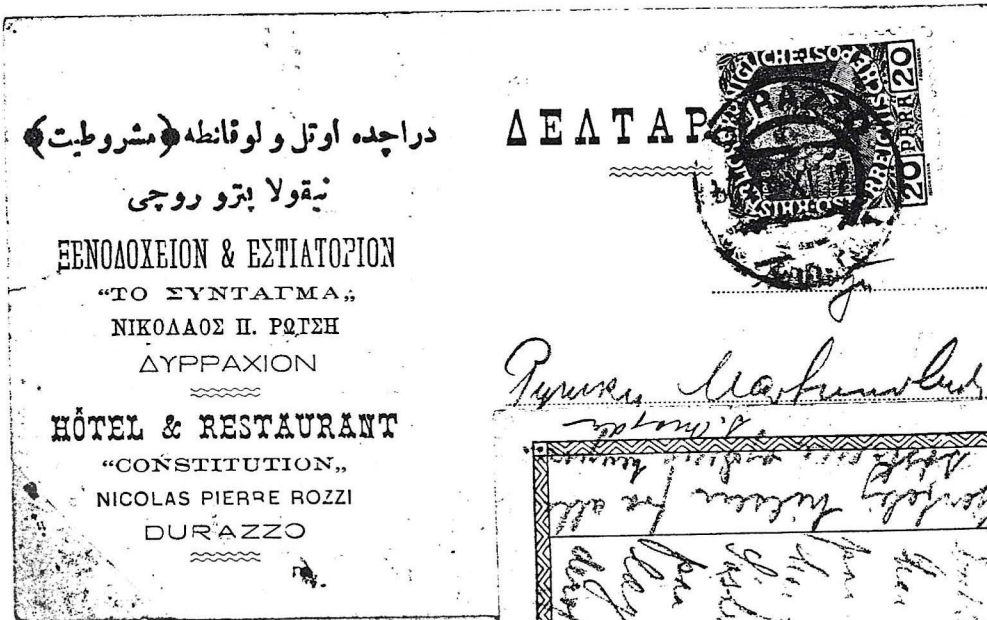


SERBIAN OCCUPATION -- BALKAN WAR

After inflicting a major defeat on the Turkish forces at Koumanovo on 24 October 1912, the Serbian troops were able to advance with little resistance into Albania, where they occupied the towns of Durazzo, Elbasan and Alessio. However, when the European Powers decided to establish Albania as an independent state, they insisted on the withdrawal of Serbian forces in the spring of 1913. As a result, covers with Serbian postmarks from this period are elusive.



Card with cachet of the Royal Serbian HQ in Durazzo delivered directly to and postmarked on the Austrian Lloyd S.S. Melpomene en route to addressee in Norway.

Drac
30 November 1912
7 January 1913
13 April 1913

A forerunner card mailed by a Serbian soldier on the day that Durazzo was occupied. The Serbs had not set up their own post office so the Austrian office was utilized.



КРАЉЕВИНА



СРБИЈА

ВОЈНИЧКА

ДОПИСНА КАРТА



Томислав
Војна Служба
Сарајево
Београд

Само за адресу.

Examples of the new Serbian postmarks used in Albania are quite elusive. This one was used at the military post office in Drac (the Slavic name for Durazzo).

SERBIAN OCCUPATION -- BALKAN WAR

Another Serbian post office in Albania during the Balkan War period was at Alessio (Lesh). It, too, had to be evacuated when required by the International Control Commission.

Lesh
7 November 1912
10 April 1913



Forerunner card mailed by a Serbian soldier after the capture of Lesh but before the Serbs opened their own post office. It was then delivered to the Montenegrin authorities at Bar (Antivari) for transmission to the addressee in Krusevac.

Postcard sent through the Serbian military post office in Lesh, Albania during the temporary Serb occupation of the town.



INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION

The European Powers (Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy and Russia) established an Ambassadors' Conference in London on 17 December 1912 to sort out the new geopolitical situation in the Balkans. The group favored independence for Albania, with the Austrians and Italians in particular being opposed to Serbia obtaining an outlet on the Adriatic. As a result, when peace was signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan Allies on 30 May 1913, the Powers agreed to create an International Control Commission to provide a multinational peacekeeping force, establish new boundaries and create a new government for Albania, and to force the Greek, Montenegrin and Serbian troops to withdraw from Albanian territory.

French Contingent

Scutari in Albanien
30 October 1913

Durres
2 July 1914

Détachement Français à Scutari (Albanie)



Vicutenant Woelket

67 Rue du Chatelet

Toulon

France

Kol Maza, Photograph - Scutari d'Albanie - Propriété réservée



affair
ESCADRE
INTERNATIONALE
DURAZZO



alb.

Madame I. Faru

10 rue Livoli

Marseille

France

Upper cover from the French Detachment in Scutari was sent through the Austrian post office abroad located there. The lower card is from the armored cruiser *Edgar Quinet* with the International Squadron off Durazzo.

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION
French Contingent

Scutari
July 1913
August 1913

22^e RÉGIMENT
COLONIAL
4^e Compagnie

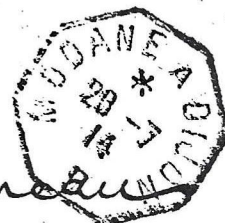
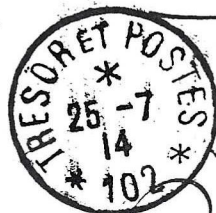
DÉTACHEMENT FRANÇAIS
D'INFANTERIE COLONIALE
à Scutari d'Albanie



Monsieur Devoitine
49 Rue Cecil Dinaut

Détachement Français d'Infanterie
Coloniale à Scutari d'Albanie

Transmise par la

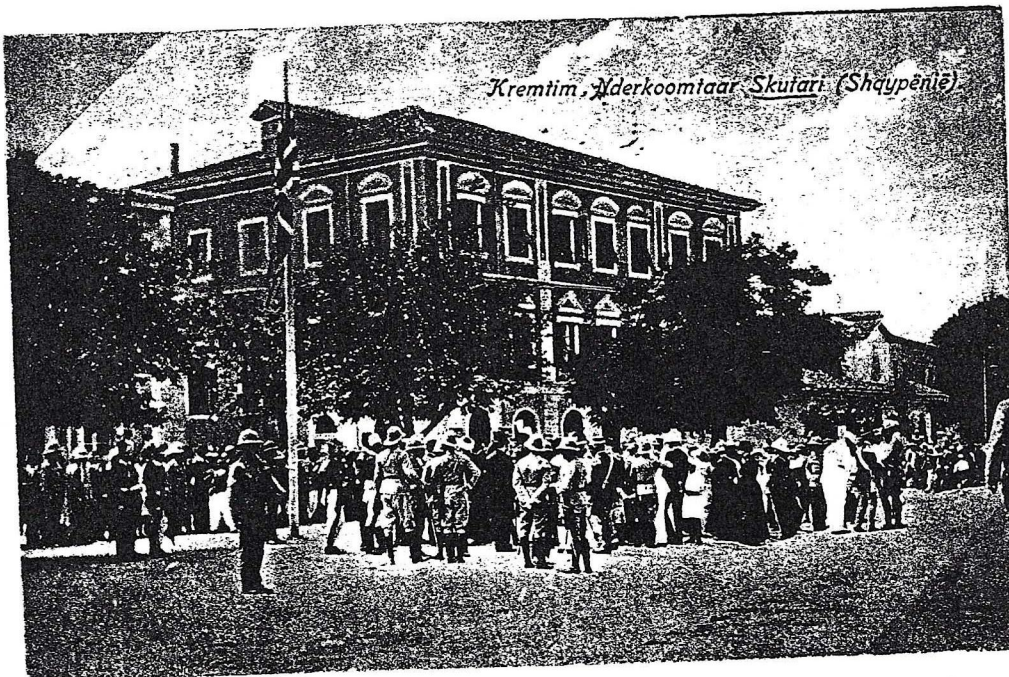
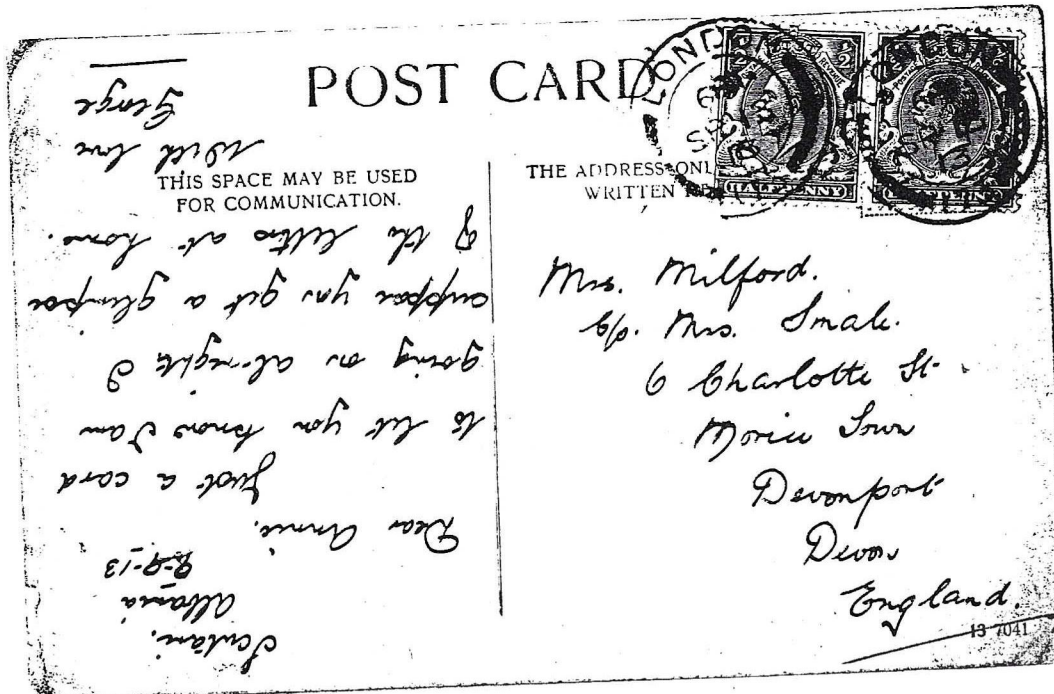


Monsieur Ragan
Marchand de Laines
Boulevard de la Gare
à Taourirt
par Oudja
Maroc Oriental

France sent as its contribution to the international forces a unit of the 22nd Regiment of Colonial Infantry from North Africa. Mail from these men was sent by military pouch from Scutari to France, where it was postmarked on the TPO from Modane to Dijon and then forwarded to its destination. The lower cover was sent to a military address in Morocco, where it obtained the T&P 102 receiving mark at the military post office in Taourirt.

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION
British Contingent

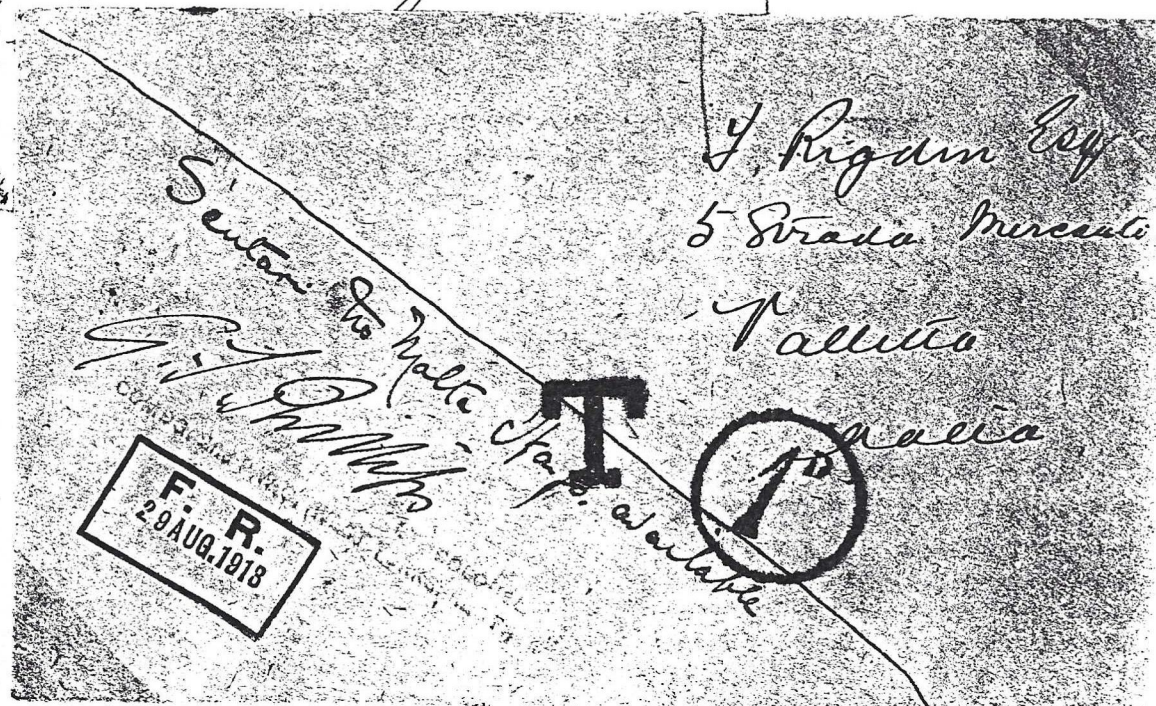
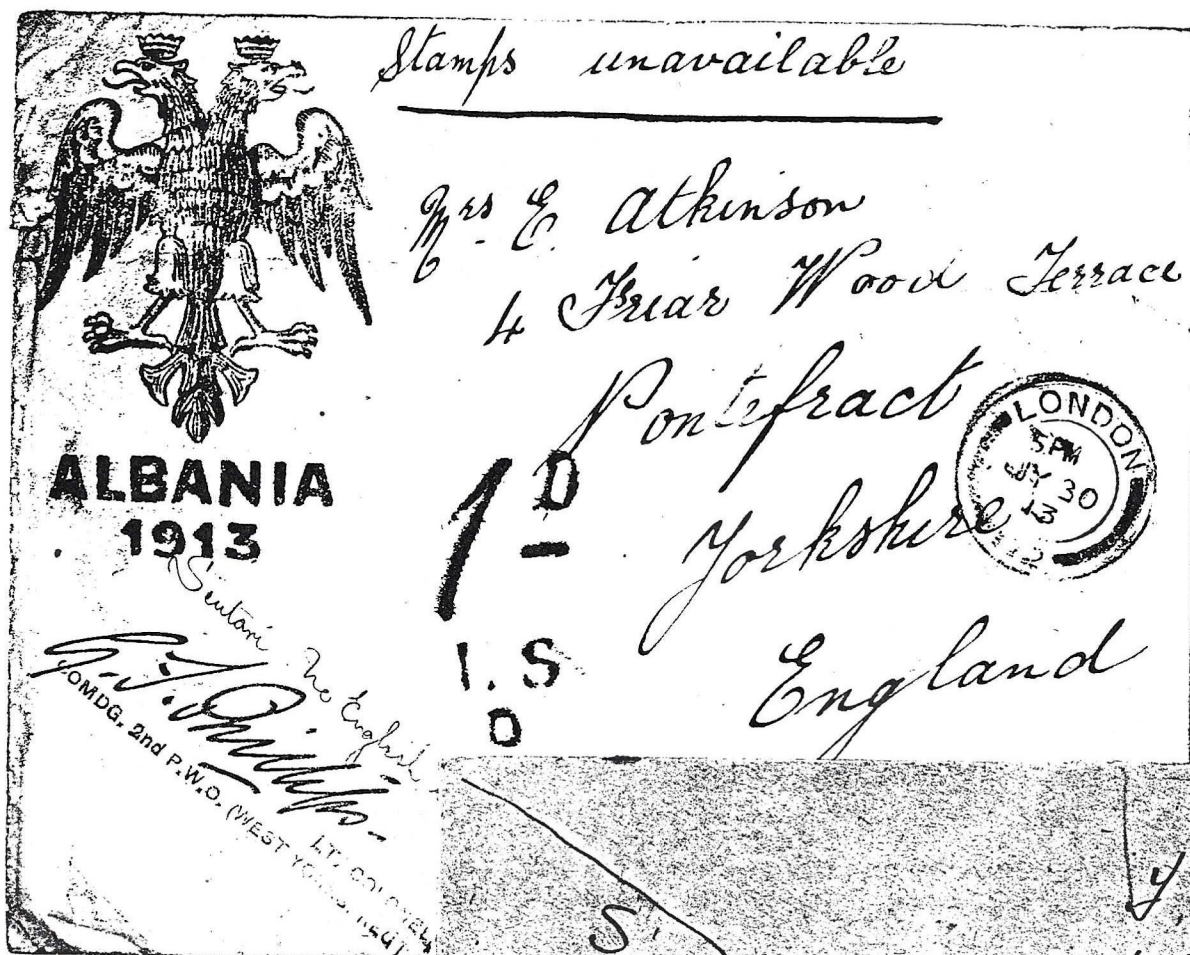
Scutari
9 September 1913



Picture postcard of Malta, obviously brought along by a member of the W. Yorks. Regiment. It was sent from Scutari to London by military pouch, where it was placed in the mail stream. The sender was unclear about the postage so paid the international postcard rate of 1d although the domestic 1/2d would have sufficed.

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION
British Contingent

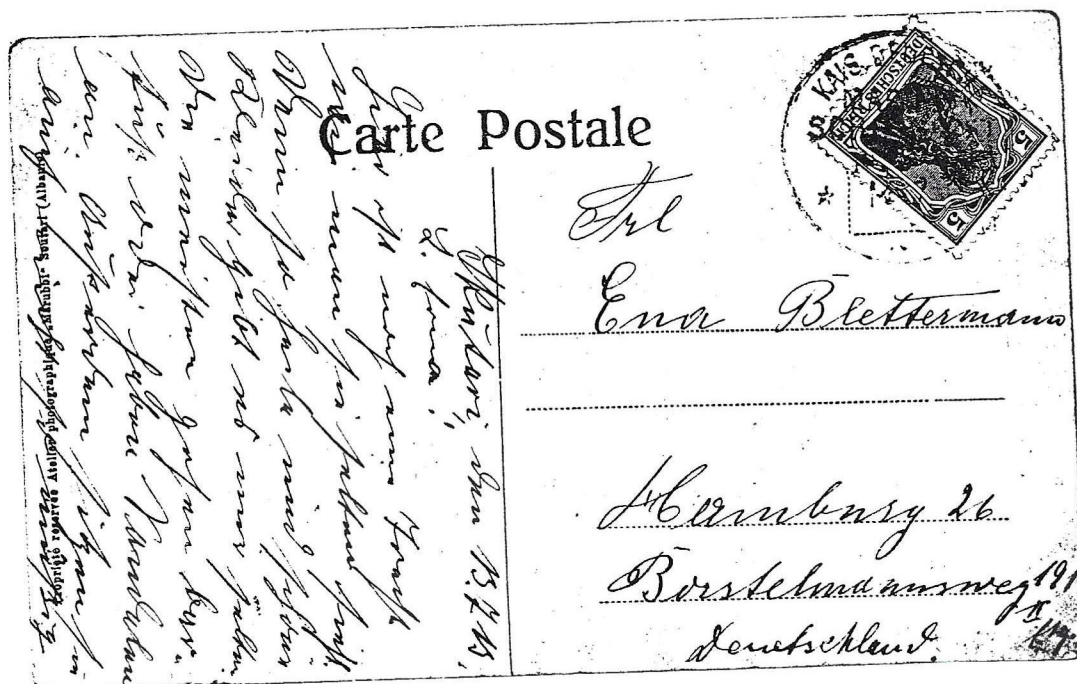
Scutari
July 1913
August 1913



The British contribution to the international landing forces consisted of three companies of the Second Battalion of the West Yorkshire Regiment, which was sent from Malta on 7 June 1913. This unit was headed by Col. G. F. Phillips, who became commander of all the international troops. The above covers were censored by Col. Phillips and sent by military pouch to London, with the lower example being forwarded to Malta where it was received on 29 August 1913. They are endorsed "Scutari: No English/Malta Stamps available" and were assessed 1d postage due on arrival.

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION
German Naval Contingent

Marine Schiffspost No. 51
14 July 1913



Picture postcard (an Albanian woman) datelined "Scutari 13. 7. 13." and postmarked the following day on S.M.S. *Breslau*. This German cruiser participated in the International Naval Squadron off Albania, landing 100 of its marines at Scutari. Its captain later became the civil governor of the Scutari District. A very elusive usage.

R. Nave Varese
18 September 1913

The Italian warship *Varese* was sent to patrol the Bojana River, which connects Lake Scutari to the Adriatic Sea, to support the Italian Delegation to the Albanian-Montenegrin Boundary Arbitration Commission. The above picture postcard of Scutari was sent by a sailor aboard the *Varese* and datelined "Mouth of the Bojana 13. 9. 913."

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION
Austro-Hungarian Delegation to the Commission for Albania

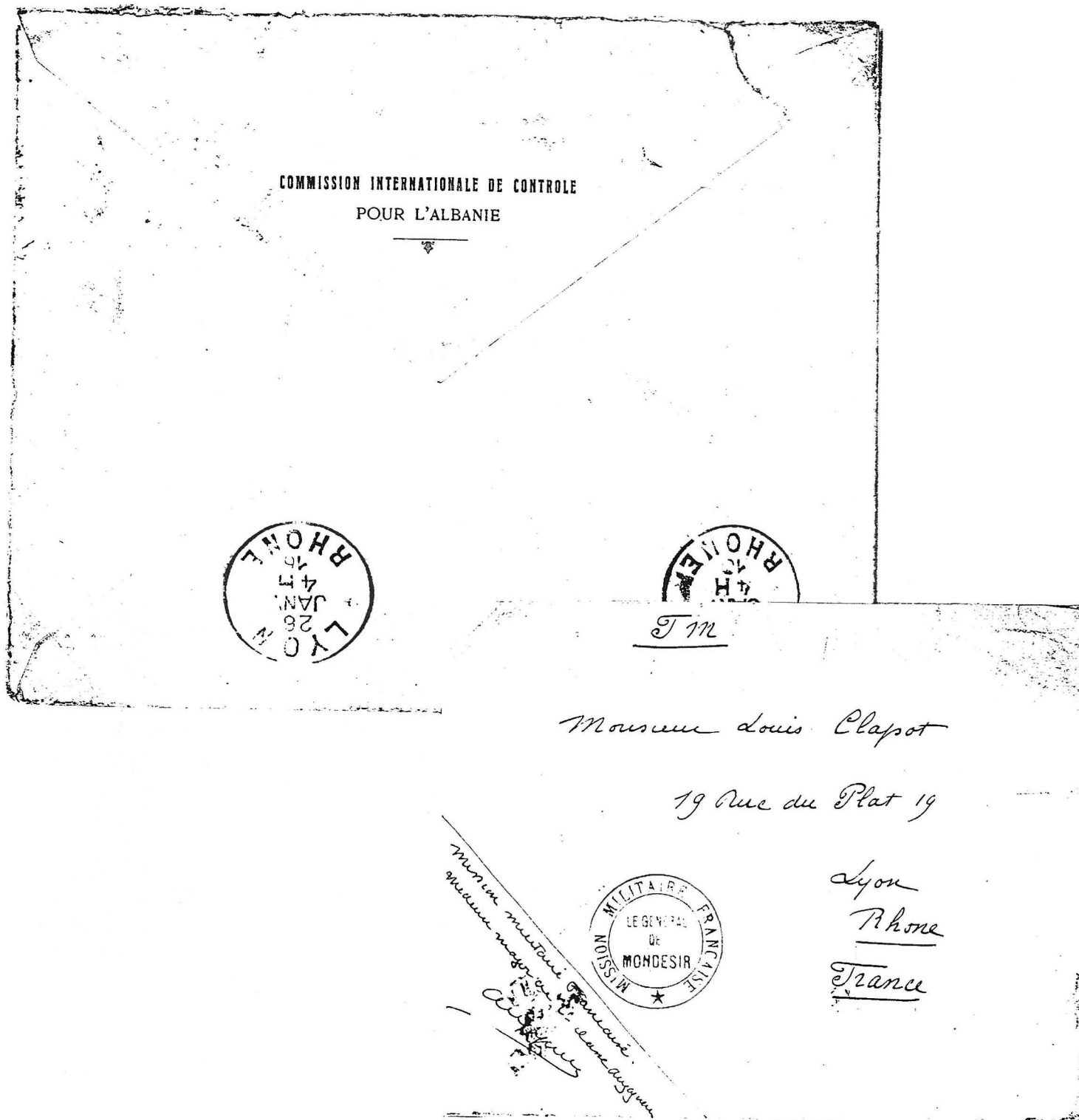
Valona
27 December 1913



This letter with return address of the Austro-Hungarian Delegation was sent through the Italian P.O. in Valona to France, providing a very international piece of Albanian postal history.

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION
French Mission to the Commission for Albania

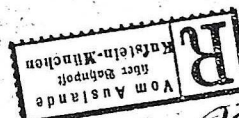
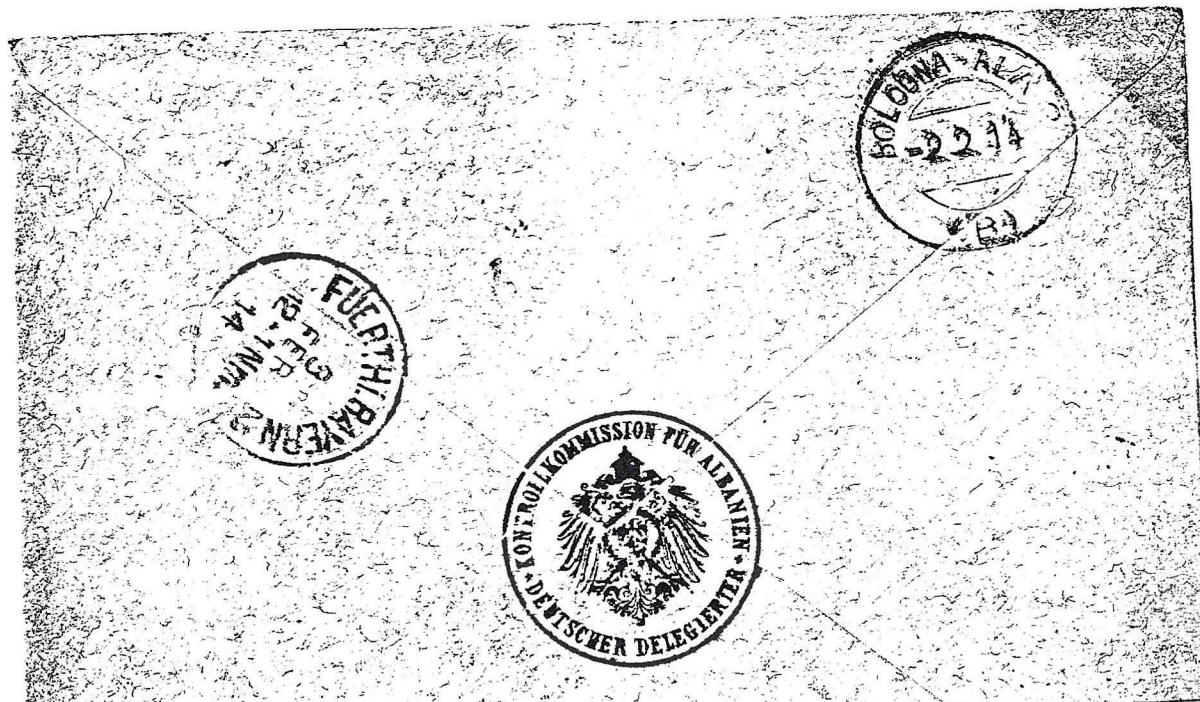
December 1915



Even as late as the end of 1915, there were still representatives of the International Control Commission operating in Albania. This cover was written by a member of the French Military Mission under General Mondesir.

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION
German Delegation to the Commission for Albania

Vlone
29 January 1914



Empfänger

H. Major Wirth *Rece.*
1939

Fürh. Bayern.

Wienberg III. a. d.

32



Bavaria

This letter with cachet of the German Delegation was franked with a 1 franc Skanderbeg adhesive and sent through the Albanian P.O. in Valona via Italy to Bavaria, with an RPO registration label being affixed upon arrival in Germany.



The Italians provided members of the boundary commission to determine the frontiers of the new Albanian state. Considering the various ethnic and geographic problems in the Balkans, it is surprising that the boundaries drawn by the European Powers in 1914 are still essentially in force today. This card has the cachet of the "Royal Italian Delegation to the Boundary Commission in North Albania," which was probably out in the hinterlands as it was postmarked at the Italian P.O. in Scutari five days after being written.

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION
Dutch Military Police Mission

Korce
14 May 1914



The European Powers decided to request that a neutral government send officers to form and instruct an indigenous military police force. This task was accepted by The Netherlands, which assigned a dozen officers to Albania. Major Snellen van Vollenhoven was sent to Korytsa as the head of police in that area. As a result of heavy desertions among the Albanian MPs in the face of Greek pressure, the major was forced to withdraw from the city with the rest of his men in June 1914, and the Dutch mission left Albania entirely following the abdication of Prince William in September.

Above cover sent by van Vollenhoven from Korytsa to The Hague, where it was backstamped on 25 May 1914.

Korce
19 March 1914
15 April 1914



Grigor Tsily

[illegible]

When the Dutch arrived in Korytsa on 5 March 1914, they were desirous of reinstating postal communications, but there were no stamps available in the post office. As a temporary measure, a large square metal handstamp inscribed "Provisional/Control Commission/Korytsa" was used to imprint 2,500 envelopes in violet or black ink. These were then surcharged 10 para or 25 para in red and placed on sale from 19 March to 16 April 1914, when a supply of Skanderbeg stamps arrived.

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION
Dutch Administration of Korce

Korce
22 March 1914

Monsieur Anastasio Dimitriadis

Galata

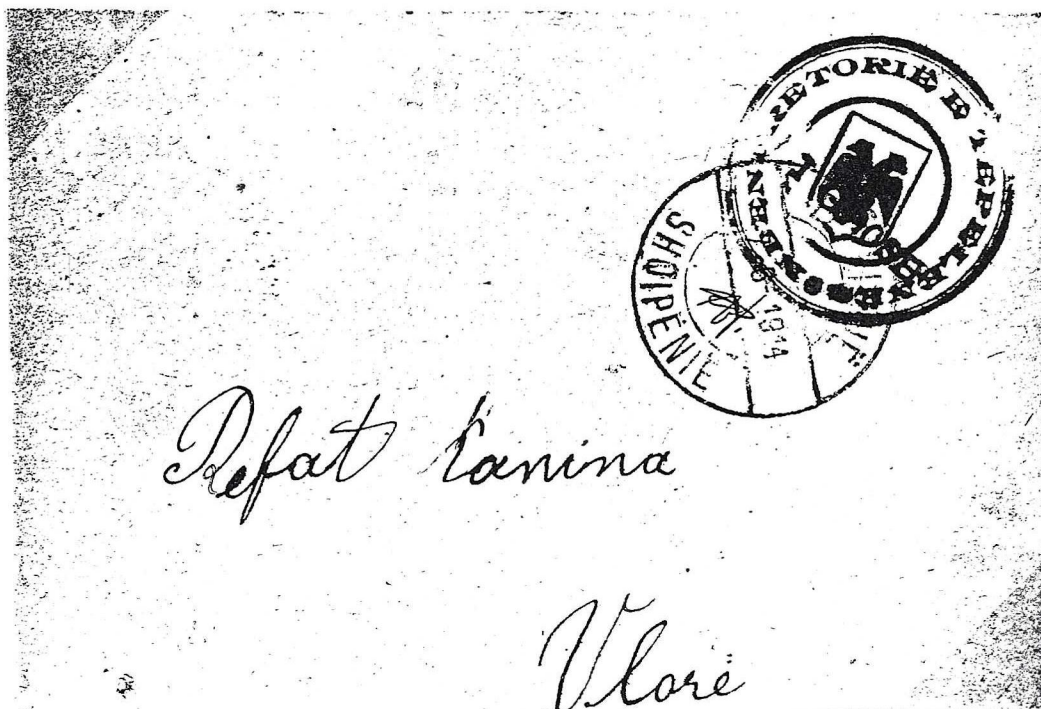
Constantinople



Some of the Korce stamps were imprinted on sheets of paper and cut out for use as ordinary stamps. The catalogues and handbooks mention only 10 para and 25 para denominations being provided. However, the international letter rate was 50 paras at the time, and the above example indicates that a stamp of that denomination was prepared by someone. This cover was backstamped upon arrival in Galata.

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION
Dutch Administration of Tepelene

Tepelene
7 June 1914



Another local issue came about because of a lack of available stamps. Captain de Jouy, the local Dutch commander, authorized the stamping of some 600 envelopes with the official seal of the town. This was a circular mark with an eagle and inscribed "Sub-Prefecture of Tepelene." In addition, a surcharge of "1 grosh" was applied to indicate payment of the letter rate. These envelopes were used between 30 May and 9 July 1914.