

Repair & Closing Seals

Issue of 1892
Second and Third Printings

**Second Printing
1892**

An 1885 domestic registered letter that was first opened in error and then redirected. It is closed with three second printing seals. Ultimately the letter was returned to the sender whose name is on the back.

One second printing usage reported



**Third Printing
1896**

An 1898 letter from Durban, Natal to Paris. It was badly damaged in transit and upon arrival in Paris was repaired with two third printing seals (a second is on the back). The letter was short paid by ½ penny (25 centimes) and the 50 centimes due collected double the deficiency.



Repair & Closing Seals

Issue of 1945
Crash Mail and Tahiti Usage

**City of Khartoum
Crash Mail**

The Koufra, a Lockheed C60, crashed on September 30, 1945 at a stop in Tripoli on its flight from Madagascar to Paris. This charred letter is repaired with fourteen 1945 issue seals.

The cachet is unlisted in Nierinck.

The EKU for the 1945 seals.

Tahiti Usage

A local registered letter from Papeete to "Noma Bennett" in Paea. The addressee was unknown and the letter was returned with the notation "Try Papeete". The back has manuscript text signed by a PTT official: "The enclosed letter for Mlle Norma Bennett of Papeete who declares that she is not the addressee of the present letter." The letter was opened in the post office to determine a return address and reclosed with the 1945 seals. It is likely the letter was returned to the sender in an ambulance bag as was common in the French Postal System at this time.

The only reported use of any seal in Tahiti



The Official Seals of France

Introduction

This exhibit covers the complete time span of use of official seals in France from their introduction in 1892 to about 1976 when the use of seals was replaced by adhesive tapes of generic design. During this period the seals had but a single uninspired design, a high aspect ratio box with the then current name of the French Postal System, and a line of text citing the article numbers in the postal regulations under which the mail was either repaired or otherwise handled. The seals are printed on either glassine or white paper, both of poor quality. All are imperforate so usages frequently only show portions of seals, or multiple seals cut haphazardly during application.

Official seals are used primarily for the repair or closing of mail. During WW I, the current seals were occasionally used as censor seals, but this practice was relatively infrequent and such usages are scarce. In addition to seals used for repair and closing, special seals were used in the Dead Letter Office to close mail opened to determine return or forwarding addresses. This use was abandoned about 1950. For the brief period beginning in 1921 to about 1926, special seals were also used to reclose mail opened for customs and currency control.

During the 1950's and 1960's colonies were granted independence or made overseas departments on an equal footing as the departments of France proper. French seals were used locally in both cases. Such usages are scarce, especially so for smaller states such as Tahiti or St. Pierre and Miquelon. This exhibit contains six such usages.

This exhibit represents the first systematic study of the French seals. The presentation is chronological with the currency control and DLO seals at the end. It is likely (but unproven) that the exhibit is complete for all seal types used during the period covered. There is however no literature available (to the extent that both the specialized Yvert and Ceres catalogs are silent on the seals) to act as a reference point, however no new types have been found by the exhibitor in the last few years.

Repair & Closing Seals

Issue of 1892
First Printing in 1892

An 1894 registered letter from California (10¢ additional franking is on the back). The letter was undeliverable, and was opened to determine a forwarding or return address and closed with a first printing seal and six wax seals (three are on the back).



Repair & Closing Seals

Issue of 1898
Types 1 and 2

Four types are known and differentiated by paper type and postal law citation. Multiple printings of all types exist.

Type 1

White paper
"Art. 380..."

Three seals from the second printing used to repair a damaged 1899 letter from New Caledonia, a very unusual point of origination.



Type 2

White paper
"Art. 483..."

Many seals completely around the edges of a badly damaged 1902 letter from Nuernberg, Germany.



Repair & Closing Seals

Issue of 1898
Types 3 and 4

Type 3

Glassine paper
"Art. 26..."

Four type 3 seals used
to close a letter from
Syria opened in error.



Type 4

Glassine paper
"Art. 483..."

Two seal fragments (a
third full seal is on the
picture side of the
card) used to repair a
badly torn domestic
postcard.

Post and postal card
usages are very scarce.



Repair & Closing Seals

Issue of 1915
Issue of 1924

Issue of 1915

The largest seal issued by France used to close a letter after censorship.

One cover reported



Issue of 1924

Two seals used to reclose a letter from Morocco opened in error and redirected.

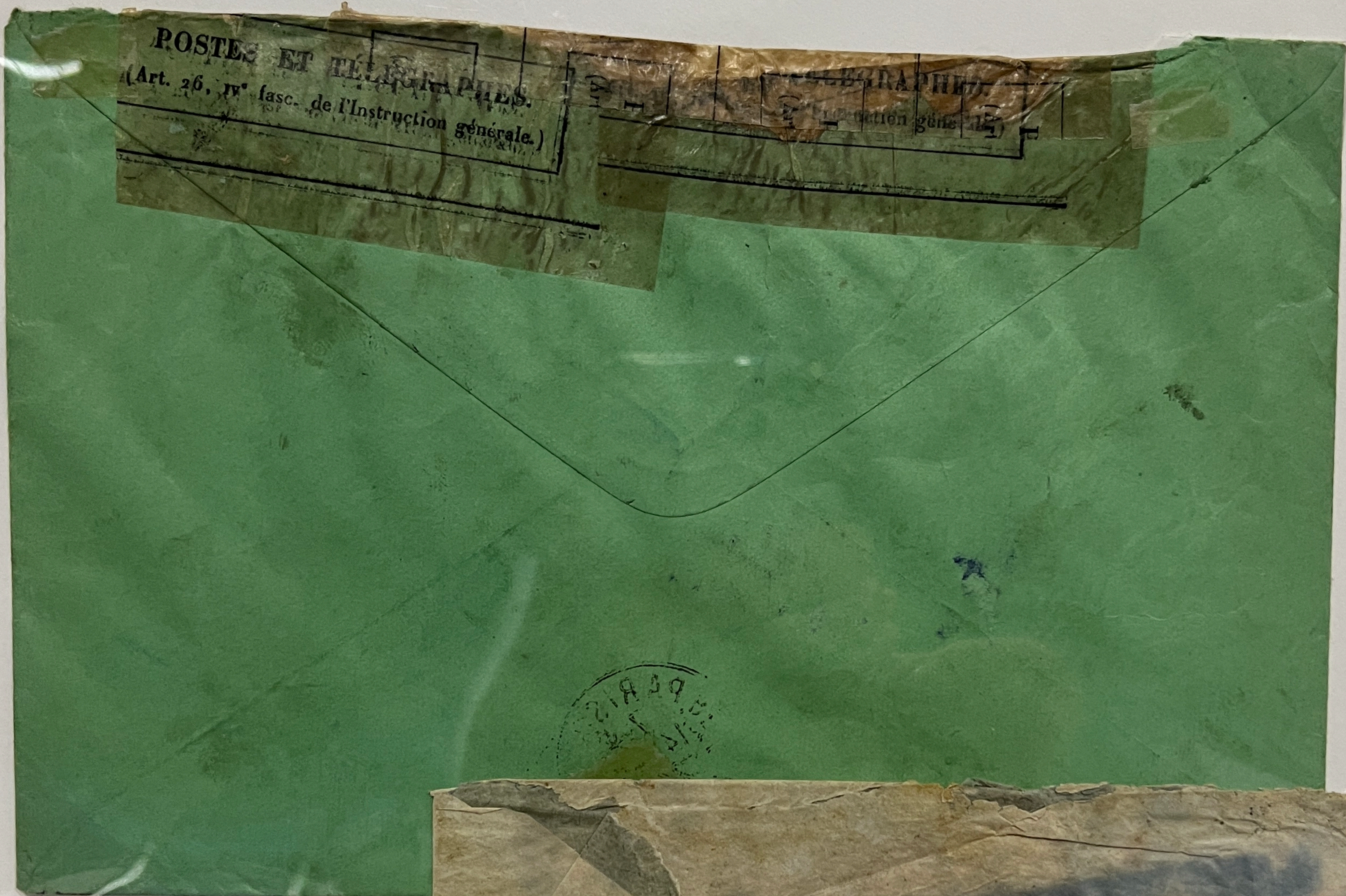


Repair & Closing Seals

Issue of 1924
Double Impression and Crash Mail

Double Impression

The EKV (May 14, 1924) for this seal. Six full and additional partial seals used to close a damaged registered letter from Belgium to Paris. A clear overall double impression can be seen on the seals. The only reported example of the double impression.



Crash Mail

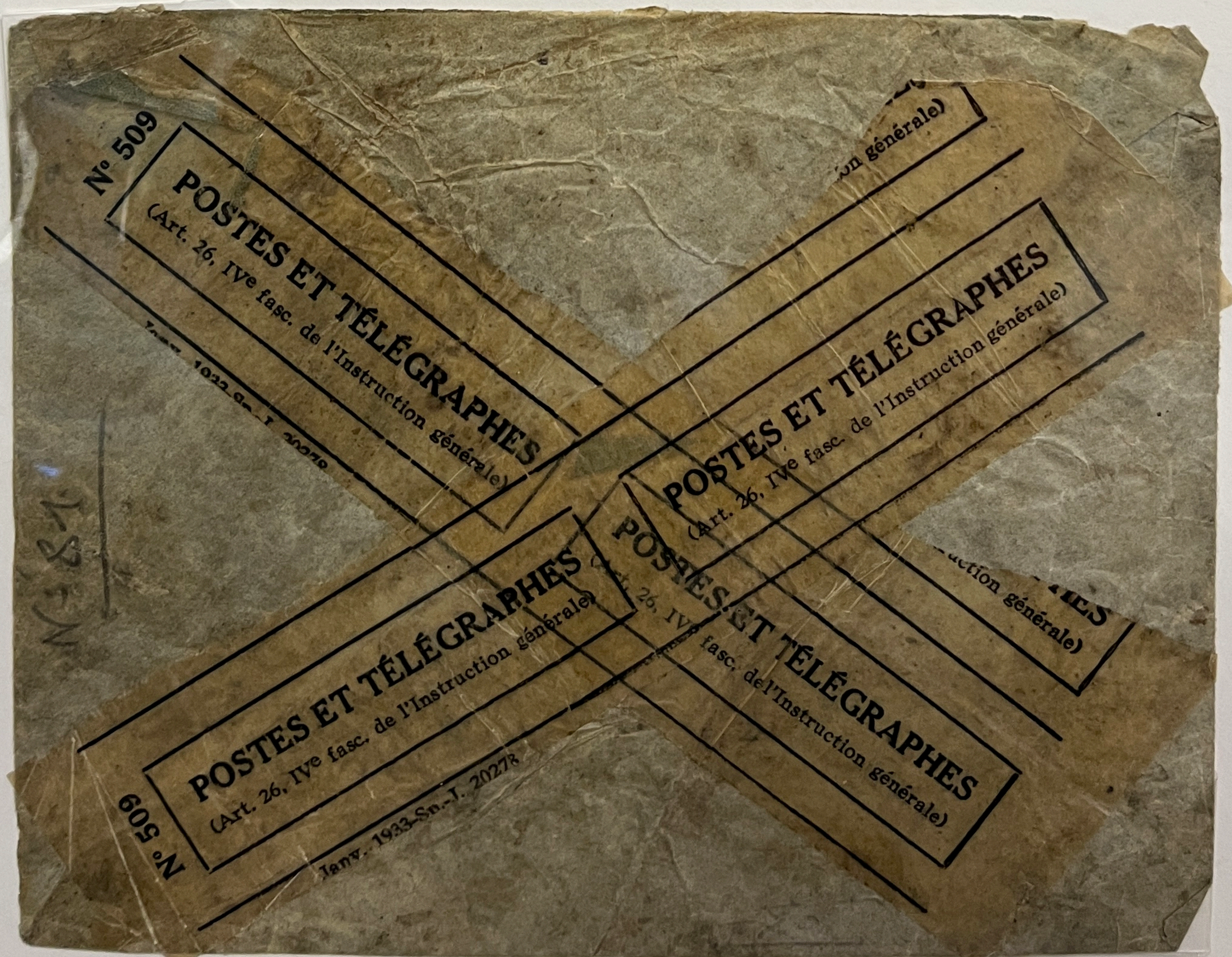
The Air Orient German Fokker seaplane crashed on June 7, 1931 in Akyab, Burma on its route from Saigon to Marseille. A small amount of water soaked mail was recovered and forwarded to Paris where it was dried and forwarded. This letter was reclosed with 1924 issue seals.



Repair & Closing Seals

Issue of 1933
City of Toulouse Crash Mail

The City of Toulouse crashed in the Pyrénées on March 23, 1938 on its flight from Morocco to Toulouse. Damaged mail was dried, closed, and forwarded from Toulouse. Cachets explaining the delay are found in violet or blue. Two covers from that crash are shown on this page, the upper has a blue cachet, and the lower a violet cachet on the front. Both are repaired with multiple 1933 issue seals.



Repair & Closing Seals

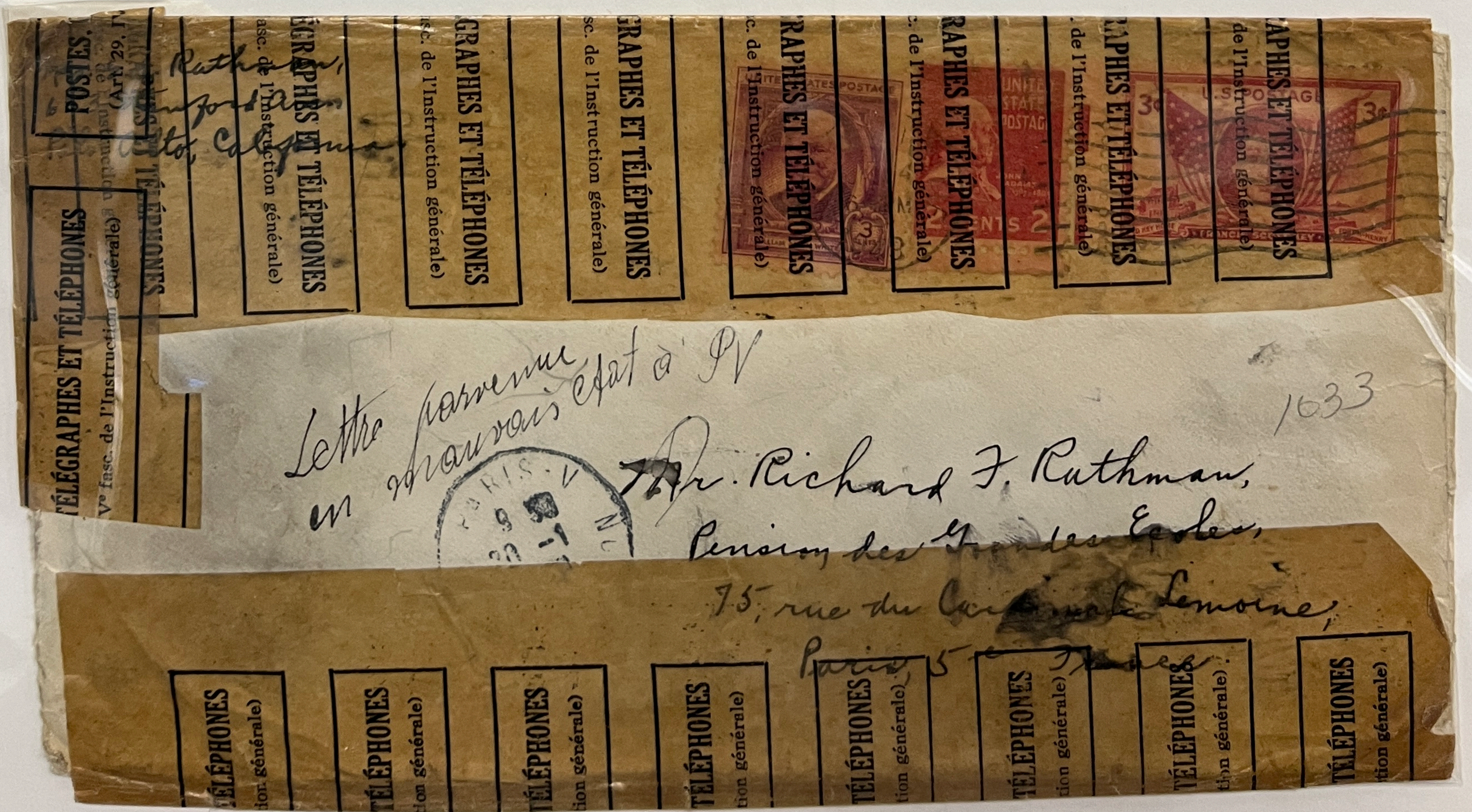
Issue of 1936
Crash Mail and Usage

Crash Mail

Mail from the crash of
the City of Toulouse
repaired with two 1936
seals. Blue crash cachet.



A massive application of twenty seals used to repair a damaged letter from the United States. All of the seals are cut from the same sheet allowing a determination of the sheet size: 10 seals tall by 2 seals wide. No unused seals or panes of any issue have been reported.



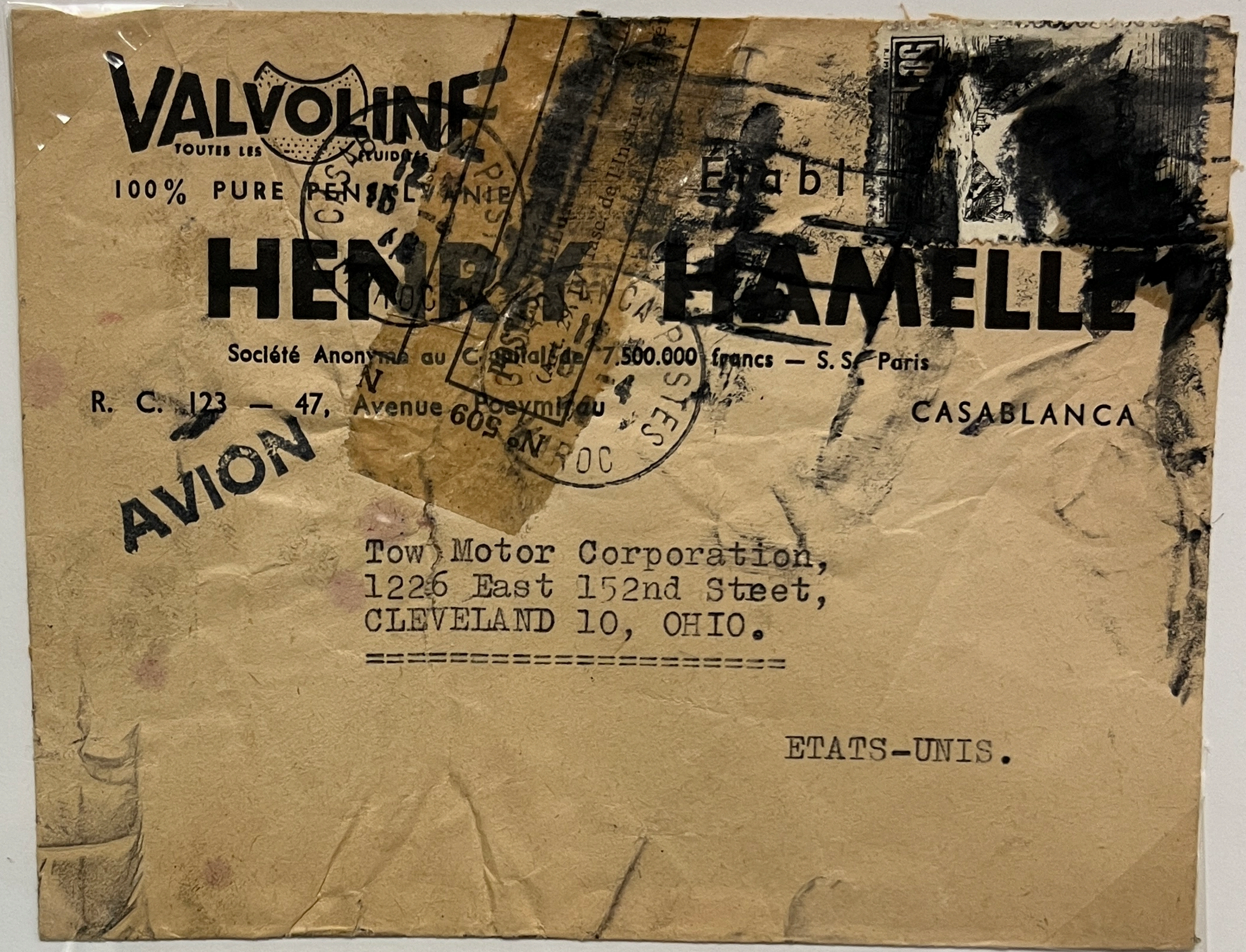
Repair & Closing Seals

Issue of 1945
Morocco Usage

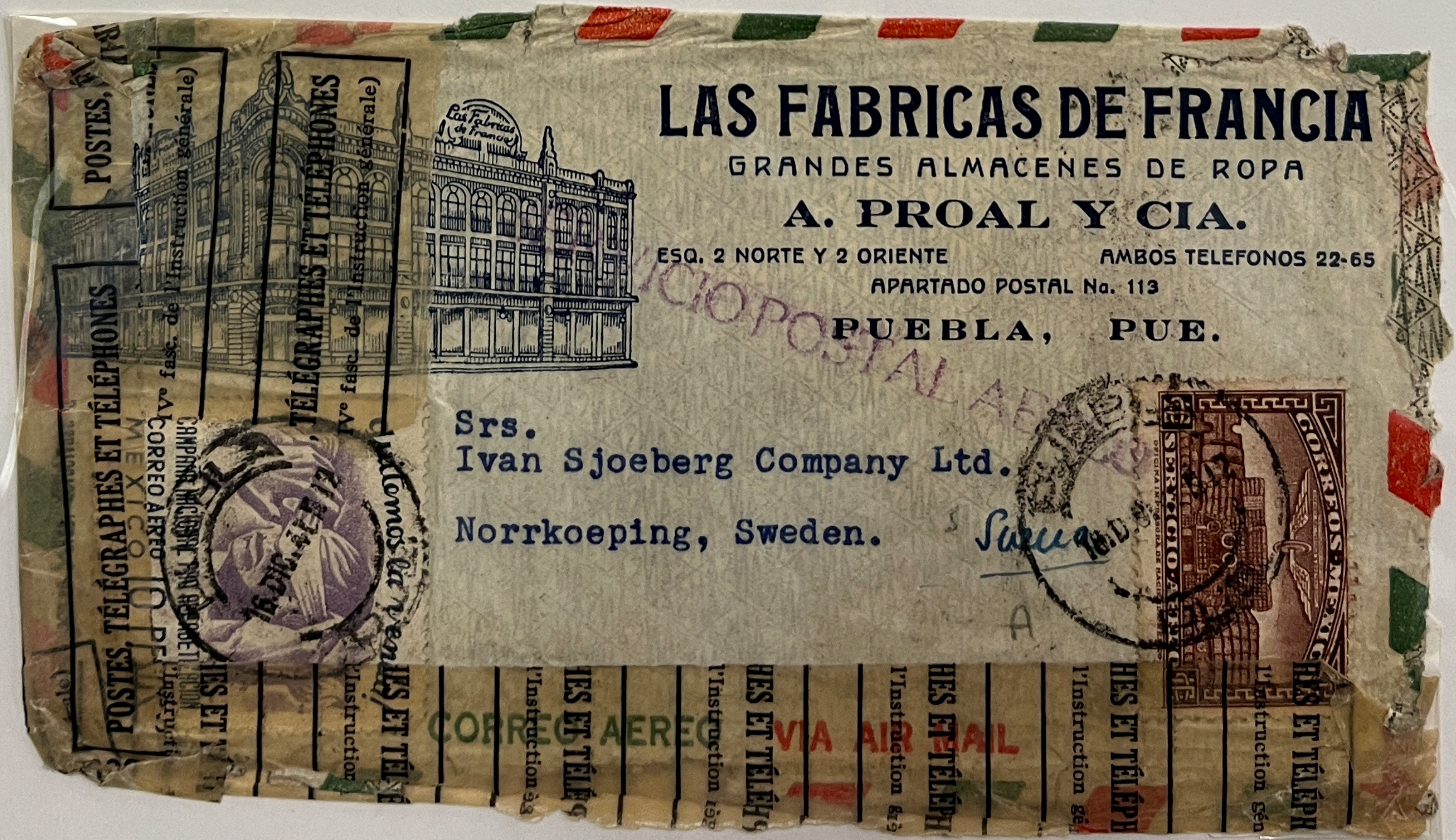
Morocco Usage

Two seals (the second is on the back) used to repair a letter trashed by a canceling machine in Casablanca.

One Morocco usage reported.



A badly tattered letter from Mexico repaired with 14 1945 issue seals.



Repair & Closing Seals

**Issues of 1948 and 1951
St. Pierre and Miquelon Usage and Other Usages**

Issue of 1948

Registered letter from Madagascar to London, damaged in transit and repaired in Paris with twelve 1948 seals.



(Above)
St. Pierre and Miquelon Usage

Seal use to reclose an undeliverable letter to Canada and returned.

The only reported St. Pierre and Miquelon usage.

Issue of 1951

Two seals used to close an undeliverable letter opened to determine a return address.

This issue is similar in design to the 1948 issue, but is slightly larger



(Above)
St. Pierre and Miquelon Usage

Seal use to reclose an undeliverable letter to Canada and returned.

The only reported St. Pierre and Miquelon usage.

Issue of 1951

Two seals used to close an undeliverable letter opened to determine a return address.

This issue is similar in design to the 1948 issue, but is slightly larger

Repair & Closing Seals

**Issues of 1954 and 1955
Sudan and Other Usages**

Issue of 1954

Sudan Usage

Used in 1959, three years after Sudanese independence in 1956, to close an envelope opened for customs inspection, this seal was probably left over from the French administration of the post office.



**Issue of 1955
Glassine Paper**

This seal is found on both white and glassine paper. To the left, two glassine paper seals used to repair a damaged letter to the United States.

**Issue of 1955
White Paper**

Damaged in transit, repaired in Paris with the seals over the return address on the back. Unknown in Algeria, and the French seals peeled off to reveal the return address.



A Brief Note

On this and the next page are covers from Morocco, Ivory Coast, and Tunisia that have French seals issued after they became independent countries in 1956. After independence, for varying lengths of time, stamps for these countries were printed in France and it is very likely that other postal supplies, such as the seals, were also supplied. All of the seals have been seen on domestic French mail in the same time frame, but these post-colonial usages are far scarcer than the domestic usages and are shown in preference to their more frequently encountered brethren.

Repair & Closing Seals

Issues of 1960 and 1964

Two Seal Type Usage in Morocco, Ivory Coast Usage

Morocco Usage of Issues of 1960 and 1964

Eight 1964 seals on white paper and one 1960 seal used to repair a special delivery letter from Spain to Morocco in 1968.

The only example reported with two different seal types.



Ivory Coast Usage

Issue of 1966

Six seals used to close a letter opened either for currency control or customs inspection.

Repair & Closing Seals

Issue of 1962
Tunisia Usage

Multiple seals used to repair a letter from China. Handstamp "PARVENU EN MAUVAIS ÉTAT"
(received in bad condition) on the back.

The earliest reported usage of the 1962 seal.



Dead Letter Office Seals

Issues of 1874, 1900, and 1945

Issue of 1874

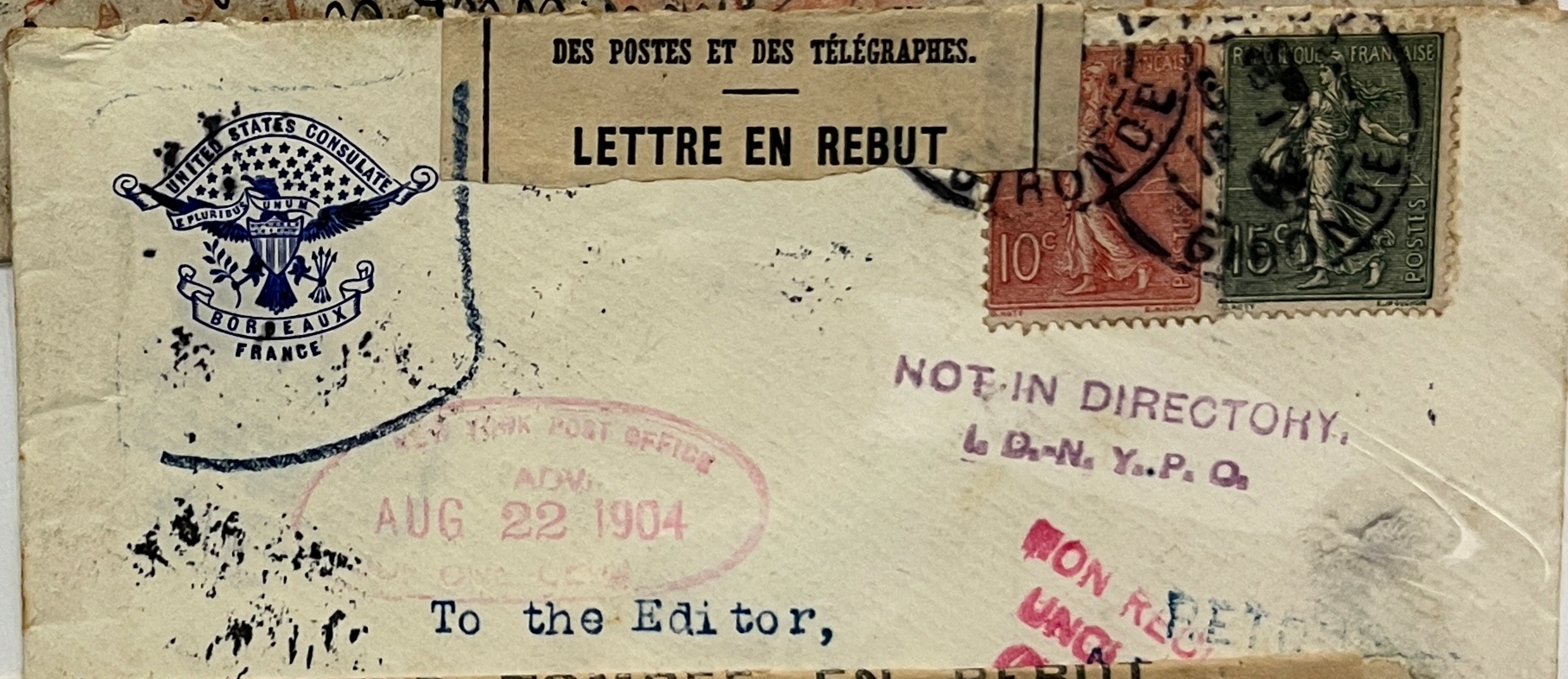
Letter to London with many redirections and failed delivery attempts returned to Paris and the DLO. Four DLO seals used to reclose the letter after a return address was found.

On cover reported



Issue of 1900

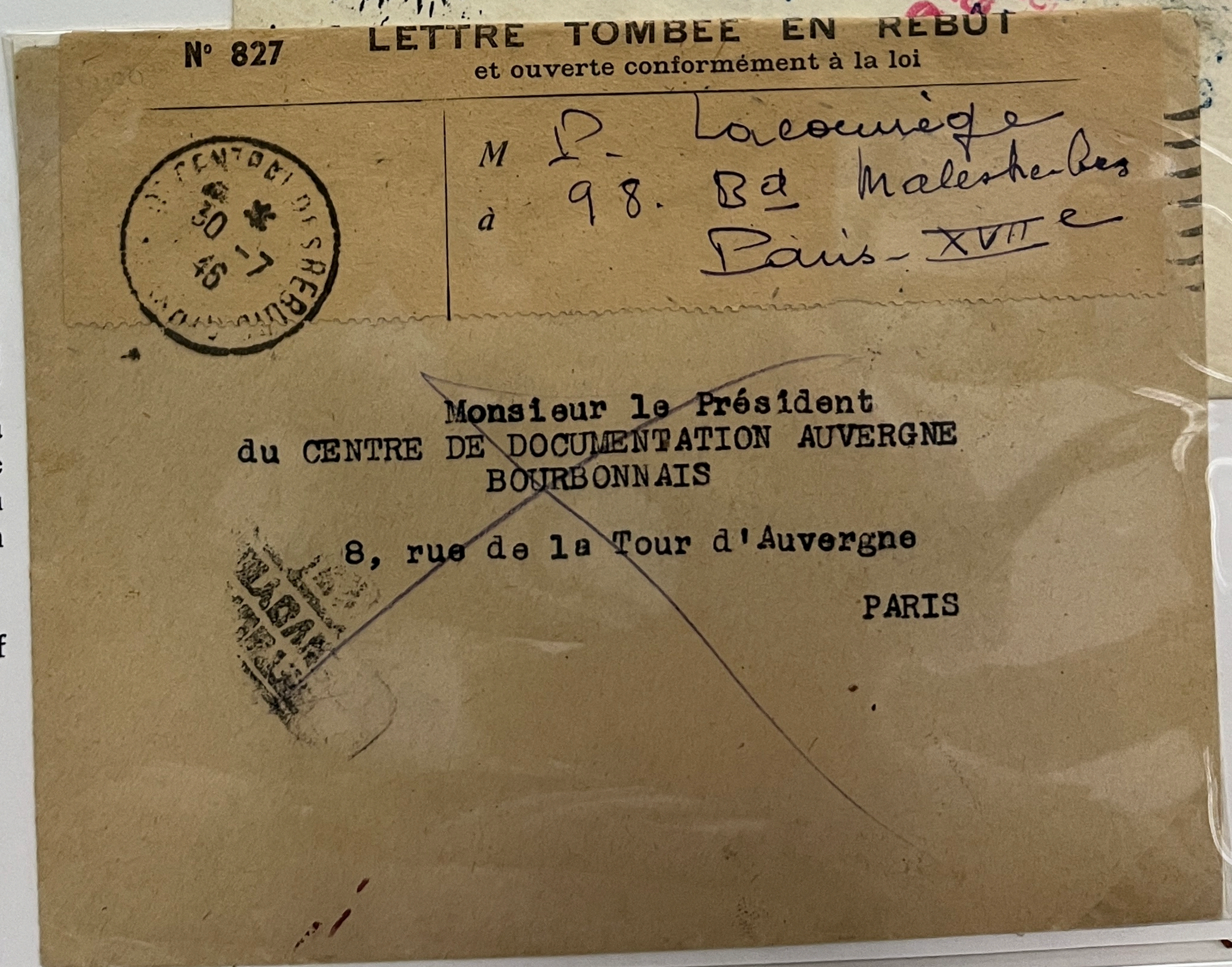
Letter to the United States, where it was undeliverable, and after passing through the US DLO, it was returned to the French DLO where it was opened to determine a return address and closed with the 1900 seal.



Issue of 1945

Prior to the introduction of this seal, letters from the DLO were returned in the aptly termed "ambulance envelopes." This seal design has a space specifically for the forwarding or return address as determined in the DLO.

A typical example of such a usage.



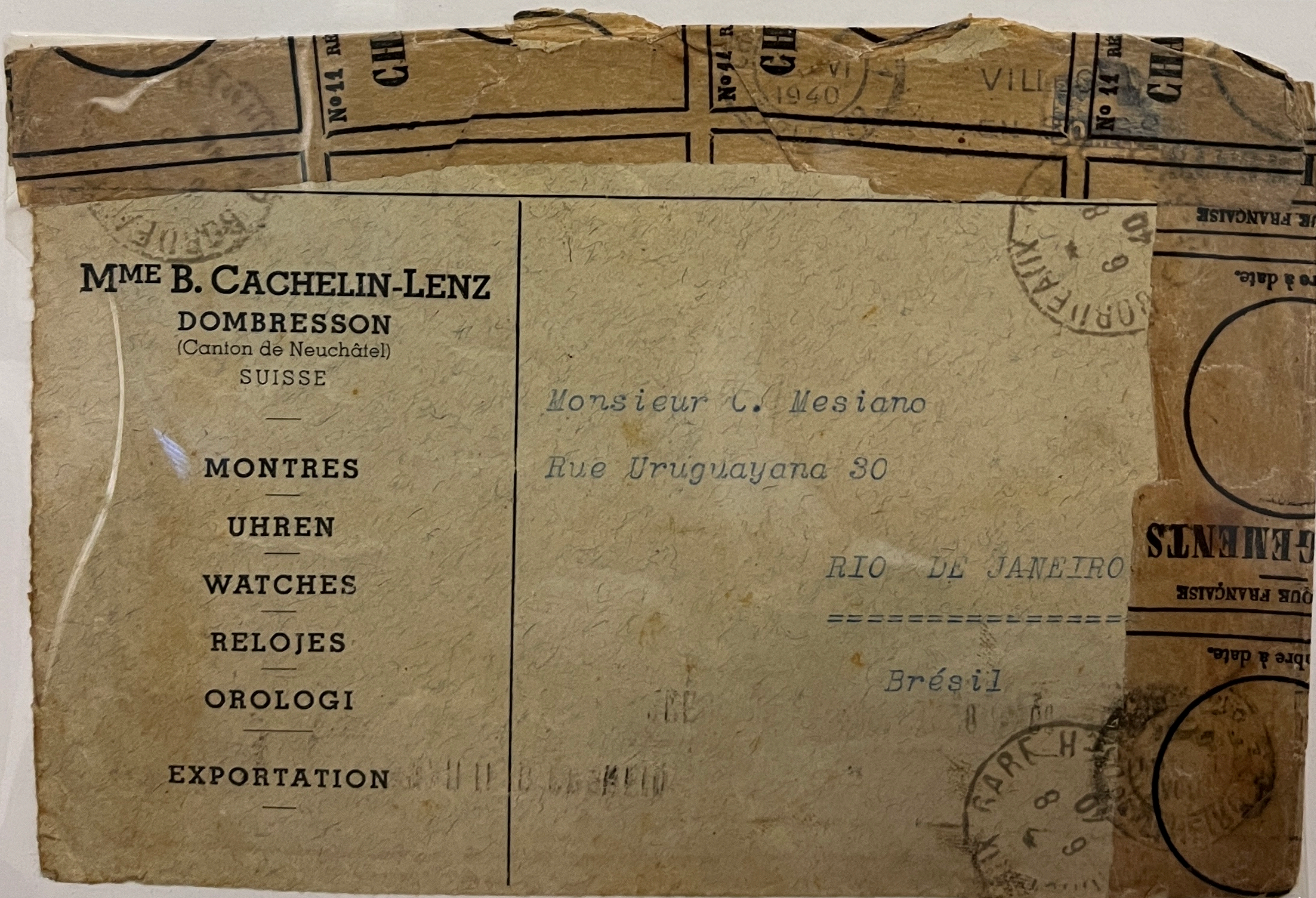
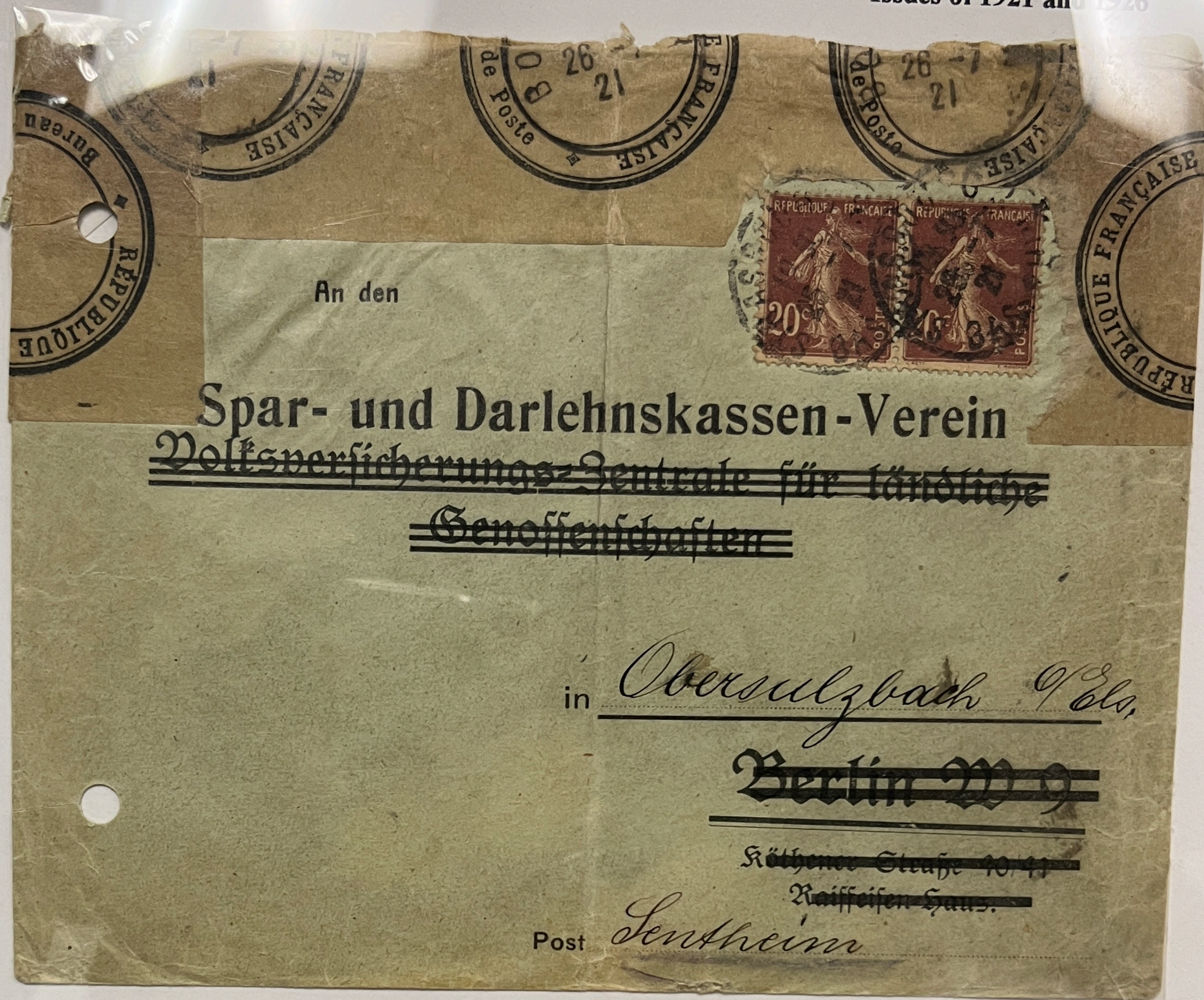
Customs and Currency Control Seals

Issues of 1921 and 1926

Issue of 1921

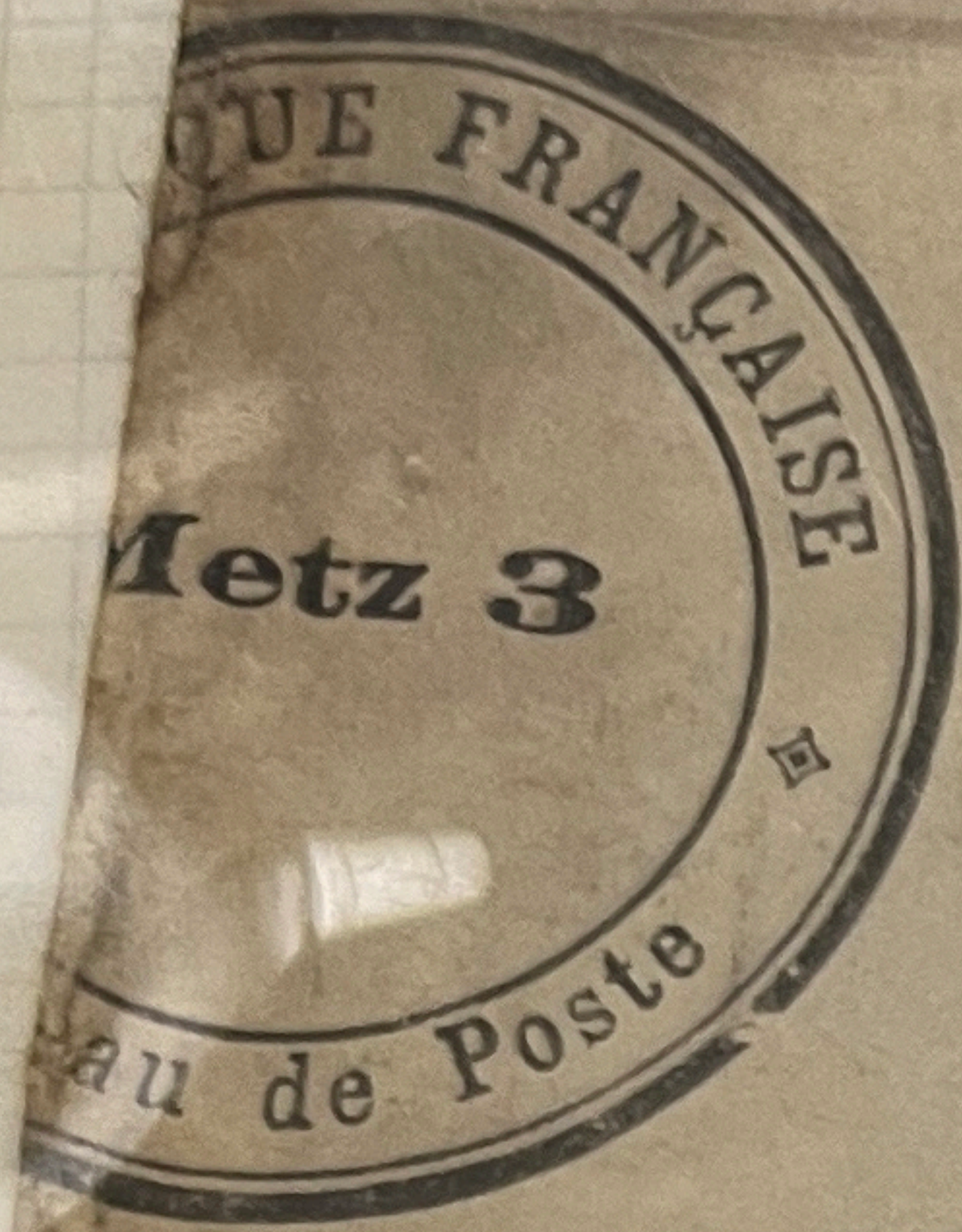
Five seals used to close a letter after inspection.

One cover reported

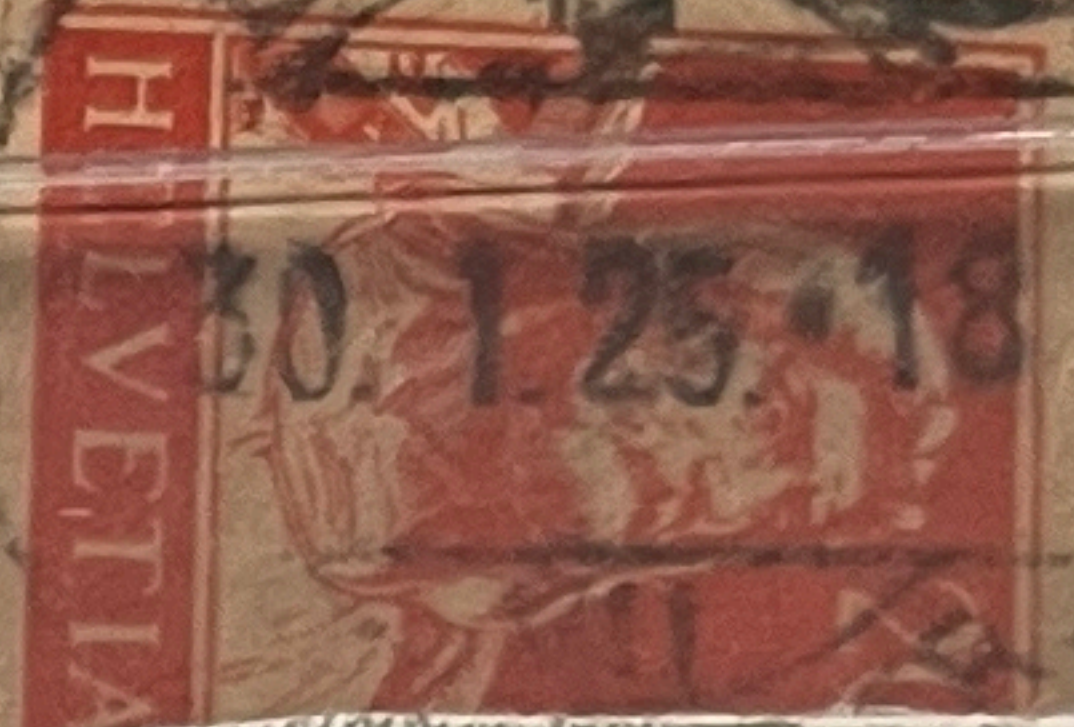


Issue of 1926

Seven seals used to close a letter after inspection.



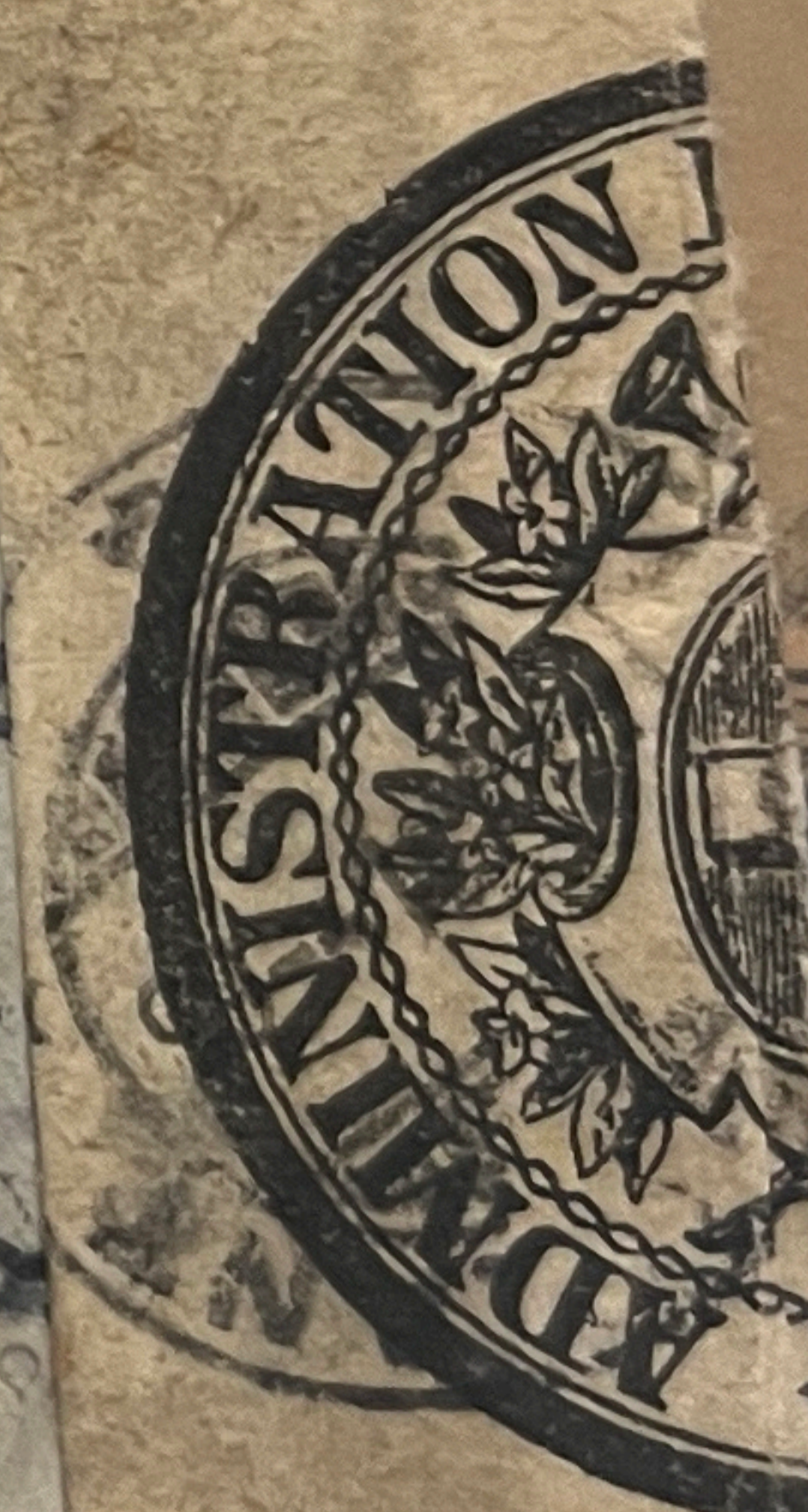
Handwritten: *W. Kelly*
Circular postmark: *8 Feb. 1925*



Handwritten: *Mr. J. C. Kelly*
Red stamp: *17-3-96*
Circular postmark: *17-3-96*
Handwritten: *Geneva*
Circular postmark: *17-3-96*
Handwritten: *725*

POSTAL ADMINISTRATIONS

POST OFFICE



ATLANTIC (France)

E. W. Christie

Rispedito dall'
HOTEL CAUVOR
MILANO

Hotel Bristol
St. Gathard Lugano
Bern

05 11 (1951)

Gabriel de LAHAZE

11, RUE CHRISTOPHE-COLOMB

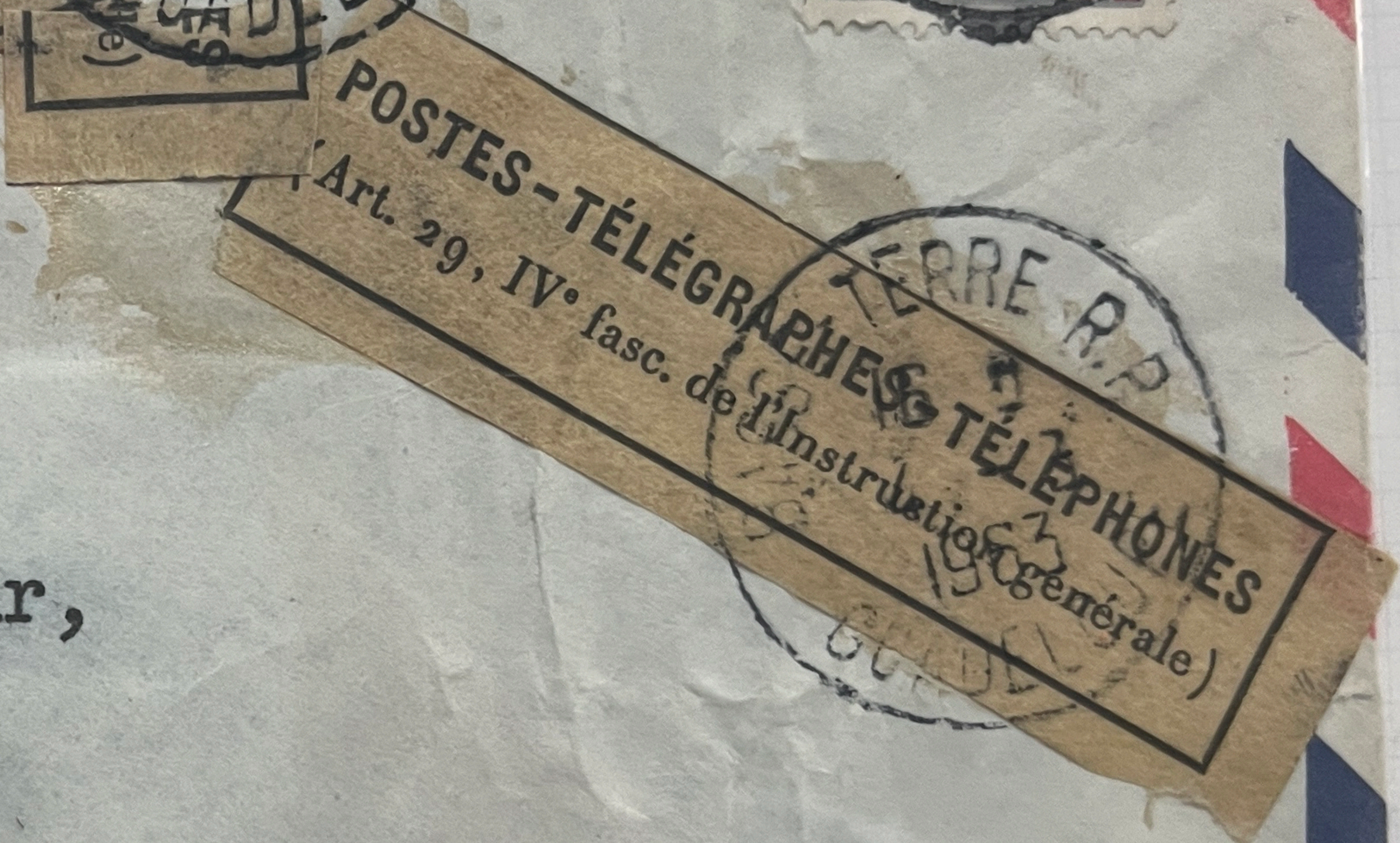
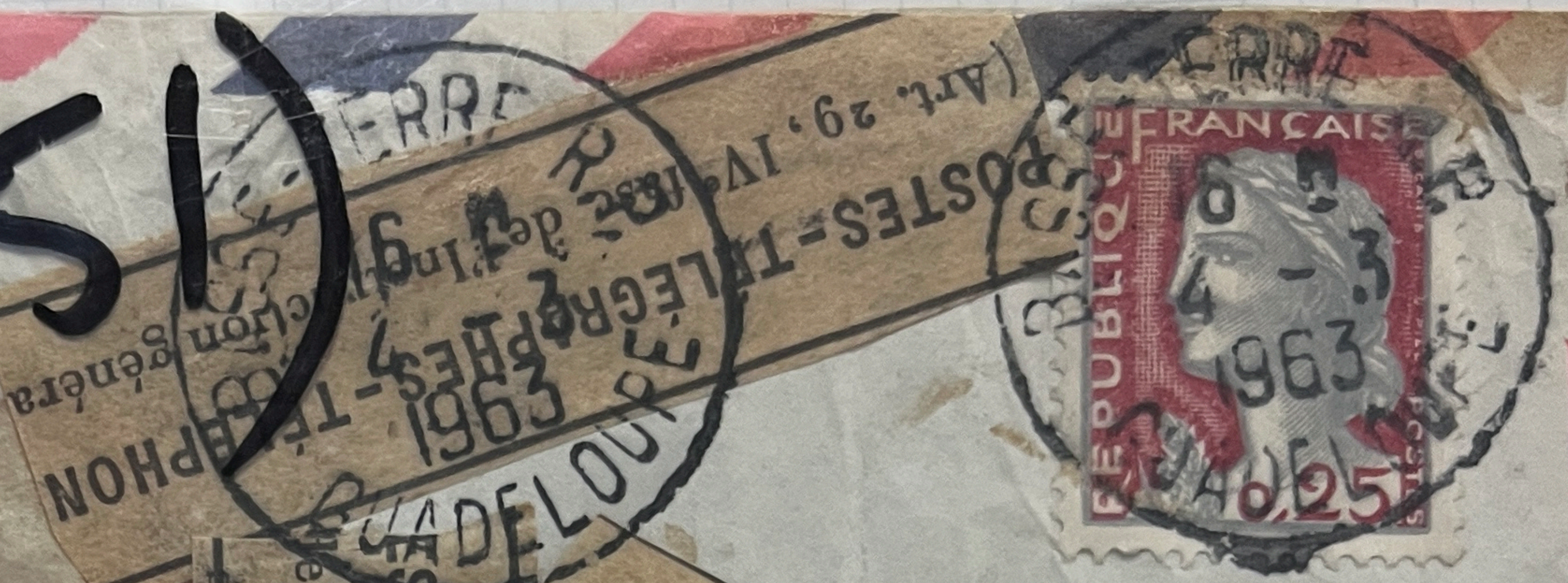
BOITTE POSTALE N° 3

TERRE (GUADELOUPE)

Used in

Guadeloupe

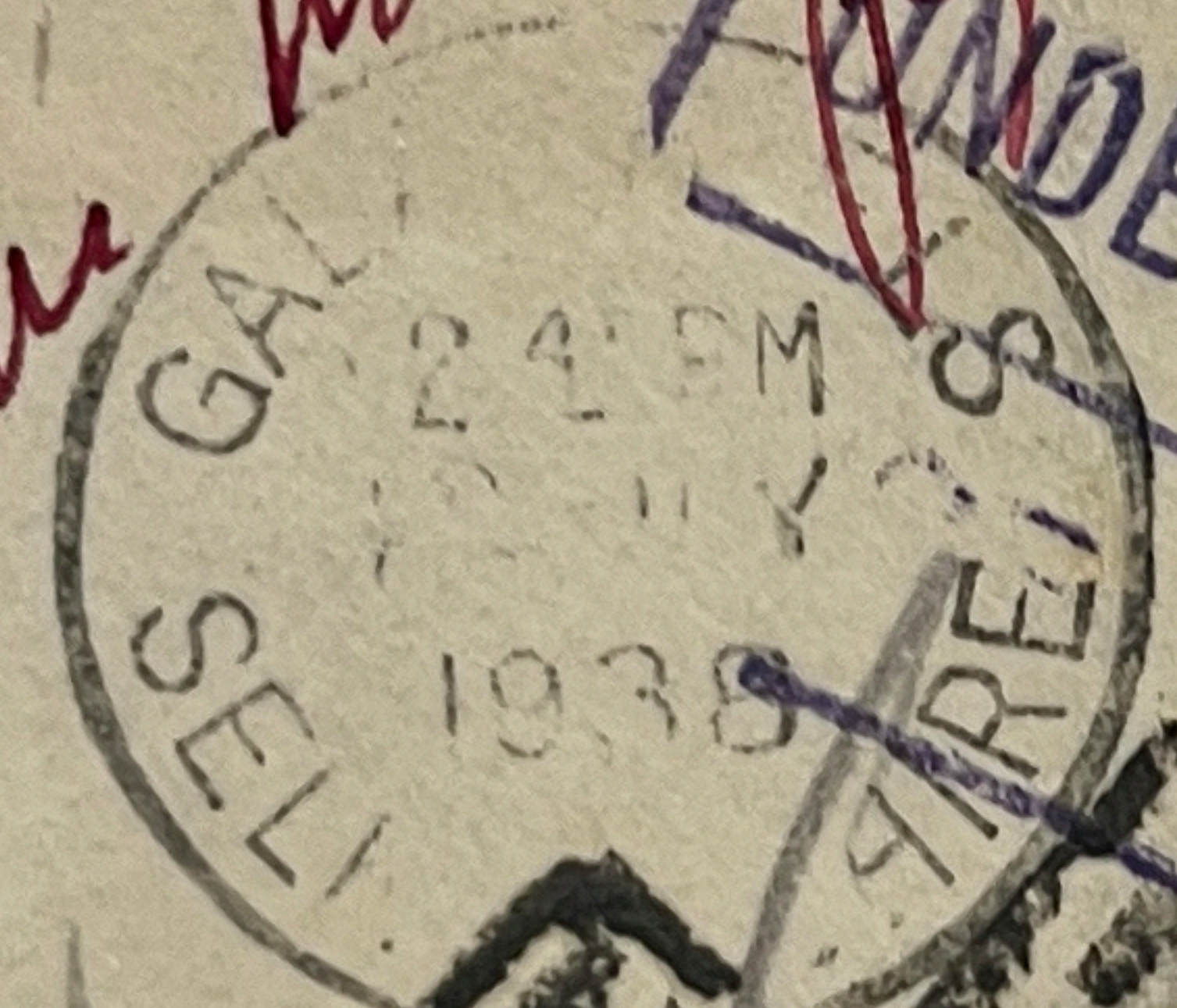
Monsieur le Percepteur,
~~BOIS~~-COLOMBES
----- (Seine)



PAR AVION
BY AIR MAIL

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M
214 B
Raspail
Experte par la direction
eng un pour nous



UNDELIVERED FOR REASON STATED
TO SENDER



~~Gris~~

214 Boulevard
Paris.
Fran

ES, TELEGRAP
26, IVe fasc. de 1

ft. 28 fasc. d

POSTES, TÉLÉGRAPHES ET TÉLÉPHONES
(Art. 29, IV^e fasc. de l'Instruction Générale)

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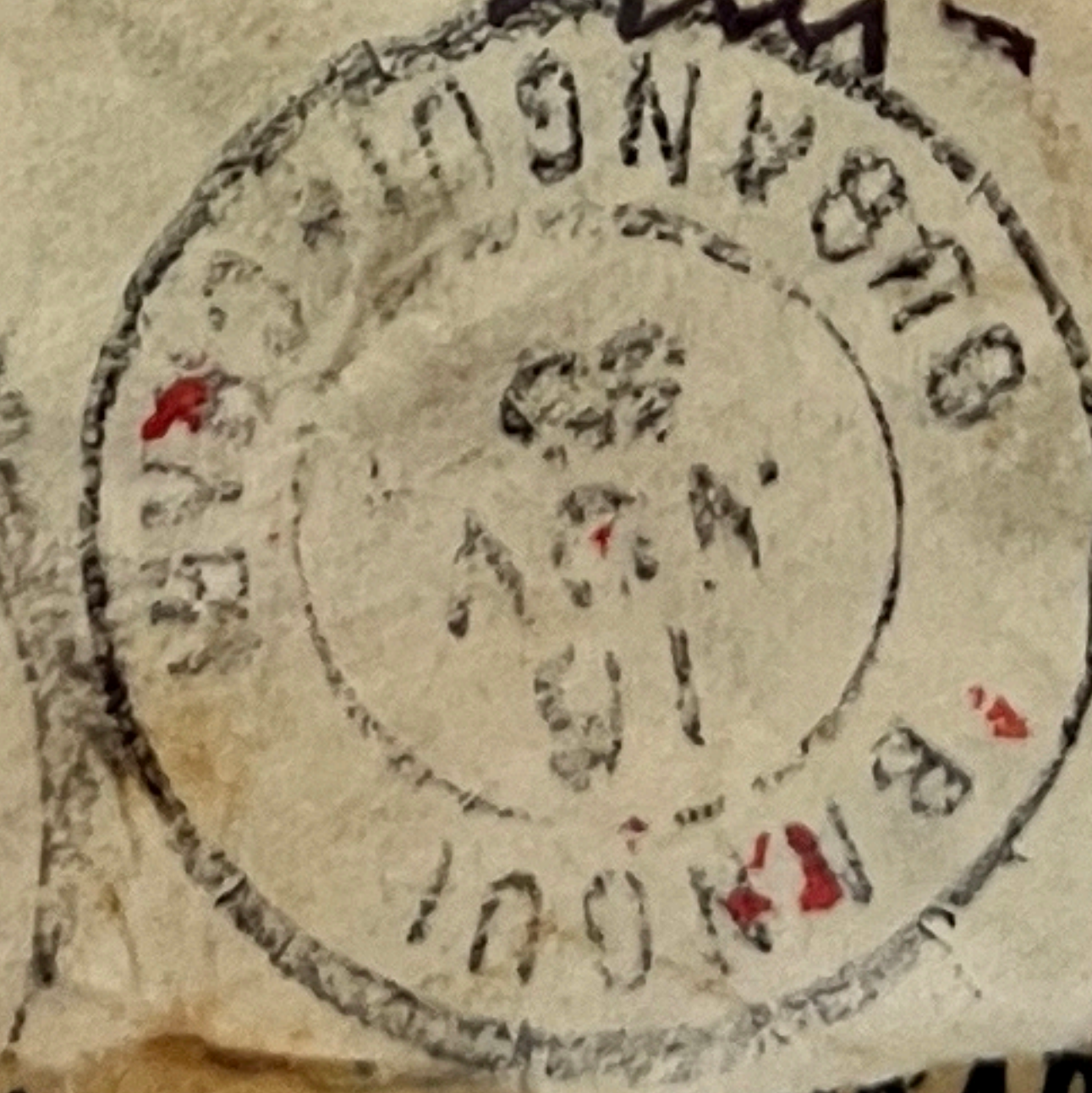
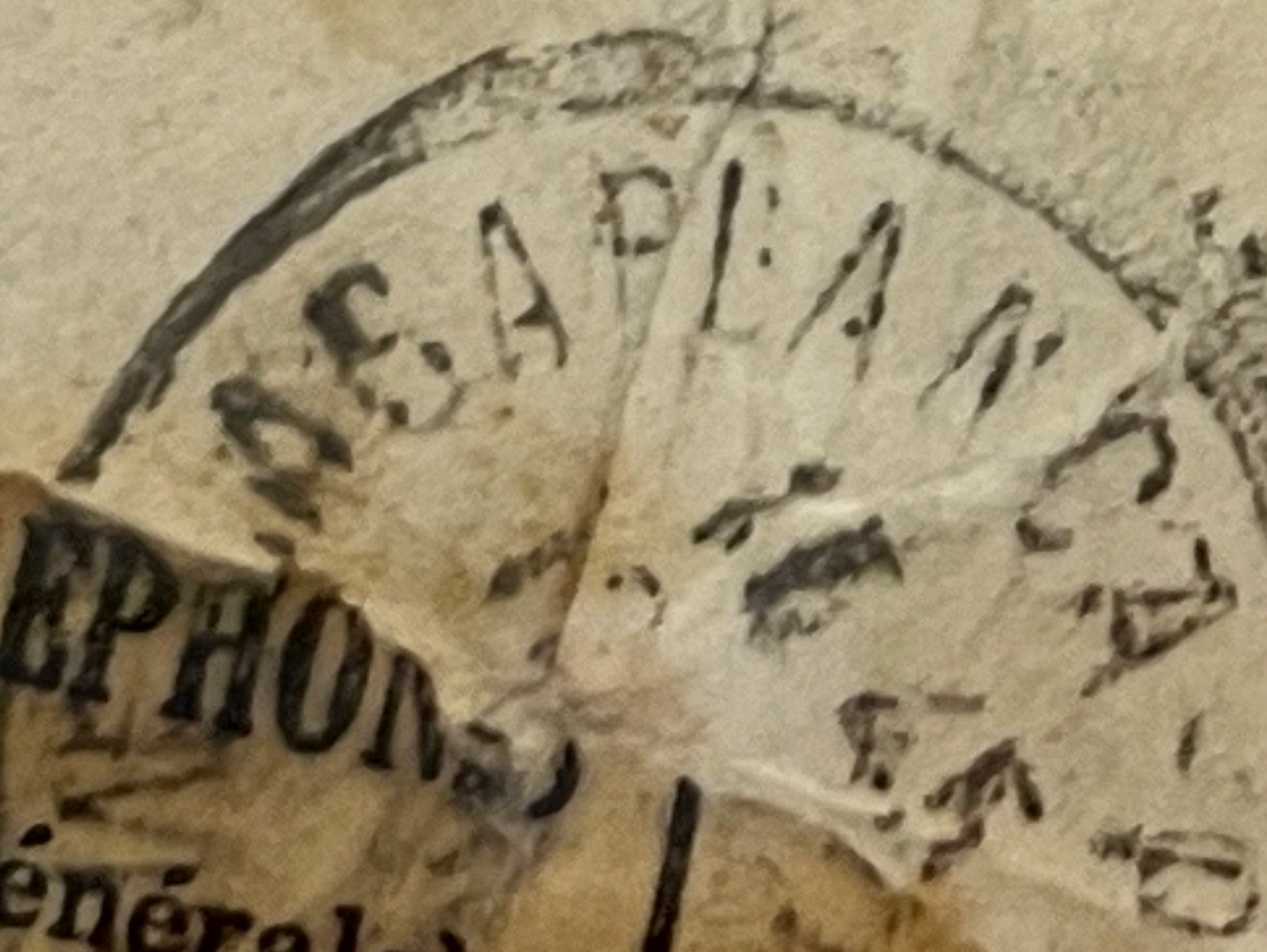
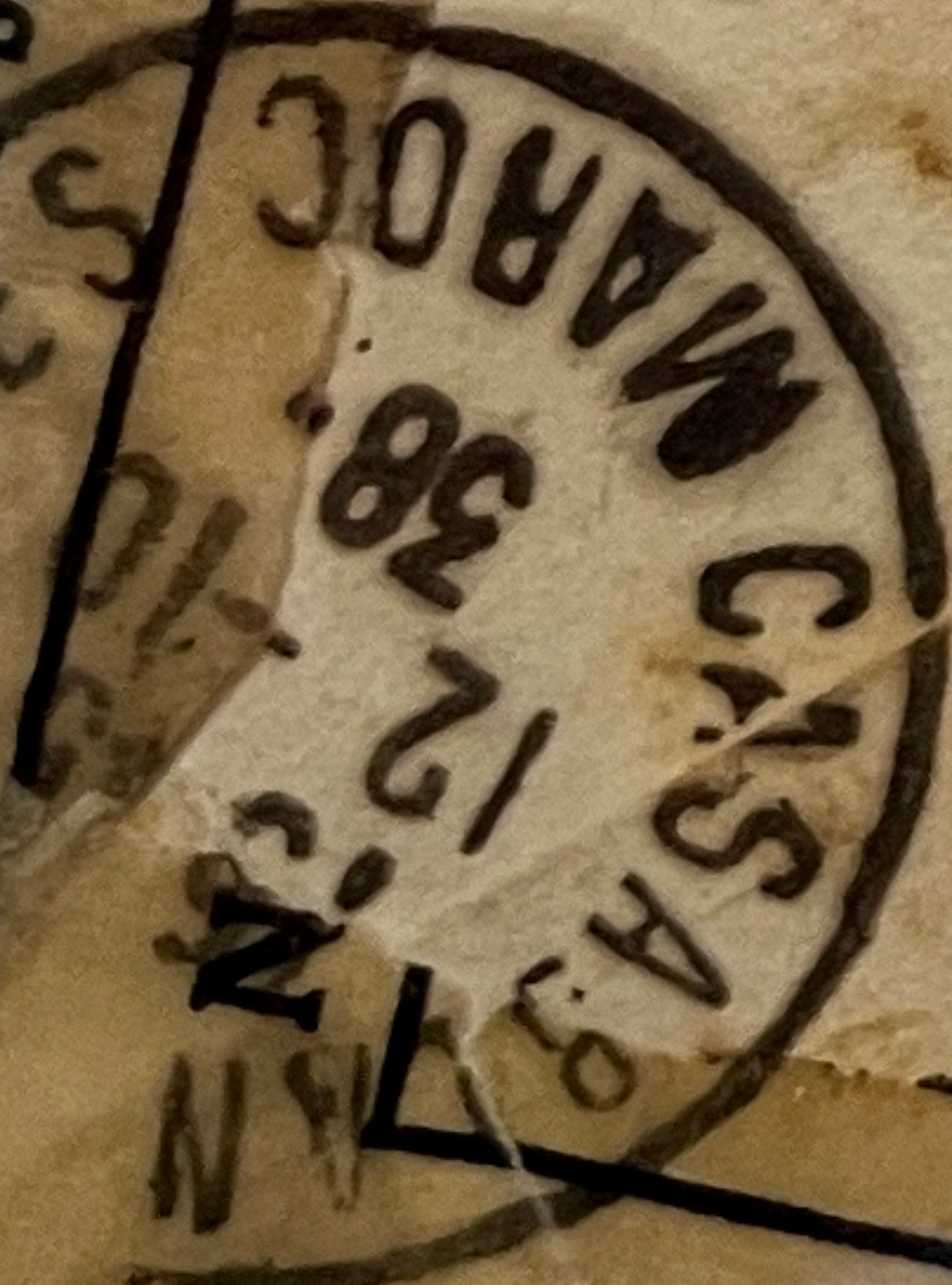
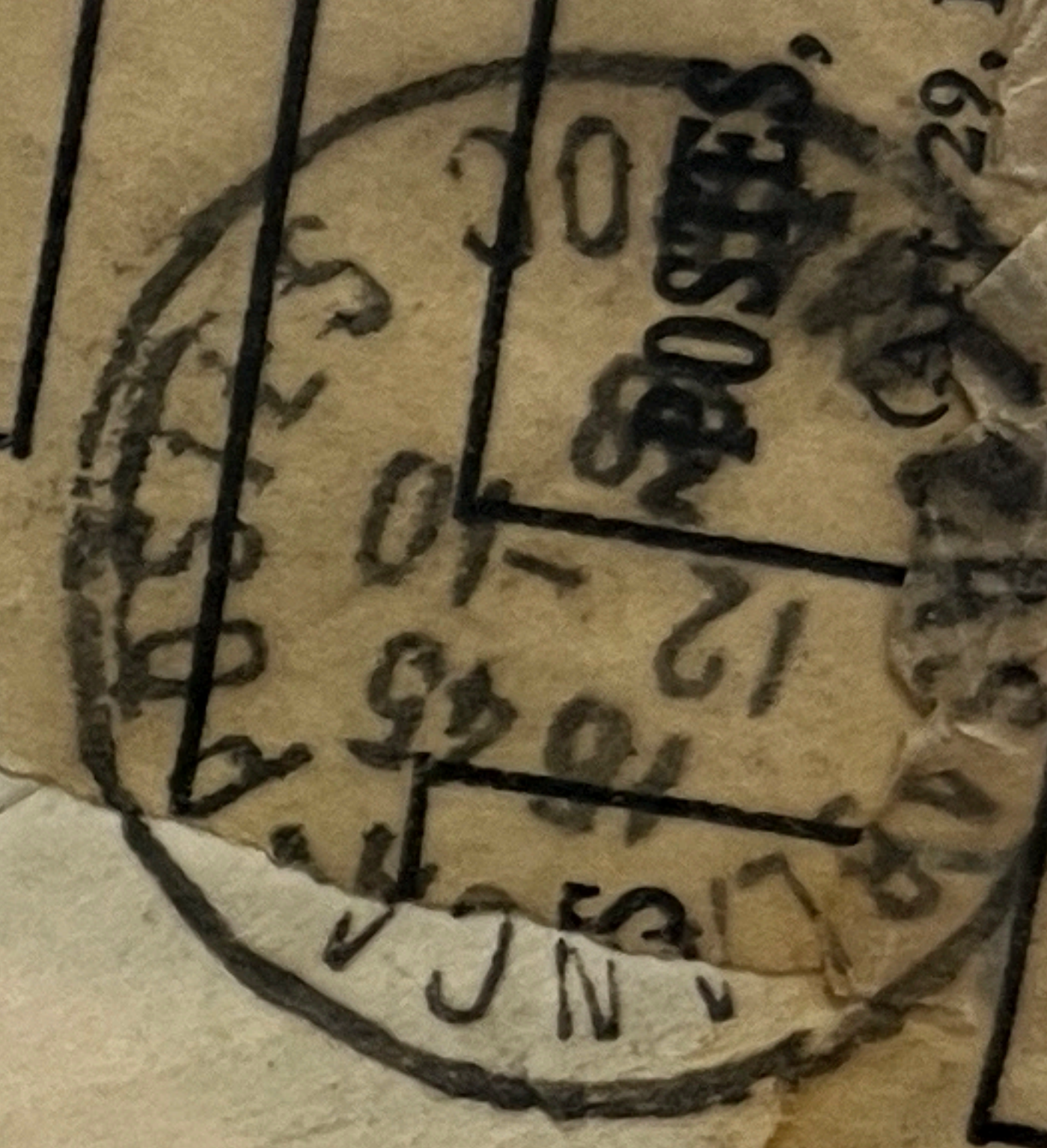
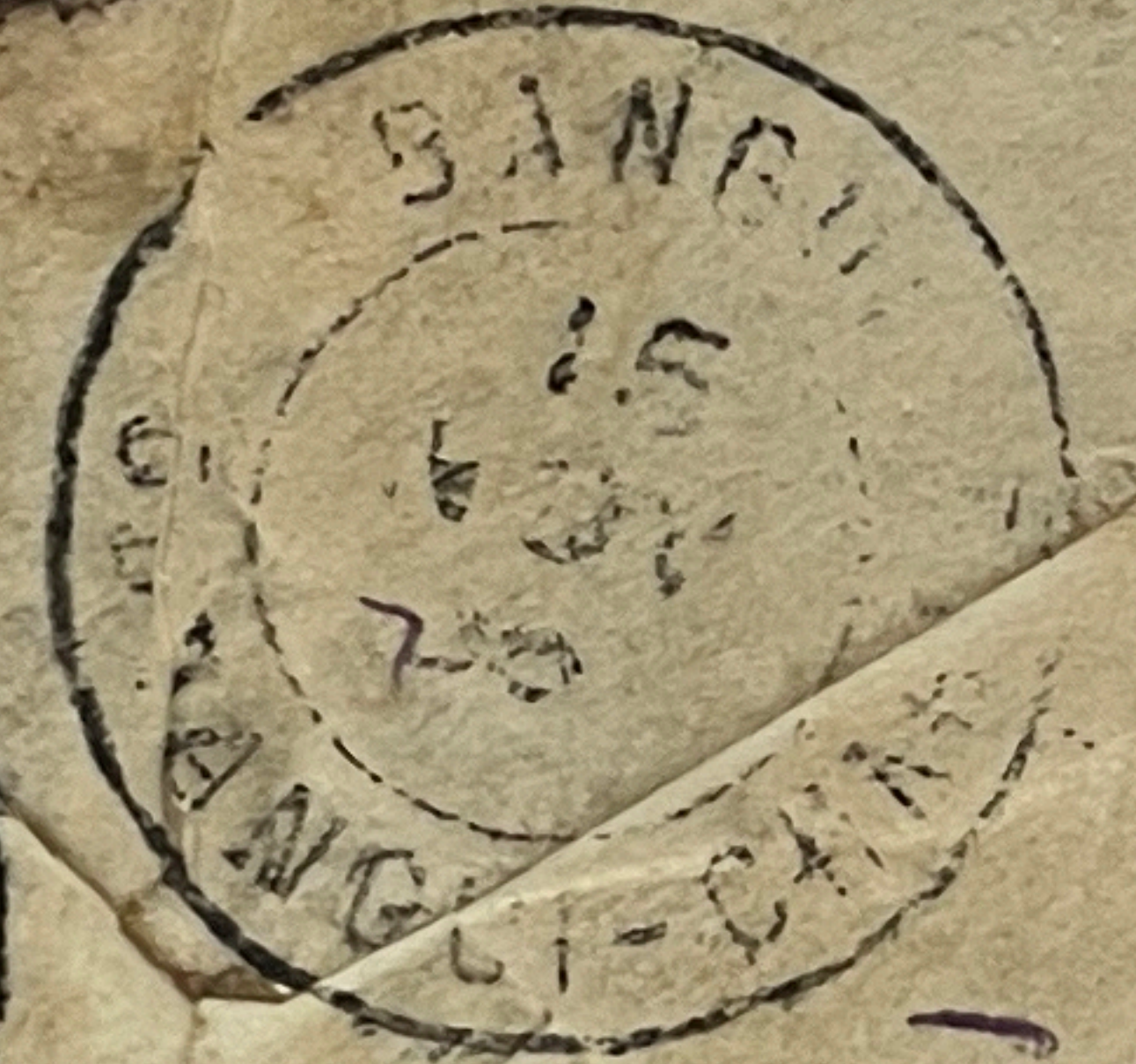
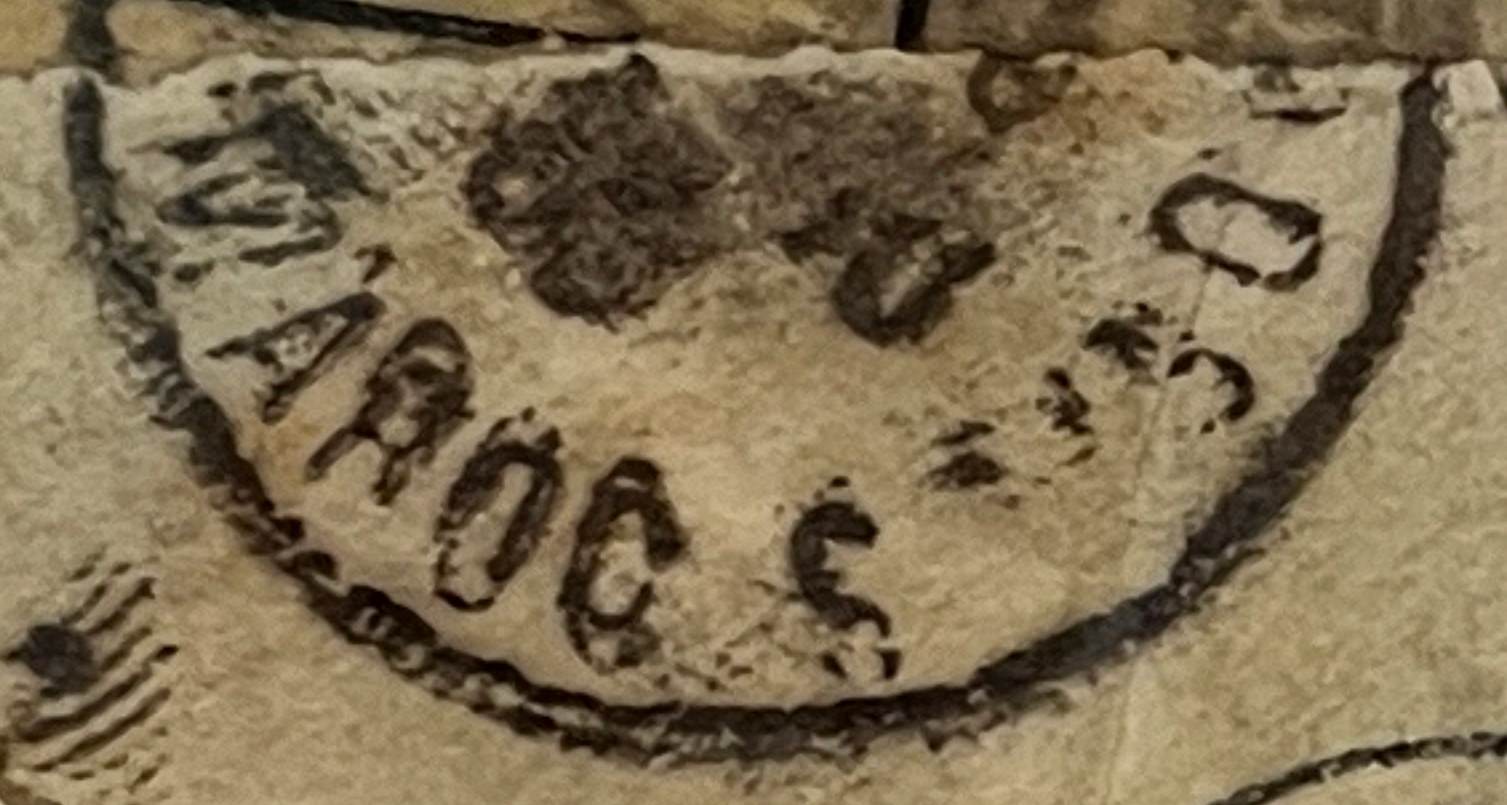
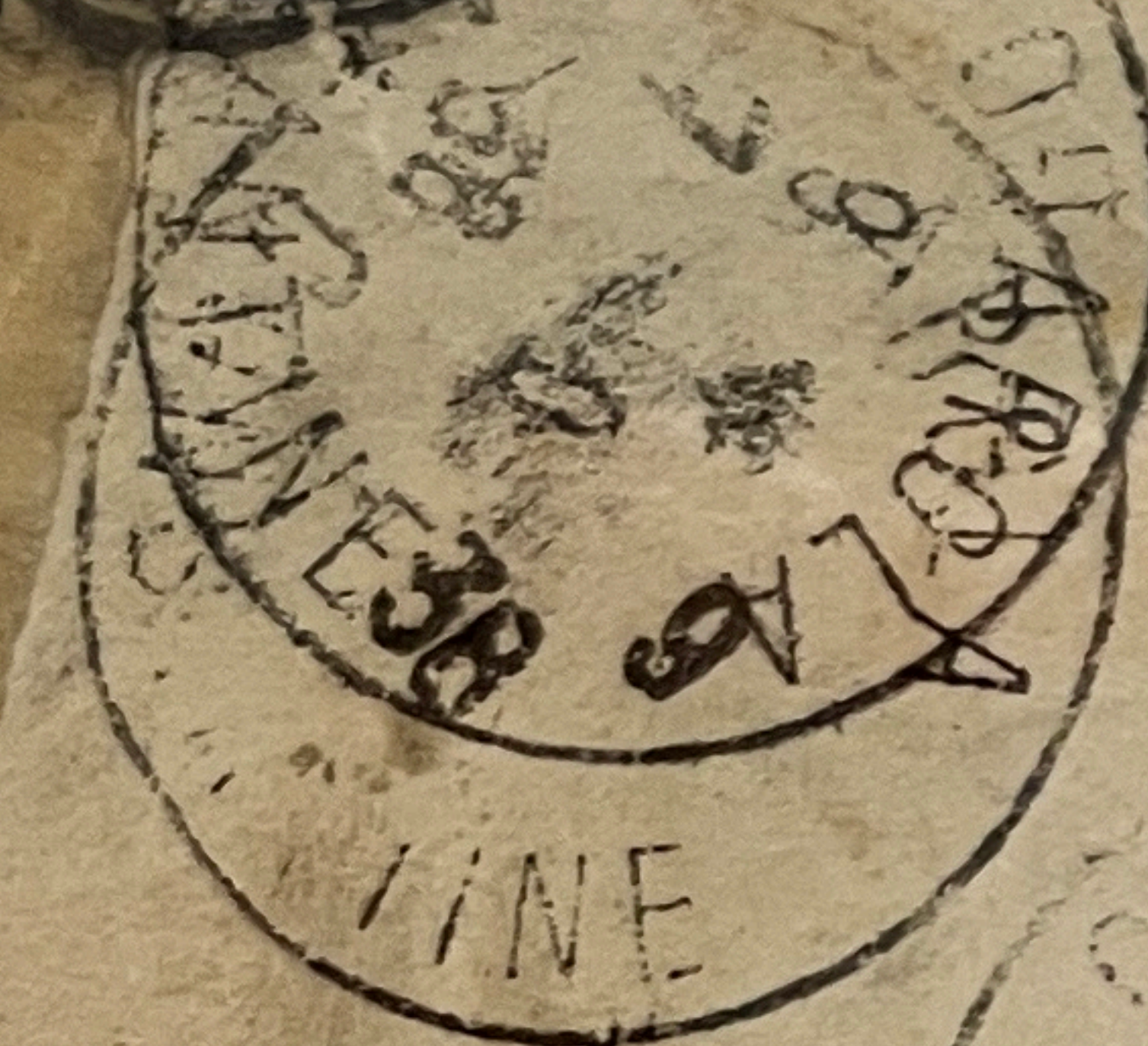
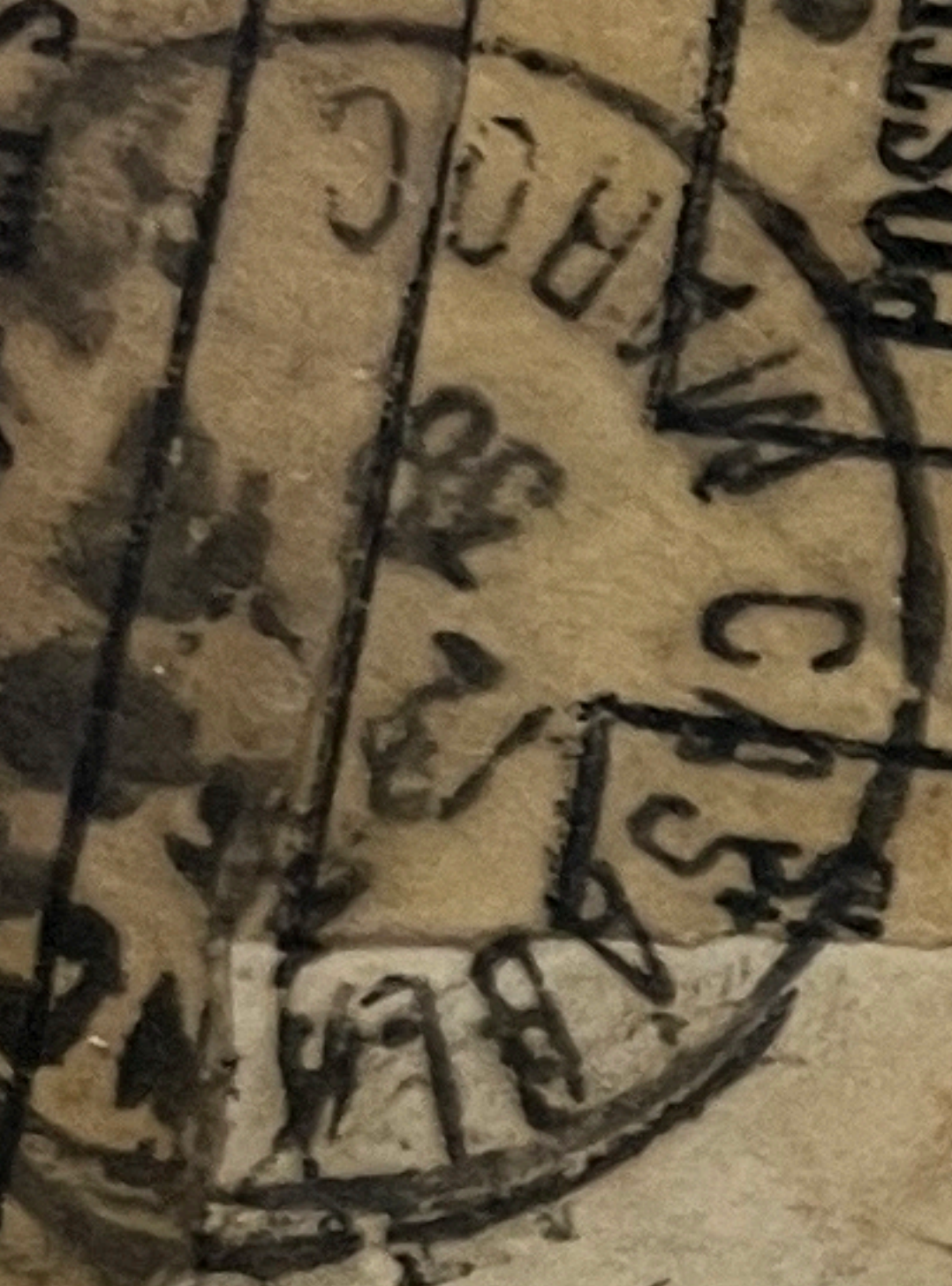
POSTES, TÉLÉGRAPHES ET TÉLÉPHONES
(Art. 29, IV^e fasc. de l'Instruction Générale)

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(Art. 29, IV^e fasc. de l'Instruction Générale)

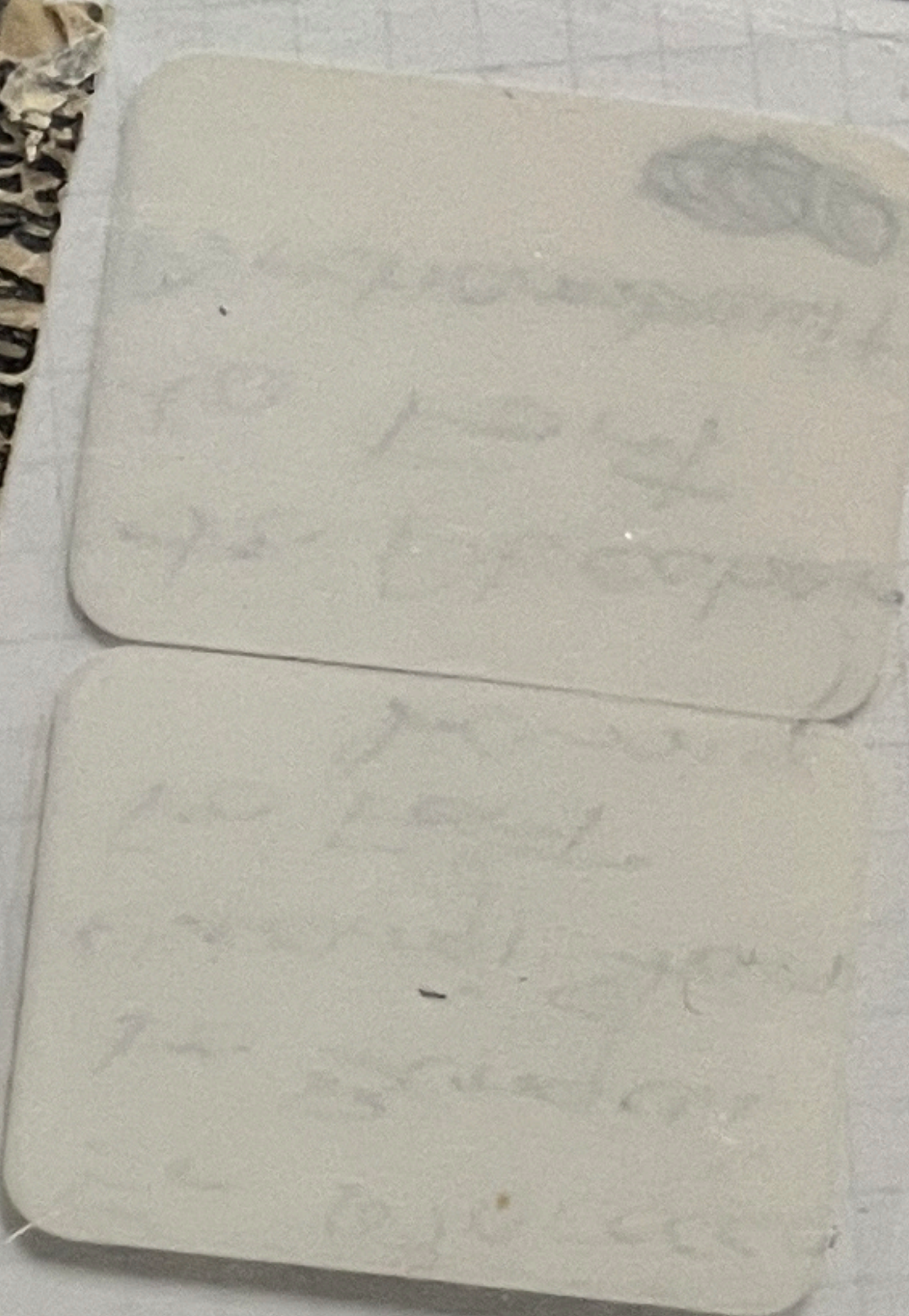
POSTES, TÉLÉGRAPHES ET TÉLÉPHONES
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L'io hauri...
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a. celesma
le 2/12/38



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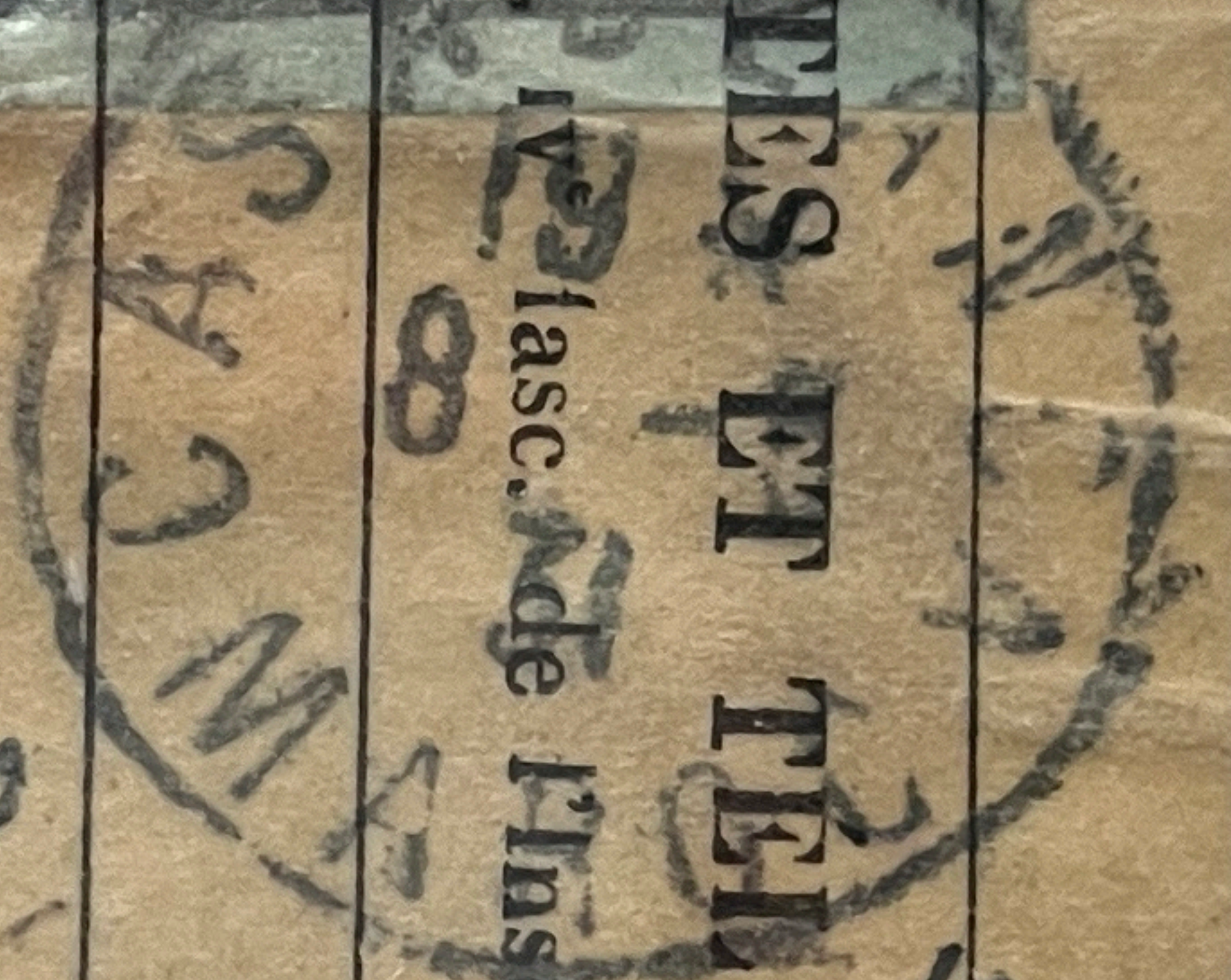
Casablanca - Paris - Wien - Paravion

CASABLANCA
R 139



POSTES ET TÉLÉGRAPHES.

(Art. 26, IV, fasc. de l'Instruction générale.)



POSTES ET TÉLÉGRAPHES.
(Art. 26, IV, fasc. de l'Instruction générale.)



Monsieur

G. L. Legrand

Wien

Autriche

~~Franget Hoefler 65~~

P. et S. G.

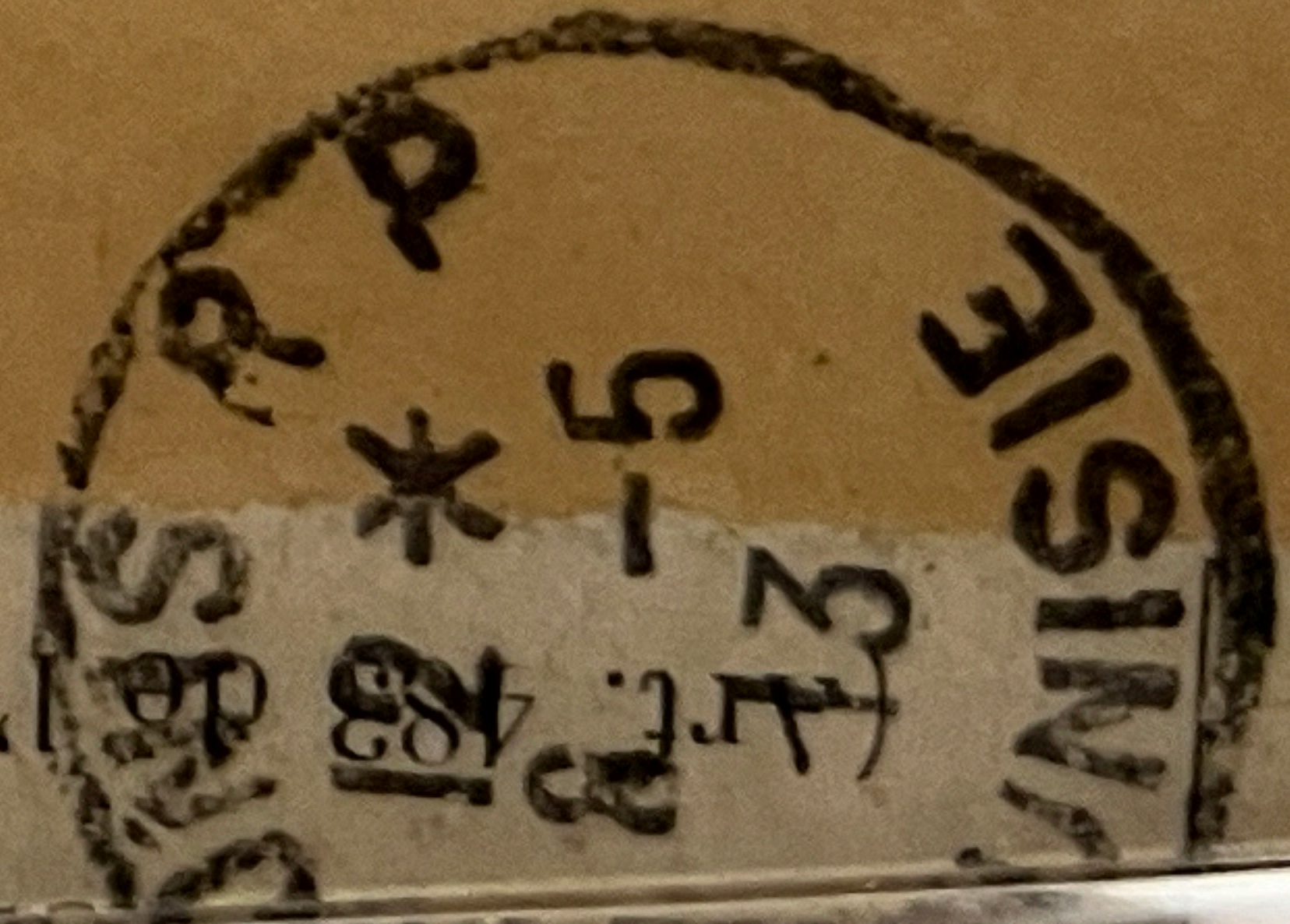
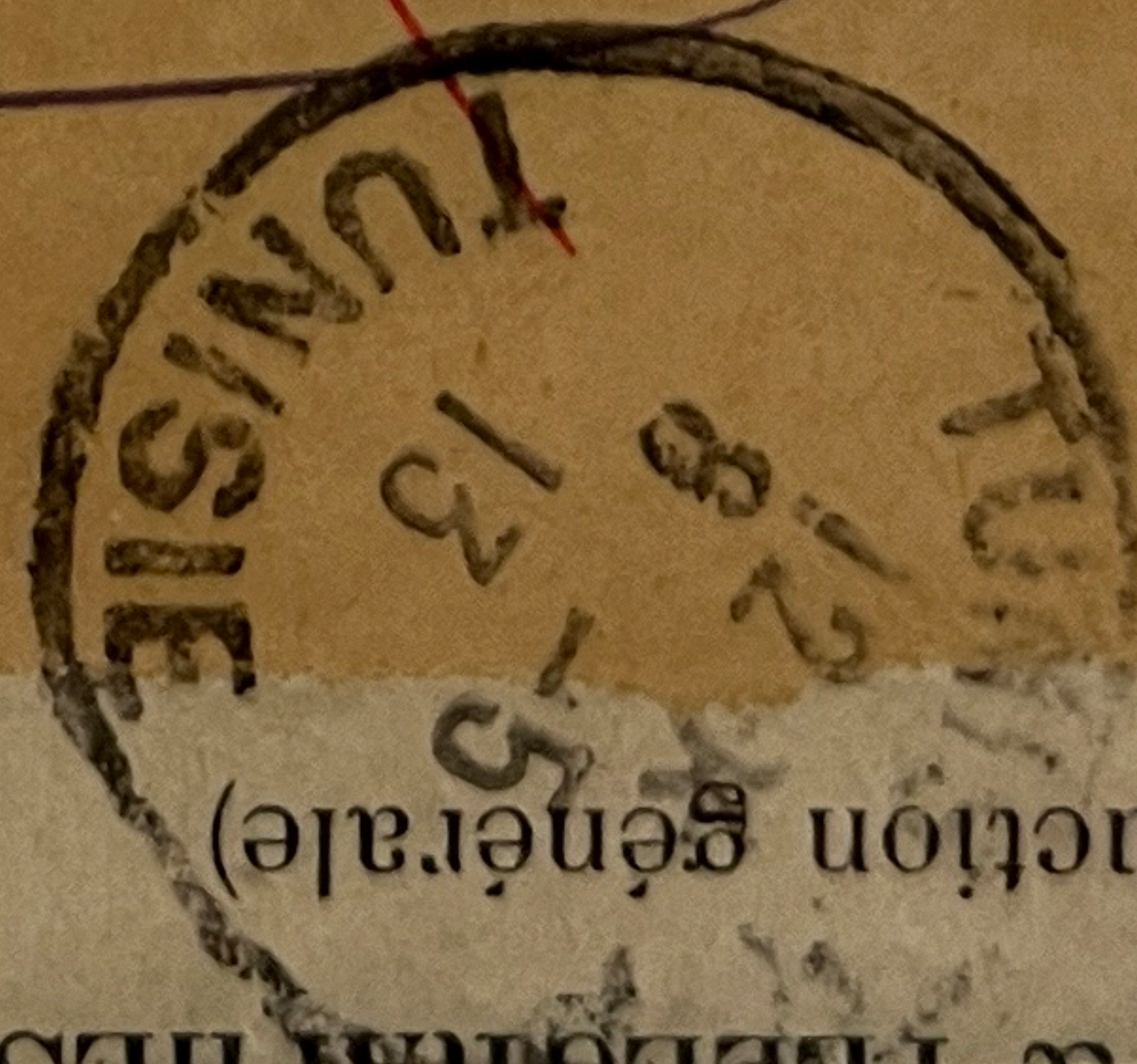
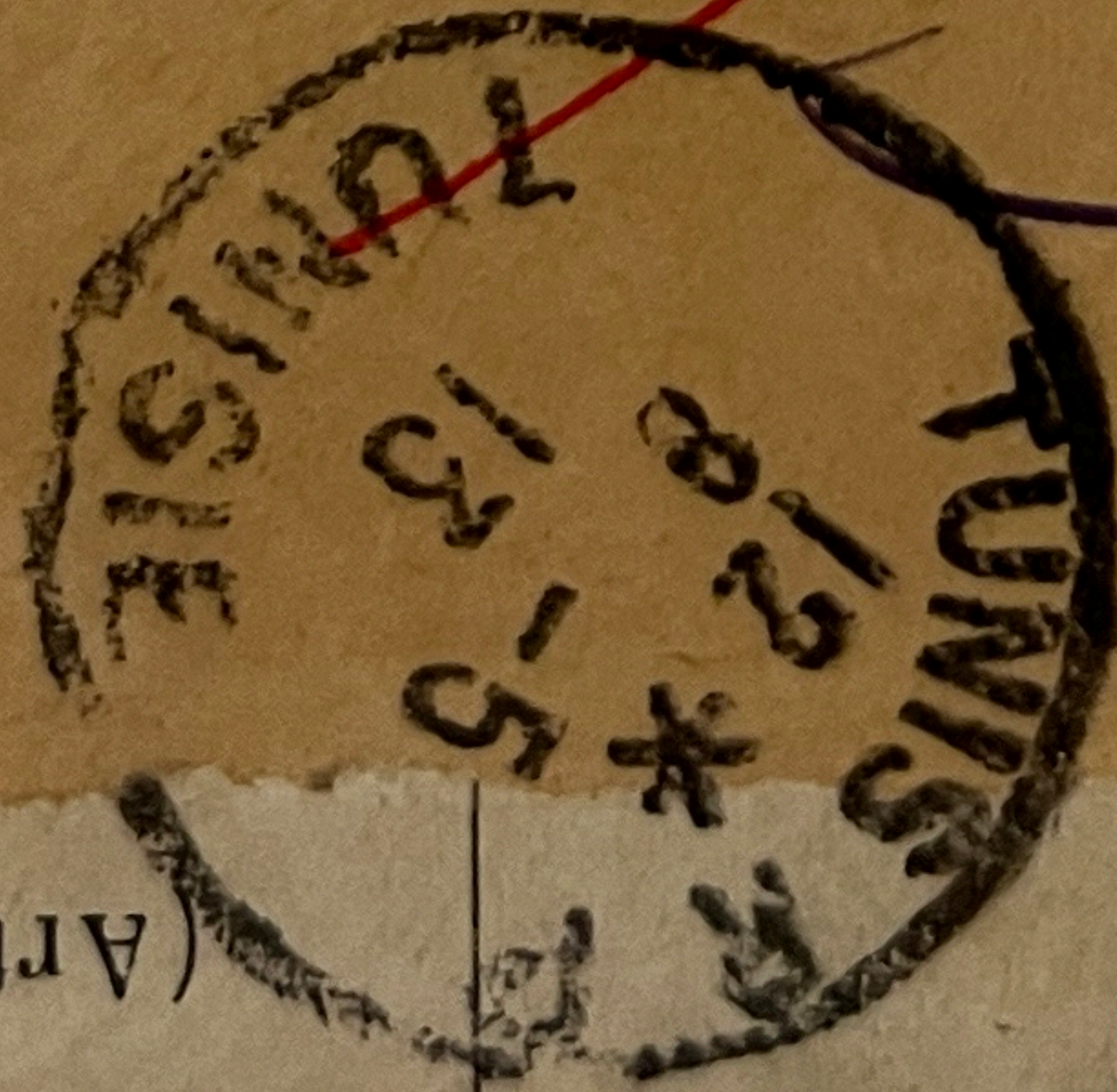
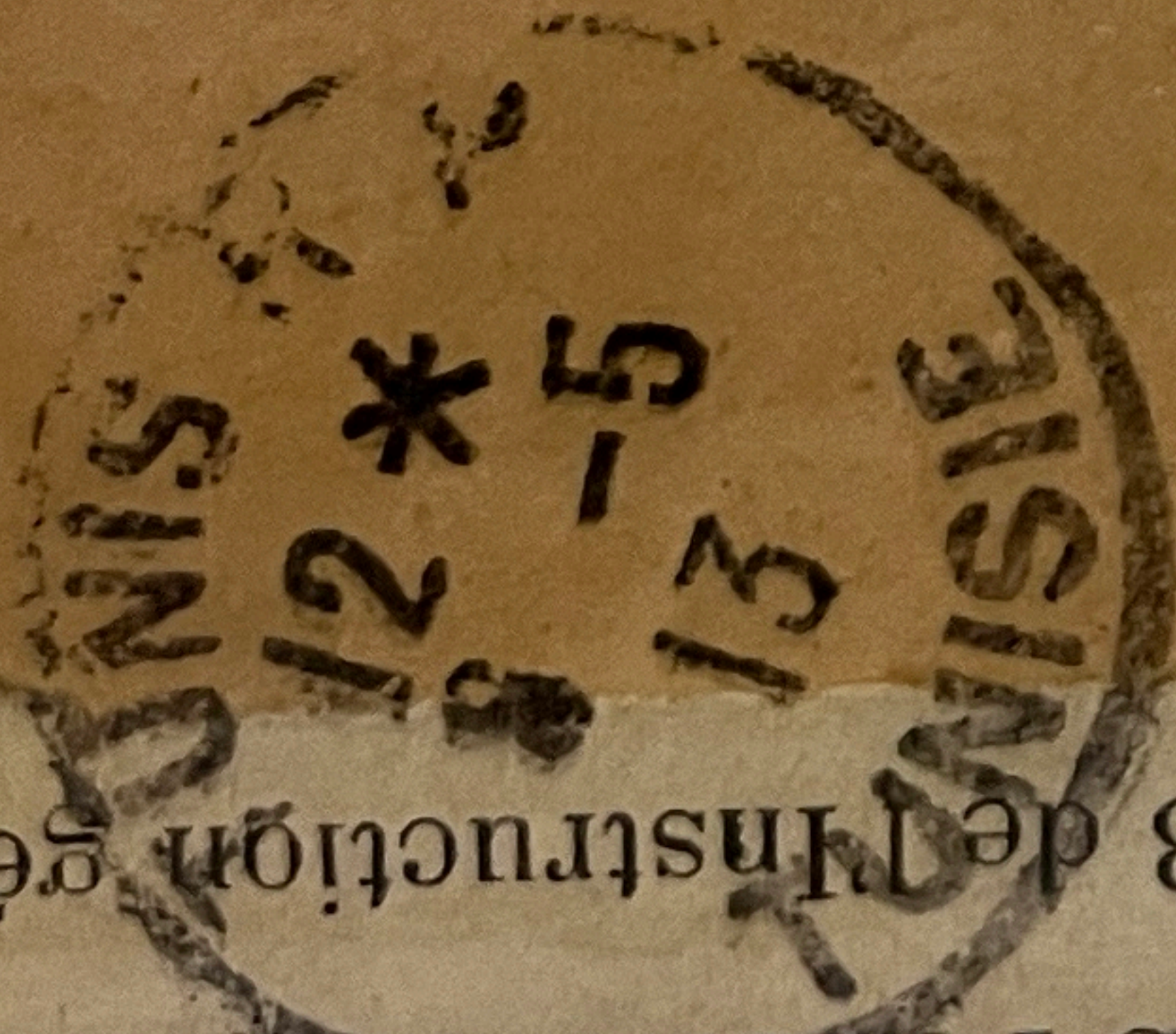
15/04

non versé

RETOUR
A L'ENVOYEUR



Mohamed Ouali
Rue Sid El Bechir
Tunis



OFFICE DES POSTES & TELEGRAMMES
(Art. 483 de l'Instruction générale)

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(Art. 483 de l'Instruction générale)