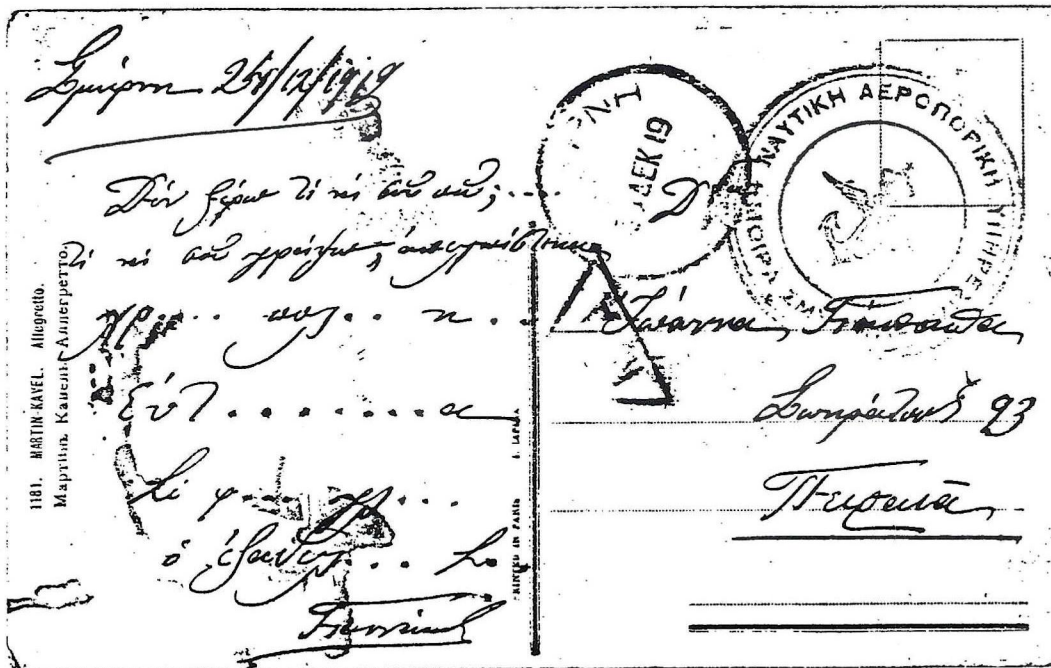


THE EXPANSION OF GREECE 1897-1922

This exhibit tells the story of the rapid geographic expansion of the Greek kingdom during the quarter century from the Cretan Uprising in 1897 through the Balkan Wars, World War I and the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922, as illustrated by contemporary postal material. The material shown is a collection of postmarks (mostly on covers) from the newly-annexed or occupied territories, organized chronologically and geographically, as shown in the Plan of Exhibit on the next page. Material which is relatively easily acquired was sharply downplayed so that a disproportionately large part of the exhibit could be concentrated on items for which only a few examples have been recorded.

In contrast to the very successful augmentation of Greek territory under Prime Minister Venizelos, who was defeated in the election of November 1920, the successor governments overreached in a Napoleonic attempt to capture Ankara, the enemy capital. With a front that was too long and supply lines that were too thinly stretched, the troops became vulnerable to a serious Turkish counter-attack. When it came, a retreat turned into a rout, and the Greeks were forced to evacuate Anatolia and Eastern Thrace.



Postcard mailed from Greek-occupied Asia Minor in December 1919. It bears the cachet of the "Naval Aviation Service/Smyrna Unit," which was based at Paradisi. There are only two recorded examples of this marking, which is highly sought-after by aviation specialists.

The historical events under review can all be illustrated by philatelic material, including military and civil mail from the annexed or occupied territories. The types of material shown include forerunners (in relation to the union with Crete), as well as provisional overprints and postmarks (issued in Thrace and during the Asia Minor campaign) and commemorative stamps (for the annexation of Macedonia and Epirus). Overall, then, the philatelic story reflects both glory and deep disappointment stemming from an era long forgotten by nearly everyone but the Greeks and Turks.

THE EXPANSION OF GREECE 1897-1922

Plan of Exhibit

This exhibit is divided into six chronological sub-sections, reflecting the various conflicts resulting in the expansion of the Greek state during the period under review. Within these "chapters," there are thirteen different topics or geographical areas studied as described below:

The Cretan Uprising and its Aftermath 1897-1913:

Allied Forces

Provisional Government

Temporary Hellenic Regime in the Dodecanese Islands 1912

Annexation of Territory following the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913:

Aegean Islands

Epirus

Macedonia

Participation in World War I during 1917-1918 and Territory Gained Thereafter:

Divided Gov't.

Internees

Western Thrace

Military Missions in Former Enemy Countries:

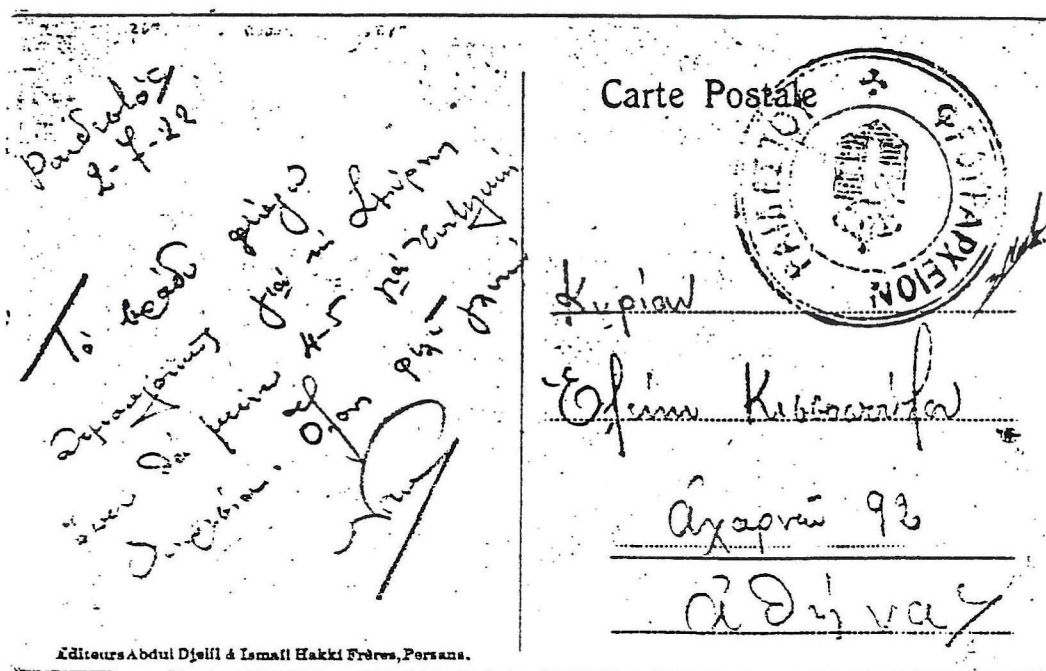
Bulgaria

Turkey

Territory Temporarily Occupied During Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922:

Eastern Thrace

Asia Minor



Fieldpost card depicting the waterfront of Rodosto in Eastern Thrace, occupied temporarily by the Greek Army following World War I but returned to Turkey under the Lausanne Treaty in 1923. The military free frank on this card sent to Athens was confirmed by the cachet with the Greek coat of arms and wording "Garrison Raideostos."

CRETAN UPRISING

Following the independence of Greece on the mainland in 1830, the ethnic Greek population on Crete desired unification with the motherland. Revolts flared from time to time, but they were put down by the Turkish authorities. However, in the late 19th Century a large number of volunteers began infiltrating from Greece, posing a serious threat to the status quo. Thus, in May 1897 an international peacekeeping force made up of warships from Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy and Russia arrived in Crete to enforce a blockade. In August 1898, the British consul and 14 soldiers were killed by Turks in Iraklion, which triggered the great powers to force Turkey to withdraw from the island entirely. As the powers were not prepared to allow immediate unification of Crete and Greece, they established an autonomous administration with Prince George, the second son of the King of Greece, as High Commissioner.

Canea
13 May 1897

1st Batt. Seaforth Highlanders
International Force of Occupation
Island of Crete.

The British Contingent on Crete consisted of some 700 men commanded by Major G. Egerton, the writer of the letter adjacent. It was mailed through the Austrian post office and taxed 5d by the foreign branch on arrival in London.

*Akrotiron Peninsula
Canea, Crete.*

May 10th 97

*Dear Mrs Knowles
I recd yr*

*yesterday and
it - I am so glad
- thing went off
& Mrs Bowker ar*

England

Mrs C. B. Knowles

5d
F.B.

Russell's

12A Curzon Street

Mayfair

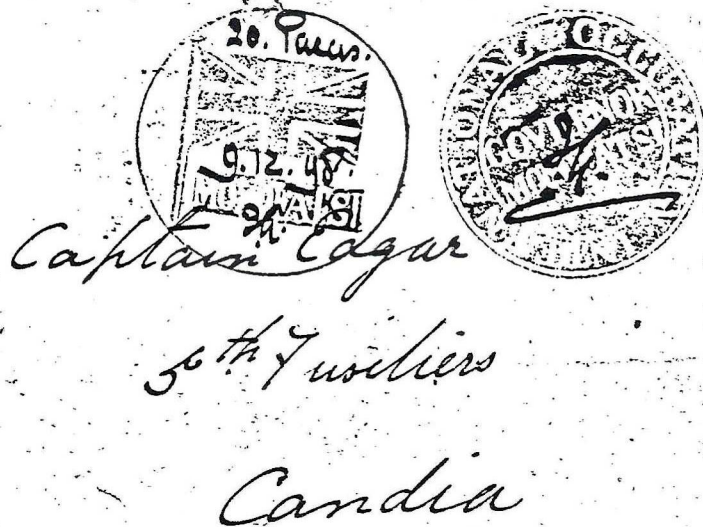
London

A selection of postal material from members of the peacekeeping force as well as mail sent during the provisional government period is included in the exhibit as "forerunners" of the eventual Greek annexation of Crete in 1913.

CRETE

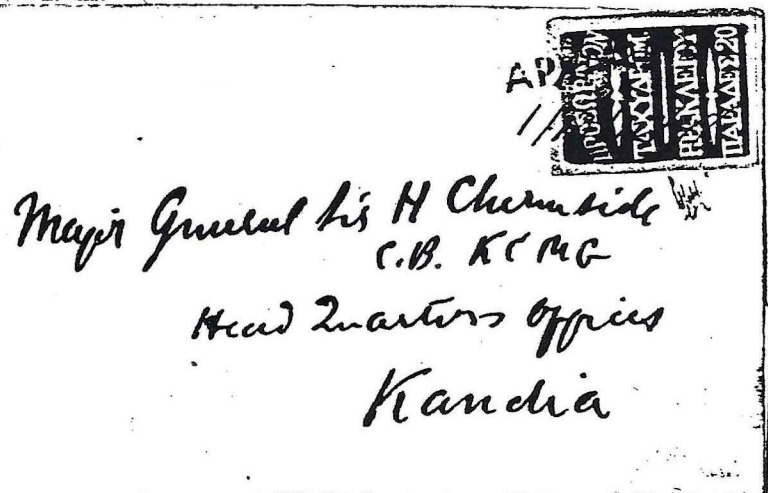
Candia
12 December 1898

Arhanes
11 December 1898



Cover mailed by I. Griffith, the Military Governor of Monofatsi, via the Austrian post office at Candia. Endorsed with official seal of the Governor's Office and "flag" indicia inscribed with postage required (1 piaster), date (9 December) and the Governor's initials. Letter states that only 24 examples of this marking were prepared prior to the issuance of a new Cretan stamp.

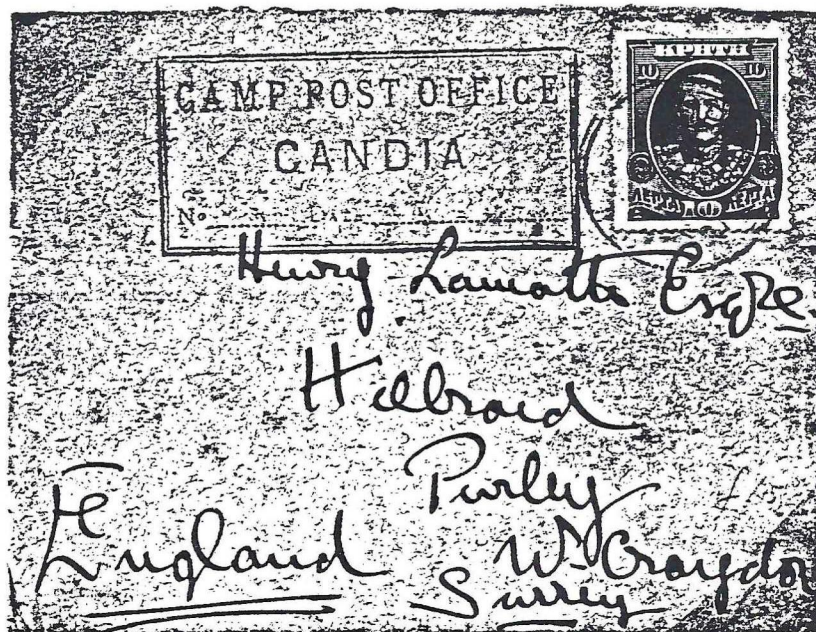
On 28 November 1898, 3,000 copies of a new 20 para stamp were issued for use in the area of Crete around Iraklion. Postmarks were only used in two of the towns -- Iraklion and Arhanes. Example shown is one of only two recorded covers from the latter.



Because of their sensitivity to Turkish interests, the Austro-Hungarians and Germans sent only warships, which left after the end of the blockade period, not troops. Thus, the administration of the island was divided between the four remaining powers. The British forces had responsibility for the Province of Iraklion (Candia).

CRETE

Iraklion
13 July 1905
February 1907

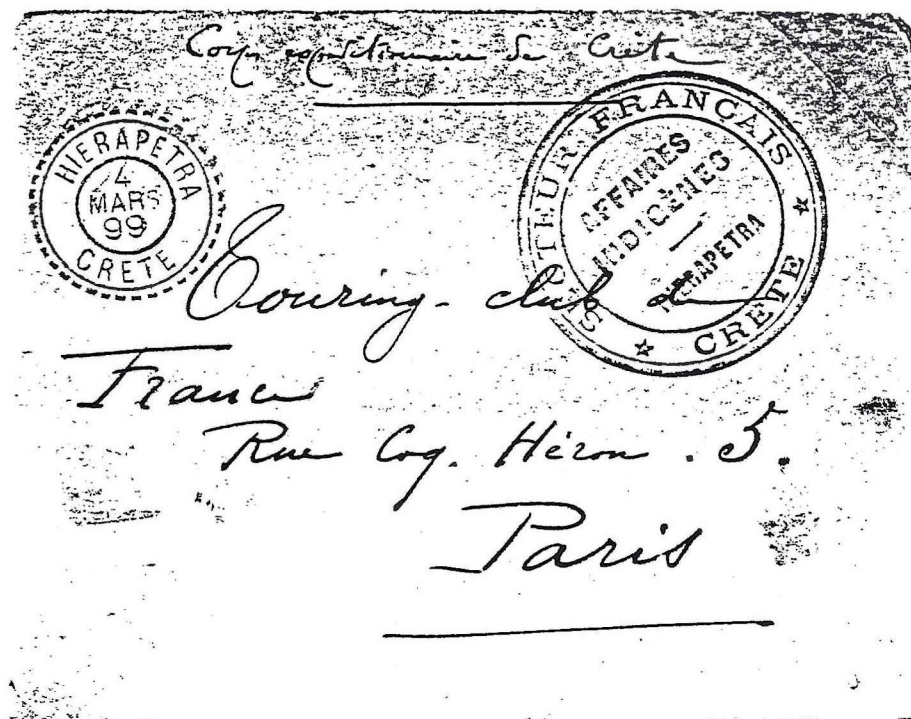
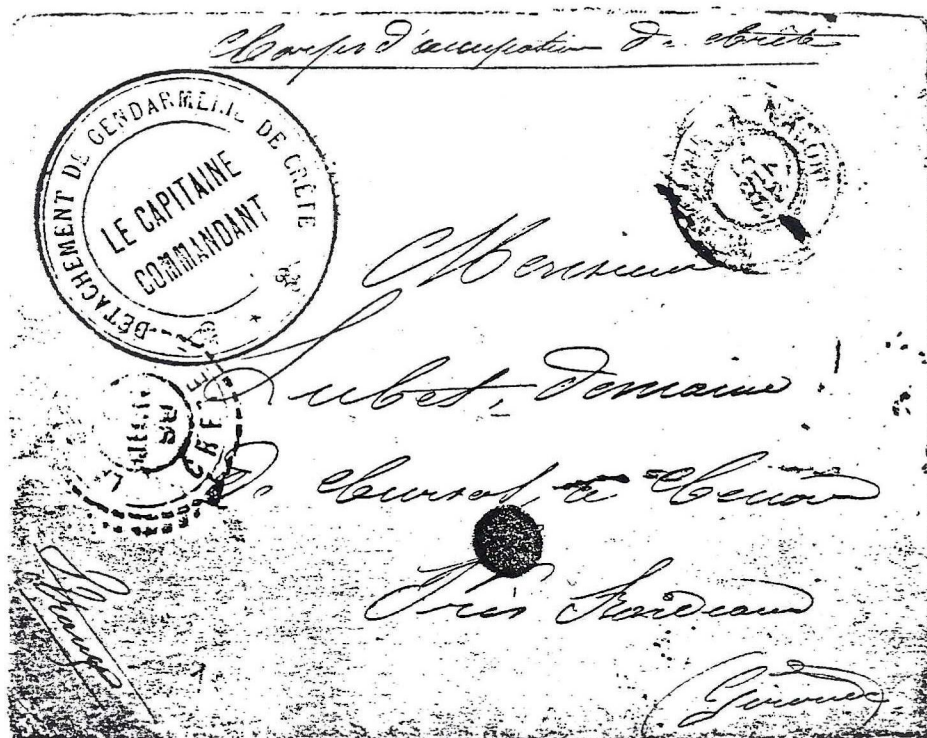


The British Contingent on Crete did not have a fieldpost system for its troops. Therefore, military mail was usually sent through the Cretan postal system at a charge of 10 lepta. Examples shown have unit cachets of "Headquarters/Crete" and "Camp Post Office/Candia."

CRETE

La Canee
June 1898

Hierapetra
4 March 1899



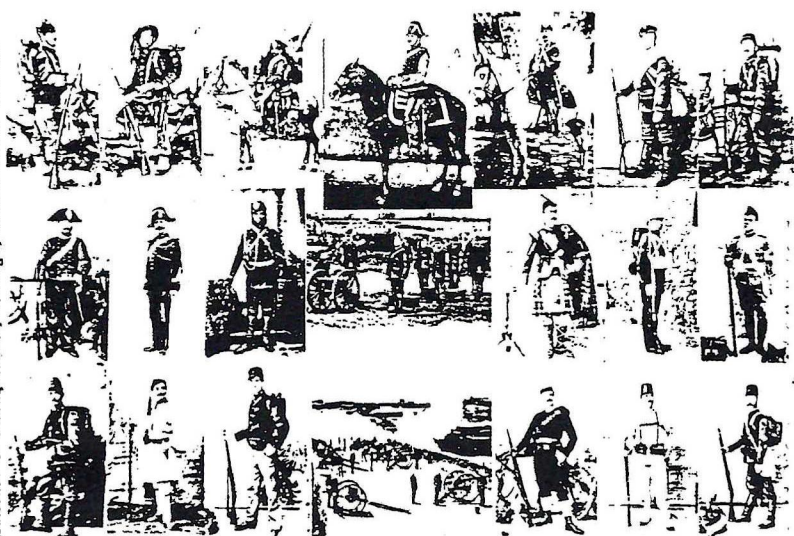
The French administrative sector was at the eastern end of the island. The French Contingent on Crete did not operate a fieldpost system for the troops nor did it issue stamps. Thus, military mail was sent through the established French post offices abroad. Mail from members of the expeditionary force was accepted free of postage if it showed a unit cachet validating entitlement to the military franchise.

CRETE

Candie
21 December 1898

Iraklion

Editeur: G. Maraghiannis, Photogr., Candia-Crète. No. 26.

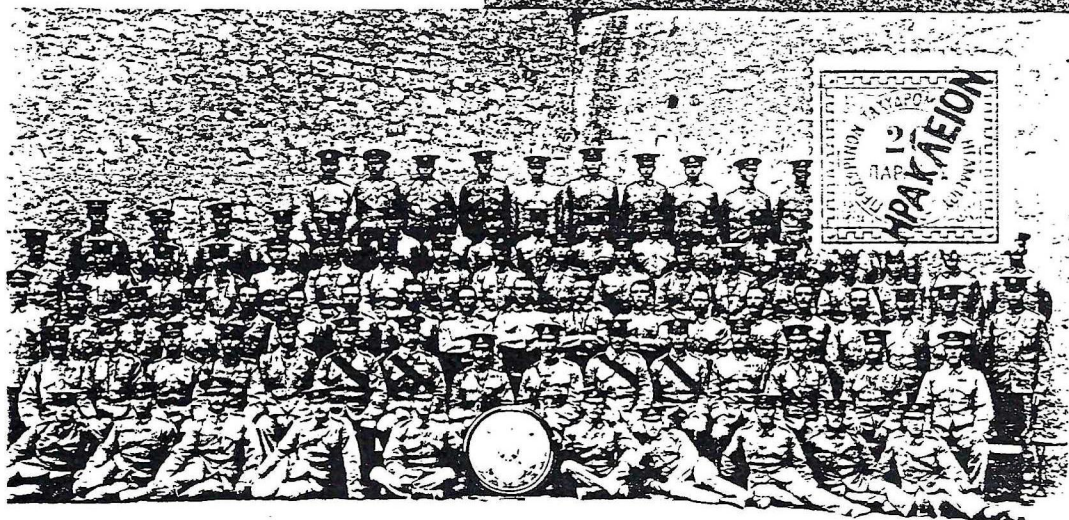


Τὰ ἐν Κρήτῃ διεσπῆσθαι στρατεύματα τῆς κατοχῆς τοῦ 1896.
Les troupes internationales en Crète



On 3 December 1898, new postage stamps arrived that had been ordered from Greece for use by the joint military administration of Crete (by Britain, France, Italy and Russia) to pay postage on civil mail.

N. D. APOSTOLIDES CANDIE (CRETE)
FABRIQUE DE CIGARETTES



Maraghiannis
Candia
Crete

128. - D Coy. - 24 Royal Sussex Regt. Candia-Crete

Edit. H. Penasoulas, photogr., Candia-Crete

During January-April 1899, the stamps were reissued in new colors. These issues were only in use for a short period, as they were replaced by stamps of the provisional Cretan government on 1 March 1900.

CRETE

Distacto. R. Truppe in Creta

Cretan Gendarmerie



PRIVATE POST CARD

Address to be written on this side.



Corrado Acerbo
Officier de la Gendarmerie Cretaine

La Canea



Isola di La Canea
Crete
Greece



928 20/11/1905
Corrado Acerbo
Officier de la Gendarmerie Cretaine



The Italian administrative sector was at the western end of the island around La Canea. A special postmark was used on mail from the expedition reading "Detachment of Royal Italian Troops in Crete." One of the tasks of the Italians was to train a Cretan Gendarmerie to help maintain order. It was made up of local volunteers with Italian officers. Upper card has an unrecorded (undated) receiving mark of the "Italian Post Office/La Canea/Island of Crete." Special patriotic card at left honors the Gendarmerie and has cachet of the "HQ of Cretan Gendarmerie."

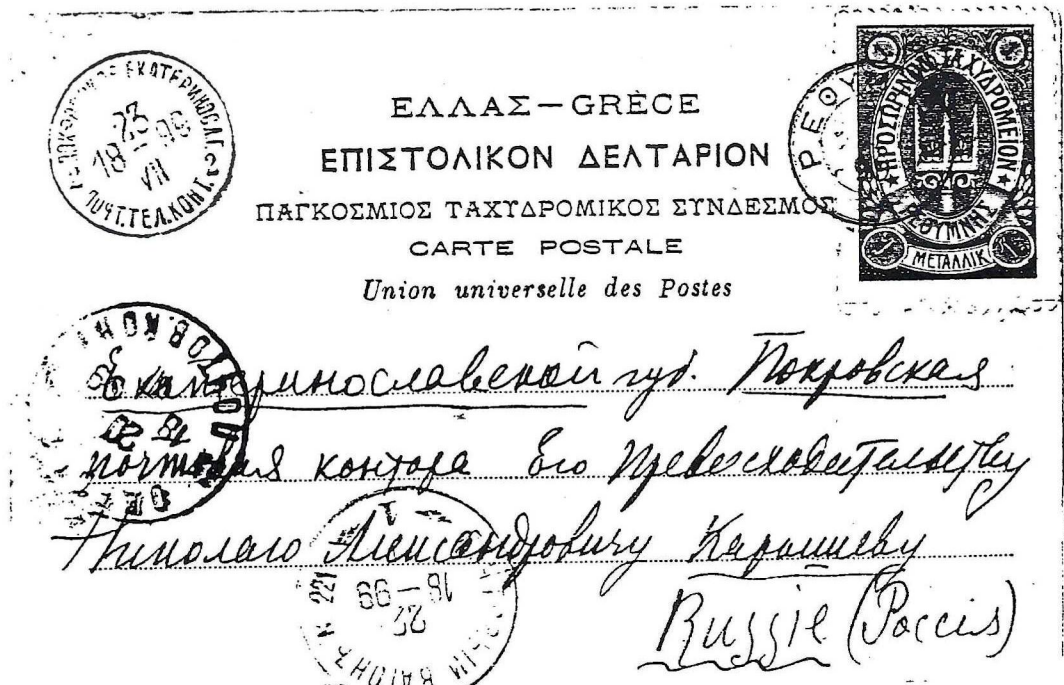
CRETE

Rethymnon
11 July 1899



The first postage stamps were provisionals produced by the application of a handstamp to sheets of paper and issued on 13 May 1899. A control mark with an eagle and the wording "Russian Expeditionary Force Crete" was applied in the middle of each four stamps to guard against forgeries.

A definitive set was issued on 27 May 1899 with the design of Poseidon's Trident and a control mark showing a Russian eagle. Example shown here is used on a postcard sent back to Russia.



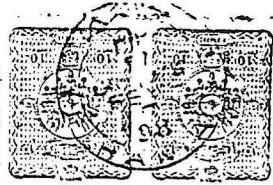
The Russian administrative sector was located between the British and Italian zones, centered on Rethymnon. The postal service in this district was in operation for a very limited time, from 13 May to 29 July 1899, which accounts for the scarcity of material.

CRETE

Hania
7 February 1898

Germania

WELTPOSTVEI
UNION POSTALE UNIV

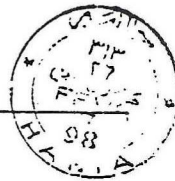


Herrn H. Niles Kändler

Villa Sonora

Trarbach

9 Mosel



Commemorative postcard depicting scenes on Crete and the international troops stationed there was issued to commemorate the birthday of Emperor Wilhelm II on 27 January 1898. Posted to Germany via the Ottoman post office located at Hania (Canea).

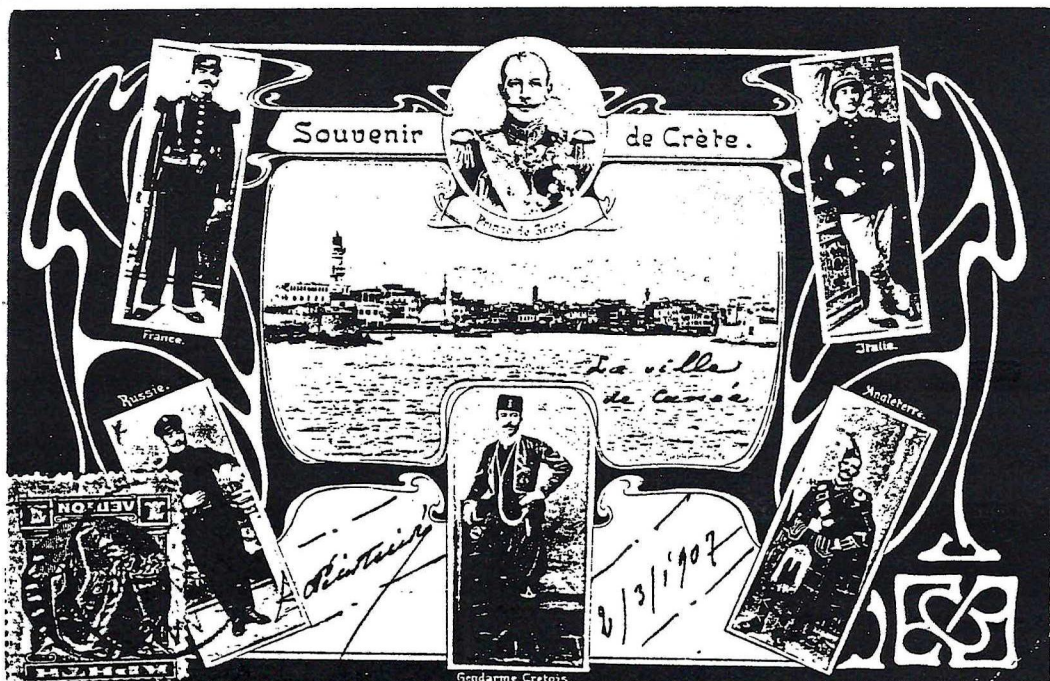


The Germans also sent warships to Crete during the blockade period, being the *SMS Kaiserin Augusta* and the *Oldenburg*. No fieldpost system was employed, and mail was either sent by on board naval post offices or through the Turkish postal service ashore. The German forces left in 1898.

CRETE

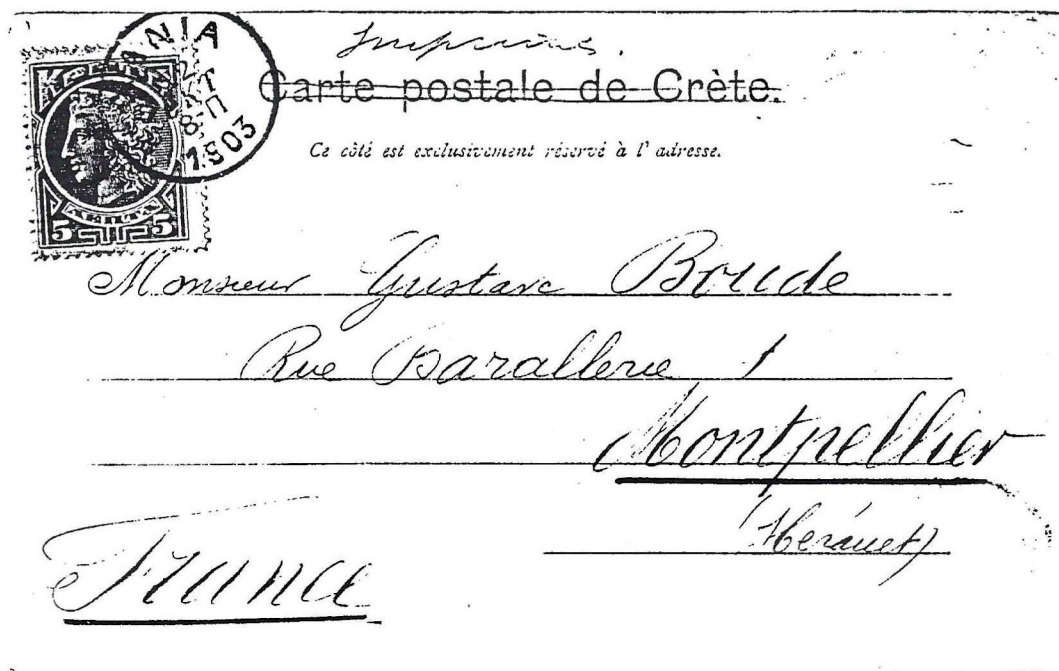
Ayios Nikolaos
2 March 1907

Hania
22 October 1903



Souvenir postcard franked with first stamp of Crete. It depicts Prince George and various international troops. Mailed at the printed matter rate to Australia.

Picture postcard showing French and Italian officers at La Canea. Mailed to Montpellier, France.



Following the installation of the Cretan provisional government with Prince George as High Commissioner, a new postal service was created to replace the British, Russian and Turkish offices that were functioning earlier. The first stamps inscribed "Kriti" were issued on 1 March 1900 and depicted mythologic themes or a portrait of the Prince.

CRETE

Hania
27 July 1901

RICH. G. KRUGER, LA CANÉE. - ILE DE CRÈTE.

Iraklion
27 March 1902

GERMANIA



Herrn

W. Mussew & Co

Gargemund

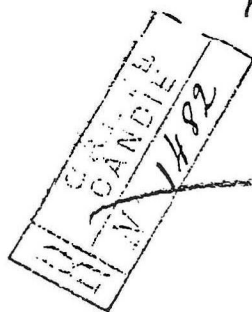


W. Mussew Esq.

57. Welford Road

Leicester

Appled



Cretan definitives on covers to Germany and England. At the time of the first issue, only Turkish currency was in circulation on Crete. Stamps denominated 25 lepta and higher were overprinted "Provisional" since they were sold at the rate of 25 lepta = 1 piaster when the exchange rate was actually 24:1. On 1 October 1903, the Greek monetary system was adopted and the overprint discontinued.



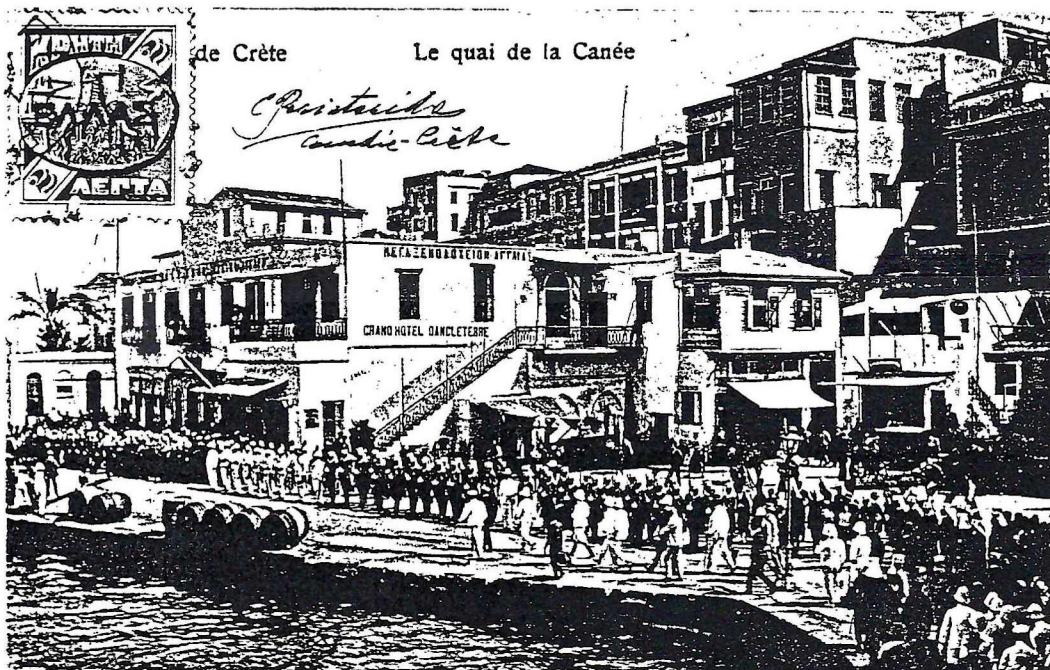
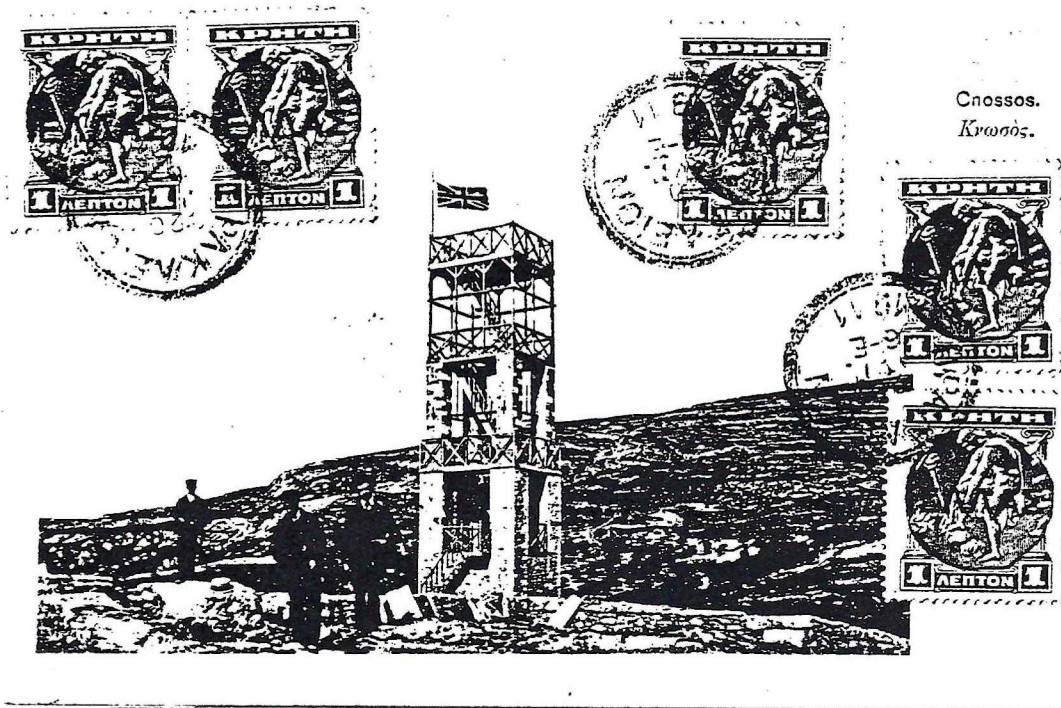
ΧΑΝΙ ΩΤΑΙ ΕΝ ΘΕΡΙΣΣΩ 1905.

Picture postcard mailed from Vamos to Therison depicting the revolutionary troops on Crete and franked with a 10 lepta value issued on 12 October 1905. The design of the stamp was symbolic of "Crete in Slavery."

Many of the more activist Cretans were dissatisfied with the progress of the High Commission in moving toward union with Greece. As a result, a revolt involving some 5,000 insurgents broke out on 11 March 1905. The uprising was put down by late in the year, largely by Russian troops.

CRETE

Irakleion
20 August 1911



In 1908, the Great Powers began to reduce their military presence on Crete. This was taken as a signal by the Cretan authorities to agitate for unification with Greece. As a result, they decided to overprint the existing stamps with "Hellas (Greece)" with the first stamps being issued on 21 September 1908. Although the ensuing overprints differed in size and style, all subsequent issues were so treated. Examples shown above used on picture postcards to Switzerland and (at the printed matter rate) to Australia.

CRETE

Hania
1 June 1909
14 November 1909

M.
L. Pappadopoulo ~~85~~^{re}; La Canée (Crète)

M.

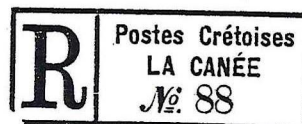


Markenham Rud Friedl



Wien I.

Austria



Postwertzeichengeschäft

Locher

Spitalgasse 29

Lucerne

Berne

"Hellas" overprints on registered covers to Austria and Switzerland. Although philatelically overfranked with the 5 drachma highest value, the use of which is which most unusual, the lower cover was properly transported through the mails and backstamped for receipt at Bern on 10 June 1909.