

# The Crimean War

The Crimean War, October 1853 to March 1856, is considered to be the first modern war. It eventually involved an alliance of Great Britain, France, Ottoman Empire and Sardinia in an armed conflict with the Russian Empire. However, the war indirectly involved Austria as well as other nation states who faced the difficult task of trying to remain neutral. The war, ostensibly started over the Russian Czar's desire to protect Christians against the Muslim Turks, ended without a lasting resolution. The result of this incomplete and inclusive peace paved the way for the World Wars that followed.

Beyond the politics, the war saw important advancements in medicine, communication such as the use of the telegraph, as well as military technology including the first use of military railroads, mines, armored ships, and exploding naval shells.

This display class exhibit weaves together the historical narrative of the military conflict, including the system used for postal communications, with the broader themes that made the war of lasting significance. The use of postal history artifacts such as envelopes and letters of the era provide unique insights to many of the deeper themes. Some items shown, such as a request for more linseed meal from Florence Nightingale written by her from the military hospital in Scutari, Turkey are included when they best illustrate some of those themes.

The exhibit includes postal history of all of the participants to the extent possible as well material from affected countries. Unfortunately, letters and covers from common soldiers in the army of the Ottoman Empire are unknown. Similarly, it should also be noted that material from the Russian side of the conflict is extremely rare. In both cases, the soldiers of lower rank were largely illiterate.

The first half of the exhibit is organized first by the area of military operation, or theater, presented in rough chronological order. Within each theater of operation, material is presented by participant country. These are designated by country flag icons representing the participant. The second half of the exhibit is more focused on the military postal systems employed by the primary combatants.

The exhibit is ordered as follows:

1. Baltic Theater
2. Danube Theater
3. Black Sea Theater
4. Minor Theaters
5. British Military Mails
6. French Military Mails
7. Sardinian Military Mails
8. Turkish Military Mails
9. Russian Military Mails



1855 patriotic cover with flags of the allies and battles of "Alma" and "Inkerman" named

# The Baltic Theater

The military objectives of the Allies in the Baltic were to keep the Russian fleet blockaded in their ports and to disrupt the Russian supply lines forcing Russia to use more costly overland routes from Prussia.

The first Anglo-French expedition of 1854 was sent into the Baltic to attack the heavily fortified Russian sea port of Kronstadt near St. Petersburg and the Russian fleet stationed there. Although the planned assault on Kronstadt was abandoned, the Allies were able to capture the fortress of Bomarsund in the Åland Islands and effect a blockade of the Gulf of Finland.

The 1855 Allied expedition to the Baltic was directed against the Sveaborg fortress guarding nearby Helsingfors. The war ended before additional attacks could be organized.

British Navy: Sir Charles Napier  
Sir Richard Saunders (1855)



French Navy: Parseval-Deschenes  
André Edouard Penaud (1855)



Russian Navy: Jakob Bodisco



Grand Duchy of Finland  
(Jakob Bodisco)

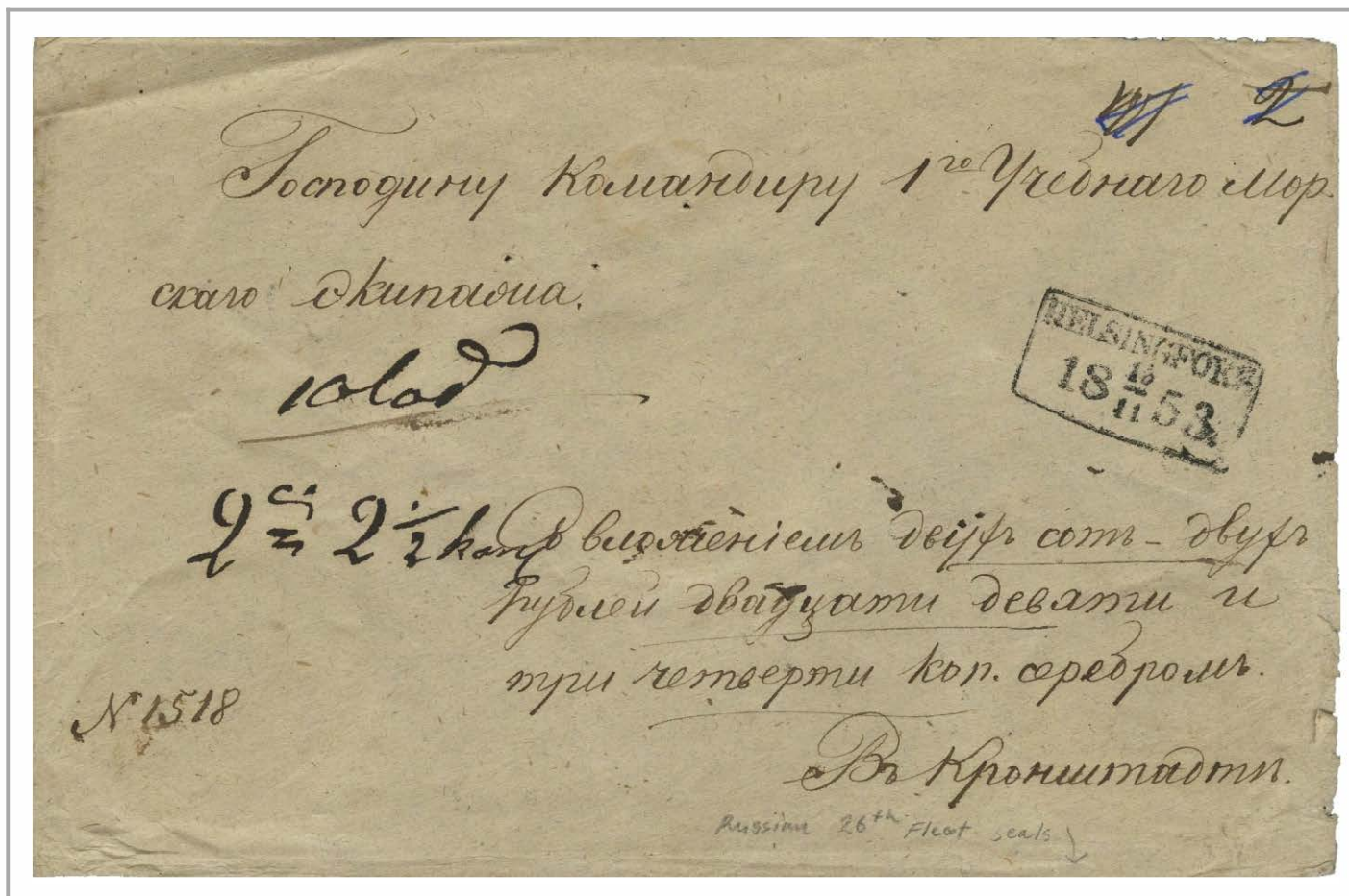


June 1854 letter dated from advice-ship *Milan* in the Baltic Sea near Stockholm to France carried by French 40-gun steamer *Vengeance* to Danzig, 23 June 1854 Danzig transit via Prussian mails via Belgium with red third rayon boxed handstamp 7 decimes postage due (civilian rate), red French entry and transit backstamps **the earliest of four known uses of French Fleet mail sent via Danzig**

The French naval expedition of 1854 included *Le Milan*, one of two steamers mounting only four guns.



Cover from the Russian 26th Fleet at Helsingfors to Kronstadt



16 November (4 November Julian) 1853 Helsingfors datestamp on military cover to Kronstadt wax seals of the Russian 26th Fleet on reverse, military money letter that enclosed 202½ kopecks addressed to: the Commander of the 1st Instructional Naval Crew at Kronstadt  
**an exceptional use**

The 1st Instructional Crew was the training unit for the Baltic Fleet. At this date it was commanded by Captain 1st rank Knyazev. The 26th Fleet was soon to provide crews for the Russian ships-of-the-line *Prokhor*, the brig *Kazarskii*, the transport *Oechora* and the brig *Ayaks*.

This cover is dated shortly before the Russians attacked and destroyed the Turkish fleet at Sinope (Turkey) on November 30, 1853 which precipitated France and England's declaration of war on Russia.

**Baltic Theater**  
**1854 Expedition**



**Five pence concession rate from HMS Imperieuse on station**

**Rate** - A five pence seaman's concession rate, per one-half ounce, for mail via Danzig was in effect from May 22, 1854 to October 30, 1854. The corresponding officer's rate was eight pence (none recorded).

**Route** - Mail from the fleet was carried weekly via Danzig and Belgium to Great Britain. Stamped mail was cancelled at the London Inland Office before onward distribution.

JUNE 24, 1854.]

NEW POSTAL REGULATIONS FOR THE ARMY AND NAVY.

The following are the Regulations under which the Correspondence for Her Majesty's Forces in the Baltic, in the White Sea, and in Turkey and the Black Sea, is at present forwarded:—

Mails for the Baltic fleet are made up in London every Tuesday evening, and are forwarded, through Belgium, to Dantzic, where they arrive on Friday. Orders have been given that a steam-vessel shall be detached from the fleet, and sent to Dantzic weekly, to receive the mails from England, and to bring to that port the return mails for England, which, on arrival, are dispatched to this country through Belgium.

An officer's letter, not exceeding half an ounce in weight, sent by this route, is liable to a postage (British and foreign combined) of 8d. A seaman's or soldier's letter, not exceeding half an ounce in weight, forwarded by this route, is charged with a combined British and foreign postage of 5d. Upon both classes of letters the postage must be paid in advance.

Newspapers cannot be forwarded by the route of Dantzic, because, according to the arrangements with the Prussian Government, the Prussian postage upon newspapers cannot be collected in this country. If, therefore, newspapers were sent by this route, they would be detained at Dantzic, until the postage due upon them to the Prussian post-office was paid.

The above is the speediest and most direct communication with the Baltic fleet; but there are other occasions, by means of Queen's ships or transports, when letters and newspapers can be forwarded. Mails are made up to be dispatched by every vessel of war proceeding from England to the fleet, and the postage by such ships is as follows:—For an officer's letter, not exceeding half an ounce, 6d.; for a seaman's or soldier's letter, not exceeding half an ounce, 1d.

Newspapers are forwarded by vessels of war, or transports, free of postage.

Letters, &c., for the Baltic fleet, should be addressed with the name of the ship for which they are destined, and the fleet to which that ship belongs, without mentioning any port or town, thus:—

"To ————  
H.M. Ship ————  
Baltic Fleet."

[June 24, 1854 notice, shown reduced at left] *Mails for the Baltic fleet .. are forwarded, through Belgium, to Dantzic .. a steam-vessel shall be detached ... weekly, to receive the mails from England, and to bring to that port the return mails for England ..*

*An officer's letter, not exceeding half an ounce in weight, sent by this route, is liable to a postage (British and foreign combined) of 8d. A seaman's or soldier's letter, not exceeding half an ounce in weight .. is charged with a combined .. postage of 5d .. postage must be paid in advance.*

*The above is the speediest .. but ... (for) Mails .. dispatched by every vessel of war proceeding from England to the fleet, .. officer's letter, not exceeding half an ounce, 6d.; for a seaman's or soldier's letter, not exceeding half an ounce, 1d.*



19 August 1854 Danzig transit on cover from HMS *Imperieuse* on station in the Baltic Sea to London counter-signed by commander John Edward Taylor, prepaid 5d rate  
 22 August 1854 forwarded from London to Isle of Wight with 1d due  
**only reported example of the 5d concession rate from the Baltic Fleet**

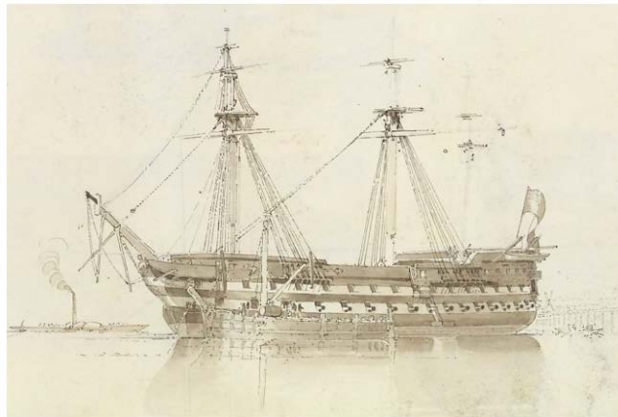
The Royal expedition of 1854, comprised of 12 screw powered vessels including HMS *Imperieuse*, represents the first time a large force of steam ships had been sent to hostile waters.



**Ten pence concession rate to HMS *Monarch* on station**

**Rate** - Mail addressed to the British fleet was subject to the same postal rates as mail from the fleet. For seaman, a rate of five pence, per one-half ounce, was in effect from May 22, 1854 to October 30, 1854. The officer's rate was eight pence (none recorded).

**Route** - Mail addressed to the fleet was carried weekly by Prussian Mails via Belgium to Danzig. Mails were then distributed by supply vessels to the individual vessels of the fleet.



- 1 July 1854 Catterick, via London, to Navel Cadet aboard HMS *Monarch* on station in the Baltic Sea prepaid 10d double weight concession rate, 21 July 1854 Danzig transit returned to England as the addressee had been transferred to HMS *Neptune*  
24 July 1854 London backstamp and Stafford arrival of next day  
**only reported example of the double 5d concession rate to the Baltic Fleet**

The addressee, Walter Talbot (Lord Walter Talbot Kerr), joined the Royal Navy in 1853. He later rose to the rank of Admiral of the Fleet in 1904.



**Six pence frankings to New South Wales / to England**



2 September 1854 Danzig transit on cover from Baltic Fleet to Sydney, New South Wales  
prepaid franked with strip of three 1d imperforate and strip of three 1d perforated  
September 1854 London backstamp, stamps canceled by "42" London Inland office cancels  
5 September carried on bark *Colonist* from London, arrived Sydney January 22, 1855  
2 January 1855 Sydney Ship Letter crowned arrival backstamp and 3d due handstamp  
**the only reported example to New South Wales**



16 September 1855 double weight cover, from Biorko Sound (near Wiborg, Finland) to Kent, England  
prepaid 6d rate with three copies 2d, endorsed "Via Dantzig," 28 September Danzig transit  
2 October 1855 Dover entry backstamp and numeral "258" cancels, 3 October Bromley backstamp  
**one of two known 6d rate uses from the Baltic Fleet**



**Three pence 1855 prepaid / due rates**

**Rate -** In April 1855 an Instruction announcing new postal rates for the Baltic Fleet was issued which brought the rates into line with Crimean rates; 3d when not exceeding ¼ ounce, 6d up to ½ ounce.



1 May 1855 Danzig transit on single weight cover from the Baltic Fleet to Smethwick, England  
prepaid 3d rate with single 1d and 2d

5 June 1855 London entry backstamp and numeral "41" Inland Office cancels, Birmingham backstamp



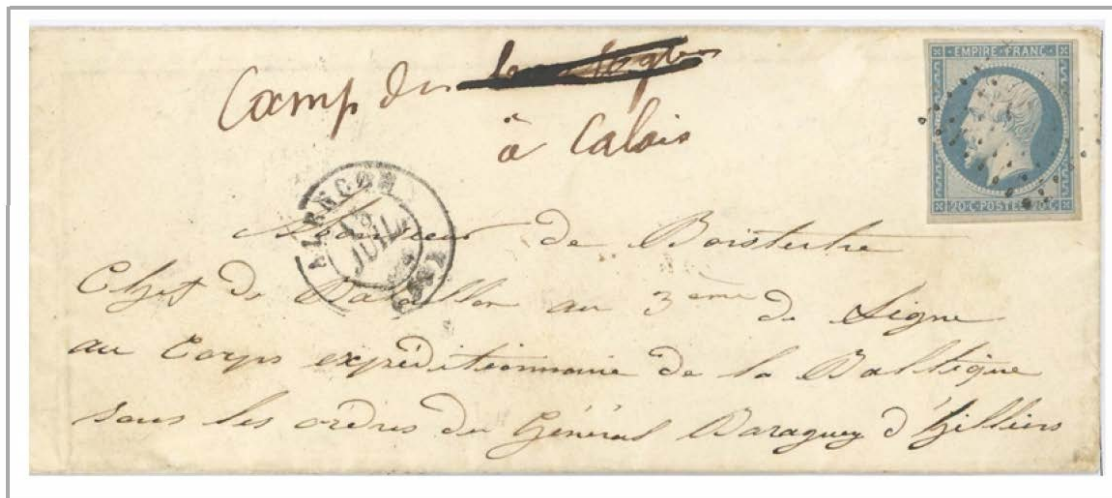
24 August 1855 Danzig transit on unpaid single weight cover from the Baltic Fleet to Cork, Ireland  
cover sent by Charles Cooper Penrose-Fitzgerald, later a Vice-Admiral in Royal Navy  
London entry and manuscript 3d due, 1855 Cork and Midleton green backstamps



### Cover to a French Major embarking on a British ship

Mail service for mail addressed to the French expeditionary forces in the Baltic was inaugurated in July 1854 with mail carried overland to Danzig and distributed by British vessels from there. After departure of the French Navy from Calais, such letters had to be sent under separate cover addressed to the French Consul at Danzig. This arrangement explains why examples of postmarked mail to the French fleet is virtually unknown.

**Rates** - A prepaid rate of 20 centimes, for military letter, per ¼ ounce, was in effect during the war.



13 July 1854 Alencon, France to Major Boistertre departing to the Baltic, prepaid 20c  
address includes, "au Corps expéditionnaire de la Baltique sous les ordres de General Baraguey d'Hilliers"  
which was amended in transit from Camp in Bologne to Camp at Calais  
16 July Paris, 17 July Calais, and 17 July Bologne S. Mer backstamps  
(a cover postmarked August 14 from Major Boistertre after reaching Bomarsund is also shown)

Prior to embarkation for the Baltic theater, French Army troops, under the command of General Baraguey d'Hilliers, stationed southwest of Saint Omer were moved first to Bologne and then to Calais before being transported to the Baltic Sea by British naval vessels. The embarkation of troops began on July 15, 1854.





## The Escadre De La Baltique markings

Mail from the Baltic Fleet to France in 1854 received either the boxed “ESCADRE DE LA BALTIQUE” entry marking applied in Paris (about 10 known in red, one known in blue) or the double circle “CORPS EXP<sup>RE</sup> DE LA BALTIQUE” payeur datestamp (3 known in black).

**Rates** - A rate of 20 centimes prepaid, or 30 centimes unpaid, for military letter mail, per ¼ ounce, was in effect throughout the war.

**ESCADRE DE LA BALTIQUE**



July 1854 cover from French Fleet near Stockholm enroute to Åland Islands used to France  
boxed ESCADRE DE LA BALTIQUE handstamp in blue, "30" centimes due handstamp  
29 July 1854 Paris transit backstamp  
**the earliest reported example of this marking**  
**the only reported example of this handstamp in blue**

On 30 July 1854 the ships which brought the first division of the French troops were seen entering the waters around the Åland Islands. French General Baraguay d'Hilliers came in the *Reine Horten* while other ships brought the troops.

The French Army landing for the attack on Bomarsund took place on the 8th of August, at two points on the island, near Bomarsund. On 8 August 1854 the Allied forces of 11,000 French artillery troops and the British fleet encircled the fortress of Bomarsund. The artillery attack commenced on 10 August. The French stormed Fort Tzee (West Fort) on 14 August, and on the next day, the British took Fort Nottichafter (East Fort). The defenders surrendered on 16 August after which the Allies destroyed the fortress.

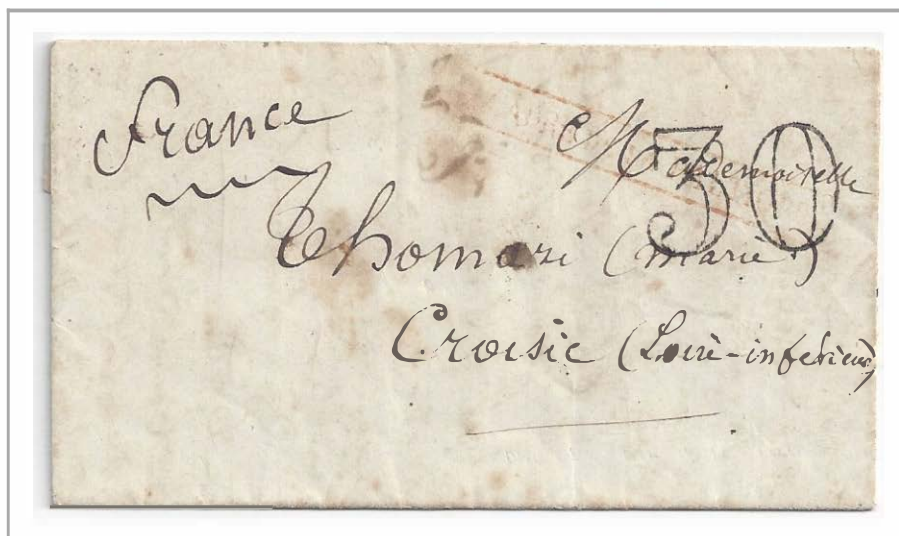


### The Escadre De La Baltique markings

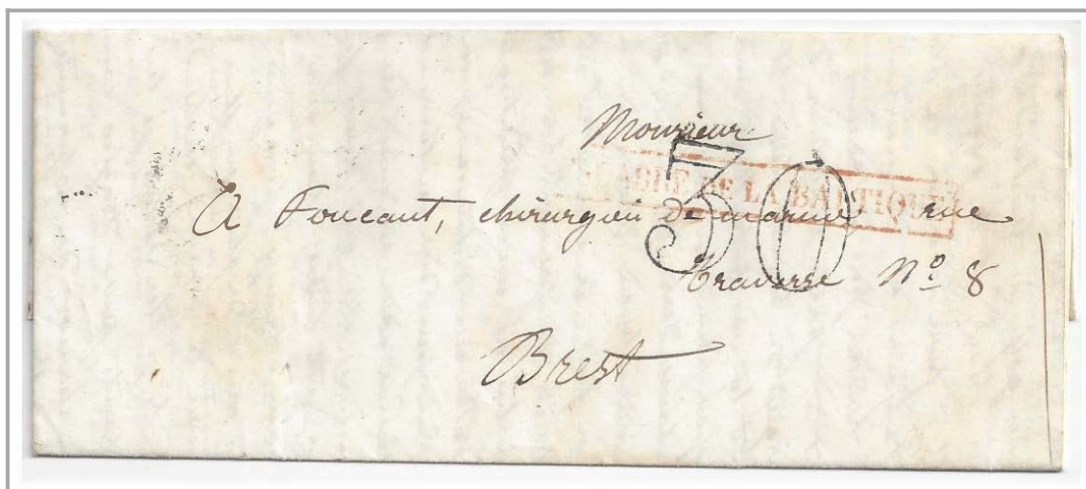
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**Rates** - A rate of 20 centimes prepaid, or 30 centimes unpaid, for military letter mail, per ¼ ounce, was in effect throughout the war.

**ESCADRE DE LA BALTIQUE**



1 August 1854 Åland Islands, French seaman's letter to Croisic, France  
ESCADRE DE LA BALTIQUE handstamp in red, "30" centimes due handstamp  
29 July 1854 Paris transit backstamp



29 August 1854 Åland Islands, letter dated from French frigate *Breslaw* (80) to Brest, France  
ESCADRE DE LA BALTIQUE entry handstamp, "30" centimes due handstamp, 6 September 1854 Paris transit  
letter: *The campaign this year is over. We will remain here for some time yet to continue the blockade.*



## The Escadre De La Baltique markings

The "CORPS EXP<sup>RE</sup> DE LA BALTIQUE" double circle datestamp is known only dated August 14, 1854.

These markings were applied by a payeur who had been assigned by the Ministry of Finance. In general, payeurs were assigned to the general headquarters, corps headquarters and division headquarters. Each payeur was equipped with facilities and materials necessary to fulfill his duties for the army in the field.

On July 13, 1854 Louis Laville, the principal payeur, embarked from Calais with the fleet. He arrived at Kiel on July 26, 1854.

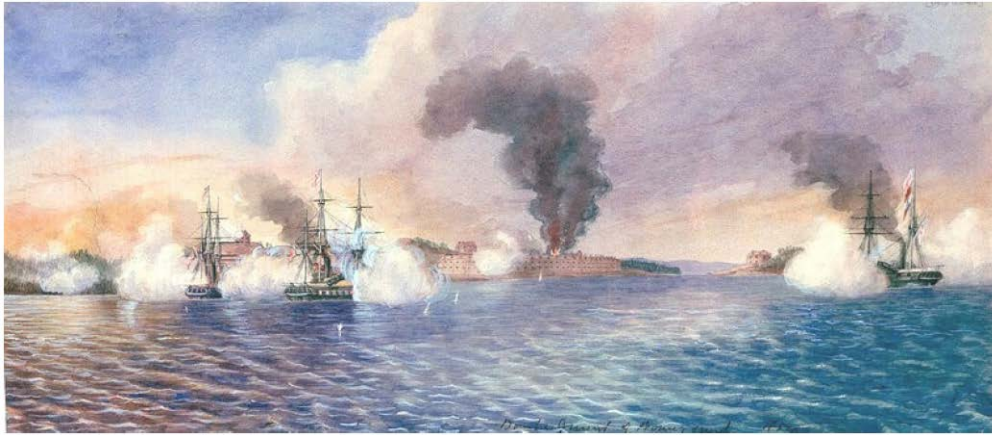


August 1854 cover from French Fleet cover from Åland Islands to Mayenne, France  
14 August 1854 double circle ESCADRE DE LA BALTIQUE postmark, "30" centimes due handstamp  
postmarked on the day the French stormed the West Fort, 23 August Prez-en-Pail arrival backstamp  
**three reported examples**

On 30 July 1854 the ships which brought the first division of the French troops were seen entering the waters around the Åland Islands. French General Baraguay d'Hilliers came in the *Reine Horten* while other ships brought the troops.



**Letter written the day after Russians evacuate Bomarsund**



12/13 August 1854 letter from the French Fleet dated at Åland Islands to France  
14 August 1854 double circle ESCADRE DE LA BALTIQUE postmark, "30" centimes due handstamp  
22 Paris A Troyes transit backstamp  
**three reported examples**

13 August postscript to letter mentions: *The Russians have abandoned the fort we attacked.*

On 8 August 1854 the Allied forces of 11,000 French artillery troops and the British fleet encircled the fortress of Bomarsund. The artillery attack commenced on 10 August. The French stormed Fort Tzee (West Fort) on 14 August, and on the next day, the British took Fort Nottichafter (East Fort). The defenders surrendered on 16 August after which the Allies destroyed the fortress.



**Special mail route via Haparanda**



**21 August 1855 Stockholm (neutral Sweden) unpaid letter to Åbo, Finland endorsed "Via Haparanda" at top, list no. 30 at Stockholm, 20 kopeck in silver due fewer than five reported examples**

After the British and French fleets blockade of the Baltic Sea was established in 1854 the normal forwarding of letters between Stockholm and Åbo by water via Åland Islands (ca. 150 miles) was impossible. Mail had to be forwarded via the land route north to Haparanda (at the tip of the Bay of Bothnia) and then south to Åbo (ca. 900 miles).



**Mail handled via Denmark**

Mail service for French expeditionary forces in the Baltic was inaugurated in July 1854 with mail carried by Navy supply vessels to and from Calais. A very small amount of mail from the French expeditionary force, such as the example below, was posted at civilian offices at a port-of-call.

**Rates** - An prepaid rate of 20 centimes, for military letter, per ¼ ounce, was in effect during the war.



DANEMARK R.2. cancel

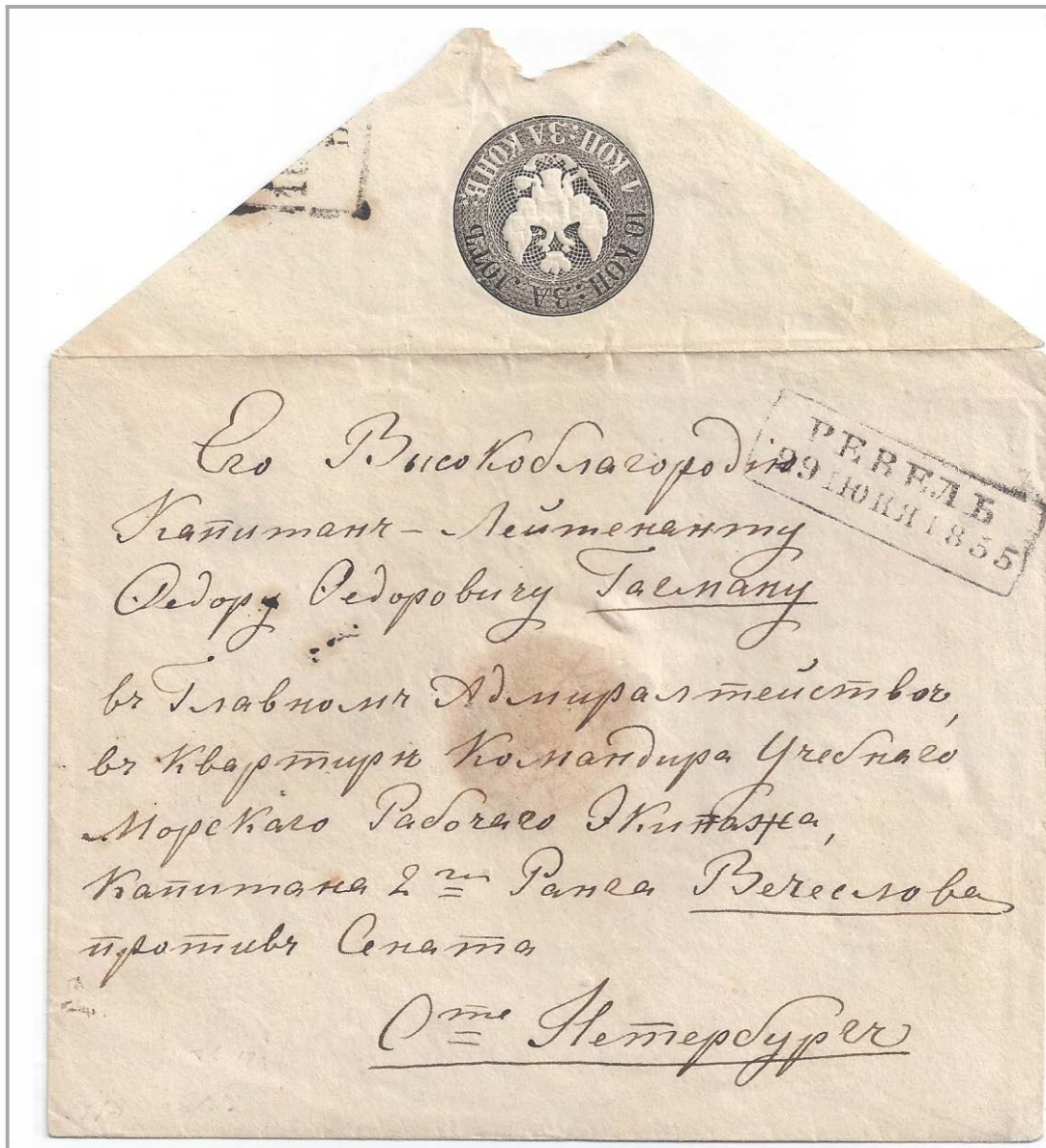


- 1 November 1855 letter from French Fleet dated Nargen (an island off Estonia) used to France prepaid 20 centimes with large dots roller cancel, mailed at Kiel, carriage via Danish and Prussian mails
  - 5 November 1855 Kieler Bahnhof postmark, boxed DANEMARK R.2.
  - 5 November 1855 KDOPA Hamburg and Hamburg T&T transit backstamps
  - 8 November 1855 July 1854 red French entry from Belgium postmark, Belleville - Paris transit backstamp
  - 7 decimes due with faint Affranchissement Insuffisant boxed handstamp
- fewer than five reported examples with French adhesives via Denmark**

When the fleets arrived to the Baltic in 1855 they found that Revel had been strongly fortified during the winter. Admirals Dundas and Penaud collected at Nargen a fleet of about thirty war-steamers, twenty gun-boats, and twenty mortar vessels. The two admirals then steamed across from Nargen to Sveaborg, a few miles from Helsingfors, on 8 August. After a long bombardment of Sveaborg they had destroyed most of the fortifications by 11 August. The "Mosquito squadron," as the steam gun-boats were called, showed enough promise that arrangements were made for building a number of these boats to be readied for any operations that might be necessary in 1856. The fleets continued coastal operations until the end of September.



**Military use from Reval to St. Petersburg**



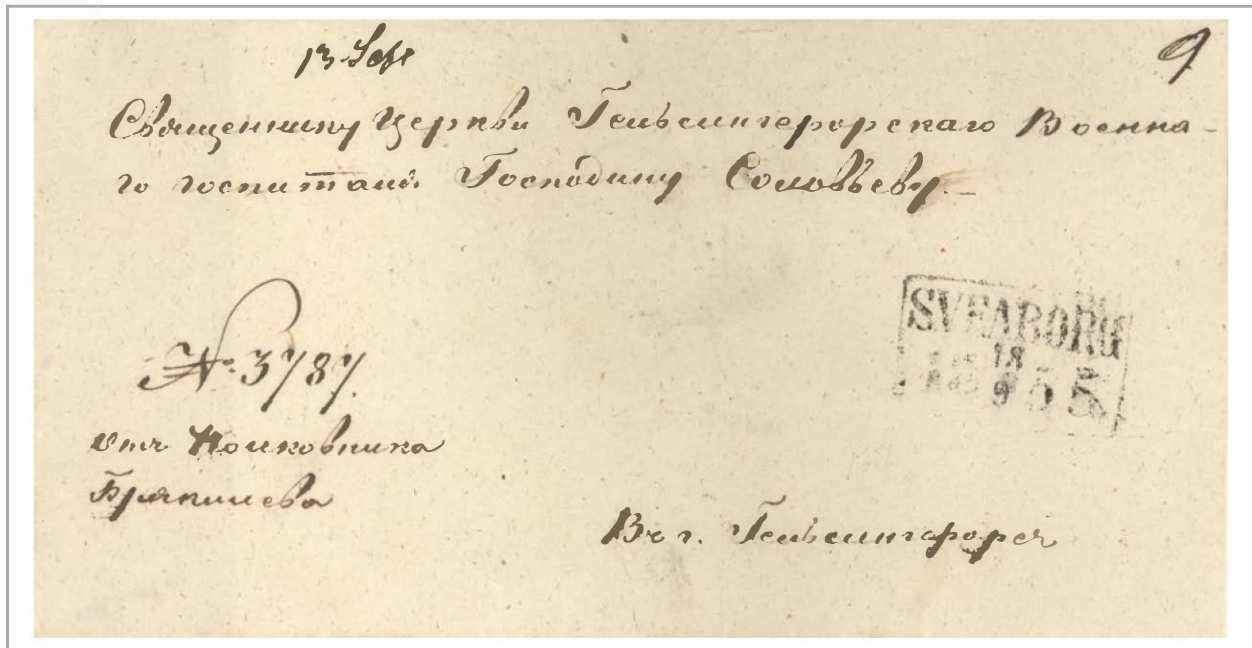
11 July 1855 (29 June Julian) Reval datestamp on 10k postal stationery to St. Petersburg addressed to, "Captain-Lieutenant Fedor Fedorovich Tasman, Admiralty Headquarter's, Training Command, Marine Working Crew under Captain 2nd Class Vecheslova"  
1 July 1855 St. Petersburg arrival backstamp  
**fewer than 3 known uses of Russian stationery in the Baltic Theater**



**Military use from Sveaborg, shortly after bombardment, to nearby hospital**



wax seal on reverse  
"Finnish Line No. 6 Battalion"



30 September (18 September Julian) 1855 Sveaborg datestamp on military cover to the Helsingfors hospital  
wax seal reads Finnish Line No. 6 Battalion in Cyrillic (recombined for inset), addressed to a minister

Sveaborg was a strategic fortress, located 3 miles west of Helsingfors, that protected the water route to St Petersburg. After 47 hours of bombardment (see painting above) that ended on 10 August 1855, the fort had been severely damaged but the Allies were unable to knock out the Russian guns. Instead of sending troops ashore after the bombardment, the Anglo-French fleet set sail for Kronstadt.



# The Danube Theater

Some of the most significant maneuvering between Turkey and Russia to gain political and military advantage took place early in the war and centered in the Danubian Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, now part of Romania. Austria, considered non-belligerent participant, sent a significant force to Moldavia and Wallachia to stabilize the area and create a buffer zone.

Russia issued demands of Turkey in May 1853 that were refused by the Porte. The Russian Danube Army then began to occupy Moldavia and parts of Romania thinking that Austria would remain neutral. Turkey then declared war on Russia in October 1853.

On 14 June 1854 Austria signed an agreement with the Turkish Porte aimed to oust the Russians from the Balkans. The convention of Boyaciköy allowed Austria to temporarily occupy the Principalities. This action convinced the Russians considered that a war with Austria would be inevitable if they remained in the Principalities and they began leaving.

Bucharest was evacuated by the Russians on 1 August 1854 and on 8 August, the first Ottoman forces entered the town. The peaceful occupation of the Principalities by the Austrians effectively removed the danger of war continuing in the Balkans.

Russia: Michael Gorchakov



Turkey: Omer Pasha



Austria: Johann Count Coronini



10 October 1855 "FELDPOST N<sup>o</sup> 2." origin postmark on newspaper wrapper prepaid with blue "Mercury" printed address band to Feldpost No. 2 at Bucharest corrected in manuscript to Jassy  
**the only reported newspaper wrapper use**

The Feldpost office number 2 marking was used at Jassy from November 1854 until the Austrian troops were withdrawn in 1857.



18 July 1854 (12 July Julian calendar) St. Petersburg military mail to Russian occupied Bucharest addressed to "The Danube Army Headquarters" and with red wax seal with anchor the only reported example from the occupation, sent just two weeks before evacuation

A Russian force of 7,000 men, under the command of Adjutant-General Graf Anrep-Elmpt, crossed the Pruth River into the Danubian Principalities on 3 July 1853. They arrived at Bucharest on 15 July. Martial law was in force, although it was not officially declared and Wallachian vessels were forbidden from navigating in the Danube. On 1 August 1854 the Russians evacuated Bucharest.



After the brief Russian occupation ended in August 1854, the Danubian Provinces were given a new status, with a neutral Austrian administration. The Austrian military occupation lasted until the Treaty of Paris became effective in April 1857 when the forces were withdrawn.

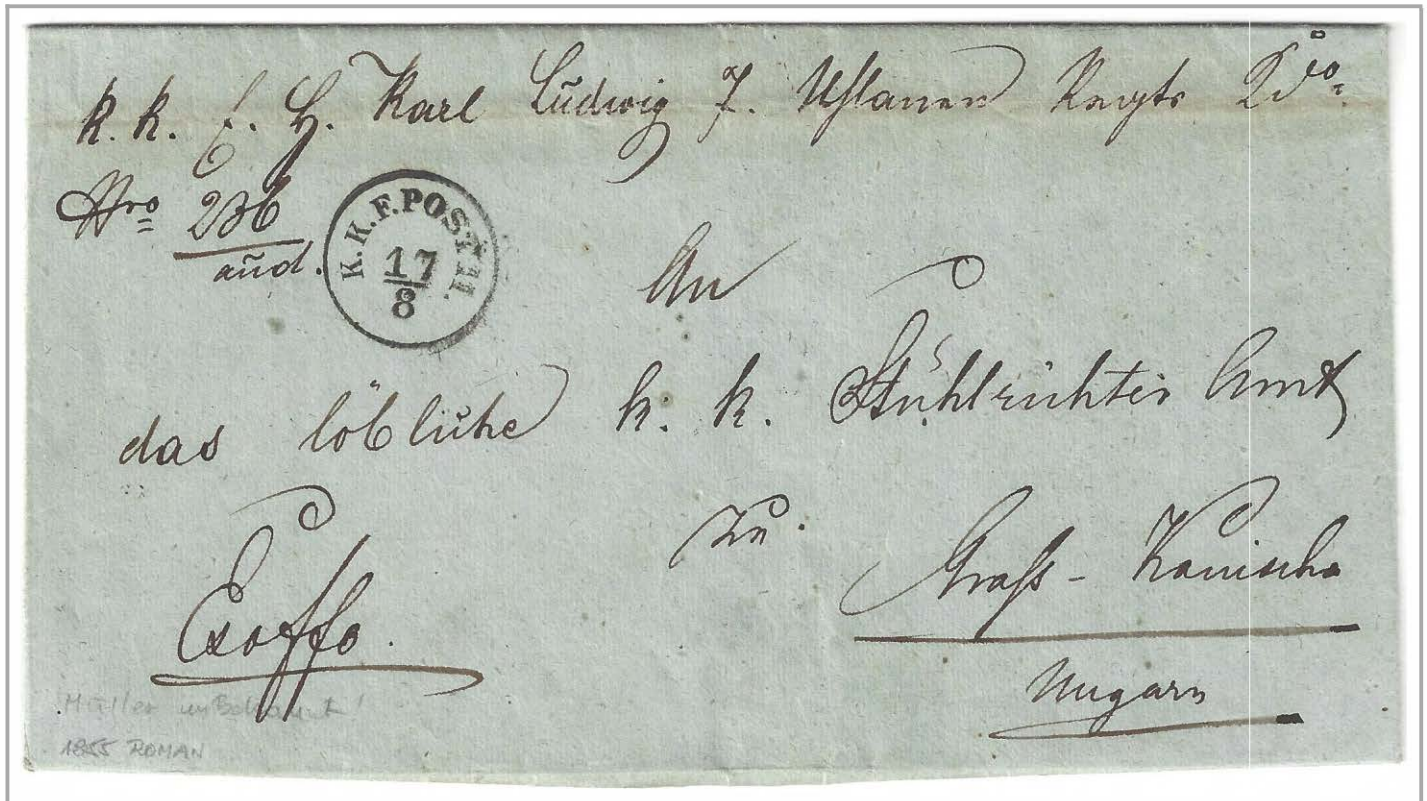


map of Austrian military post office locations and disinfection stations (dark red )



21 July 1855 registered mail use from the military post office at Piteschti (Wallachia), to Verona (Lombardy) prepaid Austria 9k postage plus 6k registry fee, disinfected with rastel punch  
"K.K. ÖST. F.P. PITESCHTI" origin postmark, Hermannstadt transit and Verona arrival backstamps  
**fewer than five reported examples with stamps**

Piteschti (now Pitesti, Romania) was occupied by Austrian troops from December 1854 until April 1857.



14 August 1855 official military letter dated at Roman (Moldavia) to Nagy-Kanisa, Hungary entered mails at the Austrian military post office with 17 August "K.K. F. POST. 11" postmark, 18 August "FELDPOST No. 2" transit backstamp Hungarian transits and an arrival backstamp fewer than five reported examples

Roman was occupied by Austrian troops from February 1855 until April 1857.



31 July 1855 official military letter dated at Bucharest entered mails at the military post office at Ploeschti (Wallachia) to Valdagno (Venetia) "K.K. ÖST. F.P. PLOESCHTI" postmark, sanitary station at Hermannstadt transit backstamp fewer than five reported examples

Ploeschti (now Ploesti, Romania) was occupied by Austrian troops from December 1854 until April 1857.



14 October 1854 cover from the military post office at Krajova (Wallachia), to Vienna apparently prepaid Austria 9k postage plus 6k registry fee but not sent registered "K.K. ÖST. F.P. KRAJOVA" origin postmarks, Alt Orsova disinfected datestamp and Temesvar transit



20 January 1855 cover from the military post office at Krajova (Wallachia), to Pesth apparently prepaid Austria 9k postage plus 6k registry fee but not sent registered "K.K. ÖST. F.P. KRAJOVA" origin postmarks, Alt Orsova disinfected datestamp and Temesvar transit



4 October 1856 registered soldier's cover from Jassy to Leipzig, Saxony, prepaid 9k "FELDPPOST No. 2" postmarks, rastel punch disinfected, Wein transit and arrival backstamps

The Feldpost office number 2 was located at Jassy from November 1854 until April 1857.



3 December 1854 official military from Bucharest to Verona (Lombardy)  
"K.K. FELDPPOST No. 1" postmark, Wein transit and arrival backstamps



The Feldpost office number 1 was located at Bucharest from November 1854 until April 1857.



19 November 1856 official military letter dated from Bucharest to Neustadt, Austria  
22 November "K.K. FELDPPOST No. 1" postmark, Hermanstadt transit and arrival backstamps



## The Black Sea Theater



The principal military operations of the Crimean War took place on the Crimean Peninsula in the areas around the Russian fortified city of Sevastopol. This section of the exhibit touches on the most notable events. After an 11 month siege, Sevastopol fell to the Allies in September 1855.

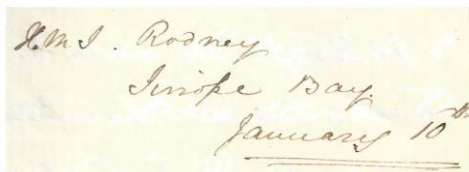
### Timeline

- 30 Nov 53 - Turkish fleet destroyed at Sinope
- 5 Oct 53 - Turkey (Ottoman Empire) declares war
- 22 Apr 54 - Allies bombard Odessa
- 12 May 54 - Loss of HMS *Tiger*
- 14 Sep 54 - Allies land at Calamata Bay
- 20 Sep 54 - Battle of Alma
- 25 Oct 54 - Battle of Balaklava (Charge of Light Brigade)
- 5 Nov 54 - Battle of Inkerman
- 14 Nov 54 - Winter storm damages supply lines
- 26 Jan 55 - Sardinia joins the Allies
- 8 Sep 55 - Final allied assault with 60,000 troops
- 10 Sep 55 - Russian forces abandon Sevastopol
- 17 Oct 55 - Fortress of Kinburn falls to Allies
- 29 Feb 56 - Armistice signed
- 30 Mar 56 - Treaty of Paris signed
- 27 Apr 56 - England ratifies the Treaty

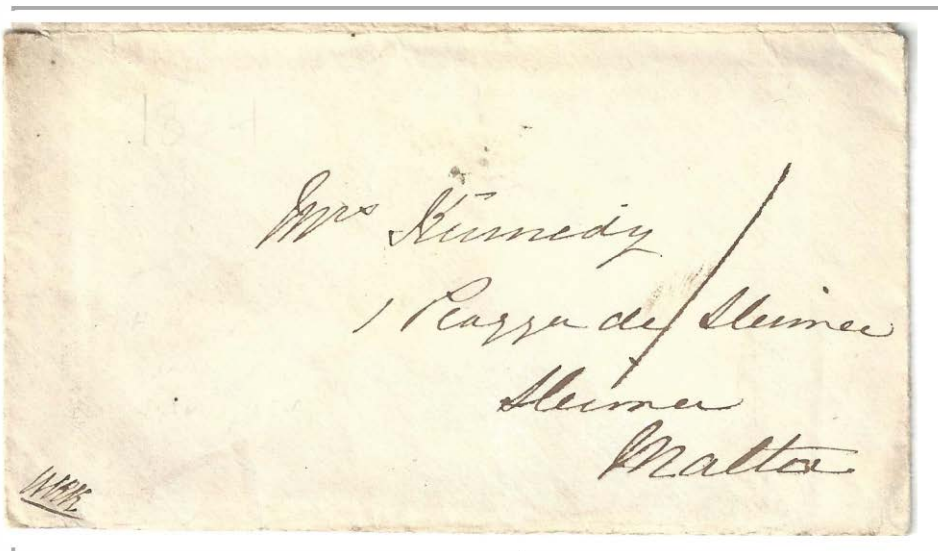


### Naval Battle at Sinope Bay

On 30 November 1853 a squadron of Imperial Russian warships struck and annihilated a squadron of Ottoman ships anchored in the harbor of Sinope leaving 3,000 dead. This action triggered a response from the French and British that led to their declaration of war on 27 March 1854.



*HMS Rodney, Sinope Bay, January 10th (1854)*



*... When we got there the sight was disgusting, the shore was covered with pieces of the wrecks, shells, and dead bodies. Although we arrived here 3 weeks after the action, the Turks had not had time to bury all the dead. The fools buried them only about 2 inches under the earth, so as soon as they went away the dogs went and dug them up and tore them to pieces. I saw one head sticking out and a dog came and tore off the upper lip in there. It looked as if he was laughing at me ...*

10 January 1854 Kennedy (later Admiral William Kennedy) correspondence cover and letter to Sienna, Malta carried by British Naval vessel to Malta, 1d due

# Black Sea Theater



## Bombardment of Odessa

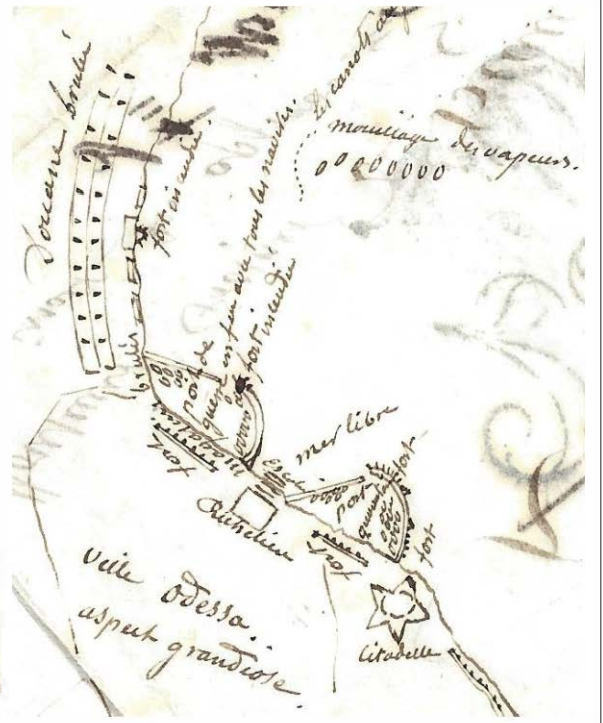
### Letter from HIMS *Vauban* with Map of the Harbor

On 6 April 1854, soon after the declaration of war, a dispatch boat of the HMS *Furious* entered the port of Odessa under a flag of truce to remove the British Consul there. When leaving the port the boat was fired upon by the Russians.

On this pretext, the Anglo-French fleet arrived off Odessa on 22 April and the first division (*Descartes*, *Sampson*, *Tiger* and *Vauban*) sailed in to open fire on the Russian positions. The second division (*Furious*, *Terrible*, *Retribution* and *Mogador*) then joined the attack. The attacking ships were able to hit a magazine on the Imperial Mole (a military port area for Russian ships). About 24 Russian ships were set afire. The rocket-boats then set fire to the dockyard storehouses.

This important action neutralized the port and allowed the Allies to operate in the Black Sea with impunity for the duration of the war.

le 22 avril 1854.  
1<sup>re</sup> division. Sampson, Vauban, Tiger, Descartes.  
2<sup>e</sup> division. Retribution, Mogador, Terrible, Furious



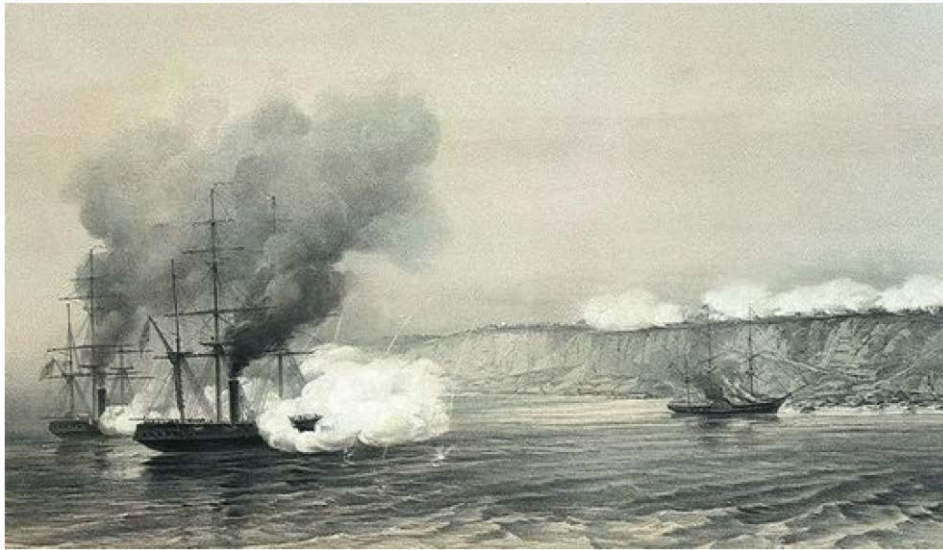
Map (details shown) dated 22 April 1854 shows harbor of Odessa as well as the position of eight paddle-wheel steamers listed as: 1st Division: HMS *Sampson*, HIMS *Vauban*, HMS *Tiger* and HIMS *Descartes* and 2nd Division: HMS *Retribution*, HIMS *Mogador*, HMS *Terrible* and HMS *Furious*.



25 May 1854 "ESCADRE DE LA MÉDITERRANÉE" origin postmark on cover from HIMS *Vauban* to France  
25c due handstamp, cover interior the sender has drawn a map of the fleet position for bombardment of Odessa



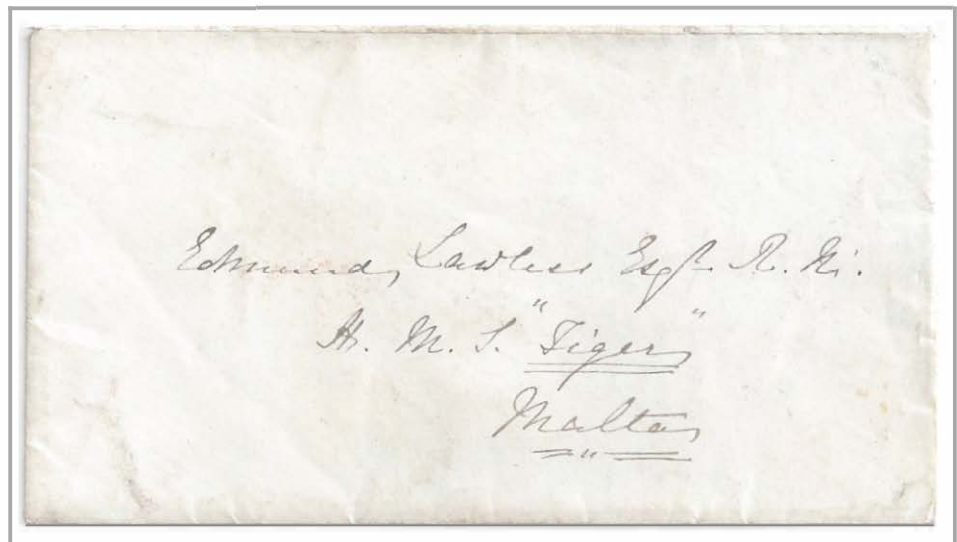
Prisoner of War Mail



The loss of the H.M.S. *Tiger*



reverse (reduced)



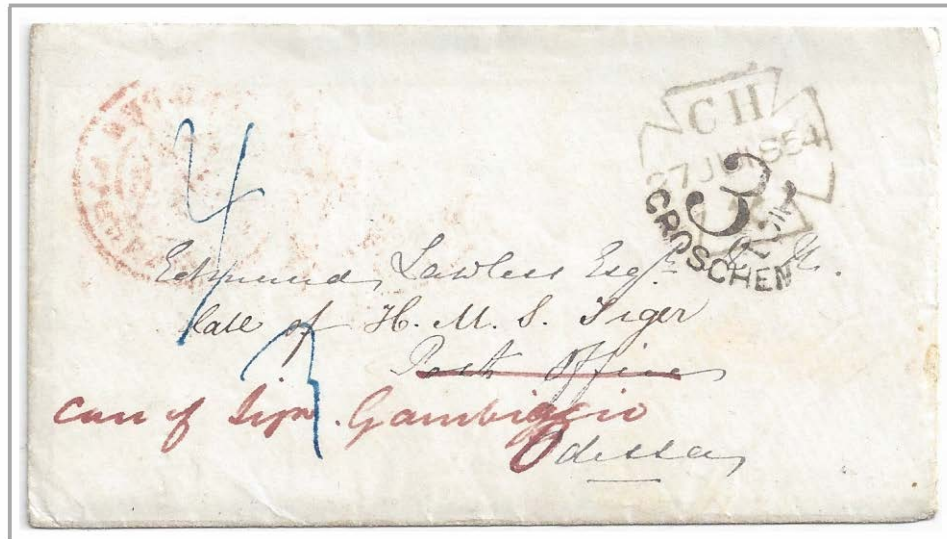
May 1854 Cashel, Ireland inner envelope addressed to Edmund Lawless onboard HMS *Tiger* at Malta  
12 May 1854 HMS *Tiger* lost, addressee taken as prisoner and removed to Odessa Quarantine station  
16 May 1854 in the flag of truce mail exchanged from HMS *Furious* and HMS *Inflexible*  
23 May 1854 Odessa Quarantine datestamp on reverse and delivered to prisoner Lawless  
**the earliest of the Lawless correspondence covers, the only reported Prisoner of War uses**

On May 12, 1854, the HMS *Tiger* ran aground in fog near Odessa. When HMS *Niger* and HMS *Vesuvius* attempted to assist, she was bombarded by Russians firing from the cliffs and surrendered. Captain Giffard and three others died while 24 officers, including Assistant Surgeon Edmund Lawless, and 201 seamen, were taken prisoner.

Only two Royal Navy ships were taken during the Crimean War. Other than the four Lawless correspondence covers shown, no prisoner of war mail from the Crimean War is reported.



Prisoner of War Mail



cover addressed to Edmund Lawless, "late of the HMS *Tiger*, Post Office, Odessa"  
27 June 1854 Cashel, Ireland origin, by Prussian Closed Mail  
additionally directed at Odessa to the "Care of Sign. Cambiaggio"  
the only example to the care of the interpreter

Edmund Lawless was an Assistant Surgeon aboard the HMS *Tiger*. He was taken prisoner by the Russians on May 12, 1854 and taken to Ryazan Prison, about 100 miles south-east of Moscow. Signor Annibale Cambiaggio was the interpreter appointed by the Russian Government. An Italian, Cambiaggio was held in very high esteem by the British prisoners according to their accounts.

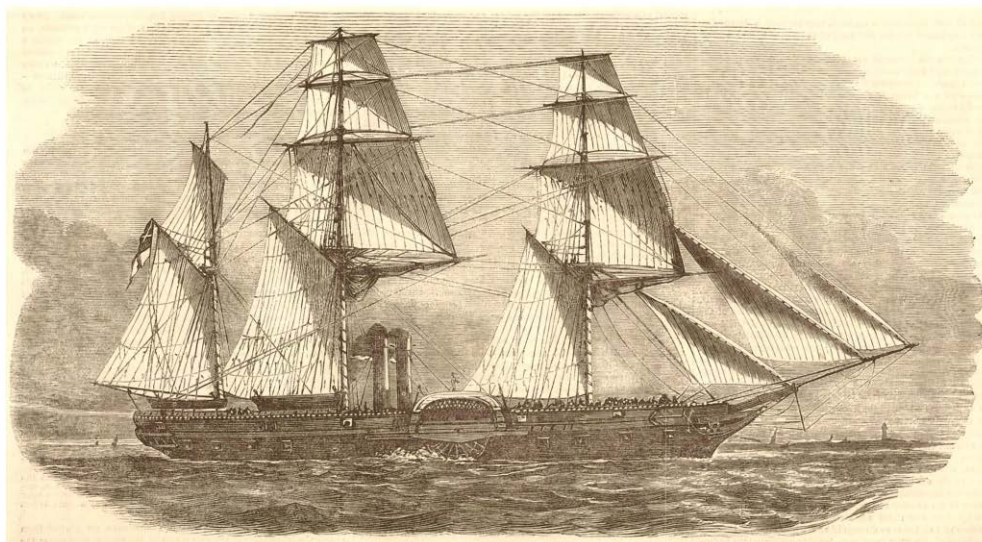
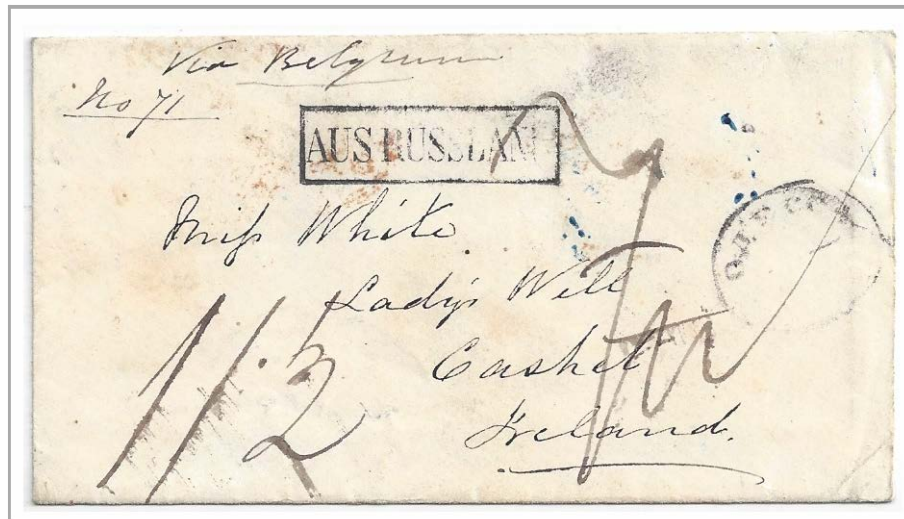


Illustration of HMS *Tiger* from *The Illustrated London News* of June 10, 1854. Their report included, "... we have now to regret the loss of one of our fine steam-frigates, the *Tiger*, of 16 guns, which was wrecked off Cape Fontana Lighthouse, on the morning of the 12th inst. Cape Fontana is a point about five miles from Odessa ... "



**Prisoner of War Mail**



July 1854 postage due cover from Edmund Lawless while imprisoned at Ryazan Prison to Cashel, Ireland endorsed "Via Belgium," Odessa oval postmark and boxed "AUS RUSSLAND" handstamps on front  
31 July Breslau/Berlin, 3 August (London) transit and 4 August 1854 Cashel arrival backstamps  
**two reported outbound uses**

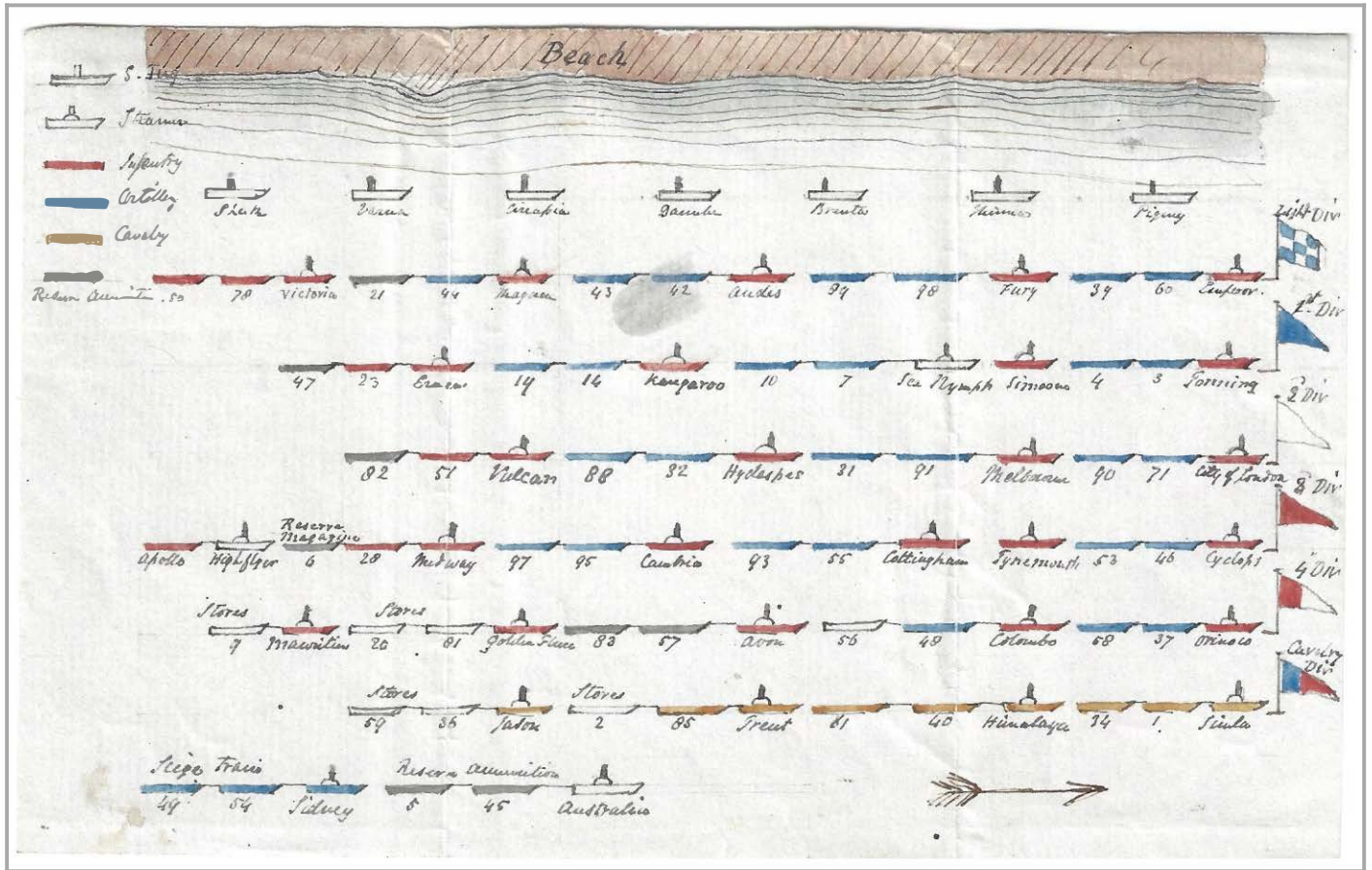


9 August 1854 Cashel, Ireland cover addressed to Edmund Lawless, "British Prisoner of War" at Odessa by Prussian Closed mail, directed (in Cyrillic) to the prison at Ryazan  
**the only reported use to Ryazan prison**

According to a Russian Statute regarding prisoners of war, the Europeans commissioned in the Ottoman army would be sent to Kaluga and Ryazan. When the French and British Empires declared war on Russia, it was decided that the British officers would be sent to Ryazan, privates to Voronezh, the French officers to Kaluga and the privates to Tambov. The soldiers commissioned in the French and British armies but who were of other nationalities would be sent to Kostroma. The Sardinians, who were the last to declare war, would also be sent to Kostroma.



Allied Landing at Calamata Bay

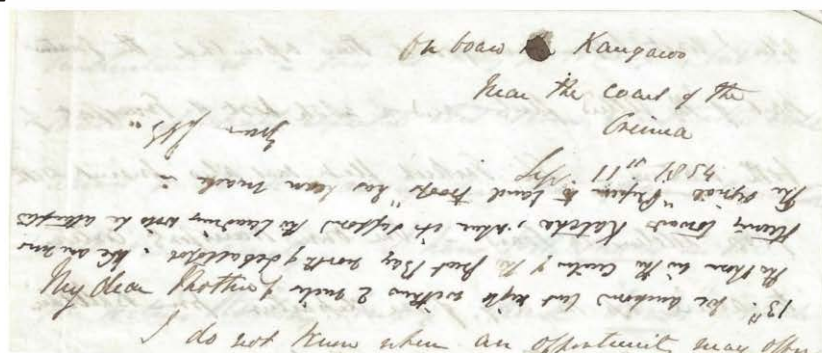


On board the (HMS transport) Kangaroo, Near the coast of the Crimea, September 11th (to 13th), 1854

Soon after daybreak on the 7th we began to move off in divisions, according to the plan I send you which is a copy of the Admiral's and which is also to show the order of disembarkation at the coast of the Crimea. Each division is distinguished by a flag (shown at right side) during the day and by a certain number of lights at night. The plan refers only to the transports and does not include the French ships or any of the "men of war."

On Saturday the 9th we came to anchor on a bank about 40 miles to the Northwest of Cape Tarkhan on the Crimea. During the time we were at anchor Lord Raglan and the Heads of Engineering Department went away in the Agamemnon to reconnoiter the coast.

(Sep 13th) We anchored last night within two miles of the centre of the great bay north of Sevastopol (Calamita Bay). We are now steering toward Katch, where it is supposed the landing will be attempted. The signal "Prepare to land troops" has been made. Yours, JSS



soldier's letter and plan of the landing written onboard the transport Kangaroo preparing to land in Crimea



**Letter from HMS *Rodney* describes Battle of Alma**

On 14 September 1854 the French and British forces landed on the Crimean peninsula 35 miles north of Sevastopol at Kalamata Bay. On 19 September 1854 the two armies marched south crossing five rivers before reaching the Alma River where the Russian commander had determined to make his defense. On 20 September 1854 the Battle of the Alma, the first battle of the Crimean War in the Crimea, took place just south of the River Alma. The Allied forces under General St. Arnaud and Lord Raglan defeated General Menshikov's Russian army.

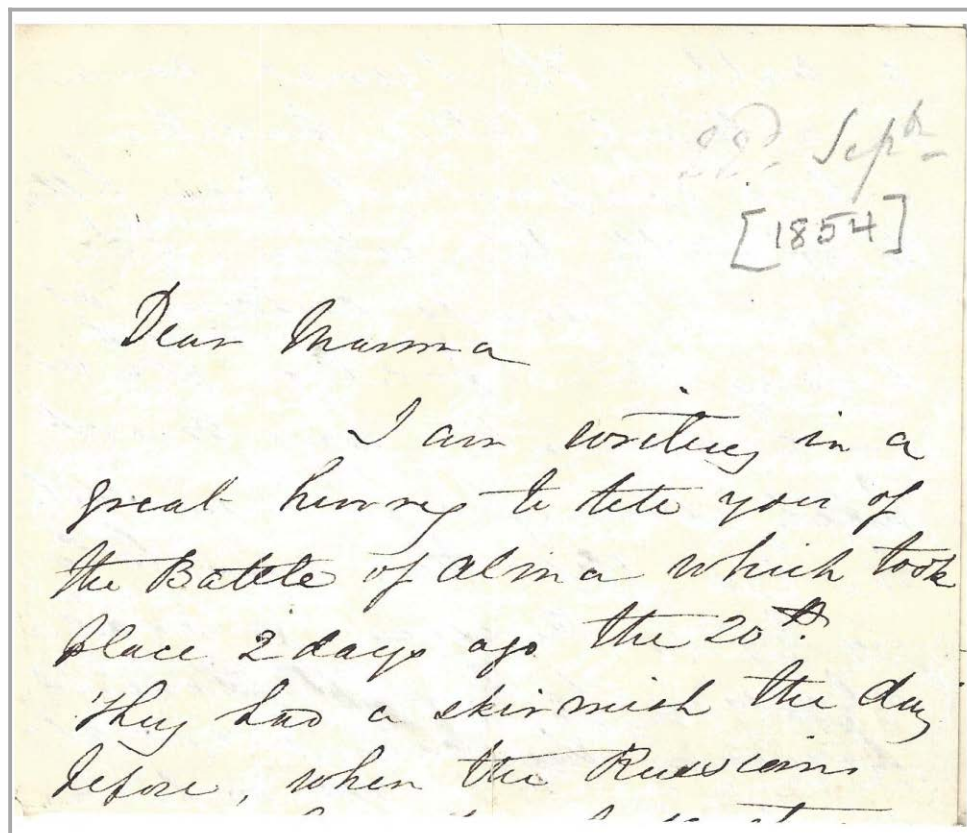
(HMS *Rodney*, off *Alma River*) September 22 (1854)

*Dear Mamma,*

*I am writing in a great hurry to tell you of the Battle of Alma which took place 2 days ago on the 20th. ... the Russians were on top of a tremendous steep hill and our men in a valley. They commenced at 12 o'clock and after 3 hours very hard fighting, the English took possession of the heights .. and the Russians retreated. We have had very heavy loss, 18 to 22 hundred killed and wounded.*

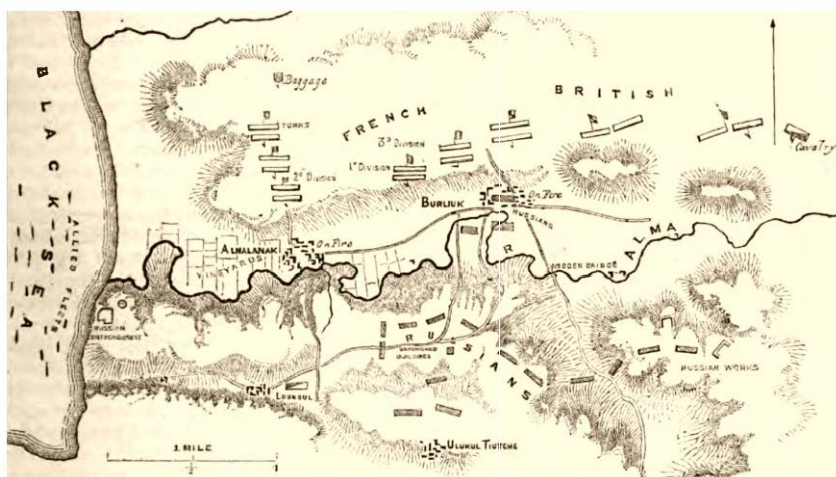
*The Highlanders fought splendidly .. they walked up to the guns which were firing on them and forced the Russians to retreat ... the Russians are supposed to have lost about 3000 or 4000.*

*The Black Sea looks so curious English sailors running around with Russians, (minus a leg, etc) on their backs. Our men are really the only fellows who care for the wounded Russians.*



# Black Sea Theater

## Battle of Alma



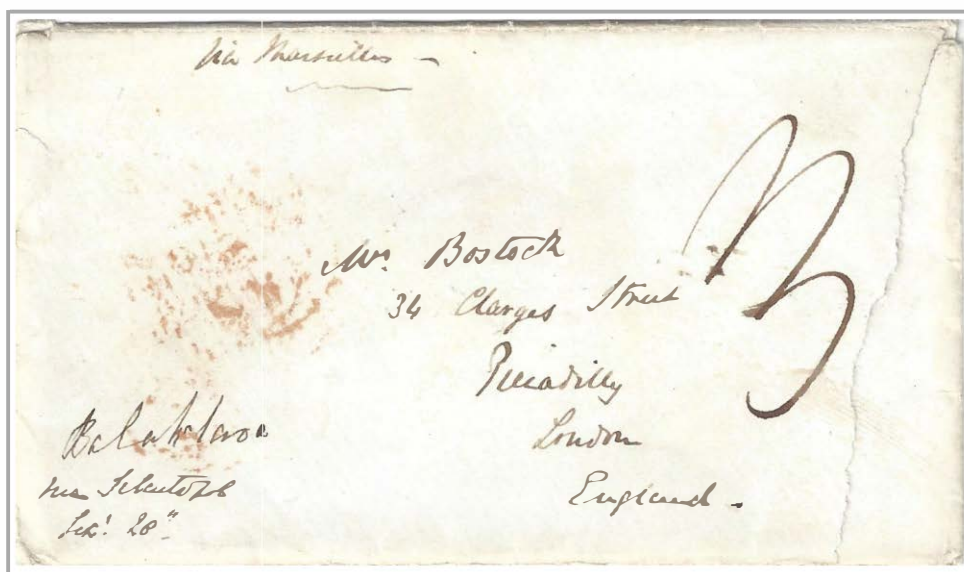
### *Camp Balaclava, Near Sevastopol, September 27, 1854*

*On the morning of the 19th we broke up camp and both armies advanced, the French close to and resting upon the Sea, ourselves on their left and protected on our own left by cavalry & riflemen. The country was quite open, gently undulating & quite desolate of trees, so that the sight of 60,000 men could be seen moving at one glance. It was most imposing...*

*In the evening we arrived at a small stream and a light cavalry & some artillery affair took place in which a few horses & one man only was killed - the enemy quickly retiring to a most formidable position they had entrenched on the River Alma. Their best troops were placed behind earthworks too elevated for our artillery to reach them and from behind which they poured a murderous fire upon our advance.*

*Across these impediments and through a fire of 32 round shot, shells and a storm of minie balls the Light Division and our won advanced in the most wonderful manner. ... Hargrath was most dangerously wounded, with 10 other of my own brother officers! We lost 30 killed and 100 wounded, many of whom I fear will die.*

*The regiment in front of ours, the 23rd of the line, was broken & rushed in confusion down the cleft upon us, followed by the Russian troops who murdered the wounded just as they lay on the ground. The Russians spared nobody ...*



27 September 1854 Bostock correspondence letter and cover written after the Battle of Alma  
Army Post Office indistinct backstamp, manuscript 3d due, London arrival backstamp





## The Charge of the Light Brigade



***PS - I regret to state that the assault order came out from some desiring our light cavalry to charge some Russian batteries unsupported. Of 700 that went out, 190 only returned. Some blame Capt. Nolan. He was the first killed. They may blame him. The dead cannot speak. A. MacLean***

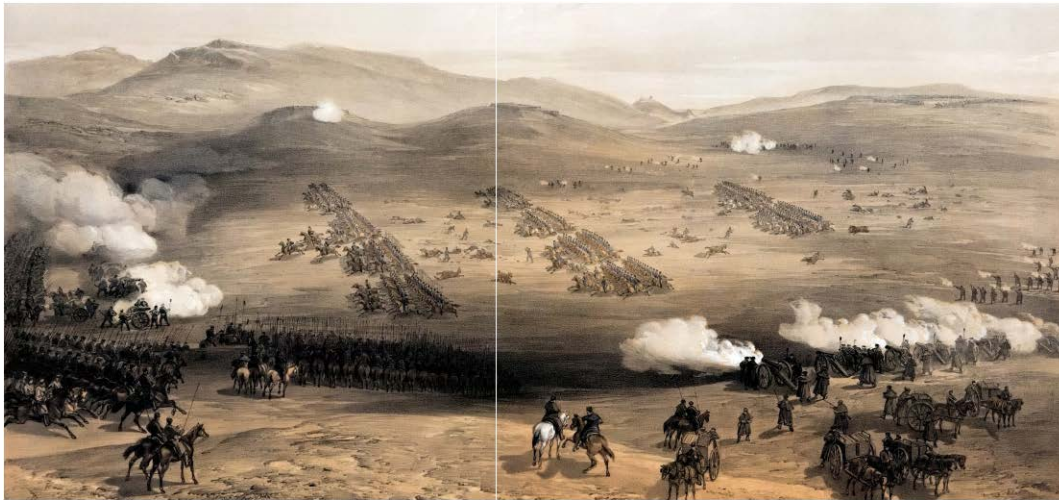
*Ps. I regret to state that  
an insane order came  
out from some desiring our  
light cavalry to charge some  
Russian batteries (near Bal-  
aklava) unsupported. Of 700  
that went out, 190 only re-  
turned. Some blame Capt.  
Nolan. (an author on cavalry  
he was the first killed. They  
may blame him. The  
dead cannot speak.)*

*A. MacLean*

Postscript to letter from A. MacLean with vivid summary of the disastrous charge of the Light Brigade at battle of Balaklava on 25 October 1854, posted at British Army Post Office (see following page) possibly the most important artifact of the Crimean War in philatelic hands



The Charge of the Light Brigade



Half a league half a league,  
Half a league onward,  
All in the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred:  
'Forward, the Light Brigade!  
Charge for the guns' he said:  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.



'Forward, the Light Brigade!  
Was there a man dismay'd?  
Not tho' the soldier knew  
Some one had blunder'd:  
Theirs not to make reply,  
Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do & die,  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

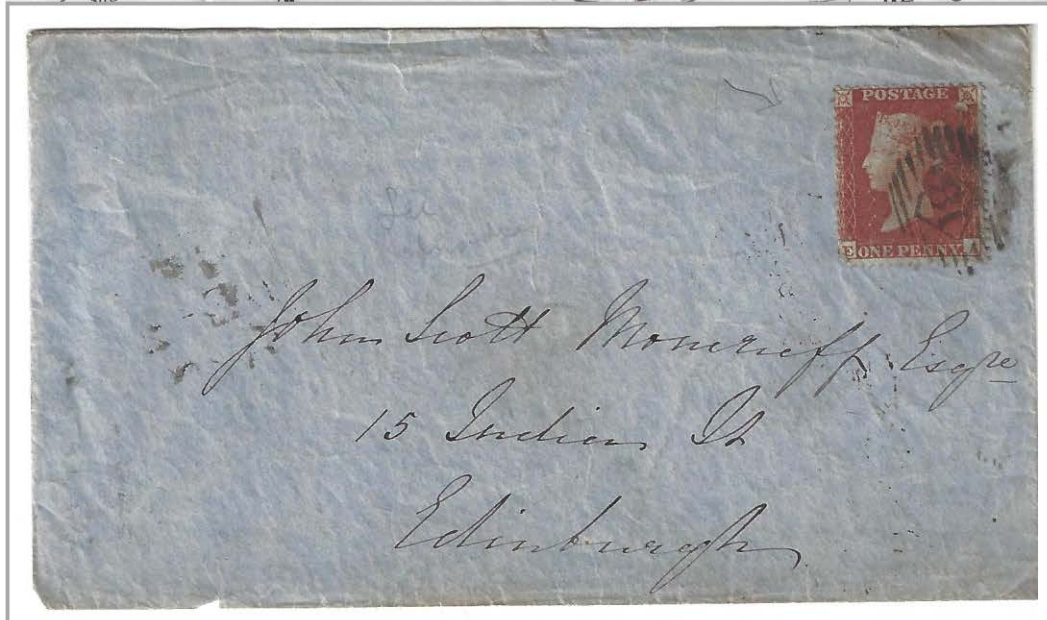
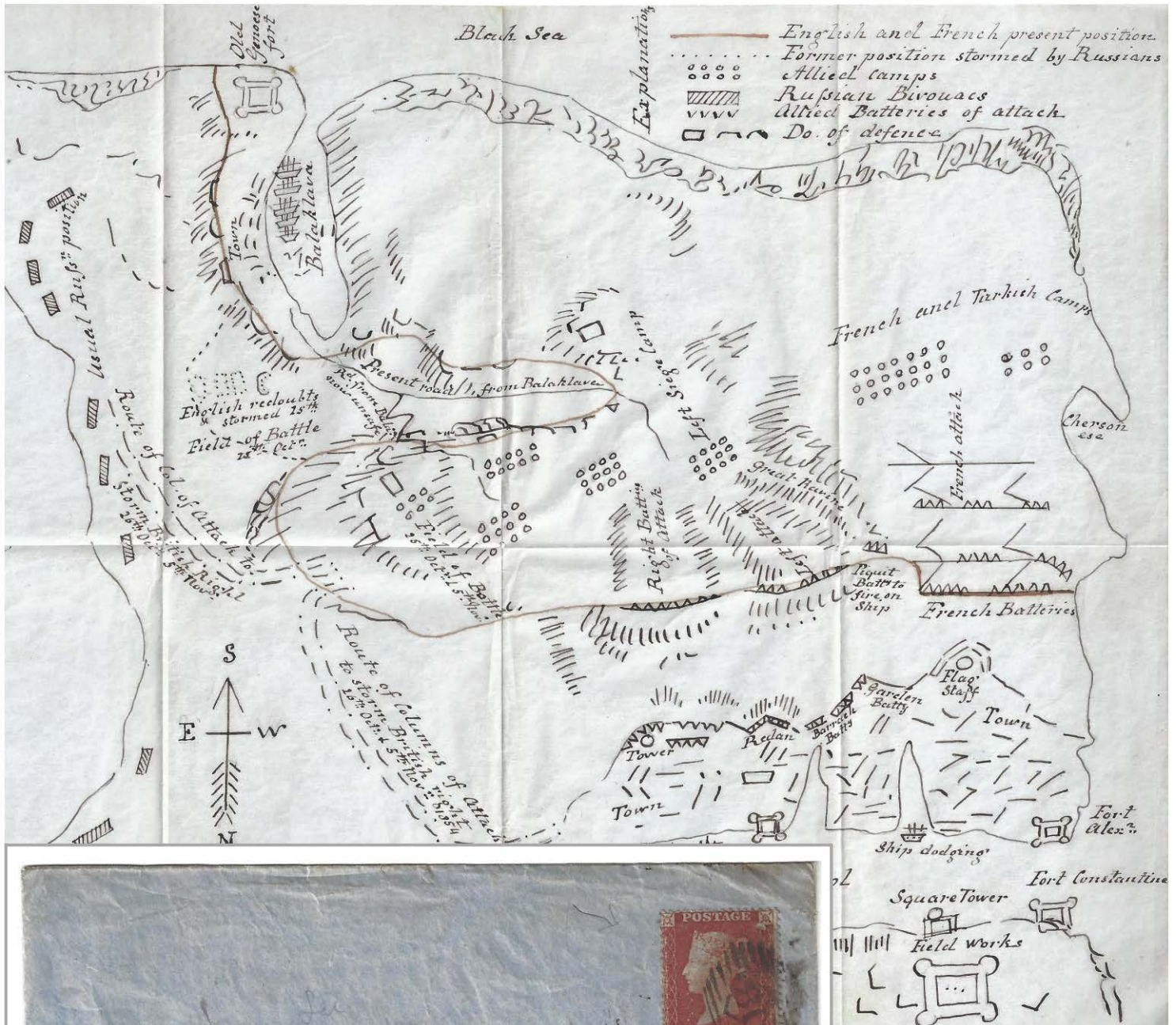
reduced image (75% of original) of address panel of sheet shown on previous page, two 1d stamps missing  
3 November 1854 Post Office British Army datestamp, 17 November London arrival

The Charge of the Light Brigade was a charge of British light cavalry led by Lord Cardigan against Russian forces during the Battle of Balaklava on 25 October 1854. Due to miscommunication in the chain of command, the Light Brigade was sent on a frontal assault against an artillery battery with excellent fields of defensive fire. The order to attack was carried out by Captain Louis Edward Nolan. His reasons for the misdirection are unknown because he was killed almost immediately (as mentioned in this postscript).

In response to the order, Cardigan lead his command of about 670 of the Light Brigade straight into the valley between the Fedyukhin Heights and the Causeway Heights. In his poem, "The Charge of the Light Brigade" (1854), Tennyson famously called this basin "The Valley of Death." The brigade was not totally destroyed, but reported 118 men killed, 127 wounded, and 60 taken prisoner.



**Battlefield Map**



Map shows the "Route of Columns of (Russian) Attack to storm British right, 26th Oct & 5th Nov 1854"

8 November 1854 Balaklava hand-drawn battlefield map sent by Lt. Col. G.H. Moncrieff, Scots Fusilier Guards carried privately, likely by returning H.R.H. Prince George, Duke of Cambridge, and mailed at London 2 December 1854, prepaid 1d, London entry backstamp and Edinburgh arrival of next day

# Black Sea Theater

## Battle of Inkerman

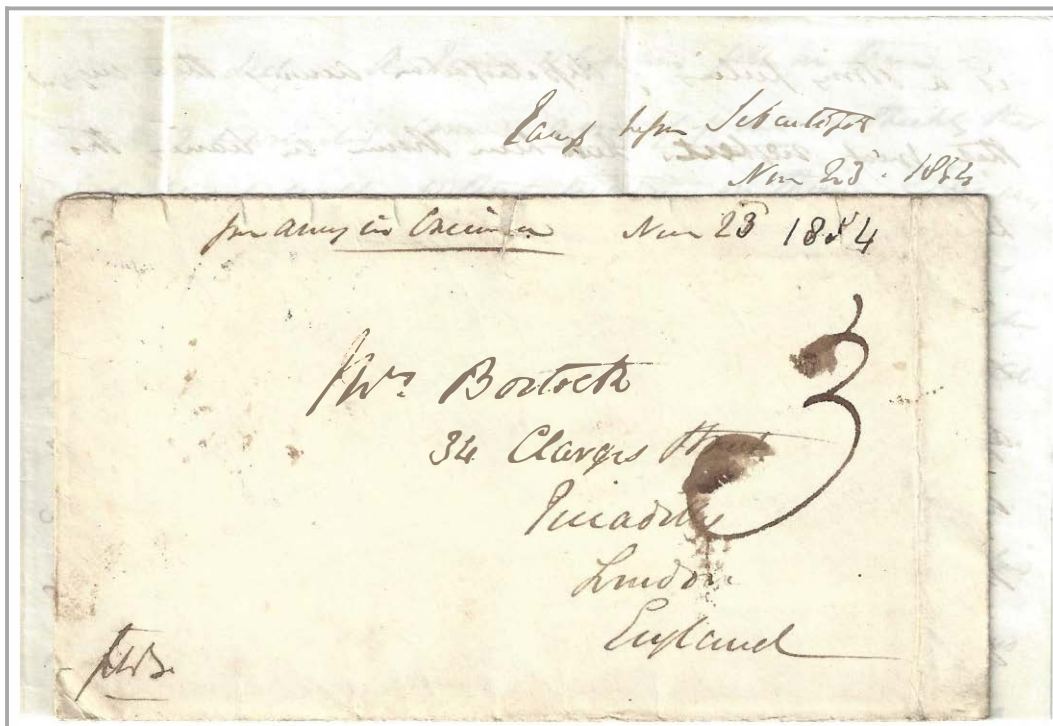


The battle of Inkerman, fought on 5 November 1854 began when the Russians launched an attack on the allied right flank with 35,000 men and 134 artillery guns. The initial assault was received by a British force of 2,700 men and 12 guns atop Home Hill. A heavy fog impeded the tactics of both sides. The British lost 4,676 killed and wounded while the Russians lost 11,959. The effects of the battle damaged the morale of the Russian Army.



### *23 November 1854 Camp before Sebastopol*

*... our victory of Inkerman, although a very glorious one for British arms, was purchased at such a fearful loss of life. For two hours and a half (it appeared an age) the whole mass of the Russian army was kept at bay by a handful of brave and determined men, who dies at their posts, but who would not retire. The Brigade of Guards lost one half of those engaged. They, with the 2nd Division saved the camp and the Army from certain destruction.*



23 November 1854 Camp before Sevastopol, Bostock correspondence letter to London



On 14 November 1854 a hurricane-force storm swept the Crimean Peninsula and the British camp at Balaklava. Tents were torn down, barracks destroyed and makeshift hospital were blown away. At sea, even modern steam vessels went aground including the newly purchased steamer HMS *Prince* carrying 150 persons. The ship was laden with the winter uniforms and equipment for the British Army. Human casualties were estimated at 500.

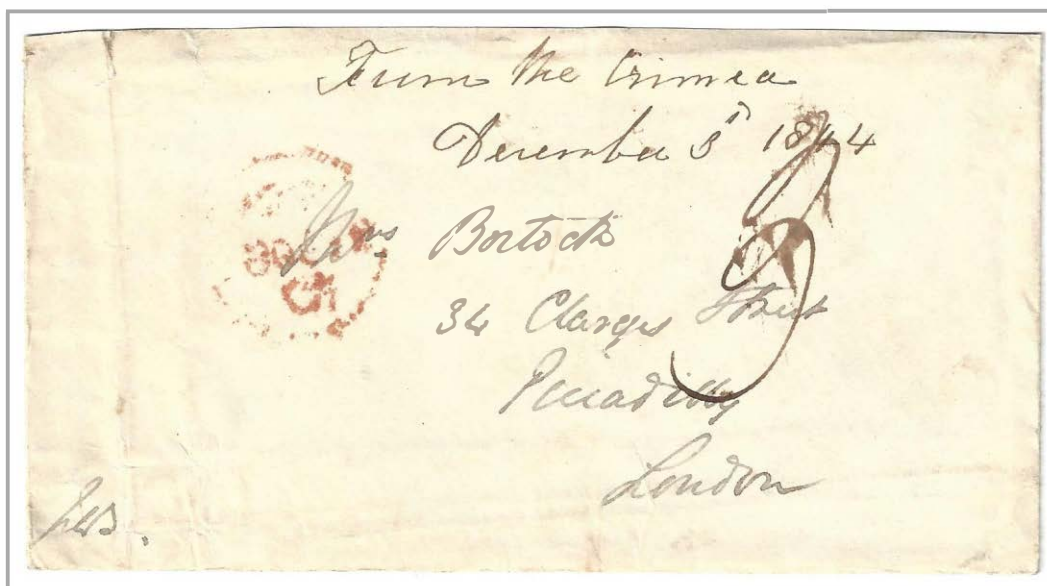
*Camp (Balaklava), December 2, 1854*

*..... the fearful hurricane we experienced on the 14th inst. This was the final breaking up of the fair weather and ushered in a series of storms and incessant rain and cold which we have had ever since. ... the whole camp is knee deep in mud.*

*Bad as is the condition of the officers that of the poor man is infinitely worse. They have much more exposure, much more mud and absolutely in rags. Most of us have two shirts and a couple of pairs of socks but most of the men have neither. I never thought that the human subject could endure so much privation & suffering.*

*The miserable mules & horses are all dead or dying of overwork and starvation. The cavalry is reported unserviceable. and the guns cannot be got up the hill to be placed in the batteries and are abandoned on the way side.*

*You can hardly image the state of filth we exist in. Two other officers and myself have dug a round hole nearly three feet deep over which we have pitched our tent. Round this we have scraped up mud and stones to form a wall.*



2 December 1854 Bostock correspondence letter and cover written after the November storm manuscript 3d due, London arrival backstamp



**From Canada to General Estcourt  
(who was held responsible for the British troop suffering)**



28 May 1855 Quebec, Canada to Adjutant General of British Forces in Crimea, 2sh 3d rate prepaid  
addressed to Major General Estcourt, Chief of Staff to Lord Raglan  
11 June 1855 London Paid transit



James Estcourt, shown in a Fenton image, was a Major General in the Crimean War and a former Member of Parliament. He participated in the suppression of the Lower Canada Rebellion of 1837 and in 1842 served as the British boundary commissioner who determined the international border of New Brunswick and Canada.

In 1854, he was made a brigadier-general and appointed as adjutant-general to Lord Raglan for the expeditionary force to Crimea. He took part in the battles of Alma and Inkerman and was promoted major-general on 12 December 1854.

Estcourt was held by some to be partially responsible for the sufferings of the English army during the first winter in the Crimea; but Lord Raglan defended him. On 24 June 1855, probably within a week of receiving the letter above, Estcourt died of cholera in Crimea.



**Officer's letter highlights importance of the railway**

The communication and supply roads from the harbor of Balaklava to the British encampment at Kadakoi were mostly impassable during the winter of 1854-55. The railway between the harbor and British camp was begun on 8 February, opened on 23 February and the final section was completed in March 1855. In April it was moving 240 tons a day including heavier artillery shells which had hitherto been impossible to bring to the front.

*Camp, Balaclava, March 16, 1855*

*..... The sickness is steadily diminishing - of all the unfortunate men who have been sent down to the different hospitals on the Bosphorus, I can say nothing - we hear dreadful accounts of their miserable & apparently hopeless state. .... most of the wounded men have died of fever or dysentery.*

*Everything else is looking up again. The railway is now complete on to the heights. A stationery engine is already nearby, connected with a long wire rope, to drag up the heavy trains. Sheds and stations are being put up for workshops.*

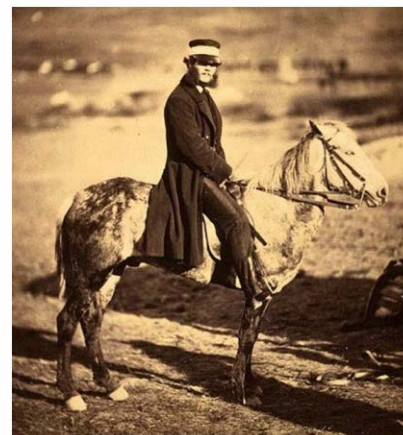
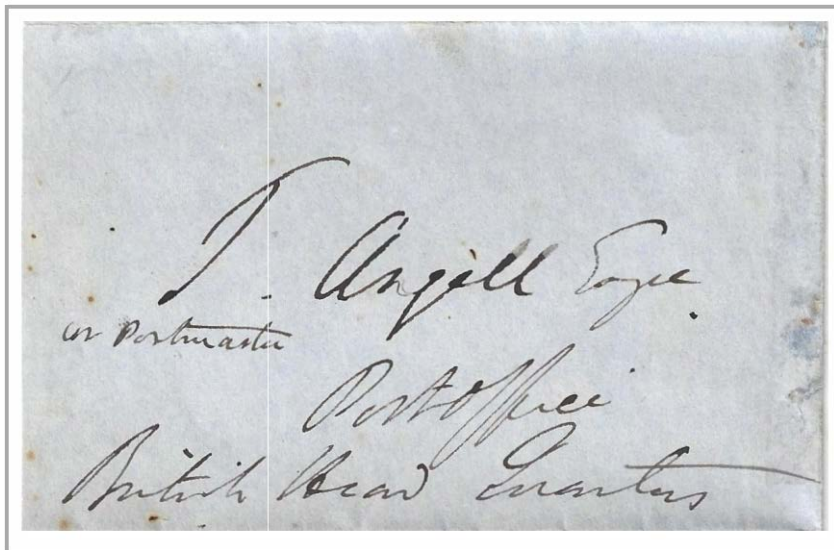
*What a pity it could not have been constructed in November. **Half the losses of the Army would not have taken place.** ...*



16 March 1855 Bostock correspondence letter and cover written after railway began to function  
30 March 1855 Army Post Office green backstamp, manuscript 3d due, London arrival backstamp



Letter sent by Russell to the Assistant Postmaster



T. Angell, Postmaster

(ca. June 18, 1855, in the field) note signed by W.H. Russell addressed to T. Angell, Post Office, British Head Quarters

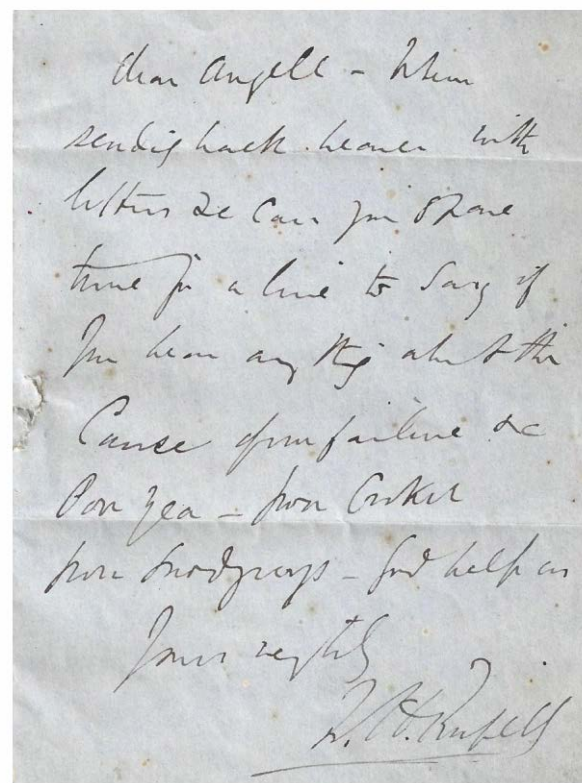
(ca. June 18, 1855)

Dear Angell,

When sending back bearer with letters, etc., can you spare the time for a line to say if you hear anything about the cause of our failure, etc.

Poor Yea - poor Croker  
poor Snodgrass - God help us

Yours respitly,  
W. H. Russell



contents of the note (reduced)

William H. Russell was an Irish reporter for *The Times*. He is considered to be the first modern war correspondent after having spent almost two years covering the Crimean War.

William H. Russell writes an undated note to Assistant Army Postmaster Angell for further information regarding the Allied defeat at the first siege of the Great Redan on 18 June 1855 where 2,000 British soldiers were killed. He specifically laments the loss of (Capt. John) Croker of the 17th Foot and (Capt. Arch.) Snodgrass of the 38th Foot, Aide de Camp to Maj. Genl. Sir John Campbell who was also killed.





Notes sent by Russell to Sanitary Commission Secretary Taylor

Insert right  
W. H. Russell



(Balaklava June 17, 1855, in the field) note signed twice by W.H. Russell plus enclosed second note first addressed to A. Taylor, Sanitary Commission, near Post Office, Balaklava, transcribed left a second note, enclosed, addressed to "Fletcher," is transcribed at right

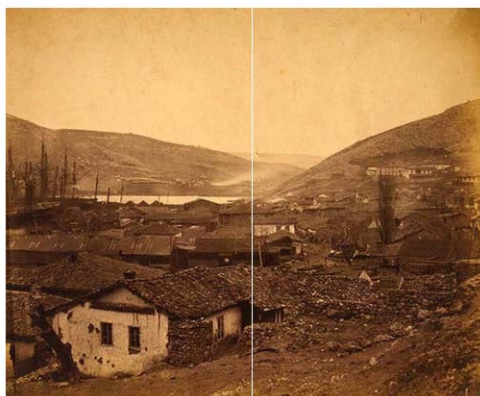
*Sartor Sartorie .. Well this is to signify that I return your horse and mule & that I would be much obliged if you would aid & abet several ladies in getting up to the front on the two ponies I sent down. If not, let Michel return weather-beaten back & bootless home.*

*Stevie is better but nonetheless is ill  
Yours resp'tfly,  
W. H. Russell*

*(P.S.) Send him on board with the reprieve to Fletcher*

*Fletcher - I've got the keys & ring !!! Where's the 'nife - bene - I've sent Michel with 2 ponies to Taylor. Perhaps he'll lend one to Ishell. If so, pray communicate to that party aboard Brusnil. Tell ladies I can't get saddle. Two ponies are ready for them. If the parties won't come, send back Michel with news of their intentions & with the horses.*

*Yours resp'tfly,  
William*



Roger Fenton's view of Balaklava during the war  
the hospital, with the Sanitary Commission, visible on hillside at right



**Images of William H. Russell, war correspondent to *The Times***



carte de visite of W.H. Russell  
circa 1880



Roger Fenton's image of W.H. Russell  
circa 1855

William H. Russell was an Irish reporter for *The Times*. He is considered to be the first modern war correspondent. His dispatches, sent during his almost two years covering the Crimean War, had a profound affect on the way wars were reported.

His dispatches, transmitted via Telegraph, were significant because for the first time the public could read about the reality of warfare in human terms. Shocked and outraged, the public's backlash from his reports led the Government to re-evaluate the treatment of troops. Florence Nightingale later credited her entry into wartime nursing to his reports.

When covering the Siege of Sevastopol he coined the phrase "thin red line" in reference to the British troops at Balaclava, writing that, "[The Russians] dash on towards that thin red streak topped with a line of steel...".

Following Russell's reports of the appalling conditions suffered by the Allied troops conducting the siege of Sebastopol, including an outbreak of cholera, the building of the Grand Crimean Central Railway was commenced. This turned out to be as a major factor leading to the success of the siege.



**Electric Telegraph Company Despatch  
"Sebastopol is in the possession of the allies"**

*The War*  
 E.T.C. Newmarket  
 10-9-55 11:15 pm  
 Lord Panmure has favored the E.T.C. with the following despatch dated  
 Crimea 9<sup>th</sup> Sept  
 Sebastopol is in the possession of the allies the enemy during the night and this morning have evacuated the South side after exploding their magazines and setting fire to the whole of the Town all the men of war were burnt during the night with the exception of the Steamers which are flying about the harbour - The bridge communicating with the North side is broken -  
 The Admiralty have received the following telegraphic despatch from Sir E. Lyons during the night the Russians have sunk all the remainder of the Line of Battleships in Sebastopol Harbour

*The War*

Lord Panmure has favored the E.T.C. with the following Despatch dated Crimea 9th Sept.

Sebastopol is in the possession of the allies. The enemy, during the night and this morning, have evacuated the South side after exploding their magazines and setting fire to the whole of the Town. All the men of war were burnt during the night with the exception of the Steamers which are flying about the harbour. The bridge communicating with the North side is broken.

The Admiralty have received the following Telegraphic despatch from Sir E. Lyons during the night the Russians have sunk all the remainder of the Line of Battleships in Sebastopol Harbour"

Henry Thomas Fisher



10 September 1855, 11:15 p.m. E.T.C. Office, Newmarket, telegraphic transmission from Crimea War News from Henry Thomas Fisher forwarded by Electric Telegraph Co. with delivery envelope the only reported example

In 1854 a military Telegraph Detachment for the Army was established. Men trained by the Electric Telegraph Company constructed and worked the first Field Electric Telegraph with eight field stations and 24 miles of line around Sevastopol. Lines connected the Headquarters with seven outlying stations. The Telegraph Detachment also managed the Crimean shore-end of a temporary 310 mile long submarine cable laid from their headquarters near Balaklava to Varna, Turkish Bulgaria. This connected to Europe via a French Army-built land line to Austrian circuits at Bucharest, and hence to London and Paris in autumn 1855.

**Black Sea Theater**  
**Sevastopol Aftermath**



After the Russians abandoned Sevastopol on 11 September 1855, they withdrew their remaining forces to the interior of Crimean peninsula to the north east of Sevastopol. On 29 January 1856, about the time the cover below would have been received, the Russian guns bombarded occupied Sevastopol in what was the last of the conflict in that region of Crimea.



24 December 1855 (5 January 1856) Moscow to Bakhchysarai, Crimea (central peninsula, NE of Sevastopol)  
20k blue postal stationery entire, small tail, first watermark  
addressed to General Butermain, Central Command of the South Army with note to forward by courier

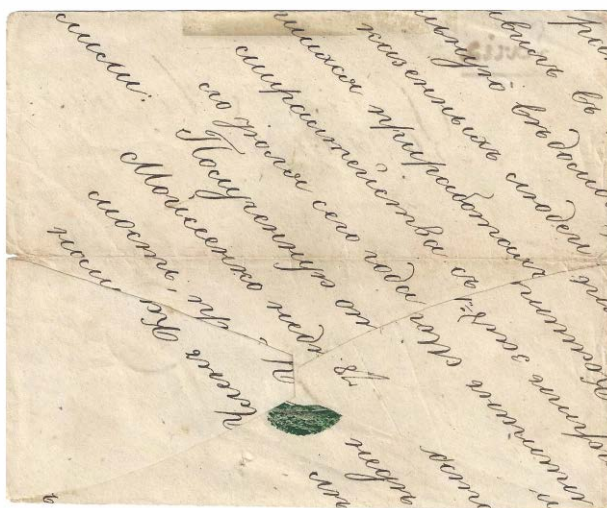
**fewer than five reported examples of this 20k blue entire**  
**the only reported Crimean War related use, ex Fabergé**



Home-Made Cover from Captured Russian letter sheet



24 April 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> M" (at Kamiesh) on home-made cover to France, 30c due cover is home-made from a piece of a letter, in Russian, on thick paper



This cover (reduced image of interior shown above), was home-made from a piece of a Russian letter. The paper possibly a souvenir from a large Russian archive that the French had captured at Sevastopol.



**Soldier's Cover Posted Onboard Mail Steamer**



4 October 1855 "INDUS" name of mail steamer datestamp on cover to France, 30c due blue "Correspondance des armées." blue boxed handstamp probably applied onboard soldier's letter dated from onboard the French mail steamer *Indus* on its way to Constantinople mail transferred at Malta to the Levant Line steamer *Jourdain* returning to Marseilles  
9 October 1855 Marseilles entry and arrival backstamps  
**the only reported example of the "Correspondance des armées." handstamp**



This auxiliary handstamp shown above is in the same shade of bluish green ink that was used to strike "INDUS" name of vessel marking on other covers in this period.



**Mail Steamer *Pericles* to Navy Corvette *La Provencale* at Kinburn**



11 January 1856 dated letter written onboard French mail steamer *Pericles* to Kinburn addressed to Ensign Genoyer on board Corvette *La Provencale*, via Varna to Kinburn prepaid 20c, pen cancel and manuscript *Pericles* instead of usual name of vessel handstamp



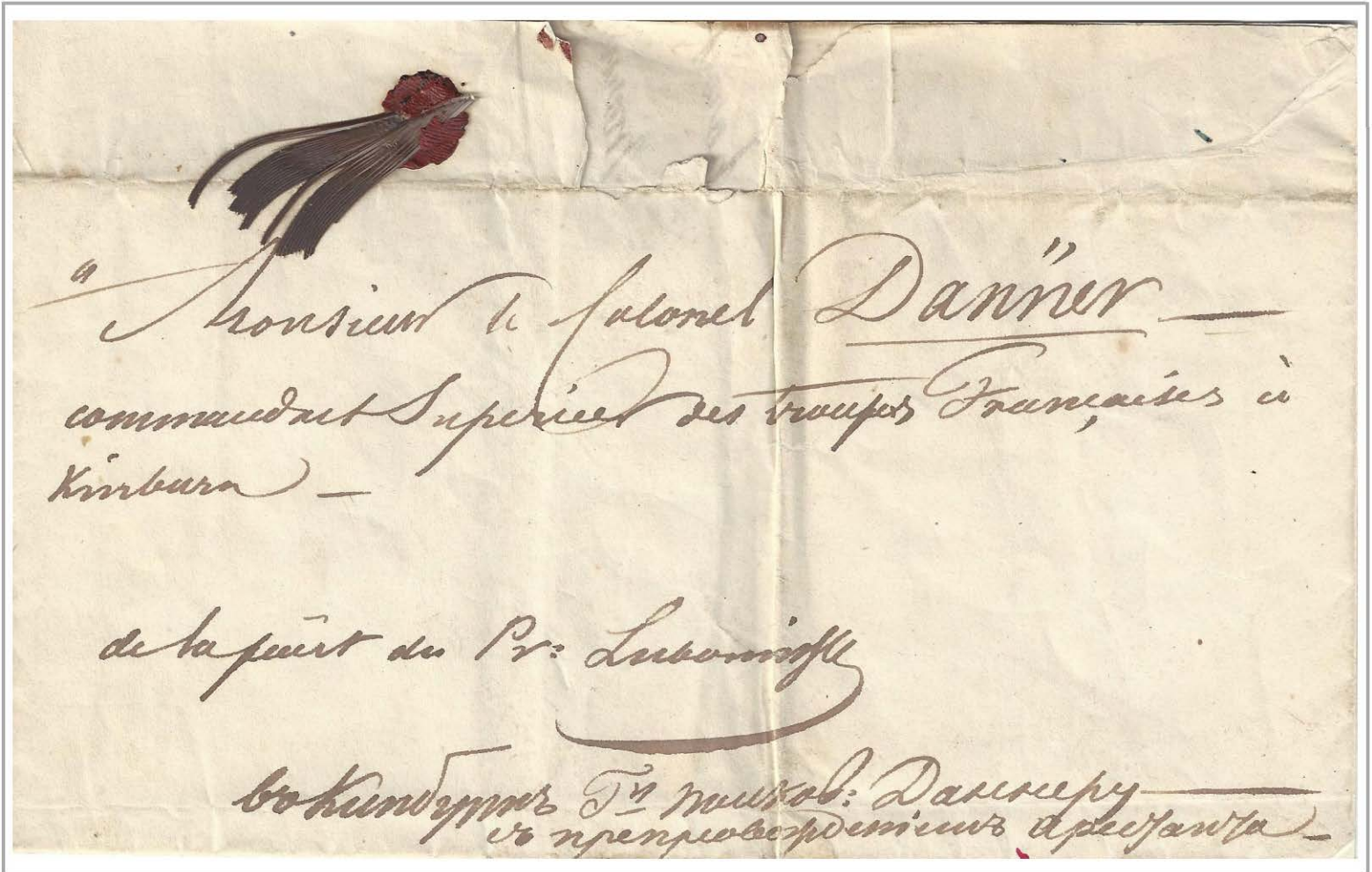
By January 1856 the Russian port of Odessa had been neutralized as a Navy base and Sevastopol was in the hands of the Allies. The fortress of Kinburn, opposite Odessa, had been taken by the Allies on 17 October 1855 and a portion of the French Navy remained there in preparation for another campaign in 1856 if needed.



Through-the-Lines

Feather Letter from Russian Commander to French Commander

Written on the Day News of Peace Arrived



4 April 1856 feather letter from Russian Prince Lubomirski, Russian Headquarters of the Southern Armies to Colonel Danner, Commandant of the French troops at Kinburn carried in haste, black feather requesting carriage night and day, accompanied return of an American

Letter mentions: "One must always make amends in this world - you sent me the other day 2 wayward beef which had straggled to you. So Today, in revenge, I am sending you an animal of a man who presented himself to the post of my Cossacks. Says he is an American. My Lord - he seems to me to have all the talons of a bad marine because he prefers to march."

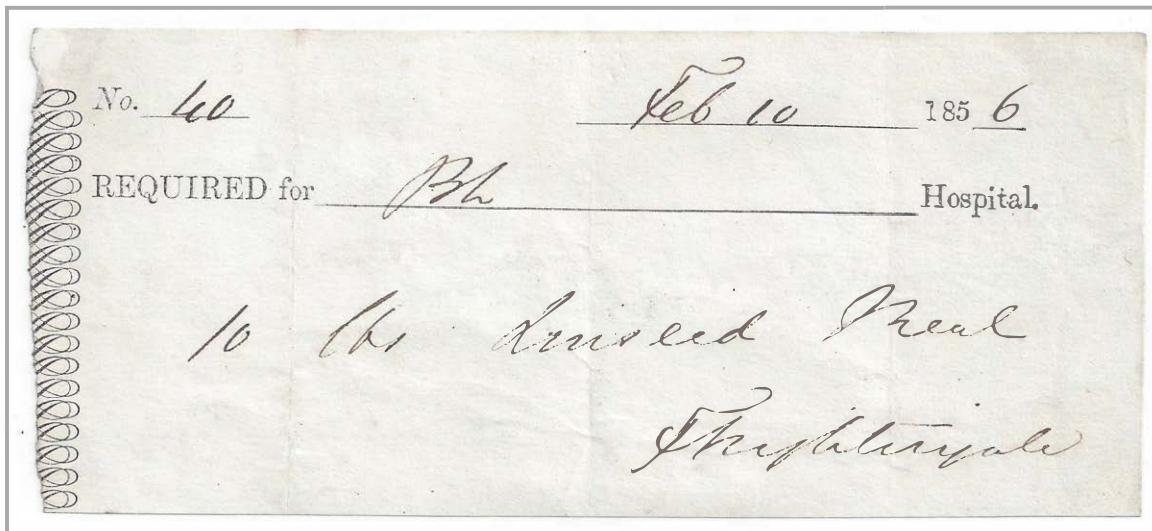
The Peace Treaty was finally signed on March 30 1856 and news arrived at Kinburn on 4 April 1856, the day this letter was written.

According to the published letters of Jean F. J. Herbé (aide to Colonel Danner at Kinburn): "On the 4th of April, a new courier brought us the official news of the conclusion of peace. The Colonel called immediately and ordered me to advance ahead of our lines until I could hand over to the Colonel of the Cossacks Lubomirski the letter which he entrusted to me and by which he announced to him the conclusion of the peace."





**Florence Nightingale Requests Linseed Meal for Hospital**



10 February 1856 "Bh" (Barrack Hospital, Scutari) partially printed for request for 10 lbs. Linseed Meal, signed by Florence Nightingale



Florence Nightingale tending patients at Scutari Barracks Hospital

Florence Nightingale is considered to be the founder of modern professional nursing. During the Crimean War she trained and managed a group of nurses that tended to wounded soldiers. She became known as "The Lady with the Lamp" as she made her rounds of the hospital each night.

Her team found that poor care for wounded soldiers was being delivered by overworked medical staff in the face of official indifference. Medicines were in short supply, hygiene was being neglected, and mass infections were common, many of them fatal. There was no equipment to process food for the patients.



**Inbound Letter to Florence Nightingale from France**



Florence Nightingale receiving the wounded at Scutari Hospital.

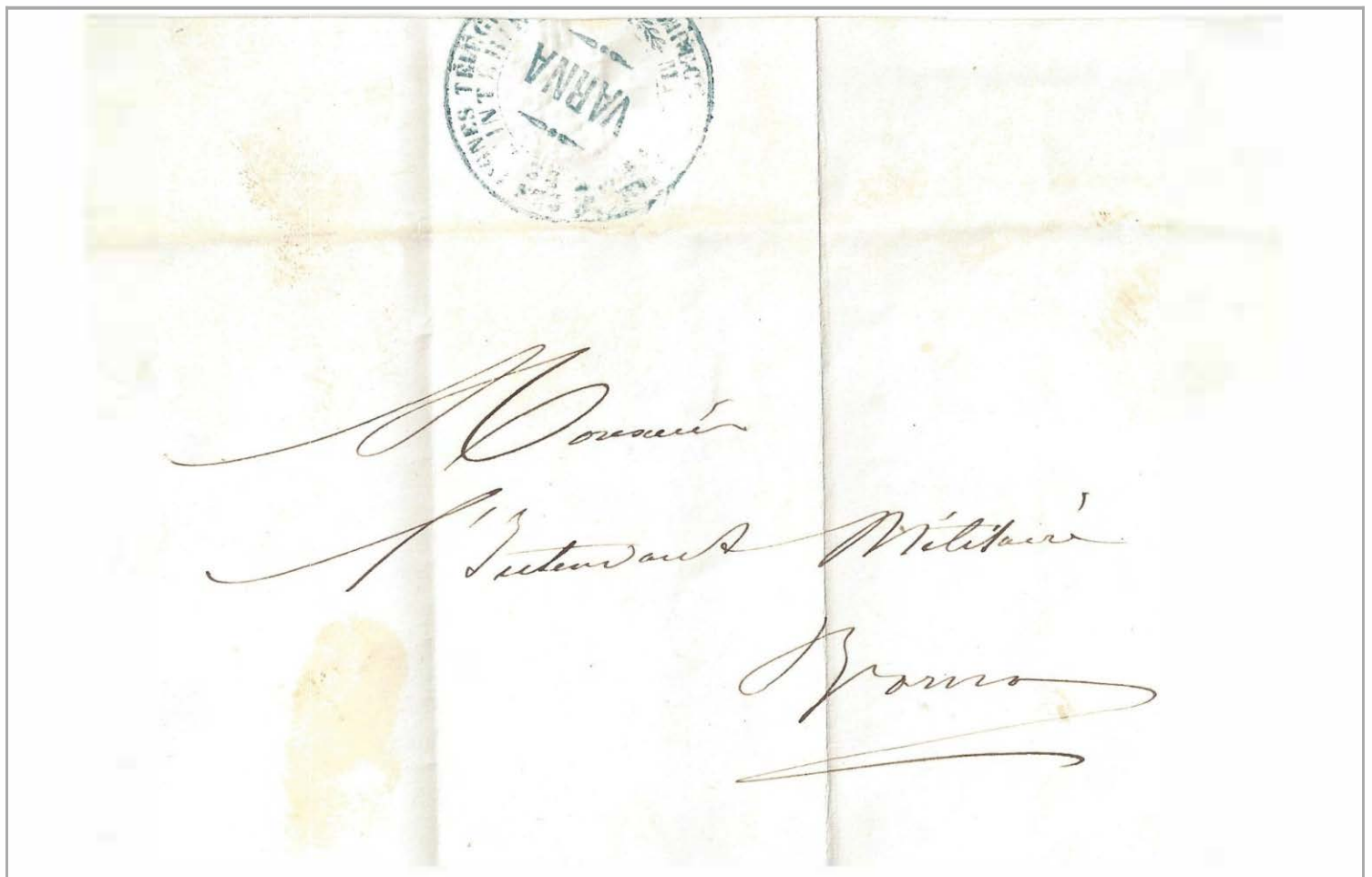


20 November 1854 Flavigny, France letter to Florence Nightingale, Anglo-French Army of the Orient as "Director of service charity for the allied troops"

4 December 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> G" arrival backstamp

lengthy letter (in French from an admirer, F. Jacquot [de Vallois]: as an author of religious works & head master, who has read about her work in the newspapers and claims to share her great interest in schools and good works in general, he invites her to visit when she is in transit back to England one day.

Nightingale arrived at Scutari Barracks Hospital in early November 1854. After Nightingale sent a plea to *The Times* for a government solution to the poor condition of the facilities, the British Government commissioned Isambard Kingdom Brunel to design a prefabricated hospital that could be built in England and shipped to the Dardanelles. The result was Renkioi Hospital, a civilian facility that, under the management of Dr Edmund Alexander Parkes, had a death rate less than 1/10th that of Scutari.



11 March 1856, French Telegraph Line, Varna Bureau transcribed telegraph from Bucharest for local delivery "Director General Lignes Bureau Télégraphiques" imprint stationery, composite image above addressed to the Superintendent of Military the dispatch regards procurement of food supplies blue Director General Telegraph Lines / Ministry of Intelligence / Varna blue cachet struck twice



ARMÉE D'ORIENT.

53

—•••—  
Télégraphie.  
—

Dépêche télégraphique.

Routchouk Le 24 avril 1855

Le vice consul de Prusse à Routchouk  
au Sous-Intendant militaire à Varna

I have found for 25 ducats at Bukarest or Coiarash 2000 cattle of best quality. There are no sheep here, but I hope to announce tomorrow I have made this deal.

The Prussian Vice Consul.

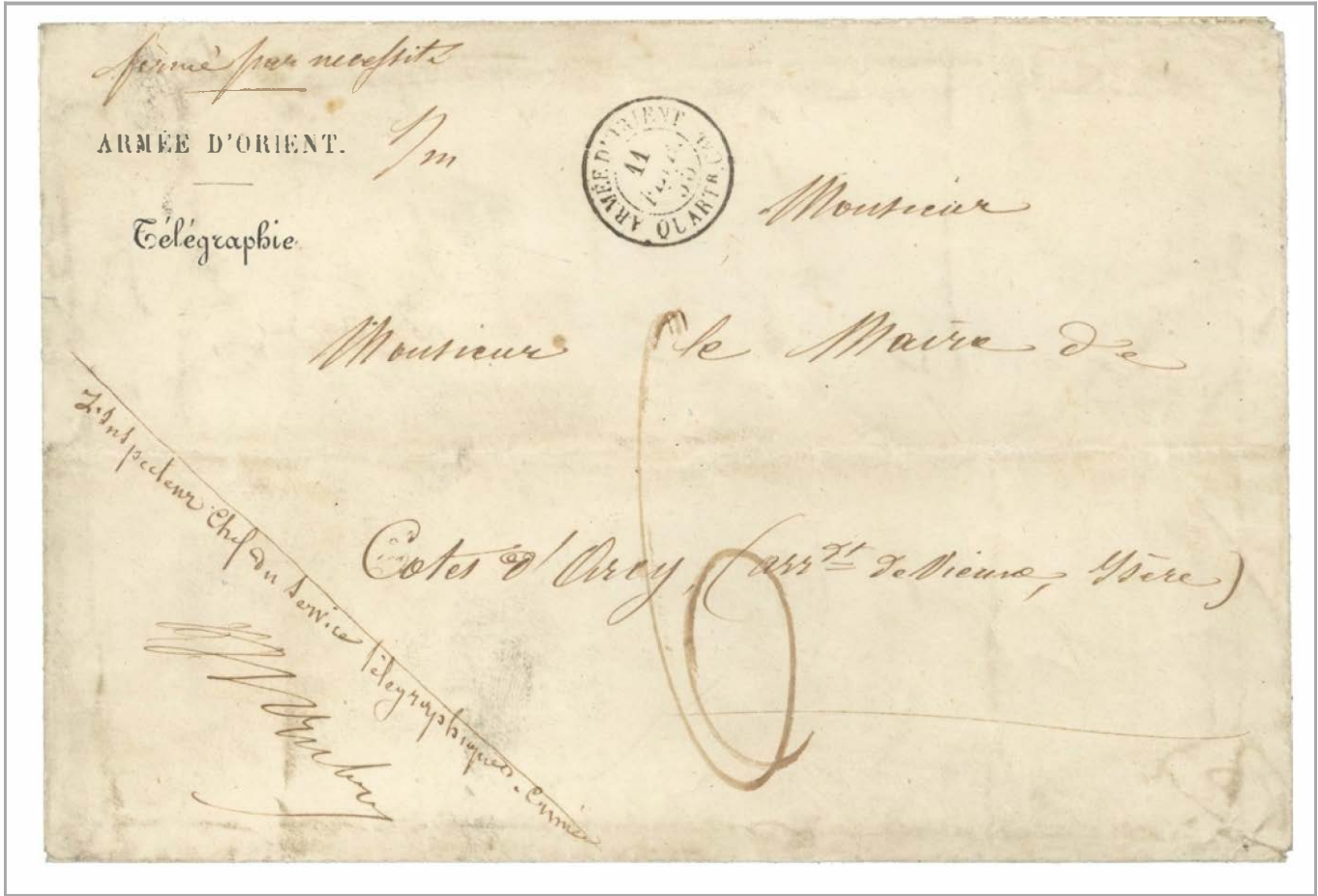
Le Directeur

Bouche & Langis





Armée D'Orient Télégraphie Imprint



11 February 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT QUART<sup>R</sup> GAL" postmark on cover to France, "6" decimes due Télégraphie, Army of the East cover imprint and endorsed by Inspector in Chief of the Telegraph Service blue "Telegraphie Direction" cachet across back flap should have entitled this to free carriage addressed to the Mayor of Cotes d'Arey, Vienne backstamp



At this date the Army Headquarters where this originated was located in Crimea. The official cachet on reverse of the Telegraphie Direction is shown above this.



### Sardinian Marine Minister Orders Sale of Equipage

*The imminent return to the homeland of the Sardinian expeditionary force makes urgent the need to dispose of the equipment that will not be of use in Genova. The Ministerie needs to make an accounting ... Please sell the equipment that is not usable. ... When the funds are (fully) arrived, we will transfer to the King's financial account.*



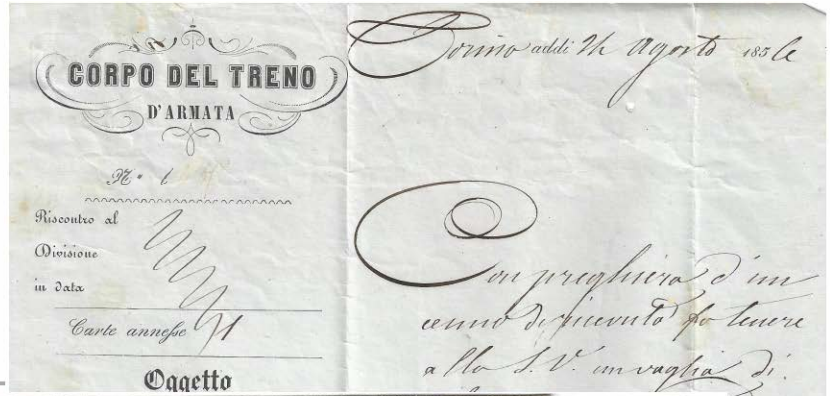
27 April 1856 Turin, letter from Marine Minister to the Sardinian Consul at Constantinople, free mail  
"MINISTERO DI MARINA" cachet at front left and large shield handstamp across flap  
13 May 1856 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA (N.3)" (type 3) arrival backstamp  
(England ratified Peace Treaty on 27 April 1856)

An English report from W.H. Russell, dated 17 May 1856, noted: "The greater part of the Sardinian army has quitted the Crimea and General della Marmora himself will soon embark. A guard of honour with artillery will be held in readiness for the departure of the Sardinian Commander in Chief."



**From Army Railroad Corps**

*After receiving this check please hand it to Francesco Cipolla as a gift from the Kingdom to the soldiers returning from the Crimea.*



25 August 1856 Turin, letter from Military Railroad Corps at Turin to the Corp Commander at Albenga cachet at top center and larger shield handstamp across flap, treated as free mail  
Genova transit and Albegna arrival backstamps



Fenton's view of rails and railbed at Balaclava.

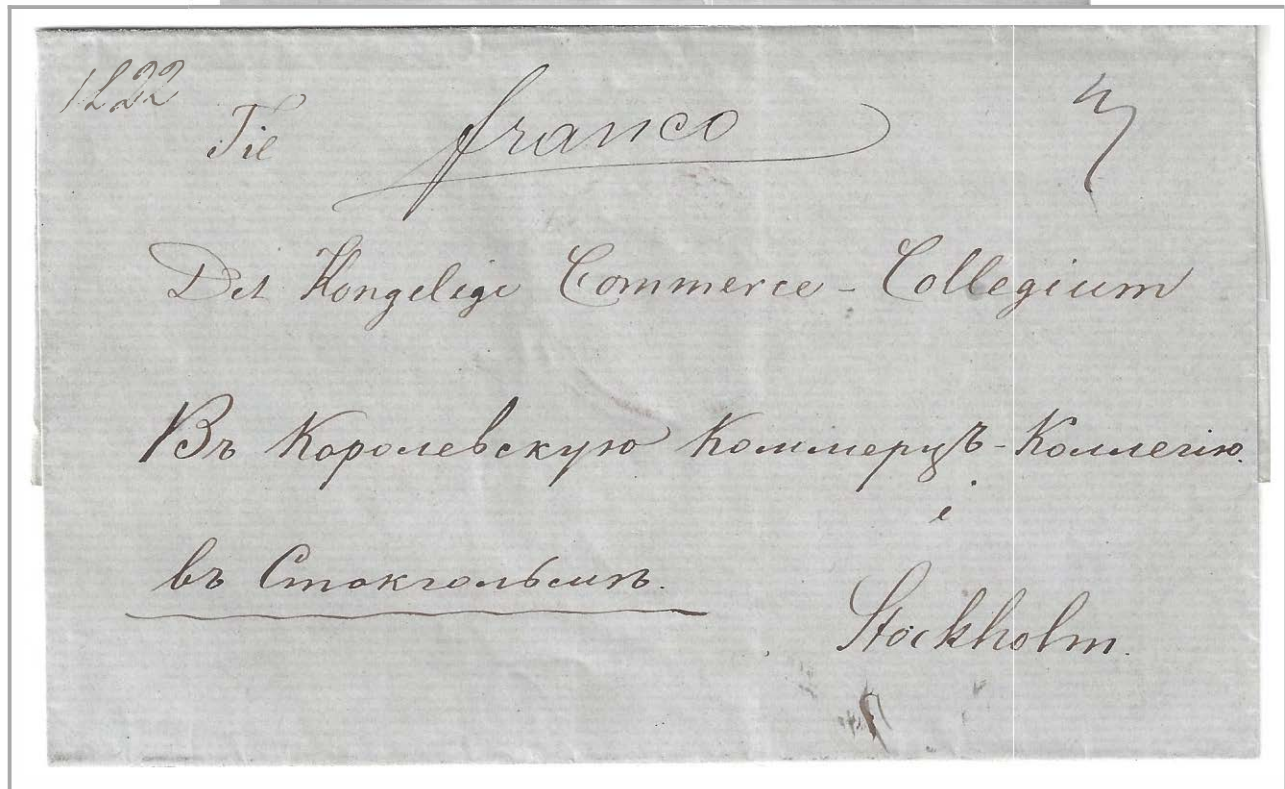
One of the he first uses of a military railway was the Grand Central Crimean Railway. The intent was to utilize trains to supply the British, French and Sardinian allies by rail from Balaclava harbor. The lines, being built towards the Sardinian and French headquarters were well advanced in 1855. Following the completion of the Sardinian-built branch to Kamara, the railway included 14 miles miles of mainline track plus a few miles of sidings and loops.

## Minor Theaters - White Sea

### The White Sea Blockade



In 1854 the British sent three ships under Captain Ommaney to the White Sea to enforce a partial blockade. On 23 July 1854 a blockade was declared to be in effect and he was then joined there by two French vessels. In 1854 the Allies bombed a monastery and destroyed a fishing village while avoiding the Russian force stationed at Archangel. In 1855, with a total of six ships, a blockade was declared on 14 June. On 9 October 1855 both squadrons departed for home.



8 September 1854 (20 September 1854) Archangel, Russia postmark on reverse (above at left)  
letter to the Royal Trade Department at Stockholm, Sweden, prepaid  
“KONGL SVENSKA OCH (NORSKA) CONSULATET I ARCHANGELSK” red wax seal of the  
Swedish & Norwegian Consulate at Archangel across back flap (shown reduced above)|  
8 October 1854 Haparanda transit backstamp (above at right)

a letter sent in duplicate includes: ... *in case my letter of 31st August this year by schooner Sleipner has not yet been received, it contained information that the Chiefs of the Allied Blockade in the White Sea have given oral permission to let Norwegian ships up to 100 tons burden, on their own risk to pass ballasted to the towns by the mentioned Sea and from there to transport flour and grain to the Norwegian market.*



## Minor Theaters - Greece



### Occupied Greece - The Epirus Revolt

In 1853, with Britain and France preparing to go to war with Russia, the Greeks decided to support Russia against the Ottomans. In 1854, the Greeks attempted to overrun the Turkish provinces of Thessaly and Epirus.

The Greek forces entered Epirus in January 1854 and inflicted an initial defeat upon the Turks at Peta. However, they made no gains in Thessaly. In March 1854 Turkey sent an ultimatum to Greece and began expelling Greeks from Smyrna and Constantinople in reprisal for the Greek attack. Then, in May 1854, Britain and France, by then at war with Russia and allies of Turkey, landed troops at Piraeus to enforce Greek neutrality. Their occupation force remained there until February 1857.



12 October 1854 "BRIGADE FRANCAIS GRECE" (Piraeus, Greece) postmark on cover to Sedan, France prepaid 20c adhesive with "BFG" cancel, Sedan arrival backstamp  
**three reported examples of this postmark and cancel**



The French Levant Line of mail packets operated from Marseille, via Malta and either Smyrna or Piraeus, to Constantinople and back during the entire period of the Crimean War. The Turkish provinces of Epirus and Thessaly are labeled in red on the map above. The importance of Piraeus, the port city for Athens, is apparent.



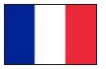
Letter from a French Marine at Piraeus



14 July 1855 "ESCADRE DE LA MÉDITERRANÉE" postmark on letter to Sens Sur-Yonne, France soldier's letter datelined Piraeus, unpaid military rate with 30 centimes due handstamp, arrival backstamp

*Amable Vivard*  
*Sergent à la 17<sup>e</sup> Compagnie Du*  
*3<sup>e</sup> Régiment d'Inf<sup>anterie</sup> de Marine*  
*au Pirée, (Grèce)*

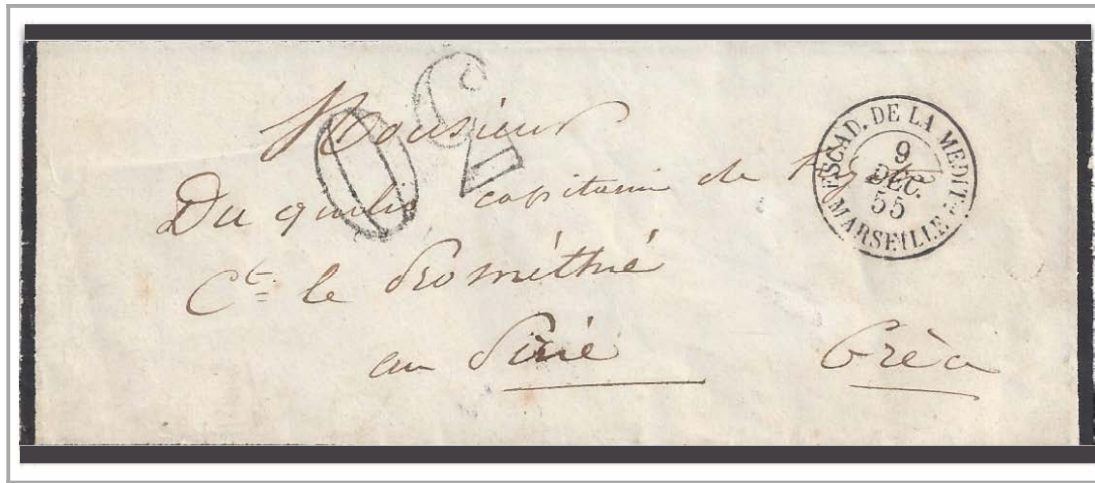
closing signature of the letter  
"Sergeant in the 17th Company of the 3rd Regiment of Marine Infantry at Piraeus, Greece"



Covers to French Navy Frigates at Piraeus



origin marking applied at the French Naval Base at Marseille



9 December 1855 "ESCAD. DE LA MEDIT<sup>EE</sup> MARSEILLE" postmark on cover to Greece, 30 centimes due mourning cover addressed to Captain of the Frigate *Ct Le Promethe* at Piraeus, Greece



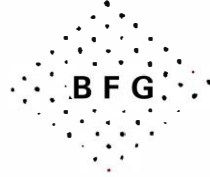
9 January 1855 Montpellier, France to a Navy Ensign at Piraeus, occupied Greece, prepaid 20c addressed to Ensign Genoyer on board the French Frigate *Provencale*, Squadron of the Levant, Piraeus  
10 January 1855 Marseille transit backstamp

## Minor Theaters - Greece

### Occupied Greece - The Epirus Revolt



#### Cover from British Soldier, by French Military Mails, to England



November 1855 "BRIGADE FRANCAISE GRECE" (Piraeus, Greece) postmark on cover to Canterbury, England from a British soldier, prepaid with France 20c adhesive with "BFG" cancel and endorsed via Marseille

22 November 1855 Paris transit backstamp, boxed Insufficiently Paid marking

28 November 1855 London transit backstamp and Canterbury arrival backstamp, 10 pence due

**the latest of three reported uses of the markings**

**the only reported example from British forces in Greece**

On 9 June 1854 a British contingent of 1,000 men disembarked at Piraeus. These troops, along with the French contingent, remained at Piraeus throughout the war until well after the peace was concluded on 30 March 1856. In addition to protecting supply lines their presence allowed them to exert influence on the Greek government to enforce the payment of past debts. The forces finally left Greece in February 1857 after a commission had been set up to deal with the finances.

## Minor Theaters - Pacific Ocean



### Siege of Petropavlovsk

The Pacific Ocean proved to be a very minor theater of the Crimean War as far as actual military confrontation is concerned.

When war broke out in May 1854 France and England saw an opportunity to halt the advance of Russian influence in Asia and the Far East. Ships of both the British Pacific fleet, under Rear Admiral David Price, and the French Pacific fleet under Rear Admiral Auguste Febvrier Despointes, were at anchor in Callao, Peru when news of war was received in May 1854. The Allied squadron concentrated their forces at Honolulu before setting sail for the only major engagement in the Pacific Theater, the siege of Petropavlovsk.

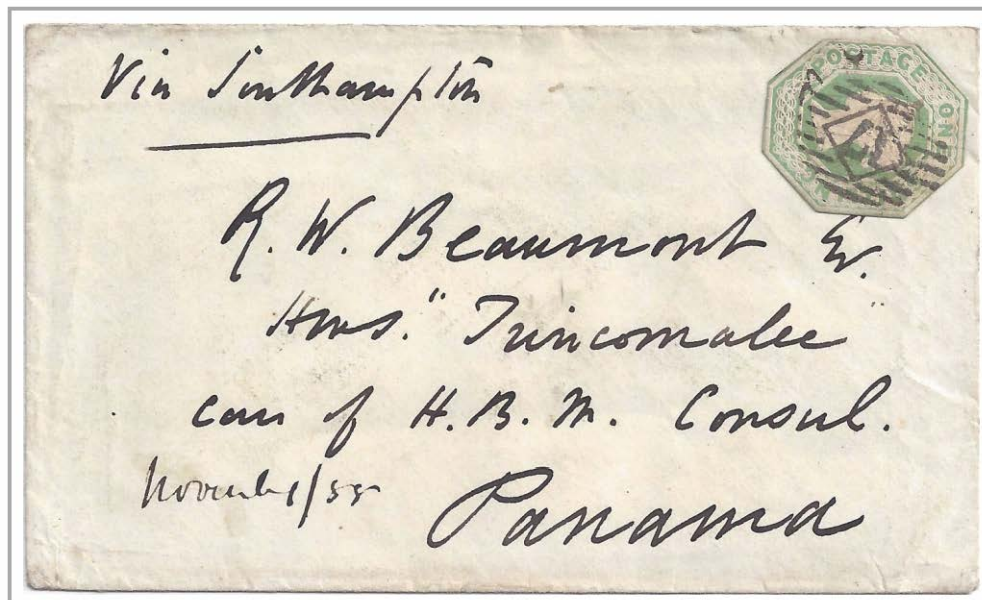
British Navy: David Price (committed suicide)  
Frederick Nicholson



French Navy: Auguste-Febvrier Despointes



Russian Navy: Yevfimy Putyatin



1 November 1855 London, England to H.M.S. *Trincomalee* at Panama, prepaid civilian 1 sh. rate

Two frigates, the 24-gun HMS *Trincomalee* and the HMS *Amphritite*, as well as the French corvette *Artemise* were detached from the allied fleet to cruise off the California coast to defend the French and British trade against possible interference from the Russian frigate *Dwina*.

## Minor Theaters - Pacific Ocean



### Siege of Petropavlovsk

On 30 August, 1854 as an Allied land assault to take the batteries protecting Petropavlovsk commenced, Admiral Price committed suicide in his cabin. With the chain of command in doubt Captain Nicholson of the *Pique* ordered a delay of 24 hours. The related assaults over the next two days ended in defeat for the allies who suffered over 200 casualties.

After the failed assault, the allied fleet departed on 28 September 1854. In April 1855, aware of their inability to repel another attack, the Petropavlovsk garrison evacuated.



1 December 1854 Oxford, England to H.M.S. *Pique*, Valparaiso, Chile, prepaid civilian 2sh. rate  
"14 January 1855 received at San Francisco" docket (the *Pique* had arrived from Honolulu on 4 January)

The HMS *Pique* participated in the attack on Petropavlovsk on August 31, 1854. After the allied fleet was repulsed, most of the British fleet wintered in Vancouver, B.C. and the French to San Francisco.



to the French Flagship *La Porte* in Pacific Ocean

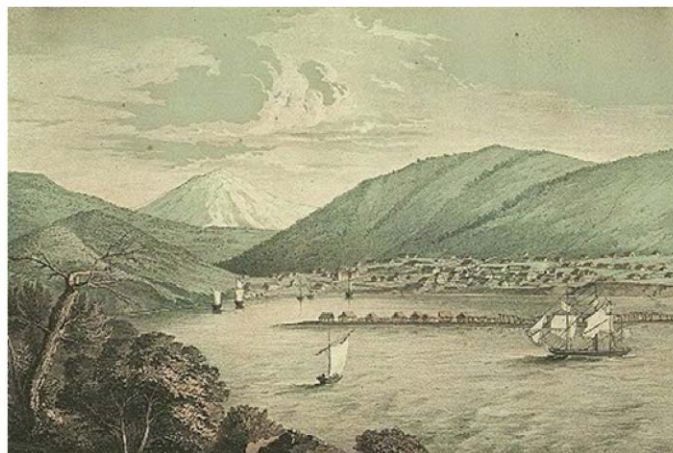
Six navy vessels, with a total of 200 guns, the British *President*, *Pique* and steamer *Virago*, as well as the French frigate *Forte* (60 guns), corvette *Eurydice* (30 guns) and aviso *Obligado* (14 guns) set out from Callao, Peru with a crew of roughly 1,700 men.

After two days of failed attempts to take the fort at Petropavlosk, the Allied forces withdrew. The Frigate *Forte* had 11 killed or missing, 18 dangerously wounded and 10 slightly wounded (*Forte* was the only ship to take casualties in the first bombardment), the *Eurydice*: 8 killed or missing, 11 dangerously wounded and 10 slightly wounded, and the *Obligado*: 7 killed or missing, 10 dangerously wounded and 18 slightly wounded. The British suffered very similar casualty totals.



3 May 1855 La Caune, France letter to an Ensign onboard the French Frigate *la Forte* at Callao, Peru "via Panama" endorsement, prepaid with boxed "PD" and "PP" handstamps, manuscript 1 fr 60c rate on back

two reported covers to the French Fleet in the Pacific



1856 view of Petropavlosk



Cover to Frigate *La Sybille*



31 January 1855 Lyon, France to Frigate *La Sybille* at Singapore, off Sumatra, prepaid 20c, "PD" handstamp  
11 July 1855 St. Denis, Ile Reunion backstamp (the home base of the frigate), redirected to Hong Kong  
10 August 1855 Hong Kong arrival backstamp and manuscript "4" pence due  
15 September 1855 pencil docket as received at Shanghai on reverse



On 7 April 1855 the *La Sybille* departed Reunion with two other vessels on an expedition to the Amur River and Kamchatka Peninsula. After a stop at Macau, and in company with other ships of the allied squadron, she reached the Kamchatka Peninsula by the end of May. Upon arrival, the expedition found that the Russians had deserted Petropavlovsk and partially destroyed the town. *La Sybille* cruised until June when she returned to Hong Kong.

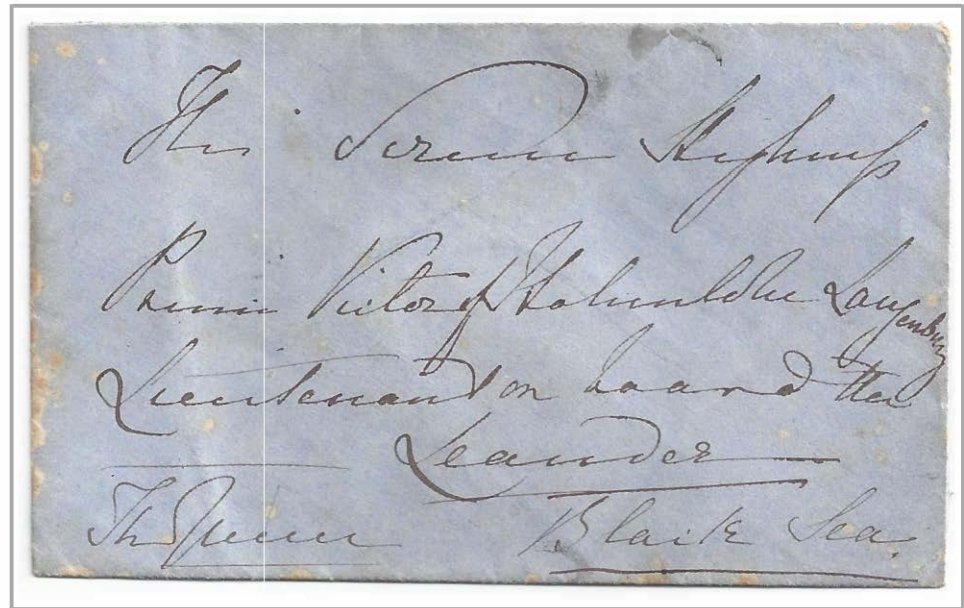




Cover franked "The Queen"



*The Queen*



(ca. November 1855) "The Queen" franked cover, addressed and franked by Queen Victoria to her Nephew "His Serene Highness Prince Victor of Hohenlohe, Lieutenant on board the *Leander*, Black Sea" Queen Victoria's red wax seal on reverse, probably transmitted under cover in diplomatic bag **the only reported example**



Prince Victor of Hohenlohe was the son of Queen Victoria's half-sister. He saw a good deal of action in the Crimea and is known to have been on HMS *Leander* in November 1855. He had been slightly wounded in action in 1854. (colored miniature of Prince Victor from the Queen's collection)

# British Military Mail

## Overview / Army Post Office at Constantinople



The British used four Field Post Offices during the war. The first office, which used a rimless style postmark, was established at Varna on 20 June 1854 and was moved to Balaklava on 30 September 1854. It used a rimless postmark with "Post-Office British-Army" text. Additional Army post offices were established at Constantinople on 20 June 1854 (the same rimless marking but with code letter "A" below date), Balaklava on 30 September 1854 (same but with code letter "B") and at the hospital at Scutari in January 1855 (same but reversed code letter "C").

Edward Smith, of the Post Office Inland Letter Section, was appointed as the Army Postmaster, and left London in June 1854 with an Assistant Army Postmaster, Thomas Angell. On their arrival they set up a Base Army Post Office in Constantinople. Mail to the forces was distributed from that office.

**Postage Rates** - From the middle of May 1854 most mail to and from the forces East was carried by French packets at the rate of three pence for each quarter ounce. Although prepayment was required, this was not enforced prior to November 1854. Letters could also be carried by British naval vessels as opportunity offered at the rate of one pence but service was not predictable between Malta and England.



British Army Post Office at Constantinople (from *Illustrated London News*)



20 March 1855 "POST-OFFICE / BRITISH ARMY" green datestamp, code "A" backstamp, on cover to London endorsed from HMS *Sidon*, at Kayateh Bay, strip of three 1d with barred "star/crown/star" cancels (code "A" postmark was used at Constantinople from December 1854 until June 1855) (the cancel was "proofed" on 27 May 1854 and is known used from July 1854 until July 1855)

**British Military Mail**  
**Mail to the Forces**



**Postage Rates** - Prior to the route and 3d concession rates being agreed with the French, in effect from 22 May 1854, mail to Naval officers was subject to Civilian postal rates if sent by mail packets.



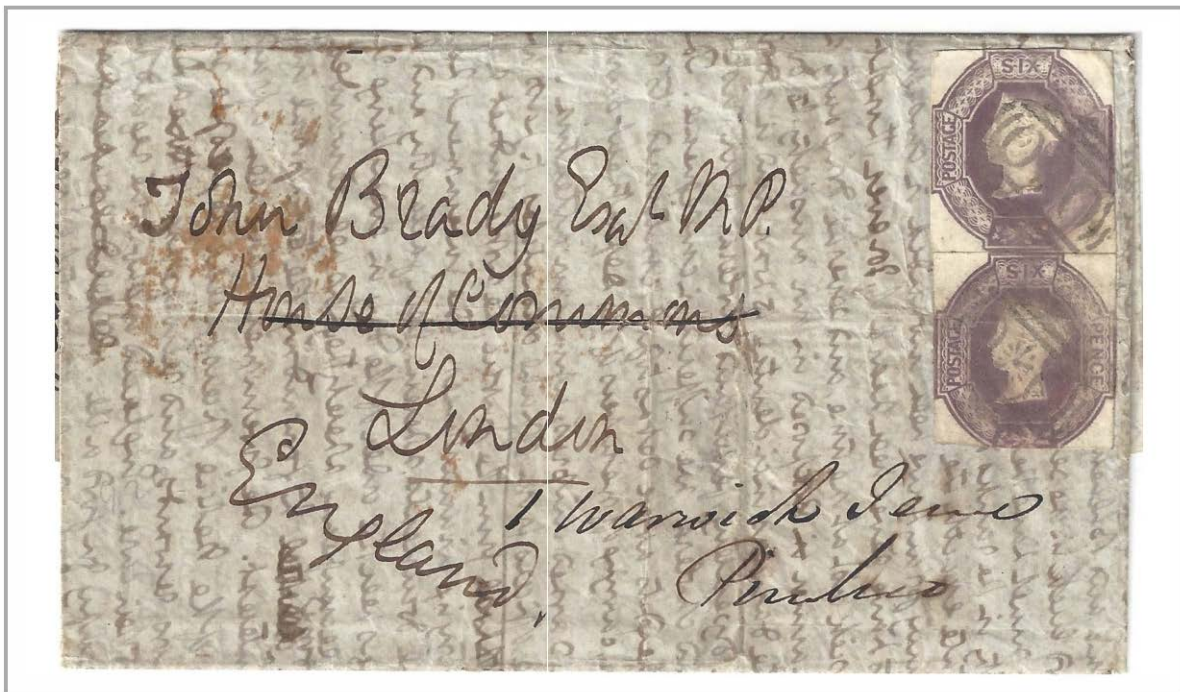
17 April 1854 London to Captain Frere (later Sir Bartle Frere) on HMS *Bellerophon* at Constantinople endorsed "By French Packet, under 1/4 ounce, Via Marseilles" and subject to civilian rate postage prepaid 1/3d rate with 1s embossed plus 1d and 2d imperforates, the civilian mail rate 21 April carried by French Levant Line steamer *Egyptus* from Marseille, arrived Constantinople 5 May



1855 pair of covers, from Brighton and from London, to a Lt. Colonel in the Coldstream Guards, Crimea by French mails, both uniform 3d rate for mail to soldiers and officers in effect after 22 May 1854 two reported uses of 1d stationery envelope in combination for 3d rate to Crimea



10 April 1855 "POST-OFFICE / BRITISH ARMY" red backstamp, code "A" of Constantinople, on cover to **Malta** partially prepaid with 2d and 1d stamps, rated 2d due upon arrival, star and cyphers cancel the datestamp with code "A" in red is known used at Constantinople between March 1855 to July 1856.



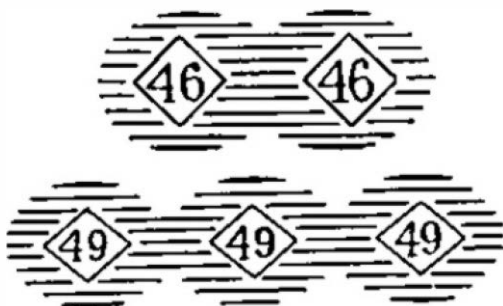
15 February 1856 Hyder Pasha Barracks, Scutari dateline on multi-page letter to a Member of Parliament, London prepaid 12d for quadruple quarter ounce rate, pair 6d embossed stamps, star and cyphers cancels letter from a career Army Surgeon at the hospital complains of the lack of recognition and conditions of service



The "POST-OFFICE / BRITISH ARMY" datestamp with code "B" is known used from Balaklava from 30 September 1854 until August 1856.



2 June 1855 "POST-OFFICE / BRITISH ARMY" green datestamp with "B" code (used at Balaklava) double rate cover to Ireland, prepaid with 1d block of six, endorsed from a member of the 77th Regiment London office triple "49" cancels applied in transit



Mail from Army Post Offices was often transmitted with the stamps still uncanceled. The stamps were canceled in London with barred numeral obliterations as shown left as well as single barred numeral. Numerals listed below are known on mail from the British Army Post Offices during the war.

single numerals reported: 1-37,3-44, 52-75

double numerals reported: 45,46 and 47

triple numerals: 48 and 49



**Army Postmaster imprint stationery**



20 October 1855 "Postmaster to the Forces." imprint envelope with red embossed seal (shown right) used to the General Post Office London with green "BRITISH ARMY POST OFFICE B" backstamp franked with strip 1d, barred numeral "49" London office cancels applied on arrival (1 November) believed to be addressed in the hand of Assistant Postmaster Thomas Angell



Roger Fenton's view of Assistant Postmaster Thomas Angell posed in front of door to the field post office at Balaklava

Edward Smith, of the Post Office Inland Letter Section, was appointed as the Army Postmaster, and left London in June 1854 with an Assistant Army Postmaster, Thomas Angell. On their arrival they set up a Base Army Post Office in Constantinople. In July 1854 the Assistant Army Postmaster, Thomas Angell set up an Army Post Office in Varna in support of the Army Headquarters.

**British Military Mail**  
**Army Post Office at Scutari Barracks**



The Army Post Office at Scutari Barracks, which served the large hospital there, was established in January 1855 and remained in service until August 1856. The office was responsible for serving the large number of patients and hospital staff.



The "POST-OFFICE / BRITISH ARMY" datestamp with reversed "C" code is known used from January 1855 until 1856.



30 April 1855 "POST-OFFICE / BRITISH ARMY" green datestamp, reverse "C" code backstamp, letter to Kent prepaid 3d, star and cyphers cancels, letter dated from Scutari Barracks Hospital (the cancel was "proofed" in March 1855 and is known used from 24 March 1855 until July 1856)

Officer's letter includes: *The Cholera has broken out in the French camp at Constantinople and is so very bad that they allow nobody to approach the camp.*



### Registered Mail

**Registered Postage Rate** - Registered mail was subject to a six pence charge in addition to the postage. Postage on the cover below represents the postage for a letter weighing between three-fourths and one ounce (quadruple rate) plus the six pence fee.



25 June 1855 "POST-OFFICE / BRITISH ARMY" green datestamp with reverse "C" code (used at Scutari) registered cover to England, prepaid with 1d block of twelve and two strips (6d registry plus 12d postage) star and cyphers cancels, London transit and green Market-Deeping arrival postmarks, small repair at fold





War Office imprint stationery



24 December 1855 London Crown Paid red datestamp on O.H.M.S. "WAR OFFICE" imprint envelope  
War Office "frank" handstamp, imprint includes printed "British Army. CRIMEA." at foot  
addressed to Lieut. Colonel Cocks of the Coldstream Guards



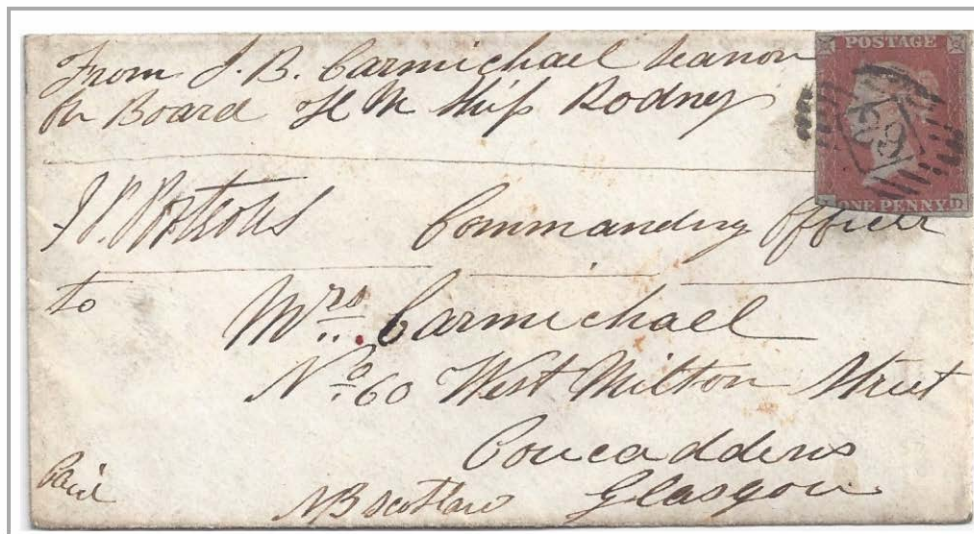
12 July 1855 London Paid yellow datestamp on O.H.M.S. "WAR OFFICE" imprint envelope  
War Office "frank" handstamp, imprint includes printed "British Army. CRIMEA." at foot  
addressed to Lieut. Dickson, 82nd Regiment

During the Crimean War, Lord Panmure (Fox Maule Ramsey) served War Office as Secretary for War.

**British Military Mail**  
**Mail from Black Sea Fleet**



**Postage Rates** - Prior to the route and concession rates being agreed with the French, in effect from 22 May 1854, seamen were able to send and receive mail by British Packets or Naval vessels for one pence if prepaid, two pence if sent unpaid. If sent by private ship, an extra two pence was required for the master's gratuity. The ship fee could be prepaid or payable upon receipt by recipient.



November 1853 from HMS *Rodney*, at the Bosphorus, Carmichael correspondence cover to Glasgow endorsed by Lieut. Francis P. Porteous as Commanding Officer, prepaid with 1d imperforate  
6 December 1853 London transit and orange Glasgow arrival backstamps

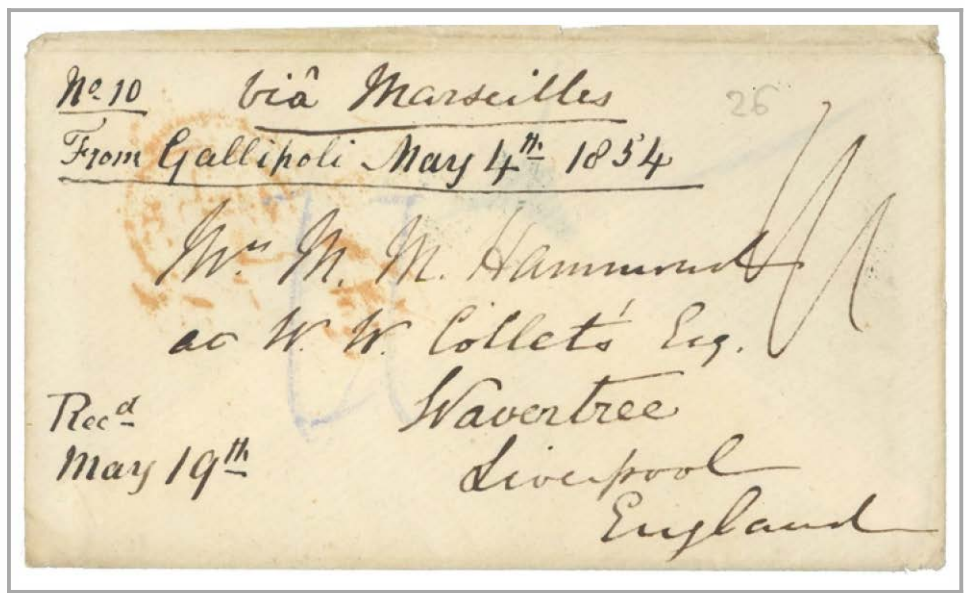


23 June 1853 from HMS *Rodney*, at the Bosphorus, Carmichael correspondence cover to Glasgow endorsed by Lieut. G. Walker as Commanding Officer, prepaid with 1d imperforate, "2" (d) ship fee due  
27 July 1853 Liverpool Ship green entry and orange Glasgow arrival backstamps

**British Military Mail**  
**Via Malta Mail Route**



During 1854 and rarely in 1855, in-transit mail from British Army and Navy forces in the Black Sea Theater were sorted and processed at Valletta, Malta.



4 May 1854 letter dated at Gallipoli, by British vessels, via Malta, to England  
11 May 1854 Malta split ring transit backstamp, manuscript 11d due civilian rate for Malta to England  
London transit and 18 May 1854 Liverpool green arrival backstamps

soldier's letter includes: ... *The French Mails leave regularly each week... Lord Raglan arrived on Friday (28th) & after an interview with Gen. Brown, went on the same evening to Constantinople. We have been informed today that we are to go on to Constantinople (or rather Scutari) in a few days when the 1st & 38th Regts arrive here.*



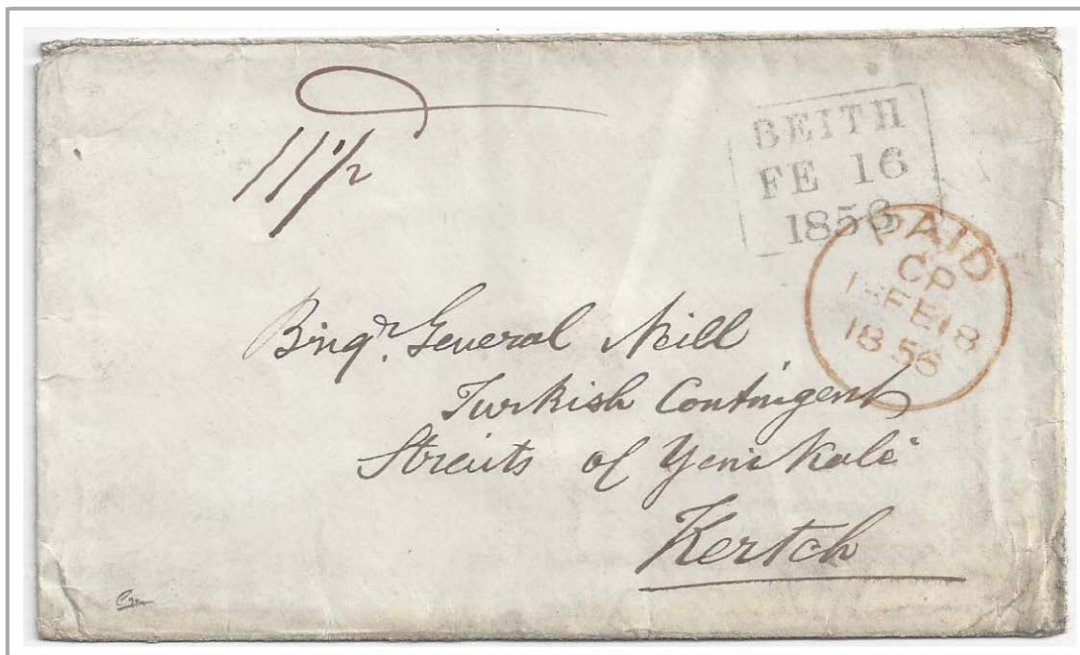
24 January 1855 transit backstamp on "Black Sea Fleet Letter, Via Marseilles" endorsed cover to England  
taxed at 9d, prepaid 3d with brush cancel applied at Malta, plus a further "6" (d) due  
1 February 1855 Portsmouth green arrival backstamps



### The Turkish Contingent

The Turkish Contingent was an auxiliary force of irregulars supported by the English government. Their only active service was the garrisoning of Kertch. On 24 May 1855 the Allied forces had attacked the Straits of Kerch leading into the Sea of Azov. The assault destroyed the Russian base at Kertch and the nearby fort at Yeni Kale was abandoned the same day, severing Russian communications east of the Crimea.

(from Tyrell's "The History of the War With Russia"): *The Anglo-Turkish contingent, or irregular Turkish troops, in the British service, were also stationed there (Kertch) to winter. Lord Raglan looked with distaste on the formation of this body. His successor, also, was hostile to it, and undecided as to the mode in which it should be employed. After many proposals had been made and disapproved of, as to its destination, it was eventually sent to Kertch. The command of it was given to officers who had served in our Indian army, and were consequently accustomed to deal with Asiatic troops. The men were difficult to manage; for they were but semi-savages: but many exaggerated stories were told of their misbehavior and ferocity.*



16 February 1856 Beith, Scotland to Brig. Genl. J.G.S. Neill, Turkish Contingent, Straits of Yeni Kale, Kertch manuscript 11½d civilian due rate, via Belgium, to Russia but marked as paid in London  
18 February 1856 London Paid transit, probably carried by a British Naval vessel

James George Smith Neill was a Scottish military officer of the East India Company. In June 1854 he was appointed second-in-command to Sir Robert Vivian to organize the Turkish contingent for the Crimean War. Later he served during the Indian rebellion of 1857 and was killed leading his troops at Luchnow, India.



## The Turkish Contingent



9 August 1855 Birmingham to Assistant Surgeon George Yates, Turkish Contingent  
British Army Post Office at Constantinople, prepaid at the 3d concession rate



Turkish Contingent at Kertch (from *Illustrated London News*)

The Turkish Contingent was an auxiliary force of irregulars supported by the English government. It consisted of irregular cavalry, the Bashi-Bazouk mercenaries, commanded by General Beatson, as well as a regular arm of infantry and cavalry under the command of Lieut. General Vivian.

It was formed early in 1855 with, British and Indian Army officers as well as Turkish. By July 1855 there were in the regular army portion of the force 2,000 cavalry and 10,000 infantry. However, they were never engaged in action and their only active service was the garrisoning of Kertch.

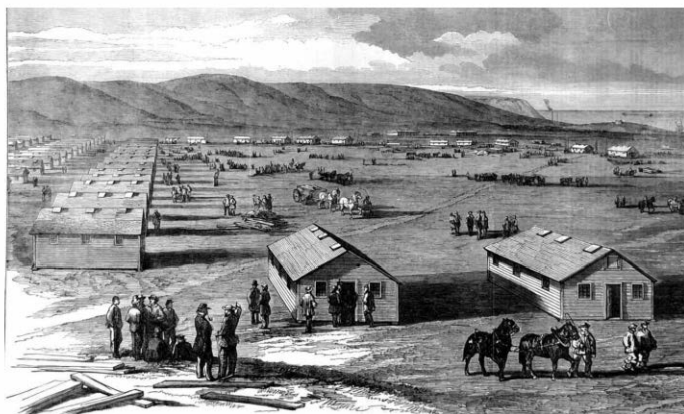


### The British-German Legion



6 December 1855 Rothenfels, Bavaria to Folkestone, England, prepaid 23 kr rate addressed to George Dodel, III Regiment of the British German Legion

#### two reported examples of mail to the British German Legion



Great Britain raised a British-German Legion of two regiments of light dragoons, three Jäger Corps, and six regiments of light infantry with a total of some 10,000 troops. The first German legionaries arrived in England in May and June 1855 and were soon sent to Shorncliffe Camp near Folkestone (shown left). After taking an oath of loyalty to the Queen, the men were to serve until one year after the termination of the war. They received the same as their British counterparts.

The British-German legion, under Baron Stutterheim and Brigadier Woolridge, was sent to Constantinople and Scutari briefly in December 1855 and January 1856. The Legion was soon disbanded and most went to the Cape of Good Hope to settle as they had broken German law by enlisting.



The British-German Legion



18 August 1856 "Camp of the Foreign Legion, Shorncliffe, Kent" illustrated lettersheet used by German soldier to Boeblingen, Wurtemberg, view is dated "Sep 4 55" faint British origin postmark, adhesive missing at lower left, sent by Prussian Closed Mail cover exterior front and back shown below reduced size



**British Military Mail**  
**The Auxiliary Contingents**



**The British-Italian Legion**



The British - Italian Legion was an auxiliary force supported by the English government. Recruitment began in October 1855 and the force was disbanded, without ever seeing the seat of the war, at Malta in July 1856. The 3,581 Piedmontese soldiers returned home or emigrated to other locations including York, Burnley and Ashton.

10 August 1856 Certificate of Discharge issued at Malta for a member of the Anglo-Italian Legion "Legione 2 Regt Britannica Italiana" oval handstamp, signed by William de Horsey as Commander





## French Military Markings



The French had a long tradition of military fieldpost services. The functions of cash payments and postal services were combined in the roles of officers known as payeurs. The postal service of the Armée d'Orient consisted of several bureaux that served the general headquarters as well as 3 corps, 16 divisional and sedentary entities as well as an Imperial Guard Brigade and other camp units. Upon the outbreak of war, the Ministry of Finance assigned payeurs who were mobilized alongside the army. Census information in this section is based on unpublished data begun by S. Walkse and continued.

**Rates** - From April to 30 June 1854, officers paid the 25 centimes single domestic rate, lower grades paid reduced rate of 20 centimes. Rates were the same paid or unpaid.

From 1 July 1854, all ranks were subject to the same rate structure: for single weight letters, prepaid 20 centimes; unpaid 30 centimes for outbound from military or 20 centimes inbound to military addresses.

## Camps in France

### Camp at Versailles / Camp at Aix



26 August 1853 "VERSAILLES 1 CAMP DE SATORY" on letter to Sammur, France  
unpaid 25 centimes officer rate, six reported (8 June to 26 August 1853)



15 November 1854 "AIX CAMP DU MIDI" on cover to Vabre, France, unpaid 30 centimes rate  
three reported (27 October to 15 November 1854)

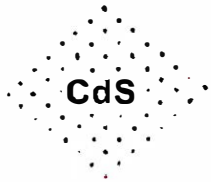
# French Military Markings



## Camps in France

The payeurs were supplied with postmark devices as well as cancel devices that incorporated, to the extent possible, the initial letters of the postmark text within a diamond of dots.

### Camp at Lyon



17 May 1856 "LYON CAMP DE SATONAY" on cover to Bussiere, France, prepaid 20 centimes rate five reported examples (23 March 1855 to 11 August 1856)

### Camp at Porquerolles

The camp on the island of Porquerolles, off Toulon, has been variously described as a rest and relaxation camp replete with brothels or a quarantine and sanitary camp for soldiers and sailors returning to France.



5. 15<sup>cc</sup> - Cognac  
10 - 15<sup>cc</sup> - Absinthe  
10 15<sup>cc</sup> - Absinthe

3 August 1856 "TOULON CAMP DE PORQUEROLLES" datestamp on folded letter to Marseills, France unpaid 30 centimes rate, letter ordering supplies include cognac and absinthe extract, arrival backstamp two reported examples (27 June and 3 August 1856)



Army Headquarters (QUART<sup>R</sup> G<sup>AL</sup>)

The French Army headquarters was located successively at Gallipoli (April 1854), Varna (June 1854), Crimea (September 1854) and Sevastopol (October 1854).



8 September 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT QUART<sup>R</sup> G<sup>AL</sup>" postmark on soldier's letter to Mirande, France prepaid 20 centimes rate



22 November 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT QUART<sup>R</sup> G<sup>AL</sup>" at right on folded letter to Lyon, France transit datestamp atypically struck on front of letter to correct a date error in the "BAU A" origin datestamp soldier letter dated 21 November 1854 from Sevastopol, 30 centimes due, arrival backstamp



Central Feldpost Bureau (B<sup>AU</sup> C<sup>AL</sup>)



5 March 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> C<sup>AL</sup>" postmark on registered cover to France prepaid 20c postage plus 40c registry fee sixteen reported examples of postmark (16 February 1855 to 3 June 1856) seven reported registered uses from the French forces in the East



3 June 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> C<sup>AL</sup>" postmark on cover to another soldier in Crimea prepaid 20c postage, "AOBC" in dots cancel, a late use 5 July 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> N" arrival backstamp

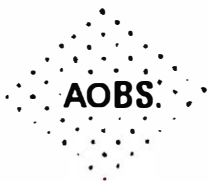
# French Military Markings

## Army Stationary Bureau



The French Army Bureau Sédentaire (fixed location bureau) was located at Gallipoli, European Turkey from May until July 1854 when it was moved to Varna, Bulgaria.

### Stationary Bureau (B<sup>AU</sup> SED<sup>RE</sup>)



20 July 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> SED<sup>RE</sup>" postmark on letter to France, prepaid 20c letter dated from Gallipoli  
twenty reported examples (5 May 1854 to 24 October 1855)



5 September 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> SED<sup>RE</sup>" postmark on cover to France, unpaid 60c double rate letter originally entered mails with civilian post office "VARNA BULGARIA" postmark at right, crossed out letter is evidence that the French Military and Civilian post offices shared common space  
only reported example with this pair of markings

# French Military Markings



## Kamiesch

On February 19, 1855 both a military and a civilian office was opened at Kamiesch, both housed together. The military postmark first used at Kamiesch was of a non-standard style with "KAMIESCH / ARMÉE D'ORIENT" text and with an additional outer circle of dots. This was replaced in May/June 1855 with the standard "ARMÉE D'ORIENT BAU M" bureau device.

In addition to the military payeur markings, the civilian post office used a standard postmark device with "KAMIESCH / CRIMEE" text. The markings were on occasion used indiscriminately.



3 April 1855 "KAMIESCH / ARMÉE D'ORIENT" on postmark on cover to France, prepaid 20c  
nine reported examples (13 March to 7 April 1855)



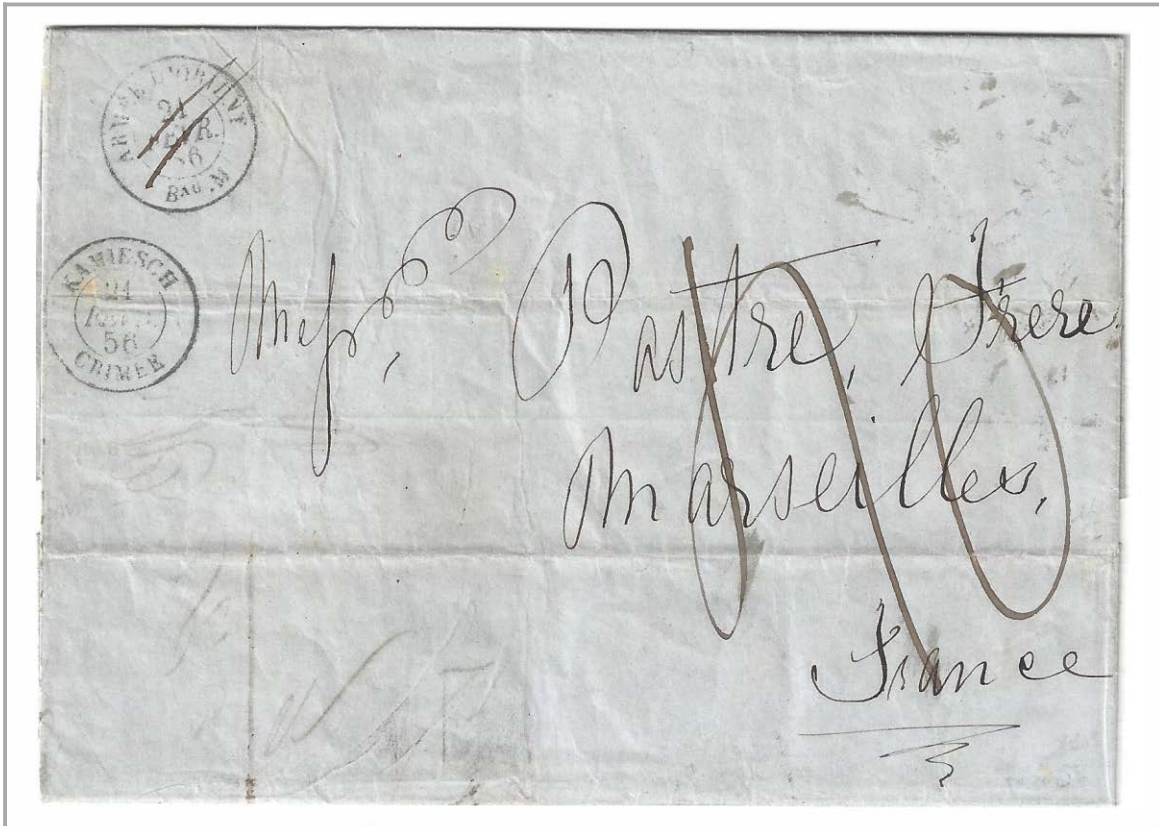
31 March 1855 "KAMIESCH / ARMÉE D'ORIENT" on postmark on cover to France, 30c due  
nine reported examples (13 March to 7 April 1855)

and

14 July 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> M" on local military letter, 10c due for local rate

# French Military Markings

## Kamiesch Military and Civilian



21 February 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> M" applied in error on letter to France, 4 francs due rate  
21 February 1856 "KAMIESCH / CRIMEE corrected postmark for civilian mail  
letter enclosed certificates for SS *Nicolai 1st* and invoices for victualing from an English merchant



29 March 1856 "KAMIESCH / CRIMEE " civilian postmark on cover to Genoa, Italy  
prepaid 1f with 20c and 80c stamps, stamps canceled with "AOM" cancel of the military Bureau M  
an exceptional combination

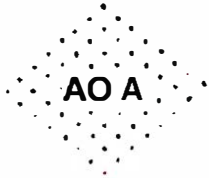
# French Military Markings

## Division Level Markings



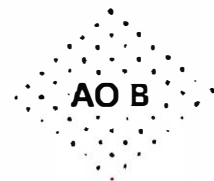
The French First Corps was composed of four infantry divisions as well as a cavalry division. The Payeurs used five different bureau postmarks (A to E).

### First Corps, Bureau A



22 December 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> A" on cover to Paris, France, prepaid 20 centimes rate fifteen reported examples (23 June 1854 to 22 December 1855)

### First Corps, Bureau B



24 May 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> B" on letter to Paris, France, prepaid 20 centimes rate nine reported examples (21 June 1854 to 19 February 1856)





First Corps, Bureau C



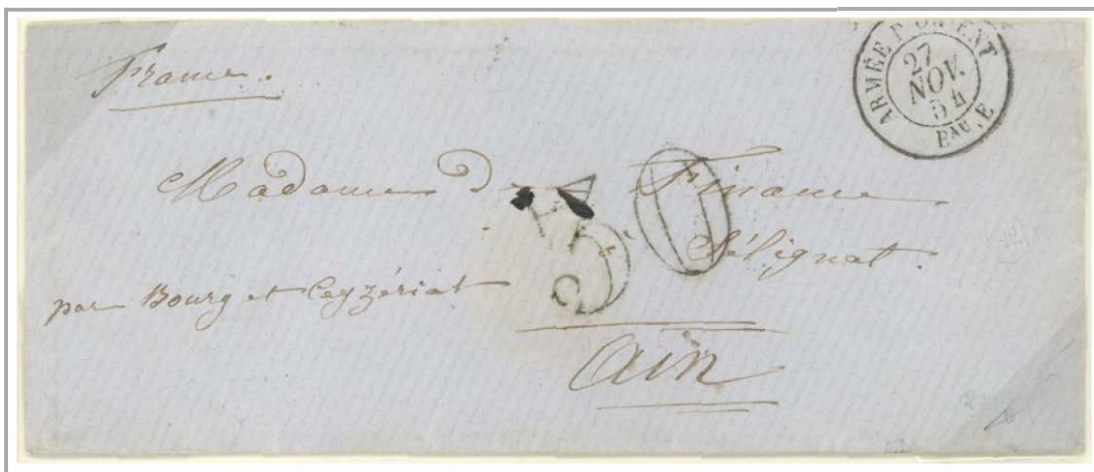
3 April 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> C" triple circle postmark on newspaper wrapper to Constantinople free of postage, arrival "BAU C<sup>AL</sup>" backstamp  
nine reported examples of postmark (15 June 1854 to 8 March 1856)

First Corps, Bureau D



31 July 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> D" on cover to France, prepaid 20 centimes rate  
seven reported examples (22 January 1855 to 29 March 1856)

First Corps, Bureau E



27 November 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> E" postmark on cover to France, unpaid 30c rate  
two reported examples of postmark (27 November 1854 and 22 February 1854)

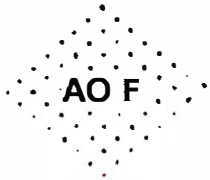
# French Military Markings



## Division Level Markings

The French Second Corps was composed of five infantry divisions as well as a cavalry division. The Payeurs used six different bureau postmarks (F to H and J to L).

### Second Corps, Bureau F



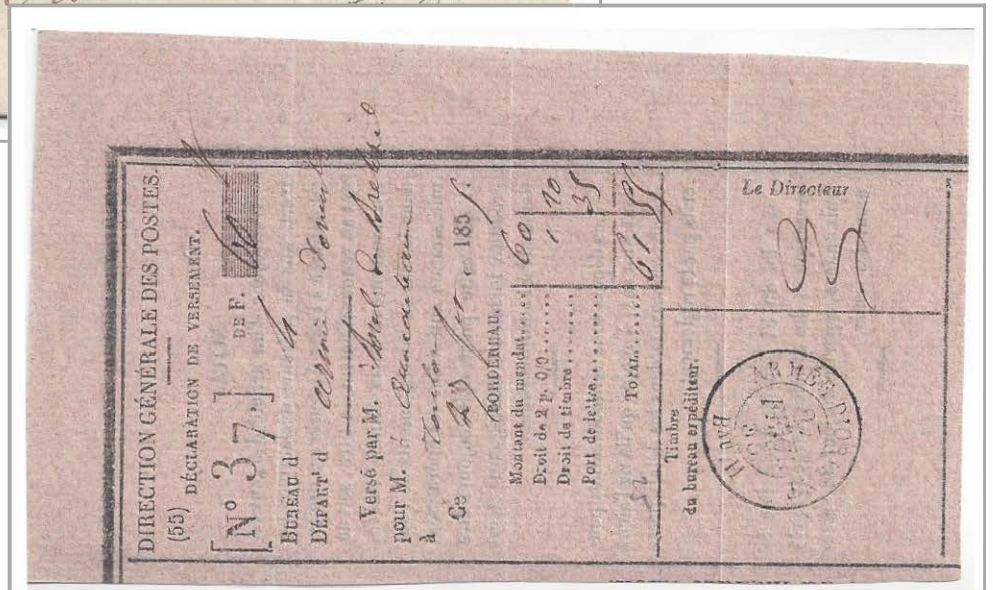
23 July 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> F" postmark on cover to Albas, France, prepaid 20c eight reported examples (23 March 1855 to 2 October 1855)

### Second Corps, Bureau G / Bureau H



8 March 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> G" on cover to France, 30c due three reported examples (24 November 1854 to 23 October 1854)

27 February 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> H" on money order form to Toulon two reported examples (this one and 16 June 1855)

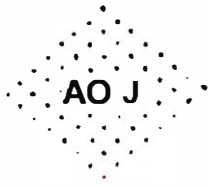


# French Military Markings

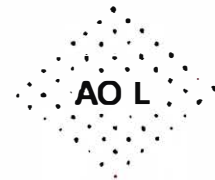
## Division Level Markings



### Second Corps, Bureau J / Bureau L



27 March 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> J" postmark on cover to Dijon, France, prepaid 20c  
latest of three reported examples (4 September 1855 to 27 March 1856)



4 December 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> L" on cover to France, prepaid 20c  
five reported examples  
(6 October 1855 to 1 March 1856)

6 October 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> L" on cover to France, due 30c rate  
five reported examples (6 October 1855 to 1 March 1856)



# French Military Markings



## Division Level Markings

The French Third Corps was composed of an Imperial Guard division, three infantry divisions as well as a cavalry division. The Payeurs used five different bureau postmarks (Gde. Imple., and M to P).

### Third Corps, Imperial Guard

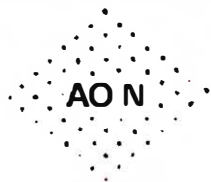


4 August 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT G<sup>DE</sup> IM<sup>PL</sup>E" postmark on to Ambrières, France, prepaid 20c fourteen reported examples (15 September 1854 to 30 October 1855)

### Third Corps, Bureau M / Bureau N



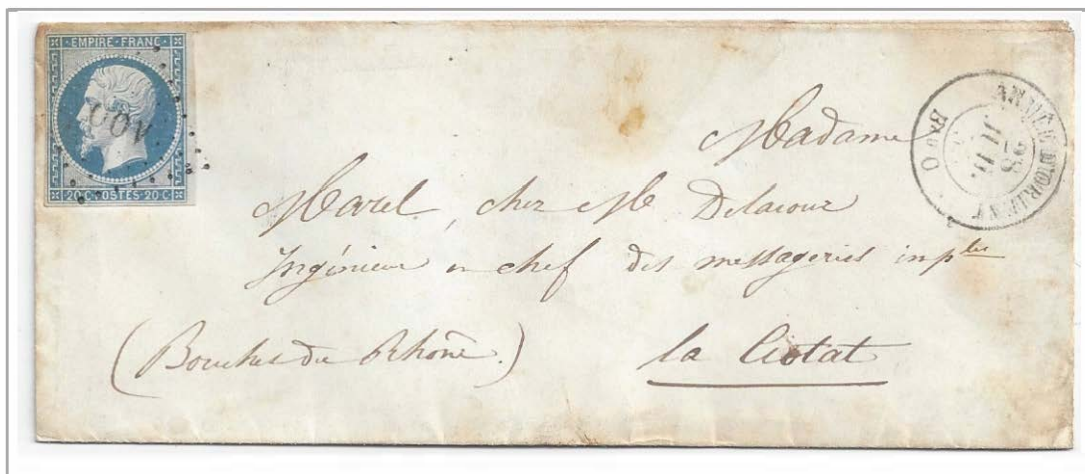
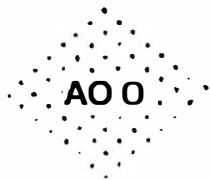
3 February 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> M" on letter to France, prepaid 20c eight reported examples (26 June 1855 to 3 Feb 1856)



13 October 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> N" on cover to France, prepaid 20c six reported examples (2 June 1855 to 27 November 1855)

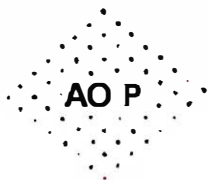


Third Corps, Bureau O



28 July 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> O" on cover to France, prepaid 20c  
five reported examples (28 July 1855 to 23 February 1856)

Third Corps, Bureau P



21 June 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> P" on cover to France, prepaid 20c  
three reported examples (8 December 1855 to 21 June 1856)

# French Military Markings

## Division Level Markings



Bureau R was a late addition to the series and its location, and any corps association, is unknown. The earliest and latest of the three reported examples are shown below.

### Bureau R



12 February 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> R" on cover to France, prepaid 20c  
three reported examples (12 February 1856 to 20 May 1856)



reverse with  
manuscript "7g - 40"

20 May 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> R" on registered cover to France, prepaid 40c plus 40c fee in cash  
three reported examples (12 February 1856 to 20 May 1856)

# French Military Markings

## The Corps Markings



In 1855 separate postmarks and cancel devices began to be used by the three Army Corps headquarters.

### First Corps



3 November 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT 1<sup>ER</sup> CORPS" on cover to Paris, France, prepaid 20 centimes rate enclosed original letter is dated from Savastopol nine reported examples (29 May 1855 to 22 December 1855)

### Second Corps



17 August 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT 2<sup>E</sup> CORPS" on registered cover to France, prepaid 20c plus 40c fee sixteen reported examples (10 April 1855 to 2 October 1855)



**Second Corps + Third Corps**



23 August 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT 3<sup>E</sup> CORPS" backstamp on inbound letter to 49th Regiment from France redirected to Second Corps with "29 August 1855 ARMÉE D'ORIENT 2<sup>E</sup> CORPS" backstamp for final delivery

**Third Corps**



14 August 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT 3<sup>E</sup> CORPS" on cover to France, prepaid 20c  
three reported examples (7 August to 23 August 1855)





### Endorsed by Emperor Napoléon III



Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte was the only President (1848–1852) of the French Second Republic and, as Napoleon III, the Emperor (1852–1870) of the Second French Empire. He was the nephew and heir of Napoleon I. He was the first President of France to be elected by a direct popular vote.



"Cabinet de l'Empereur (2)" cursive handstamp on cover to the Army of the Orient endorsed "L' Emperor" addressed to General Bosquet, Commander of the 2nd Corps 19 January 1855 Paris Franchises datestamp and "CHARGE D'OFFICE" handstamp four red wax seals with "DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DES POSTES" text around edge

The addressee, General Pierre Bosquet, was a noted commander during the Crimean War. Witnessing the British charge of the Light Brigade at the battle of Balaklava, he remarked "It's magnificent, but it is not war."



Office of the Emperor Napoléon III



"Cabinet de l'Empereur" cursive handstamp in red on cover to Inkerman, Crimea and returned 12 June 1856 Paris Franchises datestamp, addressed to a Captain of the 100th Line Regiment redirected to Clermont-Ferrand, France as the Regiment had returned at this date 2 July 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> C<sup>AL</sup>" backstamp of Central Bureau at Constantinople, late use

After nineteen sessions, a treaty of peace ending the Crimean War was signed at Paris on 30 March 1856. French troop withdrawals from the region continued well into the summer of 1856 as evidenced by the cover shown above which is a very late use of the army postmark (one known example is dated later, 18 August 1856).

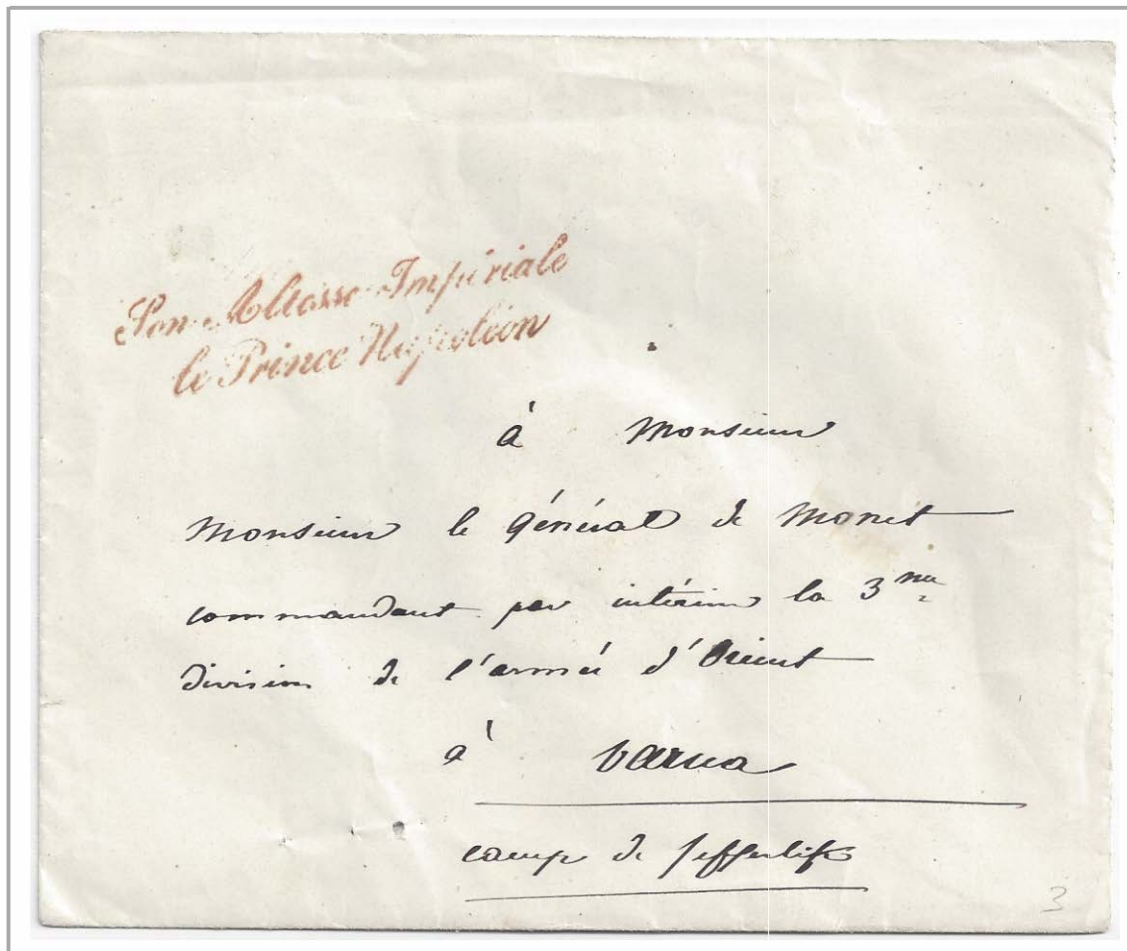


Endorsed Cover Prince Napoléon to General de Monet

When Prince Napoleon's first cousin, Napoleon III, became President of France in 1848, Napoleon was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Spain. He later served in a military capacity as general of a division in the Crimean War. Fenton's image of the Prince in Crimea is shown to right.



*Napoléon Bonaparte*



*Son Altesse Impériale  
le Prince Napoléon*

*à Monsieur*

*Monsieur le Général de Monet*

*commandant par intérim la 3<sup>me</sup>*

*Division de l'armée d'Orient*

*à Varna*

*camp de Juffulifs*

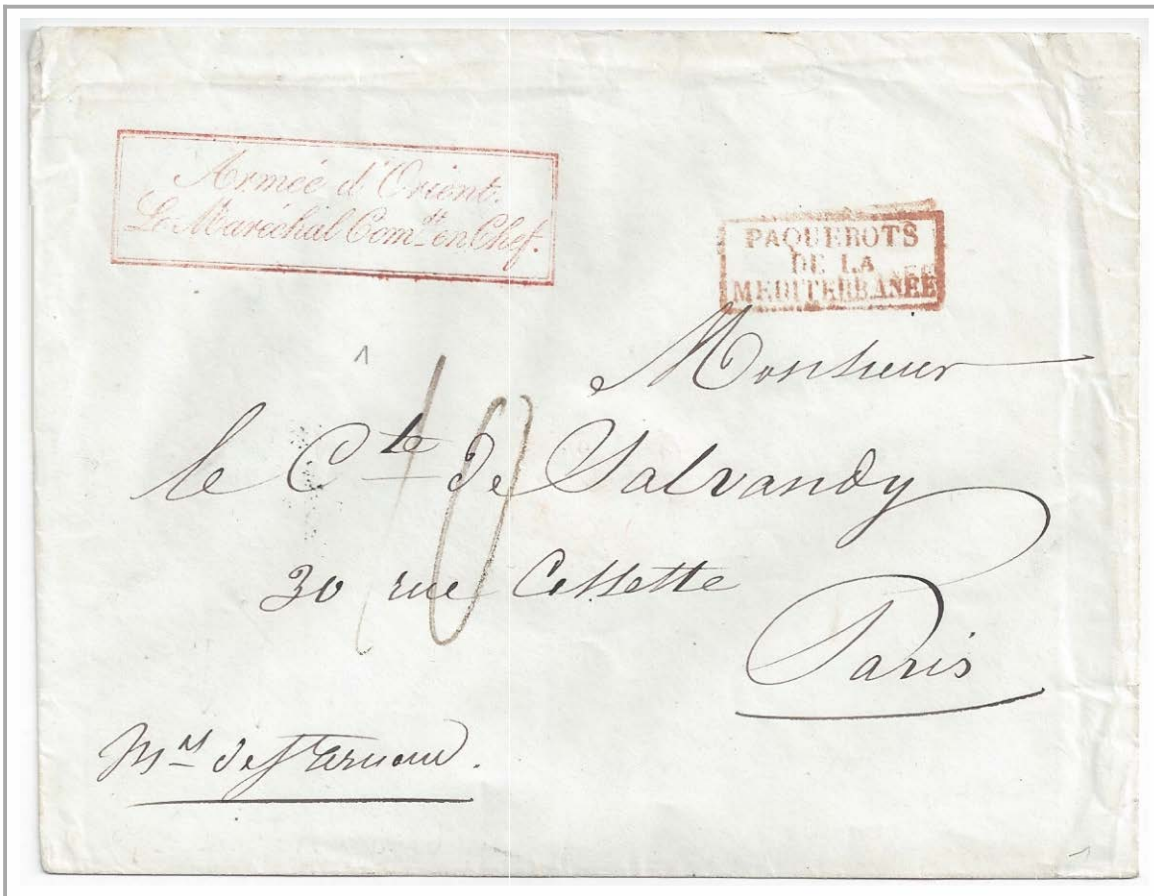
3

"Son Altesse Imperiale le Prince Napoléon" cursive handstamped cover, Therapia (Constantinople) to Varna  
18 August 1854 Prince Napoleon note signed appended to letter of Ferri-Pisani, Napoleon's wax seal  
addressed to General de Monet, commander of the 3rd Division of the Army of the Orient



**Endorsed Cover as Commander-in-Chief at Gallipoli**

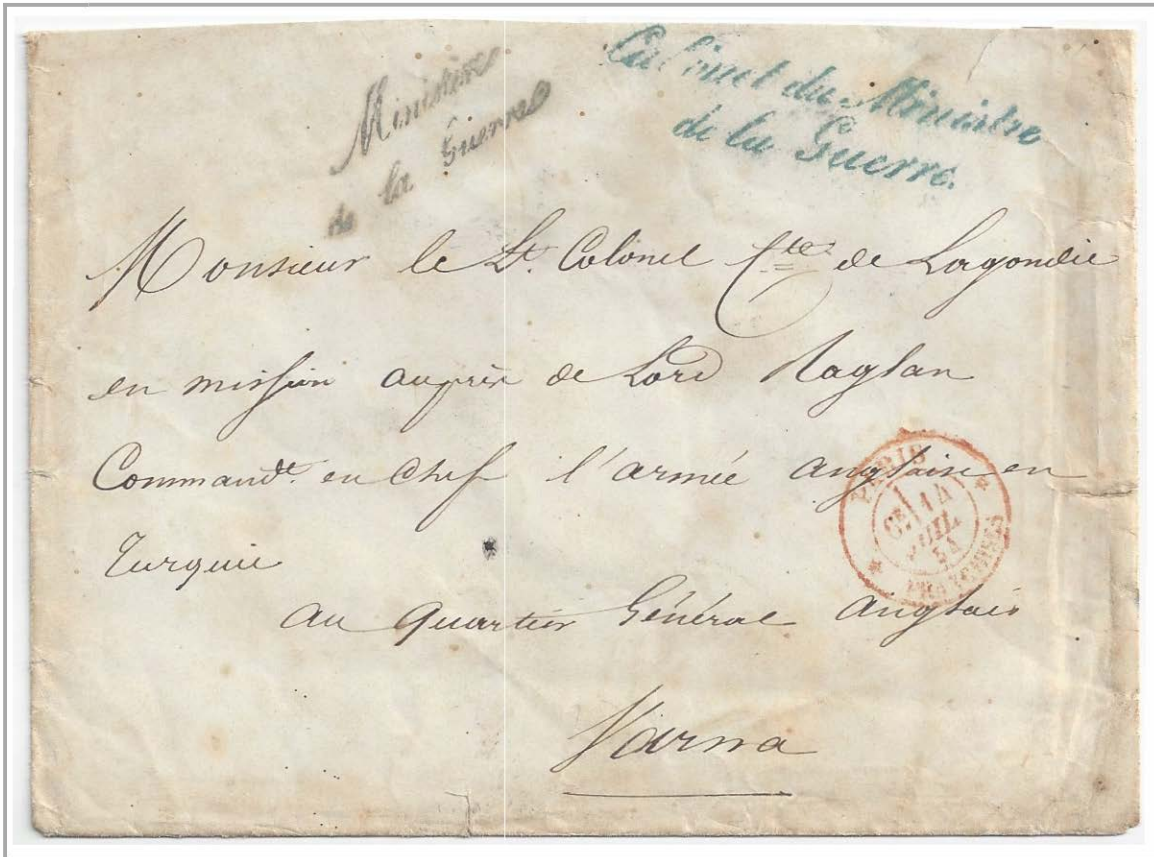
Saint-Arnaud served as French Minister of War until the Crimean War when he became Commander-in-chief of the army of the East. He arrived at Gallipoli on 6 May 1854. He died shortly after commanding the French forces at the Battle of the Alma on 20 September 1854.



"*Armée d'Orient Le Marechal Comdt en Chef*" cursive handstamp on cover to Paris endorsed by Jacques Leroy de Saint-Arnaud as Commander in Chief shortly after arriving at Gallipoli  
16 May 1854 departed Constantinople on regular French Levant Line steamer *Ganges* via Smyrna  
25 May arrived Marseille with boxed "Paquebots De La Mediterranee" handstamp and 10 decimes due rate  
25 May 1854 Marseille entry and Paris arrival backstamps



### Ministry of War to the First Allied Officer to be Captured



"Ministre de la Guerre." and "Cabinet du Ministre de la Guerre" cursive handstamps  
14 July 1854 Paris free mail cover to Comte de Lagondie at the mission of  
Lord Raglan, Commander in Chief of the British Army in Turkey at the British headquarters in Varna



Roger Fenton image of  
two French officers and  
a zouave with rifle

The addressee, Joseph Guilhen, Comte de Lagondie, embarked to the Crimea with the French troops in April 1854. He served as French liaison officer at Lord Raglan's headquarters. He was captured by the Russians on September 19, 1854 while returning from delivering messages from Prince Napoleon to Lord Raglan and was the first Allied officer captured in the war. He was released on 4 April 1855 after an interview with the Russian Emperor and returned to duty with the French First Corps.



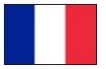
**Endorsed Cover as Commander-in-Chief**

François Certain Canrobert replaced Jacques Leroy de Saint Arnaud as Commander of the Army of the Orient upon the death of Arnaud in September 1854. Canrobert served in that post until he was removed in July 1855.



"Commandant en Chef de l'Armée d'Orient." and "Cabinet du Ministre de la Guerre" cursive handstamps ca. April 1855, endorsed by François Certain Canrobert a bottom left, addressed to the prefect of Police

two reported examples



**To Corvette *La Provencale* at Malta**



6 February 1854 Montpellier, France to Valette, Malta, due 25c rate in effect before 1 July 1854  
addressed to Ensign Genoyer on board Corvette *La Provencale*, Mediterranean fleet  
no transit backstamp, probably carried by a Navy vessel to Malta

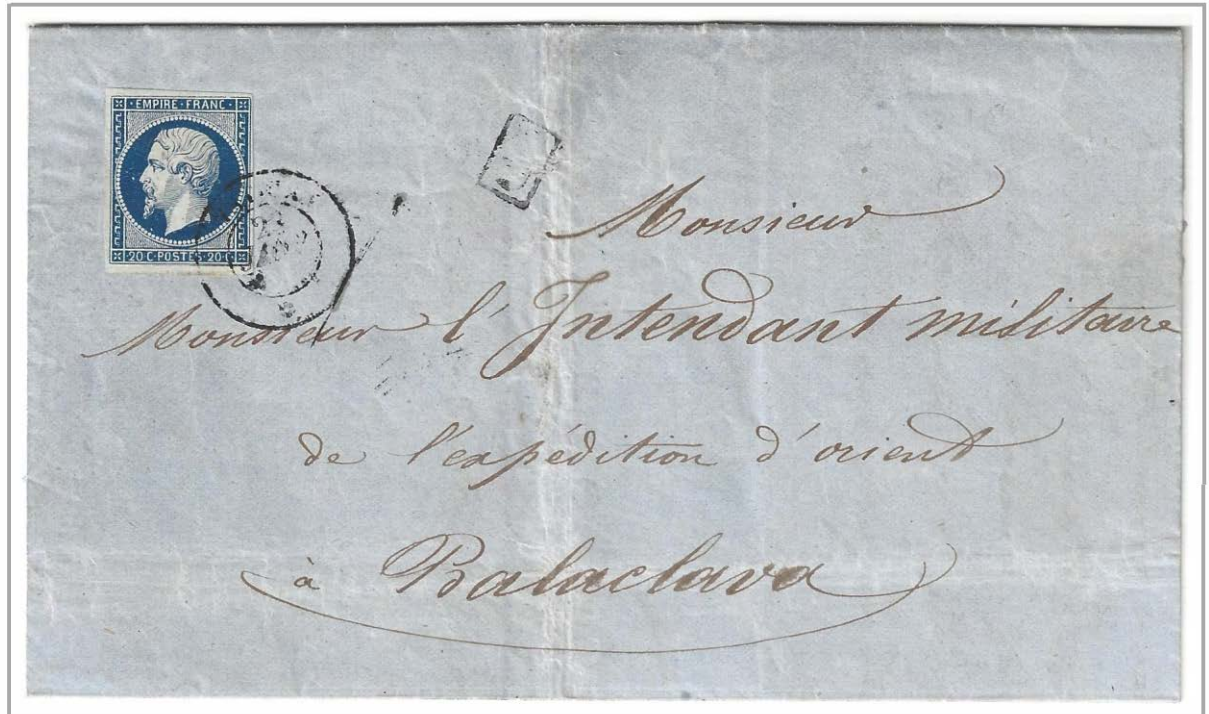
**From France to Corvette *La Provencale* at Varna**



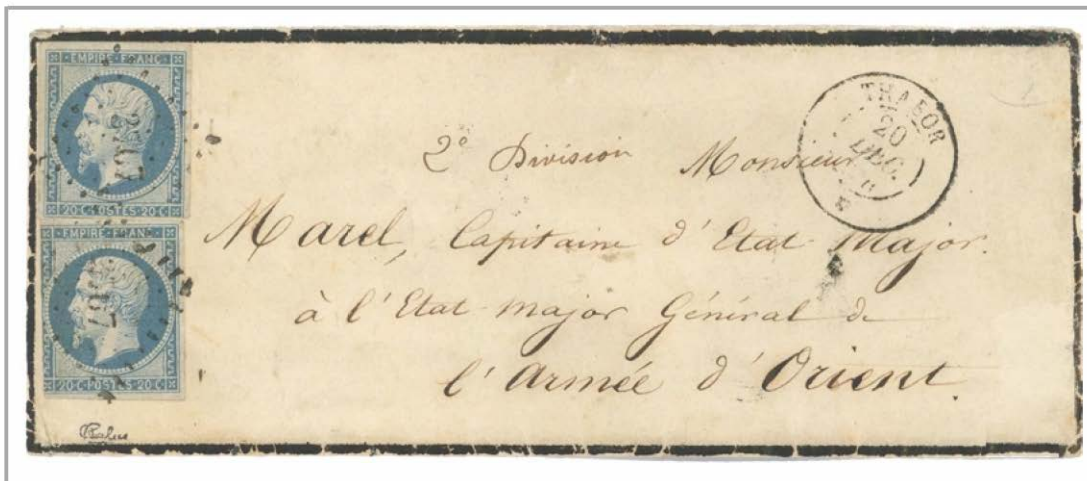
27 May 1855 Montpellier, France to Varna, Bulgaria, prepaid 20c rate  
addressed to Ensign Genoyer on board Corvette *La Provencale*, at Varna  
28 May 1855 Marseille transit backstamp  
carried by French Levant Line steamer *Euphrate* to Constantinople and a supply vessel to Varna



Mailed Onboard Mail Steamers



23 January 1856 "VATICAN" name of mail steamer datestamp on letter to Balaklava, 20c prepaid Services Maritimes des Messageries Imperiales, Ateliers, imprint stationery dated from Marseilles carried by *Vatican* on the first of her two trips to the Levant, "ARMÉE D'ORIENT QUART<sup>R</sup> G<sup>AL</sup>" arrival



20 December 1854 "THABOR" name of mail steamer datestamp on mourning cover to Crimea, 40c prepaid stamps cancelled by "3707" in dots cancel in lieu of anchor, Constantinople (Turquie) transit backstamp "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> C<sup>AL</sup>" transit and "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> B" arrival backstamps





**Registered Package Wrapper from First Corps Payeur**



May 1855 registered package wrapper sent free by the payeur of First Corps, blue cachet  
three pieces of paper stuck together, wax seals with twine, per specifications of the Post Office  
red wax seals read "ARMÉE D'ORIENT" at top, "TRESOR ET POSTES" at foot and "1<sup>ER</sup> CORPS" at center  
**the only reported example**

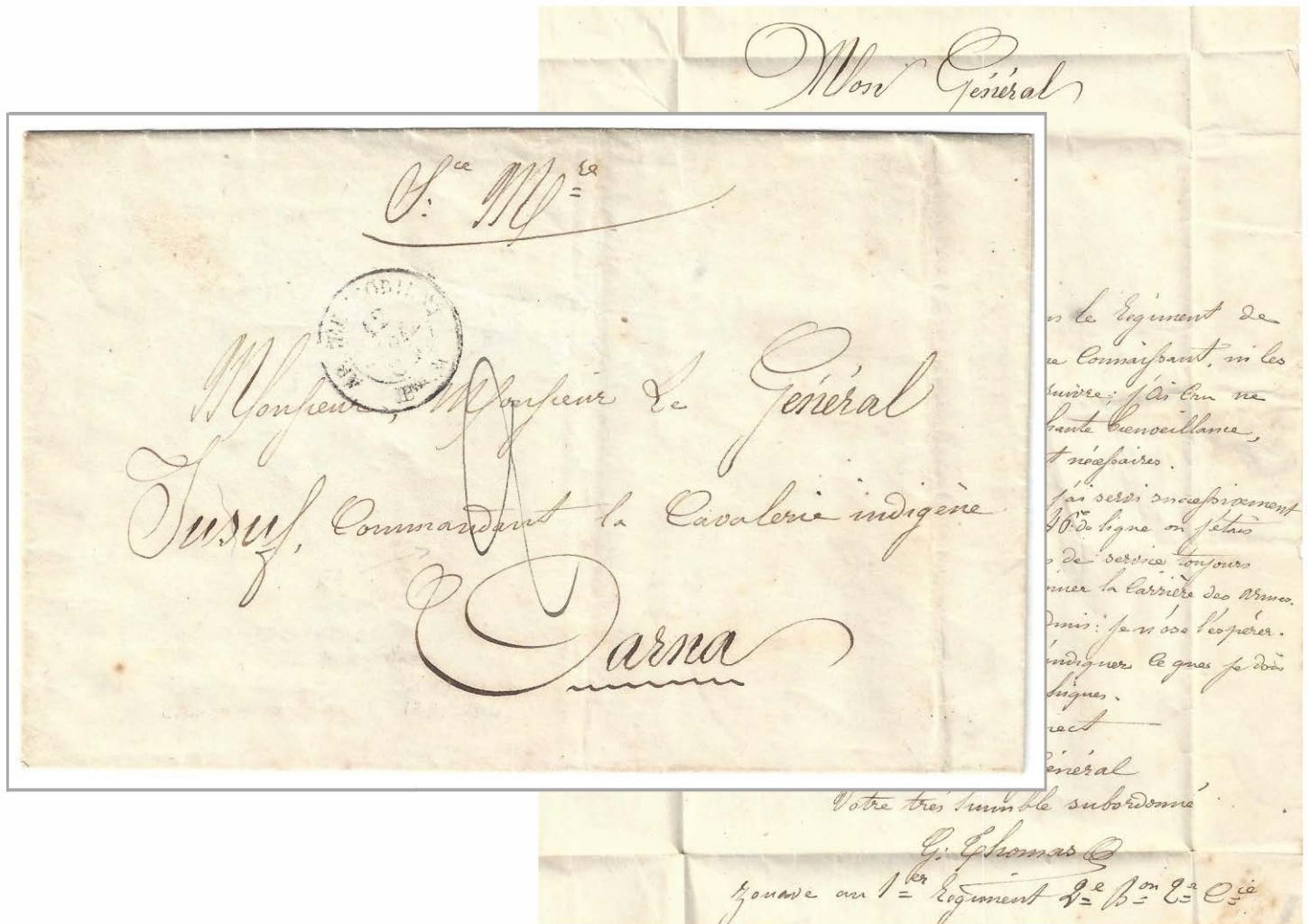


enlargement of wax seal

**ARMÉE D'ORIENT**  
**1<sup>ER</sup> CORPS**  
**TRESOR ET POSTES**



The Bashi-Bazouk Irregulars



12 July 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT BAU A" origin postmark on letter to General Yusuf at Varna  
12 July 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT QUARTIER GÉNÉRAL" backstamp and 2 decimes due "Black Sea" rate  
addressed to Yusuf as the "Commandant of the Cavalerie Indigène" also known as the Bashi-Bazouks  
soldier's letter requests engagement with the Bashi-Buzouks from former member now in French Army



The Bashi-Basouks were a group of highly irregular cavalry (described at the time as, "terrific rascals, of no fixed abode who wander the Turkish Empire plundering and murdering").

General Beatson, on the British side, and Colonel Yusuf Bey (of Tunisian origin) on the French side, both tried to enlist the force. These irregulars disbanded after the cholera epidemic killed many of them in August 1854.

Yusuf Bey, the addressee shown in watercolor at left, was the founder and commander of the force that had been previously been employed by the French in their conquest of Algeria. By July 1854 he had assembled a force of 4,000 in Wallachia as well as a smaller force under the "Dark Fatima" who led her Kurdish tribal followers under the banner of a Muslim war.

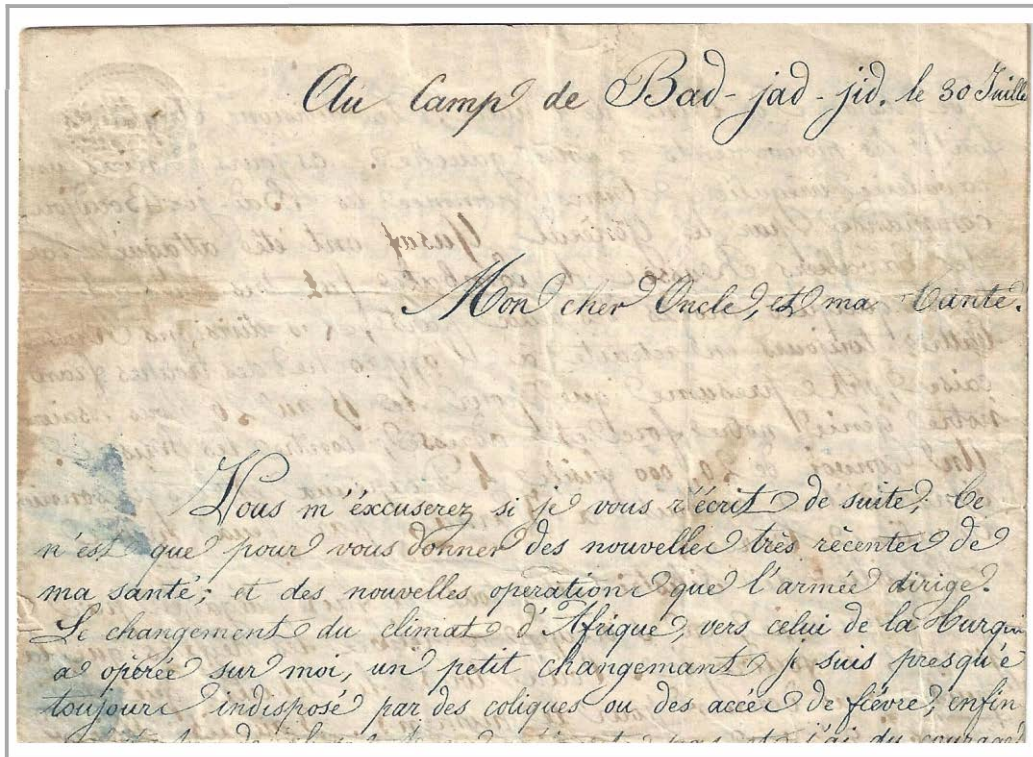


Cholera Hits the First and Third Divisions of First Corps

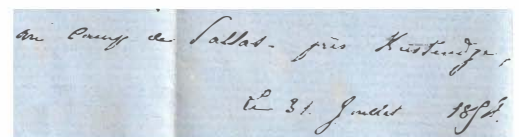
1854 Dobrudja Expedition

In late July 1854, shortly after reaching Varna, the French army experienced an outbreak of cholera. Commander Saint-Arnaud decided to disperse his forces to the plains north of Varna into the Dobrudja Region to chase the rearguard of the retreating Russian units in the area. They never engaged the enemy.

Led by the unit of Bashi-Bazouk Cavalry, followed by the First and Third Divisions of the First Corps, the French Army was devastated by the outbreak. The expedition stopped and camped at Bazarjik, where the letter below was written, before returning to Varna on 31 July. Cholera claimed over 2,000 deaths among the cavalry and the First Division was nearly annihilated by disease. Total French loss has been estimated at 7,000.



30 July 1854 folded letter dated from Camp at Bazarjik to France  
 1 August 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> C<sup>AL</sup>" postmark of 1st Corps, 3rd Division  
 bottom line shown above: "(we are) almost always indisposed by colic or bouts of fever"



31 July 1854 folded letter dated from Camp Salles at Kustenje to France  
 31 July 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> A" postmark of 1st Corps, 1st Division

# French Military Mail

## Between French Forces



### From French Expeditionary Force in Rome



10 April 1856 "CORPS EXPEDITIONNAIRE D'ITALIE 2e DIVISION" origin postmark on cover to Crimea prepaid 20c military rate, stamp with grill cancel, addressed to a Colonel of the 9th Line, cachet on reverse  
24 April 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> M" arrival datestamp



13 May 1855 "CORPS EXPEDITIONNAIRE D'ITALIE 2e DIVISION" origin postmark on letter to Constantinople letter from a soldier at Rome, 30c due rate, addressed to a Colonel in the Imperial Guard, 3rd Corps transit datestamp  
6 June 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT G<sup>DE</sup> IM<sup>PLE</sup>" arrival backstamp

The French Army entered Rome on 3 July 1849 and maintained their strong presence there in support of the Papal Administration until August 1870.

# French Military Mail

## Returned Letter Mail - Soldier Death



6 January 1856 from France to a soldier in the Second Corps at Inkerman, prepaid 20c  
5 February 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> A" arrival backstamp  
manuscript "Inconnu" (unknown) on front, "Décédé" (dead) on reverse (cropped image above right)  
returned to Vendée, France with red wax "DEPÔT DES REBUTS" seal across flap



18 June 1855 from Riom, France to a soldier in the Second Zouaves at Sevastopol, prepaid 20c  
5 July 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> C" double circle arrival backstamp  
"Décédé" (dead) on reverse, red handstamp Director General of Posts, Opened for Information  
returned to France with red wax "DEPÔT DES REBUTS" seal across flap  
(reduced image of reverse below)



# French Military Mail

## Returned / Forwarded Mail to Soldiers



22 August 1855 from France to a soldier in the 2nd Regt. de Chasseurs d' Afrique, 1st Cavalry Division  
(this division arrived in the East as Fifth Division)

8 September 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT QUART<sup>R</sup> G<sup>AL</sup>" postmark (Sevastopol)  
directed in manuscript to the "ambulance" of the Army, the 5th Division in front of Sevastopol

2 October 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT QUART<sup>R</sup> G<sup>AL</sup>" backstamp

6 October 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT 1<sup>ER</sup> CORPS" backstamp

unknown at Daoud Pacha (Hospital) in manuscript

returned to sender with red wax "DEPÔT DES REBUTS" seal across flap



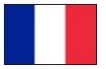
2 August 1855 from Lorient, France to a soldier in the 98th Line Regiment, Sevastopol, prepaid 20c

16 August 1855 arrival backstamp, forwarded to "Hospital of Constantinople" on front

20 August 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> C<sup>AL</sup>" faint backstamp (Constantinople)

manuscript "Inconnu" (unknown) at "Daoud Pacha" Hospital

several manuscript notes on reverse and apparently sent onward to the military college at Malta



From Belgium



10 January 1855 Halle, Belgium to a soldier in the French Foreign Legion in Crimea  
prepaid 20c domestic postage only, Insufficiently Paid handstamp and 4 decimes due handstamp  
various transits backstamps include:

22 January "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> G" backstamp

27 January 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> F"

9 February 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> G"

10 February 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> C<sup>AL</sup>" arrival at Constantinople

the only reported example

# French Military Mail

## Foreign Uses



### to Belgium



10 June 1854 "CONSTANTINOPLE TURQUIE" consular postmark on cover to Brussels, Belgium  
4 decimes due handstamp, "Camp at Scutari" docket notation of origin  
21 June 1855 arrival backstamp in blue

### From Sweden



3 April 1856 "CONSTANTINOPLE (TURQUIE)" postmark (new style) on 6 March letter from Stockholm to a soldier of the 2nd Division, 1st Corp in Crimea, 2 decimes due handstamp





King Victor Emanuel II Patriotic lettersheet



lettersheet with portrait of King Victor Emanuel II used by a Sardinian soldier to his father at Casteggio cover (imaged below) postmarked 14 April 1855 from Torino, manuscript due, arrival backstamp

*... my departure to the Crimea was postponed. The Bersaglieri departed at 11:00 AM. They boarded the steamships in the Campo de Mare (Corsica) and were visited by the King.*



A total of 18,000 men embarked from Genoa for the Crimean in April 1855 on British and Sardinian ships. While the infantry of the line and the cavalry units were drawn from volunteer soldiers, the Bersaglieri (marksmen and light infantry), artillery and sapper troops were dispatched from the regular units. Each of the army's ten regular Bersaglieri battalions dispatched its first two companies for the expedition. The corps disembarked at Balaklava between 9 and 14 May 1855.

# Sardinian Military Mail



## Outbound Mail

Mail to and from the Sardinian forces in Crimea was handled by two field post offices and two different devices as shown above were utilized. The terminal "A" in "SARDA" is thin, and positioned slightly lower in type 1 than in type 2.

It appears, from study of the material shown here, that the type 1 marking was used at Kadikoi and the type 2 device was used at Kamara. There is insufficient information due to the extreme rarity of covers with these two markings, fewer than 20 in total. A third device was also deployed to the lazaretto at Jenikoi outside Constantinople.



type 1



type 2



28 June 1855 soldiers letter from Balaklava to Turin, Piedmont

30 June 1855 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" (type 2) postmark, prepaid Sardinia 20 cent

11 July 1855 Torino arrival backstamp



Upon arrival in the Crimea in May 1855 the Sardinian forces encamped at Kadikoi and Kamara near the Black Sea port of Balaklava on the southernmost tip of Crimea. Only some 18,000 Sardinian troops participated in the war and an official report of 1857 stated that the Sardinians lost only 28 men at the battle of Tchernaya. However, a further 2,000 died in hospitals, mostly from cholera.

# Sardinian Military Mail

## Inbound Mail

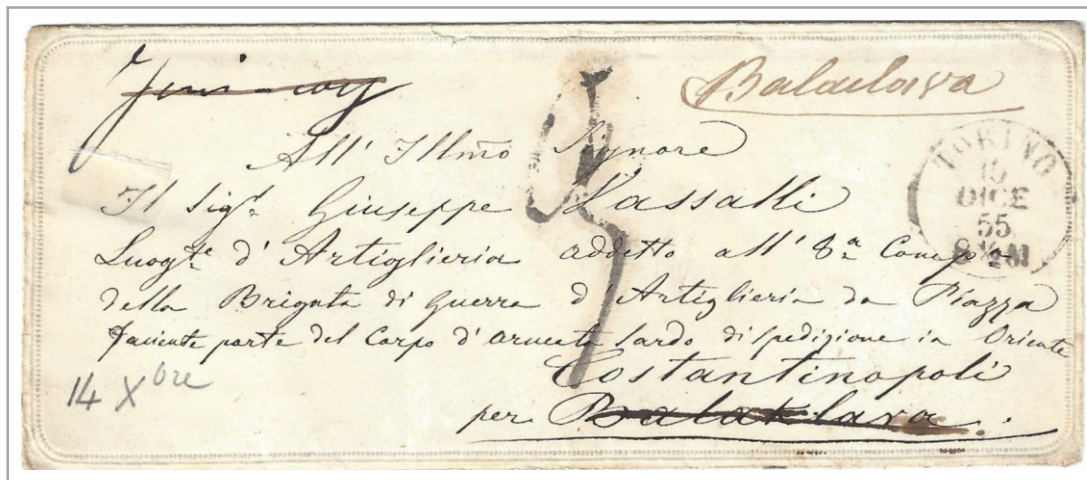


type 1



type 3

The type 3 device with "(N.3)" at foot was supplied to the Sardinian Army office at the lazaretto of Jenikoi outside Constantinople. This cover bears a combination of backstamps, type 1 in black (struck with two different dates, and type 3 in red).



15 December 1855 cover and letter from Turin to Balaklava, handstamped "3" postage due addressed to an artillery officer in the Sardinian Army at Balaklava

31 December 1855 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" (type 1) postmark backstamp and forwarded redirected to "Jeni-koy" at top left of cover (the lazaretto outside Constantinople)

7 January 1856 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA (N.3)" (type 3) arrival postmark struck in red redirected back to Balaklava at top right, 10 January 1856 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" arrival postmark **the only reported example of this combination, fewer than 5 examples of the type 3 known**

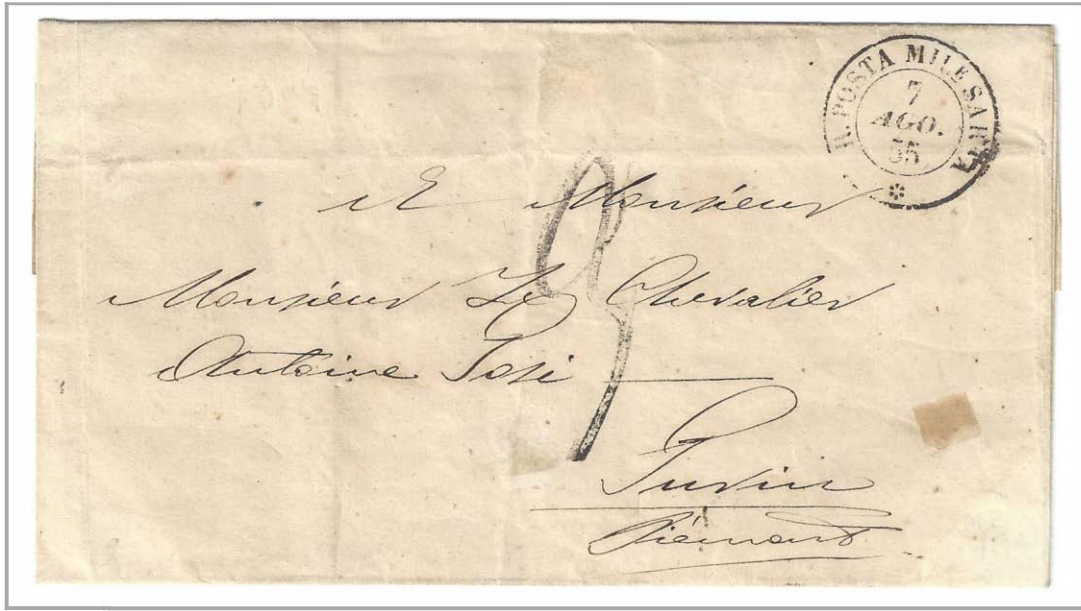
# Sardinian Military Mail

## Rates and Routes

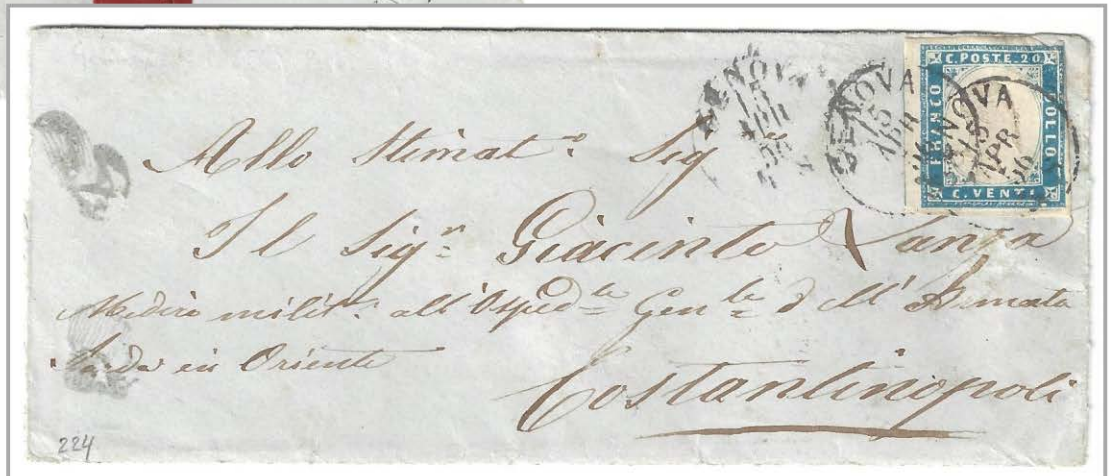


**Rate** - Letter mail, to 7.5 grams, to and from Sardinian soldiers in Crimea was subject to a 20 centimes letter rate if prepaid and 30 centimes unpaid.

**Route** - Mail to and from the Sardinian army was handled primarily by Sardinian mail ships stopping at Balaklava, Constantinople and Genoa.



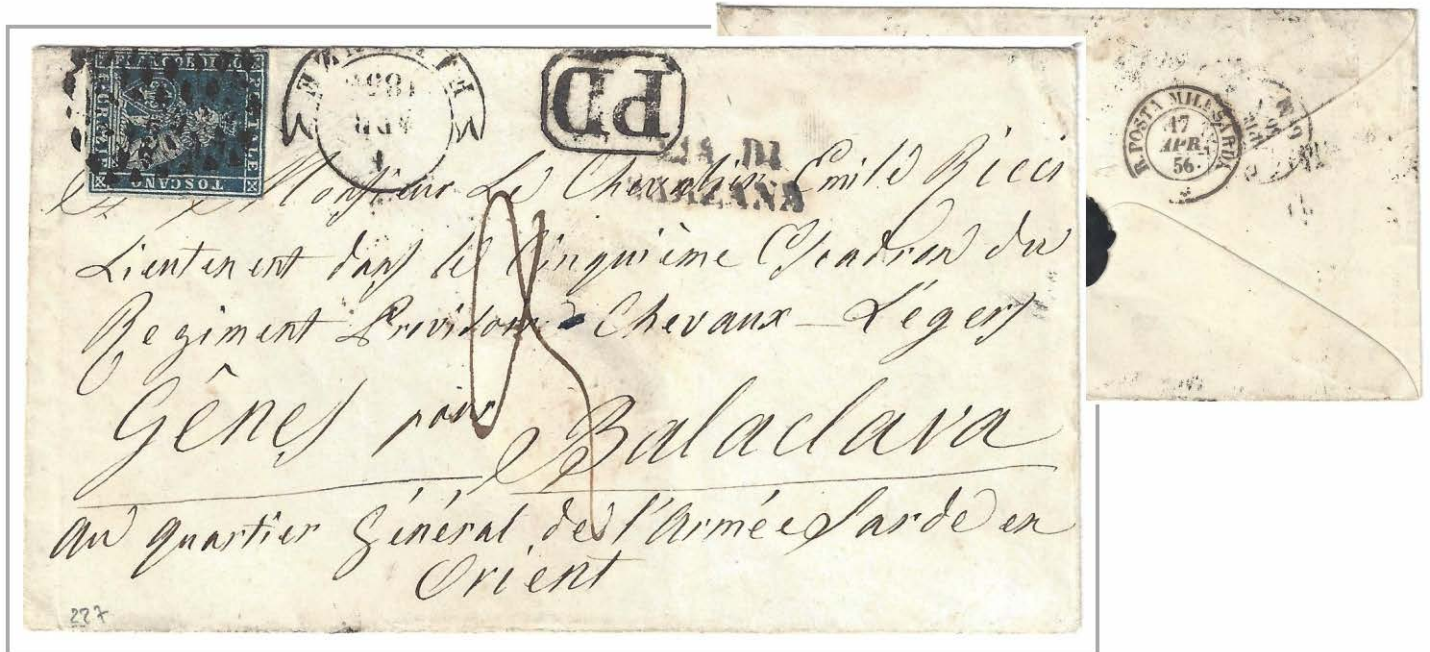
7 August 1855 from a Sardinian soldier in Crimea to Turin, "3" decimes postage due handstamp  
"R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" (type 1, in black) dispatch postmark, arrival backstamp



15 April 1856 Genova to soldier in Sardinian Army in Constantinoe, prepaid with 20c adhesive  
26 April "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA (N. 3)" (type 3, in black) arrival backstamp



From Black Sea Theater / From Modena



1 April 1856 from Firenze, Tuscany, cover prepaid 6cr to an Italian Lieutenant at Balaklava endorsed to the care of Quartermaster General of the Army of Sardinia in the Orient boxed "P.D." handstamp and "Via Di Sarzana" handstamp, manuscript 3 decimes due 17 April 1856 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" (type 2) arrival backstamp the only reported inbound use from Tuscany with an adhesive



1855 from Modena, address leaf only, prepaid 40 cent to same Italian Lieutenant as above at Balaklava endorsed to the care of Quartermaster General of the Army of Sardinia in the Orient boxed "P.D." handstamp in blue, handstamped 3 decimes due the only reported inbound use from Modena with an adhesive

# Sardinian Military Mail

## Inbound Mail



2 September 1855 Chambery to soldier in Sardinian Army at Kadikoi, "3" decimes due handstamp  
17 September 1855 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" (type 1, in black) arrival backstamp



16 July 1855 Torino to soldier in Sardinian Army in Crimea, prepaid with 20c adhesive  
30 July 1855 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" (type 1, in black) arrival backstamp

# Sardinian Military Mail

## Inbound Mail



type 1

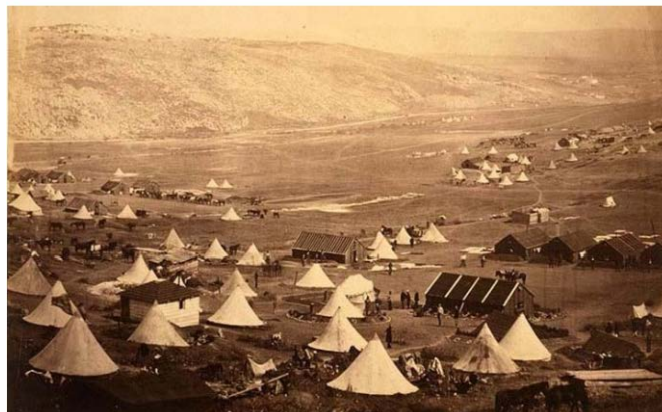


type 2

This cover bears a combination of backstamps, type 1 in red and type 2 in black.  
The significance of the markings being struck in red is unknown.



14 July 1855 cover and letter from Turin to Balaklava, handstamped "3" postage due addressed to an officer of the Savoy Cavalry, aide de camp to the General Commandant of the 2nd Division (Lieut. Gen. Ardigo Trotti) at Balaklava  
30 July 1855 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" (type 2) postmark backstamp as well as  
31 July 1855 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" (type 1, in red)  
**fewer than three known type 1 postmark in red**



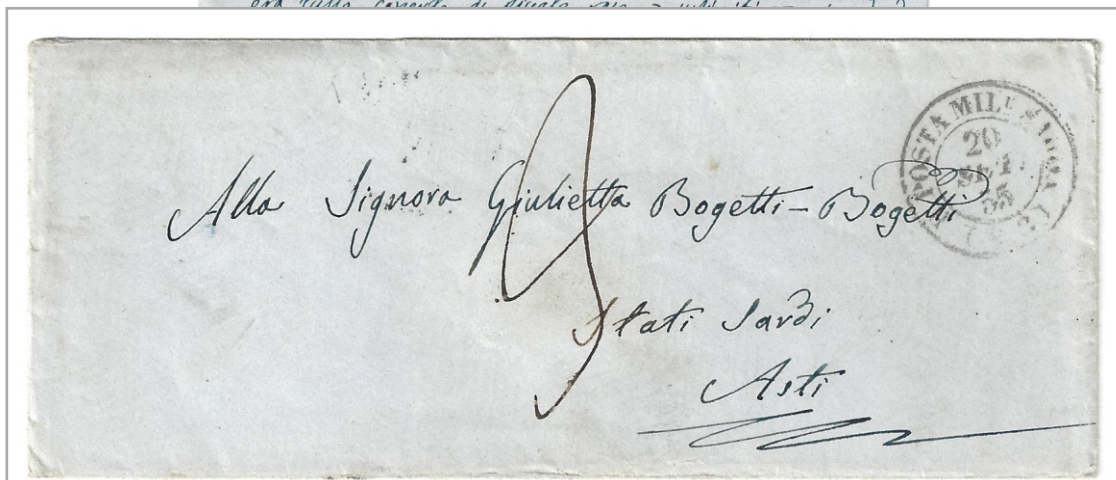
Fenton's image of the British cavalry camp, looking towards Kadikoi where the Sardinians encamped.



type 3

A type 3 device with "(N.3)" at foot was supplied to the Sardinian Army office at the lazaretto of Jenikoi outside of Constantinople.

*Giulietta mia diletta*  
 Jenikoi - 16 Sett<sup>bre</sup> - 20<sup>a</sup> lettera  
 Ah ah!! Questa volta sono uscito non soltanto dalla baracca  
 ma anche dalla cinta dell'ospedale, e sono andato a passeggiare  
 per il paese. Parvai vicino alla casa che una volta  
 era abitata da me e da Arri - era ora è occupata da un  
 dottore e da vari impiegati delle Sanzioni militari.  
 Tutte le finestre erano chiuse, e da esse più non udivano  
 quelle onde di canto con armonione colle quali il mio  
 amico dell'infanzia declava l'ammirazione di tutto il  
 vicinato. Procedendo più oltre incontrai un lungo  
 marciapiede che prima della mia partenza per la Crimea  
 era tutto coperto di arredo -



16-20 September 1855 Sardinian soldier's letter and cover dated from Jenikoi to Asti, Sardinia  
 20 September 1855 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA (N.3)" (type 3) dispatch postmark, "3" decimes due  
 2 October 1855 Genoa transit and Asti arrival backstamps  
**fewer than 5 examples of the type 3 known**



# Sardinian Military Mail

## Mail between Soldiers



type 3



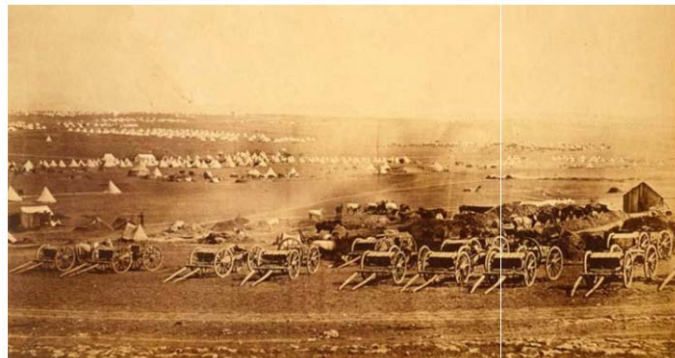
type 2



10 July 1855 Constantinople soldier's letter and cover to fellow Sardinian soldier at Kamara, "3" decimes due

10 July 1855 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" (type 3) origin postmark

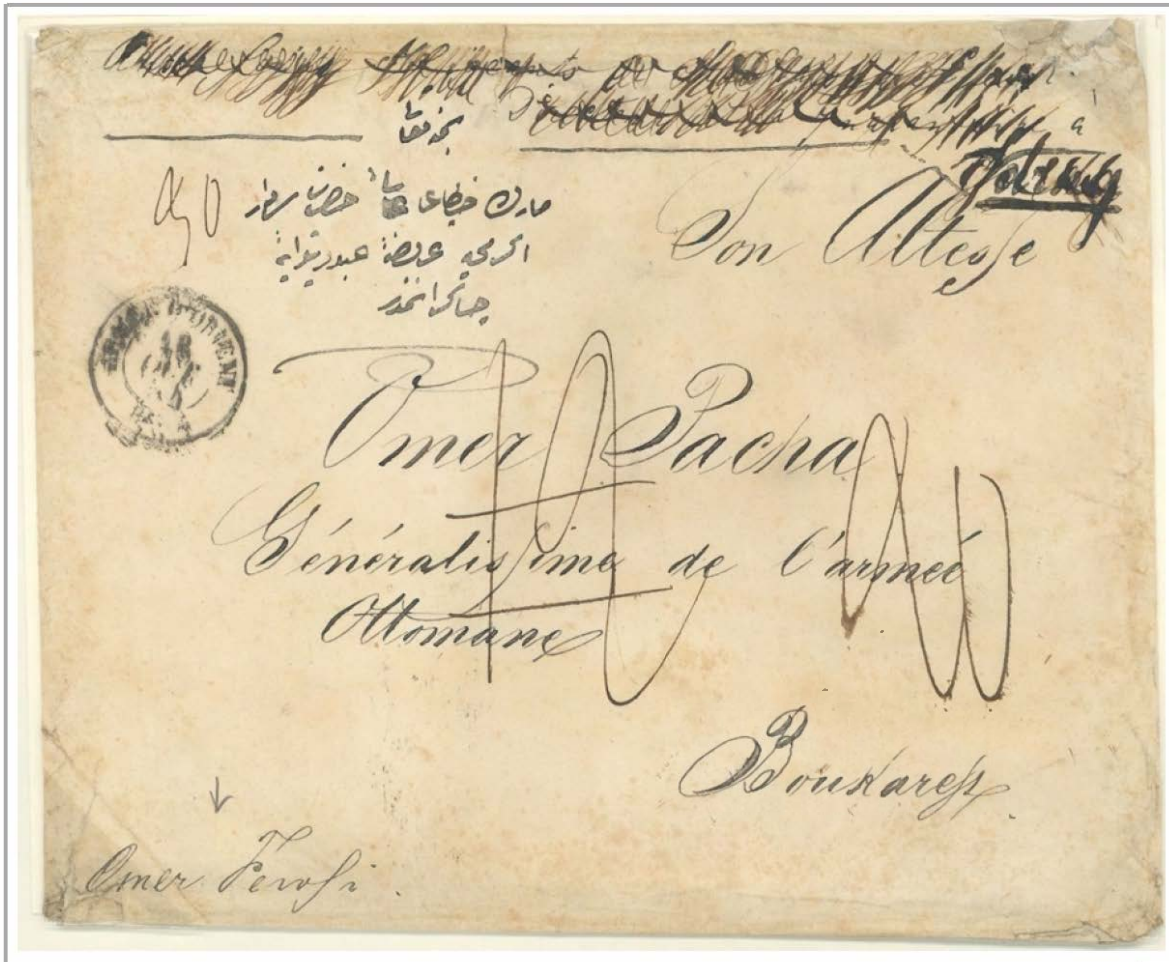
12 July 1855 "R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA" (type 2, in black) arrival backstamp



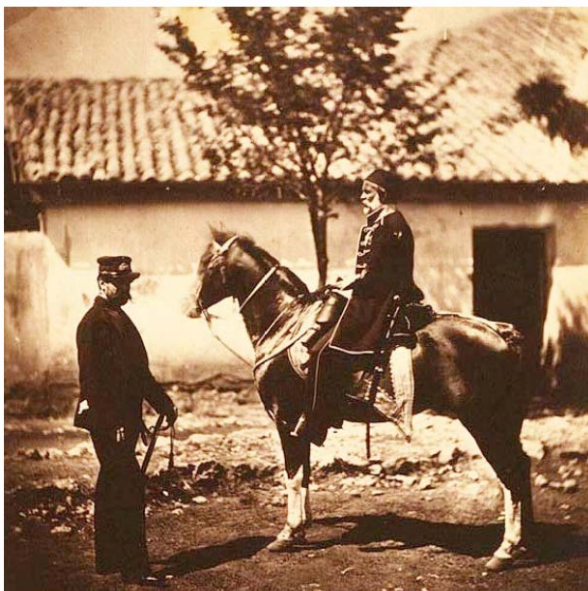
Fenton's image looking towards Sardinian positions at Kamara.



Cover to Omar Pasha in Bucharest



18 October 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> A" origin postmark (Varna) to Omer Pasha at Bucharest endorsed from Omer Ferassi and addressed to General Omar Pasha commanding the Ottoman forces  
20 October 1854 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> SED<sup>RE</sup>" arrival backstamp, 30 centimes due rate



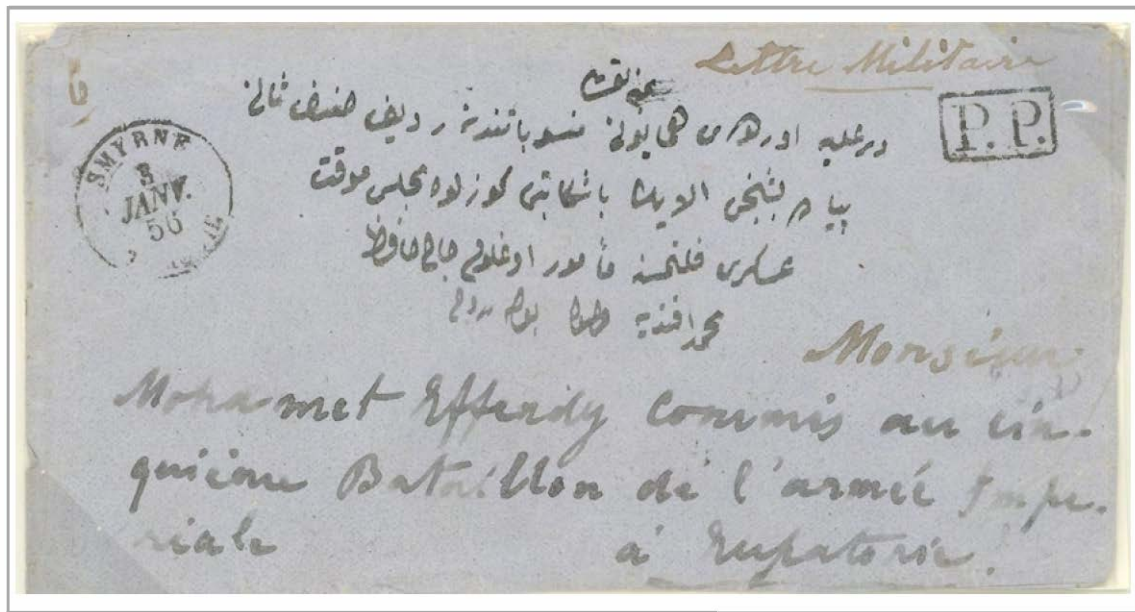
Omar Pasha, an ethnic Serb and a Christian, was the commander of the Ottoman forces in Moldavia and Wallachia during the Crimean War. On 29 October 1853 he led the Turkish Army across the Danube River at Kalafat (between Romania and Bulgaria), on 22 August 1854 he entered Bucharest and in 1855 he defeated the Russians at Eupatoria.



Cover to a Turkish Soldier in Eupatoria



Landing of the Turkish Troops at Eupatoria, Omar Pasha at left



3 January 1856 French office in Smyrna, Turkey to "Mohamet Efferdy" at Eupatoria, boxed "P.P." handstamp  
6 January 1856 Constantinople French office transit backstamp  
6 January 1856 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> M" (Kamiesch) transit backstamp

The Turkish troops defeated the Russians at Eupatoria on 17 February 1855 in an important military engagement. The victory gave the Allies total command of the sea and ensured that their forces could concentrate on Savastopol without fear of an attack on their flank. In the summer of 1855 the Turkish troops numbered 55,000 including units at Sabastopol, Eupatoria and Yeni Kale.



Mail related to the Turkish forces during the Crimean War is essentially unknown in philatelic hands. The Turkish forces were almost totally illiterate except for the officers. Some items, such as the cover shown on this page, remain enigmatic. The three items shown in this portion of the exhibit are all that have been reported.



7 August 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT B<sup>AU</sup> C<sup>AL</sup>" (Constantinople) origin postmark on cover to Eupatoria  
blue Turkish handstamp appears to read "Free/Superior/People Interests/ Officer/ Ottoman Empire"  
cover appears to be addressed to a German doctor of Medicine in the service of the Turks  
10 August 1855 "ARMÉE D'ORIENT QUART<sup>R</sup> G<sup>AL</sup>" arrival backstamp, 4 decimes double rate due



seal inscribed "Hanseatische Gesandtschaft in Constantinople" on reverse  
from Hanseatic towns embassy in Constantinople

The Turkish troops defeated the Russians at Eupatoria on 17 February 1855 in an important military engagement. The victory gave the Allies total command of the sea and ensured that their forces could concentrate on Savastopol without fear of an attack on their flank. In the summer of 1855 the Turkish troops numbered 55,000 including units at Savastopol, Eupatoria and Yeni Kale.

# Russian Military Mail

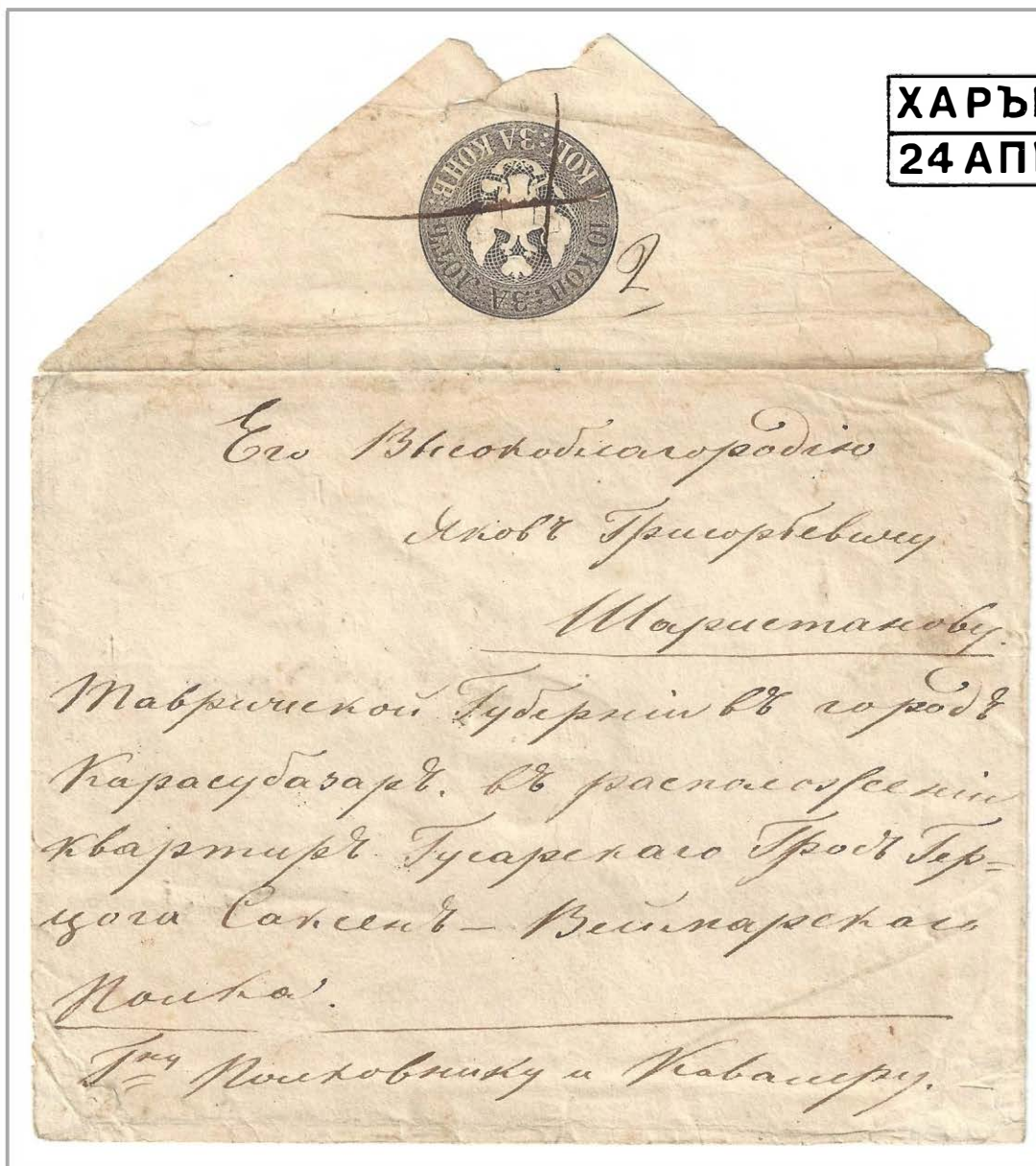
## Overview



The few surviving artifacts of Russian military mail, all being mail between officers or officials, is a testament to the low literacy rate of the the common Russian soldier. The covers that do survive were either carried by the regular Russian postal system, using postal stationery that was current at the time, special carriers, or a combination of postal system and courier.

There are no special markings reported for the Russian military. Postmarks are dated with Julian calendar dates which are roughly 12 days ahead of Gregorian calendar dates.

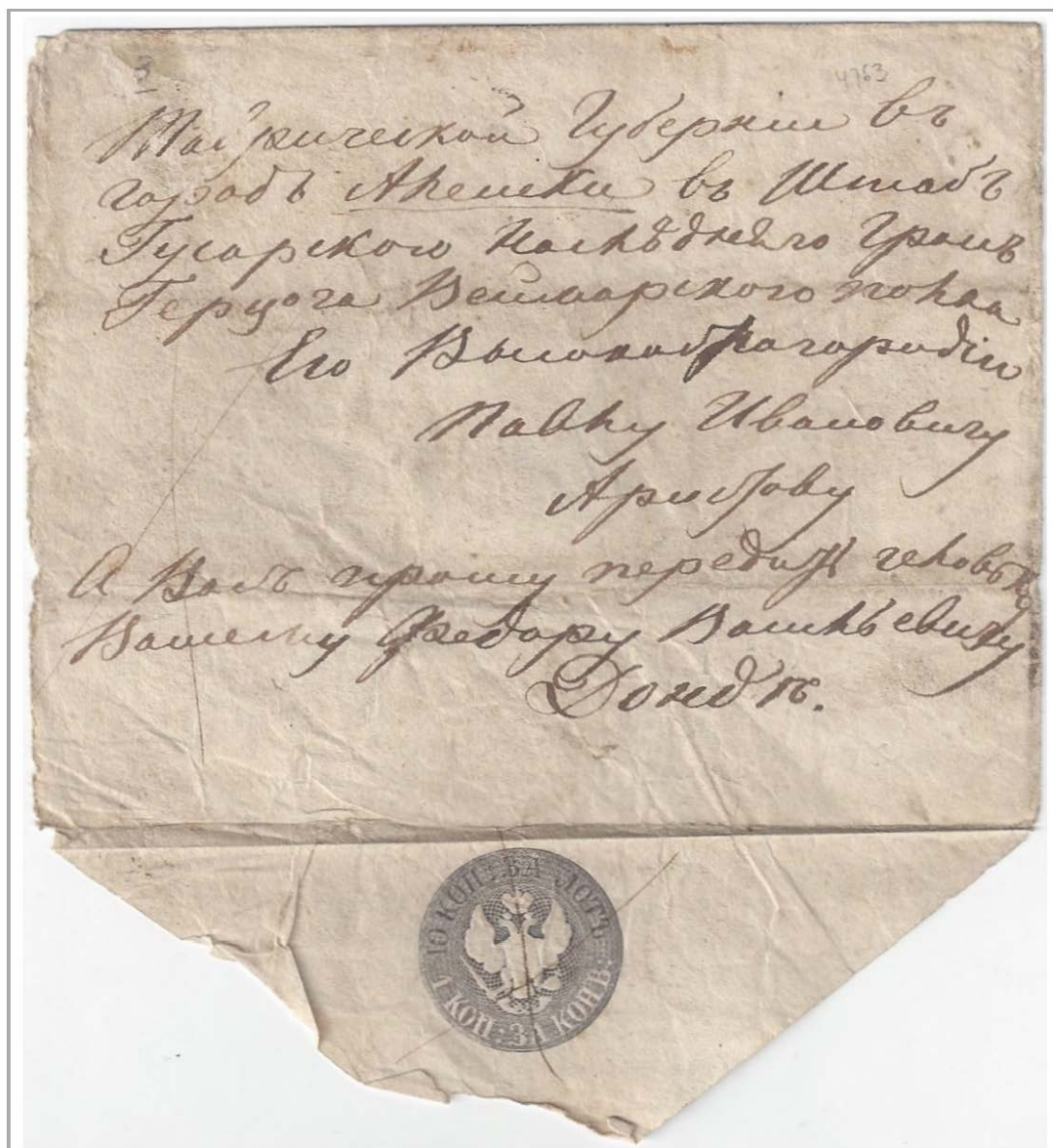
**Postage Rates** - During the Crimean War the postal rate for a letter sent within the Russian Empire was 10 kopeck per 1.5 loth weight. Prepaid postal stationery envelopes were available and were sold for 1 kopeck additional to include the cost of the envelope.



ХАРЬКОВЪ  
24 АПР.1854

6 May 1854 Kharkov to Karasubazar, Taurida Province (the province that includes Crimean Peninsula) addressed to "His Highness (Colonel) Y.G. Sharistanov, Hussars Gros Hertzok Saksen Weimar Regiment" prepaid 10k postal stationery, Kharkov boxed datestamp (24 April = 6 May) on reverse

On 25 October 1854, two squadrons of this Hussars cavalry regiment famously engaged the Light Brigade.

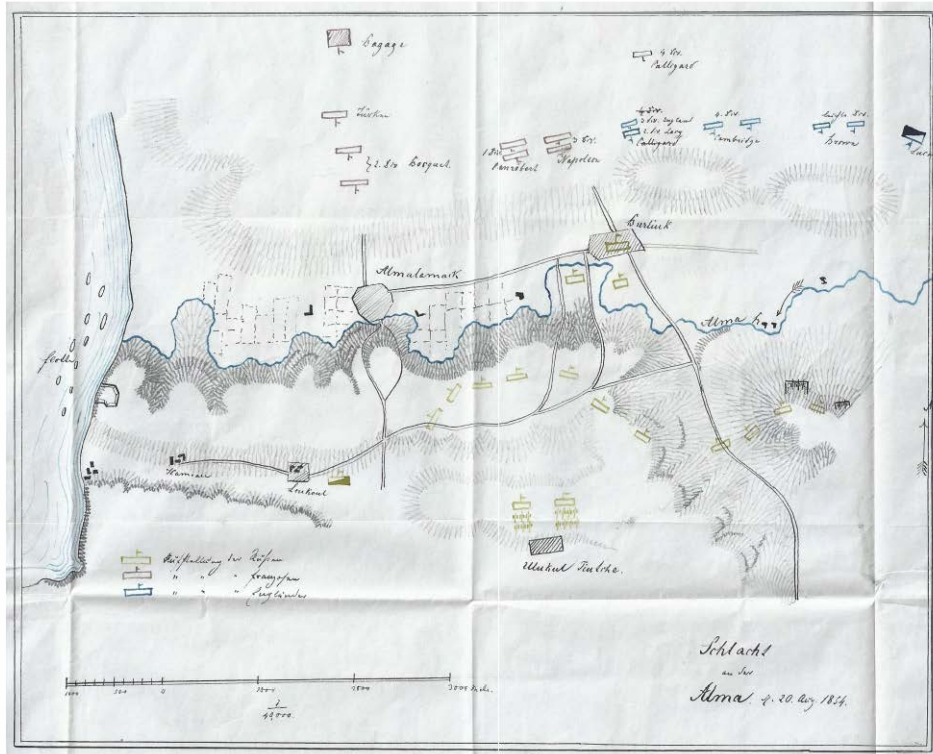


May 1854 St. Petersburg to Aleshi, Taurida Province (the province that includes Crimean Peninsula) addressed to P.I. Aribob, Hussar Gross Herzog Weimar Regiment for transmission to T. V. Dondee prepaid 10k postal stationery, St. Petersburg boxed origin datestamp on reverse

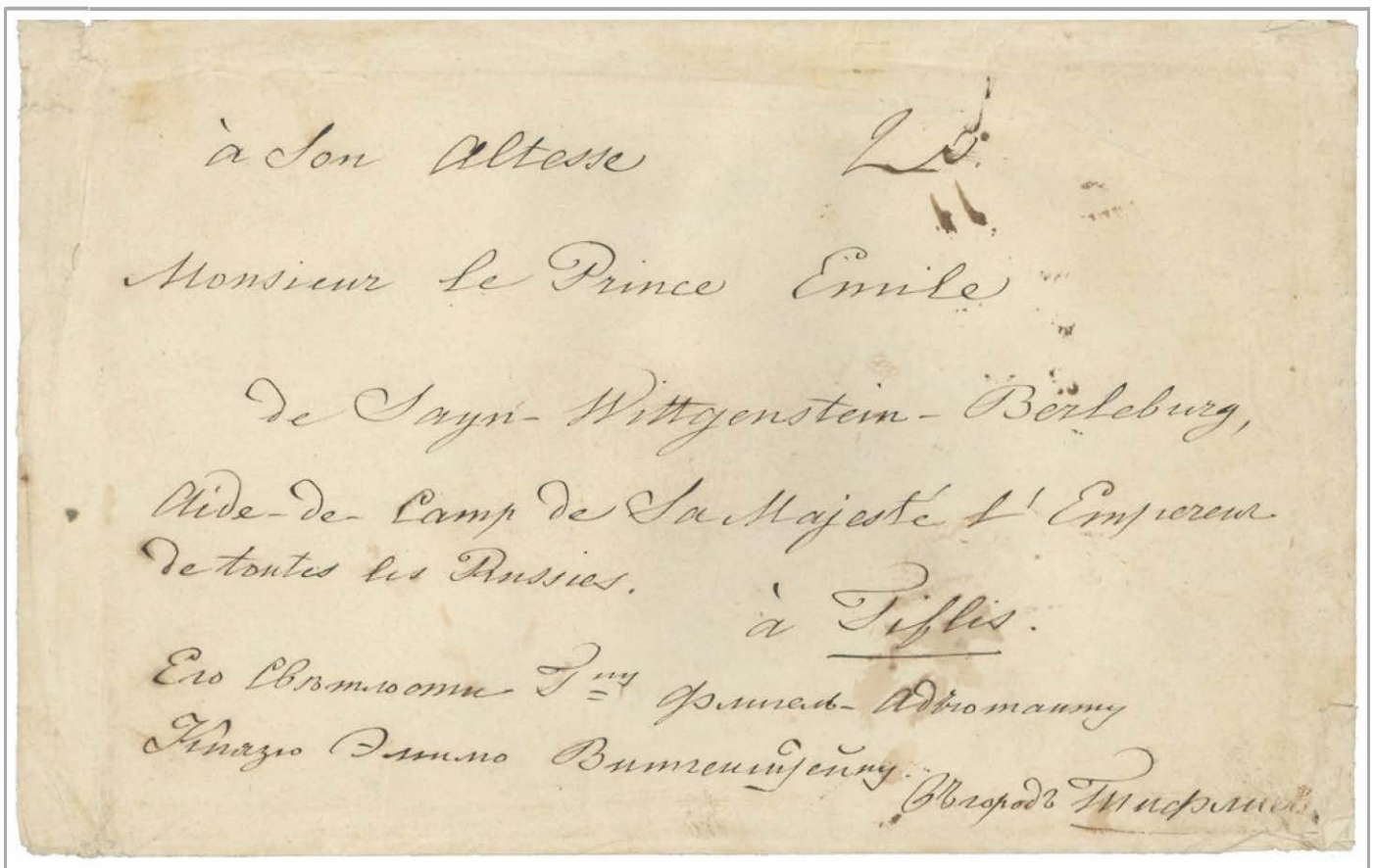
On 25 October 1854, two squadrons of this Hussars cavalry regiment famously engaged the Light Brigade of the 93rd Highlanders. The Russian cavalry officer Lieutenant Koribut-Kubitovich stated that the two Hussar units that participated at Balaklava were the Leuchtenburg and Saxe-Weimar regiments. He suggests the two Hussar regiments:

*... moved forward in fine order and started to deploy, heedless of the artillery fire. The Weimar Regiment deployed in the first line, extending six squadrons with four guns on each flank, these being covered by a squadron in column on each flank, too. In the second line were the Leuchtenburg men in attack columns.*

**Russian Military Mail**  
**German Prince in the Service of the Czar**



the enclosed plan of the battle of Alma dated 20 August 1854 (reduced)



27 November 1854 Stuttgart dated letter and cover, backstamped in St. Petersburg, to Tiflis, manuscript 20 rate addressed to his Highness, the Prince Emile Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg, aid-de-camp to the Emperor of Russia 8 page letter, dated Stuttgart, enclosing colored plans for the battle of Alma and the siege of Sevastopol



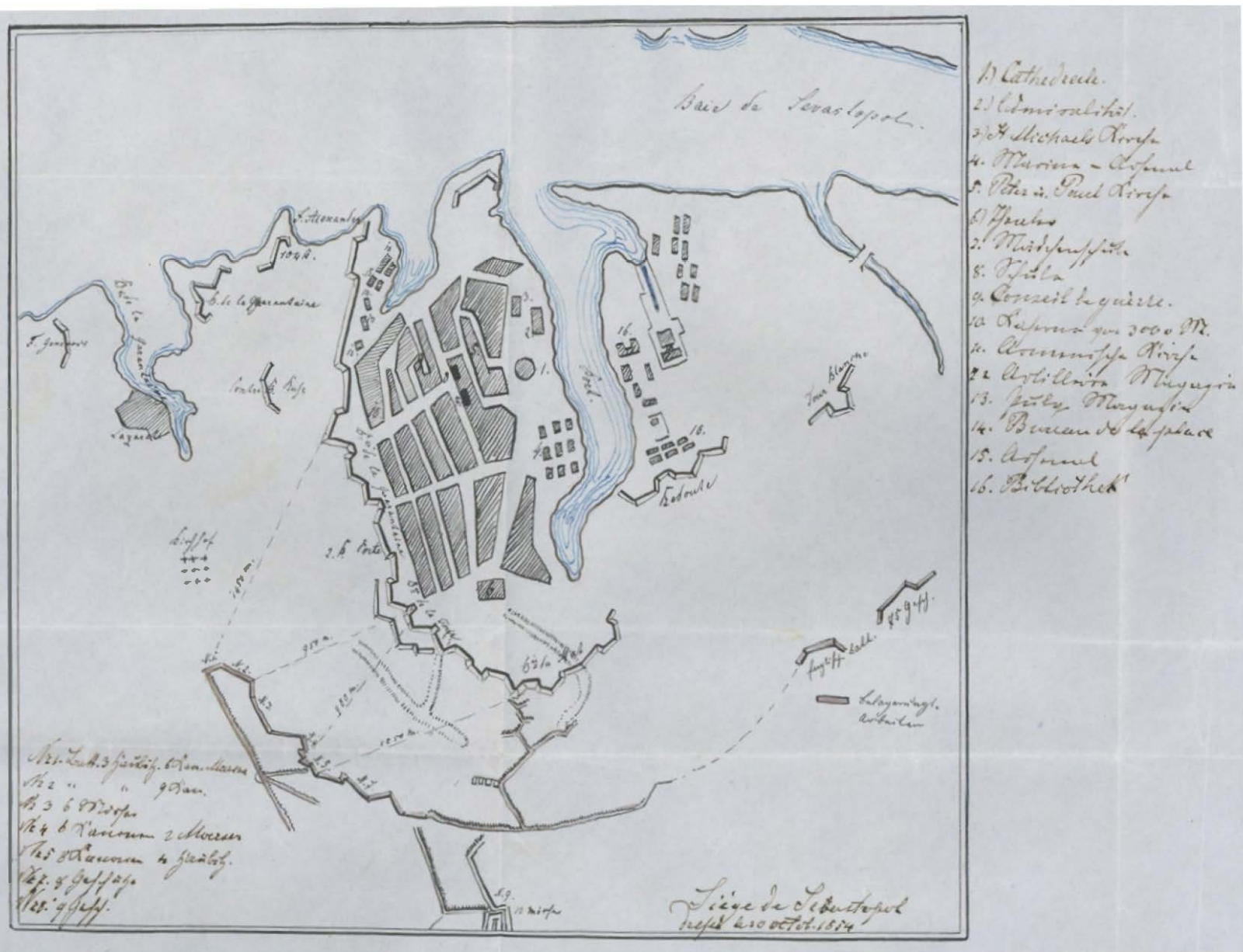
Siege of Sevastopol

Siege of Sevastopol Timeline for 1854:

- 14 Sep - Allies land at Eupatoria
- 20 Sep - Battle of Alma
- 4 Oct - Allies begin building siege lines
- 17 Oct - Russian artillery silences a French battery
- Nov - Winter storm ruins Allies' supply lines

Siege of Sevastopol Timeline for 1855:

- 8 Apr - Allies resume bombardment
- 10 Jul - Russian Admiral killed by sniper
- 5 Sep - Allies sixth and most severe bombardment
- 8 Sep - Final allied assault with 60,000 troops
- 9 Sep - Russian forces begin to evacuate



plan entitled "Siege of Sebastopol" drafted "20 October 1854"  
 the second plan sent in previous cover sent from Stuttgart, via St. Petersburg to Tiflis