

Fire on the Angkor

Closed mail sacks taken aboard at ports were not normally disturbed by the postal agent on board. An exception was when an onboard incident may have affected the mail.

On 15 October 1923, a fire broke out in the mail hold of the Angkor while the ship was transiting the Red Sea. The fire was brought under control but not without damage to the mail. Several techniques were used to mark the mail to provide an explanation about condition and delay to the recipient. If the item was judged sufficiently intact, a handstamp was applied explaining the cause of the letter's condition (missing postage among other things).

détérioré
par immersion



POSTAL MARKINGS

CUSSET ALLIER 27-9 23
handstamp explaining condition

REVERSE

LUANG-PRABANG LAOS 17-12 23

Fire on the Angkor

If an item had been only slightly damaged by water, postal personnel affixed a salmon colored label, which explained to the recipient why the condition of the item may have been less than perfect.

DETERIORE PAR IMMERSION

lors de l'incendie du 15 Oct., 23
à bord du paquebot "Angkor,"
et reconstitué par le Bureau maritime postal
de Marseille à Yokohama.



POSTAL MARKINGS

DREUX EURE ET LOIRE 29-9 23
label explaining accident

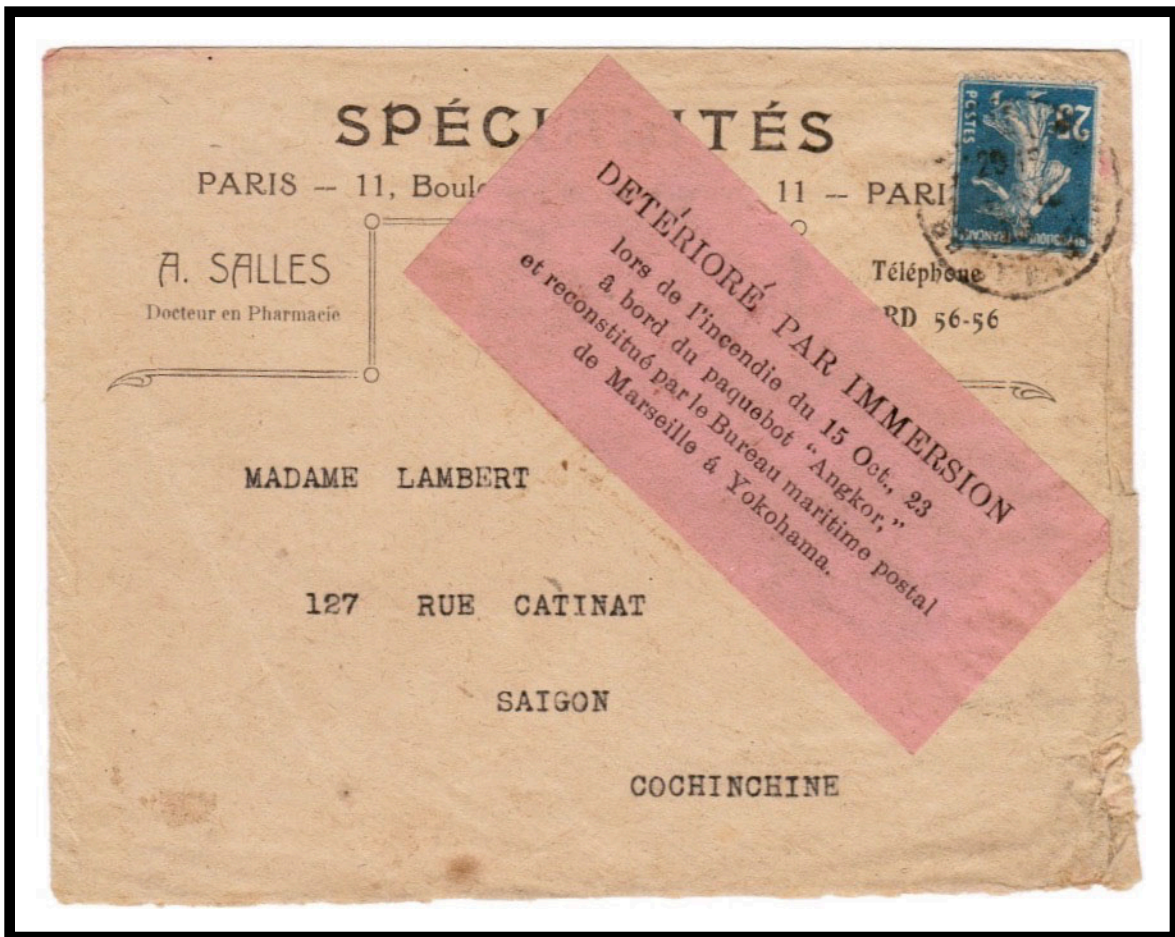
REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 2-11 23

Fire on the Angkor

This style of label attributes any damage to correspondence to the effects of being submerged in water. The black-on-salmon label reads:

DAMAGED BY WATER
During the fire on 15 Oct. 23
on board the mailboat "Angkor"
and restored by the Maritime Post Office
of the Marseille-Yokohama Line.



POSTAL MARKINGS

label explaining accident

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 2-11 23

Fire on the Angkor

As compared to other labels, which addressed water damage, the first line of this label attributes damage to both fire and immersion in water.

Deteriore par le feu et l'immersion

lors de l'incendie du 15 Oct. 1923.

à bord du paquebot "Angkor".

et reconstitué par le bureau maritime postal
de Marseille à Yokohama.



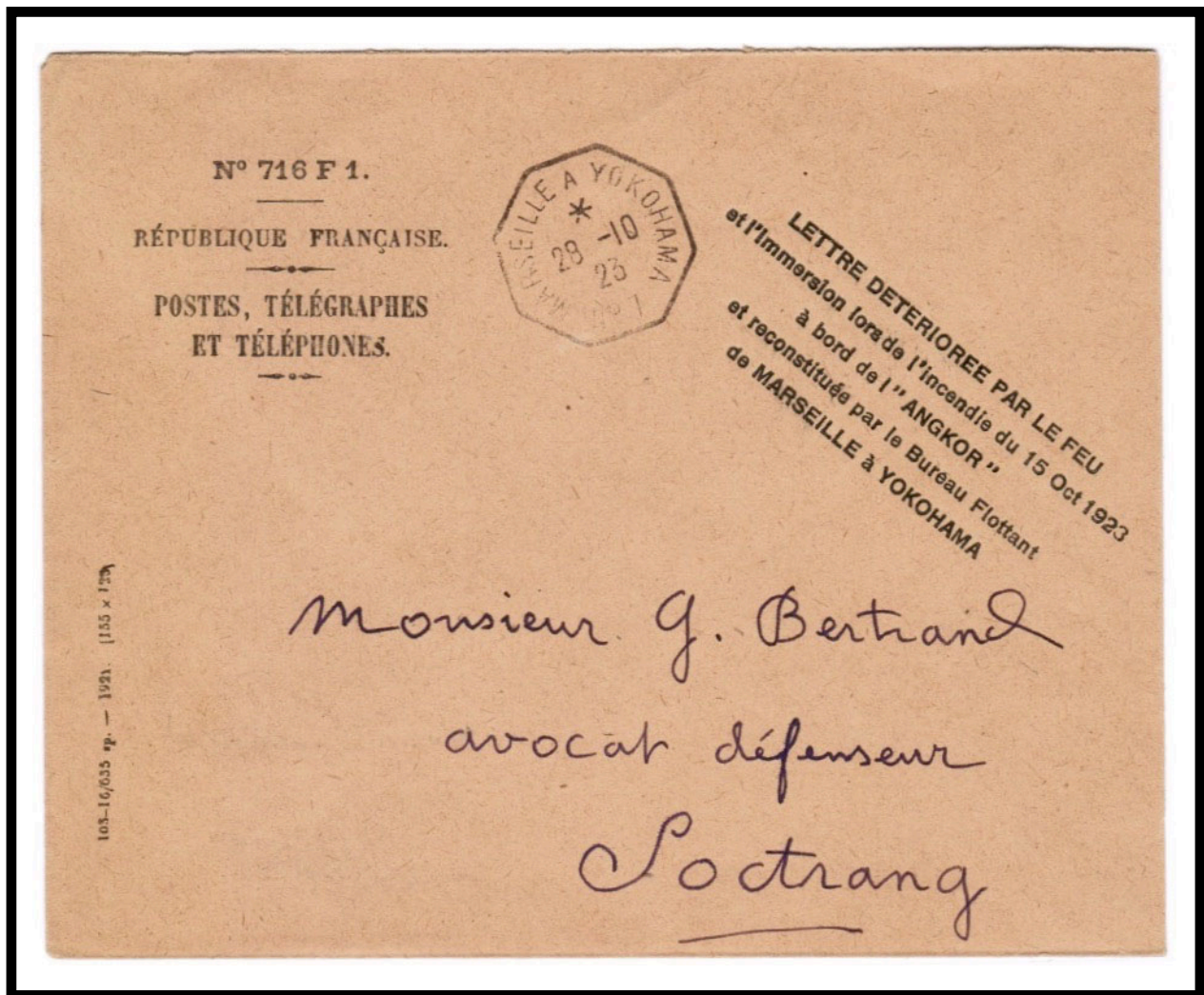
POSTAL MARKINGS

label explaining accident

Fire on the Angkor

Letters that were too damaged to survive handling through the mails were sent onward in "ambulance" envelopes. These covers were handstamped at the upper right at an angle of approximately 45 degrees with an explanatory marking similar in content to the label. This version, with a height of 23 millimeters, bears the date "15 Oct 1923."

LETTRE DETERIOREE PAR LE FEU
et l'immersion lorsde l'incendie du 15 Oct 1923
à bord de l " ANGKOR "
et reconstituéé par le Bureau Flottant
de MARSEILLE à YOKOHAMA



POSTAL MARKINGS

MARSEILLE A YOKOHAMA N° 7 28-10-23
explanatory handstamp

Fire on the Angkor

Another variety of the handstamp reports the date of the fire as "16 Oct 1923." Struck similarly at approximately 45 degrees in the upper right, this handstamp is only 18 millimeters tall.

LETTRE DETERIOREE PAR LE FEU
et l'immersion lorsde l'incendie du 16 Oct 1923
à bord de l' " ANGKOR "
et reconstitueé par le Bureau Flottant
de MARSEILLE à YOKOHAMA



POSTAL MARKINGS

MARSEILLE A YOKOHAMA N° 7 28-10 23
explanatory handstamp