

Commerce

Use of 1 and 4 centimes

Periodicals and other printed matter enjoyed postal rates much smaller than the postal rates for letters and packages. Here, in 1887, a 1-cent and a 4-cent stamp were affixed to a wrapper that was sent initially from Saigon to Lyon but was subsequently forwarded to Marseilles.



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-C^{AL} COCHINCHINE 20 AVRIL 87

Commerce
Use of 5 centimes

A local mailing, likely an end-of-year visiting card, was franked with a single 5-centime Commerce stamp to satisfy the reduced rate allowed for small, unsealed envelopes.



POSTAL MARKINGS
TOURANNE ANNAM 31 DEC. 89
REVERSE
SONG-CAU ANNAM 5 JANV 90

Commerce
Use of 5 centimes

A single 5-centime stamp franked a “visit card” mailed from Ha-Noi to Geneva, Switzerland in 1885. The “CORPS DU TONKIN” handstamp identifies the sender as a member of the military. The free franchise only applied to regular letters, not special mail classes such as “carte de visite.” The visit card rate applied to foreign destinations as well as those within the French Community.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HA-NOI TONKIN 19 DEC. 85
MODANE A PARIS 29 JANV. 86 (red)
REVERSE
PARIS A AGEN 30 JANV. 86
GENEVE N° 1 31.1.86

Commerce
Use of 5 centimes

Sent to Paris from the offices of *Le Courier d'Haiphong*, a local newspaper, this envelope was unsealed and traveled at the printed matter rate. Publishers relied on printed matter rates for the economical distribution of their newspapers.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HAI-PHONG TONKIN 16 JANV. 88

Commerce
Use of 5 centimes

The post office assigned lower rates to printed matter. While not required, printed materials could be mailed with a wrapper as in the case of this example from the "Chambre de Commerce de Saigon" to Germany in 1892.



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 5 NOV 92
LIGNE N PAQ. FR. NO 7 5 NOV. 92

Commerce
Use of 5 centimes

A pair (one stamp badly damaged) of 5-centime Commerce stamps paid for international delivery of printed matter to Melbourne Australia in 1904. Per the wrapper's printed information, the document was Speidel & Company's *Saigon Market Report*. The wrapper also bears a printed routing instruction "Per Mess. Marit. Str" ("Via Messageries Maritimes Steamer").



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-PORT COCHINCHINE 27 MARS 92

Commerce
Use of 5 centimes

Since 16 February 1879, the franked letter rate from French Colonies to France had been 25 centimes per 15 grams. In this case, five examples of the 5-centime Commerce stamp paid the postage for a mailing from Hai-Phong to Paris in 1890.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 15 FEVR 90
MARSEILLE A LYON SPECIAL 19 MARS 90

REVERSE

11 PARIS 11 (DISTRIBUTION) 20 MARS 90

Commerce
Use of 5 centimes

Five examples of the 5-cent Commerce stamp franked a mailing from *Le Courrier d'Haiphong*, a well-known newspaper, to Paris in 1889. The red band enabled Chinese language letters to be easily separated for Chinese-speaking mail sorters. In this case, the indicator was entirely superfluous as the address was entirely in French.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HAI-PHONG TONKIN 9 JANV. 89

Commerce
Use of 5 and 10 centimes

Effective 1 January 1889, the letter rate for the French Community decreased from 25 centimes to 15 centimes. A notation on this envelope instructs that the letter should go via English boat service.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 3 JUIN 92

MODANE A PARIS 12 JUIL 92

REVERSE

9 PARIS 9 (DISTRIBUTION) 13 JUIL 92

Commerce
Use of 5 and 10 centimes

Mailed in 1892 from Hanoi to Paris, the postage on this letter was overpaid by 10 centimes as the rate had been reduced in 1899.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HA-NOI TONKIN 5 AOUT 92
REVERSE
8 PARIS 8 DISTRIBUTION 11 SEPT 92

Commerce
Use of 5 and 10 centimes

A combination of 5-centimes and 10-centimes Commerce stamps paid the postage for an internal letter from Gocong to Saigon in 1892.



POSTAL MARKINGS
GOCONG COCHINCHINE 16 JUIN 92
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL CC HINCHINE 17 JUIN 92

Commerce
Use of 5 and 15 centimes

Before 1889, the letter rate to France was 25 centimes, paid here with a combination of lower-value Commerce stamps.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON CAL COCHINCHINE 13 AOUT 88
MODANE A PARIS 12 SEPT. 88

REVERSE

2 PARIS 2 PARIS (DISTRIBON) 12 SEPT. 88
PARIS 84 BARD DE CLICHY 13 SEPT. 88
PARIS A PYRENEES B 13 SEPT 88

Commerce
Use of 5 and 20 centimes

This letter was posted by a member of the Annam-Tonkin Expeditionary Corps and, as such, would have been eligible for the free franchise if deposited into the military's postal system. However, the soldier opted to mail it directly from the civilian postal system. Consequently, postage for the regular letter rate of 25 centimes was required.



POSTAL MARKINGS

DAP-CAU TONKIN 10 SEPT. 86

REVERSE

CORR. D. ARMEES HAI-PHONG 11 SEPT. 86

NANCY MEUTHE-ET-MOSELLE 17 OCT. 86

NANCY MEUTHE-ET-MOSELLE 18 OCT. 86

Commerce
Use of 15 centimes

Soldiers serving in the combat zones of Annam and Tonkin were granted free mail. In non-combat areas such as Cochinchina, soldiers were allowed to send letters at the reduced rate of 15 centimes.



POSTAL MARKINGS
CORR. D. ARMEES SAIGON 11 MARS 87
REVERSE
PARIS A BREST A 6 AVRIL 87

Commerce
Use of 15 centimes

Military mail from Cochinchina did not need any authenticating official markings to qualify for the reduced letter rate. Nonetheless, it was common practice to apply cachets from the sender's military unit.



POSTAL MARKINGS
CORR. D. ARMEES SAIGON 28 SEPT. 90
REVERSE
AVIZE MARNE 16 OCT 90

Commerce
Use of 15 centimes

Local letters were treated the same as external letters. Here the letter rate was 15 centimes after the rate decrease of 1 January 1889.



POSTAL MARKINGS
COCHINCHINE CAN-THO 4 AOUT 89
REVERSE
SAIGON COCHINCHINE 8 AOUT 89

Commerce
Use of 15 centimes

Here a local letter from Hatien to Saigon in 1887 was addressed to a member of the Marine Artillery. Evidently, it was accepted at the reduced postage rate that applied to soldiers' outgoing letters.



POSTAL MARKINGS
COCHINCHINE HATIEU 16 AVRIL 87

Commerce Use of 15 centimes bisect

The envelope is a piece of Indochinese Post and Telegraph stationery (Series 1, Number 14). Prepared for sending official telegrams, the "Télégramme officiel" has been crossed out with black ink that appears common with other manuscript markings on the cover.

Addressed to Haiphong, the front bears a Haiphong postmark dated 9 MARS. The year is indistinct – it could be "90" or "00." The reverse carries no backstamps which could help clarify the date. The cover is addressed to Mr. Soulage, D & R, Haiphong. "D et R" stood for Douanes et Régies (Customs and Taxes) which is consistent with mail of an official nature. Upon arrival, the letter was redirected via blue crayon to another individual at the D et R.

Most interesting is the bisected 15-centime Commerce stamp at the upper left. The style of the indistinct postmark is not something typically seen in Indochina. Rather, it could be a maritime postmark applied to letters posted aboard ship. Shown for reference is an image of Salles 2.089 from Hong Kong.

But what would motivate a payment of 7.5 centimes? At top center is the notation "AR," which was an abbreviation for acknowledgment of receipt. Did the sender compute this himself? A fractional centime rate is unknown.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HAIPHONG TONKIN 9 MARS 9(?)0

Commerce

Use of 15 and 25 centimes black

Although members of the military serving in the Annam-Tonkin Expeditionary Corps had free mail privileges, the franchise only applied to regular letters. If the soldier desired registration, normal postage fees applied.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HANOI TONKIN 17 SEPT 89

framed R (red)

MARSEILLE A LYON SPECIAL 25 OCT. 89

REVERSE

TONQUIN HAI-PHONG 20 SEPT. 89

CETTE A BORDEAUX 26 OCT 89

BELFORT S/ MER CHARENTE INFRE 27 OCT 89

ARCHIAC CHARENTE INFRE 28 OCT 89

Commerce

Use of 15 and 75 centimes

To protect against loss, a sender could pay an extra fee for a “declared value” letter. The “CHARGÉ” handstamp served as notice that the mailing was insured. To comply with regulations, the insurance value had to be “declared” on the envelope. In addition to a registration fee, the sender was required to pay a fee of 20 centimes per 100 francs of declared value. Postage was determined as follows:

letter rate to France	25 centimes
registration fee	25 centimes
insurance fee (basis: 140 francs)	40 centimes
total	90 centimes



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 20 FEVR 91
CHARGÉ (red) with manuscript registration number
LIGNE N PAQ. FR. N° 2 28 FEVR 91

REVERSE

SAIGON C^{AL} COCHINCHINE 27 FEVR 91
declared value grid

Commerce
fake 15 centimes

Not only is the postmark on this cover a fake, but the stamp itself was printed directly on the paper. A cursory examination reveals that the design lacks many details of the genuine stamp.



POSTMARK TYPE: D2



Commerce
Use of 20 and 30 centimes

A combination of Commerce stamp denominations totaling 50 centimes frank a registered mailing posted from Saigon to France in 1890. Postage was calculated as follows:

letter rate to France	25 centimes
<u>registration fee</u>	<u>25 centimes</u>
total	50 centimes

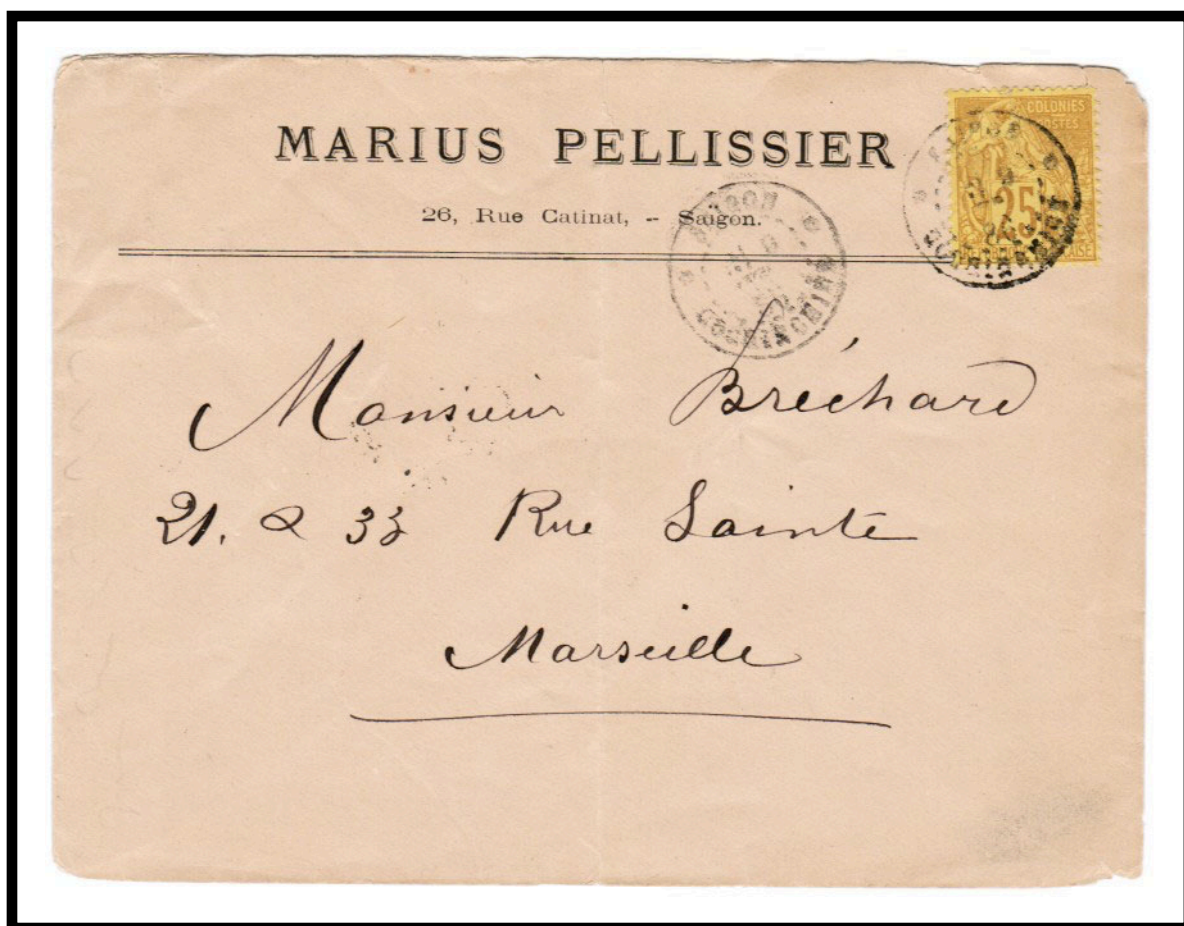


POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON CENTRAL COCHINCHIE 24 MARS 90
framed R (red) with manuscript registration number
MODANE A PARIS 27 AVRIL 90 (red)

Commerce
Use of 25 centimes yellow

As part of the original Commerce series, the 25-centimes denomination was yellow. Prior to 1889, the regular letter rate was 25 centimes.



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON COCHINCHINE 9 JUL. 86
REVERSE
MARSEILLE (12) 6 AOUT 86

Commerce
Use of 25 centimes yellow

Although the 25 centimes black Commerce stamp was introduced in 1886, the yellow value continued to be used until stocks were depleted.



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON COCHINCHINE 25 MARS 86
REVERSE
LESPARRE GIRONDE 23 AVRIL 86

Commerce
Use of 25 centimes yellow

A strip of four 25-centime yellow Commerce stamps paid for mailing a heavy letter from Indochina to France in 1886. Postage was determined as follows:

triple weight letter to France	75 centimes
<u>registration free</u>	<u>25 centimes</u>
total	100 centimes



POSTAL MARKINGS

COCHINCHINE SAIGON 5 FEVR. 86
framed R (red) with manuscript registration number
MODANE A PARIS 11 MARS 86 (red)

REVERSE

BREST FINISTERE 12 MARS 86

Commerce Use of 25 centimes black

Introduced in 1886, the 25-centimes black replaced the 25 centimes yellow. The 25-centime value was widely used as it represented the basic letter rate.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HA-NOI TONKIN 29 MARS 88

REVERSE

CETTE A BORDEAUX 6 MAI 88

BELFORT S/ MER CHAR. INFRE 7 MAI 88

LIMOGES HAUT VIENNE 8 MAI 88

Commerce
Use of 25 centimes black

The 25-centimes black continued to be used for postage even after rates had been reduced. This example is on a letter posted from Lao-Kai to Bordeaux in 1891.



POSTAL MARKINGS

LAO-KAI TONKIN 12 JUIN 91

LIGNE N PAQ. FR. N° 2 5 JUIL 91

REVERSE

HA-NOI TONKIN 18 JUIN 91

YENBAY TONKIN 15 JUIN 91

BORDEAUX ARRIVEE 3 AOUT 91

Commerce
Use of 25 centimes black

In 1892, a 25-centimes black Commerce stamp paid the foreign letter rate to Macau, the Portuguese leased territory in China. The foreign rate remained fixed at 25 centimes for the first 15 grams well past the turn of the century.



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 26 DEC 92

Commerce
Use of 25 centimes black

The use of Commerce stamps continued after Indochina's Navigation and Commerce definitive series was issued in 1892. A single 25-centimes black stamp franked this example of commercial correspondence from 1894.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HAI-PHONG TONKIN 21 JANV. 94

Commerce

Use of 25 centimes black

The 25-centime black franked a mourning envelope sent from Saigon to Nantes, France in 1890. Mourning stationery is a letter, envelope, or calling card with a black border, used to signify that a person is experiencing mourning. It was first used in the 17th century in Europe and was most popular during the Victorian era. The thickness of the black border can signify the level of bereavement but for letters originating from Indochina, the border is typically 0.9 centimeters thick.



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 12 MAI 90
REVERSE
1^E MARSEILLE 1^E B^{CHES} DU-RHONE 8 JUIN 90

Commerce
Use of 25 centimes black

A pair of 25-centime frank a registered letter sent to Paris in 1893. The registration fee had been fixed at 25 centimes in the 1880s.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HANOI-RECIE TONKIN 16 OCT. 93
framed R (red) with manuscript registration number
LIGNE N PAQ. FR. NO 4 22 OCT. 93

REVERSE

TONQUIN HAIPHONG 17 OCT. 93
PARIS 31 R. DEBOURGOGNE 18 NOV 93
PARIS POSTE RESTANTE 18 NOV 93

Commerce
Use of 25 centimes black

Free mail for government officials was not uniformly granted. Here, stationery from the Resident Superior in Annam served for a registered mailing to France in 1892.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HUE ANNAM 8 DEC 92
framed R (red)
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 16 DEC 92

Commerce
Use of 25 centimes black

Even though the rate for letters within the French Community had been reduced in 1899, the foreign letter rate remained fixed at 25 centimes. Postage for this 1888 mailing was calculated as follows:

foreign letter rate	25 centimes
<u>registration fee</u>	<u>25 centimes</u>
total	50 centimes



POSTAL MARKINGS
HAI-PHONG TONKIN 12 JUIN 88
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL. PAID ALL JUL 14

Use of 25 and 40 centimes

A letter with a declared value of 1,000 francs was posted from That-Khe, Tonkin to France in 1891. Postage, including the insurance fee, totaled 2.50 francs and was paid with a combination of 25-centime and 40-centime Commerce stamps.



POSTAL MARKINGS

THAT-KHE TONKIN 25 SEPT 91

“CHARGÉ” insured mail handstamp with manuscript tracking number
LIGNE N PAQ. FR. No 1 8 NOV. 91

REVERSE

rate determination handstamp

LANG-SON TONKIN 12 OCT. 91

LANG-KEP TONKIN 20 OCT. 91

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 5 NOV 91

TARBES HAUTE PYRENEES 5 DEC. 91

Commerce
Use of 30 centimes

After 1898, the basic letter rate was 15 centimes for letters weighing less than 15 grams. Double weight letters (15-30 grams) were charged the second rate step of 30 centimes.



POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 19 AOUT 92
MODANE A PARIS 17 SEPT. 92
REVERSE
QUIPAVAS FINISTERE 18 SEPT 92

Commerce
Use of 30 centimes

The free mail privilege for troops serving in the Annam-Tonkin Expeditionary Corps applied only to basic letters less than 15 grams. If the letter weighed between 15 and 30 grams, the soldier had to pay the full postage nullifying any benefit.



POSTAL MARKINGS
HA-NOI TONKIN 9 DEC. 92
REVERSE
BESANÇON DOUBS 13 JANV 93

Commerce Use of 30 centimes

A postal card from 1876 was franked with a 20-centime Peace and Commerce stamp and a 30-centime Commerce stamp for a mailing from Saigon to France in 1905. The registration fee of 25 centimes would have made the total postage for a registered postcard 40 centimes. Perhaps, the sender paid the registered letter rate of 50 centimes out of ignorance about prevailing postage rates or the franking was the result of a conscious effort to ensure safe passage of the mailing.



POSTAL MARKINGS

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 8 MAI 95
framed R with manuscript registration number
MODANE A PARIS 3 JUIN 95
HEREPIAN HERAULT 10 JUIN 95

Commerce
Use of 75 centimes

Higher valued stamps paid for heavier mail as in the case of this mailing from Hai-Phong to Paris in 1898. Postage was calculated as follows:

double weight rate to France	50 centimes
registration fee	<u>25 centimes</u>
total	75 centimes



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 25 FEVR. 98
framed R with manuscript registration number
MODANE A PARIS 21 MARS 88

REVERSE

PARIS 9 R. MONTAIGNE 2 AVRIL 88
PARIS 9 R. MONTAIGNE 3 AVRIL 88
PARIS POSTE REÇU ANTE 12 AVRIL 88

Commerce
Use of 75 centimes

A 75-centimes Commerce stamp franked a double weight, commercial mailing from Hai-Phong to Germany in 1894.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 2 AVRIL 94
framed R (red) with manuscript registration number

REVERSE

HONG-KONG AP 8 94
Bestellt Postamte 22 13 5.94
Bestellt Postamte 68 14 5.94
Bestellt Postamte 68 15 5.94

Commerce
Use of 75 centimes and 1 franc

Postage for a letter with a declared value of 1,000 francs sent to France in 1892 was calculated as follows:

letter rate to France (second weight step)	0.50 franc
registration fee	0.25 franc
<u>insurance fee (20 centimes per 100 francs)</u>	<u>2.00 francs</u>
total	2.75 francs



POSTAL MARKINGS

HAI-PHONG TONKIN 9 JANV. 92
CHARGÉ with manuscript number

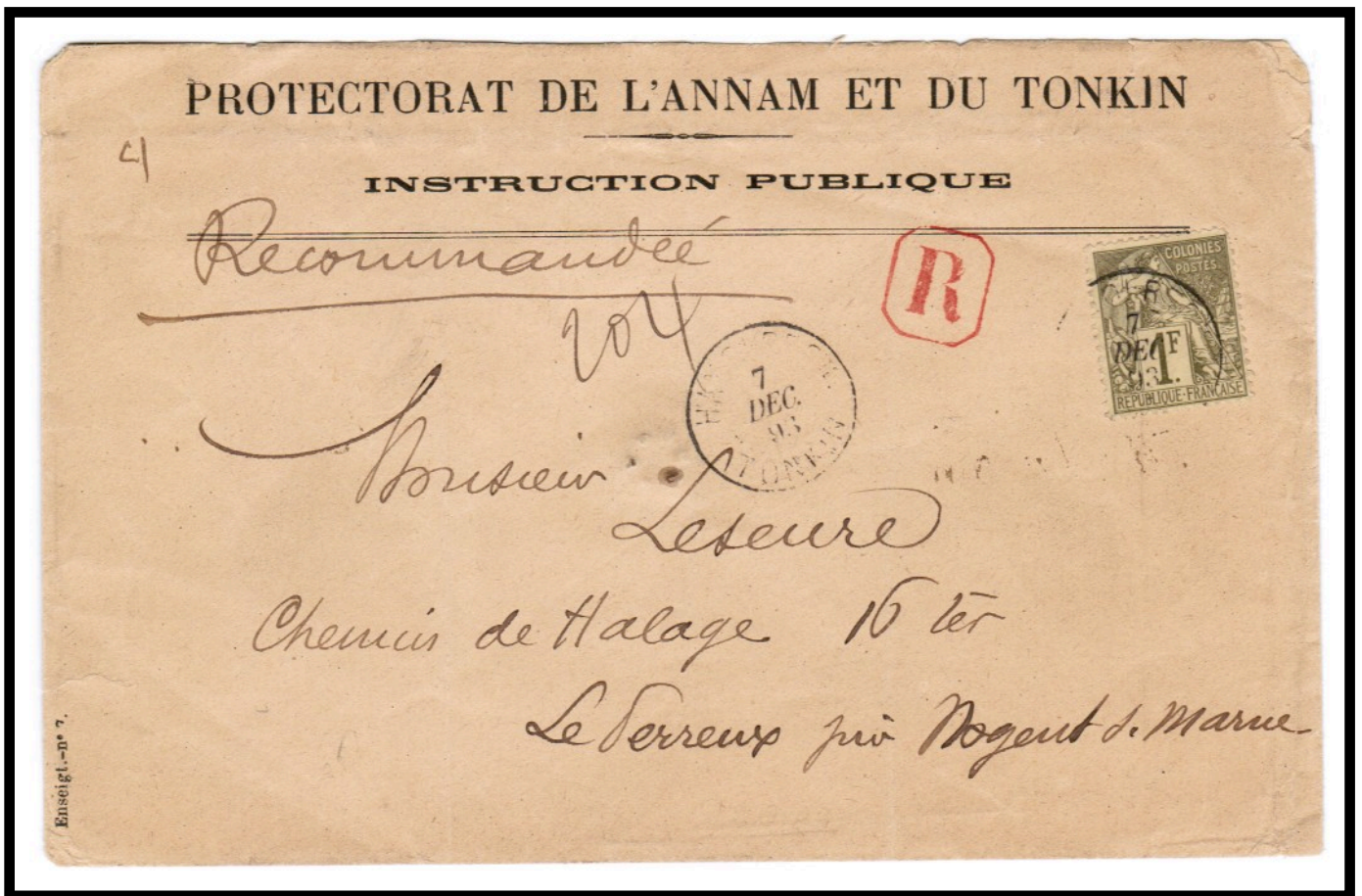
REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 14 JANV 92
MARSEILLE A LYON SPECT+IAL 12 FEVR 92
MOURIES B^{CHES} DU RHONE 13 FEVR 92

Commerce
Use of 1 franc

A 1-franc Commerce stamp franks a heavy letter sent from Hanoi Recette to France. Postage was determined as follows:

letter rate to France (3 rd weight step)	75 centimes
registration fee	25 centimes
total	100 centimes



POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI-RECTE TONKIN 7 DEC. 93
framed R (red) with manuscript registration number
REVERSE
LE PERREUX SEINE 14 JANV.94

Commerce Usage

Sent via registered mail, this example of bank correspondence was franked with four Commerce stamps of different colors. Postage was calculated as follows:

letter rate to France (second weight step)	50 centimes
registration fee	25 centimes
<u>convenience charge</u>	<u>10 centimes</u>
total	85 centimes

Perhaps the bank clerk who affixed the postage thought that the four-color franking justified the overpayment of 10 centimes.



POSTAL MARKINGS

HA-NOI TONKIN 10 JUIN 92
framed R (red) with manuscript registration number