
Castellum



**Luxembourg
Collectors Club**

3304 Plateau Drive
Belmont, CA 94002
U.S.A.

E-mail: lcc@luxcentral.com
Web: <http://www.luxcentral.com/stamps/LCC/>
Gary B. Little, President (gary@luxcentral.com)
Edward H. Jarvis, Secretary-Treasurer (EdJa@aol.com)

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President's Message by Gary Little

Welcome to the second issue of *Castellum*! From the positive comments I received from many of you after sending out the inaugural issue, it's clear there's a great demand for stories about Luxembourg philately. I suppose this shouldn't be surprising since it's been over 30 years since there's been a regular publication in the English language for Luxembourg collectors. We'll do our best to continue to provide entertaining and educational articles for you, illustrated in full color. You can help by periodically sending us an article for inclusion—this doesn't have to be a multi-page comprehensive treatise; a couple of paragraphs about an interesting cover or stamp would be just as welcome.

As I write this message we have approximately 20 members, so the club is still very small. However, we expect membership to expand rapidly as word about the LCC spreads. This will be facilitated by our internet Web site (at www.luxcentral.com/stamps/LCC/), which is hosted on my own site dedicated to Luxembourg topics. Also, the Luxembourg *Office des Timbres* (Stamp Office) has graciously agreed to send information about the LCC to all of its North American subscribers in the next month or so. Thanks to Guy Rausch, Assistant Director of Office des Timbres, for offering to do this at no cost to the club. Once the club reaches a critical mass, I would say 50 members or so, we'll be able to expand our activities to include auctions, study groups, etc.

The Juvalux '98 World Philatelic Exhibition, to be held in Luxembourg from June 18-21, 1998, is now less than one year away, so it's time to start considering your travel arrangements if you plan to attend. The Commissioner-General for this FIP-accredited show is the famous Jos Wolff, President of the FSPL. (Yes, this is the same Monsieur Wolff who gave a presentation at the first LCC meeting during Pacific 97.)

The exhibit categories are postal history and youth philately, and many of the exhibits will have a Luxembourg flavor. Check out the Juvalux web site at www.juvalux.lu for all the details about this event.

Cancellations on the Rouletted-in-Color Issue of 1865-1874

by James R. McGee

For 25 years I have been collecting town cancellations on the Luxembourg rouletted-in-color issue of 1865-1874 (Prefix 16-24, Scott 17-26). This classic issue appeals to me because the colors of the stamps take the cancellations well and make them stand out clearly. Furthermore, the issue had a long run at a time when the Luxembourg postal system was rapidly expanding, so a very wide range of cancellations are available beginning with the late use of the mute cancellations and continuing into the period of the large two-circle type that first appeared in 1882.

My earliest cancellation is on a cover with the 10c lilac, the rural bars of Redange, and a Belgian-style circular date stamp of November 4, 1865, just five days after the stamp was issued. My latest is on a 25c blue with a large two-circle Grevenmacher cancellation, dated January 10, 1890.

There is an amazing variety of cancellations to be found on this issue, from the early circles and bars, through the various circular date stamps, to seemingly random use of all the different marks that properly belonged on the cover, but were sometimes used to cancel stamps. For one who enjoys cancellations this makes for a most interesting specialized collection.



*Two-circle French-style
"Gare de Luxembourg" cancellation
on the 10c lilac rouletted-in-color.*

Because the two-circle French-style cancellation is the most common type used on the rouletted-in-color issue, I am sharing my opinion of the relative scarcity of the 21 town cancels that were used. (See the accompanying table.)

I'm also providing similar information for the cancellations that were made in [blue ink](#) instead of the usual black. It is my view that a postal clerk at Ettelbruck or perhaps Remich began to use blue ink occasionally and that clerks at other offices took notice and occasionally followed suit. There does not seem to be any official explanation for the use of blue ink.

Cancellations in violet and green are also known from Redange and are very rare.



*Single-circle
"Larochette" cancellation on
the 30c lilac rose rouletted-in-color.*

I have in my collection examples from 39 different post offices with the single-circle cancellation introduced in 1871. I have also seen three more examples in other collections.

I have examples of this single-circle cancellation in **blue ink** from the following towns:

Colmar-Berg	Reisdorf
Clemency	Roodt
Differdange	Saeul
Grevenmacher	Steinfort
Grosbous	Wasserbillig
Larochette	Weiswampach
Mamer	Wiltz
Mersch	Wormeldingen
Mertert	

Table. Relative scarcity of the two-circle French-style cancellations on the rouletted-in-color issue.

Cancellations in Black Ink (from rare to common)		Cancellations in Blue Ink (from rare to common)	
1 Weiswampach ¹	12 Redange	1 Vianden	
2 Gare de Luxembourg	13 Wiltz	2 Wiltz	
3 Bettembourg	14 Mersch	3 Larochette	
4 Clervaux	15 Vianden	4 Mondorff	
5 Larochette	16 Luxembourg	5 Hosingen	
6 Hosingen	17 Esch-s-l'Alzette	6 Trois-Vierges	
7 Cap	18 Diekirch	7 Redange	
8 Bascharage	19 Echternach	8 Esch-s-l'Alzette	
9 Trois-Vierges	20 Remich	9 Cap	
10 Grevenmacher	21 Ettelbruck	10 Remich	
11 Mondorff		11 Ettelbruck	

¹ The Weiswampach office moved to Troisvierges in 1866.

A Stroll Down Avenue de la Liberté

by Gary Little



Avenue de la Liberté stretches from Adolphe Bridge to the central train station (Gare).

The major powers of Europe guaranteed Luxembourg's perpetual neutrality in the Treaty of London of 1867 in order to resolve long-standing disputes between France and Prussia over this militarily strategic "Gibraltar of the North." As part of the bargain, the fortress of Luxembourg was to be dismantled, and so it was over the next 16 years.

One part of the fortress that was razed was Fort Bourbon, located on the Bourbon Plateau on the southern side of the Pétresse gorge, opposite the Place de Bruxelles. Its destruction freed up a considerable amount of prime real estate in the area northwest of the nearby central train station district.

As you might expect, plans to commercially develop this area were quickly proposed in order to meet the high demand for alternative access to the station from the old town, more housing for the expanding population, and more commercial space for new businesses.

The results of the development projects are still quite visible today—the Adolphe Bridge, the broad Avenue de la Liberté leading directly to the train station through the Place de Paris, and dozens of stately buildings, including those that serve as the headquarters of the State Savings Bank and ARBED.

The key to opening up the Bourbon Plateau was the construction of the Adolphe Bridge. It spans the precipitous valley of the Pétresse which sharply separates the plateau from the upper town. Construction of this famous bridge, which is based on a symmetric arrangement of semi-circular sandstone arches, began in 1900, from plans prepared by the famous French architect Paul Séjourné.



Adolphe Bridge stamp issued in 1921.

When *Pont Adolphe* opened to traffic on July 24, 1903, the Luxembourg nation had yet another treasure to add to the many accumulated since the Middle Ages—an elegantly beautiful bridge, 211 m long, poised 46 m above the valley floor below. The central arch spanning 85 m was the largest stone arch in the world when it was built.

Adolphe Bridge remains, almost a century later, one of the most prestigious stone bridges in all of Europe, a source of pride for all Luxembourgers.



The Adolphe Bridge under construction (1903).

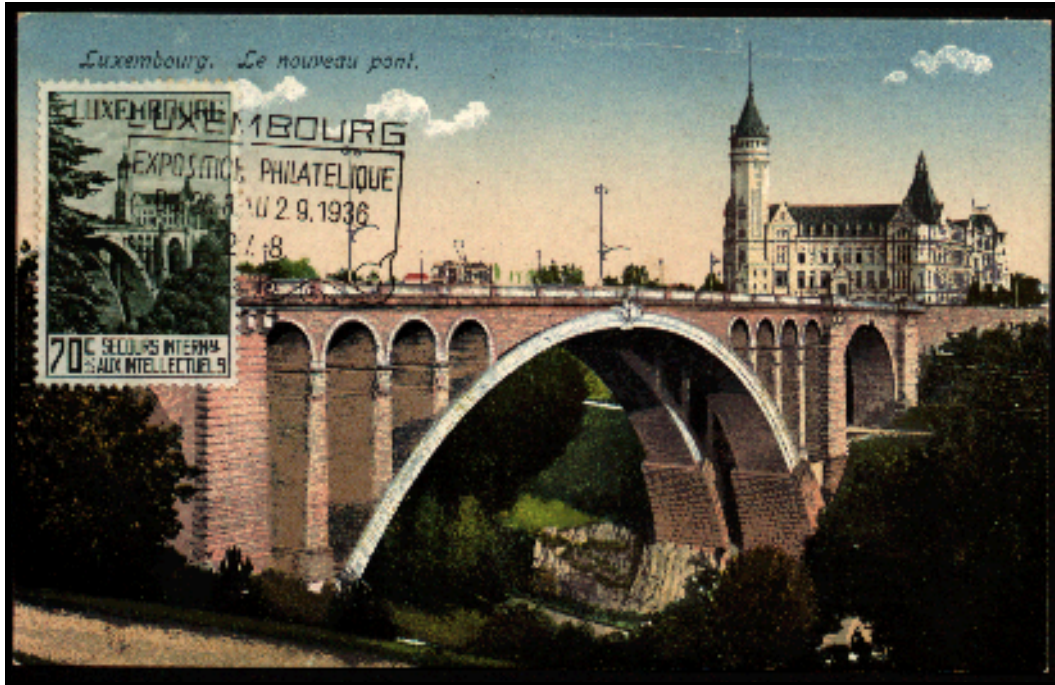


The completed Adolphe Bridge and "Charly" (1906).

Once the Adolphe Bridge was built, track was quickly laid to accommodate the new narrow-gauge "Charly" train that was to run between Luxembourg and Echternach. As the 1906 postcard above shows, however, there wasn't much else happening between the bridge and the train station 1,000 m away along the freshly-graded Avenue de la Liberté. Not a single building in sight.

But this would soon change. Over the next 25 years this entire district was developed rapidly and extensively. To ensure a harmonious grouping of buildings in the district, strict

architectural laws were passed. These laws called for the construction of so-called “monumental” buildings on the Place de Metz at the bridge head. The main thoroughfare, Avenue de la Liberté, was initially planned on a similarly grand scale—a full 52 m in width! At the time, there was considerable debate over the need for such a broad street and, in the end, a compromise was reached—a 34 m wide boulevard made up of a 15 m wide roadway and two 9.5 m wide sidewalks. Still impressive and still able to handle traffic well nearly a century later.



Adolphe Bridge and the State Savings Bank on the Place de Metz (1936).

The two monumental buildings on the Place de Metz were completed in 1913 and served as the headquarters of the State Savings Bank (*Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat*, now known as the *Banque et Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat*) and the administration of the Guillaume-Luxembourg Railway Company. Although the buildings are of different architectural styles, they fit very well together and each has a distinctive concave facade.

Of the two, the State Savings Bank building is perhaps the most impressive. It features a distinctive 46 m tower and the building is adorned by many beautiful art nouveau sculptures. Flanking the main entrance are the two most impressive sculptures, depicting Mercury, the Roman god of trade and commerce, and Ceres, the Roman goddess of agriculture. The building architect was Jean-Pierre Koenig and the sculptures were by Jean Mich, both of Luxembourg.

Today, the State Savings Bank building is still used by the bank for business offices, and since 1996 it has also housed the Bank Museum. The Bank Museum provides an interesting look into the financial history of the Grand Duchy and includes an impressive collection of coins and medals.

The State Savings Bank was founded in 1856 in response to public demand for a local savings and credit institution that was committed to addressing the needs of native Luxembourgers. The bank is owned by the State and is the nearest thing Luxembourg has to a central bank.



*The former
Railway Administration
on the Place de Metz.*

The other building on the Place de Metz, opposite the State Savings Bank building, was designed by Jüsgen of Germany and was built in the classic German style popular at the beginning of the 20th century. It served as the Guillaume-Luxembourg Railway Company administration offices for many years.

During the liberation of Luxembourg in 1944-45 it was used by General Omar N. Bradley, Commander-in-Chief of the 12th U.S. Army Group as a headquarters.

From 1952-1967 the building was the administrative headquarters for the European Coal & Steel Community.

In 1968, the building was purchased by the State Savings Bank and was leased to the European Investment Bank. When the European Investment Bank moved to its new building on the Kirchberg Plateau in 1980, the State Savings Bank took over the building for its own business purposes.



ARBED headquarters.

Further down Avenue de la Liberté, towards the central train station, is the palatial headquarters building of ARBED s.a., Luxembourg's largest employer. It is located opposite the Place des Martyrs or, as it is better known, the *Rousegärtchen* (Rose Garden).

This building was constructed from 1919-1922 from the plans of architects René Théry (Brussels) and Sosthène Weis. Weis was the renowned government architect of Luxembourg from 1905 to 1920 and also an accomplished painter.

The stylistic elements of this building are primarily derived from the 17th and 18th centuries. The front entrance is richly decorated with carved figures, including Mercury, representing trade and commerce, Victoria, goddess of war, and allegories of scientific knowledge.

The ARBED company operates four steel plants in Luxembourg and was formed in 1911 by the amalgamation of three independent steelworks. It currently employs over 10,000 people and accounts for around 15% of the gross domestic product of the Grand Duchy. The ARBED name is an acronym for *Aciéries Réunies Burbach-Eich-Dudelange*.



The Luxembourg central station in the Place de la Gare.

At the end of the Avenue de la Liberté is the Place de la Gare. The train station building here was constructed in stone between 1907-1912 and replaced the old wooden station built in 1859 when the Luxembourg railroad system began to operate. The architect was Alexander Rudell of Berlin. (Philatelists take note—the new Luxembourg P&T Museum is located across the street from the station in a corner of the large post office building.)

This ends the tour of Adolphe Bridge and the Avenue de la Liberté. I hope you have the opportunity to travel this route in person someday soon.

Letters to the LCC

Dear Gary,

I noticed your name and club in an article in Linn's some weeks back and wondered if you or your members would be interested in trading for some mint Luxembourg classics. I got them in a general lot which I couldn't pass up, but as a rule I collect only used stamps. My main focus is on Europe in general, but only the 19th century.

A list of what I have is Scott 5, 6(2), 6a, 7, 8(2), 9(2), 10(2), 11(2), 12(2), 13(2), 14(3), 16(2), 17(2), 18(2), 19, 20(2), 21, 22, 22A, 25, 25a, 29(2), 31(2), 34, 38, 39, 41(2), 44, 45, 46(2), 47(2). After 1870 most have gum. Before 1870, most do not.

— from James P. Blundell, 6 Ronnie Lane, Bethpage, NY 11714