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# OPAL



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## The NORTH STAR BRIGADE

When Japan surrendered at the end of the second world war, Korea was divided along the 38th parallel between the USA and Russia. Both these countries imposed their own style of government thus Korea remained divided.

The Americans allowed South Korea free election to establish her own government and the 50 000 American troops guarding this country were withdrawn. However as soon as the American forces withdrew from the south, North Korea invaded South Korea with the aim of uniting the country. Upon this the United Nations declared war on North Korea on the 25th June 1950 and asked member nations to supply troops, money and medical supplies.

The Turkish government without consulting the Grand National Assembly decided to send a contingent to Korea. Fifteen Nations sent troops and five other nations contributed money and medical supplies.

In a very short time the U.N. Forces backed by American troops, Navy and Air Force crossed the 38th parallel into the North and occupied the capital Pyongyang. The communist government of North Korea was in difficulties and asked aid from other communist states.

On the 28th November 1950 the Chinese army engaged the UN forces at Kunuri. The UN forces lost the battle and they were in danger of being overrun. The Turkish contingent at the time known as "The North Star Brigade" was left behind to fight and hold the Chinese armies and to give the Americans and other UN forces time to withdraw and regroup. The North Star Brigade was very successful and even though the contingent was surrounded by Chinese forces, it was able to break out and come out through safely. However the cost was very high over 1000 casualties.

Of course as philatelist we are interested in the postal facilities of this contingent. The North Star Brigade was part of the American Army Corps and for this reason they used the American army post office and American stamps. The following postmarks were used on outgoing post from Korea to Turkey and other countries.

USA PO 963

USA PO 25

USA PO 20

The incoming mail was addressed as follows.

TAPO 5401 Tokio Japan

USA PO 963 USA.

In my collection I have three different types of USA 25.

Type 1. Small machine cancellation. see fig 1.

Type 2. Army and Air Force postal service, large machine cancellation. see fig 2.

Type 3. Same as type 2, but smaller lettering and smaller diameter. see fig 3.  
Note: The above article was jointly prepared by Mehmet Akan (based on his collection and Jeff Ertughrul's notes extracted from the archives of the Imperial War Museum London. Further information is required, if you are able to help or write an article please contact the editor.

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Tokyo  
JAPAN



Bay Hacı İsmail Atlı

VIA AIR MAIL

Bay Niyazi Hamzaoglu eliyle

Hacopolu han No 6

İstanbul - Sultanhamam

TURKEY

İ. Utm. S. Kana.

P.A.F.C. T.A.P.O. 5401

Tokyo - Japan



VIA AIR MAIL

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