

POSTE AUX ARMEES
136

Post Office 136 opened at Pnompenh, Cambodia on 1 February 1946 where it remained until closing in 1954. During the early years of operation, registration labels were not available. Here a facsimile of a label was hand drawn on the cover.

The address includes both the postal sector number as well as the BPM number – a practice that was later prohibited.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 136 * 2-11 46
handwritten registration number and label

POSTE AUX ARMEES

136

The letters "SM," meaning "Service Militaire," indicated official mail. Posted from Pnompenh, the envelope was stamped "NÉCESSITÉ DE FERMER" (must be closed) and sent as registered mail. The numbered registration label was over stamped with the indication of the originating post office. Markings on the reverse show that the letter was handled by several military post offices.

NÉCESSITÉ DE FERMER



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 136 * 23-3 1950
registration label and "CF" in blue crayon

REVERSE

POSTE AUX ARMEES 405 24-3 1950
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 402 * 25-3 1950

POSTE AUX ARMEES
402

Post Office number 402 opened at Cholon, near Saigon, on 2 February 1946. It became the post office at Tansonhut in 1953 and closed in 1955.

Since it was marked for official service ("SM"), this envelope was sent as registered mail without the need of postage stamps. The cachet is unusual because it belonged to the treasurer.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 402 * 17-3 1953
registration label
sorter's marking in blue crayon

B.P.M. 402

AVIS DE RÉCEPTION (A) — AVIS DE PAYEMENT (B)

N° 514
J.A. 21636. 0

le 24 SEP 1954

A.G.P.M. (v)

d'un B. lettre
d'un mandat (2) de *Cartes 47*

enregistré au bureau de *Paris 47*, sous le n° *3646* et,

le 24 SEP 1954

adresse à (suscRIPTION complète) M. *Tajouan*
Prof. Abderrahim Jean
 (sous le n° *3646*)
Prof. Abderrahim Jean
 à *Alger*
 Département *Alger*
SP 99900

Le soussigné (1) *LR* } valeur déclarée }
 déclare que (le mandat) } recommandé }
 mentionné ci-contre (livré le (b)) }
 a été dûment (payé le (b)) }
 Signature de l'agent du bureau destinataire : *M. Bouy*

6207

PAR L'EXPÉDITEUR
A REMPLIR

(1) Nature de l'objet (lettre, boîte, paquet, échantillon, etc.)
 (2) Ajouter suivant le cas (ordinaire, carte, lettre, télégraphique, etc.)
 (3) Dans le régime international il est fait usage de la formule n° 515.
 (4) Biffer les indications inutiles.

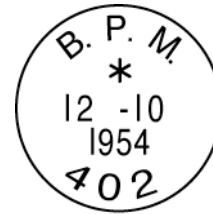
NOTA. — En cas d'absence de l'intéressé, l'objet recommandé ou chargé, adressé à un domicile, est conservé en instance au bureau destinataire pendant 15 jours, après une présentation à ce domicile.

Timbre à date du bureau destinataire

Paris 4e PL. DE LA BOURSE 24-9 1954

B. P. M. * 12-10 1954 402

Army Post Office number 402 was the only one that employed both the "POSTE AUX ARMEES" and "B.P.M." formats in its military canceller for military mail. Here the postmark was applied on a registered mail receipt form, which had originated in Paris.

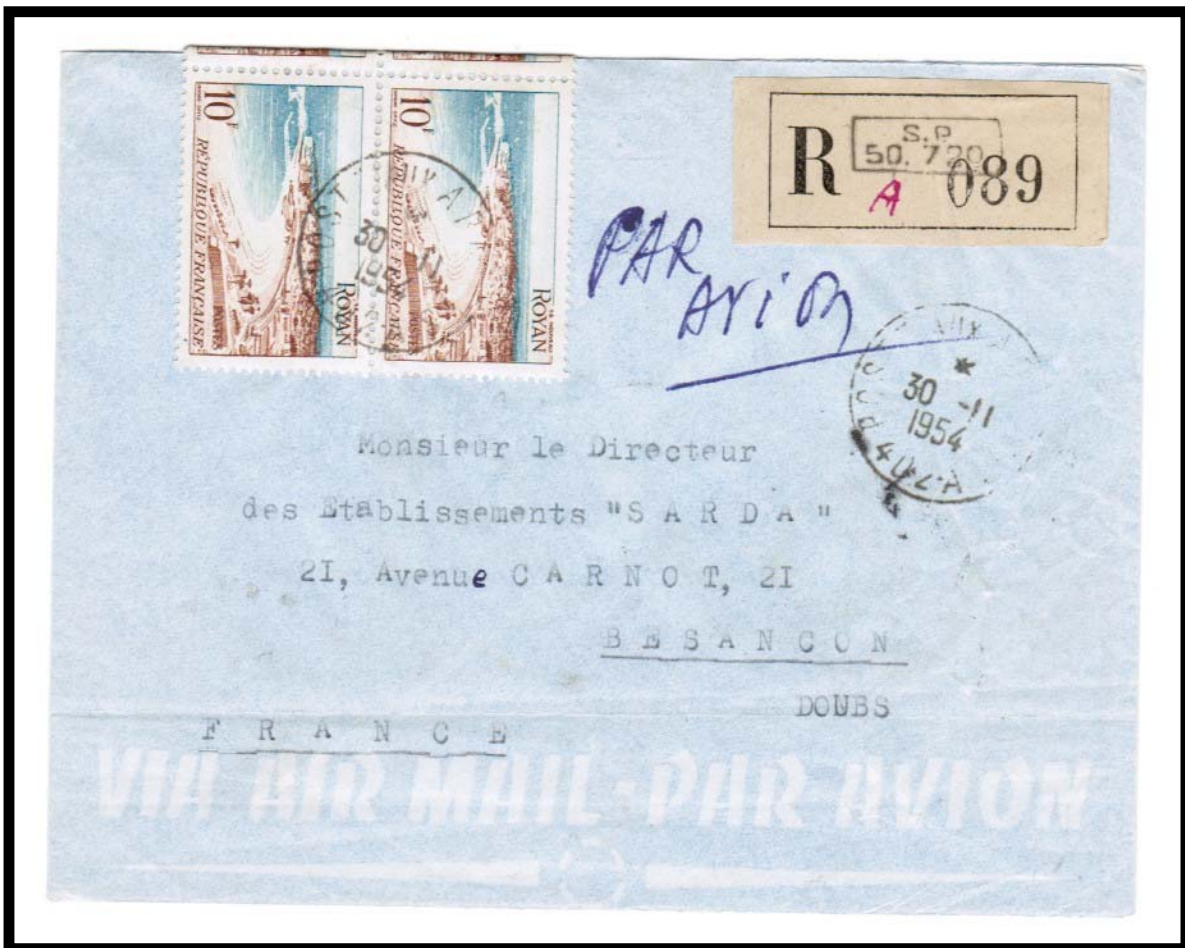


POSTAL MARKINGS

B.P.M. 402 12-10 1954
PARIS 4e PL. DE LA BOURSE 24-9 1954

POSTE AUX ARMEES
402-A

Effective 28 March 1951, Army Post Office Annex 402-A was relocated to Cantho, Cochinchina. The post office remained at Cantho until it closed in 1955.



POSTAL MARKINGS

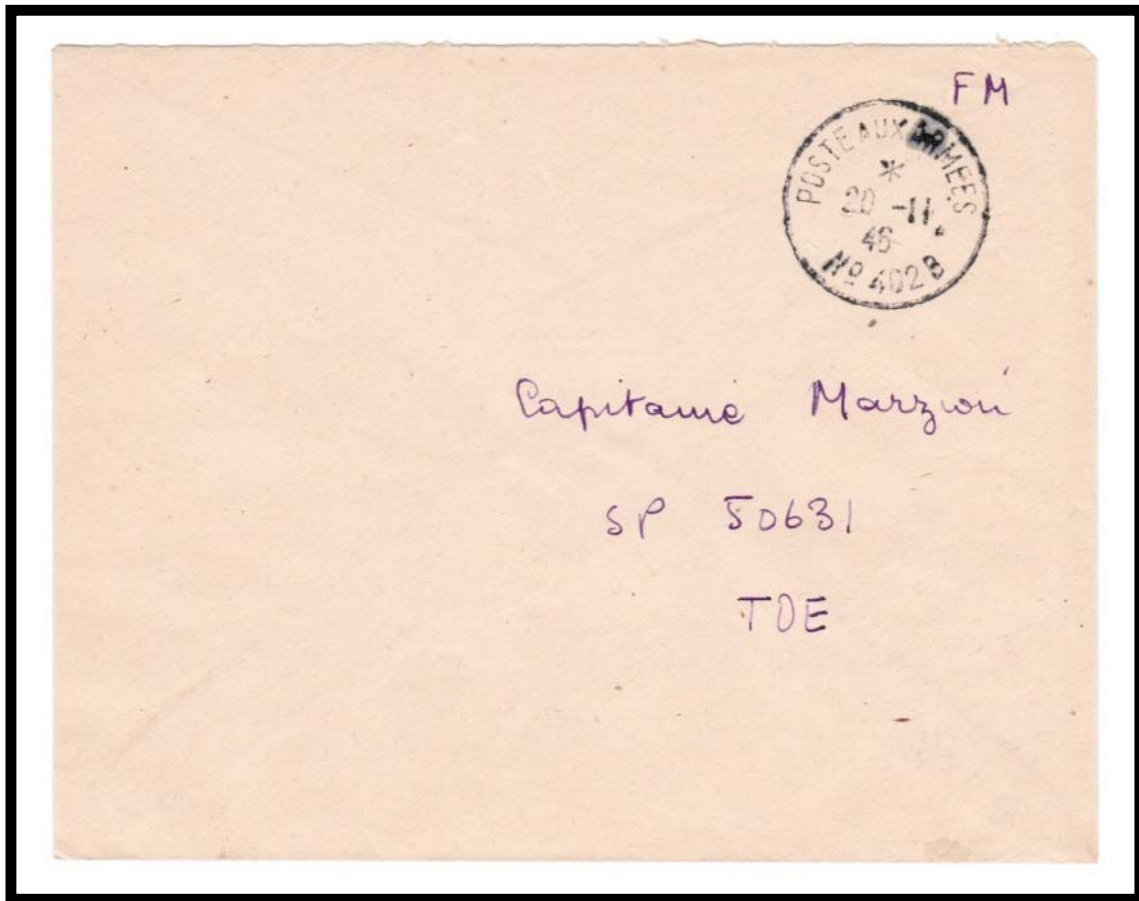
POSTE AUX ARMEES 402-A 30-11 1954
registration label

REVERSE

POSTE AUX ARMEES TOE 1-12 1954
BESANCON R.P. DOUBS 2-12 1954

POSTE AUX ARMEES
Nº 402B

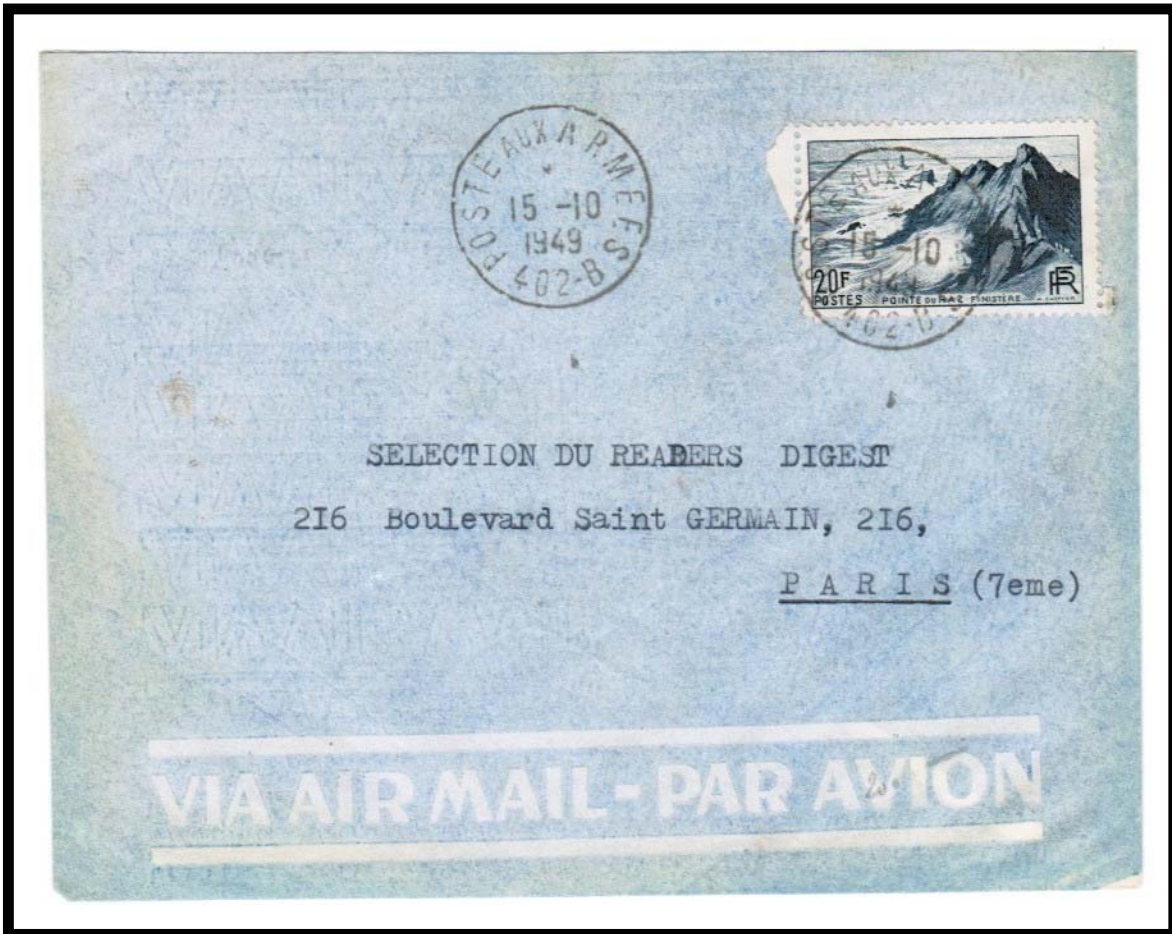
Post Office 402-B opened at Vinhlong in mid 1946. The early version of its postmark bears "Nº 402B at its base, an unusual method for identifying the number of the post office.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES Nº 402B 20-11 46

POSTE AUX ARMEES
402-B

After opening at Cholon, Post Office 402-B never moved during the remainder of the conflict. A postmark from 1949 displays the typical way of presenting the post office number. As evidenced by the stamp and the absence of military markings, a civilian sent this letter from the military post office.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 402-B 15-10 1949

POSTE AUX ARMEES
403

Opened on 1 July 1946, Post Office 403 operated at Hanoi until 1954. The cachet at the lower left certifies that this mailing to Algeria was for official business. The "SM" at the upper right is the appropriate indication for free mail of an official nature. No postage of any type was needed for official mail.



POSTAL MARKINGS

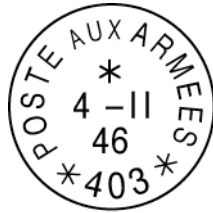
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 403 * 21-2 1949
manuscript registration number

REVERSE

MAISON CARREE ALGER 8-3 1949

POSTE AUX ARMEES
403

In the case of this registered letter sent by a soldier in 1946, a registry label was drawn by hand on the cover because no paste-on labels were available. During the early post-war period, French stamps were accepted for postage.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 403 * 4-11 46
framed manuscript registration number

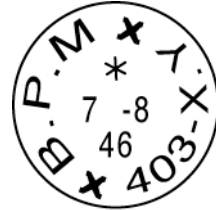
REVERSE

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 416 * 21-11 46

B.P.M 403-X.Y

The second type of postmark used the designation "B.P.M. 403 XY" for civilian mail. The straightline handstamp was used on registered mail along with an "R" to identify the point of registry.

B.P.M 403 ANNEXE DE HANOI



POSTAL MARKINGS

B.P.M 403-X.Y 7-8 46

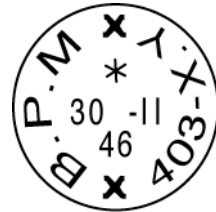
straight line "B.P.M 403 ANNEXE DE HANOI

"R" with manuscript registration number

B.P.M 403-X.Y

The lettering is slightly larger in a second variety of the auxiliary post office's straight line marking.

B.P.M 403 ANNEXE DE HANOI



POSTAL MARKINGS

B.P.M 403-X.Y 30-11 46
straight line "B.P.M 403 ANNEXE DE HANOI
"R" with manuscript registration number
registration numbers in pencil and crayon

POSTE AUX ARMEES
403-A

From July 1946 through February 1948, Army Post Office 403-A was located at Langson on the frontier with China. The "BPM 403A" straight-line handstamp served as the registry marking for this Post Office, Telegraph and Telephone Administration envelope.

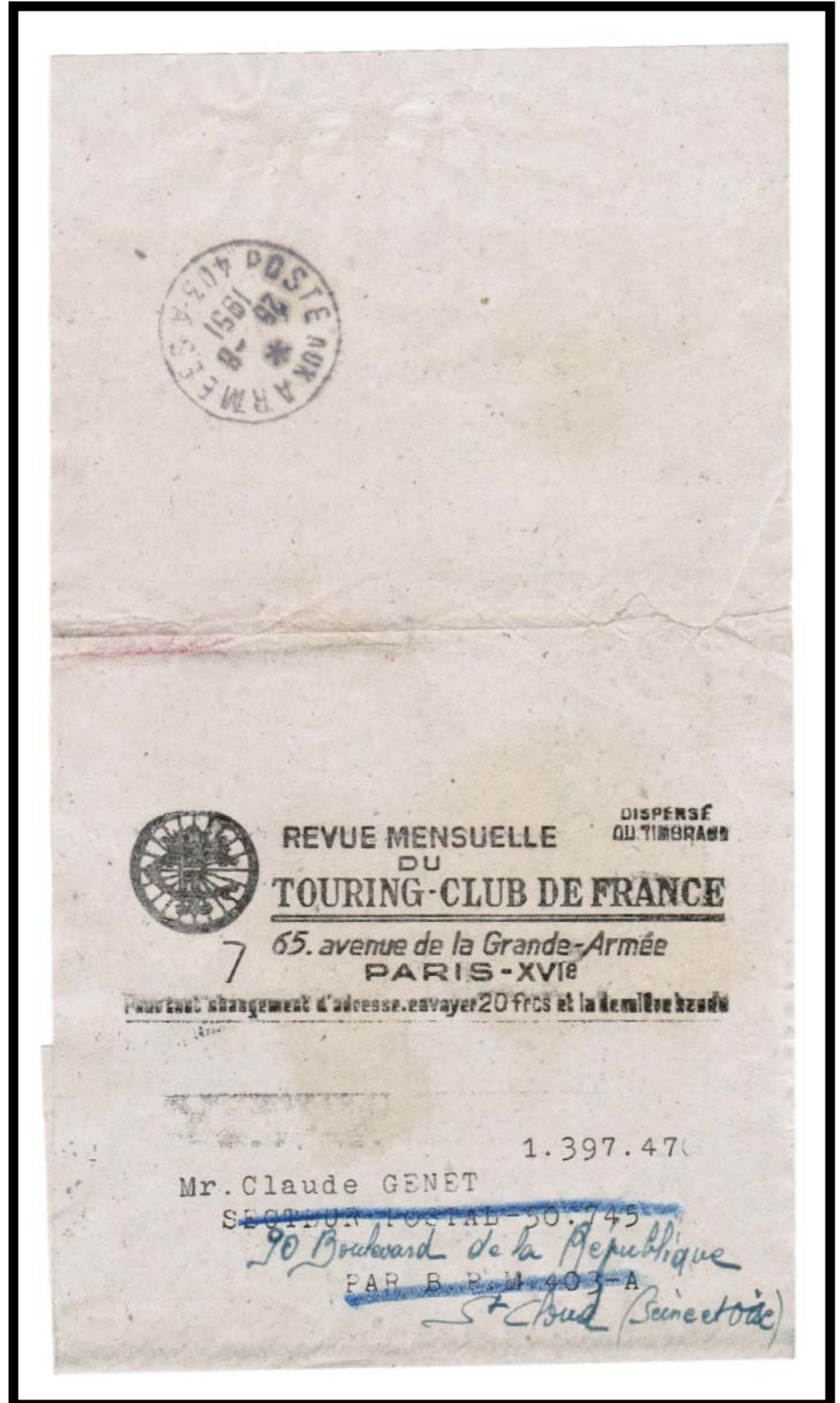
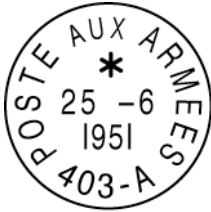
BPM 403 A



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 403-A 5-11 46
straight line BPM 403 A

POSTE AUX ARMEES
403-A

After 1948, Post Office 403-A was located at Nam Dinh. Here the military postmark was applied as a receipt mark on a mailing wrapper. The addressee had left Indochina and the wrapper was readdressed for forwarding to France.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 403-A 25-6 1951

POSTE AUX ARMEES
405

Established early on 21 October 1945, Army Post Office 405 remained situated at Saigon throughout the conflict.

Here a soldier chose to frank a letter to Malaysia with 175 francs worth of French stamps (5 francs on the reverse).



POSTAL MARKINGS

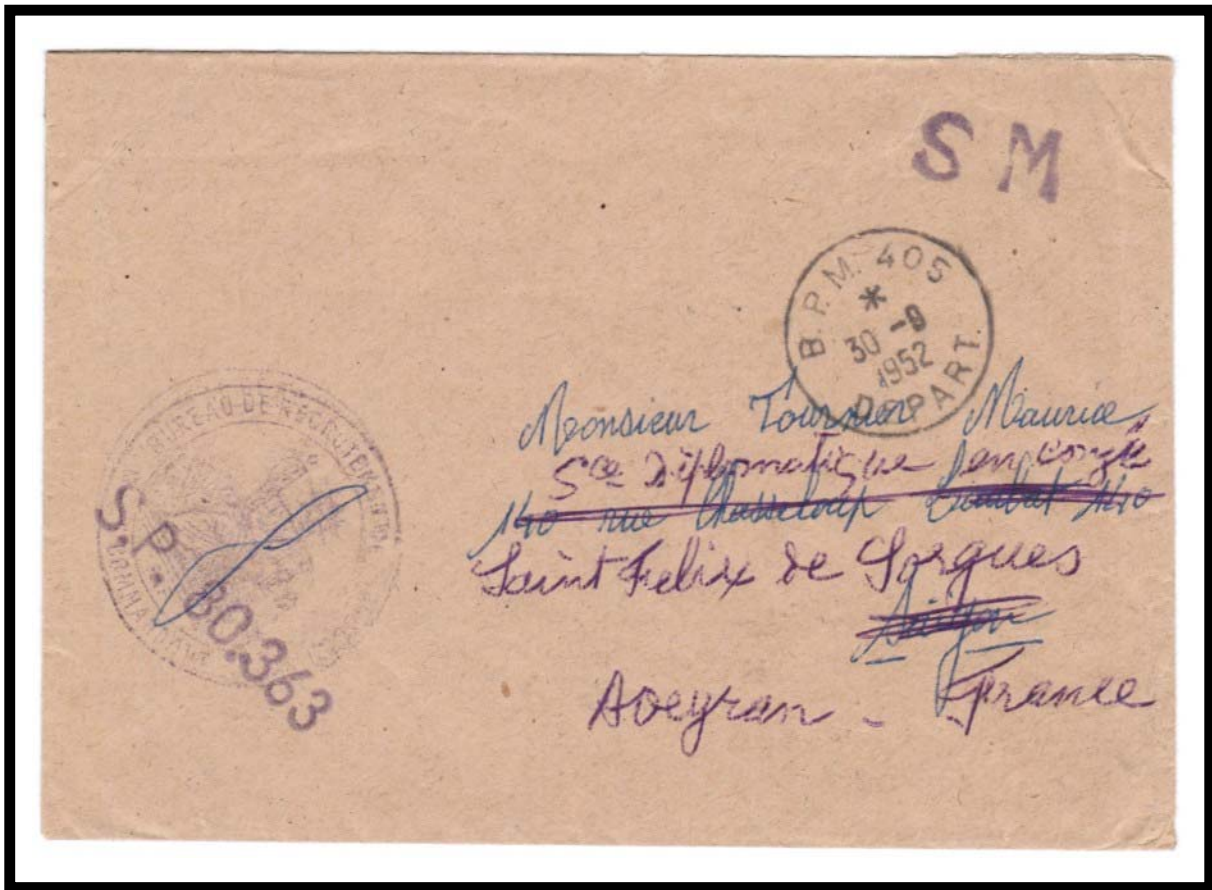
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 405 * 9-9 1950
pencil notations of weight "10g" and rate "175"

REVERSE

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 405 * 9-9 1950

B.P.M. 405
DEPART.

Located in Saigon, Post Office 405 was certainly one of the largest Army post offices in Indochina. Among its postmarks was a singularly different circular date stamp with the word "DEPART" located at the base.



POSTAL MARKINGS

B.P.M. 405 DEPART. 30-9 1952

REVERSE

SAIGON R.P. VIETNAM 1-10 1952

POSTE AUX ARMEES
405-A

Post Office 405-A was transferred to Pleiku in July 1946. Here a civilian letter was accepted from the missionary at Pleiku. Because the postage had been overpaid, a post office worker wrote "affranchi par exp" to indicate that it was the sender who had affixed the postage stamps of a higher than necessary value.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 405-A 7-5 1949

POSTE AUX ARMEES
405-A

After much moving around, Post Office Annex 405-A settled at Saigon in August 1946. For all practical purposes, the annex merged with the main Post Office 405, perhaps the major Army post office in Indochina.

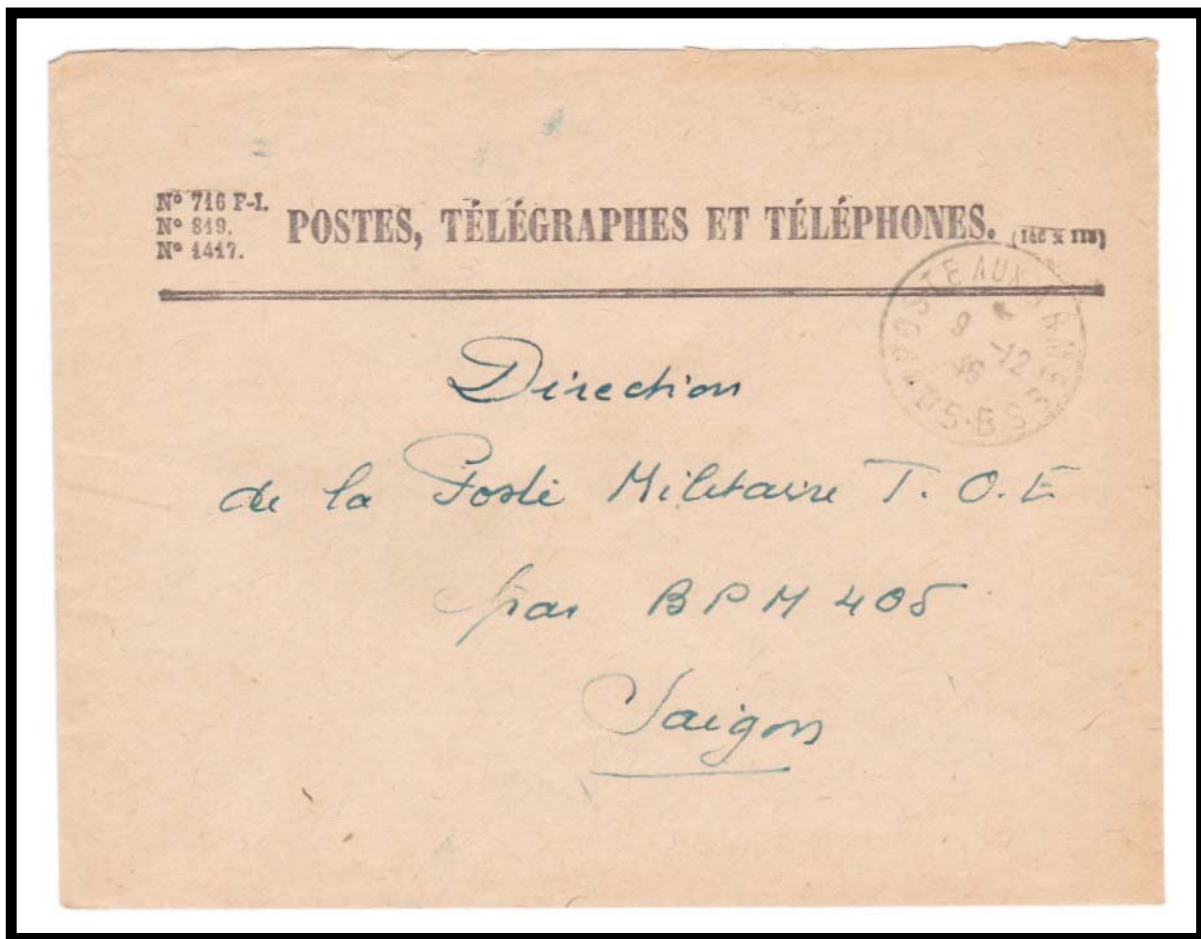


POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 405-A 4-2 1950

POSTE AUX ARMEES
405-B

Post Office 405-B replaced post Office 405-A at Nhatrang in July 1946. It remained there until June 1949.

Official envelopes did not need to bear any indication for free service. Here the envelope went from the military post office at Nhatrang to the central military post office in Saigon (BPM 405).



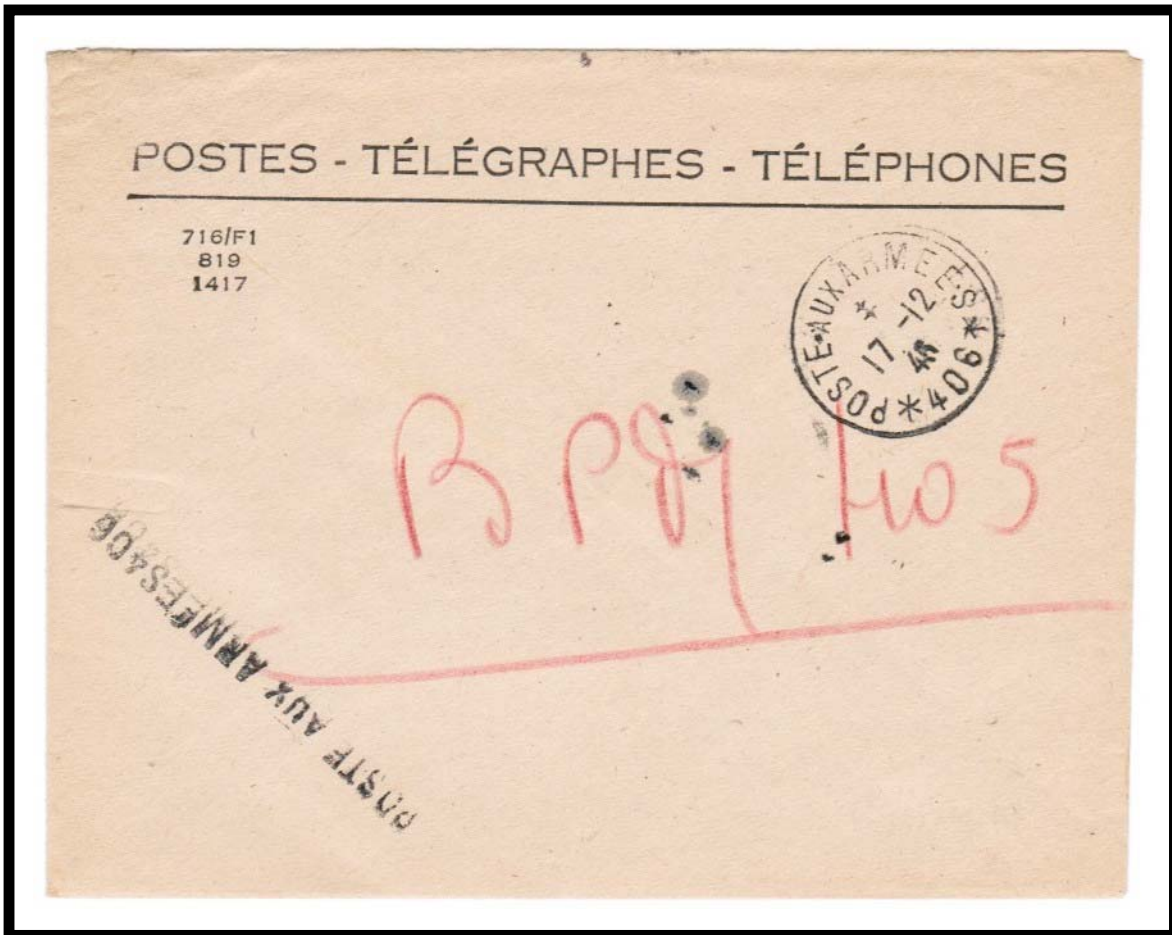
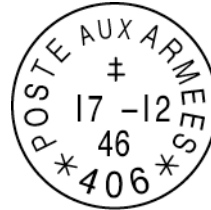
POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 405-B 9-12 46

POSTE AUX ARMEES
406

Opening at Haiphong in March 1946, Post Office 406 at first supported the large military build-up in that area. Simply addressed to "BPM 405," this mailing was sent on to the main military post office in Saigon.

The postmark is different in that instead of the usual asterisk, a cross of Lorraine occupies the upper middle area.

POSTE AUX ARMÉES406



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 406 * 17-12 46
straight-line POSTE AUX ARMÉES 406 handstamp

POSTE AUX ARMEES
406

When civilian mail was accepted by a military post office, all postal fees had to be paid by the sender. Here a registered handstamp specially made for Post Office 406 was struck on a registered letter to Canada.

In this case, an asterisk instead of the cross of Lorraine appears inside the postmark.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 406 * 25-9 1948
registry handstamp

REVERSE

MONTREAL CANADA OC 11 48

POSTE AUX ARMEES
B.P.M. 406

Army Post Office 406 used a completely different style of postmark on this registered letter posted in March 1947. This format was previously unreported.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES B.P.M. 406 18-3 47
registration label
LE TREPORT SEINE-INFRE 31-3 1947

REVERSE

KREMLIN-BICETRE SEINE 7-4 47

B.P.M 406
ANNEXE DE HAIPHONG

Army Post Office 406, located at Haiphong, established an annex for the temporary processing of the civilian mails. Operating from September 1946 until February 1947, this government envelope was posted during the final month of service.



POSTAL MARKINGS

B.P.M-406 ANNEXE DE HAIPHONG 16-2 47

POSTE AUX ARMEES
406-A

Army Post Office 406-A operated at Hongay from 1947 to early 1948. Instead of the usual asterisk, the 406-A postmark bears the Cross of Lorraine at the top center.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 406-A 12-8 47

POSTE AUX ARMEES
406-B

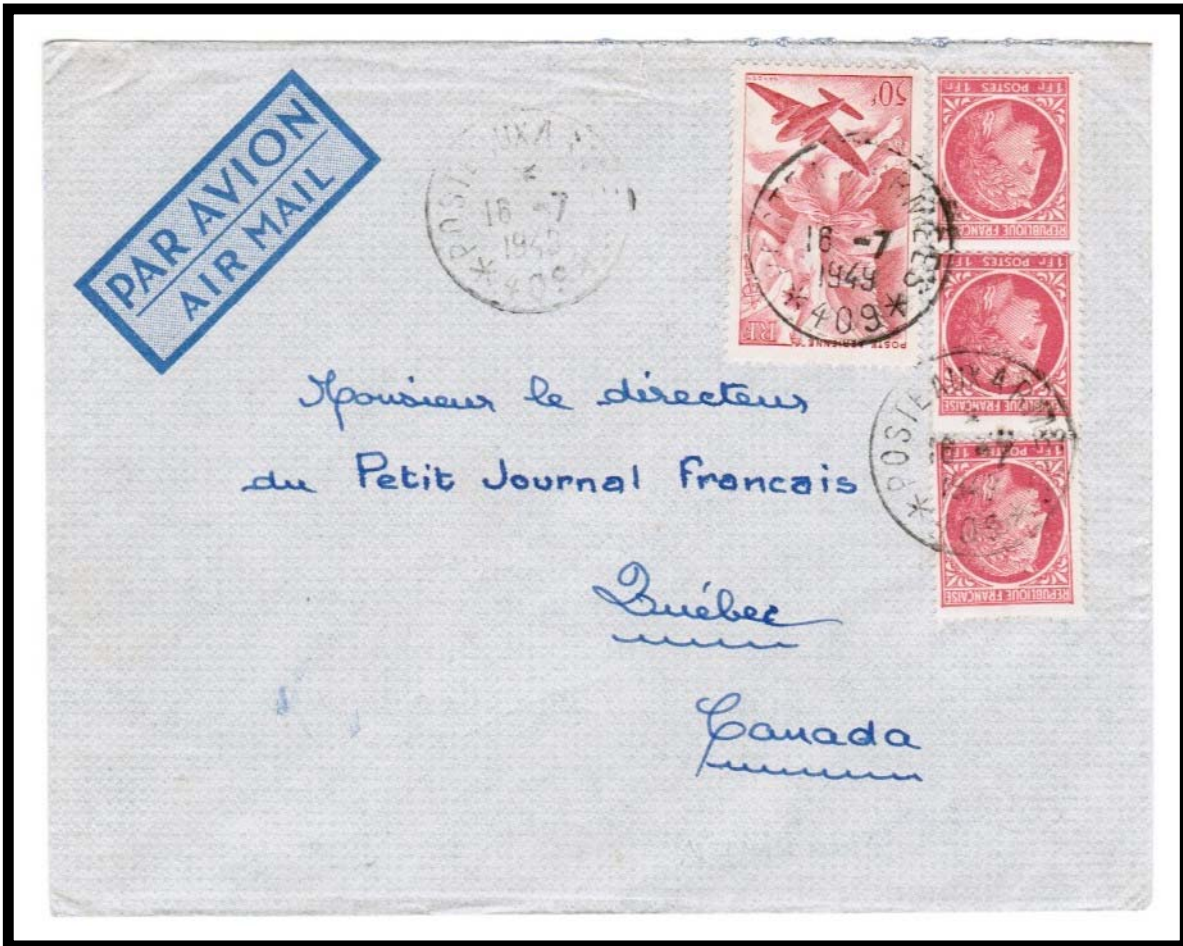
First established at Tienyen in 1947, this post office moved to Hongay but returned to Tienyen where it closed in April 1955. A postal clerk applied Army Post Office 406-B postmark to a money order receipt in 1953.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 406-B 13-6 1953

POSTE AUX ARMEES
409

Established in 1946, Army Post Office 409 served troops stationed at Nhatrang. No doubt in the interest of a quicker delivery time, the soldier who sent this airmail letter to Canada chose to affix his own postage.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 409 * 16-7 1949

POSTE AUX ARMEES
409

AVIS DE RÉCEPTION (A) — AVIS DE PAYEMENT (B)

N° 514
J. A. 12/1636. 0

(A) **A. G. P. M. Lettre** } valeur déclarée }
d'un mandat (2) } recommandé }
enregistré au bureau de **Paris 47** de }
5 JANV 1955 sous le n° **6053** et }
le **Receur J.** adresse à (suspension complète) M. }
Fuyob s/Dordogne }
(rue et n° s'il y a lieu) }
R. 7386 (Gironde) }
A REMPLIR
Département **73**
Tribune **1955**
Expéditeur **LABP**
de l'avis. **121**

(1) Nature de l'objet (lettre, boîte, paquet, échantillon, etc.)
(2) Ajouter suivant le cas (ordinaire, carte, lettre, télégraphique, etc.)
(3) Dans le régime international il est fait usage de la loi n° 515.
(4) Diffuser les indications inutiles.

NOTA. — En cas d'absence de l'intéressé, l'objet recommandé ou chargé, adressé à un domicile, est conservé en instance au bureau destinataire pendant 15 jours, après une présentation à ce domicile.

(B) Le soussigné } (1) **Lettre** } valeur déclarée }
déclare que } le mandat } recommandé }
mentionné ci-contre } livré le (B) } **10 JANV 1955** }
a été dûment } payé le (B) }
Signature de l'agent du bureau destinataire
Spilly

POSTE AUX ARMEES
* 409 *

Post Office 409 was a large post office created at Nhatrang after Post Office 405-B left in June 1949. It remained open until 1955. Here the circular date stamp was applied to a registry receipt form in 1955.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 409 * 16-7 1949
PARIS 4e PL. DE LA BOURSE (25) 5-1 1955

POSTE AUX ARMEES
409-A

Identified as official mail by the framed "S.M." marking, this envelope was handstamped with the naval cachet of the patrol transport "Le Mekong." Army Post Office Annex 409-A was located at the coastal town of Phantiet, Annam.

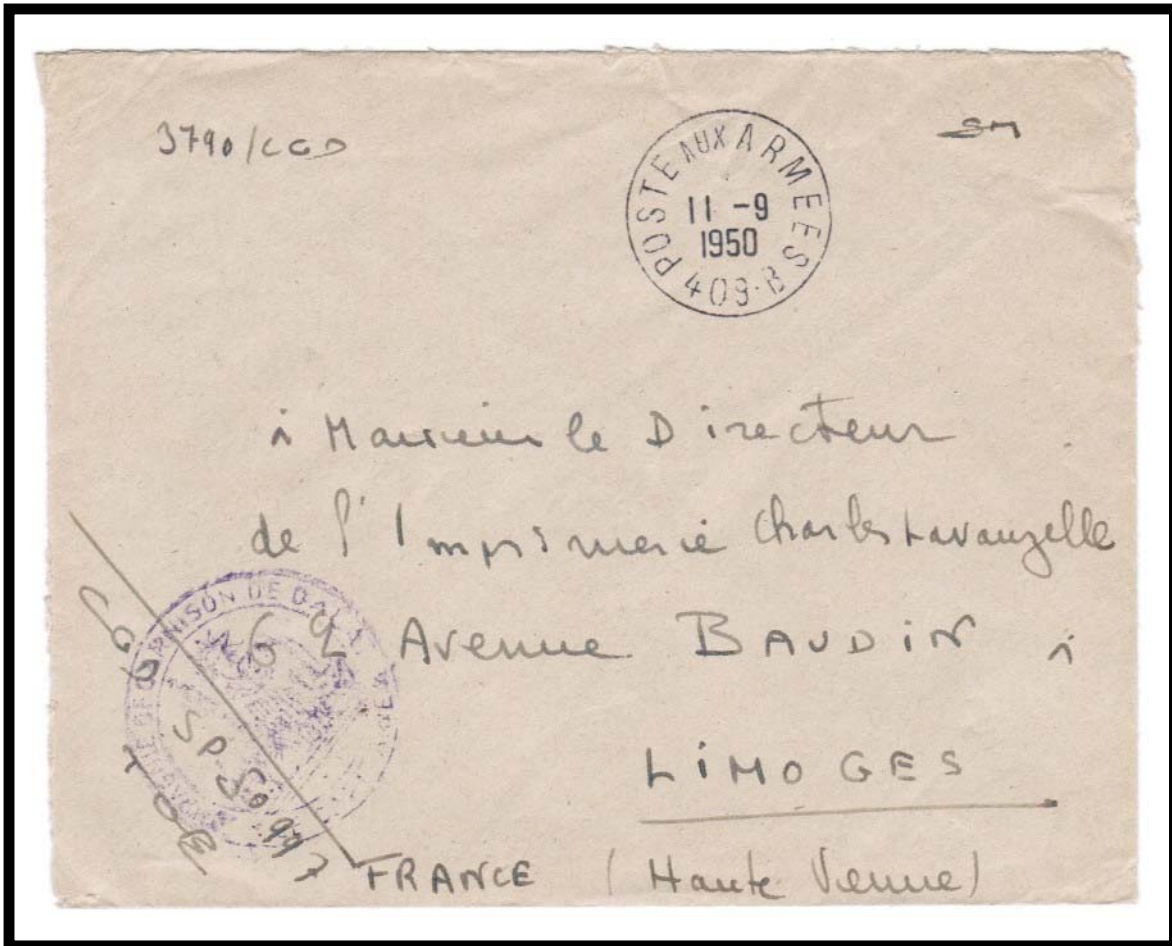
Transport-Petrolier
"LE MEKONG"



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 409-A 7-6 47

POSTE AUX ARMEES
409-B

The handwritten "SM" at the upper right of this cover identifies the letter as official mail. The postmark shows that the letter originated at Dalat where Army Post Office Annex 409-B was sited from when it first opened June 1949 until October 1951.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 409-B 11-9 1950

POSTE AUX ARMEES
411

Post Office 411 was the first to open in the North. It was established at Hanoi on 1 November 1945. After troops arrived in large numbers, it was moved to Laos.

Here a registered , civilian letter was accepted for transmission. It was handstamped in red with a registry marking for recording the registration number. The postmark was applied with blue ink.

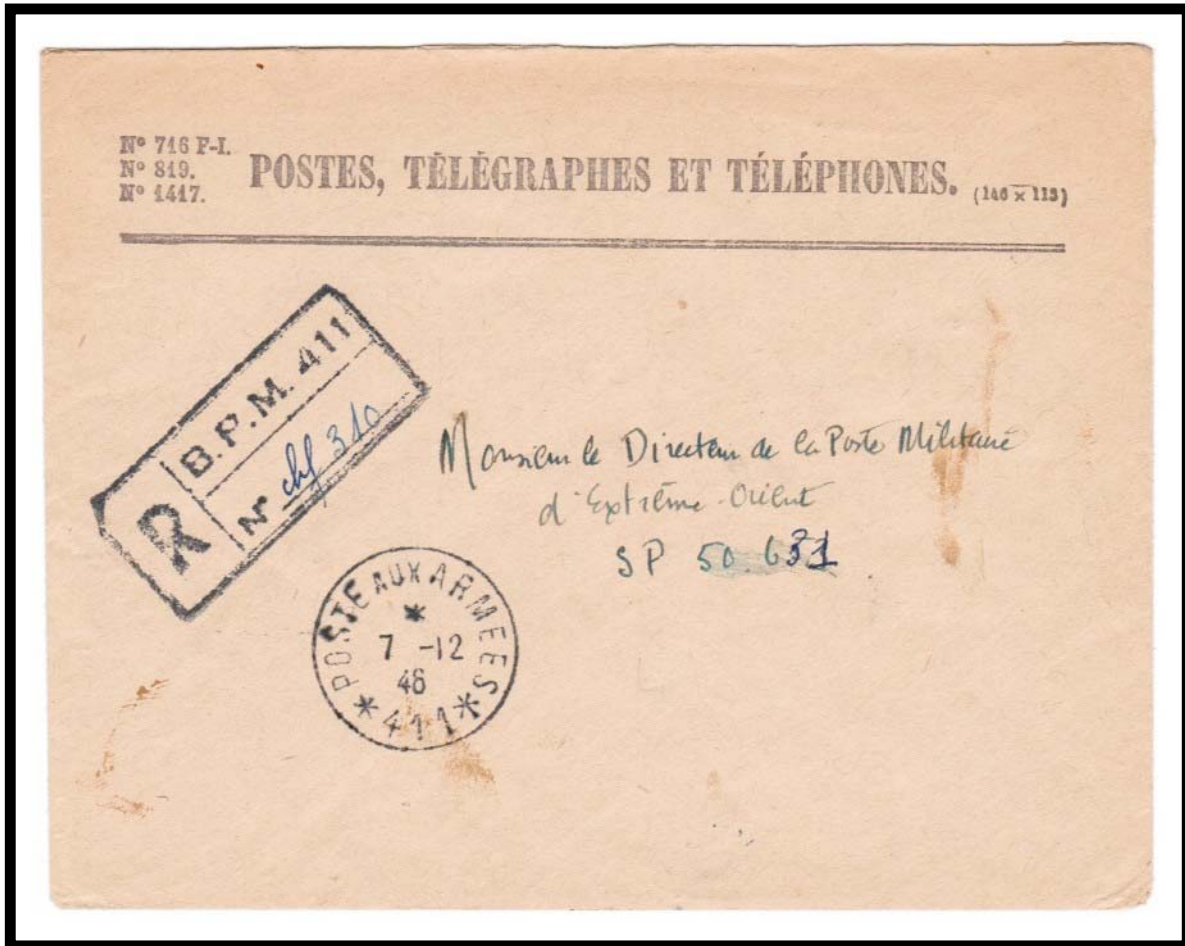


POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 411 * 21-3 46 (blue)
registration handstamp (red) with manuscript number

POSTE AUX ARMEES
411

In June 1946, Army Post Office 411 moved to Vientiane Laos. The circular date stamp and registry handstamp that had been employed at Hanoi were the same after the transfer to the new location.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 411 * 7-12 46
registration handstamp with manuscript number

REVERSE

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 405 * 13-12 46

POSTE AUX ARMEES
411

In mid 1946, Post Office 411 reopened at Luang Prabang, Laos. The sender of this letter violated military security rules by indicating his geographical location on the envelope.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 411 * 7-12 46

POSTE AUX ARMEES
413

With 25 francs worth of postage, this mailing demonstrates the effect of postwar inflation on postal rates. Replacing Army Post Office 414-A when it closed, Army Post Office 413 opened at Pleiku, Annam on 1 May 1951.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 413 * 13-8 1951
42 in circle

POSTE AUX ARMEES
414

Post Office 414 was transferred to Tourane in January 1947. It remained there until 1955.

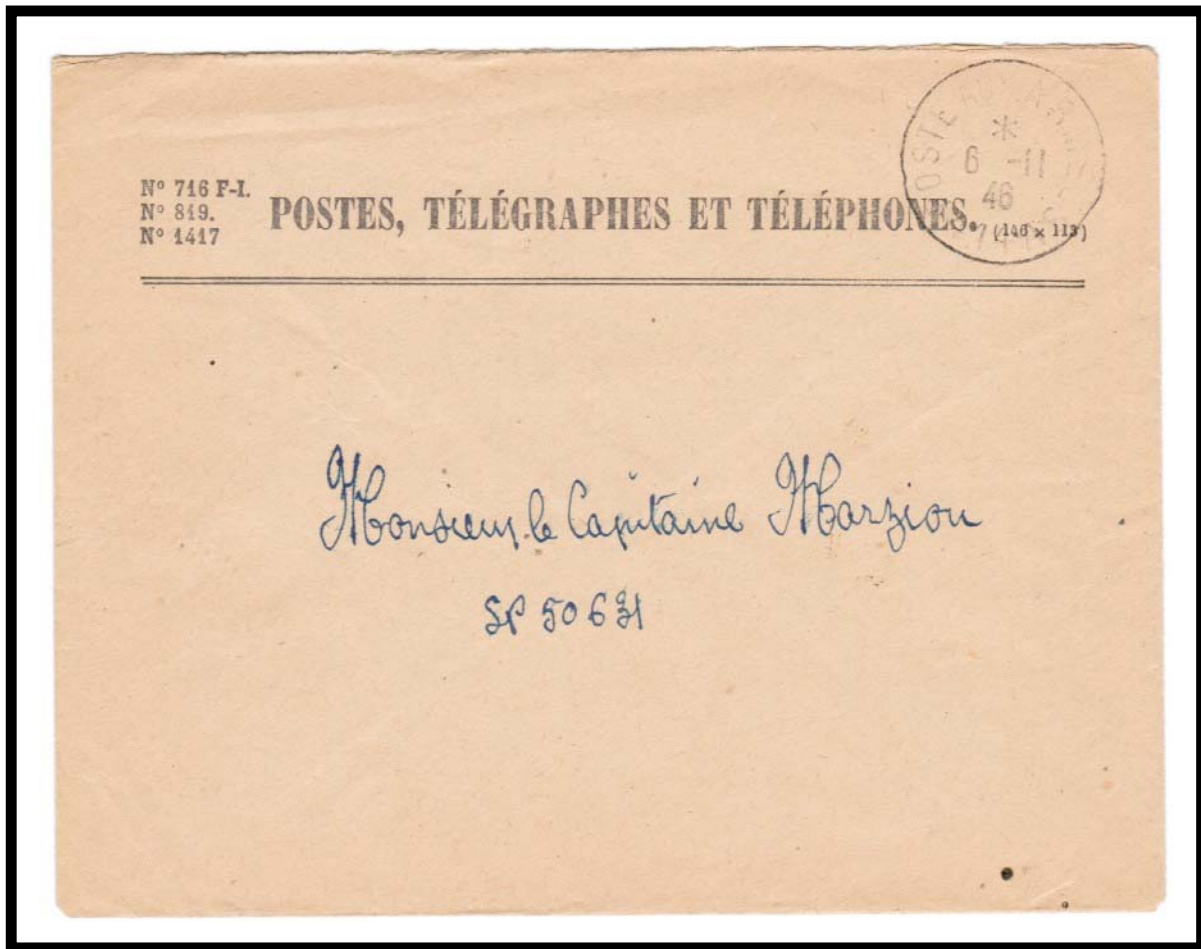
Here the sender prepaid the postage for a letter to foreign destination. The Army post office canceled the stamps.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 414 * 14-2 1949

POSTE AUX ARMEES
414-A

Army Post Office Annex 414-A operated at Pleiku, Annam until 1 May 1951 when Post Office 413 replaced it. Here a mailing from the Post, Telegraph and Telephone Administration was delivered with only the Postal Sector (SP) of the addressee identified on the cover.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 414-A 6-11 46
REVERSE
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 405 * 12-11 46

POSTE AUX ARMEES
418

Post Office 418 opened on 1 May 1946 at Hue, Annam. It remained there throughout the conflict until closed in 1955. The sender put stamps on his letter to Canada and the military post office canceled them. By 1949, post offices had replaced registry handstamps with paste-on registry labels.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 418 * 9-4 1949
registration label

REVERSE

MONTREAL CANADA AP 20 49
MONTREAL A.M.F. AP 20 49
MONTREAL CANADA STATION W 20 AP 49
B.P. Montreal, G.P.O. CANADA REGISTERED APR 21 1949

POSTE AUX ARMEES
418

Post Office 418 used a variation of its regular postmark. Unlike similar postmarks, "POSTE AUX ARMEES" was not centered but rotated counterclockwise giving the postmark an asymmetrical appearance.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 418 17-2 1948

ANNEXE DE HUE
B.P.M 418

Since the civilian postal system was in collapse when French soldiers arrived at Hue, an annex was established specifically for accepting civilian mail. The annex for Army Post Office 418 was in operation for less than a year from August 1946 until May 1947.



POSTAL MARKINGS

B.P.M 418 ANNEXE DE HUE 5-12 46

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 13-12 46

ANNEXE DE HUE
B.P.M 418

This example of a registered airmail letter was posted through the annex of the military post office. In addition to the postmark, the originating post office is identified by the straight-line "B.P.M. 418 ANNEXE DE HUE" handstamp that was applied after the registration label had been affixed to the mailing.



B.P.M. 418 ANNEXE DE HUE



POSTAL MARKINGS

B.P.M 418 ANNEXE DE HUE 14-3 47
registration and airmail labels
straight-line B.P.M. 418 ANNEXE DE HUE handstamp

ANNEXE DE TOURANE
B.P.M 418

Similar to the situation in Hue, postal facilities for civilians were fumbling when French troops arrived at Tourane. Another annex of Army Post Office 418 was set up at Tourane for civilian mail. It operated for six months from September 1946 until February 1947.



POSTAL MARKINGS
B.P.M 418 ANNEXE DE TOURANE 12-12 46
REVERSE
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 405 * 16-12 46

POSTE AUX ARMEES
418-A

Army Post Office Annex 421-A was transferred to Donghoi around May 1947. Here its postmark was applied to the receipt for a registered letter sent to an addressee at Sector Postale 55.101.



TELEGRAMS - TELEGRAPHES - TELEPHONES N° 517-2

Récépissé d'un envoi recommandé ou avec valeur déclarée

(Expéditeur.)

DESTINATAIRE :

M^{re} *Capitaine*

Chf. MOGNY n°

à *S.P. 55.101.*

(Partie à remplir par l'Agent des Postes.)

LR (Nature de l'objet.)

(Valeur déclarée.)

(Affranchis^t perçu.)

(Poids)

002 (Contre rembourse^t.)

Signature de l'Agent,

A circular postmark similar to the one above, but with the handwritten number "002" in red ink over the date "23-2".

POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 418-A 23-2 1952

POSTE AUX ARMEES
418-B

Army Post Office Annex 418-B accepted registered letters from soldiers for onward transmission. Located at Quang-Tri, Annam, Army Post Office Annex 418-B served the military in the Quang-Tri area for 7 years from 1947 through 1954.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES 418-B 27-10 1952
registration label

REVERSE

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 418 * 29-10 1952

POSTE AUX ARMEES
419

Army Post Office 419 opened at Vientiane, Laos on 16 April 1954. It remained in service at Vientiane until closing on 28 November 1975.



POSTAL MARKINGS

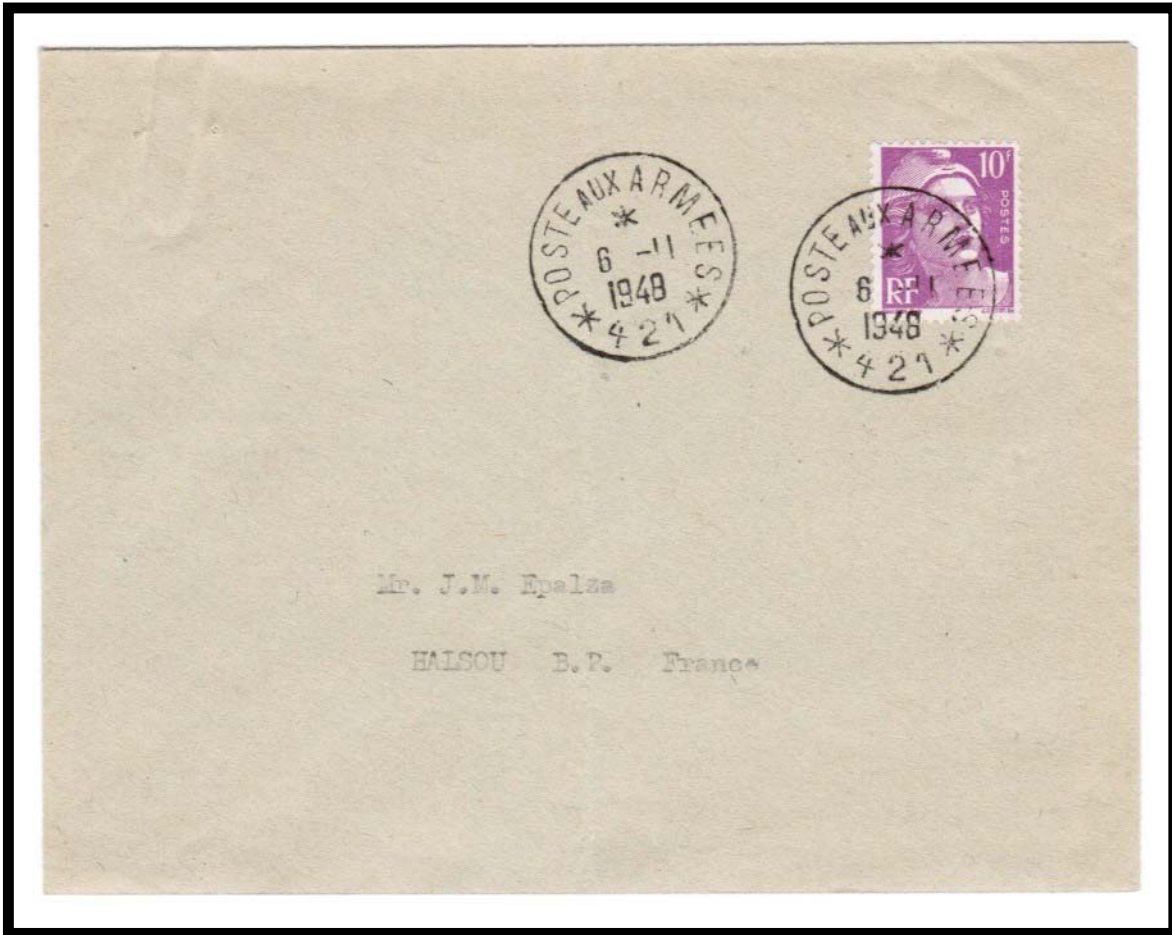
POSTE AUX ARMEES 419 12-2 1957
registration and airmail labels

REVERSE

BESANCON R.P. DOUBS 17-2 1957

POSTE AUX ARMEES
421

On 16 February 1948, Army Post Office 421 began operations at Langson replacing Post Office 403A. This post office served Tonkin's frontier with China.

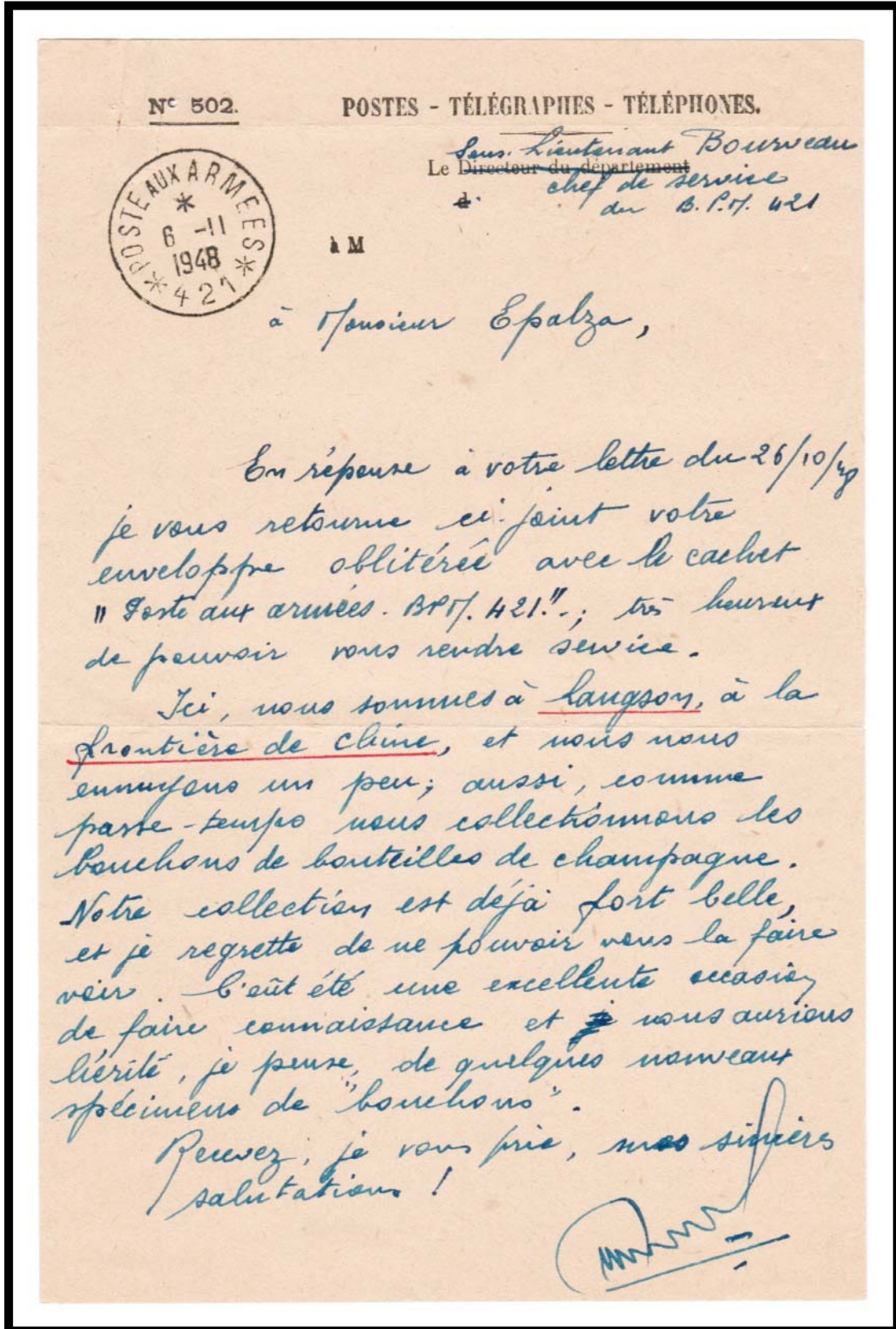


POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 421 * 6-11 1948

POSTES AUX ARMEES

421

Sent in the preceding envelope by a soldier on campaign, this letter verifies that Langson was the location of Army Post Office 421.



POSTE AUX ARMEES
421

After the evacuation of Langson on 18 October 1950, Army Post Office 421 set up operations at the airport at Gialam.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 421 * 1-8 1951
registration label

REVERSE

CHAILLEVETTE CHARENTE MARITIME 6-5 1951

POSTE AUX ARMEES
421-A

Established at Caobang on 16 February 1948, post office annex 421-A remained open there until October 1950 when Caobang was evacuated by French troops.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 421-A 16-8 1949
REVERSE
Montreal, Canada No. 232 30 AUG

POSTE AUX ARMEES
422

Army Post Office 422 was established at Haiphong on 1 April 1954. Here the sender registered his response to Reader's Digest in Paris very likely because a cash payment was enclosed.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 422 * 3-6 1953
registration and airmail labels

REVERSE

PARIS VII. DISTRIBUTION 8-6 1953

POSTE AUX ARMEES
422

Transferred to Bien Hoa in October 1954, Post Office 422 closed the next year.

Here the post office's circular date stamp was applied to a registry receipt that originated in Paris in October 1955.



A REMPLIR PAR LE BUREAU D'ORIGINE

(1) Envoi recommandé (2) 11/10
Lettre
(1) Boîte avec valeur déclarée de 8207
(1) Paquet 10
(1) Mandat de 806

déposé au bureau de poste de **PARIS**
le 3/10 1955 sous le n° 806

Le soussigné déclare que
l'envoi (1) mentionné ci-contre a été dûment (1) livré
le 12-10-1955
Signature (3)
du destinataire : [Signature]

A REMPLIR PAR L'EXPÉDITEUR

Adresse de l'expéditeur
M. **ASSOCIATION GÉNÉRALE**
n° **DE PRÉVOYANCE MILITAIRE**
à **7, Rue d'Uzes, PARIS-2** FRANCE

Adresse du destinataire
M. Ch. des L. Delarue
à SP 84 550 TOE
(Département ou Pays de destination)
52279

Timbre du bureau destinataire

(1) Biffer ce qui ne convient pas.
(2) Indiquer dans la parenthèse la nature de l'envoi (lettre, carte postale, imprimé, etc.), s'il y a lieu.
(3) Cet avis doit être signé par le destinataire ou par une personne y autorisée en vertu des règlements du Pays de destination, ou, si ces règlements le comportent, par l'agent du bureau destinataire, et renvoyé par le premier courrier directement à l'expéditeur. En France, l'avis est signé exclusivement par l'agent du bureau destinataire.

A circular postmark from the Poste aux Armees 422, identical to the one above, stamped over the bottom right portion of the form.

POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES * 422 * 12-10 1955

POSTE AUX ARMEES
422-A

Post Office 422-A opened on 27 May 1946 at Dalat, Annam.

Here a civilian used Army Post Office 422-A to send a letter to Captain Malzion, head of BPM 405, the main military post office at Saigon.



REVERSE

POSTE AUX ARMEES 422-A 12-1 47

REVERSE

POSTE AUX ARMEES * 405 * 14-1 47

POSTE AUX ARMEES
422-A

Post Office 422-A was transferred to Cantho in June 1949. It remained there until March 1951.

Here a postage-free registered letter was accepted for transmission by the military post office indicating that it was treated as official business even though it was marked "FM."



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE AUX ARMEES 422-A 21-3 1950
registration label with "CF" in blue crayon

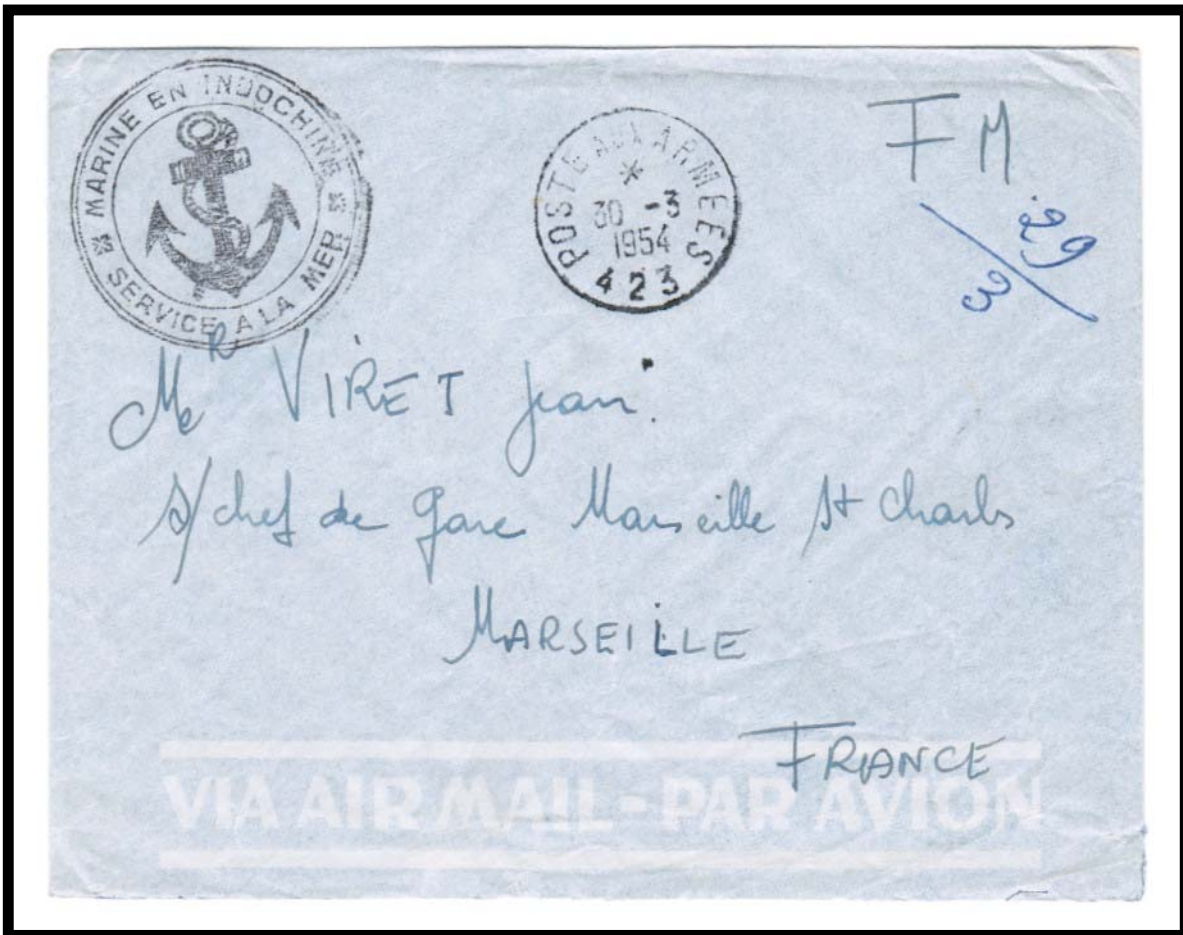
REVERSE

POSTE AUX ARMEES 402 23-3 1950

POSTE AUX ARMEES
423

In Dalat Annam, which had formerly been served by Army Post Office 409-B, the military created Army Post Office 423 on 16 October 1951. It remained at Dalat through 1954.

The cachet on this cover indicated that the sender was a sailor or a marine.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE AUX ARMEES 423 30-3 1954

POSTE-NAVALE

Naval units had their own post offices. This letter is an early usage from Saigon. The post office was established at Saigon in October 1945. For his mailing, the sender used an American postal stationery envelope franked with Indochinese stamps. The Naval Post Office Only the latter and ignored the stationery's indicium.

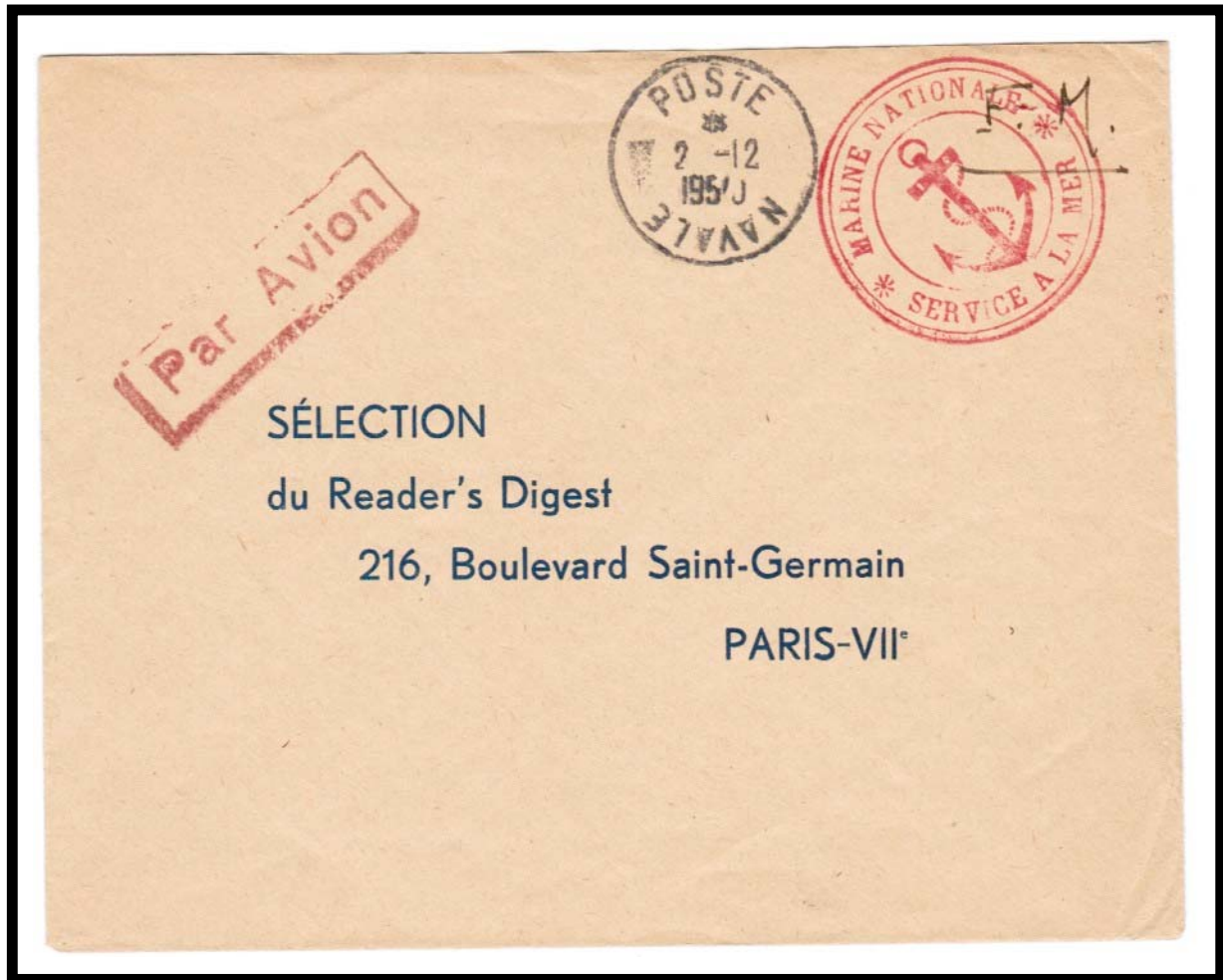


POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE NAVALE 2-2-46

POSTE NAVALE
Opposing Format

For this style of postmark, the words "POSTE" and "NAVALE" are opposite one another.

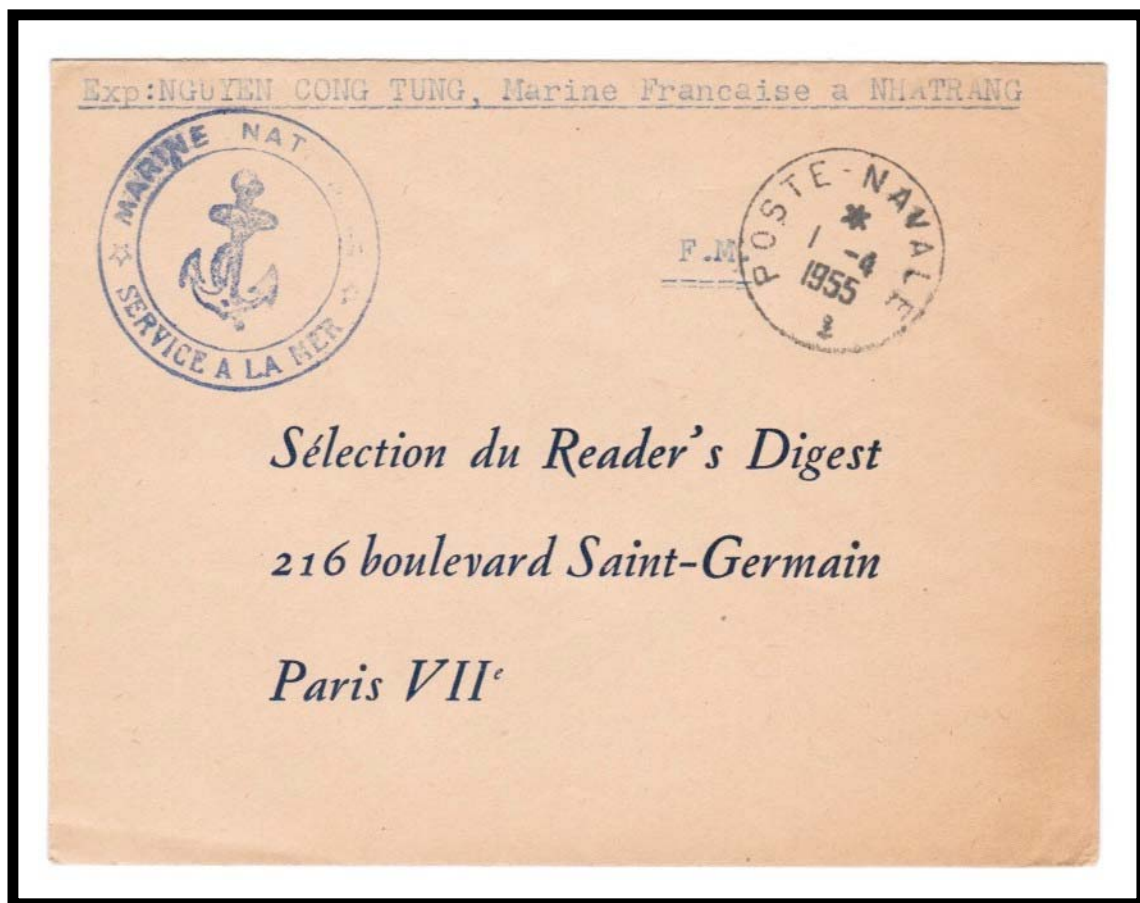
Here an envelope was returned to France in 1950 through the Naval Post Office at Saigon.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE NAVALE 2-12 1950

POSTE NAVALE
Continuous Format

The naval post office also employed a postmark with the wording in a continuous format. The lettering goes from the 8 o'clock position to the 4 o'clock position. At the bottom of the postmark is a small anchor. In this case, the sender was stationed at Nhatrang.

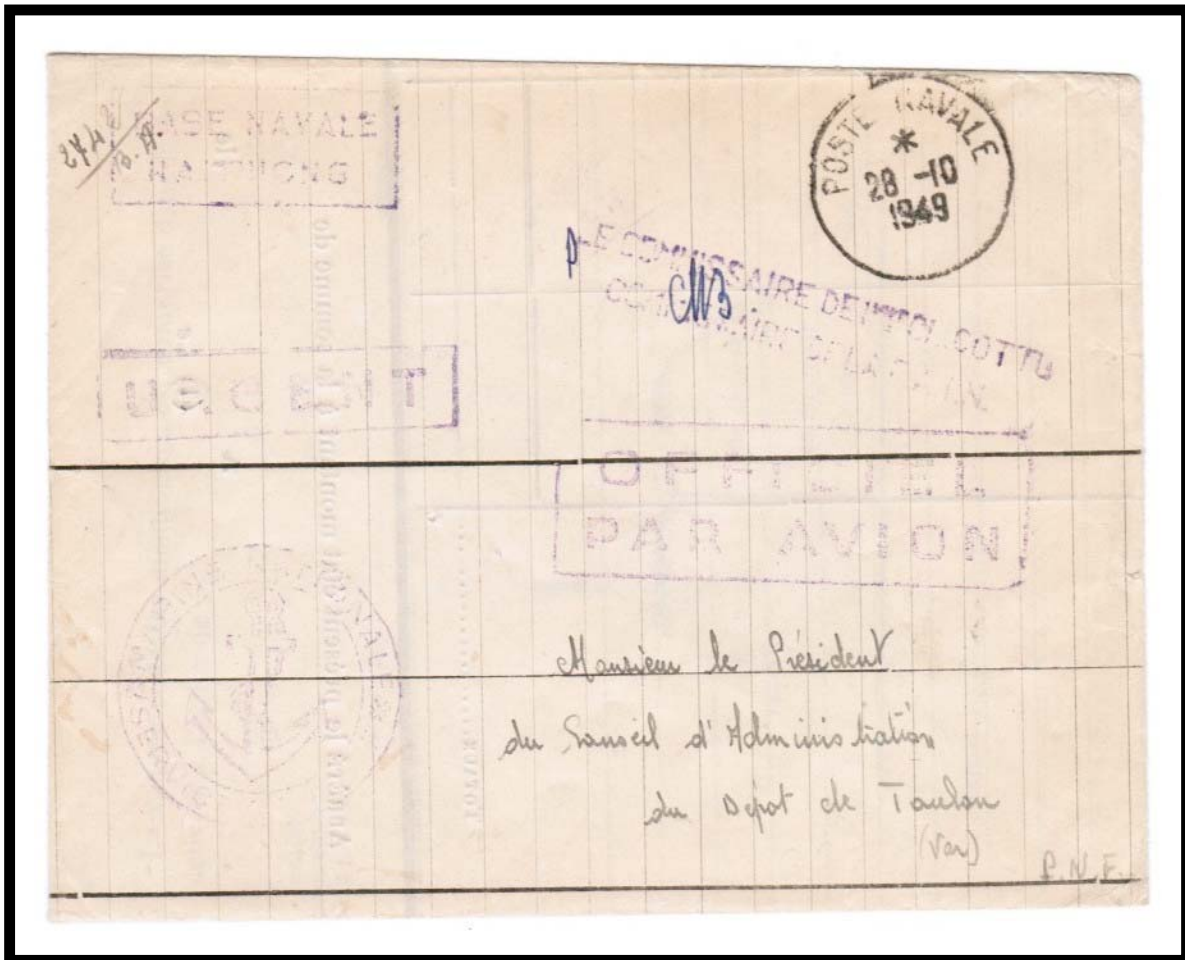


POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE-NAVALE 1-4 1955

Urgent Navy Mail 1949

Presumably, the "URGENT" handstamp indicates mail of some time value. An envelope fabricated from paper, which had originally been a printed form of some sort—a so-called "turned cover," supports this assumption.

URGENT



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE NAVALE 28-10 1949

Official Navy Mail
1951

This official 1952 letter to Paris bears several cachets including that of the Naval Air Group (GROUPEMENT AERONAVAL INDOCHINE). The manuscript number under the "OFFICIEL" marking is a serial number for tracking correspondence.

GROUPEMENT AERONAVAL
INDOCHINE

OFFICIEL



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE NAVALE 11-12 1952

Official Navy Mail
1953

Official mail ("Service Militaire") was always post-free. Here an official letter posted in 1953 bears several markings attesting to its navy origin. The marking at the upper right indicates that the sender was with the French riverine unit in Southern Indochina (FLOTTILLE AMPHIBIE INDOCHINE SUD).



FLOTTILLE AMPHIBIE
INDOCHINE SUD



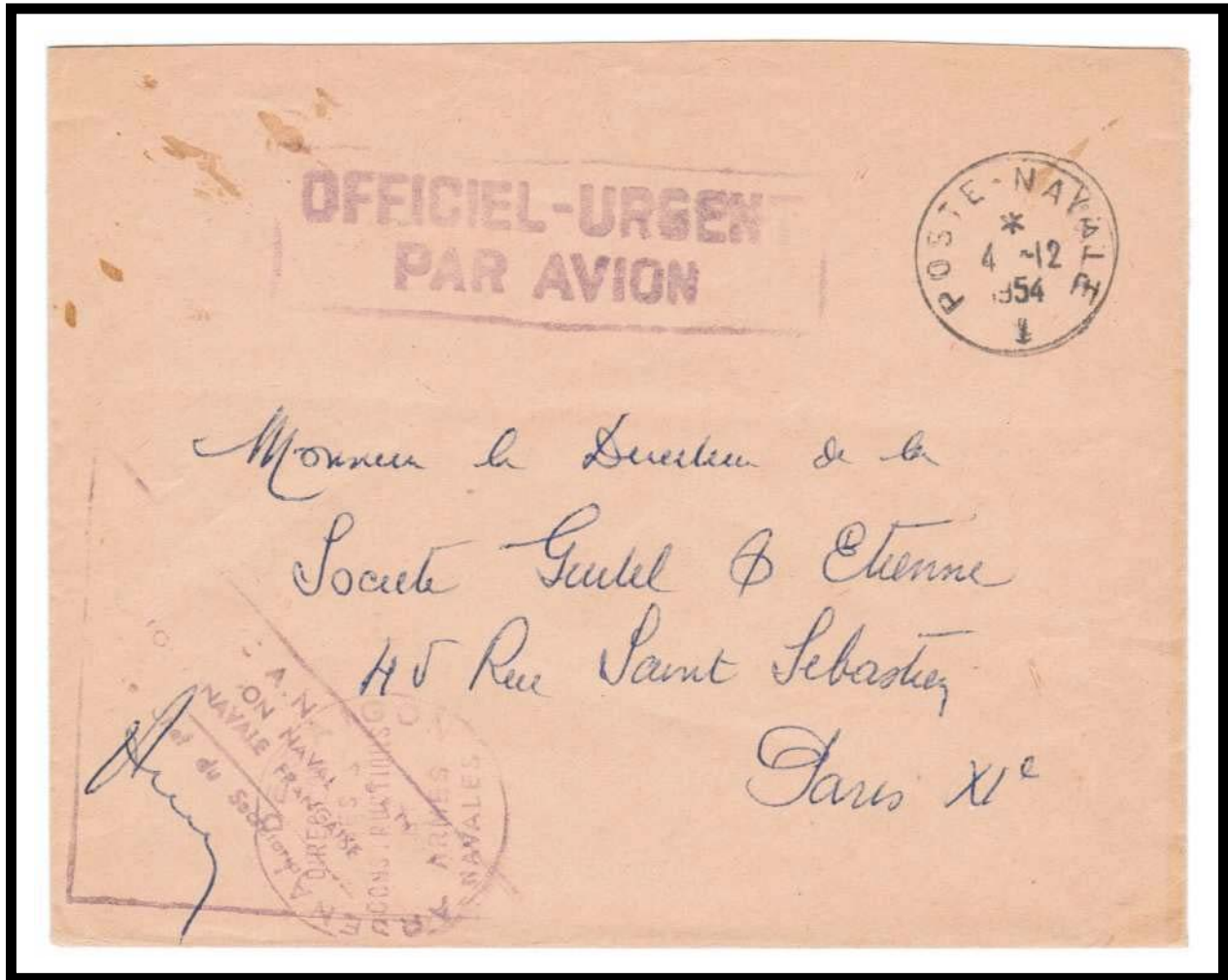
POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE NAVALE 19-2 1953

Official Navy Mail
1954

A French Navy letter from 1954 bears a variety of official handstamps.



**OFFICIEL-URGENT
PAR AVION**



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE-NAVALE 4-12 1954

Naval Base Haiphong

Haiphong was a major port for commercial shipping. Quite naturally, it became the principal navy base in northern Indochina. The cachet for the base consisted of "BASE NAVALE HAIPHONG" in two lines within a rectangular frame.

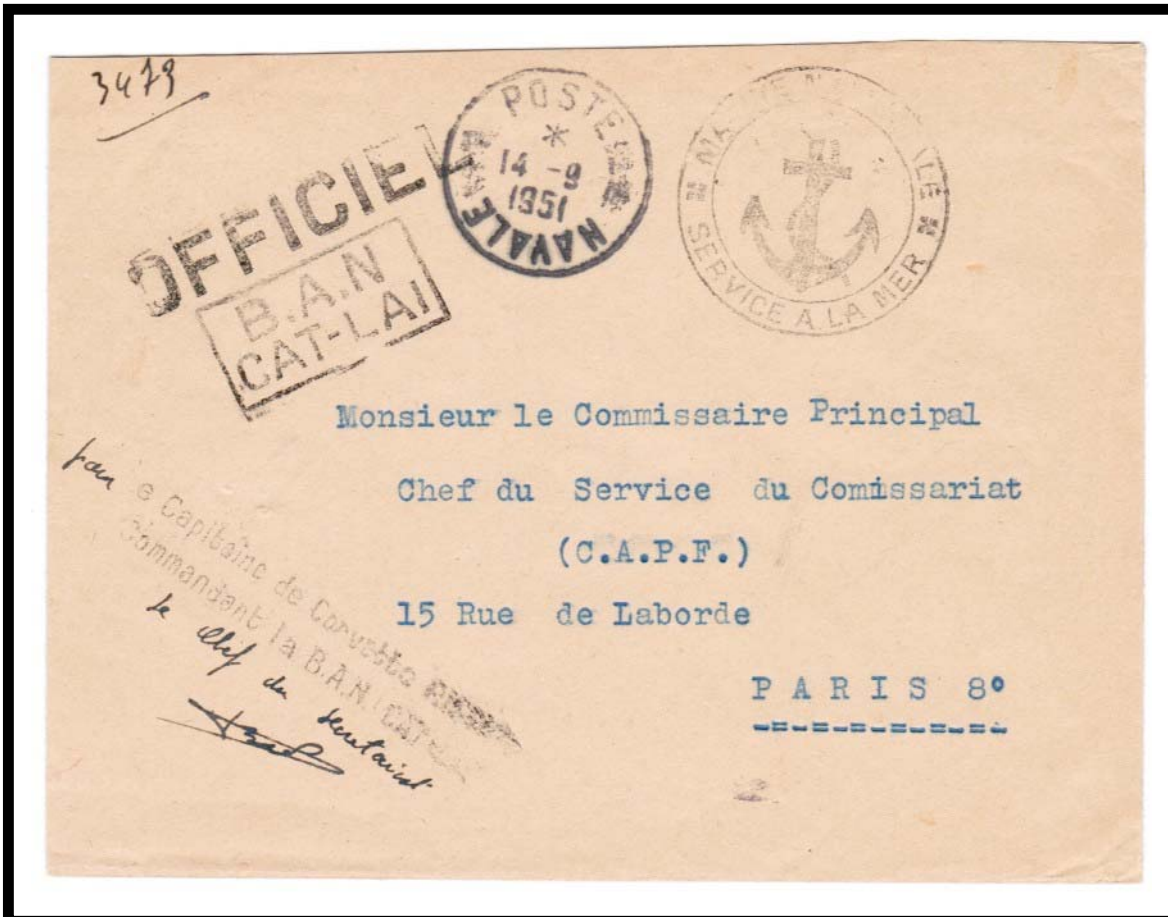
BASE NAVALE
HAIPHONG



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE NAVALE 8 11 1951

B. A. N.
CAT-LAI

Another unit cachet that employed the rectangular format came from Cat-Lai. Cat-Lai was a small town located very close to Saigon. "B.A.N" stood for "Base Aéro-Navale."



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE NAVALE 14-9 1951

Arsenal
Saigon

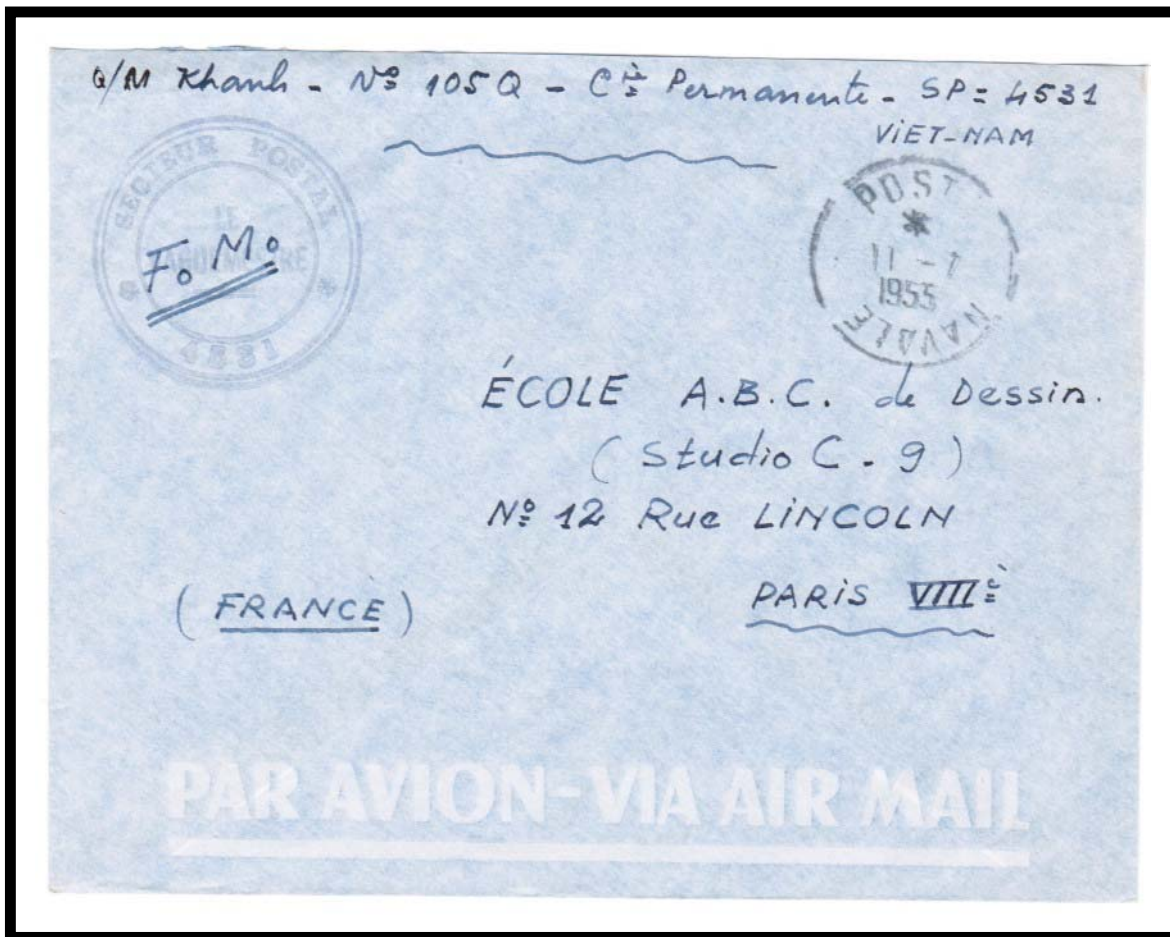
The cachet on this cover identifies the sender with the Construction and Naval Arms Administration located at the Saigon Arsenal.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE NAVALE 4-7 47

Cachet of Postal Clerk
Postal Sector 4531

The postal clerk (vaguemestre) for postal sector 4531 applied his cachet to this letter handled by the naval post office. While postal sector numbers were definitely assigned to Army units, it is uncertain whether Navy units also got them.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE NAVALE 11-7 1953

Civilian Use of Naval Post Office

Because of the postwar disruptions, public post offices could not be reopened immediately. Consequently, military post offices would accept mail from civilians for onward transmission.

Through July 1946, the Navy Post Office at Haiphong handled civilian as well as military mails. French stamps were valid for postage.

With this style of postmark, the lettering goes from the 9 o'clock position to the 3 o'clock position.



POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE-NAVALE 22-7-46

BUREAU NAVAL N° 91

In the postwar period, there were two numbered French Naval Post Offices Indochina. Naval Post Office Number 91 was established at Saigon in October 1945 when the French military returned there. Postmarks indicating the number of the naval post office were generally used only during the early part of the Franco-Viet conflict.



POSTAL MARKINGS

BUREAU NAVAL N° 91 10-9 46

BUREAU NAVAL N° 91

The "CENTER D'INSTRUCTION DU TRAIN" was a training center for train operations and must have been a specialized school. Ironically, a letter from the center was posted through a naval post office.

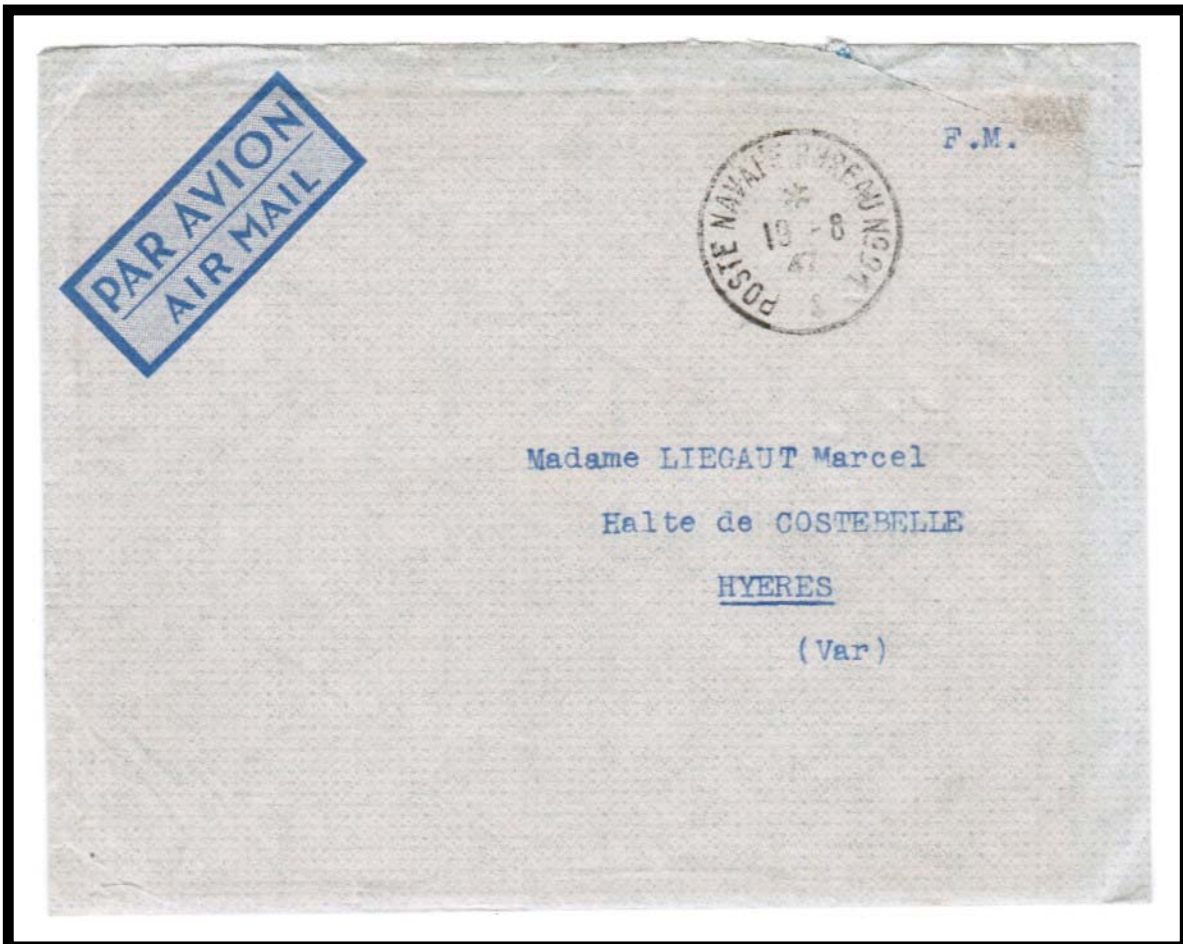


POSTAL MARKINGS

BUREAU NAVAL N° 91 16-8 46

POSTE NAVALE BUREAU N° 91

Another format variety crammed "POSTE NAVALE BUREAU N° 91" around the top of the naval postmark.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE NAVALE BUREAU N° 91 19-8 47

POSTE NAVALE BUREAU N° 91

In this case, a commercial mailing from Saigon to Marseilles was posted through Naval Post Office Number 19 in 1946.



POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE NAVALE BUREAU N° 91 25-2 46

POSTE NAVALE BUREAU N° 91

Starting in 1950, the year in the postmark for Navy Post Office Number 91 was specified with four digits instead two digits.

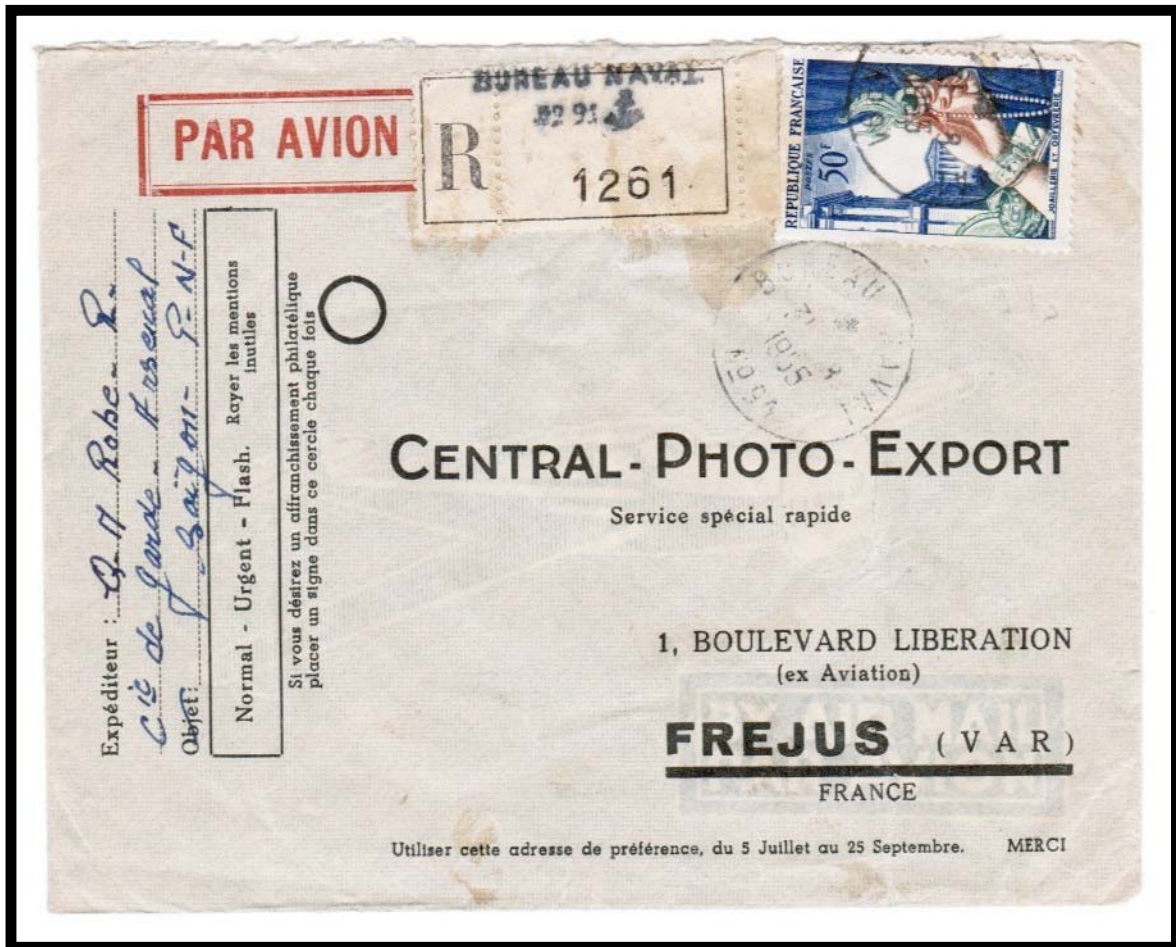


POSTAL MARKINGS

BUREAU NAVAL N° 91 13-8 1950

BUREAU NAVAL
Nº 91

A late version of the Naval Post Office Number 91 postmark placed the “Nº 91” at its base. In this case, the registration label was also handstamped “BUREAU NAVAL Nº 91.”



POSTAL MARKINGS

BUREAU NAVAL Nº 91 31-8 1955

REVERSE

FREJUS VAR 3-9 1955

POSTE NAVALE
BUREAU N° 14

In addition to the naval post office at Saigon, Naval Post Office Number 14 operated at Haiphong from March 1946 through 1955 when French troops withdrew in conformance with the Geneva Accords. Afterwards, the naval post office operated for short periods at Tourane and Camranh Bay.

BUREAU NAVAL
N° 14

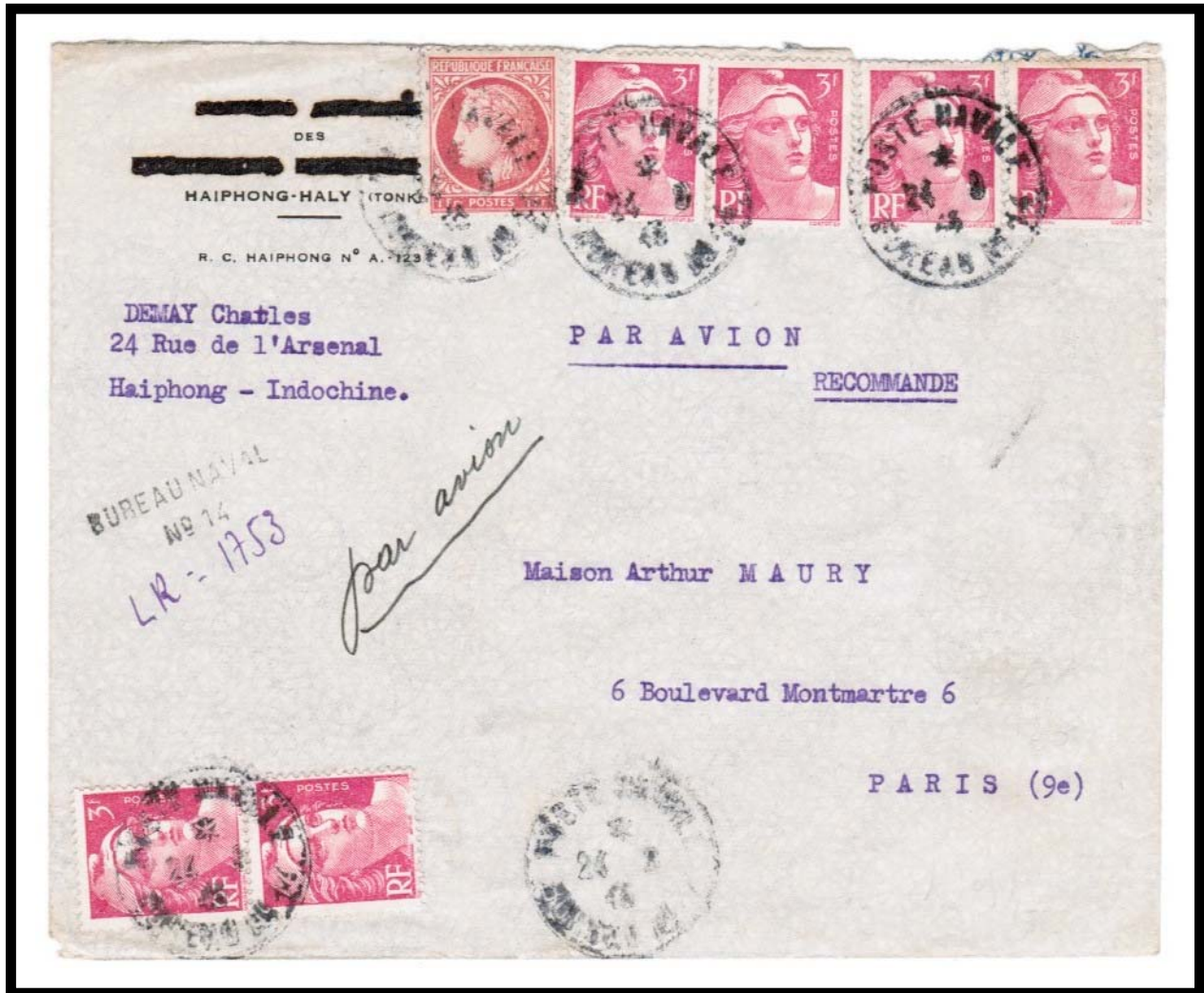


POSTAL MARKINGS
POSTE NAVALE BUREAU N° 14 15-11 46

POSTE NAVALE
BUREAU N° 14

A civilian posted his letter at Naval Post Office Number 14 when registration labels were unavailable. To indicate registration, a clerk applied the post office's handstamp with a handwritten registration number.

BUREAU NAVAL
N° 14



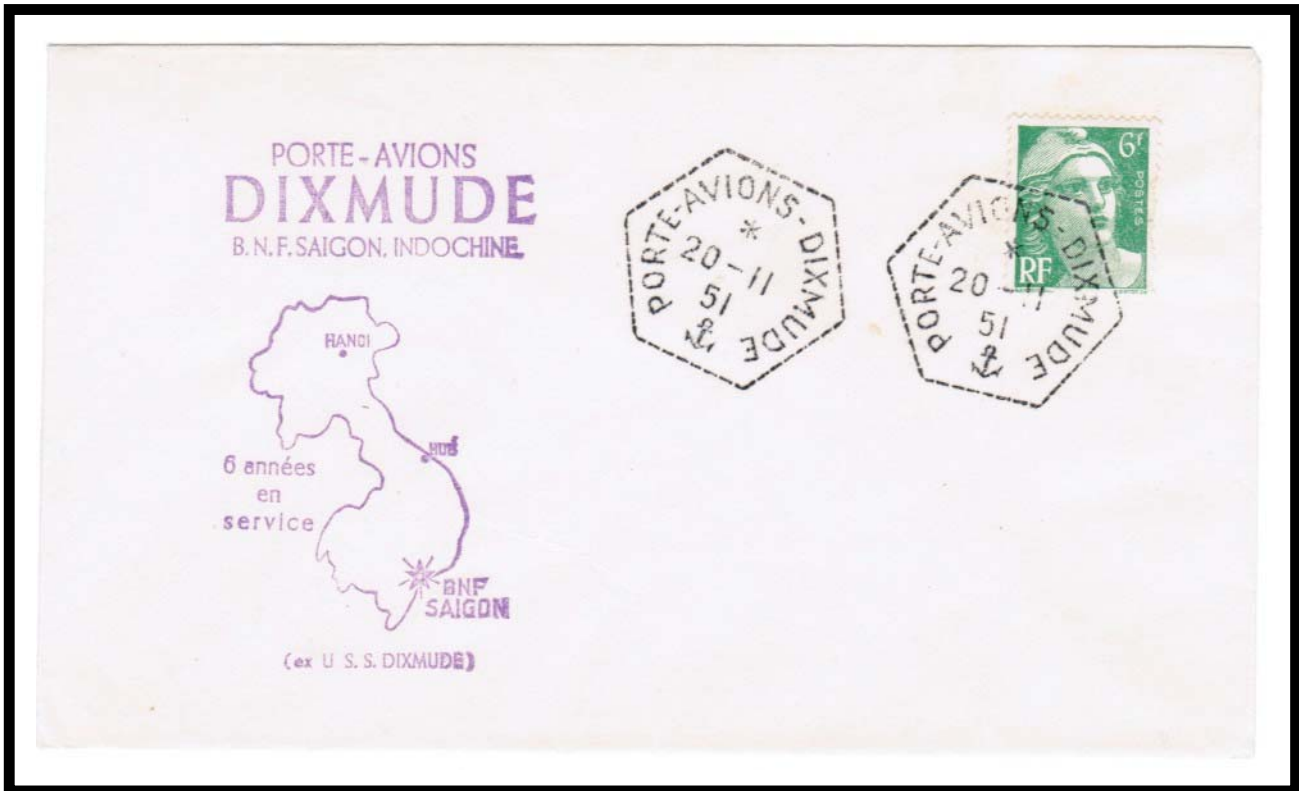
POSTAL MARKINGS

POSTE NAVALE BUREAU N° 14 24-6 46
BUREAU NAVAL N° 14 handstamp with manuscript registration label

PORTE-AVIONS-DIXMUDE

Originally built as a passenger-cargo ship, she was converted to an aircraft escort vessel and delivered to the U.S. Navy. Under the Lend Lease Act, she was transferred to the United Kingdom and commissioned as *HMS Biter*. In April 1954, she was transferred to the French Navy. Departing Toulon in January 1947, she reached Saigon in March and participated in two landing operations. *Dixmude* continued operations in the Far East into the 1950s.

A special cachet commemorated her sixth year in service while stationed off Indochina in 1951.



POSTAL MARKINGS
PORTE-AVIONS-DIXMUDE 20-11 51

PORTE-AVIONS-ARROMANCHES

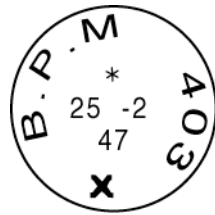
Arromanches was an aircraft carrier of the French Navy, which served from 1946 to 1974. *Arromanches* participated in the First Indochina War in three campaigns from 1948 to 1954. She was stationed off the coast of Indochina during the second half of 1952 when this letter was posted.



POSTAL MARKINGS
PORTE-AVIONS-ARROMANCHES 12-8 1952

B.P.M. 403

Indochinese stamps were accepted for postage at Hanoi's special Army post office established to service civilian mail. This represents a late usage of the B.P.M. 403 postmark at Hanoi. It was replaced with another distinctive postmark.



POSTAL MARKINGS
B.P.M. 403 25-2 47

Frigate *Tonkinois*

A period postcard depicts the *Tonkinois* with hull number F11. Built in 1943 by Smith's Dock Company in England, the ship was originally named *H.M.S. Moyola*. She was transferred to France in 1944 and renamed *Tonkinois*.

