



The Finnish Philatelist

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

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The Finnish Philatelist

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

The newsletter will be sent free of charge to all members of the FSG thru 2002. A \$5/\$10 contribution to cover printing/ mailing costs is appreciated. Contributions should be made payable to and sent directly to the Editor.

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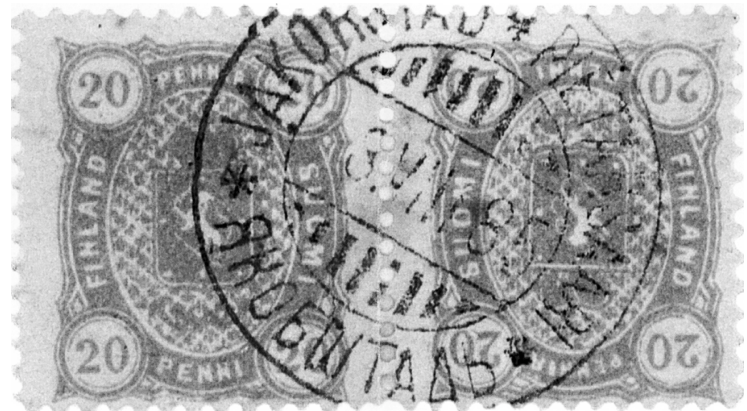
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Editor's Message

It was my intention to begin with this issue a long series on the 1901 - 1915 Russian design, Finnish currency stamps. Carita Parker has translated about ten articles and I have begun the considerable task of editing them into a coherent series that would deal with the historic background of the stamps, printing methods used, plating flaws, usages and so forth.

However, the resulting product at this point is unsatisfactory. The terminology used to describe the printing methods is confusing and conflicting. Distinguishing the stamps has at times proven somewhat elusive just as it did to H. Shenitz, who wrote in a 1933 article for *Stamps*, "While handling stamps of Finland as a speciality during the past five years, I cannot recollect having seen a collection or stock of the lithographed issues of 1901-03 correctly classified." Unfortunately, the article is not suitable for today's collectors. We will continue the effort and, hopefully, we will have some articles ready for the May newsletter.

In the masthead I have illustrated a North Ingermanland 10 mark stamp from the second series with an inverted center. One sheet of 100 stamps is known. This stamp is an excellent example of a philatelic creation which has gained recognition in the catalogues and considerable favor among collectors. Recent catalogue pricing is about Euro 600, but that price is not often realized at auction.



J. A. J. Van Dijk, a Dutch stamp dealer specializing in the Scandinavian countries, sent me a beautiful color copy of this extraordinary tête-bêche forgery. This forgery is also illustrated in Juhani Olamo's Reference Manual of Forgeries. It is not known how many examples of this forgery exist, but it should not confuse even a beginning collector. The perforations are 12 3/4, the corner ornaments are too large, and the burelage is crosshatched. The Russian tri-lingual canceller is also a forgery, and it is dated, 3. III. 85, but this type canceller was not introduced until late 1893.

Many Type 1875 forgeries have been discussed in detail in the Heikki Reinikainen articles on this stamp series. The entire series of articles has now been translated into English and will be available sometime later this year. TFP will keep you apprised as the project nears completion.

Letters

Thank you very much for the copies of *The Finnish Philatelist* (TFP) you recently sent to me. They contain a lot of information that I will be able to use as I continue with my Finnish collection.

Enclosed is \$10 US to be used for more back issues and half to cover the costs of mailing a few future issues...I will be happy to receive articles on the Independent and Associated States.

Thanks again for responding to my initial request. I look forward to reading additional copies of TFP in the future. Finnish philately is a gold mine for Scandinavian collectors.

Eric Hopper
Fredericton, NB, Canada

I am enclosing a check for membership "dues" in the Finnish Study Group.

It is always a delight to receive my copy of *The Finnish Philatelist* – and you are to be commended for your work in getting this fine publication to us.

Jacob Kisner
New York, NY

The Finnish Philatelist publication keeps my interest alive in spite of the fact I've reached 87 and have collected Finland for over 60 years.

Happy to contribute to continue TFP.

Jack Freeman
St. Charles, MO

Thank you very much for the November (2002) issue. The newsletter is invaluable and contains information not available elsewhere. I am enclosing a check.

Bob Hamerschlag
Santa Rosa, CA

Thank you again for the latest *Finnish Philatelist*. The 1922 Red Cross stamp article was excellent. Good luck for the New Year.

Jack Isaacson
Victoria, BC, Canada

Thank you for your continued support of Finland philately and keep up the excellent articles in TFP. It has greatly enhanced my knowledge and my desire to learn more about Finland.

John Salmi
Winnipeg, MB, Canada

I really appreciate receiving copies of TFP and can't tell you how invaluable they are to me...Alas my work schedule has kept me from philatelic writing but at least I can contribute financially. One favor, I seem to be missing Vol. 6, No. 3, Whole No. 18 and would it be possible to obtain a replacement copy?

Kindest regards and keep up the great work.

Roger S. Cichorz
Boulder, CO

Kiitos for all you are doing for Suomi collectors. I have enjoyed each issue of your newsletter. Keep up the good work.

Wilho E. Williams
Spokane, Washington

Communications & Notes

Some time ago Dirk Vorwerck of Germany, who has on occasion shared some of the gems from his collection, wrote that he especially appreciated the article on the Mourning Stamps, which ran in the Feb. 2001 newsletter.

Just a few weeks ago I received an e-mail from Jon Iversen of Denmark, who directed my attention to the Internet sales of the Triple S Postal History. This dealer, whom I used to see at the national shows in the US, has a wonderful Finland section and the particular item that caught Jon's attention was a parcel card to Vienna franked with a horizontal pair of 35 kopek ring stamps. The item, the last time I checked, was offered at \$1,250. Until Dirk Vorwerck sent a copy of his 35 kopek ring vertical pair to me for TFP (see May 1998), I had never seen this possibility, truly magnificent. Check out the Triple S website: www.triple-sonline.com/catalog/index.asp Then write item a00545. Many other eye catching items as well.

Morten N rstad of Norway has sent a very fine group of the 1901-1915 Finnish definitive issues on cover for use in connection with the new series on these issues.

In addition to providing a number of fine articles for republication in the newsletter, Heikki Reinikainen has often expressed his good wishes for the continued success of our publication. Heikki especially appreciates the discussion articles that report new finds and ask for additional feedback.

Cyril Schwenson of Germany has sent me two important articles in German. The first article, which he wrote, is a detailed analysis of the classic postal cards. I will try to get a good translation and publish it sometime in the future. The second is a comprehensive study of the Finnish railway postal marks by Norman Franklin. I will attempt to get permission to reprint this article. Mr. Franklin has been working on this project for many years and it is a very important study of this area.

Die finnischen Dauermarken von 1963 und 1975 mit Löwen-, Wappen- und Bildmotiven (The Finnish Definitives of 1963 and 1975 with Lion, Arms, and Pictorial Designs), Dieter Wehling, 5 1/2 by 8 1/2 inches, 108 pages, perfect bound, in German, FG Nordische Staaten, Obernkirchen, Germany, 2002.

The Finnish Study Group of the Research Society of Nordic Countries in Germany compiled this handbook of various definitive series issued by Finland in 1963 and 1975. These are the lion type, arms type, and pictorial design issues.

Consisting primarily of data tables, this book lists the many varieties and types of these stamps. Although the German language is used, the tabular format and catalog references help guide the reader through the listings. Each value stamp can be identified by printing method (engraved, photogravure, offset); printing format (sheet, machine booklet); printing press (rotary press 2-color, rotary press 6-color); gum (gum Arabic, polyvinyl acetate); print order number; first day of issue; and quantity printed.

Each stamp is identified by *Facit*, *Norma*, *Michel*, and *LaPe* catalog numbers. Distinct color varieties are also listed as well as the recognized catalog varieties. Details are also provided for the slot machine booklets, identified

by the *Norma*, *Facit*, and *Michel* numbers. A separate section identifies the types of paper, including the manufacturer, and compares the various catalog as well as the Finnish Handbook references. This section also addresses fluorescent paper and the yellow and white phosphorescent types.

The book concludes with a bibliography. This handbook will help collectors of these issues to sort them out and classify them. The print is a little small but quite legible, and the few illustrations help identify issues and varieties.

This monograph and others published by the FG Nordische Staaten come automatically to subscribers as a part of their membership. The book may be available separately. For details, contact the society's director Roland Daebel, Stolzenhagener Weg 6, 16515 Wensickendorf, Germany (info@nordische-staaten.de).

Alan Warren

1911 Russian Type - 10 Penni Imperf Block of Four on Cover

Dirk Vorwerck has shared with us another outstanding rarity from his collection. This gem is an imperforate block of four, *Norma Special Catalogue* 2002, No. 77, Type I, Hn, on cover from Tampere, 21. X. 13, to Helsinki, backstamped, 22. X. 13.

An imperforate pair on cover is priced in *Norma* 2002 at Euro 200 and in *Facit* 2002, at SEK 4,000 (= approximately US\$ 470). No pricing is given for an imperf. block of four.

I have not followed these items in the auctions so I do not know if a similar item has been offered in the recent past or for that matter how many 10 penni imperforate pairs, blocks of four, etc., on cover may have been prepared. The catalogues do not specify the quantity of imperforate stamps that may have been released to philatelists.

With the Postal Museum & Library closed for renovations until May, I was unable to request additional information on the origin of the imperforate stamps. Various perforation varieties exist for most of the 1901-1915 Russian design stamps. I would appreciate hearing from readers with knowledge of the origin of the imperforate stamps and the other perforation varieties as well.

Roger Quinby



Norma 77, Facit 64, imperforate block of four on cover. This cover was sent from Tampere, 21. X. 13, to Helsinki. Neither catalogue lists the imperf block of four on cover. A beautiful find and gorgeous addition to a collection of the Russian design types.

Pointed Rough Perforations on Type 1889 Stamps

Text & Illustrations by Heikki Reinikainen

Translated by Carita Parker - From *Filatelisti*, 6/2002

The new *Norma 2002 Special Catalogue* introduces the term “pointed rough perforation” (PRP = TRH in Finnish) in the cataloging of Type 1889 issues. It was previously mentioned in the 2 penni b emission, (*Norma 35AbTRH*, printing, earliest cancellation 3. 91), and last in sequence is mentioned the 5 penni emission e (*Norma 36AeTRH*, 12. 93). Note, also, that pointed rough perforations are found in all of the Type 1889 penni values.

According to *Handbook II* (1971), the PRP came about when the original (thinner) pins on one of the Printing Office’s two perforators was replaced with thicker than normal 1.08 mm pins. These would initially create pointed perforations that eventually would become rough as the pins/opposite holes started to wear out. According to information, this could have been caused by the pins that were used to perforate the type 1871 gauge 11 perforated stamps. These had been taken out of use in the spring of 1882, but apparently in a pressing situation they were reintroduced into service.

The sequence of appearance of these varied perforations was: initially standard perforation, then rough, followed by pointed and finally pointed rough perforation. In trying to explain the appearance of pointed rough perforations it must be

remembered that all Type 1889 manufactured emissions were printed at the same time, but the stamps received finishing touches such as gum and perforations over a long period of time, which included several lots of 50,000 and 200,000 stamps. Thus, in the same printed edition there might be different perforated versions (one stamp emission perforated from two different machines).

Differing from the other penni values, the use of the 2 penni specimens was small, and so the finishing work would continue on and off over a longer period of time. When trying to determine the period when the pointed rough perforations appeared, the 2 penni specimens are unreliable insofar that the emission printing period or earliest cancellation indicate too early a period of appearance. By eliminating these as well as the 10 penni emission d (July 1892), the period of the rough perforation is narrowed down to a few months at the end of 1893. The rough perforations seems to have disappeared from stamps printed right from the beginning of 1894. Figures 1 and 2 indicate the appearance of PRP.

While ordinary rough perforations consist of blocked torn paper with a perforation hole perhaps only an indentation in the paper, pointed rough perforation holes

are at best almost square-like openings where the bottoms have been torn and the teeth are like thin spikes of paper. Figure 2 indicates that PRP is seen also on the Saarinen designs. From the philatelic perspective, pointed rough perforations are useful in showing a certain time period and/or printing emission in specifying the stamps, the same as in pointed and ordinary rough perforation.

Although this phenomenon is not considered an actual rarity, it occurs very

infrequently, limited in each of the Type 1889 penni values to a few printing emissions. In a collection prepared for exhibition at a national or NORDIA/FIP stamp show, pointed rough perforations are best presented together with other perforation oddities. For example, as part of a larger group of perforations and with appropriate text it becomes a good eye catcher and proof of philatelic knowledge.



Figure 1 Left. Pointed rough perfs are clearly seen in a 5 penni d-colored stamp, especially in its left vertical and upper edge. The teeth are partially needle-like and the perforation hole bottom begins to show rough perforation characteristics. Also on the other sides the perforation among the rough perfs is seen as pointed.

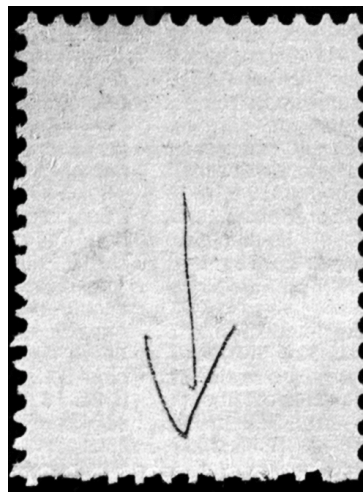


Figure 2 Right. Excellent pointed rough perforations are seen on the Saarinen 40 penni posthorn watermarked stamp at the lower edge.

Finland To Issue Eight New Stamps In March



New issues for March include a booklet honoring the jubilee year of aviation, the Ice Hockey World Championships, St. Brigit of Sweden, garden pansies and Ferdinand von Wright's painting, *The Fighting Capercailles*.

2003 is a jubilee year for aviation. The first powered flight was made 100 years ago. The honor of this historical event belongs to the American engineer brothers Orville (1871-1948) and Wilbur Wright (1867-1912), who designed the first usable powered airplane.

This year is also a jubilee year for Finnair, as the company, then Aero Oy, was founded on November 1, 1923, 80 years ago. Air traffic began at the Kaivopuisto shore in Helsinki on March 20, 1924. The Junkers F 13 plane flew to Tallinn.

Four stamps on airplanes, Euro 0.65 each, are issued to honor these two anniversaries. The stamps depict airplanes used in Finland in different decades: Junkers Ju 52/3m from 1932 to 1949, DC-3 from 1947 to 1970, Super Caravelle from 1964 to 1983 and finally, Airbus 320, which is in use today. The stamps will be issued as a Euro 2.60 booklet with four bonus PAR AVION labels. The four stamp booklet was designed by Pekka Piippo.

Sixteen countries will participate in the 2003 Ice Hockey World Championships to be played in Helsinki, Tampere and Turku. Ice hockey is very popular in Finland. The Euro 0.65 rate pays first class postage up to 50 grams.

One of the new stamps issued in March is a Euro 0.65 stamp picturing garden pansies, designed by Ms. Pirkko Juvonen. About one dozen original species of violet pansies grow in Finland. The garden pansy has been considered a symbol of modesty, coyness and loyalty, and often been related to expressions of longing and love.

St. Brigit of Sweden (1303-1373) was born 700 years ago. Therefore a Euro 0.65 stamp, depicting a wooden sculpture of St. Brigit of Sweden, will be issued to honor the founder of the Brigittine Order. The sculpture is a detail from the altar screen in the Naantali Convent Church. The altar screen, *Heavenly Coronation of the Virgin Mary*, is from the 15th century.

The Euro 0.90 self-adhesive stamp depicts the famous painting, *The Fighting Capercailles*, by Ferdinand von Wright (1822-1906). This work, greatly admired by the Finns, is in the collections of the Ateneum Art Museum. The Euro 0.90 rate is valid for 1st class domestic letters up to 100 grams.

In North America new issues are available from:

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

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

Rural Carriers and Mail Stops - The Finnish Post Extends Service to Thinly Populated Rural Communities: 1890-1891

The development of the national rail system from 1862 to the 1930s provided regular, reliable and reasonably fast postal service to towns and villages throughout Finland except to the most northern third of the country. This story has been presented in a multi-part series of articles in TFP beginning with the August 2002 newsletter.

Nevertheless, there were many remote farms and farming communities that did not receive regular mail service. There were also remote summer communities and resorts with very limited postal connections.

In 1890, Postmaster General Carl Hjalmar Lagerborg submitted a proposal that would, over the next twenty years or so, greatly extend the reach of the Finnish Post to the smallest villages and along the most remote country roads. In 1891, the first of nearly 5,000 mail stops were established to facilitate the processing of mail and to serve as originating or terminal office for many rural carrier routes.

The following article is adopted from *A Listing of Rural Mail Routes* compiled by the Post and Telegraph Museum, in Helsinki and Kaarlo Hirvikoski's multi-volume catalogue *Suomen Postipysakit ja Niiden Leimat* (= *The Mail Stops of Finland and their Cancellations*). The Finnish text from the section on the rural mail carriers was translated by Carita Parker.

Rural Mail Routes & Mail Stops

The idea of rural mail delivery originated outside Finland but the initiative for this expanded mail service

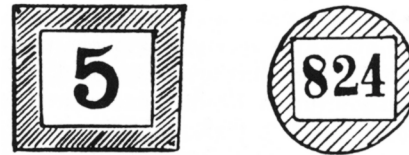


Figure 1. More than 6,000 numeral cancel numbers were assigned by the Finnish Post during the life of the rural carrier service.

was taken by Postmaster General, Carl Hjalmar Lagerberg, who was born in Oulu on November 10, 1842, and died on January 31, 1910 in Helsinki.

He presented a proposal to the Senate on December 5, 1889, recommending the organization of regular rural postal services. He received the following response from the Postal Administration (PA), in a circular letter-insert No. 4/100:

To the Postmaster General

“With reference to your letter, dated December 5, 1889, in which you have respectfully referred to the rest of Scandinavia and other European countries concerning a very useful kind of postal service that has been in practice there for a long time now, by the employment of so-called rural postmen or mail carriers.

“The mail carriers will perform certain duties, at regular intervals and on designated routes, to carry out the delivery of different kinds of common mail between locations within certain limited areas to the nearest post office, and to maintain a two-way mail delivery service between the communities in those areas.

“You have also explained the most important and useful regulations of rural mail delivery in Sweden and Norway. You have brought to our attention that this kind of mail delivery service, by carrier, would be most useful and feasible along the densely populated areas in the river valleys of Ostrobothnia (province in Northwest Finland, near the Gulf of Bothnia), and between cities, railroad stations and/or other central locations.

“Furthermore, between more populated villages or communities, no more than five kilometers apart (approximately three miles) that have a need for postal connections with the rest of the country, and



Figure 2. Card with rural carrier route No. 104 date lined Ylisimo-Saukko, 28/11/_ to the mail stop at Simo. Unusual in that no cds from nearest post office or arrival mark. Apparently, card was carried directly to Simo, which was not authorized to have cds at that time (circa mid 1890s).

finally, between the rural post offices which handle mail several times a week, and the not too distant communities, which lack any government postal service or receive mail service just once a week.

“You have requested establishing in the shortest possible time, rural mail carrier service in Finland provided that qualified persons can be employed to perform these tasks and that carrier routes can be changed or altered according to local conditions and the experience of the carriers.

“In light of all this, you have requested authorization for a trial period of one year to be carried out in various parts of the country, and if all goes well, later to expand the service to twenty rural mail routes with an average one-way distance of eight kilometers (five miles), and at an average cost of Fmk 5 per route. All this, for a total Fmk 5,200, in addition to the cost of mail and letter pouches, signal whistles, stamping devices and so forth. The cost to equip one carrier would amount to Fmk 40 or a total, altogether, of eight hundred Fmk 800 (for twenty carriers).

“Postmaster General, you have in a more recent letter, dated the eleventh of this month (April 11, 1890) to the Imperial Senate, enclosed a listing, including from six to forty-six of those communities that presently would benefit from postal service by mail carrier.

“In consideration of all this, the Imperial Senate has found your requests to be worthwhile and accordingly we grant you permission, on a one year trial basis, to establish this June a postal service by mail carrier to serve those communities on the enclosed list that would benefit the most from improved postal connections.

“A sum of Fmk 6,000 has been put to your disposal in order to cover any reasonable cost, including salaries for qualified persons as mail carriers and for other expenses involved in running the service.

“In order for the mail carriers to carry out their duties under different circumstances, The Imperial Senate has laid down certain rules to be given to the mail carrier (not specified here).

“The Imperial Senate, furthermore, wishes for you, the Postmaster General, to give an account by March of 1891,



Figure 3. Straight line village mail stop cancel from Ukonmaki, via rural carrier route 5043 to Hyrynsalmi and from there to Helsinki. Backstamped, 25.1.54. Kansanvalistusseuran Kirjeopisto was a correspondence school.

about the communities and routes where this mail carrier service is installed and describe the results of this activity. The Senate would likewise appreciate your personal opinion on whether this type of service should be continued and/or expanded further, if so in what way and direction or in the event the service is unsuccessful, that it be discontinued.

“The Senate will in time notify the public through the country’s (Finland’s) official newspapers about the final decisions made in this matter.”

(In) Helsinki April 17, 1890.

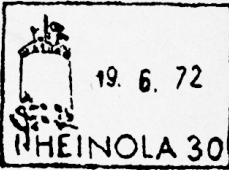
During the many decades of rural mail carrier service, more than 6,000 numbers were assigned by the postal service, for each route. In some instances, there is the letter marked after the number, such as “a,” “h,” or “c,” signifying either a part of a divided route, or when the same number had been given, by mistake, to two or more routes. These errors were blamed on the bookkeepers, whose task it was to determine each route but occasionally they became confused as to which number was next in order.

Sometimes, the number marked on the letter differs from the one used for the particular mail route. Examples include Routes No. 5 and No. 10. The first one is mentioned in the PA Bulletin XIX (33) of 6/26, 1890, to travel between: Kyrkslätt and Porkala and beginning 1. 1, 1908 to Ii pp-In satama (= harbor), but the No. 5 letters are found to have been used (cancelled) at the Liede Post Office. The latter No. 10 is thought to belong to the route: Kiuruvesi - Iisalmi, but subsequent research discovered No. 10 on letters cancelled in Kanaala.

mean Mail Stop but local, or village or city mail and “Mail Stop” is the “brevhus.” As the Mail Stop frequently is located in a small village, that name naturally was adopted. In addition to the straight line cancel, sometimes a circular cancel and on behalf of tourist centers a pictorial cancel have been used.

Roger Quinby

Figure 5. Kaarlo Hirvikoski's chart showing different types of mail stop cancellations and their estimated times of use. The straight line cancellations in full caps or with the letters “AS” or “as” at the end indicate that the mail stop was located at or near the railway station.

Type	Estimated Time of Use	Examples
I	1891-1905	Ojakkala.
II	1891-1905	Alapitkä.
III	1905-1925	Artjärvi p.p.
IV	1925-1948	Aasla Toroppala
V	1948-	Askisto Askis Ahjola
VI	Specific designs such as railway cancellations and others that differ in type of lettering	SYRJÄ
VII	Tourism cancels and other pictorial circular cancellations	
VIII	Pen cancellations	

“Iz Finlandia” Cover to Revel with Harbor Arrival CDS, Other Items to Sordavala, Brussels & Berlin

We first presented the “Iz Finlandii” (= From Finland = IF) mark in the November 2001 newsletter and again in February 2002. We continue to receive communications showing this mark on post cards and covers to Russia and via Russia to other foreign destinations. Several commentators have suggested that the IF mark was used only at the St. Petersburg branch post office No. 7, on uncanceled mail transported by rail from Finland to Russia. Post office No. 7 was located just one block away from the Finland Railroad Station.

A new and interesting IF cover has been presented by Cyril Schwenson. This 1904 cover, Figure 1, is addressed to Revel (Tallinn, Estonia), and backstamped with the Revel No. 5 harbor arrival circular date stamp (cds) suggesting that:

- 1) This cover arrived by ship directly from Finland, probably, from Helsinki and therefore,
- 2) There was more than one Iz Finlandia mark in use.



Figure 1. Collection of Cyril Schwenson.

Unfortunately, the poor quality of the illustration did not allow for a detailed comparison of the so-called Revel

mark with the marks known to have been used in SPB (usually with SPB No. 7 numeral cancel) to confirm that the Revel mark is in fact a second mark. Nevertheless, all the **IF** marks I have examined show virtual identical lettering and frames.

The Revel cover is ex-Harry von Hoffman and described by him as incoming ship mail to Revel. The numeral cancels were taken out of use by 1904 so the fact that it is absent does not offer any evidence where the mark was struck. Nevertheless, there are no other SPB transit cancels, which are usually seen on mail from Finland, via SPB, to other destinations. Therefore, the absence of any other SPB cds leaves open the possibility that the cover traveled by ship directly to Revel. Are there other examples of **IF** covers to Revel without the SPB transit circular date stamps?

Other interesting **IF** covers include the 25 penni entire Berlin, Figure 4, which does not have any SPB markings except the undated **IF** and Finland post office No. 7 numeral cancel. A SPB transit cancel would be expected as seen on the cards illustrated in Figures 2 and 3. A Berlin arrival mark is on the back, 1. 4. 00. The 25 penni entire was accurate franking to Germany so the addition of two 2 penni stamps was just a colorful philatelic decoration.

Figure 3 is a picture post card from Finland (Helsinki harbor), dated, 15. 3.1900, via SPB post office No. 7 where the undated **IF** and numeral cancels were struck, then to post office No. 8, cancelled 3. 03. 1900 (Cyrillic calendar), arriving in Brussels, 19. 03. 1900, with postman's cancellation 42.

Figure 2 pictures a 10 penni postal card from Finland to Sordavala with the earliest known **IF** mark. I was fortunate to acquire this item about a year ago. Apparently the postal clerk aboard the mail wagon to SPB forgot to cancel this card and place it in the mail bag to Vyborg where it would have been dispatched north to Sordavala. Instead, the uncanceled card went to SPB where it passed through three postal stations before arriving in Sordavala on 16. IV. 99. This card, without a dateline, went from Finland to Russia and back to Finland. Obviously, the arrival in SPB was inadvertent because Finnish inland mail was never routed through Russia.

Roger Quinby



Figure 2. Collection of Roger Quinby.

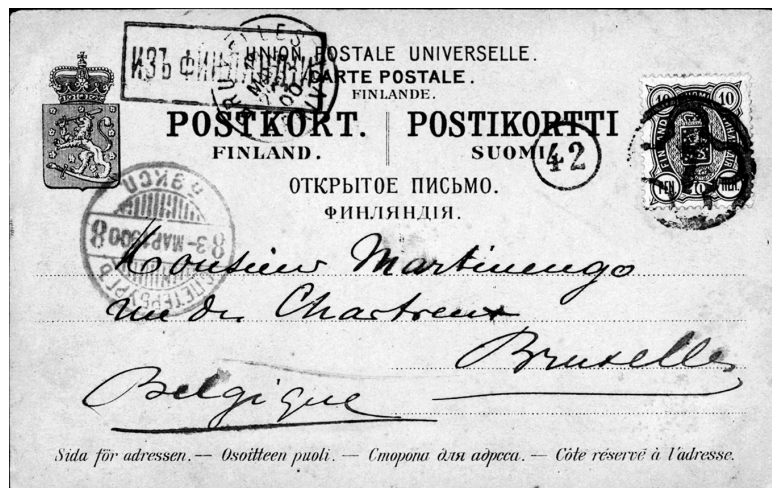


Figure 3. Collection of Roger Quinby.

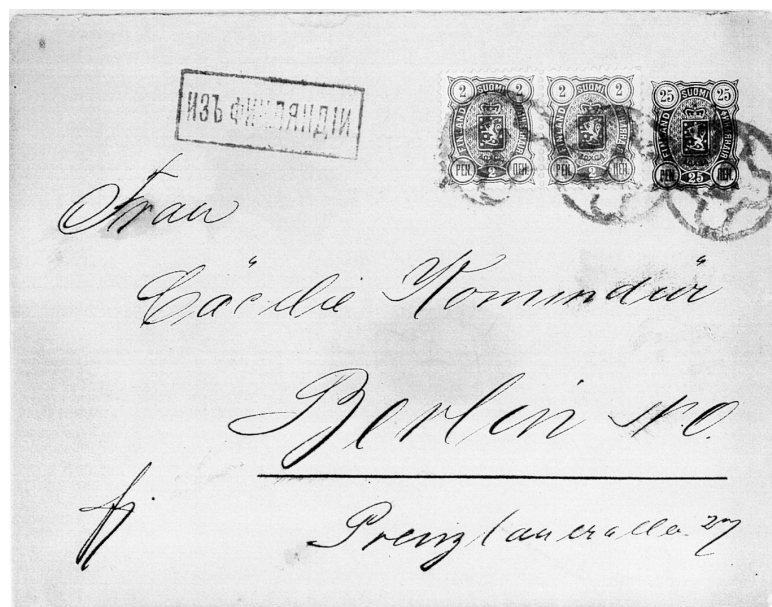


Figure 4. Collection of Dirk Vorwerck

North Ingermanland (Inkeri) Issues and Their Use

By Heikki Khri, Translated by Carita Parker

From *Filatelisti* 6/02

North Ingermanland encompasses an area on the Karelian Isthmus that is north from St. Petersburg all the way to Finland's old border prior to 1940. Ingermanland is north, east, and west of St. Petersburg.

Sweden conquered the territory from Russia in the early 1600s and annexed it to its realm in 1617. The area had an old Finnish population, and on the prompting of the Swedish kings the territory was still being populated in the 1600s by emigrants from Finland. Peter the Great conquered the territory in the early 1700s and ultimately annexed it to Russia in 1721.

The period after W.W.I was chaotic in Russia as various factions tried in such circumstances to gain independence. This also inspired the idea among the Ingermanlanders for independence or at least autonomy from Russia. Due to the Bolshevik government policies, thousands of refugees streamed across to Finland from North Ingermanland border areas where the Volunteer Troops were formed.

During 1919 the North Ingermanland Volunteer Troops launched two assaults south from Kirjasalo and so secured both the Kirjasalo front as well as the area that pursuant to the Tartu Peace Agreement was later relinquished to the Soviet Union on Sunday Dec. 5, 1920.

The Kirjasalo territory was an area separated militarily from Soviet-Russia and guarded by the North Ingermanland Regiment evolved from the Volunteer Troops. Later in the summer of 1920 it became the North Ingermanland Special Battalion.

In accordance with an agreement between the North Ingermanland Care Management (NICM) and Finland, the Special Battalion took part in border guard duties besides in the Kirjasalo area also in that of Metsapirtti-Tappari and



Figure 1. The Ingermanland coat of arms is first seen in a Finnish Bible from 1642. It depicts the Neva river with fortresses on both sides of its shores



Figure 2 & 3. In the first emission stamps below the coat of arms are marks considered to have been left from the printing process. These are seen at least in imprint position 10, 91, and 100. Above (Figure 2), an enlargement of the mark as it is in position 100.

Ino with both locations having a separate battalion command.

The NICM was established to handle Ingermanland refugee matters that included the arranging of accommodations in Finland for more than 10,000 refugees and the handling of matters for the North Ingermanland Regiment (later Special Battalion) and Kirjasalo. The approximately 30 square km Kirjasalo territory, that unofficially stayed annexed to Finland between July 1919 and Dec. 5, 1920 was an area under the Ingermanlanders own control populated at the time by more than 1,000 inhabitants including the Regiment/Special Battalion, but excluding its financial branch, which was located near the Rautu station in barrack N II rented from the state railroad (VR). The area had its own local government council and school, but not enough time to open a general store.

OWN POST

In the winter of 1919-20 it seemed likely that independence could be achieved, and in order to establish communication and generate funds, postal service was introduced on the initiative of Lt. Col. Elfvengren. This was necessary because passage to the Kirjasalo area was very limited and the only means of communication was via an active postal connection.

Finland's Traffic and Public Works Ministry approved of postal connections with Finland and from there to abroad. The Ministry also approved that the stamps be issued in the Finnish currency denominations, and that the NICM comply with Finland's postal rates.

The stamps were first sold on March 21, 1920 and their final date of use

was Saturday December 4 of that same year. The stamps were issued in the same values used then by Finland's postal service and were in accord with valid postal rates. The NICM designed the stamps and issued two series of stamps that were printed at the Viipurin Kirja- ja Kivipaino Oy (Vyborg typography and lithography company) under the watchful eye of a NICM observer. It may be noted, however, that none of the persons involved in the endeavor was an expert in this field. And the printing company also was not familiar with the strict control and security measures required for a security printing job. And besides, all work was done in quite a rush. All of the printed material was handed over to the NICM and/or their representatives and this is the reason why so many printed waste paper rejects appeared in the markets for reasons unrelated to the NICM.

Those using the postage stamps were private individuals living in the Kirjasalo area, the NICM, the Regiment/ Special Battalion and its staff. There were some fifty civilian mailings daily in addition to the Regiment /Special Battalion official mail. Instead of the planned three post offices only one was established, the Kirjasalo post



Figure 4. The North Ingermanland first issue specimens. 500 sets were overprinted with the word "Malli" (= specimen or sample) and affixed to brown paper sheets and sent to Finnish post offices as examples of valid North Ingermanland stamps. Similar specimen sheets were prepared for the second series except that the stamps were not overprinted with the word "Malli." See Figure 16.

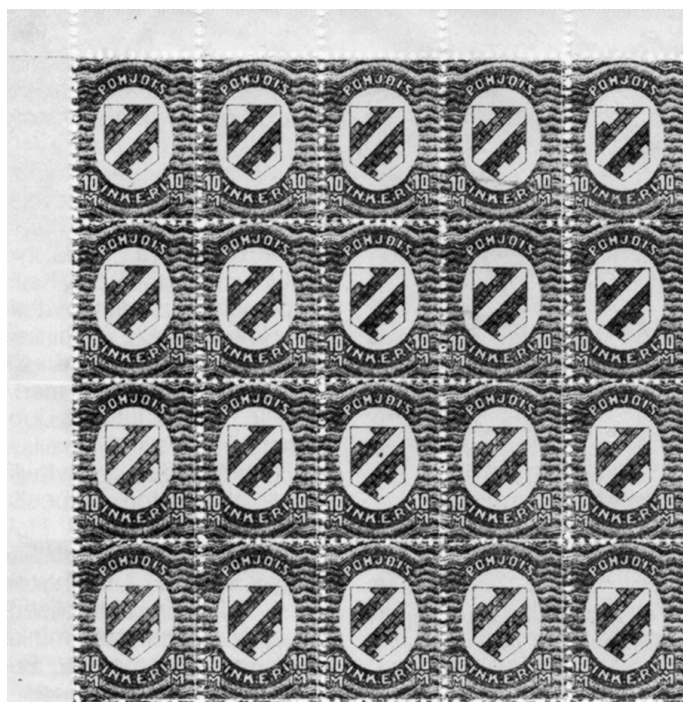


Figure 5. The largest surviving block totaling 20 stamps from the sheet left upper corner of the first emission North Ingermanland 10 Fmk stamps. Only 2,100 stamps 10 Fmks were printed.

office. However, proximity to the war zone made it impractical to locate the Kirjasalo post office in the town, so it was located at the Rautu station in space rented from the state railroad. A courier brought the mail from the Kirjasalo territory to the post office, which then forwarded the mail with the help of Finland's postal service to their destinations. The bulk of the mail was for Finland, but also known some postal items elsewhere abroad. Correctly

franked mailings are relatively rare. In my collection I have introduced both of the 1920 issues. The main emphasis is on the study of items sent by the various users.

Thus, the many-faceted use of these issues and the extent of it have been clarified. Additionally, I have also introduced the "Inkerin hyväksi" (tr. For Ingermanland) issue, the second issue counterfeits, and certain documents about the stamp post phase.

The stamp faults such as perforation errors and imperforates I will only give examples of because the bulk of such material originates from the printed waste paper rejects that the printers gave to the subscriber. For example, according to the Kirjasalo post office manager no imperforates were delivered from that office.



Figure 6, left. A 10 penni block of four of first issue North Ingermanland stamps on wrapper from Kirjasalo, 8. VIII. 20, to Helsinki. (The full address has been clipped from this illustration.) The North Ingermanland government published the weekly Kirjasalo Sanomat newspaper between April 2 and December 24, 1920. The rate was compatible with the Finnish newspaper rate, a maximum of 200 grams. The addressee, Mikko Tirranen, was one of the North Ingermanland government leaders.

Figure 7, right. Only known first and second issue mixed use on cover: 3 x 10 + 50 penni from first issue and added 10 penni from second issue. Second emission 10 penni on cover earliest known; Kirjasalo, 10. VIII. 20, to Terijoki, 13. VIII. 20.

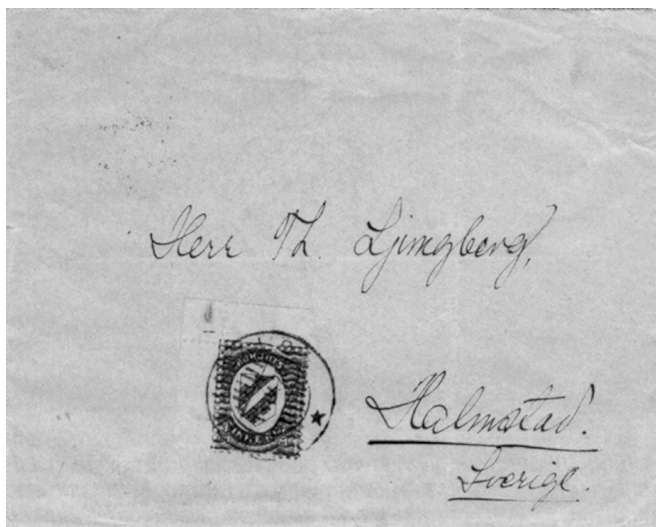
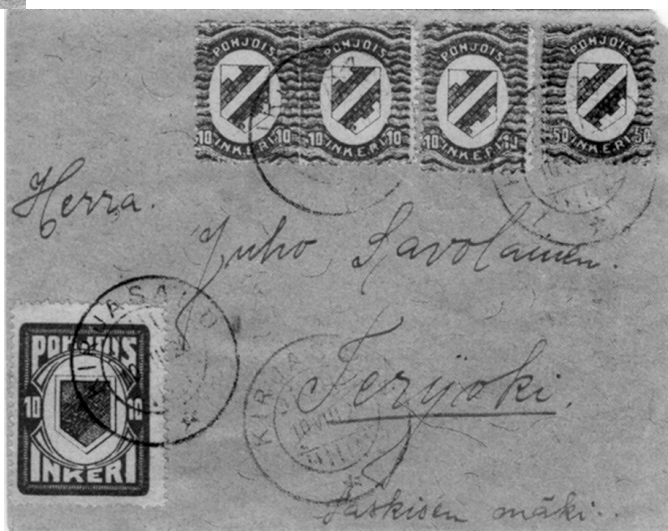


Figure 8, above. Second weight class letter to Sweden with 1 Fmk rate according to Rome agreement. Stamp is of the first emission premier print design. Interesting rate detail is the fact that according to the Rome agreement, rate to abroad for first weight class was 50 penni, whereas from April 12, 1920 domestically the rate was 80 penni. Kirjasalo, 1. IV. 20, Halmstad, 5. IV. 20.



Figure 9. The stamps from the second series were also used on foreign bound mail as shown on this cover to Marseille, France. Rate was 50 penni. Kirjasalo, 16. IX. 20, to Marseille, backstamped, 26. IX. 20.



Figure 10. Only known T (Tax) or postage due mailing with North Ingermanland stamps: Kirjasalo 16. IX. 20; mail car mark H-R (Hiitola-Rautu), 18. IX. 20, Helsinki, 19. IX. 20. No marking of the increased postal rate. 10 + 10 + 30 penni was 30 penni short of 80 penni rate.

Figure 11. The illustrated cover is private mail. The bulk of North Ingermanland post was sent by authorities and addressed to Vyborg to the Russian Red Cross, which was active also in Finland. More than 10,000 people had to leave their home location in the Russian territory of North Ingermanland. The living conditions of these people were quite deplorable, and they were helped by the Russian Red Cross too.



Figure 12. Last day cover with second issue 80 penni correct rate. The cover is addressed to 2nd Lt. Savolainen at the Ino station. Savolainen was head of the Special Battalion Ino command. The regiment mark is seen above. Kirjasalo 4.XII.20.



Figure 13. North Ingermanland stamp use on postcards was minor. Only a few cards like the one pictured here are known. Card has second issue 10 + 30 penni stamps, (i.e., the correct postal rate). Kirjasalo, 23. XI. 20, to Terijoki, 25. XI. 20.



Figure 14. Specimen page for the North Ingermanland second issue.

Golden Age of Finnish Philately

The Crown Post - Feather Letters

Text & Illustrations by Heikki Pahlman

In the early 1700s an order was issued to add feathers to letters to emphasize required fast or express delivery of the letter. Express letters with added feathers can be found among Crown Post but as previously shown, feathers were very rarely used in the General Post. Also, many kinds of extra markings and notes for the postman can be found. Some sources indicate that a letter with one feather was simply a “normal” express letter. Two feathers meant faster delivery and three feathers meant the fastest way of delivery. Also, according to some sources the colors of the feathers indicate the expected speed of the delivery: for example, white and black feathers meant that the letter was to be carried day and night until delivered.



Figure 1. A Crown Post express letter with feather from Hämeenlinna to Somero Church dated July 28, 1778. Sometimes the postmen were not able to read the Swedish text and, therefore, the sender added guidance for him. The guidance here is the character S = Somero.

CROWN POST FEATHER LETTER - 1788



Figure 2. A Crown Post express letter with feather from Djekenböle to Qwarnby, dated June 5, 1788. The letter has, for that time, a typical cut feather because sometimes the feathers were too large. On the reverse side there is an extra marking: "Afgår fran Djekenböle klockan åtta och fortskaffas wid ansvar" = "Depart from Djekenböle at eight and deliver fast with responsibility."

CROWN POST FEATHER LETTERS - 1788 & 1789



Figure 3. A crown post express letter with three feathers from Houskari (Houtskär) parish village to Houtskari Chapel, dated May 31, 1788.



Figure 4. A crown post express circular letter with one feather from Tiusala to Vesilahti (Wesilax) dated May 6, 1789. The contents deals with military operations. It is addressed: "Ordres till samtellige Reserwer wid Wesilax division som afkunnas I Wesilax moder kyrka" = "Orders to reserve forces in Vesilahti, to be announced in Vesilahti Mother Church."

CROWN POST FEATHER LETTER - 1789 & 1794

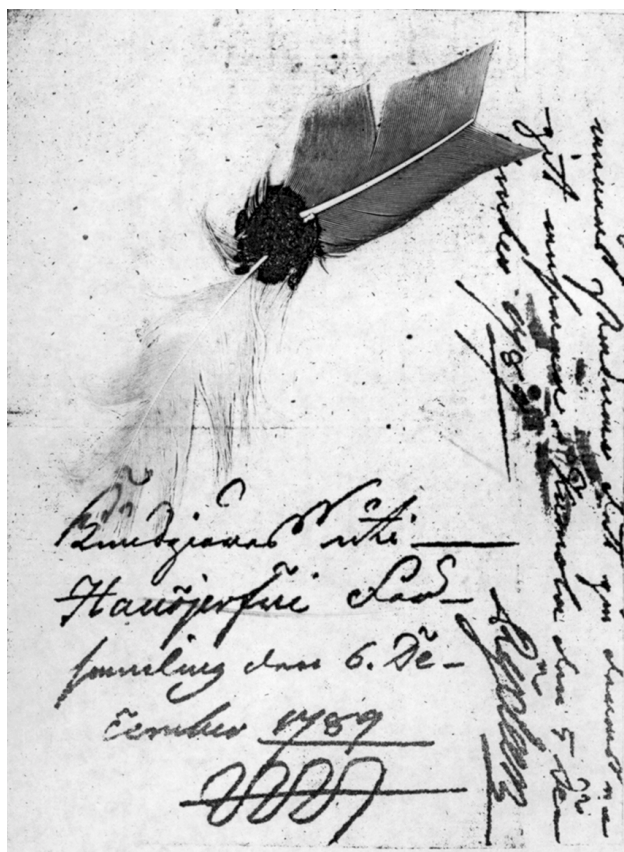


Figure 5. A Crown Post express letter with two feathers from Kumola, dated December 5, 1789. The letter is addressed to Hausjärvi (Hausjerfvi) parish to be announced the next day.



Figure 6. A Crown Post express letter with one feather from Hämeenlinna, Soutkiniemi to Teisko, dated, February 28, 1794 to be announced March 2, 1794.

CROWN POST FEATHER LETTERS - 1796 & 1799



Figure 7. A Crown Post express letter with two feathers from Hämeenlinna to Kärkölä dated April 5, 1796. On the front page there is mentioned that the letter is to be announced on April 10, 1796.

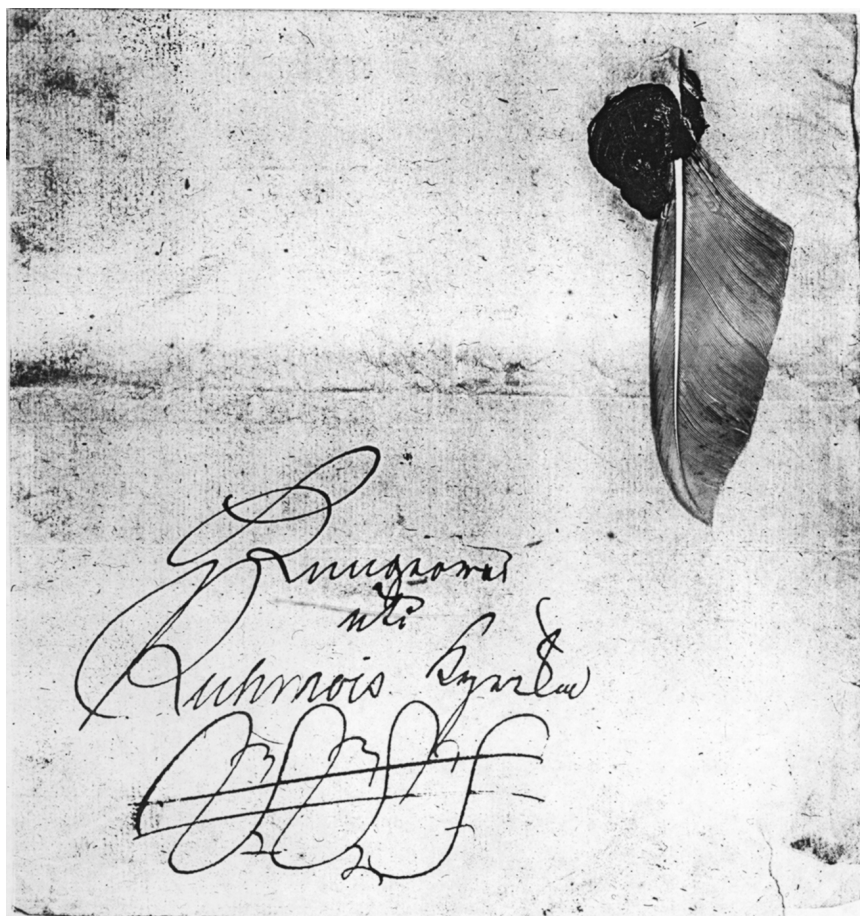


Figure 8. A Crown Post express letter with one feather from Pirkkala to Kuhmoinen (Kuhmois) dated 1799 (month and date is omitted). On the front page there is mention that the message was to be announced on April 10, 1799.

CROWN POST FEATHER LETTER



Figure 9. A Crown Post letter with one feather from Pirkkala to Orivesi (Orihwesi).

CROWN POST FEATHER LETTER - 1804

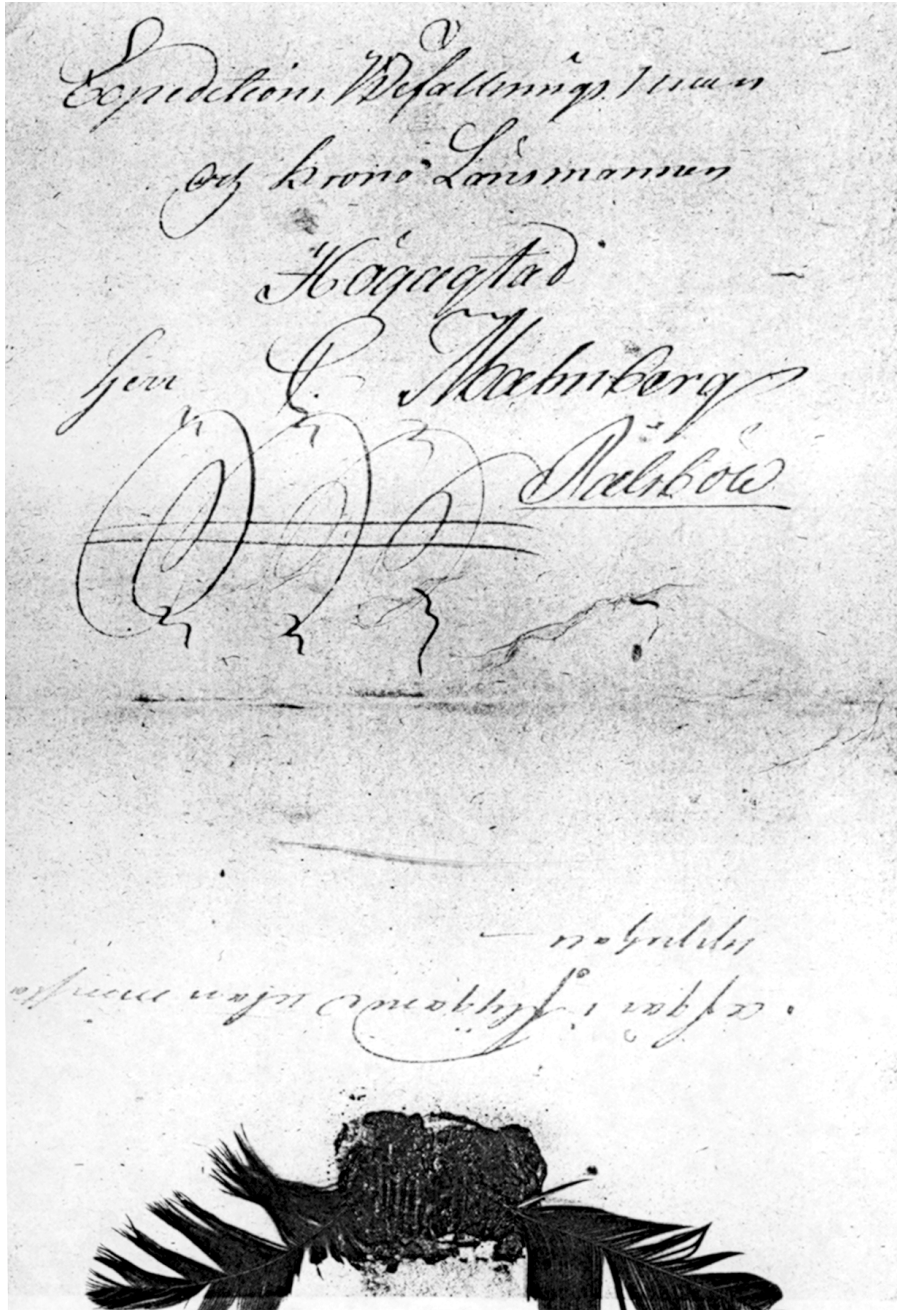


Figure 10. A crown post 1804 express letter with two feathers to Pälstöle. On the back side there is an additional marking: "Afgår i flygande utan minsta upphåll" = "Goes flying without smallest break." Also note the elaborate and ornamental Meander marks on the front side (top).

CROWN POST FEATHER LETTER - 1808

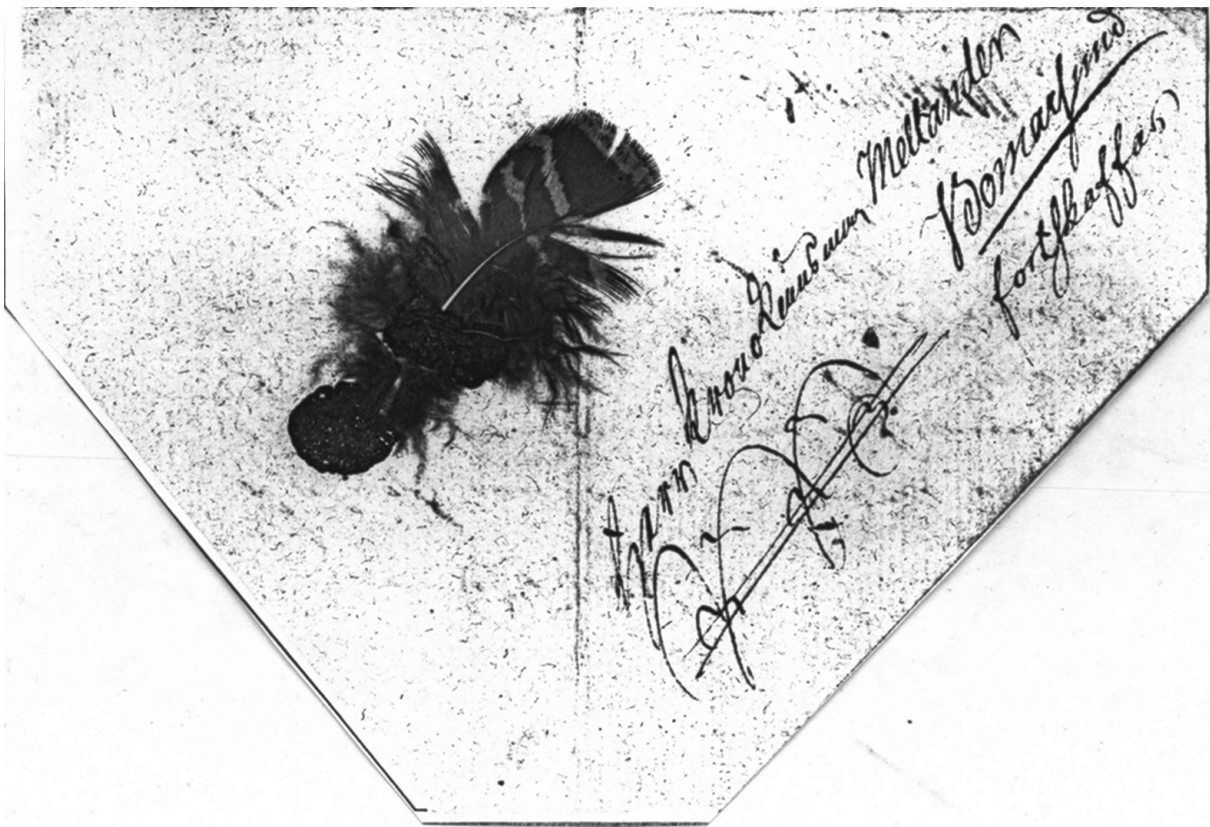


Figure 11. A Crown Post express letter with one feather from Strömsvik to Bomarsund, dated August 23, 1808 with extra marking, "fortskaffas" = deliver fast.

CROWN POST FEATHER LETTER - 1809

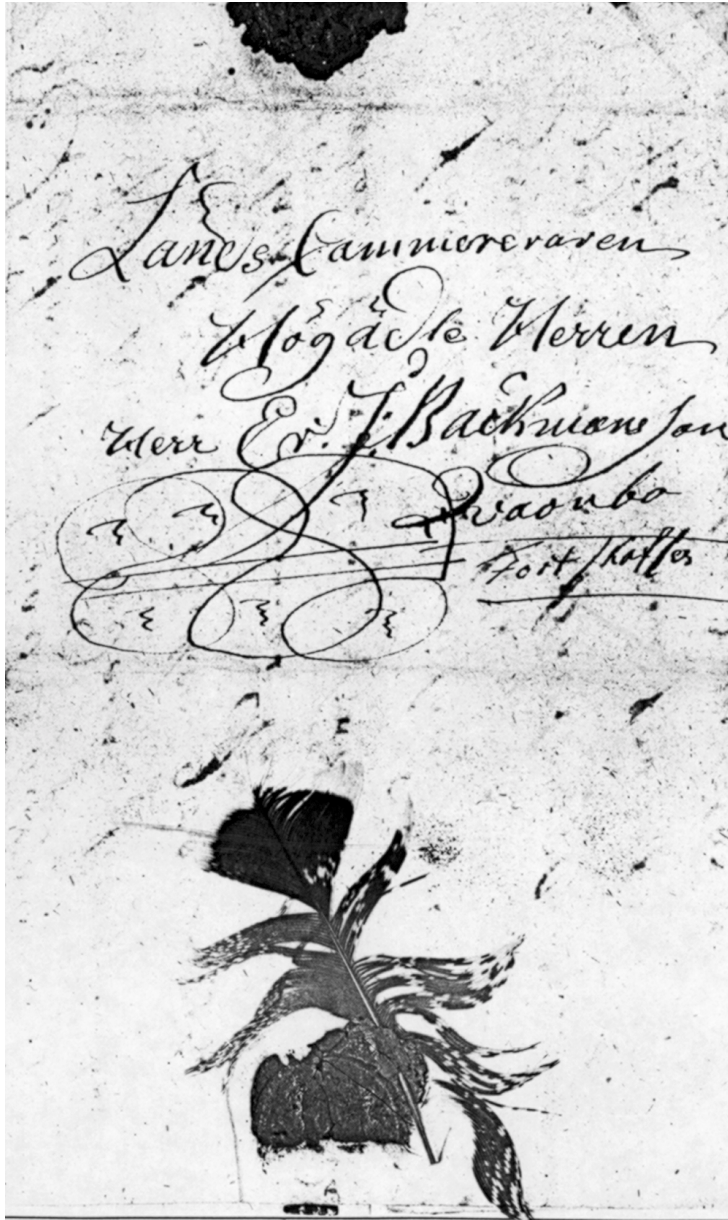


Figure 12. A crown post express letter with one feather from Söderby to Qvambo dated June 3, 1809 with extra marking "fortskaffas" = deliver fast.

To be continued in the May 2003 newsletter.

HISTORY OF RAILROAD MAIL TRANSPORT IN FINLAND 1862 - 1995

By Ilkka Teerijoki, Translated by Carita Parker

ADVANCEMENT IN MAIL CAR DESIGN: FOUR AXLE CARS IN USE

The new work protocol applied to mail cars in 1889 required more spacious cars than previously in service due to increased writing tasks. The implementation, however, did not happen soon enough even though the problem had been realized and orders for new cars submitted right away. In the meantime, some previous car interior design solutions had to suffice. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that the shortage of cars persisted as before.

At the completion of the Savo rail all of the existing cars were in use. As a last resort, three class III railroad cars were refurbished as temporary extra mail cars. For the short Kouvola-Kotka rail section, separate postal compartments were built for double axle class III passenger cars. Initially these compartments were midget-sized, only one square meter, but still better than nothing. Later on, the postal compartment was enlarged so that it covered about the size of the passenger space, and ultimately nearly similar compartments were also built in two other cars when the Jyväskylä rail was completed in 1897.

The cars stood out from ordinary passenger cars in that the passenger compartment exterior walls were brown and the postal compartment yellow. Mail was carried in the trains in other ways besides in mail and postman cars. The earliest railroad mail transportation mode used, especially on shorter routes, was to transport the mail in the conductor's car accompanied by a postman.

In 1890 the railroad administration allowed mail to be carried without a postman present under the watchful eye of the train personnel. Initially, this applied to the Lappeenranta-Simola and Suonenjoki-Iisvesi rail sections, and the mail was to be delivered to the station manager half an hour prior to departure.

Transports in postal compartments during the then turn of the century happened at least between Vyborg-St. Petersburg, Hanko-Hyvinkää, Helsinki-Kerava, Helsinki-Kirkkonummi, and Helsinki-Karjaa. Occasionally, the postal compartments were enlarged when increased mail quantities required additional space. But eventually the railroad administration did not allow

the compartments to be enlarged anymore because passenger space could not be decreased and neither could extra passenger cars be added to the trains. Especially on the shore rail-line running west from Helsinki, compartments got ever more crowded. As more seats were reserved for passengers particularly with the shortage of cars during WWI, the postmen ended up working in the middle of the class III compartment surrounded by passenger seats. As for the number of mail cars, a minimum had to continue to suffice. The two 4-axle mail cars ordered in 1888 were finally completed in 1892. These were substantially larger than the previous cars. The car interior length was 12.4 meters and a raised ceiling light gave a feeling of spaciousness. The

reorganized mail car work protocol played a role in the construction of no less than five compartments. Mail cars benefited also from the technical advances such as improved springs and other recent innovations developed for railroad passenger cars. Two additional of these same type of cars were built in 1894 and put on the St. Petersburg line. Three cars in this series were scrapped in the 1950s and a fourth became scrap yard storage space.

From 1896 to 1904 eight additional 4-axle mail cars were built that were slightly smaller in size than the previous models. Interior length was 10.8 meters. Beginning in the 1880s the mail cars were built in Finland at railroad machine shops.

In the mid-1890s the railroad administration reported that it could no

longer manufacture mail cars, because its machine shops were running at maximum capacity building cargo vans. Thus, the postal government asked for bids elsewhere. The Stockholm manufacturing company "Atlas" stayed longest in the bidding, but the wrangling eventually ended when the postal administration considered even the final offer of 2,000 Fmks too much. Ultimately, the railroad administration promised to have the cars built domestically, but the post had to scale back on some of its demands.

In 1901 the Turun Rautateollisuus Oy machine shop manufactured a series of six exceptional mail cars, built with 3 axles, including a fixed axle at one end, and at the other end equipped so as to allow use as well on tracks with sharp turns like those on the Oulu-Tornio and Kuopio-Iisalmi rails. The cars were obviously smaller



Figure 1. Hjalmar Lagerborg (1842-1910), Postmaster General from 1887 to 1903. He was instrumental in revamping the postal service.

than those with 4 axles. The interior length was only 8.4 meters, but what set the cars apart was their outer appearance.

The workspace width was only 2.3 meters due to the walkway next to the car outer walls, and with a 1.05 meter high ornamental railing protecting the walker. The purpose for the new design was to prevent railroad personnel from walking through the interior space, which mail car crew found disrupting.

The “walkthrough” had been a problem from the end of the 1880s when an end to it had been voiced referring to the fact that such was not the case in other countries. However, at that time there was no other recourse than to couple the mail cars to the train either first or last. Because of the side walk, the car type was nicknamed “balcony car” or “cage car.” Another name was the “Godenhjelm car” after the mail car district director who had participated in the design of the cars.

Godenhjelm himself was of the opinion that the car small size was not a detriment because, along with tighter train schedules the quantity of mail carried in a car would decrease. Possible problems caused by the small car size would be ameliorated by the appropriate Swiss style interior furnishings. But alas, the small space did prove to be a dilemma. One of the cars was apparently sold to be converted into a summer dwelling. According to one person’s recollection, this was more befitting than that of mail car. In 1920 the cars had already been relegated to short distances and one was kept as an extra car.

A number of the “balcony” cars were destroyed in the 1940s in bombing raids or fires, but one was saved and is now restored to its original appearance, on display at Finland’s Railroad Museum in Hyvinkää.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, the mail cars on the St. Petersburg rail again became crammed. Mail quantities increased when the mail of Finnish emigrants to America was routed from Central Europe via Russia to St. Petersburg and from there by train to Finland.

The postal district head had proposed that cars 17 meters in length be built with entrance like those of the Russian and Swedish models, on the side so that the end platform could be eliminated and thus have more space.

The railroad administration opposed the building of outer walkways considering them dangerous, and not willing to take responsibility for possible mishaps. But in the opinion of postal representatives, the walkways could be useful - even Germany had them - and thus walking across the car interior would not happen as often as had previously been the case. However, the postal administration had to accept the idea that passage through the interior had to be allowed still regardless. The only way to prevent this was to couple the mail cars first or last to the train. In such instances it was requested that the mail car be stopped as close to the station as possible.

Large mail cars were ordered in 1906. Postal personnel were guessing that delivery would take quite a long time: “Live and see when these cars will really be rolling. With us (Finns) time is not yet money.” That skepticism was justified. The first two of the long awaited cars were not ready for use until nearly the end of 1907. And of these, one broke down already on its first run.

The new cars were completed between 1907 and 1908 and they were clearly an improvement from the former models. Interior length was 17.4 meters and entrance was located in a sidewall niche. An additional 4 cars of the same type were completed in 1911 with entrance from the end platform. Consequently, the cars were slightly shorter, interior length 15.6 meters. The sidewalls were covered with sheet iron. Besides their spaciousness, the lighting in the cars was brighter than previously due to each gas lamp having two flames.

Criticism, however, was directed at the small newspaper slots and poor arrangement of the letter cubbyholes, as well as the draftiness in the sleeping quarter. But when the mail car district head invited the employees to a discussion to give suggestions for improvements, only four from the car crews showed up. Evidently, the cars were rather satisfactory after all.

Prior to Finland’s independence, still one new mail car type was made. In 1914 four cars were completed and in 1915 two cars, 15.8 meters in length, that differed from the previous mail cars by their exterior covering - boards made of aspen. The cars also had end platforms.

Most of the 12 mail cars completed between 1907-1915 were removed from service at the end of the 1950s.



Figure 2. Duties and work assignments were diversified during the 1889 reorganization of the railway post. Additional personnel were needed. To do the job, larger sorting shelves were required. A heating vent is visible under the chair. There were many complaints that the heating system in the mail cars was unreliable and during the winter the working conditions were sometimes unhealthy and unbearable.

“SNOW IS WHIRLING IN AND HAIR STANDS
ON END” DESCRIBES WORK CONDITIONS
IN MAIL CARS

The spaciousness and the functionality of the work area in the mail cars was a big deal, especially the heating and lighting arrangement. Minimizing dust and jerking about of the mail cars was also very important to employees who had to work in these cars. The earliest mail cars had candlelight only and this was quite an insufficient light source particularly after mail cars were coupled onto night trains. In Sweden, working in mail cars by candlelight was compared to sorting mail in a coal cellar.

Besides the insufficiency of candlelight, there was also the danger of fire. For example, on the Oulu rail at the end of the 1880s, two mail bags caught fire after

being ignited by a fallen candle. The postman found guilty in this incident was punished by losing his two months salary, even though only a few newspaper issues and the outer wrapper of a postal parcel were damaged. The severity of the punishment was due to the fact that the same postman had earlier too been careless with candles, and received only a severe reprimand, which, incorrectly, was thought to have an impact on him.

Fortunately, candles would not remain the only available light source. For the first time, the 1892 cars were furnished with oil lamps hanging from the ceilings. But even these were tricky to use. Although, one of the postmen on travel duty was to care for the lamps, it often happened that the flames flared up too high and spread soot around the entire car.

It was hoped that electric lighting would improve the situation. In Germany, experiments with electric lights had been successful. But when electric lights in Finland were installed in two new mail cars in September of 1897, the output quickly weakened and the accumulators had to be replaced by November. As a result, the postal administration requested that gas lamps be installed in the cars. This type of lighting met with greater success and in 1908, only one of 40 mail cars was without gaslight.

Still, candlelight often had to suffice. For example, on the St. Petersburg rail the gas frequently ran out before Vyborg and occasionally even after Kouvola. The reason for this was that sometimes the maintenance staff forgot to fill up the lamps, but one time the matter of running out of gas was a false gauge reading that showed two errors in atmospheric pressure. Another drawback with gaslight was that the car inside temperature rose and dried up even more the already arid indoor air. From 1913 onward, the mail cars were beginning to be furnished with so-called incandescent gas lighting.

However, all of the fires were not caused by candles. Often the cause was a spark from the locomotive that would ignite the car roof. This was the case in Nastola in the summer of 1917 where a cargo van carrying mail caught fire. When the fire was first noticed, there was no water nearby. Instead, it became necessary to drive more than one kilometer to the nearest well and then put out the fire by way of the car roof. The fire completely destroyed 21 mail sacks, but 5 only partly. In addition 74 sacks suffered water damage. The rest of the 171 sacks remained undamaged.

Heating was done with stoves. The long used “Moring” stoves were installed under the car floor. Later on, the cars were warmed by a heat pipe that ran from the locomotive through the entire train. But with this system, there was a

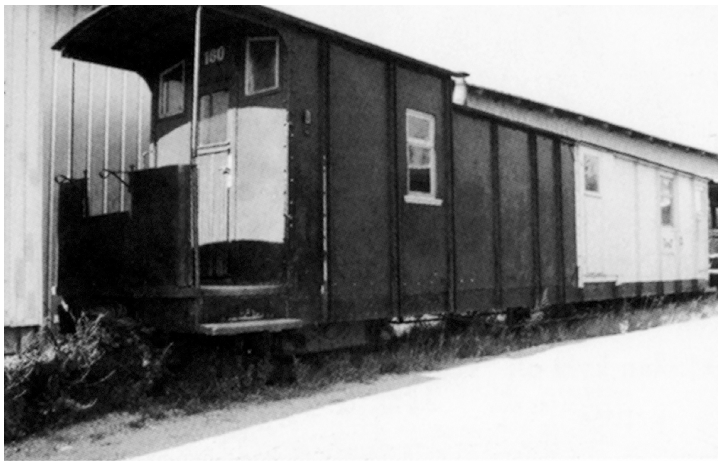


Figure 3 top. A combined conductor and mail car built in 1916 that ran on the Lahti-Loviisa line. The car has been restored and is on display at the Jokioinen Railway Museum.

Figure 4 bottom. The completion of the rail section between Pasila and Karjaa in 1903 shortened the travel time between two of Finland's largest cities, Helsinki and Turku by several hours. One of the stations along the new rail section was Espoo.

Figure 5. Between 1892 and 1894 Finland's first 4-axle mail cars were built, and equipped to negotiate sharp turns. The cars were also equipped with improved springs making writing easier in the cars. A raised ceiling light brightened the interior and added a feeling of spaciousness. This mail car in this photo is from 1894.

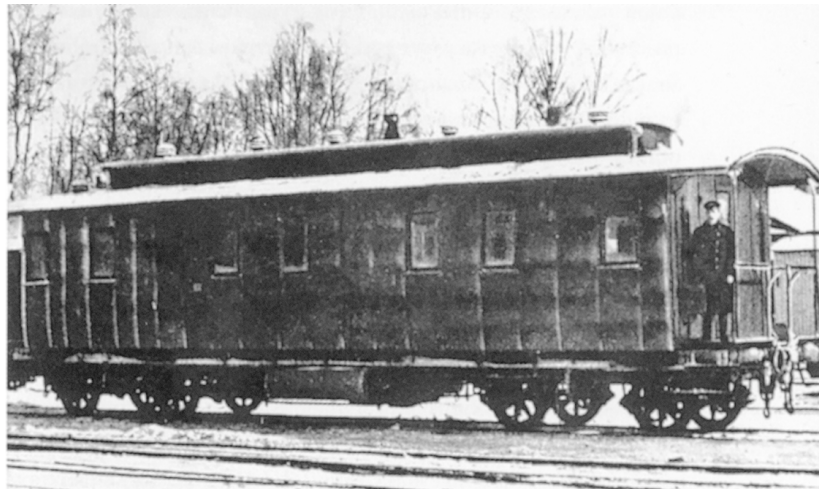


Figure 6. The "balcony" car was built in 1901; it was without doubt the most stylish of Finnish mail cars. However, the side walkway substantially reduced the work area and it turned out to be very unpopular with the postal clerks. Only six cars of this type were placed in service.

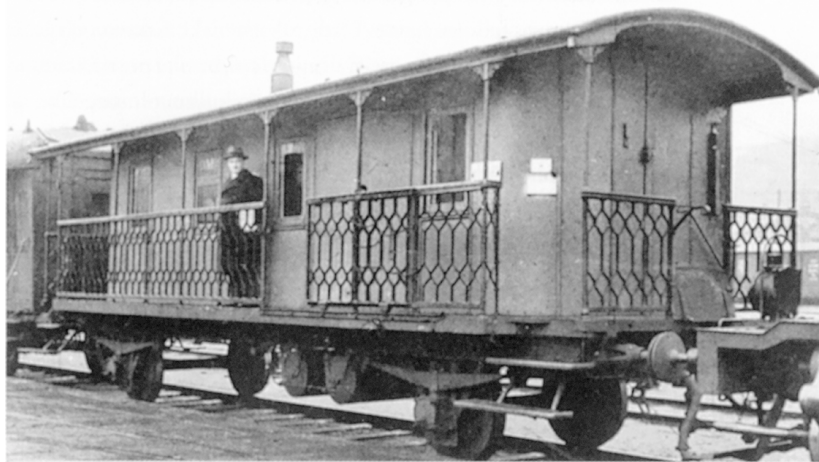
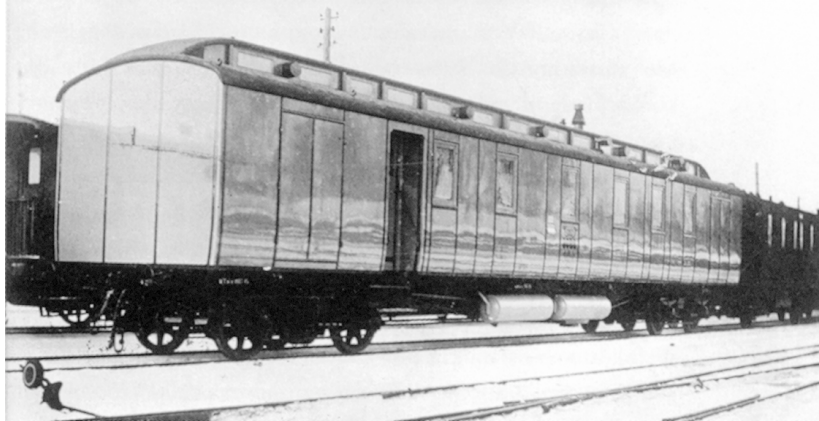


Figure 7. The 1907 mail cars were the largest at the time. Interior length was 17 meters. More interior length was achieved by designing the entrance from the side instead of at the end of platforms.



problem too since often the mail cars were located last on the train and the pipe heating capacity was inadequate. On the other hand, the inside of the cars coupled first to the engine might have been too warm. There were nights when heating was totally forgotten, which occasionally caused the pipe to split apart.

Sometimes it happened that the cars were not heated up prior to the journey (the railroad was responsible for heating the cars) and so it took time before the car interior was warm enough. For example, the St.

Petersburg-Terijoki postman car had not been heated despite numerous admonitions to the person in charge of train departures at the St. Petersburg station office; and so one February morning, the postmen upon arrival had measured the temperature in the car to be two degrees below freezing. Cars on the Helsinki-Karjaa-Turku line, on the other hand, would not warm up despite having a steam heat pipe and finally a frustrated expeditor asked for permission to purchase with his own money a petroleum stove for the car.

In a 1940s interview, a traveling postman reminisced about initial travel in mail cars during wintertime in the early 1900s: “The icy logs thrown into the stove did not heat up the car until long into the journey. To avoid rheumatism one had to bundle up as if going on a bear hunt.”

Various innovations to make work easier were implemented, which was necessary in order to properly handle the ever increasing mail quantities. One of the more remarkable new implementations was the lock bags, brought into use in Finland in 1900. The idea had come from Switzerland on the initiative of the ever energetic mail car director Godenhjelm. The bag could be locked, but not opened without a key. With this invention, the old way of having to seal the bags with wax could be abandoned, which had caused a lot of trouble, ruined the air in the mail cars and even started many a small fire.

Some of the mail car crew workload was eased also with the discontinuance of postage stamp sales from the cars in the spring of 1907. The reasoning was that more places were offering stamps and the public could purchase stamps also at stations and even from post stops. Similar minor improvements included also the installation of two letter boxes on the Helsinki-St. Petersburg fast trains, which at that time did not yet have mail cars. One of the boxes was emptied at end stations and the other in Vyborg. Thus, the letter depositing public got to play a small part themselves in the sorting of mail.

In 1900 work routines were eased in that registered letter mail addressed abroad could be marked in the books solely by their quantitative numbers, whereas earlier, the quantity, names, and departure locations had to be written down, which caused haste and, oversights.

Even though a second night train was taken into use in 1906 between Helsinki and St. Petersburg it did not make things any easier, because mail was not divided into two mail cars, but carried as usual in one crammed car. Discouraged mail car clerks sarcastically noted that at least those who found faults to comment about would not be out of a job. Complaints of improper sorting came from as far as Germany.

Due to the fast work pace and despite a clearly marked address, a letter meant for Kulennoinen went instead to Kuhmoinen and so took four days to reach its destination. The incident may seem insignificant, but for this mistake the apparent culprits, two postmen and an extra aide to the expeditor, received quite a reprimand. But greater slip-ups happened. One expeditor was lucky to get only a 100 Fmk fine for having forgotten in the car while on duty the briefcase sent by the minister-undersecretary of state to the Senate.

But amidst all the confusion, there were some fortunate incidents also. A hurried customer at the Uusikirkko station had left a letter envelope on the mail car steps, and in the absence of a postage stamp put a 20 penni coin on top of the envelope. The envelope was still on the steps when discovered at the next station.

At the turn of the century, the financial aspects of railroad postal transport came under closer scrutiny. Actual mail cars headed by expeditors were expensive to operate as far as salaries were concerned. Expenditures were lowered by degrading mail cars to postman car status as was done with the Jaakkima-Joensuu and Mikkeli-Kuopio rails in 1895. But the postmen were against this development. According to rules postman cars were supposed to only take in and drop off ready mail. But in the opinion of the postmen, the postman in the postman car actually ended up handling alone all the same tasks performed jointly with the expeditor in the mail cars.

Great expectations were had concerning both the financial aspects as well as work protocol with the new railroad mail transport mode in so-called sorter cars. These cars had only one employee, a sorter, and the cars were thought to be perfect, especially on such rail sections where the mail quantities being transported were relatively small but instead had busy train traffic. The first sorter cars became operational in May of 1900 on the Turku-Toijala and Turku-Karjaa rails. The sorting cars would alternate every other run with the mail cars. An idea was also introduced that railroad personnel would bring the mail to be exchanged all the way to the cars. Thus, women too could work in the sorter cars. Having females work in regular mail cars was considered improper. It was noted, that “women in all other postal areas have under various work conditions seemed quite compatible with men.”

With the introduction of sorter cars came the first and then periodically repeated arguments about work descriptions between mail car higher personnel and postmen. The *Postimieslehti* (postman’s paper/magazine) bemoaned the fact that higher employee trainees had been assigned the task of sorting, bypassing the postmen who had temporarily but successfully handled the job. The personnel representatives stressed the importance of general education with higher postal employees required to have the equivalent of a middle school education and in the opinion of the representatives, there were very few postmen “totally qualified” for the job of sorter. Besides, postmen could not just take over the job of higher employees.

The postmen, on the other hand, thought that practical knowhow should take precedence over “school knowledge.” Furthermore, the postmen argued the higher employee trainees were not interested in the sorting per se, but only aimed at advancing further in their positions. Thus the postmen who were in the sorting job for the long haul would be more advantageous even to the postal administration.

The postmen thought one possibility was to change the sorter cars to postman cars. The arguments became more of a dispute about prestige between higher postal mail car personnel and the postmen. According to a bitterly worded article in the *Postimieslehti*, the higher

Suomen rataverkko vuonna 1917. SR.

1902–1911

- 1902 Kuopio–Iisalmi
- 1903 Pasila–Karjaa
- 1903 Tuira–Tornio
- 1904 Iisalmi–Kajani
- 1908 Elisenvaara–Savonlinna
- 1909 Laurila–Rovaniemi
- 1910 Joensuu–Lieksa
- 1911 Lieksa–Nurmes

1912–1917

-
- 1913 Seinäjoki–Kristiinankaupunki
- 1913 Perälä–Kaskinen
- 1914 Pieksämäki–Savonlinna
- 1914 Huutokoski–Varkaus
- 1915 Tornio–Karunki
- 1899/1916 Inkeroinen–Hamina
- 1916 Terijoki–Koivisto
- 1874/1917 Kerava–Porvoo
- 1917 Hiitola–Rautu

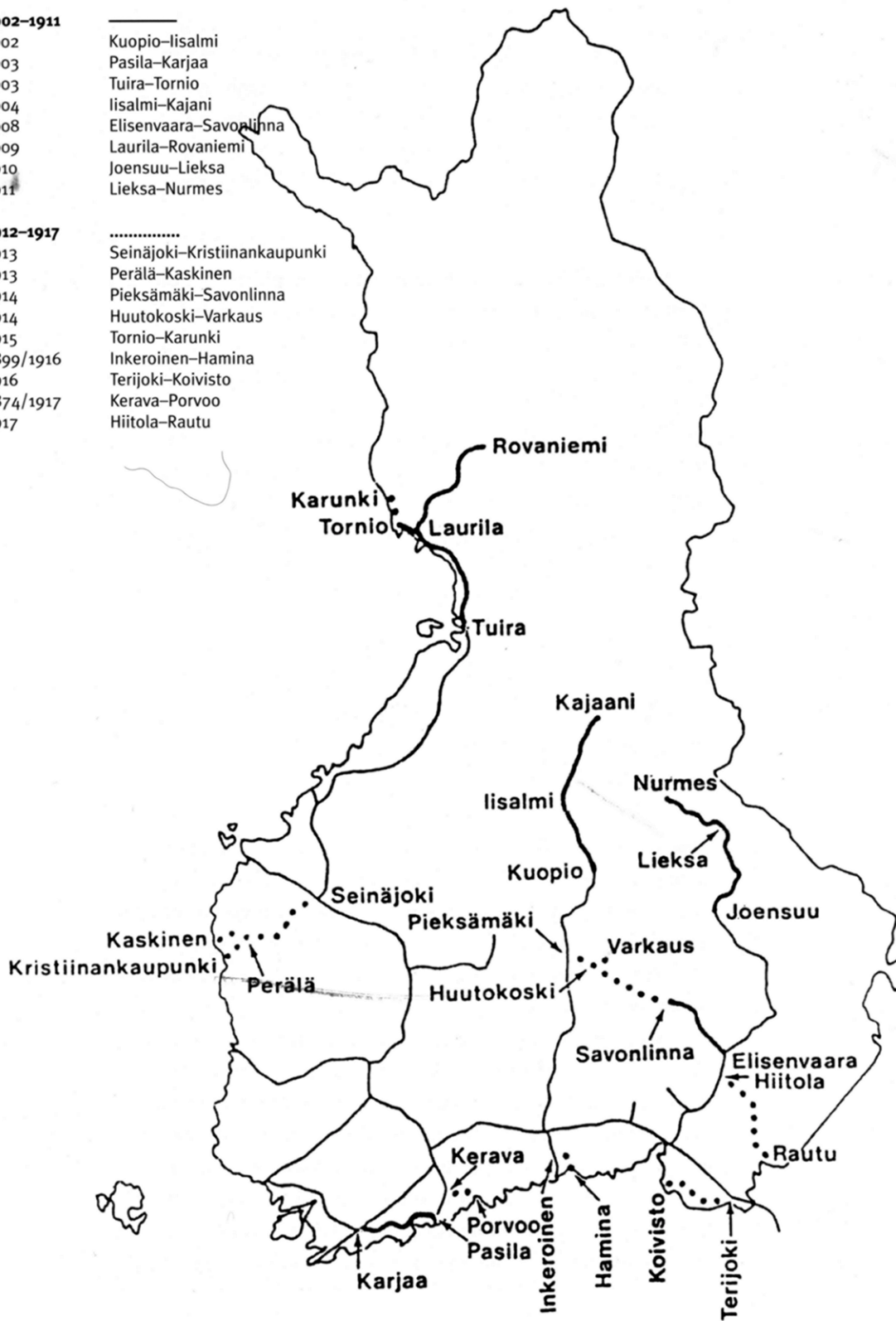


Figure 8. Finland's railroad network in 1917.

car personnel were satisfied with their postmen as long as they had enough strength to do their job, (i.e., while the postmen were young), but as they grew older they had to be replaced by younger blood.

Despite all the initial hoopla, the sorter cars were eventually abandoned, and in 1909 the mail car district extra sorter positions were changed to the work title of expeditor aide. The last of the employees to serve under the description of mail car sorter were removed from the postal administration books in 1912.

Regardless of all the improvement efforts, work conditions of mail car personnel at the turn of the century were very poor, caused by the large volume of work and insufficient car space. The cars were low and a 180 cm tall man could not walk under the oil lamps hanging from the ceiling without bowing his head. A traveling postman interviewed in the 1940s stated that the most recent cars were downright salon cars compared to the mail cars in the beginning of the century.

The mail cars' heating problems were mentioned earlier. Even though the heating may have worked flawlessly, the great temperature fluctuations in the cars caused health hazards. As the car doors had to be opened at times even in winter, the health of the perspiring men was put in jeopardy as the temperature in the car plunged to freezing almost immediately. It was not unusual either that near the ceiling the temperature

might have been plus 40 degrees C and yet there could be snow on the floor. Of course in the summer heat, car temperatures would often exceed + 40 degrees C. Also, more dust would blow on the last cars of the train than on the others. A postman on the Helsinki-Turku section said it best when describing the situation in the car(s): "Sand blows in through flimsy doors and settles like dust in a mill. In winter snow is whirling in and hair stands on end." In these conditions the postal administration recommended that mail car temperature be set "if at all possible" at +18-20 degrees C was meaningless.

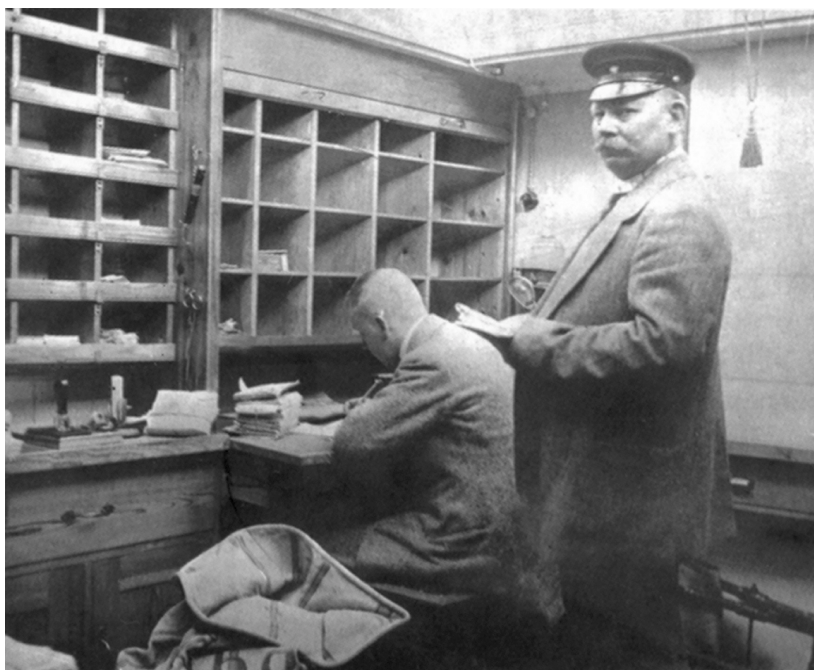


Figure 9. In the early 1900s working conditions in the mail cars were rather poor and the source of frequent complaints from the postal clerks. Among the more common complaints were temperature fluctuations, draftiness and dust. This photo was taken inside the Turku train mail car in the early 1900s and it does not seem to indicate the poor conditions which were the source of so many employee grievances.

Vibration too especially in older mail cars was considerable and after many years became an additional health hazard. According to recollections, in 2-axle cars even writing was difficult and at the end of the journey there was the sensation as if the train had run on cobblestones. Thick floor rugs did reduce vibration some, but still after a long work day it felt as if having been rough-handled.

A much told story both in Swedish and Finnish mail car circles was about the expeditor who long had traveled in the jerking cars and so no longer was able to write legibly even at home unless a member of his family rocked the desk in order to simulate the car movements.

An inadequate diet was also detrimental to health. In 1908 the postmen hoped to have gas kitchens in the cars so that food could be warmed up. The car crew suffered all kinds of stomach, digestive, and bowel ailments due

to cold food and excessive coffee-drinking. On really busy routes, eating was done by quickly gulping down the food and sometimes no time for eating at all.

Cross stations had decent restaurants, and even though the train stopped there for a lengthier time, the stations were such busy places for the mail car personnel due to considerable mail exchange, that there was no time to go and eat.

There was an anecdote in mail car personnel

circles involving food that had to do with an employee who had received the nickname "Serku-p:le." because the employee had a cousin (= serku in Finnish) living in a minor location where the train stopped for only a moment, long enough for the cousin to bring some much appreciated hot food to the car and thus the nickname. One time the cousin was late, quite a distance away when the train was about to pull out. And so the employee hollered: "Serku-p:le, hurry up the train is leaving!" According to another story, the same employee who usually was quite bad-mouthed was once asked why he

was in such a quiet mood, to which he had snapped: "Serkku-p:le is dead!" Be it what it may, the man had to put up with the nickname for decades.

Those who traveled to St. Petersburg especially would run into problems with drinking water. Water from the Neva (river) was considered bad-tasting. Some of the employees would quickly swallow it so as not to taste; others would rather go thirsty. The situation was thought to be remedied by larger water containers with lids, having enough water capacity when filled in Vyborg to last for the St. Petersburg round trip. Before long, it was discovered that the water was better tasting when slightly spiked, hiding the taste of soot. According to one tale, Postmaster General Jamalainen had once entered a mail car on the Karelian Isthmus where he used vacation in the summer. After having drunk the water, Jamalainen, wondered where such good-tasting water came from. The expeditor explained: "Why, the Terijoki river of course." Despite the slightly brownish color, the water was alright.

Added to the strenuous work in mail cars were the long hours. Often up to 13-14 hours, whereas in Germany and even Sweden it was said to be only 5-7 hours. In the early 1900s, the sorters on the Pori rail had the longest work day, up to 17 hours followed by a similar day after only 6 hours of rest. When the sorters were relocated to Tampere, work duty became more tolerable but instead the distance between Tampere and Tyrvaä had to be run without sorters.

Work schedules in themselves differed greatly. The most glaring differences were apparent on the western Uudenmaa district rails. On the Karjaa-Hanko rail, postmen had a 7 hour workday, whereas men traveling from Hyvinkää to Karjaa had up to 17 hour workdays. Eventually, the service schedules were evened out so that every other work schedule was on a longer route and the shorter distance was traveled twice.

Night work became a new dilemma when mail cars were being coupled to night trains. An arrangement on a Swiss model was copied in Finland with alternating day and night time schedules for employees, two travel tours, followed by two days off.

A mail car employee job became quite restrictive with the 1901 issued regulation requiring employees to live in their station locality. The mail car district chief was allowed to grant permission to live elsewhere for a maximum of 3 months. A period longer than that had to be granted by the postal administration. Leaving the station locality was prohibited unless first informing the foreman. A Helsinki postman had ignored the rule and

left for the Archipelago on his day off, but as the weather turned inclement did not make it back in time for his travel duty the next day. For this transgression the postman got a strong warning.

The travel expeditors had requested improvements in their pension benefits in the 1880s, but in vain. A new attempt was made in 1906. Vast claims attached even with doctors' statements of the detrimental effects upon health from long term mail car work were presented. A new point brought up was, that mail car space was barely half of the minimum required for a standard living room, (i.e., 15 cubic meters per person).

Further evidence of mail car work health risks was that some accident insurance companies offered mail car employees insurance only at a 50% higher premium than standard.

This time too no progress was made on the pension issue. Instead, the postal wage committee that in 1906 had submitted its report, suggested that the travel expeditor work title be changed to that of clerk, because working in the mail car due to its health hazards should only be an intermediate career stage. Also noted was, that mail car expeditors performed the same tasks as clerks in stationary offices. But regardless, the proposal was not implemented, because the postal administration favored the status quo on grounds, that due to the strenuous job, an expeditor's wage earnings were appropriate for a mail car top employee.

In 1911 the travel postmen had requested that their retirement age be lowered to 55. The arguments ought to have convinced anyone, because the postmen alleged that not even one travel postman had survived in his occupation until retirement age. However, according to records the claim was somewhat exaggerated.

In 1916 the retirement age of travel postmen was lowered to 55 provided the person had at least 25 years of service, with a minimum of 10 unbroken years in a mail car. Higher level mail car employees received a similar retirement clause in 1918. In 1912 all postal officials had earned the right to a yearly one month paid vacation, but the postmen got only two weeks.

At the time of WWI, improved health care brought a medicine cabinet in all long distance mail cars. The reason for this improvement was the many blood poisonings caused mainly by hand injuries. The medicine cabinets contained: boric acid solution, Galladimn, nerve drops, Thielemarin drops, iodine, boric ointment, cotton, and gauze.

To be continued in subsequent issues.

Notes, Continued from page 2

Peter Berry wrote from Scotland that he will require 13 copies "of your excellent journal for the coming year", 12 individual subscribers and one for the SPS Library. He also wrote that SPS readers "look forward to and enjoy each issue, especially as there is so little printed regularly about Finnish philately in the English language."

And, finally, I received a very nice letter from Harold Fritz of Illinois who received my package of five back issues and was "delighted to see this much material dealing on Finnish railways.

Thank you all for the monetary and philatelic contributions and to all the readers: 1,000 Kiitos for your interest and continued support.