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<p>Postbegleitadresse</p> <p>Stempelgebühr unmittelbar entrichtet</p> <p>3 WIEN 44 30. VI. 38.17</p> <p>Produktiv-Gesellschaft Der Wiener Platzhelfer Wien 11, Baumgasse 82, 757</p> <p>13705</p> <p>Die nach umschriebenen Teile und die Vorverfügung auf der Rückseite hat der Absender auszufüllen</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Inhalt</th> <th>Wert</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Musik</i></td> <td>18 S 67 g</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td>S.....g</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td>S.....g</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>An <i>Grün</i></p> <p><i>Süsmund Jandl</i></p> <p>in <i>Z. Ruperscht & Klavenfurt</i></p> <p>Strasse, Hausnummer</p> <p>Post</p> <p>Gewicht: <i>6 kg 45 g</i></p> <p>kg.....g</p> <p>kg.....g</p>	Inhalt	Wert	<i>Musik</i>	18 S 67 g		S.....g		S.....g	<p>3</p> <p>40 I 13 Wien 44</p>	<p>Gebühren bei der Aufgabe</p> <p>S 95 g</p> <p>S.....g</p> <p>S.....g</p> <p>S.....g</p> <p>S 95 g</p> <p>Gebühren bei der Abgabe</p> <p>S.....g</p> <p>S.....g</p>
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RADIOGRAMM

Eingelangt <i>20</i> <i>14 VII 48</i>	RADIO-AUSTRIA Aktiengesellschaft Wien, I., Rengasse 14 Via Radio Austria	Nr. 66
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WKT/STE 2003 Die Daten im dienstlichen Eingange des Telegrammes bedeuten:
1. Name des Aufgabebesetztes — 2. Telegrammnummer — 3. Wortzahl — 4. Aufgabebelag — Aufgabebelast

AVL119 BALTIMORE WD 14 32 = CK32 =

NLT LUISE MARIA GROSS APT 3 ZEDLITZGASSE 1 VIENNA =

YOUR CABLE INCORRECTLY READ TO ME STOP MY DIVORCE FINAL
NEXT WEEK STOP/START BACK TO YOU WEDNESDAY STOP/ I LOVE YOU =

SPAN +

PASS. am *MA*

R

Nro. 26. R e c e p i s s e.

Ueber ein rekommandirtes Schreiben

welches unter Adresse *Grün Oberamt in ann*

von dem k. k. Postamte Neudorf, unter heutigem Dato mir Endesgefertigten richtig zugestellt worden ist.

Sign. *Braun* den *15^{ten} Jber* 1820

Unterschrift:

Porto	fl.	—	fr.
Recep.	"	<i>2</i>	"
Summa	fl.	<i>2</i>	fr.

Three of the items discussed in this issue.

Notice to members and others.

We offer our Members books and magazines to borrow, and various items (books, CDs, ties, binders, etc) to buy. The actual stock is spread around the country in the houses of various committee members, and the stock moves around from time to time. To make it easy for Members, Joyce Boyer has kindly agreed to be the single point of contact for Members who want to buy or borrow anything we offer. Order from Joyce (and pay her where appropriate), and she will arrange for whoever holds the stock to send it to you. Full details of our offer are on page 1 and the inside back cover; where you will also find Joyce's contact details

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Edited by Andy Taylor

EDITORIAL 171

Don't forget to **book for the APS Weekend at Harrogate, 8-10 October**. Details were sent with the Newsletter; if yours has been mislaid the Editor, who is also this year's Festmeister, will be delighted to provide them again. Booking deadlines are 20 August for residents and 1 September for day visitors. (It should still be possible to reserve a bedroom if you ask before 1 September but not necessarily at the reduced APS rate.)

We congratulate Briefmarkensammler Verein Favoriten Vienna, in this their 80th anniversary year.

Newsletter 170 of the (USA) Ukrainian Philatelic & Numismatic Society reports the political struggles in Ukraine and the harmful results on stamp issuing. On the positive side it records joint member Inger Kuzych's Gold Medal for "Lemberg" at the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada's 2010 show – congratulations! Time for a repetition of the standard disclaimers.

The Editorial reflects the interests and prejudices of the Editor, and he and the APS accept no responsibility for any inaccuracies in the articles. Unless explicitly stated nothing is the official opinion of the Society.

THE APS BOOKSHOP

NEW!! To purchase any of these items, contact
 —▶ the Librarian.

NB! If paying by Paypal remember to add the £1 fee!

CDs

- ❖ All CDs cost £10 or €15 including postage to anywhere in the world
- ❖ "The History of Austrian Revenue Stamps" by Dr. Stephan Koczynski. Enhanced and published on CD in fully-text-searchable form.. It is ISBN 978-0-900118-07-4
- ❖ **NEW!! 1910 Post Office Index.** For details see under "Bookmarks" on page 43.

Books:

- ❖ For all books, P&P costs £1.50 in UK, £2.50 to Europe, and £4.50 to Elsewhere
- ❖ "A Celebration of Austrian Philately": the APS 60th anniversary 'Festschrift'. viii+162 pp A4 in full colour. ISBN 978-0-900118-05-0 Price **£19.95**
- ❖ "The Pneumatic Post in Vienna" now reprinted in one A4 volume, ISBN 978-0-900118-06-7 Still only £40 (**£32 to APS members**)
- ❖ "The Postmarks of Dalmatia": Supplied complete with a 20-page update to the section on Military Unit Cachets (pages 166-171). ISBN 978-0-900118-02-9 Price **£30**
- ❖ "Przemysl 1914-1918" by Keith Tranmer. A very few copies still available; price **£12**
- ❖ "The Postal History of Ukraine: KuK Ukrainische Legion Feldpost correspondence cards 1914-1918" by Dubniak & Cybaniak. **£14**
- ❖ **German/English Philatelic Dictionary**, published by the Germany Philatelic Society in the USA. This is the 2005 edition, 298 sides of A5, spiral bound, with appendix of abbreviations. Copies cost **£16**.

Back numbers of "Austria"

- ❖ Copies are £1 each, subject to us having stock. Some may be facsimiles or second-hand originals. These prices include P&P (by cheapest route).
- ❖ Binders for A5 issues of 'Austria' cost £3.75 and hold 10-12 earlier issues, 8 of the recent issues. There's very few left and it isn't made any more – order now!
- ❖ Non-members may also purchase back numbers of Austria, at **£5 per copy**. It may be better value to join the Society ☺

AN 1839 MISSIONARY COVER, BEIRUT TO LEIPZIG

By Semaan Bassil & Bruno Schill

A TRANSCONTINENTAL PRE-PHILATELIC MIXED PORTO/FRANCO MISSIONARY COVER SENT FROM BEIRUT TO LEIPZIG IN 1839

Postal history includes the study of postmarks, postal rates, and postage stamps on covers that have been transported and delivered through a postal system as well as the study of shipping routes and post offices used. Research of the genealogy of a cover transported by postal services through the addressee and addressor, and historical context of material sent through the mail is also crucial to the interpretation of a cover.

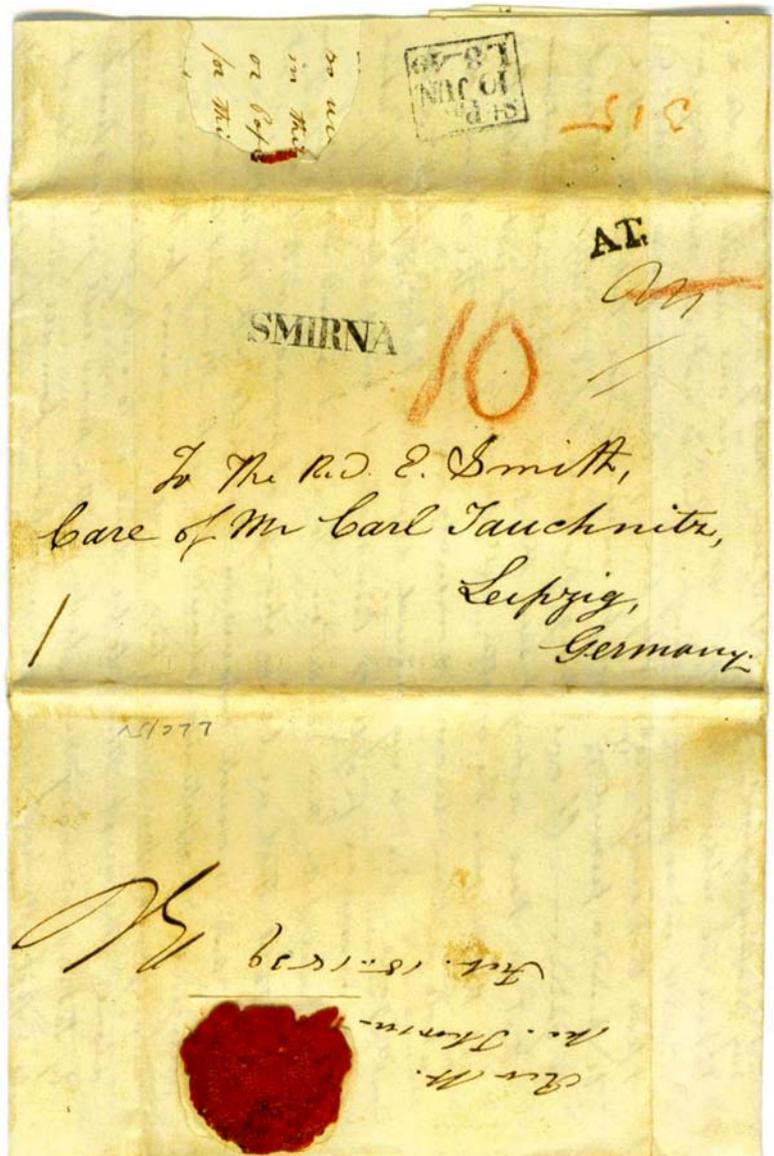
This cover is exceptional:

- (1) It is an early evangelist missionary cover from Beirut,
- (2) It is one of the early letter covers transported by the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation through the Austrian postal system
- (3) It carries the rare and early use of the straight line cancel mark of "SMIRNA"
- (4) It represents a mixed porto/franco taxation.
- (5) It represents an important document that highlights the competing efforts of the Western churches to convert the different local communities in Lebanon.

The Austrian postal system in the Eastern Mediterranean

Before the advent of the "Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation" in 1836, mail destined to outside the Ottoman Empire was remitted (including mail from foreign merchants) to the Austrian Consular postal agencies in Constantinople and in Smyrna and was transported under Tatar escort through the Ottoman territories up to the Austrian borders. This was possible following an agreement between the Porte and the Austrian Imperial government in 1739 (Ref 9 p338).

Austria began to operate in the Levant a postal system out of "Austrian Italy" in Trieste (the chief port of the Austrian Empire) as early as 1837 following the establishment in 1836 of the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation, a subsidiary of the insurance company the "Austrian Lloyd". The latter was the equivalent of today's British Lloyd's and began its insurance activity linked to marine trading at the port of Trieste in Italy in 1833. The Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation was set up in Trieste to transport passengers and couriers on its own ships.



The company's first vessels inaugurated on 1 May 1837 a link between Trieste and the two ports of the Levant which were then of the greatest importance to Europe: Constantinople the capital of the Ottoman Empire, and Alexandria (the second largest port in the Eastern Mediterranean and gateway to India).

On September 1, 1837 a 10 year contract was signed between the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation and the Imperial Administration where the former would carry the mail bags of the Postal Administration to and from all ports of call of the Levant against a fixed fee. In 1837-1838, three shipping routes were established (1) Trieste-Constantinople (twice monthly), (2) Syra-Alexandria (twice monthly) and (3) Trieste-Venice (twice weekly) (Ref 3 pp16, 22).

The Austrians would build the most effective postal system out of the Ottoman Empire which was to dominate the trade of the Levant in subsequent years.

From 1841 (two years after the posting of the cover under study) to 1845, an Austrian consular postal agency in Beirut was the recipient of mail remitted by the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation steamers once a month through a stop-over in Beirut that was ensured by the following shipping route: Constantinople-Smyrna-Rhodos-Larnaca-Beirut (from 1841 to 1844) (Ref 2 p.381) and vice versa. It was also possible to post the mail directly on board of the "Austrian Lloyd" ship.

An Austrian postal service in Beirut was set up later in 1845 (at the same time as the French postal Administration) (Ref 8) by the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation (Ref 3 p.23) which had the official mandate to operate the postal activities within its navigation agency established there. The Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation offices were under the supervision of the Postal Directorate in Trieste (Ref 1 p.13). Later in 1854, this Austrian postal service in Beirut was handed over to the Austrian Postal Administration.

The cover

The cover under study is dated 1839 and is a three-page folded letter written in Beirut (modern Lebanon), by Reverend William Thomson on February 18. It was sent to the Reverend Eli Smith, Leipzig, Saxony, (modern Germany) and arrived on June 10.

The cover was forwarded by a messenger from Beirut to the Austrian Consular postal agency in Smyrna (which had 12 postal counters open to the public (Ref 1 p.94)) as Beirut was not until 1841 a port of call serviced by the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation. The Smyrna Consular postal agency was set up between 1748 and 1817 (Ref 1 p.94). Consular post offices were under Vienna's Postal Directorate responsibility but it delegated some of the authority to the Constantinople post office at the Austrian Embassy.

Postal rates used

Letters at that time were either posted "franco" (prepaid by way of affixing the postal rate in blue or in black on the back of the cover) by the sender or posted "porto" (by way of affixing the postal rate in red on the front of the cover) meaning tax to be paid at arrival by the receiver. Letters were prepaid in cash; and later in postage stamps as these were introduced gradually in the Levant from December 1, 1863.

The total postal rate for the voyage of the letter from Smyrna to Leipzig (since it was transported by a messenger from Beirut to Smyrna) stood at 73 Soldi. Soldi was the Austrian currency used in Austrian Italy as well as in the Austrian post offices in the Levant and was equivalent to the Kreuzer currency used in Metropolitan Austria. The split of the 73 Soldi charge was as follows:

Smyrna to Trieste (sea-fare): 36 Soldi

The cover was posted "franco" (pre-paid) on May 18 (the latter date in manuscript was added at the end of the text by Reverend Adler in Smyrna who may have been the messenger) at the Austrian Consular post office in Smyrna. The office in Smyrna charged 36 Soldi convention money (CM; the latter was used for monetary conversion within the Austrian territory whereby 1 Soldi Austrian CM was approx. 1.05 Soldi as used

conventionally in Austria) to cover the sea-fare from Smyrna to Trieste. Evidence of payment is the “36” marked in black on the back of the letter.

Trieste to the Kingdom of Saxony border (postal rate within Austria): 24 Soldi (or 6.5 Groschen, the converted rate in the 1839 currency of Saxony)

In Trieste (the Chief Austrian port of the Empire since 1815) the postal rate of 24 Soldi (CM) covering the inner-Austrian transport (Trieste to the border of Saxony) was noted as porto, to be paid at the final point of destination (see “24” in black on the front of the cover just below the “A.T” mark).

Saxony border to Leipzig (postal rate within the Kingdom of Saxony): 3.5 Groschen (or 13 Soldi)

At the border exchange station (most probably at Bodenbach), a postal rate of 3½ Groschen (Convention Money) covering the voyage of the letter up to Leipzig was charged. This rate was the lowest charged for a minimum weight of (probably) 15 gram for a distance of more than 10 miles as there were different rates according to the weight of a letter and the travelled distance. The currency conversion practice among German Kingdoms and between the latter and Austria led to the following currency conversion: the total postal rate due to be paid for the trip covering Trieste to Leipzig of 10 Groschen (6.5+3.5), was affixed in red crayon on the front of the cover, and the 24 Soldi (affixed previously to cover the inner Austrian transport tax) was thus crossed over by the same red crayon from the Royal Saxon postal officer post either at Bodenbach or Leipzig.

The currency conversion was based on the so-called “Convention Money” (Konventions-Münze) between Austria and the Kingdom of Saxony (and other European territories) and was a standard monetary currency convention used to facilitate border-crossing transport and obviously the postal accountancy (debit/credit notes) among the different German Kingdoms and Austria at that time.

The 10 Groschen tax thus covered the whole distance from Trieste to Leipzig and was accounted for at the final destination in Leipzig and paid by the receiver there.

Cancel mark:

The “SMIRNA” (without a date) straight line cancel mark is the oldest Austrian hand stamp used there. Müller, the well known postal historian of Austria, has recorded in his work (Ref 1 p.94) that the earliest recorded use of this hand stamp was in 1841, while this one was used in 1839, three years earlier.

Transit/arrival marks

Disinfection at Trieste

To protect the European populations from contagious diseases endemic to the Levant and the Near East like plague and cholera, disinfection of incoming mail and paper products that were considered highly contagious (i.e. letters and books), by either fumigation or dipping in boiled vinegar, was introduced in the early seventeenth century (Ref 5 pp.483-484; Ref 6). In the 18th and 19th century most main ports in the Mediterranean (i.e. Toulon, Malta, Trieste, Venice, Ancona, Napoli, Livorno, Genova, and Marseille (Ref 7 p.13) had established disinfection and sanitation centres, the so called “Lazaret”. Trieste in particular from very early took strict protective measures against the transmission of infectious diseases that were endemic in the Levant through its “lazaretto” at Santa Teresa that operated from 1768 to 1868.

Like all incoming mail from the Levant this letter was disinfected at Trieste and was afterwards marked with the red wax seal of the Lazaretto “Sigillum Sanitatis Tergesti” (Sanitary Seal of the city of Trieste) on the back proving the sanitation measures for the authorities of the country of final destination of the letter.

Other marks

A black “A.T.” (for “Austria Transito” (Ref 2 p.289), this mark was affixed most probably at Trieste (or in Vienna). This mark was used for letters transiting through Austria into an extra-territorial destination like the Kingdom of Saxony or other German States.

On arrival in Leipzig, an arrival date stamp was affixed in a square black box reading “**St. Post 10. JUN. L3-19**”: St(adt) Post stands for City Post. The L3-19 is the internal identification number of the city postal officer responsible for mail delivery within Leipzig. Such private city post offices (opened in 1829 in the cities of Dresden and Leipzig in Saxony) operated under the responsibility of the respective city and delivered the letter to the final recipient. For the period between 1817 and 1847 the Royal Saxon mail was responsible for the delivery of the letter from the Austrian-Saxon border to the city post office of Leipzig.

Travel routes***Beirut to Smyrna***

The cover was remitted on May 17 to the Reverend John B. Adler (who may have written the date in the letter text) based in Smyrna by a messenger travelling there from Beirut probably on a transiting commercial or a military ship. In this period, there was no shipping line operating on a regular basis to or from Beirut. The letter therefore had to be carried by a private messenger to Smyrna to be remitted at the Consular post office. Note that Smyrna was the first establishment of the U.S evangelical mission in the near east.

Smyrna to Trieste

The shipping route used by the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation ship from Smyrna was most probably the Constantinople-Trieste line: (Constantinople-Smyrna-Syra-Piraeus-Patras-Corfu-Ancona-Trieste) (Ref 3 p.16) operated first from May 16, 1837 two years before the posting of that letter. This trip must have taken 14 days until destination, and was an important achievement for a small paddle-steamship in those early years. One of the following six steamers must have transported the cover under study.

1. ARCIDUCA LODEVICO (Lloyd’s first steamer)
2. ARCIDUCA GIOVANNI
3. CONTE KOLOWRAT (called BOSFORO later)
4. PRINCIPE METTERNICH
5. BARONE EICHHOF (called ORIENTE later)
6. MAHMUDIEH

Trieste to Bodenbach (at the border of the Kingdom of Saxony)

The cover was transported overland from Trieste to border of Saxony (probably Bodenbach) by the Austrian Reichpost established since 1716 for the territory of Austria-Habsburg. The means of transport on the postal route passing through Vienna and Austrian Bohemia to Bodenbach at the border between Austria and the Kingdom of Saxony were either carriage or horse mail.

Bodenbach to Leipzig

The Royal Saxon Post, responsible for the postal services of Saxony between 1817 and 1847, delivered the letter by post carriage from Bodenbach to Leipzig, where it was handed over to the city post office that was responsible for final delivery to the recipient.

Special Remarks

Summary of dates & places

Feb 18	Handed to messenger in Beirut
May 17	Arrived in Smyrna
May 18	Posted in Smyrna; sent by Lloyd ship to Trieste
Jun 1	Arrived in Trieste; sent via Bodenbach to Leipzig
Jun 10	Arrived in Leipzig

Travel length

It is interesting to note that the major travel delay was caused from the messenger trip from Beirut to Smyrna (from Feb 18 to May 17, which is 89 days). Such long travel delays were not abnormal in those days where cities such as Beirut were only served by the regular foreign shipping companies several years later, and thus had to depend on the irregular schedules of commercial or military ships in transit to pick up/drop the mail.

Note for example that an Austrian cover posted in 1865 (26 years after the posting of the cover under analysis) from Beirut to Trieste took only 17 days, since by then regular shipping routes were established on the Syrian coast and throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and Southern Europe.

The voyage from Smyrna to Trieste (about 14 days; by 1839 both cities were already served by active shipping line services) and the travel by mail-coach from Trieste to Leipzig (about 10 days) totalled a trip of 24 days within the postal system for the cover under study.

The addressee/receiver

The addressee recipient Rev. Eli Smith (1801-1857) of the letter written in Beirut was a minister from the American evangelical Protestant missionaries who joined the Syria mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in 1827 after graduating in theology from the Andover Theological Seminary in the U.S.A. He served as director of the mission press in Beirut in 1834, leaving for a short period for overseas and returning again to Beirut in the 1850s. He also founded one of the first Arabic newspapers in Beirut and also authored and translated numerous works in Arabic, including the translation of the Bible in Arabic. At the same time of the writing of this letter, he was in Leipzig, Germany where he was working on his new and improved font of Arabic cast type.

The addressor/sender

The addressor, Reverend William M. Thomson (1806-1894) ordained an evangelist by the Presbytery at Cincinnati in 1831 was sent as a missionary to Syria and Palestine in 1833, where he remained until 1849 and was again in the Holy Land in 1850-57 and 1859-76. He was author of the widely selling "The Land and the Book" (1858) which greatly increased the knowledge of Palestine in English-speaking countries.

The letter is addressed to E. Smith care of Carl (Christian Philipp) Tauchnitz, in Leipzig, Saxony (1798-1884) who was a famous German editor, theologian and philanthropist. Through his missionary work and the creation of religious foundations he established contacts in the Middle East (in particular Mennonite and Protestant churches).

Content of the letter

Thompson is reporting to Smith in the letter that the local Mount Lebanon Prince, Emir Bechir II, with French help tried to divide the Druzes and have them on their side. Note that by 1839 the Egyptian occupation of Mohamad Ali (the suzerain Pacha occupying Lebanon under the Ottomans) was no longer tolerated by the

Maronite and the Druze populations because of the heavy taxes levied upon them to fund the Egyptian military campaigns aimed at taking over the Ottoman Empire. While some foreign powers led by Britain wanted the Egyptians out, the French were trying to convince the population in Mount Lebanon to continue to back the Egyptian occupation to counter British influence in the region.

Thompson continues, saying that the “Lebanese nation will only rest when it becomes Christian, and that more funds are needed to be ensured by their board for promoting education for achieving that conversion”. The addressor is claiming that Mohamad Ali has confirmed to the evangelical missionary when asked, that any Druze conversion was not a problem as long as those do it by sincere conviction and not to escape Ottoman military drafting in Damascus.

Evangelical Missionary role in Lebanon

Correspondence from missionaries based in Beirut must have begun in the early 1820s when they established themselves there. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) objective was to disseminate the “true” Christian religion (as opposed to the so-called “Papist” one) in the region through local conversion. As religious conversion failed they rather decided to spread knowledge and science through schooling to change people’s minds.

As one missionary put it in 1813, “*the more the mind of the Christian is enlarged and strengthened by scientific pursuits, the better he is fitted to understand, believe, and defend the truths of the Bible*”. In this way, the spiritual authority of the true faith was fostered by the cultural authority of science. This rational approach to nature aimed to exemplify the superiority of Protestant rationality over the superstitious and irrational character of the Eastern Churches and of Islam.

It is recorded that the work of missionaries in Syria soon came under scrutiny by their “Board” in September 1840 (one year after the posting of that letter and following the Egyptian withdrawal from Syria and Lebanon) shortly after promises of a “mass conversion” of the Druzes of Mount Lebanon had begun to unravel. Missionaries in Syria were claiming that the Druzes earlier interests in conversion (reported in 1835-6) seemed to be motivated largely by the desire for exemption from military service - which under Muhammad Ali’s new conscription law was incumbent upon Muslim subjects only - and by hopes for English protection and patronage.

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THE REGISTERED POST IN AUSTRIA, 1789 TO 1918

by Keith Brandon

An official tariff for registered post throughout the Austrian Empire was introduced for the first time in 1789. This article sets out to detail the markings on and charges for registered mail from that date until the First World War. The receipts, which formed an integral part of the system, are also explained.

1. Introduction

Registered mail had existed for a considerable period in Austria before 1789, but in a patchy and poorly-regulated way, and with no standard tariff-structure across the Empire. Hence the introduction of a standard fee on 1 November 1789 is seen as the formal beginning of the registered post in Austria. Indeed, Austrian philatelists celebrated the 200th anniversary of the service with a commemorative book in 1989 (Ref 1).

After a brief review of the little that is known of the registered post before 1789, this article will describe the registration fees of the period up to 1817, and will then explain the receipts used for the registered post. The next section deals with a period of relative stability from 1817 to the end of the pre-stamp era, and this is followed by an examination of the markings on registered letters from 1850 including the introduction of registration labels (which celebrate their 125th anniversary this year).

2. Registered post before 1789

There was no public postal service in Austria before the middle of the sixteenth century. The aristocracy, the church, the merchants and others who needed to send letters paid trusted private messengers to carry their mail. Unavailable to private correspondents was the Imperial Postal Administration which was operated for several centuries by the Thurn & Taxis family, exclusively for the Emperor and his royal court. This all changed in 1544 when Emperor Ferdinand I opened up the Imperial Postal Service to the public. However, as Kohn (Ref 2) writes: “The public, accustomed to the trustworthiness of the messengers they employed, was at first reluctant to make use of the public mail-service. The main reason for their reluctance was the unwillingness of the authorities to assume responsibility for the safe delivery of letters, on the theory that the message as such had no intrinsic value”.

Over time, pressure was brought to bear on various postal authorities to create a service that would assure safe delivery. The dates of introduction are unknown, but Kohn advises that registration was available in Saxony by 1677, in France by 1759, and in Prussia not until 1825. In Austria, the earliest-known reference is found in a postal decree of Emperor Leopold I in 1695, but it is likely that the service had existed for some time before that.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the procedures were well-established. A mailing-receipt (“Aufgabs-Recepisse”) was given to the sender. If the letter was lost or stolen, the sender could obtain compensation on production of the receipt. The sender had to pay for both the registration fee and the receipt. When the recipient received the letter, he signed a delivery receipt (“Angabs-Recepisse”), which he paid for. At the sender’s option, it was also possible to obtain a return-receipt (“Retour-Recepisse”). This was sent with the registered letter, signed on receipt, and returned to the sender who had to pay a fee for this too. The receipt fees were not normally marked on the cover; the postage and registration fees were. Essentially this was the system that remained in place throughout the period covered by this article (and beyond).

This provided the audit-trail necessary if a registered letter went missing. The sender produced a mailing receipt signed by his post office to prove that he had handed the letter over. Post offices kept a tally-sheet of registered mail received from or passed on to other post offices. The final post office obtained the addressee’s signature on a delivery receipt.

Registered letters from the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century are difficult to find, not surprisingly as all these fees made it an expensive business to send one. In fact, the cost may have been even higher than the sum of these fees. A Czech philatelist, Kuna (Ref 3), is quoted by Kohn as stating that by the end of the eighteenth century it was customary for the sender to tip the postal clerk, who expected 2kr for issuing a mailing-receipt, and up to 10kr for a return receipt!

There were no special registration postmarks or handstamps on Austrian territory until the nineteenth century. Earlier letters were distinguished from ordinary letters by a manuscript “NB”, marked in ink or in red crayon. This is believed to be an abbreviation for the Latin phrase “Nota Bene” (“mark well”). This mark is rarely seen as just two clear initials. Generally it degraded to a scrawl of vertical and horizontal lines, known in German as a “gitter” (a “grid” or “grille”). Müller (Ref 4) states that these conventional markings “seem to have developed only after 1817”, but they were clearly used much earlier than that. Logically there had to be some means of distinguishing registered from ordinary mail (fig.1).

Fig.1 Registered commercial mail from Laibach to Pest dated 8 January 1785, and marked with the conventional “NB” symbol at lower left. Rate of 12 kr marked, to include postage and registration. Believed to be the earliest surviving use of a postmark from this city.



It was prohibited to send money through the registered post because the post was often robbed. Instead it was required to be sent through the Fahrpost.. The main users of the registered post were the law-courts, who needed to be able to prove that a summons had been delivered. The prohibition on sending money was lifted in 1755, and it was permitted to send bank-notes or coins in registered letters, but the sender had to count it in front of the postmaster before putting it in the cover, which was then closed with a wax seal. The transport of money in registered letters was again forbidden in 1786, and again became the prerogative of the Fahrpost.

3. Registered post from 1789 to 1817

Domestic postage rates had remained the same from 1751 until 1789, but on 1 November 1789 a new tariff-structure was introduced which also established a rate for registered mail for the first time. The postal rates were then revised nine times in the short period to 1817, but thankfully the registration rates were more settled during this time.

The registration fee was set at 6kr (Wiener Währung), to be paid by the sender, and was increased to 12kr on 16 May 1815. During this period, it was compulsory for the sender to pay the registration fee. However, the charges paid by the sender were commonly marked on the front of the cover, in contrast to the period from 1817 (figs 2, 3).

Fig.2 Registered mail from the Heidenreichstein herrschaft dated 1800 (during the “postmarkless period) and marked “Post Schrems”. (Heidenreichstein did not have its own post office until 1833). Marked 12 / 6 on the front alongside “NB”. Postage 12 kr for a half-paid ½ loth letter (1798 tariff) plus 6 kr registration fee.





Fig.3 1816 church mail from Vukovar sent registered to Magyar Ovar. Faint **NB** symbol at top-left and **12 / 12** lower-right. 12 kr half-postage for a 1 loth letter for more than 4 post-zones (1815 tariff), plus the new, higher registration fee of 12 kr introduced in 1815.

The rates for receipts are a little less clear. Kainbacher (Ref 5) shows the first charges for mailing, delivery and return receipts from 23 July 1812. It seems unlikely that receipts were not used before 1812 - indeed, I have some - or that the service was free of charge.

Effenberger (Ref 6) states that, under the 1789 tariff, “the registration fee of 6kr had to be accounted for by the postmaster, whereas the 3kr for the mailing receipt remained with the postal clerks or postmasters”. This may explain the reference by Kuna (section 2 above) to tips. The practice appears to have continued beyond 1812 according to Jungwirth, who says (in respect of an 1817-tariff letter): “the 2kr fee collected for the confirmation of posting ... was not noted on the letter as it was a private source of income for the postmaster” (Ref 7) (figs 4, 5).

Amalgamating these sources, we can summarise the various fees for registered letters as follows:

Fee	from	Rate (W.W.)	Note
Registration fee	1 Jan 1789	6kr	paid by sender
	16 May 1815	12kr	paid by sender
Auf- and Abgabs-Recepisse	1 Jan 1789	3kr	per receipt
	23 July 1812	3kr	per receipt
	1 Feb 1814	4kr	per receipt, if issued by the Vienna Head P.O.
		3kr	per receipt, from all other offices
Retour-Recepisse	23 July 1812	20kr	all post offices
	1 Feb 1814	1fl	from Vienna Head P.O.
		20kr	from all other post offices



Fig.4 Mailing receipt for a registered letter dated 29 November 1813 from Wiener Neudorf to Vienna. Sender charged 17 kr WW: 8 kr postage (half-paid ½ loth letter for up to four post zones; 1810 tariff) + 6 kr registration fee + 3 kr for the mailing receipt.

4. A closer look at pre-stamp receipts

Registered mail was carried by the Briefpost, along with ordinary mail. The Fahrpost carried money-letters, parcels and passengers. From 1786 it was prohibited to send money in a registered letter; it had to go in a money-letter via the Fahrpost. The receipts associated with registered mail were therefore issued by the Briefpost after 1786. We look now at the three main forms: **mailing receipt** (Aufgabs-Recepisse); **delivery receipt** (Angabs-Recepisse); and **return receipt** (Retour-Recepisse).

Fig.5 Mailing receipt for a registered letter dated 18 January 1811 from Wiener Neudorf to Vienna. Sender charged 16 kr WW, including the special Vienna rate of 4 kr for the receipt.



The earliest receipts were locally-produced, and included the name of the originating post office as part of the text. By the 1830s, centrally-produced receipts were becoming the norm. These had space for the post office concerned to fill in the name of the office, either in manuscript or with a handstamp.

There was also a number of forms associated with registered post that were used internally between post offices. These include recordings of the handover of registered mail from one post office to another, and Nachfrageschreiben which were used to trace items of mail that had gone missing.

Readers wanting to know more about postal forms (from the pre-stamp period to the 1880s) are referred to Pollak’s articles (Ref 8). A “Reader’s Digest” condensation of these, written by Taylor, appeared in AUSTRIA 147 (Ref 9).

4.1 Mailing receipts

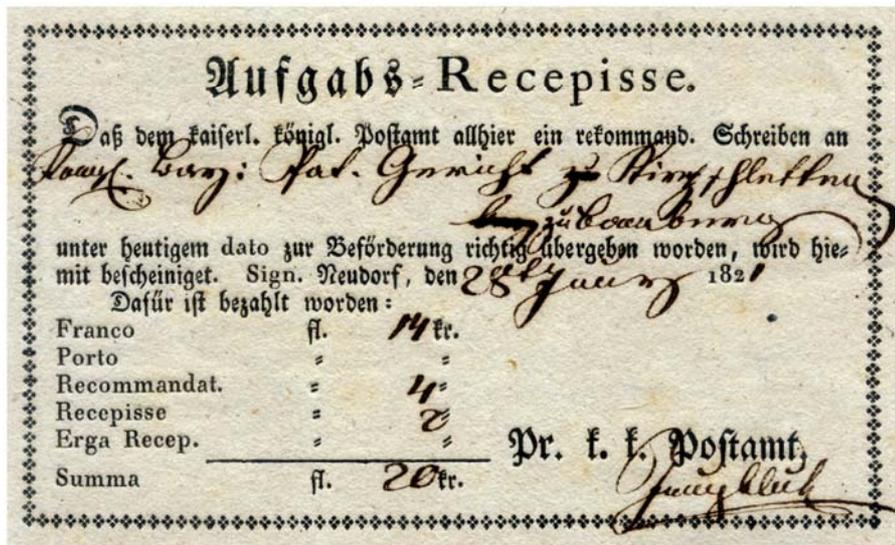


Fig.6 1821 mailing receipt from Wiener Neudorf. Sender has paid 14 kr postage (½ loth letter for 18 or more postal zones) plus 4 kr registration fee plus 2 kr for the mailing receipt itself, a total of 20 kr CM.

This was handed to the sender by the postal clerk as a receipt for a registered letter. If the letter went missing, the sender would use this form to make a claim for compensation. It is necessary to distinguish these from the similar-looking receipts from the Fahrpost for money-letters.

There are manifold different designs for these receipts, but the Briefpost receipt will generally contain the phrase “Ueber ein recommendiertes Schreiben”. The Fahrpost mailing receipt usually starts “Ueber einen Brief mit.....” and a space where the value of the money enclosed is written. Briefpost receipts for registered letters were officially introduced in 1789. However,

examples are known from 1783 onwards, and so the regulation must have formalised an existing practice among at least some postmasters. The mailing receipt detailed the separate fees for postage (if the letter was prepaid), registration, the mailing receipt, the return receipt (if requested), and the total payable by the sender (figs 6, 7).



Fig.7 1829 mailing receipt from Wottitz to Elbekosteletz. Sender has paid 42 kr WW = 14 kr CM. This comprises 24 WW = 8 CM pre-paid postage (1/2 loth letter for four to six postal zones) + 18 WW = 6 CM fees (4 kr registration fee + 2 kr for the mailing receipt).

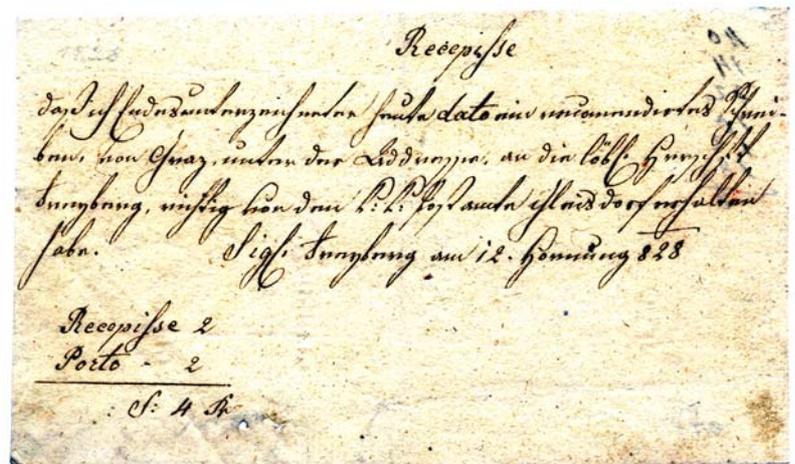
4.2 Delivery receipts

The Angabs-Recepisse (also known as the Empfängs-Schein) is the mirror-image of the mailing-receipt, and was signed by the addressee to confirm his receipt of the registered letter. The form details any charges paid by the addressee, including postage due if the letter had not been fully pre-paid, and the fee for the delivery receipt itself. (figs 8, 9).

Fig.8 1823 delivery receipt signed by addressee to confirm delivery of a registered letter by the Wiener Neudorf post office. The sender has pre-paid postage, and so the recipient has only to pay 2 kr CM for the delivery receipt



Fig.9 Handwritten receipt for the delivery of a registered letter from Gratz by the Gleisdorf post office. Unpaid letter for which the addressee has to pay 2 kr postage due plus 2 kr for the delivery receipt, a total of 4 kr CM.



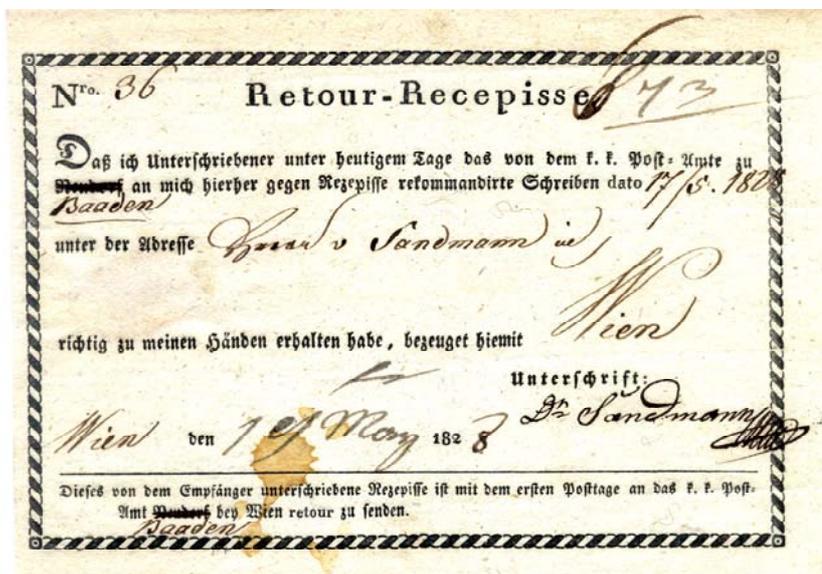
Delivery receipts are much harder to find than mailing or return receipts. The latter two forms remained with the sender, often a court or a local-government office, who filed them away to be released on to the philatelic market, perhaps a century or so later. The delivery receipt was however retained by the post office in case a claim of non-delivery were made. Such claims had to be made within three months (inland mail) or six months (foreign mail), after which the post office concerned presumably periodically destroyed the receipts to make space for newly-issued ones

4.3 Return receipts

The Retour-Recepisse travelled with the registered letter. Often the remains of the sealing-wax used to fix the form to the letter can be found on the reverse of the letter or receipt. The receipt carried the registration number of the

letter, which was also usually marked on the letter itself. On delivery, the receipt was signed by the addressee and posted back to the originating post office by the receiving office. The charge for this was normally equal to the postage for a lowest-weight letter for the appropriate distance, and was paid by the sender of the registered letter. This charge was marked on the mailing-receipt rather than on the return-receipt itself. The registered letter itself bore the manuscript phrase “*erga recepisse*” or “*gegen recepisse*”, meaning “against receipt” (fig.10).

Fig.10 1828 return receipt sent with a registered letter from Baden to Vienna. The Baden office appears to have been amending receipts from nearby Wiener Neudorf rather than buying its own. No fee shown because this would have been recorded on the mailing receipt.



5. The remainder of the pre-stamp period, 1 June 1817 to 1 June 1850

Rates for postage, registration and receipts remained unchanged for a quarter of a century from 1817, simplifying our ease of understanding considerably. During this period, the registration fee could be paid by the sender or the addressee; in the latter case the fee was marked on the front of the cover. From 1842 pre-payment of registration by the sender was again obligatory. Some rationalisation of the rates took place in 1842, and that tariff sees us through to the end of the pre-stamp era. Meanwhile the markings on registered letters followed three parallel strands, which we shall look at in turn: manuscript markings; registration handstamps; and combined town / registration postmarks.

5.1 The 1817 and 1842 tariffs

Fee	from	Rate	Note
Registration	1 June 1817	4kr CM = 12kr WW	paid by sender or addressee
	1 August 1842	6kr CM	paid by sender
Auf- und Abgabs-recepisse	1 June 1817 to 1 August 1842*	2kr CM = 6kr WW	per receipt
Retour-recepisse	1 June 1817	20kr CM = 1fl WW	from Vienna post offices
		12kr CM = 36kr WW	from all other offices
	1 August 1842**	6kr CM	up to 10 meilen
		12kr CM	more than 10 meilen
	1 June 1848	3kr CM	first distance band
		6kr CM	second distance band
12kr CM		third distance band	

* from August 1842 the mailing and delivery receipts were not separately charged for, but were included in the fee for registration.

** from the same date the return-receipt fee was set to equal the rate for a lowest-weight letter over the appropriate distance.

5.2 Manuscript markings

We can only tell by the sender's manuscript *Recomandirt* and analysis of the rates marked that the following letter (fig 11) was registered. There are no markings from the originating post office that this was so. In the next example, registration is indicated by the red-crayoned **R** (bottom left) and the manuscript *erga Receptisse*. The rate is marked on the front for the addressee to pay (fig.12).

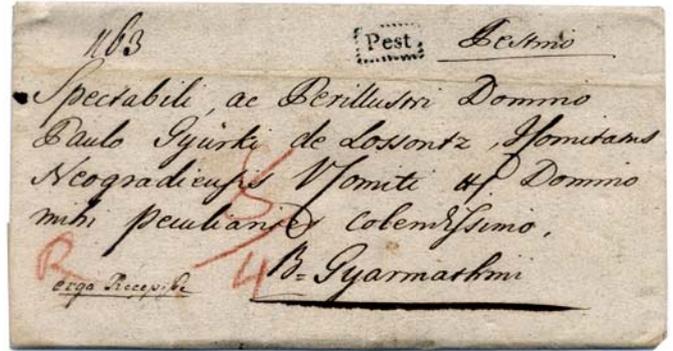


Fig.11 1834 cover from Marburg (Styria) to Friedeberg (Silesia) marked 28/4 on the reverse. Sender has pre-paid the postage for a 1/2-1 loth letter over 18+ postal zones plus the 4 kr registration fee.

Fig.12 Registered letter dated 20 February 1818 from Pesth to Balassa Gyarmath. Charged 8 kr for postage (1/2-1 loth letter for 4 to 6 postal zones) plus 4 kr registration fee.

More commonly, however, post offices continued the practice of marking registered letters with the “nota bene” symbol to distinguish them from ordinary letters until such time as they had a handstamp to do the job. Even then, some postmasters still added the “nota bene” symbol as well as the handstamp - just to be sure. This symbol is rarely marked clearly with the two **NB** initials (as in fig.13), but usually with a grid of horizontal and vertical lines. This can vary from a simple “noughts and crosses” grid (fig.14) to an elaborate spiral with a horizontal line through it (fig.15).

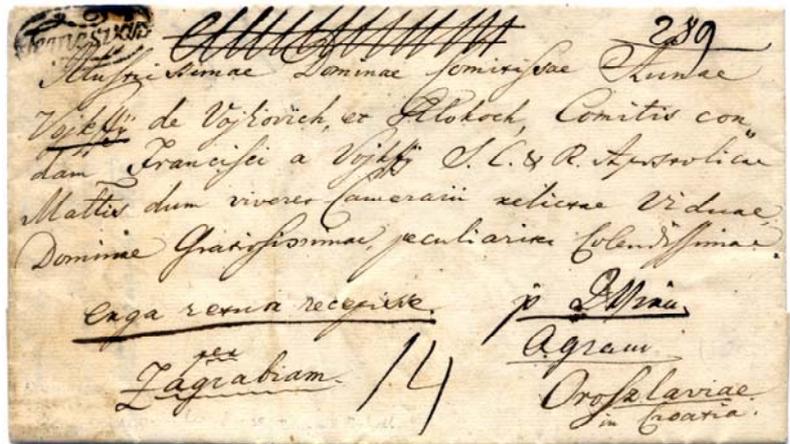


Fig.13 Registered mail from Auscha (Bohemia) dated 19 June 1820 and marked with **NB** symbol. Rated 14/4 on reverse: sender has paid 14 kr postage and 4 kr registration fee. Addressee charged 2 kr (marked on front) botenlohn fee for delivery from the nearest post office at Nikolsburg). Early use of the scarce red **v. Auscha** postmark.

Fig.14 1826 registered mail from Steinsdorf (Bohemia) to Ingrowitz marked with red *nota bene* symbol and **E.R.** (*erga Receptisse*) on the front. Sender has paid 8 kr postage and 4 kr registration fee - marked as 8/4 on reverse.



Fig.15 1838 registered mail from Temesvar to Orosлавie (Croatia) marked with elaborate fourteen-loop *nota bene* symbol, registration number 289 and *erga retour recepisce*. Sender has paid 4 kr registration fee (marked on the reverse), with addressee to pay the 14 kr postage due.



5.3 Registration handstamps

Such manuscript markings were not ideal for indicating throughout the postal journey that a letter was registered and had to be handled differently to ordinary mail. Separate registration handstamps were introduced in a few post offices in the 1820s, bearing the word **RECOMMANDIRT**, with a variety of spellings and abbreviations. Most post offices continued using manuscript markings, but during the 1830s the number of offices using either registration handstamps or combined postmarks steadily increased.

An order issued in 1838 required registration handstamps or combination postmarks to be used in all post offices by 1 May 1839. This order was generally, but not universally, obeyed, but the usage of manuscript markings on their own is not uncommon, right up to the end of the pre-stamp period. Even where special handstamps were used, the “nota bene” symbol was often employed on the same cover “just in case”.



◀ **Fig.16** Centrally-produced **RECOM.** handstamp on 1846 mail from Brünn to Steinitz. Marked 12/6 on the reverse, 6 kr being the new registration fee introduced in 1842.

▼ **Fig. 17** Locally-procured **RECOMAND.** handstamp and adjacent registration number 59 on 1835 letter from Budweis to Steyer.

The Recommandirt handstamps were the usual mixture of centrally-produced standard designs (fig.16, above) and locally-produced cancellers in a variety of designs (fig.17, right). By 1840 every post office should have had at least one registration handstamp. As Müller points out: “Some of these markings were used by hundreds of post offices, others by only a few, and some by only one post office. It is possible to form a collection with the purpose of assigning to each post office its registration postmark”.



Not unreasonably, Müller did not attempt to show all of these in his catalogue, but later catalogue-compilers who have restricted their scope to just a part of the Austrian Empire have started the task of assigning specific handstamps to specific post offices.



Fig.18 Registered mail of 1836 from Feldkirch to Vienna and marked with the *nota bene* symbol (top left) as well as *Chargé* (top right). Rated 14/4 on the reverse for pre-paid postage and registration.

In addition to “Recommandirt” in its various guises, the French equivalent “Chargé” was used in the territories occupied by Napoleon and his allies, and this handstamp remained in use in some offices for many years thereafter (fig.18). During the Hungarian uprising of 1848, a Magyar handstamp “Ajánlott” was introduced in some offices on Hungarian territory.

5.4 Combined town / registration postmarks

From the 1820s onwards, some busier post offices introduced postmarks to distinguish registered mail. These included the word “recommandirt” (i.e. “registered”), as well as the town name. Vienna was first off the mark in 1824, followed by another eighty or so offices in the 1830s and 1840s (fig 19).

Fig.19 1831 registered letter from Vienna to Mährisch Trübau postmarked **V.WIEN:RECOM.**

The cancellers for these combined postmarks tended to be locally-procured by each post office, and include some of Austria’s most unusual and attractive postmark designs (fig.20, opposite). Sometimes the design incorporated a space for the date (cf Wischau) or the registration number (cf Nachod) to be inserted.



5.5 Origin-town handstamps on registration receipts

In the same way that recommandirt handstamps took over from manuscript markings and symbols on registered letters, so did handstamps take over from manuscript to mark the name of the originating town or post-office name on registration receipts. The spread of centrally-produced receipts meant that post offices now had to write in their town-name, rather than having it pre-printed. Use of a town-handstamp eased this irksome task. In some cases regular (or amended or retired) postmarks were used; in other instances handstamps procured for “back-office” duties were used (figs 21, 22, 23).

Have you seen the notice on the inside front cover, about the change in where to buy APS items?



▲ Fig.20 Combined town / registration postmarks from Wien, Olmütz, Wischau and Nachod

No. _____

Aufgabs-Recepisse

Ueber ein rekommandirtes Schreiben unter der Adresse: *Anton Schindler*

welches am heutigen Tage hierorts richtig aufgegeben worden ist.

Dafür ist bei der Aufgabe bezahlt worden:

An Franco	} Gebühr	fl.	kr.
„ Rekommandations-		fl.	kr.
Für ein Retour-Recepisse bezehnet mit No.		fl.	kr.
Zusammen		fl.	kr.

BRÜNN am 18^{ten} 1846
Pt. A. K. Postamt

Brünn

◀ Fig.21 1846 mailing receipt for a registered letter sent unpaid from Brünn to Neustadtl. The BRÜNN handstamp was also used as a regular postmark, but not in the blue ink used here.

► **Fig.22** 1847 mailing receipt for a registered letter issued by the Horn office in return for the 6 kr registration fee. The **HORN** handstamp was only used on receipts.

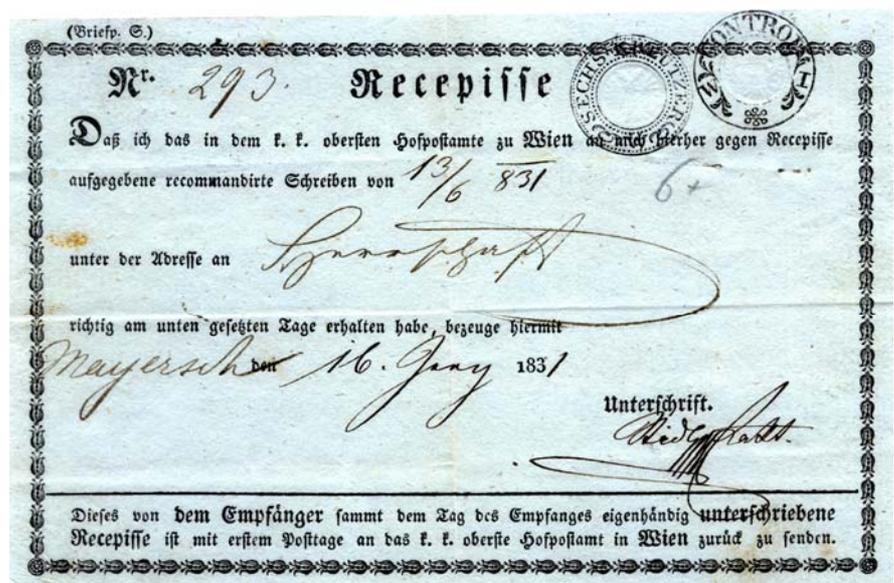


▼ **Fig.23** 1846 mailing receipt for a registered letter from Görz to Klagenfurt. The red **GÖRZ** handstamp was a regular postmark on “back-office” duty.



The main users of the registration service during the pre-stamp period were law courts who needed to be able to prove that summonses and other important documents had been delivered. Where this was disputed, the relevant receipt was produced in court and was then subject to evidence tax, and stamped with a fiscal imprint to show that this had been paid (fig.24)

► **Fig.24** 1831 return receipt issued by the head post office in Vienna. Produced as evidence in court and bears 6 kr fiscal imprint and Vienna control stamp.



Much of the Italian-speaking part of the Austrian Empire used Lombardy and Venetia receipts in the Italian language, centrally-sourced from Milan (fig.25).

Remember to bid in the Fest-auction!

Fig.25 1845 mailing receipt for a registered letter from Zara to Vienna addressed to Emperor Ferdinand. The Zara handstamp is a regular postmark, but without its date-slug, used only on receipts and forms. Produced in court as evidence and bears 6 kr fiscal imprint and Zara control stamp.



6. Registration in the postage-stamp era

When adhesive postage stamps were introduced in the Austrian Empire on 1 June 1850, registered letters continued to be identified in one of two ways; the registration handstamp and the combination postmark. The “nota bene” symbol was still occasionally used out of habit, but was by now totally redundant (fig.26, colour-plate 1). What did change was the use of postage stamps to pay the registration fee as well as postage, and we will review this in more detail in the next section. The fees for registration were fairly stable during the second half of the 19th century, but of course changing with the 1858 currency reform. Both the registration fee and the return-receipt fee had to be paid by the sender.

From	Registration Fee	Retour Receptisse (Rückschein)
1 June 1850	Local 3kr Other inland 6kr	same as first-weight letter for that distance.
1 July 1850		6kr
1 November 1858	Local 5kr Other inland 10kr	Local 5kr Other inland 10kr
1 August 1862 to 1 January 1900		

6.1 The use of postage stamps to pre-pay registration

In the early days after adhesive stamps were introduced, the stamps paying for postage were always placed on the front of the cover, and those paying for registration were usually placed on the back. Even when a letter was pre-paid in cash, the registration fee still had to be paid by an adhesive on the reverse. The stamps on the reverse were usually stuck over the flap of the cover to provide an additional seal. Consequently the stamps paying the registration fee were in the majority of cases torn through on opening the letter. This is frustrating for philatelists but does represent normal usage. Registered covers with undamaged stamps on the reverse command a premium (fig.27a, b, colour-plate 1).

In the early days, therefore, registered letters always had two or more stamps. Even when there was relaxation in the 1860s of the stipulation that the stamps for the registration fee be placed on the back of the letter, two separate stamps were usually used to pay for postage and registration, even if a higher-value stamp to pay for both was available (figs.28, 29, colour-plate 1). This tradition can be observed well into the twentieth century; one adhesive used for payment of postage, and others for extra services such as registration or express delivery. The use of two or more stamps, front and back, makes registered mail of this period a fertile hunting ground for mixed-issue frankings (fig.30, colour-plate 1).

6.2 The continuing use of registration handstamps and combination postmarks

Until the introduction of registration labels, it was still necessary to indicate that a letter had been registered, and the same two methods were used as in the latter part of the pre-stamp period; combination postmarks and “*recommandirt*” handstamps. A wide variety of locally-procured handstamps was still employed (fig.31, colour-plate 2), and those with a space in the design to insert the registration-number became more evident

Some post offices used their regular town postmark to cancel the stamp on the front of the cover, but their registration handstamp to obliterate the stamp on the reverse (fig.27a, b, colour-plate 1). Loose stamps cancelled **RECOMMANDIRT** in its various forms usually come from the back of registered mail of the classic period (fig.32).



Fig.32 A selection of registration postmarks on loose stamps, used to cancel the adhesives on the back of registered letters

Handstamps in languages other than German and Italian were becoming more prevalent by the 1870s (fig.33, colour-plate 2). By the 1880s a standardised **R NR.....** handstamp was in widespread use. In design and function this was the pre-cursor of the registration label (fig.34, colour-plate 2).

Meanwhile, town/registration combination postmarks continued to flourish during the post-1850 era, usually (but not always) with the adhesives to pay for postage and registration all on the front of the cover, and cancelled with the combination postmark (figs, 35, 36, colour-plate 2).

After the change of currency at the end of the nineteenth century, the charges necessarily changed, and both the registration fee and the return-receipt fee were set at 25 heller, remaining so until 1919.

Colour plate 1 - captions

Fig.26 1855 registered cover from Nagy Banya to Saros Patak. Franked 9 kr for postage on the front and 6 kr for registration on the back. Distinctive curved **Recomandirt** handstamp plus unnecessary “*nota bene*” symbol.

Fig.27 Registered cover from Saybusch to Labno (and returned to Saybusch). Franked 12 kr for postage (second weight-step) and 6 kr for registration (on the back). The adhesive on the reverse is cancelled with a **RECOMA** handstamp.

Fig 28 Cover-front from Nowy Sacz bearing a pair of 5 kr stamps for postage and a second pair for the registration fee, all on the front. Blue **RECOMMANDIRT / NEU SANDEC** handstamp with space allowed for insertion of registration number 359.

Fig.29 Cover-front from Pola with separate 15 kr and 10 kr adhesives to pay for the postage and registration respectively. Handstamped **POLA / recomand / No.** with space allowed for the registration number 473.

Fig 30 Trieste local registered mail with mixed franking of 3 kr (fourth issue) for local postage and 5 kr (fifth issue) for local registration fee. Handstamped **RECOMMANDIRT**.

COLOUR PLATE 1



Fig 28



Fig 26



Fig 27 (front)



Fig 29



Fig 27 (back)

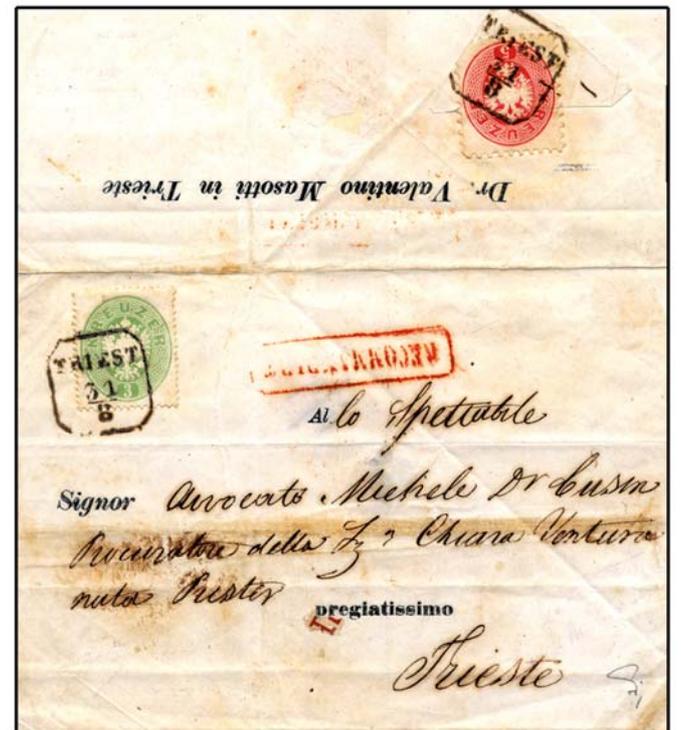


Fig 30

COLOUR PLATE 2

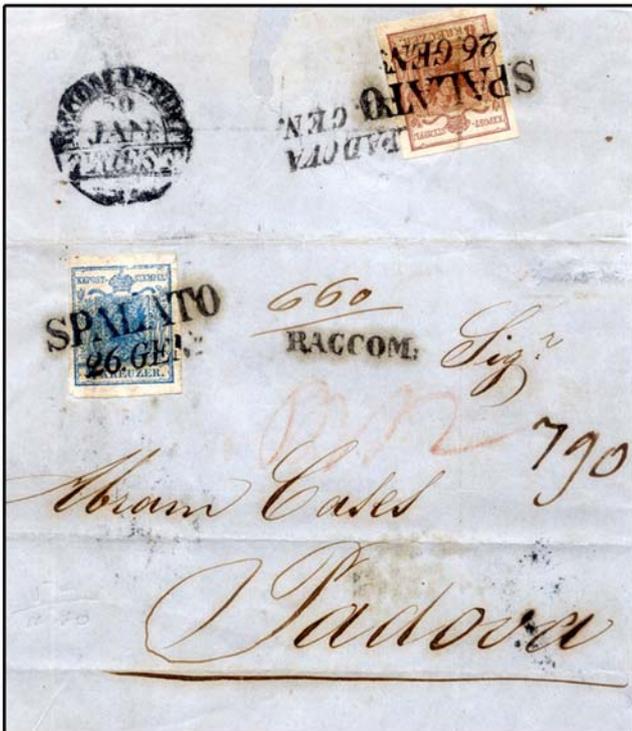


Fig 31



Fig 33



Fig 34



Fig 35



Fig 36

Colour plate 2 - captions

Fig.31 Wrapper from Spalato to Padova handstamped **RACCOM:** at origin, and reconfirmed in transit with **RECOMANDIRT / 30 JAN / TRIEST**. Franked 9 kr (on front) and 6 kr (on back) to pay postage and registration respectively.

Fig.33 1875 cover from Brzesko (Galicia) handstamped **POLECONY**, Polish for “registered”. A further 10 kr adhesive on the back pays the registration fee.

Fig.34 1884 registered postal-stationery card from Vienna with the standardised **R Nr** handstamp, and registration number **330**. Franked 2 kr postcard rate plus 10 kr registration fee.

Fig.35 1865 Vienna registered letter franked 3 kr local postage rate + 5 kr (local registration rate introduced in 1862). Both values on the front and cancelled with the combination postmark **WIEN / RECOMMANDIRT / 6.2.1865**.

Fig.36 1876 registered letter from Spalato franked 10 kr on the front (for postage) and 10 kr on the back (for registration). Cancelled with the combination postmark **SPALATO / RECOMMANDIRT / 13.10**.

7. Registration receipts in the postage stamp era

By 1850 most post offices were using receipts of a standard design, ordered from the centre, and incorporating a re-order number (fig.37)

Fig.37 Front and back of a standard-design mailing receipt ordered from Vienna, in this case with the re-order number 227.

[The circular ‘seal’ is K.K. POST-OEKONOMIE-VERWALTUNG, which is the central depot from which Post Offices ordered all their supplies. Ed]

7.1 Handstamps on receipts

Offices used either their regular postmark or a handstamp reserved for use on forms. Very often a pre-stamp postmark, no longer used as a postmark, enjoyed a new lease of life stamping receipts and forms. Regular postmarks with the date-slug removed were also often employed (figs 38, 39).

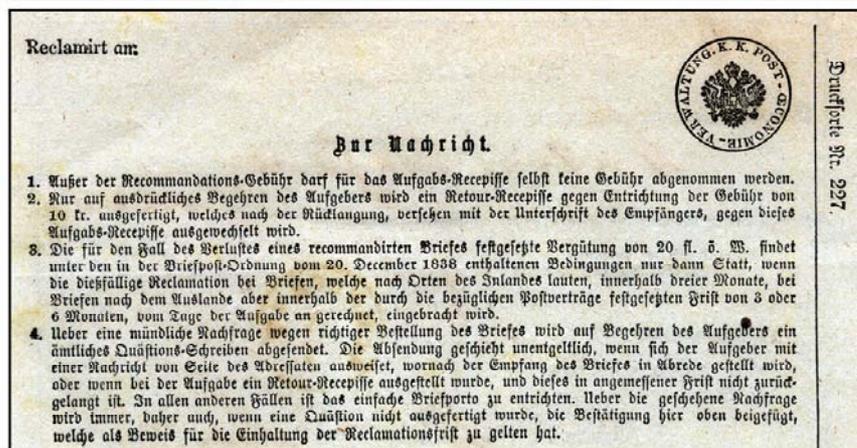
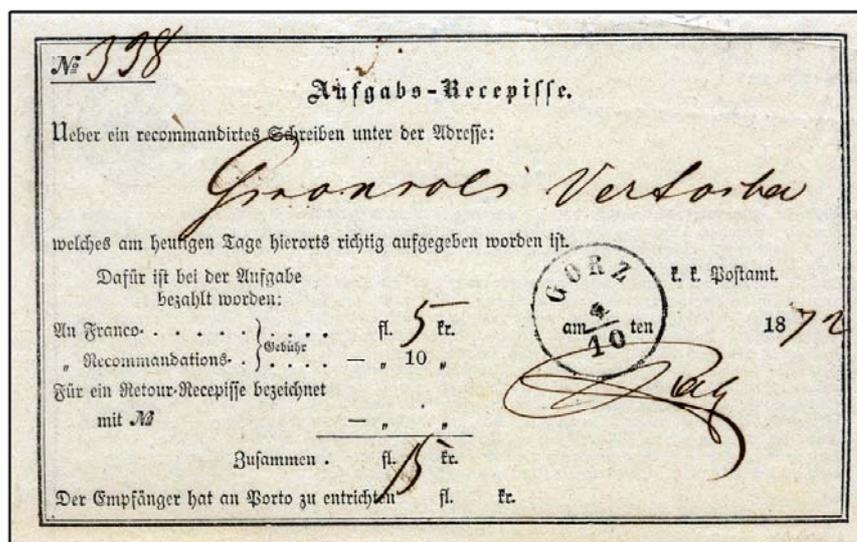




Fig.38 1860 mailing receipt from Neusohl. The bilingual **BESZTERCZEBÁNYA / NEUSOHL** handstamp was only used on receipts and forms. Sender has paid 10 kr each for postage and registration.

Fig.39 1865 mailing receipt from Vienna stamped with the same **WIEN / RECOMMANDIRT / 23.3.1865** postmark used to cancel the letter itself. Sender has paid 15 kr for postage and 10 kr for registration.



7.2 Language variants of receipts

Receipts were initially printed in the German language or, in Italian for those areas where this was the predominant tongue. But, as Henry Pollak (Ref 9) observes: “The multilingual problems of the monarchy, which affected so many of Austria’s cancels, stamp issues (such as the 1867 issue) and varieties of postal stationery, are reflected in the postal forms many decades before they appear (philatelically) anywhere else”. According to Pollak (Ref 8), Hungarian language receipts were allowed as early as 1838. By the 1840s, bilingual receipts - German on one side and the local language on the other - were common, and the trend accelerated through the second half of the nineteenth century figs. 40, 41).

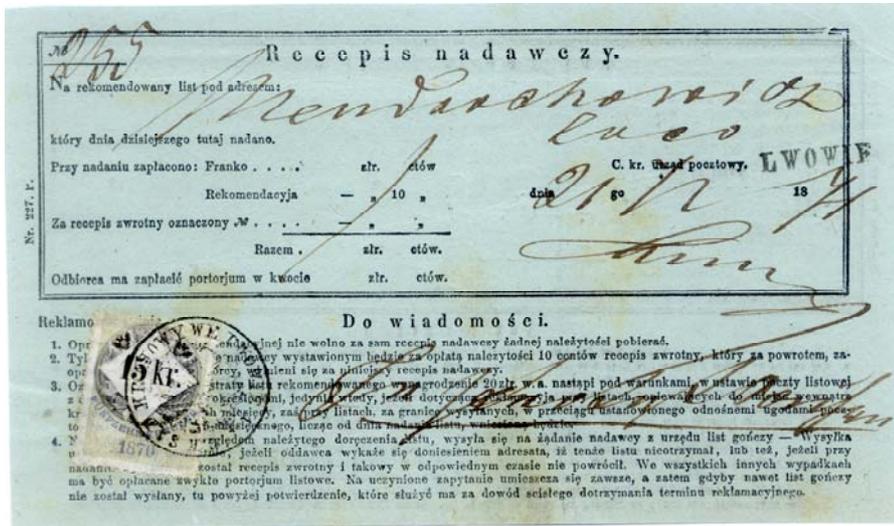


Fig.40 1871 bilingual mailing receipt in Polish and (on reverse) German. Sender is exempt from postage and registration charges. The receipt has been produced in court in Lwow, and bears a 15 kr fiscal stamp to pay the evidence tax.

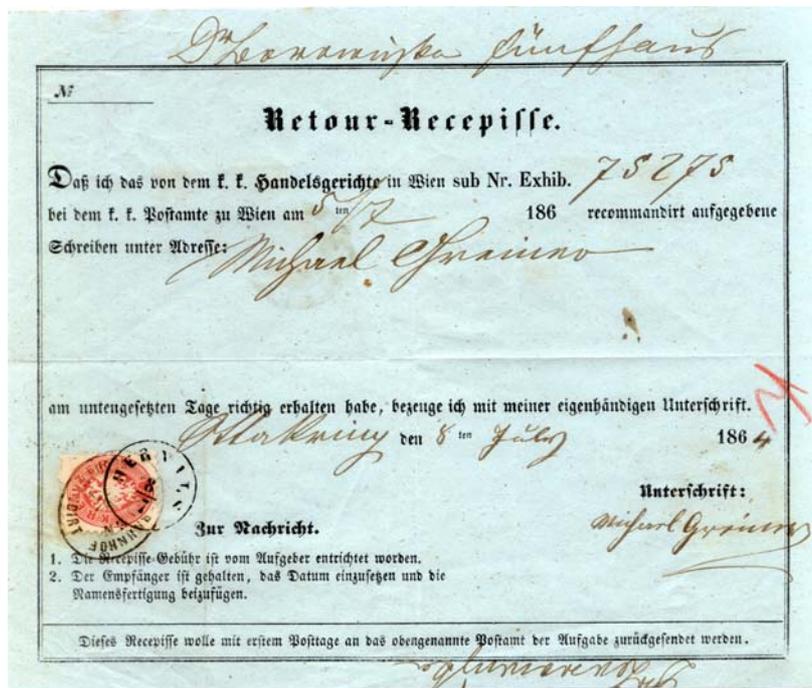
Fig.41 1878 bilingual mailing receipt for a registered letter from Zara. Printed in Italian and Croatian on the same side. Stamped with ZARA ZADAR / RECOMMAND. town/ registration combination postmark.



7.3 Return receipts after 1850

From the beginning of the stamp period, the fee for a return receipt was still paid for by the sender, but was accounted for by a postage stamp attached to the receipt. A regulation dated 27 July 1850 required these stamps to be cancelled by a regular postmark. However, some postmasters used special cancellers, particularly straight-line cancels from the pre-stamp era, which had been relegated to back-office use. This is the source of many of the scarcest postmarks on loose early adhesives. Muller (Ref 4) indicates these with an [x], which he describes as “only used occasionally”, and typically values them in the hundreds of points. (See the cover to Prossnitz, fig.44, colour-plate 3).

In the early years, the adhesive stamp paying the return-receipt fee was sometimes used to attach the receipt to the registered letter it accompanied. This explains the partial and “bisected” stamps found on receipts. To the even greater chagrin of philatelists, a St Andrew’s cross label was sometimes used to attach the receipt to the letter. This use of adhesive stamps lapsed in the 1860s, although it was not outlawed until an order of 2 November 1877.



Readers are likely to be very familiar with early classic postage stamps bearing two postmarks, typically a red combination town / registration postmark and a black postmark from another office (fig.42, colour-plate 3).

Fig.45 1864 return receipt issued by the k.k. Handelsgerichte in Vienna and sent to Ottakring (Vienna suburb). Local rate return-receipt fee paid by 5 kr adhesive cancelled WESTBAHNHOF / WIEN / RECOMMANDIRT / 6.7. Returned from the Hernals post office, the adhesive re-cancelled HERNALS / 8.7.

These originate from return receipts. The Prague postal directorate issued an order on 29 October 1850 that the receiving post office had to re-cancel the stamp that paid the return-receipt fee prior to returning the

form to the sending office. This practice was extended to the rest of Austria from 15 May 1851, until countermanded by an order of 16 January 1866. In the writer’s view, both cancellations should be regarded as despatch postmarks, rather than the second one being considered an arrival cancel (figs 43, 44, colour-plate 3).

The main users of return receipts remained the law courts, needing proof that a document had been received. Receipts produced in court can be recognised by an attached revenue stamp paying the evidence tax (fig.44). The usage of these receipts by courts was so great that some of them had “own-label” receipts made, with the name of the court pre-printed on the form (fig.45). Interested readers will find that the articles by Pollack (*op. cit*) cover these in great detail.

In the 1880s, the return-receipt forms were redesigned, and a huge variety of designs and language-variants characterised the remainder of the imperial era. Increasingly the return receipt was designated “rückschein” rather than “retour recepisse”.

8. Registration labels

8.1. Introduction

Registration labels were first introduced in Austria on 15 March 1885, and readers of Austria have been well-served by articles on this aspect of registered mail. The subject is therefore dealt with only briefly here.

A short article appeared in 1985 to commemorate the centenary of the label’s introduction (Ref 10). Curiously, only fifteen years had elapsed when two, more-detailed articles were published in 2000, commemorating 125 years of registration labels (Refs 11, 12). These two articles deal with the periods before and after the Second World War respectively.

8.2 Introduction of registration labels

The UPU had made compulsory a large letter **R** on registered mail, and by January 1883 the majority of Austria’s post offices had been issued with suitable handstamps (see section 6.2). Other countries, however, had introduced registration labels, Germany back in the 1870s.

Austria’s first labels were introduced in March 1885 at 34 post offices in Vienna and its inner suburbs as a test. The labels were printed in black on yellow, gummed paper and were perforated. The design comprised a large **R** on the left, the name of the post office, and the registration number. At this time, Vienna had not numbered her post offices, and names were still being used (fig.46, colour-plate 3).

The Vienna experiment was deemed successful, and an order dated 21 September 1886 extended the use of registration labels to the 190 State-owned post offices. On 1 September 1889, registration labels were issued to the postmaster-operated offices, albeit in imperforate form (fig.47, colour-plate 3).

While this roll-out of labels was taking place, post offices continued to use registration handstamps and/or combination postmarks until they were allocated labels, and so we can see all these methods of marking registered mail working in parallel during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Colour plate 3 - captions

Fig.42 A selection of stamps, loose or on piece, bearing two postmarks, from return receipts.

Fig.43 1862 return receipt accompanying a registered letter from Vienna to Nagy-Kanisa. Receipt fee of 10 kr paid by third-issue adhesive cancelled **KK BRIEF-FILIALAMT RECOMANDIRT / WIEN / 20.12.1862**. Returned to Vienna postmarked **NAGY-KANISA / 24.12**.

Fig.44 1862 return receipt accompanying a registered letter postmarked with red town / registration combination postmark of Vienna. For the return journey, the adhesive is postmarked with the very scarce **PROSSNITZ** boxed cancel, usually only used on forms. The 15 kr revenue stamp is to pay evidence tax.

Fig.46 1886 letter with perforated registration label from the initial Vienna test. The postage of 10 kr (second weight-step) and the registration fee of 10 kr are paid for with 4 x 5 kr adhesives on the reverse.

Fig.47 1898 cover with imperforate registration label from Atzgersdorf. The block of 4 x 5 kr pays the postage (second weight-step) and registration fee.



Fig 42

COLOUR PLATE 3

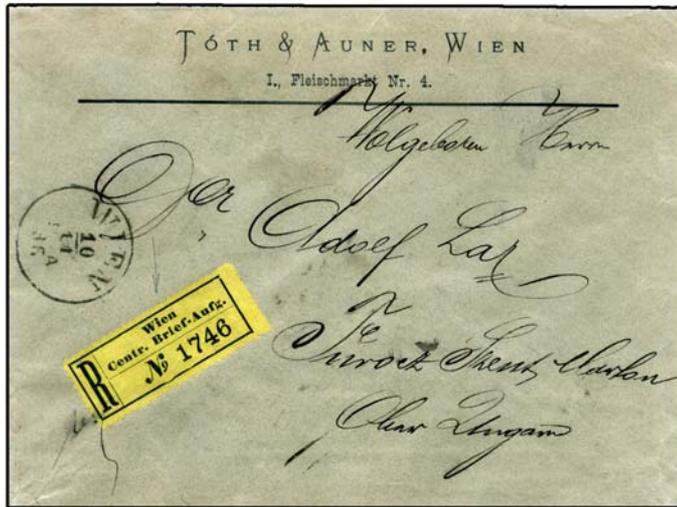


Fig 43



Fig 46 (front & back)



Fig 44



Fig 47

COLOUR PLATE 4



Fig 48



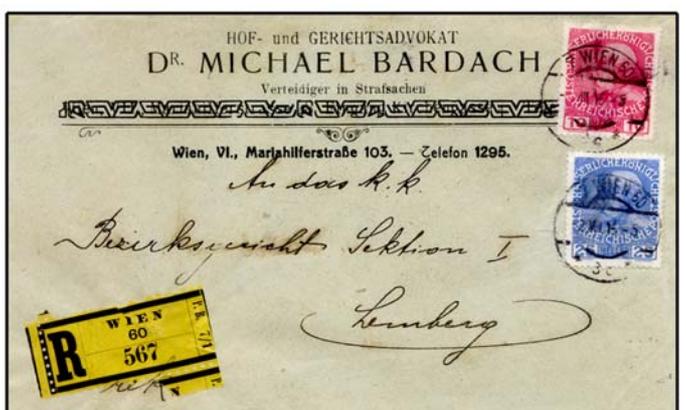
Fig 49



Fig 50



Fig 51



< Fig 52

Fig 53

Colour plate 4 - captions

Fig 48 1910 postcard with bilingual German / Czech registration label. Separate stamps used for the 10 h postcard rate and the 25 h registration fee.

Fig 49 1917 cover with bilingual Croatian / Italian registration label from Zara to Zurich. The franking of 65 h comprises 40 h overseas postage plus 25 h registration fee.

Fig 50 1901 postcard with imperforate, Croatian-language registration label of Putniković (near Ston, in Dalmatia). The postcard rate of 5 h and the registration fee of 25 h were paid with the single 30 h adhesive.

Fig.51 1916 cover with perforated label without "No.". The 35 h total charge for postage and registration is made up of a selection of low-value definitives that would have been available at the **ST. KATHERINA (NEUERN)** collecting agency.

Fig.52 1911 privately-printed postauftrag envelope bearing 10 h and 25 h imprints for postage and registration charges. New-type Vienna registration label with postal-zone code at right.

Fig.53 1915 with Vienna registration label without **Nr.** before the registration number. Correctly franked 35 h.

8.3 Development of registration labels

The initial label design comprised the name of the office in the top half of the label with the registration number below, expressed in the form **No. 15**. Over the remaining decades of the Empire, a number of changes took place:

(a) as the postmaster-operated offices were taken into the State system, they became entitled to perforated registration labels. However, the initial quantity distributed was so large that some small post offices were still using their first labels well into the First Republic period.

(b) from 1897, Dalmatia, Bohemia and Moravia were issued with bilingual labels, with both the town-name and the equivalent for **No.** in two languages. Single language labels in languages other than German or Italian also existed for these provinces (and for Austrian Poland), but appear to have been for smaller locations which did not have a German or Italian name (figs 48, 49, 50, colour-plate 4).

(c) perhaps because of the congestion caused by two languages, the **No.**, and its Czech and Croatian equivalents, were removed from the label, leaving just the registration number in the lower half of the label (fig.51, colour-plate 4).

(d) in 1892, Vienna switched to giving her post offices numbers rather than names. A slightly-larger label was produced, with a thicker frame and a wider **R** on the left. The top half of the label was inscribed **WIEN** and the post-office number. The registration number was at the bottom, as before, and the postal-zone number was included in a narrow vertical box on the right (figs 52, 53, colour-plate 4).

By now the registration labels were in a form that remained essentially unchanged in Austria until the end of the First Republic, and which also remained in use for a year or two in the successor-states to the Austrian Empire.

9. References

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- (8) Pollak, Henry - series of articles in APSNY Bulletin 23/3 1972; 24/1, 2 1973; 25/1 1974 and 26/1,2 1975. [APS Library item 6]
- (9) Taylor, Andy - "Classic Austrian Postal Forms", AUSTRIA 147 Autumn 2004, pp 52-62.
- (10) Giblin, John - "Registration Labels", AUSTRIA 72 Summer 1985, pp 36-37.
- (11) Taylor, Andy - "125 Years of Registration Labels", AUSTRIA 131 Autumn 2000, pp 48-61.
- (12) Taylor, Andy - "125 Years of Registration Labels (concluded)" AUSTRIA 132 Winter 2000, pp 16-33.

ZELL AM SEE TO SALZBURG AND RETURN



[Another partly-explained item from Steve Schweighofer; fuller explanations welcomed!] This card was posted at the correct inland postcard rate of 5 Heller on 20 July 1904 in Zell am See to Salzburg, a distance by road of a little under 100 kilometers (60+ miles), arriving also on the 20th. The card was sent by Ernst Pröckl and family to a Mr. Josef Raal, (stud ?eal?) bei (in care of?) Herrn Schreivogel on Kapitelgasse.

The addressee was not known. The letter carrier wrote in the upper left front, "Kapitelgasse (sic) nicht zu erfragen (carrier's

initials)" Back at the post office, a violet "Ausgerufen / den Briefträger unbekannt" (unknown to the letter carrier) was applied, and below that another violet handstamp "Unbekannt / auch beim Meldeamt [t] / nicht zu erfragen / zurück" (Unknown / also at the registration office / not ascertained / return). The original address of Salzburg and Kapitelgasse have been crossed out and "Zell / See" added with a violet pencil. The sender added his address, the Villa Auer(berg?), Tirol, in the front lower left, so there was someplace to return the card, but Zell am See is located in Salzburg. The card was returned to Zell am See, arriving on 24 July 1904, as evidenced by the receiving mark on the left side.

The inverted notation of "73A .02 V. Bars" below the stamp was obviously added much later and probably by a collector. This notation could possibly be a reference to Scott Catalog 73a and the 1943-1969 2¢ value of the 5-heller varnish bar variety. In the opposite corner is a small 4⁰⁰, which could be the price paid in US dollars.

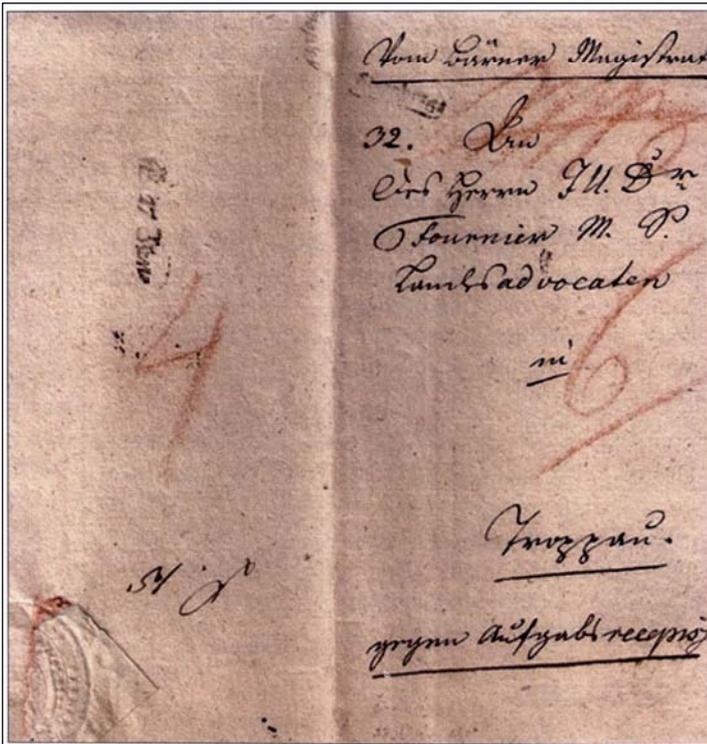
The picture side of the card has the usual greeting at the top, "Mit herzlichen Grüßen" and the date, "20. / VII. 1904", and is also signed by another Pröckl (illegible - possibly Ernst - the father?), Alma and Jula Pröckl, with a short message below, apparently in Ernst Pröckl's hand, reading "Sei so gut, u. schreiben mir Schotolo's jetzige Adresse!" (Be so good and write me Schotolo's current address!). The picture is titled: "Zell am See gegen das Kitzsteinhorn" (sic), (Zell am See, the Kitzsteinhorn Mountain in the background).

Confusing Registered Post Charges

From Die Briefmarke. Nr. 6/2008, pp 24-25. By **Hubert Jungwirth**, translated by Jean Toghil

The tariff of 1817 laid down the following terms with regard to registered letters:

- ❖ the registration charge was 4x [*'x' means kreuzer*], to be paid by the sender;
- ❖ confirmation of posting cost an additional 2x;
- ❖ it was possible to send not only postage-paid but also postage-due registered letters.



The first illustration shows such a registered letter on which there is nothing to criticise or question. It comes from the municipal authorities at Barn and the sender made known his wish for the letter to be registered by noting “against receipt of posting” (“gegen Aufgaberezepte”) at the bottom. Therefore the clerk at the place of posting, Stemberg, marked the letter with the registration symbol (crossed bars at top right) and to the left of this wrote in black ink the register number 32, under which it had to be entered in the official list of registered post items. Then the sender paid the charge of 4x and this was noted on the back of the letter. In addition the 2x fee for the confirmation of posting was collected. This was not noted on the letter as it was a private source of income for the postmaster. Finally, by request of the sender, the amount of postage, 6x, was written on the front of the letter and underlined, in order to prevent it being mistaken for a “9”.

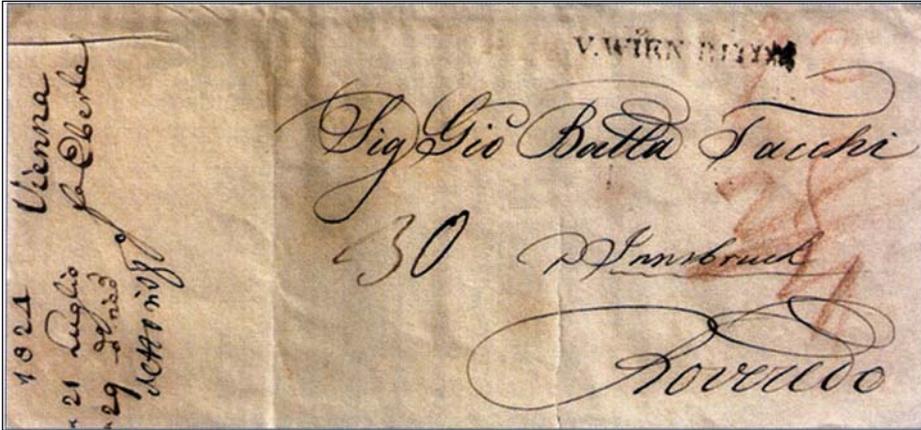


The second letter is a registered postage due item sent from Vienna to Linz. It belongs to the sort of example that can make one feel very unsure, as at the post office at Vienna not only the 8x postage was written on the front of the letter but also the registration charge of 4x beneath it. Several questions arise from this! Who paid the registration charge? Was it the sender as was generally the case? If so, why was the charge not written on the back of the letter? Perhaps there had been an exception, a forgotten regulation? After a period of fruitless enquiries the letter landed on the pile of dubious examples and a few more joined it.

Then one day an auction lot turned up with correspondence sent from

Vienna to Rovereto. Among the items there were three registered letters sent from Vienna on which the registration charge was written on the front under the cost of postage. However, the practice at the post office at Rovereto was to write on letters the total amount of postage due plus the messenger's fee, all of which the addressee had to pay. Thus, with relief, one can be sure that the registration charge was always paid by the sender, even when it was written on the front of the letter.

The double registered letter shown below, with the register number 92 written in red pencil above the assessment, was assessed on the front with 28/4 (i.e. 28X postage + 4x registration charge) at Vienna on 21.7.1824. It was marked with the registered post canceller **V.WIEN RECOM** and sent via Innsbruck to Rovereto.



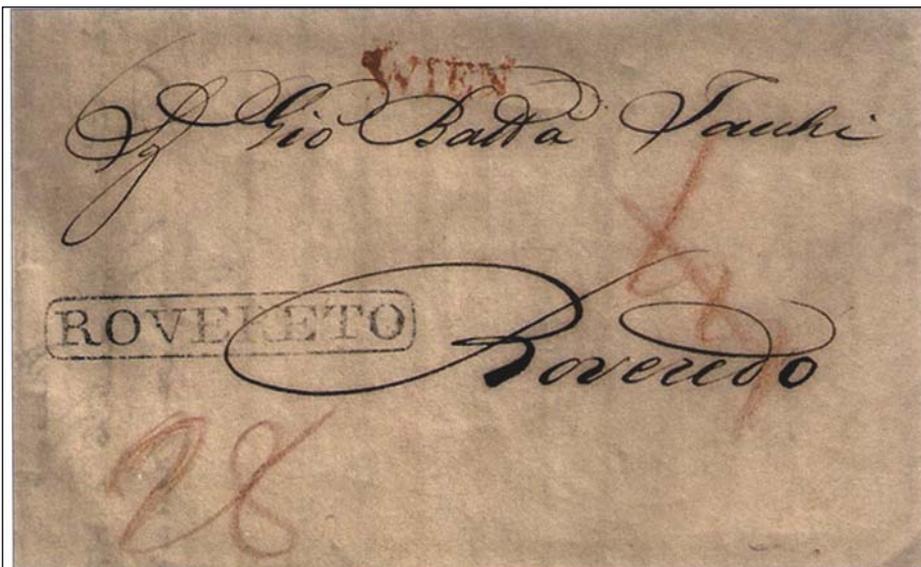
The postal authorities at Rovereto made it quite clear that the registration charge of 4x marked on the front of the letter was nothing to do with them. It had clearly been paid by the sender at Vienna together with 2x for the

confirmation of posting. They wrote the fees to be paid by the addressee: 30x, i.e. 28X postage due + 2x delivery charge, in black ink.

Correction of Assessments

From Die Briefmarke. Nr. 7/2008, pp 16-17. By **Hubert Jungwirth**, translated by Jean Toghill

The assessment contained internal information for the post offices at the place of posting and at the place of delivery as to whether postal charges had been paid or were still due. One hardly ever finds examples of corrected postage-paid assessments; corrected postage-due assessments are more usual.



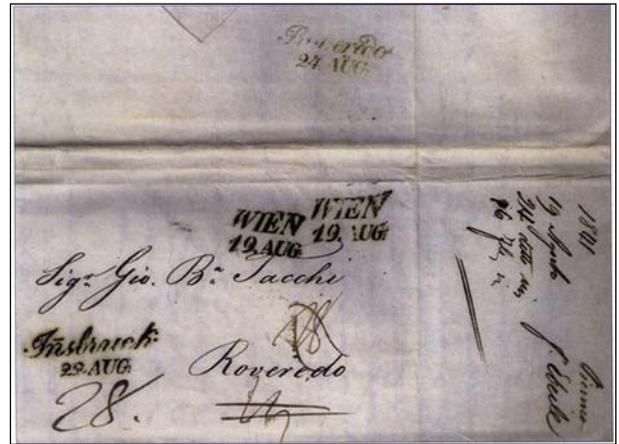
Most of the mistakes in assessment arose because of a false estimate of the weight. Perhaps this happened when, shortly before the departure of the mail, a larger pile of letters needed to be stamped and assessed and there was too little time to weigh them. In the case of doubt, in order to avoid annoying the customers, a lower weight was probably registered. This, naturally, meant a loss for the postal authorities.

It is not surprising, therefore, that at the large post offices inspectors were employed not only to correct false assessments but also to expose improper use of the exemption from charges. One can be sure that all other officials at the post offices were also called upon to correct false assessments.

The illustration shows a double postage due letter: Vienna, 23.6.1827 -Innsbruck - Rovereto, 28.6.1827. At Vienna, it was estimated as a single letter and assessed at 14xCM. At Rovereto, it was weighed again, the Viennese assessment crossed out and corrected to 28xCM. This correction was confirmed in exemplary manner by placing the boxed cancellation above it. As this letter had been entered in the index as a 14 Kreuzer letter, the office at Rovereto also had to enter the correction and the increased takings.

This is a double postage due letter: Vienna, 19.8.1841 via Innsbruck, 22.8. to Rovereto, 24.8.1841. This was originally estimated as a single letter at Vienna and assessed at 14xCM (under the handwritten "Roveredo") and cancelled. Whilst the letter was still at Vienna, this was crossed out and corrected to 28x (above "Roveredo") and the correction confirmed by the second Vienna cancel. At Innsbruck, the badly written "28", which could also have been taken for "18", was crossed out and replaced by "28" written very clearly in ink and confirmed by the "Innsbruck / 22 AUG" cancel.

[Note the writing style of the Innsbruck canceller: beginning with J, then a single 'n' with a line above.]



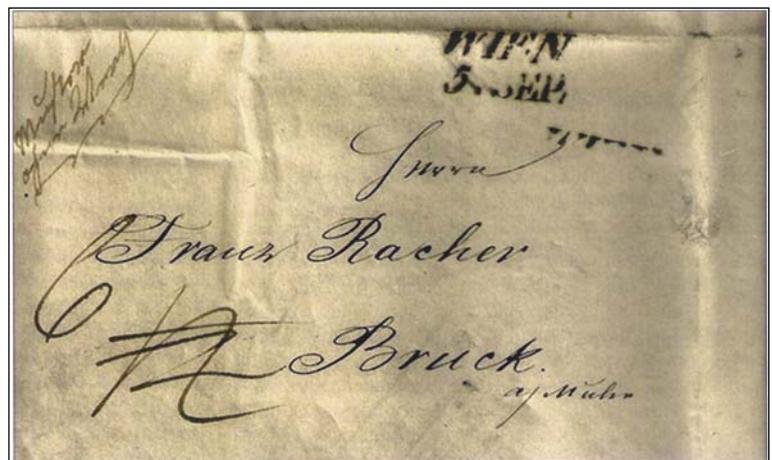
Sometimes it happened that the post official making the assessment based his calculation on a distance which proved false, as the letter travelled farther than originally intended. In the index such letters were entered as "deducted" letters. For example, if a postage-due letter were sent from A to B, post office A would enter in the index that post office B owed it postal charges. However, if the letter were sent on from B to C, the cost of this would have had to have been deducted from B's takings. This resulted in higher charges for C.



it was necessary to correct the assessment to 12xCM.

The following items show that it was also possible for other mistakes in assessment to be made at the offices of posting.

1 Lot letter from Vienna to Bruck-a-d-Mur on 5.9.1837. Originally it was assessed at Vienna as a double postage-due letter for the third distance zone with 12xCM, although it was marked "sample of no value". The mistake was noticed at Vienna, "12x" was crossed out and replaced with "6x". This was confirmed by the second Vienna cancellation.



This single letter was rashly assessed on 16.12.1842 at Pesth as a postage-paid letter. As the sender could not, or would not, pay the fee of 12x, the postage-paid assessment on the back and the postage-paid cross on the front had to be crossed out and the new postage-due fee written as distinctly as possible so that everything was clear to the post officials at Debreczin.



Postal Charges in Lombardy-Venetia from 1814

From Die Briefmarke. Nr. 1/2010, pp 12-13. By **Hubert Jungwirth**, translated by Jean Toghill

I have chosen to use "Lombardy" and "Venetia", instead of alternatives such as "the Veneto". Ed

Political History

The Duchy of Milan was disbanded in 1796 and occupied by the French. Venetia was occupied in 1797. In 1805, after being affiliated with various regions, Lombardy and Venetia passed over to the Kingdom of Italy (Regno d'Italia). Between the winter of 1813 and the spring of 1814, Austrian troops occupied first Venetia and then Lombardy. There followed a transitional phase until, on 9 June 1815, the Austrian Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia (L-V) was established.

Until 1797, the official currency was the Lira, made up of 20 Soldi. This was followed by the Lira consisting of 10 Decimi = 100 Centisimi.

Postal Charges in the Kingdom of Italy from 21.5.1811 to 30.6.1819

(Assessment in Decimi and Lire)

Postage-paid or postage-due:	up to 6g	up to 8g	up to 11g	up to 15g
up to 50km	2 Decimi	3 Decimi	3 Decimi	4 Decimi
up to 100km	3 Decimi	4 Decimi	5 Decimi	6 Decimi
up to 200km	4 Decimi	5 Decimi	6 Decimi	8 Decimi
up to 300km	5 Decimi	6 Decimi	8 Decimi	10 Decimi

This tariff was prepared for weights measured in grammes and for distances measured in kilometres. It was also valid for foreign mail for letters postage-paid to the border and postage-due from the border.

Until 30 June 1814, the tariff was also valid in southern Tirol, which belonged to the Kingdom of Italy from 1810 until 1814.



Single postage-due letter conveyed within the former Kingdom of Italy. Vicenza 11.2.1814 - Bolzano 16.2.1814. Postage due for 6g conveyed over 110km =4 Decimi, collected from addressee

In Lombardy and in Venetia the Italian tariff remained valid until 30.6.1819

Single postage-due letter conveyed within Lombardy-Venetia. Mantua 8.4.1816 - Milan (date of arrival questionable). Postage due for 6g conveyed over 160km =4 Decimi from addressee



Austrian tariff for Lombardy-Venetia 1.7.1819 to 31.12.1822

(until 31.12.1822 assessment in Centisimi and Lire)

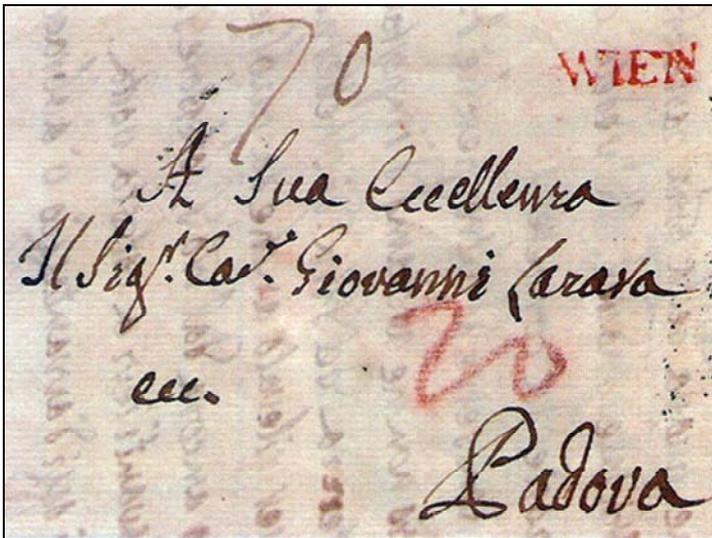
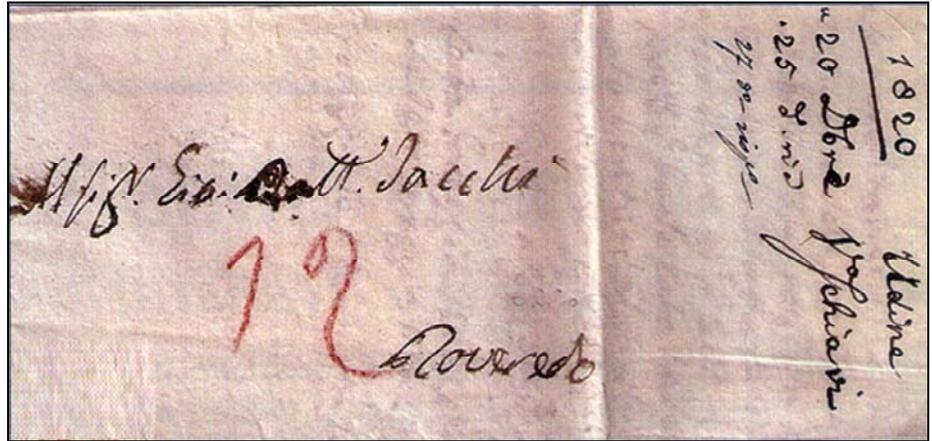
Stages:	up to ½ Lot	1 Lot	1½ Lot
up to 3	2x = 10 Cent.	20 Cent.	30 Cent.
4-6	4x =20 Cent.	40 Cent.	60 Cent.
7-9	6x = 30 Cent.	60 Cent.	90 Cent
10-12	8x =40 Cent.	80 Cent.	1 Lira 20 Cent
13-15	10x = 50 Cent	1 Lira	1 Lira 50 Cent
16-18	12x = 60 Cent	1 Lira 20 Cent.	1 Lira 80 Cent.
more	14x = 70 Cent	1 Lira 40 Cent	2 Lire 10 Cent.

Between Austria and the “Italian States”, the inland tariff was in force. Letters within Lombardy-Venetia and those from Austria were assessed in Centisimi. Letters from Lombardy-Venetia to the Austrian crownlands were assessed in Conventions-money.

[In postal jargon, Lombardy and Venetia were usually referred to as the Italian States, whilst Sardinia and the states to the south of Lombardy-Venetia were called the Foreign Italian States.]

Following the occupation by the French and the recapture by the Habsburgs, when South Tirol once again belonged to Austria the metric system, which was basically a more advanced method, was quickly abolished.

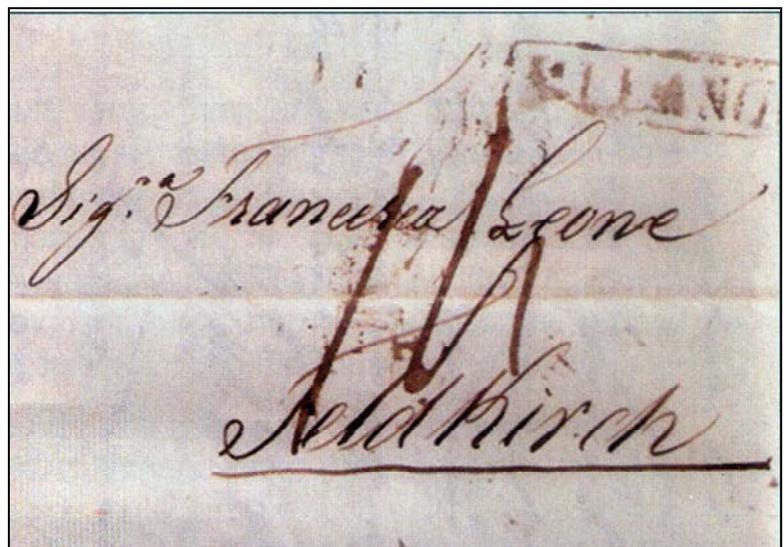
Single postage-due letter from Lombardy-Venetia to Austria. Udine 20.12.1820 - Verona - Rovereto 25.12.1820. Postage due for 16-18 stages = 12xCM from addressee



Single postage due letter from Austria to Lombardy-Venetia. Vienna 20.10.1821, Padua 26.10.1821 The ambiguous red-crayon Viennese assessment of 20 or 70 was clarified by the 70-assessment written in ink at Padua. Thus, postage due = 70 Centisimi from addressee

Austrian Tariff for Lombardy-Venetia, in Austrian Currency, from 1.1.1823

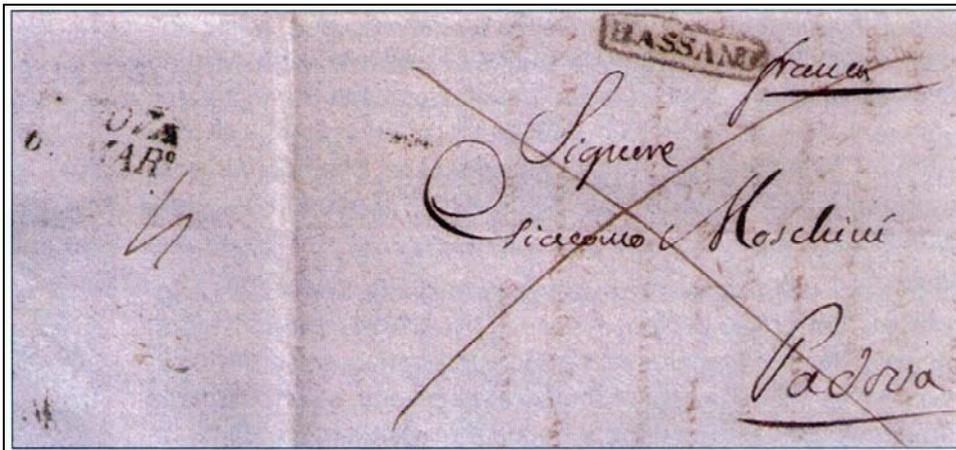
Single postage due letter from Lombardy-Venetia to Austria. Milan 13.10.1824 - Verona - Reschenpass - Feldkirch 18.10.1824. Postage due for ½ Lot conveyed over more than 18 stages = 14xCM from addressee.





Single postage-due letter from Austria to Lombardy-Venetia. Prague 5.10.1829 – Vienna - Milan 14.10.1829. Postage due for ½ Lot conveyed over more than 18 stages 14xCM from addressee. The C is an inspection stamp from Milan.

[All post offices were called upon to control the weight of letters and to ensure correct assessments. Large post offices, such as Milan, had special inspectors equipped with inspection stamps which they applied after every control, whether they had discovered and corrected a false assessment or not]



Single postage-paid letter conveyed within Lombardy-Venetia.

Bassano 4.3.1834 – Padua 6.3.1834. Postage paid for ½ Lot conveyed over 6 stages = 4xCM (=20 Centisimi) from sender

Future articles

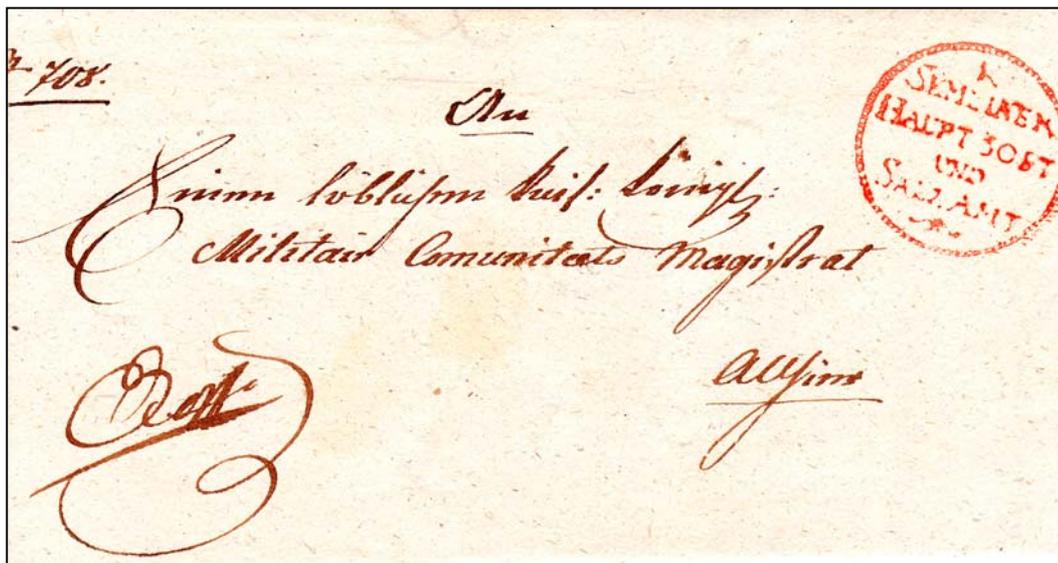
Future articles in this series will include Amtsache or Parteisache? (from 'Die Briefmarke' 2008/09); Currency and charging chaos (from 2008/10); Von der Auslaufmodellen (from 2008/11); Xmas Post (from 2008/12); Merrily sounds the horn (from 2009/01); Concerning old money letters (from 2009/03); Problems with leather post bags (from 2009/04); Concerning the price (from 2009/05); and Letters conveyed privately (from 2009/06).

Austrian Import/Export Tax in the Early 19th Century

by David Fever

Reprinted by permission from Jugopošta, journal of the Yugoslavia Study Group; thanks are given to Denis Vandervelde, Jovan Veličković, Milan Radovanović and Andy Taylor for their help in the preparation of the article

As I remarked in a previous article, there's always something new to be learned about one's collection. Such was the case for me concerning three tax office cachets on letters from the early nineteenth century. All three letters are addressed to the Military Court in Semlin (Zemun today). Two are Semlin local letters and the third is a paid letter from the village of Klenak to Semlin.



Initially, I possessed the item shown here which is a Semlin local letter from 1829 with a red tax office cachet.

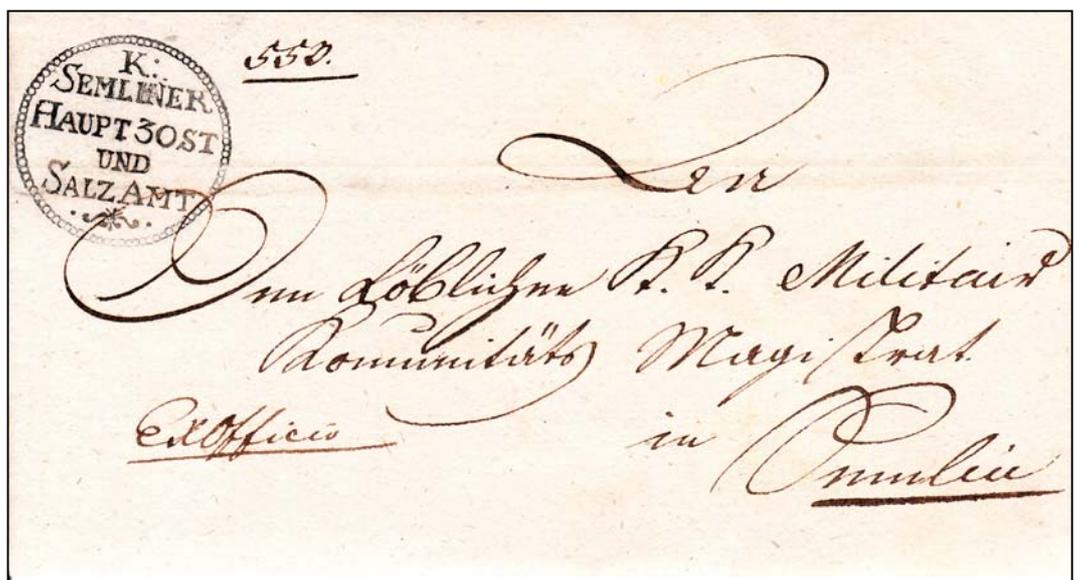
At first, I made a complete hash of the translation of the cachet - much egg on face!

I wrongly translated the words of the red cachet as **Semlin Main Post and Salt Office**.

Then through the good offices of fellow

member Jovan Veličković I obtained the item shown below, a Semlin local letter dating from 1814, upon which the same cachet is in black. Jovan stated that the marks were those of the Thirtieth Part Tax office - Jovan did not state the type of tax (for example - General Trading, Sales, Imports, Exports). Jovan repeated that information in an email to me of December 2009 together with extra information about free postage privileges as below:

In old Austria there was a law to collect taxes from transactions which were 1/30 of the amount traded. In addition the commerce with salt was an exclusive privilege of the state. To collect these taxes there existed Tax offices in various districts. In Zemun this was the Salz und Dreissigstel Amt for the district of Srem. The cachet says Salz and 1/30 Office. The Office was exempt of paying postage for its correspondence and the official cachet of the Office was good for the post to transport the letter. I do not know until when this institution existed - it was in the prephilatelic time.



In old Austria there was a law to collect taxes from transactions which were 1/30 of the amount traded. In addition the commerce with salt was an exclusive privilege of the state. To collect these taxes there existed Tax offices in various districts. In Zemun this was the Salz und Dreissigstel Amt for the district of Srem. The cachet says Salz and 1/30 Office. The Office was exempt of paying postage for its correspondence and the official cachet of the Office was good for the post to transport the letter. I do not know until when this institution existed - it was in the prephilatelic time.

It is interesting that the Tax Office official letters were rated as post paid if the cachet was present. As readers probably know, early Austrian official letters can be distinguished by the manuscript marking **Ex Offo** and in the large majority of cases were sent unpaid with members of the Imperial family and some high ranking civil servants being empowered to send their letters post free. The official rule for postmarks was that red postmarks were to be used on paid letters and black postmarks on unpaid letters - but the official rule was often not adhered to

Until January 1851, postage bills for correspondence between government departments were settled four times a year by inter-departmental accounting. From that date, official letters were sent post free. The Austrian government seemingly enjoyed a monopoly of the trade in salt and I learned later from a TV programme that in those days salt enjoyed the same status as a commodity as does oil today. At the very beginning of the investigation, Andy Taylor informed me as follows:

*I am told that the “state of Austria” as commonly understood did not levy taxes in what became The Hungarian Part Of The Empire until about 1850; and nobody knows of a “1/30 part tax on all transactions”. However a tax that leaves no paper trail is not collectable, unlike say the Newspaper Tax, and **such taxes are not unknown in the relevant period** (Author's emboldening). We do not have copies of the relevant Decrees, only of those for taxes on transactions recorded on documents. Tax Decrees tend to be 80 sides long and printed in Fraktur!*

Semlin was “just across the river Sava” from Belgrade, and the most likely explanation of the charge is that it was an import tax, or sales tax, levied on everything that came out of the Turkish Empire. This might have been a purely local arrangement, or one agreed-to by the authorities in Budapest - or even the Emperor wearing his Hungarian hat.

Milan Radovanović suspected that the (figure) **3** in the marks was actually a (letter) **z**. Comparison with the (letter) **z** in the word “salz” in the Semlin marks shows that this is not the case. It was also thought that the marks might be those of Lazarets (Disinfection Stations) but Denis Vandervelde informed me that they are not such and that there was no Lazaret in Klenak, although there was of course a Lazaret in Semlin.

The exact wording of the Semlin cachets is:

K. SEMLINER HAUPT 30ST UND SALZ AMT

In the Semlin cachets, **K** is short for **KAISERLICH** (**Imperial** in English), **ST** is short for **STEUER** (**Tax** in English) and the figures **30** refer to a tax rate of a thirtieth part of the sum to be taxed. [¹]

A free translation of the Semlin mark is thus

Semlin Imperial Main Thirtieth Part Tax and Salt Office

The two Semlin letters are local and have no postal markings. The Post Office local letter service was not introduced in Semlin until much later than 1829 and so the letters must have been delivered by private messenger, more likely by a member of the tax office staff.

A Klenak cover bearing a red Tax Office mark has recently come into my possession and this is shown on the next page. The mark is on a letter of 1830 to Semlin.

If the tax was for general trading or sales, I would expect there to be similar marks on covers from other places in Srem, the latter being my prime collecting area, but I have never seen one. In particular, I have a very extensive collection of covers of Mitrovicz (Sremska Mitrovica today) but I have never seen a 1/30 tax mark from there.

In summary, the only two 1/30 tax marks that I have seen are those of Semlin & Klenak. Both those places were in the Austrian Military Frontier Region and the job of the troops based there was to protect the Empire from the Turks. Belgrade is “Just across the River Sava” from Semlin and Šabac is “Just across the River Sava” from Klenak and for the border to be guarded correctly I am sure that border crossings were allowed only at certain places these, in my opinion, being Belgrade-Semlin & Šabac-Klenak.

¹ *The APS Editor begs leave to doubt this: he notes that the German for ‘thirtieth’ is dreißigste, for which the abbreviation in capitals would be 30ST, and feels that the words ‘tax rate’ are understood not expressed*



The Klenak mark does not contain the words “HAUPT” (“Main”) “UND” (“And”) and “SALZ” (“Salt”) nor does it contain the abbreviation “K” (“Imperial”). A free translation of the Klenak mark is thus

Klenak Thirtieth Part Tax Office

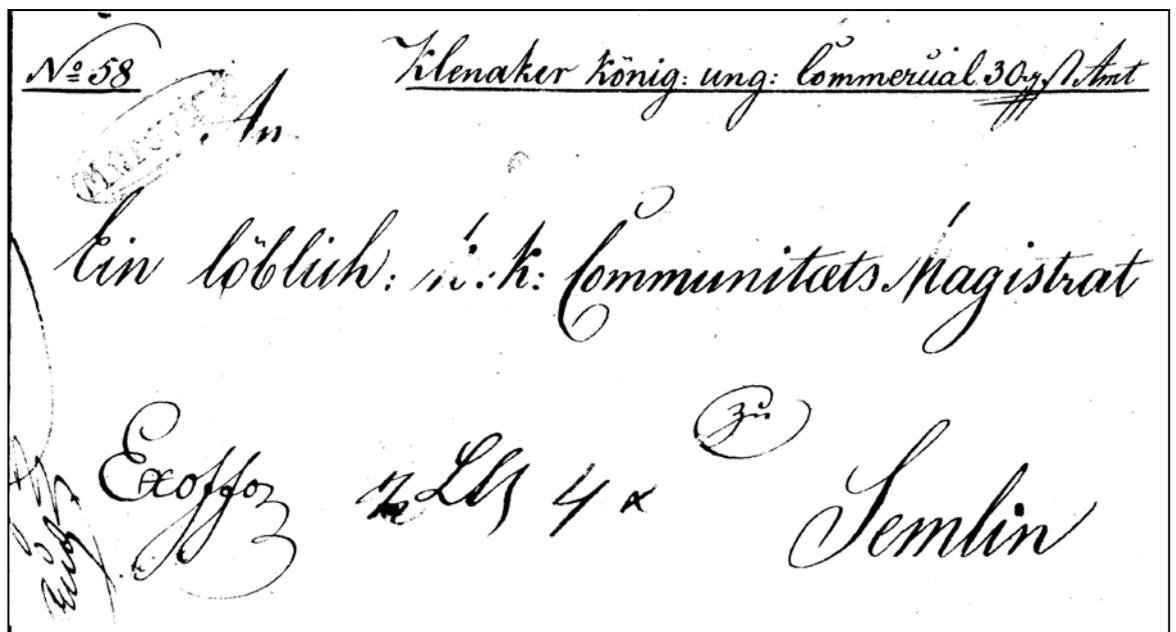
The Klenak office was evidently subordinate to that of Semlin and was not involved in the salt trade. In brick red, the post paid Klenak cover bears a

marked weight of 1 Loth and a marked postal charge of 8 Kreuzer covering travel of 4 to 6 postal stages as per the postal rates of 1 June 1817. The cover bears a Mitrovicz (Sremska Mitrovica today) town mark in a much brighter shade of red than the marked weight and postal charge showing that a different ink was used. Klenak had no Post Office until 1865 and so the cover must have been hand carried to Mitrovicz and put into the post there.

I concluded that the tax was on imports from Serbia, the latter then being in the Ottoman Empire.

After a deal of research, Jovan Veličković later found evidence that the tax was levied on both imports/exports from/to Serbia, the latter then being in the Ottoman Empire.

A little later, a second Klenak tax office cover dating from 1840 and shown opposite came into my possession. In black, the second post unpaid Klenak cover to Semlin bears a marked weight of ½ Loth and a marked postal charge of 4 Kreuzer which covers travel of



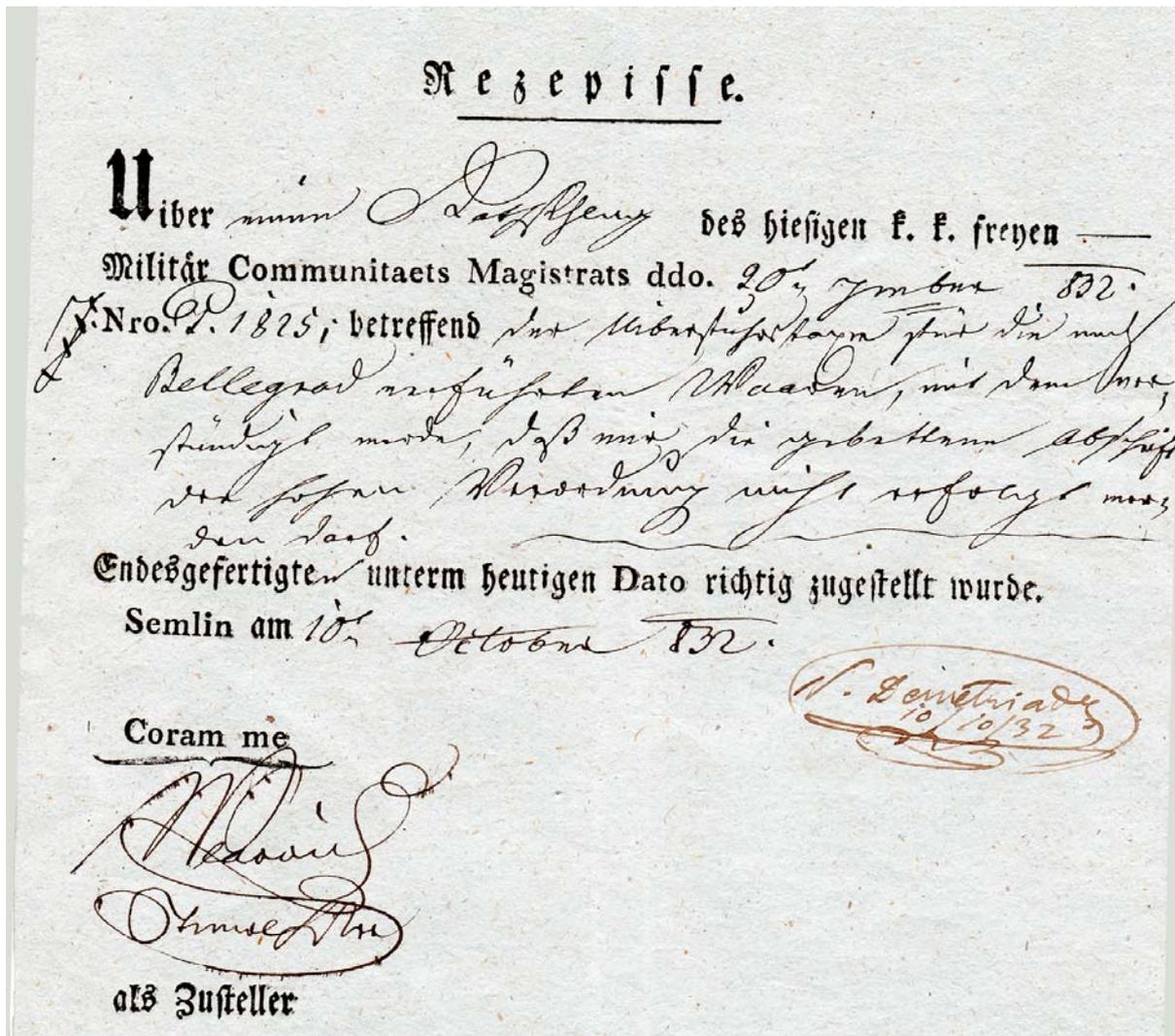
4 to 6 postal stages as per the postal rates of 1 June 1817. The Mitrovicz town mark is this time in black denoting post unpaid. As previously stated, Klenak had no Post Office until 1865 and so again the cover must have been hand carried to Mitrovicz and put into the post there.

The interesting thing about the second Klenak item is that the name of the tax office is this time in manuscript at the top of the cover and the tax office cachet is not used and therefore it is post unpaid.

It is not totally relevant to the problem in hand, but my collection includes a receipt issued in Semlin in October 1832 by the Military Court for goods received from Belgrade. Unfortunately, the receipt does not specify the value of the goods nor any tax paid. The receipt is shown on the next page.

A final point - Why did Austria adopt as her import/export tax rate **One Thirtieth Part** (= 3.333 recurring %)? This would be quite difficult to handle in those days of manual accounting before the advent of calculators and computers. The answer is really easy! The Austrian currency at the time was 1 Gulden = 60 Kreuzer and 30 divides into 60 exactly and therefore the tax rate is quite simply 2 Kreuzer per Gulden!

I suspect that the tax payable was equal to the calculated tax rounded down to the nearest whole Kreuzer - Can any expert verify this?



If any reader can provide further information, please contact the author via the editor of this journal.

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE NEW FORMAT OF AUSTRIA

[Comments-on-the-comments in italics. A couple of comments were received on the accuracy and reader-level of the articles, which I defer to another day. Editor]

- The magazine itself looks very thin and the cover is uninteresting. The quality of the cover leaves me to wonder how long it will last without looking dog-eared. *[Old and new covers are both 0.2mm thick; a stiff card cover would be considerably more expensive and might not be foldable by the printer's machines]* Somehow I had expected the first A4 edition of Austria to be something special to show the advantages of the new size and sell it to the members but issue 170 is certainly not special. The only advantage I can see is the larger print size. It is difficult to comment on whether the printing should go across the full page or be in two columns since the only illustrations are where the former format is used. The A4 size is not so easy for reading in bed.
- Congratulations on the new 'Austria'. I like the new format - it looks good and works well.
- Just received the new magazine. I do like the larger format. Takes far less space for storage. Keep up the good work. The article on "A brief History of Austria" is well written.
- I really do not want to appear negative but the new format is a mistake. On the other hand I really did not like the previous format either. The primary reason is that both formats present their own set of storage problems. *[Ed. paraphrase: even if they were loose-leaf and could be hole-punched, they do not fit into a standard USA-sized ring binder]*
- In this morning's mail, there was a strange large envelope from GB. The label with my name on it looked familiar, but it couldn't be "Austria", if only because the stamps weren't falling off! *[Miau!]* And of course it was too large. Well, it WAS "Austria", and it was a very pleasant and welcome surprise. I like it. There has been time only for a quick inspection, not for a careful reading. Anyway, congratulations on the new lovely format.
- Congrats on the new look for Austria.
- A great and long overdue improvement
- A retrograde step
- I like the bigger print
- I really like the layout
- It's flat, which is much better than the old format which bulged at the fold so was difficult to store neatly.
- Thanks for the new-style Austria. The format and layout are certainly excellent and no doubt I could even get used to the bilious green colour. Why not stick with our Austrian banded red/white/red? *[Cost! Next year's covers will be a different colour]*
- The new AUSTRIA has arrived and looks great. Well done! I may have a few minor suggestions on layout to proffer before the next issue, but those can wait. A big step forward in my view.
- What an excellent magazine this edition is - bit of history, bit of boats - have only had time to glance through it but very well done - you have excelled yourself this time!
- How much more I enjoyed reading the new AUSTRIA because of the proximity of the words and pictures. The old pages were either all words or all pictures.
- I liked the previous format of Austria and it was a worthy winner of so many awards. However having seen the new format I am impressed. The larger illustrations and slightly larger text make reading it easier and I am converted. Keep up the good work.
- My main problem is the change in size and the new design. Briefly, I preferred the old one very much, it was so handy and even the front page had the look of "something special" I know it will be hard to change back to the old size and design. But if one considers the latest issue as a trial, to get to know the members opinions, it should not be a big problem.
- We congratulate Andy Taylor on the new look of the journal of the APS, which carries on its fine record of articles etc.
- I like it.

and some errors...

- ❖ The page reference on the cover illustration should be 18 not 6; and the passengers were disembarking (as the original author said) not boarding (to which your Editor 'corrected' it).
- ❖ **Franz Josef** should be so written throughout

- ❖ On page 14, neither of the ‘u’ in Herzogtum Salzburg should be unlauded
- ❖ On page 29, under the reference to the Seven Weeks War, it was not Schleswig that Austria lost to Prussia, but Silesia / Schlesien

BOOKMARKS

“THE DANUBE STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY (D.D.S.G.)”

Edition D'Or XVIII in a series published by Corinphila Auktionen AG in 2009. The Emil Capellaro Collection - 98 pages in full colour.

John Anthony writes: A nice coffee table book, being essentially a pictorial record of Capellaro's collection; indeed the plates are simply scans of his pages as mounted and notated by him, prefaced with a brief introduction in English on the collector, the subject and the collection. As one might imagine of such an esteemed collector, this is a comprehensive reference work with many mouth-watering items of what exists if you can find or afford them; perhaps a must for anyone interested in the subject. Little by way of data; if you want that then Hurt & Kelly (APS Library No 66) is still probably the best bet. Capellaro's book was kindly donated to the Society by Dipl. Ing. Carsten Mintert and will enter our library as item 442.

“1910 VERZEICHNIS DER POST- UND TELEGRAPHEN-ÄMTER” – book and CD

Andy Taylor writes: Library book 443 is the “Verzeichnis der Post- und Telegraphen-Ämter in Österreich, Ungarn und in Bosnien-Herzegovina sowie der österreichischen Postanstalten im Fürstentum Liechtenstein und in der Levante”, published in Vienna in 1910. It lists all the Austrian post offices open anywhere at that date; with symbols indicating the facilities available at each. It is arranged by the above five ‘countries’ then in alphabetic order. The book is a privately-printed copy of cleaned-up scans of the rare original. Borrowers should note that it weighs 3 kg, so will cost you an enormous amount in postage and cannot be lent abroad. Since a published printed copy would have to subsidise the Legal Deposit copies and would thus cost about £90 not including any profit, we have decided to publish it on CD. The CD cannot be text-searched as it contains pictures of the pages, not words: you have to know how to spell the name of the place you seek. ISBN to be applied for.

BOOK REVIEWS

“HANDBUCH UND KATALOG/ DIE BILDPOSTKARTEN ÖSTERREICHS:/ DOKUMENTE UND GESCHICHTE/ LISTEN UND KARTEN/ ABBILDUNGSTABELLEN UND MOTIVLISTEN/ PREISE.”

Published 2009, ISBN 978-3-00-029818-9. By Michael Bokisch, michael@bockisch.de or from Prof. Dr. Michael Bockisch, Am Osterberg 11, D-21266 Jesterburg, Germany. Hardbound, 680 pages (mainly in colour) 240x170mm. Available with a CD ROM. Cost: somewhere around £90 depending on currency.

Martin Brumby writes:

One of the delights of Austrian Philately is that you are free to collect what you want and (unless you want to display competitively) you are free to organise and arrange it however you fancy. Lots of collectors choose to only collect material from the Imperial Period. Or a certain type of material; postage dues perhaps, or TPOs. Most collectors will probably have a range of collections of various types and will move from one to another as the inspiration leads them.

Although I have several fairly ‘big’ collections (Dalmatia, Bukowina, Revenues, Parcel Cards), ever since I started to specialise in Austria I have squirreled away nice copies of Postal Stationery and, in particular, the attractive Picture Stationery cards. A couple of years ago I purchased a quite hefty batch of the first 1927 issue on eBay. A month or so later I was able to buy another fistful from the Tomato Box Man at York Stamp Fair. This encouraged me to try to sort out all the cards I had acquired with a view to flogging the duplicates. I had problems, straight away, in trying to reconcile the listings I found in one Stationery catalogue with listings produced by various others. I had even more difficulty reconciling any of the listings with the cards spread out on my table.

Eventually, I decided that I'd better try to sort them out to my own satisfaction and perhaps publish the results, if these looked interesting. So far as the 1927 and 1930 issues (with the same basic design) are concerned, the varieties of views, labels, shades, printings, card stock and the number of plates that seem to have been used are so great that “duplicates” are actually infrequent. I even started mounting them up as “matching pairs”! My researches continued after a number of false starts and blind alleys, and I

was minded, with the Editor's indulgence, to start publishing some articles about these cards.

But, in the meantime, along comes this splendid book by Michael Bockisch. It is a magnificent effort and, at first I thought he had saved me a job. Indeed, in many ways he has, although I think that two or three articles in AUSTRIA may still be justified.

How on earth, I have been asked, can someone write a book of 680 pages on this rather limited subject? Surely he must just have illustrated every card with a bit of covering text? Not a bit of it. Every picture card is indeed illustrated – on the CD Rom which is available with the book. And a vast number of illustrations are included in the book itself but comparatively few of these are just copies of a particular card – much more often they show details of design and layout, particular issues that are considered in greater detail in the often rather dense but highly informative text.

So is the book only of use to someone who is attempting the rather complicated task of unravelling the early cards? Not in the least! I would recommend it even to those who would be content to collect these cards on a quite 'simplified' basis. It will certainly be invaluable even to those whose collecting interests I don't really share. For example, anyone who just wants to collect "Tirol", or "Innsbruck" or even "Bridges" will be able to quickly find all the cards actually issued that are relevant to their collection. And not just by Austria, between 1927 and 1938 and again from 1950 to 1996, but also Austrian scenes shown on Third Reich cards 1938 – 1942 and even a few BDR cards between 1987 and 1993!

Do you need the CD-Rom? It is very nice but not essential for the cards of the First Republic, which are well enough described in the text. But if you are interested (or might get interested) in the early

Second Republic cards with the 1S (inland) or 1S45 (external) "Costumes" imprint cards which don't have details of the series / card number helpfully printed on them (and there are a prodigious number of them!) then the CD-Rom will be invaluable. Bockisch has made a valiant attempt to list and describe every card and their differentiating characteristics, but there are some similar views that appear in different series of cards which amply prove the point that a picture can be worth a thousand words.

What else is included? Details of the genesis of the cards from the conception to their appearance on sale is given together with a number of the decrees that announced them and explained their usage. Further interesting details are given of the numerous changes that were made, obviously culled from what remains in the postal archives.

Listings are given of all the cards, and indexes help you get to what you are looking for, even including post code numbers and a number of maps showing where the various photographs were taken. A first-rate catalogue prices all the cards, mint, used, & in sets; and also notes particular cards or varieties which are scarcer and more valuable. Notes are given of the applicable postage rates and numerous curiosities, errors and varieties.

A wonderful effort, which will surely be the standard work on the subject for the foreseeable future!

Martin Brumby

The library will be obtaining a copy of the book which will have the number 444. If a member wishes to reserve the book please contact the librarian (details on inside back cover)

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

Ref	Title	Comment	Pp	Author	Pub	Tx
442	The Danube Steam Navigation Company	Edition D'Or XVIII	98	E Cappellaro	2009	E
443	Verzeichnis der Post- und Telegraphen-Ämter	Entire Empire; pictures of words. Heavy!	580	(Handelsministerium)	1910	G
444	Handbuch und Katalog die Bildpostkarten österreichs	With supplementary CD	680	Prof. Dr. Michael Bockisch	2009	G

NOTES FROM PUBLICATIONS.

Die Briefmarke:

Issue 05/2010: thematic: Steiermark; pre-1850 transport of persons by the Post; Ybbs a.d. Donau * (including its postal tram); Saborsch; society news; etc. Plus the ever-expanding selection of Opost products.

Issue 06/2010: focus on Liechtenstein; 1832 schedules of post-coaches from Vienna; Frau Ingeborg Vlach; Fieldpost cancels 1914-18; society news featuring PKM Innsbruck; etc.

ARGE Feldpost Österreich-Ungarn

Issue 101: meetings, reports, birthdays and wants; questions & answers; travelling censor offices; improvements in the postal system in 1900 as exemplified by Nagelberg bei Gmünd (11pp); etc.

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Österreich e.V.

Issue 90: letters from Italy to Austria, 1861-1875 (19pp); postcard (Ascher 74A) with imprinted 5kr brown instead of 2kr brown; 1945 posthorns genuinely used.

Czechout

Issue 2/2010: Meeting reports; letters; new editor still wanted; reviews; forgeries and overprints;

background information on some modern designs; etc

Germania

May 2010 vol 46 no 2: local reports, new issues, and much post-1918 of non-Austria interest.

Jugopošta

Vol 94 June 2010: Nr 8 in the Annual Monograph Series. "The story of Fiume to 1918" by Tønnes Ore. 110pp A4, illustrated throughout in shades-of-grey. An excellent handbook of philatelic and political history.

Militär und Philatelie

Issue 234: Feldpost wagons; supplementary information for the Riedel books; catalogue of Personal Stamps with a military connection; etc etc

Stamps of Hungary

Issue 181: June 2010: London2010 report featuring Bill Hedley; AGM notes; Fiume cancels; Szigethvár Provisional (ii); Poster Stamps; etc.

Südost-Philatelie

Issue 112 (March 2010): Much of interest, much in colour, but none specifically "Austrian".

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, LETTERS etc

Why can't I find these stamps in the catalogues?



(asks an email to the APS Web Site) They do indeed look like postage stamps; but OBER is just visible above the ÖSTERREICH. There are two scenes and four grumpy-looking clerical men. The dates 1862 - 1924 make it the 62nd anniversary, odd even by Austrian standards... Got it (thanks to the German version of Wikipedia)! The dates are the beginning and the completion of the New Cathedral in Linz, which is the capital of Upper Austria. So these are charity labels, sold to raise funds.

Can you explain the apparent charge of 95 groschen on this parcel card?

The item in question consists of a bluey-greyish parcel card (Postbegleitadresse) to which a brown “Ersatz Postbegleitadresse” is glued. For the illustrations, it has been electronically separated into its two parts.

 Postbegleitadresse Stempelgebühr unmittelbar entrichtet	Inhalt <i>Wurst</i>	Wert 18 S 67 g	Gebühren bei der Aufgabe S 95 g
	An <i>St. Ruprecht</i> in <i>St. Ruprecht bei Klagenfurt</i> Straße, Hausnummer Post	Gewicht: 6 kg 45 g	Raum für die Permetie Elf, Flugpost, B. D. Sp. W. 1938 30

Aufgabestempel: WIEN 44, 30. VI. 38. 17
 Abgabestempel: WIEN III, BAUMGASSE 131
 Die hier umrahmten Teile sind der Vorverfügung auf der Rückseite bei der Absender auszufüllen

The Postbegleitadresse is the card that accompanies a parcel. This parcel was sent from the Production Society of the Viennese Meat Smokers, Wien III, Baumgasse 131, Vienna to a business in St Ruprecht bei Klagenfurt on 30 June 1938. The contents, in the ‘Inhalt’ box, are Wurst ie sausages! Next to that is the value, declared as 18 Schillings 67 groschen. The label which shows the sending post office (Vienna 44) indicates by being orange that the parcel is of declared value. The weight of 6kg 45 grams is at the bottom (the other card says 6kg 450 grams – both would incur the same charges).

Vorberfügung
 (Die gleichlautende Verfügung ist auch auf dem Patete anzubringen. Ein Verlangen nach a) 2 bis 4 kann in Verbindung mit einer Verfügung nach a) 3 bis 4 oder b) gestellt werden.)

Für den Fall der Unbestellbarkeit des Paketes

a) verlange ich:

1. daß ich von der Unbestellbarkeit benachrichtigt werde,
2. daß das Paket an **RÜCKMELDEN!** in oder an in ausgefolgt werde. Ich wünsche benachrichtigt zu werden, an welchen Empfänger das Paket ausgefolgt wurde,
3. daß das Paket an mich zurückgesendet werde,
4. daß der Inhalt auf meine Rechnung postordnungsmäßig verkauft werde.

b) gebe ich das Paket der Post preis.

Aufgabestempel: WIEN 44, 30. VI. 38. 17
 Abgabestempel: (empty)
 Paketzustellkarte
 Paketabgabebuch
 Postamtlicher Vermerk:
 Sendung (Sendungen) erhalten:
 Ort am 193...

“St Ruprecht bei Klagenfurt” is Bezirk 11 of Klagenfurt, or at least it is today.

The office name changed to Klagenfurt 6 in late 1939; this cancel is Stohl A0960c. Vienna to Klagenfurt is around 235km by crow. The Parcel Card is Schneidebauer 296 issued in 1934, showing the 1934 Coat of Arms of the “Corporate” (Austrian – fascist) State.

At top right is a note that a fee of “95”, ostensibly in groschen, has been paid. The ‘6’ above and the ‘3’ above the label are likely an indication that this is parcel 3 of a batch of 6, or alternatively notes from the haulier where on the wagon he stuffed his big sausage. (Or they could be dealers marks.) Postage was paid in cash. The 12795 at lower left is some kind of reference code from the sender. On the back of the Postbegleitadresse is another cancel from the office of posting, and the sender’s instructions in case of non-delivery (which were “use the standard official form to ask us”).

The Ersatz-Postbegleitadresse is normally used when a parcel arrives without its card (and is glued to it, as in this example, if it turns up later). Note that it only has the delivery office cancels, all for 1 July 1938. The postage due of 5 groschen is the Aviso Fee, the charge for telling you that there was a parcel at the post office for you. The right-hand columns on the front have been retitled Rm-Rpf in pencil, to conform with the German currency; 5 groschen converts to 3 Rpf and that's written at the bottom right. On the back the recipient has signed for his parcel.

Postamt <i>Wien</i>		Nr. <i>75</i>		Orts- und Tagesstempel SANKT RUPRECHT b. KLAGENFURT 1. VII. 38 a	
Ersatz-Postbegleitadresse					
Inhalt					
Wert <input type="text"/> S <input type="text"/> g		Nachnahme <input type="text"/> S <input type="text"/> g			
An <i>Agnes und Johann</i>				Nachnahme	
In				Nachgebühr	
Straße, Hausnummer					
letzte Post (Land)					
Gewicht <i>6.45</i>		Absender (bei zurückgehenden Paketen)		Lagerzins	
				Zustell- Gebühr	
				Summe <i>13</i>	

- Druck der Österreichischen Staatsdruckerei in Wien. (St.) 2150 25

After the Anschluß, an ordinance in May 1938 required the Austrian coat of arms on the various Postal forms to be over-stamped or overprinted with the German national emblem: this hasn't been done. Austrian Postage Dues, were simply abolished, on 1 Aug 1938. The Ersatz parcel card has a single-headed 1919 First Republic eagle, and the imprint at the bottom suggests a 1925 printing date.

Could it have been charged at German rates?

Abgabenummer	Raum für Stempelabdrücke	Abgefolgt durch
	 	<i>14</i>
Empfangsbestätigung und Erklärung des Empfängers		
Vorstehend bezeichnete Sendung habe ich empfangen und verpflichte mich, die darauf haftenden Nachs, Zolls- und sonstigen Gebühren, Nachnahmebeträge usw. zu zahlen oder Nachzahlungen an solchen zu leisten.		
Ort <i>W. Wagners</i>	den <i>1. VII.</i>	19 <i>38</i>
Unterschrift <i>Agnes und Johann</i>		

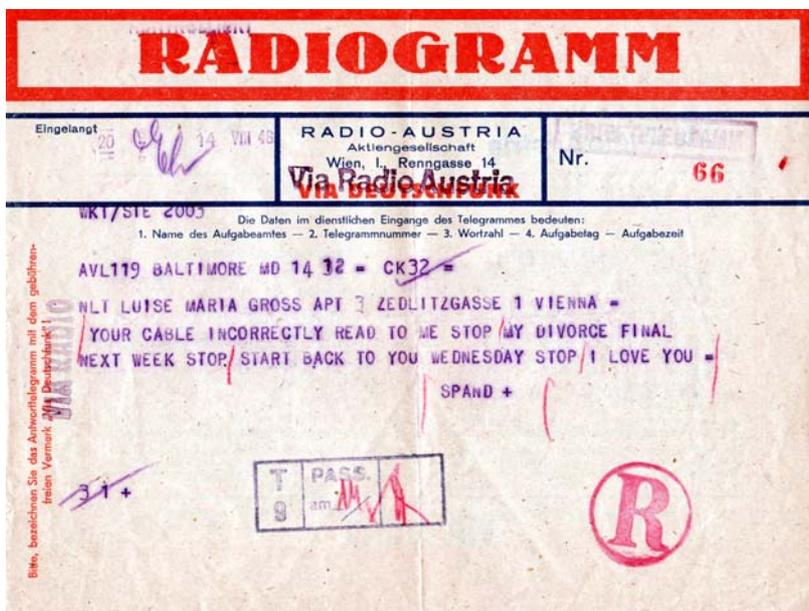
At this time these would have been: postage 100 + delivery 15 + insurance 10 = 125 Rpf. Germany also had a Postgut system, whereby parcels could be sent in groups between designated cities— a service restricted to designated firms who sent lots of parcels. Under that, the postage would have been 60 plus zero for delivery plus insurance of 10 = 70 Rpf. However, German Parcel Rates (and the Postgut system) were not introduced in Austria until 1 October 1938.

Kainbacher gives the Austrian rates as follows: From 1 July 1934, the parcel fee for (the new) 7½kg weight rate was 90g to 75km, 105g from 75km to 150km, 135g from 150km to 375km, 165g over 375km. Thus the weight rate would have been 135g plus the value (Wert) rate of 7g per 42 Sch so 7g plus the “Abfertigungsgebühr” (effectively a fee for setting up insurance on larger amounts) which for a value up to 28 Sch is zero. Total Austrian rate 142 groschen; which times 2/3 = 95Rpf.

Conclusion – the item has been charged the normal Austrian parcel rate, and the Post Office are entering what the sending firm pays (ie 95 Rpf; Austrian currency had been withdrawn in May 1938) in a column still headed S and g. Whilst the meat-smokers may indeed have been authorised to create their own parcel cards, it is notable that there are “95”s in two different hands. The top one is presumably by the sender – who also writes the contents, value and “franko” at the bottom – and the other by the postal clerk confirming weight and rate.

One conundrum remains. It is certain that the fee paid was (correctly) 95Rpf, whatever the currency indication on the card says. But this begs the question, was the declared value 18S 67g or 18RM 67Rpf? The “Abfertigungsgebühr” is zero for a declared value up to 28 Sch; and $28 \times \frac{2}{3} = 18.67$ Rpf; and fractions of an Rpf were most probably ignored (for postage, an instruction explicitly said so). This, then, is the maximum amount which could be insured without bumping the value fee up by 30g (20Rpf) and it seems highly probable that a value of 28 Sch was chosen by the sender to avoid a large increase in the postage costs, then converted to Rpf and entered on the card. A super item, much coveted!

[The Editor thanks M Brumby and J Whiteside for their considerable help on this item.]



Did she believe him?

Maybe, maybe not...

the philatelic question is, what is the significance of the large letter R inside a circle? In the original it is in a maroon-red colour.

What is a “Steuerzahlkarte”, and why is it franked with 30 somethings?

Although used in Austria, this is a standard German-type card using Third Reich postal practice, as continued in the Russian Zone until Dec 1945. The money is in Reichmarks. The form is for Herr Holzl to pay his local tax of 500RM; the adhesive 30 denotes payment of 30Rpf, the Zahlkarte fee for sums between 250RM & 500RM. It was the same rate for Steuerzahlkarte and ordinary Zahlkarte. We’re not sure if the Postsparkassen account is Herr Holzl’s to take the payment from; or Neunkirchen's to make the payment into - we suspect the latter. So basically it's a standard transaction, nothing special. However these cards are not common!



Aide Memoire

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