

The World at war

(from one peace: Versailles 1919 to another: Reims/Tokyo 1945)

The largest armed conflict in the history of mankind, which caused about 63 million military and civilian casualties involving Nations from all continents, goes from September 1, 1939 to September 2, 1945. Born from the harsh Treaty of Versailles, drafted at the end of the great war, the second world war marks the pinnacle of the sacrifice of human lives on earth, in the skies and on the seas with, at the same time, the largest military operations, as for men and means employed, never before completed successfully. It also defined the supremacy of airpower and carrier vessels on traditional battleships.

TITLE AND PLAN OF THE EXHIBIT

sheet 1

<p>A FROM VERSAILLES TO THE TRIPARTITE sheets 13</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Armistice, peace, treaties and consequences 2. The rise of national socialism 3. Italy and fascism 4. Japanese imperialism 	<p>D JAPAN SPREADS OUT sheets 10</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pearl Harbour 2. Southeast Asia 3. Midway
<p>B THE BEGINNING OF TRAGEDY “ 14</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The attack on Poland 2. A strange war 3. Denmark and Norway fall 4. BlietzKrieg in the West 5. Italy enters the war 6. The battle of Britain 7. Eastern Europe in flames 	<p>E THE COUNTERATTACK IN EUROPE “ 23</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The campaign in Italy 2. From Stalingrad to Leningrad 3. The landing in Normandy 4. From Provence to Germany 5. The Red Army in Berlin 6. The victory, the peace and the division of Germany
<p>C DUEL ON THE SEAS AND THE AFRICAN SCENE “ 11</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Duel on the seas 2. The African scene 3. The Mediterranean sea and Malta 	<p>F THE DEFEAT OF JAPAN “ 8</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The re-conquest of the Pacific Islands 2. Back into the Philippines 3. Attack to the Japanese ground 4. The atomic bomb, Japan's surrender, peace

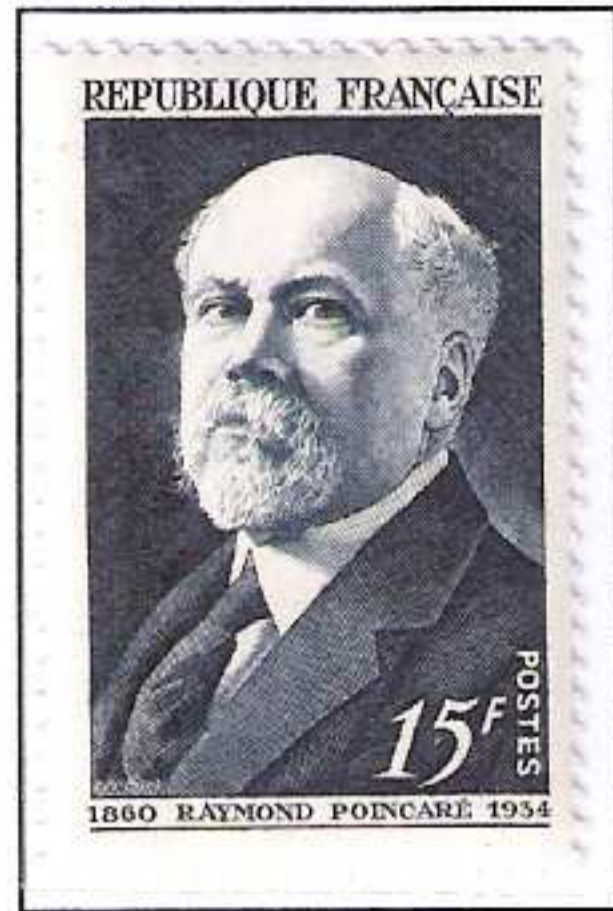
Total sheets 80

On November 11th, 1918 the Armistice of Compiègne is signed between the Allies and the German Empire. On every front all battles stop. The first World War is over.

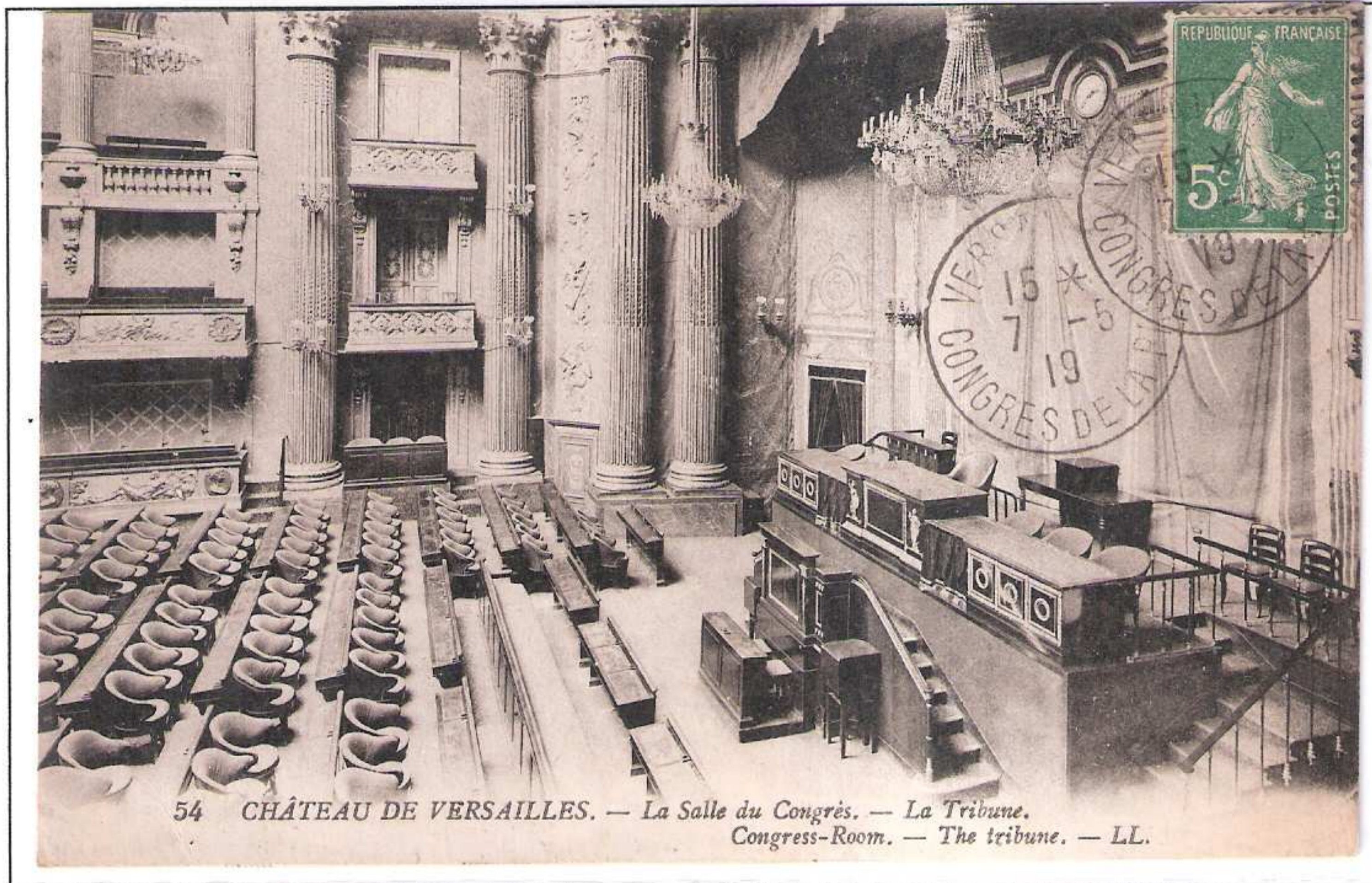
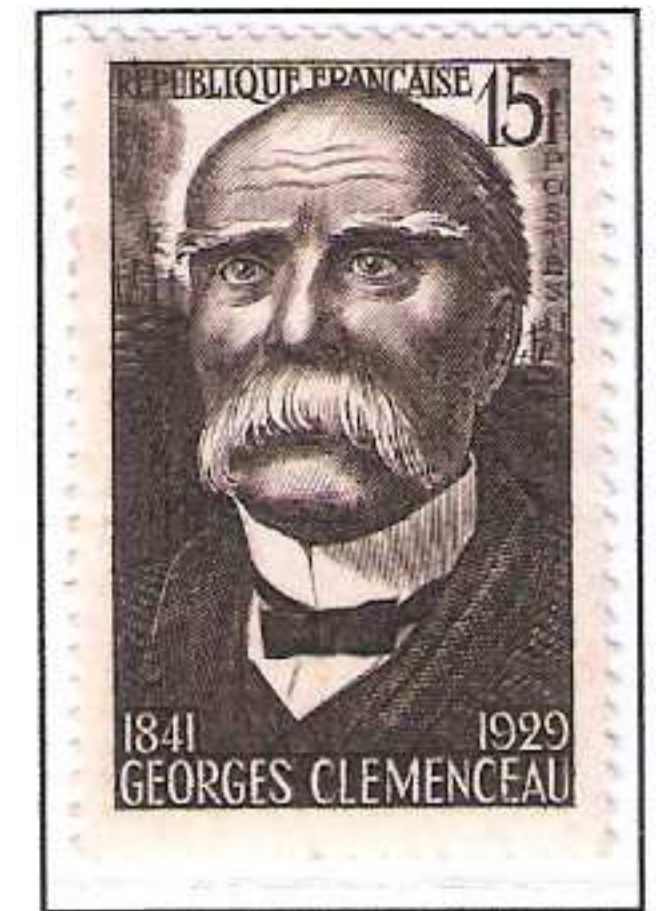


The great massacre is over. Peace is restored.





Raymond Poincaré, President of the French Republic, opens the Peace Conference in Versailles on January 18th, 1919.



The President of the Conference is the Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau. On May 7th, 1919 the peace conditions are imposed to the German delegation.

54 CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES. — La Salle du Congrès. — La Tribune. Congress-Room. — The tribune. — LL.

On that occasion a prophetic sentence is supposed to have been said by Marshal Foch: " *This is not peace; it is a twenty years " armistice "* "



Artist proof

œuvre

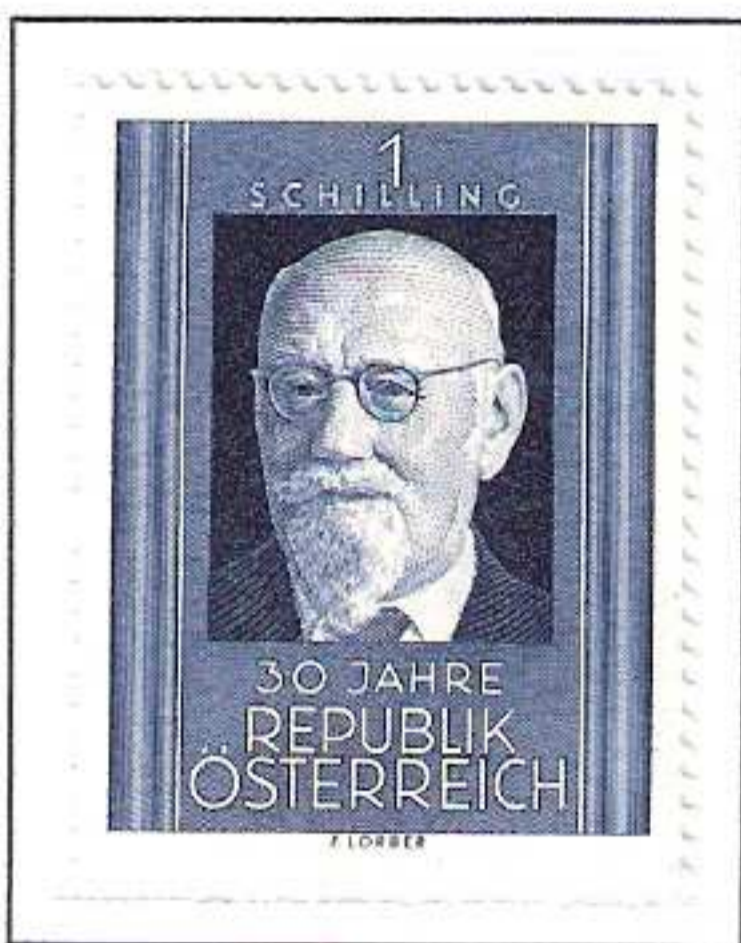
The Treaty is signed on June 28th, 1919. It also contained the famous fourteen points wanted by the American President Woodrow Wilson.



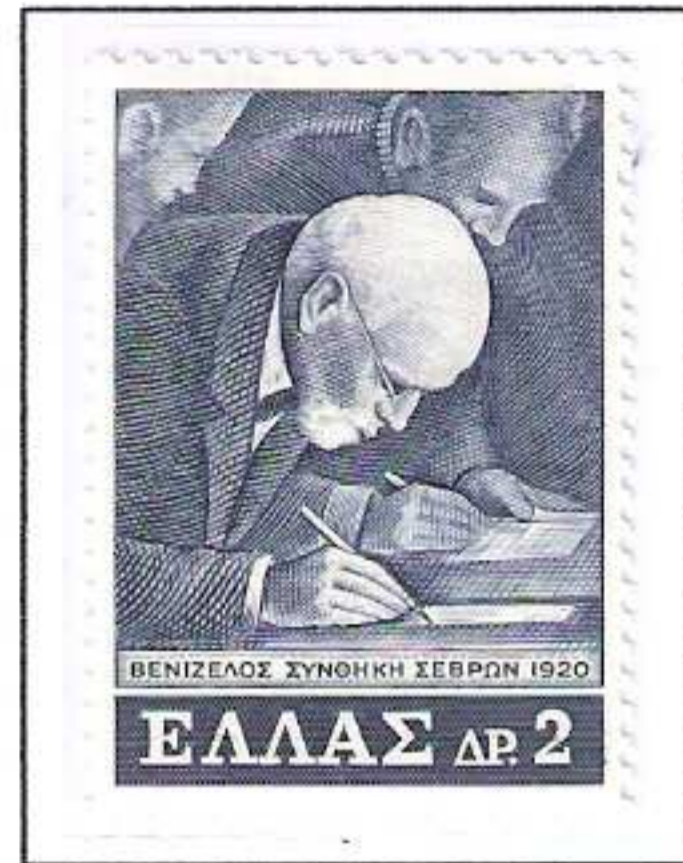
After accepting the full responsibility of the war, Germany and its Allies face the disarmament, the loss of their territories and the compensation of the damage caused to the Allies.

The Treaty of Peace signed by Austria in the castle of Saint-Germain-en-Laye marks the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Karl Renner, Chancellor of the new Austrian Republic, signs the peace Treaty on September 10th, 1919.



On August 10th, 1920, in Sèvres, the Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos signs, together with the Allies of the Entente, the peace treaty with the Ottoman Empire; it marks the end of the Sultanate and the split of its territories.



The Turkish Nationalists, led by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, do not accept the Treaty and during the War of 1919-1922 they defeat Greece and manage to keep the current borders of their Country. However, they lose the control of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus Straits.



The Treaty of Lausanne of July 24th, 1923 puts an end to the Greek-Turkish war and defines the borders of two Countries.



The Treaty of the Grand Trianon of Versailles marks the future of the Hungarian Kingdom after the collapse of the House of Hapsburg Empire. Actually it changes the names and the borders of the Carpathian-Danubian area.



With the loss of part of its National territories, of all its African and Pacific colonies and with the Kaiser's escape to Holland, Germany faces a period of serious political instability. The payment of the enormous debts of war drains the Government revenues, causing the beginnings of the mark devaluation.

Historians now recognize that the harsh conditions imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles, together with the great depression of 1929, caused a deep discontent in the German people, and favoured the spreading of the National Socialist ideas of Adolf Hitler and his movement.

Inflation in Germany reaches its peak in 1923.



The fight to get the power in Germany ends in 1933 when Hindenburg appoints Hitler Chancellor of the Reich.



Postal stationery praising Hitler's rise to power.

A "Referendum", held in the Saar on January 13, 1935, decides the return to the German Reich with 90,73 of votes.



January 13, 1935: registered card from Saarbrücken to Bern franked with the values "Volksabstimmung 1935".



The Saar returns to "Mother Germany"



1935: From Saarbrücken into town with the cancellation "German is the Saar" with the stamp of 6 pf, symbol of the re-arming.

The popular consensus encourages Hitler who conquers Austria. The plebiscite of October 4, 1938, ratifies the annexation of Austria to Germany.



On September 29, 1938, the Munich agreement gave the Sudetenland to Germany, yet victorious with its aggressive policy, opening the way to Hitler for the conquest of the whole Czechoslovakia.



WIR DANKEN UNSERM FUHRER

The delta of the River Vistula and the town of Danzig are a pretext to occupy Poland. But this time for Germany will be the war.



September 14, 1940, Poland: registered mail from Krakov to Lorch franked with overprinted "General Government" after the conquest of Poland.



Einschreiben



Herrn Hermann E. Sieger

Lorch/Württ.

Even before Hitler in Germany, in Italy Mussolini, riding, after the great war, the discontent of the "mutilated victory" as Gabriele D'Annunzio called it, rises to power on October, 31, 1922 in the context of strong political and social instability, with the help of the "blackshirts" and "the March on Rome".



Emission in remembrance of the 3rd anniversary of victory in the great war.



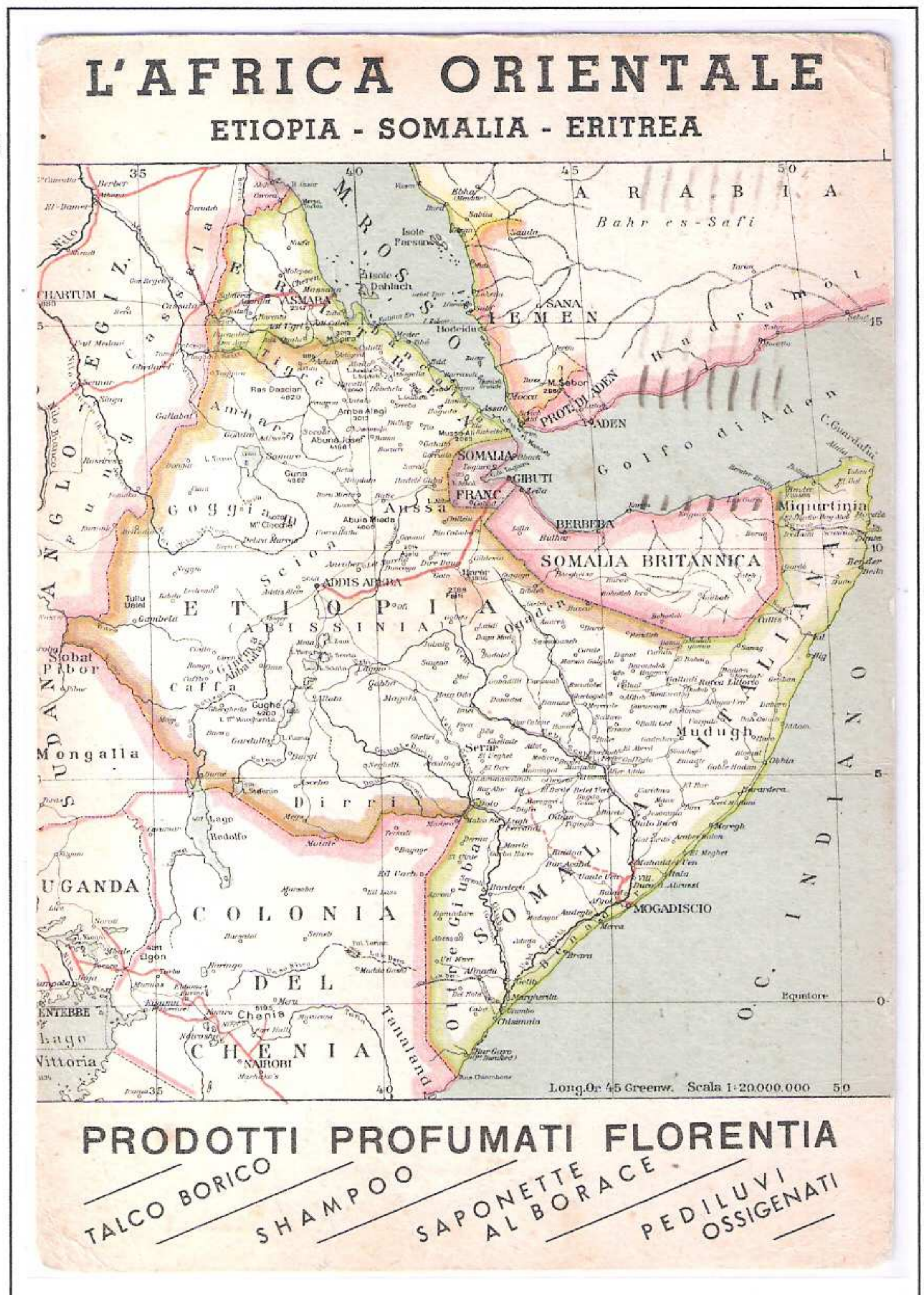
Organized by the F.N.P., the "March on Rome", on October 31, 1922 resulted in the rise to power of the same party. The event ended on October, the 30th when the King decided to appoint Mussolini to form a new Government.



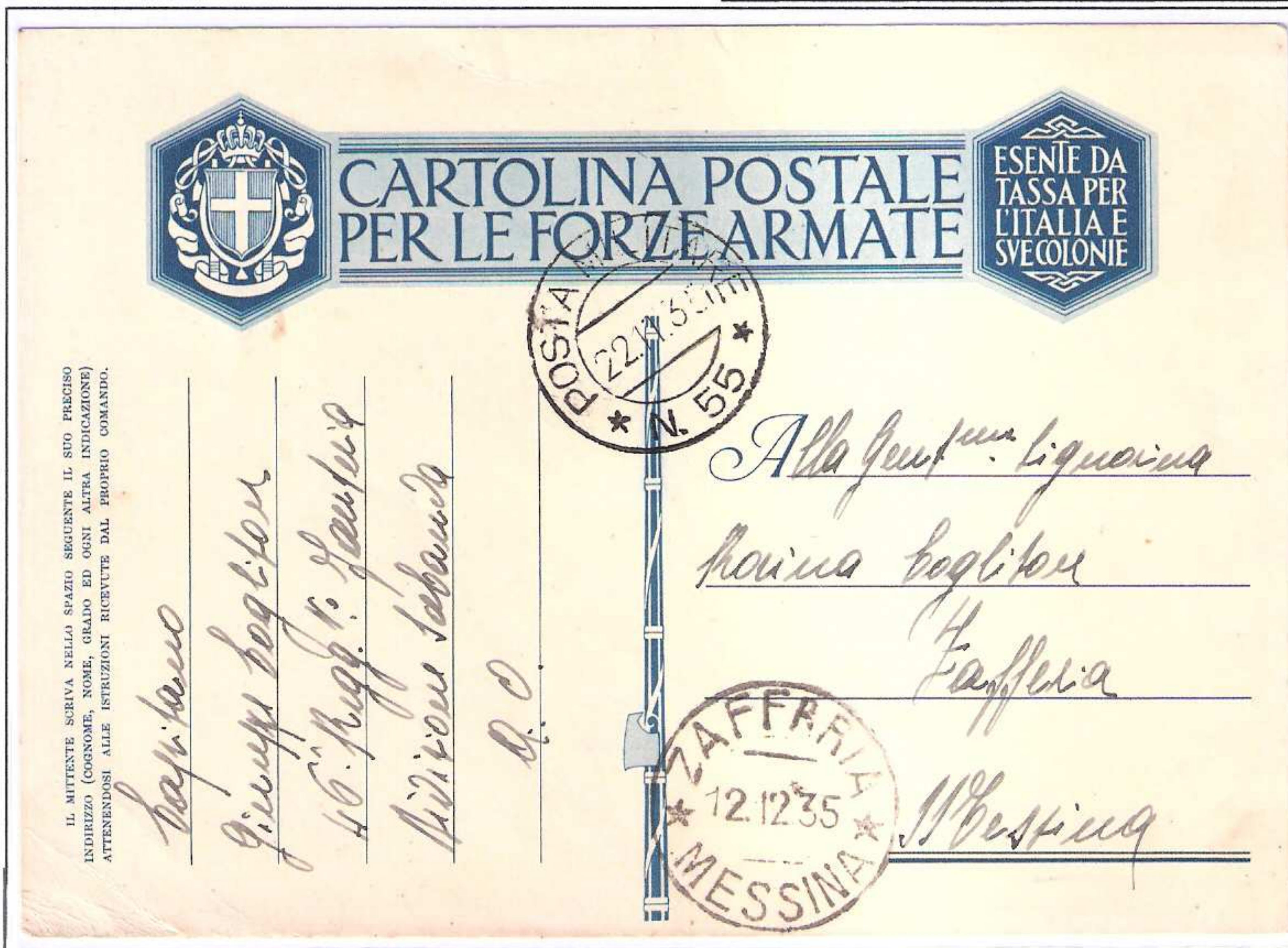
Stamps issued for the anniversary of the "March on Rome".



Eager to create a colonial empire, Mussolini begins the campaign in Ethiopia on October 2, 1935. The League of Nations, of which Italy, too, is not surprisingly part, imposes its "sanctions" on Italy on October 7, 1935. The campaign ends on May 9, 1936 and the "sanctions" are repealed on July 4, 1936. At last Italy has its colony in Eastern Africa.



Postcard: "East Africa", from Naples to Viggiano in tariff.



Ethiopia, December 22, 1935, M.P. n.55 from Zafferaria (Messina)..

On April 7, 1939, Mussolini invades the small Albania; on April 12, the Constituent Assembly approves a new Constitution that turned the Italian Protectorate of Albania into the Kingdom of Albania. The same as in Germany, it is the last Italian conquest before two dictators are united in the madness of war.



December 4, 1939, Albania: overprinted stamp for the Constituent Assembly.



April 8, 1939, Albania: stamp with the effigy of King Vittorio Emanuele III.

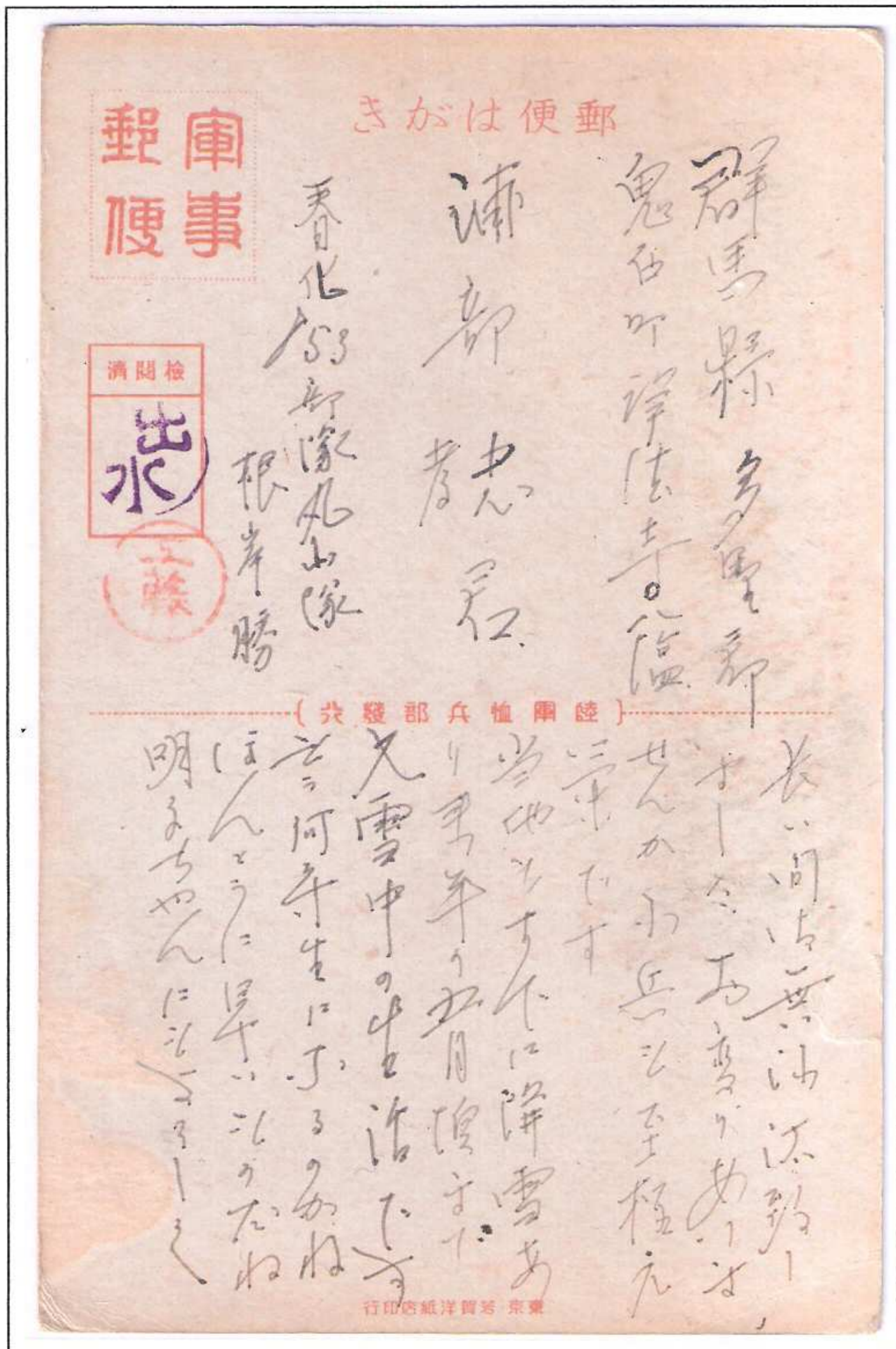


M.P. free card with greetings praising victory.



Albania, June 1941: letter for Maleo (Mi) charged by 50 cets. tax at its arrival.

Emperor Hiro-Hito came to power on December 25, 1926. Inside the Government he had to face the caste of the military power, led by gen. Tojo, determined to subdue with arms most of the Asian countries in order to strengthen the Empire.



Japan, 1928: commemorative values for the coronation of Emperor Hiro-Hito.

The Japanese militarists had already forced the Emperor's hand in 1931 with the conquest of Manchuria.

Manciukuo, Jiandao : M.P. free postcard sent to Gumna, Japan, seen for censorship.

With the Emperor's approval, Prince Asaka Yasuhiko, the Emperor's uncle, is appointed chief of the Japanese Army. Using as a pretext "The Marco Polo's Bridge Incident" (when Japanese soldiers disguised in Chinese uniforms attack the Japanese troops) Japan starts the 2nd Sino-Japanese war. On July 7, 1937 it occupies Shanghai, Nanking and the Xhanxi defended by the army of the Kuomintang (Chinese nationalist party) led by Chiang Kai-shek.



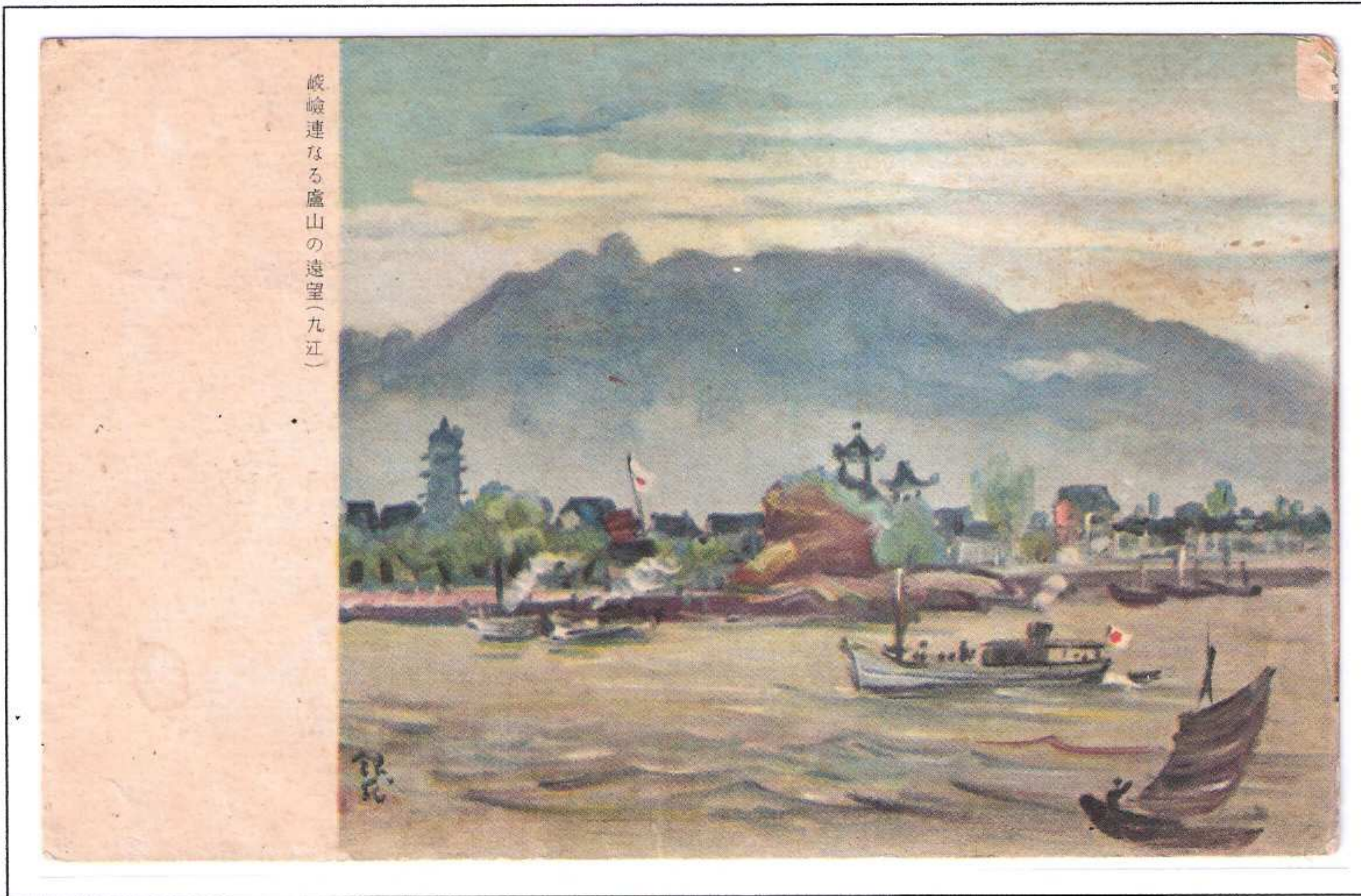
Chinese overprinted stamps for the Japanese occupation of Nanking And Shanghai.



Chiang Kai-shek,

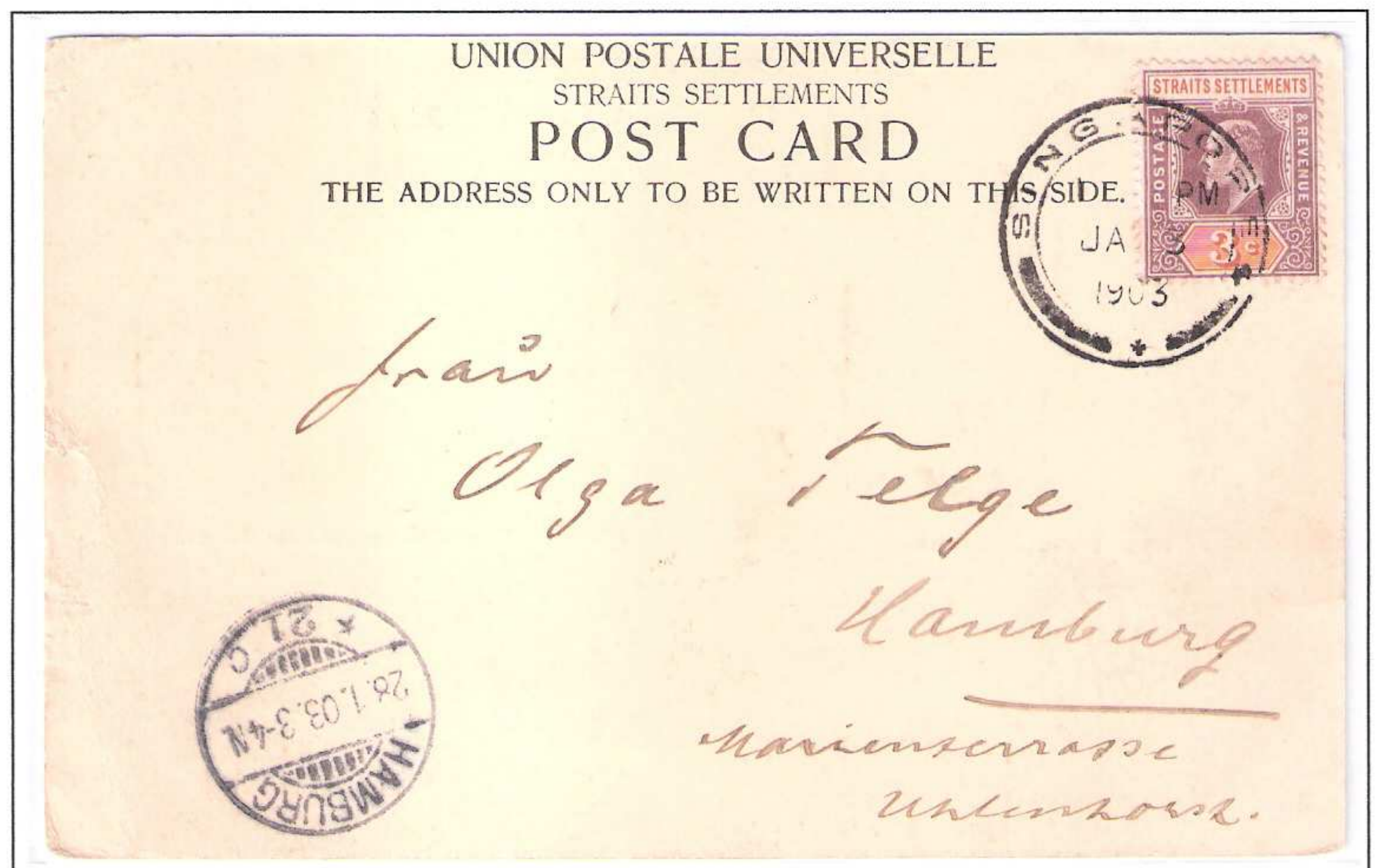


At the end of July 1941, Japan managed to get the permission from the Vichy Government to settle military bases in Indochina. For the United States, Britain and the Netherlands that was a strong signal of the will to conquer the rich Japanese possessions in Southeast Asia. Sanctions were immediately taken against Japan. The embargo was made on oil and iron supplies.



M.P. free postcard sent from central China to Japan (Shitsuoka).

Stamps, on place at that time, of colonies threatened by Japan.





At dawn, on September 1, 1939, at 4.45 a.m., Hitler's Wehrmacht invaded Poland and that was the beginning of the 2nd World War tragedy. It will come to an end only on September 2, 1945.



Invaded also on the Eastern front by the Soviet Union, Poland will surrender on September 27, 1939, after a strenuous defence of Warsaw.

Propaganda Postal stationery: "Danzig is German".

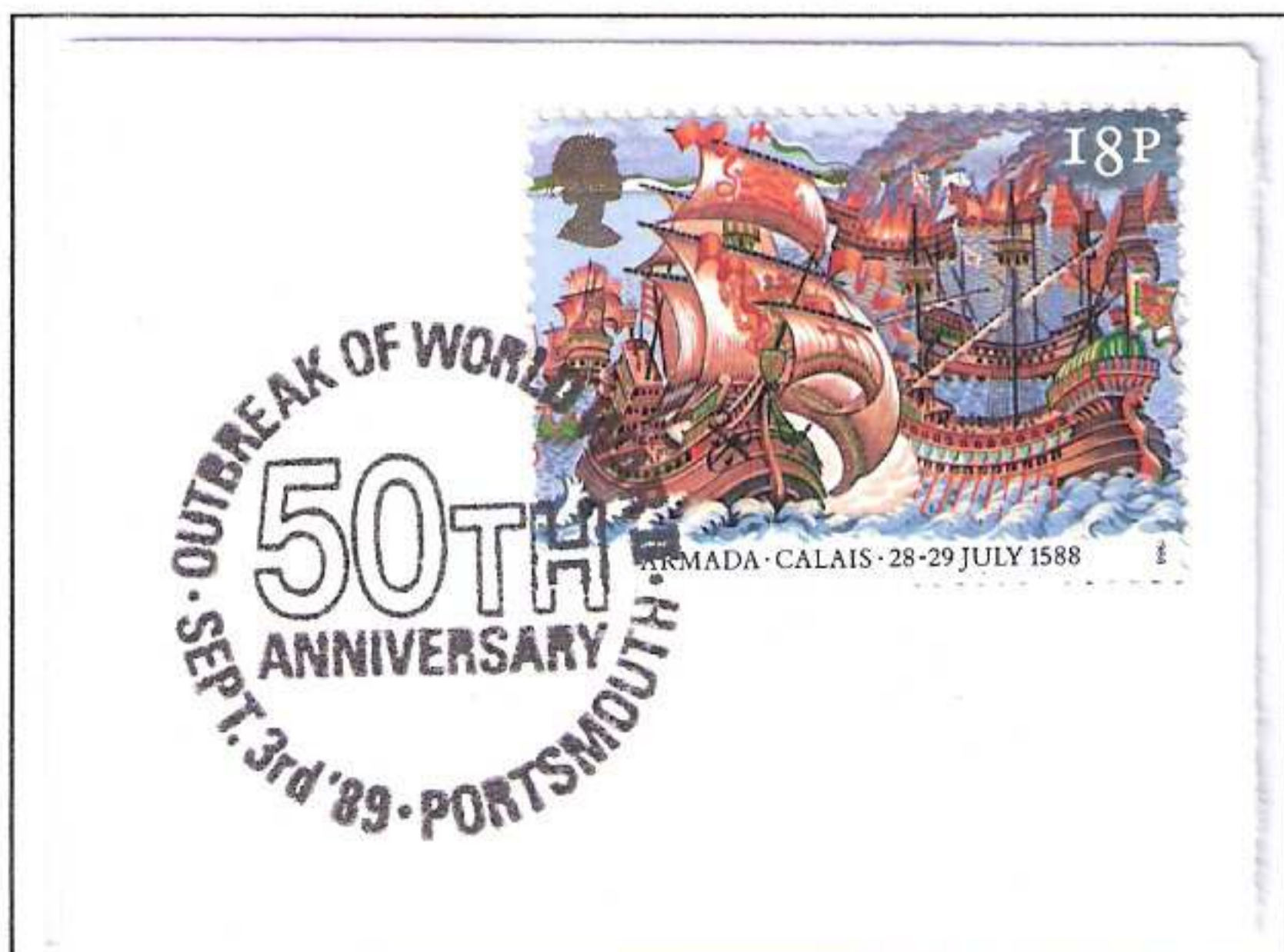


The battles of

Westerplatte



Warsaw



England and France declare war to Germany on September 3, 1939.



B THE BEGINNING OF TRAGEDY

2. A STRANGE WAR

After the conquest of Poland a new period starts: it is called " Period of the strange war " because none of the opposite armies moved. The battlefield was only on the sea.



On October 14, at 10,30 a.m. the u-boat 47, Commander Gunther Prien, enters the Scapa Flow Bay: the battleship Royal Oak sinks

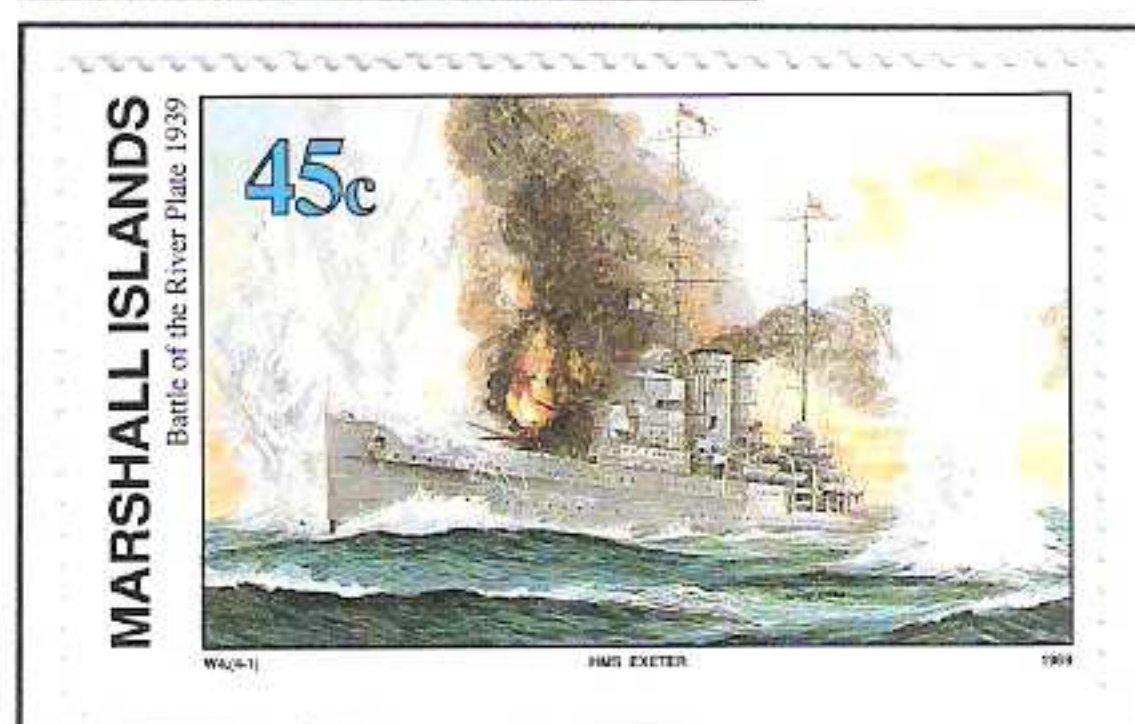
The Home fleet recovers and on December 14 of the same year, by the cruisers Ajax, Exeter and Achilles, commanded by Commodore Harwood, it forces the heavy buttlecruiser Admiral Graf Spee, to find a shelter in Montevideo harbour. The cruiser will find self-sinking in the estuary of the Rio de la Plata on the 17th. The German com. Langsdorff commits suicide 3 days later.



Private postal stationery on commission by collectors of Siemens, Berlin, March 30th, 31st, 1940.



Commodore Harwood and his team of cruisers.



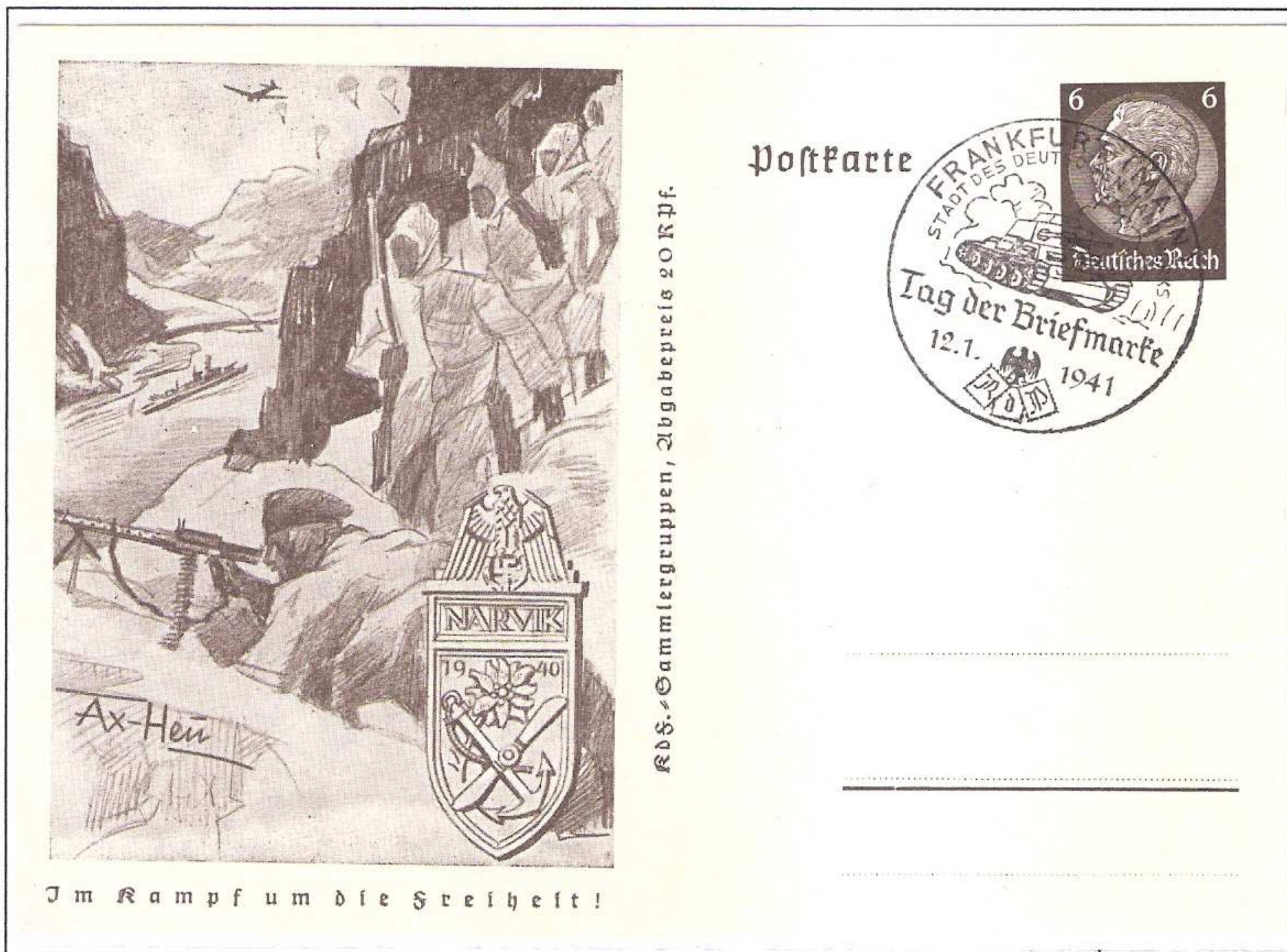
B THE BEGINNING OF TRAGEDY

3. DENMARK AND NORWAY FALL

Anticipating the moves of the English troops, in order to ensure the passage of his ships in the North Sea, Hitler, on April 9, 1940 decides to invade Denmark and Norway. The latter, attacked from the sea, land and air, aided by British and the French, resists until 10 June.



December 9, 1940, Copenhagen: letter to Hamburg seen for censorship.



The fjord of Narvik, where the battle was extremely bloody, and the memorial for the allies dead in battle.

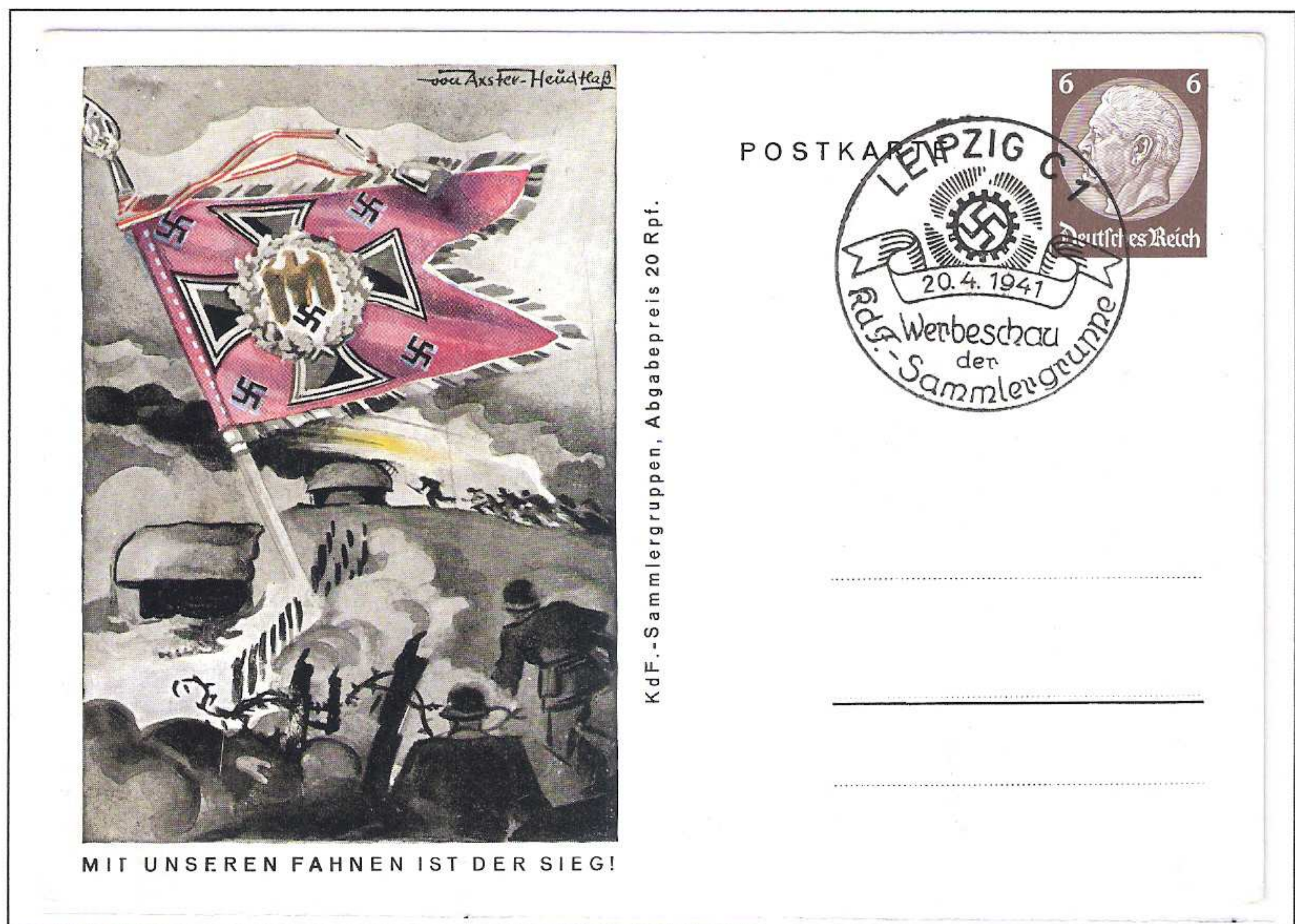
Begun in 1928 and finished in early 1940, the Maginot line, named to commemorate the Minister André Maginot, who had worked for the approval to the construction of the work, aimed at defending the borders of France. The German invasion plan (Fall Gelb) often also referred to as Sishelschnitt, provides the steps for the invasion of France through the Ardennes and the occupation of Belgium and Holland.



The Minister of war André Maginot.



The entries to the Maginot line at Markolsheime and Fermont-Longuyon.



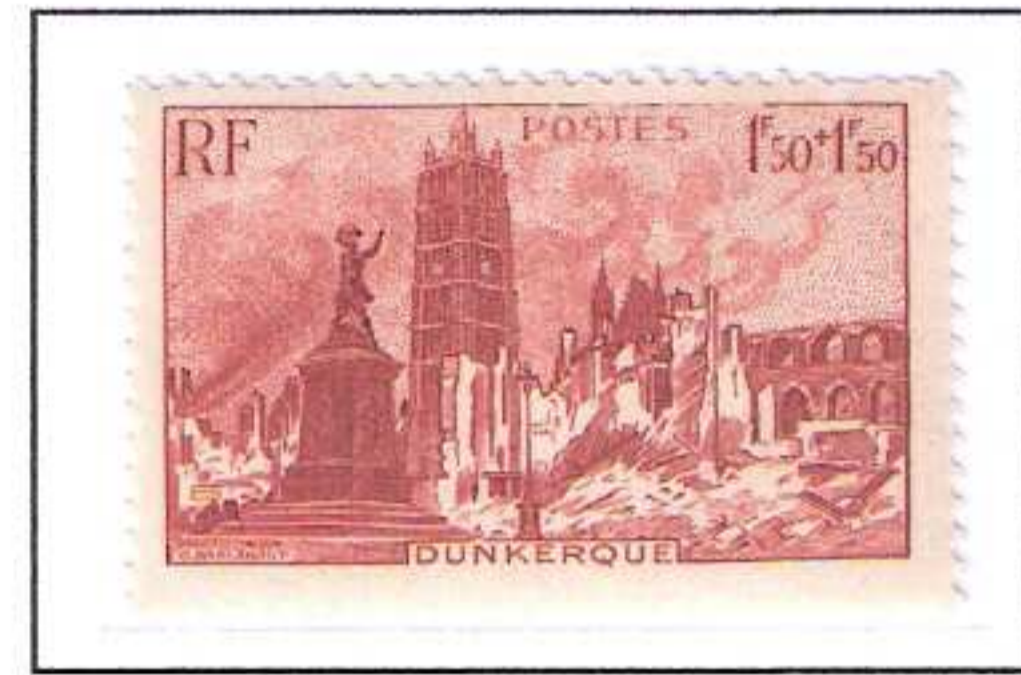
1941, the attack on the Maginot line.

B THE BEGINNING OF THE TRAGEDY

4. BLIETZKRIEG IN THE WEST



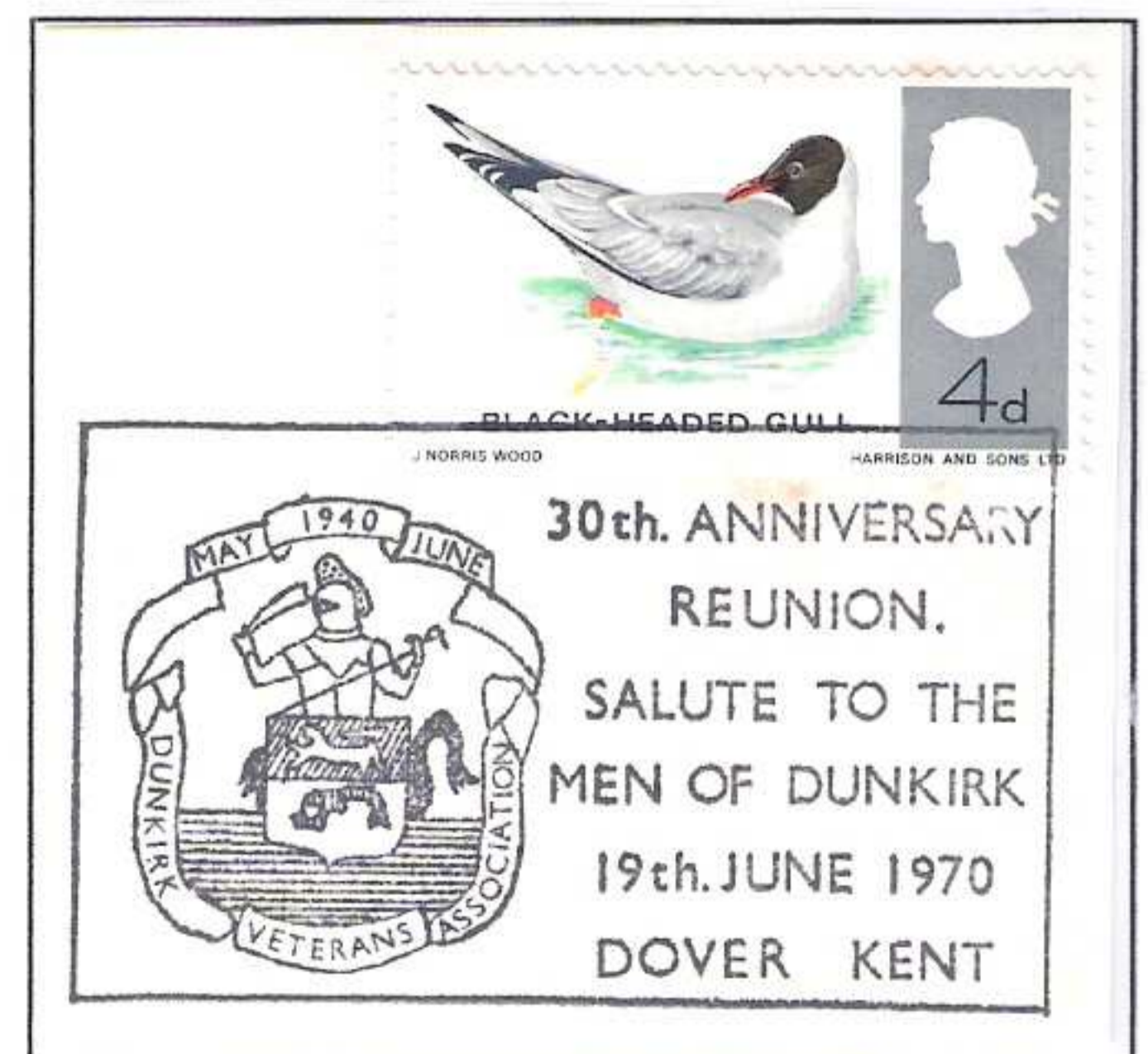
The German Panzer and Luftwaffe attack at dawn on May 10, 1940. In few days Belgium and Holland surren. The French and British armies are surrounded in the bay of Dunkirk.



June 16, 1940, Holland: postcard from Wassenaar to Switzerland seen for censorship.



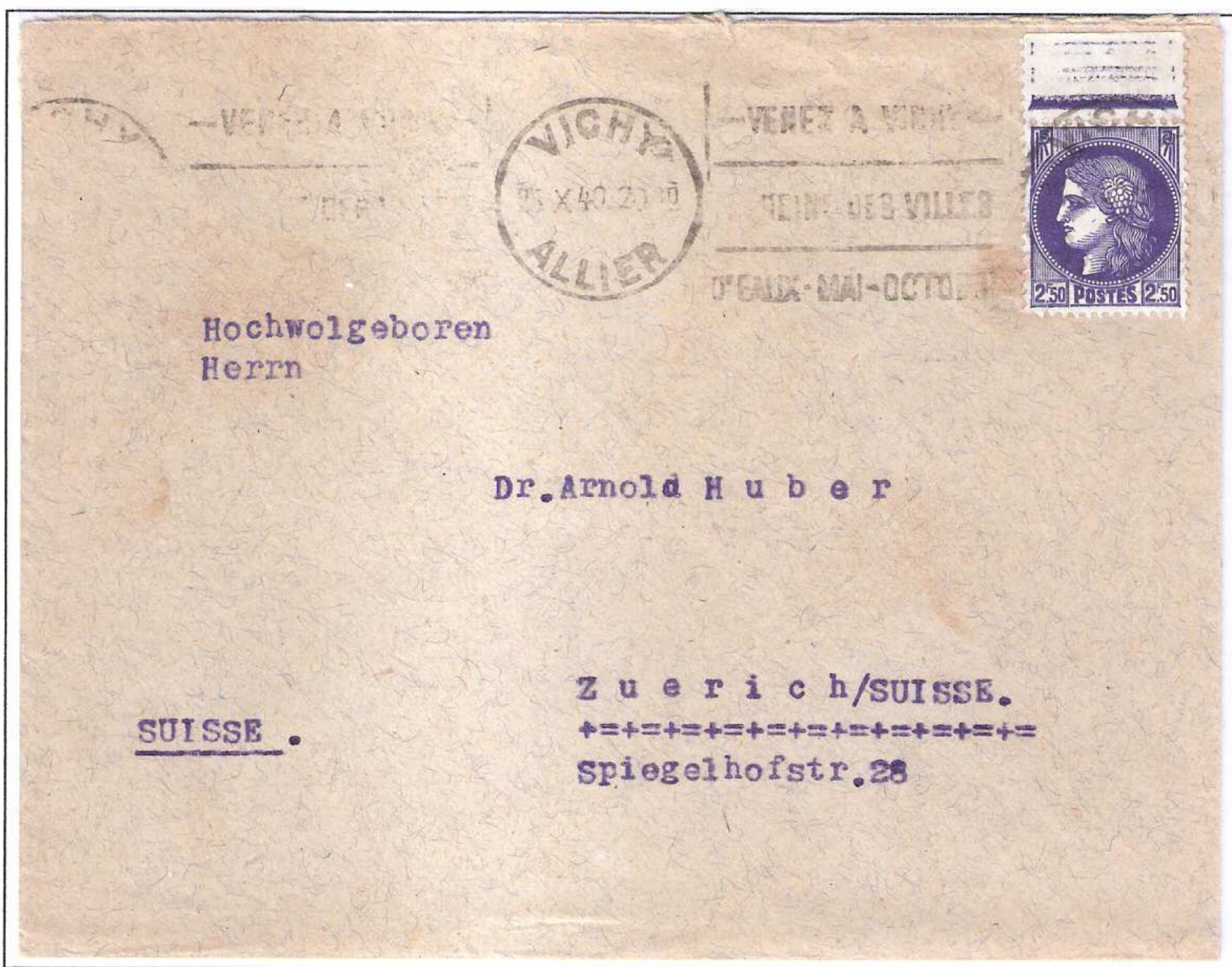
Thanks to a massive rescuing action almost 300,000 soldiers are re-embarked on small and big ships.



When Paris is occupied, on June 14, 1940, France signs the armistice on June 22nd and its territory is divided into two parts: the northern part, including the whole Atlantic zone is occupied by the German army, the southern part, called free France, relies on the French Government settled in Vichy and led by Marshal Phillippe Pétain



The Wehrmacht march along the Champs Elysées.



Letter from Vichy, free France, to Zurich, October, 23, 1940.



Cancellation letter "Marseille République", May 20, 1942, to Lyon (France).



The last value dedicated to Mar. Pétain,

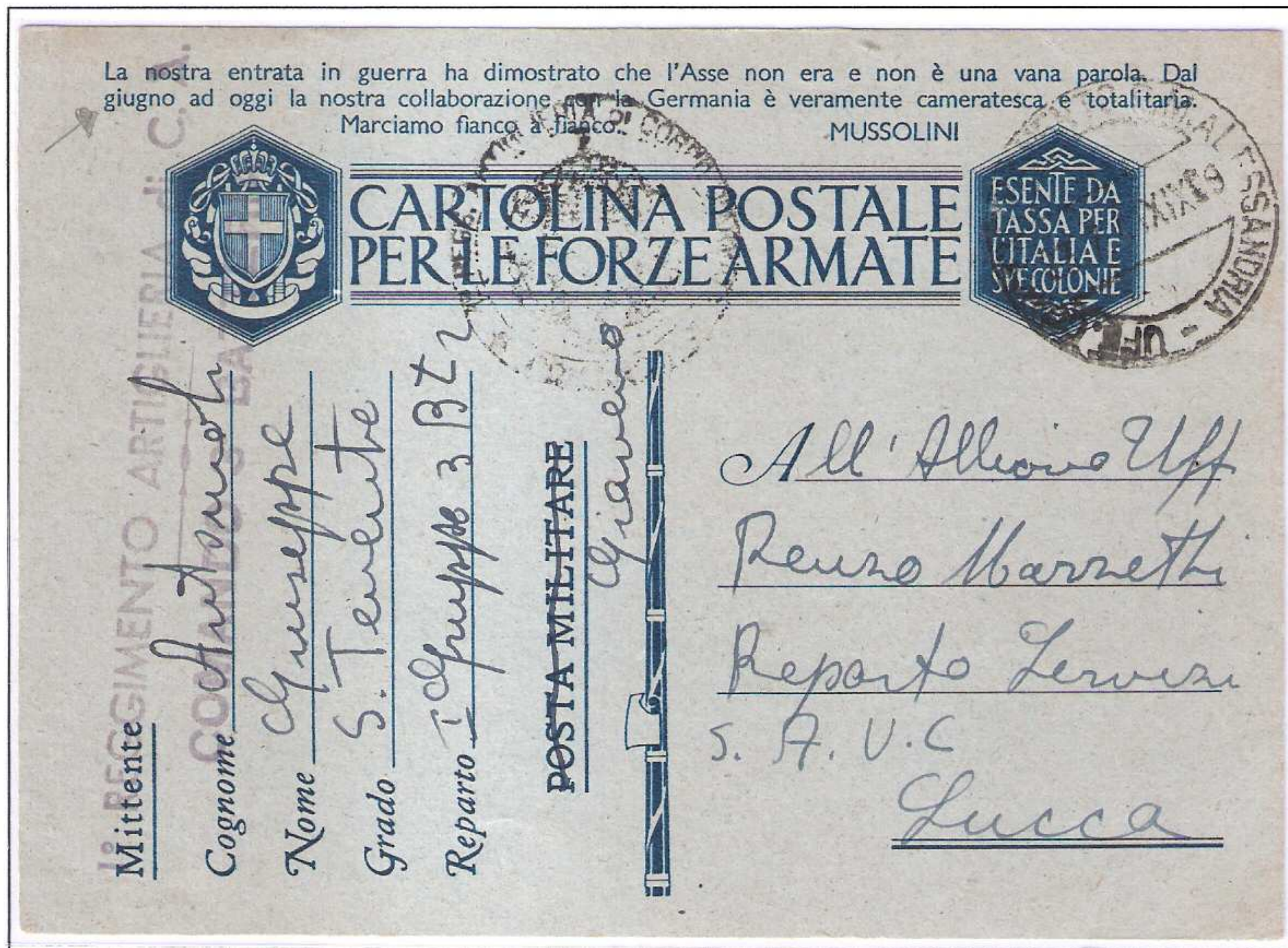
On October 6, 1940 Italy declares war on Britain and France. The troops enter France through the Western Alps without conquering any special territories. The position of the "Tripartite" is thus consolidated.



The "Tripartite"



and the victory will be. ...

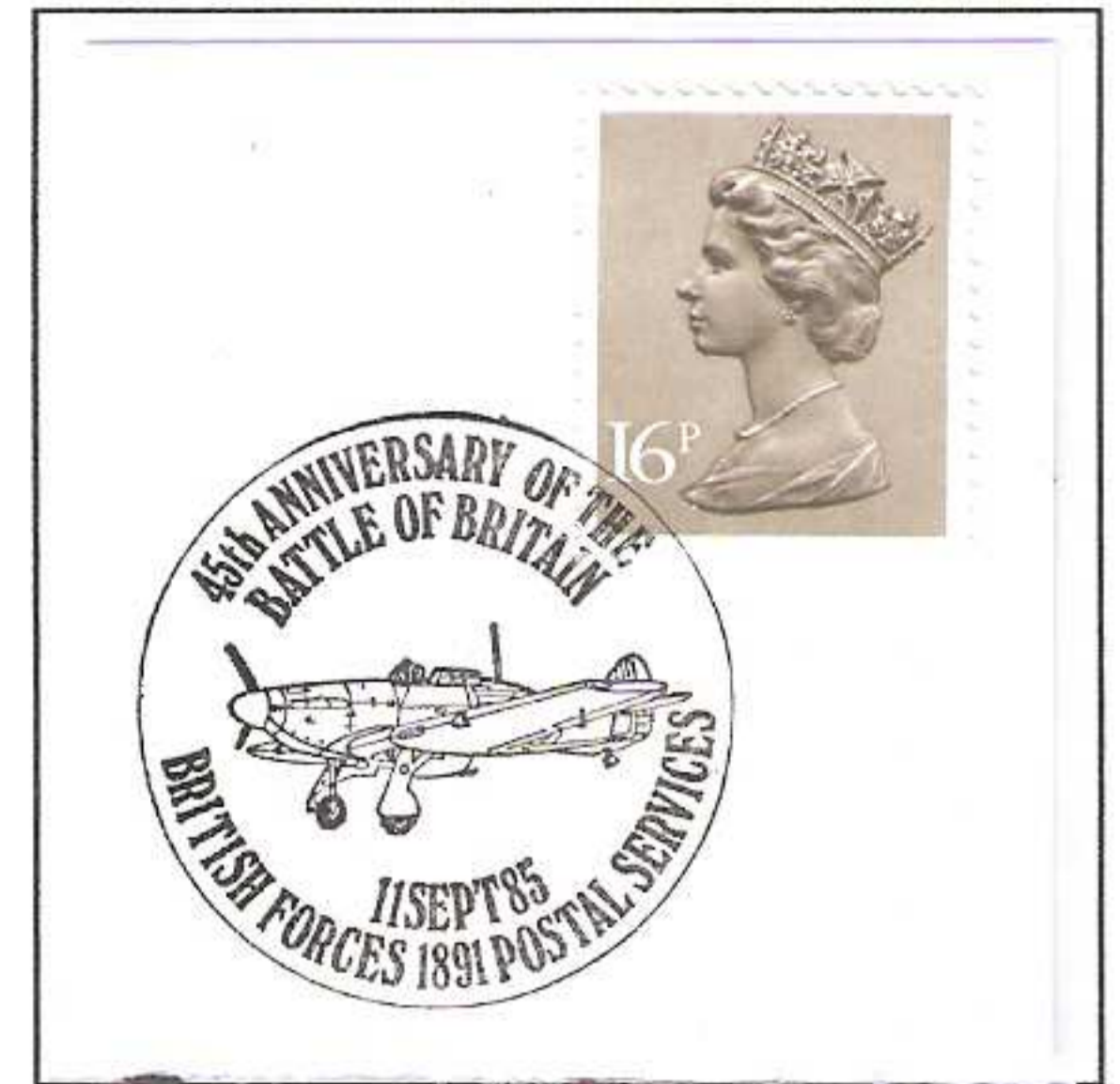
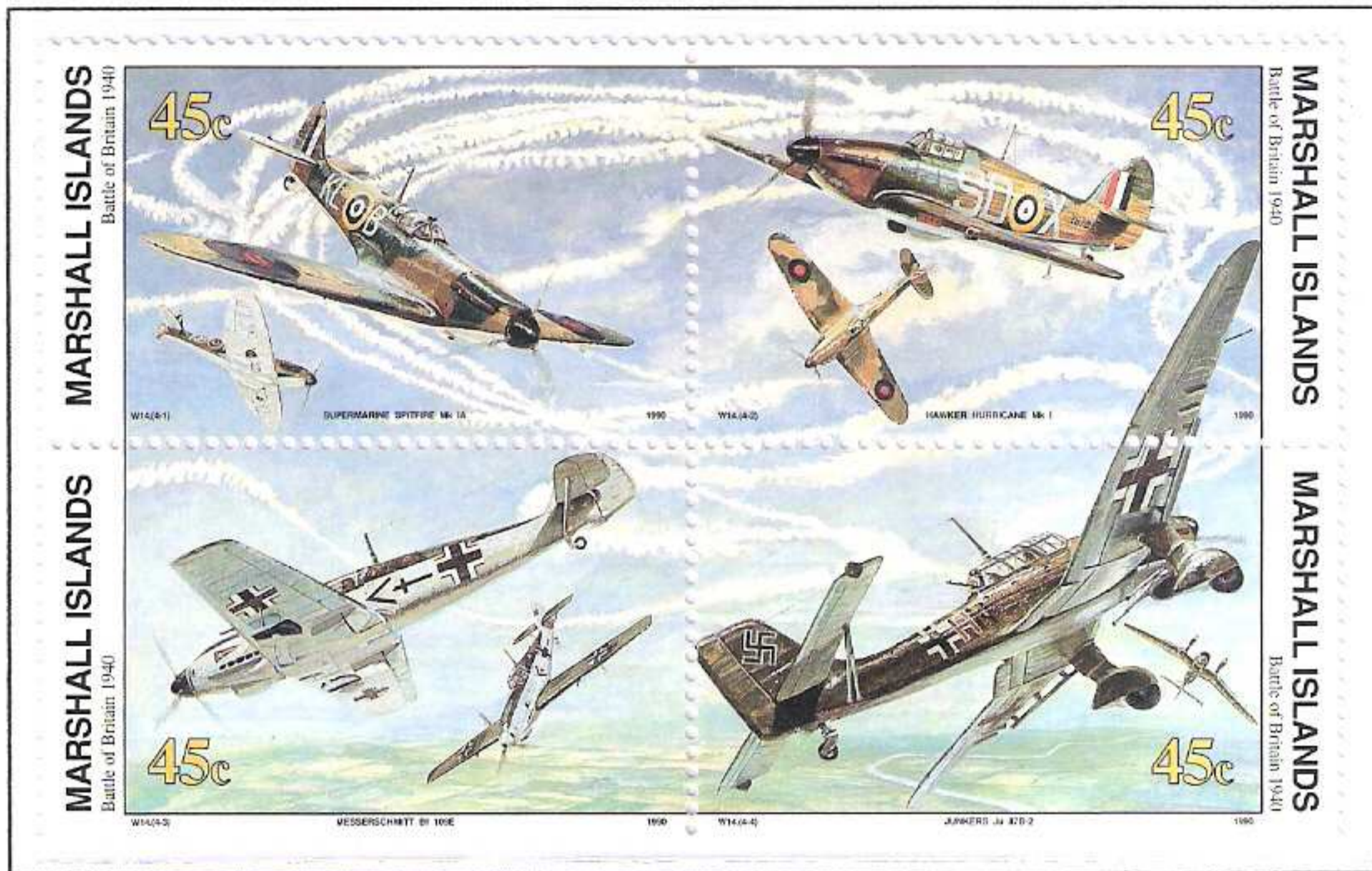


A motto by Mussolini: our entry into the war. ...



Postcard from Turin to Pola, June 12, 1940, two days after Italy's entry into the war.

Hitler, who knew the superiority of the English fleet, before invading Britain leaves to Goring and his Luftwaffe the task to destroy London and the Royal Air Force. For Germany that will mean a great loss of planes and pilots.



RAF and Luftwaffe, duels.



Rescuers and anti-aircraft defence.



Mrs. Abernethy
 % The Butler's Home,
 Bluebell Pike
 Bluebell
 Montgomery Co., PA,
 USA 19472

Without consulting Hitler, Mussolini orders to invade Greece on October 28, 1940, perhaps hoping for a bright and quick success. It won't be quince: the difficult mountainous ground, the lack of preparation, and the shortage of means will force Hitler to rush to the aid of Italy to avoid Mussolini a fool.



Free postcard with Mussolini's famous phrase "We shall break the kidneys to Greece", August 15, 1941.



Letter from M.P. 204, Greek front to Florence, May 5, 1942 with Mussolini's motto "with Germany side by side, until the end".

By declaring war on Greece and Yugoslavia, Hitler also rescues his ally Mussolini. The operation in the Balkans, called "Marita", will however cause a two months' delay before attacking Russia, with inevitable negative consequences.



October 29, 1941, Croatia: after the German occupation postcard from Dakovo for the Interior.



Serbia, 1943: stamps issued during the German occupation.

Kriegsgefangenenpost
Correspondance des prisonnier de guerre

Postkarte Carte postale

An
A

Vera Milic

Gebührenfrei! Franc de port!

Absender: Expéditeur:
Vor- und Zuname: Nom et prénom
Milic Miodrag

Gefangenennummer: No. du prisonnier
920

Lager-Bezeichnung: Oflag VI C
Nom du camp Osnabrück - Eversheide

Deutschland (Allemagne)

Empfangsort: Lieu de destination
Beograd

Straße: Rue
*Zlatiborska 75 pradu-
Ruc zenje Mileševske ul.*

Land: *Serbien*
Landesteil (Provinz usw.)
Département

Stamp: *-21041-12-15*

Letter of prisoner n. 920 October 2, 1941 from Osnabruck to his family in Belgrade.



After the conquest of the Balkans and Greece, the German forces could not allow Crete to remain in the hands of the allies. Therefore, with an action of airborne troops (operation Merkur), the Wehrmacht began the attack on May 20, 1941 and in June the island was completely conquered. The allies managed to re-embark and load about 18,000 men out of 32,000 stationed on the Island.

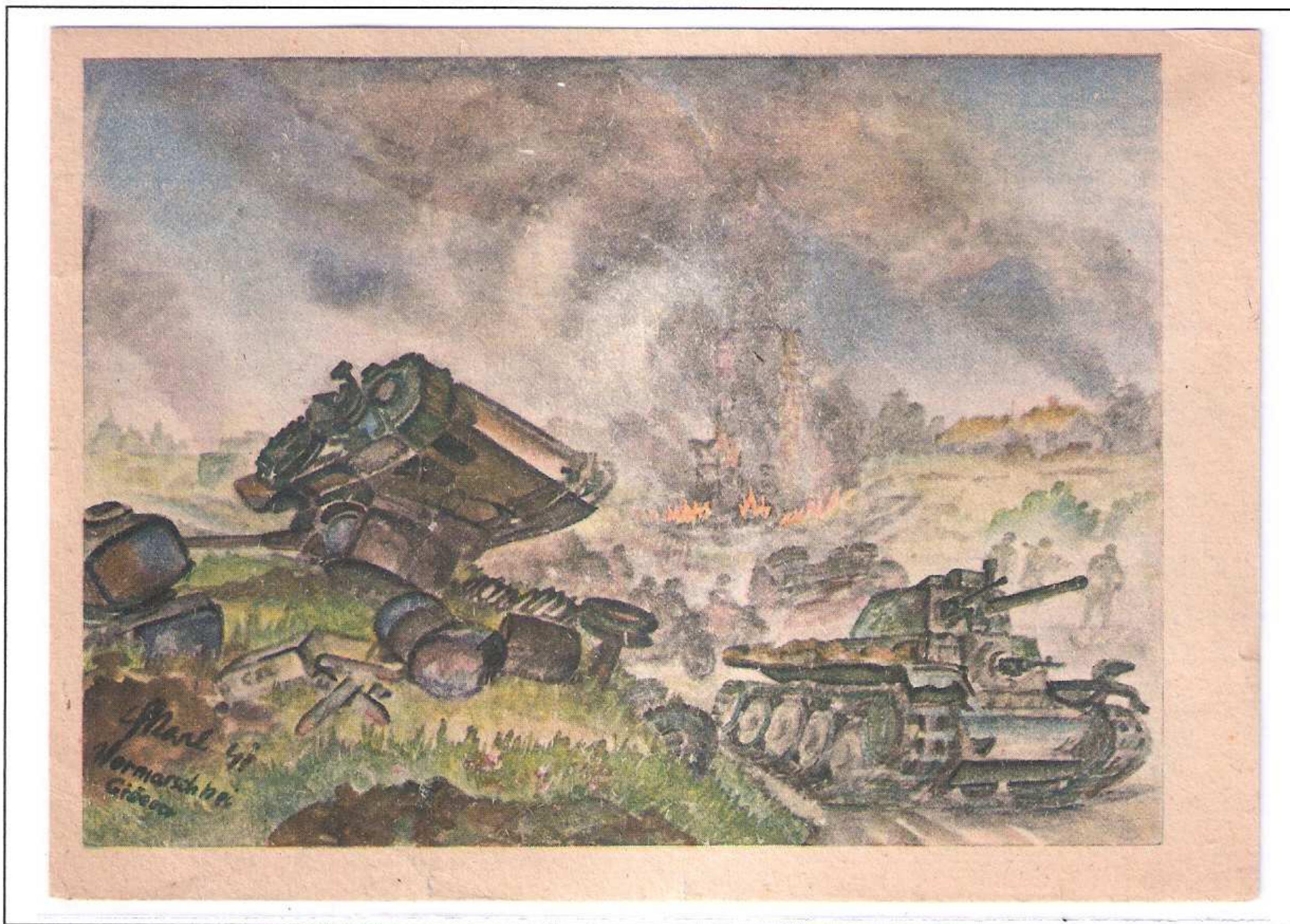


Crete attacked by Paratroopers.

The conquest of the island is not painless for Germany; in fact the Germans lose 3,700 men and 2,500 are injured. The allied troops recovering from the island were composed of Greek, British, New Zealander and Australian soldiers. In the clash of the naval fight to defend the island, the battleship Warspite, too, was damaged.



On June 22nd, 1941, with a six weeks' delay because of the invasion of the Balkans, Greece and Crete, Hitler attacks Russia. The operation is called "Barbarossa"; thousands of guns, tanks and planes launch a massive attack to the Soviet forces.



Military Mail.



In the attack the Soviet forces, led by the Supreme Leader J. Stalin, are helped by Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian troops, as well as by legions of Dutch, French, Croatian, Norwegian volunteers and by Slovak Divisions.



To defend their homeland there is a general mobilitation.



Colour proof.



To regain the lost territories after the Soviet aggression, Finland allies with Germany.



January 29, 1940 letter from Viipuri to Palkane during the war with Russia.



Mar. Mannerheim
Chief of the Finnish troops.

In July 1941 Italy is on the side of Germany with the C.S.I.R. (Italian Corps of Expedition in Russia).



Italy, March 3, 1942: letter from M.P. 40, Russian front, to Milan, seen for censorship.

The arrival of "General Winter" and the help of Siberian fresh divisions, led by Gen. Zukov and called back from Leningrad, cause the victory in the battle of Moscow. The Germans, who were at about 50 miles from Moscow, can only see it in photos.



M.P. 20616 sector C to Moscow (August 18, 1943).



Part of the population of Leningrad, evacuated before the encirclement, is sent beyond the Urals. Their mail is sent to the soldiers left behind to defend the town, while on the southern front the battle for the conquest of Stalingrad continues.



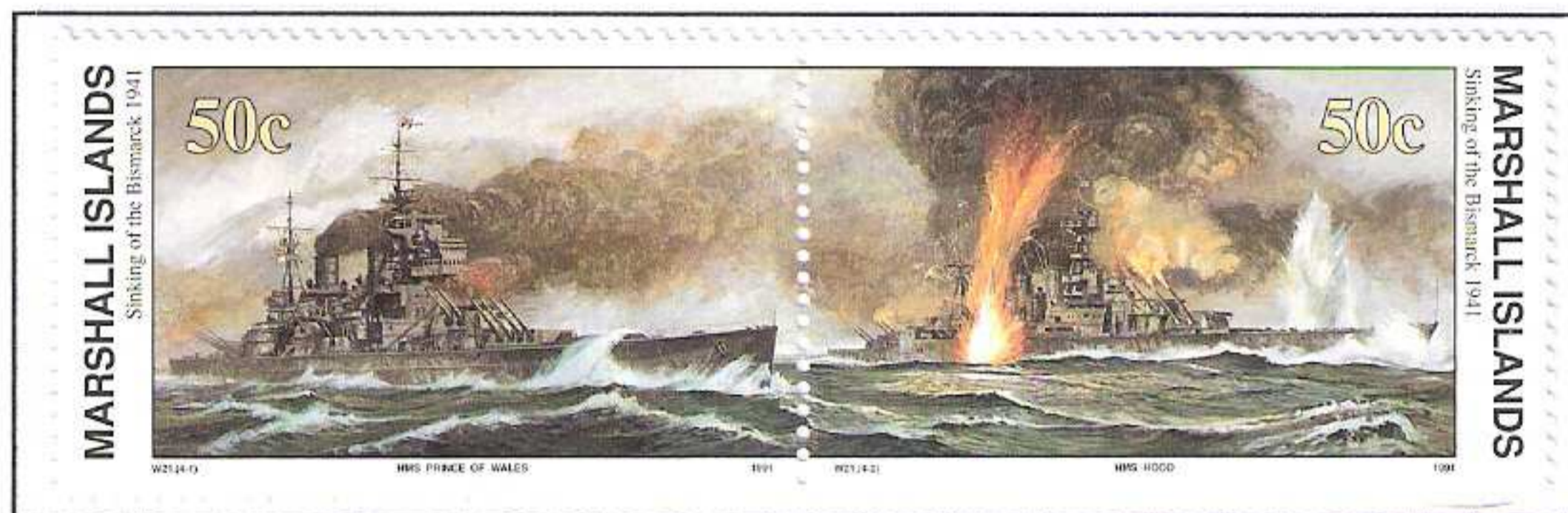
The defence of Moscow.



Postcard from the front in Leningrad to Moscow (August 21, 1943).

The "battle of the Atlantic", as W. Churchill called it, is the longest of the whole conflict. It began in 1939 and ended only at the end of the war. The first great victory on the sea was reached by the Home Fleet when it sank the Bismarck on May 27, 1941, after the German ship had sunk the battle cruiser Hood and seriously damaged the Prince of Wales.

The Bismarck opens fire.



The Hood is sinking while the battleship Prince of Wales withdraws after being hit.

The chase of the German damaged battleship is accomplished by the battleship King George V, the aircraft carrier Ark Royal, cruisers and destroyers, including the Polish Piorun. After being hit by torpedoes and the gunfire, the ship sinks at 9.30 on May 27.

The torpedo planes of the Ark Royal.



The Piorun and the route of the Bismarck.

The sinking of the Bismarck.



In order to hinder the flow of aids that the United States and Canada, the latter not yet at war, sent to Britain and Russia, Germany carried out a real chase against the convoys, by using its pirate ships and U-boats in formations called "pack of wolves".



The aids to the allies from USA and Canada and the formation of convoys along the Atlantic route.

To contrast the attacks of the German U-boats, convoys were escorted by British, Canadian and American destroyers and corvettes, following the route passing South of Iceland and arriving even at the ports of Murmansk and Archangel in Russia.



U-Boot in surface navigation.



German propaganda about the ship foundering.

*Destruction of Atlantic convoy "PQ 17";
25 out of 36 ships for the convoys were sunk.*



The first American destroyer escorting the convoys is sunk on October 31, 1942.



The Reuben James sunk by U-boats.



The rescue of surviving sailors.

The United States built 2,710 ships "Liberty" during the war. Each of them, 14,200 tons of gross tonnage, could carry 300 rail cars of aid or 440 tanks or 2,840 jeeps. About 200 of these ships were sunk .



PK-Kriegsbericht Schimpke
Bombenabwurf auf britisches Handelsschiff

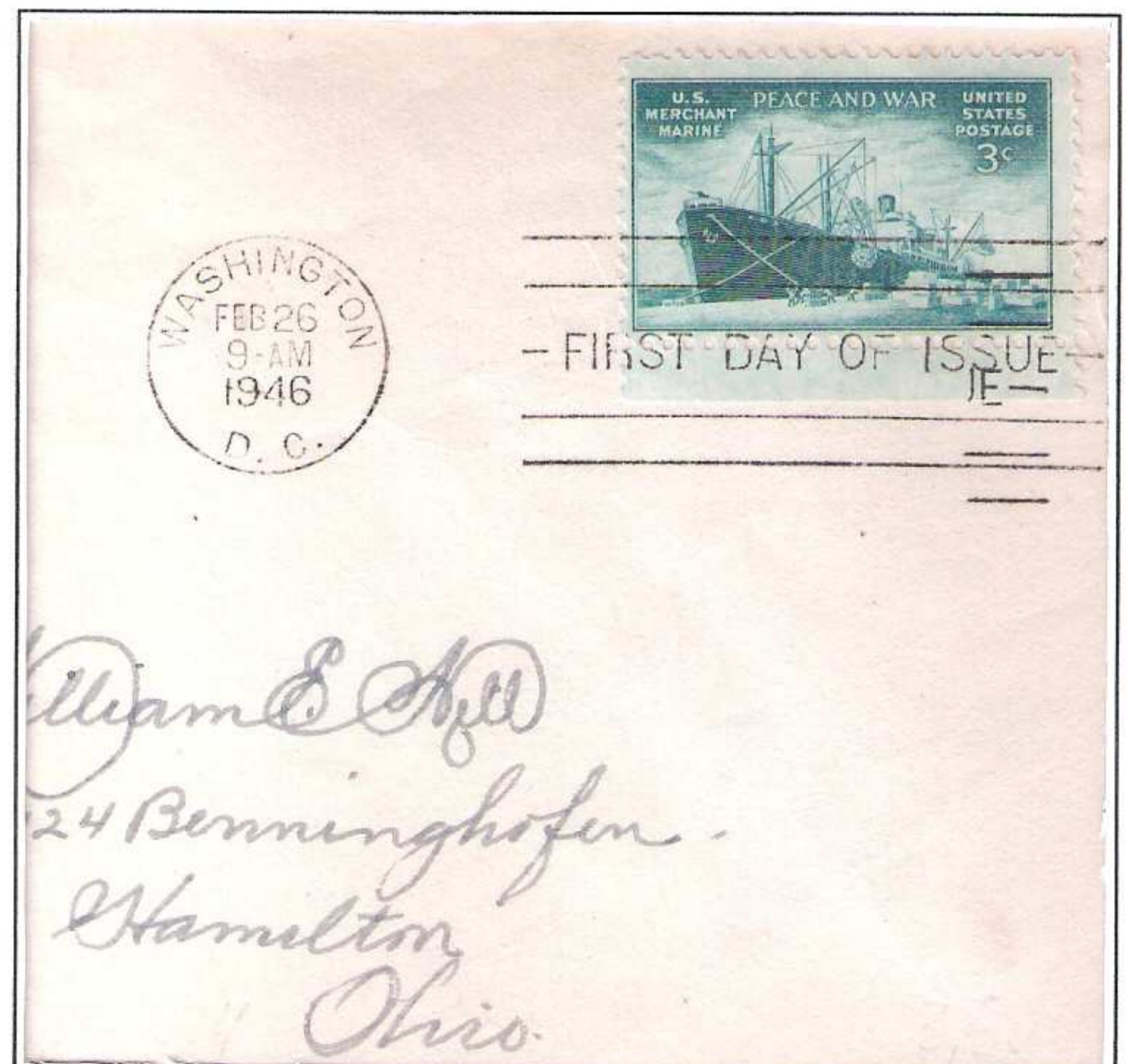
November 18, 1942: Military Mail from Bremen with German aircraft Junkers JU 88 bombing merchant ships.



Honoring the sacrifice of sailors.



The "Liberty" on peace and war.



The I.E.A war lasted from March 17, 1941 to November 29, 1941 with the surrender of Gondar by Gen. Nasi. Earlier, on May 17, 1941, Amedeo Duke of Aosta had surrendered in Amba Alagi obtaining from the British "the honour of arms" for the bravery and the valour of the Italian soldiers.



M.P. free postcard with the Duke of Aosta and his soldiers.



April 6, 1940, Eritrea: letter from Dessie Amara to Cormons, Capri va arrived before Italy entered the war.

The war on the "Libyan front" was a series of avances and retreats from September 13, 1940 until January 23, 1943 when Montgomery's troops arrived in Tripoli.



M.P. postcard with the Meditteramean and North Africa..

The first move on the Libyan front is operated by Graziani who occupies Sidi-el-Barrani in the Egyptian territory. The British counterattack, take the Italians by surprise and reoccupy the town. In January 1941 the British conquer Bardia and on the 22nd they arrive in Tobruk. Graziani orders the retreat. On February 6,1941 the British invade the Cyrenaica.



Italia, 1941 : stamp of Cirenaica airmail, 1929 overprinted "Libia", last issue.



Cirenaica, Bengasi : letter for Salerno, January 30,1941 before the British occupation.

Considering the Italian defeat, Hitler runs to the aid of Mussolini and sends Gen. Rommel with his "Afrikakorps" to Tripoli.



Erwin Rommel
"the desert's fox."



On March 24, 1941, after replacing Graziani with Gen. Gariboldi, Rommel begins his offensive on April 10th and surrounds Tobruk. Although constantly attacked, the British troops resist.

On November 28, '41 the 8th British Army breaks the siege of Tobruk and occupies Bengasi on December 25th.



Tobruk front: May 7, 1941: 96 M.P. greetings from a gunner to his family in Codogno.



On February 7, 1942 Rommel makes his troops stop along the Derna- Bir Hakeim line. In May he advances again and regains Bir Acheim,

Rommel stops his advance in El Alamein, waiting for reinforcements, which are not as many as expected. The British replace their commanders. Gen. Montgomery and Alexander are in action on October 23, 1942, they attack with forces much higher than Rommel's ones.



The Allies advance.

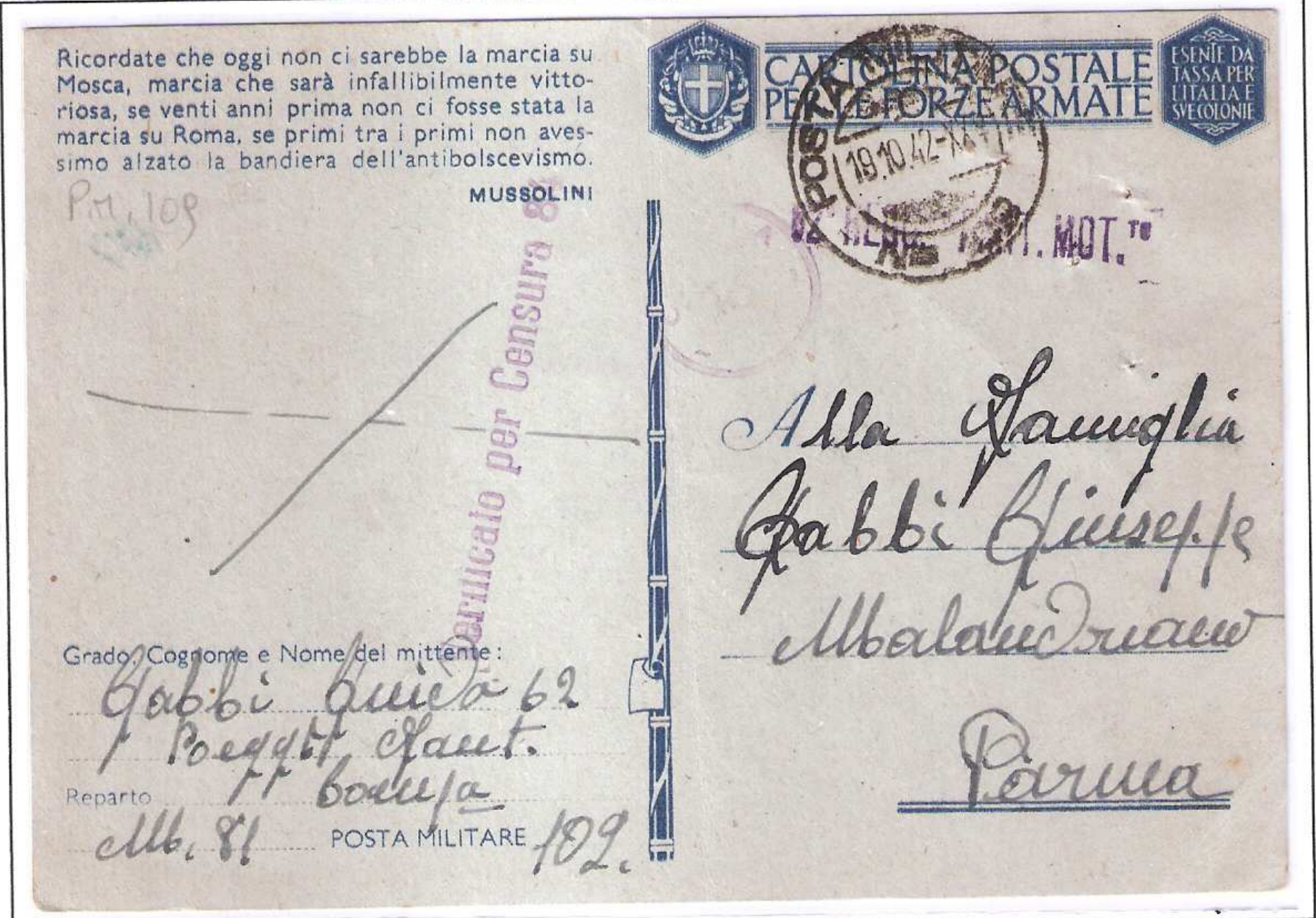
August 13, 1942, Libya, by M.P. 210, 10th Division G.G.F.F. for Naples.





Italian cemetery of El Alamein.

October 19, 1942, Italy: front of El Alamein, a few days before Montgomery's offensive, started on the 23rd of the same month.



Memories of a defeat despite the valour and courage of the Italian soldiers on the battlefield.

Propaganda postcard for the Army in tariff: foot soldier with grenade.



On November 11, 1941, at 11 p.m. the torpedo bombers Swordfish, taken from the aircraft carrier Illustrious, attack the naval base in Taranto. The battleships Cavour, Littorio and Caio Duilio, and the Cruiser Trento and smaller vessels are hit.



The development of the action and the battleships Andrea Doria, miraculously unscathed, and Cavour.

June 18, 1941: Italy correspondence from "Littorio".



May 31, 1941, Italy: M.P. card from the cruiser "Trento".

The battle of Cape Matapandel, March 28, 1941 in the Peloponnese, between the Italian team, formed by battleship Vittorio Veneto, cruisers and normal ships, and the British fleet, formed by three battleships, including the Warspite and the aircraft carrier Formidable, marks a clear defeat of the Italian fleet. The Vittorio Veneto is hit but it can survive; the cruisers Pola, Zara and Rijeka are sunk.



Admiral Cunningham and the battleship Warspite



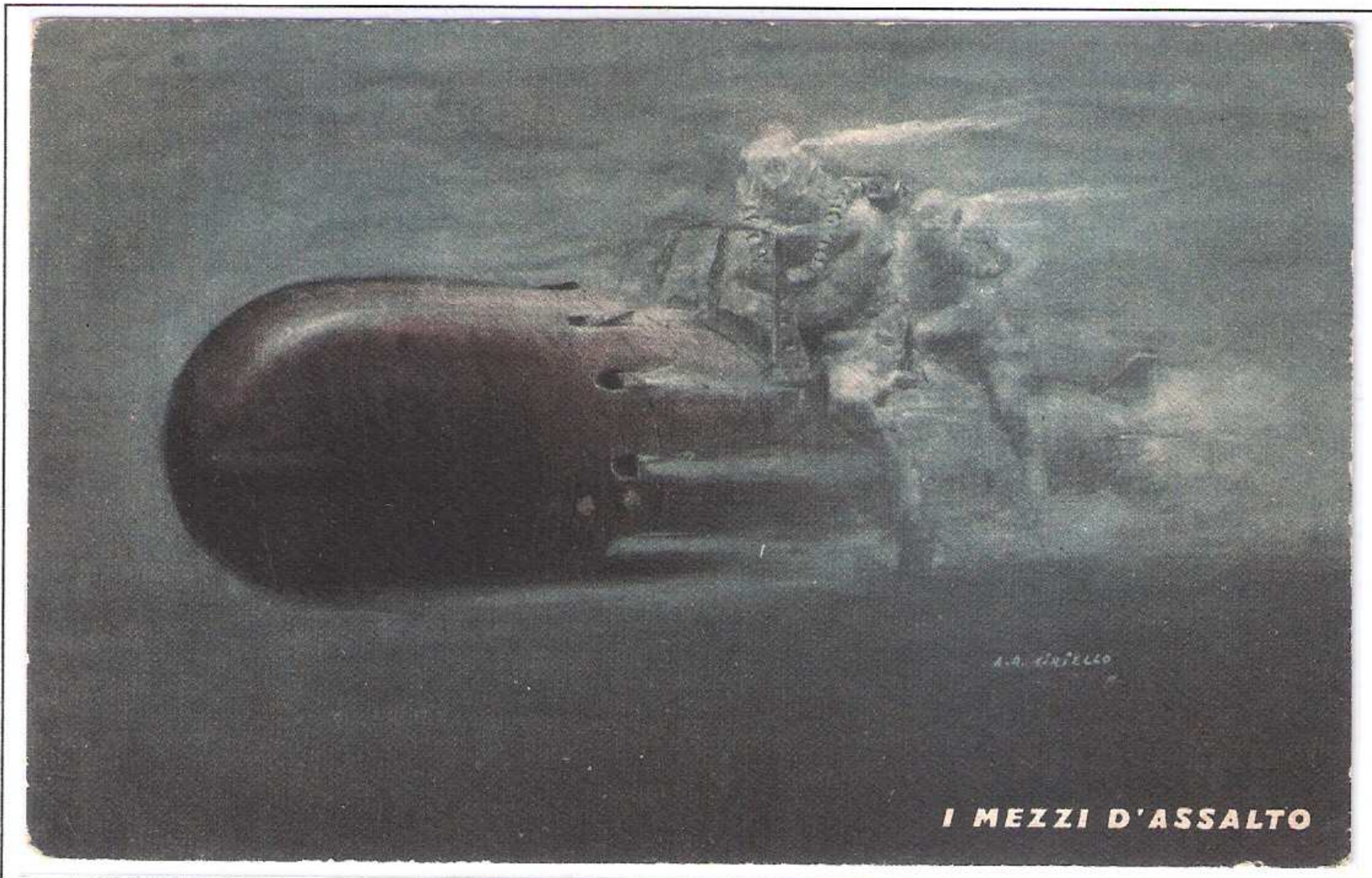
Correspondence from the "Vittorio Veneto" and "Pola"



The most successful action is achieved by the raiders of the 10th Flotilla Mas who attack the battleships Valiant and Queen Elizabeth in the harbour of Alexandria in Egypt with the LSC (slow-Running Torpedoes), commonly referred to as "pigs". The crew of the Durande de la Penne-Bianchi, Martellotta-Marino and Marceglia-Schergat, driven near the port by the submarine Scirè, seriously damage two battleships, one destroyer and one tank.



HMS Valiant, Alessandria d'Egitto, the Scirè.



Italy, P.M. free postcard with raiders of the Royal Navy on LSC-pigs.

On the airfleet operations Harpoon-Vigorous and Pedestal from supplying the isle of Malta, the Italian-German forces sinking aircraft "Eagle", 3 cruiser, 7 destroyers, 1 tanker and 16 merchant ships.



Italy lost the Cruiser "Trento" and one destroyer.

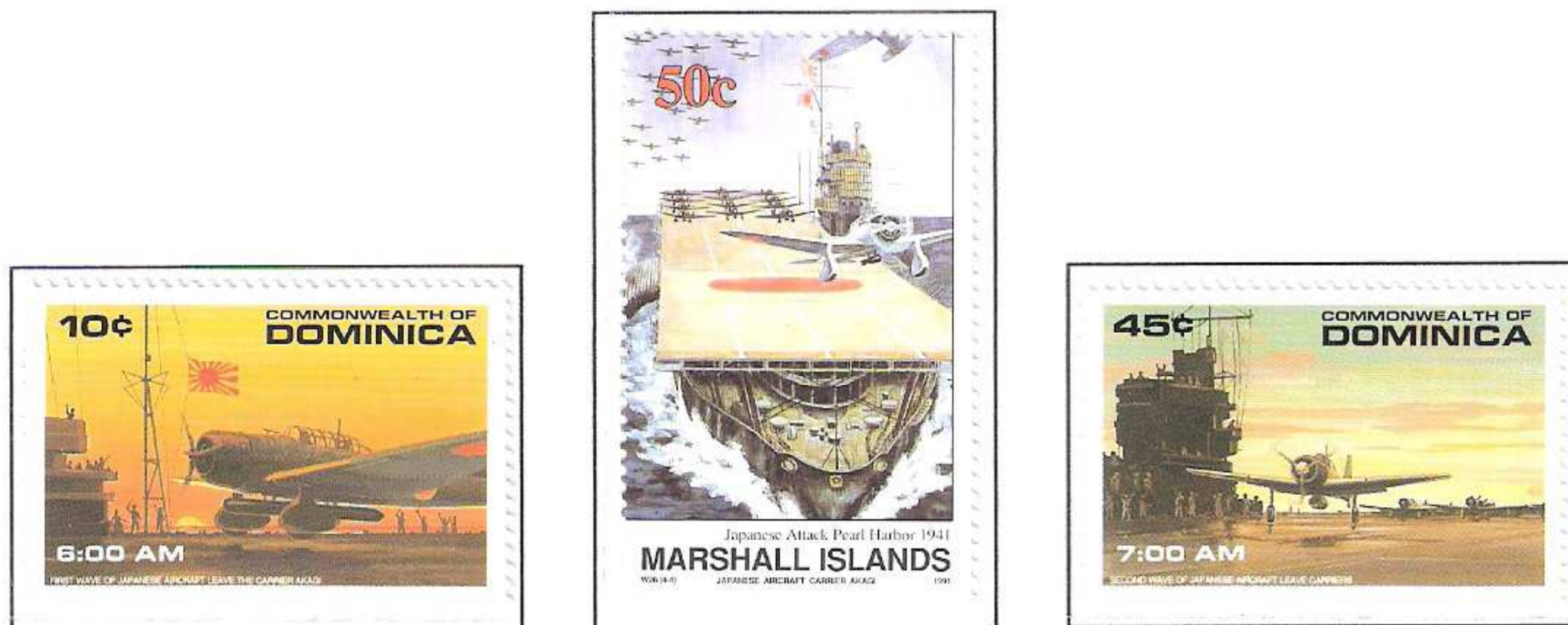
Correspondence sent to sailor on force on the "Trento".



On a Sunday of December, on the 7th, 1941, at 7,55 a.m. without any declaration of war, the Japanese attack the U.S. territory of Hawaii. The II World War starts on a large scale in the Pacific and South-East Asia. The Japanese strategist of the naval operations is Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto, Commander of the Japanese combined fleet.



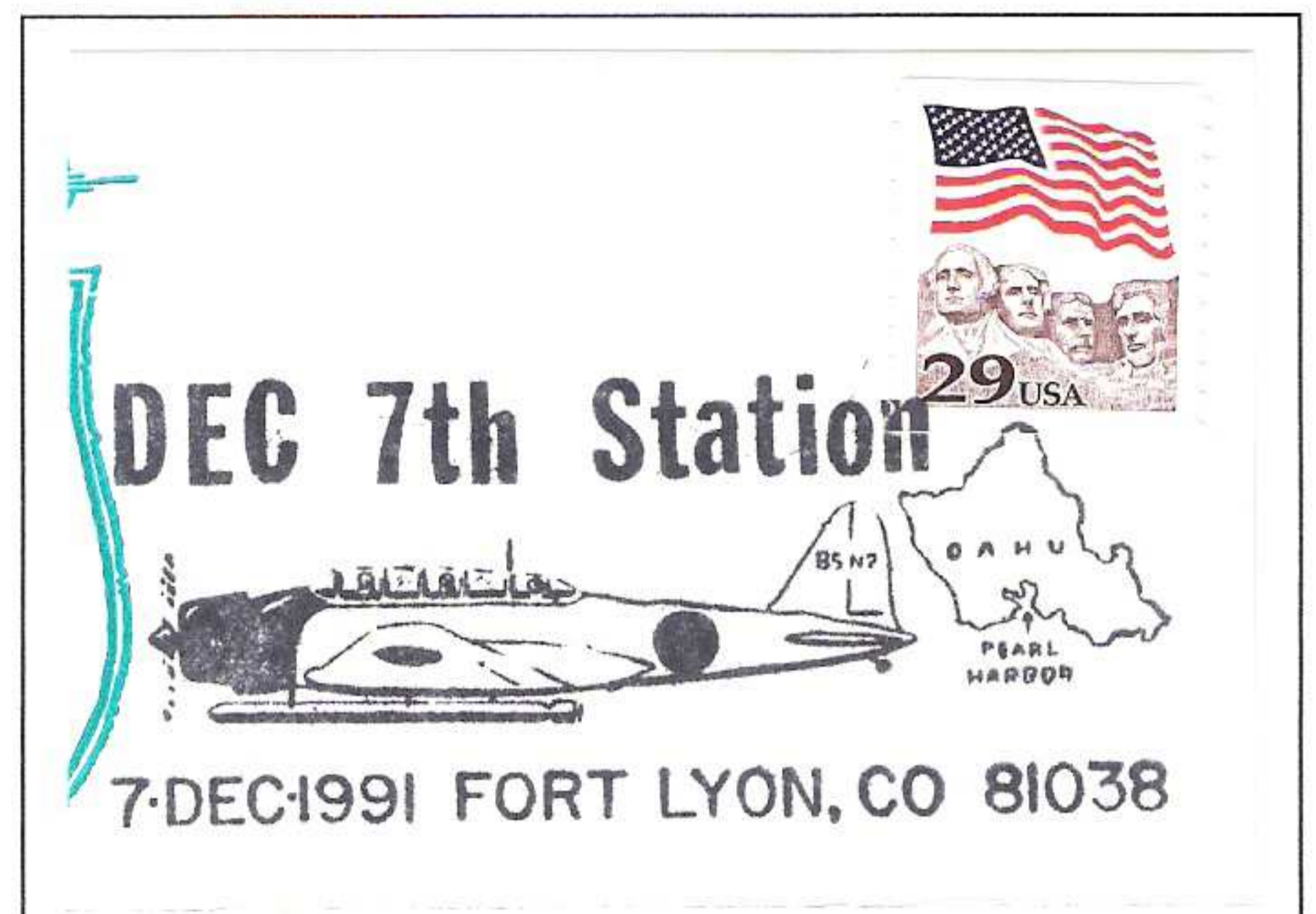
Thanks to the second in command, Adm. Nagumo, the powerful Japanese fleet, formed by the aircraft carriers Akagi, Kaga, Soryu, Hiryu, Shōkaku and Zuikaku and escorted by battleships, cruisers and submarines, start to launch the first wave of 183 planes at 06,00 a.m.; the second wave of 167 aircraft carriers is launched at 07,00 a.m..

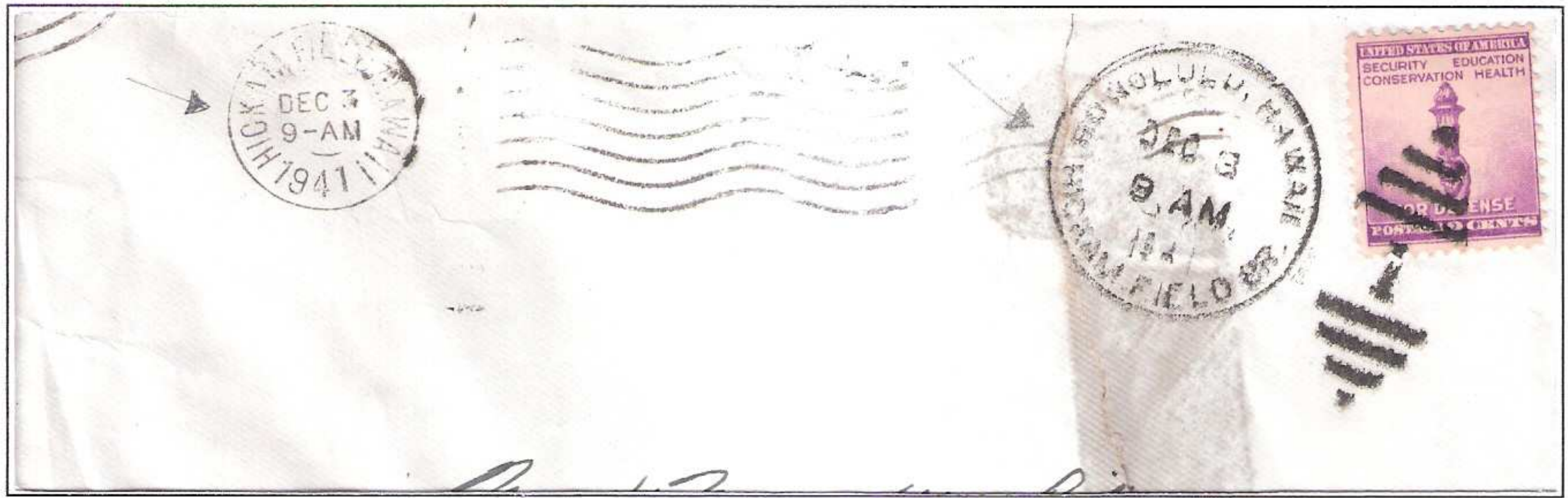


Aircraft taking off from Japanese carriers.



While the Japanese planes are about to reach the island of Oahu and Pearl Harbor Bay, the destroyer Word and a patrol of the Navy sink a Japanese submarine.





At 7:45 a.m. the island's airports are attacked including Hicham Field. Cap. Fuchida communicates "Tora, Tora, Tora", the surprise attack was successful.



The Japanese planes reach the naval base at 7:55 a.m. and begin to torpedo and bomb the U.S. battleships. They sink the Oklahoma and Arizona and seriously damage the remaining six battleships, causing a hell of fire.



筆二堅岡吉 襲強灣珠真イワハ



The first explosions.

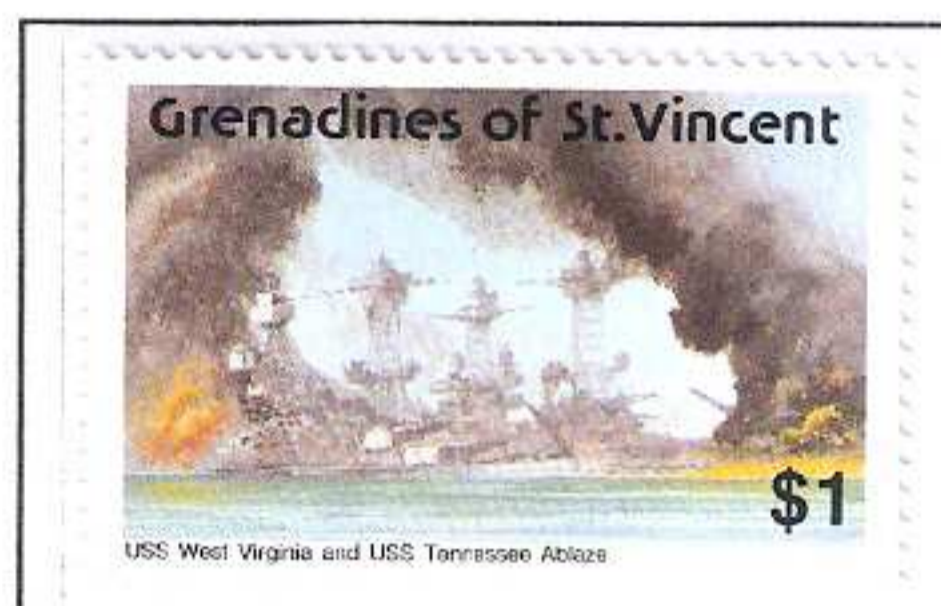
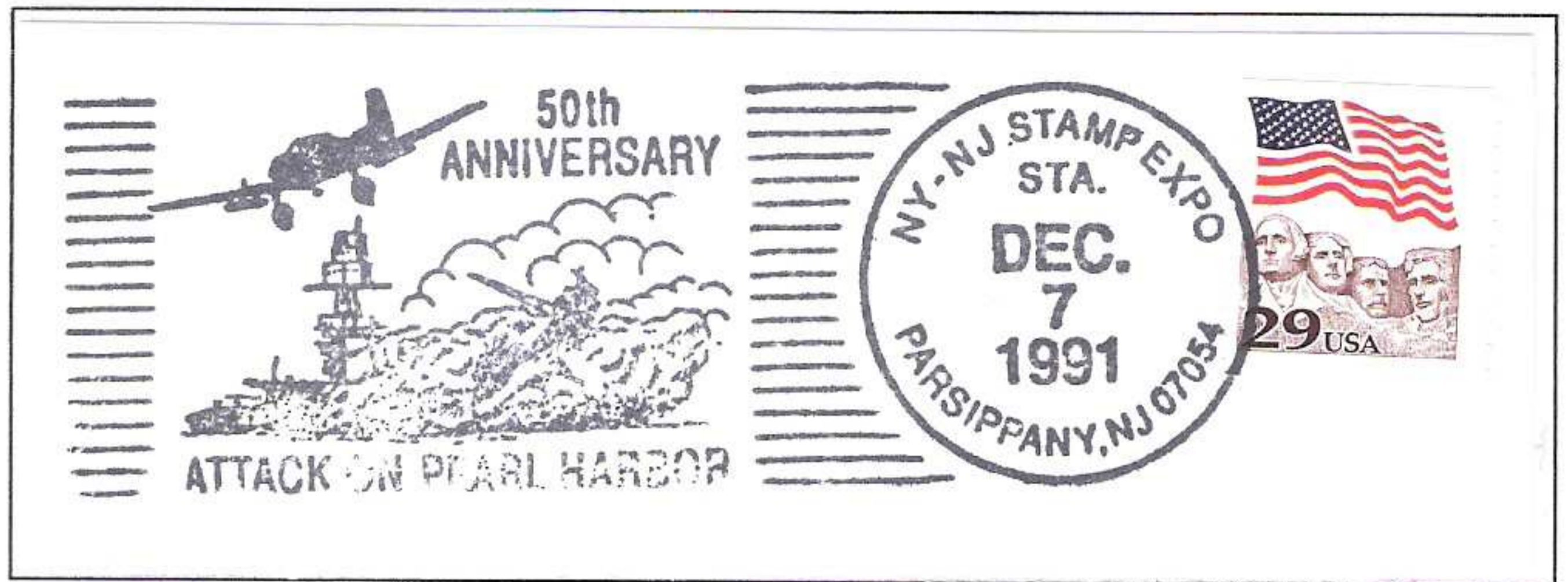


Arizona sinks.



The base of Pearl Harbor under attack in a Japanese postcard, 1943.

The treacherous Japanese attack on the USA has a high price: 2,402 dead, 1,247 injured and the temporary loss of almost the complete surface fleet with the exception of the aircraft carriers not there on the day of the enemy's raid; the "day of infamy".



The destroyer Shaw and the battleship Tennessee sink. The Nevada tries to leave the base, but it is hit by torpedoes and bombs. It lies on shallow water with its dead sailors.



The aircraft carriers Enterprise, Hornet and Yorktown are safe because out in the sea on a mission.



The "day of infamy" will never be forgotten. It can only be followed by the entrance of the United States into the war.



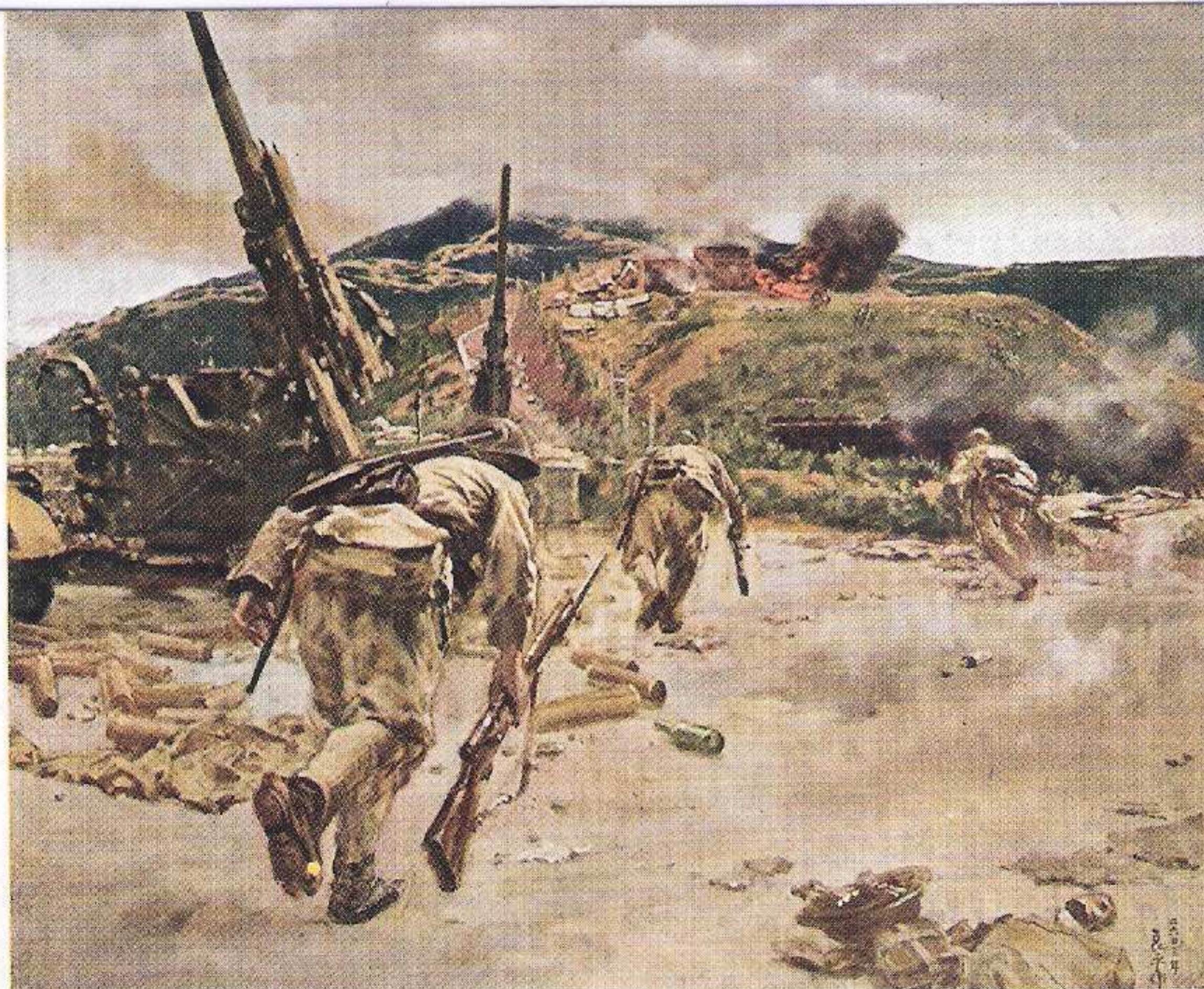
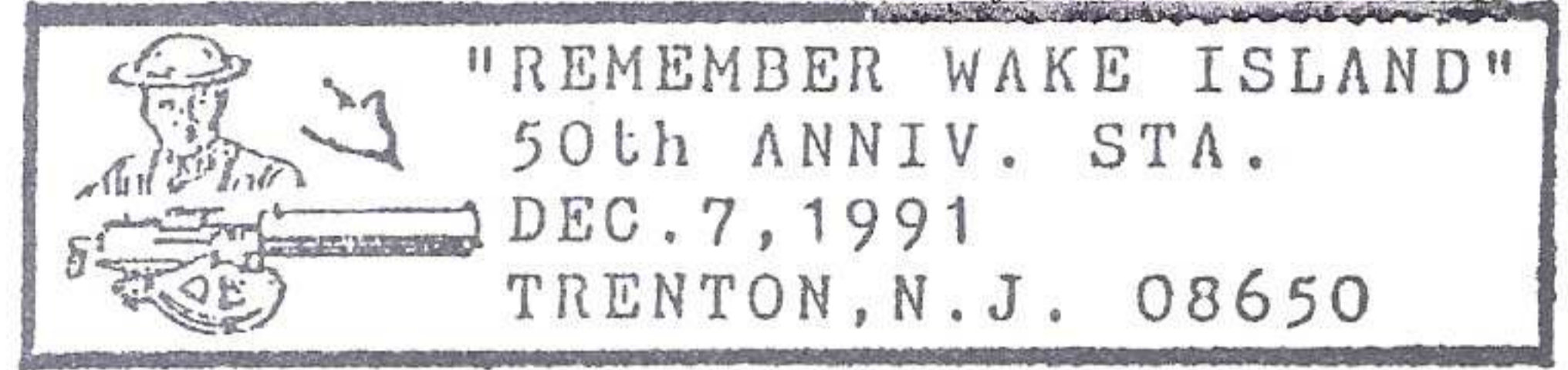
Newspaper reports about the attack on the Hawaii with Roosevelt signing the declaration of war

D JAPAN SPREADS OUT

Besides Pearl Harbor, in anticipation of a future attack on the Midway, the Japanese attack and conquer the isles of Wake and Guam on December 8 and 10, 1941.



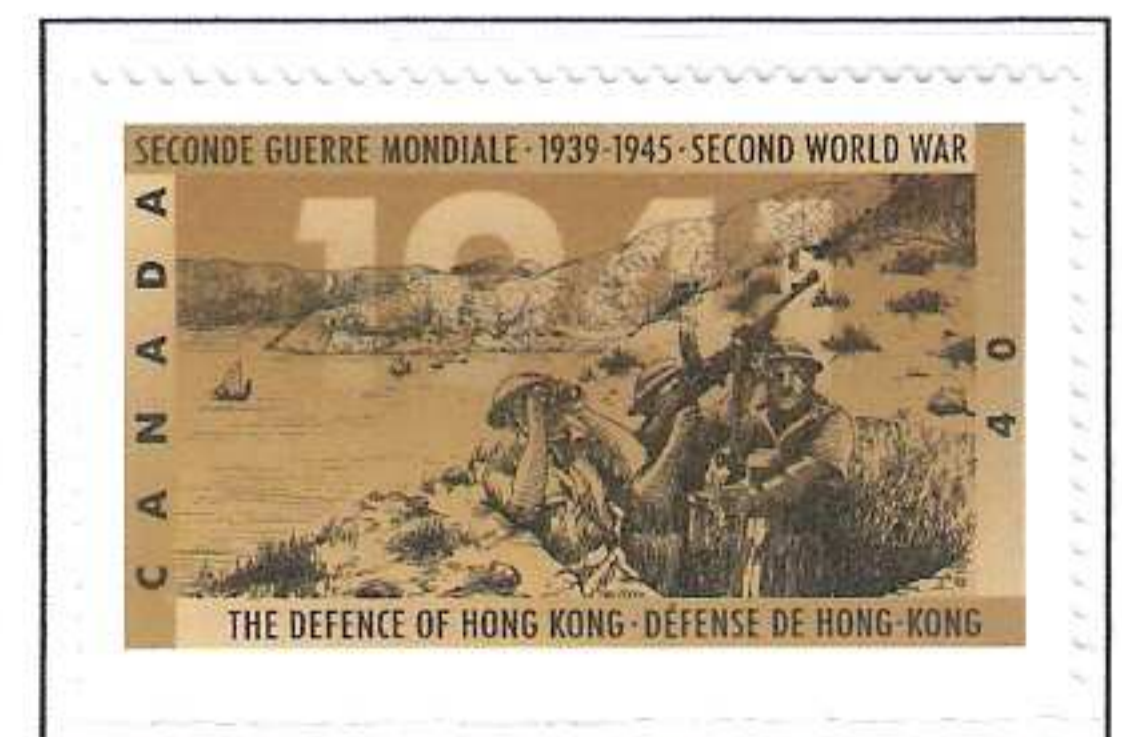
I. PEARL HARBOR



香港黃泥涌高射砲陣地奪取

小磯良平筆

In the same month of December the Japanese forces occupy the British possession of Hong Kong defended by Canadian troops, and are ready to invade Malaya.



Japan, 1043: a 2 s. postcard.

In six months the Japanese conquer the Philippines, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, Borneo, Indonesia and much of China. On September 12, 1941 the Japanese deal a blow to the British Navy sinking the only two battleships present in those seas.



The Repulse and Prince of Wales.



1942, Italy: allegorical M.P. card, free of import duties, with the Japanese samurai sinking the British ships.



To celebrate the conquest of Singapore the Japanese Post Office overprinted two stamps depicting the heroes of the Russian-Japanese war of 1905: Gen. Nogi and Adm. Togo. They also mention Gen. Percival's surrender.



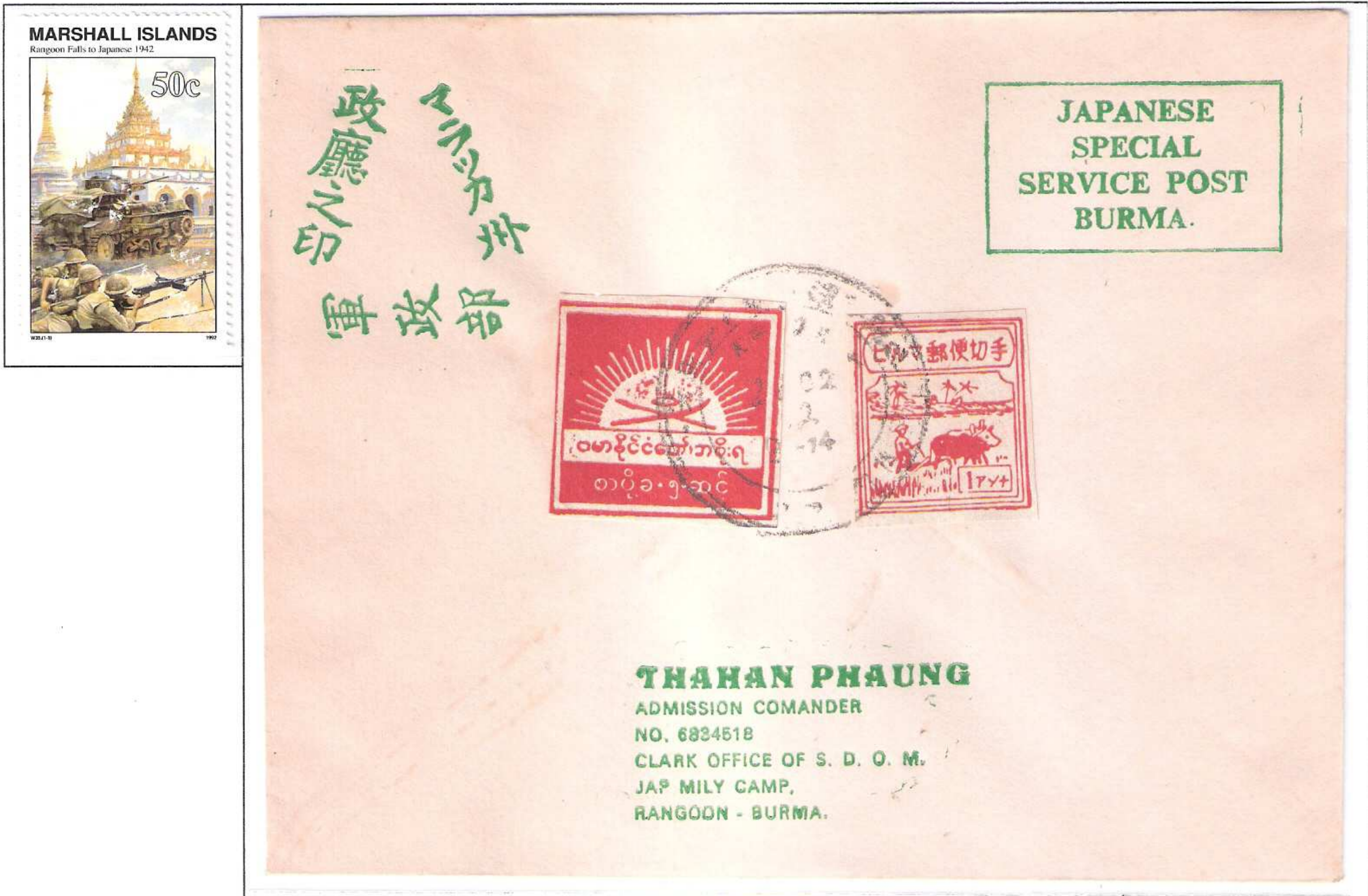
シンガポール英軍の降伏

宮本三郎筆



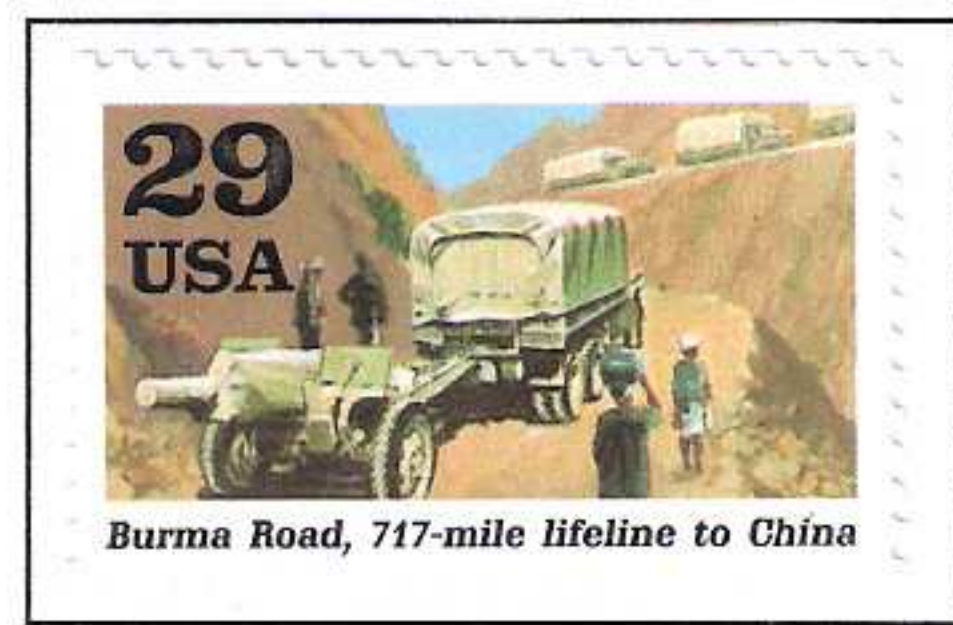
Japan, 1943: a 2 s. postcard.

After the conquest of the capital Rangoon in May the whole Burma is occupied by the Japanese.

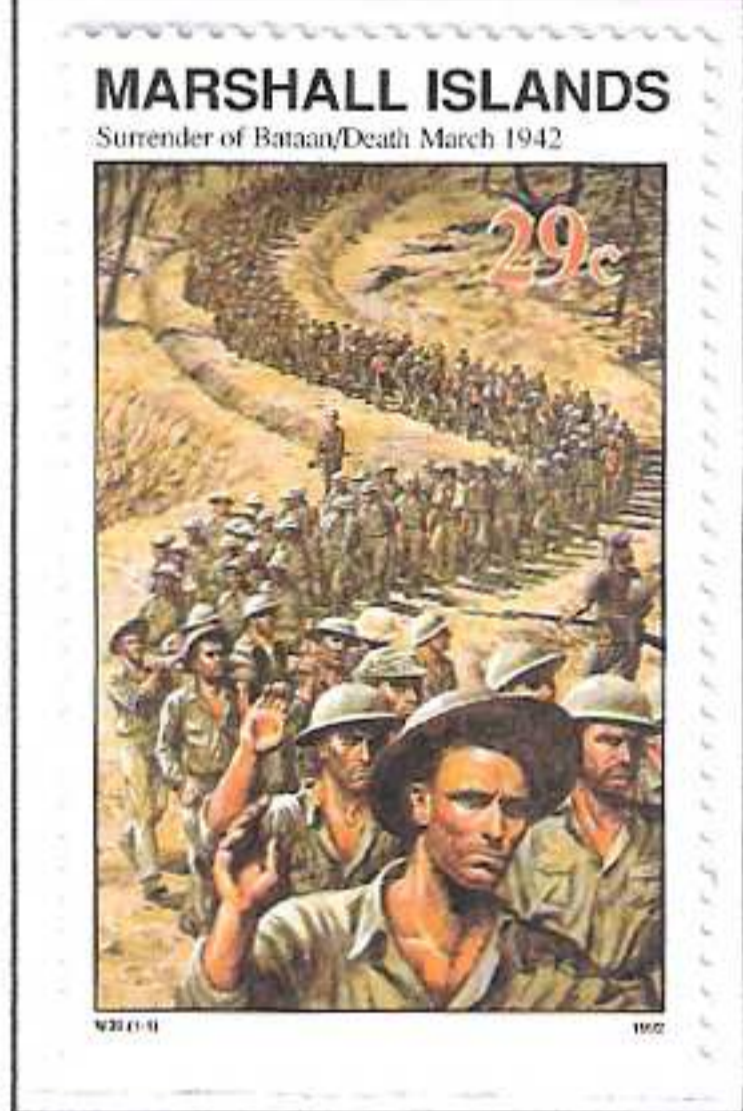


Japanese stamps issued for the conquest of the Dutch Indies and Burma.

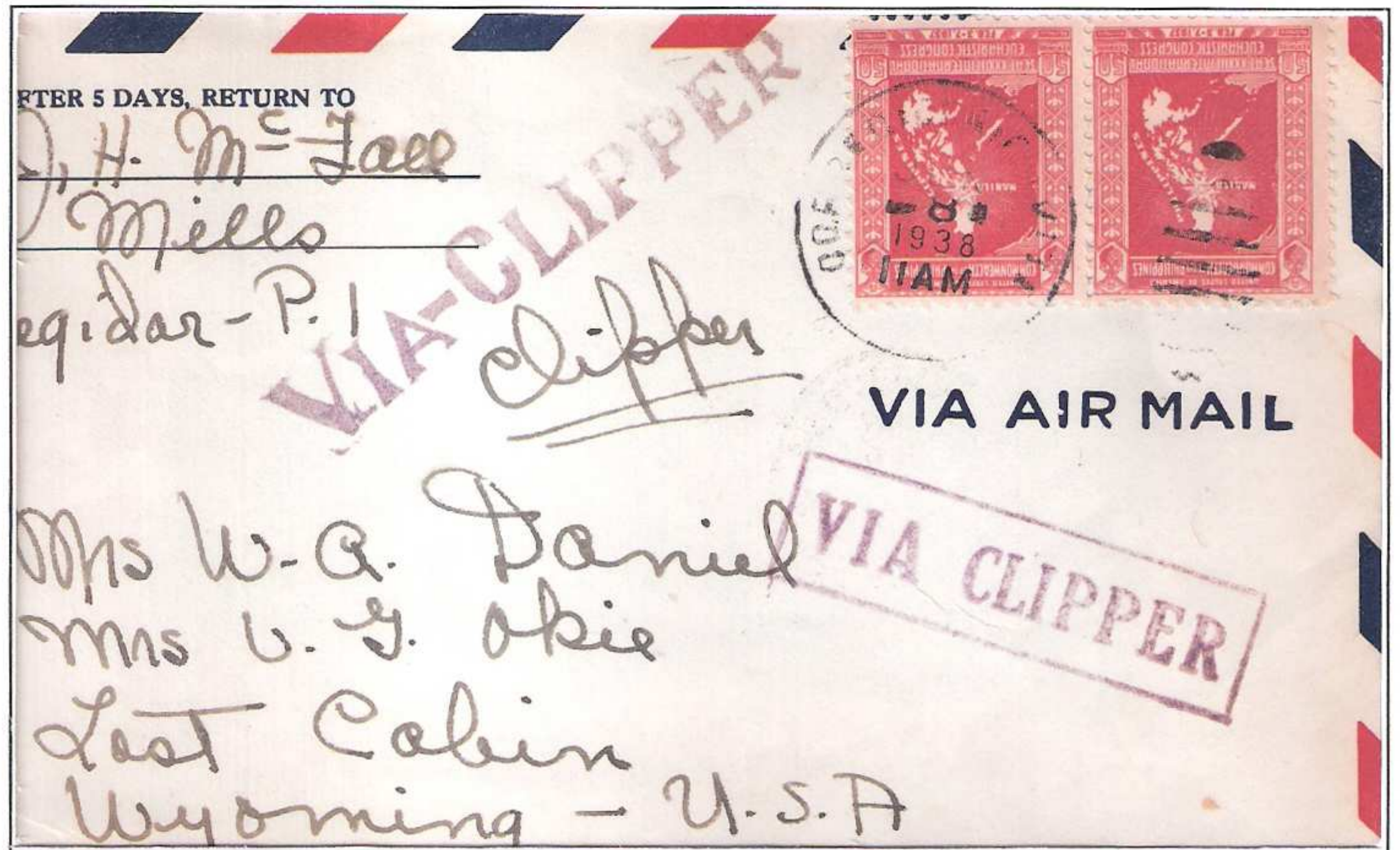
The "Burma Road", joining India to China, was the only way to provide supplies to Chiang Kai-Shek's troops opposing to the Japanese forces. It was interrupted by the Japanese troops on April 29, 1942 despite the efforts of the British and American soldiers commanded by the American General, Stilwell.



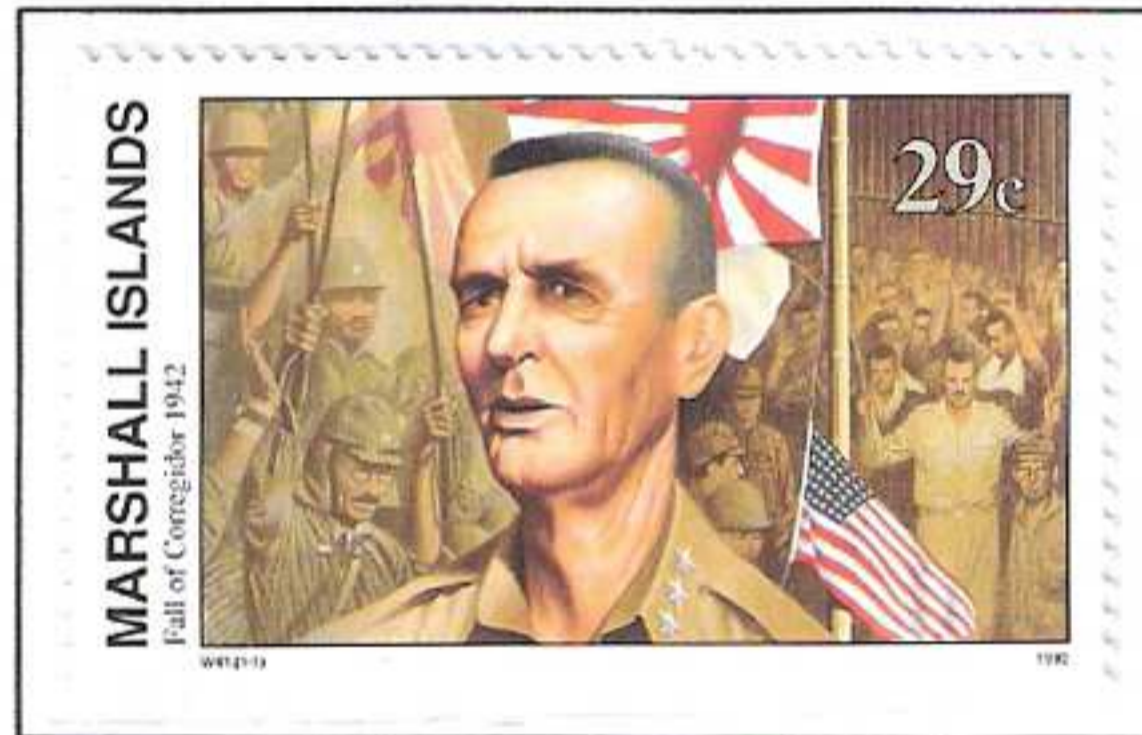
The Philippines ,too, are a Japanese target. Landed on the isle of Luzon on October 12, 1941 they occupy the capital Manila January 2, 1942.



Letter from Corregidor, Jun 8, 1938 to Wyoming (USA)



The American and Philippine troops retreat into the Bataan peninsula but after fighting for months they surrender on April 9th. The prisoners' start the " long death march " which decimates them through diseases, food and water shortage and the hardness of the march.



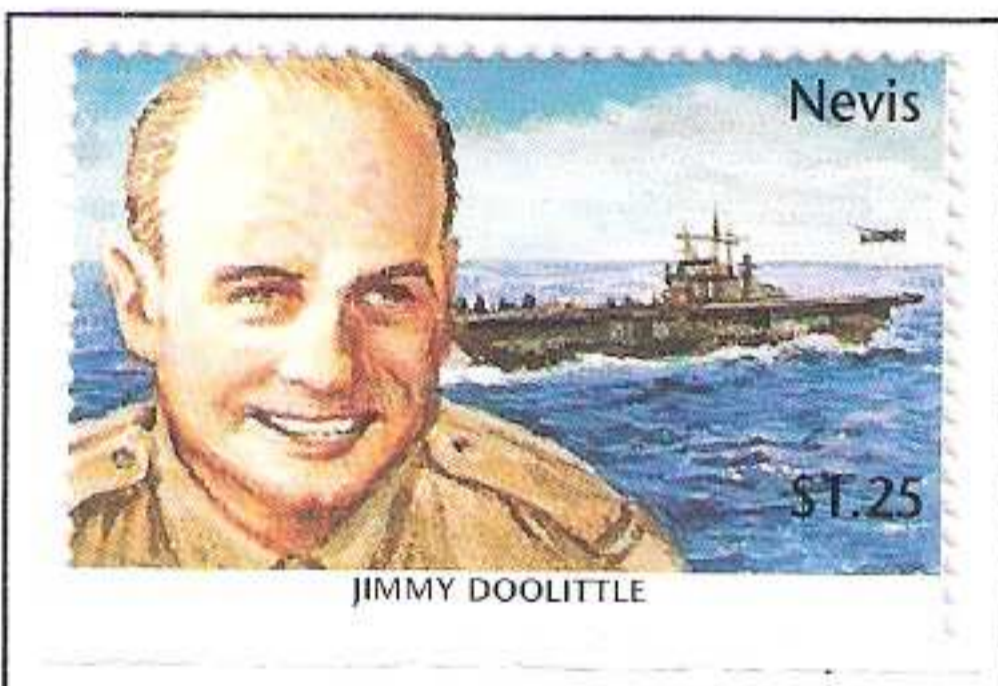
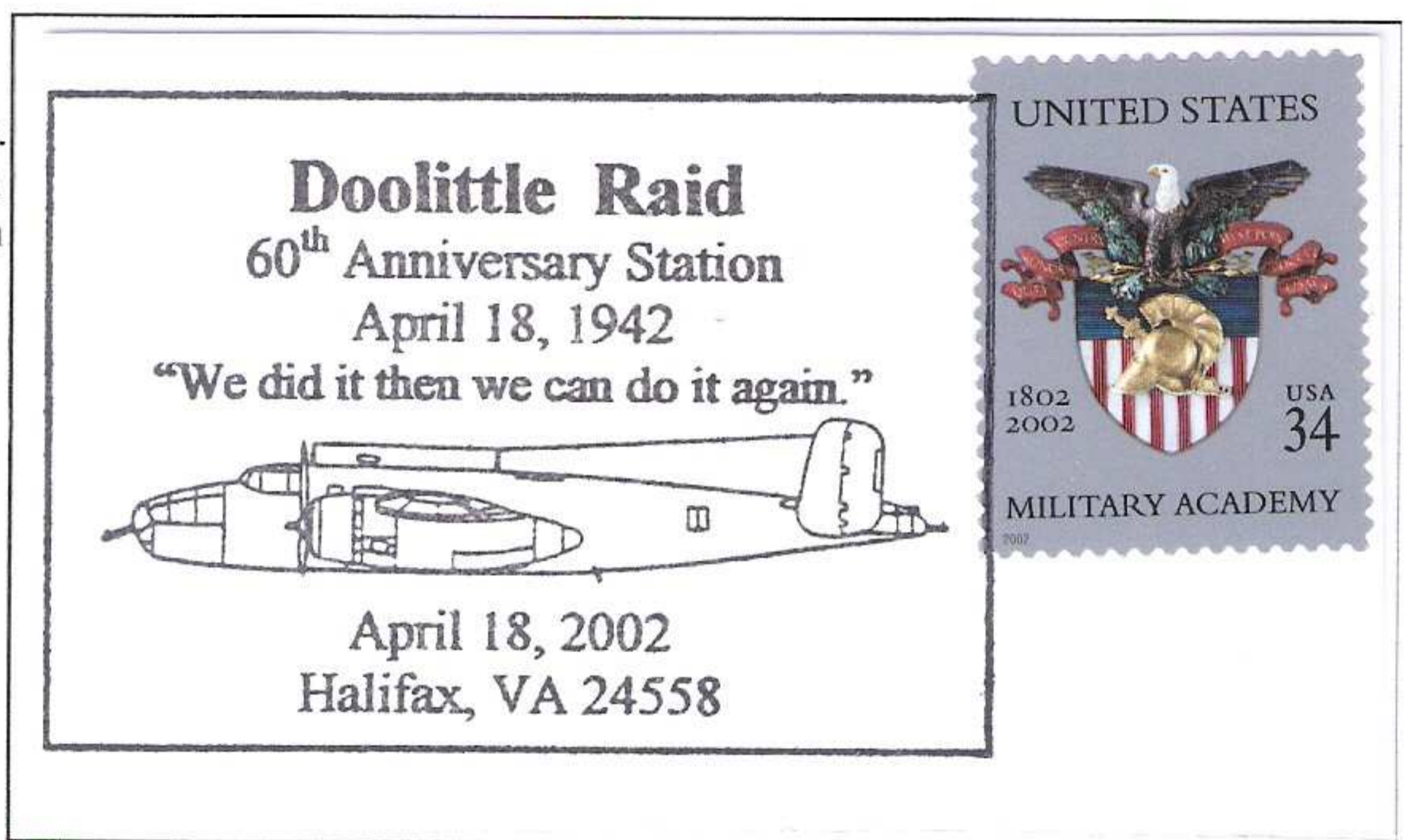
On May 6, 1942 even Gen. Wainwright's troops, sheltered in the isle of Corregidor, are obliged to surrender to Japanese forces. Gen. MacArthur left the Philippines uttering the famous sentence " I shall return ".



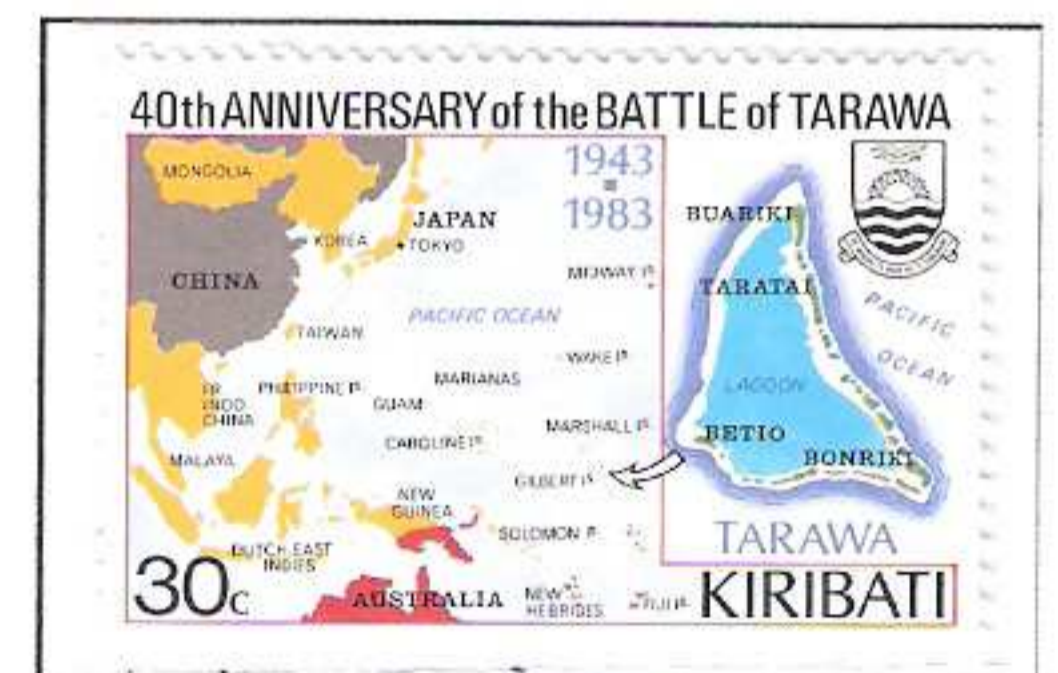
After the loss of the Philippines, Gen. Mac Arthur and Adm. Nimitz coordinate the strategies for the allies' come back.



The decision is taken for an air attack to show the allies' ability to hit Japan on its heat. Col. Doolittle is charged with the mission. He takes off from aircraft Hornet with 16 B-25, arrives over Tokyo on April 18, 1942 and bombards it.



In about six months Japan conquers many pacific Islands the Aleutians, Borneo and Philippines. It also aims to conquer the New Guinea and Australia.



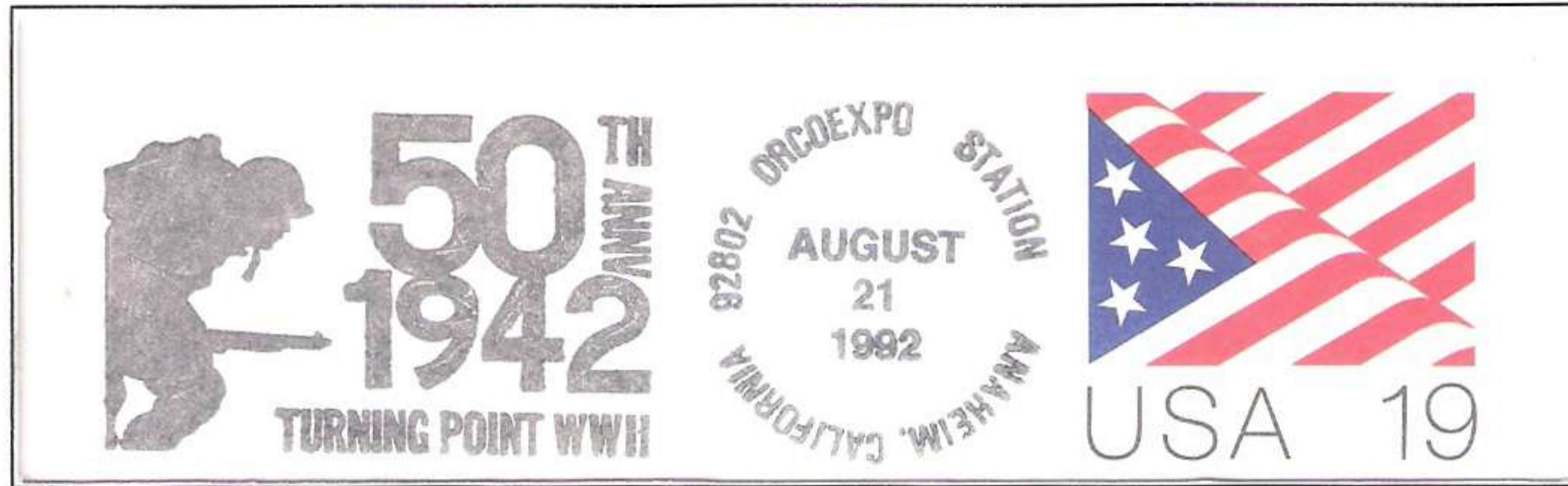
The Japanese victory on battle of the Coral Sea is tactical while the American one is strategic. In fact it prevents the Japanese occupation of Port Moresby, a springboard for the conquest of New Guinea first and of Australia later.



The battle of the Midway Islands marks the end of the Japanese supremacy in the Pacific. The unexpected American victory, coordinated by Adm. Nimitz, Commander of the naval forces in the Pacific, lasts from 4 to 7 June, 1942, at about 200 miles north of Midway. In case of victory, the conquest of the Islands would have allowed Japan to eliminate the American carriers and to attack the Hawaii successfully.

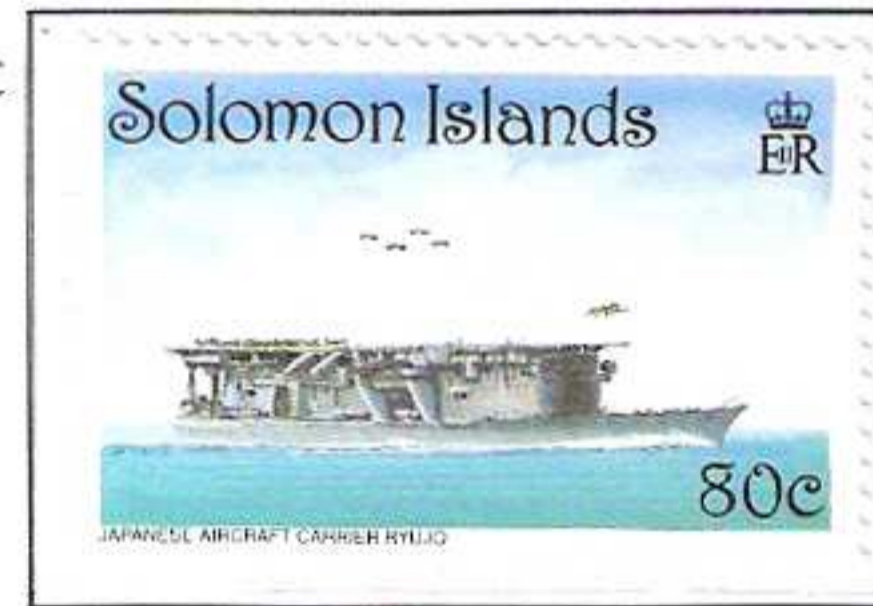


Adm. Nimitz, Midway island and "Turning point WWII"



But luck helps the Americans. In fact the last "Catalina" sent in a reconnaissance mission, finds the fleet and immediately informs the American command. The Japanese cannot rely on surprise.

The Hiryo and Enterprise.



Nagumo in Akagi.



Fletcher in Yorktown.



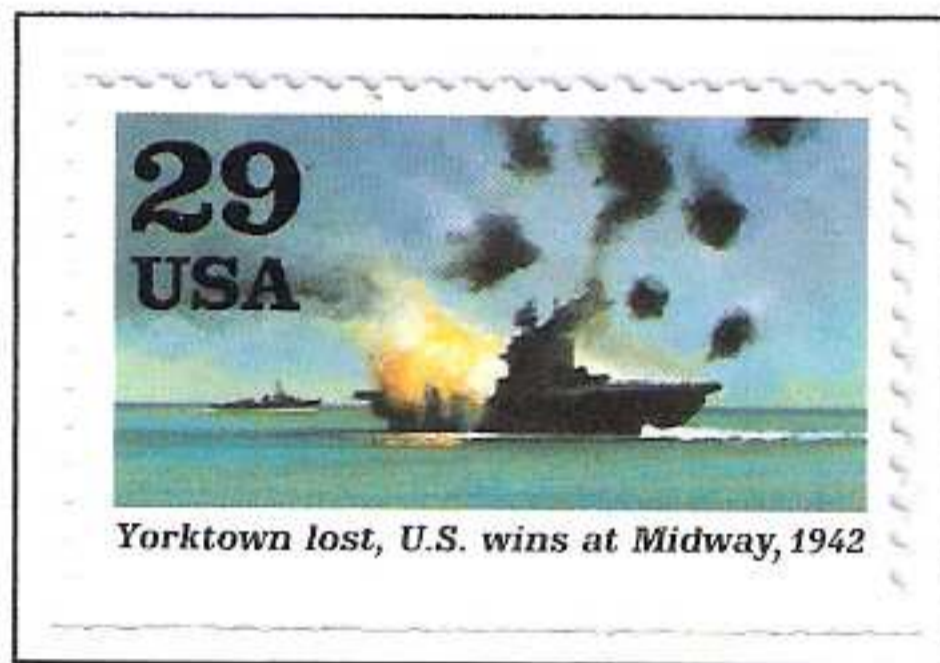
At the end of the battle, the Imperial fleet commanded by the Adm. Nagumo records the sinking of all its four aircraft carriers, Akagi, Kaga, Soryu and Hiryu.



The battle.



The United States remember the loss of Yorktown.



The unexpected victory amerik trough in second world war in the sector on the Southeast Asian and the entire Pacific.



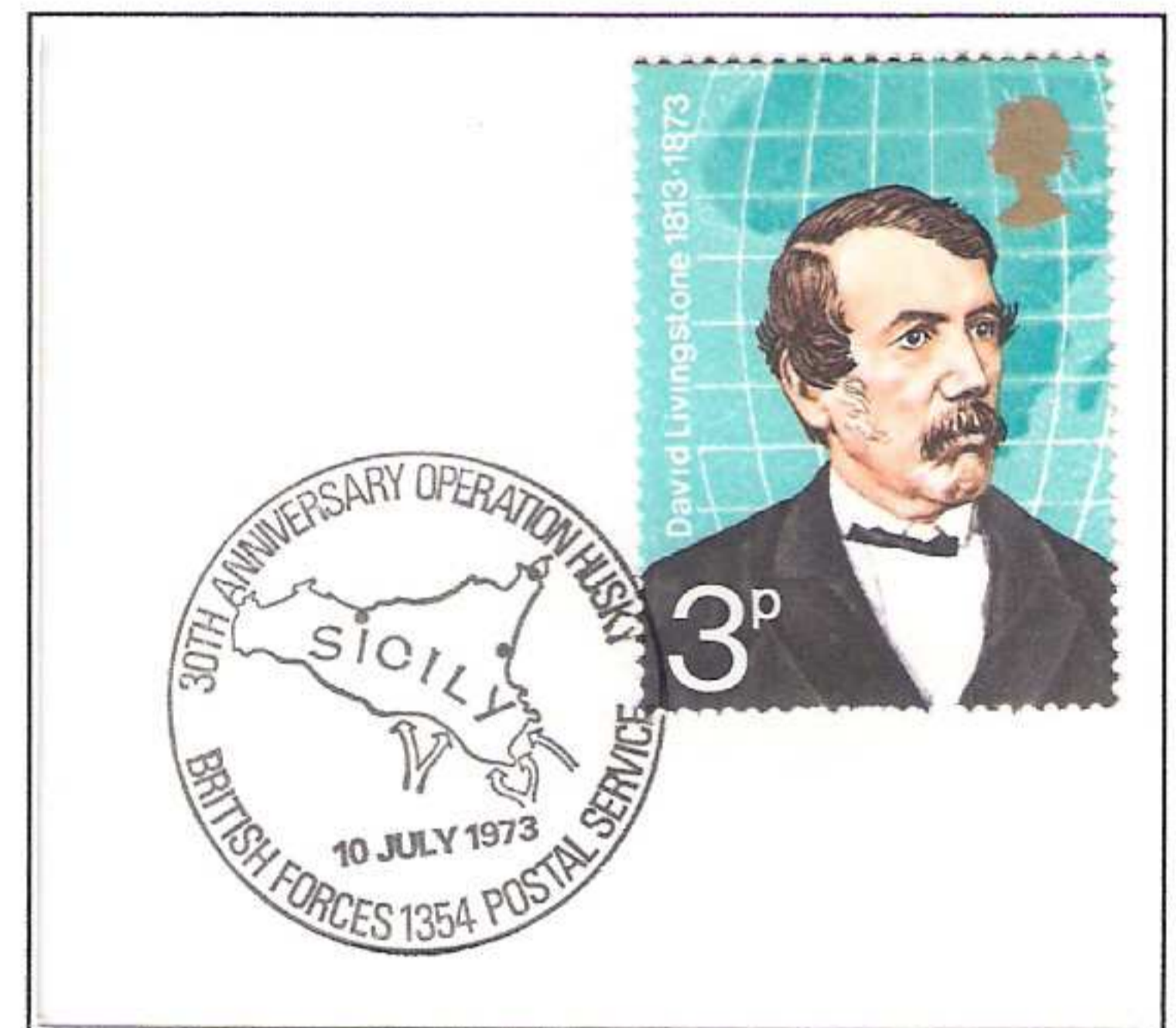
V... Mail 1944 from Pearl Harbor (Navy 128) Fleet Post Office, Naval Censor to San Francisco, Calif. "Tojo is sailer's bag".



April 1, 1943: from Castelfranco to the M.P. 221, Tunisia, during the Italian retreat.



After the last operations in Tunisia, the allies begin the "Hasky" operation, the invasion of Sicily on July 10, 1943. In one month Sicily is released.



CARTOLINA POSTALE

MITTENTE

VIA

C.A.P. LOCALITÀ (SIGLA PROV)

MANIFESTAZIONE FILATELICA NAZIONALE PALERMO 24-26 SETTEMBRE 1993

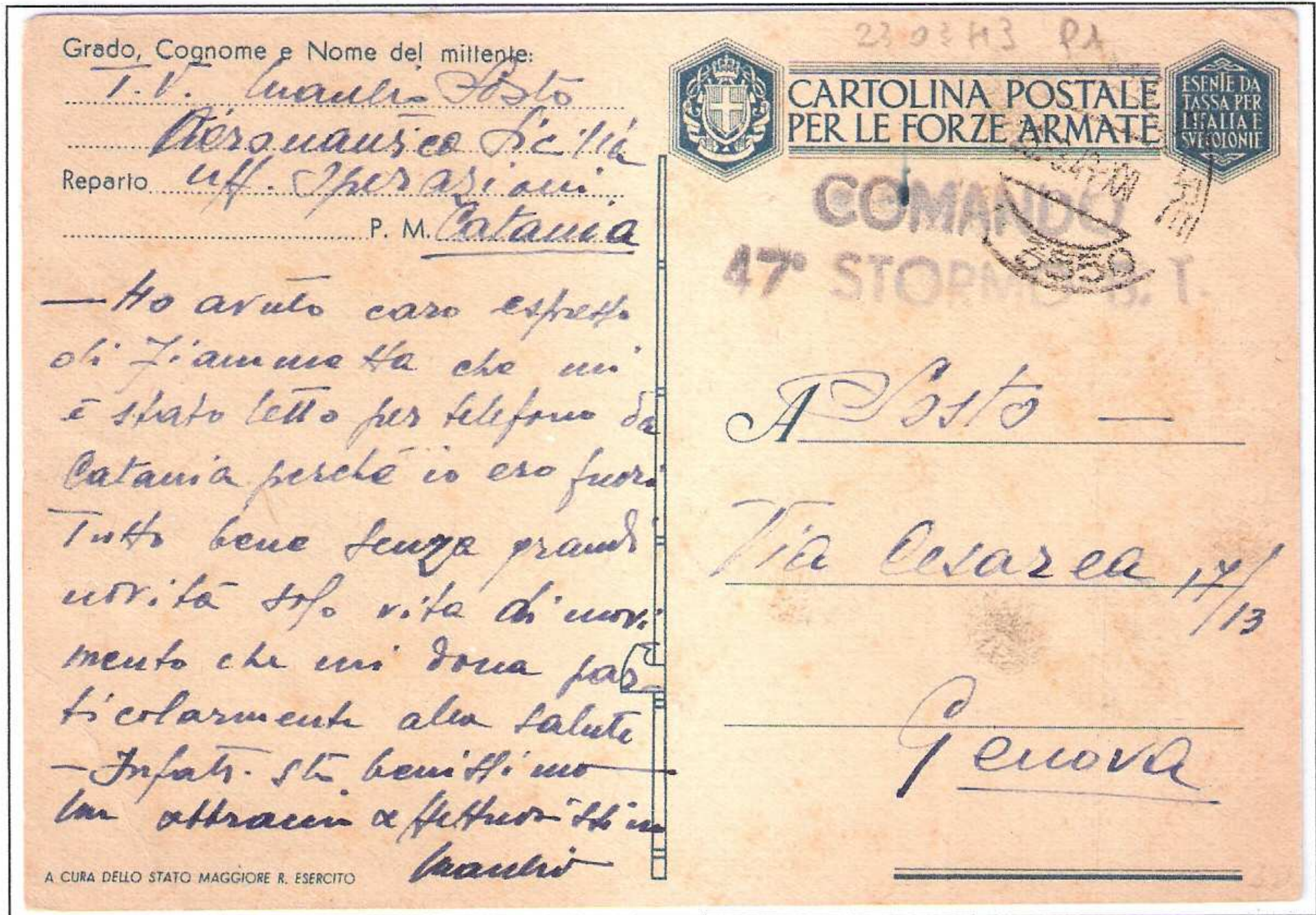
OPERAZIONE HUSKY

1943 - SBARCO IN SICILIA

POSTE ITALIANE ITALIA 700 LIRE

★ PALERMO C. 24.9.1993 P. MANIFESTAZIONE FILATELICA NAZIONALE OPERAZIONE HUSKY Giorno di emissione

C.A.P. LOCALITÀ SIGLA PROV



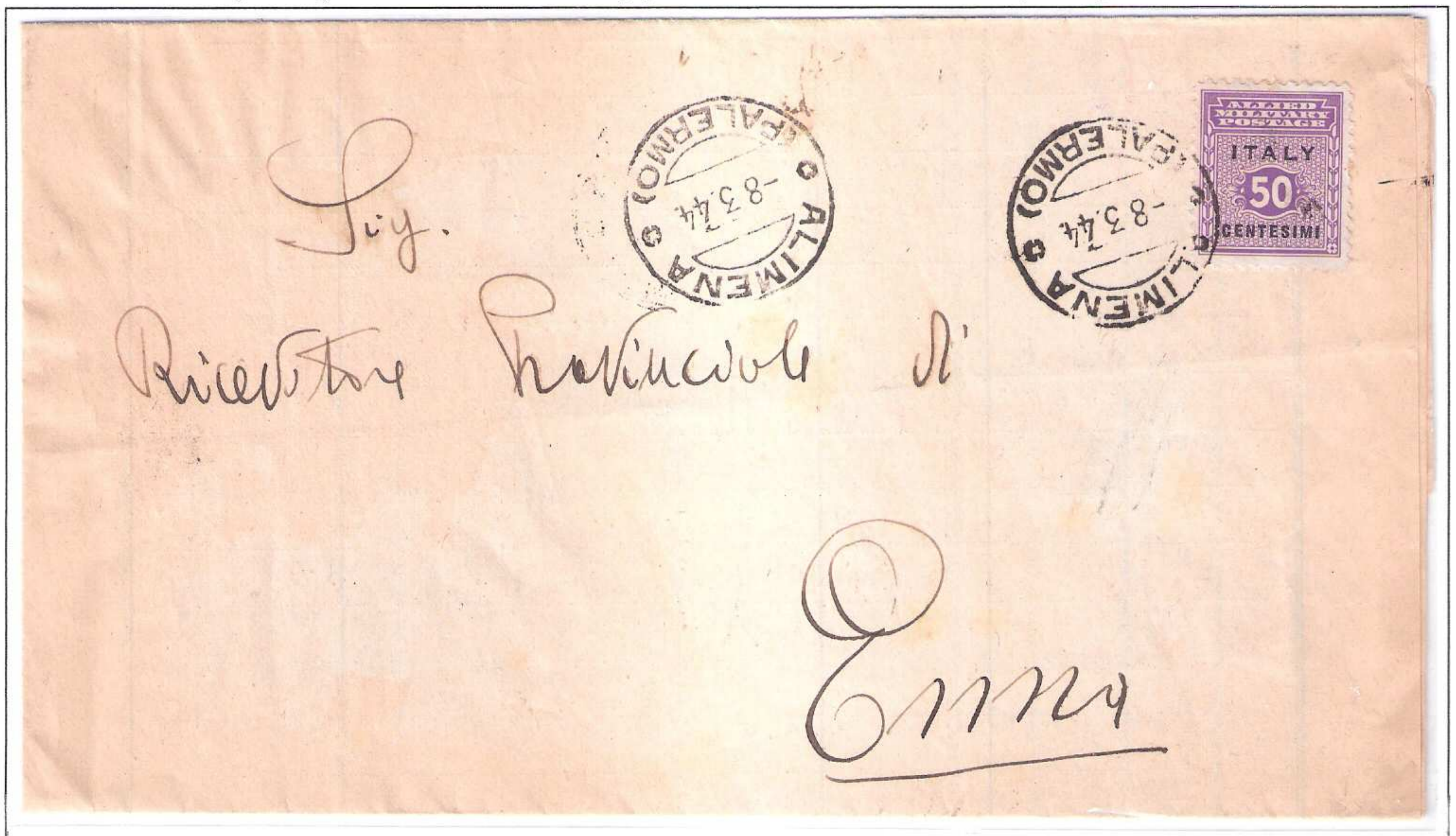
March 20, 1943 : free postcard from Sicily, P.M. 3550 to Genoa, before the allies' landing.

With the arrival of the allies and the partial occupation of Italy new stamps for the administration of the correspondence are printed.

August 24, 1943, Italy: emission for Sicily with words "Allied Military Postage and Italy", validity of use September 30, 1944.



March 8, 1944, Italy: letter from Alimena to Enna, Sicily, franked with 50 cent. "Allied Military Postage".



On July 25, 1943, during the conquest of Sicily by the allies, King Vittorio Emanuele III removes Mussolini from head of Government and imprisons him at the Gran Sasso. Secretly, on September 3 in Cassibile, Gen. Castellano signs the Armistice with the allies. The Act is made public only on the evening of September the 8th.

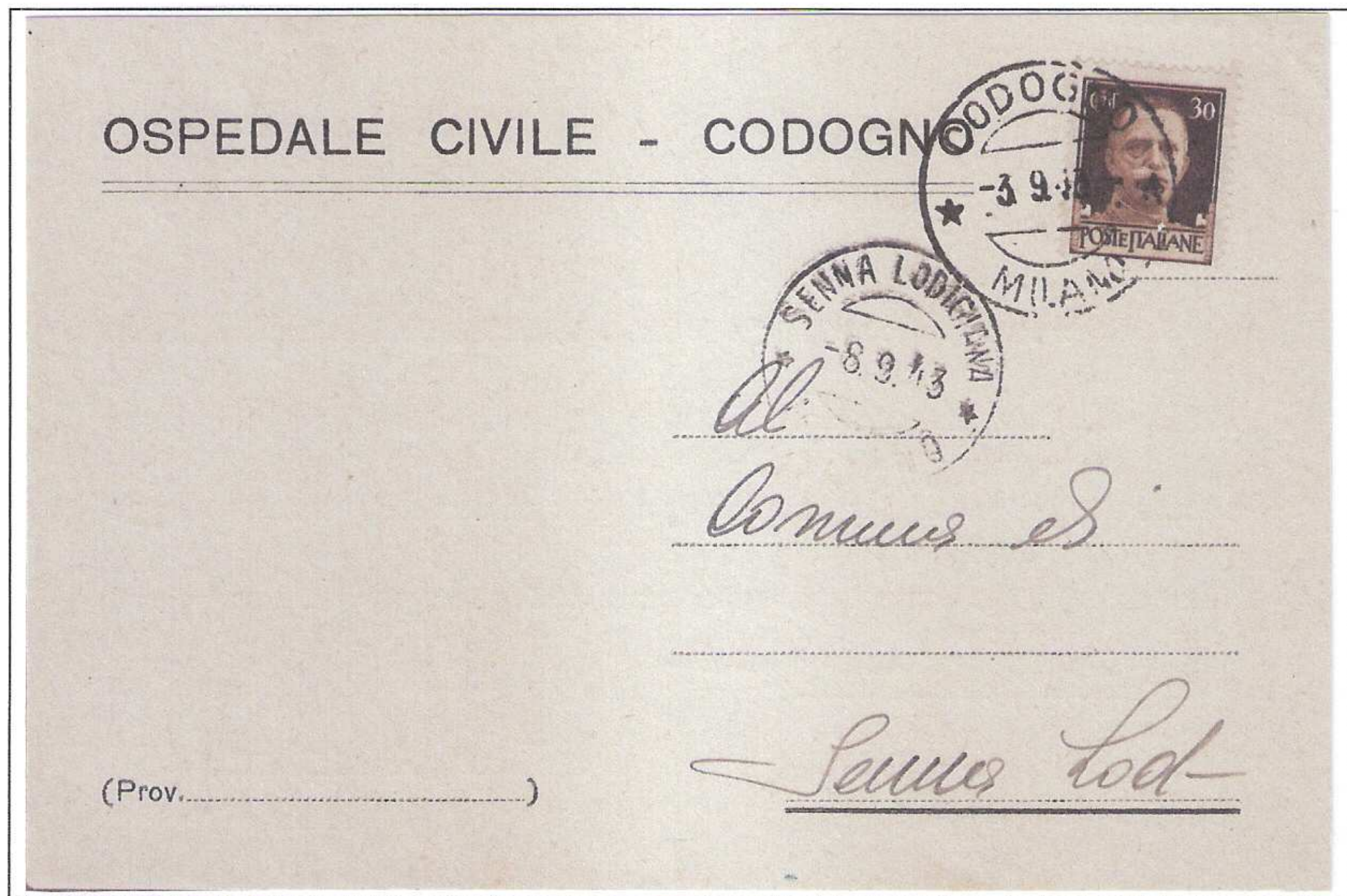
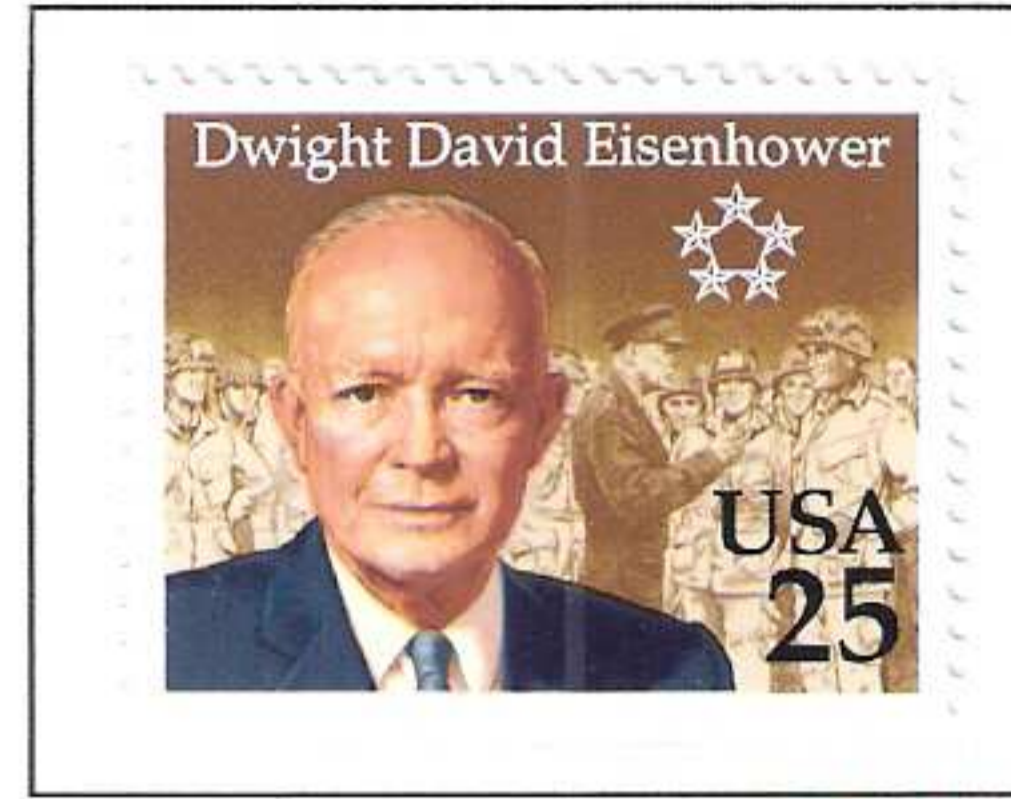


July 24, 1943, Italy: letter sent from Arezzo on the last day of Mussolini's Government, arrived in Anghieri on July 25, the day of his arrest.



September 3, 1943, Italy: postcard from Florence on the day of the signature of the Armistice, checked for censorship and made at the Post Office for forwarding to Milan on 6 September, when the Armistice is signed but not yet made public.

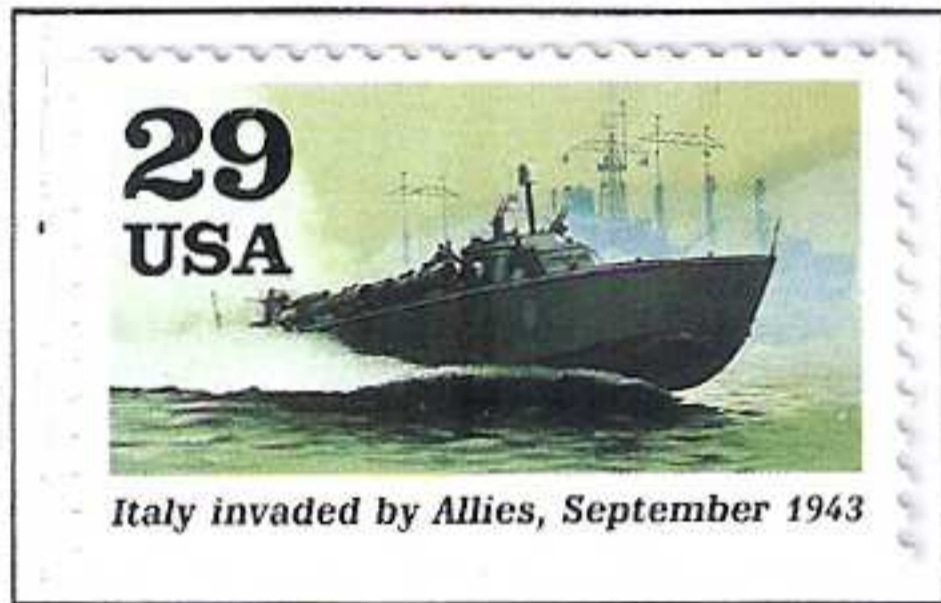
On September 3, 1943, the Armistice signed in Italy, also known as the "short" Armistice, is made public, aboard the British battleship Nelson, on September 29, "the long Armistice" is signed between Gen. Eisenhower and Marshal Badoglio.



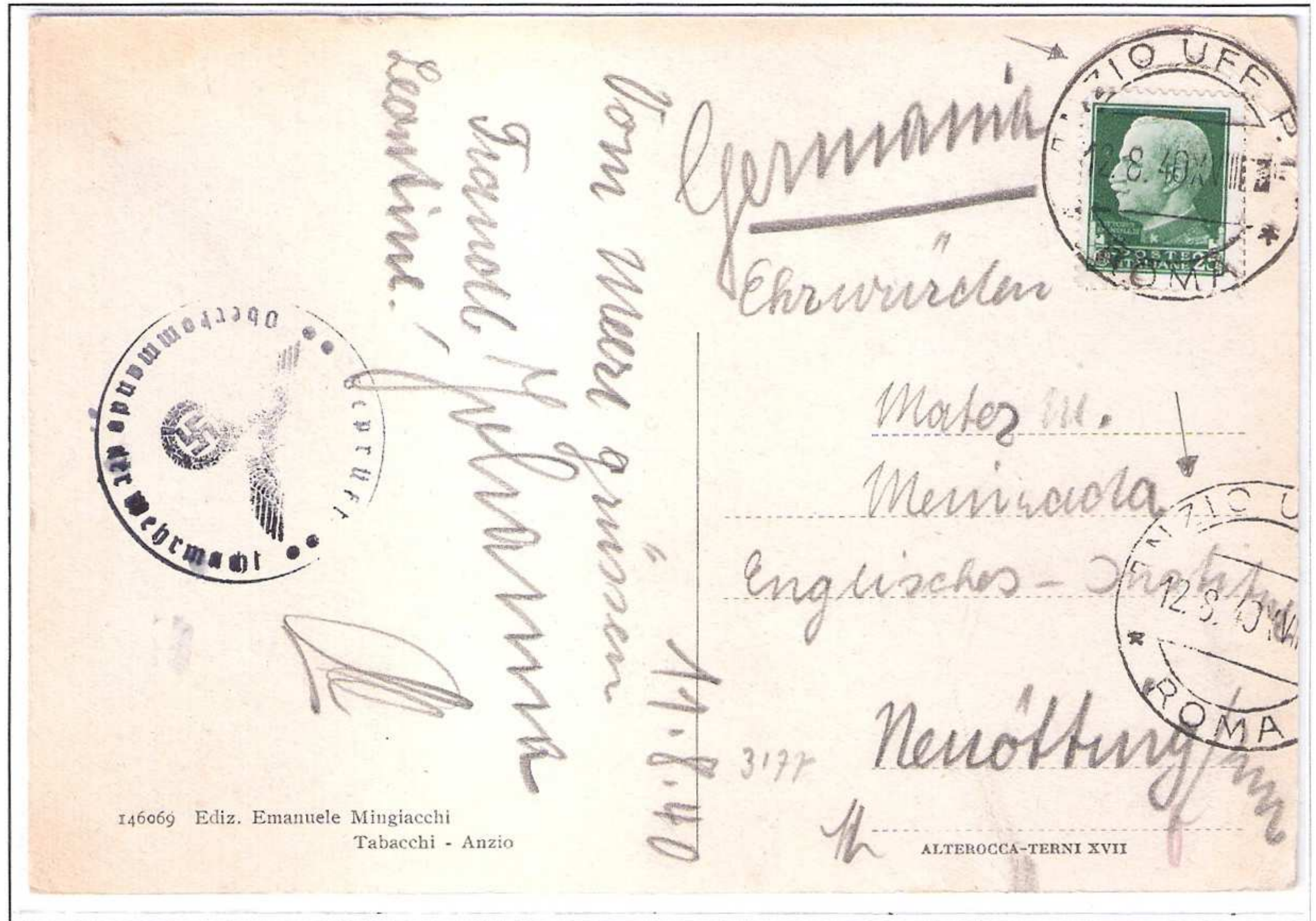
September 3, 1943, Italy: private postcard from Codogno's Civil Hospital on the day of the signing of the Armistice, arrived in Senna Lodigiana on September 8, 1943, day on which the Armistice is made public.



With the Armistice Italy must deliver its ships to the allies. The battleship "Rome" is however intercepted and sunk off Sardinia's sea on September 9, 1943. Meanwhile the allies, now friends, land at Salerno on September 9, 1943.



January 22, 1944 allies land at Anzio and Nettuno with the support marine forces including the cruiser "Penelope".



LST (Ships Landing Tanks) used for landings in Sicily and Salerno.



The approach to Cassino's front implies significant losses for the allies. Wounded soldiers are cared for in military facilities located close to the front.

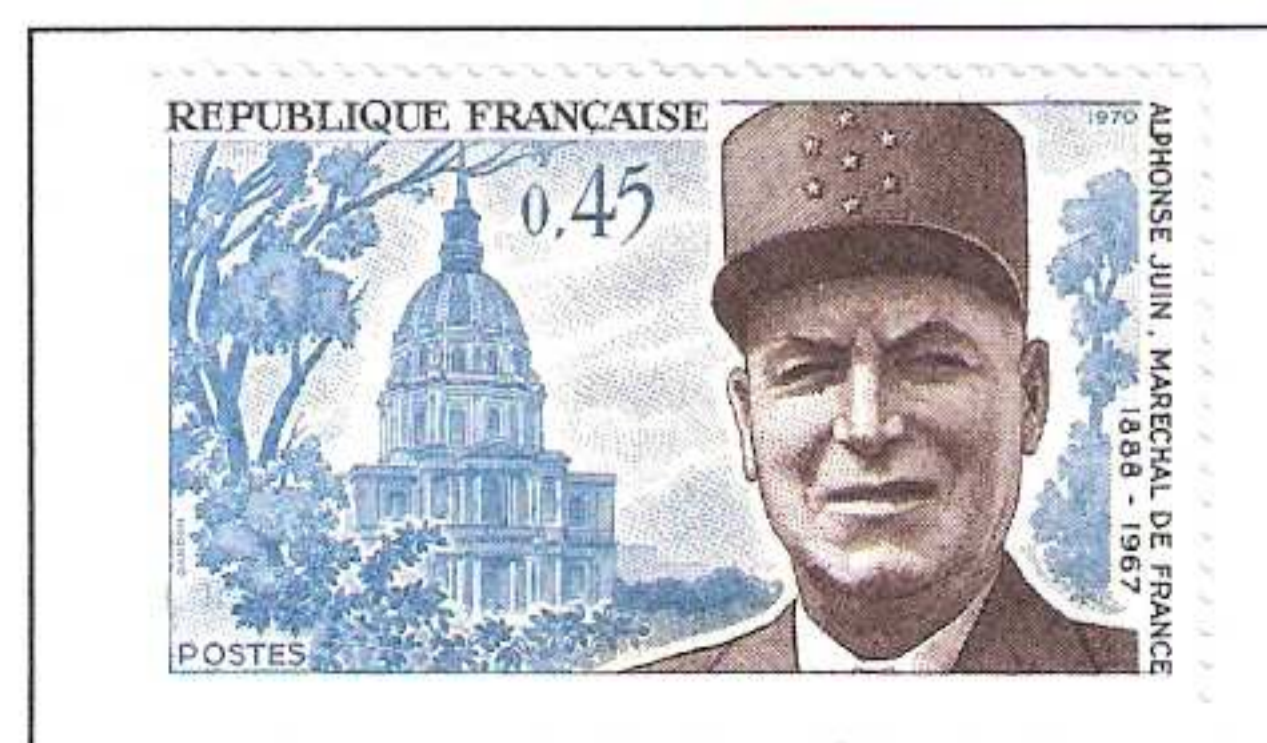
V... Mail of 58th American Medical Battalion, A.P.O n. 464 based in Caserta.



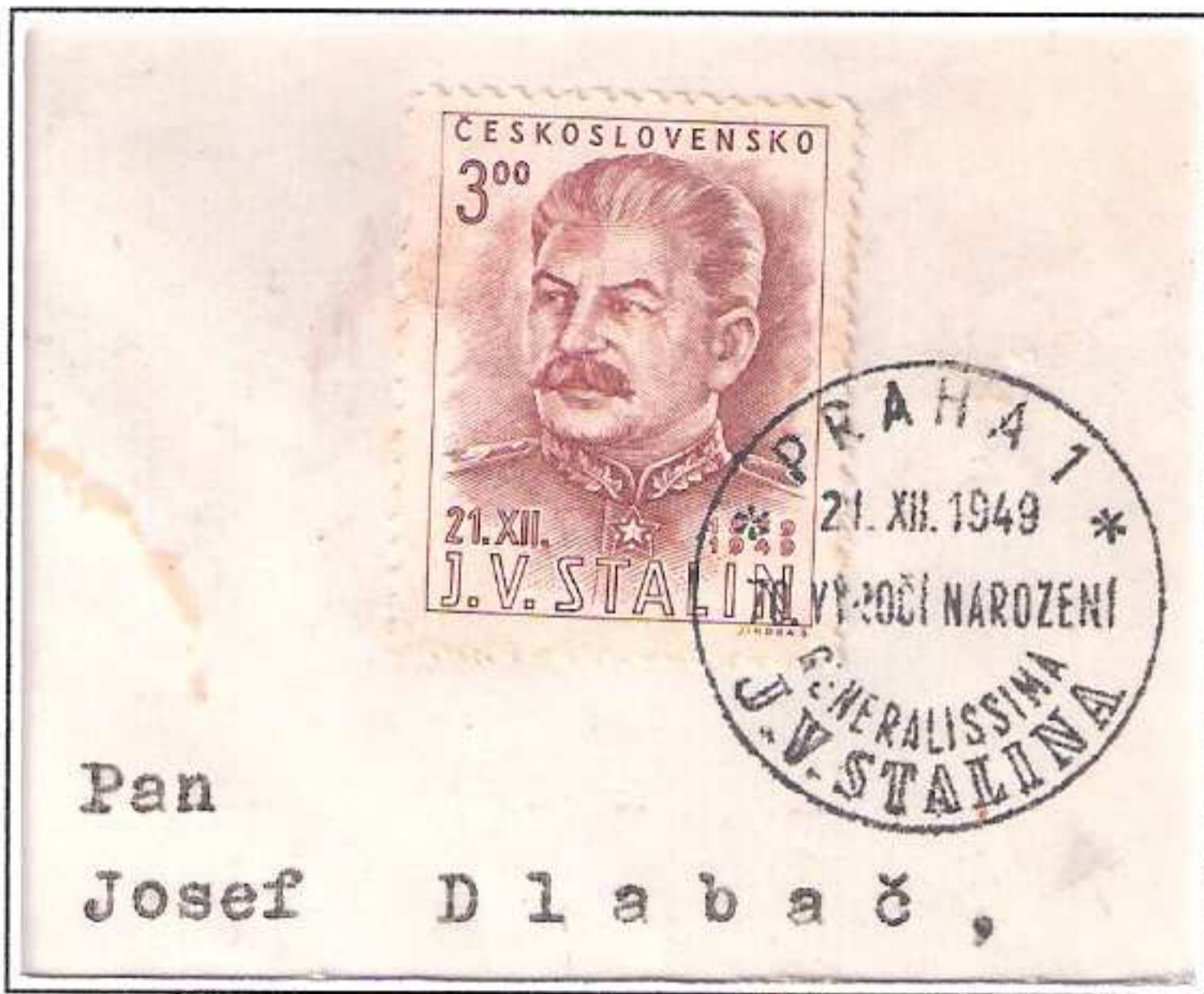
Started on January 12, 1944, the battle of Cassino lasts until May 19, when the Polish unit of Gen. Anders manages to raise its flag on the ruins of the Abbey.



Along the Garigliano river on the "Gustav Line" fierce fighting took place. Free France forces led by Gen Juin helped the allies.



On the East front, from Leningrad to the Caucasus, in the autumn of 1942 the response of the Soviet Union is hard. On November 19 the Russians crush the German-Romanian defence on the Don in five days and reach Kalac encircling Stalingrad.



Attack and defense of Stalingrad.

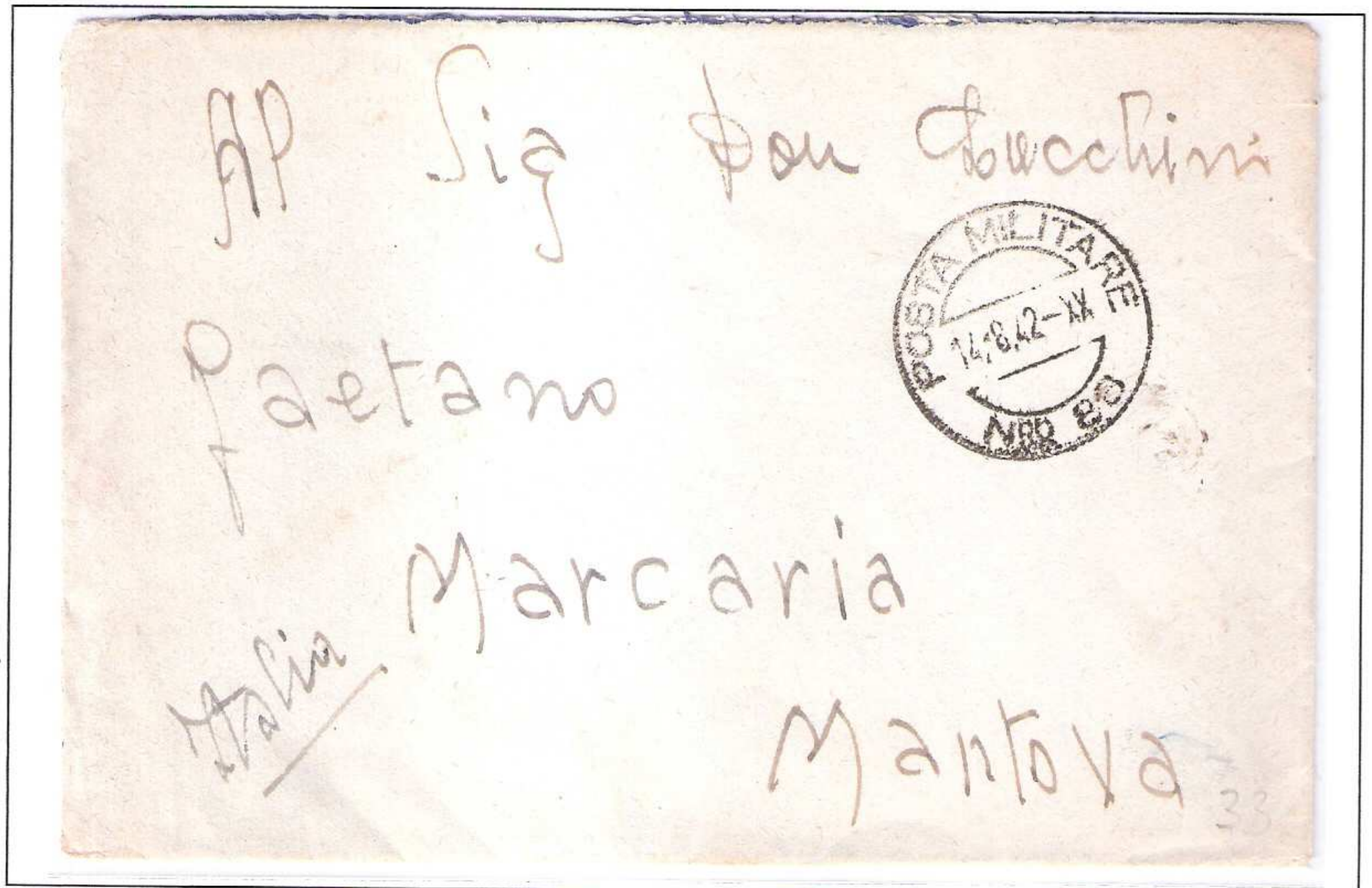


The work of women in factories and in the military aid to the front was very important.



The battles on the Don and the encirclement of Stalingrad also involve the Italian troops. Part of the ARMIR (8th Army) must withdraw to avoid encirclement. In particular the 35th Army Corps fight at Serafimovic's bridgehead.

M.P. 88, letter from the Don front, Serafimovic, August 14, 1942, for Mantua, August 23, 1942.





The victory of Stalingrad.



M.P. 88, free card of October 15, 1942 from the Russian front to Levico (Trento).



The Russian offensive on the Don opens the Italian's retreat. A long odyssey on foot starts across the freezing Russian plains.



The town of Kursk, railway between Moscow and Harkov, is known because of the biggest battle with armed vehicles in history which took place there from July 4 to August 1, 1943.



Stalin's inducements on postcards.



The German divisions, now tired and overruled by the Soviet troops, withdraw progressively abandoning the Russian territory. After Karkov is liberated the entire Ukraine and the Bielorussia.



Towards victory.



The "road of life".



After a 900 days', Leningrad is liberated.



E THE COUNTERATTACK IN EUROPE

In order to alleviate the German pressure on the Russian front, the Soviet Union had long insisted on opening a second front: the invasion of France. After a very long preparation the operation, called "Overlord", took off on June 6, 1944 with the Allies landing in Normandy, and ended on August 26 with the liberation of Paris.

Supreme Commander



3. THE LANDING IN NORMANDY



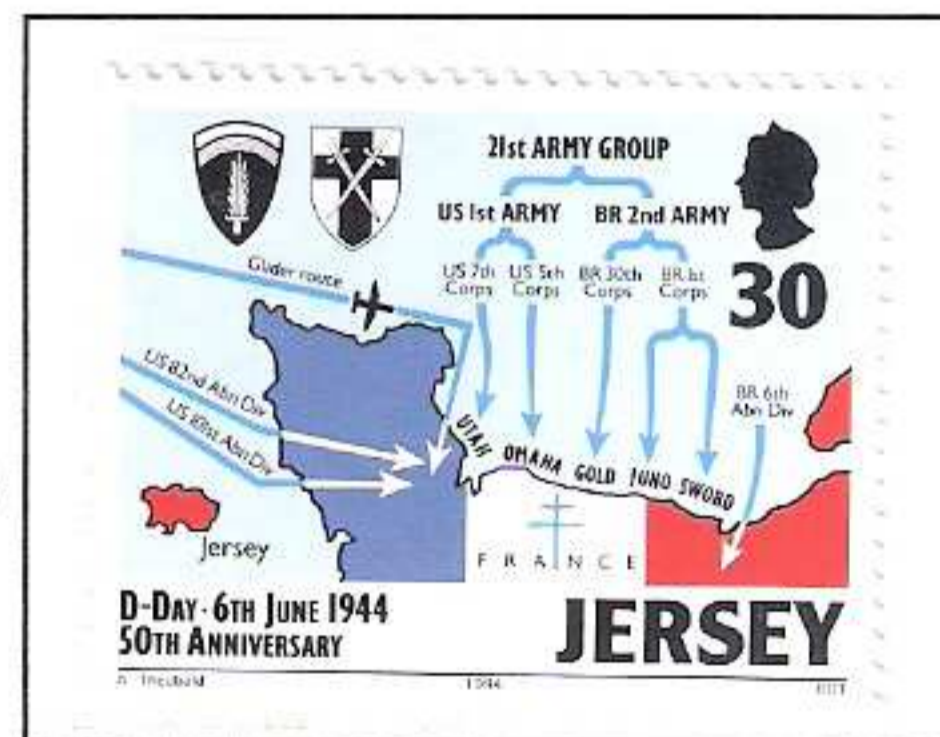
Letter from Bousselfange to Carnoule sent on the day before the landing.



The "Atlantic wall".



The "theatre" of the landing and the support given by battleships including the Warspite.



The landing and the transports, Jun 6, 1944 LCA (landing craft assault troops).

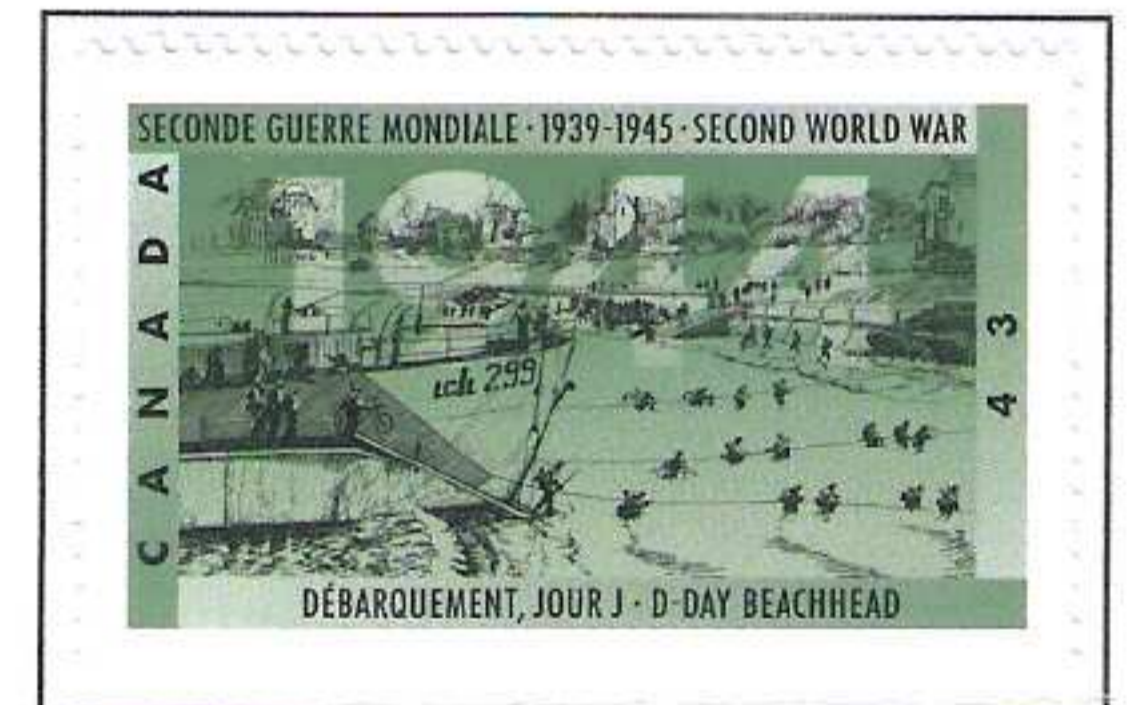


Once chosen the beaches where to land the allies start their " longest day". With the massive support of the air force bombarding the beaches and the surrounding hinterland, the allies, transported by thousands of ships, are ready to land.

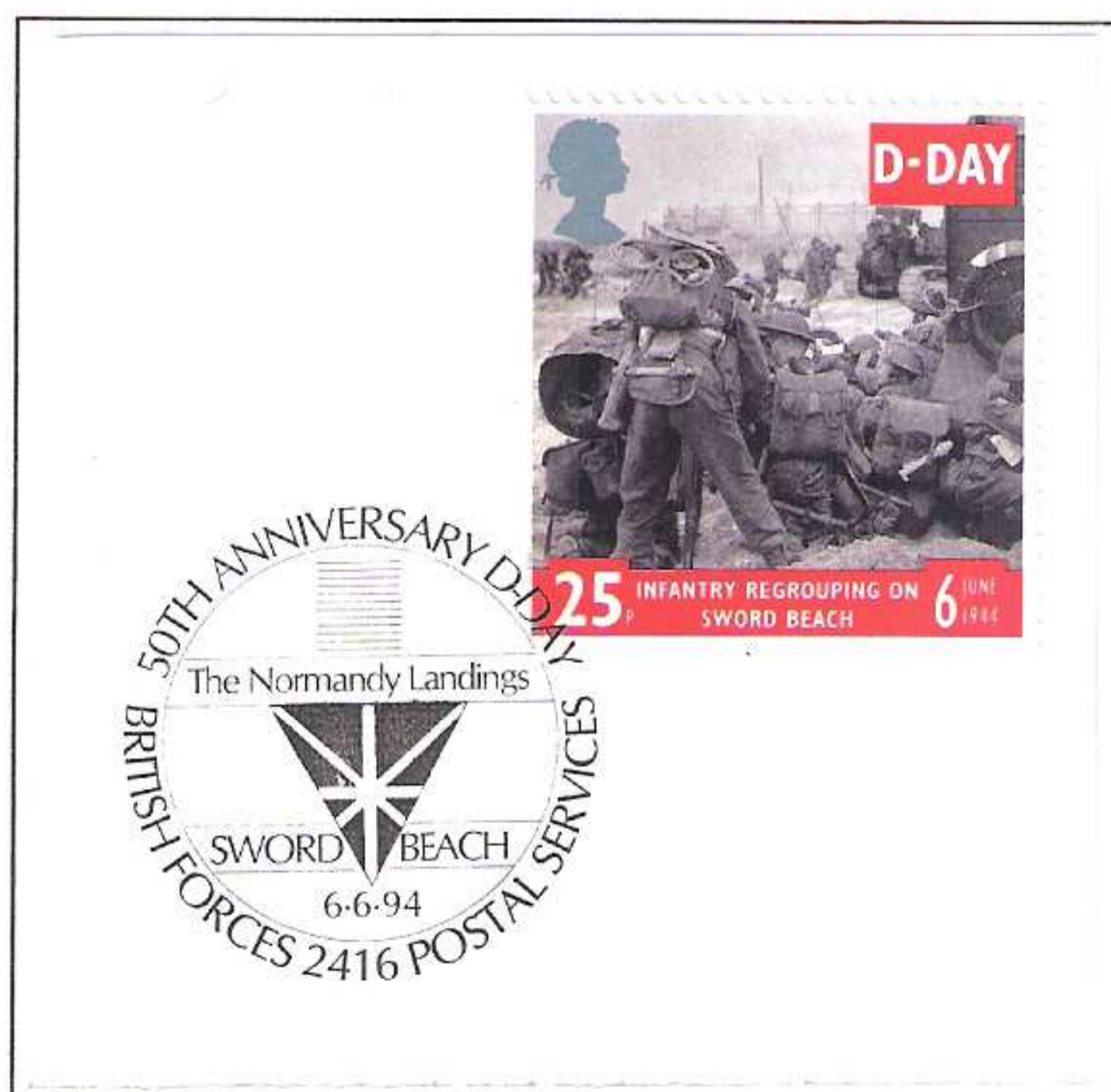
The air support



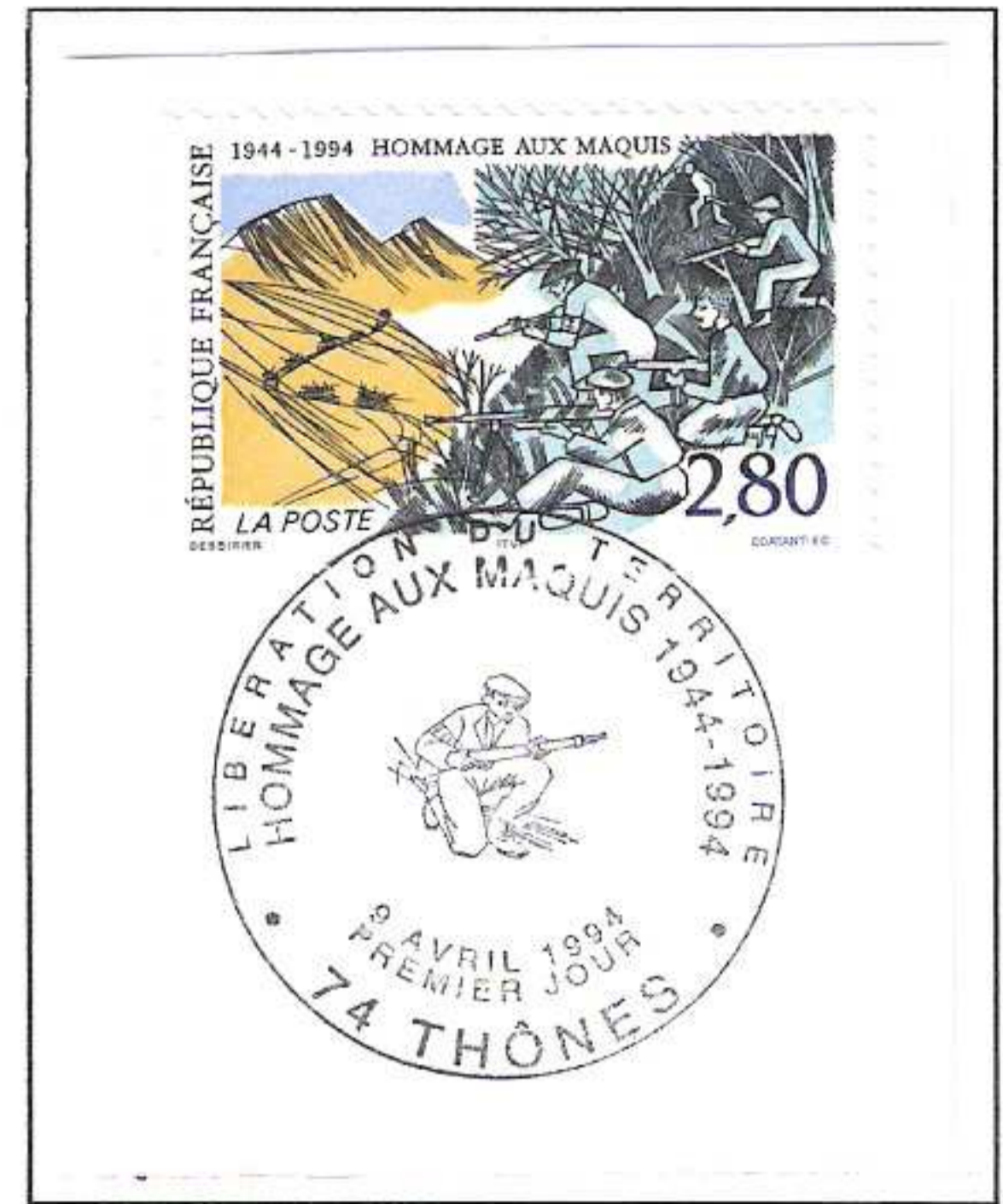
Though obstructed by a huge barrier of fire spit by guns and machine-guns, despite being hindered by several obstacles expressly scattered everywhere by the Germans, the allied troops land on French beaches.



The beaches " Sword " and " Gold "



The favourable outcome of the landing is also due to two factors. The sabotage in the rear guard by the French Resistance which went into action after being informed by Radio London about the imminence of the landings through the verses of a poem by Paul Verlaine (les sanglots longs des violons de l'automne blessent mon cœur d'une langueur monotone).



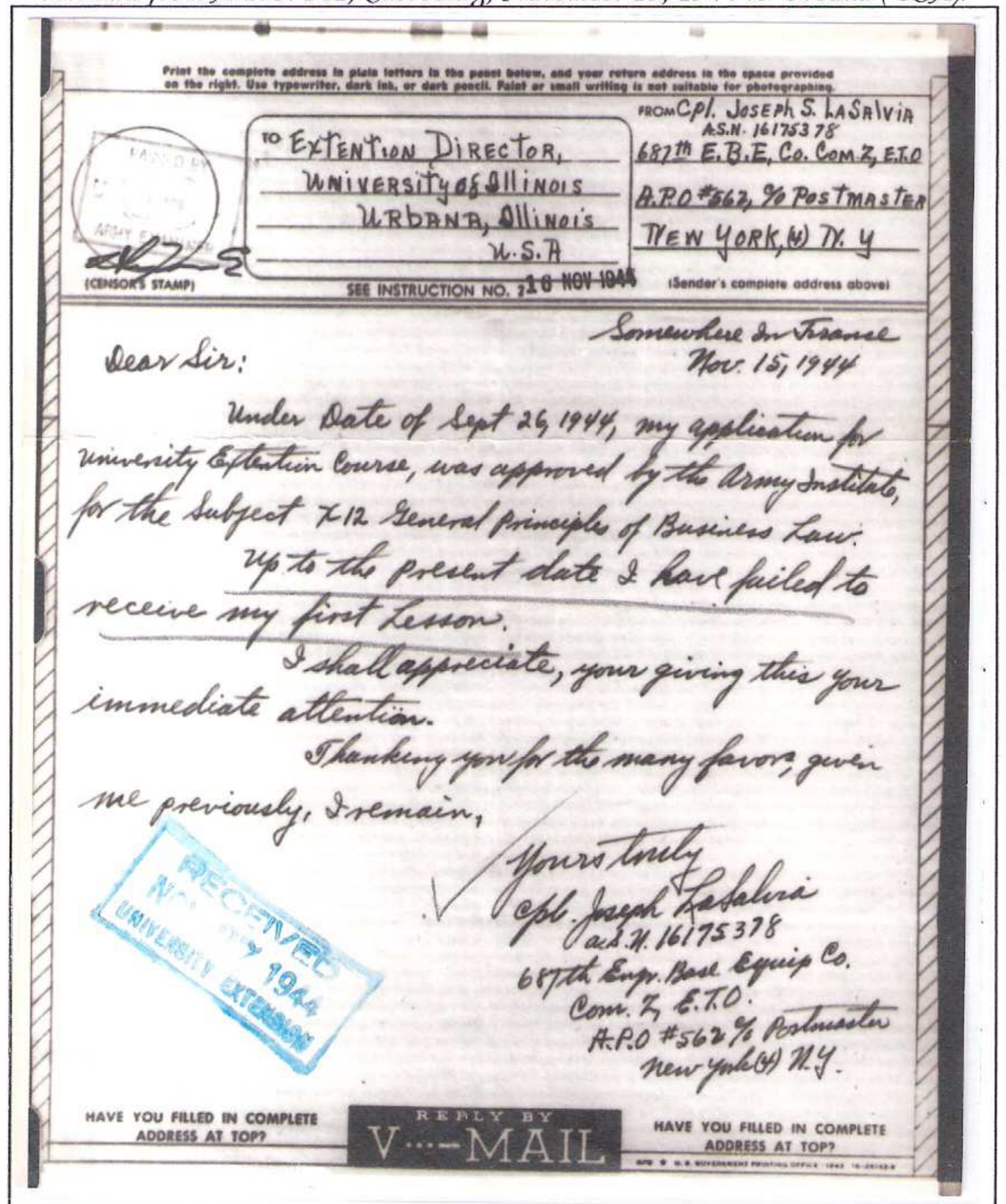
The important work carried out by paratroopers, starting at night and aiming at the conquest of bridges, roads and strategic points that were to be kept until the arrival of the landing troops.



Air-transported troops and paratroopers in action.



V... mail from A.P.O. 562, Cherbourg, November 15, 1944 to Urbana (USA).





The human toll paid by the Allies in the early days of landing was very high.

The Omaha Beach and Point du Hoc.



At Arromanches the allies had set up an artificial port, waiting to use the ports of Norman towns. The artificial harbour was named "Port Winston" in honour of W. Churchill.



In S.te Mère Eglise, after the liberation, a stele was placed named "the road to Freedom", signifying that the path started there by the allies would end only in Berlin.



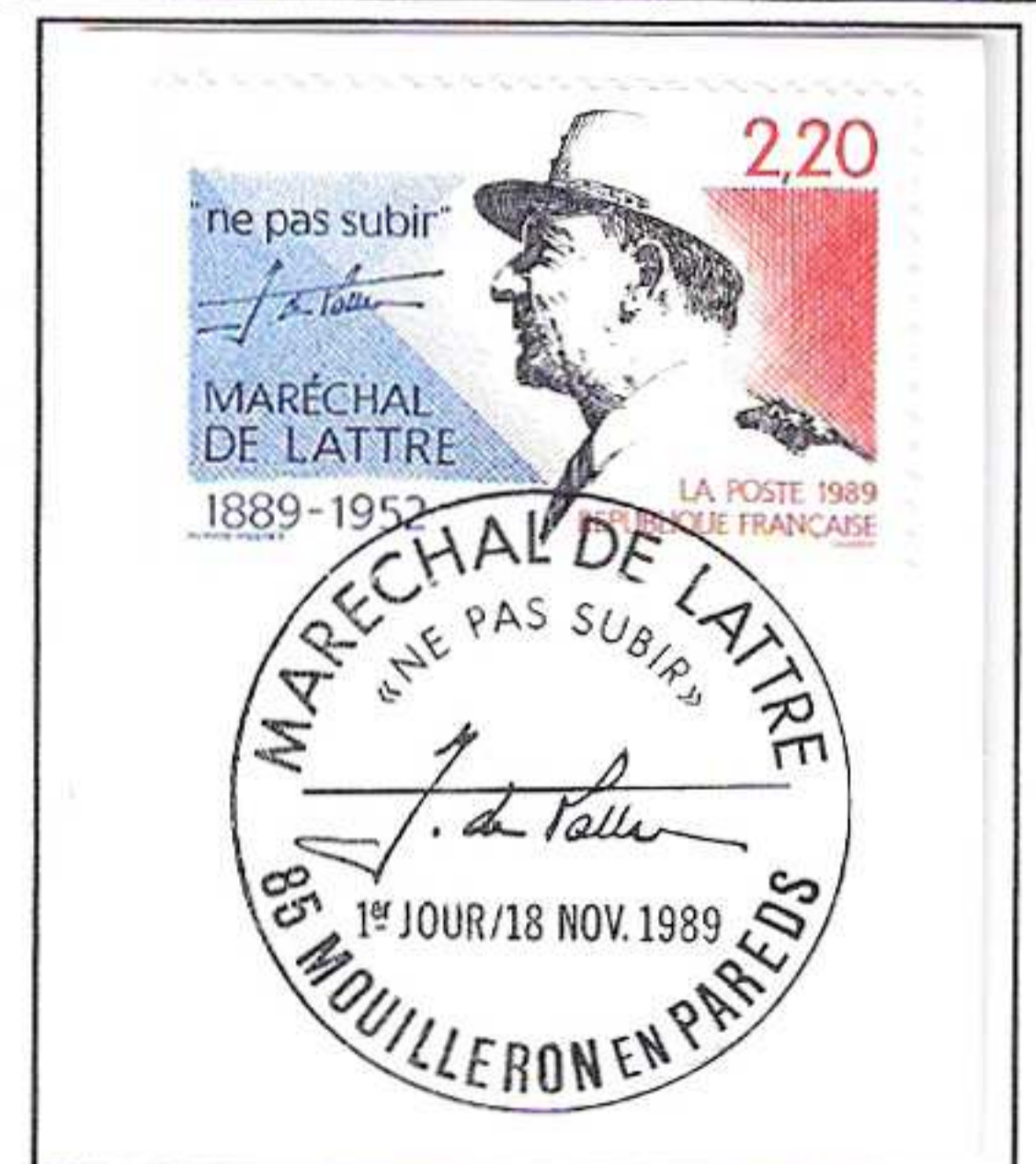
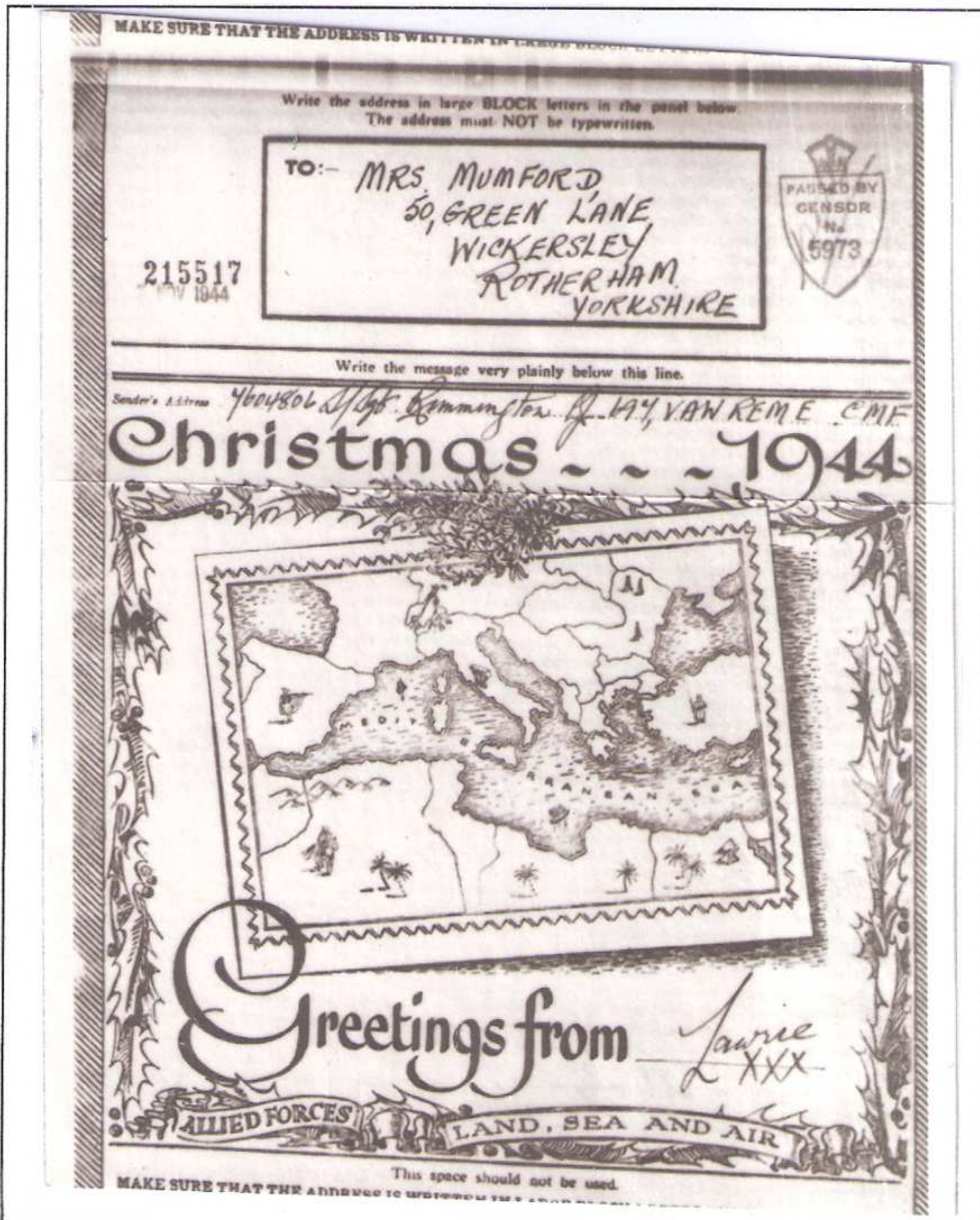
France, July 12, 1944: registered mail from Paris to Saintes sent after the landing but before the liberation of the capital.



The operation "Dragoon", landing in Provence, enabled the allies to capture two ports, important even for the supplies to troops in Normandy: Marseille and Toulon. Started on August 15, 1944 with the air support provided by seven carriers and battleships, cruisers and other ships, it allowed the troops to join in Dijon with the forces coming from Normandy at mid-September.



The battleship Lorraine and cruiser Gloire and Bertine waiting for the d-day support.

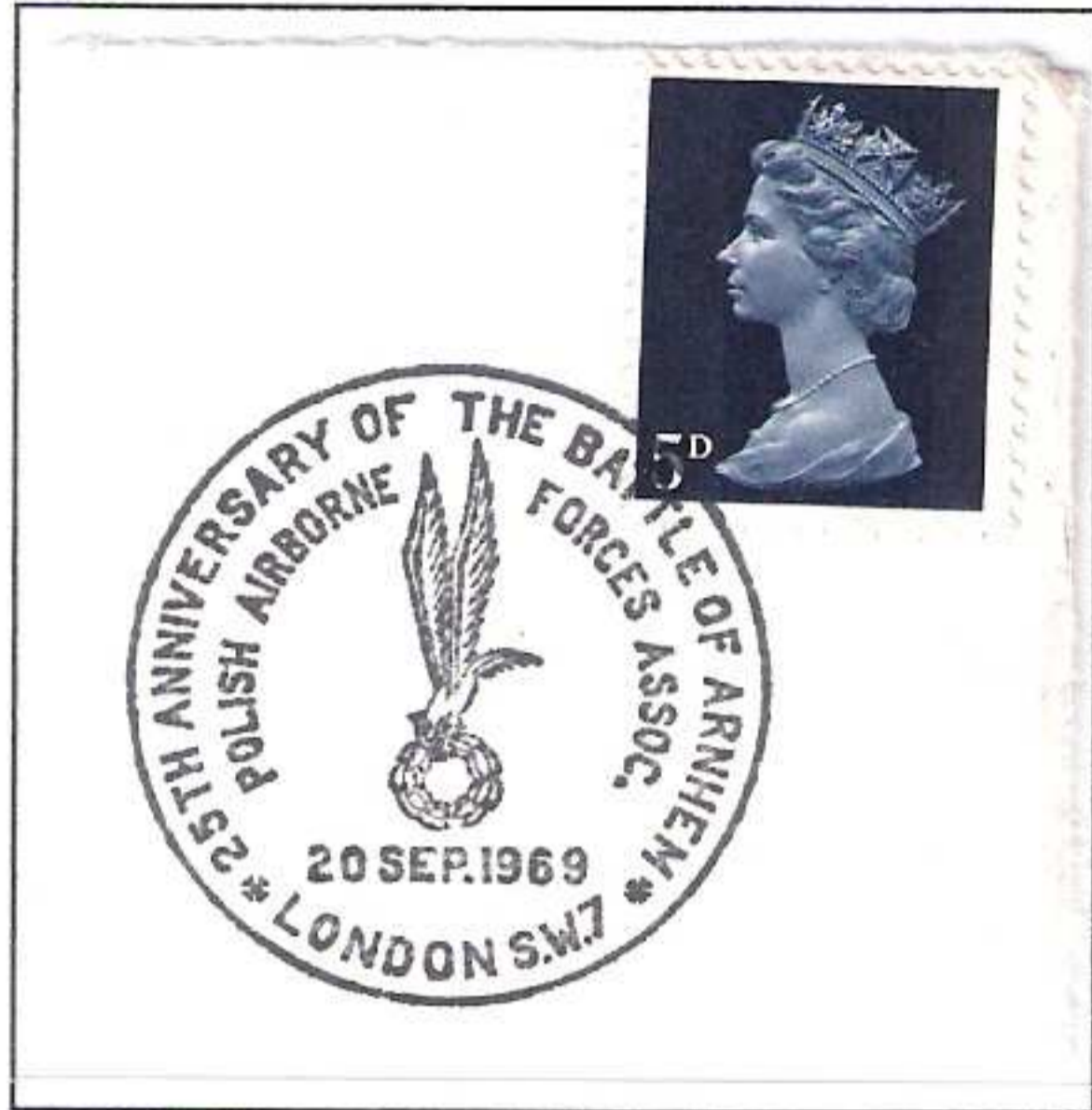


De Lattre de Tassigny commanding the 1st French Army during the landing in Provence, and his phrase "ne pas subir"

Airgraph, 1944, from C.M.F. to Yorkshire, England. The Mediterranean Sea now belongs only to the Allies.

E THE COUNTERATTACK IN EUROPE

Before the decisive battle of the Ardennes, the allies suffered a setback in the operation, combining army and airborne troops, called "Market Garden". The operation which took place in the Netherlands from 17 to 26 September 1944, aimed at arriving straight at the Rhine in order to end the war by Christmas '44. The attack was preceded by bombings on German anti-aircraft posts and Dutch ports.

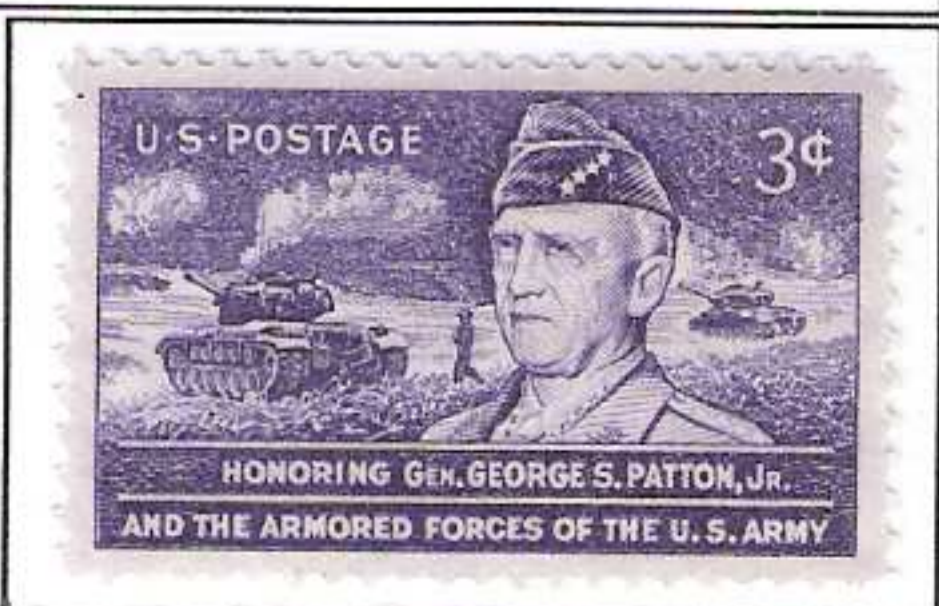
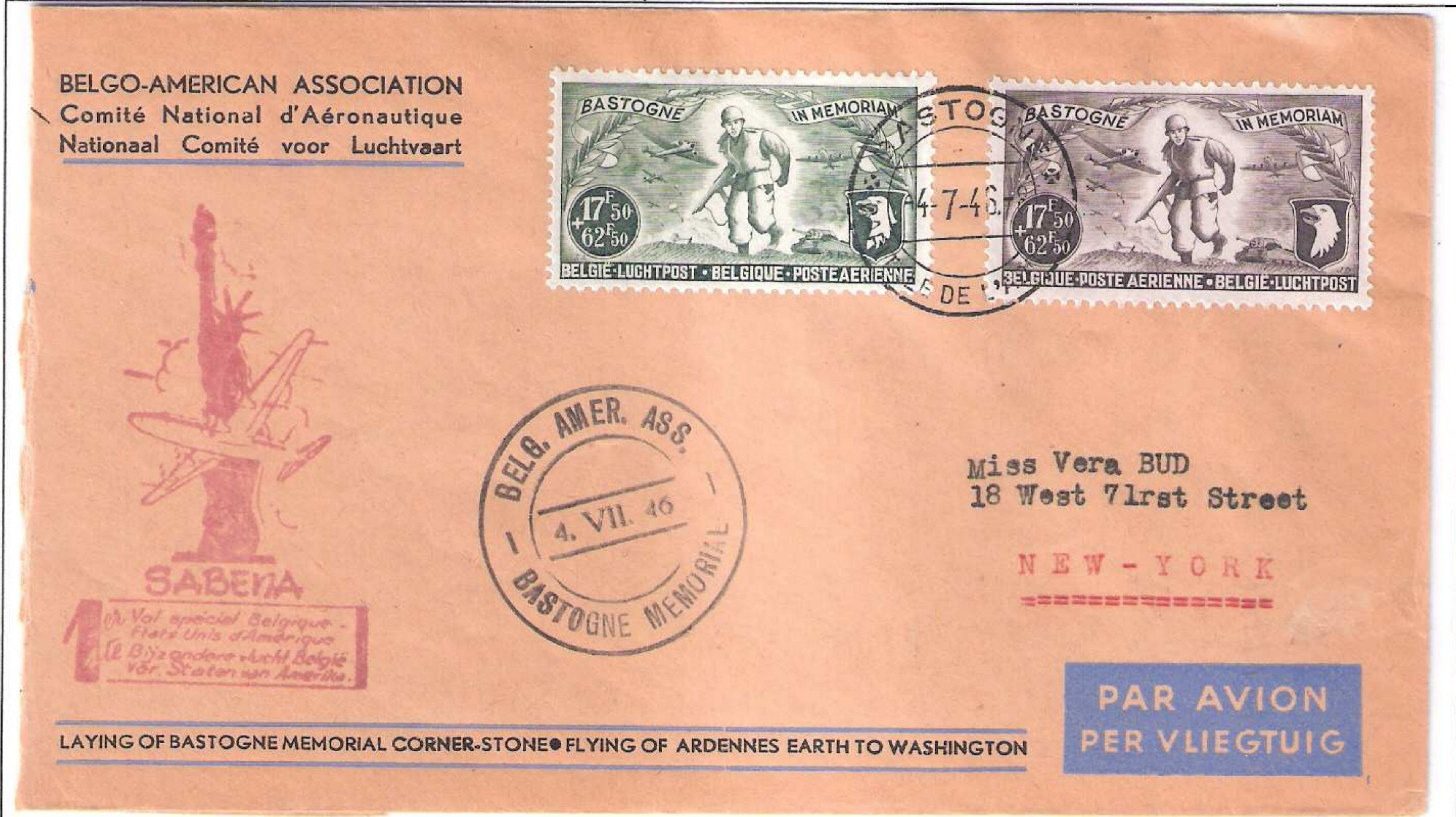
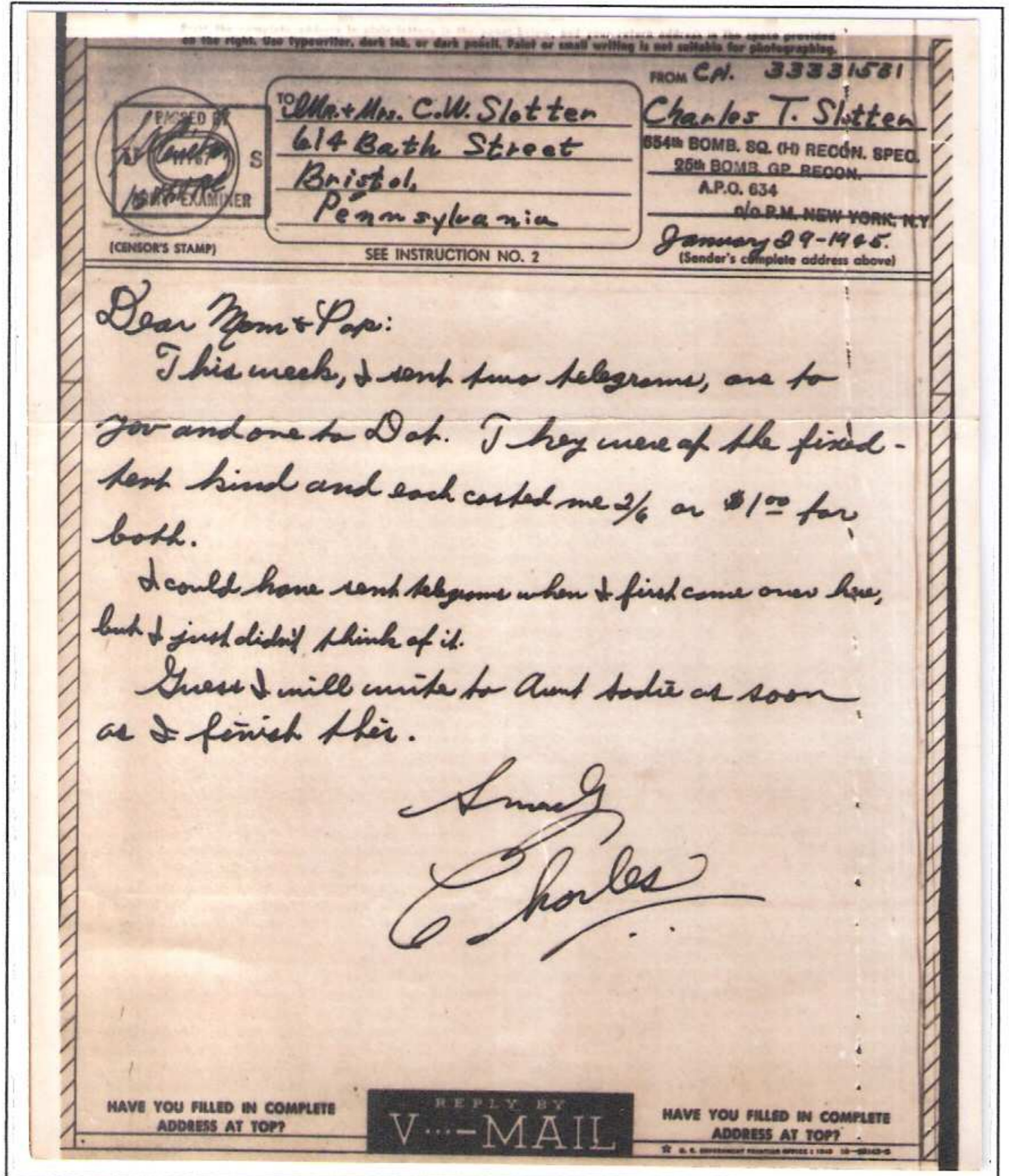


A Brigade of Polish paratroopers participates in the operation.

V. ...mail from A.P.O. 634 of 8th US Air Force stationed in England to Bristol, in Pennsylvania.

The last great and strategic German offensive on the Western front was the battle of the Ardennes.

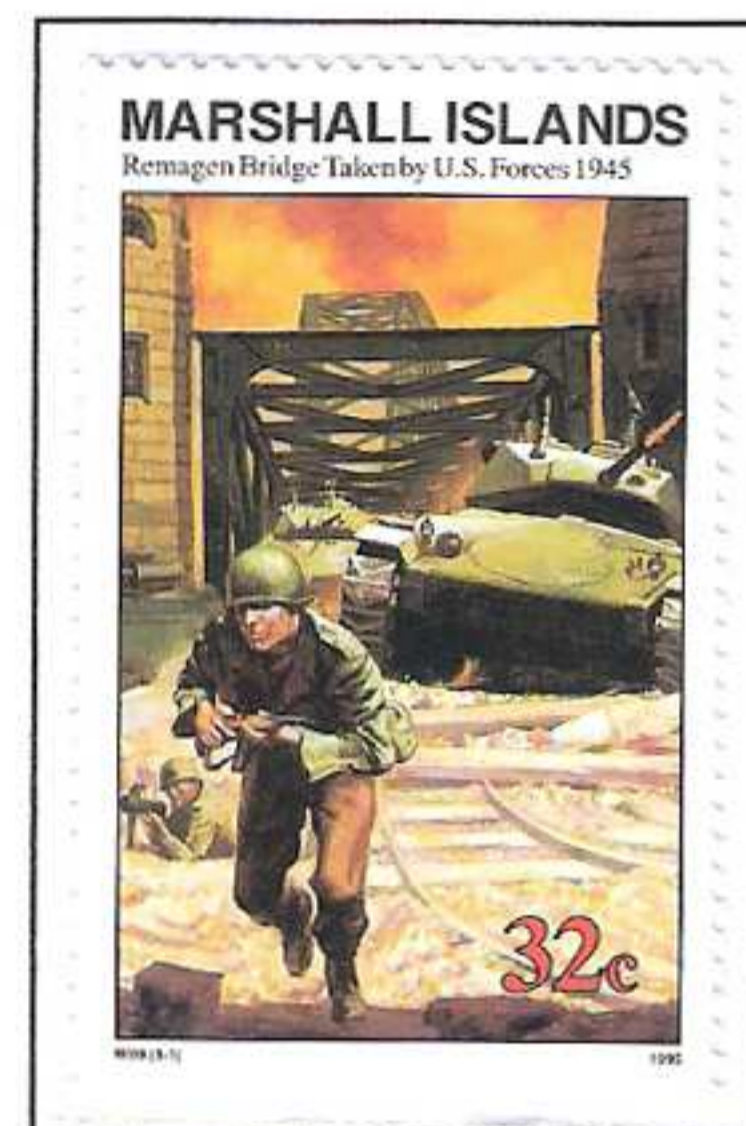
4. THE OPERATION MARKET GARDEN AND BASTOGNE



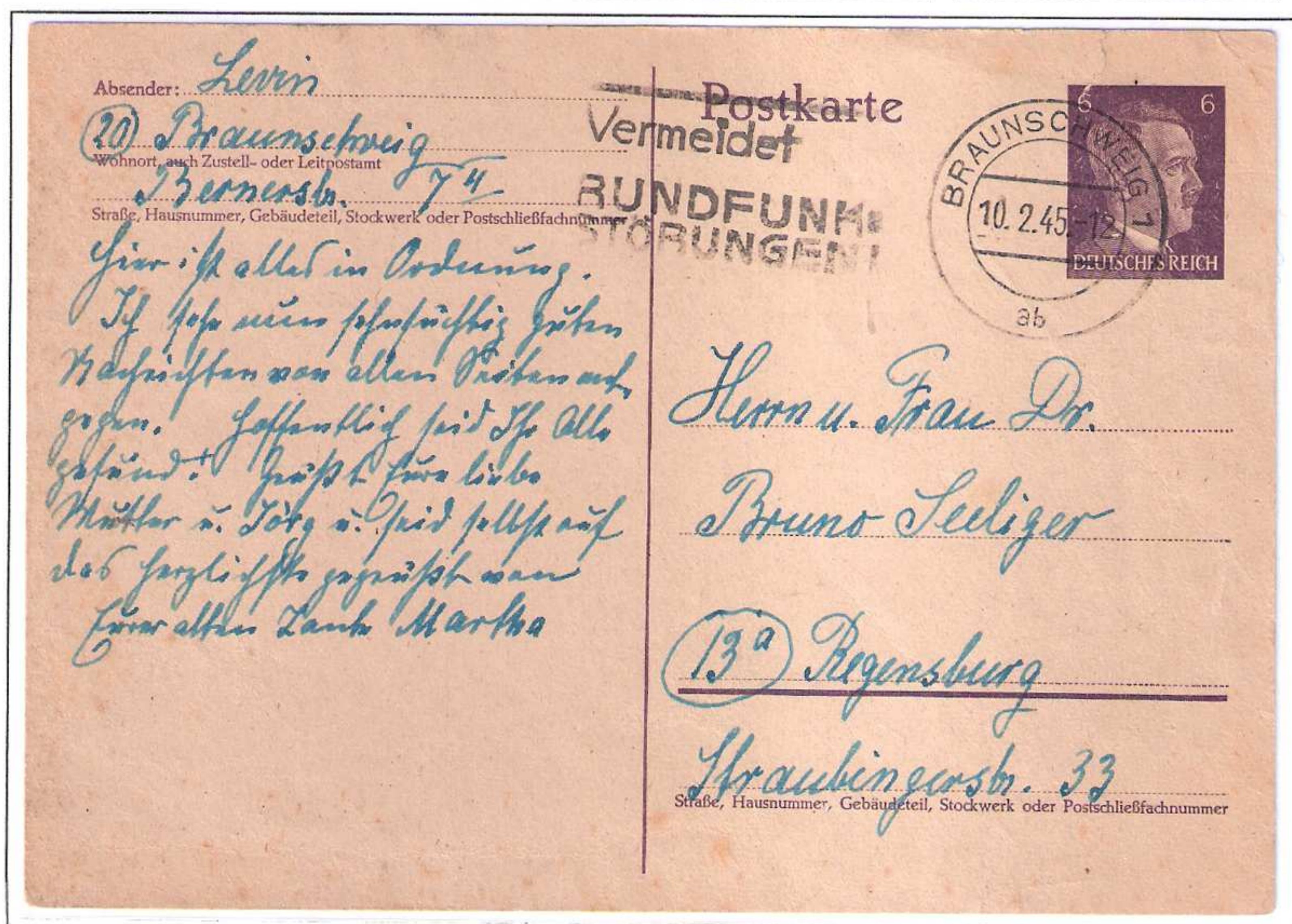
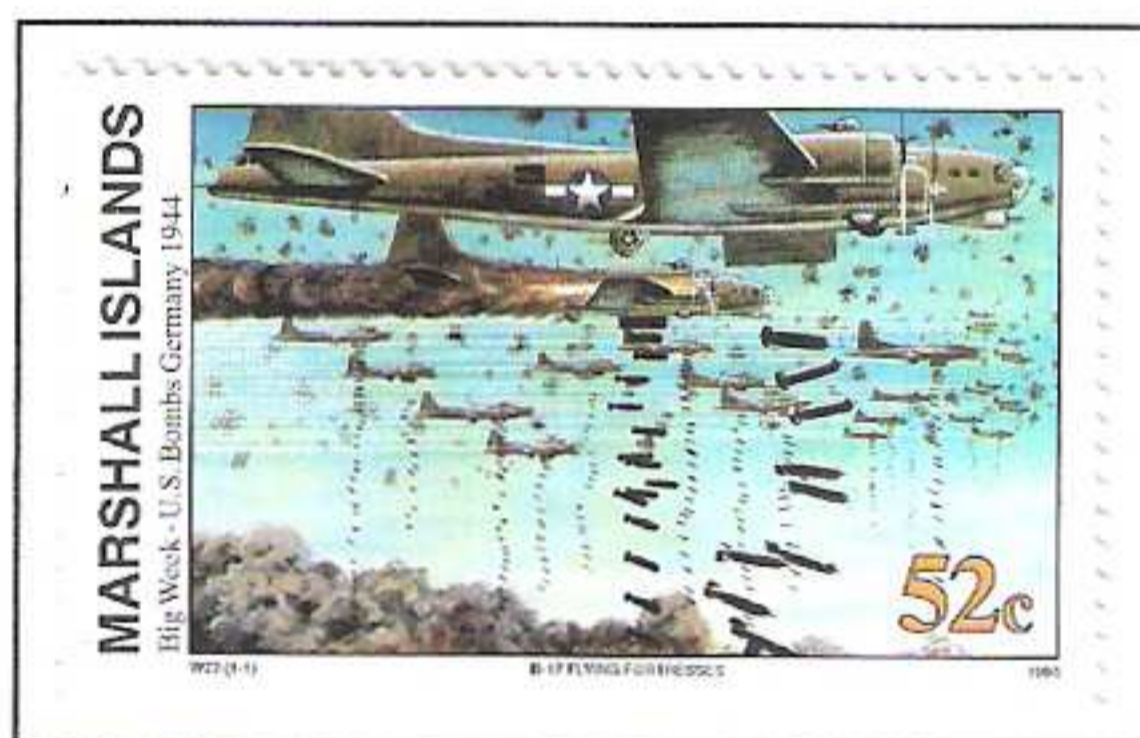
After the collapse of the line of the Vistula on the eastern front, and the battle of the Ardennes, in order to face the Russian advance Germany is forced to transfer its last reserve divisions to this front. The allies, after the liberation of Paris and France, favoured by their enormous superiority of men and means, move to conquer the Rhineland.



The passage on the Rhine.



The bombing raids on Germany intensify and German anti-aircraft forces have no truce.



Braunschweig, February 10, 1945: postcard to Regensburg without censorship; the last days of the Reich.

The Red Army, now unstoppable, recaptures Odessa and Crimea, Kiev and the whole Ukraine.



Romanian artillery in action in defence of Crimea.



1943: postal ticket from the Russian front seen for censorship.

The last Russian town to be freed is Brest-Litovsk, now called Brest. On March 3, 1918, in this town, Germany and Lenin's Soviet Union had signed the peace treaty which ended the 1st World War on the Eastern front.

Brest-Litovsk, February 27, 1916: M.P 191, free postcard for Germany with the ruins of war.



After crossing the Vistula, the Soviet troops of Rokossovskji and the 1st Polish Army approach Warsaw. The remaining German forces are defeated in the battle of Studzianki which begins on the 9th and ends on the 16th of August 1944.





With the aim to free Warsaw before the arrival of the Soviets, the army "Krajowa" of gen. Komorowski rouses the population of the town on August 1, 1944. The repression of the Germans is violent and after nearly two months all resistance is broken. The Soviet troops enter Warsaw only in January 1945.



Following Hitler's order, Warsaw is razed.



Abandoning Warsaw to its tragic fate, the Red Army continues its advance Southwards to the conquest of Romania.



Anniversaries of liberation of Romania.



Romania, May 29, 1944: postcard censored three months before Romania joins the Red Army.

After Romania, Bulgaria, too, joins the allies and on September 9, 1944 it opens the door to the Red Army. On October 1, 1944 Bulgarian partisans and the troops of gen. Tolbuchin arrive in Sofia.



Gabrovo, (Bulg.) letter to USA with stamps of 1945-46 series "liberation".

The collapse of the whole Eastern front forces the Germans to the progressive disengagement of troops from Greece and Yugoslavia. The Red Army, together with the troops of Marshal Tito, benefits and conquers Belgrade on October 20, 1944.



1944, Democr. Fed. Jug. overprinted series, the 1st after liberation.

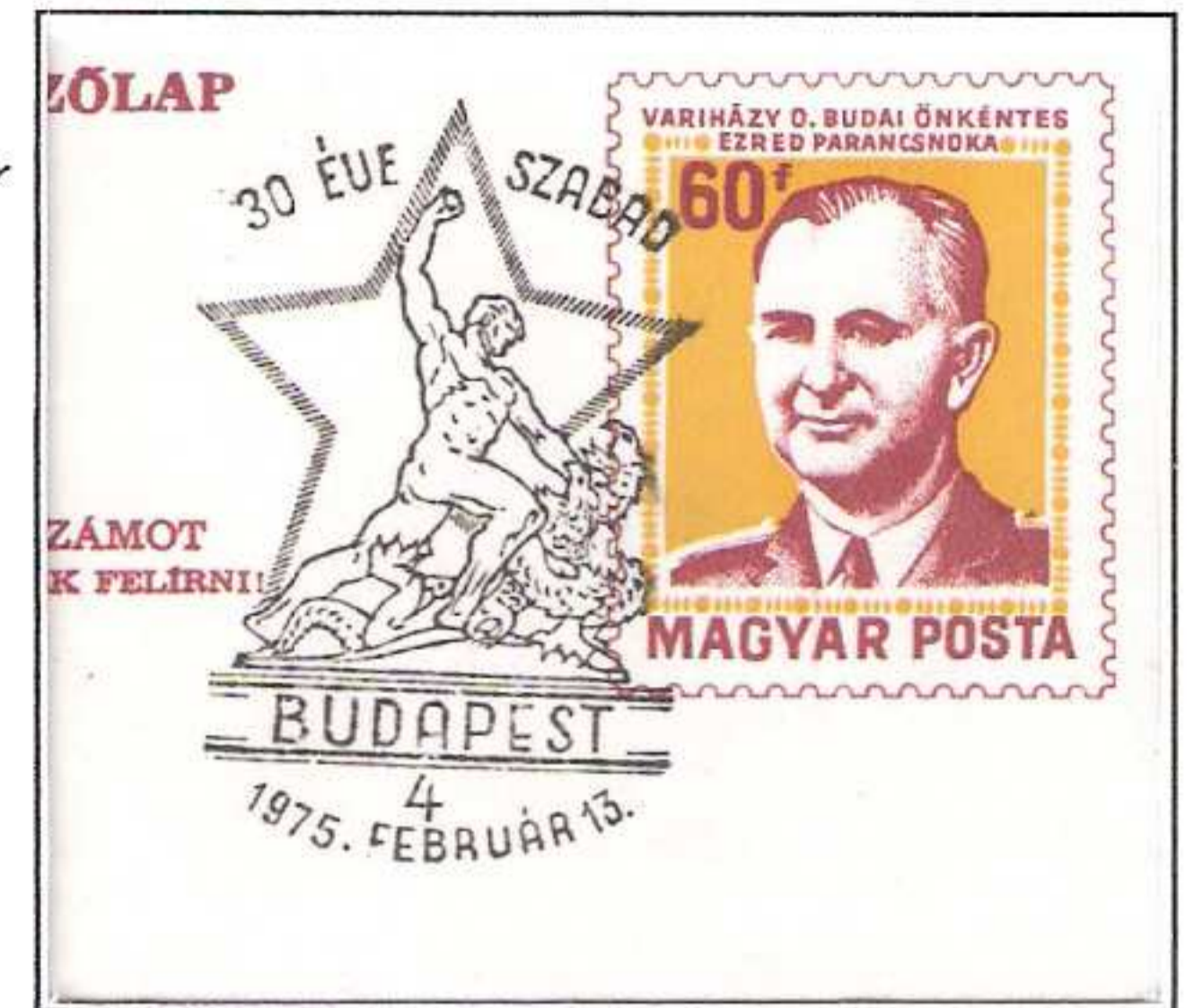




The conquest of Budapest, helped by the Regiment of Hungarian Volunteers "Budaisky", engages the Red Army for 45 days and the town suffers from considerable devastation. Two Russian parliamentarians sent by Gen. Malinovsky to ask for surrender, are treacherously killed by the German. One of them is Cap. Ostapenko.

The stamp for Cap. Ostapenko.

The Col. Varihazy com. der of the "Volunteer".



After the liberation of Vienna, on April 13, 1945, the Red Army enters the Prague on May 9, the last European Capital to be freed. The town revolted against the German on May 5, 1945. Berlin had already been captured on May 2 while Hitler had committed suicide on April 30, 1945.

Correspondence from Prague, February 7, 1945, a few months before the liberation.



Overprinted stamps with the popular uprising, May 5, 1945.

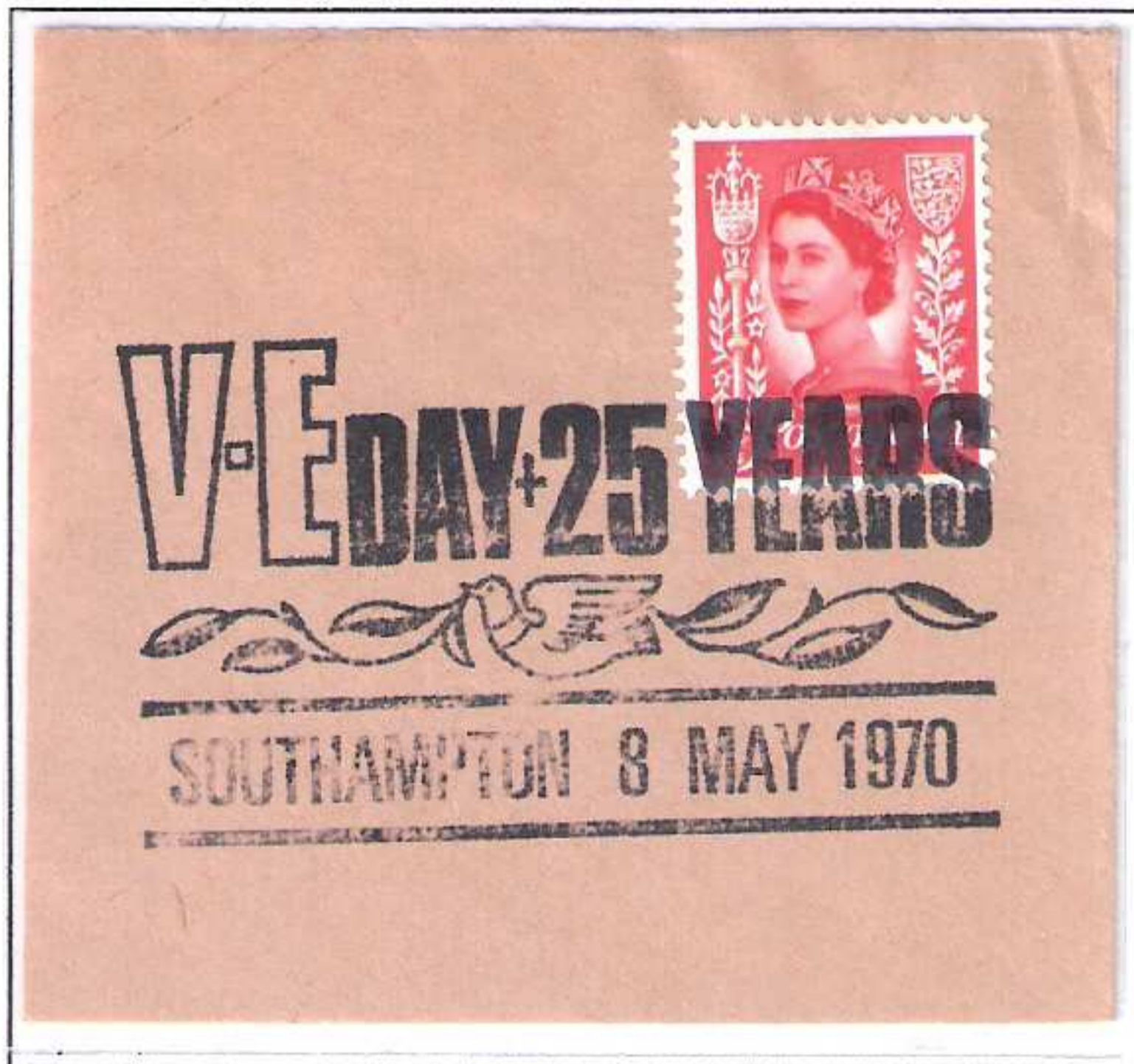


People celebrating for the liberation and the historical date of May 9, 1945.





Before the last battle for the conquest of Berlin, the allies meet in Turgau, on river Elbe. Berlin is a heap of rubble. The Reichstag is taken on April 30, 1945 and on May 1st, the Red Army's flag is raised on the Palace of the Nazi power by Sergeant Egerov and soldier Kantarija. On May 7, in Reims, in the American headquarter, Germany signs its surrender. The same operation is repeated in Berlin in the headquarters of the Red Army on May 8th.



Victory and peace are commemorated in many countries and in different ways.





The bells and the "V" of victory.



Germany and Berlin are divided into sections committed to the administration of the winners. The mail service, too, adapt.



Soviet zone, 1945: district emission for Berlin and Brandenburg.



French occupation, 1945: issues for every zone.

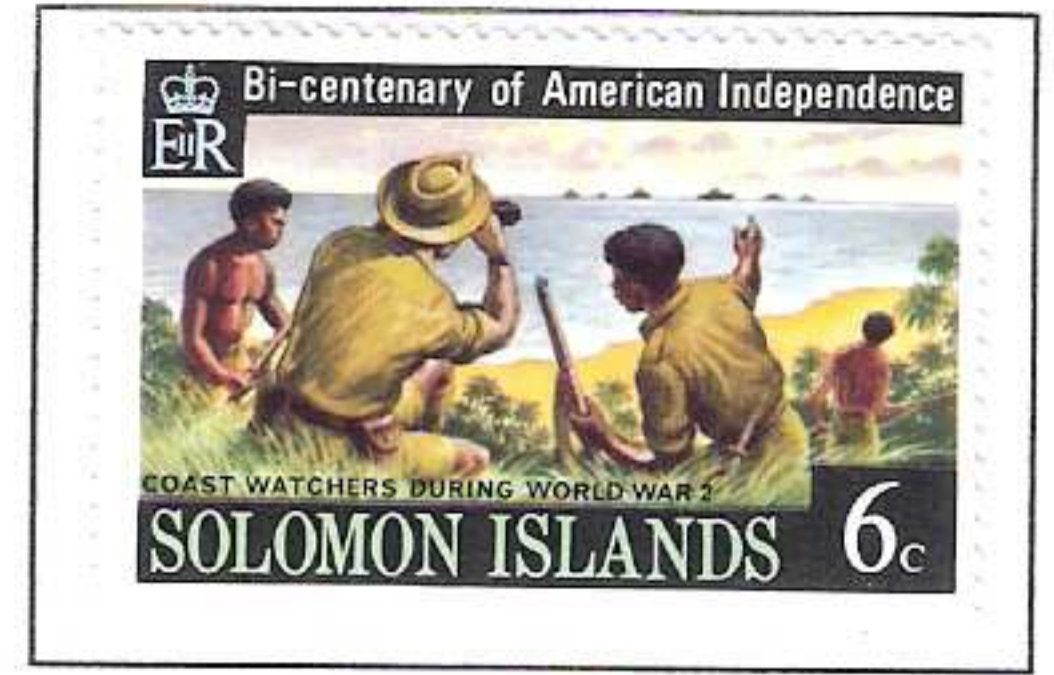
The Anglo-American zone: issues 1945-46 valid only for this zone.



Soviet zone, 1946 value of A.I.S areas overprinted and valid only for the soviet zone.

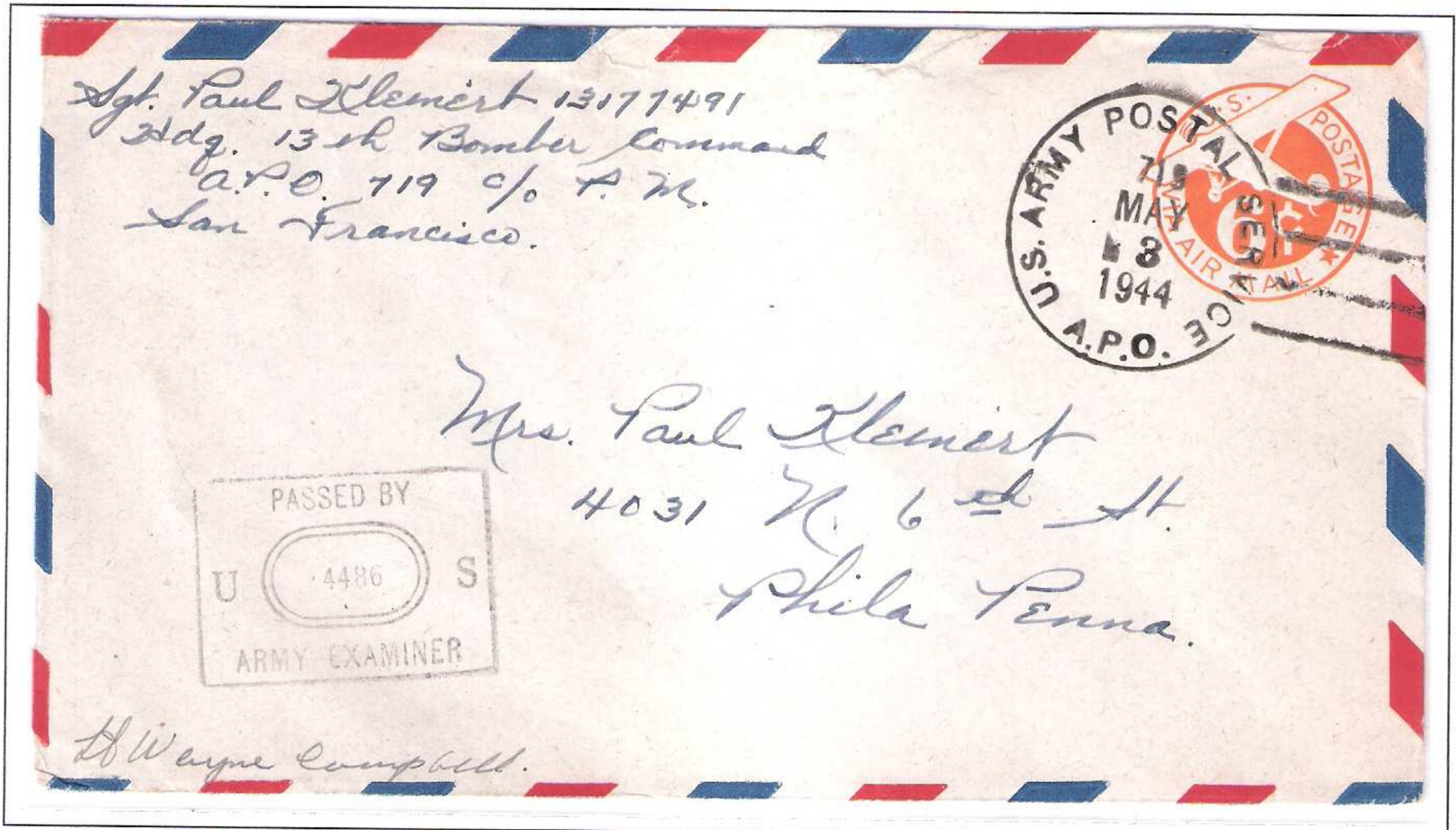
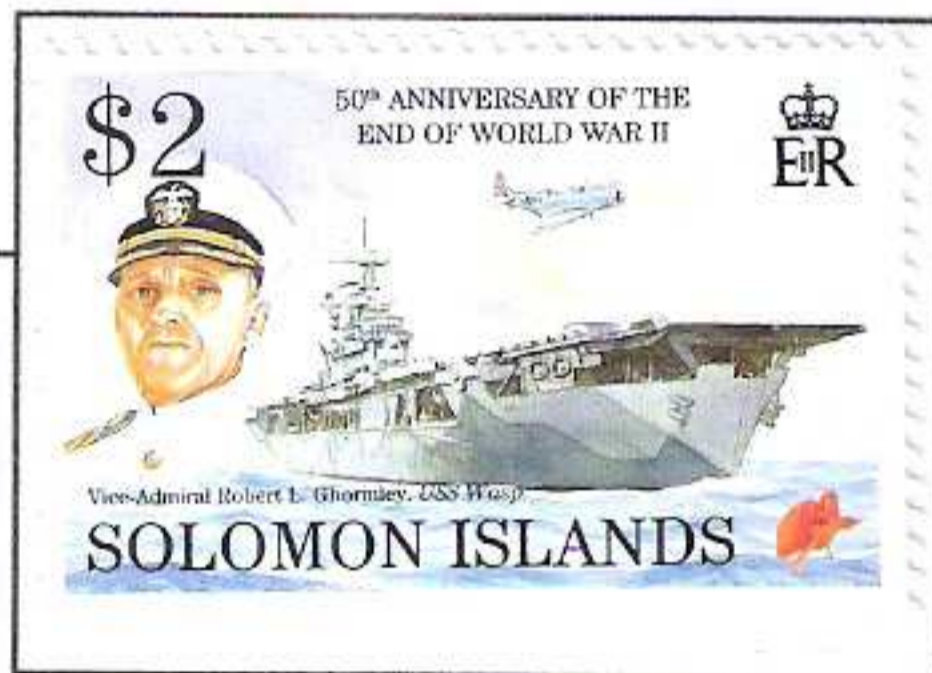
Inter-allied area April 16, 1946: letter from Frankfurt to Furth franked with valid stamps for the Russian, English and American zone.

The allies' recapture of lost territories in South Pacific began with the Guadalcanal campaign that lasted from August 7, 1942 to February 9, 1943.



Control of the coastline, the fighting and Japanese landings at Guadalcanal and Tulagi.

Aircraft carrier Wasp and the cruiser Canberra with other ships protecting the recapture of Guadalcanal.

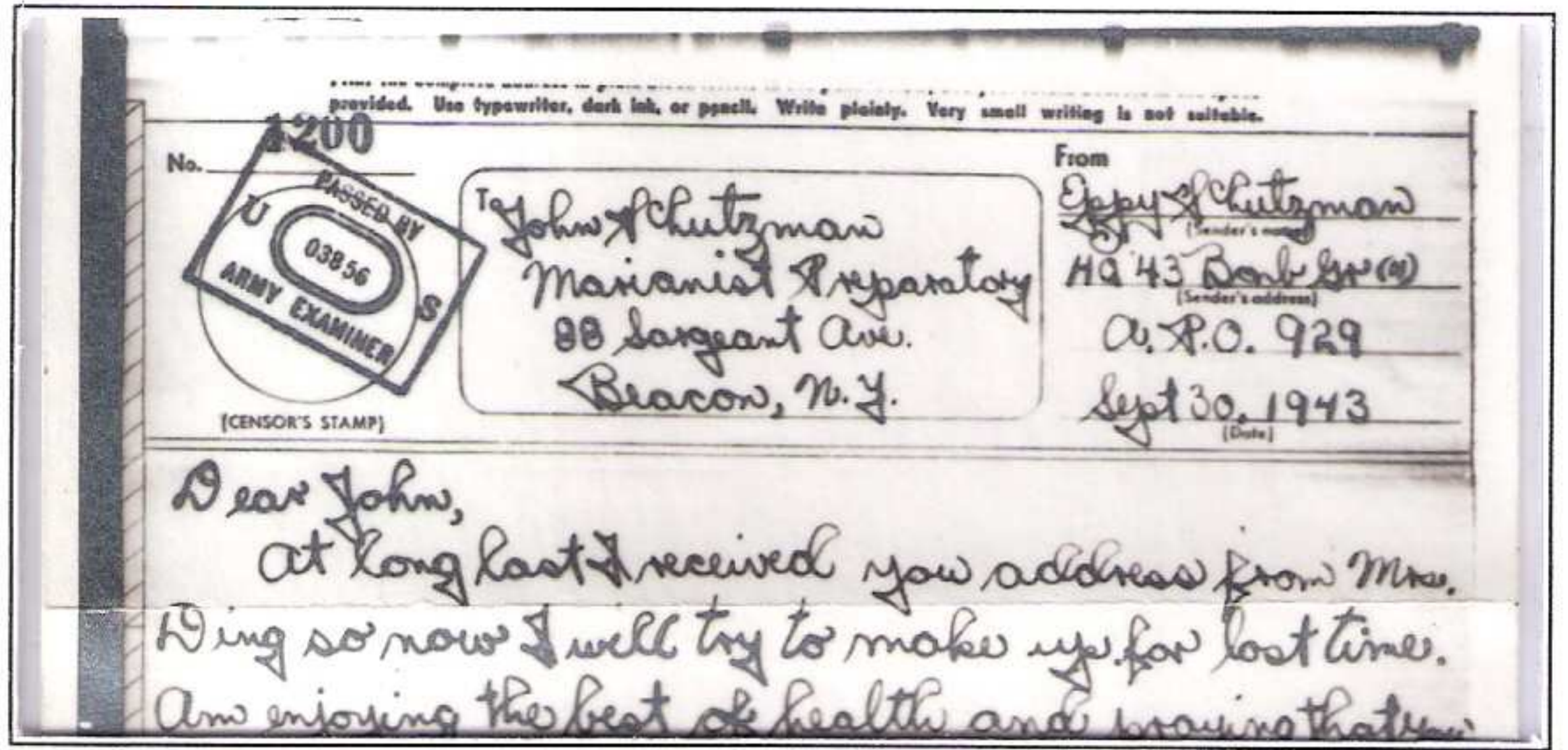


Letter from Guadalcanal (A.P.O. 719) to Philadelphia seen for censorship.

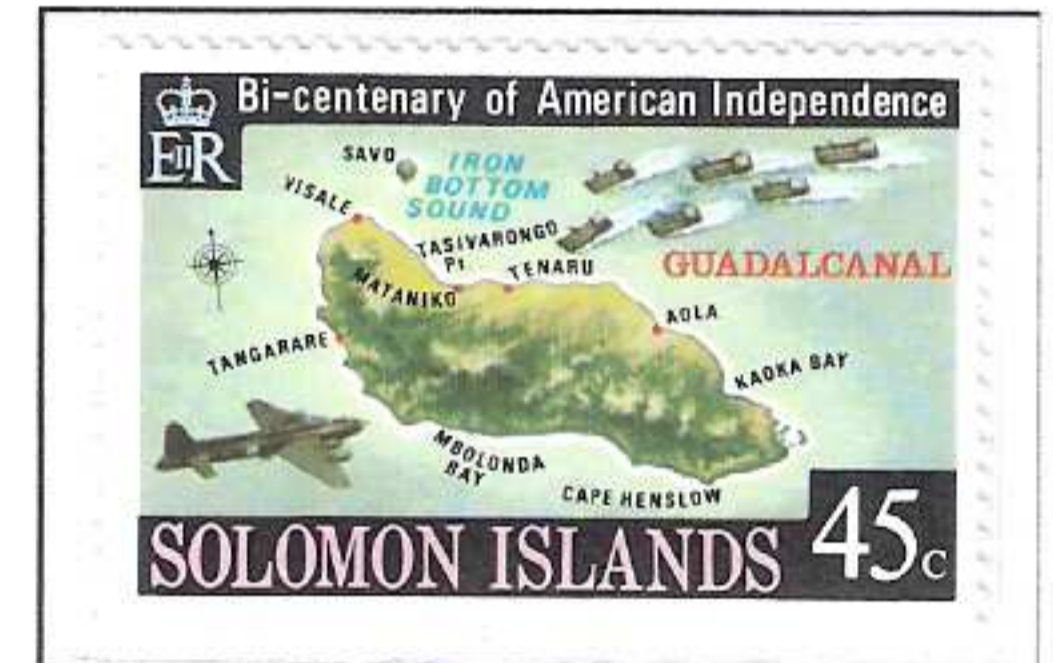
After vainly trying Port Moresby the Japanese land on the north side of New Guinea but suffer heavy losses in the battles of Milne Bay and KoKoda.



V... Mail 1943 A.P.O. 929 Port Moresby, New Guinea to Beacon, N.Y., Army Censor.



Oro Bay, New Guinea 1943, A.P.O. 503, letter to Detroit, Michigan, (USA).



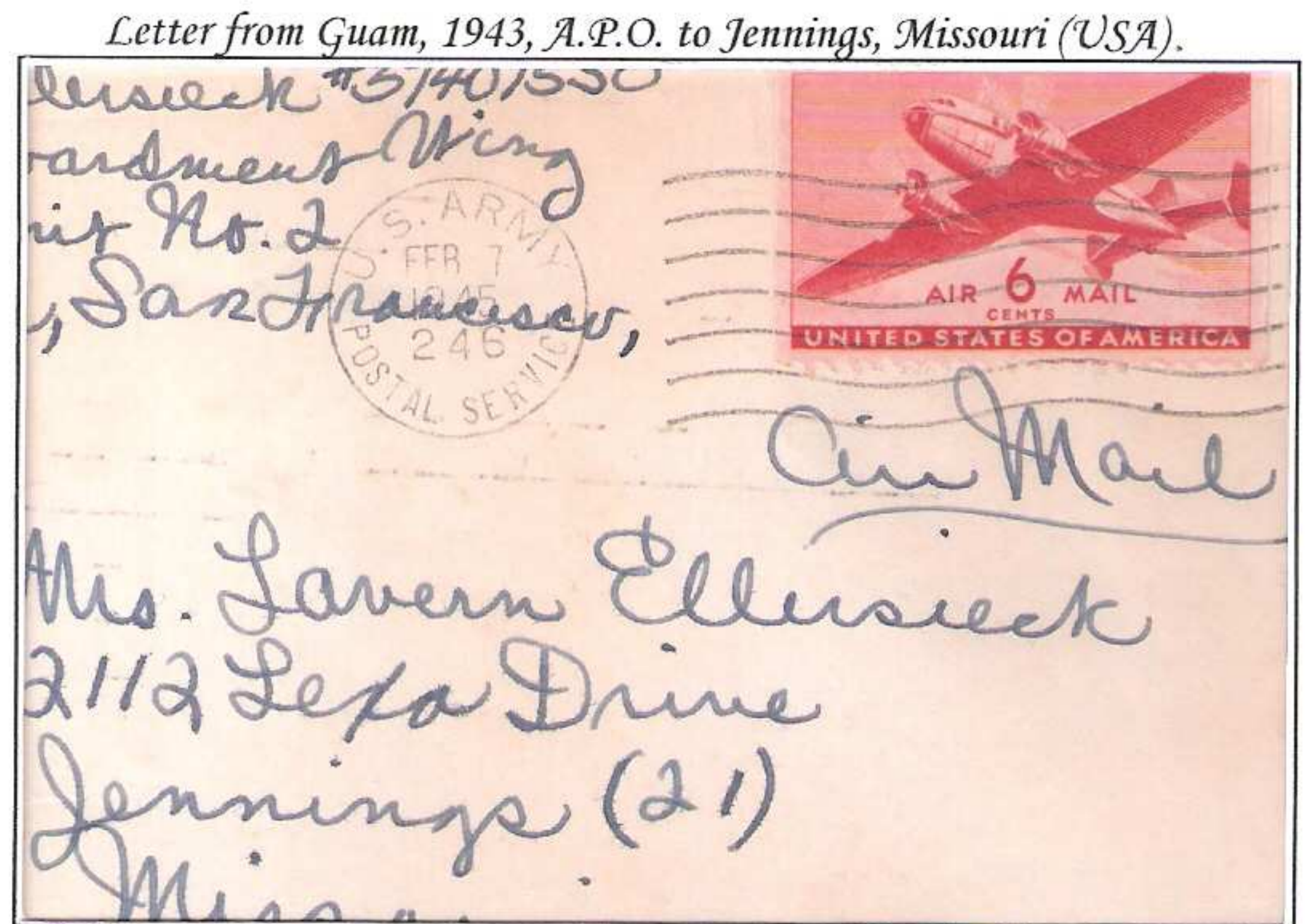
In the battle of Savo and in the "naval battles of Guadalcanal", the Japanese lose the battleship Kirishima while the allied register the sinking of the aircraft carrier Wasp and the cruiser Canberra and Quincy. But allied forces retake New Guinea.



Adm. Yamamoto flies over Bougainville, he is shot down on April 18, 1943 by a P-38 Lightnings.



The occupation of Guam by the Japanese and American attacks to the island in preparation for re-conquest.

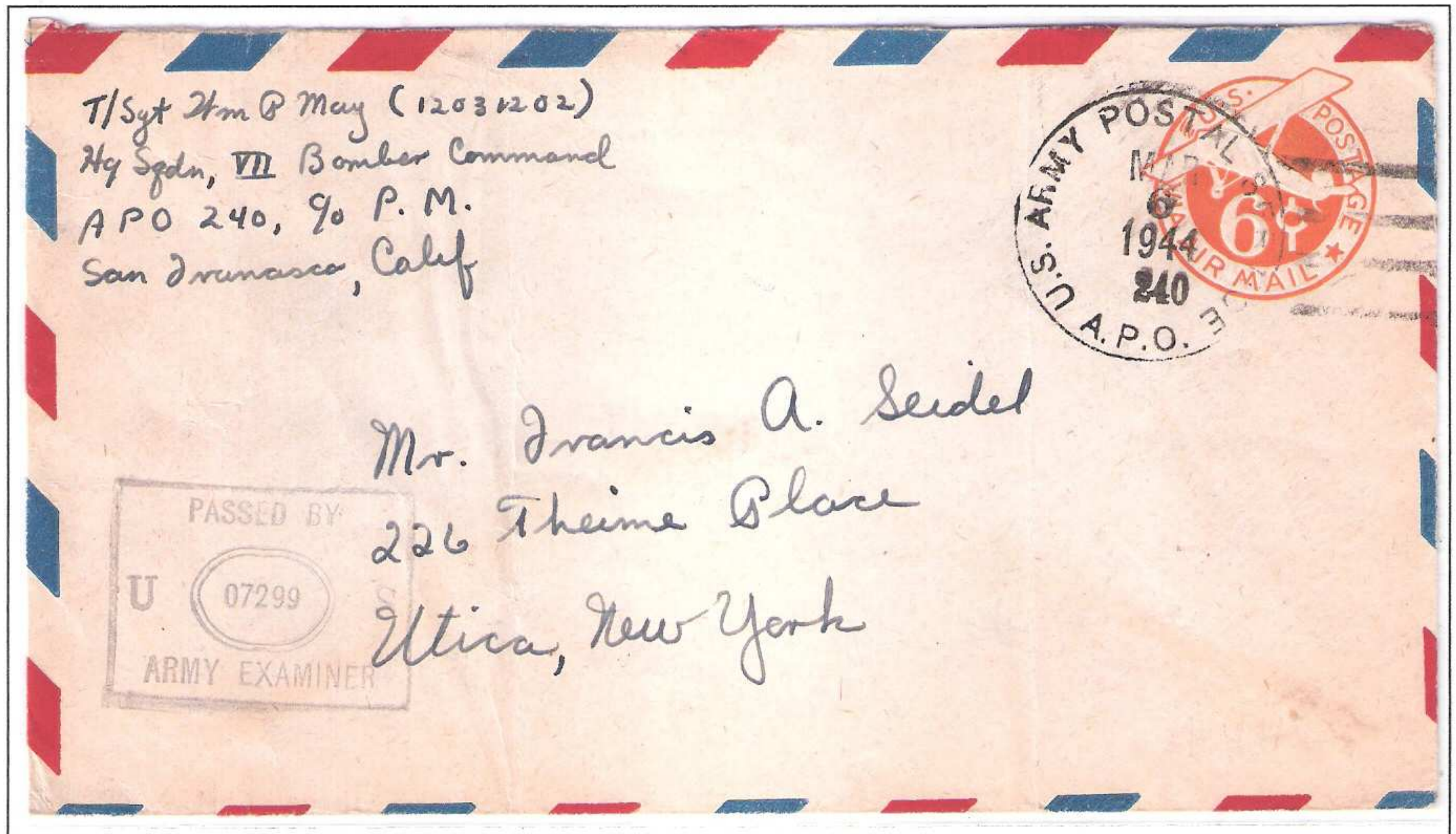


Letter from Guam, 1943, A.P.O. to Jennings, Missouri (USA).

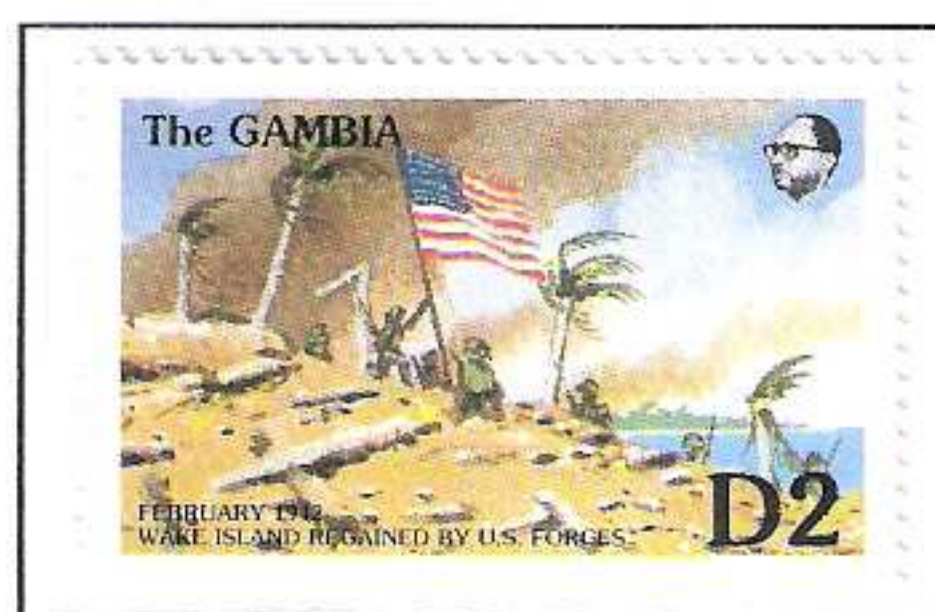
Air-naval battles and American landings take place throughout the Pacific to reconquer the atolls. With the protection of submarines, on June 15, 1944 the Americans land and recapture the island of Saipan.



From 20 to November 23, 1944 a battle takes place to re-conquer Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands.



Letter from A.P.O. 240, Tarawa, Gilbert Island, March 6, 1944, to Utica, New York



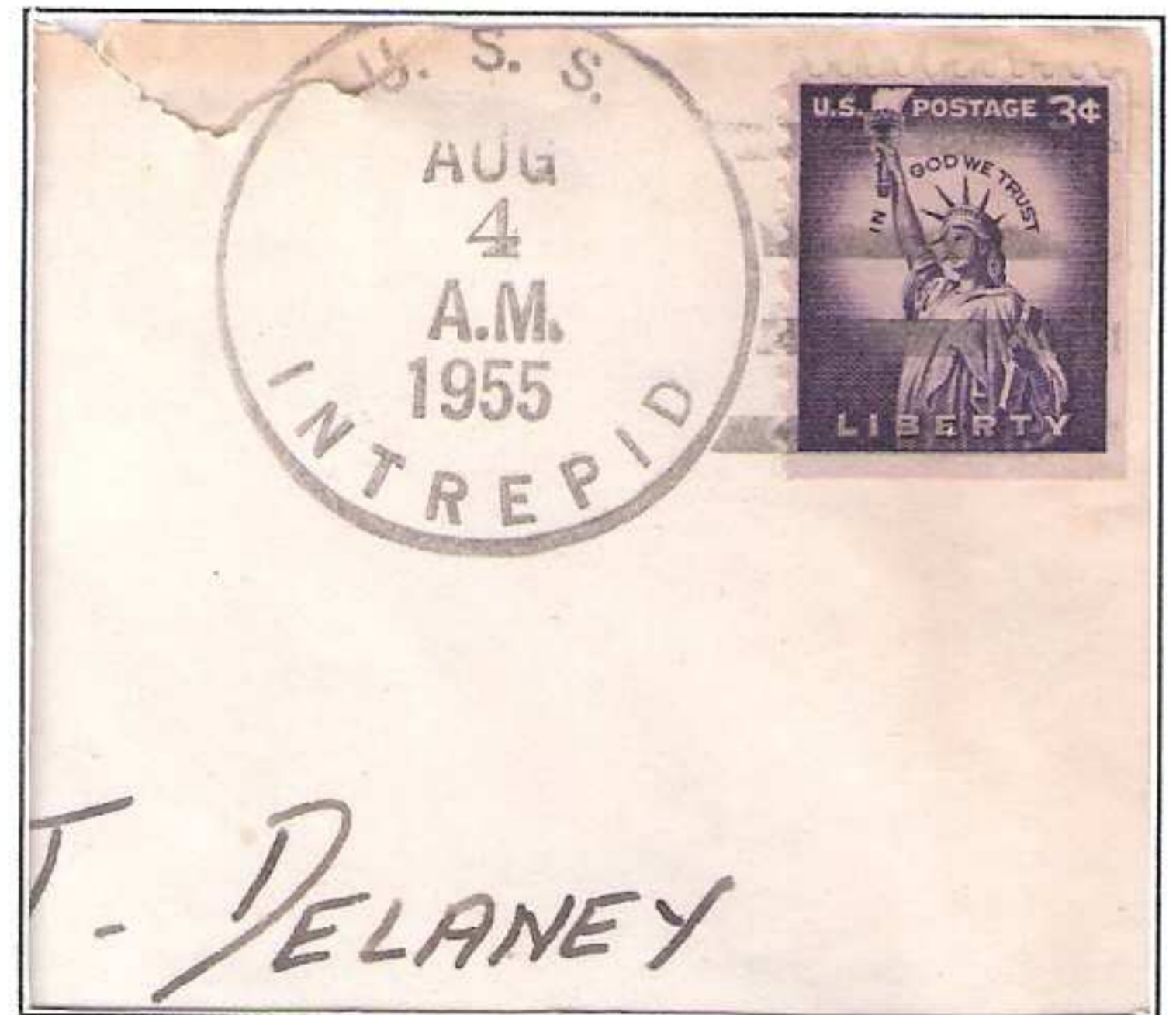
The isle of Wake remained in Japanese hands until the end of the war, when the Americans landed without fighting.

As promised on the day of the retreat, Gen. MacArthur, backed by an imposing fleet, supervises the landing in the Philippines.

The Japanese forces oppose to the Americans using the "Kamikaze".

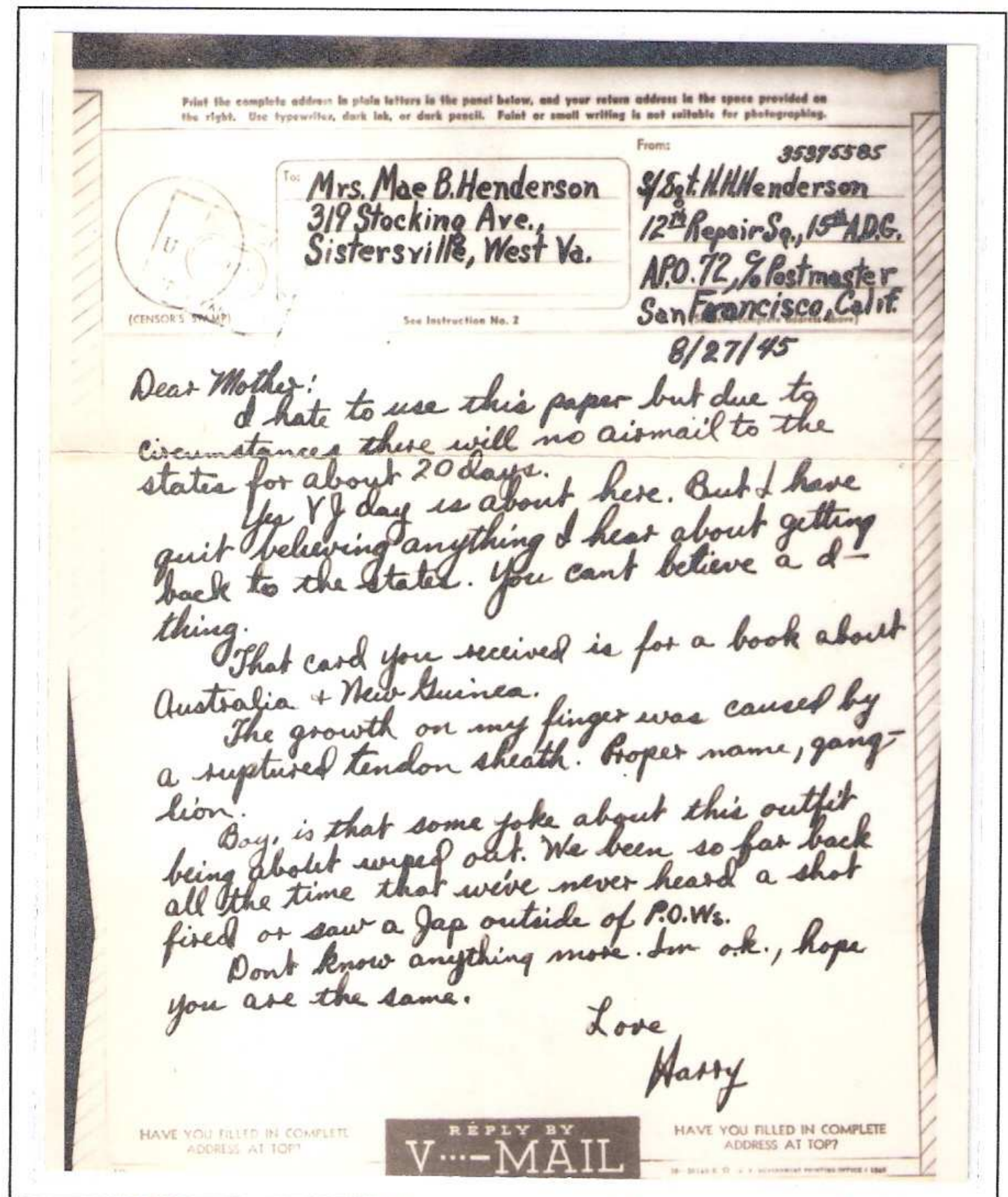


From October 17 to December 31, 1944 the Americans start the campaign to re-conquer the Philippines. The aircraft carrier Intrepid participates and is hit by a "Kamikaze".



The return of gen. MacArthur to the Philippines.

V...Mail from A.P.O n. 72, August 27, 1945, Tacloban, Leyte, to Sistersville, West Virginia, seen for censorship.



Dear Mother:
 I hate to use this paper but due to circumstances there will no airmail to the states for about 20 days.
 Yes V day is about here. But I have quit believing anything I hear about getting back to the states. You cant believe a d-thing.
 That card you received is for a book about Australia + New Guinea.
 The growth on my finger was caused by a ruptured tendon sheath. Proper name, ganglion.
 Boy, is that some joke about this outfit being abolet wiped out. We been so far back all the time that we've never heard a shot fired or saw a Jap outside of P.O.Ws.
 Dont know anything more. Im o.k., hope you are the same.

Love
 Harry

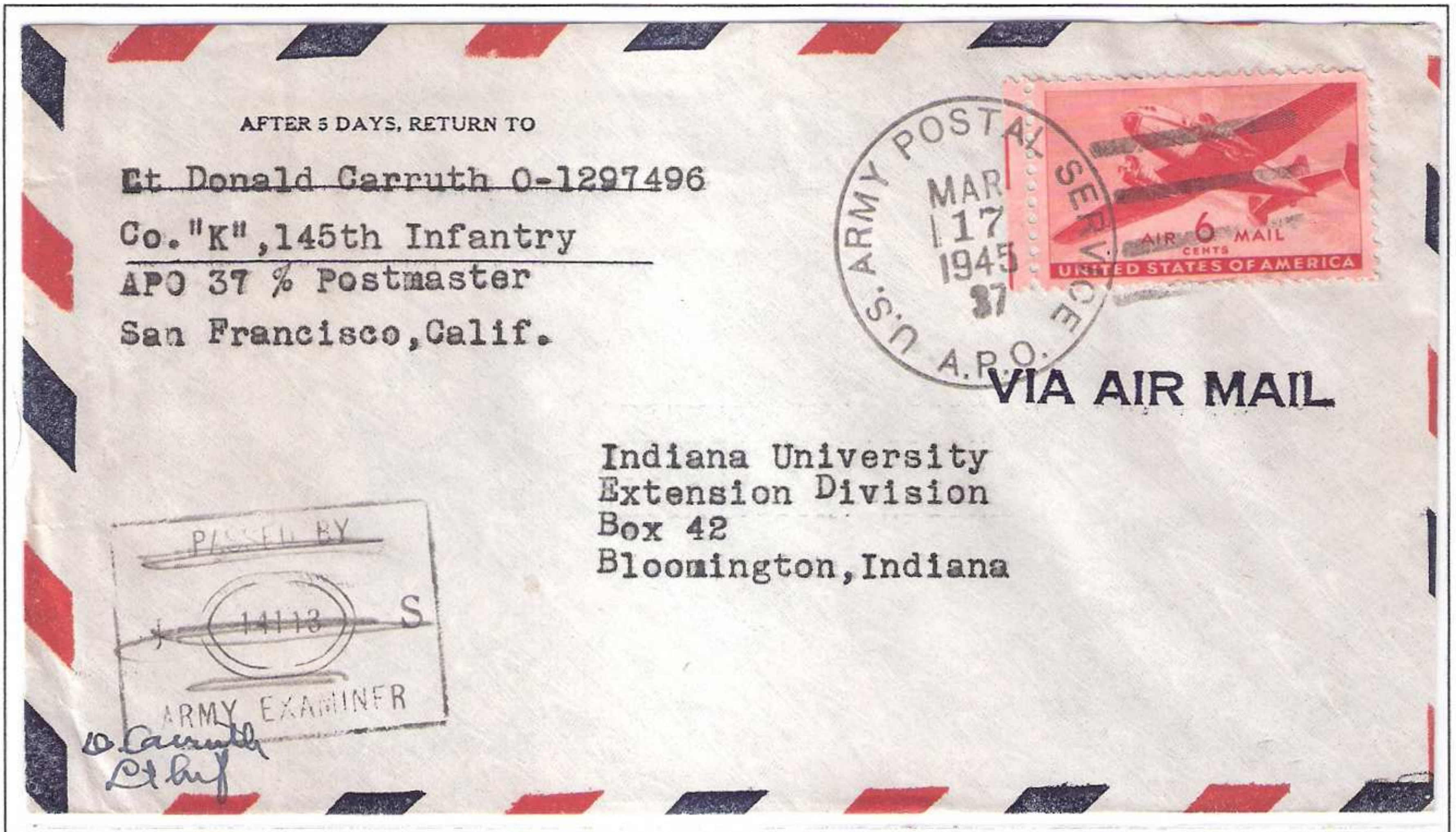
HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

REPLY BY
 V...-MAIL

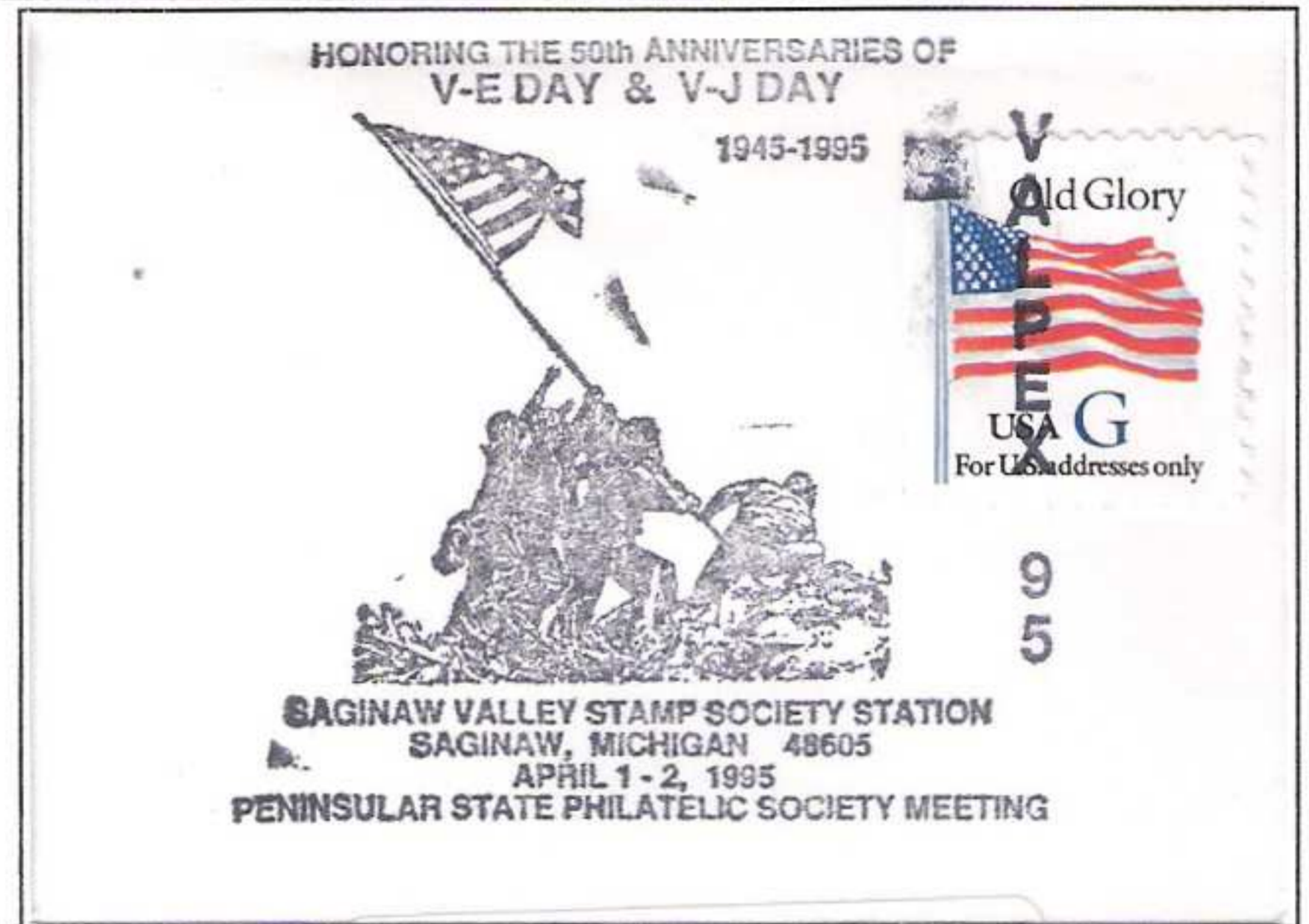
HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE ADDRESS AT TOP?

After the occupation of the Philippines, the Americans prepare their ground attack to the islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

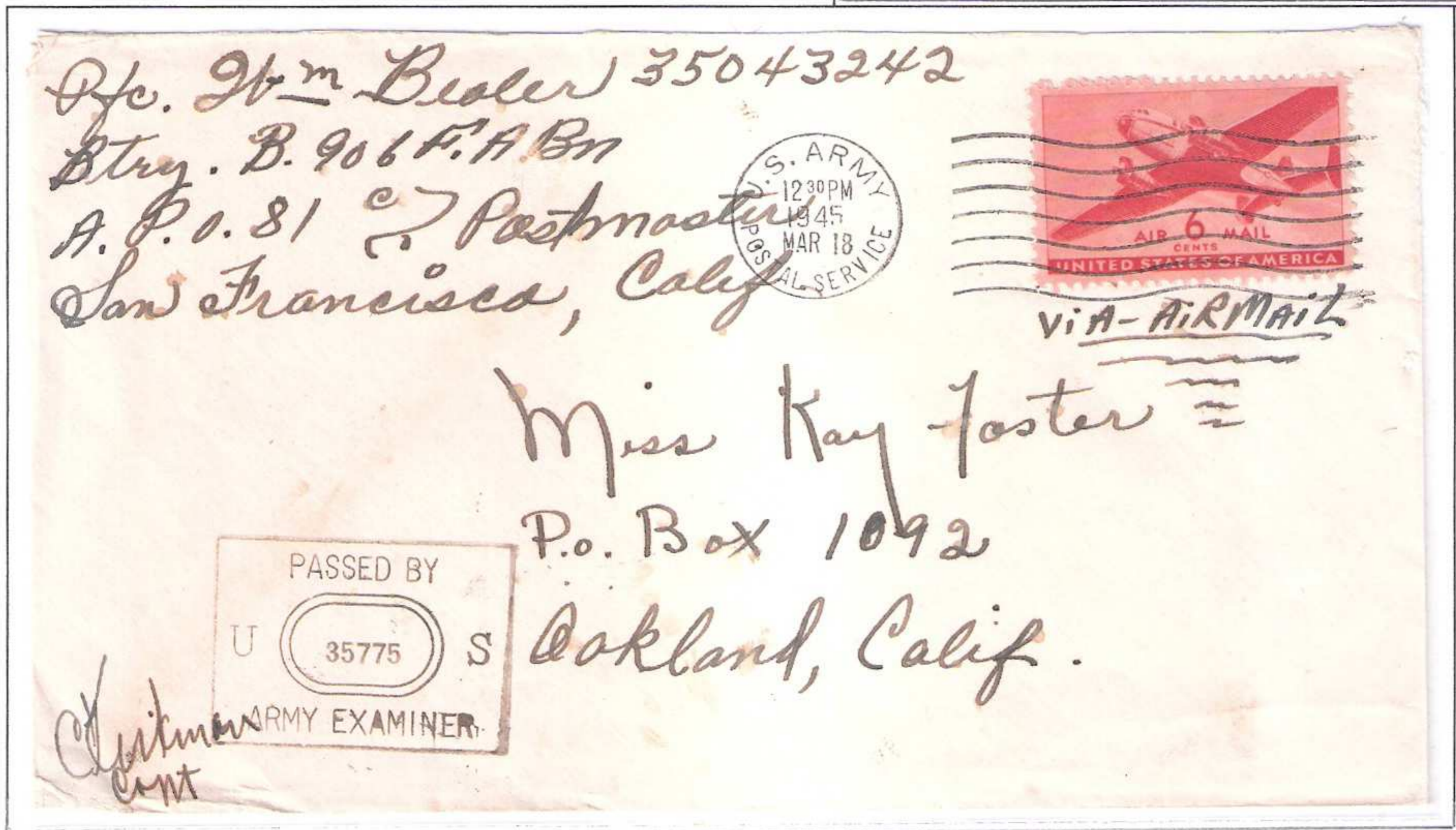
Letter from
A.P.O. 37,
Manila,
March 17,
1945 to
Bloomington,
Indiana
(USA)



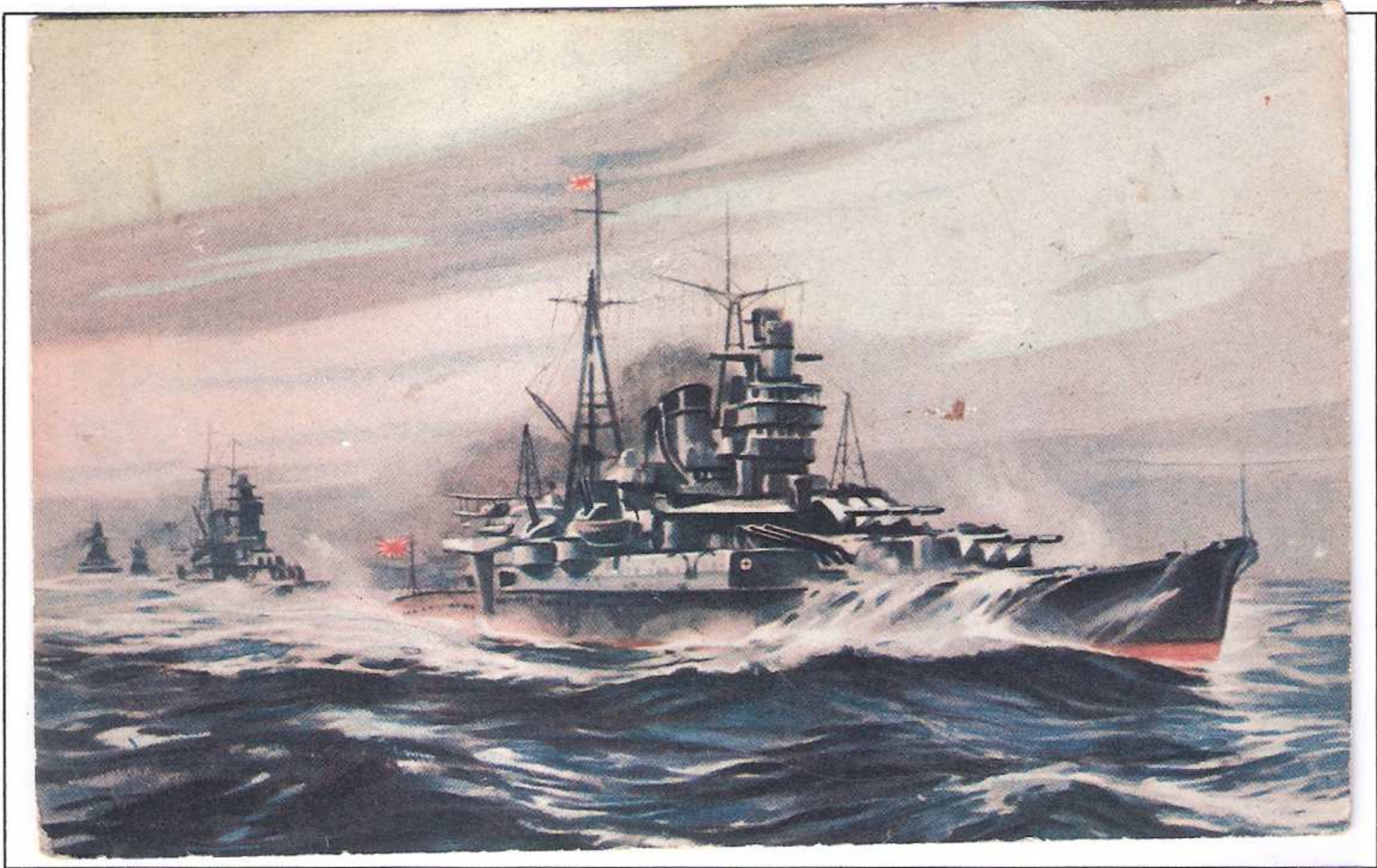
On February 19, 1945 the Americans attack Iwo Jima; the whole island is taken only on March 27.



Letter from A.P.O. 81, Iwo Jima, March 18, 1945, seen for censorship, for Oakland, California.

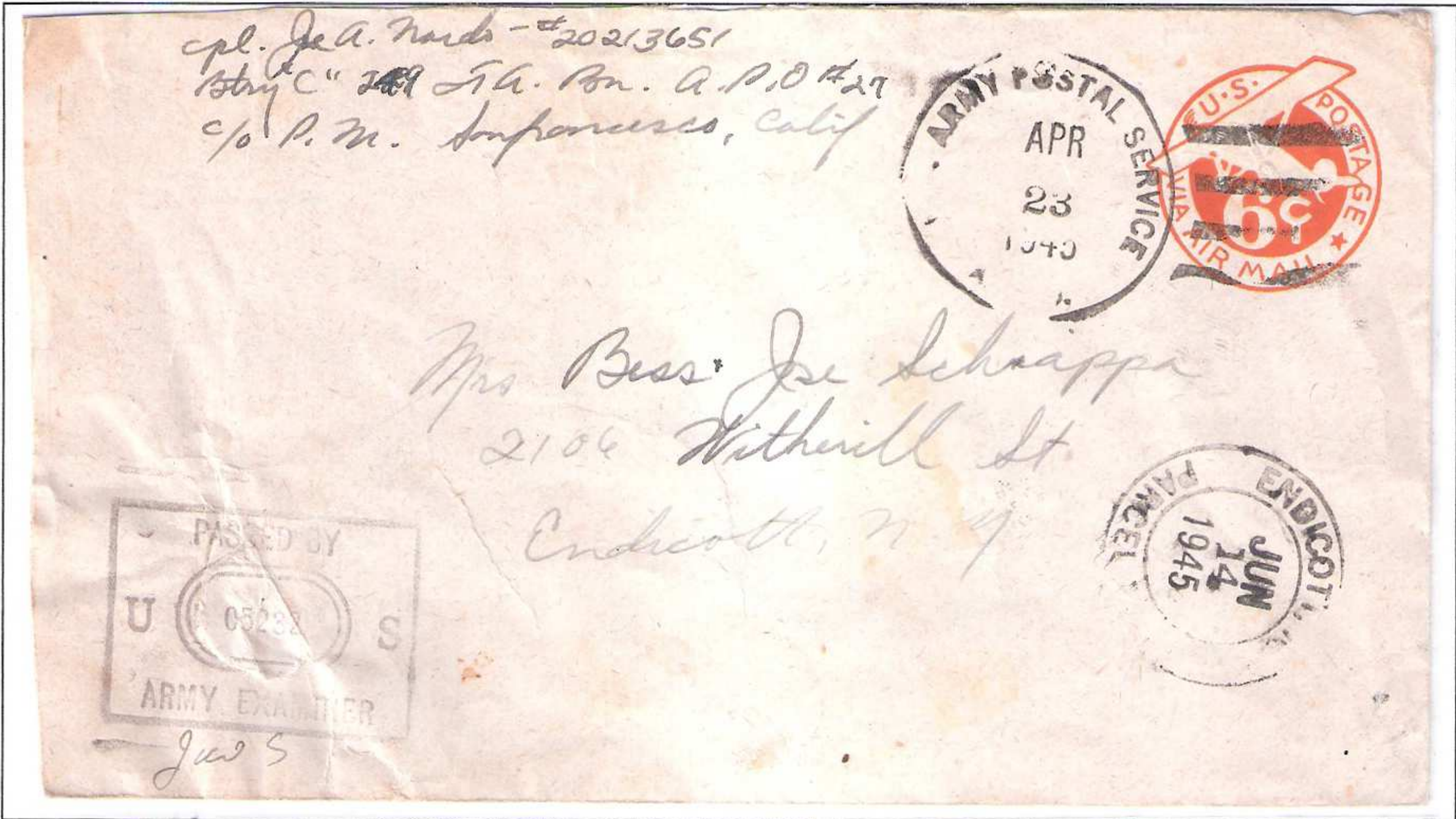


On April 7, 1945, the largest battleship in history, Yamato, is sunk by U.S. aircraft while it was about to reach the island of Okinawa to defend it from the allied landings.



The last major battle of the war and the last big battle in the Pacific.

Japan, the Ryukyus Islans, April 23, 1945: letter from Okinawa to Endicott (New York-USA).

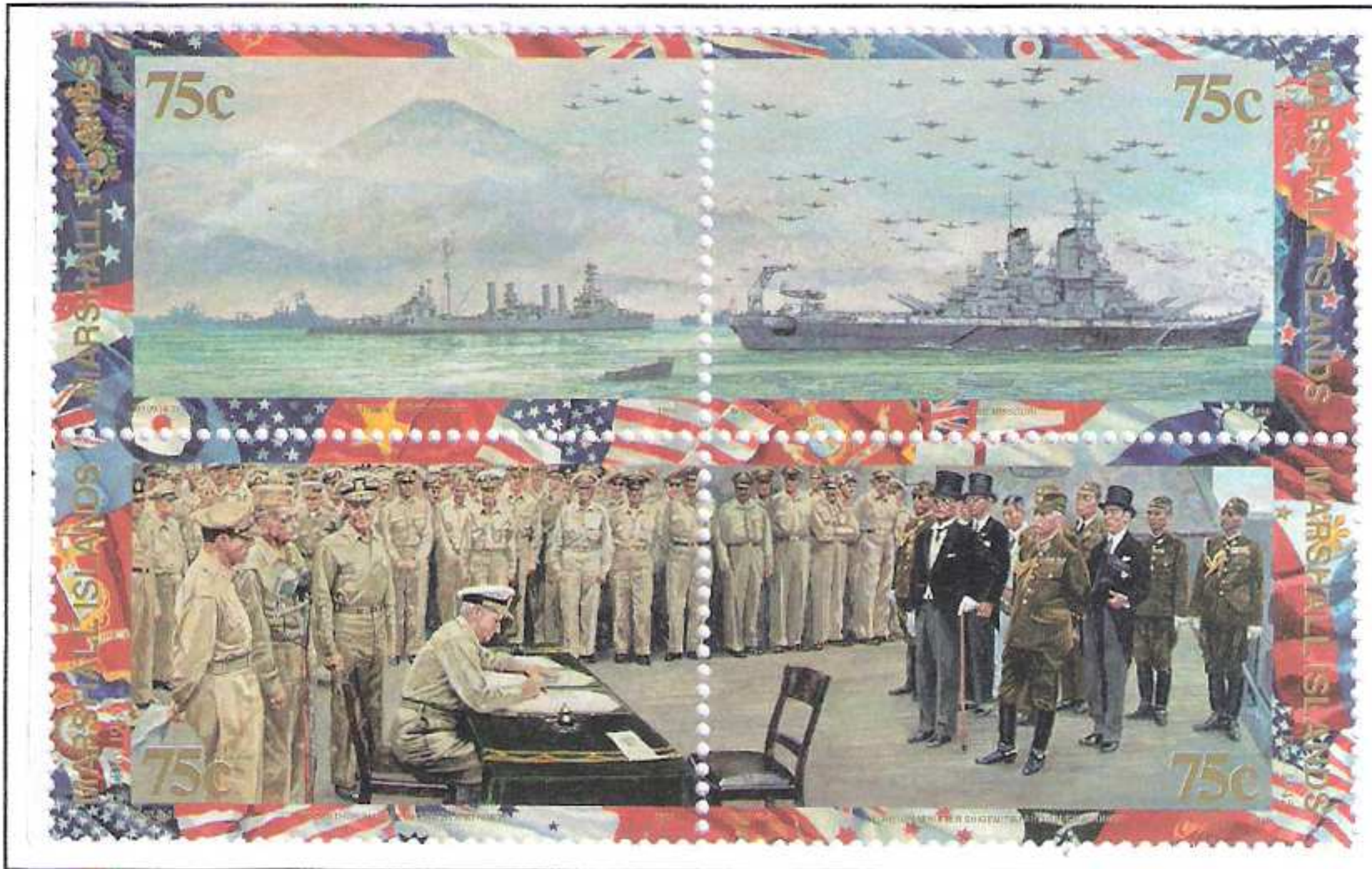




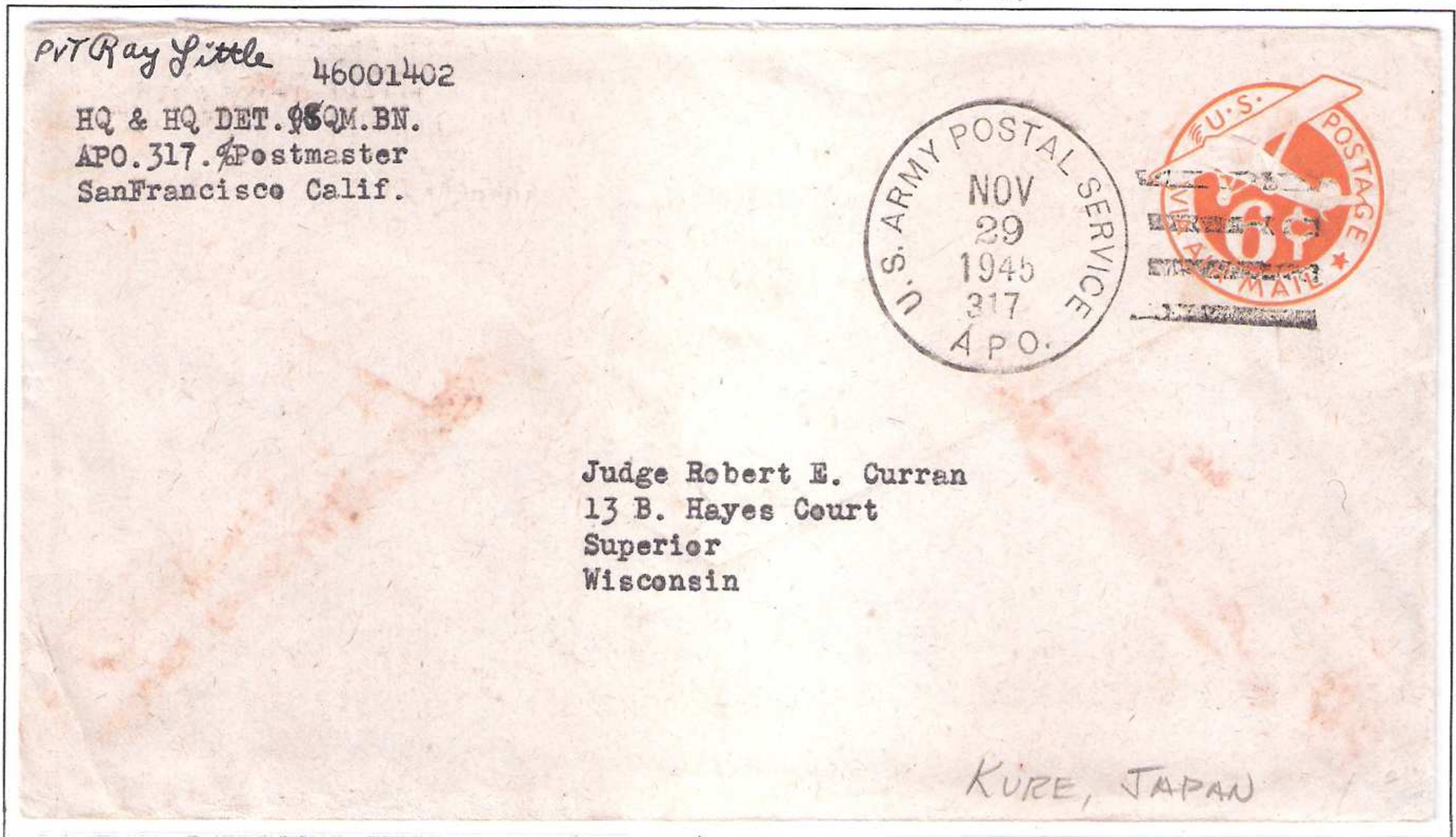
The use of the atomic bomb persuades Japan to ask for an unconditional surrender.



President Truman announces the surrender of Japan. The signing took place aboard the battleship Missouri in the Harbour of Tokyo.



Letter from A.P.O. 317 Kure, Japan, to Superior, Wisconsin (USA).





With the surrender of Japan peace is restored in every continent.



The "peace".



Tribute to Tsutomu Yamaguchi, who was involved in both the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



The going back home of all the soldiers.