

Military Mail of the Post-Napoleonic Papal States: 1815–1870

ROPEX 2019

May 2019

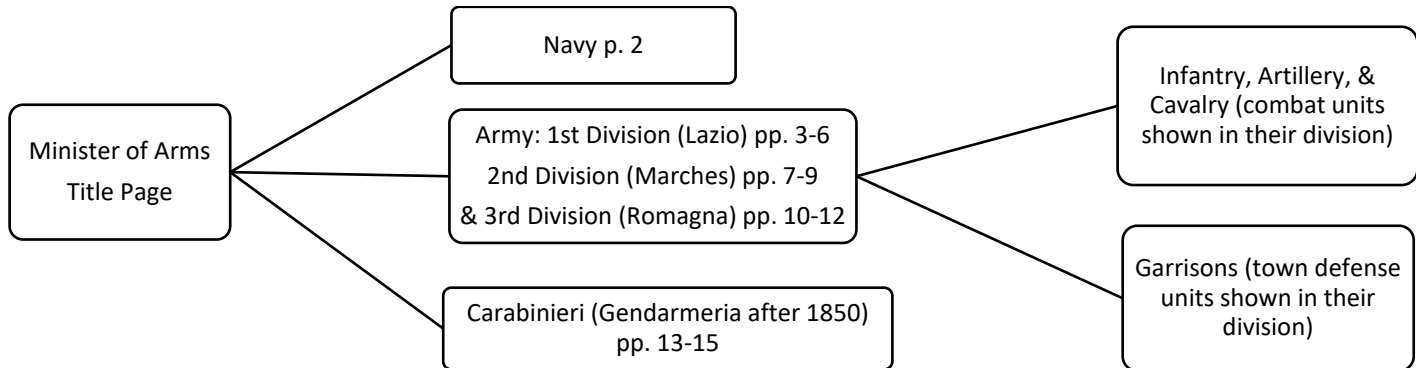
Purpose: This military postal history study examines military mail of the Papal States after the establishment of European national boundaries by the Congress of Vienna. The exhibit presents the rates, routes, and markings for military mail. With a delineated territorial responsibility and the removal of foreign troops, the Papal States established a coherent military force that lasted until the unification with Italy in 1870.

Scope: In this era, the term “military” included three branches of service: army, navy, and military police (initially *carabinieri*, later *gendarmeria*) who reported to the Minister of Arms. The exhibit has mail from all three service branches.

FAQs: All census data presented are as of 1 Feb 2019. Papal post rates changed three times during the era: 1826, 1844, and 1864. The currency changed in 1864 (*baj* to *centesimi*).

Highlights: Covers of philatelic interest are highlighted with a **red box**. *Blue italics indicate personal research.*

Exhibit Plan with Military Structure: The military cover on page 16 is from the unification with Italy.



1856 Route: Rome to Ronciglione (North of Rome in Lazio). **Rate:** 9 *baj* fee is more than the 2 *baj* fee for an adjacent postal region; the original letter must have had more than one page. **Comments:** *Only known cover from the Minister of Arms. Major headquarters did not use the D'Ufficio (official) usually found in the lower left corner.* Standard marking for Servizio Militare at top right. Double circle mark for Rome. Fee paid by recipient.



1865 Route: From Maritime magistrate in Civitavecchia (31 Dec. 1865) to Marseille (3 Jan. 1886), then Lyon (3 Jan. 1886), entering Spain at LaJonquera (4 Jan. 1886), and arriving at the consulate in Barcelona, Spain (5 Jan. 1886).
Rate: *The fee is greater than the known Papal States rate for international mail in 1865.* PP indicates partial postage paid by sender. Combined cost of 45 centesimi (apparently the Papal Post continued to use the older 9 baj marking; if it were centesimi it would **not** cover the P.P. cost) plus 8 Spanish reals (blue 8R^s on upper right) to cover the cost in Spain.
Comments: *Only known (1) naval mail, (2) military to overseas cover and (3) from a non-ship naval unit.* It is missing the mandatory stamps for international mail from the Papal States since 1864. No official or military service markings. Double circle town stamps are first receiving towns in Papal States and Spain; others on back.

Legend for Military Mail Markings

1--Oval hand franking of sender's unit	3--Handwritten franking
Recipient, title, and position	
Destination town	
2--Official Mail Designation	

1 – Indicates sending office would pay the postage. This franking is sometimes found in the upper right corner.

2 – *The D'Ufficio* indicating official mail was optional, since its absence does **not** indicate unofficial mail.

3 – *Servizio Militare*, or an abbreviation – *SM*, *SMil*, *et al*, designated military mail. Military police usually used *Servizio Carabinieri*, or later *Servizio Gendarmeria*. Sometimes *Pontifici* (Pontifical) replaced *Servizio*.

Common postal markings: PP (partial postage), PD (paid to destination), handwritten numbers for fees paid by recipient, handwritten “X” and “/” (slash) cancels, double circle or linear town marks, and commercial marks can be found on military mail.



Ex. – Dr. Migliavacca

1860 **Route:** Rome to Monte Romano (both in Lazio). **Rate:** 2 baj fee for adjacent post.
Comments: *This is the only known cover for the 1st Division HQ. It was sent to a garrison commander, not a political leader, unlike all other known HQ mail. S.M. for Servizio Militare. No official mail marking.*



The military assigned each of three provinces (Romagna, Marches, and Lazio) of the Papal States to a division of the army. Responsibility for Umbria was split between 1st (Lazio) and 2nd (Marches) divisions.

Only two known covers from garrisons in First Division. Garrisons defended towns (~50 to 100 men each). The handstamps translate as *The Commander of the Plaza in (town name)*.



1836 **Route:** Acquapendente to Viterbo (both in Lazio). **Rate:** 2 baj fee for adjacent post. **Comments:** *Only known cover from this garrison unit.* Official mail marking.



1854 **Route:** Mailed within Narni (portion of Umbria under 1st Division's control). **Rate:** 1 baj fee for same post. **Comments:** *Only known cover from this unit. Some suggest that the use of the green color ink for handstamps or handwriting indicates special status. In fact, it is simply the use of a copper solution in the ink instead of oak or iron pigment. S°.M°. for Servizio Militare.* Official mail marking.

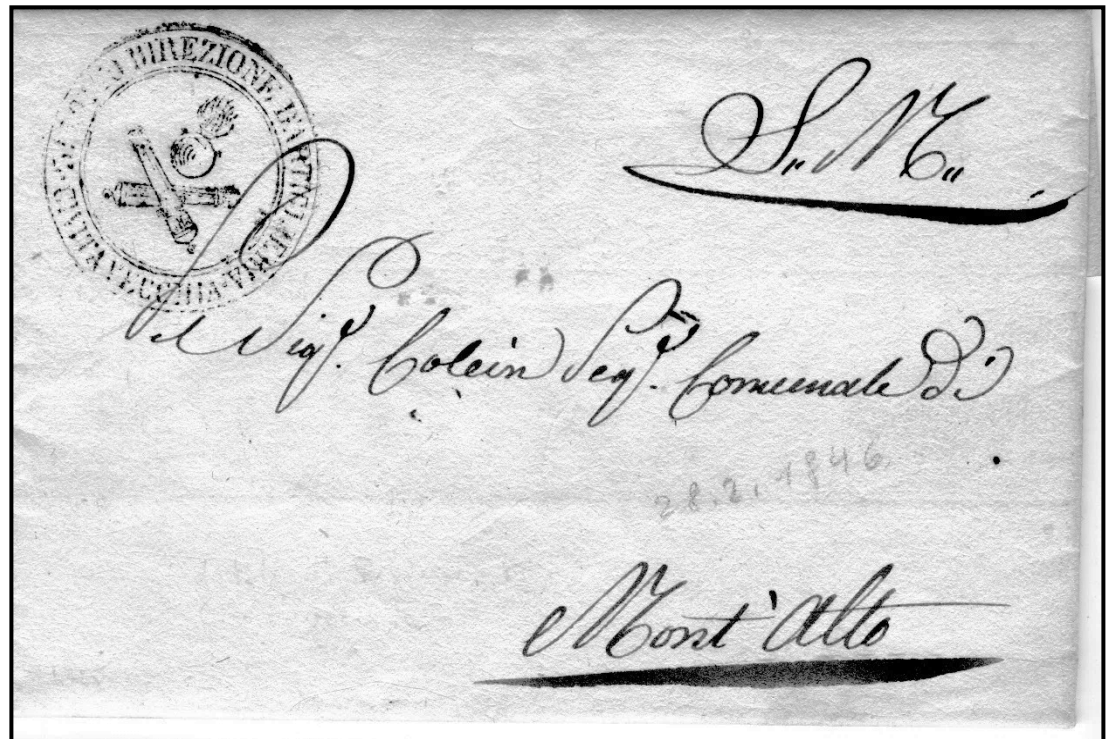


1818 **Route:** From Umbria (cavalry unit on campaign) to Casale in the Marches. **Rate:** Adjacent province fee of 4 baj. **This cover highlighted because:** *it is the earliest known (1) use of a graphical military franking, and (2) the earliest use of papal imagery in a military franking.* **Comments:** Mailed within portion of Umbria under Lazio's control. Terni is the receiving town's stamp. Manuscript X cancel. No official mail marking.



1840 **Route:** From Spoleto (elite Light Infantry unit) to Cerreto (Both in Lazio's section of Umbria). **Rate:** Same post was a 1 baj fee. **Comments:** *Only military mail using a free franking stating the unit's special type (Bersaglieri) and using the military police variation of Pontificia instead of Servizio.* No official mail marking.

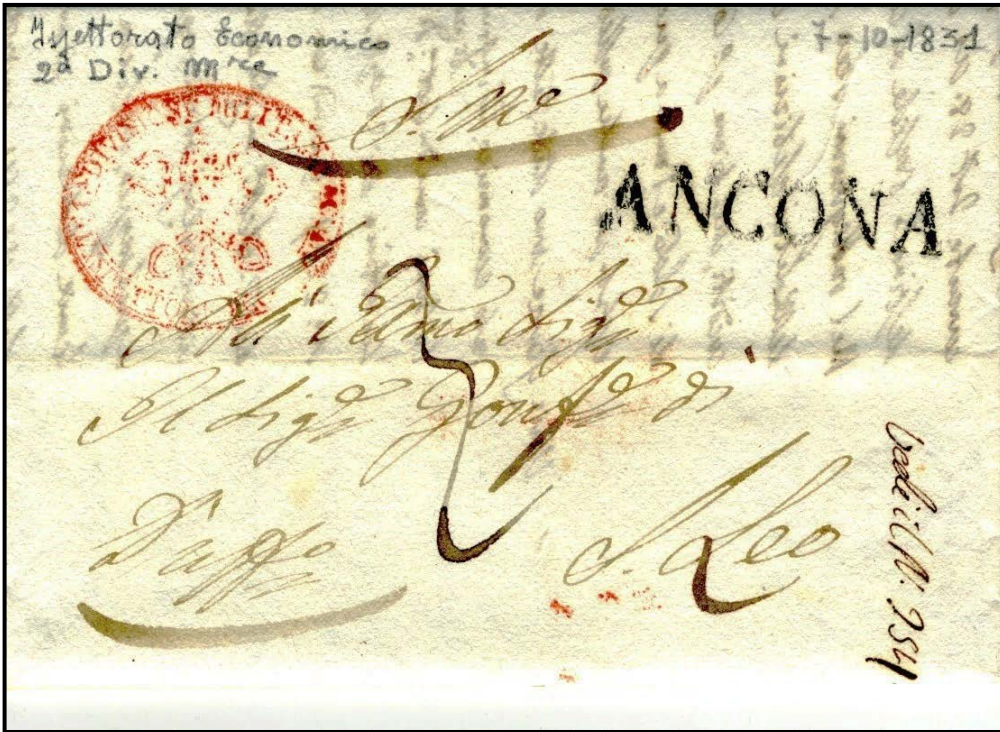
Artillery units had four to eight cannons (fewer than 30 men) and stood guard mostly at ports.



1846 **Route:** Civitavecchia to Mont'Alto (both in Lazio). **Rate:** 2 baj fee for adjacent post. **Comments:** Only known example of an artillery unit franking. Hand-stamp indicates this artillery unit was subordinate to a headquarters in Civitavecchia. S^o.M^{re}. for Servizio Militare. No official mail marking.



1867 **Route:** Viterbo to Ischia (isle off coast of Naples). **Rate:** 10 centesimi fee (paid with older baj stamps) for Lazio outside of Rome. **This cover highlighted because:** Only known military cover with a stamp and no military marking. **Comments:** Paid by sender (manuscript mark over Vincenzo). The blue ellipse is the Viterbo commander's commercial mark. The military ended the use of frankings after 1864, when stamps were required on all mail. No official mail marking.



1831 **Route:** Ancona to San Leo. **Rate:** Non-adjacent post fee of 3 baj. **Comments:** This is one of five known covers for the Second Division HQ. This cover has red ink; the other four used black ink. It uses the S.M. mark (top center) instead of the spelled out Servizio Militare. 3 baj fee charged to recipient. Fee paid by recipient. S.M^e. for Servizio Militare. Official mail marking.



1818 **Route:** Ancona to San Benedetto. **Rate:** 2 baj fee for adjacent post. **Comments:** The Commissioner of War was the commander for the division. (An enhanced 75% scan of the hand stamp is shown lower left for clarity.) Only known cover for this office in any of the three divisions. No official mail marking.



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1840 **Route:** 1st Company 7th Battalion (Infantry) on campaign on Umbria/Marches border with cover sent to town in Umbria. **Rate:** Fee cannot be determined but could be 1 to 3 baj. **Comments:** *Only known cover from this unit and second cover for a unit on campaign.* S^o.Mre. for Servizio Militare. No official mail marking.



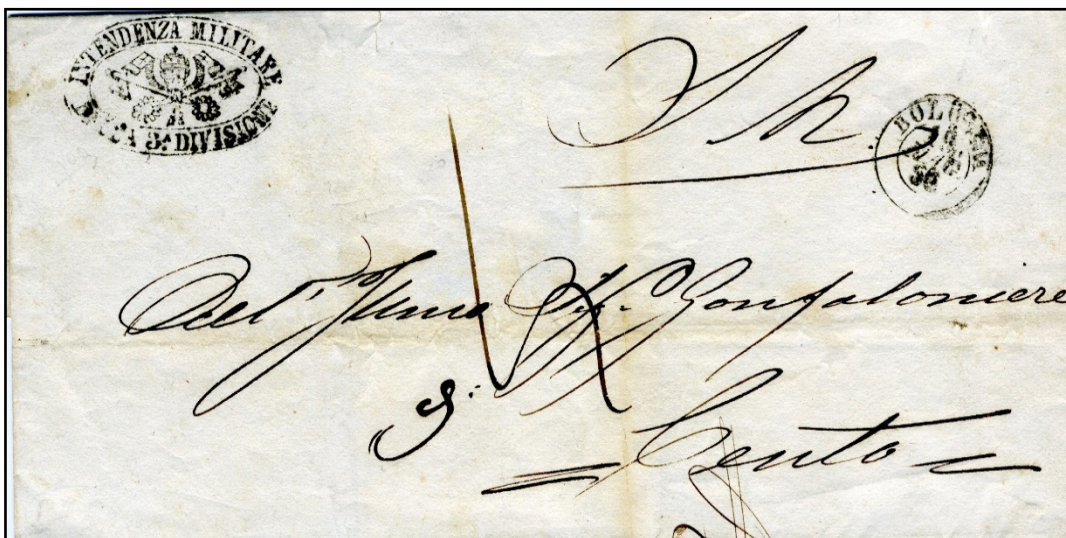
This mark is the typical notation for a 3 baj fee in this period. Compare to mark on cover to left.

1821 **Route:** 1st Cavalry Squadron in Fano to Acqualagna. **Rate:** 3 baj fee for non-adjacent posts. **Comments:** *Only known papal military cover with this style S.M. marking. Servizio Militare marking is not in typical location (top right or top center). Instead it is bottom left at an angle.* Fee paid by recipient. No official mail marking.

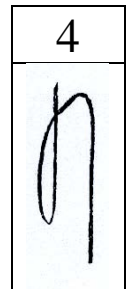
The Third Division had an erratic existence since it was in the province of Romagna, which had an on-again/off-again membership in the Papal States. Its military consisted of garrisons.



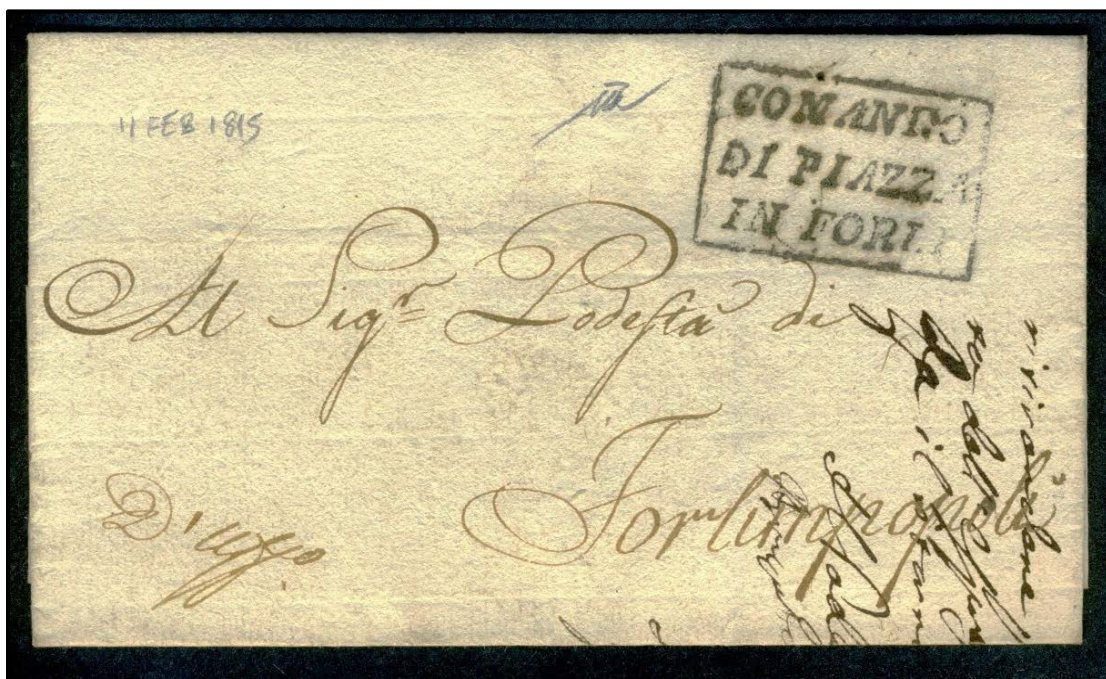
1856 Route: Bologna to Cento. **Rate:** 4 baj for what was normally a 1 baj fee (adjacent posts); the original cover may have held more than one page. **This cover highlighted because:** (1) *Only known cover with military franking using stamps* and (2) *earliest known cover using stamps*. **Comments:** *One of two known covers for this unit*. Fee paid by recipient. S.M. for Servizio Militare. No official mail marking.



75% scan of cover's front



The mark above is the typical notation for a 4 baj fee in this period. Compare to the rotated "S" mark over the recipient's name.



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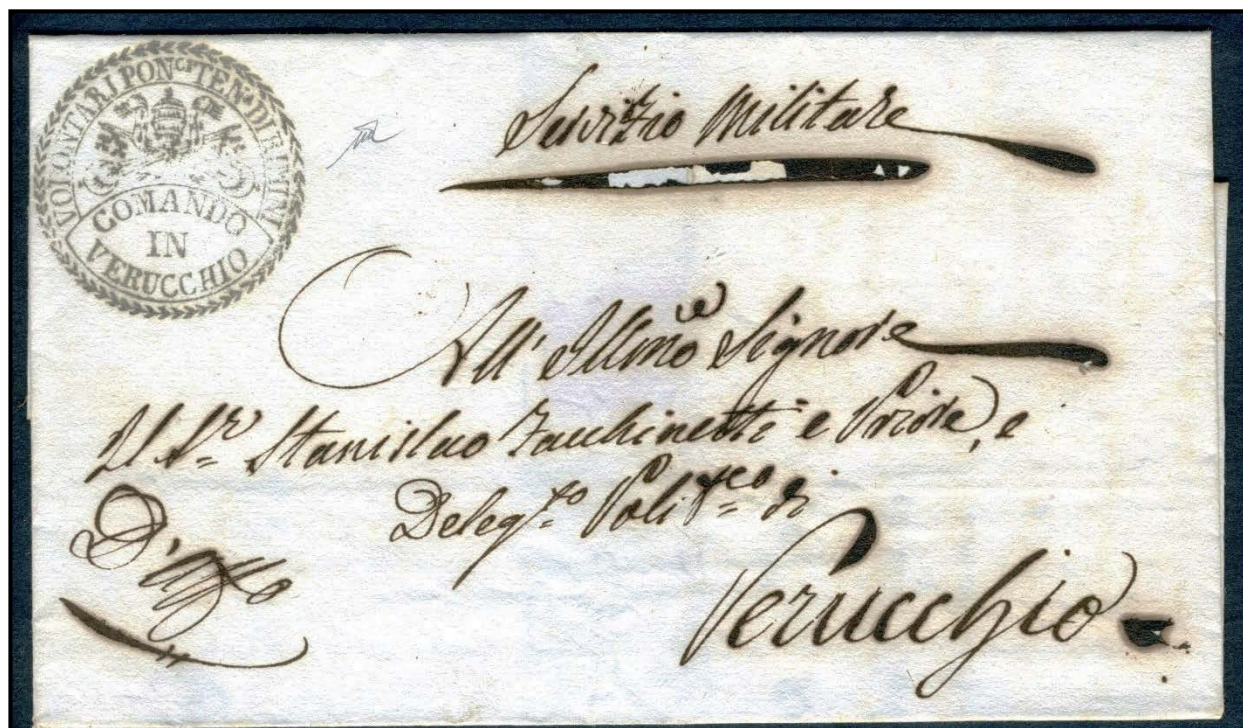
1815 Route: Garrison in Forli cover to Forlimpopoli. Rate: Fee of 2 baj for adjacent post.

Comment: *One of five known covers from this unit.* No Service franking. Official mail marking.



1826 Route: Garrison at Ravenna cover sent within Ravenna. Rate: 1 baj fee for same post.

Comments: *One of four known covers from this unit.* No official mail marking.



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1841 **Route:** Volunteer (Infantry) cover sent within Verrucchio **Rate:** 1 baj fee for same post. **Comments:** *One of two known mobile unit covers for Third Division.* Official mail marking.



1821 **Route:** Volunteer Battalion stationed in Ozzano to local Mayor. **Rate:** 1 baj fee for same post. **Comment:** *Second of two known mobile unit covers for Third Division.* Official mail marking.



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1822 Route: Castel Maggiore to San Giorgio. Rate: 1 baj fee for same post.

Comments: This cover shows the text box/circle handstamp common between 1820 and 1840. The *CⁱPⁱ* stands for *Carabinieri Pontifici* (Pontifical). No official mail marking.



1834 Route: From an unknown location to Ferrara. Rate: fee unknown. **This cover highlighted because:** *Only known military cover to use a handstamp instead of handwritten military franking.* **Comments:** Fee paid by recipient. Variant spelling of *Pontifici* in both frankings. Official mail marking.

The Carabinieri performance was poor, so the units were reorganized in 1850-52 to form the Gendarmeria.



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1851 Route: 2nd Brigade local post within town. Rate: 1 baj fee for same post. Comments: Note the franking still retained the term *Carabinieri*, although the service marking is *Gendarmeria*. One of two known covers using both terms. Another variant spelling of *Pontifici*. No official mail marking.



Ex. – Dr. Migliavacca

1853 Route: Military Police headquarters for Rome (in Civitavecchia) to Commander of Weapons Brigade. Rate: 1 baj fee for same post. Comments: This is one of three known covers from the main military police HQ. Another variant of *Pontifici*. Fee paid by military. No official mail marking.

- The Papal States fell in September 1870.
- The Italian forces accepted former papal military officers and enlisted personnel.
- The process of assimilation was completed by the time this cover was mailed in 1872.



1872 Route: This unit (50th Infantry Regiment) of the Italian Army was stationed from close to Turin to just north of Pompei.

Rate: This cover does not indicate that any fee was assessed. This should have been a 50 *centesimi* fee (Italian currency). This cover crossed most of the former Papal States territories.

Comments: Uses manuscript *S.M.* in top center, similar to the Papal States. Single-circle date stamp indicates Italian postal system (Papal States system commonly used a double circle). Curved text handstamp at lower left denotes the commander of the sending unit.