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# Castellum

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## President's Message

by Gary Little

There was plenty of excitement in Luxembourg this month as Crown Prince Henri, eldest son of Grand Duke Jean and Grand Duchess Joséphine-Charlotte, became the next Grand Duke in a gala coronation ceremony on September 28. Henri, age 45, married Maria Teresa Mestre in 1981 and the royal couple now have five children: Crown Prince Guillaume (1981), Félix (1984), Louis (1986), Alexandra (1991), and Sébastien (1992). *Vive le Nouveau Grand-Duc!*

The Luxembourg P&T issued two special stamps to mark the accession. One is an 18 F stamp showing Henri in his formal uniform alongside Maria Teresa. The other, shown below, is a 100 F stamp issued in a souvenir sheet. The design incorporates a view of the Grand-Ducal palace, the Nassau-Weilburg coat-of-arms, and Henri's royal insignia (the letter "H" with crown).



*Their Royal Highnesses Grand Duchess Maria Teresa and Grand Duke Henri*

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## Grand Duke Jean

by Gary Little

After a reign of nearly 36 years, Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg abdicated on September 28 in favor of his eldest son Henri. Henri becomes the ninth sovereign since the formation of the Grand Duchy by the Congress of Vienna in 1815.

Jean has presided over a period of explosive growth in Luxembourg. When he became Grand Duke in 1964, the country was still recovering from the effects of World War II and relied heavily on the iron & steel industry to fuel the economy. The depletion of iron ore resources in the early 1970s caused a serious financial crisis, but the establishment of Luxembourg as a center for pan-European institutions and for banking provided welcome relief. Today, Luxembourg is, on a *per capita* basis, the richest country in Europe and has the highest average annual income. It is not surprising, then, that Jean has been a very popular ruler and will be remembered fondly.



*Jean's parents, Charlotte & Félix  
(1927 stamp)*



*Jean, age 6  
(1927 stamp)*



*Crown Prince Jean, age 18  
(1939 stamp)*

Jean was born on January 5, 1921 in the family château in Colmar-Berg, a few kilometers north of Luxembourg-Ville. He was the first male heir to be born in Luxembourg territory since his namesake and national hero, Jean l'Aveugle (John the Blind) in 1296. His parents were Grand Duchess Charlotte and Prince Félix, who were married on November 6, 1919.

Jean's formative years between 1921 and 1939 were largely uneventful. He grew up in a large household which included one brother and four sisters — Charles, Elisabeth, Marie-Adélaïde, Marie-Gabrielle, and Alix. He was educated in Luxembourg and at Ampleforth College in Yorkshire, England.

1939 was an important year for both Jean and his country. In January, upon reaching his 18th birthday, Jean was formally proclaimed Crown Prince and the heir to the throne. And throughout the year, he participated in numerous events organized to celebrate the centenary of independence. The year 1839, when the present boundaries of the Grand Duchy were established, is considered to be the start of independence of modern Luxembourg.

Of course, 1939 was a momentous year for other, less celebratory, reasons. In September, Nazi Germany invaded Poland thus igniting World War II. Within nine months, the Grand Duchy was also occupied and it would remain under the Nazi jackboot for more than four years. During this dark period Luxembourg was assimilated by the Third Reich and became known as the District of Moselland. Personal freedoms were sharply curtailed and the use of the French language was banned.





*Crown Prince Jean, age 24  
(1945 stamp)*

The Luxembourg royal family had resolved to rule in exile and fled the country in the early hours of May 10, 1940, narrowly escaping capture. All eight headed to neutral Portugal; from there Charlotte went to London to join her government in exile while Félix and the children went to the United States and Canada. Jean soon enrolled in the University of Laval near Quebec City where he studied law and political science.

Two years later, on October 6, 1942, Jean and his father went to England to enlist in the British army. Jean trained with the Irish Guards and, at the same time, was very active in promoting the Luxembourg cause. He first saw action in the Battle of Caen of June, 1944 with the armored division of the Irish Guards, eventually participating in the liberation of Brussels on September 3. On September 10 he joined his father in Luxembourg City as the Nazis were swept out of the capital once and for all.

Despite the liberation of Luxembourg City, the war was far

from over. In fact, the Battle of the Bulge in the winter of 1944-45 devastated the northern half of the Grand Duchy. Jean and his regiment played an important role in resisting this last major German offensive of the war.

Grand Duchess Charlotte returned to her country on April 14, 1945, marking the end of period of exile of almost five years. For the next twenty years she was to preside over a successful post-war recovery. Jean left the Irish Guards in May, 1945 and became a colonel in the newly-formed Luxembourg army.



*First day cover for the set of stamps issued for the 1953 wedding of Jean and Joséphine-Charlotte.*

The next major event in Jean's life was his marriage, on April 9, 1953, to Princess Joséphine-Charlotte of Belgium, the sister of King Baudouin. Joséphine-Charlotte, born in Brussels on October 11, 1927, is widely respected for her philanthropy and her support of benevolent and cultural organizations. She has been president of the Luxembourg Red Cross since 1958.





*A 10-year-old Princess Joséphine-Charlotte, Jean's future bride, is featured on this 1937 first day cover.*



Jean and Joséphine-Charlotte have five children: Marie-Astrid (1954), Henri (1955), twins Jean and Margaretha (1957) and Guillaume (1963).

The special postmark shown at the left was used to celebrate the birth of eldest son Prince Henri in 1955.



*Joséphine-Charlotte & Grand Duke Jean  
(1964 stamp)*

In 1961, Jean became the Lieutenant-Representative of Grand Duchess Charlotte, giving him the power to act on her behalf and preparing him for his role as future sovereign.

Charlotte abdicated on November 12, 1964 and Jean became Grand Duke at the age of 43.

Now, at the end of his reign, 79-year-old Jean is much beloved by his subjects who wish him well in his retirement years. At the same time, they turn their attention to the new monarch, Grand Duke Henri, hoping his reign will be as successful as his father's.



Grand Duke Jean gallery:



*Jean and Joséphine Charlotte celebrated their silver wedding anniversary in 1978.*



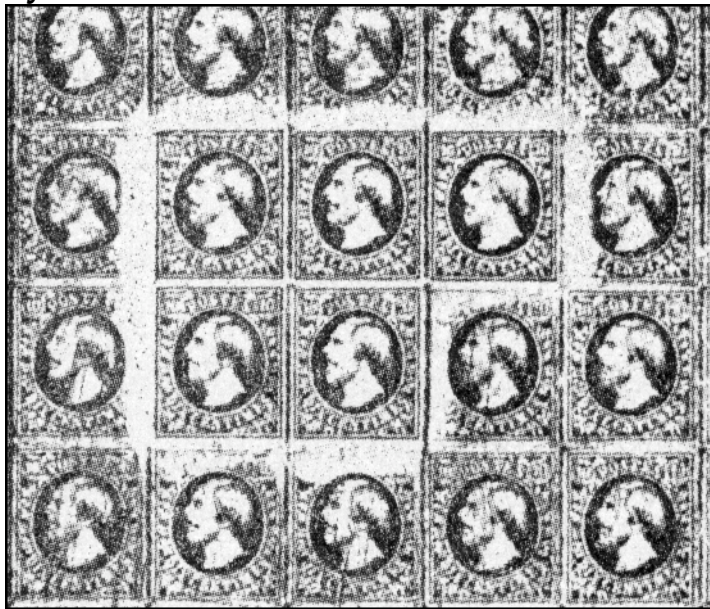
*Jean celebrated his 60th birthday in 1981.*



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## Look Out for Luxembourg Forgeries

by Robert C. Danzer



*A close-up of a section of the cleaned-up 10c plate from which five stamps was salvaged from a reimpresion*

outraged and promptly had all stamps prior to the Adolphe issue of 1891 declared invalid for postage as of January 1, 1906. These reimpresions are rare collectibles today.

Starting with the 10c and 1 silbergros William III stamps of 1852, very crude lithographic fakes of Luxembourg stamps exist, but they will fool no one. However, in 1904, a court clerk at Diekirch discovered a stack of the original watermarked paper of the first issue and a friend discovered in a blacksmith shop the four plates used to print the first two stamps. The plates were rusted and almost completely defaced with scratches. After having them cleaned in Stuttgart, these chaps made reimpresions from these plates on the watermarked paper. Of the 200 impressions of each value, only thirteen of the 10c and three of the 1 silbergros stamps were reasonably clean of rust and unaffected by scratches. These specimens were removed from the sheets and sold to stamp dealers. Authorities were

Beware of forgeries of the second issue, the imperforate armoiries. Both famous forgers, Sperati and Fournier, made excellent reproductions, some of which have become so scarce themselves that they are sought after by specialists. Other forgeries have fine lines between the stamps and are not very convincing.

Next we have the fakers who forged the Un Franc error surcharged on the 37 1/2c Luxembourg local print of 1875 (Prifix 36a, Scott 39a). These can usually be identified because detailed plating studies have determined the precise characteristics of the two stamps per sheet where this error appears. Also beware of fake postmarks on the 40c and Un Franc on 37 1/2c stamps.

The most rampant forgeries are the first *Officiel* overprints on the rouletted stamps. Some are too long, some too short, some too heavy, some too light, some at the wrong angle, and others use a slightly different typeface. These *must* be expertized, or forget collecting the *Officiel* stamps before 1882. There are also forgeries of the S.P. overprint on the 1c to 10c Adolphe profile stamps.

One forgery that is little known and even less understood is the fancy *Officiel* overprint on the issue of 1908, Scott O80-86, which are very common stamps. Why forge the overprints, unless they were used on the high value William IV stamps, which are now scarcer without the overprint? It all makes no sense. The first I knew about this forged overprint was when I mounted Scott O83 into an A.P.S. sales book and was greeted with a \$2 fine for trying to pass a forgery.

A very dangerous forgery is the 10 Franc green souvenir sheet reproduced in excellent lithography shortly after the original was issued on January 3, 1923. Shown below, it was used on a cover posted at Wecker on January 24, 1923, registered, backstamped at Luxembourg, and sent to Brussels. Note that the sender's name was cut out of the cover!





A forgery of the 1923 10 Franc green souvenir sheet used on cover (front, above; back, below).



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## A Forgery of the 10 Fr Green Souvenir Sheet of 1923

by Gary Little



Last July, *Linn's*, the weekly stamp newspaper in the United States, contacted me for help in answering a reader's question relating to an unusual copy of the famous 10 Fr green souvenir sheet issued by Luxembourg in 1923. Coincidentally, I have an example of a similar sheet in my own collection, shown at the left. In recent weeks I have also seen two others sold at auction on the eBay web site.

This interesting sheet measures 117 mm by 90 mm (although not perfectly rectangular) with the stamp design itself measuring 37.5 mm by 24 mm. It is a very good engraving, but can be

*The forgery of the 1923 10 fr green souvenir sheet*  
easily distinguished from the issued sheet by the open "C" in "DUCHE" — the sheet as issued has a serified "C" with hooked endpoints. So what is this sheet, an early proof, a forgery, or what?

I discovered two old articles in *Moniteur du Collectionneur*, the official publication of the FSPL (Luxembourg Stamp Federation) that discuss this particular sheet:

- 1961, pp. 80-82. *Nouvelle falsification du Bloc No 1, Luxembourg, 10 frs, vert*  
[Translation: *New forgery of the first souvenir sheet of Luxembourg, the 10-franc green*]
- 1967, pp. 112-113. *Le Bloc du 10 fr vert Epreuve ou falsification?*  
[Translation: *The 10 fr green souvenir sheet, proof or forgery?*]

(These issues of *Moniteur du Collectionneur* are available from the American Philatelic Research Library at [www.stamps.org](http://www.stamps.org).)

The first article pictures the sheet with the 'open C', no perforations, and no control punch (the crown-shaped hole on the issued sheet). The article says that a Frankfurt stamp dealer sent the sheet to the FSPL expert committee (apparently to make them aware of it). The article states that the stamp is engraved, but it is not as finely done as the issued stamp and that the size of the engraved image and sheet is different than for the issued sheet. The article ends with a note that an Irish firm is said to have 100 such forgeries in its inventory.

The second article refers to the first and gives more detail about the difference between the issued sheet and the forgery. The forgery was apparently offered in a German auction with a very high estimate. The conclusion of the article was: "To date, no proofs or essays of the 10 fr. green [sheet] have ever been seen. All examples presented are either originals or forgeries [i.e., no proofs or essays exist]."