



Third Reich Study Group Bulletin

THIRD REICH STUDY GROUP
Devoted to the Study
of the Postal History
of Germany 1933-1945

VOL. XLVI No. 3 (Whole No. 184) 2012

DIRECTOR: Myron Fox, 4 Arbor Circle, Natick MA 01760-2953

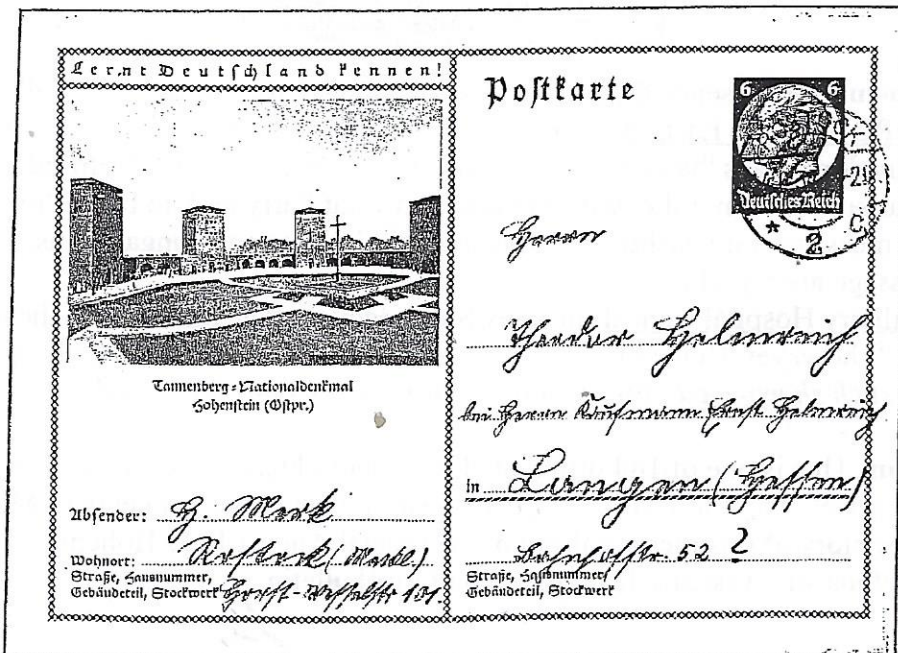
BULLETIN STAFF:

EDITOR/AUCTION MGR.: James E. Lewis, 867 Monmouth Road, Cream Ridge, NJ 08514

SECRETARY/TREASURER: James E. Lewis (Temporary)

Contents:

Page 3	Combat Division Profile: 16th Panzer Division - J. Lewis
Page 4	Navy Log: 4th Destroyer Flotilla Headquarters- R. Dunn
Page 5	German POWs in North Carolina - J. Lewis
Page 7	National Socialist Motor Corps Cancels - B. Ferguson
Page 9	Post Script to the 'Hindenburg' Disaster - J. Rawlings
Page 10	Story Behind the Cancel: The Tannenberg Memorial - K. Stefanacci
Page 11	The 90 days of Zara - E. Ludin
Page 15	Combat Division Profile: 17th Panzer Division - J. Lewis
Page 16	Undercover Corner: South African Red Cross - E. Fraser
Page 17	The Return of Memelland - J. Lewis
Page 19	To the End: The Volkssturm and the Atlantic Fortresses - J. Lewis
Page 21	Censored Feldpost to a POW in America - M. Fox
Page 22	Combat Division Profile: 18th Panzer Division - J. Lewis
Page 23	Late Covers from the Protectorate - B. Ferguson
Page 24	Third Reich Postal Rates: Parcel Fee Changes in August 1944 - R. Dixon

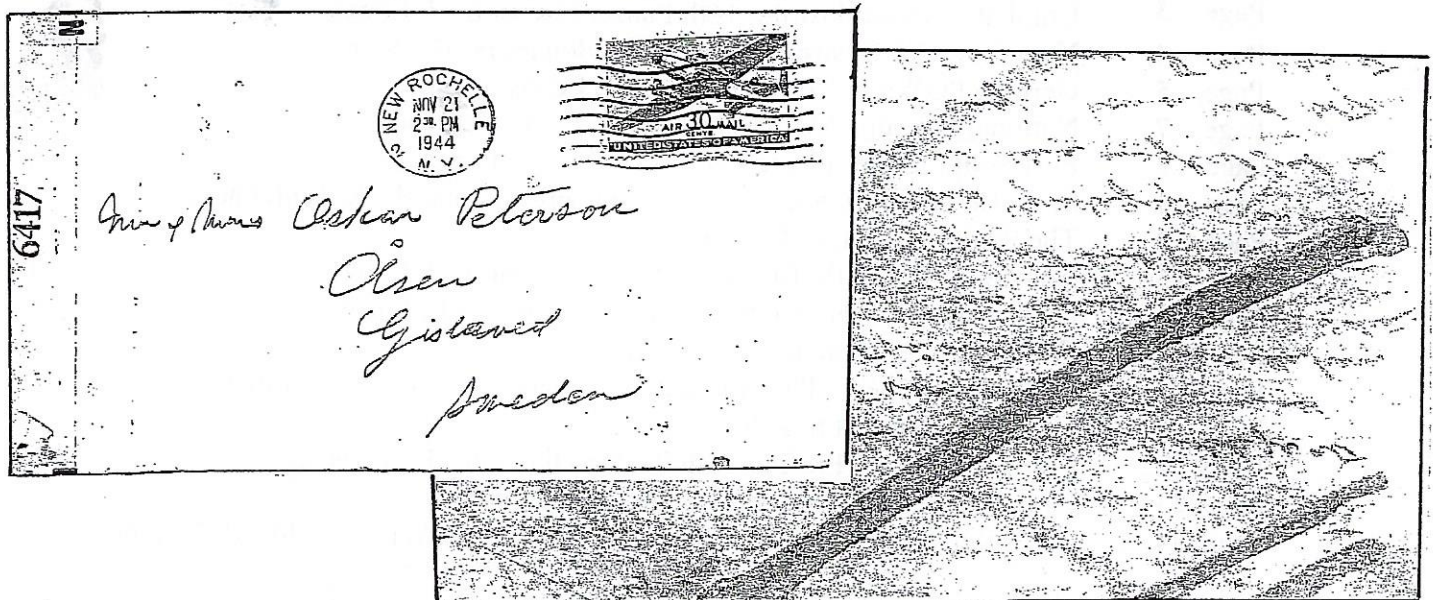


STUDY GROUP NOTES

Undercover Corner - this new feature will show covers sent by indirect routes to circumvent war time postal restrictions. While Thomas Cook's Post Box 506 Lisbon scheme is best known, there are quite a few others. TRSGer Ed Fraser's article on Page 16 begins our 'corner' and we hope other members will send in examples from their collections to share with the membership.

'Posthorn' - the February 2012 issue of this journal of the Scandinavian Collectors Club published TRSGer Ed Fraser's "Undercover Mail - a 'New' Discovery - Mail Confiscated by the German Censor for Denmark and Norway to Thomas Cook's Box 506, Lisbon. This issue also included TRSGer Bruce Fisher's article on a cover forwarded to Gestapo by Censor Office that appeared in TRSG Bulletin # 181.

Chemical testing - while chemical testing for hidden writing on foreign letters by German censors is well known, this cover sent in by TRSGer Ron Morgan seems to indicate that this practice was also used by U.S. censors. This airmail cover sent to Sweden in November 1944 has U.S. censor sealing tape on left side and chemical stains in blue, brown and yellow on the message. Ron notes that this may reflect heightened security measures in place at that time to safeguard against the possible transmission of information relative to our "Project Trinity" development program?



TRSGer Axel Kornfuehrer sends the following corrections to these articles in Bulletin # 183:

Missing German POW on the Eastern Front: a) on Page 5 of Larry Nelson's article, the "refused" stamp on the back of the envelope reads "verweigert" (which is the German word for "refused", "vermeigert" does not exist). I know Frankur text is not the easiest to read and what Larry took to be an "m" is really a "w".

b) on Page 6, the message is not written in Hungarian but in Russian. Hungarian uses Latin letters and the letters in this message are Cyrillic.

The Pasewalk Military Hospital Cancel: in Kelly Stefanacci's article on Page 14, the quotation under the town name reads "I however decided to become a politician", there is no "it was here..." in that quotation. *Thank you, Axel, such sharp-eyed observations keeps us all on our toes! Ye Olde Ed.*

Cover Illustration: This is one of 144 different "Lernt Deutschland Kennen!" postal cards of the March/June 1934 series. This card (Borek 229/121) has a view of the Tannenberg Memorial in Hohenstein (East Prussia). The story of this memorial and of the special August 1939 Hohenstein cancel is detailed in TRSGer Kelly Stefanacci's fine article on page 10 of this bulletin.

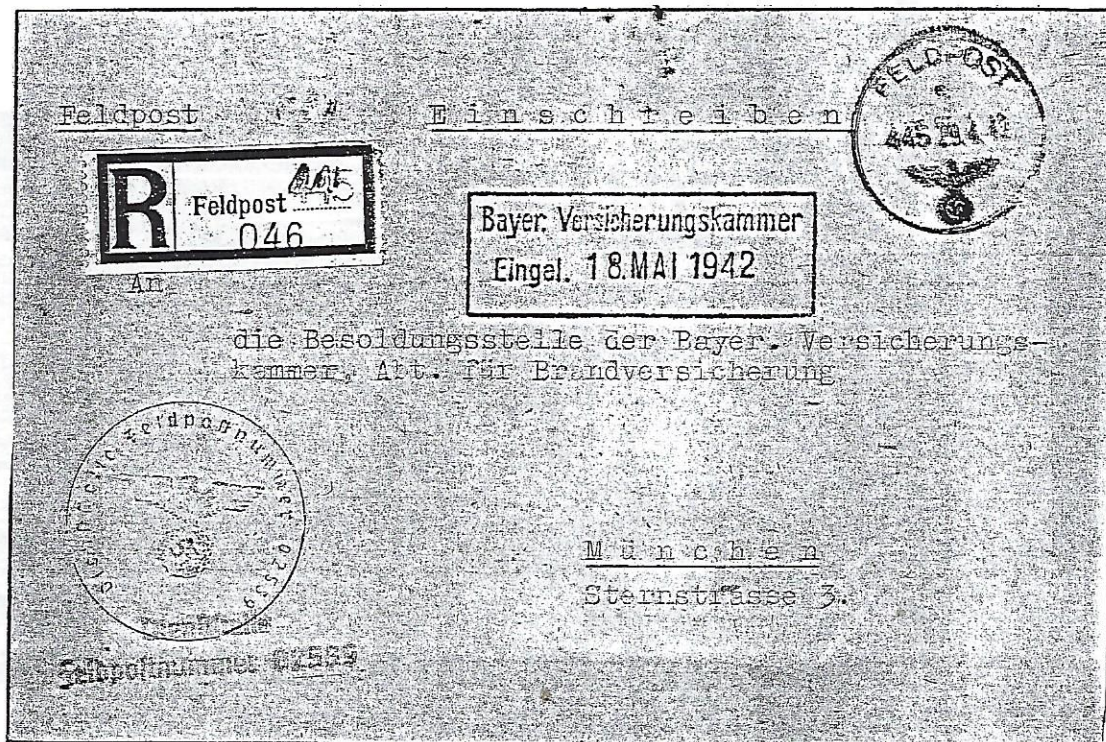
COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE:**16th Panzer Division**

by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS				AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	PANZER	GRENADIER	ARTY	UNITS	
16	445	2	64	79	16	16

Formed (1st Wave) as 16th Infantry Division with Infantry Regiments 60, 64 & 79. The P.O. was assigned Fp.# 25537 as a return address and Kenn 445 as a coded identity in lieu of tactical FpA 16. It was stationed in the Saar in 1939 and fought in France the following year. Converted to the 16th Panzer Division in August 1940, adding Panzer Regiment 2 and supplying 60th Infantry Regiment to the new 16th Motorized Division. The 16th Panzer Division fought in the Balkans in April 1941, and then took part in the invasion of Russia in the central sector. It fought in the Ukraine, the Battle of Kiev, and the Donets battles and against the Russian winter offensive of 1941-42. It took part in the drive across the Don to the Volga. It was surrounded with the 6th Army at Stalingrad and destroyed in January 1942.

A second 16th Panzer Division was formed in France during the spring of 1943. A new P.O. was assigned Fp.# 34640 and K-326. Upon completion of training the new division was sent to the Taranto sector in Italy. Shortly thereafter it contested the Allied landings at Salerno and north of Naples where it lost 2/3 of its tank strength. It was sent to the southern sector of the Eastern Front during the winter of 1943-44 for a German counter-offensive west of Kiev. The division suffered heavy losses at Kiev and in the subsequent withdrawal across northern Ukraine. The division later fought in Poland, Schlesian and Moravia from September 1944 to May 1945.

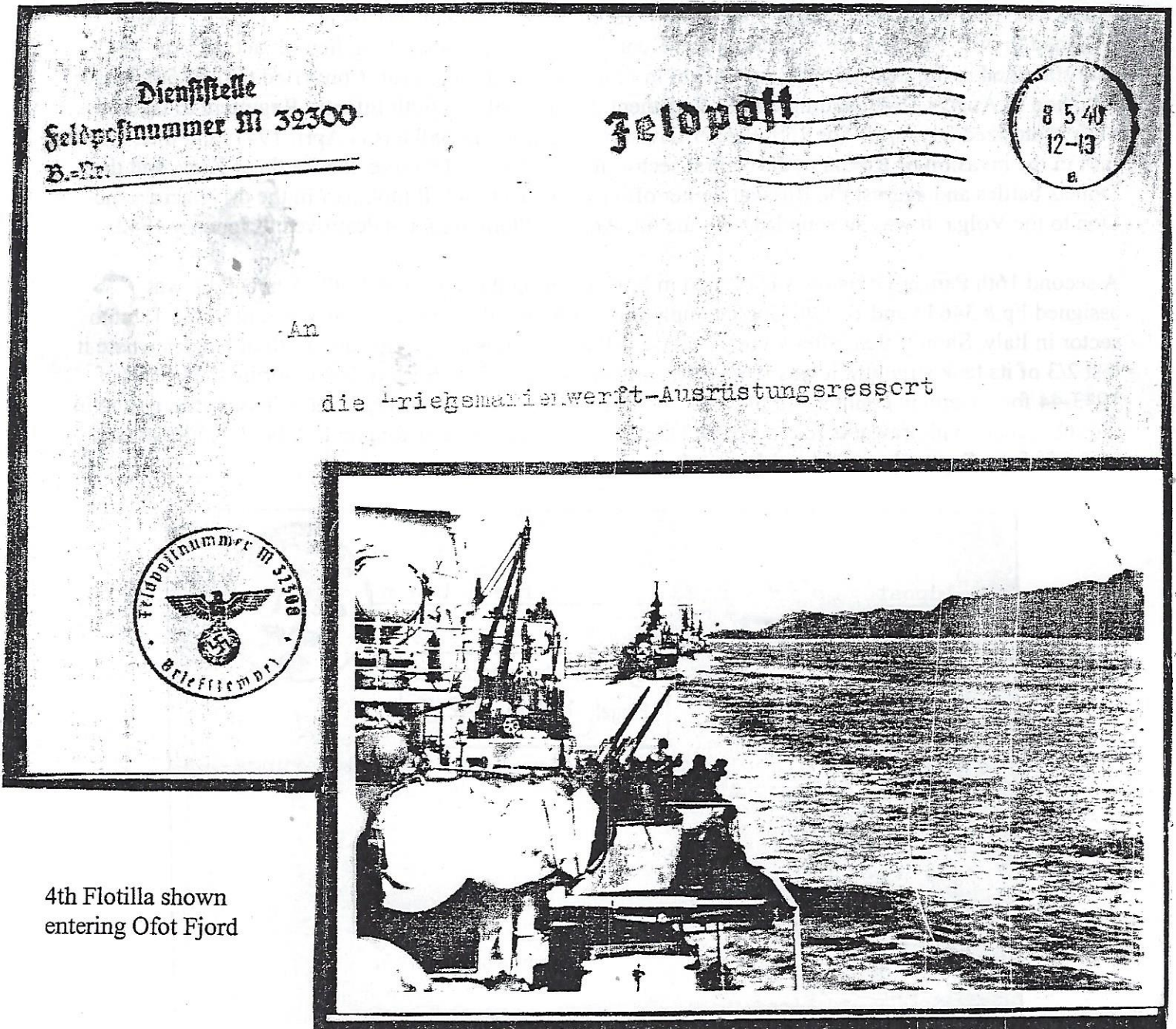


Cover sent to Burn Bandage Section of Bayer Office in Munich in April 1942 from Fp. # 0539 (Panzer Observation Battery 16) via division P.O. 16 (Kenn 445).

NAVY LOG

by Bob Dunn

4th Destroyer Flotilla Headquarters - Feldpost # M32300



4th Flotilla shown entering Ofot Fjord

May 8, 1940: From Flotilla 4 Headquarters – a few weeks after the flotilla had been decimated at Narvik. The 21mm diameter 6-line “Mute” cancel with code ‘a’ was used in Bremerhaven.

German POWs in North America Camps in North Carolina

by Jim Lewis

North Carolina was the first state to receive German POWs when in the spring of 1942 survivors of the torpedoed submarine U-352 were interned in a temporary camp at Fort Bragg. This facility, however, was closed early in 1943. The first permanent German POW camp in North Carolina was established in May 1944, when 500 German POWs were transferred from Tennessee and Alabama. When the camp system had been fully developed, approximately 10,000 German POWs were interned in 18 facilities including two base camps at Fort Bragg (Code 22) and Camp Butner (Code 43) and 16 branch camps throughout the state. By the end of the war Camp Butner was responsible for more than 5,000 German POWs. At the request of soldiers who had been forced to join the German army, it provided separate housing (called the "United Nations Compound") for 332 Czechs, 150 Poles, 147 Dutch, 117 French, 34 Austrians, 11 Luxembourgers and 1 Lithuanian.

While initially most German POWs had been imprisoned in the central portions of the country, far away from coastal areas so they could do less damage in the case of escapes or uprisings. However, with the number of German soldiers shipped to the United States steadily rising and a growing need for labor on the home front, the idea of concentrating German POWs in the interior of the country was abandoned. The camp system was expanded, encompassing 705 camps in 46 states by the end of the war. In North Carolina, German POWs were a welcome source of labor both at military installations and in the private economic sector. They performed almost two million man-days of labor in agriculture and rural industries in the state. They could be seen shaking and stacking peanuts or cutting pulpwood; they were employed in a basket factory, a fertilizer plant, a local slaughterhouse and in lumber mills.

The main camps and branch camps in North Carolina are listed below

Name of Camp	County	Main Camp	Name of Camp	County	Main Camp
Ahoskie	Hertford	Butner	MacKall, Camp	Richmond	-----
Battle, Camp	Craven	Bragg	Monroe	Union	Butner
Bragg, Fort	Hoke	-----	Moore Hospital	Buncombe	Butner
Butner, Camp	Granville	-----	New Bern	Craven	Bragg
Carthage	Moore	Butner	Roanoke	Halifax	Butner
Davis, Camp	Pender	Butner	Scotland Neck	Halifax	Butner
Edenton	Chowan	Butner	Sutton, Camp	Monroe	Butner
Goldsboro	Wayne	Bragg	Whiteville	Columbus	Butner
Greensboro	Guilford	Butner	Williamson	Martin	Butner
Hendersonville	Henderson	Forrest, TN	Wilmington	New Hanover	Bragg
Johnson Air Base	Wayne	Bragg	Winston-Salem	Forsyth	Butner

Note): POWs were treated at these hospitals: Camp Butner and Moore General. POW Cemeteries: Fort Bragg Post, Camp Butner Post (transferred in 1947 to Chattanooga National Cemetery in Tennessee.)

While there were a few escape attempts, most were caught within a day or two. However, Kurt Rossmeisl walked away from Camp Butner on August 4, 1945, and caught a train to Chicago. There he lived under the name Frank Ellis, obtained a social security card, found employment, and even joined a local Moose lodge. Tired of being on the run and fearful of capture, Rossmeisl finally turned himself in on May 10, 1959, fourteen years after the end of the war.

In addition to their regular mail, prisoners received communications concerning major family events from the Office of the Provost Marshal General in Washington, D.C. who, in turn, had received the information from the International Red Cross.

Fig. 1) Photo of crew of U-352 take at Fort Bragg in 1942.

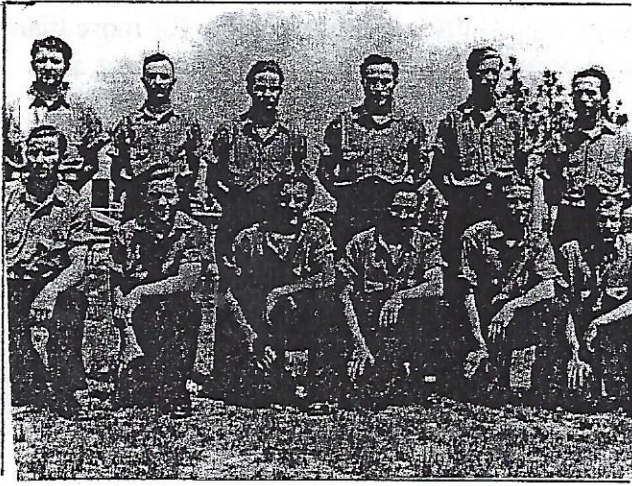


Fig. 2) Message dated January 1, 1945 from "Enemy Prisoner of War Information Bureau" in Washington, D.C. to German POW Walter Strohmeyer in Camp Butner notifying him of the birth of a daughter on October 19, 1944. Baby and mother were well.

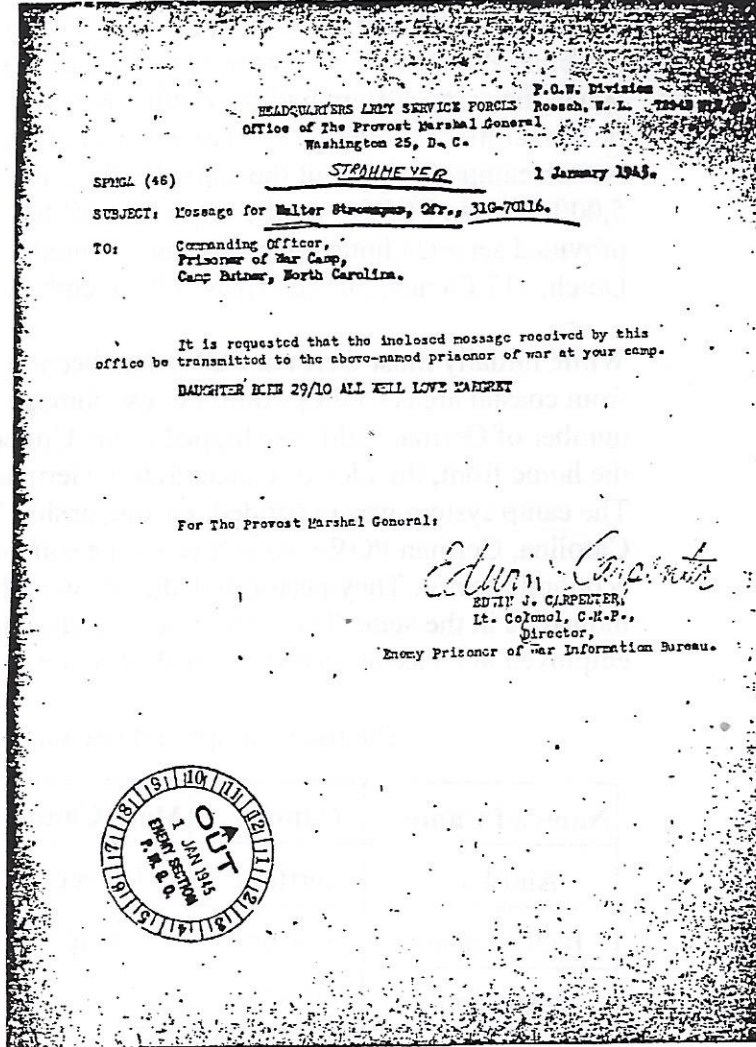


Fig. 3) Postcard sent to Gosslarshausen on January 2, 1945 from German POW in Camp Fort Bragg has U.S. censor #11813 and hand stamp of Berlin censor office (code 'b')

From: Uffz. Kurt Weiss, 4 WG 1649 Co. # 1
 Prisoner of War Camp Fort Bragg N.C. *avdck-g*
 c/o Box 20 G.P.O. New York N.Y. U.S.A. *Postage Free*
Portofrei

PRISONER OF WAR POST CARD
 Postkarte für Kriegsgefangene

German "AF"
 Address
 Adresse
 Fr. 1.
 Renate Augsburg
 Gosslarshausen/Westpr.
 Hauptstr. 8 Germany

Do Not Write Here!
 Nicht Hier Schreiben!

11813
 U.S. CENSOR

P. M. G. Form No. 6-1
 November 1, 1942

16-31472-1

National Socialist Motor Corps Cancels

by Bob Ferguson

The "Nationalsozialistisches Automobil Korps" (NSAK) was formed in 1930 by Martin Bormann, organizing all NSDAP members who owned a car or motorcycle into a nation-wide unit. When SA-Gruppenführer Adolf Hühnlein was appointed in 1934, he revised the organization's name to "Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps" (NSKK). The NSKK took over all German motor clubs and expanded to 350,000 members. After war began, the NSKK was made responsible for training drivers for the Army in their NSKK Motor Sports Schools and also provided transport for the construction of the Siegfried Line among other assignments during the war.

The following special cancels pertaining to NSKK events are listed in Julius Bochmann's **Katalog der Deutschen Gelegenheitsstempel**.

Altenberg # 6	NSKK Ktaftsfahrzeug Winterprüfung Start	1.-6. Feb. 1938
Altenberg # 7	Ktaftsfahrzeug Winterprüfung vom 2-5 Feb.1938	1.-6. Feb. 1938
Bad Gandersheim #3	Motor-Wehr-Sport des NSKK	17.-22. Juni 1939
Berlin # 176	Reichswettkampf NSKK Oktober .35-Marz .36	1935-1936 Machine Cancel
Dresden # 86	Grosser Preis von Europa/Sachsenring Hohenstein-Ernstthal/NSKK Motor-Gruppe Sachsen	1936
Frankfurt (M) #67	Tag des NSKK 20. Und 21.Juni 1936	1936 Machine Cancel
Frankfurt (M) #68	Tag des NSKK 20. Und 21.Juni 1936	1936 Machine Cancel
Frankfurt (M) #69	Tag des NSKK Motorgruppe Hessen	18.-21. Juni 1936
Goslar # 11	Motorsportswoche des NSKK im Harz 10. Dreitage-Mittelgebirgsfahrt	23.-25. Juni 1936
Hannover # 55	16.Internationales Eilenriede-Rennen NSKK	14.-16. April 1939
Hohenstein (Ern) #1	Gross preis von Deutschland NSKK Motor Brigade Sachsen	5.-8. August 1937
Hohenstein (Ern) #4	Gross preis von Europa NSKK Motor Brigade Sachsen	4.-7. August 1938
Kiel # 33	2.Nordmark Treffen am 23.u.24 Mai in Kiel SA-NSKK-SS	1936 Machine Cancel
Marienberg (Sach) # 1	Marienberger Dreieck Rennen NSKK Motorbrigade Sachsen	10. Oktober 1937
Nordhausen # 10	Motor-Sportsübung des NSKK	20.-21. Juni 1938
Nurnberg # 53	Reichsparteitag/NSKK-Zeitlager Mageldorf	6.-13. September 1937
Series cancel # 200	Reichswettkampf NSKK Oktober 35 - Mai '36	1. Feb.-22 April 1936 in Bremen, Osnabruck and Wesermunde



Altenberg # 7



Goslar #11



Hohenstein # 1



Hohenstein # 4

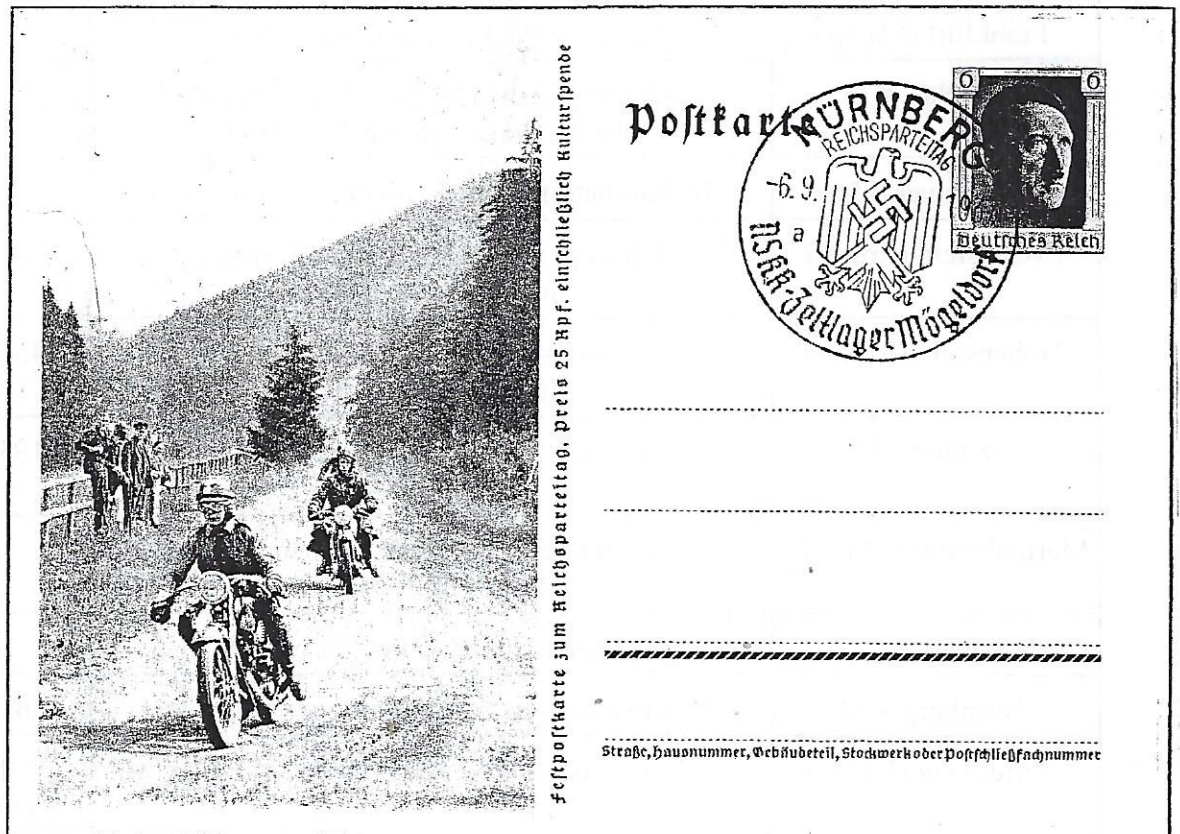


Marienberg # 1



Nordhausen # 10

Postcard for 1937
Nuremberg Rally
has special cancel
Nürnberg # 53
dated Sept. 6, 1937



Feltpostkarte zum Reichsparteitag, Preis 25 Hpf. einschließlich Kulturpende

Postkarte NÜRNBERG



Straße, Hausnummer, Webstübe teil, Stadtwerk oder Postschließfachnummer

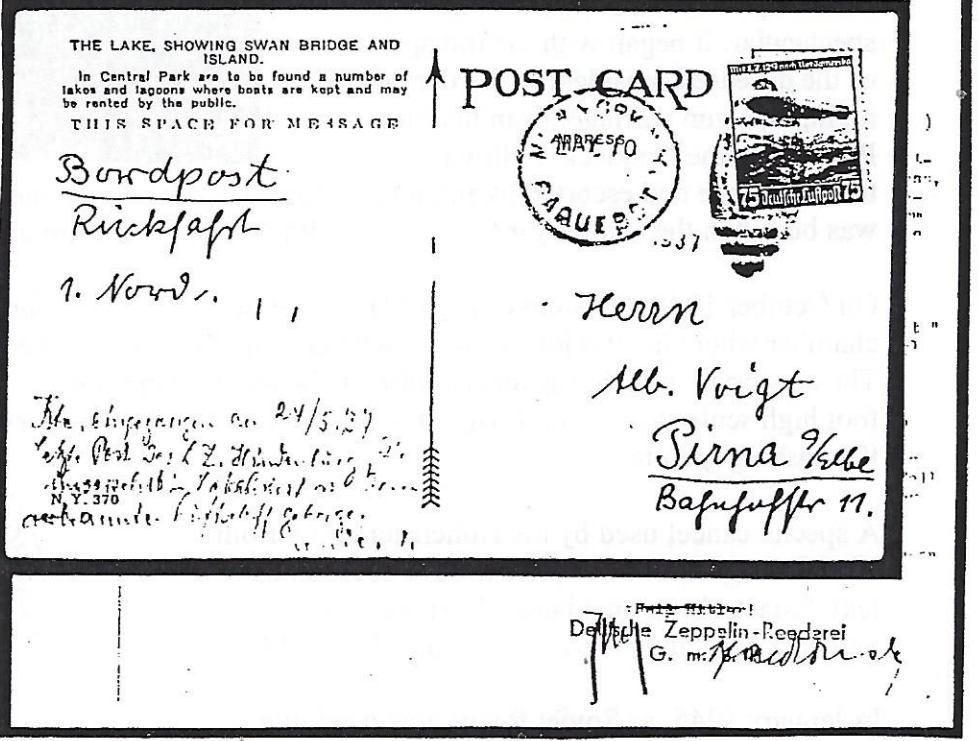
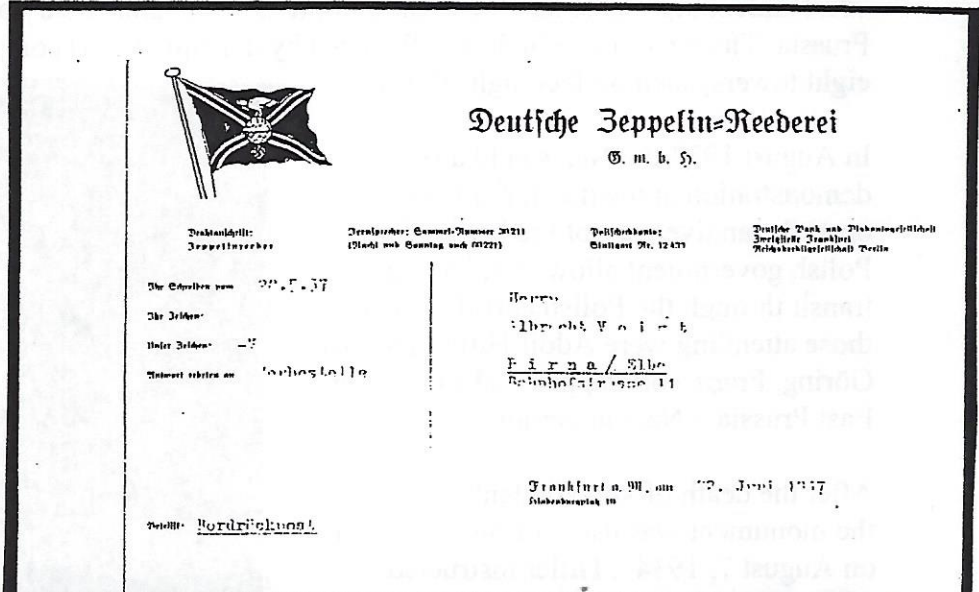
Post Script to the 'Hindenburg' Disaster

by John Rawlings

When the airship 'Hindenburg' burst into flames at Lakehurst, New Jersey on May 6, 1937, a chapter in the story of air mail services came to an abrupt end. Most of her outward bound mail was lost in the conflagration and the few charred pieces that survived have become rarities. However, those unfamiliar with the Sieger catalog may not know that these are not the last souvenirs of a unique transatlantic service.

When the disaster occurred the U.S. Post Office was already holding items of mail prepared for the scheduled return flight to Germany and, when forwarding in the intended manner became impossible, the postal authorities had to return such mail to senders both home and abroad. Items with U.S. postage stamps received U.S. post office cancels and were returned by surface mail. The 176 covers and cards with foreign stamps could not (according to U. P. U. rules) be handled in this way and, instead, were cancelled on May 10, 1937 with a circular New York Paquebot handstamp and adjacent oval 'killer', the method used on mail received from foreign ocean liners calling at port.

This post card, cancelled and returned by sea mail, is shown with an advisory note dated May 20, 1937 sent by the Zeppelin Company to the card's sender. The Sieger catalog states that other known covers have a handstamp reading "Could not be forwarded on account of accident to Airship. May 6th 1937". The card shown lacks this marking as it's assumed it was only applied to those items with U.S. stamps. These items prepared for the anticipated return flight of 'Hindenburg' are among the rarest items of Zeppelin mail.



ED Note: This article was originally published in Group News Sheet 93 of the Third Reich Study Group (U.K.) and appears here, in a slightly abbreviated version, with their permission.

Story Behind the Cancel: The Tannenberg Memorial

by Kelly Stefanacci

The Tannenberg Memorial commemorated fallen German soldiers of the second battle of Tannenberg in 1914, which was named after the medieval Battle of Tannenberg in 1410. The victorious commander, Paul von Hindenburg, dedicated the memorial on the 10th anniversary of the battle in 1924 near Hohenstein in East Prussia. The structure, which was financed by donations, was completed in 1927. The octagonal layout had eight towers, each 67 feet high (Fig. 1).

In August 1933 the Nazis held a massive demonstration at the memorial to commemorate the anniversary of the battle. The Polish government allowed 1,500 cars to transit through the Polish corridor. Among those attending were Adolf Hitler, Herman Göring, Franz von Pappen and Eric Koch, East Prussia's Nazi governor.

After the death of von Hindenburg, the monument was used for his interment on August 7, 1934. Hitler instructed Albert Speer to ensure that the day was spectacular. It began with the transportation of the deceased president in the dark of night, on a gun carriage, from his East Prussian home Neudeck. Following a

torch-lit route and escorted by infantry and cavalry, the cortège made its way to Hohenstein. Hindenburg was buried in the central yard or "plaza" with 20 unknown German soldiers from the 1914 battle.

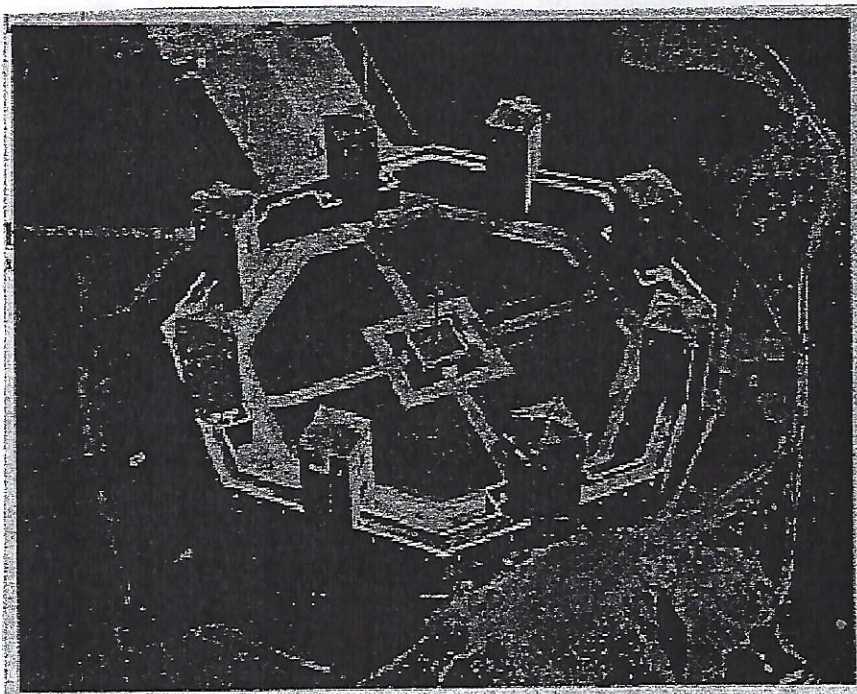
On October 1935, the anniversary of Hindenburg's birthday, his bronze coffin was relocated to a new chamber where he was joined by his wife Gertrud, who was moved from the family plot in Hannover. The new crypt, which was located directly below the south tower. To create an entrance to the crypt, two 14 foot high sculptures of the *Ewige Wache* (Eternal Watch) were carved out of more than 120 tons of imported Königsberg granite.

A special cancel used by the Hohenstein P.O. from 25.-28. August, 1939 depicts the memorial and has text: "Staatsakt Tannenberg 27. August 1939/ Schlacht bei Tannenberg 27. August 1914". (Fig. 2).



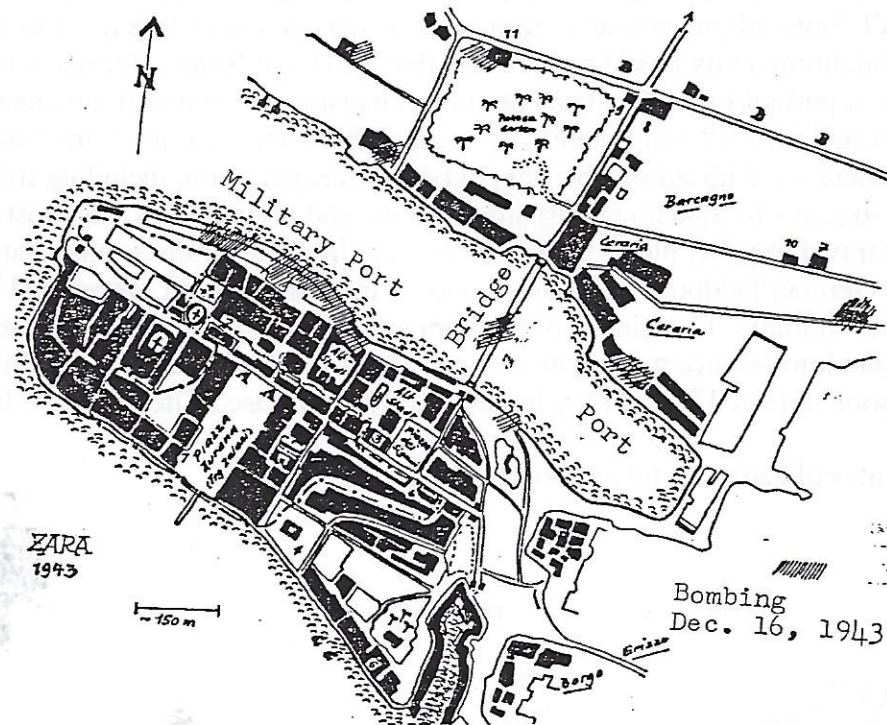
In January 1945, as Soviet forces advanced into East Prussia, Hitler ordered the coffins of Hindenburg and his wife moved to safety. The coffins were interred behind a 6-foot thick masonry wall in a salt mine tunnel near the village of Bernterode, Thuringia. The coffins were discovered by U.S. Army Ordnance troops on April 27, 1945. In August 1946, Hindenburg and his wife were laid to rest at St. Elizabeth's, the church of his Teutonic ancestors in Marburg.

In January, 1945, withdrawing German forces planted demolition charges and destroyed most of the Tannenberg Memorial. The Polish government ordered the dismantling of the remains in 1949.



The 90 Days of Zara

by Emil Ludin



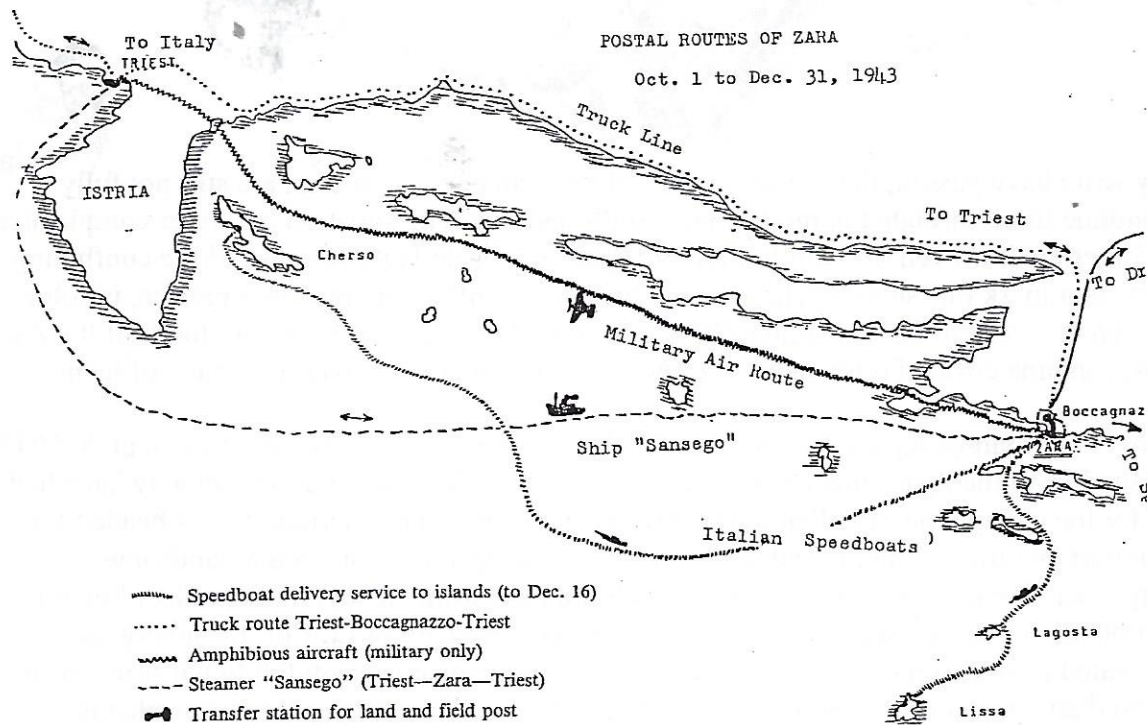
Even though many years have passed, the stamp issues of the Italian enclave of Zara are still not fully explained; they continue to be shrouded in myths, half-truths and lies. The situation is further complicated by a multitude of forgeries. It is even difficult to pinpoint dates and basic facts, because of the conflicting opinions and reports that mark this subject. The existing literature, neither complete nor precise, is colored by political bias. Even the work of Dr. H. Müller-George, former Zara commander and initiator of the Zara overprinted stamps, contains errors. Fortunately, information is now available to correct most of them.

The 90-day history of German-occupied Zara began with the Allied radio announcement on Sept. 8, 1943 that Italy had defected from the Axis alliance. The German Army High Command immediately launched 'Operation Axis' for the occupation of Italian territories. By forced marches, German forces headed for the strategically important cities along the Dalmatian coast, including Zara. Zara was a handsome Venetian-style city where bands were still playing in hotels, an anachronistic idyl in the midst of merciless combat. Some 2800 German troops were stationed in Zara under command of Lt. Col. Kleinberg (not "Kleinberger", as stated in some reports). Little is known about him since he soon fell to partisan gunfire during an ill-prepared attempt to occupy some nearby islands. Lt. Müller-George, who succeeded in command, went to work restoring services and supplies in the city. The civil government, including police, continued to operate under his supervision. A small flotilla of Italian speed boats was organized for both military and postal service. The German Command (*Kommandatura*) was located in the palace of justice with the Feldpost bus parked nearby.

The postal service was ordered not to use Italian stamps, most of which carried portraits of the king or emblems of the royal house, unless they were either obliterated or suitably overprinted. Müller-George availed himself of the services of an experienced Italian postal official and a local printer (who, fortunately, spoke German) to overprint Italian stamps with *Deutsche Besetzung Zara* (German Occupation Zara). It's been claimed that the Germans had to gather all of the stamps available in the city post office and surrounding area in order to obtain all overprint values. This isn't true, since additional stamp supplies could be easily obtained from the postal center in Triest. However, stocks of the higher values were scarce.

Information on the lines of communication used by the Zara mails is generally rather sketchy and inaccurate. It ranges from the assertion that all mail was forwarded by Feldpost to the claim that Zara never had any postal service at all. None of this is true as Zara quickly managed to restore its outside postal connections and establish a fully functioning city postal service. All this is evident from a German command order dated Sept. 2, 1943. Zara was important to the Germans because it had an excellent port, undamaged industry and great quantities of stores and military equipment. There was only one truck route from Zara to Triest and Boccagnazzo but there were no serious barriers to postal transportation, including Italian soldier's mail. Trucks continued to move to Spalato (Split) almost to the end of hostilities. Feldpost and civilian mail were separated, but did travel together along the brief stretch of highway to the sorting station at Boccagnazzo (Bocanjac) where German Feldpost was handed over to the military mail system and Italian mail was turned over to the Italian civil mails. The islands of the Zara area were provided with mail service by way of the speed boats. Partisan interference was minimal since no major guerilla units existed in the area. Those which did operate were soon defeated by German forces after Hitler refused Tito's request for an armistice.

Fig. 1) Postal Routes of Zara - October 1 to December 31, 1943



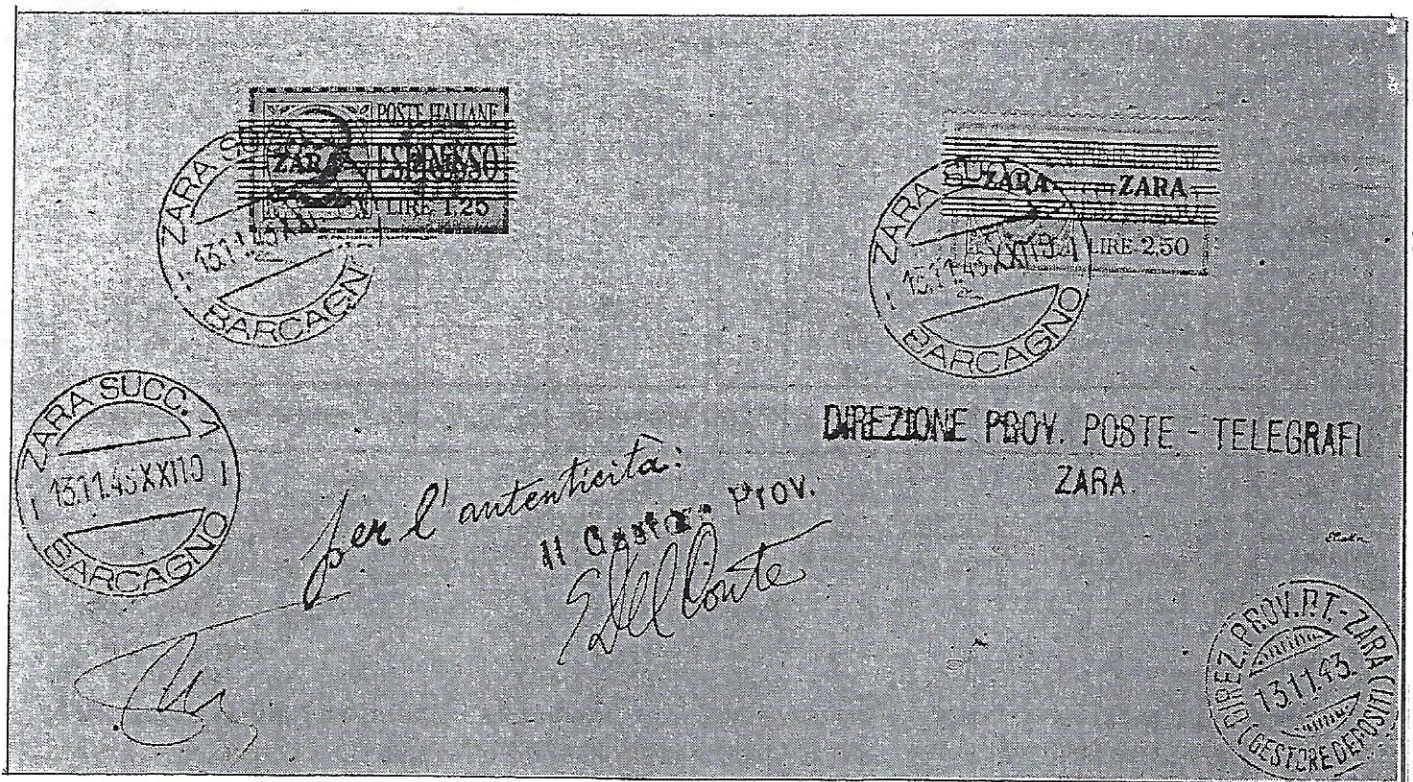
Legend persists that the Croats, who established a nation independent of Yugoslavia under German protection, still maintained consular offices in Zara, as well as consular mail service. On this theory, expensive doctored covers, including impossible mixed frankings, have come on the market. The fact is that Croatian offices were closed in the fall of 1943 and came under German control. Any philatelic material of this type was produced after the war and is fake. There is also lack of clarity about the workings of the Zara postal establishment during the occupation and about its area of operations. Many of the supposed eye-witness reports contradict each other and it has been difficult to sort out. The type used for the overprinting, selected to impart a Germanic character to the stamps, had been in use for many years, both in Germany and in Austria (to which Zara belonged before World War I). However, because this type was no longer current, new metal type had to be specially cast by a type foundry in southern

Germany. The molds had not been in use for decades and the die set was no longer complete. As a result, the printer had to employ two type varieties to do the overprinting.

All statements with regard to deliberate errors and varieties are nonsense. The work was done under careful supervision of German Lt. Egger, who conscientiously carried out the orders of the *Kommandatura*. As long as postage stamps were stored at the print shop, German guards watched over them. Soldiers considered this peaceful guard duty a welcome chance to rest, a rare pleasure in this desperate war. On orders of the local commander, overprints were made in two styles, normal in rectangular shape, as well as the so-called smudged prints (*Schmutzdrucke*) on cheap yellowish paper. Proofs (*Probedrucke*) have so far turned out to be fakes; it is certain that proofs were neither requested nor prepared. If any were made, they were produced for internal use only.

Undoubtedly, the very rare vertically displaced overprint of the 1.25-lire (Mi. 21) was a printer's proof. The few known pieces originated from fragments of panes and cannot be traced to full sheets of the stamps; so far, only single stamps are known. The fact that some of these stamps exist on courtesy-cancelled envelopes does not alter the situation. The commander requested the preparation of an inventory. Several copies were prepared by postal-administrator Bonini, who stamped and signed each. He included samples at the request of the commander, as well as descriptions and measurements.

Fig. 2) Samples of overprinted stamps prepared on sheets for the German authorities by the Zara postal administration. This is the bottom of a total sheet and has appropriate signatures.



Proofs (*Probedrucke*) have so far turned out to be fakes. As stated above, proofs were neither requested nor prepared so if any were made, they were for internal use only. No doubt the very rare vertically displaced overprint of the 1.25-lire (Mi. 21) was a printer's proof. The few known pieces are from fragments of panes and cannot be traced to full stamp sheets. Thus far, only single stamps are known. The fact that some of these stamps exist on courtesy-cancelled envelopes does not change these facts.

The commander requested the preparation of an inventory. Several copies were prepared by postal-administrator Bonini, who stamped and signed each sheet. He included samples at the request of the commander, as well as descriptions and measurements. The description is of no particular philatelic value, since it is only approximate. It did, however, serve as a guide for innumerable post war forgeries. Printing errors and type varieties were neither ordered nor anticipated. The printers did not know German and the errors came to light as the printing proceeded.

Philatelist Müller-George was happy to take cognizance of the errors but it was of no concern to anyone, especially the Italians, to undertake any corrections. That this was of no import to the occupation authorities is evident from the fact that some of the errors, such as the 25-cent. (Mi.5K), were totally unknown to the local commander. He maintained long after that the error never existed, even though it had already been authenticated and listed in Italian catalogues.

The assertion in many philatelic publications that printing flaws and errors were due to the myopia of printer De Schoenfeld is a bad joke. The elder Schoenfeld had died back in 1939 and, although his son wore glasses, he was neither myopic nor visually impaired. Furthermore, there is no truth to the claim that a certain Barone from Bologna influenced the stamp preparations. The only Barone known in Zara was a merchant who purchased a supply of Zara stamps, but only after they were printed. It is absolutely certain that no illegal or unofficial sale took place during the entire occupation period.

Every stamp was only sold officially over the postal counter. The German postal rules applied to everyone, not just the Germans. The stamp issue of Oct. 9, 1943 was officially announced in the local newspaper, *Corriere di Zara*. Claims have been made that this newspaper's print shop subsequently produced authentic "reprints" of the Zara stamps. This tale served as the basis for claims of authenticity by many subsequent forgers. It also triggered a long argument among experts, which only ended after every example of these "reprints" turned out to be a forgery.

This newspaper did not possess the right type faces and De Schoenfeld was hardly willing to supply his to a competitor. Furthermore, the newspaper soon stopped publication whereas De Schoenfeld continued to print stamps. Finally, none of the materials used for stamp overprinting survived the disasters of war; they were destroyed long before any thought would be given to using them for the production of illegal reprints or forgeries.

It should be remembered that the Zara local postal system, including production of overprinted stamps, was under the tight control of the German occupation authorities. Postal regulations and control of distribution were carefully discussed before any stamps were issued. All other claims have not survived examination.

*Note: We've received several inquiries from TRSG members who've seen covers with these scarce Zara stamps at shows or advertised on-line. As there isn't a great deal of information on this subject, we've combined, with some slight revisions, two articles written by Bundesprüfer Ludin that appeared in the German Postal Specialist in February and March of 1985. The author was the German authorized expert (Bundesprüfer) for Kotor, Xante and Zara. There are also many examples of fraudulent and fantasy Zara occupation stamps and covers in Section 18 of Germany Philatelic Society's Reference Manual of Forgeries by Dr. Werner M. Bohne.
Ye Olde Ed*

COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE:

17th Panzer Division

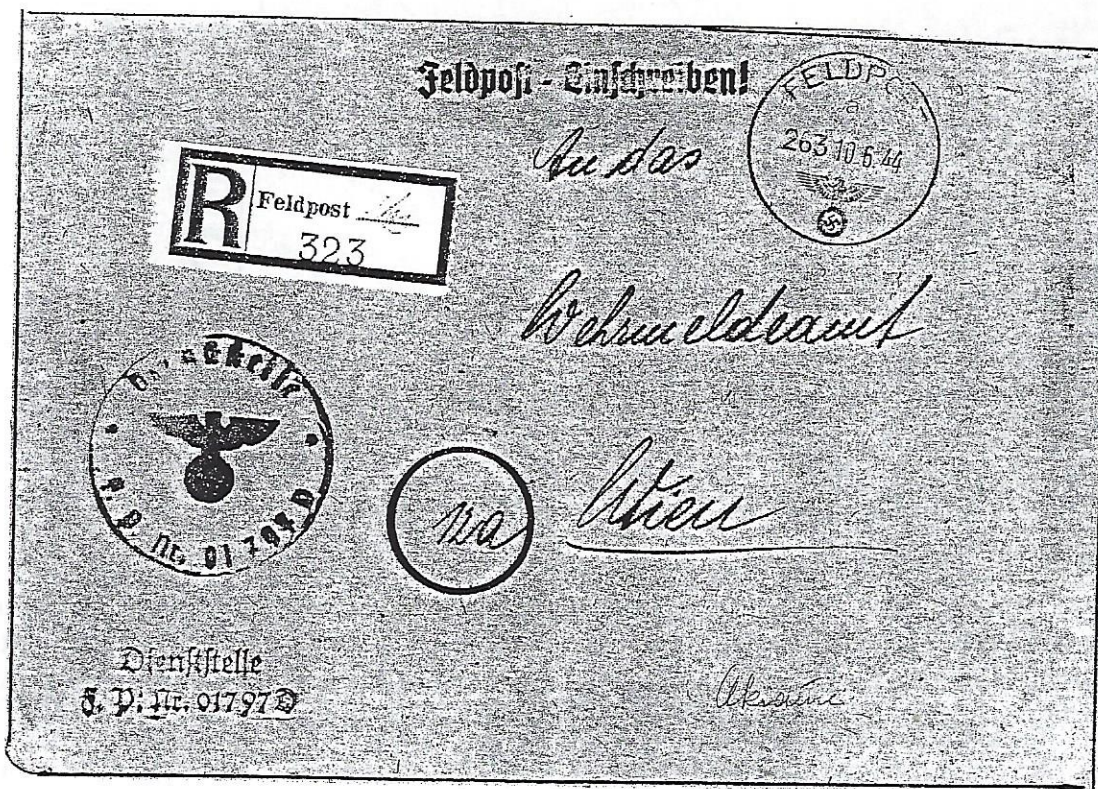
by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS			AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	PANZER	GRENADIER	ARTY	UNITS
27	263	39	40	63	27

Formed (1st Wave) as 27th Infantry Division with Infantry Regiments 40, 63 & 91. The P.O. was assigned Fp.# 22784 as a return address and Kenn 263 as a coded identity in lieu of tactical FpA 27. After fighting well in Poland and France, converted to the 17th Panzer Division in autumn 1940, adding Panzer Regiment 39 and supplying 91st Infantry Regiment to the 4th Gebirgs Division.

In June 1941 the 17th Panzer Division took part in the invasion of Russia in the central sector. It fought at Brest-Litovsk, the Minsk encirclement, and the Dneiper crossings, at Smolensk and in the Battle of Moscow. Transferred to the southern sector in 1942, it took part in the attempt to relieve Stalingrad. By Christmas 1942 it was down to eight tanks and one anti-tank gun.

It later fought at Kursk in July 1943 and in the subsequent retreat from the Donets, the Dneiper bend and in northern Ukraine. In March 1944 the division was encircled with the 1st Panzer Army but managed to break out. In September 1944 it was fighting west of the Vistula, opposed the Russian offensive during the winter of 1944-45. The 17th Panzer Division was in a pocket west of Prague when the war ended.



Cover sent to Military Records Office in Vienna in June 1944 from Fp. # 01797 (Stab I of Panzer Grenadier Regiment 40) via division P.O. 27 (Kenn 263).

Undercover Collector's Corner: South African Red Cross Cover to Portugal

by Ed Fraser

Charles Entwistle's Undercover Mail Addresses of W.W.II, notes: "The Portuguese Red Cross had an agreement, recognized by the Germans, with the South African Red Cross. Officially, this was for the forwarding of mail between South Africa and the Netherlands, although mail to Germany is also known."

Fig. 1) Portuguese Red Cross cover to Denmark has handstamp on front reading "Cruz Vermelha Portuguesa/Praca Do Comercio/Lisboa" and Lisbon Central P.O. cancel dated March 21, 1941. On the back side is: 1.) a red circular hand stamp "South Africa Red Cross Society", 2.) British censor P.C. 90 sealing tape and 3.) Munich censor sealing tape, hand stamp and examiner stamp (4162).



Fig. 2) Enclosed slip was printed on both sides and inserted by South African Red Cross. It is assumed that this letter was censored at South Africa Red Cross and the British "Opened by Examiner" sealing tape applied before it traveled from South Africa to Portugal in some sort of "ambulance cover" or packet.

UNION CENSORSHIP

Although this letter has been released, it should be noted that the only avenue open to the public to send communications to enemy or enemy-held occupied territory is through the intermediary of the South African Red Cross Society, Johannesburg. Neither remittances nor parcels are permitted.

Apply at any Post Office for further particulars.

Letters for Belgium, Germany, Holland, Luxemburg, Denmark, Norway can ONLY be sent through The South African Red Cross Society

P.O. Box 3266

(or, 77 de Villiers Street, Johannesburg)

under certain special conditions, particulars of which can be obtained from the Society or from any Post Office.

The Return of Memelland

by Jim Lewis

The provisions of the Treaty of Versailles required Germany to cede a strip of Baltic coastal territory in East Prussia containing the port city of Memel.

This territory came under French administration until January, 1923 when it was occupied by Lithuanian irregulars and claimed by Lithuania. To resolve this matter, the League of Nations held a Memel Conference in May 1924 which established an autonomous territory under Lithuanian sovereignty, the status being guaranteed by Britain and France.

In 1938, after completing the occupation of Sudetenland, Hitler communicated a secret 'Directive for the Armed Forces' on October 21st which initiated preparations for the liquidation of the remaining area of Czechoslovakia and occupation of the Memel district. An amendment to this directive on November 24th added preparations to enable the Free State of Danzig to be occupied by a surprise invasion made under the guise of a "quasi-revolutionary" situation. The troops to be employed for this purpose were not to be simultaneously earmarked for the occupation of Memel, so that both operations could, if necessary, take place simultaneously.

The OKW developed a plan for an attack on Memel from the sea and the Navy began training for the assault under the code name "Transport Exercise Stettin".

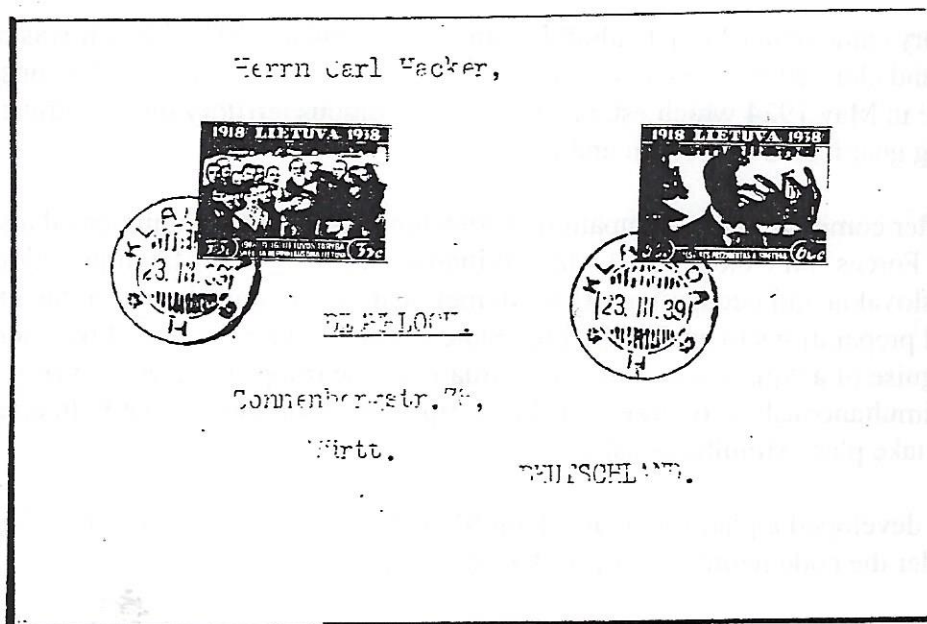
Meanwhile, the possibility for a political solution was being explored. On March 20, 1939, a week after the German occupation of Bohemia-Moravia, Germany's Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop presented an ultimatum to Lithuanian Foreign Minister Juozas Urbšys. In exchange for an immediate return of the Memel district, Germany offered to guarantee Lithuanian territorial integrity and provide special port facilities at Memel. The Lithuanian government was required to make a decision within four days, after which the matter would be settled by force.

The naval assault force left Swinemünde on March 22nd, accompanied by Hitler and Admiral Raeder aboard the pocket battleship "Deutschland". The attack proved to be unnecessary, however, as the Lithuanian Parliament ratified the transfer of Memel on the same day. A delegation was dispatched to Berlin and the Treaty signed during the evening of March 22nd. A state of emergency was declared throughout Lithuania as their troops and officials evacuated the Memel district.

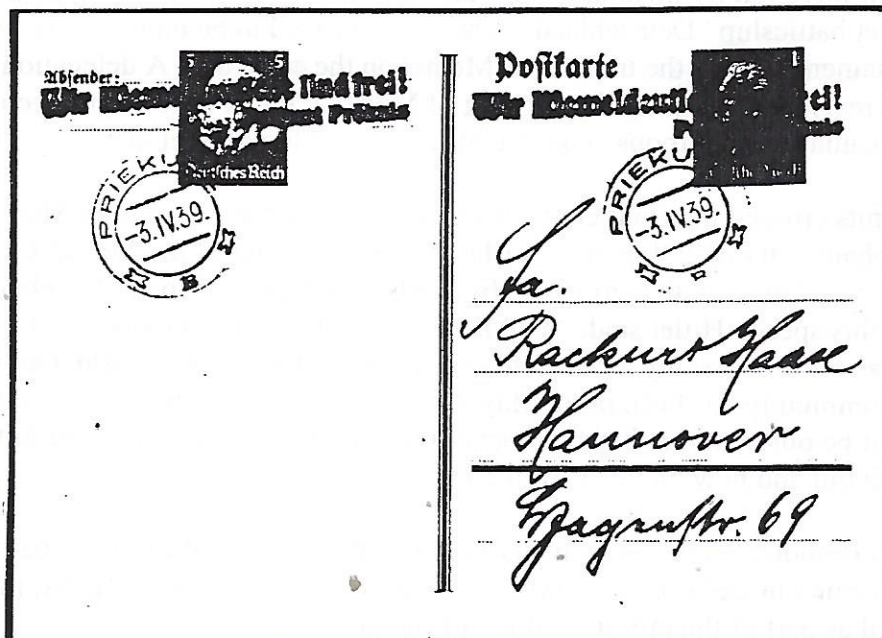
German army units crossed the frontier of East Prussia during the morning of March 23rd and Hitler made his triumphant entry at 2:30 p.m. After Dr. Newman, leader of the Memel Germans, formally announced the "Anschluss" with Germany, Hitler addressed the delirious Memel Germans at the Memel Stadttheater. In this speech Hitler said: "You have returned to a new Germany which is determined to master and shape its own destiny, even if this does not suit the outside world. Out of suffering and distress a new community has been born. May it be our will and decision that it should never break again, and may it be our oath that it should never bow before any foreign power in the world. I therefore greet you as both old and new members of the German nation."

The Memel Diet (Landtag) was officially dissolved on the evening of the same day and the hitherto autonomous government laid down its powers. Under a decree signed by Hitler, the Memel territory was incorporated as part of the province of East Prussia.

Postally, the news of Germany's demand inspired a privately prepared overprinting of four values of the current Lithuanian stamps by a pro-Nazi group. The overprint is of an "Elchschafel" (Elk antler) and the words "Memelland ist frei!". Although not sold over post office counters, the German authorities permitted these overprinted stamps to be used as postage until April 1, 1939. Shown below is a cover with overprinted stamps postmarked in Klaipeda (Lithuanian name for Memel) on March 23rd, the day of Hitler's arrival.



For a short period at the end of March and early April, mail posted in Memel received Lithuanian cancels along with a provisional German handstamp indicating the town name and various propaganda slogans as on the card shown below. This card has a Lithuanian cancel Priekule dated April 3, 1939 and handstamp "Wir Memeldeutsche sind Frei!/Postamt Prökuls" (We Memel Germans are free!/Post Office Prökuls).



Ed. Note: This article originally appeared in TRSG Bulletin 52 in July 1979.

To the End: The Volkssturm and the Atlantic Fortresses

by Jim Lewis

Germany reached it's maximum expansion in 1942. The defeat at Stalingrad was the beginning of the reversals which led to the destruction of the Reich. Withdrawals, encirclements and bridgeheads were difficult situations where supply and mail delivery was critical. Limits on mail delivery was accomplished by the admission stamps or, in some instances, by provisionals.

All of this has been discussed previously under the procedures for airmail and package deliveries. There remain two interesting areas which are the subjects of this article: The Volkssturm (People's Militia) and the isolation of Atlantic bases by the Allies.

A.) The Volkssturm: On October 18, 1944, the "Deutscher Volkssturm" was established and could draft all men between the ages of 16 and 60. With it's purpose the defense of the homeland, the Volkssturm was organized into "Gauen" under jurisdiction of a "Gauleiter" (District Leader). With little in the way of training and equipment, the Volkssturm units were used to shore up weak spots along the front.

The Volkssturm was not served by Feldpost offices and instructions for the routing of their mail are not known. As far as can be determined by examining existing Volkssturm mail, the procedure was to mark the mail with a "Dienststemple" (unit handstamp) which served as a postal cancel. These handstamps were not placed in the lower left corner of the cover as was normally done in the Feldpost system. Instead they appear in the upper right position in place of the cancellation and, when used with air mail permission stamps, were placed above the stamps. Sometimes the hand stamp "Frei Durch Ablosung Reich" (Free by Govt. Authority) is found, even on private mail. This mail was delivered by the Reichspost or the Feldpost, neither of which added any additional markings.

"We will never capitulate" The Volkssturm marching through Berlin on a gloomy day in 1944.



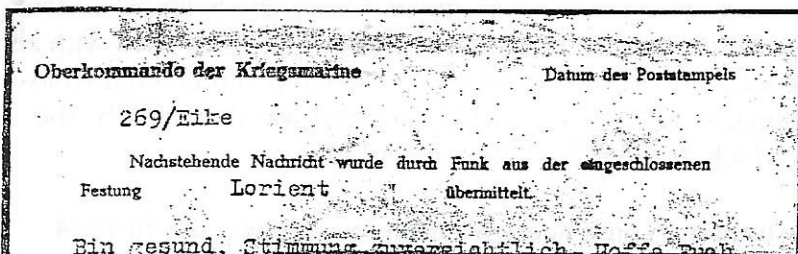


A typical Volksturm cancel with "Gau 23" above the eagle and unit identification "51. Bataillon" in lower portion of the circle.

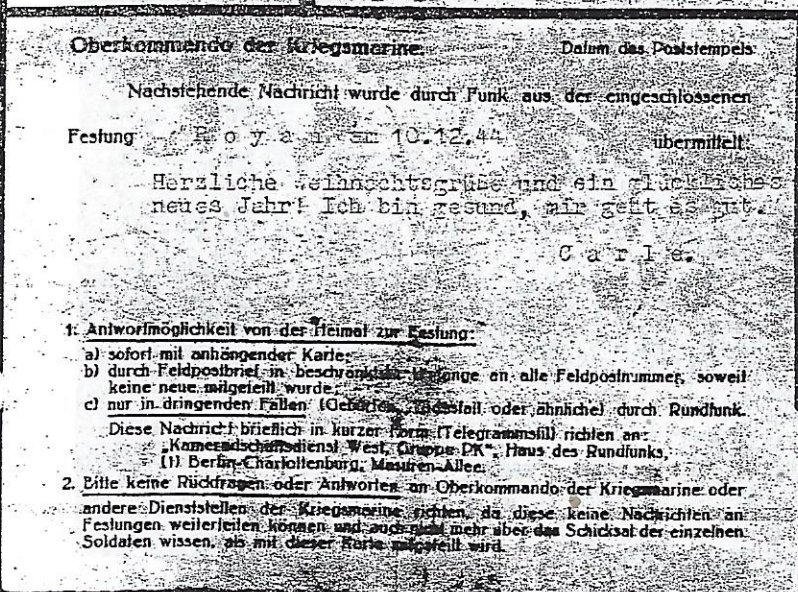
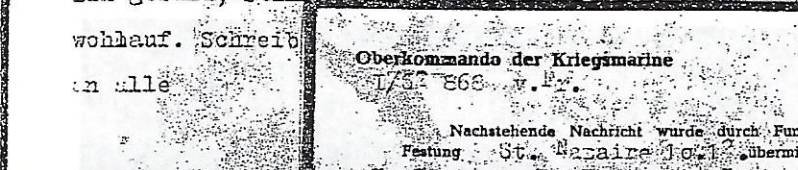
B.) The Atlantic Fortresses: After the successful invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944, the Allies moved into France and had occupied the entire northern section of the country by August. A second invasion on the Riviera and the subsequent link-up of the two forces resulted in the occupation of the entire country and became the basis for the move against Germany. During this period a number of German-held cities on the Atlantic coast became isolated and were declared fortresses. These included Dunkerque, Lorient, St. Nazaire, Royan and the Channel Islands.

With normal postal links severed, the main form of communication with the homeland was by the wireless. In Dunkerque, every member of the fortress garrison could send a radiogram once a month via the fortress radio station Dunkerque (formerly the radio station of the Pas de Calais naval command) to his closest relatives (parents or wives). Only short messages such as "I am well" or "I am wounded" were permitted.

These messages were received by the Naval radio station in Wilhelmshaven which forwarded them to the recipients on special "Funknachrichttenkarte" (Radio card) forms. There were also attempts to parachute mail into the fortresses at night but Allied air superiority resulted in the loss of most of the planes. References have been found which indicates that mail barrels from U-boats may have been tried but no such covers have been reported.



Radio cards containing brief messages from the fortresses (top to bottom) Lorient, St. Nazaire and Royan.



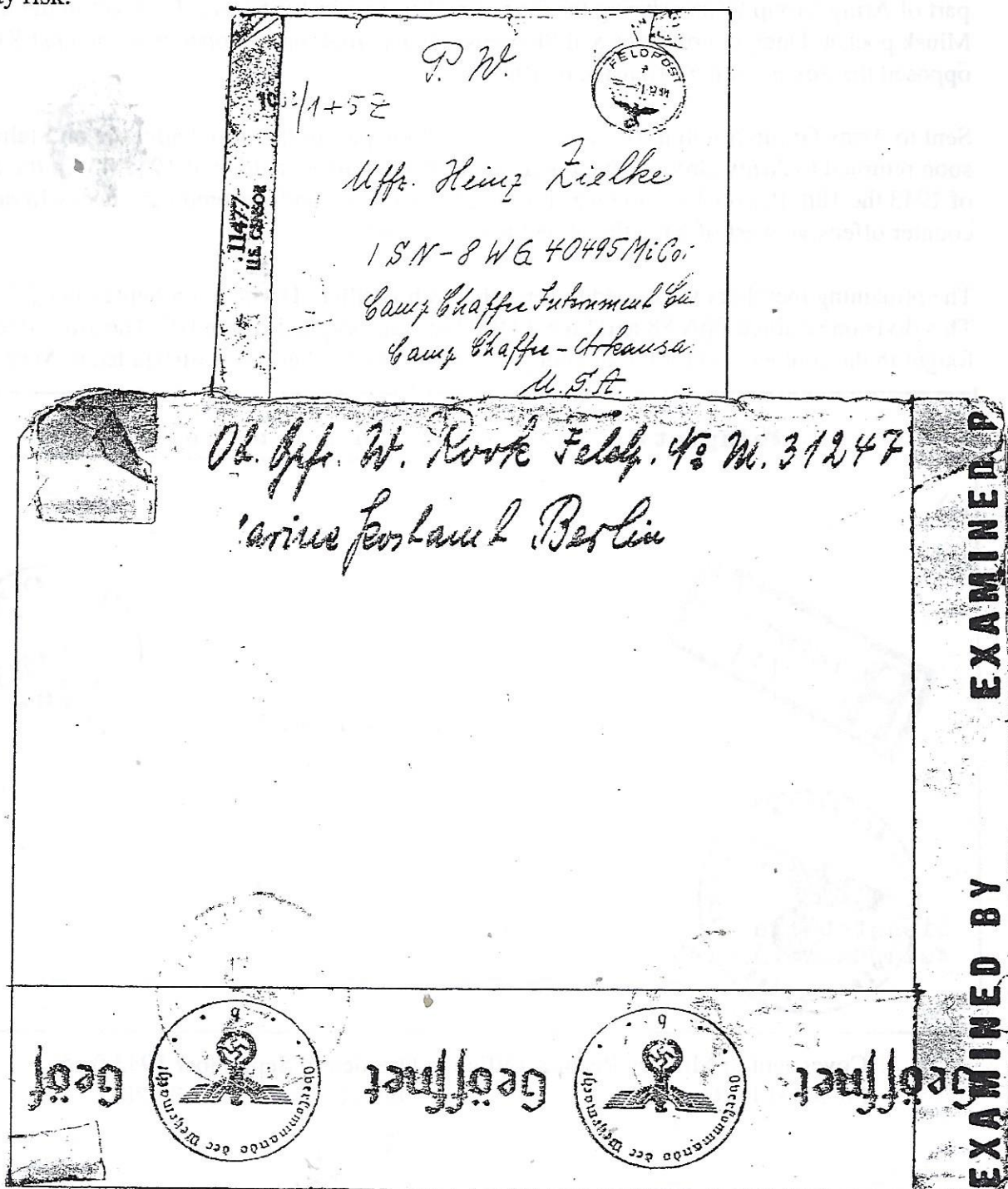
ED. Note: This article was first published in TRSG Bulletin # 51 in 1979.

Censorship

Feldpost to German POW in America

by Myron Fox

German censorship offices were also responsible for examining military mail sent to foreign countries. The Feldpost cover shown below (front side reduced in size) was sent in September 1944 to a German prisoner of war held in Camp Chaffee, Arkansas. The sender was a German sailor whose Feldpost No. M31247 is shown on backside. This was the coded address of 2. Batterie/ Marine Flak Abteilung 706 (Battery 2 of Naval Anti-Aircraft Battalion 706) which on this date was stationed in Svolveaer, Norway. The Berlin censor office sealing tape and hand stamps appear at bottom of cover while the U.S. censor tape is at right side. The U.S.A. did not allow members of their armed services to communicate with POWs as this was considered to be a security risk.



COMBAT DIVISION PROFILE:**18th Panzer Division**

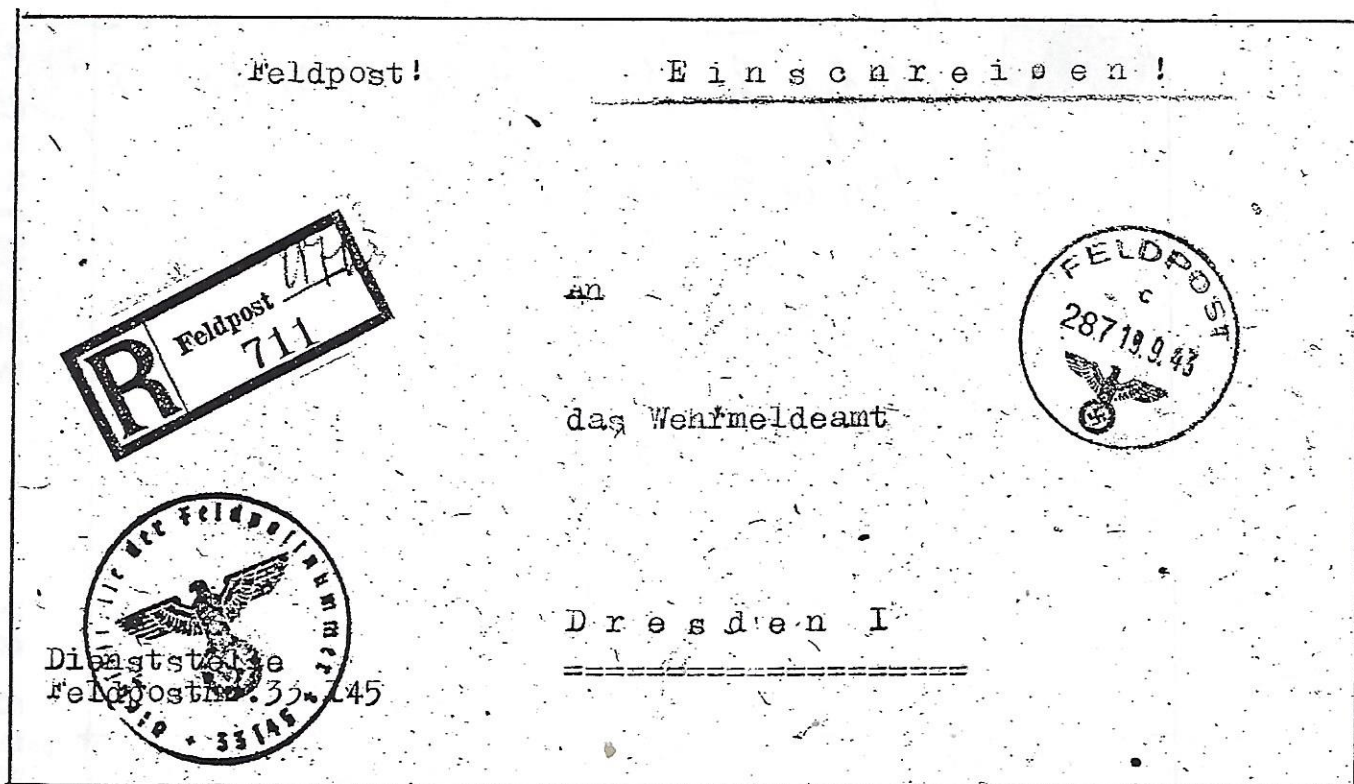
by Jim Lewis

POST OFFICE		REGIMENTS			AUXIL
TACT.	KENN	PANZER	GRENADIER	ARTY	UNITS
88	287	18	52	101	88

The 18th Panzer Division was formed in fall of 1940 as a result of Hitler's decision to create new armored divisions by weakening older Panzer and Motorized divisions. It received the 52nd and the 101st Motorized Regiments from the 4th and 14th Panzer Divisions. The P.O. was assigned Fp.# 47400 as a return address and Kenn 287 as a coded identity. The 18th Panzer Division was part of Army Group Center during the invasion of Russia in June 1941. It fought in the battles of Minsk pocket, Dneiper crossings and Smolensk. It also took part in operations against Kiev and opposed the Soviet winter offensive of 1941-42.

Sent to Army Group South in summer of 1942, it took part in the initial advance on Stalingrad but soon returned to Army Group Center and fought the defensive battles of 1942-43. In the autumn of 1943 the 18th Panzer Division was fighting around Kiev and suffered such heavy losses in the counter offensive west of Kiev that it had to be disbanded.

The remaining members were used to form the 18th Artillery Division on September 27, 1943. This division retained FpA 88 and Fp.# 47400 but was assigned Kenn 310. The artillery division fought in the southern sector but did not prove to be practical and was disbanded in May 1944.

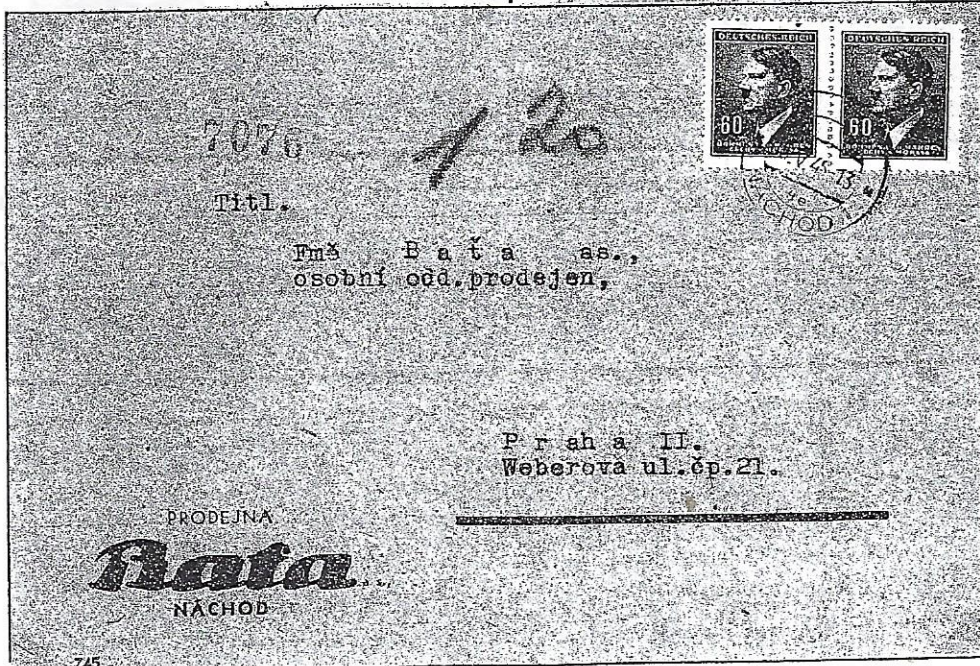
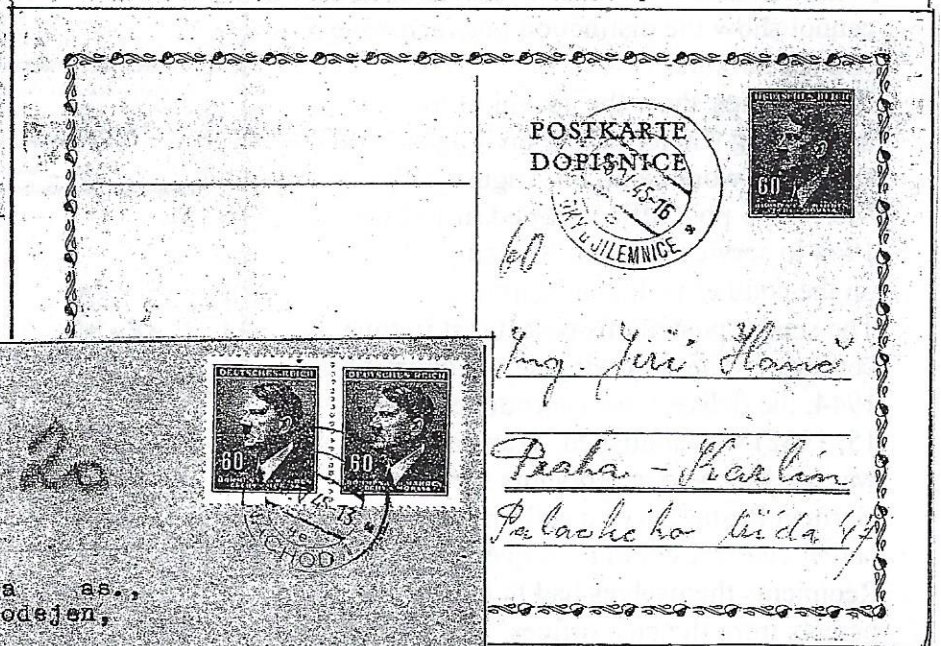
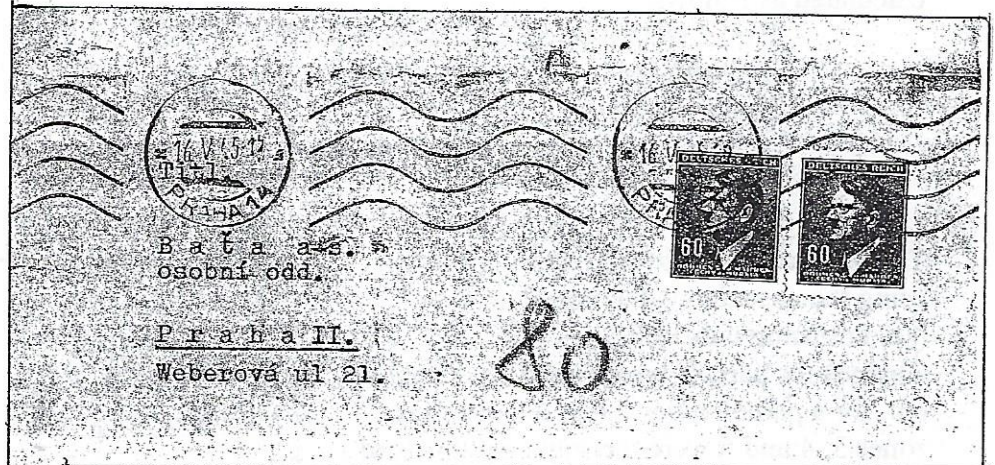


Cover sent to Military Records Office in Dresden in September 1943 from Fp. # 33145 (Co. 2, Panzer Aufklarungs Abtl. 18) via P.O. 88 (K-287).

Late Covers from the Protectorate

by Bob Ferguson

After Bohemia-Moravia became a protectorate of Germany in 1939, the Czech cancelling devices used in civil post offices were replaced with bi-lingual versions that had the town name in German at the top and in Czech at the bottom. Shown below are three items posted to Praha (Prag) in May 1945 that have definitive Hitler head stamps of the German occupation but cancels with the German language removed from the top section. These items were cancelled: (top) **Praha 14** on 16 May; (middle) **Roztoky u Jilemnice** on 26 May and (bottom) **Nachod 1** on 16 May. Does anyone know the circumstances under and/or dates when these changes to bi-lingual cancelling devices were made?



Third Reich Postal Rates

Parcel Fee Changes in August 1944

by Rex Dixon

Students of German World War II postal rates will probably be aware of some of the many changes and restrictions introduced, both as the result of international agreements and, later, of wartime difficulties. Until recently I was puzzled by the apparent failure to charge a delivery fee on parcels in the autumn of 1944. Up to August 12, 1944, charges were typically levied as shown on the card illustrated below that was made out for a parcel sent from Hamburg to a labor camp (Gemeinschaftslager I 36/3) in Marburg a/d Drau - Thesen. The total charge of 85 pfg was calculated as follows:

Parcel weight up to 5 Kg, zone 5 (over 750 Km)	0.60 pfg	Lütgens 121/5 (*)
Delivery fee	0.15 pfg	Lütgens 134
Insurance fee	0.10 pfg	Lütgens 124/4

	0.85 pfg	

The insurance fee covered up to 500 RM, using the unsealed value parcel service (i.e. not using wax seals).

Charges for parcels were based on distance but, for a parcel under 5 Kg, the rates for zones 3, 4 and 5 were the same, so this card cannot show the distinction between zone 5 and the far zone.

Back stamps show the arrival of the parcel in Marburg (Steierm.) 5/c on August 15th and at the work camp on August 24th.

Marburg 5 post office opened in 1943 or 1944 to service Thesen (Slovenian Tezno) on the southern edge of Marburg.

The sender posted this parcel just in time because on the following day, August 13, 1944, the delivery fee (introduced on Jan. 15, 1932) was abolished. Wartime chaos was causing severe problems for the German Postal Service and, in many towns, parcel delivery could no longer be maintained. Recipients themselves had to collect their parcels from the post offices. Rates were also greatly simplified and the five charge zones were reduced to two. The new "Near Zone" (up to 75 Km) was equivalent to the old zone 1 and the "Far Zone" covered the old zones 2 to 5, using the rates for the old zone 3.

(*) Rates found in "Postgebührenkatalog 1923 bis 1945" by Rainer Lütgens. ED Note: This article, originally published by Third Reich Study Group (U.K.), appears here with their permission

315 Hamburg 5

Absender: *Am Hof 4 12 844*

Besondere Vermerke des Absenders (a. Rückseite):
Marburg 200-16

An *Frau Fritz Kuhn*

Freigegebühr (pfg) **-85**

Postgewicht (kg) *4.1*

in *Marburg a/d Drau Thesen*
Gemeinschaftslager I 36/3
(Straße, Hausnummer, Postort, Postfach)

C 20 Din A 6