



# 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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# STUDY GROUP NOTES

**Prosit Neujahr!** - this issue begins another year of study group activities. On a personal note, I have accepted an early retirement package, which means that in addition to preparing these bulletins, I may actually find some time to work on my collection. I look forward to finally preparing pages and mounting covers for a new T.R. postal history exhibit that has been in the "planning stage" (i.e. in boxes) for many years. Ye Olde Ed.

**Golden Oldies** - as the TRSG is now 34 years old, we are looking back at the huge store of information which has appeared in the pages of our Bulletins. While our policy of limiting back issue availability to the past ten years was necessary, it meant that newer members do not have access to many of the fine articles appearing in earlier issues. In order to rectify that situation, we are reviewing all earlier issues to determine which articles merit republishing. One result of these reviews has been the 'Fundamentals of Feldpost Collecting' articles that began in Bulletin 132. While the Feldpost articles selected for this series appeared randomly in earlier bulletins over the years, in total they provide a comprehensive review of this complex field of study. In addition to the Feldpost series, we will be selecting and republishing other articles which we feel have particular merit. We welcome your comments on these efforts as well as your requests for any other earlier articles listed in the index in our TRSG Handbook.

**Combat Division Profiles** - requests for write ups on particular divisions has resulted in a large backlog so we have decided to double the number per issue from two to four. Most members send cover illustrations with their requests but many illustrations are not usable because of dark covers, indistinct markings, etc. We are requesting our Feldpost collectors to provide clear photocopies of R-Feldpost covers from any of the following German divisions for future TRSG Feldpost publications:

FpA	Division	Kenn #	FpA	Division	Kenn #
111	111 I.D.	K-501	335	335 I.D.	K-649
112	112 I.D.	K-680	338	338 I.D.	K-643
125	125 I.D.	K-375	347	347 I.D.	K-830
134	134 I.D.	K-384	356	356 I.D.	K-646
248	168 I.D.	K-694	369	369 I.D.	K-965
219	183 I.D.	K-832	376	376 I.D.	K-606
205	205 I.D.	K-423	389	389 I.D.	K-873
255	255 I.D.	K-342	97	97 Jäger	K-516
262	262 I.D.	K-437	100	100 Jäger	K-468
878	278 I.D.	K-653	114	114 Jäger	K-418
291	291 I.D.	K-984	3	3 Pz-Grenadier	K-169/784
293	293 I.D.	K-514	22	22 Pz- Grenadier	K-434
294	294 I.D.	K-335	60	60 Pz- Grenadier	K-391
319	319 I.D.	K-937	190	90 Pz- Grenadier	K-805/912
320	320 I.D.	K-760			

The key markings (Feldpost cancel & Fp. #) must be legible. Don't send photocopies of dark envelopes because they won't reproduce clearly. This is your opportunity to contribute to a TRSG study, so please help us!

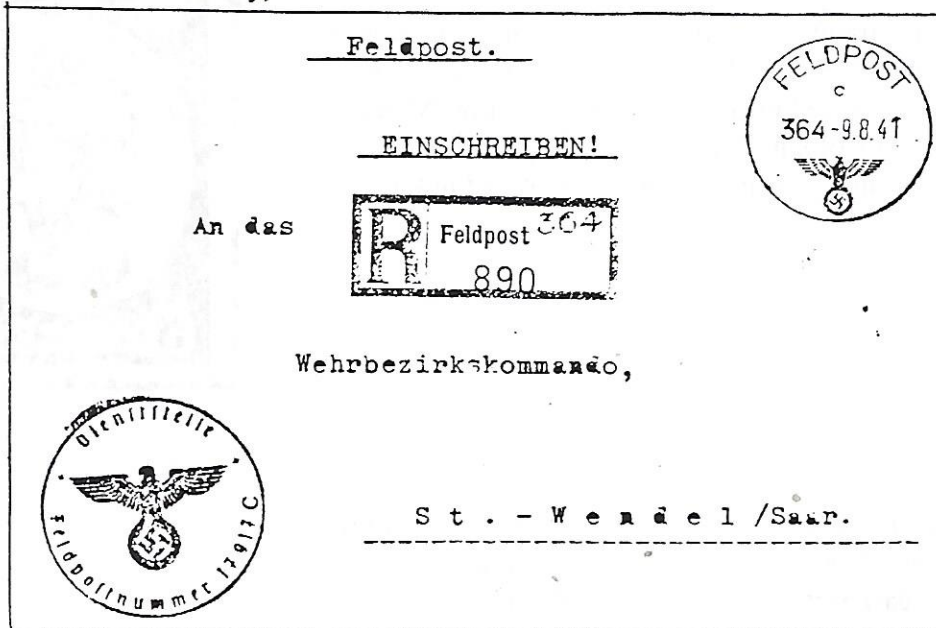
**Cover Illustration** - to illustrate the article on Page 5, this Feldpost cover with notation 'Durch deutsche Feldpost' was sent in August 1944 to the headquarters of a German firm in Heidelberg from a branch office in Paris. Note the "A.x." transit marking applied by the Foreign Letter Examining Office in Paris (Code x) which indicated that the letter was passed unopened by German censors.

## COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE: 36th Panzer-Grenadier Division by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS				AUXIL
TACT	KENN	MOTORIZED INFANTRY		ARTY	UNITS	
36	364	87	118		36	36

Formed in 1935 with mainly Bavarian personnel, the 36th Infantry Division initially included the 70th, 87th & 118th Infantry Regiments. Remaining on Western front in 1939, it fought in the French campaign of 1940 and was converted to a motorized division that autumn, giving up the 70th Infantry Regiment. It fought through the Baltic States in 1941 and was heavily engaged at Kalinin where it helped establish a bridgehead on the Upper Volga in late October. Later it stormed the last Leningrad fortification on Dunder Hill, before being halted because Hitler thought Leningrad would fall without street fighting.

After suffering heavy casualties resisting the Russian winter offensive of 1941-42, it was transferred to Army Group Center. It fought in the defensive battles around Rzhev in summer of 1942. In July 1943 it fought in the Battle of Kursk and was reduced to battle group strength. The 36th Panzer-Grenadier Division took part in the retreat of 1943-44. In remnants by October 1943, it was placed under the operational control of the much-reduced 268th Infantry Division until May 1944, when it was finally reformed into a two-regiment infantry division. The 36th Infantry Division was encircled at Bobruysk when the Soviets launched their massive attack against Army Group Center in June 1944. Many of its men were taken prisoner, including division commander Major General Conrady. The remnants were returned to Germany and reformed at the Baumholder Maneuver Area as a three regiment 36th Volksgrenadier Division, adding the 165th Grenadier Regiment and a new FpA 36 assigned K-379. It was sent to the Western front in September 1944 to oppose the U.S. 3rd Army and was badly mauled during battles in eastern France and Luxembourg in late 1944. It took part in the retreat through the Saar and into southern Germany, where it was when the war ended.



Cover sent to Military District Office in St. Wendel/Saar in August 1941 from Fp. # 17917 (5 Battery II/ Artillery Regiment 36) via Post Office 36 (K-364).

## Story Behind the Stamp: Gustav Nachtigal

by Kelly Stefanacci

Gustav Nachtigal was born February 23, 1834 at Eichstedt in the Mark of Brandenburg. The son of Johann Nachtigal, a Lutheran pastor, the boy attended primary school in Eichstedt and then went on to the Grammar School in Stendal. He then studied medicine at the Universities of Berlin, Halle, Würzburg and Greifswald. Upon graduation, Gustav Nachtigal served for several years in Cologne as a military surgeon. However, his health failed in 1863 and he went to live on the northern coast of Algeria, first at Bona and then at Tunis. His skill as a surgeon led him to be included in several expeditions into the Sahara, where his interest in the inhabitants of that desert inspired him to learn Arabic and to settle first at Mursuk, then at Kuka and finally at Mara.

In 1869, Wilhelm I of Prussia appointed Gustav Nachtigal the leader of a mission to the Sultan of Bornu which took him through Tibesti and Borku in the Central Sahara, places which had never been visited by a European. After his diplomatic negotiations in Bornu, he traveled on through Bagrimi, Wadai and Kordofan, then arrived in Khartoum at the end of 1874. He later described this journey in his three volume book "Sahara and Sudan" which was published in Berlin between 1879 and 1889.

His reputation led to his appointment as Consul General of Tripoli, a position he held until 1884. In that year, Bismarck sent him to West Africa on the pretext of investigating the condition of German trade there. The true reason for his mission became apparent when he added both Togoland and Cameroon to the German Empire. When this annexation was complete, Gustav Nachtigal embarked on April 11, 1885 for a return trip to Germany from Cameroon on the S.M. Kreuzer 'Möwe'. However, he became so ill while aboard that the captain, Rear Admiral Knorr, decided on April 15th to make for Lagos and land him there. Before this could be accomplished, Gustav Nachtigal died early in the morning of April 20, 1885 when the ship was off Cape Palmas.

A 6 Pfg. stamp portraying Nachtigal was part of a four stamp set issued on June 30, 1934 titled German Colonizer's Jubilee. These stamps were issued in commemoration of the "Memorial Festival of the Lost Colonies", which coincided with the 50th Anniversary of the first hoisting of the German flag in the colonies in 1884.



ED NOTE: If you enjoyed this article and would like to know "the story" about other people or places appearing on Third Reich stamps, please send requests to Ye Olde Ed.

# Fundamentals of Feldpost Collecting

## Part 3. Durch Deutsche Feldpost

by Jim Lewis

In August 1940, German nationals working in Belgium and occupied France (both of these areas being under German military administration) were allowed to send and receive mail through the Feldpost. While this service did not include free-franking, such mail was only charged domestic German fees. Initially mail was restricted to ordinary postcards and letters up to 250 grams. For private mail, the name of the sender's employer was required in the return address. The address side of each piece of mail required the boxed notation "**Durch Deutsche Feldpost**" (via German Military Mail) in red.

These regulations were revised in July 1941 to also allow packages weighing up to 1000 grams. The address requirements now included designation of the '**Feldpostamt**' (military post office) and notation "**über Feldpost-und Luftgaupostamt...**'

Durch Deutsche Feldpost

Herrn Otto Ziegelhofer  
Deutsche Buchmeinschaft  
Feldpostamt Brüssel  
über Feldpostamt-und Luftgaupostamt Brüssel

Special authorization was required for usage of this service and a request had to be sent to the '**Armeefeldpostmeister**' (Army Field Postmaster) in Paris or Brussels. Permission was not required to send mail to German firms and nationals in France and Belgium.

There were a number of other changes which resulted in a supplement to the regulations which appeared in the '**Amtsblatt der Reichspostministeriums**' (Bulletin of the National Postal Ministry) as S.17/18 (new) of Postal Communication 1156/1942 which has been reproduced on the following page. Entitled "Postal traffic subject to fees sent via German Feldpost", the directive states that such postal traffic is permitted in all areas in which the only German postal system is the Feldpost. German official agencies and firms operating in these areas could send ordinary or registered postcards, letters up to 250 grams and packages up to 1000 grams. However, private mail could not be registered.

It was no longer necessary to include the Feldpostamt but the '**Luftgaupostamt**' (Air District Post Office) designation was still required. The treatment of this mail at '**Auslandsbriefprüfstellen**' (Foreign Letter Examining Offices) is interesting. While earlier mail was usually passed unopened with a '**durchlaufstemple**' (transit stamp), by 1944 it was routed directly to the censor offices and received full treatment.

On the following pages are examples of mail sent through this arrangement to illustrate some of the markings used to comply with regulations.

## Deckblätter zum Merkheft über den Postdienst mit den besetzten Gebieten usw.

S. 17/18 (neu)

17

### Gebührenpflichtiger Postverkehr „Durch Deutsche Feldpost“

Ein gebührenpflichtiger Postverkehr „Durch Deutsche Feldpost“ ist nach allen Gebieten zugelassen, in denen als deutsche Post nur die Deutsche Feldpost besteht.

Zugelassen zu diesem Verkehr können die in diesen Gebieten eingesetzten deutschen Dienststellen, Körperschaften, Organisationen, Unternehmen und selbständigen Einzelpersonen deutscher Staatsangehörigkeit sowie die bei diesen Stellen usw. beschäftigten Reichsdeutschen werden, soweit sie nicht zur Benützung der Feldpost berechtigt sind.

Zugelassen sind in beiden Richtungen:

- a) im Dienst- und Geschäftsverkehr der deutschen Dienststellen, Körperschaften, Organisationen, Unternehmen und selbständigen Einzelpersonen  
gewöhnliche und eingeschriebene Postkarten,  
gewöhnliche und eingeschriebene Briefe und Drucksachen bis 250 g,  
gewöhnliche und eingeschriebene Päckchen bis 1000 g ohne Rücksicht auf eine etwa bestehende Sperre für Feldpostsendungen;
- b) im Verkehr der reichsdeutschen Gefolgschaftsmitglieder der obengenannten Stellen usw. (Privatverkehr)  
gewöhnliche Postkarten,  
gewöhnliche Briefe bis 100 g,  
gewöhnliche Päckchen bis 1000 g, jedoch nur soweit durch Feldpostsperrern keine Einschränkungen verfügt sind.

Die Sendungen sind nach den Inlandsgebühren freizumachen.

Die Sendungen müssen über der Anschrift den rotumrandeten Vermerk „Durch Deutsche Feldpost“ tragen. In der Anschrift der Sendungen nach den besetzten Gebieten muß angegeben werden

1. die genaue Bezeichnung des Empfängers, und zwar
  - a) bei den deutschen Dienststellen, Organisationen, Unternehmen: die genaue Bezeichnung der Dienststelle, der Organisation oder des Unternehmens,
  - b) bei selbständigen deutschen Einzelpersonen: Vor- und Name sowie Beruf oder Stand der Einzelperson;
  - c) bei deutschen Gefolgschaftsmitgliedern: Vor- und Name, Beruf oder Stand, sowie die Anschrift der Dienststelle, der Organisation usw., der das Gefolgschaftsmitglied angehört;
2. der Ortsname der Feldpostdienststelle, die den Postaustausch vermittelt;
3. der rotunterstrichene Zusatz „über Luftgaupostamt : : : : :“ (Angabe des für die Leitung in Frage kommenden Luftgaupostamts).

Für die richtige Leitung der Sendungen ist es wichtig, daß der Zusatz „über Luftgaupostamt : : : : :“ rot unterstrichen wird, daß aber von einer Unterstreichung oder besonderen Hervorhebung des Ortsnamens des Feldpostamts abgesehen wird.

Auf den Sendungen ist der Absender anzugeben. Die Absenderbezeichnung auf den Sendungen nach der Heimat muß dieselben Angaben enthalten, die für die Anschrift der Sendungen nach dem besetzten Gebiet erforderlich sind.

Fig. 1) Cover to the Kreiger Steel Works in Düsseldorf from a branch office in Belgium. Weight in excess of 20 grams required 24 Pfg. postage. Note Feldpost cancel dated December 1943 and notation "via Air District Post Office Brussels".



Fig. 2) Single weight cover sent to Berlin from Belgium in April 1942 has required notations pre-printed in lower left corner.



Fig. 3) Cover sent from France in November 1943 was passed unopened by Paris censor office per the "A.x" transit stamp. Note "über LGPA Paris" on back side.

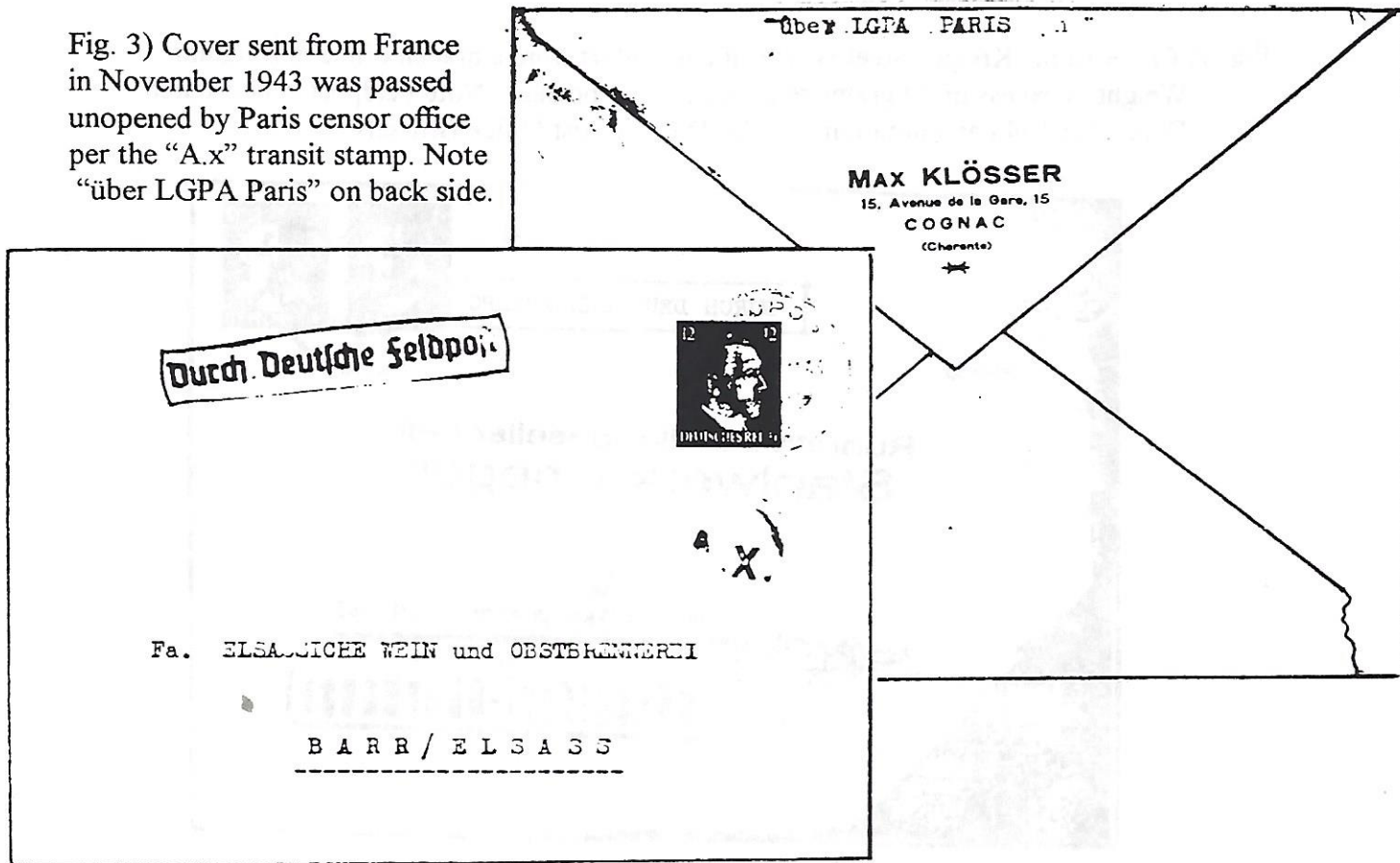
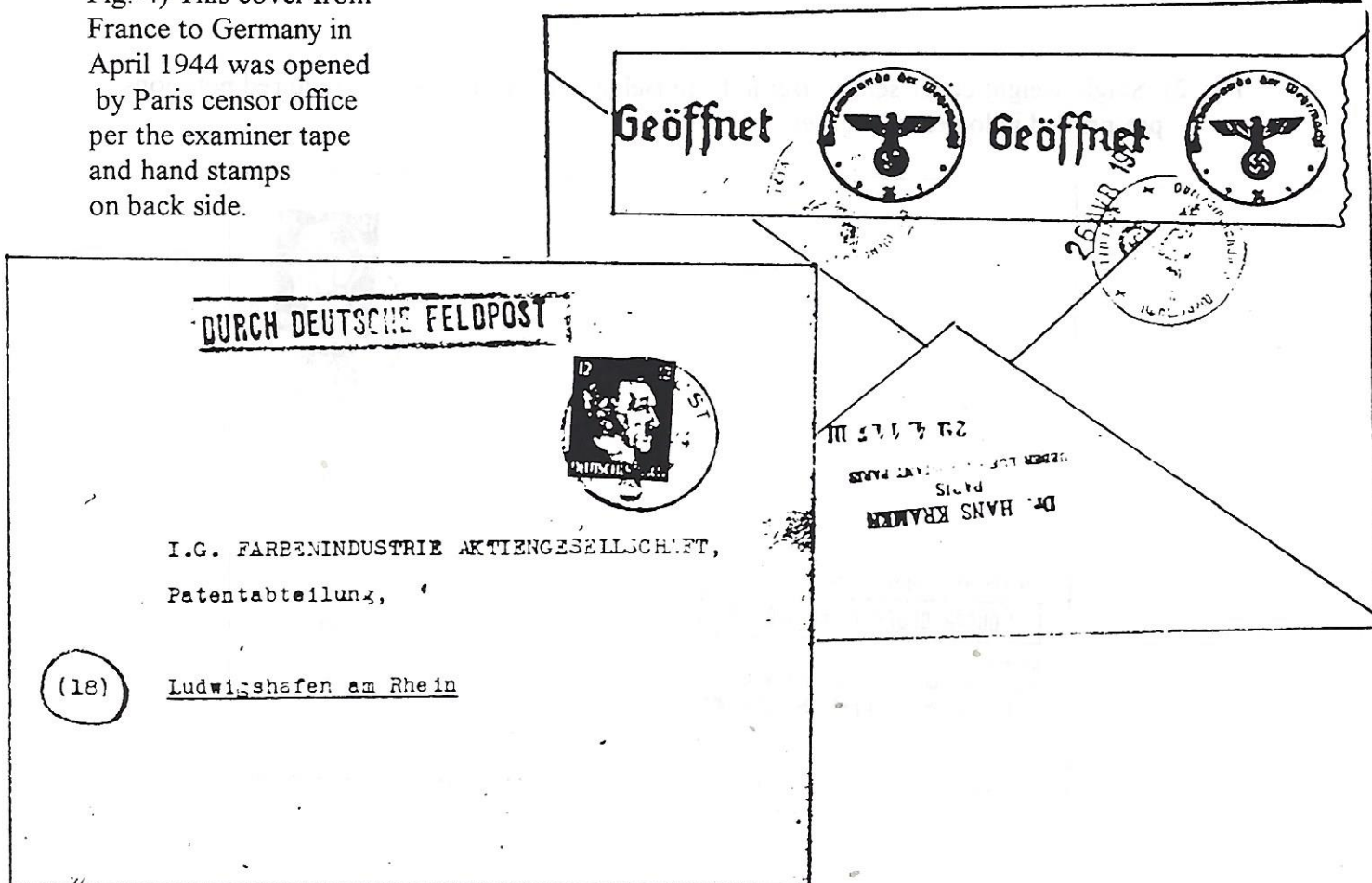


Fig. 4) This cover from France to Germany in April 1944 was opened by Paris censor office per the examiner tape and hand stamps on back side.





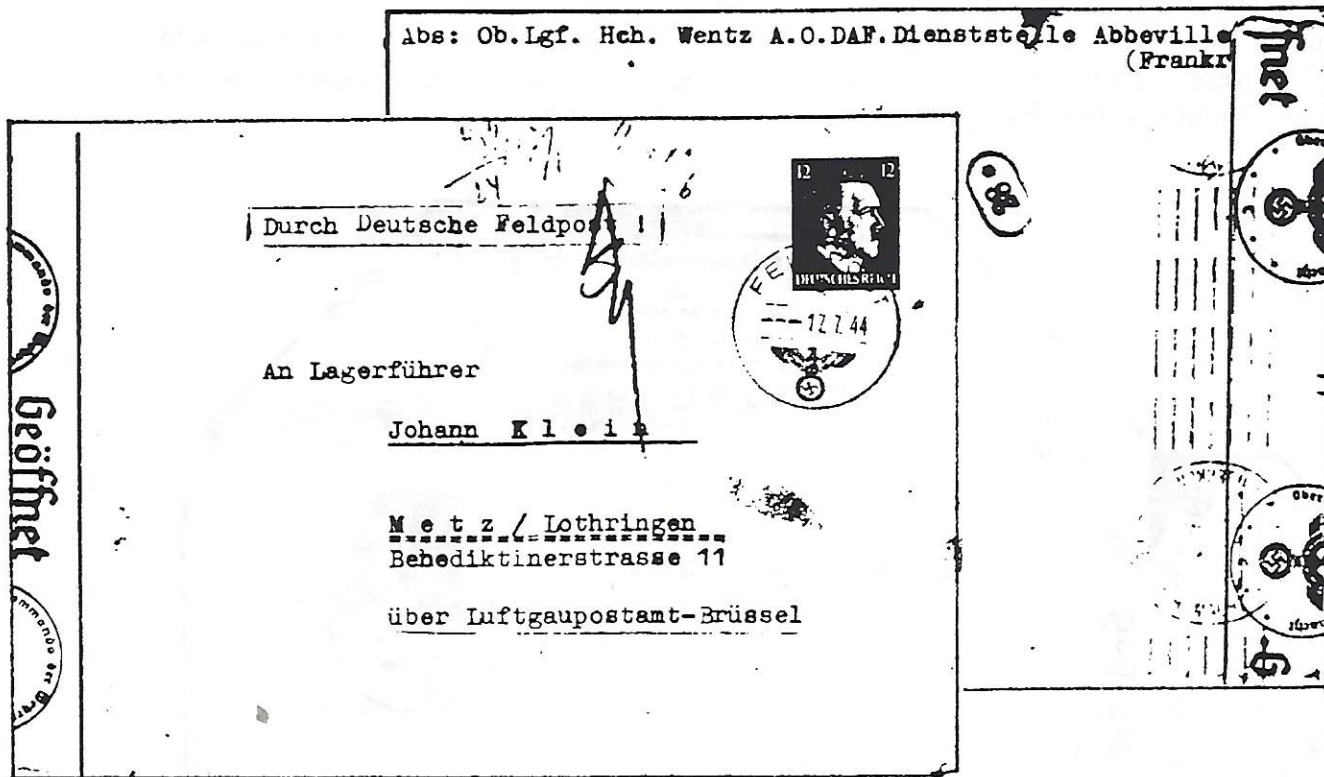


Fig. 5) Cover to Lorraine from occupied France in July 1944 has been examined at the Cologne censor office (Code 'c')

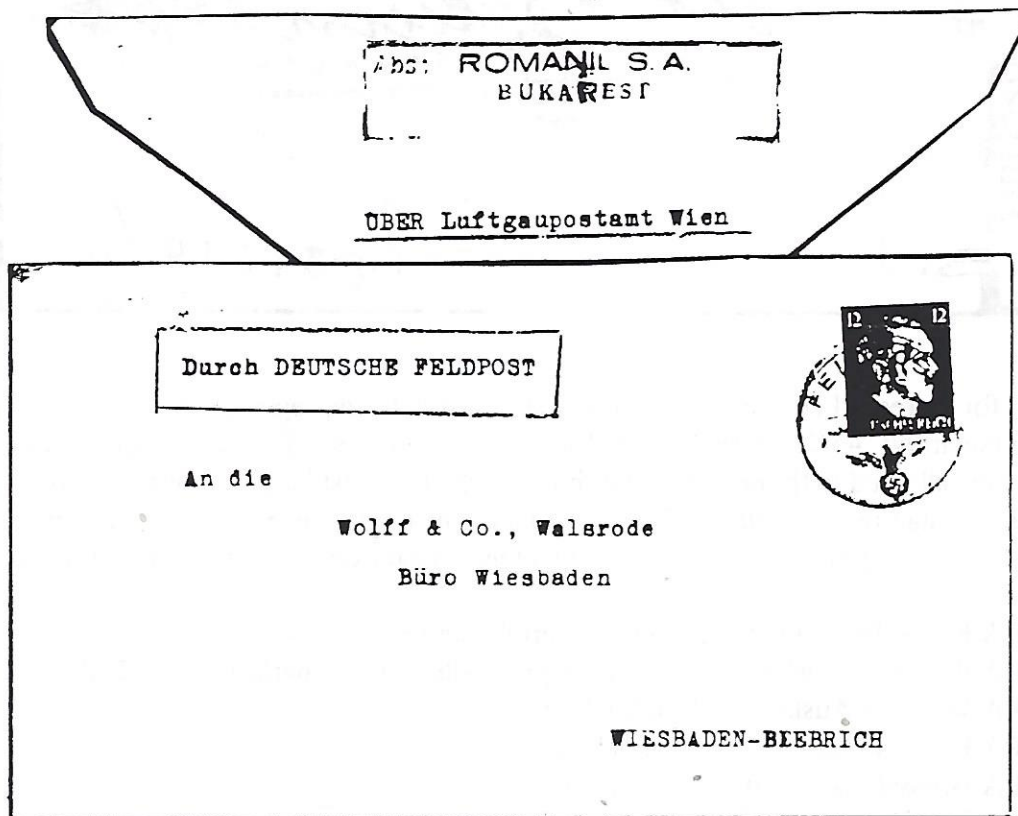
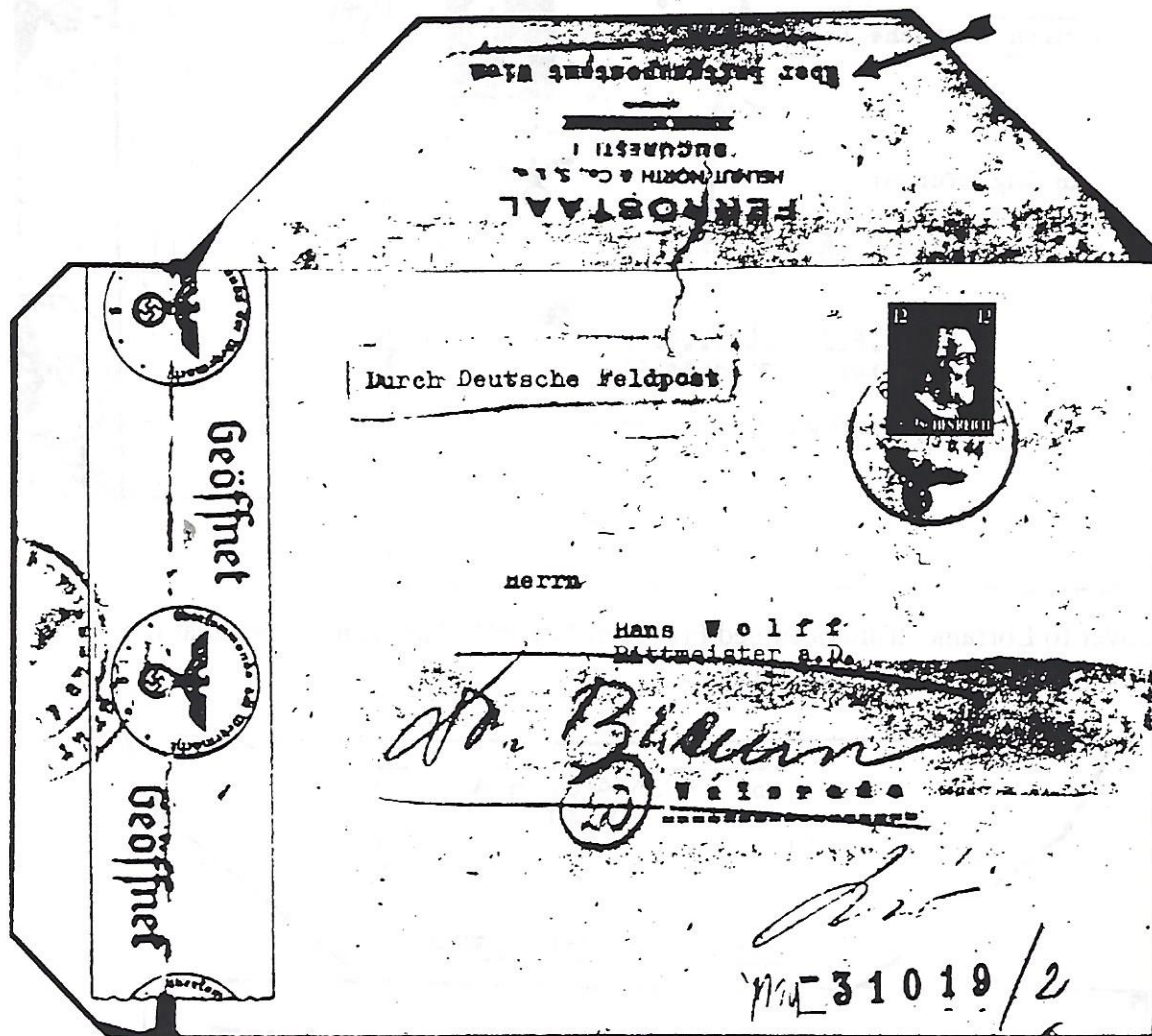


Fig. 6) A cover sent to Germany in June 1943 from a firm in Bucharest, Romania via the "Luftgaupostamt" in Vienna has no censor markings.

Fig. 7) This cover was also sent to Germany from a firm in Bucharest. Posted in June 1944, it received a very thorough examination by the Vienna censor office, including a test for hidden writing that left the dark streak across the address.



The reason for increased censorship was the final revision to the regulations issued in Feldpostamtsblatt Nr. 45/1944 on April 5, 1944 which noted: Sendings from non-hostile foreign nations allowed with the note "Durch Deutsche Feldpost" are not permitted to bear foreign postage stamps nor evidence of foreign postal examination. Such items shall be forwarded by the receiving LGPAs to the competent postal examination office as follows:

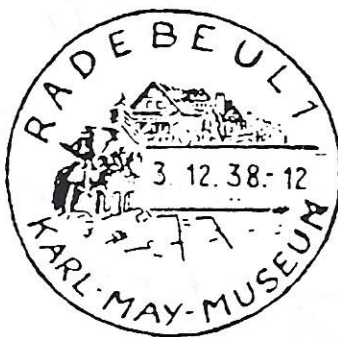
- LGPA Königsberg (Pr) to Auslandsbriefprüfstelle Königsberg 5
- LGPA Posen & Breslau to Auslandsbriefprüfstelle Berlin-Charlottenburg 2, Zoo.
- LGPA Wein to Auslandsbriefprüfstelle Wein
- LGPA Paris to Auslandsbriefprüfstelle Paris.
- LGPA Brussel to Auslandsbriefprüfstelle Köln.
- LGPA Hamburg to Auslandsbriefprüfstelle Hamburg.
- LGPA Berlin to Auslandsbriefprüfstelle Berlin.

## Karl May Special Cancels by Bob Ferguson

Special cancels to commemorate Karl May (1842-1912), the author of popular western novels featuring a gunfighter named 'Old Shatterhand' and an Apache Chief named Winnetou, were used mainly in Radebeul (his home town which established a museum in 1938) and in Rathen, which held 'Karl May Spiele' wild west shows. The cancel numbering scheme is in Julius Bochmann's work "Katalog der Deutschen Gelegenheitsstempel".

Berlin #330	Karl May Spiele/Berlin	21 June-31 August 1940
Radebeul #1	Karl May Museum D.S./G. Werbeschau	15 May 1938
Radebeul #2	Karl May Museum	1938-1942
Radebeul #4	Karl May Museum	1942-1949
Rathen #1	Karl May Spiele	28 May -31 August 1938 (Handstamp)
Rathen #2	Karl May Spiele	28 May -31 August 1938 (Machine stamp)
Rathen #4	Karl May Spiele	28 May -31 August 1939
Rathen #5	Karl May Spiele/Sonderpostamt der KDF Sammlergruppe Gau Sachsen	1 July -30 September 1939

Machine Can. #324	Karl May Spiele/28 May - 31 August 1939 Rathen Sachs, Schweiz	1 July -23 August 1939 in Dresden and Rathen
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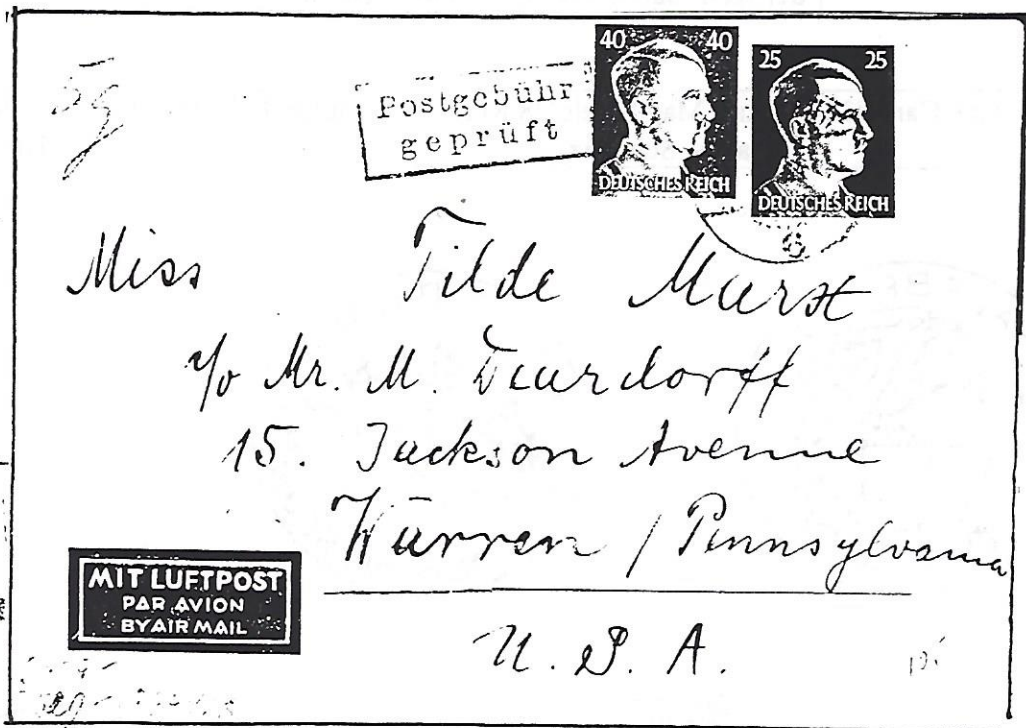
# Rejected by Censor - Inadmissible Mail

by Ron Morgan

## Postage Stamps Examined?

Part II, Sec. 2A, Para. 5: "The affixing of postage stamps by the sender is prohibited. Postal fees are to be paid in cash at the counter".

This airmail cover was sent from Düsseldorf to the U.S.A. in August 1941. It was forwarded to the Frankfurt Censor office which passed it after adding sealing tape printed 'Geöffnet' (Opened) and "Geprüft" (Examined) hand stamps to the backside. What is unusual is the boxed hand stamp reading "Postgebühr geprüft" (postal rate examined) which is tied to the postage stamps. Did this indicate that the post office had examined stamps that had been affixed by the sender? While the regulation shown above is quite clear, there was another regulation that might explain this marking i.e. Part II, Sec. 2A, Para. 7: "A sender who shows an identification card for foreign telephone or telegraph services may affix their own postage stamps when mailing a letter". If anyone has information regarding this marking, please send it to our Bulletin editor.?



# The Destruction of Army Group Center

by Jim Lewis

*It was noted in letters from several members that many of the German divisions in our Combat Division Profiles were destroyed during a Soviet summer offensive in June 1944. This article first appeared in TRSG Bulletin 59 and is re-printed here to provide background information on this event. YE OLDE ED*

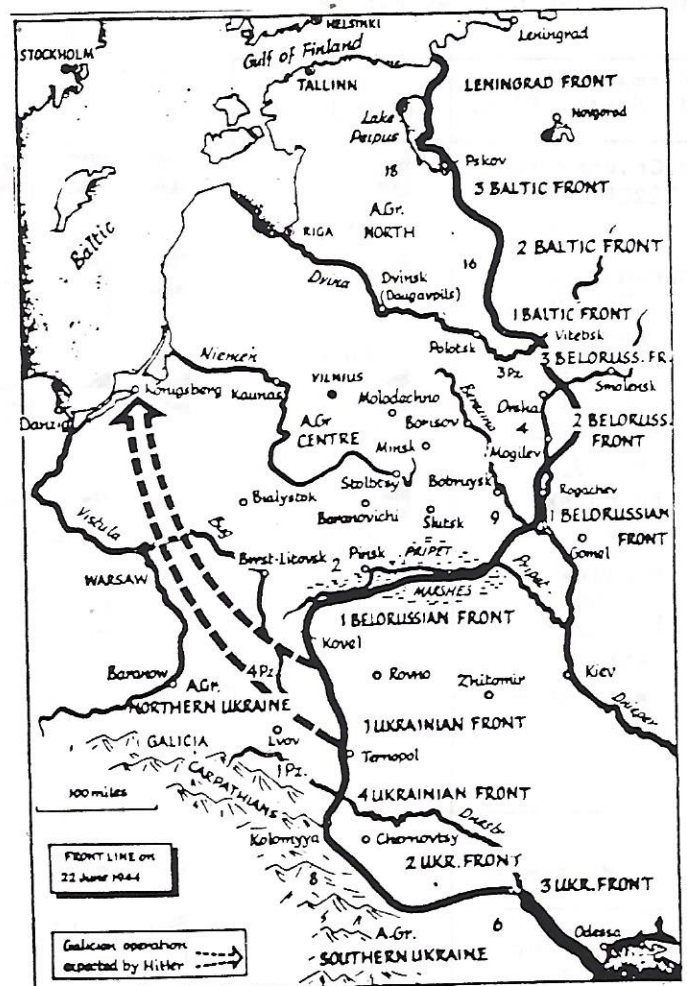
A problem for Feldpost collectors is to correctly identify a registered cover if the Kenn number for the post office had been changed after the parent organization was destroyed in combat. Such wide spread changes occurred in the late summer of 1944 as a result of the devastating defeat suffered by Army Group Center in central Russia. For a better appreciation of the way these postal changes took place, it is necessary to review the military events that preceded them.

During the winter of 1943 and into the spring of 1944, the major fighting on the Eastern Front had taken place in the southern sector. In a series of fierce battles, German forces had been driven from their defenses on the Dneiper River and across the Ukraine, losing the Crimea in the process. When the spring rains forced a lull in the fighting, the Soviet front line ran from Odessa on the Black Sea along the northern slopes of the Carpathian Mountains and then north to the edge of the Pripet Marshes near Kovel. Above this the German Army Group Center front line bulged eastward over 250 miles. This 450-mile long Army Group Center front began at the connection with Army Group North on the Dvina River. It then ran roughly south parallel with the Dneiper River until it turned west along the upper edge of the Pripet Marshes. At this point it connected with the left wing of Army Group Northern Ukraine.

Army Group Center had the 3rd Panzer, 4th and 9th Armies holding the eastern sector while a weak 2nd Army held the southern flank. These defenses were laced to a number of 'Festung Platz' (fortified towns) designated in Hitler's Führer Order 11 in March '44 to serve as breakwaters to any Soviet assault. Senior grade officers directly responsible to Army Group Center commander Field Marshal Busch commanded them. They could only be relieved of their mission by him and then only with Hitler's permission.

In early May 1944 Hitler and the OKW became convinced that a Soviet offensive would be directed against Army Group Northern Ukraine in the Kovel area (see Fig. 1). If successful, this attack would drive into Galicia and then turn northwest toward Königsberg and the rear of Army Groups Center and North.

Fig. 1) Map showing the Eastern Front on June 22, 1944. The dotted arrow is the anticipated Soviet thrust at Army Group Northern Ukraine in Galicia.



To counter this threat, the OKH (Army High Command) decided to concentrate strong armored forces in the Kovel area. In late May, the LXI Panzer Corps containing virtually all of Army Group Center's tanks was transferred to Field Marshal Model's Army Group Northern Ukraine. In addition, most of the reserve divisions in the center were moved into Galicia to seal off any breakthrough of Soviet forces. By mid-June only 38 of the original 55 German divisions assigned to Army Group Center were left. The chart (Fig. 2 below) shows the order of battle for Army Group Center on June 4, 1944.

As German strength was concentrating in the south, the Soviets were beginning a massive build-up opposite Army Group Center. During late May and early June, four Soviet Fronts (Army Groups) received increases of 60% troop strength, 300% in tanks and self-propelled guns, 85% in artillery and 62% in support aircraft. When the build up was completed the Soviets had nearly 200 divisions with 1.2 million troops in the offensive zone.

The fighting strength of Army Group Center was also weakened as a result of the Normandy invasion on June 6, 1944. To shore up the weak Luftwaffe forces in the west, fighter squadrons were quickly transferred from the Eastern Front. On the eve of the Soviet offensive, the Sixth Air Fleet had only 40 operational fighter aircraft to support Army Group Center.

Fig. 2) This order of battle chart for "Heeres Gruppe Mitte" (Army Group Center) is found on National Archives Microfilm Publication T 311, Roll 228, Frame 689.

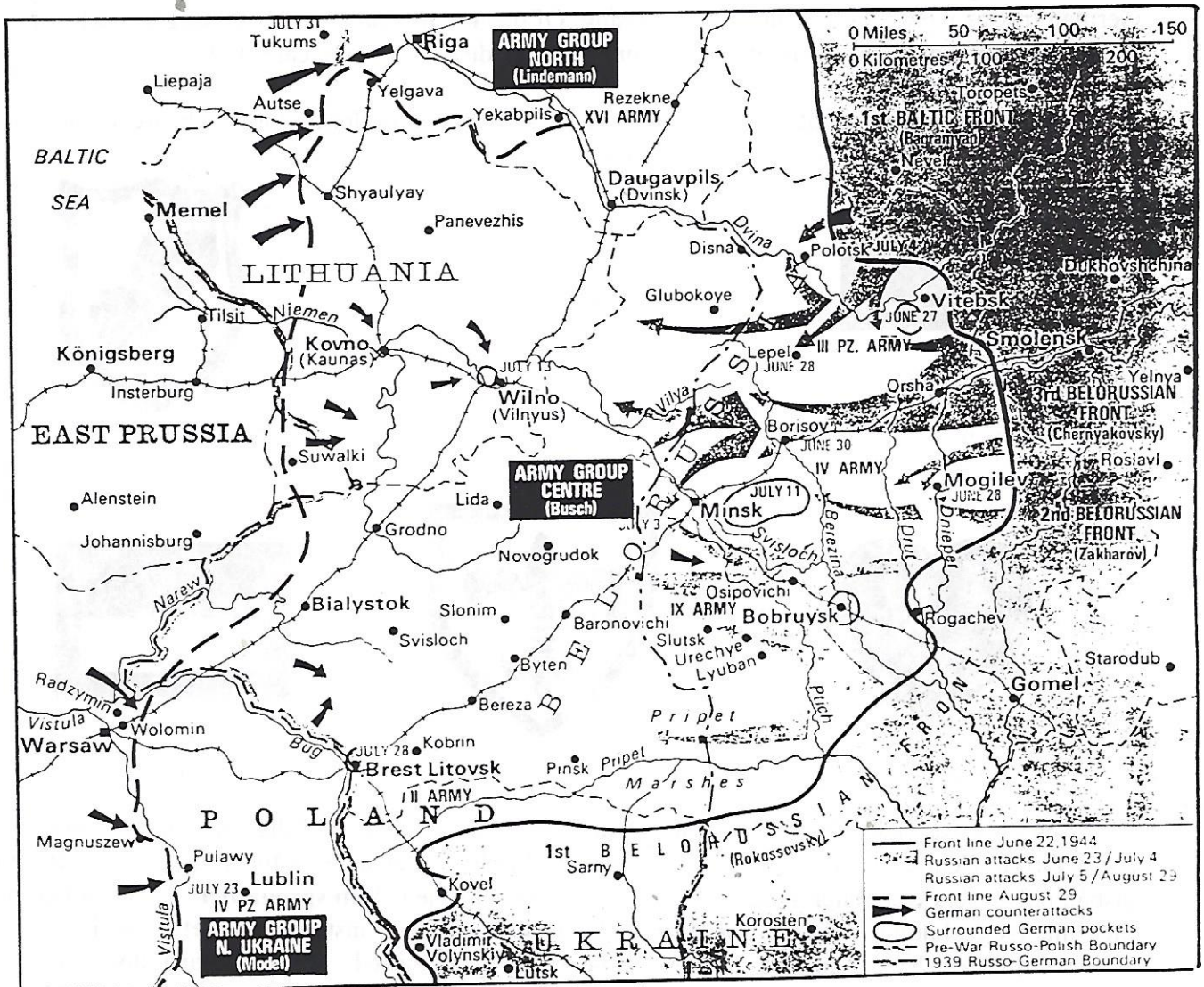
ObKdo. H. Gr. Mitte Abt. Ia Nr 6930/44.g.Kdos		Mitte Gliederung der großen Verbände				9 Ausfertigung Stand vom: 4.6.44	
Kommandanten d. Festen Platz	Wehrmacht Bef. Weißruth.	Pz 3	4	9	2		
H.Gr.unmittelb. untersellt.		IX  LIII  VI	XXVII  XXXIX  XII	XXXV  XXXXI  LV	XXIII  XX  VIII		
Wilna Minsk Baranowicze Selusk	221.Sich.	"D"  206  256	260  31  57	45  129  102	7  "E"  5Jg		
AOK 2 Brest Pinsk Luniniec	52.Sich. (bodenst.)	252  6Lw  299	25  12  267	383  35  292	203  3. Kav.  211		
AOK 9 Bobruisk	341.Sich. (bodenst.)	4Lw  197	78  337  18	6  36	zbV  12		
AOK 4 Mogilew Orsha Borissow	390 F.A.D.	246	110	296	17  ung.		
AOK 3 Witebsk				134	Kgl. ung. II Res. K 5ung  23ung Res. Res.		
.V.d. Armeen		95  201.Sich.	286.Sich.	Div.stb.  707 zbV 442			
z.V.d. H.Gr. oder O.K.H.		14	Pz.Gr. Feldhh.				4.Kav.Brg. (in Ausst.)

With his predilection for initiating major actions on dates of historical importance, Stalin ordered the attack on Army Group Center (See Fig. 3 below) to begin on June 22nd, the third anniversary of the German invasion of the Soviet Union. On that day, 1st Baltic and 3rd Belorussian Fronts under Marshal Vasilevskiy attacked the northern sector held by 3rd Panzer Army. By noon of the following day the Soviets had achieved deep penetrations and had pinched off the fortified city of Vitebsk.

The 2nd Belorussian Front attacked the center on June 23rd. Striking toward the fortified cities of Orsha and Mogilev, the Soviets tore a large gap in the 4th Army front. General Tippelskirch, commander of 4th Army, requested permission to evacuate the fortified cities and establish a new defense behind the Berezina River. However, Field Marshal Bush refused this request and ordered all troops to hold fast.

Continuing the assault in echelon, the 1st Belorussian Front under Marshal Zukov attacked 9th Army in the southern sector and drove toward the fortified city of Bobruysk. By the end of the fourth day, Army Group Center had committed all of its reserves without stopping or slowing the Soviet advances. With five of its divisions encircled in Vitebsk, the rest of 3rd Panzer Army attempted to establish a new defense line 50 miles to the rear.

Fig. 3) This map shows the assault on Army Group Center from June 22 to August 29, 1944.



Bypassing the fortified cities, Soviet armor poured through the gaps in the German lines and drove toward Minsk. The troops of 4th and 9th Armies were being compressed into a pocket between the Beresina River and Minsk. With Soviet pinchers closing around Minsk, Hitler sacked Busch and gave command of Army Group Center to Field Marshal Model, who was to also retain command of Army Group Northern Ukraine so he could facilitate exchanges of forces between the two Army Groups.

The Soviets closed the western side of a triangle formed around Minsk, Cherven and Borisov containing the remnants of five corps of 9th and 4th Armies on July 3rd. Model brought up three Panzer divisions backed by a Jäger and two infantry divisions to break through to the hotly contested triangle. However, after Soviet forces captured the rail center at Baranovichi, which was to have been the southern anchor for a new German defense line, the counter attack was failed. There would be no rescue of the German formations encircled around Minsk and other fortified cities.

As the Soviet offense continued unabated, 57,000 German POWs were paraded through Moscow on July 17th. By the end of July, Soviet forces had passed Brest-Litovsk and advanced to the Memel River in the north and the Vistula River in the south, where German blocking forces finally checked their advance. In five weeks the Soviets had advanced 435 miles and annihilated Army Group Center. Out of the original 38 divisions in action, 28 had been destroyed. An estimated 350,000 to 400,000 German troops were killed, wounded or missing. Of the 47 German generals serving as corps or division commanders, 10 were killed or committed suicide and 21 were captured.

Fig. 4) The emblems of six of the divisions of Army Group Center during this battle are shown below.

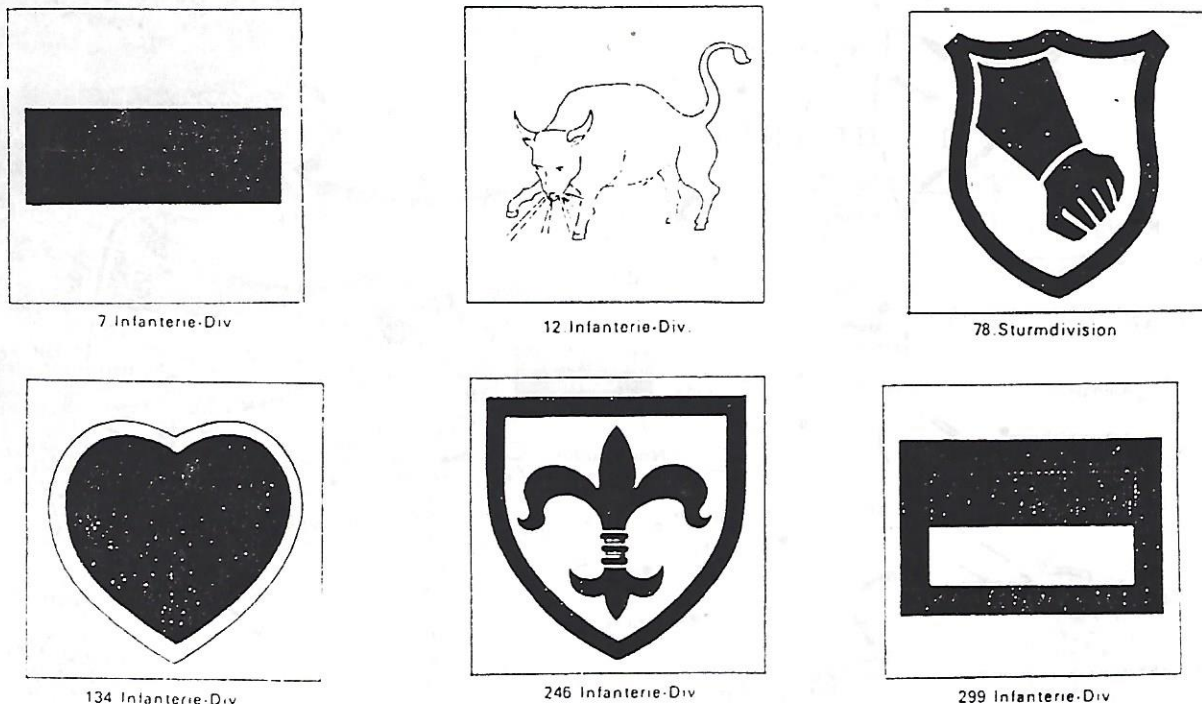


Fig. 5 on the next page is a list of 'Feldpostamts' (Field Post Offices) of the corps and divisions of Army Group Center that were destroyed during this battle. While some of these FpAs were officially disbanded, others were later assigned to other units or reformed 'Volksgranadier' divisions that bore the same tactical numbers as their predecessors. However, in most instances the reformed FpAs were assigned different Kenn numbers, so they can be easily distinguished from the original divisions.



Fig. 5) Shown below is a listing of FpAs (Feldpost offices) of German corps and divisions that were destroyed during the Soviet summer offensive against Army Group Center.

	FpA	Kenn	Fate
<b>3rd Pz. Army.</b>			
<i>LIII Corps</i>	453	K-149	Destroyed, reformed in 1945 w/K-836
206 Inf. Div.	206	K-910	Destroyed Vitebsk, disbanded
6 Lw. Feld Div.	906	K-588	Destroyed Vitebsk, disbanded
4 Lw. Feld Div.	904	K-528	Destroyed Vitebsk, disbanded
246 Inf. Div.	246	K-373	Reformed as 246 VG Div. in Sept. 1944 w/K-277.
256 Inf. Div.	256	K-477	Reformed as 256 VG Div. in Sept. 1944 w/K-898.
299 Inf. Div.	299	K-994	Reformed as 299 VG Div. in Sept. 1944 w/K-454.
197 Inf. Div.	229	K-399	Destroyed Vitebsk, disbanded. K-399 to FpA 195 (95. I.D.)
<b>4th Army</b>			
<i>XXVII Corps</i>	427	K-600	Destroyed, later combined with remains of XII Corps
260 Inf. Div.	260	K-569	Destroyed Minsk, disbanded.
25 Pz. Gren. Div.	25	K-456	Reformed as 25 Pz. Gren. Div. in Oct. 1944 w/K-922.
78 Sturm Div.	178	K-295	Reform as 78 VG Div in Feb. '45w/K-183. K-295 to FpA 960.
<i>XXXIX Corps</i>	439	K-119	Suffered heavy losses east of Minsk, reformed.
31 Inf. Div.	31	K-249	Reformed as 31 VG Div. in Sept. 1944 w/K-446.
12 Inf. Div.	12	K-674	Reformed as 12 VG Div. in Aug. 1944 w/K-564.
337 Inf. Div.	337	K-454	Reformed as 337 VG Div. in Sept. 1944 w/K-110.
31 Inf. Div.	31	K-249	Reformed as 31 VG Div. in Sept. 1944 w/K-446.
110 Inf. Div.	110	K-374	Destroyed Minsk pocket, disbanded.
<i>XII Corps</i>	412	K-964	Destroyed Minsk pocket, disbanded July 20, 1944.
57 Inf. Div.	157	K-982	Destroyed Minsk pocket, disbanded.
267 Inf. Div.	267	K-190	Destroyed Minsk pocket, disbanded.
18 Pz. Gren. Div.	18	K-980	Reformed as 18 Pz. Gren. Div. in Oct. 1944 w/K-124.
<b>9th Army</b>			
<i>XXXV Corps</i>	435	K-565	Destroyed Bobruysk , disbanded.
45 Inf. Div.	45	K-874	Reformed as 45 VG Div. in Sept. 1944 w/K-534.
383 Inf. Div.	383	K-219	Destroyed Bobruysk & disbanded. K-219 to FpA 957 in 2. '45.
6 Inf. Div.	6	K-662	Reformed Oct. '44 as 6 VG Div., absorbed 552. VG Div.
296 Inf. Div.	296	K-660	Destroyed Bobruysk & disbanded. K-660 to FpA 83 12. '44.
134 Inf. Div.	134	K-384	Destroyed Bobruysk & disbanded. K-384 to FpA z.b.V 763.
129 Inf. Div.	129	K-115	Reformed as 129 Inf. Div. in July 1944 w/new Fp. # 27080.
36 Inf. Div.	36	K-364	Reformed as 36 VG Div. in Aug. 1944 w/K-379.
<b>2nd Army</b>			
7 Inf. Div.	7	K-652	Reformed as 7 Inf. Div in Nov. 1944 w/K-329.
707 Inf. Div.	769	K-285	Destroyed Bobruysk & disbanded. FpA 769 to 203. Sich. Div.
211 Inf. Div.	211	K-348	Reformed as 211 VG Div. in Sept. 1944.
<b>Reserves</b>			
95 Inf. Div.	195	K-527	Reformed as 95 VG Div. in Sept. 1944 w/K-399.
221 Sich. Div.	350	K-922	Destroyed Minsk & disbanded. K-922 to FpA 25 Oct. '44

### THIRD REICH POSTAL RATES

#### Double Weight Insured Letter ('Wertbrief')

by Bob Ferguson

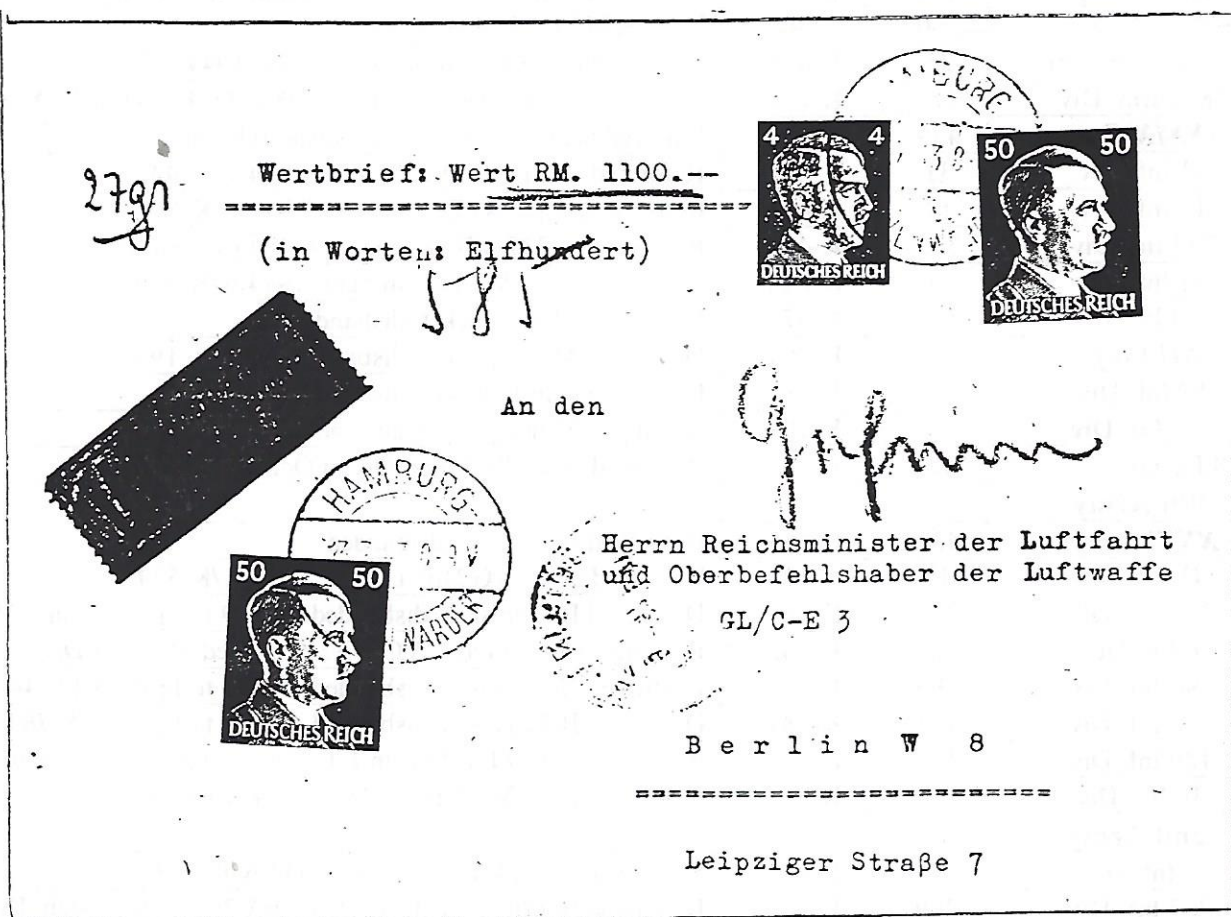
Insured letters ('Wertbrief') required that sender clearly indicate the declared value.

30 January 1933 – 12 August 1944

Rate: Basic letter rate

+ Insurance fee (10 Pfg. for each 500 RM Value).

+ Handling fee (50 Pfg.)



Insured letter weighing 27 grams addressed to Reichs Minister for Air Travel in Berlin.

Posted: Hamburg, July 3, 1943

Declared Value: 1100 RM

Franking (104 Rpf.): 24 Pfg. (Intercity letter rate for weight 20-250 grams).

30 Pfg. (Insurance for 1100 RM)

50.Pfg. (Handling fee over 100RM)

## German Feldpost Offices at Stalingrad

by Jim Lewis

We recently received a request from a member asking where he could find a listing of German units at Stalingrad. The following is a listing of these units along with the tactical, Kenn and Feldpost numbers of their Feldpost offices.

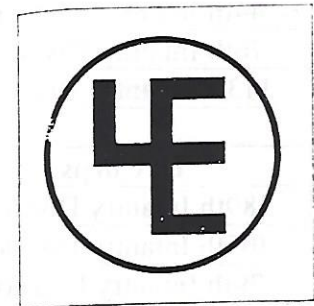
<b>Corps and Divisions</b>	<b>FpA</b>	<b>Kenn</b>	<b>Feldpost #</b>
<b>XIV Corps</b>	414	K-542	15709
3rd Pz.-Grenadier Division	3	K-784	15202
376th Infantry Division	376	K-606	41000
<b>VIII Corps</b>	408	K-573	19730
44th Infantry Division	44	K-242	09195
76th Infantry Division	176	K-457	19445
113th Infantry Division	113	K-522	46900
<b>LI Corps</b>	451	K-607	47512
389th Infantry Division	389	K-872	47944
305th Infantry Division	305	K-866	43340
79th Infantry Division	179	K-796	14017
100th Jäger Division	100	K-116	01230
295th Infantry Division	295	K-358	38388
71th Infantry Division	171	K-333	23116
<b>XI Corps</b>	411	K-604	14907
60th Pz.-Gren. Division	160	K-391	27954
16th Panzer Division	16	K-445	25537
24th Panzer Division	40	K-128	12654
94th Infantry Division	194	K-684	02233
<b>IV Corps</b>	404	K-748	26873
371th Infantry Division	371	K-707	43100
297th Infantry Division	297	K-312	37437
29th Pz.-Gren. Division	29	K-933	06391
<b>Army Reserves</b>			
14th Panzer Division	4	K-828	10262
384th Infantry Division	384	K-581	01357

## COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE: 268th Infantry Division by Jim Lewis

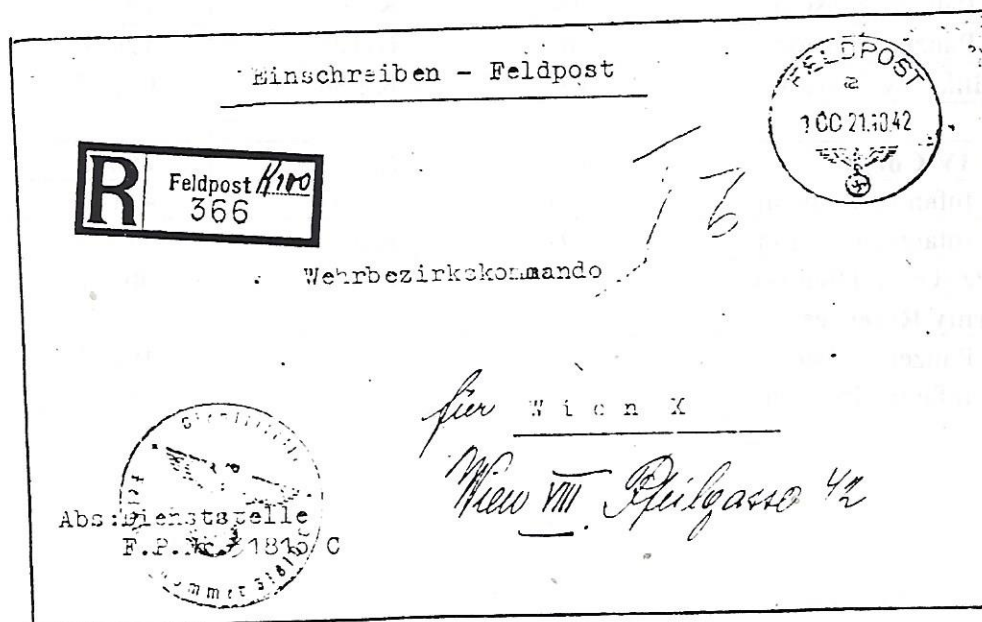
POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS				AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	GRENADIER			ARTY	UNITS
268	100	468	488	499	268	268

The 268th Infantry Division was formed in the summer of 1939 (4th wave) from supplementary ('Ergänzungs') men in the VII and XVII Military Districts. The post office unit was assigned Fp. # 35901 as a return address and Kenn 100 as a coded address for registered mail in lieu of tactical FpA 268. As a divisional emblem this formation adopted a black letter 'E' with an extended central arm on a white circle. The division served on the Saar Front in 1939-40 and then spent the rest of its career on the central sector of the Eastern Front.

In June 1941 it was part of VII Army Corps from von Klug's 4th Army where it fought at the Battle of the Yelna Bend, before Moscow, against the Soviet winter offensive of 1941-42 and in the Rzhev withdrawal. In the summer of 1943 it was part of XII Army Corps of 4th Army. It suffered such heavy losses in the Battle of Kursk and the associated retreat that it was down to battle group strength by October and had to be disbanded late in 1943. The remaining elements of the 268th were transferred to the newly forming 352nd Infantry Division in France. This division later fought with distinction at Normandy in the summer of 1944.



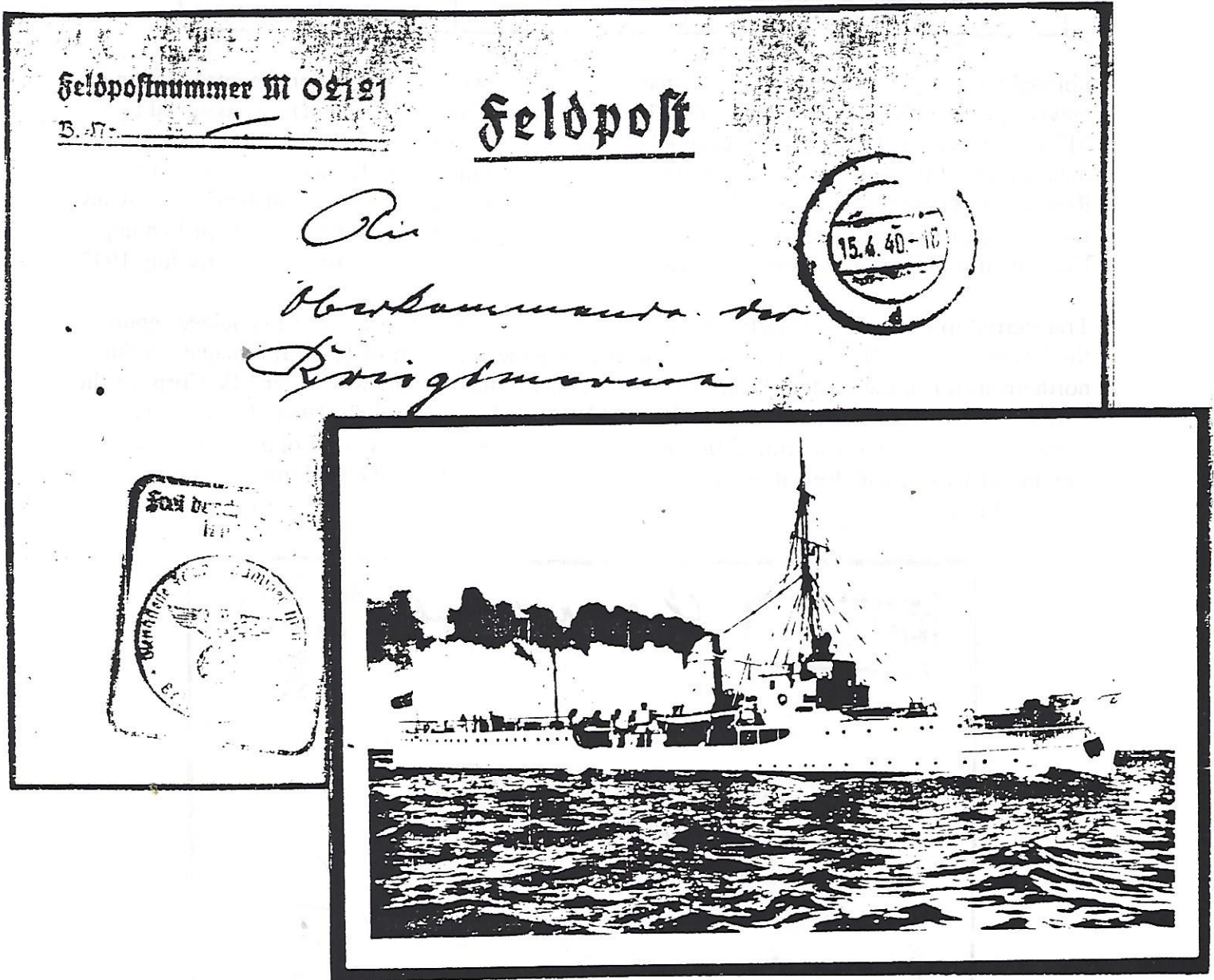
The former Feldpost unit along with Fp. # 35901 and K-100, were transferred to the 362nd Infantry Division, which was forming in northern Italy in November 1943, and re-designated FpA 362.



Cover to Military District Command in Vienna in October 1942 from Fp. # 31810 (Stab II/ Grenadier Regiment 488) via Division Field Post Office 268 (K-100).

# NAVY LOG

## Fleet Tender 'Gazelle' - Feldpost # 02021



The ex-minesweeper M135, which had been launched in March 1919, was converted to fleet tender in 1940. Taken over by Russia in 1945.

Cover above with April 1940 mute Feldpost cancel sent to Navy High Command in Berlin.

## COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE: 24th Infantry Division by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS			AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	GRENADIER		ARTY	UNITS
24	823	31	32	102	24

Formed with Saxon personnel during expansion (1st Wave) of the Army after the introduction of universal military service in March 1935. The "Feldpostamt" (post office unit) was assigned Fp # 01787 and Kenn 823 for use on registered mail in lieu of tactical FpA 24. This division took part in the invasion of Poland as part of Army Group south. After fighting in France, it crossed into Russia in 1941 and fought across the Ukraine and into the Crimea with von Manstein's 11th Army. It was engaged in the Siege of Sevastopol for several months. Along with the 22nd Air Landing Division, it took part in the amphibious assault that led to the fall of Sevastopol in early July 1942.

Transferred to Army group North with the 11th Army, the 24th Infantry Division helped repulse the Soviet counter offensive in the Lake Ilmen area in the latter part of 1942. It remained in the northern sector of the Eastern Front for the remainder of the war and was under LIV Corps of the 18th Army when the Soviets broke the Siege of Leningrad in mid-January 1944. The 24th was cited for bravery in the withdrawal through the Baltic States. In July 1944 it opposed the Soviet summer offensive, withdrew into western Latvia in October 1944 and ended the war in the Courland Pocket.



Cover sent to Censor Office HQ in Berlin in July 1943 from Fp. # 21976 (Stab II/ Grenadier Regiment 102) via P.O. 24 (K-823).

# Horst Wessel Postcard Circa 1933

by Ron Morgan

The postcard shown below, printed by the Berlin firm 'Verlag Wesenbach', has a drawing of Horst Wessel, 'Stürmführer' of S.A. Gausturm Berlin. Police killed this early martyr for the Nazi cause on February 23, 1930. The card also has the words of an S.A. marching song he wrote, renamed the 'Horst Wessel-Lied' after his death, which became the anthem of the 'Sturm Abteilung' (Storm Troopers).


The address side of this card shows that it was sent to Stuttgart and posted at Berlin-Charlottenburg 2 on May 11, 1933. The area for address has the unusual printed inscription 'Deutschgeboren' (German born), which I have not seen on any other post cards of the Third Reich era. If anyone has an explanation for this inscription, please send it to our Bulletin Editor so he can publish it in the Study Group Notes of a future bulletin.

Postkarte  
 feste Briefe  
 war der  
 überaus  
 feinsten  
 geschweigt  
 auf dem  
 Meistern  
 Nie schwin  
 Was ruan

Vergiß nicht Straße  
und Hausnummer  
anzugeben.

Deutschgeboren Frau  
Bairat Bahrwerde  
Aegerloch  
Stuttgart  
Kirchheimerstr. 40

STUTTGART  
 20  
 RABT



Deutsches Reich



Horst Wessel-Lied

Die Fahne hoch! die Reihen dicht geschlossen E. A. marschier mit ruhig festem Schritt Kameraden die Kraft und Keckheit erschließen marschieren im Geist in unseren Reihen mit.	Die Straße frei den braunen Divisionen die Straße frei dem Sturmabteilungsmann es schon auch Gefahren voll Hoffnung schon Millionen der Tag für Freiheit und für Trut bricht an.
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Zum letztenmal wird man Abschied nehmen  
 um Kampfe steht mir alle schon bereit  
 bald Ratten Hitlerläden über allen Straßen  
 die Knechtzeit dauert nur noch kurze Zeit.

Erst von dem Markt  
 Charlottenburg 2 im Gausturm  
 11. 5. 1933

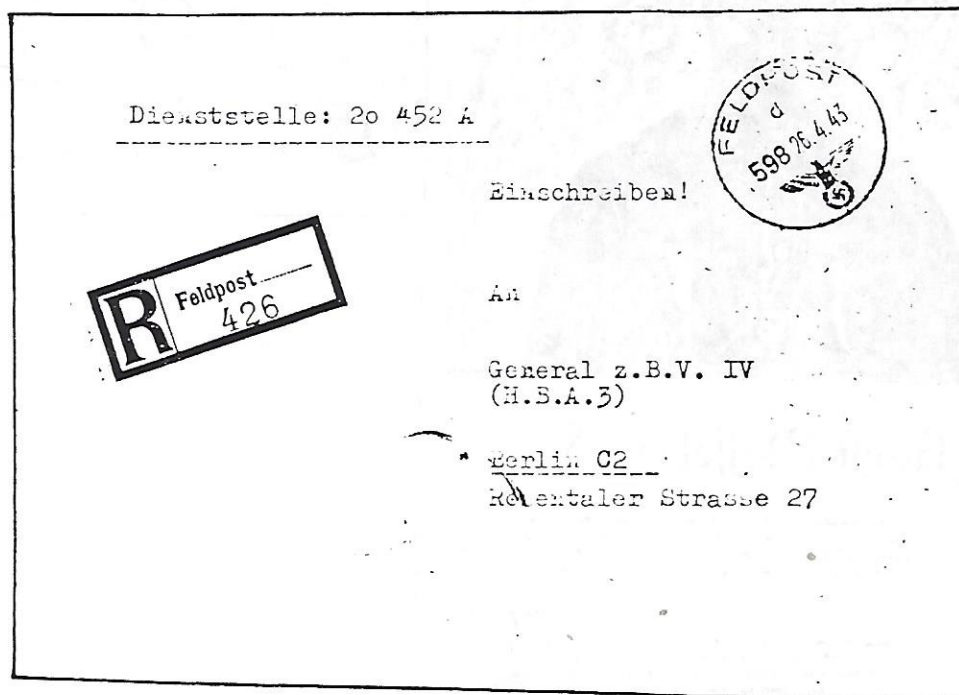
## COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE: 6th Infantry Division

by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS				AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	GRENADIER		ARTY	UNITS	
6	598	18	37	58	6	6

Created with mostly Westphalian personnel at Münster in the Reichswehr reorganization of 1921, the 6th Infantry Division first saw action in France in 1940. In June 1941 it invaded the Soviet Union in the central sector as part of 9th Army. It took part in Army Group Center's drive on Moscow and crossed the Volga River north of Moscow in late November 1941. This division held a 16-mile long section of the front during the Soviet counter offensive in the winter of 1941-42 and sustained heavy casualties. It remained with Army Group Center for the next two years and in 1942 fought in the defensive battles. In March 1943 it played a key role in the retreat from the Rzhev Bulge, a maneuver that freed 12 divisions from a very exposed position. It fought at Kursk in July 1943 as part of XLVII Panzer Corps and later in the defense of the middle Dneiper. In June 1944 the 6th Infantry Division was surrounded with XXXV Corps during the Soviet summer offensive and most of the division was forced to surrender.

Remnants of the division were sent to Poland where, after absorbing personnel of the newly forming 552nd Grenadier Division, it was designated the 6th Volksgrenadier Division. At this time it took over FpA 1552 (K-662) which was re-designated FpA 6. The re-formed division took part in the retreat through Poland and saw action on the Vistula River in December 1944. It was surrounded east of Prague with Army Group Schörner in late April 1945 and surrendered to the Red Army.



Cover sent to Special Purpose Military Office in Berlin in April 1943 from Fp. # 20452 (Regiments Stab/Grenadier Regiment 37) via Field Post Office 6 (K-598)