



Third Reich Study Group Bulletin

THIRD REICH STUDY GROUP

Devoted to the Study
of the Postal History
of Germany 1933-1945

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Contents:

- Page 3 Combat Division Profile: 13th Panzer Division - J. Lewis
Page 4 Navy Log: U-Boat 389 - P. Miller
Page 5 Missing German POW on the Eastern Front - L. Nelson
Page 7 Special Cancels - Funicular Railways - B. Ferguson
Page 8 Combat Division Profile: 14th Panzer Division - J. Lewis
Page 9 The "V für Viktoria" Propaganda Campaign of 1941 - J. Lewis
Page 14 Story Behind the Stamp: The Pasewalk Military Hospital - K. Stefanacci
Page 15 German POWs in Australia - G. Pohlig
Page 19 German POW Camps in Maine - J. Lewis
Page 21 Mail to Users of "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" - B. Beede
Page 23 Combat Division Profile: 15th Panzer Division - J. Lewis
Page 24 Romerberg Festspiele - Frankfurt (Main) Cancels - B. Ferguson

Briefmarken-Sprache

Ich komme!

Dein ist mein Herz!

Bist Du mir auch treu?

Du bist mein Glück!

Ich habe Dich von Herzen lieb!

Warum schreibst Du nicht?

Wann werden wir uns wiedersehen?

*Immer in den stillen Stunden
Denke ich an Dich zurück
Und sag Dir unumwunden
Du bist mein einzig Glück!*

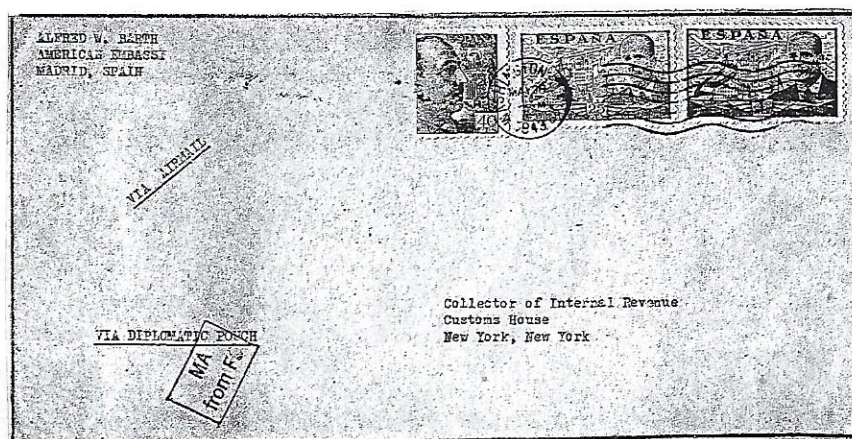
Ich denke stets an Dich!

STUDY GROUP NOTES

Registry Labels - TRSGer Kelly Stefanacci wonders why German registry labels have the initial "R"? While this label may be due to standards established by the UPU in 1874, we do recall reading that "R" stood for "rekommandiert", the term used in Germany for registered mail prior to introduction of the term "eingeschrieben". Can any member provide the correct answer?

MA from FC - TRSGer Bruce Fisher has this update to his article in Bulletin 182. "Hiatt, a Quaker doing relief work in Vichy France, was interned at Brenners Park Hotel in Baden-Baden from Jan. 1943 to Feb. 1944. He was included in a group of mostly American diplomats serving in Vichy France who were rounded up and interned following the Allied invasion of North Africa. Per the State Department Office of History, MA and FC are actually internal US State Dept. routing indicators. FC was the Division for Foreign Activities, an intelligence branch of the State Department during WWII (not Mail from Foreign Country as many have suggested) and MA was the mail and pouch room. According to Hiatt's diary, internees were allowed one letter a week. These letters were initially censored by the resident German commander of their internment camp, who would carry them to the Berlin censor office for inspection. His home was in Berlin and according to Hiatt, a maid at the camp said that on one occasion, his home was bombed and a large batch of mail addressed to the internment camp was destroyed. No postage was required because the letters were from internees and sent via surface. You will note that PAR AVION was lined out on this cover. Now I am trying to find out why a U.S. State Dept Intelligence division was interested in Hiatt's mail or at least how they got it, and why he put no return address on his letter. Did he know in advance that this letter would go back by some special route? All other mail I have been able to find from the Brenners Park Hotel internment camp in Baden-Baden, including other correspondence from Hiatt, had a complete return address plus Bern and US Legation Lisbon forwarding hand stamps".

Another MA from FC Cover- TRSGer Larry Nelson has this cover sent via diplomatic pouch from the American Embassy in Spain to New York in May, 1943. Larry notes that pouch mail normally required stamps from the sending country which were cancelled in Washington, D.C.. This was so that sending country did not lose stamp revenue as per this example. However, as interment mail was free, no stamps would have been required on the cover shown in Bulletin # 182.



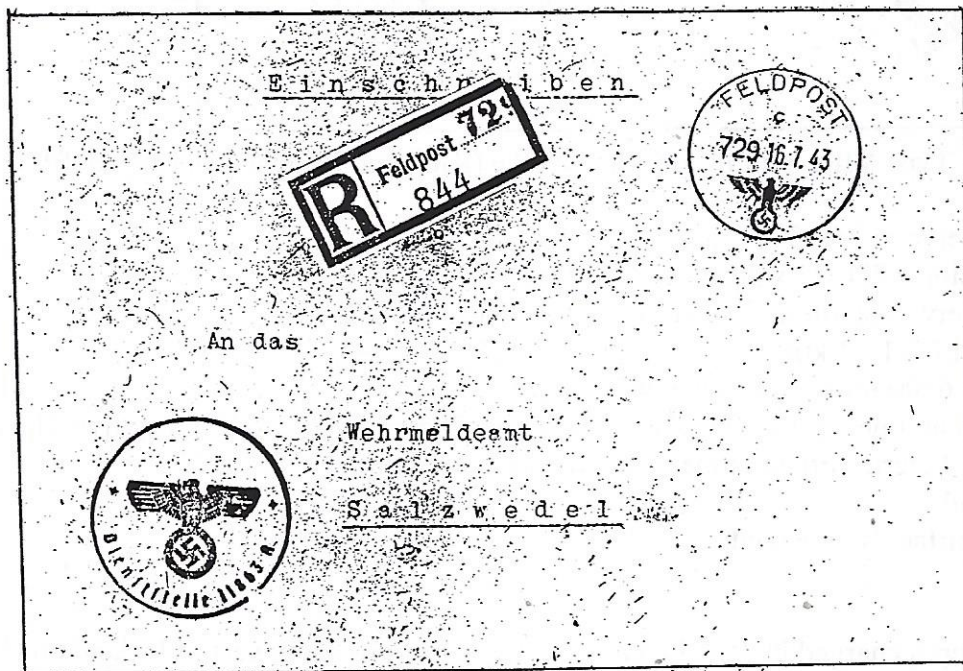
Cover Illustration: If you've ever wondered why stamps on a Third Reich cover are sometimes affixed upside down or at an angle, the reason may be "Letter Talk" in which love birds expressed their feelings by a "code" involving the placement of stamps. This post card depicts a young couple, various stamp positions and the messages they denote.

COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE: 13th Panzer Division by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS				AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	PANZER	PZ.-GRENADIER	ARTY	UNITS	
13	729	4	66	93	13	13

Formed initially as 13th Infantry Division in 1936 (1st Wave) and included 33rd, 66th and 93rd Infantry Regiments. Converted to a motorized infantry unit, it gave up 33rd Regiment to 4th Panzer Division. The post office unit was assigned Fp. # 08874 as a return address and Kenn 729 as a coded address. The division fought in Poland and France, then was converted to a panzer division in autumn of 1940.

It was then sent to Romania late in 1940 and remained there until invading Russia with Army Group South in June 1941. The 13th Panzer Division fought in the Kiev encirclement, the Battle of Chernigovka Pocket and the capture of Rostov. After opposing the Soviet winter offensive of 1941-42, it took part in the drive on the Caucasus oil fields in 1942. Most of the division escaped isolation on the Kuban after the Soviets retook Kharkov . Reunited under a resurrected 6th Army, it fought in the lower Dneiper battles and suffered heavy losses after Romania defected in September 1944. After being withdrawn to reform in October, it was back in action on the southern sector in November. A large part of the division was encircled in Budapest in December 1944 but the remnants fought on in Austria until the end of the war.

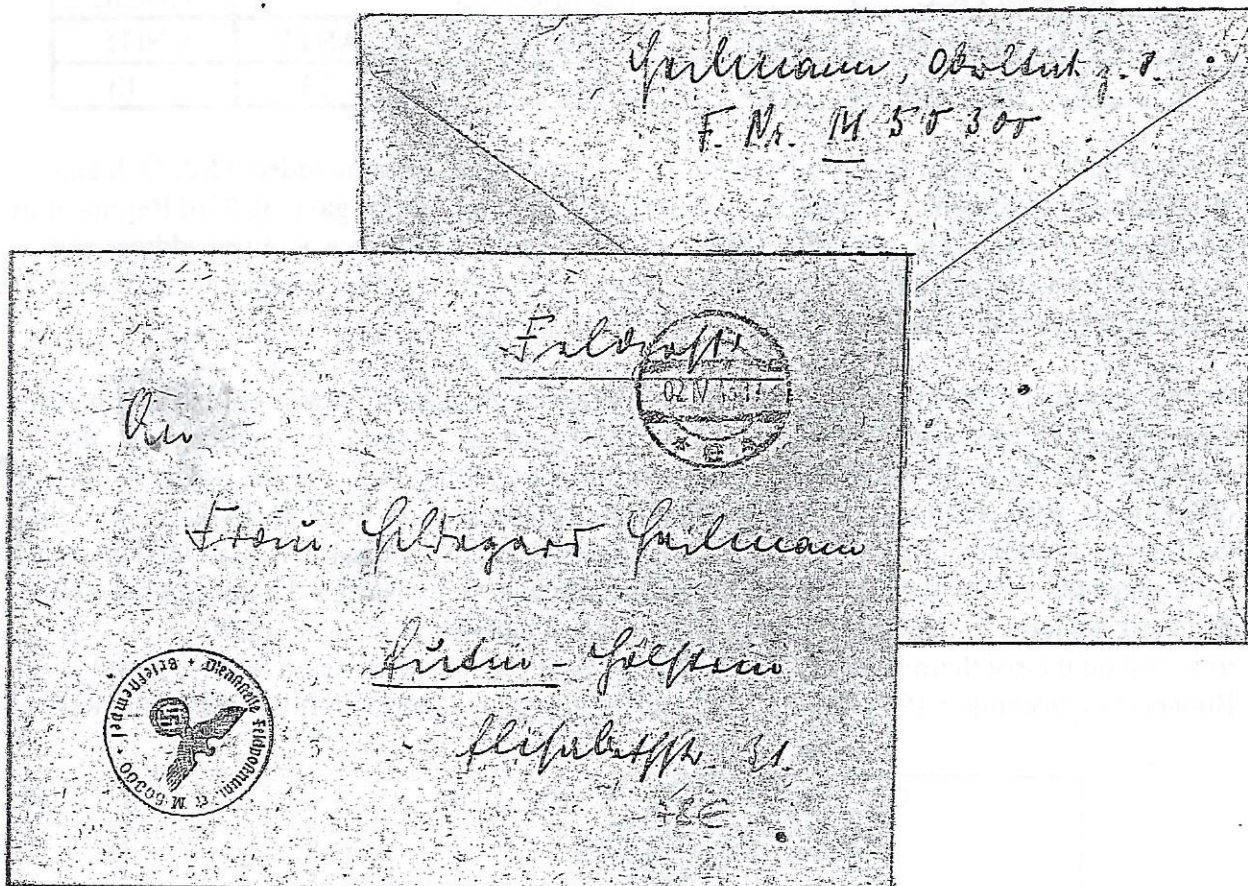


Cover sent to Military Records Office in Salzwechel in July 1943 from Fp. # 11863 (Btl. III/Panzer-Artillery Regiment 13) via Post Office 13 (K-729).

NAVY LOG

by Phil Miller

U-Boat 389 - Feldpost # 50300



U-Boat Type VIIC built by Howalts Werke (Kiel) and launched December 19, 1942.

Displacement: 769/871* tons

Dimensions: 220.25 x 20.25 x 15.74 feet

Machinery: 2-shaft diesel electric motors, BHP 2800/750

Speed: 17/7-1/2* knots

Radius: 6500 miles at 12 knots/80 miles * at 4 knots

Armament: one 3.5 in., one 37mm A.A., two 20mm A.A. (2 x 1), guns, five 21 in.

(4 bow, 1 stern) torpedo tubes, 14 torpedoes or 14 mines

Crew: 44

(*) Surface/submerged.

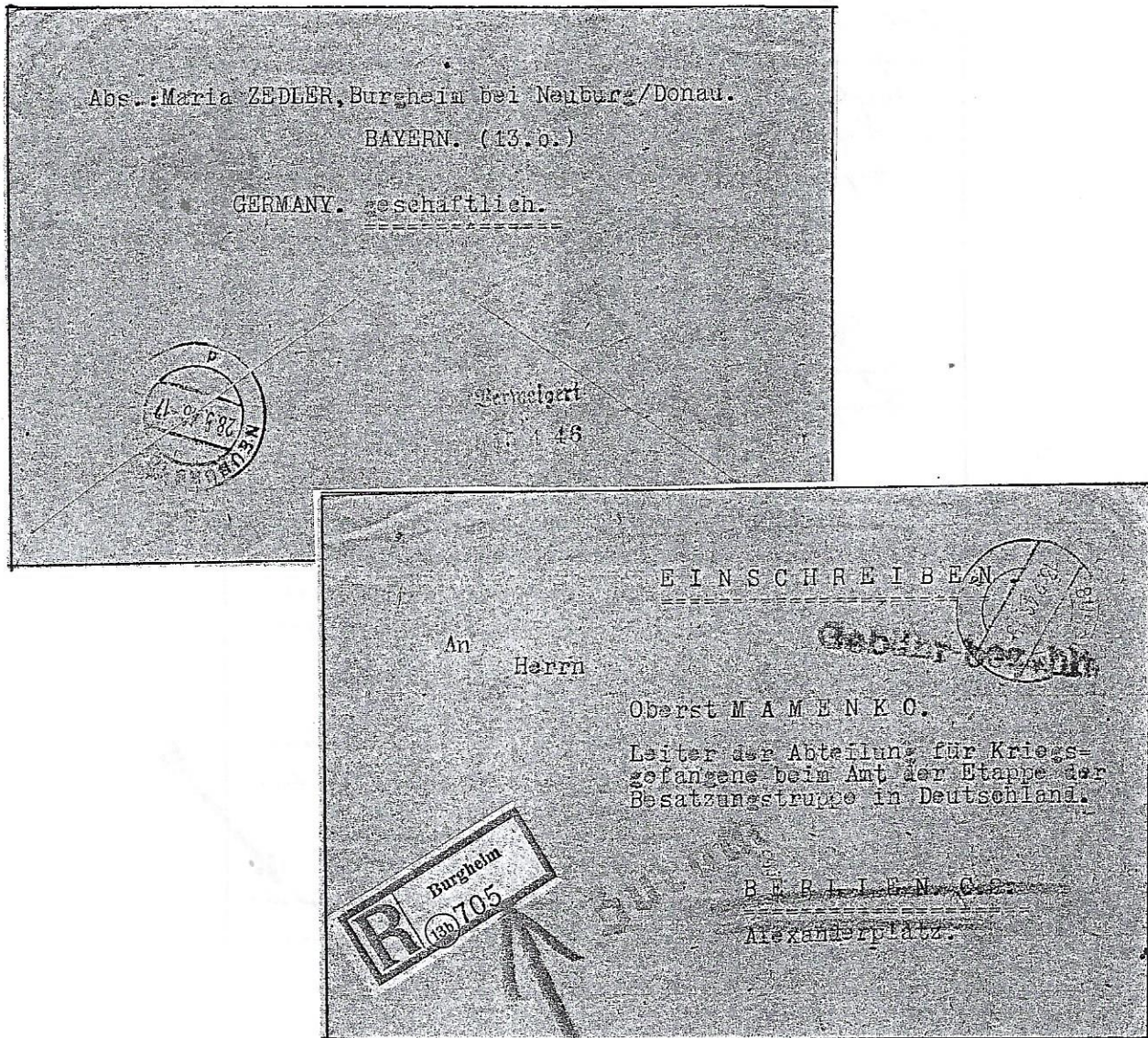
Fate: Depth charged by R A F. aircraft (269 Squadron) southwest of Iceland on October 5, 1943.

Cover from Oberleutnant Heilmann to his wife in Eutin, Germany has mute cancel dated April 2, 1943.

Missing German POW on the Eastern Front

by Larry Nelson

BACKGROUND - The registered cover (*) shown below was posted by Marie Zedler on February 13, 1946 in Burgheim, a very small town near Neuburg/Donau in Bavaria. It was addressed to a Colonel Mamenko in Berlin as the "Leiter der Abteilung für Kriegsgefangenen beim Amt der Etappe der Besatzungstruppe in Deutschland" (Head of the Department for POWs with the Office for Communication with the Occupying Forces in Germany). This letter was stamped "Verweigert" (refused) on April 15, 1946 (see hand stamp on reverse side), then stamped "Zurück" and returned to Burgheim via Neuburg where it was back stamped on May 28, 1946. (*) The postal fee of 84 Pfg was paid with a "Gebühr bezahlt" (postage paid) handstamp not listed in Richter's Barfrankaturen book, the standard reference on this subject.



OBERST MAMENKO - Colonel Mamenko's organization could, in theory, provide information about German POWs in Soviet custody and his address was listed in German newspapers as a place to go for assistance in locating relatives held as POWs. However, based on this "rejected" cover and several other similar covers located on Google, they were of little or no help. Apparently the Soviets were not interested in helping the relatives of their former enemies get information about POWs they were holding. Perhaps our TRSG members can provide more information on this subject.

THE ENCLOSED MESSAGE - I believe that this cover was probably rejected and returned unopened. The enclosed message shown below is written in what appears to be Hungarian. In any event, it seems clear that the sender, Marie Zedler, who is requesting information was a relative (same last name). She states that Rudolf Zedler, the missing soldier, was born on Feb. 26, 1916 and his Feldpost number address was Fp.# 04854. This was the coded address of "1. Kp/Pz. Div. Nachr. Abtl. 27" (Company 1 of Panzer Signal Detachment 27) of the 17th Panzer Division. This division fought on the Eastern Front and had ended the war surrounded in a pocket west of Prague. At the bottom right of the message (see arrow) the town of Mährisch Ostrau is mentioned. This town is in eastern Moravia near the Polish border and may have been his last known location. Do we have any Hungarian readers who can translate this message?

Zedler, Marie
 Цедлер Марс
 Бургхейм
 bei Nürnberg / Donau
 Bayern.

1. Feldpost 1916 года.
 Почтовый Отделение
 Мариинск.
 Пыльогуминского округа
 Вагнеровской бригады.
 Тройная Колония. Окружа. Армавия
 в Тегенбург. Германия.


Тысяча.

Тысячелетнему Тогому Тогому!

Тысяча Вас тысяча тысяча в тысяче тысяча

Имя: Цедлер (Zedler)
 Улица: Пыльогумин (Rudolf)
 Дата рождения: 26.2.1916 года.
 Место - " - Пыльогумин у Гейбура.
 Адрес: Пыльогумин у Гейбура / Бургхейм.
 Почтовый № Почтовой Почты: 04854.
 Страна: Вагнербург.
 Раз отправления: тысяча тысяча 17. Тысяча
 тысяча тысяча тысяча тысяча тысяча
 тысяча тысяча тысяча тысяча тысяча тысяча.

Тысяча тысяча тысяча тысяча тысяча тысяча
 6. Август 1945 года. из Мейсбург-Омбург (Mährisch-Ostau)



Note: Larry Nelson had some concern that his article may not be appropriate for our TRSG Bulletin because it relates to the post-war period. However, as postal communication, or the lack of it, to and from German POWs in the Soviet Union has long been a topic of interest, I believe this article will be of interest to our members.

Ye Olde Ed

Funicular (Cable) Railways (*Drahtseilbahnen*) Cancels

by Bob Ferguson

The following special cancels pertaining to towns which had cable railways are listed in Julius Bochmann's *Katalog der Deutschen Gelegenheitsstempel*.

Bad Reichenhal # 4	Predigtstuhlbahn	1936-1937
Bad Reichenhal # 5	Predigtstuhl-Berghotel	1937-1942
Innsbruck #3	Bergbahnen-Bergstation Hafelekar-Patscherkofel	1939-1942
Igls #1	Bergbahn-Patscherkofel/Luftkurort und Wintersportplatz	1939-1942
Mariazell #2	Luftkurort-Wintersportplatz	1939-1943
Mariazell #3	Luftkurort-Wintersportplatz	1945
Oberwiesenthal # 4	Grossdeutschlands höchstgeleg. Stadt m/Luftkurort-Wintersportplatz	1938-1940
Oberwiesenthal # 5	Luftkurort-Wintersportplatz	1941-1945
Reichenau #2	Luftkurort an Fusse der Rax	1940-1945
St. Anton # 2	Wintersportplatz-Sommerfrische 1300-1500m	1939-1945
Schneefernerhaus # 1	mit der Bayrischen Zugspitzbahn	1937-1939

Bad Reichenhal # 4



Oberwiesenthal # 4



Innsbruck #3



Reichenau #2



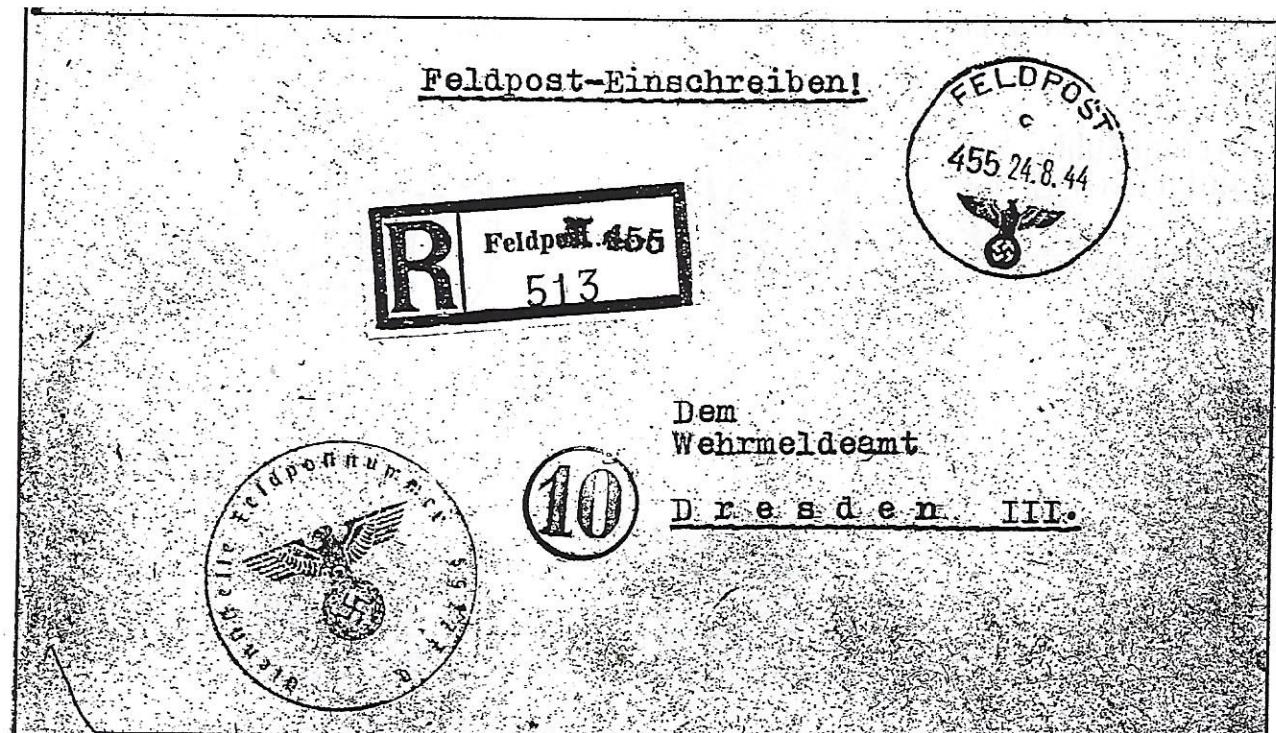
COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE:**14th Panzer Division**

by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS			AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	PANZER	PZ.GRENADIER	PZ. ARTY	UNITS
4	455	36	103	108	4

The 4th Infantry Division, formed in Dresden in 1935 (1st Wave) included the 52nd, 103rd & 108th Infantry Regiments. The division, whose post office was assigned Fp. # 10262 and Kenn 828, fought in Poland and the French Campaign, where it followed up the break through at Sedan. In September 1940 it was reorganized as the 14th Panzer Division, receiving Panzer Regiment 36 from 4th Panzer Division and giving up 52nd Infantry Regiment to 18th Panzer Division. After serving in the Balkans Campaign, the division invaded Russia with Army Group South in June 1941, fought in drive across Ukraine, the Chernigovka Pocket and other battles in the southern sector. After the Soviet winter offensive of 1941-42 had been checked, the division fought in the drive across the Don and on to the Volga. The 14th Panzer Division was surrounded at Stalingrad in November 1942 and destroyed in January 1943.

The 14th Panzer Division was reformed in Brittany, France during the summer of 1943 with a new P.O. assigned Fp.# 59970 and K-455. After returning to southern Russia, it took part in the Battle of Kiev that autumn. In continuous retreat after that, it fought in the Dneiper battles and suffered such heavy losses that it had to be rebuilt during the summer of 1944. The division was sent to the northern sector in September 1944 and became isolated in the Courland Pocket. The division was returned to Germany on the last available shipping before Army Group Courland capitulated and, thus, avoided Soviet captivity.



Cover sent to Military Records Office in Dresden in August 1944 from Fp.# 59277 (Panzer Aufklarungs Abteilung 14) via P.O. 4 (K-455)

The “V für Viktoria” Propaganda Campaign of 1941

by Jim Lewis

Propaganda takes as its objective the mind of the enemy, and makes use of the intellect to compensate for the inadequacy of material resources. During the period following the defeat of France, the most effective form of passive resistance in the German-occupied territories was the V sign. Two Belgians working for the BBC Foreign Service knew that their countrymen at home, listening night after night to the British bombers overhead on their way to the Ruhr, often scrawled the letters RAF on factory walls. But it clearly took time to write these three letters, during which they might be arrested. Therefore the Belgians in London invented for their own bilingual people (Walloon and Flemish) a simpler sign. The letter V, which stood for victoire for the French-speaking Walloons, and vrijheid for the Flemish. It could be daubed on walls and pavements in a second.

They suggested it to the deputy editor of the BBC who agreed that it should be tried out in Belgium. It was so successful that the V sign was soon in use all over occupied Europe - even in countries where the word for victory doesn't begin with V. Thus, in Czechoslovakia, V recalled the words of the Czech patriot Jan Huss, “Pravda vitezi” (Truth shall prevail). It also had a musical connotation, because the Morse code for the letter V is •••—, three dots and a dash. These were the opening bar of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, which he had explained as “Fate knocking at the door”. It was easy to tap on a door or window and soon proceeded Allied propaganda broadcasts to occupied Europe. “Dah, Dah, Dah, Dum” was henceforth to symbolize fate knocking at the door of the Third Reich (Fig. 1).

Although at first scorned and ignored by the Germans, the V campaign was soon infuriating, and finally haunting them. After failing to outlaw the practice, the Germans adopted the V sign for their own purposes. Initially it was used in the Summer of 1941 in connection with the Allied collapse in Greece (Fig. 2)



Fig. 1) A defiant Churchill flashes the V sign (left), and a bi-lingual leaflet dropped on occupied Belgium (below).



During the summer of 1941 the Germans decided to appropriate the V sign as a symbol of victory. They announced that "Viktoria" was an old, perfectly good Latin-Teutonic word for victory, which had only been replaced by "Sieg" in relatively modern times. Soon posters began to appear featuring a V sign and slogan "Viktoria - Deutschland siegt an allen Fronten" (Germany is victorious on all Fronts). This was no idle boast in late 1941. Greece and Yugoslavia had surrendered, Rommel was advancing in North Africa and German armed forces were deep into the Soviet Union.

The V sign also began to be used philatelically by the Reichspost and Feldpost as well as by German-controlled postal systems in the occupied areas.

In the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, a number of special cancels and supplementary hand stamps were used late in 1941.

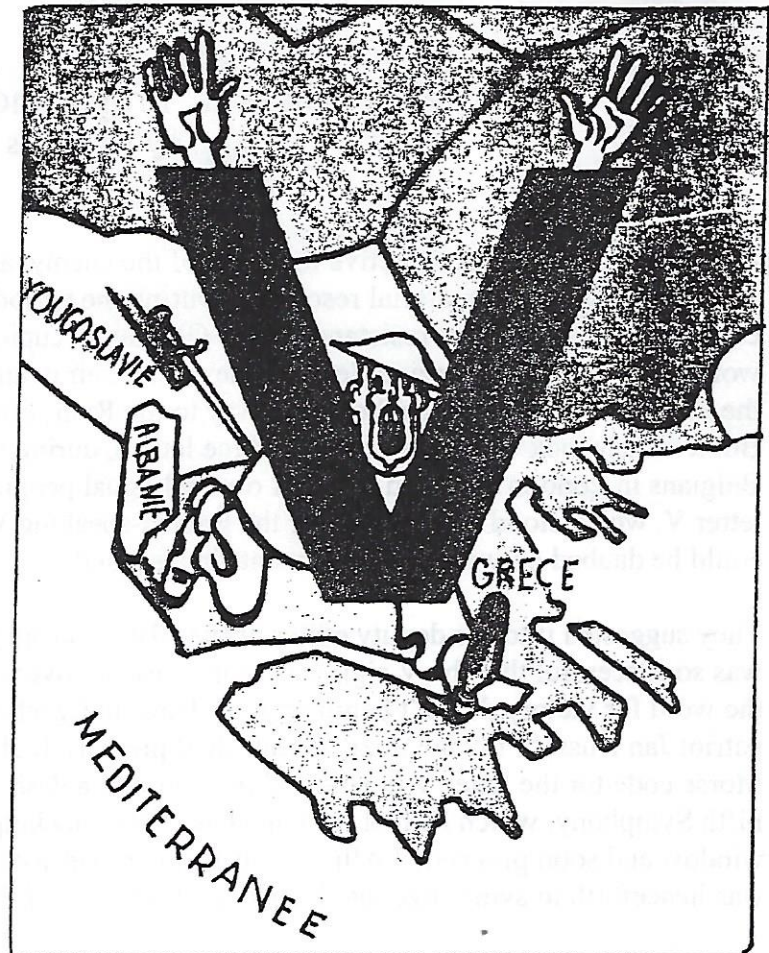


Fig. 2) The British retreat from Greece in late April 1941 prompted this German poster suggesting that the V was a sign of surrender

A notice in the July 26, 1941 "Protectorats-Verkehrministerium Amtsblatt No. 39" listed 15 post offices that would use victory wreath cancels (Fig. 3) to commemorate German victories. These P.O.s were Prag, Budweis, Kolin, Klattau, Tabor, Jungbunzlau, Pardubitz, Königgrätz, Klado, Brünn, Iglau, Olmütz, Mährisch Ostrau and Zlin. A slogan cancel (Fig. 4) with the victory motto in both German and Czech was used by Brünn 2 and by Prag 25 on August 6, 1941.



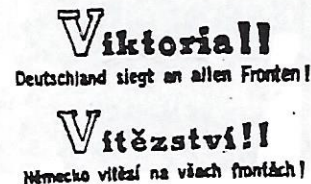
Fig. 3)

In addition to these cancels, red hand stamps (Fig. 5) were added adjacent to the town cancels between July and October 1941 in connection with the announcement of major German victories.



Fig. 4)

Fig. 5)



These red hand stamps are known to have been used by civil post offices on specific dates as follows: Freidberg-Mistek (5.VII.41), Mährisch Ostrau (12.VII.41), Olmütze (15.VII.41), Kolin1 (30.VII.41), Ung. Brod (9.VIII.41), Prag 27 (14.VIII.41), Zlin (15.VIII.41), Königgrätz (10.XI.41), Prag 2 (30.IX. 41), Deutschbrod (11.X.41), Prag 41 (28.X.41) and Mährisch Ostrau 2 (3.XII.41).

A German only handstamp was used by the Deutsche Dienstpost office in Mährisch Ostrau (Fig. 6) while a somewhat smaller handstamp was used by DDP offices in Prag, Brunn, Iglau and Zlin (Fig. 7). There was also a circular handstamp in either red or violet (Fig. 8) used in various DDP offices during the same period.



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

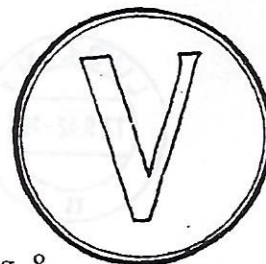


Fig. 8

A crude unofficial V handstamp was apparently used by the civil post office in Jitschin (Fig. 9) and a violet line stamp is found on "Postsache" (Postal business) mail from Kremsier (Fig. 10). Finally, a white label with red printing was used by Olmütz 1 (Fig. 11).



Fig. 9

Deutschland siegt an allen Fronten für Europa



Fig. 10



Fig. 11

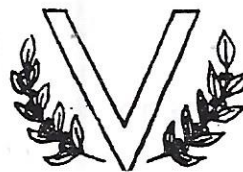
The most common type of V marking found on mail from Bohemia/Moravia was not applied by post offices. Many of the German administrative offices and organizations such as Organization Todt were supplied with 3-line hand stamps (Fig. 12) that were used on official mail, especially mail sent via the larger Dienstpost offices in Prag, Brünn and Olmütz.



Fig. 12

In occupied Norway, the government of Prime Minister Quisling had definitive stamps overprinted "V" in black. Additionally, a victory wreath and V were incorporated into the town cancels of Koningsvinger (Fig. 13), Oslo, Bergen and Drontheim.

Fig. 13



A number of post offices in the Generalgouvernement employed V markings in the form of hand stamps applied adjacent to or above the town cancel. The following types are known:

Boxed hand stamp with German slogan was used by Lublin 1 (Fig. 14) while another boxed stamp used by Jasoslau (Fig. 15) has slogan in Polish. The only bilingual (German/Polish) slogan was used by Warschau 1 in August 1941 (Fig. 16)

Fig. 14



Fig. 15

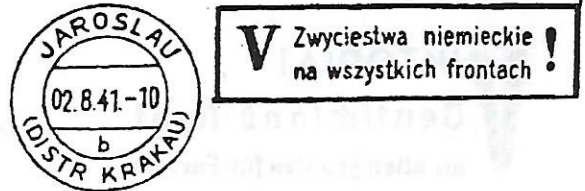
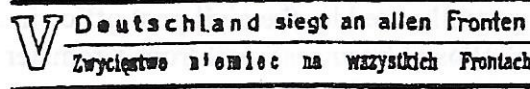


Fig. 16

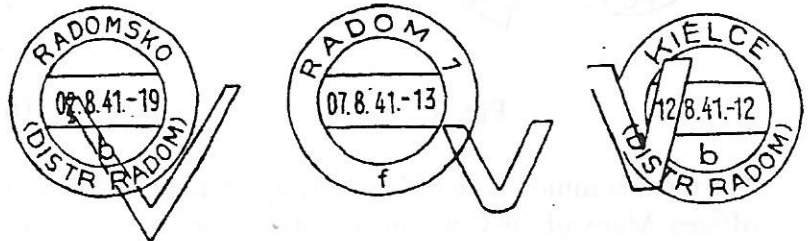


A "V" sign without slogan was used by Krakau 1 (Fig. 17) while cruder signs in red, black and violet impinge into the cancels of Radomsko, Radom and Kielce on August 8, 1941 (Fig. 18)

Fig. 17



Fig. 18



The German Ministry of Propaganda issued labels to military units for use on Feldpost. The cover (Fig. 19) has this red label with "VICTORIA" in white and a large black V superimposed on the background.

There were also a number of privately produced V labels that are shown on the next page.

Fig. 19

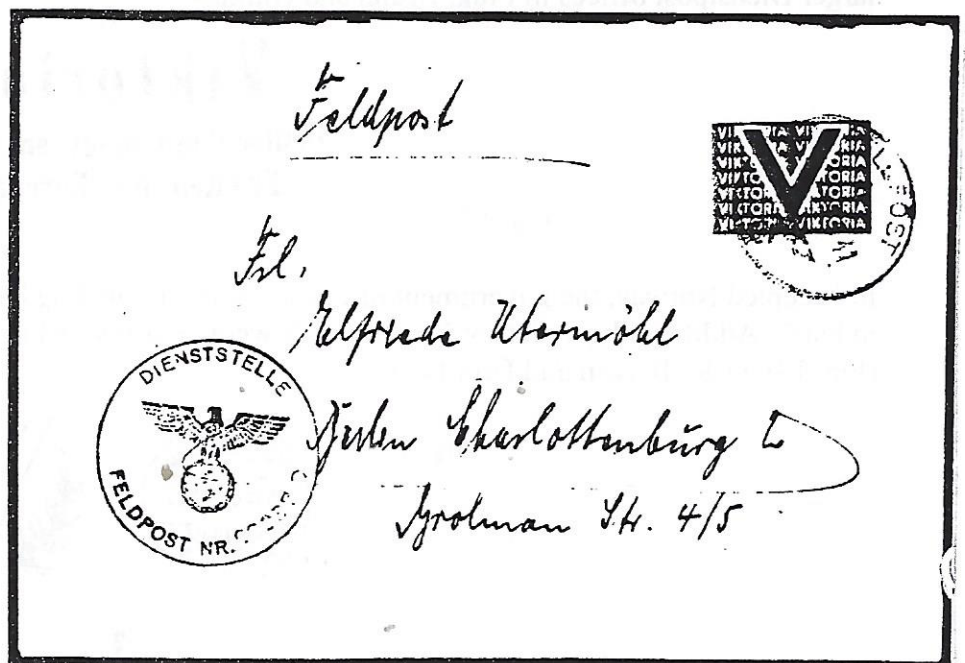




Fig. 20

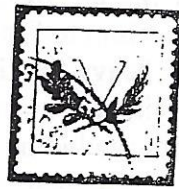


Fig. 21



Fig. 22



Fig. 23

Perforated labels include a large design (Fig. 20) with “Feldpost” & V produced in Vienna and a smaller design with V plus swastikas and German crosses in the corners (Fig. 21).

Cut labels include a round vignette with red V and gold border (fig. 22) and a diamond design (Fig. 23) with red background and slogan “DAS DEUTSCHE SIEGESZEICHEN” (The German Victory Sign) on white paper.

This same slogan appears in a slogan cancel of the Feldpost office in Brussels for major victories in 1941. (Fi. 24)



In addition to these postmarks, there are a number of interesting post cards produced in both Germany and Italy which incorporate the V sign and motto into their designs. Shown below is a multi-color card (Fig. 25) designed by Gottfried Klein for Heinrich Hoffman.



The German defeat before Moscow in late 1941 ended an unbroken string of military victories since September 1939. Propaganda Minister Göebbles decided it was prudent to soft pedal the Viktoria campaign and prepare the German people for the realities of war on several fronts. Although there was fairly wide use of the V mark, all of these postal markings are fairly scarce today, particularly the Feldpost Labels.

References:

Deutsche Dienstpost 1939-1945

by Dr. Hermann Schultz (1958)

Propaganda, the Art of Persuasion During WWII

by Anthony Rhodes (1976)

The War that Hitler Won

by Robert E. Herzstein (1978)

ED Note: This article, in slightly different form, first appeared in the October 1985 TRSG Bulletin (Vol. XIX, Whole No. 77).

Story Behind the Cancel: The Pasewalk Military Hospital

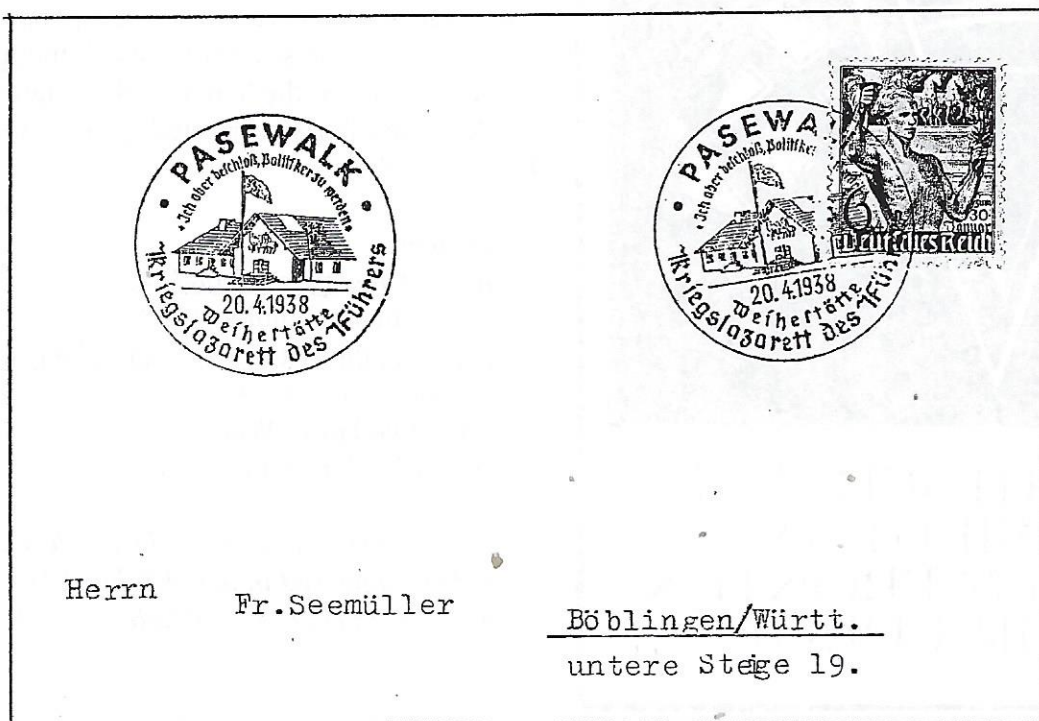
by Kelly Stefanacci

At the start of World War I in the summer of 1914, Adolf Hitler was an Austrian living in Vienna who asked and received permission to enlist as a German soldier. Traveling to France in October 1914 as a member of the 16th Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment, he saw heavy fighting during the First Battle of Ypres. He was awarded the Iron Cross that December for carrying a wounded comrade to safety. Over the next two years he took part in some of the fiercest battles, including the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, the Second Battle of Ypres and the Battle of the Somme. On October 7, 1916, he was wounded in the leg by artillery fire near Bepaume, France and sent to convalesce near Berlin. Upon returning to his unit in February 1917, he bitterly remarked to his comrades about the dismal state of morale and dedication on the home front.

He earned more citations for bravery the next year including the Iron Cross 1st Class for singly capturing a group of French soldiers during the final German offensive on the Western Front. On October 14, 1918, Corporal Adolf Hitler was among the Germans wounded in the Ypres Salient in Belgium. Temporarily blinded by a British gas shell, he was evacuated to a German military hospital at Pasewalk, in Pomerania. His injury put an end to his service in World War I. He learned of the German surrender while recovering at Pasewalk and felt that he and his fellow soldiers had been betrayed by the German people.

In 1941, as Germany's Führer, Hitler revealed the degree in which his career and its terrible legacy had been shaped by World War I when he wrote "I brought my experiences at the Front back home with me; out of them I built my National Socialist community".

This postcard has two strikes of the special cancel used in Pasewalk to commemorate Hitler's 49th birthday on April 20, 1938. The central design is the hospital where Hitler was treated after his mustard gas exposure. The text below the date reads: "Consecrated place, the Field Hospital of the Führer" while the text below the town name reads: "It was here I decided to become a politician".



German POWs in Australia

by Gustav Pohlig

During and after WWII, most German POWs were held in camps in the USA, Canada, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union. Smaller groups were held in Jamaica, South Africa, Kenya, India, Australia and other countries. I, myself, was a POW in Australia from August 1941 until January 1947. This article is intended to show the various mail forms that were available to me during this period of time.

As the distance from Germany to Australia is very great, the mail took a very long time. In 1942, Germany threatened to curtail mail privileges of British POWs in reprisal for the slowness of mail from our camps in Australia. The International Red Cross intervened and prevented a major crisis. The major change was the availability of airmail. We could send two letters and four cards per month, using "notelopes" (folded letters) and post cards that were provided by the Australians.

Fig. 1) Standard letter sent to USA in Nov. '45 was still censored by Australians and the U.S. Army.

3
Opened

U.S. ARMY
1945
WRITE HERE
HIER SCHREIBEN
SCRIVERE QUI

Opene y Censor

Name	Abreander	Mittente
Name and Surname <u>Pohlig, Gustav-Adolf</u>	Vor and Zurname	Cognome e nome
Number and Rank <u>41669, O. Gefr.</u>	Gefangenen-nummer Rang	Numero dell' internato Grado
Camp _____	Lager-bezeichnung	Campo
State <u>Vic.</u>	Staat (Landesteil)	Paese (Distretto)
No 13 P.O.V. G.P.F. ...		AUSTRALIA

SERVICE OF PRISONERS OF WAR

THIS PAGE MUST BE USED FOR THE ADDRESS ONLY
DIESE SEITE DARF NUR FUER DIE ADRESSE BENUTZT WERDEN
QUI SI SCRIVE SOLO L'INDIRIZZO

Addresssee
Empfänger
Destinatario

Name and Surname
Vor und Zurname
Cognome e nome

Street
Strasse
Strada

Suburb
Bezirk
Sebborgo

City
Staat
Citta

1945
NOV 28 1945
VIC. AUSTR.

PAUSEL
CENSURE UNIT
182

T/Sgt. Ernest J. POHLIG

361 T.C. Harlow Craft Co.


264

RPO 954 - C/O Postmaster

5611

SAN-FRANZISCO Country Calif. U.S.A
Land Calif. U.S.A
Paese

Fig. 2) POW Form Post Card with diamond-shaped hand stamp of Australian censor.

SERVICE OF PRISONERS OF WAR.		POST CARD	
The address only to be written on this side.		Name and Surname Vor- und Zuname Nome e Cognome	Herrn W. ORTMANN
If anything else is added the postcard will be destroyed.		Street, Strasse Strada	
Nur die Adresse ist auf diese Seite zu schreiben. Sollte etwas hinzugefügt werden so wird diese Postkarte Vernichtet.		Suburb, Stadteil Sobborga	
L'indirizzo soltanto su questa parte.		City, Stadt Città	HELLMITZHEIM / Franken
Se si aggiunge qualsiasi Parola La cartolina sarà distrutta.		Country Land Paese	GERMANY

Beginning in 1943 we could send these letter forms and cards by airmail, for which we paid 1 Shilling and 6d respectively. A postage stamp was affixed after we had handed in the item of mail and paid the fee as shown in Figs. 3 and 4 below.

BY AIR-MAIL

NUR DIE ADRESSE AUF DER
L'INDIRIZZO SOLTANTO SU
THE ADDRESS ONLY ON

FRAU GRETE HAMPEL
IN WIEN, XX. BEZ.
LEIKE-STRASSE 36.

DEUTSCHLAND

LETTER IN GERMAN
SCHREIBEN AUF DER
PARTEI DER
OF WAR

AB

PASSED BY V.E.V. CENSOR

Fig. 3) Letter form with Air Mail stamp.

Fig. 4) Form card with Air Mail stamp.

SERVICE OF PRISONERS OF WAR.		POST CARD	
The address only, to be written on this side.		Name and Surname Vor- und Zuname Nome e Cognome	Herrn W. ORTMANN
If anything else is added the postcard will be destroyed.		Street, Strasse Strada	Weymannstrasse
Nur die Adresse ist auf diese Seite zu schreiben. Sollte etwas hinzugefügt werden so wird diese Postkarte Vernichtet.		Suburb, Stadteil Sobborga	Hellmiltzheim / Franken
L'indirizzo soltanto su questa parte.		City, Stadt Città	KASSEL
Se si aggiunge qualsiasi Parola La cartolina sarà distrutta.		Country Land Paese	Germany G. Fulham

Subsequently, the regular glazed letter sheet was overprinted with a blue panel inscribed "Australia 1. Airmail Fee" and the standard postcard with a similar panel denoting payment of 6d fee. The letter shown as Fig. 5 has Australian censor stamps on both sides while the back has the camp commander's approval stamp (extreme bottom) and German censor tape and hand stamps applied in Berlin.

Fig. 5)

SERVICE OF PRISONERS OF WAR

THIS PAGE MUST BE USED FOR THE ADDRESS ONLY
 DIESE SETTE DARF NUR FÜR DIE ADRESSE BENUTZT WERDEN
 QUI SI SCRIVE BOLO L'INDIRIZZO

Name and Surname } **Frau A. POHLIG**
 Vor- und Zuname
 Nome e Cognome

Street } **Huegelstr. 79**
 Strasse
 Strada

Suburb }
 Stadtteil
 Sobborgo

City } **DARM**
 Stadt
 Città

AUSTRALIA AIR MAIL FEE

RECEIVED
PAULY-CR

Geöffnet

Name and Surname } **Frau A. POHLIG**
 Vor- und Zuname
 Nome e Cognome

Number } **41664** Gefangenen-nummer Numero de' internato
 Rank } **Oberst** Rang Grado
 Camp } **No. 13 POW Group, Murchison** Lager-bezeichnung Campo
 State } **Victoria** Staat (Landesteil) Stato
AUSTRALIA

POW GROUP MURCHISON

Fig. 6) Form card with airmail overprint has hand stamp of Berlin censor office.

POST CARD

SERVICE OF PRISONERS OF WAR.

The address only to be written on this side.
 If anything else is added the postcard will be destroyed.
 Nur die Adresse ist auf diese Seite zu schreiben. Sollte etwas hinzugefügt werden so wird diese Postkarte vernichtet.
 L'indirizzo soltanto su questa parte. Se si aggiunge qualcosa Parola La cartolina sarà distrutta.

Name and Surname } **Herrn W. ORTMANN**
 Vor- und Zuname
 Nome e Cognome

Street, Strasse } **Wincklerstr. 8**
 Strada

Suburb, Stadtteil }
 Sobborgo

City, Stadt } **BAD-KREUZNACH**
 Città

Country } **Germany**
 Land
 Paese

AUSTRALIA AIR MAIL FEE

RECEIVED
PAULY-CR

The source of authorization for this overprinting is, in spite of intense investigation, not clear. One fact remains, however - these items, now extremely scarce, are the only existing airmail stationery ever issued for the use of POWs and internees exclusively (A 5d post card was also issued to Japanese POWs in Australia.)

Of the 1,658 Germans held in Australia, 67 officers and their orderlies lived in Dhurnigile (Victoria). The remaining NCOs and other ranks were in the main camp at Murchison (Victoria) with satellite camps at Tatura (Victoria), Graytown (Victoria) and at Marrinup (West Australia). These German soldiers had been captured in Crete, the Middle East and Egypt during the spring of 1941. After initial processing, they waited in transit camps in Latrun (Palestine), Heinan (south of Cairo) and Fayed or Sidra (Bitter Lakes) for transport to Australia on the British liner *Queen Elizabeth*.

On board this ship were also 2,000 Templers (descendants of a group of Germans who had left Germany around 1850 and settled in Palestine) who were being interned in Australia. Upon arrival in Australia, the POWs were joined by members of the crew of the German auxiliary cruiser *Kormoran*. This was the largest raider operated by the Germans during World War Two. During her year long career in the Atlantic and Indian oceans, she was responsible for the destruction of ten merchant vessels and the capture of an eleventh. *Kormoran* sank the Australian light cruiser *Sydney*, during a mutually destructive battle off Western Australia on November 19, 1941. Damage sustained during the battle prompted the scuttling of *Kormoran*. While 318 of the 399 sailors aboard the German ship were rescued and placed in POW camps for the duration of the war, there were no survivors from the 645 crew members of the *Sydney*. Later a group of German merchant seamen who had been judged to be prisoners of war were also placed in an Australian camp.

It appears that most of the mail sent by German POWs after the end of the war was not censored in Australia. A post card sent to the U.S.A. in 1946 (Fig. 7) carries a single line hand stamp "Approved for transmission by the Camp Commander" but no censor markings. However, as noted earlier, the letter sent to the U.S.A. in November 1945 (Fig. 1) was censored both in Australia and by the U.S. Army. During wartime, mail from German POWs in Australia often took four to eight months to reach their destinations, obviously making the long imprisonment even more difficult.

Fig. 7)

SERVICE OF PRISONERS OF WAR	
THIS PAGE MUST BE USED FOR THE ADDRESS ONLY	
DIESE SEITE DARF NUR FUER DIE ADRESSE BENUTZT WERDEN	
QUI SI SCRIVE SOLO L'INDIRIZZO	
Name and Surname Vor- und Zuname Nome e Cognome	Mr. ERNST J. POHLIG
Street Strasse Strada	% Dr. H.T. Perry
Suburb Stadtteil Sobborgo	Box 866
City Stadt Città	BISMARCK (N.D.)
Country Land Paese	U.S.A.

APPROVED FOR TRANSMISSION BY CAMP COMMANDER

1346 AUSTRALIA AIR MAIL 5d

ED Note: This article, in slightly different form, first appeared in the July 1978 TRSG Bulletin (Vol. XII, Whole No. 48). The author was one of the earliest members of the TRSG and remained a staunch member until his passing during in early 1990s.

German POWs in North America Camps in Maine

by Jim Lewis

While the agricultural and forest products industries in Maine were vital, by late 1943 an estimated 10,000 workers had left either to enter the armed forces or to seek lucrative defense jobs. Senator Ralph Brewster, who knew the benefits gained by POW labor in other states, was able to arrange for a POW camp in Maine. The site deemed most suitable was the Houlton Army Airfield located on the Canadian border in the northeastern tip of the United States. On July 1, 1944 Camp Houlton (Code 194) was opened with an initial shipment of 299 German POWs from Camp Edwards, Massachusetts. Eventually, almost 3,000 POWs would be sent to Houlton. The POW compound was located on the east side of the airfield, within feet of the Canadian border. The compound itself measured 1,350 feet long by 650 feet wide and consisted of a double barbed wire fence with six machine gun towers. Inside the fence were fifteen "H" shaped barracks 100 feet long. The middle of the "H" contained showers and toilets.

Late in 1944, during the interrogation of some newly arrived POWs, one U.S. Army interpreter, who was also fluent in Russian, noticed a group of men who kept to themselves. When he called them forward to fill out International Red Cross cards, he overheard them speaking in Russian. He approached the Provost Marshall and said "Sir, we have a group of Georgians among the prisoners". Confused, the Major replied "Georgians?, I thought the Civil War was over with!" When this information had been passed on to the Provost General's Office in Washington, a survey of all POW camps in the country revealed that many of them also contained Russians. These men had all been members of the "Army" founded by General Andrei Vlasov. He had been captured by the Germans and was able to partially convince them that there were enough Anti-Stalinist Russians to form an army to help overthrow the Soviet leader. While captured in German uniforms, most of these men had never been armed and were used in labor battalions. In December 1944, the Russians at Houlton were, along with their countrymen in other camps, shipped to a new camp exclusively for Russians at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

Farmers interested in utilizing POW labor were required to provide the necessary transportation from the camp. POWs worked in groups of ten, each gang accompanied by two guards. The farmer then reimbursed the government according to the number of barrels of potatoes picked or pounds of peas or beans harvested. The POW labor proved invaluable during the harvest of 1944, when they picked 291,000 pounds of beans and 725,000 barrels of potatoes. This provided the government with \$145,000 in revenue. During the harvest, the local Birdseye frozen food plant operated 24 hours a day, freezing and packing peas and beans, with most of the labor supplied by the POWs. Prisoners worked up to ten hours a day in the fields. This did not include the time traveled to and from the farms, some of which were twenty miles or more from camp.

The main camp and branch camps in Maine are listed below

Name of Camp	County	Main Camp	Name of Camp	County	Main Camp
Augusta	Kennebec	Houlton	Presque Isle	Aroostook	Houlton
Bangor	Penobscot	Houlton	Princeton	Washington	Houlton
Dow Field	Penobscot	Houlton	Seboomook	Somerset	Houlton
Houlton	Aroostook	-----	Spencer Lake	Somerset	Houlton

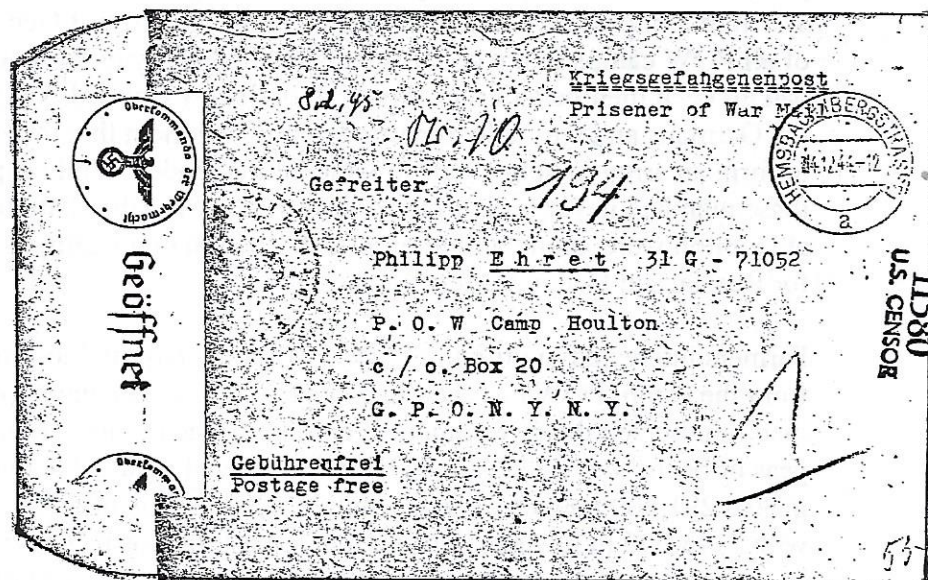
Note): Houlton also had a branch camp in Stark, New Hampshire.

In the fall, following the harvest, the work shifted to contract wood cutting for Great Northern Paper Company and six other concerns employing prisoners. Four branch camps for wood cutting were opened at Spencer Lake, Seboomook, Princeton and Stark in New Hampshire. These were former CCC camps with fenced compounds and gun towers surrounding the buildings that housed the POWs. At Seboomook, located at the northern end of Moosehead Lake, 250 POWs were billeted in housing owned by Great Northern Paper. Each POW was required to cut 6/10 of a cord of wood per day. Between October 1944 and January 1945, POWs averaged 12,000 cords per month. Camp Houlton also provided several dozen POWs each to Presque Isle air base, Dow air base in Bangor and Camp Keyes in Augusta where they worked as orderlies and on maintenance crews.



Fig. 1) German POWs in Maine potato field.

Fig. 2) Letter from Hemsbach, Germany to POW in Houlton posted on December 12, 1944 has sealing tape and "Zensurstelle" hand stamp of Frankfurt censor office (Code 'F'). Note manuscript "194" to denote code number of Camp Houlton and "8.2.45" for receiving date of Feb. 8, 1945.



During the spring and summer of 1945, POWs worked in the fields and in the fall returned to the forests for wood cutting. Morale improved in January 1946 as the first group of POWs was transferred to Fort Devens, Massachusetts, the first leg of the anticipated return to their homeland. Unfortunately, some would spend an additional year or two rebuilding England or in the French coal mines before finally arriving home. Camp Houlton was officially closed on May 8, 1946.

The legacy of the POWs marked an important footnote in the history of warfare. It proved that the rules of the Geneva Convention, which required decent treatment of captured soldiers, could be implemented and adhered to on a large scale. It is indisputable that this treatment helped lay the foundation for post-war German/American relations

Feldpost Facets 1937-1945

Mail to Users of "Durch Deutsche Feldpost"

by Benjamin R. Beede

This is the first in what may be a group of articles about aspects of German military mail from the 1930s through the end of World War II. I wrote "a group" rather than "a series" intentionally. My inspiration comes from Gerald O. Zedlitz's articles about the local postal system during World War I German occupation. Like those articles, each one of mine will be "a random walk" rather than a highly detailed examination of the subject. I have waited until the present to begin my articles, because I knew that a fifth edition of the Michel Feldpost was coming. Some of my articles may examine the coverage of a topic in the Michel Feldpost book.

My articles will necessarily be tied to my interests and, to a lesser extent, to items in my collection. Those interests include the use of the Feldpost by various categories of individuals, firms, and governmental agencies. Civilian use of the Feldpost goes far beyond the "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" segment, but let us begin here. In some occupied areas, such as France and parts of the Soviet Union, and in Axis countries, such as Hungary, Croatia, German governmental agencies and private firms and those individuals associated with them could send and receive mail through the Feldpost by paying postage at domestic German rates or, in the case of governmental agencies, by using bulk payment contracts. Building a collection of "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" covers is challenging, but slowly a group of covers varying by locations and rates can be assembled.

By far, the most common "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" cover was sent by a firm or individual in France or Belgium, and the franking was normally a 12 Rpf. Hitler head stamp. The Michel Feldpost catalog now recognizes that covers other than those sent to and from France and Belgium are somewhat scarce. The prices shown for covers sent to firms, individuals and governmental agencies are consistently lower than for items sent to them. I disagree with this assessment. Covers sent to firms, individuals and governmental agencies seem to me to be at least unusual.

Fig. 1) The sender of this cover evidently confused "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" with ordinary Feldpost service and sent it without any franking. Somewhere, a Feldpost office picked up the error and applied a 12 Pfg. Hitler head stamp and a Feldpost cancellation. Only 12 Pfg. Postage due was charged, suggesting that the Feldpost worker thought the mistake was a natural one.

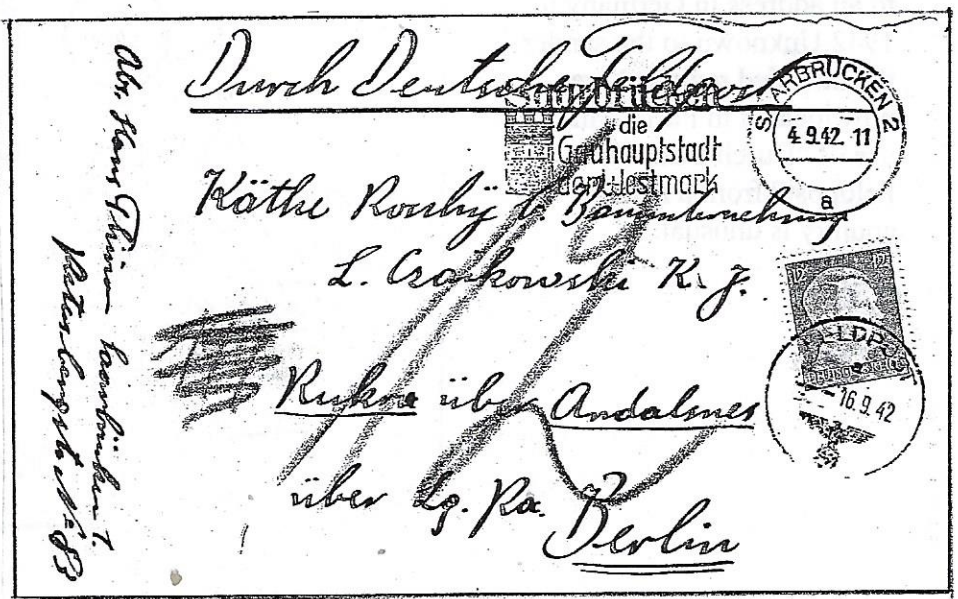


Fig. 2) This bank cover was sent "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" from Bohemia-Moravia. The cover appears to have been paid at the foreign postal rate, plus the fee for express mail. There is no receiving postmark. The item is an exception to the general rule that express service was not available to Feldpost users.

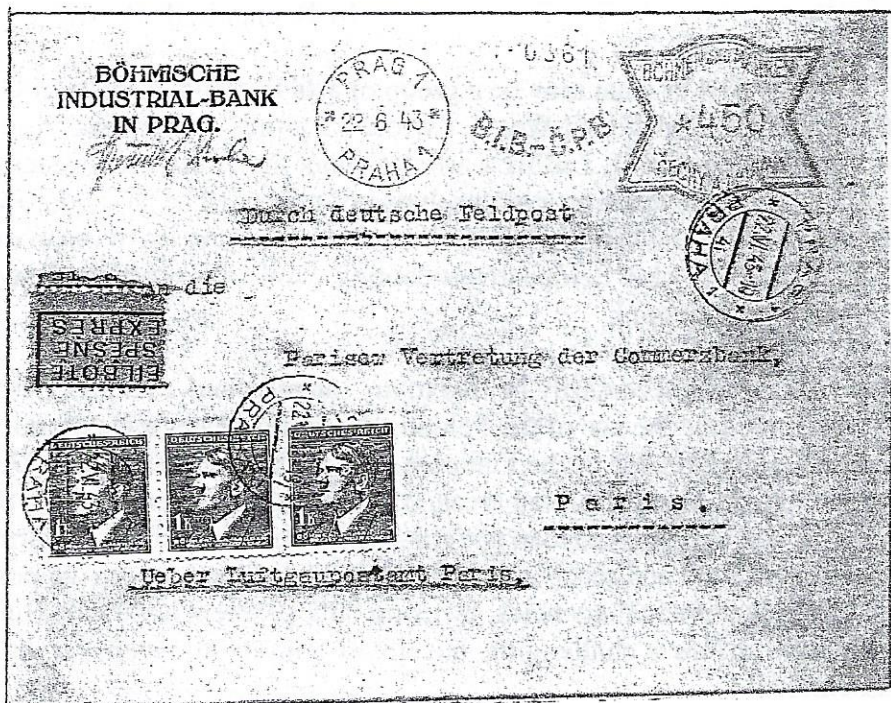
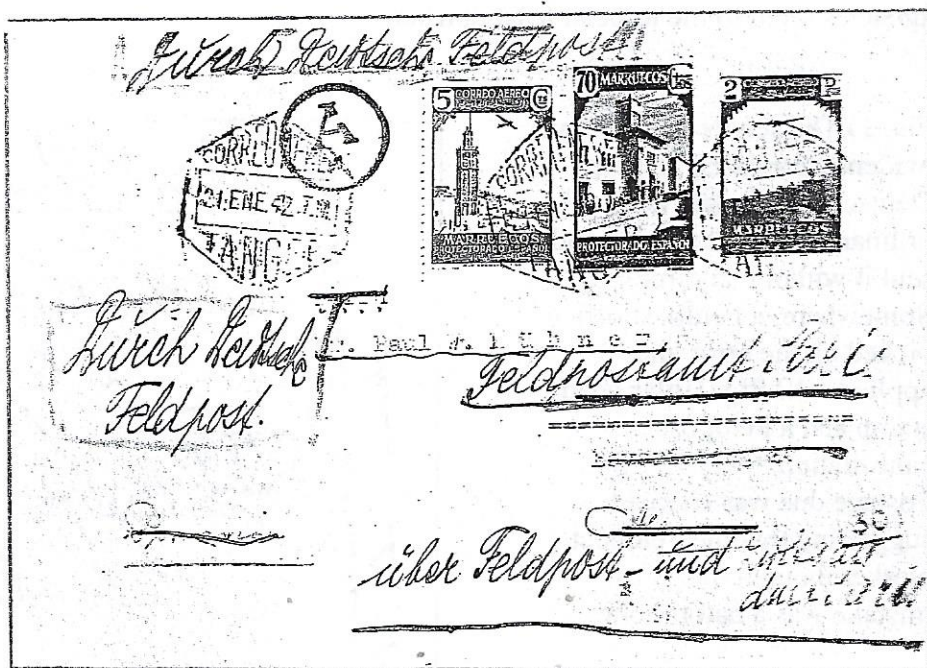


Fig. 3) This cover sent from Tangier in Spanish Morocco to an address in Germany in 1942. Unknown to the sender, the intended recipient was now located in Paris. This use of "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" from a neutral country is unusual.



COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE:**15th Panzer Division**

by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS			AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	PANZER	GRENADIER	ARTY	UNITS
33	697	8	104	115	33

The 33rd Infantry Division was formed in 1935-36 (1st Wave) of the peacetime Army; it initially included the 104th, 110th and 115th Infantry Regiments. The P.O. was assigned Fp.# 05254 as a return address and Kenn 697 as a coded identity in lieu of FpA 33. The division fought in France, and then was reorganized into the 15th Panzer Division in the fall of 1940, receiving the 8th Panzer Regiment and giving up the 110th Infantry regiment to the 112th Infantry Division.

In the spring of 1941 the 15th Panzer Division was sent to Libya to form one of the two divisions of the Afrika Korps. That summer it gave up the 104th Panzer Grenadier Regiment to the 5th Light Division, which was reorganizing as the 21st Panzer Division.

The 15th Panzer Division took part in the final attacks on Tobruck in April-May 1941 and suffered heavy losses in late 1941. After retreating into Libya and receiving a new supply of tanks in January 1942, it fought in the second Cyrenecian campaign and helped retake Benghazi. Later in 1942 it took part in the battles of the Gazala Line, the capture of Tobruck and the invasion of Egypt. It was checked and virtually destroyed in the El Alamein battles. After retreating to Tunisia, it turned to attack at the Kasserine Pass. The 15th Panzer Division was finally destroyed in the final collapse in North Africa in May 1943.

Dienststelle Feldpostnummer 31605.

Feldpost.

An das

R Feldpost (047)
557

Wehrbezirkskommando

Bayreuth.

FELDPOST
b
697 29.6.41

Einschreiben.
Kriegs-Bez. 31605

Cover sent to Military District Office in Bayreuth in June 1941 from
Fp. # 31605 (5 gr. kw. Kol. Panzer Division Kol. 200) via P.O. 33 (K-697).

Romerberg Festspiele - Frankfurt (Main) Cancels

by Bob Ferguson

The Romerberg is the square at the historic core of Frankfurt, named after the 15th century Romer, or town hall, on its western side. The Festival was held for two months each summer through 1939 and was continued after the war. A uniform slogan text "Romerberg-Festspiele in der Goethestadt" appears on seven cancels used between 1933-1939. These cancels are listed in Julius Bochmann's **Katalog der Deutschen Gelegenheitsstempel** as Frankfurt (M) #s 56, 61, 63, 64, 74, 88, and 97.

Printed matter (Drucksache) cover to Pfalz posted on August 21, 1937 has 3 Pfg. Stamp tied by Frankfurt(M) slogan cancel # 74.

