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The first official meeting of the Third Reich Study Group took place at the national GPS convention in Newark, New Jersey. There was not much publicity concerning the meeting, for we are still a young group. I felt that we should avoid the possibility of a thinly attended general gathering. Those who have participated in a GPS convention can attest to the fact that there are always a number of activities competing for members' time. A few of us, Jim Duffy, Sam Simon, Heinrich Peterson, Myron Fox, Drew Nicholson, Chris Hunt, and myself did get together. Bud Hennig also dropped in during the meeting.

Although many plans were discussed, probably the most important result was that many of us became personally acquainted for the first time after having had extensive correspondence. There is a good deal of other news for the Study Group membership; so I shall leave the convention meeting at this point. First on the agenda is an announcement. Mr. John Painter has resigned as a Director of the Study Group. Fortunately, we have a number of people active in the Study Group these days; and so, hopefully, we can continue to progress, despite the loss of John's contribution.

The increasing participation by members is reflected by the announcement of still another subgroup. This will deal with concentration camp mail and is to be led by Mr. Sam Simon, 80 Bruce St., Younkers, New York 10705 and Mr. Arnold Shay, 205 Haverford Road, Wynnewood, Penna. 19151. In this connection, I should mention that our first slide talk is to be compiled on the subject of KL mail. Funds are accumulating nicely for this slide talk. Each time a member pays an extra dollar to become a "Contributing Member", Bob Houston segregates it in a special account to finance slide talks, handbooks, etc.

Speaking of financial affairs reminds me that dues must be paid by February 15, 1969. Most or all members have received three Bulletins, including this one, without charge. Dues, however, must be imposed to get us through 1969. As noted in our last Bulletin, there is a two-level payment schedule. "Members" pay one dollar and "Contributing Members" pay two dollars, the dollar being a contribution. We need that extra dollar, especially this year when we are organizing the Study Group on a firm basis. Please do send your dues as promptly as possible to Mr. Robert Houston, 11 Yorktown Drive, Clark, New Jersey 07066.

Benjamin R. Beede, Director.

Abstracts (German Occupation Issues)
by Prof. Marion L. Miller

- (1) Die Postwertzeichen während der Deutschen Besetzung Ukraine 1941/1944. Deutschland-Sammler, Feb. 1954, pp. 22-26; Deutschland-Sammler, Mar 1954, pp. 39-43.

The two-part article by Federal Inspector of Bridges Eberhard Keller pertaining to the Postal Issues in the Ukraine during the German occupation provides some interesting historical background to the study of occupation postal issues. In the first part, entitled "Forerunners of Deutsche Dienstpost", Inspector Keller discusses the chain of command, official procedures in establishing postal districts, and problems connected with organization in the occupied areas of the Ukraine. Hitler head values from 1 to 80 Pfg. with overprint "Ukraine" had been designated for the whole of the Ukraine, but severe shortages in personnel, as well as difficulties in transportation and other problems necessitated other solutions with regard to the postal service. Inspector Keller then discusses these problems and the measures taken, namely the issuance of locals in the three cities of Sarny, Alexanderstadt, and Wosnessensk as typical for outlying areas until such time as a regular official mail service could be established. Each area, with the exception of Sarny, where reference is made to Michel, for further information, is dealt with in detail. To orient the reader a map of the Ukraine and surrounding territories is included.

Abstracts (1), continued.

The second part of the article, Inspector Keller devotes to measures taken with suspension of Deutsche Dienstpost service after the German retreat in early 1944 and in the following months in the Ukraine. Much more detailed information regarding the stamps themselves is contained in this part than in the first, such as printing officies, numbers of stamps per sheet, color, perforations, numbers issued in each value, etc., although some historical background is included. Two detailed maps of South and North Ukraine are also contained in this section. Reference is made several times to Michel. Both sections are worthy of consideration, for they shed a great deal of light on the postal history of German occupation issues during the Second World War.

- (2) Lokalausgaben in Nordrussland 1941-42. Deutschland-Sammler, May 1956, pp. 76-79.

Two interesting items with regard to German Occupation Philatelic History are contained in an article of the May 1956 issue of Deutschland-Sammler by Dr. H. Schulz, entitled "Local Issues in North Russia 1921-1942". In the first, entitled "District Courier Mail of Ljady", Dr. Schulz discusses the unique postal system devised by the district commander in Ljady for payment of indigenous couriers conveying orders to various Russian officials within the district, using 1 Pfg. values of the Hindenburg and Hitler regular series, overprinted Ljady and surcharged 60 K(opek). Although it was officially forbidden in the fall of 1941 to surcharge German postal issues, these values were used from 1941 to 1943 for courier mail, as the system contributed greatly to the logistic support of the German forces in that area.

In the second item, entitled "The Local Issues of Luga", Dr. Schulz describes in detail the attempt of the field commander of Luga to establish a postal system in that city, utilizing captured postal stationery and Russian stamps of the workers and peasants regular series purchased from Estonian postal authorities. Types of overprints and surcharges, reasons for the surcharge, as well as cancellations prepared, detailed information regarding attempts to gain official permission to use the issues -- which, incidentally, was refused by higher authorities -- and their disposal by sale to interested philatelists, as prepared but not used issues, are also discussed. Dr. Schulz also notes that forged cancellations do exist. Illustrations of both the Ljady and Luga prepared issues accompany the text. An intriguing sidelight for those interested in German occupation issues.

- (3) Ukraine Reply Card. Der Sammlerdienst, Heft 15 (1967), p. 860.

F. A. Beyer, Chief of the editorial staff of the "New Postal Stationery Catalog", has verified the genuiness of a Hitler Reply Card with 6 - 6 Pfg. values and overprinted "Ukraine". According

Abstracts (3) continued.

to Beyer, only 20 copies from a packet of 100 of the reply card were brought back to Germany by the wartime chief of the post office in Rowno. What happened to the remaining copies as well as the number sold in the Ukraine is unknown. The West German Philatelic Agency, says Beyer can provide few details in regard to the card.

- (4) Ukraine Reply Card. Deutsche Zeitung für Briefmarkenkunde, Nr. 6/1967, p. 1034.

A somewhat longer article pertaining to the reply card overprinted "Ukraine" with 6 - 6 Pfg. values is that of K. Höltershinken in the above named philatelic journal. Having corresponded with the wartime chief of the post office in Rowno, Höltershinken offers more information about the card, when it was issued, where it was printed, and suggests reasons why it has remained unknown for more than 20 years since the war. Höltershinken has in his possession the only known postally used copy of the card, and illustration of which appears with the article. Since Hitler stamps were overprinted "Ostland" as well as "Ukraine" the author raises the question of whether reply cards overprinted "Ostland" also existed and requests collectors of postal stationery to check their collections for such a card, as he considers the Ukraine reply card to be one of the true rarities of the Second World War, if not the greatest item of rarity in postal stationery.

- (5) Five Values Prepared for the German Occupation of Russia, 1943, but not Issued. Deutsche Zeitung für Briefmarkenkunde, Nr. 22/1959, p. 1499.

The discovery of five commemorative values (50K, 1-, 2-, 4-, 10R) prepared for use in German-occupied Russia is reported in the above mentioned journal by Ing. Fischer and Sanwald Donauwörth. A detailed description of each value is given, such as size, perforations, gum, type of printing, number per sheet, and paper, as well as information pertaining to the order commissioning the stamps. An illustration of each value is also included with the article. cf. German Postal Specialist XIX, Nr. 7, pp. 318-319.

Professor Miller is one of the first contributors to the new Third Reich Study Group Bulletin (in addition to the many articles already supplied by TRSG Director Ben Beede). The abstracts Prof. Miller took the time to prepare are not only essential for the student of WW II German postal history, but are also useful references for those members interested in local issues, some aspects of the Deutsche Dienstpost, and of course postal stationery. Thank you, Professor. I hope others will follow your example. (Ed.)

THIRD REICH STUDY GROUP INFORMATION BUREAU

The study group information bureau answers a wide variety of questions concerning all aspects of Third Reich philately. The bulletin will carry as a regular feature some of the more interesting questions and answers. All members are invited to submit any questions and problems of their own along with 30¢ to cover postage and handling to:

Donald L. Boese, Director
Third Reich Information Bureau
117 Center Street
Mankato, Minnesota 56001

A recent inquiry from Minneapolis requested information on a 1940 Wiesbaden cancel. The cancel pictures an eagle and sword (Bochman 51) with the inscription "Wiesbaden - Waffenstillstandskommission" (Armistice Commission).

(1) The Armistice Commission was set up by Hitler just after the signing of the Armistice with France on June 21, 1940. The primary function of the Commission was to deal with questions concerning the military in unoccupied France. Wiesbaden was chosen as the location for the headquarters of the Commission as this was the city the French used for their military authority in Germany after 1918.

The French were allowed an "independent" army of about 100,000 men. The Armistice Commission was responsible for the close enforcing of the numerous restrictions on weapons, responsibilities, etc., of the "Armistice Army of France". The Commission, headed by General Stülpnagel, particularly relied on teams of inspectors who toured unoccupied France regularly and sent their full and detailed reports back to Wiesbaden. The Germans and French did not sign a peace treaty and consequently the Commission was in operation until the Liberation in 1944. The Wiesbaden post office used this cancel up to that time so therefore it is frequently found on mail of that period.

There is a good deal of information on the Commission since part of its archives were recovered after the war. The French government has published a small number of documents on their relations with the Commission, however they are planning to hold the bulk of the archives from publication until 1995. Parades and Politics at Vichy by Robert Paxton, Princeton, 1966, has many references to the activities of the Armistice Commission. (Information from Donald L. Boese).

COMMENT: I was most interested to read the discussion of the Armistice Commission. There was a fine article on the philatelic aspects of the Commission on pages 29-30 of the June, 1965 issue of Germania, the journal of the Germany & Colonies Philatelic Society in Great Britain. Letter seals and souvenir postcards are described in some detail by Mr. A. Cowey. Mr. Cowey tells us that mail from the Commission (German element) was sent through the Feldpost system. (Benjamin R. Beede).

INFORMATION BUREAU continued.

I have a "Feldpostkarte" with the Wiesbaden cancel as described by Don Boese, dated Sept. 17, 1940. A "Briefstempel" (official seal) also appears on this card; (a 34mm. circle with the "Hoheitszeichen" (national insignia) in the center with the word "Briefstempel" below; surrounding the insignia - the words "Deutsche Waffenstillstandskommission * Wiesbaden *"). Ed.

(2) A GPS member from Missouri sent an attractive cover to the Info Bureau, franked with a block of Hitler-head semi-postal stamps, Michel 672. However, he had purchased it cataloged as gum variety 672 y. He wanted to know how to determine how an on-cover, or used, stamp could be designated as "x" or "y" (in this case the "y" variety catalogs at a higher price).

This question stumped our study group members and so the question was referred to the GPS Expertising Committee. The answer: "It is the opinion of the Committee that it is impossible to determine the "Gummiriffelung" (gum ribbing) on stamps on cover and in most cases also on used copies. In many instances it is even difficult to tell on unused copies." (Information from Dr. Werner M. Bohne).

As Bulletin No. 14 is being run off on this first day of January 1969, I can reiterate the statements of last year as our New Year's resolutions, that we intend to be progressive and informative. We hope that you will see these characteristics in Bulletins 12, 13, and 14. But rather than dote on last years comments, I would like to give a preview of part of the April Bulletin: a financial report will be published, and once each successive year we will carry this very necessary portion of study group business; there will be a new membership list based on the membership list of 1967. Old members need not resubmit their interests, unless they have changed. New members and those whose interests have changed should submit the necessary information to me, or to Bob Houston, when they pay their dues. And speaking of dues, this is the last "gratis" bulletin we will send out.

I believe we have submitted evidence of our desire to progress and reach all levels of TRSG interests. We need your assistance, through articles, commentary, research, etc. This is your bulletin and your study group. Support them.

John Painter, due to the press of business, had to resign as a Co-Director of the TRSG. Recently, John collaborated with Ben Beede, Alfred Harper and Roger Szymanski on the specialized study on "Germany's Foreign Legions", which was published in the German Postal Specialist. This is but one of his contributions to the study group and the GPS. I met John in Baltimore in 1962 at a GPS convention where upon hearing of my interest in WW II Feldpost, John encouraged me to join the Third Reich Study Group. On the behalf of the study group, I would like to say thanks and best wishes for success in your profession, John.

To everyone, a Happy and Prosperous, as well as a successful philatelic New Year. Jim Duffy, Editor.