

MARSEILLE A KOBE
N° 1, First Voyage

After the terminus of the sea line was moved from Shanghai to Kobe, Japan at the end of 1933, new postmarks were provided that displayed the new routing. This letter was posted aboard the *Chenonceaux* on the first voyage with postmarking devices with the new format.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.051/1
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40

MARSEILLE
AKOBE

POSTMARK TYPE: 2.053
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

MARSEILLE A KOBE N° 1 1-12 33
straight -line MARSEILLE A KOBE

MARSEILLE A KOBE
N° 1

Postal agents were able to accept and process registered mail as indicated by the mailing posted on the *Maréchal Joffre* during her outbound voyage. She departed Marseilles on 6 September and reached Kobe in early October.

MARSEILLE A KOBE



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.051/1
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40

MARSEILLE
AKOBE

POSTMARK TYPE: 2.053
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

MARSEILLE A KOBE N° 1 23-8 35
registration label and straight-line MARSEILLE A KOBE

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 1

Following the standard practice of the day, a second set of postmarking devices were used on the return legs of the Far East voyages. Postmarks were numbered "1" through "9."

The *Tahure* was an Arras class sloop that was stationed in Indochina during the Franco-Thai War. She was sunk by the *USS Flasher* in 1944.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/1
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 1 12-4 38

MARSEILLE A KOBE
N° 2

A picture postcard depicting Hindu temples in Colombo, Ceylon was mailed to France aboard the *Sphinx* during the outbound leg of her voyage to the Far East. France's internal postcard rate had been 40 centimes since 1926.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.051/2
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
MARSEILLE A KOBE N° 2 7-10 35

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 2

Postmark number 2 was used by the *Athos II*, which departed Saigon on 4 January 1938. This letter addressed to India was offloaded at Colombo, Ceylon when the *Athos II* called there during her return trip to Europe.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/2
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 2 4-1 38
REVERSE
RAYAVARANA JA. 30 38

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 2

A postcard mailed from Madagascar in August 1937 was addressed to Djibouti but was later forwarded to France. During the last part of its travels, the card was aboard the *Aramis*, which arrived in Marseilles on 21 September 1937.

The *Aramis*, which had been commandeered by Japan, was sunk in 1944.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/2
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

MAJUNGA MADAGASCAR 13 AOUT 37
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 2 15-9 37

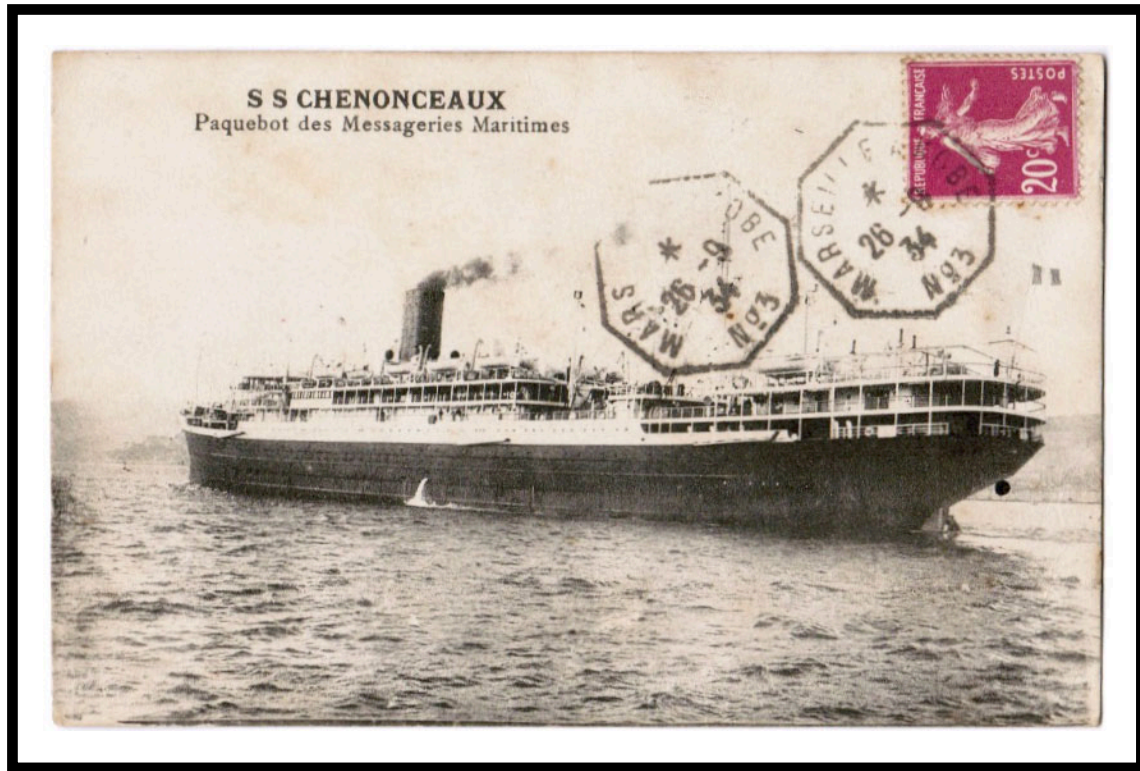
MARSEILLE A KOBE
N° 3

A traveler aboard the *Chenonceaux* selected a picture postcard of the ship for sending a short message (“souvenir de Port Said”) home to France. The postmark is dated 26 September a few days after the ship had departed Marseilles on 21 September 1934.

The *Chenonceaux* was scuttled at Marseilles in 1944.



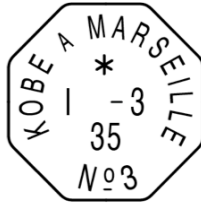
POSTMARK TYPE: 2.051/3
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
MARSEILLE A KOBE N° 3 26-9 34

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 3

While aboard the *Athos II*, a sender chose one of the ship's postcards for sending his message to Shanghai, China. The letter was posted at Kobe a few days before the ship departed on 6 March 1935 for her return trip to Europe.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/3
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 3 1-3 35

KOBE A MARSEILLE

N° 3

With postmarking device number 3, the *Maréchal Joffre* departed Saigon on 22 September 1938 and arrived at Marseille on 17 October 1938. After entering service, the Joffre made 13 voyages to the Far East and Madagascar during 1935-41.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/3

PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 3 22-9 38

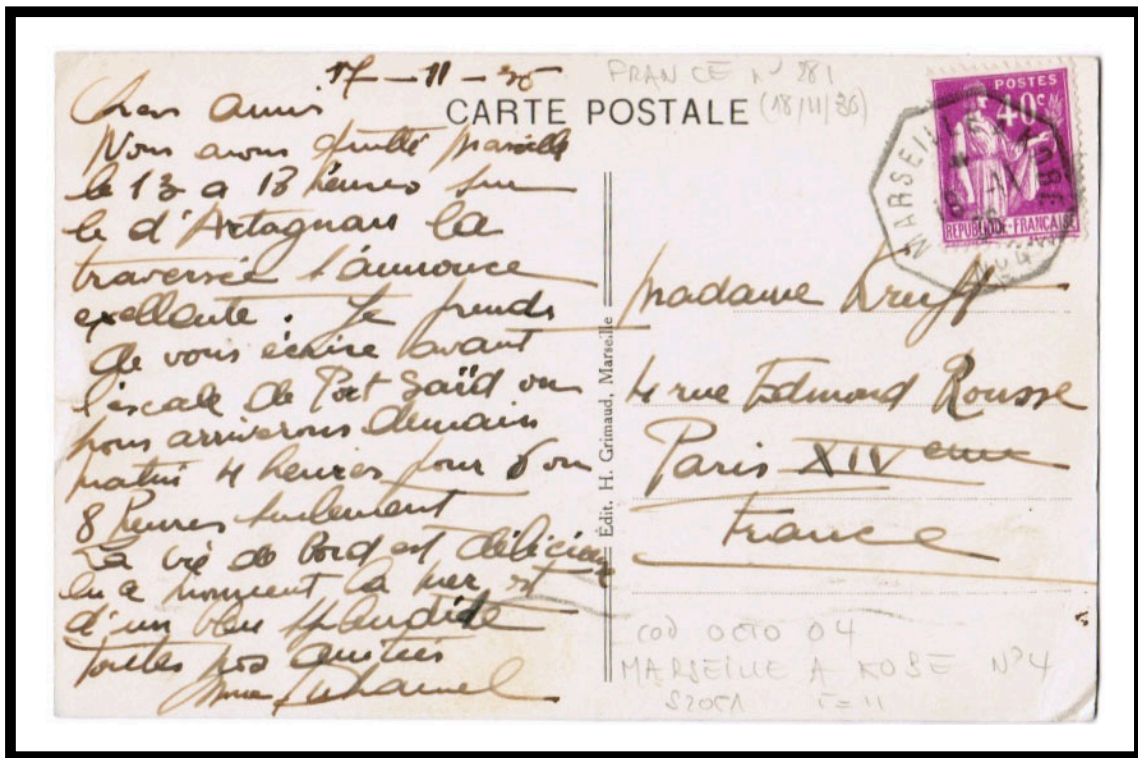
MARSEILLE A KOBE
N° 4

A picture postcard depicting the docks at Port Said was mailed aboard the *D'Artagnan* a few days she departed Marseilles for her outbound trip to the Far East on 13 November 1936.

The *D'Artagnan*, which had been commandeered by Japan, was sunk in 1944 .



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.051/4
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
MARSEILLE A KOBE N° 4 18-11 36

KOBE A MARSEILLE

N° 4

Mailed to Paris, this letter was posted aboard the *Athos II* on 21 February 1939, the day she departed Saigon. Her outbound voyage to Kobe Japan had been cut short at Shanghai. The *Athos II* arrived home at Marseilles on 18 March 1939.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/4

PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

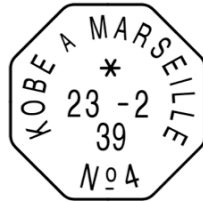
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 4 21-2 39

REVERSE

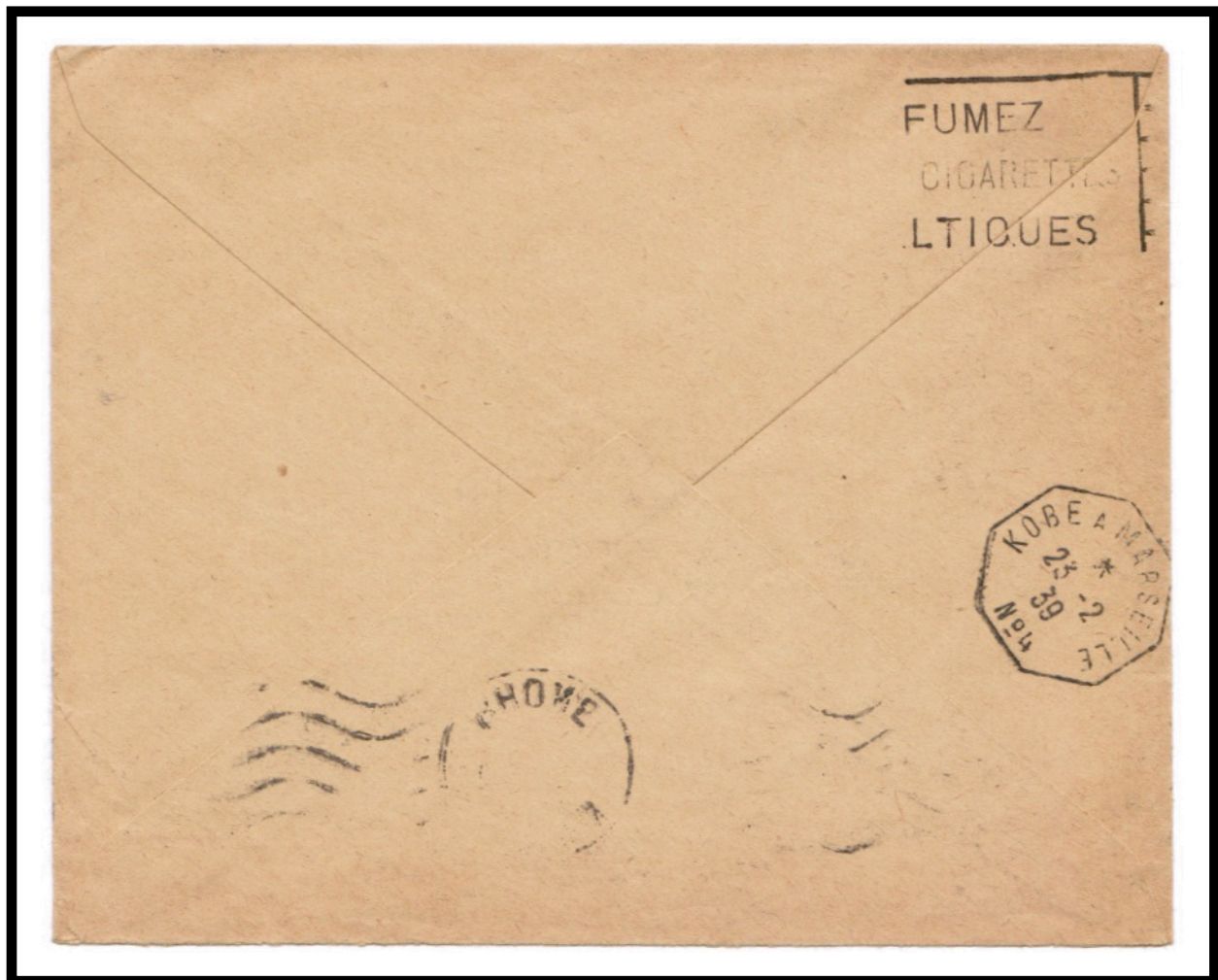
PARIS XV DISTRIBUTION 19 • III 1939

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 4

A postal service letter mailed at Lyon St Jean was addressed to an official aboard the *Athos II* at port in Saigon. The letter received the *Athos II*'s transit postmark on 23 February having departed Saigon on 21 February 1939.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/4
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 4 23-2 39
REVERSE
LYON - S^T JEAN RHONE 2 II 39

MARSEILLE A KOBE
N° 5

Canceller number 5 was assigned to the *Félix Roussel*, which departed Marseilles on 1 June 1934. This picture post card reached Hanoi six days after having been posted aboard the *Félix Roussel* on her outbound journey.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.051/5
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

MARSEILLE A KOBE N° 5 22-6 34
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 28-6 34

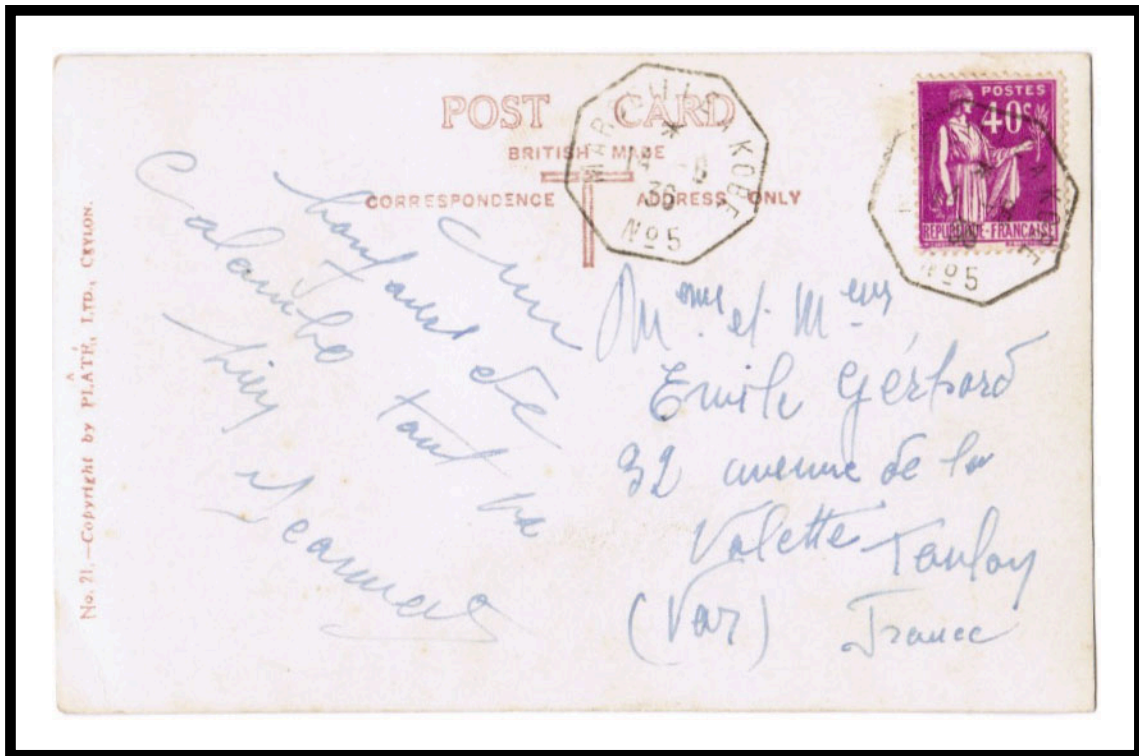
MARSEILLE A KOBE
N° 5

Addressed to France, this letter was posted aboard the *President Doumer* on her outbound trip to the Far East. She had departed Marseilles on 27 July 1936. The postcard depicts government buildings at Colombo, Ceylon.

While escorting a convoy, the *President Doumer* was torpedoed and sunk in the Atlantic in October 1942.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.051/5
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



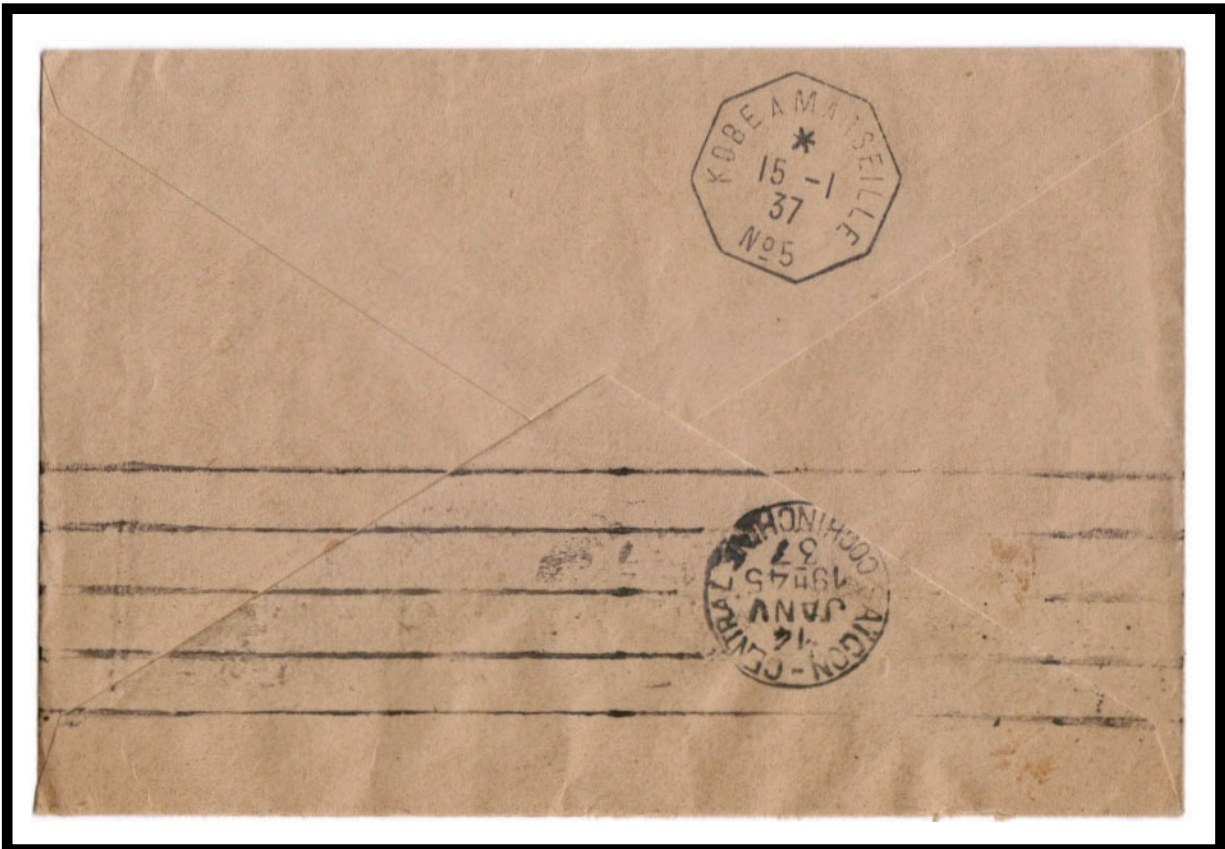
POSTAL MARKINGS
MARSEILLE A KOBE N° 5 14-8 36

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 5

A Ceylonese postal service letter to the *Chenonceaux* in Saigon was posted on 2 January 1937 and processed through the Saigon-Central post office on 14 January. The *Chenonceaux's* receiving postmark is date 15 January, two days before she left on her return trip to Europe.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/5
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 5 28-8 33
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 14 JANV 37
REVERSE
COLOMBO 4 2 JA. 37

KOBE A MARSEILLE

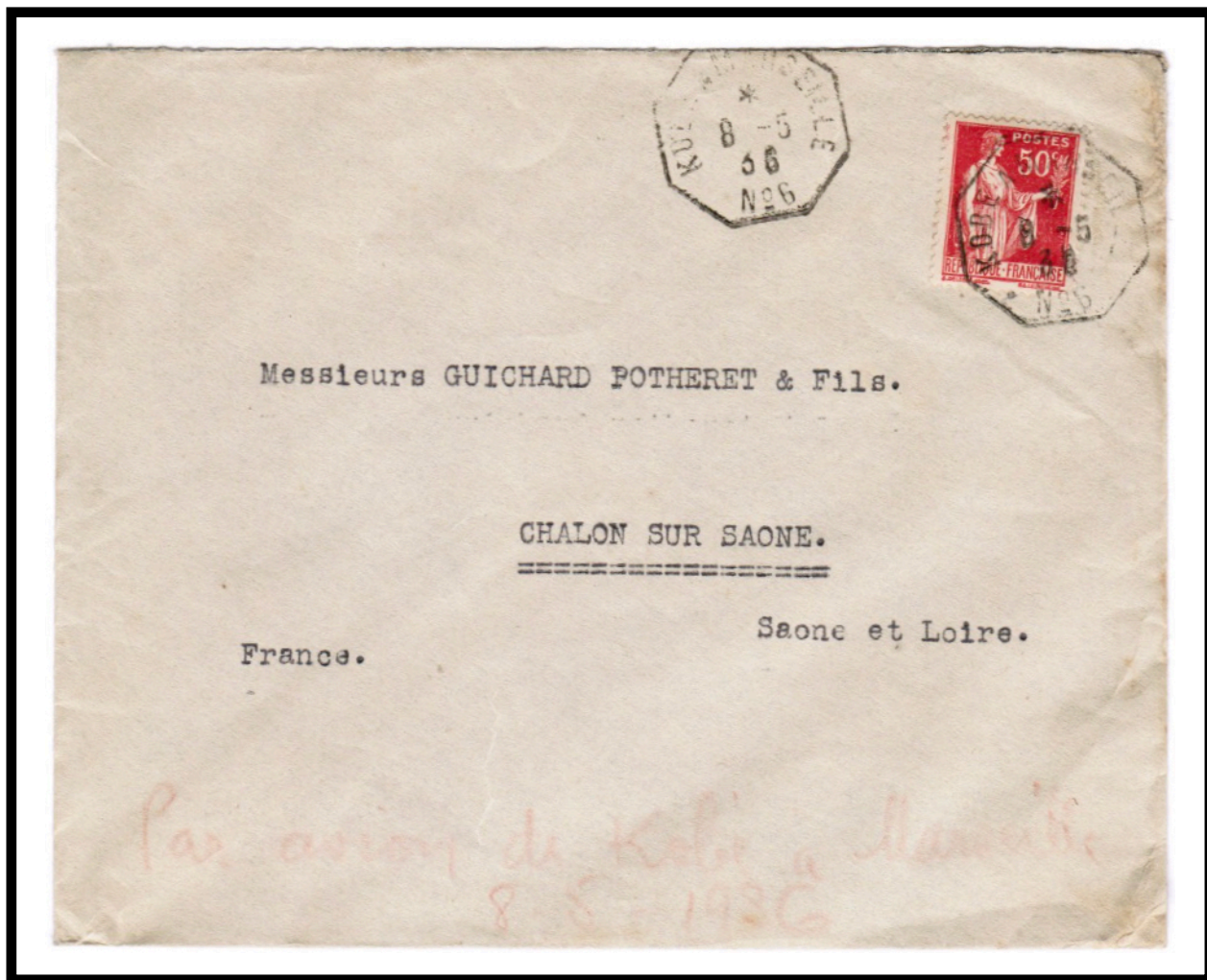
N° 6

Business correspondence was posted aboard the *Aramis* during the return leg of her Far East trip. She left Kobe on 28 April 1936 and reach Marseilles on 2 June 1936.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/6

PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 6 8-5 36

REVERSE

CHALON SUR SAONE SAONE ET LOIRE 3 VI 36

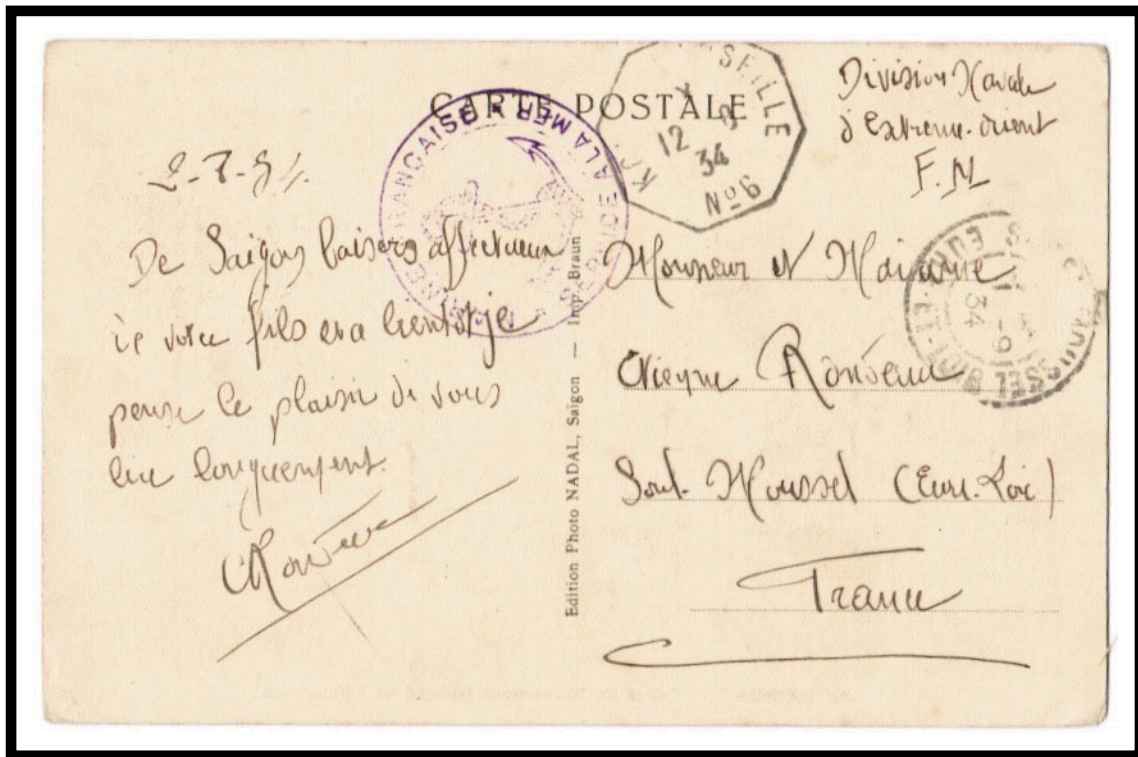
KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 6

Sailors serving in the Far East Naval Forces could send letters and postcards postage-free. Here, a 1934 postcard addressed to France was postmarked aboard the *Chenonceaux* with the number 6 KOBE A MARSEILLE device.

The *Chenonceaux* was scuttled at Marseilles in 1944.



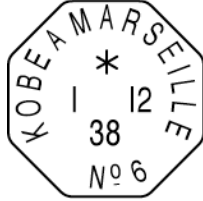
POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/6
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 6 12-8 34
SAINT WOUSSEL EURE ET LOIR 1-9 34

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 6

The *Athos II* departed Saigon on 1 November 1938. The postal clerk on the ship improperly set the month as "12" with the date plug when it should have been "11."



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/6
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 6 1-12 38
REVERSE
CHIDAMBARAM 10 NOV. 38

MARSEILLE A KOBE
N° 7

Postmarks for mail posted outbound direction of travel mimicked those employed for the return trip to Marseille. The number 7 postmark was aboard the *André Lebon*, which departed Marseille on 16 November 1934. Subsequently, she departed Kobe, Japan on Christmas Day 1934.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.051/7
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

MARSEILLE A KOBE N° 7 8-12 34
T in triangle with manuscript due amount

REVERSE

PARIS-VIII DISTRIBUTION 7 • I 1935

MARSEILLE A KOBE
N° 7

This Messageries Maritimes picture postcard depicting the original *Athos* was posted aboard the *Athos II* on her outbound voyage while at Port Said. She departed Marseilles on 27 May 1938.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.051/7
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
MARSEILLE A KOBE N° 7 31-5 38

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 7

Postmark device "N° 7" was aboard the *Aramis* which departed Saigon on 11 February 1937 for her return trip reaching Marseilles on 8 March 1937.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/7
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



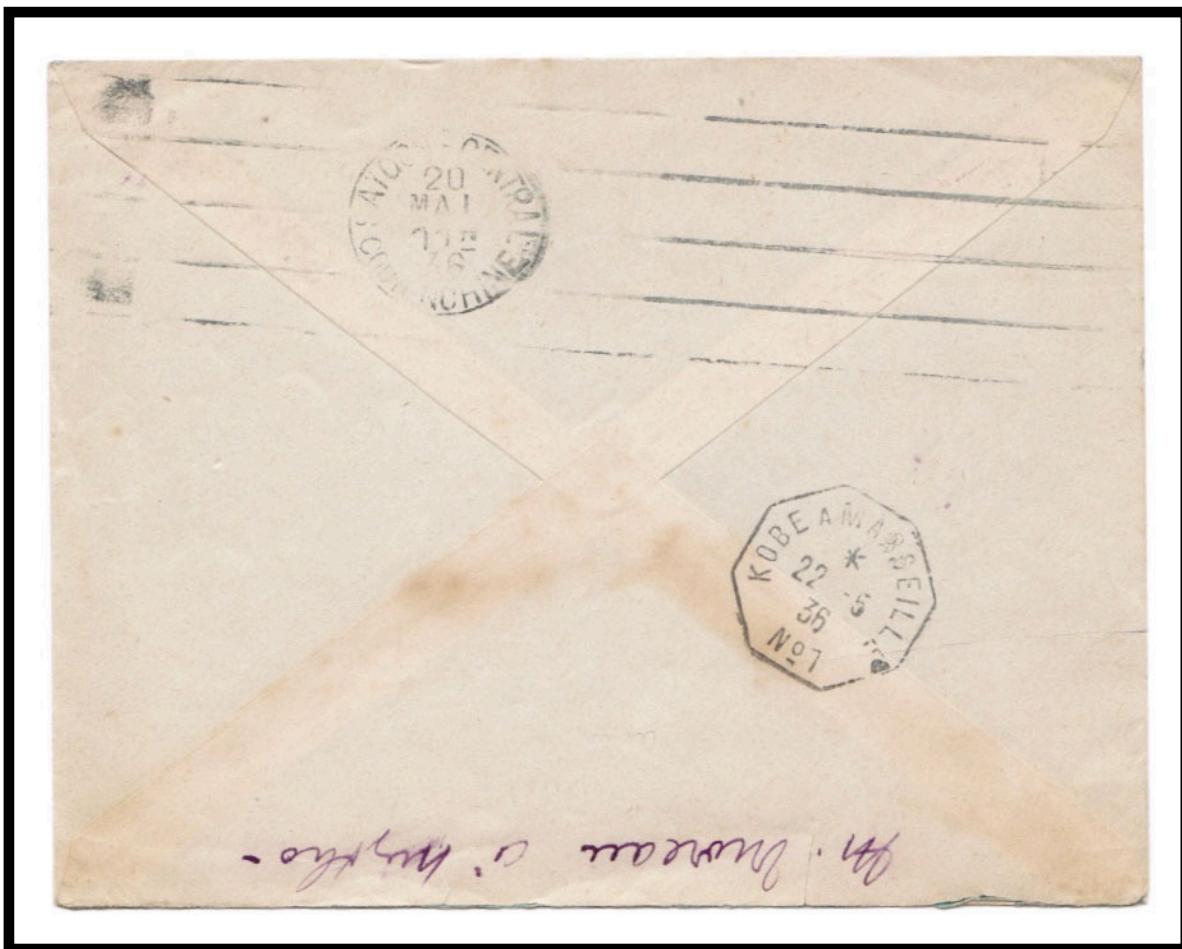
POSTAL MARKINGS
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 7 11-2 37
REVERSE
AGEN R.P. LOT-ET-GARONNE 9 III 37

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 7

Posted from Dalat, Annam and addressed to the purser on the *Chenonceaux*, this letter reached the ship two days before she departed Saigon on her return trip to Europe.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/7
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 20 MAI 36

KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 7 22-5 36

REVERSE

DALAT ANNAM 19-5 36

MARSEILLE A KOBE

N° 8

This letter was posted aboard the *Président Doumer* several days after departing Marseilles on 14 October 1938. While escorting a convoy, the *President Doumer* was torpedoed and sunk in the Atlantic in October 1942.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.051/8

PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

MARSEILLE A KOBE N° 8 18-10 38

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 8

Addressed to the purser on the *Jean Laborde*, this letter transited the Bangkok central post office and the Saigon central post office before reaching the ship in port at Saigon. The *Jean Laborde* left Saigon on 1 August 1938.

The *Jean Laborde* was scuttled at Marseilles in 1944.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/8
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
COLOMBO 7 30 JN 38
BANGKOK G.P.O. c 6-7 38
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 8-7 38
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 8 26-7 38

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 8

Sailors serving in Indochina could send letters and postcards for free within the French Community. Here a picture postcard was endorsed "F.M." and handstamped "FRANCHISE MILITAIRE DE FORCES NAVALES D'EXTREME ORIENT."

The Maréchal Joffre departed Saigon on 8 August 1939 and reached Marseilles on 30 August shortly before the General Mobilization of 3 September 1939.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/8
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 8 15-8 39

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 9

Whereas the former N Line postmarks went all the way to 10, the largest numeral used by the ships plying the Far East route in the 1930s was "9." Here the number 9 postmark was applied to a postcard showing the Saigon Cathedral aboard the *Sphinx* which left Saigon on 7 April 1938.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/9
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 9 20-4 38

KOBE A MARSEILLE

N° 9

Here a mailing from the French Navy was posted aboard the *Sphinx* while she was at Saigon. As indicated by the handstamp on the cover, the sender was a crew member of the French cruiser *Primauguet*.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/9

PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40

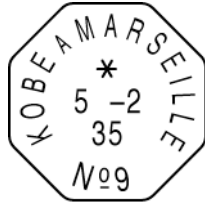


POSTAL MARKINGS

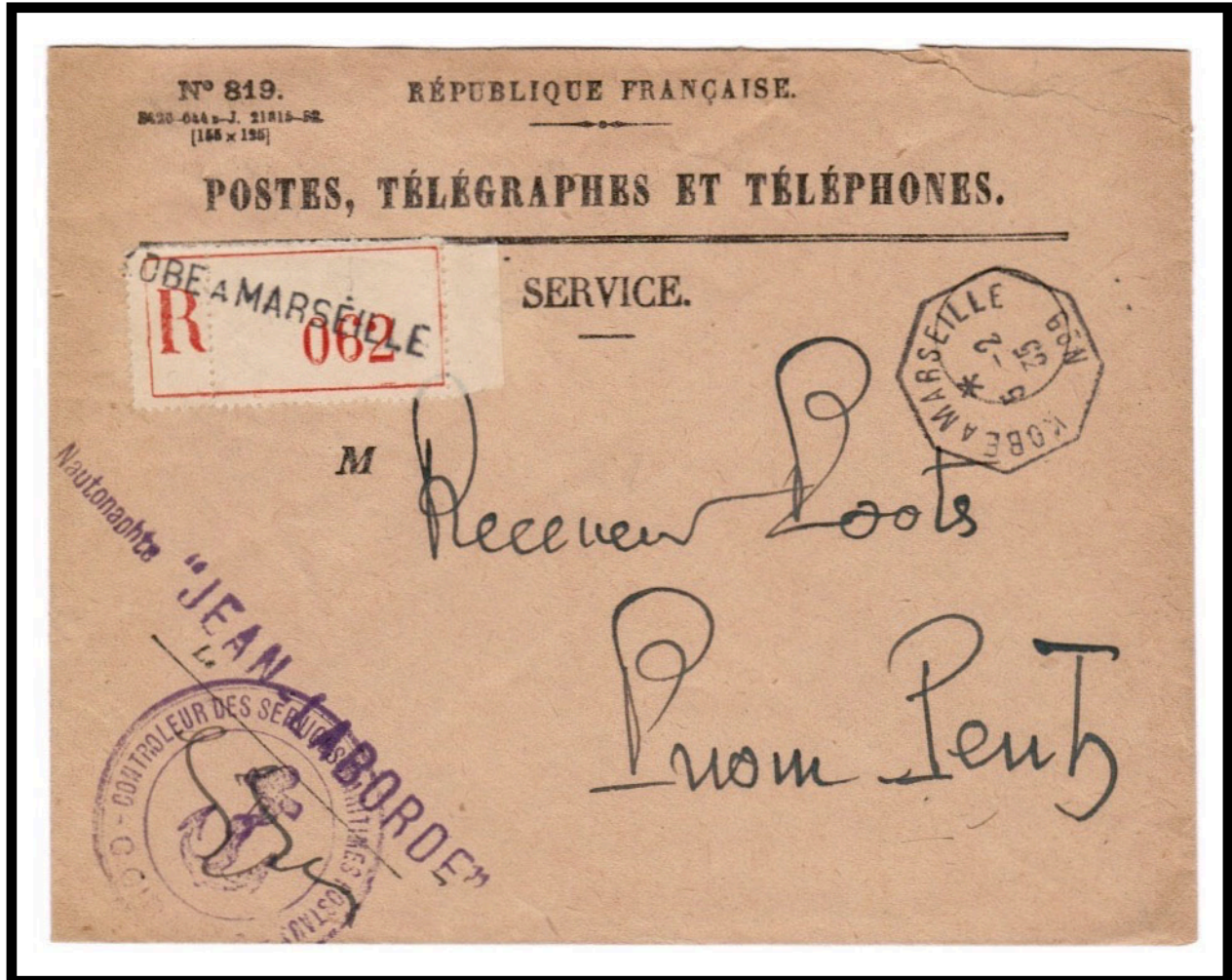
KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 9 31-3 38

KOBE A MARSEILLE
N° 9

Nine was the largest number employed for the KOBE A MARSEILLE maritime postmarks. In this case, the *Jean Laborde* used the number 9 device on her return trip having left Kobe on 23 January and arrived at Marseille on 27 February 1935.



POSTMARK TYPE: 2.052/9
PERIOD OF USE: 1934-40



POSTAL MARKINGS

KOBE A MARSEILLE N° 9 5-2 35
registration label

REVERSE

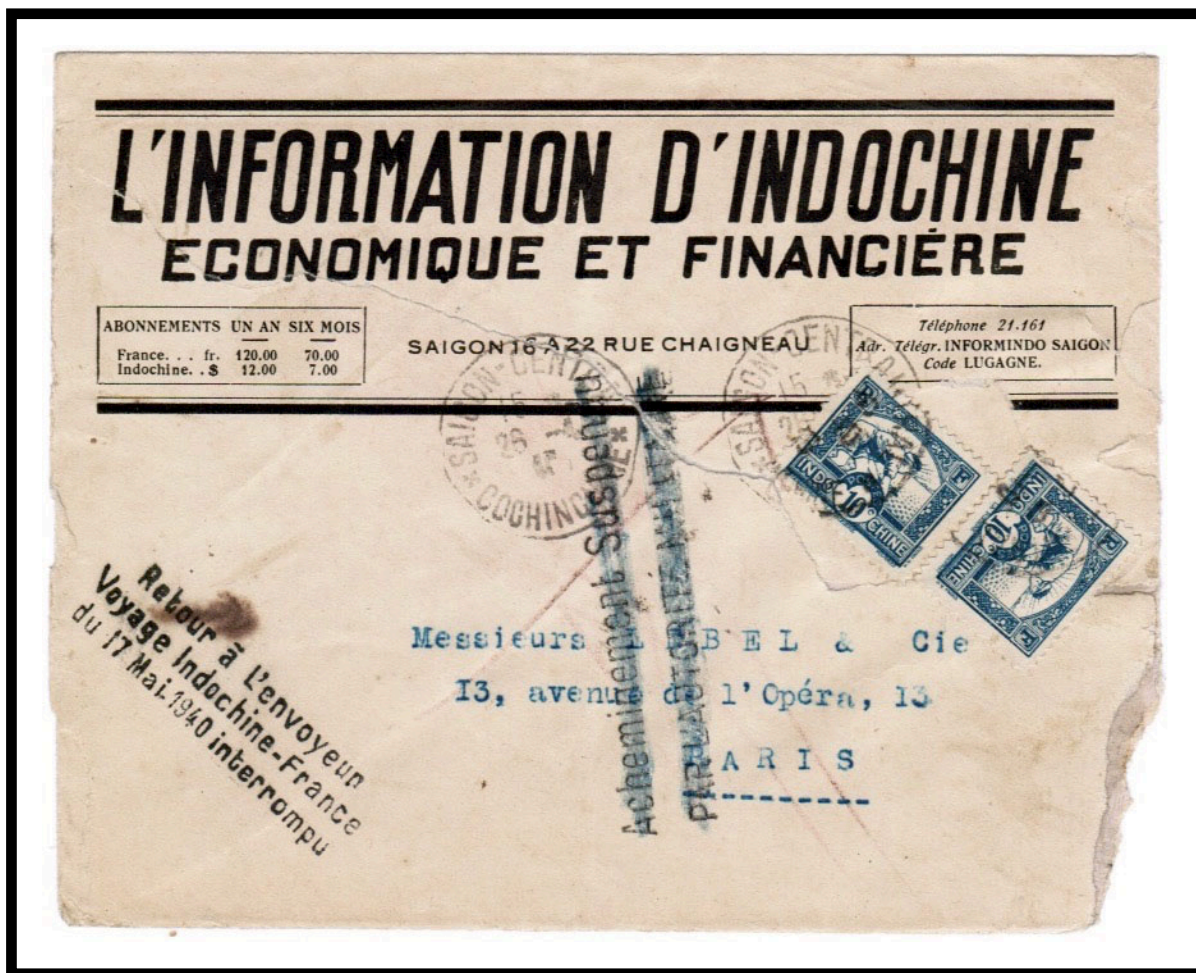
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 12-2 35
PNOMPENH CAMBODGE 13-2 35

Indochina – France Interrupted Service
17 May 1940

British authorities seized the *Félix Roussel* as she transited the Suez Canal in June 1940. Mail from the Far East was returned with a handstamp explaining the situation to senders. For some reason, the “Acheminement Suspendu / PAR L’AUTORITE MILITAIRE” was stricken out with blue crayon.

Retour à L'envoyeur
Voyage Indochine-France
du 17 Mai 1940 interrompu

POSTMARK TYPE: 2.057
PERIOD OF USE: 1940



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 26-4 40
Return to sender handstamps