



# 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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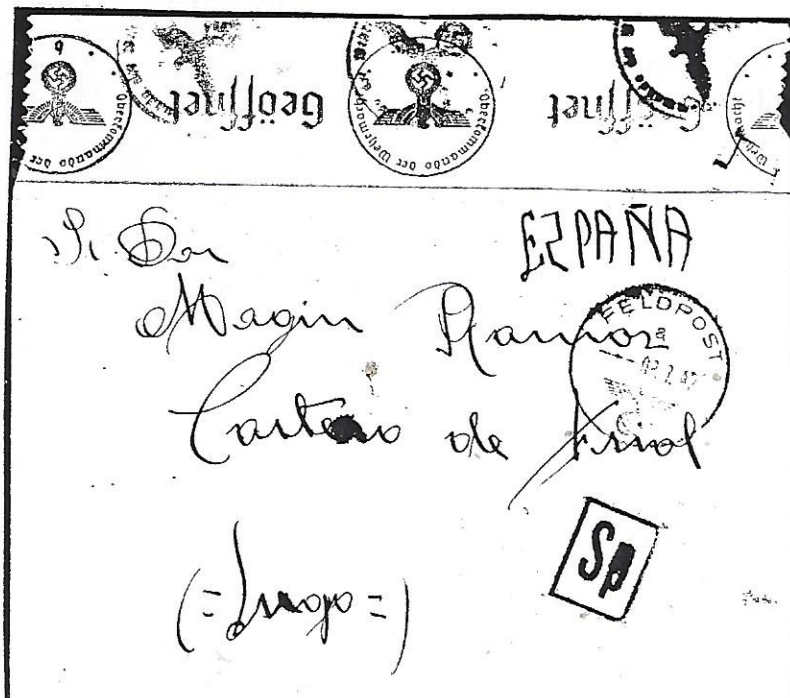
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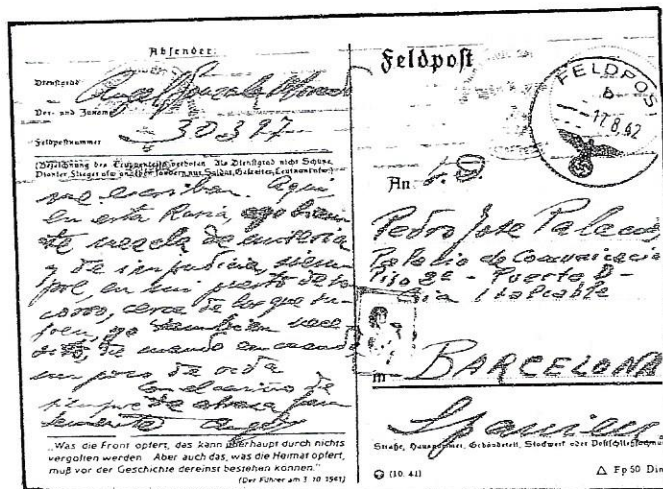


# STUDY GROUP NOTES

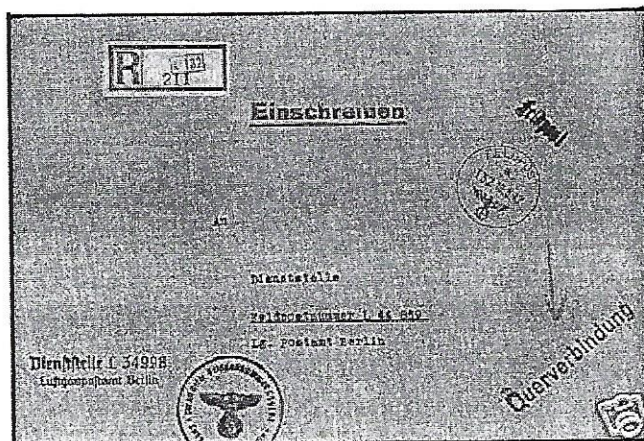
**Prosit Neujahr!** – Welcome to another year of study group activities. As always, I hope that each of our members will take it upon themselves to contribute something to these pages in 2009. One member who has been especially generous in this regard is **Bob Ferguson**. From his lonely outpost in rural Alabama, Bob continues to provide a steady stream of articles based on his varied and interesting collections.

**The Blue Division** - Frederick Clements writes “Just received the October TRSG Bulletin and wish to say how much I enjoyed John Walker’s article. For those of our members who may be interested in the rather remarkable combat record of the 250<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, may I suggest the division history by Gerald R. Kleinfeld and Lewis A. Tambs titled “Hitler’s Spanish Legion - The Blue Division in Russia”. While this book is out of print, it can be found. The Blue Division was the only unit on the Eastern Front that was never overrun and defeated by the Russians. It is supposed to hold the record for forced marches during its deployment. The Germans ended up using it as a fire brigade for threatened areas of the Leningrad Front”.

**Correction to Bulletin 169** - Randy Nelson noted a typo on page 13 of the Blue Division article. At the left column bottom, Fp.# 30901 is listed for both Kp. 2 and Kolonne of Nachrichten Abteilung. While correct for Kolonne, Kp 2 was assigned Fp.#30397. Randy has this post card sent to Barcelona in Aug. ‘42 from a member of Kp 2 showing the above noted Fp.#30397 and a very nice boxed “Sp” marking.



**Querverbindung?** - Ed Fraser sent this registered German Fp cover posted August '42 from Fp.# L34998 (2. Kp/Lw. Abtl. 82 ) via K-132 (FpA 537) located in Rovaniemi, Finland under Gebirgs AOK 20. Note the “**Querverbindung**.” marking in lower right corner. Does anyone know what this marking indicates? Please send replies to Ye Olde Ed.



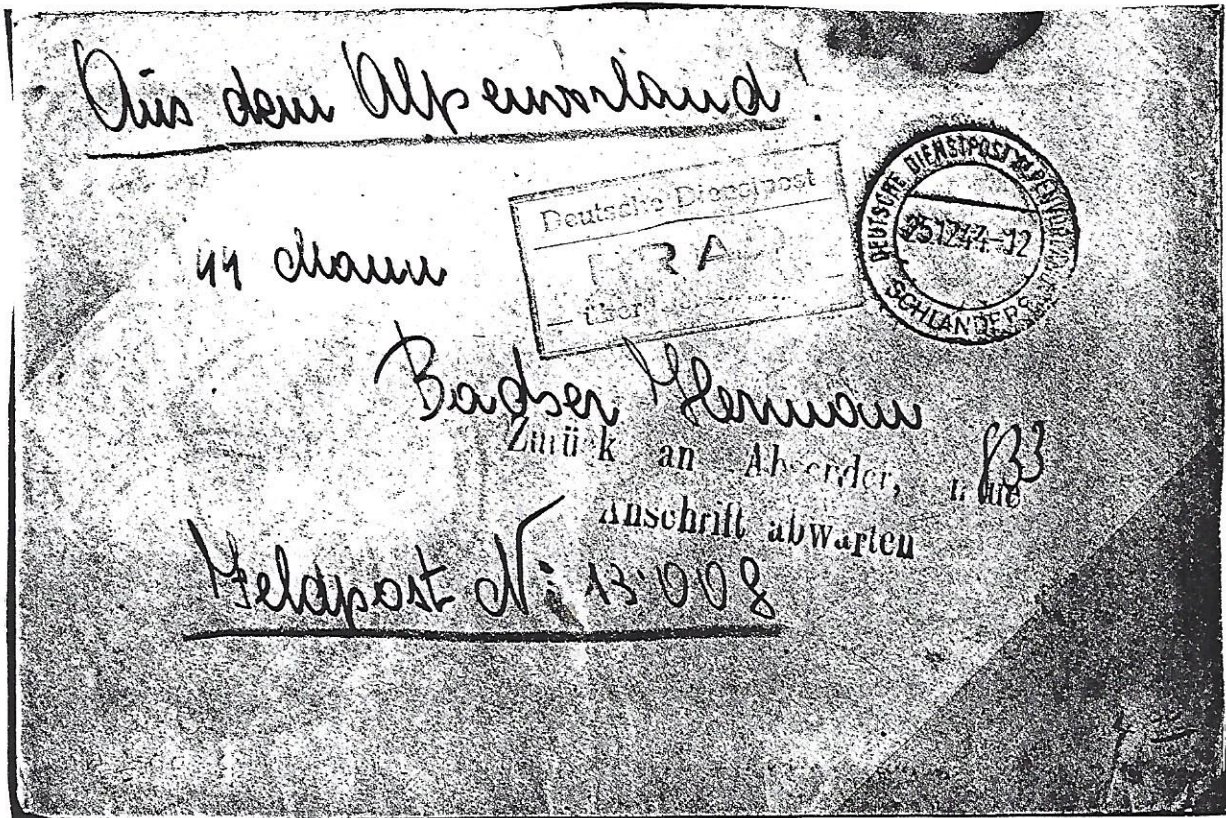
**Cover Illustration:** Posted in July '42 by a member of Fp.# 31949 (Stab, Nachschub Führer 250) of the 250th ‘Blue’ Division located outside of Novgorod, then forwarded by FpA 250 to Feldpost Routing Office 734 in Riga where the “Sp” identifier was applied. It was then sent to Foreign Mail Censor Office in Berlin which applied the censor markings and forwarded it on to Spain.

## Waffen-SS Feldpost: 12<sup>th</sup> SS Division "Hitler Jugend"

by John Painter

As its name implies, this unit was formed mainly with Hitler Youth members who were recruited from military fitness camps of that organization. The average age of its members in 1943 was seventeen. Activated on June 24, 1943, the division spent the next year in Belgium where it served primarily as a training unit for other SS divisions. In April 1944 the division was transferred to France and on June 8 was moved forward to the threatened Caen area opposite British forces. Remaining on the line for almost a month, the young men of the Hitler Youth Division fought with fanatical dedication and 90 percent of them were casualties before the campaign was over. They evacuated Caen on July 15 but on August 8 they saved the day at Falaise by preventing a British breakthrough. Eventually encircled, the division broke out but by August 21 had only three hundred men and ten tanks left, and all its artillery had been lost or destroyed. Withdrawn to north west Germany for a hasty refitting, the unit fought in the Ardennes where it was at battle group strength.

This letter was mailed from northern Italy on Christmas day via the Deutsche Dienstpost Alpenvorland postal system. The addressee at Fp. # 13008 was an ethnic German with the mortar supply unit of the 12<sup>th</sup> SS Division. From the time this letter was mailed until the middle of January the division was heavily engaged in the fighting around St. Vith and Bastogne. The letter was returned to sender with the familiar inscription "Return - await new address". The soldier had been either wounded or killed in the heavy fighting. Note that a postal clerk had written the kenn number on the face (K-833) to aid in the delivery.



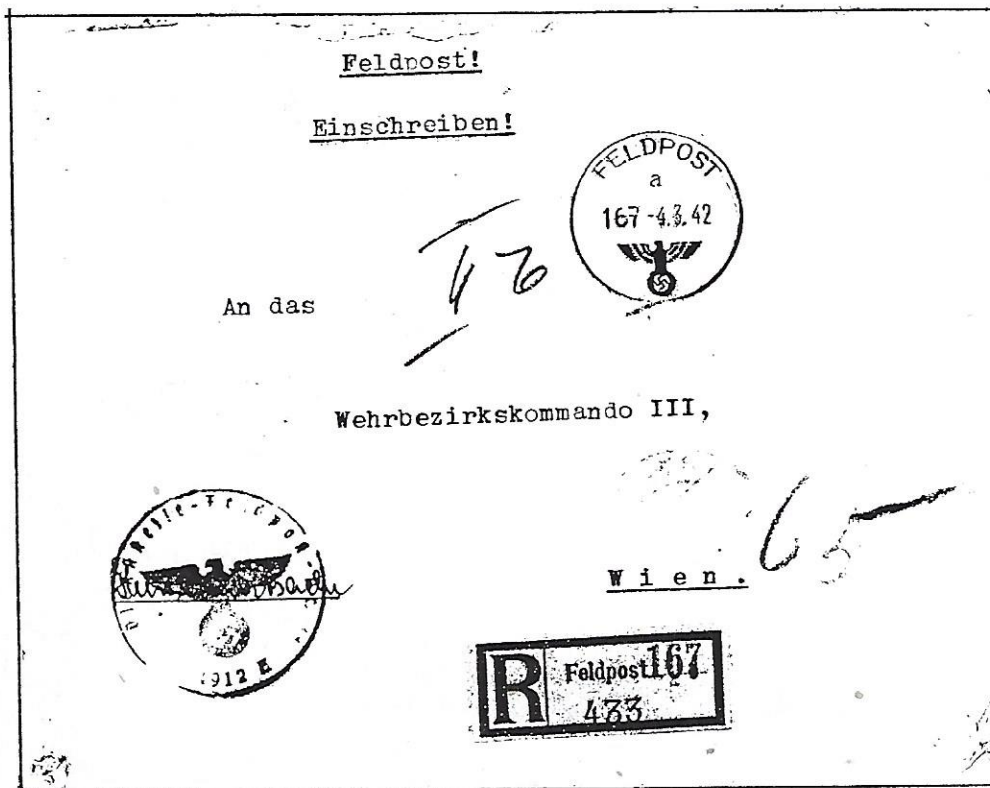
## COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE: 16th Panzer-Grenadier Division

by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS				AUXIL
TACT	KENN	MOTORIZED INF	PZ BTL	ARTY	UNITS	
66	167	60	156	116	146	66

The peacetime 16th Infantry Division initially included the 60th, 64th and 79th Infantry Regiments. The division saw action in Poland in 1939, then was stationed in the Saar Front. Taking part in the invasion of France in 1940, it supported the panzer divisions during the decisive Battle of Sedan. Converted to a motorized infantry division in the late summer of 1940, it retained 60th Regiment but gave up the 64th and 79th regiments to the new 16th Panzer Division. The P.O. was assigned Fp.# 13858 and K-167 as a coded identity for FpA 66.

The 16th Motorized Division fought in the Balkans in April 1941, then invaded Russia with Army Group South in June, fighting in the Ukraine and then in the advance to the Caucasus in 1942. Re-designated as 16th Panzer-Grenadier Division in the fall of 1942, it opposed the Soviet winter offensive of 1942-43. It was then transferred to the reconstituted 6th Army in the spring of 1943 and fought in the retreat to the Mius, suffering heavy losses in the fighting around Zaporozhe. The 16th Panzer-Grenadier Division was virtually destroyed during the withdrawal from the lower Dneiper in the spring of 1944. The remnants were transferred to France where they were merged with the much larger 179th Reserve Panzer Division to form the new 116th Panzer Division



Cover sent to Military District Command III in Vienna in March 1942 from Fp. # 04912 (Battalion III/Panzer Grenadier Regiment 156) via Field Post Office 66 (K-167).

## More of my "Fun Collection" of Third Reich Covers

by  
Bob Ferguson

As noted in my original article in Bulletin 138, I collect National Socialist covers sent to as many foreign countries or colonies as I can find. At that time my collection consisted of 48 different destinations, Since then I have increased that number to 83 destinations. As I noted, the difficulty finding a particular country depends, at least in part, on the location of the collector. So, from the vantage point of a small town in rural Alabama, the following covers seem quite exotic.

Fig. 1) Posted Erfurt 1 April 1938 to Macao. Backstamped: Victoria/Hong Kong, 13 May 1938 (10 AM) and Macau, 13 May 1938 (18.30)

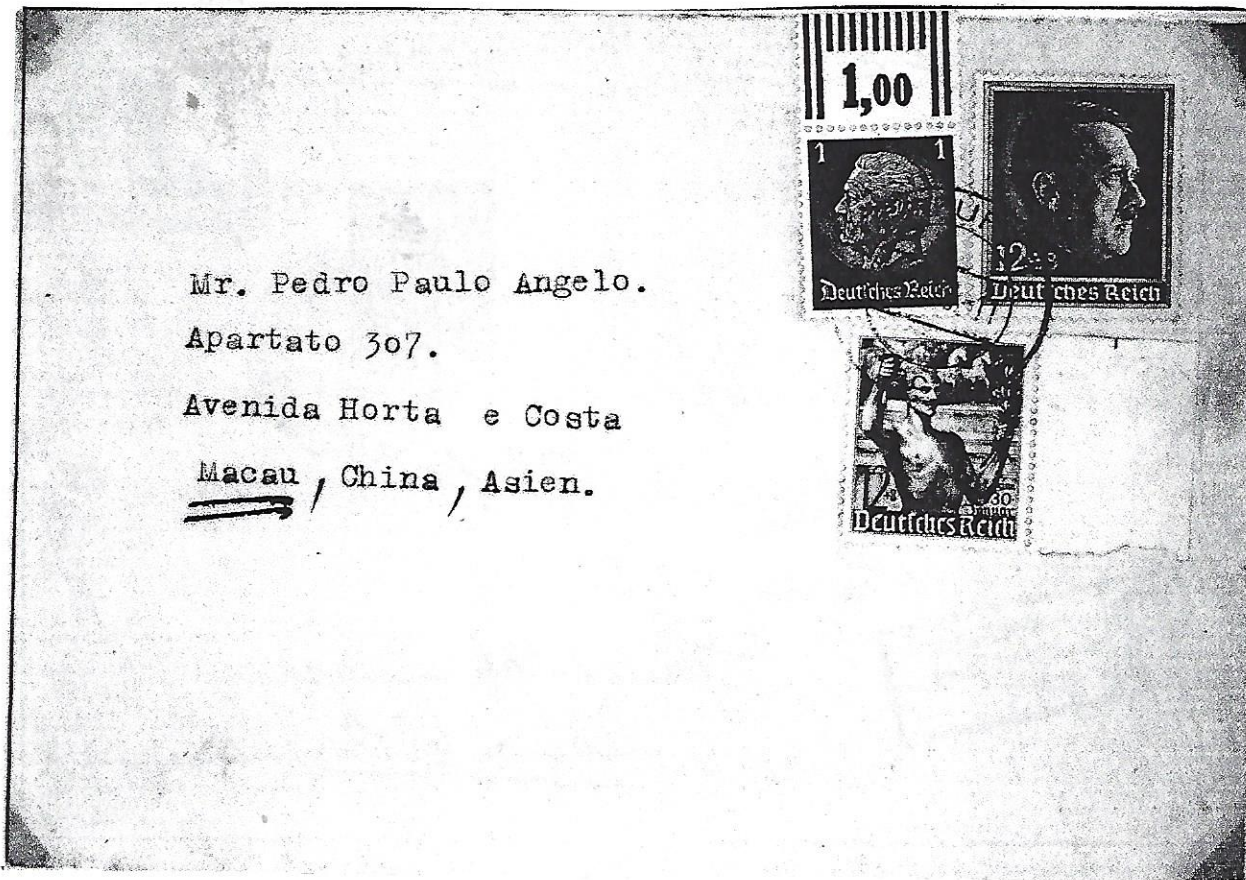


Fig. 2) Posted : Mollhagen (Tritau IBZ Hamburg) 28 May 1937 to Ethiopia. Flug und Luftschifflhafen (Rhein Main) 29 Main 1937. Backstamped: Addis Abeba (Raccomandate), 4 June 1937.

Franking 115 Rpf = 60 Rpf - Airmail surcharge for weight 5 - 10 grams  
30 Rpf - Registration fee  
25 Rpf - Foreign letter rate for weight 8 - 20 grams

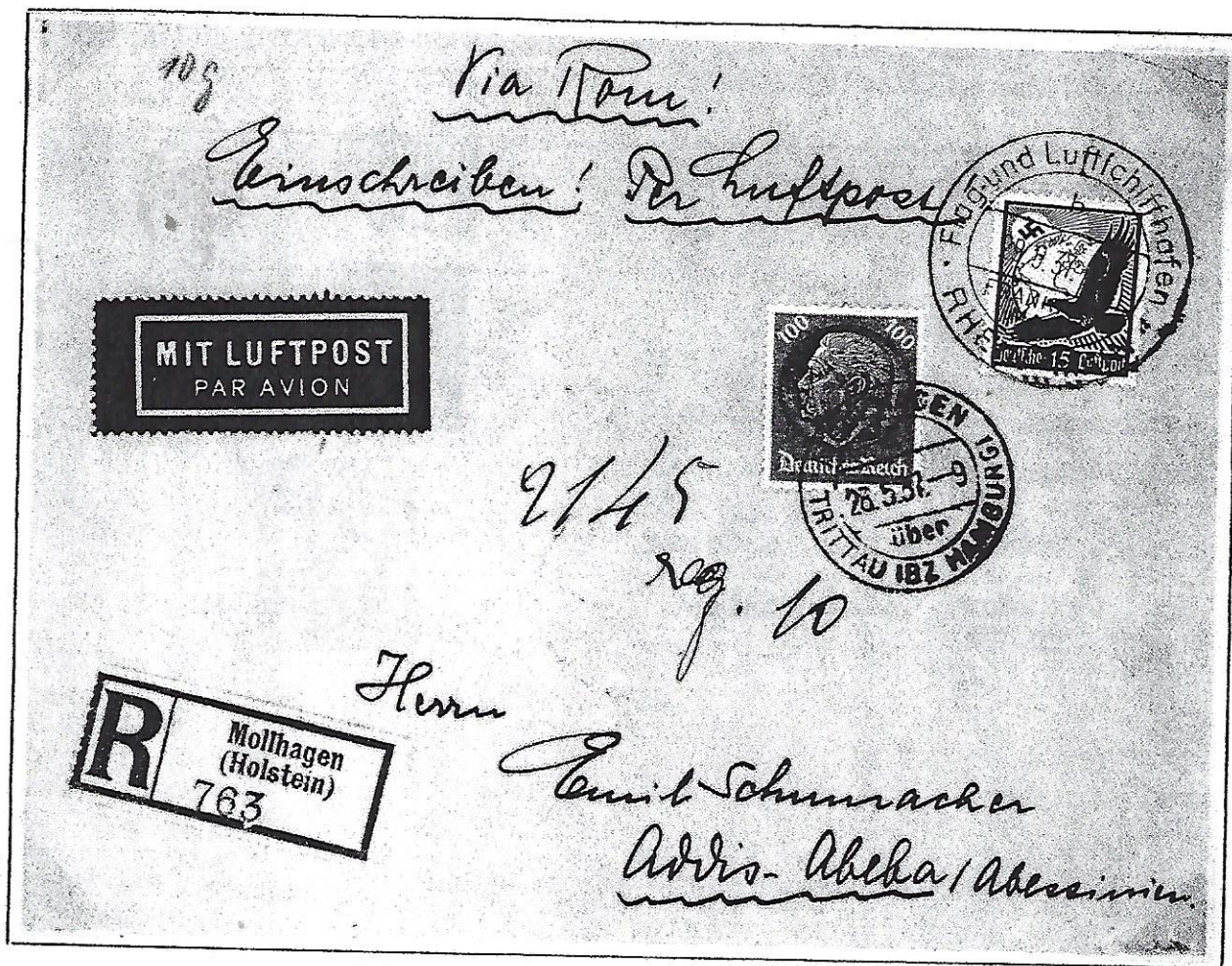


Fig. 3) Posted : Dusseldorf 23 December 1934 to Sumatra. Backstamped: Medan: 3 January 1935.



Fig. 4) Posted : Genthin 27 August 1935 to Transjordan. Backstamped: Amman: 2 September 1935.

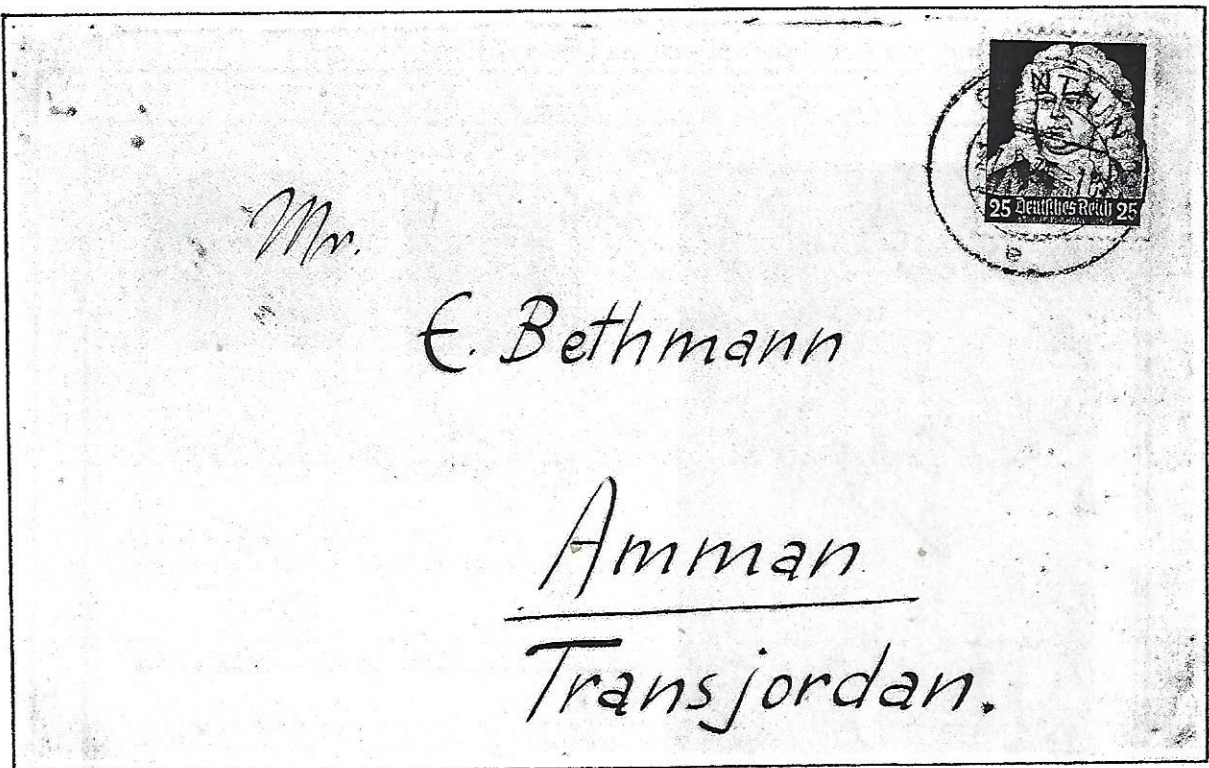
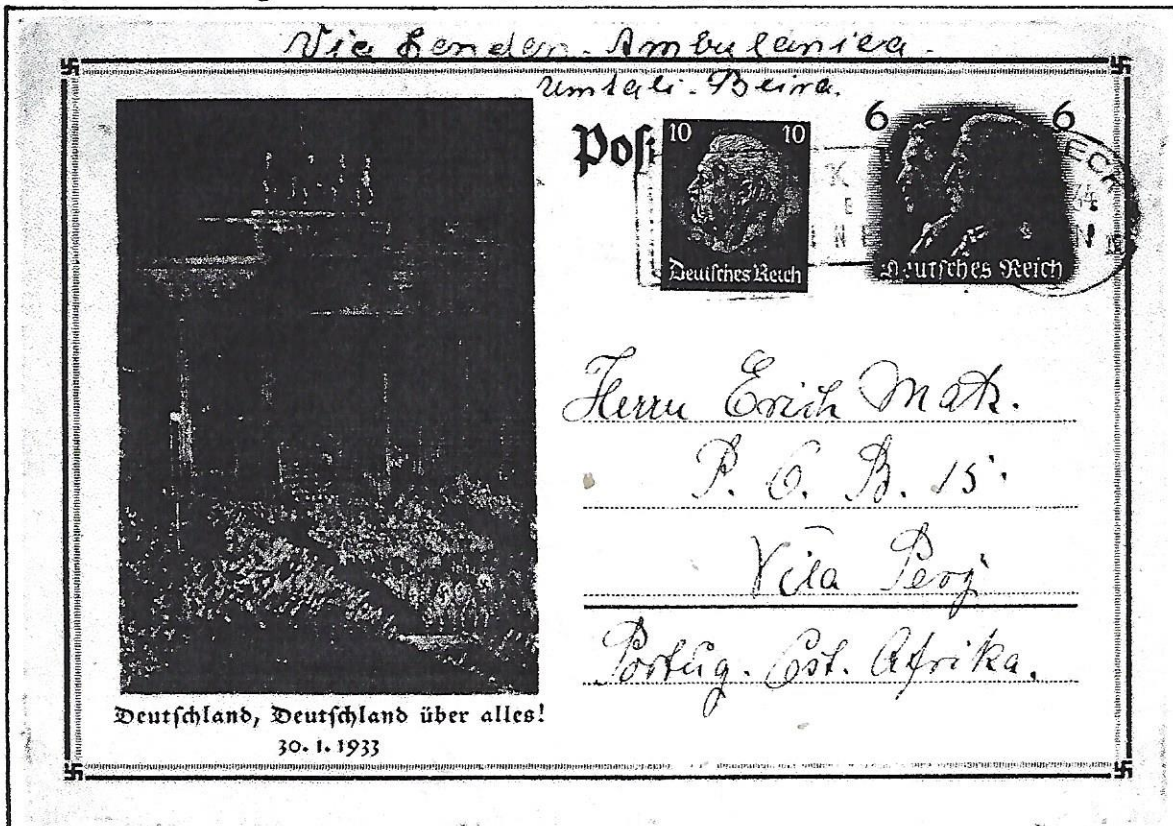


Fig. 5) Posted : Markkleeberg 24 November 1937 to Southern Rhodesia.



Fig. 6) Posted : Lubeck 31 January 1934 to Vila. Pery, Portugese East Africa (Mozambique). Backstamped: Ambulanc/Beira-Umtalie), 22 February 1934. Backstamped: Carrein Vila-Pery, 22 February 1934. Routing: via London-Ambulancia Umtali-Biera



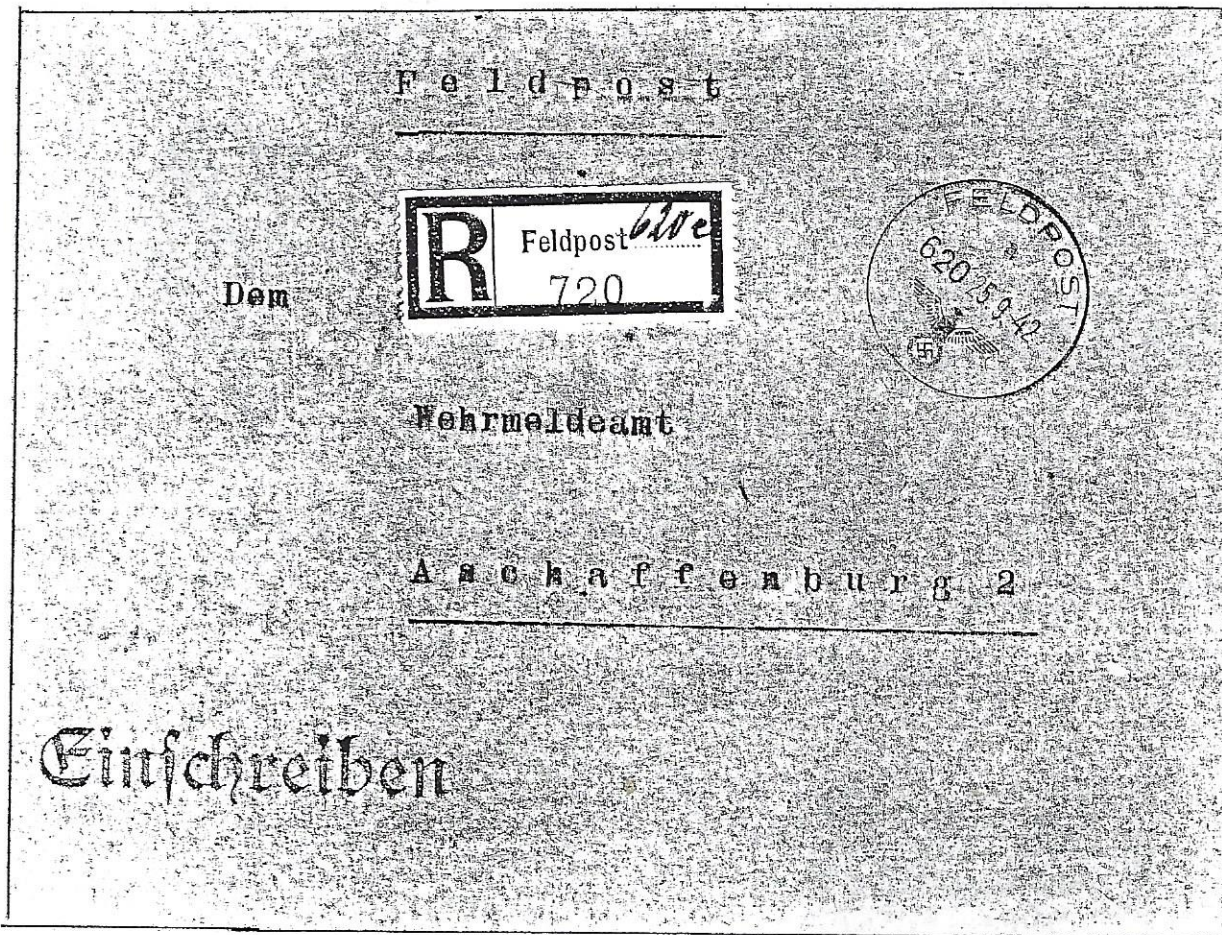


## COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE: 104th Jäger Division by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS			AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	JAGER		ARTY	UNITS
104	620	724	734	654	104

Formed as 704th Infantry Division in April 1941, initially included the 724th and 734th Infantry Regiments plus 654th Artillery Regiment. The P.O. was assigned Fp.# 45820 as a return address and Kenn 620 as a coded address in lieu of FpA104. This division was sent to Serbia in May 1941 where it performed occupation duties in Belgrade area. In May 1943, converted to a light division and designated the 104th Jäger Division. At this time it's signal and reconnaissance units were expanded and an anti-tank battalion was added. The P.O. designation was changed to FpA 104.

It was sent to the Epirus area of western Greece in June 1943 and remained there until the rapidly advancing Soviet armies threatened to take Army Group F and the Balkans from the rear. The 104th Jäger Division was withdrawn to Yugoslavia, where it fought Tito's partisan in the Sarajevo area and continued to fight in the southern sector until the end of the war.



Cover sent to Military Records Office in Aschaffenburg in September 1942 from Fp. # 43259 (Battalion III of Grenadier Regiment 734) via Division P.O. 104 (K-620).

# THIRD REICH POSTAL RATES

by Bob Ferguson

## Same Day Service in Denmark

In an article titled "Some Literature on Third Reich Postal Rates" (TRSG Bulletin #126), Ben Beede noted that "sometimes, careful study is required to understand what is meant by a given rate." I think that the following cover is a good example of what Mr. Beede had in mind.

Single weight (0-20 gm) Airmail Express Delivery Letter (Rohrpost to Airport)

Posted Berlin-Charlottenburg 12 Marz 1936 to Copenhagen, Denmark

Backstamped: København Luftpost 12 Marz 1936

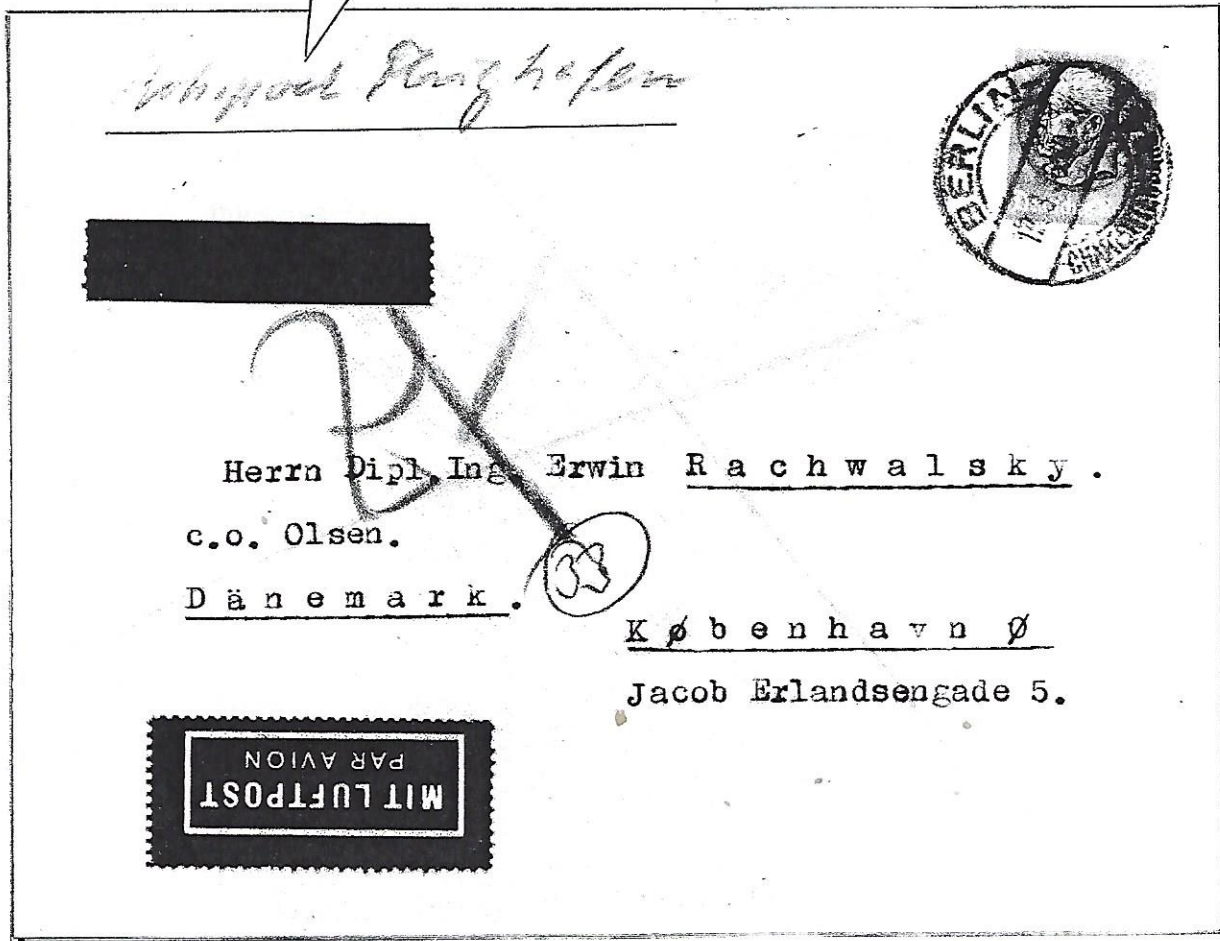
Franking (100 Rpf): 10 Pfg. = Rohrpost fee to Airpost.

25 Pfg. = Foreign letter rate for weight 0-20 gm

15 Pfg. = Airmail surcharge for weight 0-20 gm

50 Pfg. = Foreign Express Delivery fee

**Rohrpost Flughafen**



## Supplementary Cancels (Nebenstempelungen)

By Bob Ferguson

Supplementary cancels come in various forms, but in general a supplementary cancel, hereafter called a nebenstempel, was used to promote or record an ongoing event over a period of time. As the nebenstempel did not provide time, date or city of posting, it was used in conjunction with a regular canceller. Several of the cancels used to promote a "yes" vote in the Anschluss plebiscite (Fig. 1) are nebenstempelungen and the changing of the Polish city of Lodz (Wartheland) to Litzmannstadt (Fig. 2) was advertised by a nebenstempel..

Fig. 1) Nebenstempel reading "Am 10 April Dem Führer Dein = Ja!" used with a Linz cancel 10 April 1938.



Fig. 2) Nebenstempel reading "Auf Befehl des Führers heisst diese Stadt ab 11.4.1940 Litzmannstadt" used with a Lodsch cancel 20 April 1940.



The following are six nebenstempelungen used for trips (Fahrten) by NSDAP organizations that were struck by mobile post offices that accompanied the groups on their trips. The mail was then posted and received regular cancels at various cities along the trip route.

Fig. 3) Postcard with nebenstempel reading "Ostlanfahrt der Alten Garde 16-20 Juni 1937" and Marienburg town cancel 19 June 1937.

### Cities and Dates of Postings

Rauschen -----17. June  
 Osterode -----18. June  
 Magdeburg -----19. June  
 Deutsche-Eylau ----20. June

Fig. 3)

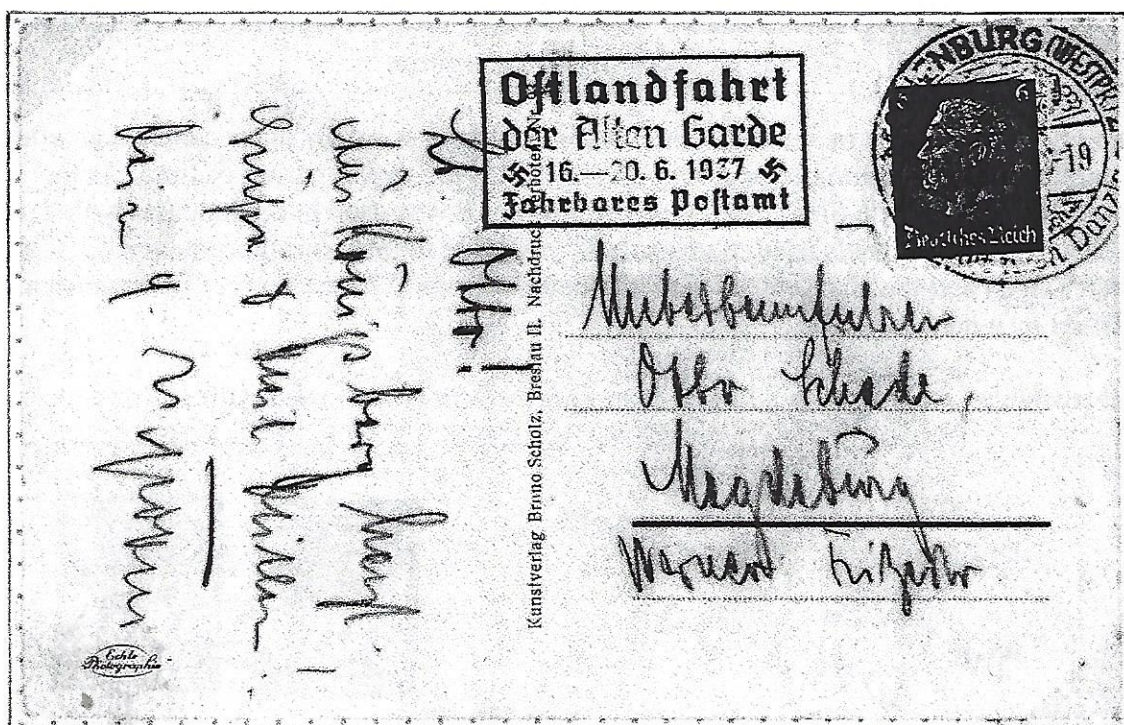


Fig. 4) Postcard with nebenstempel reading "Westfalenfahrt der Alten Garde 14-17. Juni 1939" and Bad Salzuflen town cancel 16 June 1939.

Cities and Dates of Postings  
 Bielefeld 1 und Bielefeld 2 ----- 14. June  
 Bielefeld 2 und Bad Salzuflen -----16. June  
 Gelsenkirchen und Münster-----17. June

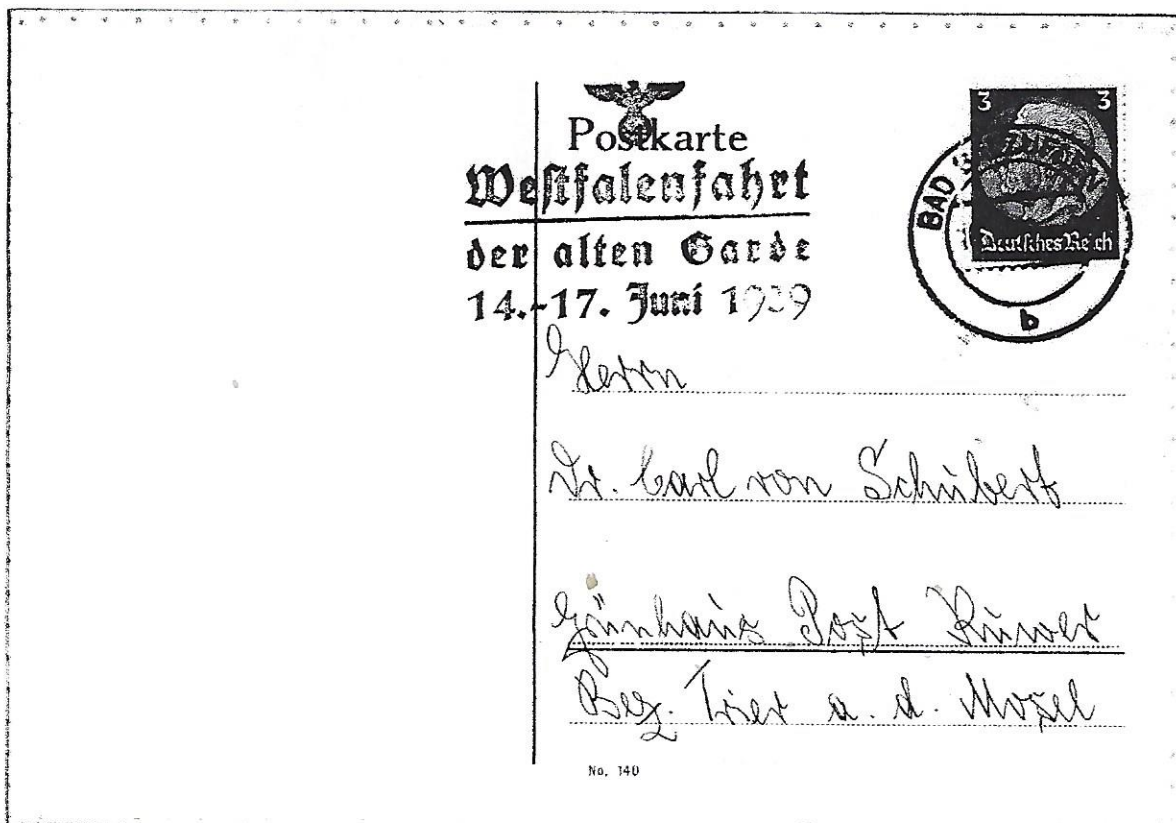


Fig. 5) Postcard with nebenstempel reading "Thuringenfahrt 10 -13. Oktober 1935" and Weimar town cancel 10 October 1935.

Cities and Dates of Postings  
 Weimar ----- 10. October  
 Friedrichroda-----11. October  
 Gotha-----12. October  
 Wartburg -----13. October

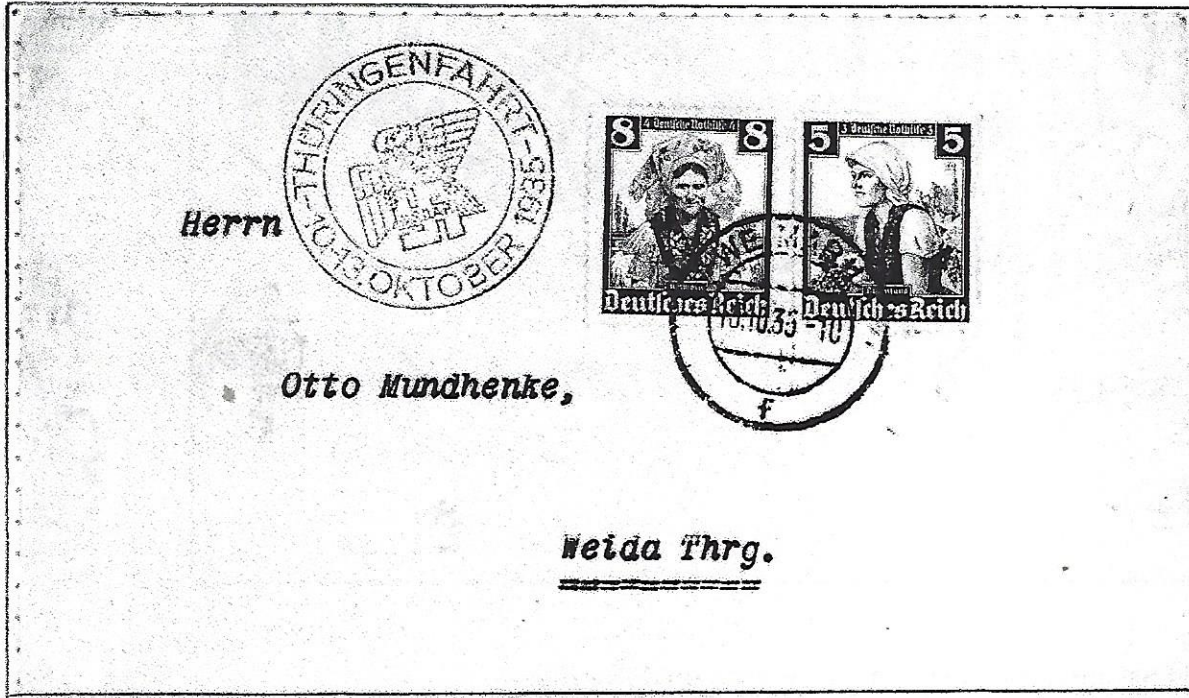


Fig.6) Postcard with nebenstempel reading "Marschstaffel Gau Sachsen der NSDAP Hof/Nürnberg 4.- 10 September 1935" and Nürnberg town cancel 15 September 1935. Cities of Postings: Gefrees, Grafenberg, Eschenau, Nürnberg.

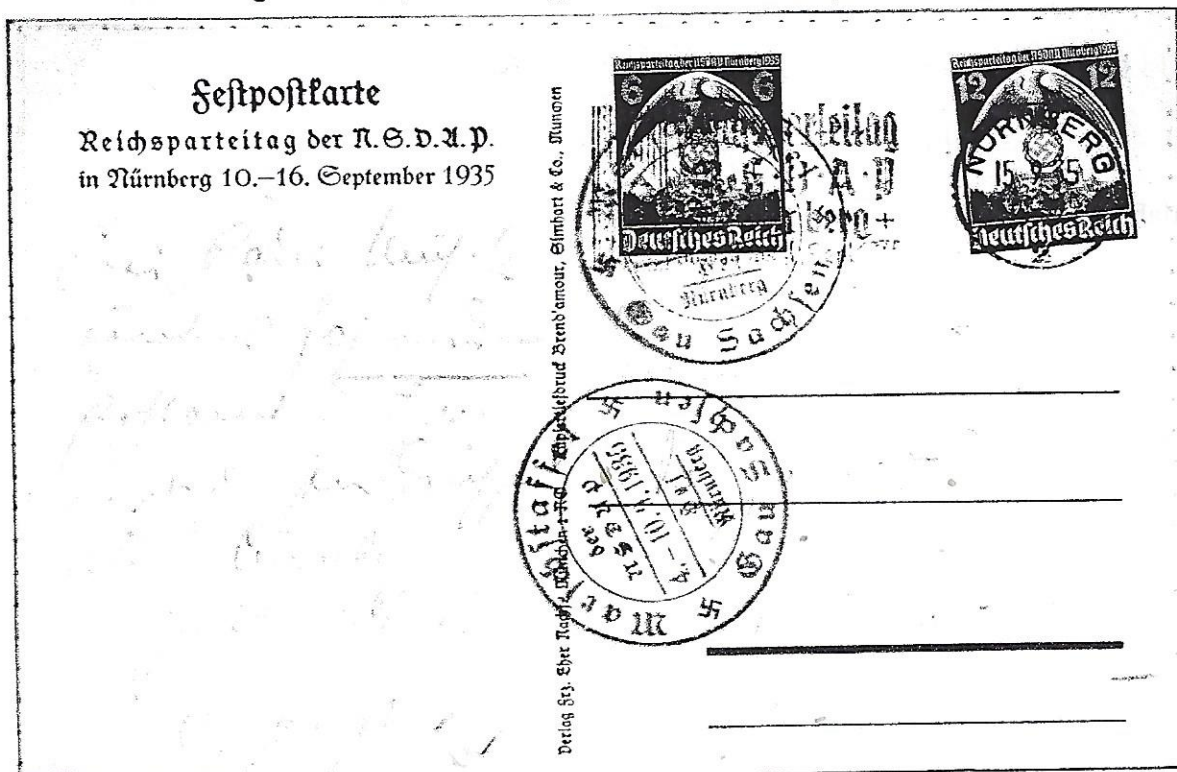
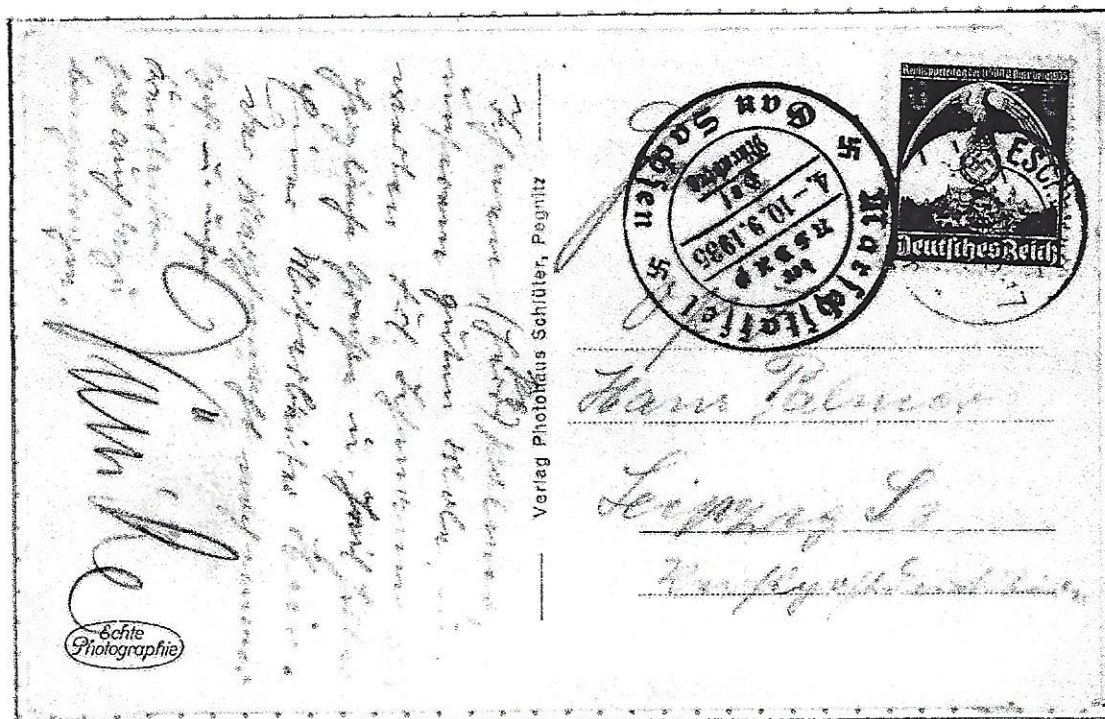


Fig.7) Postcard with nebenstempel reading "Marschstaffel Gau Sachsen der NSDAP Hof/Nürnberg 4.- 10 September 1935" and Escherau town cancel 9 September 1935.



The following list are the six nebenstempelungen used for trips:

- Gaufahrt # 1:           Gaufahrt der Alten Kämpfer der Bayerischen Ostmark 20-23.6.1939.
- Hof # 3:                 Marschstaffel Gau Sachsen der NSDAP Hof/Nurnberg 4.-10.9.1935
- Ostlandfahrt # 1:       Ostlandfahrt der Alten Garde 16.-20. 6. 1937
- Thuringfahrt # 1:      Thuringfahrt 10.-13. Oktober 1935 NSDAP
- Westfalenfahrt # 1:    Westfalenfahrt der Alten Garde 14.-17. Juni 1939
- Westmarkfahrt # 1     Westmarkfahrt Alte Garde Gau Koblenz-Trier 21.-24. Juni 1938

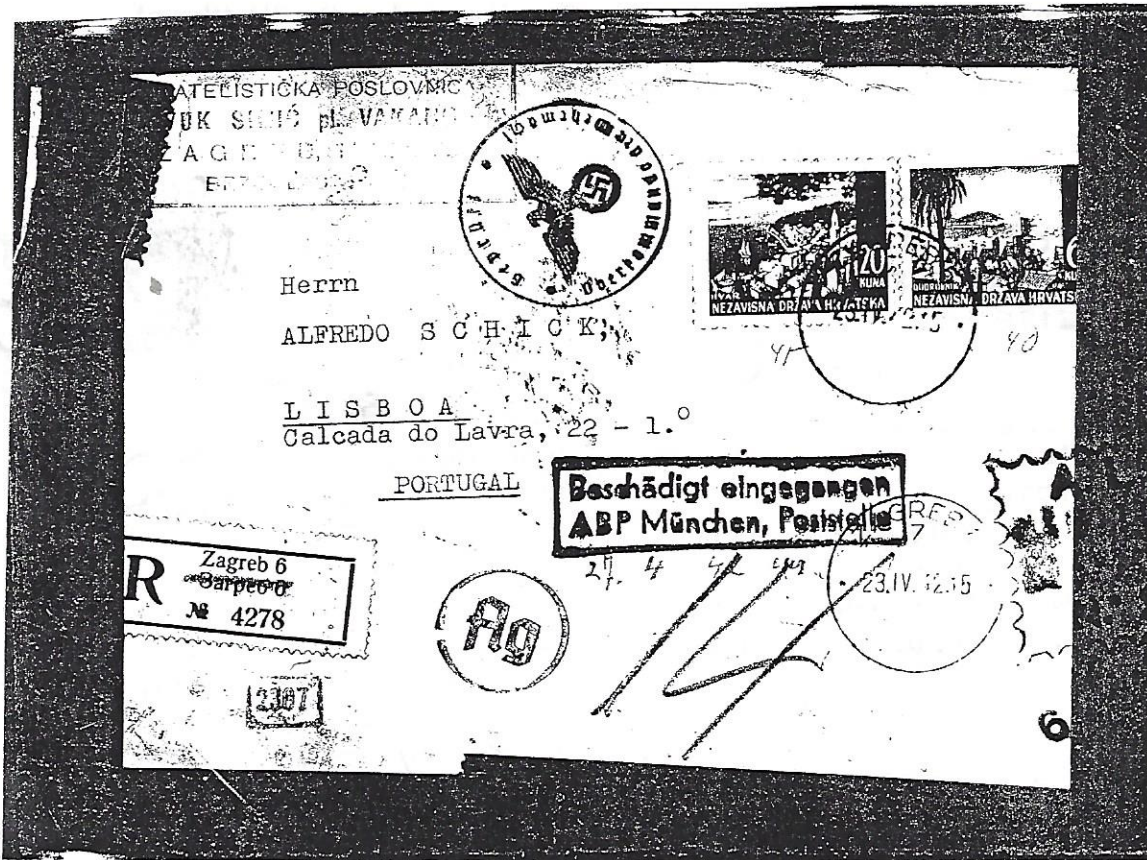
The following two are for meetings:

- Hessen-Nassau # 1:    Treffen Hessen-Nassau 1936. Das alte Führerkorps der NSDAP
- Sachsentreffen # 1:   Sachsentreffen der ältesten PO-Leiter 4.-7.10.34

# Damaged Registered Letter to Portugal

by Henry Laessig

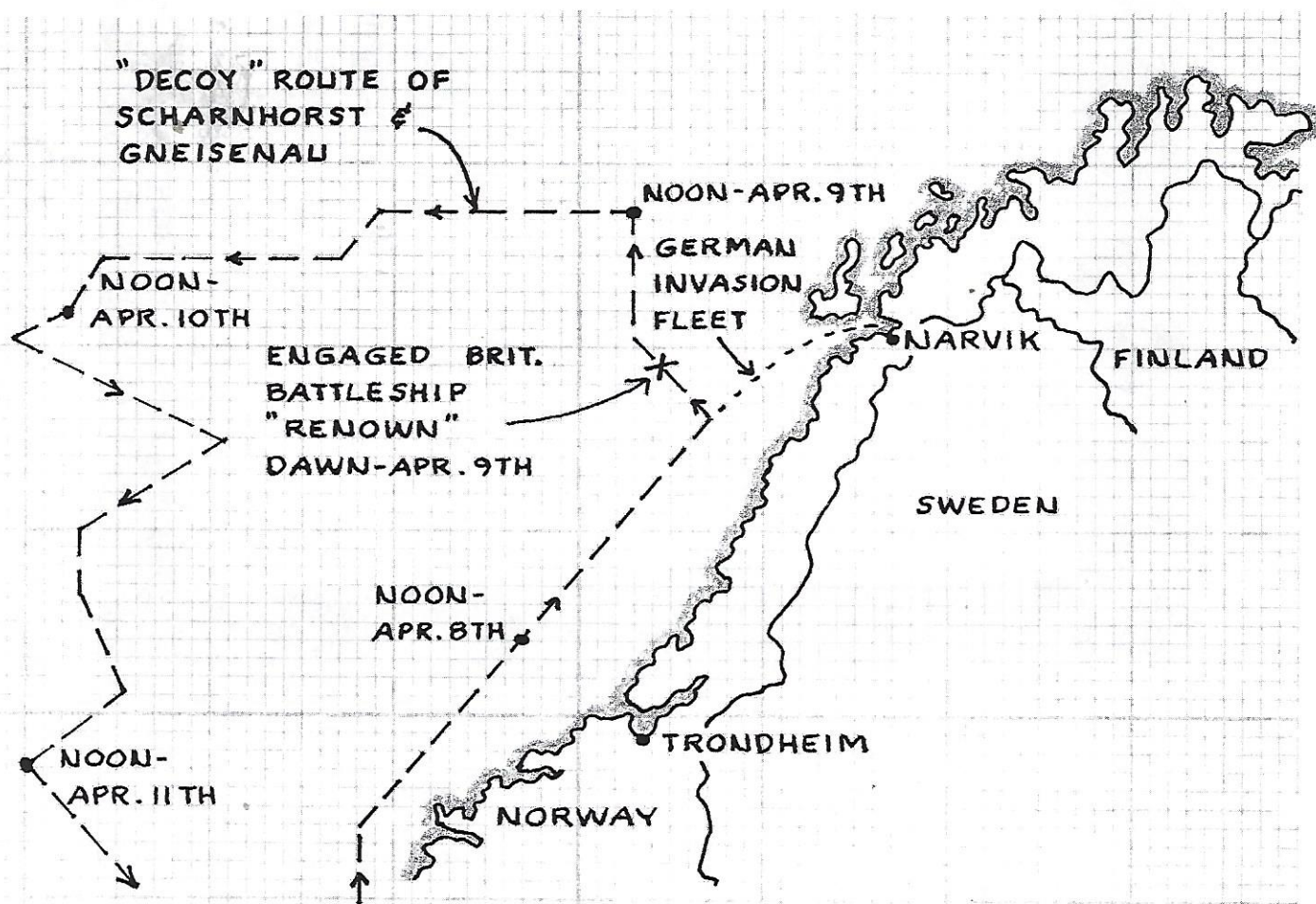
This registered letter to Lisbon, Portugal posted in Zagreb, Croatia on April 23, 1942 was passed unopened by the Vienna censor office per the "Ag" in circle. Subsequently damaged in transit and repaired on all sides with brown tape, the letter was examined at the Munich censor office which applied sealing tape to backside and "Geprüft" (Examined) hand stamps on both sides. A boxed hand stamp "Beschädigt eingegangen" (Received in damaged condition) was added to front. This letter was back stamped at Lisbon Central P.O. on May 7 as shown in detail below.



## TRSG Maps: The Battles of Narvik - April 1940

by Kelly Stefanacci

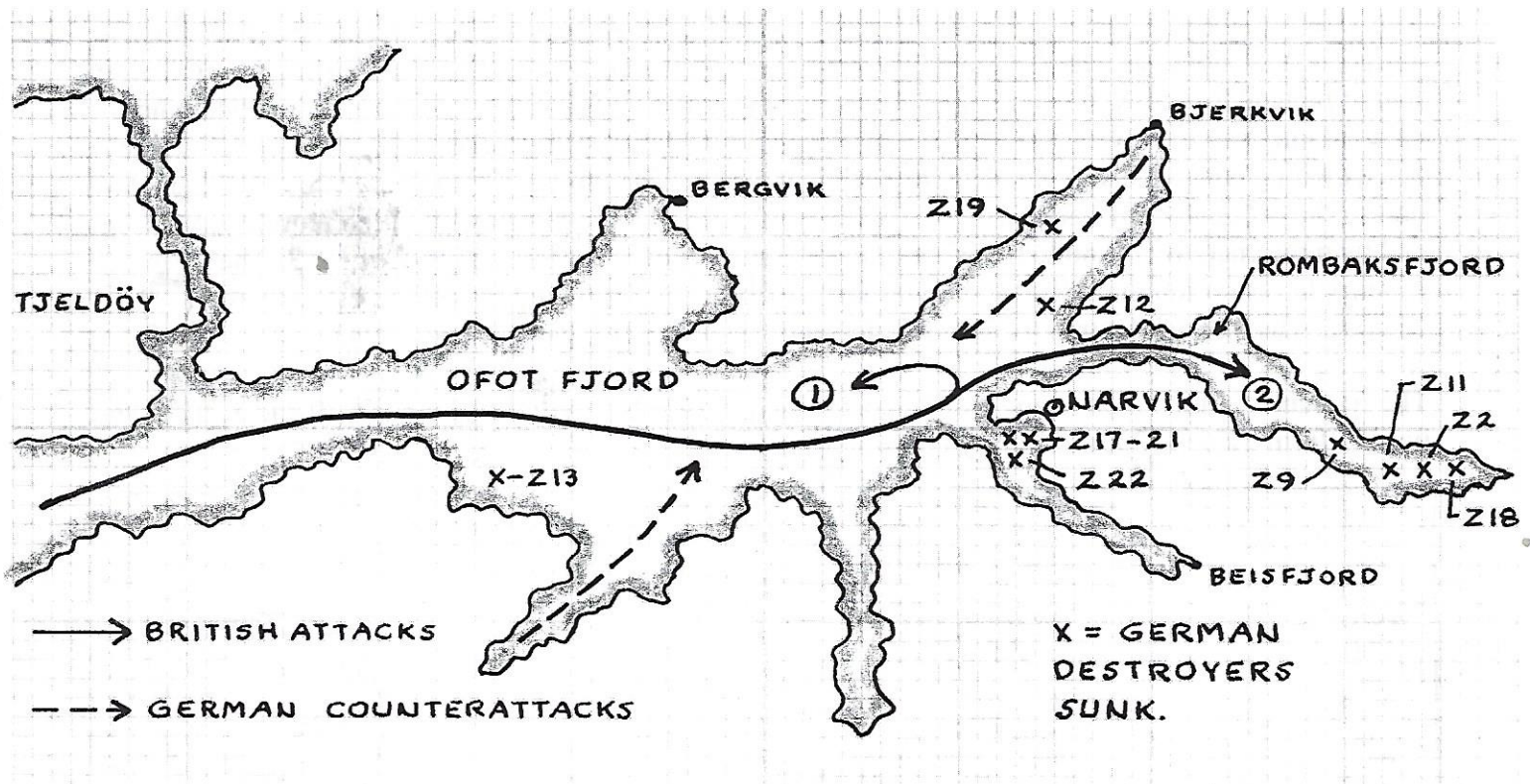
The northernmost phase of the German invasion of Norway actually began April 2, 1940, when two German battle cruisers, **Scharnhorst** and **Gneisenau**, sailed up the Norwegian coast accompanied by transports and ten destroyers. On 9 April the two battle cruisers decoyed British naval patrols away from the areas while the ten German destroyers landed the forces which took Narvik the same day. Thus foiled, the British Navy exacted its revenge in the next few days - when the "Battles of Narvik" were fought





## First Battle of Narvik - April 10, 1940

Five destroyers of the British 2nd Flotilla sailed up Ofotfjord at dawn and attacked a German force of unknown strength - sinking the German destroyers **Wilhelm Heidkamp (Z.21)** and **Anton Schmitt (Z.22)** along with six transports. Counterattacking from the side fjords, the Germans sank two British destroyers and forced a British withdrawal at 0630.



## Second Battle of Narvik - April 13, 1940

At 0100, nine British destroyers and the battleship **Warspite** sailed again up the Ofotfjord and sank the remaining eight German destroyers: **Erich Koellner (Z.13)**, **Hermann Kunne (Z.19)**, **Hans Ludemann (Z.18)**, **Diether von Roeder (Z.17)**, **Wolfgang Zenker (Z.9)**, **Bernd von Arnim (Z.11)**, **Georg Thiele (Z.2)** and **Erich Giese (Z.12)**. On April 14, British troops landed and destroyed the port facilities - evacuating shortly thereafter.

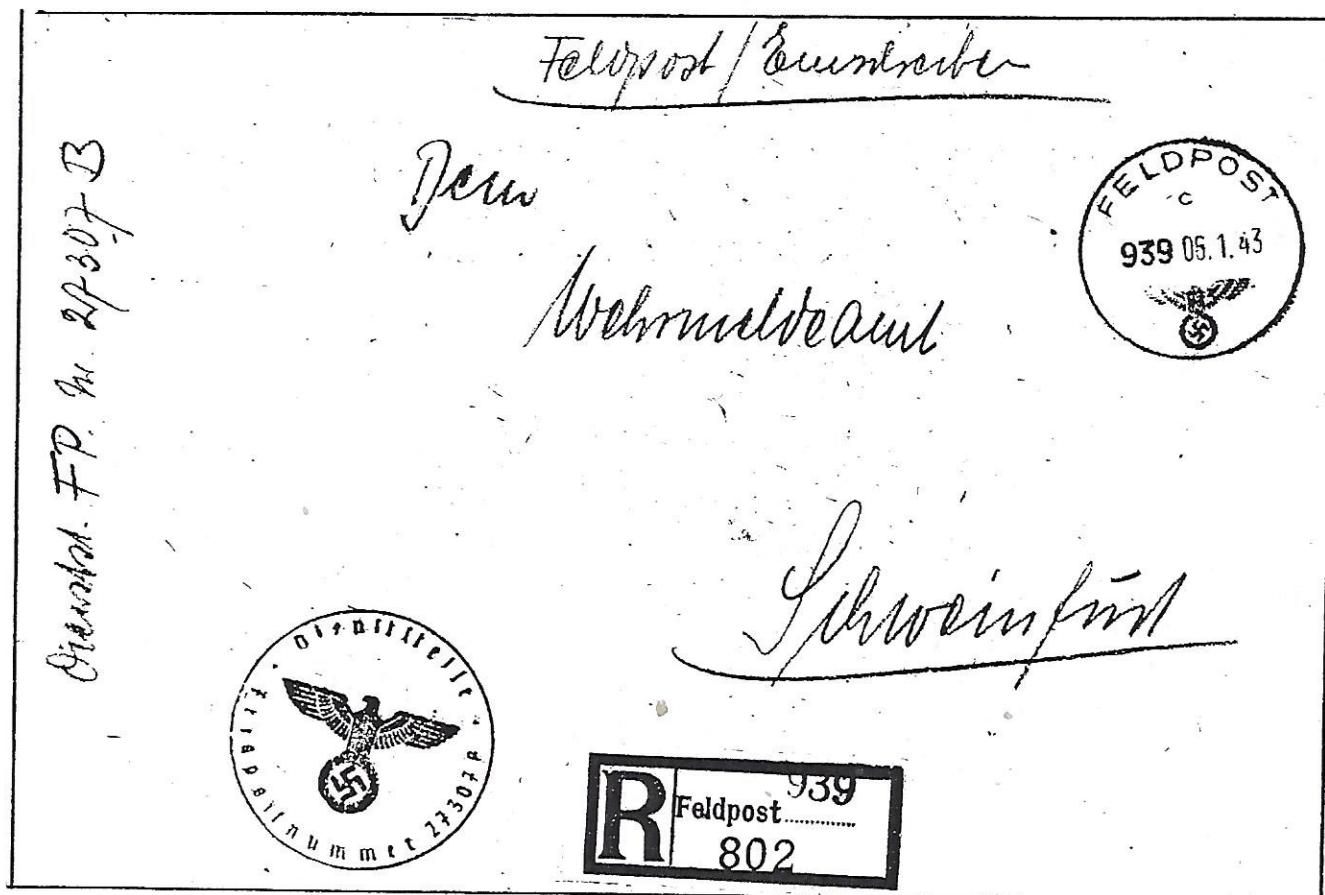
**COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE:****328th Infantry Division**

by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS				AUXIL
TACT	KENN	INFANTRY			ARTY	UNITS
328	939	547	548	549	328	328

The 328th Infantry Division was formed in late in 1941 (17th Wave) in Wehrkreis I. The P.O. was assigned Fp.# 39620 as a mailing address and Kenn 939 as a coded identification for registered mail in lieu of tactical FpA 328. It was sent to Army Group Center on the Eastern Front early in 1942 where each infantry regiment was assigned to a different corps of the 3rd Panzer and 9th Armies during the Soviet winter offensive of 1941-42. One regiment was returned to the west in November 1942 and took part in the occupation of Vichy France. By the spring of 1943 the division had been reunited in the west and then returned to the southern sector of the Eastern Front in the late summer of 1943. The 328th Infantry Division fought at Kursk and was largely destroyed following the failure of 'Operation Citadel'. The 328th Infantry Division was formally disbanded on November 2, 1943.

The remnants of the division and its Feldpost Office (FpA 328), including Fp.# 39620 and K-939, were used to form the new 353rd Infantry Division in Brittany.



Cover sent to Military Records Office in Schweinfurt in January 1943 from Fp. # 27307 (Battalion II/Artillery Regiment 328) via Field Post Office 328 (K-939).


# Behind the Wire

## Postcard to U.S. from Stalag Luft I P.O.W. Camp

by Bob Ferguson

The exchange of prisoner of war and internee mail between Germany and the United States could be sent by airmail beginning on July 3, 1942. Through November 3, 1944 the payment of an airmail surcharge of 40 Rpf per 5 grams was required in cash - Taxe percue. After that date, airmail labels and stamps were permitted and affixed by the postal clerk. Beginning on January 9, 1945 the airmail surcharge was dropped by agreement and these mails were sent routinely by air.

This POW form card sent to the U.S.A. on November 28, 1944 from an American Air Force 2nd Lt. at Stalag Luft I in Barth, Germany. While the basic P.O.W. postcard rate was free ("Gebührenfrei!"), the 40 Rpf airmail surcharge to U.S. for weight 0-5 gm was paid per the boxed hand stamp "Taxe percue".

<b>Mit Luftpost</b> <b>Kriegsgefangenenpost</b> <b>Par Avion</b> <b>Postkarte</b>		<b>GEPROBT</b> <b>53</b>	
Taxe percue 40 Rpf		Mr + Mrs. John Hoffman	
<b>Gebührenfrei</b>		Empfangsort: <u>6238 Page Ave</u>	
<b>Absender:</b> Vor- und Zuname: <u>2nd Lt. F. Jordan</u>		Straße: <u>St. Louis, Co, (Miss)</u>	
Gefangenennummer: <u>3516</u>		Land: <u>United States of America.</u> Landesteil (Provinz usw.)	
Lager-Bezeichnung: <u>Stalag Luft I</u> <u>via Stalag Luft 3</u> Deutschland (Allemagne)			

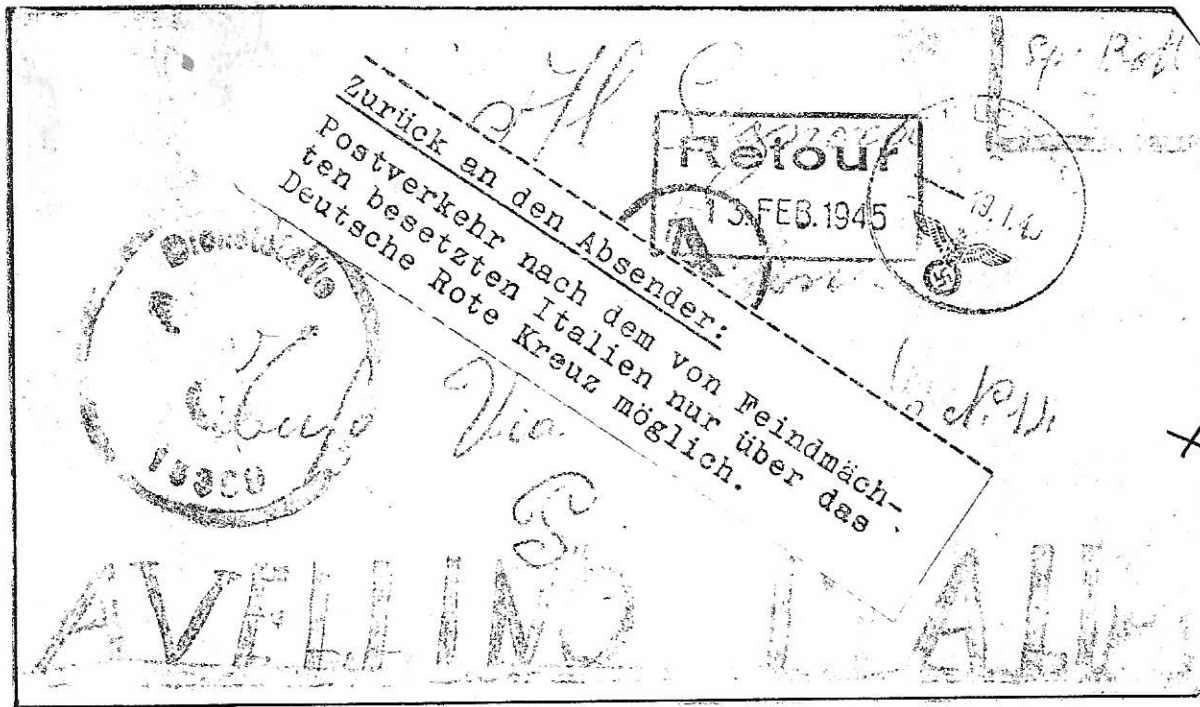
# Rejected by Censor - Inadmissible Mail

by Jim Lewis

## Sent to Enemy Occupied Territory

Part V, Sec. 11, Para. 3. "Communications service of the Red Cross, as well as with prisoners of war and internees, is regulated by special rules."

Shown below is a Feldpost card addressed to Avellino. Italy that was posted on January 19, 1945. Initially passed by the Munich censor office per the circled "Ad" hand stamp, the card has a boxed "Retour" (Return) stamp dated February 13, 1945 and an advisory label reading "Return to Sender Postal traffic to enemy occupied Italy is only possible through the German Red Cross".



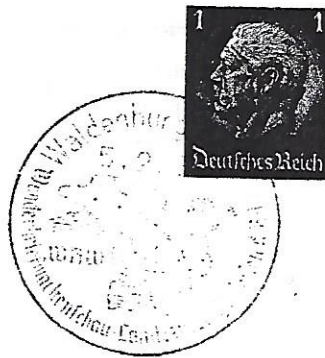
## Special Cancels - Traveling Stamp Show in Silesia

by Bob Ferguson

All cancels have a common text: "Wanderbriefmarkenschau Landesberg. Schlesien D.R.D.P./WHW..The cancel numbering scheme is in Julius Bochmann's "Katalog der Deutschen Gelegenheitsstempel".

- Schweidnitz # 3: 8 January 1938
- Ratibor # 2: 15 January 1938
- Benthen # 1 22 January 1938
- Brieg # 1: 29 January 1938
- Waldenburg # 3: 5 February 1939

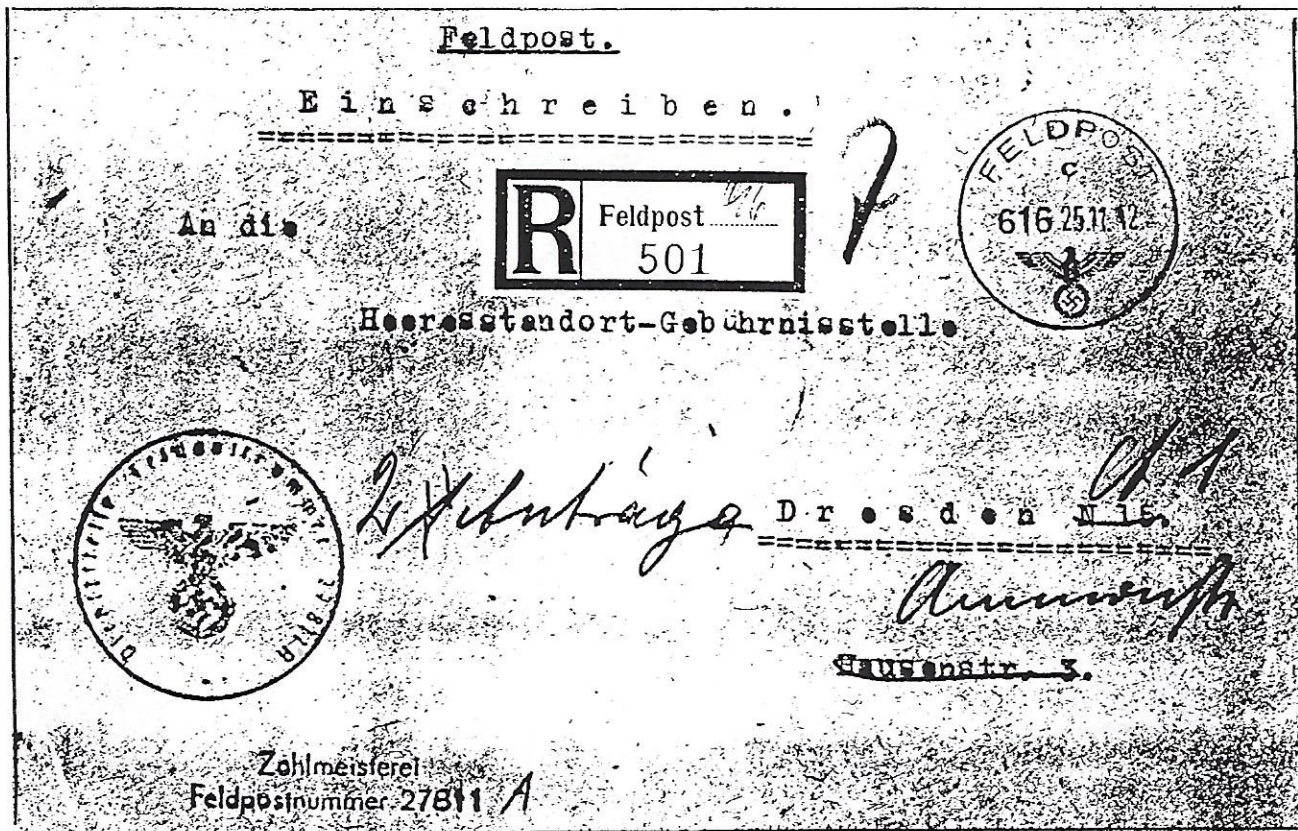
- Oppeln # 2: 19 February 1939
- Breslau # 44: 25.-26. February 1939
- Hirschberg # 3: 12. March 1939
- Sagan # 2: 26. March 1939



## COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE: 286th Security Division by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS			AUXIL
TACT	KENN	SECURITY			UNITS
354	616	31	61	122	66

Formed in Wehrkreis VIII early in 1942, this division had three security regiments as opposed to the normal two per division. It served with Army Group Center throughout the war. The post office was assigned Fp.# 35585 as a mailing address and Kenn 616 as a coded identification. It was used primarily in the rear area, protecting important installations and conducting anti-partisan operations. The division saw front line duty against the massive Soviet summer offensive in July 1944 and suffered heavy casualties in the Orsche area. Down to battle group strength, the division was withdrawn in December 1944 and re-designated the 286th Infantry Division, retaining the same Feldpost and Kenn numbers but the FpA was changed to 286. Returned to the Eastern Front, it fought at Samland in early 1945 and was destroyed in East Prussia in April 1945.



Cover sent to Army Garrison Office in Dresden in November 1942 from Fp.# 27811 (Battalion III of Security Regiment 61) via Field Post Office 354 (K-616).

## German POWs in North America Camps in Missouri

by Jim Lewis

Thirty POW camps were established in Missouri during World War II. These camps were populated by more than 15,000 prisoners between 1942 and 1946, the majority of whom came from Germany. The four main camps were 1.) **Ft. Leonard Wood** in central Missouri, 2) **Camp Clark** outside of Nevada, Missouri, 3) **Camp Weingarter** near Ste. Genevieve and 4) **Camp Crowder** outside Neosho, Missouri. Each of these locations housed thousands of prisoners and was in continuous operation for years. The construction of each main camp brought controversy, because the federal government took farmland that had been in families for many generations for the construction of prison camps.

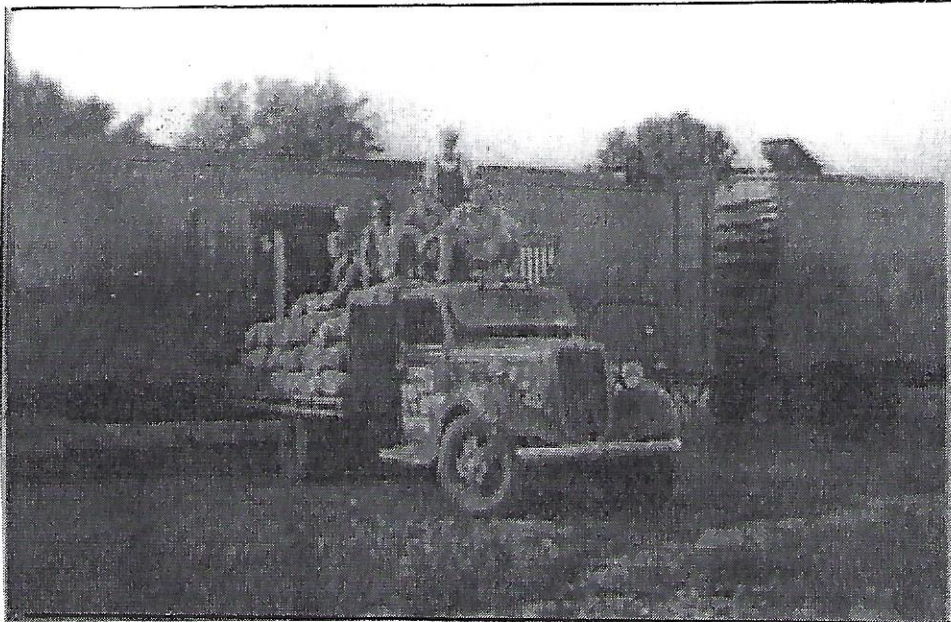
Branch camps were established primarily to utilize POW labor. The branch camps were directly tied to a specific main camp for certain support and administrative control, but were capable of maintaining prisoners in secure facilities for long periods of time, if necessary. The smaller camps were often seasonal, as the need for agricultural labor increased, the number of branch camps increased as well. As traditional agricultural laborers obtained better paying jobs in factories, American farmers experienced an extreme shortage of manpower for planting, tending, and harvesting their crops. POW labor is credited with saving numerous crops in Missouri, although farmers initially complained that the prisoners were not as efficient as American workers. Prisoners were often unfamiliar with American crops, but that upon receiving proper instructions for their tasks, their output was similar to traditional farm labor.

### Branch Camp Locations

Charleston	Lexington
Chestefield	Liberty
Chestefield (river boat)	Louisiana - Stark Bros. Nursery
Columbia- on MSU campus	Malden
Conran/Marston/Portageville	Marshall
Fulton	Orrick
Gasconade (river boat)	Riverside - housed in racetrack facility
Grand Pass (river boat)	St. Louis Ordnance Depot - Baden
Hannibal	St. Louis - (river boat)
Independence - Atherton	Sedalia Army Air Field
Jefferson Barracks	Sikeston/Grant City - McMullin Estate
Kansas City	Springfield - O'Reilly General Hosp
Kennett	Washington - (river boat)

Note: Camps designated "river boat" were just that. POWs who'd served in the Kriegsmarine worked with the Army Corps of Engineers in dredging operations, mostly on the Missouri River. Others were quartered on the river boat and worked on land based projects, such as those who worked at the Corps of Engineers boatyard at Gasconade or who did levee repair at a number of sites up and down the river.

Fig. 1) German POWs loading sacks of potatoes onto a train at branch camp Atherton, near Independence, Missouri in 1944.



The Missouri main camps had code numbers, Clark was 27, Weingarter was 34, Ft. Leonard Wood was 50 & Crowder was 79. Camp Clark was an odd place. Located just east of the town of Nevada in southwestern Missouri, it had been a military base prior to WW I when National Guardsmen had trained before heading south to the Texas-Mexico border to chase Poncho Villa, then it was the training base for the 35th Infantry Division in WWI. It was the first POW camp in Missouri and by September 15, 1942 there were 3,000 prisoners. As the war progressed, Camp Clark was designated a facility for uncooperative German prisoners. For example, Stabsfeldwebel Harry Huenmoerder , a 37-year old pro-Nazi with 13 years of military service, came to Fort Robinson, Arkansas in November 1943 and was elected as camp spokesman. When his fanatical Nazism caused problems among the prisoners he was quietly transferred to Camp Clark, Missouri where, according to a camp spokesman, "all good Nazis go." One day in the summer of 1945, prisoners at branch camp Atherton near Independence were told to stay in camp because they were to have an important visitor. President Harry Truman spoke about a minute but said to them "the war is over and you'll be going home soon."

Fig. 2) POW letter sent from Wangerin, Germany to a POW in Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri in January, 1944 was inspected in Berlin (see back side) and by U.S. censors. A search("nicht 12" etc.) revealed that the intended recipient was not at this camp so the letter was marked "Hold".

