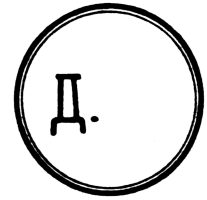




The Finnish Philatelist

Vol. 3, No.3 • August, 1998 • Whole Number 8



A newsletter published quarterly by the Finnish Study Group of the Scandinavian Collectors Club

In This Issue

Postal Censoring in Finland, Part 2:
Helsinki & Wiipuri
censor stamps and tapes
Finnish Postal Cards: Part 2:
The first tri-lingual postal cards
Helsinki-St. P.Burg RR
Letters, notes & new issues

The Finnish Philatelist

The newsletter is published quarterly by the Finnish Study Group (FSG) of the Scandinavian Collectors Club (SCC). The newsletter is free to all members of the FSG through 1998. A \$5 contribution to cover printing and mailing costs is appreciated. Membership inquiries for the FSG, and changes of address:

Robert Lang
PO Box 125
Newark, DE 19715-0125
email: langsc@dol.net

Membership inquiries for the SCC:
Donald Brent, Exec. Secretary
PO Box 13196
El Cajon, CA 92020
email: dbrent47@sprynet.com

Newsletter Editor

Roger P. Quinby
PO Box 738
Clifton Park, NY 12065
email: rpquinby@aol.com

Manuscripts are welcome. Send all material to the editor. While due care will be taken, we do not accept responsibility for submitted materials. For return of submissions, enclose a stamped return envelope. Manuscripts must be typed or submitted on computer disk. Illustrations should be clean and sharp, suitable for scanning. All manuscripts are subject to editing at the discretion of the staff.

Editor's Message

This issue features the Kaj Hellman, Jussi Itkonen article from the *Finlandia* 88, Bulletin No. 2, on the history of the Helsinki-St. Petersburg Railway and the first Finnish postal compartment cancellations. This article will allow collectors to identify and properly read the cover markings on mail cancelled on this traveling post office and identify all station numbers in use from 1870 to 1899.

Several of our readers from England have suggested that we revise the format of the Heikke Reinikainen series on the m/75 issues with the latest articles from *Filatelisti* and work backwards. It is a good suggestion and as soon as we have several translations from the most recent articles, it will be restarted, probably with the November issue.

It is our plan to complete the W.W.I censorship lists by the February, 1999 issue. If there is sufficient interest, the complete text and censorship location stamps and tapes could be updated and reprinted in booklet form.

Nordia Bulletin I has been included with the August *Finnish Philatelist* addressed to American and Canadian readers. We would very like to see about ten exhibits on display in Turku in September, 1999. This is an excellent opportunity to have your exhibit reviewed and judged by Nordia/FIP standards. See the notice on page 3. It is also important to note that exhibit applications are due by mid January. Please contact me if you have any questions about exhibiting or attending the show.

In a recent issue of *Filatelisti*, Kari Lehtonen, has written a long article on the 1918 Wasa. This article represents the latest research on this temporary civil war issue. Kari is Finland's recognized expert and a renowned exhibitor (Pacific 97 vermeil) in this area. Mrs. Carita Parker has translated the article and it will be reproduced as another supplement to the regular November issue.

You may recall that last fall we published a note (which had previously appeared in *Luren* and *Linn's*) that eight cancellers were taken from the postal museum in Helsinki. I am pleased to mention here (albeit, somewhat late) that the items have been returned and it appears that there has not been any "philatelic damage" insofar as we know.

As I will be on the road during much of October and November, the November issue will more than likely be somewhat late. Please be patient.

Heikki Reinekkainen Reports Two Double Printed Finnish Stamps from the Classic 1866 & 1875 Emissions

As an answer to the inquiry of Mr Jacob Kisner's find, I offer two interesting illustrations of double printed stamps. The interest lies in the fact, that the printing methods in both stamps are different. Hence, the reasoning for the double printing differs somewhat, as well.

The Serpentine rouletted 20 penni stamp was printed by a hand operated flat press. This means that the printing paper was placed in the end of a long jointed or segmented 'arm'. When the pressure in the hand operated machine was for some reason - perhaps the hold of the printer slipped - repeated, it is easy to believe, that this long arm with several flimsy hinges was able to move a little bit sideways thus offsetting the second image. This means, that the first short pull was the cause of the double image and the second one created the real picture. This feature shows clearly in the doubled oval pearls just under the cancellation and on the right vertical sideline.

On the other hand, Type 1 1875 Charta Sigillata stamps were printed by a steam operated cylinder press. The professional printers report that after a break in the work, it was customary to make



Figure 1



Figure 2

some empty trial runs with the machine before the printing started again. The cylinder was protected with paper. Some ink was probably transferred from the cleaned printing block. If the paper was clean enough, it was used again and a double printing was born. This image is weaker and shows best at the top of the picture and in the lower numeral circles.

Editor's note: Further information on the printing of the early Finnish stamps may be found in an article by D. A. Dromberg in, *Suomen Postimerkkien Käsikirja*, Vol. I, Second Series, pages 31-49, 1975.

A. K. Loidl Requests Information on the Langolain Pen Cancellation: During 1861, Did Langolain Serve as a Postal Clerk in Kuopio?

Although I am a new member of the Scandinavian Collectors Club, I have been a very enthusiastic collector and exhibitor of Finnish stamps, particularly classic Finland for some years. Nevertheless, from time to time there occur questions for which I do not have an immediate answer but should be solved. May I ask your readers now as follows:

The ink cancellation of Langolain is known for Helsinki during the years 1858 and 1859. I have a piece with a 10 Kopek, 1860 Serpentine emission cancelled with a high box postmark of Koupio, 18.



11. 1861, (November 18, 1861) and with an ink cancellation, which looks like that of Langolain (see illustration). The question which appears now: Was Langolain at Kuopio at this time? Is there any information about that in the

literature? Or is it only the pen cancellation of another clerk in the Kuopio post office with a cancellation signature similar to Langolain? I would be very thankful if I could get an answer. Editor's note: Please send your comments to the Editor of TFP.

Letter From Bob Lang Reports Two Unusual Winter War Covers

At a recent show I picked up what I consider two unusual commercially used Finnish covers mailed during the Winter War! What you think? Have you encountered similar covers in your search?



Figure 1

Figure 1 is a registered window envelope bearing an 800 penni (or 8.00 Fmk) red-colored meter, with the emblem of the Krogious Company (flag bearing Iron Cross) on it. It was mailed at the prevailing surface rate from Helsinki (home base of the company) on 3.1.40 and cancelled again the next day (4.1.40) at the Munkkiniemi substation at the Port to an unknown USA destination, probably NYC as it arrived there about one month later, backstamped both February 1 & 2, 1940.

The cover was censored and shows a registry label plus a purple "Rekommenderas" marking. The reverse also carries a well preserved wax seal. The franking indicates that it was a double weight letter requiring 5.5 Fmk (over 5 grams as the weight limits were decreased in 1935) plus an additional 2.5 Fmk for registry. Surface mail to foreign destinations is

difficult to find from this 3 1/2 month war-time period (30 November 30, 1939 - March, 13, 1940).

Figure 2 is a censored "Printed Matter" cover from "Hameenlinna" to Hancock, Michigan. 50 penni was the rate at the time it was mailed on 28. 11. 40, two weeks before the Winter War came to an end. Unfortunately we don't know how long it took to reach it's destination as there are no other markings on the envelope.



Figure 2

Airmail covers to foreign destinations are quite prevalent during this period in Finland's history, but to find two surface letters mailed only a month apart was a stroke of luck on my part.

NORDIA 99 Set for Turku, 22-24 September 99, Bulletin No. 1 Now Available

Nordia 99 will be held in Turku, Finland on the weekend of September 24-26, 1999 at the Turku Convention Center. Juhani Pietilä, President of the Nordia 99 Organizing Committee has extended a cordial invitation for members of the Scandinavian Collectors Club to exhibit at this important Nordic philatelic event. Dr. Pietilä wrote, "We are looking forward to get a good range of US exhibitors and their exhibits to Turku in September, 1999." Tourist and travel information will soon be available.

Bulletin No. 1 is now available from US Representative, Roger P. Quinby, at PO Box 738, Clifton Park, New York, 12065-0738. Although the text is in Finnish and Swedish, the exhibiting rules

for the show are nearly the same as they are for Nordia 98. The important information is:

- a large silver (US equivalent is a vermeil) medal from a APS-WSP show
- 5 to 10 frames is offered
- applications are due by January 15, 1999
- frame fee is FIM 100 (about \$18 or \$19)

Competitive exhibition classes include: traditional philately, postal history, postal stationery, aerophilately, thematics, open (display) class, youth and a literature class.

The 12 member jury includes: Juhani Olamo, Kari Rahiala, Eero Hellsten, Harry Swanljung, Halfdan Helgason, Olafur Eliasson, Arne O. Olsson, Gunnar Dahlvig, Frank Gilberg, Per M. Kindem, Erik Hvidberg Hansen and Per Friis Mortensen.

Part 2: The 1872 Tri-Lingual 8 Penni Postal Card

By Juhani Pietilä, Translated by Kauko Aro
 Reprinted from Abophil, No. 3, 1994



THE TRI-LINGUAL 8 PENNI POSTAL CARD (PART I)

After the use of the postal cards began it became evident that such cards would also need to be sent to Russia. However, the first card type did not permit this as the text was only in Swedish. Therefore, a new type of postal card was released in July, 1872.

TRI-LINGUAL CARD WITHOUT ADDITIONAL TEXT - (NORMA 3)

Now the new card was tri-lingual when Finnish text was added together with Swedish and Russian (see photo). Apparently space considerations required giving up the curved heading in order to comfortably fit all three languages onto the card. Two printings of the cards were made, the first in July and the second in November, 1872.

1 o	1 t	2 o	2 t	3 o	3 t
4 o	4 t	5 o	5 t	6 o	6 t
8 t	7 o	7 t	8 o		

Apparently the Post Office Cashier ordered 25,000 copies of the postal card forms from Tilgmann's Lithographers. Both sides of the form were printed green and the printing took place in sheets of 16 blank forms according to Sihtola in a pattern shown in the lower left hand column. The sheets had guide lines for the purpose of cutting the sheets which have assisted in defining the sheets. In the diagram the cards have a running number and the letters stand for the reverse (= t) and the front (= o) side of each card. When one side was printed, the sheet was turned over for a new printing run. According to the records at the Charta Sigillata office 27,200 cards were printed of which some 16,600 were used.

The outward appearance of the first tri-lingual card shows hardly any variation. The cards were printed on paper stocks of two different colors, but that is it for subtypes. The prevailing paper stock is of grayish-buff color and its share of all cards is about three quarters. The color of the second paper stock is slightly yellowed, but distinguishing between the two subtypes is sometimes troublesome. The differentiation between the two is helped by the practical piece of information that the following card with extra text is found only on the paper stock of the second color. The color of the value stamp is always olive-green, although degrees of darkness do

exist. The earliest known usage dates back to August and September, 1872.

When thinking of a postal card exhibit this card presents only one problem: a card sent to Russia should be shown as well, since this option was the grounds for the printing of this card. However, most of our postal card collections are missing just such a card.

TRI-LINGUAL CARDS WITH EXTRA TEXT (NORMA 4)

With regard to mailing the cards to Russia even the new cards had a significant flaw. Without the printed instructions on the cards, the people did not always realize that the name and address should be written in Russian. Of course, the Russian Post Office did not necessarily understand the predominant languages in Finland which were normally used for such directions.

As a solution to this problem it was decided to print a new tri-lingual extra message which would correct the flaw. It is not clear from the information in the archives why such a message was not included in the actual printing of the cards, but added in as an extra.

Two main types of the cards are known with the extra message. This was caused by another error in the spelling of the extra message as the first main types contained a wrong letter in the middle of the last Russian word. This error was then corrected for the second main type with the extra message.

THE FIRST MAIN TYPE OF THE CARD WITH THE ADDED MESSAGE (NORMA 4 I 1 - 2; II)

A new batch of forms of the previous tri-lingual card were printed in November, 1872 on a yellowish paper stock and these were used for these cards. Then, these cards were prepared with the previously mentioned tri-lingual added text in black; I will return to its details later. A total of 42,000 cards were printed.

No great details of the printing of these forms are available. This resulted primarily from the lack of any cutting lines on these and subsequent cards. However, Mr. Harri Sihtola has assumed the printing sheet of these cards as well contained 16 forms, and that the front and reverse sides of these cards were printed with different stones. The extra text was added in typograph, partly individually card by card,

but apparently also in groups. The extra printing of the November batch of forms resulted in clearly distinguishable subtypes which are separated here using Sihtola's presentation. The differences between the types are at times very small, but still clear; thus, the subdivision must be considered appropriate and well founded.

Sub-type I (*Norma I 1*). The clearest identifier in the added text is the location of letters 'ks' in the word "wenajaksi" below the letter 'k' in the word "ryska". This sub-type can still be divided into two further sub-types on the basis of the pressure marks and the sharpness of the printing. Sometimes the printing of the added text is so unclear that the text is illegible. The earliest usage's of the sub-type are from November 1872. Picture 3 [Ed: I do not know where this picture is - unless it is the un-numbered photo on p.49.] Sub-type II (*Norma I 2*). The setting of the extra text differs from the above type as only the letter 's' in the word "wenajaksi" is under the letter 's' in "ryska", as even the picture shows clearly. Both sub-types I and II have a round period at the end of the added text which in turn differentiates these from the next sub-type. This sub-type has been used since January 1873.

Sub-type III (*Norma II*). The final period of the added text is either missing or square-like in shape. This sub-type has also other variations, e.g. the final letter in the Russian text may be missing. A detailed discussion of all the different sub-types would require ample space and is therefore not possible. It must still be noted that the cards of sub-type III are scarce and certain varieties can never be within the reach of all collectors. The earliest usage's of sub-type III date from February 1873.

THE SECOND MAIN TYPE OF THE CARD WITH THE ADDED MESSAGE (NORMA 4 III)

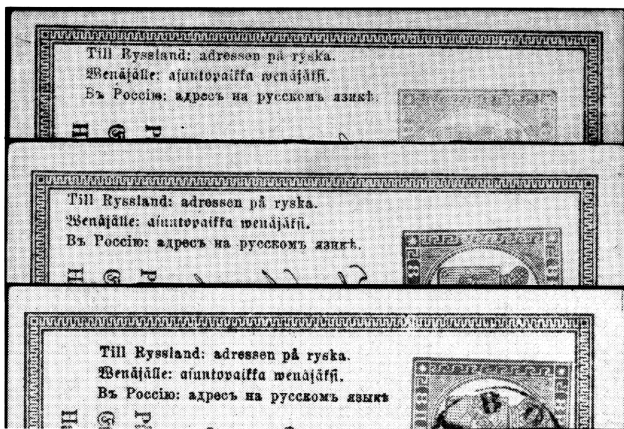
This card with the added text must be regarded as another main type where the misspelled last word of the Russian text has been corrected (photo). The forms for this card came from the returned cards of the July 1872 printing; thus, both grayish and yellowish paper stock is again found. The added printing took place in February 1873 so that the cards were distributed to post offices already towards the end of February. Some 9,500 cards of this main type were printed. The earliest usage's are known from March 1873.

THE VALUE STAMP OF THE CARDS WITH ADDED TEXT

Some of the cards with added text - namely the second main type - had naturally received their value stamp already in connection with the printing of the July 1872 batch. The other cards with the added text received their value stamp at the Charta Sigillata Office in three batches which can be clearly differentiated from each other:

a: olive green, also dark, 20,000 cards on 20 November 1872; b: light green, 12,000 cards on 30 November 1872; c: bluish or dark green, 10 February 1873.

Thus these three colors represent the main type I with all of its sub-types. On the basis of the press marks it has been possible to separate two sub-types within the light green color. Certain colors of the value stamp appear to be clearly linked to certain sub-types. Thus, subtype I is found with a-b colors, but c-color there is scarce. The a-color is hardly found in other sub-types besides the first. In sub-types II and III, the c-color is common and the b-color is very scarce. Only one copy of each used cards IIb, IIIb and Ic have been found, although new discoveries are still possible. Certain sub-types are even more difficult to find in mint form.



The series on the Finnish Postal Cards will be continued in the next issue of *The Finnish Philatelist*.

PUPPIES FEATURED IN JUNE BOOKLET



Cute puppies doubtless have won everyone's heart in a booklet of eight stamps, issued on June 4th. The FIM 2,80 stamps feature, for instance, a pumi, a Finnish Lapphound, a Bernese mountain dog and a wire-haired dachshund. The booklet, presenting eight popular breeds, was designed by Asser Jaaro and priced at FIM 22,40.

Together with the puppy stamps, four pieces of postal stationery were issued. They are maximum cards with dogs as their subject. The cards depict a boxer, a Labrador retriever, a cairn terrier and a bichon frise. The maximum cards have a puppy stamp on their picture side and these are stamped with the first day postmark. The cards also have a value marking equivalent to a stamp, providing postage to all countries. The four maximum dog cards are priced at FIM 28.

STAMP FACTS

Issue date:	June 4, 1998
Face value:	FIM 22.40
Issue:	1 000 000
Designer:	Asser Jaaro
Perforation:	13.33 x 12.8
Format:	Stamps: 36 x 33 mm Cover: 170 x 66 mm
Paper:	Stamps: stamp paper 102 g Cover: cardboard 200 g
Printers:	Walsall Security Printers
Printing method:	Stamps: offset 4/0, Cover: ofset 4/1
First Day Cover and postmark:	Asser Jaaro
Price of FDC:	FIM 24.90

“ARANDA” AND “THE NORTH-EAST PASSAGE” STAMPS CELEBRATE THE ANNIVERSARIES OF FINNISH MARINE RESEARCH



Finnish marine research was noted on May 7th with two special stamps. One has a face value of 2,80 and depicts the research vessel of the Finnish Marine Research Institute, “Aranda”; the other one has a face value of 3,20 and has as its subject the famous Northeast Passage explored by the great Finnish scientist A.E. Nordenskiöld (1832-1901). The stamp features the whaler Vega used by the expedition. In the background is depicted a part of the route. Both stamps are designed by Juha Flinkman, who is a marine biologist and a research diver by profession.

The stamps were issued as part of the “Pohjola-Norden” series, a joint project of Nordic Posts. This year, the theme of the series is navigation.

Finnish marine research celebrates its 100th and the Finnish Marine Research Institute its 80th anniversary this year. The “Aranda” vessel depicted on the stamp was assigned to the Finnish Marine Research Institute in 1989. As early as in the winter of 1989/90 (and again in 1995/96) the vessel set sail towards the seas of the Antarctic. “Aranda” continues its round-the-year expeditions on the Baltic and other seas of the world.

In 1878-80, the expedition led by A.E. Nordenskiöld sailed around the Old World starting from the Northern coast of Siberia and continuing through the Bering Strait. The vessel Vega was a three-mast barque and it had an auxiliary steam engine.

Nordenskiöld, who was a senior lecturer in mineralogy in Helsinki University, moved to Sweden in 1857 and was nominated professor in 1858. He became the director of the Swedish Academy in 1893.

STAMP FACTS

Issue date:	May 7, 1998
Face value:	FIM 2,80 and FIM 3.20
Issue:	1 810 000 each
Designer:	Juha Flinkman
Perforation:	13 1/4 x 13 3/4
Format:	34.8 x 30 mm
Paper:	stamp paper 96g
Printers:	Joh Enschede Security Printing, The Netherlands
Printing method:	offset 4/0, engraving 1
First Day Cover and postmark:	Juha Flinkman
Price of FDC:	FIM 8,50
Orders:	The Philatelic Centre, P.O. Box 2, FIN-00011 POSTI, Finland
	www.posti.fi/postimerkki

A STAMP DEDICATED TO CYCLING



Cycling is the motif of a special stamp to be issued on September 4th and priced at FIM 3. The stamp honors the Cycling Union of Finland, the oldest central organization for cycling in Scandinavia on its 100th anniversary. The stamp depicts a cyclist in a downhill competition and in the background we see a lady with a bicycle from the turn of the century.

STAMP FACTS

Issue date:	Sept. 4, 1998
Face value:	FIM 3
Issue:	2 000 000
Designer:	Pekka Hesanto
Perforation:	14 x 14
Format:	24.48 x 34.56 mm
Paper:	stamp paper CPL 1
Printers:	Setec Ltd
Printing method:	offset 5/0
First Day Cover and postmark:	Pekka Hesanto
Price of FDC:	FIM5.50

Finland Salutes 150th Anniversary of National Anthem, “Our Country”



This year, it has been 150 years since the first performance of the Finnish national anthem “Our country”. A stamp, was issued on May 7th, to celebrate the occasion. It has a face value of FIM 5, and it features the first notes of the anthem in gold gravure printing. Behind the notes we see the Finnish flag over a typical Finnish lake scenery. The designer of the stamp is Asser Jaaro.

The lyrics to the Finnish national anthem were written by Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804-1877) and it was composed by Fredrik Pacius (1809-1891). The song was first performed in public on May 13th at a students’ spring festival at the Kumpula field in Toukola, Helsinki. It was performed by the Akademiska Söngföreningen and the Band of the Guard with the composer as conductor.

Runeberg wrote his poem “Vört land”(“Our country”) in 1846. Pacius composed the poem - already composed by several others, including Runeberg himself - for the 1848 spring festival, and

succeeded in creating a tune that eventually elevated “Our country” to its present status as the national anthem. “Our country” (lyrics and notes) was first published in December of the year of first performance in Part I of the “Fonrik St6ls Sdgnr” (The Tales of Ensign St6l), written by Runeberg and depicting the events of Sweden’s war with Russia. The poem was translated into Finnish by Paavo Cajander.

STAMP FACTS

Issue date:	May 7, 1998
Face value:	FIM 5.00
Issue:	2 000 000
Designer:	Asser Jaaro
Perforation:	12 3/4 x 13
Format:	40.82 x 29.07 mm
Paper:	stamp paper CPL 1
Printers:	Setec Oy
Printing method:	offset 4/0, engraving 1
First Day Cover and postmark:	Asser Jaaro
Price of FDC:	FIM 7.50
Orders:	From the Philatelic Center in Helsinki or from Jay Smith or other dealers

Nurses Trade Union Honored for 100 Years of Dedication for Better Health

Finnish nurses are celebrating the 100th anniversary of their organisation into a trade union this year. A special stamp with a face value of FIM 2,80, designed by Heikki Juutinen, was issued on February 3rd in honor of the anniversary.

The left side of the stamp (not illustrated) features a nurse from a hundred years ago and the right side a nurse of today. The background depicts nursing equipment such as both an old-fashioned and a modern drug ampoule, an oxygen mask and a syringe, as well as text from a nearly hundred-year-old case history. The stamp also portrays the paraffin lamp of Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), the famous English nurse and “bringer of light”.

The nurses celebrated their jubilee year in various ways, for instance with an exhibition which opened on February 27th in Jugendsali, Helsinki.

STAMP FACTS

Issue date:	3.2.1998
Face value:	FIM 2,80
Issue:	2 000 000
Designer:	Heikki Nuutinen
Perforation:	14 x 14
Format:	24,48 x 34,56 mm
Paper:	stamp paper CPL 1
Printers:	Setec Oy
Printing method:	offset 4/0
First Day Cover and postmark:	Heikki Nuutinen
Price of FDC:	FIM 5,30 (one stamp);
Orders:	The Philatelic Centre, P.O. Box 2, FIN-00011 POSTI. FINLAND www.posti.fi/postimerkki

The Helsinki-St. Petersburg Railway and the First Finnish Postal Compartment Cancellations

By Kaj Hellman & Jussi Itkonen
from *Finlandia 88*, Bulletin No. 2

In 1987 it will be 125 years since the first Finnish railway was opened for traffic. This was the line between Helsinki and Hämeenlinna which was completed on 17 March 1862 and was soon to revolutionize the postal service.

But this was just the beginning. To connect Helsinki and St. Petersburg by rail an imperial edict was issued on 29 November 1867 concerning the building of a new line from Riihimäki via Viipuri (Viborg) to the imperial capital. The work was started in February 1868 and progressed so rapidly that the Riihimäki-Lahti section was completed on 1 November 1869 and the Viipuri-St. Petersburg section on 13 February 1870. The new railway was opened on 11 September 1870. It had taken less than three years to complete this considerable piece of construction work. 35 kilometers of line were on the Russian side of the border.

INTRODUCING POSTAL COMPARTMENTS

Special postal compartments were to be put in on the Viipuri-St. Petersburg section in the summer of 1870, but this came to nothing. The mail traveled in sealed bags in the guard's van attended by a mail carrier. When the

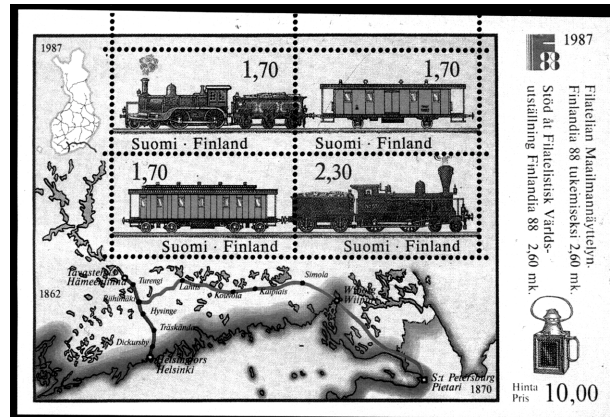


Figure 1. Third Finnish miniature sheet issued for *Finlandia 88* depicted the first railway line from Helsinki to Hämeenlinna (1862) and the line from Riihimäki to St. Petersburg (1870). Date of issue was May 8, 1987.

railway was officially opened there were still no mail compartments. The Railway Board had ordered three mail vans built at the Pori Engineering Works, but not until 23 September 1870 could the Board make known "that the mail vans to be used between Helsinki and St. Petersburg are awaiting the pleasure of the Postmaster (1)". However, the matter did not advance very rapidly; as late as 18 October the Postmaster was forced to report that the vans had no facilities for heating. Not until 7 November 1870 did the Director of Railways inform the Board that repairs had been made and the mail vans were in traffic since 1 November 1870, however, only between Helsinki and Viipuri at the request of the Postmaster. In his letter (2) he adds that the traveling clerks had no complains against the fittings of the compartments.

The necessary equipment for the vans had already been purchased, four cancellation stamps among other things. Payment for the stamps had been made on 14 May 1870 (3) and for four seals on 15 July 1870. The payment for the receipt books used in the mail vans was entered into the books as late as 7 December 1870, but this was not necessarily the date of purchase. The clerk of

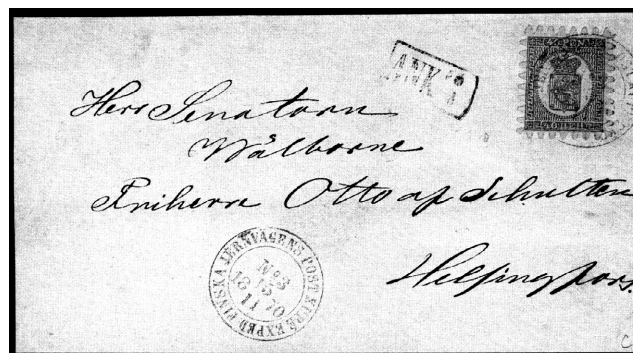


Figure 2. The earliest known postal compartment cancellation 15. 11. 70 on cover to Helsinki. Collection J. Itkonen

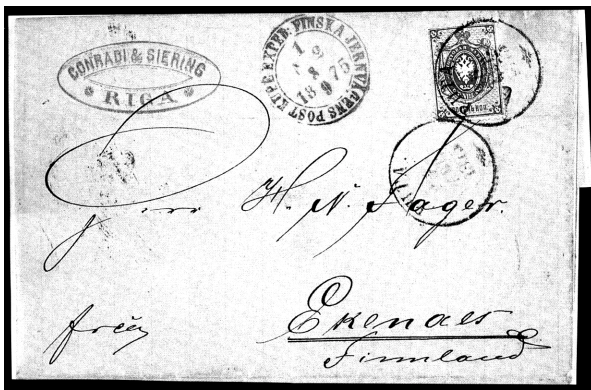


Figure 3. Folded letter from Riga, 25. Aug. 1875. On the reverse, Russian mail van stamp No. 9-10, 25 Aug. 1875. Arrived St. Petersburg 26. Aug., sent on from there 27. Aug. (8 Sept. according to the Western calendar). On the front a blue mail van stamp type 1, FINSKA JERNVÄGENS POST KUPE EXPED: 1 No. 2, 8.9.1875. Station number 1 means that the point of dispatch (in this case the transit point) was St. Petersburg.

the Viipuri post office C. L. Masalin was appointed senior traveling clerk on 15 September 1870. His work consisted mainly of organizing and management. When the mail vans were put into traffic on 1 November A. F. Scheele, G. Stahlberg and U. Godenhjelm were appointed traveling clerks. These offices were evidently not much sought after as the appointments were left so late.

In November when the mail vans trafficked only between Helsinki and Viipuri, there were always two vans in use. The nights were spent in Viipuri. The third crew was always off duty.

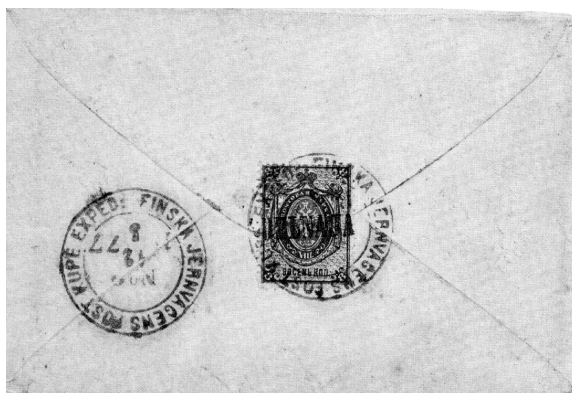


Figure 4. Blue UDELNAYA station postmark on cover with address Nikolaistad (later renamed Vaasa), Finland. The Russian 8-kopek stamp has also been cancelled with the FINSKA JERNVÄGENS POST KUPE EXPED: No. 2 stamp for 12.5.1877. Station number 3 can be seen on the address side of the cover. Collection, R. Quinby.

THE MAIL VANS REACH ST. PETERSBURG

In a letter dated 26 November 1870 (4) the Post Office administration department informed the postal compartment office that the mail van traffic will be extended to St. Petersburg as of 30 November 1870. The return trip lasted for three days. The mail van crew got on the train in Helsinki on the morning of the first day. In the evening they arrived at Viipuri where they spent the night. On the second day they continued to St. Petersburg and back again to spend the night in Viipuri. On the third day they returned from Viipuri to Helsinki and a period off duty. Thus three crews and three vans were always in use. A substitute crew was also needed for holidays.



Figure 5. First type of stamp using Roman-style letters. The most common station number during the first period was 35, Helsinki. This picture shows the number 35 in the 5.8.1874 postmark of mail van No. 5. From the writer of the card's own stamp, printed on the lower left corner, can be seen where the card was dispatched from Loviisa ANK arrival stamp for 5.8. on the front.

The 1870 financial statement (5) of the Post Office shows that mail vans 1, 2 and 4 had accounted for stamps sold and had thus been operational.

MORE MAIL VANS ACQUIRED

On the last day of 1870 the railway manager Strömberg inspected a number of new vans, two newly built mail vans among them. On 25 January 1871 he ordered (6) that they should be put into traffic. These vans became mail vans 2 and 5.

However, this could not be done without staff. The Postmaster appointed O. L. Järnefelt to the

office of junior traveling clerk on 6 February 1871 and he was to manage mail van No. 2. A cancellation stamp and a receipt book were ready. They had been purchased with the other mail van cancellation stamps the year before. Van No. 5 could not start at the same time as there was neither a cancellation stamp nor a receipt book.

The Post Office accounts department paid for the stamp on 4 March 1871 and for the receipt book on 13 March 1871. A letter has also been found wherein the Post Office administration department asks the accounts department to pay the travel bill of the junior traveling clerk J. W. Stenback accrued when he served in mail van No. 5 from 9 March to 1 July 1871. We may thus conclude that the No. 5 van started on 9 March and the No. 2 van on 6 February 1871.

THE FIRST POSTAL COMPARTMENT CANCELLATIONS

The first cancellation stamps were double circular stamps with a 28 mm diameter. Between the circles was the text FINSKA JERNVAGENS POST KUPE EXPED: in decorative Roman type. The postmarks found are black or blue. On top in the

FIRST AND SECOND TYPE OF MAIL VAN CANCELLATIONS

mail van	type no.1		type no.2	
	earliest date found	latest date found	earliest date found	latest date found
no. 1	10.7.71	12.10.75	4.1.76	11.7.80
no. 2	2.7.71	3.11.75	25.12.75	20.10.83
no. 3	15.11.70	1.9.75	22.10.75	2.11.79
no. 4	25.1.71	24.10.75	5.11.75	2.12.78
no. 5	17.7.71	23.10.75	1.11.75	10.8.77

Figure 7. The earliest and latest dates known to the authors.

Cancellation No. 2 with a date 22. 11. 70 has been found on a stamp, but there must be an error in the year, since the van mail No. 2 was not placed in service until February 6, 1871.

center of the postmark there is a number, of which more later. Under that is the number of the van (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) and under that again the day and month flanked by the year. The center is sometimes reversed, but this is only a variation to which too much importance should not be attached.

POSTMARKS SHOW STATION OF DEPARTURE

The Post Office had prepared instructions for the postal compartments as early as 1869 (7) They say, among other things, that “all letters and packages shall be marked with the stamp of the postal compartment, and that the station where the letter has been received shall be indicated by a separate number according to the order of stations”. These instructions incorporate the generally prevailing principle that the postmark shall indicate the route of the postal item.

In 1870 there were 35 stations between Helsinki and St. Petersburg, and they were numbered starting with 1 for St. Petersburg and ending with 35 for Helsinki, the other end-of-the-line station. This was the top figure in the center of the postmark. In Finnish items 35 is by far the most frequent number, number 14 for Viipuri being common too. Number 1 for St. Petersburg is found almost only on Russian items. Particularly rare are numbers 2 to 7, that is the small stations on the Russian side.

The postal compartment cancellations are not, however, always provided with a station number. There was naturally little mail taken aboard from the very smallest stations and the clerk did not attach the proper station number to the cancellation



Figure 6. The KPXP cancellation shown above was in use in the mail van Helsinki-St. Petersburg only during the year 1894. The last found usages are 9.XI.94 (no. 1) and 24.X.94 (no.2). Towards the end of 1894 they were replaced with new cancellations with a text H.FORSS.P.BURG. Earliest found usages are 18.XI.94 (no 1) and 30.XI.94 (no.2) There are several types of these new cancellations, two of which are illustrated below. Black dot indicates the night train.



Figure 8. For a brief period (1893-1896) rare, undated cancellations WIBORG-WALKEASAARI and WIBORG-St:PETERSBURG were in use. The upper post card in the picture is dated 24.6. 1895 at Uusikirkko, destination Säiniö. Where the cover in the picture was dispatched from is not clear; probably St. Petersburg. This author has in his own collection a post card with this same cancellation, dated 22. VI. 1893 Raivola, and dispatched to Lembois. The card was stamped WIBORG 22.6.93 in Vyborg.

stamp cancelling the postcards and letters without a station number and stamping the station number separately close to the postmark. Sometimes there



Figure 9. The post card shown here has been stamped 18.1.17 with a BYELOOSTROV-PETROGRAD cancellation, which was only in use for a short period. Despite the cancellation being completely in Russian, it is nevertheless a Finnish one. Even the date on the cancellation is according to the Gregorian calendar, rather than the Julian calendar in use in Russia at that time. This use of Russian is understandable as the stamp was used only on (that section of the line that was actually inside the Russian Empire. The card itself was dispatched from Levaschovo station. On the front, a Helsinki machine cancellation for the arrival stamp, and a red Helsinki censor's stamp.



Figure 10. Type No. I, postal compartment cancellation. Serif type.



Figure 11. Type No. II, postal compartment cancellation. Sans serif type.

is no station number at all. The numbers of stations close to Helsinki are also very rare. The reason is probably that there was so much mail from Helsinki that there was no time to process and cancel all items until the train was already well on its way. The mail taken aboard at the near stations may have been mixed up with the mail from Helsinki and thus not stamped with separate station numbers

A NEW TYPE OF POSTMARK AND NEW STATION NUMBERS

In the autumn of 1875 two important changes were made. The numbering of the stations had remained unchanged, but now three new stations had been opened and a change was necessary. The Helsinki number grew from 35 to 38. The new stations were Kouvola, Jokela and Malmi, the last being the station next to Helsinki. The first time the new numbers were in use as shown by extant items was on 1 November 1875 while the last find using the old numbers was stamped 12 October. We may thus conclude that the numbers on the Helsinki-St. Petersburg line were changed in the latter half of October in 1875.

About this time new stamping devices were also introduced. The old stamps were very worn and the postmarks were blurred. The new stamps were different from the old ones only where the kind of type was concerned. The letters were less ornamental. These postmarks too, are found with reversed centers. On the other hand blue is a very

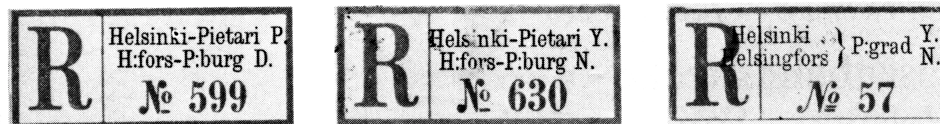


Figure 12. It is unusual to come across registered mail labels for mail vans. These labels are of a later type and bilingual, Finnish and Swedish. The letters P (Finnish "päivä") and D (Swedish "dag") denote the registered mail label of the day train and the letters Y (Finnish "yö") and N (Swedish "natt") of the night train mail van. The label on the right is from the period when St. Petersburg had already changed its name to Petrograd.

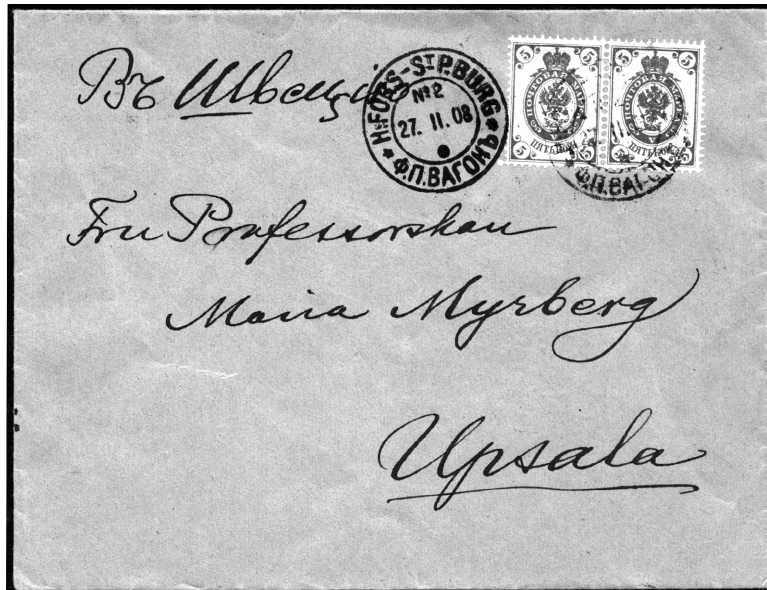


Figure 13. Covers from St. Petersburg, via the Helsinki-St. Petersburg, to foreign destinations other than Finland are relatively scarce. This cover was struck with the No. 2 van night train cancellation, 27. II. 08, and backstamped in Upsala, Sweden, 1.3. 08. Collection R. Quinby.

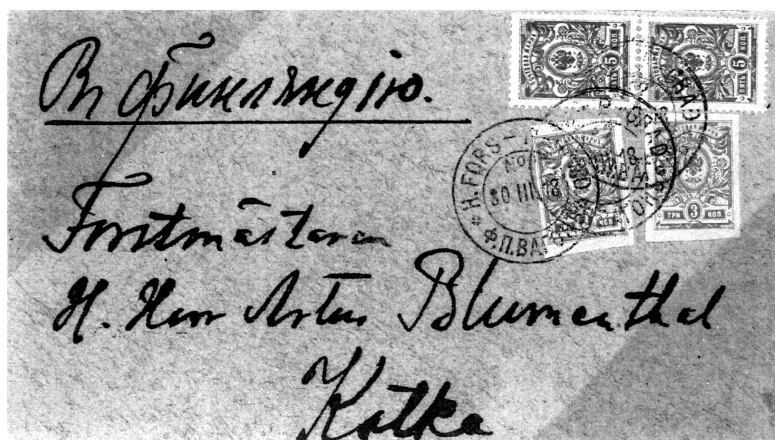


Figure 14. Mail continued to travel the Helsinki-St. Petrograd RR until April 13, 1918, when German troops broke the link at Uusikylä. The postal compartment cancellations were not used after this date. This cover, cancelled on 30. III. 18, was sent from Petrograd to Kotka. Collection R. Quinby.

rare color. There are two subtypes of the stamp used in mail van No. 1.

SEVERAL TYPES OF POSTMARKS IN USE

The Helsinki-St. Petersburg line has much material to offer the collector in the shape of various postmarks, and later on also labels for registered mail. Up to 1894 the postmarks were in Swedish. In 1894 Russian was incorporated into the stamps. At that time K.P.X.P (KUPE POST EXPEDITION) stamps were used for a short period. In November 1894 they were for the first time replaced by postmarks bearing the text H:FORS - StP.BURG (Helsinki-St. Petersburg). These stamps were used until 1915. The name of St. Petersburg was changed to Petrograd and consequently H:FORS - P.GRAD stamps were introduced. They were in use up to 1918 after which Finnish mail vans did no longer crossed the border into Russia.

FURTHER CHANGING OF STATION NUMBERS

The traffic on the line continued to grow and old station buildings were enlarged. New junction lines were also built. In the autumn of 1881 the station numbers were changed once again. All the new stations were in Karelia: Mustamaki, Kamara and Howinmaa. Helsinki now became station number 41 and the other numbers were adjusted correspondingly. Postmarks show that the old number 38 for Helsinki was in use on 7 November and the new one on 9 November 1881.

STATION NUMBERS ON THE HELSINKI-St. PETERSBURG RAILWAY 1870-1889

Station	Finnish name	1st period	2nd period	3rd period
St Petersburg	Pietari	1	1	1
Lanskaja		2	2	2
Udelnaja		3	3	3
Schuwalovo		4	4	4
Pargala		5	5	5
Lewaschovo		6	6	6
Bjeloostrov	Walkeasaari	7	7	7
Terijoki		8	8	8
Raivola		9	9	9
Mustamäki				10
Nykyrka	Uusikirkko	10	10	11
Perkjärvi		11	11	12
Galitsina		12	12	13
Kämärä				14
Säiniö		13	13	15
Wiborg	Wiipuri	14	14	16
Howinmaa				17
Nurmis	Nurmi	15	15	18
Simola		16	16	19
Pulsa		17	17	20
Davidstad	Taavetti	18	18	21
Kaipiäis	Kaipiainen	19	19	22
Uttis	Utti	20	20	23
Kouvola			21	24
Kymmene	Kymi	21	22	25
Kausala		22	23	26
Nyby	Uusikylä	23	24	27
Lahtis	Lahti	24	25	28
Herrala		25	26	29
Järvelä		26	27	30
Lappila		27	28	31
Ois	Oitti	28	29	32
Hikie	Hikiä	29	30	33
Riihimäki		30	31	34
Hyvinge	Hyvinkää	31	32	35
Jokela			33	36
Träskända	Järvenpää	32	34	37
Kervo	Kerava	33	35	38
Dickursby	Tikkurila	34	36	39
Malm	Malmi		37	40
Helsingfors	Helsinki	35	38	41

First Period: November 1, 1870 to October 12, 1875

Second Period: November 1, 1875 to November 7, 1881

Third Period: November 9, 1881 to August 15, 1889

Special thanks to Mr. Paavo Korhonen, Mr. D. Lain Fraser and Mr. Olavi Koponen.

All illustrated items are from the collection Kaj Hellman, if not otherwise stated.

Editors Note: Certain illustrations from the original text have been omitted and Figures 13 and 14 were added by the Editor.