# Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland

by Jim Lewis

(Part 2)

### 3.) Dispatch of Dienstpost Mail

Mail dispatch was an especially difficult problem because of the vastness of the area. Although war damage in the Baltic states, in contrast to White Russia, had not been severe, retreating Russians had caused considerable damage to rail lines & bridges. The first Dienstpost dispatches were sent by freight trains running to the border stations of Eydtkau and Memel. The rail line between Riga and Tilsit was quickly restored and a courier express service begun to transport Dienstpost mail between Germany and the towns of Schaulen, Mitau and Riga. Other rail lines were gradually repaired, a difficult task because the narrow gauge tracks, often single track for long stretches, were overloaded by military transports to the Front. The rail lines were covered by ice and snow during the severe winter of 1941/42, slowing mail transports considerably. Only very gradually could postal trains operate on a regular schedule but even then service could be halted for days due to snow drifts.

Initially freight cars were used as improvised mail cars. After their improvement and modification to narrow gauge track, numerous confiscated mail cars were pressed into service. Ten of these were operated only by German postal employees, five by German and indigenous employees and fifty two only by indigenous employees. Railroad personnel carried sealed mail bags on six additional stretches. All rail lines and mail processing was under the jurisdiction of the "Bahnpostamt Riga" (Railway Post Office Riga), which had its own cancelling devices.

Map of the Ostland area shows the borders of the three Baltic states and the major cities. Note that the eastern border began in the north at Narva and ran south through Lake Peipus. The area of White Russia was headquartered in Minsk and comprised the eastern Polish territories occupied by Russia in September, 1939, and Russian territories to the northeast of the Polish frontier.
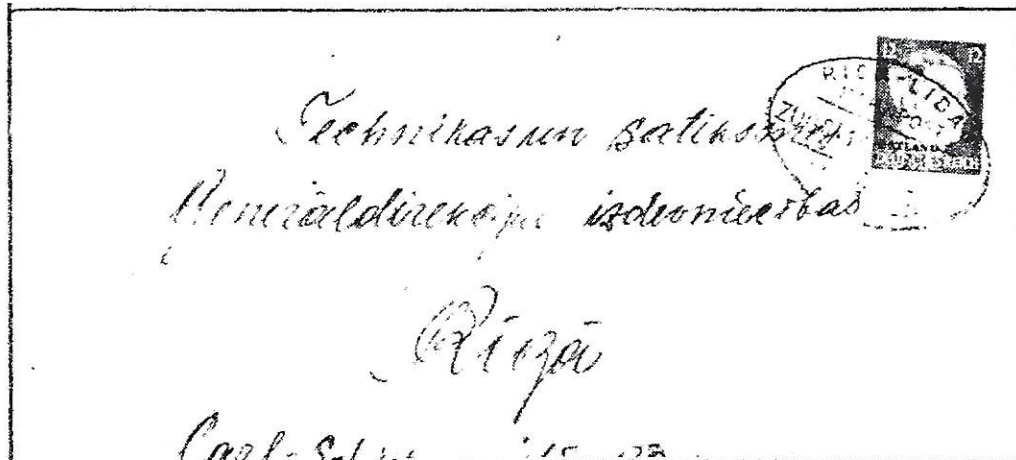
Fig. 7) German style oval rail-road cancel of the Riga-Libau line on cover sent to Riga. Note train number "Zug 8419" on date line.
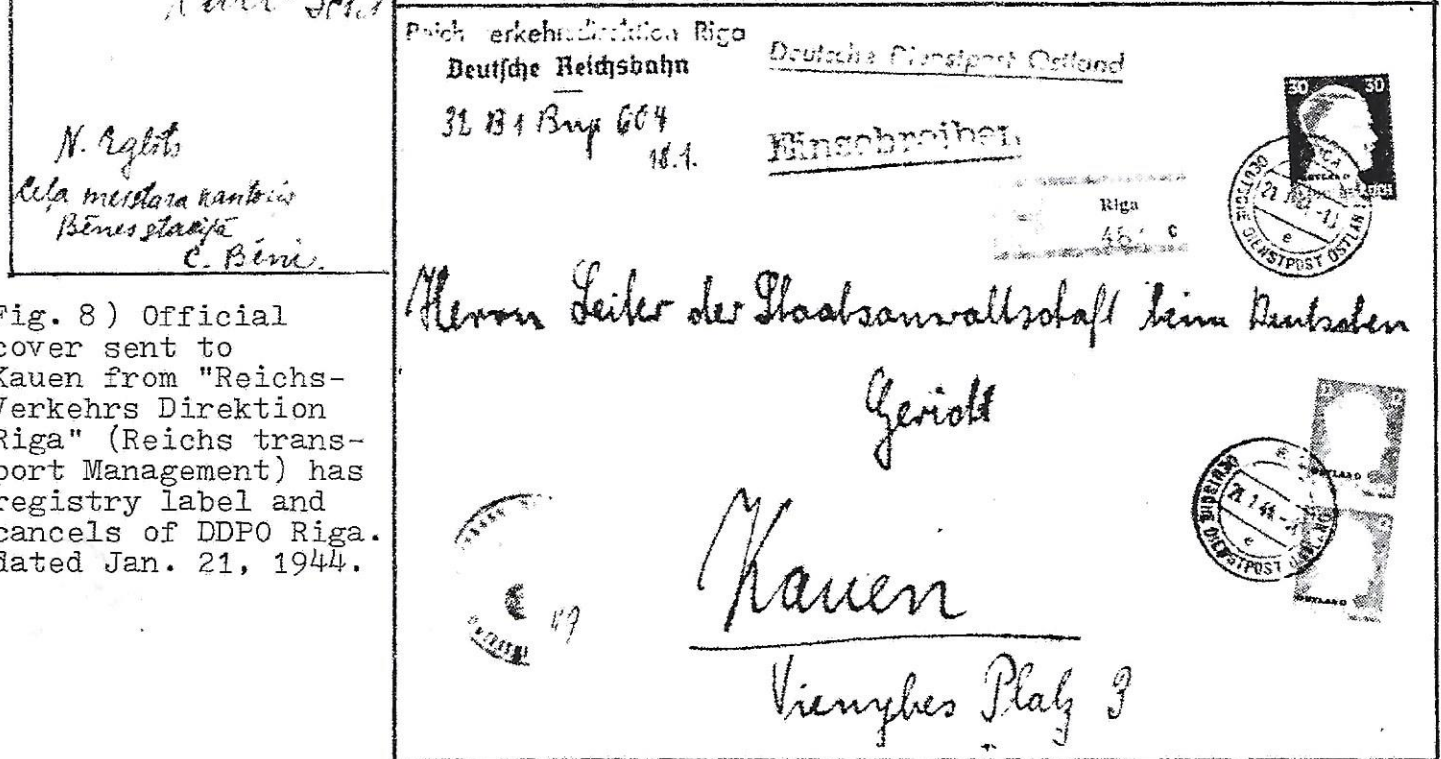


Fig. 8) Official cover sent to Kauen from "Reichs-Verkehrs Direktion Riga" (Reichs transport Management) has registry label and cancels of DDPO Riga. dated Jan. 21, 1944.

In addition to raillines, there were boat connections on the Memel River between Georgenburg and Kauen and to the Estonian islands of Dagö, Moon and Worms. which were used to ferry mail. No special cancels are known to have been used for such boat mail.

As the railroad could not possible handle all mail dispatch, a network of motor transport routes was gradually established with a few German postal buses, cars from private transportation companies and captured Russian motor pools. This network bridged the large overland stretches between Eydtkau, Kauen, Riga, Tilsit, Memel and Riga, servicing the Dienstpost offices along these routes as well as civil post offices. Besides 54 postal bus lines which were also used for passenger traffic (a total of 3,324 Kilometers), there were six roads (222 Km.) used soley for postal communications. The central points for repair of postal vehicles were postal bus offices established in Reval, Riga and Kauen.

For rapid delivery of Dienstpost mail (including private mail of firms, etc.) airmail service became available in 1942 with a route from Berlin-Danzig-Königsberg-Riga-Reval-Helsinki. Kauen was added to the route in 1943 as an intermediate station.

This airmail service was provided by the German Lufthansa four times a week and could deliver mail to Germany in a matter of hours instead of the 2-3 days required for mail sent by the railroads. This service was not generally used for domestic Dienstpost and civil mail within the Ostland area as surface transportation was deemed adequate.
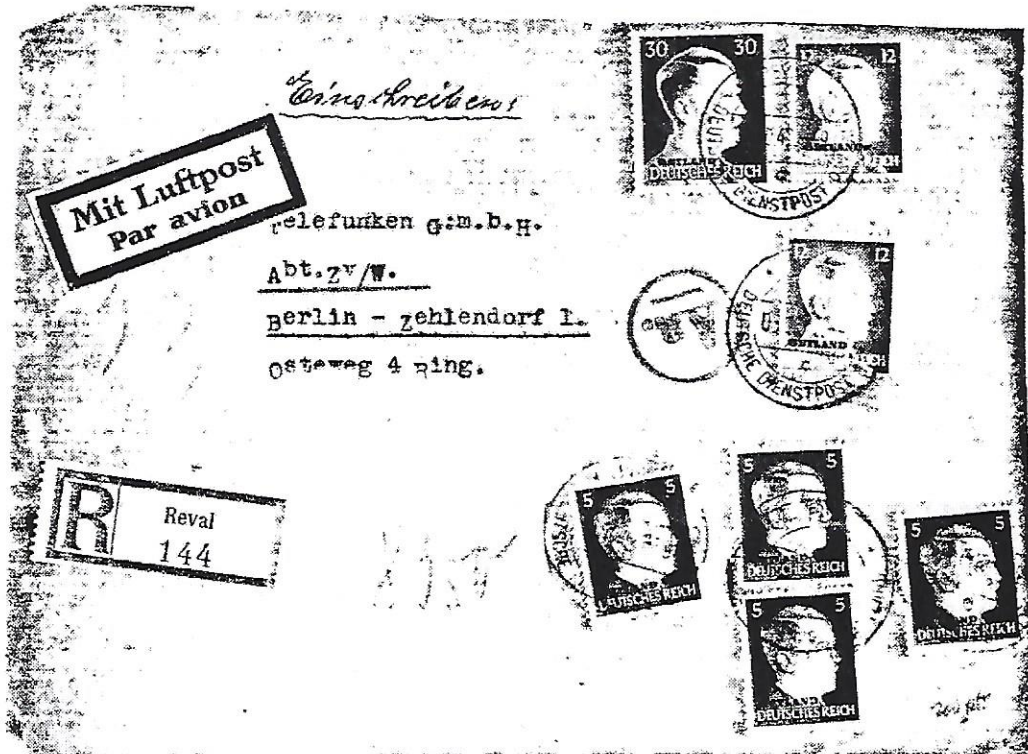


Fig.9 ) Registered airmail cover to Berlin posted at the DDPO office in Reval, Estonia in Oct. '42. Note "Aa" hand stamp applied by Königsberg censor office to denote that letter was passed unopened.

## C.) Dissolution of the Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland 1944/45

The Soviet offensives during 1944 led to a shortening of the northern sector of the Eastern front. The loss of Pleskau on July 23, 1944 and of Narva four days later led to Finland withdrawing from the war. Army Group North was pressed back until the front in mid-September was a serpentine coastal strip 70 to 80 miles in width and over 400 miles long. By October 16th Army Group North was holding defensive positions on the Courland peninsula. Soviet forces had overrun Lithuania and were advancing on East Prussia. The breakthrough in Lithuania prevented an orderly closing of Dienstpost offices. They were simply overrun and many postal officials and employees fell in battle against Red army or partisan forces.

The office of the General Postal Commissioner was withdrawn to Köslin in Pomerania  in the fall of 1944 after Soviet forces had entered Estonia and Latvia. The rapidly dwindling number of Dienstpost offices received their directions via land routes from Köslin and, when this was no longer possible, by sea via East Prussia. The most important documents, stamp supplies, money supplies of the civil authorities and the valuable stamp collection of the General Post Commissioner Ostland were shipped from Libau to Berlin in Oct. 1944, packed in 70 sacks and crates. Among this shipment was the money supplies of the post offices and of the German Notenbank Ostland. Whatever became

of this material is unknown, nothing remains in the archives of the Minister of Posts in the German Federal Republic.

The Dienstpost offices in White Russia were overrun during a massive Soviet offensive launched on June 22, 1944 which quickly smashed Army Group Center. By the end of July '44 the Red Army had recaptured White Russia and stood on the Polish border.

In the north the remaining Dienstpost offices in the Courland peninsula ("Kurland" pocket) shared facilities with the Feldpost in Libau. Although completly cut off from Germany by land, mail service was still possible by sea and air. The Dienstpost quickly exhausted their supplies of the most commonly used 6 Pfg. and 12 Pfg. stamps. The remaining 5, 10 and 20 Pfg. stamps were overprinted for 6 Pfg. while brown Feldpost parcel concession stamps were overprinted 12 Pfg. These overprints were done at a printing firm in Libau and were for non-military use within the pocket.

The need to restrict Feldpost sendings to Germany led to the issuance of special Feldpost cards ("Kurland-Schnellbrief") with bi-sected green Feldpost parcel concession stamps tied by the unit seal of the Libau Feldpost office. (Fig.10).

The Ostland offices were the only Dienstpost offices to remain in operation until the final surrender of the Third Reich on May 8, 1945. The Dienstpost Alpenvorland and Adria in northern Italy ceased operations with the capitulation of the Italian front on April 30, 1945.

Since the end of 1941, German officials of the Reichscommisariat Ostland received advanced education and training at the National Socialist "Ordensburg" (castle of the order) Krossinsee near Falkenburg in Pomerania. This area became a pocket of resistance when Soviet forces invaded Pomerania. Farther north, the relocated headquarters of the General Post Commissioner Ostland in Köslin fell to the Soviets on March 5, 1945. The fate of its archives has never been discovered.

Fig.10) Kurland-Scnellbrief card with green parcel concession stamp bisected and tied by unit handstamp of Feldpost-Leit-stelle Libau was used to limit mail to Germany. This office also used another handstamp with their 5-digit Feldpost number 17092.
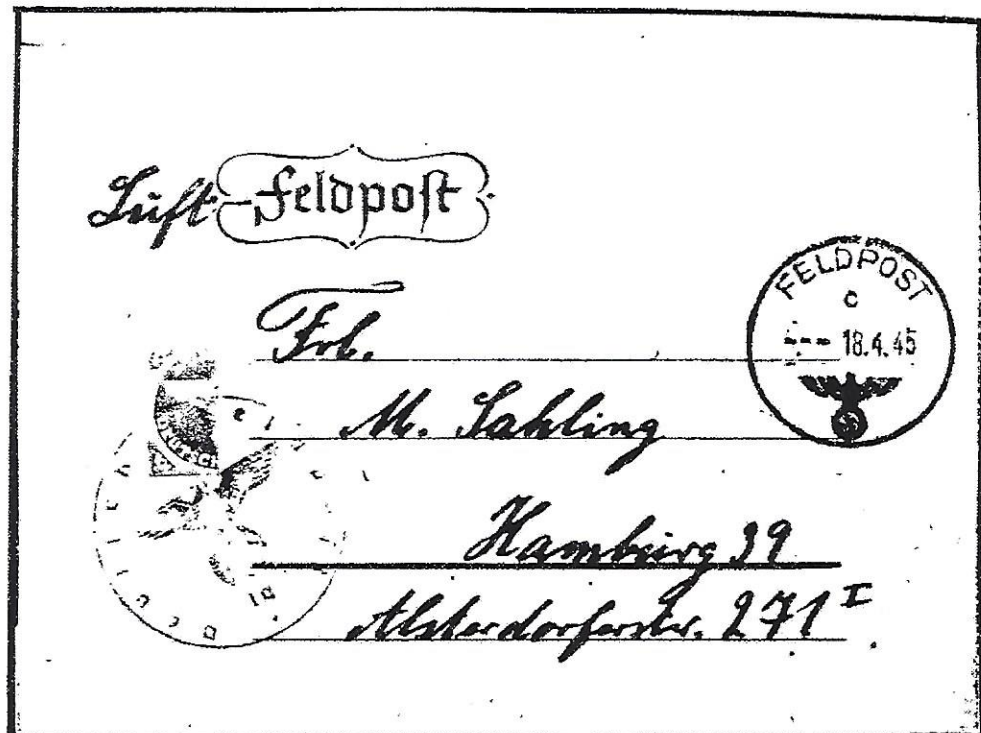
D.) Deutsche Post Ostland

   1.) Development and organization

     Soon after the German occupation had begun it became evident that a postal system was urgently needed for the Baltic peoples. Once the larger post offices were converted to Dienstpost offices, a civilian postal system was established utilizing the smaller post offices.

In Lithuania a limited civil postal service between towns with Dienst-post offices was permitted after Sept. 1, 1941. By Sept. 9th, numerous additional Lithuanian post offices employing their former personnel were reopened as branch offices of the Dienstpost. Finally, former Lithuanian postal agencies ("Postagenturen") and auxiliary postal agencies ("Posthilfstellen") were re-established in October 1941, bringing the entire Lithuanian postal service under the control of German postal authorities.

In Latvia the indigenous postal service was resumed during July and August '41 under the former Latvian "Landespost" administration. All Latvian postal institutions were wholey annexed by the Deutsche Post on Oct. 1, 1941. After Nov. 1, 1941 all smaller Latvian post offices were formally annexed as branch offices of the Dienstpost.

In Estonia the establishment of the Deutsche Post took much longer than in Lithuania and Latvia because heavy fighting took place in the northern areas for several months. It was not until December 1941 that Estonia was declared a civil administrative area under a Reichs Commissioner in Reval. Initially those Estonian post offices situated in the districts of individual Dienstpost offices came under German supervision in January 1942. Annexation of the "Landespost" offices was completed in late Feb. '42 with the establishment of the Dienstpost office in Arensburg on the island of Oesel.

In White Russia only the German Dienstpost operated during the entire occupation. As noted earlier, there were no indigenous personnel as in the Baltic countries to administer a civil postal system. The limited amount of civilian mail was therefore handled by the Dienstpost. There were "Hilfstellen" auxiliary postal agencies at Sowchosen and Kolchosen which were under German agricultural managers charged with improving agricultural production in these areas. The limited civilian mail was delivered to the nearest Dienstpost office.

The final organization was detailed in the April 24, 1942 decree of the Reichs Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories concerning administration of the Post and Telegraph in the Civil Administration Ostland. The "Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland" was administratively re-named "Deutsche Post Ostland" with the following organization:

    a) General Postal Comissioner for all of the Reichscommissariate Ostland with headquarters in Riga, Latvia.

    b) Four Postal Commissioners for the General Commissariates Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and White Russia.

    c) Eightyfour Dienstpost offices, branch offices and postal stations directly under the General Postal Commissioner.

    d) Six hundred and sixteen branch offices for civilian mail managed by indigenous postal personnel. These were former "Landespost" offices.

e) 1903 postal stations with telephone connections.

f) 3404 small auxiliary postal stations with and without telephone.

Note: a to c had exclusivly German personnel, d to f were managed by indigenous personnel.

Administratively, the branch offices were directly under the Dienstpost offices and also received their guidelines from them. Postal stations were either under the jurisdiction of post offices or branch offices and operated according to the manner of postal stations in the old Reich. Finally, auxiliary postal stations were under the jurisdiction of individual branch offices or postal stations.

In addition to those indigenous postal employees which were absorbed by the Dienstpost offices, a large number of employees were required to handle the volume of civilian mail in the Deutsch Post network. For example, the Riga Dienstpost office with all of its affiliated offices and stations employed over 1,000 Reichs Germans and Baltic personnel by 1944.

The growth and complexity of the postal network required experienced postal inspectors to regulate business and financial administration. In 1942 such positions were filled by experienced German inspectors who served directly under the General Postal Commissioner in Riga. By 1943 a number of senior Latvian postal officials were promoted to these positions.

To reduce the burden of the General Postal Commissioner Ostland, an administrative office was established under German supervision but staffed with indigenous personnel selected from the better educated and more experienced employees of the former Baltic central postal administrations.

2.) General Postal Service of the Deutsche Post Ostland.

   a.) Establishment and Postal Rates.

        In Sept. '41 indigenous civilians in Lithuania were permitted to send postcards and letters weighing up to 250 grams. Such mail was delivered to addressees by indigenous mail carriers. Registered and Printed Matter mail were permitted after Oct. 1, 1941 and letter weight was increased to a maximum of 1000 grams. A similar situation prevailed in Latvia after local post offices were incorporated into the Deutsche Post network. Postal business ("Postsache") and limited parcel post mailings were subsequently permitted so that by Dec. 1, 1941 the postal service in both of these areas nearly matched that available to Reich Germans.

In Estonia the Estonian Post handled a provisional mail service until the end of 1941. After annexation of the Estonian post by the Deutsche Post Ostland, postal service was expanded until by February 1942 it matched that available in the other Baltic areas. One exception was parcel post which was not begun until April 15, 1942.

As noted earlier, the overprinted Russian stamps, liberation issues and local post issues were invalidated by the German authorities.

Postal rates of the German mail service in the Baltic region, after dissolution of the "Landesposts", were the same as in Germany proper. These rates were announced in an Aug. 16, 1941 decree of the Reichs Post Ministry pertaining to the newly occupied Eastern territories. A reduced rate for local mail was not introduced until July 1, 1943.
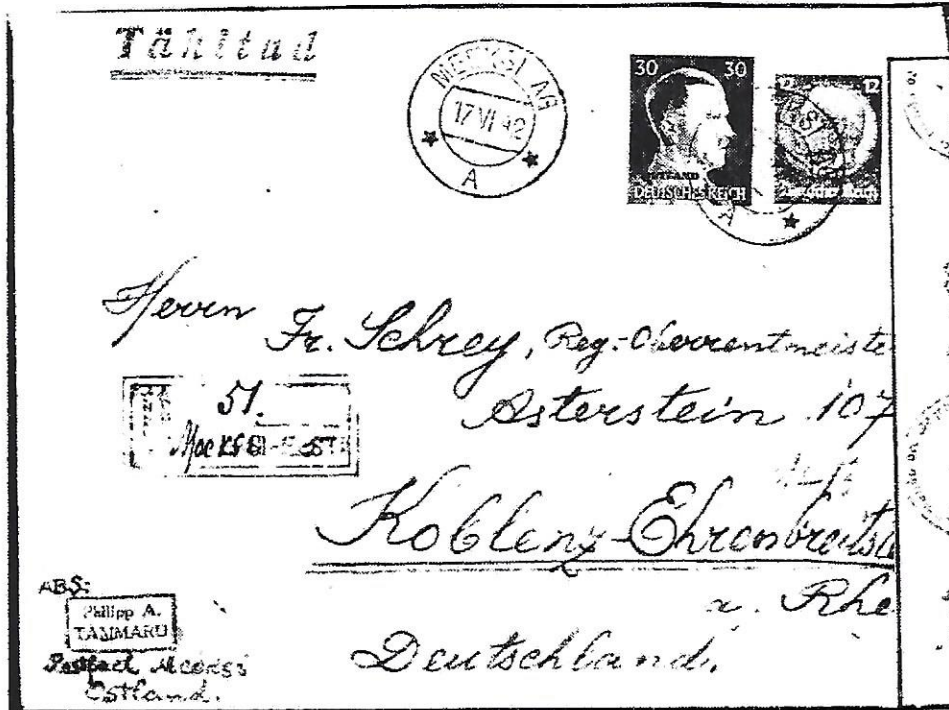
Fig. 11 ) Civilian registered cover to Germany sent via post office in Meeksi, Estonia in June '42 has hand-stamped registry "label".

Limited mail service to Germany proper was permitted in Oct. '41 and expanded during the remainder of that year. Civilian mail could be sent to other German occupied territories after Feb. '42.

In December 1942 the German Postal Ministry introduced a Zone Number ("Leitzahl") system to serve as a sort of zip code for postal districts in Germany and the occupied territories. The Reichs Commissariat Ostland was assigned "Postleitzahl" 5c.

b.) Mail Dispatch

The situation previously described in the Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland section also applied here. The railroad postal system was slowly expanded and numerous postal bus lines for personnel, mail and parcel delivery were added. Another 1609 postal routes (by horse and wagon) were established to provide civilian mail service to the outlying countryside. There were also 187 mail boat lines in remote areas which were patterned after the old German boat lines.

c.) Postal Money Transfer Service

A Post Check Office in Riga was established by the office in Königsberg, E. Prussia which initially serviced requests for money orders for Lithuania and Latvia beginning Dec. 1, 1941. By April 1, 1942 this office absorbed the former Latvian postal savings service and thereafter offered both money transfers and savings accounts as the "Scheck-und Postsparkassenamt Riga" (Check and Postal Savings Office Riga") with its own cancelling devices.

d .) Personnel

As previously noted, there were a small number of German personnel in the "Einsatz Ostland" which were employed in the larger Dienstpost offices which also processed mail from civil post offices. There were usually two or three German supervisors while the former indigenous officials continued employment as counter clerks. In smaller offices which had no German personnel, the indigenous administrators remained and were continuously supervised by district supervisors who reported to the General Post Commissioner.

e .) Stamps

During the early months of the German occupation a chaotic condition existed in the Baltic states as regards available stamps. While remaining stocks of Russian stamps were officially declared invalid, this order could not be implemented everywhere due to a lack of alternate stamps. Some civil post offices had stored the older Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian stamps which were placed in service for provisional mail service. Also, as previously noted, overprinted Russian stamps, liberation stamps and, in Estonia, local stamps were valid at various times. In addition, Hindenburg definitives and other German stamps brought in by the occupation employees were valid as were stamps of the General Gouvernment which arrived with German administration staffs transfered from the G.G. and were allowed for a brief period. On Nov. 1, '41 Hitler definitive stamps overprinted "Ostland" were received from the State Printing Bureau in Berlin.



Examples of Lithuanian "Liberation" overprinted Russian stamps are 10K at left with o'print "NEPRIKLAUSOMA/LIETUVA/ 1941-VI-23" and 50K in center o'printed "Laisvas/ 1941-VI-27/Rokiskis". The Estonian stamp at right issued in Odenpäh on July 22, 1941.

Dienstpost offices, branch offices and postal stations received orders to sell only the "Ostland" stamps. The use of Hindenburg and other German stamps was permitted but were not available from post offices in the Ostland. A few organizations with Dienstpost privileges, such as Technische Nothilfe (a technical auxiliary of the police which was trained for emergencies and maintenance of vital public services) had German official stamps. These were rarely used as most such organizations used free franks while stationed in the occupied territories. After March 31,'42 only "Ostland" stamps were permitted on mail dispatched from post offices of the Reichs Commissariat Ostland. The invalidated native stamps (Soviet, Baltic and overprints) were to be turned in to the stamp distribution office of the General Postal Commissioner in Riga and exchanged for "Ostland" stamps. The officials in Riga made these native stamps available to the Reichspost Ministry and gave out others as presents to employees of the Gen. Postal Commissioner and Reichs Commissioner. Many Russian stamps were found in large quantities by German soldiers capturing undamaged post offices. This booty often wound up in the hands of German stamp dealers during and after the war. The native stamps which were officially sent to Berlin were donated to the Reichs Post Museum but dissapeared during the battle of Berlin.

## f.) "Ostarbeiter" Mail

The "Ostarbeitern" were laborers of Russian nationality from the occupied Russian territories who had been sent to Germany illegally and usually against their will. In Feb.'43, special Sender/Reply cards were produced for use by the "Ostarbeiter". Printed in German, Russian and Ukrainian, these cards were especially important in White Russia because a large number of laborers from this region had been sent to Germany. The reply cards and limited parcel post which could be sent to these workers was handled by the post offices of the Gen. Postal Commissioner Ostland.

Laborers of Baltic nationality did not fall under the limited Ostarbeiter mail arrangements. They could correspond with their relatives through the normal civilian mail system at domestic postal rates and were allowed to receive parcels from them. This mail was routed through the German censorship office in Königsberg.
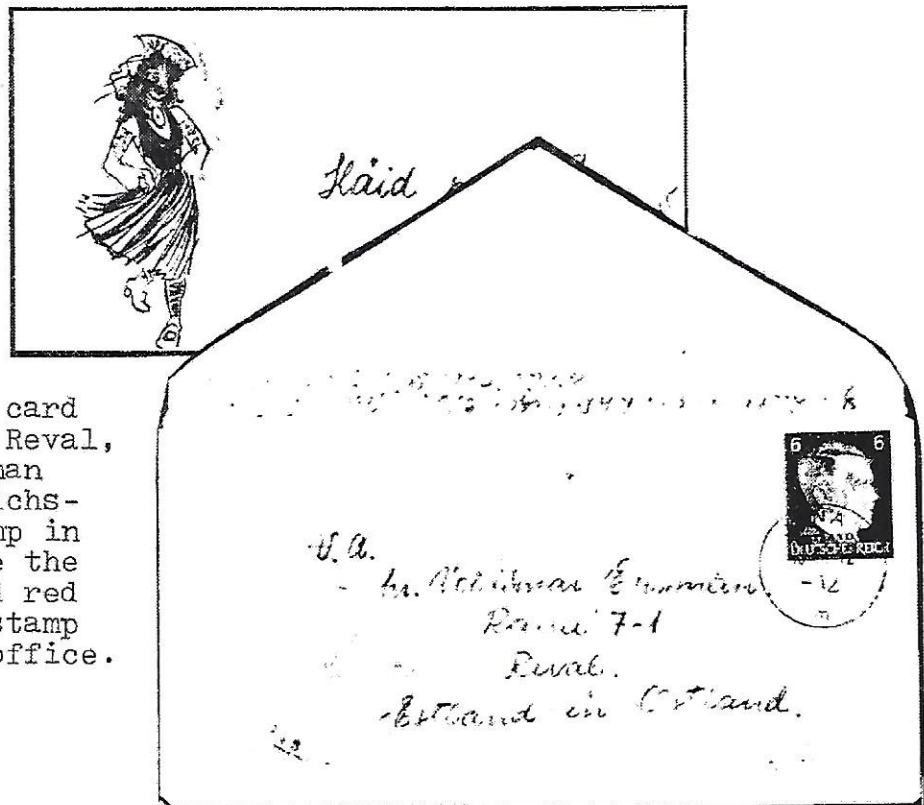


Fig. 12) Christmas card sent in Dec.'42 to Reval, Estonia from a German Labor Service ("Reichs-arbeitsdienst") camp in Jena, Germany. Note the "Ostland" stamp and red German censor handstamp of the Königsbreg office.

## g.) "Hilfswillige" Mail

The German Army contained about one million former Soviet citizens. Most were prisoners of war but there were also deserters from the Red Army and even Russians from the pre-war waves of emigration. These were all designated "Hilfswilligen" (Volunteers) or "Hiwi". They were used strictly as auxiliaries; one of their main functions being the driving and care of army transportation horses. In 1943 the German Postal Ministry announced postal service for "Hiwis" with relatives in German-occupied Russia. A special Sender/Reply Feldpost card was produced by the National Printing Works as Fp 49 Din A5. These cards (see Fig. 13 ) were distributed to "Hiwis" by the Feldpost. Completed cards were first forwarded to the special POW section of the Berlin censor office and then sent to the German Dienstpost office nearest to the intended recipient. Such mailings were of importance to the

population of White Russia. As there was no civilian postal service
in "Weissruthenien", Dienstpost offices delivered "Hiwi" Feldpost
cards and accepted the response portions. These were also routed
through the Berlin censor office before being forwarded to the unit
of the "Hiwi".

Fig. 13) Front
& back of the
return half of
"Hiwi" Feldpost
card has text:
"Postdienst für
ehemalige russ-
ische Kriegsge-
fangege" (Mail
service for
former Russian
POWs). This was
sent from Minsk
in White Russia
to Fp.# 09455
(Special HQ
Holfeld of the
Commander of
Security Div.
203). Censor
handstamp was
added by Berlin
office.



## IV.) Place Names in the Ostland

The leaders of the Third Reich never publicly revealed their plans
for the Baltic territories after the war had been won. They might have
been given Protectorate status like Bohemia and Moravia or annexed as
"Reichsgaue" in a Greater Germany extending from Burgundy to Narva. It
is of little importance to postal historians except to explain the
efforts made to germanize the Ostland. At the suggestion of the Reichs
Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, the postal service tried
to Germanize many town names in order to make mail service easier. This
was relatively easy in those areas which for centuries had been under
the political and cultural influence of the Teutonic Knights and, later,
under the German Dukes of Kurland and Livland. German names for Riga,
Libau, Mitau, Reval, Dorpat, Goldingen, Wilna, etc. had been part of
the German vocabulary for centuries. Initially the German postal
administrators preferred the Baltic names, which remained on cancels
and registry labels used for civilian Ostland mail. Only the larger
towns with germanic names received new dual language German-style
registry labels produced in Germany.

The Dienstpost offices used German town designations from the start,
primarily because they were located in larger towns such as those
named above which had German names for centuries until replaced by
Russian names and from 1919 by Baltic names.

An effort was made in 1943 to use more German language in all walks
of life, e.g. railroad, mail, administration of town names, street
names, etc. This was carried out most intensively in Lithuania, where

the sense of nationalism was not as strongly developed
as in Latvia and Estonia. The main obstacle in this
effort was the difficulty in aquiring new dual language
cancelling devices due to shortages of materials. When
new cancellers were obtained, they were often in German
with no Lithuanian town name. Registry labels were not
as difficult to procure and were supplied to most branch
offices, again often in German only. A few German postal
supervisors with good connections acquired special branch office cancels
with German names and number designations 1 thru 8 in Lithuania. These
were manufactured locally although procurement was supposed to be done
through the General Postal Commissariat in Riga. There is a theory that
these numbered "Postzweigstelle" cancels were part of a
trial to be implemented later in all of the Ostland. This
does not seem probable because all of these cancels were
confined to one small area in Lithuania.
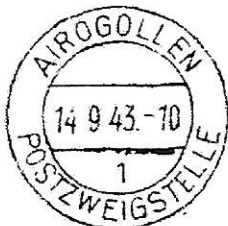
The German renaming of Latvian towns falls into two groups,
one relating to the historical past while the other came
about in an effort to give every Latvian town an alternate
German name. The names in the first group were not really
new German names but germanization of Latvian and Livonian town names
which had already been in use along with the indigenous names. In the
second group the naming was arbitrary with no consideration of the
Latvian names. These changes were painful for patriotic Latvians and
Baltic-Germans. Old Ostland postal employees later insisted that the
search for German names was done carefully but it was sometimes not
possible to select a fitting name. Often the effort was prolonged,
resulting in the continued use of Latvian and Lithuanian registry labels
with indigenous names still being produced late in 1943.

This is the reason why Estonia had the fewest German or dual-language
cancels and registry labels. Often the German name was simply an added
"germanized" ending to the Estonian name. Exceptions are, of course,
those towns with historical German names such as Dorpat, Arensburg,
Pernau, Reval, Wesenberg, Weissenstein, etc.  The search for German
names was made even more difficult by pronunciation errors and a
misunderstanding of a strange town's name. These errors frequently led
to revisions to the originally selected name such as:

| Latvian | Abrene | German Cancel | a) Abrene | b) Abrehnen |
|---------|--------|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| "    " | Indra | "    " | a) Indra | b) Baldenau |
| "    " | Aizpute | "    " | a) Hasenpot | b) Hasenpoth |
| "    " | Pokrowo | "    " | a) Kaceni | b) Katzehnen |
| Estonian | Kuressare | "    " | a) Ahrensburg | b) Arensburg/Oesel |
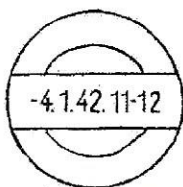
Abrene

(to be continued)

# 𝔇𝔢𝔲𝔱𝔰𝔠𝔥𝔢 𝔇𝔦𝔢𝔫𝔰𝔱𝔭𝔬𝔰𝔱 𝔒𝔰𝔱𝔩𝔞𝔫𝔡

(Part 3)

V.) <u>The Collapse of the Deutsche Post Ostland</u>

Whatever has been previously stated about the Deutsche Dienstpost also applied to the offices of the Deutsche Post Ostland. Only the General Postal Commissioner himself withdrew, as noted earlier, to Pomerania. The excellent German-style postal system in the entire Ostland was destroyed piece by piece by the advancing Red Army. It is possible that some of the Baltic Landespost officials stayed on and worked for the Russians, if they had not fled west with the German forces. No information on this subject has ever been published in the west. The Russians took over the postal inventory not already destroyed in the fighting. German cancels were still used in Riga in 1949 by the Russian post offices because new ones were not issued due to a lack of materials.

VI.) <u>Cancellations of the Ostland</u>

Contrary to the postal situations in former Polish territories, a clear distinction between cancels of the Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland and Deutsche Post Ostland is possible, at least for those Dienstpost offices established before April 1942, because Dienstpost offices had cancels inscribed "Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland". On the following page is a listing of DDPO offices and branch offices ("ZdA") which appeared in the Amtsblatt RPM following the decree establishing a General Post Commissioner for the Ostland territory early in 1942. Adjacent to the German town names are the native town names ("Frühere Ortsbezeichung") and routing offices ("Leitort"). In addition, the following Dienstpost offices were established subsequent to to this Amtsblatt listing:

<u>Latvia (Lettland)</u>

DpA <u>Lilast (Lager)</u>, lett. <u>Lilaste-nometne</u>, Leitort: Tilsit 2. - a troop training center opened Jan. 1, 1943 as Poststelle of DpA Riga.

DpA <u>Wainoden (Kr. Libau)-Lager</u>, lett. <u>Vainode-nometne</u>, Leitort: Memel - a troop training center opened August 15, 1943 as Poststelle of DpA Prekuln.

<u>Lithuania (Litauen)</u>

DpA <u>Radwilischken (Kr. Schaulen) 2</u>, lit. <u>Radviliskis</u>, Leitort: Tilsit B - established May 24, 1942 as Poststelle of DpA Schaulen.

<u>Estonia (Estland)</u>

DpA <u>Arensburg (Oesel)</u>, estn. <u>Kuressare</u>, Leitort: Tilsit - established February 1, 1942.

DpA <u>Hapsal</u>, estn. <u>Haapsalu</u>, Leitort: Tilsit - established Feb. 7, 1942.

DpA <u>Jewe</u>, estn. <u>Jövi</u>, Leitort: Tilsit - established May 17, 1943.

DpA <u>Kiwiöli</u>, estn. <u>Kivioli</u>, Leitort: Tilsit - established June 1, 1943.

DpA <u>Narwa</u>, estn. <u>Narva</u>, Leitort: Tilsit - established Feb. 10, 1942.

DpA <u>Sillamägi</u>, estn. <u>Sillamäe</u>, Leitort: Tilsit - established June 1, 1943.

DpA <u>Slanzy über Narwa</u>, Leitort: Tilsit - established Dec. 5, 1942 as a Poststelle of DpA Narwa.

# Dienstpostämter
## im Bereich des Generalpostkommissars Ostland

| Name des Dienstpostamts | Frühere Ortsbezeichnung | Leitort | Name des Dienstpostamts | Frühere Ortsbezeichnung | Leitort |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abrehnen | lett. Jaunlatgale | Tilsit | Olita | lit. Alytus | Eydtkau |
| Alt-Schwanenburg | lett. Gulbene | Tilsit | Ossersee | lit. Zarasai | Eydtkau |
| Baranowitsche | russ. Baranowicze | Brest-Litowsk | Pernau (Ostland) | est. Pärnu | Tilsit |
| Bauske | lett. Bauska | Tilsit | Petschur | est. Petseri, russ. Petschory | Tilsit |
| Birsen | lit. Birzai (Birzi) | Tilsit | Polangen ZdA Krottingen | lit. Palanga | Memel |
| Dorpat | est. Tartu | Tilsit | | | |
| Dünaburg | lett. Daugavpils | Eydtkau | Ponewesch | lit. Panevezys | Eydtkau |
| Fellin (Ostland) | est. Viljaudi | Tilsit | Preekuln | lett. Priekule | Memel |
| Frauenburg (Kr Goldingen) | lett. Saldus | Tilsit | Raseinen | lit. Raseiniai (Rossieny) | Eydtkau |
| Georgenburg (Memel) ZdA Schaken (Kr Schaken) | lit. Jurbarkas | Eydtkau | Reval | est. Tallinn | Tilsit |
| | | | Riga | lett. Riga | Tilsit |
| | | | Rokischken | lit. Rokiskis (Rakischki) | Eydtkau |
| Goldingen | lett. Kuldiga | Memel | Rositten (Ostland) | lett. Rezekne | Tilsit |
| Hasenpoth | lett. Aizpute | Memel | Rujen | lett. Rujiena | Tilsit |
| Jakobstadt (Düna) ZdA Kreuzburg (Kr Dünaburg) | lett. Jekabpils | Tilsit | Schaken (KrSchaken) | lit. Sakiai (Schaki) | Eydtkau |
| | | | Schaulen | lit. Siauliai | Tilsit |
| Janischken (Kr Schaulen) | lit. Joniskis (Janischki) | Tilsit | Schwentschionellen ZdA Schwentschionys | lit. Svencioneliai | Eydtkau |
| Kauen | lit. Kaunas, poln. Kowno | Eydtkau | Schwentschionys | lit. Svencionys | Eydtkau |
| | | | Slonim | russ. Slonim | Brest-Litowsk |
| Kedahnen | lit. Kedainiai | Eydtkau | Talsen | lett. Talsi | Tilsit |
| Kemmern (Kr Riga) ZdA Majorenhof | lett. Kemeri | Tilsit | Taps | est. Tapa | Tilsit |
| | | | Tauroggen | lit. Tauragé | Tilsit |
| Kibarten ZdA Wilkowischken | lit. Kybartai (Kibarty) | Eydtkau | Telsche | lit. Telsiai (Telschi) | Memel |
| | | | Tuckum | lett. Tukums | Tilsit |
| Kreuzburg (Kr Dünaburg) | lett. Krustpils | Tilsit | Utena | lit. Utena, russ. Uciany | Eydtkau |
| Krottingen | lit. Kretinga (Kretingale) | Memel | Walk (Ostland) 1 | est. Valga | Tilsit |
| | | | Walk (Ostland) 2 ZdA Wolmar | lett. Valka | Tilsit |
| Lemsal (Kr Wolmar) | lett. Limbazi | Tilsit | Weißenstein (Ostland) | est. Paide | Tilsit |
| Libau | lett. Liepaja | Memel | | | |
| Lida | russ. Lida | Eydtkau | Wenden (Ostland) | lett. Cesis | Tilsit |
| Ludsen | lett. Ludza | Tilsit | Werro | est. Voru | Tilsit |
| Majorenhof | lett. Majori | Tilsit | Wesenberg (Ostland) | est. Rakvere | Tilsit |
| Mariampol | lit. Marijampole | Eydtkau | Wileika | russ. Wilejka | Eydtkau |
| Marienburg (Kr Walk) | lett. Aluksne | Tilsit | Wilkomir | lit. Ukmerge, Vilkmerge | Eydtkau |
| Minsk (Ostland) | russ. Minsk | Eydtkau | Wilkowischken | lit. Vilkaviskis | Eydtkau |
| Mitau | lett. Jelgawa | Tilsit | Wilna | lit. Vilnius, poln. Wilno | Eydtkau |
| Modohn | lett. Madona | Tilsit | | | |
| Molodetschno | poln. Molodeczno | Eydtkau | Windau | lett. Ventspils | Tilsit |
| Moscheiken | lit. Mazeikiai (Murawjewo) | Tilsit | Wolmar | lett. Valmiera | Tilsit |
| Nowogrodek | russ. Nowogrodek | Brest-Litowsk | | | |

White Russia (Weissruthenien)

DpA Glebokie, pol. Glubokje, Leitort:? - established March 16, 1942.

DpA Hansewitsche, pol. Hancewizce, Leitort:? - est. Sept. 11, 1942.

DpA Smolewitsche (Ostland), russ. Smolelewitsch, Leitort: Eydtkau - established August 1, 1943.

DpA Stolpce, russ. Stolpce, Leitort: Eydtkau - est. March 1, 1943.

Dienstpost offices are listed as "DpA" and civilian offices as "DPOstl.". In the years 1943 till 1944 the civilian mail service expanded to a full network. Often Dienstpost and Feldpost covers were cancelled with former Baltic Landespost cancels or new German-style civil mail cancels. There are several explanations for this. For example, a Dienstpost cancel may have been locked up and the Indigenous postal official, who also processed Dienstpost even if not officially permitted, would use his civilian canceller. By contrast, civilian letters with Dienstpost cancels are very rare.

Fig. 14) Dienstpost mail to Military Records Office in Landeshut, Germany from "Zollgrenz- schutz" (Border Defense) unit has DDPO routing mark but was cancelled with Landespost cancel in Karuse, Estonia in May '44.
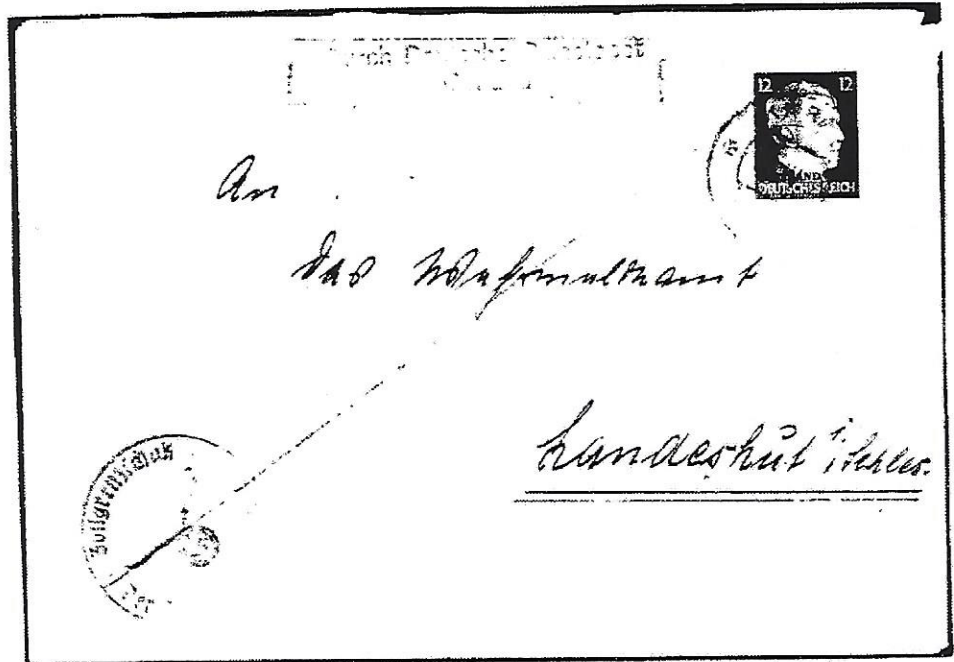


Because of space limitations I have decided not to include a listing of DPOstl offices in this article. A complete listing would include over 6000 offices. Even Dr. Schultz' book includes only those DPOstl. offices which were subject to "germanization". His listings include 44 offices in Estonia, 110 in Lithuania and 129 in Latvia.

Only a few Dienstpost offices had German DDPO cancelling devices in the first few days after opening. They made do with altered Russian canceling devices which they had found. There was extensive use of these cancels during the first year of occupation. Only occasionally were they used unchanged i.e. with Russian hammer & sickel emblems.

Unaltered Russian cancel used with DDP handstamp by DpA Slonim (White Russia) in 1941 (left below). Altered Russian cancel (Soviet emblems removed) used with two-line handstamp by DpA Dünaberg (Latvia) from late 1941 until mid-1942 (right below).



DeutscheDienstpost



Dünaburg
18. OKT. 1941

Baltic Landespost cancelers found in postoffices or returned by native personnel were also used by the Dienstpost during the first few months. Such cancels were used in combination with rubber handstamped "Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland" and one or two-line handstamps identifying the DDP office.

**Radwilischken**
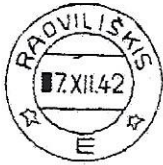


Shown at left is Landespost cancel and German handstamp used by DpA Radwilischken (Lithuania). These rubber hand stamps soon became the only ones used to cancel Dienstpost mail in lieu of the proscribed DDPO cancels because the Landespost cancels were returned to the civil postoffices upon resumption of civil service. Many German postal employees did not like to use "foreign" cancelers and preferred to order rubber or wooden handstamps which were used with date stamps per the examples below.

**Deutsches Dienstpostamt**
**Bauske**

**Alt-Schwanenburg**
-6. NOV. 1941

**Lemsal (Kr. Wolmar)**
3. NOV. 1941

All official business of the Dienstpost ("Postsachen") had to show a German routing notation, almost always Tilsit or Eydtkau (the former railroad transit station Eydtkuhnen in East Prussia). A seperate post office Tilsit 2 was established on Jan. 1, 1944 for Ostland civil mail and Dienstpost mail, which henceforth was to be indicated as the routing office. Several Dienstpost offices in White Russia had Brest-Litowsk as their routing office because of good rail connections. During the brief period it belonged to the DDPO Grodno had Suwalki as routing office. As of May 1, 1944 the postal routing notations were no longer required because the newly established Postleitzahl 5c allowed mail to be sorted in Germany according to the letter routing area.

All regular German steel cancelers and R-labels were to be ordered from the supply office of the Gen. Postal Commissioner in Riga. As manufacture of these cancelers requires precision equipment, most factories which produced such items were also producing more important items for the war effort. Thus shortages of materials often delayed production of new DDPO cancelers with new place names. Those cancels with incorrect town names such as "Ahrensburg" instead of "Arensburg" remained in use for long periods because a corrected canceler did not become readily available. Shown below are the two most common type of German cancels in the Ostland. Those on left were only for Dienstpost mail while those on the right were for civil mail. A commemorative cancel was used for Stamp Day ("Tag der Briefmarke") on Jan. 11, 1942 by DDPO offices in Riga (Latvia), Dorpat (Estonia) and Kauen (Lithuania).
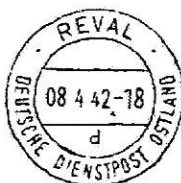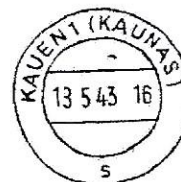
Erroneous cancelers were sometimes received from Germany, for example
"Hasenpot" instead of "Hasenpoth". The longer the German postal employ-
ees remained in the "Einsatz" the more familiar they became with their
Baltic colleages and their language. Changes in cancelers to conform
to the German language occured henceforth, such as "Baranowitschi" to
"Baranowitsche", "Molodeczno" to "Molodetschno", "Abrene" to "Abrehnen",
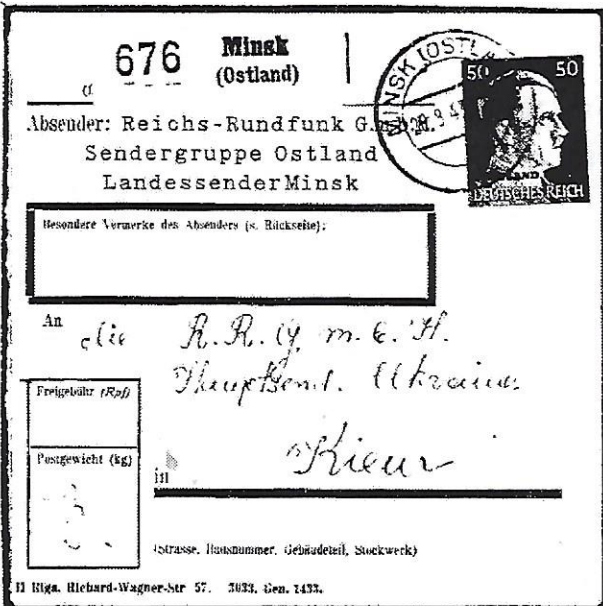


Confusion between similar sounding
names like "Minsk" in White Russia
with "Minsk Mazowiecki" in the
General Gouvernment resulted in a
new cancel "Minsk (Ostland)" in
1942. Fig. 15 is a receipt card
for a 3 Kilogram parcel sent to
the National Broadcasting Company
Ukraine in Kiev from the Ostland
network in Minsk in August 1943.

**Molodeczno (Weißrußland)**



Fig. 15

When the indigenous Landespostoffices were taken over as branch offices
of the Deutsche Post Ostland, a problem arose with new German names in
the cancels for those civil post offices. The reader is referred to the
section on "germanization" of place names in Part 2. Rubber handstamps
were not permitted for use by the Landespost. The only exception to this
rule was made when most of the Landespost cancelers were lost due to
the war in Lettgallen. Handwritten (manuscript) or simple line cancels
were used while German style canceling devices were obtained. This was
possible only in one part of all the civil postal stations because the
basic decree concerning postal service in the Ostland did not appear
until April 1942. By this time material shortages in Germany were so
widespread that it was very difficult to obtain steel cancelers.

Only especially resourceful postal commissioners and district supervisors
as well as the larger offices, such as Riga, Reval, etc., succeeded in
obtaining dual language cancelers such as those shown below. It was far
easier to obtain German design R-labels. After using up the old Landespost
labels and old registry handstamps (in which the number was entered by
hand), new German style labels in accordance with UPU regulations were
ordered. If German names existed then they were used. Baltic names were
usually printed next to these but not in all cases. When no German
name existed, the old name was used but with a "germanized" ending and
the German "Kreis" or routing office name.
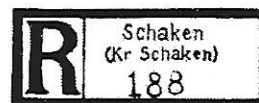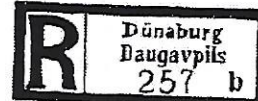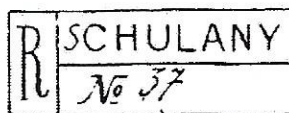
These new R-labels are especially plentiful in Lithuania and Latvia (see Fig. 16) where the old Landespost cancels with old town names were still being used to cancel mail as new cancelers were not yet available. Conversely, few new R-labels in combination with German name cancels were used in Estonia, which is analogous with the resistance of the provisional Estonian government against "germanization" as has been previously noted.
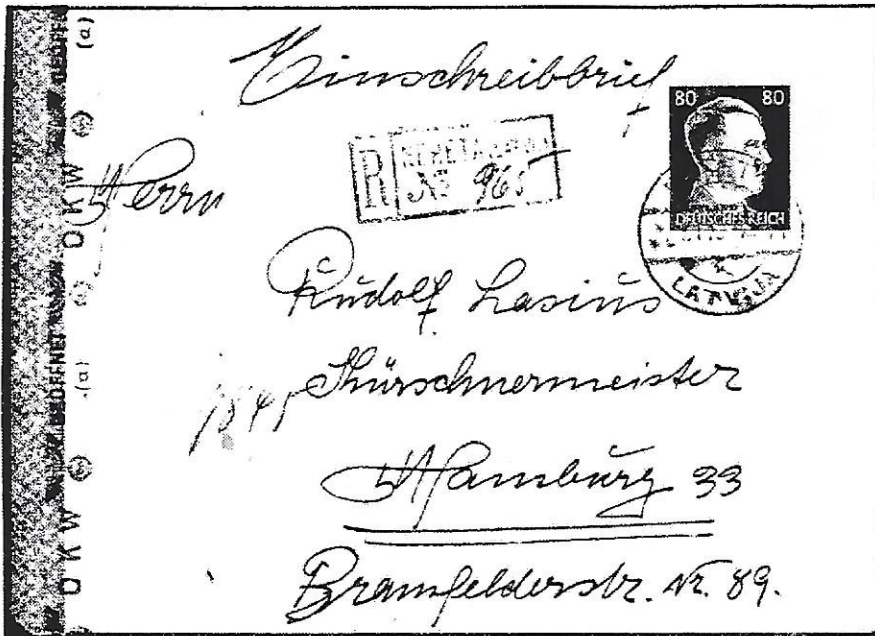


Fig. 16) Registered letter to Germany has 80 Pfg. postage for letter weight exceeding 20 grams (50 Pfg.) plus 30 Pfg. registry fee. Landespost office in Nereta, Latvia used old registry handstamp and Baltic style cancel in October 1942.

Censor tape and machine stamps on left side of cover applied after the letter was opened and examined by Königsburg Foreign Letter Examining Office.

Fig. 17) German style R-label on registered cover from Bolwa, Latvia has Landespost cancel with Baltic town name Balvi.

The 54 Pfg. postage is for conventional letter weight to Germany (24 Pfg. plus 30 Pfg. registry fee).

The 19mm circular handstamp "Aa" in Königsburg transit marking denoting that the letter was passed unopened. This cover posted May 1943.
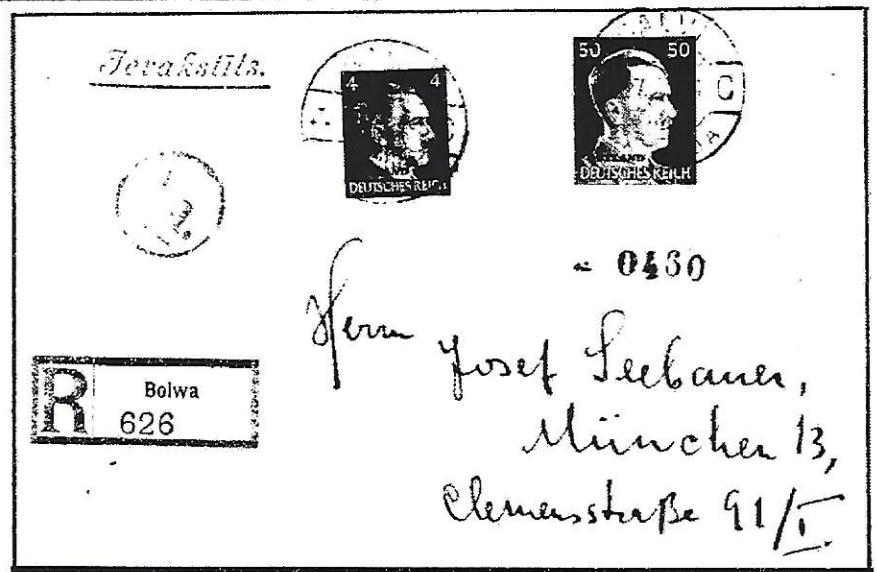


Thus we find a wide variety of different cancels in use in the Ostland. including Russian cancels (altered and unaltered), provisional handstamps, old Baltic Landespost cancels and new German cancels. In no other area of occupation do we find so many different kinds of cancels. Old Latvian slogan cancels in Riga continued in use with only small alterations, because the name is the same in German as in Latvian. Old roller cancels of Estonian design were used by the Dienstpost and civil mail in Reval by incorporating the German name "Reval" next to "Tallinn"
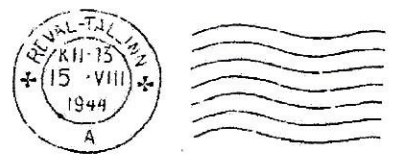
## VII.) Identifying markings of Dienstpost in general

Many different types of rubber linestamps were used by the sending post office to identify Dienstpost mail if not noted by the sender.

**Durch Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland**    Durch Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland

Official postal matter ("Postsache") carried appropriate handstamps and the official seal ("Dienstsiegel") of the sending post office.



Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland

Postsache

05.6.42.-18

R 508
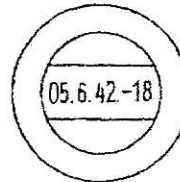
Feldpost with 5-digit Feldpost number return addresses received mute ("stumme") cancels and blank field R-labels for registered mail (above).
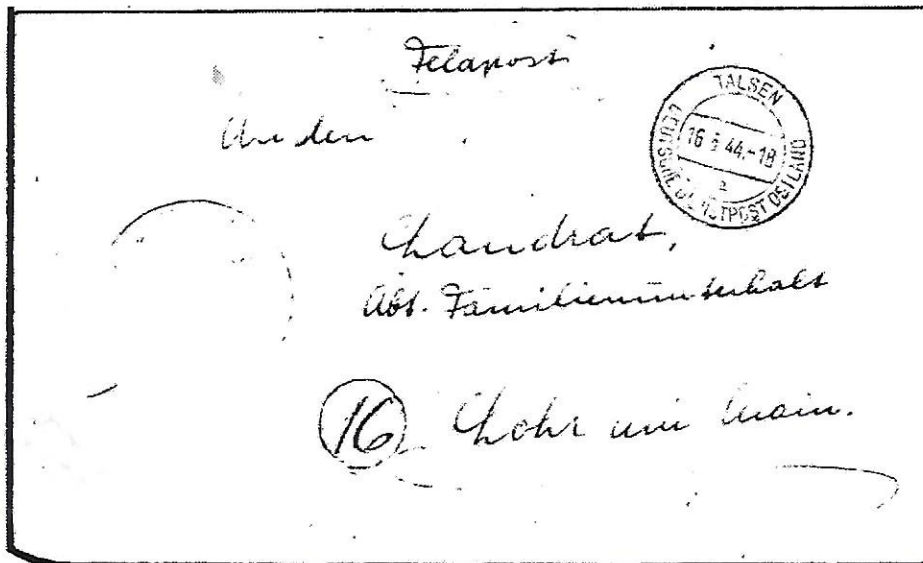


Feldpost from rear area units with open unit identification received conventional DDPO cancels.

Fig. 18) Feldpost cover with open unit seal "4/SS-Pz. Aufkl. Abt. 2" (Co. 4/Waffen-SS Panzer Reconnaissance Training Battalion 2) sent via DDPO office Talsen, Latvia in May 1944.

## Definition of cancels and R-labels of the Dienstpost and Civil Mail

Dienstpost offices were located in larger towns, usually the seats of the area commissioners. In these towns the Dienstpost and Deutsche Post Ostland (civil mail service) shared the same facilities but had seperate postal counters. As both types of mail increased in volume these rooms became quite crowded. Although regulations specified that DDPO cancels be used for official mail, mute cancels for security Feldpost mail (w/5-digit Feldpost numbers) and Baltic Landespost or new dual language German cancels for civil mail, the cramped quarters and heavy work loads often resulted in Dienstpost personnel employing civil cancelers.

In addition, several of the Dienstpost offices received neither DDPO nor German dual language cancelers. These offices (Sillamägi, Slanzy, Glebokie and Stolpce) used either 2-line rubber stamps with town name and date or "stumme" cancels with line stamped town name. Dienstpost offices in Lilast, Wainroden, Radwilischken, Jewe, Smolewitsche,

Hansewitsche, Kiwiöli (see Fig. 19) and Sluzk did not receive
cancels with "Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland" but instead received
one or dual language German style cancels for use on both Dienst-
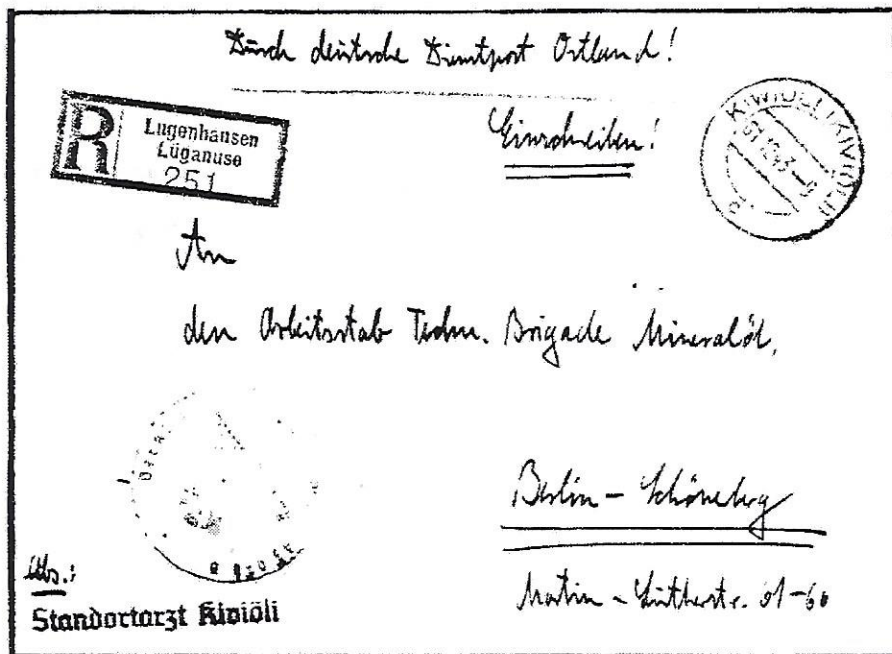post and civil mail.



Fig. 19) German style
dual language cancel
on registered Dienst-
post cover sent to
Berlin in December '43
by the "Standortarzt"
(Garrison Physician)
in Kiwiöli, Estonia.

R-label from nearby
Lugenhausen has been
hand stamped for
Kiwiöli.

## Railroad cancels of the Batlic area

The railroad system in the Baltic area was quite extensive because
of the sparse population. As these countries were rather small, many
rail lines ended in a different country from where they started. For
this reason railroad cancels were not designated by General Districts.
The main terminals and crossroads were at Riga and Reval. A railroad
post office was established by the General Postal Commissioner in Riga
to serve the entire Ostland. It was the central office of the railroad
postal service.

Five different types can be distinguished in the Ostland cancels:

a.) Oval cancels of the former Baltic states, the same design in
    all three countries although different in size and type style.

b.) Altered cancels of the above types, used only sporadically and
    very rare.

c.) Circular Latvian RR cancels, known to have been used on the line
    Riga-Tilsit during the German occupation. These may be older
    cancels from the 1914-'18 period (OberOst-Post).

d.) Conventional German oval RR cancels with "Deutsche Dienstpost
    Ostland" in German language only.

e.) Similar to d.) with railway line designation but without DDPO
    notation, found both in German only and dual language.



a.                b.                c.                d.                e.

## VIII.) Riga postal markings

Riga had been the center of the Baltic region for hundreds of years. The "Schwarzhäupter" guild house and numerous churches dating back to the Hansa period and reign of the Teutonic Knights still showed a German character in 1941. Riga remained the center of Baltic life, even after the establishment of the three Baltic states. During the German occupation from 1941-44 it was the center of the administration, economy and cultural life because the Reichs Commissioner for the Ostland was headquartered there.

All roads in the Ostland crossed at the Düna, all airlines of the Ostland used Riga as their main airfield. Numerous high military staffs (Air District, Military Commander Ostland, Replacement staffs for troops at the front) and supply centers were headquartered in Riga. Flourishing industry created jobs for tens of thousands of indigenous and German workers. As seat of the Generalpostkommissar (GPK), Riga was also center of the postal administration of the Ostland. The railroad post office, the postal check and savings office and the Dienstpost office in Riga with its many branch offices employed more than one thousand officials, postal employees and laborers.

A wide variety of cancels were used in Riga because initially the lack of raw materials delayed aquisition of German style cancels. Numerous Latvian and Russian canceling devices remained in use, some altered, some unaltered.



As Riga was the main routing point for military mail to the northern Front (Army Group North's Feldpost Headquarters was in Pleskau), many "stumme" (mute) cancels were also used by the Dienstpost. These include Russian cancels completely altered except for the identification letter and plain German design cancels.



Fig. 20) Another type of "stumme" cancel used on Feldpost was an altered Riga machine cancel which was altered by adding solder to the town name to "black out" identification.

This cover was sent from a member of Fp.# 33166 (Div. Stab of 269th Infantry Div.) via the "Luft-feldpost" (Military Air Mail Service) in July 1942.
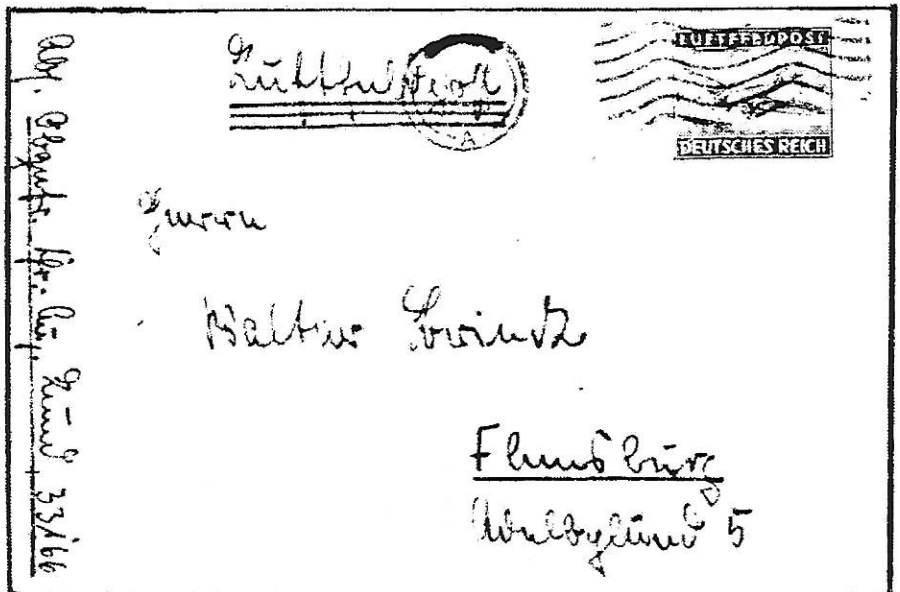
The unaltered Riga machine cancel with "A" below the date line and a
"B" version with illustration were used by the civil post office.

Two DDP hand cancels were used, the first type had dots on either side
of the town name and is found with letter codes a,b & c. The other had
no dots and is found with letters d,c,e,f,g,i,j,k,l,m,n,o,r & s. There
was also a DDP roller cancel design with letters a,b & c and a special
cancel used on Jan. 11, 1942 to commemorate "Stamp Day".
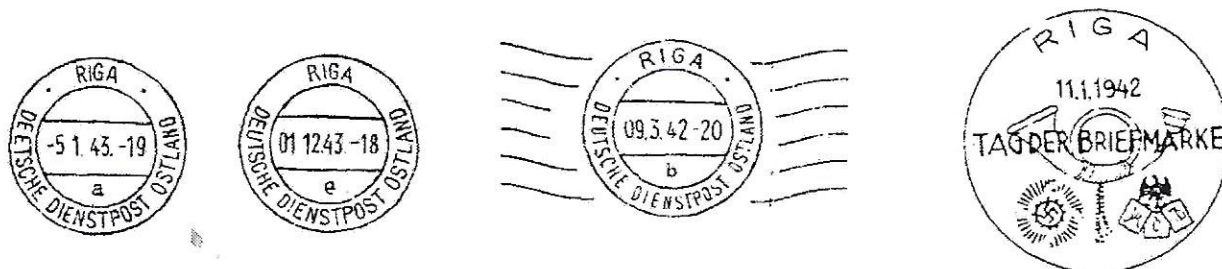
Dual language cancels were used by DDP branch offices of the Riga DDP
office as they handled both Dienstpost and civil mail. The dual language
is actually the same in this instance but was in keeping with the move
to dual language civil cancels throughout the Ostland. The Riga cancels
are found with and without letter codes. Later versions denoted Riga
branch offices 2,6,9 and Riga-Kaiserwald. The Railway post office ("Bahn-
postamt") had a unique cancel (shown below) as did the Postal Check and
Savings Office which was illustrated in Part 1 of this article.
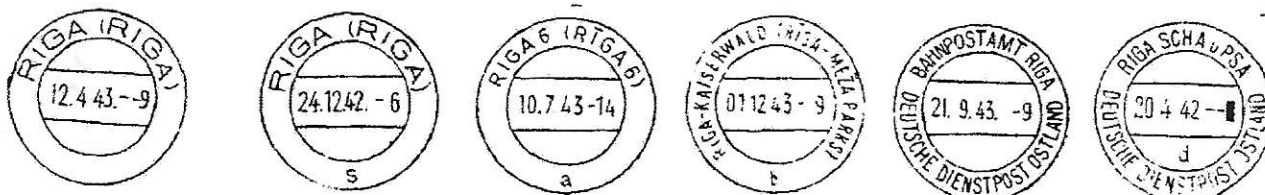
Fig. 21) Registered
cover to Diebfurt,
Wartheland (former
Polish district
annexed by Germany)
via Riga DDP office
Riga in June, 1942.

Censor handstamp to
left of "Ostland"
stamps was applied
at Königsberg Foreign
Letter Examining
Office (code "a").
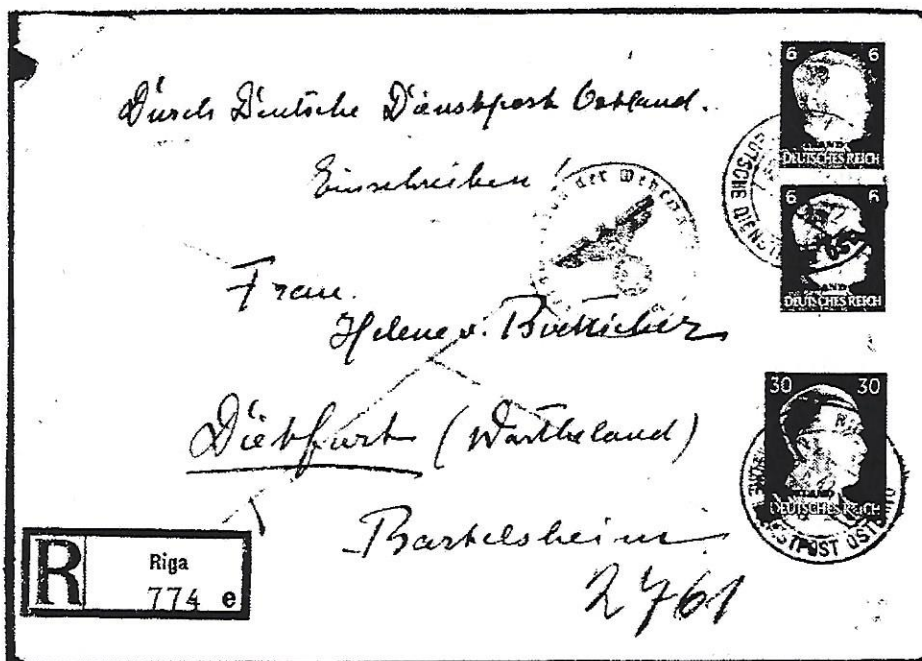
Registered mail from the
Riga DDP office initially
used Latvian style labels
and handstamps. These were
superceded by German style
labels, both blank field
and printed either DDPO
or for individual offices.

A number of these registry
labels and handstamps are
shown to the right.
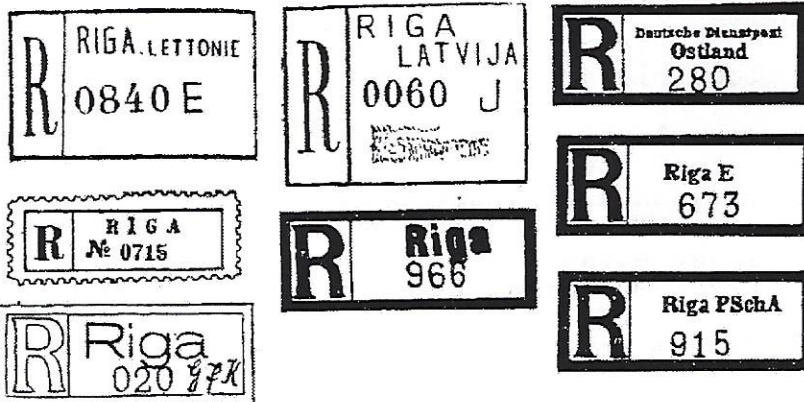
Additional postal markings on mail sent via the Riga DDP office include
open and boxed handstamp for official postal business (shown below at
left). Official mail from the General Postal Commissioner is found with
a line handstamp and two variations of the office seal ("Dienstsiegel")
in either Latin or Gothic type style.

Deutsches Dienstpostamt

Riga

Deutsches Dienstpostamt
RIGA
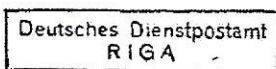
Generalpostkommissar
Ostland

Business firms in Riga were permitted to use postal meters, those owned
by Latvians used indigenous style meters as shown below. Note that the
meter postmark on the right has "Rpf" in the fee segment to denote that
the fee was calculated in German currency value.

LATVIJAS STATISTIKAS
PARVALDE
RĪGĀ, LAČPLĒSA IELĀ 1.
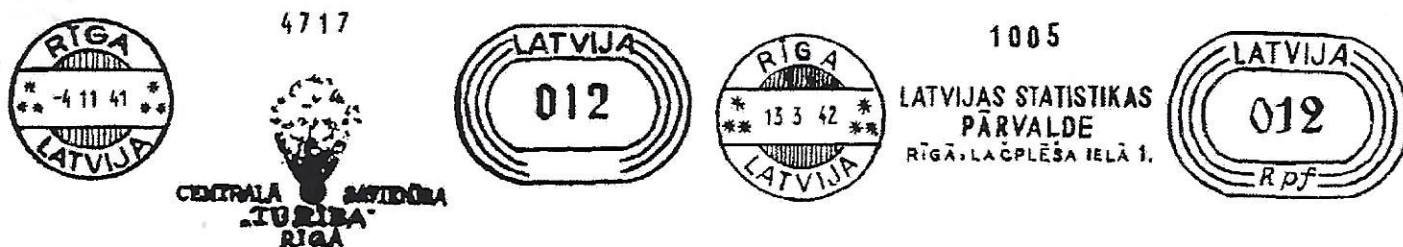
In contrast, German owned firms used the same type "Deutsches Reichspost"
meter designs employed in the homeland.

AEG
AEG OSTLANDWERK GmbH
RIGA

Deutsche
Reichspost

Deutsche
Reichspost

DEUTSCHE ZEITUNG
im Ostland

IX.) Miscellaneous notes

   Parcel card labels - the resumption of limited parcel post service
took place in Latvia and Lithuania at the end of 1941, in Estonia in
the spring of '42 and in White Russia at the end of '42. This required
parcel post card labels with town names in all four districts. The
parcel post service experienced a considerable expansion when tens of
thousands of young Baltic volunteers and large numbers of Russian
conscripts went to Germany in 1943 to become part of the work force.
These workers were entitled to a limited parcel post service and the
required parcel post labels became available in all postoffices and
branch offices in the Ostland. Most were pre-printed before being sent
to the postoffices but some were prepared locally by handstamping blank
labels. There are four types of these labels:

a.) German language only i.e. Riga

b.) German only with main postoffice i.e. Eisiskes

c.) Baltic language only i.e. Otepaa

d.) Dual language i.e. Dobeln-Dobele
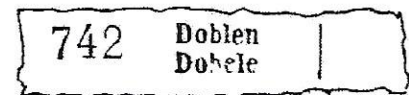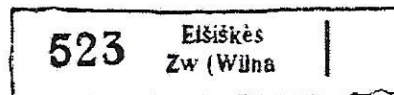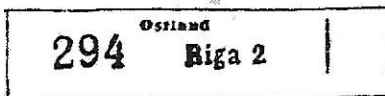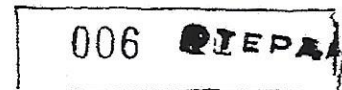


Money letter labels ("Wertbrief") - Dienstpost offices accepted private
money letters from officials, Party units and German military personnel.
Such mail was affixed with German V-labels with blank field. Town names
were added by manuscript or rubber handstamps.
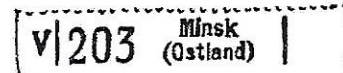


Postal letter seals - letter seals were required by the Dienstpost and
civil post offices soon after resumption of postal services. Blank labels
of German postoffices, brought by postal officials from Germany, were
used for this purpose. They were either stamped with the day stamp of
the Generalpostkommissar Postamt (GPA) (see Modohn, here the Latvian
cancel Madona) or with the rubber cancel of the DpA (see Goldingen).
Larger Dienstpost offices such as Goldingen in Latvia later had these
labels printed as their need became more widespread. It can be assumed
that all Dienstpost offices had such labels at their disposal.



Routing number ("Postleitzahl") - only a few cancels incorporate the
Routing number 5c for the territory of the Reichs Post Minister Ostland
because the decree for Routing Number Areas did not go into effect in
the Ostland until May 1, 1944. Even the larger DpAs such as Riga, Reval,
Kauen, etc. never had routing numbered cancels. Only a few newer offices
established in 1944 such as Jerwen, Estonia or Walk-West, Latvia were
supplied with cancelers of this type.

X.) Feldpost notes

     As noted earlier, the DDPO processed mail from the large Feldpost
network of stationary and mobile postoffices ("Feldpostämter") under
military administration in the northern sector of the Russian front.
These FpAs sent and received mail via Pleskau, headquarters of Army
Group North. At Pleskau, Feldpost was routed to and from Germany by
the DDPO via Riga-Tilsit. Feldpost packages up to 1,000 grams could be
sent for a fee of 20 Pfg. A "Päckchenstelle" (Parcel office) in Kauen,
Lithuania forwarded parcels to the transit station Eydtkau in E. Prussia.

Fig. 22) Parcel label has
20 Pfg. "Ostland" stamp
and sender Fp.# 26935
(San. Kp. 161 of the 61st
Infantry Division). The
2-line handstamp "Bei der
Feldpost eingeliefert" to
denote that parcel had
been submitted at a Feld-
post office.
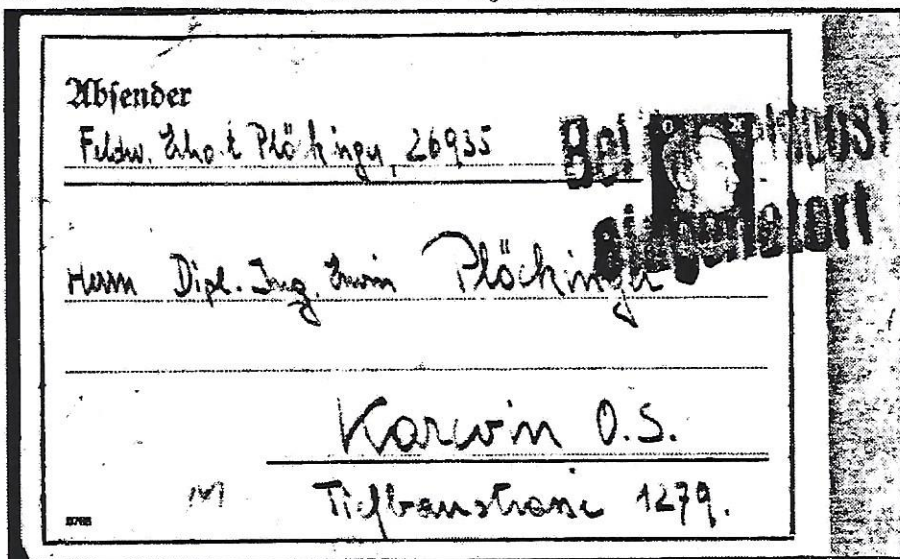


German firms in the Ostland engaged in military production etc. for
Finnish forces could send mail postage free via the Finnish Feldpost.
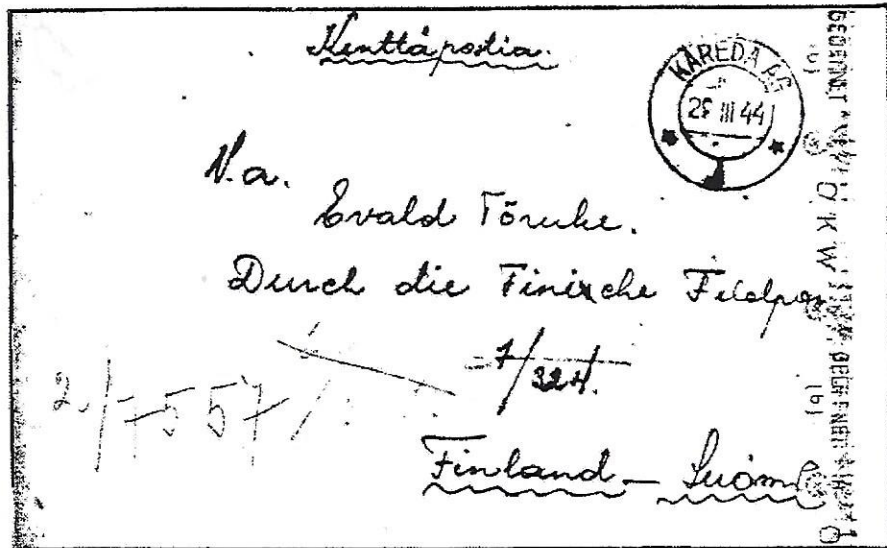As this was foreign mail, it was subject to German censorship.



Fig. 23) Cover sent to
Finland from German firm
in Kareda, Estonia in
March 1944  has notation
"Kenttäpostia" (Finnish
Feldpost) and routing
"Durch die Finische
Feldpost" (via Finnish
Feldpost). Sealing tape
and stamps of Berlin
Foreign Letter Examining
Office affixed to right
side after examination.

SOURCES:
Deutsche Dienstpost 1939-1945, books 4 & 5, Dr. Hermann Schultz,
  Poststempelgilde 'Rhein-Donau' E.V. 1953.
Records of the Reich Commissioner for the Baltic States Microfilm Series
  T-459; National Archives & Records Service, Washington, D.C.

I want to add a special note of appreciation to Gerard J. deBoer for
translating large sections of the Schultz works noted above. (J. Lewis)

# Deutsche Dienstpost Oslo

by Jim Lewis

This article is to provide historical background on the German occupation of Norway and to illustrate some of the postal markings in use during this period.

I.) Historical Background - the German invasion of Norway began on the night of April 8, 1940. Several hours later the German minister in Oslo presented to the Minister of Foreign Affairs an ultimatum stating that Great Britain and France were violating Norway's neutrality and intended to occupy that country; that the German Government had therefore begun "certain military operations which will result in the occupation of stategically important points in Norwegian territory"; and that the "German Government therewith takes over the protection of the Kingdom of Norway during this war." Under the conditions laid down in this ultimatum the Germans would have at their disposal, in addition to military points, the railways and steamers, the pilots and the light-houses, the mail, telegraph, and telephone services, the wireless, the radio, and the press. In addition, it was demanded that all communications between Norway and the countries to the west, including America as well as Europe, be severed.

The Norwegian Government rejected the ultimatum, which was answered by a heavy German bombing of Oslo. On April 10 the German Minister proposed that the fighting cease and that the King appoint Major Vidkun Quisling, head of the pro-Nazi Nasjonal Samling, as his Prime Minister. Refusing this proposal, King Haakon and the government went to England when all Norway was occupied by German forces.

II.) German Administration - on April 24, 1940, Hitler appointed a Reich Commissioner to administer the occupied Norwegian territories. The Reich Commissioner had offices in Trondheim, Bergen, Harstad, Hammerfest and Kirkenes with a staff, the Reich Commissariat, which was divided into three main sections:Administration, Economy and Propaganda. In addition, a ranking SS police officer supervised the police forces within Norway. Beside the Reich Commissioner, who was vested with supreme civil authority, the Commander of the German Forces in Norway was vested with supreme military authority. The jurisdiction was divided between the Reich Commissioner and the military commander, both of whom received orders from their respective authorities i.e. the Reich Minister and Chief of the Reich Chancellery for the former and the Chief of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht for the latter.

III.) Postal Service - following the occupation, Reich Kommissar Terboven ordered all political parties in Norway dissolved. Norwegian civil administration was turned over to the Commissioners of State which were members of the Nasjonal Samling. Quisling was Prime Minister for a brief period late in 1940 and again in 1942. Civil post offices were run by Norwegians in sympathy with the "new order" and much German official and military mail was handled by the Norwegian civil post.

During late June 1940, the newly established Foreign Mail Examining Office ("Auslandsbriefprüfstelle") in Oslo employed provisional hand stamps. Until properly staffed, this office operated in conjunction with the censorship office in Hamburg. Shown below are two covers sent to the same address in Copenhagen during this period. These covers have been folded to show both front & back sides.
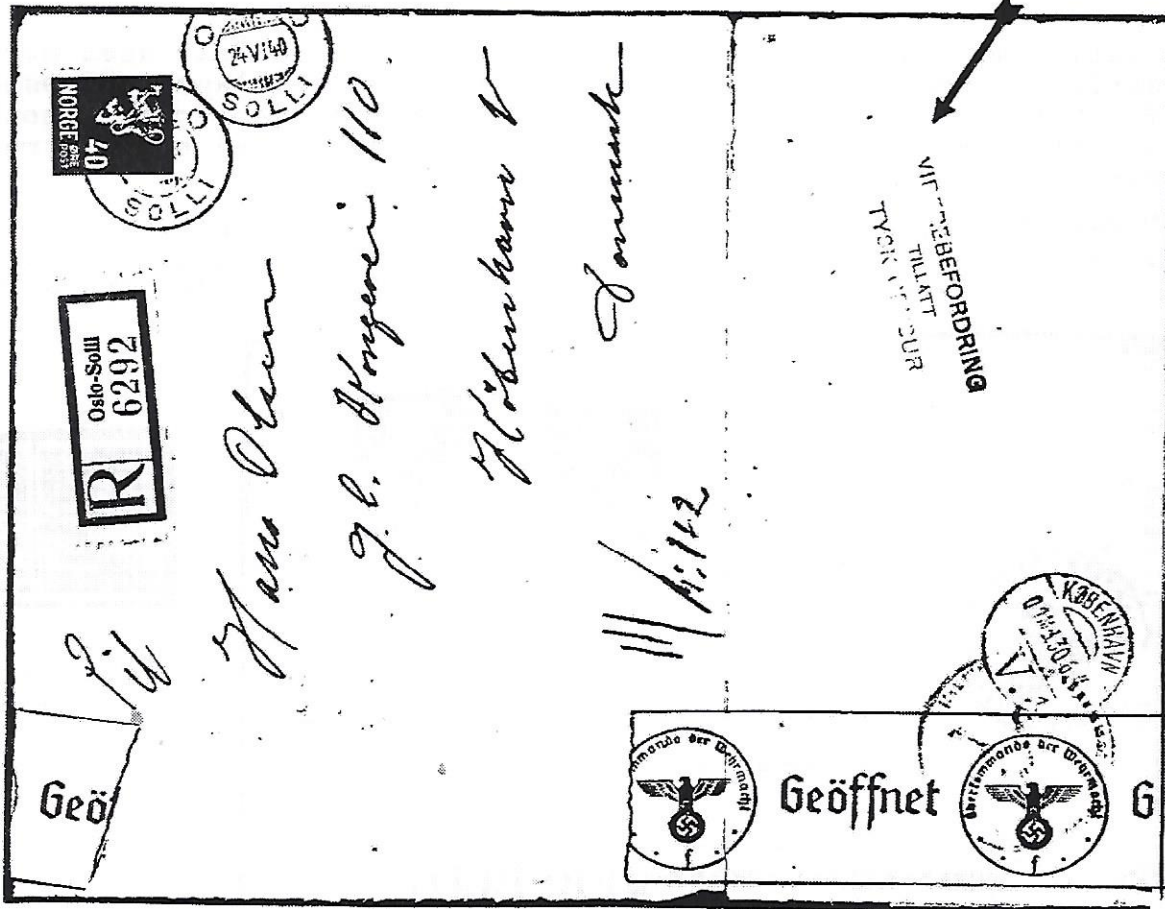
Fig. 1) Registered cover posted June 24, 1940 at Oslo-Solli has 3-line handstamp "VIDEREBEFORDRING/TILLATT/TYSK CENSUR" (Forwarded by the German Censor) applied at Oslo for routing to Hamburg censor office.

Fig. 2) Ordinary cover posted June 26, 1940 was opened and examined at Oslo, then closed with plain brown tape and handstamped "APNET VED TYSK CENSUR" (Opened by German Censor). A subsequent Hamburg inspection added the code 'f' sealing tape and "Geprüft" stamp.
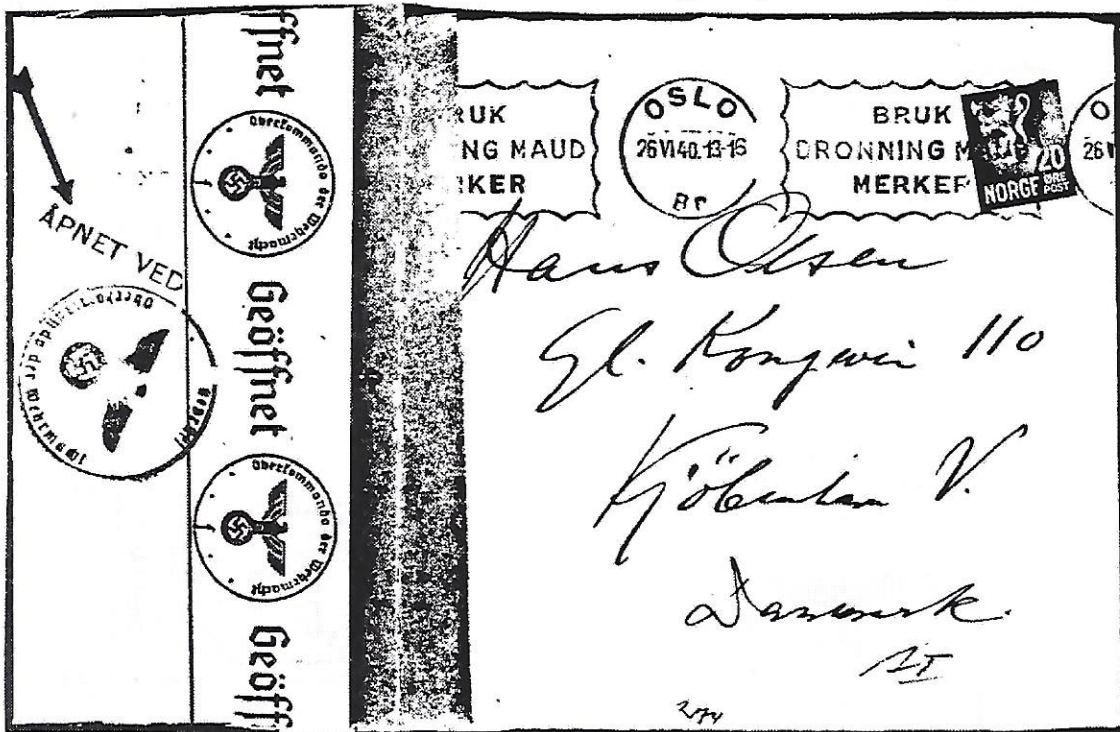
From July 1940 onwards, the German censor office in Oslo used more
conventional tapes and handstamps to perform surveillance on postal
traffic between Norway and the other Scandinavian countries. Another
censor office established at Trondheim in 1941 handled postal traffic
between north-central Norway and Sweden/Finnland.

The Norwegian Postal Ministry issued a number of stamps to commemorate
the Quisling government. On August 1, 1941 a semi-postal 20+80 Ore stamp
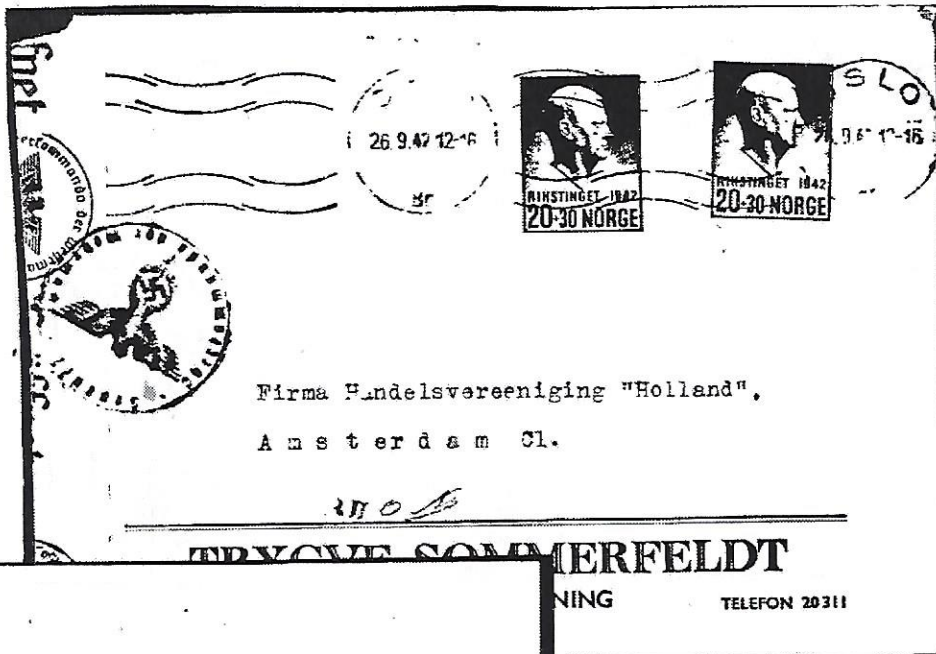honored the Norwegian Legion which fought in Russia under the Waffen-SS.



Firma Handelsvereeniging "Holland",

A m s t e r d a m  C1.

TRYGVE SOMMERFELDT

NING        TELEFON 20311



Fig. 3
Norwegian Legion
stamp pair.

Ein Schreiben war in diesem
Briefumschlag nicht enthalten.
Auslandsbriefprüfstelle

Hamburg, den . . . . . 1942

Fig. 4) First day cover to Holland has
semi-postal stamps depicting pro-Nazi
Minister Vidkun Quisling (whose name
became a synonym for traitor). These
stamps commemorating the 8th annual
meeting of the Nasjonal Samling Party
were issued on Sept. 26, 1942.

The 'philatelic' purpose of this cover
is revealed by the advisory slip which
was inserted at the Hamburg censor
office and reads "This letter contained
no message".

The Norwegian Postal Service issued regulations on April 4, 1941 which
provided that official mail from German civilian and military agencies
in Norway required no postage. Such mail required that an official seal
("Dienstsiegel") be displayed on the address side. Shortly thereafter,
German agencies were furnished with special handstamps which included
the exemption notation "Portofreie Dienstsache" (Postage Free Official
Mail) as shown below.


Portofreie Dienstsache


PORTOFREIE DIENSTSACHE

All political parties in Norway were outlawed except for the Nasjonal Samling. Political prisoners were sent to a new concentration camp at Neuengamme near Hamburg which was established in June 1940. This had initially been a branch camp of the Sachenhausen concentration camp which had been established in 1938 to produce bricks for the SS controlled Deutsche Erd-und Steinwere GmbH (German Clay and Brick Works Ltd.). It was set up as an independent concentration camp to fulfill the need for a large center west of the Rhine to accomodate political prisoners from Norway, Holland, Belgium and France.
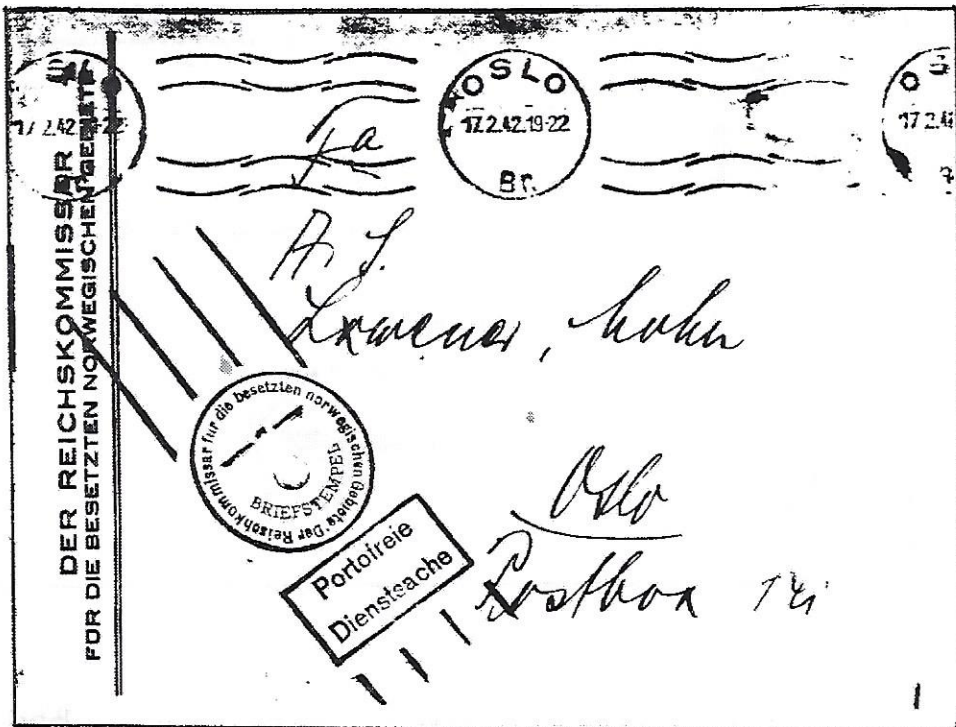


Fig. 5) Official item from "Reich Commissioner for the Occupied Norwegian Territories" using printed envelope and official seal.

Note that seal has the word "Reichskommissar" erroneously spelled "Reischkommissar".

When the occupation administration was firmly established, the "Einsatzgruppen" (Action Groups) of the SS which had accompanied military forces were converted into a static security force under the "Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und der SD" (Commander of Security Police and the Security Services). The BdS in Norway was Oberführer Dr. Stahlecker, who established four local commands in the major cities. Stahlecker was killed during an air raid in Germany late in 1940 and was succeede by Heinrik Fehlis, a senior Gestapo official and the Local Security Commander in Oslo.

Fig. 6) Registered cover posted in Stavanger in October 1941 was sent to a firm in Oslo from the "Einsatzkommando der Sicherheitspolizei und der SD".
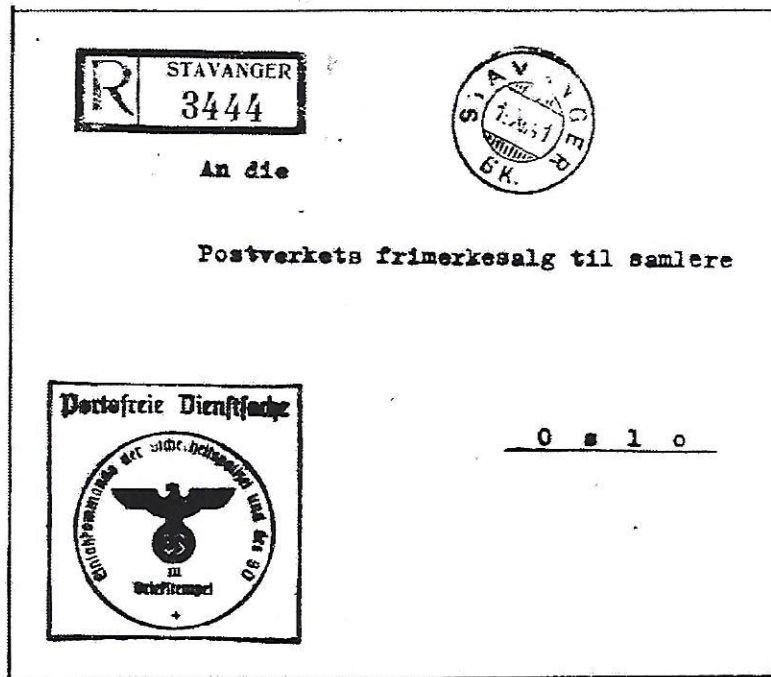
Within the central administration in Norway, the police and S.S. were
represented in headquarters by an officer with the title "Der Höhere
S.S. und Polizeiführer" (Superior S.S. and Police Chief) who commanded
not only units of the S.S., the Gestapo and the Security Services, but
also the German regular police.

Fig. 7) Official
mail from Economics
Section of the
Senior SS and Police
Commander. This
cover posted in
Oslo in Oct.'43 has
slogan cancel
"Purchase the Front
Fighter stamp".

This section of the
HSSPF office was
established to
control economic
enterprises in
Norway.
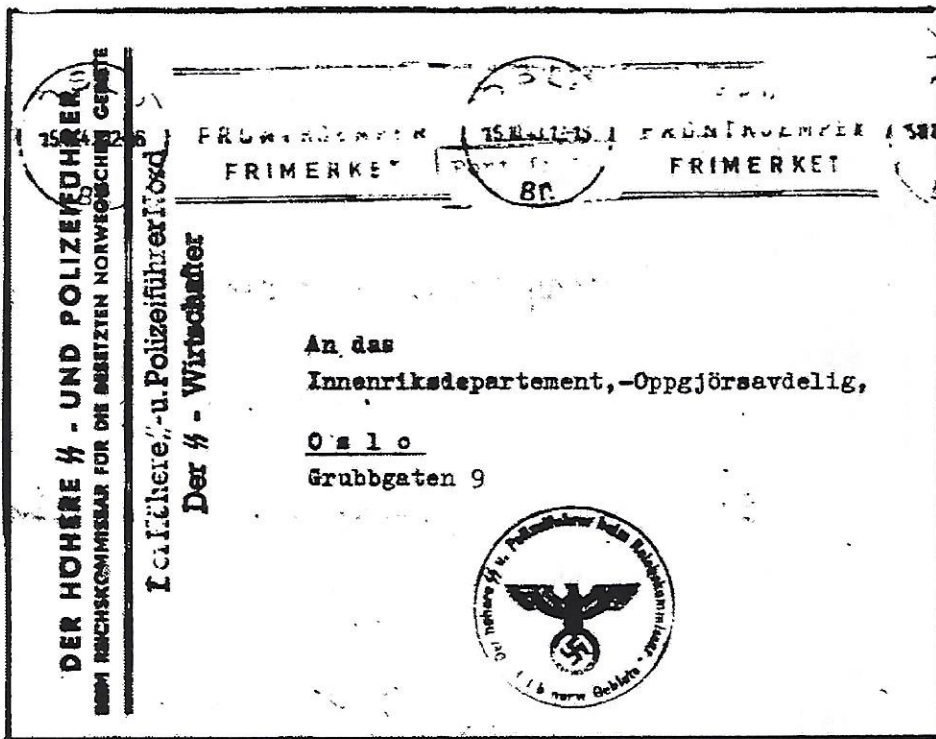


IV. Military Mail - Norway was the northern flank of Germany's defenses
and required the maintainence of large military garrisons throughout
the war years. Prior to the start of the Russian campaign in June 1941,
military forces in Norway were controlled by the 20th Army. When this
command relocated to Finland, a new Army staff was formed in Oslo and
designated "Armeekommando Norwegen". The A.K. Norwegen controlled three
Army Corps: LXXI Korps in the north, XXXIII Korps in the center and
LXX  Korps in the south. There were also many Navy and Air Force units
which contributed to the defense and also battered Allied convoys on
their way to the Russian port of Murmansk.

The postal needs of military forces in Norway were usually met by the
extensive network of Feldpost offices. Military mail was allowed to be
posted at civil offices initially but was later restricted to German
controlled Dienstpost offices.

Feldpost from units with "open" (i.e. without 5 digit Feldpost number)
addresses were required to add the "Portofreie Dienstsache" notation,
even when dispatching mail through Feldpost offices. There was also a
15mm circular handstamp "FN" which was used on military mail transferred
from the Feldpost to Norwegian civil post. These handstamps are found
with numerals "1" thru "5" per the example shown as Fig. 8 on the next
page.

Michel's Feldpost handbook has a section on propaganda labels ("Propaganda-
Vignetten") which illustrates a label with pairs of crossed arrows inside
a shield with "9.April 1940" above and "Norwegen" below. Also seen on
Feldpost from Norway in 1941 is a label with a large "V" in black on a
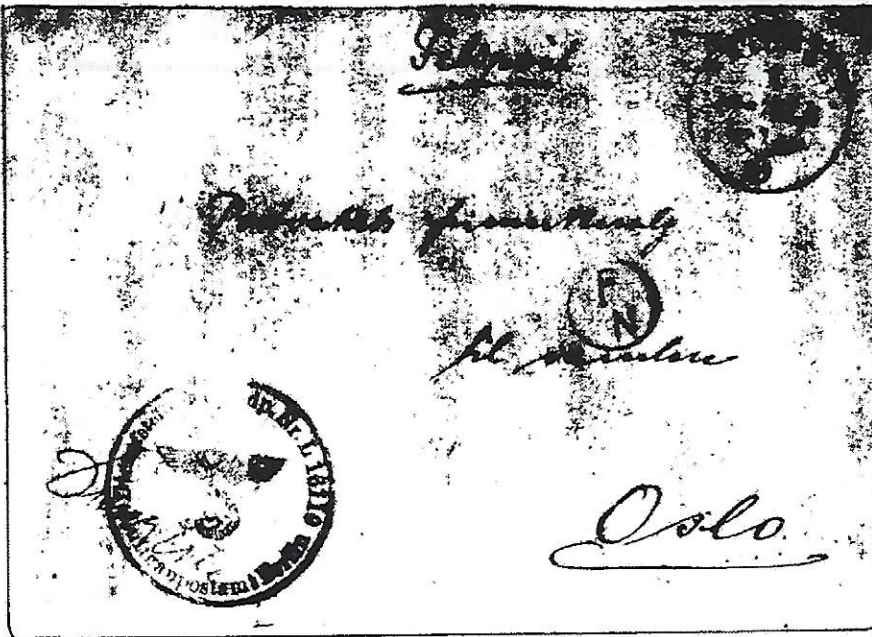red background and "Viktoria" in small type.

Fig.8 ) Feldpost cover from Fp.# 16110 (Flug-meldfunk Kp. z.b.V. 33) posted Feb. '43 with 16mm circular "FN" routing stamp used only in northern Norway.
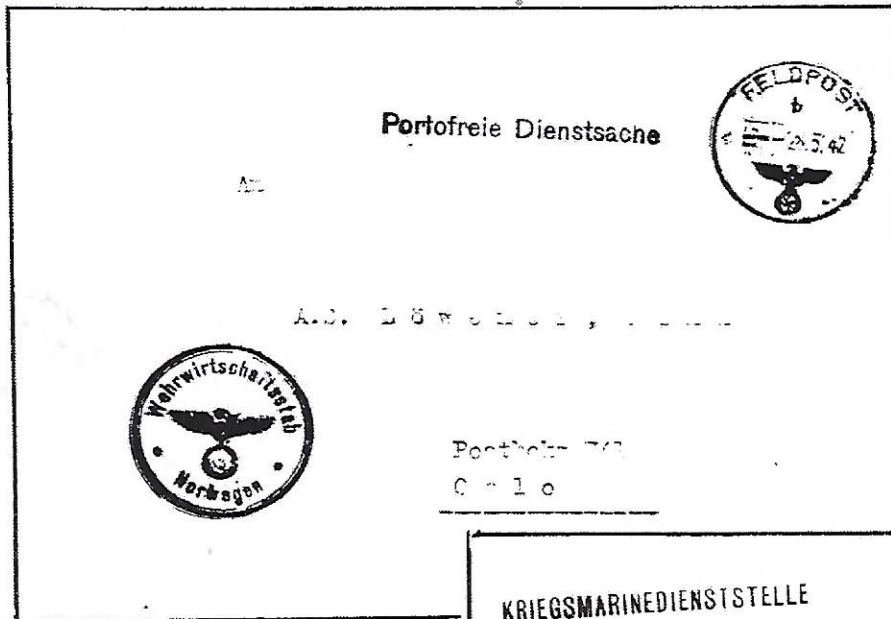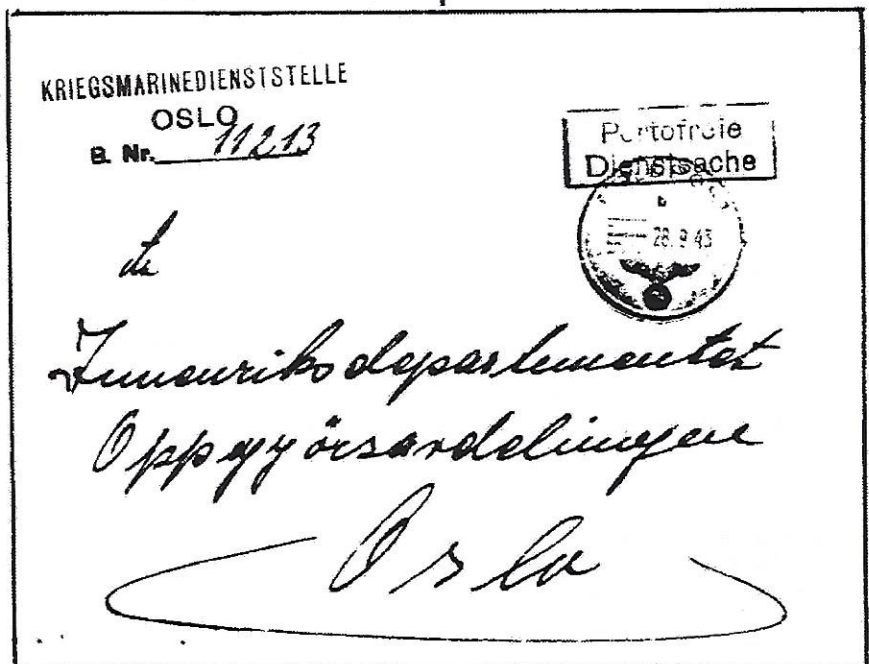


Portofreie Dienstsache

Fig. 9) Military units in Norway which were not under operational commands used the note "Portofreie Dienstsache" instead of "Feldpost". A 1-line handstamp for this notation appears on this cover to Oslo sent via the Feldpost by the Armed Forces Economics Staff ("Wehr-wirtschaftsstab") in May 1942.

Fig. 10) Official Navy mail posted at a Feldpost office September 1943 has 2-line boxed exemption handstamp.



KRIEGSMARINEDIENSTSTELLE
OSLO
B. Nr. 11213

Portofreie
Dienstsache

| Jahrgang 1942 | Berlin, den 24. Juli | Nr. 63 |

## Inhalt

## Allgemeines

### *) Nr. 347. 1942.  Deutsches Dienstpostamt Oslo

Am 11. Juli 1942 ist das »Deutsche Dienst-
postamt Oslo« eingerichtet worden.

#### I. Dienstbereich

Das Deutsche Dienstpostamt Oslo vermittelt
in beiden Richtungen vorerst nur den Dienst-
postverkehr

1. des Reichskommissars für die besetzten
norwegischen Gebiete und der ange-
schlossenen Dienststellen sowie der Dienst-
stellen der NSDAP., ihrer Gliederungen
und angeschlossenen Verbände (Behörden-
verkehr) und

2. der reichsdeutschen Bediensteten der
unter 1. genannten Dienststellen (Privat-
verkehr).

#### II. Sendungsarten

Zugelassen sind in beiden Richtungen

1. im Behördenverkehr (I, 1):

gewöhnliche und eingeschriebene Brief-
sendungen wie im innerdeutschen Ver-
kehr,

Wertbriefsendungen bis 3000 $\mathscr{R}\mathscr{M}$,

gewöhnliche und eingeschriebene Päck-
chen bis 1000 g,

gewöhnliche Pakete bis 5 kg,

Sendungen mit Rückschein,

2. im Privatverkehr (I, 2):

gewöhnliche und eingeschriebene Brief-
sendungen bis 100 g,

gewöhnliche und eingeschriebene Päck-
chen bis 1000 g.

#### III. Gebühren

Die Sendungen sind nach den deutschen In-
landsgebühren entweder mit deutschen Post-
wertzeichen oder Dienstmarken freizumachen
oder — sofern sie der Gebührenablösung unter-
liegen — mit dem Vermerk »Frei durch Ab-
lösung Reich« und dem Dienststempel der ab-
sendenden Dienststelle zu versehen. Die Gebüh-
ren für Dienstpakete werden bis auf weiteres
nach der 5. Zone berechnet.

#### IV. Anschrift

Die Sendungen sind wie folgt zu kennzeich-
nen:

1. über der Anschrift mit dem rot um-
randeten Vermerk: »Durch Deutsches
Dienstpostamt Oslo«,

2. über die ganze Aufschriftseite mit einem
diagonalen blauen Kreuz,

3. in der Richtung nach Norwegen auf
Aufschriftseite unten rechts unterhalb der
Angabe des Bestimmungsortes groß und
deutlich mit dem rot unterstrichenen
Leitvermerk: »über Leitpostamt Ber-
lin N 4«,

4. im Privatverkehr der Behördenbediens-
ten ist in der Empfänger- und Absender-
angabe außer dem Vor- und Zunamen und
der genauen Amtsbezeichnung auch die
Beschäftigungsdienststelle anzugeben (z.B.
Steuerinspektor Fritz Müller beim Reichs-
kommissar für die besetzten norwegischen
Gebiete, Abteilung Finanz, Oslo),

5. für Dienstpakete ist die gelbe Inlands-
paketkarte (ohne Zollpapiere usw.) zu
verwenden.

#### V. Zustellung

Eine Zustellung der Sendungen findet in Nor-
wegen durch die Deutsche Dienstpost nicht
statt. Die Sendungen sind von den Dienststel-
len zugleich für ihre Bediensteten bei den vom
Deutschen Dienstpostamt Oslo zu bezeichnenden
Stellen abzuholen.

#### VI. Leitung und Prüfung der Sendungen

Die Dienstpostsendungen in Richtung Nor-
wegen sind bis auf weiteres unmittelbar, in
Richtung Reich über das Deutsche Dienstpost-
amt Oslo auf das Leitpostamt Berlin N 4 zu
leiten. Die Prüfung, ob Empfänger oder Ab-
sender in Norwegen zur Teilnahme am Dienst-
postverkehr berechtigt sind, erfolgt durch das
Deutsche Dienstpostamt Oslo.

Min-Z 2198—0 Nor

Amtsbl. d. RPM 1942

V. <u>German Official Mail Service</u> - in the spring of 1942, Reichs Commissioner Terboven decided that the Norwegian postal service could no longer be trusted to handle mail to and from German agencies and their employees. On July 11, 1942, the "Deutsches Dienstpostamt Oslo" was established at Oslo Postoffice P2 for the exclusive use of German agencies and their employees. A "Leitstelle" (Routing office) was set up in Berlin N4 to handle mail traffic between Germany and Norway. The regulations for this service were published in the July 24, 1942 issue of the Amtsblatt des RPM (see Page 14). The notation "Durch Deutsches Dienstpostamt Oslo" in red and a diagonal cross in blue were required on such mail. New cancelling devices were issued to DDPA Oslo and branch offices later established in Drondheim, Narvik and Tromsö.
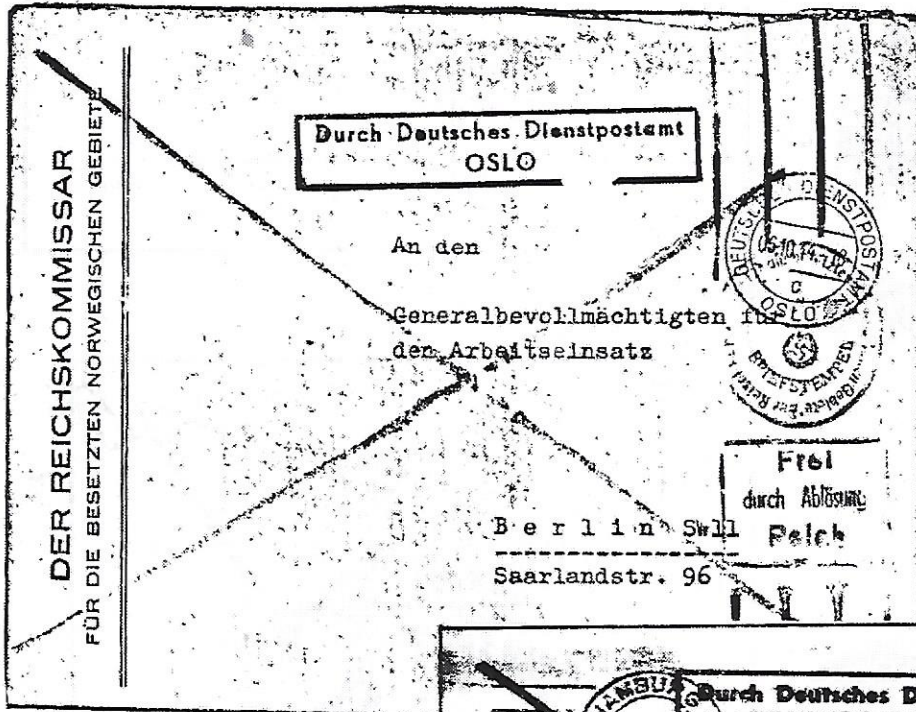
Fig. 11) Official cover to Berlin sent by the Reichs Commissioner's office in October 1944 has DDPA Oslo cancel and boxed notation.

This was a very limited DDP system because large areas of Norway remained under German military administration. A large Feldpost network in Norway provided postal service for military personnel.

Fig. 12) Preprinted envelope addressed to the Reich Commissioner's office from a firm in Hamburg posted in Feb. 1945.

The DDPA Oslo remained in operation until the general capitulation in May 1945.