

## Military Postal History of the 1859 Italian War

**Background:** Tensions between the Austrian Empire and the Kingdom of Sardinia culminated in an Austrian ultimatum on April 23, 1859. France's Second Empire mobilized in support of Sardinia, and six corps were sent over the Alps to Torino or by sea to Genova. The Austrians struck first, invading Piedmont from Pavia on April 29 and threatening Torino. The allies left a weak force to defend Torino along the Dora Baltea and concentrated the bulk of their forces on the Alessandria/Valenza/Casale line. On May 28, the allies moved north across the Po River from Valenza/Casale and defeated the Austrians at Palestro, forcing their retreat to the Ticino. A major battle then occurred at Magenta on June 4, resulting in another Austrian retreat from Milano to the Mincio. The allies pursued and, in the largest battle of the war, defeated the Austrians at Solferino and at San Martino on June 24. An armistice was signed on July 8, followed by the November 10 Treaty of Zurich, which ceded Lombardy to Sardinia. A five-division French occupation force remained in Lombardy and Parma from August 1859 until July 1860 to prevent any renewed hostilities.

**Geography:** The map below of northern Italy shows the movements of the Franco-Sardinian allies (in green) from Alessandria/Valenza to Magenta and then Solferino. The Austrian movements are shown in orange, starting with the invasion of Piedmont, followed by the retreat to the quadrilateral fortresses of Peschiera, Verona, Mantova and Legnago. The battle locations are highlighted in red.



**The Mails:** All of the combatants provided fieldpost services that travelled with their armies in the field. The French fieldpost was initially named the “Armée des Alpes” but re-named “Armée d’Italie” in early June. Letters with “Armée des Alpes” postmarks are particularly prized by philatelists.

**Scope and Study:** This exhibit shows letters from all of the armies engaged in the war. Of particular note are Austrian fieldpost letters, French military letters mailed at Sardinian civilian post offices, and Sardinian fieldpost letters with Sardinian postage stamps.

The heading of each page identifies the period of the war, and greater information is given in text boxes and in the descriptions of the letters shown.

# Austrian Invasion of Piedmont

## Advance to Vercelli – April 29-May 29, 1859



The Austrians initiated hostilities on April 29 when they crossed the Ticino into Piedmont. They advanced toward Vercelli and Casale, threatening both Torino and Alessandria. The advance was led by the III Corps, followed by the VIII, II, VII and V Corps.

Military postal departments were established on April 29 at Verona and Milano, and each corps was assigned a bureau.



Dated May 12 at Mortara (near Palestro) – posted next day at Fieldpost No. 4  
From the colonel of the 21<sup>st</sup> Regiment in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of the V Corps  
Arrived on May 17 in Vienna – 15 kreuzer due (3<sup>rd</sup> zone rate)



“Austrian Artillery”

## Allied Concentration South of the Po River

### Sardinian Movement to Casale – May 1-28, 1859

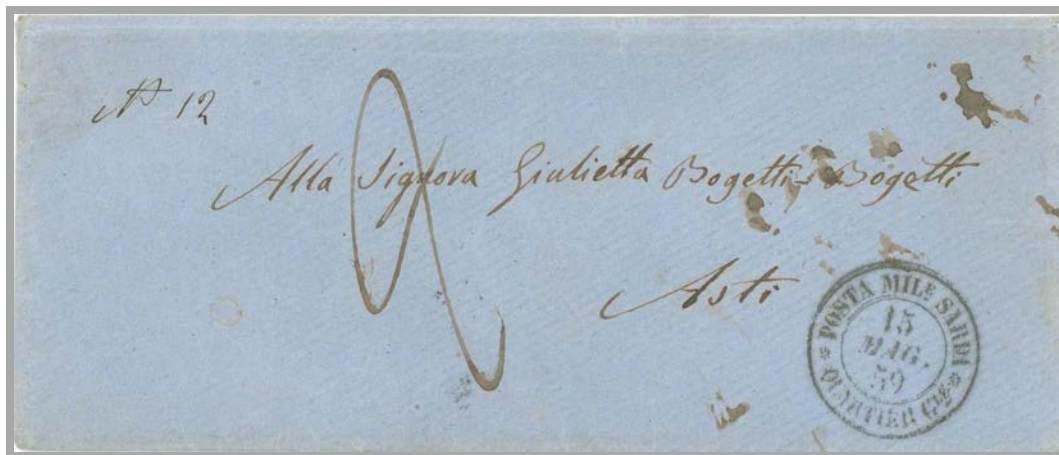


On May 1, the Sardinian army shifted to positions around Casale, leaving only a weak force to protect Torino along the Dora Baltea.

On May 2, military fieldpost bureaus were assigned to the headquarters, five infantry divisions, and the cavalry division. These offices began operations on May 8-9.



Postmarked R. POSTA MILE<sup>E</sup> SARDA (N. 5) on May 26 at the 5<sup>th</sup> Division bureau  
20 centesimi due – arrived near Genova on May 28



Datelined Occimiano (between Alessandria and Casale) on May 15, 1859  
Postmarked POSTA MILE<sup>E</sup> SARDA QUARTIER GLE on May 15 – 20c due



## Allied Concentration South of the Po River

### Sardinian Movement to Casale – May 1-28, 1859



Sardinian military postal rates were the 20 centesimi per 7.5 grams domestic rate, whether prepaid or sent unpaid. Most mail from the military bureaus was sent unpaid, although a few letters were franked with stamps of the 1855 Issue.



Dateline at Casale on May 27 – postage **prepaid with 1855 20c stamp**  
Postmarked at headquarters bureau on May 27 – arrived same day in Torino



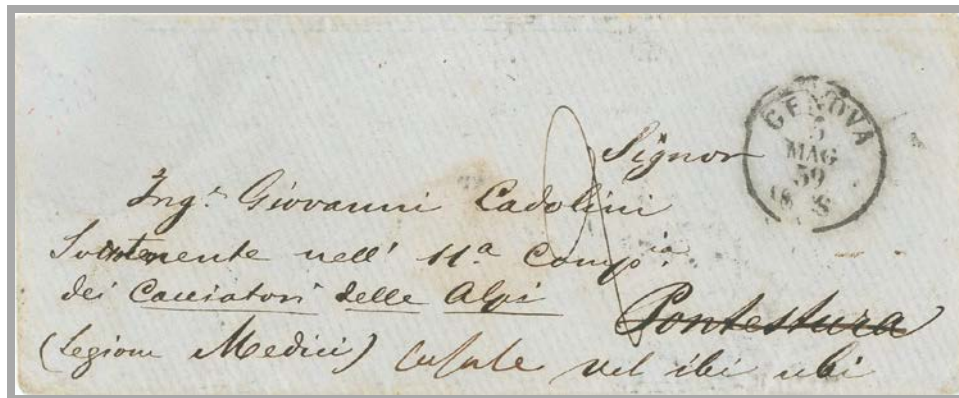
Dateline at Stroppiana (north of Casale) on May 28 – **prepaid with 1855 20c stamp**  
Postmarked at 3<sup>rd</sup> Division bureau on May 28 – arrived May 29 in Torino

# Allied Concentration South of the Po River

## Sardinian Defense of Torino – April 23-May 21, 1859



Garibaldi's Cacciatori delle Alpi brigade was attached to the Cavalry Division from April 27 to May 21. On May 10, it reinforced the division along the Dora Baltea, protecting Torino. On May 22, it left for its celebrated campaign in northern Lombardy.



(image of envelope front at 90%)

Addressed to the Medici Legion of the Cacciatori delle Alpi



Posted unpaid at Genova on May 5 – initially sent to Pontestura (near Casale)  
Arrived May 7 at Pontestura – forwarded to Casale and then to Torino on May 12  
May 13 **POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA DIV<sup>E</sup> CAVALL<sup>A</sup> arrival postmark** – 20c due

# Allied Concentration South of the Po River

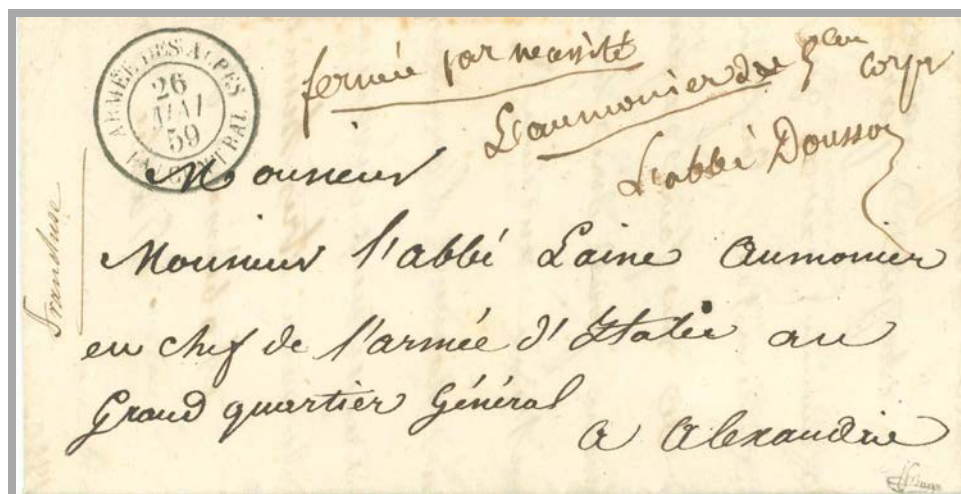
## French Movement to Alessandria – May 1-28, 1859



The Armée des Alpes fieldpost was formed on April 25 with payeurs at the headquarters and the central postal bureau at Genova. In addition, the Garde Impériale and the 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> corps had bureaus at headquarters and at each division. Earliest known postmark is May 10.



May 20 “Armée des Alpes G<sup>d</sup> Q<sup>r</sup> G<sup>al</sup>” postmark– 1853 20c cancelled “AAQG”



Dated at Genova on May 26 and postmarked “Armée des Alpes B<sup>au</sup> Central”  
**Received at the Bureau Spécial de l'Empereur** at Alessandria on May 27  
No postage due on mail between military bureaus



# Allied Concentration South of the Po River

French Landing at Genova – April 26-May 19, 1859



The headquarters, Garde Impériale, 1<sup>st</sup> Corps and 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps were transported by sea to Genova. Initial units of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps arrived on April 26. While the army and payeurs were still in transit, the handling of their mails was difficult.



Dated "Gênes le 6 mai 1859" – handled by 1<sup>st</sup> Corps payeur at Marseille  
Boxed Marseille "**Correspondance des armées**" marking - rated for 30c due  
From an officer later killed at Solferino – arrived in Angers on May 10  
**Fewer than ten letters are known with this boxed marking**



**Postmarked at Genova** on May 15 – prepaid with French 1853 20c stamp  
Sent by a headquarters artillery officer - entered France via Torino on May 17  
5 décimes due corrected to 30 centimes to reflect 20 centimes prepayment

# Allied Concentration South of the Po River

## French Movement to Alessandria – May 1-28, 1859



Before the first payeur arrived at Alessandria on May 8, some of the French mail was handled by the Sardinian post office, where both French and Sardinian stamps were accepted for the 20 centesimi prepayments. Due amounts in France were 50 centimes per 7.5 grams, per the July 1, 1851 Franco-Sardinian Treaty.



**Postmarked at Alessandria** on May 3 – prepaid with French 1853 20c stamp  
Sent by an officer on Napoléon III's staff - entered France via Torino on May 6  
5 décimes due corrected to 3 décimes to reflect 20 centimes prepayment



**Cursive Alessandria postmark** – Sardinian 1859 20c stamp cancelled on May 8  
May 8 Alessandria-Torino railroad postmark – arrived in Campan on May 14  
Sent by Baron Larrey, Chief Medical Officer of the army - 5 décimes due



# Allied Concentration South of the Po River

## Bureau Spécial de l'Empereur – May 13-31, 1859



Napoléon III arrived in Genova on May 12, and his military postal bureau began operations on the next day. It moved to Alessandria on May 14. Imperial dispatches were sent twice daily, via Torino and Genova.



Posted unpaid at the "Bureau Spécial de l'Empereur" on May 13  
Arrived in Paris on May 15 - rated for 30 centimes due  
**Earliest known date from this bureau**

## Allied Concentration South of the Po River

### French Movement to Alessandria – May 1-28, 1859



Mail to and from military postal offices was subject to domestic postal rates: 20 centimes per 7.5 grams if prepaid and 30 centimes due if not prepaid. Registered mail was subject to a 20 centimes fee.



Dated May 28 at Alessandria by an officer in the Garde Impériale  
Postmarked at the Bureau Spécial de l'Empereur on May 27  
Arrived May 30 in Paris – 30c due



Postmarked at the Bureau Spécial de l'Empereur at Alessandria on May 25  
1853 20c stamp cancelled "BSE" – arrived May 28

# Allied Concentration South of the Po River

## French Movement to Alessandria – May 1-28, 1859



The 1<sup>st</sup> Corps used Bureaus A, B and C for its three infantry divisions, and Bureau D for its cavalry division. The corps landed at Genova and moved to Alessandria on May 7.



Posted May 13 at Bureau C of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps' 3<sup>rd</sup> Division near Alessandria  
1853 20c stamp cancelled "AAC" - arrived on May 17 in Paris  
**Armée des Alpes postmarks were only used from May 8 to June 7**



Posted on May 11 at Bureau A of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps' 1<sup>st</sup> Division near Alessandria  
Arrived in Pallua on May 19 – 30 centimes due for unpaid letter



# Allied Concentration South of the Po River

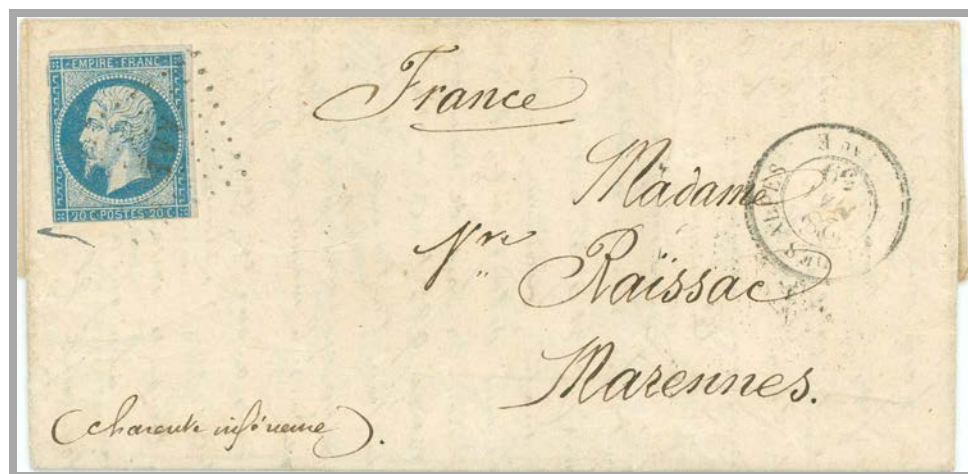
## French Movement to Alessandria – May 1-28, 1859



The 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps used Bureaus E and F for its two infantry divisions, and Bureau H for its cavalry brigade. The corps landed at Genova and followed the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps to Alessandria.



Postmarked “**Armée des Alpes Bau H**” on May 24 - Cavalry Brigade  
1853 20c stamp cancelled “AAH” - arrived on May 17 in Paris  
Bureau H suppressed in June – “AAH” cancel later used by the 5<sup>th</sup> Corps



Datelined at Oriollo (near Montebello) on May 26 – 1853 20c cancelled “AAE”  
1<sup>st</sup> Division “**Armée des Alpes Bau E**” May 28 postmark - arrived in Palluau on June 2

## Allied Concentration South of the Po River

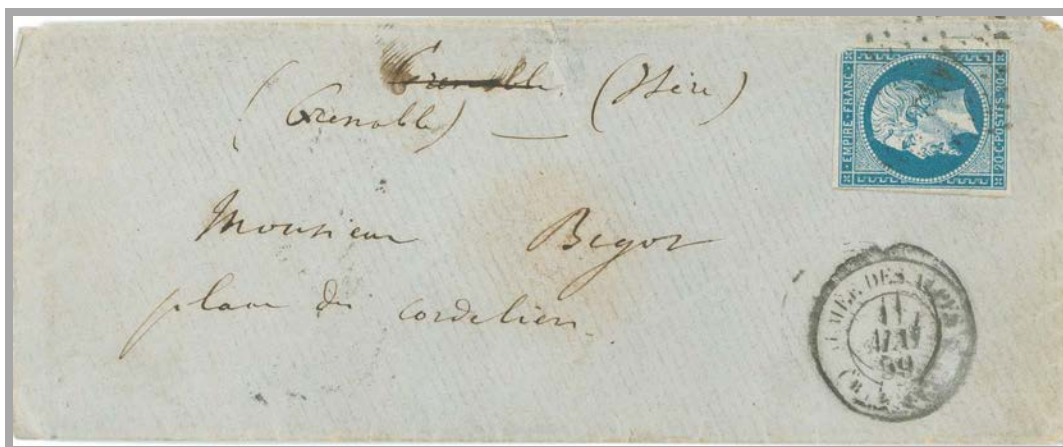
### French Movement to Alessandria – May 1-28, 1859



The 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps used Bureaus I, K and L for its three infantry divisions, and Bureau M for its cavalry division. It crossed the Alps to Torino and pivoted to Alessandria. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps payeur reached Alessandria on May 8, and was the first postal agent there.



Datelined “Alexandrie le 5 mai 1859” from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps  
Prepaid by 1859 Sardinian 20c stamp - **cancelled Alessandria on May 6**  
Written before the Armée des Alpes bureau K was in operation



May 11 “**Armée des Alpes Q<sup>r</sup> G<sup>l</sup> 3<sup>e</sup> Corps**” postmark – 1853 20c stamp cancelled “AA3C”  
Arrived in Grenoble on May 14 – earliest known 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps postmark

# Allied Concentration South of the Po River

## French Movement to Alessandria – May 1-28, 1859



The 4<sup>th</sup> Corps used Bureaus N, O and P for its three infantry divisions, and Bureau Q for its cavalry brigade. The corps crossed the Alps to Torino and moved southeast to Alessandria.



Written by a captain in the 55<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division of the 4<sup>th</sup> Corps  
Postmarked “**Armée des Alpes Q<sup>r</sup> G<sup>l</sup> 4<sup>e</sup> Corps**” on May 12 - “AA4C” cancel



Posted unpaid on June 1 at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division’s “**Armée des Alpes Bau P**”  
Arrived in Marines on June 8 - 30c postage due



# Allied Concentration South of the Po River

## French Movement to Tuscany – May 12-June 11, 1859



The 5<sup>th</sup> Corps used Bureaus R, S and T. It sailed to Genova, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division and Cavalry Brigade were sent to Firenze from May 17 to June 11.



Postmarked “**Armée des Alpes Q<sup>r</sup> G<sup>l</sup> 5<sup>e</sup> Corps**” at Genova on May 12  
1853 20c cancelled “AA5C” – arrived in Paris on May 16



Posted with free frank on June 5 at “**Armée d’Italie Bau T**” at Firenze – arrived June 12  
Red cursive “**Son Altesse Impériale le Prince Napoléon (2)**” (commander of the 5<sup>th</sup> Corps)



## Allied Concentration South of the Po River

### Battle of Montebello – May 20, 1859

On May 12, the 1<sup>st</sup> Division of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps began an eastward movement from Alessandria. On May 20, they encountered Austrian units from the V Corps, IX Corps and the Reserve Division at Montebello. The 74<sup>th</sup>, 84<sup>th</sup> and 98<sup>th</sup> Regiments led the French to a decisive victory.



Written at Casteggio (near Montebello) on May 26 by a sergeant in the 84<sup>th</sup> Regiment  
Posted unpaid at the “**Armée des Alpes Bau A**” on May 27 – 30 centimes due  
Routed over the Alps via Torino and Lyon to Colmar on June 1



“Bataille de Montebello” by Henri Philippoteaux (1862)

# Allied Offensive Across the Po River

## French Movement to Novara - May 28-June 4, 1859



On May 28, the French moved north across the Po from Alessandria. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Corps led the advance to Novara, while the Garde Impériale guarded Alessandria at Casale.



Dated "Novarre le 4 juin" and postmarked "Armée d'Italie G<sup>d</sup> Q<sup>r</sup> Gal" on June 6  
1853 20c stamp cancelled "AAQG" - arrived at Vincennes on June 8



Postmarked "Garde Imp<sup>le</sup> Quartier Gal" on May 31 - 1853 20c cancelled "G.I.Q.G"



# Allied Offensive Across the Po River

## French Movement to Novara – May 28–June 4, 1859



Around June 1, the Armée des Alpes fieldpost service was re-named, and new “Armée d’Italie” datestamps were provided to the payeurs from June 2 to June 8. The “AA” cancels remained in use.



Datelined at Boigo Vercelli (southwest of Novara) on May 30  
Posted unpaid at the “Armée d’Italie Q<sup>r</sup> G<sup>l</sup> 4<sup>e</sup> Corps” bureau on June 2  
From a major in the 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment - arrived at Miribel on June 6  
**Earliest known “Armée d’Italie” postmark**



Datelined “near Novara” on June 1 – 30c due for unpaid letter  
Posted at the 4<sup>th</sup> Corps’ “**Armée des Alpes Bau N**” on June 1 – arrived June 4

# Allied Offensive Across the Po River

## French Movement to Novara – May 28–June 4, 1859



When the French moved north to Novara, they left payeurs at Alessandria as part of the garrison. They used two types of military postmarks and the “AAZ” cancel.



Postmarked “Armée d’Italie Bau Z” on June 1 at Alessandria  
1853 20c stamp cancelled “AAZ” - arrived on June 3



Postmarked “ALEXANDRIE ETATS SARDES” on June 9 – 1853 20c cancelled “AAZ”  
Fewer than five examples of this postmark are known

## Allied Offensive Across the Po River

### Sardinian Movement to Palestro – May 28-June 4, 1859



On May 28, the Sardinian army moved east across the Sesia River toward Palestro. The 4<sup>th</sup> Division led the advance, supported by the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Divisions.



Dateline at Pomaro (near Casale) on May 26 by a 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment soldier  
Postmarked R. POSTA MILE SARDA (N. 5) on May 27 - 5<sup>th</sup> Division bureau  
20 centesimi due – arrived in the Savoie on May 31



Postmarked R. POSTA MILE (N. 1) on May 28 at the 1<sup>st</sup> Division bureau – 20c due



# Allied Offensive Across the Po River

## Battle of Palestro – May 30-31, 1859



Advancing east, the Sardinian 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Divisions attacked units of the Austrian VII Corps at Palestro, pushing them back. They then repelled a counterattack by units of the II and VII Corps. The Austrians retreated toward the Ticino.



Postmarked R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA (N. 4) on June 1 at the 4<sup>th</sup> Division bureau  
Prepaid with **1855 20 centisimi stamp** – arrived in San Germano on June 3



**"Presa di Palestro del 30 Maggio" by Gerolamo Induno (1860)**

# Allied Offensive Across the Po River

## Battle of Magenta – June 4, 1859



After capturing Novara on June 1, the French moved east across the Ticino toward Milano, led by the Garde and 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps. They attacked the Austrian I and II Corps at Magenta on June 4. The III and VII Corps reinforced the Austrians, but the arrival of the French 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Corps and the Sardinian 2<sup>nd</sup> Division turned the tide. The Austrians retreated to the southeast.



Dateline "Magenta le 6 juin 1859" by a sergeant in the 49<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the 4<sup>th</sup> Corps  
Posted unpaid at the "Armée d'Italie Q<sup>r</sup> G<sup>l</sup> 4<sup>e</sup> Corps" bureau on June 7 – 30c due



Posted at the "**Bureau Spécial de l'Empereur**" at Magenta on June 6 – red "BSE" cancel

# Allied Occupation of Milano

Occupation – June 7-11, 1859



After the June 4 Battle of Magenta, the Austrians abandoned Milano and retreated southeast toward Lodi. On June 7, the French 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps entered Milano, followed by Napoléon and the army headquarters on the following day.



Datelined “Milan le 10 juin 1859” by soldier in the 70<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps  
Posted unpaid at the “Armée d’Italie Bau E” on June 11 – 30 centimes due



Posted underpaid at the “Garde Imp<sup>le</sup> 2<sup>e</sup> Don” bureau at Milano on June 11  
1853 20c **stamp cancelled “AAS”** – 4 décimes due for doubleweight letter



# Allied Occupation of Milano

## Battle of Melegnano – June 8, 1859



The French 1<sup>st</sup> Corps moved south through Milano in pursuit of the retreating Austrians. They attacked the VIII Corps rear guard at Melegnano on June 8. The Austrians retreated southeast toward Lodi.



Dated "Mélagno 9 juin 1859" by soldier in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps  
Posted prepaid at the "Armée d'Italie Q<sup>r</sup> G<sup>l</sup> 1<sup>r</sup> Corps" on June 10 – arrived June 14



Dated "Malegnano le 10 juin 1859" by a sergeant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Regiment  
Posted unpaid at the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps' "Armée d'Italie B<sup>au</sup> B" on June 11  
Routed via Torino and Lyon to Lagnieu on June 17 – 30c due

## Allied Advance to Brescia

### Sardinian Army – June 11-23, 1859



On June 11, the Sardinian army moved deeper into Austrian Lombardy. It formed the northern flank of the allied armies advancing from Milano to Brescia.

The only possible use of Sardinian stamps in Lombardy during June was at the military bureaus. Civilian use in Lombardy was not authorized until July 1, 1859.



Posted on June 22 at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division bureau east of Brescia  
**Prepaid with 1855 Sardinian 20c stamp** – arrived in Arquata on June 24



Dateline at Travagliato (west of Brescia) on June 16 – 20c due  
Postmarked POSTA MILE SARDA DIV<sup>E</sup> CAVALL<sup>A</sup> on June 19 – arrived June 22

## Allied Advance to Brescia

French Army – June 11-23, 1859



On June 11, the French army moved toward Brescia from positions at Melegnano and Milano. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps formed the southern flank of the advancing army.



Posted at the “Armée d’Italie Bau E” on June 16 – “AAE” cancel on 1853 20c  
From Tirailleurs in 1<sup>st</sup> Division of 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps – arrived in Algeria on June 27

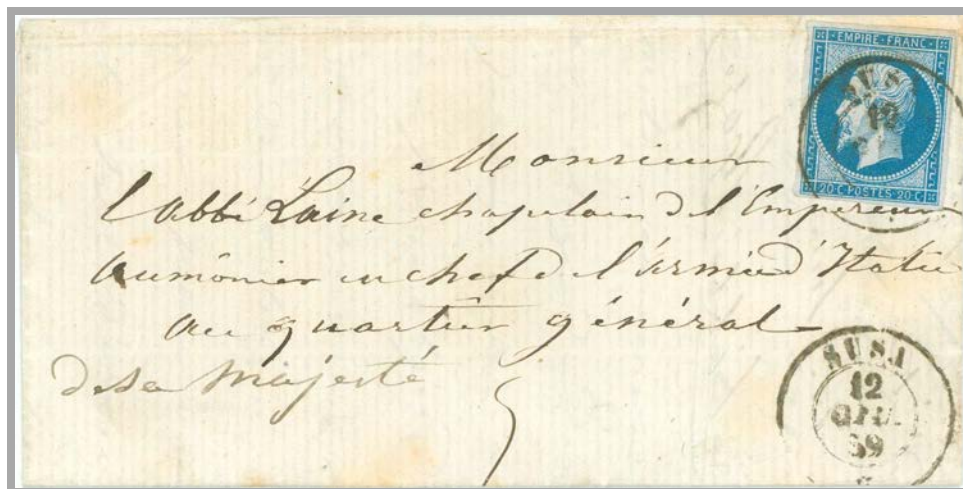


Dateline “Mezzane (southeast of Brescia) le 23 juin” by 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps soldier  
Posted at the “Armée d’Italie Bau K” on June 23 – “AAK” cancel on 1853 20c



# Allied Advance to Brescia

French Army - June 11-23, 1859



Posted at Susa on June 12 - to army headquarters – **prepaid with 1853 20c stamp**



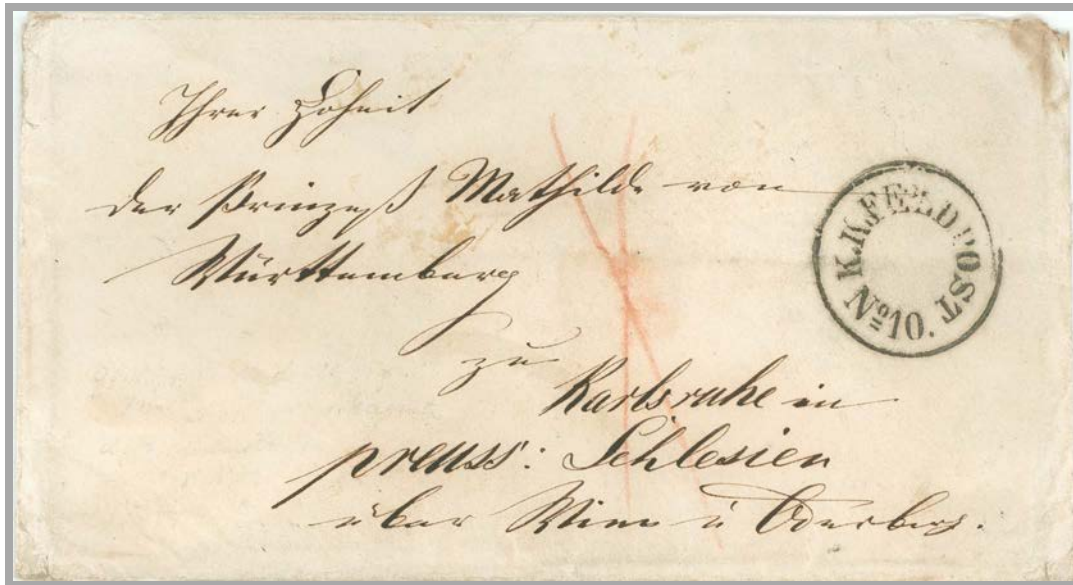
Posted June 20 at the "Armée d'Italie Bau A" - to army headquarters at Brescia

# Battle of Solferino

Austrian Army – June 24, 1859



The advancing Austrians and French met at Solferino on June 24. In ferocious fighting, the French Garde and 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> Corps engaged the Austrian I, III, V, VII, IX and XI Corps. The Austrians retreated east across the Mincio to Valeggio.



Dated "Valeggio (east of Solferino) 25 Juni 1859" – posted at Feldpost No. 10 (no date)  
From the colonel of the 27<sup>st</sup> Regiment in the 1<sup>st</sup> Division of the III Corps of the I Army  
Postmarked again at Feldpost No. 10 on August 30 - arrived on September 3 in Karlsruhe  
"The bloody combat which this letter witnessed in my uniform pocket was utterly lost"



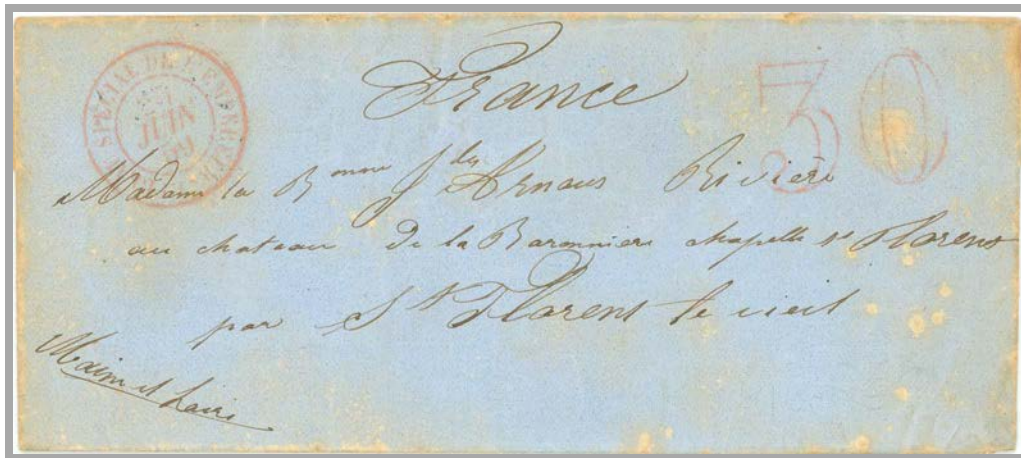
(image of reverse at 90%)

# Battle of Solferino

French Army – June 24, 1859



The French 1<sup>st</sup> Corps and Garde engaged the Austrian V and I Corps at Solferino; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps fought the VII Corps at San Cassiano; and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Corps attacked the III, IX and XI Corps at Guidizzolo.



Dateline "Castiglione battlefield" (west of Solferino) on June 24 – arrived June 29  
From an officer in the 1<sup>st</sup> Division of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps – fought against the VII Corps  
Posted unpaid at the "Bureau Spécial de l'Empereur" on June 25 – 30c due  
"The de la Motterouge Division was admirable"



"Battle of Solferino" by Carlo Bossoli (1859)



# Battle of Solferino

French Army – June 24, 1859



Posted at the "Armée d'Italie Bau M" on June 25 – "AAM" cancel on 1853 20c  
From Cavalry Division of 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps – arrived in Cenon on July 2



Posted at the "Armée d'Italie Bau O" on June 25 – "AAO" cancel on 1853 20c  
From 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of 4<sup>th</sup> Corps - arrived in Paris on June 28

## Battle of Solferino

French Army – June 24, 1859



**Posted unpaid at Brescia** on June 27 – arrived in Oloron on July 3  
From Captain in the 55<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the 4<sup>th</sup> Corps – wounded at Solferino  
Sardinian “N.D.” (non débitée) paid mark – 8 décimes due corrected to 3 décimes



Postmarked “Armée d’Italie Q<sup>r</sup> G<sup>l</sup> 4<sup>e</sup> Corps” on June 25 – “AA4C” cancel on 1853 20c  
From the 4<sup>th</sup> Corps on the day after the battle – arrived in Pau on July 1

# Battle of San Martino

Sardinian Army – June 24, 1859



On June 24, the Sardinian 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Divisions advanced toward San Martino, where they engaged the Austrian VIII Corps. With reinforcements from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, the Sardinians finally took San Martino that evening.



Datelined on the heights of San Martino on June 27 – arrived June 29  
Posted unpaid at the 5<sup>th</sup> Division bureau on June 28 – 20c due



Datelined “3,000 meters from Peschiera” (east of San Martino) on June 26 – arrived June 30  
Posted unpaid at the headquarters bureau on June 26 – 60 crazie due in Tuscany



## Allied Advance to the Mincio River

French Army – June 25-July 8, 1859



After the Solferino battle, the Austrians crossed the Mincio and the Adige to the protection of their 'Quadrilateral' fortresses at Peschiera, Mantova, Legnago and Verona. On July 1, the French pursued them across the Mincio to Valeggio.



Dated "Valeggio le 5 juillet 1859" – arrived in Torino on July 6  
Endorsed for a free frank by Baron Larrey, Chief Medical Officer of the army  
Posted at the "Bureau Spécial de l'Empereur" on July 5

## Allied Advance to the Mincio River

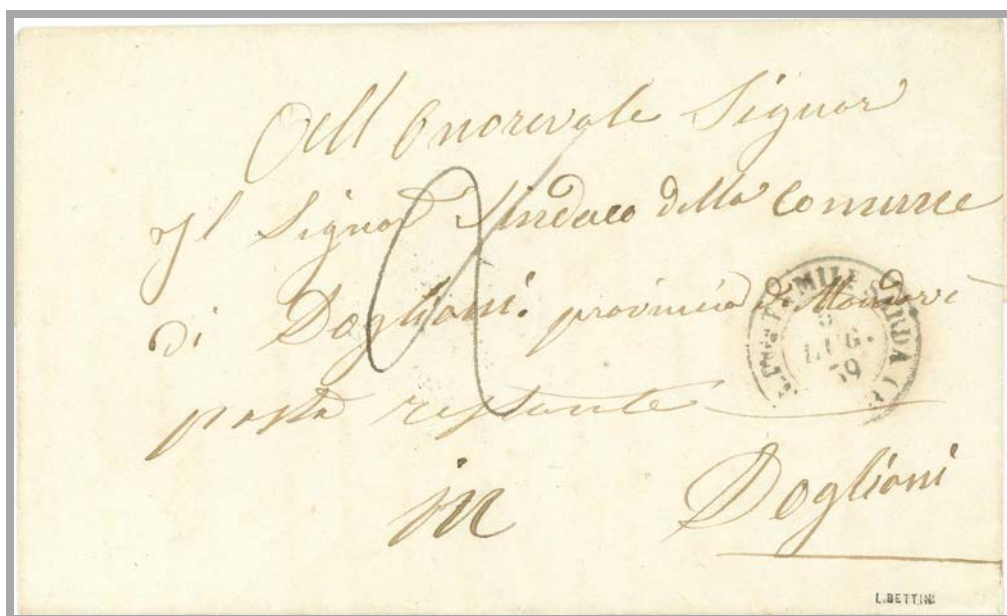
### Sardinian Army – June 24-July 8, 1859



After the battle at San Martino, the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sardinian divisions moved east to commence the siege of Peschiera on July 1. The 4<sup>th</sup> Division remained in the mountains north of Brescia, protecting against the VI Corps.



Dated at Peschiera on July 2 – from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division headquarters  
Postmarked POSTA MILE SARDA (N. 2) on July 2 – 60 crazie due in Firenze on July 7



Posted unpaid at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division's POSTA MILE SARDA (N. 3) on July 5  
20c due at Dogliani on July 8

## Allied Advance to the Mincio River

### Tuscan Army – June 28-October 31, 1859



General Ulloa's Expeditionary Division was formed to protect Tuscany. Once the Austrian retreat began after June 4, it was ordered north to Parma, where it arrived on June 28. Its 18 infantry battalions were provided with a fieldpost service.



Dated "Parma 1 Luglio 1859" – arrived in Bibbiena on July 5  
**Postmarked POSTA MILITARE TOSCANA 2** on July 1  
Granted military free frank to Tuscany



Dated "Modena 13 Ottobre 1859" – arrived in Bibbiena on October 17  
Tuscan Expeditionary Division moved to Modena from August to October  
**"15 OTT" Tuscan type I fieldpost marking** - military free frank



## Armistice Period

### French Army – July 8-August 8, 1859



On July 8, an armistice to August 15 was signed at Villafranca. A preliminary peace treaty was signed on July 11, and Napoléon III left for France from Valeggio on the following day.



Datelined at Oliosi (near Valeggio) on July 9 – “since yesterday there is an armistice”  
Posted at the 4<sup>th</sup> Corps’ “Armée d’Italie Bau N” on July 9 – “AAN” cancel on 1853 20c



Posted at the “Armée d’Italie Bau P” on August 3 – “AAP” cancel on 1853 20c  
From the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division of the 4<sup>th</sup> Corps – arrived in Marines on August 7

## Armistice Period

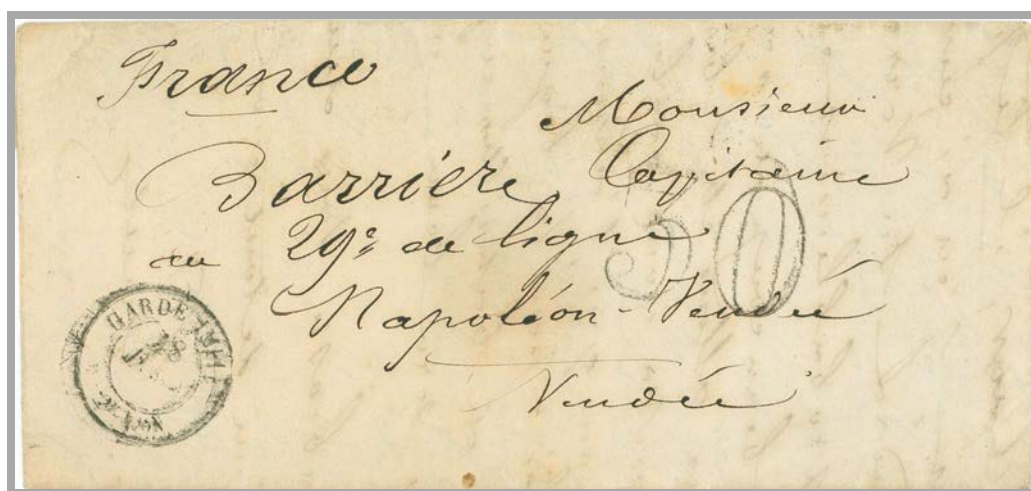
### French Army – July 8-August 8, 1859



On July 12, the Garde Impériale moved to Desenzano (on Lake Garda), and began its return to France four days later. On August 14, it paraded through Paris with Napoléon III.



Postmarked “**Garde Imp<sup>le</sup> 1 Cavalerie**” on July 27 – passing through Torino  
“G.I.1.C.” cancel on 1853 10c pair - arrived at Montoire-s-Loire on July 30



Dateline at St Marco (west of Desenzano) on July 17 – arrived July 22  
“Here we are enroute for France...we will arrive in Milano on the 21<sup>st</sup>”  
Posted unpaid at the “**Garde Imp<sup>le</sup> 2<sup>e</sup> Don**” bureau on July 18 – 30c due

## Armistice Period

### French Army – July 8-August 8, 1859



The 5<sup>th</sup> Corps 2<sup>nd</sup> Division reached Parma on June 26 and then reunited with the 1<sup>st</sup> Division at Goito (southeast of Solferino) on July 4. Both divisions remained in Italy as part of the Occupation Army.



Postmarked “Armée d’Italie Qr G1 5<sup>e</sup> Corps” on July 15  
“AA5C” cancel on 1853 20c - arrived in Trouville on July 20



Posted on July 10 at the “Armée d’Italie Bau R” of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division of the 5<sup>th</sup> Corps  
“AAR” cancel on 1853 20c – arrived in Mostaganem, Algeria on July 18



## Armistice Period

### French Army – July 8-August 8, 1859



French Postal Bulletin #54 (February 1860) stated that letters from soldiers in cities where there were no military bureaus were to be delivered without foreign postage due. The Italian postmark was to be crossed out. This formalized an existing practice.



**Postmarked at Torino** on July 30 – “GM2” ambulant cancel on 1853 20c  
Entered France via Genève-Macon railroad on August 1 – no postage due  
19<sup>th</sup> Regiment of d’Hughes Division - transferred from Lyon to Italy on July 3



Dated “Novi le 1<sup>er</sup> août 1859” by soldier in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chasseurs Regiment of the 4<sup>th</sup> Corps  
**Postmarked at Novi** (southeast of Alessandria) on August 1 – no postage due to Novara

## Armistice Period

### Sardinian Army – July 8-August 8, 1859



The Sardinian army held its positions around Lake Garda and Peschiera during the armistice period. The 4<sup>th</sup> Division was still with Garibaldi in the mountains north of Brescia.



Posted at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division bureau on August 8 – **Sardinian 1855 20c stamp**  
R. POSTA MILE SARDA (N. 2) postmark - arrived at Silvano on August 11



Posted at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division bureau on July 14 – **Sardinian 1855 20c stamp**  
R. POSTA MILE SARDA (N. 3) postmark

## Armistice Period

### Cacciatori delle Alpi – July 8-August 8, 1859



Garibaldi's Cacciatori delle Alpi brigade and the Sardinian 4<sup>th</sup> Division were stationed in the mountains north of Brescia, guarding against the Austrian VI Corps.



Dated at Lovere on July 31 – private “Cacciatori delle Alpi Compagnia del Genio” mark  
Posted with military free frank at the R. POSTA MILITARE SARDA (N. 6) bureau on July 31  
Garibaldi's fieldpost bureau No. 6 opened on July 7 near Brescia - closed on October 12  
**Bureau 6 is the rarest of the Sardinian fieldpost offices**



**“Landing of Garibaldi and the Cacciatori delle Alpi” by Pagliano Eleuterio (1865)**



## Armistice Period

### Sardinian Army – July 8-August 8, 1859



Mail to the Sardinian army benefitted from a reduced rate of 10 centesimi per 7.5 grams



Postmarked in Genova on July 22 – **Sardinian 1858 dark brown 10c stamp**  
Addressed to depot of the “Corpo Cacciatori” – July 23 Alessandria arrival



Posted doubleweight in San Pier on July 13 – **Sardinian 1855 20c stamp**  
July 15 R. POSTA MILE SARDA (N. 3) arrival postmark - near Peschiera

## Occupation Period

French Army – August 8, 1859-July 27, 1860



Five infantry divisions and their payeurs were assigned to stay in Italy until the threat of Austrian invasion was over. The Bureau Central moved from Genova to Milano in the fall of 1859. It was the last bureau to close, on July 27, 1860.



Posted at “Armée d’Italie Bau Central” at Milano on July 5, 1860 – “AABCAL” cancel  
**Latest known Armée d’Italie postmark** – arrived near Paris on July 7



Datelined at Genova on August 29, 1859 – postmarked at Bau Central next day  
**August 30 Genova postmark on 1853 20c stamp** – arrived on September 2

## Occupation Period

French Army – August 8, 1859-July 27, 1860



The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Divisions of the Occupation Army were formerly the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Divisions of the 5<sup>th</sup> Corps, and used their originally-assigned Bau R and Bau S postmarks.



Registered letter posted at “Armée d’Italie Bau R” on December 6 – “AAR” cancel 20 centimes additional postage for registration – arrived in Paris on December 8



Dated at Bergamo on January 12, 1860 – posted that day at “Armée d’Italie Bau S” “AAH” cancel since “AAS” not available - January 13 Bau Central transit postmark at Milano



## Occupation Period

French Army – August 8, 1859-July 27, 1860



Fixed location bureaus at Cremona and Milano were provided with special postmarks and cancels.



Posted at "Armée d'Italie Crémone" on September 9 – "ACRE" cancel  
Routed over the Alps via Susa and Lyon to Chauny on September 12



Posted at "Armée d'Italie Milan" on August 22 – "AMIL" cancel  
Arrived in Versailles on August 25

## Occupation Period

### Sardinian Army – August 9-November 25, 1859



The Sardinian fieldposts were de-mobilized from September 3 (1<sup>st</sup> Division at Milano) to November 25, 1859 (2<sup>nd</sup> Division at Milano).



Posted at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division bureau on August 19 – **Sardinian 1855 20c stamp**  
R. POSTA MILE SARDA (N. 2) postmark - arrived at Silvano on August 21



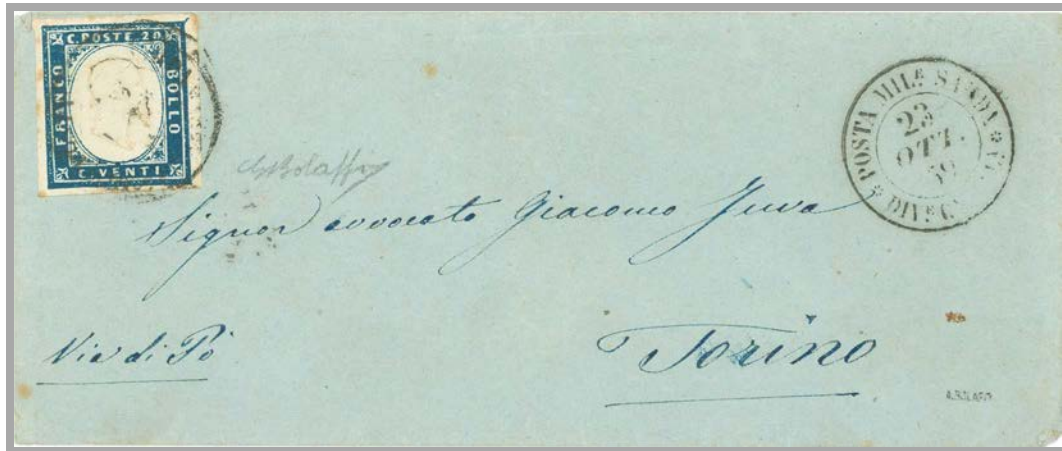
Posted at the 4<sup>th</sup> Division bureau on August 24 – **Sardinian 1855 20c stamp**  
R. POSTA MILE SARDA (N. 4) postmark – arrived in Torino on August 25

## Occupation Period

### Sardinian Army – August 9-November 25, 1859



The latest known use of the Cavalry Division fieldpost was October 23, 1859. The latest date from the 5<sup>th</sup> Division bureau was October 20.



Posted at the Cavalry Division bureau on October 23 – **Sardinian 1855 20c stamp**  
R. POSTA MILE SARDA DIV<sup>E</sup> CAVALLA<sup>A</sup> postmark - arrived at Torino on October 24



Posted at the 5<sup>th</sup> Division bureau near Brescia on October 20 – endorsed for military free frank  
R. POSTA MILE SARDA (N. 5) postmark – arrived in Pontevecchio on October 22



## Occupation Period

### Cacciatori delle Alpi – August 9-October 12, 1859



Garibaldi's Cacciatori delle Alpi brigade was assigned fieldpost #6 on July 7, 1859 at Valtellina. It is the rarest of the Sardinian army postmarks, since it was in use for only three months.

Garibaldi was in the mountains north of Brescia, guarding against the Austrian VI Corps.



Sent from Torino on August 17 to **General Garibaldi** at Lovere  
Received by R. POSTA MIL<sup>E</sup> SARDA (N. 6) bureau on August 19 – 20c due  
Forwarded to Modena on August 21