
CASTELLUM



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President's Message by Gary Little



Congratulations to the Fédération des Sociétés Philatéliques du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg on the occasion of its 75th anniversary this year. The FSPL is the central philatelic organization whose members are the dozens of small stamp clubs around the Duchy. It has organized many, many important local and international events over the years and is well known for the quality of its postal history publications. I've found its postmark catalog to be especially useful.

To mark the occasion, P&T Luxembourg this month issued an attractive souvenir sheet with a pair of stamps on it. One shows the 5F Three Towers stamp of 1934 and the other shows a similar, but updated, version of the same stamp, presumably illustrating how the tower looks this year.

This is our club's 50th issue of *Castellum*. For the entire run, all 12 1/2 years, I have regularly edited the publication and, of course, written a lot of the feature stories. Many others have contributed interesting and useful articles, notably Allan Wichelman — I thank them all for their good work.

I have decided, however, that this will be my last *Castellum* as editor. In fact, in all probability, it will also be the final *Castellum*, given the difficulty in finding someone to commit to the onerous task of editing and writing on a regular schedule. In future, I hope we will see more people taking the time to publish their own Luxembourg-related articles on the internet on their own schedules. Allan's already doing this with his interesting and brilliant Luxembourgian Philately blog at www.luxphilately.blogspot.com — read it and be inspired to create your own!

Au revoir.

Early Cacheted First Day Covers of Luxembourg

by Gary Little

Cacheted first day covers for new Luxembourg stamps were quite rare until 1949 when, beginning with the UPU commemoratives of October 6, the FSPL (Luxembourg Federation of Stamp Clubs) began creating cacheted covers for almost all new stamp series; many years later, the task of creating "official" first day covers was assumed by the Luxembourg Post Office itself.

Several other Luxembourg stamp dealers began to compete with FSPL in the late 1940s and 1950s: Raymond Thill, Krier (First Day Cover Service), and Banque du Timbre. Today, however, the only cacheted first day covers issued regularly are those sold by P&T Luxembourg.

Challenging to collect are the pre-1949 cacheted covers that were created sporadically beginning in 1935. Most of the ones I am aware of are pictured in this article.



I believe the above two cacheted covers, created for the imperforate 2F Clervaux stamp of 1935, were the first sold in Luxembourg. The stamp was issued at an exhibition in Esch-sur-Alzette.

A miniature sheet of two 2F Esch iron & steelworks stamps was issued for the Dudelage stamp show of 1937. Two cacheted first day covers were created for this sheet as well.



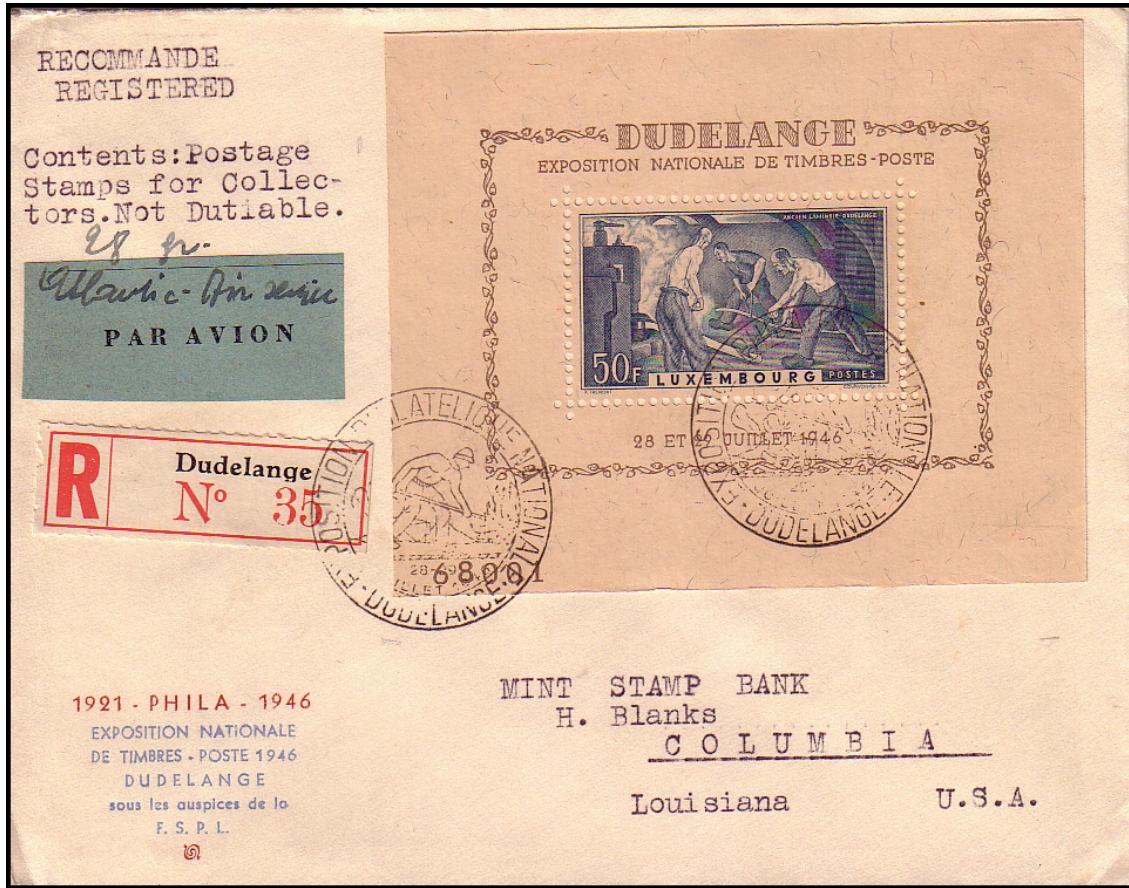
Later in 1937, an enterprising American or Briton created a simple cachet for the set of six Wenceslas II semi-postal stamps issued on December 1. The cachet reads "Christmas 1947".



In 1945, Luxembourg issued four stamps to thank four allied countries for helping to liberate Luxembourg: France, USSR, Great Britain, and the United States. Plain first day covers for this set are very common, but finding a cacheted cover is quite difficult. Here is an example from my collection:



A simple cacheted first day cover was also created for the 50F foundry miniature sheet of 1946. It was issued for the Dudelage stamp show.

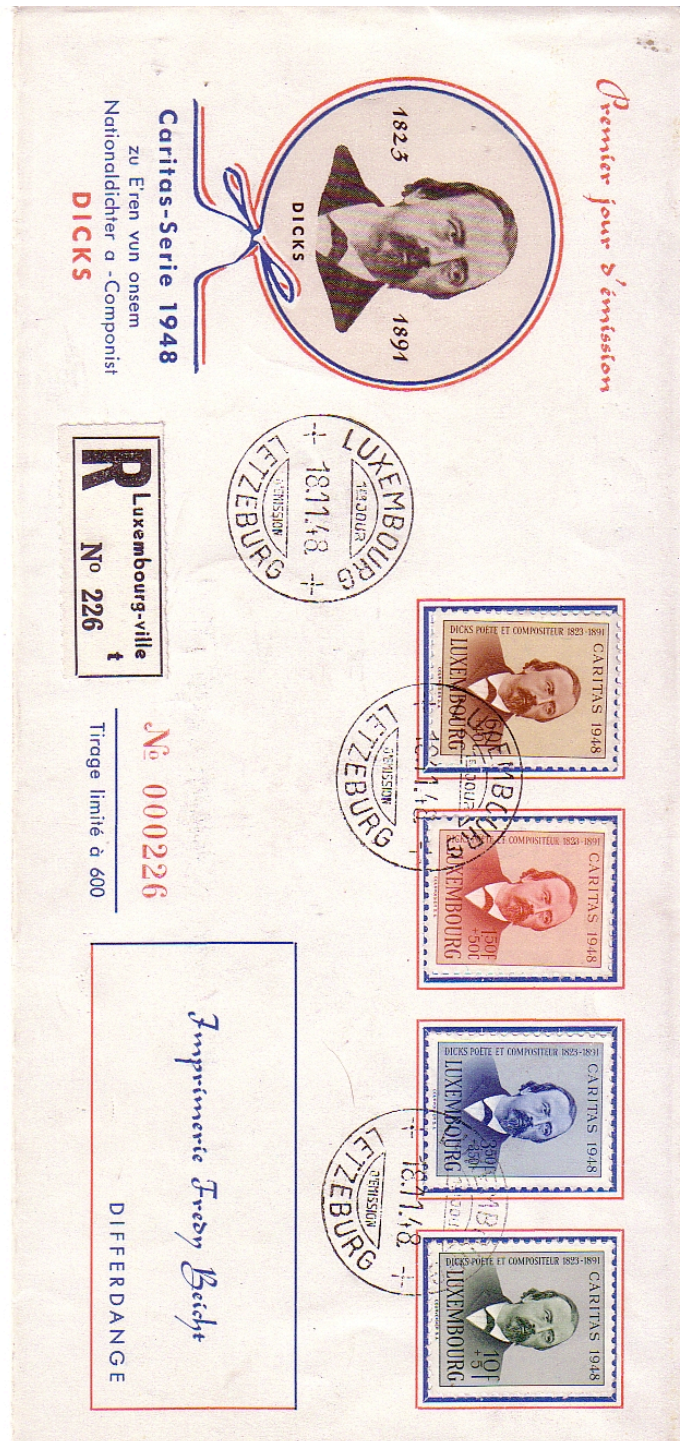


The Patton set of 1947 was very popular with American collectors and I've seen two cacheted covers created for the American market. One is a preprinted black & white cachet featuring a portrait of "General George S. Patton, Liberator of Luxembourg" and the other is a hand-painted cachet (actually, just text written with fancy calligraphy) on a legal-sized envelope.





In 1947 and 1948, Fredy Beicht of Differdange created a brief series of cacheted first day covers for the semi-postal issues and the Charlotte definitives issued in December 1948.





The Charlotte first day cover is actually a card. Only 370 copies were produced.

The set of covers shown here is by no means complete. I believe there was a cacheted first day cover for the 1939 centenary series, but I've never seen an example. In addition, Alfred Krier created cacheted first day covers for the post-war lion definitives. There may be others.