

Postal Meter Proof

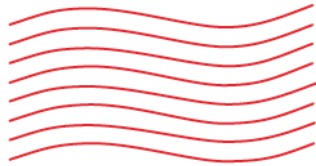
Postal meters first appeared in Indochina toward the end of 1948. The meter marking consisted of three parts: wavy lines replicating obliterations of the period, a straight-line date and town name identifier and an indicium in the form of a stylized postage stamp that contained the denomination and the meter number. These elements are evident with this null value meter proof.



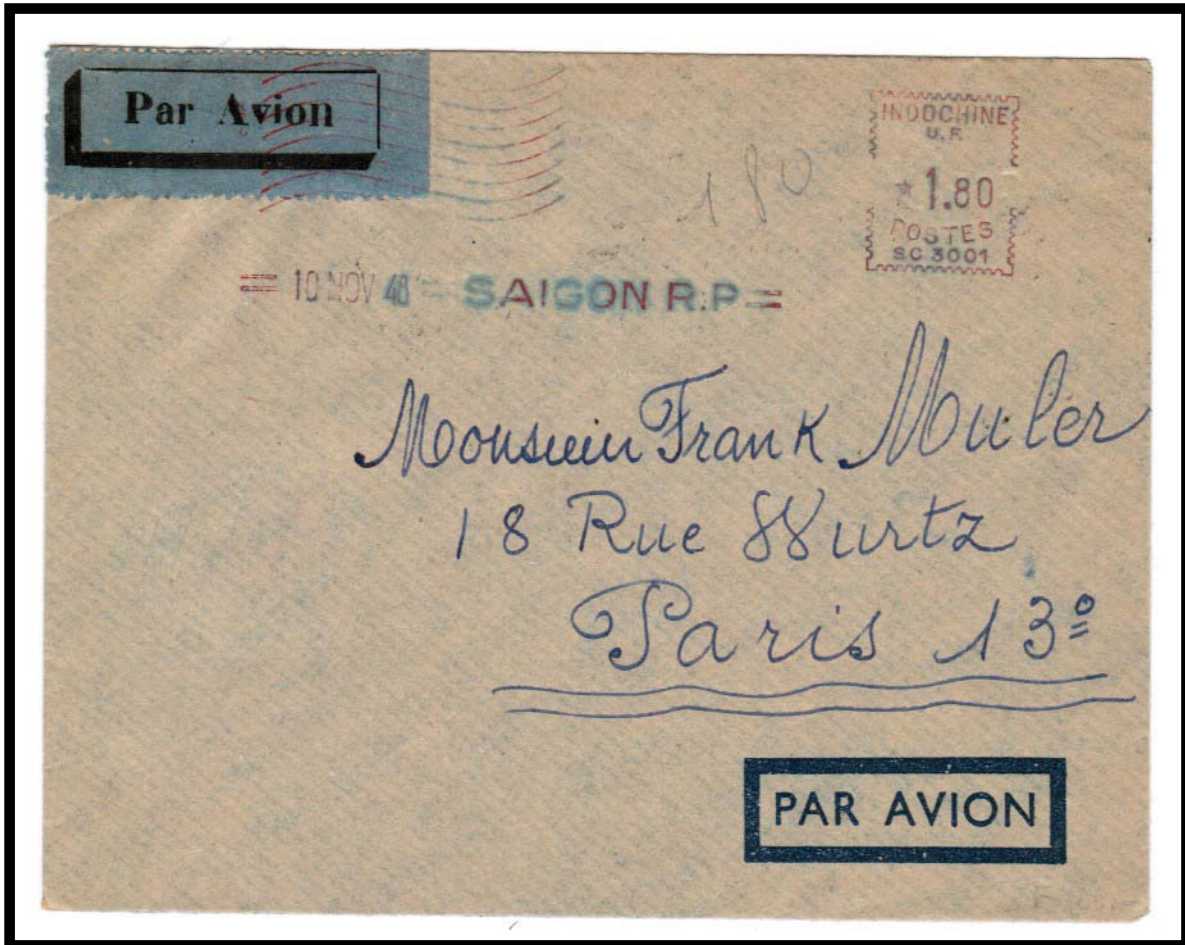
POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON R.P. 20 IX 51 (meter)

Postal Meter Saigon

Each meter had its own individual serial number, which was printed at the base of the indicium. The first postal meter in Indochina was installed at the main Saigon post office in late 1948. This cover exhibits meter number "3001," the first to operate in Indochina.



= 20 NOV 48 = SAIGON R.P. =



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON R.P. 10 NOV 48 (meter)
airmail label

Postal Meter Saigon

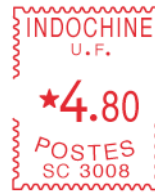
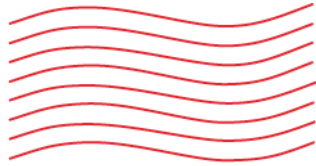
With time, subtle changes were made to the meters. For this example from meter 3001, the city identifier "SAIGON R.P." is only 31 millimeters long versus the typical 36 millimeters. Although the sender had indicated that his letter should go by registered mail, the handwritten instruction was later lined through and this letter went by regular airmail service.



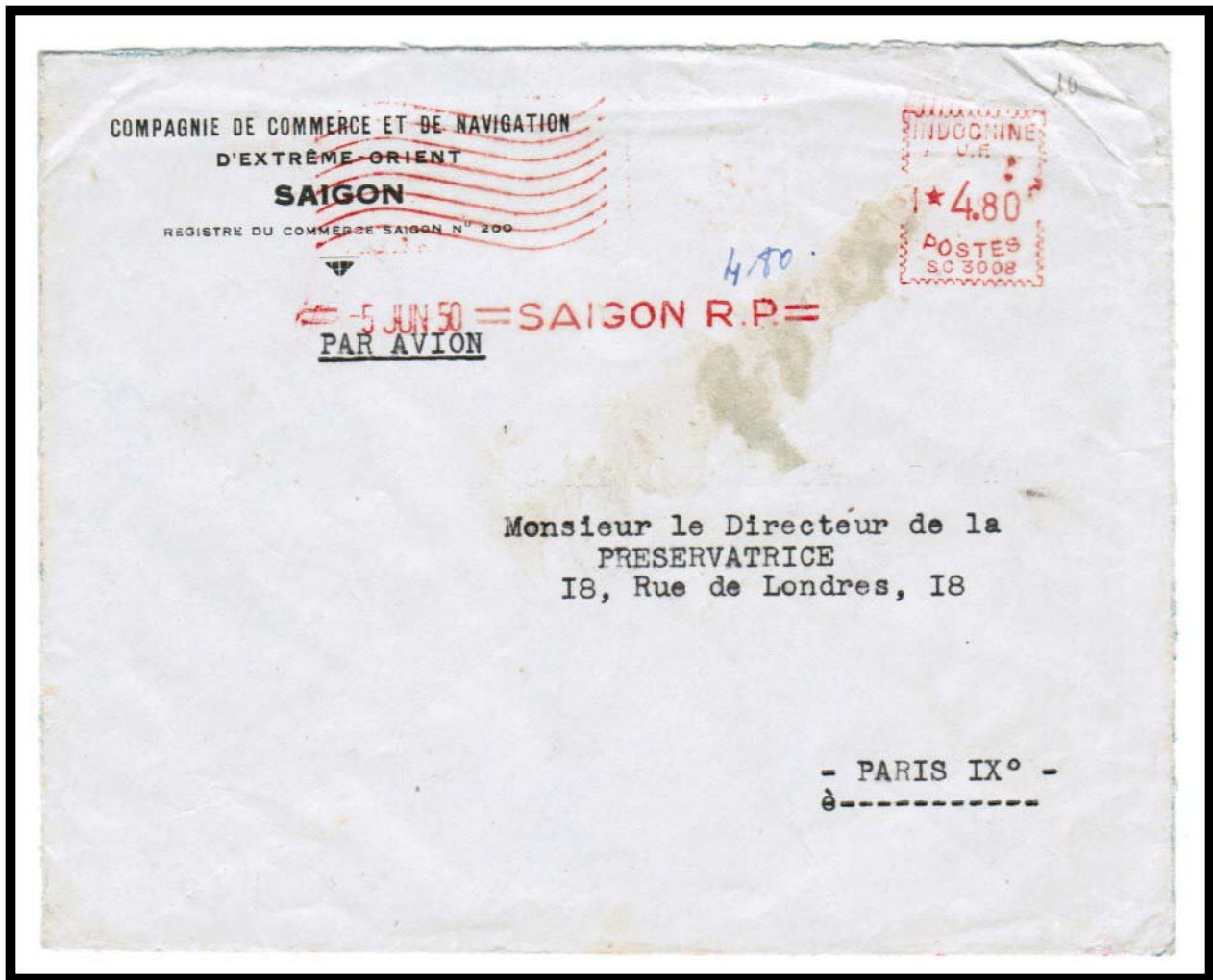
POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON R.P. 27 MAI 50 (meter)

Postal Meter Saigon

After the first postal meters had demonstrated their value, more were added to satisfy demand. This June 1950 meter marking shows that machine 3008 was located at Saigon's main post office.



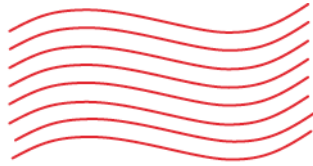
= -5 JUN 50 = SAIGON R.P. =



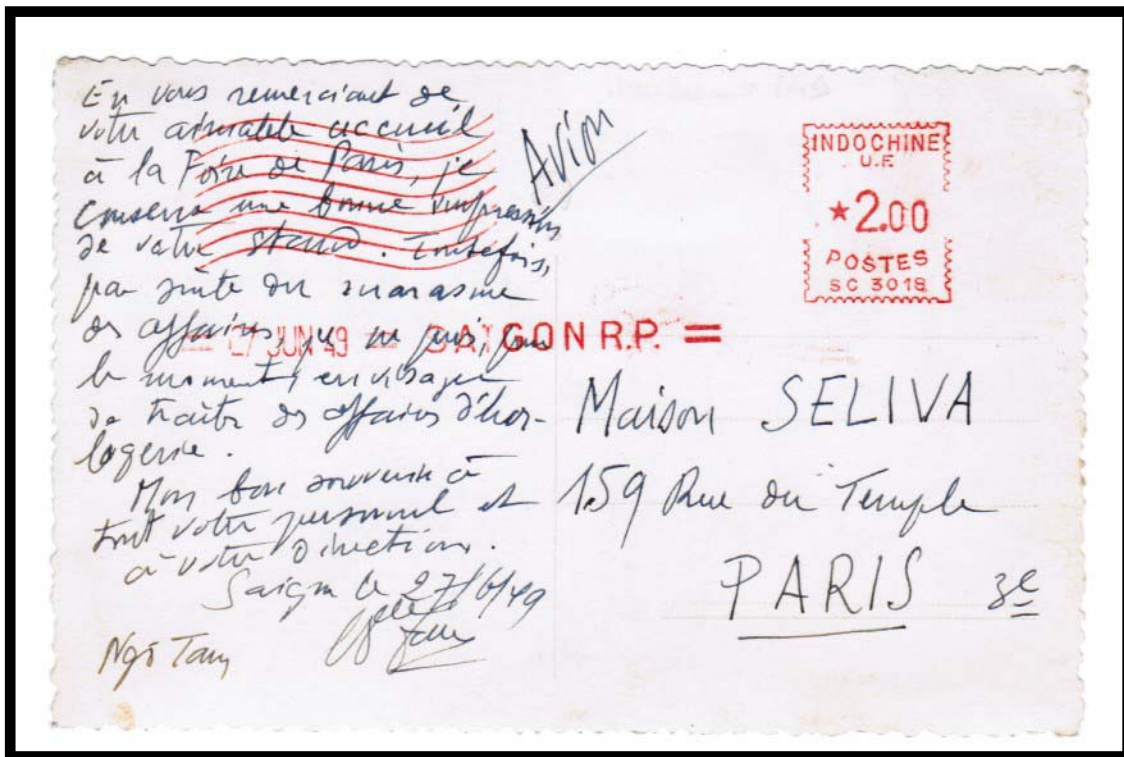
POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON R.P. 5 JUN 50 (meter)

Postal Meter Postcard Use from Saigon

Among the distinct advantages of the meter machines was their flexibility to handle different types of mail. Here the airmail postage for a postcard to Paris was applied with meter number 3018 at Saigon in 1949.



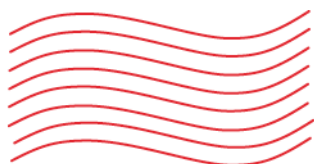
= 27 JUN 49 = SAIGON R.P. =



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON R.P. 27 JUN 49

Postal Meter Late Use from Saigon

This 1952 example of postal meter number 3010 was a late usage when the meters were transitioning their inscriptions from "INDCHINE" to "VIETNAM."



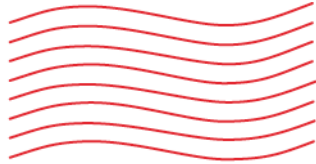
= 20 JUN 52 = SAIGON R.P. =



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON R.P. 20 JUN 52

Postal Meter Late Use from Saigon

Postal meters with the "INDOCINE" identifier remained in use into the mid 1950s. Here a 1953 postcard received a metered franking from meter number 3027 in Saigon.



= 23 JAN 53 = SAIGON R.P. =



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON R.P. 23 JAN 53 (meter)

Postal Meter Haiphong

Haiphong's postal meter, which was machine number 3013, employed the same format as that in other cities except that the wavy lines were located slightly higher.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HAIPHONG 29 SEP 50 (meter)

Postal Meter
Phnom-Penh

Phnompenh was another city that adopted postal meters. Machine number 3011 produced this example. Underneath the word "INDOCHINE," all early meters carried the abbreviation "U.F." which stood for "Union Francaise."



POSTAL MARKINGS
PHNOM-PENH 7 JUN 49 (meter)

Postal Meter Phnom-Penh R.P. Combination with Postage Stamps

Usually, metered covers had no other postage as the amount was easily changed. Occasionally however, as in the case of this airmail letter posted at Phnom-Penh, the sender used a combination of postage stamps and the meter amount made up the shortfall.



POSTAL MARKINGS
PHNOM-PENH R.P. 15 SEP 49 (meter)
REVERSE
PHNOMPENH CAMBODGE 16-9 49

Postal Meter Cholon

Postal meters were useful for items other than correspondence. As shown by this example, postal meters were used to indicate payment of postal money order fees. Although the meter's bottom portion is not present, the imprinted number ("3016") identifies Cholon as the post office that applied the postal meter.



Postal Meter Cholon

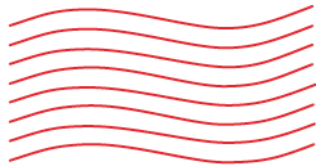
Meter number 3016 was used at Cholon from 1 September 1949 through 24 March 1952. This meter was also reportedly used at Saigon within this period. This example is the earliest known use of meter number 3016.



POSTAL MARKINGS
CHOLON 1 SEP 49 (meter)

Postal Meter
Hanoi R.P. Combination with Postage Stamps

With 90 cents worth of stamps affixed beforehand, the total postage on this letter to Paris was 3 piasters. Usually, metered mail did not have any postage stamps affixed.



= 24 MAI 51 = HANOI R.P. =



POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R.P. 24 MAI 51 (meter)

Postal Meter
Hanoi R.P. Combination with Postage Stamps

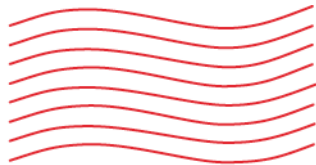
In this example, the meter was applied along the left, vertical edge of the envelope. The total postage was correct, but the two 20-cent stamps were uncanceled.



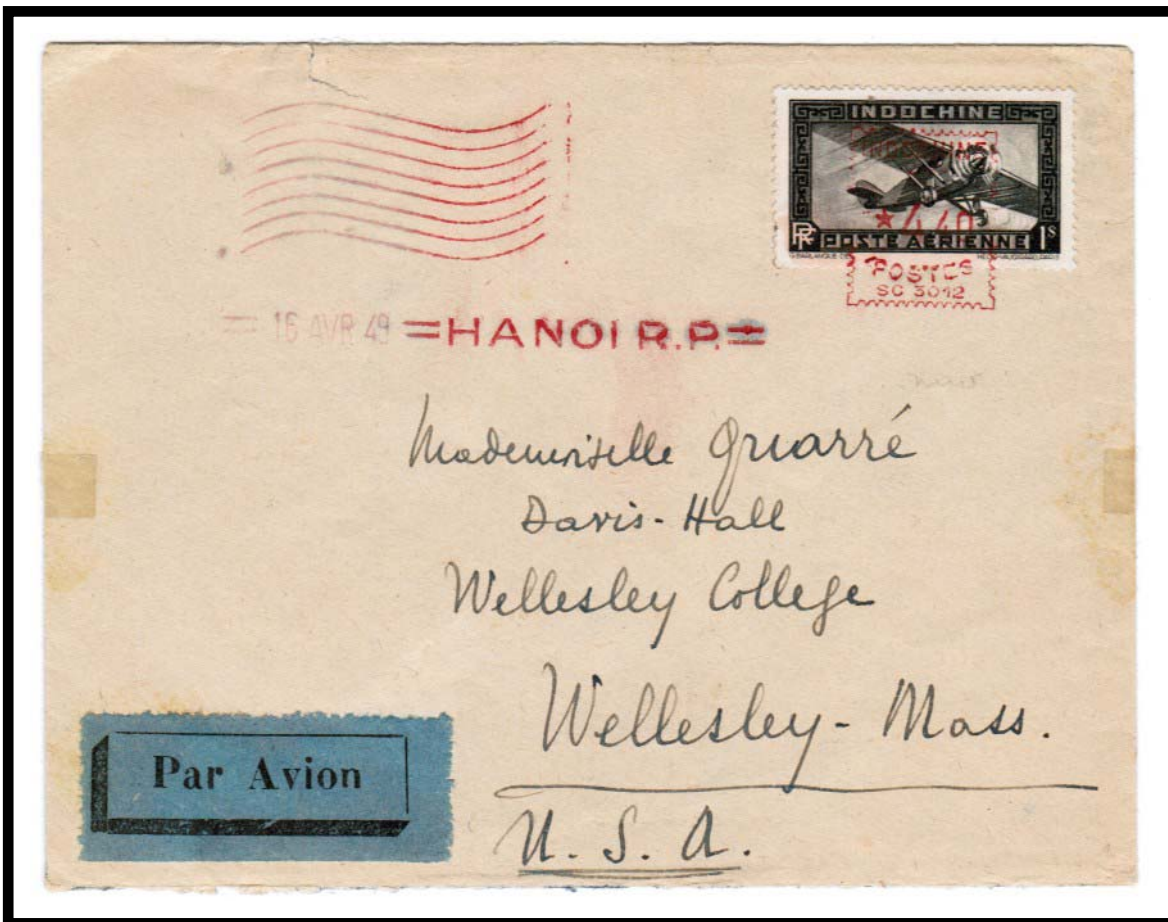
POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R. P. 5 AVR 49

Postal Meter
Hanoi R.P. Combination with Postage Stamps

Here a meter imprint with a value of 4\$40 was applied directly over a 1 piaster Monoplane airmail stamp on an airmail letter to the United States in 1949.



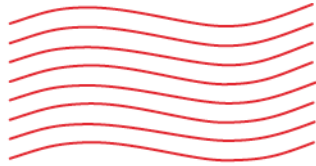
= 15 AVR 49 = HANOI R.P. =



POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R. P. 15 AVR 49

Postal Meter
Registered Mail

Meters were not limited to simple mailings. Here the postage for a registered, airmail letter was paid with a uncommonly large meter value of 13.20 piasters.



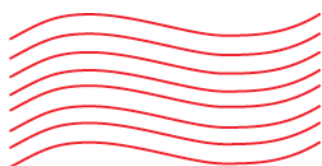
= MAR 50 = HANOI R.P. =



POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R.P. MAR 50
registration label
REVERSE
flight cachet

Postal Meter Late Use from Hanoi

This example is a late use of Hanoi's Indochinese meter number 3012 in August 1952. Indochinese stamps had been demonetized some months earlier in April 1952. The central portion of the imprint was under-inked so the letters "HA" from "HANOI" are barely visible.



= 16 AOU52 = HANOI R.P. =



POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R. P. 16 AOU 52

Postal Meter with Inked Currency Indication Cholon

Although, the meters were prepared with an "F" to denote francs, the local currency was piasters, so that area was left uninked. However, in this case, the "F" mistakenly received ink and is visible immediately to the right of the value.



POSTAL MARKINGS
CHOLON 4 AOU 1951 (meter)
REVERSE
slogan handstamp

Postal Meter Replacement Device

Meter number SCW 053 was a replacement meter. It is unclear why the numbering system deviated from the other meters. Later examples do not identify the city of use.



POSTAL MARKINGS

22 AVR 1951

REVERSE

DALAT PLATEAUX-INDOCHINOIS 24-4 1951

Postal Meter
Haiphong Branch of the Bank of Indochina

The Haiphong branch of the Bank of Indochina centrally located the company's logo in the killer bars.



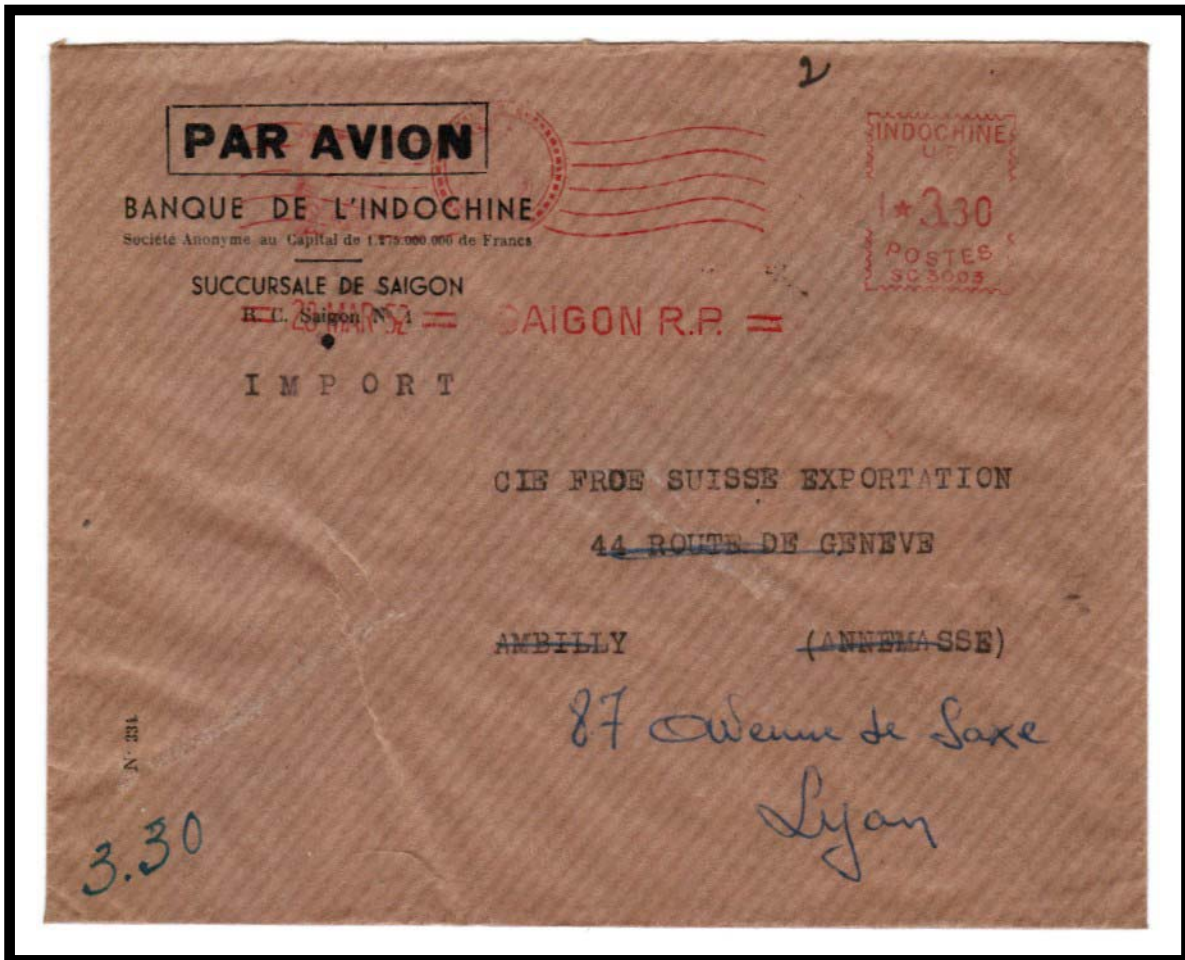
POSTAL MARKINGS
HAIPHONG 10 JUL 50
REVERSE
HAI-PHONG TONKIN 11-10 30

Postal Meter
Saigon Branch of the Bank of Indochina

With this meter number 3003 variation, the interior of the circle lacks the initials of the Bank of Indochina.



= 28 MAR 52 = SAIGON R.P. =



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON R.P. 28 MAR 52

Postal Meter
Saigon Water and Electric Company

Postal meter 3031 belonged to Saigon's Water and Electric Company. The "EE" in the company's logo undoubtedly stood for "Eau" and "Électricité," the French words for "water" and "electricity."



72 RUE PAUL BLANCHY

= 27 VIII 52 = SAIGON R.P. =



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON 27 VIII 52

Postal Meter
Hanoi

By the mid 1950s, "VIET-NAM," along with "BUU-CHINH" meaning "post office," replaced "INDOCHINE U.F." at the top of the meter's indicium as this example from machine 3012 demonstrates.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI 11 JAN 54 (meter)

Expedited Service
Red Label, Southbound Direction
Airmail to France

Expedited service enabled senders in the North to make connections with the biweekly airmail service from Saigon to Europe. Indeed, this was probably the greatest use of this special service.

This covers bears three types of labels for airmail, expedited service and registration.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 3-2 31
airmail label, registration label, expedited service label

REVERSE

LE RAINCY BANLIGNE EST 17-2 31

Expedited Service
Red Label, Southbound Direction
Surface Mail to France

At first, a red label was used to indicate special handling by this service. In this case, the sender in Hanoi paid an extra 5 cents in order to catch a ship departing from Saigon to France.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 3-2 33
expedited service label

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 6-2 33
PARIS IX RUE HIPPOLYTE LEBAS II.III 1933

Expedited Service
Red Label, Northbound Direction
Internal Surface Mail

While the predominant use of expedited service was southward to make connections with outbound mail carriers from Saigon, the expedited service was available northward as well. The sender at Saigon paid the extra 5 cent fee for expedited delivery of this mailing to Haiphong. The letter took 3 days to arrive.



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 5-8 30
expedited service label
REVERSE
HAI-PHONG TONKIN 8-8 30

Expedited Service
Red Label, Southbound Direction
Registered Surface Mail to France

The expedited service could accept registered letters. In this case, a 1930 letter to France traveled from Haiphong to the South via the expedited service.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG-B TONKIN 26-11 30
expedited service label
framed R with manuscript registration number

REVERSE

ARRIVEE MARSEILLE 26-12 30

Expedited Service
 Red Label, Southbound Direction
 Registered Surface Mail to Switzerland

In the case of this 1930 registered letter to Switzerland, postage was computed as follows:

foreign letter rate	10 cents
registration fee	15 cents
<u>expedited service fee</u>	<u>5 cents</u>
total	30 cents



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 19-9 30
 expedited service label and registration label

REVERSE

BASEL 25. X. 30

Expedited Service
Gray Label, Southbound Direction
Internal Surface Mail

Around 1933, a new label was introduced. As opposed to the former red paper which was extensively used for airmail labels at the time, the expedited service label became a distinctively different light gray.



POSTAL MARKINGS

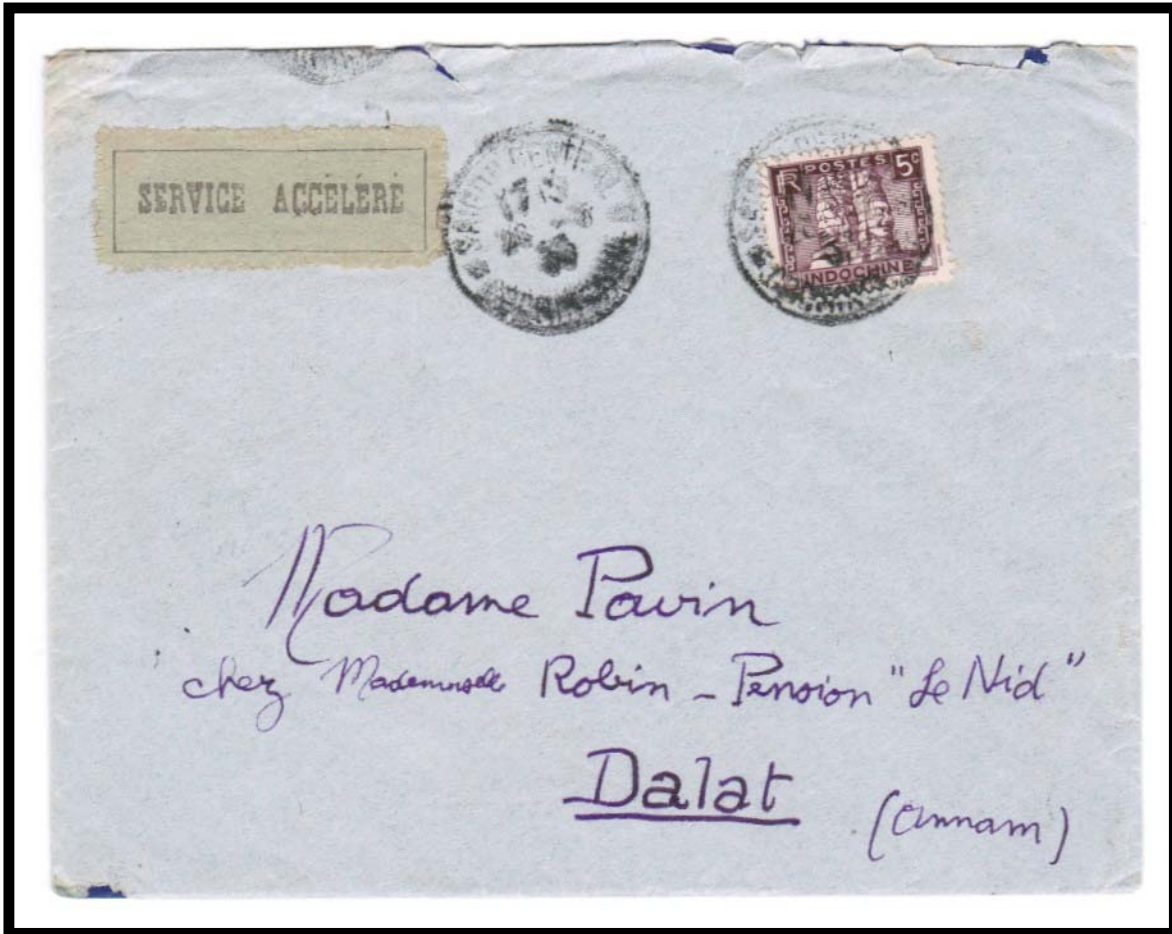
QUI-NHON ANNAM 29-12 35
expedited service label

REVERSE

PHANTBIET ANNAM 30-12 35

Expedited Service
Gray Label, Southbound Direction
Internal Surface Mail

The fee for expedited service was 5 cents. Sometimes the postal service missed letters that were underfranked as with this example that only had sufficient postage for the basic letter rate.



POSTAL MARKINGS

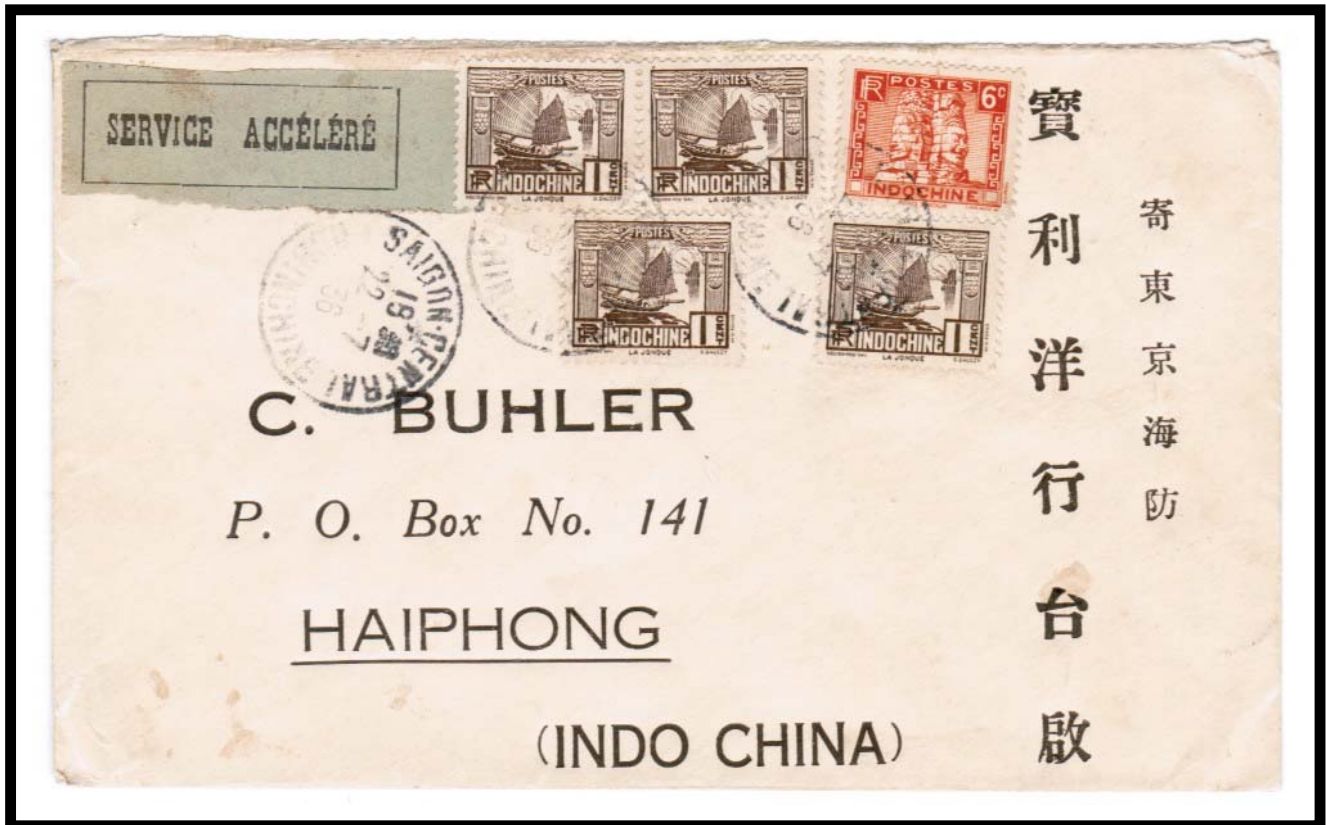
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 26-5 35
expedited service label

REVERSE

DALAT ANNAM 27-5 35

Expedited Service
Gray Label, Northbound Direction
Internal Surface Mail

While the bulk of the mail taking advantage of the expedited handling was southbound to make connections with service to Europe, a small portion of the traffic traveled northbound as did this example of business correspondence.



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 22-7 36
expedited service label
REVERSE
HAIPHONG TONKIN 25-7 36

Expedited Service
Gray Label
Airmail Service to India

Labels could be pressed into service for other than official purposes. Here an envelope sent from Saigon to Pondichery, India was sealed with a gray expedited service label. In this case, the label served no purpose other than as a closure.



POSTAL MARKINGS

expedited service label

CALCUTTA G.P.O. D.B.N. 12 AUG. 35

PONDICHERY 15 AUG. 35

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 9-8 35

Expedited Service
Gray Label, Southbound Direction
Internal Surface Mail

This mourning envelope was postmarked at Mon-Cay before a clerk in Hanoi noticed the handwritten instructions for expedited service. The clerk affixed a gray label over the instructions (and the left postmark). First posted on 16 November, the envelope reached Pnompenh in five days on 21 November.



POSTAL MARKINGS

MON-CAY TONKIN 16-11 35
expedited service label

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 18-11 35
PNOMPENH CAMBODGE 21-11 35

Expedited Service
Blue Label, Southbound Direction
Internal Surface Mail

In 1935, a third color, blue, appeared for the expedited service label. Here the label was used on business correspondence from an Indochinese financial organization



POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 16-11 35
expedited service label
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE NOV 35

Expedited Service
Blue Label, Southbound Direction
Internal Surface Mail

Here the blue expedited service label had been affixed to an envelope posted at Hanoi on 11 January 1936. The Saigon receiving date stamp on the reverse shows that the letter was in transit for two days - expedited service for the day.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 11-1 36
expedited service label
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 13 JANV 36

Expedited Service
Typewritten Instruction, Southbound Direction
Internal Surface Mail

It was not necessary to use a post office-supplied expedited handling. Here the sender typed "SERVICE ACCELERE" next to the address.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 17-1 36
expedited service label

REVERSE

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 18-1 36
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 20 JANV 36

Expedited Service
Initial Capitals Label, Southbound Direction
Airmail to France

This red label only capitalized the first letter of each word. It is uncertain whether the different format was locally produced. Postage fees included a 60-cent airmail surcharge and the 5-cent expedited service fee.

Service Accéléré



POSTAL MARKINGS

THAI-NGUYEN TONKIN 5-8 31
airmail and expedited service labels

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 5-8 31
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 10-9 31

Expedited Service
Initial Capitals Label, Southbound Direction
Internal Surface Mail

This red label used capital letter only for the first letter of each word. Affixed to a 1937 letter from Son-Tay to Saigon, the label served no postal purpose at this time because the Trans-Indochina Railway had been completed.

Service Accéléré



POSTAL MARKINGS

SON-TAY TONKIN 6-7 37
expedited service label

REVERSE

HANOI R.P. TONKIN 6-7 37
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 9-7 37