

A selection of the items discussed in this issue.



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**Edited by Andy Taylor**

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## EDITORIAL 182

The Vernal Equinox is the traditional date to start spring cleaning, providing the opportunity to discard documents no longer wanted as well as to admit that Collection X is never going to come to anything so might as well be sold. Having added three cubic feet of paper to the recycling bag, I can confirm the validity of Taylor's Third Law. This states that the volume occupied by a philatelic accumulation never decreases, whatever changes are made to the contents thereof. It is probably a special case of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, often stated as “despite all human endeavours, the disorder in the Universe steadily increases”.

Good and bad news.

- (a) The next part of “Stamps of the First Republic” has been deferred to the next issue – I ran out of time to write it and space to print it.
- (b) Austria Post has announced a new series of definitive stamps, presumably to replace the much-discussed architectural designs. Preliminary sketches show outlines of well-known buildings as if seen through hair, and printed in pastel shades. Postage rates will not change, the announcement added.
- (c) Publication of the new book on the Austrian post offices in the Levant has been delayed.



*Andy Taylor, Editor*

## News about members

We welcome Ken Dyke; Rob North; and John Corderoy.

We say goodbye to Neil Ritchie; Judith Nau; and Adrian Keppel.

## News about news

As an experiment, the “newsletter” that you might have expected to accompany this Journal has instead been printed as a centre page. You can detach it if you wish – it will contain only ephemeral information.

Why? The equipment on which the newsletter was produced is getting old. Money can solve that problem. However the people who produce it are also getting old, and there is a distinct absence of volunteers offering their services to take over any part of the often-unseen work that goes into the running of the Society.

Comments on this change are invited, and will be included in the Editor’s Report to the AGM. This will be held at 11am on Sunday 29 September, during the Fest, which is at Coulsdon Manor Hotel on the weekend of 27-29 September. Rooms are still available for the Fest– contact Colin Tobitt ASAP.

## Not quite as it seems

By Jablečný Koláč.

This envelope looks as if has a story to tell – and it does, but with a twist in the tale. It was cancelled in Vienna: bridge 4 WIEN 50 on 20-XI-45. The sender's address on the back is in Steiermark, so the envelope must have been hand-carried to Vienna across the occupation zone boundary. It is franked with a 12 groschen posthorn. Unfortunately while this was valid in Steiermark (British occupation) it was not valid in any part of Vienna. [Wien 50 is now 1040 so is in Bez. IV (Wieden) which was Russian Zone anyway.]

Alternatively, the address on the back is fictional and the envelope was concocted by a philatelist; it may be too much of a coincidence for a hand-carried cross-zone letter to be posted so that it is sorted and cancelled less than 1km from its destination. But since the posthorn wouldn't be obtainable in Vienna we'll set aside this unworthy thought and assume Frau Müller is writing to Herr Pauser, probably to reassure him of her well-being.



Whatever its genesis, it was treated as a local letter posted unpaid. The invalid-in-Vienna 12g posthorn was blue-lined. The rate was 8 Rpf so the letter was charged double deficiency =  $8 \times 2 = 16$ . This was written in blue crayon and suitable dues applied, cancelled 4 WIEN 50 on 21-XI-45. They are not overstampd "Ungültig", so someone paid the 16gr – probably on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, when the delivery postman wrote "Zusteller am 22 XI 45" in pencil at the top.

In the middle of the envelope is "Dresden" in light red crayon, and in the same at the bottom what looks like 'Privat'. In blue ink at the bottom is 'Dresden' in the same handwriting, then something that might be entnehmen. 'Dresden' cannot be a redirection: there is no address and anyway no letter could go to Germany for another 6 months. Nor can it be a reason for refusal of delivery, since the dues have been paid.

The envelope was still sealed; holding it up to a light revealed the contents to be postage stamps! If the letter contained only stamps, it would not have passed censorship, but for local mail inside Vienna at that time there was no censorship.

Temptation duly succumbed to ... holding the letter up to a strong light indicates some odd things inside that don't show on the outside. Slitting the envelope with great care and a new scalpel blade revealed three used postage stamps, and what appear to be paper flaws in the envelope. But they are not.

Looking carefully at the back shows that the top left corner isn't all there. The envelope has been cut or torn open, then trimmed, and resealed to make a useable envelope. And the "wrinkle" at the right on the front is actually the torn front stuck very carefully on to the folded-in back. There are no signs of a previous use.

The stamps contained within the envelope are three of the landscapes series, neatly cancelled.



10g ANK 745, bridge cancel ...W 50 / ...6.15, soaked off something from which it has lifted part of a printed word and to which it hadn't stuck well as almost half the gum remains.

12g ANK747, bridge cancel 4 WIE..., soaked off something. Mottling on back suggests that it was originally stuck to a plastic rather than to a paper.

16g ANK749, bridge cancel ..IEN 50 / ..1.46.15- Yes, 46. Curious, since the envelope is cancelled December 1945. However the 16g wasn't issued till 12.1.1946.

Hmmm. 4 WIEN 50 is popular! What conclusions can we draw?

The outside of the envelope looks self-consistent: Frau Mueller wrote a letter to Herr Pauser, franked it, and had it carried to Vienna. There the franking was declared invalid, dues duly applied, and delivered on 22 December 1945 – most probably to Herr Pauser, who would have paid the 16 Rpf. He tore open the envelope and extracted & presumably read the contents. Later, he resealed the envelope and used it to store some used stamps destined for Herr Dresden - who didn't turn up for them. There is a split in the top edge of the envelope, above the word Zusteller, through which stamps could easily be slipped.

## Missing parcels or contents during WWI

by Roger Morrell

Most readers will be broadly familiar with the Austro-Hungarian process of sending a parcel through the post. The Post office clerk issues a *Postbegleitadresse* (declaration) card which contains the details of the sender, the addressee, the weight and the postage fee, and affixes the stamps to pay that fee. Each parcel is given a unique number which is glued to the top of the card, and a larger version is stuck on the parcel, thus relating the card to the parcel. The larger part of the card and the parcel are sent together to the destination. On arrival at the destination post office, the card is delivered to the addressee, who then has to make arrangements to collect the parcel from the post office (there was no home delivery), signing the back of the *Postbegleitadresse* card. The small fee that was paid is receipted on the back of the card using postage stamps<sup>1</sup>. The vast majority of parcel cards that are available to collectors show that this process was fairly straightforward and worked most of the time. Extra services included insurance and cash-on-delivery.

However, the system was not fool-proof. Should the parcel card go missing en route, this was usually corrected at the destination post office which issued an *Ersatz-Post-Begleitadresse* (substitute declaration) card, and sent this to the intended recipient in the normal way. But what happens when a parcel goes missing or its contents are tampered with? Presumably the card arrives at the destination office, but cannot be married up with a parcel. The intended recipient would be notified in the usual way, but then the bureaucracy kicks in. The following three examples from the WWI period provide some evidence.

### *The case of the disappearing shirt:*

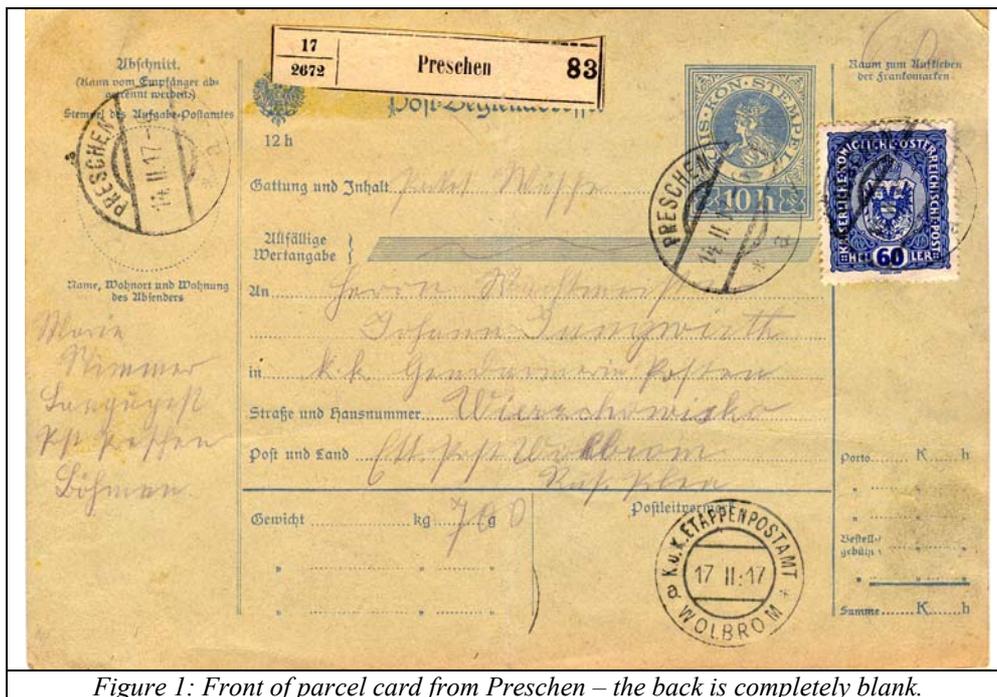


Figure 1: Front of parcel card from Preschen – the back is completely blank.

Figure 1 shows a usual type of parcel card employed for transmission of a parcel of *Wäsche* (washing) weighing 700 g, charged 60h carriage and sent on 14 February 1917 by one Marie Stimmer Lungugest (? : difficult to decipher – we shall call her just Marie) from Preschen in Bohemia to a Johann Jungwirth based with the *k.k. Gendarmerie* at Wierchowisko, *Etappenpostamt* Wolbrom (which is about 60 km north of Krakau) in Russian Poland. The card arrived in Wolbrom on 17 February, but it appears the parcel did not. The back of the card has no markings whatsoever to indicate that it was collected. Separate communication between Marie and Johann must have occurred, because on 22 March Johann initiated an enquiry. Form DS Nr 412A (VIII-1913),

<sup>1</sup> Oddly, no fee was payable in the Hungarian part of the Empire unless the parcel was stored for a period of time, but then the Hungarians had been doing their own thing since 1867.

*Meldung über ein fehlendes Paket*, was completed at Wolbrom *Etappenpostamt* for a 700g missing packet (Figure 2), which was sent back to Preschen. On the back, the enquiry *Antwort* (answer), was dealt with at Preschen on 28 March, which in scrawly gothic handwriting basically described the nature of the packing and confirmed that the packet contained one shirt was duly sent on 14 February. This was addressed back to Wolbrom. The next step appears to have been that the ‘case’ was sent to the *Anmeldestelle für Postpakete* (notification office for postal packets) in Lublin (datestamp at the top) where it arrived on 14 April.

Meldung über ein fehlendes Paket 448 F

z. 24 f. an Postamt Preschen

Aufgabe-Nummer	Postamt	Preschen
Tag	Nummer	83
Empfänger	Tag	14/II
Bestimmungs-Ort	Empfänger	Johann Komparit
Postamt	Bestimmungs-Ort	Wolbrom
Wert	K	h
Gewicht	kg	g
Nachnahme	K	h
Inhalt	Inhalt	
Verpackung	Verpackung	
Absender	Absender	Maria Komparit

Das nebenstehende Paket fehlt hier seit: 14/II  
Die Begleitadresse erliegt hier.

Das Postamt wolle vom Absender eine genaue Beschreibung der Verpackung (nach Gattung und Material) sowie des Inhaltes einheben und umseitig mitteilen.

Es wird ersucht bekanntzugeben:

- Ob und über welches Eintritts-Auswechslungsamt das Paket dort eingelangt ist.
- Ob und mit welchem Leitzettel das Paket versehen wurde.
- Wohin das Paket abgeleitet wurde.
- Wo das Paket verzollt wurde.
- Ob dort irgendwelche Anhaltspunkte über den Verbleib des Paketes bekannt sind.

Wolbrom am 24/II 1917

Anmerkung: Der nicht gültige Vordruck ist zu streichen.

D. S. Nr. 512 A. (VIII-1913)

Figure 2: *Meldung* document filled out by the intended recipient of the shirt, front side.

Antwort

z. 24 f. an Etappenpostamt Wolbrom

- Laut Auskunft des Absenders besteht a) die Verpackung des Paketes aus: *Leinwandstoffbeutel mit Holz in Packstange von Holz gemacht*. b) der Inhalt des Paketes aus: *ein Hemd*.
- Das Paket ist hier a) nicht eingegangen. b) eingegangen über:
- Das Paket erhielt a) keinen Leitzettel. b) den Leitzettel:
- Das Paket wurde abgeleitet nach: *01/II 17*
- Das Paket wurde verzollt in:
- Anhaltspunkte über den Verbleib des Paketes a) können nicht gegeben werden. b) liegen folgende vor:

Preschen am 28/III 1917

Anmerkung: Der nicht gültige Vordruck ist zu streichen.

Figure 3: Reverse of the *Meldung* document.

On or about this date, this office in Lublin issued a second *Meldung* document (Figure 4) addressed to the *k.k. Postamt Szczakowa Zoll* (about 80 km northwest of Krakau – seems to be a big railway junction), which must have been a sufficiently common occurrence because this has been done using a rubber cachet. The handwritten response on the reverse of this form (Figure 5), addressed back to Lublin, again using a rubber cachet, says: *Das Pkt bis 20/II nicht nachweisbar. Im Zugangsfalle nach 20/II nach Wolbrom zollfrei abgefertigt / die zollfreie Pkte nach Polen sind vom 20/II nicht mehr konsigniert*. Translated this says: ‘The parcel was not traceable up to 20 February. In any event after 20 February it would have free from customs clearance. Customs clearance free parcels to Poland are no longer consigned from 20/II.’ In other words, ‘it didn’t come to us for customs clearance before 20 February, and now we don’t do parcels destined for Poland anyway – nothing to do with us, guv’. The datestamp at the bottom is of Szczakowa ‘5b’ on 19.V.17. This document was received back in Lublin on 20 May.

Next, the Lublin office filled out an *Erklärung des Empfängers* (declaration of recipient, Figure 6) form Nr 3712/16, printed by the book press of the M-G-G, Lublin (*Militär Grenz Gebiet?*) and sent it to the Wolbrom office where our intended recipient signed on 26 May to say that ‘neither through the post nor by another means has he received his shirt’. What happened next is anyone’s guess, but this bundle of papers was pinned together and probably archived back in Lublin, or even Vienna. The existence of this specially printed form suggests there was an awful lot of missing parcels!

Meldung über ein fehlendes Paket 448  
 z. 22 f an K. k. Postamt Szczakowa Zoll

Aufgabe-Nummer	Postamt Breschen	Das nebenstehende Paket fehlt hier seit: 17/II
Tag	83	Die Begleitadresse erliegt hier.
Empfänger	Johann Jüngwirth	1. Das Postamt wolle vom Absender eine genaue Beschreibung der Verpackung (nach Gattung und Material) sowie des Inhaltes einheben und unseitig mitteilen.
Bestimmungsort	Wolbrom	Es wird ersucht bekanntzugeben:
Wert	K h	2. Ob und über welches Eintritts-Auswechslungsamt das Paket dort eingelangt ist.
Nachnahme	K h	3. Ob und mit welchem Leitzettel das Paket versehen wurde.
Inhalt	Heud	4. Wohin das Paket abgeleitet wurde.
Verpackung	Schachtel in Papier	5. Wo das Paket verzollt wurde.
Absender		6. Ob dort irgendwelche Anhaltspunkte über den Verbleib des Paketes bekannt sind.

7. Das Paket ist neu Antwort des Auf-Amtes  
 nicht zurückgelangt

Anmerkung: Der nicht gültige Vordruck ist zu streichen.

D. G. Nr. 412 A. (VIII-1913)

Figure 4: Second Meldung document, front side

Antwort  
 z. 1000 an K. u. k. Anmeldestelle für Postpakete LUBLIN.

- Laut Auskunft des Absenders besteht
  - die Verpackung des Paketes aus:
  - der Inhalt des Paketes aus:
- Das Paket ist hier
  - nicht eingegangen.
  - eingegangen über:
- Das Paket erhielt
  - keinen Leitzettel.
  - den Leitzettel:
- Das Paket wurde abgeleitet nach:
- Das Paket wurde verzollt in:
- Anhaltspunkte über den Verbleib des Paketes
  - können nicht gegeben werden.
  - liegen folgende vor:  
 Das Paket bis jetzt nicht nachweisbar. Im Zugegang falls nach 20/2 nach Wolbrom zu abfertigen die Zollfreie Karte und oben sind von 20/2 keine mehr konfirmiert. —

am 19/II 1917

Anmerkung: Der nicht gültige Vordruck ist zu streichen.

Figure 5: Second Meldung document, reverse side

K. u. k. Anmeldestelle für Postpakete LUBLIN.

Zl. 448/245

### Erklärung des Empfängers.

Ich erkläre hiemit, daß ich die Sendung Nr. 83 / Schachtel aus Breschen, aufgegeben am 14. II. 17 an die Adresse: Johann Jüngwirth in Wolbrom Wert K h Gewicht kg 700 g. Nachnahme K h Inhalt: Heud weder durch die Post, noch auf anderem Wege nachträglich erhalten habe.

Orts- und Poststempel: 26 V 17

Unterschrift des Amtsvorstandes: [Signature]  
 Unterschrift des Empfängers: Johann Jüngwirth

Nr. 3712/16. -- Buchdr. des M.-U.-G. -- Lublin.

L: Figure 6: Erklärung document

This set of documents raises some questions:

- Before 20 February 1917 were all incoming parcels to newly occupied Russian Poland subject to routing through Szczakowa for customs inspection?
- Lublin is a long way ENE of Krakau – it seems odd that the office would be so far out of the way. Was Lublin a big sorting centre for troops on the Eastern Front after the Russian expulsion from Galicia in 1915?

**The case of the pilfered food:**

This concerns a rather interesting *Feldpostbegleitadresse* (field-post declaration form) (Figure 7) sent from Odessa at the end of September 1918, part of the abortive final foray up the Volga river for the Austrian army and the Danube Flotilla. The sender is *Linienschiffskapitän* Mallinarich of the *Hafenkommando*, Odessa, Ukraine, who is sending a *Kistchen* (little crate) of *Lebensmittel* (food) to his wife in *Königliche Weinberge*, Bohemia. The 5 kg weight is charged 50 h + 1 k = 1.50 k, and because there are no stamps available, a large ‘G.B.’ cachet has been applied, which probably means *Gebühr Bezahlt* (fee paid). The partly visible two-line

cachet across the top edge of the card reads *K.u.k. Heimpaketabschubstelle Odessa / Feldpost* (despatch office for parcels destined for the homeland). The card is stamped with FPA 240b datestamp of 30.IX.18.

The front of the parcel card is filled with handwritten information. At the top left, there is a circular postmark from Odessa dated 30.IX.18 and a stamp '240'. The card is addressed to Marie Basch in Königliche Weinberge, Bohmen. The weight is listed as 5 kg. The card is stamped with 'Feldpostamt Nr. 240' and '1918'. The recipient's name is 'Marie Basch' and the address is 'Königliche Weinberge, Böhmen'. The weight is '5 kg' and the postage is '2.2.00'. There are also some illegible handwritten notes in the bottom left corner.

Figure 7: Front of parcel card sending 5 kg of food from Odessa to Königliche Weinberge

The reverse of the parcel card shows a receipt stamp 'Vorne bezeichnete Sendung erhalten' dated 19/10 1918. The recipient's name is 'Marie Basch'. There are several handwritten annotations in German, including 'gegen Vorbehalt des Schadensersatzes' and 'Richtige Gewicht 2 kg 000 gr avisiert 19.X.18'. There are also some illegible handwritten notes on the right side of the card.

Figure 8: Reverse of the parcel card with the manuscript annotations.

The reverse of the card (Figure 8) reveals that the parcel did actually arrive quite quickly in Königliche Weinberge, on 6 October, but it looks like the recipient, Marie Basch, thought something was wrong. At the right-hand side the manuscript reads '*Richtige Gewicht 2 kg 000 gr avisiert 19.X.18*' (correct weight 2.0 kg advised) and signed. In the lower part of the card where the recipient would normally sign for receipt, Marie Basch has commented '*gegen Vorbehalt des Schadensersatzes*' (with the proviso of the damage). So this implies that the crate was damaged, probably partly prised open, and some of the contents pilfered. There is no postage due stamp on the reverse, so presumably the recipient's charge was waived. There are rusty pinholes visible in the card, which means that another document was probably attached to it when the paperwork was sent, probably to Prag, for investigation. Unfortunately that did not come with the card, but it looks as though a formal complaint was made.

### **The case of the missing pastries:**

This one is about a crate of *pečivo*/*Gebäck* (a collective noun in both Czech and German languages meaning breads, pastries, cakes, etc.) that went missing between Peček an der Staatbahn / Pečky na Státní Oráze and the Naval Base in Pola down on the Adriatic coast.

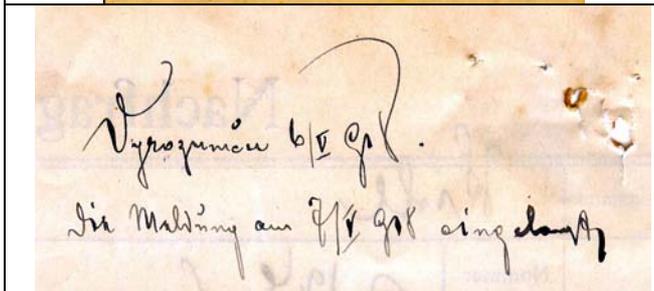
The original bilingual German/Bohemian parcel card (Figure 9) was made out on 13 March 1918 to send a crate of *pečivo* weighing 5kg to a family member on the cruiser S.M.S. 'Zrinyi' at the usual mailing address of *Marinefeldpostamt* Pola. The postal charge was 80h, and the card duly arrived in Pola on 17 March as evidenced by the datestamp on the reverse. However, it seems that the crate was not signed for.

There must have been some communication between the sender and the intended recipient, because on 22 April in Peček/ Pečky, the sender filed a *Nachfrageschreiben*, a foolscap-sized enquiry document (type D.S. Nr. 438, X/1912, Figure 10), asking for the parcel to be traced, for which the sender had to pay 25 h in stamps. (Seems a bit pointless, because the value of the crate was not declared and hence the parcel was not insured<sup>2</sup>, and because by this time nothing inside the crate would have been edible, at least by modern standards!)

On 27 April, this second document reached the *K.u.k. Marinefeldpostamt* Pola, where the clerk indicated in the top right-hand box (by strike-out and underlining), that *Die Sendung... ist nicht eingelangt*, i.e. the sending was not received.

A third document then appears to have been attached (the staple holes in all three documents match up). This is a double-sided flimsy sheet that we saw in Case 1, of type D.S. 412A (VIII/1913) entitled *Meldung über ein fehlendes Paket* (notification of a missing packet), Figures 11 and 12. The recipient was clearly having his two penn'orth as well. He filled in this form about the missing crate at the Pola 1 civilian post office, where it received the barred octagonal straight-line datestamp of 29 April.

<sup>2</sup> I believe that it was not possible to register or insure a parcel going to the 'Front', but perhaps Pola was not in this category?



Top: Fig 9: Parcel card sending 5 kg of pastries to Pola;  
Centre: fig 9 reverse - arrival in Pola on 17 March.  
Bottom: text on the reverse of fig 10

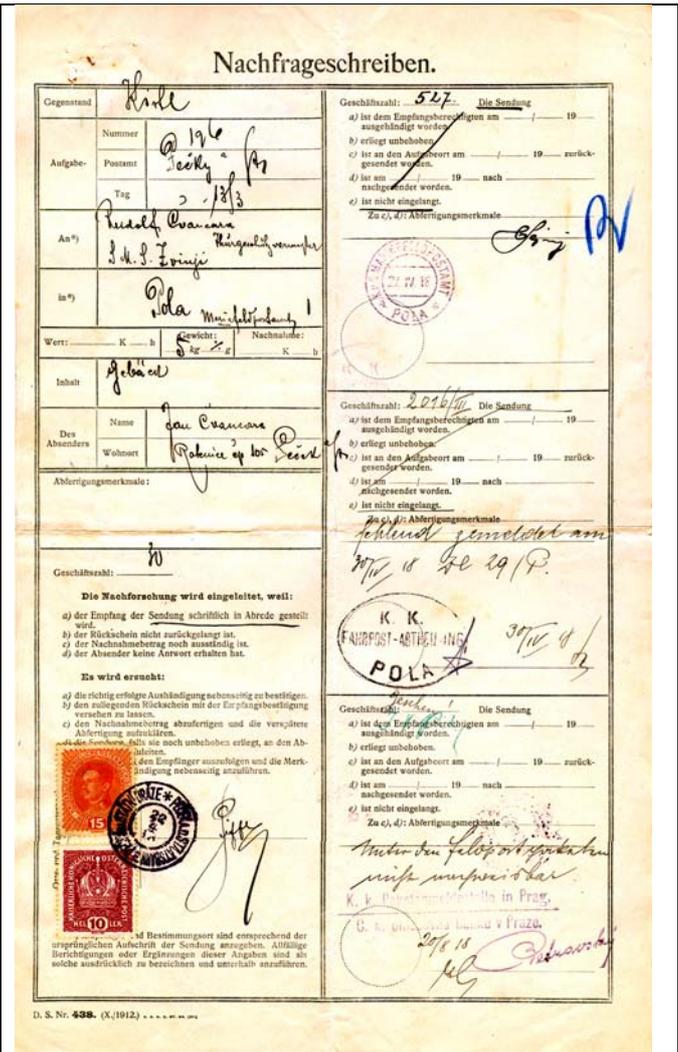


Figure 10: Nachfrageschreiben to trace the sending.

All three documents then passed to the K.K. Fahrpost-abteilung Pola, perhaps actually meeting up there, where a second clerk wrote 'fehlend gemeldet am 30/IV 18', i.e. 'missing in registering the arrival' (of the sending) on the middle right-hand box on the *Nachfrageschreiben*, and then applied his big oval cachet. The package of documents was folded up and sent to Peček / Pečky, probably inside an official envelope. On the 6 May, someone wrote on the back of the *Nachfrageschreiben* in Bohemian: *Vyrozumou* (I can't quite make sense of this – *vyrozumet* appears to translate as 'informed') and dated it 6/V 918. Presumably at this point the sender was informed that the crate was untraceable. Beneath this is written in the same hand: 'Die Meldung am 7/V 918 eingelangt' (the notification received on 7 May). The postal clerk then datestamped the back of the flimsy *Meldung* document on 8 May, and also stamped it with the long single-line cachet 'Ausgleich nicht gefunden' ('sending not found', Figure 12), probably to indicate that it wasn't still sitting somewhere in Peček/Pečky. The contents also seem to have been changed from 5 kg of *pečivo* to somewhat less palatable 4.25 kg of *Schmalz* (lard)!

Now the package of documents had to go back to the intended recipient, presumably to inform him that the crate was untraceable. The back of the flimsy *Meldung* document has an *Anmeldestelle* Trieste datestamp of 16 May, but not one of Pola, so perhaps the post office knew that the ship had moved on from Pola.

Finally, the package of documents was sent to Prag/Praha, probably a central archive. On 20 May, the lowest box on the right-hand side of the *Nachfrageschreiben* was completed by yet another clerk who wrote 'Unter den Feldpostpaketen nicht nachweisbar' (not traceable amongst the field-post packets). He then applied the bilingual cachet K.k. Paketanmeldestelle in Prag / C.k. ohlašovna banku v Praze, and dated it 20/5 18. Finally,

the back of the original parcel card and the front of the flimsy *Meldung* document are both datestamped *Anmeldestelle* Prag on 21.V.18.

*Meldung über ein fehlendes Paket*

z. 29/P an *Prag an Staatsbahn*

Aufgabe- Postamt	Postamt	Das nebenstehende Paket fehlt hier seit:
Tag	146 ?	Die Begleitadresse erliegt hier.
Empfänger	<i>Paul Cornicora</i>	1. Das Postamt wolle vom Absender eine genaue Beschreibung der Verpackung (nach Gattung und Material) sowie des Inhaltes einheben und umseitig mitteilen.
Bestimmungs- Ort	<i>Prag</i>	Es widersucht bekanntzugeben:
Postamt		2. Ob und über welches Eintritts-Auswechslungsamt das Paket dort eingelangt ist.
Wert	K h   Gewicht 5 kg g	3. Ob und mit welchem Leitzettel das Paket versehen wurde.
Nachnahme	K h	4. Wohin das Paket abgeleitet wurde.
Inhalt	<i>Wurst</i>	5. Wo das Paket verzollt wurde.
Verpackung		6. Ob dort irgendwelche Anhaltspunkte über den Verbleib des Paketes bekannt sind.
Absender	<i>Paul Cornicora</i>	

7. \_\_\_\_\_

Anmerkung: Der nicht gültige Vordruck ist zu streichen.

am 21. V. 18 1918

D. S. Nr. 412 A. (VIII-1913)

Figure 11: *Meldung* document completed by intended recipient, front side.

*Antwort*

z. 27/P an *Prag 1.*

1. Laut Auskunft des Absenders besteht

a) die Verpackung des Paketes aus:

*Wurst*

b) der Inhalt des Paketes aus:

*4 kg 100 g Wurst*

2. Das Paket ist hier

a) nicht eingegangen.

b) eingegangen über:

3. Das Paket erhielt

a) keinen Leitzettel.

b) den Leitzettel:

4. Das Paket wurde abgeleitet nach:

5. Das Paket wurde verzollt in:

6. Anhaltspunkte über den Verbleib des Paketes

a) können nicht gegeben werden.

b) liegen folgende vor:

am 21. V. 18 1918

Anmerkung: Der nicht gültige Vordruck ist zu streichen.

Figure 12: *Meldung* document, reverse side.

This little package presumably sat in the Prag archive until ‘liberated’. It makes a nice, if a tad complicated, postal history tale, but also links well with real history. In 1918, food was becoming scarce in many parts of the Empire, especially in the cities. Naval rations were not up to much either, so maybe the family thought they would be doing their sailor son a favour by sending him some food. The awkward step in those times, of course, was to have to declare on the parcel card that there was something tasty inside<sup>3</sup>. This must have made it easy pickings for one of the less scrupulous employees of the post office or the railway system. It was probably quite easy to leave a ‘target’ crate behind en route (or to break into it as in Case 2)! Goodbye *pečivo*.

### Endnote:

*Nachfrageschreiben* from the WWI period regularly appear in auctions, and are commonly related to missing/stolen fieldpost packets, but until acquiring these examples, I had not seen the *Meldung* document before. But I don’t understand why it was necessary to have two different documents, one involving paying a fee and the other not. What dictated which type was used when? Are the *Meldung* documents solely for use by the military?

The author would appreciate any background information or documentation to answer these and other queries dotted throughout the article.

<sup>3</sup> Because of restrictions to what could be sent to serving personnel, if the content of a military parcel was found to be incorrect during customs examination it would be confiscated.

## THE APS BOOKSHOP

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- ❖ **1910 Post Office Index**. This is the “Verzeichnis der Post- und Telegraphen-Ämter in Österreich, Ungarn und in Bosnien-Hercegovina 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. The CD contains pictures of the original pages, not text. It is ISBN 978-0-900118-08-1

### Books:

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“**The Postal History of the Anschluss, The German Annexation of Austria**” by Tony Hickey, Ian Nutley, David Taylor and Colin Tobitt. Copies are still available; contact the editor of AUSTRIA.

## NOTES FROM PUBLICATIONS

### **APS<sup>US</sup>**

**Vol 13 Nr 1 Jan 2013:** “Austrian Post in Liechtenstein” (*translation of Ferchenbauer2000 pp1137-1145*); stamps depicting lesser-known Austrians; Postage dues and postcards; etc.

### **Czechout**

**Vol 31 Nr 1:** New & enhanced Journal format; Secretary Urgently Wanted; notes & reports; Czechoslovak Field Post in Sub-Carpathia 1919-20; and much else of interest.

### **Germania**

**Vol 49 Nr 1:** Germany-specific articles.

### **Jugopošta**

**Nr 105 Mar 2013:** Articles needed; 1934 mourning issue; French medical missions in Serbia 1915 (the main problem was typhus brought by the 60,000 Austrian POWs); Independent Croatia 1941-45.

### **Ukrainian Philatelist**

**Vol 60 nr 2:** WWI Ukrainian refugee camps in Austria (mainly Gmünd); overprinted Austrian issues as Western Ukrainian provisionals; etc etc.

**To borrow any of these, consult the Librarian**

### **Review: Poststempel von Südtirol (1850-2012) und dem Trentino (1850-1918)**

This 784 page, soft back book has been added to the library as Number 452. The information on page 8 of Austria 181 is incorrect in that the text is mainly in German with a section of the introduction in Italian. The detailed introduction includes a list of the abbreviations used, history of the posts, overview of the cancellations and simple maps of the postal areas. These I found interesting in following the route of mail from the sender at least as far as the Austrian border. A reduced version of the introduction follows in Italian before the main section of the book.

This lists each post office in alphabetical order using the German name-Italian name firstly in South Tirol- Alto Adige and then Trentino for the years stated in the title. There is a cross reference Italian to German for collectors of Italian material. For each town all cancellations known are listed and as many as possible illustrated. Sub-types, for example an alteration to a star, change in space or letter are included where known. Valuations for earlier cancellations are given with a table of value included in the book and on the back cover. Postablagen are listed but the cancellations are not included.

For anyone interested in this area the book should be useful if only to tell you how many cancellations you are missing but if you find an example not included in the book the authors would be delighted to hear from you. First contact the librarian, Joyce Boyer at joyceb@d-lweb.net, phone and address in the list of officers who will give you the contact details.

The authors have started the groundwork for a similar book on the cancellations of North and East Tirol and have requested our help for examples of the Bezirksstempel as mentioned in the last Newsletter and also modern (number) cancellations. Again if you can help please contact Joyce.

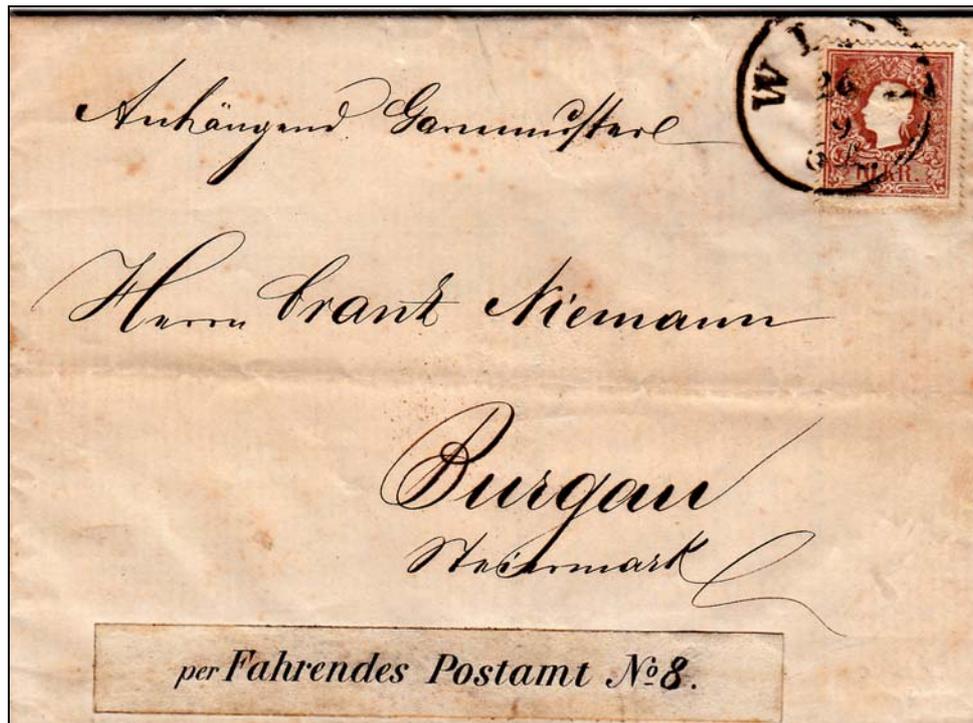
**Joyce Boyer**

# THE PUZZLE OF THE FAHRENDES POSTAMT LABEL OF THE 1850s

by Keith Brandon and Friends

## Introduction

An unexpected by-product of my Auctioneer role is a flow of subject-matter for short articles for **AUSTRIA**. In the last issue, I told the story of the China Battery postcard. In a recent consignment I found the subject of this article. However, this time I have not been able to tie up all the loose ends. Indeed it's a bit of a mystery. I hope that readers will be able to fill in some of the gaps.



The cover in question is a conventional looking 1859 letter except for the label near the bottom inscribed per *Fahrendes Postamt No. 8*. I had not seen such a sticker on an 1850s letter before, and neither had several distinguished postal historians that I showed it to. Was it a private production, or an official post-office marking, or affixed on the train by the TPO staff, or something else. With the assistance of several colleagues, I've tried to narrow down the options.

### ***The Letter and its Route***

The complete folded business letter is dated Wien, 26 September 1859 and addressed to a firm in Burgau, Styria. It is franked with a second-issue 10kr brown (Type II) cancelled with a Wien cds. On the reverse is an arrival cds of Burgau, a textile town in the east of Styria.

It would have travelled by rail as far as Graz. Completion of the Wien-Graz section of the eventual Wien-Trieste line was effected when the stretch over the Semmering Pass was opened on 17 July 1854. From Graz, the letter would have continued by mail-coach to Burgau.

Towards the top of the cover is the manuscript inscription *Anhänger Garnmuster* (Attached yarn-sample). A sample of yarn to a textile firm would not be unusual, and commercial samples enjoyed a favourable postage rate. At the time, the rate for an ordinary letter for a distance of ten to twenty meilen was 10kr and so was the rate for a letter with a sample. However the 10kr was valid for a weight of up to 2 loth for a sample-letter compared with only 1 loth for an ordinary letter.

On the reverse of the envelope, we find the sender's stamp **G. BORCKENSTEIN & SOHN / WIEN am PETER Nr.575**. This was a textile firm with a mill in Burgau (see next section) and we can surmise that the Vienna sales office was sending a customer's swatch to one of its mills for yarn to be manufactured.

Finally we have the label per *Fahrendes Postamt No.8*. The "8" appears to have been neatly inserted in manuscript, but more of that later.

### ***The Destination***

Burgau lies due east of Graz, almost on the Styria / Burgenland border, which of course would have been the border with Hungary at the time of our letter. Burgau had the first cotton mill of the Imperial Monarchy, founded in 1789 by Count Batthyány and based upon the English mills rather than the Austrian factories of the time. He had modern cotton-spinning machinery smuggled out of England. The mill ceased operation in 1808, during the Napoleonic Wars, due to increased competition and difficulties in obtaining raw materials. In 1831, the Vienna wholesaler Georg Borckenstein took over the mill, modernised it and introduced new products.

Batthyány had wanted to create jobs in the somewhat backward region of Eastern Styria. A housing development was constructed for the workers and is still called "Unteren Markt" (Lower Market). At some point, the company moved its main production three kilometres north to a new site in Neudau. The population figures reflect this. Burgau had 1174 inhabitants in 1869, peaked at 1357 in 1890, and has just under a 1000 people now. Neudau went the other way, its population growing from 828 in 1869 to 1212 in 2012. The Borckenstein company still produces yarn, and is headquartered in Neudau. An internet satellite map shows just how dominant the Borckenstein complex is in this small town.

### ***Some Similar Letters.***

A 1991 article in *Die Briefmarke* by Dir. Gerhard Wessely shows three similar letters from the 1850s, all with similar labels, but for *Fahrpostamt No.9* rather than *No.8*. He observes that there appears to have been no mention of such letters in the philatelic literature.

His letters are from Baden to Burgau (addressed to the Borckenstein firm), 1854; from Vienna to Burgau, 1857; and from Vienna to Graz, 1858. All of them are franked with first-issue adhesives, and the 1854 example is cancelled by a straight-line TPO postmark.

## ***A Closer Look at the Label***

The labels measure approximately 95 x 13mm, cut from sheets, with printed guide-lines to show where to cut. The three Wessely letters have the printed inscription *per Fahren des Postamt No.9*. The APS Auction letter has an identical label but with a neat manuscript 8 instead of a printed 9.

This difference led me to look more closely at the APS letter. Holding the letter up to the light, it became clear that the paper was thinned behind the 8; something had been scratched off the label to be replaced by the 8. I have no doubt that this was an amended *No.9* label.

The TPO services 8 and 9 went on the same route from Vienna to Trieste over the Semmering Pass, both starting on 1 August 1851. Both numbers were used in both directions, one on the morning train and the other on the afternoon train.

## ***Possible Origins of the Label***

The big unknown factor is whether the label was of private origin or applied by some part of the postal service, in which case which part. Let's look at the possibilities.

### **Private origin.**

This must be the favourite. We know that one of the four letters is from the Borckenstein firm in Vienna, and one is addressed to the same firm in Burgau. Perhaps this company affixed the labels to mail travelling on the Südbahn as an instruction to their mailing room to ensure that they got the letters to the post office in time to catch the train. On the other hand, we have four letters, all in different handwriting, and one of them from Baden. And all four letters are addressed to different individuals, one of whom is in Graz, not Burgau. This does not negate the theory. Borckenstein could have had an office in Baden and a customer in Graz. The Burgau letters could have been addressed to different individuals working for Borckenstein or their local sub-contractors without need to mention the firm; it was a one-company town.

### **Letter-post origin.**

It seems unlikely that these labels were applied by the Briefpost in Vienna as part of their sorting procedure. We surely would have encountered far more of them. And, if this was the official procedure, would we not have seen similar labels for other routes, say to Prague or Krakow?

Moreover, the Austrian Briefpost never used labels in this era. If they needed to regularly apply an instructional marking, they always had a handstamp manufactured.

It has been suggested that the post-office might have used these labels for some specific occurrence that was fairly uncommon. For example if the mail had missed the last train of the day. The mail was perhaps labelled and put aside for the next day's train. It should be noted in this respect that all three of the Vienna labels were postmarked at 6.00 in the evening. But if this action was taken in the main Vienna office or the Südbahnhof sub-post-office, I still believe that a handstamp would have been used.

### **Railway Station origin**

Similarly, perhaps the station-staff at the Sudbahnhof applied the label to ensure that the mail was put on board the right train, particularly if it had missed the last train of the day. If it was a local station initiative, this would explain why we don't see similar labels from other Vienna termini for other rail-routes.

### **Travelling post-office origin**

It seems scarcely believable that these stickers were applied by the TPO staff; we would have seen many more examples from the busy Wien-Graz-Trieste route, and presumably from other routes as well. Moreover, one of the Wessely letters is cancelled by a conventional TPO postmark. There would be no need for both. The TPO service can surely be eliminated from our list of suspects.

### **Parcel-post origin**

Why would the Fahrpost be involved? We know that the APS Auction letter accompanied a sample. Perhaps all four were packet-letters, accompanying parcels handled by the Fahrpost. The illustration below shows such a letter, but from a decade later and, like other examples I have seen, bearing a revenue stamp rather than a

postage stamp. Could our four letters be fore-runners of these packet-letters, which were themselves forerunners of the more-common parcel cards? Certainly the Fahrpost, unlike the Briefpost, regularly used labels.



### **Tentative Conclusions**

It seems unlikely that the Letter Post or Travelling Post could have applied these stickers. It runs counter to all we know about their practices, and I propose to eliminate them from our enquiries. The originator of the mail, probably the Borckenstein company, could well have affixed these privately-produced stickers to help with the timely despatch of its own outgoing mail.

The Südbahnhof also had the means and the motive; helping to ensure that the mail went on the right train. Either Borckenstein employees or Sudbahnhof staff could have diligently amended the 9 to an 8 when they realised that the letter would not catch the earlier train. And the Parcel Post? Something of a long-shot which requires more research.

My own belief is that the labels were affixed by the sender of the letter, presumably employees of Borckenstein (although the Baden letter does not fit well with this). It would have been possible for a letter to go all the way from Vienna to Burgau by mail-coach, without having to go near Graz. However, the mail coaches did not travel every day, and made slow progress on minor roads. The sender would have calculated that use of the Sudbahn to Graz, and then the mail-coach, would expedite his commercially-important mail even though it travelled a greater distance. Rather than handwrite it on every letter, he had the labels printed.

I do hope that readers will contribute further examples, information and theories about these intriguing little labels. If I receive anything interesting, I promise a follow-up article.

### **References:**

- Dir. Gerhard Wessely: "Leit-Klebezettel der Post: 'Per Fahrendes Postamt No 9' 1854-58", Die Briefmarke 10/91,
- [www.borckenstein.com](http://www.borckenstein.com),
- [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burgau\\_\(Steiermark\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burgau_(Steiermark))

### **Acknowledgments:**

I am most grateful to the following colleagues who have supplied me with facts and theories in connection with this article: Richard Zimmerl, Henry Pollak, Joyce Boyer, Andy Taylor, Martin Brumby and John Anthony.

### **Editor's note:**

The cover discussed in this article will be offered in the Society's Grand Auction 113. The catalogue for this will be circulated with the next issue of AUSTRIA.

## Italy Leaves the Triple Alliance: The Austrian Response

by William Velvel Moskoff and Carol Gayle

It is arguable that political and military alliances are fragile agreements, bargains made of mutual convenience that may always be trumped by an individual nation's self-interest. Early in the twentieth century, the Triple Alliance, a pact that had existed since 1882 between Austria, Germany, and Italy failed to hold together when Italy refused to join the other two countries in combat during World War I, formally announcing its neutrality on August 2, 1914, the day after Germany declared war on Russia and less than a week after Austria-Hungary declared war against Serbia on July 28.<sup>1</sup> Italy defended its decision by arguing that the Triple Alliance was a defensive alliance and that Austria-Hungary and Germany were the aggressors in this war.

In the years prior to World War I, the Triple Alliance had begun to fray as Italy embraced an independent foreign policy and seized Tripoli from the Ottoman empire, then supported by Germany and drawing closer to Great Britain and France. Thus, when the war began, while Italy was formally obliged to side with its alliance partners, it did not do so. Instead, Italy engaged in a lengthy national debate about the war. Italian socialists were against military involvement on principle while the nationalists advocated entry into the war as a way to demonstrate Italian prowess and unite the nation. Once the first campaigns of the war led to stalemate rather than a speedy victory, the issue took on a more serious tone in Italy. The question was: Would entry into the war be in the interest of Italy? After nine months, Italy decided to enter the war on the side of Britain and France. Although Italy had annexed most of the Italian-speaking areas of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, including Venetia in 1866, the Empire continued to control several areas with large Italian populations, including Trieste, Fiume, and South Tyrol. Additionally, there were ethnic Italian areas on the Balkan coast across the Adriatic that Austria controlled.

Both France and Great Britain put pressure on Italy to join forces with them. France's interest in Italian support was governed by Germany's presence on its eastern flank. If Italy came into the war, it would force Germany to redirect some of its forces away from the western front to deal with Italian forces. Britain was concerned about the security of its Mediterranean interests and sought to bring both Greece and Italy into the war. As an inducement, the Allies offered both financial assistance and territorial concessions. In April, Italy negotiated a secret agreement with the Allies that responded to Italy's territorial aspirations and its financial needs. On April 26, 1915 Italy signed the Treaty of London and agreed to enter the war on the side of the Allies. Among a number of favourable terms, the Treaty offered Italy a £60 million line of credit through the Bank of England to help finance its military effort.<sup>2</sup> This benefitted Italy because it had for years been a heavy net borrower and was in a difficult financial position, which would be seriously compounded by a major war effort. There was also an offer to support its territorial claims against Austria. Moreover, Great Britain sweetened the pot by offering Dalmatia and Istria to Italy, territories across the Adriatic that were then ruled by Austria. Austria-Hungary and Germany had nothing remotely comparable to offer; Austria would never concede any territory to Italy to induce its participation on its side. Italy declared war against Austria-Hungary on May 23, 1915, indicating the strong territorial ambitions driving Italy's actions.<sup>3</sup>

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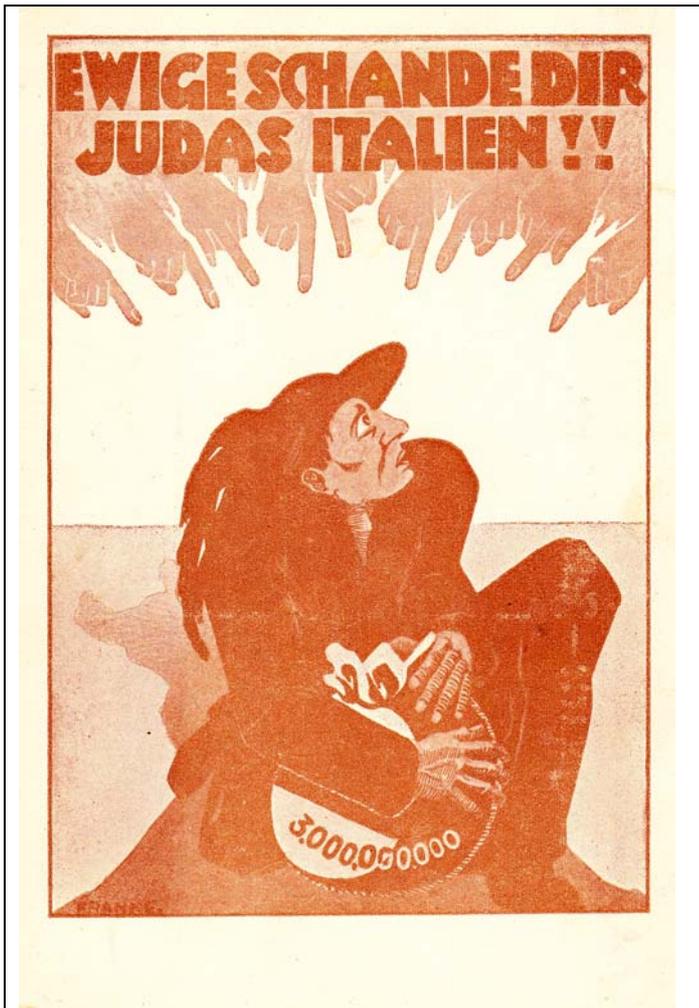
<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, the discussion of the Triple Alliance and the territorial and financial issues involved were drawn from the following sources: Ross F. Collins, *World War I: Primary Documents on Events from 1914-1918*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008; John Horne, editor, *A Companion to World War I*, Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester, UK, 2010; Colin Nicolson, *The Longman Companion to the First World War Europe, 1914-1918*, Harlow: England, 2001; Hew Strachan, editor, *World War I: A History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998

<sup>2</sup> Franco Galassi and Mark Harrison, "Italy at War, 1915-1918," in Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison, editor, *The Economics of World War I*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 281.

<sup>3</sup> Italy did not declare war against Germany until August 1916

Not surprisingly, the Austro-Hungarian Emperor Franz Josef reacted angrily to Italy's decision to join the Allies. Clearly feeling betrayed, he said:

"The King of Italy has declared war on me. Perfidy whose like history does not know was committed by the Kingdom of Italy against both allies [Austria-Hungary and Germany]. After an alliance of more than thirty years duration, during which it was able to increase its territorial possessions and develop itself to an unthought-of flourishing condition, Italy abandoned us in our hour of danger and went over with flying colours into the camp of our enemy. We did not menace Italy; did not curtail her authority; did not attack her honour or interests. We always responded loyally to the duties of our alliance and afforded her our protection - then she took the field."<sup>4</sup>



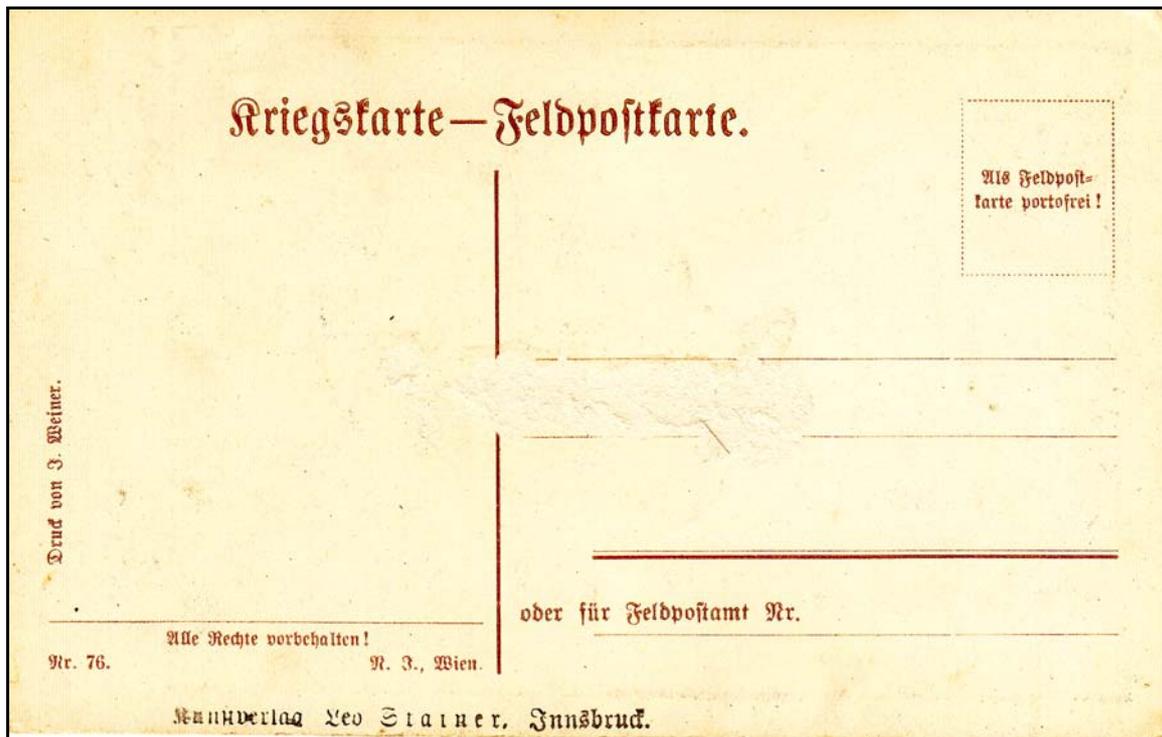
It was not just the Emperor who felt aggrieved by Italy's actions. This Austrian propaganda card shows an unbridled and unconditional condemnation of what was viewed as Italian treachery. On the front of the card, fingers are pointing at a man who is drawn to resemble a Jew, possibly Shylock; he appears both frightened and guilt-ridden. The German phrase translates as: "Eternal Shame on Judas Italy!!" The German *ewige* might well evoke the myth of the Jew, damned to wander eternally, a people without any allegiance to place or country, like the disloyal Italians. He is holding a bag with the number three billion, although it does not say what or whether this represents some currency and if it does, which one. The number looks to be pulled out of the air, since converting 1915 British pounds sterling to either Austrian krone or Italian lira does not add up to three billion. The card was privately produced, printed in Vienna as part of a series and sold by a firm in Innsbruck.<sup>5</sup> The most important point of the caricature is that Italy is being accused of selling out Austro-Hungary for some equivalent of 30 pieces of silver. On the back, the card is designated as a *Kriegskarte-Feldpostkarte* (Wartime Card - Field Post Card). The word "Kriegskarte" is not found on official cards, reinforcing the idea that this was not an official card.

The other side of the card is shown on the following page.<sup>6</sup> The place where the postage stamp normally goes is marked, "Als Feldpostkarte portofrei!" suggesting that the card could be mailed free by the armed forces but that civilians might send the card only with the appropriate postage affixed. Thus, although the card may not have been government-issued, it had to have had at least implicit official sanction to be able to offer postage-free mail.

<sup>4</sup> Source: [www.firstworldwar.com](http://www.firstworldwar.com)

<sup>5</sup> I would like to thank Andy Taylor, John Anthony, and Martin Brumby of the Austrian Philatelic Society for their insights into the provenance of this card

<sup>6</sup> [The card seems to have been scuffed, rather than having had an address deleted. Ed.]



This card appears to draw on historic Austrian anti-Semitic sentiments and apply them to the perceived betrayal by the Italians. The apparent effort is to make it clear to soldier and civilian alike that Austria's efforts in executing the war were made more difficult by Italy's disloyalty to the Alliance.

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by Andy Taylor

### Author's Notes

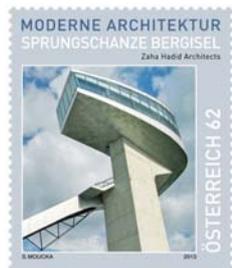
The information given here is face value ('c' is Euro-cents); issue date (first-valid, not the earlier on-sale); quantity printed; printing method; designer (and engraver if relevant); printer if not Österreichische Staatsdruckerei; and some details on the design. The illustrations are around life size, although blocks & strips are smaller. Many issues are also available in mini-sheets, as blackprints, as 'Buntdrucke' (ie printed in different colours from those issued) and so on. There are also a large number of officially-issued Meine Marke (personalised stamps), including one for each Austrian medal winner (39?) at the London 2012 Olympics.

The descriptions are translated from "Die Briefmarke" and the Post.at website; the latter has changed from providing information on the stamp to flowery essays on the philosophy behind the design written in AufgeblasenesDeutsch. Your author finds this unhelpful.



### Ski WM 2013 Schladming – Freedom in the snow

62c, 70c, 90c: issued 2.1.2013; 600,000; Offset; design: Christian Ludwig Attersee. The 42nd Alpine Ski Championships were held in the resort of Schladming in Styria from 4 to 17 February.



**"Modern Architecture in Austria" series - the new Bergisel ski jump.** 62c; 4.1.2013; 415,000; Offset; design: Silvia Moucka. The new ski jump at Bergisel, Innsbruck, was designed by the British architect Zaha Hadid; her acclaimed creation offers a superb view over Innsbruck as well as a world-class sporting experience.

**Europa issue – "20 reasons to love Europe".** 70c; 21.1.2013; 640,002 in sheetlets of 6; Offset; design: Elvira Barriga. The design arose from a competition and is based on "Vielfalt in der Einheit"; your editor cannot understand the official description.



**"Motor cycles" series: HMW Z50 Bj. 1953.** 2Eu20; 21.1.2013; 300,000; Offset; design: David Gruber. The bike was produced by the Hallein Motor Company Hinterberger, Schreitl & Co.

**New-issue-subscriber's bonus stamp "Sunflower".** 62c; 13.2.2013; 420,000; Offset; design: Mag. Brigitte Heiden.



**Definitive "greetings" stamp "Sonnenhut".** No denomination on stamp; valid for 'standard inland' which is currently 62c. Issued 13.2.2013; printed as required; offset; designed in-house. The plant is 'Echinacea purpurea' or 'Purple cone flower'; it is a traditional herbal medicine used to relieve the symptoms of the common cold. (thanks, Jean)



**100 years of the Salzburg Marionette theater.** 62c; 27.2.2013; 400,000; Offset; design: David Gruber. The theatre was founded on 27 February 1913 by Professor Anton Aicher. Its first production was Bastien and Bastienne, a marionette version of Mozart's famous opera. The company repertoire was expanded the following year to incorporate thirteen additional productions. Many of Mozart's famous operas are in the repertoire of the Salzburg Marionette Theatre, and it grew more adventurous and began to tour abroad, starting in Hamburg in 1927. In 1936, a tour was made to Moscow and Leningrad. As a sign of artistic excellence, the company was



awarded the Gold Medal at the World Fair in Paris, France. In 1938, the Salzburg Marionette Theatre made an extensive tour of Germany and Sweden. During World War II, the Salzburg Marionette Theatre was instructed to make tours to the front and it performed in German-occupied Norway, Poland, Russia and Romania until it was forced to cease operations in 1944.

With Hermann Aicher's return from the front, the Salzburg Marionette Theatre restarted its performances, performing for the occupying American, British and French military forces. In 1950, for the first time the sound for performances was recorded; prior to this everything had been performed by live actors and musicians. In 1971, the company acquired its own theatre in the former ballroom of the Mirabell Hotel. Its first production there was Rossini's Barber of Seville. In 1977, Hermann Aicher died; artistic control passed to Gretl Aicher.

To mark the 85th anniversary of the Salzburg Marionette Theatre and the 70th birthday of Gretl Aicher, a special exhibition of marionettes was held at the Salzburg Hohensalzburg Fortress. Since that time the company has continued to tour and perform in its own theatre with an ever increasing repertoire of productions featuring not just the works of Mozart, but also many other famous composers such as Johann Strauss and Pyotr Tchaikovsky. 2007 marked a special year in the history of the company. Bastien and Bastienne was once again performed as well as the premiere of a new production of The Sound of Music, directed by Richard Hamburger. The 100th birthday of the Salzburg Marionette Theatre will be marked by a revival of the historic production of Snow White using the original marionettes. The year will conclude with the première of Alice in Wonderland.



**“Autos” series - Porsche 356 Nr.1 Gmünd.** 70c; 28.2.2013; 415,000; Offset; David Gruber. The Porsche 356 Nr 1 was the prototype of Porsche's first car, built in Gmünd with an aluminium body on a VW-Beetle chassis and a rear 1.1l engine. Nr 1 was completed on 8 June 1948, followed by 50 more until production moved to Germany where it continued until April 1965.

**“Austrian photographic art” series - VALIE EXPORT.** 70c; 13.3.2013; 400,000; offset. VALIE EXPORT is a noted Austrian contemporary performance- and media-artist, born in Linz in 1940 as Waltraud Lehner. After convent schooling and study at the National School for Textile Industry in Vienna, she changed her name in 1967 to VALIE EXPORT in uppercase



letters, like a trademark, derived from the packaging of a popular brand of cigarettes. The stamp, designed by herself, shows this.

**Baden Station in the Biedermeier era.** 1Eu45; 13.3.2013; 400,000; offset; design: Dr Erich Pucher. The engine is the 'Bruck', built in Vienna in 1846 for the Wien-Gloggnitzer-Bahn by the Scottish engineer John Haswell.



**“Wild animals and hunting” series – the Chamois.** 90c; 14.3.2013; 265,000; combination print; design: Kirsten Lubach. The Alpine Chamois lives at high altitudes in rocky places; a controlled number are killed each year for their meat, hide, horns and hair.

Franz Josef donated some to New Zealand, where they still live.



**“Austrian Sacred Art” series:** illuminated manuscript from St Florian abbey. 90c; 15.3.2013; 250,000; combination print; design: Prof. Peter Sinawehl. Codex III 204 is a Missal made in 1320/25 and containing 296 richly-decorated parchment pages.

**“Austrians in Hollywood” - Senta Berger.** 70c; 22.3.2013; 250,000; offset; design: Prof Adolf Tuma. The stage and film actress Senta Berger was born on 13 May 1941 in Vienna and first worked in Hollywood in 1962. She has performed many famous roles both there and in Europe, and received many prizes and awards.



# AUSTRIAN RETURN-TO-SENDER LABELS

By Douglas N. Muir

*This article is an expanded, combined version of extracts of two which originally appeared in the London Philatelist.*<sup>1</sup>

Heinrich von Stephan was the great Postmaster General of 19<sup>th</sup> century Imperial Germany. Many of his ideas were fundamental to the modern running of a postal service. One of these was a suggestion to the Universal Postal Union (which he had been instrumental in founding) to have individual return-to-sender labels for international mail which could not be delivered.

His proposal had first been made in January 1886. It was pointed out that there was no consistency in the way returned letters were marked. Some had indications as to why, some did not, some only in their own language. The moment had now come to introduce some uniformity. At a recent meeting in Berlin the regulations of the international telegraph service had been revised, a service which von Stephan had also introduced. For undeliverable telegrams it had been decided that the receiving office should advise the originating office of the cause of any non-delivery – “*inconnu, refusé, pas arrivé, parti* etc”.<sup>11</sup>

This, it was suggested, could be applied to letters as well. Short phrases in French such as “*inconnu*”, “*refusé*”, “*non réclamé*”, “*parti*” (or “*parti sans [laisser]. d’adresse*”), and “*décédé*”<sup>111</sup> (unknown, refused, unclaimed, gone away, and deceased) would represent the most frequent causes of non-delivery. These could be printed as labels on gummed, transparent paper or impressed by a handstamp (*imprimées comme étiquettes, sur papier gommé et transparent, ou apposées au moyen d’un timbre*). Not only French, but also the local language, could be used. Attached to the circular was a remarkable illustration of what the labels might look like. (Figure 1)

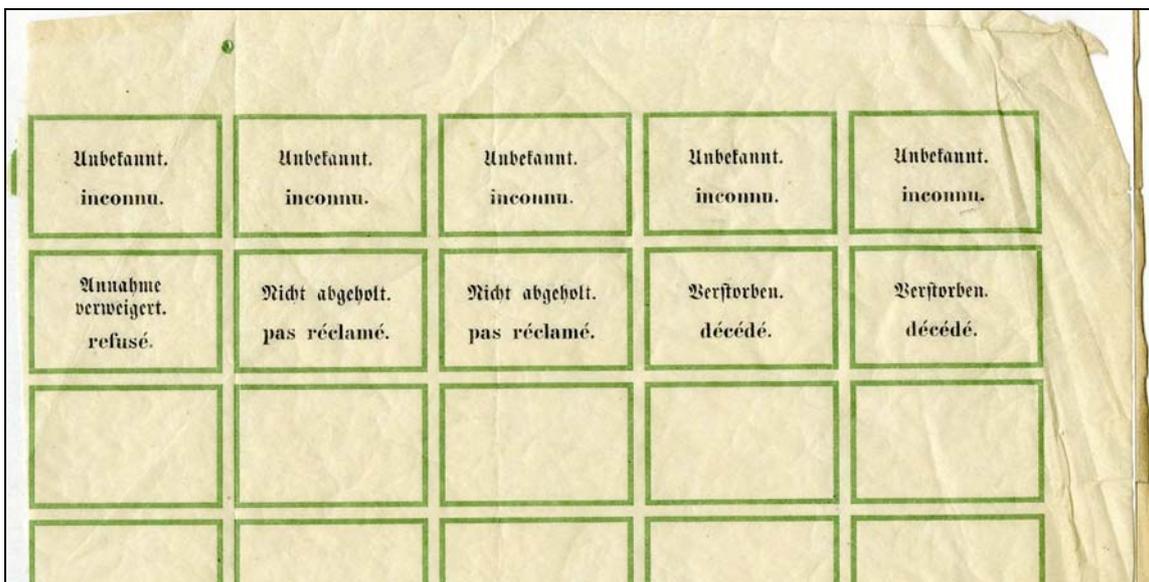


Figure 1. 1886. Suggested German template

Here, all on the first two rows of one sheet (10 x 8) were a series of different labels, all in the boxed format that was later to be introduced in most of the countries which used them. Even the texts and typefaces are virtually the same as those used later by Imperial Germany, and the size was identical. Printing was on thin, translucent, gummed paper with the outer rules, or frame lines, in light green and the text in black. The other six rows of the sheet were blank boxes merely indicative of what could be done. Translucent paper was used so that no part of the address would be obscured when the label was attached to the letter or card.

This proposal was then agreed by UPU member countries and implemented from 1 April 1887. However, not all countries used labels to indicate the reason for the return of items of mail. Some utilised handstamps instead. Those who used labels mostly followed the German template as provided in the 1886 circular.

It was on 28 March 1887 that the Austrian Ministry of Commerce announced that labels for non-delivery of mail were to be introduced<sup>iv</sup>. (Figure 2) The texts were:

Unbekannt. Inconnu.	Nicht angenommen. Refusé.	Abgereist. Parti.	Nicht behoben. Non réclamé.	Gestorben. Décédé.
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113

N<sup>o</sup> 29.  1887.

## Post- und Telegraphen-Verordnungsblatt

für das  
Verwaltungsgebiet des k. k. Handelsministeriums.

Redigirt im k. k. Handelsministerium. Wien, den 6. April.

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**Inhalt:** Ausgabe des Grundes der Unbestellbarkeit auf Briefpostsendungen des Weltpostvereinsverkehrs. — Verlegung des Postamtes Wösendorf nach Siebenhirten. — Anhang: Concurse. — Verlustanzeige. — Fundanzeigen. — Einladung zur XV. General-Versammlung des Vereines der k. k. Postmeister und Postexpeditoren für Niederösterreich. — Concurse-Widerrufe.

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### Angabe des Grundes der Unbestellbarkeit auf Briefpostsendungen des Weltpostvereinsverkehrs.

S. Minist. B. 4691.

Von nun an ist auf den unbestellbaren Briefpostsendungen, welche aus den dem Weltpostvereine angehörigen Ländern herrühren, vor der Rücksendung nach dem Aufgabelande der Grund der Unbestellbarkeit in deutscher und französischer Sprache auf der Rückseite der betreffenden Correspondenzen mittelst nachstehender Worte anzugeben:

„Unbekannt, inconnu“;	„Nicht angenommen, refusé“;	„Abgereist, parti“;
„Nicht behoben, non réclamé“;	„Gestorben, décédé“.	

Zur Erleichterung für die Postämter werden in der Folge Klebezettel aufgelegt, welche in Druck die obigen Worte enthalten und seitens der Abgabepostämter je nach dem Falle auf eine freie Stelle der Rückseite der unbestellbaren Correspondenz haltbar zu kleben sind.

Die Auswechslungspostämter haben darüber zu wachen, daß die vorerwähnten Angaben auf den ihnen zur Rückleitung in das Ausland zugehenden Correspondenzen angebracht sind, und haben in Unterlassungsfällen die nachträgliche Beisetzung der fehlenden Auskunft von den betreffenden Abgabepostämtern zu erwirken.

Wien, den 28. März 1887.

P. u. T. V. Bl. 29

Figure 2. April 1887. Official notification of the introduction of the first labels.

The gummed label was to be stuck on the back of the item. Some of the German text differs markedly from that of Germany or Switzerland: for example “Nicht behoben” instead of “Nicht abgeholt” (*Non réclamé*) and “Nicht angenommen” instead of “Annahme verweigert” (*Refusé*). The label was also quite different in appearance and did not follow the suggested German template. (Figure 3)



Figure 3. The first label types.

Its style – black type printed letterpress on a purple ground, landscape in format – is immediately reminiscent of Cash on Delivery (*Nachnahme*) labels which had been used in Germany for quite some time. Indeed, *internal* German return-to-sender labels could follow this format, as seen in the example from Dresden dated June 1887. (Figure 4) Austrian labels clearly derived their format and colour from this, probably deliberately different from the original imperial German model.

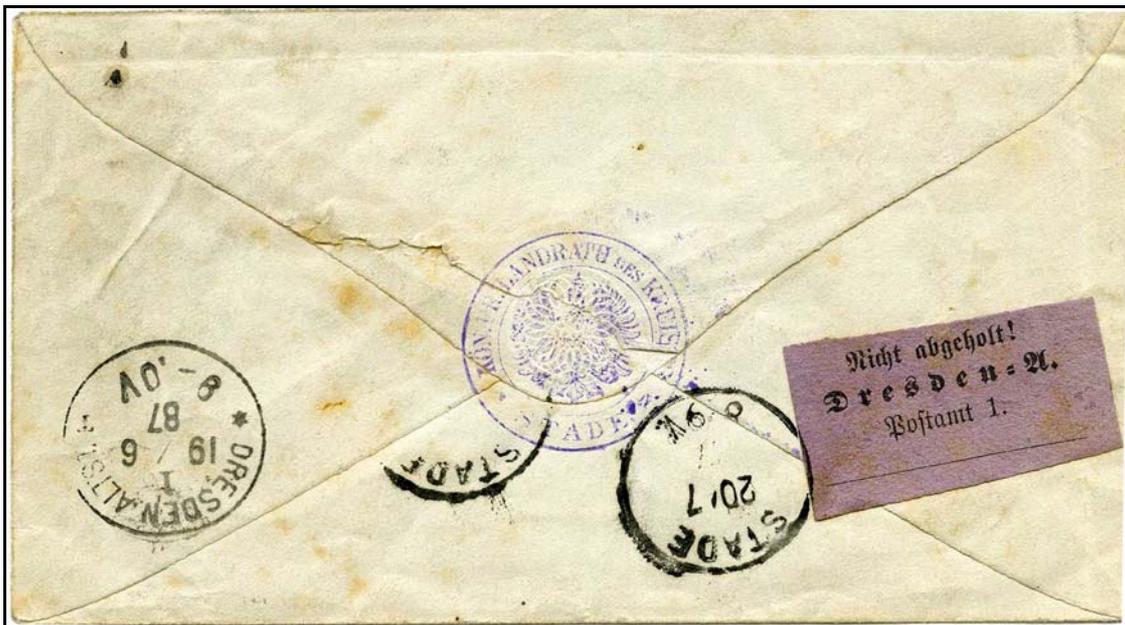


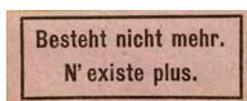
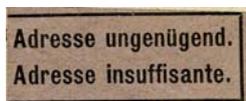
Figure 4. June 1887. German forerunner of the Austrian model, as used internally.

It is not clear who printed these labels, nor in what sheet format. However, subsequent Czech labels (which followed the Austrian ones used in Bohemia) were in the same size and overall appearance. They were printed in sheets of 100 (5 x 20). It would have seemed likely that this was also true of the original Austrian labels. However, a 1916 register clearly states that they were in sheets of 200.

A later directive (1895 PTVOB Nr 70 p.330) (Figure 4a) dated 18 July added two further labels

Adresse ungenügend./ Adresse insuffisante.

Besteht nicht mehr./ N'existe plus.



**Anhang.**

— (Hinausgabe neuer Kategorien von Klebezetteln.) Nebst den mit hierämtlicher Verordnung vom 28. März 1887, Z. 4.691 (Post- u. Tel. V. W. Nr. 29 ex 1887) eingeführten Klebezetteln mit Angabe des Grundes der Unbestellbarkeit auf Briefpostsendungen des Weltpostvereins-Verkehrs werden in Zukunft auch Klebezettel mit den Texten

Adresse ungenügend  
Adresse insuffisante

und

Besteht nicht mehr  
n'existe plus

zur Ausgabe gelangen.

Die neuen Klebezettel sind unter der Nummer 95 f, bzw. 95 g im Wege des Defonomates der vorgelegten Post- und Telegraphen-Direction zu beziehen und ist hiernach das allgemeine Druckorten-Verzeichnis zu ergänzen.

Die Klebezettel D. S. Nr. 95 f sind in dem Falle zu verwenden, wenn der Adressat wegen unvollständiger oder ungenauer Wohnungsangabe nicht ermittelt werden kann.

Von den Klebezetteln D. S. Nr. 95 g ist nur dann Gebrauch zu machen, wenn die Sendung an eine nicht mehr bestehende Firma, Handelsgeellschaft u. dgl. lautet.

(S. W. Z. 29.614, ddo. 5. Juli 1895.)

The first for an insufficient address had been introduced in Switzerland in 1892, and probably in Bavaria before that. The second is the equivalent of the German “*Firma erloschen/ maison n'existe plus*” – the firm no longer exists - which had been introduced in Imperial Germany at the outset but was not to be in Switzerland until 1899. Here it is also noted that the form numbers of the new labels are to be 95F and 95G clearly allocating 95A – E to the previous labels.

By 1905 there was yet another label – “*Nicht zulässig/ Non admis*” (not permitted). An example of the use of this label (Figure 5) indicates that being stamped on the picture side of a postcard was not allowed, and so the card was returned to Gibraltar.

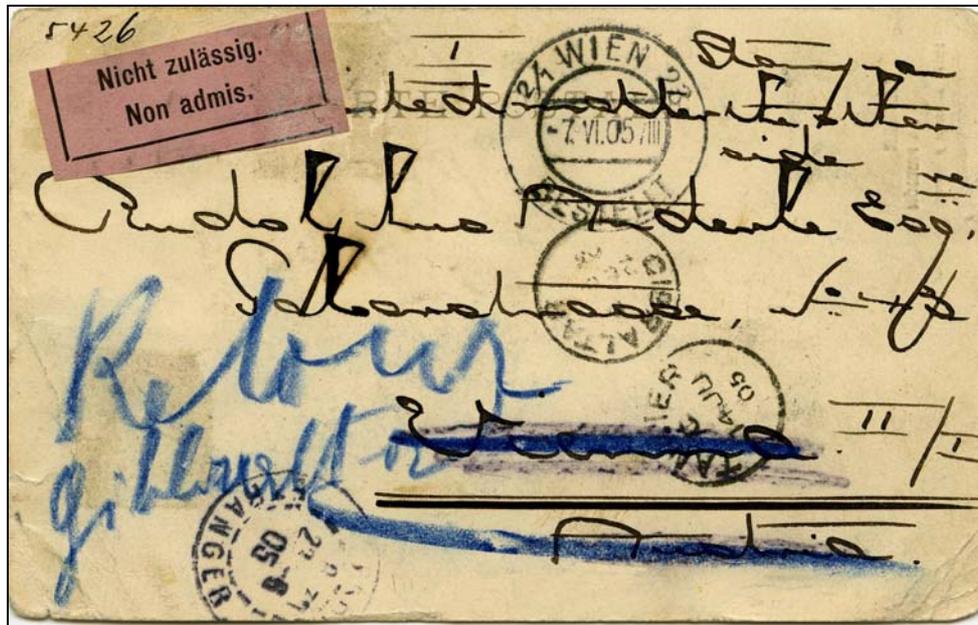


Figure 5. 1905. “Not admitted” on an illustrated card from Gibraltar

Another item shows that the label was also used on outgoing mail. It is from Gablonz an der Neisse in Bohemia, (now Jablonec) posted on 30 July 1914 addressed to France. On 28 July Austria had declared war on Serbia. Clearly anticipating war with France this apparently innocent commercial card was stopped while still in Bohemia and marked “Non admis” with the Austrian label. (Figure 6) Return-to-sender labels are often the witness to great historical events.



Figure 6. 30 July 1914. “Not permitted” on a card from Gablonz an der Neisse to France just before the outbreak of WWI

All labels were imperforate and shared a remarkable consistency over many years. There is virtually no change in size, setting or colour of the labels until after World War I. This would imply that the same printer was used throughout, and possibly even the same plates.

A later form register of 1916 reiterated the form numbers for these labels [I have added the French].

95A	Unbekannt [inconnu]	95F	Adresse ungenügend [adresse insuffisante]
95B	Nicht angenommen [refusé]	95G	Besteht nicht mehr [n'existe plus]
95C	Abgereist [parti]	95H	Nicht zulässig [non admis]
95D	Nicht behoben [non réclamé]	95I	Auf Reisen [en voyage]
95E	Gestorben [décédé]		

This is particularly interesting. Firstly, these form numbers were carried on to the later Czech labels, almost unchanged. Secondly, there is the addition of “Auf Reisen” which in French would be “en voyage”. In Germany the text was “Verreist”. As yet I have never seen an example of this label. The term was introduced after the 1906 UPU Congress in Rome to distinguish different forms of “Gone away/parti”.

Shades varied slightly but from the 1930s the paper is distinctly rose in hue. This can be regarded as a second series. Texts did not change. With the *Anschluss* in 1938 Austrian labels gradually ceased to be used and standard German labels were substituted.

## Austrian provinces

Austria comprised an agglomeration of kingdoms, principalities, archduchies, duchies and counties. Apart from present-day Austria these included Bohemia, Moravia, Galicia and Dalmatia incorporating a large number of different peoples. They surrounded the largely independent (and especially postally independent) Kingdom of Hungary, also an amalgam, to which it was joined under the “Dual Monarchy” (*k.u.k.* = *kaiserlich und königlich*) of Emperor Franz Josef. These territories also used standard Austrian labels without any changes - all in German, no matter the predominant local language. It is a considerable challenge to find them used from some of the more outlying areas. Labels are known used from Przemysl (Galicia), Laibach (Ljubljana – then Carniola, Krain in German, now Slovenia), Cattaro (Kotor in Dalmatia) and all over Bohemia. (Figures 7, 8, 9 and 10) With the changes in political boundaries which followed, these all form forerunners to the postal history of the succeeding countries.



Figure 7. 1902. “Deceased” from Przemysl in Galicia.



Figure 8. 1906. “Refused” from Ljubljana (Laibach).



Figure 9. 1912. “Unclaimed” from Cattaro (Kotor) in Dalmatia.



Figure 10. 1914. “Gone Away” from Weipert in Bohemia.



Figure 11. 1907. “Deceased” from Srebrenica in Bosnia on foreign mail.

Until recently there was one apparent exception to the use of Austrian labels. Since 1878 Austrian and Hungarian troops had occupied Bosnia & Herzegovina. Postal services there were run jointly by the Austrian and Hungarian military and it appeared that return-to-sender labels were not used, neither Austrian nor Hungarian versions, nor any special Bosnian ones.<sup>v</sup> Generally, return-to-sender labels were not used by army or field post offices anywhere in the world.

However, I recently found one example used of a standard Austrian label returning a card abroad from Srebrenica. (Figure 11) Then, thanks to Gerrit Matthijssen several more examples can be recorded, seven in all, including types 95A-E, ranging in date from the 1890s to 1918. Astonishingly, most are used on internal mail within Bosnia. Illustrated (courtesy of Gerrit) is one from Zenica to Varcar Vakuf (near Jajce) dating from 1899. (Figure 11a)



Figure 11a. 1899. “Gone Away” from Varcar Vakuf, used internally within Bosnia.

Gerrit also provided some documentation. In regard to the additional labels announced in 1895 he provided an instruction from the War Ministry in Vienna to the Director of Post and Telegraphs in Sarajevo stating that these new labels were to be brought into use in the Military Post Offices in Bosnia.<sup>vi</sup> This would imply that the previous labels were already in use there. It may be relevant that Bosnia joined the UPU in 1892 when regulations such as these would come into force.

Then there is a 1906 Austrian regulation detailing how undeliverable items are to be dealt with.<sup>vii</sup> Here it states that items sent from internal provinces [of Austria], Hungary and the occupation areas [Bosnia & Herzegovina] should have the reason for return written in manuscript. Those from abroad should use labels Nos. 95 a-g. This is clearly contradicted in practice in Bosnia but no other Bosnian instruction has yet been found.

## Austrian Post Offices Abroad

Austria had no overseas colonies, but it did have “Post Offices Abroad” in the Ottoman Empire. Standard Austrian labels were used here too, in German and French only, not the local language. An example of this can be seen in Figure 12 (right). The Austrian postcard was sent from Reichenberg (Liberec in Bohemia) to Jerusalem in Palestine in April 1893. There it was not claimed at the Austrian post office and so attracted a “Nicht behoben. / Non réclamé.” label in May,

and returned eventually to Reichenberg in July. The Jerusalem office closed in 1914, and examples of labels used are extremely rare. One other example of the *Nicht behoben* label is reported from 1904, also from Jerusalem, and one of the *Unbekannt* type from Beirut from 1906.<sup>viii</sup> Another *Nicht behoben* label is known from Beirut from 1900.

Two other offices can now be reported: Constantinople and Trebizond (the easternmost office on the Black Sea). Both attracted a “Nicht behoben. / Non réclamé.” label, apparently the most common from those offices. That returned from Constantinople (Figure 13) is dated May 1899; the example from Trebizond (Trapezunt – Figure 14) dates from November 1906.



Figure 13. 1899. “Unclaimed” from the Austrian Post Office in Constantinople.



Figure 14. 1906. “Unclaimed” from the Austrian Post Office in Trebizond.

Clearly all offices in existence within the period from 1887 until they closed may have used the labels, but whether they have survived is a very different question.

## Anschluß

In March 1938 German troops marched into Austria and that country officially ceased to exist, being absorbed into the Reich. This loss of identity was not immediately recognised by most people abroad and mail continued to be addressed as before but one obvious indication of the new reality was the introduction of current, standard German labels in place of the distinctive rose-purple versions used previously.

The current standard German labels differed markedly from their Austrian counterparts. Firstly, and obviously, they were of the original template – green boxed rules on white paper, with black Gothic text. The version now in use was perforated with no full stops at the end of the texts. However, the texts also differed in many cases from the Austrian. (Figures 15 & 16)



Figure 15. 1939. “Unknown” German label used after the *Anschluß*.



Figure 16. 1942. “Insufficient Address” German label.

One extra label had also been introduced, probably in 1906 differentiating two types of “gone away”. The original “Parti” label had been “*Abgereist ohne Angabe der Adresse/ parti, sans laisser d’adresse*” – “gone away without leaving an address”. This remained in use, but with the additional version “*Verreist/ en voyage*” – “travelling” but without the “*Nicht zulässig/ Non admis*” version. Thus, those labels brought into use in 1938 after the *Anschluß* were:

Unbekannt/ inconnu

Annahme verweigert/ refusé

Nicht abgeholt/ non réclamé

Abgereist ohne Angabe der Adresse/ parti, sans  
laisser d’adresse

Verstorben/ décédé

Firma erloschen/ maison n’existe plus

Unzureichende Adresse./ insuffisance d’adresse

Verreist/ en voyage



The use of these German labels continued, clearly, until 1945 and they are known still being used up without alteration years afterwards. (Figure 17)

Figure 17. 1950. "Travelling" German label being used up after WWII.

### Post World War II

Prior to 1938 all Austrian labels had been imperforate. After the war there was a shortage of everything and it took some time for the German Reich labels to be used up. When distinctive labels were reintroduced by 1950 they were initially a paler rose in colour with a different black sans typeface. (Figures 18 & 19) Texts generally remained the same as before though for no apparent reason "Adresse ungenügend" became "Anschrift ungenügend". (Figure 20)

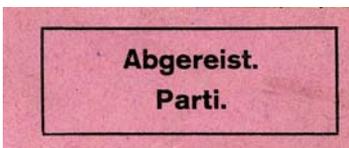


Figure 18. Post World War II label with sans text.



Figure 19. 1952. "Refused" label with sans text.

These were still imperforate, but soon afterwards perforated versions also appeared. Both these types were to last through to the early 1960s.



Figure 20. 1961. "Anschrift ungenügend" change of text, perforated.

### Multi-purpose labels

A new type of multi-purpose label gradually replaced all the different varieties. The earliest I have seen comes from Austria with a print date of June 1961. (Figure 21) Some nine different reasons for return were listed in German and French with a box between to be crossed against the particular reason. The label came in two parts, perforated between. The top simply bore the word "Retour" (later "Zurück - Retour") and the printing details. This section was normally stuck on the front of the mail item; the list was pasted on the back.

Reasons initially listed were:

- Nicht angenommen – Refusé
- Nicht behoben – Non réclamé
- Abgereist – Parti
- Auf Reisen – en voyage
- Besteht nicht mehr – N'existe plus
- Unbekannt – Inconnu
- Gestorben – Décédé
- Anschrift ungenügend – adresse insuffisante
- Nicht zulässig – Non admis

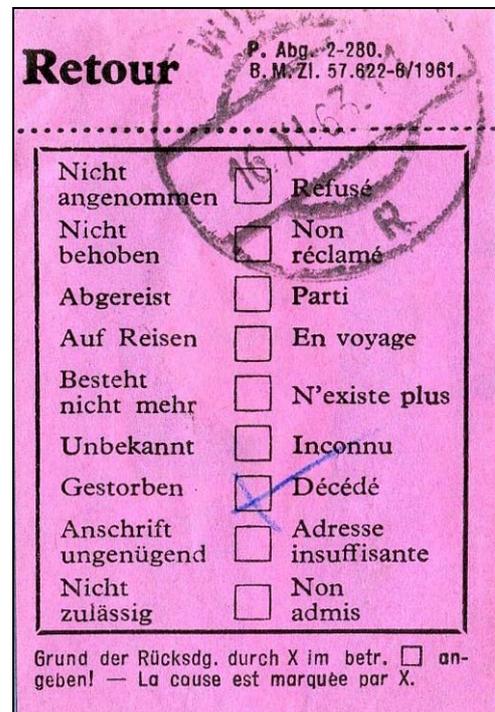


Figure 21. 1961 Multipurpose label

Der Grund der Rücksendung ist angekreuzt  
La cause est marquée par X

Nicht angenommen	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refusé
Vom Empfänger zurückgegeben	<input type="checkbox"/>	Retourné par le destinataire
Nicht behooben	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non réclamé
Abgereist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parti
Verzogen	<input type="checkbox"/>	Déménagé
Besteht nicht mehr	<input type="checkbox"/>	N'existe plus
Unbekannt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Inconnu
Gestorben	<input type="checkbox"/>	Décédé
Anschrift ungenügend	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Adresse insuffisante
Nicht zulässig	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non admis

P. Abg. 2-280. GZ 44 235/III-41/80. - L61 46360

Figure 22. 1980. New version of multipurpose label

This list was to change in form and substance over the years. (Figure 22) Very gradually, because it was obviously so useful, similar versions came to replace individual labels in all the other countries and such multi-purpose labels were even to be used in many countries which had never introduced individual labels in the past.

<sup>i</sup> Muir, Douglas N. "Return to Sender! The Retour Etiquettes of Central Europe up to World War II" *London Philatelist*, Vol. 120 October 2011, pp302-24, and "World War II and after" Vol. 121 April 2012, pp86-105

<sup>ii</sup> Bureau international de L'Union postale universelle *Circulaires* No. 378/22, 20 January 1886

<sup>iii</sup> *ibid*

<sup>iv</sup> Post- und Telegraphen-Verordnungsblatt für das Verwaltungsgebiet des k. k. Handelsministeriums No 29 1887 p. 113

<sup>v</sup> See (for prior negative evidence) Sekelj, Berislav *Handbook and Catalogue – Postal History Bosnia & Herzegovina 1878-1918*, 2005

<sup>vi</sup> 21 July 1895.

<sup>vii</sup> Quoted in: Bartl, Johann *Handbuch für den ausübenden Postdienst in Österreich* Vienna, 1906. The text in German reads "bei Sendungen aus dem internen Verkehrsgebiete, Ungarn und dem Okkupationsgebiete handschriftlich und bei jenen aus dem Ausland mittels Klebezettel (D.-S. Nr. 95 a-g)"

<sup>viii</sup> Stuchell, Robert W. "An Instructional Label from the Austrian Post in Beyrouth" *Opal* No. 203, February 2002, pp 48-9; Smith, David K. "An Instructional Marking from the Austrian Post Office in Jerusalem, 1904" *Opal* No 199, March 2000, p 8; Vandervelde, Denis "Austrian Postal Services: A problem of interpreting covers, solved" *Opal* No. 201, January 2001, p4

## BEFORE LEMBERG

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MAIL SYSTEM IN CENTRAL EUROPE AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE POSTAL SERVICE IN LWOW (LVIV)<sup>1</sup>

by Ingerit Kuzych

#### Early European Mails

Life without the mails seems almost inconceivable to us today, but postal services took a long time to evolve. In ancient times, ties between people's and countries were kept up by couriers, who would transmit messages either verbally or in written form. In the Middle Ages, royalty, the ecclesiastic hierarchy, larger monastic orders, and lay orders of knights all set up their own messenger services. In the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries universities established a separate communication network with punctual, dependable, and speedy couriers operating between the Italian universities in Bologna, Salerno, and Naples, and the French universities of Toulouse and the Sorbonne.

With the growth of towns and cities, urban courier services were set up, especially in the larger cities of Italy and Germany. The couriers, who were run by the town councils, delivered correspondences for the councils and for city inhabitants and received payments according to a fixed price.

The word "post" comes from the Italian "posta" and is a shortened form of "statio posita," which means a place for the changing of horses. The first such specially organized equestrian postal stations were set up in Germany which, for a fixed price, would not only carry correspondence, but also occasionally passengers.

Sometimes, with the concurrence of town magistrates and merchants, a separate post was set up through a tradesman's syndicate (guild), as, for example, the butcher's guild in Germany. This so-called Metzger Post began in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and continued until 1637, when the Thurn and Taxis monopoly took over (see below). The Metzger Post functioned as follows. As butchers journeyed to farms, livestock fairs, and markets throughout Europe (usually traveling on horseback), they would carry the letters of friends and loved ones. Upon arrival at a town, they used a horn to announce the arrival of the mail and thus created a commonly recognized emblem for postal services.

#### Getting Organized in the Habsburg Dominions

A system of posts was established in northern Italy by the family of Thurn and Taxis (Torre e Tassis), from the district of Bergamo, in the mid-15th century. In 1490, the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (r. 1486-1519) (*Fig 1, right*) took things a step further and set up the first extended European postal linkages. Records survive of three things that occurred in that pivotal year, making it an appropriate starting point for European postal services:

- a communication dated 11 July 1490 from Emperor Maximilian to the town of Speyer ordering it to found both a mounted and a foot post for the Imperial Service;
- an entry in the *Raitbuch* of the Tirol Exchequer Chamber of 11 December 1490 concerning the payment of 300 Rheinischen guilden to a Johannetn Daxen, Chief Postmaster; and
- an entry in the *Memminger Chronik* of 1490 that states that in that year the postal service came into existence.



In 1990, the Austrian postal service celebrated the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European postal connections by issuing a 5-schilling multicolored stamp showing an engraving entitled "The Courier" by Albrecht Dürer. It was part of

<sup>1</sup> Although the Lwow spelling is predominant in this article, it does not imply any less respect for the other names applied to the city: Lemberg, Lviv, Lvov, or Leopoldis. Since Lwow was the city's appellation during the roughly three centuries discussed in this article, that designation was deemed the most appropriate to use.

a joint issue with the three German entities of that time: the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), the Democratic Republic of Germany (East Germany), and Berlin, as well as with Belgium (*Fig 2*). All these governments recognized 1490 as the foundational year for their postal systems.



*Fig 2.* A 1990 maximum card from Germany illustrates the postal route linking Mechelen (just north of Brussels) with Innsbruck. The card bears two of the five joint-issue stamps (left: West Germany; right: Berlin) commemorating the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of European Postal Relationships with a special cancellation, and illustrates two of the cities along the route, Speyer and Memmingen. The same stamp design – based on an engraving by Albrecht Dürer entitled “The Courier” – was used by all five of the collaborating European postal agencies.



In 1491 the emperor named Franz von Taxis (*Fig 3, left*) as Postmaster and tasked him and his brother John Baptist to set up posts connecting the Imperial Dominions in Lombardy with those in Austria. In 1500, Franz was named Hauptpostmeister (Chief Postmaster) by Philip I, Duke of Burgundy and son of Maximilian. In 1504, Philip concluded an agreement with Franz to provide a postal connection with his court in the Netherlands and those of Maximilian in Austria and Germany, and to link these with the courts of France and Spain. In 1512, Maximilian raised the family of Thurn and Taxis to the ranks of the imperial nobility.

In setting up these arrangements, Taxis created a network linking Habsburg possessions throughout Europe: in the Holy Roman Empire (today Germany, Austria, Italy), Hungary, the Low Countries (now the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg), and Spain (*see Figs 4 & 5 on next page*). Initially it was the royal families and nobility that took advantage of the postal system, which often involved the transport of valuable jewels and treasures. (Bandits were a persistent threat.) Nevertheless, the Thurn and Taxis standards were very high and the mail generally went through safely and quickly.

The mail delivery men were known as coursers, a name given to professional couriers dating back to Roman times. The horse relay system that was created not only shortened the transit time for mail but made its arrival predictable. Taxis coursers – wearing the imperial yellow and black livery – were able to travel from Brussels

to Paris in 44 hours in the summer and in 54 hours during the winter<sup>2</sup>. Travel time for a letter between Innsbruck and Brussels was 5½ days (6½ days in winter). Other delivery times in 1505 were: Brussels-Blois 2½ days (winter 3 days), Brussels-Lyon 4 days (winter 5 days), Brussels-Toledo 12 days (winter 14 days), Brussels-Granada 15 days (winter 18 days).

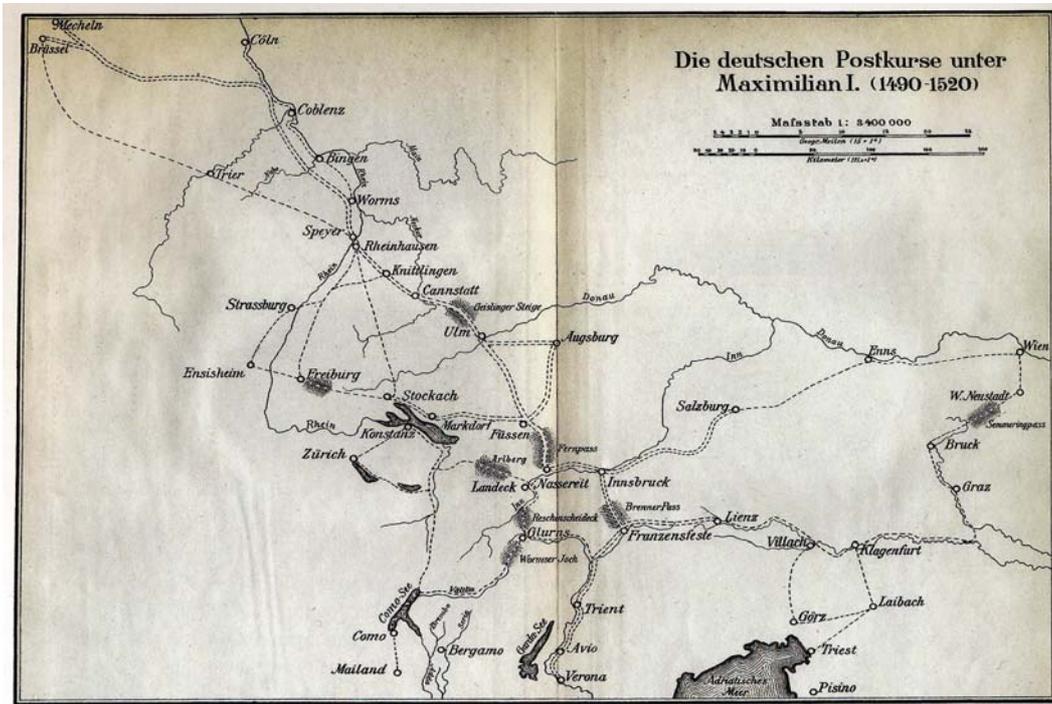


Fig 4. A more detailed map of the post routes established under Emperor Maximilian I between 1490 and 1520 shows the main axis of delivery between Brussels and Innsbruck connecting the emperor’s two main centres of power in Burgundy and Tyrol.

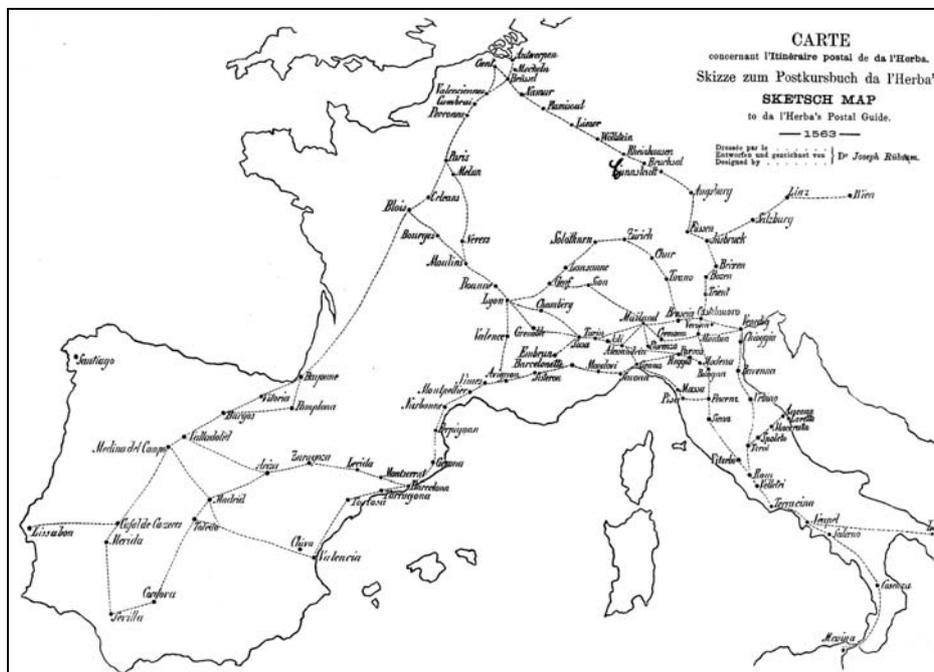


Fig 5. Map illustrating the extent of the postal routes developed by the Thurn and Taxis family by 1563.

<sup>2</sup> The imperial Habsburg colors of yellow and black were incorporated into the uniforms that the coursers wore: a yellow jacket with black lapels. The distinctive colors not only aided in identifying the couriers, but also lent them an air of imperial prestige. Yellow remains the color of the Austrian Post (Österreichische Post), the German Post (Deutsche Post), and the Italian Post (Poste Italiane).

A decade later (1516) saw a new agreement negotiated with delivery times reduced and some of the cities in the network changed. Brussels to Paris now took 36 hours (winter 40 hours), while the Brussels-Innsbruck route became a 5-day journey (winter 6 days). The Brussels-Toledo and Brussels-Granada routes were dropped in favour of a Brussels-Burgos connection of 7 days (winter 8 days). Two new Italian cities were added: a Brussels-Rome link of 10½ days (winter 12 days) and Brussels-Naples route that required 14-days in winter.

Taxis hired many relatives to operate his vast network. Over time, more and more mails were accepted from anyone who could pay the fees. In essence, what the family accomplished was to lay the foundation for the development of an international postal system (*Fig 5, above*). In 1615, Emperor Mathias rewarded the services of the family by making the position of imperial postmaster general a hereditary right in the male line of succession.

At its peak in the 17th and 18th centuries, Thurn and Taxis had upwards of 20,000 employees and monopolized postal transport from the Baltic Sea southwards to the Straits of Gibraltar (*Fig 6*). While the family competed with (and frequently out competed) other courier services, it was not averse to occasionally working in conjunction with other delivery tradesmen. With the rise of national mails in Europe in the second half of the 19th century, the Thurn and Taxis monopoly was steadily reduced and the family sold its postal rights in 1867.



*Fig 6. A German “Postage Stamp Day” 80-pfennig stamp from 1984 shows a 17<sup>th</sup> century Posthaus in Augsburg set up by the Taxis postal service. Postal riders approach the postal station, one blowing a horn.*



*Fig 7. Austrian souvenir sheet released in 2008 as a joint issue with the Czech Republic shows a mail coach – carrying both posts and passengers – that travelled between Vienna and Prague in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.*



*Fig 8*



*Fig 9*



*Fig 10*

*Fig 10. A 6 schilling + 3 schilling Austrian “Postage Stamp Day” surcharged stamp from 1986 depicting a 16<sup>th</sup> century postal messenger.*

*Fig 8. A 3.50 schilling + 80 groschen Austrian “Postage Stamp Day” surcharged stamp from 1967 depicting a 15<sup>th</sup> century postal messenger.*

*Fig 9. A 3 schilling + 70 groschen Austrian “Postage Stamp Day” surcharged stamp from 1966 depicting a postal messenger in 1500.*

In addition to mounted couriers, Thurn and Taxis employed the first horse-drawn mail coaches in Europe since Roman times. They began using this new conveyance in about 1650 from the town of Kocs (in present-day northern Hungary) and thus gave rise to the term “coach”. With the expansion of mail coach use in the 17th and 18th centuries, passengers also began to be carried in addition to the mails (*Fig 7*). With the passing of time, loud blasts of the post horn became more familiar sounds and would signal passage through a city, town, or village, or the approach of a rider or coach at a postal station. Post horn soundings also served another purpose in allowing locals to warn a courier or postillion of bad roads or dangerous passages. The post horn remains today a symbol for a number of European postal administrations.

While the above text has focused on the more celebrated mounted postal delivery system, the more mundane foot post continued to be used extensively from the 15th into the 18th century for less urgent and for private delivery of mails. Postal deliverymen would venture forth on their rounds bearing a leather pouch with a large flap that protected the letters, and wearing a hat, cloak, or cape to fend off the elements. Frequently they went lightly armed with a sword and/or a spear. The latter could serve not only as a weapon should the messenger be attacked, but also as a walking staff. Austria Post has presented postal foot couriers a number of times on its stamps (*Figs 8 to 10, above*).

### **Early Post in Poland**

The beginnings of a regular postal service in Eastern Central Europe began in Poland and later in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the late 16th-early 17th centuries. At this time many expatriates from Italy lived in Polish cities, including Krakow, Warsaw, and Lwow (Lemberg, Lviv). Among the Italians were merchants, architects, builders, and artists.<sup>3</sup>

The first postal service in Poland came about as the result of a royal death. Dowager queen Bona Sforza, the Italian-born mother of Polish King Zygmunt II August (r.1548-1572; *Figs 12 and 13*), died in 1557 leaving behind a large estate in Italy. The king deemed it necessary that a reliable communication system be set up with the administrators of the estate. To that end, on 18 October 1558 he granted to Prospero Provana, an Italian nobleman at the Polish court, the first official Polish postal privileges. These included the right and duty to carry both the royal mail and the royal persons between Krakow and Venice. While the king owned the postal service and was responsible for funding it (the couriers and horses), it was up to Provana to organize it. The income from the service was deposited in the royal treasury; Provana's annual salary was 300 zlotys.

Instead of using already established postal roadways in Austria, Provana decided to set up his own shorter postal route – with stations for change of horses – from Krakow, through Vienna and Graz, to Venice. It is from 1558 that the Polish postal service may be dated; this initial phase of the service lasted for four years (*Figs 11 and 13*).



*Fig 11. Five of the six stamps composing a 1958 stamp set honouring the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Polish Post (the 6<sup>th</sup> is on the FDC of Fig 16). The 40-groszy stamp shows the effigy of Prospero Provana on his monument in the Dominican Church in Krakow. The remainder of the stamps present various forms of postal transport through the ages.*

The postal service encountered difficulties on the Austrian part of the route resulting in unreliable service. In July of 1562 the king, dissatisfied with Provana's performance and enticed by Christopher Taxis' promise of free delivery of royal correspondence, nominated him director of the post. The Taxis postal route was divided into an Italian and a Lithuanian part. The central node was in Krakow from where the mail was transported either to Venice or to Vilnius.

Under the terms of the contract, Taxis assumed the obligation to transmit the letters of the king and those of the members of his court without cost. In return, he received the right to accept private letters and charge for their carriage by his postal service. The king also agreed to provide 1,500 thalers per year towards the management and upkeep of the postal service. The rate was 6 groszy for letters up to 1 loth in weight (3 groszy up to ½ loth). The service extended to Venice (at this time Venice was a powerful maritime republic), Rome (the capital of the Papal States), and Naples (the capital of a southern Italian kingdom), and other states. A letter from Krakow to Venice required about 10 days in transit.

<sup>3</sup> Although Polish was the dominant language in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Latin was commonly used in foreign relations and was a popular second language among the nobility during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Its use made it easier for Italians to function in the Polish milieu.

Fig 12 (right). A 1.10 zloty Polish stamp from 1997 depicting King Zygmunt II August.



Fig 13. A 450<sup>th</sup> Anniversary souvenir sheet from 2008 depicts three personages crucial to the founding of the Polish Post: King Zygmunt II August, Prospero Provana, and Sebastian Monteluppi. The background depicts 16<sup>th</sup> century views of the two

cities making up the endpoints of the first postal route: Krakow in the upper portion and Venice below.

Under the Thurn and Taxis family a remarkably efficient and well run postal system was set up. However, after some time, intra-familial squabbles caused the service to deteriorate and the free transfer of royal mail became a fiction. Zygmunt August cancelled the Taxis contract and appointed another Italian, Peter Maffon, as the new director of the Polish royal post. The contract was for five years.

Maffon's post was not successful either and Sebastian Monteluppi, another polonized Italian nobleman, became the director of posts in 1569 (Fig 13). A new privilege, dated 22 June 1569, specified how the postal service was to function. Monteluppi was to maintain enough horses to freely transport the correspondences of the king, as well as those of royal and foreign envoys, from Krakow to Venice and back. The post was to be royal property and the couriers were to wear the royal insignia. Couriers were to depart from Krakow to Venice on a regular schedule so that the king could receive weekly dispatches. Postal expenses, aside from the director's yearly salary of 1,300 thalers, were to be paid by income from private sendings and letters. The post could also use the royal "podwod" (horses and wagons provided by the local population); see Figs 14 and 15.



Fig 14. An enlargement of one of the miniature sheetlet of six 2.50 zloty stamps issued on 25 October 1958 for a special Warsaw exhibition on the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Polish Post. Depicted is a heavily laden post wagon drawn by four horses.



Fig 15 is a first day cover (12 December 1958) issued on the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Polish Post. It features a beautifully engraved high-value 50-zloty silk souvenir sheet showing the same scene as Fig. 14.

Monteluppi's postal service functioned much more efficiently than Maffon's had. Since Monteluppi came from one of the wealthiest families in Krakow, he was not burdened by the financial problems of his predecessor. As a successful merchant and a banker, he had maintained financial and business contacts through his own courier system. Often other merchants had used his "post".

In organizing the royal postal service, he was able to draw on his former experience. He performed his new duties efficiently, maintaining the horses and couriers along the postal routes. Letters and other correspondence were carried with regularity, but packages frequently arrived late or damaged. The fault was often not that of the couriers, but rather was caused by the primitive forms of transportation and by the poor condition of the roads.



The original privilege stipulated that the postal service would be established for five years. When the king died in 1572, Monteluppi continued to carry out postal duties at his own expense to the end of the term. The service suffered, however, since he was probably limited to foot couriers (*Fig 16*) having lost access to the expensive horse transport previously funded by the king. Then, for almost a decade, there was a hiatus in the development of the posts.

*Fig 16 (left). A first day cover (14 November 1958) honouring the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of the Polish Post. The cachet shows a foot courier; the stamp shows a mounted delivery man blowing a post horn.*

King Stefan Batory (r.1576-1586) restored a postal service in Poland in 1583 in conjunction with his preparations for war with Ottoman Turkey. The military campaign required frequent exchanges of mail with Rome, so the king once again granted the royal franchise to the Monteluppi family, but this time to both Sebastian Monteluppi and his nephew Valerius.

The conditions were somewhat different from the previous agreement. The two men were enjoined to set up a service from Krakow to Venice that would enable journeys every 15 days (24 trips per year), and the rate for letters was reduced from 6 to 4 groszy regardless of weight or distance. For this service the two men were rewarded with 1,000 zlotys per annum.

Working from Krakow over the course of the next several decades, the Monteluppi family undertook the organization of the posts in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The royal correspondence travelled by two chief routes: south to Venice and Rome and west via Vienna to Prague, then the seat of the Holy Roman Emperor. Prague was a hub for various communication routes and was the link for mails sent onward through the Taxis postal network. A large portion of the southern Italian mail consisted of correspondence of the papal nuncio (ambassador) and the Polish king. Letters were also sent by nobles, bishops, and Krakow merchants importing Italian goods. Additionally, the Monteluppis set up postal routes that encompassed the chief trade centres of Gdansk, Lvov, Poznan, Warsaw, and Vilnius.

To meet postal expenses, letter fees were raised in the 17th century; a ½ loth letter to Italy now cost 10 groszy to send (20 groszy for 1 loth). Letters were sent via professional couriers who spent 20 days travelling, rested for six days, and then travelled on again. Mails arriving in Krakow from Vienna – not always regularly – would be taken the same day by courier to Warsaw, the new capital of Poland since 1596.

The Polish Sejm, the supreme legislative authority in Poland-Lithuania, issued a constitution in 1620 authorising Zygmunt III (r.1587-1632) to abolish the system of privately paid couriers and establish a postal service that would make it possible for the general populace to send letters and communications once a week without great expense. The king for unknown reasons did not put this constitution into effect.

It was left to Wladislaw IV (r.1632-1648) to reorganize the postal system. In 1647, the king issued an ordinance that became the basis for the Polish post for the next century and a half. This statute abolished the duty of "podwojny" (the provision of horses and wagons for royal service by the local populace) and instead imposed a

tax on each town of over 4,000 inhabitants for the maintenance of its postal service, the so-called “quarter money” (Fig 17).



Fig 17. A special silk 20-zloty souvenir sheet from 2008 honouring the 450<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Polish Post. It depicts a post rider about to blow his horn. This first day cover is cancelled 19 December 2008.

The importance of this reform was that the post became a public institution maintained by a special tax for the benefit of society in general. Previously the post had been a private enterprise financed by the royal treasury. The statute, however, did not bring the expected results because of the difficult political, socio-economic, and military situation faced by Poland at that time.

Later rulers confirmed and extended the postal arrangements begun under Wladislaw IV. King August II (r.1697-1706, 1709-1733) undertook great efforts to make the Polish mail system one of the best on the continent, particularly between Warsaw and roads leading west to his native Saxony. To that end he hired a special road commissioner who undertook the improvement and construction of postal roads and determined the exact distances between postal stopping points. Post road signs and stone posts were placed at regular distances along the Warsaw-Saxony routes. Postal routes were also opened leading east to the Russian Empire. Major cities linked to Warsaw were Riga, St. Petersburg, Smolensk, Moscow, Minsk, and Kyiv.

Some further postal developments occurred during the reign of August III (r.1734-1763), despite the fact that this monarch spent very little time in Poland. A number of new postal routes were established, wax seals were first introduced to secure postal dispatches, and postal fees became dependent on weight and distance. The fee for a one loth letter sent 12 miles was 6 groszy, over 12 miles 12 groszy. The correspondence of senators, clergy, and the military was postage free, but censorship was set up for mails of certain influential personages suspected of political plotting.

The most important steps towards establishing reliable postal communications were made under Poland's last monarch, King Stanislaw II August (r.1764-1795). Postal stations were set up along the more important postal routes. In the capital of Warsaw, a court post office was established. Other improvements included fixed rates for letters, seals to indicate where letters were sent from, mail boxes, decrees insuring the privacy of correspondence, the repair and maintenance of roads, the introduction of relay transportation for mails, and regulations specifying the duties of postmasters and letter carriers.

These notable developments in the mail service were commented upon in some accounts of foreigners travelling in Poland and were inherited by the Austrian Habsburgs when they acquired Lwow and all of Galicia in the First Partition of Poland in 1772.

### **Starting up the Particular Post in Lwow (Lviv, Lemberg)**

The posts described above were all of a public type. They served the interests of the country – connecting it with other states abroad – and also linked important strategic, administrative, and economic locales within the country itself. Public posts were maintained by the state.

In contrast, particular posts served the interests of certain circles – specific cities, districts, or counties. Such posts were self-governing authorities, and could be brought to life only by a decree of central governmental authorities. Particular posts had the same privileges as public ones. Interference with their privileges was forbidden and was prosecuted by municipal or city courts. The establishment of particular posts was provided for in the constitution of 1620.

It is Dominico Monteluppi who is credited with establishing a reliable particular post in Krakow in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, and it is he who also organized the first postal center in Lwow in 1625 (Fig 18). This service was supposed to ensure the functioning of postal routes from Lwow to Warsaw, Lublin, Gdansk, Krakow, and somewhat later, to Kamianets-Podilsk. He set up this center in a Lwow building that survives to the present day at No. 2 Rynok (Market) Square (Fig 19).

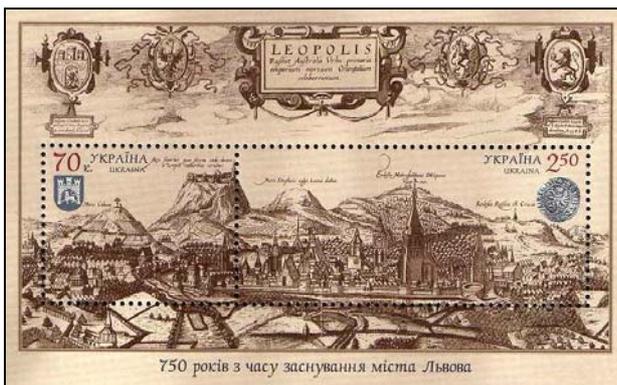


Fig 18. A souvenir sheet issued by Ukraine Post in 2006 for the 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding of Lviv. Based on a copper-plate engraving made in 1618, it is the earliest known view of the city and dates to just before the establishment of the Lwow postal service in the 1620s.

Fig 19. Cover sent via air mail from Lviv to the US on 20 May 2008 depicts the Bandinelli Palace both on its cachet and the special blue “Post on the Market Square – Lviv 6” cancellation applied at the Palace. The structure officially became the Lviv Postal Museum seven months later.



While postal traffic between Krakow and Lwow was fairly significant, Monteluppi’s Lwow post service was rather rudimentary. It was up to another Italian merchant, Roberto Bandinelli, to carry out improvements and further organization. Roberto had settled in and become a citizen of Lwow around 1622. He was the grandson

of the renowned sculptor Bartolommeo (Baccio) Bandinelli, whose masterpieces include the well-known statue of Hercules and Cacus in the Piazza della Signoria in Florence.

In a decree of 4 March 1629, Polish King Zygmunt III accepted Roberto Bandinelli into the royal retinue and at the same time granted him the privilege of conducting regular royal mails to Italy, to other European cities, and even overseas. Bandinelli also acquired the title of “Royal Postmaster.” As such he managed postal affairs from the city that was his particular postal seat (Lwow), while in other cities he set up representatives, the so-called “correspondents.”

At that time the voivode (provincial administrator, similar to a governor) Stanislaw Lubomirski and the Polish crown hetman (highest-ranking military officer) Stanislaw Koniecpolski issued a series of “Universals” in which they accepted Roberto Bandinelli into their service and protection. These decrees further announced the significance of the new postal service to both the citizenry and the state, that no interference would be tolerated for this important service, and that any necessary aid should be provided to Roberto Bandinelli.

In consultation with the magistrates of Lwow, Roberto Bandinelli proposed to the town council an organizational plan for the post, the so-called *Ordinatio Posthal*. This document survives to this day in the city’s historical archives. The text includes the statement that: “The postal ministry from Lwow to Lublin, to Warsaw, to Torun, Gdansk, and also other countries and ... from those cities back, is granted to the eminent Roberto Bandinelli.” On the 12th of May 1629, the text of the *Ordinatio* was entered into the city records. The postal service in Ukraine traces its beginning to 1629 and Bandinelli’s organizational efforts.

Mail from the city left once a week on Saturdays; it was sent in two directions. The first route went northwest to the Baltic Sea through Zamosc (Zamostia), Lublin, Warsaw, Torun, to Gdansk. The other route went west to Jaroslaw (Yaroslav), Rzeszow (Riashiv), Tarnow, and Krakow. Parcels could be sent out in other directions by special arrangement.<sup>4</sup>

Figures differ as to the original number of postal couriers. One source says 21, but since only 17 couriers are named, that is probably the initial number. One of these served as commander. The names of the original group have survived: Symon or Lomyvoda, Bartholomeo Kozel, Jan Moscinski, Martin Sokyrnyk, Martin Kapusta, Jan Surowka, Martin Opryshko, Stanislav Volovets, Yakiv Kamensky, Andriy Opryshko or Plakhta, Voitek Shvets from Bashty, Martin ‘who comes from the Jews’, Valentyn the tall ‘who goes to the Jews’, Vorona Sharpanyi, Beniek formerly Tsipak, Jan Volokh from Pidhiria, and Hresko Sokyrnyk. Over time, the number dwindled to 12.

Couriers were given a postal identification, distinctive clothing in the colours of the royal post, and a post horn, which they were supposed to blow when passing/riding through a town or when approaching the postal building (Fig 20).



Fig 20. A stamp issued on the occasion of the 7<sup>th</sup> Ukrainian National Philatelic Exhibition, held in Dnipropetrovsk in 2001. It depicts a galloping post rider blowing his horn.

The couriers were formally sworn in, and their duties were clearly spelled out. For example, the courier to and from Warsaw was to return in two weeks. If it was not possible to fulfil this timetable for some reason, he was to explain or justify the delay in writing. If this was not done, he would be fined 5 grzywna and imprisoned. An

<sup>4</sup> Brief mention also needs to be made of another popular particular post in Przemysl (Peremyshl). This city on the main postal route between Krakow and Lwow was an important communication juncture between Hungary and the north. Przemysl’s councillors lobbied for the formation of their own postal service and received it in an ordinance of 1667. However, because of the large expense of maintaining a mounted postal service, here only a foot courier service was established. Przemysl postmasters were obliged to make sure that mails with destinations beyond Krakow, Lublin, and Lwow (e.g., to Warsaw) were expedited by the public post.

acquittal might be obtained from a postal agent – a “correspondent” – who could certify that some sort of accident had occurred en route, e.g., the delivery wagon broke down. Couriers were not allowed to accept letters on their own. Doing so could entail a fine of up to 8 grzywna, imprisonment, and the loss of the right to serve as a courier. [The monetary equivalents were as follows: 30 groszy = 1 zloty; 1 grzywna = 48 groszy = 1 zloty 18 groszy.]

The postal service guaranteed the safe delivery of letters and parcels with seals unbroken. If a letter was lost, withheld, or delivered with a broken seal, the courier was supposed to explain and apologise to the “correspondent.” If the mishap occurred through inattention or carelessness, the courier would be severely punished.

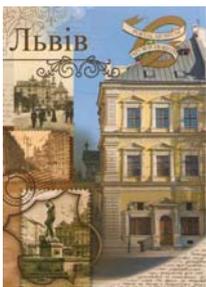
Couriers were only to take the prescribed fees from the senders (who were responsible for paying for delivery). These fees depended on the distance the mail was carried and the size of the letter (number of sheets). If some urgent dispatch needed to be sent that could not wait till Saturday, then the postmaster was obligated to arrange for delivery by a separate courier. In this case, however, the citizen was supposed to provide his own courier. In order to prevent any infringement to the established postal service, this courier was not allowed to take any other correspondence en route. If this rule was broken, a severe fine of 30 grzywna was levied. Monies accumulated from fines went toward the needs of the post.

Postal services at this time were fairly expensive. For each half sheet of paper or for half a Polish loth in weight (6.3 grams), cost to Jaroslaw (Yaroslav) was 1 grosz, to Rzeszow (Riashiv) or Zamosc (Zamostia) – 1.5 groszy, to Tarnow or Lublin – 2 groszy, to Krakow or Warsaw – 3 groszy, to Torun 4.5 groszy, and to Gdansk 6 groszy. For comparison, the average daily wage for a labourer was just over 5 groszy.

### **Postal Intrigues**

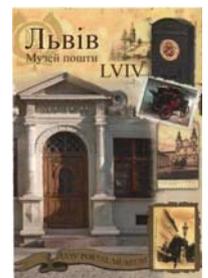
It should be pointed out that Bandinelli’s postal arrangement was a departure from the way the Polish posts had earlier been structured. Whereas previously the organization and maintenance of postal routes were financed by the king, now this responsibility fell to the postal entrepreneur. The sovereign provided him with certain privileges and freed him from public obligations, but in return he had to agree to carry mails at a constant fee. Additionally, the entrepreneur had to abide by the postal regulations ratified by the various city councils to which he delivered the mails. It was this dependence on the city councils, however, that hindered postal development.

#### **LWOW’S FIRST POST OFFICE**



History has not only preserved the names of Lwow’s first mail carriers, but also the building where Roberto Bandinelli lived and from where the post was sent. It is the same building (No. 2 Rynok Square) where Monteluppi had earlier set up the first postal centre and it is one of the lovelier Renaissance buildings on the Square complex. *Fig 21 (left) is a postcard from the Lviv Postal Museum showing the façade of the building; see front cover.*

The structure was built at the end of the 16th-early 17th century by the Lwow merchant and apothecary Jarozh Wedelski, who in 1589 had acquired an old building constructed in the Gothic style and rebuilt it in the style of the late Renaissance. The interior of the first floor retained some of the original Gothic elements. The building was rebuilt again in 1629 by Roberto Bandinelli, who used the first floor to run his postal business and the upper floors as his residence.



Although Bandinelli may have been ill-treated in his efforts to establish a postal service, his labours have not been forgotten. Today his former home is still remembered as the place where Ukraine’s first regular postal service was established. Local tour guides refer to it as “Budynok Bandinelli” or “Palats Bandinelli,” i.e., the Bandinelli Building or Bandinelli Palace. His postal office survives to the present in this building, which is now the Lviv Postal Museum. Opened on 12 December 2008, it is the first such museum in Ukraine.

*Fig 22 (right) is another museum postcard showing the beautifully decorated entranceway.*

In 1633, King Wladislaw IV reconfirmed Bandinelli's postal privileges. Even though Bandinelli had earlier received the title of "Royal Postmaster" and had invested 1,500 gold crowns (a considerable sum) in this new venture, he apparently had some enemies in the local administration jealous of his status, his privileges, and his income. The city council decided to circumvent his private initiative and establish its own official post with its own couriers. Not surprisingly, the royal post suffered severe losses.

Sometime after 1639, Bandinelli was forced to liquidate his business and in 1639 he began legal actions against the city council [4]<sup>5</sup>. These proceedings were dragged on and eventually Bandinelli was accused of all sorts of charges (misuse of posts, embezzlement, unfair treatment of servants, etc.).

Nonetheless, even though he was forced to suspend his service for a while, Bandinelli eventually was able to restart it [12] – perhaps after a royal intervention into the entire affair. In later years, he expanded his deliveries to include the entire territory of the Ruthenian voivodeship (province). In 1650 he travelled to Vienna to negotiate a new postal contract with that city, but he died there shortly afterwards. We know that his successor was Andrzej Krzczonowicz and after him Lwow's postmastership was held by Fabian Zywert (1668).

The Lwow postal service continued on into the 18<sup>th</sup> century with other officials running the postal service from the same building (No. 2 Rynok Square) where Monteluppi and Bandinelli had begun the enterprise early the previous century.

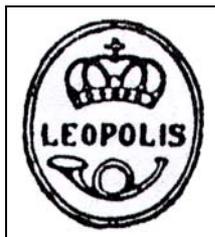
### ***Earliest Postal Insignias from Lwow and Lemberg***

The oldest postal seals from Lwow date to 1766; about 10 examples are known on market receipts. (Postal seals in Poland as a whole date to 1764.) The dimensions of the red seals are 30.5x33mm; the Latin inscription reads "Sigillum Officii Postae S.R.M. Leopoliensis" (Seal of the Leopoli (Lwow) Post Office); *see Fig 23*.

The oldest Lwow postal cancellation is one of a number of cancels created by the universal of King Stanislaw II August of 18 December 1764 for all of the major cities in Poland. It is a vertical black oval with double border showing the Latin name of the city, "LEOPOLIS". A royal crown surmounts the word while a post horn with its mouth piece to the right appears below it (*Fig 24*). This unique postmark is only known from an article by Leopold Siwec in *Kurier Literacko-Naukowy* No. 42 (15 October 1934), which merely included a reproduction without any detailed information on dimensions or date of usage. An Austrian publication, however, lists the introductory date of this cancellation as 1768 [11], four years before the First Partition of Poland and the transformation of Lwow into Lemberg.



*Fig 23 (left). The oldest postal seal from Lwow dates to 1766.*



*Fig 24 (left). The oldest Lwow postal cancellation, in use prior to 1772.*



*Fig 25 (left). The first Austrian Lemberg postmark from 1773 was modeled on the earlier Polish one.*

Following Austria's acquisition of Galicia in 1772, Polish postal regulations were preserved for a short time. A complete reorganisation took place several months later when a Postal Directorate was established at Lemberg, the capital of the new Austrian crownland. Austrian authorities began operating the postal system fully on 1 June 1773. Nonetheless, some Polish postal regulations and customs were retained for a short period.

Austria's first two postmarks, both for the city of Vienna, date to 1751. Over the next half century, many more Austrian cities and towns introduced markings, almost all of which simply consisted of single-line names and some of which occasionally appeared in a box. During the transition period following the onset of Austrian rule in Galicia, the distinctive circular or oval Polish postmarks continued to be used, but only a few examples have survived.

<sup>5</sup> Numbers in square brackets refer to the References at the end.

In 1773, the first Austrian postmarks were introduced in Galicia (in Lemberg and in Casimir); they were clearly modelled on the previous Polish ones, displaying a tripartite design. The circular Austrian markings, however, consisted of an imperial double-headed eagle replacing the Polish crown, the German name for the city replacing the Latin name, and the post horn – frequently but not always – turned the opposite way, with the mouthpiece to the left (Fig 25).

\* \* \* \* \*

I wish to thank Ihor Kulczycky for his assistance with Polish-language translations/summaries, and Hank Bieniecki and Roman Sobus for their efforts in helping me locate appropriate illustrations for this article.

\* \* \* \* \*

*This article is adapted from the opening chapter of a forthcoming book on the postal history of Lemberg (Lviv, Lwow) that is scheduled for release in the second half of 2013.*

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