

FOURTH MARINE REGIMENT - SHANGHAI
Inbound Mail

February 1937
February 1941



Examples of inbound Clipper airmail from the mainland and Guam. The upper cover was forwarded from Guam to Shanghai. The lower cover was properly paid at 30 cents (the total of 10 cents Guam to Manila and 20 cents Manila to Hong Kong). As it transited the latter port, it was "Not Opened by Censor."

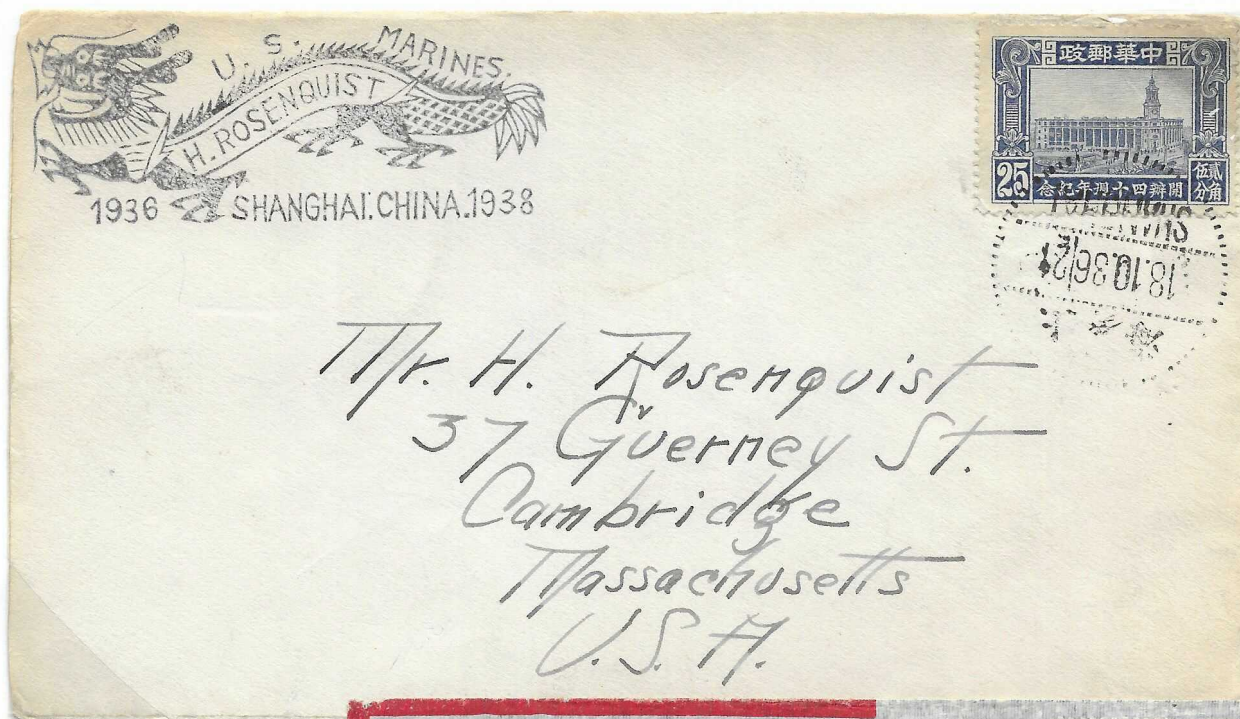
November 1936
August 1937



Examples of inbound mail from foreign countries to the Fourth Marine Regiment are very unusual. Shown here is airmail from Germany and surface mail from Iceland. The former is backstamped for receipt in the Chinese P.O. in Shanghai on 21 November 1936.

FOURTH MARINE REGIMENT - SHANGHAI
Use of Chinese P.O.

Shanghai
18 October 1936
9 May 1941



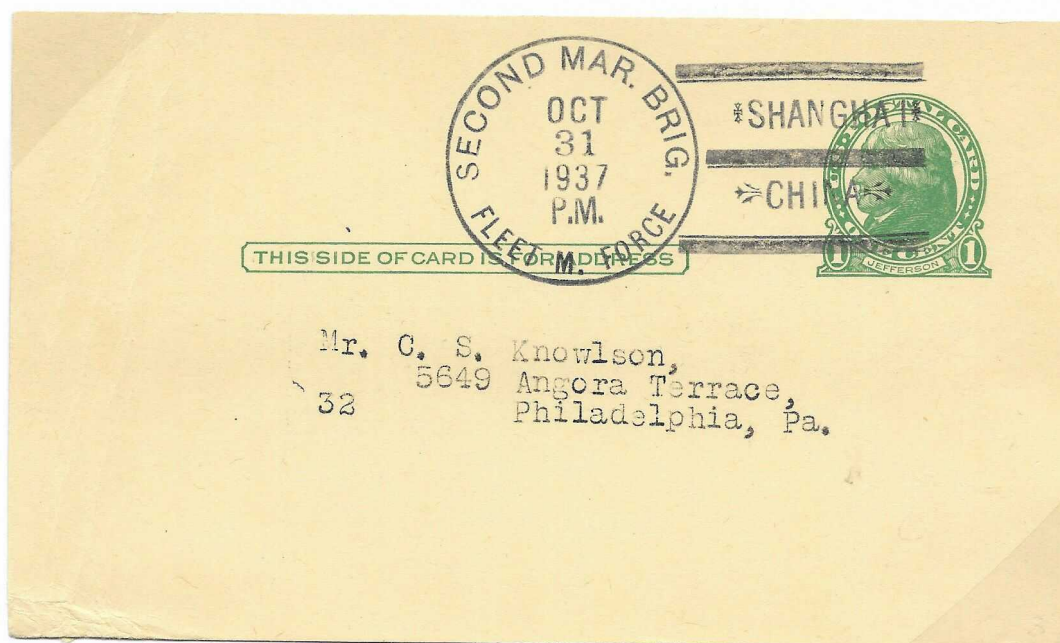
The Marines in Shanghai could and did use the Chinese postal service for sending letters. Examples are shown of surface mail which cost 25 Chinese cents and registered airmail with franking of \$5.00 Chinese.

SECOND MARINE BRIGADE - SHANGHAI

Using the excuse of a clash at the Marco Polo Bridge on 7 July 1937, Japanese forces invaded China proper. In response, the U.S. government decided to reinforce the Fourth Marines in Shanghai by sending the Second Marine Battalion from San Diego, which arrived on 19 September 1937. The fighting died down once Japan had taken over full control of the area, and the Second was withdrawn on 18 February 1938.

Second Mar. Brig.
31 October 1937
18 February 1938

Earliest recorded use of this postmark



10/31/37
Mr Knowlson.
I did not get my
equipment till to-day on
account of this trouble.
this is the first postmark
of this office.
Howard F Barton
mail clerk
2147

A special postmark was provided for use by the Second Marines, but it did not arrive until the end of October 1937, as indicated by the note from Mail Clerk Barton. Thus, it was in use for only three and a half months.

Shanghai
14 October 1937
19 October 1937

*H. W. B. Kyle U.S.M.C.
Co. "D", 6th Marines
Asiatic Station
% Postmaster, San Francisco
Calif.*

*From Hongkong
by U. S. Mail Service*

*Mr. W. W. Ferrier
Penn. Mutual Life Insurance Co.
San Diego, Calif.*

L.A.

Navy Y. M. C. A.

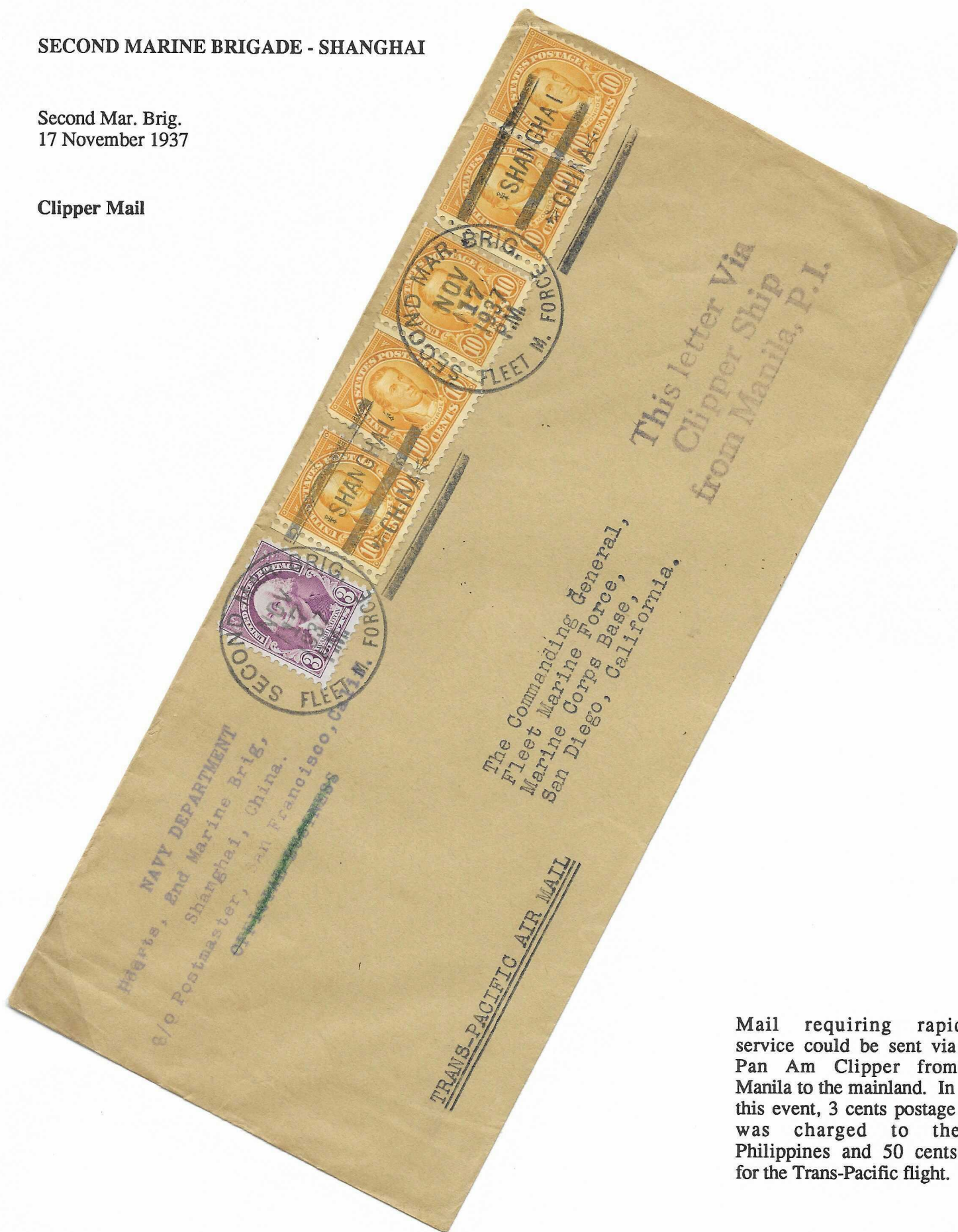


In the period before the U.S. post office opened to serve the Second Brigade of the Sixth Marines, mail could be sent by the troops through the Chinese postal service. As shown by the examples above, airmail letters could be sent at a cost of \$1.20 Chinese via Pan Am Clipper from Hong Kong to San Francisco.

SECOND MARINE BRIGADE - SHANGHAI

Second Mar. Brig.
17 November 1937

Clipper Mail



Mail requiring rapid service could be sent via Pan Am Clipper from Manila to the mainland. In this event, 3 cents postage was charged to the Philippines and 50 cents for the Trans-Pacific flight.

SECOND MARINE BRIGADE - SHANGHAI
Registration Marking

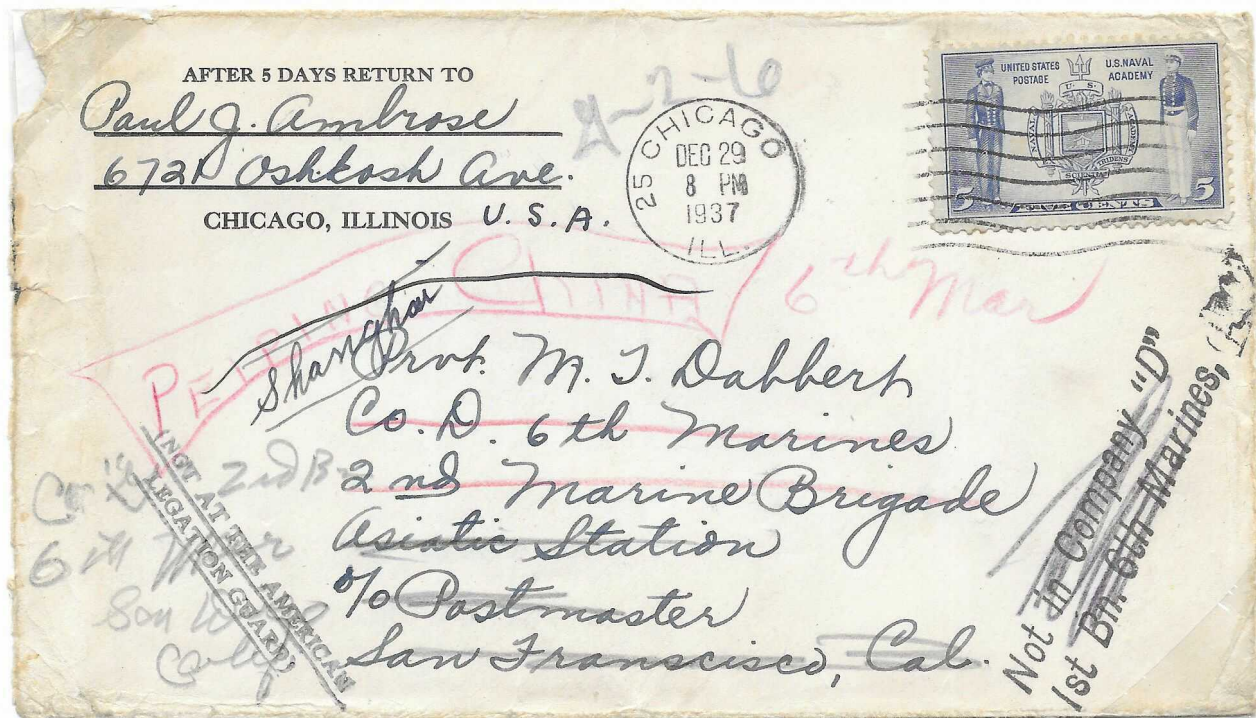
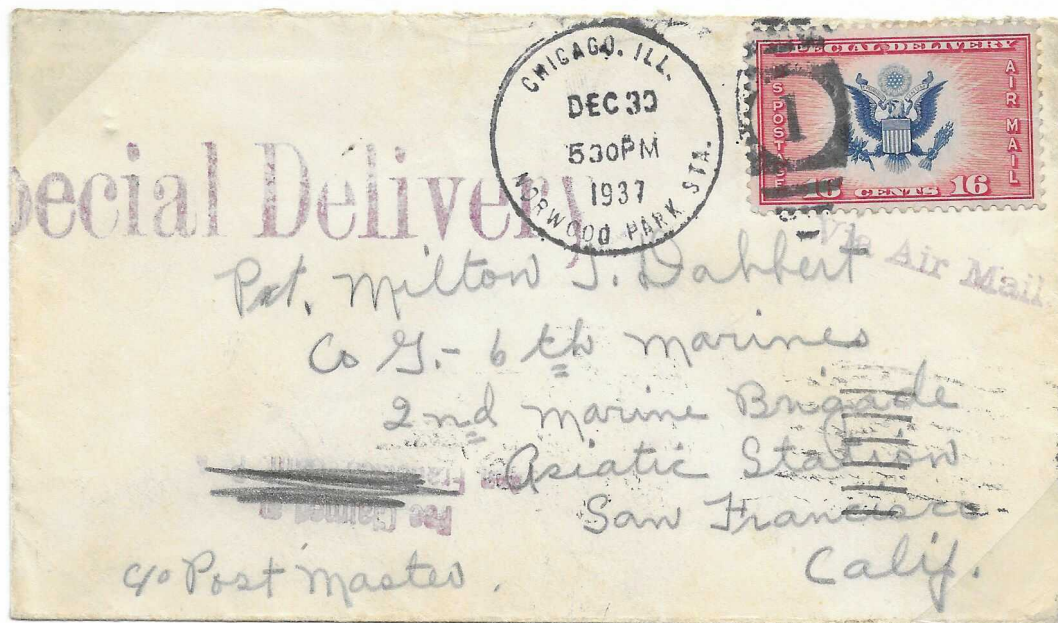
Second Mar. Brigade
 6 November 1937
 1 January 1938



A registration cancel was provided for the Second Marines, although it is not discussed in the literature. Only this single example of an outbound registered letter has been recorded. The cover below shows the registry cds used as a receiving mark on an inbound cover from the Post Office Department in San Diego.

SECOND MARINE BRIGADE - SHANGHAI
Inbound Mail

Shanghai
January 1938
11 February 1938

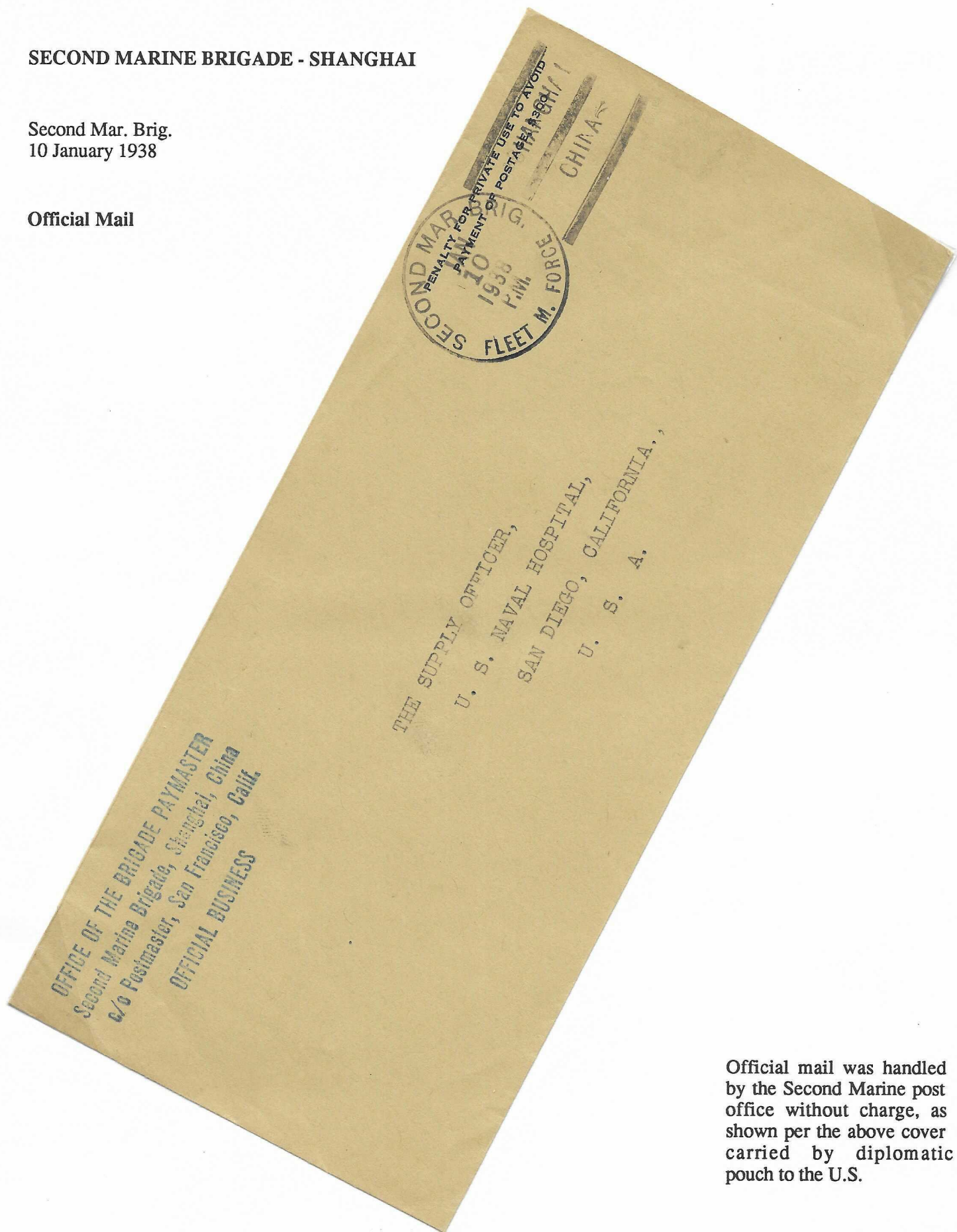


Because of the limited time they spent in China, inbound mail to the Second Marines is especially elusive. The airmail - special delivery letter apparently was delivered as addressed. However, the ordinary letter first went to the post office for the Legation Guards in Peiping and did not arrive in Shanghai until after Pvt. Dabbert and the Second Marines had left for San Diego.

SECOND MARINE BRIGADE - SHANGHAI

Second Mar. Brig.
10 January 1938

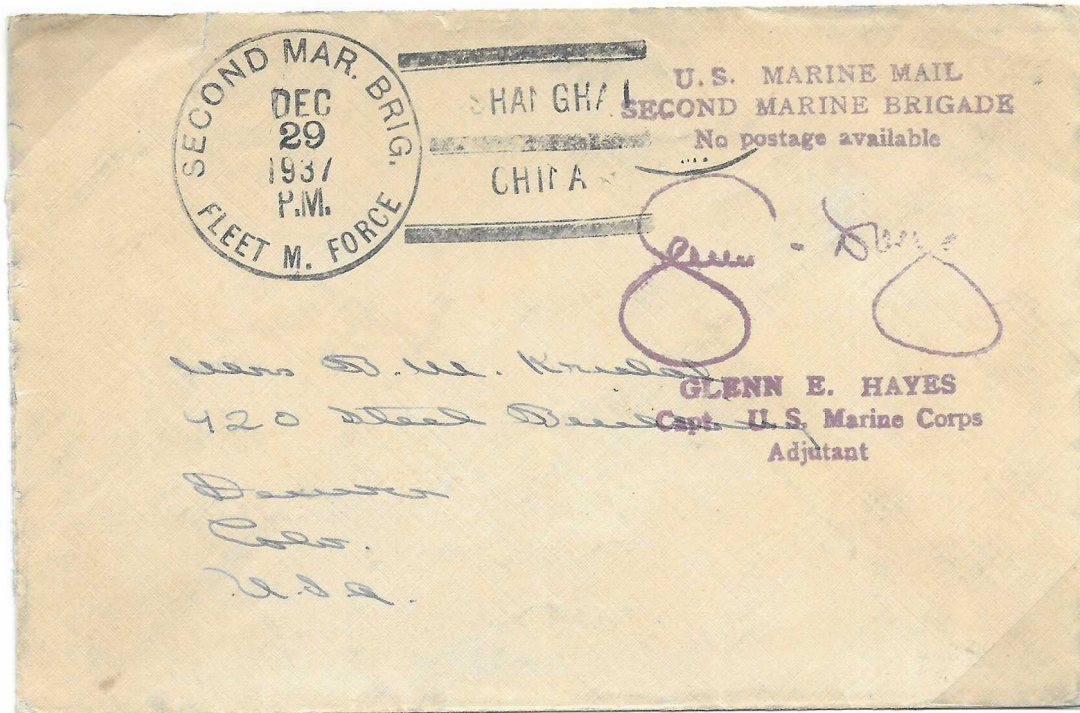
Official Mail



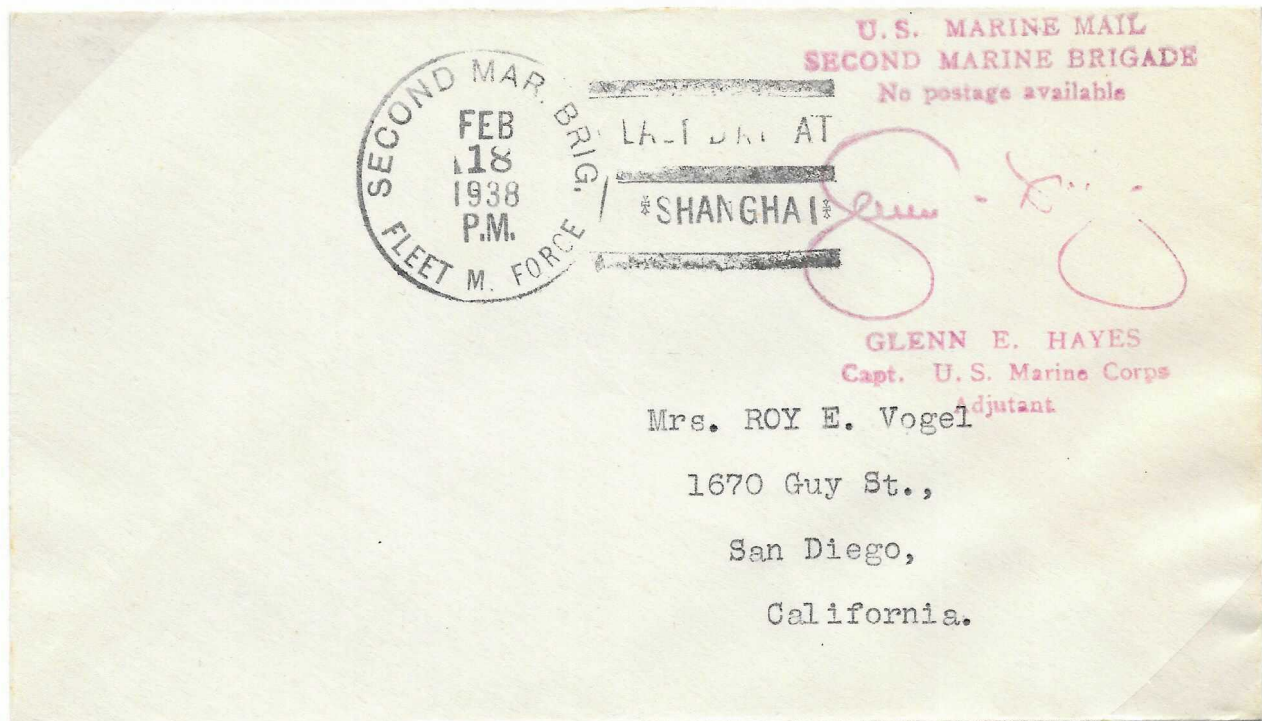
Official mail was handled by the Second Marine post office without charge, as shown per the above cover carried by diplomatic pouch to the U.S.

SECOND MARINE BRIGADE - SHANGHAI
Unfranked Mail

Second Mar. Brig.
29 December 1937
18 February 1938



Latest recorded use of this postmark



From time to time, supplies of stamps ran out and Capt. Hayes applied a special marking indicating that no postage was available. Above examples in purple and mauve, the latter being used on the final day in Shanghai.

MARINE DETACHMENT - TIENTSIN

In July 1938, 100 Marines were transferred from the Legation Guard in Peiping to establish a detachment in Tientsin. They remained there until being taken as POWs by the Japanese following the attack on Pearl Harbor. Mail from this unit is scarce, with non-philatelic usage being limited to an estimated 20 examples.

Marine Detachment
24 August 1938
5 June 1939

Earliest recorded use of this postmark



A special postmark was provided for use by the Tientsin Detachment. The extreme dates of use are recorded as 24 August 1938 to 10 December 1941. Lower cover is the only example to a foreign address seen by exhibitor.

MARINE DETACHMENT - TIEN TSIN
Registration Marking

Marine Detachment
17 November 1938

Only Reported Example of this Postmark

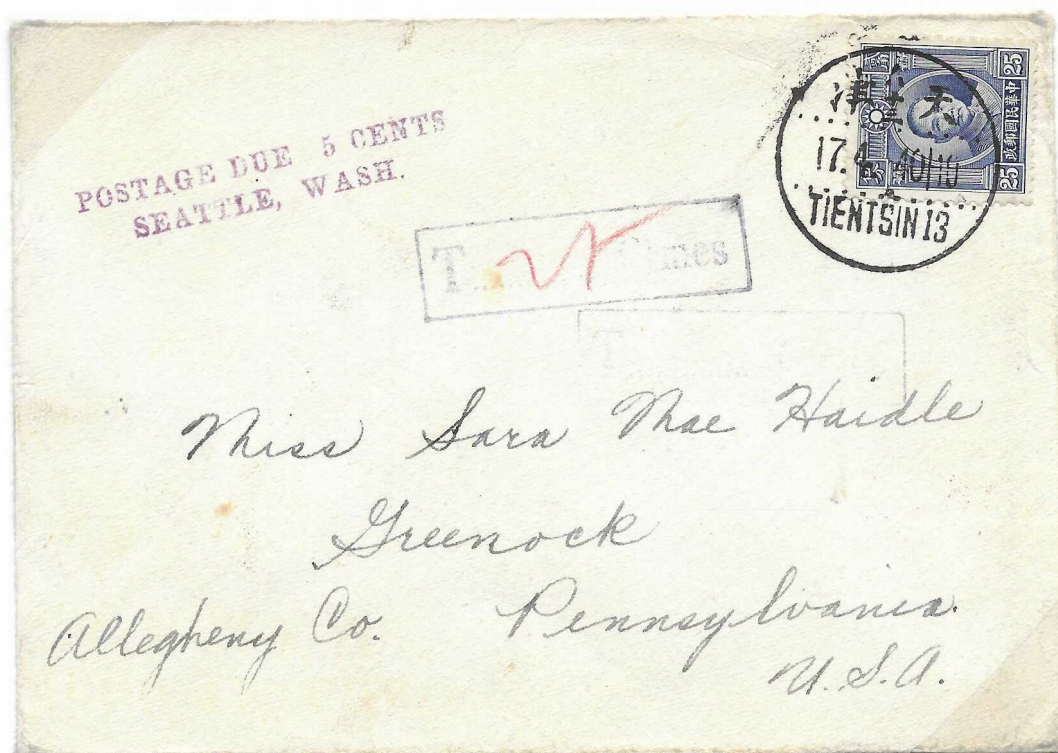


Registered mail from the Marine Detachment is extraordinarily elusive, with only this one example having been recorded in over a half century. As was usual for the period, the postage on the front was cancelled with an oval killer, and the strikes of the double circle registration marking were applied on the reverse.

MARINE DETACHMENT - TIENTSIN

Tientsin
17 April 1940

Sent through the Chinese P.O.



Mail could be sent by members of the Marine Detachment via the Chinese postal system. The above cover was assessed 5 cents postage due on arrival in the U.S., presumably because it was over the 1 ounce first weight step.

MARINE DETACHMENT - TIENTSIN

Marine Detachment
30 January 1941

Charles M. Petrillo
U.S. Marine Detachment,
Tientsin, China.

Mr. Crowell D. Eddy
County Assessor (Civic Center)
San Diego, California.



The personal mail of members of the Marine Detachment was franked at the 3 cent domestic rate and carried by diplomatic pouch to the U.S.

MARINE DETACHMENT - TIENTSIN

Marine Detachment
20 October 1941

Official Mail



Official mail was handled by the Marine Detachment post office without charge, as shown per the above cover carried by diplomatic pouch to the U.S.

LATE SENDING PRIOR TO PEARL HARBOR
Registered Mail

4th Regt. U.S.M.C.
11 November 1941

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Kobe, Japan



Mrs Rella Warner
973 Coronado Drive
Glendale,

REGI

NO. —

Registered



Cover sent by the U.S. Foreign Service office in Kobe, Japan during the intense U.S.-Japanese diplomatic negotiations to stave off the onset of war in the Pacific. It was sent by pouch to the nearest American post office, which was that of the Fourth Marines in Shanghai. There it was mailed to California, with postage of 27 cents being paid (quadruple weight x 3 cents plus 15 cents registration) by a most unusual franking of all 1 cent "Defense" stamps. The way that it actually traveled is uncertain since it would have been caught en route by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. It eventually arrived in San Francisco seven weeks later on 29 December 1941 and was delivered in Glendale on the following day.