

SOUTH BULGARIA

Philippole
17 October 1885
19 July 1886

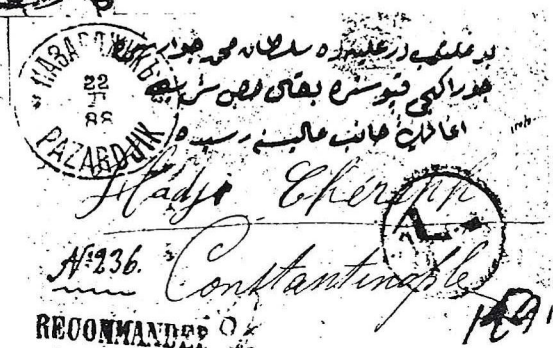
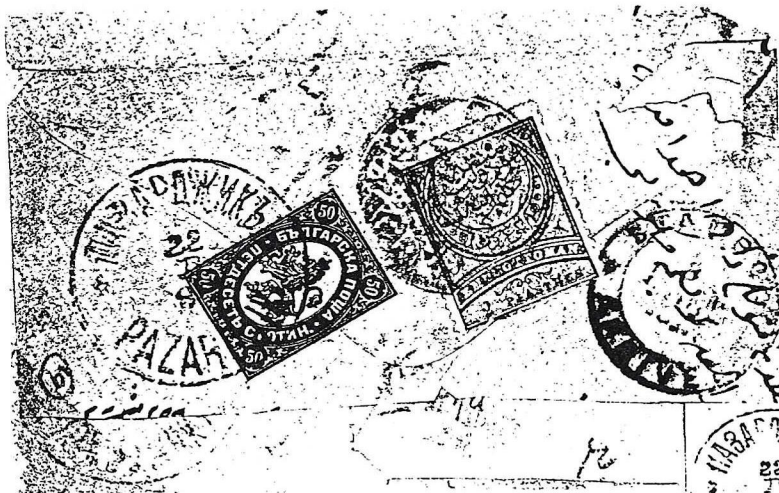
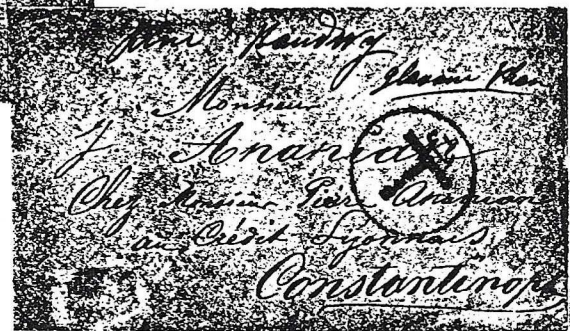
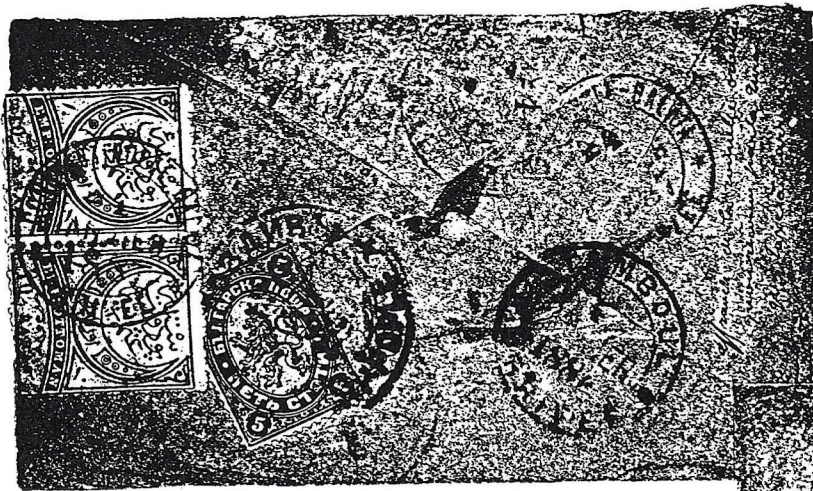


On 1 October 1885, normal Bulgarian stamps were required for payment of postage in the former South Bulgaria. Above are examples of international registered mail (50 stotinki rate) to Austria and Germany, respectively.

SOUTH BULGARIA

Philippople
20 December 1886

Pazardjik
22 February 1888



The Turkish authorities refused to recognize the Bulgarian annexation of Eastern Roumelia. As a result, when mail franked with Bulgarian stamps arrived in Turkey from this area, it was assessed postage due at double the normal postal rate. The underpayment was indicated by the "T" marking in circle shown on the above covers, with Turkish stamps added to reflect the amounts collected from the addressees. Such usage is very unusual.

SERBO-BULGARIAN WAR

King Milan of Serbia was very jealous about the expansion of Bulgaria as a result of the annexation of Eastern Roumelia and on 14 November 1885 launched an unprovoked attack on the Bulgarians. However, Prince Alexander led the Bulgaria to a major victory at Slivnitsa on the 19th and subsequently advanced into Serbia near Pirot. On the 28th, the Austrian minister intervened and brought the hostilities to an end. As a result, the Serbian army was saved from severe defeat, but the enlargement of Bulgaria was confirmed.

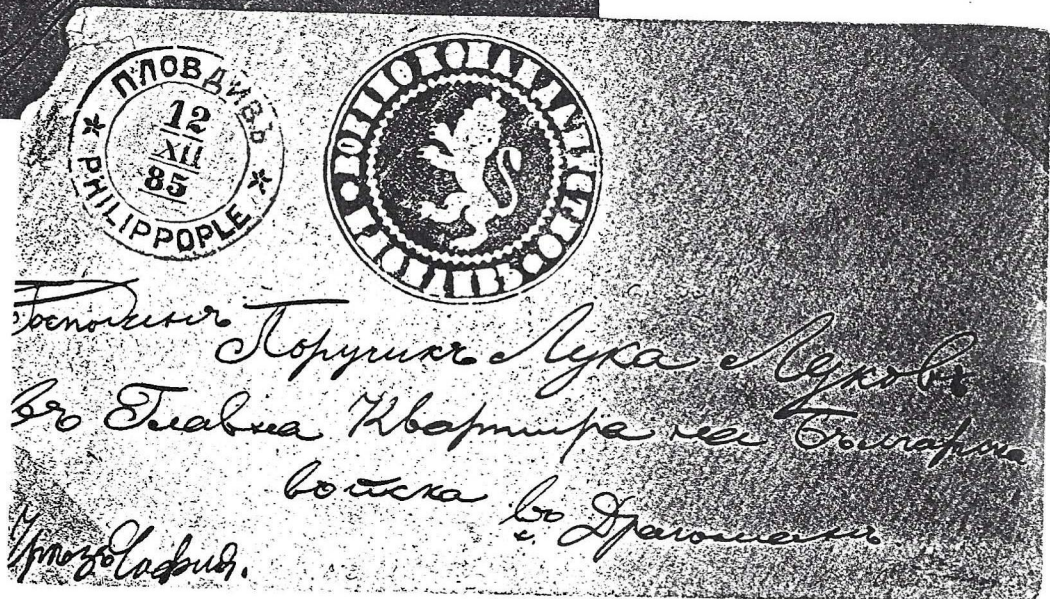
Plovdiv

11 December 1885

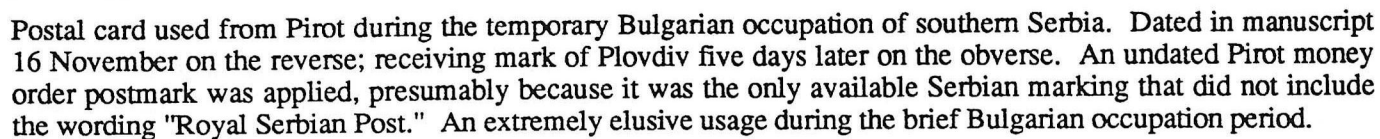
12 December 1885



Small cover addressed to a lieutenant at the main headquarters of the Bulgarian forces at Drogiman.

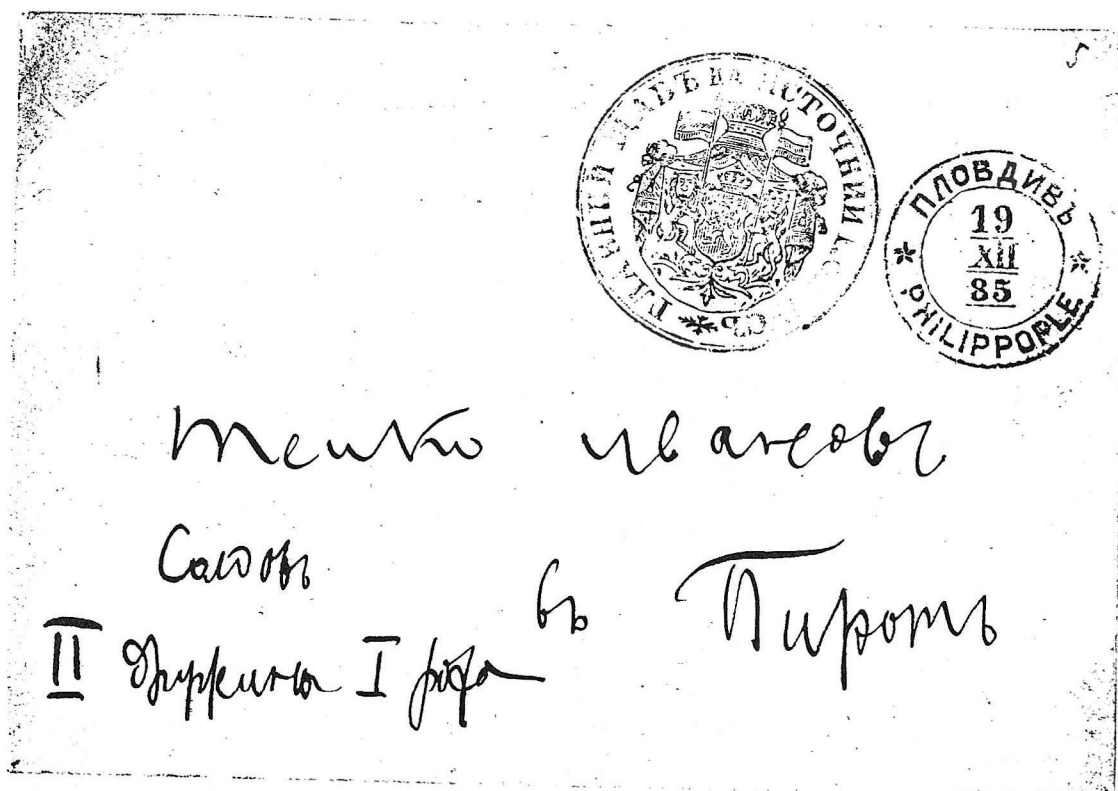


Military mail from this extremely short and very successful campaign was carried free of postage and is quite scarce. This usage was authorized by application of the South Bulgarian negative seal inscribed "Military Headquarters/Plovdiv" (Bulgarian name for Philipppole).



SERBO-BULGARIAN WAR
To Occupied Serbia

Plovdiv
19 December 1885



Military cover with blue circular cachet of the "Commander of the Eastern Army Corps." Sent from Plovdiv to Pirots in occupied Serbia. Backstamped with undated Pirots marking as well as postmark of the "First Military T.P.O." This latter marking is extremely elusive, with only two examples recorded.

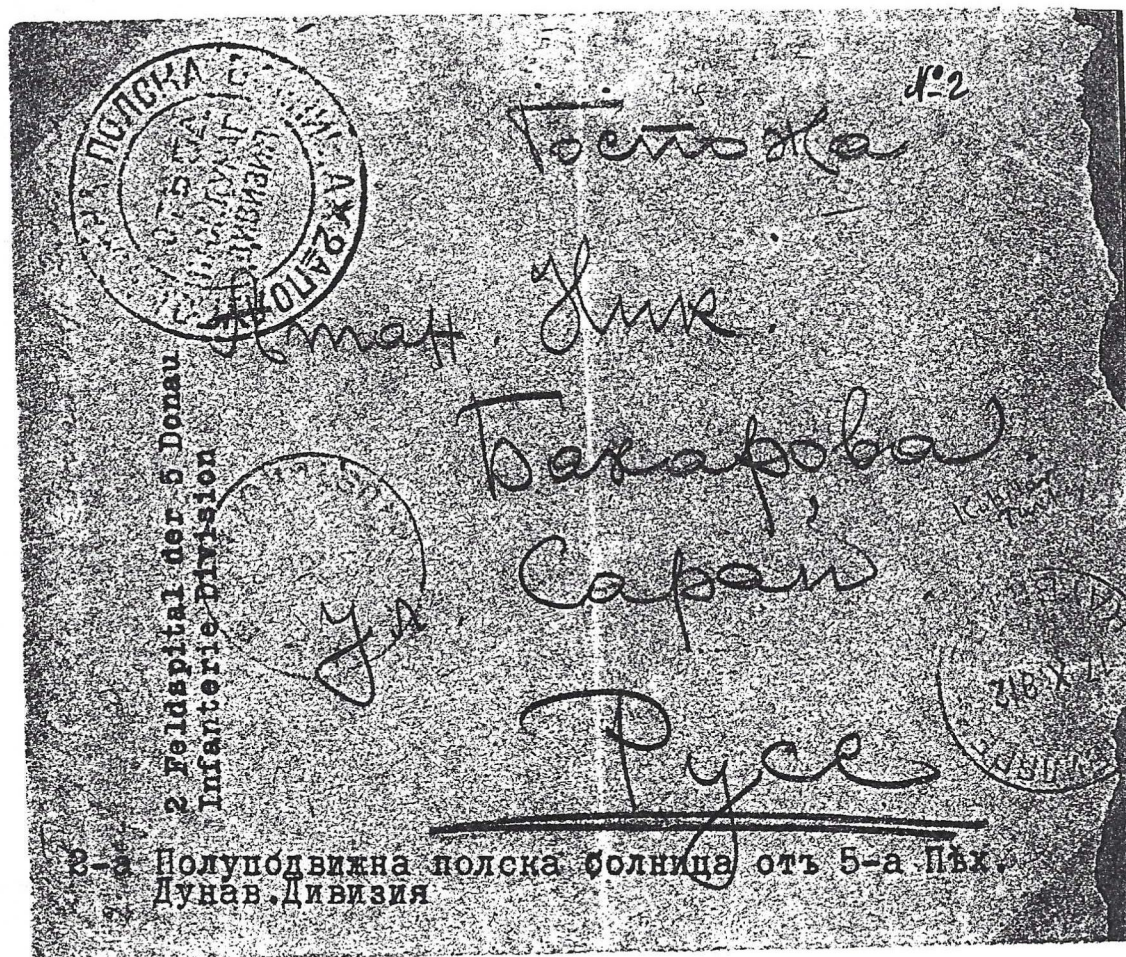
FIRST BALKAN WAR

Observing the ease with which the Italians had seized Libya and the Dodecanese Islands, the smaller Balkan states (Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Montenegro) joined forces to settle their grievances with the Turks. Bulgaria declared war on 17 October 1912 and quickly inflicted major defeats on the Turks at Kirk-Kilise (Lozengrad) on 22-23 October and at Lule-Burgas on 29-31 October. As a result, the Bulgarian forces were able to occupy most of Thrace up to the Chatalja lines near Constantinople as well as large portions of Macedonia.

Kaybilare
17 October 1912

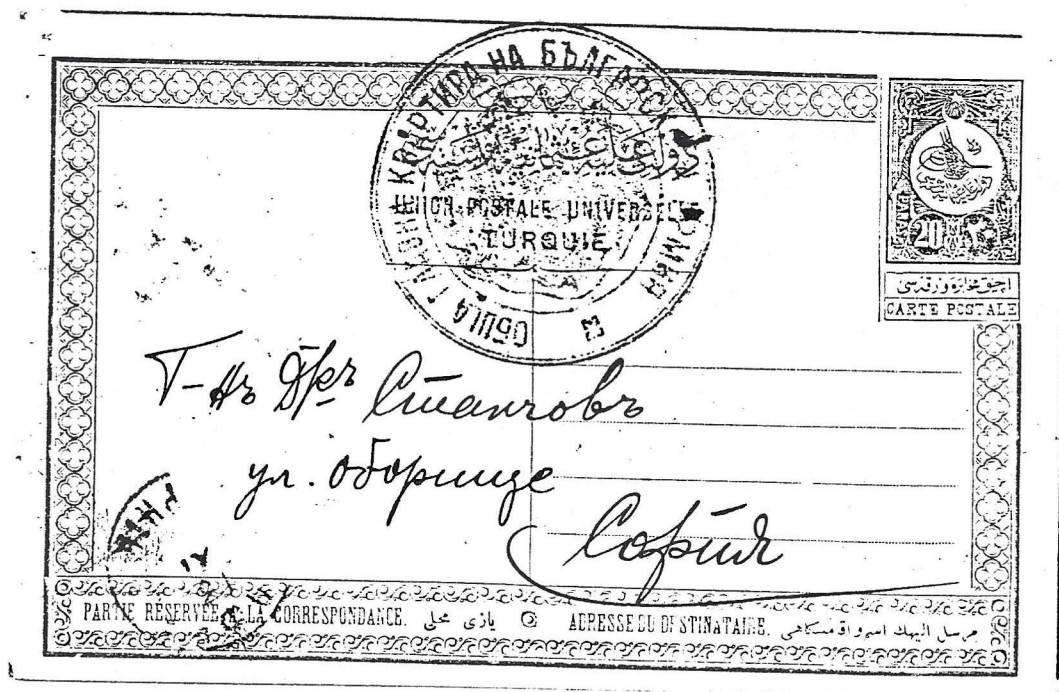


This cover is post-marked on the first day of the fighting and has the unit cachet of the 2nd Field Hospital of the 5th Danube Infantry Division. Backstamped for receipt at Rustchouk five days later.



FIRST BALKAN WAR
Unit Cachets Used as Postmarks

First Army
October 1912
8 November 1912

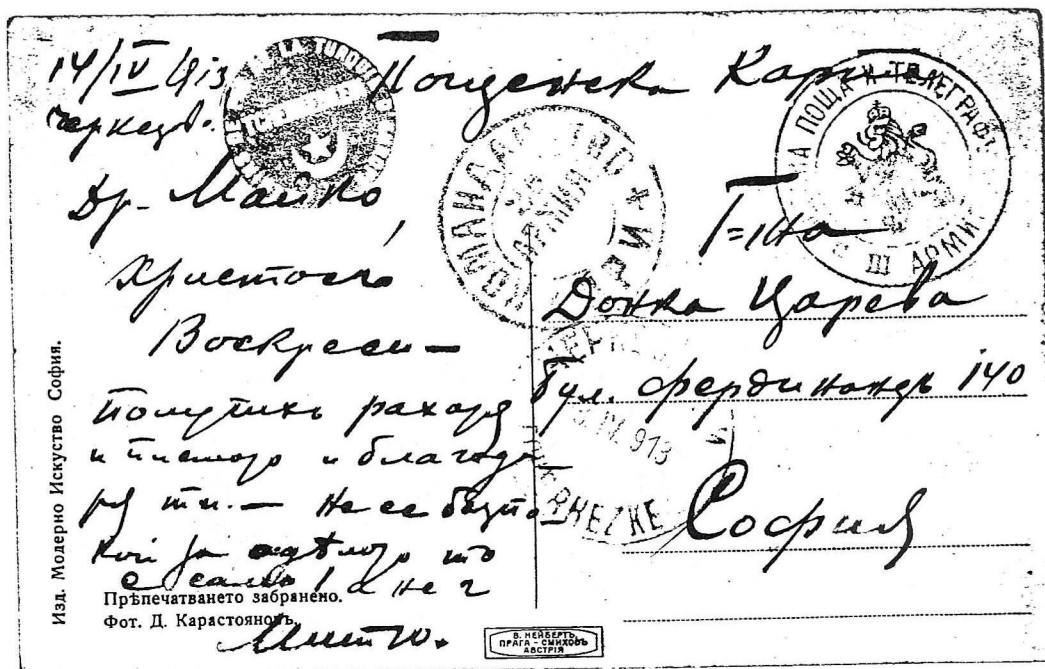
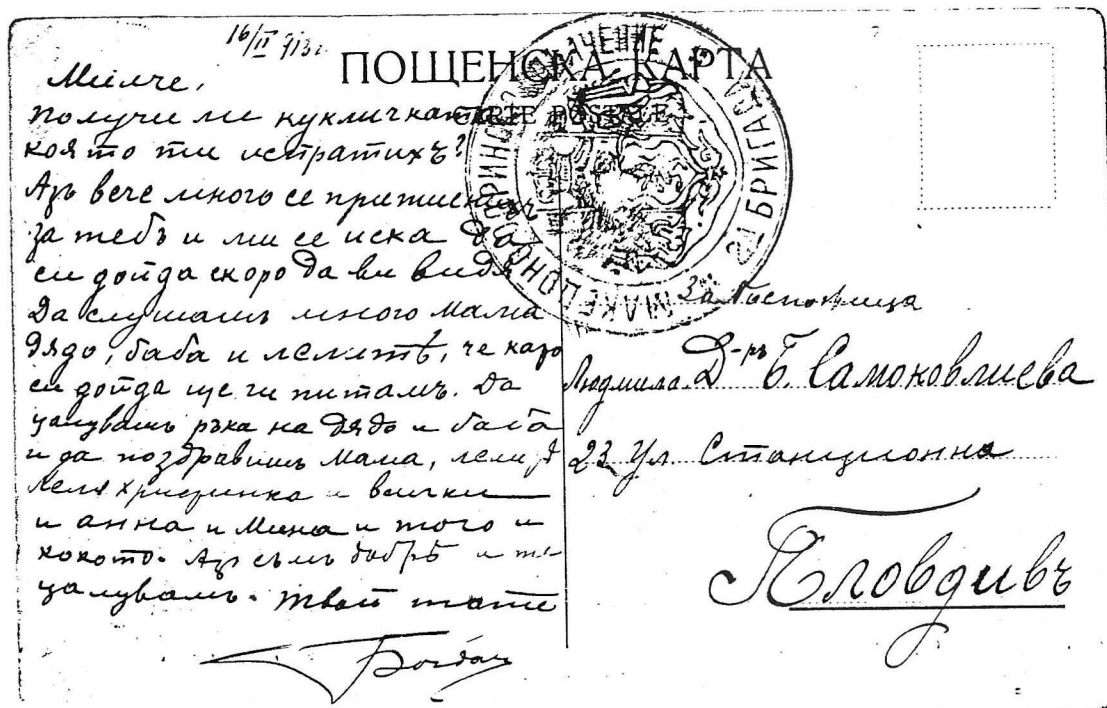


Cover is postmarked with provisional "Military Posts & Telegraphs/I Army" and has unit cachets of the First Field Army and the Headquarters of the Cavalry Division; backstamped for receipt in Sofia on 30 October 1912. Captured Turkish postal card not postmarked but has unit cachet of "Bulgarian Army Occupation Forces Authority." It is datelined "Lozengrad 8 November 1912" and was received in Sofia five days later.

FIRST BALKAN WAR
Unit Cachets Used as Postmarks

Second Macedonian Brigade
16 February 1913

Third Army
14 April 1913

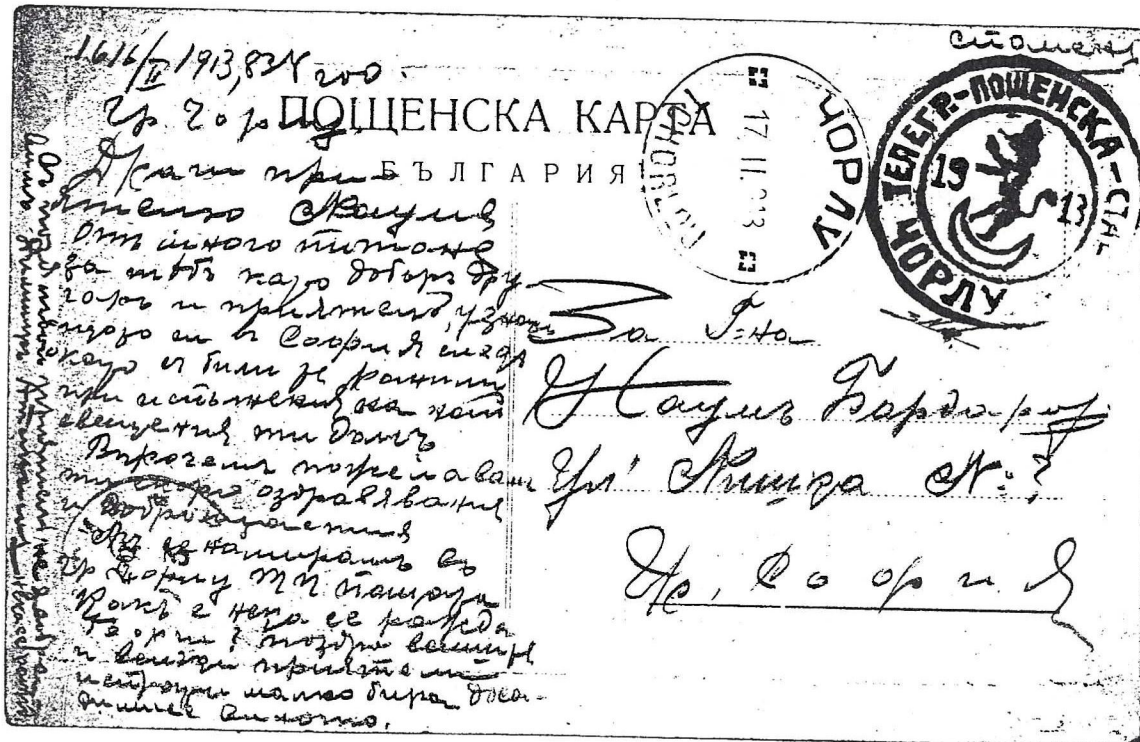


Military mail was free of postage, providing that it received a proper unit marking. Upper card shows cachet of the 2nd Macedonian Brigade. Lower card has marking of "Headquarters of the Third Army," of which only two examples recorded, and small negative cachet inscribed "Railways of European Turkey/Tcherhezke."

FIRST BALKAN WAR Special Unit Cachets

Tchorlou
17 February 1913

Dede-Aghatche
14 March 1913



Various types of unit markings were used to validate the military free franking privilege. Some were particularly attractive and most rather elusive. Upper card has marking of the "Telegraph-Postal Station/Tchorlou" with the Bulgarian lion astride the Turkish crescent. Lower card has cachet of "Kingdom of Bulgaria/Port Authority Dede-Aghatche" with anchor; it is one of the rarest markings, with only two recorded examples.

FIRST BALKAN WAR
Field Hospital Cachets

Lozengrad
November 1912

Dede-Aghatche
22 February 1913



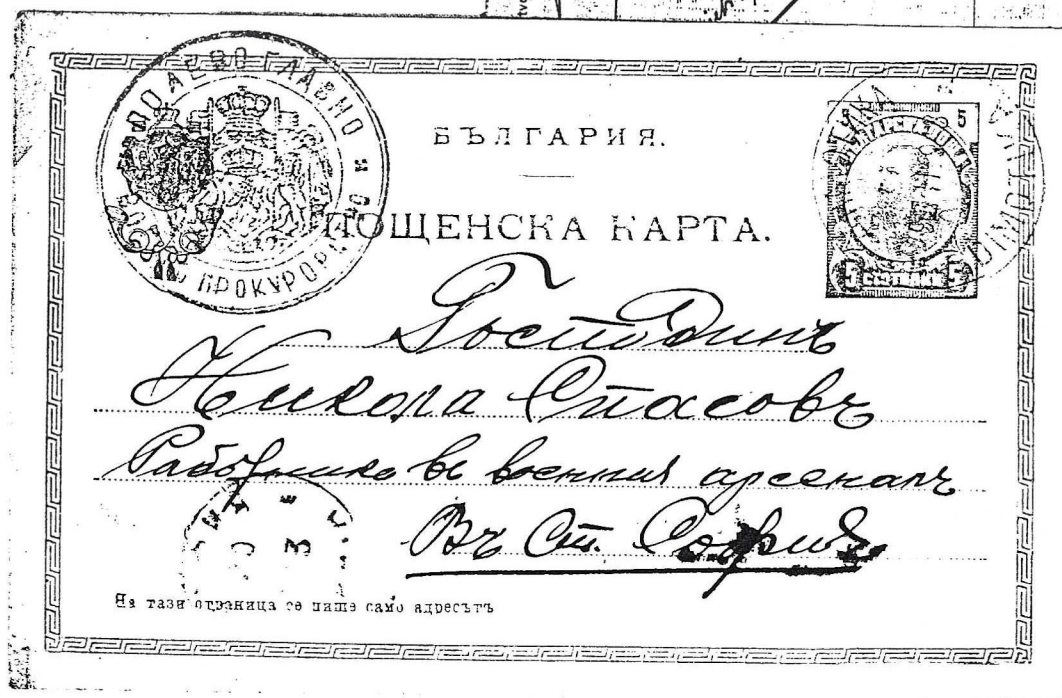
Special markings of field hospitals are unusual. Cover from the VI/9th Mobile Hospital to France and received at Chazay (Rhône) on 13 December 1912 but untaxed. Card from Yambolska Military Hospital sent to Switzerland and franked with proper postage of 10 stotinki.

FIRST BALKAN WAR
New Bulgaria

Alpolou
18 January 1913

Dede-Aghatche
14 May 1913

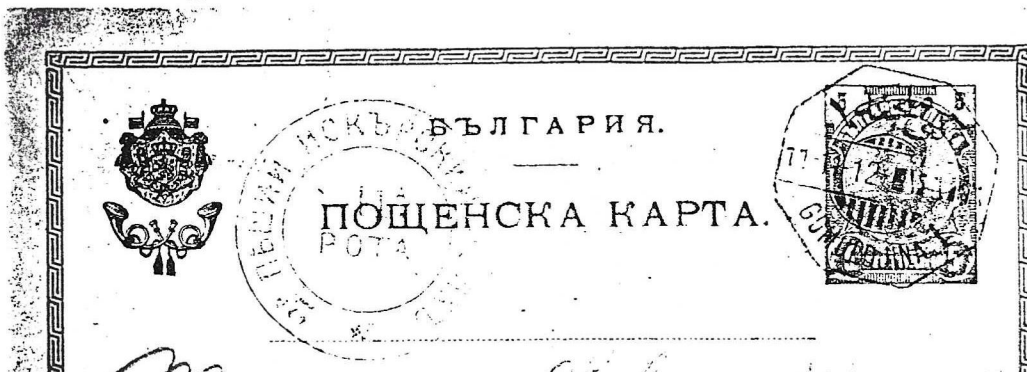
Dimotika
9 February 1913



After the Bulgarians advanced into Macedonia and Thrace, new bilingual Cyrillic/Latin postmarks were introduced in the liberated towns. The postal card from Alpolou is one of only two or three examples known from this small village; its postmark is considered one of the rarest from this period. Dede-Aghatche (today Alexandroupolis) and Dimotika (now Didymotichon) were in the area annexed by Greece in 1919 following the end of World War I.

FIRST BALKAN WAR
New Bulgaria

Gumurdjina
11 November 1912
24 December 1912



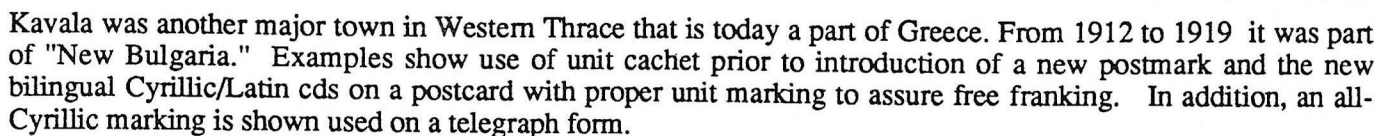
Изпълва вложителят. Пощенски записъ № 9 Л. — ст.
Г. Стефанъ Ръбевъ внесе (словомъ) лева девени
за Т. Шредеръ Банка
въ гр. София ул. чл. м. търговска

Изпълва чиновникът. Пощенски записъ № 10597
на 24.XII.1913 г. на Г. Гюмюрджина
на 24.XII.1913 г. на Г. Гюмюрджина
Стойност на записа (съ цифри)
Злато
Сребро 9
Размѣна
Всичко 9 =

Старост. — 545-1912

Gumurdjina (now Komotini) was a major town in Western Thrace, today a part of Greece. From 1912 to 1919 it was part of "New Bulgaria." Examples show use of old Ottoman postmark and new bilingual Cyrillic/Latin cds on money order form for 9 leva to be paid to addressee in Sofia.

Kavala
21 October 1912
3 May 1913
11 June 1913



FIRST BALKAN WAR
New Bulgaria

Kechane
22 June 1913

Koukouch
5 April 1913

Lozengrad
21 December 1912



Monsieur



Господин

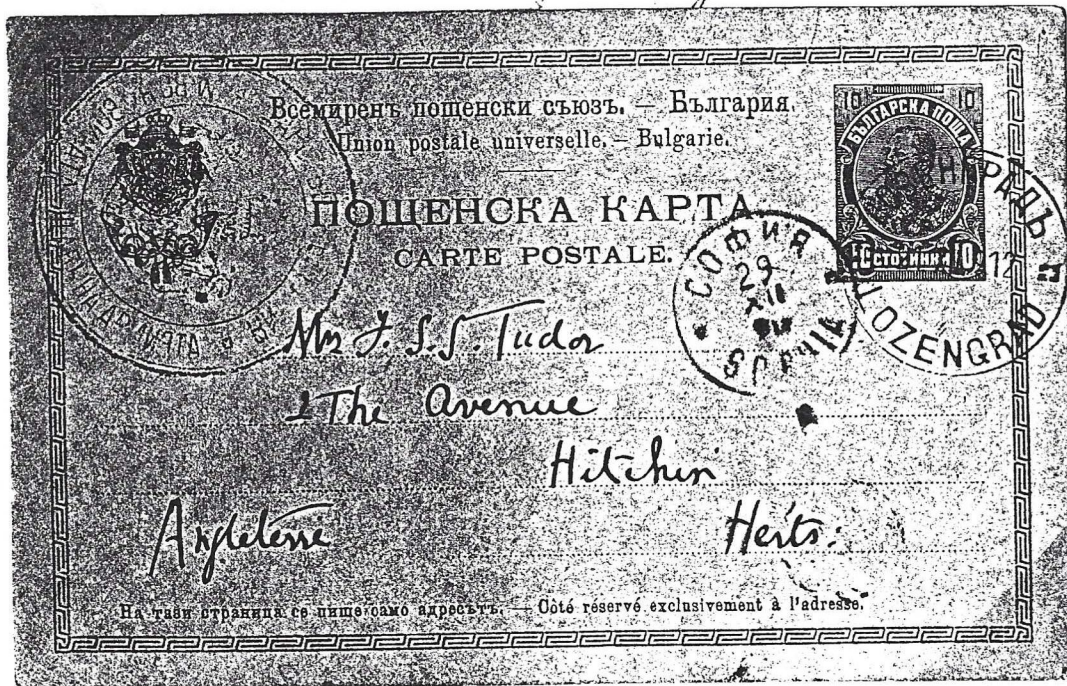
Василь Крушев работи

Сатунча Усатова



Канадиреви

Софий



Large piece of cover from Kechane shows handwritten censorship of the military administrator of the town. Military cover has very scarce postmark of Koukouch and unit marking of the 15th Company of the 14th Macedonian Regiment. Lozengrad postal card properly paid to foreign destination.

Okdjilar
2 June 1913

[illegible]

OK 25.95

М.Ъ. Зо. Запощенски марки.



Изпълва вложителя

Пощенски записъ 25 л. 1 ст.

Г. Димитър Харателски внесе (словомъ) лева Два
Ресми пет и
за Г. Антон Самаров

63 кв. Алтай ул. Ильинское Муромовское

ИЗГЛЪВЪ ЧИПОВНИКЪТЪ

Пощенски записъ № 25954

Издадено въ гр. Порто Лавосъ.

A circular postmark from Porto-Lagos, Portugal. The text "PORTO-LAGOS" is curved along the bottom. "27-11-915" is in the center. "Lagoa" is curved along the top. "Lagoa" is also written vertically on the right side.

27-го февраля 1915 г.

Подпись на чиновника :

Handwritten signature

Стойност на записа
(съ цифри)

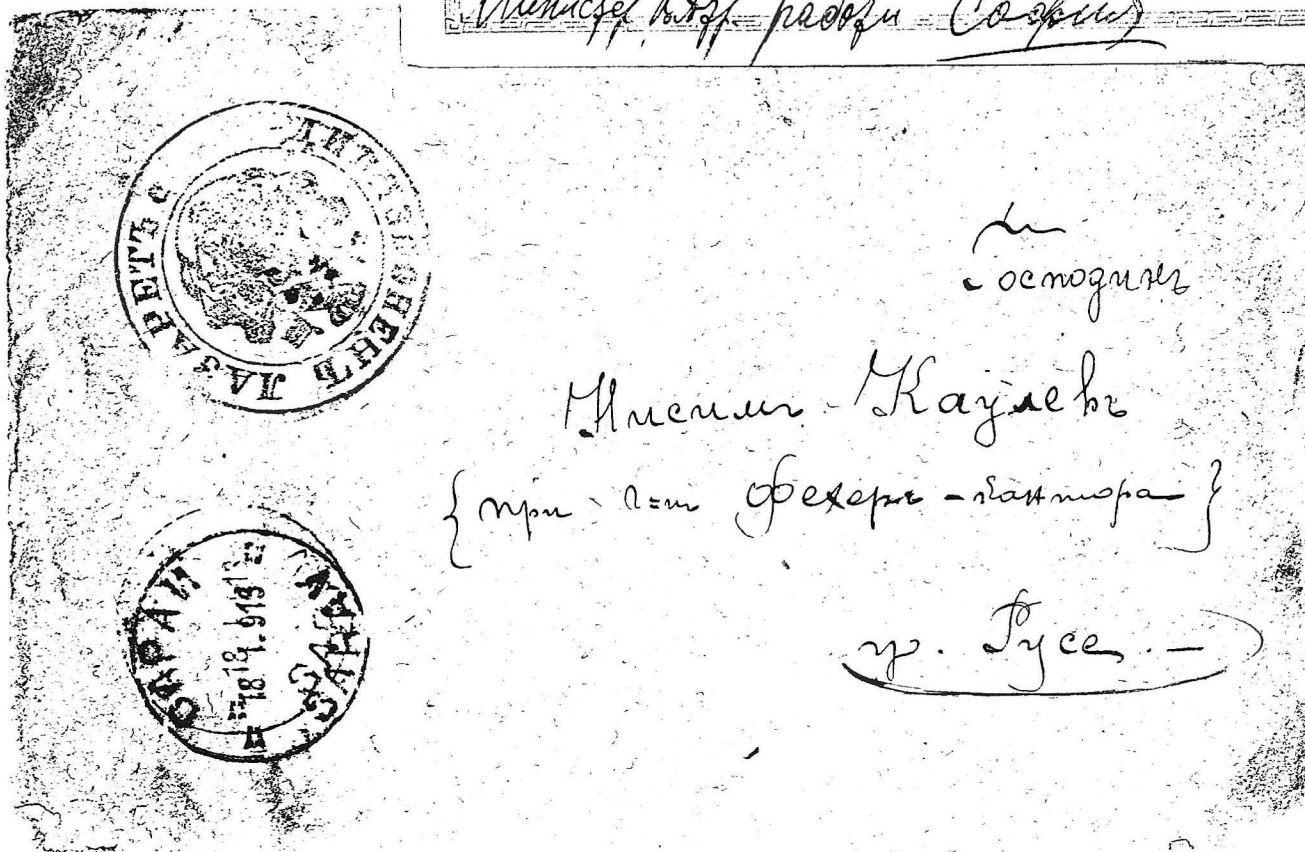
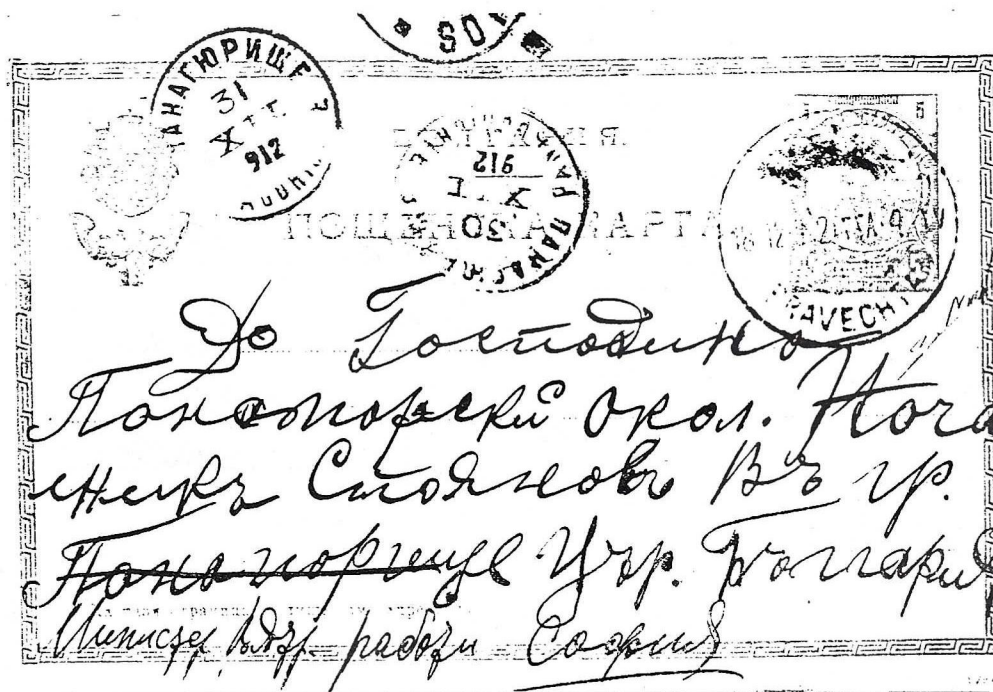
	лева	ст.
Злато	=	2
Сребро	25	2
Ръ	=	2
Всичко	25	2

Bilingual postmark used on money order form for 25 leva from Port Lagos in Western Thrace. This town was Bulgarian from 1912 to 1919, but taken by Greece following World War I.

FIRST BALKAN WAR
New Bulgaria

Pravechta
18 December 1912

Saray
18 January 1913



Additional town cancellations from New Bulgaria. Cover from Saray has the marking of the Danube Division Field Hospital.