
Castellum



Luxembourg
Collectors Club

7319 Beau Road
Sechelt, BC V0N 3A8
Canada

E-mail: lcc@luxcentral.com

Web: <http://lcc.luxcentral.com/>

Gary B. Little, President (gary@luxcentral.com)

Edward H. Jarvis, Secretary-Treasurer (ejarvis@westpex.com)

Vol. 10, No. 3 (whole #39)

© 2006 Luxembourg Collectors Club and contributors

December 2006

President's Message

by Gary Little

Take a close look at the cover below, franked with 10 Luxembourg stamps and postmarked on April 16, 1935. It is obviously philatelic in nature, overfranked, and the two most interesting stamps, the *Timbre du Souvenir* semi-postals, aren't tied with a postmark.

Even so, there is some postal history value here — the cover illustrates that the post office did not tolerate the use of demonetized stamps (the semi-postals had run their course in 1928). How can I be so sure? Inside the envelope is a letter from the American Consul in Luxembourg to the addressee (a stamp collector) stating that he was "...successful in getting all [stamps] cancelled except two, which are no longer current and which the postal officials refused to stamp." A postage due fee would likely have been levied had the other stamps not been sufficient to pay the rate to the USA.



Town Cancel Collecting for the Frugal or Impecunious Philatelist

by Allan F. Wichelman

With patience, perseverance and very little money, you can build a satisfying collection of inexpensive, low-denomination Luxembourg stamps showing town cancels. Add covers to the collection to show how the stamps were used. Common Luxembourg stamps are ideal for this purpose as the Grand-Duchy is comprised of about 120 small towns, villages and hamlets that have (or used to have) a post office. There is only one city — Luxembourg-Ville — with a population today of about 75,000. Esch-sur-Alzette (27,100), Dudelange (17,300), and Differdange (10,250) are the only towns with a population greater than 10,000.

Wholesale lots, kiloware, sales books, packets, mixtures, old album pages such as those often seen on eBay, and of course dealers' stocks are fertile sources of common stamps with town cancels. Regardless of the scarcity of the cancel, most dealers will sell these common stamps for a nominal sum that probably barely covers their overhead to stock the items. Covers present a greater challenge, but with patience and dedication they too can be acquired.

Initially, you may find it helpful to prepare a checklist of the town cancels used during the period during which your favorite low-denomination stamps were valid. An easy way to do this is by abstracting information from the comprehensive CATALOGUE DES CACHETS USUELS DES BUREAUX DE POSTE DU LUXEMBOURG published in 2001 by the Fédération des Sociétés Philatéliques du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg (the "FSPL"). This invaluable reference, which is being incorporated into the FSPL Handbook of Luxembourg Philately project, is available on a print-to-order basis at the FSPL website: <http://webplaza.pt.lu/wolffh/Accueil.htm>. In addition to illustrating all known cancels, it provides the dates of operation of the post offices and the approximate dates of use of most of the canceling devices.

For identifying incomplete cancels on stamps, see my *Guide to Identifying Luxembourg Double-Circle Cancels* published in *Castellum* (Vol. 2, No. 4 (May 1999)). Postal rates, of course, are now readily accessible, thanks to publication of *DIE TARIFE DER BRIEFPOST IN LUXEMBURG 1852-2002* by Dieter Basien and Fernand Hoffkamp (2002, P&T Luxembourg).

To illustrate my approach, let's take a look at the possibilities presented by the small-size Caritas semipostals Luxembourg issued each December from 1953 to 1962. These issues are summarized in Table 1, with those denominations priced at 55 cents or less in the SCOTT 2006 CATALOGUE shown without shading.

Used examples of the 35 non-shaded denominations are as plentiful and inexpensive as some of the shaded denominations are elusive and pricy. The reason is that Luxembourgers used large quantities of the lower denominations during the Christmas and New Year's holidays to send holiday letters, postcards and visiting cards. Correctly rated examples on cover or card are more elusive despite the nominal value of the stamps as holiday mail often found its way into the fireplace or trash bin and the validity periods for these issues were rather short. Moreover, the quantities issued were relatively small — for the three Folklore sets, the quantities were only 61,086, 63,685, and 72,753 sets, respectively. And regrettably, many dealers do not find it economical to stock what has been saved of this sort of material.

At most stamp shows I attend, I find a few of these stamps with interesting town cancels to add to my collection, usually for no more than the price of a cup of cappuccino. And for zest, I also seek covers, especially those showing sole uses of these rather quaint but attractive stamps.

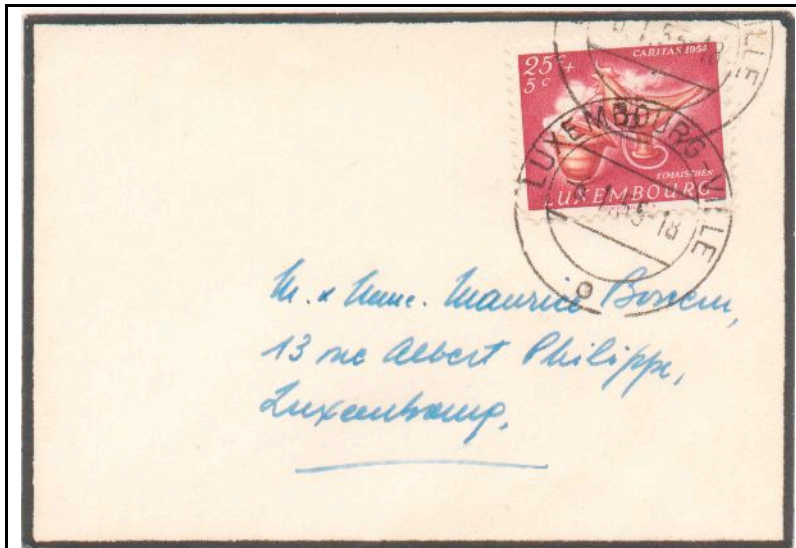
Table 1

1953 – 1962 Caritas Semipostal Issues							
Validity	Issue	Denominations					
		A	B	C	D	E	F
12/03/53- 12/31/54	Folklore I	.25+.15	.80+.20	1.20+.30	2.00+.25	4.00+.50	7.00+3.35
12/03/54- 12/31/55	Folklore II	.25+.05	.80+.20	1.20+.30	2.00+.25	4.00+.50	7.00+3.45
12/05/55- 12/31/56	Folklore III	.25+.05	.80+.20	1.20+.30	2.00+.25	4.00+.50	7.00+3.45
12/05/56- 01/01/58	Cantons I	.25+.05	.80+.20	1.20+.30	2.00+.25	4.00+.50	7.00+3.45
12/04/57- 12/31/58	Cantons II	.25+.05	.80+.20	1.20+.30	2.00+.25	4.00+.50	7.00+3.45
12/03/58- 12/31/59	Cantons III	.30+.10	1.00+.25	1.50+.25	2.50+.50	5.00+.50	8.50+4.60
12/02/59- 12/31/60	Cantons IV	.30+.10	1.00+.25	1.50+.25	2.50+.50	5.00+.50	8.50+4.60
12/05/60- 12/31/61	Marie- Astrid	.30+.10	1.00+.25	1.50+.25	2.50+.50	5.00+.50	8.50+4.60
12/04/61- 12/31/62	Henri	.30+.10	1.00+.25	1.50+.25	2.50+.50	5.00+.50	8.50+4.60
12/03/62- 12/31/63	Jean & Margaretha	.30+.10	1.00+.25	1.50+.25	2.50+.50	5.00+.50	8.50+4.60

- A = Printed matter rate within Luxembourg and to Belgium (per 50 g)
- B = Printed matter rate to France, Germany, and other UPU countries (per 50 g)
- C = Postcard rate within Luxembourg and to Belgium
- D = Letter rate within Luxembourg and to Belgium (first 50 g)
- E = Letter rate to Germany and other UPU countries (first 20 g)
- F = Registered letter rate (≤ 50 g) within Luxembourg and to Belgium

I organize the stamps on Hagnar stock sheets by year of issue, then each denomination alphabetically by cancel. Here are a few examples:

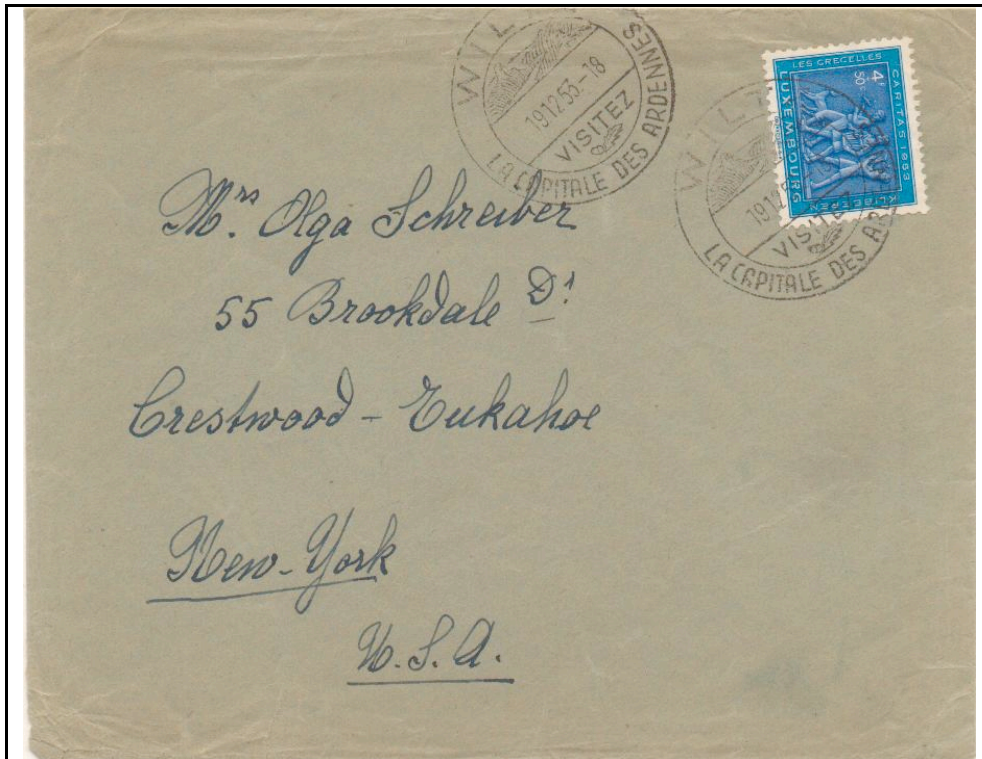
		
80c 1955 Folklore III Kayl 12/30/55	25c 1953 Folklore I Wilwerwiltz 01/02/54	80c 1954 Folklore II Rodange 12/31/54



25¢ 1954 Folklore II
Luxembourg-Ville [o]
 Domestic printed matter rate, January 6, 1955



4 F 1955 Folklore III
Esch-sur-Alzette [g]
 German letter rate, February 20, 1956, to Frankfurt



4 F 1953 Folklore I
Wiltz [tourist cancel]
 UPU letter rate, December 19, 1953, to New York, NY






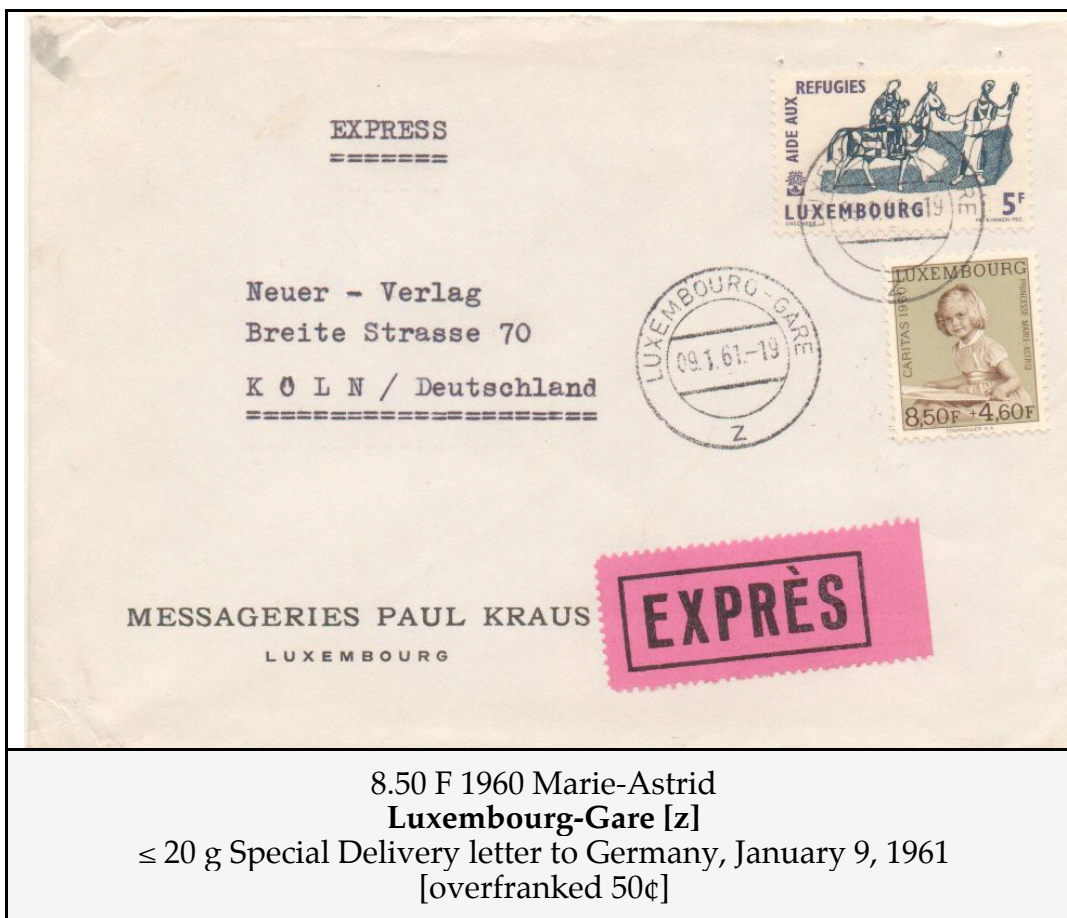
1954 Folklore II set
Luxembourg-Ville [d]
 15-20 g (?) UPU airmail letter to Lebanon, December 15, 1954

		
80¢ 1956 Cantons I Petange [z] 01/04/57	2 F 1957 Cantons II Clemency [a] 09/13/55	30¢ 1958 Cantons III Mamer 01/21/59



25¢(x2) & 80¢ 1956 Cantons I
Esch-sur-Alzette [g]
German postal card rate, February 26, 1957 to Frankfurt

		
1.00 F 1960 Marie-Astrid Esch-sur-Sûre 12/29/60	2.50 F 1961 Henri Junglinster 01/03/62	1.00 F 1962 Jean Schiffflange [b] 12/28/62



8.50 F 1960 Marie-Astrid
Luxembourg-Gare [z]
 ≤ 20 g Special Delivery letter to Germany, January 9, 1961
 [overfranked 50¢]



2.50 F 1962 Jean & 8.50 F Jean & Margaretha
Luxembourg-Gare [z]
 40-60 g German letter rate, December 20, 1962, officially resealed at Lübeck



Apart from the pure enjoyment of collecting, you could also develop a very nice postal history exhibit with these cancels and covers. By adding a modicum of philatelic knowledge about the applicable postal rates and the types of cancels, periods of use, and their scarcity, you would certainly earn some nice awards at local, regional and even national shows. Moreover, other collectors would certainly enjoy seeing seldom exhibited material presented in accordance with the prevailing norms for postal history exhibits. And as you form your town cancel collection, you can use the exercise to become very knowledgeable about Luxembourg geography.

An elegant and philatelically useful Web site by David Flammang showing photographs and the location of nearly every Luxembourg village or town can be found on the Internet at:
<http://www.luxalbum.com/>.

Most importantly, in building your Luxembourg town cancel collection, you won't need to deplete your savings account!