



The Finnish Philatelist

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

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The Finnish Philatelist

The Finnish Philatelist is a newsletter published quarterly by the Finnish Study Group (FSG) of the Scandinavian Collectors Club (SCC).

The newsletter will be sent free of charge to all members of the FSG thru 2001. A \$5 contribution to cover printing/ mailing costs is appreciated. Contributions should be made payable to and sent directly to the Editor.

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Editor's Message

We have only recently returned from Tucson, Arizona and NORDIA 2001, the first NORDIA to be held in the United States. Uniformly, the comments from exhibitors, commissioners, dealers, and general collectors were very positive. Finnish Federation President, Risto-Matti Kauhanen, summed up the general consensus this way, "According to my judgment the NORDIA 2001 was a great success, nice hall, and good exhibits, excellent opening ceremonies and very nice social programs."

Of the many excellent Finnish area exhibits shown in Tucson, special recognition must go to Heikki Pahlman for taking the GRAND PRIX NORDIQUE with his gold medal collection, *Finland 1566-1856* and 94 points and to Olavi Koponen, for receiving a gold and 91 points for his collection, *Finland, 1856-1884*.

Three Finnish area exhibits received large vermeil medals; Hannu Elo, *Finnish Figure Cancellations*, 85 points; Kauko Aro, *Postal Cards of Finland 1871-1886*, 85 points and Heikki Hongisto's thematic exhibit, *Sugar in the Life of Mankind*, 85 points.

Congratulations to all Finnish area exhibitors. Well done!



This card was sent as a birthday greeting from Kotka, 10. XII. 32, to grandfather Erland Kuusela then working in the coal mines in Perm, Siberia. The card was addressed to Perm, Kombinat K, Soc.(ialist) Town coal works, Barrack No. 19. Correspondence from Finland to the Soviet Union, especially to the Finnish idealists who went to the Soviet Union from 1925-1932, to build a new society founded on Marxist-Leninist communism, is very elusive. From the collection of Teuva Rönkkönen.

Letter to the Editor

from Jack Isaacson

I have another problem that I would appreciate some guidance on. I recently purchased a mint Finland Scott 37, Norma 34, Facit 26. (Ed. This is the 1885, 10 Fmk brown/red stamp issued on December 1, 1885. This is a very expensive stamp with a value range from Skr. 4.500 to 10.000 or Fmk 5.000 to 7.500 or more depending on condition. It is very elusive on cover.) When I got home I noticed a pinhole in it, which was hidden under a hinge remnant.

I then remembered this stamp from 20 years ago when I declined to buy it. Some time ago I read a story that old time stamp dealers from the last century (19th Century) would attend flea markets on Sundays. They didn't have stamp hinges or glassine envelopes, so they pinned their stamps up on a board for display. I believe that is how this stamp got a pinhole in it.

Would you know how much of the value of this particular stamp is lost because of the pinhole?

Editor's Note: First I want to apologize for this somewhat delayed response to printing this inquiry. The writer has asked an important question and while I hazard the following comments, I would appreciate it if our readers would come forth and offer some advice.

My comments are:

1) While such a defect might have been "acceptable" in the marketplace decades ago, they are not marketable today unless substantially discounted, even if the flaw is not readily detectable by the naked eye.

2) The stamp is undoubtedly of a better grade than a "space filler", but it should be returned assuming you have a proof of purchase and a good relationship with the dealer.

3) All expensive classic stamps and covers should be purchased subject to certification to detect the type of imperfections detected here and other possible problems that may not be obvious to the purchaser and/or the seller at the time of the transaction.

Note from The Editor: I have received quite a few thank you notes with contributions and words of encouragement. I appreciate these notes very much. I have a number of inquiries still unanswered. I will try to answer them as quickly as possible, but sometimes I have to refer the inquiries and I await replies from correspondents abroad. Please be patient. Thank you.

Special stamp for the European Year of Languages Issued January 17th

On 17 January, Finland Post issued a special stamp in honor of the European Year of Languages 2001, to be celebrated by the entire continent. The



pictorial subject is a partial close-up of a female face. The texts: "Euroopan kielten teemavuosi" and "Europeiska året för språk 2001" partially cover the face. The objective of the design is to convey the feeling that the woman is speaking directly to the person looking at the stamp. Various language versions of the emblem of the year flicker on a blue background. The designers of the stamp, depict a Finnish woman, well versed in languages, routinely using and studying them, and thriving in a variety of language environments.

The upper margin is adorned with two EU wheels of stars, the lower one with two emblems of the theme year. The pictorial subject of the stamps bleeds into the left and right hand margins of the sheet: the one to the left shows part of the woman's hair and shoulder, while the texts in the background bleed out in the one to the right.

The European Year of Languages is being jointly organized by the European Union and the Council of Europe. UNESCO will also play an active role. The year is to celebrate linguistic diversity, and to increase the appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity among Europeans. The theme year will be celebrated in 47 countries which are the member states of the European Union and the Council of Europe.



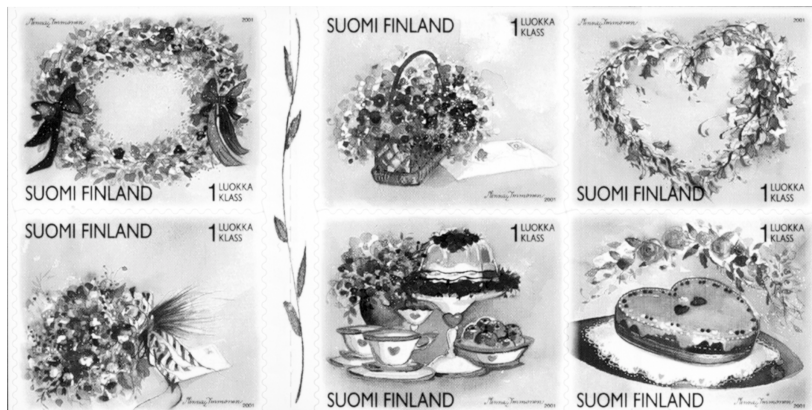
Issue date:	January 17, 2001
Designer:	Susanna Rumpu & Ari Lakaniemi
Denomination:	1st Class (FIM 3.50)
Stamp-size:	34.5 mm x 24 mm
Perforation:	13 1/4 x 13 1/4
Paper:	Stamp paper 102 g/M2
Issue:	1,000,000
Printers:	Joh. Enschede Security Printers, The Netherlands
Printing method:	Offset 5/0

This Year's Friendship Stamps Presented in Booklet of Six Flowers Painted by Minna Immonen Issued January 17th

Flowers by Ms. Minna Immonen adorn the stamps in the With Friendship booklet

Minna Immonen has painted a set of flower arrangements for the stamps in the With Friendship booklet to be issued next year. The non-denominated self-adhesive stamps in the booklet, issued on January 17th, featured lush bouquets, garlands and wreaths. Two of the flower arrangements also feature a letter. One stamp shows a coffee-table decorated with flowers, another a heart-shaped gâteau, also garnished with flowers. The stamps in the booklet are designed with St. Valentine's Day greetings in mind, but the stamps are equally well suited, e.g. for invitations and congratulation cards.

A stationery set, also adorned with art by Minna Immonen, was also issued simultaneously with the stamp booklet. Besides the With Friendship stamp booklet, the set, called Flower Basket, contains six



sheets of stationery and six envelopes.

Postcards by Minna Immonen are sold at the Philatelic Shop in the Main Post Office of Helsinki .



Worlds Ski Championships in Lahti Featured on First Class Stamps

On 17 January Finland Post issued two FIM 3.50 commemorative stamps to celebrate the Lahti 2001 World Championships in skiing.

The pictorial subjects of the stamps blend together to form a single picture. The stamp to the left shows ski jumper Janne Ahonen in mid-air. His jump took off from the stamp to the right, whose main subject is skier Mika Myllyllyd in a slope. Ms Susanna Rumpu and Mr. Ari Lakaniemi, the designers of the stamps, express the dynamic nature of winter sports by blending the contours of the athletes with each other. A silhouette of the spectators stand is shown at the left-hand lower corner of the pair. A man waving the Finnish flag can be discerned. According to the artists, the shading of the stand expresses the fact that this big event will be broadcast to viewers all over the world.

The mascot of the games, a merry lynx called Harri, is egging the competitors on in the margins.

The World Championships will be held February 15-25, 2001. This will be the sixth time the games are hosted by Lahti.



New Issues from Finland are available from The Philatelic Cener, P. O. Box 2, FIN-00011 POSTI, FINLAND or it is also possible to order cards and stamps over the Internet, at the electronic stamp shop of Finland Post: www.posti.fi.

Jay Smith & Associates or your favorite dealer also has a new stamp order service.

Mourning Stamp Catalyst for Finnish Nationalism and Protest of Russian Stamps - 100th Anniversary Noted

from *Filatelisti*, 7/2000, translated by Carita Parker

One of the most beautiful in Finnish philately - the so-called mourning stamp - was issued one hundred years ago in August 1900. Although, it was soon called "Mourning Stamp," it is actually not a postage stamp, but a specimen carrying the Finnish coat-of-arms indicating the original mailing place. The reason for the issuance of this black background item was the national sorrow that the use of Finnish stamps was prohibited first on foreign mail, from August 14, 1900, and later on domestic mail as well, from January 14, 1901.

This text deals with the issuance of the mourning stamp, its use and different variations. The text is mainly based on and, in many instances, directly borrowed from the Matti Poutavaara book about mail in the oppression era, titled in Finnish "Postia sortokaudelta" published by Gummerus, Jyväskylä 1973. Information also included from the work by Seppo Arvelin on the Ring Stamps and Stationery 100 years 1.5.1991 (May 1), in *Finnish Rengasmerkit ja ehiöt 100 vuotta 1. 5. 1991* published by Hangon Kirjapaino Oy, Hanko 1991. The article illustrations are from the Aimo Pulkkinen collection representing the oppression era.

The Tuesday, August 14, 1900, editorial of the *Päivälehti* paper dealt with Finnish postal history and bemoaned the decision imposed. "The unfortunate order effective today is only one more aspect in the little by little chain of events. From this day on mail from Finland abroad is no longer permitted to be franked with other than Russian

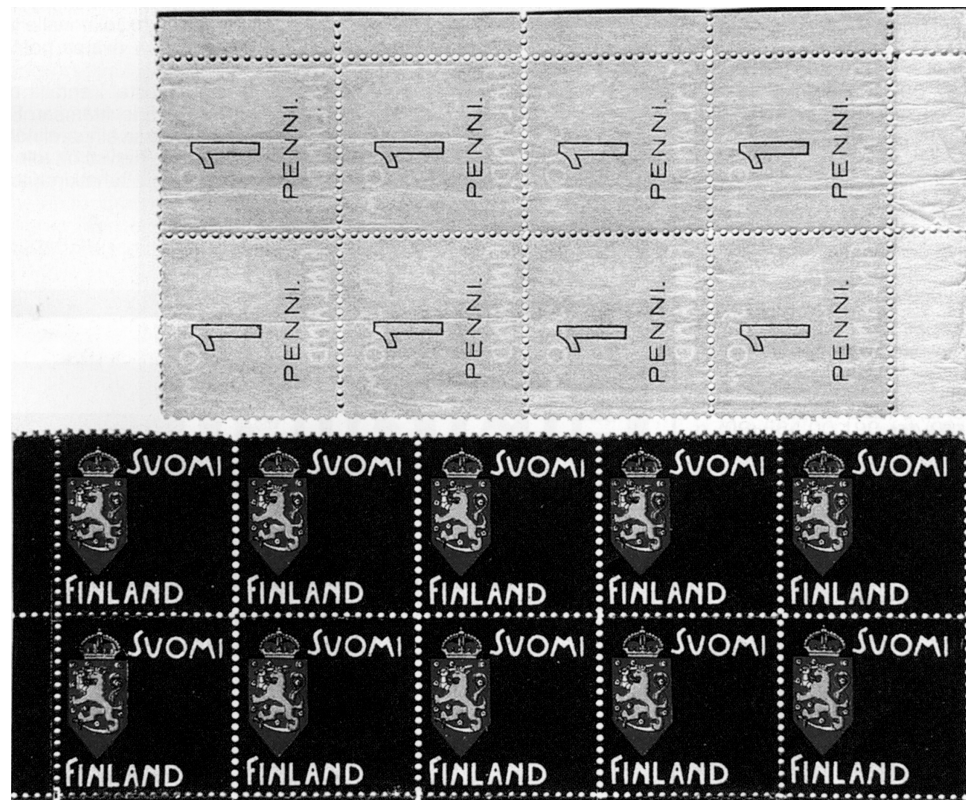


Figure 1. The two groups of mourning stamps; front set of 10, and the back - set of 8. The stamp rate marked on the reverse helps in identifying one stamp type, but on two others it is entirely lacking. Poutvaara lists, in addition to the original, five other later printed types.

stamps to which a special value in Finnish currency has been determined." The paper was also eager for someone to blame. "Those Russian journalists who started the campaign against our (Finland's) postal department have achieved their goal. Anything practical or advantageous accomplished by this imposition is hard for us in Finland to comprehend."

On Thursday *Päivälehti* reported: "A telegram from the Russian Interior Ministry that arrived here (Finland) informs, that the 1891 Vienna convention 16th paragraph prohibits the use of coat-of-arms stamps on envelopes, post cards and other postal matter. Mail franked with such stamps will no longer be postally delivered." In order to clarify the matter even further, an official statement from the Department of Communication Ways and Means Committee was published: "The spreading and transporting of any kinds of pictures, vignettes,



Figure 2. Postally used mourning stamp postcards, one of which is “dated” (in Swedish) “H:fors Nyarsafton” (Translation: Helsingfors, New Years Eve), mark HELSINKI 1.1.01. Date on specimen to the right, 24. 1. 01, cancelled on the Helsinki-St. Petersburg postal rail car - Turku arrival cds 25. 1. 01. It is obvious even from the picture, that the right-side card printing appears more faint - the paper more grainy. Both items are rarely seen mourning stamp objects.

stamps, or in general any items and depictions having a political reference is prohibited.”

Thus, the mourning stamp carried quite a weight, in its day, making even the Russian Interior Ministry wanting to ban its use. But how did all this come about?

OPPRESSION AND UNIFICATION

In its time the Mourning Stamp thus became quite a factor, compelling even the Russian Interior Ministry to prohibit its use. How did all this begin?

For one hundred years now, the talk in Finland has been about the measures of Russian oppression and imposed Russian influence whenever Finland’s position and the relationship between Finland and Russia of the late 1800’s to early 1900’s has come up. These actions were viewed as that of zealous Russian expansionists wishing to crush smaller nations and integrate them into Russia.

A more recent study has somewhat shifted the emphasis, and considers the Russian government’s actions an attempt at unification - part of

the competition among the European powers and their war preparations begun at the end of the 1800’s. It is viewed that the attempt was not primarily to integrate small nations into Russia, but to unify the entire realm in the face of an external threat. This, however, could have been accomplished in many ways especially with Russian expansionists still active.

Finland’s situation, as part of Russia, had been very independent and unique. From the Finnish point of view the many unification attempts were like turning back the clock of history. Unification threatened to eliminate that which had been practiced for decades and had proved to work well, namely the Finns running their own business. Although, according to Professor Osmo Jussila, the Finns knew already then how to “play” also the St. Petersburg (later Moscow) “card” to their own advantage.

Finland’s position was that of a state within a state, which even made the Czar wonder aloud whether “Finland is part of Russia or Russia part of Finland,” as the Finns were opposed to postal unification, appealing instead to Finland’s own laws. From the Empire standpoint, Finnish nationalism, lawfulness, and public education amounted to separatism. But to the Russian people, Finland, even as a part of the Empire, was considered foreign with its own language, currency, laws and parliament. Actually, the only thing in common was the Emperor and even this Autocrat the Finns dared to challenge, adhering rather to their own constitution.



Figure 3. Domestically cancelled “mourning stationery card,” postmarked, HAAPAKOSKI 16. XII. 00, arrived in Vyborg on, 19. XII. 00.



Figure 4. A mourning stationery card mailed to abroad. Such postally used cards with the Mourning Stamp already printed on them are little known and hard to come by. This card carries the (in Swedish) "FRAN FINLAND" (from Finland) harbor mark. The cards were hand carried to the boat, since use of the mourning stamps were banned immediately on August 15, 1900. The card was sent to Copenhagen with the Swedish TPO, P. K. X. P No 81 A, 10/10/03, and SUNDSVALL 9/10; then, KJOBENHAMN, 11/10/03 international arrival postmark.

UNIFICATION THROUGH COMMUNICATIONS

The politics of unification was begun with the communication services, such as the post- and telegraph as well as the Customs and through monetary affairs. The Russian industry resisted unification of the Customs and the Russian Finance Minister unification of money matters.

Initially the Postal Manifesto was issued on June 12, 1890 wherein Finland came under the control of the Russian Interior Ministry in violation of Finnish law. This Ministry in turn ordered Russian currency ring stamps and stationery (valid until May 14, 1911) to be used in Finland beginning on May 1, 1891. The rings indicated that monies from their sale would be credited to Finland. The stamps remained unpopular.

Furthermore, Russian stamps became valid also in Finland provided that letters franked with these were deposited in mailboxes. Finnish stamps were valid domestically and abroad, but no longer to Russia after January 1, 1892. Beginning January 16, 1892, letters franked with Finnish stamps addressed

to Russia were devalued to zero and had to be redeemed.

These actions were considered to be the first link in the chain of unification efforts. Then came the order to convert the postmarks into Russian. This was made public in a Postal Administration circular on December 23, 1893. The locality name in Cyrillic was added to the mark and those marked "FINLAND" began to be removed from use. The earliest use of the Russian marks began at the end of that same (1893) year. However, the 1889-type stamps

were required already to also indicate the country name and value in Russian.

The next step was the so-called February Manifesto or declaration of February 3, 1899. This gave the Czar the liberty to decide which governmental laws were general enough be applied effortlessly also in Finland. Opposition to the Manifesto culminated with a large citizen petition signed by over 520,000 Finns, and a so-called cultural petition signed by nearly all well-known individuals around the world associated with cultural affairs - a total of 1,063 names. But too little avail!

An attempt at discontinuing the use of Finnish stamps on foreign mail on January 1, 1900, and entirely on July 1, 1900, was delayed for about six months (until August 14, 1900 and January 14, 1901 respectively; or August 1, 1900 and January 1, 1901, according to the Russian calendar) due to Finnish opposition.

Because of the resistance, Russian stamps equal to Finnish monetary value became valid and accepted for use in Finland. The banned use of Finnish stamps on foreign mail was the catalyst for the issuance of the mourning stamp.

THE MOURNING STAMP

The Mourning Stamp was designed by artist Axel Gallen (Gallen-Kallela) and financed by bookstore owner Wentzel Hagelstam. The purpose for the use of the Mourning Stamp is explained in a sales promotion letter.

The letter was issued in Helsinki on June 1, 1900, by the Communication Department Ways and Means Committee to the Finnish Postal Administration concerning valid Finnish postage stamp regulations. The letter emphasizes that Finnish stamps on mail abroad were to be discontinued beginning on August 14 "of this year," after which mail from Finland to foreign destinations was to be solely franked with Empire postage stamps. However, beginning on the same (above) date, Empire postage was also allowed to be used alongside Finnish stamp values on postal mail in Finland.

The letter continues: "It might therefore be advisable after Russian postage has replaced Finnish stamps, that the home locality right of Finnish letter mail be indicated with the coat-of-arms stamp(s), to be attached to the envelope right-hand corner, in the usual postage stamp spot, so as to fulfill their purpose, without being considered postage stamps."

"Great quantities of these Finnish coat-of-arms stamps (of which one sample is enclosed) have been printed from a design by Axel Gallen. In the spirit of (Finnish) patriotism, these most certainly will be used all over our country from August 14th onward, and be seen on every letter cover in addition to a Russian stamp."

The coat-of-arms stamps were available from the undersigned and only by enclosing with the order, a cash amount. The specimens were sold for 1 penni each. Wholesalers received a 20% discount for a minimum order of 500. "Those who wish to be sufficiently prepared when the coat-of-arms date of use begins, in case of great demand, should right-away order larger quantities."

Helsinki, July 30th, 1900
Wentzel Hagelstam

INCOME FROM SALE FOR PATRIOTIC PURPOSES

Sale of the mourning stamp began quite publicly through newspaper ads, by word of mouth, and



Figure 5. A postcard from Helsinki, 15.VIII.00, to Stockholm arriving there on 8. 16. 1900. The mourning stamp is cancelled also. Picture below, is the front of the same card depicting the merrymaking on the Moulin Rouge at the Place Blanche.

through the circular letter issue. The following column appeared in the August 11, 1900 "Keski-Suomi" paper:

"A BEAUTIFUL STAMP displaying Finland's colored coat-of-arms on black background with the printed words "SUOMI FINLAND" in white lettering has recently appeared in bookstores. The stamp is very suitable on foreign postal deliveries, cost 1 penni apiece, and is available in every bookstore around the country. As far as we (at the paper) understand, the profit from the sale of this stamp will go for general welfare purposes. In order to further the idea of this specimen, it would be advisable that everyone unite in using this particular stamp."

On August 18, 1900, the "Keski-Suomi" paper reported that the Mourning Stamp had been prohibited from use, and concluded the news story with: "Presumably because of this ban, all mail with



Figure 6. "Mourning stationery card" domestic mail postmarked, Helsinki, 19. XI. 00, frontstamped at Pernå, 19. XI. 00.



Figure 7. Printed matter rate for postcard by postal rail car, K. P. X. P. No. ___, to Helsinki, 13. 1. 01; frontstamped, Helsinki, 15. 1. 01.

the coat-of-arms stamp, dropped off on the 14th of this month at the post office(s), were marked invalid and undelivered. So far, there has been no official ban on the use of the coat-of-arms stamp. Thus, the public that relies on the postal service to deliver on time, perhaps even important mail, will suffer unfairly while the mail remains undelivered to destinations."

Additionally it was mentioned (in the paper), that the amount of letters and postcards was 10 times greater than usual in the final days when Finnish

postage stamps were still allowed.

The "official" use of the Mourning Stamps began on August 14, 1900, but the stamps had been ready and distributed to sellers, mainly bookstores, at least a week or two prior. Consequently, the earliest known use of the mourning stamp, according to Poutvaara, was already on August 7th. Again citing Poutvaara, the premature use happened due to ignorance of the matter. Similar lack of information was very much evident in the domestic use of the Mourning Stamp alongside Finnish postage during

the months when Finnish stamps were still in use. Referring once more to Poutvaara, the only accepted use (of the Mourning Stamp) alongside Finnish postage was in conjunction with the final days of use.

FROM COUNTRY SYMBOL TO MOURNING STAMP

The original name of the mourning stamp was that of “coat-of-arms.” And it was supposed to indicate the “home location right” or country of origin on letters and cards to foreign destinations due to the fact that this was no longer obvious from the postage stamps. Soon however, the name changed to mourning stamp, which in fact it was meant to be all along.

Use of the Mourning Stamp became a tug-of-war right from the start between users and the (Finnish) Postal Administration (Bobrikov behind it). When the Mourning Stamp “appeared” August 14, 1900, Bobrikov apparently was aware of it already beforehand, since the Postal Administration issued a circular the next day in which, on orders from the Interior Minister, the postal service was prohibited to deliver mail “that, for instance, carries the newly issued black background stamps on which Finland’s coat-of-arms is printed in red and yellow.”

However, this was not sufficient. Another circular had to be issued by the postal department, on September 10, 1900, concerning the use of the stamp. In it was decreed, that letter mail not allowed to be postally sent, as indicated in the first circular, had to be sent instead under separate cover to the Postal Administration. In other words, the letters were to be confiscated.

Still, a third circular about the matter was issued in December, and in it even the authorities give the specimen the Mourning Stamp recognition.

The response to the ban from those who utilized the Mourning Stamps was to take the mail addressed to foreign destinations directly to the ships.

In the most extreme cases, the Mourning Stamp was gummed to the letter (paper) and inserted in a transparent envelope franked with a valid postage stamp. Such an object incidentally was put up for sale at the Hellman auction, on October 1, 2000 in Helsinki. A separate circular had to be issued prohibiting even such use as the aforementioned. Mail furnished with the Mourning Stamp(s) was addressed also to Russia.

Another wave of use, smaller in scale, happened still in January 1901, when Finnish postage was entirely banned. The use of Mourning Stamps and stationery cards ended with the ban on all stamps of a political nature, though later on, boat mail included stationery cards.

Interestingly enough, the Mourning Stamps became popular as collectibles immediately upon issuance and also abroad, even in Russia, according to a clipping from the Keski-Suomi paper, February 19, 1901: “MOURNING STAMPS VALUABLE. These well-known stamps that have met with such misfortune in Finland are, regardless, still viable and valuable. These specimens have continued to circulate around the world and have ended up in the postage stamp market, though far from being postage stamps. As an example, in Moscow they are seen in many stores. In one window, there is a Mourning Stamp adorning a large advertisement that reads: “Rare opportunity - stamps for sale utilized for only one day.” Inside, the asking price is 50 kopecks apiece.” In Finnish currency 50 kopeck equaled 1.50 Fmk; when it sold for 1 penni apiece in Finland. The letter rate then was 20 penni.

Besides the Mourning Stamp itself, there are Mourning Stamp stationery and picture cards also. On the former, the stamp pattern is similar to the Type-I; whereas on the latter, the details appear somewhat “feigned.” Both are pictured in the article.

ONE PLUS FIVE DIFFERENT REPRINTS OF THE MOURNING STAMPS

Besides the one “official” Mourning Stamp, at least five reprints were made according to findings hitherto. All of the postally used mourning stamps are Type-1. The reprints were made later and only for commercial purposes because the stamp generated much interest also abroad.

The premier Mourning Stamp type supplied by Wentzel Hagelstam was apparently printed at the Gust. Arvidssons Lithography Atelier in Helsinki. The printed quantity is unknown.

The second domestic stamp - type II - was printed in Tampere in 1914, at the Syren Lithography Co. All the other specimens are presumed to have been printed abroad - dates of printing and locations unknown.

Classification of the Mourning Stamp types was started in 1921, with new categories added along the way. Poutvaara has made the following distinctions:



Figure 8. Two pairs of mourning stamps with perforation shift(s) from the first, bona fide printing.

The first ones are the domestic printings and the next are categorized in order of rarity, which has caused two types without background printing to be placed last.

The following includes some of the characteristics of the different types in aforementioned order:

I. Arch on crown rounded; inner frameline consistent; chain of pearls connected by line. Crown base 4 1/2 mm wide, with two thin black lines on yellow background space between lines thicker than the lines. Sword handshield toward blade. Dot after penni on stamp reverse - horizontally elongated.

II. Arch on crown broken up and lower than on Type-I. In place of pearl chain irregular short lines. Sword handshield arched toward hilt. Colored spot on sword blade in front of paw. Crown base 4 1/2 mm wide; yellow background between two black lines only a narrow streak. Letter "A" inner triangle larger than and with more pointed corners than any other type. Letter "N" middle line on backside word "penni" arched up and beak on 1 straight and short.

III. Black color dull grayish. Arch of crown half of regular circle and as such a little bigger than on any other type. In place of pearl chain toothline cutting on consistent and solid bottom arch. Crown base width 6 mm. Black protrusion in place of lion's mouth, where only a faint colored streak is discernible of the tongue. Bottom end of sword

handshield slightly misformed toward blade. All black outlines on coat-of-arms design thicker than on any other type. Background printing similar to Type-I.

IV. Top of crown arch elongated past 2-3 pearls at summit both sides; sheet has a few rounder arches. Pearls separate without connecting line and their bottom innerline has almost disappeared with only a smitten discernible by the left-side arch on some of the stamps. Base as in Type-I. The sword handle is only thinly visible and the shield short beak toward handle. Printed background similar to Type-I, point only is round. Stamps gumless. Black color of stamp has dull brownish tinge.

V. Stamp color deep black. Colors on coat-of-arms also bright. Crown arch formed solely by separate dots sans support lines, somewhat flattened on top, base 5 mm wide, thinner yellow middle line between pronounced black lines. Sharp point in place of sword handle and handshield only a black spot. Black (round) circles for rosettes with dot in middle. (Gumless?). Background not printed.

VI. Stamp approximately 3 mm lower and pair narrower on average than other types. Printed black background limited to tooth pattern, between it and perforation is a white margin. Crown flattened at top; in place of pearl chain a tooth-like arch where between baseline and supportline is an unbroken black line. Base 41 mm wide, yellow middle line somewhat more pronounced than black lines. Names of country approximately 1/3 lower lettering than on the other types. South-east rosette missing on coat-of-arms design. No background Gummed.

Sheet sizes vary. On type-I printed sheet, there had been mini-sheets two 50 ea. on the left, and two 100 ea. on the right. Black border between sheets, but printed sheet outer margins white. Type II has 9 x 8 or 72 stamps per sheet, white margins 15-25 mm wide. Type III sheet is 5 x 4 + 5 x 4 with 7 mm horizontal base, sheet has black margins. Apparently there had been 4 mini-sheets to a printed sheet. Type IV has horizontal row of 12 and vertically 7 stamps, the black background extends 3-5 mm outside of perforation, in addition to a 10-15 mm white margin. Type V and VI sheet format unknown.

Wasa Issue 20 Penni Cards Used to Abroad - Philatelic Rarities



Figure 1. The “Lehtonen” card. The censor mark does not cover the 20 penni value stamp and the cds on the left shows the month as May.



Figure 2. The “Quinby” card. On this card, tri-lingual censor stamp is tied to the value stamp on the left side. The cds on the left shows month as June while the cds struck on the value stamp shows the month as May. Clearly, two similar, but different cards were mailed to Germany on the same day.

I recently came across an interesting article by Kari Lehtonen about the early use of the 20 penni Vaasa card to abroad. The article struck me because the item pictured in Figure 1 looked very much like an item from my own collection, Figure 2.

Kari Lehtonen writes:

“The 15 penni Vaasa issue stationery cards appeared in postal offices beginning March 16, 1918. The 20 penni cards did not appear until May 1, 1918. The selling of the Vaasa issues and cards was discontinued on June 24, 1918. And likewise, the Vaasa stamps and postal cards were then also prohibited on mail sent abroad.

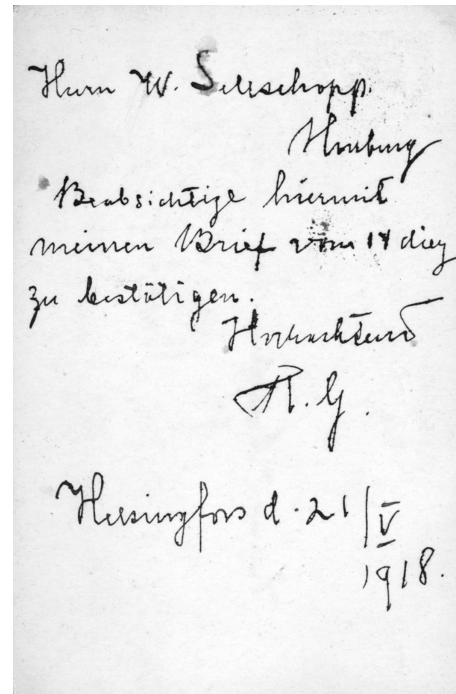


Figure 3. The date on the message side of the Quinby card shows that it was written on 21. V. 1918 (May 21, 1918).

“Thus, the 20 penni stationery card can only be seen on foreign mail during a period of 55 days. Because of the small number available, these types of cards are rarely obtainable. The 20 penni Vaasa postal stationery cards are uncommon even on regular postal mailings. The added difficulties about the card shown in Figure 1 is firstly, that the Cyrillic is still present on this the Helsinki chain mark. Secondly, that the Roman numeral for the month on the (22. V. 1918) date happens to be incorrect. It should read 22.VI.1918. In other respects, the censor mark in three languages is quite appropriate on an object such as this.”

The Lehtonen and Quinby postal cards are similar in the following respects:

- 1) The same person addressed both cards.
- 2) Both cards were addressed to the same person.
- 3) Both cards were mailed in Helsinki on May 22, 1918.
- 4) Both cards were correctly struck with the tri-lingual censor mark in Helsinki.

The message side of the Quinby card, Figure 3, clearly indicates that the note was written on 21. V. 1918, not in June as suggested by Lehtonen.



According to Jorma Keturi, the tri-lingual censor stamp was used as early as May 17, 1918. Therefore, the earlier date (May 22) is not invalidated by the censor stamp. See *The Finnish Philatelist*, February 1999, p. 12.

There is one other common characteristic, which should be noted. Both of these cards are among the earliest known Vaasa franked items originating in Helsinki and among the very few Vaasa items with the Helsinki cds with Russian text. The Russian text was removed from the Helsinki cancellers beginning about May 24th.

In November 1918, the Vaasa stamps were again placed on sale and allowed for use on mail to abroad. Nevertheless, the Vaasa stamps and postal cards used to abroad are very difficult. See Figures 4 and 5.

Figure 4, top left. Helsinki, 8. IV. 19, to Berlin. The German text was removed from the censor stamp at the end of June, 1918. The card is overfranked 10 penni. The 20 penni card rate to abroad remained in effect until February 1, 1921. Figure 5, lower left. This card was mailed in the small town of Suonnejoki, 12. IV. 20, to Wiesbaden, Germany. A few Vaasa cards are also known used to Sweden; other destinations are very scarce.

Finnish Censorship of Mail From Latvia 1939-40

by Maris Tirums from *Krajejs*, Journal of the Latvian Philatelic Society

The infamous “Non-Aggression Treaty” between Germany and the Soviet Union, which was concluded on August 23, 1939, assigned the Baltic States to the Soviet sphere of interest, and this was a factor that eventually led to Latvia’s occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union. Another nation, which was victimized by this Treaty, was Finland as it too was assigned to the Soviet sphere of interest.

The Soviets lost no time in taking full advantage of the secret terms of its treaty with Germany. Since Germany was the one outstanding power that could stand in the way of Soviet expansion in Europe, and since Germany had now given the U.S.S.R. a free hand to act, the Soviets moved quickly to gain their objectives. On October 5, 1939, the Soviets requested that a Finnish delegation come to Moscow to engage in political discussions. This was the first of a series of blatantly hostile acts by the U.S.S.R. that culminated in what is now known as the “Winter War” during the early months of World War II.

The Finnish delegation to Moscow was issued a series of demands the most significant of which were that Finland surrender certain strategically important areas of the Karelian Isthmus to the Soviet Union, and that Finland lease the Hanko Peninsula to the Soviets for a naval base. The Finns refused to agree to these demands, and on November 30, 1939 Soviet armed forces invaded Finland.

The Finns put up a stiff resistance, and the initial Soviet assault was stopped after it made some advances onto Finnish land. The Finns could not hope to win the war, however, as the country’s resources were strained and little material help was forthcoming from other nations. On March 12, 1940, a peace treaty was signed in Moscow that gave the Soviets those concessions, which they had demanded from Finland originally.

Finland was forced to cede the southeastern part of the country to the U.S.S.R. and to lease Hanko for 30 years as a Soviet military base. Most of the



Figure 1. Postmarked on December 12, 1939. The Town name in the cancellation is too faint to read. This cover was mailed to Finland during the Winter War. The rectangular Finnish censor mark in violet ink was applied on the front. This mark, which in Finnish and Swedish reads "Inspected By Wartime Censor", was introduced in December, 1939 and remained in use until June, 1944. The censor's initials are inscribed in the right hand box of the censor stamp.

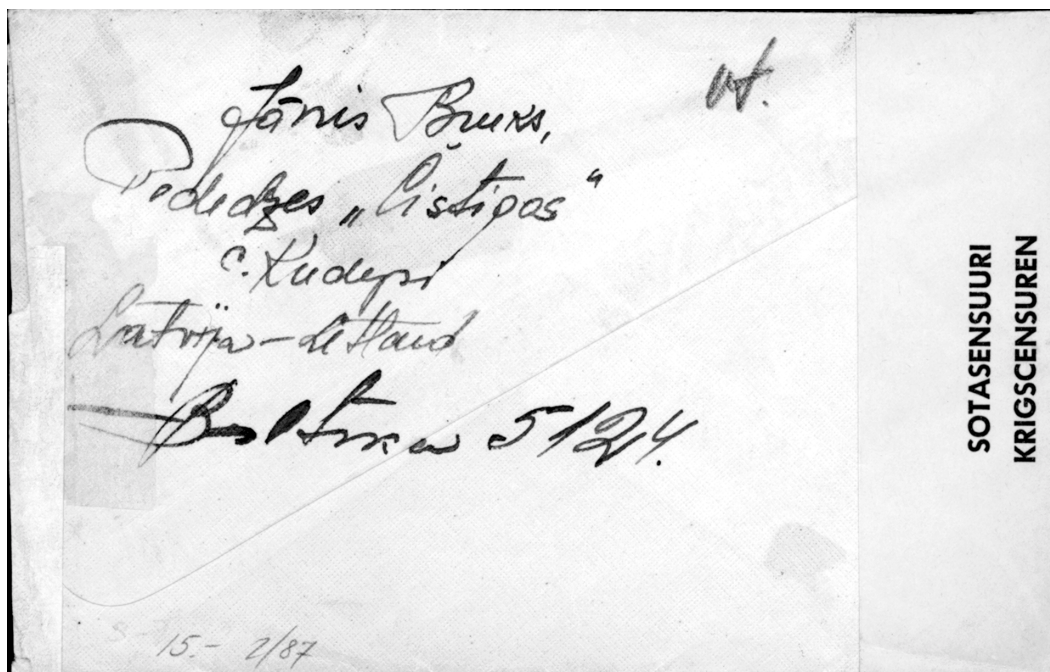


Figure 2. The reverse side of above cover shows the commonly used bi-lingual resealing tape used during this period. This cover is the only cover in this collection of correspondence to Orivesi that is not backstamped with a transit or arrival cds.

Finnish inhabitants in these areas were evacuated to areas under Finnish control. After the Peace Treaty was concluded, the Soviets used intimidation to pressure Finland into following Moscow's wishes; the Soviets began intervening in Finnish internal affairs, a defensive treaty between Finland and Sweden was vetoed by Moscow, and Finland had to provide military transit rights to Soviets for travel to Hanko.

Under the war conditions that prevailed in Finland

from the end of November in 1939 through March 12, 1940, and for months thereafter, Finland instituted mail censorship. Censored letters were appropriately marked. Envelopes were resealed after inspection by strips of censor's tape of a type that was commonly used by many nations that also censored mail during this wartime period. Featured in this article are a group of covers mailed to Finland from Latvia. The covers show a variety of Finnish censorship markings.



Figure 3. Postmarked, Riga, 30. I. 40. The war between Finland and the U. S. S. R. was still being fought. The Finnish censor mark (censor 204) is in the lower right hand corner of the cover. The cover contained printed matter and was not sealed, therefore, no resealing tape was used to reseat the envelope.

The boxed text in the lower left is a handstamped slogan promoting "woodcutting" as a lucrative activity. This cover was for some reason mistakenly addressed to Estonia, but the postal clerk must have recognized "Orivesi as" as Finnish and it was delivered to Finland despite the faulty address.

Figure 4. Postmarked, Jaunjelgava, 21. IV. 40. Finland signed a peace treaty on March 12th, so hostilities were officially at an end when this cover was mailed. The cover bears the usual rectangular Finnish censor mark (censor 182) and was resealed at the left by the bi-lingual censor tape. A Helsinki machine transit postmark, 25. IV. 40, is on the reverse.

Figure 5. Postmarked, CESVAINE, 1. V. 40. This printed matter cover was mailed to Finland after the peace treaty with the Soviet Union was signed. The envelope was not originally sealed, and there is no resealing tape. The cover is backstamped with the Orivesi cds, 8. V. 40.



Figure



Figure 7

Figure 6. Postmarked Makaseni, 20. VII. 40. Latvia was occupied by the Soviet Union at the time this cover was mailed. Perhaps the sender was making a patriotic gesture by applying Latvian tourist labels on the front and back. Backstamped Helsinki, 22. VII. 40.



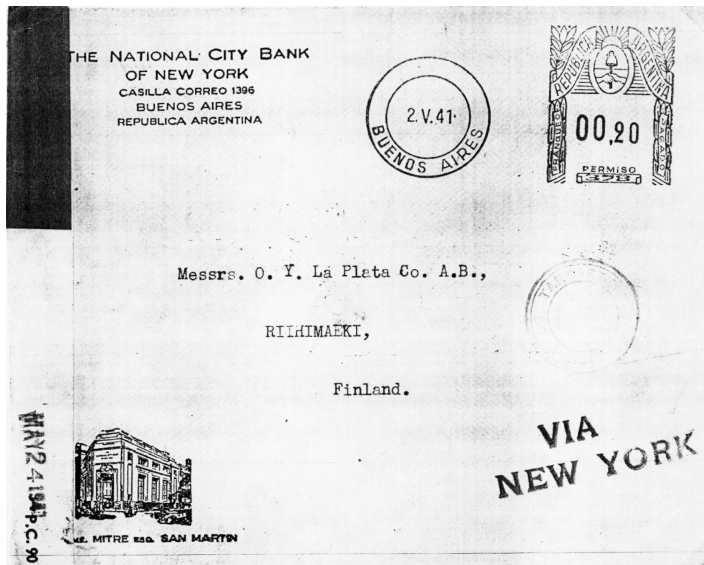
Figure 8. On the covers shown in Figures 6 and 8, the circular “TARTKASTETTU * GRANSKAT” censor stamp was applied. These stamps were used from November 1940 until May 1943. This triple ring stamp with the Finnish lion in the center is known with more than 100 different numbers. These numbers were the censor’s personal identification mark. This mark was often struck with a very light violet ink, but blue and black ink marks are also known. From Aluksne, 21. __. 40, to Orivesi as (railway station).



Figure 9. Postmarked at the Riga railway station post office, RIGA DZ. P. K., 9. 6. 40. This is the only cover in the group that has both a Helsinki transit cds, 10. VI. 40, and an Orivesi town arrival cds, although the date is unreadable. All the covers in this group appear to have been correctly franked as checked against the rate tables compiled by Ms. Vesma Grinfelds of the Latvian Philatelic Society.

Mail confiscated by English censors in Bermuda 1940 - 1946 from all American countries except Canada, the Dutch, British and French colonies

In July the British authorities in Bermuda and later in Trinidad started to inspect the mail between Finland and the Americas. The confiscated mail was sent to its destination mainly in January 1946 and a part of letters depending on the content already during the war.



A letter from Argentina: Buenos Aires , May 2, 1941

Confiscated by English censor in Bermuda May 24, 1942

Released in 1943 - Lisbon, March 19, 1943, to Tervakoski, April 9, 1943

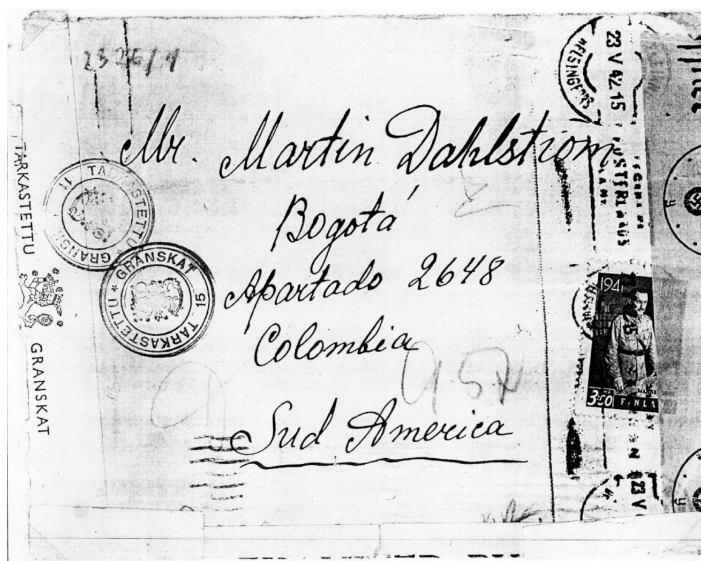
Letter rate: -20 g = 20 centavos

English Censor No. 5142 in Bermuda
Censor No. 50 in Helsinki

Surface mail via Stockholm from March 27, 1942 to July 20, 1944, to Haiti, the Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and South America

The sending of mail to the Americas was interrupted by the Finnish Postal Administration because of British confiscation of mail in Bermuda. The mail was totally interrupted to Canada and the British colonies in America.

Direction from April 21, 1941: From **Helsinki** and **Turku** to **Stockholm**, where letters were included with regular mail from Sweden addressed to Mexico and South America. The crossing of the Atlantic by the ships of the Ybarra company, the Capo de Buena Esperanza and the Cabo de Hornos. Usual correspondence was to be transported by surface mail only. Postal clerks were instructed to advise senders that the mail was not guaranteed to go through.



A letter to Colombia: Helsinki, 23. V. 42, to Bogotá, December 3, 1942

Rate: November 1, 1936 to September 30, 1942 for -20 g = 3.50 Fmk

English Censor No. 5142 in Bermuda
Censor Nos. 11 & 15 in Helsinki
Censored in Berlin
Censor Nos. 3326 & 3333 in the USA

Surface mail via Spain from March 27, 1942 to June 26, 1942, to the USA, Cuba, Guatemala, French Guiana, Cuba, the French West Indies, Salvador, St. Pierre & Miquelon

Direction from April 21, 1941: From **Helsinki** through Sweden, Berlin, Paris, and Bordeaux to Spain, and from there by the ships of the Spanish Ybarra company through Trinidad or Bermuda to **New York**.



A letter to the USA: Käpylä, 2. V. 42 to Detroit

Rate: November 1, 1936 to September 30, 1942 for -20 g = 3.50 Fmk

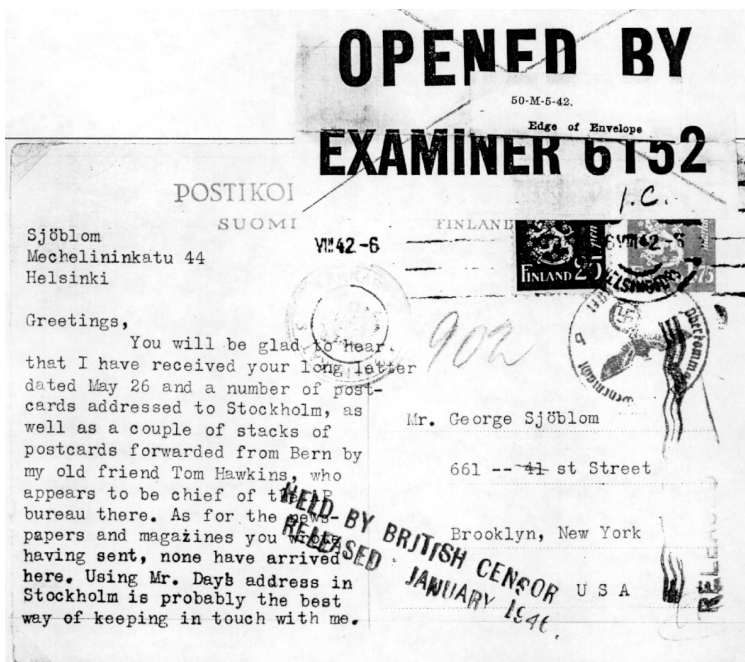
English Censor No. 5142 in Bermuda
 Censor Nos. 11 & 14 in Helsinki
 Censored in Berlin
 Censor Nos. 6452 in the USA

This letter was detained by the Censorship Office: "THIS ARTICLE HAS BEEN HELD BY THE OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP."

The letter was released in Detroit on September 19, 1945 and returned to the sender with the mark: "RETURN TO SENDER."

Surface mail via Lisbon from June 27, 1942 to August 20, 1942, to the USA, Cuba, Costa Rica, Guatemala, French Guiana, the French West Indies, Salvador, St. Pierre & Miquelon

Direction from April 21, 1941: From **Helsinki** through Sweden, Berlin, Paris, and Bordeaux to Spain, and from there by the ships of the Spanish Ybarra company through Trinidad or Bermuda to **New York**.



A postcard to the USA: Helsinki, 6. VIII. 42

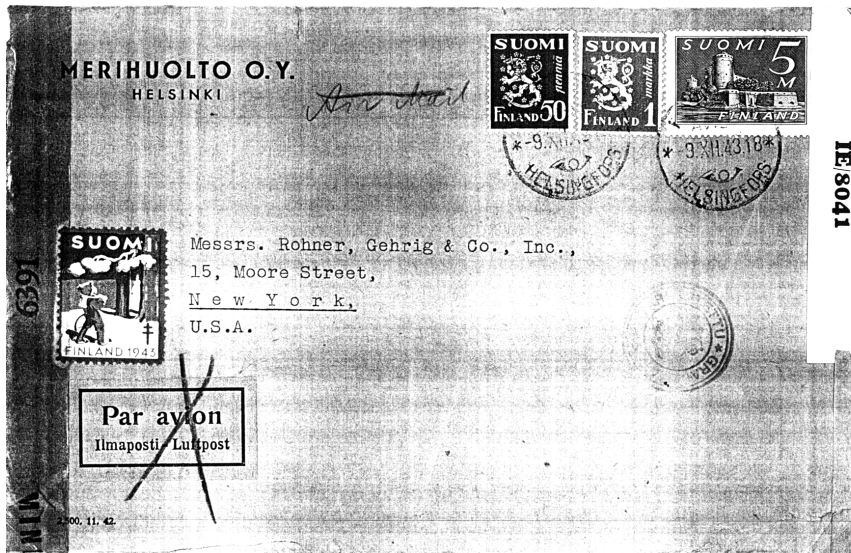
Rate: November 1, 1936 to September 30, 1942 for -20 g = 2.00 Fmk

English Censor No. 6152 in Bermuda
 Censor Nos. 36 in Helsinki
 Censored in Berlin

This card was detained by the English censor in Bermuda and not released until January, 1946.

Surface mail via Spain from August 21, 1942 to August 20, 1944, to the USA, Cuba, Costa Rica, Guatemala, French Guiana, the French West Indies, Salvador, St. Pierre & Miquelon

Direction from: From **Helsinki** through Sweden, Berlin, Paris, and Bordeaux to Spain, and from there by the ships of the Spanish Ybarra company through Trinidad to **New York**.



Air mail letter to the USA:
Helsinki, 9. XII. 43

Rate: October 1, 1942 to June 30, 1945 for -20 g = 4.50 Fmk

Air mail rate to the Nordic countries: October 1, 1942 to September 30, 1957: -20 g = 2.00 Fmk

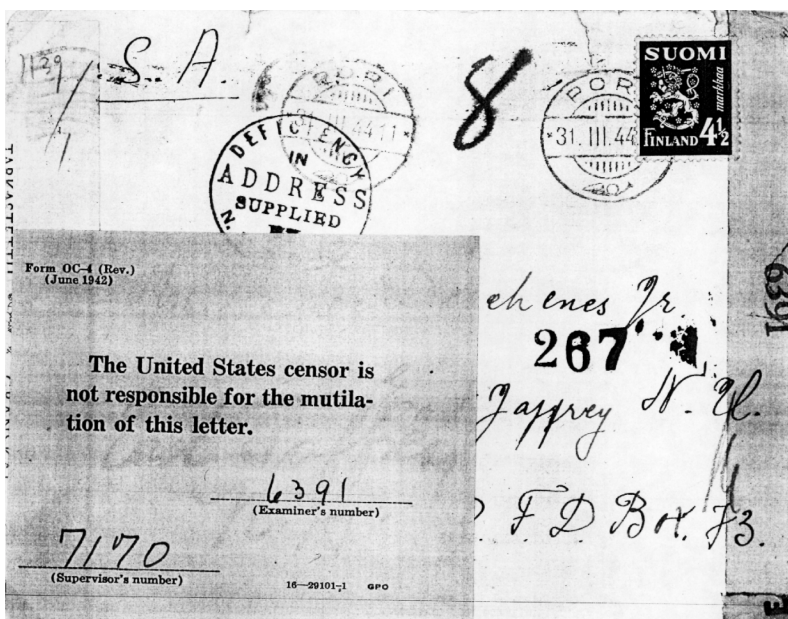
English Censor No. 8041 in Trinidad
Censor No. 40 in Helsinki
Censor No. 6391 in the USA

The air mail markings were voided at the Helsinki exchange office according to Article 6 of the air mail agreement and because the transportation of air mail had been stopped.

Surface mail via Spain from August 21, 1942 to August 20, 1944, to the USA, Cuba, Costa Rica, Guatemala, French Guiana, the French West Indies, Salvador, St. Pierre & Miquelon

Direction from: From **Helsinki** through Sweden, Berlin, Paris, and Bordeaux to Spain, and from there by the ships of the Spanish Ybarra company through Trinidad to **New York**.

In 1944 letter mail was sent six times from Finland to New York. The last mailing was sent on May 20th.



A letter to the USA: Pori, 31. III. 44

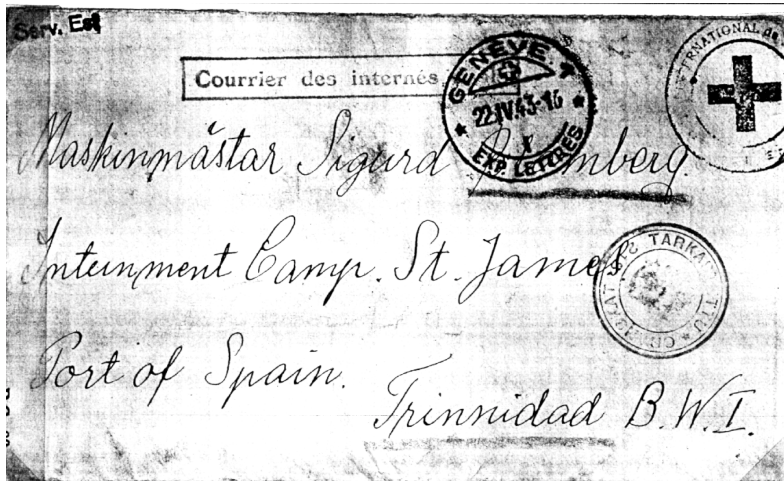
Rate: October 1, 1942 to June 30, 1945 for -20 g = 4.50 Fmk

Censor No. 94 Turku
Censored in Berlin
Censor No. 6391 in the USA

A certificate was placed on the cover by the U.S. censor and signed by the supervisor that they were not responsible for the condition of the letter.

Surface mail via Geneva from March 27, 1942 to December 30, 1943 to interned civilians in Trinidad.

Direction: From **Helsinki** by the Finnish Red Cross through Stockholm to the International Red Cross in **Geneva**, and from there through Portugal and later through Spain by ship to Trinidad.



A letter to Trinidad: the sender from Parainen, via Geneva, 22. IV. 43

Rate: free of postal charge

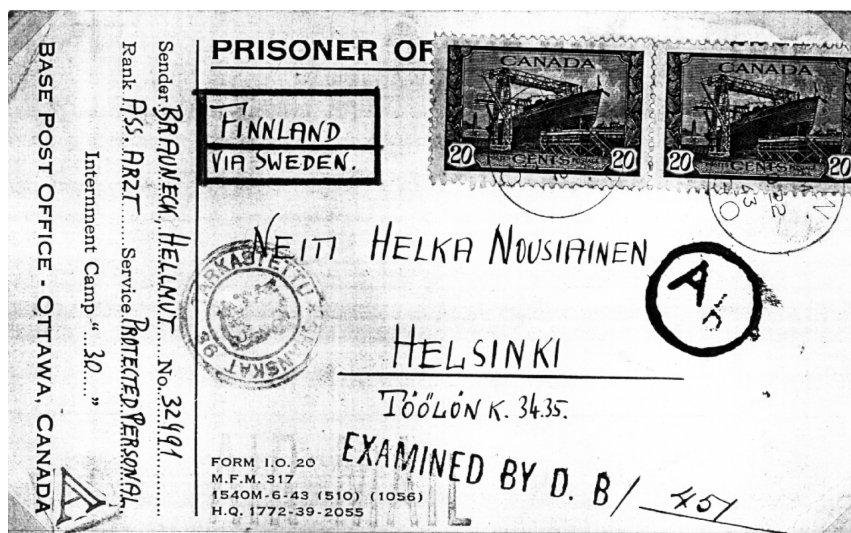
Censor No. 218 in Helsinki
English censor No. 8614 in Trinidad

Ordinary letters up to 2 kilos and usual postcards and printed material could be sent to the internees. The internee's name and address was required on the cover of the postal material. The last persons interned in Trinidad were released on December 30, 1943 with the assistance of the Swedish government.

The stamp of the Finnish Red Cross: "Courrier des internés". The stamp of the International Red Cross in Geneva: "Comite International de la Croix Rouge".

Air mail to Finland by the POWs transferred to Canada from 1943 to June, 1944

Direction: From **Montreal** to New York. From there by the route of Pan American Airways, New York - Puerto Rico - Trinidad - Bolama - Lisbon. From there by the air route Lisbon - Madrid - Lyon - Berlin - **Stockholm** - Helsinki.



Postcard to Helsinki from a German M.D. transferred to Canada: P. O. W. Camp 30, November 22, 1943.

Air mail rate: 40 cents

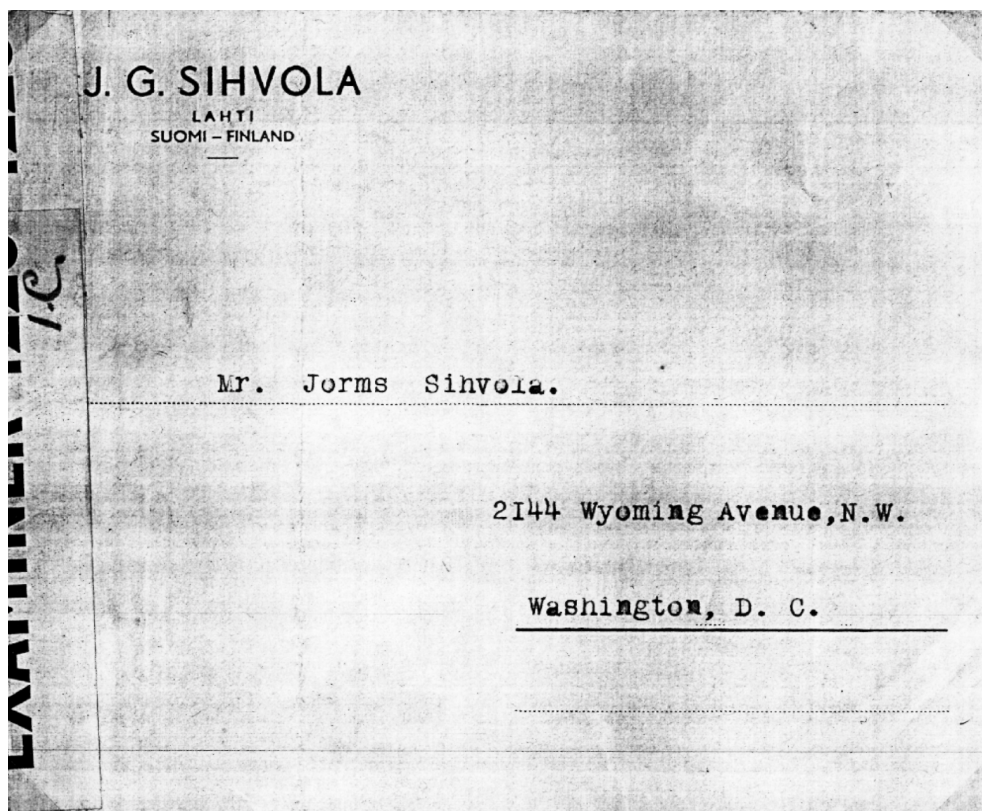
Censored in Canada and Censored in Berlin

Censor No. 36 in Helsinki

Courier/ diplomatic mail of private persons from June 7, 1941 to September 1944 to the Finnish legations in the Americas

Personnel and their relatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had the right to send letters by courier mail (diplomatic mail) according to the decision of the official controlling this mail.

Direction: With a courier from Helsinki to the Finnish Embassy in Berlin and further with German courier mail to Madrid. The Finnish Embassy in Madrid took care of redirecting mail to the Americas with a courier of a neutral country.



A private courier letter to an official in the Embassy of Washington. No official covers of the embassy were allowed to be used for private purposes.

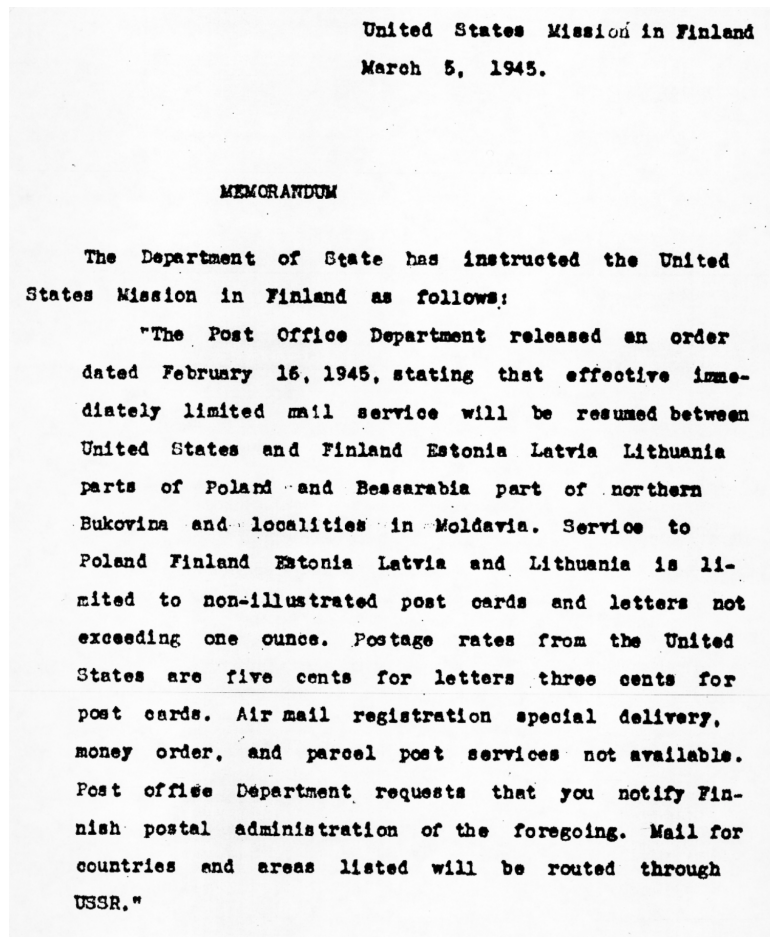
Rate: Free of charge

English censor No. 4226 in Bermuda

The English mail control in Bermuda was also concerned with courier mail. As the reason for that, the English stated that there was no permission for mail given by them in advance. All confiscated mail was delivered with the English courier to America, where mail was transferred to the Finnish Embassy.

Limited postal traffic between the Americas and Finland was opened on March 5, 1945

The United States Post Office released an order dated February 16, 1945 authorizing resumption of limited mail service to Finland and other countries in Eastern Europe. The Finnish Postal Administration was informed of this decision on March 5, 1945.



Surface mail to Finland via Soviet Union from February 27, 1945 to August 1, 1945 from all American countries

The first mail from the USA arrived through Moscow to Helsinki on June 27, 1945 containing 3,000 ordinary letters and some postcards mailed in January, February and March in the USA.

Direction: From February 27, 1945, New York by ship to Odessa, via Moscow to Helsinki.



A letter from the USA: Hubbel, Michigan, February 20, 1943 to Oulu, VII. 2. 25

Rate: -20 g = 5 cents

Censor No. 9518 in the USA

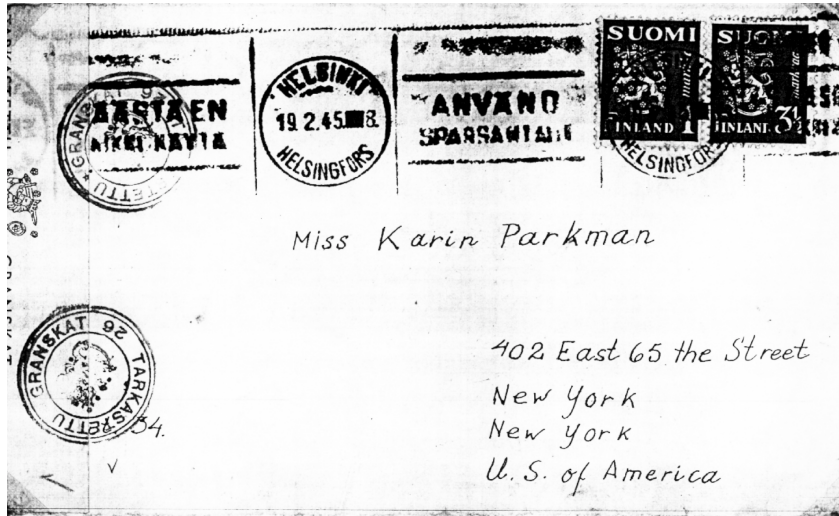
Between February 1945 and October 3, 1945 it was allowed to send only ordinary letters weighing up to 1 ounce (28.5 g) from the Americas to Finland.

Surface mail via Moscow from March 10, 1945 to August 1, 1945 to all American countries

Moscow announced on March 8, 1945 to process and transport letters without extra charge from Finland to all countries in the Americas.

Direction: From **Helsinki** by railway in a Russian TPO from Leningrad to Moscow and from there to New York.

The letters sent from Helsinki, March 10-20, 1945 via Moscow arrived in New York on July 11, 1945. Only two letters are known.



A letter to the USA: Helsinki, 19. 2. 45. It was kept in the post office in Helsinki until March 9, 1945.

Rate: October 1, 1942 to June 30, 1945
-20 g = 4.50 Fmk

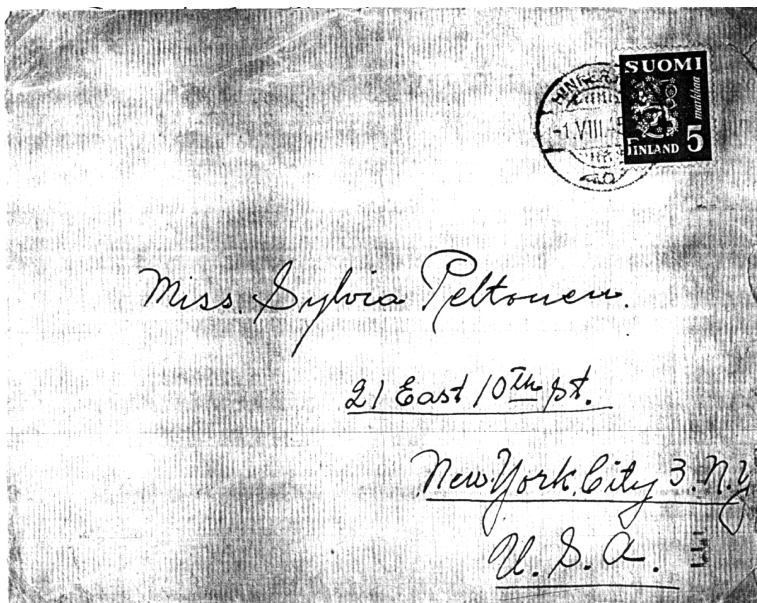
Censor No. 26 in Helsinki

From March 6, 1945 to October 3, 1945 only ordinary letters with a weight 1 ounce or less (28.5 g) could be sent to the USA

Surface mail via Stockholm and New York from August 2, 1945 to October 10, 1945 to all American countries

Sweden announced on July 26, 1945 that it would carry letter mail to the Americas with a direct ship connection from Gothenburg to London and New York.

Direction: From **Helsinki** through Stockholm to Gothenburg, from there by ship, at first about every second week through London to **New York**.



A reply letter to the letter dated on February 26th in the USA: Hinnerjoki, 1. VIII. 45, to New York, 18 AUG 1945

Rate: July 1, 1945 to August 30, 1945
-20 g = 5.00 Fmk

Only three letters are known.

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