



## THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

### FROM THE *ANCIEN RÉGIME* TO THE END OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> REPUBLIC IN 1804

#### RESUME

The French Revolution is a turbulent period in the history of France. It is a turning point between the *Ancien Régime* and the replacement of the monarchy with the First Republic. Inspired by a liberal spirit, the Revolution brings profound changes at various levels in society reflected through the French postal system. The establishment of the First Republic is a direct consequence of the latter. It is with regard to that context that was created this exhibit on **postal history** and **marcophily**, with a **specific focus on the historical and social aspects** of this important period.

#### PLAN

- I. Introduction
- II. The *Ancien Régime* ±1655 - 1789
- III. The French Revolution
  1. May 1789 – Aug. 1792
  2. Sept. 1792 – Nov. 1799
    - ♦ The French First Republic
      - 2.1. The National Convention
      - 2.2. The Directory
- IV. The Consulate Nov. 1799 – May 1804
  - ♦ The end of the French First Republic
- V. The armies of the Revolution
- VI. Conclusion

Reference is made to the pre-revolutionary postal system to appreciate the changes brought forward by the Revolution at governmental level and also in cities and *communes*.

Covers and cachets then illustrate the spirit of rebellion that affects French society at that time.

According to French historians, the First Republic is officially founded on September 22 1792 during the Revolution. We shall see three forms of government: the National Convention, the Directory and the Consulate. The latter, established after the Revolution, ended in 1804 with the French Empire.

The armies of the Kingdom of France will become republican armies responsible for enforcing the republican order and spirit.

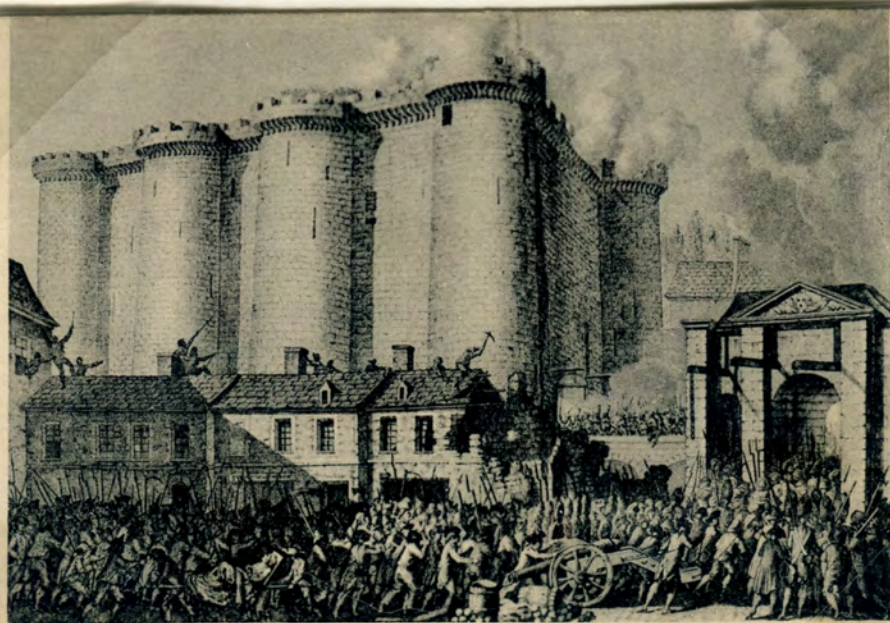
This exhibit presents some very interesting postmarks and is a reflection of the complex history of France, more specifically during this hectic period of political and social changes.

**N.B.** This exhibit deals with events that occurred **in France ONLY** (even if this country was at war in Europe at the same time).

- Rare and hard to find covers are **framed in red**
- Most covers are accompanied with their letterhead

**The Storming of  
the Bastille  
July 14 1789**

by J.L. Prieur  
(1759-1795)  
Carnavalet Museum





## I. INTRODUCTION

During the *Ancien Régime* (Old Regime) and the monarchy, the postal system was under royal control. The system is relatively stable and is the main source of information transmission in the kingdom.

The Seven Years' War followed by the participation of France in the American War of Independence emptied the National Treasury. The Third Estate, constituted by 98% of the people, must pay several taxes among them : the *taille*, the *gabelle* (salt tax) and tithe. They blamed the government for the privileges granted to the nobility and clergy. Added to that, the years of poor harvests accompanied by these exorbitant taxes exasperated the French. In 1789, the French people are dissatisfied, they want to abolish monarchy and feudalism.

Let us see the causes which will lead the French people to revolt:

1. the social organization
2. the taxes

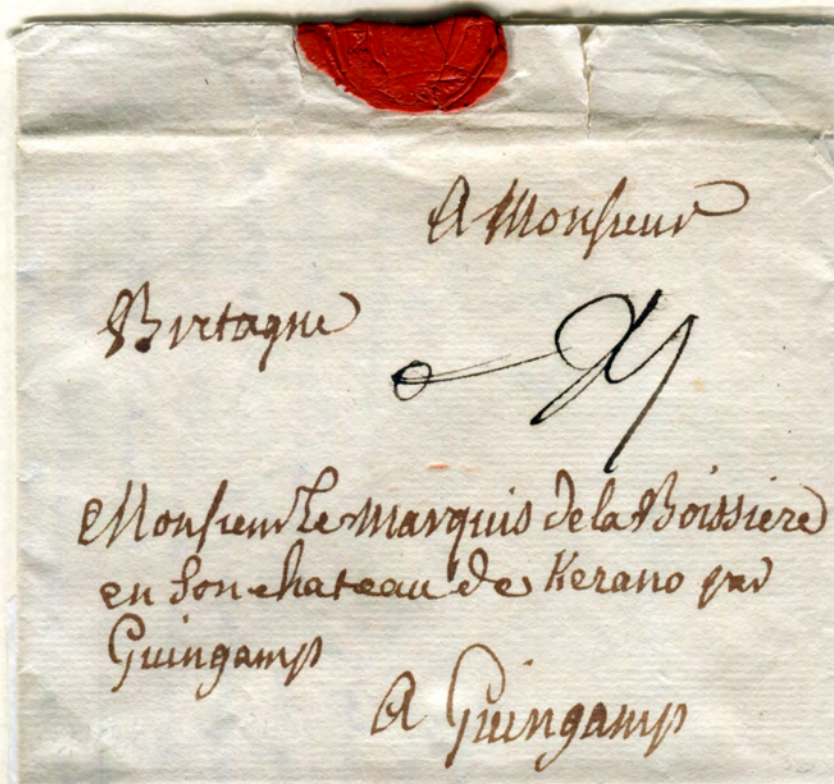
### 1.1. THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

At that time, French society was made up of three social classes:

- A. the nobility
- B. the clergy
- C. the *Tiers-État* (Third Estate)

#### A. The nobility

- They enjoy all the privileges: social, judicial, fiscal
- Exemption from taxes because of the positions that some might occupy in the army
- Yet many live in idleness in their castles or at the court of the King



- Paris to Guingamp
- December 11 1767
- postage due 24 sols
- double rate letter (2<sup>e</sup> échelon)
- manuscript destination : Bretagne – French province

a Paris le 11 Dec 1767

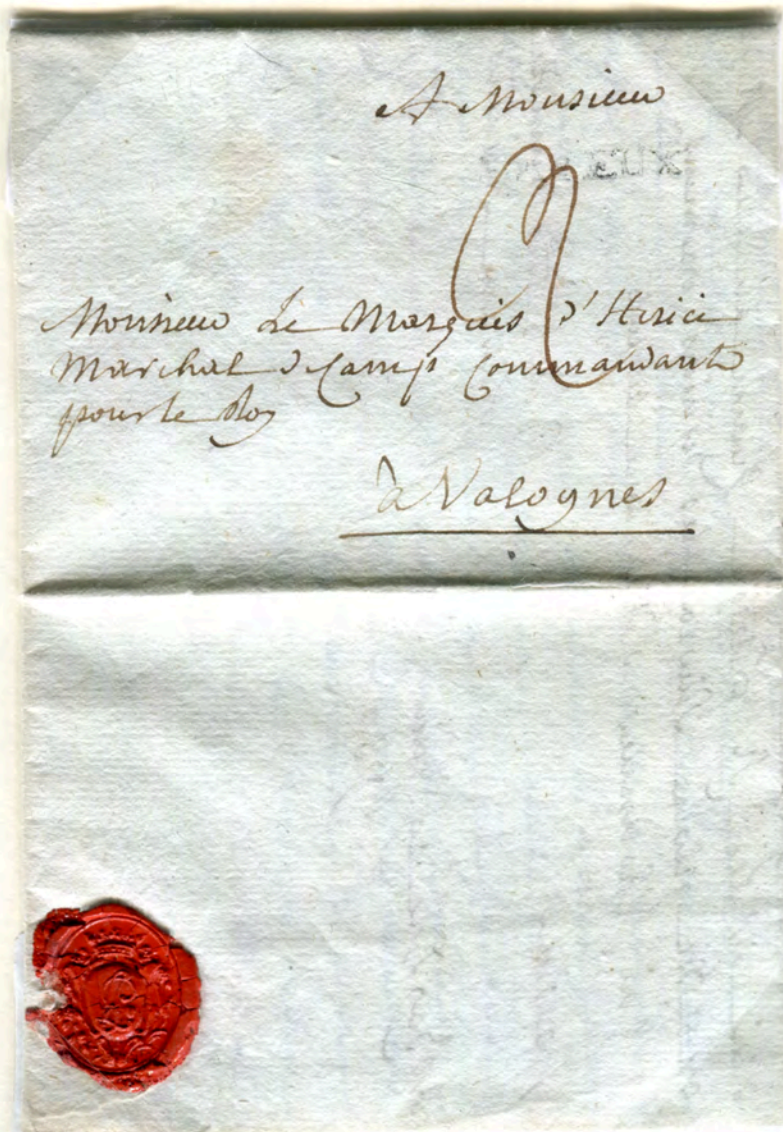
letterhead



## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1. THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

#### A. The nobility



- Bayeux to Valognes
- June 19 1780
- postage due 3 sols

crois P le 19. Juin  
1780.

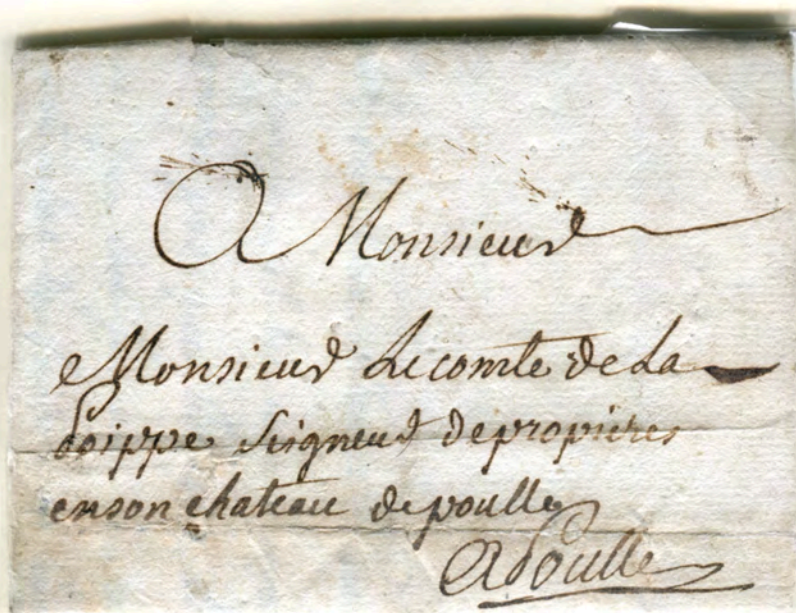
letterhead

a St. Julien le 18. Decr 1753.

letterhead

- St-Jullien to Poulle
- December 18 1753
- no postmark of origin
- postage paid

note : faithful to the King,  
the Count de la Poype will  
emigrate to GB during the  
Revolution





## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1. THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

#### B. The clergy

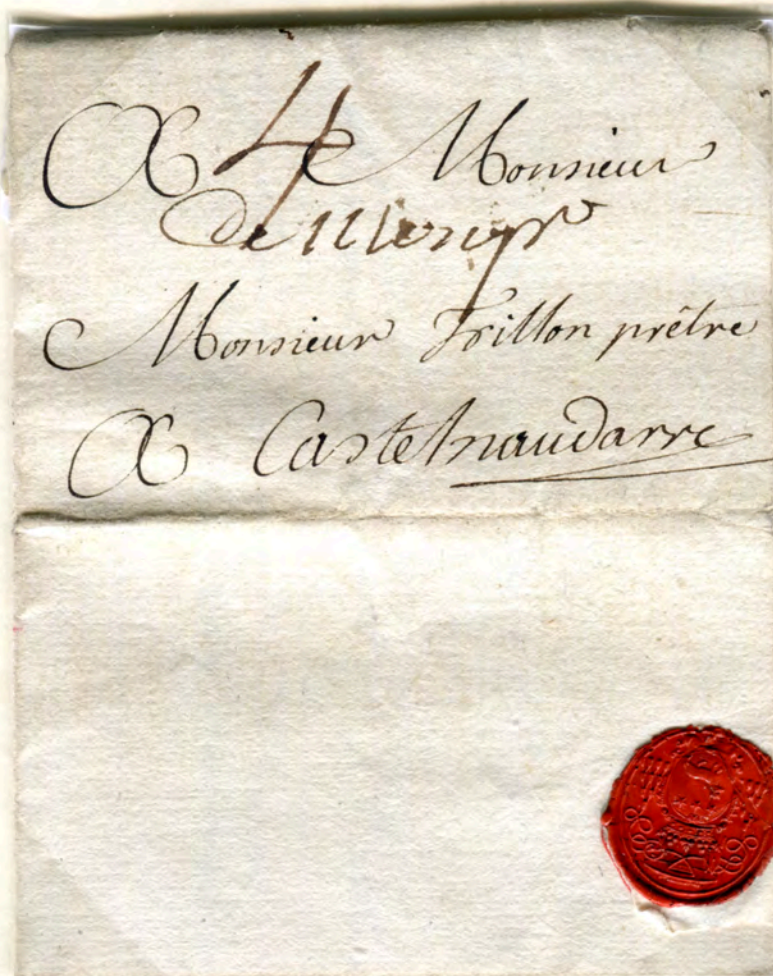
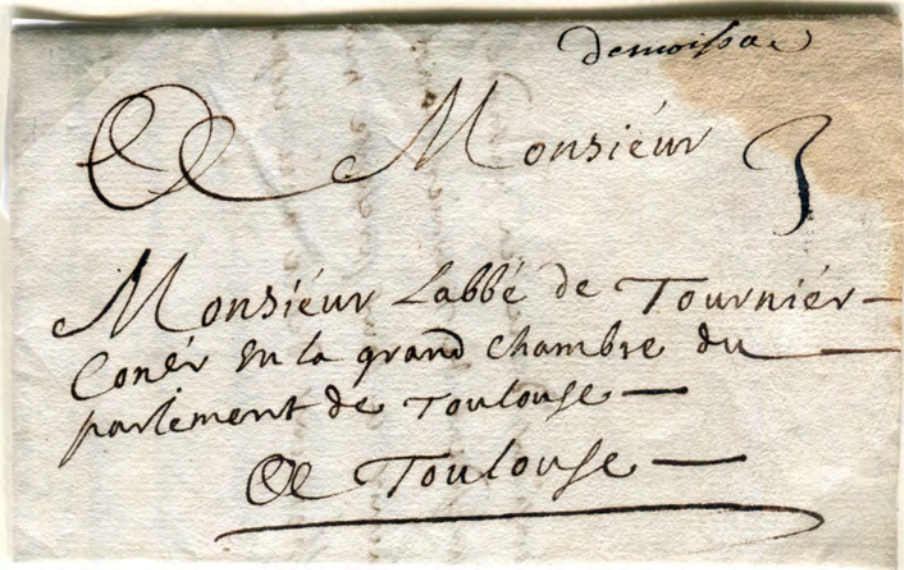
#### B. The clergy

- distinction between the high clergy of the nobility and the poorer rural clergy
- exemption of taxes

- Moissac to Toulouse
- manuscript mark of origin  
*De Moissac*
- February 1st 1737
- postage due 3 sols



- seal from the sender the noble baron de Cérat

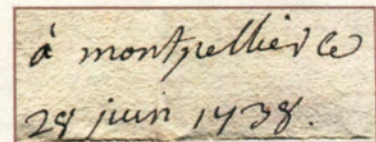


- Montpellier to Castelnaudary
- June 1st 1738
- manuscript de Mont<sup>pl</sup>
- postage due 4 sols

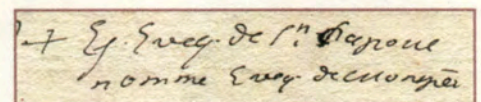
❖ letter from the Georges L. Berger de Charancy, Bishop of Montpellier; member of a noble wealthy family

❖ addressed to Pierre Trillon, a constitutional priest (juror) during the Revolution.

- he was obliged to take refuge at Le Mans to avoid falling into the hands of the Chouans who had devastated his house (cf. Chouannerie)



letterhead



signature



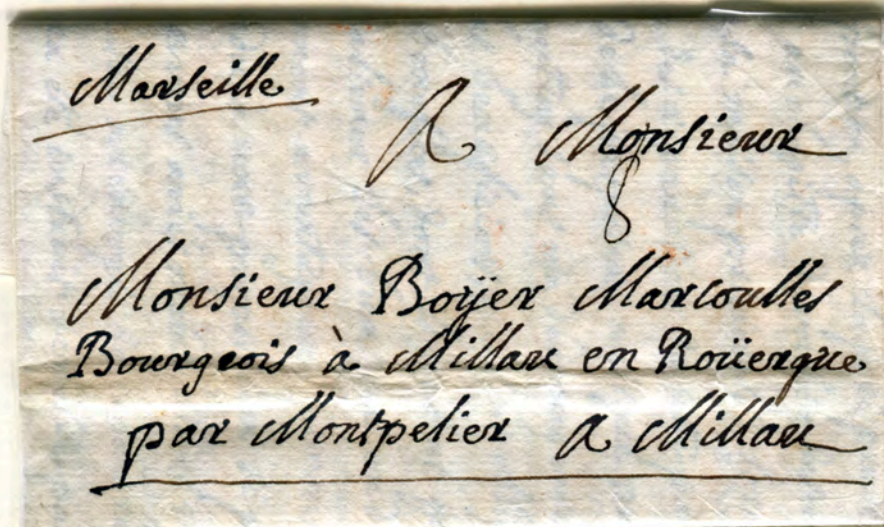
## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1. THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

#### C. The *Tiers-État* (Third Estate)

#### C. The *Tiers-État* (Third Estate)

- 98 % of the population
- no privileges but many taxes
- constitutes a very diverse population : bourgeois, lawyers, notaries, counsellors, workers, farmers, peasants etc...
- ❖ bourgeois :
  - some are very rich and occupy important positions in government
  - excluded from the nobility
  - some will buy a title of nobility
  - the bourgeoisie will benefit greatly from the Revolution



- Marseille to Millau
- manuscript mark of origin
- December 19 1749
- postage due 8 sols
- seal from the noble sender



19<sup>e</sup> Xbre  
1749

letterhead

- Paris to Perpignan
- no postmark of origin
- June 24 1737
- postage due 10 sols

a Paris  
Jun 1737

letterhead

A Monsieur  
Monsieur Provira Mauwan bourgeois  
noble de Perpignan le avocat au conseil Supérieur  
de Perpignan  
A Perpignan





## I. INTRODUCTION

1. THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION
2. THE TAXES

### I.2. THE TAXES

Taxes were numerous and administered arbitrarily. This tax was one of the privileges enjoyed by nobility.

- A. the *taille*
- B. the *gabelle* (salt tax)

#### A. The *taille*

- > direct land tax on the French peasantry and non-nobles
- > to fund the many wars
- > the tax was levied in a very arbitrary manner

- Embrun to Gap
- April 24 1769
- postage due 4 sols

note : the sender requests  
a 3 month delay for a  
tax payment

« ...je viens encore vous  
supplier de m'accorder  
trois mois pour le paiement... »

Embrun Le 24 avril 1769

letterhead

*Embrun*  
A Monsieur  
Monsieur prieux, Conseil  
Du Roy, et Reçevue des tailles  
De l'Intendance de Gap  
A Gap

DE ROUEN  
A Monsieur  
Monsieur de la ville d'Evreux  
des tailles de Mortain  
A Mortain

- Rouen à Mortain
- August 19 1758
- postage due 5 sols

A Rouen le 19 août 1758

letterhead



## I. INTRODUCTION

1. THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION
2. THE TAXES

### B. The gabelle (salt tax)

- salt is essential for cooking, preserving food and for raising livestock
- extreme regional disparities in salt prices
- the salt tax stood as one of the most hated and grossly unequal forms of revenue generation in the country



- Perpignan to Nîmes
- October 27 1766
- postage due 9 sols

Perpignan le 27. 8. 1766.

letterhead

- Lyon to Nîmes
- January 14 1769
- postage due 7 sols

Lyon le 14 Janv. 1769

letterhead

note : grenier à sel (salt attic)

- at first, it was a salt warehouse
- after 16th c., it was a court to try disputes over the gabelle
- they concentrate on police and justice



**Historical Facts :** Added to these heavy taxes, the years of poor harvests exasperated the French. In 1789, the French people are dissatisfied, they want to abolish monarchy and feudalism and to end the privileges granted to the nobility.

Although the postal system is under royal control, it will be the main source of information transmission. Thus, the revolt may spread throughout the Kingdom.



## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

To better understand the important changes that occurred in the Postal Service during the French Revolution, we must see its functioning before this great disruption.

### 1. THE FRENCH PROVINCES

- The Kingdom of France was organized into provinces until March 4 1790 when the establishment of the *département* system superseded provinces.
- Even today, these old regions keep their cultural and linguistic identity.
- When a letter was sent to a small town or a village, it was customary to indicate the name of the province on the letter.

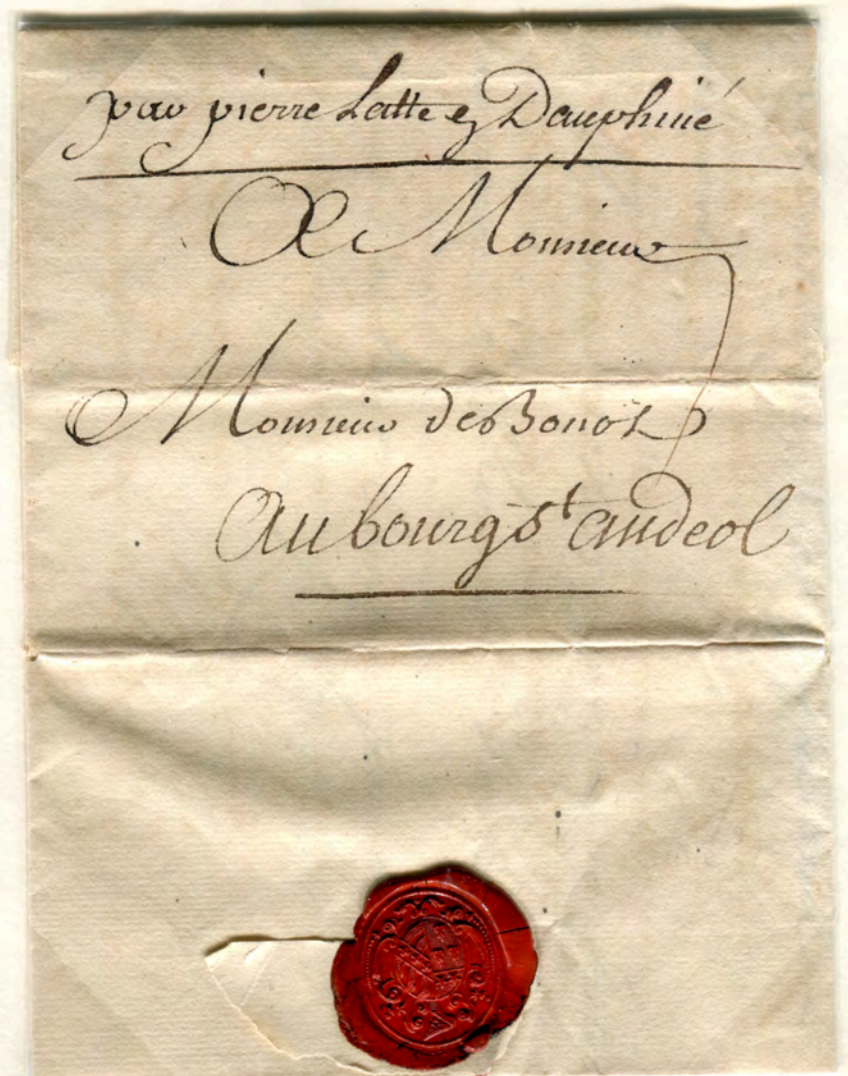


OLD PROVINCES OF FRANCE IN 1789

- Paris to Bourg-St-Andéol
- par Pierre Latte en **Dauphiné**  
(Pierrelatte)
- June 28 1735
- postage due 7 sols

*À Paris le 28 Juin 1735.*

letterhead





## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

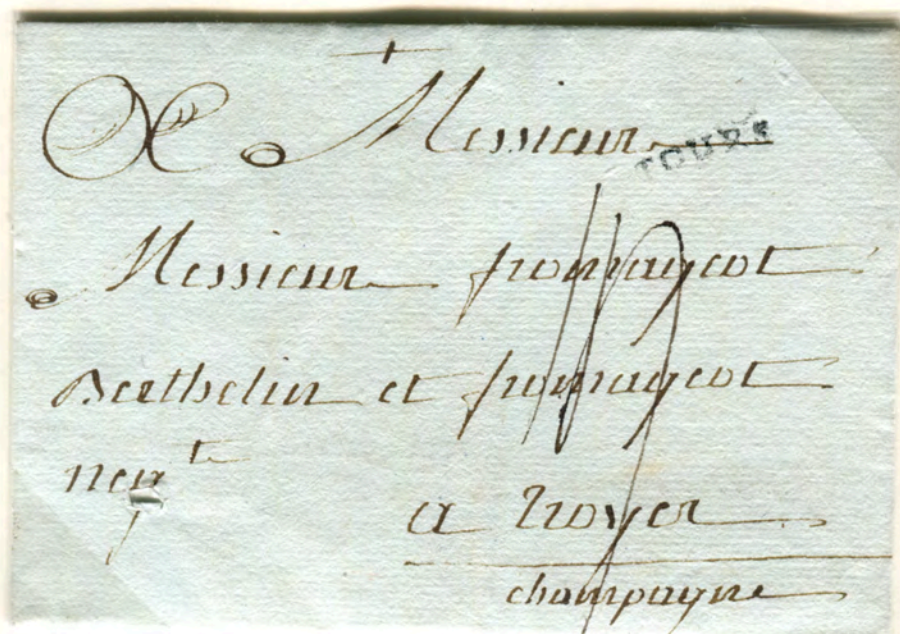
### I. THE FRENCH PROVINCES

#### Champagne

- Tours to Troyes
- undated (1760-1789)
- postage due 14 sols

+

« in the hands of God »



#### Normandie

- Bayonne to L'Aigle
- September 7 1765
- postage due 16 sols

+

« in the hands of God »



letterhead



## 2. THE POSTAL ORGANIZATION

- Louis XI (1461-1483) will remain in history for having founded in 1479 the post in France, a state system.
- a convenient relay system was established every 7 *lieues* ( $\pm 28$  km).
- each messenger would travel 4 relays per day ( $\pm 90$  km) on horseback
- its mounted couriers were called « *chevaucheurs du Roi* »
- this postal system was called :

### King Charles IX Period (1560 – 1574)

- letter sent from Jean de Capriol de Puéchassaut (Péchassaut) to Monsieur Gonthier
  - from Brousse to Lautrec • postage paid
  - November 1572
- ❖ signature : *J. de Pech*

❖ signature : *J. de Pechasaut*

Monfr gentil Je ay amice amouse  
meuz onch mouste del layssu come Je  
vous seviray de mon cuer & ny en  
commingne vus Lettre pour le fan  
de sonldat & mame mande Equit  
me faire dy pour cumme vus  
Je me suz vus nulle & de moy

Conseguenti Vo. f. me. y. l.  
de p. ch. a. l. e. m.  
1872 re. a. m. y.

re ambo e my  
mos farce f con e  
F. de pecha smit

Am onse  
M onse gontre  
Al ambre



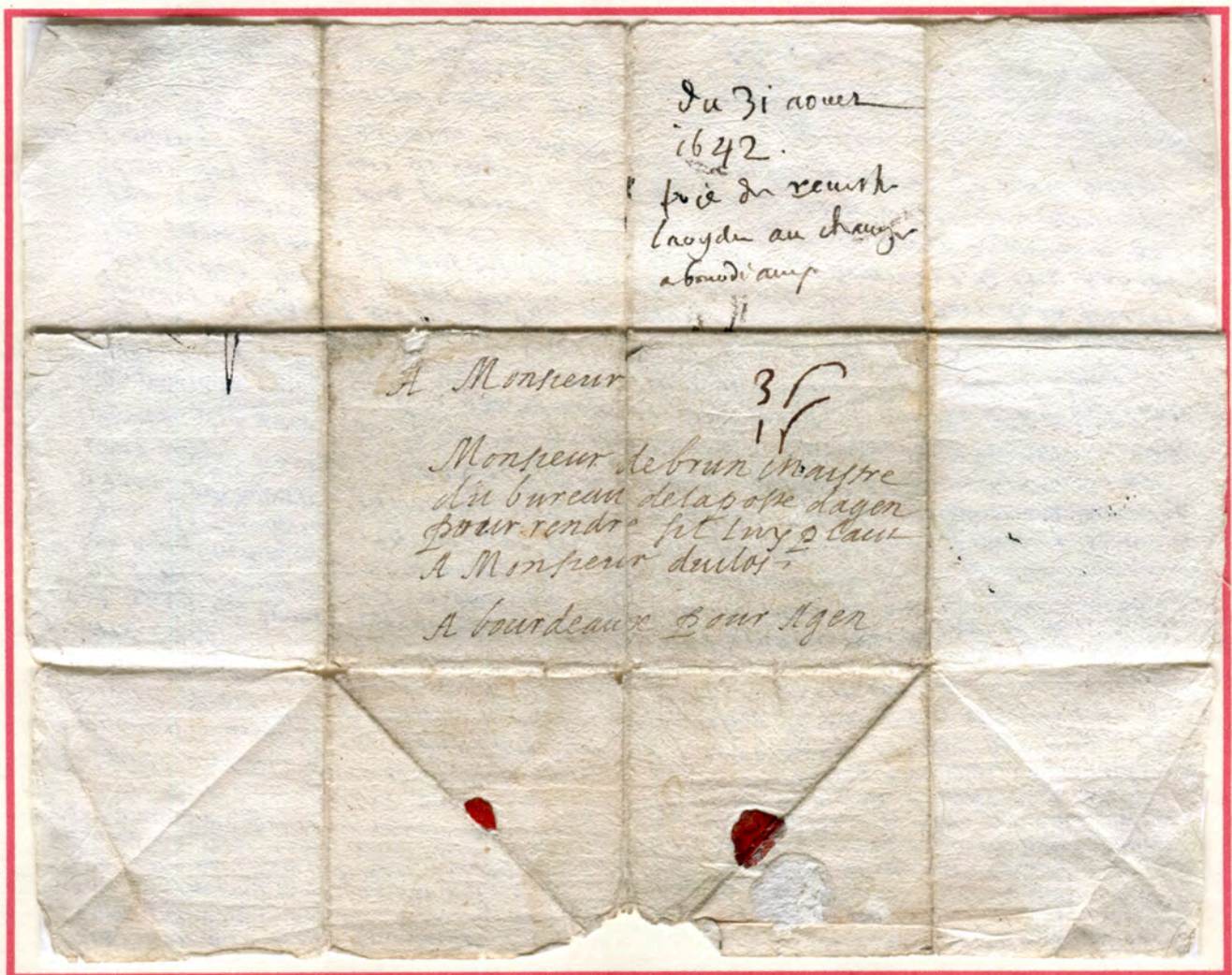
## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

### 2. THE POSTAL ORGANIZATION

- in 1603, King Henri IV named Fouquet de la Varanne *Controller General of Posts*; creation of the « **poste aux lettres** » a public postal system.
- in 1630 until the French Revolution, the person responsible of the postal organization had the title of « *Surintendant des postes et relais* ».
- 3 types of services :
  - the *poste aux lettres* : carried letters
  - the *poste aux chevaux* : carried passengers and packages under 2 pounds
  - the *messageries* : carried passengers and heavy packages under 50 pounds
- needless to say that the competition was fierce; each would take on letters for a sum of money

#### The « poste aux lettres »

King Louis XIII Period (1610 – 1643)



- Paris to Bordeaux via Agen
- August 31 1642
- postage due :
  - Paris to Agen : 3 sols
  - Agen to Bordeaux : 1 sol

Letter sent from Paris to the mayor (!) of the post office in Agen if it pleases him to give this letter to Mr. Duclos in Bordeaux

« Monsieur Lebrun mayre du bureau de la poste d'agen pour rendre sit luy plait à Monsieur Duclos à bourdeaux »

It explains the 2 taxes



## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

### 2. THE POSTAL ORGANIZATION

#### The « Messageries »

- the « Messageries » complained of couriers carrying goods, but they did not hesitate to carry letters; they have often been in court for these offenses.
- receipt from the MESSAGERIES ROYALES in Lyon
- « delivering to MM. Roux Frères in Marseille « *une caisse emballée* »
- « worth « *la valeur de vingt sept mille neuf cen trente livres en espèce* »
- December 25 1787

Remboursement: \_\_\_\_\_

## MESSAGERIES ROYALES

DE LYON, PROVENCE ET LANGUEDOC, ET RETOUR.

A Lyon le 25. X. 1787

M. Roux Frères A la garde de Dieu, & par les Carrosses

& Fourgons des Messageries Royales, il vous plaira recevoir *une Caisse*  
*emballée* marqué comme ci-contre, contenant

*la valeur de Vingt sept mille neuf cen Trente*

*livres en Espèce*

pesant brut *335* p. de mar. qu'ayant reçu  
bien conditionné, en paierez la Voiture COMPTANT, à raison de *l'ordinaire*  
& rembourserez

les Droits légitimes, en outre *rien*

sans qu'on soit responsable de la rupture des choses fragiles, coulage des liquides,  
ni des mouillures: Et *comme*

A M. Roux Frères

M. Roux Frères

Marseille

Vo. J. très-humble / Serviteur /

*J. M. Roux Frères Passavant*

*Janre Laine*

27  
27  
13-10  
2-5  
69 16



## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

### 2. THE POSTAL ORGANIZATION

- in 1676, the first tax system valid throughout France appears
- the Marquis de Louvois requires that all letters bear a manuscript postmark of origin; this is necessary to calculate the taxes
  - letters may be sent : postage due or post paid

- Meulan to Bourbon-L'Archambault
- September 23 1761
- postage due 12 sols

23 Septembre 1761.

Meulan A Monsieur  
Monsieur Thomé officier au  
régiment du garde français  
a Bourbon l'archambault

Arles  
Monsieur  
Monsieur de la Calmette  
Lieutenant particulier au  
présidial  
a nîmes

- ← franco
- Arles to Nîmes
- after 1676
- post paid
- + cross – leaving the destiny of the letter in the hands of God knowing that the roads were not safe at the time

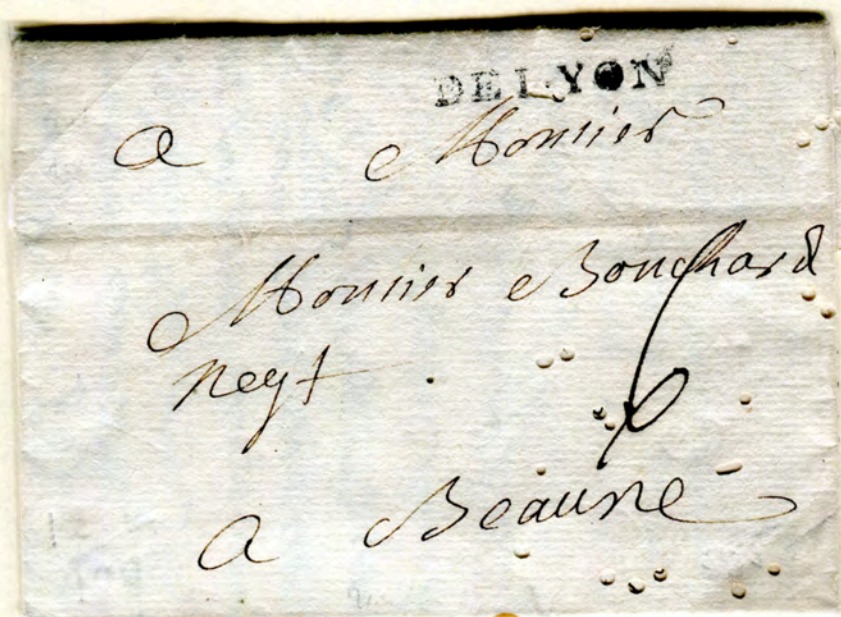


## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

### 2. THE POSTAL ORGANIZATION

- a notice requesting the use of a handstamp will be issued in 1749; some offices will receive their hammer from Paris only in 1792 !
- straight line cancel with the prefix **DE** before the name of the post office

- Lyon to Beaune
- postmark of origin  
**DE LYON**
- July 4 1760
- postage due 6 sols



*Lyon le 4<sup>e</sup> juillet 1760*

letterhead



- Limoux to Bordeaux
- 1760
- postage due 8 sols
- 2 different postmarks of origin :
  - DE LIMOVX (handstamp)
  - de Limoux (manuscript)

note : the sender probably did not trust the new postal mark!

*Sainte-Colombe-sur-Guette le 3<sup>e</sup> juillet 1760.*

letterhead

Note : Sainte-Colombe-sur-Guette is a *commune* in the Limoux region.



## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

### 2. THE POSTAL ORGANIZATION

➤ Some major cities have their particular postmarks of origin

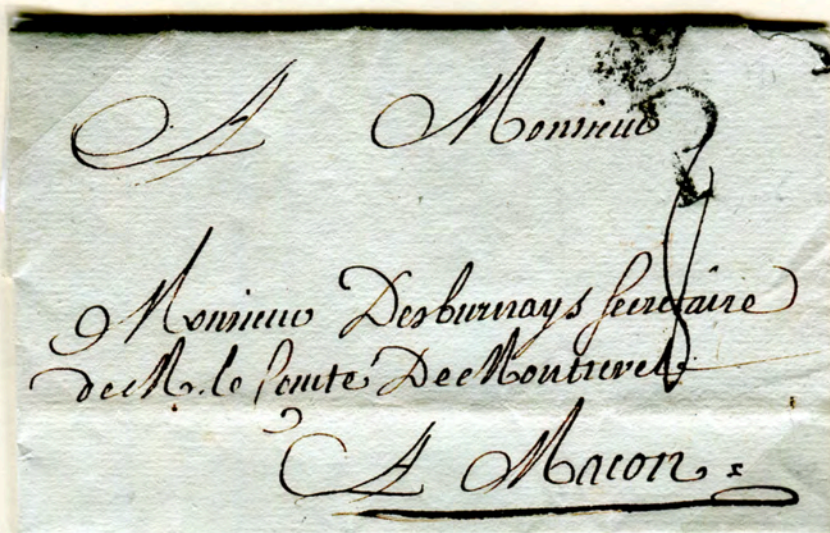
#### A. PARIS

- *P couronné* (Crowned P) in Paris
- from July 1771 to April 1774
- « Grande Poste » (Major Post Office) – front, for letters off-Paris



- Paris to Mâcon
- August 27 1771
- postmark *P couronné*
- postage due 8 sols

27. août 1771.



- **PAR∞** → *Paris à l'infini*
- from April 1774 to May 1778
- replaces *P couronné* above
- « Grande Poste » (Major Post Office) – front, for letters off-Paris

PAR∞



- Paris to Cognac
- February 3 1778
- postmark of origin
- postage due 10 sols

Paris le 3. fév. 1778.



## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

### 2. THE POSTAL ORGANIZATION

#### B. BORDEAUX

- handstamp postmark of origin
- double circle with B and fleur de lys
- from 1729 to 1743

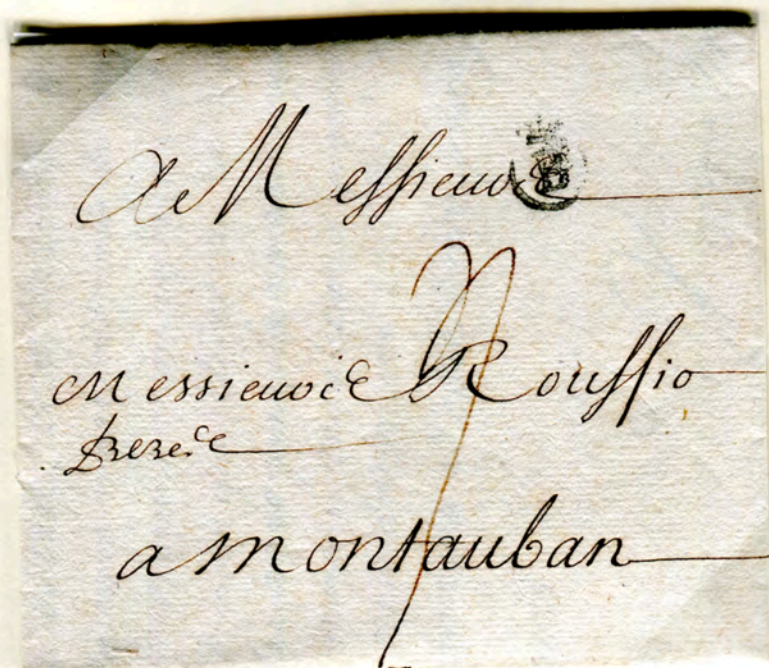


- Bordeaux to Marseille
- February 1st 1742
- postage due 9 sols

Bordeaux le 1<sup>er</sup> février 1742.



- handstamp postmark of origin
  - B with fleur de lys, many variations
  - from 1737 to 1787 (officially)
- note : we find this mark until the Revolution



- Bordeaux to Montauban
- January 25 1756
- postage due 4 sols

Bordeaux le 25. janvier 1756.



## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

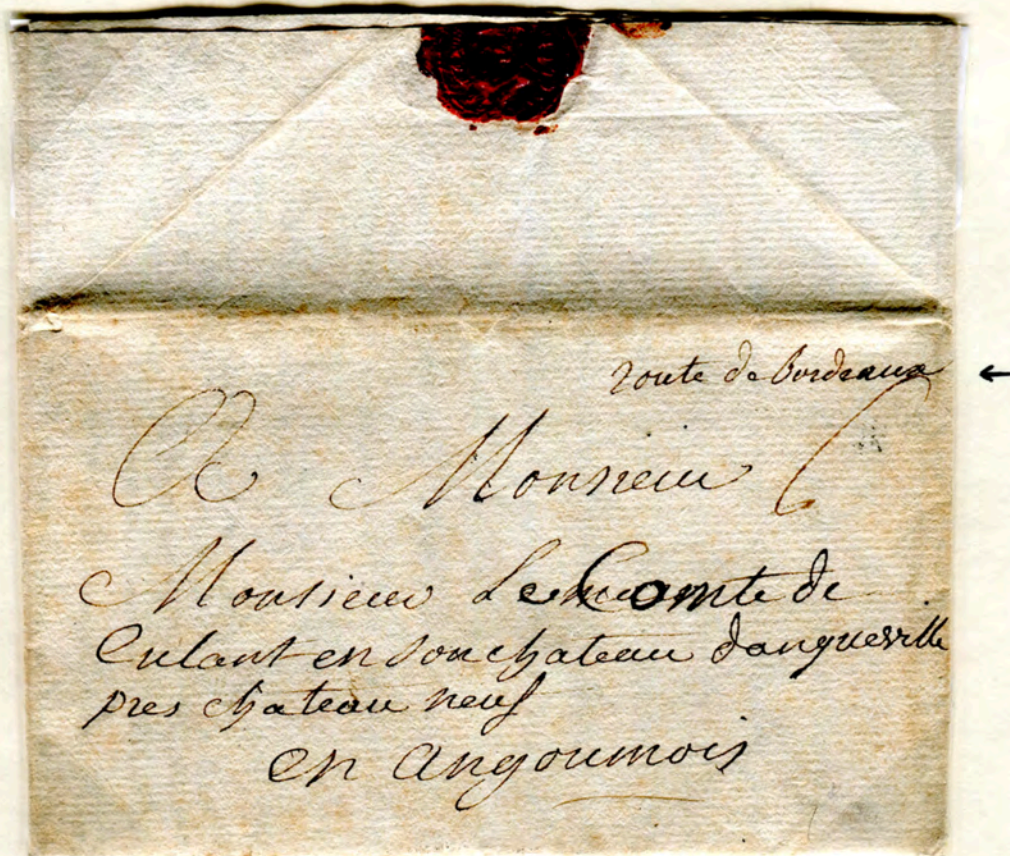
### 3. THE POSTAL ROUTES

#### 3. THE POSTAL ROUTES

*Historical facts.* The road network was characterized at the beginning of the 18th c. by its star-shaped form, which ensures rapid and numerous connections to the headquarters of the administration. The transverse routes are very few, especially in the southern half, where only the connections between the major provincial capitals are present until the middle of the 18th century.

- We can consider 5 main postal roads from Paris :
  - A. Bordeaux - B. Lyon - C. Toulouse - D. Strasbourg - E. Brest
- Other destinations : private couriers

#### A. postal road : Paris - Bordeaux



- no postmark of origin
- Paris to Angueville
- June 29 1737
- postage due 6 sols

a paris le 29 juin 1737



## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

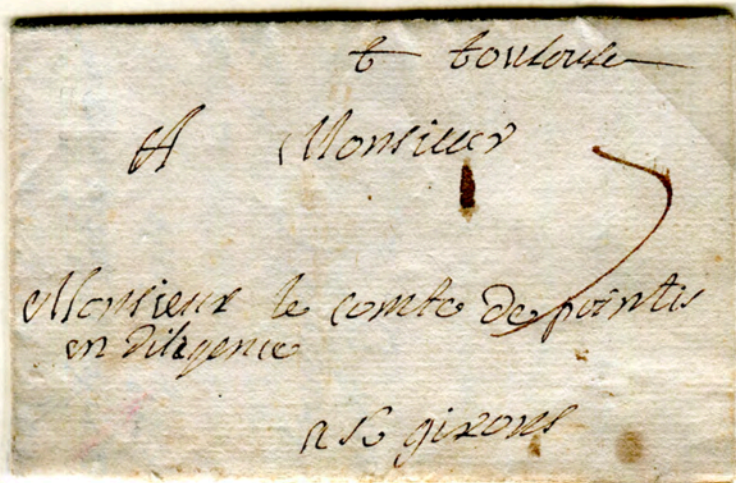
### 3. THE POSTAL ROUTES

#### B. postal road : Paris - Lyon

- Marseille to Claveson
- date unknown
- postage due 5 sols



#### C. postal road : Paris - Toulouse



- postmark of origin
- Paris to Toulouse
- June 27 1716
- postage due 7 sols
- en diligence  
(stagecoach)

Paris le 27<sup>e</sup> Juin  
1716.



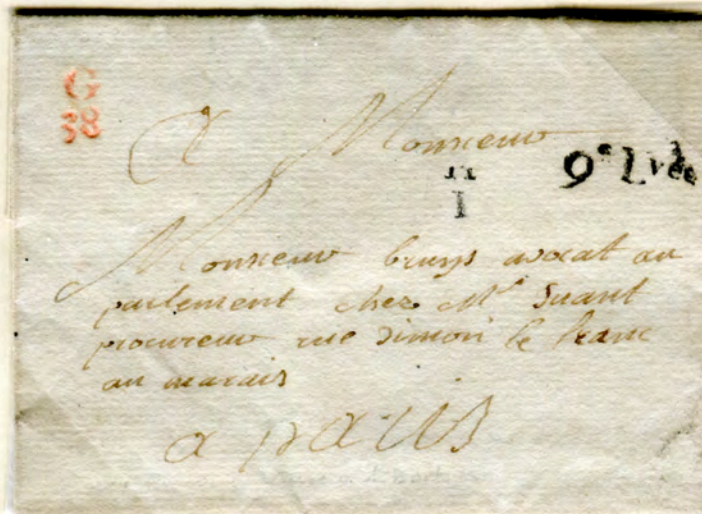
## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

### 4. THE PETITE POSTE DE PARIS

#### 4. THE PETITE POSTE DE PARIS

- while the « Grande Poste de Paris » would deliver the mail to other cities or *communes* and to foreign countries, the « Petite Poste » was serving the inner city
- started June 9 1760 – operates until 1849
- 9 offices : A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,J – K (suburb)
- 9 collections (L<sup>vee</sup>) of mail each day
- the sender pays the tax

- first period 1760-1763
- **G** : office G
- **38** : mailbox number
- **9<sup>e</sup> L<sup>vee</sup>** : 9th collection
- **I** : number 1 with "  
= date received at the  
sorting office in Paris



#### VERY PARTICULAR CASE

where the postman replaces the sender and pays the tax

- the postman must have a special accounting system to later reclaim the money
- the sender must be a very well known person
- the name of the sender must be written on the front of the letter



#### FIRST PERIOD - 1760-1763

upper left : name of the sender :  
Duval

**C** = office C  
**37** = mailbox number 37

**2<sup>e</sup> L<sup>vee</sup>** : 2<sup>nd</sup> collection

**C** = postage due  
**P.D**

**11**  
**7** = date of the month received at  
the sorting office in Paris

**X** = payment received by the  
postman



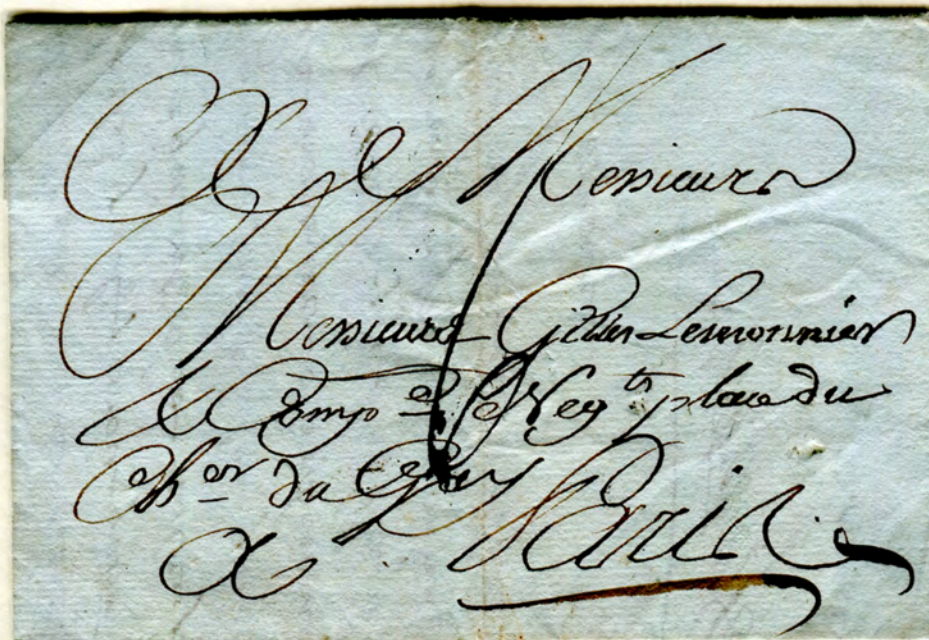
## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

### 4. THE PETITE POSTE DE PARIS

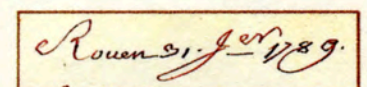
- on July 1st 1780, the *Petite Poste* is absorbed by the *Grande Poste*
- the local mailboxes may receive letters for the provinces
  - *Petite Poste* in Paris → *Grande Poste* in Paris → Rouen
    - D** = office C
    - 27** = mailbox number 27
    - 5<sup>e</sup> L<sup>vee</sup> : 5<sup>th</sup> collection
- postage paid to Paris
- postage due : Paris to Rouen 6 sols



- one of the last letters sent before the Revolution.
- beginning of the uprising of the population throughout the provinces
- merchants were still working but were anxious about the fate of their orders :
  - « ... cette lettre est pour vous tranquilliser sur le sort... »



- Rouen to Paris
- January 31 1789
- postage due 6 sols

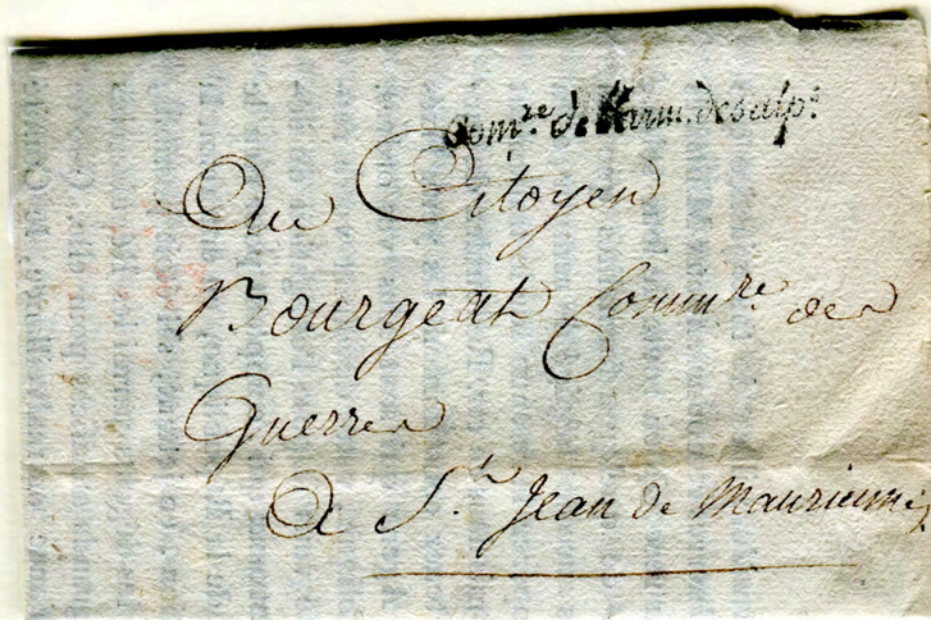




## II. REVOLUTIONARY WARS : THE BEGINNING

➤ Armée des Alpes (Alps Army) → Armée d'Italie (Army of Italy) in 1797

### LETTER FROM THE WAR COMMISSIONER IN PARIS



- Paris to St-Jean-de-Maurienne (Savoy-France)
- January 11 1795
- Official military franchise

**Le Commissaire L. A PILLE.**

Chief-Commissioner  
Louis-Antoine Pille



## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

### 4. THE PETITE POSTE DE PARIS

- in 1786, Pierre-Charles Laurent de Villeguill becomes the *Contrôleur général des Finances* (Comptroller of Finance), responsable of the General Administration of the Posts of the Kingdom of France
- during the Revolution he will emigrate to Scotland
- this letter is sent to Monsieur de Tolozan, *Contrôleur général du Commerce* (Comptroller of Trade)
  - Rouen to Paris
  - July 24 1786

❖ signature de Villeguill

M. De Tolozan  
28 juillet 1786.

Monsieur le 24. Juillet 1786.

Monsieur

les conventions de la loi, ainsi que  
ou mélanges des dites matières à l'apposition du  
plomb prescrit par l'arrêt du 7. <sup>de</sup> 1786, et dont le  
diamètre qui était de 15 lignes a été réduit à 9 seulement.  
Je vous, Monsieur, Je donne les ordres nécessaires pour les  
faire publier et afficher dans cette Généralité, ainsi que de  
vous en faites connaître de me le prescrire.

Je suis avec un respect infini

Monsieur

Je suis très humble et très  
obéissant serviteur de Villeguill

M. le Contrôleur G. L.



## II. THE ANCIEN RÉGIME ± 1655 – 1789

### 4. THE PETITE POSTE DE PARIS

- letter from Claude François-Marie Rigoley, Comte d'Ogny named in 1776 *Intendant Général des Postes aux Lettres & aux Chevaux, Courriers, Relais & Messageries*
- he will stay in charge of the postal administration until 1790

- Paris to Paris
- September 20 1785
- letter in response to a complaint from Mr. Perregaux about the postal service...

Paris Le 20. 9. 1785

Je me suis fait rendre compte, Monsieur, de la réclamation  
que vous a chargée de me faire M. Le Colonel Campbell.  
Il se plaint qu'on lui a attellé les chevaux sur sa  
diligence chargée de deux personnes avec une malle.  
Je suis très fâché de vous observer que cette plainte n'est  
pas fondée. vous pouvez consulter l'ordonnance page  
9, article 11. qui est au commencement du titre des  
Postes. Je ne puis qu'approuver les maîtres de poste qui  
veulent bien ne pas exiger tout ce qui leur est dû  
légitimement, mais je ne puis blâmer ceux qui suivent  
à la rigueur l'ordonnance, quand ils font leur représentation  
avec honnêteté.

Je suis avec attachement, Monsieur, votre très humble et  
très obéissant serviteur

*Claude François-Marie Rigoley*

M. Perregaux banquier rue d'Artois à Paris



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION - INTRODUCTION

1. May 1789 – Aug. 1792
2. Sept. 1792 – Nov. 1799
  - \* The French First Republic
  - 2.1. National Convention
  - 2.2. Directory

*Historical Facts.* The French Revolution is a turbulent period in the history of France. French people redesigned their country's political status, uprooting centuries-old institutions such as monarchy and the feudal system. It proclaimed the equality of citizens before the law, the fundamental freedoms and the sovereignty of the nation.

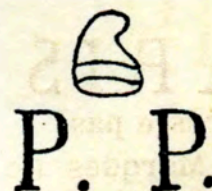
#### REVOLUTIONARY SYMBOLS

##### THE PHRYGIAN CAP

*Historical Fact :* During the French Revolution, the Phrygian cap became the symbol of liberty. It was worn by the *insurgés* as the « red cap of liberty ». In 1792, it became part of the uniform of the *sans-culottes*. It continues to be associated with the national allegorical figure of *Liberté*.

- This postmark was in use in 1793 by the sorting department on post paid letters to Paris or as a transit mark through the Main Office in Paris (*Grande Poste*).
- Replaced in 1798 by

P. P.



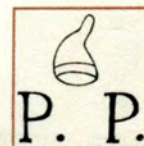
Cert.

Bapaume, le 9 Brumaire 6<sup>e</sup> année Républicaine

- Bapaume to Paris  
P.61.P.  
BAPAUME
- 61 = Pas-de-Calais department
- 9 Brumaire an VI  
30 October 1797
- postpaid
- letter addressed to the *Citoyen* Ministre de l'Intérieur
- *citoyen(-ne)* replaced Monsieur, Madame who, at the time, seemed too aristocratic



RARE accidental deformation of the tip of the bonnet



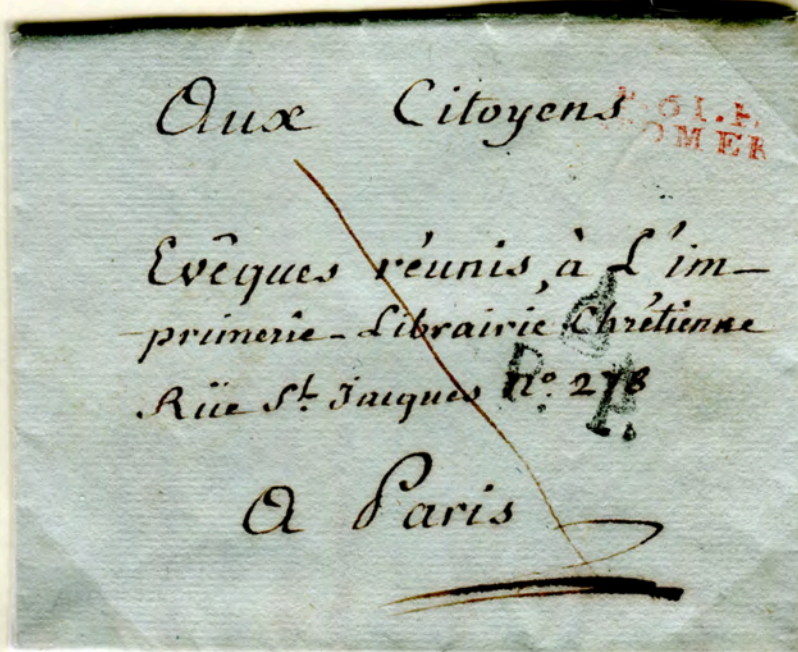
- St-Omer to Paris  
P.61.P.  
ST OMER

- 1801

- postpaid  
back  
4 sols



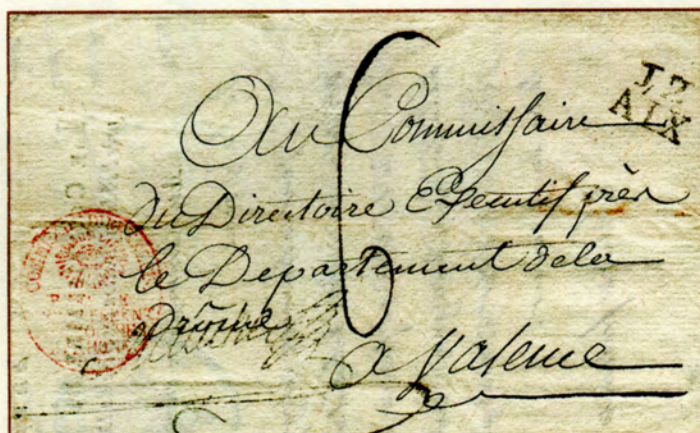
Main Office in Paris  
Bureau T  
3<sup>E</sup> Levée  
dated : 6 (June)



**THE EYE** was often used as a countersignature or a revolutionary vignette for the Committees responsible for the surveillance of the enemies of the Revolution.



- Aix to Valence
- 25 Prairial an VI
- June 13 1798
- countersignature  
front & back  
the « eye »





### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

#### 1. MAY 1789 – AUGUST 1792

##### 1.1. The premises

*Historical Facts* : The heavy taxes, the years of poor harvests exasperated the French. During the 80s, the French people are dissatisfied, they want to abolish monarchy and feudalism and end the privileges granted to the nobility.

- The king then decides to summon the **Estates-General** (*États-Généraux*), an assembly representing the nobility, the clergy and the rest of France (98%).
- To prepare this meeting, he convenes in February 1787, the **Assembly of Notables** (*Assemblée des notables*), a group of 144 high-ranking nobles, ecclesiastics and ministers to consult on tax reform.

#### THE ASSEMBLY OF NOTABLES

1787

Letter from a nobleman, *monsieur de Castellet*, to a colleague in Pignans.

« I have the project to go to Aix at the opening of the Assembly following the letter of invitation that I received from the *sindics* of the nobility....

... and send me complaints from your community promptly, since the Assembly is opening on the 31st... ».



- Toulon to Pignans
- December 21 1787
- postage due 6 sols

Toulon Le 21. Decr 1787.

letterhead

extracts from  
the letter

J'ai le projet, Monsieur de me rendre à  
Aix à l'époque de l'ouverture des États  
Conséquemment à la lettre d'invitation que  
j'ai reçue des *sindics* de la noblesse;

... à la communauté, et de lui envoyer  
promptement vos mémoires, attendu  
que les États sont ouverts le 31;



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1. MAY 1789 - AUG. 1792

1.1. The premises

#### LETTER FROM THE KING FOR THE CONVOCAION OF THE ESTATES GENERAL *LETTRE DU ROI POUR LA CONVOCAION DES ÉTATS GÉNÉRAUX*

- Versailles, May 5 1789
- 1200 delegates
- the Estates-General were summoned by a royal edict dated 24 January 1789. It comprised two parts :
  - *Lettre du Roi*
  - *Règlements*
- text from the *Lettre du Roi* :

« WE HAVE NEED OF A CONCOURSE OF OUR FAITHFUL SUBJECTS, TO ASSIST US SURMOUNT ALL THE DIFFICULTIES WE FIND RELATIVE TO THE STATE OF OUR FINANCES...

... THESE MOTIVES HAVE RESOLVED US TO CONVENE THE *ASSEMBLÉE DES ÉTATS* OF ALL THE PROVINCES UNDER OUR AUTHORITY»

LETTER SENT TO THE PROVINCE OF BIGORRE



## LETTRE DU ROI

POUR LA CONVOCAION

DES ÉTATS-GÉNÉRAUX

*À VERSAILLES, le 27 Avril 1789,*

ET RÈGLEMENT Y ANNEXÉ,

POUR LE PAYS DE BIGORRE



A PARIS,  
DE L'IMPRIMERIE ROYALE.

---

M. DCC. LXXXIX.



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1. MAY 1789 - AUG. 1792

1.1. The premises

#### THE CASE OF ALSACE

- most of Alsace was recognised as part of France with the *Treaty of Westphalia* in 1648.
- it was said to be a « German Land within the Kingdom of France ».
- as such, they were almost forgotten during the convening of the Estates General; but thanks to Marshal Stainville\*, Alsace was able to send two deputies to Versailles. (*letter*)
- Alsacians played an active role in the French Revolution.
- **the Imperial cities\*\* will serve as entrenched camps for the French armies** against the armies of the 1st Coalition.

\* Jacques Philippe duc de Choiseul-Stainville (1727 – June 1789) was a French Marshal of France and Governor General of Alsace.

\*\* Ancient Free Cities of the Germanic Empire: Haguenau, Colmar, Wissembourg, Obernai, Kaysersberg, Rosheim, Munster, Sélestat, Landau, Strasbourg that were in French territory since the Treaty of Westphalia.

**Letter sent from Paris on February 13 1789;** it was written 2 months before the Estates General.

« ...j'ai l'honneur de vous annoncer que les dix villes jadis Impériales auront deux représentants aux États Généraux. Elles ont failli être confondues avec la Commune, et sans Mr. le Maréchal de Stainville et mes sollicitations c'était chose faite... »

"... I have the honor to inform you that the ten formerly Imperial Cities will have two representatives to the Estates General. They were almost confused with the Commune, and without Mr. Marshal Stainville and my solicitations it was done ... "

Paris ce 13. février 1789.

Mr  
C'est avec grand plaisir que j'ai l'honneur de vous —  
annoncer que les dix villes jadis Impériales auront  
deux Représentans aux États Généraux. Elles ont  
failli être confondues avec la Commune, et sans  
Mr le Maréchal de Stainville et mes sollicitations  
c'était chose faite. Mr le Maréchal partira la  
Semaine prochaine pour son Commandement,  
je présume que c'est pour y recevoir et donner les  
ordres pour former la députation d'Alsace aux États  
Généraux, je vous engage Mr à lui envoyer une  
lettre de remerciement et lui recommander



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

#### 1. MAY 1789 – AUGUST 1792

##### 1.2. The beginning of the Revolution

*Historical facts :* The Estates-General (*États-Généraux*) meeting soon deteriorated and a popular insurgency culminated.

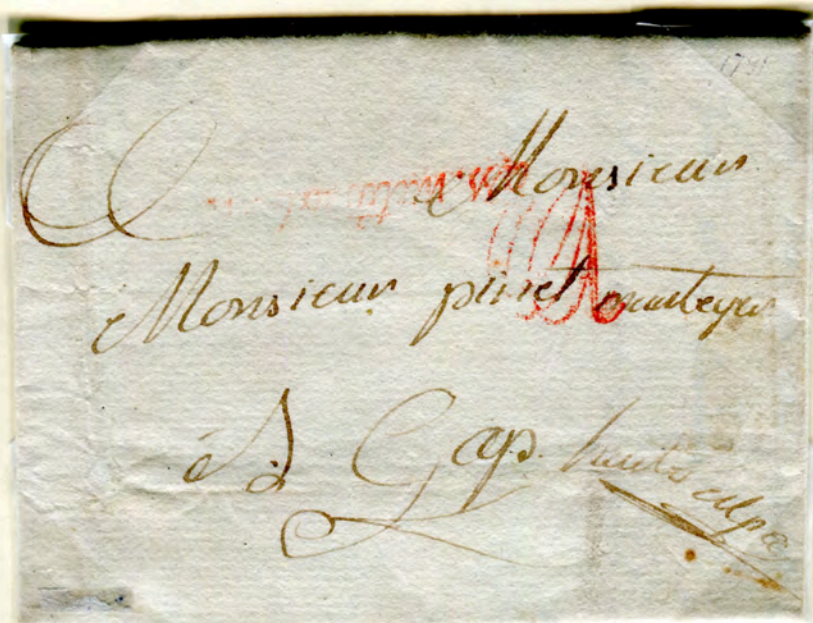
- On June 17 1789, it became the « *Assemblée nationale* » (National Assembly). The Assembly renamed itself the « *Assemblée nationale constituante* » (National Constituent Assembly) on July 9 and began to function as a governing body and a constitution-drafter.

- The Assembly is the first legislative assembly of France. She sat from June 17 1789 to September 30 1791.

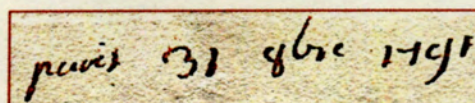
This Assembly took possession of the powers of the State, abolished, on the famous night of August 4, the privileges established in France, and consecrated the principle of equality by the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen* (Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen).

1.1. June 17 1789, new government : the *ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE* (National Assembly)

- Paris to Gap
- October 31 1791
- red countersignature  
*Ass. nationale*



- red franchise mark



letterhead



seal  
of a noble deputy



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

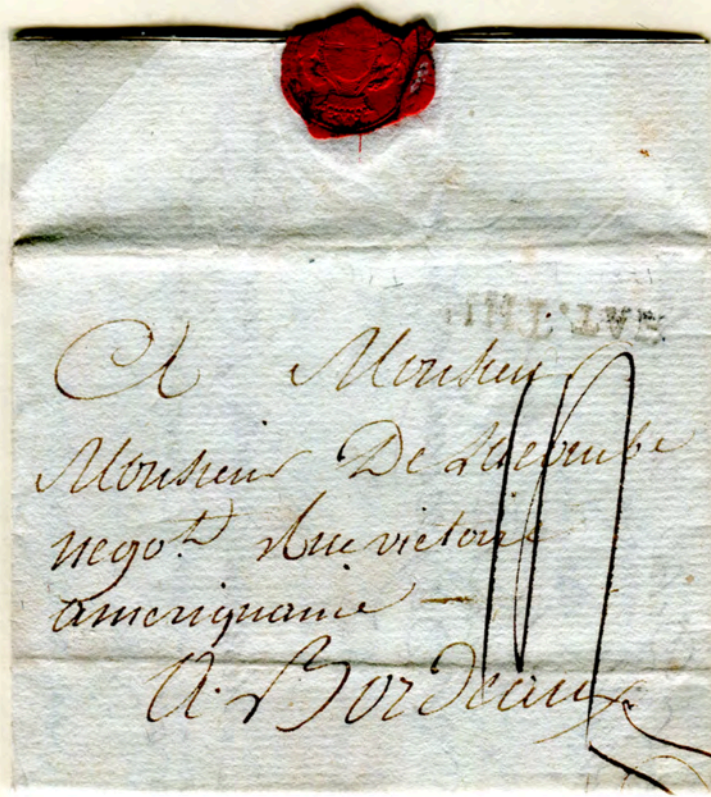
#### 1. MAY 1789 – AUGUST 1792

- On July 14 1789, insurgents **stormed the Bastille fortress** in an attempt to secure gunpowder and weapons. It was also a **symbol** of the abuses of the monarchy; its fall was the flashpoint of the French Revolution. (cover drawing)
- **In France, the 14th of July is a public holiday, called the Bastille Day**

**Letter sent by a soldier of the *Régiment de Metz* describing the events occurring in Paris.  
4 days after the Storming of the Bastille.**

*« Les choses y sont à un point qu'on ne peut concevoir et il vient de se passer des évènements des plus extraordinaires. Les détails ne sont permis que de vive voix, l'ouverture de toutes les lettres qui passent par Paris m'empêchent de vous parler ici ... »*

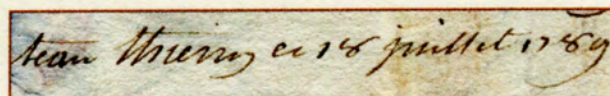
"Things are at a point that one can not conceive and the most extraordinary events has just happened. The details are only allowed in person, the opening of all the letters that pass through Paris prevent me from speaking to you here ... "



- very light postmark of origin
- Chateau Thierry to Bordeaux
- July 18 1789
- postage due 14 sols



CHAT. THIERRY  
postmark



letterhead



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1. MAY 1789 - AUG. 1792

- at the beginning of the Revolution, post management is not a priority; it explains the fact that the Count Rigoley d'Ogny kept his position as *Intendant Général des Postes aux Lettres & aux Chevaux, Courriers, Relais & Messageries* until 1790 (cf. frame 2, page 13) back

- POSTAL DOCUMENT - RECEIPT OF LYON POST OFFICE TO THE MONTBRISON POST OFFICE. Aug 21 1789

**LETTRES DE SERVICE,**  
Ou Dépêches pour Nosseigneurs les Ministres.

Bureau de LYON.

Envois à

*Montbrison*

N°

Du 21 août

1789

J'ai reçu votre Dépêche du 19 contenant en Ports payés pour la somme de *liv. 12 sols* qui a été exactement distribuée : je vous demande le même soin pour ce qui accompagne celle-ci, & notamment les Dépêches de service cotées ci-dessus, dont vous accuserez la réception par votre premier avis.

Je vous envoie, SAVOIR :

N°. Ces deux sommes doivent être portées en toutes Lettres.

- 1°. En Lettres taxées dont vous devez faire Recette à l'ordinaire la somme de *quarante-un liv. 10 sols* Ci..
- 2°. En Lettres affranchies entre mes mains pour votre Bureau & en passe, dont j'ai fait Recette, & que vous devez porter sur votre Etat, intitulé Etat pour Mémoire, la somme de

liv. sols.

*41. 8*

liv. sols.

Ci..

*J'ay en l'honneur de vous en envoyer*

- 3°. Plus, un Paquet de Lettres affranchies au-delà de mon Bureau, & en passe mondit Bureau pour le vôtre, que j'ai enregistrées, & dont vous ne devez nullement faire mention sur votre dit Etat intitulé Etat pour Mémoire.

Je payerai

*Messieurs de la Cour  
Messieurs de la Pape*

liv. sols.

*2. 10  
11 8*

Ci-joint pour payer  
à

liv. sols.

TOTAL...

Je suis, Monsieur, votre très-humble serviteur,  
**TABAREAU.**



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1. MAY 1789 - AUG. 1792

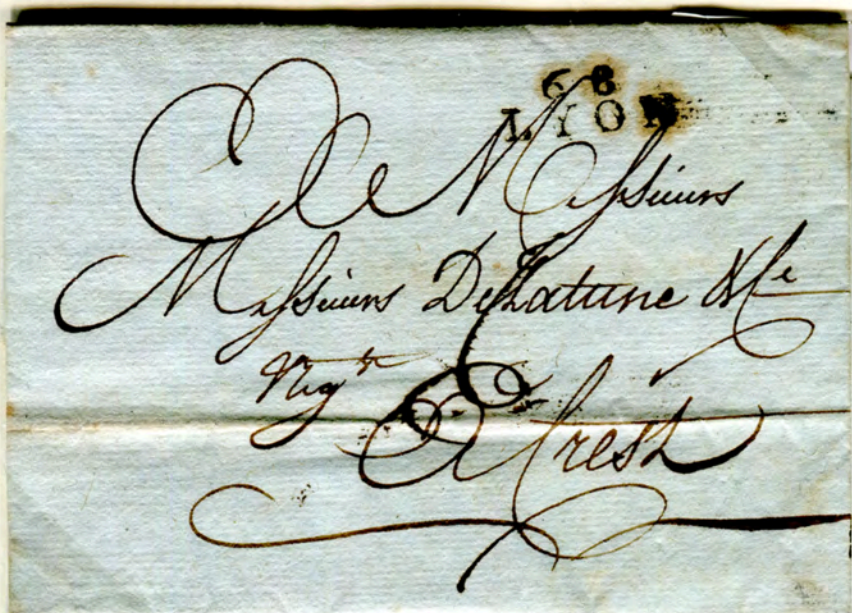
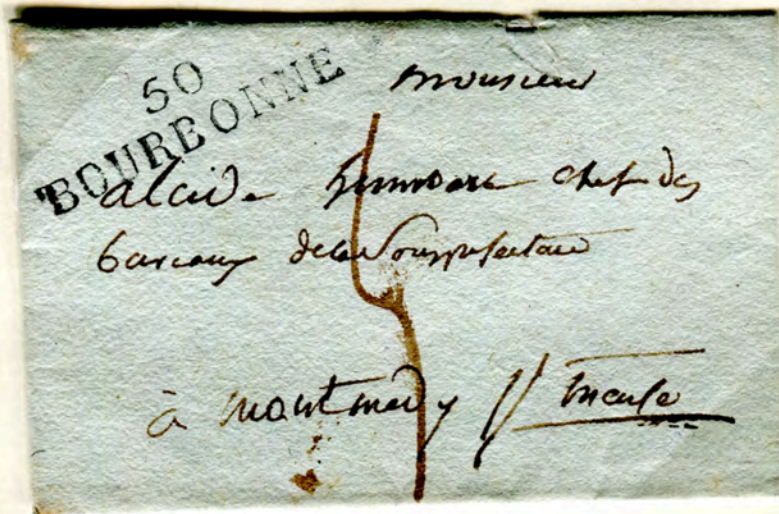
#### 1.2. CREATION OF THE FRENCH DEPARTMENTS

- on February 26 1790 France was divided into 83 departments
- as soon as **January 1st 1792**, postmarks bear the department number
- **straight line cancel on 2 lines**

- Bourbonne to Montmedy
- *Haute-Marne* department 50
- 1792
- postage due 5 sols



THE 83 DEPARTMENTS OF FRANCE



- Lyon to Crest
- *Rhône-et-Loire* department 68
- 1792
- postage due 6 sols



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1. MAY 1789 - AUG. 1792

#### 1.3. The CIVIL CONSTITUTION OF THE CLERGY

*Historical facts* : The **Civil Constitution of the Clergy** was a law passed on 12 July 1790, that caused the immediate subordination of the **Catholic Church** in France to the French government.

- the Catholic Church property was nationalized
- congregations were dissolved
- the government required that all priests swear an **oath of loyalty** to the Civil Constitution
  - o a certain number of priests refused → non-jurors or refractory priests (*prêtres réfractaires*)
  - o many have taken the oath → jurors

❖ Letter from a **juror priest**, vicar Aubac, thanking the municipal officers for their good words regarding the oath he had taken to the Constitution.

« ... les principes de patriotisme... je n'ai fait par cet acte de civisme mûrement réfléchi que remplir mon devoir puisque nous devons tous hâter le règne du bonheur... »

« ... the principles of patriotism... I have done this duty of deliberate reflection merely to fulfill my duty, since we must all hasten the reign of happiness... »

- Lunel to S-Hipolite (Saint-Hippolyte)
- March 24 1791
- postage due 6 sols



seal on back

marthargues le 24 mars 1791

letterhead

LUNEL  
@ Messieurs  
Messieurs les Chaires  
et officiers municipaux  
de St Hippolite  
à St Hippolite

Aux citoyens  
officiers municipaux  
A Puiguiillaume

lettre de l'administration  
du district de Thiers  
relative aux ecclésiastiques  
qui s'étaient refusés à la  
prétention de serment  
du 14 vendémiaire  
L. le 25 du dit  
3<sup>e</sup> année

text from the letter

❖ Letter from the district administrator to remind the municipal officers of the deportation of refractory priests ...

- Thiers to Puiguiillaume (Puy-Guillaume)
- 14 Vendémiaire an III → October 5 1794

- franchise for an official letter



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1. MAY 1789 – AUGUST 1792

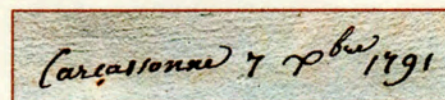
❖ Letter from a **refractory priest**, dom Jean de Capdeville, declaring that he had no legitimate reason for taking advantage of the freedom given by the National Assembly and that his vows retained their full force. He will be deported to Spain where he will stay in an abbey for seven years before coming back to die in France in 1804.



- postmark of origin  
CAR<sup>NS</sup>
- Carcassonne to Toulouse
- December 7 1791
- postage due 4 sols



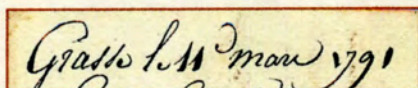
seal on back



letterhead

➤ Nearing the new Republic, some post offices do not have a handstamp. Some will receive it from Paris in 1792 !

- Grasse to Agde
- March 11 1791
- postage due
- taxes 14 sols





### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1. MAY 1789 - AUG. 1792

#### THE ROYAL FLIGHT TO VARENNES

During the night of 20–21 June 1791 was a significant episode in the French Revolution in which King Louis XVI of France, queen Marie Antoinette, and their immediate family unsuccessfully attempted to escape from Paris in order to initiate a counter-revolution at the head of loyal troops under royalist officer **General marquis de Bouillé** concentrated at Montmédy near the frontier.

They escaped as far as the town of Varennes, where they were arrested and returned under guard to Paris,

The royal family was confined to the Tuileries Palace.

From this point forward, the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic became an ever-increasing possibility.

**François Claude Amour, marquis de Bouillé**

(1739–1800)

Metz le 26. Juin

J'ai vu avec plaisir Monsieur le Baron  
et tout ce que vous avez bien voulu écrire  
pour faire payer les dettes de  
M. de Jarnes; je n'ai pas pu convenir  
le détail de l'acompte; je pense que  
vous en serez venu à bout. Le baron Bouillé  
qui je vous ay adressé B.B. qui je  
vous envoie pour les brevets de. Je vous  
prie de m'en envoyer un exemplaire  
pour les faire valoir. Je vous prie  
de m'en envoyer un exemplaire pour les faire valoir.  
Je vous prie de m'en envoyer un exemplaire pour les faire valoir.  
Je vous prie de m'en envoyer un exemplaire pour les faire valoir.

A committed Royalist, he was a French General and a leading conspirator involved in the royal family's failed flight in 1791, whose failure forced *de Bouillé* into exile in Prussia.

He died in London.

He is mentioned as a hated Royalist in the French national anthem, *La Marseillaise*.

Rare letter from the **marquis de Bouillé** while putting down rebellion in Metz (Alsace).

- Metz, June 26 1790

signature

PLAN

The plan had been prepared a year earlier.

The King was confined to the Tuileries (the royal residence in Paris); he would exit his Tuileries 'prison' and retire to a frontier post under the command of M. de Bouillé in Metz. There, the King would gather troops....



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1. MAY 1789 - AUG. 1792

#### Friedrich August Thomas von Heymann

(1740 - 1801)

Under the Marquis de Bouillé, he had several secret missions during the French Revolution.

With him, he participated in the **flight of the King to Varennes**.

However, both had to flee to Prussia as a result of the failed attempt. Afterwards, Heymann remained in the service of the King of Prussia.

Letter signed von Heyman to General Stengel.

• Paris, June 20 1790

#### Historical facts :

In 1792, after the unsuccessful escape of the King and his family from Paris to Varennes, many events will occur :

- the Emperors of Austria and Prussia issued the **Declaration of Pillnitz** which proclaimed the cause of King Louis XVI; the threat of force merely hastened the French militarization
- on September 20 1792 France declared war to Austria
- constitutional crisis : a new elected government, the **Convention**, abolished the monarchy and declared a **Republic**

Le General de choisy mon cher Stengel  
prend le commandement au camp allié  
je lui ay parlé de vous et de l'utilité dont  
vous pourriez lui être en palatinat partout  
il vous emploiera, et compte sur sa  
reconnaissance autant que sur le desir qu'il  
aura de vous faire valoir dans toutes les  
occasions.

adieu mon cher Stengel vous connaissez  
mon invariable amitié pour vous.

De Heymann  
Paris ce 20. juin 1790



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1. MAY 1789 – AUGUST 1792

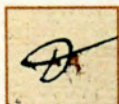
- The insurrection in Paris spread throughout France; some burned castles and abbeys, as the *Great Fear* spread across the countryside during weeks
- Members of the nobility, fearing for their safety, fled to neighboring countries.
- On August 4 1789, was the abolition of feudalism and privileges left over from the *Ancien Régime*.



Even if it was a difficult period for the French people, trade continued.

Letter sent from Paris on June 23 1789 to a wine merchant in Bordeaux

- postmark of origin :  
P in an open triangle
- postage due 18 sols  
→ double rate letter  
(2<sup>e</sup> échelon)



Bordeaux,  
23 juin 1789.

letterhead

Messieurs  
Messieurs Schröder  
et Fils et C<sup>ie</sup>  
A Bordeaux

Marseille  
A M. Messager  
Messieurs P. Pousquet  
Fils et C<sup>ie</sup>  
à Agde en Languedoc

Letter sent from Marseille to Agde on September 30 1791 to a dry goods merchant

- manuscript postmark of origin
- postage due 9 sols  
→ single rate letter  
(1<sup>er</sup> échelon)

Marseille Le 30. 7<sup>bre</sup> 1791

letterhead



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### 2. SEPTEMBER 1792 – NOVEMBER 1799

##### FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

3 stages in the Government

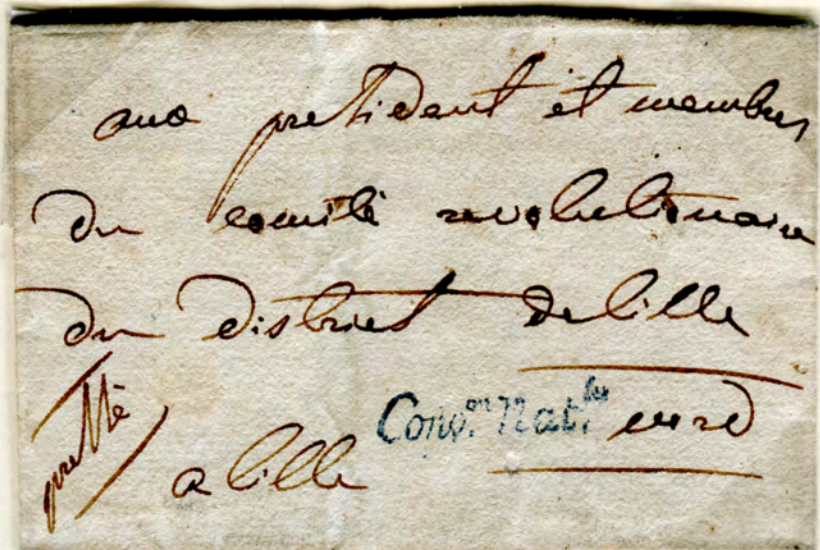
- *CONVENTION NATIONALE* (NATIONAL CONVENTION) September 21 1792 to October 25 1795
- *DIRECTOIRE* (DIRECTORY) October 26 1795 to November 9 1799
- *CONSULAT* (CONSULATE) November 10 1799 to May 17 1804

##### THE CONVENTION NATIONALE

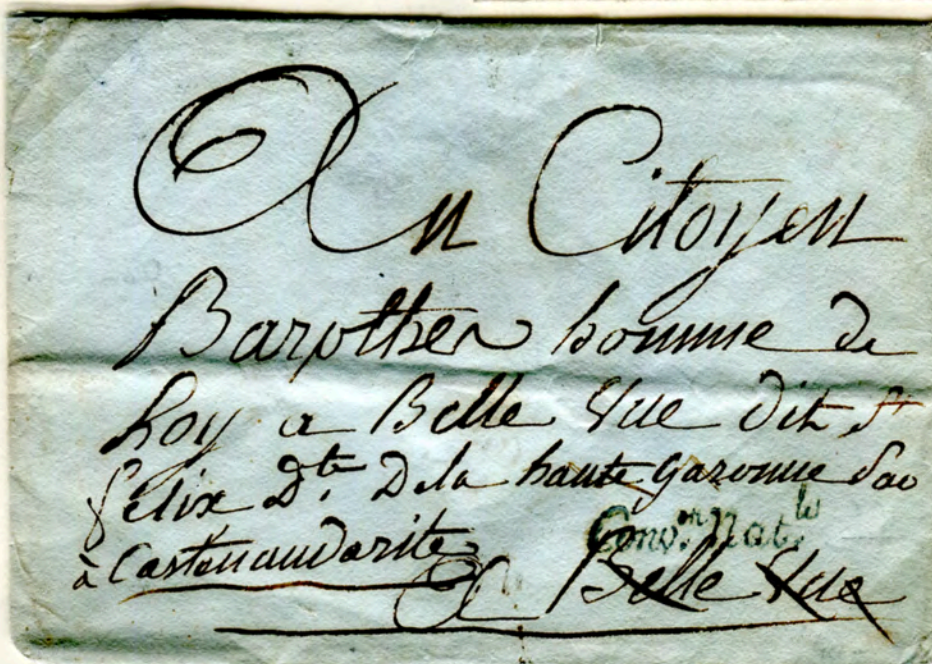
➤ the Republic was proclaimed on September 22 1792

- Paris to Lille
- countersignature of  
the *Convention nationale*  
**Conv.<sup>on</sup> Nat.<sup>le</sup>**
- free letter (franchise)
- sent to the « *président  
et membres du comité  
révolutionnaire...* »

pressé →  
(rush)



au président et membres  
du comité révolutionnaire  
du District de Lille  
à Lille Conv. Nat. le



Au Citoyen  
Barpther homme de  
loi à Belle Vue dit St  
Felix 2e de la haute Garonne Sec  
à Castenauvaritz Belle Vue

- Paris to Belle Vue
- revolutionary name  
for St. Felix
- free letter  
(franchise)
- countersignature of  
the *Convention  
nationale*  
**Conv.<sup>on</sup> Nat.<sup>le</sup>**
- sent to the *Citoyen* -  
revolutionary name  
for 'Sir'



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

*Historical Facts :* The **French Republican Calendar** started the day of the proclamation of the new Republic, on September 22 1792. The system was designed to remove all religious and royalists influences from the calendar.

It will be abolished by Napoléon Bonaparte on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1806.

➤ As of that date, all official documents must use this calendar

#### THE CONVENTION NATIONALE

Weaponry, Powders and Mining Commission of the Republic

**Commission des armes, poudres et mines de la République**



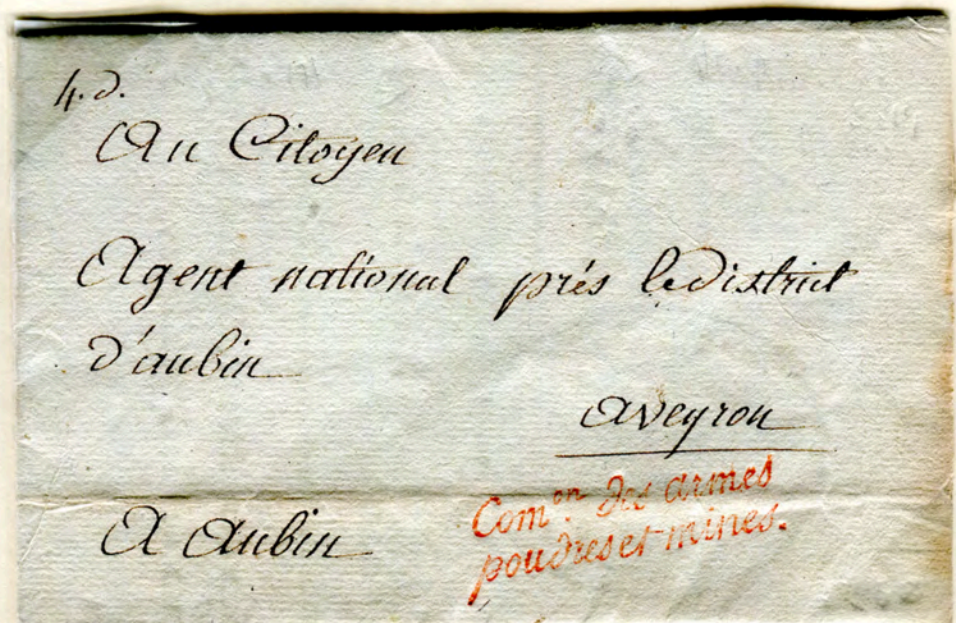
letterhead

- Paris to Aubin
- 14 Messidor an II  
(year 2 of the Republic)  
→ July 2 1794
- franchise from the  
**Com<sup>on</sup>. des armes  
poudres et mines**

- seal -

« French Republic »  
« One and Indivisible »

« Death to Tyrants »  
« Peace to People »



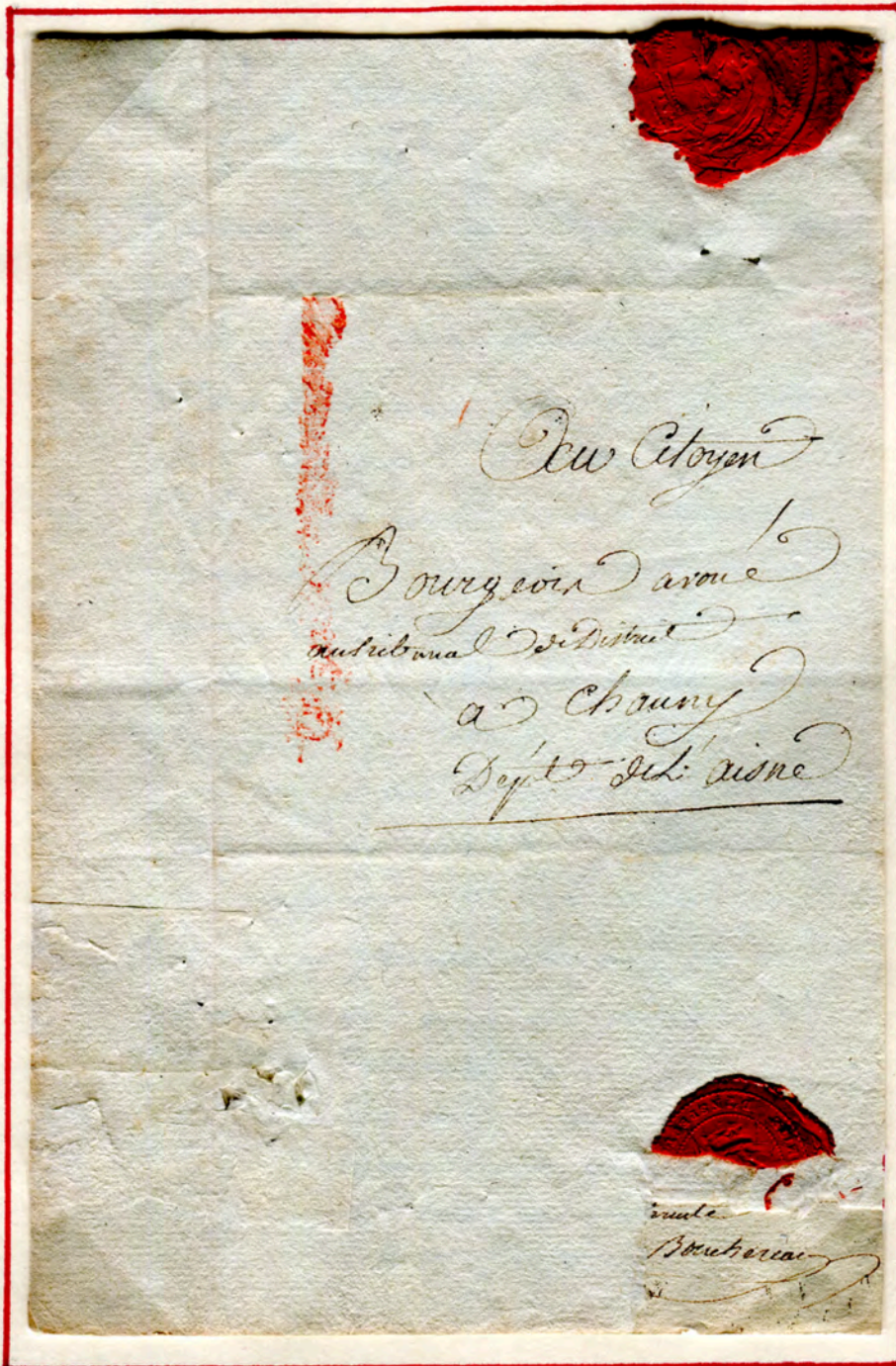
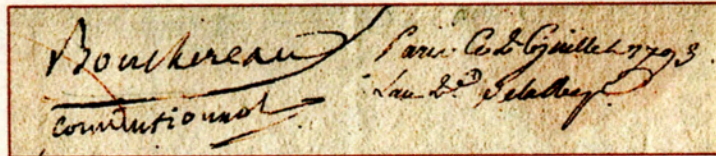


### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

- one of the first tasks of the conventionals was to **decide the fate of the King**
- the majority (361/749) voted « **LA MORT !** »
- King Louis XVI was guillotined on January 21st 1793 to **international condemnation**.

❖ Letter and signature from a **regicide** of King Louis XVI

❖ Conventional who voted for the death of the King

Augustin Bouchereau  
(1756 – 1841)

- Paris to Chaunty
- July 26 1793
- red countersignature  
*Convention nat.*
- franchise
- red seal of the  
Convention



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

- Jean-Michel Chambon-Latour  
1739 - 1815

❖ Letter and signatures from **conventional regicides** of King Louis XVI

- Etienne-Nicolas de Calon  
1726 - 1807

• Paris to Paris • July 29 1793 • franchise

*Bien nationaux  
A. le 31 juillet*

*Paris ce 29 Juillet 1793  
l'an 2<sup>ème</sup> de la République*

*Les membres de la Commission  
du 10 Juin 1793.*

*de l'art VII. de la Loi du dix Juin dernier, les  
double des procès verbaux que nous avons  
dressés de nos opérations, depuis le N<sup>o</sup> 1  
jusqu'à et compris le N<sup>o</sup> 10: nous vous  
prions de vouloir bien nous en accuser la réception.*

*Les Commissaires à la vente  
des effets du garde meuble nationale  
cité St. Florentin.*

*Latour* *Calon*

*P. Louquet  
Secrétaire  
général.*



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

*Historical Facts* : At the beginning of the revolution, members of the nobility, fearing for their safety, fled to neighboring countries. These *émigrés* funded counter-revolutionary causes within France. In return, the French Government confiscated their estates as they became national properties. (Decree of July 27 1792). The National Assembly began to sell the lands to the highest bidder to raise revenue when it was not simply burned down by the insurgents.

THE CONVENTION NATIONALE  
Administration of National Properties  
**Administration des Domaines nationaux**  
**Contentieux des Émigrés**  
Legal Department

CONTENTIEUX DES ÉMIGRÉS.	LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ. Administration des Domaines Nationaux.
AFFICHES DE VENTES.	Paris, le 15. Ventose l'an 2 <sup>e</sup> . de la République une et indivisible.
Départem. <sup>t</sup> du Bas de la Loire District de Boulogne	

letterhead

- Paris to Boulogne
- 15 Ventose an II  
(republican calendar)  
→ March 5 1794
- countersignature : **adm.<sup>on</sup> des dom.nat.<sup>aux</sup>**
- postage free (franchise)

À un Administrateur  
Du District  
à Boulogne / Bas de la Loire  
  
**adm.<sup>on</sup> des dom.nat.<sup>aux</sup>**



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

*Historical Facts* : The possessions of the Roman Catholic Church were declared national property by the **Decree of November 2 1789**. It was sold during the **Convention** to resolve the financial crisis that caused the Revolution.

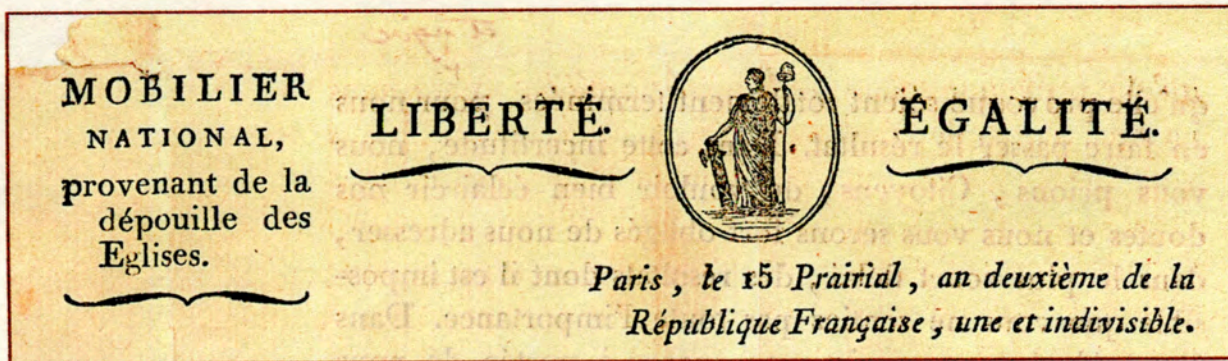
#### THE CONVENTION NATIONALE

Commission of National Revenues

**Commission des Revenus nationaux**

**Mobilier national provenant de la dépouille des Églises**

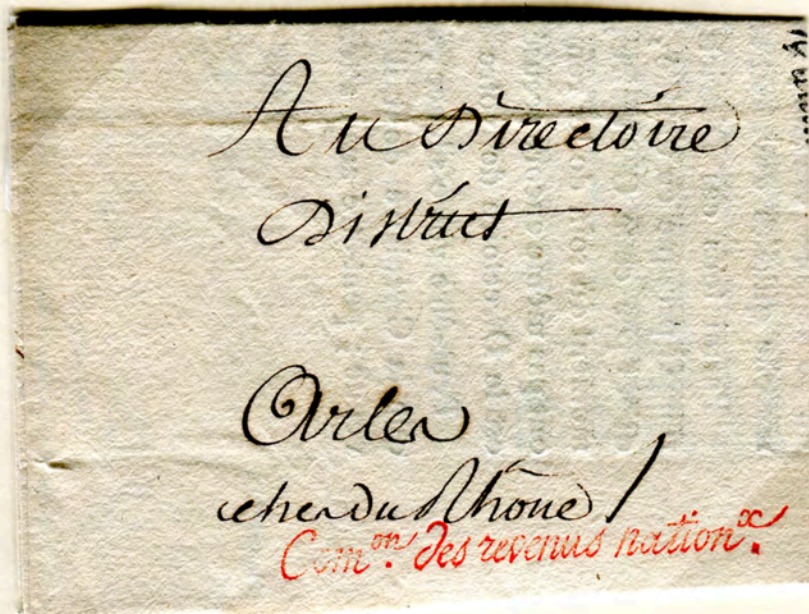
**National Furniture from the Dispossession of the Churches**



letterhead

- Paris to Arles
- 15 Prairial an II  
→ June 3 1794

- countersignature : **Com<sup>on</sup>. des revenus nation<sup>x</sup>.**
- postage free (franchise)





### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### CREATION OF THE COMITÉ DE SALUT PUBLIC. April 6 1793

##### COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY

*Historical facts :* In 1792, after the unsuccessful escape of the King and his family from Paris to Varennes and the *Declaration of Pillnitz* which proclaimed the cause of King Louis XVI; the threat of force merely hastened the French militarization

Following this, on September 20 1792 France declared war to Austria.

The French Government, the *Convention nationale*, created the **COMITÉ DE SALUT PUBLIC**.

The main goal of this Committee was to protect the new Republic from foreign attacks and internal rebellion.

- At the time this letter was written it was a period called the *Grande Terreur* (the **Reign of Terror**) (1793-1794). Maximilien Robespierre was in fact the head of the Republican Government.
- More than 17,000 persons will be guillotined during this period.
- The Thermidorian Reaction represented a reactionary period against the Committee. Its leader, Robespierre will be executed on July 1794.



- Paris to Digne
- 1793
- double circle countersignature
- red ink of the **COMITÉ DE SALUT PUBLIC**

- **CHARGÉ** – at the time equivalent of a registered letter
- control of franchise



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### CREATION OF THE *COMITÉS DE SURVEILLANCE RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE*

##### REVOLUTIONARY MONITORING COMMITTEES

The Revolutionary Monitoring Committees are revolutionary institutions created by decree of the National Convention on March 21, 1793 in all municipalities.

They are charged with "the application of the revolutionary laws and measures of general safety and *salut public*".

Each Committee consists of 12 people.

They will disappear in October 1795 under the Directory

2 letters censured by 2 different agents of the Committee of Châlons -sur-Marne with the mention :

**Vu au Comité  
de Surveillance**

signature

70

- CHALONS-S-M  
to Brives
- April 25 1793
- postage due 9 sols

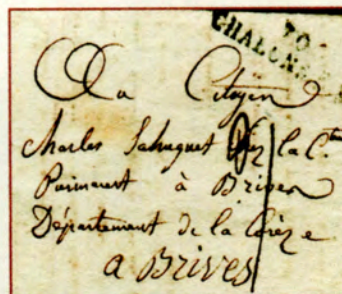
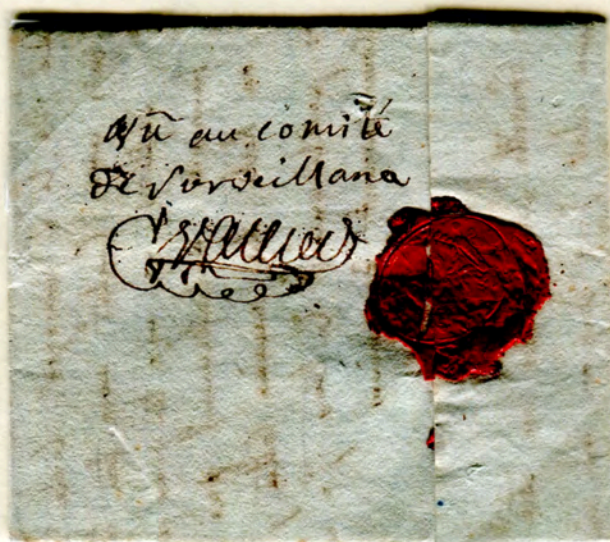


Certificate



70

- CHALONS-S-M  
to Brives
- July 16 1793
- postage due 9 sols



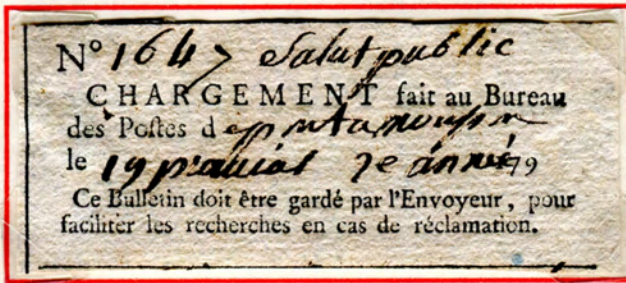
Certificate



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

## \* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC



RECEIPT N° 164

for a REGISTERED LETTER

- from the **Comité de Salut Public**
- issued at Pont-à-Mousson
- 19 prairial an II → June 7 1794
- republican calendar

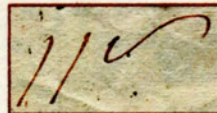
\* **A very rare specimen of Postal History** if we take into account the hectic period and the size of the *Tribunal révolutionnaire* (Revolutionary Tribunal) was a court instituted in Paris by the law of **10 March 1793**

**TRIBUNAL RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE**  
**REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL**

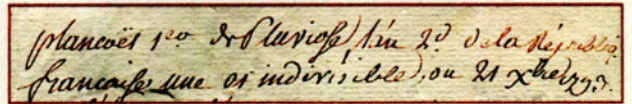
- the tribunal became **one of the most powerful engines of the Reign of Terror**
- the tribunal terrorized the royalists, the refractory priests and the actors of the counter-revolution
- death was the sole penalty
- the Revolutionary Tribunal was **suppressed on May 31 1795**



- Plancouet to Paris
  - postmark of origin
- P.21.P.**  
**PLANCOUET**



back  
11 sols paid by  
sender



letterhead



seal  
*Liberté* with a  
phrygian cap



PHRYGIAN CAP  
Postage Paid

- 1<sup>er</sup> Pluviose an II  
→ January 20 1794
- manuscript *port payé*
- **X** = postage paid



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### *PRISONS RÉVOLUTIONNAIRES* REVOLUTIONARY PRISONS

- Revolutionary prisons are often hospitals or large houses transformed to receive counter-revolutionaries awaiting their trial at the *Tribunal révolutionnaire* (revolutionary tribunal)
- There were more than 50 prisons only in Paris
- Prison conditions varied widely from one place of detention to another. There were epidemics in the poorest prisons. There are an estimated 500,000 people incarcerated during the Terror, that is, one year

#### La Force

- the prison of La Force is a mansion which was transformed into a house of detention and served as a prison for the city of Paris.
- from the beginning of the Terror, it then became a place of political detention where accused and suspects were brought; most were opponents of the new government
- **La Grande Force** was a prison for men while **La Petite Force** was for women



Certificate

- Paris to Paris
- 1793
- franchise for the administrator of the prison



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

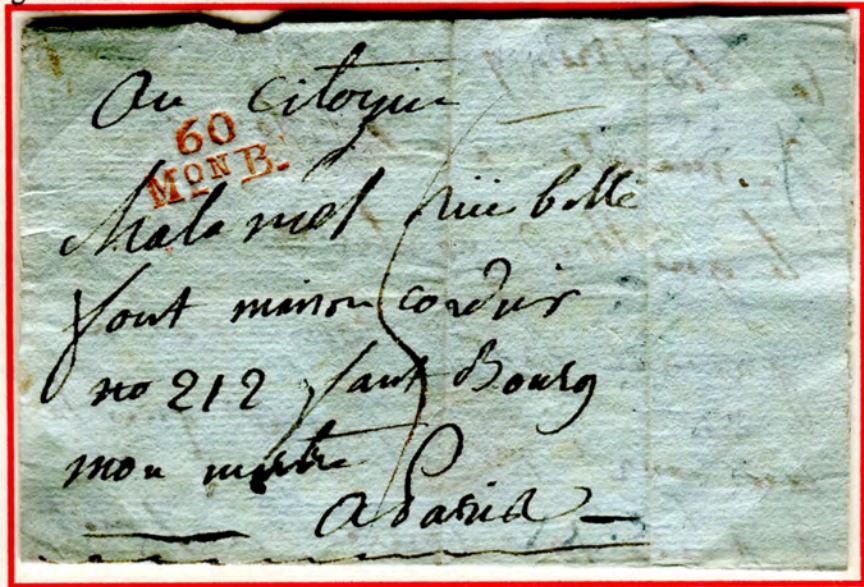
2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

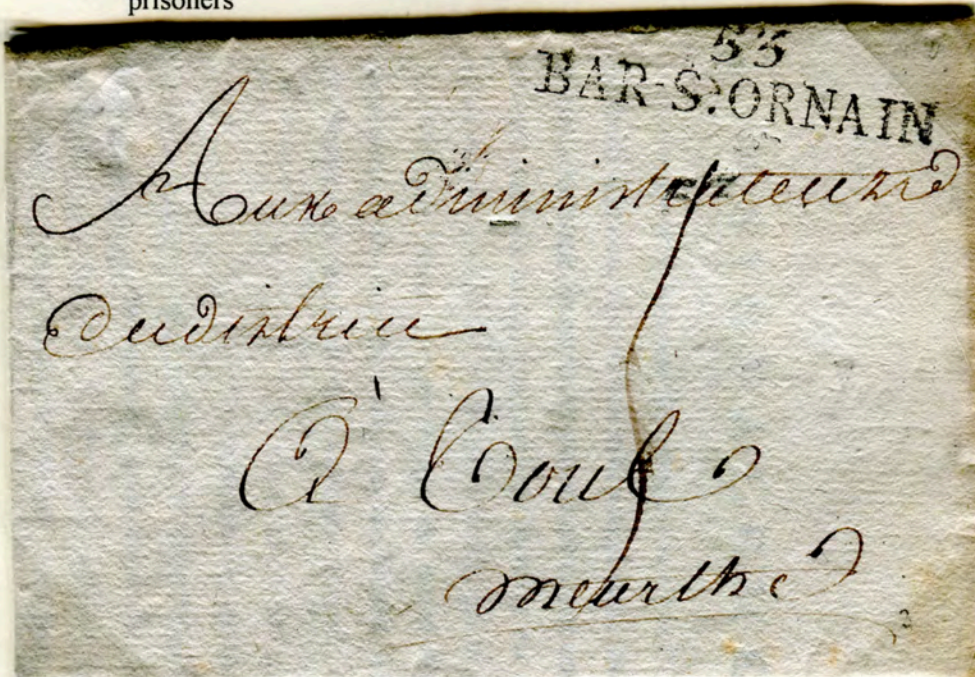
#### La Maison de détention de Bicêtre

- the Maison de Bicêtre was first an hospital for wounded soldiers but during the Revolution and more specifically during the Terror it became the « worst prison for men ».
- criminal suspects and counter-revolutionary political activists are imprisoned together.
- they were mostly sent to the guillotine.

- Paris to Paris
- postmark of origin  
60  
MON B.
- 13 Pluviose an III  
→ February 1st  
1795
- postage due 5 sols



- many *communes* had their own revolutionary prison
- this is the case for **Bar-sur-Ornain**, revolutionary name of Bar-le-Duc
  - ❖ Letter from the *Comité de Sureté Publique* (Committee for Public Safety) concerning 2 escaped prisoners



- Bar-sur-Ornain to Toul
- 18 Thermidor an II
- → August 5 1794

Bar-sur-Ornain, le 18 Thermidor,  
l'an second de la République Française,  
une, indivisible & impérissable.



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

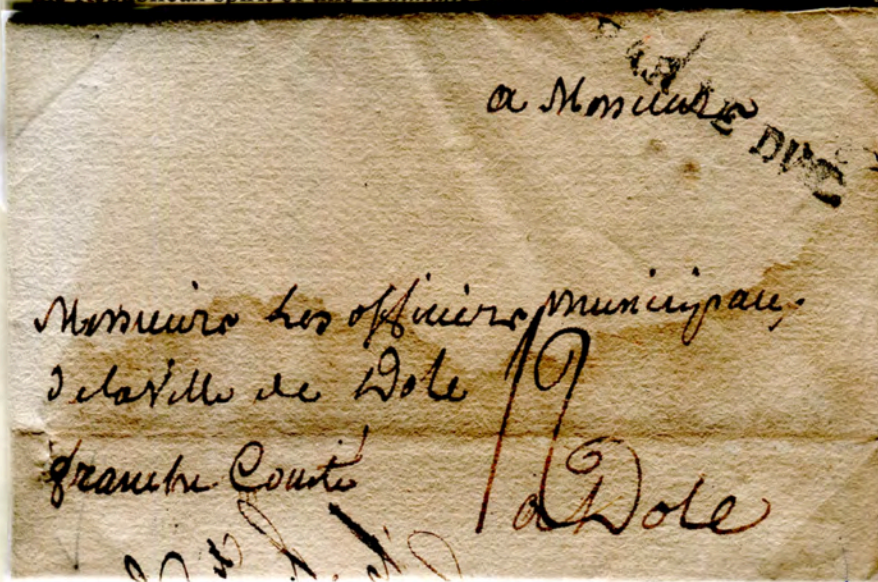
\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

*Historical Facts :* The *communes* are a municipal organization created during the Revolution. On the 25 Vendémiaire an II ( October 16 1793), a **Decree** changed the names of more than 1200 *communes* in a **spirit of dechristianization**. All *communes* with an evocation of feudalism, symbolism of royalty had to change their names. Most of the time it was replaced by a geographical name or a revolutionary virtue. Very few of these names will survive after the Revolution.

#### REVOLUTIONARY NAMES OF THE FRENCH COMMUNES

**Decree changing the name of Bar-le-Duc into Bar-sur-Ornain – October 9 1792**

- the Republican spirit of this *commune* had the name changed before the 1793 Decree.



#### Before the Revolution

- **Bar-le-Duc** to Dole
- 1787
- postage due 12 sols

#### Revolutionary name

- **Bar-sur-Ornain** to Valence
- 3 Prairial an VII  
→ May 22 1799
- postage paid  
**P. 53 P.**  
53 = Meuse department
- **P.P.P.P.**  
transit postmark Grande Poste  
in Paris  
**Port-Payé-Passe-Paris**



letterhead





### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### Revolutionary name : Sarre-Libre / Sarrelouis

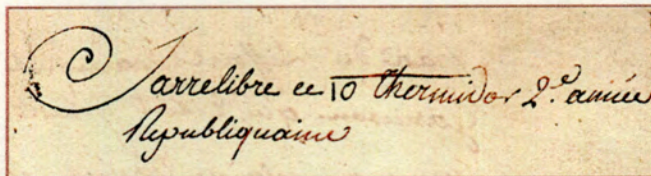
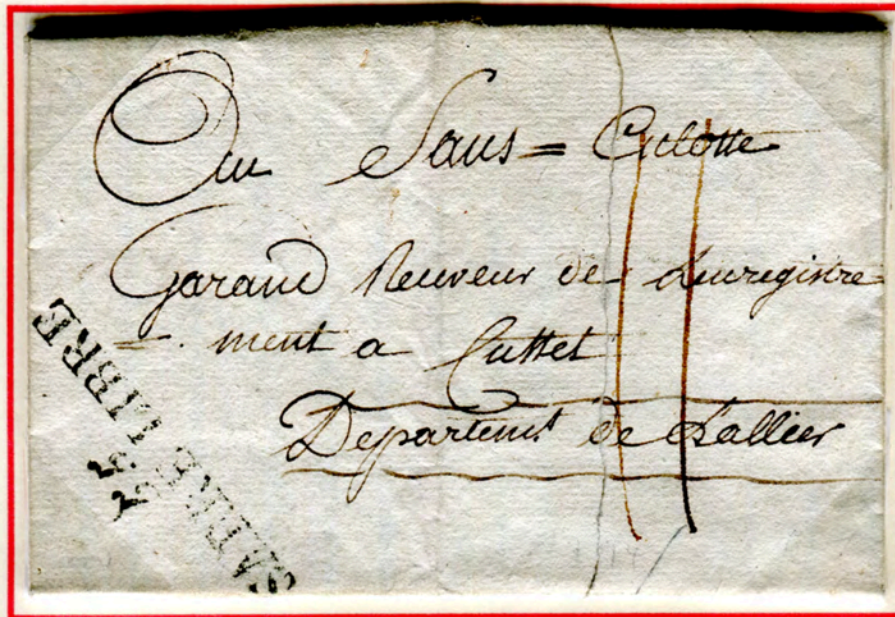
Letter to the *Sans-Culotte* Garand.

*Historical Fact :* The *Sans-Culottes* were « the common people of the lower classes, a great many of whom became radical and militant partisans of the French Revolution ... They were the driving popular force behind the revolution. » (Wiki)

The working class *sans-culottes* traditionally wore *pantalons* instead of silk knee-breeches of the nobility and bourgeoisie.

A fine specimen of French Postal History.

Extremely rare. The only one seen in years.



- Sarre-Libre to Cusset
- 55 = L'Allier department
- 10 Thermidor an II
- → July 28 1794
- postage due 11 sols



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

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\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### Revolutionary name : Havre-Marat / Le Havre

- While the official name of the city of Le Havre had been modified to add the name of the Girondin's hero of the time, Jean-Paul Marat, the postal administration never recognized this and kept the same postmark during the Revolution.
- It is interesting to see that the secretary who wrote this certificate added the word *provisoire* (provisional) to the name of the city in the headletter. Perhaps he was not such an ardent revolutionary after all!

Official document of the city of Havre-Marat  
with a revolutionary name

- quinze Ventôse an II → March 5 1794



- Le Havre to Bordeaux
- 26 Pluviôse an VI  
→ February 14 1798
- 74 = depart. Seine Inférieure
- postage due 13 sols
- no addition of a revolutionary name to the postmark



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### POSTAL ORGANIZATION

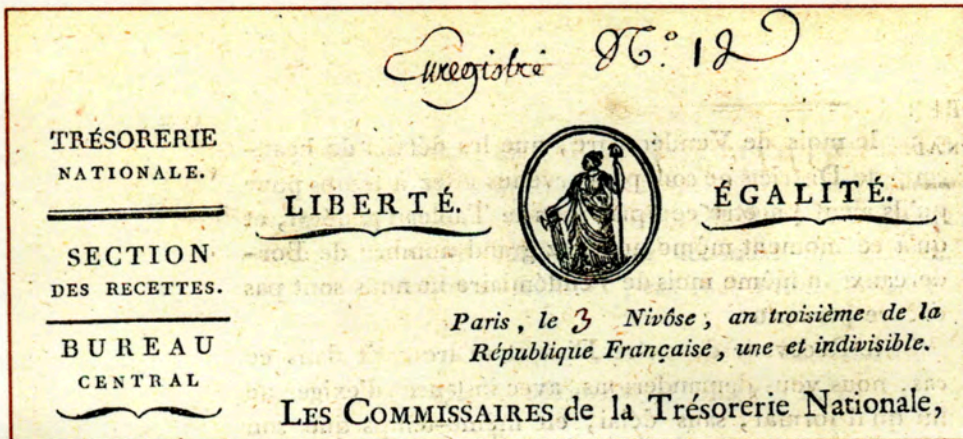
- The postal system will undergo a major change. The directors and comptrollers of the posts are henceforth **elected by the people**. The elected are inexperienced and there are many conflicts.
- the *Trésorerie nationale* will conduct this operation since the postal system brings significant revenues

**Trésorerie nationale**

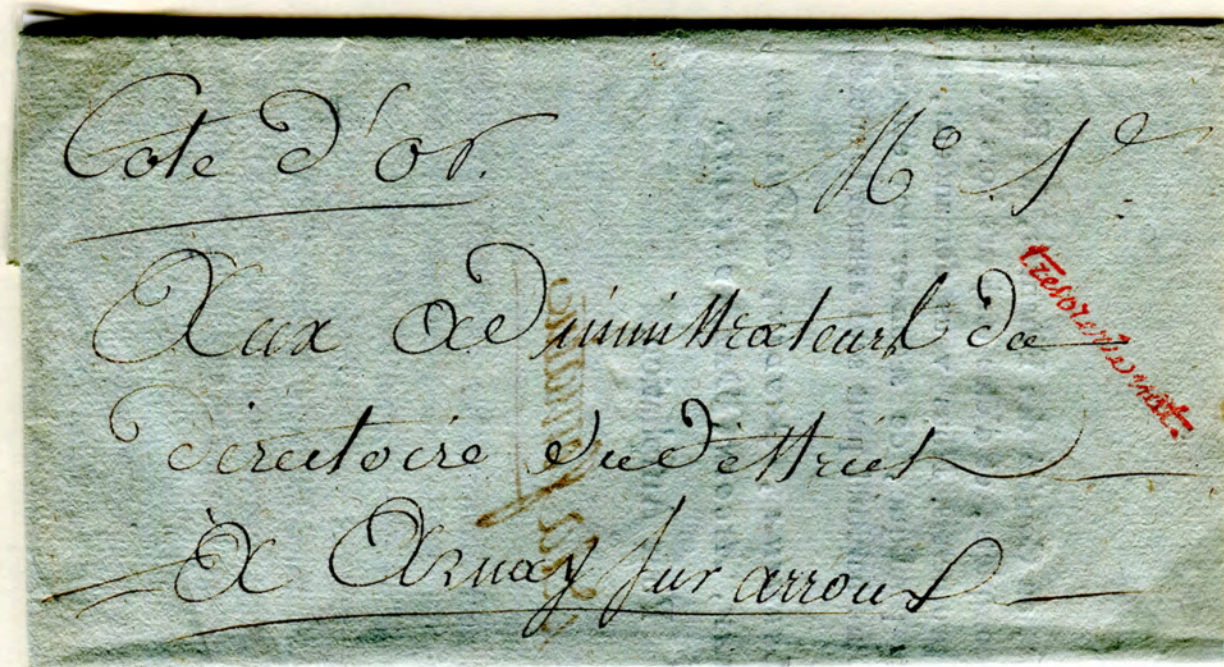
**National Treasury**

**Section des recettes**

**Revenue Section**



letterhead



- Paris to Ornay-sur-Arroux
- revolut. name for :
- Arnay-le-Duc
- countersignature : *trésorerie nationale*
- 3 Nivose an III
- revolut. calendar:
- December 23 1794



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

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\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

- a decree at the end of 1792 creates the *Ministère des Contributions publiques* (Ministry of Public Contributions) of who will depend the Posts

- Paris to Chaumont
- 12 Germinal an II (Republ. calendar)  
April 1st 1794
- countersignature :  
*M<sup>re</sup>. des contr. pub.*
- franchise

*Mes Citoyens*  
*Administrateurs du Département*  
*de la Haute-Marne*  
*À Chaumont* <sup>le</sup> *des contr. pub.*

- in 1793, creation of the *Commission des subsistances et approvisionnements* (Commission on subsistence and supplies)

*Mon Citoyen*  
*Officier Municipal de la*  
*Municipalité de Beaufort*  
*Dépt de Maine et Loire*  
*à Beaufort*  
*Comm<sup>n</sup> des subsistances et approvisionnements*

- Paris to Beaufort
- 20 Ventose an II (Republ. calendar)  
10 mars 1794
- franchise
- countersignature :  
*Comm<sup>n</sup> des*  
*subst<sup>es</sup> et*  
*approvisionnement<sup>s</sup>*



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

- As of May 1st, a Decree merges the *Postes aux Lettres & aux Chevaux, Courriers, Relais & Messageries* into a unique administration: the *Commission des transports, postes et messageries*.

PARIS, le 30 Fructidor, l'An second de la République Française  
une et indivisible.

*Chez Citoyen  
officiers Municipaux  
de la Commune  
à Maletroit.  
Dept. du Morbihan.*

*Com. des transports  
postes et messag.*

- Paris to Maletroit
- September 16 1794
- countersignature from the Commission



seal on back

Text with signatures of the administrators telling the municipal officers to give each worker a proportional salary...

proscrire les bénéfices abusifs; en assurant à chaque Préposé un salaire proportionné à ses travaux et à ses avances, et c'est pour parvenir à ce but qu'il doit remettre le traitement de ces Citoyens, sous la sauvegarde des connoissances, et s'en rapporter à la justice des Municipalités.

Nous espérons, Citoyens, que vous vous empresserez de répondre à sa confiance; que vous ne perdrez pas un instant à délivrer aux Préposés de votre Commune les Certificats prescrits par cet Arrêté.

Salut et fraternité.

*Darbois* *Muller*  
*Subyffet*  
*J. Pietrang*



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

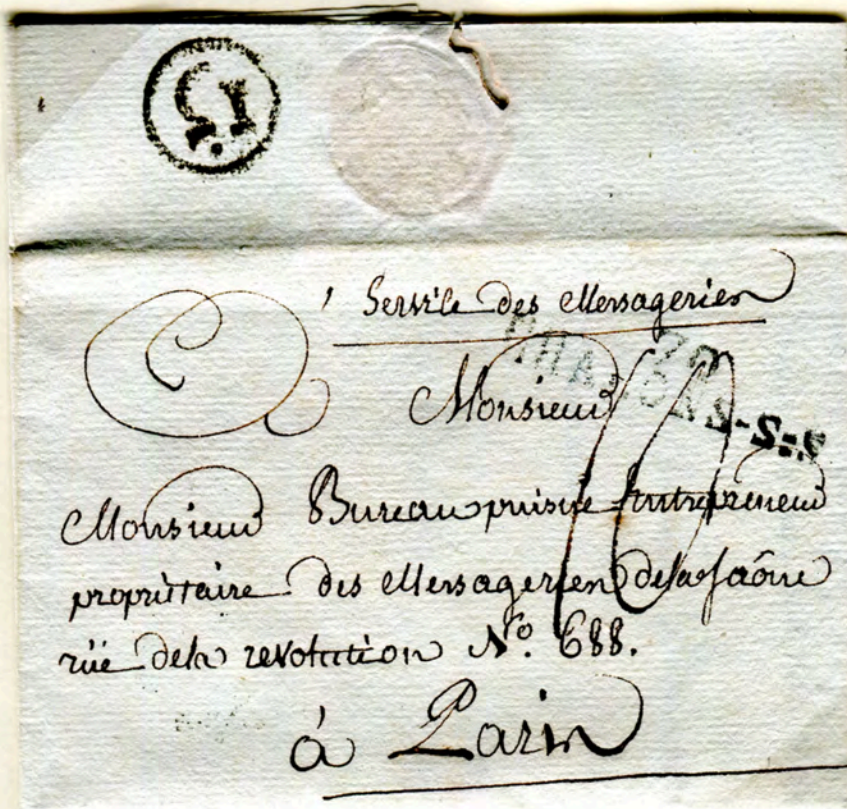
- > the Commission had different offices depending on the service
- > addressed to the *Service des Messageries* in Paris

- Lyon to Paris
- 15 Brumaire an V  
→ November 5 1796
- postage due 10 sols
- date of arrival in Paris  
*Grande Poste*



Lyon le 15. Brumaire, an V.

letterhead



- Chalon-sur-Saône
- 11 Prairial an V  
→ May 30 1797
- postage due 10 sols
- date of arrival in Paris  
*Grande Poste*



Chalon s.S. 11 Prairial an V.

letterhead



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

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\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

➤ Starting mid-June 1794, the name of the postal service will change for the **Agence des postes aux lettres** ... it explains the name crossed out on the document.

❖ letter about a courier who asks a raise in his salary since he travels from Rhodéz to Laguiole, a distance of 8 lieues, on horseback 3 times a day for only 2700 sols; he claims that he cannot continue for this price...

*Le Citoyen Leguin entrepreneur du service de Rhodéz  
à Laguiole distance de 8 lieues qui fait à cheval 3 fois  
par jour pour 2700<sup>s</sup>, nous demande que si l'augmentation  
des denrées, il ne peut plus le continuer pour ce prix, comme*

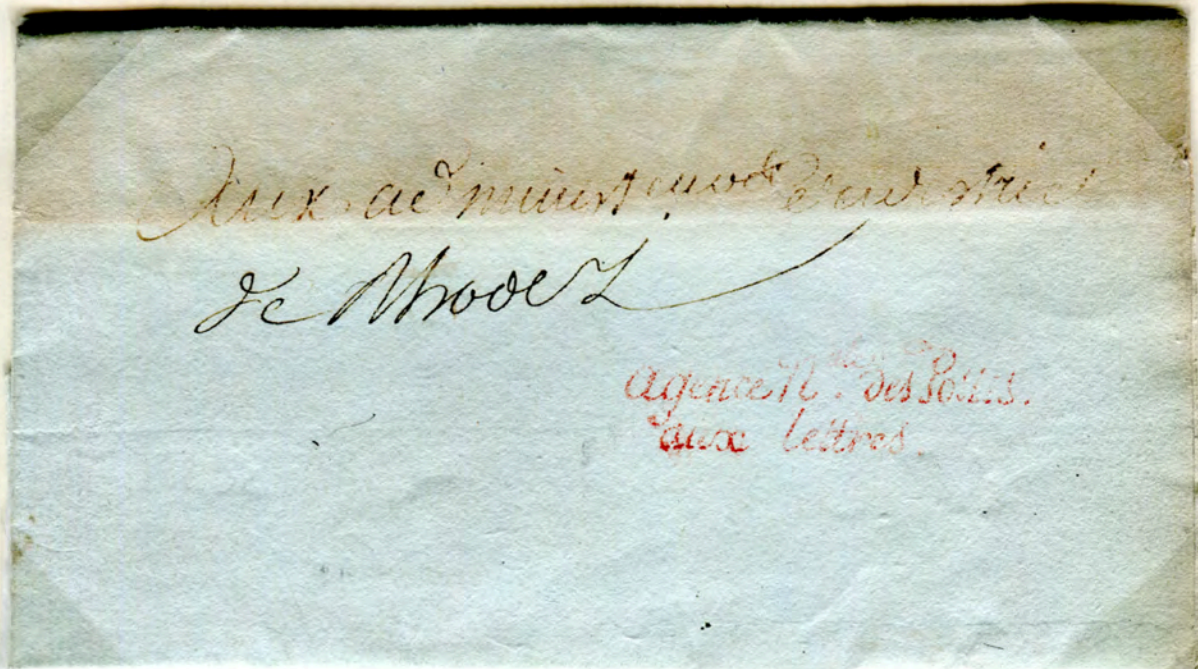
*Agence n<sup>le</sup>*  
ADMINISTRATION  
des *lettres*  
Postes & Messageries. LIBERTÉ. ÉGALITÉ.

*Paris, le 17 Nivose de l'an 3<sup>e</sup> de la  
République française, une & indivisible.*

*294. Dina*  
*de l'Etat Civil*

*Le Citoyen Leguin*  
aux *lettres*  
Les Administrateurs des Postes & Messageries,  
aux Administrateurs du District de Rhodéz

letterhead



- Paris to Rhodéz
- 17 nivose an III  
→ January 6 1795

*Agence N. des Postes  
aux lettres.*

countersignature

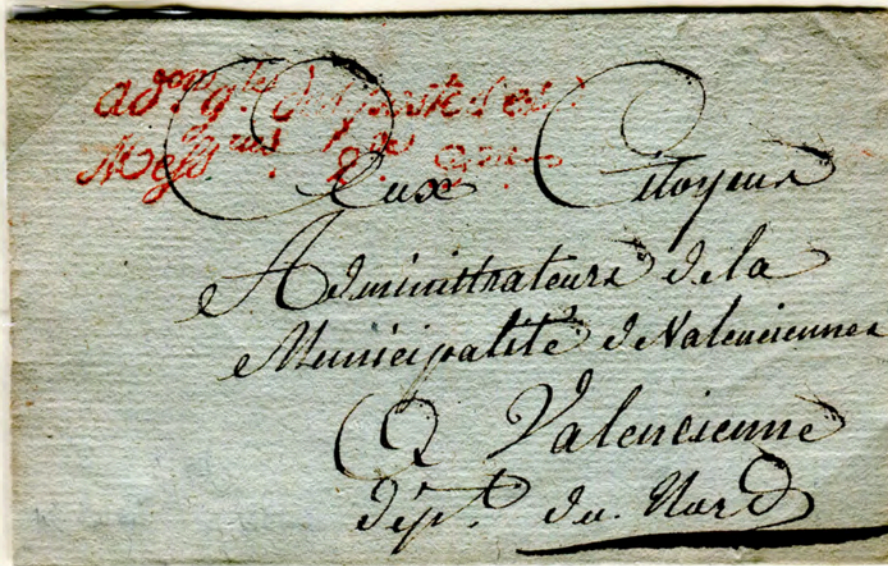


### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

- on 27 Prairial an III (May 30 1795), the Convention decides to cancel the Postal Agency and creates the *Administration générale des Postes et Messageries*. The postal administration will be under the direct control of the Ministry of Finances.



- Paris to Valenciennes
- office 1795-1798
- franchise

countersignature →

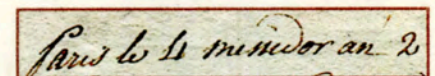
note : 2<sup>de</sup> Division is the *Messageries* bureau



- Paris to Crest
- postmark of origin



- Messidor an II  
4 → June 22 1794



letterhead

❖ letter from a postal inspector about a transport contract : « ...il faudrait solliciter auprès de la Convention nationale, la confirmation des concessions de transports qui nous ont été fait ...et que nous pourrions peut être l'obtenir... »



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

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\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

**BUREAU ROYAL DE CORRESPONDANCE GÉNÉRALE (1781)**

↓ during the Revolution

**BUREAU DE CORRESPONDANCE GÉNÉRALE (1792)**

↓

**BUREAU CORRESPONDANCE NATIONALE ET ÉTRANGÈRE (1796)**

➤ The Bureau handles business and collections in Paris and abroad for people who can not do it themselves; it is the only office authorized by the government.

➤ in 1781, this office acquired special postmarks :

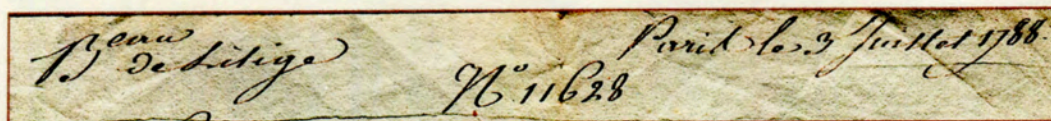
- a circle with 3 fleurs-de-lys with the name of the bureau in the inner circle
- the postage paid letter has the mention : **PORT FRANC** in the circle

**BUREAU ROYAL DE CORRESPONDANCE GÉNÉRALE (1781)**

Postage paid

- with PORT FRANC 3 FLEURS-DE-LYS
- **P. PAYÉ PARIS** (*Grande Poste* in Paris)

- Paris to Charolles
- 1788
- postage paid 8 sols as seen on back →



letterhead

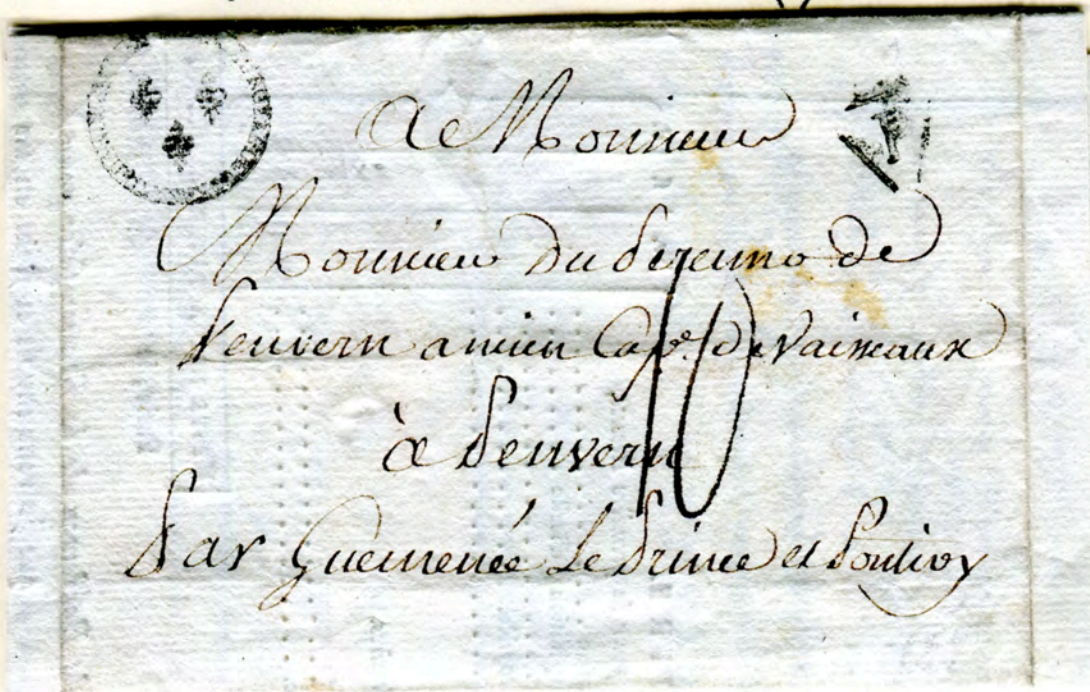


### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

- *Before the Revolution*, this office managed the affairs of all persons who can not take care of their income in Paris and throughout the Kingdom
- it was called the **BUREAU 'ROYAL' DE CORRESPONDANCE GÉNÉRALE** until 1792
  - with 3 FLEURS-DE-LYS
  - postmark of the *Grande Poste* in Paris



- Paris to Penvern
- August 6 1790
- postage due 10 sols

- September 22 1792, a law orders the disappearance of all the symbols of royalty
- November 1793, a decree reminds that all *fleurs-de-lys* must disappear of all postal documents
- it is now called the **BUREAU DE CORRESPONDANCE GÉNÉRALE**
  - the 3 FLEURS-DE-LYS are « scratched »
  - the word « royale » is erased on the inner circle



- Paris to Nice
- April 18 1793
- postage due 13 sols



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### BUREAU CORRESPONDANCE NATIONALE ET ÉTRANGÈRE (1796)

Postage paid

- Postmark of the Grande Poste in Paris



- Paris to Beausset
- 24 Fructidor an IV  
→ September 10 1796
- postage paid



letterhead



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

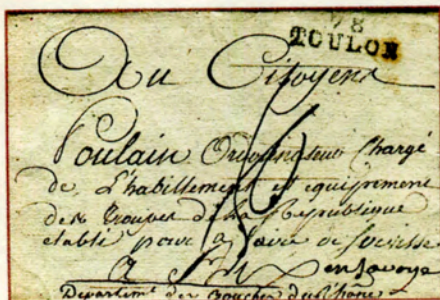
\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### DÉBOURSE - Extra charge

« Operation carried out in the sorting office to determine all the taxes payable on a letter which cannot be delivered. The details of the extra charge are always given on the verso of a letter. »

- in 1792, in France, appears a specific postmark for the *déboursés*. It is affixed to the back of the letter. These postal markings will be abolished around 1832.

- Toulon to Aix
- 28 Prairial an IV  
→ June 16 1796
- postage due 50 sols  
manuscript striked  
**chargé = paid**
- redirected in Savoy



- Amiens to Chambéry
- 17 Floréal (year unknown)
- postage due 12 sols
- redirected in Grenoble





### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### EN NUMÉRAIRE

The law of 6<sup>th</sup> Nivose year IV (December 27 1795) introduces a new postal rate. Article V stipulates that letters coming from abroad may be **paid in 'numéraire' (cash) on the old tariff** or in '**assignats**' as coming from beyond 150 leagues.

The instruction of the same date sent to the Post Office directors states: "The letters coming from abroad will receive **2 taxes, one in cash and the other in assignats, the one in cash will be shown on the recto. The assignats will be on the back of the letter**".

To avoid any confusion between the 2 payment methods, this red postal marking was created to be affixed to the front of the letters concerned.

- Danzig to Bordeaux
- April 1st 1796
- tax in 'numéraire' - **recto** 34 sols
  - Danzig to Paris : 24 sols
  - Paris to Bordeaux : 10 sols
- tax equivalent : 4 groschen in Danzig currency
- tax in 'assignat' - **verso** 10 sols
- expert signature : Dr. Migliavacca
- dry seal





### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

*Historical facts* : **Assignats** were a fiduciary currency established under the French Revolution. The property of the clergy had been confiscated; the government decided to create a new currency whose value corresponds to these properties.

- From 1790, the assignats became paper money.
- In 1793, the state passed laws for which the **death penalty** for the refusal to accept transactions paid by assignats. The State realized the damage caused: inflation, falsification by the too large emission of assignats.
- They were finally destroyed in 1796

Letter sent to *La Société républicaine de Clermont* : *Bylaw from the Conseil du département de Haute-Garonne.*

- Toulouse to Clermont
  - September 30 1793
  - red franchise : **Dept h<sup>te</sup>. garonne**
- ...death penalty for anyone in possession of metallic money...  
...every citizen is invited to denounce....

Confidérant que la circulation desdites especes monnoyées métalliques étant prohibée, sous peine de mort, par l'Arrêté des Représentans du Peuple , du 12 Septembre , il est aussi instant

4.<sup>o</sup> Tout citoyen qui dénoncerait un possesseur d'especes monnoyées pour ne les avoir pas remises , ou pour les avoir cachées ou enfouies , recevra en assignats pour prix de sa dénonciation, si elle se trouve véritable , la moitié de la somme découverte par ses soins , ou les indications qu'il aura





### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

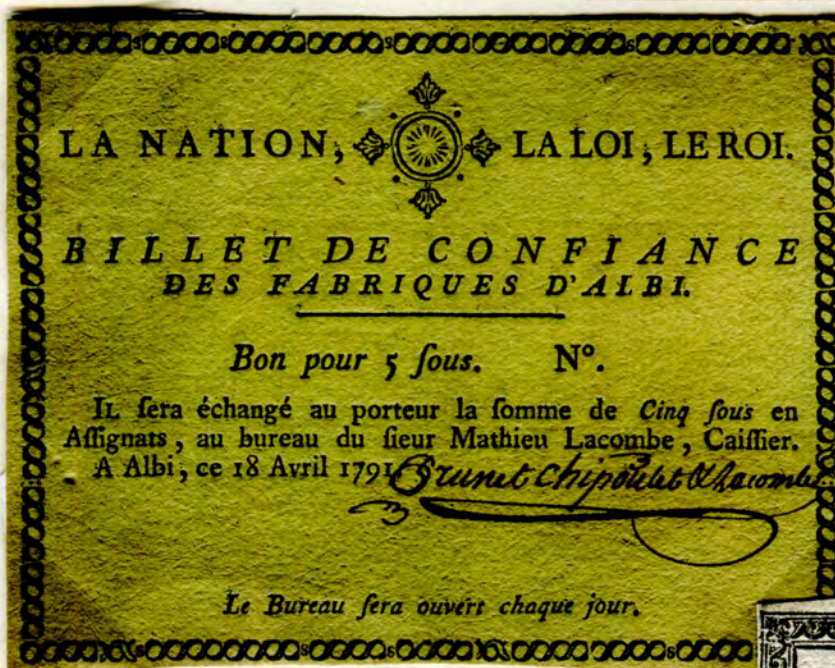
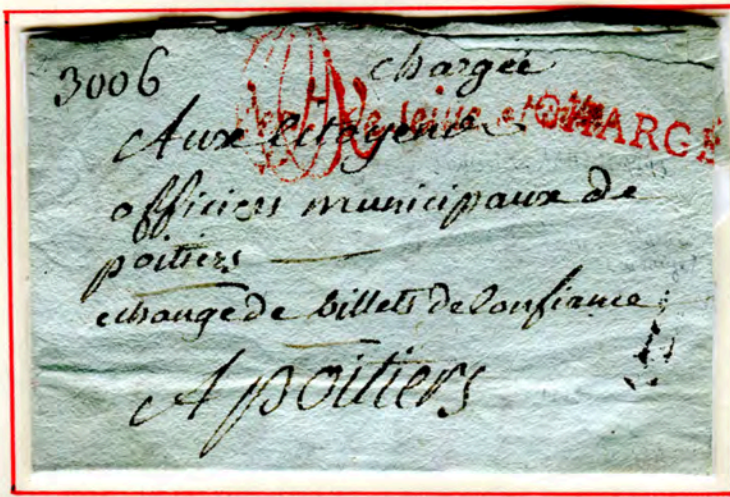
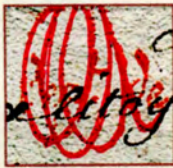
2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

- until 1791, the smallest face value of the *assignats* was 50 pounds which is a relatively large sum for the workers.
- to overcome this lack of small cash which complicates the daily life of the inhabitants, some municipalities, issued small vouchers = « *billets de confiance* »; these are often in cardboard or in color
- they were exchangeable for *assignats*

Letter requesting the exchange of *billets de confiance* for *assignats*.

- Angerville to Poitiers
- April 18 1793
- manuscript *chargée*
- in red **CHARGÉ**
- franchise



↑  
BILLET DE CONFIANCE

ASSIGNAT →





### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### 2. SEPTEMBER 1792 – NOVEMBER 1799

##### FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

3 stages in the Government

- *CONVENTION NATIONALE* (NATIONAL CONVENTION) September 21 1792 to October 25 1795
- *DIRECTOIRE* (DIRECTORY) October 26 1795 to November 9 1799
- *CONSULAT* (CONSULATE) November 10 1799 to May 17 1804

##### THE DIRECTOIRE (DIRECTORY)

3 levels of government :

- the Executive Directory (*Directoire exécutif*)
- the Council of Ancients (*Conseil des Anciens*)
- the Council of Five Hundred (*Conseil des Cinq-Cents*)

*Historical facts* : The Directory concentrated on ending the excesses of the Reign of Terror; mass executions stopped, and measures taken against exiled priests and royalists were relaxed. In 1799, Bonaparte returned from Egypt in October, and was engaged by the Abbé Sieyès and other moderates to carry out a parliamentary "coup d'état" on 8–9 November 1799. The coup abolished the Directory, put the French Consulate led by Bonaparte in its place, and effectively ended the French Revolution.

##### DIRECTOIRE EXÉCUTIF (*Executive Directory*)

5 members



- Paris to Bar-sur-Ornain (revolutionary name of Bar-le-Duc)
- 1<sup>er</sup> Ventose an IV → February 20 1796
- countersignature **DIRECTOIRE EXÉCUTIF**
- free postage for the government (franchise)





### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

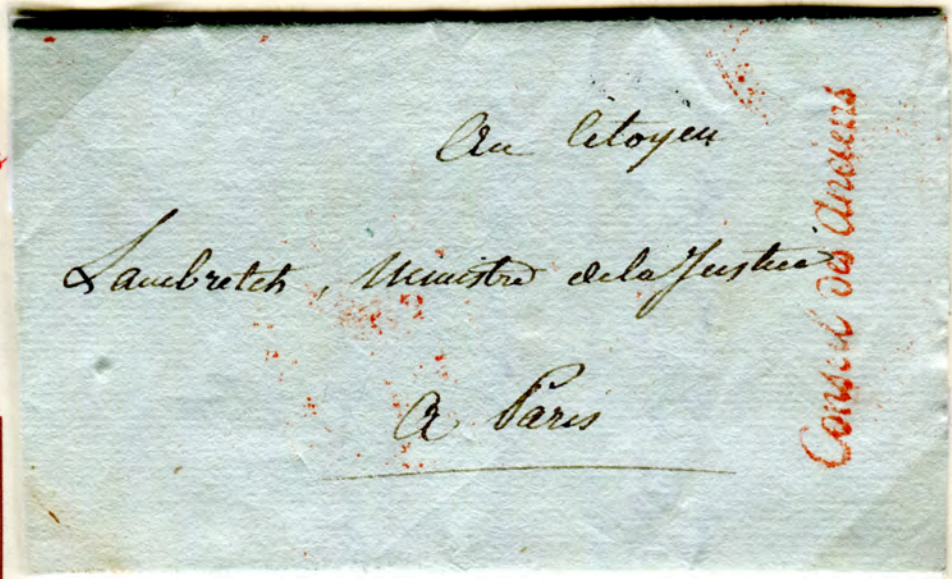
\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### CONSEIL DES ANCIENS (*Council of Ancients*)

Upper House - 250 members

The Ancients or Elders could accept or reject laws put forward by the *Lower House* or Council of Five Hundred.

- Paris to Paris
- 27 Thermidor an VI  
→ August 14 1798
- countersignature :  
*Conseil des Anciens*
- free frank  
    back
- seal in red ink
- 27 date of reception
- **M** in a circle :  
messenger office responsible  
for the deputies' mail



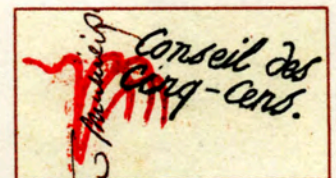
#### CONSEIL DES CINQ-CENTS (*Council of Five Hundred*)

Lower House - 500 members

Its delegates proposed legislation; the Council of Ancients could accept or veto these laws.



- Paris to Valenciennes
- 8 Frimaire an IV  
→ November 29 1795
- postage free
- countersignature :  
*Conseil des Cinq-Cents*
- red mark : control  
↓ of franchise





### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

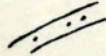
2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC



**P.9.P.**

- **ERVY** to Plombière
- 27 Ventose an IV  
March 17 1796
- postage paid
- **P.P.P.**  
transit mark  
Port-Payé-Passe-Paris

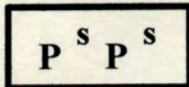
-  freemason mark ?

❖ Letter from the *Commission du Directoire exécutif près le Département des Bouches-du-Rhône*.

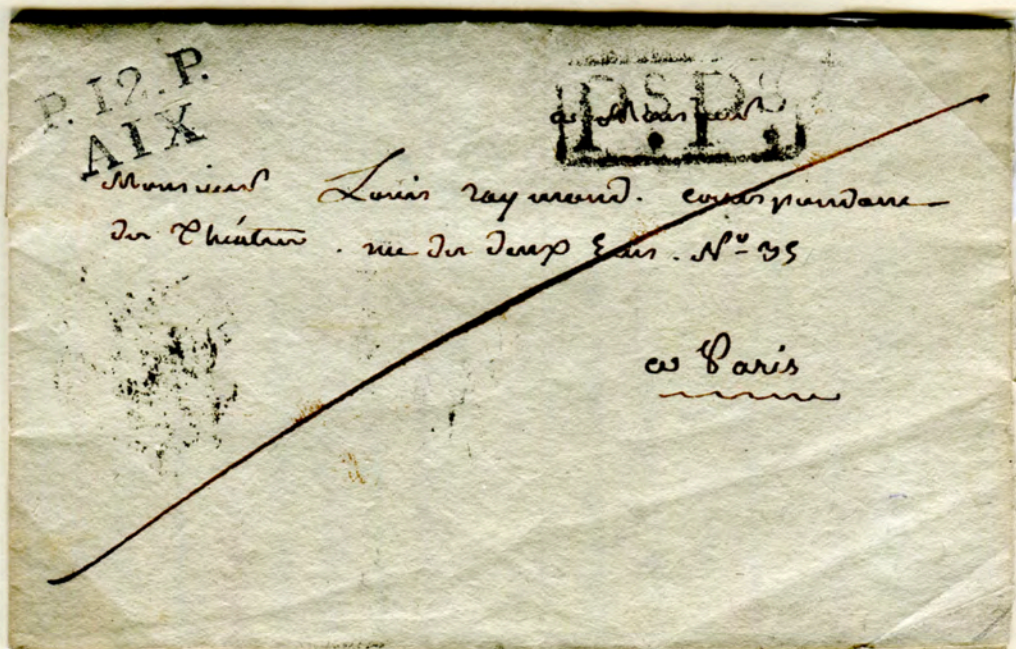
**P.12.P**

- **AIX** to Paris
- 24 July 1804
- postage paid
- reception mark  
Hôtel des Postes  
on letter to Paris

**Port-Payé-Pour-Paris**



back



- Hôtel des Postes
- on letters from departments  
to Paris
- received by office T
- 3rd round



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

#### PETITE POSTE DE PARIS

- Paris to Paris
- November 8 1792
- postage due 2 sols

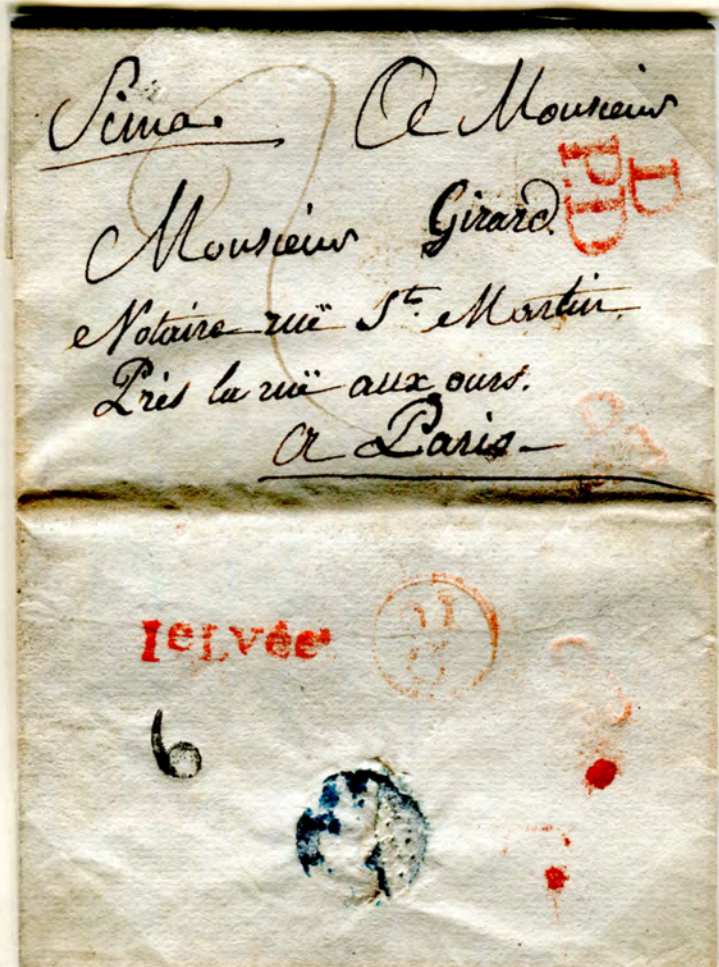
**D**

**P.D.**

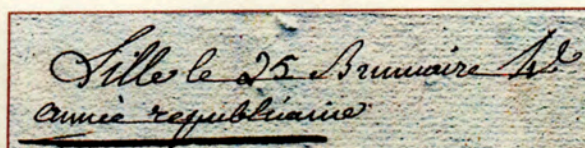
- P.D. = postage due
- mailed at box D
- *Sima* (upper left)  
name of the sender  
back



- D = cachet from the postman
- 10 = district number
- **1<sup>e</sup> L<sup>vee</sup>** = first collect
- 6 = time of day

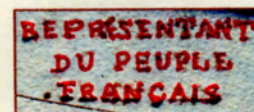


- Lille to Sceaux-L'Unité  
revolutionary name of Sceaux
- canton de l'Egalité  
revolutionary name for the  
canton of Anthony
- November 16 1796
- post paid - franchise



letterhead

- countersignature



certificate



### III. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

2. SEPT. 1792 - NOV. 1799

\* THE FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

*Historical Facts* : The repression suffered by the priests of the Catholic Church at the beginning of the Revolution will continue until the end of the Directory. The arrival of Napoléon Bonaparte and the establishment of the Consulate will allow the return of priests and their activities in France.

❖ Letter from the « *Ministre de la Police générale* » to the prefect of the Côte d'Or department.  
« ... I am instructed that rebellious priests carry out their activities ... you will take effective measures to monitor these individuals and repress their offenses... ».

• Paris to Dijon

• 14 Floréal an VIII → Republ. calendar

• franchise – countersignature from the Minister

• May 4 1799

Régré le 19 floréal An 8, N° 3034

Division.

4. Bureau

Liberté.



Egalité.

N° 2443. S. 2.

Paris, le 14 floréal an 8<sup>e</sup> de la  
République une et indivisible.

Le Ministre instruit, Citoyen préfet, que des  
prêtres insoumis exercent leur culte dans le  
Canton de Meursault. J'attends de votre zèle que  
vous vous assurerez de la vérité de cette assertion,  
et que vous prendrez des mesures efficaces pour  
surveiller ces individus et réprimer leurs délits.

Salut et fraternité.  
Fouché

front

Ab. de la police

Min. de la Police

du Dép. de la Côte d'Or

(Dijon)



#### IV. THE **CONSULAT** (CONSULATE)

Nov. 1799 – May 1804

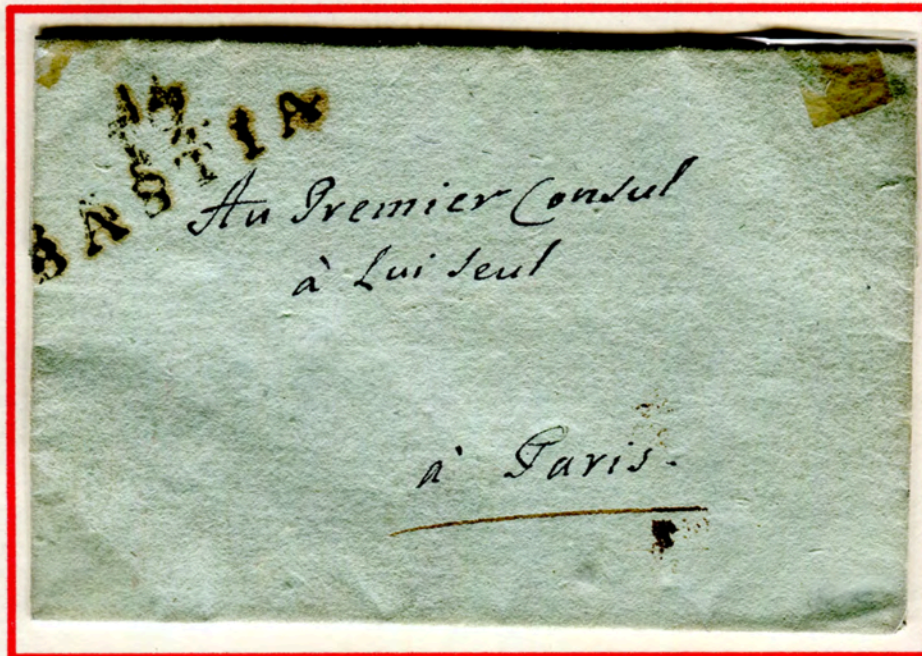
*Historical facts :* The **coup of 18 Brumaire** (November 9 1799) brought General Napoléon Bonaparte to power as **First Consul** of France, and, in the view of most historians, **ended the French Revolution**. The *coup d'état* overthrew the Directory, replacing it with the Consulate.

#### FRENCH FIRST REPUBLIC

3 stages in the Government

- *CONVENTION NATIONALE* (NATIONAL CONVENTION) September 21 1792 to October 25 1795
- *DIRECTOIRE* (DIRECTORY) October 26 1795 to November 9 1799
- *CONSULAT* (CONSULATE) November 10 1799 to May 17 1804

#### LETTER ADRESSED TO NAPOLEÓN BONAPARTE 1<sup>ST</sup> CONSUL



appraisal by expert R. Gratton

- Bastia (Corsica) to Paris
- 1800
- postage paid

back  
11 décimes

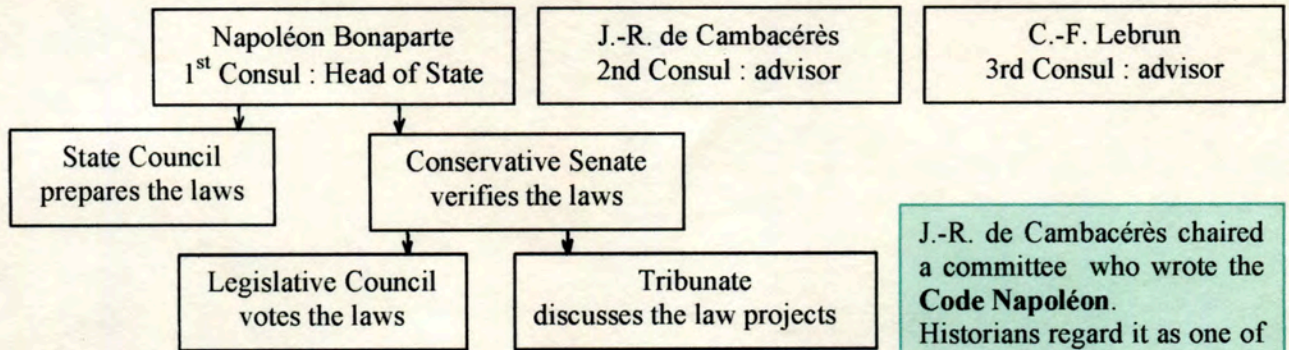




#### IV. THE CONSULAT (CONSULATE)

NOV. 1799 – MAY 1804

##### THE CONSULATE : THE GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION



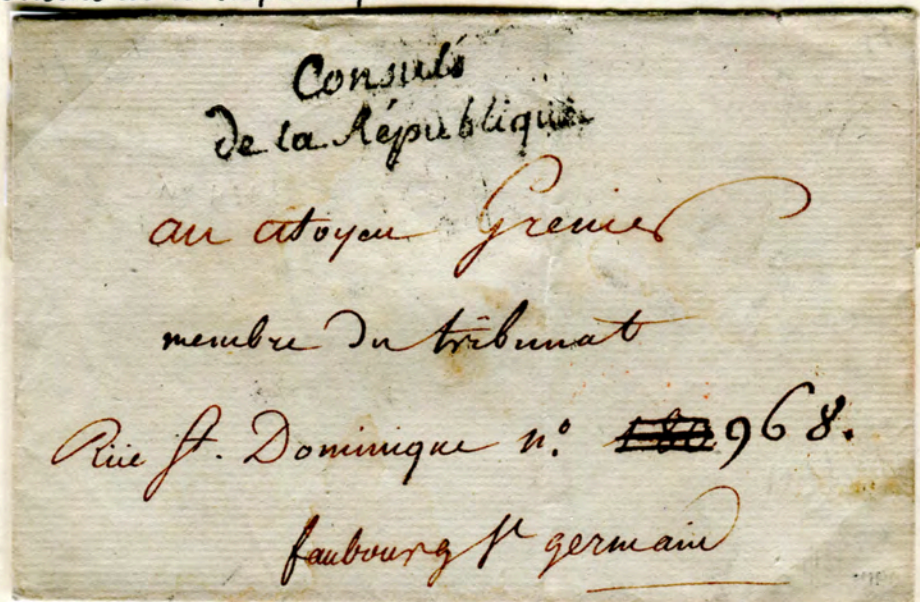
J.-R. de Cambacérés chaired a committee who wrote the **Code Napoléon**. Historians regard it as one of the few documents that have influenced the whole world.

- ❖ Letter from J.-Régis de Cambacérés with
  - countersignature : *Consuls de la République*

- Paris to Paris
- 1799 – 1804
- franchise

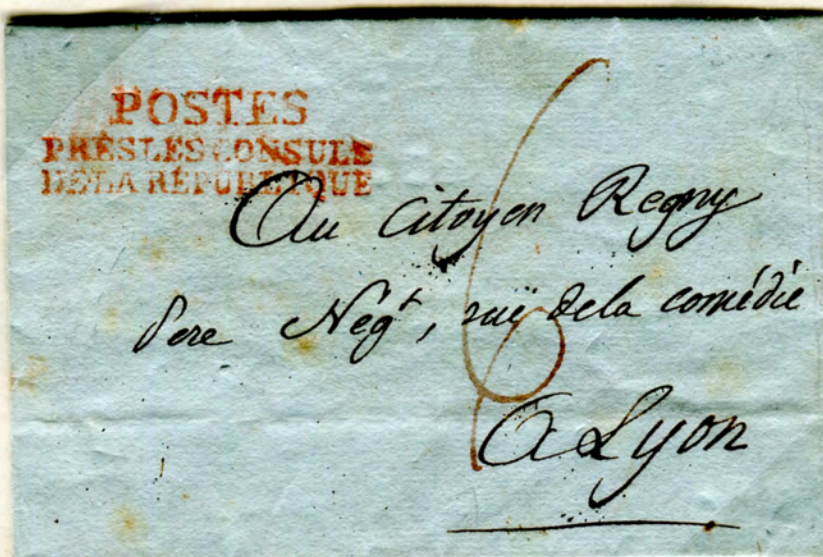


back



seal of CAMBACÉRÈS 2<sup>ème</sup> CONSUL DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE

certificate

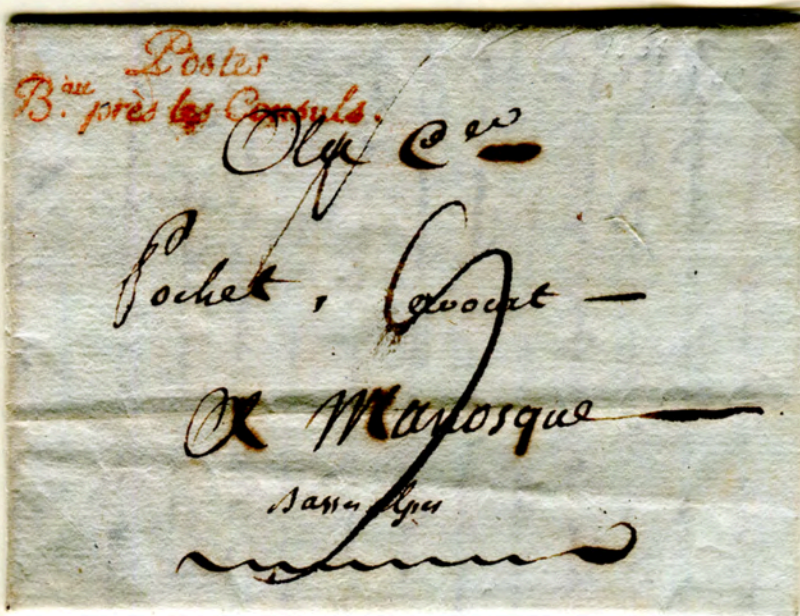


- Paris to Lyon
- 2 Messidor an VIII  
→ June 21 1800
- postage due 6 décimes
- countersignature :

**POSTES  
PRÈS LES CONSULS  
DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE**



#### IV. THE CONSULAT (CONSULATE) NOV. 1799 – MAY 1804



- Paris to Manosque
- 14 Thermidor an IX  
→ August 2<sup>sd</sup> 1801
- postage due 9 décimes
- countersignature (1801-1802)

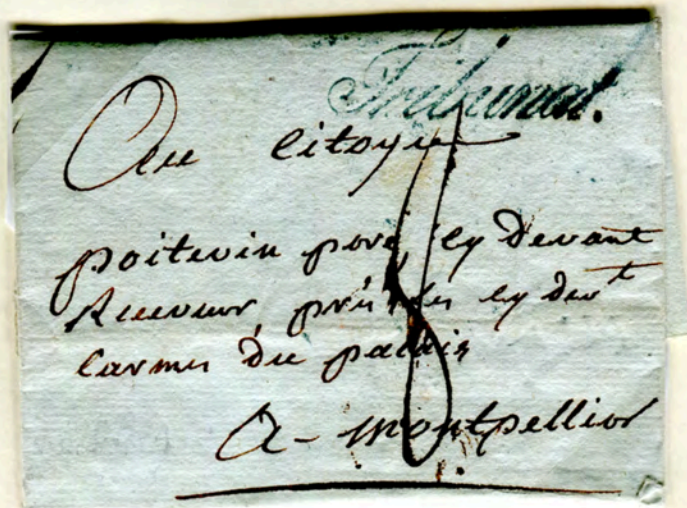
*Postes*  
*B. au près les Consuls.*

Letter from J.-F. Crassous, president of the *Tribunat*

- Paris to Montpellier
- 17 Nivose an IX  
→ January 7 1801
- postage due 8 décimes
- countersignature  
*Tribunat*



back  
seal  
**TRIBUNAT**



Interesting text : « ...je sors de chez le 1er consul  
...après avoir fait une heure et demie d'antichambre  
je suis parvenu à lui parler avant que l'envoyé russe  
lui soit présenté... »

« ...I am coming out of the First Consul's house ...  
after having spent an hour and a half in the  
antechamber, I managed to talk to him before the  
Russian envoy was introduced to him... »

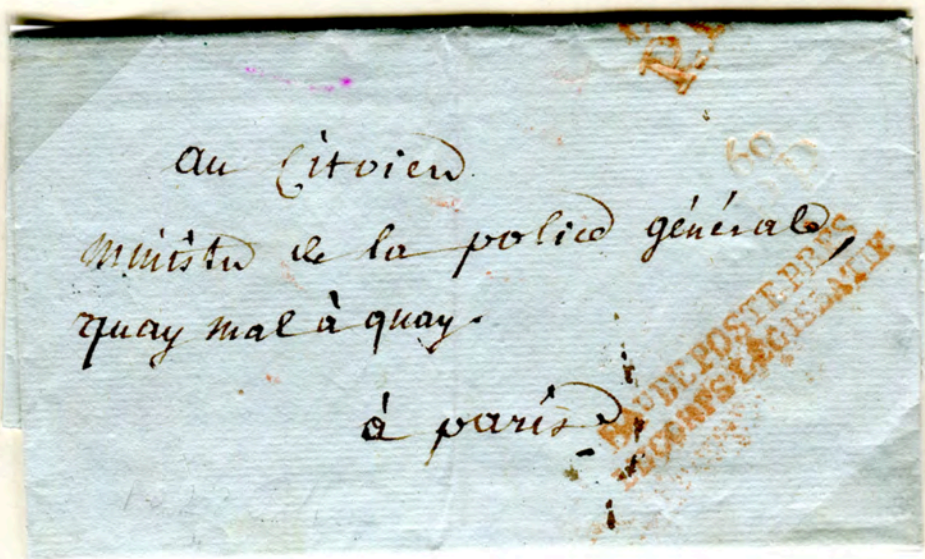


#### IV. THE CONSULAT (CONSULATE)

NOV. 1799 – MAY 1804

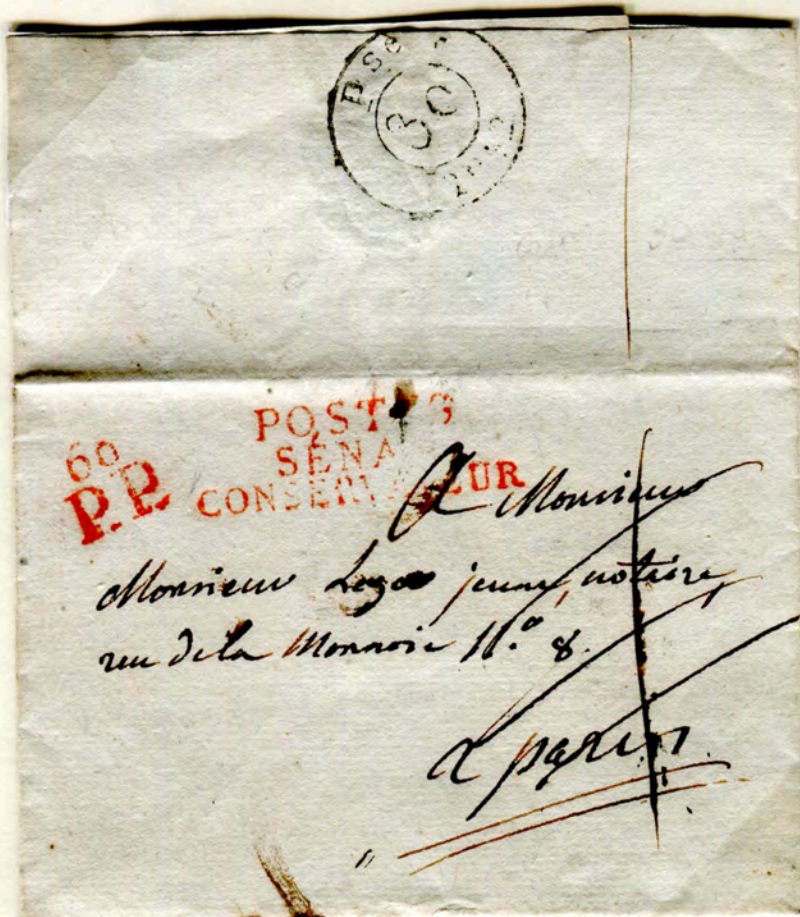
- Paris to Paris
- 17 Nivose an VIII  
→ January 7 1800
- postage paid  
**60**  
**P.P.**  
back
- Petite Poste de Paris  
**B<sup>AU</sup> T. 4<sup>E</sup>**  
**17**

Bureau T : Hôtel des postes  
4<sup>E</sup> : 4<sup>e</sup> levée  
17 : date of distribution



- countersignature :

**B<sup>AU</sup> DE POSTE PRÈS  
LE CORPS LÉGISLATIF**



- Paris to Paris
- 30 Pluviose an XII  
→ February 20 1804
- postage paid  
**60**  
**P.P.**
- 1 décime cancelled

back

- Petite Poste de Paris



Bureau T  
3<sup>e</sup> levée

- reception mark:  
dated double circle  
**P<sup>sc</sup>** (Pluviose)  
**30**  
**an 12**

- countersignature :

**POSTES  
SÉNAT  
CONSERVATEUR**



#### IV. THE CONSULAT (CONSULATE)

NOV. 1799 – MAY 1804

##### STANDARDIZATION OF WEIGHTS, MEASURES AND CURRENCIES

- MARCH 1791. The Academy of Sciences suggests the Decimal System
- DECEMBER 1799. The Decimal System is compulsory in France → law of 19 *Frimaire* an VIII

##### Decimal System (base-10 numeral system)

- Postal tariff of December 25 1796
- • into force July 21 1800

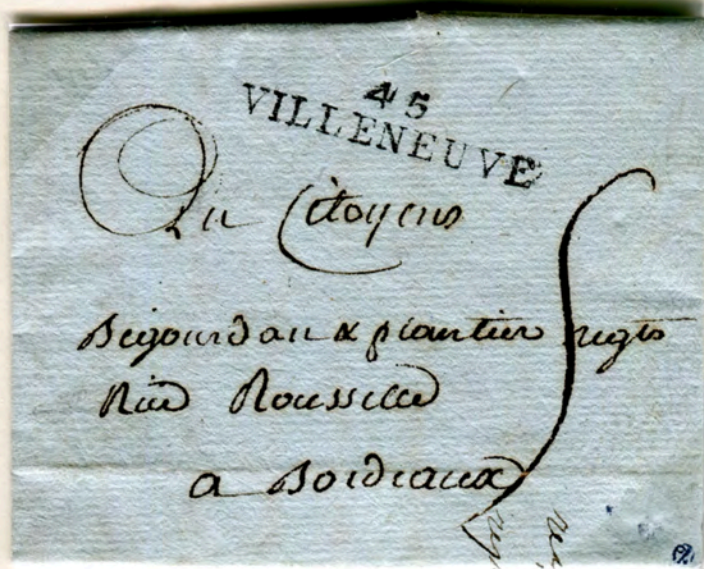
##### Equivalences

- **Old Regime** : 1 pound = 20 sols
- **Decimal System** : 2 sols = 1 décime  
10 décimes = 1 franc

- \* the tax is still calculated according to the distance x weight
- \* 1<sup>st</sup> level (1<sup>er</sup> échelon) : up to 7.5 grammes

- Villeneuve to Bordeaux
- June 21 1792
- tax: rate of the Old Regime
- postage due 12 sols

Villeneuve 21 juin 1792



- Villeneuve to Bordeaux
- 3 Thermidor an VIII
- → July 22 1800
- postal tax : new **Decimal System**
- postage due 5 décimes

Villeneuve 3 Thermidor 80



# IV. THE CONSULAT (CONSULATE)

NOV. 1799 – MAY 1804

❖ Letter signed by the 2 « *Administrateurs généraux des Postes aux Lettres* » during the Consulate:

- Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès and C. Forié

• Paris to Toulouse

• 26 Ventose an IX → March 17 1801

Administration  
générale  
des Postes  
aux Lettres.

LIBERTÉ.



ÉGALITÉ.

F. D.

Paris, le 26 Ventose an 9 de la République  
française, une et indivisible.

Les Administrateurs - Généraux des  
Postes aux Lettres,  
au C<sup>te</sup> Vitrac l'aîné nég.  
à Toulouse

André Sieyès  
C<sup>te</sup> Desort.  
Charente-inf.  
N<sup>o</sup> 5914.

Sieyès  
Forié

Nous vous invitons, Citoyen,  
à faire retirer au Bureau des  
Postes à Toulouse un article de  
118-50, qui a été déposé le  
1<sup>er</sup> Compteur au 8, à celui  
de surgeres, à votre adresse.  
Celle somme étant parvenue  
à Toulouse en un groupe



#### IV. THE CONSULAT (CONSULATE)

NOV. 1799 – MAY 1804

➤ Since the *1st Messidor an III* ( June 19 1795), the postal administration was under the control of the *Ministère des Finances* (Ministry of Finances); it will remain so for a long time.

❖ Letter from the **Minister of Finances** François Barbé-Marbois (1801-1806)

- Paris to Niort
- no date
- franchise

Aug Administrateur  
Du Département des  
Deux Sèvres  
De Niort. *Minist. des finances*

❖ Letter from the *Commissaire central du Gouvernement près les Postes*, Antoine-Marie Chamans de Lavallette. On March 19 1804, the Count of Lavallette will become *Directeur Général des Postes*.

- Paris to Beaune
- 18 Ventose an X ( March 9 1802)
- signature of Lavallette
- countersignature : *Administ<sup>on</sup> gen. des Postes*

Le Commissaire central du  
Gouvernement près les Postes,

Lavallette

letterhead

Paris le 18 Ventose an 10  
Lavallette

back seal



*Administ<sup>on</sup> gen. des Postes*  
au Citoyen  
la Beaune Négociant en Vins  
A Beaune — Dept de la Côte d'Or



#### IV. THE CONSULAT (CONSULATE)

NOV. 1799 – MAY 1804

*Historical facts :* The **Treaty of Amiens** temporarily ended hostilities between the French Republic and Great Britain during the French Revolutionary Wars. It was signed in the city of Amiens on March 25 1802 by Joseph Bonaparte and the Marquess Charles Cornwallis.

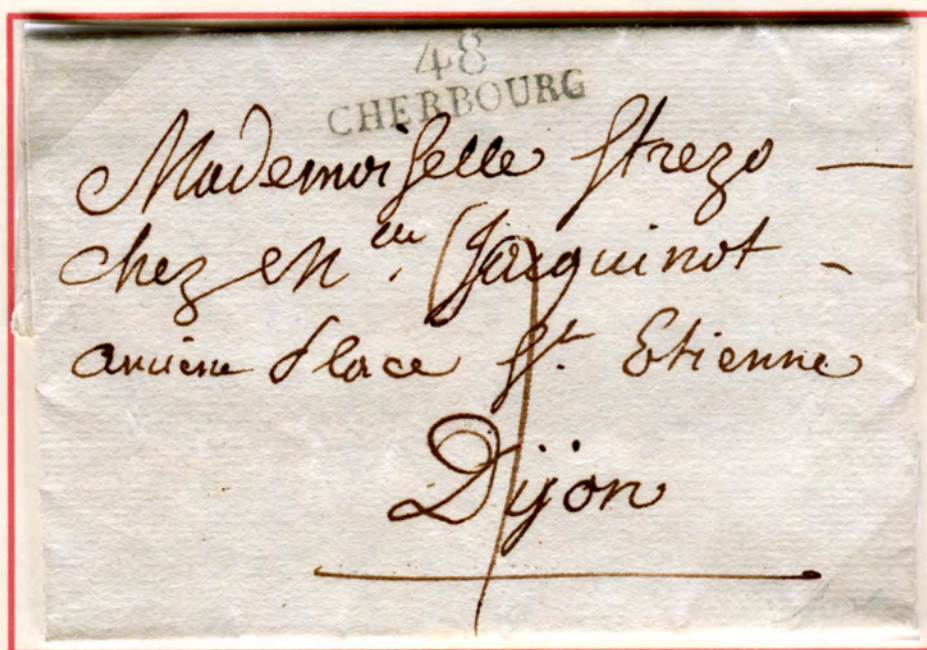
- But France continued its protectionist economic policy. It thus blocked British industrial opportunities and prevented imports.
- All mail between the French and the emigrant nobles in England is forbidden and seized.
- The **Peace of Amiens** lasted only one year (May 18 1803)

**Letter from a French noble « émigré » to his family a month before the Treaty of Amiens smuggled to France.**

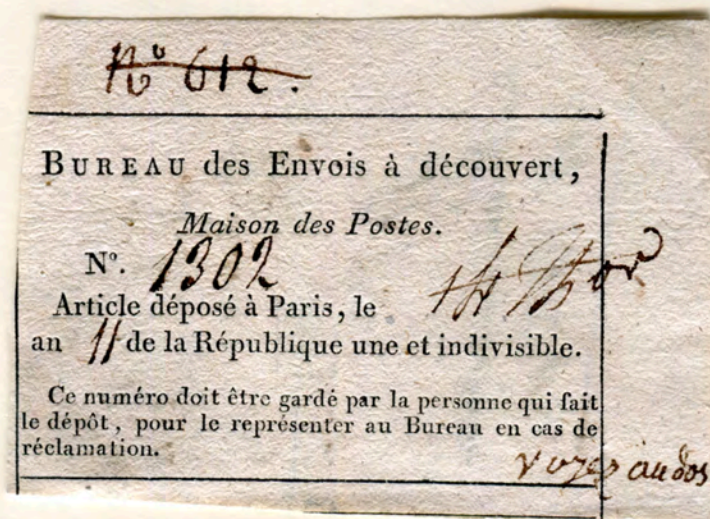
Southampton → (private carrier) Cherbourg (France) → mailed at a French Post Office → Dijon

- Cherbourg to Dijon
- February 1<sup>st</sup> 1802
- postage due 9 décimes
  - Cherbourg-Paris : 5 dc
  - Paris-Dijon : 4 dc

*Kie Southampton anglaise  
1<sup>er</sup> fév. 1802 Vienne*



certificate



Receipt from a Post Office in Paris for a package sent to a soldier fighting in the Army of Italy

- 14 Thermidor an 11 = August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1803
- postage paid 45 fr



#### IV. THE *CONSULAT* (CONSULATE)

NOV. 1799 – MAY 1804

##### POSTAL SERVICE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- from the *Storming of the Bastille* until December 31, 1791, nothing will change in the routing and taxation of mail. Treaties with foreign countries remain in force.
- the reform of January 1, 1792 will simplify the domestic mail but **the international mail will be governed by the International Conventions until the Empire May 18 1804.**

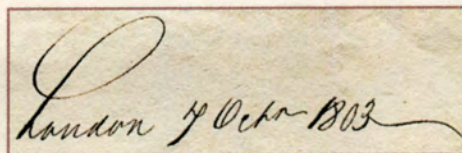
Thus this letter smuggled in France from London (England) using the Thurn und Taxis Postal Service.

London → Hamburg → Thurn und Taxis Postal Service → French border → Paris → Cognac

- October 7 1803
- postage due :
  - 18 schilling  
Hamburg
  - London → Hamburg  
8 sols
  - Hamburg → Paris  
= 24 sols
  - Paris → Cognac  
= 10 sols
- ⇒ 42 sols  
old currency
- **R.4.** = distance  
Hamburg → French  
border
- **red Foreign Office**  
postal marking



certificate



letterhead



#### IV. THE CONSULAT (CONSULATE)

NOV. 1799 – MAY 1804

##### ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE

*Pour la Patrie, les Sciences et la Gloire*

For the Nation, Science and Glory

- When the revolution began, all minds turned to politics. The sciences were suddenly abandoned.
- In 1794, all that genius, labor and activity can create of resources, was employed so that France alone could support herself against all Europe, and be self-sufficient as long as the war would last.
- It is in this spirit that the *École centrale des travaux publics* was founded by Lazare Carnot and Gaspard Monge at the time of the National Convention. It was renamed "*École polytechnique*" one year later (Law of 15 Fructidor an III).
- Ministers of the Interior will see to develop this engineering institution so that it became one of the most prestigious and selective French *grandes écoles*.

Letter from the Ministry of Interior, the Director of the *École Polytechnique*, L.-B. GUYTON DE MORVEAU (signature), chemist, member of the *Conseil des 500*, one of the **creator of the republican calendar**.

- Paris to Paris
- 3 Frimaire an IX → November 24 1800
- private carrier



Au Citoyen  
Zeller, Membre du Conseil  
de Perfectionnement de l'École Polytechnique  
Rue Dominique au coin de celle  
de l'Église n° 1067.  
Au Gros Caillou.

signature



#### IV. THE CONSULAT (CONSULATE)

NOV. 1799 – MAY 1804

*Historical facts* : During this period, the *Institut de France* charged with « collecting discoveries and perfecting the arts and sciences » enjoyed great prestige among the educated population.

Also the *Légion d'honneur* is created. It is the highest honorary French decoration.

##### LÉGION D'HONNEUR

Order instituted by the First Consul Bonaparte on May 19, 1802. The Head of State was the Grand Master of the Order. The Grand Chancellor, the guardian of the seals of the order, directed the administration.

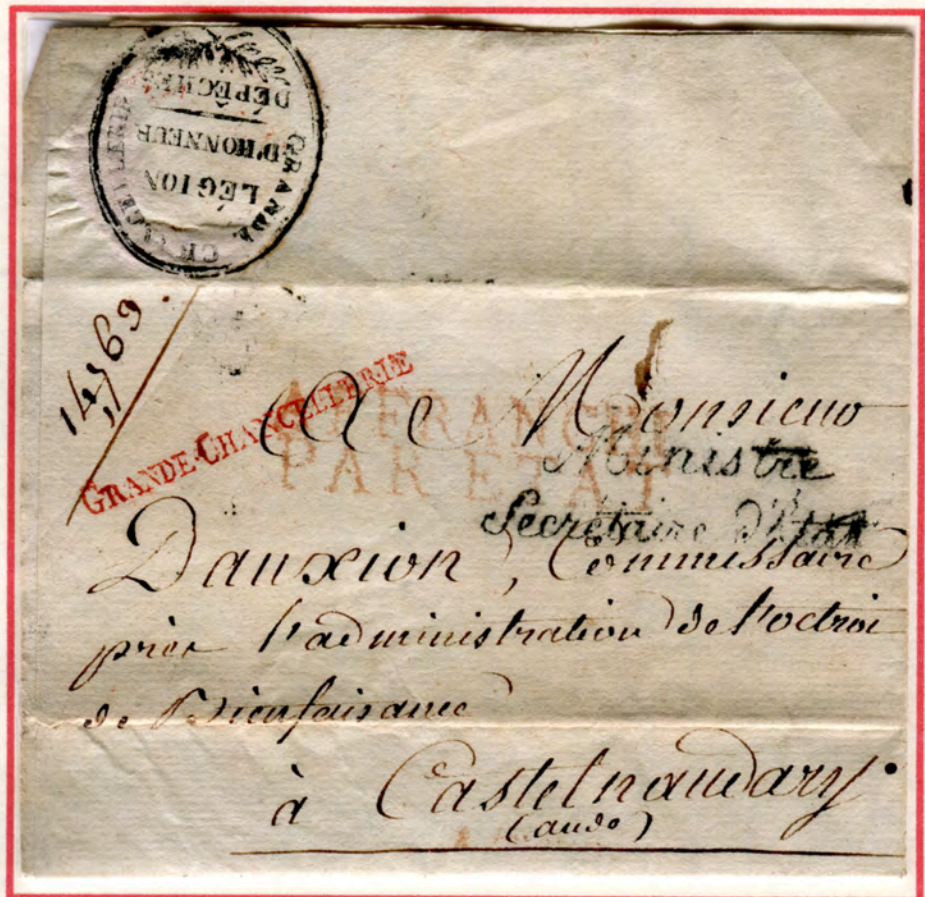
❖ **GRANDE CHANCELLERIE** – first postmark of the *Légion d'Honneur* in 1802



seal

- Paris to Castelnaudary
- 10 Messidor an XII  
→ May 29 1804
- franchise  
**AFFRANCHI  
PAR L'ÉTAT**
- countersignature :  
Ministre  
Secrétaire d'État

**Rare cover** not only for the postmark but for the signature of this well known French biologist.



Signature of Bernard G. Étienne de Laville-sur-Ilion, comte de Lacépède

politician, member of the Senate, well known zoologist, member of the *Institut de France*,  
Grand Chancelier de la *Légion d'Honneur*



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

*Historical facts* : Since 1763, the end of the Seven Years' War, the Kingdom of France is no longer in conflict with anyone. The troops are garrisoned within the borders.

In 1792, it is written: « ... the army is instituted to defend the state against enemies ... and maintain public order and the maintenance of laws ... ».

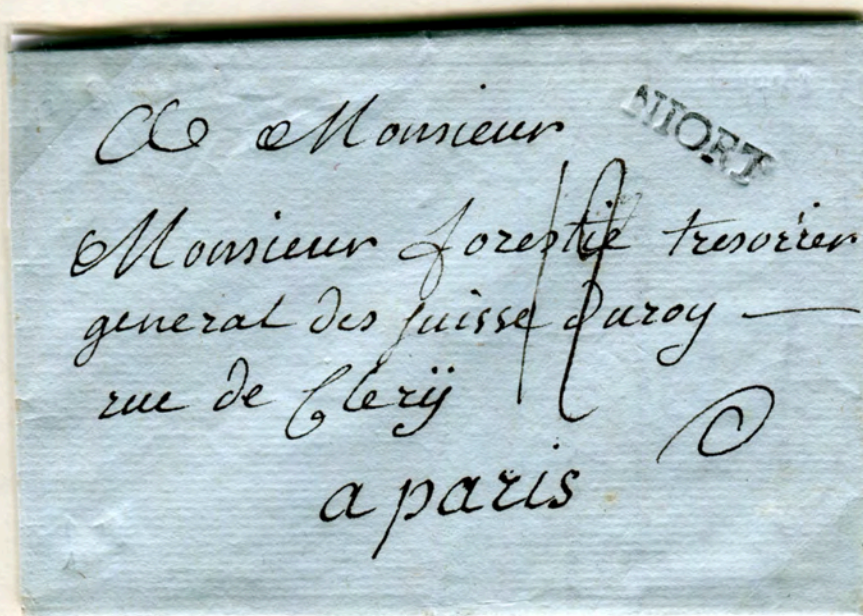
The Revolution will cause drastic changes in the army. The armies of the Kingdom of France will become republican armies responsible for enforcing the republican order and spirit.

These armies will eventually increase and invade Europe in the Napoleonic Wars.

### 1. BEFORE 1789

- There is 3 different armies :
  - army of the Royal House : the *Gardes suisses* (Swiss Guards) : they are Swiss soldiers who have served as guards at foreign European courts since the late 15th century
  - active troops : the officers of the army are generally nobles while the troops consist of volunteers
  - *Milice bourgeoise* : (Bourgeois Guard): each town and village maintained its own militia. In 1788, it became a « Provincial Militia »
- There is no particular postal system for these armies; the civilian Post is used.

#### Letter addressed to the treasurer of the *Gardes suisses*



- Niort to Paris
  - 1788
  - postage due 12 sols \*
- \* 12 sols =
  - Niort to Poitiers = 19 lieues = 4 sols
  - Poitiers to Paris = 84 lieues = 8 sols

Le 19 janvier 1788



## 2. FROM 1789

➤ A regiment of the active troops, the *Régiment Dauphin* went to Paris in July 1789 to maintain order during the popular uprising. After the Storming of the Bastille, the regiment was renamed 29<sup>e</sup> *régiment d'infanterie de ligne* in 1791 and joined the *Armée du Nord* in 1792.

- signature from the Commanding Officer, « Maréchal de camp » *L.-F. de Chamillart Marquis de la Suze*; this nobleman will emigrate and become an Officer of the « Armée des Princes »; he will fight with the Prussian army to restore monarchy.

- December 24 1790

G. janvier.

8

à Paris, le 24<sup>bre</sup>. 1790.

Division du hagnau  
Régim<sup>t</sup>. Dauphin, Inf.<sup>rie</sup>

Mémoire  
 pour un Cingé avec appointement &c.

Ref. de 18. g. in 20. 70.  
s. anz. d. 18.

M. de Chamillard, ci -  
devant M<sup>re</sup> de la fuzee, Maréchal  
de camp, commandant le rég<sup>t</sup>.  
Régiment 8.

ci -  
Maréchal  
Le maréchal  
Supplie sa Majesté  
de vouloir bien accorder à  
M. Ozery, Lieutenant en  
1<sup>er</sup> Régiment Dauphin, Inf.

Chamillars y Duvallet's de  
Sachaz



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 2. FROM 1789

- The Swiss Guards will remain in office to protect the King but they will be almost all massacred by the revolutionaries on August 10 1792.
- The « *Milice bourgeoise* » had become the « *Milice provinciale* » but on July 14 1789 they were united under the Marquis de Lafayette and renamed « *Garde nationale* » (National Guard).

#### Letter addressed to the Commanding Officers of the *Milices Bourgeoises* *Garde nationale*

- Paris to Vire
- postmark of origin



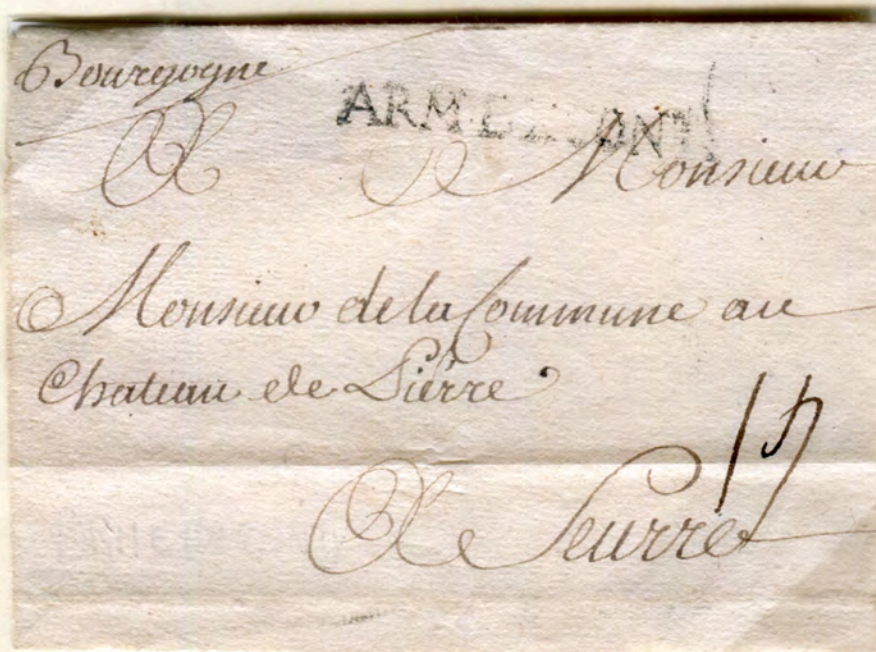
- November 1<sup>st</sup> 1789
- postage due 8 sols



seal



*A Paris, ce premier Novembre 1789.*



#### ARMÉE DE CONTI

known as the  
4<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Conti de dragons\*

- created in 1667
- this army participated at the victory of Valmy
- it will join the armies of the Rhine (1792-1794), Rhine et Moselle (1795-1796), of Germany before being part of the *Grande Armée*.
- Paris to Seurres
- postage due 14 sols

\* **Dragoons** used horses for mobility but dismounted to fight on foot.



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 2. FROM 1789

- **Garde nationale (National Guard)**: From the beginning in 1789 until August 1793, the National Guard consisted of volunteers. Following the conscription, this militia will be incorporated into the different armies.

**Premier Bataillon des volontaires nationaux du département du Jura.**  
**First Battalion of the national volunteers of the department of Jura.**

• Clerval

• December 25 1791

Nous officiers du premier Bataillon des volontaires nationaux du département du Jura Certifions que le sieur mare Gilbert Desaux volontaire de la première compagnie du dit Bataillon, a servi dès la formation de le corps avec honneur et distinction, ayant toujours donné des preuves de la plus grande subordination, de civisme, et d'attachement à la constitution la foi de quoi nous lui avons délivré le présent certificat. Clerval le 25 Decembre 1791

Maréchal quartier mtr <sup>bourruier</sup> <sup>placet</sup> <sup>Lieut des Gren.</sup>  
 Guilloz <sup>Placet Cap.</sup> Barbier. Roden Moutz  
<sup>capitaine de grenadiers</sup> <sup>lieut des grenadiers</sup>

Vu par nous le Colonel  
 Commandant le 1er Bataillon  
 des vol. du Jura.

*Silvaux*

*Quenisset adjt mjr*



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 3. THE FIRST ARMIES

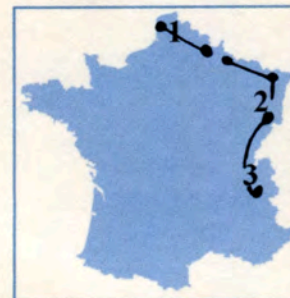
#### 3. THE FIRST ARMIES

Historical facts : **THE DECLARATION OF PILLNITZ**

« The **Declaration of Pillnitz** was a statement issued on **August 27 1791** at Pillnitz Castle near Dresden (Saxony) by the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor *Leopold II* and *Frederick William II* of Prussia. It declared their joint support for King Louis XVI of France against the French Revolution. » (Wiki)

- Foreign powers reinforce their military presences on the borders of France.
- Feeling threatened, France creates on December 14 1791, by order of the king, 3 armies at the borders.
  - 3.1. *Armée du Nord* (Army of the North)
  - 3.2. *Armée du Centre* (Army of the Center)
  - 3.3. *Armée du Rhin* (Army of the Rhine)

**Louis-Marie de Narbonne-Lara is the Minister of War** (1791-1792); he will be the one to organize these armies and appoint the 3 Generals: *Rochambeau*, *Luckner* and *La Fayette*.  
Narbonne-Lara emigrates in England in 1792.



Letter from Narbonne-Lara as a Minister of War. Paris, March 5 1792

A Paris, le 5 Mars 1792:

votre arrivée.

Le Ministre de la Guerre.

*L. de Narbonne*



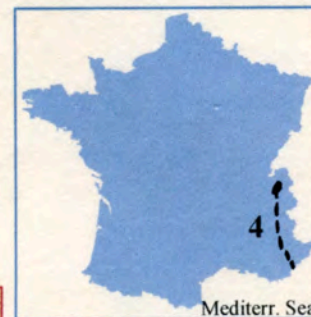
## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 3. THE FIRST ARMIES

On April 5 1792, a fourth army is created : l'*Armée du Midi* – Army of the Midi, extending from Besançon to the Mediterranean Sea. It was commanded by the Chief General Anne-Pierre de Montesquiou.

Letter from Briançon to the minister of War on July 18 1792.

Signature from Chief General A.P. Montesquiou.



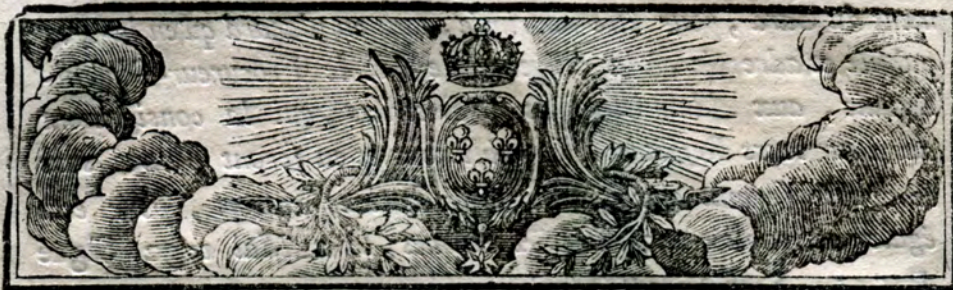
Briançon Le 18 Juillet 1792.  
Infanterie 5<sup>ème</sup> Régiment

font vouloir être étant obligé de quitter le service,  
il me paroit juste de lui accorder une  
recompense proportionnée à l'ancienneté  
de ses services. Je prie le ministre  
de prendre en considération la demande  
Le Général de l'Armée du midi  
A. Montesquiou

*Historical facts :* The tension continues to rise between France and the Emperor of the Holy Empire early in 1792. It will lead to the **declaration of war to the « King of Hungary and Bohemia »** on **April 20 1792**; this expression designating the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and his states. Austria and Prussia issued a provocative general call to European sovereigns to use force to assure the maintenance of monarchy in France.

Document sent to all French department from the King Louis XVI. →





# DÉCLARATION DE GUERRE.

no 215

25 Avril 1792,

An 4.<sup>e</sup> de la Liberté.

---

DE LA PART  
DU ROI DES FRANÇAIS ,  
AU NOM DE LA NATION.

---

LA GUERRE EST DÉCLARÉE  
AU ROI DE HONGRIE ET DE BOHÈME.

Signé LOUIS. Et plus bas, ROLAND.

Consignée dans les Registres de l'Administration du Départe-



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 3. THE FIRST ARMIES

*Historical facts :* On 25 July 1792, the population of Paris received this threat.

The **Brunswick Manifesto** was a proclamation issued by Charles William Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick, commander of the Allied Army (principally Austrian and Prussian). The Brunswick Manifesto threatened that if the French royal family were harmed, then French civilians would be harmed. It is widely regarded to have been a measure intended to intimidate Paris, but rather helped further spur the increasingly radical French Revolution and finally led to the war between revolutionary France and counter-revolutionary monarchies. (Wiki)

It is now considered by historians to be a false document written by French noble emigrants.

The King wrote a letter to the National Assembly saying: « *The nation is in danger* ».

In reaction, the Convention decides a **conscription of all French** from 18 to 25 years. It is a compulsory military service.

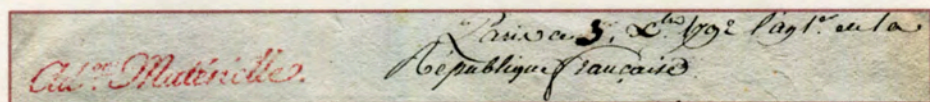
**With the increase of soldiers, the armies will be split in 8 by the Minister of War, Jean-Nicolas PACHE (1792-1793).** Later, the armies will be divided according to the needs.

Letter from the Minister of War Jean-Nicolas Pache with signature.

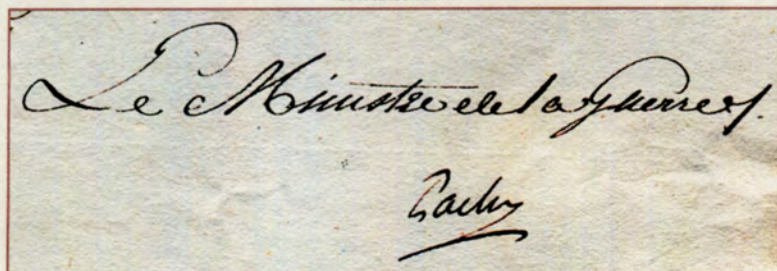
- Paris to Poitiers
- December 3 1792  
year I of the Republic
- franchise  
postal marking



seal



letterhead



signature



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

#### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

- It was the French force that fought the French Revolutionary Wars from 1792 to 1802.
- These armies were characterised by their revolutionary fervor, their poor equipment and their great numbers.
- It should not be confused with the « Revolutionary Armies » which were paramilitary forces set up during the « Terror ».
- In 1791, a large number of officers left their regiment (2,160) and fled France to join the « Armée des émigrés » of Louis Joseph, prince de Condé.
- Young inexperienced soldiers were closely monitored by the *Comité de Salut public*.
- A military school was set up : l'École de Mars

#### **L'ÉCOLE DE MARS - SCHOOL OF MARS** **June 1 1794 - October 23 1794 (5 months)**

Created by decision of the National Convention of 13 Prairial an II (June 1 1794), the School of Mars is a school providing military and civic education during the French Revolution which was installed near Paris.

It must receive young citizens, **six per district**. It is expected that they will receive military training there, in order to provide the Army cadres, but also that they be trained for all the republican virtues.

The school will be closed on October 23 1794.

- **One of 83 letters** sent to « l'agent national » of each department in order to send 6 young boys from, in this case, the Finistère department to the School of Mars

- Paris to Quimper
- 21 Messidor an II – July 9 1794
- franchise - countersignature in red ink : **LOIS CHARGÉ**
- red seal of the **COMITÉ DE SALUT PUBLIC**



front (2/3)



COMITÉ  
DE  
SALUT PUBLIC.

BUREAU  
de la  
SURVEILLANCE  
de  
L'EXÉCUTION DES LOIX.

No. 1471.

É G A L I T É.



LIBERTÉ.

A Paris, le 21 Messidor,  
l'an second de la Répu-  
blique, une et indivisible.

Les Représentans du Peuple, composant  
le Comité de Salut Public,

*Aux Agens nationaux, près les Districts.*

*Nota.* L'ordre et la division du travail du comité de Salut public exigent que la réponse relate la date de cette lettre, et le bureau d'où elle est partie.

On aura soin d'ajouter sur l'adresse, au-dessous de ces mots : *Au comité de Salut public*, ceux-ci : *Bureau de la surveillance de l'exécution des lois.*

PAR un décret du 13 prairial, la Convention a ordonné que, de chaque district de la République, il seroit envoyé six jeunes citoyens à Paris, pour entrer dans l'École de Mars.

La Convention vous en a laissé le choix.

Elle a, en même temps, statué qu'il ne seroit pas reçu d'élèves dans cette École, après le 20 messidor. Vous jugez par cet article, la célérité que vous devez mettre dans cette opération.



**V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION**  
**4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY**

**MINISTRES DE LA GUERRE**  
**MINISTERS OF WAR**

*Historical facts :* The Ministers of War played an important role during the Revolution and during the wars that followed. They directed troop movements, moved regiments as needed and appointed officers.

- letters from Ministers of War are incorporated in this chapter.
- nevertheless some ministers were important and left their mark, among these: C.-L. PETIET and B. L. J. SCHÉRER.

**CLAUDE-LOUIS PETIET**  
**1796 – 1797**



signature

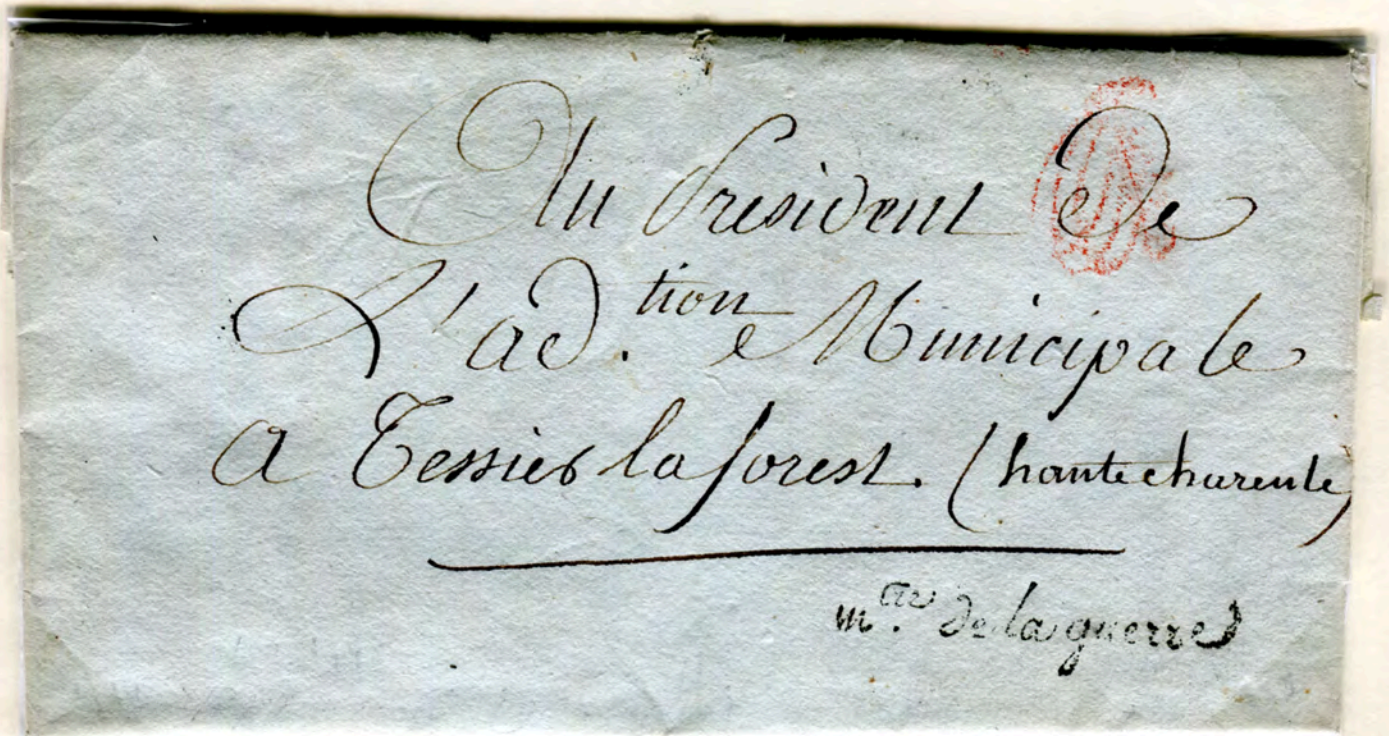
Commissary, military chief judge of the 13th Division in 1791. Commissioner General of the Armies of the Center, of the Coasts of Brest and Cherbourg. While he was Minister of War, he signed the decree appointing General Bonaparte in command of the Army of Italy on Feb. 1796.

- Paris to the Battalion Chief of the 19th *demi- brigade* at the Headquarters, Place de Paris
- 12 Frimaire an V = December 2 1796



V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION  
4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

BARTHÉLEMY LOUIS JOSEPH SCHÉRER  
1797 - 1799



signature

Schérer was a General at the beginning of the Revolution and on 3 occasions led armies in battle; he became Minister of War in 1797.

- Paris to Tessier-la-Forêt
- 18 Pluviose an VI = February 6 1798

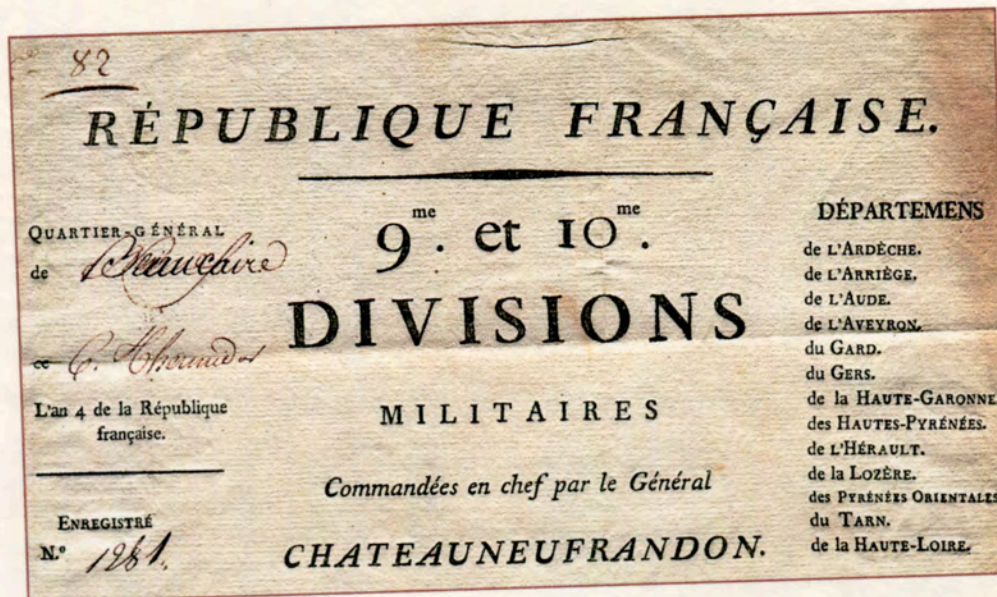
postal marking  
franchise



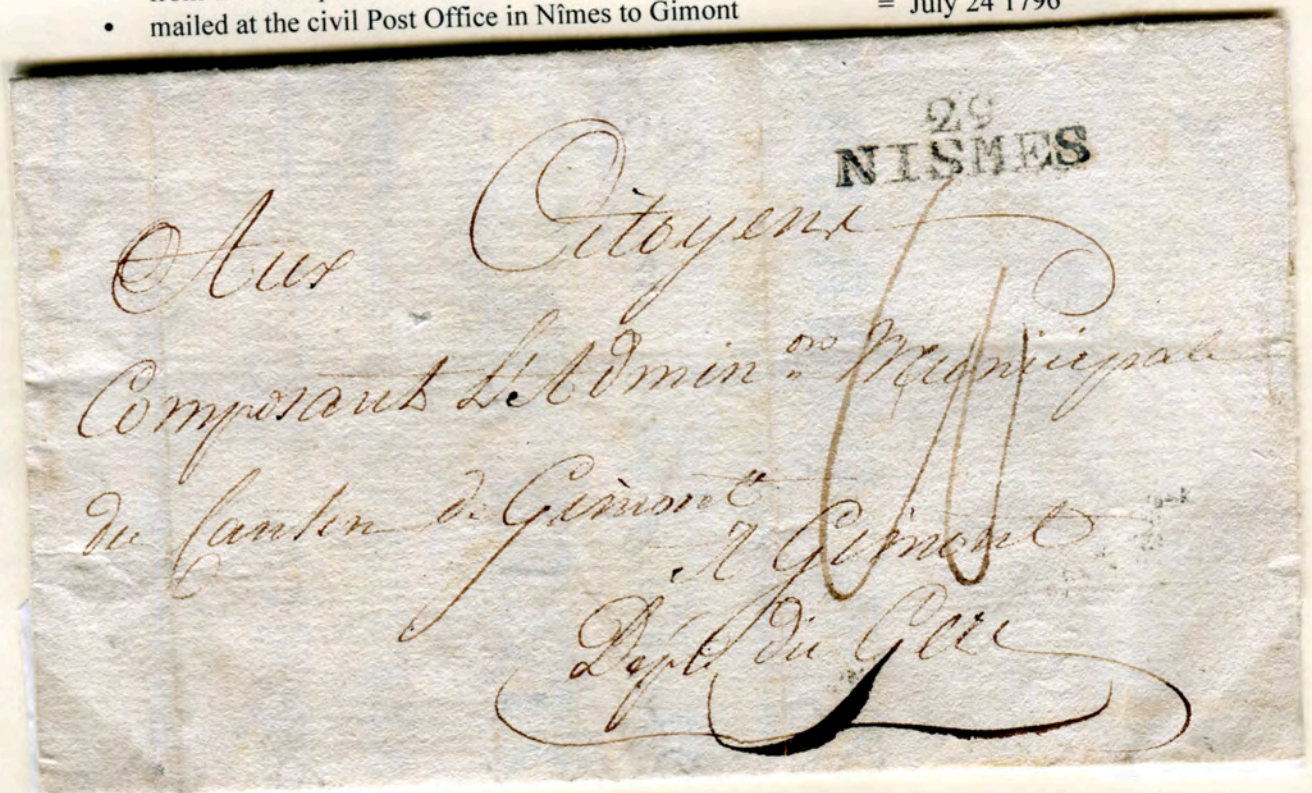
V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION  
4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

ARMÉE DE L'INTÉRIEUR - ARMY OF THE INTERIOR

- The formation of this name was raised on 12 July 1795 using the forces of the 17th military division of Paris, augmented by those of the Somme, Seine-Maritime and Eure departments. Its main purpose was to keep order in Paris and its region and supply Paris with food.
- Divisions of this army have also been sent to maintain order in neighboring departments.
- Napoléon Bonaparte was Chief General until he was named Chief General of the Army of Italy in 1796



- this army had no military postmark; the letters were mailed in the Civil Post Office
  - from the headquarters in Beaucaire
  - mailed at the civil Post Office in Nîmes to Gimont
  - 6 Thermidor an IV  
= July 24 1796





V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION  
4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

ARMÉE DE L'INTÉRIEUR - ARMY OF THE INTERIOR  
18<sup>e</sup> Division

- from the headquarters in Dijon to Gomméville
- 21 Floréal an VII (May 10 1799)
- military letter mailed at the Civil Post Office
- no franchise - the title of « adjudant » does not authorize the military franchise
- postage due 5 sols



Citoyen  
Minet lieutenant à la  
suite de la 13<sup>ème</sup> 1/2 65<sup>de</sup> d'infanterie  
légère  
à Gomméville



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

The armies described in this exhibit are those that fought in France; those who fought elsewhere in Europe may be mentioned only as armies stemming from the first.  
Except for armies whose headquarters were in Alsace (France).

#### CHRONOLOGY OF THE FRENCH FIRST 3 ARMIES

Belligerents : France against the Coalition of countries : Holy Roman Empire (Habsburg Monarchy, Prussia), Great-Britain, *Armée des émigrés*, Dutch Republic, Spain etc....

① <i>Armée du Nord</i> Army of the North	1792	Armée du Nord Armée des Ardennes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• armée du Pas-de-Calais</li> <li>• armée de Sambre-et-Meuse (1794) (1794) ↗</li> </ul>
② <i>Armée du Centre</i> Army of the Center	1792	Armée de la Moselle	- de Longwy à Bitche
③ <i>Armée du Rhin</i> Army of the Rhine	1792	Armée du Rhin Armée des Vosges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Armée du Haut-Rhin</li> <li>- headquarter : Ottmarsheim (Alsace)</li> <li>• Armée du Bas-Rhin</li> </ul>

#### ① Armée du Nord - Army of the North

- 1792 - 1797
- area of operations : Ardennes department, northern border; later : Belgium and Batavian Republic
- battles : Valmy, Jemmapes... conquest of Belgium...

- Paris to Evreux
- red postmark of 1794
- **ARMÉE DU NORD** (48 mm)
- postage due 8 sols

- red postmark of 1795
- **ARMÉE DU NORD** (39 mm)
- postage paid





## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

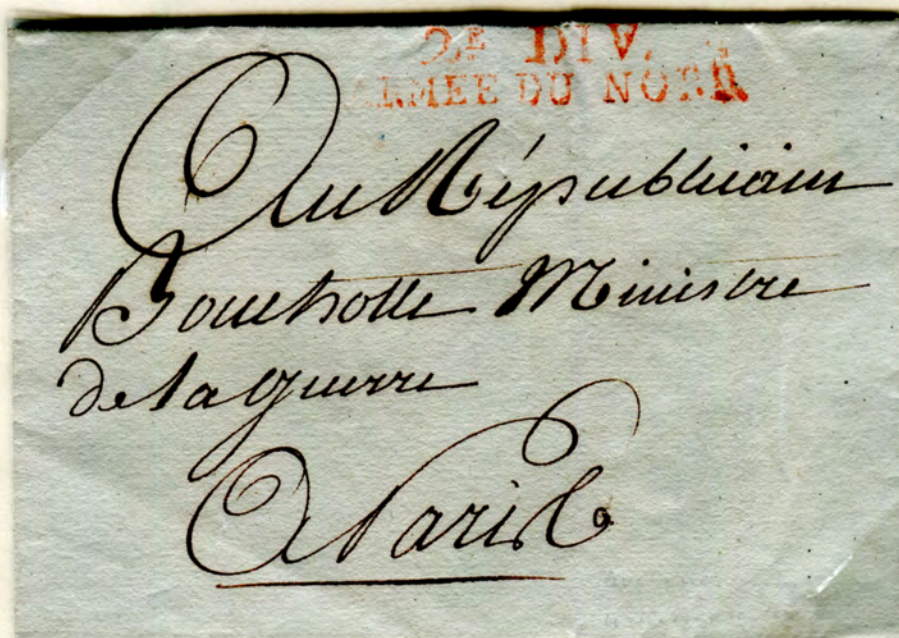
### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

Letter from a soldier to his family in St-Geoirs, Isère department



- **BAU PRINCIPAL ARM. DU NORD**
- postage due 10 sols
- date unknown

Letter to the Minister of War, Jean-Baptiste Bouchotte (April 1793 – June 1793) in Paris, from General Dampierre who will be killed the same year during the war.



- **2<sup>E</sup> DIV. ARMÉE DU NORD**
- 1793
- franchise

According to the law of September 3rd, 1792, the **postal franchise** is reserved for generals, commissioners, commander-in-chief of division and the commissioning officers.



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

- The *Bataillon des Fédérés nationaux* are volunteers from all departments; they will be amalgamated, to the regular army in 1793.

Letter from a soldier of the 8<sup>th</sup> *Bataillon des Fédérés nationaux* linked to the Army of the North; in a letter addressed to his father, he tells his participation in the *Siege of Valenciennes* (1793). He advises that he is now moving with his army towards Brittany to fight the « *rebelles* » i.e. the Royalists.

- in this particular case, the Battalion comes from the Department of Mayenne-et-Loiret
  - Cambrai to Beaufond
  - 14 May 1793
  - postage due 11 sols

Reçu par le soldat de Cambrai le 14 May 1793 dans le  
dép. de Mayenne-et-Loiret

On Citoyen  
Citoyen Boullisier  
Fils de Demourant à  
Beaufond en argout  
Département de  
Mayenne et Loiret  
à Beaufond

- *Compagnie des Grenadiers – 6<sup>e</sup> Bataillon* - this Battalion comes from the Department of Lot
  - Pau (France). 28 juin 1793

Comp. des Grenadiers. Extrait d'appareil verbal de la  
formation des Compagnies de 6<sup>me</sup> Bataillon  
des volontaires du département de Lot  
des 28 juin 1793 et 3. juillet 1793.

Extrait verbal de l'ordre au Secrétaire lequel  
ont tenu lieu de Brevet au citoyen mesdames  
en vertu de l'art. 17 de la section 2<sup>me</sup> de la loi  
du 3. février 1792 Concernant la formation  
l'organisation et l'apologie des Bataillons  
des gardes nationales volontaires



#### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

- In 1792, the *Armée du Nord* (Army of the North) will be divided in 2 armies by a Decree of the Convention.

### Armée des Ardennes - Army of the Ardennes

- Mézières (Ardennes) . 4 Floréal an II - 23 April 1794

*Liberté, Egalité, Révolution, Ou la mort*

*1.<sup>e</sup> Bataillon de Ligne  
5.<sup>e</sup> Compagnie*

*2.<sup>e</sup> Division*

Nous Membres du conseil d'administration de cette  
Compagnie Certifions que le citoyen Charles Drouot  
natif de Juvigny, District de Chaumont, Département  
de la Marne, Est dans ladite Compagnie depuis  
sa Incorporation faite le Dix-neuf Pluviôse qu'il est  
ce temps il s'est comporté avec honneur et le  
patriotisme qui caractérisent le Citoyen républicain qu'enfin  
il s'est montré en vain à la Colonne.

Fait à Metz le quatre Pluviôse l'an sixième  
Républicain Une et Indivisible.

G. Mlle Sergent Devareux  
Cyprieux  
Maurice  
Jouveau  
Drouot  
Hennery  
Lapierre  
Schlan



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

#### Armée de Sambre-et-Meuse - Army of Sambre-et-Meuse

- By decree of the Convention of June 29, 1794, the **Army of the Ardennes** forms with the left wing of the Army of Moselle and the right wing of the Army of the North, the **Army of Sambre-et-Meuse**.
- Three years later, it will be reunited to the Armée de Rhin-et-Moselle to become l'Armée d'Allemagne
  - 1794 – 1797
  - territories : at the beginning, on the French border, from Maubeuge to Longwy; later, from Koblenz to Sierck and Dusseldorf to Bingen (Germany).

N.B. the postal marking on the letter will be used only for General Headquarters in Eichhoffen (Alsace) from 1794 to 1796.

**BAU G<sup>L</sup> ARM<sup>S</sup> DU NORD  
SAMBRE ET MEUSE**

- 10 Floréal an III  
= 29 April 1795
- postage due 12 sols
- Eichhoffen to Schelestat (Sélestat) (Alsace)



10 Floréal 3<sup>e</sup> année républicaine



V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION  
 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY  
 THE WAR IN THE VENDÉE

The Army of Mainz (Armée de Mayence) is sent to the West to strengthen the Republican armies fighting against the Vendean insurgents.

Letter addressed to General Aubert Dubayet, Minister of War from the Armée de Mayence

- he will parade at the head of this army in Nantes on September 3 1793
- the General was a nobleman named Du Bayet; during the Revolution he modified his name to the more republican Dubayet

- Breteuil to Paris
- 1795 - 1796



Letter from Albert RUELLE  
 member of the Conseil des  
 500

> he leads the fight against  
 the Vendéans

- Paris to Chinon
- 22 Pluviose an VI  
 = February 10 1798
- postage due 8 sols
- postmark from Paris



> signature

Paris le 22 pluviôse l'an  
 6<sup>e</sup> 3<sup>e</sup> République



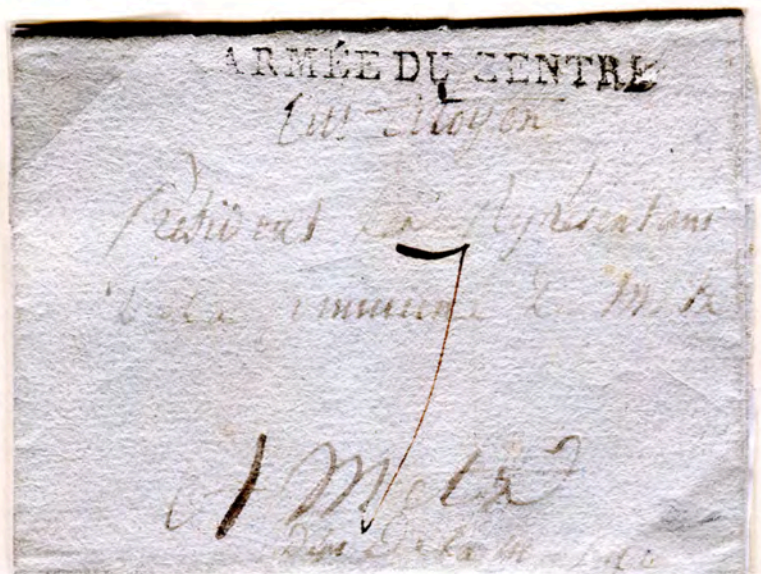


## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

#### ② Armée du Centre - Army of the Center

- The **Army of the Center** of 1791 will soon become, by a Decree of the Convention on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1792, the **Army of the Moselle**.
- It was billeted in Champagne, between the Army of the North and the Army of the Rhine.
- The Commanding Officer was La Fayette.



- Sedan to Metz
- postage due letter 7 sols

#### Armée de la Moselle - Army of the Moselle

- 1792 – 1795
  - November 29 1794, the right wing of the **Army of the Moselle** united to the left wing of the **Army of the Rhine** receives the denomination of **Army in front of Mainz**.
  - by decree of the Convention dated March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1795, the **Armies of the Rhine and Moselle** are **united under the name of the Army of Rhine-and-Moselle**
- 2 Documents from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Bataillons-du-Lot. 1793.

*Armée de la Moselle*      1<sup>er</sup> Bataillon du Lot

*Armée de la Moselle*      6<sup>es</sup> Bataillon du Lot

*Vous m'avez par votre conseil d'administration soussigné*  
*Reconnaitre avoir reçu le dépôt de magasin de effets*  
*de l'habillement de notre*  
*pour l'équipement dudit Bataillon*  
*Le 21<sup>er</sup> 1793*      *Le 21<sup>er</sup> 1793*

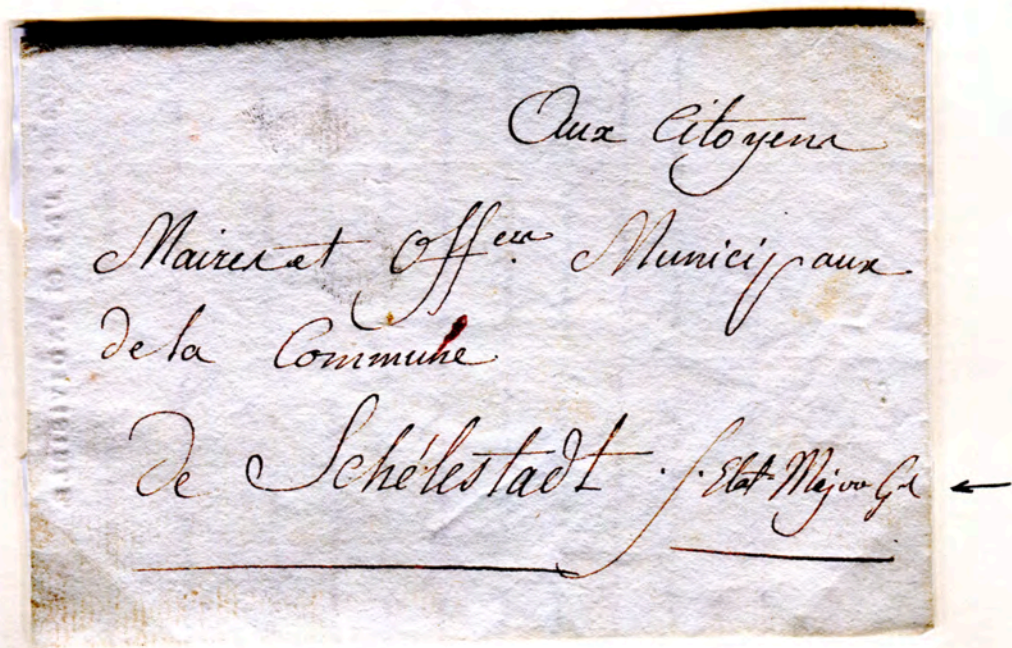


## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

#### ③ Armée du Rhin - Army of the Rhine

- 1792 – 1802 (Treaty of Amiens)
- there has been many Armies of the Rhine; several times regiments are removed while others are added later.
- territories : in the beginning the department of Ain, then the region of the Rhine, from Mainz to Basle, from Bitche to Porrentruy, the region of Besançon advancing towards the East.
- Letter from the **Headquarters of the Army of the Rhine in Neustadt** (Strasbourg, Alsace)
- to Schlettstadt (Sélestat, Alsace)
- 2 Vendémiaire an III = September 23 1794
- franchise  $\int$  *État Major G<sup>nl</sup>*





## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

#### Armée du Rhin - Army of the Rhine

- letter from the **headquarters** of the x Division. **Armée du Rhin** in Obersulm, a municipality in the district of Heilbronn, Baden-Württemberg, Germany.
- to the **headquarters** of the 1ere Division de l'Armée du Rhin-et-Moselle in **Ottmarsheim (Alsace)**
- transfered to Huningue
- 5 Fructidor III = August 22 1795
- postage due 10 sols

→ on back DÉB. OTTMARSHEIM



front



V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION  
4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

67  
LANDAU  
Citoyen  
Prochard Republicain français,  
Maitre d'armes de la 3<sup>e</sup> Compagnie de la  
3<sup>e</sup> Bataillon d'infanterie et de la 2<sup>e</sup> Division  
l'Armée du Rhin  
All Camps de Rhot. / Rott  
Wissembourg

Preparation for the  
Battle of Wissemburg  
(Dec. 1793)

The victory will clear all  
Alsace from the Austro-  
Prussian army and the  
« Armée des émigrés ».

- use of the Civil Post  
because of the remoteness

- Landau to the cantonment  
of Rhot (Rott) near  
Wissemburg (Alsace)
- 24 June 1793
- postage due 4 sols

au fort de Landau le 24. Juin 1793. l'an 2<sup>e</sup> de  
la République française, une et indivisible.

- letter from the cantonment of  
Chesnau
- use of the Civil Post because of  
the remoteness
- Benfelds (Alsace) to Besançon
- 28 Ventose an III  
18 March 1795
- postage due 10 sols

67  
BENFELDS  
Aux Citoyens  
Maire, et officiers municipaux  
De La Commune de Besançon  
Département Du Jura.  
à Besançon

Arrivée de  
l'Armée du  
Rhine  
Liberté, Égalité, fraternité.  
Cantonnement de Chesnau par Benfeld, le 28.  
Ventose 3<sup>e</sup> année Républicaine et Universitaire.



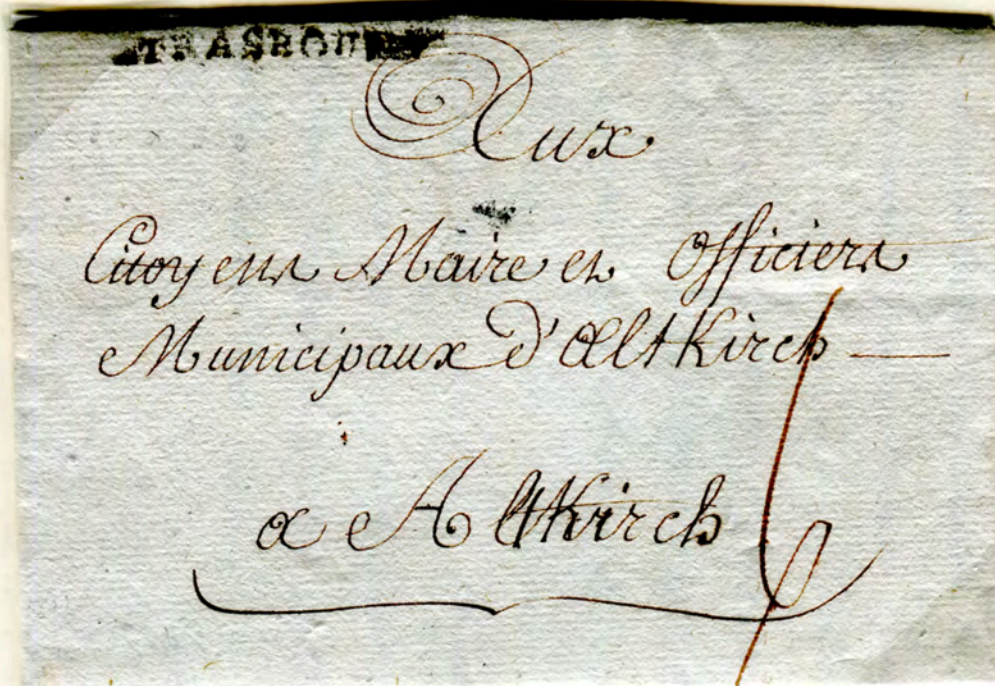
## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

- Troop movements could not be done without the **Administration of Transport and Military Convoys** and the **support of municipal administrators**.

Letter between these two administrations

- Headquarters in Strasbourg to Altkirch (Alsace)
- postage due 6 sols



**Décret du 23 Juin 1792 « Relatif à la taxe des lettres destinées pour l'armée »**  
 Decree of June 23 1792 relating to the tax of letters intended for the army

Les lettres adressées aux armées, seront taxées conformément au tarif de 1791, jusqu'au dernier bureau de poste de la frontière, sans que la taxe puisse être augmentée pour le transport de la frontière aux armées, lorsqu'elles seront sur territoire étranger.



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

*Historical facts* : France declared war on the Habsburg Monarchy on **April 1792**.

- **July 1792**, the Prussian army joined the Austrian side and invaded France, only to be rebuffed at the Battle of Valmy.
- **21 January 1793**, the revolutionary government executed **Louis XVI**.
- This united all European governments, including Spain, Naples and the Netherlands against the Revolution.
- February 1st 1793, France declared war against Britain and the Netherlands and soon afterwards against Spain.
- **In the course of the year 1793 the First Coalition was formed.**
- France will then face the powerful British Royal Navy.

### THE SIEGE OF TOULON

The « Siege of Toulon » is a military conflict that took place from September to December 1793, after the Royalists seized the city and delivered it to the British: it opposed the army of the First French Republic to his enemies.

The British Admiral Sir Samuel Hood and the Spanish Admiral Juan de Lángara destroyed the Arsenal and ± 22 ships. This was a serious blow to the arms of the Republic. If France was to lose this port, there was no hope for her naval ambitions.

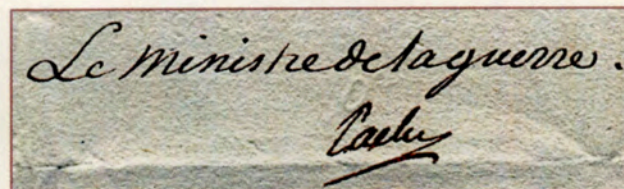
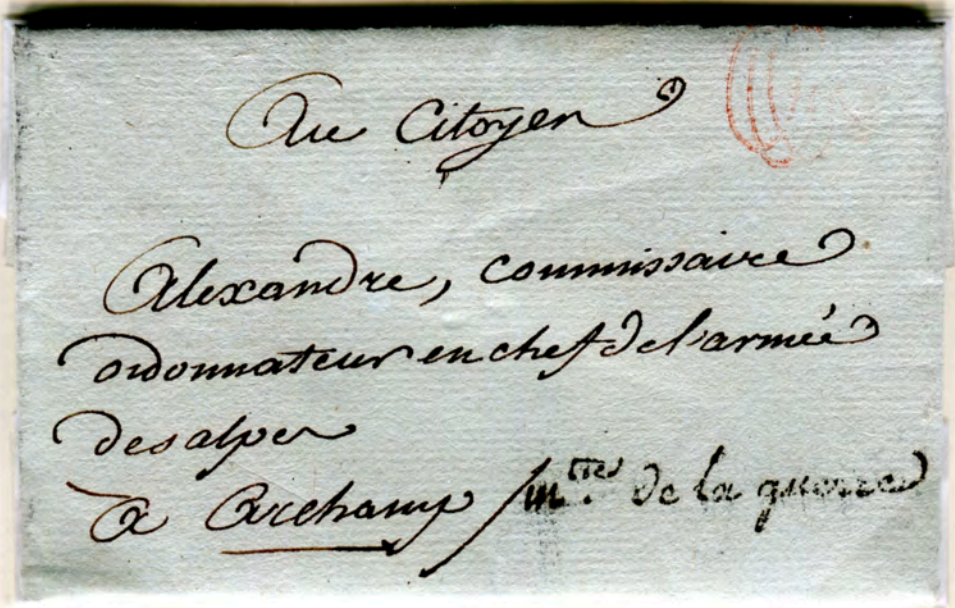
- On September 4 1793, the Ministry of War sent 2 detachments from the **Army of the Alps** and the **Army of Italy**.

Letter from the Minister of War, Jean-Nicolas PACHE to the Commissioner of the Army of the Alps

- Paris to Archamps
- 1793
- countersignature
- *M<sup>re</sup> de la guerre*
- franchise marking



- seal on back



signature



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

#### THE SIEGE OF TOULON

- on September 4 1793, a Decree sends two large detachments to fight the Royalists and the Anglo-Spanish fleet to retake the city of Toulon
- the 2<sup>sd</sup> division of the **Army of Italy** will meet the **Army of the Alps** to free the city

Letter from Toulon to Cassin in 1794.

- countersignature of the army

2<sup>E</sup> DIV

ARMÉE D'ITALIE



- franchise  
postal marking

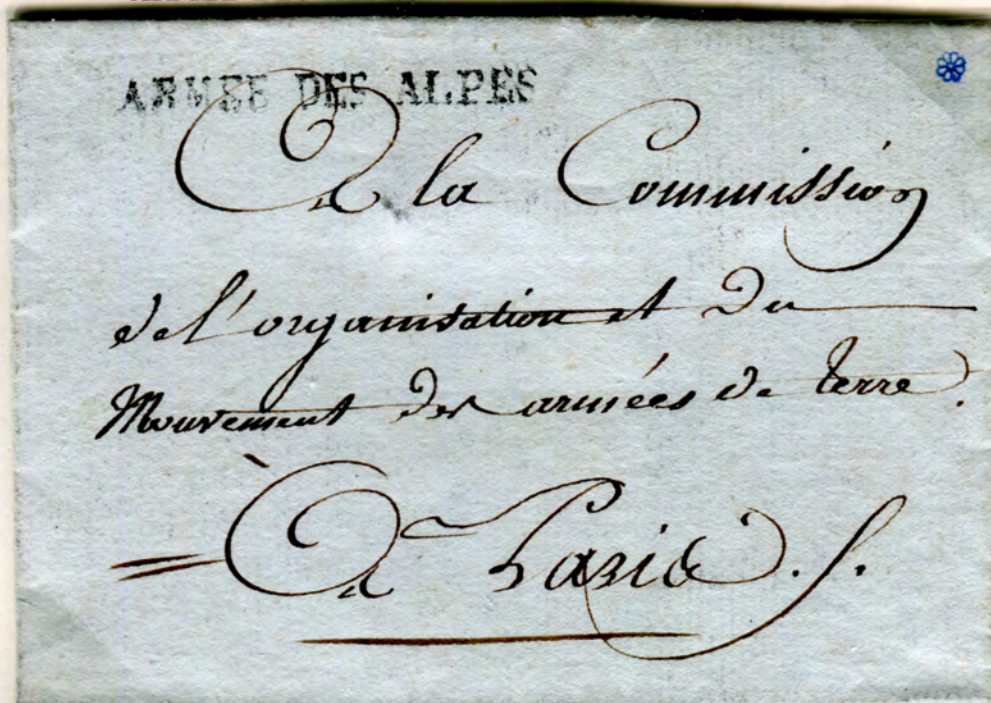


- back seal

Letter from Toulon to Paris in 1793.

- countersignature of the army with a seal on the back

ARMÉE DES ALPES



- back seal



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

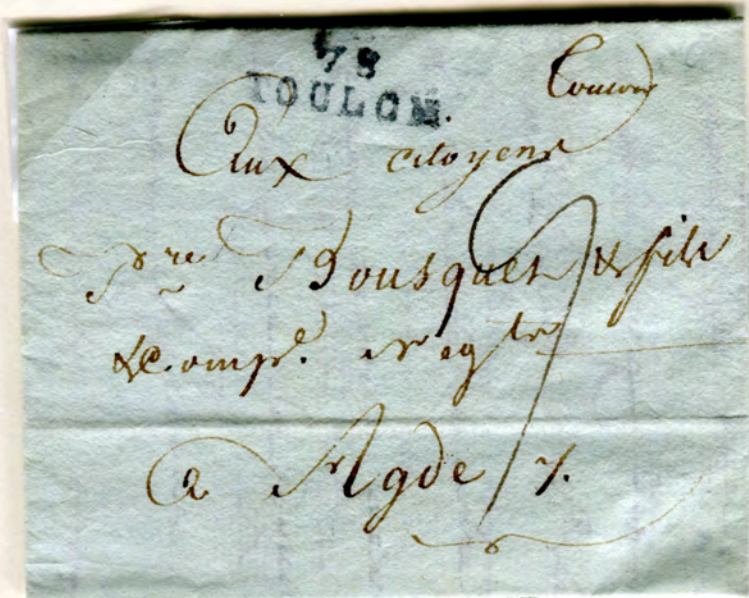
### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

#### THE SIEGE OF TOULON

- Napoléon Bonaparte distinguished himself during this siege. He will be promoted Brigadier General
- On December 24 1793, the Convention passed a decree stating that: "**The infamous name of Toulon is suppressed. This *commune* will henceforth bear the name of Port-la-Montagne**".

Postmark of the *commune* until the Decree

- 78
- TOULON
- to Agde
- 78 = dept. Var
- April 29 1793
- upper right :  
Toulon
- manuscript
- postage due  
9 sols



Postmark after the severe repression



- 78
- Port-de-la-Montagne (Toulon)
- to Aix
- July 26 1794
- postage due  
6 sols

au bord rouge  
Le 8<sup>e</sup> thermidor l'an 4 de la républ.

The « Bord rouge » was a fort northeast of Mont-Faron that protected the city of Toulon



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY THE DEFENSE OF THE CHANNEL COASTS

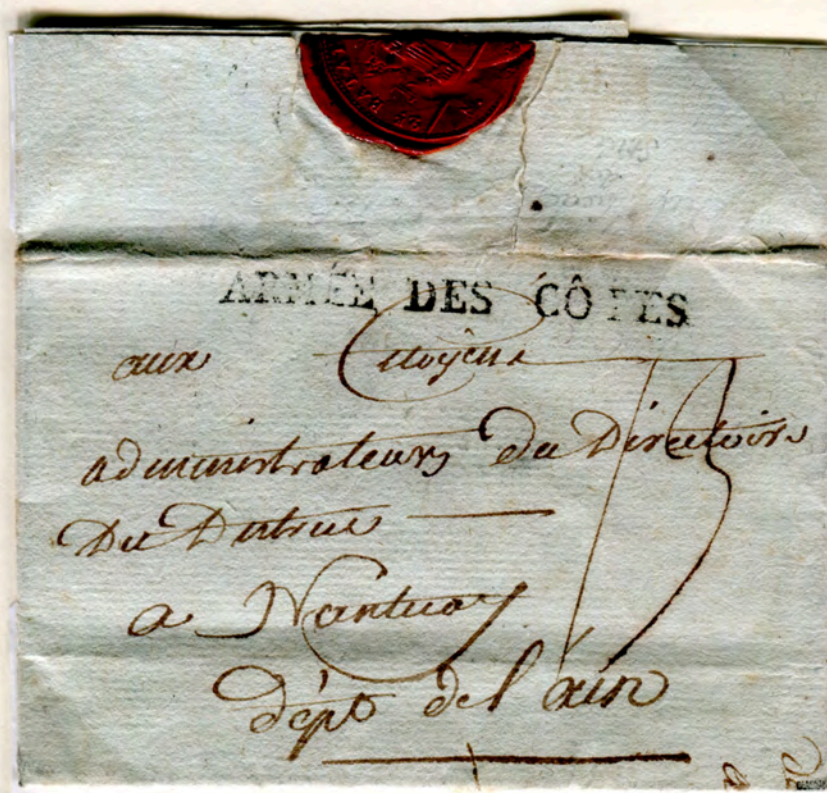
- After the Declaration of War to England on February 1st 1793, France must protect its northern border from a possible British invasion.
- The **Armée des Côtes** (Army of the Coasts) will be created by order of the Executive Committee of January 31 1793 to defend the coasts of the English Channel.
- The Army of the Coasts will be divided by decree on April 30 1793 in two : the **Armée des Côtes de Cherbourg** (Army of the Coasts of Cherbourg) and the **Armée des Côtes de Brest** (Army of the Coasts of Brest).

Armée des Côtes    ➤ Armée des Côtes de Cherbourg  
                              ➤ Armée des Côtes de Brest

Letter from the **ARMÉE DES CÔTES** in Rennes, on 3<sup>e</sup> *sans-culottides an 2* (Republican calendar)  
September 17 1794

- Rennes to Nantua
- postage due 13 sols

*Rennes le 3<sup>e</sup> sans-culottides l'an 2*



seal from the  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion





## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY THE DEFENSE OF THE CHANNEL COASTS

- One of the last postal marking of the ARMÉE DES CÔTES
- The army was split into two and bears the countersignature of the 2 Chief-Generals :
  - *g<sup>l</sup> de l'armée d. C<sup>l</sup> de Cherbourg*
  - *G<sup>l</sup> en chef del'armée des côtes de Brest*
- Headquarters in Rennes
- 1<sup>er</sup> Frimaire an III = November 21 1794



franchise

seal on the back  
ARMÉES DES CÔTES DE BREST ET CHERBOURG  
MAJOR GÉNÉRAL

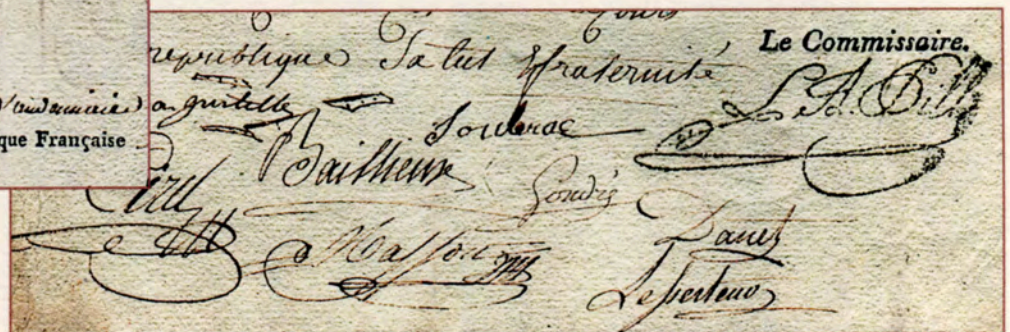
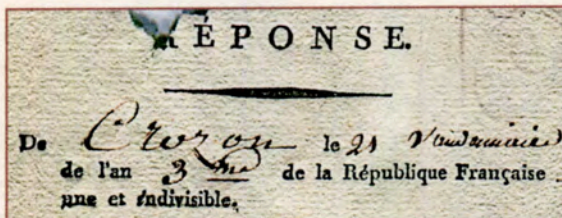




## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY THE DEFENSE OF THE CHANNEL COASTS

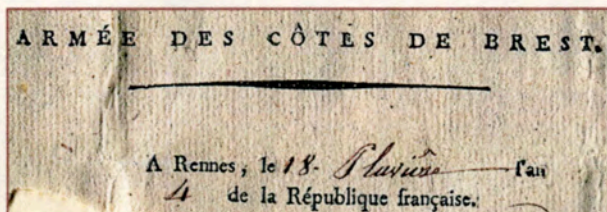
- the law of September 19 1792, creates a military postal service in Paris with couriers in order to ensure a faster and safer link between the government and the armies.
- this letter illustrates the use of the **Poste aux armées** (Army's Postal Service) for this round trip
  - **Paris** from the **BUREAU DU CONTRÔLE DES TROUPES** (OFFICE OF CONTROL OF TROOPS) - September 25 1794
  - to the **I DIV. ARMÉE DES CÔTES DE BREST** in **Crozon**
  - with the answer back from **Crozon** to **Paris** - October 12 1794



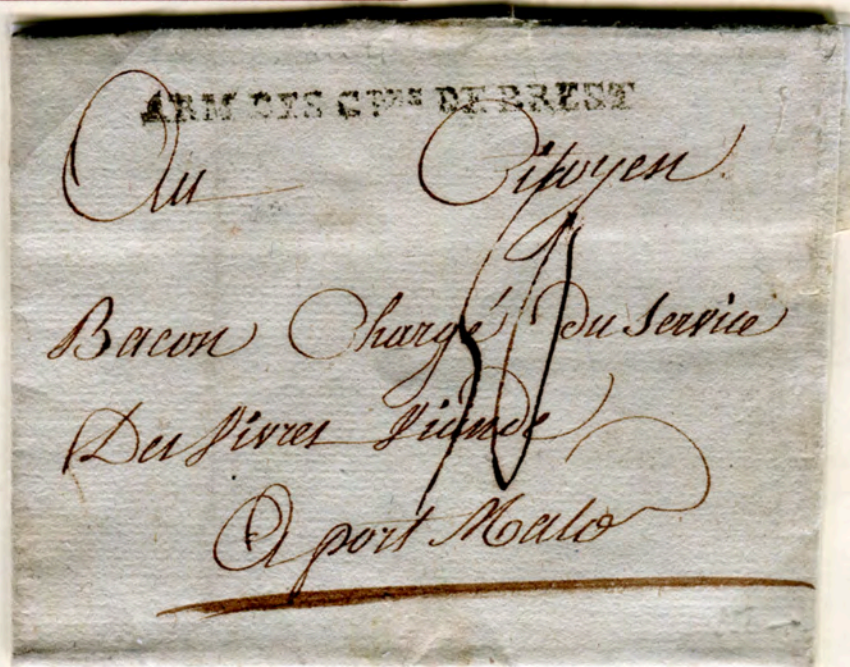


# V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY THE DEFENSE OF THE CHANNEL COASTS

Letter from the headquarters of the Armées des Côtes de Brest in Rennes.



- Rennes to Port-Malo (revolut. name of Saint-Malo)
  - postal marking of the army • postage due 50 sols
- ARM DES C<sup>TES</sup> DE BREST**
- 18 Pluviose an IV = February 7 1796

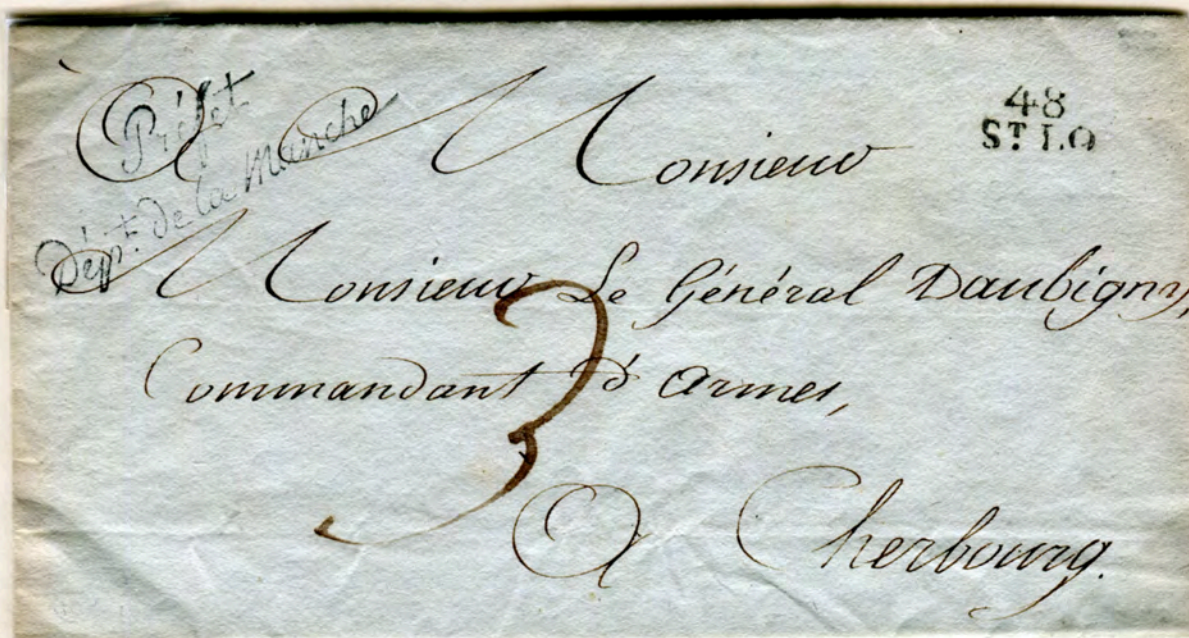


## ARMÉES DES CÔTES DE CHERBOURG

- St-Lo to Cherbourg
- addressed to the *Commandant d'armes*\* General Daubigny
- 1793 – 1796 • postage due 3 sols

## ARMY OF THE COASTS OF CHERBOURG

- \* the *Commandant d'armes* commands a garrison and is the intermediary between civilian officers and military personnel





## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY THE DEFENSE OF THE CHANNEL COASTS

#### ARMÉE D'ANGLETERRE - ARMY OF ENGLAND (1797 - 1800)

- on 5 Brumaire an VI (October 26 1797) the Directory decided to assemble a new army with the aim of invading Great Britain and preventing the landing of the British in France
- its area of operation was 10 *lieues* wide all along the coast, from Brest to Ostend
- in 1799, this army was commissioned to fight the *Chouannerie* and became the **Army of the West**

Letter from the headquarters in Rennes to Division General Moulins commanding the Left Wing of the army.

- 28 Frimaire an VII → December 18 1798
- franchise : manuscript '*Service militaire*' → Army Postal Service (*Poste aux armées*)

ARTILLERIE.

AILE GAUCHE  
DE L'ARMÉE  
D'ANGLETERRE.

LIBERTÉ.



ÉGALITÉ.

Au Quartier-Général de *Rennes* le *28. frimaire*  
de la *7<sup>e</sup>* année de la République française, une et indivisible.

MACORS, GÉNÉRAL DE BRIGADE, Commandant l'Artillerie  
de l'aile gauche de l'Armée d'Angleterre.

*Au Citoyen Moulins, Général De Division Commandant  
l'aile gauche de l'armée d'Angleterre, à Rennes.*

*Service Militaire.*

*Ma Général De Division Moulins  
Commandant en Chef l'aile gauche de  
l'armée d'Angleterre.*

*A Rennes*

*Général*

*informez que je viens de recevoir des*



## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

#### GUERRE DE VENDÉE and CHOUANNERIE

#### WAR IN THE VENDÉE

*Historical Facts :* It was an uprising in the Vendée, a coastal region located south of the Loire River in western France. The Royalists revolted against the French Revolutionary government in 1793-96. They resented the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and the military conscription necessary to fight the wars in Europe. The Republican repression revealed massacres and destruction on an unprecedented scale. It is sometime associated with the *CHOUANNERIE*, a similar war on the northern side of the Loire and called « *GUERRES DE L'OUEST* ».



Vendée in France



Vendée (detail) ● city of Nantes  
● city of Fontenay-le-Comte

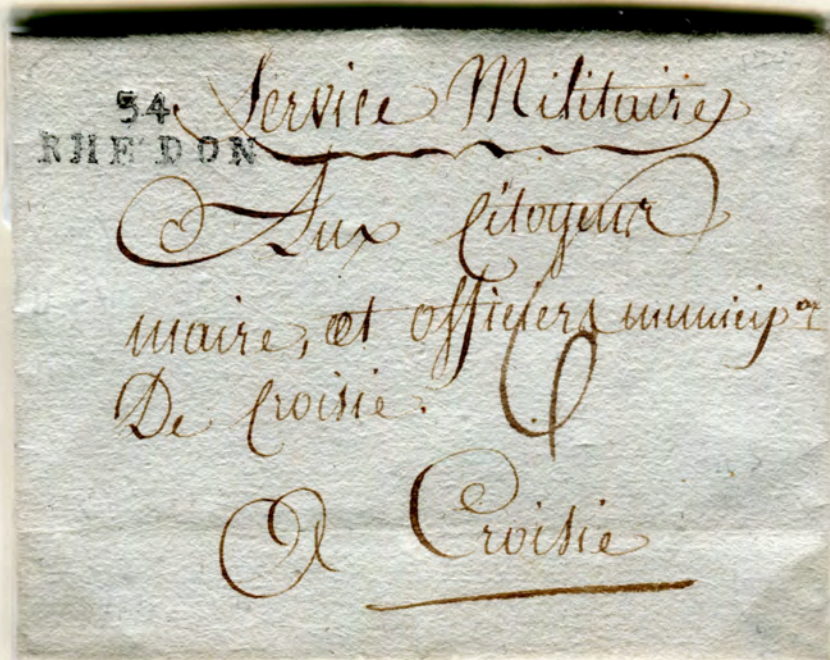
#### ARMÉE DES CÔTES DE BREST

Letter about the conscription  
« *Service militaire* »

- Rhedon to Croisic
- Military Police
- 29 Germinal an III  
→ April 18 1794
- postage due 6 sols



seal



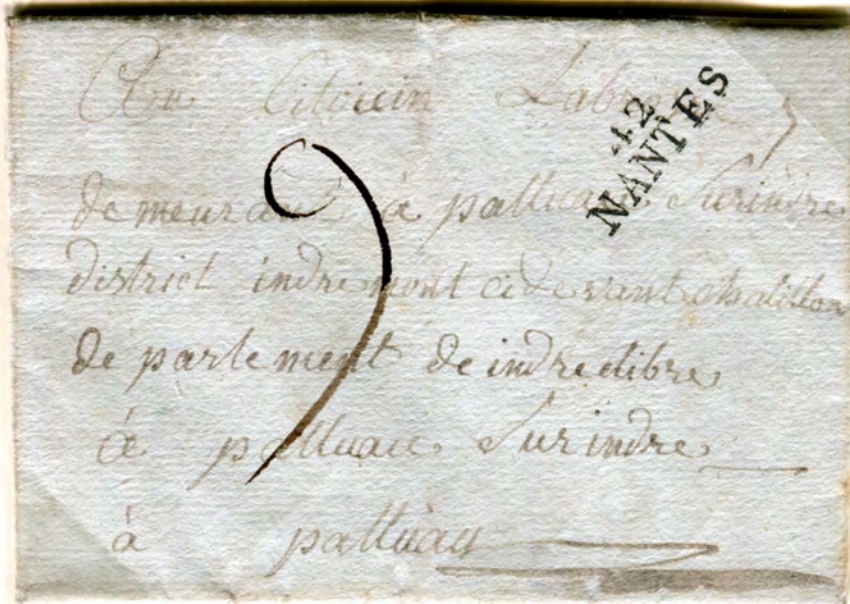


## V. THE ARMIES OF THE REVOLUTION

### 4. THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONNARY ARMY

#### THE WAR IN THE VENDÉE

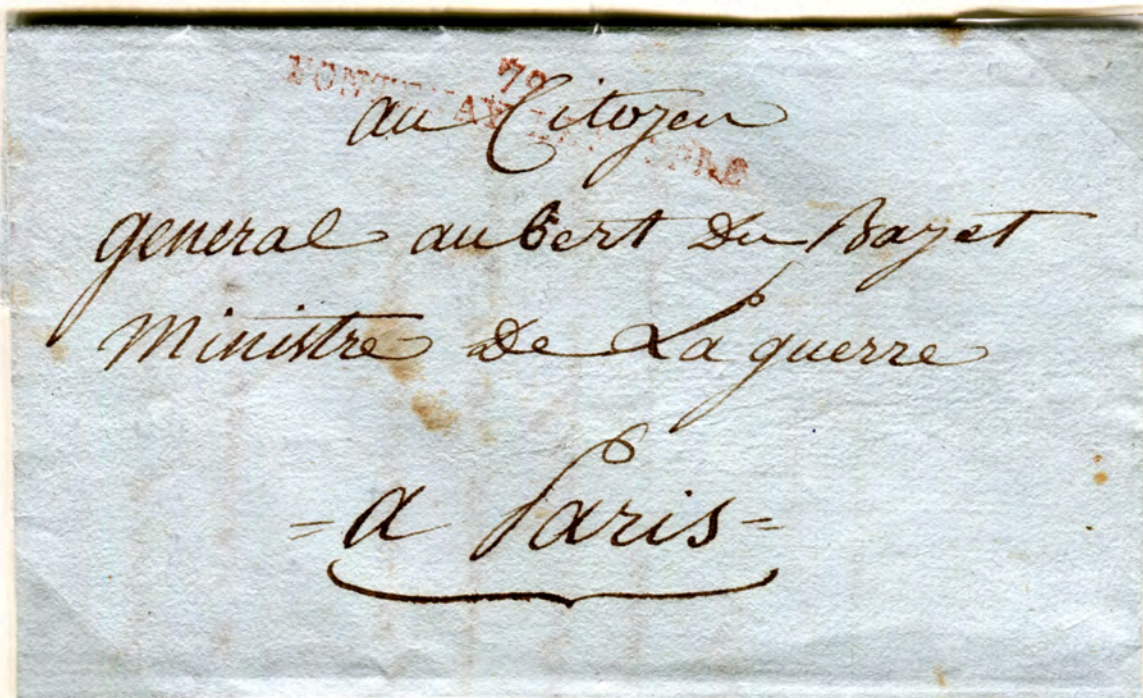
- several republican armies took part in the Vendée war against the Royalists and the Chouans.
- the army of the Coasts of Brest, the army of the Coasts of Cherbourg will be reunited with the army of the West
- Nantes to Palluau • 23 Prairial an II = June 11 1794 • postage due 9 sols



Letter from a soldier to his father :  
 « ...je ne travaille pas je suis au servis de la république... quand on sers sa patrie lon donne toujours assez... »

Letter addressed to General Aubert Dubayet, Minister of War from the **Chef du Bataillon de sapeurs de la 3<sup>e</sup> Division de l'Armée de l'Ouest**

- Fontenay-le Peuple (revolut. name of Fontenay-le-Comte) to Paris
- 8 Frimaire an IV = November 29 1795 • military franchise



liberté      armée de l'ouest      égalité  
 3<sup>me</sup> division



armée  
victorieuse

Liberté égalité  
Au nom de la République  
française  
une et indivisible

---

Le Trentesixième jour de la Première Décade, de  
Première Mois de l'an deux de la République Française, un  
et indivisible.

Carrié représentant du peuple parisi l'armée victorieuse  
Considérant que les motifs qui avoient dû former  
à Mettre un embargo, à ce que les bateaux ne pussent  
Monter ni descendre la Loire depuis aujors jusqu'à ma  
ont cessé et voulant donner à la navigation toute  
la liberté que les circonstances permettent

Arrête  
que dès ce jour la navigation de la Loire est libre et que  
Sera permis à tous les Bâtimens de remonter et  
descendre librement la rivière

Le représentant du peuple  
Signé Carrié



- **Jean-Baptiste Carrier**, 'représentant du peuple près l'Armée de l'Ouest' one of the most sanguinary people of the Terror period. His name remains associated with the massacres, shootings and drownings in Nantes which he ordered between December 1793 and February 1794.
- In Nantes, between 8,000 to 9,000 men, women and children are imprisoned. Drownings and shootings added to cold, hunger and typhus exterminated the population.
- By order of Carrier, men, old men, women and children are taken on board old ships which are then sunk.
- However, traders who sail cannot move freely on the Loire and complain to the authorities.

#### DECREE OF 2 FRIMAIRE AN II → NOVEMBER 22, 1793

« Considérant que les motifs qui avaient déterminé à mettre un embargo à ce que les bateaux ne puissent ou monter ni descendre la Loire depuis Angers jusqu'à Nantes, ont cessé et voulant donner à la navigation toute activité que les circonstances permettent...

Arrêté

Que dès ce jour la navigation de la Loire est libre et qu'il sera permis à tous les bateliers de remonter et descendre librement la rivière ».

Signé *Carrier*

Ainsi les noyades cessent mais reprennent de plus belle en décembre.

-----

***« Considering that the motives which had determined to put an embargo so that the boats cannot go up or down the Loire from Angers to Nantes, have ceased and wanting to give navigation any activity that circumstances allow ...***

***I Decree***

***That from this day the navigation of the Loire is free and that all boatmen will be allowed to go up and down freely the river ».***

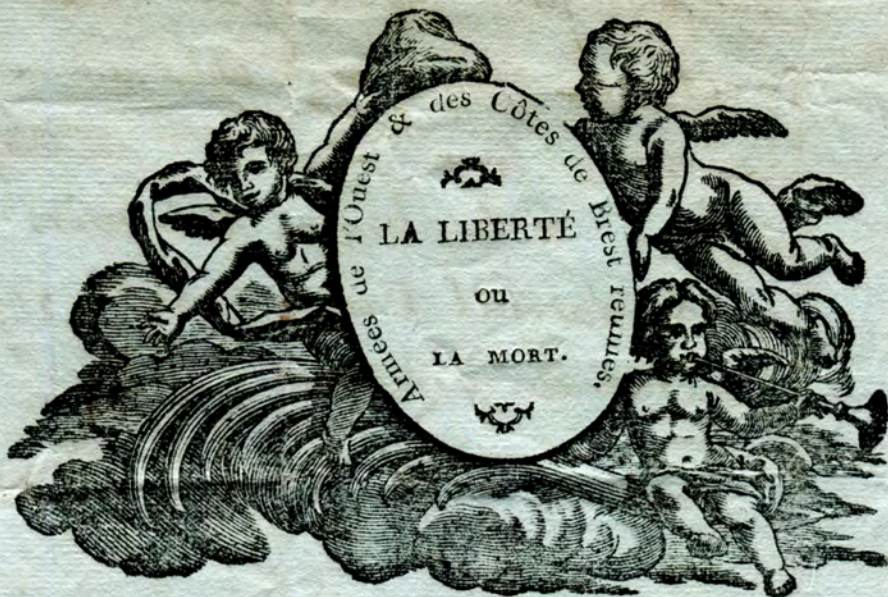
***Signed Carrier***

So the drownings stop but start again in December.



LIBERTÉ,

ÉGALITÉ.



AU NOM DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE,  
UNE ET INDIVISIBLE.

*A Nantes le 16 Nivôse*

*l'an deux de la République Française, une et indivisible.*

*Le Représentant du Peuple délégué près les Armées réunies de  
l'Ouest & des Côtes de Brest (Gorge de l'Imbricadum de Brest)*

*Mon propre au milieu de  
l'armée, à Paris.*

*M*

*Dubois Crancé*



*Ici au Bureau de la Solde Militaire de Paris  
Le 11 Germinal l'an 2.<sup>e</sup> de la République Française  
une indivisible  
Le Commissaire  
Fleury Secrétaire de la  
Solde Militaire*



ARMÉE LIBERTÉ OU LA MORT.

EXTRAIT DE MORT.

DE CÔTES  
DE CHERBOURG

Division

SIXIÈME BATAILLON DE PARIS,  
POUR L'EXPÉDITION DE LA VENDÉE.



N O U S souffignés Membres composant le Conseil d'Administration dudit Bataillon, certifions à qui il appartiendra que le Citoyen *Jean François Turre* fils de *Jean François Turre* & de *Elisabeth Mottet* natif de la Commune de . . . . . District d . . . . . Département d . . . . . est entré audit Bataillon, le *à sa formation* où il a servi avec honneur & patriotisme en qualité de *volontaire* dans la *huitième* Compagnie, jusqu'au *12 Septembre 1793 (Vieux St.)* époque à laquelle il est mort en combattant les ennemis de la République; en foi de quoi nous avons délivré le présent, & fait apposer le sceau du Bataillon.

A *Vire* ce *16 Prairial* de l'an *3<sup>me</sup>* de la République, une & indivisible.

Certifié par nous Membres du Conseil  
d'Administration.

Vu par nous Capitaine Commandant  
ladite Compagnie.

*elaveau* *Coste*  
*capitaine* *St.*

*Louypont* *cap.*  
*volontaire*

*Chapel*  
*capitaine*

*Juster* *capitaine*

*Nantois chef*  
*de Bataillon*

*payan* *volontaire*

*Morin* *capitaine*

*Mouster* *capitaine*

*Jean François Turre*  
*volontaire*  
*de la Commune de Vire*



Armée de Rhin-et-Moselle - Army of the Rhine and Moselle

There is no specific postal marking for this army; it is likely that the postmark of the Armée du Rhin was used.

Letter from the Headquarters of the 5<sup>e</sup> Division - in Belfort (Alsace)

• 8 Nivose an V → December 28, 1796

5<sup>e</sup> DIVISION  
MILITAIRE.



ARMÉE  
DE  
RHIN ET MOSELLE.

LIBERTÉ. ÉGALITÉ.

ÉTAT-MAJOR DE LA PLACE.

*Belfort le 8 Nivose de l'an cinq de la République française, une et indivisible.*

HENRY-GERMAIN VERNEREY, *Commandant  
amovible de la Place.*

*M. Commisnaire des Districts Belfort par le Canton de Belfort.*

*J'ai reçu filage, votre lettre du 7 courant par laquelle vous me recommandez les personnes les plus estimées  
dans les Districts et les communes de Belfort qui ont été Commisaires de la Place de Belfort.*

*Je vous prie de leur adresser les lettres de recommandation que vous leur avez données.*



In 1796, the Republic owned a weapons factory in Nantes for the **Armée de l'Océan**.

Letter from the director of the arms factory concerning a wounded military worker at the said factory

• Nantes • 17 Prairial an IV → June 5, 1796

ARMÉE  
de l'Océan.  
A Nantes, le 17. Prairial, l'an quatrième  
de l'ère républicaine.  
Armes LE Directeur de la Manufacture d'armes  
portatives, établie à Nantes, pour la République,

Certif.

Desous  
Delivré le présent pour Servir audit  
la Croix a recevoir les Secours que la  
Republique accorde aux ouvriers militaires  
Blessés.

Joseph

Inspecteur  
Dauvin  
Cap. d'Artillerie



Suppléant pour le Comité de Guerre  
Joseph

Atelier de la  
République à  
Nantes.



## 2.2. The Siege of Lyon

August 9 to October 9, 1793

- > In 1793, the people of Lyon revolted against the revolutionary government. A violent repression from the *Convention nationale* followed (Siège de Lyon). On October 11, the government delegates decided on the destruction of the city; a decree (October 12) put through the Convention ruled that Lyon was to lose its name and would be known as **Ville Affranchie** (*Liberated City*).

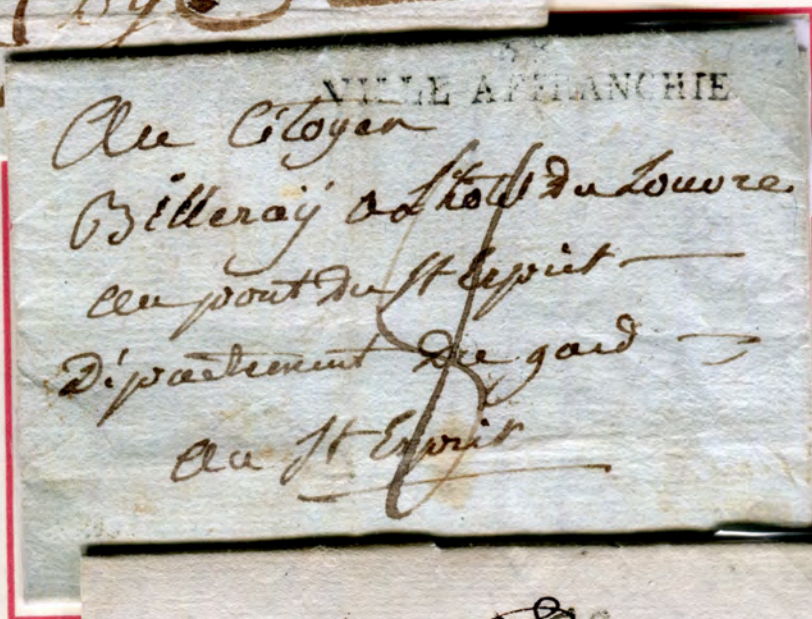


• Before the change of name

- Lyon to Dye (Die, Drôme)
- **April 30, 1793**
- postage due 6 sous

during the rebellion the city is named Ville-Affranchie  
Oct. 12 1793 to Oct. 7 1794

- Ville-Affranchie to St-Espirit
- December 15, 1793
- postage due 8 sous
- a rare specimen during a very hectic and brief period



At the end of the *Siège de Lyon*, a decree (October 7, 1794) gives back to the city its original name

- Lyon to St-Gilles
- October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1797
- postage due 8 sous

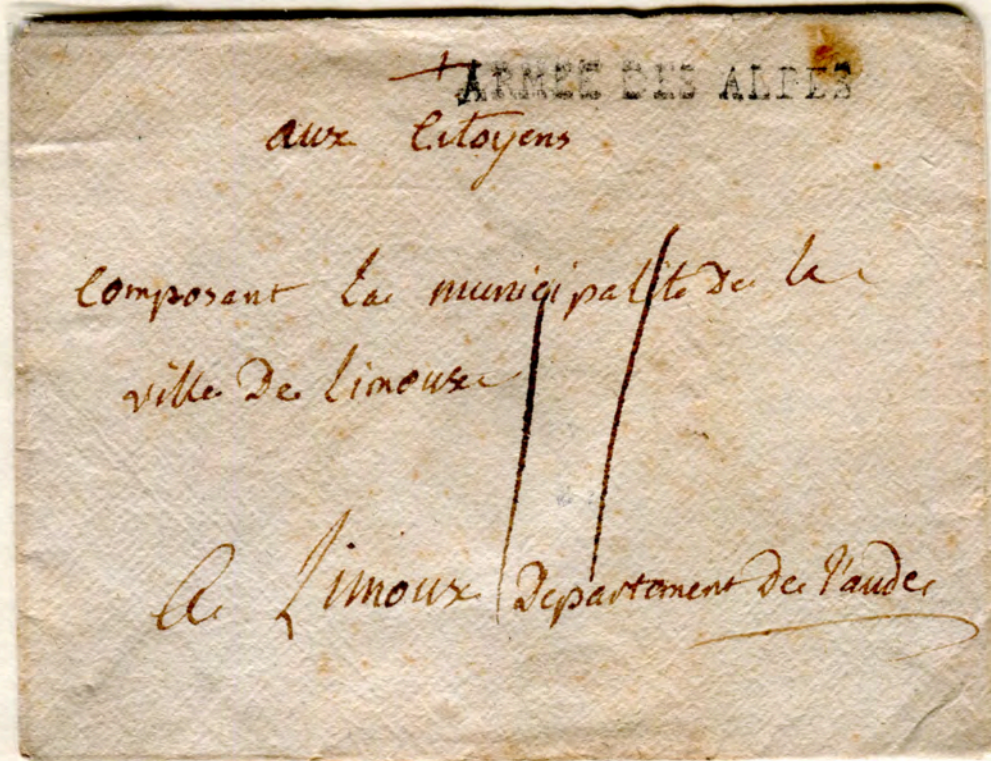




# Armée des Pyrénées

Armée du Midi 1792 ↗ Armée de Savoie → Armée des Alpes  
 ↘ Armée des Alpes\* 1797 ↓  
 ↘ Armée d'Italie → Armée d'Italie

- During the Siege of Lyon in 1793, the city was encircled by detachments of the **Armée des Alpes\***, the **Armée d'Italie** and the **Armée révolutionnaire de Paris\*\***. It was named the **Camp devant Lyon**.



With the War in the Vendée, the Lyon insurrection of 1793, the siege of the city and the terrible repression that followed are among the worst military clashes between a city and an army of besiegers organizing a siege and trusting the heavy and field artillery the care of reducing the besieged to capitulation.

## \* ARMÉE DES ALPES

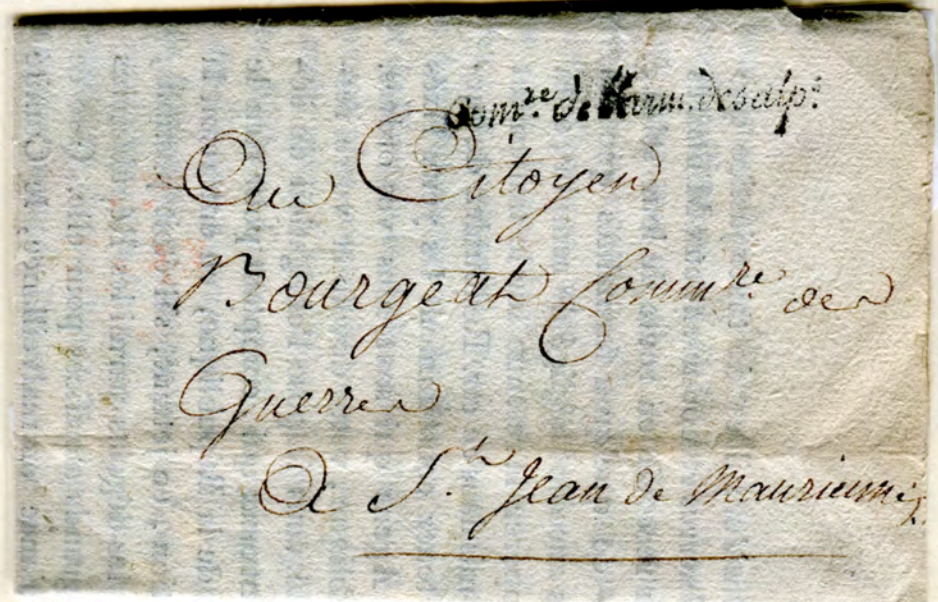
- according to the situation of the army, it had just been divided of the Army of the Midi and headed for Lyon
- postage due 11 sous

## Com<sup>re</sup>. de l'arm des alp

Commissaire ordonnateur de  
 l'Armée des Alpes

- order to reach Savoy
- the army will be renamed :  
**Armée de Savoie**  
 - no postmark known -

- Paris to St-Jean-de-Maurienne
- January 11, 1795
- military franchise





**\*\* ARMÉE RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE DE PARIS**  
**REVOLUTIONARY ARMY OF PARIS**

- > created on the **5th of September 1793** by decree of the National Convention
- > **this army took part in the Siege of Lyon in 1793**
- > it was the armed arm of the partisans of revolutionary exaggeration
- > because of this a decree on **March 27 1794** dissolved this army.

- Paris
- 17 Ventose an II  
→ March 7, 1794

seal

*Liberté* with a  
phrygian cap

- its role was to  
inspire Terror

*bailler — finistre*

ARMÉE  
RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE.

LIBERTÉ.



ÉGALITÉ.

*Paris*, le 17<sup>e</sup> jour du 6<sup>e</sup> mois de  
la 2<sup>e</sup> année de la République Française, une et indivisible.

*Ladjoins* **Le** Commissaire des Guerres de l'Armée  
Révolutionnaire. *Artificier à tout*

*Celui qui appartenait à quel est, grand  
besseler canonier âgé de 37 ans demeurant  
Carrefour igotite, n°23. Section du finistre  
En enrole du 28<sup>e</sup> 1793 (4, 1) dans la  
1<sup>re</sup> Comp. du 1<sup>er</sup> Bat. de la dite armée  
et qui est actuellement en activité de service  
à Paris; Enfoi de quoi les résent lui  
à été délivré pour lui servir ce que de raison*



*Martin*



É G A L I T É .

N<sup>o</sup>. 170



LIBERTÉ.

COMMUNE-AFFRANCHIE.

CERTIFICAT DE NON-REBELLION.

Nous Membres du Comité de Surveillance et Révolutionnaire du Canton  
de l'Égalité ( ci-devant Fédération ), certifions que la Citoyenne *veuve*  
*Rigobert no 60, place Légalité, Lingère de sa profession*

âgé de *64* ans, taille de *cinq* pieds, — pouces, cheveux et  
sourcils *grisaille* visage *ovale* yeux *gris* nez *Bien*  
bouche *moyenne* menton *ronde*  
n'est pas compris dans la liste des rebelles. *ni Aguerre*

En foi de quoi nous lui avons délivré le présent certificat pour lui  
servir et valoir à être payé de ses débiteurs, conformément aux décrets  
du 12 Ventôse et 4 Germinal dernier.

FAIT à Commune-affranchie, au Bureau du Comité, le *12 Thermidor*  
l'an 2 de la République Française, une et indivisible.

*M. Bon*

*Laurier Phil Louis*  
*Bernard*

*Dodat*

*Versay*

*12 Thermidor*  
*Rigobert*



- Maximilien de Robespierre is dead and the Terror is over.
- **AFTER THE SIEGE** . We must now appease.

**Agent national**  
**National Agency in**  
**Commune-Affranchie**  
 • 18 fructidor an II →  
 September 4, 1794  
 • military franchise

**CONVOCATION TO MEET THE REPRESENTATIVES**

ÉGALITÉ,



LIBERTÉ.

Ce 18 fructidor de l'an 2<sup>e</sup> de la République  
 Française, une, indivisible et démocratique.

L'AGENT NATIONAL, près le District de  
 Commune - Affranchie ,

Je t'invite, Citoyen à te rendre ce  
 soir à 5 heures précises au conseil de  
 L'administration pour former la séance  
 à laquelle doivent se rendre les  
 représentants du peuple

salut et fraternité  
 J'ajoute  
 J. L. Darnay  
 [Signature]

Au Citoyen  
 Armand Darnay  
 Commune Affranchie  
 quai de la Seine

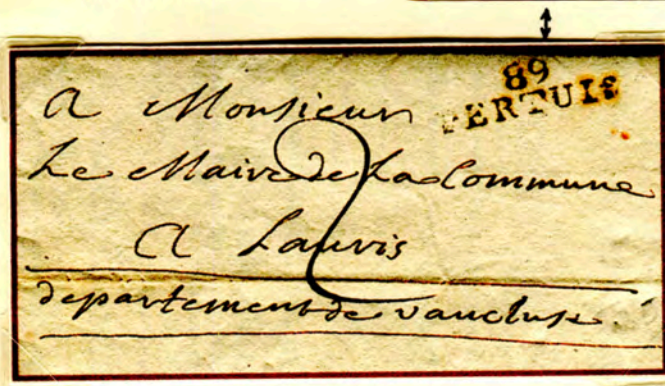
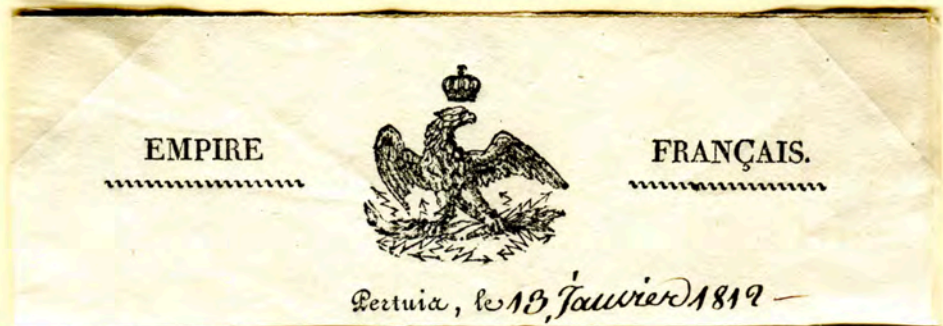


## VI. CONCLUSION

*Historical Facts :* After endless conspiracies against Bonaparte's life, Joseph Fouché suggested that Napoléon create a hereditary title to cement his legacy; he was ultimately persuaded to do so, provided that the power come from the people, not by divine right.

On May 18 1804, Napoléon was granted the title **Emperor of the French** (*Empereur des Français*) by the French Senate and was crowned on December 2 1804, **ending the period of the French Consulate and of the French First Republic.**

- Pertuis to Lauris
  - 89 = dept. Vaucluse
  - January 13 1812
  - postage due 2 décimes
- letterhead  
EMPIRE FRANÇAIS  
with Imperial Eagle  
and crown



The Napoleonic Wars extended the French borders but, after the fall of Napoléon, the Congress of Vienna re-established the borders of France. Various types of government followed: Restoration, Monarchies, Second Republic, Second Empire and finally the Republics (III<sup>rd</sup>, IV<sup>th</sup>, V<sup>th</sup>).

These governments have all this in common, they are constitutional regimes elected by universal suffrage with the direct trust manifested by the people as sole source of legitimacy. All citizens have the right to designate their representatives.

Immediately after the first abdication of Napoléon, The First Restoration (1814-1815) allowed King Louis XVIII to return to Paris in May 1814. It is a constitutional monarchy to which are added the major achievements of the Revolution; the individual rights are thus preserved.

- Paris to Paris
  - February 20 1815
  - franchise
- front : countersignature  
*Direction Générale  
des Ponts et Chaussées*

back : coat of arms of the  
Kingdom of France:  
- a crown and 3  
gold fleurs-de-lys





The monarchy was replaced by the **Second Empire** of Napoléon III on December 2 1852. The Emperor wanted to be regarded as the « *representative of democracy* ».

The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 ended the Second Empire followed by the Republics (III<sup>rd</sup>, IV<sup>th</sup>, V<sup>th</sup>).



- Paris to Nice
- dated double circle marking
  - PARIS
  - 6<sup>E</sup> levée
  - March 11 1870
  - B<sup>ur</sup> DES CONTRE-SEIGNS
- countersignature in blue ink  
*Service de l'Empereur*  
*(Maison de l'Impératrice)*

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (*Déclaration des Droits de l'homme et du citoyen*), passed by the *Assemblée nationale* in August 1789, is a fundamental document of the French Revolution and in the history of human and civil rights.

It is included in the preamble of the Constitutions of both the Fourth French Republic (1946) and Fifth Republic (1958) and is still current.

**The Declaration had a major impact on the development of freedom and democracy in Europe and worldwide.**

**It inspired in large part the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.** It was signed at the *Palais de Chaillot*, Paris, on December 10 1948 by the 58 States member of the United Nations.

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