postal administration was transferred to Reims, on Oct. 1, 1870 and Oct. 6, 1870 separate administrations at Strasbourg for Alsace and in Nancy (transferred on Oct. 31, 1870 to Metz) for Lorraine established. The postal service was conducted by the German postal authorities for seven months until March 24, 1871, when the postal service was returned to the French postal authorities. Only in the German-annexed province of Alsace-Lorraine no change was made, the postal service remained in German hands, until on Dec. 31, 1871, it was consolidated with the German "Reichspost", which conducted the postal service in all Germany (except Bavaria and Wurttemberg), beginning Jan. 1, 1872. No fixed day was set for the issue of the special stamps; they were issued middle of September 1870 (1c, 2c, 4c, 10c, 20c) and middle of December 1870 (5c, 25c) in all occupied parts of France. They were withdrawn from use in those parts which remained French, on March 24, 1871, but continued to be used in the new German provinces of Alsace-Lorraine until Dec. 31, 1871, on which day they were demonetized.

The stamps were printed at the State Printing Works at Berlin. They were obviously a rush job, as except for the design itself, the same material was used as for the contemporary stamps of the North German Confederation. The design was put together quite primitively from printers type in the same size as the stamps of the North German Confederation, in panes of 150 (15 rows of 10), of which four formed a plate. The network underprint was also not specially prepared, but the same plate used which printed the invisible underprint on the paper used for the stamps of the North German Confederation. The same perforating devices and the same gum were also used.

Compared with the accuracy the Berlin State

Printing Works revealed in the printing of other stamps, the Alsace-Lorraine stamps disclose an unusual number of plate varieties. This was mainly due to the fact that the design was type-set, singly for each design of the plate. Therefore, of every value at least 600 different "types" exist, conforming to the 600 plate positions of the plate of 4 panes of 150 stamps each. At least for the values, of which the largest quantities were used (5c, 10c, 20c), several plates must have existed, resulting in 1200, 1800, 2400 or even more "types". But the State Printing Works were accurate enough in their work, that most of the "types" were so similar to each other, that they could be grouped by common characteristics. In this way the number of types has been reduced to a maximum of four for some values, but others have only three or two. They either show up as separate plates or they were with other "types" together in one plate. A few seem to have been individuals and only for a limited time in a plate. These are the rare "types", of which we know two for the 4c and one each for the 5c and 20c. While the better "types" of the 1c, 2c, 10c and 20c deserve about three times the prices of the normal stamps (the "types" of the 25c are of equal rarity), these rare "types" sell for between 15 to 30 times the prices of the regular "types". The characteristics of the rare "types" are mainly in the position of the figure of value in relation to the other inscriptions. On the 4c, the vertical stroke of the "4" stands either above the "IM" or above the "TT" of "CENTIMES", while on the common "type" its position is just above the "I". On the 5c, the continuation of the vertical stroke of the "5" touches the first "S" of "POSTES" at left, while for the common "types" it goes through the "S" or to the right of it. On the 20c, the front of the figure "2" ends between "C" and "E" of "CENTIMES", the distance from the frame line at left is 4mm., while on the common "types" it ends above the middle of "C" or the middle of "E" and the distance is either 3½mm. or 4½mm. There is also another setting variety of the 20c, on which the figure "20" stands conspicuously higher than usual, 3½mm. instead of 2mm. above "CENTIMES" and 1mm. instead of 2½mm. below "POSTES" (Fig. 1). This interesting variety is extremely rare and only known in a few copies. The Ferrari Collection contained an unused and a used copy, the latter cancelled



Fig. 1

Fig. 2

on July 29, 1871 at Forbach. There are other small varieties, with some letters of the inscription incorrectly lined up (dropped or raised) or with various spacings between the letters. This latter fact is responsible for different lengths of the word "POSTES", which can be found 11½mm. to 12½mm. long. The 10c and 20c exist with a large space between the "E" and "S" of "POSTES"; the latter value is considered very rare in this variety. We also find some defective letters and figures as well as dented frame lines, the most conspicuous defect being a broken "2" in the figure of the 20c (Fig. 2). No varieties of the network underprint which were the result of particularities of the plate are known.

The *printing* was done rather carefully, although more or less heavy print, resulting in thinner or bolder letters can be recognized. The same is the case with the *network underprint* which comes from thick and heavy to thin, almost faint and hardly visible, as well as clear and worn. The underprint is also responsible for the two major printing varieties of these stamps, *upright* and *inverted underprint*. Because the position of the network with the *points up* is the more common one, the network with *points down* is considered inverted and a variety. Only Scott and Gibbons give the stamps with inverted underprint the status of main catalog numbers, although they are simply varieties, caused by feeding the sheets inverted into the press for the printing of the design and therefore deserving only to be sub-numbers. The stamps with inverted underprint (points down) are generally scarcer for all values. They seem not to have originated in separate printings, for part of several printings contained such sheets with inverted underprint. The underprint covers about 6mm. of the sheet margins on the sides, which otherwise had no printing. But in some cases the underprint or the print of the design was shifted and resulted in scarce stamps from the sheet margin which showed only part of the underprint (Fig. 3).

The *paper* used was the same security paper as used for the stamps of the North German Confederation from Spring of 1869 and later for the first printings of the 1872 issue of the German Empire. It had an *invisible network underprint* of lead monoxide carbonate, which was applied with the same plates as were then used for the colored network underprint of the Alsace-Lorraine stamps. These stamps therefore have two underprints of the same design, one invisible and one in the color of the stamps. There are four different varieties possible: both underprints upright, both inverted or one inverted, of which the second one seems to be the rarest. But the study of this fact is somewhat difficult, as the invisible underprint becomes permanently visible only when the stamps are treated with hydrogen sulphide or potassium chromate; in the former case it shows up in black brown, in the latter in yellow. As this process spoils the stamps for philatelic purposes, nobody will make such investigations on a large scale but such treated stamps have been mistakenly hailed as stamps with double network.

The *color scale* used for the Alsace-Lorraine stamps was the same as that of the 1863 issue of France, which was current when the war started. Only for the 25c value, which did not exist in the French issue, the color of the next higher value, the 30c, was adopted. There are quite a number of distinct *shades* for all values. The underprint should have the same color as the design, but rather distinct differences can be found especially for the 10c, which exists with the underprint in a totally differing *lemon* shade.

The *perforation* was the same as used for the contemporary stamps of the North German Confederation. It was a *horizontal comb perforation* 13½x14¼, which had regularly horizontal 14 and vertical 17 perforations. Such stamps are about 23½mm. high, measured from tip to tip of the perforations. Due to inaccurate working of the perforating devices varieties occurred, usually in the first or last



Fig. 3

row of the sheet, consisting in *short stamps*, which in extreme cases were only 23mm. high and had vertically only 16 instead of 17 perforations. Much rarer are cases where the stamps are *higher*, measuring up to 24½ and even 25mm.; this variety is only reported for the 5c, 10c, 20c and 25c, while the shorter stamps are known for all values. The stamps are usually quite well centered and stamps which are so badly centered that they show parts of two stamps, are scarce.

The *gum* of the stamps was also the same as that used for the contemporary stamps of the North German Confederation and has no special characteristics.

The *mail service* first was confined to *letters, post cards, printed matter and samples* within the *occupied territory* and to the *North German Confederation*. The rates were 10c for letters to 15 gram, 25c for letters to 250 gram, 10c for post cards and 4c for each 40 gram of printed matter or samples. *Registration Fee* was 25c. In October 1870, the service was extended to the *other parts of Germany*, as well as to *Austria-Hungary and Luxembourg*, at the same rates, and to *foreign countries*, for which the rates were higher, for letters to Great Britain 30c, to Italy 40c, to Spain 75c, etc. *Money letters and money orders* also were introduced, the latter generally from November 15, 1870. End of December 1870, the letter rate to Germany outside of the North German Confederation, to Austria-Hungary and Luxembourg was raised to 15c. Despite the war, mail service to the *unoccupied parts of France* was permitted, but postage could be paid to the border only and the addressee in France had to pay the balance. After March 24, 1871, when the postal service, except in Alsace-Lorraine, was given back to France, many senders in France as well as in Alsace-Lorraine, used on their letters both kinds of stamps, paying the full postage and therefore avoiding payment by the addressee. Such *mixed frankings*, mostly Alsace-Lorraine 20c plus France 20c (from July 1, 1871, 25c) are not rare, but sought after and therefore not plentiful. Interesting frankings with several different values can be found and provide, combined with other features, an interesting field. The 10c is known *bisected*, used for 5c. A copy of this rarity was in the Ferrari Collection, which also included a bisected 5c, considered bogus. Mixed frankings with stamps of the North German Confederation or with those of the

German Empire are unknown, as the Alsace-Lorraine stamps were never valid simultaneously with them. The stamps are not rare *on cover*, but the 1c and 2c much less common than the other values; they are worth about twice as much as stamps off cover. Scarce are stamps with *early cancellations* (from September 1870) or with *last day cancellations* (Dec. 31, 1871), on or off cover.

*Multiples, unused*, are not rare and *blocks* generally deserve only a 25% higher price than singles, but the stamps with inverted underprint are rare in blocks, some values even seem to be unknown in larger multiples than pairs. *Used blocks* are scarce, the most common being the 25c, the others deserving mostly three times the price of singles. 10c and 20c in blocks are rarer and worth about ten times the price of singles, while with inverted underprint 1c, 2c, 5c and 25c in blocks are rarities. The largest block known, a show piece, is a block of 140 copies of the 25c with regular underprint — a full pane without the bottom row — which was cancelled at Strasbourg on July 15, 1871. Supposedly it was used on a box with war reparations to Wurttemberg.

Nothing is known about the *quantities printed*, but official figures for the stamps *used in 1871* are known. They are:

1c .....	265,468	copies
2c .....	300,978	"
4c .....	2,302,356	"
5c .....	4,075,930	"
10c .....	7,514,582	"
20c .....	2,837,310	"
25c .....	845,834	"

The use of the stamps with regular underprint is, by the way, evenly distributed between towns in Alsace and towns in Lorraine. This is also true for the most values with inverted underprint—of which the 1c, especially on cover, is a highly underpriced stamp—except the 5c and 20c. The former seems to have been issued only in Lorraine, the latter only in Alsace. Cancellations of these two values from the other part of the province are accidental and rare.

No *postal stationery* was issued for Alsace-Lorraine. There were special *official forms* in French for post cards, etc., but without imprinted stamps.

There were 203 *post offices* in *Alsace-Lorraine* and 53 in *other occupied parts of France*, which were active during the occupation. Aside

from this, 94 mobile field post offices — with the name of the army unit — and 140 semi-permanent field post offices — the fieldpost "relais" — were in operation. All of these offices used Alsace-Lorraine stamps, making the cancellations on these stamps their most diversified and colorful feature. First the old French postmarks, augmented by new provisional postmarks in cases where the French postmarks were not available, were used, then new German postmarks. Aside from this, numerous German Fieldpost markings can be found used as cancellers. The ink used was usually black, but blue cancellations are also frequent, while violet ones are rarer and red ones rare. The old French postmarks, of which about 175 continued to be used, were town and date postmarks, single or double circles, with some straight line postmarks and a few in rectangular frames. In a small number of towns — about 20 — the French numeral cancellers — with small or large numerals — were also used. The German provisional postmarks — there were about 30 — were double circles with the town name, sometimes with added "1871", but without date or with manuscript date. The new regular German postmarks number about 250 and were of the same types as used in the whole North German Confederation, single circles, with a few double circles, boxed and horseshoe types. There were also about 25 postmarks of travelling railroad post offices. The German field postmarks, of which almost 250 different were used, including some special ones for the troops of Baden, Bavaria and Wurttemberg, contain either the name of the army unit which used it, or they were numbered; the highest "relais" number known is 105. On letters from France to Alsace-Lorraine with the mixed frankings, referred to previously, the Alsace-Lorraine stamps should have been cancelled on arrival in Alsace-Lorraine, but not infrequently the French post offices cancelled both kinds of stamps. Therefore, we can find on Alsace-Lorraine stamps also the cancellations of French post offices from territories which were never occupied by German troops. With such occasional cancellations and others, like manuscript — town name, date or pen lines — etc., and considering the colored cancellations, the number of different cancellations which can be found on Alsace-Lorraine stamps, is well over 1000.

The Alsace-Lorraine stamps were at all times quite popular among the European collectors,

especially in France and, to a lesser degree, in Germany. This led to quite numerous forgeries and fakes, as well as — in 1885 — to an official imitation of the stamps. In that year a dealer, Wiering of Hamburg, approached the German Postal Administration, suggesting reprints of the Alsace-Lorraine stamps and offered to pay a substantial amount for them — it is said 7000 marks — to a charity fund for postal employees. The German Postal Administration accepted the offer and the Berlin State Printing Works were ordered to reprint an unknown but certainly large quantity of the stamps, all with inverted underprint, because this was the rarer variety. The Printing Works still had the plate for the underprint, but the type-set plates for the design had been taken apart long ago and therefore were not available. New plates of 150 type-set designs were made and used for the imitations; they are not reprints, as claimed, because they were neither printed from the original plates nor from plates manufactured with the help of an original die. The new settings of the designs differ in several respects from those of the genuine stamps and make the imitations easily detectable. The main difference lies in the word "POSTES", which is 12¾mm. to 13mm. long (originals 11½mm. to 12½mm.); the space between the "P" and the colored frame at left is only 2½mm. to 2¾mm. (originals 3mm. to 3½mm.), but there are also other less obvious small differences. The colors are different, generally brighter, and there is no invisible underprint. The perforation is almost the same as on the originals, it measures usually 13½ x 14½ instead of 13½ x 14¼ and comes only in the regular size of the originals. All imitations have, as stated before, inverted underprint, but one sheet of 150 of the 1c was found among the imitations with upright underprint, which variety is very rare and almost never found in the market.

There also exist a number of forgeries of which several are quite dangerous to the uninformed collector. Especially a forgery of the rare "type" of the 4c can easily fool one, but all forgeries we know have line perforation instead of comb perforation, which detail alone gives them away to the observant collector. Forgeries and imitations, as well as those originals which are rarer used — especially 1c and 2c — can be found frequently with faked postmarks. Some rare postmarks — rare types or towns as well as red cancellations —

have also been imitated, on genuine stamps and on forgeries.

The stamps of Alsace-Lorraine provide a *wide field for the specialist*. There are mainly three considerations by which specializing and even research can be done. As far as we know, no serious effort has been made to *reconstruct the various settings* of the different values and to establish the plate positions of the scarce "types". The *plating* of the stamps will therefore be a rewarding undertaking. It is a quite formidable task, but as multiples—unused and used—exist in sufficient quantity, it should not prove an insoluble problem. The two other considerations are less involved, namely the study and collecting of the various *frankings* and of the existing *cancellations*. Much work has been done in both fields and large cancellation collections, containing tens of thousands of stamps exist. As the object of a specialized collection, without much expectation of finding new facts, a collection of frankings and/or cancellations would be highly satisfying.

There exists sufficient *literature* in the field to guide the new specialist. The standard work is still *Hugo Kroetzsch's* "Die Freimarken des Norddeutschen Postbezirks" (in German), but a more modern listing by *Henry Bauer*, "Catalogue Special des Timbres d'Alsace-Lorraine" (in French) also gives all necessary information. The specialized catalogs of France and Germany may also be of some help, especially the specialized parts of *Yvert* and *Michel*. Numerous *articles* in philatelic literature, especially in French and German magazines, deal with details in the field and may give hints and new ideas. Altogether the stamps of Alsace-Lorraine are a rewarding field for a collector with medium means, to build a collection which will satisfy himself and justifiably impress other collectors.

## II. ANDORRA

*Andorra* is the largest of the four miniature countries of Europe. With its 191 square miles, it is more than three times as large as Liechtenstein, five times as large as San Marino and twenty-five times as large as Monaco. Nevertheless, in regard to population, it is, with about 6000 inhabitants, the smallest of all European countries. The population, consisting mostly of farmers and smugglers, had and has little contact with the outer world and it is therefore not very surprising, that the little



Fig. 4

country in the Pyrenees is still the only country in Europe without a postal administration of its own.

The political status of Andorra is of a dual nature. Being a *republic*, ruled by a council of 24 men, it dates its history back to Charlemagne, who has made it, so it is said, a free state. Actually, the country is only *semi-independent*, because it is under *Spanish* and *French protectorate*. The "protector" on the Spanish side is the Bishop of Seo de Urgel in the Spanish province of Lerida. On the French side, it was the Count de Foix, but he was expropriated and his functions were taken over by the prefect of the French department of Pyrenees at Perpignan.

The *postal history* of Andorra, as far as the *classic period* is concerned, is clouded in mystery. The postal necessities of the population seem to have been small. Domestic mail was forwarded by occasional travellers and foreign mail taken in the same way to the next Spanish or French post office and mailed there, without any distinctive markings concerning its origin. Only around 1870, there seem to have been some signs of an organized postal service. It is claimed that rural mail carriers of the neighboring Spanish and French post offices visited the capital, *Andorra La Vieija*, regularly, to deliver and accept mail. A short while later, two postal clerks, paid by Spain and France, are said to have been established in *Andorra La Vieija*, but we know of no covers which undoubtedly originated from there. The earliest sign of a postal service is a French postmark ANDORRE / VAL D'ANDORRE, which Langlois found on a Spain 1879, 10c, dated Oct. 15, 1882 (Fig. 4). It is possible that this postmark came into use considerably earlier, but we can only guess about it, as this is the only known copy and no covers of that period are reported.

That there must have been some postal aspirations in Andorra in the classic period is shown also by the existence of a series of