

Kouangchowan Expeditionary Force Cachet of the Supreme Commander

Looking with envy on colonies like Hong Kong and Macao, France sought to establish a foothold in China. In 1898, French army and naval forces occupied Kouangchowan.

This envelope bears the cachet of the Supreme Commander of the force located at Fort Bayard, which was the central military and administrative area.



POSTAL MARKINGS

CORPS EXPEDIRE TONKIN
FORT BAYARD INDOCHINE FRANCAISE 14 OCT 03

REVERSE

AUBERVILLIERS 4 CHEMINS SEINE 27 NOV 03

Kouangchowan Expeditionary Force Civilian Postmark

Once a 99-year lease for Kouangchowan had been extracted from China in 1899, the military became more of a garrison force as the endorsement on this cover indicates —“Troupes d'occupation de Quang-Tchiow-Wan (Chine).”

Before 1905, the territory was administered by Tonkin. The civilian postmark reflects that, after securing the lease, Kouangchowan was considered a part of Indochina.



Civilian Postmark



POSTAL MARKINGS
CORPS EXPEDIRE TONKIN
QUANG TCHEOU INDO-CHINE FRANCAISE 10 JANV 01
REVERSE
8 PARIS 8 DISTRIBON 20 FEVR 01

Kouangchowan Expeditionary Force
Military Postmark

The military postmarking devices used in Kouangchowan were often either worn or else had some of the lettering purposely scratched away. The postmark on this cover shows only the letters '...PS EXPEDIRE ...N'.



Civilian Postmark



Military Postmark



POSTAL MARKINGS

...PS EXPEDIRE ...IN
FORT BAYARD INDOCHINE FRANÇAISE 27 NOV 02

Kouangchowan Expeditionary Force
Tonkin Regiment

As evidenced by the military cachets, Kouangchowan had troops assigned to various locations. Other troops must have rotated through Kouangchowan as this cover demonstrates. The cachet clearly belongs to a regiment based in Tonkin. The letter was postmarked at Fort Bayard in 1903.



5th Regiment Tonkin Skirmishers



POSTAL MARKINGS

CORPS EXPÉDIRE TONKIN
FORT BAYARD INDO-CHINE FRANÇAISE 7 AOUT 03

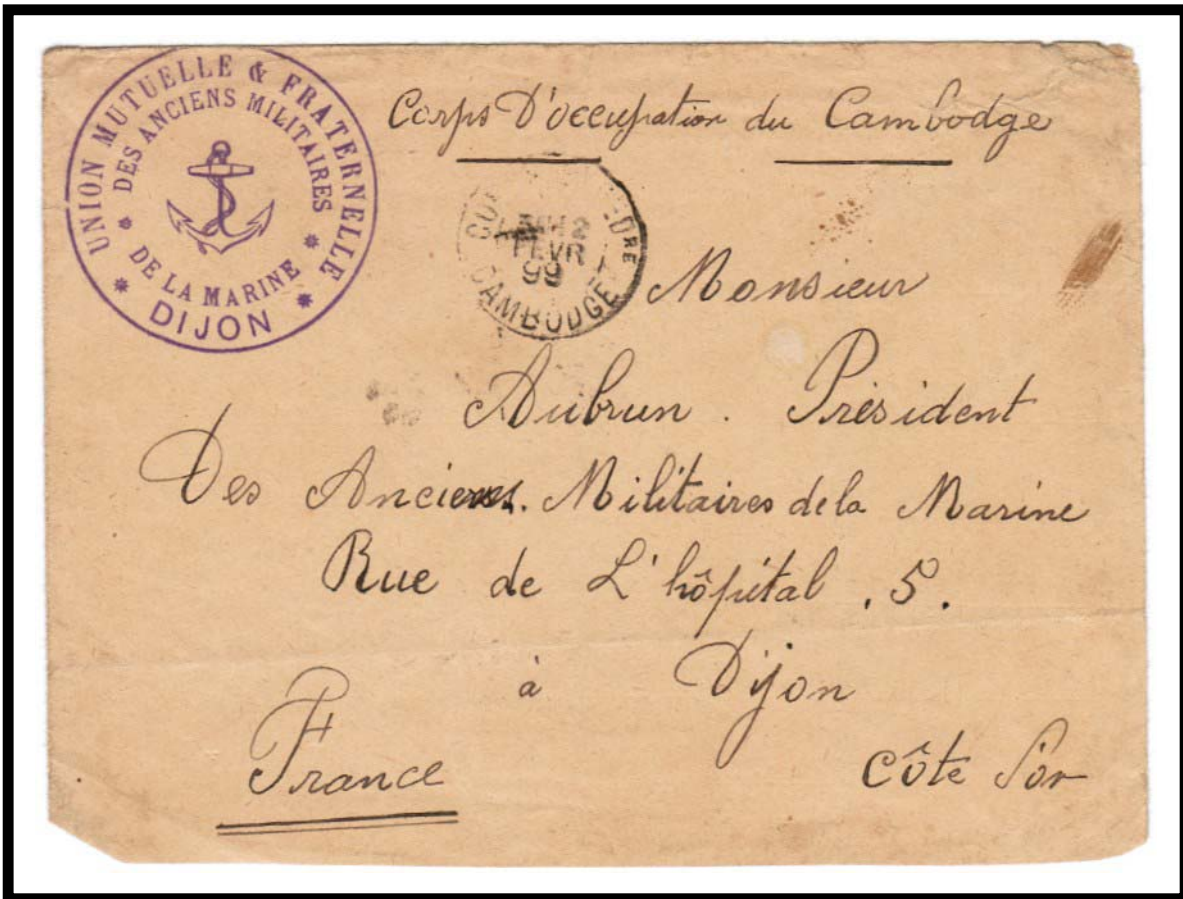
REVERSE

HAIPHONG TONKIN 11 AOUT 03
10 PARIS 10 DISTRIBON 19-9 03

Cambodia Expeditionary Force

In spite of the French protectorate for Cambodia, clashes continued with Thailand. The Second Cambodian Expeditionary Force was formed in 1893 to drive the Siamese from western Cambodia and southern Laos. Distinctive postmarks differentiated the Cambodian Expeditionary Force from the Tonkin Expeditionary Force.

The purple cachet on this cover was applied upon arrival by the addressee in Dijon, France.



POSTAL MARKINGS

CORPS EXPEDRE CAMBODGE 12 FEVR 99

REVERSE

DIJON COTE D'OR MARS 99

Cambodia Expeditionary Force

The endorsement at the top of this early Expeditionary Corps letter is "Corps expéditionnaire de Haut Mékong," which signified the section of river between Phnompenh and Laos. The letter took 10 days to reach Saigon and seven weeks to reach the destination in France.



Military Postmark



POSTAL MARKINGS

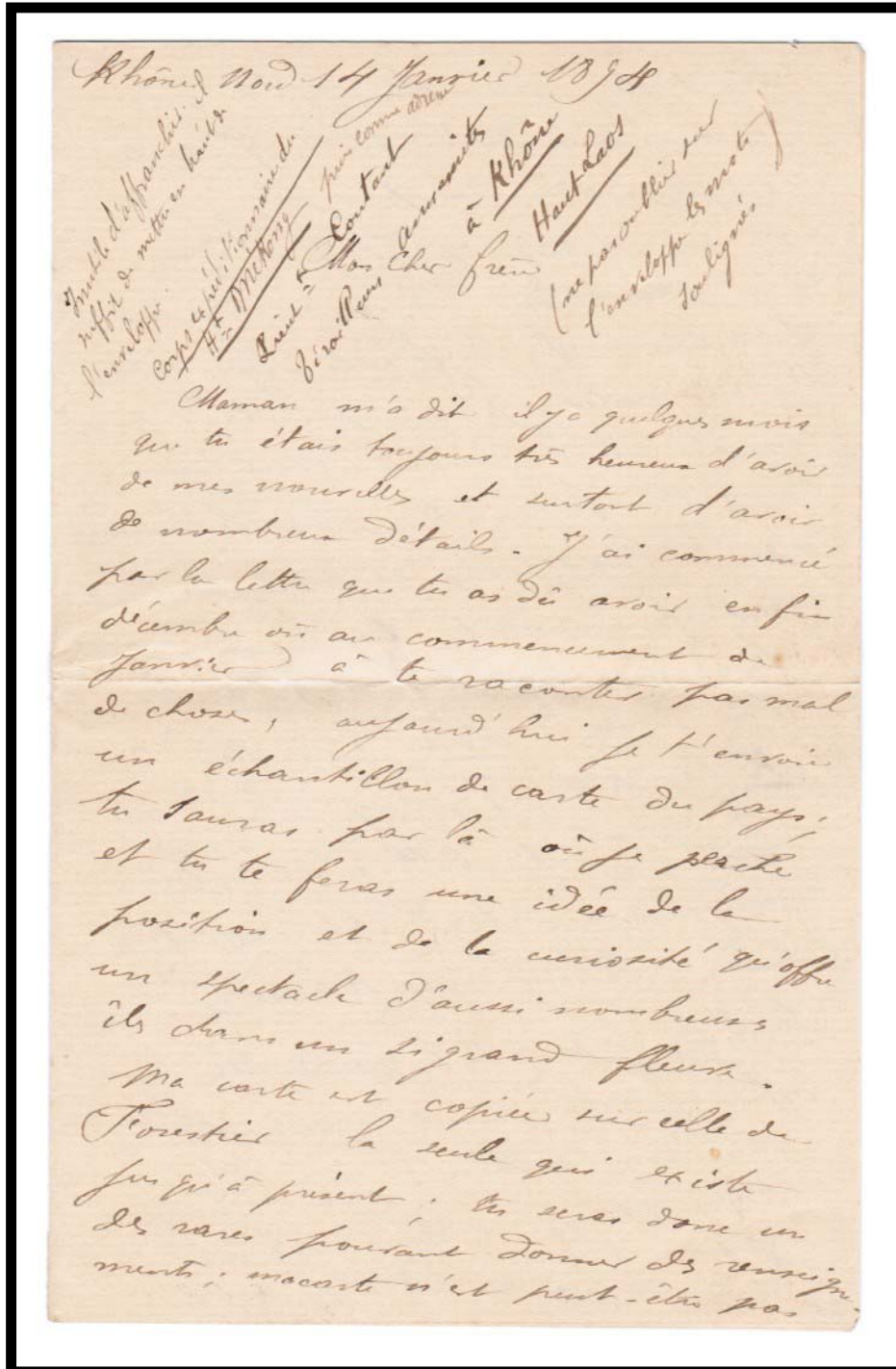
CORPS EXPEDITIONNAIRE CAMBODGE 18 JANV 94
CORPS EXP. TONKIN LIGNE N.8 10 FEVR. 94

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 28 JANV 94
POITIERS VIENNE 9 MARS 94

Cambodia Expeditionary Force

The letter enclosed in the previous envelope was datelined "Khone Nord" 14 January 1894.



Corps Cambodia Expeditionary Force

For this letter, the endorsement was “Corps expéditionnaire de Mékong.” On the reverse, the addressee is identified as “le Commandant d’armées de Khone.” The Cambodian Expeditionary Corps postmarks differed slightly at different locations. At Khone, the inner circle of the postmark was composed of 15 dashes.



Military Postmark



POSTAL MARKINGS

CORPS EXPED^{RE} CAMBODGE 23 MARS 94
CORPS EXP. TONKIN LIGNE N.1 8 AVRIL 94

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 1 AVRIL 94
POITIERS VIENNE 5 MAI 94

Cambodia Expeditionary Force
Military Postmark

At the top, this cover was identified as coming from the "Troupes d'Occupation du Cambodge." The format of the military postmark is exactly the same layout as the type E2 civilian postmark from the same period.



Military Postmark



POSTAL MARKINGS

CORPS EXPEDITIONNAIRE CAMBODGE 14 FEVR 00

REVERSE

SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 15 FEVR 00

ALEX DROME 12 MARS 00

Cambodia Expeditionary Force Commander's Cachet

The cachet denotes that this letter was posted from Pnom Penh where the Commander of Troops was located.

Soldiers' covers were endorsed "Troupes du Cambodge", "Corps d' occupation du Cambodge" or the equivalent. The authenticating signature for the franchise was written at the lower left of the envelope.



Commander's Cachet



Military Postmark



POSTAL MARKINGS

CORPS EXPEDRE CAMBODGE 29 SEPT 96

REVERSE

SAIGON COCHINCHÉ CORPS EXPE 1 OCT 96

Cambodia Expeditionary Force
Public Health Service

At that time, all hospitals in Cambodia were run by the military. All doctors were in the military and hence they each had the free franchise privilege. The cachet for the Public Health Service indicates a political ("Protectorate du Cambodge") association rather than a military one. Physicians were both military and political officials. The postcard was mailed from Kompong-Chnang, near Phnompenh, Cambodia.



Public Health Service Cachet



Civilian Postmark



POSTAL MARKINGS

KOMPONG-CHNANG CAMBODGE 10 MARS 02

REVERSE

KOMPONG-CHNANG CAMBODGE 10 MARS 02