

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 11</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pearl Harbour 2. Southeast Asia 3. The battle of the Midway
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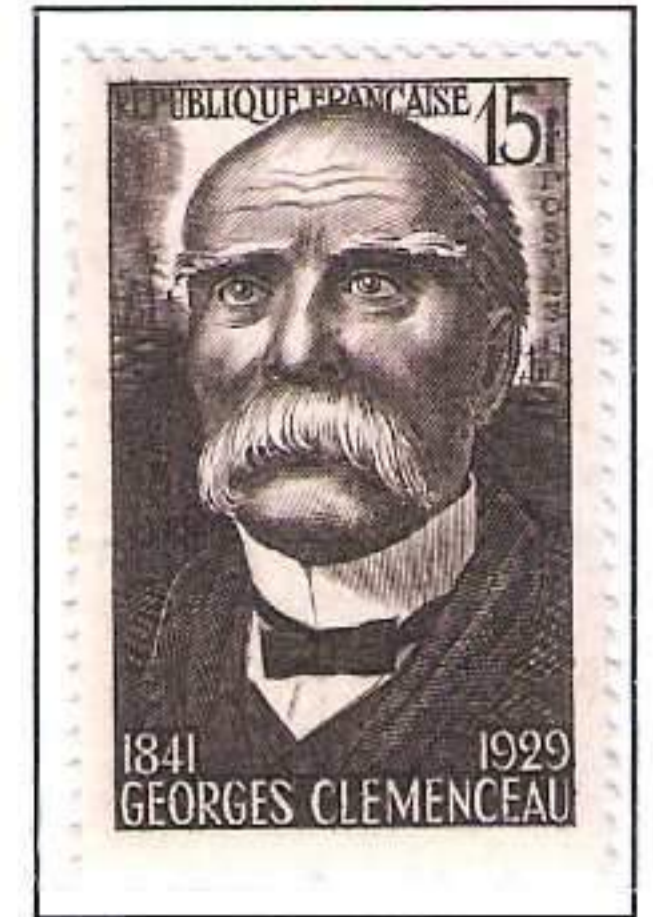
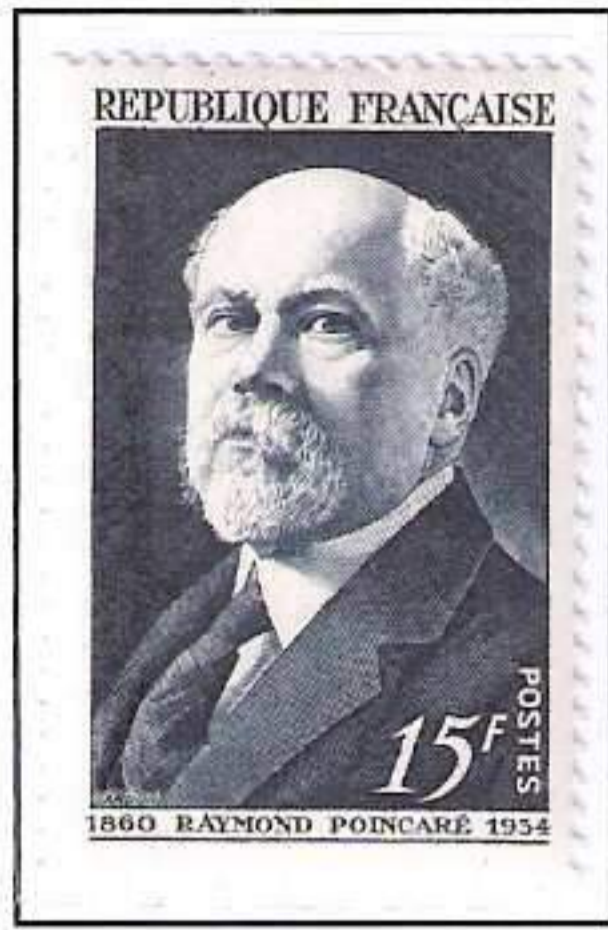
Total sheets 84

On November 11, 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.

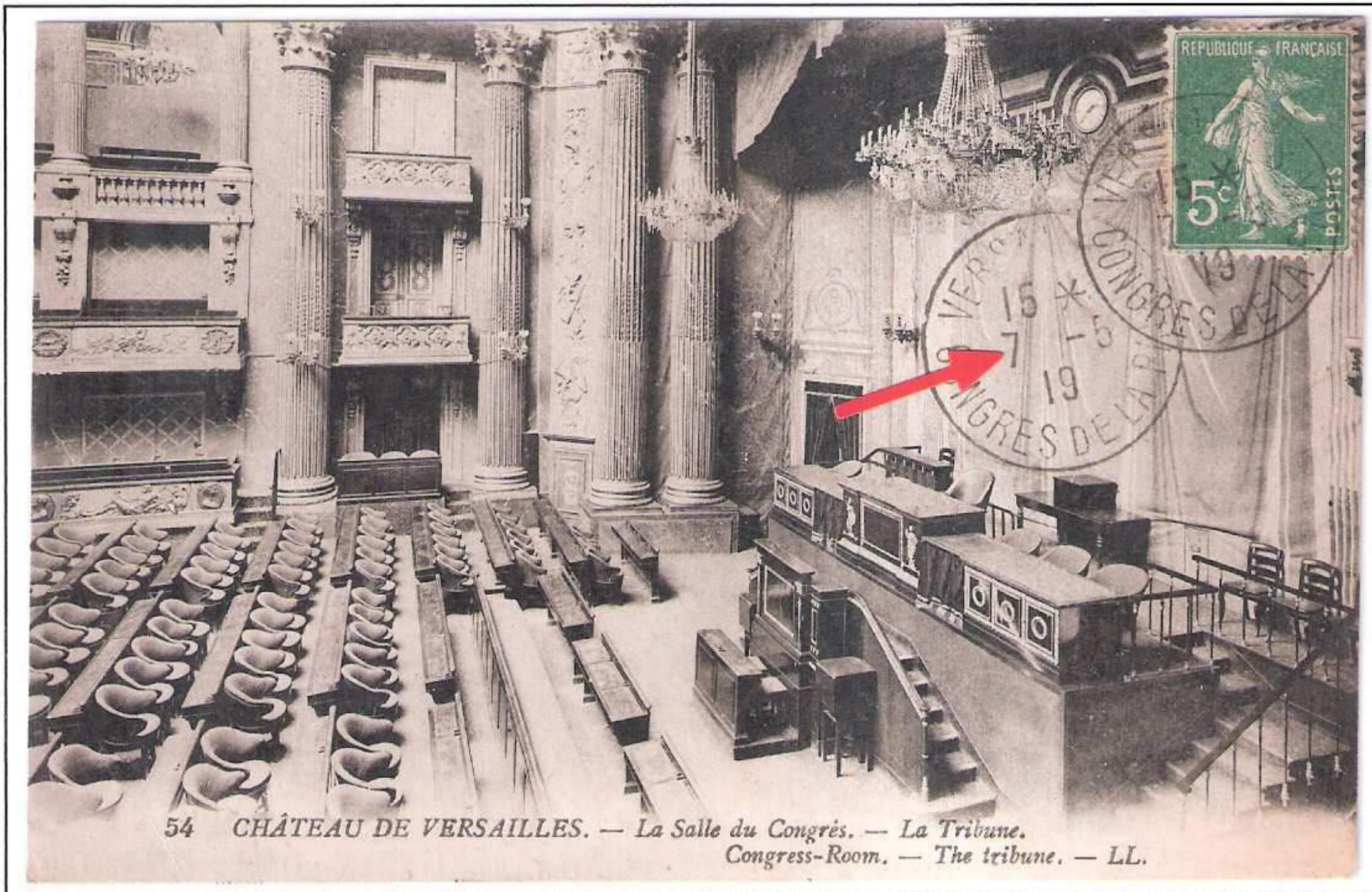


The great massacre is over. Peace is restored.





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.

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. "(e)"

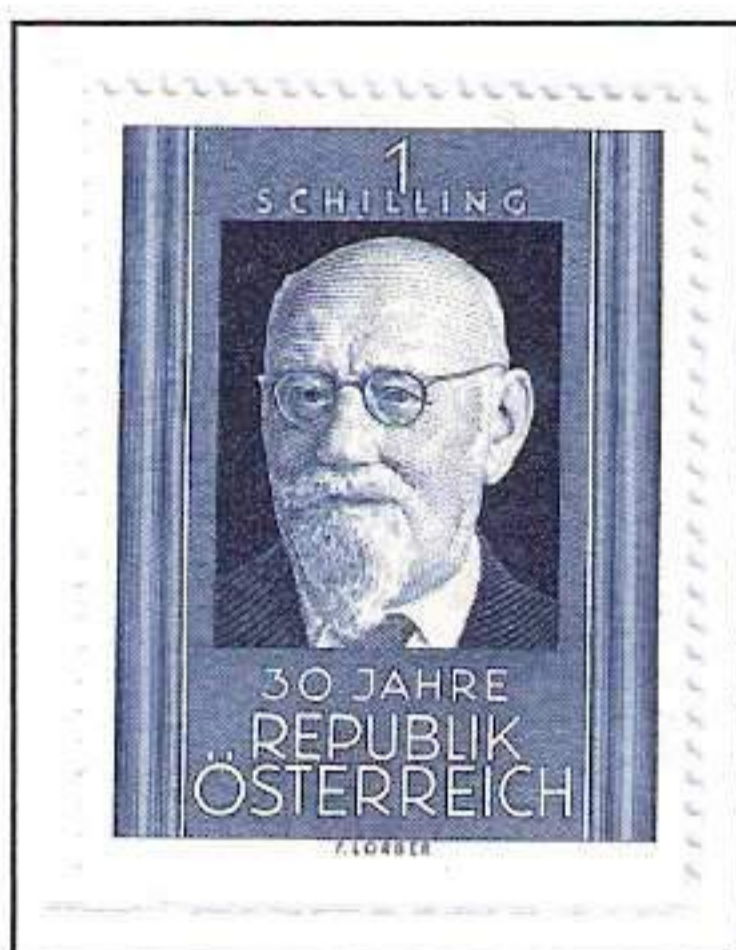
The Treaty is signed on June 28, 1919. It also contained the famous fourteen points wanted by the American President Woodrow Wilson.



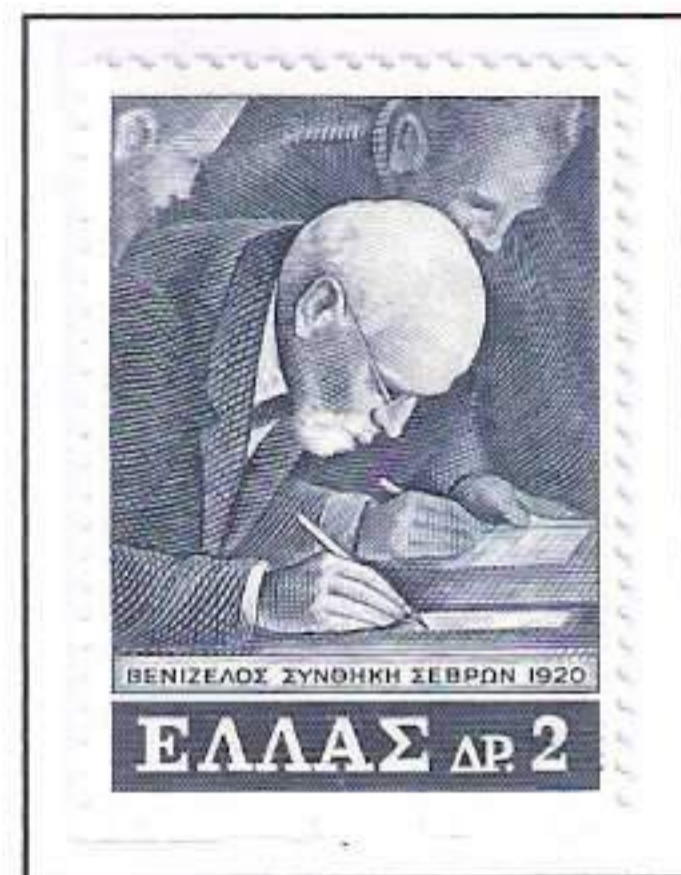
After accepting the full responsibility of the war, Germany and its Allies face the disarmament, the loss of their territories and the compensation of the damage caused to the Allies.

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 10, 1919.



On August 10, 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 24, 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.

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 the 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.



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.



Einlöstreiben



Herrn
Hermann E. Sieger
Lorch/Württ.

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

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.



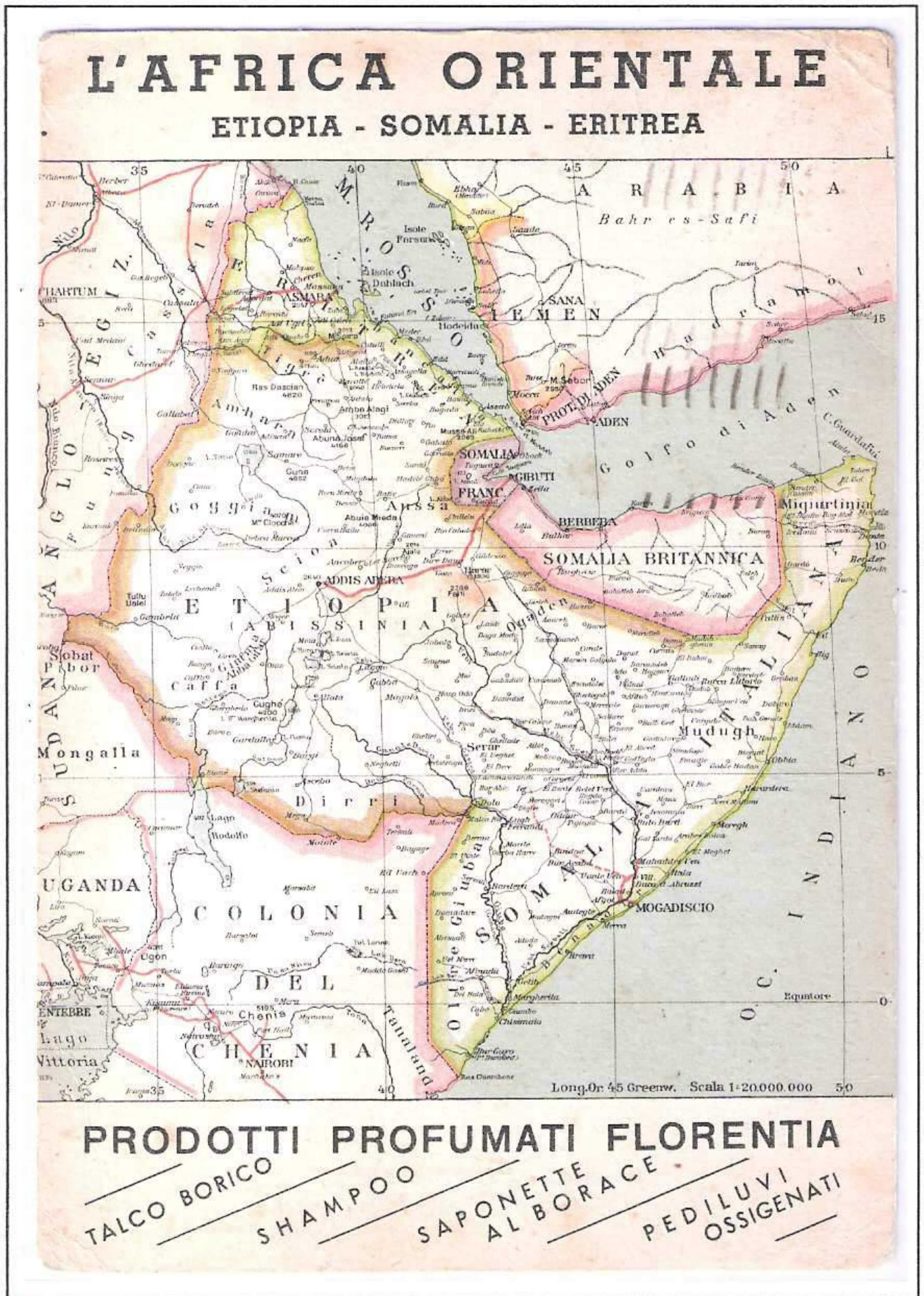
Organized by the F.N.P., the "March on Rome", on October 31, 1922 resulted in the rise to power of the same party. The event ended on October, the 30th when the King decided to appoint Mussolini to form a new Government.



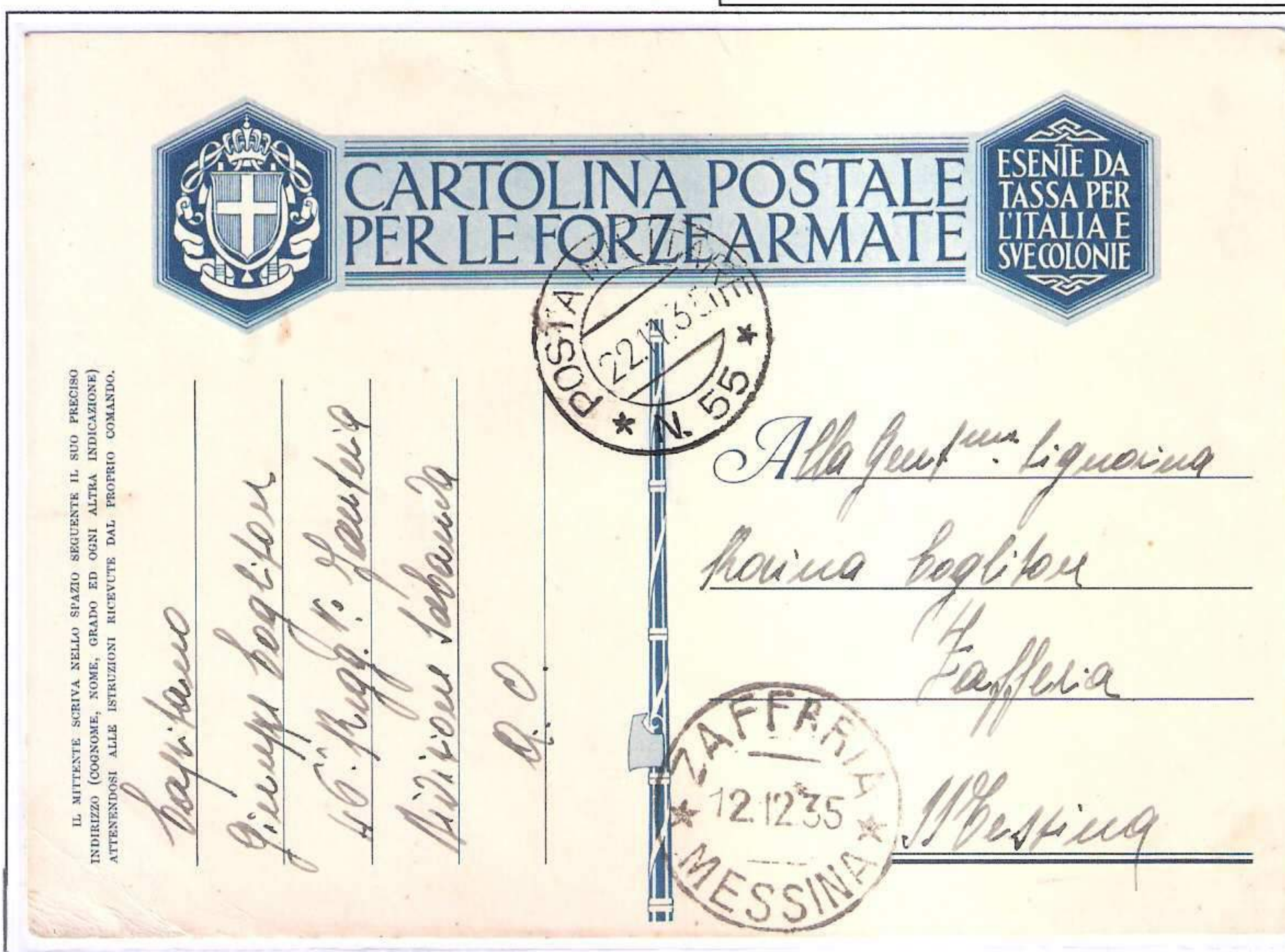
Stamps issued for the anniversary of the "March on Rome".



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 Zafferia (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.



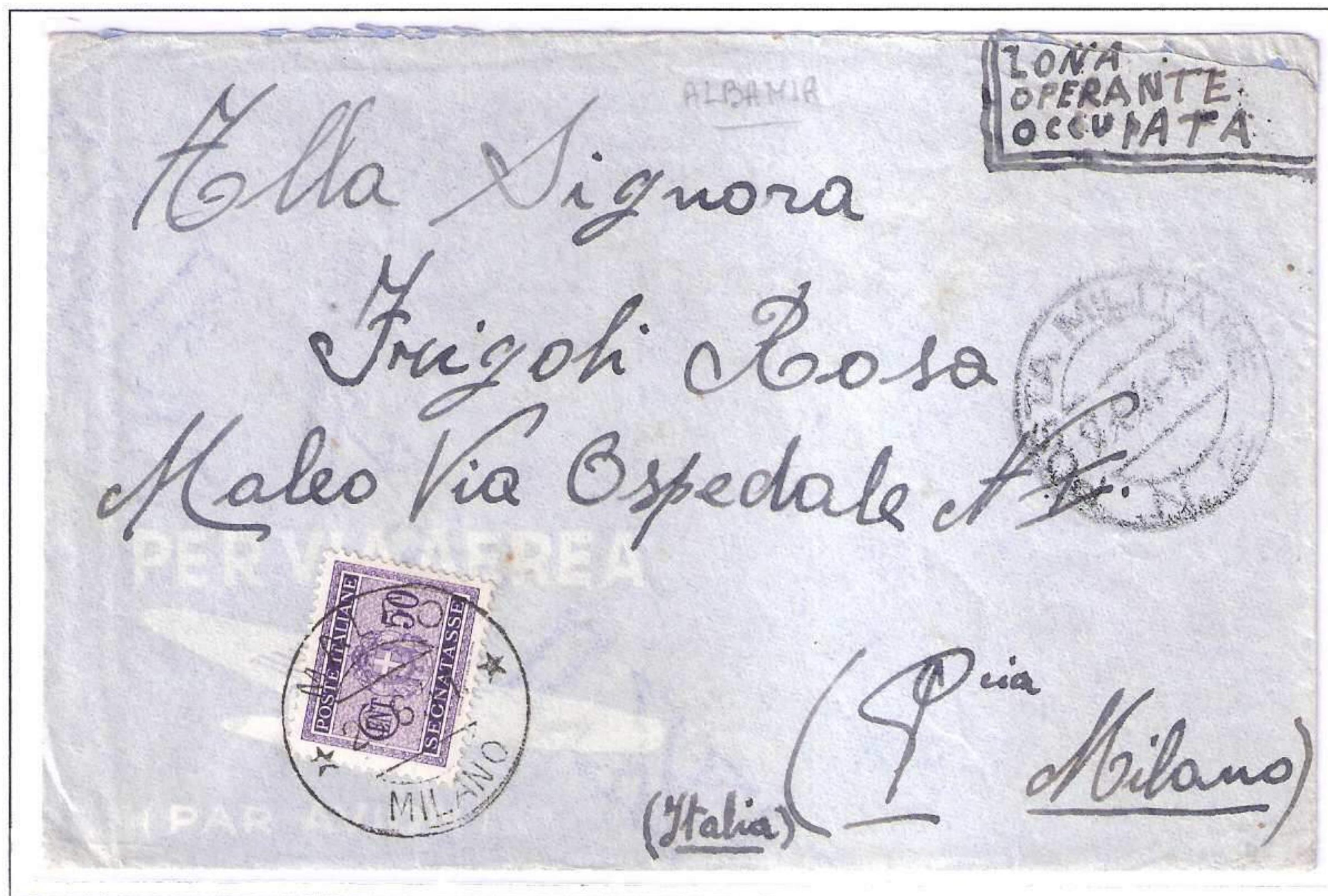
December 4, 1939, Albania: overprinted stamp for the Constituent Assembly.



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

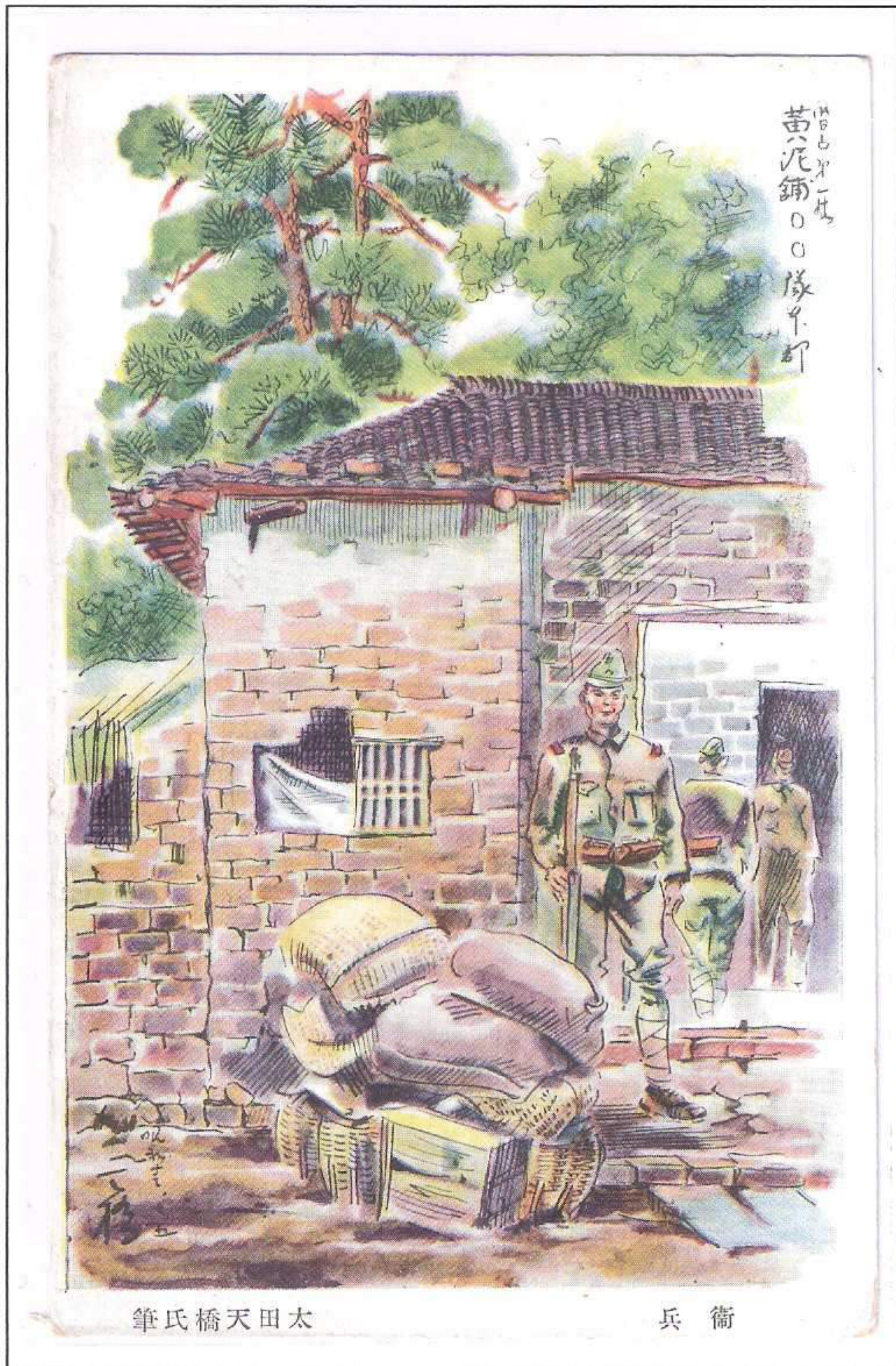


M.P. free card with greetings praising victory.



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.



峻嶮連なる廬山の遠望(九江)

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

M.P. free postcard sent from South China to Japan(Osaka).

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



皆様お變り御座いませんか偕て私儀先般重任を拜しました其の節は萬端御配慮を戴きまして只々感激の外御座いません謹んで厚く御禮申上ますお蔭様で一路恙なく任地に着き益々元氣です何卒御安心下さい今大陸に立つて其任いや重く其責いや大なるを痛感致しひしくと胸を打つものは皆様の熱誠溢るゝ御聲援御鞭撻であります生々しい感激の思ひ出が次から次へと盡きませんこの上は愈々粉骨碎身以て盡忠報國の誠を致し第一線の重責を完ふし誓つて皆様の御期待に副いたい念願であります今後共に何卒宜敷く御願致します

併せて遙かに皆様の御健康と御多幸をお祈り致します

左様なら

月 日

中支隊原誠部隊石谷部隊 福山 隊

朱本庄三郎



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 Postkarte: "Danzig is German".

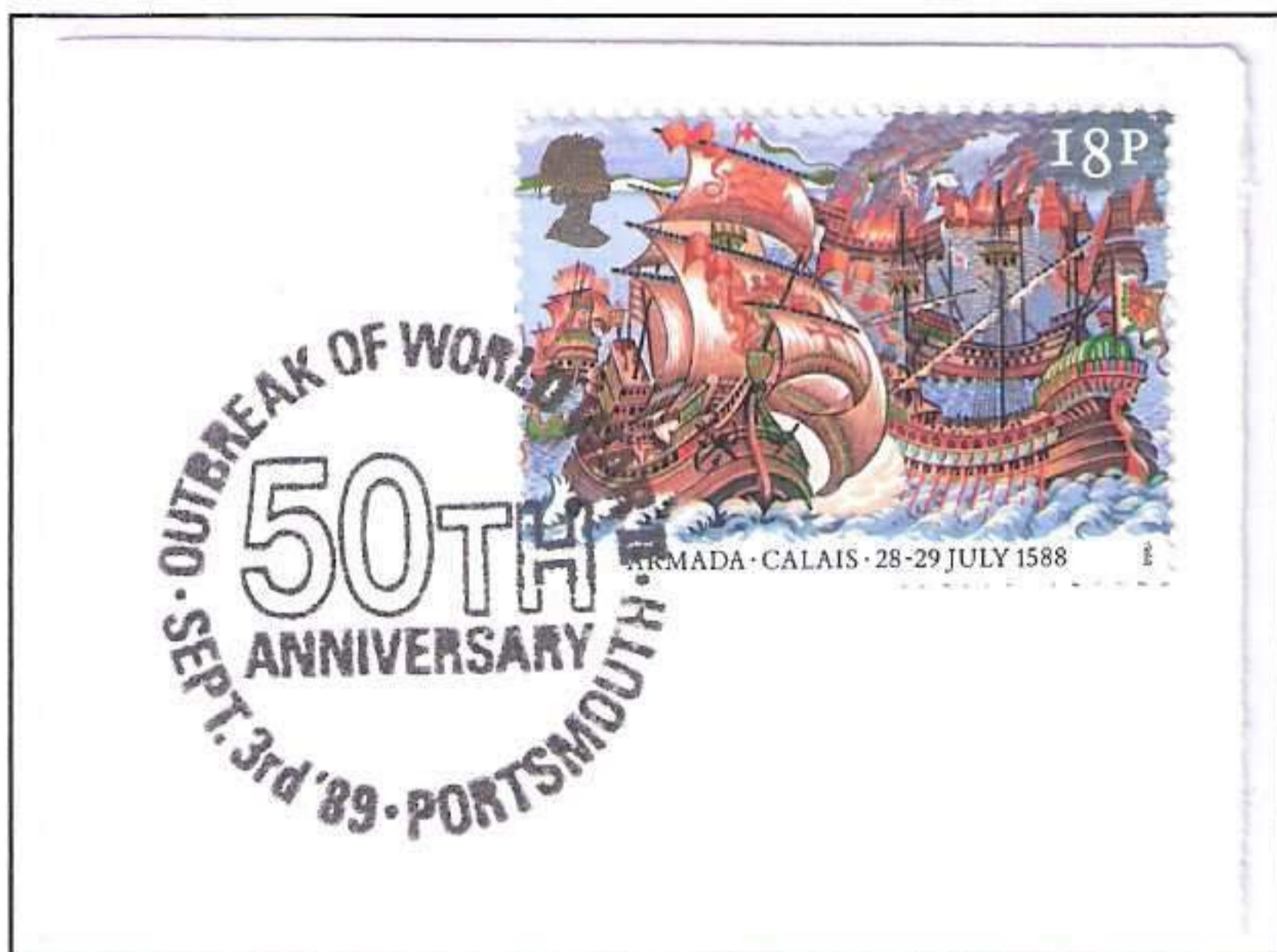


The battles of

Westerplatte



Warsaw



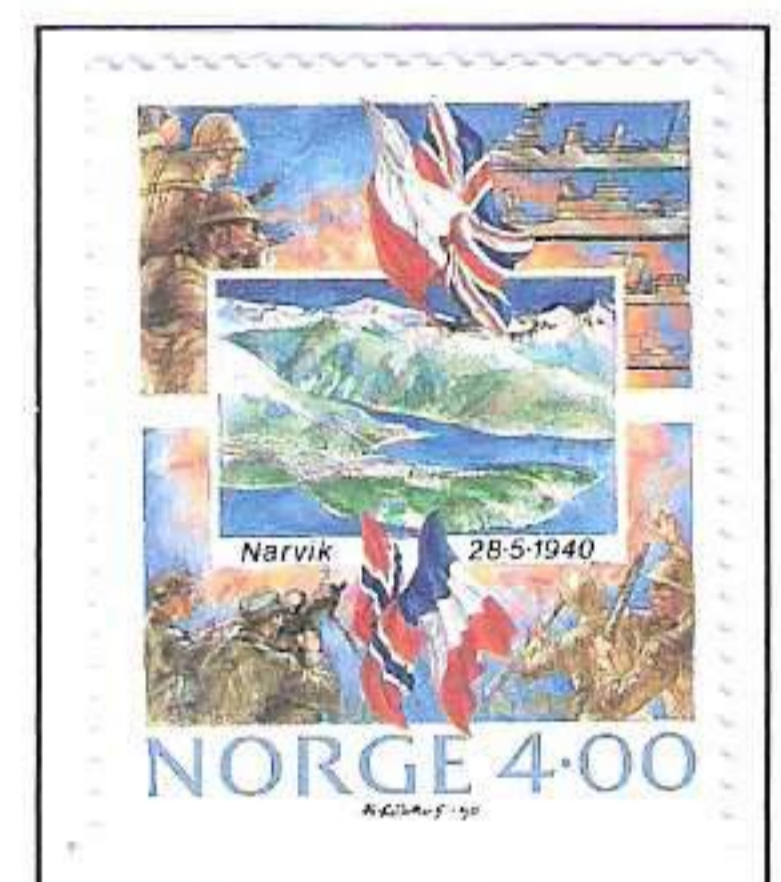
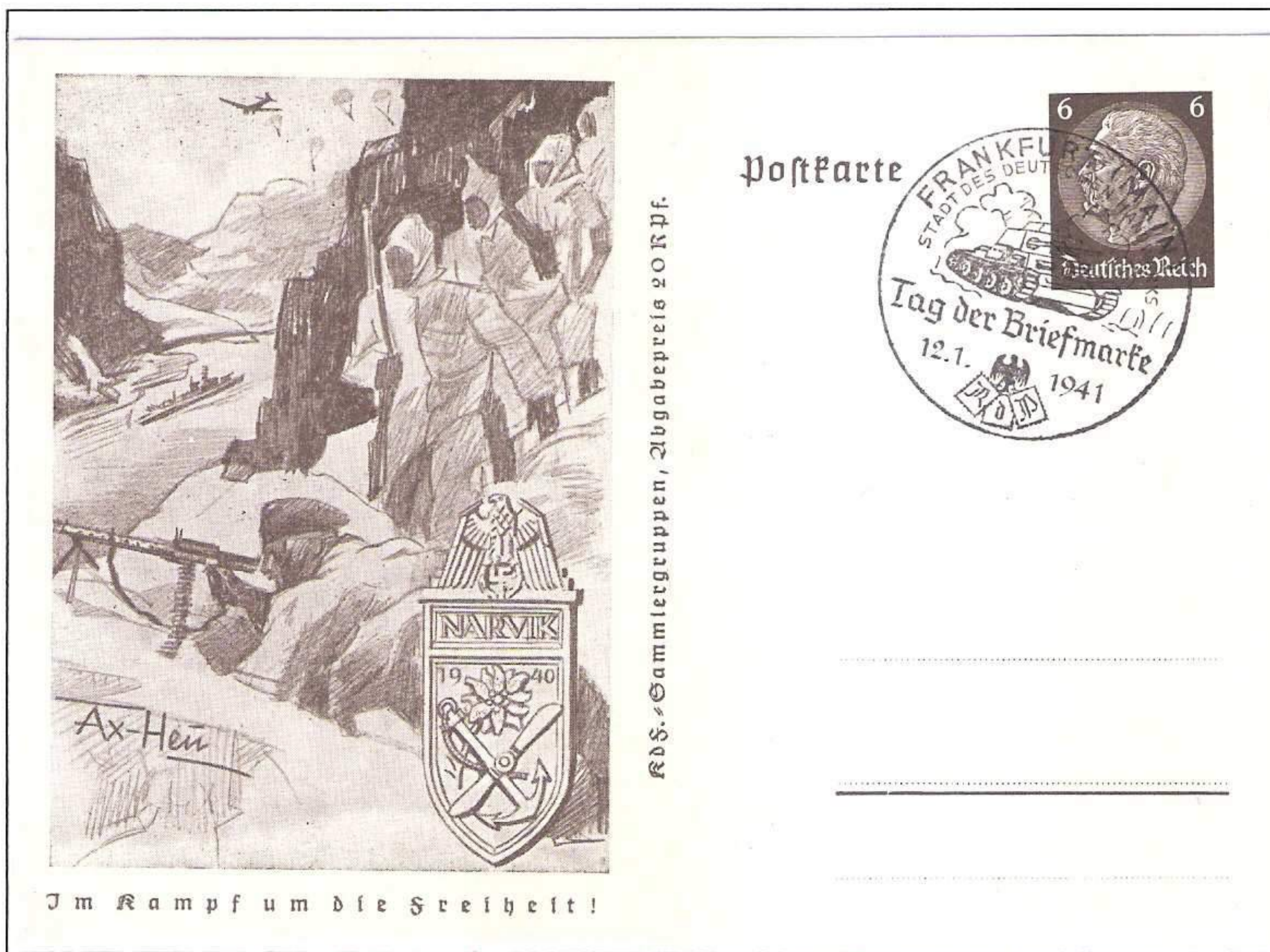
50th England and France declare war to Germany on September 3, 1939.



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 until 10 June. The fast battleship Gneisenau protected the troops engaged in the landing in Norway.

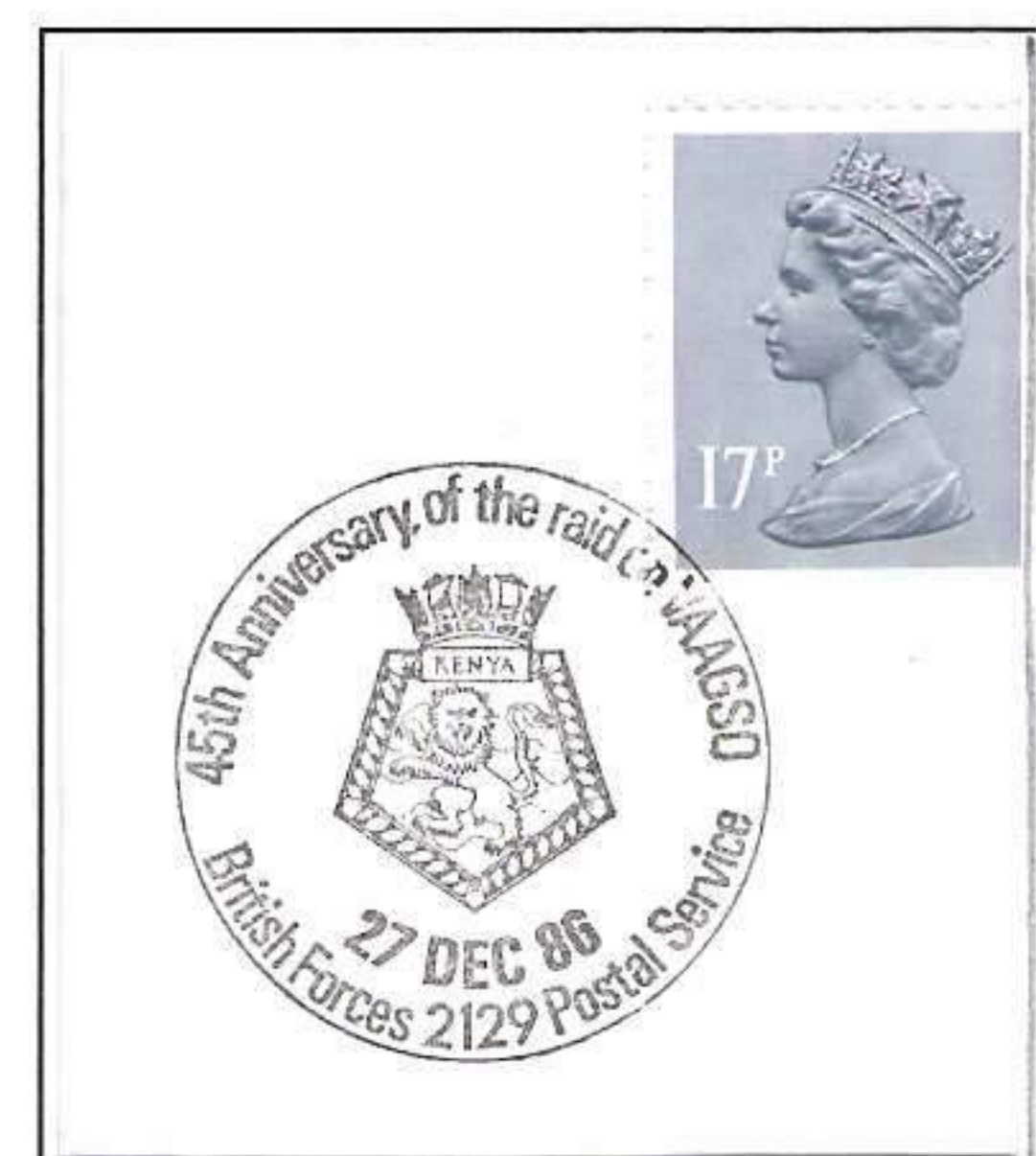


Germany, Marh 1, 1942, from Munchen to Berlin, Feldpostkarte "Schlachtschiff" Gneisenau".



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

On December 27th, 1941, in order to contrast the German occupation, the English troops attack the isle of Vaagso and destroy its military plants. The English troops are carried by the Prince Charles and Leopold which were once the Belgian ferry-boats of the Ostenda-Dover line. The whole operation is protected by the planes Hamden and by the battle cruisers Kenya and Nigeria.



The plane Hamden, the Nigeria's crest and the 45th of the raid on Vaagso.



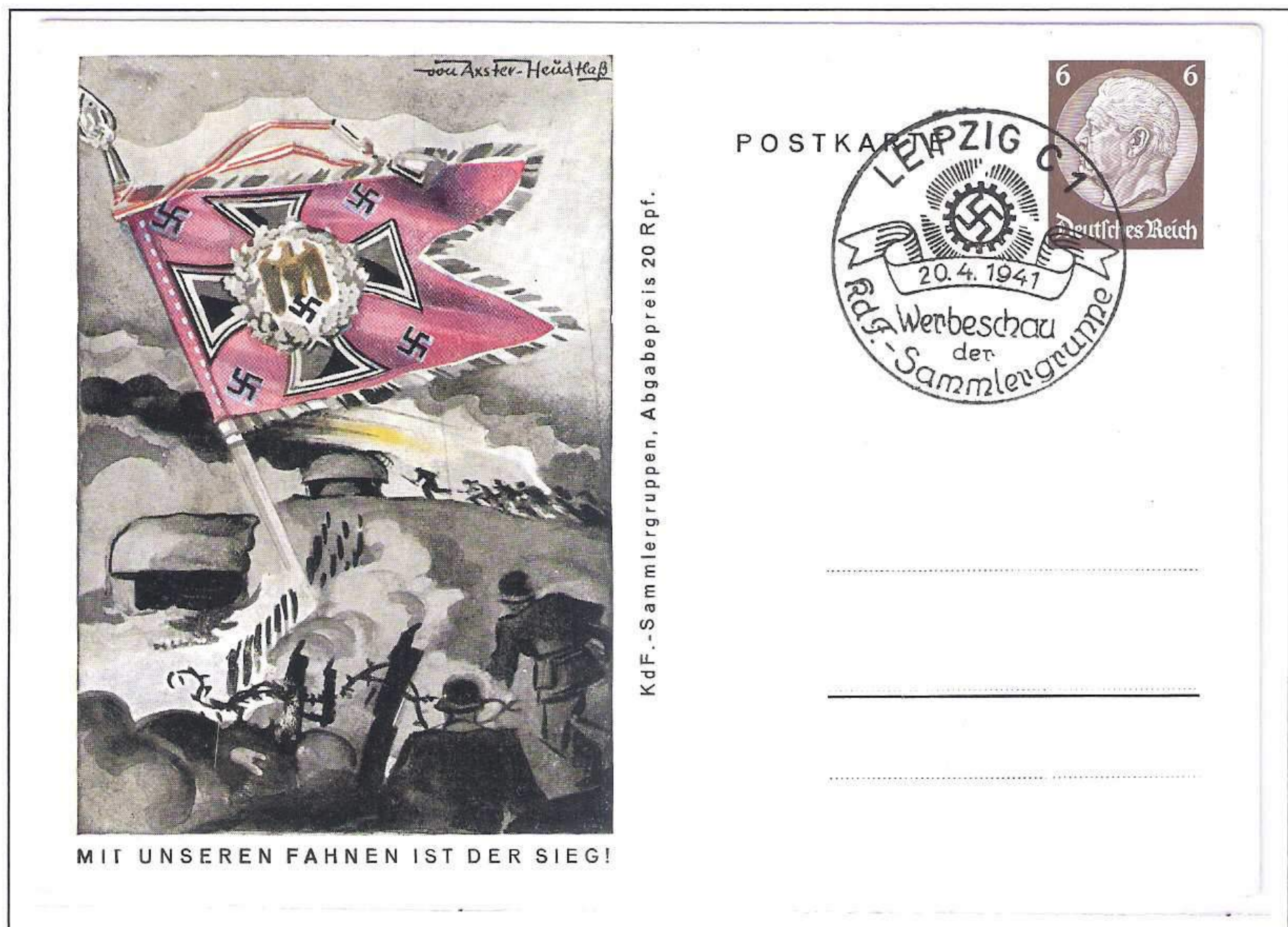
Begun in 1928 and finished in early 1940, the Maginot line, named to commemorate the Minister André Maginot, who had worked for the approval to the construction of the work, aimed at defending the borders of France. The German invasion plan (Fall Gelb) often also referred to as Sishelschnitt, provides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



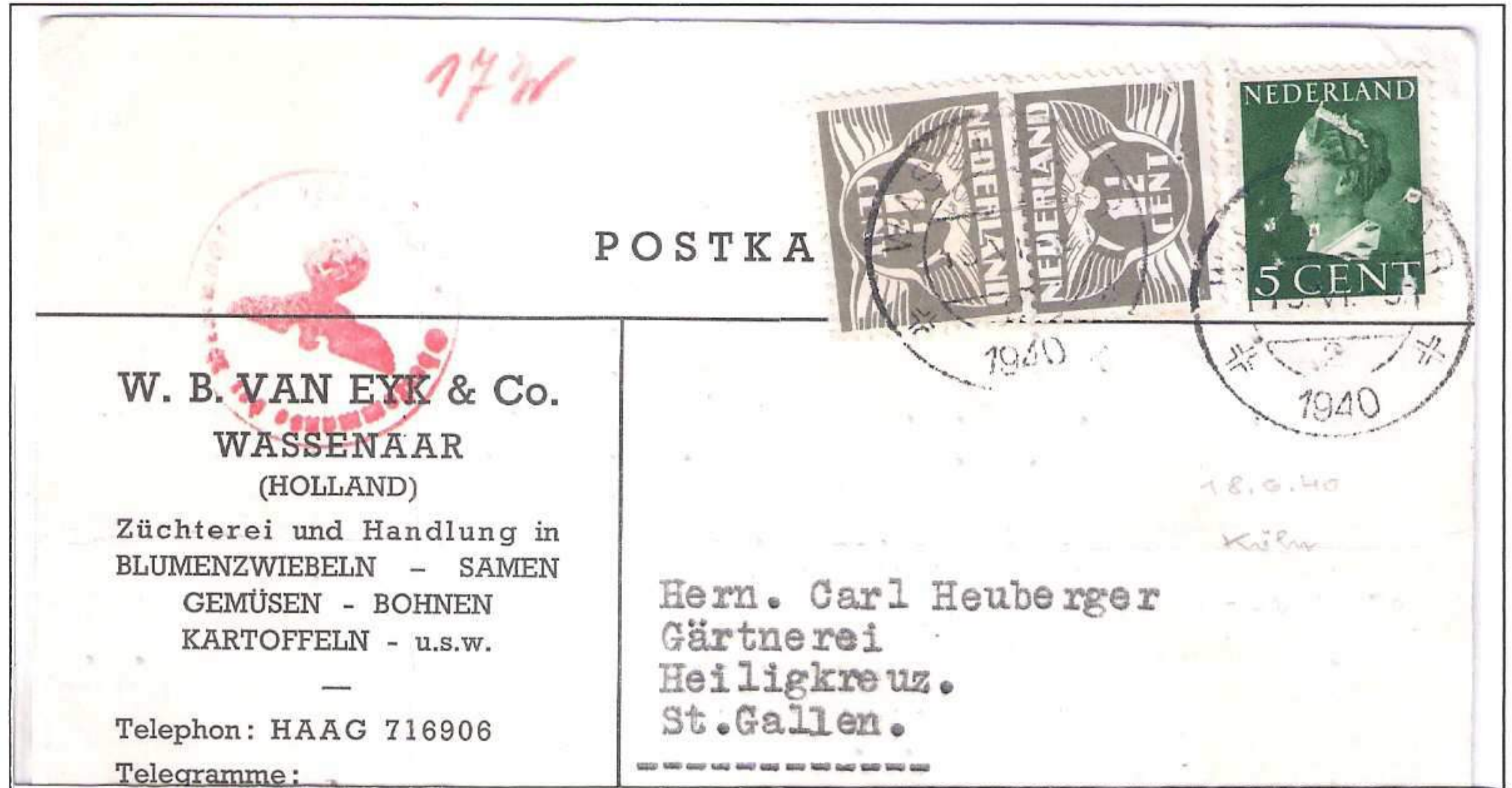
Germany 1941, the attack on the Maginot line.



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 surround of Dunkirk.

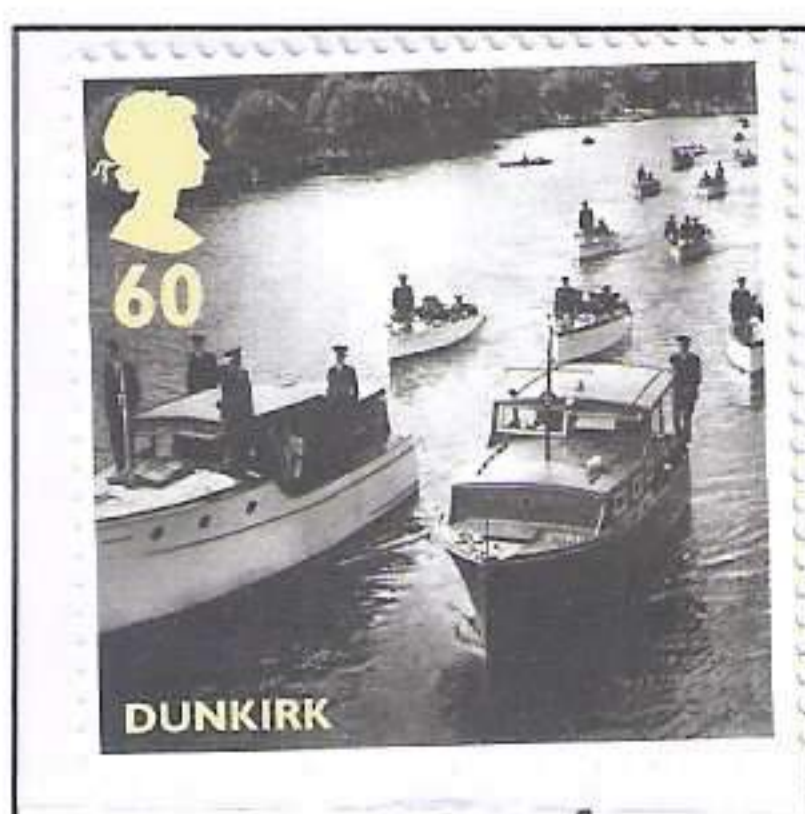


June 16, 1940, Holland: postcard from Wassenaar to Switzerland seen for censorship.



France, Dunkerque, April 20, 1940: EMA to Boulogne-sur-Mer.

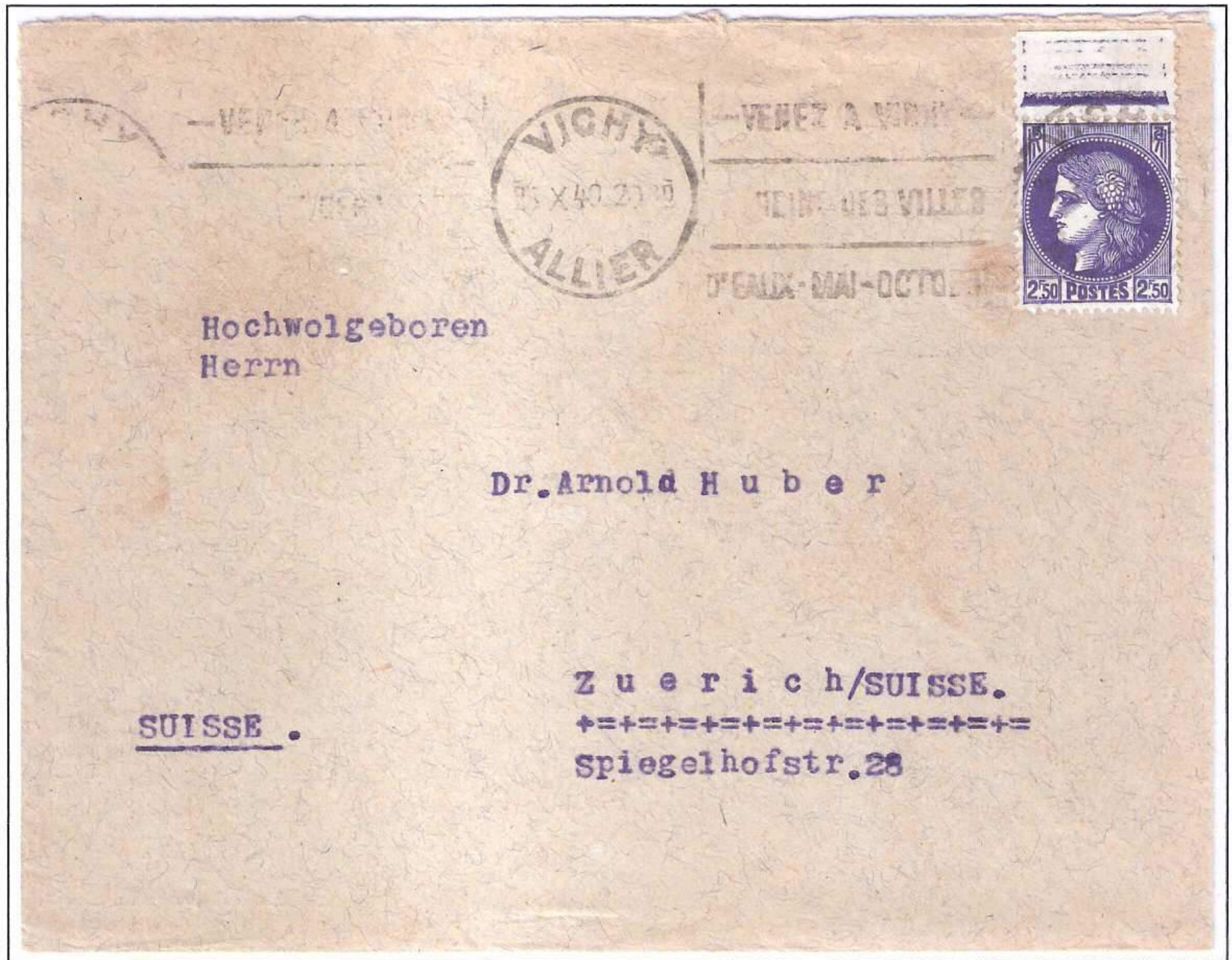
Thanks to a massive rescuing action almost 330.000 soldiers are re-embarked on small and big ships.



When Paris is occupied, on June 14, 1940, France signs the armistice on June 22 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, to Zurich, October 23, 1940.



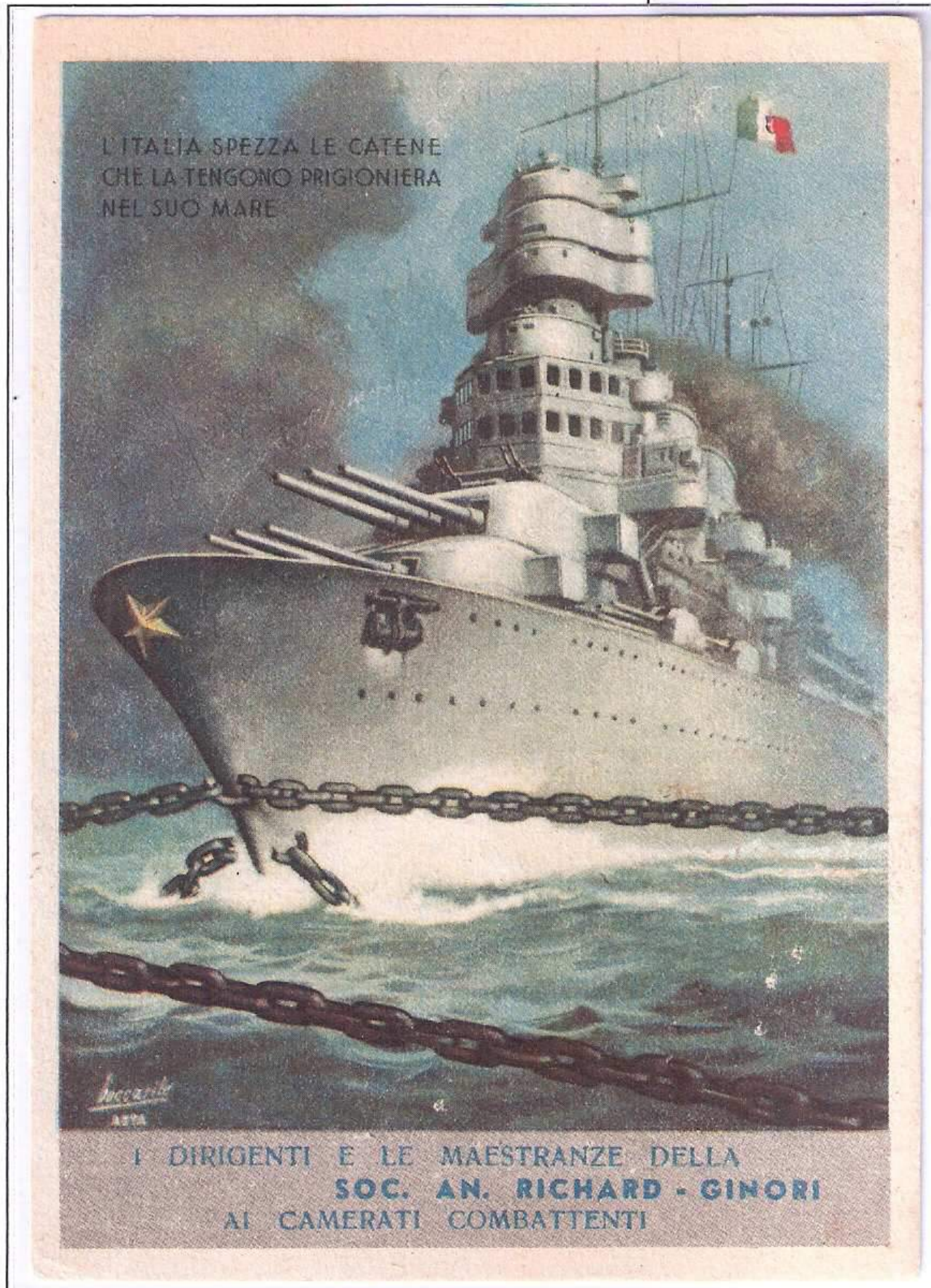
Cancellation letter "Marseille République", May 20, 1942, to Lyon (France).



The last value dedicated to Mar. Pétain,

On June 10, 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.

Italy, Boffalora Ticino: June 10, 1940: communication to the municipality of Cuggiono.



The "Tripartite" and the victory be ...



Free postcard P.M. with the propaganda: motto "Italy breaks the chains which cheep in prisoner on its own sea".

After France had surrendered, aware of the supremacy of the English fleet, Hitler orders Goring and his Luftwaffe to destroy London and the Royal Air Force before invading Britain. The "Eagle's day – the Adlertag", that is the beginning of the bombing on English centres, is on August the 13th, 1940.



Great Britain, August 13, 1940: letter from Kensington (London), seen by censure for the New Jersey(USA)..



Anniversary of the battle of Britain



Germany, February 24, 1942: feldpost for Dresda seen for censure. Stukas bombing London.



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



Free postcard from M.P. 23, Greek front to Alvito (Frosinone), March 11, 1941 during the "Vojussa battle".

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 Đakovo for the Interior.



Serbia, 1943: stamps issued during the German occupation.



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. The Germans also land some departments of alpine troops to be used in the mountains.



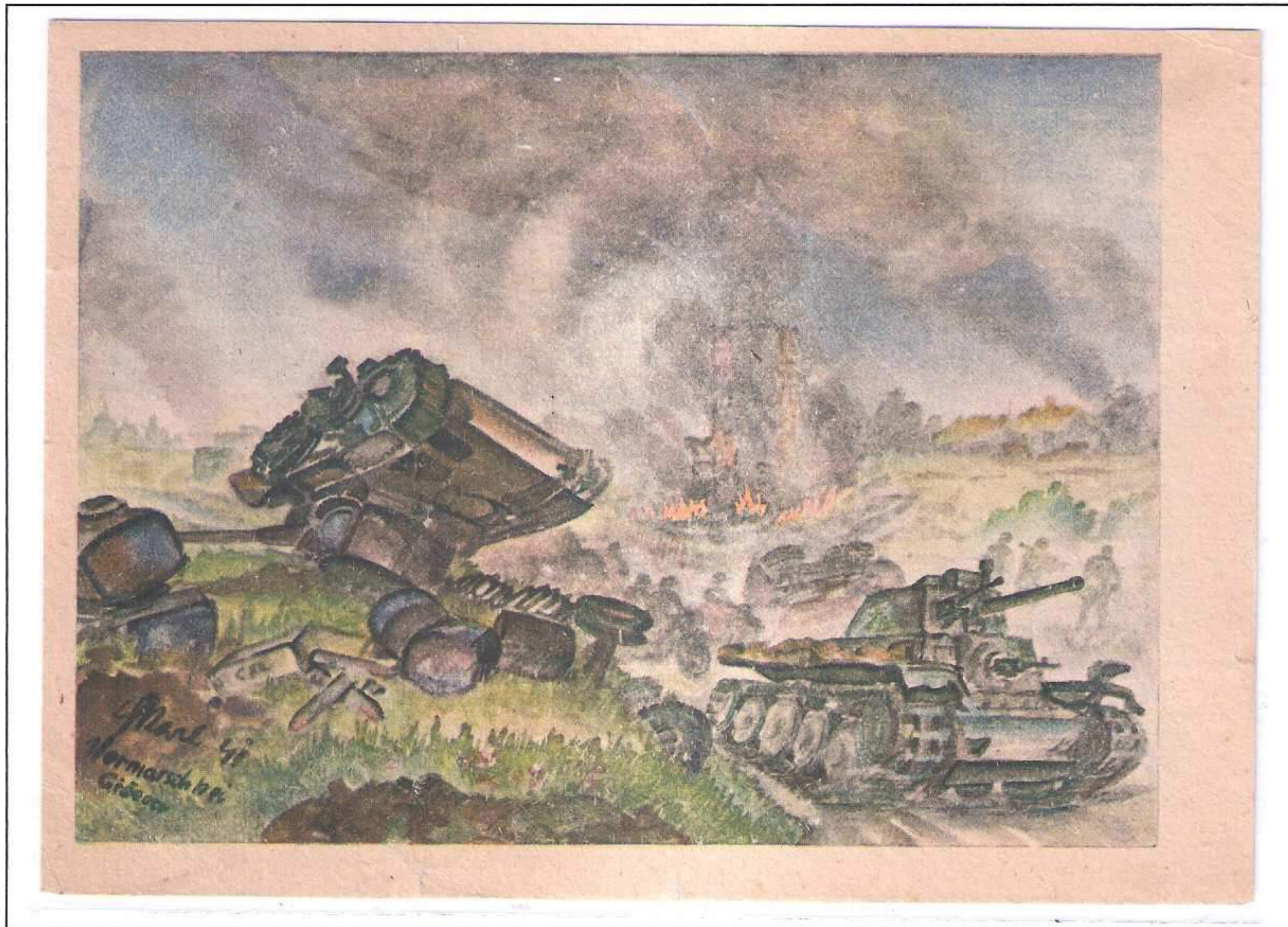
Crete attacked by Paratroopers.

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.



Italy, Letter from P.M. 121 (Creta) December 21, 1941, air mail ,to Genova.

On June 22, 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.



Feldpost "Tanks" towards.



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.



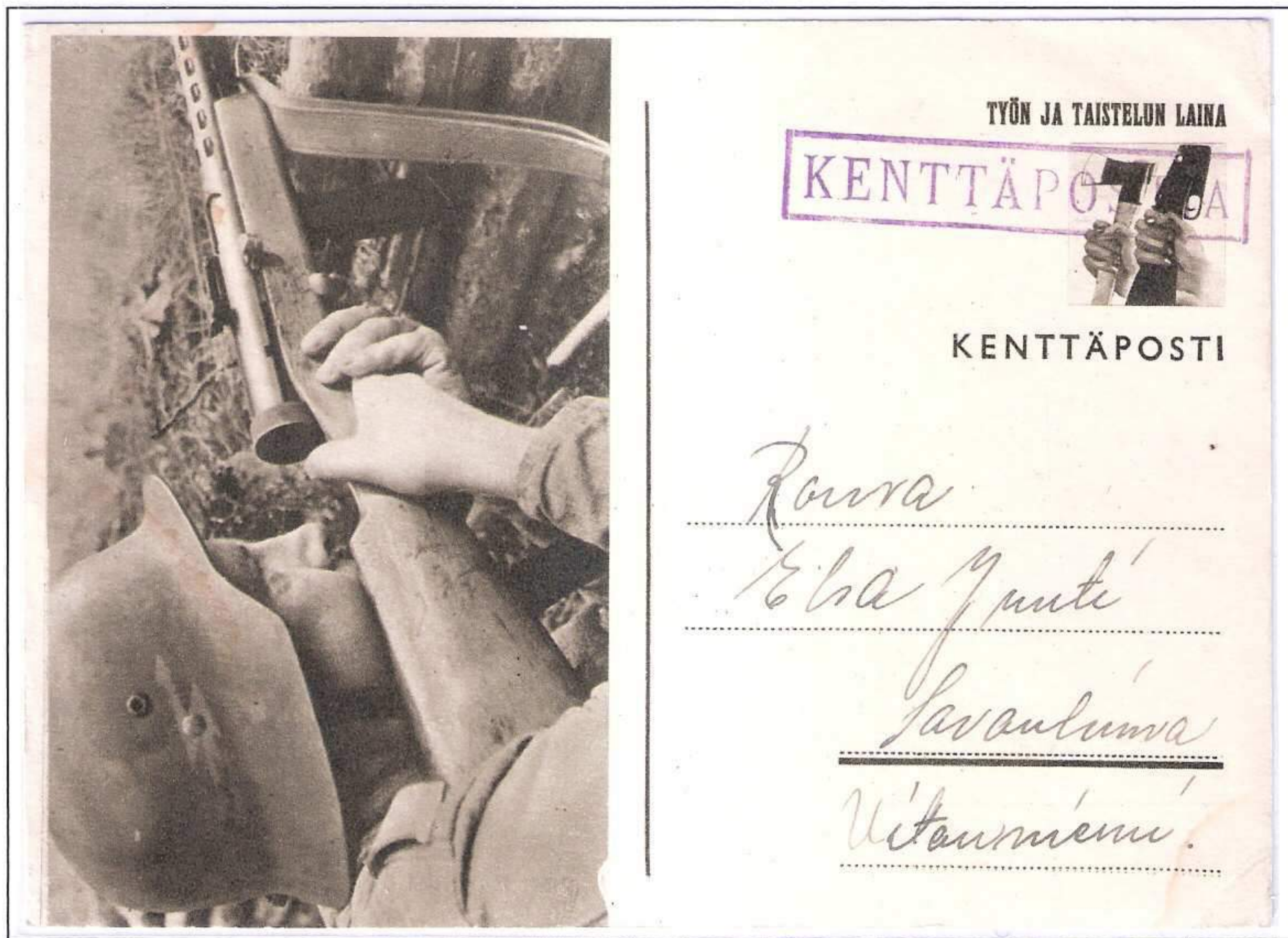
To defend their homeland there is a general mobilitation.



Colour proof.



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



Finland, November 27, 1942: M.P. to Savonlinna.



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 is for the German Navy which on October 14, 1939, enters the bay of Scapa Flow and sinks the battleship Royal Oak. The operation is led by Captain Gunther Prien, chief of the U-boat 47.



On May 9, 1940, some "S" motor torpedo boats leave the base of Wilhelmshaven, attack a naval English unit and damage the destroyer Kelly.

MIT UNSEREN FAHNEN IST DER SIEG!

POSTKARTE

KdF.-Sammlergruppen, Abgabepreis 20 Rpf.

On October 29, 1940, the armoured cruiser Admiral Sheer leaves the Atlantic in search of a cargo boat heading for Great Britain. On November 5, it bumps into a big ship convoyed by the auxiliary cruiser Jervis Bay and it sinks it.



The Home fleet recovers and on December 13, 1939 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.



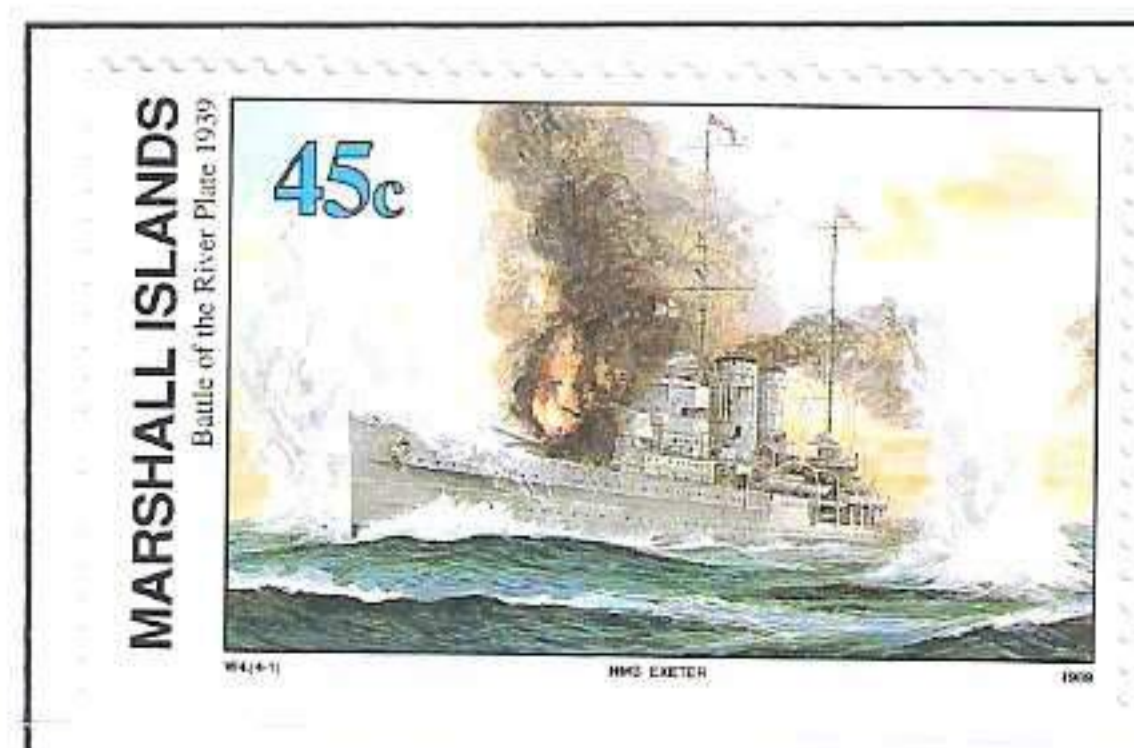
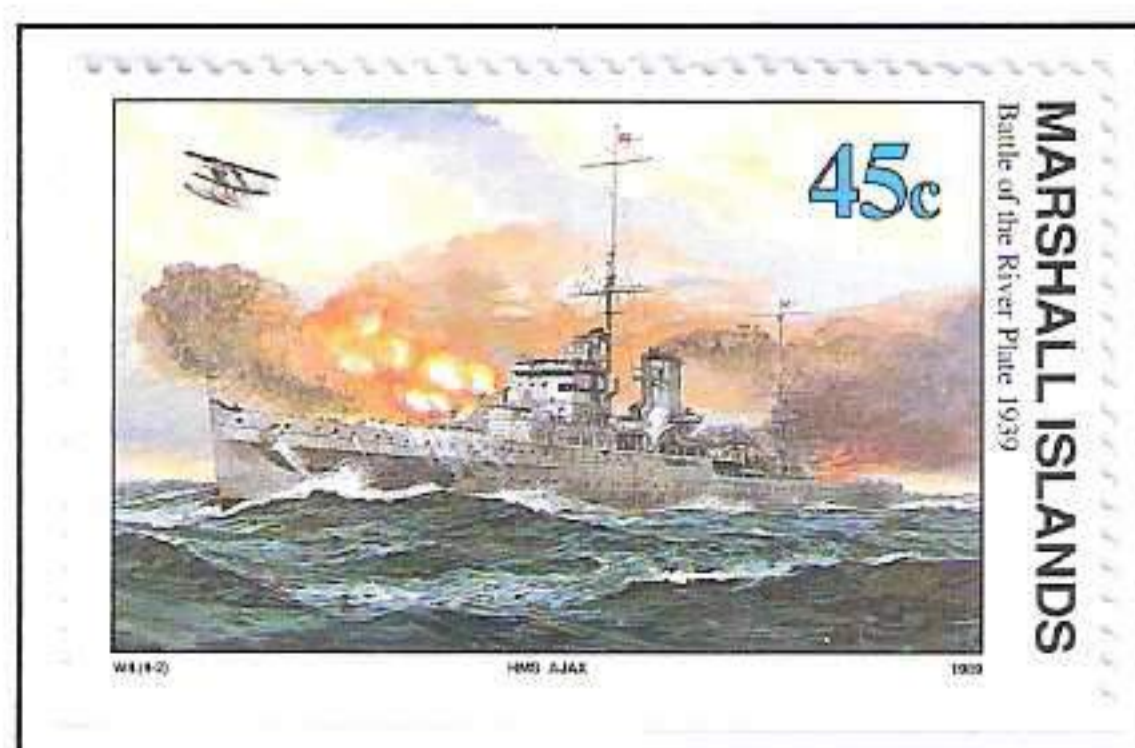
The Cap. H.Langsdorff.

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

35th anniversary battle of the River Plate.



Commodore Harwood and his team of cruisers..



On May 24, 1941, the biggest German cruiser, the Bismarck, on the Atlantic Ocean on its first mission, sinks the battle cruiser Hood and damages the cruiser Prince of Wales. Afterwards it tries to reach the French coast to be repaired



The Bismarck opens fire



The bombardment of the Prince of Wales and the Hood bombarded to death.

The cruiser King George Vth, the Ark Royal, some battle cruisers, among which the Dorsetshire, and some destroyers, among which the Polish Piorun, chase the German battleship. Hit by torpedoes and cannon shots the ship, which cannot be governed any more, sinks at 9.30 a.m. on May 27th.



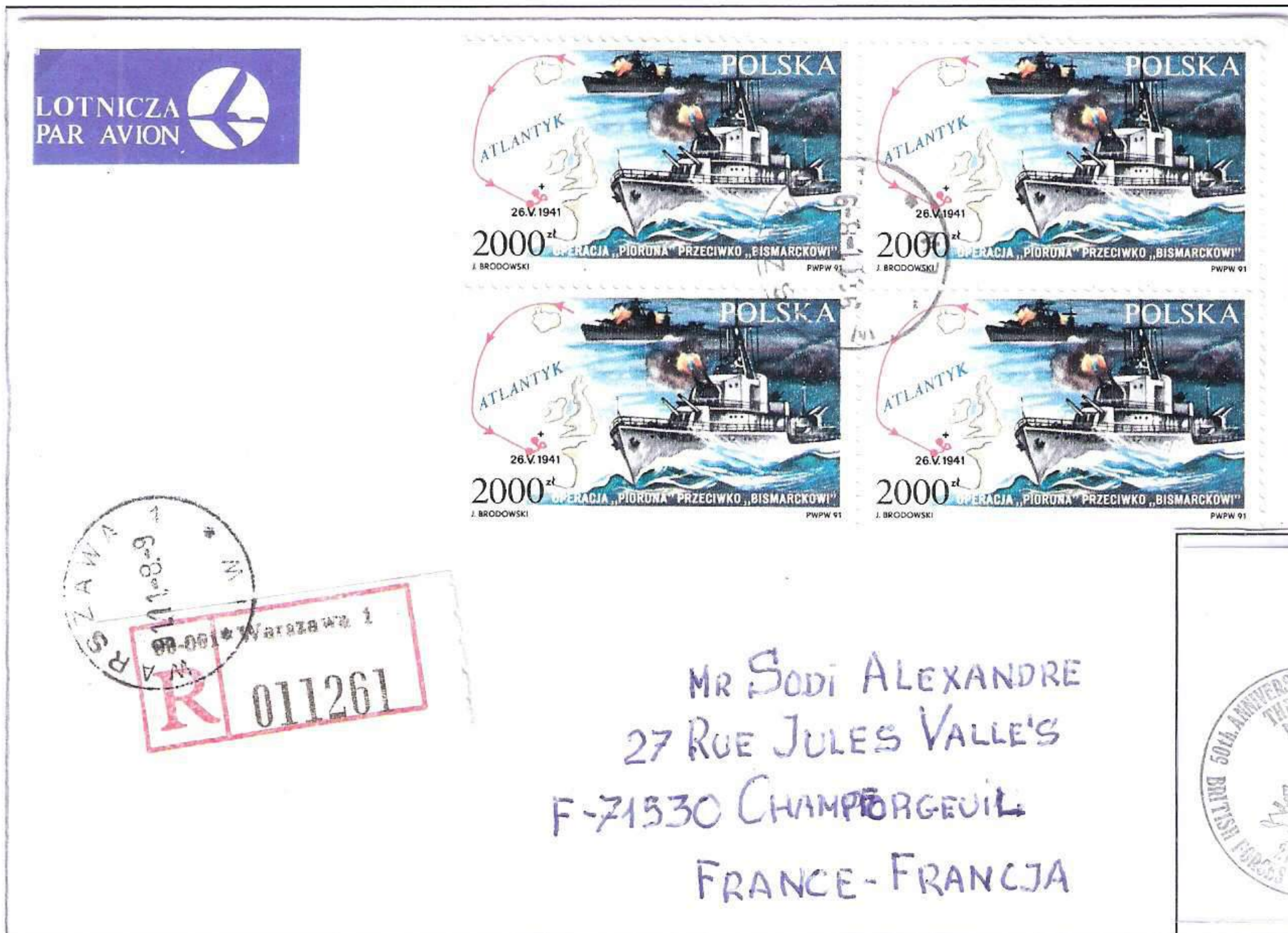
H.M.S. King Georg V.



Carrier Ark Royal.

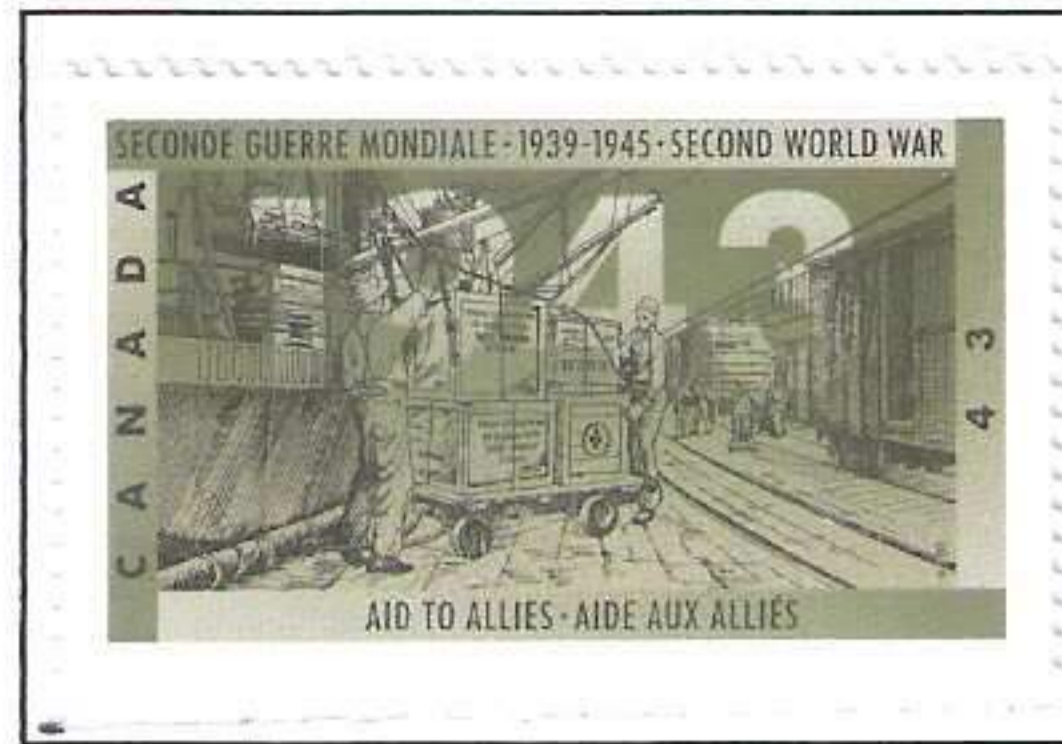


H.M.S. Dorsetshire.

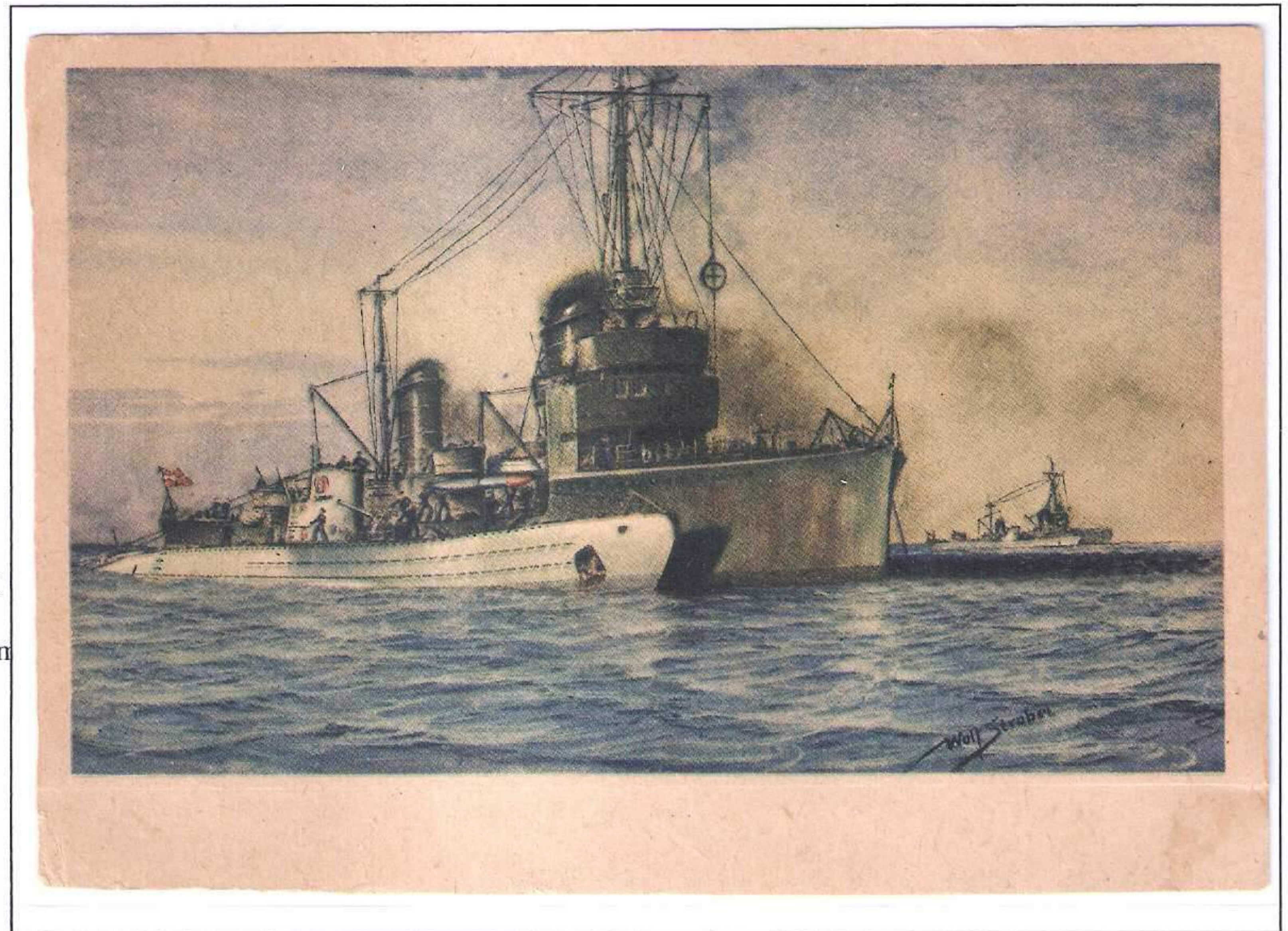


Poland, November 9, 1991: registered mail from Warsaw, stamped with values remembering the Piorun ship and the Bismarck's retreat.

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.



Germany, feldpost whit U-Boot that provides overnight refueling from a support ship.



Destruction of Atlantic convoy "PQ 17".



German propaganda about the ship foundering.

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



The rescue of surviving sailors.

On September 3, 1940, the United States and Great Britain sign an agreement which provides the British Navy with 50 destroyers. In change the USA will be allowed to settle American bases at the Bahamas Islands, in Jamaica, Antigua, Trinidad and Saint Lucy.



The Ct. Banf ex USS Saranac.



The Ct. Georgetown ex USS Maddox.



The Ct. Buston ex USS Edwards.

After the signature of the "Atlantic Charta" (agreement), on August 9, 1941, in Newfoundland, on board of the new cruiser Prince of Wales, Roosevelt and Churchill come to the agreement that the ships of the Allies' convoys will be defended by American ships.



The Ct. USS Escort.



The Ct. USS Gleaves.

Despite the help provided by American ships to the English Navy, the German U-Boats continue to chase the convoys carrying supplies to Britain and Russia. 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.



The "Liberty".



Honoring the sacrifice of sailors of merchant marines.



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.

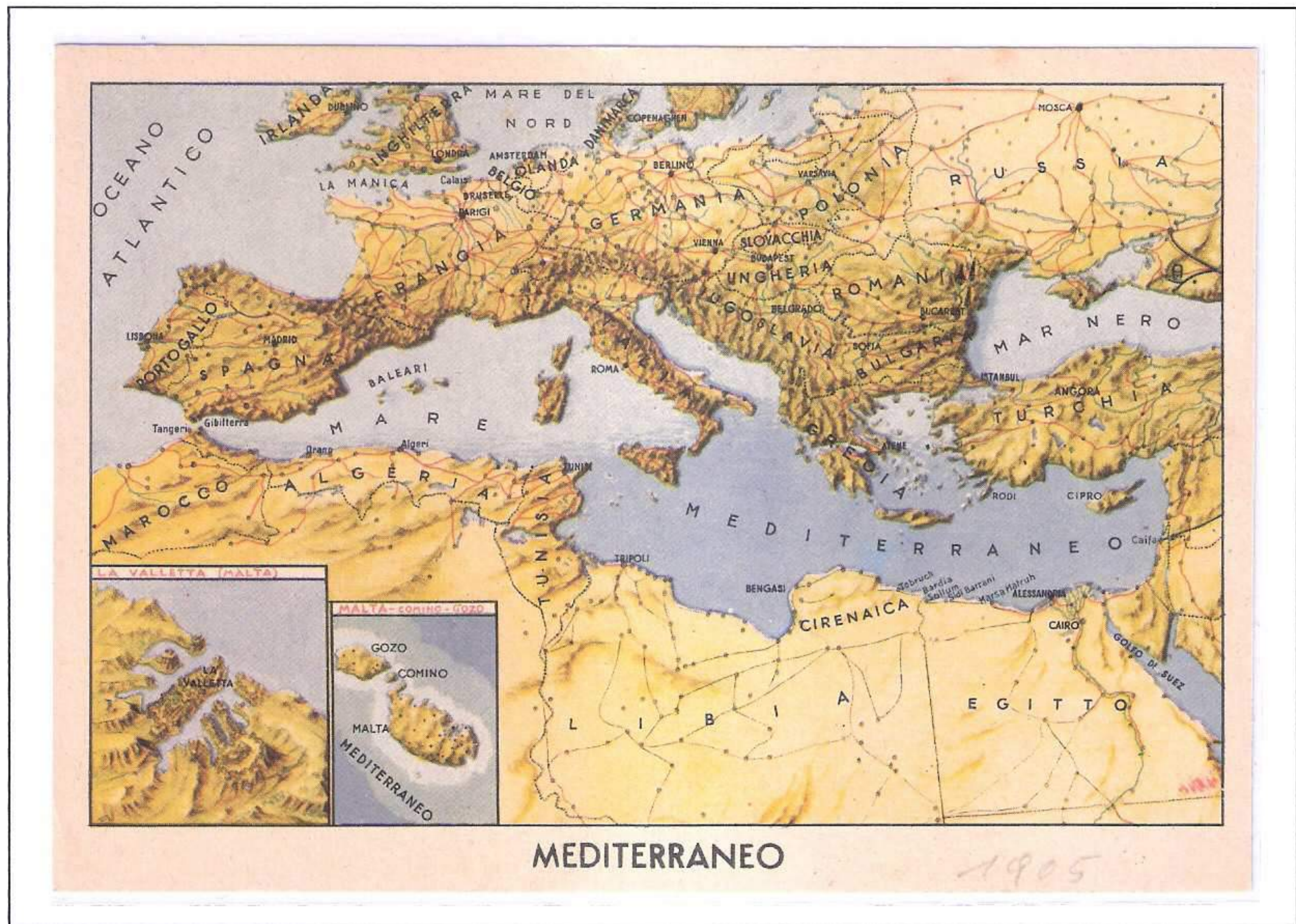


M.P. free postcard with the Duke of Aosta and his soldiers.



April 6, 1940, Eritrea: letter from Dessie Amara to Cormons, Capriva 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 Mediterramean 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 invaded 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.

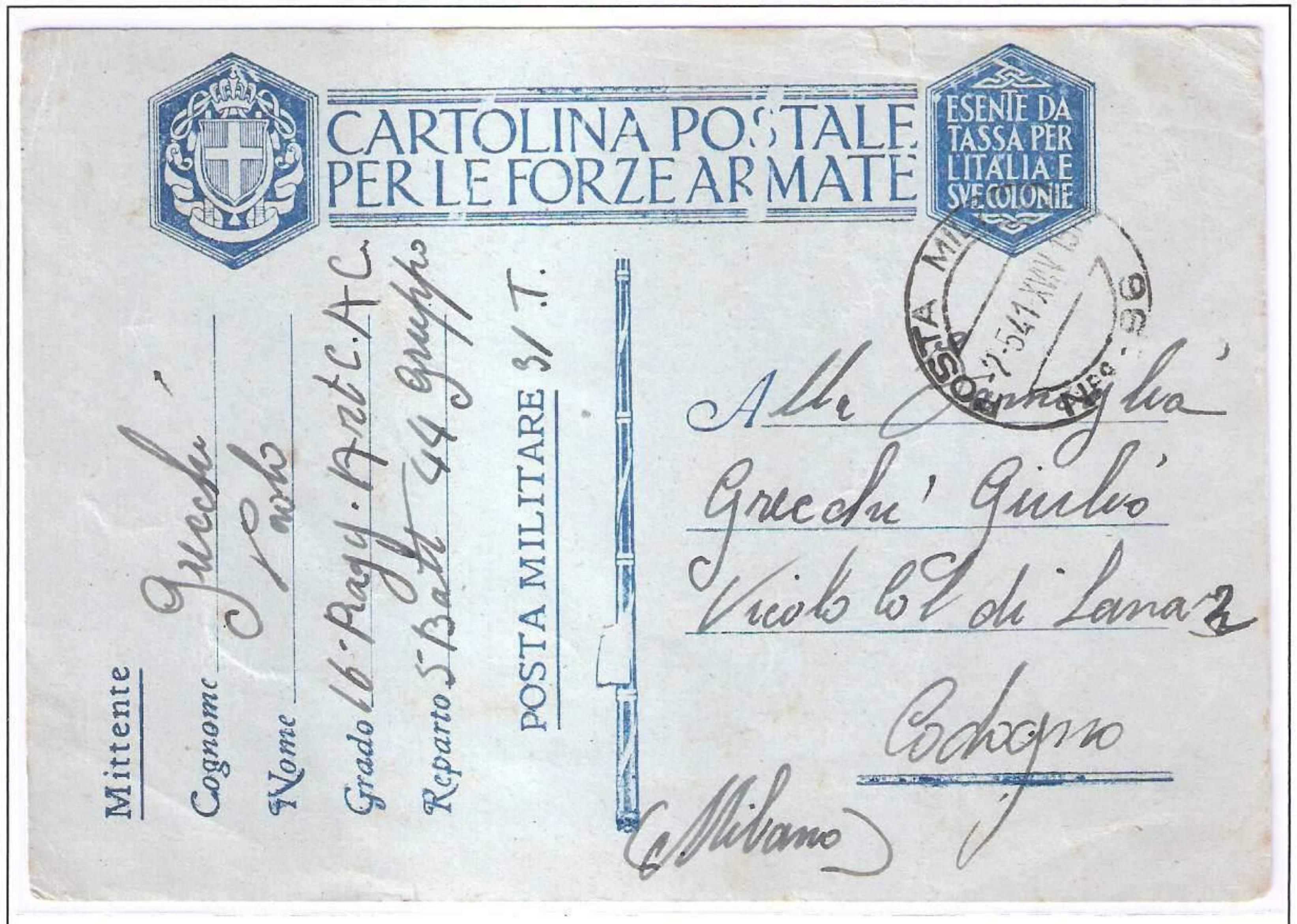


Erwin Rommel
"the desert's fox"



On March 24, 1941, after replacing Graziani with Gen. Gariboldi, Rommel begins his offensive on April 10, 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 25.



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 Aheim,

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.

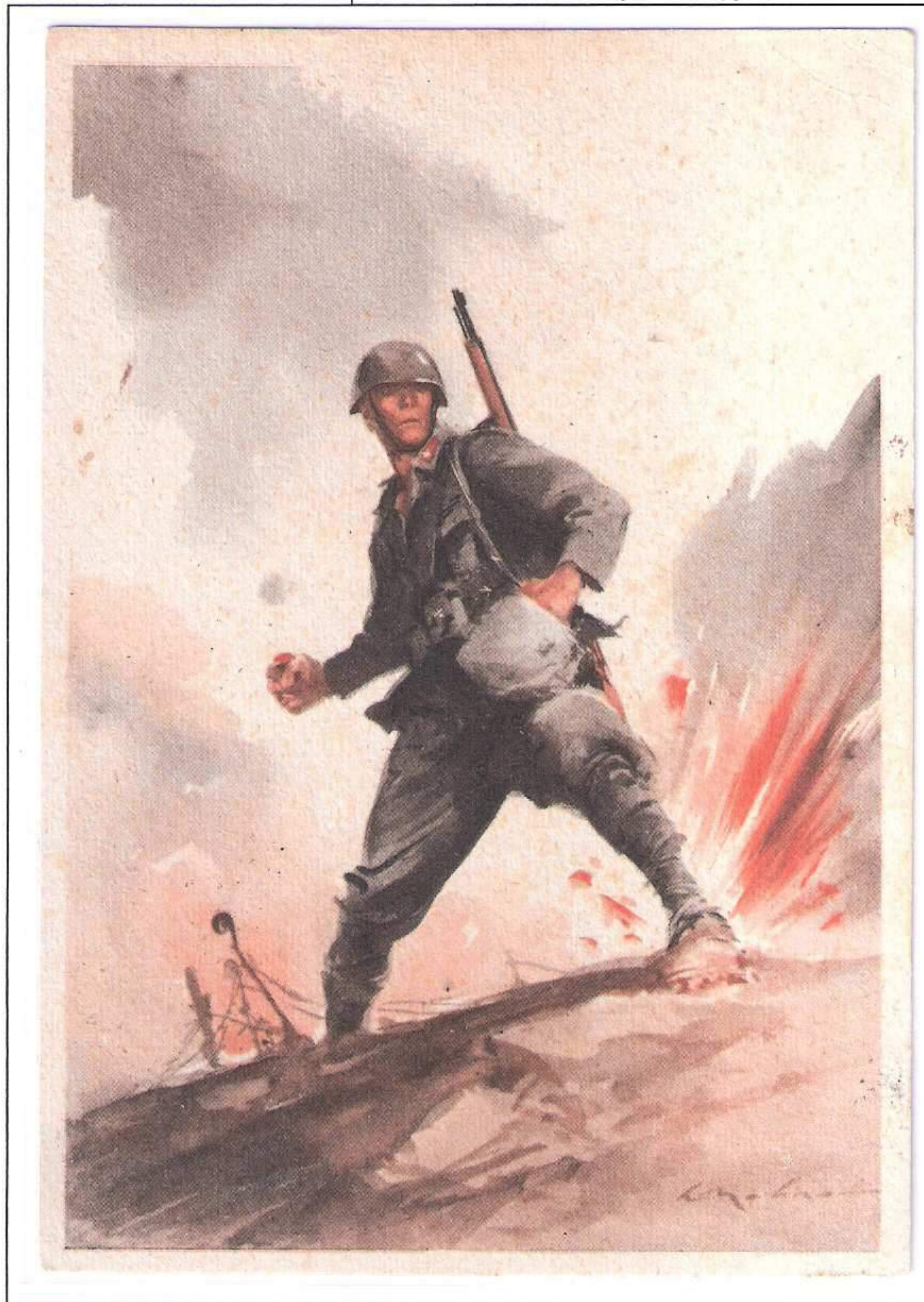
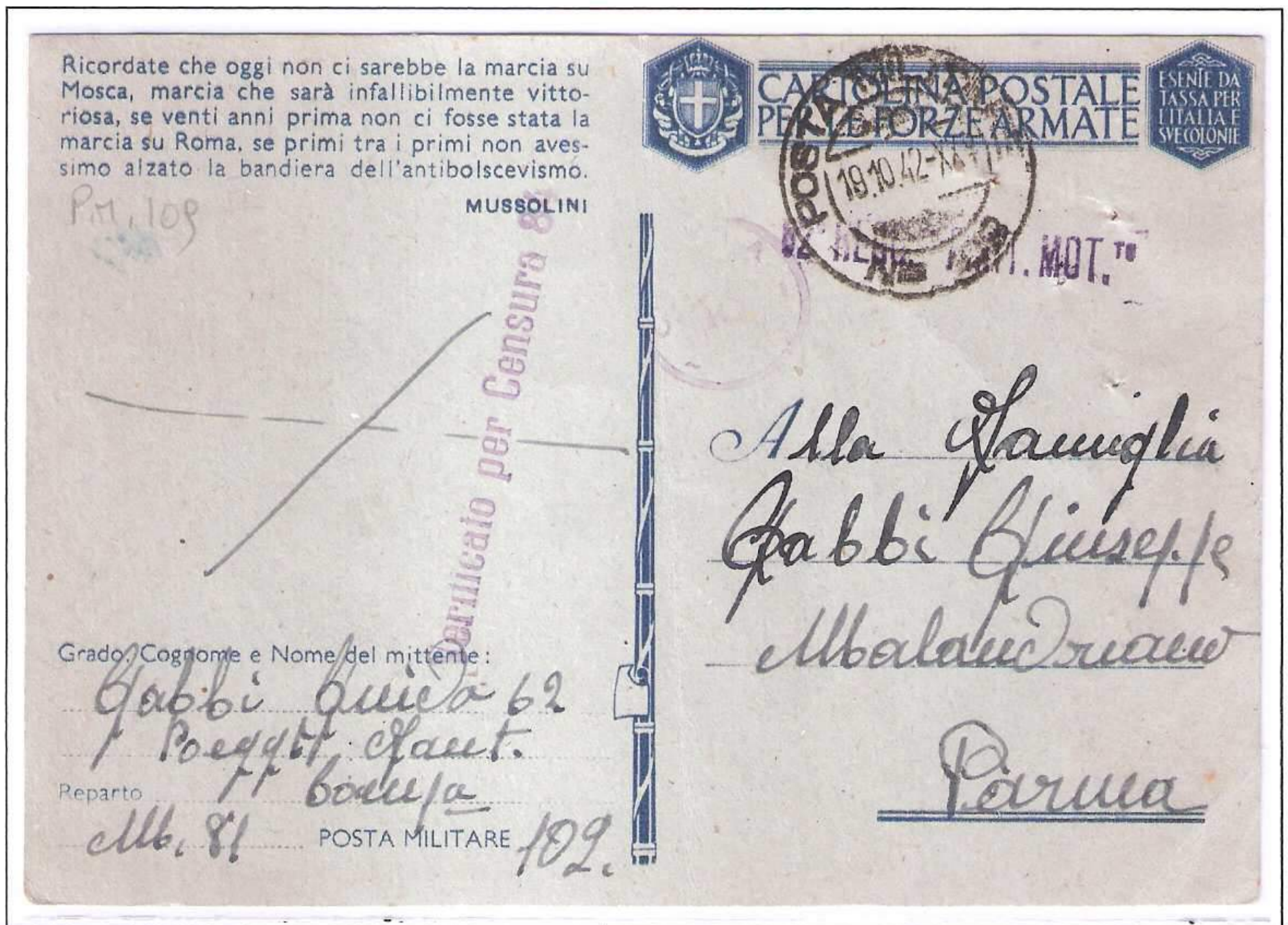
August 13, 1942, Libya, by M.P. 210, 10th Division G.G.F.F. for Naples.





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 Italians soldiers on the battlefield.

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



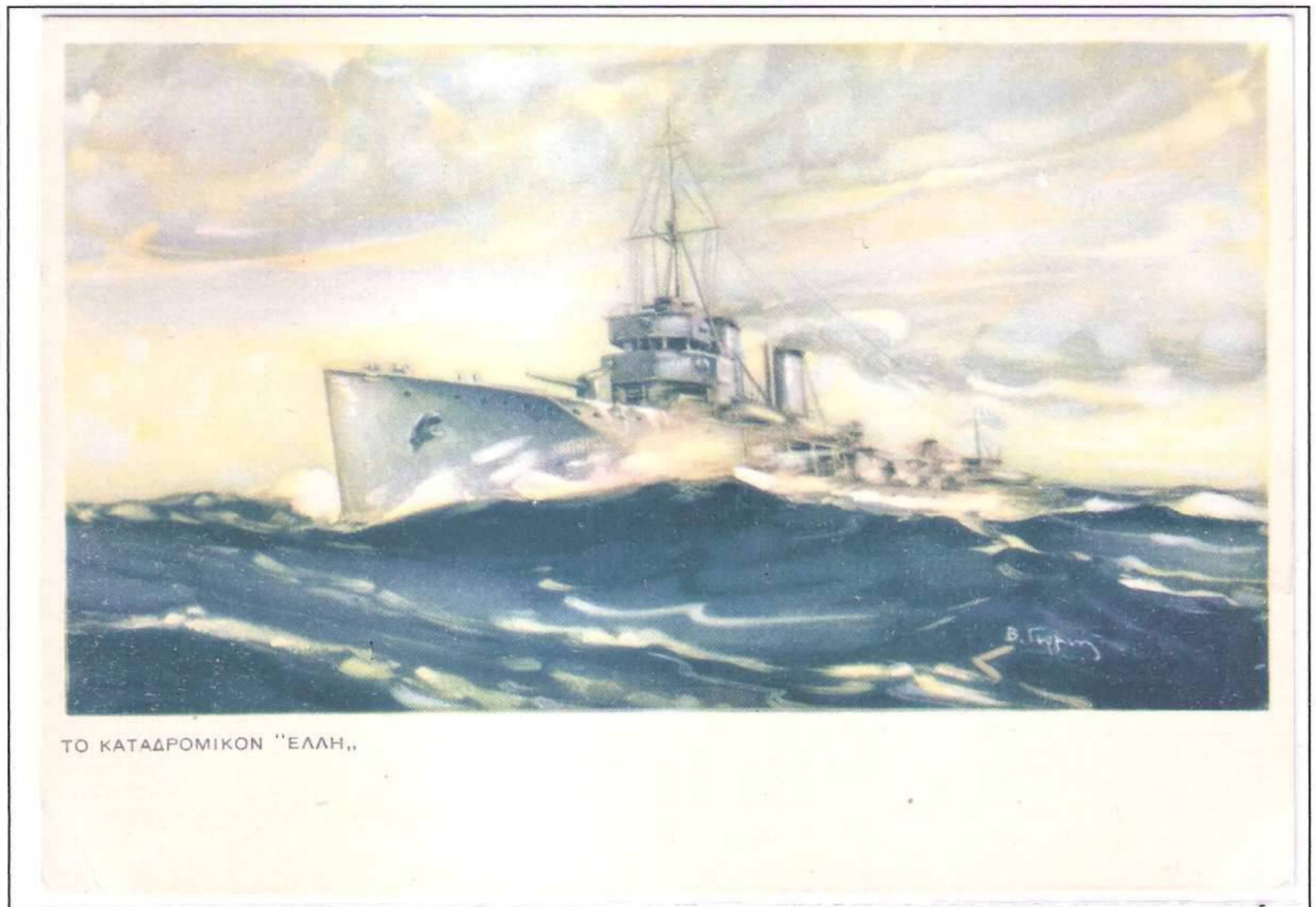
Any hope of an easy victory against Greek quickly dissolves. Notwithstanding on August 15, 1940, the submarine Dolphin, sailing in Greek waters in order to intercept any cargoes neutral to the English service, had sunk the old Greek cruiser Helly.



Greek convoy at the English service.

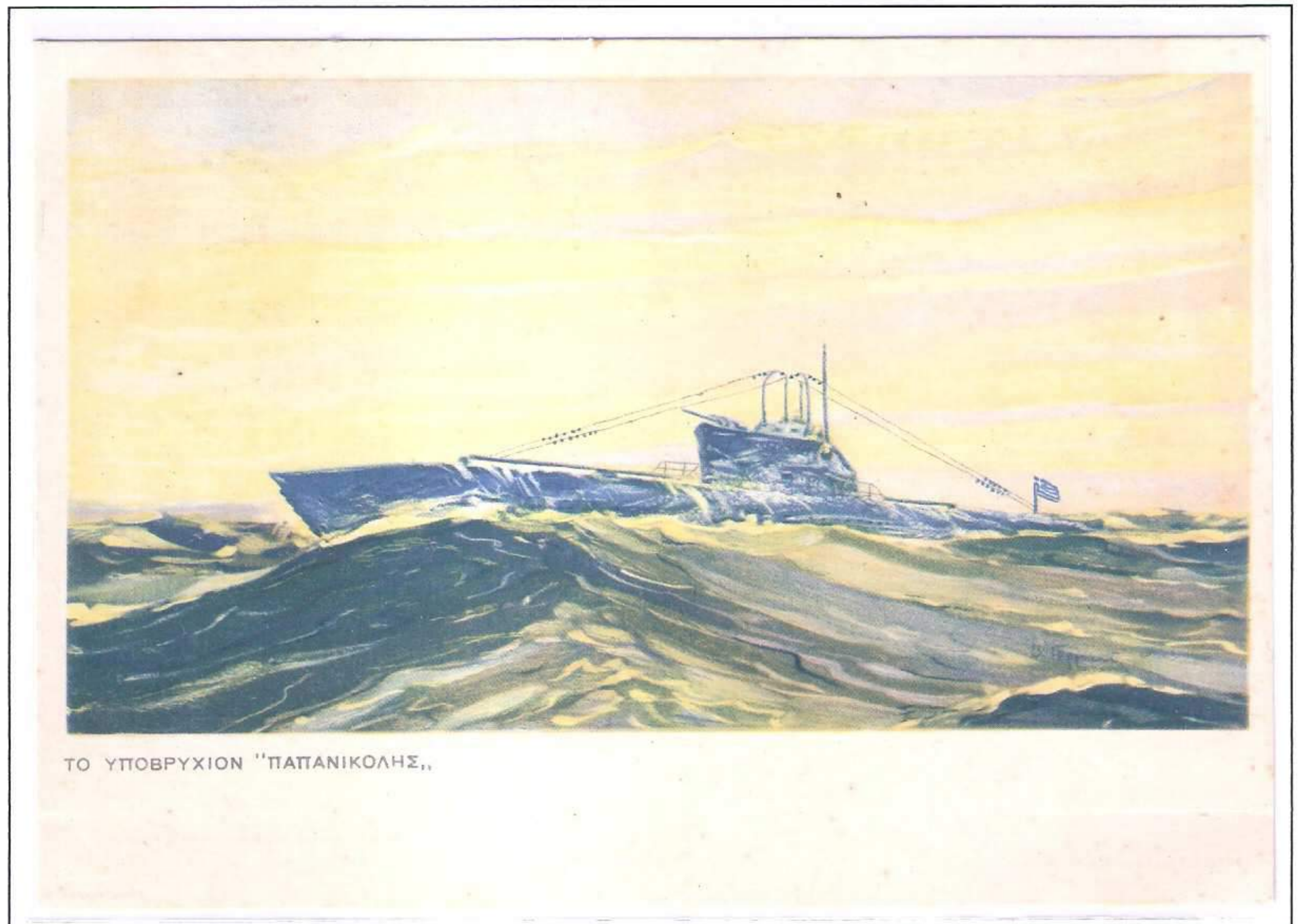


The sinking of the cruiser Helly.



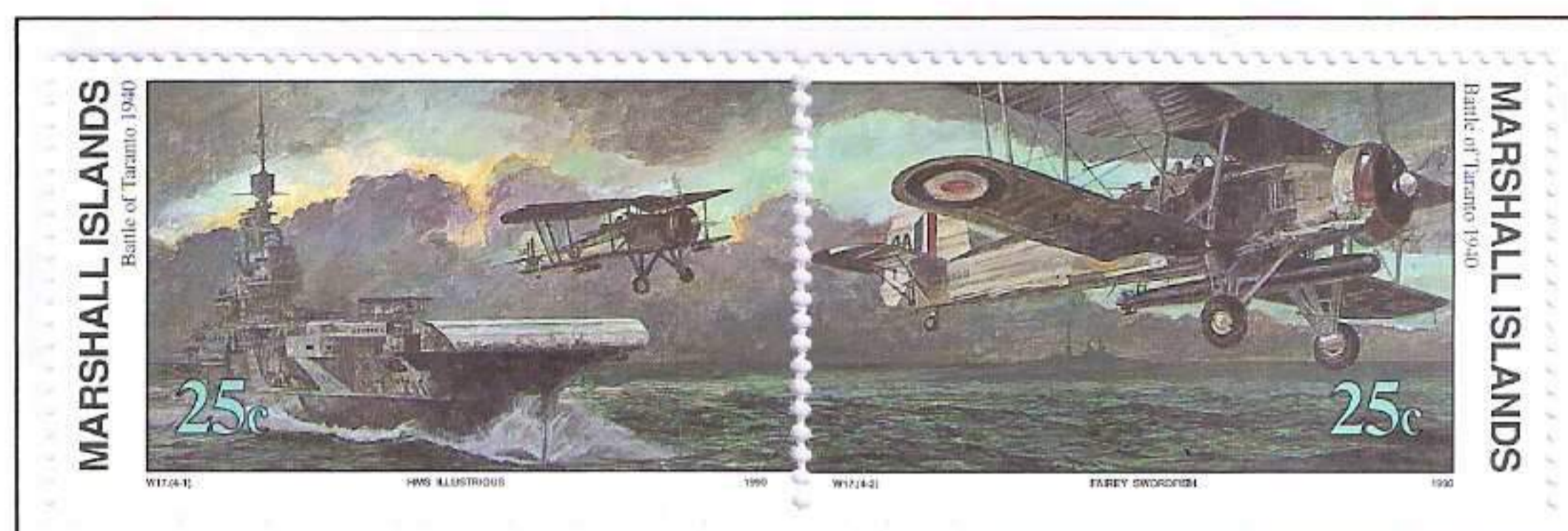
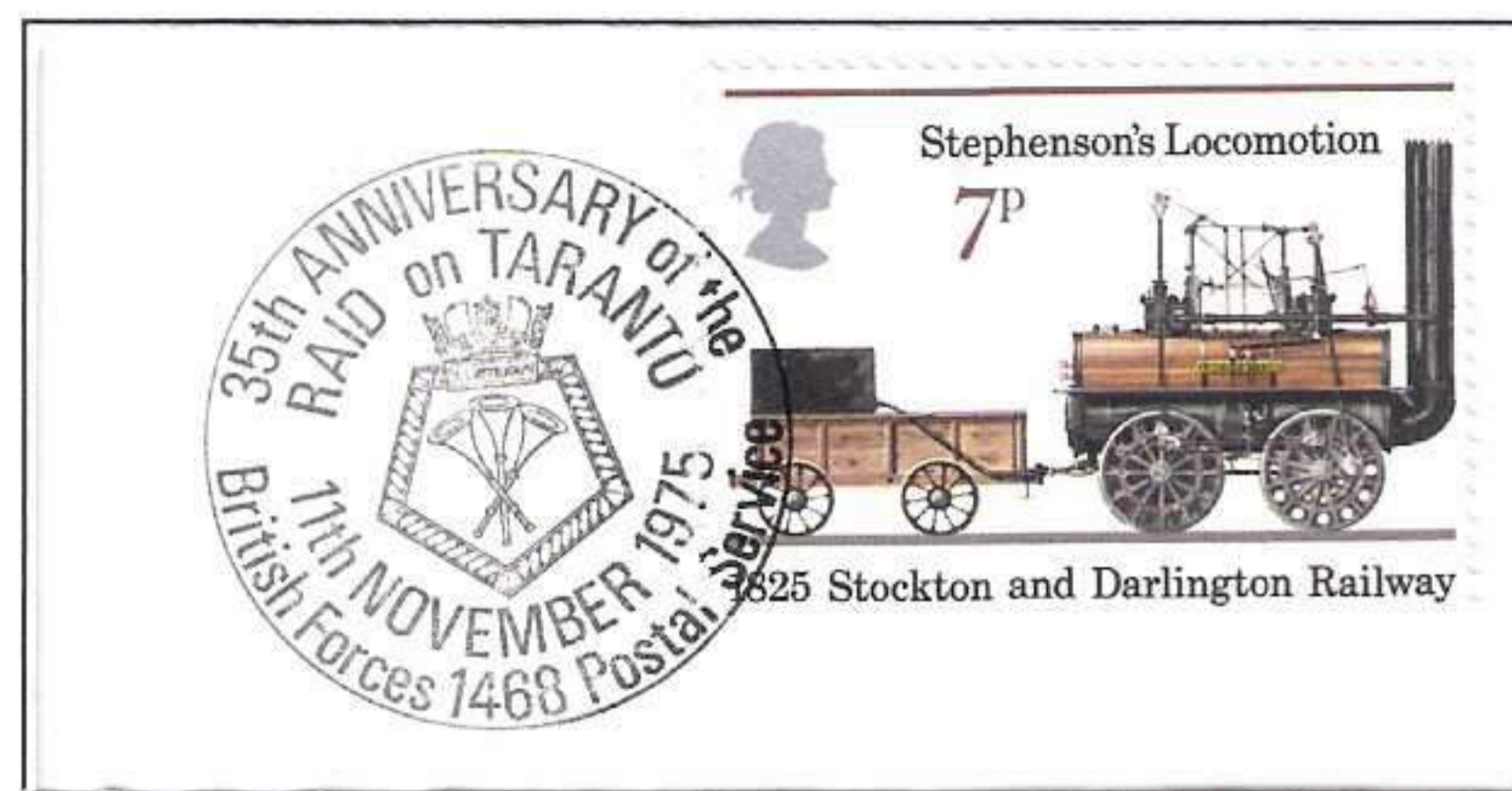
Greek 1941: two drachmas one-piece mail presenting the cruiser Helly.

Actually Greek, though relying on restricted means, gets ready to resist on land, sea and sky. The small fleet of Greek submarines reaches rather goods results in Otranto Channel and offshore the Albanian coasts. The Papanicolis ship takes part in these operations.

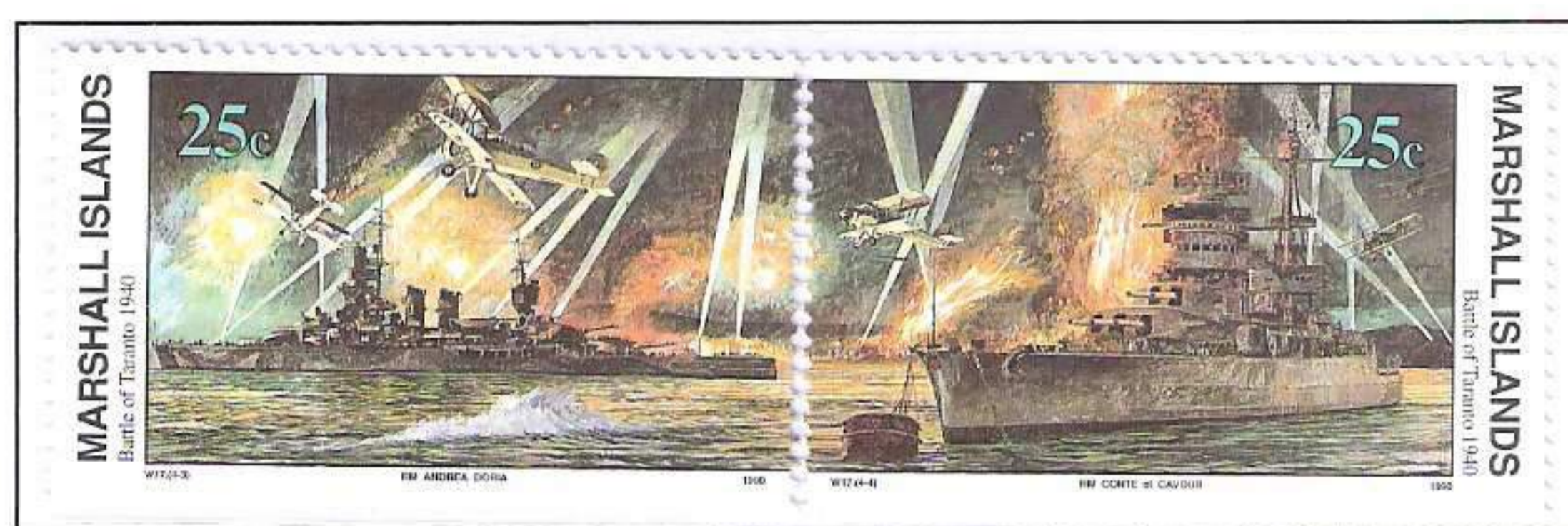


Greek 1941: two drachmas one-piece mail presenting the submarine Papanicolis.

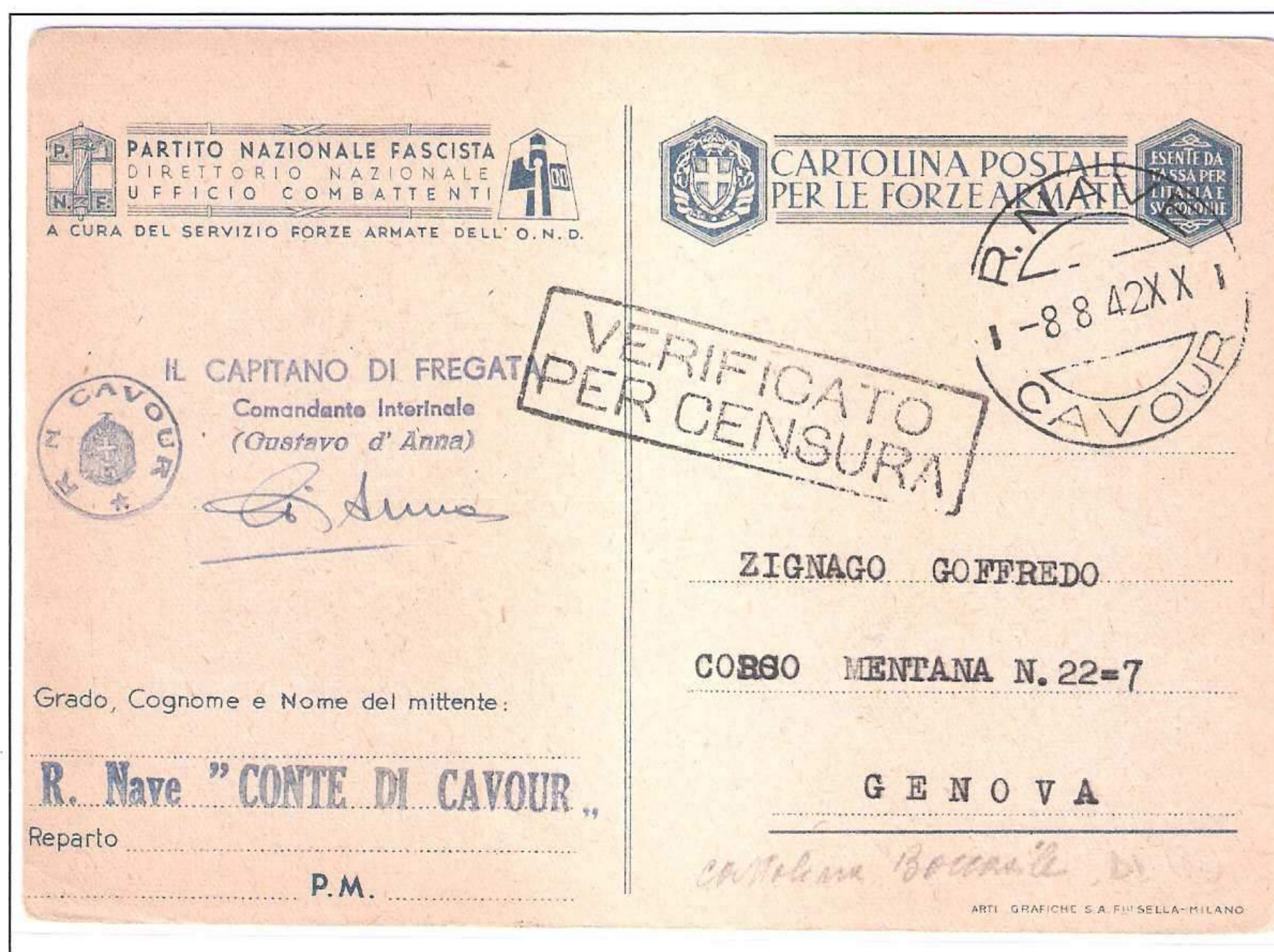
On November 11, 1941, at 11 p.m. the torpedo bombers Swordfish, taken from the aircraft carrier *Illustrious*, attack the naval base of Taranto.



The take-off of the *Swordfish* from the *Illustrious*.



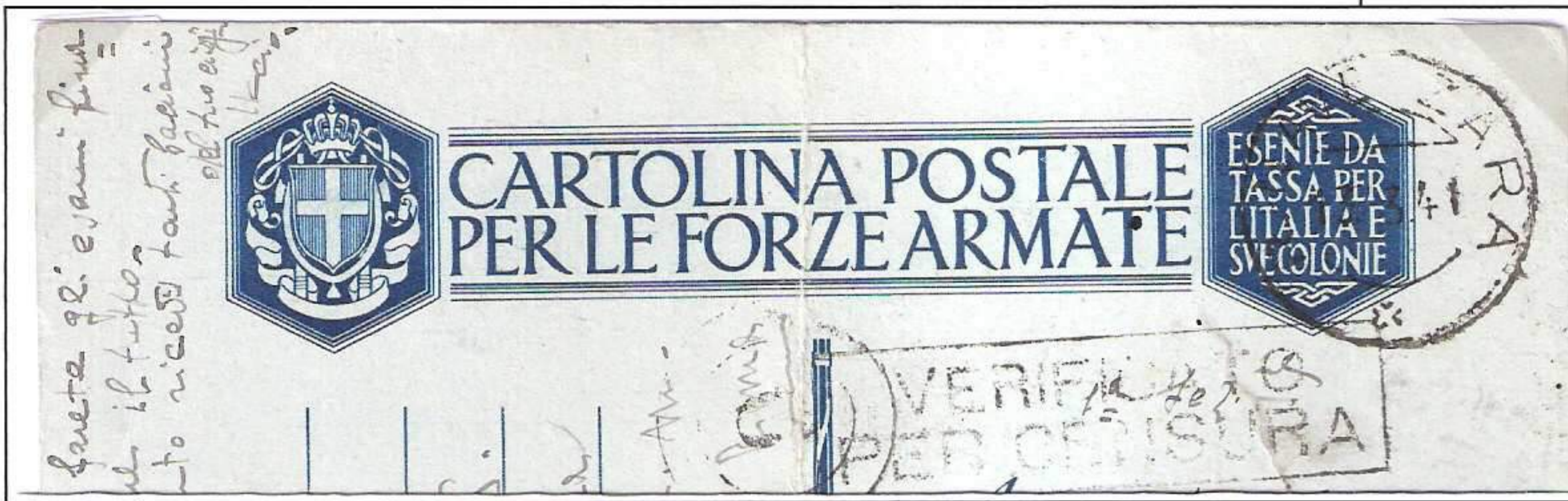
The cruiser *Conte di Cavour* is hit. It will never be operating again. The *Littorio* and the *Caio Duilio*, too, are hit and, once repaired they will be used again in naval operations.



The battle of Cape Matapan, 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.



M.P. from R.S. Zara and Pola.



Correspondence from R.S. Vittorio Veneto.

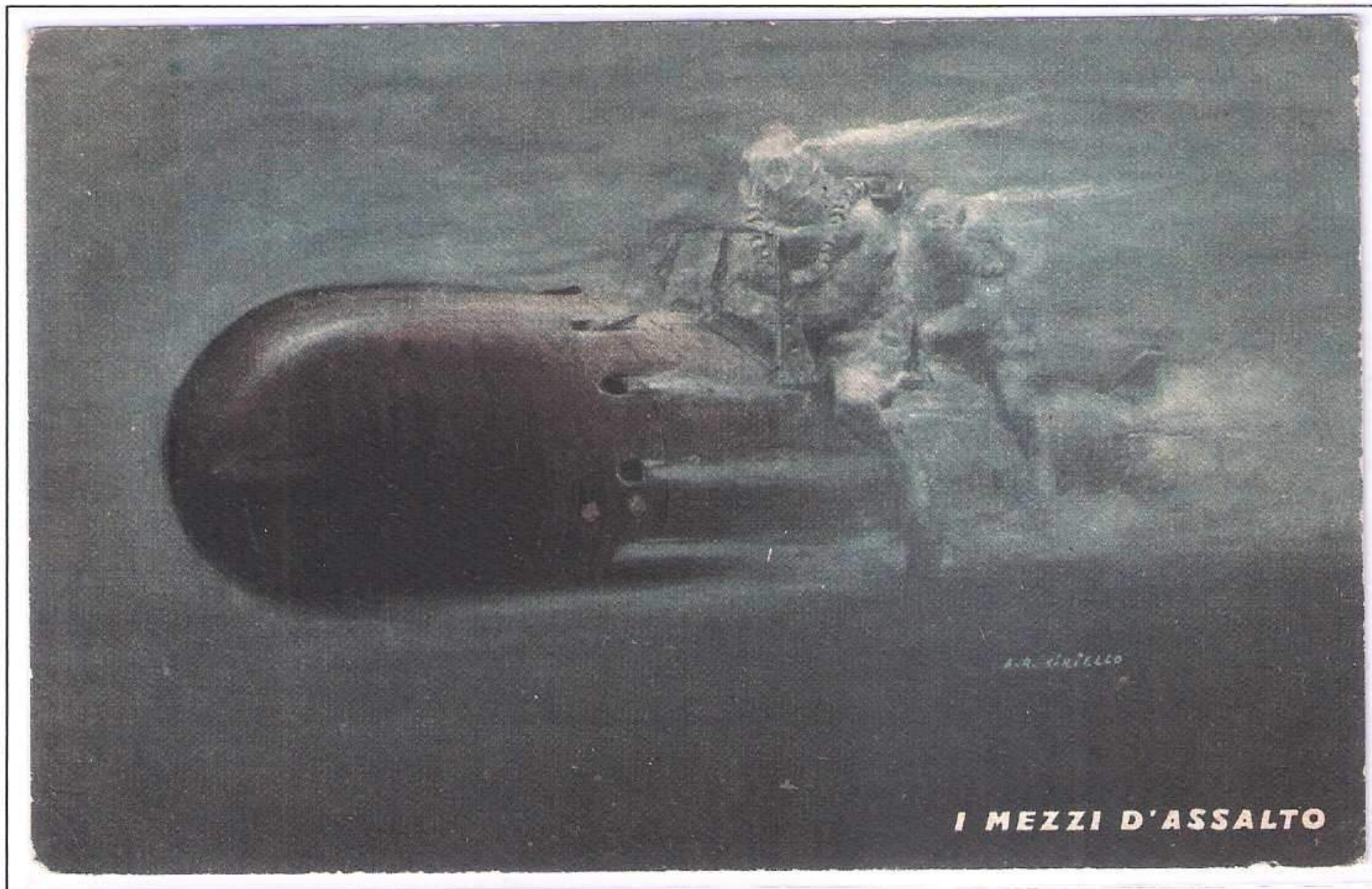
C DUEL ON THE SEAS AND THE AFRICAN SCENE

3. THE MEITERRANEAN SEA AND MALTA

The most successful action is achieved by the raiders of the 10 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.

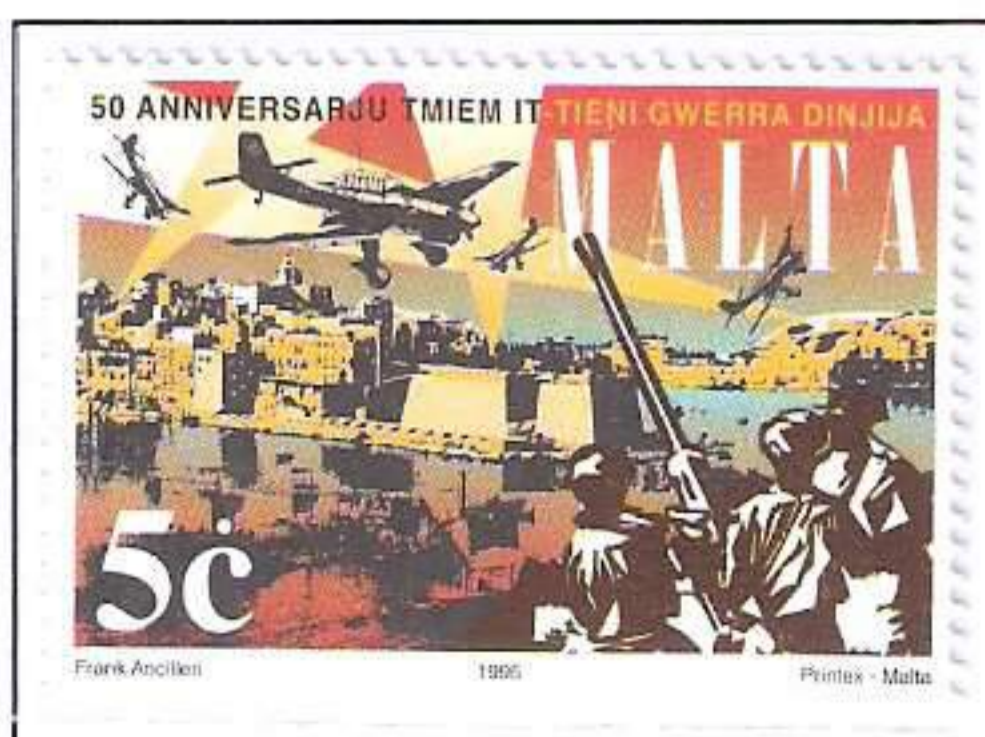


The Valiant, Alessandria of Egypt ,the Scirè.



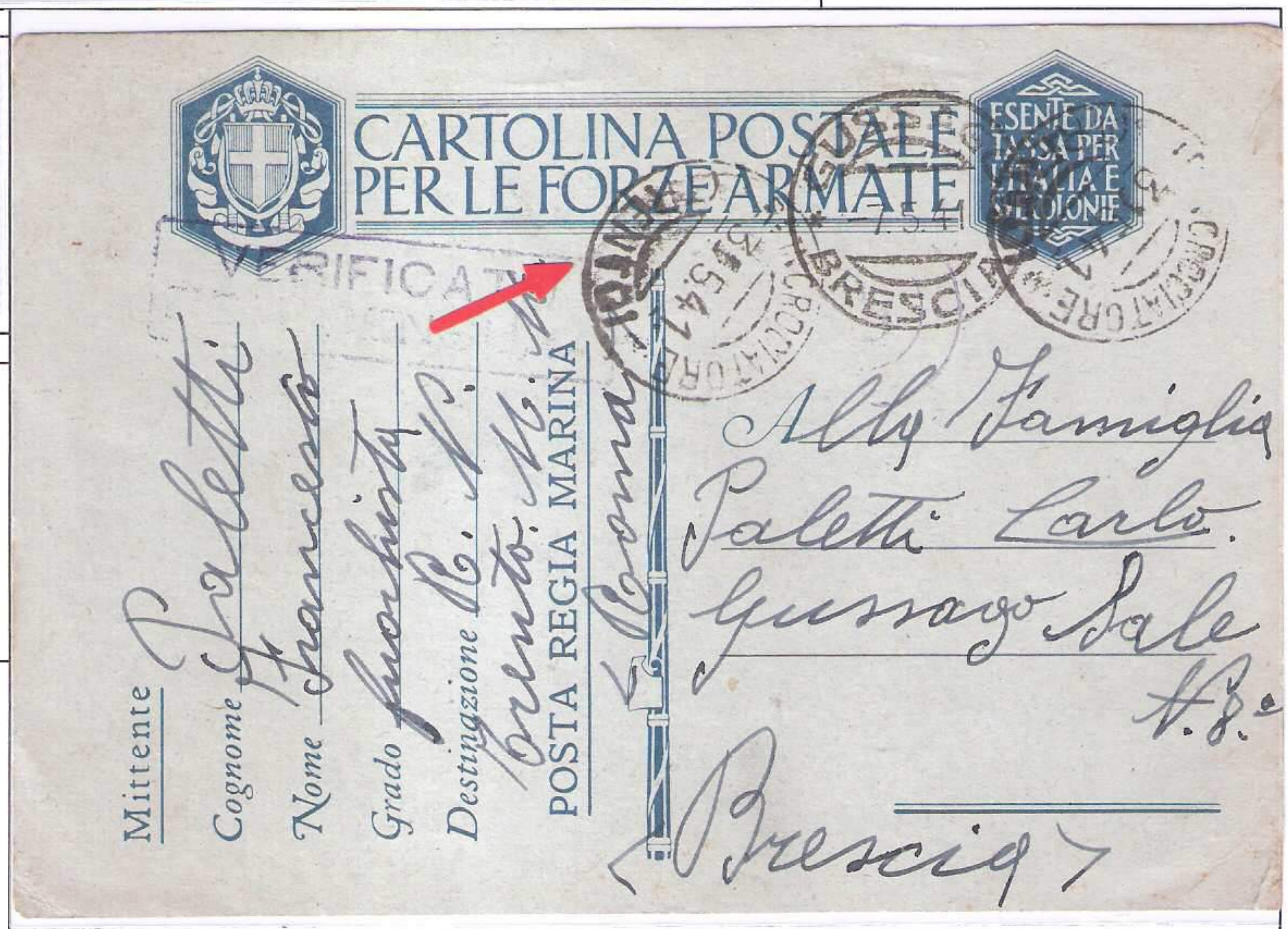
Italy, P.M.free postcard with raiders of the Royal Navy on LSC-pigs.

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.

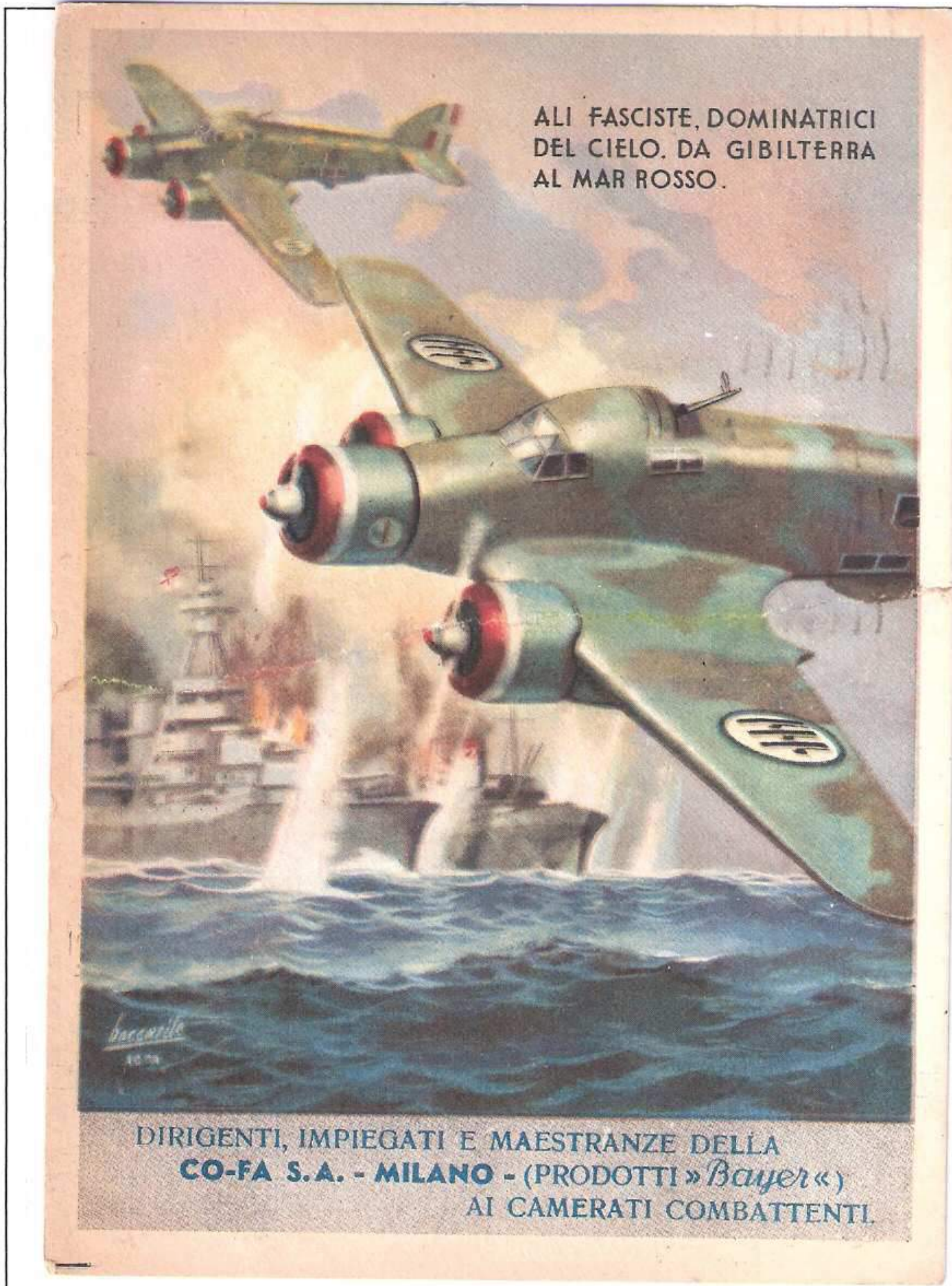


Italy lost the Cruiser "Trento" and one destroyer.

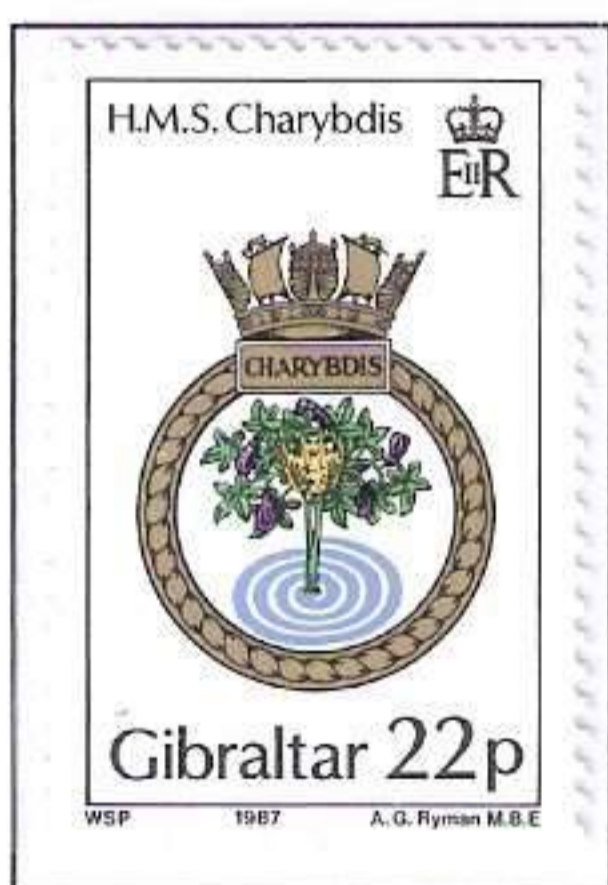
Correspondence sent to sailor on force on the "Trento".



The air torpedoes Savoia-Marchetti S.M.79 and the cruiser Montecuccoli and Duca d'Aosta take part in the so called "middle June battle". On the English side there is the cruiser Charybdis.



The isle of Malta, though under attack and short in supplies, will resist and it will always remain a constant danger for our cargoes moving towards the African coast.



D JAPAN SPREAD OUT

1. PEARL HARBOR

On a Sunday of December, on the 7, 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..



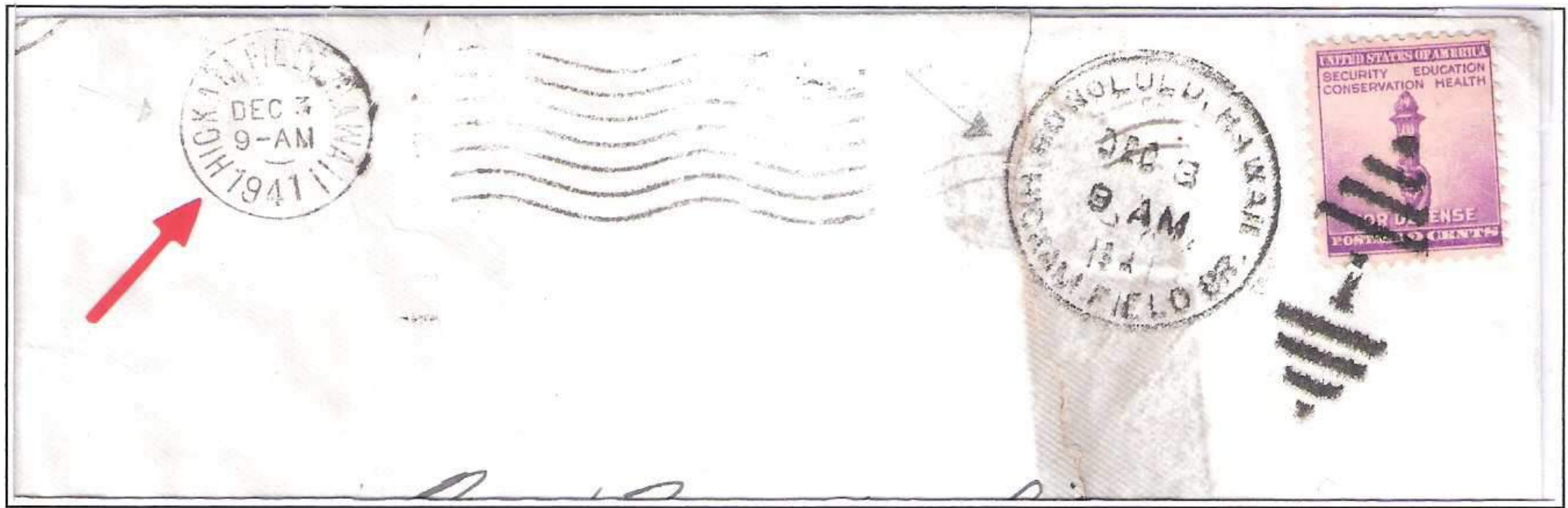
Aircraft taking off from Japanese carriers, the island of Oahu and Pearl Harbor Bay.



Hawaii, September 2, 1941, Letter from Honolulu with cancellation of "Hahu".

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.

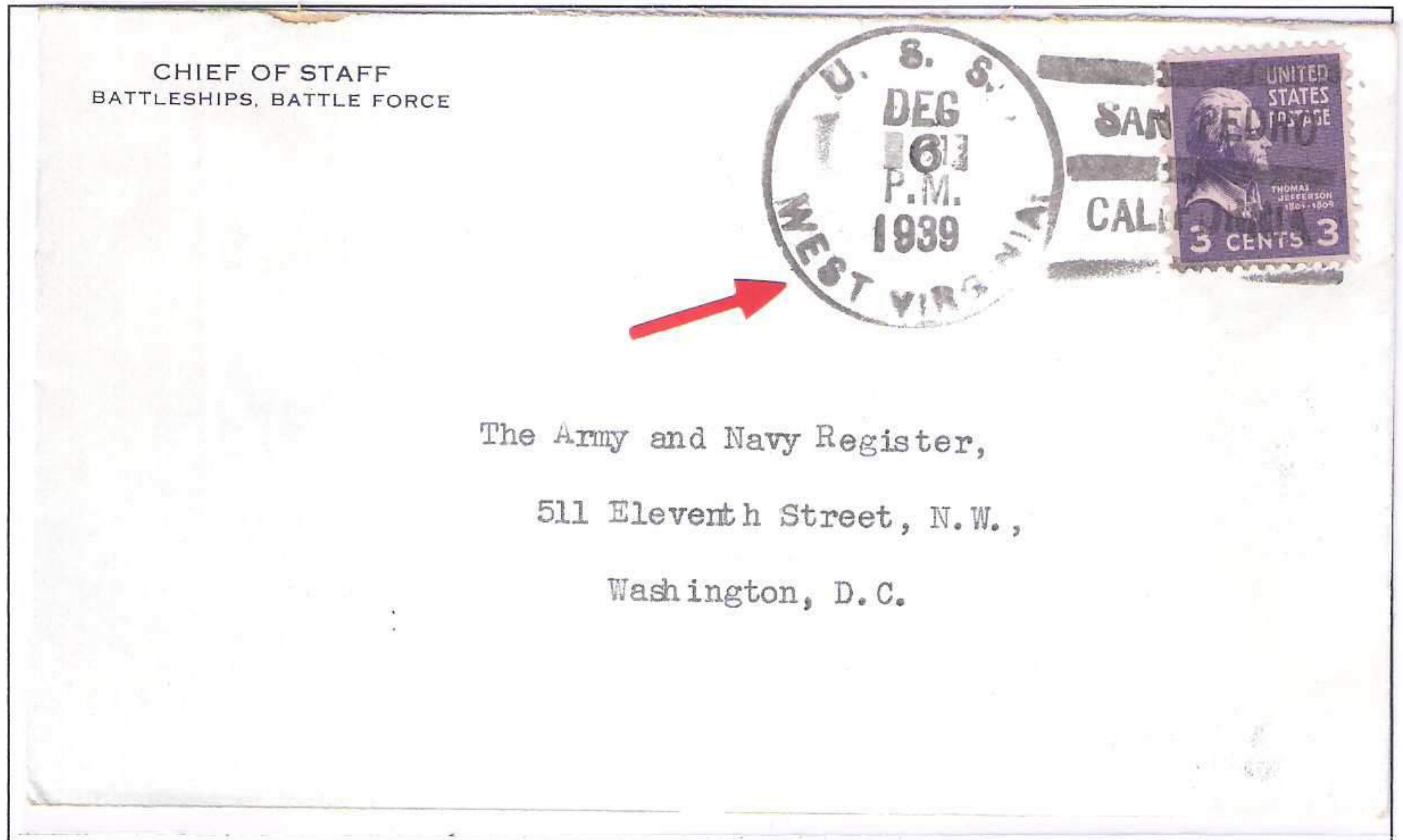


The base of Pearl Harbor under attack in a Japanese postcard, 1943, from 2s.

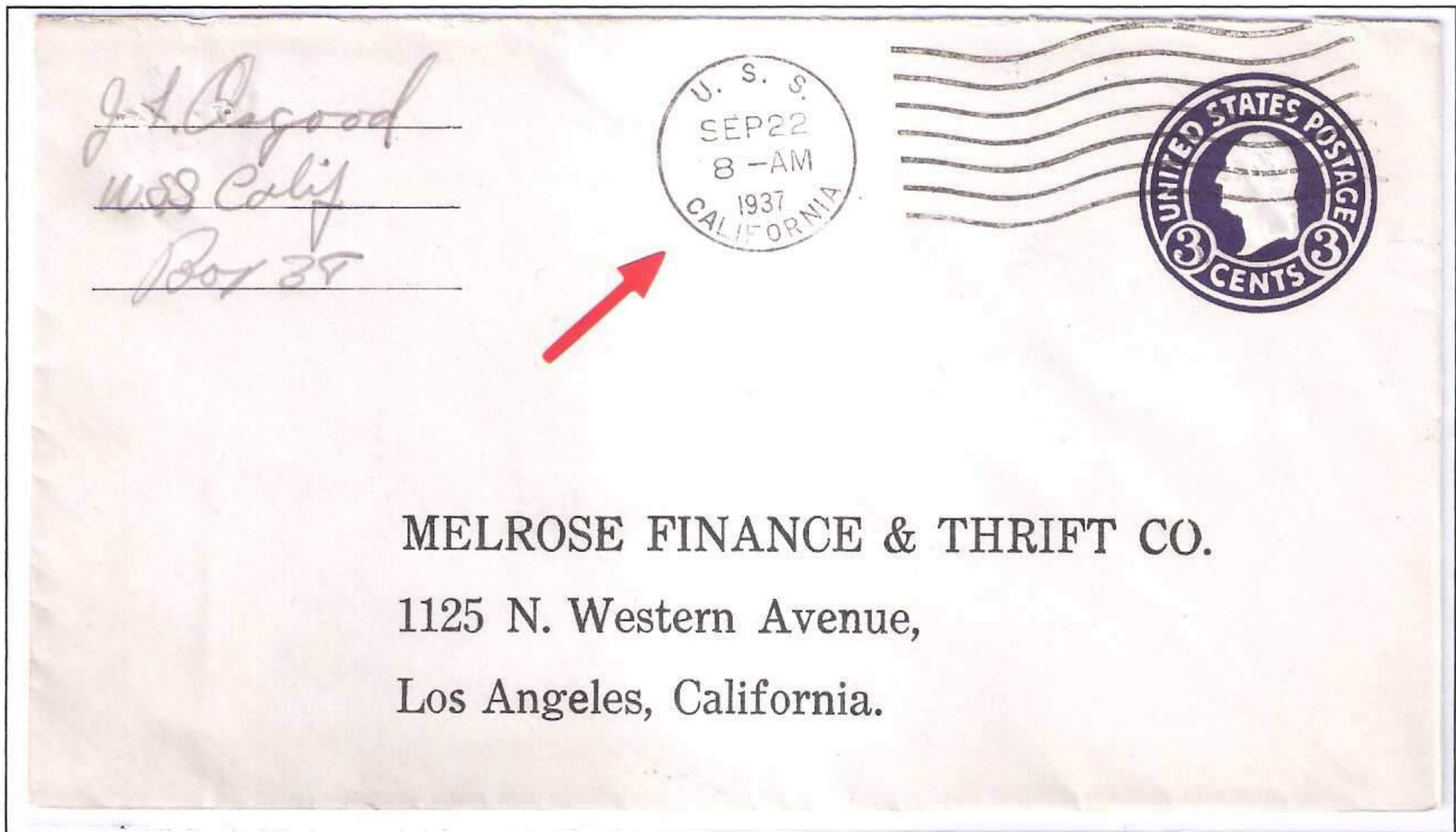
D JAPAN SPREADS OUT

1. PEARL HARBOR

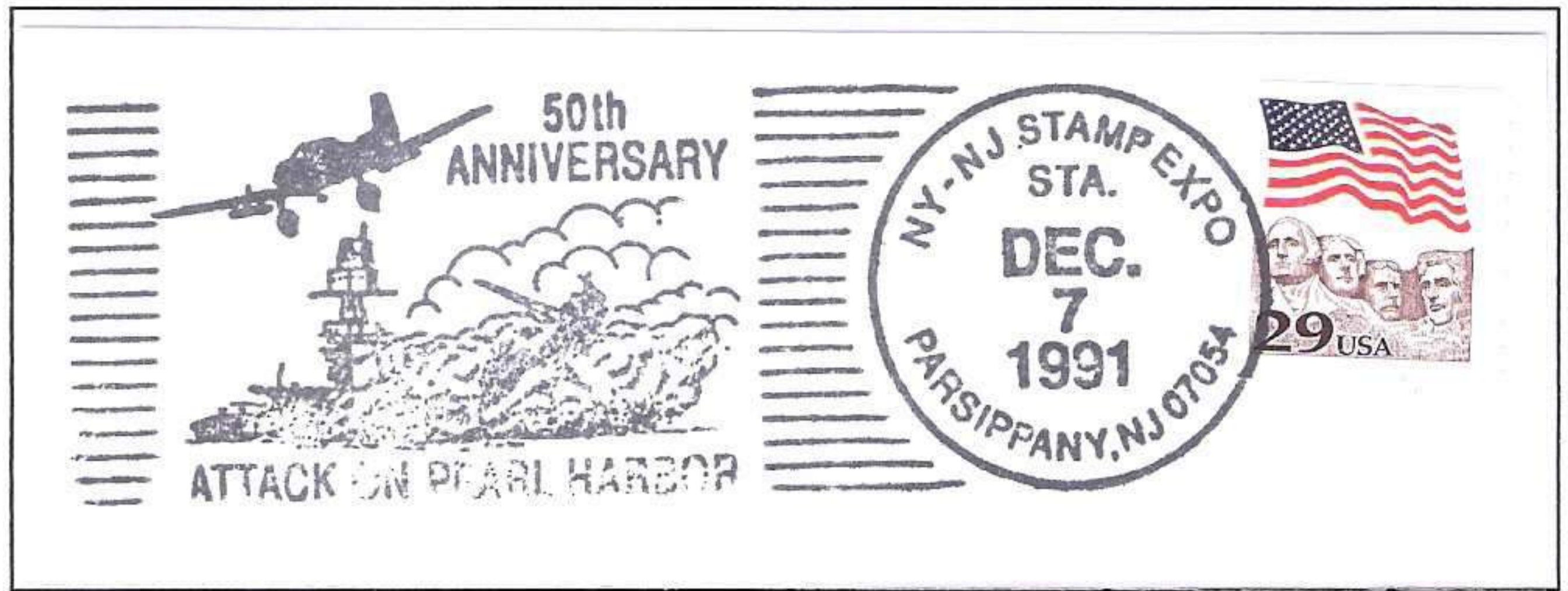
During the Japanese attack the Nevada is the only battleship trying to find a way out of the bay. It will however be hit by bombs and torpedoes which will stop its mission. The Arizona, unfortunately hit by bombs and torpedoes, will capsize and sink, together with almost 1,200 men, sailors and marines.



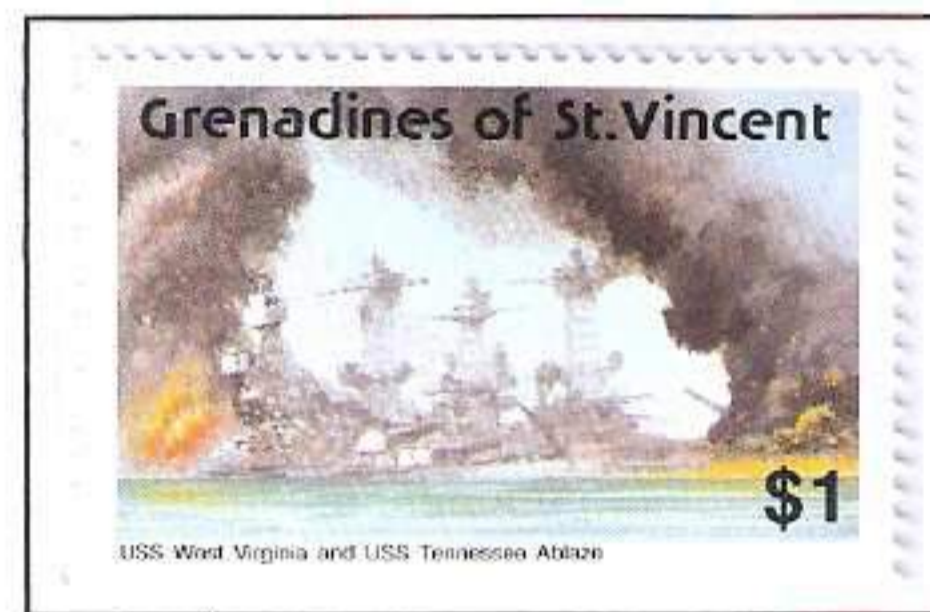
The battleships Pennsylvania, California and West Virginia, too, are hit and seriously damaged. They will be repaired and they will take part in new missions both in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.



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 sinks.



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.

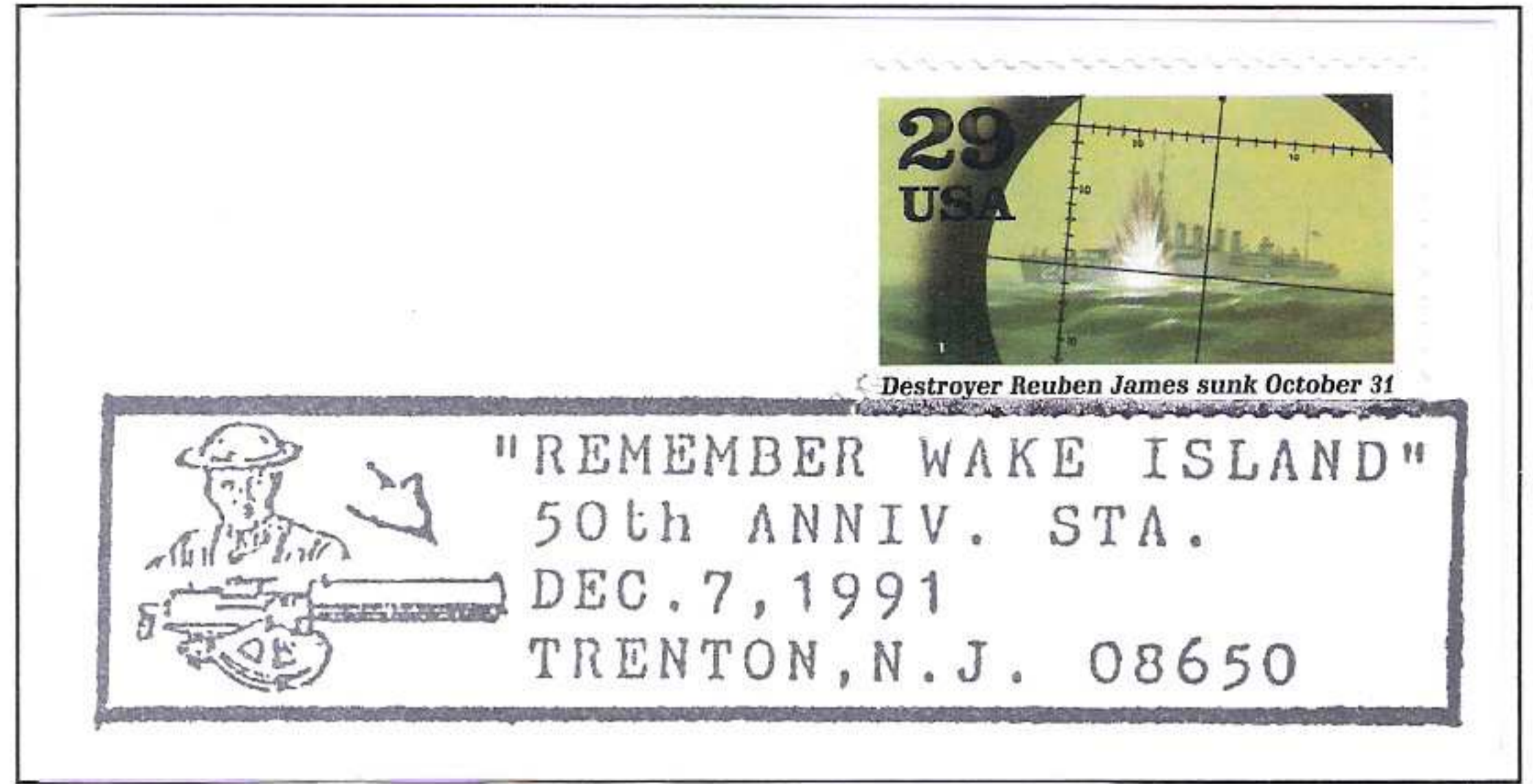


Newspaper reports about the attack on the Hawaii with Roosevelt signing the declaration of war.

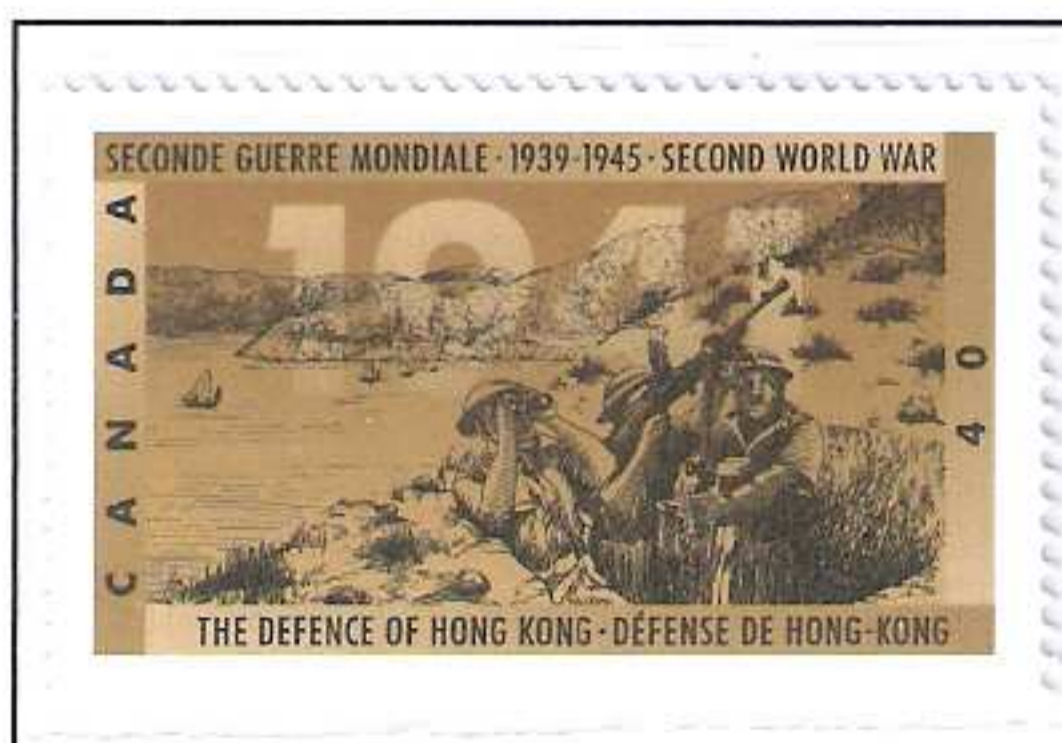
D JAPAN SPREADS OUT

2. SOUTHEAST ASIA

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.

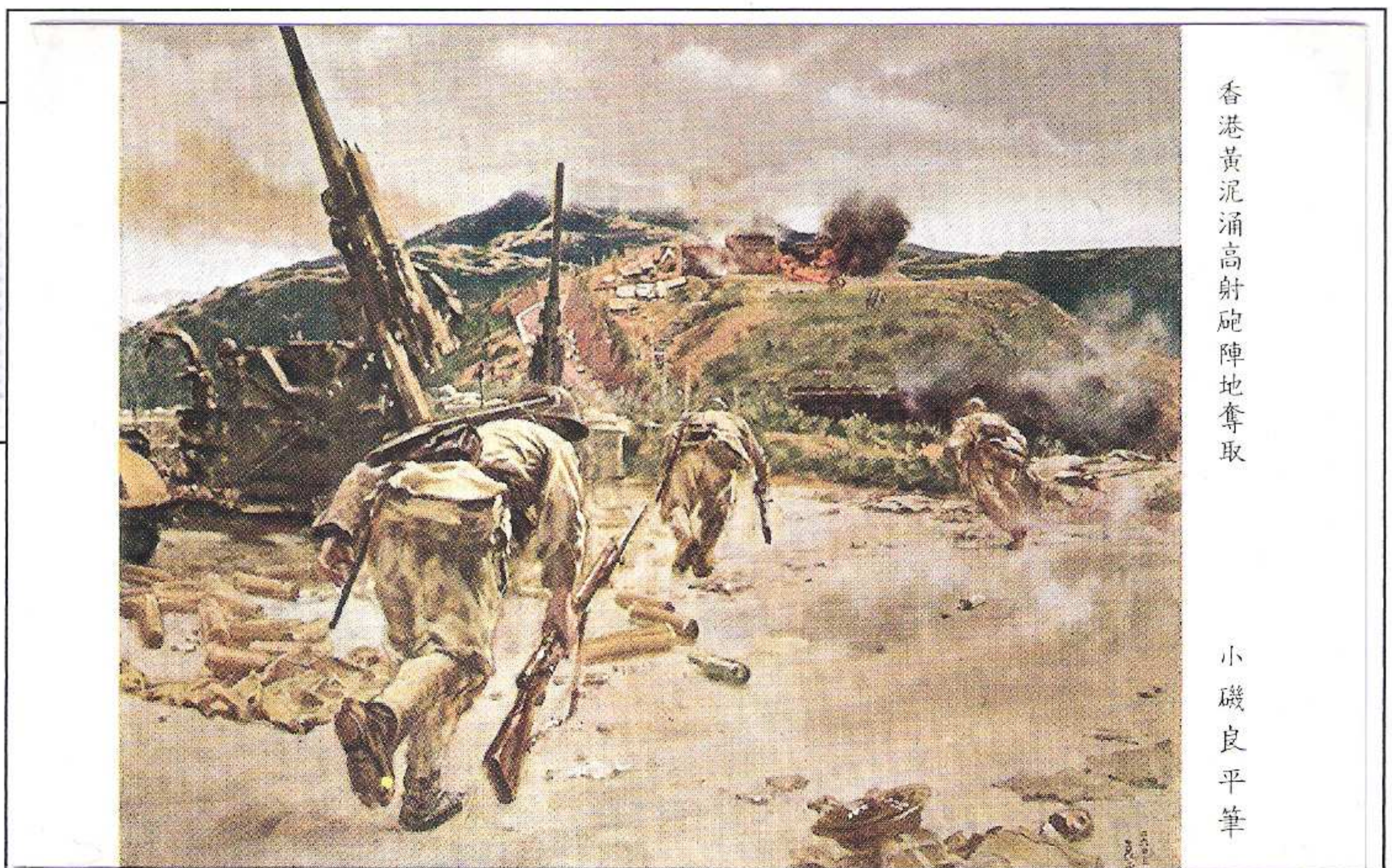


In the same month of December the Japanese forces occupy the British possession of Hong Kong defended by Canadian troops, and are ready to invade Malaya.



The defence of Canadian troops.

Japan, 1943, a 2s. postcard.



香港黃泥涌高射砲陣地奪取

小磯良平筆

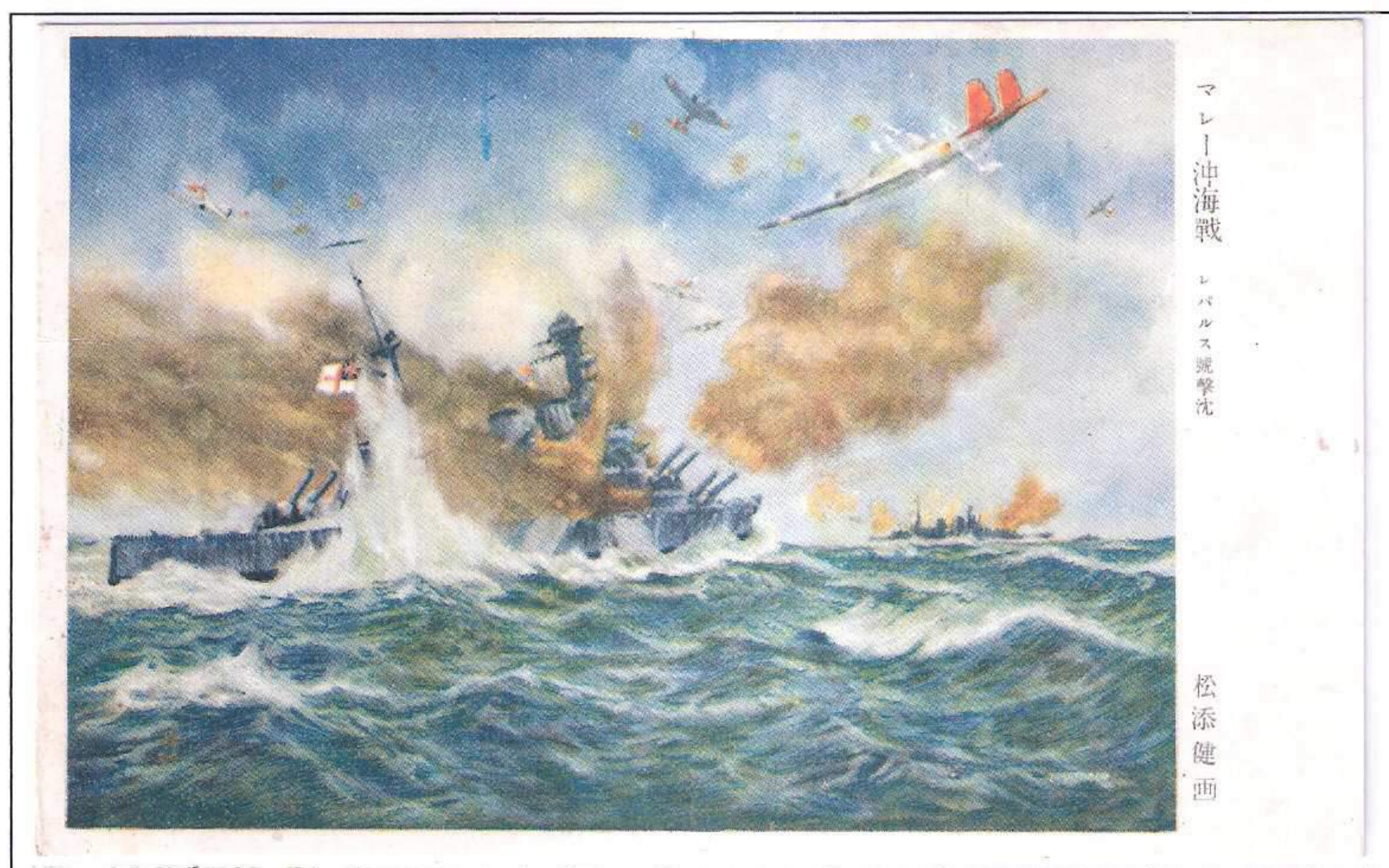
In six months the Japanese conquer the Philippines, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, Borneo, Indonesia and much of China. On September 12, 1941 the Japanese deal a blow to the British Navy sinking the only two battleships present in those seas.



The Repulse and the Prince of Wales.



Italy, October 17, 1942: from P.M. 157, allegorical card with the Japanese samurai sinking the British ships.



Japan, 1943: a 2s. postcard, the Repulse sinks

After the surrender of Hong Kong on December 25, 1941, the Japanese attack Singapore from land and they force General Percival to surrender. The loss of that strongpoint is a very hard blow to the English army.

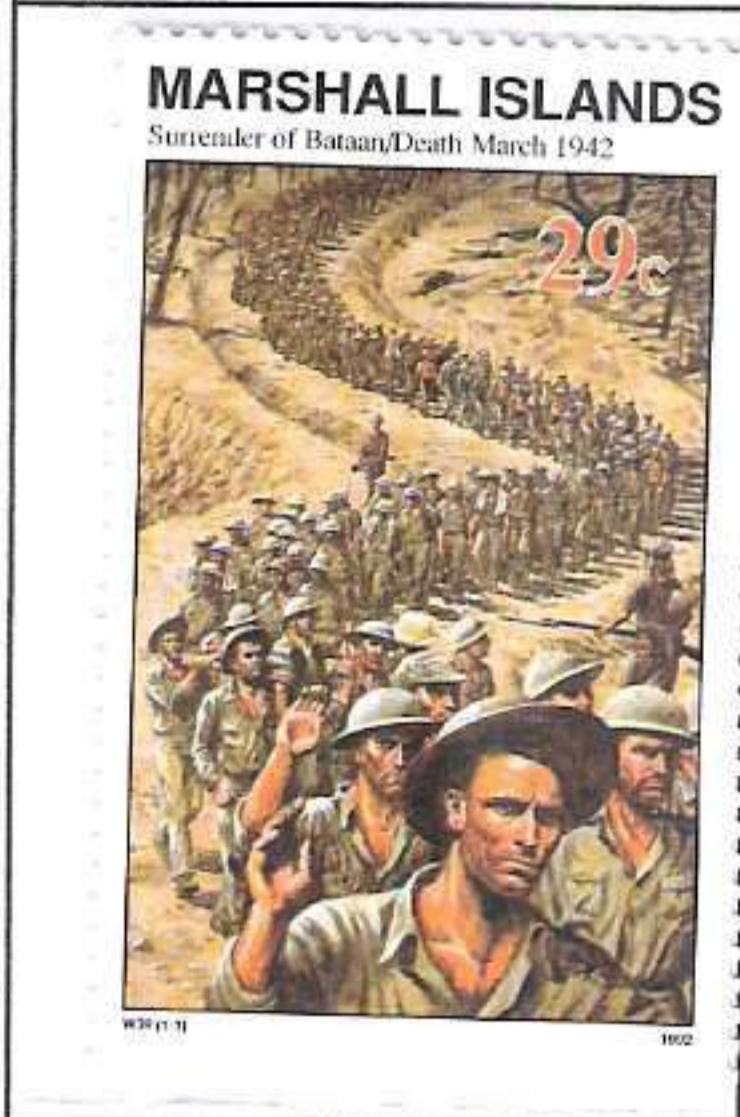
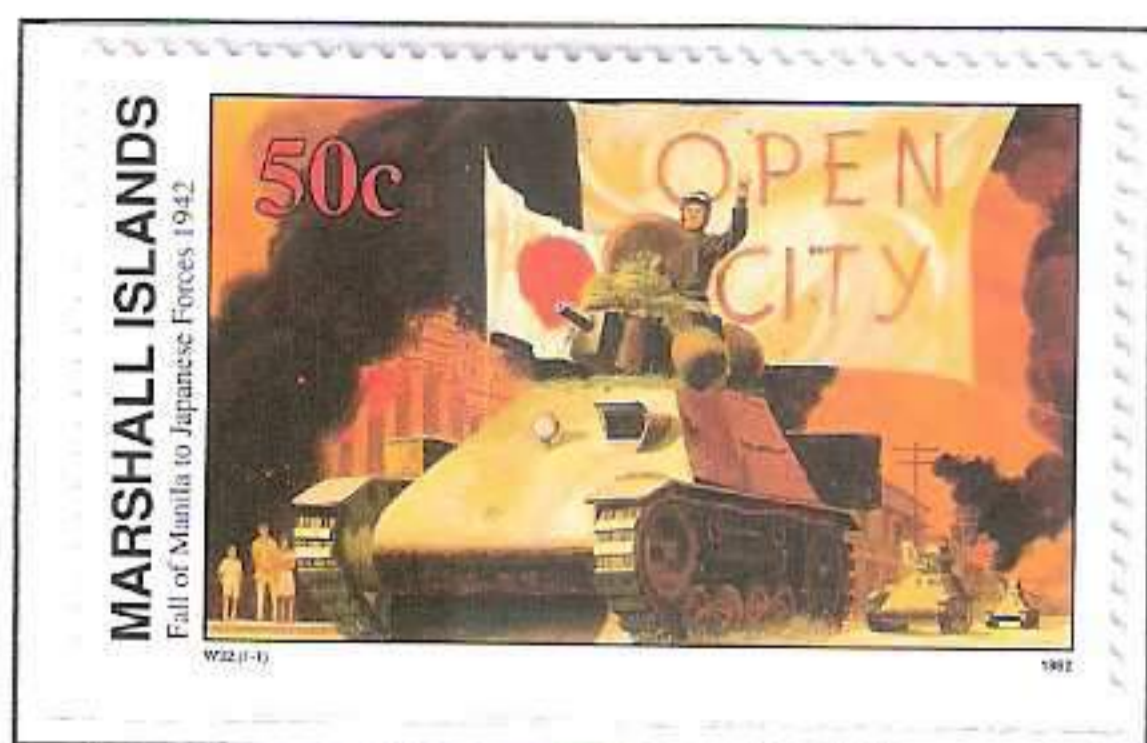


Japan, 1943: a 2s. postcard.

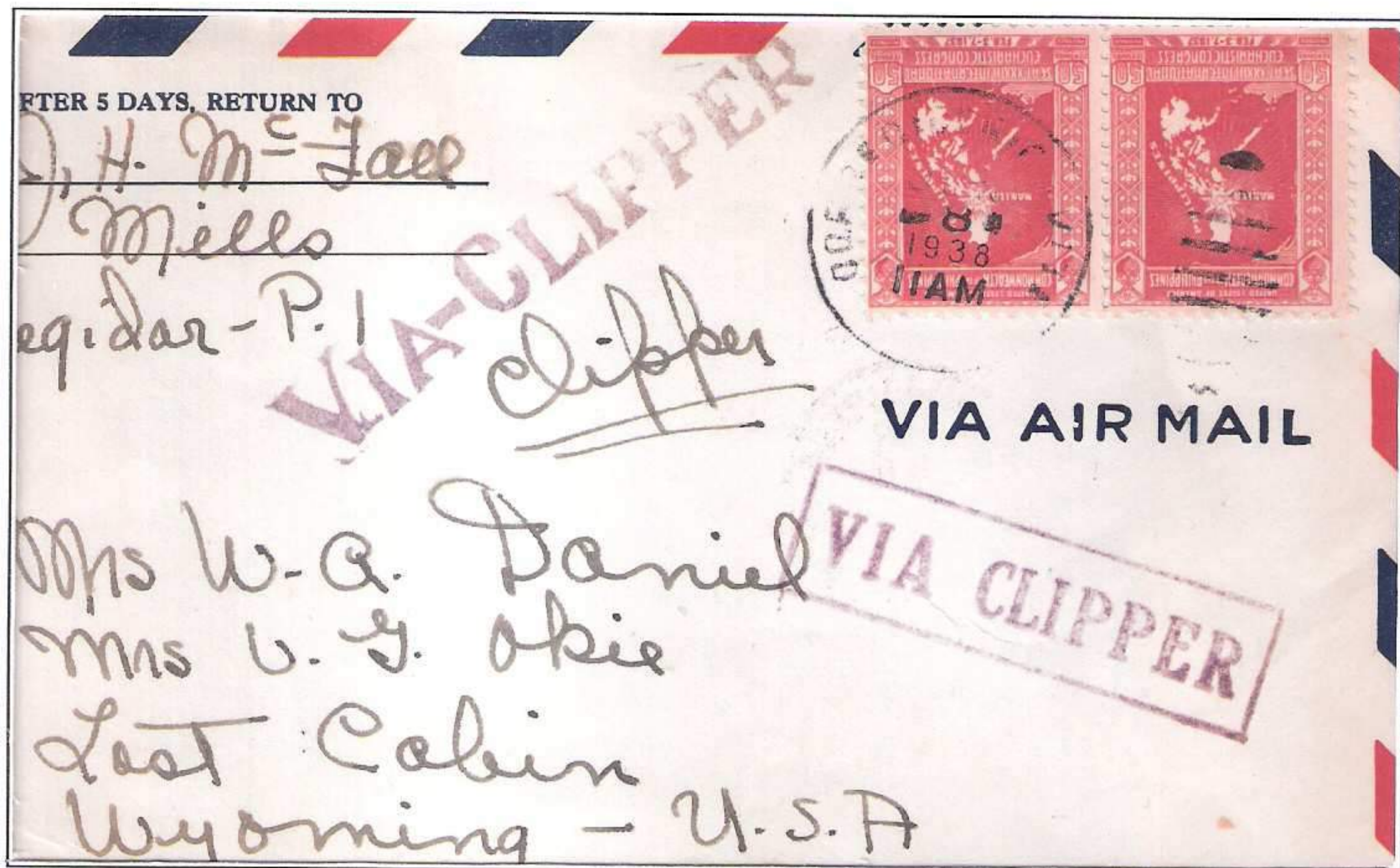
After the conquest of the capital Rangoon in May the whole Burma is occupied by the Japanese.



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).



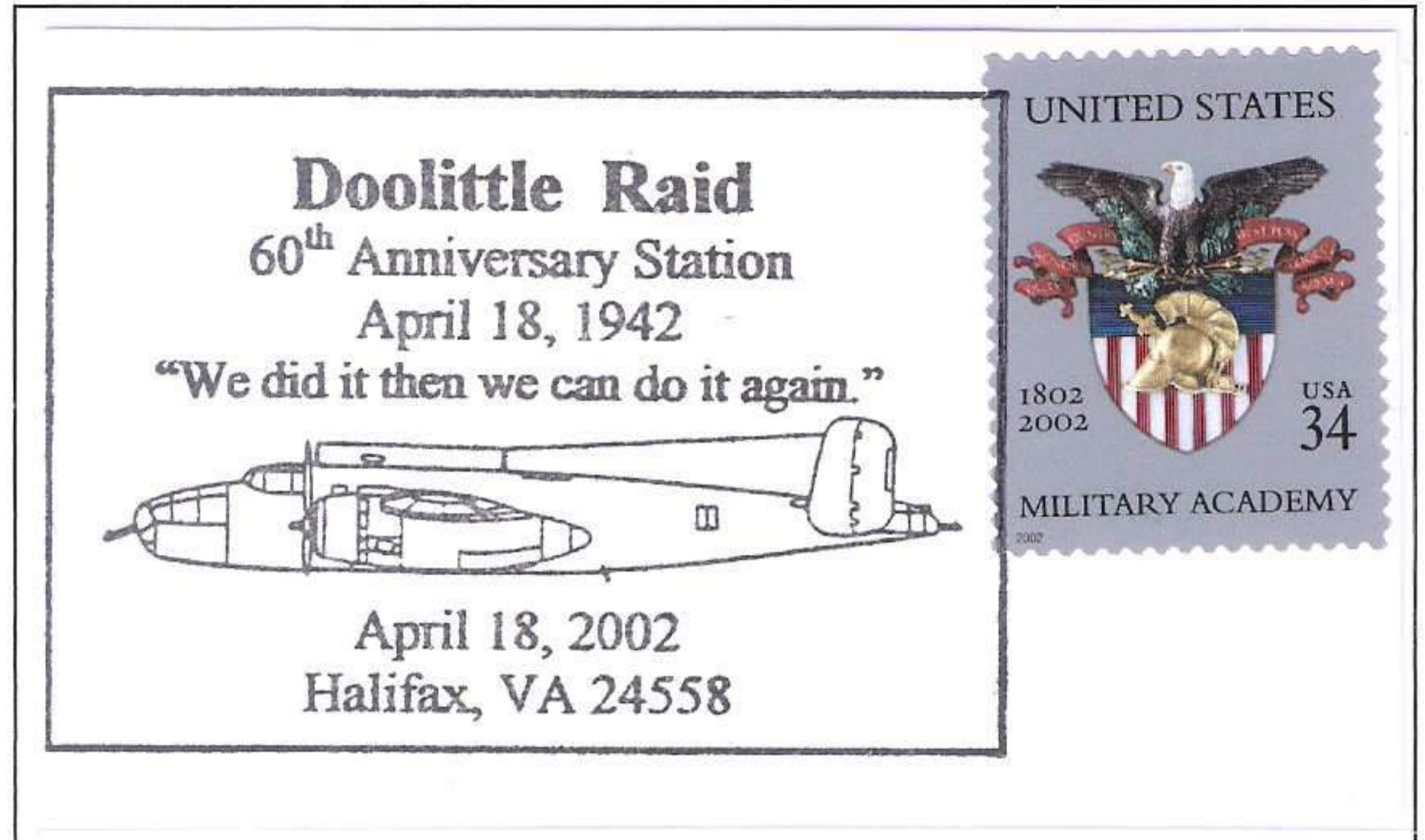
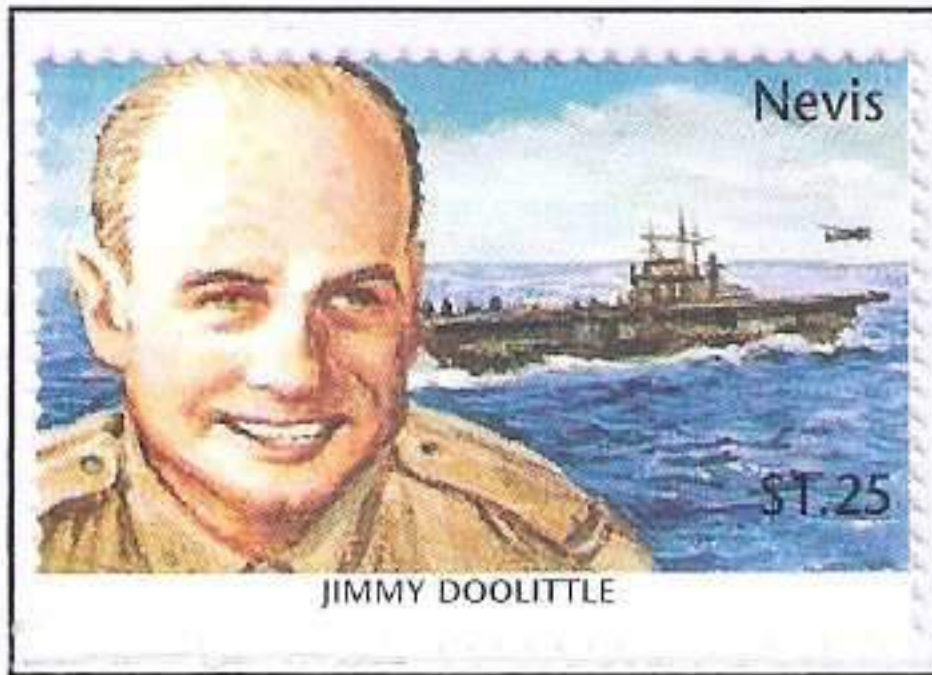
The American and Philippine troops retreat into the Bataan peninsula but after fighting for months they surrender on April 9th. The prisoners' start the "long death march" which decimates them through diseases, food and water shortage and the hardness of the march.



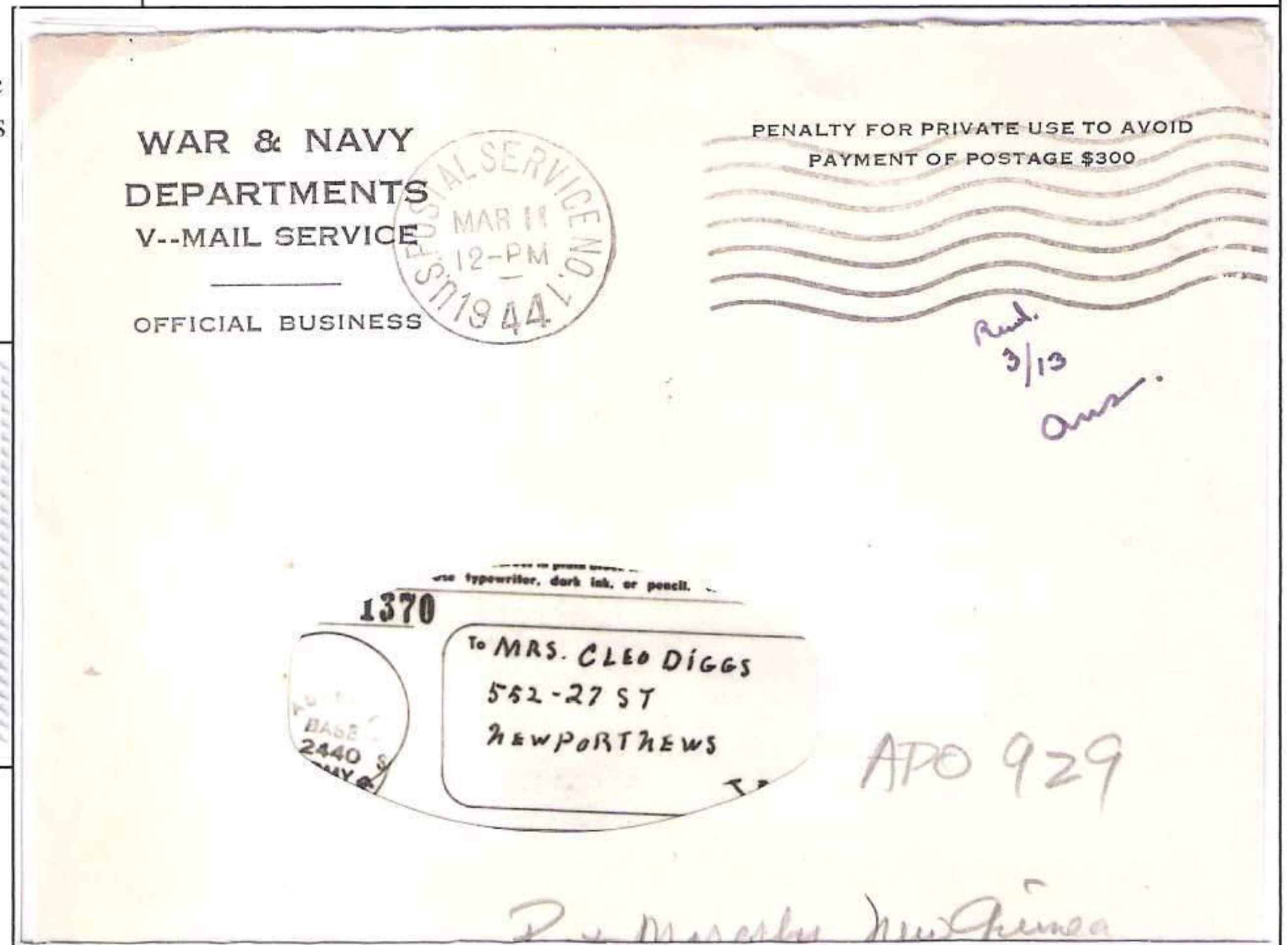
On May 6, 1942 even Gen. Wainwright's troops, sheltered in the isle of Corregidor, are obliged to surrender to Japanese forces. Gen. MacArthur left the Philippines uttering the famous sentence "I shall return".



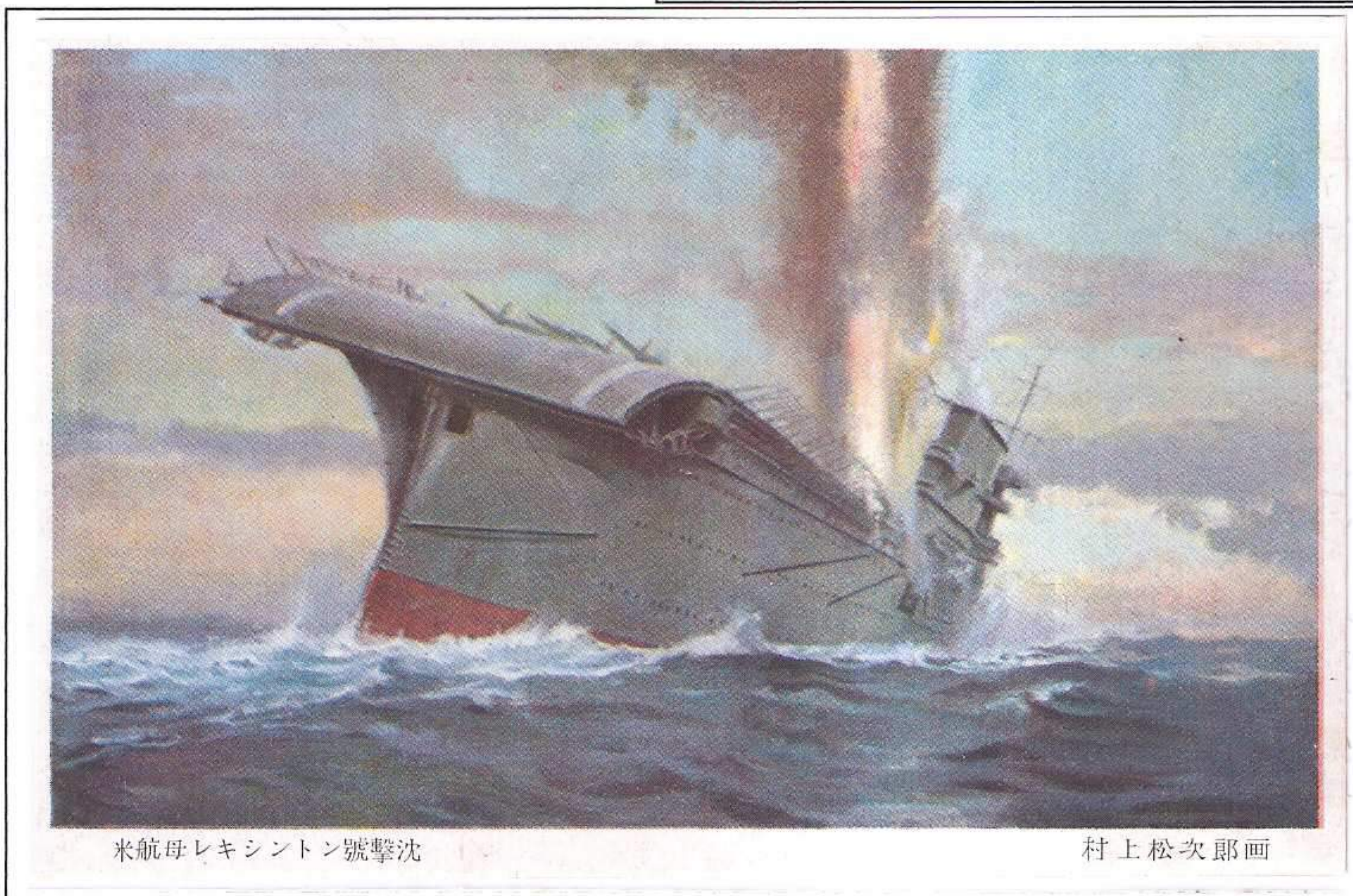
After the loss of the Philippines, Gen. MacArthur and Adm. Nimitz coordinate the strategies for the allies' comeback. The decision is taken for an air attack to show the allies' ability to hit Japan on its heat. Col. Doolittle is charged with the mission. He takes off from aircraft Hornet with 16 B-25,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



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.



V-Mail 1944 from Port Moresby (A.P.O. 929) New Guinea to Newport News, Va. (USA).



米航母レキシントン号撃沈

村上松次郎画



The United States lose the aircraft carrier Lexington, but they stop the Japanese offensive.

Japan, 1943: a 2s. postcard whit the Lexington sinks.

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.



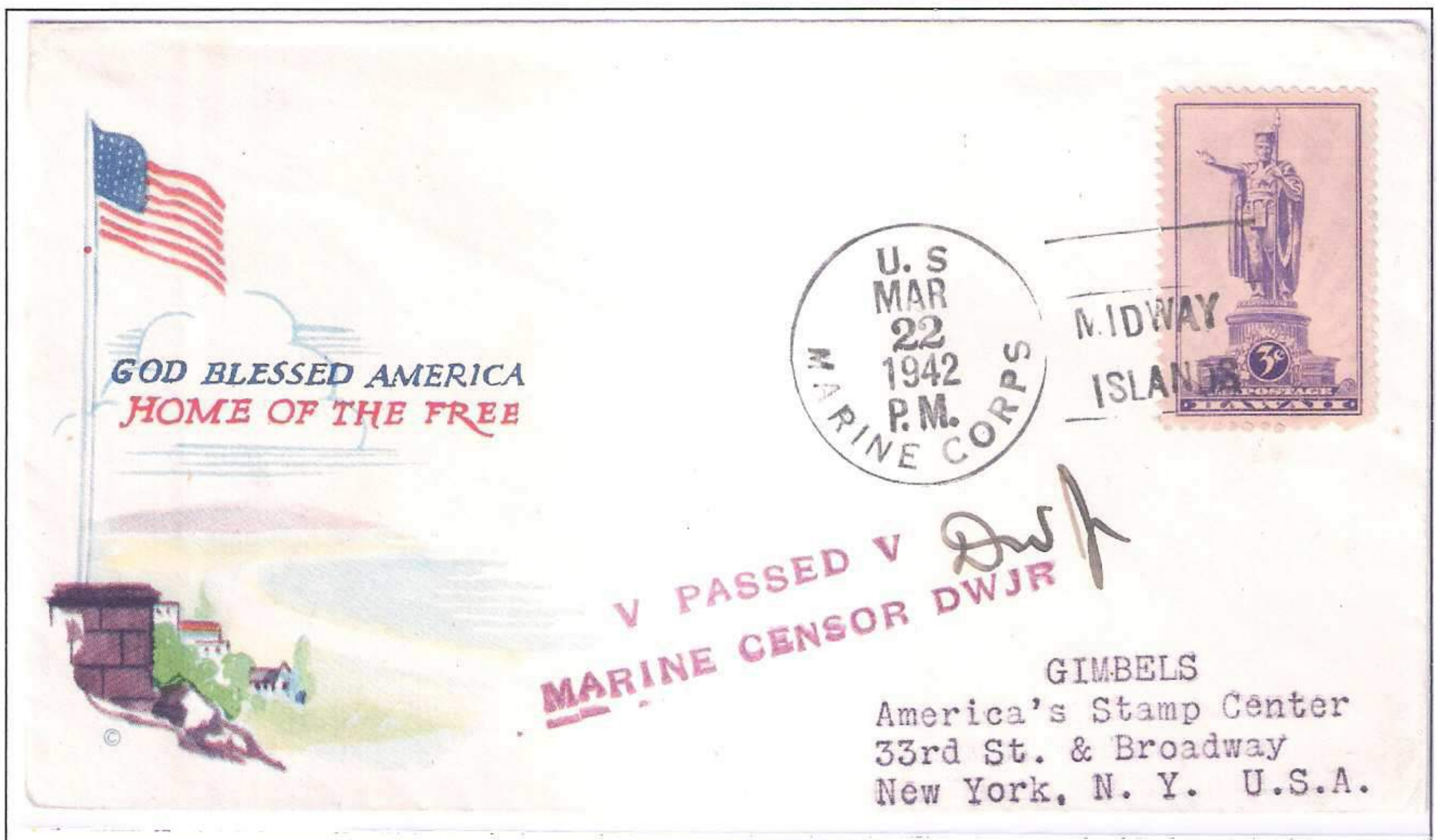
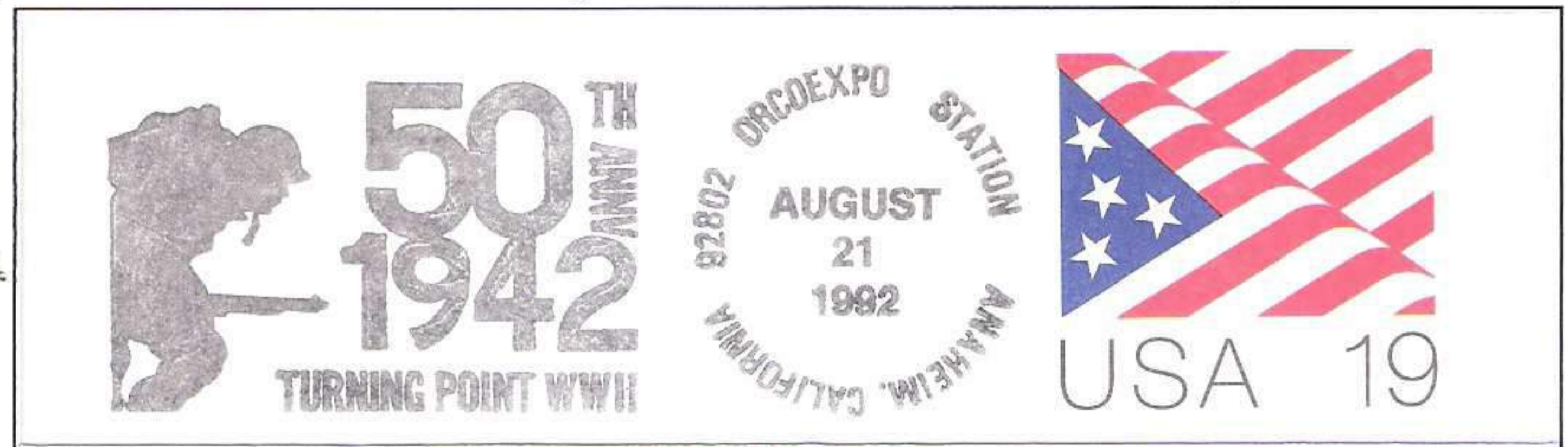
Adm. Nimitz, Midway island and reconnaissance "Catalina".

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 aircraft carriers Hiryu and Akagi and the American Enterprise and Yorktown, the commanders Nagumo and Fletcher.

The turning point WWII.



U.S. Marine Corps, March 22, 1942: Letter from Midway to New York.

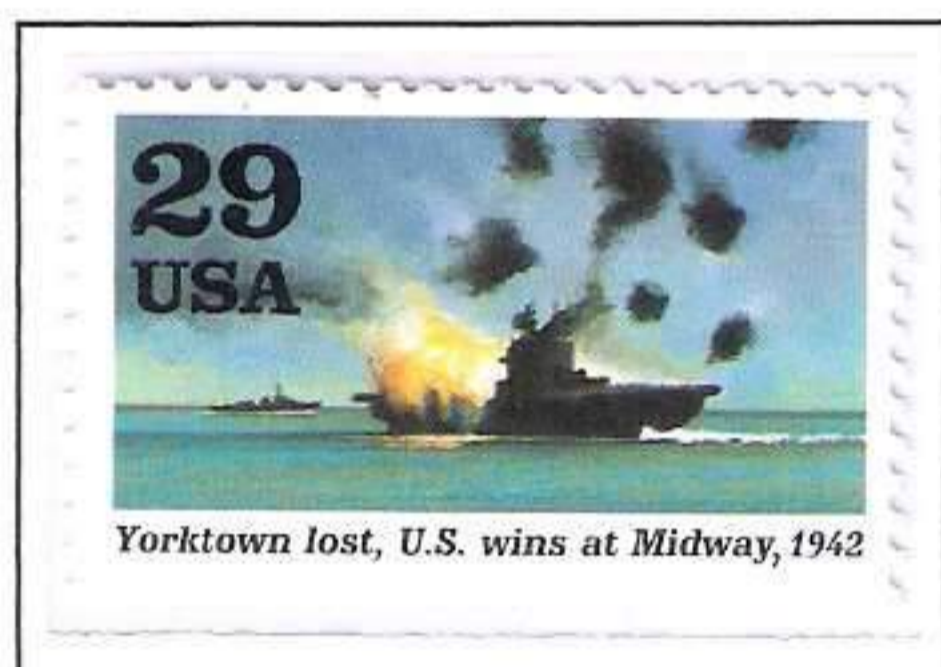
At the end of the battle, the Imperial fleet commanded by the Adm. Nagumo records the sinking of all its four aircraft carriers, Akagi, Kaga, Soryu and Hiryu.



The battle.



The United States remember the loss of Yorktown.



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

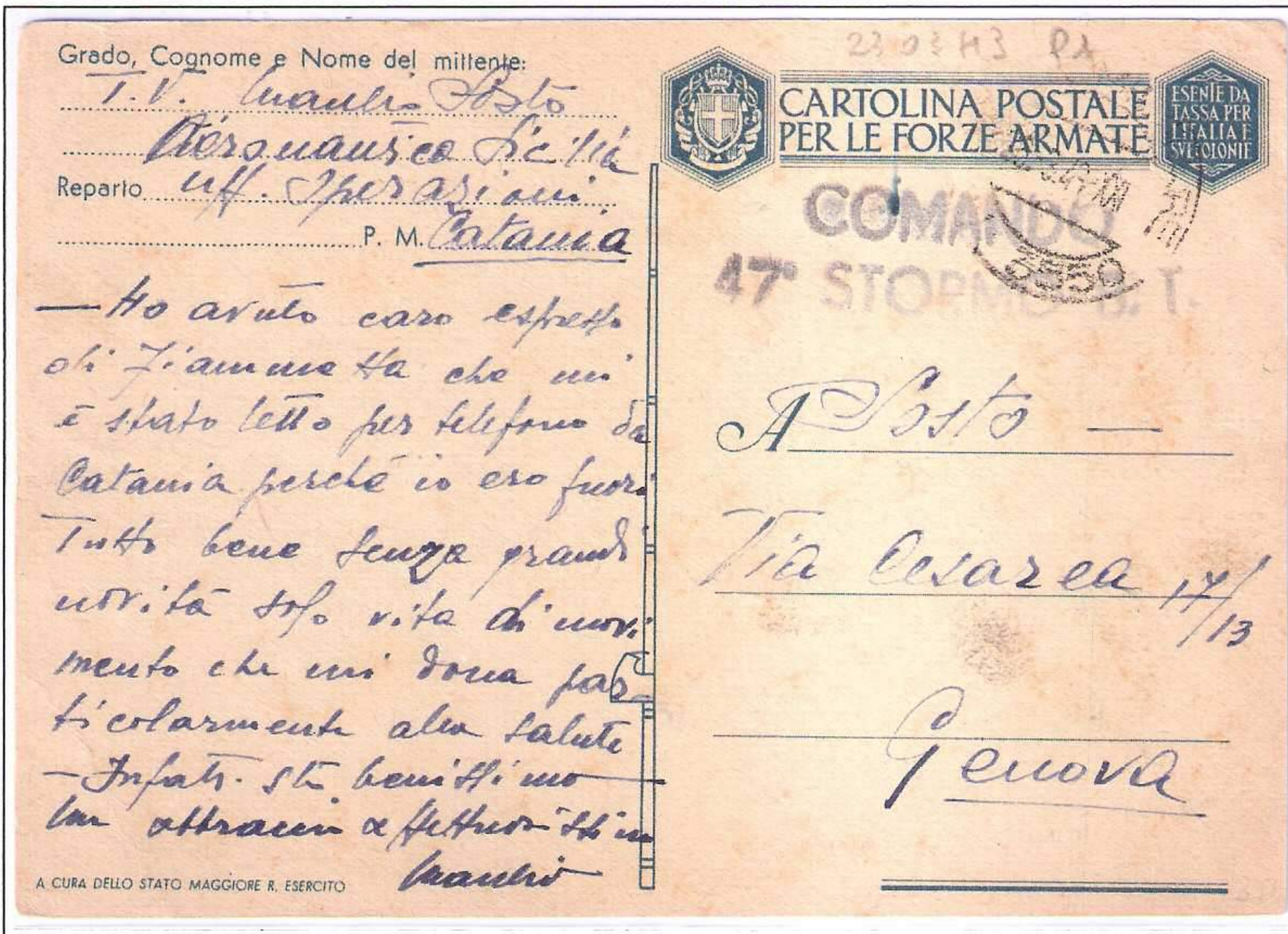


V... Mail 1944 from Pearl Harbor (Navy 128) Fleet Post Office, Naval Censor to San Francisco, Calif. "Tojo is sailor's bag".

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



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



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

E THE COUNTERATTACK IN EUROPE

1. THE CAMPAIGN IN ITALY

On September 12th, 1943, Hitler orders General Student to set Mussolini free by his paratroopers. The operation is called "Eiche" – oak – and the Obersttumbanfuhrer Otto Skorzeny, too, takes part in it.



After being set free, on September 23rd Mussolini proclaims the Italian Social Republic and he sets up a new Government.

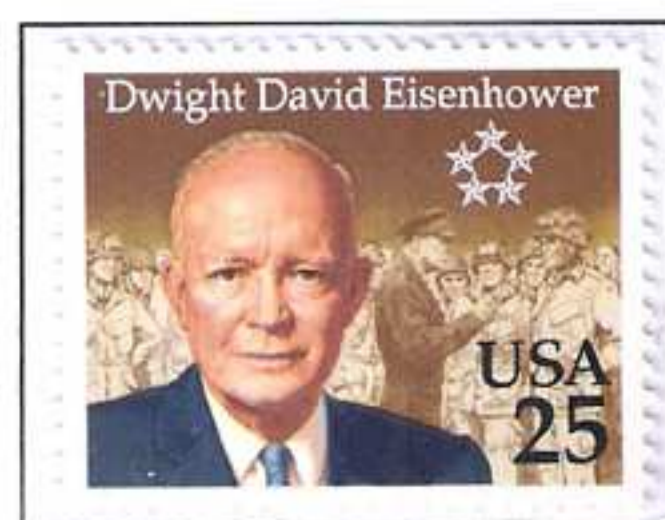


On September 3, 1943, in Cassibile an armistice had been signed between Italy and the Allies. The agreement will become public on September 8.



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

On September 29, 1943, aboard the British battleship "Nelson", "the long Armistice" is signed between Gen. Eisenhower and Marshal Badoglio.



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, the same September 9, 1943, land at Salerno.



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.

Polish Airgraph, Jan 7, 1945, with English and Polish flags for the conquest Monte Cassino.



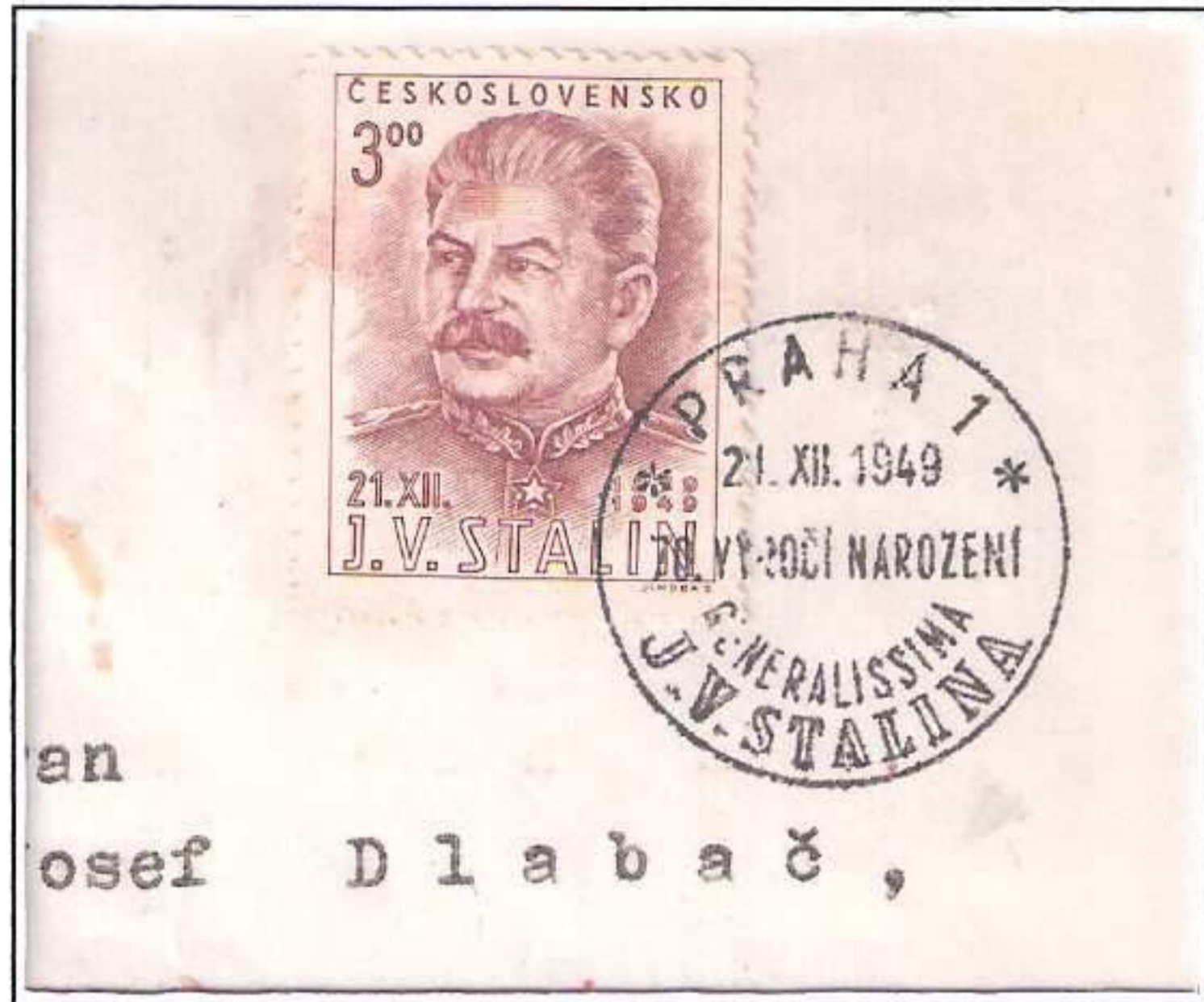
Started on January 12, 1944, the battle of Cassino lasts until May 18, when the Polish unit of Gen. Anders manages to raise its flag on the ruins of the Abbey.



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.



Supreme commander of Soviet Union.



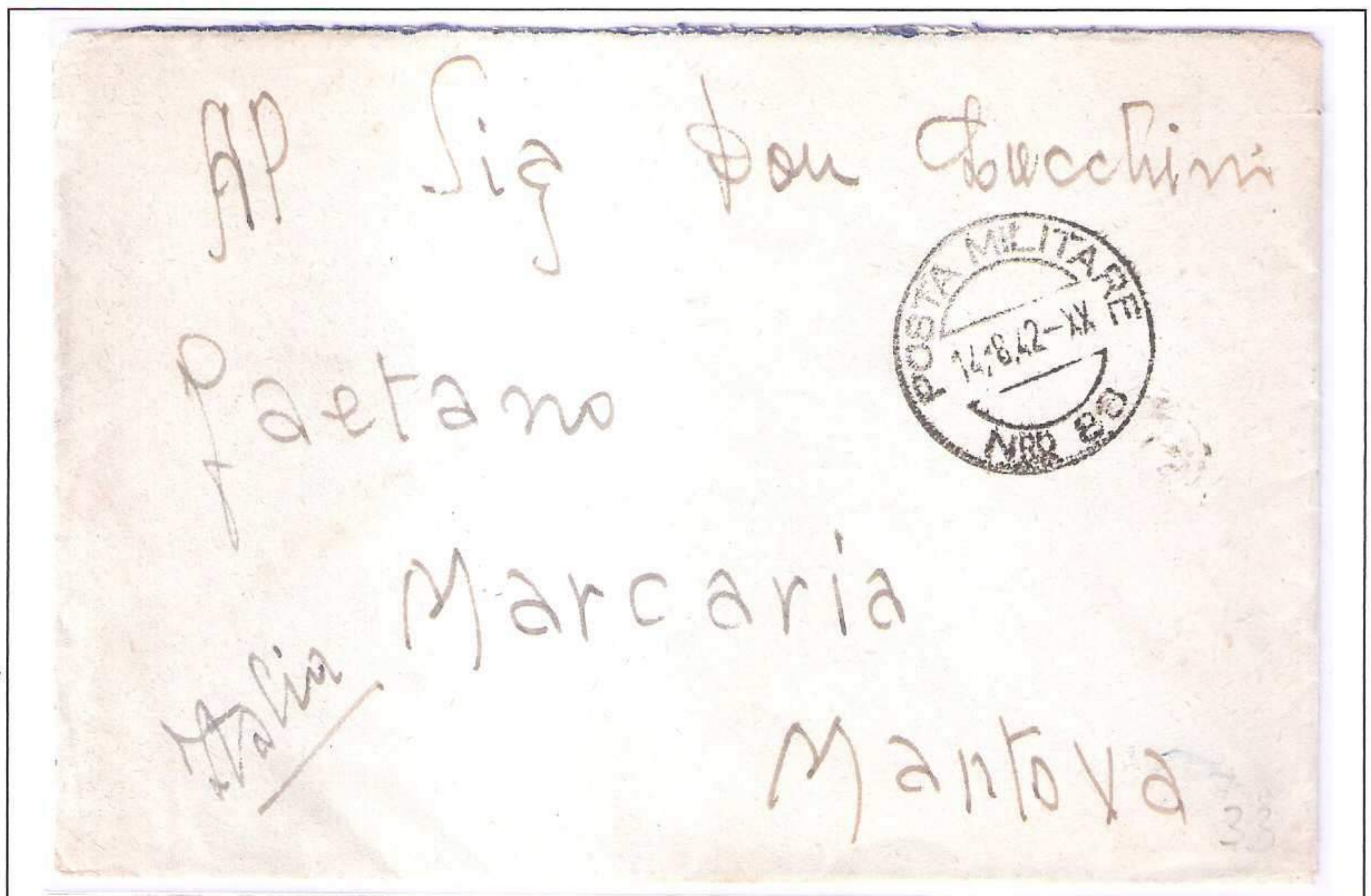
Attack and defence of Stalingrad.

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.



The skill of the snipers in Stalingrad: a shot is a dead enemy.



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.



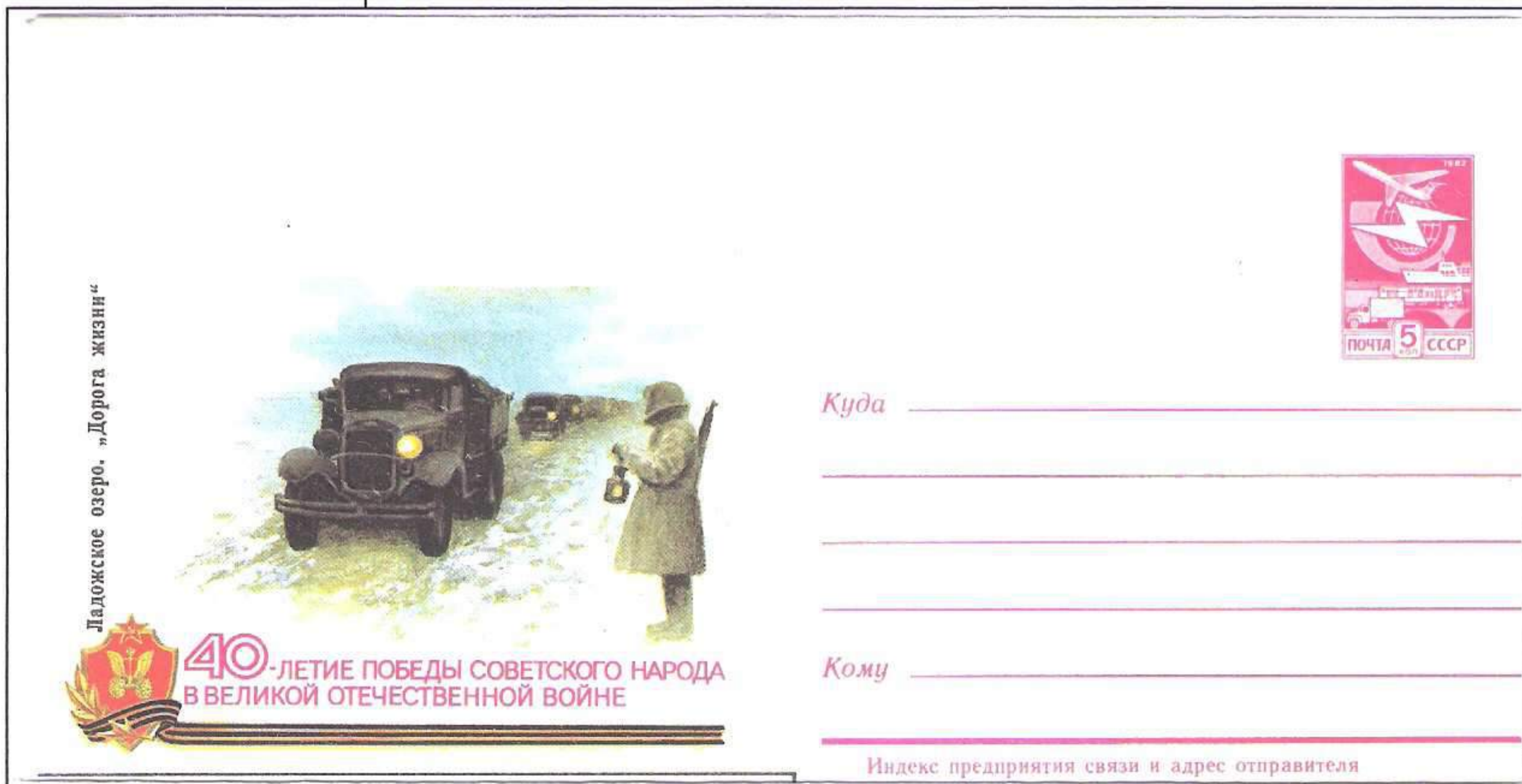
The German divisions, now tired and overruled by the Soviet troops, withdraw progressively abandoning the Russian territory. After Karkov is liberated the entire Ukraine and the Bielorussia.



Towards victory.



Да здравствует свобода и независимость нашей славной Советской Родины!



The "road of life".



After a 900 days', Leningrad is liberated.



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.



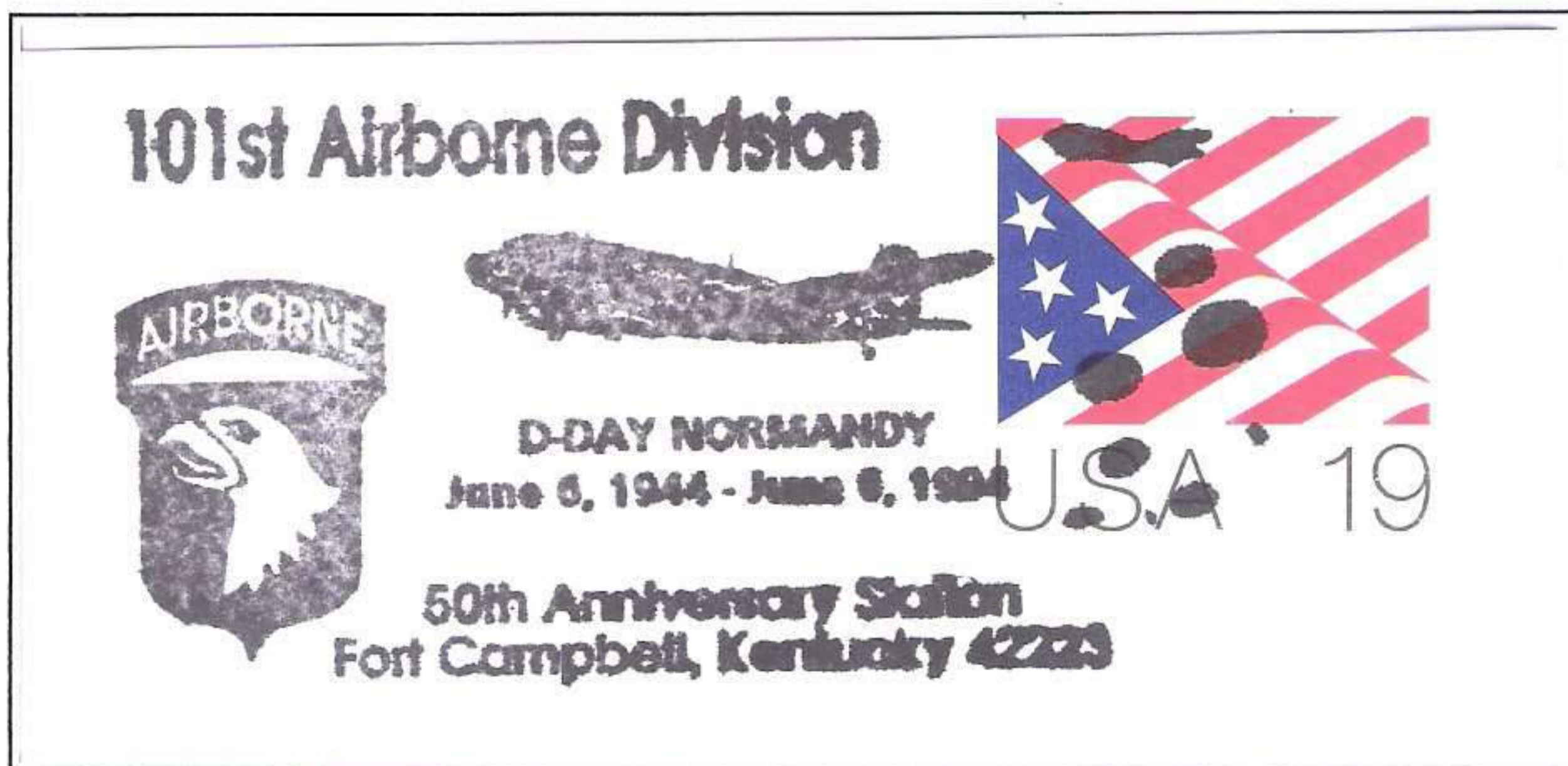
Letter from Paris to Valence sent on the day before the landing.



The "Atlantic wall".



The landing is preceded on the night of June 5 from the departure of planes and gliders with board infantrymen and paratroopers who, shortly after midnight, are launched or landed on French soil to occupy roads and bridges in the hinterland of landings.



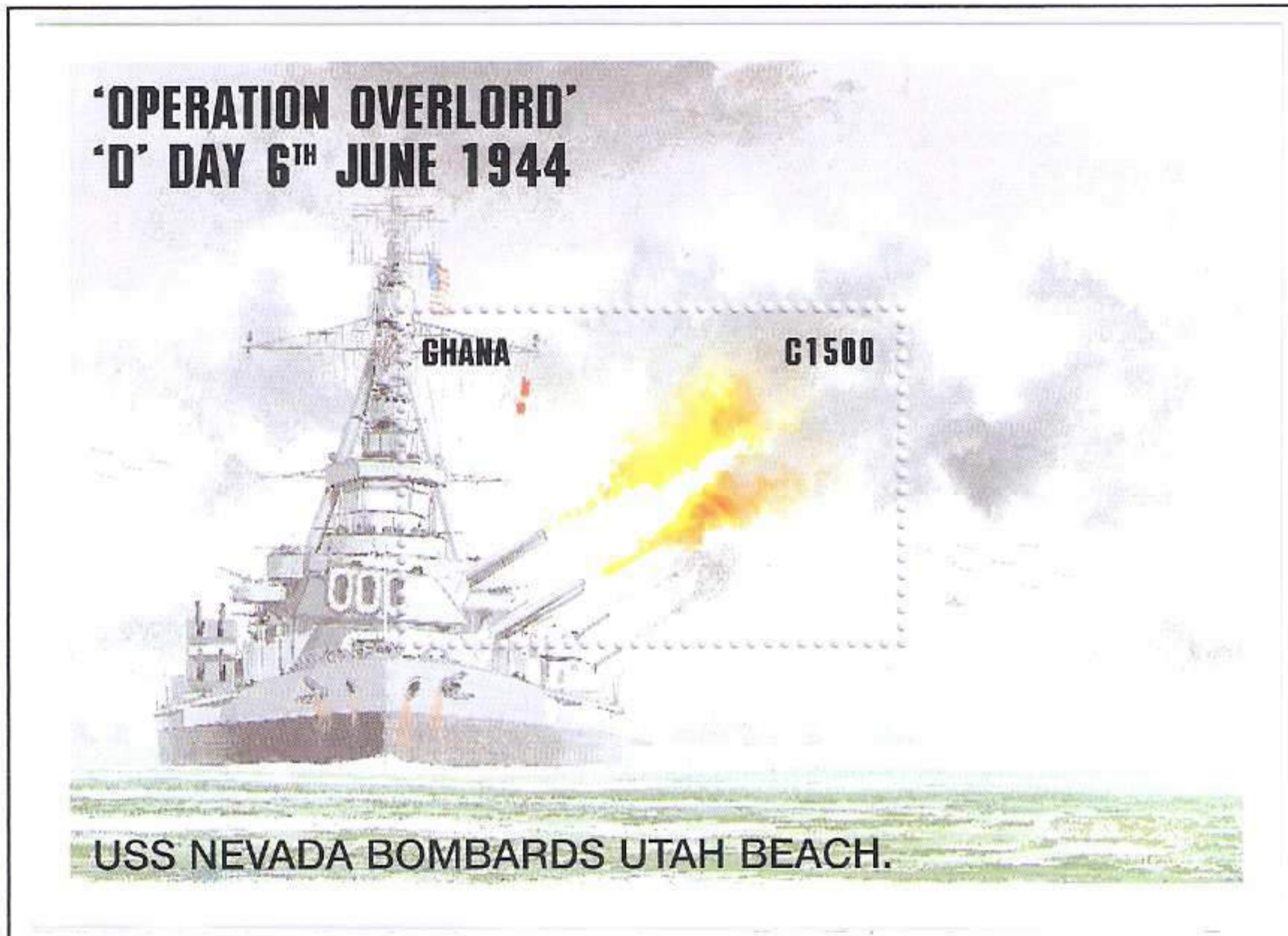
After the night attack of paratroopers and air troops, "the longest day" starts with an unopposed coverage from the air and a massive bombing of the beaches and the nearby hinterland by the allied ships. Among them there are five battleships.



The aerial bombardment..



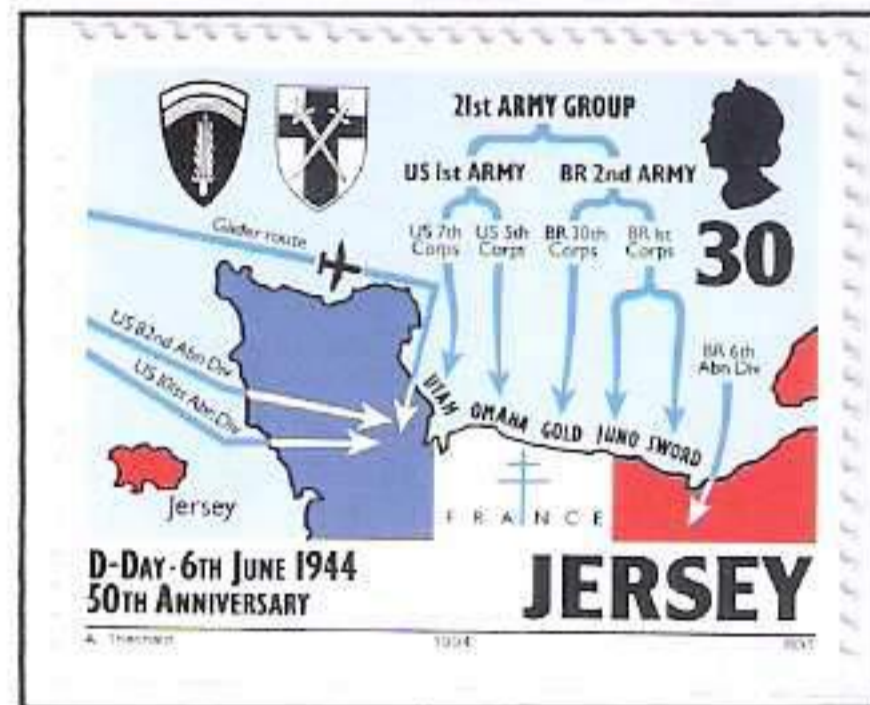
The five battleships engaged in the bombardment of the beaches are the American Arkansas, Texas and Nevada. This one had been repaired after heavy damage during the Japanese attack in Pearl Harbor.



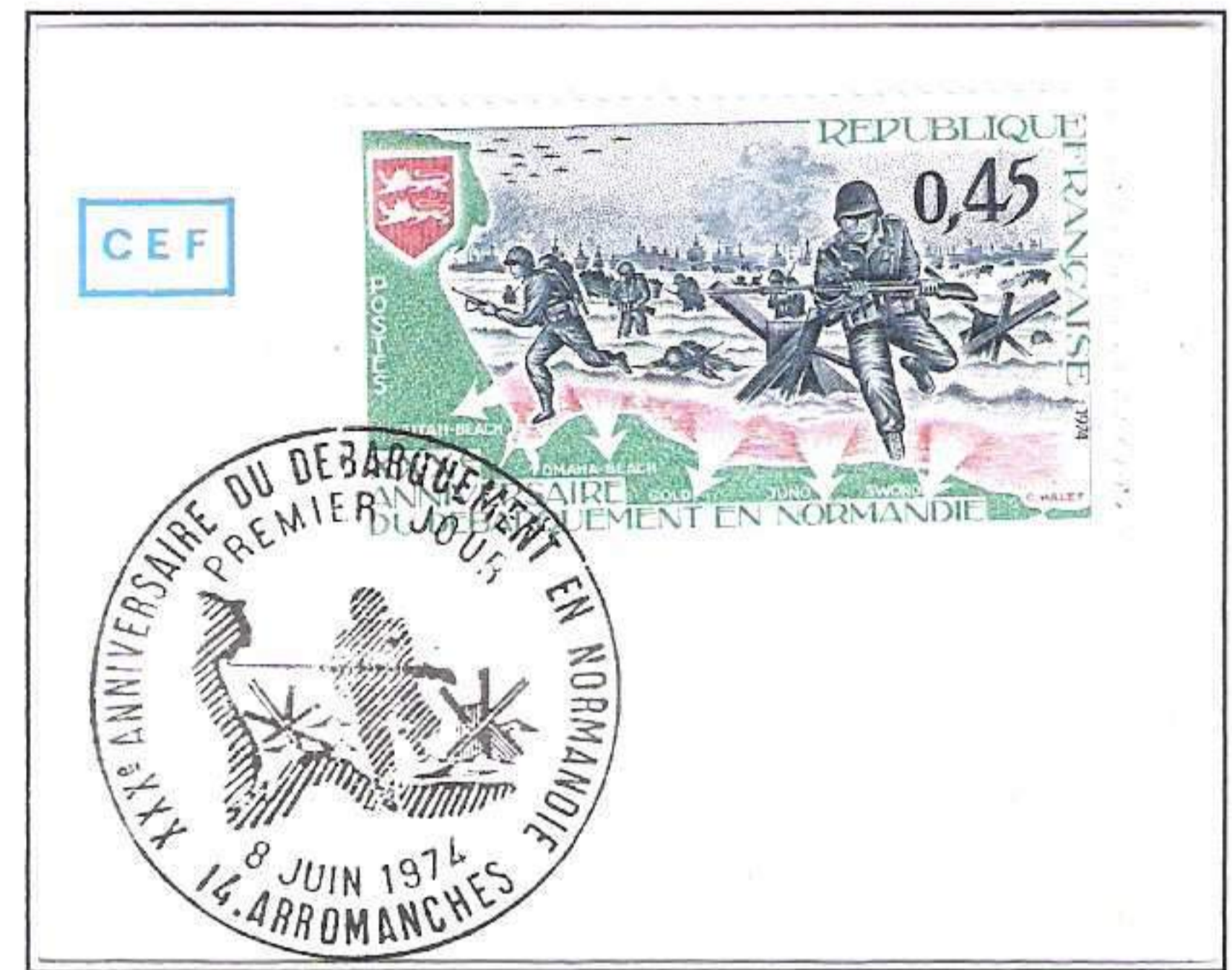
End the two British, Warspite e Ramillies.



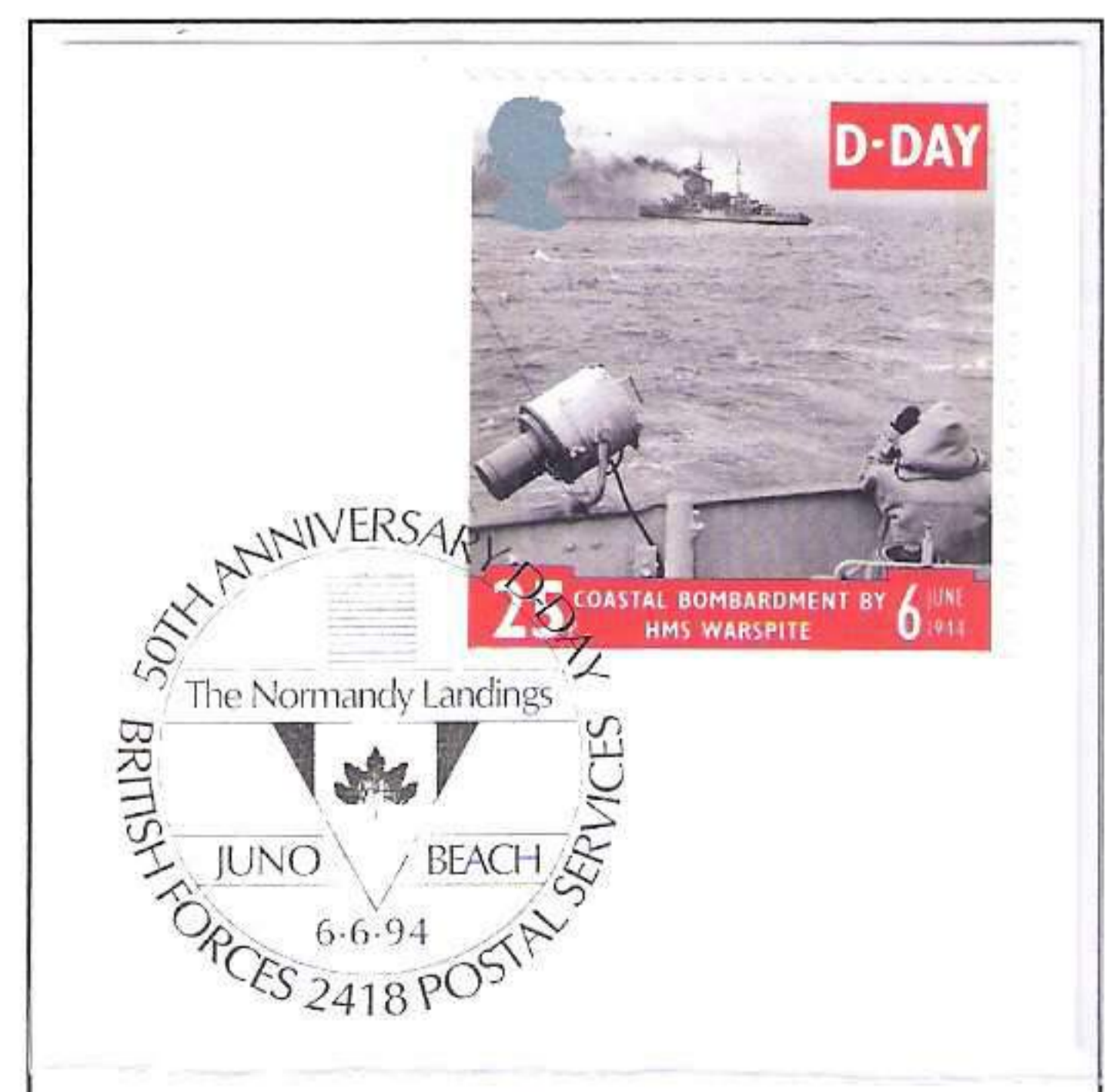
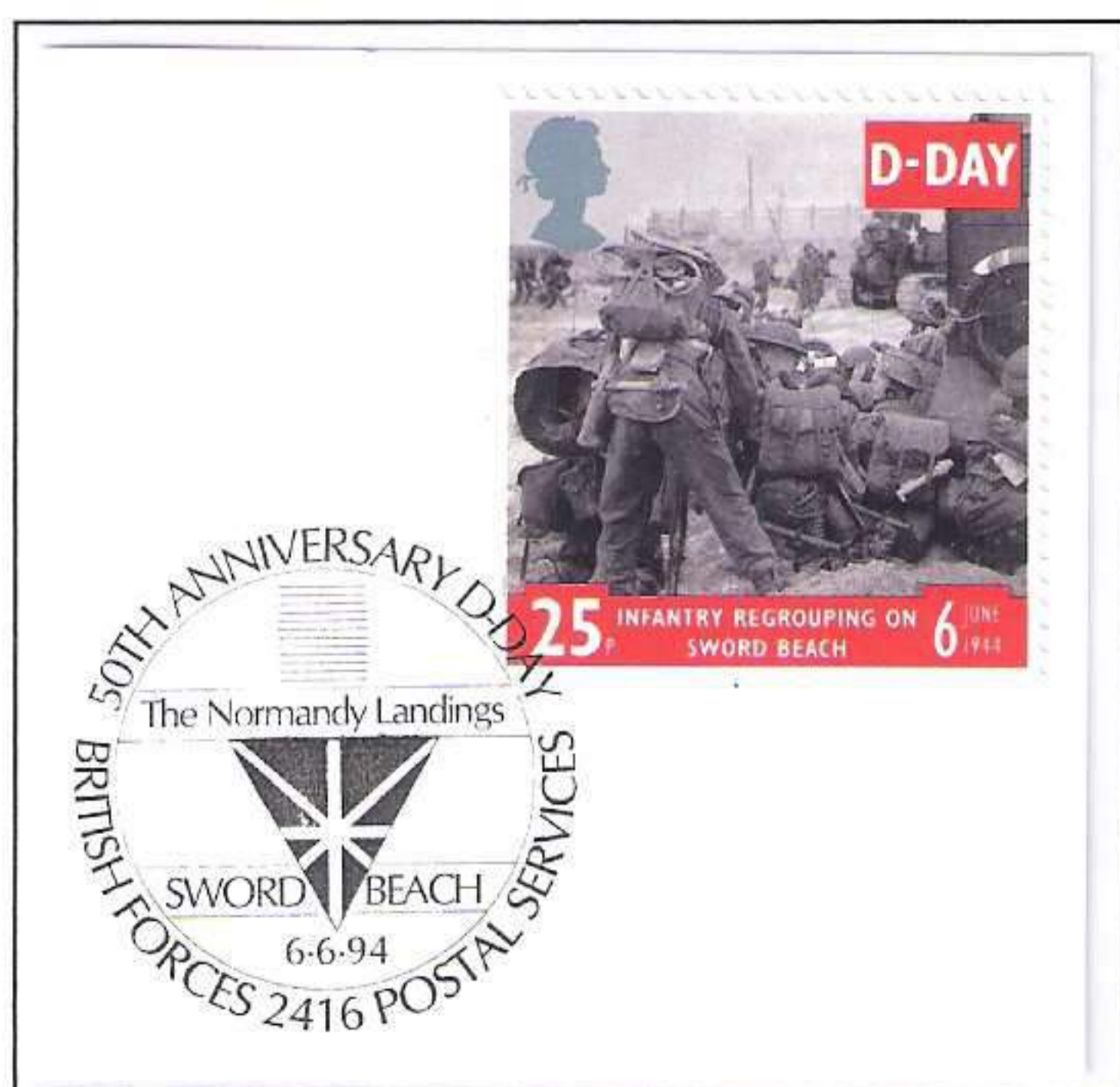
Taken by surprise thanks to the ability to misdirect off the landing areas, the Germans try to respond to the attack by any means they dispose of.



Contrasted by the enemy's fire and hindered by the German barriers the Americans land on the beaches they had been assigned: Utah and Omaha.

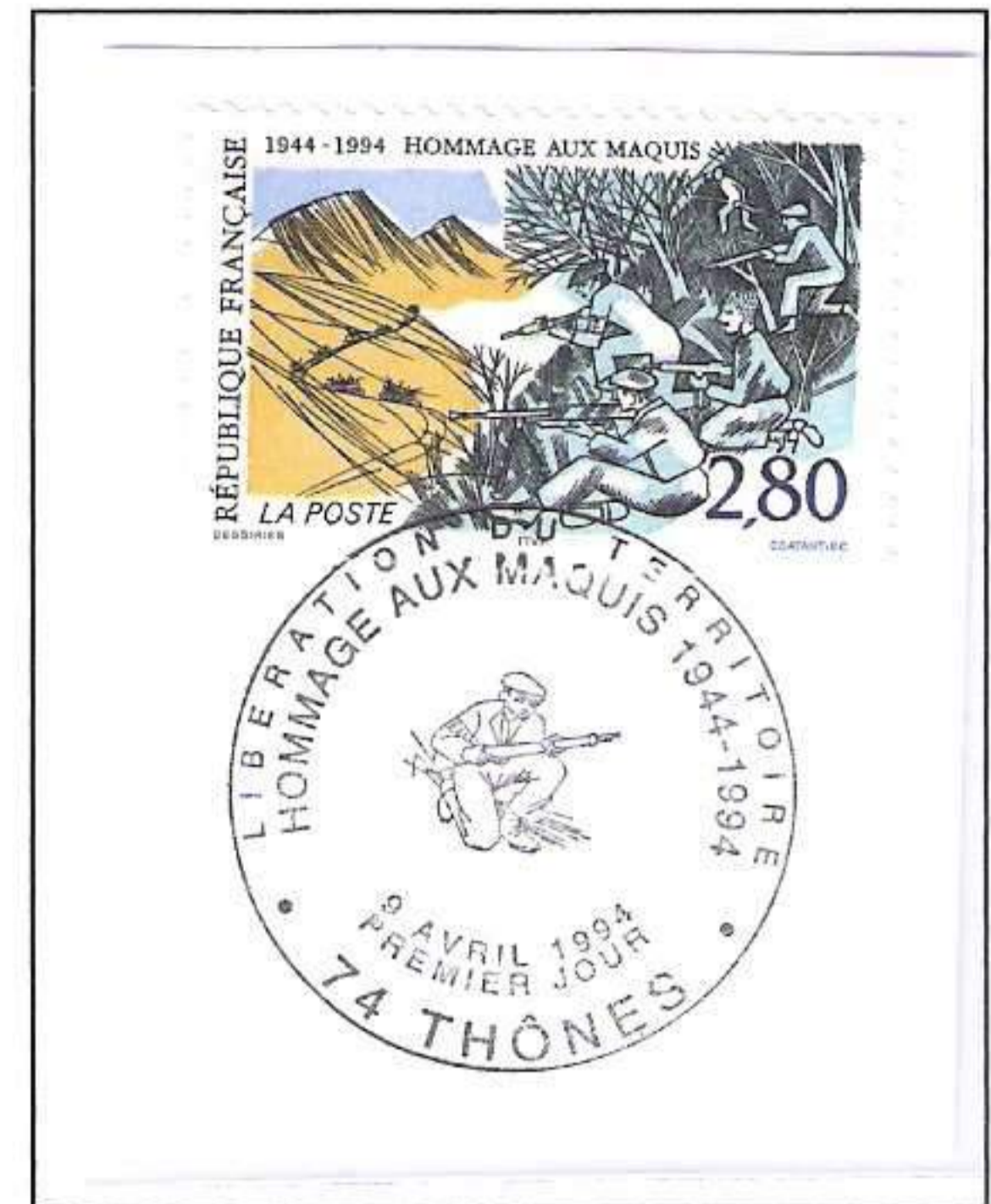


The English and Canadian troops land on the beaches called "Gold", "Juno" and "Sword".



E THE COUNTERATTACK IN EUROPA

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).



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.

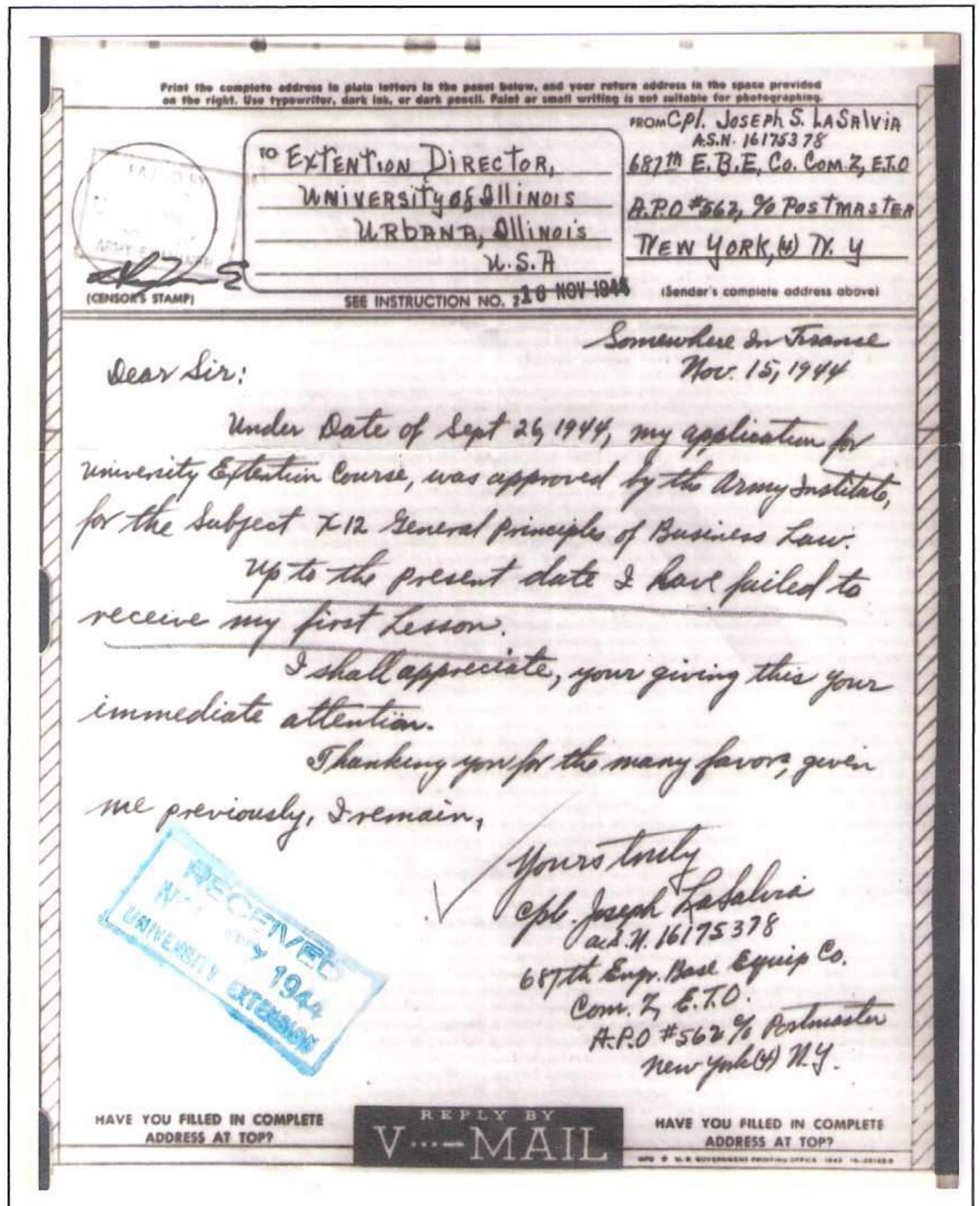
Thanks to the French "Resistance", which paid a very high tribute, several German forces are misdirected from the landings areas. Despite the German effort to stop the Allies, they occupy Cherbourg, an important dock in the Cotentin Peninsula to unload means and troops.



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.

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

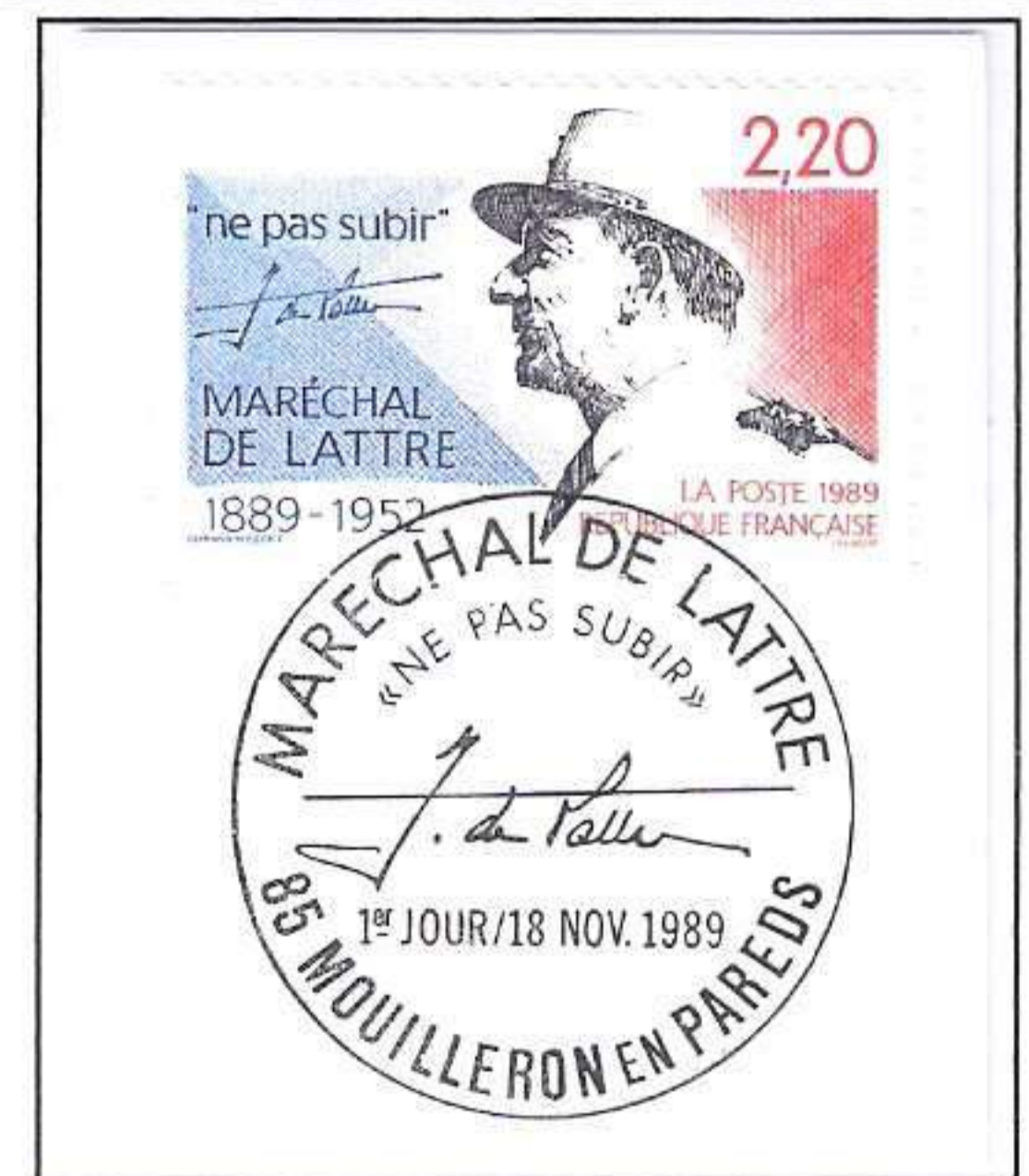
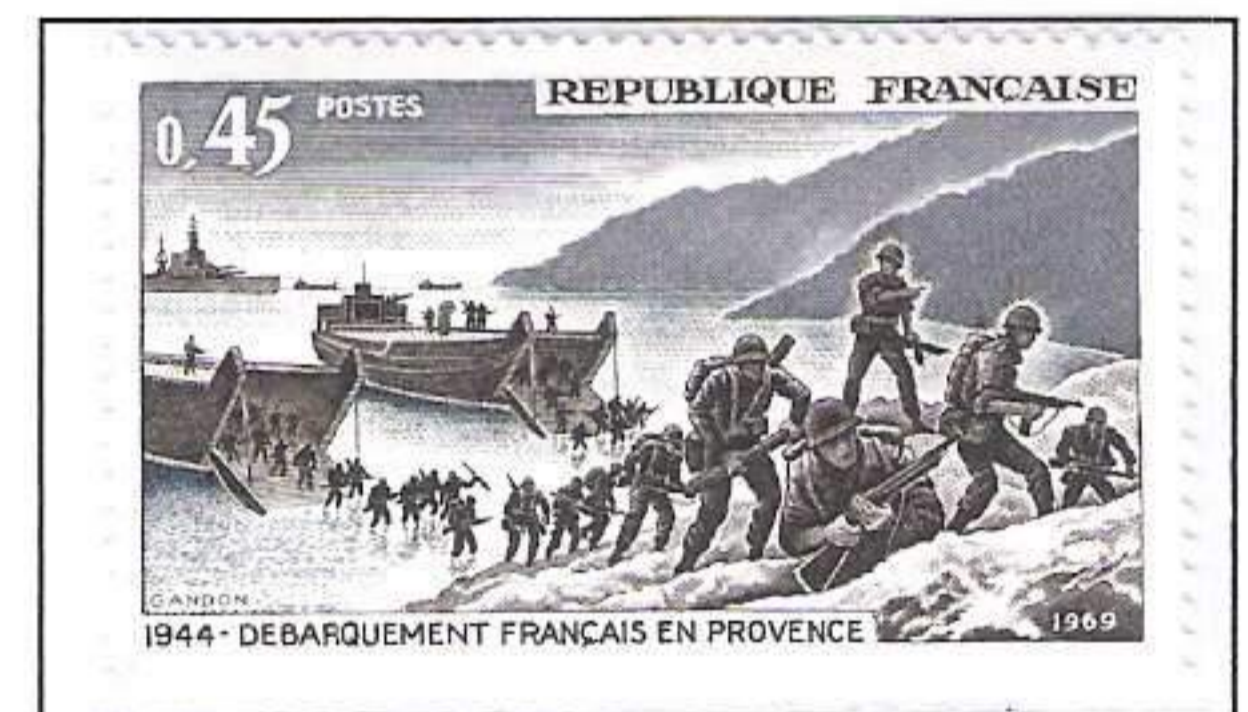
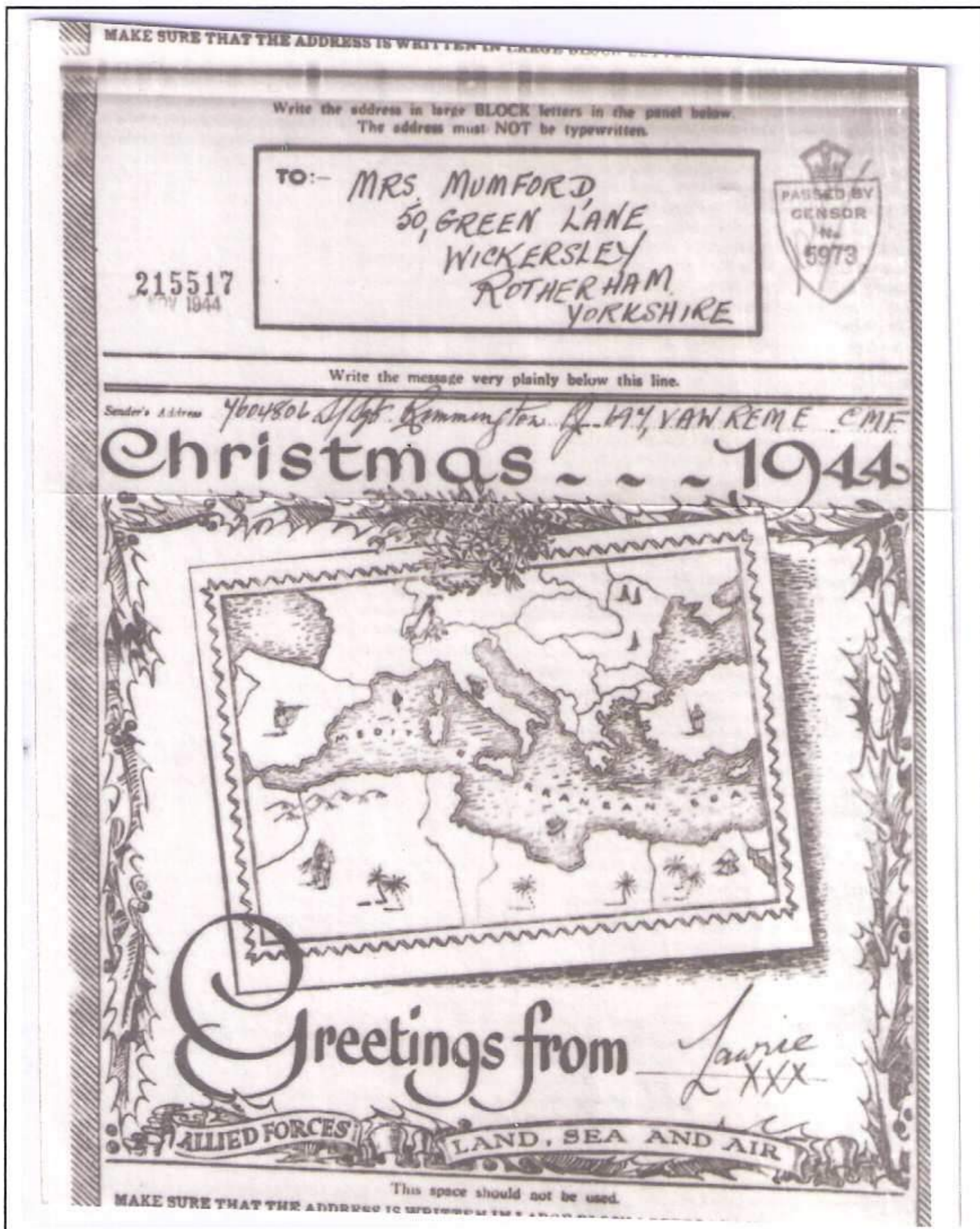
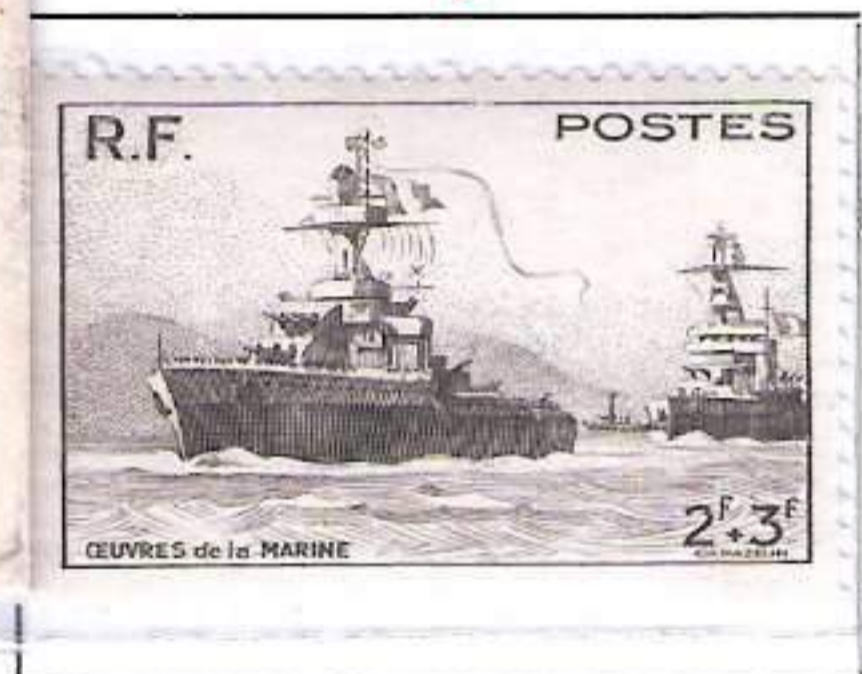
3. THE LANDING IN NORMANDY



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.

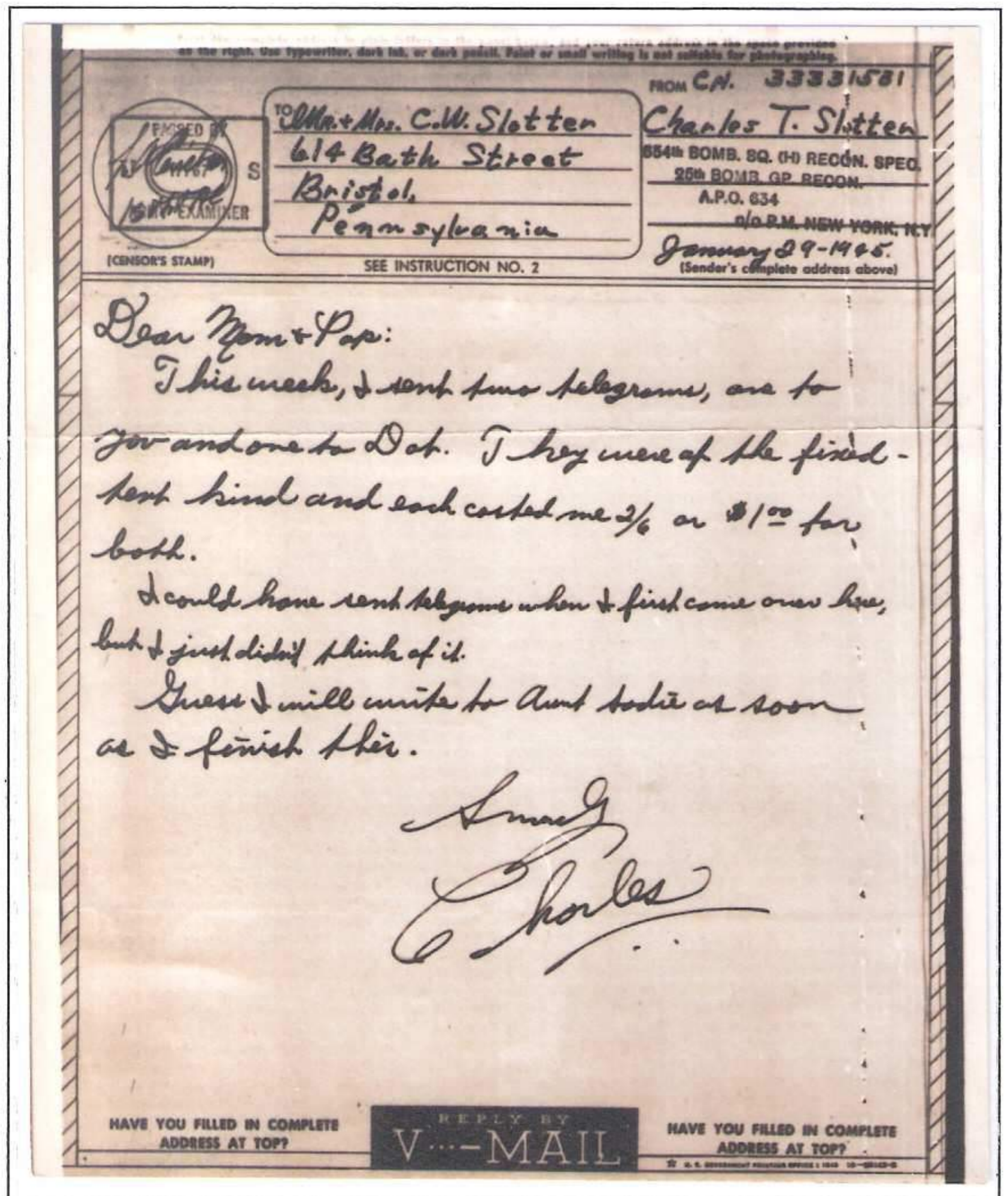
The last great and strategic German offensive on the Western front was the battle of the Ardennes.



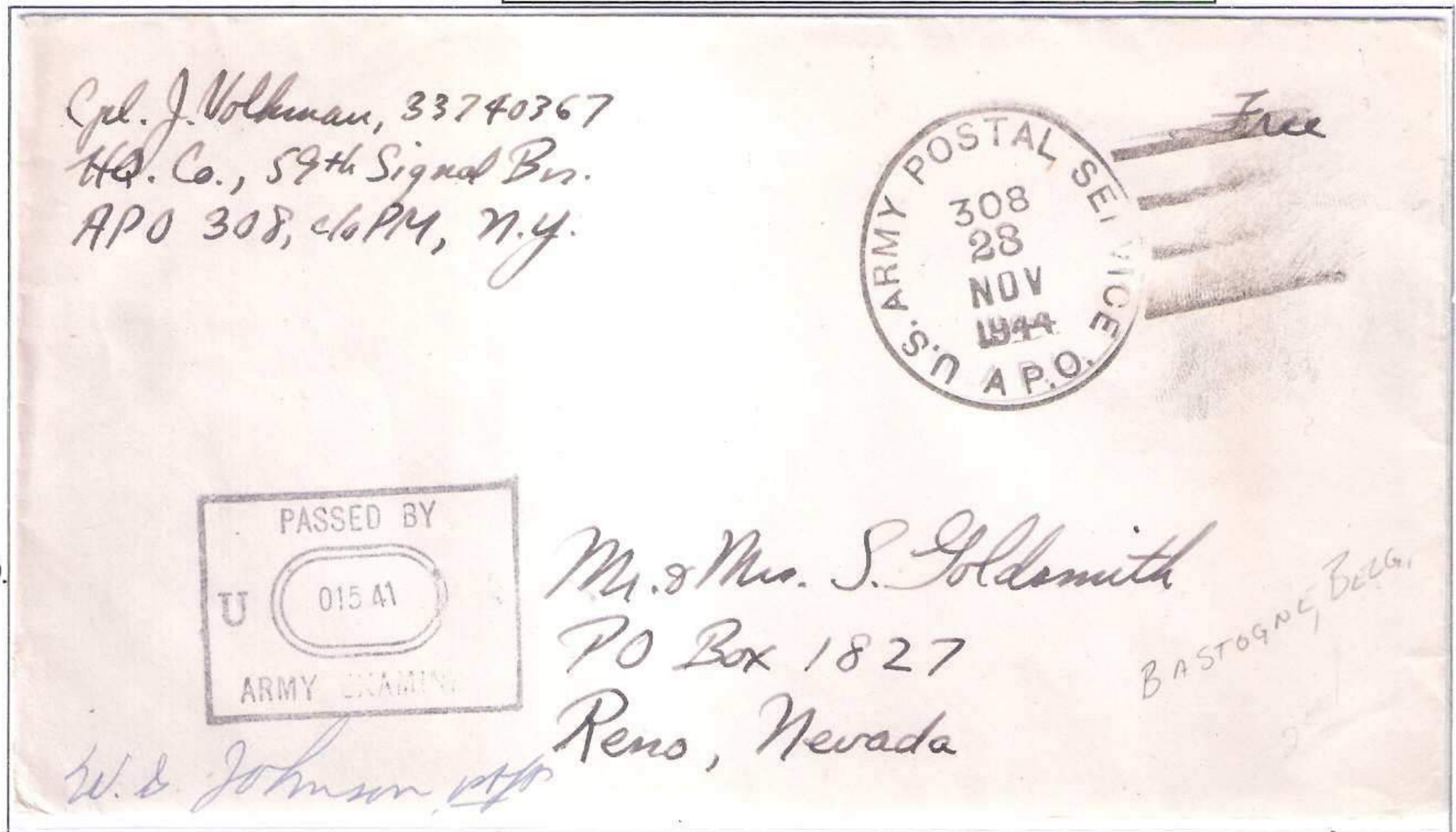
G.S. Patton

Letter from A.P.O. 308, Bastogne, 28, 11, 1944 to Reno - Nevada (USA).

4. THE OPERATION MARKET GARDEN AND BASTOGNE



Imperforate.



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.

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 9 and ends on the 16 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.

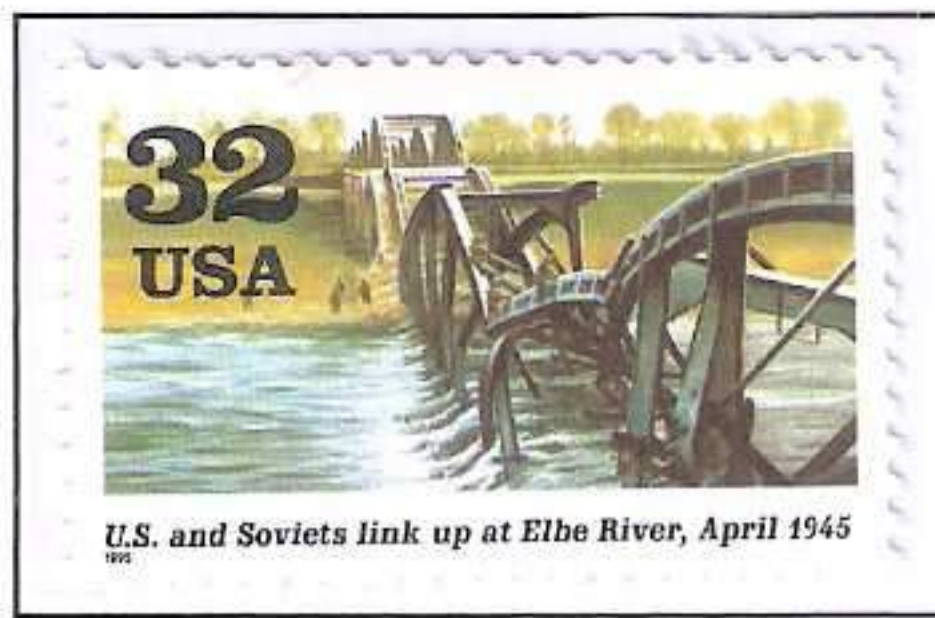
The Col. Varihazy com. der of the "Volunteer".



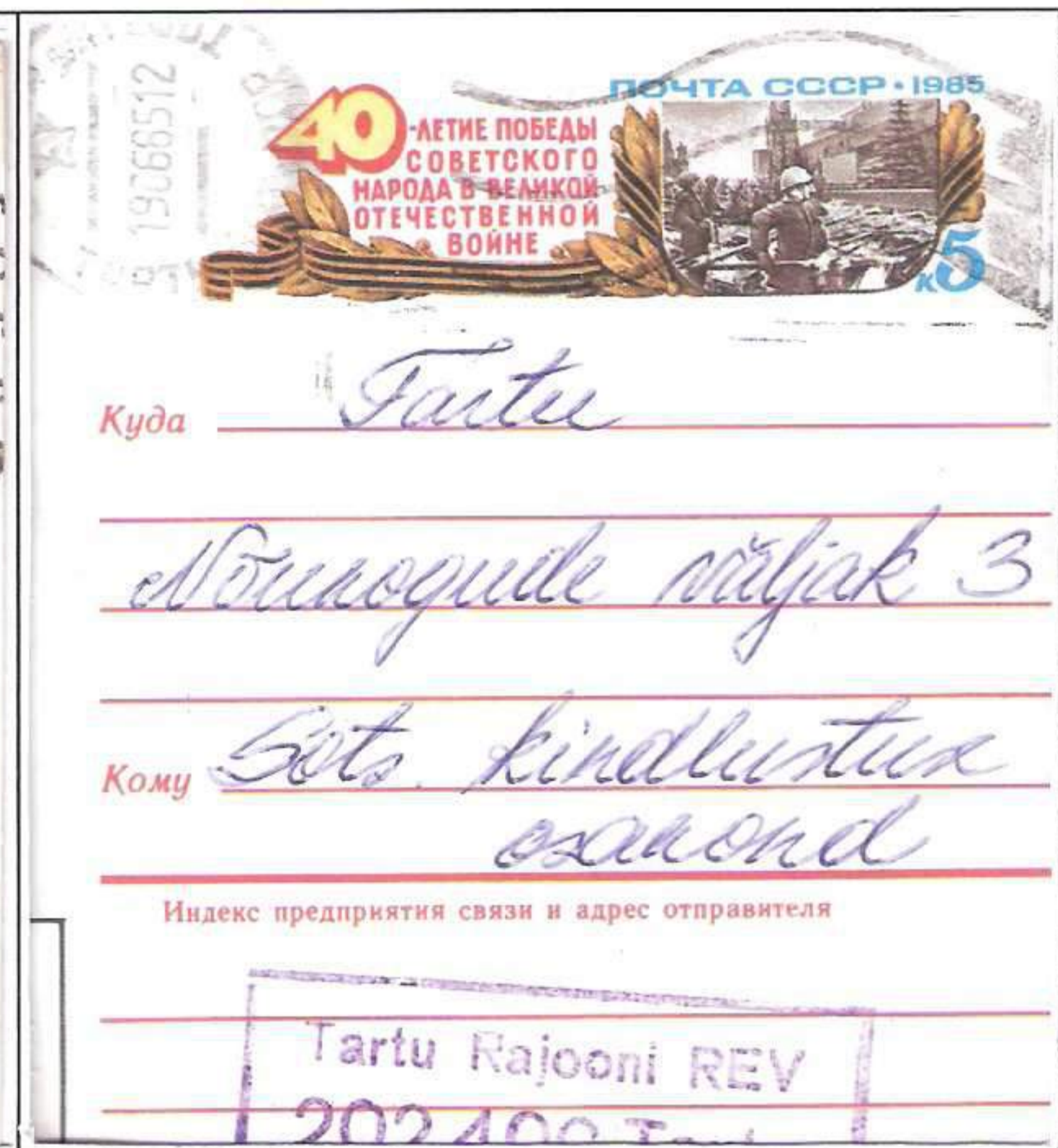
After the liberation of Vienna, on April 13, 1945, the Red Army enters the Prague on May 9, the last European Capital to be freed. The town revolted against the German on May 5, 1945. Berlin had already been captured on May 2 while Hitler had committed suicide on April 30, 1945.

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





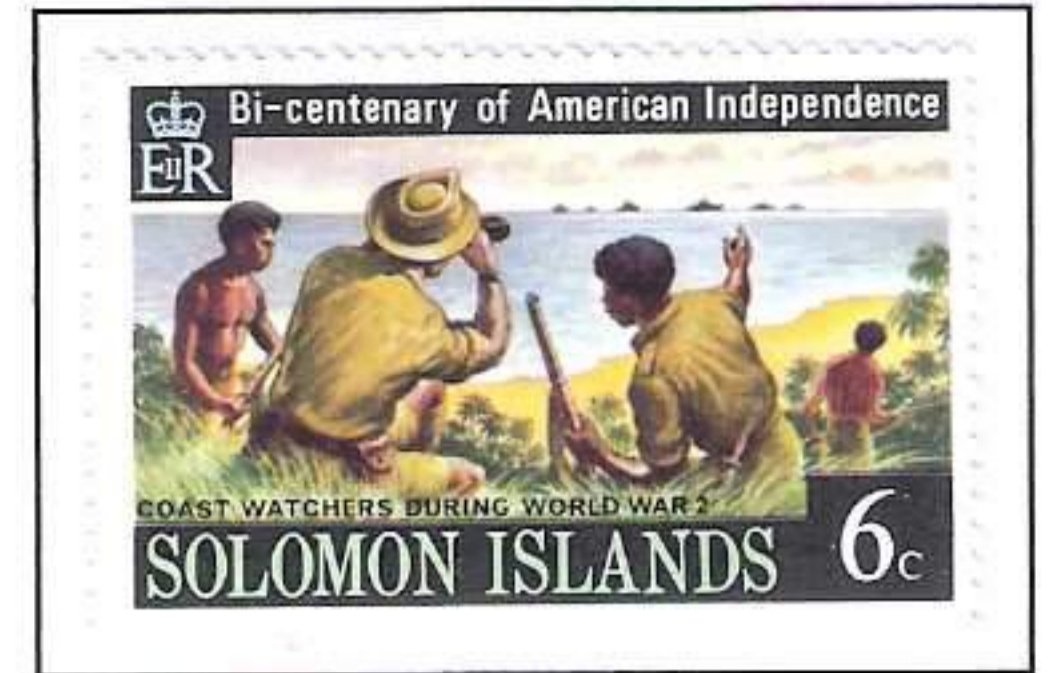
Before the last battle for the conquest of Berlin, the allies meet in Turgau, on river Elbe. Berlin is a heap of rubble. The Reichstag is taken on April 30, 1945 and on May 1, the Red Army's flag is raised on the Palace of the Nazi power by Sergeant Egerov and soldier Kantarija. On May 7, in Reims, in 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.

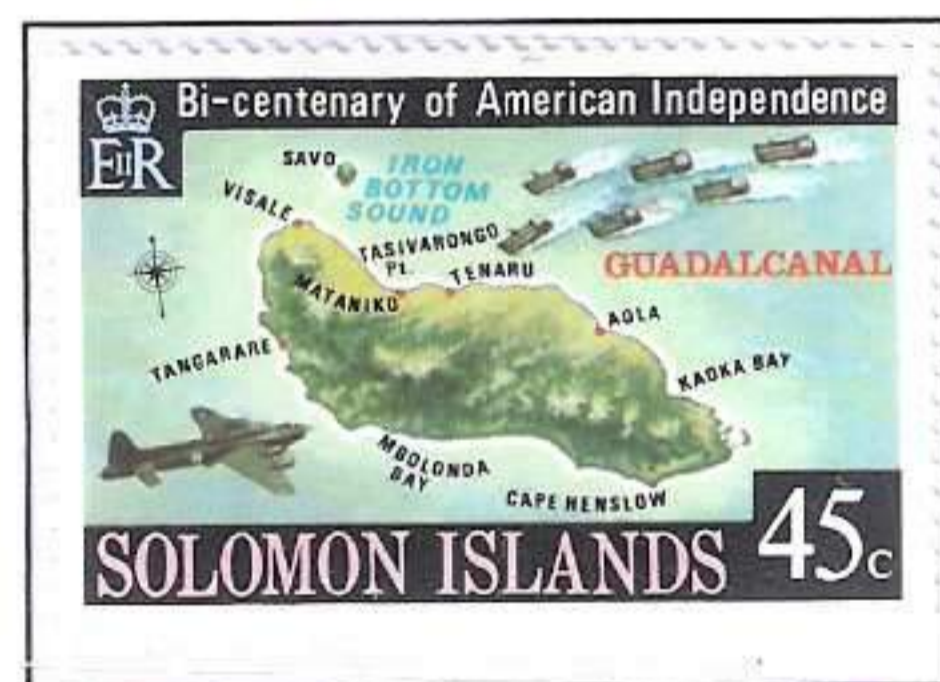
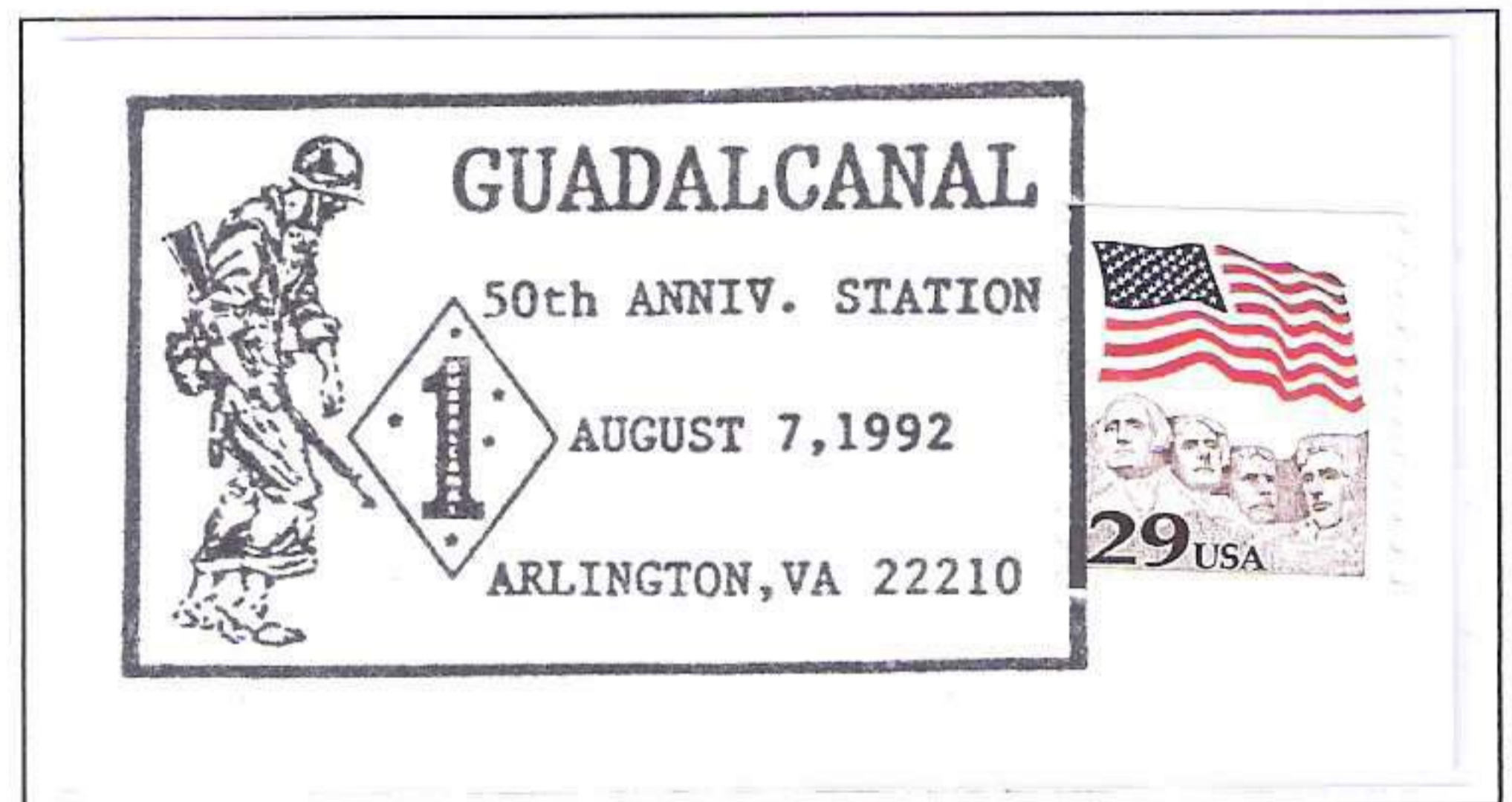
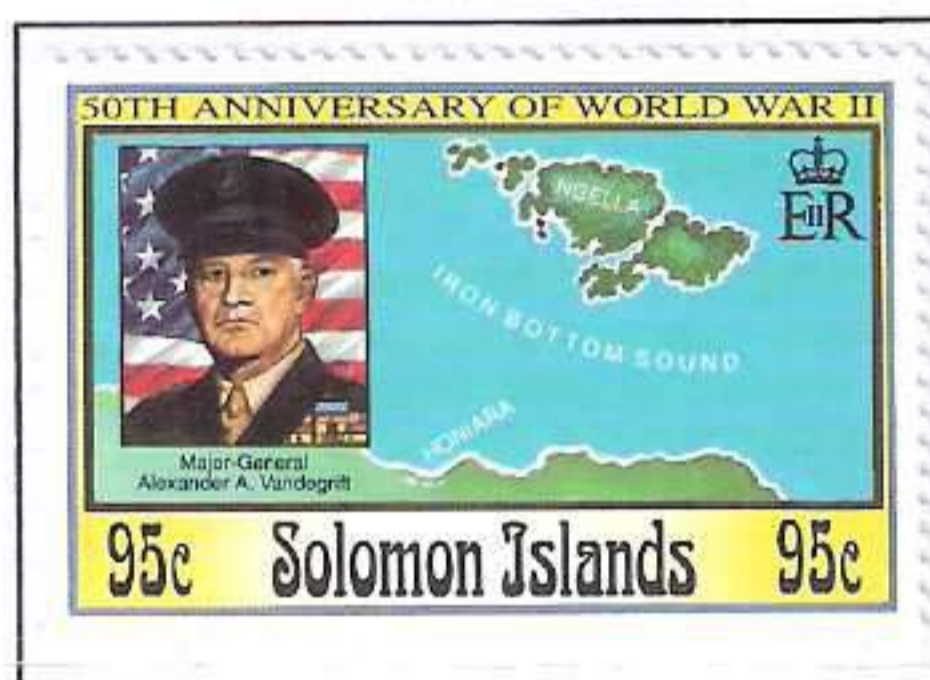


The allies' recapture of lost territories in South Pacific began with the Guadalcanal campaign that lasted from August 7, 1942 to February 9, 1943.

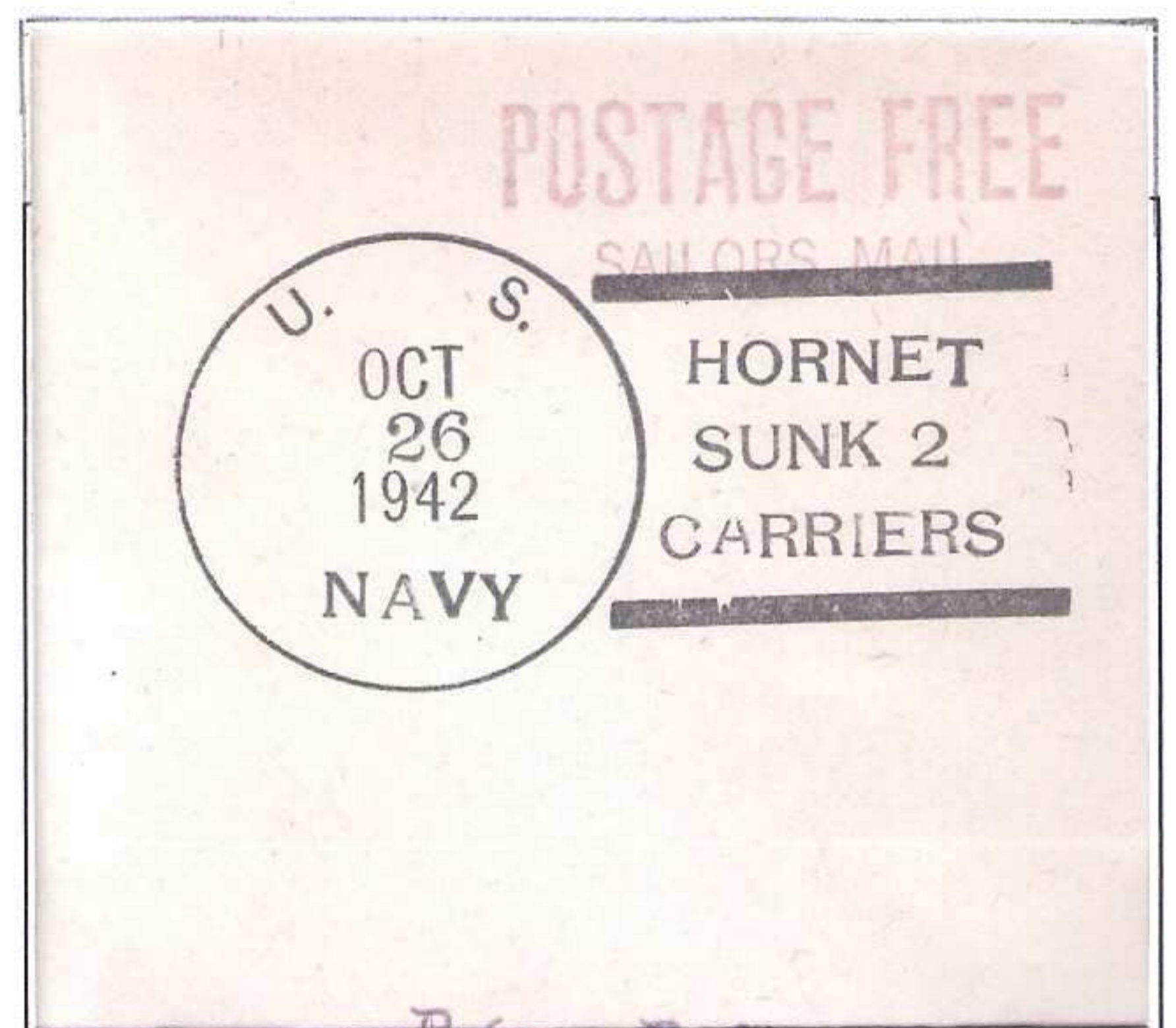


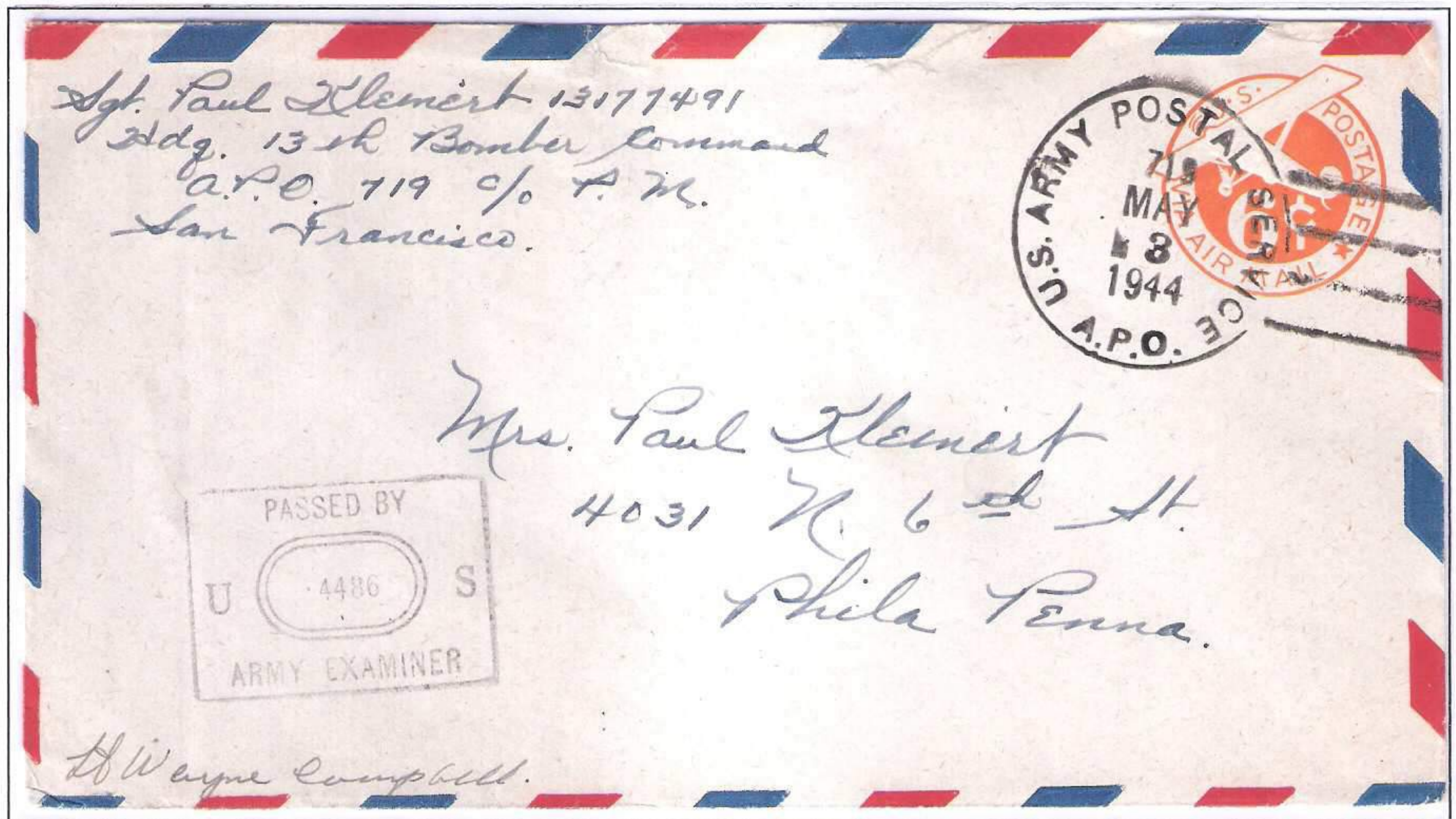
Control of the coastline, the fighting and Japanese landings at Guadalcanal and Tulagi.

Led by General Vandergrift, the Marines land on the Isle of Guadalcanal, in the group of the Salomon Islands.



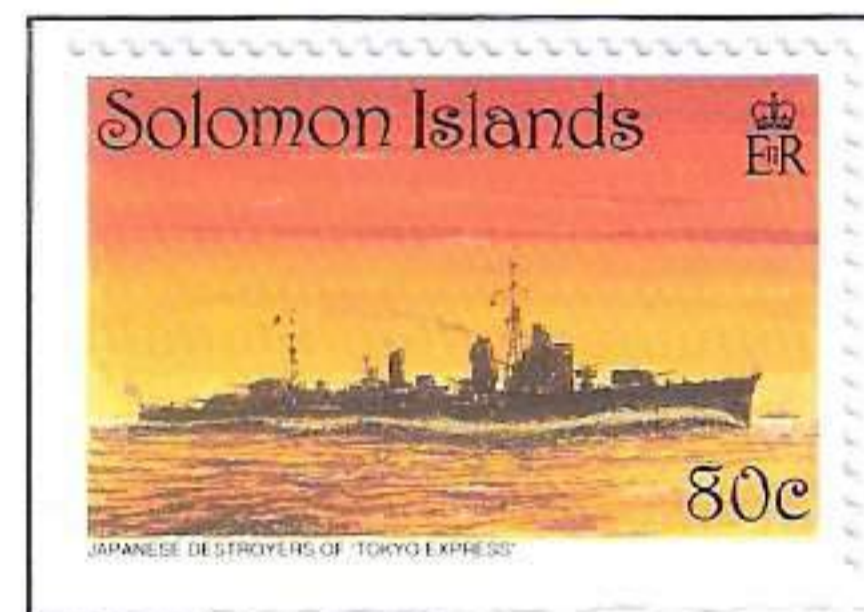
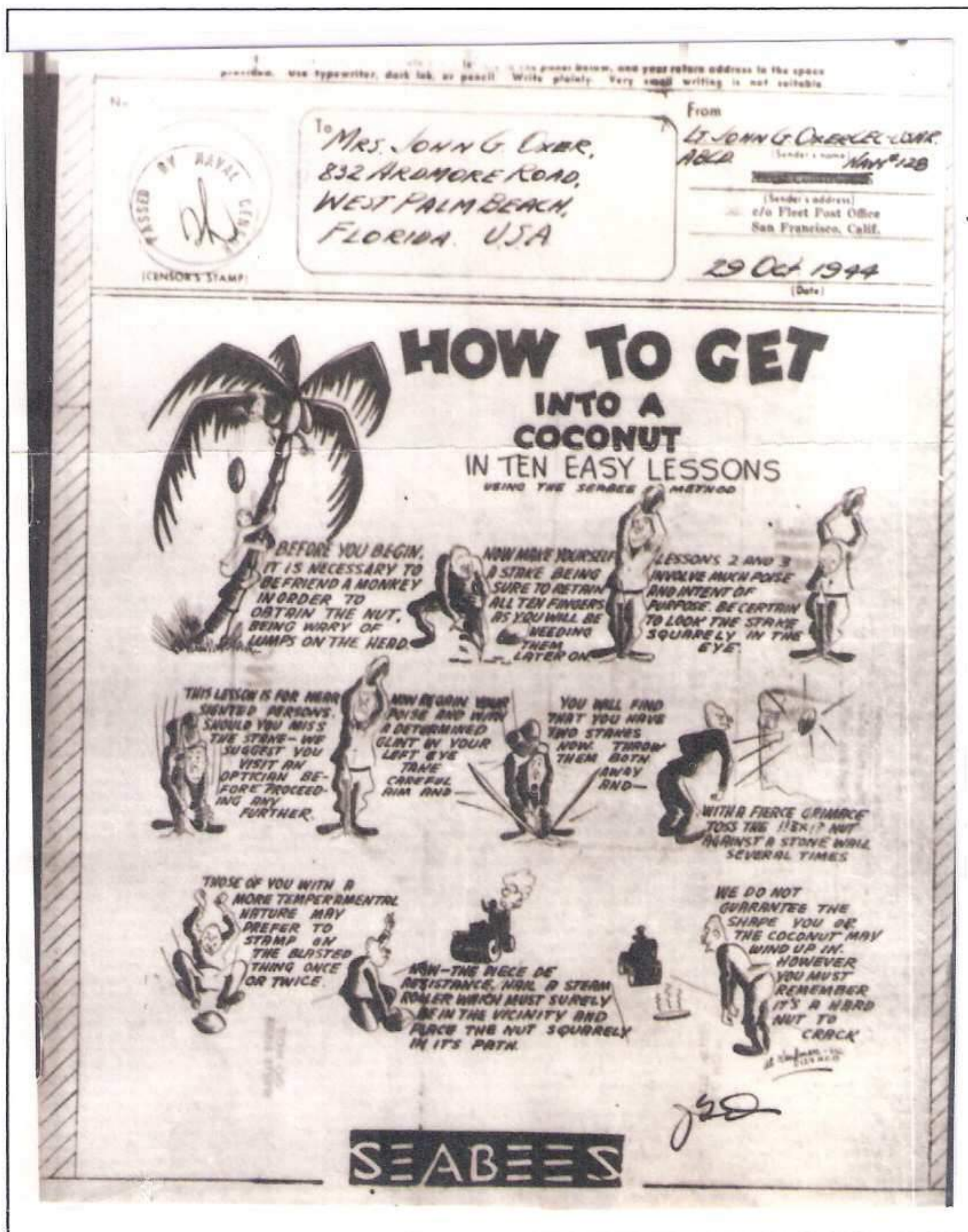
The support to the Marines is given by the planes of the aircraft carrier Wasp and Hornet and by the cannons of the war ships, one of which the battle cruiser Canberra..





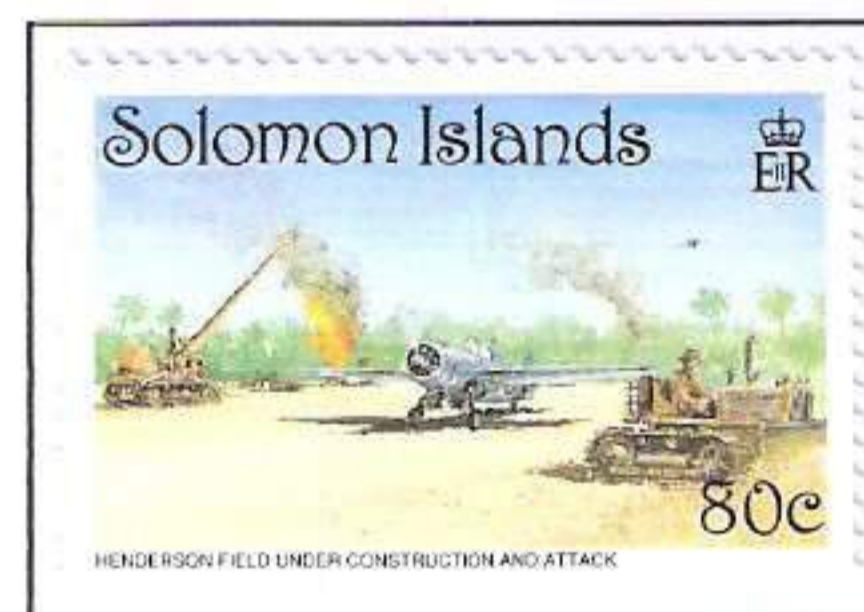
Letter from Guadalcanal (A.P.O.719), May 3, 1944, to Filadelfia.

Thanks to the work of the naval military divisions, "the Seabees", in Guadalcanal the landing tracks for the American planes are prepared. The work is hard because the Japanese cruisers, that the Americans call "Tokyo express", keep on supplying their troops on the island and the building plants are continuously bombed by the Japanese planes.



"Tokyo Express"

Duel on Henderson Field.



Hemdersen Field.



V...Mail used bay the corps of the "Seabess".

During the various naval battles that followed for the conquest of Guadalcanal, teams of submarines also participate, including the Cuttlefish with duties to protect troop transports, aircraft carriers and battle ships..



U.S. Cuttlefish, June 8, 1934: registered letter to Buffalo, N.Y.

On September 12th, 1942, the ships carrying troops Coolidge, Matua, Malaita, arriving from Espiritu Santo and due to Guadalcanal to support the American garrison, are sunk by some Japanese submarines. The Dutch cruiser Boisservain escapes the attack. The aircraft carrier Wasp is sunk after a hard battle.



Isle of Espiritu Santo.



The carrier Wasp.



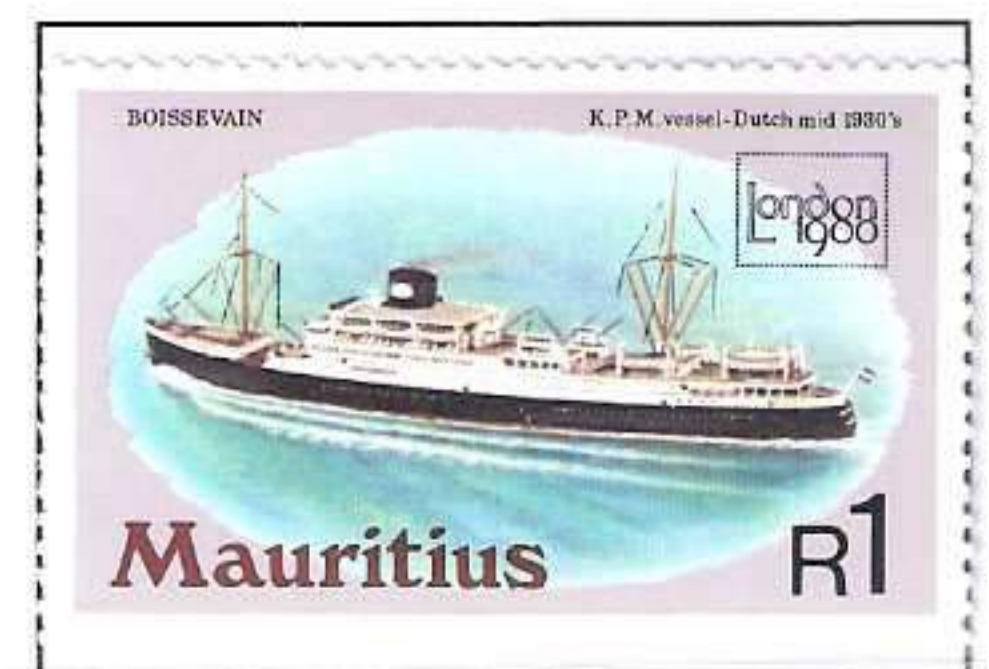
The Coolidge.



The Matua.



The Malaita.



The Boisservain.

F THE DEFEAT OF JAPAN

1. THE RE-CONQUEST OF THE PACIFIC ISLAND

The operations to conquer Guadalcanal go on through several battles on the sea. After losing the carrier Hornet in the battle of October 26, 1942, during which the carrier Enterprise too is seriously damaged, the Americans try to debark a huge contingent of men on November 12th to reinforce their position.



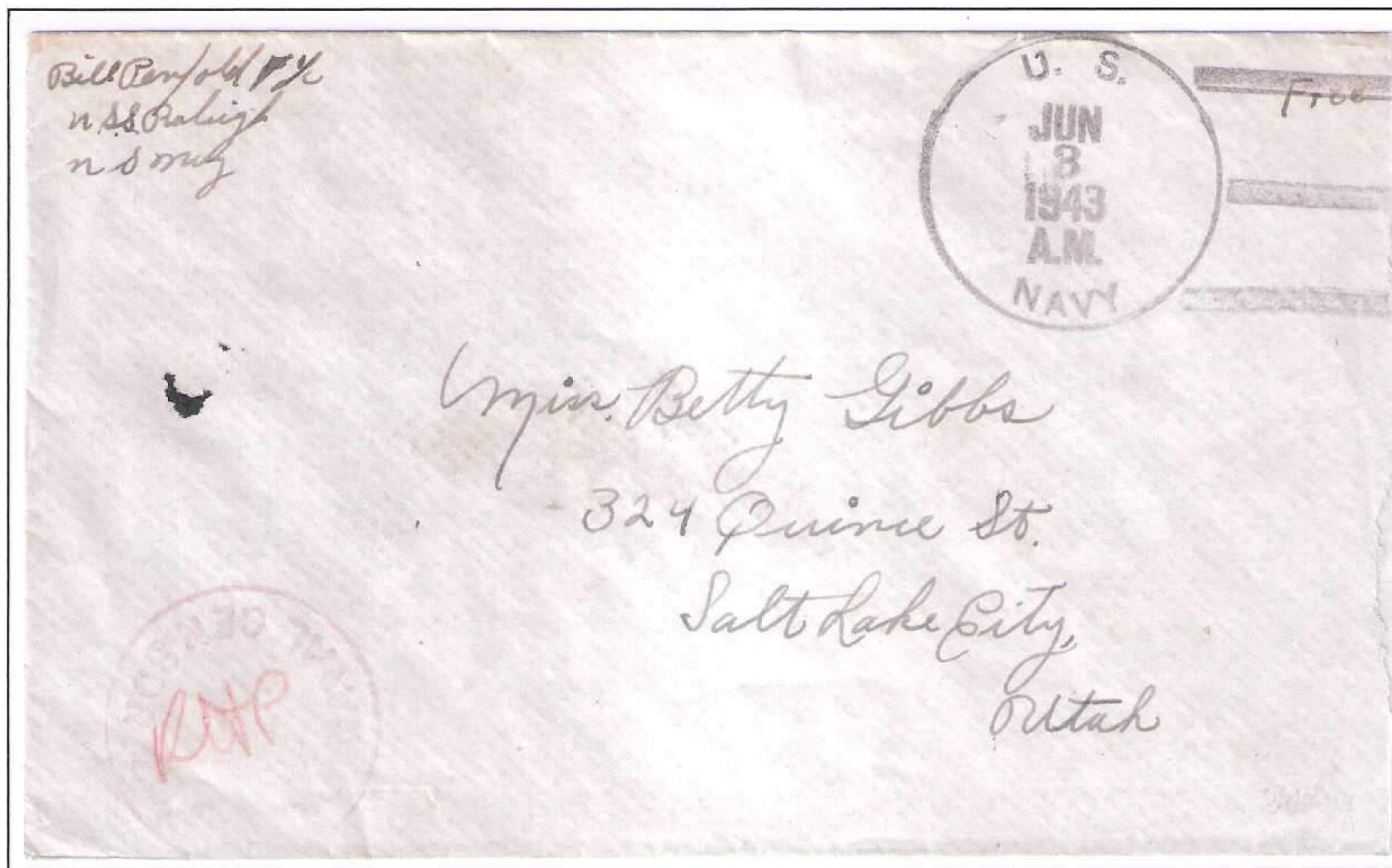
The carrier Hornet.



The convoy arriving from the New Hebrides and New Caledonia is escorted by American and Australian destroyers and battle ships, among which the Raleigh. The operations must be interrupted because of the arrival of a big Japanese naval squad.

The New Hebrides and New Caledonia.

U.S. Navy, June 3, 1943: letter from Cruiser Raleigh to Salt Lake City (Utah).



The powerful Japanese naval squad is located on the night of November 13th between the isle of Sayo and Guadalcanal in the famous strait called "iron layer strait" because of the huge number of ships which had sunk there. The Japanese contingent is formed by 2 carriers, 4 battle ships, among which the Kirishima, which will be sunk, 10 battle cruisers, with the Chokai, 30 destroyers, submarines and 11 cargoes. It is highly superior to the American force, formed by 1 carrier, the Enterprise, 2 battleships, the South Dakota and the Washington, 8 battle cruisers and 22 destroyers..

The South Dakota and the Washington .

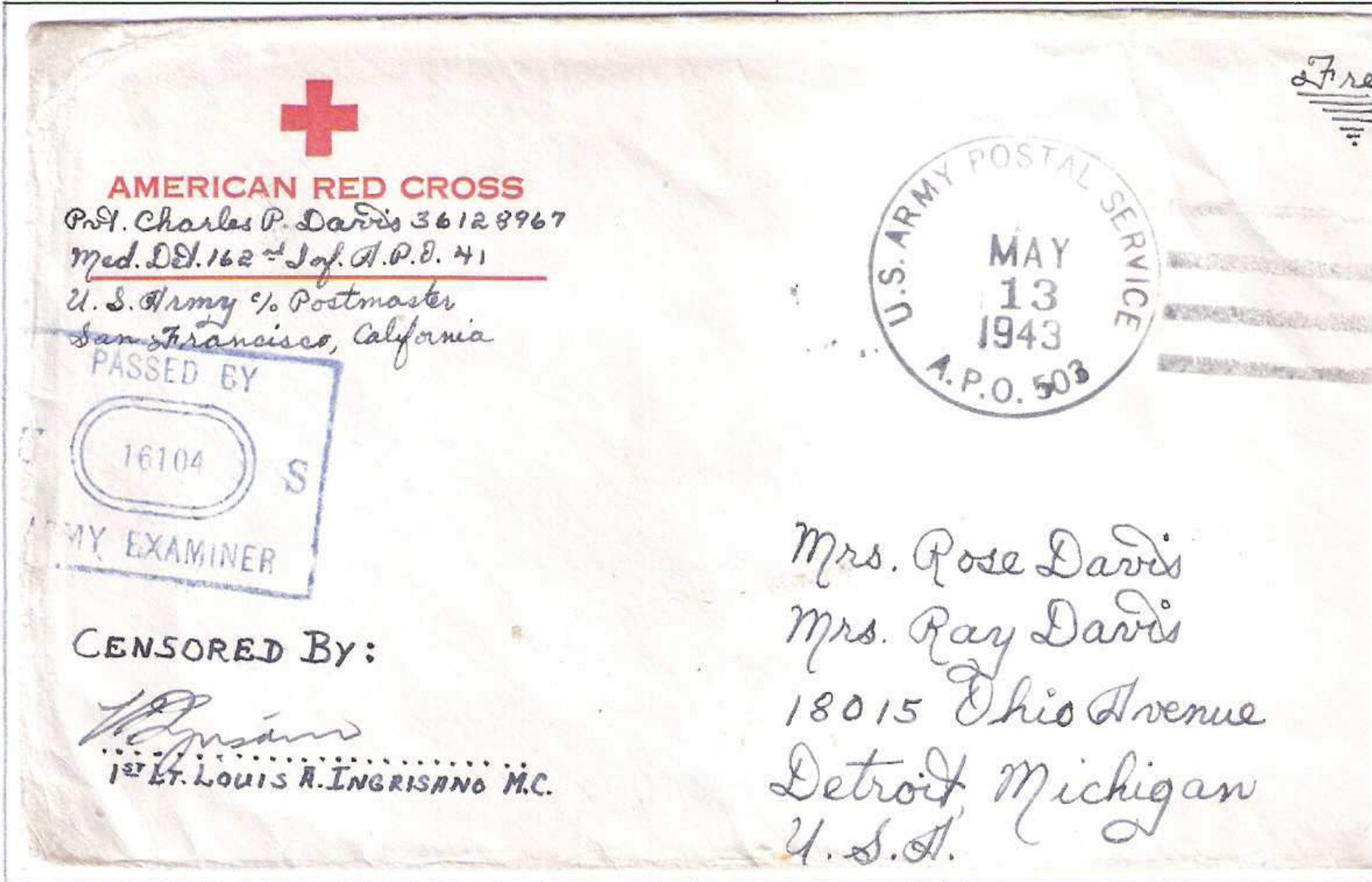
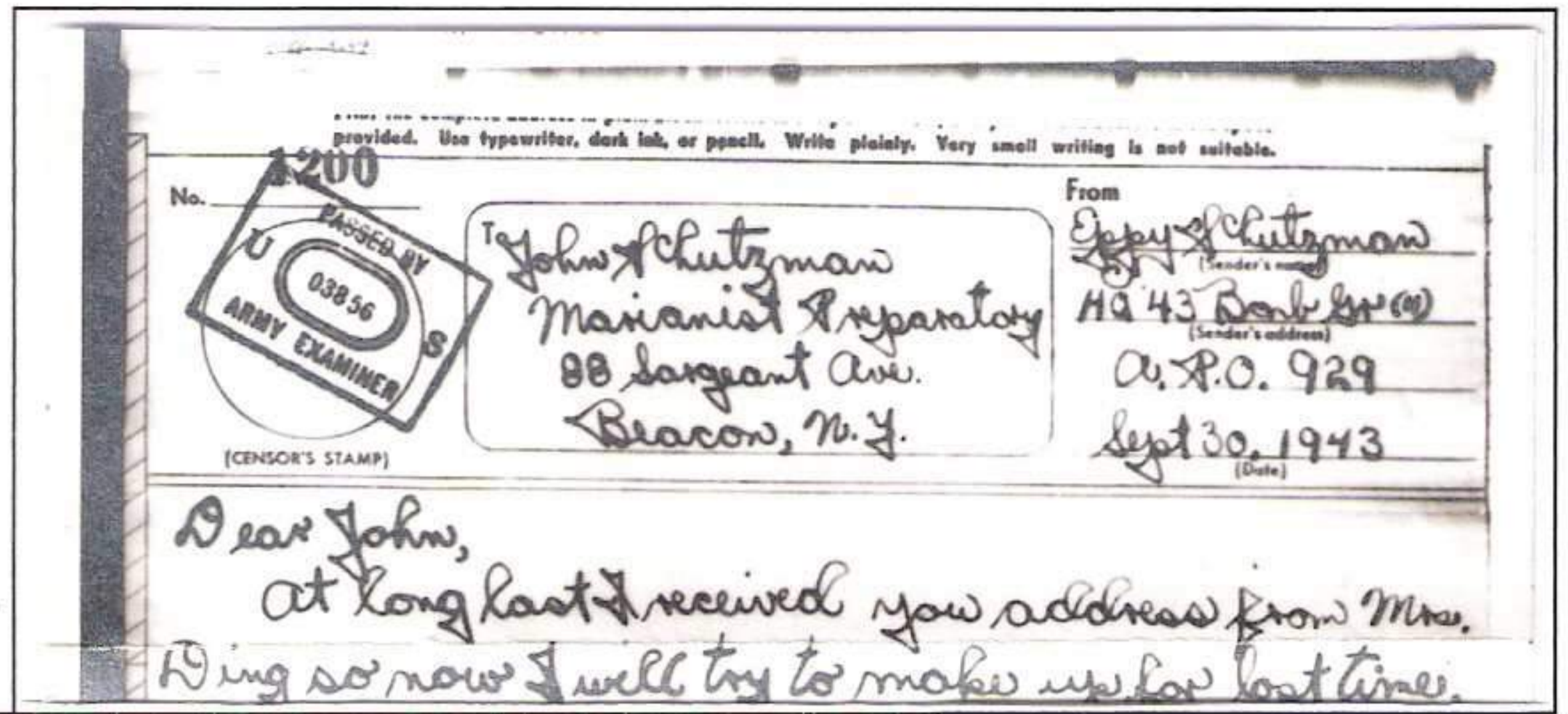
The Kirishima and The Chokai .



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).

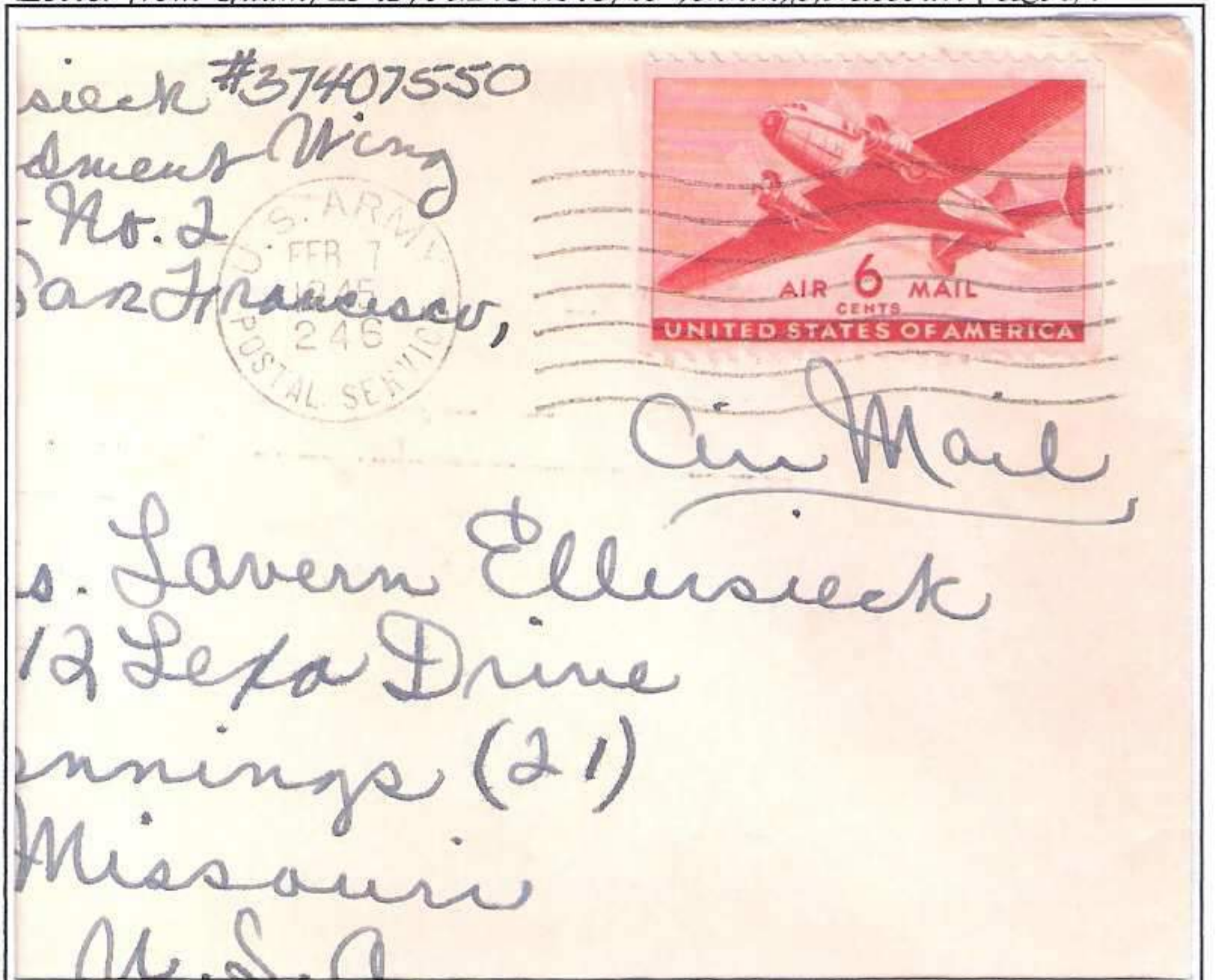


Intercettati i messaggi nipponici relativi a una ispezione dell' Amm. Yamamoto nelle isole Salomone, scatta l'operazione "Pavone". Adm. Yamamoto flies over Boungaiville, he is shot down on April 18, 1943 by a P-38 Lightnings.



Alla riconquista della Nuova Guinea.

Letter from Guam, 1943, A.P.O. 246, to Jennings, Missouri (USA).

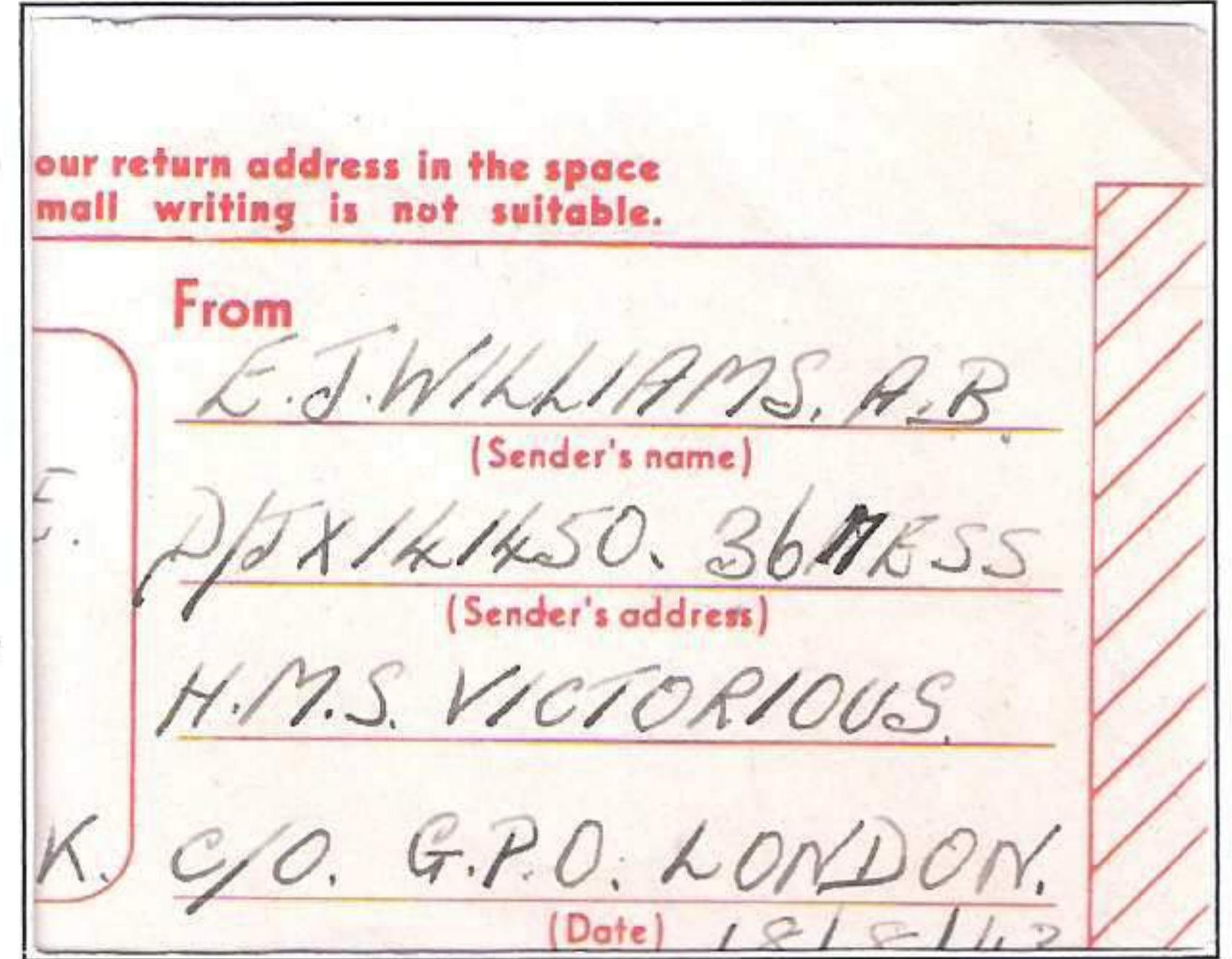


The occupation of Guam by the Japanese and American attacks to the island in preparation for re-conquest.



During the battle to reconquer the Solomon Islands, the British carrier Victorious joins the allied fleet in the Pacific. Its support will be precious to the allies' landing in Vella Lavella and Bougainville.

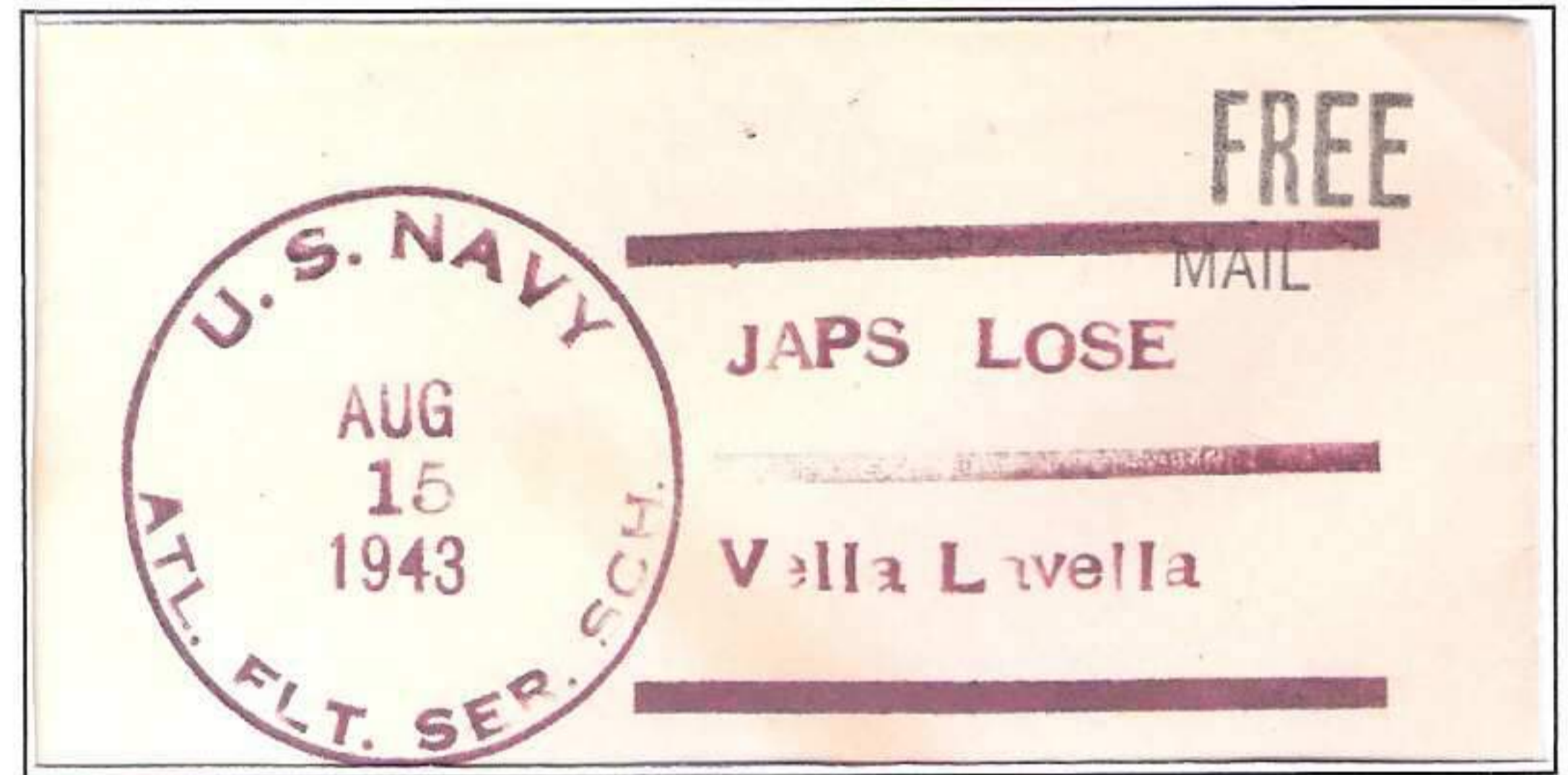
Mail sent August 18, 1943 from carrier Victorious to Cardiff (U.K.)



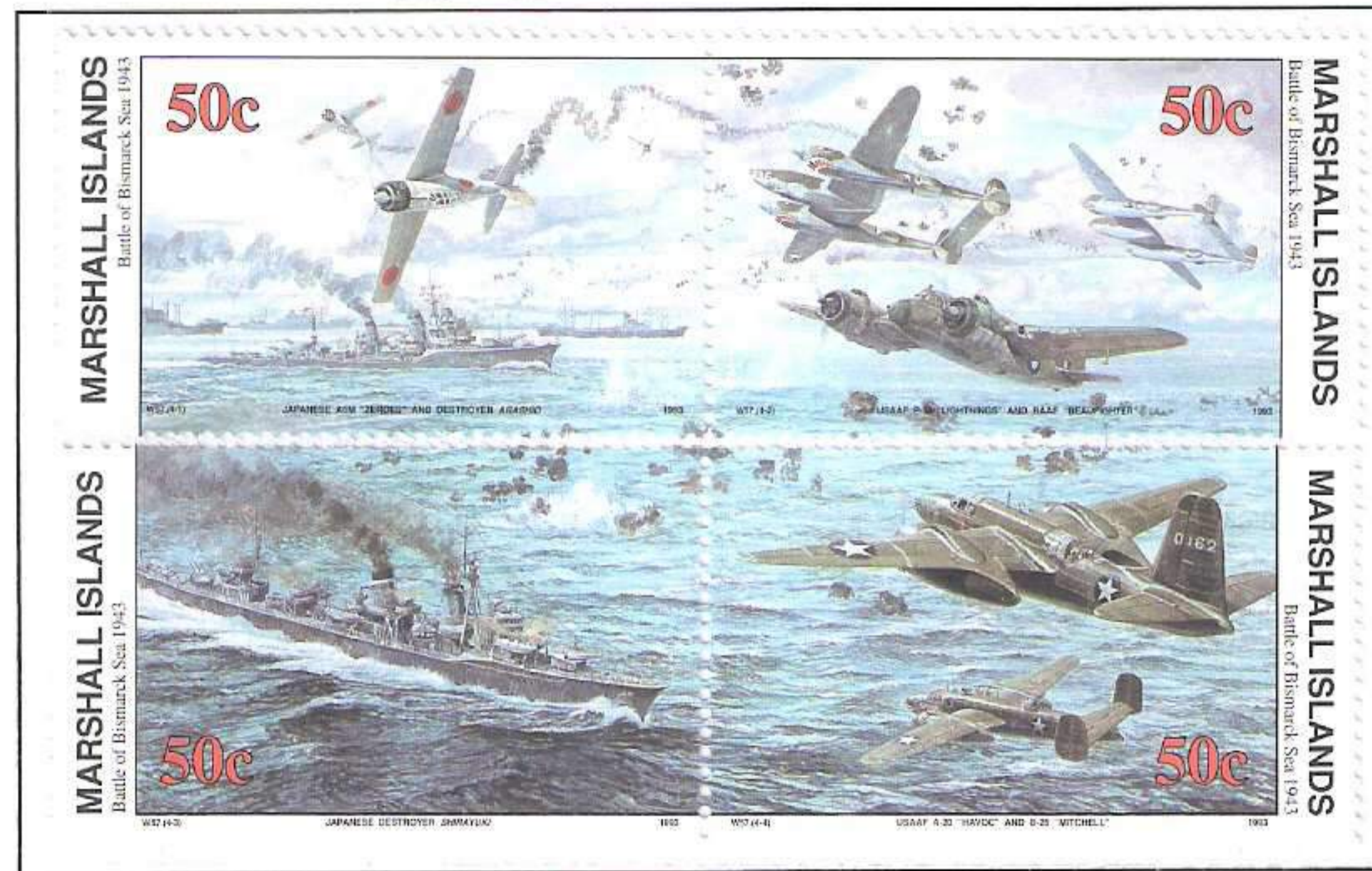
In their advance the Americans land on the isle of Vella Lavella on August. For the first time they use the frog's leap tactic, aiming at the conquest of an advanced position and at isolating areas which will be later attacked. In this case the new strategy is used in the isle of Kolombangara.



During the conquest of the Central Salomon Islands the invade the isle of Bougainville in order to approach Gen. Mac Arthur's troops to New Guinea and the Bismark Islands, where the important base of Rabaul was located.



The Battle of Bismarck Islands.



Operations in New Guinea.

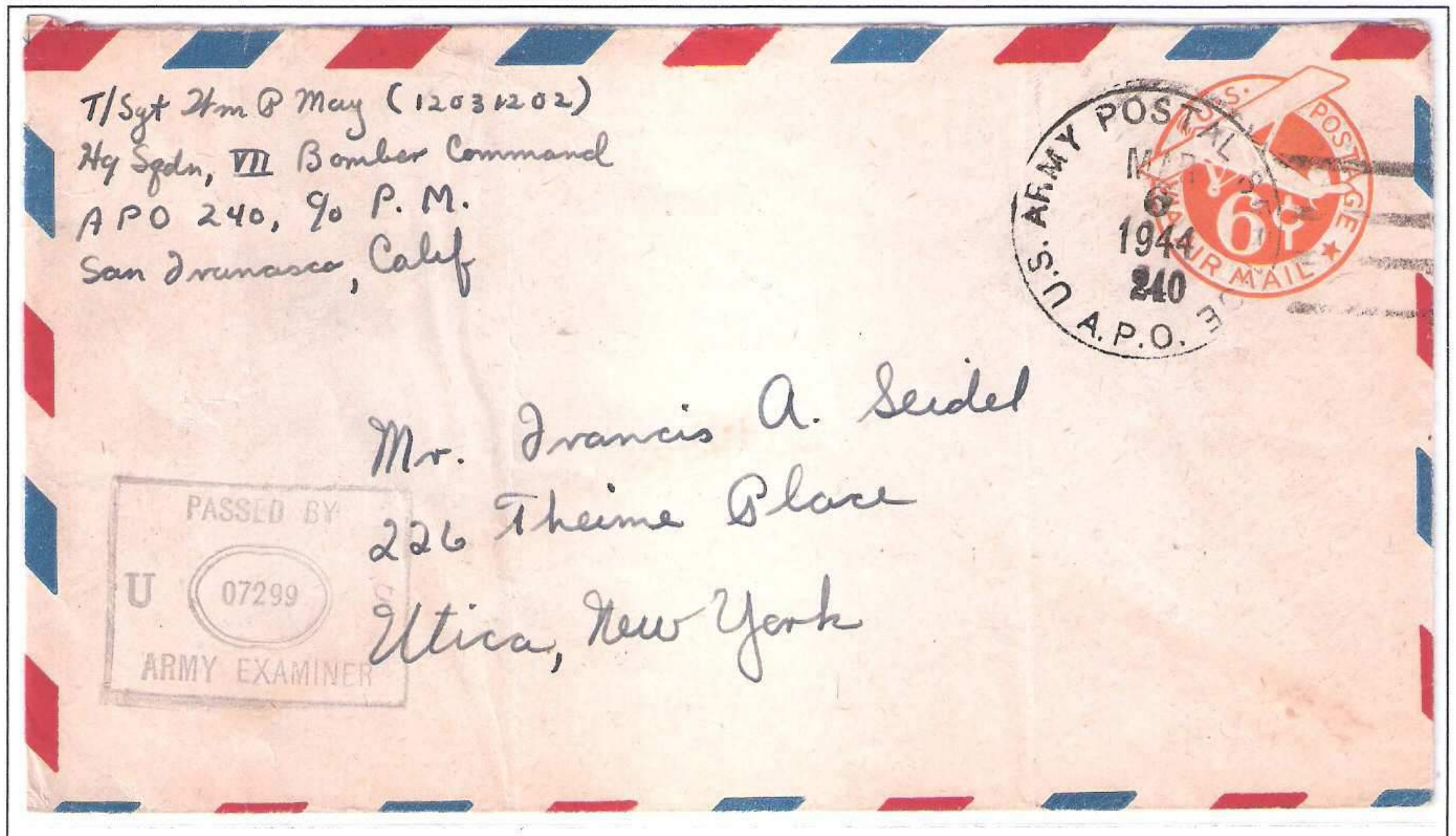
Planes of the carrier Indipendence, together with some other battle crafts, bombard Rabaul's shelter.



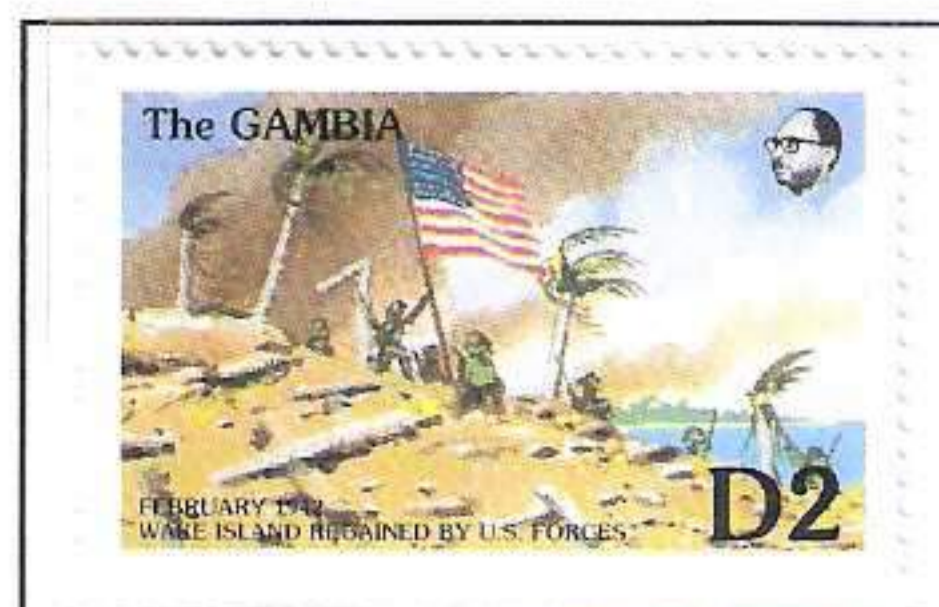
Air-naval battles and American landings take place throughout the Pacific to reconquer the atolls. With the protection of submarines, on June 15, 1944 the Americans land and recapture the island of Saipan.



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

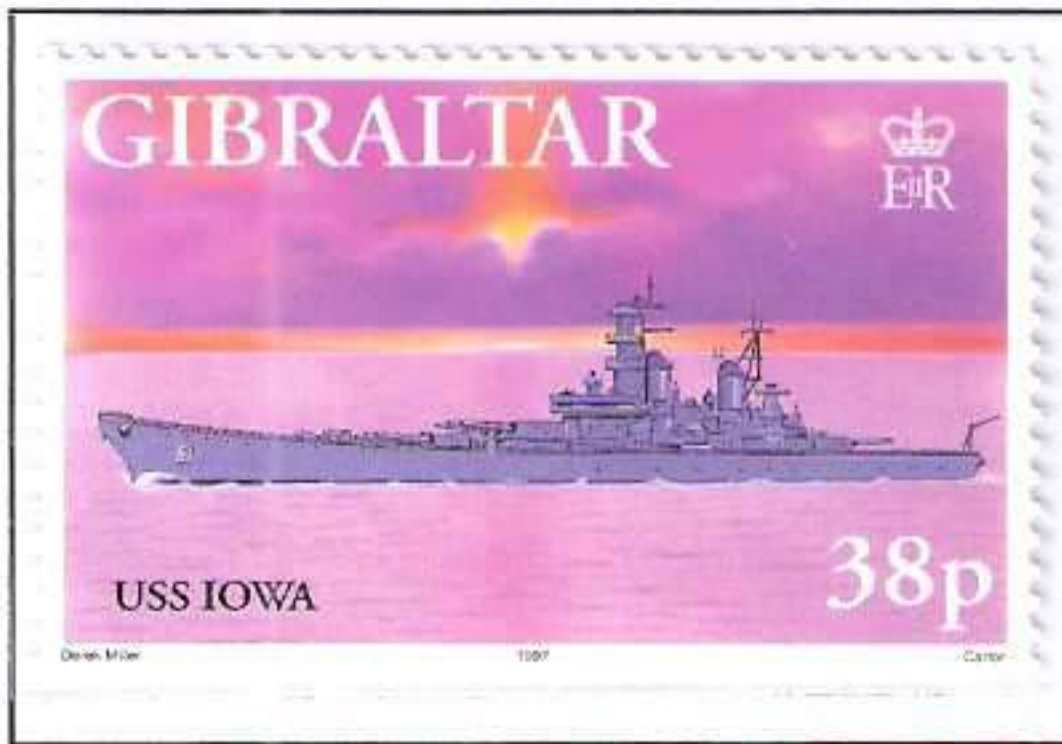


Letter from A.P.O. 240, Tarawa, Gilbert Island, March 6, 1944, to Utica, New York



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.



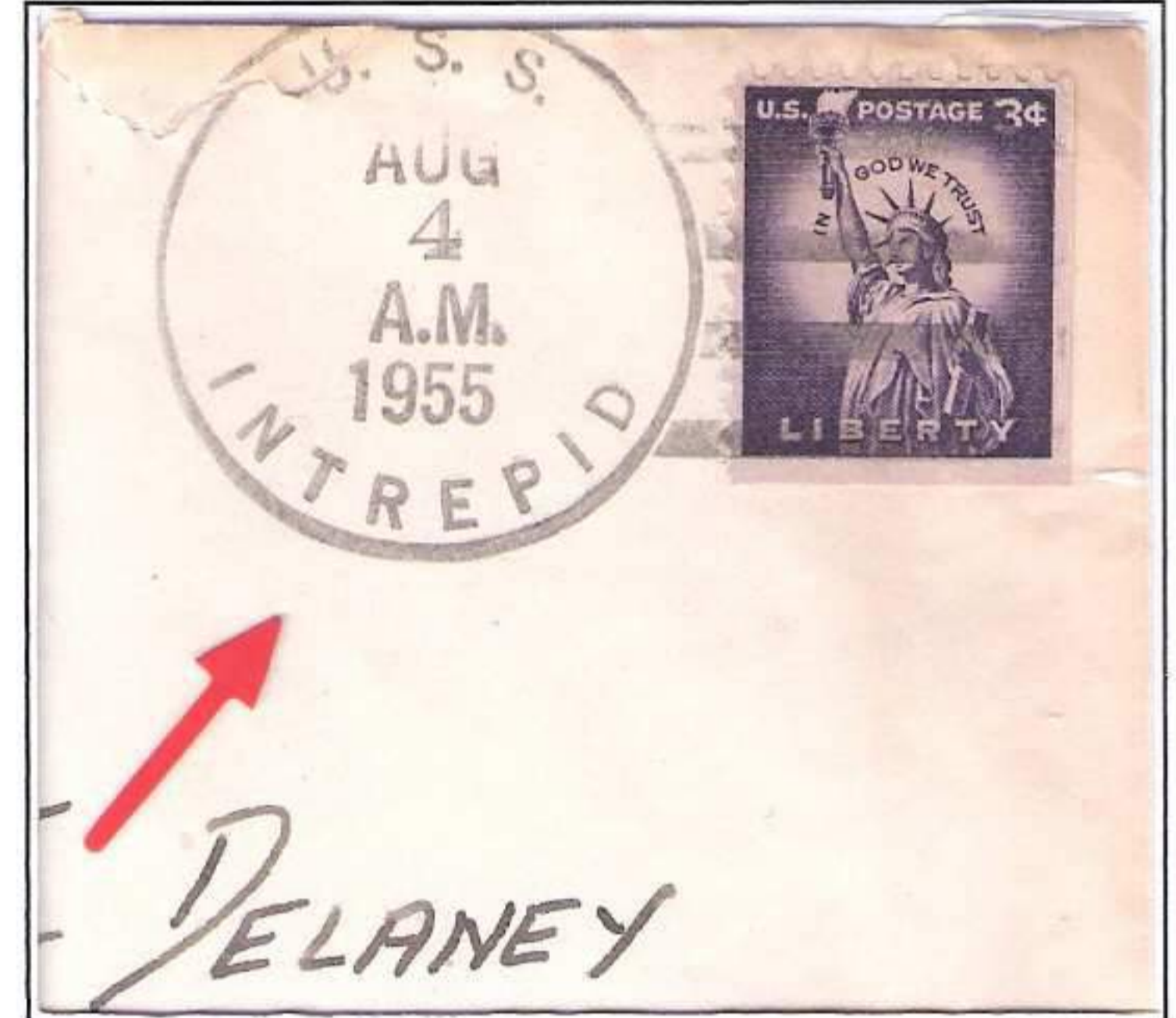
The Japanese forces oppose to the Americans using the "Kamikaze".



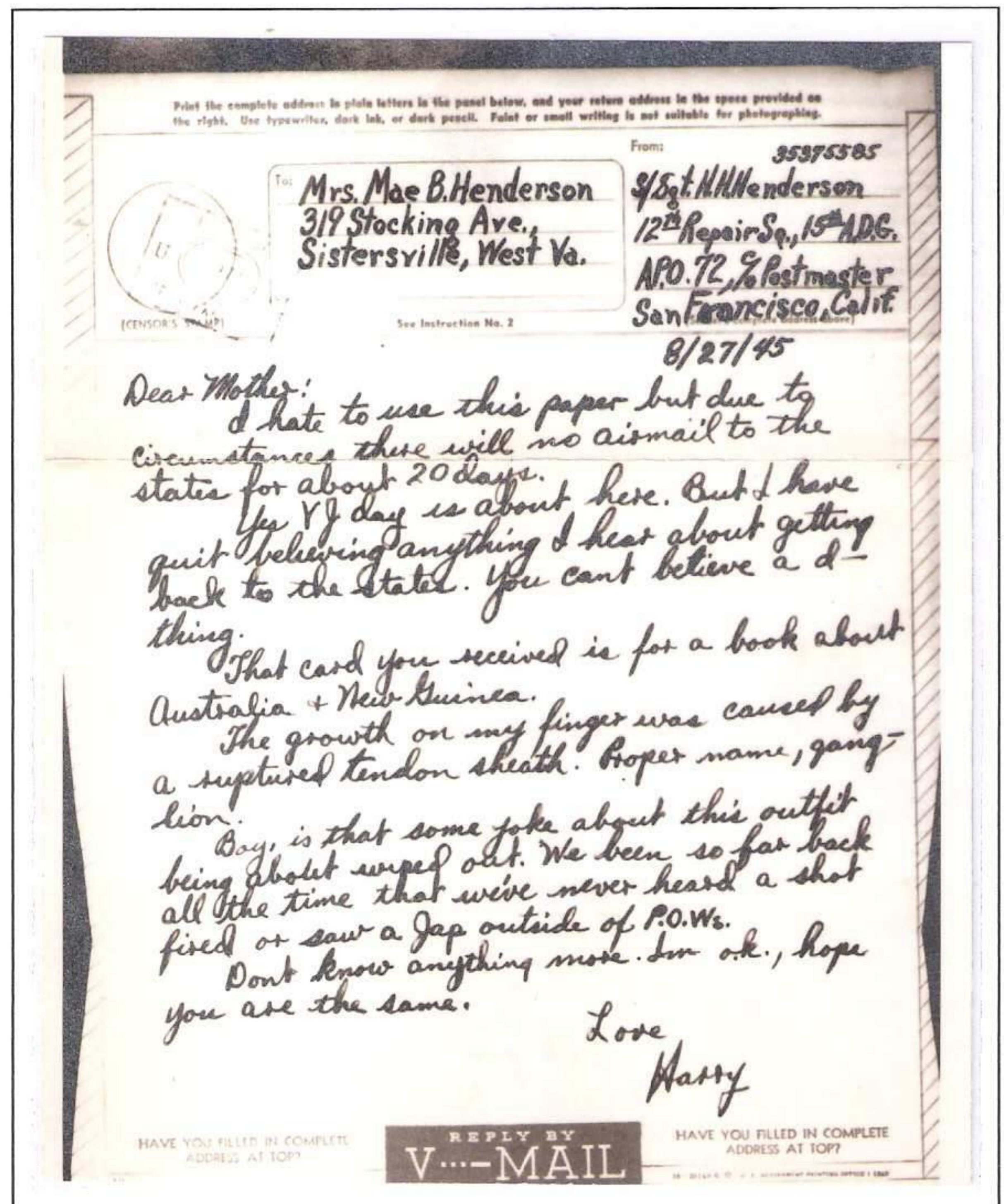
USS Iowa battleship in the battle of Gulf of Leyte.



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".



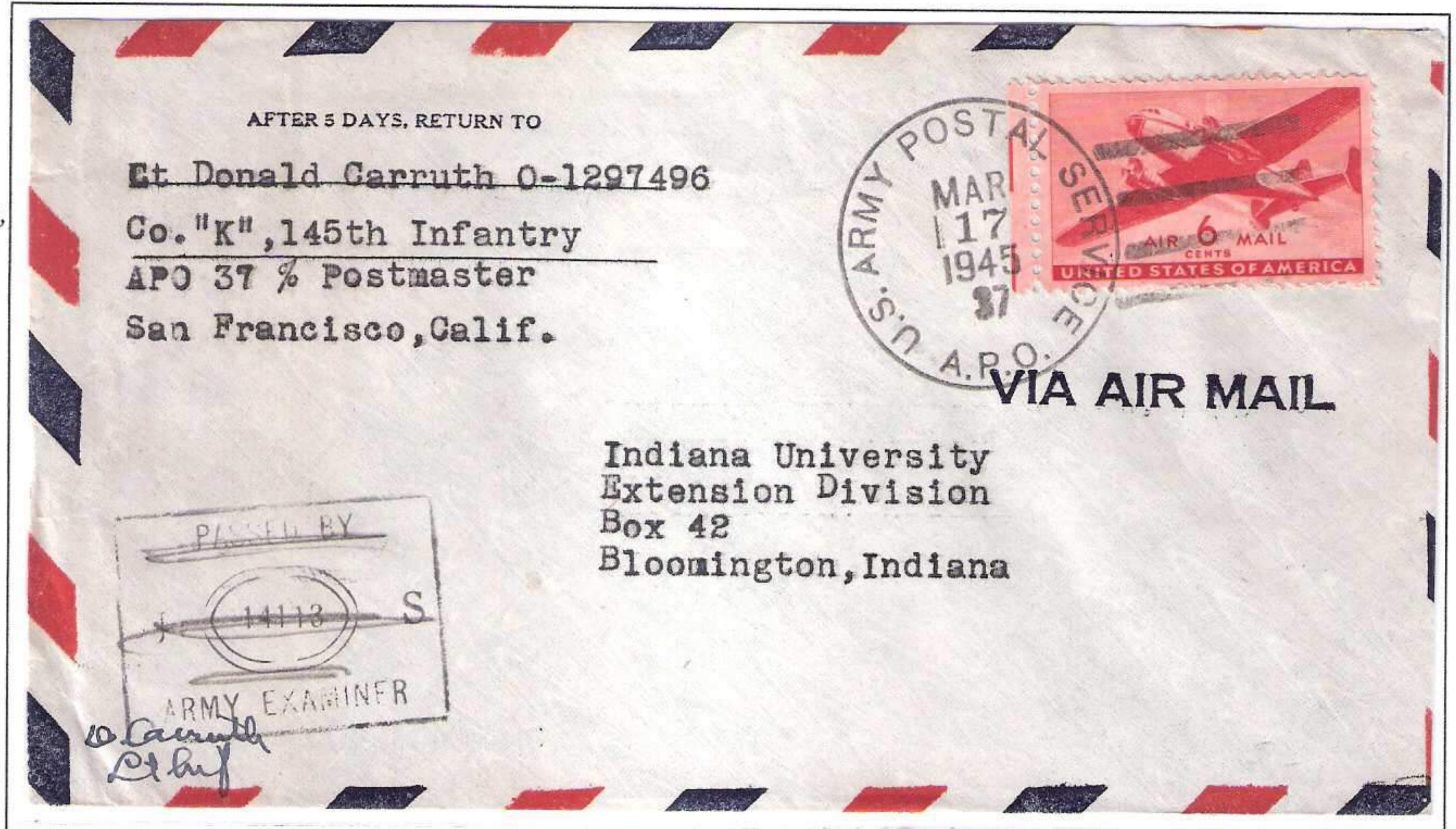
The return of gen. MacArthur to the Philippines.



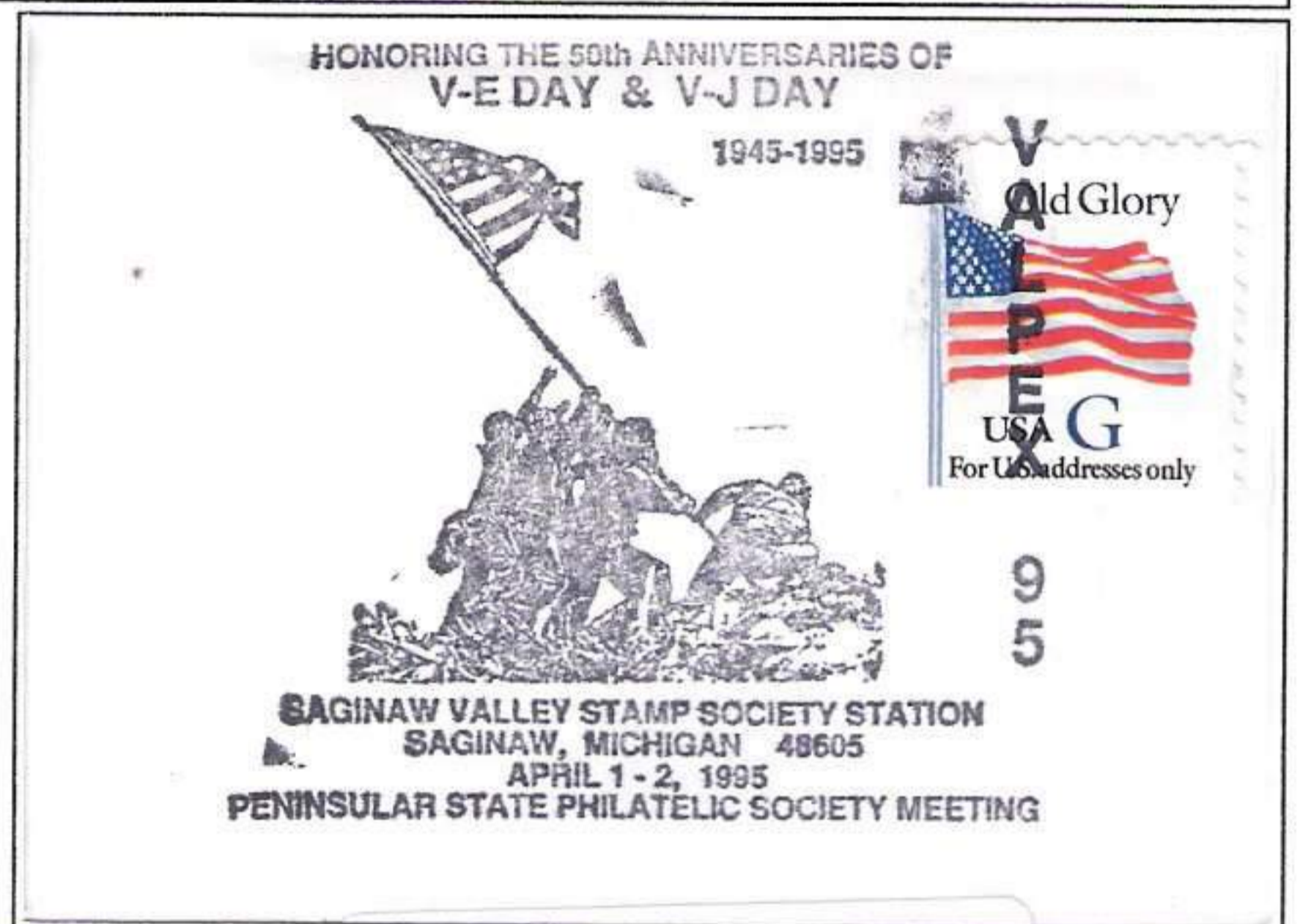
V...Mail from A.P.O n. 72, August 27, 1945, Tacloban, Leyte, to Sistersville, West Virginia, seen for censorship.

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

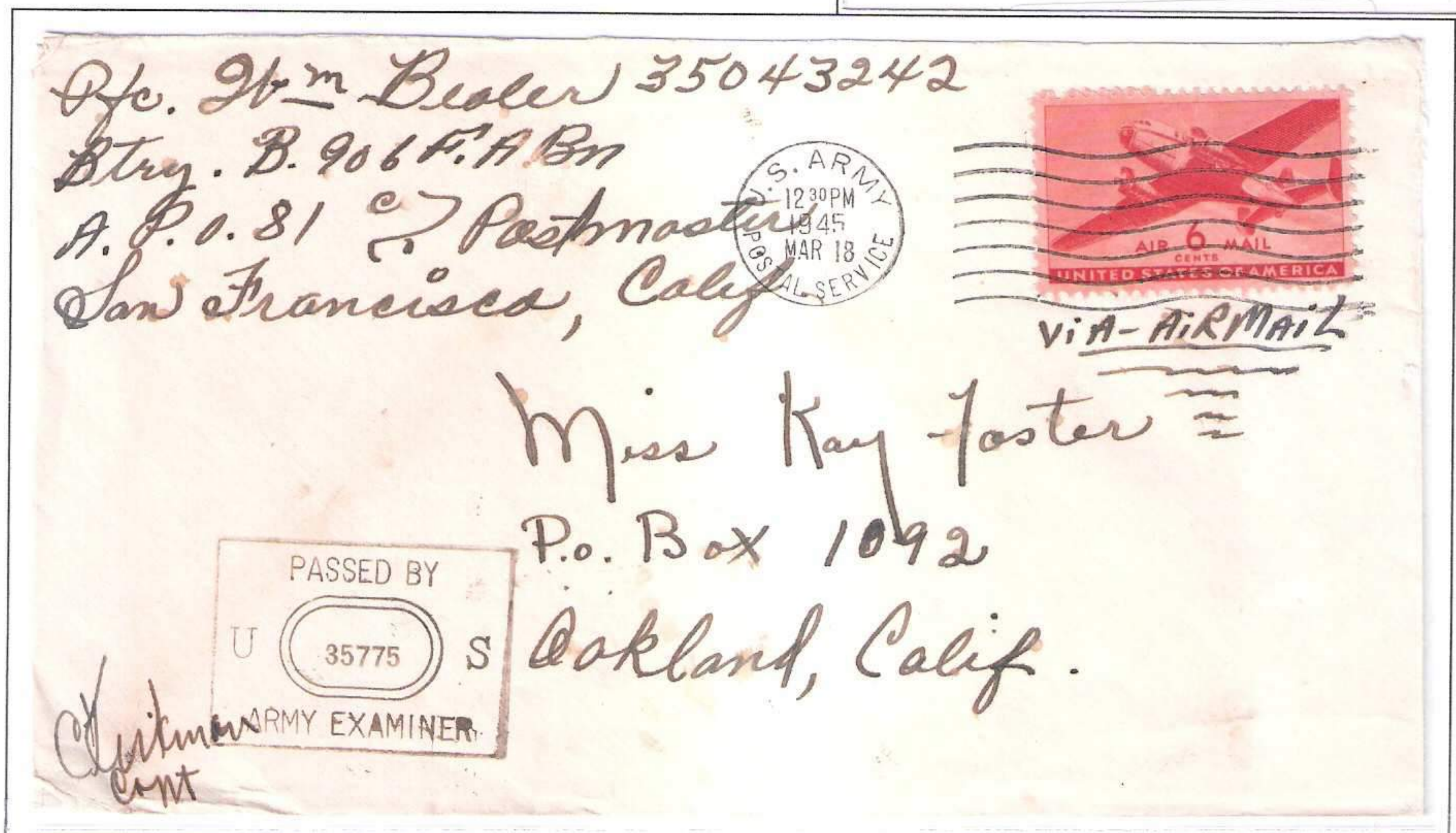
Letter from
A.P.O. 37,
Manila,
March 17,
1945 to
Bloomington,
Indiana
(USA)



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



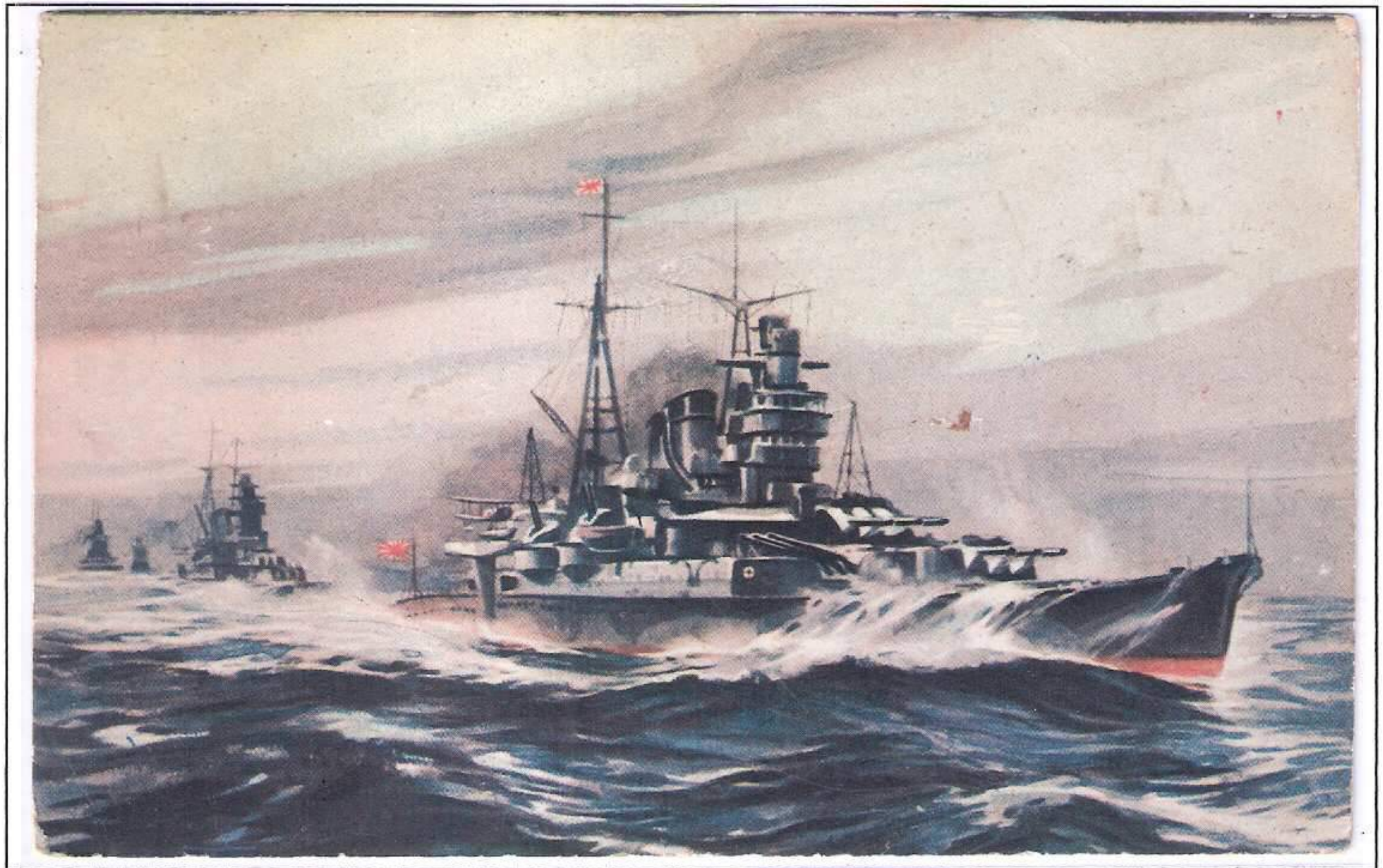
Letter from A.P.O. 81, Iwo Jima, March 18, 1945, seen for censorship, for Oakland, California.



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



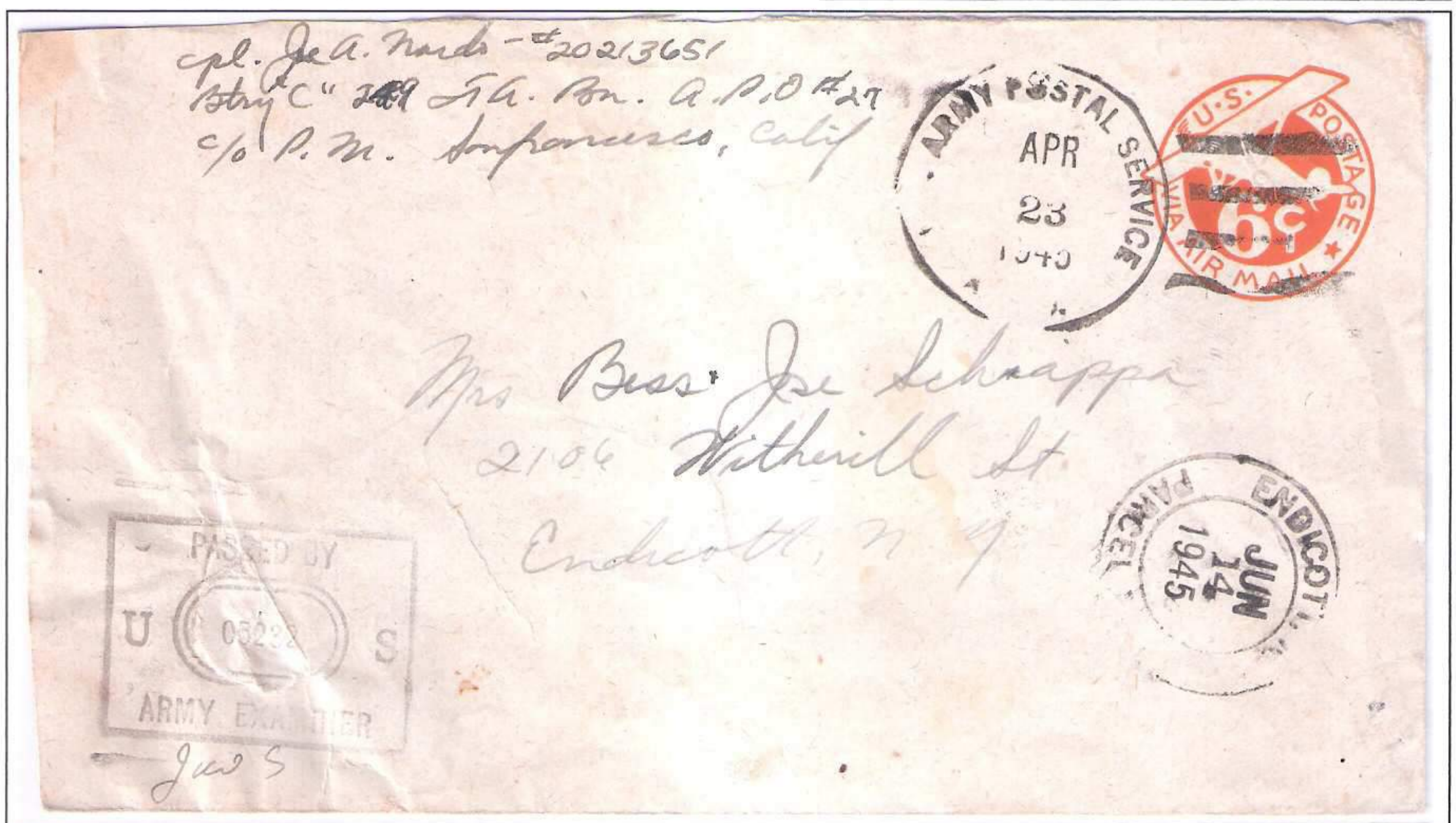
Japan, Post Card of the Yamato.

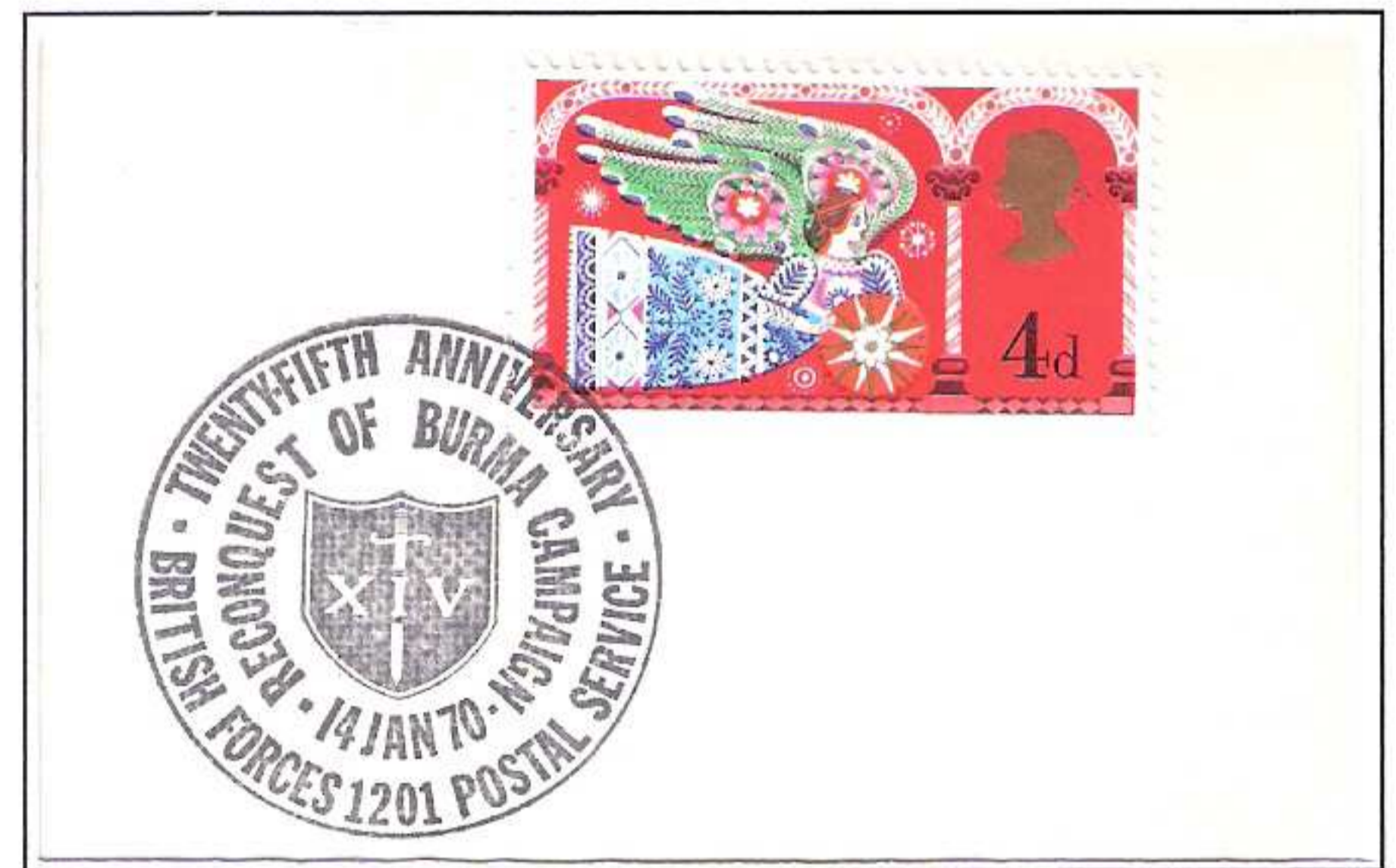


The last major battle of the war and the last big battle in the Pacific.

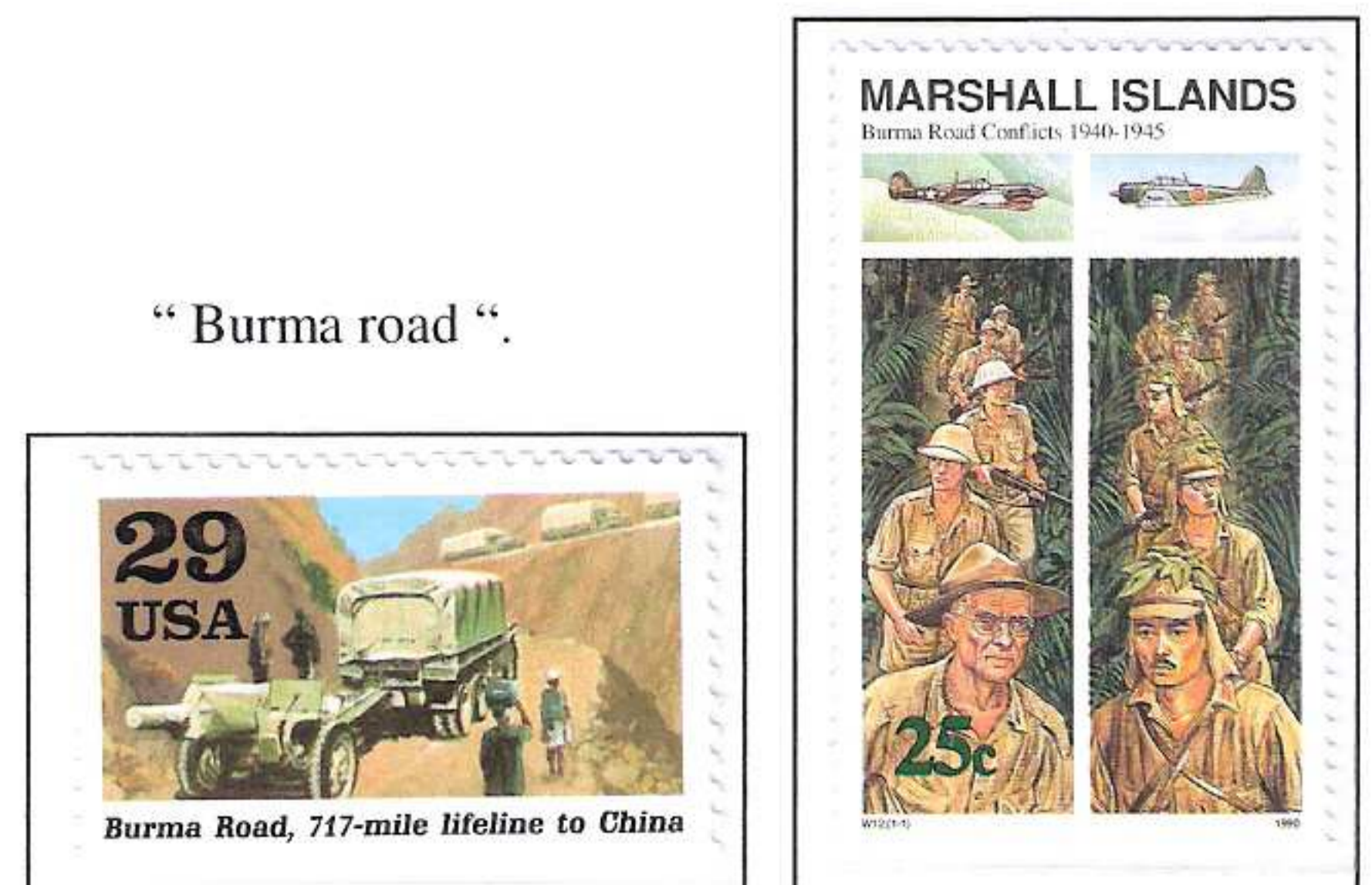


Japan, the Ryukyus Islans, April 23, 1945: letter from Okinawa to Endicott (New York-USA).





On August 29th, 1945, the Japanese surrender in Singapore. After four years of battles, destructions and sufferings Asia's South East is at last set free.



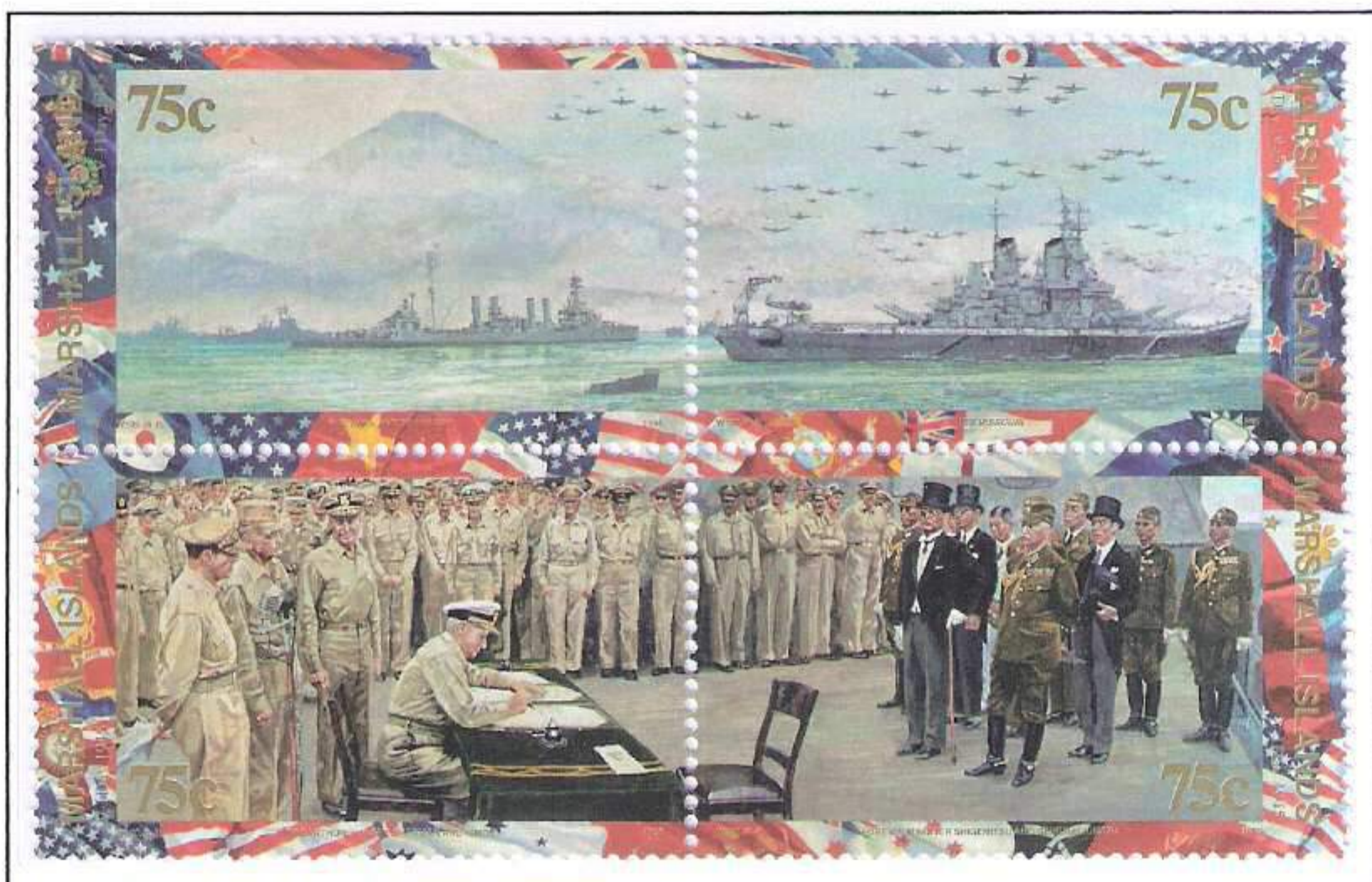
"Burma road"



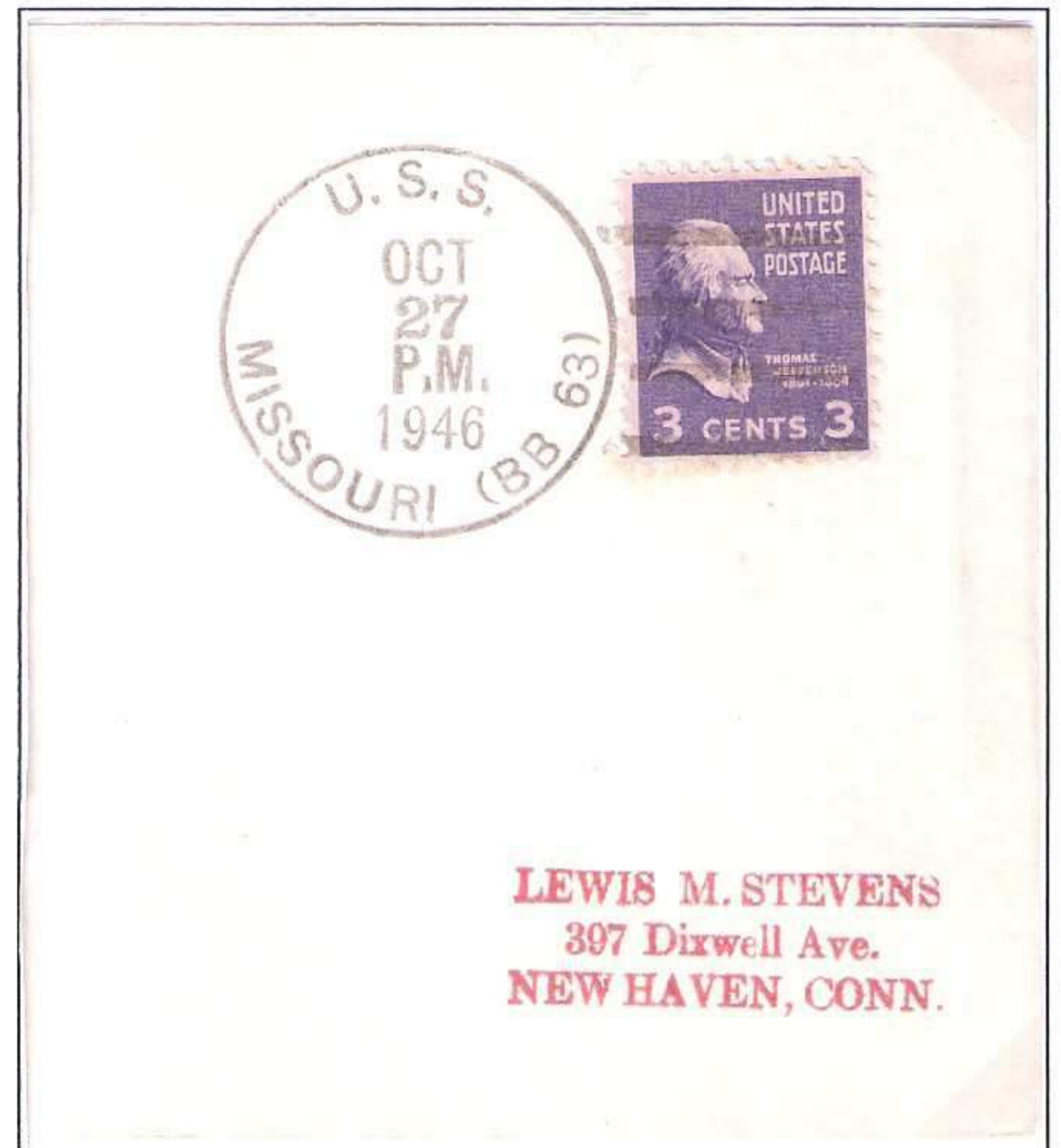
The use of the atomic bomb persuades Japan to ask for an unconditional surrender.



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



The "peace".



The going back home of all the soldiers.

