



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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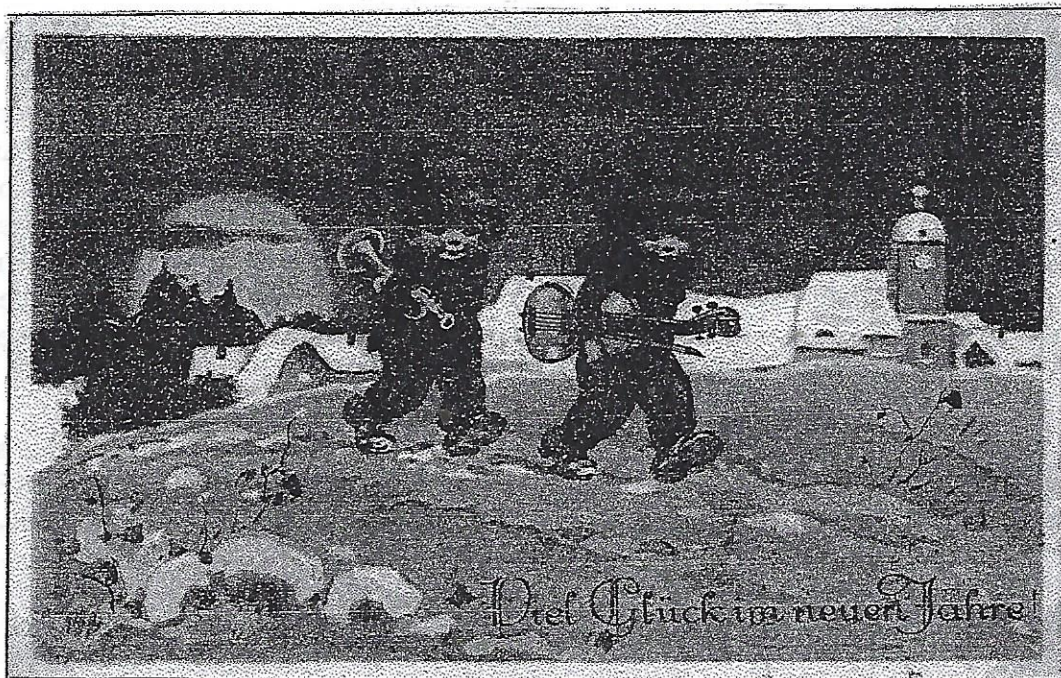
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STUDY GROUP NOTES

Dues are due - with this fourth Bulletin for 2013, dues are now due and a renewal form is included for those members not yet paid for 2014. Any member whose dues are not received by December 30, 2013 will be considered to have resigned. Should such individuals elect to rejoin at a later time, they will be required to pay the new member fee of \$10 in addition to their dues. Please send your dues payment to: Jim Lewis, 867 Monmouth Road, Cream Ridge, NJ 08514.

Early Third Reich covers - After reading this article in Bulletin 188, Ben Beede was reminded of the fact that the NSDAP apparently never thought to prepare a propaganda postcard or any kind of label or vignette to celebrate Hitler's appointment as chancellor on January 30, 1933. Has any TRSG member seen any cards or covers with political labels with Nazi symbols from that event?

Possible new features - Ben Beede offers the following suggestions for new 1-page articles:

- 1.) **High Marker**- covers franked with at least one Reichsmark, the higher the franking, the better.
- 2.) **Austerity Postal Service** - examples of late Third Reich mail from the limitations on service imposed on January 20, 1945 until the end of the war.
- 3.) **Last Days** - extremely late Third Reich mail dating from the meeting of U.S. and Soviet troops at Torgau on April 26, 1945.

Parcel Permit stamps of Greece - the article on Page 19 first appeared in the *Kurzl Briefmarkenliste* in Munich in 1954. It was then republished with an English translation in Vol. 3, No. 1 of the 'German Philatelic Review' (UK) in 1955. An edited version then appeared in the Third Reich Study Group (UK) News Sheet 125 in June 2006. Our version is also edited and includes two illustrations that were provided by the late John Painter, first editor of our TRSG Bulletin. As most of the participants in these events are no longer with us, it's nice to hear details from someone who actually knew them.

The Rest of the Story - in Bulletin No. 188, I mentioned in passing that I had won a lot at the Carl B. Kroboth Auction in 1977. To my surprise, I received seven e-mails from our members asking for more details on my "first big time auction lot". Like most of you, I'm a pack rat and discovered that I had enough documentation from this particular auction to cobble together the article that appears on Page 9.

German POWs in Soviet Captivity - TRSGer Bruce Fisher is curious as to whether any mail exists to or from German POWs in the USSR.

ED note: The Int. Red Cross set up an office in Ankara, Turkey to find out about Russian and German POWs from the Eastern Front. In August 1941, the first list of Russian POWs reached Ankara from the Germans. However, it was to be the last because the USSR was unwilling to send a list of German POWs to Ankara. From my reading, I learned that Hitler himself urged Red Cross inspectors to German camps holding Soviet POWs. But a Red Cross appeal to Stalin for POW postal service received his reply: "There are no Soviet POWs, the Soviet soldier fights till death. If he chooses to become a prisoner, he is automatically excluded from the Russian community. We are not interested in a postal service for Germans."

Cover Illustration: This charming color post card showing two fur clad little musicians trudging through the snow was mailed at Breslau on December 26, 1936. It was provided by TRSGer Bob Ferguson, who, along with our staff, wishes all of our members "**Viel Glück im neuen Jahr!**"

Feldpost Facets 1937-1945

Family Communication Card for Russians in Wehrmacht

by Benjamin R. Beede

The bilingual German/Russian postcard shown on the following page appears to be a device for Russians in the German Armed Forces to communicate their families. The German language notes on the face of the card reads:

“In case families cannot remain united together, the German Armed Forces will take care that everyone will be reunited with their family as soon as that is possible.

Therefore, it is in your interest to answer all questions accurately. A separate card is to filled out for each man, each woman and each child.”

The wording seems strange, which suggests that a Russian may have composed the notes. The intent was apparently to facilitate maintaining contacts by mail rather than to assure soldiers that they would soon be stationed near their families.

There appears to be two sections to the questionnaire on the reverse of the card, one for military personnel and one for their dependents. The first questions seem to be aimed at Russian soldiers. The soldier was asked to provide information about his family, including names of his wife and children.

The final questions in this section ask about the last known location of the person's family. The other questions, which are highlighted with a bar, seem to be addressed to family members. A soldier would probably not be asked to supply a town and street address. The last question in the family member section refers to: “*Betrieb, Familie usw.*” Evidently, the question was included to deal with the possibility that a family member could be best identified and contacted through association with a given factory or plant or through residence with another family.

The address to which the card was to be sent is Feldpost Number 39 609/Ru. The Kannapin compilation [1] indicates that on Jan. 7, 1944 this number was assigned to “*Prop. Abtl. B u. Zentralauskufsstelle (u. russ. Einw.) IV*”. (Propaganda Section B and the Central Information Office for Russian Inhabitants [or residents?][IV]). This number was reassigned on February 11, 1945.

The issuance of the cards may have resulted from the movement of large numbers of Russian soldiers outside the Soviet Union in late 1943 owing to German concerns about their continued reliability in the face of Red Army advances. One may wonder whether similar cards were used for non-Russian Soviet citizens who served with the German forces.

Reference

- 1] Kannapin, Norbert - *Die deutsche Feldpostübersicht 1939-1945*- Biblio Verlag. Osnabrück 1981.

Feldpost-Karte

В случае, если члены одной семьи будут разлучены, Германская Армия позаботится о том, чтобы, как только это окажется возможным, каждый снова присоединился к своим близким.

Поэтому, если во время эвакуации Ты был разлучен с Твоей семьей, в Твоем же интересе точно ответить на все вопросы этой открытки. Каждый мужчина, каждая женщина и каждый ребенок, разлученные со своей семьей, должны прислать отдельную открытку.

Für den Fall, dass die Familien nicht immer geschlossen beisammen bleiben können, wird die Deutsche Wehrmacht dafür Sorge tragen, dass jeder wieder mit seiner Familie vereinigt wird, sobald das möglich ist.

Deshalb ist es in Deinem Interesse, alle Fragen der Karte genau zu beantworten. Für jeden Mann, jede Frau und jedes Kind ist eine besondere Karte auszufüllen.

An die Dienststelle

Feldpost-Nr.: 39 609/Ru.

Имя и фамилия:

Name und Vorname

Год, месяц и число рождения:

geboren am:

Имя жены:

Name der Frau:

Имена детей:

Name der Kinder:

Последнее место жительства в России:

Letzter Wohnort in Russland:

Город или деревня:

Stadt bzw. Dorf:

Район:

Rayon:

Теперь проживаю в:

Ich bin jetzt in:

Город или деревня:

Stadt bzw. Dorf:

Улица и № дома:

Strasse und Hausnummer:

у:

bei:

Предприятие, семья и т.д.

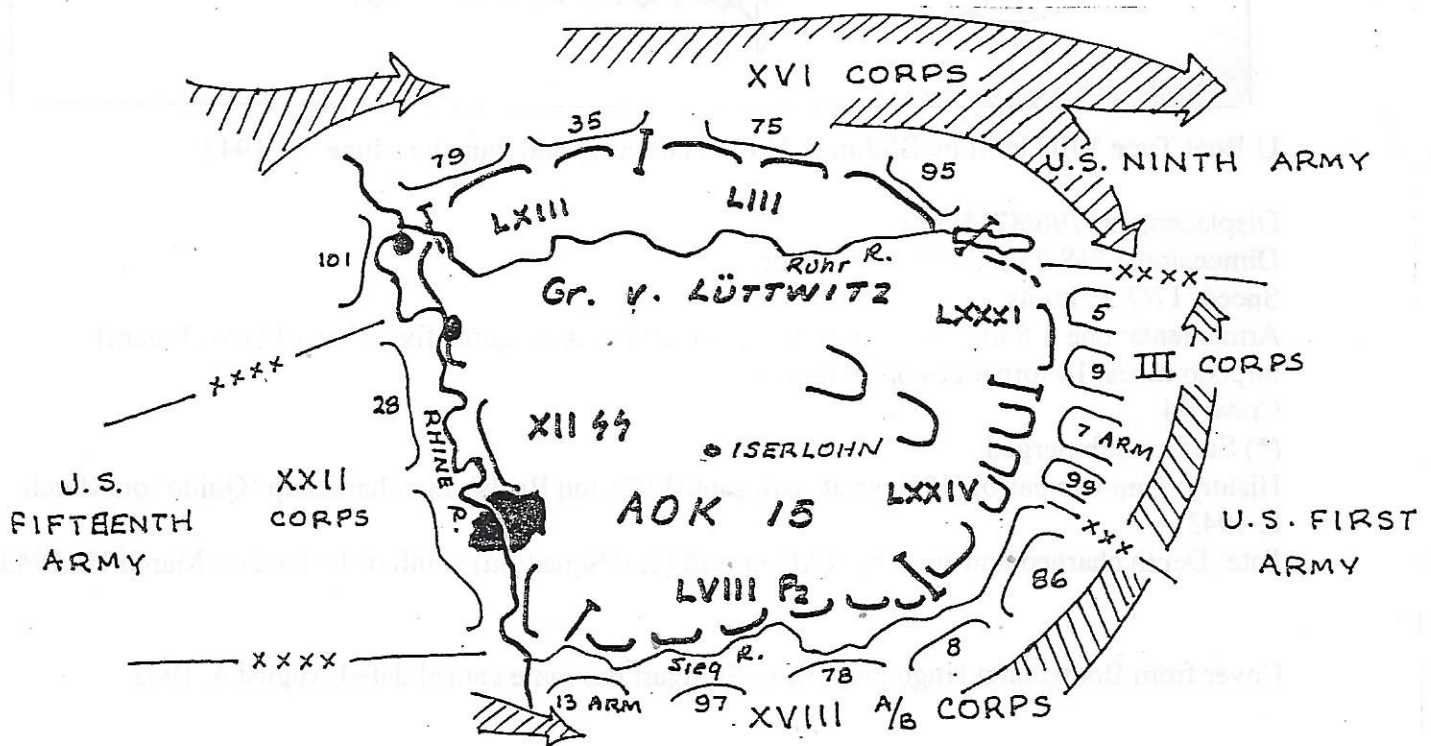
Betrieb, Familie usw.:

TRSG Map: The Ruhr Pocket

by Kelly Stefanacci

In March 1945, Allied Forces crossed the Rhine River. South of the Ruhr, the U.S. 12th Army Group captured the Ludendorff Bridge at Remagen. North of the Ruhr, the British 21st Army Group crossed the Rhine at Rees and Wesel. Both Army Groups fanned out into the German hinterland. One of the primary objectives was capture of the Ruhr industrial area, known as the “armory of the Third Reich”. The U.S. 1st Army headed northwest, forming the southern pincer of the Ruhr envelopment while the U.S. 9th Army headed southwest to form the northern pincer. Lead elements of the two pincers met on April 1, 1945 near Lippstadt and the encirclement was completed by April 4th. Trapped within the Ruhr Pocket were approximately 350,000 German soldiers of Army Group B, comprising 21 divisions of the Wehrmacht, plus millions of civilians in cities that had been heavily damaged by Allied bombing.

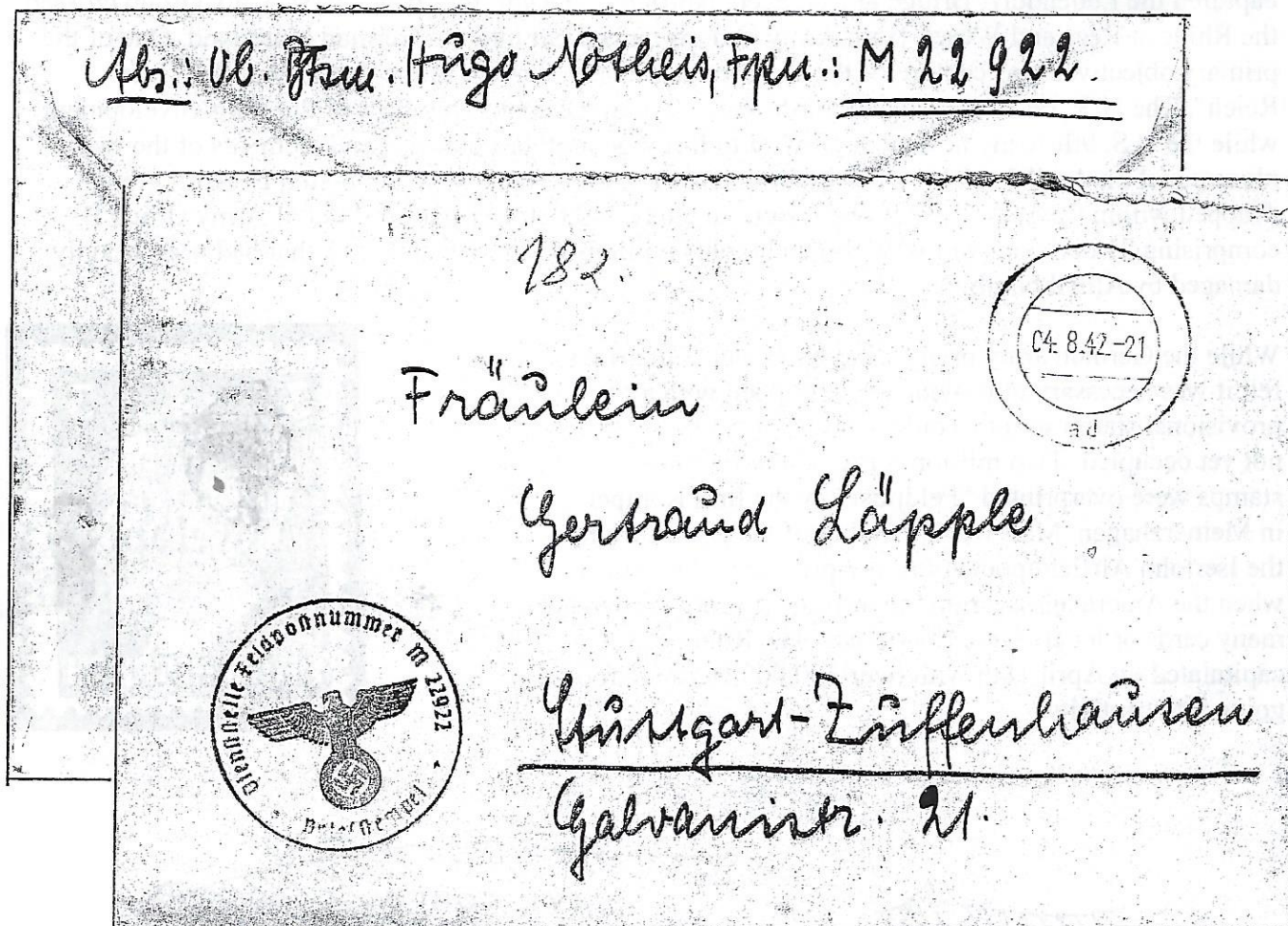
While the German army prepared to break out, authorities felt it was necessary to provide those trapped with a provisional stamp so they could send letters to those areas not yet occupied. Two million 3 Pfg. Hitler definitive stamps were overprinted “Feldpost” by the firm Kämper in Meinerzhagen. Mail was flown out of the pocket from the Iserlohn Airfield pocket From April 7th to the 15th, 1945, when the Americans overran the airbase. It is not known how many cards or letters were flown out. The Ruhr pocket capitulated on April 18th with over 300,000 German troops going into captivity.



NAVY LOG

by Phil Miller

U-Boat 633 - Feldpost # 22922



U-Boat Type VIIC built by Blohm & Voss (Hamburg) and launched June 10, 1942.

Displacement: 796/871* tons

Dimensions: 218.25 x 20.25 x 15.5 feet

Speed: 17/7.5* knots

Armaments: one 3.5 in., one 37mm A.A., two 20mm A.A. guns, five 21 in (4 bow, 1 stern) torpedo tubes, 14 torpedoes or 39 mines

Crew: 44

(*) Surface/submerged.

History: One war patrol (19 days at sea), sank 3,921 ton British merchant ship 'Guido' on March 8, 1943.

Fate: Depth charged and sunk by RAF aircraft (220 Squadron) south of Iceland on March 10, 1943

Cover from Bootsmann Hugo Notheis to Stuttgart has mute cancel dated August 4, 1942

The Warnemünde-Gedser Ferry

by Bob Ferguson

A long established ferry runs between Gjedser (Gedser) Denmark and Warnemünde, a coastal city a few miles down the Warnow river from Rostock. The distance of the route is approximately 25 miles. The ferry "Schwerin" of the Warnemünde-Gedser line is shown on Michel # 657.

Fig. 1) Postcard from 1937 showing Warnemunde-Gedser line ferry has text "Expressroute nach dem Norden Durchlaufende Wagen-Schlafwagen."

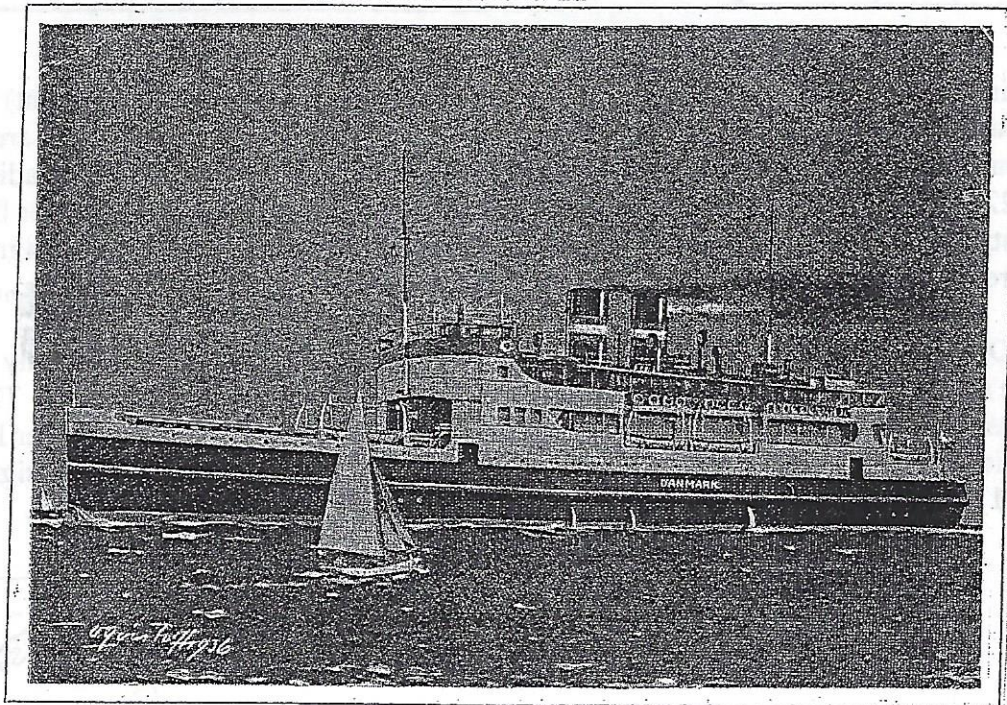
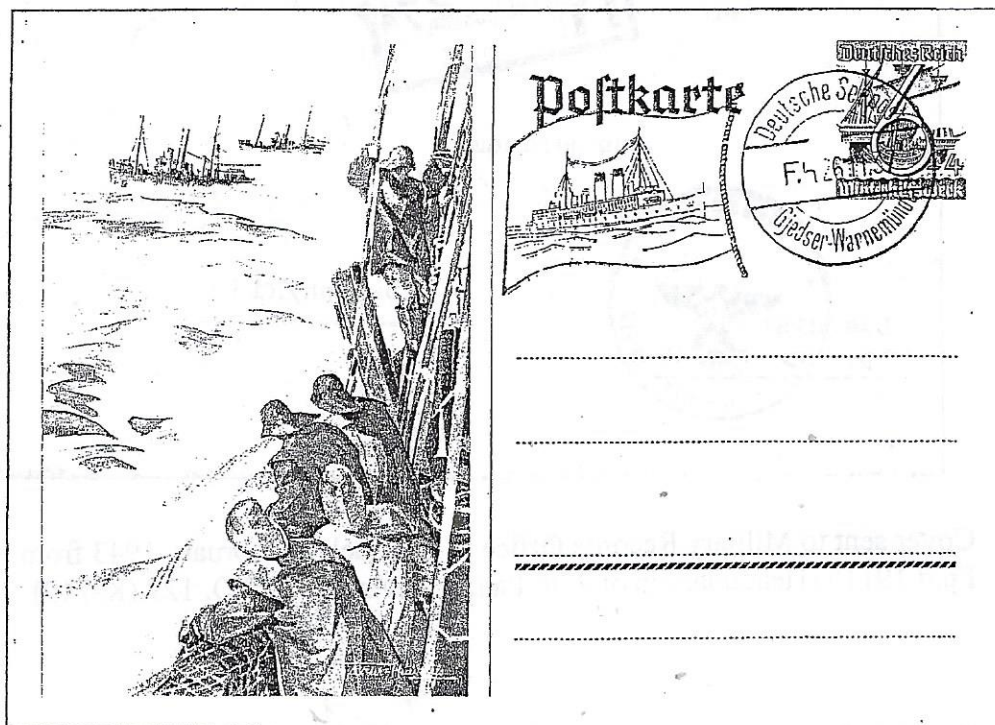


Fig. 2) Postal card with flag cancel dated November 26, 1937. Circular portion of cancel has "Deutsche Seepost" in top segment and "Gjedser-Warnemünde" in bottom segment.



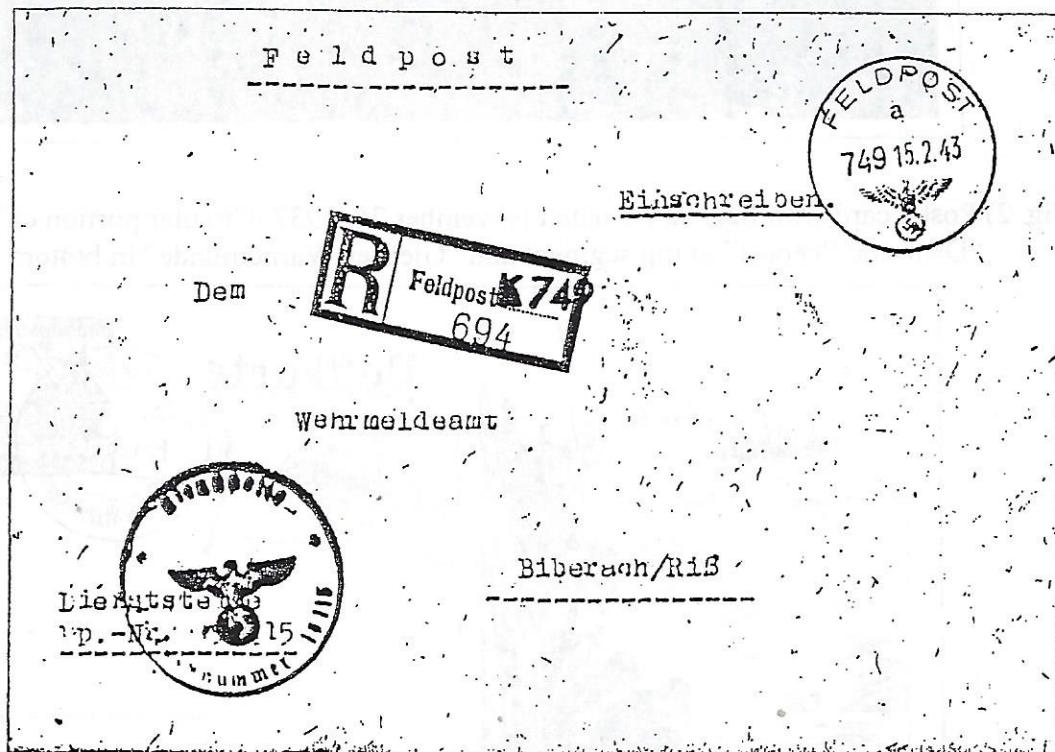
COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE:**27th Panzer Division**

by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS			AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	PANZER	GRENADIER	ARTY	UNITS
127	749	245	140	127	127

Partially formed in two echelons - part of the divisional base (including the artillery regiment) was formed in France in the summer and autumn of 1942 and then sent to Voronezh, Russia, in the rear area of the 2nd Army. There it was joined by Brigade Michalik - which consisted of the 140th Panzer Grenadier Regiment (formerly of the 22nd Panzer Division) - to form the 27th Panzer Division. The 127th Panzer Engineer Battalion was destroyed in Stalingrad and never joined the rest of the unit. The P.O. was assigned Fp. # 48484 as a return address and Kenn 749 as a coded identity in lieu of tactical FpA 127.

The 27th Panzer Division fought on the Don and in the retreat from Stalingrad, and apparently was broken up over the whole southern sector; parts, for example, were attached to the Italian 8th Army. The division was disbanded after the Soviet winter offensive of 1942-43 had been stopped. The 7th Panzer Division absorbed most of its equipment and survivors. It should be noted that Fp. # 48484 was re-assigned to FpA 16 of the reformed 16th Panzer Division in August 1943 but this division retained Kenn 326.



Cover sent to Military Records Office in Biberach in February 1943 from Fp.# 19115 (Headquarters of 27th Panzer Division via P.O. 127 (K-749))

Sender/Reply Postal Card for Eastern Foreign Workers

by Bob Ferguson

This paid sender/reply postal card (Michel # P310 or Borek # 307) was produced for the use of Eastern foreign civilian workers in Germany. Particulars for the sender and the recipient were given in German, Russian and Ukrainian. The following three sender cards were written in Ukrainian. Note the Berlin censor office transit hand stamp # B-32 or transit machine stamp # B40.

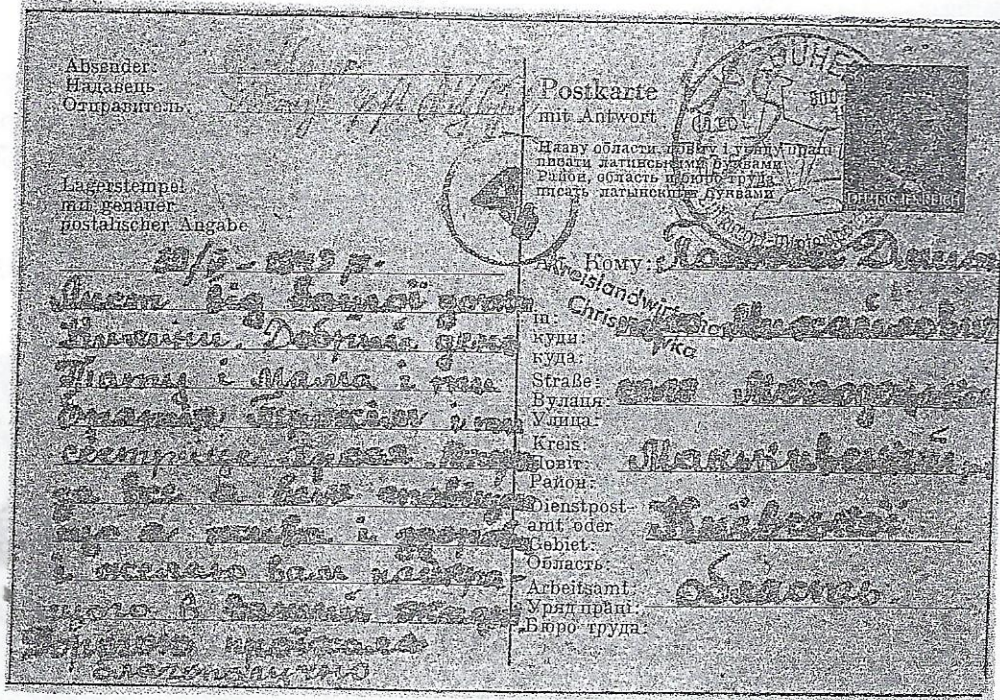
- 1.) Posted at Woltersdorf (Kr. Greifenhagen) [RPD-Bezirk Stettin] on Sept. 16, 1943. Sender was Onisehenko Uljana, Neuhaus, Post Woltersdorf, Kreis Greifenhagen i Pommern

Absender: Надатель: Отправитель:	<i>Onisehenko Uljana</i> <i>Neuhaus</i> <i>Post Woltersdorf</i> <i>Kreis Greifenhagen</i>	Postkarte mit Antwort	
Lagerstempel mit genauer postalscher Angabe	<i>Woltersdorf</i>	Назву области, пошту і уряду праці написати латинськими буквами Район, область и бюро труда написать латинскими буквами	
Подати адресу та ім'я маючого адресату і назвати місто, селище і вулицю, де проживає і домашню адресу свого українського в'язня, який повинен бути наданий йому в подарунок грошей або подарунків на день. Милість на старому місці всіма	<i>Подати адресу та ім'я маючого адресату і назвати місто, селище і вулицю, де проживає і домашню адресу свого українського в'язня, який повинен бути наданий йому в подарунок грошей або подарунків на день. Милість на старому місці всіма</i>	Ан, Кому:	<i>Onisehenko Uljana</i>
		in: куда: куда:	<i>Ромово</i>
		Straße: Улиця:	
		Kreis: Повіт:	<i>Perejaskowskij</i>
		Rajon: Район:	
		Dienstpost- amt oder Gebiet: Область:	<i>Kiewska</i>
		Arbeitsamt: Уряд праці: Бюро труда:	

- 2.) Posted at Zittau [RPD-Bezirk Dresden] on Sept. 13, 1943. Intended recipient was Anastasy Demitrenko, Kreis Kiev, Rayon Perejaskovsky, Dorf Studenkis, Russland

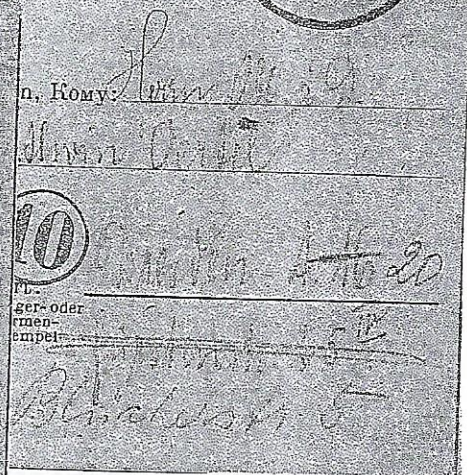
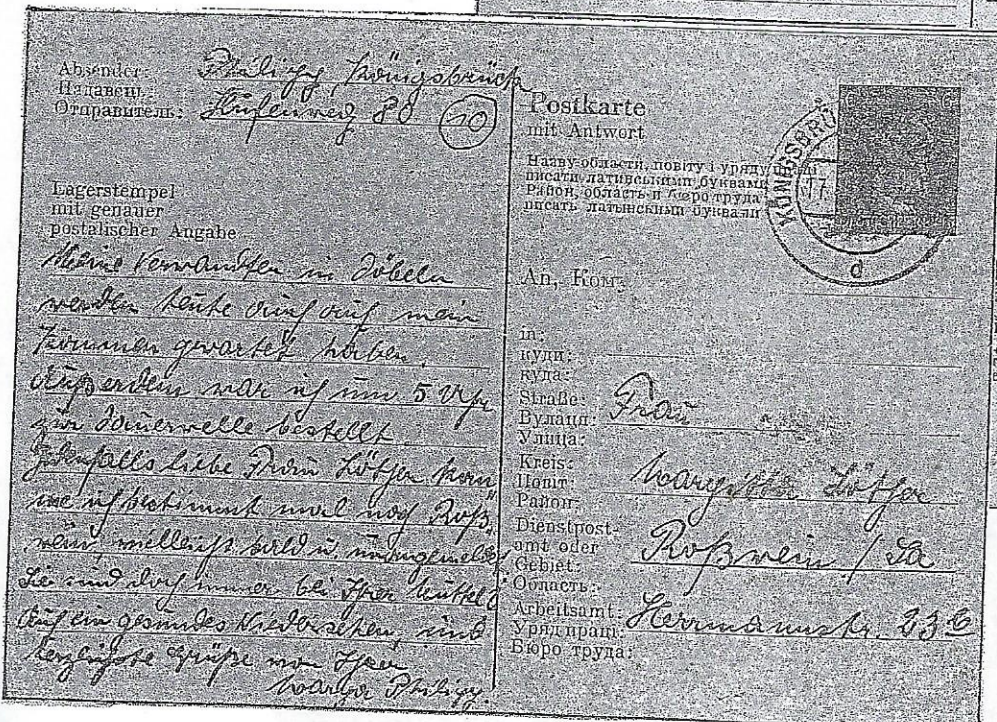
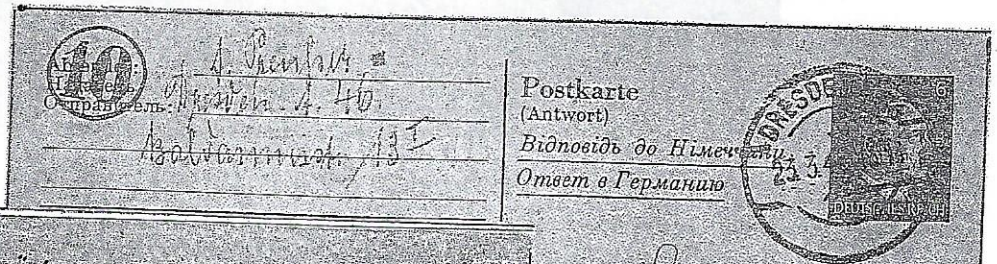
Absender: Надатель: Отправитель:	<i>Demitrenko</i> <i>Zittau</i> <i>Post Zittau</i> <i>Kreis Zittau</i>	Postkarte mit Antwort	
Lagerstempel mit genauer postalscher Angabe	<i>Zittau</i>	Назву области, пошту і уряду праці написати латинськими буквами Район, область и бюро труда написать латинскими буквами	
Подати адресу та ім'я маючого адресату і назвати місто, селище і вулицю, де проживає і домашню адресу свого українського в'язня, який повинен бути наданий йому в подарунок грошей або подарунків на день. Милість на старому місці всіма	<i>Подати адресу та ім'я маючого адресату і назвати місто, селище і вулицю, де проживає і домашню адресу свого українського в'язня, який повинен бути наданий йому в подарунок грошей або подарунків на день. Милість на старому місці всіма</i>	Ан, Кому:	<i>Anastasy Demitrenko</i>
		in: куда: куда:	<i>Kreis Kiev</i>
		Straße: Улиця:	<i>Rayon Perejaskowskij</i>
		Kreis: Повіт:	<i>Dorf Studenkis</i>
		Rajon: Район:	<i>Russland</i>
		Dienstpost- amt oder Gebiet: Область:	
		Arbeitsamt: Уряд праці: Бюро труда:	

3.) Posted at Kitzbühel [RPD-Bezirk Innsbruck] on May 2, 1943. Intended recipient was Dmitry Polygall, Molodetsky Village, Mankovsky District of Kiev Region. Handstamp at center right reads: "Kreislandwirtschaft Chrissinowka".



Due to paper shortages and the loss of territories to the Red Army, both halves of these cards were used within Germany late in the war per the following examples:

- 4.) Reply card posted March 23, 1945 from Dresden A46 to Dresden A16 then forwarded to Dresden A20.
- 5.) Sender card posted April 17, 1945 from Konigsbruck (Bz Dresden) to Rosswein/Sachsen.



Censorship:

Censorship Office in Lyon

by Myron Fox

The purpose of this article is to provide examples of the surveillance of mail between unoccupied France, Switzerland and Italy at the APB "Auslandsbriefprüfstelle" (foreign letter examining office) at Lyon.

Work was begun provisionally at the end of 1942 because this office lacked proper inspection stamps and sealing tape. The military manager of this office came from ABP Frankfurt while some of the inspectors came from ABP Paris.

Fig. 1) Cover sent from Switzerland in December 1942 has a sealing strip from the Paris censor office tied diagonally by 1-line hand stamp inscribed "Dienststelle Feldpost Nr. 24052D" used from December 1942 until February 1943.

The enclosed letter shows signs of chemical examination

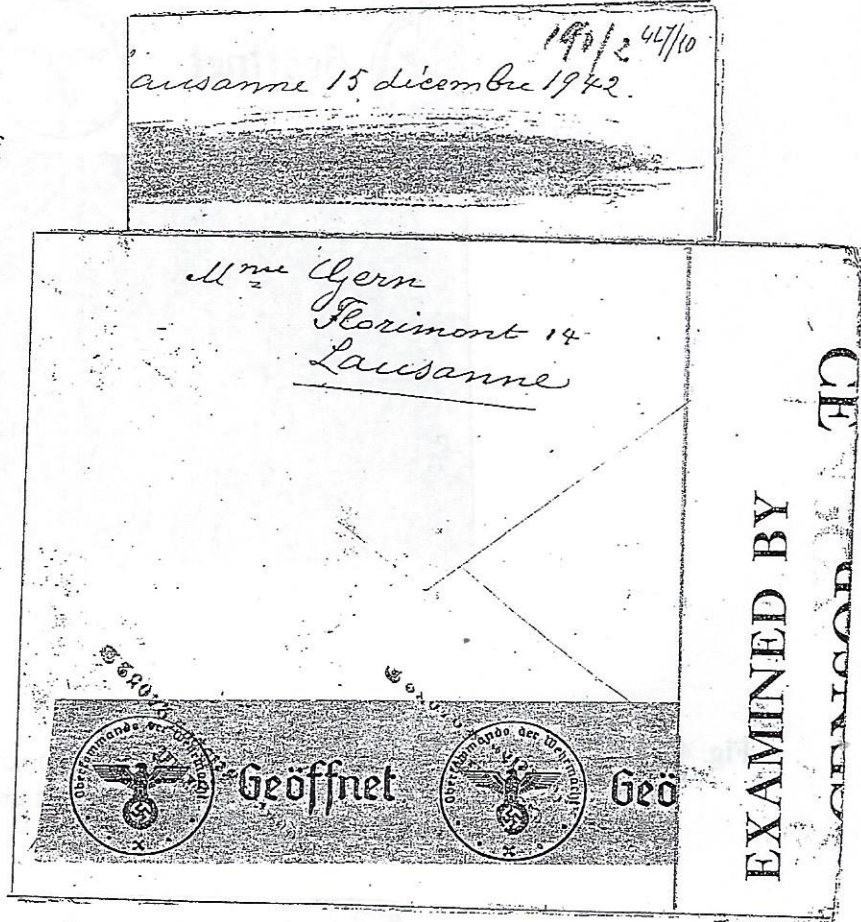


Fig. 2) Another Swiss cover has sealing strip from the Frankfurt censor office tied by circular Feldpost unit stamp with the same "Dienststelle Feldpost Nr. 24052D".

This stamp was also used from December 1942 until February 1943.

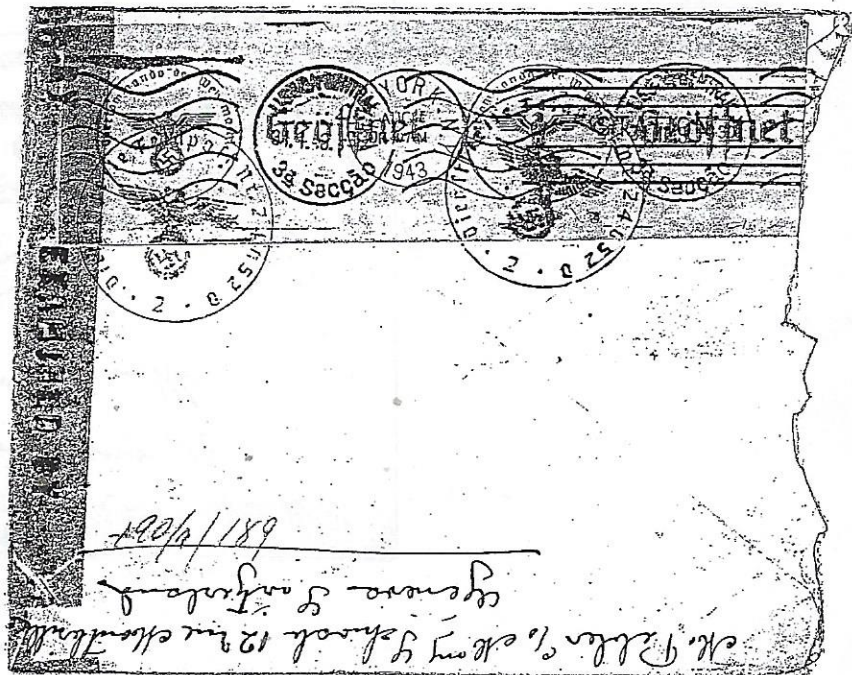


Fig. 3) By March 1943, proper "Geöffnet" (opened) sealing tape and "Geprüft" (examined) 25mm hand stamp with code letter "I" had been obtained by the Lyon Office.

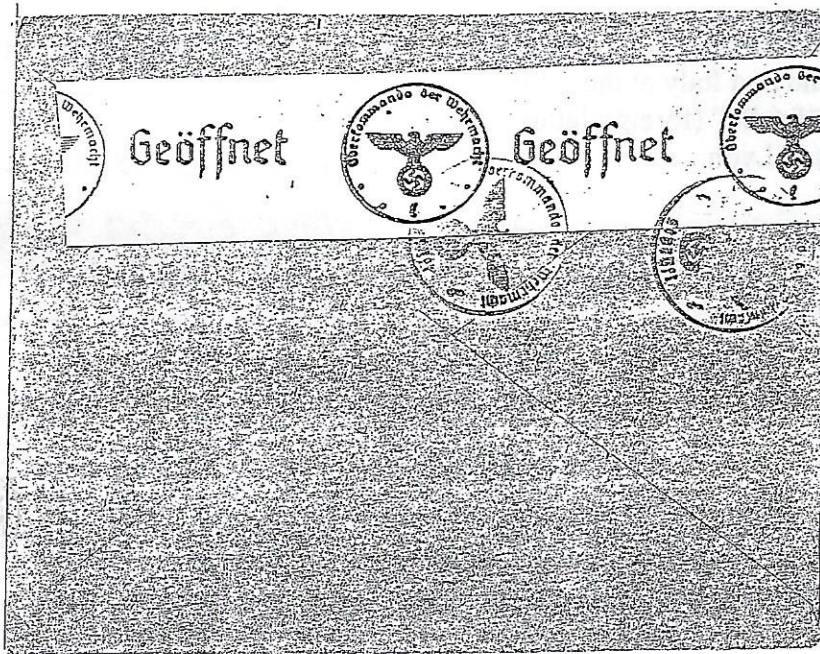


Fig. 4) A different 35mm "Geprüft" hand stamp has an eagle flanked with code letter "I" and an identification number (1 thru 4) above eagle was used from June 1943 until the closing of this office in August 1944.



German POWs in North America

Camps in Washington

by Jim Lewis

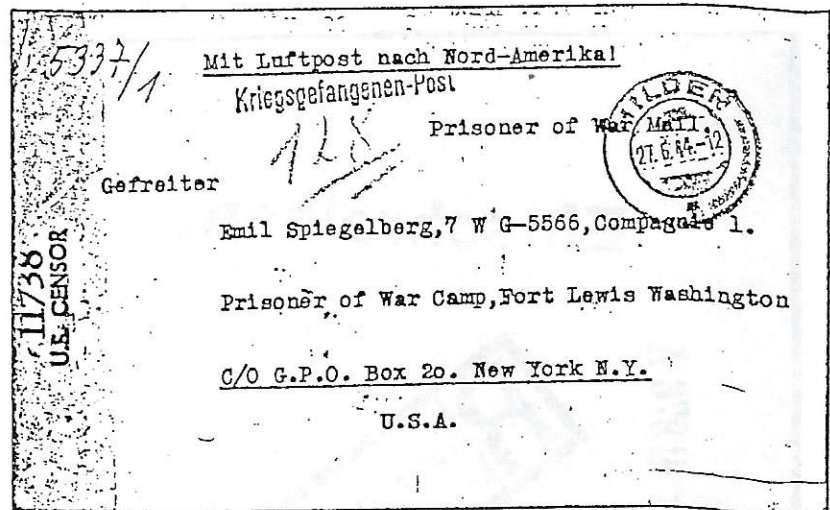
During WWII, Fort Lewis (Code 128), south of Tacoma, held about 4,000 German POWs between 1942 and 1946. Three POW camps were located just north of Gray Army Airfield, just inside the Fort Lewis main gate. Another camp located east of the field housed disruptive POWs and Nazi Party members. The POWs stayed in the same style two-story wooden barracks used by U.S. soldiers. The POWs were paid 80 cents a day for their labor, which they could spend on recreational equipment or on treats. They worked at maintaining the camp or labored in logging, clearing brush, mending uniforms or harvesting food stuffs at seven branch camps in the surrounding countryside.

POWs also worked at Mount Rainier Ordnance Depot in Tacoma which provided refurbished weapons, vehicles and other equipment for the Pacific area and Alaska. The German POWs helped in the shops, the fire department, and the salvage yards. They contributed greatly to the salvage yard's success as this depot recovered 707 tons of metal, tires, wood and paper which were sold to civilian firms in 1944.

One prisoner named Kurt Zimmerman escaped Fort Lewis by hanging under a truck as it drove out. His fellow prisoners covered for him by keeping an empty space during roll calls. A POW would run to the empty space after the clerk passing through the rows had already counted him. Two weeks later Zimmerman turned himself into Seattle police and asked to be returned to Fort Lewis. He later told military investigators that he sneaked out and had been living with a Seattle woman but they had an argument and she kicked him out.

Fort Lawton, outside Seattle, had a compound with 1,100 German POWs who worked at the nearby Port of Embarkation which processed troops to the Pacific.

Fig. 1) Cover sent in June '44 from Hilden, Germany to a POW in Fort Lewis has manuscript code "128" and U.S. censor 11738.



The main camps and branch camps in Washington are listed below

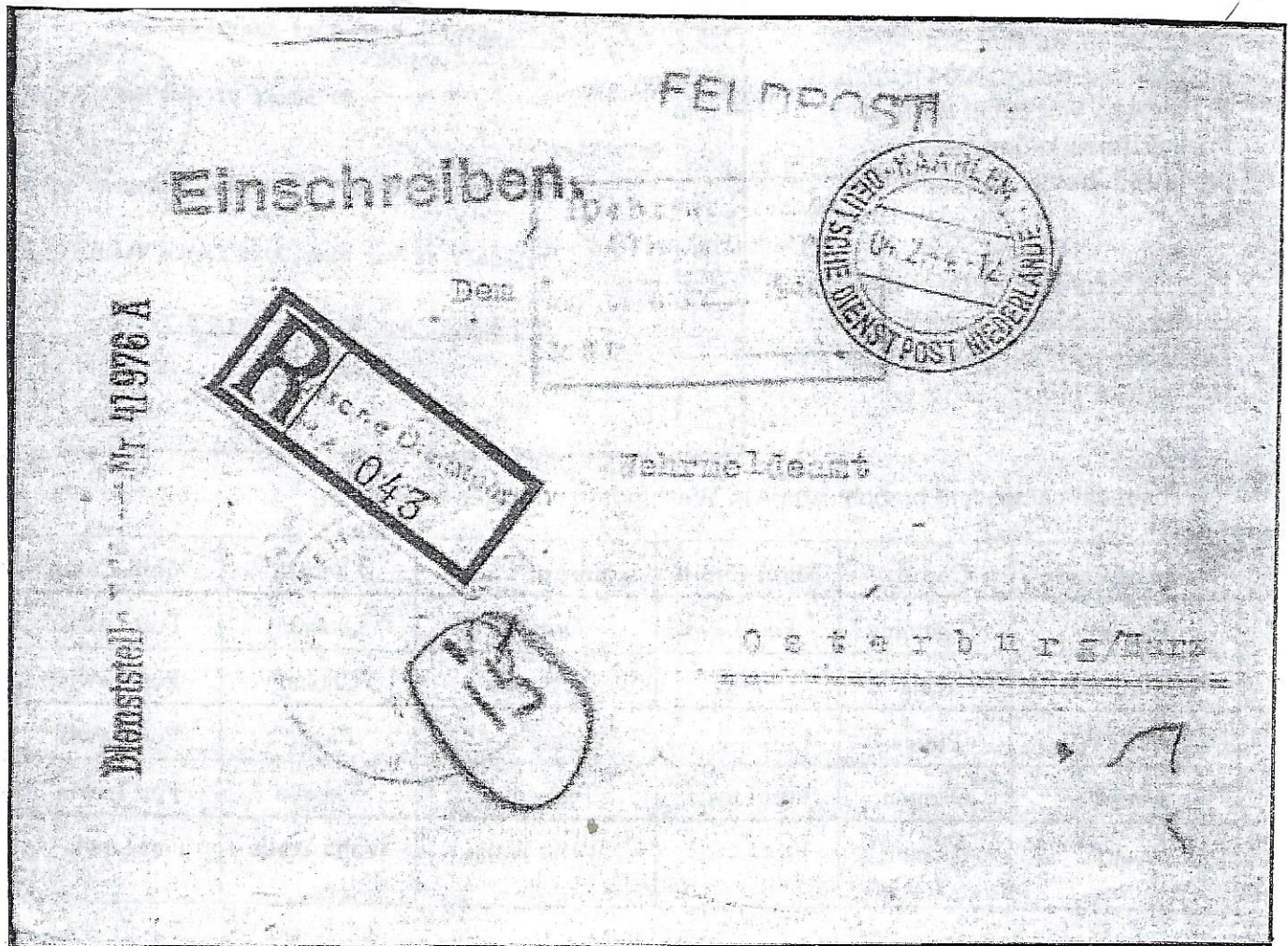
Name of Camp	County	Main Camp	Name of Camp	County	Main Camp
Dayton	Columbia	Fort Lewis	Oroville	Okanon	Fort Lewis
Fort Lawton	King	-----	Peshastin	Chelan	Fort Lewis
Fort Lewis	Pierce	-----	Spanaway	Pierce	Fort Lewis
Malott	Okanon	Fort Lewis	Toppenish	Yakima	Fort Lewis
Okanon	Okanon	Fort Lewis	Walla Walla	Walla Walla	Fort Lewis

Note): POWs also worked at the Seattle Port of Embarkation and these hospitals: Barnes General (Clark County), Baxter General (Spokane), Madigan General (Fort Lewis) and McCaw General (Walla Walla).
POW Cemeteries: Fort Lawton Post, Fort Lewis Post and Vancouver Barracks Post.

The Lost Legions:
The Georgian Legion
 by Joseph Chervenyak

The Wehrmacht's ethnic Georgian Legion was formed in December 1941 from émigrés who had been living in Western Europe since the 1921 Soviet invasion of Georgia. In addition, Soviet POWs of Georgian origin were allowed to enlist in the Legion rather than face the harsh conditions in German POW camps. After formation, the Legion recruits were sent to training camps in western Ukraine and became operational in the autumn of 1942. The Georgians were organized into thirteen field battalions of up to 800 men, each made up of five companies. Hitler became very suspicious of these Georgians and other Soviet battalions. As a result of this distrust of "Ostruppen" (Eastern Troops), some Georgian battalions were moved west to occupation duties in the Netherlands. In the spring of 1945, as the western Allies were driving into Germany, troops of the 822nd Georgian battalion, stationed on the Dutch island of Texel, rebelled against their German commanders. The resulting battle, known as the "Georgian uprising on Texel", continued from April 5, 1945, past the general German surrender, until May 20th. This event is sometimes described by historians as Europe's last battle.

This registered Feldpost cover was post marked on February 4, 1944 by the Haarlem office of the Deutsche Dienstpost Niederlande. Addressed to the Military Records Office in Osterburg, the sender is Feldpost # 41976A, coded address of Staff HQ of Georgian Legion Battalion 822. The rectangular marking at top center is the receiving stamp of the records office dated Feb. 7, 1944.



Story Behind the Cancel: Karl May Festival in Rathen

by Kelly Stefanacci

Karl Friedrich May (February 25, 1842 - March 30, 1912) was born in Hohensteib-Ernstthal (Saxony) to an extremely poor family of 14 children, and was one of only five to survive infancy. His early life was difficult. In 1856 he began his teacher training at Waldenburg but was expelled in 1859 when it was discovered that he had stolen six candles. After a petition, he was allowed to resume his education at Plauen but his career as a teacher was short-lived. After his room mate accused him of stealing his watch, May spent six weeks in jail in Chemnitz and his teaching license was revoked.

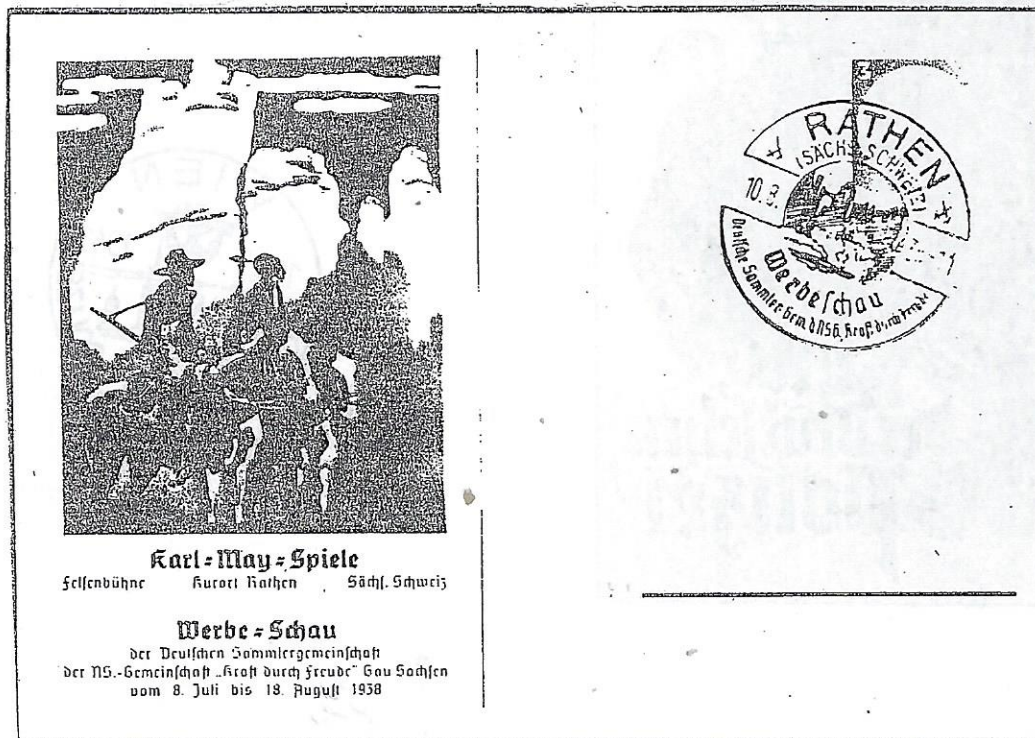
He eventually became a prolific writer, best known for his novels set in the American Old West, which he had never visited. He created the characters of Winnetou, a wise Apache chief and his German émigré blood brother "Old Shatterhand". May's novels influenced the European popular imagination of the American wild west and his readers included Kaiser Wilhelm II, Albert Einstein, Albert Schweitzer, Franz Kafka and Fritz Lang. Adolf Hitler was also an admirer and wrote that May's novels "overwhelmed" him as a school boy.

The first regular Karl May "Spiele" (Festival) was staged from 1938 until 1941 in the *Felsenbühne* (Open Air Stage) at Rathen in Saxony which was laid out in 1936. This is a natural stage located in a hollow at the upper end of Wahlgrund valley between the rocks of *Kleine Gans* and *Grosser Wehrturm* below the famous Bastei rocks and Neurathen castle.

Fig. 1) Portrait of Karl May appears on this Rathen cancel dated July 20, 1939 that was sponsored by the collectors group in Gau Saxony.



Fig. 2) Winnetou and "Old Shatterhand" on horseback depicted on a postal card (Borek 105/C 67) sold at the first Karl May Spiele at Rathen in 1938.



Tag der Deutschen Polizei Cancels

by Bob Ferguson

The following special cancels pertaining to German Police Day are listed in Julius Bochmann's *Katalog der Deutschen Gelegenheitsstempel*.

Berlin # 299	Tag der Deutschen Polizei/ Dein Freund-Dein Helfer	29 January 1939
Wien # 25	Tag der Deutschen Polizei	27.-29. January 1939
Wien # 25	Tag der Deutschen Polizei	16.-18. February 1940
Wien # 75	Tag der Deutschen Polizei	12.-16. February 1941
Brunn # 83	Tag der Deutschen Polizei	15. February 1942
Iglau # 84	Tag der Deutschen Polizei	15. February 1942
Munchn # 171	Tag der Deutschen Polizei	14.-15. February 1942
Wien # 75	Tag der Deutschen Polizei	13.-15. February 1942

Fig. 1) Postcard sponsored by the W.H.W. (Winter Relief Fund) has illustration of a policeman (front) and a member of the SS Security Service ("Sicherheitsdienst").



Fig. 2) Wien cancels for 1940 and 1941



Feldpost Parcel Permit Stamps of Greece

by Dr. Erich Mathieu

The story of the Feldpost parcel permit issues of Greece, as published in many catalogs and handbooks during the post-war period, has frequently suffered from incorrect, or incomplete information. I believe that the actual facts, made available to me by the officers and Feldpost officials responsible for postal administration in the area at the time, should now be published. The true facts have emerged from an extensive exchange of correspondence with Dr. Ewald Schwarz, who was then the Army Feldpost Master in the Balkans; Oberst Rolf Göhring, then in charge of communications for Army Group E; and Oberpostrat Dipl. Ing. Walther Steinmann who was the Telecommunications Officer for Army Group E, the group that was actively involved in the issuance of these parcel stamps. I have not only seen mint copies of all the relevant stamps, but I also possess photocopies of twelve postally used copies and can, therefore, prove that all these stamps cataloged have actually seen proper postal use.

An understanding of the circumstances leading to these issues is essential. In 1944, every soldier in Greece was allowed to send two parcels per month back to Germany. Initially the issuing of special printed labels, such as the example shown top right on the parcel wrap in Fig. 1, was the responsibility of the company commander. Each label would bear his personal signature because, without this, the parcel would not receive the unit handstamp nor be forwarded by the receiving Feldpost office.

Fig. 1)

Even under stable conditions this system was very difficult to administer. Often, when companies were divided into many smaller independent units scattered over hundreds of miles, it became almost impossible. Smaller units would have had little opportunity to send their parcels home, which must be one of the reasons for the current rarity of these labels on the philatelic market today.



The responsible officials were certainly aware of this problem. Oberst Göhring sent several requests to Army Feldpost Master Dr. Schwarz for special parcel permit stamps to replace the labels. Schwarz, however, did not like this proposal and thought it would be turned down by his superiors. According to Schwarz, Oberst Göhring persisted with his request and managed (without his knowledge) to obtain 1,500 to 2,000 Italian stamps of four types [See Michel Feldpost Catalog - Griechenland (Saloniki)] bearing a special overprint consisting of a large central swastika dividing a four-line overprint reading 'Soldaten/Päckchen' and 'Front/Heimat'

Göhring then distributed some of these new permit stamps to troops under his command. Several weeks later, Dr. Schwarz received reports from Athens and other towns stating that local Feldpost offices had received parcels bearing postage stamps instead of permit labels. The stamps in question were those noted above. Many parcels also bore an additional franking, usually Hitler definitives to the value of 20 Rpf. (Fig. 2) In response to this information, Dr. Schwarz stated:

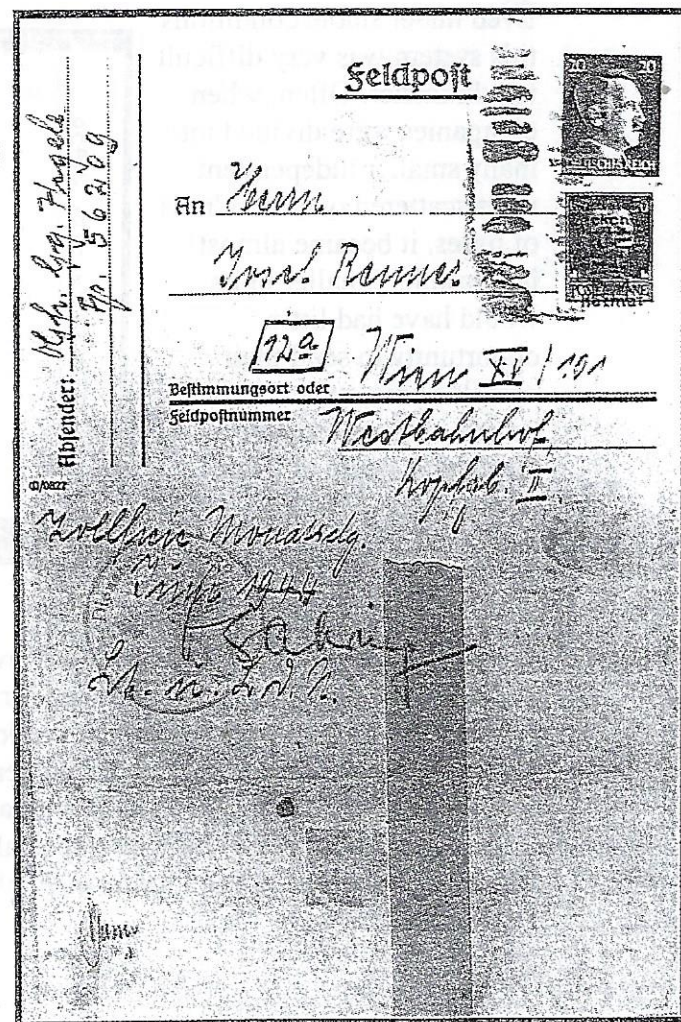
'I gave orders that these parcels should be accepted and forwarded, as it would be wrong to punish soldiers for actions perpetrated by their superiors, and I commenced my investigations. It was proved thereupon that Oberst Göhring had, on his own initiative, ordered these stamps to be printed and that he had issued them instead of the labels as instructed by G.H.Q. I confiscated all the remainders, approximately 65 stamps, and forwarded them to G.H.Q. This caused quite a row and resulted in Oberst Göhring being reprimanded by army headquarters. The G.H.Q. further circulated an order, printed in *Heersverwaltungsblatt* - Summer 1944, stating that these stamps were not valid. However, as all parcels franked with the stamps had been properly accepted, cancelled and forwarded to Germany, the stamps has thus 'de facto' become valid parcel permit stamps. The issue consisted of overprints on the 20 cent (Caesar), 25 and 50 cent (Victor Emanuel) and 50 cent (Pegasus)'

This would imply that Göhring alone was responsible for the issue, but further correspondence with him, and with Steinmann, leads me to believe that the final decision was taken at a higher level. Steinmann says that an order from the C in C of Army Group E to issue permit stamps had been made and Göhring states that all he had done was to recommend such an issue to his superiors. If these statements are true, it would seem that the Army Group C in C had slipped this order past Dr. Schwarz.

The decision was probably based on Hitler's decree (the so-called *Vereinfachungsbefehl*) directing that in extraordinary circumstances requiring immediate action, regulations could be replaced by direct orders from the responsible commander. This particular C in C must have considered that such a situation had arisen with regard to postal service. He therefore accepted Göhring's suggestion and issued an order for the production and release of parcel permit stamps that were printed in June 1944 by a German propaganda company at a Greek printing firm in Salonika. Only red and black inks were available and the latter was only used on the 20 cent carmine Caesar. Trials revealed that the red overprint didn't show up clearly on darker colors so the 5 and 50 cent Victor Emanuel and 50 cent Pegasus were given a dull, milky undercoat on which the overprints showed more clearly. Steinmann estimates the total overprint (all values) at 2,000 while Göhring puts the figure at approximately 6,000. While the official order of 1944 declared these stamps invalid, the statements of officials most closely concerned leave no doubt that they were genuine issues designed to meet a particularly urgent postal need.

This article appeared in News Sheet 125 of the Third Reich Study Group (UK) in June 2006.

Fig. 2)



An Interesting Parcel Post Item

by Rex A. Dixon

Have you ever wondered what happens when a parcel card reaches the post office in the town to which it has been sent but cannot be matched with the parcel to which it relates? Well, here is your opportunity to note how the Reichspost dealt with this situation in 1944. The parcel card shown as Fig. 1 below was sent on May 9, 1944 from Schlossberg in East Prussia to Brunndorf bei Marburg an der Drau in Lower Styria. The backside received a post office arrival date stamp on May 13th. However, the parcel never arrived after its 622 mile journey (as the crow flies), one of the longest possible within the Reich.

Fig. 1)

On June 6th the Brunndorf P.O. decided that the time had come to take action. They filled out a *Fehlmeldung* (tracer concerning the missing parcel) with the details taken from the parcel card and posted it the following day (June 7th) to the Schlossberg P.O. At the same time they annotated the front of the parcel card, which they retained in Brunndorf, with the word "*Fehlgem(eldet) 6/6*" (tracer sent and date) and initialed it. This can be seen just below the postage stamps on right hand side of card.

The following is a translation of the back side of the advice tracer card that is shown as Fig. 2:

Serial No. 411 Originating Office Schlossberg Ostpr.

Post Office Brunndorf on 6.6 1944

The parcel indicated above failed to arrive here*)

Address: Willy Leiwat post restante

Sender: Mar. Leiwat, Kiesdorf ub. Schlossberg

Value: -- RM, Weight: 3.- Kg

(For unsealed, insured parcels and unsealed, insured Postgut)

Date Submitted: 9.5.44

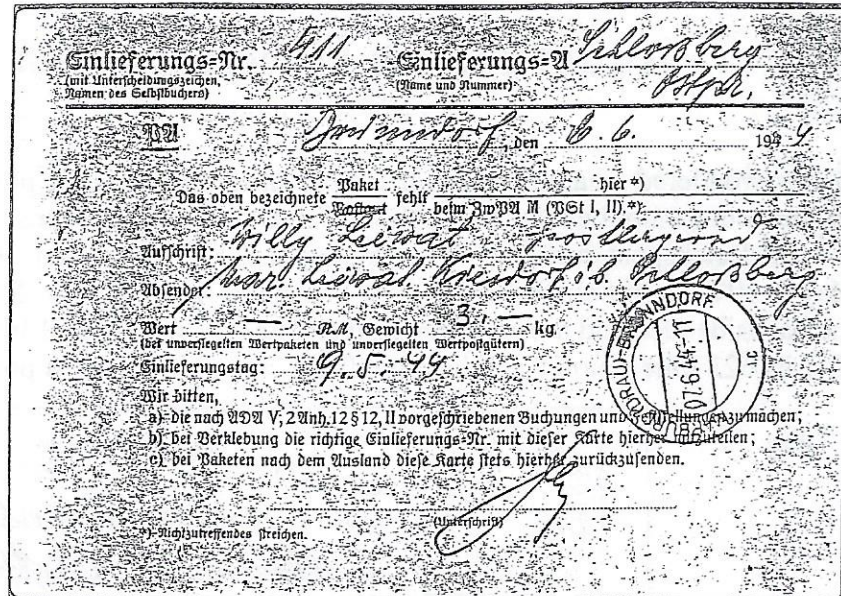
We request you,

- a) make inquiries re the aforementioned in accordance with ADA V.2, annex 12 12.II;
- b) use this card to inform us of the correct serial number on the label;
- c) (for parcels sent abroad) send this card rather than return it here.

(Initials)

(Signature)

Fig. 2)



As shown in Fig. 3, the Schlossberg P.O. applied a boxed arrival date stamp in violet to the front of the advice tracer card recording the arrival on June 11th. In the remarks section are two manuscript comments written in two different hands. The first reads “Vielleicht liegt eine Verzettlung vor??” which I believe was written in Brunndorf before the tracer card was sent. Our German member Rainer Lütgens translates this comment as “Perhaps the wrong number is on the parcel?” The second comment reading “Es liegt Verklebung vor Nr. 411 Fink” is the answer given in Schlossberg by a Mr. Fink. Rainer suggests that this says “It is the wrong numbered label on parcel No. 411”. The word “Verklebung” refers to the identically numbered white labels that were affixed to both the parcel and the parcel card.

Fig. 3)






The Schlossberg P.O. then returned the tracer card with the diagonal notation “12/6 Zurück” (Return to sender on 12th June) on the front, crossing out their address and substituting “12a Marburg (Drau)”. No other postmarks were applied. Upon its arrival in Brunndorf, the tracer card was stapled to the parcel card. As the parcel card has never been signed on the reverse by the intended recipient or his agent, one may suppose that the parcel never showed up. It could well have been destroyed by enemy action during its long journey.

Control Card for Foreign Mail Service

by Bruce Fisher

In the September 1977 issue of the German Postal Specialist, Ben Beede wrote a highly informative article about the 'Kontrollkarte für den Auslandsbriefverkehr' (Control Card for Foreign Mail Service). This control card, introduced early in 1944, rationed the sending of non-commercial letters to foreign countries to only two per month. The purpose of this article is to provide examples from my collection of both a control card and a cover hand stamped 'Ohne Kontrollkarte' (without control card).

Fig. 1) A control card was a folder with four pages, the front page with the name, address, birth date and signature of the owner. It also shows the date issued (7 February 1944) and the seal of the issuing office in Berlin. The middle two pages had spaces for 24 post office date stamps (2 per month x 12 months). Note that only three letters had been sent in 1944, two from Berlin-Friedenau in February and a third from Berlin-Steglitz in March.

Kontrollkarte
für den Auslandsbriefverkehr


Name und Vorname: *Birong, Johann*

Wohnort und Straße: *Berlin-Steglitz*
Friedrichshagen Platz 3

Geburtsdatum: *2. Jan. 1904*

Johann Birong
Eigenhändige Unterschrift

Datum der Ausstellung:
7. Febr. 1944



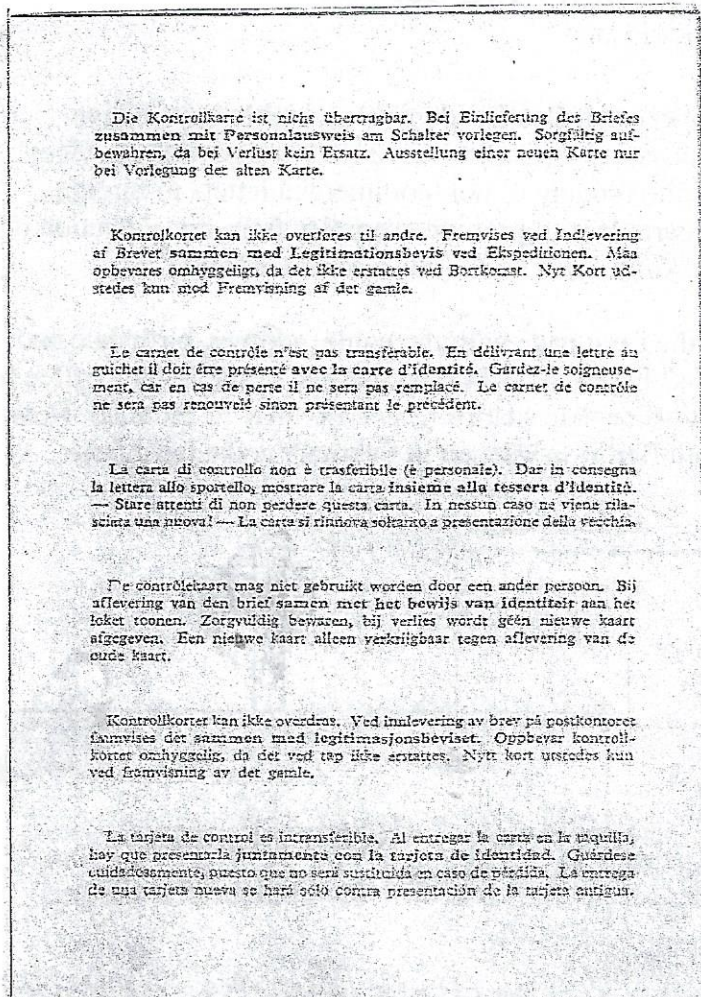
Nicht übertragbar!

The reverse or last page of the folder has instructions for use stating: "This Control Card is not transferrable and must be shown whenever a letter is handed in at a postal counter. Be careful to keep this Card secure as it will not be replaced if it is lost. A new Card will only be issued upon presentation of the old card." These German instructions

are followed by similar instructions in Danish, French, Italian, Dutch, Norwegian and Spanish.

Note: Landsmann lists this card as PF1.1 and the same card with red overprint "Lagerkarte" as PF1.2.

Fig. 2) The reverse or last page of the folder.



Commercial mail was not subject to these limitations. However, questions might sometimes arise about the status of a particular piece of mail, i.e., whether it should be considered private or commercial. When serious doubt existed in the mind of a postal clerk, he was supposed to apply the hand stamp "Ohne Kontrollkarte" (without Control Card) to the item in question and leave the final decision to the appropriate censorship office.

Fig. 3)

Cover to Export-Import firm in Sweden sent from a German-Hungarian Export-Import firm in Berlin in December 1944 has "Ohne Kontrollkarte" hand stamp at top left. The "Zensur-Stelle" machine stamp was applied over sealing tape at Berlin censor office (Code 'b')

Fig. 3).

