



The Finnish Philatelist



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The Finnish Philatelist

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Editor's Note

I had the good fortune to attend ABOEX 2004, April 23-25, and then spend a few days in Helsinki rummaging through the stamp shops and visiting with several contributors to our newsletter. I also visited the recently renovated Post Museum and Library. During my stay in Helsinki, I acquired several important early railway covers, see page 28.

ABOEX 04 was a successful show on many levels. There were cues at every dealer stand during the peak hours; the Suomen Filateliapalvelu Oy auction offered a wide variety of material, which attracted a good number of bidders. Although there were 45 traditional and postal history exhibits on display, the majority of collections in the frames reflected the interests of a new generation of exhibitors. There were 10 thematic, 11 display or open class and 49 one frame exhibits covering a wide range of subjects including plants, wartime censorship, m/89 issues, United Nations, the 6d stamp of South Africa, and so forth. The one frame class has very quickly emerged as a favorite exhibiting vehicle for new collectors and many established collectors as well.

Finland will host NORDIA 06 over the last weekend in October. The show will be held in the Helsinki Congress Hall, the site of FINLANDIA 95. The show will commemorate the 150th anniversary of Finland's first postage stamps, the 5 and 10 kopek oval stamps. Approximately 1,200 frames are planned. SCC members worldwide will be invited to participate in this major event. We will keep you informed.



Is this the first postal item from Finland to the Philippines? Pyttis, 11. IX. 1911 via Kotka, 12. IX. 1911 to Manila. Until Independence, mail from Finland to abroad is primarily addressed to Russia, Sweden, Germany, Great Britain, France, Austrian Empire and several other western European countries. A surprisingly few items are known to the USA and Canada. Until the early part of the 1900s there is very little mail to the rest of the world. If you have an exotic or unusual destination postmarked prior to January 1918, please send a scan or copy to the editor. See news and notes on Page 22. This card is from the collection of Jon Iversen.

Fun with Finnish First Day Covers – 5

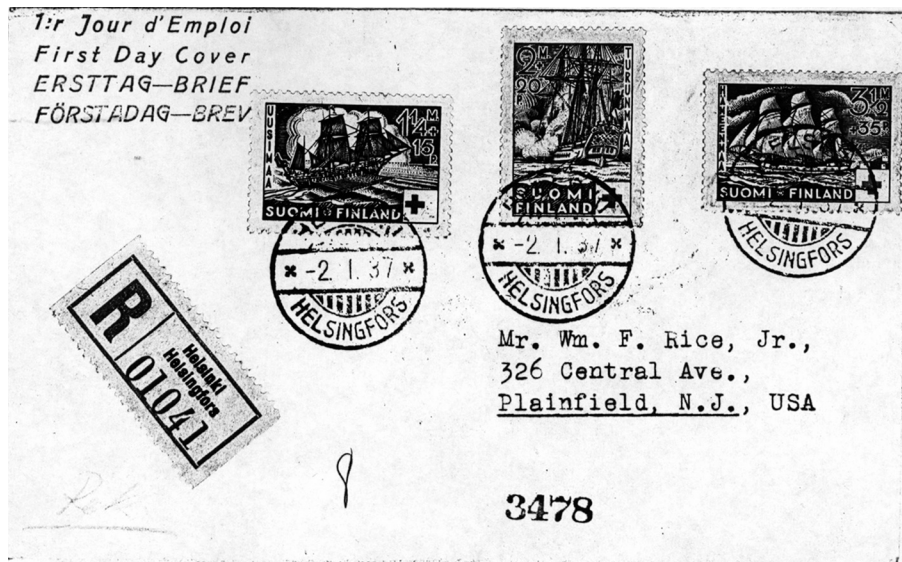
Text and illustration by Alan Warren

The Red Cross semi-postal issues of Finland are popular with collectors. Our FDC this time shows the set of three values issued to support the Red Cross (Punainen Risti) issued January 1, 1937, *Norma* 218-220. Both *Facit* and *Norma* show January 1 as the first day, in which case this is a second day cover.

The stamps depict 18th century fighting ships. The 1¼ Fmk + 15 penni shows the barque *Torborg*; the 2 Fmk + 20 penni stamp has the frigate *Lodbrok*, and the 3½ Fmk + 35p illustrates the frigate *Styrbjörn*. The cover was sent registered to the United States and, as is often the case with FDCs bearing the full set of a new issue, is slightly overpaid. The foreign rate was 3.5 Fmk and the registry fee 2.5 Fmk for a total required rate of 6.0 Fmk. The stamps provided 6.75 Fmk postage, exclusive of the supplemental funds to benefit the Red Cross.

The upper left corner of the FDC bears a red handstamp cachet declaring the item as a First Day Cover in four languages—French, English, German and Swedish. The cover reached the New York Registry Division January 13 and the Plainfield, N.J. registered office the following day, as indicated by the transit and receipt stamps on the reverse.

The pictures of the ships that appear on the stamps are based on the drawings of the master shipbuilder Fredrik Henrik af Chapman. These ships were designed to maneuver around the coastal islands of Sweden and Finland in avoidance of the larger Russian ships. They were part of Sweden's Army Fleet. This fleet was divided into the Stockholm Squadron and the Finnish Squadron. There were various classes of ships within the fleet.



The Udemä class had one deck and three masts and a crew of 126. This class was armed with ten 12-pound and two 3-pound guns. The *Torborg*, built in 1772, was in the Udemä class.

The Turuman class had two decks and three masts with a crew of 266. Armament consisted of twenty-four 12-pound and four 3-pound guns. The *Lodbrok*, built in 1771, was a member of this class. The above two ships measured about 100 to 118 feet in length.

The Hemmema class also had two decks and three masts with a crew of 220 sailors. The third ship depicted on the 1937 Red Cross stamps, the *Styrbjörn*, was a second generation Hemmema class vessel that measured 145 feet long and had the heavier armament of twenty-four 36-pound guns and two 12-pounders. It was built about 1790.

Reference: www.algonet.se/~hogman/navy_o_army_fleet.htm

Finnish Philatelic Reference Library - Part 2

Stamp Issues And Cancellation Studies:

Finland's Oval Stamps, Linder, Leo, 1956. This is the classic reference on Finland's first postage stamps, usage, and cancels. It is written in Swedish, but recommended nonetheless.

The Serpentine Rouletted Stamps of Finland – Issues of 1860 and 1866 (Vol. I), Linder and Dromberg, translated by Kauko Aro. This is the primary reference for these issues.

The Serpentine Rouletted Stamps of Finland – Issues of 1860 and 1866 (Vol. 2), Ossa, translated by Kauko Aro. Excellent reference includes tables of cancellations and reverse alphabetical town list.

Two-Ring Cancellations 1873-1893; Cancellation Handbook Vol. II, Olamo, Lists and illustrates every two ring

postmark, dates of use. English summary, very easy to use. Highly recommended.

“Finland” cancellations; Cancellation Handbook Vol. III, Arvelin & Olamo. Lists and illustrates every “Finland” cancel. Complete English introduction. Highly recommended.

Russian Cancellations, Cancellation Handbook Vol. IV, Arvelin, Helkio, and Elo. Superb reference, complete English introduction and text. This is the best of the SFFF postmark series. Highly recommended.

These reference books are available from Jay Smith & Associates, PO Box 650, Snow Camp, NC 27349-0650. For US and Canadian residents there is a toll-free phone: 1-800-447-8267. Also, on the Internet: www.jaysmith.com

This the second in a series of recommendations for your Finnish stamp library. Additional reference books will be presented in the August newsletter.

Finnish Figure Cancels

By Aaro Laitinen, translated by Carita Parker

Finland with its varied marks is quite a treasure trove to a collector of cancellation marks. One of the most interesting areas of postmark collecting is the figure cancellations.



Figure 1. Figure cancel No. 23 should be considered a precursor figure cancel. It was used at Christinaestad from 1856 to 1865 and is known used on the 1856 5 and 10 kopek oval stamps and the 1860 5 and 10 kopek large tooth stamps. It is known on a single 1860 10 kopek cover. This mark is rare and elusive.

In the mid 1870s post offices were rather sparsely located, especially in the rural areas where the nearest post office was often quite a distance away. As industrial and commercial development increased and the educational level of the population rose, the need for postal service also rapidly increased.

In Finland the industrial breakthrough occurred in the 1870s. Rural commerce had been liberated in 1860 and thereafter many general stores were established in the countryside. A mandatory grade school education decree was issued in 1866 resulting in improved reading and writing skills among the entire population.

The official postal letter box first appeared in Finland in 1845 along with value marked stationery entires, although a resourceful populace had much earlier, at least in the 1700s, used hollow trees and wooden containers from where the traveling postman would take the letters to the nearest postal office.

In conjunction with the value marked stationery covers, there was also in Finland a uniform postal rate independent of travel distance. However, this rate was abandoned in 1850 when the public again had to deposit their mail at post offices. In the countryside, the situation was lessened somewhat by the single pouch system as well as the Crown Post. In the mid 1870s it became necessary to extend and improve official postal services.

Improved Postal Service

The uniform postal rate was again reinstated in 1875. The public was able to drop franked letters into the nearest mailbox. In 1874 the Senate decreed, that “in the name of public convenience” arrangements were to be made for the public to purchase postage stamps in locations other than official post office locations. Thus postage stamps were distributed for a 2% sales commission to be sold in different rural locations patronized by the public such as general stores, apothecaries, inns, inland, and coastal ships docks.

The Finnish Postal Administration (FGPO) would also consider the need for additional letter boxes in a 1876 circular. Depending on location, the list was divided into two categories: boxes at post offices emptied by office personnel and boxes away from post offices such as those on steamships, on piers or

places that generally lacked a post office.

Naturally, new letter boxes were placed at points where postage stamps too were sold, such as on the walls of general stores, apothecaries, inns and so forth.

Additionally, the distribution of regular letters, postcards and newspapers were extended to include the same places where stamps too were offered. A location where postage stamps were sold, and where regular mail was distributed and with a box for depositing letters, was actually the unofficial forerunner to the mail stop.

Introduction of Figure Cancellations And Period Of Use

The need soon arose, of course, to know from which letter box the traveling postman had collected the letters that he brought to the nearest post office. Thus, an order was given whereby the postmen in question or the “postal point” proprietors make or acquire some type of mark that could be used for the cancelling of stamps on letters and value marks on stationeries emptied from the boxes. These cancellers became known as figure cancels or mute cancellation marks. This method was apparently chosen for reasons of frugality.

The idea for the figure cancellation was taken from overseas, most likely from the U.S.A., and taken into use in Finland in early 1877. The earliest recorded date on a figure cancelled letter is Turku, February 10, 1877. Regrettably there are no actual orders for the utilization of figure cancellations in the postal archives. Evidently, “secondary archival material” was destroyed during W.W.II. In any case it is certain that there was an official order given for the use of figure cancellations throughout the country. References to such use is evident in later postal circulars.

From 1891 official lower category post offices or mail stops were being introduced and given their own cancellers, straight line marks, with the post stop name on them. Apparently the mail stop marks had slowly, generally by the mid 1890s, replaced the hitherto used figure marks. The same happened when a community or village’s post office was upgraded and received a circular date stamp (c ds).

It has been assumed that the use of the rural letter carrier number marks beginning in 1890 would have hastened the demise of the figure cancellation marks, even though the rural letter carrier routes were on entirely new routes, which extended outside normal traveling postmen routes. However, this was not the case and some cancels remained in use until 1940.

Various Uses

The ship/boat arrival marks (in Swedish) FRAN UTLANDET (Tr. from abroad) taken into use at the end of the 1880s, as well as the boat imprint design marks in the end of the 1890s, may have compensated for the figure cancellation marks used in the cancelling of mail from letter boxes on ships. These marks were in the post offices (usually at the harbor post office) and not on the ships. The use of figure cancels was,

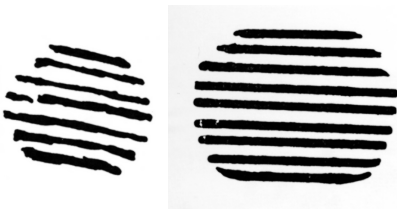


Figure 2. Figure cancel No. 461 was used as a postage due canceller in Helsinki from 1921 until 1927. It is known on a variety of m/17 Saarinen issues.

however, not totally unambiguous. There are certain marks that clearly have been used for the cancellation of stamps on value (insured) mail and registered letters. Mark No. 23, (Figure 1) a long thin bar approximately ½ x 38 mm long and used to cancel stamps in Kristiinankaupunki between 1857-65. This mark may be considered the forerunner of figure cancellations. The mark was the result of that particular post office own interpretation of the order to “cross out/over” the stamp’s. Other post offices would “cross” with an ink pen.

Some figure cancellers were used as postage due marks seen on mark No. 461 mail (Figure 2). A Lahti postmaster during independence would use figure marks Nos. 89 and 102 (Figures 3 & 4) for “standby” marks with which he cancelled letters arriving in Lahti, which had been overlooked at the departure location or had been insufficiently cancelled.

In some post offices where the actual cds type postmark with an interchangeable date was removed and stored in a safe over Sunday/weekend/holiday period, the cds handle part was used for marking outgoing mail on those days. Of these, only bona fide non-philatelic items such as contest replies and business mail have been approved to be listed as figure marks.



Figures 3 & 4. Mark No. 89, left and No. 102, right were used as “standby” marks in Lahti for cancelling incoming letters overlooked at the point of departure or had otherwise been insufficiently cancelled. Both cancels were introduced in 1917. No. 89 was taken out of use in 1927 while No. 102 was used until 1940.

Figure canceller No. 115 was used to mark stamps in a newspaper post office. At first the stamps were pasted right on the newspapers, whereas later it was sufficient to cancel a sheet with the correct number of stamps.

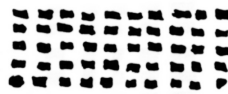


Figure 5. Mark No. 115 was used in newspaper post office in Helsinki from 1875 until 1901. This is a fairly common mark.

Many figure marks were used as boat arrival marks, but the cancellers were not on the boats. Instead they were used by the person in the post office who had emptied the letter box of a particular boat. In some cases when mail in the boat letter box had to be dropped off along the way in a location lacking a post office, the skippers were authorized to obliterate the stamps “as best they could.” Instead of a boat name mark, some skippers might have acquired a figure cancel that they

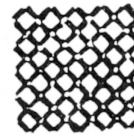


Figure 6. This mark, No. 399 was used during the 1880s on several ships operating from Helsinki. It is shown used on a 10 penni Thyra ship stamp. This mark is rare.

would carry with them on the voyage.

It may be mentioned here that foreign bound boat mail in Finland came under government monopoly on June 18, 1835 and domestic boat mail with a Senate decree of May 18, 1874 as well as with an ordinance of May 23, 1877. With the latter, skippers were granted special permission to transport, on their own account, letters and cards on routes that at the other end

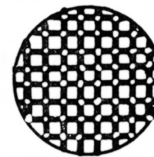


Figure 7. Figure cancel No. 400 was used as a ship cancel in Turku from 1885 until 1902. It is fairly common on the Finnish definitive issues, but extremely rare on the 1891 Ring stamps and Russian ringless issues.

lacked an actual post office.

Of the figure cancellations used to cancel postage on boats, a typical example is mark No. 399 (Figure 6). Stamps of both departure and arrival countries were valid on ships traveling to foreign destinations.

Many figure cancellations are seen on foreign stamps, usually Swedish. These marks originate on letters deposited in mailboxes on the ships.

Many Metal Cancellers

The old name for figure cancellers was “cork cancellers.” This name was appropriate insofar that many figure cancellers were made of some soft material such as wood, rubber or cork to which a handle was attached. And sometimes a metal casing for support was put around the canceller. Occasionally a plain bottle cork was used for a canceller, Mark Group 1 - 3B. A substantial number of the figure marks were clearly metal cancellers, some even of the manufactured standard mark types, such as marks Nos. 399 and 400 both of which were used on boat mail.

Of the figure cancellers used, there is only mark No. 53 under Sysmä, left in the Post Museum collection. Also two cancellers have been seen in other museums and one in a private antique collection. These cancellers, all metal, were possibly used as figure marks in the cancelling of postage stamps, but hitherto not yet seen on stamps.

Ink for the canceller would come from the post office, on which property the letter box was located. This is obvious from the fact that the figure marks are of the same color as the actual postmark on the mailing struck at the post office. Black is the most common ink color, but relatively common are also different shades of blue and less frequently violet and green. A very few marks have been struck in red ink.

Figure marks were used for the cancelling of postage stamps and value stamps on letters, postal stationeries, parcel cards, receiving receipts and other postal items. The majority of the marks are on single stamps. In rare cases, two different figure marks are seen on the same stamp or cover.

Figure Cancellation Research

Altogether there are 590 different known figure cancels. E.A. Hellman numbered the marks in running order in his basic research published in 1961. Subsequent new marks encountered have been put in their proper place and after the number there is the added identification A, B, and so forth.

Interest in Finnish figure cancellations has steadily increased over the years. Many young philatelists in various countries have begun putting together actual figure mark collections. Additionally, regular Finland collectors have discovered that a special Finland stamp display is not complete without the inclusion of various cancellation types. Thus, beautiful pattern marks are eagerly acquired to brighten regular collections as well.

Figure cancellations are divided according to their configuration into categories:

CATEGORIES	CANCELLATION Nos.
I Circles and rings	1 - 16
II Triangles	17 - 18 A
III Quadrangles	19 - 20
IV Ovals	21
V Marks with bars/beams	22 - 10
VI Marks with squares	106 - 389
VII Checkerboard marks	390 - 398
VIII Grate marks	399 - 402
IX Marks with stars and other rays	403 - 466
X Other patterns	467 -

Of this subject there are two research publications: The basic 1961 work by E.A. Hellman, a pioneer, and an addendum published in 1974 by Hellman and myself. Both works are in Finnish and German. (Editor's Note. In 1981 Laitinen published an updated and expanded catalogue of the figure cancellations, *Suomen Kuvioleimat*)

The Hellman and Laitinen reference books on the figure cancels list the different marks and their degrees of rarity on the various stamp values. The scale used is as follows:

RARITY ID	KNOWN MARKS
RR extremely rare	1 - 2
R - 5 very rare	3 - 5
R - 4 rare	6 - 12
R - 3 relatively rare	13 - 20
R - 2 not quite ordinary	21 - 50
R - 1 relatively ordinary	51 - 100
F - 1 fairly common	101 - 200
F - 2 common	201 - 400
F - 3 very common	401 - 800
F - 4 extremely common	801 -

Number Of Collectors Increase

Back in the 1960s, Erkki Hellman told me that if only ten new collectors joined the ranks of those already collecting figure cancellations, the rarity of the RR and R5 marks would become very apparent. Now (1981), this is what has happened, and a novice collector cannot hope to obtain a complete collection, because cancellations do not exist in sufficient quantity for every collector to have a complete collection. Instead, the few known rare marks are in museums and in the private collections of philatelists and thus not for sale, at least in the immediate future. Regardless, the area is fascinating and ranks of new collectors continue to grow.

As far as collecting is concerned, figure marks are extremely challenging. Much work is involved in learning to recognize the marks. But because it is such a difficult field, the challenge feeds the interest. Figure mark collecting is interesting too in that the opportunity always exists for discovering new marks, such as completely new, never before catalogued marks or previously known marks seen on a new stamp issue or value, a cover or other mailed item that clarifies a mark location of use, or new ink colors discovered on the marks and so forth. Then types of marks focus our attention on the rich possibilities of figure mark collecting.

Instructions On Research Method

On the basis of my experience, I would like to give new figure mark collectors a few hints on how to do the research. First, count the number of bars, beams or squares on the mark. After that search the catalogue for the mark that seems the most appropriate. When such a specimen is found, it is important to immediately ascertain that the mark appears on that particular year's stamp issue under investigation. If the period does not agree further research is needed as when according to the catalogue the mark is seen, for example, only on Type 1875 issues, but the mark under study appears on a Type 1889 stamp.



Figure 8. Figure cancel No. 47 was used in Turku from the mid to late 1870s and it is also known on incoming mail from Sweden. Åbo 2. 10. 78 to Helsinki with ANK arrival cancel 3.10. The transparencies of the figure cancels in the E. A. Hellman book help to readily identify many of the more than 80 circular bar figure cancels. The bottom rows of this mark faded with usage. This mark was applied at more than a 90 degree angle and the two bars which faded are on the right hand side of the postal card.

When a seemingly correct mark on a correct stamp issue has been found, the bars and rows of squares have to tally. Then finally, an inspection of the mark for minor brokenness or wear or other details. In the beginning it is helpful to draw the contours with pencil on transparent paper. Skilled drafters may use drawing ink and transparent film to compare by placing the drawing on the pictured mark in the book. As experience grows, a visual inspection is enough to reveal which mark it is, often even from a small partial marking. The more difficult to identify are many of the bar marks and of the marks with checkered squares especially those with an oblique square pattern.

E. A. Hellman's *Die Figurenstempel Finnlands* book includes the reprint of the figure cancellations on transparent India paper which may be overlaid on the cancel selected for study. The use of this guide greatly facilitates the identification process of all the cancels but it is especially helpful with the more difficult checkered square cancels.

New Marks May Still Be Discovered

Certainly, figure marks continue to be discovered. In my experience, however, this rarely affects the categories of rarity. During the 20 years that I have studied figure marks there have been few instances of additional discoveries of the very rare RR and R1 marks; in fact, for the most part no more examples have been reported. Inasmuch as figure cancellations have been systematically studied for 60 years, the grading system is on a quite sound basis although new items are reported from time to time.

Additionally, a few entirely new, previously unknown marks, show up almost every year. This is another benefit of the increased popularity of this sub-specialty of postmark collecting.

Many Finnish figure cancellations collections with rare and entirely new values of previously known issues are presently scattered abroad. This is indicated, for instance, by the findings of recent Swedish collectors in this field. Decades ago figure marks were not at all appreciated, and thus stamp dealers would include inexpensive figure marked stamps in packets sold to department stores and other retail outlets worldwide.

All of the figure cancels used in Finland will most likely never find their way into the confines of figure cancel research. It is safe to assume that in addition to those presently known, many more perhaps even hundreds of other figure cancel marks have been used in Finland.

Forgeries And Other Non-Bona Fides

Among ordinary collectors there seems to be the notion that there are quite a number of forged figure cancellations "out there" and that the experts would not be able to

tell them from the genuine. This assumption is erroneous. It is possible for the experienced figure cancellation collector to distinguish a forged mark from a genuine one at first sight. With time, a special eye develops in this respect. A new mark is only rarely accepted and added to the catalogued listings on the basis of only one cancellation. In that case the mark must be exceptionally discernible and complete in addition to meeting a host of other criteria. In most cases additional specimens are required from other sources as confirmation.

I remember several marks that Erkki Hellman and I thoroughly pondered whether to include in the 1974 addendum only on the basis of one or two known cancellations. We arrived at a positive decision after having unanimously discovered that the specimen seemed to be in all aspects quite genuine in appearance. This fact has been confirmed many times over as additional marks and covers were discovered proving this type of mark to be bona fide.

Researchers are urged to retain bogus figure marks for the purpose of identification and comparison. Actual forgeries of marks made to resemble an already existing figure cancel are rather uncommon, only a few examples are known. Forgeries and other bogus items are distinguished from the genuine in the same manner as applies to other forged marks. A mark done on a postally unmarked, washed stamp is easy to recognize. The forger often does not know or is unable to copy the actual ink color of the original mark. A forger of wholly "new" marks easily makes mistakes in many areas.

A very skilled forger with substantial philatelic knowledge might be able to produce acceptable looking marks, but the high cost of unused basic stamps reduces the financial incentive to create forgeries.

Building A Collection

Long ago Agathon Fabergé expressed the opinion that collecting figure marks with minor faults in the stamps was allowed as long as they did not disturb the philatelic item. Regular postmarks, circular date stamps or straight line marks, however, are expected to be presented on stamps in good condition. It is also not pleasant to view a collection where all of the expensive values are faulty in one way or another. In the case of very rare marks the faults do not affect the matter to any greater extent because often specimen availability is the deciding factor of what goes into a collection.

In expensive stamps, a fault reduces the value of the basic stamp the same as in the regular collecting, but does not affect the rarity based on an added mark value that must be calculated in addition to the base stamp price.

In all postmark and cancellation collections, cancellation quality is decisively important. Even for a figure mark collection it is well to acquire as complete, discernible, and beautiful marks as possible, whereas smudgy and indiscernible marks are useful only in a statistical sense and as research material. This, however, does not apply to marks where smudginess is a characteristic feature.

As in all collecting, top quality and very beautiful marks are also rare in the figure cancellations. Most of the cancellation material is of rather poor quality. Beautiful pairs, strips, block of fours, groups and clippings, besides being usually very rare and therefore much in demand, do help brighten up a collection and usually the entire cancellation mark is visible on them.

A collection is more fun to look at if the same mark is present on different stamp values. Since cancellations vary and the different color hues on one stamp indicate also the period of use (this is more true of the m/75 and m/85 issues), it is appropriate to present several of same value specimens next to each other in a collection. This indicates the degree of mark rarity on different values and wear on the mark over time.

Postally Carried Items Very Important

Figure cancellations are also called mute cancellations. A mark on single stamp may not disclose where it has been used. In order to identify the location of the host post office at least a clipping or preferably an entire postal item is needed so that the other departure location postmarks on the item are displayed. Thus, postally carried items are exceptionally important in figure mark collecting.



Figure 9. Figure cancel No. 441; three different impressions.

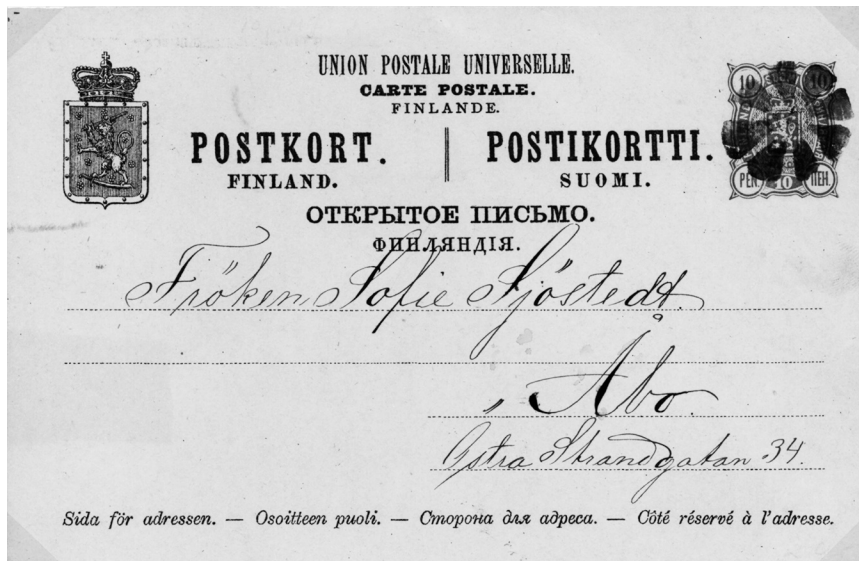


Figure 10. Åbo ship figure cancel No. 441 on postal card dated "Naantali 28. 6. 1894" to Åbo with arrival mark on reverse side. Both the Hellman and the Laitinen reference books show three illustrations for this figure cancel. Nevertheless the mark struck on the card does not match up exactly with any of the three pictured versions of the mark. Continuous usage over a number of years, amount of ink and pressure applied by the clerk all contribute to slightly different impressions with each use.

Some marks on postally carried letters and stationery cards are known to be plentiful. However, the location of use has hitherto only been evident in less than half the marks. Of many rather ordinary marks there is known only one letter or card that indicates the post office location, or perhaps even none.

In conclusion, one more suggestion to beginners about figure mark collecting: All beautiful exceptions touched upon in this article appear in markets quite by happenstance and getting a chance at catching one later is usually not often if ever repeated. Therefore it is smart to try to obtain these for a collection already in the beginning stage even though the collection still may lack many ordinary marks. As the collection expands the aforementioned bring a certain amount of satisfaction and even the money spent will with time not seem to have been wasted.

Editor's note: This article was adapted from an 1981 article in *Philatelica Fennica* that was later revised and which appears as an Introduction in *Suomen Kuvioleimat*.

Laitinen, Aaro; *Suomen Kuvioleimat, The Figure Cancellations of Finland - Price Catalogue*. Suomen Postimerkkeily Oy, Lahti, Finland, 1981. This catalogue is out of print but copies may be available from Jay Smith. E. A. Hellman's *Die Figurenstempel Finnlands* is occasionally offered by Kaj Hellman at one of his semi-annual auctions.

Ring Printed Matter Wrappers - 1 and 2 kopeks

By Mika Heinonen, translated by Carita Parker

Reprinted from *Abophil* 2/2002

Newspaper and printed matter wrappers appeared for the first time in Finland in 1891 as ring postal stationeries.

The 1 Kopek Wrapper

The 1 kopek value mark was orange and the paper yellowish-brown or grayish-brown. The 1 kopek wrapper was printed in one size, 89 x 380 mm. Only a total of 30,100 specimens of this wrapper were delivered to the Finnish Government Post Office (FGPO) of which 500 were auctioned off in 1911 and 100 specimens retained in the postal archives. The rest of the unsold paper wrappers were burned.

The 2 Kopek Wrappers

The 2 kopek paper wrappers were printed in 2 sizes. The larger (wider) size is 177 x 444 mm and the smaller (narrower) wrapper is 134 x 376 mm. Often a few variations in the size are encountered. A total of 40,200 of the 2 kopek paper wrappers were delivered to the FGPO presumably half the quantity of each size. This, however, has not been confirmed by documents from the printing office in St. Petersburg or receipts from the FGPO. The color of the 2 kopek value mark is either green, yellowish-green or dark green. The wrapper paper is yellowish-brown with different hues. At the 1911 postal auction 100 of the small and 500 of the large wrappers were sold, 100 of each size were archived and the unsold remainder was burned.

Sale Prices

Post offices did not sell paper wrappers at their face value, but an extra fee was charged for the wrapper itself. The sale price of a 1 kopek paper wrapper was ¼ kopek above face value and for the 2 kopek wrapper, ½ kopek above face value.

Usage

The one kopek paper wrapper was issued for local printed matter, newspapers and periodicals weighing under one “luoti” or “lod”. One lod is a weight measure comparable to 13 grams. The 2 kopek paper wrapper was accurate franking for printed matter in Finland weighing 1-8 “luoti” or lods; and printed matter under 4 “luoti” to the Czarist Empire and printed matter weighing less than 50 grams to other foreign destinations.

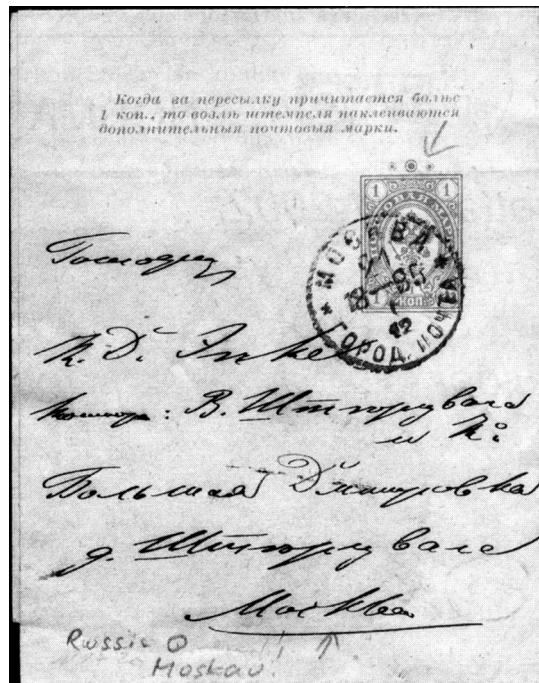


Figure 1. A 1 kopek wrapper used as a local item in Moscow, 21.12.1895. Commercial usages of the 1 kopek wrapper used in Finland without additional franking are very rare.



Figure 2. A beautiful 1 kopek paper wrapper with added 1 kopek ring stamp to meet the inland printed matter 2 kopek postal rate, Pori 20. VII. 00 to Ahlais. As a general rule wrappers were not backstamped. This wrapper was cropped at the bottom.

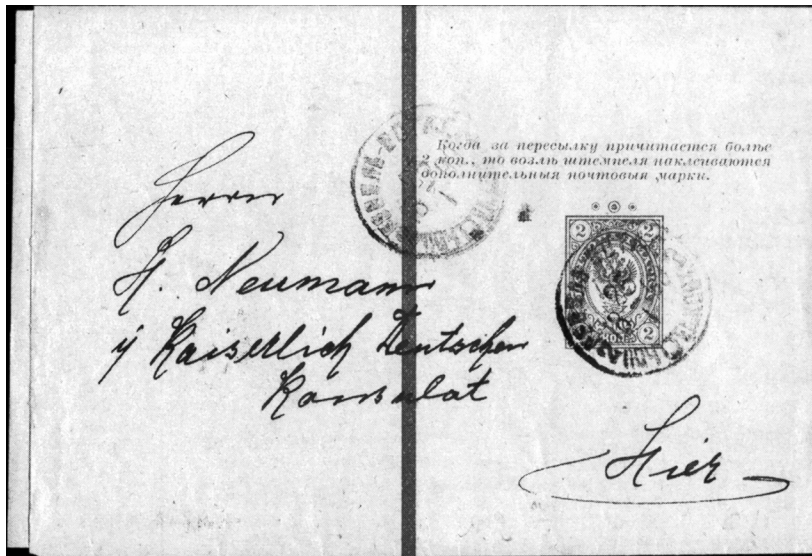


Figure 3, left. This 2 kopek narrow wrapper may have been used for local printed matter, a newspaper or a periodical. It was mailed as a local item in Revel (Tallinn), 25.1.1899. The ring stationery was not sold outside Finland although it was valid franking if deposited in a letterbox anywhere in the Russian Empire.

Figure 4, right. A narrow 2 kopek paper wrapper with two Finnish 1901 Eagle Type 10 penni stamps added to meet the rate. These kopek penni mixed franking items are the gems of Finnish philately from 1891 until 1917/18 when the kopek franking was demonetized first for domestic traffic and later in March 1918 for mail to abroad. The combined rate equivalent to 6 kopeks was enough to send printed matter of 201-250 grams, or newspapers and periodicals of 451-500 grams. Ruovesi 24. VIII. 09, to Kivijärvi.

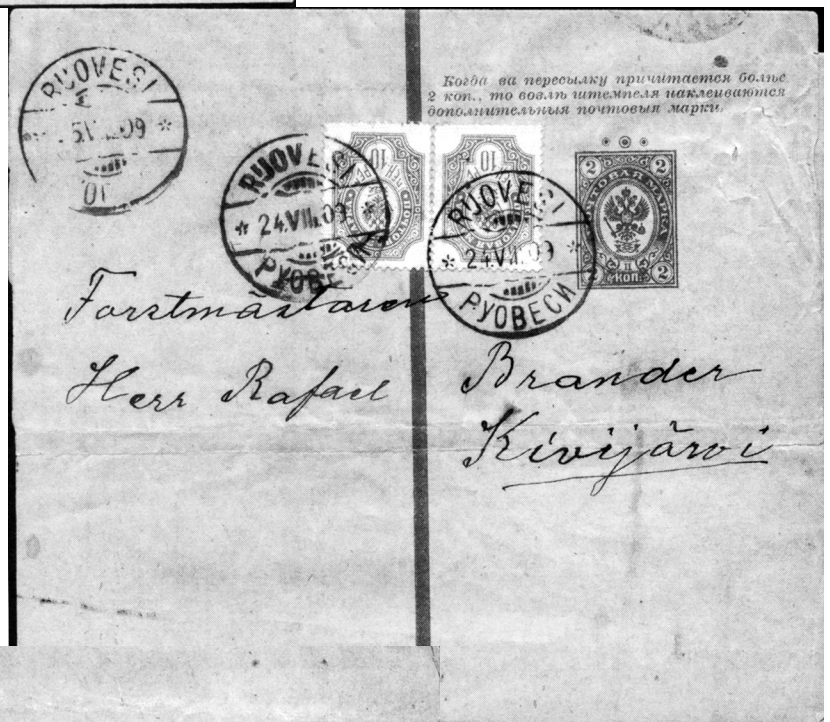


Figure 5, left. A wide 2 kopek paper wrapper with added ring stamps of two 1 kopek stamps and one 4 kopek stamp. Helsingfors, 6. 11. 01, to Willmanstrand. An 8 kopek rate was enough to mail printed matter of 151-200 grams or newspapers and periodicals of 351-400 grams.

1891 Ring Postal Stationeries - Part 3

Stationery Postal Cards 3, 4, 3 + 3 and 4 + 4 kopeks

By Mika Heinonen, translated by Carita Parker

The Postal Manifesto of June 12, 1890 required the postal service to obtain kopek value stationery postal cards. Pursuant to the Postal Manifesto mail to Russia was not allowed to be franked with Fmk/penni stamps beginning on January 1, 1892. But the ring postal stationery cards that were ordered to meet the kopek franking requirement to Russia were also acceptable for domestic mail and on mail to other foreign destinations.

3, 3 + 3 Kopek Cards

The postal rate for a postcard domestic traffic as well as cards addressed to Russia was 3 kopeks for the entire period of validity for ring postal stationery and stamps. A total of some 1.2 million cards were printed, and a little over 50,000 3



Figure 1. A 3 kopek stationery card from Naantali via Turku to St. Petersburg. The value mark was cancelled with a Turku boat mark. 3 kopeks was the correct postcard rate for cards addressed within Finland and to Russia.

+ 3 kopek double cards were produced. Both card types were delivered to Finland's postal service in several installments. The doublecard is folded at the upper edge, the crease without perforation. The text and value stamps of both cards were printed in red or carmine red. The card stock was smooth or course cardboard, buff colored or with a brown or brownish hue. Strong variations in the color hues exist.

Morten N rstad of Norway reported in *The Finnish Philatelist*, August 2001 that the 3 kopek single and doublecards were printed with two different address line styles based on the number of dots per 2 cm in the address lines. N rstad designated cards with 25 small but somewhat irregular circular dots per 2 cm as Type I cards. Type II cards were printed with smaller dots, 32 per 2 cm. These type differences were known for the Russian ringless 3 kopek 1889 cards, but the different address line types were apparently missed for the ring cards for nearly a century.

4, 4 + 4 Kopek

The postal rate to abroad was 4 kopeks. Also evident from the 4 kopek stationery cards is that where the 3 kopek card text is only in Russian, the 4 kopeks have French text (the UPU language) in addition to the Russian text. Nearly 325,000 copies of the 4 kopek cards were printed, but only 30,000 of the 4 + 4 kopek doublecards were produced. The 4 kopeks cards are like the 3 kopeks in both printing ink colors and cardstock varieties, but address line varieties have not been reported to date. A few hundred specimens of both denominations of ring postal stationery cards were sold at a postal auction in 1911. The remainder of the emission was burned.

Russian (Ringless), Too

All foreign mail from August 14, 1900 was to be franked with kopek value stamps or stationeries. Even earlier it was permitted to use in Finland ringless Russian stationery cards, but it was not until around the turn of the century that this practice became commonplace, especially on mail to foreign destinations. The final ring postal stationery card installment was delivered to Finland's postal service (FGPO) on March 23, 1899. From that time forward the kopek valued stationery cards delivered were ringless Russian cards. Between 1889-1911 there were 3 different kopek valued stationery card types used in Russia. All types had the same 3, 3 + 3, 4, and 4 + 4 kopek cards and all of the card types were apparently delivered to the FGPO. The most common cards were the 3 kopek regular stationery card of which approximately 11 million specimens were delivered to the FGPO. The ring postal stationery cards were valid until May 14, 1911 whereas the ringless Russian cards remained valid for inland mail until November 29, 1917 and to foreign destinations until March of the following year.

What Is A Doublecard?

A double post card (doublecard) or response postcard is a card where the sender part has a prepaid detachable reply postal card. In postal circulars it is called a postal card with an attached paid response card. The card sender is also paying the postal fee for the responder. On the message or sender's card following UPU rules, the French text "Carte Postale avec response payee" appears and on the reply or response card the text "Carte Postale response payee." Pursuant to the UPU decision the use of the double card ceased on July 1, 1971.

Sale Prices

The sale price of all stationery postal cards at the post offices was   kopek above the face value.

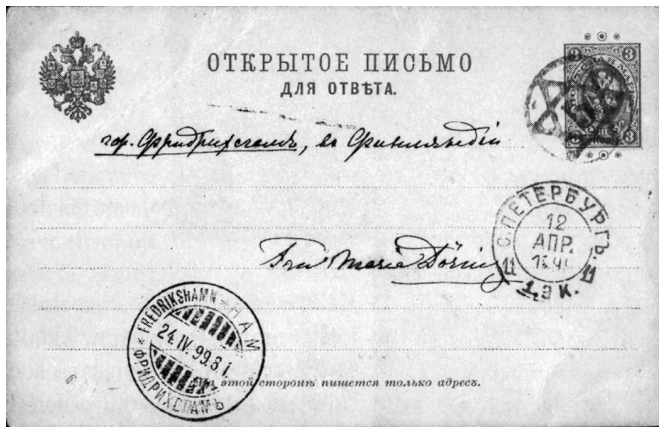


Figure 2. A 3 kopek reply card half from postal station No. 5, St. Petersburg to Hamina, frontstamped 24. IV. 99.



Figure 5. A 4 kopek card from Hämeenlinna, 15. 4. 1892, to Liege, Belgium. The card took 4 days to arrive. The Finland postmarks marks are quite rare on ring postal stationeries.



Figure 3. A 3 kopek card used from Russia to Narva in 1892.

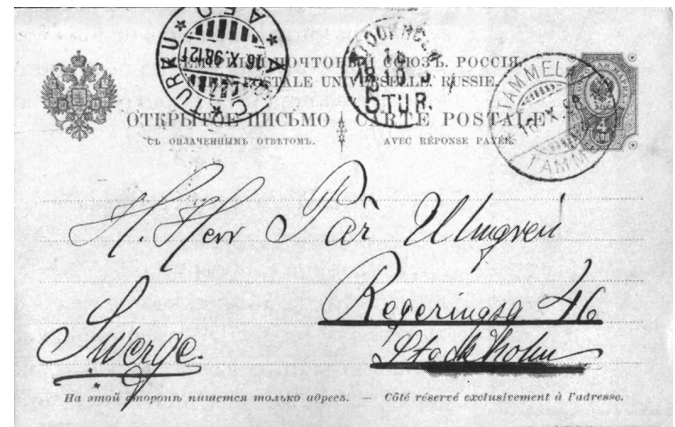


Figure 6. A 4 kopek double card with prepaid response from Tammela, 16. X. 98, via Turku to Stockholm. Frontstamped, 18. 10. 1898.



Figure 4. A 3 kopek card with added 1 kopek ring stamp from Turku, 11. XI. 1893 to München, Germany. 4 kopeks was the correct rate for a postcard to abroad.



Figure 7. A 4 kopek card from Mariehamn, Åland Islands, to Stockholm. The card had been deposited in the boat mailbox and therefore bears no Finnish postal cancellations so it was struck with the Från Finland (From Finland) harbor cancel and Stockholm arrival mark, 22. 4. 1902.

Finnish Printed Matter And Newspaper Censor Marks

By D. A. Dromberg, translated by Carita Parker
Reprinted from *Philatelia Fennica* 4, 1965

While studying the marks and notations included in my collection "Mail from abroad to Finland" my attention turned to some mysterious double row marks "Pressombudsmannen i Åbo" (Wiborg, Nystad and so on). Without embarrassment I have to admit that initially I thought these marks to be of a private origin, perhaps the marks of some mercantile newspaper office or representative thereof. One day I obtained a cover that had contained printed matter addressed to Helsinki, but forwarded to St. Petersburg because the addressee had relocated there. The cover carried a violet round mark with text that translated into English reads: "The St. Petersburg post foreign printed matter and newspaper censors." That is when it occurred to me that the mysterious "Pressombudsmannen" marks I had discovered probably were also censor marks. I inquired from collector and postal historian Erik Johanson and he reaffirmed that this was indeed the case. Erik mentioned that he had several covers with the Pressombudsman marks, one of which dated from 1893.

In order to get more information I contacted Mr. Kalle Vaarnas who is a political history expert. He thoroughly explained the matter giving it complete background explanation of censor activities in those days. According to Vaarnas it appears that the authorities in Finland and apparently also in Russia strictly censored newspapers and printed matter from abroad. (See the following article.)

The body responsible for organizing censoring oversight in Finland was the "Head Administration of Printing Affairs." This office was established in 1867. Apparently, at first no marks were used, since there are no reported older examples of censored or inspected specimens earlier than 1893.

Kalle Vaarnas also indicated that the actual censoring was done by local Pressombudsmen in Åbo, Wiborg, and at the other locations. These were 42 Pressombudsmen located at 35 locations in 1905 when the department ceased. The larger locations had several "Pressombudsmen" and this might explain why even in my small collection there are two different marks from both Åbo and Wiborg. Strangely enough a Helsinki mark

has yet to be found. (A list of Pressombudsmen marks and locations was published in *The Finnish Philatelist*, February 2004.)

As previously indicated, pre-censoring was discontinued with the so-called November Manifesto (November 4, 1905). Of those marks in my possession, the Mariehamn mark was struck on September 4, 1905 and is one of the last recorded censored items.

The censor marks are non-postal (the Pressombudsmen were not employees of the post office) and some collectors have therefore argued that that they do not belong in a stamp or cover collection. However, they appear on covers and wrappers and on mail that was subject to examination, delay or possible confiscation and therefore important to the

postal historian's understanding of processing printed matter mail from abroad.

As mentioned, the marks are seen on covers that contained printed matter and/or transcripts as well as on wrapped items. And since these items were often postal stationeries, some have been kept for posterity. The best chance of finding these marks is probably on objects from 1893 to 1905, but it is prudent to check out all such items from abroad to Finland in the event that censor marks had been used at other times as well.



This is an Åbo Type II "Pressombudsman i ÅBO" mark struck in red ink. From Svendborg, Denmark, 15. 7. 1896. Frontstamped, Uleåborg, 19. 7. 1896. Illustration courtesy of Kaj Hellman.

Circumstances Of Censoring In Finland During Swedish And Russian Rule

By Kalle Vaarnas, translated by Carita Parker
Reprinted from *Philatelia Fennica* 5-6, 1965

Censoring in a national sense usually means state sponsored control with the goal of preventing the spread of published printed matter believed to express opinions contrary to the views and objectives of the governing officials. In a wider context censoring usually applies to all media activity that generates dissident or controversial views. Censoring also takes place during times of war and national crisis.

In Sweden, which included the annexed territory of Finland, civil censorship was introduced about the same period as book printing. In order to suppress those elements that tried to minimize his sovereign power, Gustav Vasa banned the publication of non pre-censored books. But the actual office of censoring was not established until 1686. The Censor Librorum under the College of Councils watched all domestic and imported printed material. This situation continued until 1766 when an amendment to the Constitution was adopted which banned pre-censoring for all domestically printed matter except religious writings. This freedom to publish, however, lasted only six years.

Under Gustav III pre-censoring was again reinstated. This especially included periodicals and stage plays, which were also pre-censored. By the 1800s governmental authorities had gained almost unlimited control over all published material. The secret inspection of letters was not an unknown activity, either. Among the duties of the Ahvenkoski border post office master was covertly opening and censoring letter mail and then to inform Stockholm of any interesting information before the delivery of the mail.

Even though theologian Martin Luther considered such behavior a deadly sin, the prevailing sense of justice did not strongly condemn that kind of activity. Besides, in the beginning of the Renaissance era, the Post had oftentimes when transporting letters received additional compensation by spying for various government officials. In the opinion of Richelieu, secret censoring - the "Black Cabinet" - was only the "softening of the wax seal." The place of such activity behind closed doors resembled more a laboratory than an office. Even in the 1800s there were several nation states that did not honor the privacy of letter mail.

After Finland became an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire, the laws enacted during the Swedish period remained. Very strict censoring still applied even though the Finnish authorities opposed censorship under Sweden's Gustav IV. Later the relevancy of the press especially as a factor in forming public opinion was taken into consideration. In 1820 the government in Helsinki began publishing a newspaper, called in Swedish, *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* (Tr. Finland's general newspaper), a government organ for official news and announcements. The Russian era "father" of censoring in Finland was a Russian field post office that after the war

of 1809 became the border post office in Turku. When the office ceased, its duties were taken over by the newly formed postal administration (FGPO) headed by Postmaster General, Gustaf Ladau, in those days better known by the moniker (Tr.) "The great one not hanged." Ladau hired two experts directly from the former Turku Russian border post office and the St. Petersburg postmaster supplied him with tools for the purpose of secretly inspecting letter mail. Ladau was paid 3,000 rubles annually for these services; however, if this sum proved insufficient he was allowed to request additional funds.

In the Turku "Black Cabinet" all letter correspondence from abroad was inspected. Matters of interest were transcribed to St. Petersburg without delay. Any letters offensive to the government were confiscated. The censoring extended to newspapers and periodicals from abroad to Finland. The delivery of some publications was cancelled and the subscription cost for missing issues refunded. The Senate disapproved of Ladau's secret activities, but the Council for Finnish Affairs in St. Petersburg held the opinion that the postal administration newspaper office should handle both the newspaper subscriptions and the distribution because it could more easily oversee censorship and seize objectionable material.

Censoring and its sub-categories were in full force until 1817, but its effectiveness lessened after Alexander I in 1816 reorganized Finland's postal government in ways that would hamper letter mail secret inspections. The selection of new officials was the Senate's task and a reduction in personnel took place, as well. From time to time the secret inspections were not carried out when no "trustworthy" individuals could be engaged to carry out this activity.

After Nicholas I had ascended to the throne, the Helsinki and Turku post offices in 1826 opened assistant manager positions compatible with Ladau's censoring activities. In 1824 the Russian appointed Arseni Zakrevski, Governor General to Finland. Ladau was a most faithful follower of Zakrevski's Russification policies. With an ordinance of October 14, 1829 a censoring body and censoring committee was established in Finland and "Pressombudsmen" were employed. The founding of printing offices and bookstores required permission from the government. Private printed matter was inspected both prior to printing and distribution. During Nicholas I's reign, writing about the Constitution was prohibited and still in 1860 the papers were not allowed to mention the words "constitution" or "parliament." When famine ravaged the northern parts of Finland, the censors thought that writing about it would be insulting to the government.

One of the most severe foes of newspapers was the Governor General, Count F.W.R. Berg. It was difficult to write about anything at all. Only an official paper was allowed to

print news from abroad and this under strict control. One way to fight the importation of publications was to raise the postal fees sometimes by as much as 125% of the subscription price. Initially the delivery cost of domestic papers was unreasonably high, 75% above the normal letter rate. At the end of 1846, J.V. Snellman's newspaper *Saima* ceased publication forever after having been at odds for a long time with the censoring authorities. However, the censors forced the closing of *Saima* proved to be a critical loss and the actual clout of censoring diminished even though this pursuit grew more efficient.

With an April 8, 1850 edict, Nicholas I banned the printing of literature in Finnish unless it addressed religious devotion or economic benefit. On Snellman's orders, the edict was nullified in 1860. The governor general had between 1847 and 1861 the ultimate power in matters of newspaper publishing after which decision-making was reinstated to the Senate with regard to all of the special considerations of public wording. The Senate's authority to decide also included the discontinuation of newspapers. After the Parliament was again able to assemble, the law of the freedom of the press was enacted on July 18, 1865. This law was, however, short lived and remained valid only until the end of the subsequent session of Parliament. On May 31, 1867 the law was superseded by a new decree,

characterized as a kind of "liberal wastefulness" that would at least allow the founding of a printing office, but only with the permission of the Head Administration of Printing. The publisher of a newspaper had to pay an advance sum of 1,000 to 4,000 Fmks in the event of possible penalties that could later be assessed against him.

The Head Administration of Printing had been established in 1865 and included a foreman and two members. Any decisions of this body could be argued in the Senate. The first foreman was A.E. Arppe (1865-77). The secret censoring came to an end around 1863 when Finland's Post notified St. Petersburg that the yearly financial ruble aid was no longer needed, and consequently this assistance ceased in 1869. The pre-censoring of printed matter was reinstated in 1867 and

the "Pressombudsmen" were at liberty to exercise their own interpretation in removing any offensive text. In the event the publisher refused to go along, the matter was turned over for deliberation to the Head Administration office, which in 1867 changed its name to Head Administration of Printing Affairs. The actual censoring was performed by the "Head Pressombudsman" assisted by local "Pressombudsmen." By 1905 the number of "Pressombudsmen" had reached 42 in 35 censoring locations. The "Pressombudsmen" received the newspapers from post offices at border locations. Postmaster General Akates Gripenberg in the 1860s did not consider papers from abroad to be of any danger saying: "We have scissors and black ink." On June 18, 1891 the Governor General received the right to grant publishing permits for periodicals as well as



Lovely 5 centimes wrapper from Geneve, Switzerland to Uleåborg (Oulu) with PRESSOMBUDSMANITORNEÅ struck prominently on the front. On the reverse, transit cds at Haparanda, 16. 7. 1903 and Torneå, 16.7. 1903, arrival cds at Uleåborg, 17. 7. 1903.

to halt publication of dissident newspapers. However, stage plays in Helsinki required permits from the Head Administration of Printing Affairs before beginning public performances.

From the early 1890s, censors became more active in reviewing printed materials. From 1891 to 1893 there were a total of 626 private incidents involving the hindrance or distribution of some printed material. Between 1899 and 1905, 25 newspapers were closed down and additionally 47

newspapers were suspended, 77 times for varying lengths of time for printing objectionable material. A very willing co-operator of the Russians was the Swedish-Finnish Count, A. Cronhjelm, of whom the "Oma Maa" (Tr. = Own country) in 1908 had this to say: "During nearly all the past years of oppression while this 'system of robbery' against newspapers and the printed word in general was committed in Finland the person at the helm of the Main Administration of Printing Affairs was A. Cronhjelm. His name is synonymous with the tightening of the freedom of the press in Finland. He died six months after the infamous General Bobrikov was installed as Governor General and the job of Cronhjelm's successor in the practice of pre-censoring did not prove to be long lasting. It ended in 1905 with the General Strike."

The period known in Finnish history as the First Oppression Era (1899-1905) did give the Russian authorities and their aides quite a lot of trouble. Despite the control, printed literature was smuggled from abroad especially from Stockholm. This material included news banned by censor, substitute papers, "undisguised wording and information," uncensored statements, and even historical works. From flyers the Finnish populace could find out, also, about Finnish officials collaborating with the Russians, about censored transcripts and the means of inquiry. Because sympathetic Finnish Customs workers would ignore many smuggling endeavors the Russian state steamboat *Bomba* was leased for surveillance between Helsinki and the Åland Islands. And a motorized boat cruised the waters off Turku with a "Pressombudsman" on board. Despite all the effort the results were rather meager. Some newspapers were initially sent by mail first in unsealed then sealed covers. At the stage when letter privacy no longer was held in sacred esteem and when secret censoring was again reinstated at Finland's Post, after being dormant for decades, those spreading banned printed material had to devise a special distribution scheme that even during the worst of the oppression worked surprisingly reliably and regularly.

On the recommendation of Governor General Bobrikov, the Czar in 1902 ordered Finland's telegraph bureau closed down because in Russian governmental circles it represented "a harmful direction for the Grand Duchy of Finland and its people." The real reason for the closing was that the Finnish telegraph had ceased its co-operation with its St. Petersburg counterpart because of the distortion of news items against Finland. In order to continue its own transmission of news Finland's telegraph started operations under a new name. With the so-called November Manifesto, issued Nov. 4, 1905, the beleaguered Czarist government cancelled pre-censoring and

urged Finland's Parliament to introduce measures providing for the freedom of the press. The measures were passed in 1906, but the Czar never confirmed the bill into law. The "Pressombudsman" positions were discontinued during 1906.

The Second Era of Oppression began in 1908. A printing business was only allowed to operate in cities. For the distribution of printed material, the bookstores, book peddlers, book auctioneers, as well as the lending and reading libraries, had to apply for a special permit and promise to adhere to new regulations. During W.W.I there was total war censoring in effect and a number of newspapers were shut down.

In order to keep private correspondence in the grip of censoring, the St. Petersburg city mayor in December 1914 banned the carrying of letters independently from the postal service to Finland or from Finland to abroad or from abroad to the Russian Empire. Violators of the ban were subject to a three-month prison sentence or a fine up to 3,000 rubles. At about the same time the postal administration ordered post offices to carefully check that the Post did not distribute foreign newspapers or books that lacked the mark of the printing authority or war censor. If such items were discovered, they had to be sent to Helsinki. Books were confiscated on the orders of the Head Administrator for Printing and on March 30, 1916 it was prohibited to bring into Finland books either encased or bound.

The Russian Revolution in March of 1917 brought with it certain freedoms of which the first was the abolishment of the "Pressombudsman" positions. And when on January 4, 1919 pursuant to the freedom of the press law the control of printing affairs was transferred to the Ministry of Justice, the Head Administrator of Printing Affairs was no longer needed and the office was dissolved. The newly declared Republic of Finland guaranteed freedom of the press on July 17, 1919.

New 70-Kopek Cover Offered In Høiland's April Auction

Thomas Høiland's Auction House recently offered a previously unreported mixed franking insured cover front from the well known Kavaleff family correspondence that was franked with a 1909 Russian 70 kopek issue. This cover raises the number of recorded postal items to 15 and the number of insured money letters to two. This cover was also franked with several 1917 co-runners including the 20/14 and two 10/7 kopek overprints of the 1909 issues.

This cover was cancelled at Helsinki 28. XII. 1917, addressed to Copenhagen. The rate is correct. Insurance: 1300 French francs (12 kop fee for each 300 francs or part thereof, x 5 = 60 kopeks Registration fee = 20 kop. Letter rate: 17 grams = 2nd weight (20 kop for each 15 grams) = 40 kopeks Total franking = 120 kopeks or 1.20 rubles.

This lovely and colorful cover will be a valuable addition to a Russia in Finland collection.

Jon Iversen.



The Tooth Doctor Was Here

By Heikki Reinikainen, SFFF Expert Committee,

Translated by Carita Parker, reprinted from *Filatelisti* 1/2004

While studying a large number of stamps I had in my hand the pictured large-toothed stamps that represent typical manipulation of the roulettes of the large-toothed stamps. The perforations have been improved by doctoring in various ways or even by cutting out the entire perforation and adding something entirely new.

For the philatelist intending to purchase the 1860-1867 serpentine roulette stamps, it would be prudent to examine the perforations carefully both front and back under a minimum 10x magnification. Under this level magnification many if not all types of exceptions are easy to detect. First, it is well to ascertain that the shape of the perforation on all sides of the stamp is uniform. If there is any variance in the roundness or size of the tooth base, tooth thickness, conically, arched cutting, if they are slightly angularly pointed, the tear marks are absent from the tooth sides, the paper color or coarseness differs from tooth to tooth, then tampering may be apparent.

In the more valuable objects like the illustrated 1 Fmk stamp, a few of the teeth may not have been doctored, which gives a more 'realistic' impression, and so the stamp would not be carefully inspected and easy to sell. The tooth doctors know their business. Note, however, that the tooth density of a perforation that has been switched by cutting remains unchanged so this, too, must be checked. Coarse perforations that have been 'tidied up' by cutting causing the tear marks to disappear is not actual doctoring, rather it is an attempt to improve the stamp's general appearance, but even this should also be unacceptable to the prospective purchaser.

The Senate printing office over the years had several perforators and thus the shape of the perforation (mainly B and C) may vary slightly on each of the stamps. The careless use of the perforator created occasionally genuine slanted perforations. If you do not have enough expertise in the appraisal of apparent exceptions it is always prudent to obtain an expert opinion about the items.

Editor's note. The five different types of the large toothed stamp roulettes are illustrated in *Facit* 2003 *Special Catalogue*, page F-634 and in *Norma* 2002 *Special Catalogue*, page 6.



Figure 1, top left. 1872 dull red 40 penni. The stamp bottom edge show new teeth pasted on, and likewise several of the teeth on the bottom right side have been replaced. The doctoring was poorly done and the erroneous shape of the teeth are immediately apparent.

Figure 2, lower left. 5 penni first emission brown. The owner apparently was dissatisfied with the stamp perforation and so perforated it again to improve the appearance. Only the upper edge looks original. You can assess for yourself how well these efforts succeeded.

Figure 3, top right. 1 Fmk C-perforation. Very fine NYSLOTT cds 23. 3. 75 with one missing tooth would be a good object. The perforation on the lower edge, however, was ruined by deepening the tooth base and by shortening the tips – the poor original perforation was re-made. The tampering changed the teeth and the shape of the tooth base. Compare the lower and upper edges to each other. There are also variances from tooth to tooth and the tips a tad angular from cutting.

Figure 4, lower right. 40 penni orange-brown. The stamp C-perforation has been cut to resemble a B-perforation, not genuinely known. This endeavor requires considerable philatelic expertise. The size and shape of the teeth and their bases vary especially on the lower and left side immediately revealing an altered stamp.

Finland's First Registration Labels, Part I

By Matti Sipari, translated by Carita Parker

Reprinted from *Filatelisti* 1/04

This is the beginning of a series of articles on Finland's registration labels. The readers have seen articles in many philatelic publications about registration labels written by various people

some of whom I would like to include here: The E.A. Hellman articles about Finland and the Helsinki labels in *Libertas Philateliae*, Nos. 4 and 7/1954; Lasse Nortesuo's own published work of 1984 on the Hämeenlinna labels; and the Tauno Eskola articles about the Imatra labels in the *Kurre* journal 3/1986. The results of previous research will be incorporated in this series of articles. I will mention the source as the series of articles progress.

According to Eero Hellsten, interesting label collections can be built. Although I have not discovered a totally complete collection I have seen label presentations of singles in displays about home (provincial) territories and various other localities. In the FINLANDIA 88 show in Helsinki a Danish collector displayed a Denmark label collection of singles that also included covers and entires. The Munch Andersen collection received large silver.

I have wondered why so many single labels? So much work to cut out from the cover and then wash, dry, and put into a folder. But then again they are philatelic objects. I have arranged the red registration labels according to the R-type and the approximate years of issue as presently known. In my value mail collection the dates have been sorted out.

Old Habit

As known, initially pencil markings were used in Finland from about the 1650s to the early 1900s on letters, folded letters and other mailed items to indicate registration. However, towards the end of this period Finland began to use a stamped mark and then labels. The text was in the form of 'Recommenderes/Recommenderas' and later 'Rekommenderas/Rekommenderes.' At the end of the 1700s the French 'Recommandee' was also used. In 1870 Germany started using a label with either 'Recommendiert' or 'Eingeschrieben'. In 1882 the UPU decided that the large letter 'R' was to be the correct identification of registered mail. The universal postal language was chosen to be French in 1880 and still remains to this day.

The following text definition is based on different sources: The R-label is a printed item meant to be pasted onto a postal mailing to indicate registration and requires an extra fee. The



Figure 1. Registration labels between 1883-1896. From left to right: 1883-, 1888-, 1890-, and 1892-1896.

label cannot be handed to the customer, but the postal employee attaches it to the mailing. The printing ink on the label is black, the size and shape resemble a stamp and the labels were usually perforated. In

1888 a label was issued with the country's name in Swedish 'FINLAND' and in 1890 a more decorative version was issued. The tri-language Finnish, Swedish and Russian label was issued in 1892. The label had the abbreviation 'No' where to mark a number, i.e., a running number assigned to the letter had to be written on the label with ink pen.

The following changes concerning the registration of mail were issued in circulars during 1882 and 1883: According to a circular issued on November 30, 1882 the use of the labels was effective from January 1, 1883. A circular issued on December 23, 1882 changed the previous circular as follows: The R-label was meant only for registered items to abroad. The 'Rekomd' mark was used only on inland registered mail until the end of 1883.

After the R-labels had been in use for one year solely on registered mail to abroad an order about its use for domestically mail went out in a circular dated December 8, 1883 as follows: 'With reference to circulars 42 and 48 of November 30, 1882 and December 23, 1882 (respectively), the R-label is henceforth to be used on registered inland mail.' Furthermore, the post offices were told to remove from their inventories and return the no longer required 'Rekomd' mark.

In this series I will not focus on the R-types as they have already been well researched and the findings published in the philatelic press. I will focus on the text types of registration labels and note the postal locations where they are used. Label perforations differences will be noted; some labels were perforated on all sides while other were perforated horizontally and other only vertically. Some labels were printed in sheets without perforations.

And of course all comments are welcome and I will try to respond to them. Please send them to the editor of *The Finnish Philatelist* and they will be forwarded to the author. I hope that this new series of articles will be useful in the philatelic arena. A question to my colleagues and readers: I assume that these labels were issued in sheets, but what size sheet? Where is there any information about this? For reference I have researched the articles by the following persons: Kustaa Lakanen, E.A. Hellman, Lasse Nortesuo, Tauno Eskola, T.T. Arvelin, and Eero Hellsten in addition to the Post's circulars and my own research.



Figure 2. NY CARLEBY 11.12.1887, to Kajana 1887, 2nd weight class, postage 40 penni and registration 25 penni. Notice, the cover has both REKOMD and label markings. The Ny Carleby figure mark No. 360, and a late use of the 'Rekomd' mark.

Figure 3, right. HELSINGFORS-BRUNNSP.FILIAL 2. VIII. 90, to Lempois, weight 42 grams, postage 40 penni, registration 25 penni. This label was the first to include the country name, "FINLAND." (Item size reduced)



Figure 4, below. Printed matter item from WIBORG 16. 1. 91, to HELSINGFORS 16. 1. 1891, weight 75 grams, postage 10 penni, registration 25 penni, registration written in pen, No. 1025, departure map No. 6. The arrival map number was written below the surname. (Item size reduced)

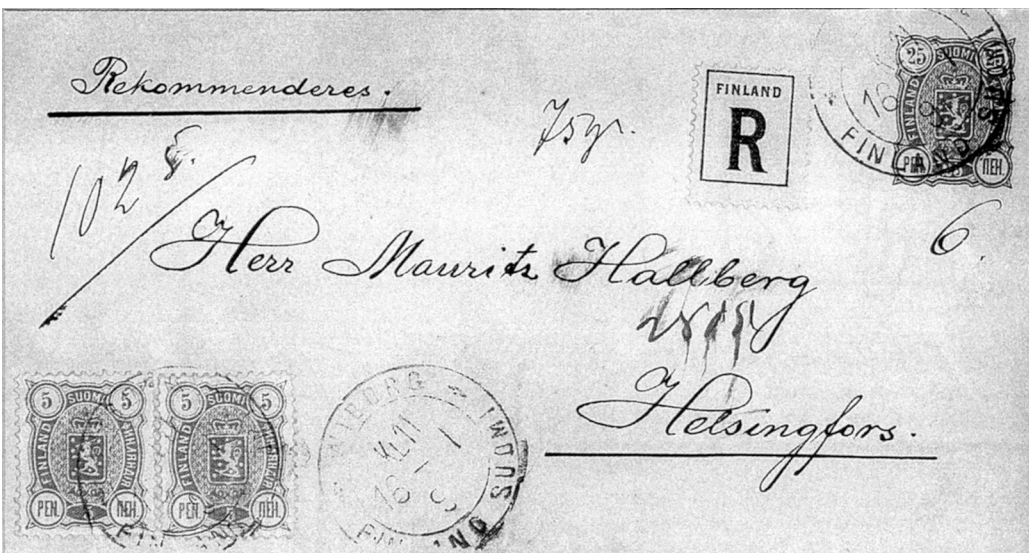




Figure 5, left. A beautiful cover from FISKARS, 12. V. 91 to Ekenäs, backstamped. Weight 10 grams, postage 20 penni, registration 25 penni, blue ink Fiskars mark. Registration number 18.



Figure 6, above right. TAMMERFORS 3.VII.94, to Helsinki 3.12.94, weight 10 grams, postage 20 penni, registration 25 penni. Postal employees got used to writing in the number and weight in pen or pencil. The new label was cut so that only the R-letter remains. The force of habit has the number still marked on the cover. This R-label had the country name in three languages, Russian, Swedish and Finnish.



Figure 7, above. PITKÄLAHTI 7. VII. 95, to Hamburg, Germany. Weight 18 grams, postage 50 penni, and 25 penni for registration. The number was correctly written where it should be, on the label.

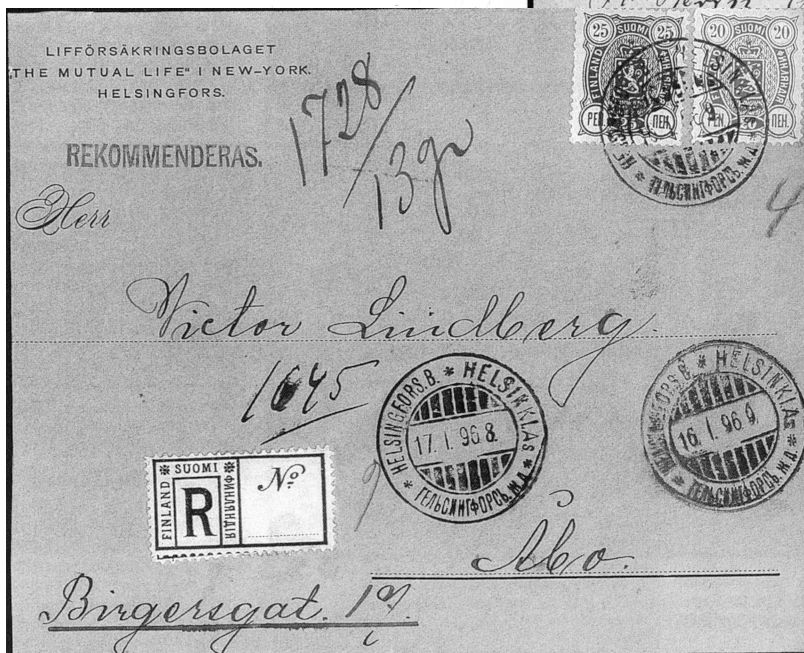


Figure 8, left. HELSINGFORS B. 16. 1. and 17. 1. 96, to Åbo, backstamped, 17. 1. 96. Weight 13 grams, postage 20 penni, registration 25 penni. The cover has two R-labels on top of each other. The registration number on the cover should have been written on the R-label.

A Remarkable Mourning Cover

By Dirk Vorwerck, introduction by Roger Quinby



Figure 1. The cover was opened on each side to show the front and reverse. A Mourning stamp has been placed in the upper right hand corner to show where the sender originally affixed it. The pencil notation indicating that it was forbidden to deliver a letter with the Mourning stamp is clearly seen on the reverse side. The sequence of postmark cancellation times suggests that the cover was held for some hours while a decision was made to remove the Mourning label. D. Vorwerck's Collection.

Introduction

The Mourning stamps (MS) were sold as a protest against the prohibition of Finnish Coat-of-Arms stamps on mail to foreign destinations effective August 14, 1900. Almost as soon as the protest labels (MS) were placed on sale the postal administration was directed to forbid their use on mail to abroad. Nevertheless these forbidden labels were affixed to letters (usually on the top right hand side where the postage stamps would normally be placed) and deposited in mail boxes on steamers bound for Sweden or another foreign country. In this manner a number of covers with Mourning stamps escaped notice and were delivered to the addressee without delay or interruption. For an overview of the Mourning stamps and their usage, see *The Finnish Philatelist*, Vol. 6, No. 1, February 2001, p. 4.

For years I have searched unsuccessfully for a cover with the forbidden Mourning stamp returned to the sender marked with a notation to the effect that the stamp was not allowed and therefore the letter could not be delivered. Then a few months ago Dirk Vorwerck sent me several illustrations of a cover from Tammerfors, 16. VIII. 1900, shown here as figures 1 and 2. This cover unmasks the political oppression and postal censorship in Finland at the turn of the twentieth century.

Dirk Vorwerck conducted a careful and detailed inspection of the cover. The results of his examination follow.

The Tammerfors Cover

A detailed and careful inspection of the cover shows the following result:

1. The Mourning Stamp had been affixed in the upper right corner of the cover. Some teeth of a MS fit exactly in the colorless spots in the black line under the sender's address. See figure 2.

2. The MS has been torn off the cover:

- There is a long tear across the cover, closed from the back side.
- The color of the cover's paper has changed in the upper right corner and the paper is somewhat rough in that part. These findings suggest that the MS was moistened to lift it off without damaging the envelope.

- If you held the cover against the light, you can see a big thin spot in the paper, as large as a thumb-nail. There is almost a hole in the paper, closed from the inner side (you can see this even in the copy).

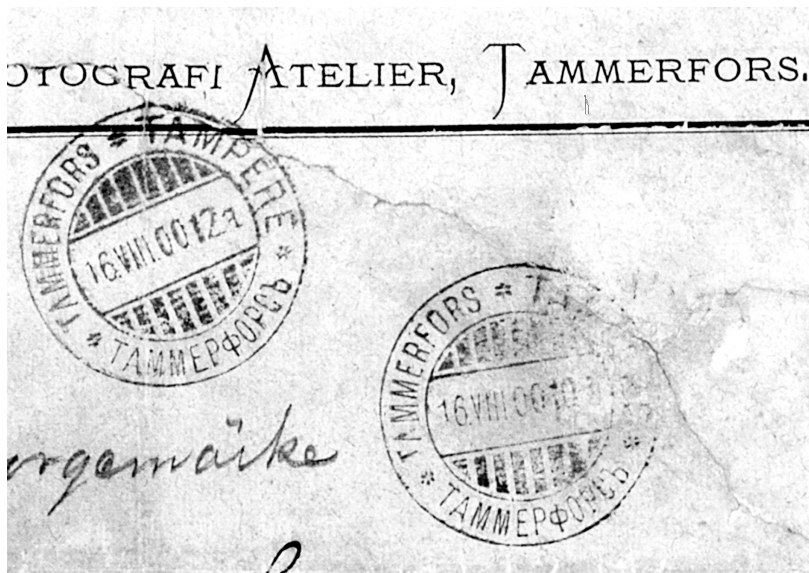


Figure 2. In removing the stamp from the upper right hand corner of the envelope the gummed teeth left colorless spots in the black line under Tammerfors. The teeth fit exactly in the spots in the line confirming that the Mourning stamp was originally affixed on the cover and removed according to the notation from the postal clerk.

3. Some part of the paper of the envelope has been cut off on both sides, undoubtedly this was done to enhance the appearance of the cover. So originally there was enough space for the MS.

4. Especially interesting are the three Tammerfors-Tampere cancellations:

- In the middle of the front as well as on the 10 kopek stamp on the back side we find the tri-lingual Tammerfors 16. VIII. 00 - 12 a. cds.

- In the upper right front corner we have a Tammerfors 16. VIII. 00

- 10 i. cds. The letter "a" stands for the Finnish "aamu" = morning, the letter "i" stands for Finnish "ilta" = evening.

The cancellation is somewhat unclear in this part (perhaps from moistening the paper), but the dot of the "i" is clearly visible under a magnifying glass (8x). The copy does not show this detail, there seems to be a little "3". In the original this is not the case; the "3" comes from the mottled paper.

Conclusions

1. At first the cover front and the stamp backside were cancelled at 12 o'clock in the morning.

2. Then someone noticed it was against postal regulations to deliver a letter with the Mourning stamp affixed thereon. The post office "Cirkulär" No. VIII/1900, dated 15. 8. 1900, banned the MS and other national symbols from envelopes, covers and other postal mailings (see Valter V. Johansson, *Russian Stamps in the Postal History of Finland*, p. 243). So the postal clerk in the Tammerfors Post Office could not have received this instruction before August 16, 1900.

3. Then the MS was removed from the cover. Postal clerk L Nordström wrote his annotation that it was forbidden to deliver a letter with a MS. After the MS was removed from the cover it was cancelled again, this time at 10 o'clock in the evening. Then the letter was placed into the mails for delivery to Vestervik, Sweden.

Indeed the cover is not very attractive. Nevertheless I am happy to have such an important item of Finnish postal history in my collection. I have been collecting "Russia in Finland" for nearly forty years, but I have never seen before a letter like this.

News and Notes

M/1889 Russian Issues - New Earliest Usage Dates

In response to my request for new earliest usages of the 1889 Russian definitive stamps used in Finland, Morten N rstad of Norway has reported that the 3 and 4 kopek issues were used as additional franking on an 1891 ring stationery item cancelled at Helsinki, 6. XII. 1899.

The 6. XII. 91 cancellation date is later than the reported first delivery of these stamps to the FGPO in October 1899, but prior to the reported delivery dates of these values to branch post offices. According to *Facit*, the 3 kopek stamp was not delivered to branch post offices until August 1900 and the 4 kopek stamp was not delivered until July 1900. Without additional items it might be premature to advance the approximate delivery date of these stamps to branch post offices. The 6. XII. 1899 usage of the ringless 1889 Russian issues should be considered co-runner usage pending identification of additional items with pre-July/August 1900 cancellations.

Morten has also reported that he has in his collection an 1889 50 kopek issue on a registered cover from Helsinki postmarked, 8. VIII. 05. This cover advances the usage of this issue significantly. The August 1905 date is approximately four months earlier than the date *Facit* listed, as the approximate date the issue was first delivered to branch post offices.

Not long after I received the message from Morten N rstad, Jon Iversen wrote that he has found in his collection a m/1889 Russian 50 kopek issue with a very clear Helsinki postmark dated, 15. XII. 04.

However, inasmuch as *Facit* (see *Facit 2003 Special Catalogue*, page F-652) acknowledges that the dates mentioned are "statistically calculated" and "a little insecure" after 1901, the earlier dates from N rstad and Iversen very strongly suggest that the 50 kopek stamps were distributed for sale at the Helsinki post office as early as December 1904. It is, of course logical to expect that Finland's busiest post offices in Helsinki would be the first to run out of the 50 kopek ring stamps and the first post offices to put the ringless stamps into general use.

Dirk Vorwerck reports earliest usages for the 1906 5 ruble issues on vertically striped paper: perf 11½, 28. XII, 1914 (Helsinki) and perf 13½, 30. IV. 1913 (RAK- AFD).

I am very much interested if any collector has any m/89 ringless issues cancelled in Finland before 1899. The clearly defined co-runner usages, (i.e., prior to any delivery of the ringless stamps to the FGPO), remain very elusive.

Abbreviations

Several abbreviations are used rather frequently in this newsletter and it may be useful to note them here:

cds = circular date stamp. It is used only for postmarks with place names and dates.

FGPO = Finnish Government Post Office. Henceforth this abbreviation will be used in place of FPA (Finnish Postal

Administration) or any other name for the Finnish postal service. Jorma Keturi suggested this abbreviation.

PJ = Postiljoonivaunu or railway postal compartments

TPO = traveling post office.

RTPO or RPO = railway traveling post offices includes mail handled on the Postiljoonivaunu routes.

Destinations

I am wondering if the time has come for Finnish postal historians to assemble a list of covers from Finland to foreign destinations for the period 1856-1917. I note that *Facit 2003 Special Catalogue*, pages F-625/628 has offered a pricelist of all franking combinations of Finnish covers, to domestic and foreign destinations, known up to the 1875 issue in perforation 11. From 1885 *Facit* lists only the more important covers. This is an excellent guide for collectors and exhibitors of the "classic" issues up to and including the first UPU issues of 1875.

My first reaction to this listing was how few covers to foreign destinations are known and altogether how few destinations have been recorded. The list includes: Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy, Holland, Switzerland, Austrian Empire, Spain, and the USA. Also on the list are ten additional countries with just two or three recorded items. These destinations include: Portugal, Malta, Cape Province (South Africa), Algeria, Egypt, Cuba, Argentina, Brazil, Turkey and Java.

My interest at this juncture is simply to identify foreign destinations by issue up to the time of Independence and to identify the earliest known covers (not necessarily any particular value of the issue) to a foreign destination franked with the stamps of each issue from 1856. For example, is the 1910 post card to Manila the earliest recorded item to the Philippines? Who has an m/75, m/85, m/89 or m/91 cover to Japan, Australia or New Zealand? Covers to most South and Central American countries from this period seem to be missing. Are there any covers to Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia? Covers to the British and French colonies from this time period also seem to be mostly unrecorded at this time.

The point is that there are substantial geographical gaps in many Finnish postal history collections and it might be interesting to discover and record the full extent of Finnish mail to the rest of the world from 1856 to 1917.

Modern Philately

Our newsletter has mostly neglected the post WWII period except for reporting now and then on new issues from the Finnish Post. The reasons have been largely unintentional. First, few contributions have been submitted and second as I do not personally collect the modern period, I am generally unfamiliar with the literature. Your suggestions are welcome. We will arrange translations of worthwhile articles and republish them as space permits.

Roger Quinby

Postiljoonivaunu (PJ) Routes and Postmarks Until 1917

The Finnish Philatelist has published several articles on the Finnish railway traveling post offices, their routes, station stops and postmarks.¹

In 1894, in response to the rapid growth of the railway postal service, a second type of railway post office was placed into service. The Post office partitioned a postal compartment in a passenger coach or luggage van and operated these cars along some branch lines or segments of major routes. This service allowed for mail to be carried on more trains and on additional routes without adding new mailcars. Only one person was assigned to the compartment (“postiljoonivaunu”) and he was called a “mail guard.” His responsibilities included picking up mail at each station stop and then cancelling the mail but not sorting it. He then turned over all the mail to the postal authorities at the final destination. Approximately 56 postiljoonivaunu routes were operated from 1894-1917.

Franklin identified three types of postal compartment handstamps used until 1917 that are illustrated in Figure 1. The postal compartment handstamps bear the abbreviation ‘Postilj.v.’, or ‘Postilj.k.’ Franklin’s classification of the Postiljoonivaunu postmarks is based on the bridge design in the center of the cds (circular date stamp). I have noted in my collection at least one additional Postiljoonivaunu cds with a different bridge design. See Figure 5. It is possible that there

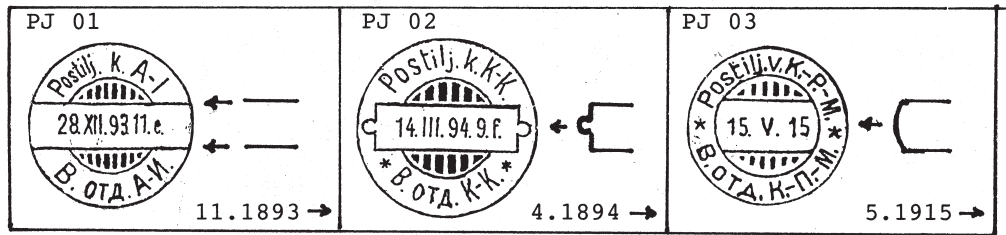


Figure 1. Franklin identified three PJ postmarks each characterized by a distinct bridge design.

are others. Further, there are some PJ routes that had two or possibly three different cds in use during the 1894-1917 period. Further research is required. On page 25 there is a list of all the known PJ routes.

Endnote

¹ See, *The Finnish Philatelist*, “St. Petersburg Railway & The First Postal Compartment Cancellations”, Kaj Hellman & Jussi Itkonen, Vol. 3, No. 3, August 1998; *The Finnish Philatelist*, “Collecting Finnish Railway Post Offices”, John MacDonnell, Vol. 6, No. 5, Nov. 2001; *The Finnish Philatelist*, “Collecting Finnish Railway Post Offices Cancellations – Some Additions”, Norman Franklin, Vol. 8, No. 2, May 2003. For a detailed history of the mailcars and postal compartments, see the continuing series of the “History of Railway Mail Transport in Finland”, *The Finnish Philatelist*, 2002-2004

Roger Quinby

Figure 2, below. The design of this Franklin PJ 02 is probably unique among Postiljoonivaunu marks. It may be described as a bridge cds but the “bridge” does not connect to the inner or outer circles. The center of the cds shows an ornamental rectangular box, which held the changeable date and time characters. The ornamental rectangular box with handles on either side divides the vertical bars on the upper and lower halves of the mark.

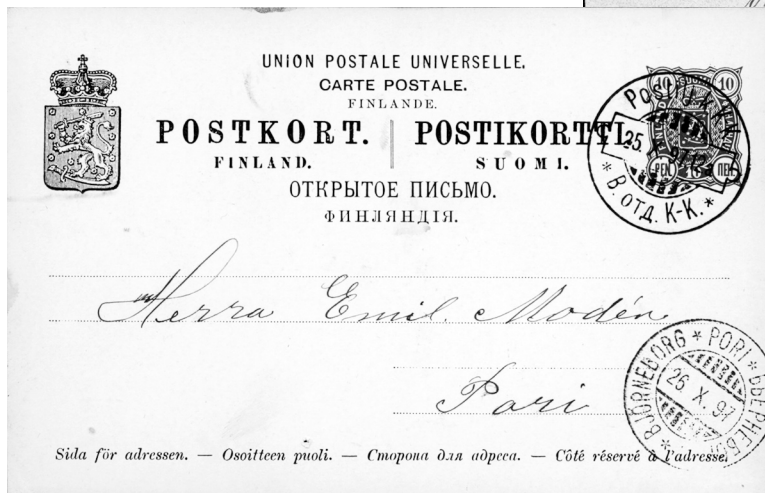


Figure 3. This Postilj. k. K-K postmark identifying the Kouvola-Kotka route is a Franklin type PJ 01 mark with the bridge extending across to the outer circle with vertical bars inside the inner circle above and below the bridge. This cds was used contemporaneously with the better-known K-K cds illustrated in Figure 2.



Figure 4, left. There are two distinct Jyväskylä-Haapamäki cds. The cds shown here is a typical PJ 01 mark except that there is a star at either end of the bridge. This is an unclassified variety of the PJ 01 marks. A review of my own rather extensive collection of Postiljoonivaunu cds suggests additional types and varieties may be added to the proposed Franklin classification. This obsolete card was stamped with the boxed T postage due mark and "L 20p" because the value stamp had been demonetized in January 1901.

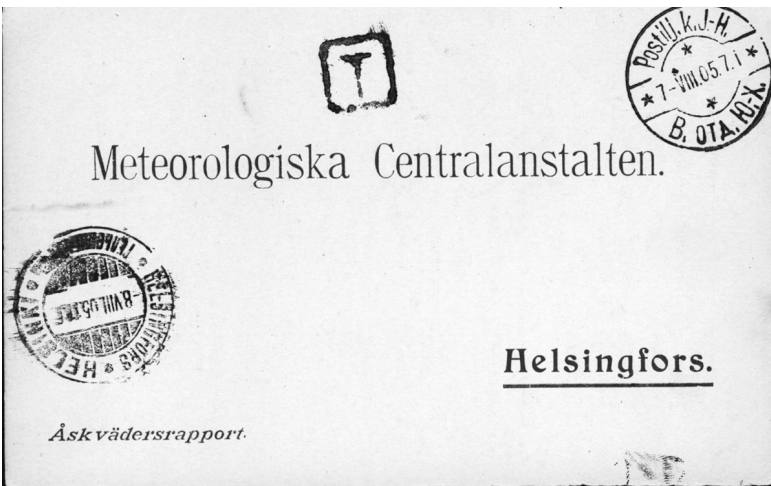


Figure 5, left second from top. This Jyväskylä-Haapamäki cds is quite a bit different from any shown in the proposed Franklin classification system. The "bridges" extend only from the outer to the inner circles and not across the cds. Additionally, there are no vertical bars, instead four stars, one at each end of the date and time, and one above and another below. I would name this mark an "open bridge" cds.

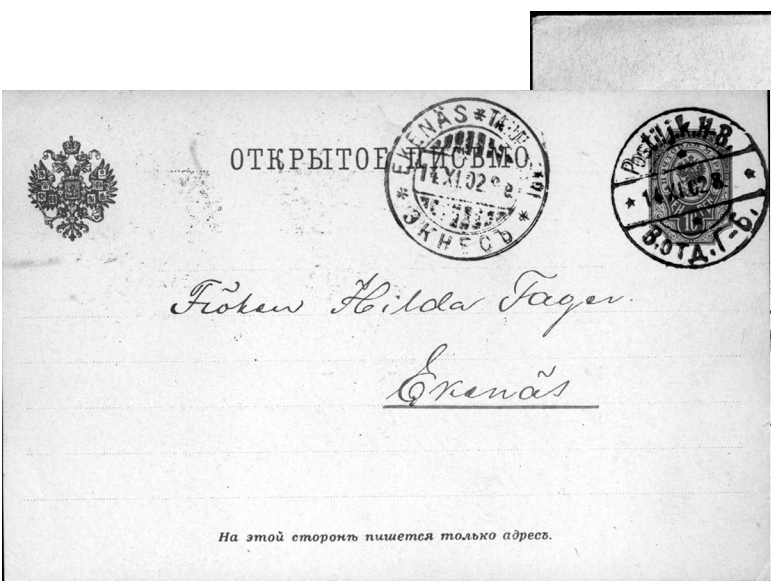


Figure 6, lower left. This H-B, Helsingfors-Björnborg (Helsinki-Pori) postmark also differs from the typical Franklin type PJ 01 cds and it could well be considered as another variety. The cds has a complete bridge across the mark, but there are no vertical bars, instead a four star configuration similar to the J-H cds illustrated in Figure 5. Is this a different type cds or just a variety of PJ 01?



Figure 7, lower right. This second H-B cds fits the Franklin type PJ 01 in all characteristics except that there is a star at either end of the date and time. The illustration of these different PJ cds points the need for a comprehensive classification of these marks including basic types and subtypes. For additional illustrations of the PJ marks, see the "The Railways of Finland, Part 2", by B. M. McCloy, Scandinavian Contact, vol. 19, Number 6, September 2003.

List Of Postiljoonivaunu Routes Until 1917

A-E-S	Antrea-Elisenvaara-Sordavala
A-I	Antrea-Imatra
B-K	Borgå-Kervo (Porvoo-Kerava)
H-B	Helsingfors-Björneborg (Helsinki-Pori)
H-H	Hangö-Hyvinge (Hanko-Hyvinkää), later Hangö-Helsingfors (Hanko-Helsinki)
H-I	Hamina-Inkeroinen (Fredrikshamn-Inkeroinen)
H-K	Hangö-Karis (Hanko-Karjaa)
H-K-H	Helsingfors-Kervo-Hyvinge (Helsinki-Kerava-Hyvinkää)
H-K-K	Helsingfors-Kyrkslätt-Karis (Helsinki-Kirkkonummi-Karjaa)
H-L-K	Hyvinge-Lohja--Karis (Hyvinkää-Lojo-Karjaa)
H-P	Helsingfors-St.Petersburg (Helsinki-Pietari)
H-T (r-T)	Helsingfors-Tammerfors (Helsinki-Tampere)
H-T(r-A)	Helsingfors-Turku (Helsinki-Åbo)
H-V	Huutokoski-Varkaus
J-H	Jyväskylä-Haapamäki
J-J	Joensuu-Jaakima
J-L	Joensuu-Lieksa
K-I	Kuopio-Iisalmi (later Kuopio-Kajaani)
K-K	Kouvola-Kotka
K-P-M	Kuopio-Pieksämäki-Mikkeli (Kuopio-Pieksämäki-St. Michel)
L-L	Lovisa-Lahtis (Lovisa-Lahti)
L-R	Laurila-Rovaniemi
L-S	Lappeenranta-Simola (Willmanstrand-Simola)
M-K	Mikkeli-Kouvola (St. Michel-Kouvola)
P-Ta	St. Petersburg-Terijoki (a = aamu (morning))
P-Ti	St. Petersburg-Terijoki (i = ilta, (evening))
P-V	St. Petersburg-Viipuri (Pietari-Wiborg)
R-K	Rovaniemi-Kemi
R-P	Raumo-Peipohja
S-E	Savonlinna-Elisenvaara (Nyslott-Elisenvaara)
S-E-A	Savonlinna-Elisenvaara-Antrea
S-H	Suolahti-Haapamäki
S-J	Sordavala-Joensuu or Suolahti-Jyväskylä
S-N	Seinäjoki-Nikolaistad (Östermyra-Wasa, (Vaasa))
T-H	Tammerfors-Helsingfors (Tampere-Helsinki)
T-K	Turku-Karjaa (Åbo-Karis)
T-L	Tornio-Laurila
T-O	Tornio-Oulu (Tornio-Uleåborg)
T-R	Turku-Riihimäki (Åbo-Riihimäki)
T-S	Toijala-Seinäjoki (Toijala-Östermyra)
T-T (T-T)	Toijala-Tammerfors (Toijala-Tampere)
T-T (Å-T)	Turku-Toijala (Åbo-Toijala)
T-Ta	Toijala-Tammerfors(a = aamu (morning)), (Toijala-Tampere)
T-Ti	Toijala-Tammerfors(i = ilta (evening)), (Toijala-Tampere)
V-O	Viipuri-Ollila (Wiborg-Ollila)
V-Pa	Viipuri-Pietari (a = aamu, (morning)), (Wiborg-St. Petersburg)
V-S	Viipuri-Simola (Wiborg-Simola)
V-V	Viipuri-Vuoksenniska (Wiborg-Vuoksenniska)
V-Va	Viipuri-Vuoksi (a = aamu, (morning)), (Wiborg-Vuoksi)
V-Vi	Viipuri-Vuoksi (i = ilta, (evening)), (Wiborg-Vuoski)
W-E	Wiborg-Elisenvaara (Viipuri-Elisenvaara)
W-E-S	Wiborg-Elisenvaara-Sordavala (Viipuri-Elisenvaara-Sordavala)
W-P	Wiborg-St.Petersburg (Viipuri-Pietari)
Å-S	Åbo-Salo (Turku-Salo)
Å-T	Åbo-Toijala (Turku-Toijala)

This list was prepared from information provided by Norman Franklin with supplemental information provided by Kaj Hellman and Jon Iversen.

History Of Railway Mail Transport In Finland

By Ilkka Teerijoki, translated by Carita Parker

St. Petersburg Travel And Lodging

Until 1917 one aspect of mail car activity was the St. Petersburg destination. And even though Finland was but a part of the Russian Empire there still was a distinct border between the autonomous Finland and Russia. The Customs station was located in Valkeasaari where the trains stopped according to schedule for twenty minutes, but in reality often longer. There were active dealings with the St. Petersburg station, since most of Finland's foreign bound mail - except for that to the Scandinavian countries - went by way of St. Petersburg and further on via the Russian railroad network. It was therefore also necessary for the St. Petersburg-bound mail car top employee to master some Russian and beginning in the 1910s a Russian postal official would travel in the train between St. Petersburg and Vyborg.

But as relations between Finland and Russia soured in the early 1900s it would affect also matters related to mail exchange. According to accounts, various tickets and other proof was required on the St. Petersburg journey. Around 1910 Finnish mail car postal personnel travelling to St. Petersburg were provided with passports so that they could move about in the city without being arrested as vagrants. Especially annoying was the attitude of the Russian customs agents. Once in Valkeasaari a gendarme officer with two underlings, a Customs official and three of his aides, entered a Finnish mail car. The car personnel had to empty the firewood box, and even the staff's lunch bags came under suspicion.

Health issues during travel also had to be reckoned with. Due to the St. Petersburg poor drinking water, cholera - its spread and deadliness still a frightening possibility early in the new century - was a scary reality that from time to time threatened to spread with the railways to Finland. If there was any threat of cholera the cars would be disinfected and the post offices along railroads cleaned quite thoroughly. In 1901 and 1910 the post received appropriations in its efforts to guard against cholera. Due to the cholera hazard, employees arriving

in St. Petersburg had to be disinfected in the so-called cholera barrack. One expeditor assistant had his clothes ruined by a lysol solution used in the disinfection process.

Other epidemics were also an ongoing concern. The postal administration would watch very closely for any evidence of serious outbreaks as shown by an incident during WWI when mail car employees were banned from entering the St. Petersburg station duty room because rumor had it that the caretaker there had fallen ill to smallpox. All of the St. Petersburg rail employees were ordered on their next day off to go to the mail car district office to be vaccinated.

Most of the mail car personnel duties required them to overnight away from their home localities. For this purpose

quarters or lodging rooms had to be obtained, the conditions of which were quite varied. In Seinäjoki one lodging place had ultimately deteriorated so badly that only the mail storage space remained. The postmen had to stay in a third class hotel for travelers.

Even worse, in St. Petersburg the lodging quarters for postmen had so many cancer sufferers that the postmen would rather spend the night in the mail car at the station. Furthermore, the lighting was inadequate as there were too few lamps.

According to the *Postimies* publication there was light only occasionally and even then it often flickered on and off. Lack of heat in the cold St. Petersburg winter was another major complaint of the mail car workers.

The lodging situation in St. Petersburg must have gotten on one postman's nerves who due to the 1906 revolution and general strike was stuck in that city, but after spending five days there became fed up and walked back to his home in Vyborg, a distance of more than 100 kilometers.

The employee lodging situation in St. Petersburg, however, improved considerably when in 1905 a space consisting of four rooms was rented in a newly built apartment building located in the so-called Vyborg part of St. Petersburg. These quarters were apparently used by mail car personnel until the Russian revolution in 1917. But the furnishings were not by any means lavish and it was not until 1909 that a table lamp was acquired.



Figure 1. Pictured, the cable lift over the Tornio river. This device could carry 1/2 cubic metre baskets full of mail. The repeatedly malfunctioning lift, however, was in use less than one year. Its usefulness ended when the through traffic moved to more southern routes at the end of 1917. Post Museum.

Thus, employee complaints about the quality of lodging were not unfounded. Lodging in Turku was moved to another location in 1914, and even if the space was more expensive than the previous accommodations, it was clearly of a poorer standard and was compared to an underground prison cell. The *Postimies* suspected that the change of location was due to nepotistic business dealings by local officials. The situation for one extra postman on the Terijoki-Ino route was even worse when he ended up spending the night on the station waiting room bench because no other lodging was available for him.

The furnishings in the expeditor quarters in Joensuu in 1916 consisted of a metal bed with mattresses, a thick blanket, 2 pillows, a desk, 3 chairs, a stand with wash bowl and bed pan, a chest of drawers, a hook for hanging the coat, a small nightstand, a tall wall mirror, pitcher and drinking glasses, window curtains, blinds, and an extra cot with linen. Similar furnishings were allowed also for the postman quarters except here the desk had to be "very simple."

The WWI Years – Exceptional Times

The start of W.W.I at the end of July 1914 immediately affected also postal matters in Finland, although the country's territory was outside of the actual war zone. Mail exchange by sea with Sweden, Denmark and Germany ceased on the last day of July 1914 and western bound mail was being transported by land circumventing the Gulf of Bothnia. The Finnish railroad had to relinquish its railcars to the Russian army for use in the mobilization on August 1. The train schedules had to be reduced, usually to one train run daily on each line. After the mobilization was completed, regular scheduling was slowly reestablished, and by mid-November 1914, conditions were almost back to pre-war levels.

Although the first three years of WWI affected Finland less than expected, the situation on the railways was sometimes quite chaotic. The postal administration received information about changes in scheduling only at the last minute, and often not until after the new schedules were published in the newspapers. Frequently information was obtained also by inquiring directly from railroad officials when there were rumors about changes.

Censoring introduced at the beginning of the war also impeded the handling of mail. Only experienced postal employees were ordered to do the censoring and among these there were nearly twenty mail car district personnel retained as censors at the end of 1914. But inexperienced substitutes were hired when necessary to take the place of those originally assigned to the censoring job, so that railroad mail processing and distribution could continue without interruption. Regardless, censoring did slow down mail delivery. The censoring ordinance was revoked in March of 1917 immediately after the collapse of the Russian Czarist Empire.

Perhaps the greatest challenge in postal transportation due to the war was the passage of mail through the war zones. As the German invasion reached the western parts of Russia, Russia's mail connections with its allies, France and England, would go by way of Finland and Sweden. Prisoners of war,

the Germans in Russia and Russians in Germany, added to the burden of the mail railway transport system.

For the most part during the war period, postal items were carried via Tornio. Transport by way of the Rauma port was also attempted, but due to the danger of mines the northern route continued to be used instead. The Tornio station had a large sorting facility that could hold 50 railcar loads of mail.

But, one of the problems with the northern route was that the railway between Finland's Tornio and Sweden's Haparanda had for strategic reasons not been constructed in the early 1910s as planned. Sweden's rail network at the start of the war reached only some 20 km from Haparanda toward Karunki.

From the autumn of 1914 the mail was transported from Tornio to Karunki on the Finnish side by the power of hundreds of horses pulling wagons and from there taken across the Tornio river to Karunki on the Swedish side and loaded onto trains. The situation improved when the hastily built Tornio-Karunki rail was completed in January of 1915. In the spring the rail was extended also on the Swedish side to Haparanda and so mail was begun to be exchanged in Tornio.

The volume was quite impressive. In one day up to 17,000 parcels might have been carried across the river. And when in October-November 1915 there was a three week pause in the delivery of parcels, 250,000 parcels piled up on the Tornio station waiting further transfer.

During winter months mail delivery across the frozen Tornio river was relatively easy, but the spring thaw caused difficulties. One remedy was the cable lift between Tornio and Haparanda that from February 1917 carried across the river at 4-5 second intervals a cubic meter basket full of mail. The lift became obsolete when through traffic ceased at the end of 1917. The rail between Tornio and Haparanda was completed in 1919.

The number of mail cars was insufficient for through traffic and therefore a great quantity of extra cargo vans were used for which the railroad charged 40 penny/hr per van. The transport in the cargo vans caused considerable headaches for the post. In 1915 alone numerous inquiries were made about the location, travel routes, and speed of the trains with the vans. For example, at the end of 1915 a train loaded with postal parcels stood at the Korja station for two weeks, because the station master thought it more important to let trains containing military cargo on their way. According to a 1915 account only one cargo van with parcel post out of ten would make it from Tornio to Vyborg in three days. On average the trip took one week for a train, but for the slowest up to three weeks.

Likewise, there were problems with the post's own railcars, too. A mail car district head had sent an urgent telegram to Oulu in May of 1916 saying: "If one of cars 9997, 9998 or 9999 is found in Oulu, immediately send to Kuopio."

As WWI dragged on, the effects were slowly being felt even in Finland outside of the actual war events. In the summer of 1915, news arrived that two mail sacks addressed to the St. Petersburg-Helsinki mail car had been lost with the sinking of the *S/S Lusitania*.

The mail cars wore out quickly in constant use and the appropriations set aside for the cars barely covered the upkeep. But, in 1916 a special appropriation allowed even for the building of two new mail cars. Frugality measures would be tightened also in 1916. Any wax seal and left-over wrapping string had to be returned to the district store room and wrapping paper, if at all possible, had to be re-used. In September of 1916 a total of 516 kg of wrapping paper and 20 kg of lead seals were sent into postal storage.

The worsening food shortage during 1917 affected also the mail car personnel and many of them carried only bread and water while travelling on duty. There was no time to eat at station restaurants due to the rush and besides, a decent meal would have been too costly for mail car employees at a time of high prices.

The year of the Russian Revolution 1917 would mess things up worse than before. The trains between Helsinki and

St. Petersburg were described to be "long as the famine years" and took a whole 24 hours one-way to destination. The speed was so slow that an employee could hop off and limber up along side the moving train.

At the Pulkkiniemi platform on the Vyborg-Hiitola rail section a train was once told to stop one hour due to a damaged rail. The travel postman decided to use the idle time to visit friends nearby. Soon, however, the train started moving again and the postman had to run to catch up, but thanks to the slow speed reached the train at the Ojarvi station.

The October Revolution that brought the Bolsheviks to power totally upset everything. Nobody at the St. Petersburg station was there to receive the mail from the Helsinki train between November 20-22, 1917.

To be continued.

First Railway Cancellation Handstamps 1862-1865

The first railway, from Helsingfors to Tavastehus, was opened to passenger traffic on March 17, 1862 and about five weeks later on April 24, mail was carried on this line for the first time.

During the period between the introduction of the railway system in 1862 and the introduction of the traveling post offices in 1870, mail was cancelled at the station of origin with a heavy date stamp.

Two types of handstamps were in use from 1862 until 1865, one with the date before the month and another with the month followed by the date. These handstamps were also used to mark passenger tickets. From 1865 until the introduction of the first TPO cds in 1870, manuscript cancellations and ANK cancellations struck across the stamps were used. All of these early railway cancellation marks are fairly elusive.

Figure 1, below. Datedlined 19 Juli 1864. This handstamp shows the month first, then date.

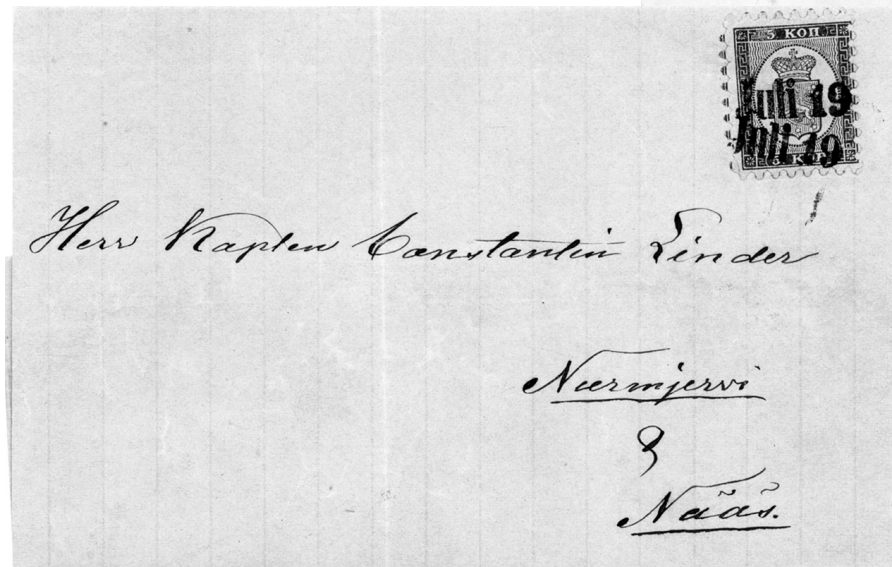
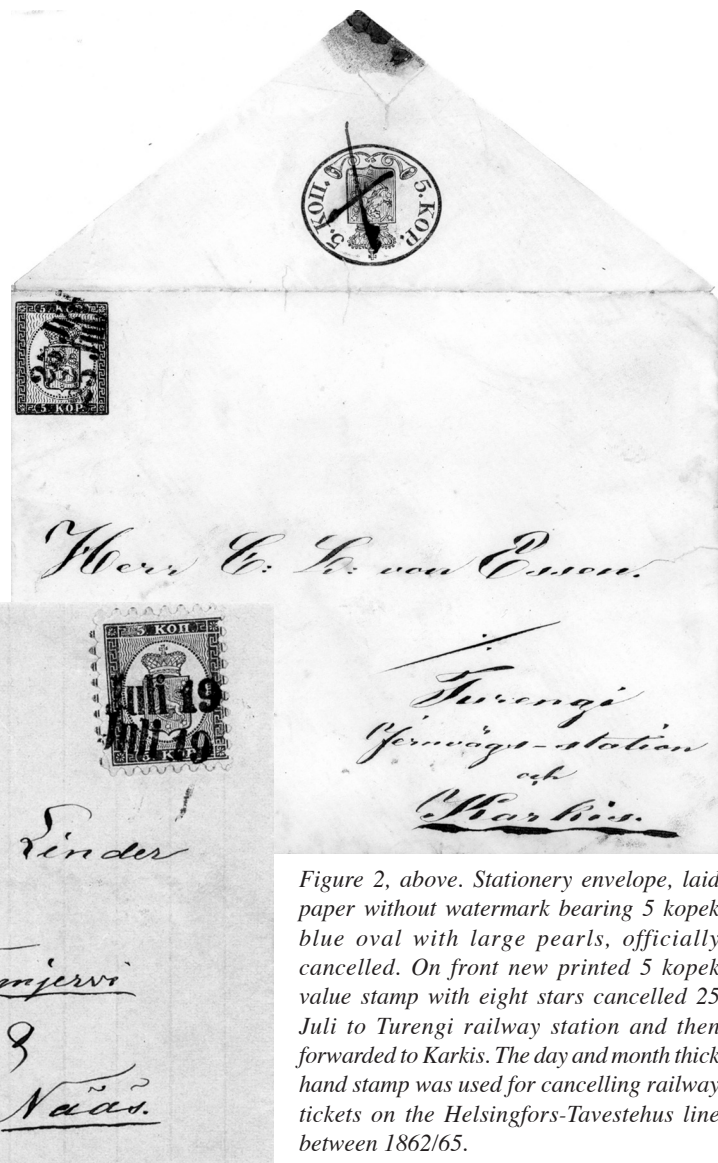


Figure 2, above. Stationery envelope, laid paper without watermark bearing 5 kopek blue oval with large pearls, officially cancelled. On front new printed 5 kopek value stamp with eight stars cancelled 25 Juli to Turengi railway station and then forwarded to Karkis. The day and month thick hand stamp was used for cancelling railway tickets on the Helsingfors-Tavestehus line between 1862/65.