



The Finnish Philatelist

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The Finnish Philatelist

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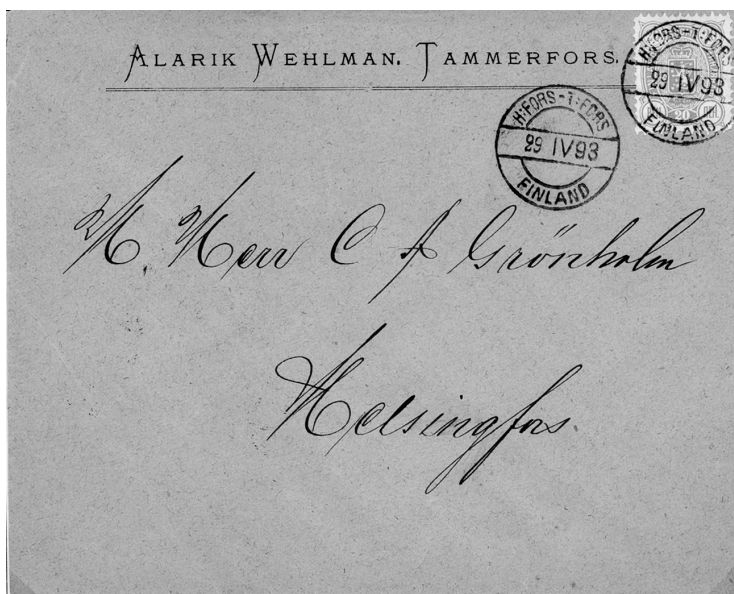
Editor's Message

Nordic philately continues to thrive and our recent visit to NORDIA 2002 leaves us eager for next year's event in Kjarvalssta – Reykjavik, October 16-19, 2003. We met show Icelandic Federation President Gunnar Rafn Einarsson in Kristiansand and he extends a warm welcome to exhibitors, collectors and visitors to NORDIA 2003.

In Kristiansand, the Nordic countries were well represented with outstanding exhibits in every class. Of particular interest was the number of quality Norwegian local postal history entries. Some noteworthy Finnish area exhibits on display were: Lauri Aurenus, *Storfurstendom Finland 1856-1975*; Matti Sipari, *The Postal History of Registered and Insured Letters in Finland*; Roger Quinby, *The First Postal Cards of The Republic of Finland*; Matti Mustalahti, *The 1924 Postal Order of Finland*; Mikael Erickson, *The Postal History of the Åland Islands for 300 Years*; and Markku Koivuniemi, *The Finnish Red Cross 1904 – 1952*. And, there were a number of excellent thematic exhibits from Finland as well.

Although there were no dealers from Finland at the show, we did acquire a few items and chatted with Risti-Matti Kauhanen, SFFF President and several Finnish collectors and exhibitors who attended the show. We also renewed our acquaintance with collectors and newsletters readers/contributors from the UK, Germany, and the Netherlands.

Continued on page 7



Cover from Tammerfors (Tampere) to Helsinki, 29. IV. 93, bearing the named TPO railway route, H:FORS - T:FORS, in use from 1888 to 1893. Early cancellations for this mark are somewhat difficult.

Rolf Gummesson, Ambassador for Finnish Philately, Dies at 88

Rolf Gummesson has died. He was one of the most outstanding Scandinavian philatelists of the last century and no one promoted Finnish philately to the world more than he. It has been said that Gummesson had the best current Finnish collection in the world, receiving several international gold medals and the Grand Prix award in Luxembourg in 1963. While collection comparisons are always

difficult, some experts have ventured that only the Agathon Fabergé Finland-collection was more notable, and nowadays building a similar collection would be a very formidable undertaking.

Rolf Gummesson was 88 when he passed away. Born in Lund, Sweden where as a schoolboy he founded a stamp club and began trading in postage stamps. In 1935 he moved to Stockholm to study and there opened his postage stamp store and in 1939 moved to Kungsgatan 55, which is operating today at the same address. Presently

in charge of the store is Rolf Gummesson's son, Per, who also continues on with his father's collection. From 1935, the elder Gummesson regularly published a Scandinavian wholesale catalogue that is still issued. Mr. Gummesson acquired much material after the war from Central Europe where he made good deals

buying collections with hard currency in countries with rapid inflation. Rolf Gummesson considered himself first and foremost a dealer. He expressed his pleasure at having met practically all of the world's most notable dealers and philatelists.

Initially, Rolf Gummesson was an early thematic philatelist. In 1936 he published a book about mythical



Rolf Gummesson at the entrance of his Stockholm stamp store in the spring of 1996. The store has been located at Kungsgatan 55 since 1939.

and religious historical themes on postage stamps. The collection is presently at the Stockholm Post Museum. Naturally, he also was a collector of Sweden.

The other of Gummesson's country collections included Germany: The Third Reich, personalities, Weimar, Berlin, and the overprints, as well as Iceland. Besides classical Finland, Rolf also collected the Finnish-Russian era. Of

Sweden he further collected "present day postal history," which began with the 1876 official stamps between the postmasters.

Gummesson's Finland collecting began after W.W. I and continued until the end. A good friend and supporter of this was the Finnish born Karl-Erik Stenberg, who first had a stamp shop in Turku, but after the war moved to Sweden and was recuperating from his war injuries with the Gummesson family. With Mikko Ossa, they published a book on Finland's earliest postal marks, which was

based, in part, on research from Gummesson's collection. Rolf was also an authenticator of early Finnish objects.

After STOCKHOLMIA 76, Gummesson no longer entered his classic Finland collection in international shows, but did present his rarities at the 1989 World Stamp Expo in

Washington D.C., FINLANDIA 95, and lastly a couple of years ago at the Monaco Post Museum.

Rolf was a Gold Life member of the Scandinavian Collectors Club holding membership number 541.

Philately and especially Finnish philately has lost its "ambassador."

Lauri Poropudas & Roger Quinby



This early cover from Gummesson's collection with multiples of the 1856 5 kopek issues is one of the great rarities of Finnish philately.

2002 Post Logo Symbolizes New Mission in The Information Technology World, Euro Issues Feature Traditional Subjects



Finland Post Corporation is renewing its corporate logo and image. The new image conveys the idea of the Post as a company that is meeting the challenges of the time and is offering both physical and electronic solutions for reaching the recipient- solutions that meet the needs of both companies and consumers.

The new image is used to depict the change that the Post has gone through over the past few years. This change is crystallized in the logo that, for example, no longer bears the traditional, stylized post horn. As a new element, the logo features two blue dots that are connected to each other. The dots make the logo multidimensional as one of them can change position and size. The changing connection between the dots expresses motion and development. The moving dot may also contain a photograph or moving images.

In the logo the Finland Post's strong traditions are still represented by the name Posti and the yellow color.

The yellow color in the logo can be associated with tradition, reliability and continuity, as well as customer-orientated thinking. On the other hand, the new blue is a color of action that expresses the ability to change and new solutions. Combined, the colors emphasize the power of the logo.

The reasons for refreshing the corporate image lie in the Post's changed business operations. The Post's basic function remains to reach the recipient, but the nature of the job has been altered markedly. Today, the Post offers messaging solutions for both conventional and, increasingly, electronic communications. Also, the IT-based technology solutions for corporate logistics have generated significant business opportunities. In addition to personal visits to the post office, postal business is more and more frequently managed by telephone and via the Internet.

CIRCUS IN THE EUROPA STAMP

A stamp on circus was issued on April 15th. The stamp was drawn by Nina Rintala, and its face value is 0.60 Euro. The stamp belongs to the EUROPA stamp series of the European postal administrations.

The modern circus was created by the Englishman Philip Astley, an owner of a riding school. He opened a riding arena in Lambeth in 1769, and the story tells that he financed it by selling a diamond ring he had found on the Westminster Bridge.

It is not known exactly when the riding performances organized by Ashley became shows comparable to today's circus. Little by little the number of items grew, and they became more versatile as well. In the course of time a strong man, a clown and an acrobat group, among others, joined the circus. The real stars of the shows were, however, horses and riders. The programmed pattern and circus traditions created by Astley are still largely followed.



The first circus troupe visited Finland 200 years ago. Jean Lustre, a Frenchman, and his troupe arrived in Turku from Stockholm and gave their first performance at Kupittaa on July 7, 1802. The circus stayed in town about a month before returning to Stockholm. Many circus performances were seen in Finland in the following decades.

The first Finnish circus was created by two brothers, head stablemen Cart and Johannes Ducander. They organized four "amateur circus performances" in the Turku manger in 1892. A few years later they established a real circus troupe and gave their first performance in Terijoki (now in Russia) in August 1896. The group consisted of 50 people and 30 horses.

The 200th birthday of the circus in Finland is celebrated in Turku throughout this year. For example, a circus historical exhibition will be organized at Turku Castle in cooperation with the Saint Petersburg Circus Museum and the Swedish Circus Academy. The exhibition is open from 25 April 2002 to 31 January 2003.

SIBELIUS MONUMENT IN NORDIC STAMP

The monumental statue *Passio Musicae*, which symbolizes the life work of master composer Jean Sibelius (1865-1957), is depicted in the 0.60 Euro special stamp issued on May 3, 2002. The stamp was issued in the Pohjola-Norden stamp series of the Nordic postal administrations, the theme of which this year is contemporary environmental art. The stamp depicting the famous sculpture created by sculptor, Professor Eila Hiltunen (1922-) was designed by Päivi Vainionpää. The stamp is based on a photograph by Otso Pietinen.



The Sibelius Monument, situated in Töölö, Helsinki

Sibelius Monument, Juniper and Lapland Stamps Released in 2002

was completed in 1967 causing unparalleled hue and cry. The result of the open competition arranged for the purpose caused such a heated discussion that the sponsor decided to arrange a second round. All artists whose works had been awarded and paid were invited. The work by Eila Hiltunen, a large structure of steel pipes welded together and standing on three support legs, won the second competition. There had been doubts, whether this abstract statue would be suitable as a memorial of the great man. The sculptor had added a separate relief-like portrait of the master composer to the final version.

For Eila Hiltunen the Sibelius Monument became her great artistic breakthrough. It is considered as one of the most remarkable memorials in Finland, and it is the most admired sculpture in Finland.

JUNIPER AND LAPLAND STAMPS ISSUED OCTOBER 9



Finland Post issued a stamp on the juniper tree on October 9th. The new stamp is a self-adhesive 0.60 Euro stamp, and issued in a sheet of 10 stamps. The stamp was designed by Pirkko Juvonen.

The juniper (*Juniperus communis*) is a conifer tree in the cypress family. In Finland it occurs naturally in two main forms. The short dwarf juniper with curved needles grows in Lapland, while the juniper with straight needles thrives elsewhere in Finland. This evergreen plant is normally bushy but sometimes grows to a 10 meters tree. Due to the good properties and pleasant scent of the wood, the juniper has been used for decorative objects and utility goods. The tree-like junipers are now protected; it is forbidden to fell them for commercial purposes.

This stamp, issued on October 9th, depicts a juniper branch with berries. The juniper berries are actually juniper cones; green when raw but blue-black when ripe, i.e. the third year after blooming. Both birds and people like the ripe berries. They are excellent spices in game dishes and are also used in beverages - e.g. gin. In olden days, people also used the juniper berries as natural medicine for various ailments.

In *My People Like The Juniper*, writer Juhani Aho describes the period of oppression, and makes this tough and strong tree a symbol of the Finnish people.

Date of Issue:	October 9, 2002
Face Value:	0.60 Euro
Issue:	5,000,000
Perforation:	Security perforation
Size:	34.5 x 24.5 mm
Paper:	Self-adhesive stamp paper
Printer:	House of Questa, England
Printing method:	Gravure 6/1
Stamp design, FDC & postmark:	Pirkko Juvonen

LAPLAND ISSUE



The attraction of Lapland: unique nature and silence can be sensed on the new non-denominated first class (1) stamp (0.60 Euro) to be issued on 9 October. The stamp was designed by Mika Launis.

The stamp depicts a wintry field view and a reindeer, and the sun dawning behind the field tops.

The original work is made with pastel crayons on tinted paperboard.

Lapland is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Finland. Clean nature that changes its outfit every season, peace and silence, and naturally Santa Claus with his own post office in the Arctic Circle, attract tourists to the North throughout the year. The winter is the top season but the summer with bright summer nights and the autumn with Ruska are heydays of tourism as well: about a half a million tourists visit Rovaniemi, the town of the Arctic Circle, yearly. The Rovaniemi area offers tourists both high-quality accommodation services and many adventure opportunities. The adventure program includes, depending on the season, hiking, rapids-shooting, skiing and snowmobile treks, reindeer and husky drives etc.

Date of Issue:	October 9, 2002
Face Value:	1st Class (0.60 Euro)
Issue:	5,000,000
Stamp designer:	Mika Launis
Perforation:	Security perforation
Size:	24.5 x 34.5 mm
Paper:	Self-adhesive stamp paper
Printer:	House of Questa, England
Printing method:	Gravure 6/1

Gulf of Finland, Environment and Fire Fox Franking Label Issued



GULF OF FINLAND BOOKLET

The Gulf of Finland stamp series, the first part of which was issued last autumn, continued with a booklet of five stamps on the submarine nature and marine research issued on April 15th. All stamps are non-denominated first class stamps, and the booklet is thus priced at 3 Euros.

The Gulf of Finland stamp booklet, the First Day Cover and the First Day postmark were designed by marine biologist, research diver and marine history enthusiast Juha Flinkman.

The lower part of the only vertical stamp of the booklet and the other stamps depict the undersea world. Mussels and kelp represent the population of the shallows, while perch and flounder are rare examples of organisms adapted to the brackish water of the Baltic Sea. The stamps on right depict the open sea: phytoplankton thrive in the surface water, while animal plankton can go deeper where there is less light; deep down in dark you can barely discern the shapes of Baltic herring and cod. Respectively, the upper parts of the stamps depict the view above the sea surface: zonal archipelago, boats and Arctic terns wheeling above the sea. The stamp also shows the Tvärminne Zoological Station, situated in Hankoniemi, the southernmost tip of continental Finland.

The pictorial subjects describe the Baltic Sea as a unique, difficult and very sensitive environment, to which only a few species of plants and animals have adapted. The purpose of the booklet is also to attract attention to the research of the Baltic Sea and to the importance of protecting it.

Date of Issue:	April 15, 2002
Face Value:	3.00 Euro (5 x 1st class)
Issue:	600,000 booklets
Stamp designer:	Juha Flinkman
Perforation:	13.25 x 13.75
Size:	stamp size varies
Paper:	Chancellor stamp paper 102g
Printer:	Joh Enschede Security Printers, The Netherlands
Printing method:	Offset 5/0

FIRE FOX FRANKING LABEL

Finland Post will introduced a PA-10 franking label, depicting a fire fox, on 1 November in all its vending machines. The new franking label was illustrated by advertising artist Tapio Honkanen.

The fire fox label replaces a franking label depicting a wolf. Vending machine sales of the wolf label ended on October 31, 2002.

The sale of the reindeer label will also end at the same time. The reindeer label was available in the Santa Claus Main Post Office vending machine and by ordering from the Philatelic Center.

The fire fox franking label also has an illustrated introduction day cover to which four new franking labels are attached. Their values are Euro 0.45, 0.50, 0.60 and 0.90. These machine-vended labels are cancelled with the Arctic Circle November 1, 2002 postmark. The cover will be sold at the Philatelic Centre for 2.90 Euros.

The Philatelic Center also sells a set of franking labels separately without the cover - cancelled or uncanceled. The set is priced at 2.45 Euros. No illustration of the new fire fox label was available at the time we went to press.

The fire fox is a mythic animal. According to an old folktale, the northern lights ("fox fires" in Finnish) on the sky of Lapland are caused by the fire foxes running in forests. It was said that when "the flanks of foxes touch trees, they strike fire, and the blaze is seen in the sky". Actually the northern lights are caused by the sun.

All new issues are available from:

Finland Post Philatelic Center
P. O. Box 2
FIN-00011 POSTI
Finland

Jay Smith & Associates
P. O. Box 650
Snow Camp, NC 27349

NORDICA
P. O. Box 284
Old Bethpage, NY 11804

m/75, Senate 2 Penni SAg - Source of Annoyance

Text and illustrations by Heikki Reinikainen

From *Filatelisti*, 4/02, translated by Carita Parker

The 2 penni SAg stamp from the smallest printed quantity of the Senate 7th and final printing emission is hard to come by, difficult to identify and really difficult if looking for a beautifully marked copy. There seems to be none, neither with beautiful markings nor any at all. This emission's rare densely perforated SBg stamps are the real stars of the 2 penni values.

Involved here is the type 1875 printing emission smallest quantity, only 25,000 stamps were printed in December of 1881. Earliest known cancellation is dated February 6, 1882. The emission remained unknown until 1961 when Jaakko Kempainen came public with the 2 penni densely perforated "true color" discovery. These Senate densely perforated stamps belong to the final 7th printing and so emission identification began with the few perforated 12 stamps that did not at all fit in with the Charta Sigillata pearl gray specimens.

But why were these stamps so difficult that it took nearly a century to identify one printing emission? The reason probably was the 2 penni monotonous pale gray print color that in many of the emissions is very similar. The separating factor for identification becomes



Figure 1. On the left there is unused dark grey SAf stamp having clear and sharp printing appearance plus well contrasting coat of arms in the pale oval. Ink surfaces are always broken and outlines are thin in this emission. Next to it there is an unused SBg, i.e. perforated 12 1/2 grey stamp from the Senate last emission. The sharpness is missing, printing appearance is dense, and unlike the other stamp, the coat of arms does not contrast well. The bottom of the oval starts clogging slightly. Ink surfaces are broken and the outlines are thin or defective. Note some surplus ink between the outlines. The grey color of the SBg has a slight warmer tinge when compared to the grey color of SAf



Figure 2. These similar looking 2 penni stamps are difficult to separate. However, dense perforation of the stamp on the right will guide it immediately to the last SBg emission. But what if the stamp was perforated 11? As in Figure 1, identification is confirmed by the dense appearance when compared to the stamp in the middle. One has to be careful, however, because dense perforations may be forged. They were made in abundance from the end of the nineteenth century onwards! Compared to the one on the right, the stamp on the left is noticeably sharp in appearance thus differing from SAg. The date of the cancellation, 3. 3. 77, guides it to the pale gray SAc emission. (And of course, the paper is thin.) The appearance of the stamp in the middle is closer to SBg but one can see dark ink accumulations bordering the figure of the lion. Printing ink like spreading water color is typical of the smudgy emission SAd. The identification is confirmed by the 1878 cancellation, because the next emission did not come until the spring of 1879 and SAg as late as 1881.

the thin paper that eliminates part of emission 1 as well as emissions 2 and 3. The black-grayish emission 5 can be eliminated due to its ink color, but emissions 4, 6, and 7 must be identified on the basis of printing appearance, often by means of very vague clues.

Printing emission 7 had been mixed in with earlier emissions until Kempainen & company with the help of the printing appearance happened upon it. That was then. The present problem is scant material, not to mention beautiful marks. Markets indicate even such an exceptional situation, that the offering of perforation 11 are nearly as scant as that of the 12k. The Handbook states, that 7,600 specimens were delivered on April 1, 1882 or thereafter to the postal service, and all of these might have received dense perforation. The quantity amounts to 1/3 of the entire printing and figures rather well with observations in recent years about the availability of these stamps. In light of this, it is smart to check the pricing of the perforated 11 stamps.

But why is it that both emission 7 perforations are so infrequently offered? The previous SAf emissions printed quantity totaled 30,000

specimens and are continuously offered at auctions, even in large groups. Since the SAg printed quantity was 25,000 specimens, there ought to be considerably more available. However, it can be said that part of the stamps are so similar to the previous, that these can not be distinguished from the Saf stamps.

At least the difference in printing appearances is apparent (Figure. 1). When 250 stamp sheets were printed in a few hours, it is doubtful that the printing cover (or anything else connected with it) would have been changed/renewed, since the appearance of each emission is somewhat of the same satisfactory quality. This question to be left to later research.

Single stamps from the last emission are seen, for instance, on Helsinki, Turku, Tampere, Pori, Padasjoki, Tornio, Mikkeli, Dahlsbruk, and Jyväskylä marked mail. However, postal items with stamps from the last emission are not known with certainty. Here is another question to ponder for the researchers of this particular issue.

Included are some illustrations of these printing emissions. By studying them and reading through the information in *Handbook III* (1993), I think that identification of the emissions would be considerably easier. The colors in the pictures as gray may be more appropriate, even though this time I (writer) would ask the reader to concentrate on the printing appearance and to forget the color issue entirely.

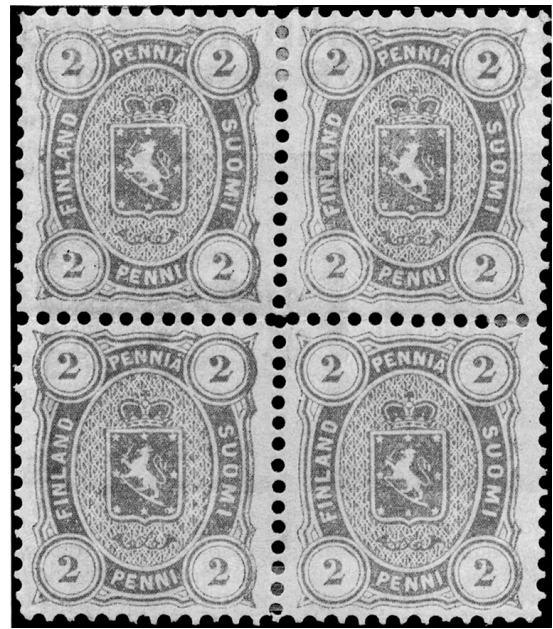


Figure 3. Densely perforated unused block of four from the last emission SAg is a great rarity. Only two are known. These two and one cancelled strip of three may be the only known existing blocks of the SAg/SBg emission. Here the ovals are dense too, almost to the extent of clogging. Note again the surplus ink between the outlines.

Editor's Note, Continued from page 1.

The NORDIA shows always rekindle my enthusiasm for philately and I hope if you were to attend just one show a year that you consider NORDIA as the show to attend. See you in Iceland next October!

Beginning with the February 2003 issue, we will publish a series on the 1901-1916 stamps. If you have some interesting or unusual covers from this period, please send them on.

I am presently reviewing and editing a number of articles on the Finnish TPO cancellations. For several reasons, this has turned out to be a challenging task. First, recent research has necessitated substantial revisions in some of the earlier articles and second, a good deal of the research is fundamentally incomplete. For example, there is no basic agreement among Finnish railway collectors on the classification of railway cancellations. So, everyone who has written on the subject has offered a new and different system and this has left us with somewhat of a mess.

Nevertheless, I have studied Kaj Hellman's unpublished notes in which he has proposed separate identification numbers for thirty three TPO cancellation types. I think it is possible to reduce this number slightly and I will publish a proposed (tentative) classification system later next year. This classification will augment the very fine list proposed by John MacDonell in the November, 2001 newsletter.

This issue of the newsletters brings us to the close of

our seventh year of publication. When the venture was begun, I thought we might have a quarterly publication of 12, possibly 16 pages, but never in my most expansive moments of philatelic bravado and exuberance did I envisage a publication of 32 pages. Increased costs and time to put this modest publication to press will keep us at this page limit for the foreseeable future. In order to maintain the 32 page format of the newsletter, we have modified the body text type font from Times-11 to Times-10.

It is my current intention to continue publishing the newsletter through the Finnish NORDIA show in 2006. I will then be celebrating my 70th birthday and it may be just the right time to slow down a bit. I hope you enjoy the newsletter and find something of interest in each issue.

I would like to mention here how saddened I was to learn of Rolf Gummesson's passing. I knew he was not well these past several years and it had been some time since I last visited him at the shop in Stockholm. I first visited there in the early 1980s and it was Rolf who directed my Finnish collecting interests to the areas which over time matured sufficiently so that they could shown in international competition. He was a good friend, a wonderful mentor and a superlative philatelist. I will miss him.

Two Finnish Postal Cards with Virtually Unknown St. Petersburg Pen Cancellations Are Offered on eBay



Figure 1. This card was offered by an Italian collector/dealer on eBay without any explanation of the pen cancellation.

Figure 1 shows a relatively common 1881 issue postal card (*Norma* PK 14, *LaPe* 12, H & G 6), addressed to someone with a Swedish surname in St. Petersburg, but with an unusual cancellation. An Italian collector/dealer, with whom contact could not be made, recently offered this card for sale on eBay. A second card (not pictured) with a similar pen cancel was subsequently offered by a dealer from Eugene, Oregon.

As Finland originating mail at this time was virtually always canceled with a handstamp, one wonders what the handwritten cancellation is on the value stamp. The card's only other marking is the SPB cancel of 25 May 1887, and presumably there is no other cancellation on the back.

Questions were asked of a number of specialists for their opinions. Although many plausible and thoughtful suggestions were offered, none proved entirely correct until we discovered an article (reprinted here, see pages 25-26) by D. A. Dromberg which reported a discovery item from Mr. A. Fabergé with these same marks. The illustration from the Dromberg article is shown as Figure 3. The pertinent text is also repeated here:

Mr. Fabergé also reported an 1882 letter from Karjaa to Riga franked with 25 penni m/75 emission, as well as 2 singles of the same stamp with an ink cancellation F.Z.D. (in Cyrillic). According to Fabergé, it could be an abbreviation of: *Finlandskajaeljesnaja Doroga* (tr.= Finland's Railroad). The letter came from Finland by rail to St. Petersburg and there the postage stamp was found to be uncanceled and so ink-marked F.Z.D. at the St. Petersburg Finland railroad station before having been dispatched to Riga.

Accordingly, these pen cancellations should be classified as SPB railway station cancels.

It would appear that these pen cancels are fairly elusive items and once again we thank



Figure 2. Close-up of pen cancellation.

Herb Volin who spotted the items on eBay and initiated this inquiry. As a result we have identified one cover, two postal cards and two single stamps with this hand cancel.

Both postal cards bearing the SPB pen cancel were sold very inexpensively; most likely the sellers were unaware of just how unusual and elusive are these cancellations.

So, the mystery has been resolved and we are especially appreciative for Cyril Schwenson for his e-mail with the translation of the pen cancel text and to Ms. Soila Siltala of the Helsinki Post Museum for finding the article that first reported these pen cancellations. If you have any covers like this, please send a scan or a photocopy to the Editor.



Figure 3. From the 1977 article by the noted philatelic author, D. A. Dromberg. Unfortunately, the poor quality of the original illustration resulted in this less than satisfactory reproduction.

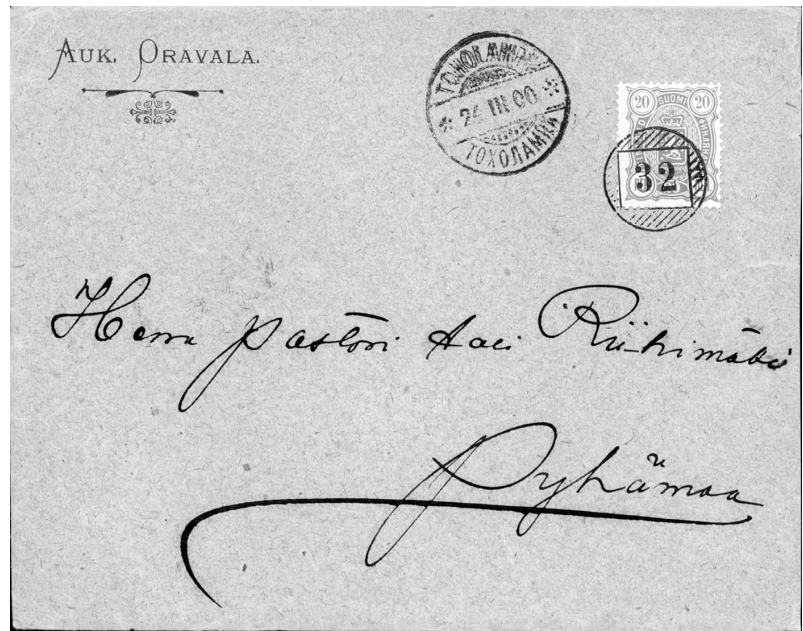
1900 Rural Domestic Cover With Numeral Departure Postmark and Mail Stop Arrival Mark

One of the fascinating characteristics of pre 1920 Finnish philately is the splendid variety of postmarks and other postal markings seen on covers from the early nineteenth century. We are generally familiar with most of the main nineteenth century cancels used in Finland including the single-line Russian postmarks introduced in 1812, the low boxed rectangular date stamps introduced in 1847, the high box cancels used from 1851, the large single ring circular date stamps used from 1856 followed by the small single ring cancellers in 1860, and the double ring cancellers used from 1873. At various times one or more of these types of postmarks were in use. The familiar "Russian" postmarks beginning in 1893 replaced all of these cancellers not previously withdrawn. These cancels remained in use until 1918 when the Russian (Cyrillic) town name text was removed. It should also be mentioned that during this period figure cancels, railway cancels and ship cancels were also in use.

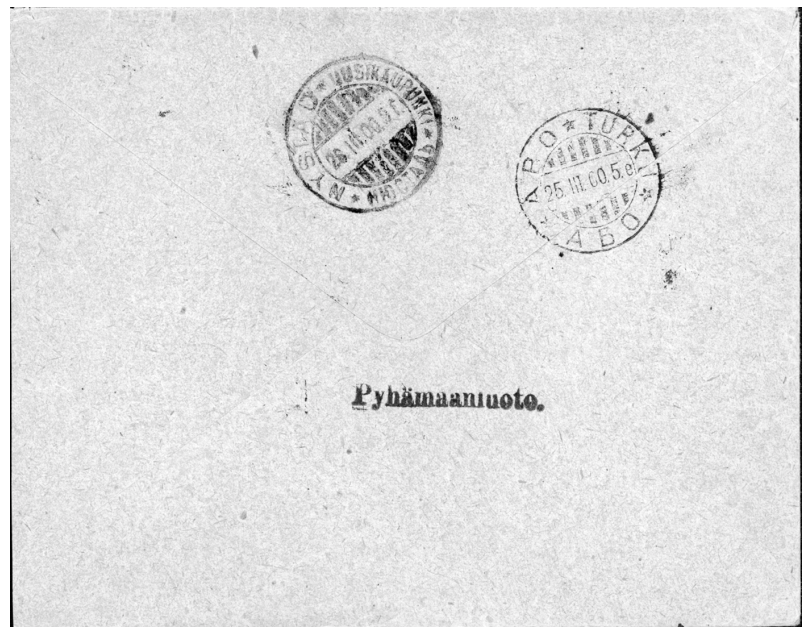
Nevertheless, there were several types of less familiar postmarks that were used in the rural areas of Finland beginning in the 1880s, namely the numeral cancels which designated weekly routes and the single line mail stop postmarks introduced in 1891. The mail stops operated with limited authorization, mostly by village shopkeepers under contract as state postal agents handling ordinary mail and the sale of postage stamps. The stops remained in use until 1977 when the village mail stops were replaced with postal stations.

The numeral cancels identified a specific route between villages, with one terminus often connected with a post office at or near a railway station where the mail would be date cancelled, sorted and dispatched for transit to the destination address.

This is an area for further study; surely we will present more detailed articles on the numeral cancels and the straight-line mail stop or village cancellations. An article on the figure cancellations is planned for the January 2003 newsletter.



Pyhämaaniuto.



The cover shown here is particularly interesting because it was postmarked with three different type cancellers: it was dispatched with the undated numeral cancel No. 32, and delivered to Toholampi, and there postmarked with the Russian type cds, 24. III. 00, and from there sent to Turku, bearing a transit cds, 25. III. 00, then to Nystad, 26. III. 00, and finally to the village of Pyhämaaniuto, where the village straight-line postmark was used as an arrival mark. A single cover displaying both types of rural cancellers is quite unusual.

Aarne Haapakoski - A Great Collector of Meander Letters

by Jaakko Kemppainen, translated by Carita Parker

Lauri Seppänen did not believe the assumptions presented abroad that supposedly the Meander figures indicated rush delivery or the official status of the sender or addressee, nor the theory offered by Kustaa Lakanen in 1956-1957, that the figure was an open(ed) crown.

On the request of Seppänen, I (writer) looked for an answer in early 1957 in the Oulu provincial archives and found perhaps the earliest in Finland discovered one crown letter 27.11.1682 (Nov. 27); a letter 3.4.1712 (Apr. 3) with three beautiful separate crowns; as well as a 2.10.1725 (Oct. 2) letter also with three separate crowns, but close to each other, and a 1726 three crown letter with crowns joined to each other.

On February 12 and 21, I (writer) photographed several letters and gave part of the photos to Kustaa Lakanen. Additionally, I copied the strangest curlicues of which the simplest is a drawing 13. 3. 1764 (March 13) of a slightly wavy line crossed by a straight line.

Where the crown lines became curlicued, there were added small figures, initially numbers 1 or 3 indicating the number of crowns, such as one or three crowns. Whereas, later on, when their meaning was lost the small figures were drawn quite haphazardly. I recall seeing in the *Suomen Kuvalehti* magazine in 1956 an article by Aarne Haapakoski (pen name "Outsider") with a lot of Meander curlicues pictured where the number 3 was well represented. I wrote to him on February 18, 1957 and he responded with the following:

"At one time I was an active philatelist, but in later years I have focused mostly on pre-philatelic objects such as Meander letters about which meaning Kustaa Lakanen and I have often pondered. At the time I wrote the article in the *Suomen Kuvalehti* I still agreed with Lakanen that the Meander figure is an open(ed) crown, but I already mulled over the three crown symbolism. The puzzle became clear even to me around the same time as Lakanen made his discoveries in Oulu and urged me to visit Stockholm archives.

"When I last met Lakanen before Christmas the Meander-puzzle, as I understood it, had been solved in the way you described in your letter: The Meander figure is indicative of three crowns being the Sweden-Finland symbol and marked on Crown Post (perhaps even on other post?) covers and signified of course a type of postmark. A month ago I found in the State Archives similar three crown letters from the 1600s.

"The matter is solved, and Lakanen most likely soon will give an official account on the issue after which the Meander letters

will become more highly valued in my opinion. But the beginning is still clouded in mystery. Where did the order come from to draw the crowns? No such decree has been found. Was this only the idea of some single individual and with time became a custom? These questions ought to be resolved next.

"I have tried to prove another matter too. Judge Seppänen claimed, that there are no private Meander letters, i.e., non-business sent from one individual to another. I beg to disagree, because I have in my collections, for instance, a Meander letter sent to Abraham Witting, where the content is official to be sure, but my understanding is, that also Meander letters from private individuals were carried in the Crown Post sack. I believe, that before long I will get my hands on such an aforementioned letter.

"Yours truly might have the largest collection of official Meander letters in Finland - over 700 specimens, about 80 different kinds - whereas Lakanen has only about 40. Lauri Seppänen wrote in *Philatelica Fennica*, 1/1958, about my research and published several photos I had taken. Rolf Grönlund, the last of the three now deceased researchers had in the *Philatelica Fennica* 11/1976 and 2 and 4/1977 issues extensively presented his observations about the Meander figures."

(Editor's Note: These articles are presented in full on pages 12-15.)

Grönlund at one time assumed, that most of the small figures indicated the number 3. I told him (Rolf) about the Haapakoski article and promised to sometime write about the 3s pictured in the article. Haapakoski, I did not get a chance to meet, because he passed away while on the Canary Islands. (Editor's Note: Apparently, this article was never written.)

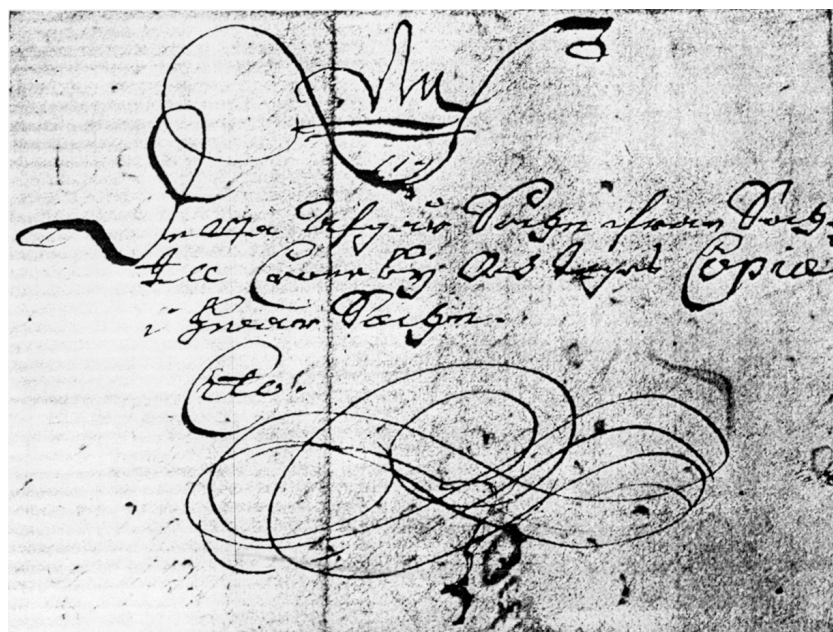


Figure 1. One crown official letter, 27. 11. 1682.



Figure 2. Examples of how the three crown figures became less distinct Meander figures in the 1700s. The different clerks, who were not well educated, and whose writing skills were poor, were to blame.

Origin of So-Called “Meander” Figures in The Crown Post

by Rolf Grönlund, translated by Carita Parker
from *Philatelia Fennica*, 11/76

Hitherto, the assumption of how Meander figures came about has been presented by the notable Finnish philatelist, Kustaa Lakanen, and first published in the Finlandia 1956 exhibition catalogue. As far as I know, Mr. Lakanen had arrived at his conclusion by studying church proclamations in Archives, backtracking in the order of time and thus supposedly arriving at the correct conclusion. I now think that I can finally prove how the Meander figures really happened.

The figures were used to mark Crown Post (*häradspost* in Swedish/*kihlakunnan posti* in Finnish), but when the order was first implemented has been traced to Sweden-Finland only to about the year 1690. This manner of marking continued on - barring a few scattered exceptions - in Sweden until December 31, 1873 and in Finland until about 1880. So far no more detailed information is available.

Now to the real issue. Initially on Crown Post and apparently for a rather short time, only one open crown was used. A church proclamation from 1697 for the Wiitasaari church shows this rare usage. Figure 1.

In Figure 2, a church proclamation from the same year and addressed to the same place, has three unattached open crowns in the order of one above and two below.

Figure 3, illustrates a church proclamation from 1724 for the Nastola chapel, folded so as to show two open crowns above and one below. Here the open crowns are in the same configuration as seen on Sweden's coat of arms, for instance, marked on the “ore” (Swedish minor currency). In my opinion, these three open crowns correspond to the names (in Swedish) Sveas, Götes, and Vendes king.

This explains also the number “3” on about 80% of letters with curlicue figure(s), which number is seen in the so-called degenerative Meanders too, that may have as many as 6-7 open crown curlicues. More about this at a later time.

It can be presumed that the clerks were kept busy since few had writing skills and drawing three open crowns separate from each other was tedious. Thus, the crowns were drawn side by side, but still separate and then connected by a line. Figure 4 from 1795 and Figure 5 from 1796 are indicative of this, both are church proclamations for the Utajärvi church. The next step was a figure with a curlicue, and this then became the mark for Crown Post delivery.

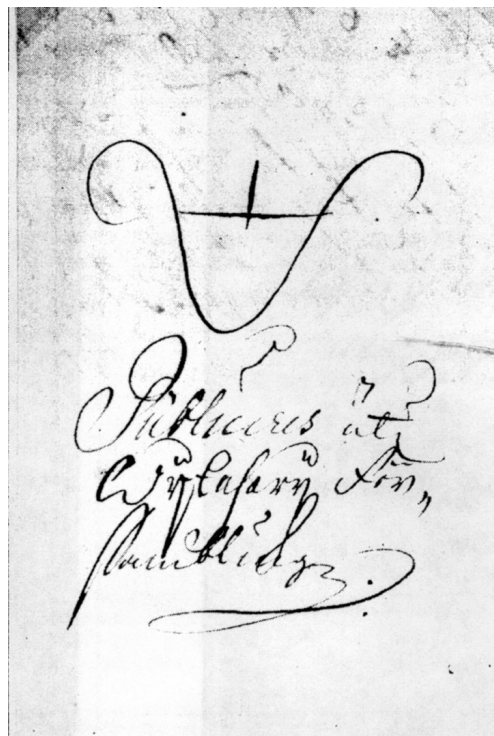


Figure 1

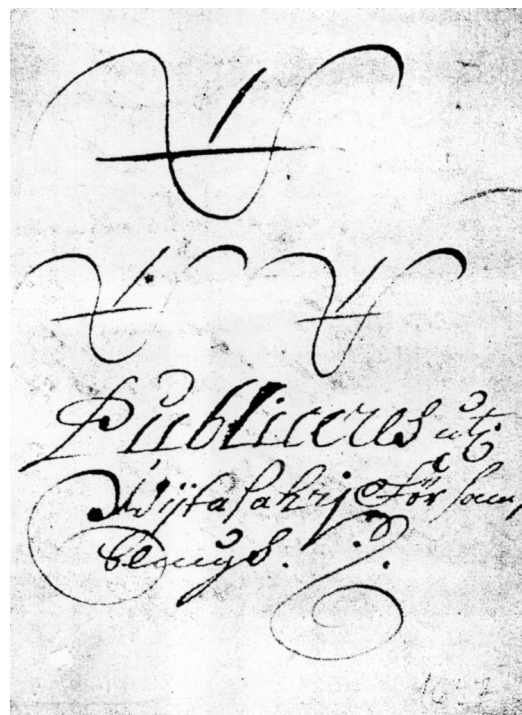


Figure 2



Figure 3, above and Figure 4, below

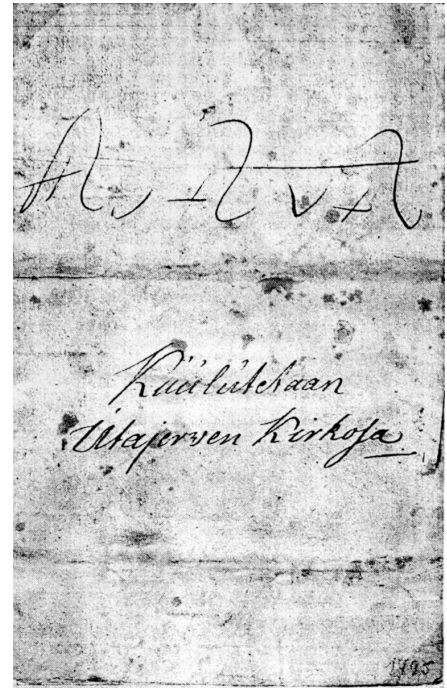
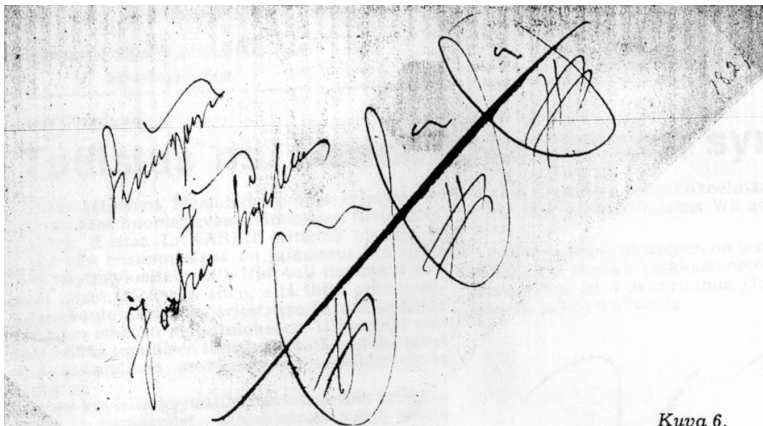
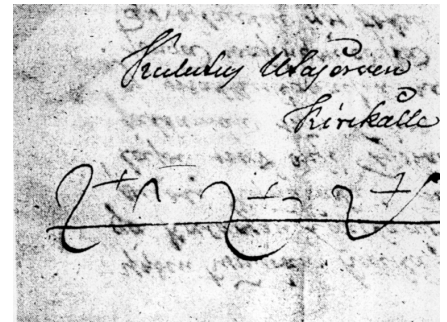


Figure 5



Kuva 6.

Figure 6, right. This is a 1827 proclamation from for the Jokiois church. It is complete proof of how the so-called Meander figures came about.



Arne Haapakoski, continued from page 11.



Figure 3 above, 4, upper right & 5 lower right. The three Crown Post letters shown here show more ornamental designs of the crowns. Compare with the nine designs shown in Figure 2 on page 11. No instructions to clerks have been found as to how the crown post figures were to be drawn.



“Meander” Figures in The Crown Post

by Rolf Grönlund, translated by Carita Parker
from *Philatelia Fennica*, 12/76 & 2/77

THE MAGIC THREE IN “MEANDER” FIGURES

Since time immemorial the “figure 3” has in some ways symbolized secretive, magic qualities to humans. Example, the Holy Trinity and the three kings, Balthazar, Melchior, and Kaspar arriving in Bethlehem to pay homage to the Christ child. From here a big leap forward in time to the coat of arms of cities and the aristocracy in the Middle Ages, where often the number 3 appeared on the emblems in the form of three towers, three bars/beams, three barrels, three lilies etc. This would be a very interesting subject for research. When the royal house of

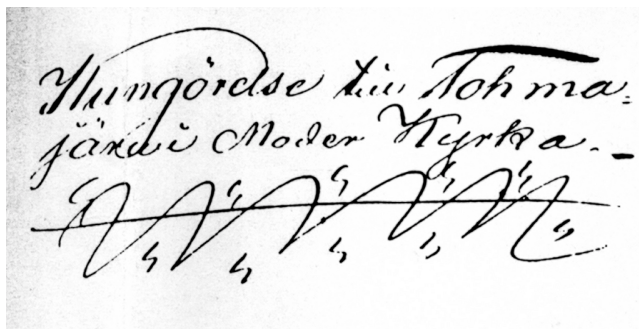


Figure 3. This is a church proclamation for the Tohmajrvi church from 1849, and takes great imagination to really see the 3's in this pattern.

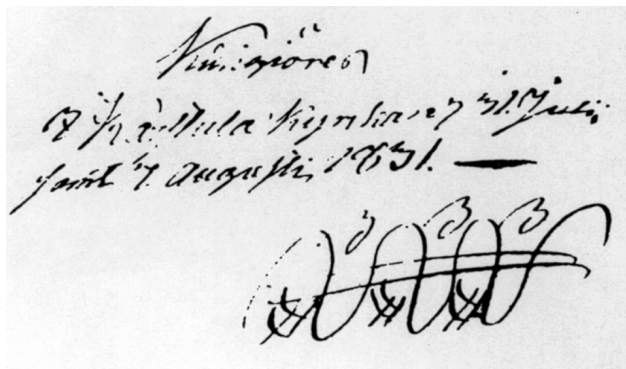


Figure 1. This cover represents a church proclamation for the Karstula church from 1831 and gives a good idea of a vertical 3.

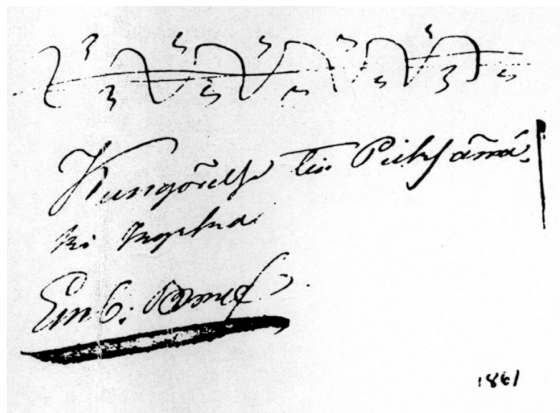


Figure 4. A proclamation ordered for the Pieksämäki church from 1861 is very interesting insofar that it came about at a period in time when the use of “Meander” patterns started to become outmoded and instead the move to the marking: “Official letter.” In this cover both address types are represented.

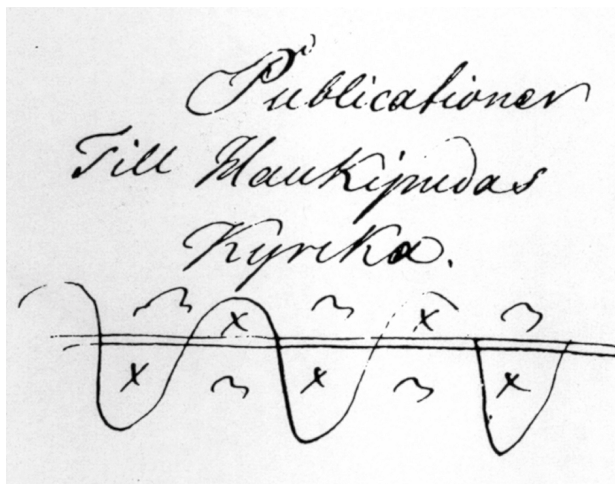


Figure 2. This cover represents a church proclamation for the Haukipudas church from 1786 and gives some idea of a slanted 3. Note, that the 3's were not drawn according to any artistic requirements. Thus, the researcher often has to use a very vivid imagination in trying to discern these figures.

Sweden (the king was Sweas, Göthes and Vendes king) began displaying on its coat of arms the three crowns as a symbol of status, it then followed that the “figure 3” on the Crown Post gained specific and important meaning.

The author has already in the *Philatelia Fennica* issue of 11/1976 written about the origin of the “Meander” figures.

Thus there are quite a number of patterns with the “figure 3” in Crown Post letters. Apparently the figure was originally drawn in a vertical position, but with time and with a busier pace the writing often became more slanted.

The so-called degenerated Meander figures require a special explanation: As time passed and the clerks

changed, the knowledge that the original “Meander” pattern officially consisted of three parts was lost, but still the magic number 3 retained its hold on things for centuries.

A clerk actually did not have to know anything else than the fact that when he drew on a Crown Post letter many-faceted and specific types of figures and inside these marked figure 3's, the mailing was forwarded as an official letter. In the “Meander” patterns of Crown Post letters there are a great number of different small marks about which I plan to write a research paper.

“MEANDER” SMALL PATTERNED MARKS

After the 3, the most often encountered small mark is the slanted crossed double lines. So far I have not been able to adequately explain the significance of these. Once upon a time in Italy it meant “per cavalcata,” i.e., that the item was to be carried by horse, most likely on horseback. The same meaning apparently did not apply to Sweden-Finland Crown Post, because the marking is seen on letters that contained no urgent message. Almost all of the slanted crossed double lines are very clearly discernible, but I have also found markings that to a great extent are distorted (degenerated).

Figure 5 is a church proclamation for the Jokioinen (in Swedish = Jockas) church from 1815, and Figure 6, a church proclamation for the Joroinen (in Swedish = Jorois) church from 1799. The church proclamations of that time were usually written in Swedish and apparently the pastor translated them into Finnish.

When it comes to the other small marks in the “Meander” patterns there are a great number of different kinds. Examples include: open crowns with one or two cross lines, large specks either singly or in pairs, dots, crosses etc. Figure 7 is a church proclamation for the Tuusula (in Swedish = Thusby) church from 1765. Figure 8 is a similar letter for the Lapua (in Swedish Lappo) church from 1790.

Naturally the question arises what if anything these small marks really signified. Perhaps the original idea was to depict gems and other ornaments like on a crown. And even though nearly all of the figures display these small marks there are those, albeit less commonly encountered, that completely lack them (marks). Figure 7 is a church proclamation for the Laukaa church from 1845.

Previously I thought, that the 1, 2, or 3 lines running lengthwise had some specific meaning. But I have come to realize, that they only link together the groups of three “open” crowns formed by the loops.

Editor's Note: The article illustrates additional covers from the 1700s until 1845 with other examples of the small crown-like meander figures. See the following article on the Crown Post.

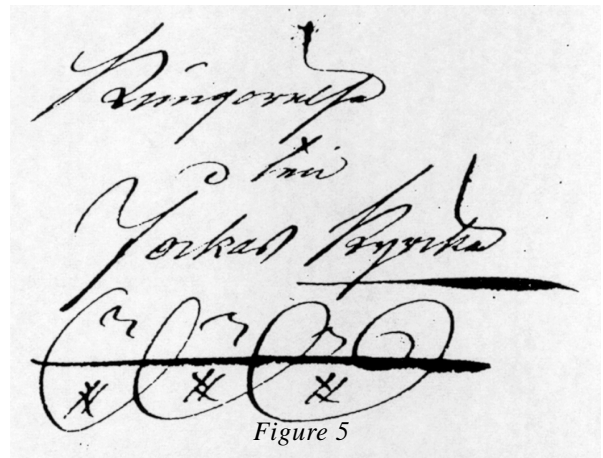


Figure 5

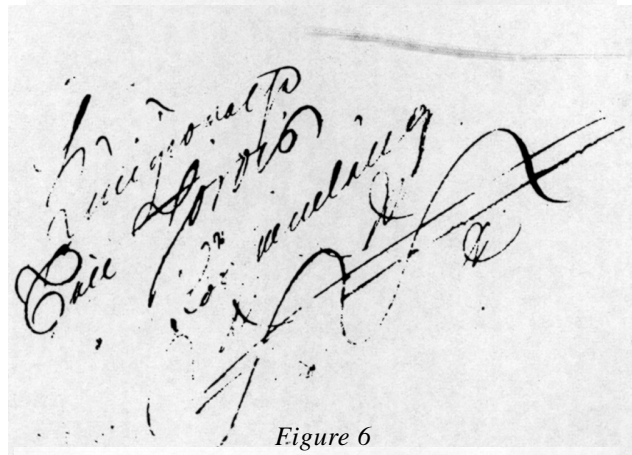


Figure 6

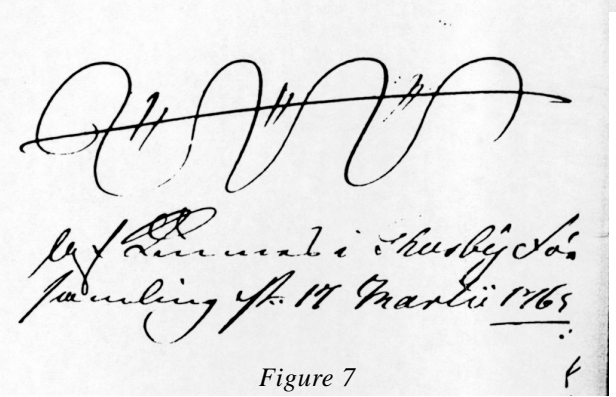


Figure 7

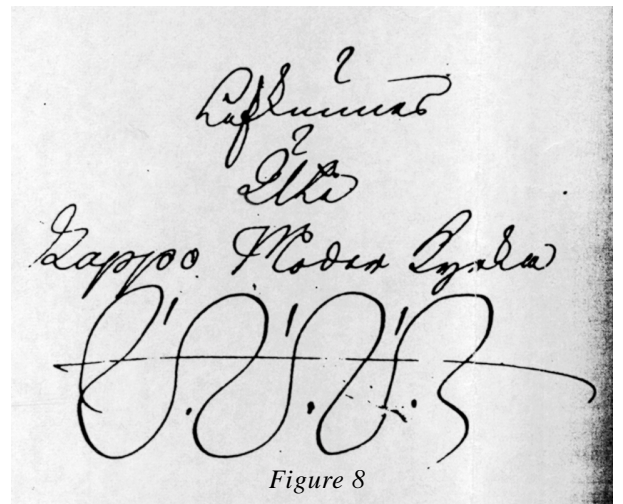


Figure 8

Golden Age of Finnish Philately - Part 5a

The Crown Post

Text & Illustrations by Heikki Pahlman

INTRODUCTION

The philately before the stamp period has been expanding more and more recently. This offers to collectors a versatile and compelling research area. Some new outstanding international collections are an example of this. Temporal extension for the collection gives the four whole centuries.

In this part, (this is the fifth installment on the series of pre-philately) I explain briefly the development of the Crown Post to a countrywide district post. (I do not have the exact translation for “kihlskeenanponti” and therefore, I use the name district post.)

The Crown Post is one of the oldest methods of letter carriage. It provides an inexhaustible source for new discoveries including the routes and special markings on the letters.

The Crown Post was originally intended for the highest officials of the crown. King Kustaa Vaasa (Gustaf Wasa) tried several times in the middle of the sixteenth century to arrange free rides and accommodations for officials of the crown - also for the letter carriers. The oldest known record of this from the Sweden - Finland period is a letter sent to the burghers of Orebro in 1537, where it was mentioned that for the first time the free ride privilege for the letter carriers. A few years later an order was issued that these letter carriers must have a silver badge with the coat of arms of the king and a special post carrier pass.

Juhana III continued developing the courier organization at the end of 1500s trying to provide regular post transportation for the crown. In 1584 Juhana III prepared a lengthy declaration in Finnish regarding the free carriage of letter transportation.

The Crown Post established a permanent and wider system in the middle of seventeenth century. It was used at the beginning for governors and lower local administrators for post transportation between those districts where there was no regular general postal routes, especially linking inland towns. It also was used in areas outside the postal routes for delivering the letters to post offices or post houses and further to the addressee. At this phase, it acted as a complementary post for the Kingdom's general post.

Slowly, the Crown Post lost its general post nature and it became the Kingdom's official post - district post. Later it was used also for sending letters of persons other than state officers. One important group of letters was the announcements to churches, and later letters were sent by private persons.

The Crown Post lasted in Finland until the middle of the nineteenth century (1800s) - actually a lot longer after the use of adhesive stamps.

The Crown Post did not end during the occupancy of Russia. However, the general post of Finland had developed so much by the 1880s that the use of it was unnecessary and the regulation prohibiting its cancellation was issued on January 15, 1883.

The mark of The Crown Post - the crown figure(s) (Meander figures or marks) originated during the sixteenth century, when the post carriers had the post coat of arms and post pass as a mark of the officer's letter carrier. This crown figure was later drawn directly on the letter itself to indicate the way of transportation. Later, the meaning of it was forgotten and the figure(s) developed into the so called Meander marks. This assumption is supported by the fact that it has been found that crown figures were transformed into Meander figures or coils from the seventeenth century.

CROWN POST SURPRISINGLY VERSATILE

During these many centuries man created various designs, additional markings and guides of carrying the letters to the final destination and it is the variety of these markings that makes the collection of Crown Post mail very attractive.

The crown drawing were one, two or three separate figures or they may have been combined together in various ways creating many different and interesting marks or coils.

Instead of crowns, it can as well be written on the letter that it had to be delivered to the receiver like “Framscaffas af haradsbrefftorare” or “haradspost”. Sometimes for express letters, one, two or three feathers were added depending on the urgency of the delivery. Also very interesting are the few remaining letters which have been carried by both the General Post and the Crown Post.

It is possible to build interesting collections of this pre-philatelic period by adding to the basic material different post forms, feather letters and letters with various additional markings. In the remaining articles in this series, I will show and explain the types of letters that can add interest and variety to the collection.

CROWN POST LETTER 1809

The crown post changed in 1649 with the statutory order of inns. This combined the crown mail carriage and other traffic including services of private persons. The mail carriage had reached the fourth degree of technical development, which appeared in stations where the horses were changed. There were three types of stations and they had Swedish names: first was the “*Landskiften*” which meant mail changing place of the district, the foreman was “*Landspostmästare*” = district postmaster who changed the horses and wagons. The second was “*Skiften*” which meant a shift changing place. There the horses and wagons were changed but the foreman was a local “post master” of the Crown. The third was, “*Ombyte*”, which was a changing place where only the horses were changed, the foreman was the local “*posthållare*” = post housekeeper. According to the order there were several “*Ombyte*” places between one-shift places “*skiften*”. In these cases the post system was called “*Härad post*” = district post and in some letters it is indicated in writing “*Afgår med härads post*” = leaves with district post even though the original crown figures (Meander marks) remained in use.



Figure 1. A Crown Post local letter with meander figure, from Nygård to Johannisberg, dated February 7, 1809. On the back side it is written: “Afgår med härads Post befaller Gustaf Hannholm” = leaves with district post orders, Gustaf Hannholm.

CROWN POST LETTERS - 1688 & 1694

In parallel with the Courier Post, King Kustaa Vaasa (Gustaf Wasa) developed the postal system that was mainly for purposes of carrying regular or less important letter by riders. This so called Crown Post was further developed by Kings Eenk XIV (Erik XIV) and Juhana III (Johan III). Juhana III made an announcement in Finnish to organize this postal system. Therefore, it organized post houses, kept by peasants within 10 to 20 km from each other on the main roads. These letters are typically recognized from the crown figure on the letter which can have 1 or 3 crown figures, called meander figures. The first recorded crown post letters are from the late 1600s. In the middle of 1600s this post form was changed to “harads post” = district post.

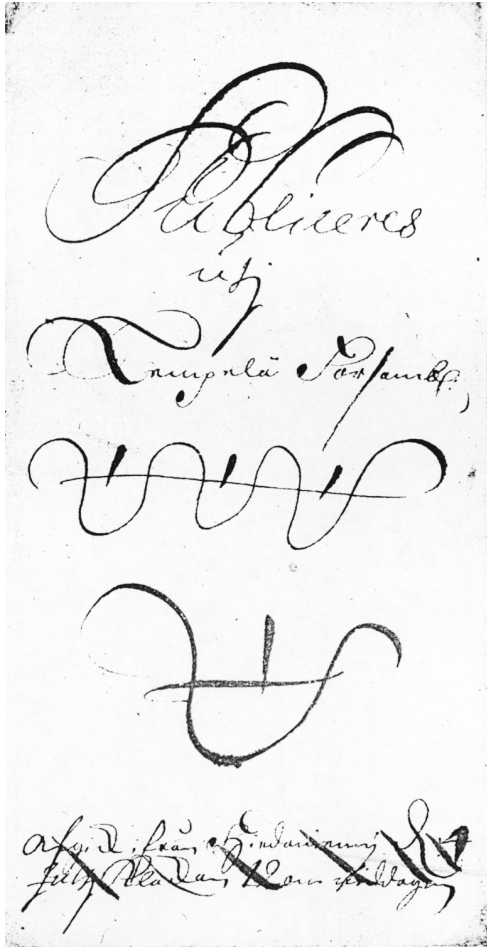


Figure 2. A Crown Post letter, with one single crown and three crowns together, to be publicly read at the Lempaala church 1688 = “Publiceres uti Lempala Forsamling”. To follow the mail it was written, “Afgick ifran H...d 4 July klockaan 12 middagen” = left from H... July 4 at 12 mid day.



Figure 3. A Crown Post letter with three single crowns to Viitasaari parish dated November 4, 1694.

CROWN POST LETTERS - 1697, 1724, 1769 & 1770

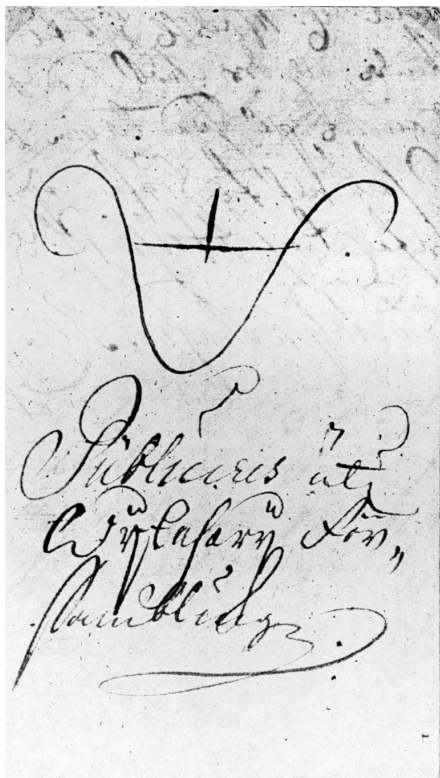


Figure 4. A Crown Post letter with a single crown to Viitasaari parish from Helsinki dated October 22, 1697. The Crown Post used the district roads.

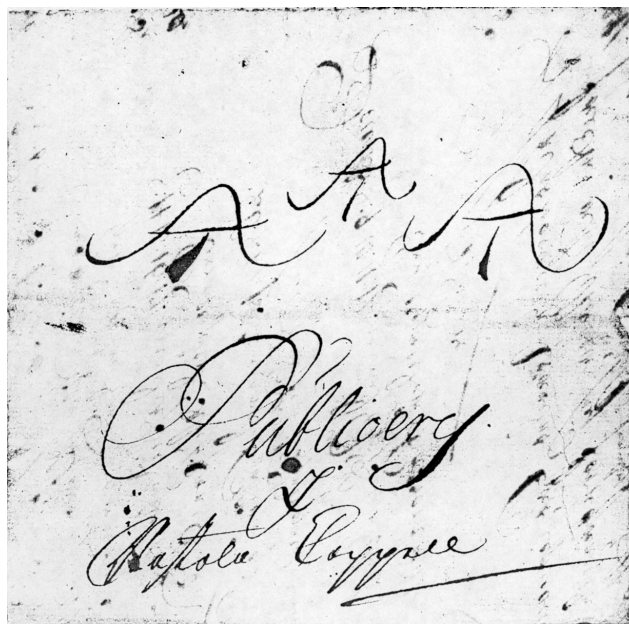


Figure 5. A Crown Post letter from Helsinki to Nastola chapel, dated July 29, 1724, with three separate single crown figures.



Figure 6. A Crown Post letter with a single meander figure from Hamina (Fredrikshamn) dated August 24, 1769.

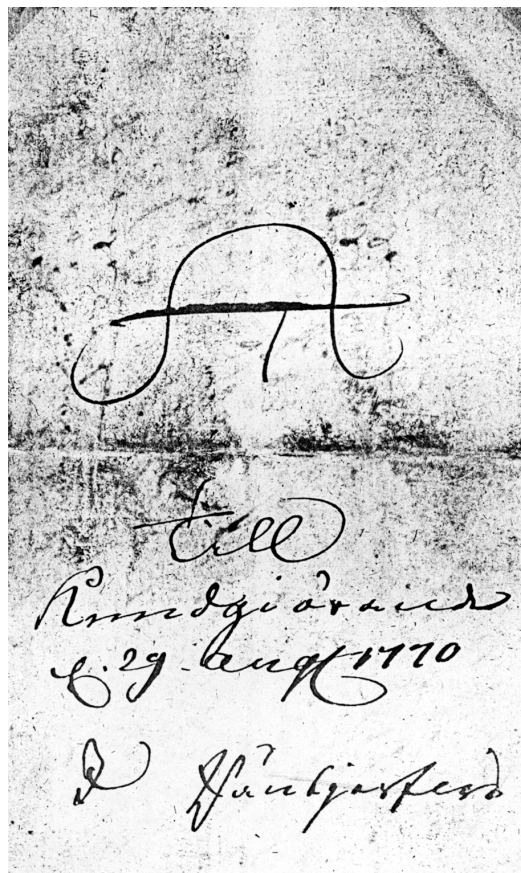


Figure 7. A Crown Post letter with a single crown figure from Kymenkartano province head office to Rautjarvi dated August 29, 1770.

CROWN POST LETTER - 1700, 1720 & 1774

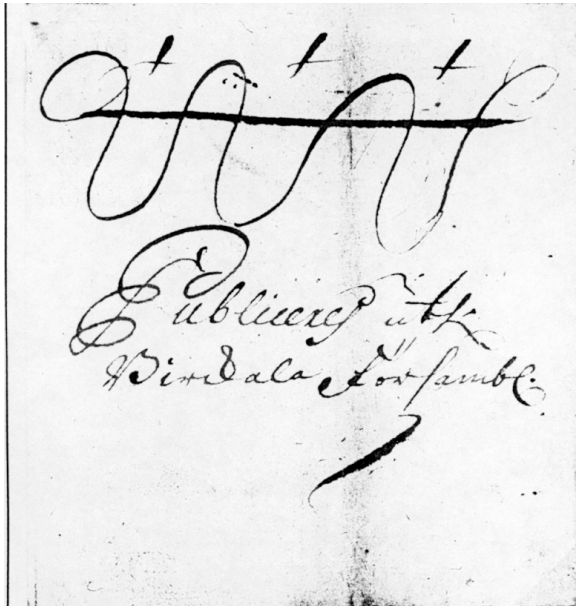


Figure 8. A Crown Post letter with crown figures, which have been transformed to a so-called Meander figure. The letter is dated in Turku on October 30, 1700 and addressed to Pirkkala.

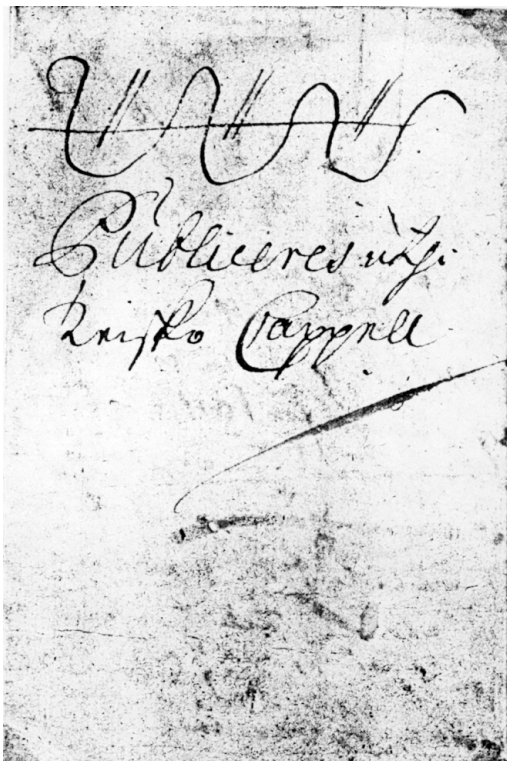


Figure 9. A Crown Post letter with Meander figures. The letter is dated in Pirkkala on January 3, 1720 and addressed to the Teisko Chapel.

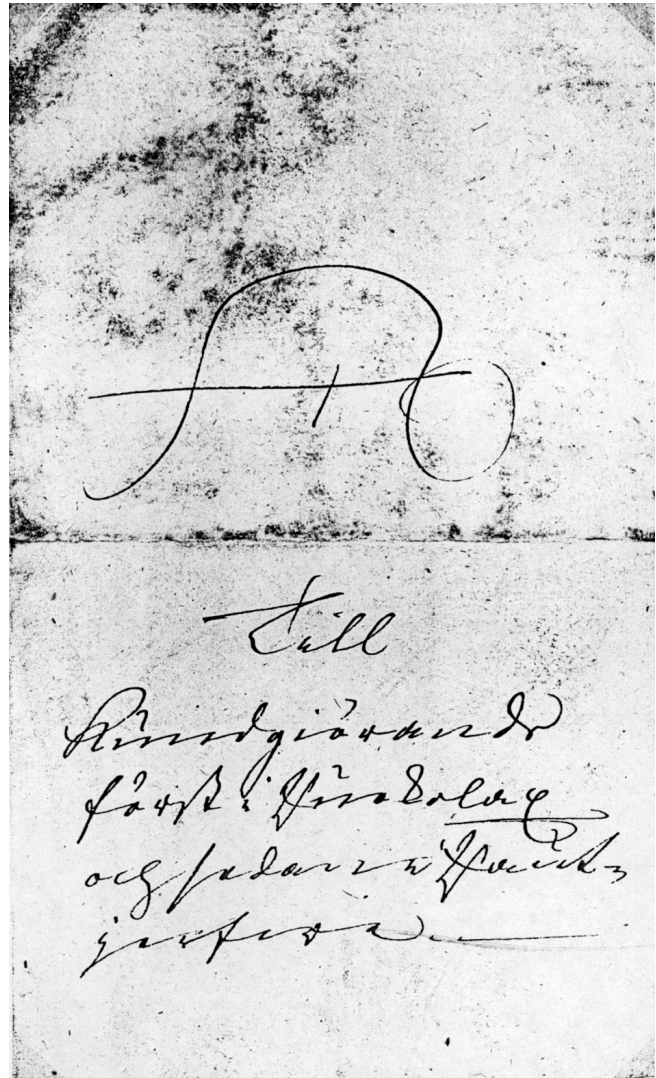


Figure 10. A Crown Post circular letter with a single crown figure from Kyminkartano province to be publicly read, "först i Ruokolax och sedan i Rautjerfwi" = first in Ruokolahti and then in Rautjärvi. The letter is dated February 25, 1774. The post form and the Swedish origin crown figure (Meander figure) were still in use even though the province had been incorporated into the Russian Empire for 31 years.

CROWN POST LETTER - 1723, 1732 & 1796

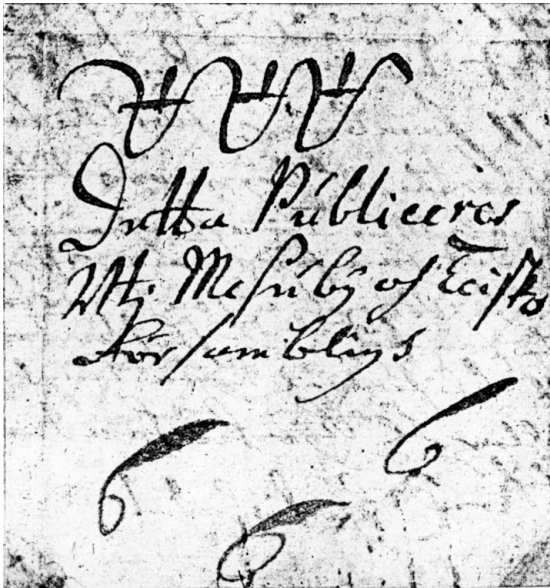


Figure 11. A Crown Post local letter with combined (attached) crown figures and three separated crown symbols. The letter was sent on March 9, 1723 from Messukylä to be announced in Messukylä and Teisko parish about the gathering and training of military troops.

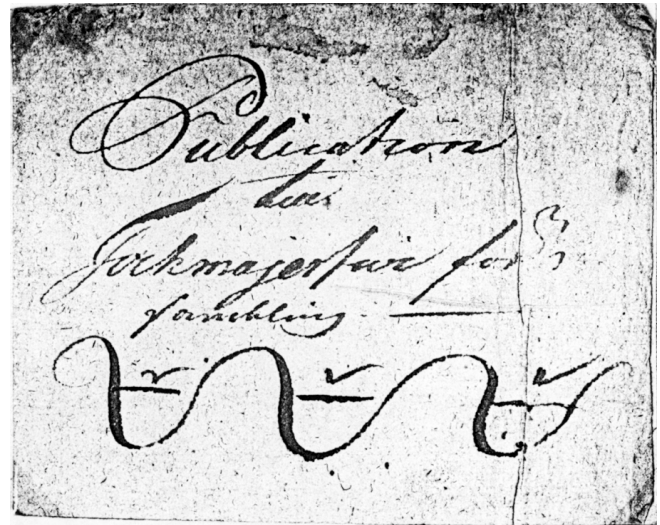


Figure 12. A Crown Post local letter dated March 10, 1732 with combined crown or Meander marks from Hamina (Fredrikshamn) to Tohmajärvi parish

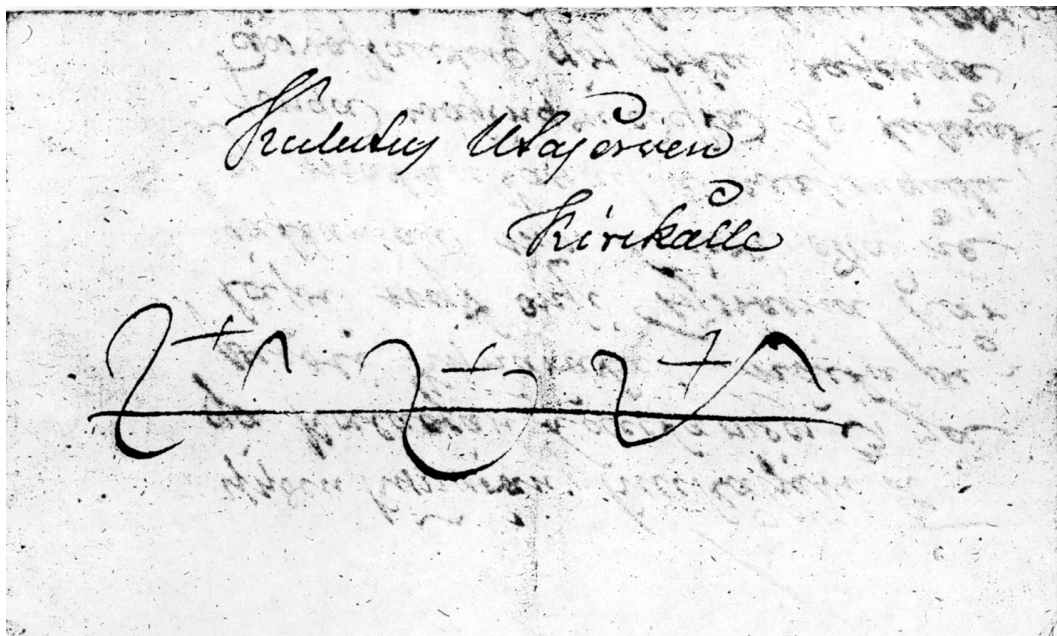


Figure 13. A Crown Post letter with three single crown figures (Meander marks) from Oulu (Oulunborg) to be publicly read in Utajärvi church. The letter is dated August 2, 1796.

CROWN POST LETTER - 1762

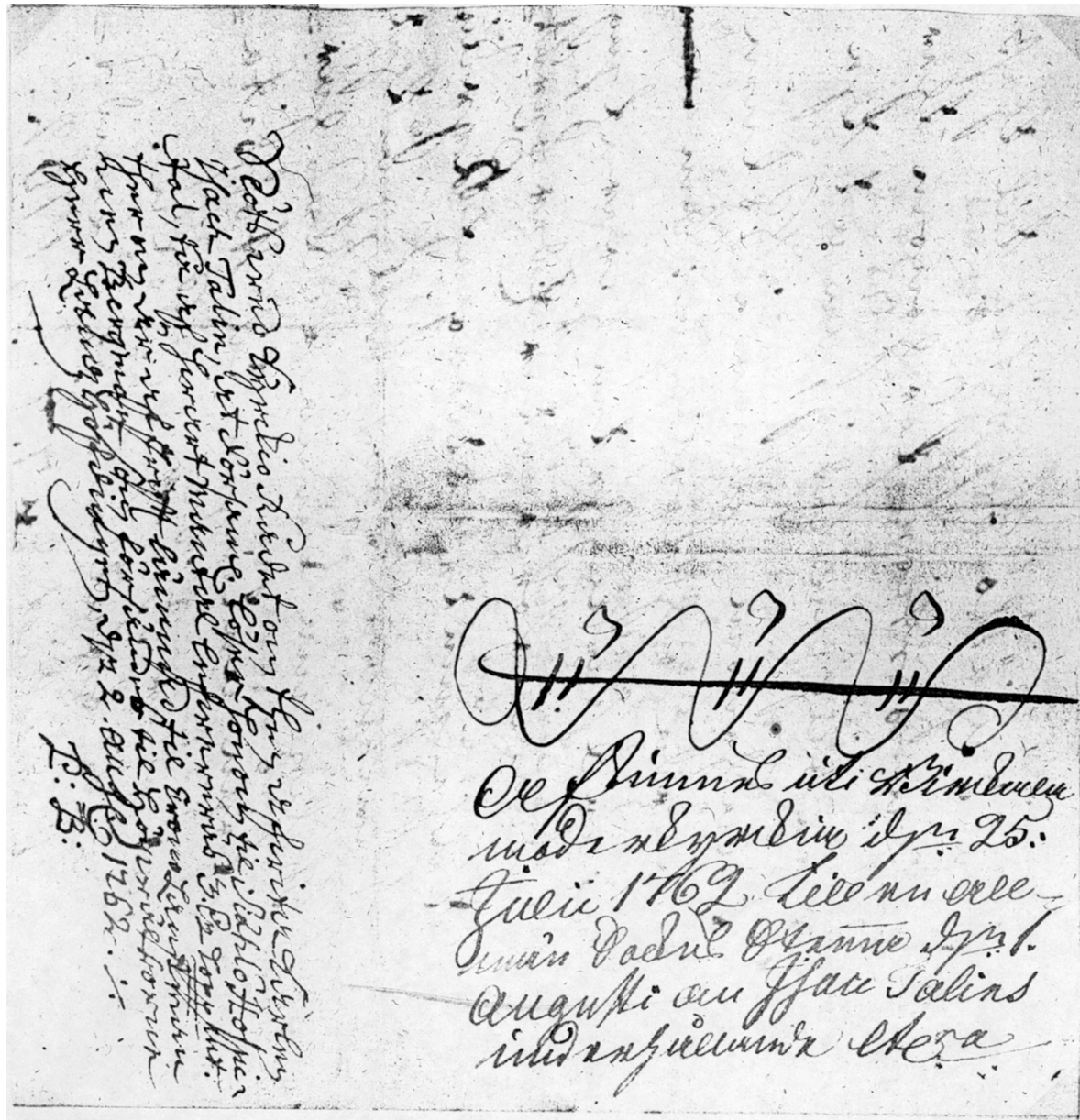


Figure 13. A Crown Post letter with combined crown figures from Turku (Åbo) to Pirkkala dated July 25, 1761. Pirkkala was a very important inland commercial center in the eighteenth century.

CROWN POST - 1788

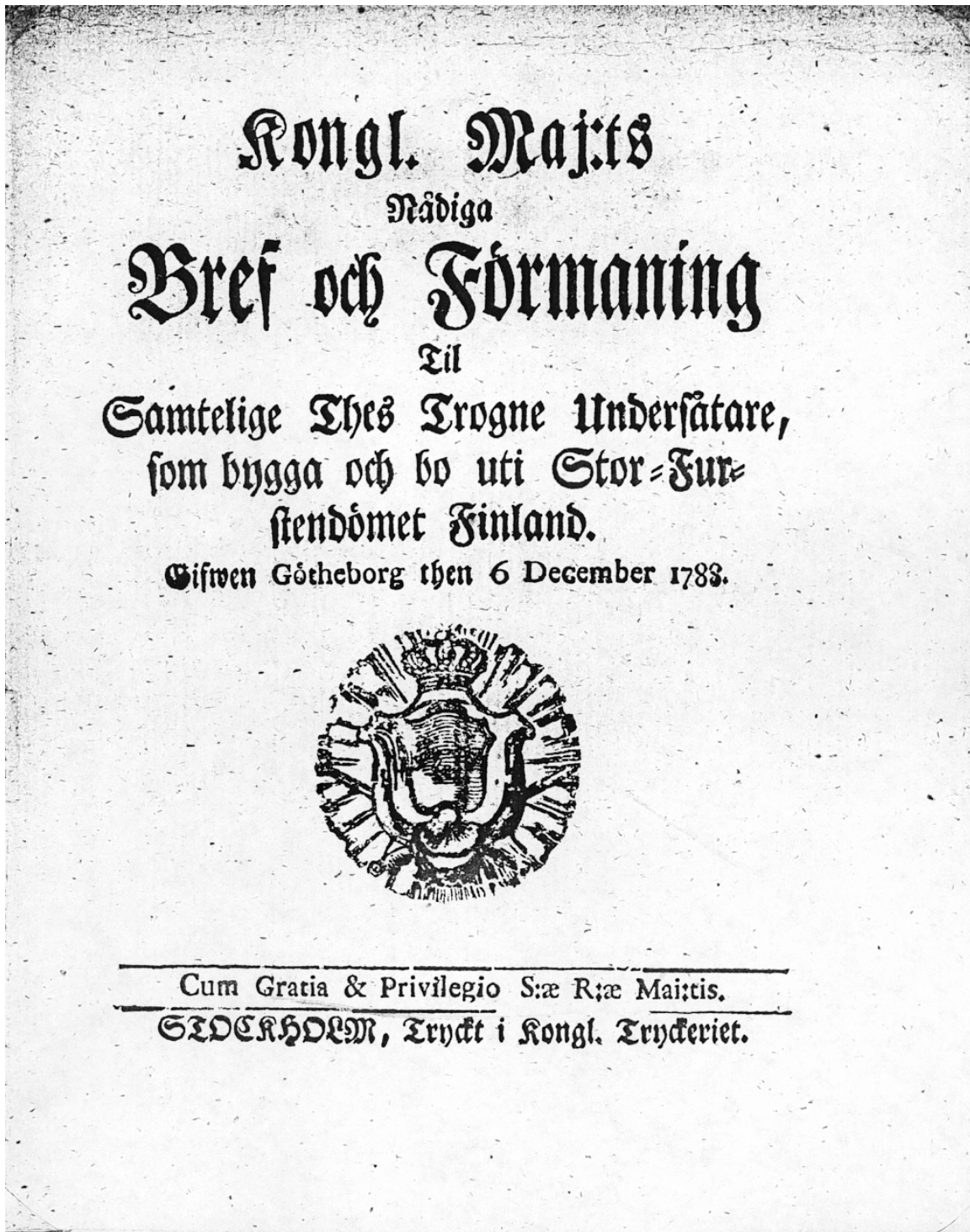


Figure 14. The king had the right to grant privileges to societies, towns or larger groups. This is a typical privilege letter addressed to Finland, dated December 6, 1788.

Editors Note: The Crown Post mail will be continued in the February 2003 issue of the newsletter. The illustrations in this article have been reduced to provide the best layout.

Temporary Station Cancellations on the Wyborg - St. Petersburg Rail Line in the 1800s

By D.A. Dromberg, translated by Carita Parker, edited & updated by Roger Quinby
from *Philatelica Fennica*, 4/1968

When Finland embarked on building railroads, the Postal Administration (PA) immediately adopted this modern mode of transportation for its service. Agreements were made with the railway station managers and railway conductors and later the PA provided its own mail cars staffed by postal clerks to sort and cancel the mail on route. Thus, the postal needs of the population along the rail routes were met.

The mail cars were traveling post offices with their own marks, and about these there have often been articles in the *Suomen Postimerkkilehti* (tr. = Finnish stamp magazine. Some of these articles are being edited for future publication in the newsletter.) Furthermore, there were mailboxes at railroad stations emptied by the station manager and upon arrival of the train taken to the mail car. At minor stations it was the station manager's task to also receive the location's arriving mail and then deliver it to the addressees. The letter (below) discovered in the Archives from the Postal Administration to the railroad administration gives an idea of the procedure.

Finland's Senate did not issue any generally applicable instructions for the implementation of postal rail service. Instead, the directives were given separately when one of the rail sections was completed. It can be assumed that the instructions were similar across the board, so this particular one for the Helsinki-Hämeenlinna rail may suffice as an example.

WIBORG.
SÄINIÖ
GALITZINA
NYKYRKA
PERKJÄRVI
RAIVOLA
TERIJOKI

WALKEASAARI
UDELNAJA
ST PETERSBURG

Figure 1. The original list of temporary station marks on the Wyborg - SPB line from Gummesson's book on early Finnish cancellations. The bottom three stations were located in Russia.

"To The Railroad Administration:

In order to prevent any possible reuse of already postally used postage stamps or value marked envelopes, the postal administration requests that station inspectors at the Helsinki-Hämeenlinna railroad receive as well as empty letters deposited in mailboxes and like post offices mark with the station canceller or in another*) appropriate way cancel postmark**) or postage stamps on departing letters. And at the mailing of letters ascertain that such a cancellation has been performed or if found lacking, mark before letter is delivered. The postal government awaits administration response in this matter.

Helsinki Postal Administration, August 11, 1871
A. Tn (Tanninen)"

*) Crossed over in the original text.
**) Means stamp(s) on stationeries.

The station managers were tasked to inspect such mail that was taken from the station mailbox or left at the station, as well as mail coming from the arriving mail car to be distributed to the locals. And in case the stamp(s) or the stationery value stamp was uncanceled, the station managers were, to the best of their ability to perform the cancellation.

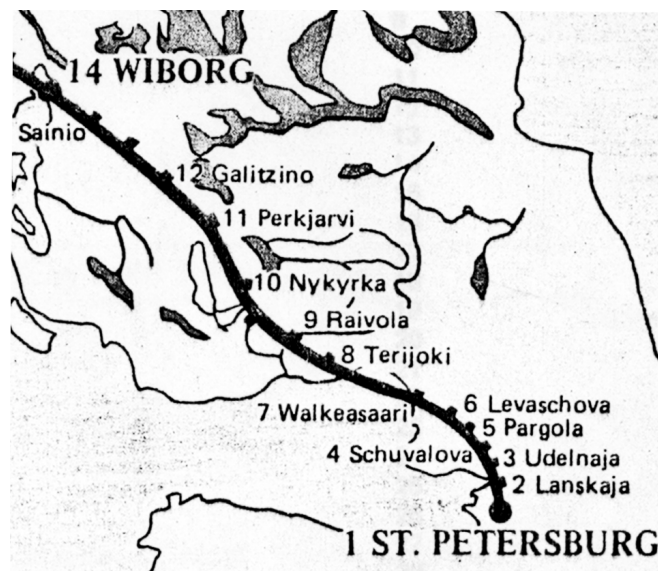


Figure 2. A map of the original stations on the Wyborg-SPB section of the Helsinki-SPB route. Kämärä and Mustamjaki, on the Finnish side, were added in 1881 and on the Russian side, Oserki was added about 1889.



Figure 3. A Russian 3 kopek letter card carried by St. Petersburg local mail service. The addressee evidently temporarily stayed in Levaschovo since the card was sent there and received a Finnish official mark LEVASCHOVA (should read LEVASCHOVO). But since addressee apparently returned to St. Petersburg, the card too was returned there (St. P-burg). The card value mark was cancelled with two of Finland's Railroad mail car office marks, one en route from St. Petersburg to Levaschovo and the other on its way back. A Russian object not having been to Finland, yet with 3 Finnish cancellations.



Figure 4. The SCHUVALOVO station mark (cancellation) on an 1883 stationery card to Forssa. Also cancelled with a blurred 2. 9. 1883, Type II, TPO postmark. The straight line station marks from the Russian towns on Helsinki-SPB route are extremely elusive.

The temporary cancellations can be very varied and most likely many of them consist of the so-called cork marks (figure cancellations) even though ink cancellations were probably used too.

The Handbook, Part I, page 134, gives an interesting example of one method of cancelling, i.e., with a station date mark used for tickets. (Also see *Facit 2001*, page F-611, Figure 1.) These marks are seen on both 1860 kopek

(Figure 2) and 1866 penni value large perforated stamps, but not on the m/75 penni stamps. Still another way of cancelling was with the official station canceller, since the stations had single row marks with the station name(s) used for various documents and forms. The ink color was blue. In the Rolf Gummesson book, *The Early Postmarks of Finland*, there are 46 of these marks pictured and listed. This list is not complete.

FINLAND-SPB RAILROAD

With the opening in 1870 of the Riihimäki-St. Petersburg rail line, the important train connection between Helsinki and St. Petersburg had been established. Arrangements for mail transportation was immediately started on this section by deployment of mail cars with traveling post offices and with Finnish personnel. Russia would partake in the cost of servicing the mail cars, but not the mail transport.

When the agreement for mail transport on this route was made with Russia, the Russians demanded that both Finnish and Russian postage stamps be allowed on both sides of the border. This however, did not come about. The railroad was Finland's and the personnel also on the Russian side were probably employed by Finland's Railroad, because official Finnish marks were delivered to stations across the border. The following official marks on the Wyborg-St. Petersburg line are listed in the Gummesson book: Wyborg (Wiborg/Vyborg), Säiniö, Galitzina, Perkjärvi, Nykyrka (Finnish = Uusikirkko), Raivola, Terijoki, and on the Russian side Walkeasaari, Udelnaja, and St. Petersburg (Figure 3). In addition to these, the railroad maps of the period list the following additional stations from west to east: in Finland, Kämärä, added in 1881, and Mustamjoki; on the Russian side, Levaschovo, Pargalovo, Schuvalovo, Oserki (this station is not listed in the original allocation of station numbers so it may not have been added as a station stop until 1889 or thereafter), and Lanskaja.

Dromberg reported that Mr. Oleg Fabergé had recently seen (circa 1968) a Levaschovo station mark on a Russian 3 kopek stationery card, but not used for the cancelling of the value stamp. Nevertheless, it was struck on the card front and stands as proof that this station did have an official Finnish mark. See Figure 3.

Station marks from the Russian side are very elusive. I have another item with the Levaschov mark stamped

on the reverse side of an 1889 postal card sent by a Finnish railway clerk working at the Levaschovo station (Figure 3) and I have a 1907 card with the Oserki station mark on the reverse side also written by a Finnish railway clerk working at that station. The Schuvalovo mark is also shown, see Figure 4. The Lanskaja and the Pargalovo station marks are extremely elusive. I have not seen a single item of either mark and the Oserki mark was used well after the period of interest; nevertheless it is proof that the mark existed and possibly a collector with a keen eye will find an earlier mark.

Mr. Fabergé also reported an 1882 letter from Karjaa to Riga franked with 25 penni m/75 emission, as well as 2 singles of the same stamp with an ink cancellation F.Z.D. (in Cyrillic). According to Fabergé, it could be an abbreviation of: *Finlandskajaeljesnaja Doroga* (tr.= Finland's Railroad). The letter came from Finland by rail to St. Petersburg and there the postage stamp was found to be uncanceled and so ink-marked F.Z.D. at the St. Petersburg Finland railroad station before having been dispatched to Riga.

The aforementioned postal government letter to the railroad administration gives the impression that along Finland's railroads those locations that lacked a post office station chief, the railway station manager apparently acted as post stop chief in charge of station community mail. It is also evident from postal bureau accounts that the foreman/men in the traveling post offices (TPO/mail car expeditions) regularly received from the postal administration quite a number of postage stamps. It is unlikely, that the foremen would have had enough time to sell these directly to the public while the trains were stopped at the stations. It is more likely, that the foremen delivered the stamps to the station managers who then handled the sale to the public.

There are also cases where mail traffic was so numerous, that a post office was opened at the station. And so commonly the station chief also became post office manager receiving additional salary from the postal service. This was at least the case in Raivola where on October 1, 1873 a post office was opened to be managed by the station chief. Raivola, then most likely received its own postmark, so the Raivola official mark on postage stamps must be rare, since it was in use less than 4 years. Nevertheless, for whatever reason, the Raivola straight line station marks (there were at least two) were used for many years after the opening of the local post office, see Figure 6. Acquiring an item with the Raivola mark used



Figure 5. The WALKEASAARI station mark on an August 15, 1884, 3 kopek Russian stationery card to Kuopio. The station number, 7, was not placed in the TPO postmark nor was it stamped elsewhere on the postal card. The WALKEASAARI and UDELNAJA (not illustrated) station marks are the two more common station marks from the Russian side, although all are magnificent additions to a collection.

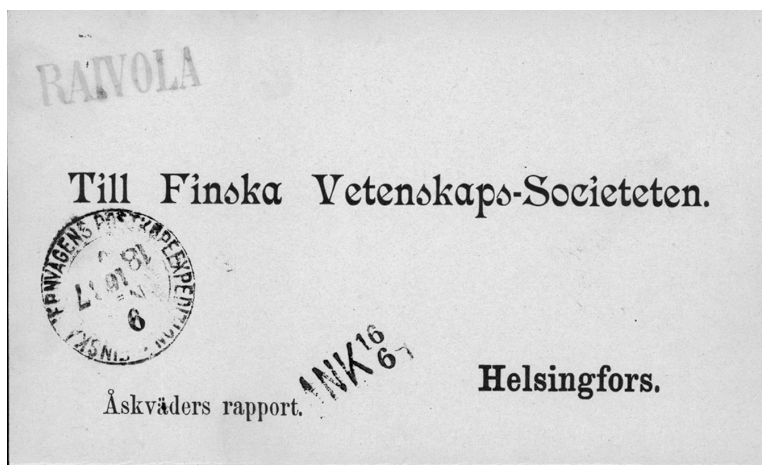


Figure 6. RAIVOLA railway station mark on an 1887 weather report card sent post free to Helsinki. Raivola was the 9th station from St. Petersburg as shown in the TPO postmark, number "9". Note that the RAIVOLA straight line mark is different from the mark illustrated in the Gummesson book. The blue ink mark does not contrast well on the light blue weather report cards.

before October 1, 1873 would be a formidable challenge and a lovely addition to any collection of the early Helsinki-St. Petersburg mail.

The use of official railroad station marks on letters is clearly postal in nature, since these were temporarily used as postmarks and thus belong to the category of Finnish postmarks regardless of their differing original purpose; and of course they are seen also as cancellation marks on railroad parcel stamps. With new discoveries possible, this will remain a fascinating and challenging area of study for many years.

HISTORY OF RAILROAD MAIL TRANSPORT IN FINLAND 1862 - 1995

by Ilkka Teerijoki, translated by Carita Parker

CHAPTER III

“FLYING POST OFFICES”: PERIOD 1889-1917 From mail transporters to traveling post offices

In December of 1887, Hjalmar Lagerborg, an engineer and aide to the traffic director at the railroad administration was named the new head of the postal government. Already prior to Lagerborg's transfer to the postal service he had made extensive trips to familiarize himself with postal matters not only in the Scandinavian countries, but also in Germany, France, Switzerland, and Austria.

On his travels Lagerborg had for instance noticed, that the postal railcar system in Finland was lagging behind in development. Mail cars in Finland were only traveling compartments for the gathering and sorting of letter mail and newspapers. For most part mailbags were only transported from one location to another. Elsewhere, the cars resembled traveling post offices with activities comparable to a stationary post office. The two decades old system no longer served its purpose.

The mail cars came under the postmaster general's direct control, but as the postal service expanded time, did not allow him (postmaster) to closely follow each of the administration's endeavors. The senior travel expeditor was not in the actual position of authority, but mainly in charge of the ordering of supplies and letter correspondence. The result amounted to inconsistent work habits on the different rail sections and even between individual cars, as well as the slackening of discipline.

With considerable expansion of mail traffic in the 1870s and 1880s, work protocol in the mail cars required reorganization. Customarily, registered and insured mail was carried only as parcel post, which caused, for instance, foreign bound mail to be delayed as much as 24 hours in St. Petersburg. The post offices along the railroad could address their mail anywhere in the realm, which taxed especially the railroad personnel whose sideline duty included mail handling. On the suggestion of the postmaster general it was sufficient that the mail be directed to the St. Petersburg bound mail car with the task of then further forwarding the mail. This made the postal railcars into exchange offices for mail abroad, and so for the next decades the care of Finland's foreign bound post was almost solely the responsibility of the mail car crews.

The position of senior travel expeditor had been vacant since the end of 1888. In its stead the position of mail car director (in Swedish *postkupeförestndare*) was

introduced in 1889. At first this was only a temporary position and even though it was changed to permanent in 1893, still the position was held until 1919 by some official on leave from his own job. The Maarianhamina/Mariehamn post office manager, Uno Godenhjelm, who at the end of the 1870s had already once served as senior travel expeditor, was the first to be named mail car director.

In the summer of 1888 Godenhjelm made a study trip to the other Scandinavian countries together with A.K. Planting, who then recently had been named head of the postal government new traffic department. The two men traveled in Sweden and Norway to familiarize themselves with mail car functions and mail transfer activities. After having departed Helsinki, the travelers arrived in Stockholm on August 1, and continued on to Christiania (Oslo) on August 20, and from there to Copenhagen at the end of August. The two returned to Helsinki on September 11.

Godenhjelm and Planting took notice of the efficient railroad mail transport system in Sweden. Responsibility for the mail cars in different parts of that country (Sweden) was divided between four inspectors who used about 1/3 of their work time on inspection travel. Their task was also to determine mail car staff travel schedules. Cooperation with the railroad administration was amicable, apparent for instance in the joint planning of timetables. Especially evident was the fact that only the staff employed in the mail cars would enter them.

Sweden also used so-called postman cars on short rail distances. The work in these was similar to that of Finnish mail cars: the lines functioned mainly as distributors of mail. The car had only one employee, a postman, who was not required to leave the car at any stage. Instead, clerks, whose task it was to exchange mail, "mail exchangers," would fetch the incoming mail and bring the outgoing mail to the car.

In Norway the country was divided into rail districts all headed by a foreman. No postmen at all traveled in Norwegian mail cars. Instead work duties were performed by junior officials. Furthermore, the emptying of letter boxes in Norway was not the task of the mail car personnel. As for the comparison of technical aspects, inspectors concluded that Finland fared well, because both in Sweden and Norway, the postal compartment was often crammed into less than half the car space.

Postmaster General Lagerborg's reorganization proposals in the spring of 1888 were implemented during 1889. Mail car director Godenhjelm would add his recommendations from experiences gained during his foreign travels. Godenhjelm's own work descriptions were quite varied. Like that of the Swedish model, he made inspection trips every third day, besides handling the correspondence between mail cars and the postal administration; arranging mail transport lines, and when necessary was in charge of mail car interior planning, as well as working on various research and other matters concerning mail car traffic and mail car crew.

Godenhjelm and his work convinced the Senate of the need for reorganization and the mail car director position for which initially monies had been allocated for one year only, was extended.

The increased importance of mail car transport was apparent also from the fact that it was prominently on the forefront at the postal government during the entire period beginning from the early 1890s to the 1910s. In postal government publications, mail car functions of other countries were introduced and the technical improvements made in such cars analyzed and so on. Thus, Finland's postal service employees knew, for example, that there were special mail trains in England that carried only the driver of the locomotive, the stoker or fireman, 2 conductors and a postal crew of 30.

At that particular period in time, mail trains for Finland were not even planned so there was no need to fear accidents such as that on the Paris - Marseille rail in 1913. A mail train was pulling seven mail cars in a row when another train, due to a wrongly positioned track switch, plowed into it with full speed from the side, hitting the line of mail cars in the middle. The accident claimed 40 lives of which 15 were postal workers. In Finland the only serious train incident involving a mail car in those days was a collision in the vicinity of the Hovinmaa station near Vyborg in 1906 when a fast train rammed the back of another train pulling a mail car. The car buffers, four windows, and a cancelling table were damaged. One of the employees got a bad cut on his forehead and another was thrown against some shelves. The damage was lessened, because the mail car was not the last in line, but followed by a baggage van.

The modernization of duties in the mail cars came at an opportune period of time. The expansion of mail traffic that had begun in the 1870s continued with increasing pace. A satisfactory climate was created for the development of rural postal service when in 1890 the earlier "post house" arrangement was replaced by a rural letter carrier system. In sparsely populated areas post stops were established beginning in 1891. Many post stops were opened also in railroad locations with lesser traffic, generally staffed by railroad lower paid clerks or other service personnel provided they could read and write.

Partly because of reorganization, the number of post

office locations in Finland at the then turn of the century mushroomed. In 1890 there were around 400, but when the decade turned into the new century there were nearly a total of 1,000, and in 1910 as many as 2,000. And in 1917, despite the three year war situation, almost 2,500.

The number of postal mailings from 1895 to 1917 increased between from 23 million to 189 million, an eight-fold increase over two decades. During that same time, mail deposited directly into car mail boxes clearly increased by less, from 1.2 to 3.2 million or nearly three-fold. Because over half of all mail was carried by mail car at some point in its journey, the mail car crew bore an equal share with other postal personnel in handling the ever increasing quantities of mail.

FINLAND'S ARTERIAL RAIL COMPLETED

The length of postal rail-lines increased between 1890 and 1917 from 1,870 km to more than double that or 4,090 km. This was evidence that in Finland the building of new rails progressed swiftly. When the Savo rail from Kouvola to Kuopio was completed in 1889, rail work continued south from Kouvola. The Kouvola-Kotka rail section was opened to traffic in early October of the following year. The short rail distance (55 km) was operated in a new way -- round trip twice daily with no mail car expeditor at all, only a postman. This was the beginning of the first postman car, an idea that Godenhjelm most certainly had copied on his study trip to Sweden.

Extra postman, Juho Vaananen, of Joensuu was named the first postman car postman. Mail was exchanged besides end stations also at the Inkeroinen, Myllykoski and Tavastila stations. The Karelia was the next rail to be completed. The route from Vyborg via Antrea to Imatra was opened on November 1, 1892, and the rail section from Antrea to Sortavala exactly a year later. The rail that continued from Sortavala to Joensuu opened on November 1, 1894. A postman car was used on the 72 km long Vyborg-Imatra line, whereas mail to Sortavala and from there on to Joensuu was carried in mail car.

The rail section from Tampere to Pori was completed in the summer of 1895. Mailcar traffic was begun already prior to rail official opening at the same time as the rail became operational to temporary traffic in early August. The rail route from Peipohja to Rauma (branching out from the aforementioned rail section) was taken into use in 1897. The rail was private, but regardless postman car transport on it started right away first three times a week, and soon round trip twice daily.

That same year, the rail was continued from Haapamäki to Jyväskylä and the next year further on to Suolahti. On this rail section too, mail transport was started in the postman car round trip once daily.

The shore rail construction begun from the Turku direction reached Karjaa in 1899 and mail transport was started on November 1, once a day in a mail car. A second daily service was run between Salo and Karjaa in postman

car. Mail was carried once daily in the conductor's car on the 20 km stretch from Pori to Mäntyluoto harbor.

Even the building of private rails was revived after having been dormant for over two decades ever since the poorly profitable Hyvinkää-Hanko and Kerava-Porvoo rails. As mentioned earlier, the Peipohja-Rauma rail had been completed already in 1897.

On the Kouvola-Kotka rail section from Inkeroinen, a 26 km long rail to Hamina was completed in 1899. Mail transport occurred twice daily on round trips without a postman. The railroad company shouldered the responsibility for the safe carriage of the mail. The Hamina post office provided the Hamina station manager with the ready made pouches for the various post offices, the Kouvola-Kotka rail stations, and the Hamina line only station (Metsakyla).

Also the private rails from Forssa to Humppila (mail transport twice daily round trip), Kovjoki to Uusikaarlepyy (daily twice), Vilppula to Mänttä (once daily), Suolahti to Äänekoski (once daily), as well as from the Lappi station to Raahe (once daily) were taken into use between 1899 and 1900.

The private railroads were not fully aware of all the responsibilities required for the safe carriage of the mail. The postal administration hoped, that the same regulations would be followed on these (private rails) as those in force between the post and railroad administrations. Such an agreement had already been made with the G.A. Serlachius Company about mail transport on the Vilppula-Mänttä rail: "As for mail transport, the same applies as that currently prescribed or possibly to be (prescribed) in the future concerning government railroads." The Senate resolved the matter also as far as other rail companies were concerned in that the regulations were otherwise similar; however, unlike government railroads private rail companies had the right to compensation for their part in the transportation of mail. Thus, the Loviisa-Vesijärvi, Hamina-Inkeroinen, Jokioinen-Forssa, Suolahti-Anekoski, Lappi-Raahe, and Kovjoki-Uusikaarlepyy rail companies began receiving compensation. Industrialist G.A. Serlachius, involved with the Vilppula-Mntth rail, also requested reimbursement after having first transported mail for a year gratis. Reimbursements for mail transport were, however, not substantial.

When the private rail from Hyvinkää to Pyhäjärvi (Karkkila) was completed in 1912, the postal administration and railroad company agreed that mail be carried in closed satchels and pouches twice daily, round trip. No postman was present. Instead railroad company personnel watched over the mail. A flexible mail exchange was to be arranged for trains running on the main rail via Hyvinkää. Compensation was set at 1,200 Fmk a year, which amounted to a savings of 600 Fmk annually compared to previous arrangements, and at the same time area mail service improved considerably.

On short private rails the postman did not accompany

the cargo. Instead railroad companies were responsible for mail transport to destination. When mail transport on Finland's longest private rail from Lahti (Vesijärvi) to Loviisa (82 km) was started in early March 1901, space was reserved in the Third class passenger car for mail and postman. The cars had also an opening for the depositing of letters. On Sundays and other holidays, only standard mail was carried in closed pouches without postman. Complete mail transfer daily began in 1907. Initially compensation for transport was 5,000 Fmk and in 1917 rose to 12,000 Fmk.

The postmen complained that the car used was hazardous to health. Walls were drafty, door seals leaked, and the stove capacity, was not sufficient to generate enough heat. Apparently the complaints were valid, although the Lahti-Loviisa railroad company for most part disputed the accusations, yet promised to strengthen the doors to double and build a windbox on the car. In 1916 it became necessary to construct a new conductor car on the chassis of an old cargo van, and to add to it a decent mail compartment also.

The relationship between postal and railroad employees was generally amicable. Thus, the postman too was invited to the Pakaa train stop manager's coffee for the entire train crew on Christmas Day 1910. Passengers had to wait an extra 10 minutes, but most likely the number of travelers were few on such a holiday.

Also government rail construction work continued on at a steady pace in the early 1900s. The continuation of the Savo rail to Iisalmi was completed in 1902 and from there to Kajaani in 1904. The shore rail from Helsinki to Karjaa was finished in 1903 and considerably shortened travel time between Helsinki and Turku. North from Oulu to Kemi was completed in 1903 also, and from there further on to Tornio the following year. The rail branching out from the Kemi-Tornio rail at Laurila reached Rovaniemi in 1909.

Construction of the important crossrail connecting Karelia and Savo was also begun. Elisenvaara was connected to Savonlinna in 1908, but the remainder of the section to Pieksmäki was not completed until autumn of 1914 after WWI had erupted. The Karelia rail was continued from Joensuu to Lieksa in 1910 and to Nurmes in 1911. Rails running from Seinäjoki via Perl to Kaskinen and Kristiinankaupunki were opened in 1912.

By 1917 a number of shorter rail sections had been completed such as: Hyvinkää-Pyhäjärvi (1911, private); Jaakkima-Lahdenpohja (1911); Pieksmäki-Varkaus (1914); the Tornio-Karunki in 1915, that proved to be extremely important during the war; the Kiukainen-Kauttua (private, 1916) originating from the Rauma Peipohja rail; Koivisto-Terijoki (1916); and the Hiitola-Käkisalmi-Rautu (1917).

Generally, having a railroad in a region generated great enthusiasm. The significance of railroads becomes apparent when comparing mail transport conditions in Joensuu and its back country after rails reached Joensuu

in 1894. The train having left Helsinki in the morning arrived in Joensuu at 8 p.m. (distance about 450 km). An hour later the mail to Nurmes was being carried by horse and wagon, a distance of 130 km reached not until the next evening around 6 p.m., requiring twenty horses during the journey.

Complaints were still unavoidable. For instance, after the Oulu-Kemi rail was completed the schedules were initially such, that passengers and mail reached destination twelve hours sooner by boat from Oulu. Even in wintry weather it was assumed that under good road conditions a ride by horse and buggy would be faster. The editor of the "Perä-Pohjola" irately noted, that copies of the paper printed in Kemi were first taken directly to Oulu, and only the next day transported back to middle stations. As the papers were then further carried, for example, from the Simo station to the Simoniemi post office to be distributed the next day, the papers had been on the road for two days even though the distance traveled from Kemi was barely 20 km

The Kemi-Rovaniemi rail ran along the river west shore whereas the old mail route had followed the east side. After the rail was completed some of the villages were, for some time until the situation stabilized, left outside the mail transport network. Alarmed inhabitants complained that the Alapakkola village had totally been separated from mail connection with the rest of the world.

The importance of postal transport by rail was heightened not only due to the expansion of the rail network, but also with the increase in travel schedules. Mail transport in the conductor's car accompanied by postman on the St. Petersburg line, that had continued for a decade, had become overwhelming with the continuous increase in the quantity of mail. Thus, the mail car was coupled with night trains beginning October 1889, and decades old rumblings about mail car non-necessity were silenced. On the contrary, the night mail train timetables were right-away adjusted to the new Savo rail schedules. Also on many other rail sections, service was scheduled for more than once daily.

Finland's connections abroad improved during the 1890s, which was necessary due to the country's ever more rapid industrialization. At the same time the need for swifter letter connections grew. The possibilities for winter sea navigation improved considerably when Finland got its first icebreaker in the early 1890s. During this decade regular traffic on the lines Turku-Stockholm, Hanko-Copenhagen, and from Hanko to Hull (England) commenced. After the turn of the century service increased ever more. Sticking to the schedules, however, caused repeated problems. In 1912 the Senate issued

	maantiekuljetukset		rautatiekuljetukset		vesitiekuljetukset	
vuosi	pituus km	matka milj.km.	pituus km	matka milj.km	pituus km	matka milj.km
1890	13840	2,4	1870	2,2	5600	0,8
1900	24367	5,5	2767	4,3	10400	2,6
1910	47765	11,2	3532	5,6	12202	2,6
1917	54003	12,7	4084	6,5	4755	1,3

Figure 1. This table introduces the increases in the lengths of Finland's mail routes:

Maantiekuljetukset = Land road,

Rautatiekuljetukset = Railroads

Vesitiekuljetukset = Waterway transportations

vuoi = year

pituus km = length in km

matka = journey in million km

(for each of the three transportation systems)

directives for the mail train, when necessary, to wait in Turku for the mail from Sweden as much as 2 hours past scheduled departure time before it was allowed to leave.

Evidenced from this table is the fact that as the railroad lines more than doubled in length, the distance traveled on them increased threefold. Tight schedules account for the difference. Regardless, mail transport along land roads - the organizing of rural letter carrier lines had started in 1890 - increased even faster. The route lengths grew fourfold and the traveled distance fivefold. The railroad advantage was the tight scheduling whereas most of the land road mail routes were still utilized only once or twice a week. Note also, that mail transport by steamship was still considerable, although the war years of 1914-1918 caused a greater decline than with other postal transportation modes.



Figure 2. State railway station mark in postal use. Stationery card from Lappo Nov. 7, 1889 to Waasa. The value stamp was cancelled with LAPPO mark because the double circled mark was carelessly put only on the lower left corner.°

Suomen rataverkon kehitys 1882–1901. SR.

1882–1891

- 1883 Tampere–Vaasa
- 1885 Simola–Lappeenranta
- 1886 Seinäjoki–Oulu–Toppila
- 1886 Ykspihlaja
- 1887 Pännäinen–Pietarsaari–Leppäluoto
- 1889 Kouvola–Kuopio
- 1890 Kouvola–Kotka

1892–1901

- 1892 Viipuri–Antrea–Sortavala
- 1893 Sortavala–Joensuu
- 1895 Imatra(nkoski)–Vuoksenniska
- 1895 Tampere–Pori
- 1897 Haapamäki–Jyväskylä
- 1898 Jyväskylä–Suolahti
- 1899 Pori–Mäntyluoto
- 1899 Karjaa–Turku



Figure 3. Expansion of the railroad system, 1882 -1901

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