



# 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

It is midsummer in upstate New York; the weather is perfect for hiking in the Adirondack mountains, playing tennis on the red clay courts at Ridgefield Park in Albany and enjoying an occasional traditional BBQ with fresh tomatoes, sweet corn and of course, strawberries and blueberries piled over a buttermilk biscuit topped with whipped cream. This is but a brief, alas wonderful interlude in the calendar of the upstater's philatelic life. Wherever you are, we hope you are enjoying the season.

We are delighted to begin another new series in this issue,  
continued on page 4



*The importance of the Helsinki - St. Petersburg (SPB) railway line for the Finnish connections to foreign countries cannot be overestimated. It made all the connections much quicker. However, the Finnish railway station in SPB was not connected to other stations in the city. Therefore, the mail had to be carried by horse from the Finland Station to other stations for connections to other European destinations. This folded letter was correctly franked at 56 penni postage with a 40 penni and a pair of 8 penni m/67 penni issues. It was sent from Hyvinkää railway station (31) with the first type railway cds, 14. 4. 1875, via SPB, two SPB station cds, 3. APR. 75, (Cyrillic calendar) then to Copenhagen with a faint arrival cds on back. On July 1st the letter rate to abroad was reduced to 32 penni. Rate information was provided by Esa Mattila. The Turengi railway station cancel is shown in the masthead.*

## Threatened Woodpeckers Highlight Erik Bruun's Bird Series



The White-backed and Black Woodpecker, along with four other woodpecker illustrations, are the theme of a new six-stamp miniature sheet, issued on May 16th. Professor Erik Bruun designed the sheet. The sheet is priced at FIM 21.60 and the individual stamps at FIM 3.60.

Erik Bruun, a renowned graphic artist and conservationist, says woodpeckers have always fascinated him. "In the summer, one might easily get the impression they're just playing around, but if you observe them in the winter as well, you'll notice what a laborious life they actually lead. If you have to dig up every single bite you eat under the bark of trees, it's no game", commented Bruun.

Woodpeckers are becoming rare in Finland as modern, intensively managed forests are offering them little food. In order to preserve the woodpeckers, it is important to let stand old trees decaying in the forest. In designing the miniature sheet, Bruun said, "This is why I've drawn a thick aspen and a decaying pine to represent their ideal environment."

Nominated Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of Art and Design Helsinki this year, Bruun has for decades promoted Finnish nature in his work, and in 1998 he was elected Kunnianorppa (Honorary Ringed Seal), a title given to the most deserving conservationist of the year, by the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation.

The first bird stamps painted by Bruun were issued in 1993. They featured, among others, plovers, a crane, owls and summer night songbirds. The May stamps introduced the White-backed, Great Spotted, Three-toed, Grey-headed, Lesser Spotted and Black Woodpecker.

Along with the miniature sheet, a woodpecker package consisting of the stamp sheet and six postcards was issued. The postcards feature the same birds as the stamps. The package is priced at FIM 34.

### STAMP FACTS

Size:	Sheet: 79 x 119 mm. Individual stamps vary
Perforation:	14.5 x 14.5
Paper:	stamp paper 102 g
Issue:	500,000 sheets
Printers:	Walsall Security Printers, England
Printing method:	Color off-set 5/0
First Day Cover and Postmark:	Erik Bruun
FDC Price:	FIM24



## Cornflower & Pale Pasque Flowers in New Class I Sheet



The Cornflower of Päijät-Häme and the Pale Pasque Flower of Central Häme are the topics of the new Class I non-denominated stamps issued on May 16th. The stamps were designed by Paavo Huovinen. They were issued together with other flowers in a ten-stamp self-adhesive sheet, priced at FIM 36.

The stamps are the last in a series introducing Finnish Provincial Flowers, first issued in 1990. The flowers decorating the new stamps do not, however, represent actual historical provinces, but rather two regions of the province of Häme. The official Provincial Flower of Häme, the Hepatica, was featured on a stamp in 1992.

The Cornflower is a beautiful weed decorating corn fields, particularly rye fields and fallows. The 50 cm tall flower with a thin stem and narrow leaves is barely noticeable until the blossom of its azure flowers in June-September. This beauty of the fields is becoming more rare for a variety of reasons: the rye cultivation area has shrunk, large-grained rye has replaced the traditional rye, the seed is now purer than before, and herbicides prevent the Cornflower from blossoming. Variations of the Cornflower with lilac, pale red or white flowers are grown commercially.

The Pale Pasque Flower thrives on the sunny heaths of the Central Häme ridges. Outside Central Häme, the Pale Pasque Flower grows only in the municipality of Palkane in Pirkanmaa. The hairy plant blossoms before it grows any leaves. It grows a large blue flower on top of each stem. The blossom starts in the spring with hanging, bell-like flowers. This threatened flower is under complete protection: it must not be picked or displaced.



### STAMP FACTS

Size:	Sheet: 144 x 119 mm Stamps: 20.1 x 23.8
Perforation	14.4 x 13.1
Paper:	stamp paper 80 g
Issue:	1,500,000
Printers:	Walsall Security Printers, England
Printing method:	Gravure printing color 4/0
First Day Cover and Postmark:	Paavo Huovinen

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## Double Perforated Orienteering Issue With Detachable Center Transforms Square Stamp to a Circular One

This unusual stamp, issued in conjunction with the Orienting World Championships may be a square or circular stamp - with its double perforation, the Orienteering World Championships stamp is either.

The Orienteering World Championships, held in Tampere from July 29 through August 4, was celebrated with a special stamp issued on May 16 and priced at FIM 3.60. The stamp features a special double perforation: the center of the rectangular stamp is detachable, forming a perfectly valid, round stamp.

Ken Nikander designed the stamp while studying to be a graphic artist at the Marketing Institute. The form of a compass inspired the design of this stamp. Nikander also designed the stamp's FDC and postmark.

A major international orienteering event does not take place in Finland often. The previous Orienteering World Championships in Finland were held in 1979 in Tampere. The sports clubs Tampere Pyrintö and KooVee have worked hard for years in order to make these Championships a success. The city of Tampere has enthusiastically helped in organizing the event. The Tampere Hall will house the field office of the Championships.

The participants will be competing in Normal Distance, Short Distance, Sprint and Relay. Competitors are expected from over 50 countries. Orienteering is generally considered a typically Nordic sport, but it is also very popular in Central Europe, for instance in countries such as Switzerland, the Czech Republic and Great Britain. Finland, too, is a renowned orienteering country: Mr. Jani Lakanen was the first Finn to win the World Cup, whereas Ms Kirsi Boström became the World Champion in Normal Distance in Scotland two years ago.

The sport is extremely popular in Finland. In a variety of studies, the number of orienteering enthusiasts in the country has been estimated as great as 80 000. Orienteering is suitable for people of all ages, and the categories in competitions range from 8 to 80-year-olds. The best-known Finnish Orienteering event is undoubtedly the Jukola Relay, where the entire top sports clubs as well as 1200 men's teams with seven and 650 women's teams with four competitors participate each summer.



### STAMP FACTS

Size:	30 x 30 mm
Perforation	13 x 13 (For both rectangular and circular shapes)
Paper:	stamp paper 110 g
Issue:	1,000,000
Printers:	Cartor Security Printing, France
Printing method:	Color off-set 4/0
First Day Cover and Postmark:	Ken Nikander

Editor's Note, continued from page 1

namely, the pre-philatelic period of Finland. This series is based on Heikki Pahlman's outstanding collection that received the Grand Prix National at NORDIA 2001.

The Ring stamps and postal stationeries were introduced in Finland in 1891. They were issued in the Russian kopek/ruble currency initially for use on mail to Russia and later on mail to abroad. They were optional franking on inland mail. The

stationeries were made by the use of typography at the Russian state printing office in St. Petersburg. No first hand information or documentation is available. The printing "appears" clean, crisp and even; in short carefully printed. Now, after 110 years, one of our readers, Morten Naarstad, while examining Russian stationery used in Finland decided to check the ring postal cards to see if the several different varieties recognized in the Russian  
continued on page 8



# Type m/66 10 Penni Pair

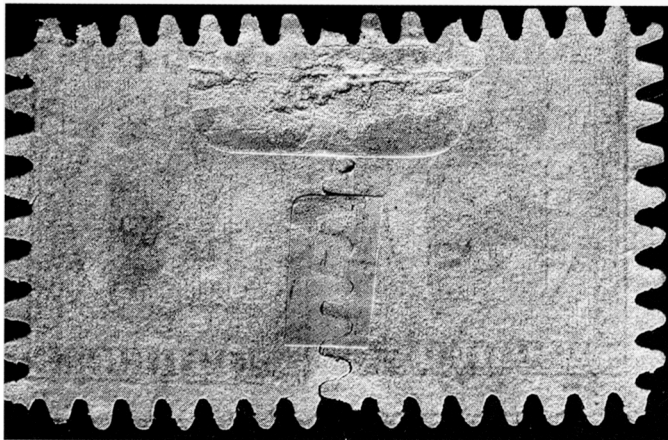
by Heikki Reinikainen, from *Filatelisti*, 2/01  
translated by Carita Parker

Some time ago, this writer was asked about the value i.e., how much to pay for the pictured, mint Type 1866 (m/66) 10 penni pair. This seldom offered, seemingly beautiful object in such good condition with only three half teeth of roulettes missing and still with gum intact must surely be worth spending a small bundle on. (Editor's Note: *Facit 2001* minimum pricing for a mint m/66 10 penni pair = Skr. 14,000.)

But alas, experience has shown that these m/66 - 10 penni values often have, in different ways, been altered. Therefore, it is smart to first thoroughly check the object out. And sure enough, putting it up to the light immediately revealed that all was not well. The left vertical side four top teeth had been redone and shaped by using both a circular perforator and by a crude cut.

Additionally, the upper row of roulettes is not lined up quite straight. Instead, the roulette on each stamp points slightly in different directions. Was this actually a pair or perhaps only a paired specimen? An investigation of the joined center showed that the bottom fourth tooth on the left stamp had been doctored. And the sixth tooth differed in color from the others, a further indication of alteration, though the gum on the reverse cleverly prevented any closer study.

The separation of perforated stamps from each other always leaves tear marks on the teeth, and such marks are visible on this pair, top to bottom, when holding up to the light. No such marks are visible on an intact pair. Even the cusps of the teeth have been trimmed at



the bottom center joint.

Consequently, this is neither an actual pair nor even a possibly separated one. The upper edge roulettes do not point in the same direction. And the teeth, on a separated pair, hardly needed trimming in order to fit. Furthermore, the right upper corner looks different because the vertical side top tooth is too close to the next lower one. The horizontal side first tooth on the right seems doctored too, and a reinforcement or larger tooth-shaped piece has been glued to the back.

What about the gum? Visible toward the light are small droplets of gum as shiny dots along the edges of the teeth that, as expected, indicate post-gumming. The forger apparently had available to him two uncanceled stamps without gum that were joined together and post-gummed. Gum has liberally been added to the back, conveniently covering any errors in "workmanship."

It seems that a lot of work had been spent on this and for a reason. Two single 10 penni specimens missing a total of at least 8 teeth would not make a very attractive acquisition. So by fixing the teeth, washing away any possible marks, joining the two stamps together to form a pair and adding the gum, voila, suddenly a pricey object suitable for a collection. Three missing half teeth only adds to the item's credibility.

Ultimately, these are but two uncanceled (?) single stamps that have been significantly altered. Not a recommended purchase!

## M/89 Brownish-Orange 20Penni Perforations - 11th Printing

by Heikki Reinikainen, from *Filatelisti*, 10/2000

translated by Carita Parker

The heralded 11<sup>th</sup> printing consisted of 2,450,000 printed stamps issued on October 10, 1895, and the earliest known cancellation happened shortly thereafter in October 1895.



*The brownish-orange 11th printing; the 14 x 13 narrow perforations is on the left. The wider, newly discovered 12 1/2 perforated stamp is in the center, and the 10th printing, perforation 12 1/2 regular on the right. Notice, the similar smooth, dense appearance of the middle and left stamps compared to the one on the right.*

The lot is the first of the 20 penni known with a 14 x 13 perforation only. Yet, there may be specimens with the wider perforations in this edition still.

The reason for this assumption is, that when the 14 x 13 perforation equipment (paid in full in September 1895) was first introduced at the printing office, the old equipment was surely not immediately discarded. It is often difficult to bring new equipment on line, surprises sometimes occur. For various reasons usage may be delayed, repairs or adjustments made, regulations introduced and so on. It simply makes sense to keep the old equipment handy until the new is proven to run properly in order maintain production quotas.

As long as the old machinery was still kept in working order, it most certainly was used alongside the new as auxiliary equipment. For instance, the dull aniline-red 10 penni from the 7<sup>th</sup> printing is indicative of this. The printing of this lot was completed on September 21, 1895, and for most part consists of the narrow 14 x 13 perforation, though perforation A (12 1/2) is also found in rare instances.

The perforation of the 11<sup>th</sup> printing of the 20 penni followed very soon after the above, on October 10, 1895, and was probably done in like fashion with the new equipment, though the old might still have been used in the process. However, if this was the case, why then are there no known stamps from the 11<sup>th</sup> printing with the A perforations? This is cause enough for closer scrutiny. I carefully checked all available 20 penni specimens cancelled from the end of 1895 to the end of 1896. The result

revealed, indeed, several 12 1/2 perforated stamps from the 11<sup>th</sup> printing. Actually, they showed up in the previous 10<sup>th</sup> printing, where I had earlier sorted and filed them after first having tentatively grouped them.

The stamps from the 10<sup>th</sup> printing were mostly used in 1896 and

all of the more widely perforated examples must have belonged to this edition. Upon careful examination, the appearance differs between the several printings. In the 11<sup>th</sup> printing or emission, where the stamp color hue is brownish, thus differing from the previous emission's brighter yellow or reddish-orange stamps. The appearance is also denser, and more even, although the smoothness does vary.

The color hues of the 10<sup>th</sup> printing vary, as does the degree of darkness in both emissions. Perhaps collectors of the m/89 have not happened upon these varieties, and so any possible difference in appearance has remained unappreciated.

Any new type of perforation is presently quite uncommon. As a result of the aforementioned classification, my collection now includes 3 stamps from the 11th printing with perforation A, 12 1/2. And Jussi Saarinen has discovered several examples in his own collection. With a growing awareness, more will crop up. Thus, I would place this type 1889/20 penni A stamp (Norma 1994/95 category - earliest known cancellation 5. 6. 96 - June 5, 1896), because of its rarity, up there with the 7<sup>th</sup> printing of the 10 penni sparsely perforated specimens.

The best of luck to all interested in their search for this newly discovered specimen, and a clue: First look through the 10<sup>th</sup> printing, perforation A types. (Editor's Note: For background information on the m/89 definitive issues, I strongly recommend the book by Pentti Waris, *Finnish Definitive Stamps - 1889 Series*. This book contains full English text and is available from Jay Smith & Associates.)



## Registered Postal Card Rarity to Petrograd with Cyrillic R- Label

by Uolevi Vapaa, from *Filatelisti*, 8/1992  
translated by Carita Parker



collection. This I dare say after having studied the background to the object. I would gladly use even the word unique, but with caution. A stationery card with 3 kopek + 10 kopek stamps, R-label with text TAMPERE AS. (Tampere railway station post office) in Cyrillic.

The card had left the Tampere station on 27. VIII. 16 and from there routed via the Tampere post

The reddish-black R-labels with the post office name and sequential numbers were taken into use in the beginning of 1896. The Swedish language was predominant especially in the larger office locations. In 1906, surprisingly in some locations the text on the labels was changed to Finnish. Apparently those in power during the repressive period discovered their error and in a couple of years things were returned to the "normal" order of affairs.

A change for the better was the appearance of Finnish alongside the Swedish language or better yet, in some instances above it. Example: Helsinki/Helsingfors, Tampere/Tammerfors etc. The same change was seen also in postmarks, first Finnish, then Swedish and Russian. The wholly Russian influence, however, was evident on the R-labels. Only labels in Cyrillic were to be used on registered mail to Russia. However, the discovered quantity of such mailings is relatively minor; thus each such discovery is a rarity indeed.

To a greater extent, the same can be said about postal mailings, the majority of which have disappeared in the vast country of Russia. A card registered is generally much more uncommon than for instance a letter or parcel, etc. Last spring I obtained a real gem for my Tampere postal history

office 30. VIII. 16 (mark) to the Tampere censor's. From there, 31. VIII. 16, (Tampere censor mark) back to the post office and struck with a, 31. VIII. 16, departure cds, and finally to Petrograd.

There at its destination the card must have caused quite a stir, because the Russian censor and other authorities in charge seem to have studied the object front to back. Tell tale signs are the marks and some torn off labels. Even a red pencil has visited the object.

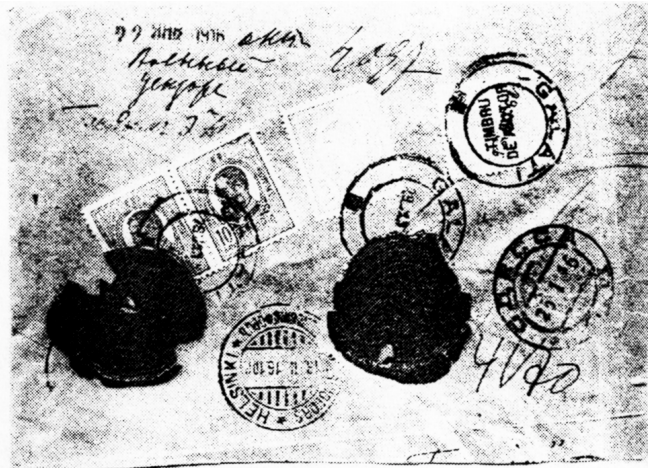
Our late philatelic expert E.A. Hellman had likewise studied the R-labels and discovered the rarity of the Cyrillic place names. Mr. Hellman publicized the Tampere and Vyborg labels and stated not to have discovered any more of them. To my understanding he (Hellman) referred specifically to the unattached/loose labels.

The research has advanced considerably after E.A. Hellman's early work. The most credit goes to Matti Sipari for his efforts of bringing the value mail research to entirely new vistas.

The chances of discovering more Finnish R-labels in Cyrillic are slim, but it certainly makes them more interesting.

# W.W. I Censored Letter From Romania to Helsinki

from *Philatelia Fennica*, 4/1977  
translated from the Swedish by Carita Parker



Mailings that have been delivered during war time or other exceptional circumstances are almost always of interest to collectors because such mail often carries interesting marks or indicate new and imposed ways of delivery.

Introduced here is a registered letter from Galati (Galatz) Romania to Helsinki mailed on January 29, 1916, during WWI. Initially Romainia stayed out of the conflict, but in 1916, declared war on Germany/Austria, and conquering first Transylvania (Siebenburgen). Thereafter, things started going poorly and almost the entire Romania was occupied. This letter had been written prior to the war events, though the entire Eastern Europe was part of the theatre of war.

Letters from Romania to Finland prior to the war were partly routed via Poland and partly via Odessa. However, when the route through Poland closed, the letter was delivered via Odessa. On the front of the letter is the GALATI January 29, 1916, departure mark and the same location registration label as well as a decorative censor mark in abbreviated Cyrillic lettering meaning: "Censor allowed." The large

square-shaped Odessa censor mark carries the text: "Opened by Odessa war censor, censor No. 241." The postage stamps are located on the letter reverse, and franked with 3 10 bani red stamps, one of which is covered by a wax seal, as well as a 5 bani green stamp. The stamps have been marked with the same cancel as those on the letter front. Additionally, the mark ODESSA 23.1.16, is according to the Russian calendar. The Helsinki arrival mark is dated 13.11.16. Thus, the letter took 15 days to arrive.

The text "ODESSKAJA VOENNAJA TSENSURA" (Odessa war censor) is on the wax seal. In those days there was still time to do wax seals. Later the custom was discontinued.

Besides the other stamps there is on the reverse a 5 bani green stamp with the text "TIMBRU DE AJUTOR." As such, these stamps are well-known to all earlier collectors. These are considered obligatory war time stamps. Every letter except local ones had to be franked with such a stamp of 5 bani value. The red 10 bani stamps were for franking telegrams.

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Editor's Note, continued from page 4

postal cards were also found on the Ring cards. See the article on page 17 for the "rest of the story." Varieties, shades, and printing errors have been generally ignored by collectors of the Ring stamps. What can you find in your collection? We would like to hear from you.

Heikki Reinikainen's article on the 1866 pair illustrates the importance of examining high end

material very carefully. The new *Finland Reference Manual of Forgeries* is an indispensable guide for serious collectors, but it is not a substitute for having questionable items expertised.

Finally, we are making progress unpacking and settling into the new house, and out of nowhere I found a small box of back issues. So, if you are missing a few issues just drop me a note or e-mail.



## Letter in Midst of Conflict - Held, Undelivered & Returned from *Abophil*, 5/1990 translated by Carita Parker



It is much easier to experience the many historical events through postage stamps and postal mailings than by reading books. This fact is making philately a most worthwhile pursuit. For example, the letter envelope pictured has an interesting story to tell, which relates to the fateful events in the first decade and a half of this century. The object comes from the Veikko Ikonen collection.

It is a registered letter from the then well-known Crichton company in Turku. The letter had been cancelled in Turku on August 2, 1914, in other words, around the time of the beginning of WWI. The shots had rung out in Sarajevo already in June, but the real action did not start until 1.8.1914 (August 1), when Germany declared war on Russia.

On August 2, big headlines in the newspapers proclaimed the news of the war declaration. For instance, the (newspaper) *Uusi Suometar* carried the following, (here loosely translated from Finnish): "The steps taken by Imperial Germany have led European politics on the path which the world has long watched, worried and feared about".

August 2, then happened on a Sunday. It is

assumed, that after having read about the commencement of war in the newspapers, there was the urge to send the aforementioned letter immediately, and thus was mailed on that Sunday. Apparently several letters were sent on that same day, because Mr. Juhani Pietila has in his possession a letter mailed also by Crichton with the registration label number 198.

Anyhow, the letter (pictured) never reached its destination. It was routed via St. Petersburg, but was not cancelled there until a year later on 9.8.1915 (August 9), when the name had already changed to Petrograd. Soon after that the letter had been returned to Finland and carries the arrival marks of both Helsinki 23.8.1915, and Turku 24.8.1915. Most likely, the letter was not returned to the sender until much later because the envelope has what appears to be Crichton's own arrival mark dated 30.6.1917. The Russian marks on the address side, "Delayed because of war censoring" and "To be returned when war situation allows" are indications of the interesting path that this letter had travelled in an Empire embroiled in a world war.

# The Golden Age of Finnish Philately - Part 1

text & illustrations by Heikki Palhman

edited for the *Finnish Philatelist* by Alan Warren & Roger Quinby



Figure 1. The first coat of arms of Finland from the tomb of King Kustaa Vaasa.

In the following series of articles I will describe the postal services in Finland before the stamp period. Also my aim is to tell about the history from medieval time to the new age and relate the letters to their own age. I believe that by that way the reader will better understand my story. In the first article I tell about the courier post. Later, I will tell about the origins of the general post, district post, and church post and finally all the special markings such as the disinfected mail and combined post.

I am most delighted to have this opportunity and want to thank Mr. Roger Quinby for his interest in this topic as well as all of his help in making this available for American readers.

In the following pages I will show the names of persons and places as they are written today in Finland to make it easier to search the related documents. In parentheses I have written the original or old Swedish names.

## COURIER POST

The oldest known post form in Finland was the courier post. That means delivering a letter from the



Figure 2. Riding post courier from 1550.

sender to the receiver without any middlemen i.e., delivered by one courier. These letters are recognized from the cover when there is neither a crown figure as indication of crown post nor a chart number in the upper right corner as an indication of the general post. Typically after the title rows there is mentioned in Swedish “dette till egen hands” = this to own hands of...

At the beginning mainly the kings and their highest officials could afford sending letters through a courier. This courier post was a necessary way of sending messages when the united Sweden and Finland became the major power in Scandinavia. This became obvious especially when the king and also the admiralty were often traveling.

There is no exact data of the first written message of the realm. In the chronicle of Rimberts, which is from the Viking period, there is a statement of a hand written letter by the king of Swea (south Sweden) to Ludwig the Pious in France. The courier of this letter was the first known missionary in Scandinavia, named Ansgar.

However, the early material in the markets available is very limited and most of them are from the beginning of the 1600's. There are about 10 known letters from the 1500's and 20-30 from 1600's.

At the end of medieval time there was a clerk room in the castle in Stockholm for writing and receiving messages. Very often it was a habit to send



only oral messages to someone because written messages were too easy to steal and take advantage of. Also the oral message was easier to keep secret.

In 1550 there were in the castle few, especially for courier purposes, hired express messengers. At the beginning there were 10-20 and in 1635 already 43 men. From these, two were responsible for letter carriage to the “governor’s district of Turku and Botnia”. One was responsible of mail to Viipuri, Narva and Tallinna.

Making one trip was often very time consuming because the roads were mainly used as walking paths, almost impossible for horseback riding. From the correspondence of Paavali Sheel, the dean of Turku, one letter from Turku to Lyybeck (Germany) in 1515 took 4 months to deliver.

The remaining letters prove that the couriers used primarily the main roads of Finland. At the end of the 1500’s these were the roads between Turku and Viipuri, Turku through Kokemäki to Korsholma, Turku and Hämeenlinna and the road from Korsholma through Hämeenlinna to Pirkkala, which continued east.

The couriers were equipped with horses to speed up the carriage. They also had the right to exchange those with fresh horses to replace the tired ones. For this purpose they had from the king a signed letter, bearing the coat of arms and seal of the king.

In the museum of Maarianhamina I learned another detail, namely that the post couriers were using bells like in the churches but the size of a hand. One courier had three such bells.

The courier post letters are typically very beautiful because clerks hired by the king or the aristocracy wrote them. The clerks insured that the receiver was properly addressed, including all of his titles. Sometimes these took several rows, up to ten rows to describe the receiver.

When the administrative letter charge increased dramatically at the beginning of 1600’s and on the other hand the crown post had developed further and the general post was founded, the courier post became very heavy and expensive compared to the other post forms. It needed always one man and one horse to carry one letter. This was the reason that the usage of it decreased towards the middle of the 1600’s. From the latter part of the 1600’s it is very difficult to find courier letters.

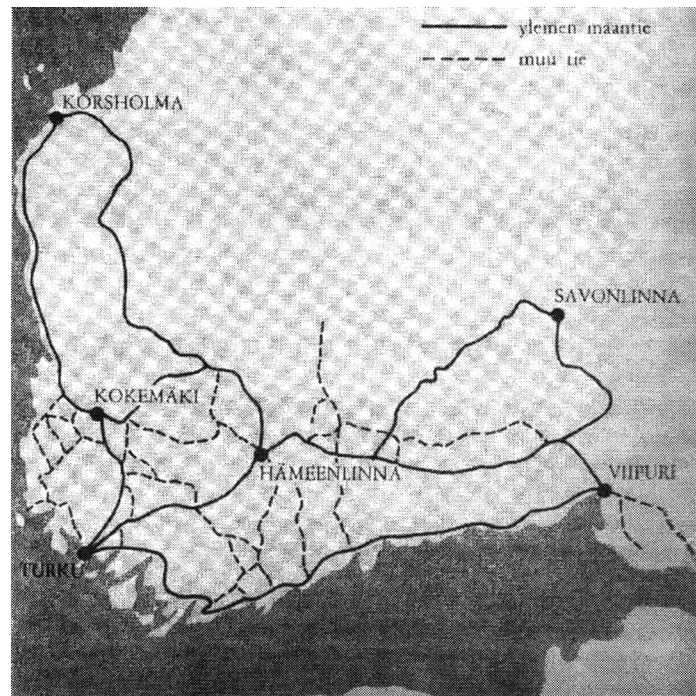


Figure 3. The main roads in Finland in the 1500's. The courier post letters are found mainly in the places which are close to the main roads.

Courier post letters should show the date and the place of origin. Only by this way can the letter be certified as Finnish. Otherwise the origin must be certified from the seal of the sender or from the biography. The prices of the letters in other Scandinavian countries are on a totally different level.



Figure 4. Heikki Palhman receives the Grand Prix at NORDIA 2001 in Tucson Arizona.



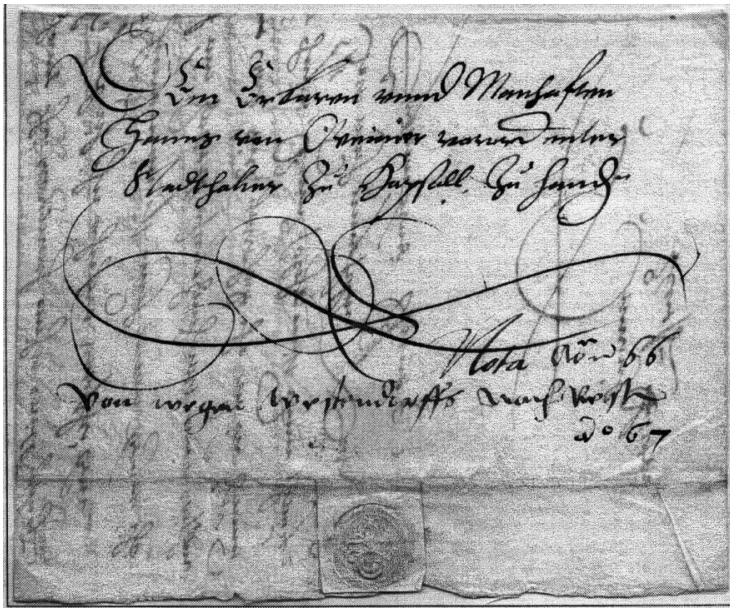


Figure 5. A courier carried the oldest known letter in Finland. Henrik Klasson Horn was a Knight and member of the kingdom's Privy Council. He also was Admiral and the Marshal of Finland, Estonia and Lithonia. He sent this letter as an instruction to the Swedish King Erik's Supreme Commander in Haapsal, Estonia. Horn wrote the letter in his own hand, writing in the German language because, the majority of the aristocracy were members of the German Order.



Figure 6. The letter is dated "23 Septembris Anno 1566" in Kankais' manor with his signature and sealed in beeswax with the coat of arms of the Horn family.

After King Eerik XIV (Erik XIV), his brother Juhana (Johan) Duke of Finland, became the King. He expected that the war with Denmark in the south would soon be over and started to expand the kingdom in the eastern border against Russia. For this purpose he sent Gustaf Banér, the Supreme Commander, to Finland. The main troops were in Viipuri but for safety reasons the headquarters were placed at Jokioinen (Aminne ) manor in west Finland. Juhana III sent instructions to Banér. In a typical polite way the receiver is described in many titles: " Till.. Wår Banér tro Man, Råd, Hofmarsk och tillförordnade feldöferste udi Finland, den Adle Wellborne Her Gustaff Banér r till Djursholm". On the letter the clerical officer has written the date of arrival "...på Aminne ... 6 December 71".

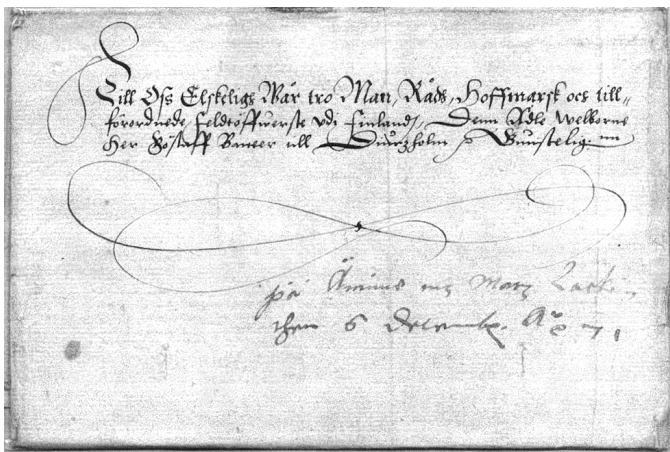


Figure 7. Juhana did not cover his modesty in the letters. He used to start them: "Johan den Tredje med Guds Nåd, Sweriges, Götes och Wendes Konuny" = "I Juhana III from the grace of God, King of Sweden, Göta and Wende."

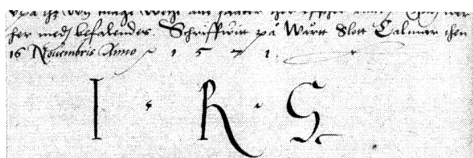


Figure 8. The letter carriage took three weeks over the sea due to winter storms. It is dated "...på wårt slot Kalmar 16 Nowembris 1571, I \* R \* S" = "...in our castle in Kalmar November 16, 1571 Johan Rex Suecica."



## A Letter Order to Arrange Mail Carriage in the Kingdom, 1574

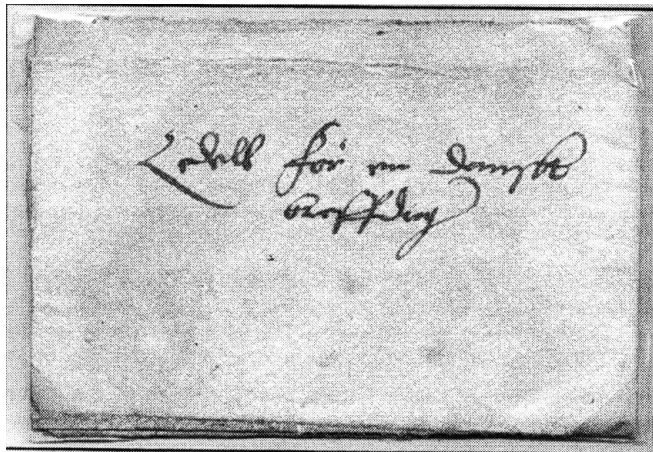


Figure 9. "Zhill för en dansk brefdrag"

King Kustaa Vaasa (Gustav Wasa) tried several times to organize mail carriage with various methods. Afterwards his sons King Eerik XIV (Erik XIV) and Juhana III (Johan 111) both cancelled these and established again. This is the earliest document and first known letter sent outside the Kingdom. It was sent for the attention of the Danish letter carrier. The purpose was to reorganize the mail carriage after the war against Denmark. The letter was sent by the advisors who earlier served King Eerik XIV and later Juhana III and who negotiated the peace with Denmark. The first was a Swede. The second was Hogen skildt Bielke who had Finnish origin from his mother's side and was born and raised in Finland.

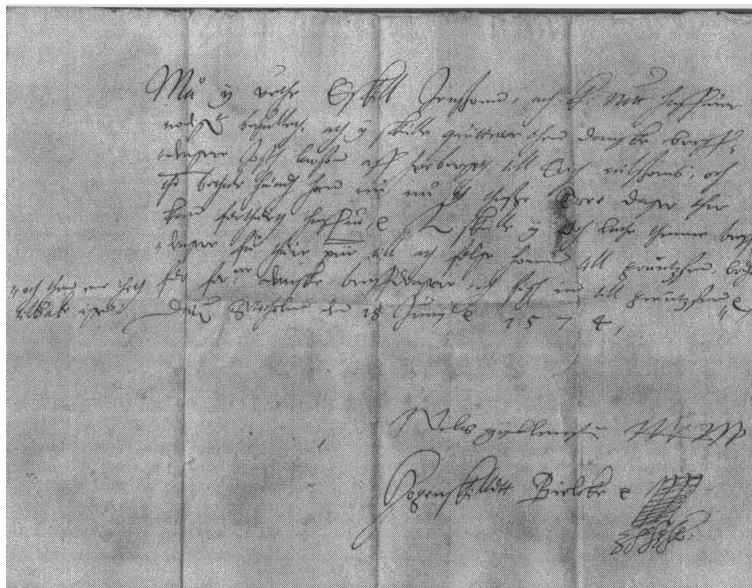


Figure 10. With this letter they arranged letter carriage from the Kingdom's capital at Stockholm and also from Finland through Markaryd to Denmark and further to Middle Europe. This was the main route earlier for couriers to foreign countries.

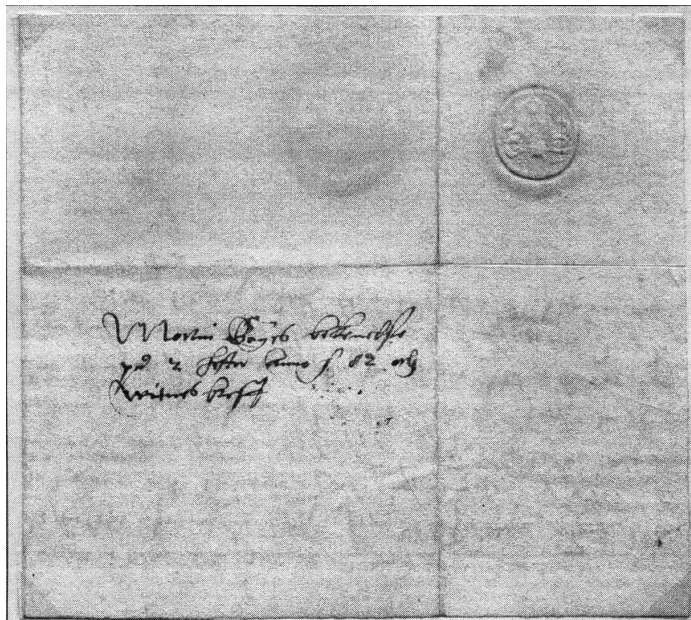


Figure 11. A witness letter from Gennarby in Tenala to Stockholm dated November 8, 1582. These kinds of letters were used to prove if somebody had given his own property for war purposes. The couriers used the existing main roads for mail carriage. See Figure 3.



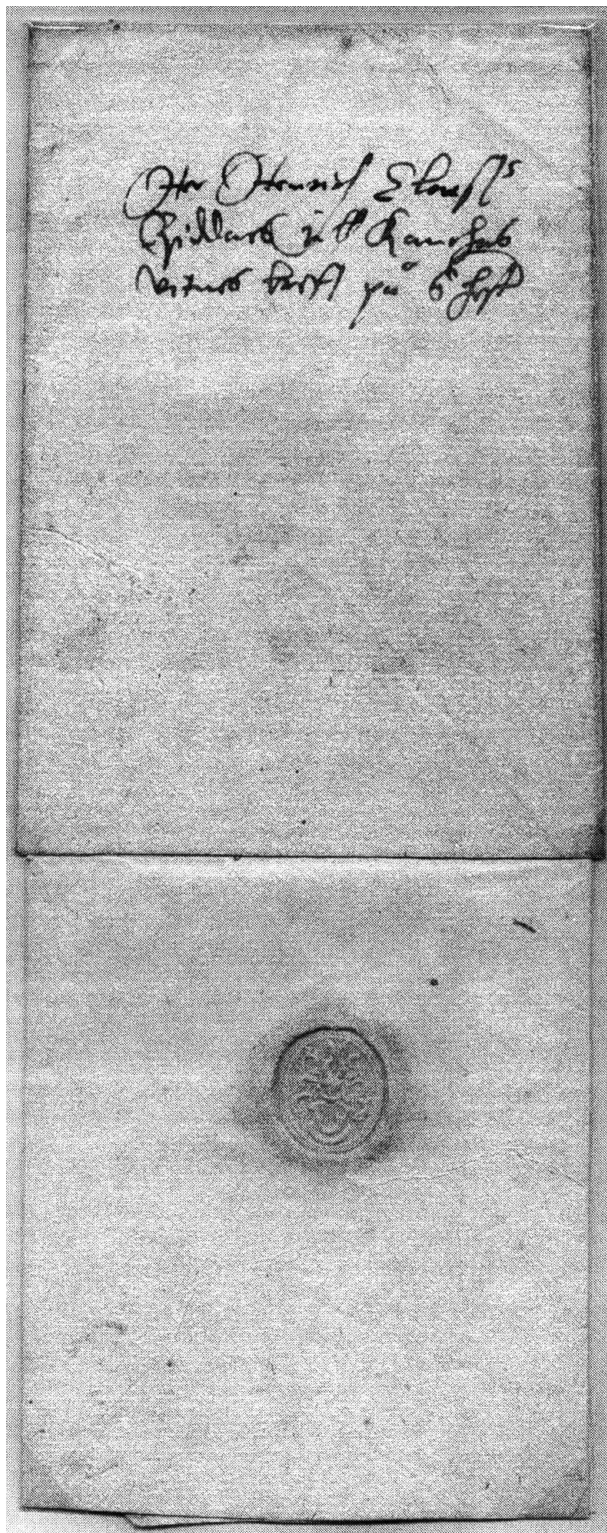


Figure 12. A witness letter from Henrik Klaasson Horn in Kankais manor to the King in Stockholm. He was the Supreme Commander of Finland and Commander of the eastern Castles. In the letter he proves having seen the original letter dated September 20, 1566 in Tallinn and confirms the content of it. This witness letter is dated March 2, 1584. The typical language for the time is shown in the written text to the right.

“Hr Henfich class ‘n  
Riddare aff Kankas  
vitnes breff på 6 hästar”

Wonung Majltz till Swarige. Min aller nodigle herres tillfdranden Skidthollare på Wijburgh, Nysloft och Kexholms Beffestningar, Jach Henrich Classon till Kankas, Riddare, Bekenner och här med KriffOrligitt gör, aft thenne högz’te Konung Maizn tro vndersits Mickell Powellson, till Nuhiala, haffuer want hoss Migh med eft Morten Allfonns till Storby, Wiftnessbreff och begarade aft Jagh thet/d förnye Wille, Shä medan thet War driffwidt oplumpedt och alldefis Wäll låslogitt, hatfr iach henne thet icke Wegre Kunndt, Och lydde samme breff ord frä ord som heir effter föfiger.

Konung Matz till Swänge. Min aller nodig’te herres troplichtige vndersåts och CWartormestere vnder finske Ryttare Anders Nillson Thene Bekäinnes och Wittorligit gör iach Mothen Afflon till Storby, aft thenn Ährfig Wälbörligit Powell Anderson till Nuhiala miste fyre hestar med all tillbehöming I Afflandh, Och ther nest Rust han Samp Mickill Powellson med two hestar sigh wed Johan Knutzon ther som bleff Ryttare Store epter Anders Nilsson ther vnder Jagh och een CwarterMester War huilke hestar förde: Mickill miste, med ll tillbehörning ved för de Affland, emot till thenne sanfärdig witnessb6rd, Dat Rciff/e the 20 Septembris Anno 1566

Till Mher Wisso aft Jagh eft Sdant breff seed och eff’r Läsedt haffr, Trycker Jagh mitt Angele, hir medan red Dat Kankas the 2 Martfi Anno, 1584.”



Pontus De la Gardie had a remarkable role in the coming history of the kingdom. He was serving King Erik XIV and Johan III. There was a 25 years war between the Kingdom and Russia. De la Gardie was appointed Chief Commander of the troops. With his war skills the 7000 men under his command captured the Kakisalml (Kexholm) Castle. After this they marched through Karelia and North Ingermanland. After these conquests they overran the Narva Castle in Estonia.

Because of these victories Johan III gave the title, "Major Principality" to Finland. De la Gardie recommended to Juhana III to make peace with Russia which he accepted. With this letter De la Gardie started preparing the peace negotiations. This temporary peace of 1583 ended finally with the Táyssinä peace accord in 1595.

The letter shown below is addressed to Skill Jönsson on the east border with instructions to organize the peace negotiations. The peace finally connected the Baltic countries to the kingdom. This made the need to arrange the letter carriage and later to organize the post route via South Finland to the Baltic countries.

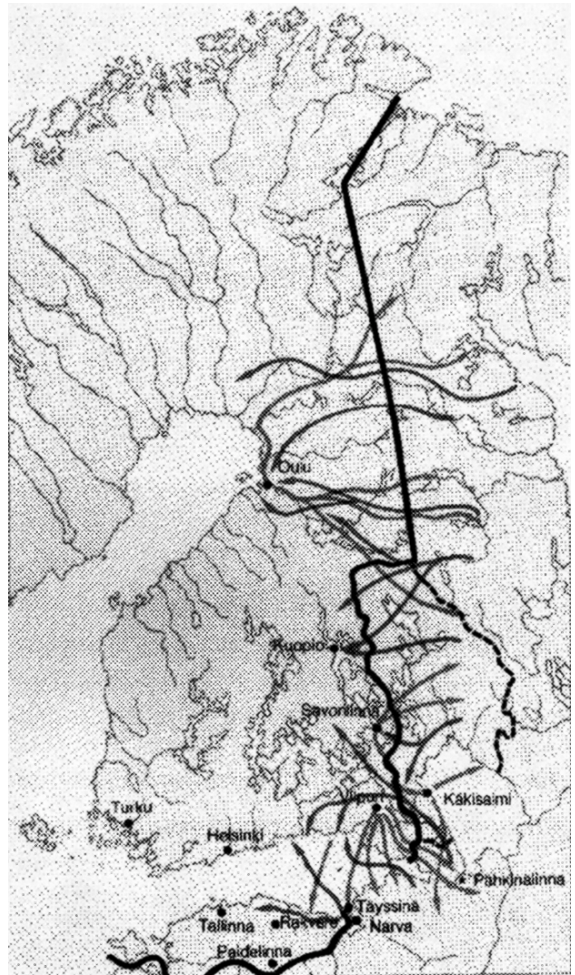


Figure 13, right. This map shows the thrusts of the Russian forces (arrows pointing west or left) and the Finnish forces' movements to the east or right. The thick north/south line divides the Kingdom and Russia, to the east. This map depicts the area in the late 16th century.

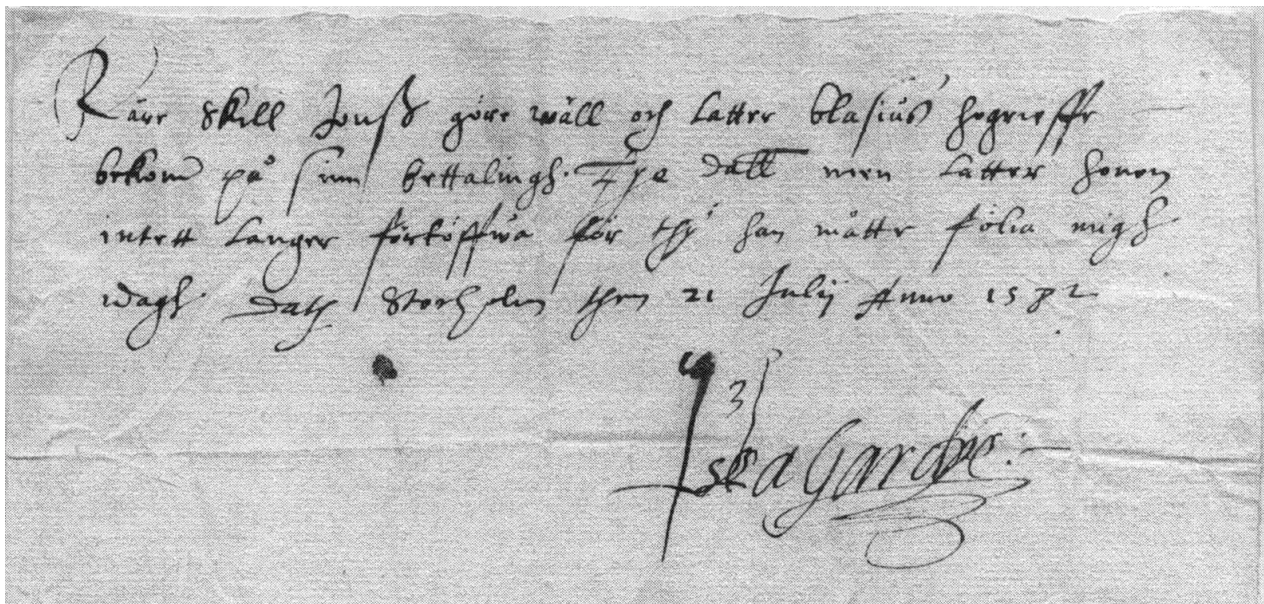


Figure 14. This letter is dated July 21, 1582, from P. de la Gardie in Stockholm to Skill Jönsson.



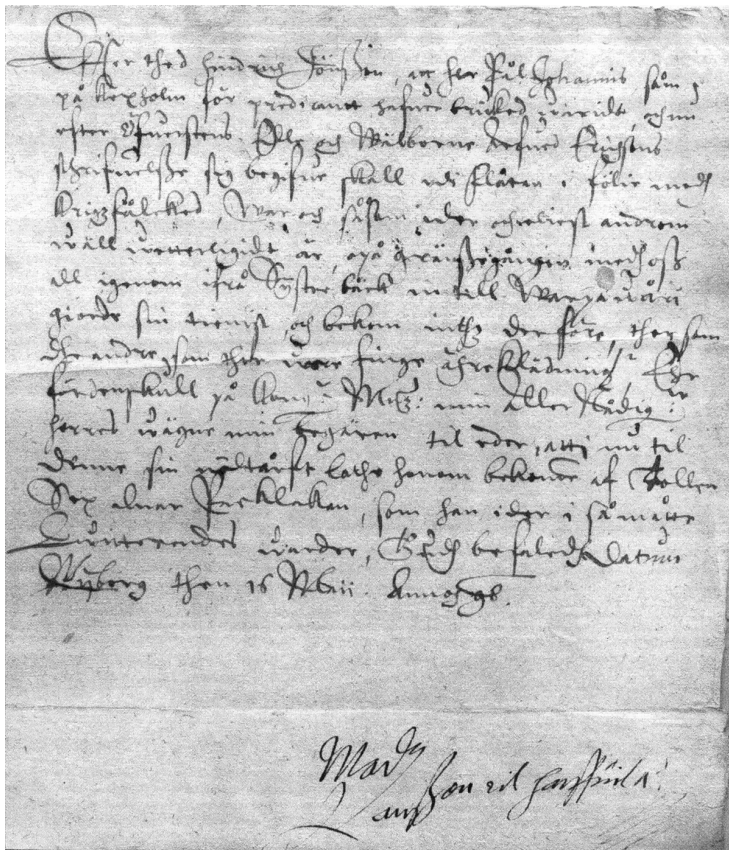


Figure 15. It took more than two years to agree to the final border between the Kingdom and Russia. It was agreed that Russia would surrender the Baltic areas and in place they would get the Käkisalmi castle with its surroundings. The King ordered the bailiff of the city of Viipuri and Castle Mats Larsson Hästesko of Gunnila in Wehmo to make the demarcation. He sent this letter as a document of it for the King in Stockholm. It is dated in Viipuri May 16, 1598. (The map of the route and new border could not be reproduced. The Route was from Viipuri, inland along the southern coast of Finland across the Baltic Sea via the Åland Islands to Stockholm.)

Juhana III married the Princess of Poland, Katarina Jagellonica. After the death of Juhana III, his son Sigismund became the King. Juhana's brother Kaarle (Karl) did not like the fact that the King of Poland and the country were Catholic country, whereas the King and Scandinavia were now Lutheran. Therefore, Kaarle started a war against Sigismund. Sigismund as King gave the command to the Supreme Commander of Finland Arvid Eriksson Stålarms to collect the army of Finland to support his 3000 men. Stålarms sent this letter to the bailiff of Raseborg Henrik Eriksson to start preparing a war ship for Cavalry Captain Anders Böije and his men. When the Finnish forces arrived in Stockholm the war was over and Duke Kaarle had assumed power. The Finnish forces returned without any losses. With this the existing culture of the Kingdom remained the same and continued strengthening to east and Baltic countries.

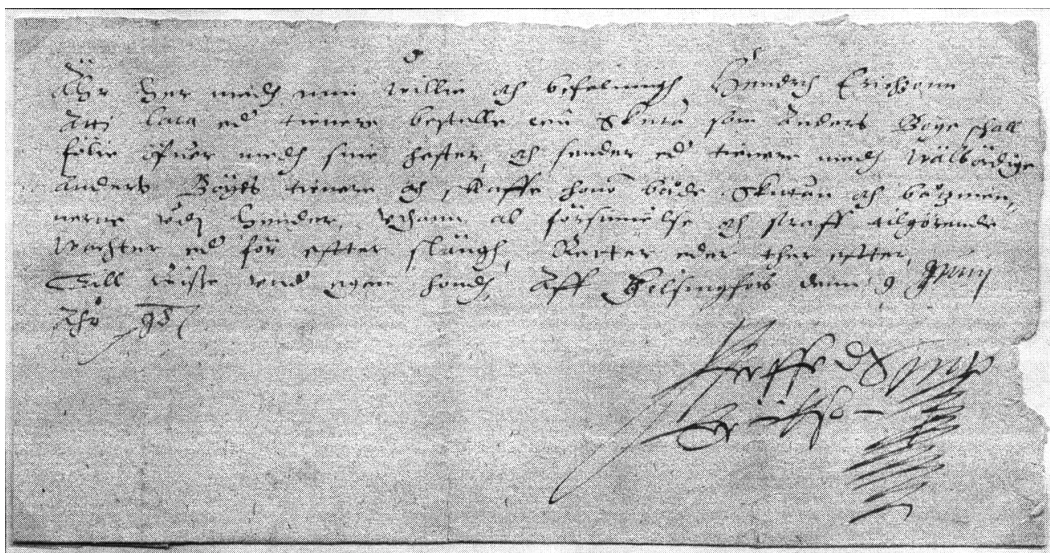


Figure 16. This letter is dated in Helsinki on July, 9, 1598, and it is addressed to Raaseborg manor.



After having won the war against King Sigismund, Duke Kaarle (Karl) began to prepare the Kingdom for himself. The Commander of Turku castle, Arvid Eriksson Stålarms, used to support the existing King and, fear for his own future, he sent his wife to Estonia. He sent this letter (Figure 17) to the Bailiff of Raasepori King's manor, Henrik Eriksson, as a command to forward goods for his wife. The courier post letters are recognized from the cover when there are neither crown nor any other markings. Also typical for these letters is that after the address there is mentioned "...to, receiver's own hands..." This letter is addressed: "Ehrfig och försichfig He fik Eriksånn fogde udi Rassborgs Lh. In dette till egen hands." The letter also proves that the Wasa dynasty's culture remained and all efforts were made to keep or even expand the eastern parts of the kingdom.

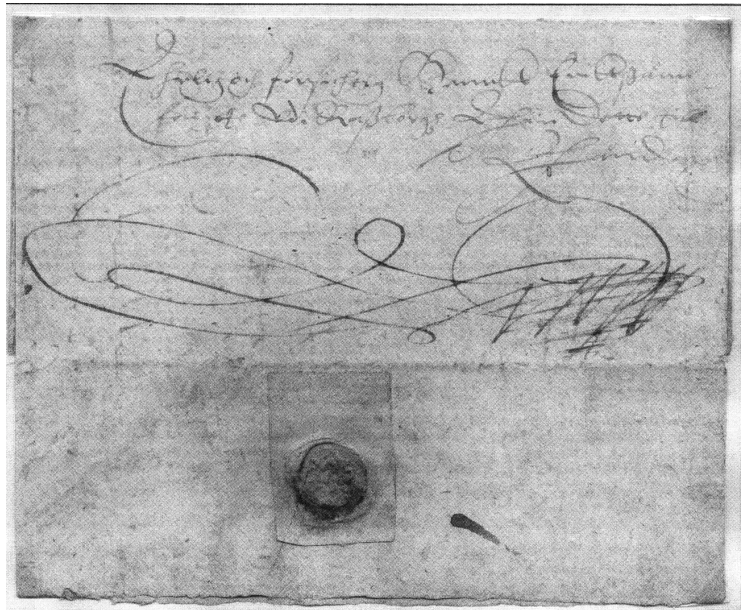


Figure 17. The letter is dated in Turku castle on July 30, 1599.

Part IA, the continuation of the Courier Post will appear in the November issue of the newsletter.

## “Bjeloostrov-Petrograd” is an Unusual Finnish Railway Postmark



Bjeloostrov is best known to us by its Finnish name, “Walkeasaari”. It was station number 7 on the Helsinki-St. Petersburg (SPB) Finnish operated railway. Station number 1 was SPB, stations 2-7 were small stations on the Russian side. The FINSKA JERNVAGENS POST KUPE EXPED cancellations with the station number placed within the cds for these towns are extremely rare. In most cases the station number was struck on the cover. (See “The Helsinki-St. Petersburg railway and the First Finnish Compartment Cancellations”, *The Finnish Philatelist*, August 1988.)

There is another Finnish railway cancellation from the Russian side that is also very rare - namely the “Bjeloostrov” circular date stamp. The Finnish railway operated local trains along the Helsinki-SPB route with a mail van and postal clerk. These trains operated between SPB, later Petrograd and Bjeloostrov or Walkeasaari, all on the Russian side of the border. The Finnish railway postmark is entirely in Russian, BJELOOSTROV-PETROGRAD, 2. V. 15. Are there any surviving covers with this postmark?

### 3 Kopek Ring Postal Cards: Recognizing Address Line Varieties, Type I & Type II - N rstad's Remarkable Discovery Unmasks 110 Year Old Variety

#### Shifted Background Dots Also Reported on Value Stamp



Figure 1. Type I on a 1908, 3 kopek Ring card with normal 25 dots per 2 cm in the address

In the *Facit 2000* listing of the Ring and Russian stationery used in Finland (pages F-618-619) two types are differentiated based on the number of dots per 2 cm in the address lines. Type I = 25 dots per 2 cm and Type II = 32 dots per 2 cm for the purely Russian 1889, 3 and 4 kopek postal cards and 7 and 10 kopek lettercards. The German catalogue, *Michel*, which provides fairly extensive listings of Russian stationery, does not recognize this distinction although an examination of even a small sample of items confirms the existence of the two varieties.

The Type I and Type II varieties also exist in the 1891 Ring 3 kopek single and doublecards. Morton Naarstad of Norway has made this important discovery.

In the 3 kopek Ring single and double cards, the address lines in the Type I cards are comprised of small but somewhat irregular circular dots. In the Type II cards the address lines have a darker, stronger appearance slightly rectangular and elongated horizontally. These dots are closer together and more evenly spaced.

The Type I and Type II 3 kopek Ring postal cards have now been confirmed by several collectors in the US and Europe. Approximately 100 cards have been examined and each collector reported having found one or more of the lesser-known Type II variety. This sampling shows that between 12 and 17 percent of the cards are Type II. Altogether this should be a sufficient sampling to confirm a repeating variety rather than just an unimportant minor printing error or anomaly.

Yet, this distinction seems to have been ignored in *Facit*, *Norma* and *LaPe* catalogue listings as well as in *The Finnish Handbook* and *The Ring Stamps and Postal Stationery Centennial, May 1, 1991*, considered the definitive study of the Ring stamps and postal stationery.

These differences may have been overlooked because it has been widely assumed that "The printing seems to have been first-class", according to *The Ring Stamps and Postal Stationery Centennial, May 1, 1991*, page 25. To date the discovery of the Type II variety seems to be limited





Figure 2. Type II, 3 kopek card, cancelled in 1901, with 32 dots per cm in the address lines. Of the approximately 100 3 kopek cards which have been examined to date, less than 15 percent are Type II.

just to the 3 kopek postal cards. Further, the differences are not immediately obvious although the Type II cards address lines have a deeper color.

Nevertheless, certain other differences in the cards have been studied and reported: the color of the card paper varies from buff-colored to grayish brown to brown; the thickness of the cards varies from 0.21 to 0.24 mm (Morten Naarstad reports that several 3 kopek single cards measured 0.25 thickness) and the value stamp color ranges in shades of red to carmine-red. To date, none of these differences have been identified with a particular printing or delivery date to the Finnish Postal Administration.

Figures 1 & 2 demonstrate the existence of the two types of 3 kopek Ring postal cards based on the number of dots per cm in the address lines. Figures 3 & 4 show Type I cards with irregular address lines and missing dots.

We know that the postal cards and lettercards were delivered to the Finnish Postal Administration in several lots over a period of years. From figures 5 & 6 we can state that both Types I and II postal cards were in circulation by 1894, however; at this time our research is insufficient to link a Type I or Type II card to a particular printing. It is also possible that both types of cards were printed together on the same printed sheet, but no full sheet of uncut mint Ring cards survives and the size (number of cards

per sheet) of the sheet is unknown. If a reader knows of a surviving sheet of purely Russian 3 or 4 kopek m/1889 cards, we would have strong clues as to how the Ring cards were printed and if the two types were printed side by side.

Also, in looking through my own small collection, in addition to the cards with the irregular lines and missing dots, I noticed that on the message half of an unused 3 kopek doublecard the background dots in the value stamp were misplaced to the right. See Figures 7 & 8. The reply card value stamp is perfectly centered. Morten Naarstad makes another important observation, namely that the background dots in the value stamp are brown, brownish or possibly yellowish brown; therefore, the value stamps are bi-colored. Thus, a careful analysis of but a small sampling of the 3 Ring postal cards has revealed a noteworthy variety, a bi-colored value stamp and several minor printing errors.

Possibly, this is a good time for collectors of Ring postal stationery to take a second look at their collections and report further on these different types as well as other printing errors. Please report your observations and findings to the editor.

This article is based on correspondence and e-mail exchanges with Morten Naarstad of Norway, Kaj Hellman of Finland, Ed Fraser of Melville, New York and Steve Kaplan of Cleveland, Ohio.

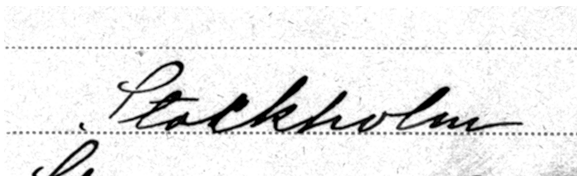


Figure 3. Type II detail shows uniform, evenly spaced cleanly struck dots. Type II cards are known with cancels from 1894, 1901 and 1908 indicating a recurring pattern of possibly one card or one row of cards on a full sheet. Since no full sheet of these cards is known we are left to speculate on the origin and number of the Type II variety.



Figure 4. Type I address lines are somewhat sloppy. The dots are not uniform in size, alignment, distance from each other and some dots are missing. Blow-up of Figure 1.



Figure 5. Morten Naarstad submitted this illustration that juxtapositions two 3 kopek Ring cards with clearly different styled address lines. The difference here are similar to the Type I and Type II varieties identified with the purely Russian postal stationery series of 1889 to which "rings" were added for cards sold in Finland beginning in 1891.



Figures 6, top left, 7 left, and 8 top right. On close-up on the left, the value stamp cropped from the card above, figure 7, shows that there are background dots showing on the vertical length of left side of the value stamp. These near microscopic dots are a shade of light brown or yellow brown and clearly visible under an 8 times magnification. In Figure 8, the misalignment is on the right side. Technically, the value stamps are bicolored and no doubt printed on two passes through the press. The dots are very small and difficult to reproduce in this newsletter. The shifted background dots are also rather uncommon. Only two examples were found among the 60 cards examined for this purpose. We welcome comments from our readers. Illustrations are from the collections of Morten Naarstad and Roger Quinby.