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THIRD REICH STUDY GROUP

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Evidently, by outlining our long range plans and by asking for as generous donations to the Study Group as possible, I intimidated some members. Dues payments are coming in, but not at the rate we had hoped for. Let me assure you that, if you have not renewed as yet, you need send only one dollar (\$1.00) to receive Bulletins for 1970. We hope that most members will send in more than the minimum payment; so that the Study Group can build up a fund to support handbooks, slide talks, and other projects. A dollar is enough for membership, however.

As matters stand right now, this will be the last Bulletin for about half our membership. If you have decided to drop out of the Study Group, please do reconsider. If we have not covered some topic of interest to you, please tell us. Perhaps something can be done. The future of the Third Reich Study Group is well assured, at least for 1970. (continued on p. 23).

The Anschluss 1938: Postal Documents

Compiled and Translated by Benjamin R. Beede

The first of Hitler's conquests was his homeland, Austria. Not a great deal seems to have been written about this phase of German postal history, although it has several points of interest. Mixed frankings between German and Austrian stamps were possible, despite the varying currency systems. Many Austrian commemorative cancellations remained in use after the annexation. Finally, the Austrian forces were given Feldpost privileges for a brief time. For the present we shall be concerned only with assimilation of the Austrian postal system to the Reichspost:

Decree of the Führer and Reichs Chancellor on the Transition of the Austrian Postal and Telegraph Administration to the German Reich (Deutsche Reichspost):

March 19, 1938 (Reichsgesetzbuch I, p. 261)

On the basis of Article II of the Law on the Reunification of Austria with the German Reich of March 13, 1938 (Reichsgesetzbuch I, p. 237) I order

Section I.

The Austrian Postal and Telegraph Administration and the Postal Savings Bank are parts of the national administration Deutsche Reichspost and are subordinated to the Reichspost Minister.

Section II.

- (1) The Reichspost Minister is empowered to arrange the transfer of the ancillary property of the Austrian Postal and Telegraph Administration in agreement with the Governor (Austrian Central Government).
- (2) The property of the Postal Savings Bank will be allotted to the special assets of the German Reichspost.

Section III.

The Reichspost Minister issues the necessary legal and administrative instructions for the accomplishment of this decree in agreement with the Reichs Minister of the Interior and the Reichs Minister of Finance.

The decree goes into force from the day of proclamation.

Berlin, March 19, 1938

/Signed by Hitler and the three Ministers mentioned/

The Anschluss 1938: Postal Documents, continued.

Decree on the Introduction of New Postal Fees for Letters and Postcards in Austria.

March 26, 1938 (Reichsgesetzbuch, I, p. 313)

On the basis of Section 1 of the Decree of the Führer and Reichs Chancellor on the Transition of the Austrian Postal and Telegraph Administration to the German Reich (Deutsche Reichspost) of March 19, 1938 (Reichsgesetzbuch I, p.261) and of Section 4 of the Law on Simplification and Retrenchment of Administration of February 27, 1934 (Reichsgesetzbuch I, p. 130) it is hereby ordered:

Section 1

(1) For letters and postcards from Austria the postal fees established in the appendix henceforth apply.

(2) The fees for local service apply within the town and rural delivery areas of the postoffices where mail is posted. If several postoffices are in the same community, then their town and rural delivery areas form a uniform local fee zone.

Section 2

This decree enters into force on April 4, 1938.

Berlin, March 26, 1938.

/Signed by the Reichspost and Interior Ministers/

First Order of Execution on the Decree of the Führer and Reichs Chancellor on the Transition of the Austrian Postal and Telegraph Administration to the German Reich (Deutsche Reichspost).

April 30, 1938 (Reichsgesetzbuch I, p. 457)

Of the basis of Section 3 of the Decree of the Führer and Reichs Chancellor on the Transition of the Austrian Postal and Telegraph Administration to the German Reich (Deutsche Reichspost) of March 19, 1938 (Reichsgesetzbuch I, p. 261) the following is directed:

Section I.

The General Directorate for Postal and Telegraph Administration in Vienna is converted into a liquidation authority (Abwicklungsstelle). It carries the designation "Liquidation Authority of the Reichs Postal Ministry for the State of Austria".

Section II.

To the field of the Director of the Liquidation Authority for the State of Austria belong:

Anschluss 1938: Postal Documents, continued.

- a) the duties of the former General Directorate for Postal and Telegraph Administration,
- b) the duties of the Austrian Rural Post,
- c) the Postal Savings Bank.

Section III.

The Postal and Telegraph Directorates of the former Austrian Postal and Telegraph Administration bear the designation "Reichspostdirektion"; the Vienna Postal Directorate and the Vienna Telegraph Directorate are united into a Reichspostdirektion.

Section IV.

The directive enters into force on the day after its proclamation.

Berlin, April 30, 1938

/Signed by the Reichspost and Interior Ministers/

APPENDIX TO THE DECREE ON THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW POSTAL FEES FOR LETTERS AND POSTCARDS IN AUSTRIA OF MARCH 26, 1938

| Item | Domestic and to the Free City of Danzig | | Abroad, except Luxemburg, Czechoslovakia and Hungary | | | |
|--|--|--------------------|---|--------------------|----|----|
| | Weight Level | Rpf or Groschen | Weight Level | Rpf or Groschen | | |
| Letters | LOCAL SERVICE | | | | | |
| | up to 20g | 8 | 12 | up to 20g | 25 | 38 |
| | 20-250g | 16 | 24 | for each | 15 | 23 |
| | 250-500g | 20 | 30 | additional 20g | | |
| | OUT OF TOWN | | | | | |
| | up to 20g | 12 | 18 | | | |
| | 20-250g | 24 | 36 | | | |
| | 250-500g | 40 | 60 | | | |
| Fees for letters with a weight of more than 500g remain unchanged. | | | | | | |
| Postal Cards | LOCAL SERVICE | | | | | |
| | Simple | 5 | 8 | Simple | 15 | 23 |
| | with Reply Card | 10 | 16 | with Reply Card | 30 | 46 |
| | OUT OF TOWN | | | | | |
| | Simple | 6 | 9 | | | |
| | with Reply Card | 12 | 18 | | | |

Anschluss 1938: Postal Documents, APPENDIX, continued.

| Item | Luxemburg, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary | | |
|-------------------------|--|-----|-------------|
| | Weight Level | Rpf | or Groschen |
| Letters | LUXEMBURG | | |
| | up to 20g | 12 | 18 |
| | 20-250g | 24 | 36 |
| | 250-500g | 40 | 60 |
| | CZECHOSLOVAKIA | | |
| | up to 20g | 20 | 30 |
| | for each additional 20g | 15 | 23 |
| | HUNGARY | | |
| | up to 20g | 20 | 30 |
| for each additional 20g | 10 | 15 | |
| Postal Cards | LUXEMBURG | | |
| | Simple | 6 | 9 |
| | with Reply Card | 12 | 18 |
| | CZECHOSLOVAKIA and HUNGARY | | |
| | Simple | 10 | 15 |
| | with Reply Card | 20 | 30 |

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BOOK REVIEW

By Benjamin R. Beede

Walter Stephan, Kriegsgefangenenpost Deutscher Soldaten und Internierter 1939-1945. Teil I: Der Westen. (1969).

This work was mentioned in my last Director's Report. Volume I is a paper-bound booklet of about 100 pages, costing approximately five dollars. If you are at all interested in POW mail to and from Germans in Allied hands you need a copy. There is a good deal of historical and postal information which it would be extremely difficult to find elsewhere. There are gaps. Although airmail covers are illustrated, no discussion of the special rates that were in effect is included. There is much data on the numbers of prisoners held by various Allied countries, but relatively few dates are given. Much of the text should be easily understandable to anyone with the slightest knowledge of German. In any case, part of the booklet consists of lists of camp names and other information and is therefore readily usable by collectors who do not know German. In summation, I would say that this is one of the finest contributions to German philatelic literature on the Third Reich. Stephan's booklet does not duplicate other handbooks to any great extent. On the other hand, we are still left with much to do in the field of POW and internee mail.

GERMAN POSTAL SERVICE TO JAPAN AFTER JUNE 22, 1941

By Benjamin R. Beede

Up until the invasion of the Soviet Union it was easy for German nationals to correspond with people in Japan. The Soviets permitted mail to pass freely through the U.S.S.R. The situation changed, of course, with the outbreak of the conflict between the Third Reich and the Soviet Union. Yet, it did not change completely; that is, mail service was not completely suspended. I cannot go into too much detail here, but will try to give the gist of this story.

Letters and small packages which were intended to go from Germany to Japan could be sent to neutral countries. They would be remailed to Japan after being suitably disguised. The Soviets were reluctant to interfere, wishing to avoid any sort of controversy with Japan while the Germans were deep within the U.S.S.R.

The British did make an arrangement with Turkey to deal with part of the problem. Neutral mail was often routed to British territory in the Middle East "by mistake". The British were careful to censor the mail, before they "returned" it.¹

This is an interesting bit of postal history. Theoretically, with considerable research and incredible luck one might find a cover or package wrapping. I would be delighted if one of our members could locate an item of this kind!

¹ David L. Gordon and Royden Dangerfield, The Hidden Weapon: The Story of Economic Warfare, (New York, 1947), pp.55-6.

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FELDPOST WORLD WAR II:
SPECIAL DELIVERY SERVICE

No special delivery service was provided for civilians writing to soldiers, since there was no possibility of carrying out such service at the front. If letters were mailed to the field army, they were to be forwarded through normal channels and would be marked "Aus dem Briefkasten".¹ This inscription meant "From a letterbox", showing that the letter had been dropped into a mail box. If such a letter were mailed at the postoffice, a clerk would have rejected it. Special delivery was possible from the front to Germany. Postage was free for such mail, and only the special delivery fee had to be paid in stamps.²

¹ Feldpost Amtsblatt, 43/1940, 12 April 1940, p. 27.

² Ibid., 58/1940, 31 Mai 1940, p. 37; Die Verkehrsnachrichten für Post und Telegraphie, 1 June 1940.

SWISS LEGION COVERS

By Benjamin R. Beede

Unfortunately, so far I have been unable to obtain one of these, but recently did obtain a nice collateral item. Readers of the Specialist may have noted in my article in the legion series on Switzerland that the Swiss SS volunteers were gathered into the SS-Gebirgsjäger Ausbildung und Ersatzbataillon 6, or at least that an attempt was made to draw them together. This took place in February-April, 1944. My cover is from Hallstein and bears a unit seal from the unit mentioned above. The cancellation date is May 8, 1944. The cover was however, almost surely sent by a German member of the unit and was addressed to Vienna. Yet, it is an interesting item.

Although Swiss volunteers could send mail to and receive it from Switzerland without payment of postage, this applied only to letters. Apparently, packages were not permitted at all. According to the regulation which expanded Feldpost service between Germany and Switzerland in 1942, packages could go at domestic fees, but this may have applied only to mail sent to and from Reichsdeutschen. According to one authoritative account¹ packages for Swiss volunteers had to be smuggled out of Switzerland through Liechtenstein. There was a special SS agency at Feldkirch which handled these packages and all correspondence to and from Swiss volunteers.

¹ Bericht des Bundesrates an die Bundesversammlung über die anti-demokratisch Tätigkeit von Schweizer und Ausländer im Zusammenhang mit dem Kriegsgeschehen 1939-1945, Teil I (28 Dez. 1945), s. 92. (Account of the Federal Council to the Federal Assembly on un-democratic activities of Swiss and other nationals together with (other) war activities 1939-1945, Part I, (28 Dec. 1945) p. 92.)Ed.

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FELDPOST FROM ITALIAN EAST AFRICA

By Benjamin R. Beede

The postal affairs of the German forces in North Africa have received a good deal of attention the philatelic press. However, there were Germans in East Africa as well. Small units were made of people who had been caught in Italian East Africa by the outbreak of war in 1939. Also, I believe, but am not sure, that some German technicians were flown in from Libya. At any rate, these troops were permitted to correspond with Germany. Postcards and letters up to 5 grams were permitted. As addresses they used Feldpost numbers plus unit names. The following route marking was also used: "Feldpost - Posta Militare/Africa Orientale Italiana". This notation appeared below the address.¹ Does anyone known more about this matter?

Despite the fact that postal service to East Africa was announced in an official publication, I am not certain it did operate. In his handbook on military air mail, Clement mentions two air mail admission

Feldpost: Italian East Africa, continued.

stamps issued by the Italians for use in East Africa.² They were never issued however. That makes me wonder whether service was really available to the Germans.

¹ Die Verkehrsnachrichten für Post und Telegraphie, 19 April 1941, p.78.

² Handbuck der Militär-Luftpost 1793-1954 (Graz, 1955), pp. 118-19.

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FELDPOST COVERS WITH "SCH" PREFIX

By Benjamin R. Beede

There may have been some who are sceptical about my article on Feldpost cover prices in the last Third Reich Study Group Bulletin. Evidently, there was a bit of confusion about my method of arriving at the prices mentioned. They certainly do not refer to market prices. My theory was (and is) that fair estimates can often be arrived at by using strength figures for various elements of the Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS.

At any rate, collectors of German naval covers have shown some interest in items with Feldpost numbers bearing the "Sch" prefix. I know this was used between November, 1941 and July, 1944, but still do not know the reason for its utilization. I do know that such items must be scarce.

In May, 1942, there fifty-four (54) naval artillery battalions. Five of these used the "Sch" prefix. There were two naval anti-aircraft brigades. The headquarters of these regiments had the "Sch" marking. There were seven naval anti-aircraft regiments. The staff units of three had "Sch" prefixes. Finally, in another section of the same source¹ are listed thirty-four (34) naval anti-aircraft battalions with the "Sch" notation. These forces do not amount to much in terms of numbers of personnel, at least in comparison with Army, Air Force, or even with the remainder of the naval forces.

I hope that one of our members will be able to tell us why the "Sch" marking was introduced.

¹ Feldpostübersicht, Teil III, Band 10, 7. Neudruck. Stand vom 30.5.1942. Marine (Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1942), pp. 72-84, 85-107.

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Ben Beede will undoubtedly be surprised to have an answer to the above question concerning the "Sch" prefix within this Bulletin. I contacted Heinrich Petersen whom I thought may have a lead on this question because he has been specializing in the study of the Navy mail systems.

"SCH" PREFIX, continued.

Heinrich Petersen reports that from his correspondence with Corvette Captain Fr. Crüsemann, author of "Deutsche Marine-Schiffspost, Handbuch und Stempelkatalog", he learned the reasoning behind the letters "Sch".

Certain army units in 1941 were assigned as naval land units (Landmarine-Einheiten) for coast artillery (Küsten-Schützes) duty. These units, although assigned to the Navy, were land-based and could not use the "M" ("Marine" Navy) prefix before the Feldpost unit number.

Since these re-assigned army units kept their same Feldpost numbers, to avoid confusion and to differentiate between coast artillery and army units, the prefix "Sch" (from Schützen) was established. Until "Briefstempeln" could be changed, along with return address stamps, etc., the letters "Sch" are found handwritten prior to the Feldpost unit number.

* * * * *

The following Feldpost Office Directive was issued in Berlin, 1941, No. 21; Order No. 86, 1941: Addresses of Feldpost mailings.

"Naval land units of the coastal forces (coast artillery) using half-open addresses, henceforth put the letters "Sch" before the Feldpost number, for example:

FELDPOST

An den
Marine Artillerist Richard Brandt
Feldpostnummer Sch 04610

Kiel-Friedrichsort

FELDPOST

An die Dienststelle
Feldpostnummer Sch 16440

Helgoland

The letters "Sch" have no bearing on the administration of the mail (i.e. this "Sch" mail was sent to the respective "Postleitstellen" (postal routing offices) as was all military mail). Incoming mail is also conveyed from the postal routing offices to its destination, immediately". (Ed.)

* * * * *

September 5th /1941/

"Dr. Frank announces the issue of new postage stamps bearing a

Dr. Frank..., continued.

portrait of the Führer and the inscription "Deutsches Reich-General-gouvernement". He declares 'The whole world is thus told that the Generalgouvernement is not only incorporated in the sphere of German power, but in the Great German Reich itself'."

From: Polish Ministry of Information, The Nazi Kultur in Poland, (London, H.M.S.O., 1944).

This passage refers to the issuance of the Hitler series of October 26, 1941. We may have some more data on this soon.

B. R. Beede

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Censor Transit-markings on Mail from Business Firms

by James E. Duffy

Ben Beede noted in his "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" article in Vol. V, No. 1, pages 2-3, TRSG Bulletin, that mail to German nationals in countries other than Germany, bearing the "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" notation was not censored. This regulation evidently was amended sometime in 1942, because I have seen letters that were opened and censored with appropriate sealing tapes and rubber stamps in September 1942.

No doubt many have seen the hand-stamped transit-markings on the front or back of civilian private or business letters. This is a circle-code letter combination; i.e. circles varying from 19 to 34mm in diameter, enclosing a capital letter "A" followed by a lower case letter.

The lower case letters indicate a specific censor office. In Feb. 1940, seven head censor offices were established.¹

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------|------------------|---------------|
| a-Königsberg | c-Köln | e-Frankfurt/Main | g-Wien / Prag |
| b-Berlin | d-München | f-Hamburg | |

In August 1940 an office was opened in Oslo; letter code "o".

Following the final occupation of France by Germany in November 1942, the area of censorship was increased and new censor offices had to be established. Paris was the next censor city with letter "x".² In February, 1943 two more offices were opened, namely

| | |
|--------|------------|
| l-Lyon | y-Bordeaux |
|--------|------------|

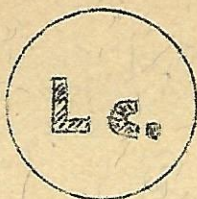
Now what does the capital "A" mean? Mr. Wolter in Die Postzensur notes "A" for (Abwehr) defense (force) or possibly (intelligence).³

Mr. Riemer in his Zensurpost aus dem III. Reich notes "A" means "Auslandsbriefprüfstelle" or Foreign Letter examination (censor) office.⁴

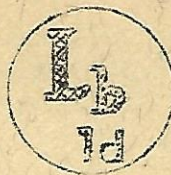
Censor Transit-Markings, continued.



1



2



3

What does the "L" mean? Mr. Wolter reports that "L" has been found on mail from prison camp offices. Could "L" = Lager? But how then would you explain the "L" found on official as well as business mail?⁵

Fig. 1. is found on a "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" letter with Feldpost cancel on 12.10.43, addressed to Wehrmeldeamt Wien I - Nord, Wien I, from Bell Telephone Gesellschaft, Antwerpen über Lgpa. Brüssel.

Fig. 2. is found on an Official (Dienst)letter cancelled in Rotterdam, 3.VII - 1943 addressed to Den Heer Oberfinanzpräsident, te Munchen, from the "Departement van Financiën, Van den Directeur der Directe Belastingen, Invoerrechten en Accijnzen te Rotterdam (Oost)!"

Fig. 3. is found on a letter dated Berlin C111, 5.3.43, addressed to the Schweizerische Kreditanstalt, Luzern; from the Deutsche Reichsbank, Berlin C111.

Fig. 3 is a transit-mark with the greatest interest and mystery. Mr. Wolter reports that lower cases letters from "a" to "g" have been reported in combination with "L". But now we have a branch office designation ld or 7d perhaps.

If anyone has transit-markings "La" "Lb" "Lc" etc., on any kind of mail, I would be very much interested hearing from you, plus any information you have on what "L" stands for.

¹ Karl Kurt Wolter, Die Postzensur, Handbuch und Katalog, Vol.II, (1939-1955) Munich, 1966. p 10

² Ibid., p. 22.

³ Ibid., p. 10.

⁴ Karl Heinz Riemer, Zensurpost aus dem III. Reich, (Die Überwachung des Auslandsbriefverkehrs während des II. Weltkrieges durch deutsche Dienststellen), Heft 61, Mai, 1966, Poststempelgilde "Rhein-Donau" e. V., p. III.

⁵ Karl Kurt Wolter, Die Postzensur, Vol. II, p. 14.

Director's Report, continued from page 13.

If you are intending to pay your dues, please send them to Mr. Robert Houston, 11 Yorktown Drive, Clark, New Jersey 07066. Please do not make your checks out to the Third Reich Study Group or to the GPS! The checks should be made out in Bob Houstons name. The study group is not big enough to have its own bank account as yet.

NEW BOOKS of special interest to members of the Third Reich Study Group:

GERMAN ARMY PARCEL MAIL - Part of the German Military Mail 1939-1945, by Hans Wimmer; available from Myron Fox, 238 Needham Heights, Mass. 02194, price \$3.50 postpaid. 88 pages, bound.

From the table of contents:

Organization and transportation regulations of army mail,
All official and unofficial admission stamps,
Registration of all known Army Parcel Mail Seals with table of same,
Representation of all known seals and labels, duty free monthly shipments,
List of all Army Parcel Mail Stations, Air Force and Navy Post Offices with many illustrations.

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Note: (Ed.) This is the kind of information that has been almost non-existent, since the end of World War II. If you are a serious collector of Third Reich material, now is the time to build up your library.

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DUES ARE DUE - - - - - ONLY ONE DOLLAR FOR MEMBERSHIP - - - - -

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With this printing, there should have been a membership listing; however, the first Bulletin of 1970 was delayed, as is the case with this Bulletin, number two. Mr. Beede reports that only half of the membership of the TRSG has renewed their membership. This will be the last Bulletin for those who do not wish to send in their dues. It has to be that way, due to just the production and mailing of the bulletin, and the costs involved.

We want to publish articles that we hope you will find informative as well as interesting. We have asked publicly for your comments and criticisms (constructive, that is) and what you have to contribute in the form of articles, findings, questions, translations, etc.

Perhaps there has been too much emphasis on the "Feldpost" or military mail aspects of World War II. This stems from the fact that the few contributors so far have been immersed in the study of military mail, so that is what they write about. Ben Beede has done an admirable job of providing the Bulletin with material from all facets of this period of study, from postal regulations, civilian mail usages, postal rates, etc.

And so another Bulletin comes to a close. Speaking for Ben Beede, Bob Houston and myself, we thank you for your support thus far, and especially those of you who contributed funds to us, beyond the dollar dues. Bulletin No. 3 is being prepared. Be seeing you in July. (Jim Duffy, Ed.).