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My unforgettable time in
Pöszeiten/Pežeičiai, district of Memel/Klaipėda

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Greeting / Editorial

Dear Collector Friends,

oh, another issue already? Well, issues 14 and 15 were published a little late due to work commitments. With issue 16, we hope to return to the usual rhythm of June and December. However, delays cannot be completely ruled out in the future, as professional assignments must take priority. We have solved the technical problems to the extent that Friedhelm Doell is now solely responsible for the layout.

The expert editors Thomas Löbbeling (Estonia), Ruud van Wijnen (Latvia) and Martin Bechstedt (Lithuania) have created a diverse program once again. Thanks to them! I urge all members to recommend and submit possible articles to the expert editors. All will receive assistance in every way possible. The three expert editors competently and thoroughly answer any philatelic inquiries. Throughout the years, I have garnered some editorial experience.

At the end of October, we promoted the Baltic philately at the Ulm International Stamp Fair. You will find a report at the back of this issue. We are planning another stand at PHILATELIA in Munich next year. Our registration was immediate in mid-November upon confirmation that the event would take place on March 2 and 3. The BDPH had intended to hold a trade fair in Essen, which was cancelled at press time. Representatives of the specialist trade had already been much more sceptical about the event than those responsible at the BDPH.

Our annual meeting in 2024 will happen on the second weekend of May, specifically from the 10th to the 12th. It is necessary to adhere to the March 31 deadline set by the sports school to confirm your participation. During February, you will receive an invitation to the event. In the invitation, I will introduce the topics that will be presented throughout the General Assembly. If you wish to speak about anything related to Baltic philately, please inform me before the end of January. By the way, delivering a lecture is easier than many people think. We always have an engaged, postage stamp-collecting crowd. No rhetorical or other gimmicks are required to appeal to the audience. Just test us!

At the end of July, Tartu will host MARE BALTICUM 2024, an event organized by Oliver Hanschmidt in the European Capital of Culture. The exhibition will feature members from the Baltic States Working Group, and detailed information was already provided by Friedhelm Doell in issue 15 of BALTIKUM. The board hopes for a large crowd attending the event in Tartu.

Yours, Torsten Berndt

Constance, November 2023

Estonia Michel No. 45 B II and more

Thomas Löbbeling, Holzappel (D)

On November 9, 1923, the denomination of the airmail overprint issue "45 Marka 1923" on 2 x 5 Marka with 3,234 copies appeared in the second issue, known as MiNo. 45 B II on MiNo. 14 (2). In contrast to the first issue, MiNo. 45 B I, of October 1 of that year, the distance in the overprint between (4)5 and M(arka) is always more than two millimetres. Additionally, unlike the first issue, the overprint was not done on complete sheets of 200 original stamps that were folded for overprinting. Instead, it was printed on half-sized sheets of the original MiNo. 14 stamp, which customers could exchange for valid stamps at the post office counter¹.

For this reason, there are no gutter pairs available for the second issue. About 65 counter sheets, each containing 100 original stamps, underwent an overprint.

Unused stamps with the uniform, brown-striped gum coating occur more often in the second issue than the first. This is because they came from returned counter sheets. The first issue stamps mostly used the uneven "economy gum coating" which was also overprinted. (Hurt/Ojaste D:1).

So far, only one half-sheet of 50 original stamps = 25 overprinted stamps and two complete sheets of 100 original stamps each = 2 x 50 overprinted stamps with uneven gumming are known. If unused and used overprinted stamps² from left and right-hand counter sheets of 100 original stamps each with uneven gumming are combined, it is likely that no more than four complete sheets with 200 overprinted stamps on paper with uneven gumming were created. As far back as 1994, Dipl.-Ing. Zbigniew Mikulski accurately described the 2nd edition containing economy gum as Estonia's most significant rarity³.

The initial print run for the 10, 20, and 45 marka denominations made use of a printing plate containing 50 printing forms on 100 original stamps. For the second release of the 45 marka denomination, a new plate with 25 printing forms was created. As a result, the spacing between (4)5 and M(arka) in the second issue is always approximately 2.10 mm, which differs from the first edition where it varied between 0.85 and 1.75 mm. Additionally, as the initial stamp sheets did not need to be folded before overprinting, they could be overprinted consecutively, resulting in a more consistent overprint compared to the first edition. The new printing plate with 25 overprint forms is showcased by four⁴ coun-

¹ Cf. Hurt, Vambola & Ojaste, Elmar (eds.) 1986; Estonia, Philately & Postal History. Handbook, catalogue. Gothenburg. Note in the English text on p. 91.

² sc. with uneven gumming

³ Quoted from Mikulski, Z. in a letter to private on June 1, 1994

⁴ Two sheets each with even and uneven rubber coating

ter sheets containing 50 overprinted stamps each and a half-sheet displaying 25 overprinted stamps.

The individual letters and numbers of the overprint were reassembled for the second edition using the material available from the first edition. This is particularly noticeable on the sheet fields R 31/32 and R 81/82. While the plate errors of the overprint of the first edition according to Hurt / Ojaste

- E:4, notch in the "1", on sheet fields 27/28 and
- E:6, damaged "2", on sheet fields 73/74

appear separately, the same plate errors of the overprint appear together in the second edition on sheet fields R 31/32 and R 81/82, catalogued here by Hurt / Ojaste as E:2.

The same applies to the plate errors on the overprint of the first edition:

- E:2, damaged "M" on sheet fields 33/34
- E:3, damaged "r" on sheet fields 75/76
- E:5, damaged "9" on sheet fields 73/74,

that appear identical in form in the second edition:

- on sheet fields R 27/28 and R77/78, H/O not catalogued, damaged "M"
- on sheet fields R 49/50 and R 99/100, H/O E:1, damaged "r"
- on sheet fields R 35/36 and R 85/86, H/O not catalogued, damaged "9".

However, the fact that the new printing plate with 25 overprint forms made it possible to overprint the counter sheets of 100 copies of the original stamp one after the other with 2 x 25 equal to 50 overprint stamps did not prevent the printer(s) from placing individual sheets "upside down" in the printing press and thus creating "upside down" overprints. This occurrence is listed in the Schwaneberger catalogue since 2022 under MiNo. 45 B II K (Hurt / Ojaste E:3).

If the observer wants to determine whether there is an "upside down" overprint in his collection, it is essential that he first abandons the conventional approach of viewing the overprint horizontally and from left to right: the "normal" overprint on MiNo. 45 B II and generally on MiNos. 43 to 45 is to be read from top to bottom rotated 90 degrees to the right, the "upside down" overprint from bottom to top. See Fig. 3 for an example of the "normal" overprint on the 25-printing plate. Figs. 11 and 12 depict upside down overprints from the left and right halves of the original stamp.

Distinctive plate faults and field characteristics of the two original stamps also enable precise determination of sheet field for most individual copies of the overprint stamp⁵. Eo Vaher has created a comprehensive list of these plate faults and field features, which

⁵ Cf. Vaher, Eo 1976: Plate Flaws of the First Estonian Air Mail Stamp. In: Estonian Philatelic Societies in New York and Tallinn (ed.) Eesti Filatelist 1976, 18–19. Västra Frölunda (Sweden). P. 31 ff.

the observer requires to determine whether they have an "upside down" by comparing the original stamp and the position of the overprint on each of the two original stamps.

Only two half-sheets have been discovered so far, one on the left and one on the right, with 100 overprinted stamps inserted incorrectly. It's highly likely that specimens for MiNo. 45 B II K are even more scarce than those for MiNo. 45 B II on paper with uneven gum coating, as previously described. Both sheets of MiNo. 45 B II K with the "upside down" overprint also have even gumming.

Unique to date: During the stock investigation on which this piece is grounded, the initial instance of MiNo. 45 B II K with the plate defect of the first stamp according to Hurt / Ojaste E:5, "missing green print", was found on sheet field R 43/44. Therefore, the related comment on page 91 of the Estonia handbook, stating that such a piece is unseen, should be removed. Fig. 14 displays stamps from two identical sheet sections, R 43/44, with both "normal" and "upside down" overprints for comparison.

From a printing point of view, it is quite possible that stamps of the overprint values of 10 and 20 Marka with an upside-down overprint also exist. So far, they have not been proven with certainty.

Even more reason to have a look: Go in search of your upside-down overprint!

Fig. 1: Schematic view of a printed sheet Michel no. 14 with 2 x 100 stamps

Fig. 2: left stamp with uneven gumming, so-called "economy gum", right stamp with evenly brownish striped gumming

Fig. 3: MiNo. 45 B II 25 printing plate, sheet fields R 51-100, front side

Fig. 4: ditto, reverse, stamps with uneven gumming

Fig. 5: MiNo. 45 B II, sheet fields R 81/82, plate error original stamps E:4 & E:6, plate error overprint E:2 after Hurt / Ojaste

Fig. 6: ditto, enlarged image of the imprint

Fig. 7: MiNo. 45 B II sheet fields R 81/82 to 89/90, front side

Fig. 8: ditto reverse, stamps with even gumming

Fig. 9: MiNo. 45 B II sheet fields R 81/82, uniform gumming

Fig. 10: MiNo. 45 B II sheet fields L 81/82, uneven gumming

Fig. 11: MiNo. 45 B II K Sheet fields L 81/82 & 83/84, L 91/92, and L 93/94

Fig. 12: MiNo. 45 B II K Sheet fields R 9/10

Fig. 13: MiNo. 45 B II K Sheet fields R 43/44, plate error of the original stamp H/O E:5, white spot under POST, unique

Fig. 14: MiNo. 45 B II and MiNo. 45 B II K, sheet fields R 43/44, in comparison

Estonia's kroon values – real or fake?

Thomas Löbbbering, Holzappel (D)

On January 1, 1928, Estonia got rid of their old paper money, marka and penni, and started using a new currency that was based on the gold standard. A hundred marka were now worth one crown (1 = üks kroon / 2 = kaks krooni) made up of 100 cents (üks sent / kaks senti). The postage stamps on marka and penni issued from February 18, 1922, onwards remained valid for postage at one hundredth of their face value until December 31, 1940¹. This also applied to the biggest values of 70, 100 and 300 marka, which were mainly used for franking parcel cards, airmail, and express mail. It took almost three years before the previous 70 and 300 marka values showed up on September 1, 1930, with another coloured net print and overprint of the new values in crown currency, MiNos. 87–89. The postage stamps were created in multiple stages across six years, but no forgeries are known.

The situation is different with the one kroon, two krooni and three krooni maximum postage stamp values, which appeared in final design between April 1, 1933, and April 15, 1940. They will be discussed below.

A one-crown (üks kroon) denomination with the motif of the Narva River Falls in the city of Narva was issued on April 1, 1933, Michel No. 98, in contrast to the following values, first in halftone intaglio, before it too was issued on April 15, 1940, largely with the same motif in intaglio, Michel No. 159. All stamps were created in sheets of 50 and printed in Tallinn State Printing House. They were issued in landscape (K 14:13½) or portrait (K 13½: 14) formats. The gum generally appears brownish, often bubbly, and glossy, less frequently even, lighter and matt glossy.

Only the one-crown value category in halftone intaglio printing has two editions based on the paper used. The first edition used a thicker 0.08 mm paper, and the second edition used a thinner 0.065 to 0.070 mm paper. The brightness of the grey-black colour differs significantly between editions.

Imperforated proofs in final design and colouring are known. Hurt / Ojaste² list them under G:1. They originate from the archive sheet(s) deposited in the archives of the former Tallinn Postal Museum.

The essay mounted on brown-black cardboard in the form of a single print measuring 41.5 x 29.5 mm can be shown here for the first time. Apart from its size, it differs from

¹ In the Berliner Briefmarkenzeitung No. 4 / 1928, Dr. jur. W. Schönherr lists the issues concerned exactly on page 53 f., such as MiNo. 26, the postage stamps in craftsmen's and landscape drawing up to 31.12.1940, the city issue up to 18.01.1928, the additional airmail stamps from 02.02.1928 (start of the flying season) up to 15.04.1928, etc.

² Cf. Hurt, Vambola & Ojaste, Elmar (eds.) 1986; Estonia, Philately & Postal History. Handbook, catalogue. Gothenburg. p. 143 ff.

the issued MiNo. 98 in that the stamp image is surrounded by a frame. This consists of halftone dots in the stamp colour. The previously unknown essay can undoubtedly be assigned to the stamp issue in halftone intaglio printing, MiNo. 98, and not to the stamp issue in intaglio printing, MiNo. 159, listed in Hurt / Ojaste under G:4. There are no known forgeries of this intaglio stamp either.

This is not the case for the crown values produced by intaglio printing, which are therefore considered to be largely forgery-proof. So-called "proofs" have been around for decades, still offered in large numbers as rarities and paid for dearly. How can this be explained and how can these forgeries be distinguished from genuine essays and proofs to the detriment of collectors?

Let us stay with the sequence 1, 2, 3 crowns and return to, or rather start with, the last value stage issued on April 15, 1940, one crown in intaglio printing, MiNo. 159, which is not a further issue of MiNo. 98, but a completely new stamp. This becomes particularly clear when the two stamps are superimposed for comparison, in the differing frame drawing, but also in the drawing of the clouds above the waterfall. This also explains why no forgeries of MiNo. 98 in halftone rotogravure have been discovered to date, but there have been forgeries of MiNo. 159.

In their production process, the 1, 2 and 3 crown denominations created using intaglio printing (copper intaglio printing) first required the reverse engraving of the stamp image on a copper plate, the reproduction of which was then used to create the printing plate, which was then used to print the correct side of the finished stamp by the paper absorbing the ink from the recessed parts of the engraving. Fig. 13 shows an original copper printing plate of the 2-crown value, MiNo. 137, issued on April 11, 1938.

Copies of the original copper plates of the denominations of one crown, MiNo. 159, two crowns, MiNo. 137, and three crowns³, MiNo. 108, have fallen into private hands and have been misused to produce forgeries⁴. All forgeries of this type originate from a printing company in Helsinki, where they were produced in the early 1960s. The plates were used to create fake versions of the currency. The forgeries were placed on flat, non-gummed yellowish-white paper (1-5-6)⁵ and coloured in black, red, and blue. The paper had a thickness of 0.07 to 0.08 mm.

The forgers used the real plates and stacked them in sheets of ten. Interestingly, even though authentic copper plates were utilized to create the fake prints, letterpress printing was used to produce them.

³ Contrary to what is shown in Hurt / Ojaste, cf. note on p. 143, the original copper plate of the three-crown value, MiNo. 108, was also used to produce forgeries.

⁴ Stories differ as to whether the theft took place after the bombing of Tallinn by the Soviet Air Force on March 6-7, 1944, whether from the State Printing House or the Postal Museum, or as a result of the later sale of material originally from the Estonian Postal Museum by the Soviet Postal Museum in Leningrad.

⁵ See MICHEL 2011: Colour guide. 38th edition. Unterschleißheim. p. 19.

This not only resulted in the clearly visible "squeezed edges" along the front of the printed image and the visible embossing on the back of the paper. Above all, in letterpress printing, it was not the lower parts of the plate that printed the image on the paper, as in engraving (copper) gravure printing, but the higher parts. As a result, all forged proofs in letterpress printing show a negative image. Genuine proofs, on the other hand, always show the positive image in intaglio.

There exist imperforate proofs of the two-crown stamp portraying Tallinn harbour in its final design and colouring. Hurt / Ojaste lists them under G:1 and G:2. They came originally from the archive sheet(s) held at the archives of the former Tallinn Postal Museum. A formerly unknown essay, enlarged and printed in black on white cardboard, can be viewed for the first time.

Imperforated proofs of stamps for one and two crowns are available in the final design and colouring of Hurt/Ojaste G:1. Examples of essays are displayed on white cardboard, presenting an enlarged single print in a different colouring, here exemplarily Hurt / Ojaste G:2 in (reddish) brown and presented for the first time in blue, Hurt / Ojaste n.n.

Fig. 1: "3 KROONI 3" on 300 MARKA with double net print in blue, MiNo. 89 F

Fig. 2: Parcel card, franked in cash with RMk 5.90 for a parcel of 15 kg from Durlach via Stettin to Tallinn, February 29, to March 8, 1936; Non réclamé, Retour (not executed)

Fig. 3: Storage fee for international parcels (1 Jan. 1928 2 5 Dec. 1940) 1st-7th day 10 Senti; from the 8th day onwards 10 Senti per day, calculated 50 days = 5.00 Kr; MiF MiNo. 98 (2), 108; parcel delivery on May 14, 1936

Fig. 4: MiNo. 98, range of colour brightness of the intaglio printed stamp

Fig. 5: Imperforated proof (archive) MiNo. 98, H/O G:1

Fig. 6: Essay on MiNo. 98

Fig. 7: FAKE proof MiNo. 159 in black, ex printed sheet of ten copies: negative printing, letterpress printing.

Fig. 8: Ditto, FAKE, proof MiNo. 159, single print front

Fig. 9: Ditto, FAKE, proof MiNo. 159, single print reverse

Fig. 10: Differences in the drawing of the frame of MiNo. 98 and MiNo. 159 in comparison (enlarged)

Fig. 11; Imperforated proof (archive) MiNo. 159, H/O G:2

Fig. 12: Registered airmail letter Tallinn2New York, 25.4.40-23.5.40; MiF MiNo. 118 (2), 159; foreign letter up to 20 g (1.4.1939 – 5.12.1940) 30 Senti, registered 20 Senti; Airmail letter USA (1.3.1940 – 5.12.1940) à 5 g x 3 = 15 g 90 Senti => 1,40 Kr; the letter was cancelled due to the airmail ban from the end of April 1940 (Western campaign as from May 10, 1940) by land and sea

Fig. 13: Copper printing plate (enlarged) of the 2-crown value, Michel No. 137; the engraving is reversed, the intaglio image of the issued stamp appears on the correct side.

Fig. 14: FAKE proof print MiNo. 137 in blue

Fig. 15: FAKE proof print MiNo. 137 in red

Fig. 16: FAKE proofs MiNo. 108 and 137 as well as other stamps (MiNo. 141 and 150) as joint single prints in black. The illustration proves that the copper printing plate of the three-crown value, MiNo. 108, was also used for the forgery.

Fig. 17: Imperforated proof (archive) MiNo. 137, H/O G:1; the illustration shows the handwritten approval note by Postal Director Gustav Jallajas dated March 2, 1938, for the present blue colour.

Fig. 18: Essay MiNo. 137 in black, Hurt / Ojaste n.n.

Fig. 19 (front): Registered domestic postal money order for 515.34 Kr; MiF MiNo. 137, 162w (5); domestic registered mail (1 March 1940 – 5 December 1940) 15 Senti, Mandat de Poste 5 Senti per 10 Kr; postage calculation: 15 Senti plus 52 x 5 Senti = 2.75 Kr

Fig. 20 (back): Payment by the Pärnu Primary School Board and disbursement to the Tõstamaa Home Economics College on November 20/21, 1940.

Fig. 21 (enlarged): Plate error MiNo. 108, sheet field 14; E(ESTI) damaged, H/O E:1

Fig. 22: Essay MiNo. 108 in (reddish)brown, Hurt / Ojaste G:2

Fig. 23: Essay MiNo. 108 in blue, Hurt / Ojaste n.n.

Fig. 24: Parcel card franked with 8.45 SKR, MiNo. 207 I, 215b, 238 A (2), for a parcel over 14.5 kg from the Swedish ball bearing factories in Gothenburg via Stockholm to Helsingfors, Finland; from there readdressed to Tallinn; 10–15–17 June 1936

Fig. 25: Back of the same parcel card franked with a further 9.60 EKR transport, customs, and storage fee, MiNo. 85, 108 (3); TALLINN-VÄLISP. C 17 VI 36, B 22 VI 36, D 25 VI 36; the parcel was delivered to the Axel von Knorring technical office on June 26, 1936.

One of the most printed illustrators in the world

Torsten Berndt, Constance (D)

Most people have likely seen her work before. Some examined the drawings more closely, while others paid more attention to the text and only briefly glanced at the illustrations. Many children probably attempted to colour in the figures or interpret them in their own way. Her most popular pieces were featured in children's books.

Maire-Ilon Wikland, née Pääbo, designed most of Astrid Lindgren's books. Many translations included her original drawings, which means she might be one of the most prolific illustrators worldwide. Nevertheless, she faced the same as most artists – that most readers are more interested in the stories and hardly look to the illustrations or the covers.

Wikland is overshadowed by another illustrator, Ingrid Vang Nyman, who was given the honour of putting a face to Lindgren's most famous character. Wikland only illustrated books that were released after "Pippi Långstrump", but not the original "Pippi Longstocking", or "Pippi Pikksukk" in Estonian. The reason for this is simple: Wikland was

only 15 years old and had escaped to Sweden the year before to avoid the advancing Red Army when the legendary title was published in 1945.

She was born in Tartu on February 5, 1930, and grew up mainly in Haapsalu, living only briefly in Tallinn. Her parents were Vida Juse, an artist, and Maks Pääbo, an engineer working in textiles. In the 1920s, Vida Juse succeeded as a textile designer, later branching into painting and mosaic artistry. In 1939, she left Estonia to pursue further studies in Florence. As Maire-Ilon later lived in England and Spain, it is assumed that her parents divorced around 1939 or earlier – exact dates could not be determined. Maks Pääbo, also known as "Max", made a name for himself in technology by creating a new loom that produced more durable fabric. He left in 1944 and got a job at the Åke Berg textile factory.

It is unclear why Maks and Maire-Ilon Pääbo left for Sweden separately. Nonetheless, it is not uncommon for families to be separated during escapes. Neither Estonian nor Swedish sources provide any information. German families from the eastern territories surrendered by the Hitler regime also often experienced this. Maire-Ilon Pääbo escaped along with a schoolmate's family. At that time, Sweden was one of the nations where a lot of Estonians sought shelter. As a result, the Estonian Philatelists' Association in Sweden – Eesti Filatelistide Ühing Rootsis – had a strong philatelic impact. The association regularly published a periodical called "Eesti Filatelist", which possibly remains the sole publication to offer articles in Estonian, Swedish, English, and German.

In Sweden, Maire-Ilon Pääbo started training right away with Akke Kumlien, a painter, designer, and writer, at the School of Book and Advertising Art, also known as "Skolan för bok- och reklamkonst". Kumlien is popular among philatelists for designing the 1949 commemorative set for August Strindberg. Later, Pääbo improved her skills further by studying at the painter and art teacher Signe Barth's painting school and travelling across Europe. It was at this point that she got the task that would guide the direction of her life.

After getting married and taking her husband's name, who was a naval officer, she visited the publishing house Rabén & Sjögren in 1953 to seek work. While she was there, she met Astrid Lindgren, a renowned editor and writer who was searching for an illustrator for her latest book titled "Mio min Mio" – "Mio, my Son", "Mio, mu Mio". Lindgren promptly requested sketches from Wikland without delay. As a result of this, they started collaborating and worked on nearly all of Lindgren's books written solely from 1953 onwards. Björn Berg illustrated "Emil i Lönneberga" – "Emil of Lönneberga" – "Vahtramäe Emil" alone. Two female illustrators also created illustrations for book series published before and after 1953, such as "Barnen i Bullerbyn" – "All about the Bullerby Children [Children of Noisy Village in the US]" – "Bullerby lapsed": Ingrid Vang Nyman and Maire-Ilon Wikland.

Lindgren typically agreed with Wikland's suggestions, except for "Ronja rövardotter" – "Ronja the robber's daughter" – „Röövlitutar Ronja“. Initially, it seemed too feminine and reminded her too much of a Sámi child, the indigenous people of northern Scandinavia. Lindgren aimed to prevent anyone who viewed the Sámi as inferior from misinterpreting the character, so they worked together to develop the tousled-haired character. It's definitely not a mistake to read Lindgren's books with a focus on promoting independence. Lindgren and Wikland talked about "Karlsson på taket" – "Karlsson-on-the-Roof" – „Karlsson katuselt“, when they worked on it. This time, Wikland had the final say. She got ideas for Karlsson's room from her own living room. "Your illustrations have helped my books to connect with readers," Astrid Lindgren wrote about Wikland's exhibition.

"Many children will remember the figures you created for the rest of their lives. They will be an unforgettable part of their childhood" (quoted from: Süddeutsche Zeitung).

The pictures in Astrid Lindgren's books made Maire-Ilon Wikland famous all around the world. Yet, they were not her main occupation. It is doubtful that the payments were sufficient to sustain her livelihood in the long run. Wikland proceeded to draw for many other books, mostly aimed at children. Most of the writers she collaborated with are most likely only familiar to enthusiasts. Wikland partnered with authors such as Malene Schwartz, Elisabeth Hjortvid, Grete Janus Hertz, Hans Petersen and Ulf Schenkmann, among others. Some books have also been translated into German, but the writer could not find any Estonian translations.

This also applies to children's books that Wikland both illustrated and authored, including titles like "Animals all around", "I can help", and "I can do it solely" [English interpretations of German book titles] originally published in Swedish as "Djur", "Jag kan hjälpa till" and "Vad jag kan". Currently, there is no indication of any publisher expressing interest in releasing the works in Wikland's native language.

The "Läänemaa Muuseum", located in Haapsalu, has been displaying some of Wikland's art since 2009. The museum even named a section after Wikland called "Iloni Imedemaa" or "Ilon's Wonderland". Wikland partnered with her teacher, Akke Kumlien, in 2007 to produce a stamp from the Estonian Christmas collection with a face value of 5.50 crown. Wikland's art has been previously showcased in miniature form by the Swedish Post. This was always done as a tribute to Lindgren. Her stories were already included in the programme during her lifetime. There was only one issue published solely with Wikland's drawings for "Jul i Bullerbyn" – "Christmas in Bullerby/Noisy Village" In Estonia, the book was likely not published separately, but always together with the other volumes under "Bullerby lapsed." The remaining Swedish stamps showcased Wikland's artwork alongside other illustrators' drawings for Lindgren's literary creations.

While conducting research for this article, we discovered whether and to what degree Maire-Ilon Wikland is connected to Svante Pääbo, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2022. Maks Pääbo, Svante Pääbo's grandfather's second

cousin, means that three generations had already passed since the lines separated. The Pääbos are not as closely related as the Manns, the German extended family known for their distinguished lineage of scientists and artists. A few of their kin share the same destiny as Maire-Ilon Wikland, who remains unknown despite many having seen her works. Most film enthusiasts know "The Blue Angel" simply as a movie featuring Marlene Dietrich. Most people who have watched the film adaptation of Astrid Lindgren's work are unlikely to be familiar with Heinrich Mann's original book, "Professor Unrat." – translated as "Small Town Tyrant", just as most of Astrid Lindgren's readers are unlikely to have noticed the reference to Maire-Ilon Wikland.

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- Ilons Wonderland: <https://salm.ee/iloni-imedemaa/>
- Biographical Dictionary of Estonian Science: <https://www.ies.ee/ETBL/ETBL-III.pdf>
- German National Library: <https://portal.dnb.de/opac.htm>

Fig. 1: The Swedish discount stamp booklet of 1987, MH 121, was dedicated to Astrid Lindgren. Ilon Wikland created the drawings on fields 1, 3, 4, 7, 9 and 10, MiNos. 1431, 1433, 1434, 1437, 1439 and 1440. The other motifs were designed by: Ingrid Vang Nyman MiNos. 1432 and 1438, Eva Billow MiNo. 1435 and Björn Berg MiNo. 1436.

Fig. 2: Akke Kumlien, one of Ilon Wikland's teachers, designed the commemorative stamps for August Strindberg, here the 30 øre value, MiNo. 347.

Fig. 3: The booklet commemorating the death of Astrid Lindgren, MH 283, once again brings together selected characters from her oeuvre. Ilon Wikland's drawings can be found on fields 2, 3, 6 and 7, MiNos. 2276, 2277, 2280 and 2281, while field 1, MiNo. 2275, features a motif by Ingrid Vang Nyman and field 5, MiNo. 2279, one by Björn Berg. At the centre of field 4, Michel no. 2278, is Astrid Lindgren herself, drawn by Lars Sjööblom after a photograph by Jacob Forsell.

Figs. 4 and 5: In 2005, Sweden Post dedicated its Christmas stamps to Ilon Wikland's drawings from the Bullerby books, MiNos. 2501 (wet-adhesive roll stamp) and 2502 to 2505 (booklets with self-adhesive stamps, no separate Michel number as they do not contain a se-tenant).

Fig. 6: Two years later, Ilon Wikland designed one of the two self-adhesive Estonian Christmas stamps, MiNo. 598.

Marcophilistic diversity

Torsten Berndt, Konstanz (D)

In the years between the wars, Estonia had a dense railway network of broad-gauge and narrow-gauge lines. It had inherited the broad gauge from Finland and its Baltic neighbours Latvia and Lithuania, which had only gained independence from Russia at the end of the First World War. The postal service used the railways to transport and process mail almost from the beginning.

In his book, Oliver Hanschmidt documents the marcophilistic diversity of railway mail using selected covers. In addition to the classic railway postmarks, handwritten cancellations were also created in the early days after the proclamation of independence; as is well known, the ellipsis postmarks of the tsarist postal service bore place names in Cyrillic script, sometimes with Russian-language place names, so that they first had to be reworked. In the era of handwritten cancellations, some postal officials took the easy way out and simply crossed out the stamps, while others added their name or the date. The postal route shows that a cover must have travelled by rail.

The variety of postmarks used is as expressive as it is typical of railway mail. You often must look very closely to see the difference between two postmarks that look almost identical. Hanschmidt also distinguishes between periods of use – not every stamp is used throughout. In the 1920s, the Estonian Post acquired several district cancels with the word "Postvagun", abbreviated to "P.V.".

Eventually it replaced the reworked Russian cancels with elliptical cancels bearing the same abbreviation. Hanschmidt is also able to provide evidence of postmarks showing only the word "Postwagon" or "Postwagun" – the different spellings are due to the gradual reform of Estonian orthography.

The basis for Hanschmidt's study was Vambola Hurt and Elmar Ojaste's handbook, which is now almost 40 years old. Hanschmidt has not yet been able to obtain a specimen for every stamp presented there. He has left space for illustrations so that they can be added in later editions. He relies on the assistance of Estonian and railway postal specialists.

He documents his own speciality in detail: registered mail sent by rail. The variety ranges from hand-drawn registered letter endorsements to registered letter cancellations where the consignment number was entered by hand. To date, only a relatively small number of registered covers are known, and they are among the rarities of Estonian philately.

Oliver Hanschmidt has produced a standard work on Estonian railway mail with this volume, which was initially published in an edition of one hundred copies. Collectors of Estonian and railway mail will be pleased to add it to their libraries.

Bibliographical information: Cancellations and Markings of the Estonian Railway TPOs (Travelling Post Offices) 1918–1944. by Oliver Hanschmidt. 220 pages, over 400 colour illustrations, DIN A5 format, hardback. Price: 40 Euro plus postage. Available from Oliver Hanschmidt at oliver.hanschmidt@gmail.com.

Modern classicism

Torsten Berndt, Konstanz (D)

After the end of Soviet control over Estonia, the first stamps of the restored republic appeared quickly. At the same time, however, many provisional issues were produced, partly to meet demand and partly to make use of existing postal stationery. For the first few months, roubles and kopecks were still in circulation. This made the changeover a little easier but was a burden for everyone because of the worthlessness of the Soviet currency.

Today, the various provisional measures are part of the material for building a large collection. It is hard to win laurels at exhibitions, because the classicism of modern Estonia is less popular than any old German exhibits. However, it is more challenging to place the provisional items from the transitional period in the context of postal history than it is to collect well-known classical rarities.

Peeter Pärn's catalogue, which can certainly be described as a handbook, provides philatelists with a work aid whose value can hardly be overestimated. He describes in detail the production and use of provisional issues, the variety of which – including, of course, the legendary Tartu perforated strips – is underlined by a wealth of illustrations. Thanks to these, even philatelists who do not understand Estonian can make many classifications; software such as www.deepl.com provides further assistance.

The research that has made this volume possible has been immense; sometimes the smallest deviations in the drawing of a hand stamp used for overprinting make all the difference. Peeter Pärn also kept an eye on the details and added extensive postage tables. The catalogue is the basis for all further research.

Bibliographical references: Eesti Posti ajutised maksevahendid 1991–1993 Kataloog (Provisional postage stamps [literally: means of payment] of the Estonian Post 1991–1993 catalogue). By Peeter Pärn. 176 pages, more than 1200 colour illustrations, DIN A5 format, bound with hard cover. Price: 40 euros plus postage. Available from Oliver Hanschmidt, oliver.hanschmidt@gmail.com.

Latvia's First Block Issues – Notes and Discoveries, part 1: Michel Block No. 1

Yehoshua Eliashiv, Haifa (ISR)

Introduction

The third decade of the 20th century can undoubtedly be described as the "golden era of blocks". To name just three of the iconic issues: The German "Nothilfe-Block" (Emergency relief block), the Austrian "WIPA-Block" – both issued in 1933 – and Liechtenstein's "Landesausstellungs-Block" (National exhibition block) from 1934. All these miniature sheets were issued in limited quantities with the clear aim of encouraging collectors to buy them. The postal authorities of the Baltic states also followed this then new trend and began to issue miniature sheets. Estonia made a start with the "CARITAS" souvenir sheet, which appeared on January 21, 1938. Latvia followed with the "Baufonds" (Building fund) souvenir sheet on May 12, 1938, and Lithuania's first souvenir sheet appeared on February 15, 1939, to mark the 20th anniversary of the republic.

In the following, I would like to briefly present some of the results of my studies on the first two Latvian souvenir sheet issues.

General remarks

In the eyes of collectors, the first two miniature sheet issues of Latvia appear to be comparatively "boring" and are simply seen as "space eaters". The only difficulty in completing the issue is to find the less common variant with the "normal" watermark – and then the challenge is met. But is this really the case? As so often in philately, the reality is more complicated.

According to the Contemporary Latvia Catalogue, published in Riga in 1940 and highly regarded by collectors, the total number of miniature sheets issued was 100,000. The same number is mentioned by Harry v. Hofmann in his "Handbook". Only 40,000 were sold to the public, block MiNo. 1. The rest was held back to produce the second block issue, planned for 1939, the block Mi No. 2.

Whether intentional or not, the reason for the low sales of block 1 is obvious. With a franking value of 75 santīmi – consisting of the international letter rate of 35 santīmi and the registered mail rate of 40 santīmu – the selling price of the block was 2 lati. The surcharge of 1.25 lati was used to finance public works. The high surcharge obviously had a very negative effect on sales.

Archive copies

The Latvian State Printing House usually archived at least one printed sheet of each stamp issue. The archive sheets remained imperforated and usually ungummed. The same was true for block issues. But how many copies of a block did a printed sheet contain? A. Rucins in his publication "Imperforated Latvian Stamps, Archive Proofs and Essays" mentions four individual copies (of the archive proof, not the printed sheet of the archive proof, ed.) as known. Today, five individual archive proofs are known to be in private hands, three in Latvia and two outside Latvia. The question of whether an archive sheet originally contained eight or ten individual imperforated archive blocks remains unanswered.

Plate errors and other variations

Philatelic products sometimes show deviations from the norm. Not all of these "varieties" are considered plate errors. It is mainly the latter that are of philatelic interest, but not only. A misaligned perforation also has its visual appeal. Fig. 2 shows such a perforation.

A few years ago I had the opportunity to examine about 20 copies of a MiNo 1 block and was rewarded with the discovery of two "real", regularly recurring plate errors on a block: a broken "3" in 1938 and a dot between the "A" and "R" of (PASTM)A.R(KAS).

Postal use

Unlike the first Estonian and Lithuanian block issues, whose stamps were also issued as individual stamps, the two Latvian building fund stamps, MiNos 262 and 263, were issued exclusively in block form, MiNos 1 and 2. Accordingly, in postal use they are found almost exclusively in block form on philatelically inspired registered letters sent abroad. Figs. 5 and 6 show one such use of the stamps in a block on a first day cover.

The following letter, addressed to a rather unusual destination – Schaan in Liechtenstein – was posted in Riga and bears the transit cancels of the Marienburg–Eydtkuhnen railway line on the back of the cover, together with the arrival cancels.

More interesting is the use of stamps that were separated from the block. Figs. 9 and 10 show the correct use of individual stamps from the block on a registered letter from Riga to Berlin.

The following letter from Smiltene to Daugavpils (figs. 11 and 12) shows a rather unusual but perfectly legitimate use. It is correctly franked with a 40 santīmu stamp, together with the adjacent parts of the block. In this case, the 40 santīmu postage covered the

cost of a 20+20 santīmu registered long-distance domestic letter. There are no limits to the collector's imagination!

This is the story of the first Latvian block, no. 1, which will be continued in a future issue of BALTIKUM with the story of the second block, no. 2.

I would like to thank Thomas Löbberring for his excellent translation from English.

Fig. 1: Imperforated archive sample with vertical frame lines on the left and right

Fig. 2: Box perforation shifted to the left

Fig. 3: Broken "3" in 1938

Fig. 4: Dot between "A" and "R" of PASTMARKAS

Fig. 5: Front side

Fig. 6: Back (cutout)

Figs. 7–12

Retour – Возвращать – Back – Atpakaļ (part 2)

Ruud van Wijnen, Arnhem (NDL)

(Part 1 of this article can be found in BALTIKUM No. 15/2023).

In the late 1930s, new and more conspicuous return stamps were used in Riga. They are distinguished not only using violet or pink ink, but also by the fact that they indicate the reason for the return, either alone or in combination with another stamp. Here are three examples from 1937, 1938 and 1939.

On the first postal flight Stockholm – Riga – Moscow, Tullbergs Antikvariat & Frimärksaffär in Stockholm sent the printed matter shown in fig. 15 postage paid ("p.r.") to Mr "Larsson" in Riga on July 1, 1937. Of course, the merchant in Stockholm did not want Mr Larsson in Riga to have to deal with the mail. This would have meant that the phantom "Mr Larsson" would have had to pay 4 santīmi for storage. So Tullbergs Frimärksaffär waited until the two-month storage period for items stored in Riga had expired, the Latvian postal service cancelled its claim to payment of the storage fee and sent the printed matter back to Stockholm on September 1, 1937. It was returned to Stockholm on September 1, 1937, this time by sea and, as requested, decorated with the bilingual postmarks **"Nav pieprasīts / Non réclamé"**, **"Not recovered"**, and **"Retour à / l'expéditeur"**, **"Return to sender"**.

On November 18, 1938, a reader of "Sammlerwelt" (Collectors' world) in Schmalkalden sent a postcard asking whether the addressee in Riga would be interested in an ex-

change (fig. 16). He offers "beautiful material from Germany and neighbouring countries" and continues: "I have franked my card philatelically and ask you to do the same". Unfortunately, this did not happen. In Riga it turned out that the addressee did not have the post office box address given. The postmark "**Pasta skapīti neabonē.**", "**No P.O. Box subscription**" illustrates this. Instead, the address office found the addressee's home address: "Lāčpleša 88-4a". But here, too, the delivery attempt failed, as the izziņa, the notice, states: "**no māja**", "**not at home**". Stamped "**Inconnu**" and "**Retour**", "**Unknown**" and "**back**", the card was returned to Thuringia on November 23. Not an "exchange connection", but a very nice addition to my collection.

Fig. 17 (next page) shows another request for an "exchange connection", this time from Heiligenhaus near Düsseldorf on March 1, 1939, and also philatelically franked. However, the sender does not seem to have been completely on the ball: Riga is not in Estonia; the street name does not go beyond "ielâ", "street", so no further details are given. The house number varies between "11" and "20".

The post office in Riga could not or would not be satisfied with this: "**RETOUR – LIEU DE DESTINATION INCONNU**", "**BACK – ADDRESS UNKNOWN**". The card was returned to the sender on March 3.

"**Home to the Reich**" was a political slogan of the German National Socialists, which propagated that Germany was "the home of every German-speaking people" and that ethnic Germans outside Germany should therefore be resettled in Germany wherever possible. After the expansion of the German Reich in 1938/39 into neighbouring German settlement areas (Austria, Sudetenland, Memel region), the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of August 23, 1939, with its secret side and follow-up agreements, paved the way for the resettlement of "ethnic Germans" from the Soviet sphere of influence, including those from Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.

Partly under pressure, partly out of conviction – but always with very conflicting feelings – the vast majority were prepared to leave their homes in the Baltic States. Between the German invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, and the end of 1940, some 51,000 people left Latvia. They were mainly resettled in the "newly won eastern territories", i.e. the territories stolen from Poland, often in the flats and houses of previously expelled Poles. After the Soviet occupation of the Baltic states in the summer of 1940, the German and Soviet governments negotiated the so-called "resettlement", mainly from Lithuania, which continued until the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941.

The following two letters, figs. 18 and 19, belong in this context. Both letters never reached their addressees in Riga, Mrs Erna Konstant and Mrs Erika Nusche. The letter addressed to Mrs Konstant (fig. 18) was sent by express mail in Meissen on November 29, 1939. It reached Riga via the Wehrmacht censorship office in Königsberg on December 4, but not the addressee. At the bottom left of the front of the envelope, the sender noted "Please forward" in both German and Latvian, but this was not done, at least not

in Latvia. Instead, the letter immediately began its return journey to Germany, bearing the postmark: **"Retour / Parti – repatrié pour l'Allemagne", "Back / moved – repatriated to Germany"**.

There is about a year between the above letter (fig. 18) and the one shown in fig. 19. It is already clear from the bilingual address that Latvia had become part of the Soviet Union in the meantime: *"Rīga U.d.S.R.R."* and *"Pūža C.C.C.P."*. Posted in Berlin-Schöneberg on December 5, 1940, and censored in Königsberg, the letter reached Riga on December 12 and was immediately returned, *"12/XII"*, with the same postmark as shown in fig. 18.

As far as is known, the period of use of the return postmarks shown in figs. 18 and 19 is limited to Dec. 4, 1939, and Dec. 12, 1940. It is striking that no other postmark or note indicates whether they were returned.

Soviet occupation 1940–1941

This period begins with the occupation of Latvia by the Red Army on June 17, 1940, and ends with the occupation of Riga by German troops on July 1, 1941. This first Soviet occupation is characterised by the extensive and forced adaptation of Latvia to the social and economic structures of the Soviet Union, combined with political repression, deportation and murder, expropriation of private property and the attempted extermination of the Latvian nation. The postcard shown in fig. 20 is a good example of this.

The printed text on the left-hand side of the card informs the policyholder that he is obliged to notify his accident insurance company of the purchase and use of new machinery, the use of his own and other people's transport vehicles and permanent activities outside his own company. However, the card is no longer sent by the Latvian Accident Insurance Board, but by its liquidation committee, the *"Likvidācijas Komisija"*. On April 7, РИГА-РІГА sends the card to a fruit-growing company in АЙЗПУТЕ-AIZPUTE, with a request to pay the insurance fee of 2.24 Ls. The handwritten note at the top left of the card *"Izceļotis uz Vāciju", "departed for Germany"*, indicates the reason for its return to Riga, "A. Rīga".

About a month and a half earlier, the *"Likvidācijas Komisija"* had sent a similar request for payment to Bernhard von Rittenberg in Riga. None of the three previously valid bank accounts existed anymore; instead, payments were to be made to an account at *"V. Bankā"* (Valsts Bankā = State Bank).

However, Mr von Rittenberg could no longer be reached at the address given. The card was therefore placed in a letterbox with a new address, cf. the stamp "From the letterbox with new address" in Latvian. The new delivery attempt also failed, and the card was returned to the liquidation commission, *"Atpakaļ sūtītājam", "Return to sender"*. Both cards are franked with Soviet stamps and cancelled with new bilingual Russian-Latvian

cancels. The corresponding arrival cancels date from the period of Latvian independence.

German Occupation 1941–1944/45⁶

The question I always ask myself about field post letters from Latvia is whether they are from soldiers temporarily fighting there or soldiers permanently stationed there. The field post numbers on the letters do not always provide a reliable answer, but the cancelled machine postmark used in Riga does. This originally Latvian postmark with the code letter A was used by the German field post; initially unaltered and from mid-January 1942 with the name of the town first made illegible and finally completely cancelled (fig. 22).

On April 19, 1943, Lance Corporal Hans Siegers wrote the field post letter to Lance Corporal Math.(ias) Siegers, possibly his brother. However, the field post number given in the address has been crossed out in red chalk and the three-line Fraktur postmark **"Return to sender, as relocated. Wait for new address"** has been erased. Hans Siegers thus received his letter back unread and had to wait for the new field post number of Math.(ias) Siegers: a strange postmark that raises more questions than it answers. Had Math.(ias) really only been "transferred" and not actually wounded or even killed in action?

On the back of the envelope is a handwritten note (not shown): "D.R.K. (German Red Cross, ed.) Sister Cobi Koster, Hotel Fürstenhof, Eisenach". Perhaps a hidden clue. The hotel, which was fashionable before the war, was used as a military hospital and rehabilitation centre for wounded soldiers during the war.

The postal regulations for the Reichskommissariat Ostland allowed the sending of postcards but prohibited the sending of picture postcards⁷. This is evidenced by a censorship stamp used by the Wehrmacht censorship office in Königsberg in 1941/42: **"Picture postcard not permitted"**, fig. 23.

The regulation probably dates to the time when coloured picture postcards in particular were made of multi-layered paper. The slightly thicker paper on the picture side was glued together with the paper on the writing side. A clever spy could have taken advantage of this and hidden secret messages between the layers of paper from the watchful eyes of the censors. Who knows? In practice, however, the danger was apparently not considered very great. The stamp does not seem to have been used after the end of 1942.

⁶ von Hofmann, Harry 2001: Latvia before and as part of the "Generalpostkommissariat Ostland". Handbook. Hamburg.

⁷ Cf. Landsmann, Horst 2008: Die Zensur von Zivilpost in Deutschland im 2. Weltkrieg. Norderstedt.

Fig. 24 (next page) shows such a postcard, which was posted at the Deutsche Dienstpost in Riga on November 18, 1942, and addressed to the Reich Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Even in Riga, it was noticeable that the sender's name and address were missing, which is why the box postmark **"Return address missing. Insufficient."** was cancelled. But "back" to whom? The red chalk mark could be interpreted as an indication that in 1942, as in the Latvian period, there was something like a depository for unclaimed mail in Riga.

As mentioned above, I am not aware of any bilingual postmarks from the period of Soviet occupation of Latvia in 1940/41. Until recently, this was also true for the Ostland period from 1941 to 1944/45, but I recently came across such a bilingual cancellation on the Internet, on a letter (piece) from 1944 by the Oldenburg writer and publisher Fritz Strahlmann to the renowned printing, publishing, and bookshop Ernst Plates in Riga, Monēta iela 18 (fig. 25).

Although he used the correct pre-war address of the bookshop, the letter was returned on '17 VI 44', **'BACK - Unknown / АТРАКАЛ - Nezināms'**. It is quite possible that the bookshop had already changed hands because of the resettlement in 1939/40 and/or was subsequently expropriated or closed by the Soviets.

Operation "Barbarossa", the German attack on the Soviet Union, began on June 22, 1941. The German Army Group North had to conquer the Baltic States and advance on Leningrad as quickly as possible. They succeeded in both. The starvation siege of Leningrad lasted almost 900 days before the Soviet Army finally broke the German siege in January 1944 and advanced southwards to the gates of Narva. The collapse of the Central Army Group in June 1944 opened the way for Soviet troops to advance from the north-east towards Latvia in July. They advanced through Latgale to the Baltic Sea. Riga finally fell to the Soviets on October 13.

As a result of the rapid Soviet offensive, postal connections between Riga and the postal towns in the north and east of Latvia came under increasing pressure or were completely interrupted. On July 11, 1944, the court chamber in Riga sent the letter shown in fig. 26 to Daugavpils. The purple postmark **"Zurück / z. Zt. keine Postverbindung"** (**"Back / currently no postal connection"**) indicates this development. Daugavpils fell to the Soviets on July 27.

The letter from Riga dated July 22 to the small station of Vecumi on the Abrene-Balvi railway line shown in fig. 27 bears only the short "ZURÜCK" postmark. Vecumi is about 9 kilometres from Viļaka. This town was taken by the Soviets on July 24.

Soviet occupation 1944/45–1990

On August 27, 1945, the Docītim family from Madona sent a letter to Andrejs Docītim in Rīga (fig. 28). The address shows that he lived in "Darba kolonija No. 1" (Labour Colony No. 1), P.O. Box 51. A cover address! Andrejs Docītim was one of tens of thousands of Latvians who were deported to the GULAG by the Soviets after the reoccupation of the country in 1944/45. As a Latvian railwayman accused of anti-Soviet activities under the German occupation, he was arrested on December 27, 1944, in his official residence on the Pļaviņas–Gulbene railway line.

On the note at the top left of the envelope, under the date "10.IX.45", it is handwritten in red ink *"Adressat abgefahren", "Addressee departed"*. The letter was returned easily to Madona, as it had previously been placed incognito in a letterbox and the post office had stamped *"Izņemta no vēstuļu kastītes", "From the letterbox"*, with the date "11.9.45". It arrived in Madona on September 14.

Where had the "addressee departed to"? On August 25, 1945, Andrejs was deported from Riga to the "Karlag", the Karaganda Corrective Labor Camp in Kazakhstan. He arrived there on September 19 after more than three weeks of transport and wrote his first letter from the camp to his family on October 15, 1945. After six years in the camp, he was released and allowed to return to Madona.

Fig. 29 shows a similar letter that was sent back and forth between Madona and Riga between September 6 and 18, 1945, without reaching the addressee or informing his family of his whereabouts.

I received the above two letters (figs. 28 and 29) from Laimons Bockā, the son-in-law of Andrejs Docītim. The same is true of the last letter in this article in fig. 30. I came into contact with Laimons through an advertisement in the Michel Rundschau. For years I exchanged Latvian post with him for "luxury" items such as pens, T-shirts, seeds or a winter coat for his wife. He knew what I was looking for in my collection and I knew what he was missing in terms of consumer goods. I regularly sent him Dutch Wehkamp and German Otto catalogues. Laimons would pick out things from them that were not available in the Soviet Union, and I would send them to him by post. We paid each other in this way for years.

As the stamps used for franking were worthless in the eyes of Soviet customs, they could easily be sent abroad. This did not apply to unused or mint stamps. These were seen as foreign currency stamps and could not be exported by private individuals. Laimons Bockā maintained philatelic exchange contacts with several collectors outside the Soviet Union. On June 13, 1955, for example, he sent the letter shown in fig. 30 from Madona to Shanghai in China.

His "foreign contacts" were of course known to the KGB and the Soviet customs authorities in Riga and Moscow. His letter was already checked by customs in Riga and returned

to him with clear **"Retour"** and **"Interdit"**, **"Back"** and **"Forbidden"** stamps. The enclosed note shows that the 21 stamps found in the envelope were confiscated.

At the end

Although it might seem so from the two postmark overviews in this article, it was not my intention to compile a kind of catalogue of Latvia's return postmarks with this article. However, I wanted to give the many return cancellations and endorsements on postal items in Latvia the attention they deserve and, whenever possible, put them in a historical or personal context. After all, postal communications are about people who have something to say to each other.

I look forward to your reactions, additions or new "finds" at marsruts@planet.nl.

The translation from Dutch (into German) was done by Thomas Löbberring.

Figs. 15–30a as described in the text above.

Fluorescence on Lithuanian and Latvian stamps

Olaf Hoffmann, Munich (D), and Martin Bechstedt, Bargteheide (D)

It took a tip from Lithuania to discover an interesting aspect of modern Lithuanian and Latvian stamps. The Lithuanian philatelist Antanas Jankauskas had been reading the Michel catalogue carefully and had come across the words "Melierfasern fl.", "Melier fibres fl." and "Aufdruck fl.", "Overprint fl." in the descriptions of stamps from MiNo. 1269 onwards. None of us had noticed this before. He had set the ball rolling. The abbreviation "fl." of course means "fluorescent", as collectors of stamps from the Federal Republic of Germany and Berlin in particular will know. Fluorescent stamps have been used there since the 1950s and 1960s for sorting mail and as a deterrent to counterfeiting. They are also widely used on banknotes.

Chemists are familiar with this effect: fluorescence is a bright yellow-green light that can be seen when an ultraviolet (UV) lamp in a dark room. Be careful, the UV light can damage your eyes! In philately, UV lamps are indispensable for collectors of all countries and especially for experts. Due to physical conditions, fluorescence is only possible in the yellow-green and orange-red colour range and should not be confused with bluish phosphorescence. It is not intended to change colour under UV light, but to produce a striking yellow-green luminescence. This is a wonderful effect that we would never have noticed if a Lithuanian had not read the Michel catalogue carefully!

Melier fibres were used in Germany for several years, fluorescent paper was used throughout, and occasionally by other postal administrations. However, we only knew of

a few other stamps with fluorescent overprints, such as Norway MiNo 1415 "Post horn" 9 crowns. These overprints are not visible in daylight, although daylight also contains UV light, which is outshone by visible light.

Lithuanian and Latvian stamps only have overprints in yellow-green fluorescence, not orange-red fluorescence, which rarely appears on stamps at all (e.g. the aforementioned Norway Post Horn 9 crowns). The managers of the Estonian Post have not yet discovered this design option.

Fluorescence on Lithuanian stamps

From January 2018, stamps have been issued with fluorescent "Melier fibres", i.e. paper with specially prepared fibres mixed in during production. They are listed under MiNos. 1269 to 1319, although some stamps were issued without such components, e.g. block 58 with MiNos. 1271 and 1272.

The fibres are used very sparingly, often only a few can be seen on stamps and margins.

From MiNo. 1320, issued on January 7, 2020, fluorescent overprints can be found on Lithuanian stamps in various shapes:

- Post horn (Lithuanian Post logo) (fig. 4b)
- Post horn and LIETUVOS PAŠTAS lettering (Fig. 3 and 5b)
- Country name LIETUVA (fig. 6b).

To date, almost all stamps have been issued with these overprints, with only MiNos. 1335, 1337 and 1338 remaining without fluorescence. MiNo. 1357 has a different fluorescent paper respectively a full-surface overprint. The printers worked carefully – no varieties with missing overprints are known to date.

Fluorescence on Latvian stamps

Not only the Lithuanian Post, but also the Latvian Post has been offering stamps with fluorescent overprints for several years.

According to our own research, this started in 2010, when the value digits of two Christmas stamps were printed with a fluorescent overprint, MiNos. 798 and 799 (fig. 7). The overprints are not yet listed in the Michel catalogue.

In 2011, we will continue with an example of a self-adhesive stamp which, in addition to the value digit, also bears the Latvian Post logo, a stylised letter (Fig. 8). Some coloured flakes (melange fibres) in the paper can also be seen under UV light.

In later years, from 2015 onwards, only the Latvian Post logo is overprinted on the stamps.

The Michel online catalogue refers to fluorescent overprints, which appear almost continuously from MiNo. 982 (2016) onwards. More examples: (see figs.)

It would be interesting if someone in their collection of Latvian stamps were to discover pieces without overprints with the indication "overprint fl." in the Michel. That would be a completely new form of variety!

Fig. 1a: MiNo. 1318 Christmas. Mottling fibres UV; the blue tears are damage to the colour surface!

Fig. 1b: Cutout (enlarged)

Fig. 2: Cover with MiNo. 1318 (milking fibres), 1320 (overprint Paštas/Post horn) and 1204 (without fluorescence!)

Fig. 3: UV overprint of post horn and LIETUVOS PAŠTAS lettering, for example on MiNo. 1320

Fig. 4a: MiNos. 1347 and 1348 (reduced size)

Fig. 4b: UV imprint of post horn (Lithuanian Post logo), enlarged

Fig. 5a: MiNo. 1395 Europe 2023

Fig. 5b: UV print Post horn and lettering LIETUVOS PAŠTAS

Fig. 6a: MiNo.1397, 700 years Vilnius

Fig. 6b: UV print country name LIETUVA, enlarged

Fig. 7: (see text)

Fig. 8: MiNo. 816a

Fig. 9: Left: MiNo. 929 I (2015), Centre and right: MiNo. 929 II (2017)

Bild 10: MiNr. 1005 (2016)

Fig. 11: MiNo. 1108 (2020)

My unforgettable time in Pöszeiten/Pežeičiai, district of Memel/Klaipėda

Doris Masch, Wahlstedt (D)

Everything I can still find out about Pöszeiten¹ is like a message from beyond the grave. The reason for this was the two post office savings books that belonged to my mother and father. Unfortunately, there were no letters or postcards in them, but these books are indisputable proof that there were postmarks in the small town from 1942 to 1944.

¹ There are different spellings for the German place name: Pöszeiten or Poeszeiten

Postmarks from postal savings books are absolutely genuine, which is what makes them so valuable.

My mother's savings book reflects an important period in my life, and the stamps bring events from it to life. I was born in 1934 in Königsberg, East Prussia. My father was a senior police officer. So, I had a life of many moves ahead of me, partly because of the war, but I didn't realise it at the time.

Of all the places, the idyllic Memel region in the small border town of Pöszeiten (Lithuanian: Pežaičiai), east of Prökuls / Priekule, remains the most memorable for me. This time has shaped my philatelic love for postcards and letters from Pöszeiten and the Memel region.

The post office of Pöszeiten in Memelland

There was a post office in Pöszeiten in the German Empire, but evidence of it is rare.

A post office was operated in Lithuanian times. Postmarks are documented from the period 16.04.1924 to 11.04.1939.

In the early days of the German occupation in 1939, Pöszeiten, like other places, had a temporary rubber stamp:

After the German takeover of the Memel region, the old German Mandate-era stamp was "revived" as in other places.

Here is an illustration from Becker's plate WS 2 with data from the Mandate and German periods known to Becker.

It would be too nice if, in addition to the Postal Savings Book, I could acquire at least one document for my Memelland collection confirming the existence of a post office in Pöszeiten during the German period in which I lived there! In any case, there was a post office there during the Soviet occupation, as a document in my possession shows (see fig. 10).

The postal savings book

Here is my very personal story from and around the time of Pöszeiten, when this Postal Savings Book was created:

In 1936, when I was two years old, my father was transferred to the Technical Police School in Berlin, and my mother and I moved there with him. Every summer, however, we travelled to Königsberg, where we stayed with my grandparents or other relatives.

On March 1, 1941 my father was transferred to Vienna, where my mother, my sister, who had been born in the meantime, and I went to visit him. We couldn't find a larger apartment quickly.

However, as I was old enough to start school, we moved back to Berlin without my father in the autumn of 1941.

During this time, when we lived in Berlin without my father, my parents had opened postal savings books. The post office confirmed the first deposit in my mother's book with the stamp BERLIN 1.7.42.

During my summer holidays in 1942, we visited my mother's sister for the first time in Pöszeiten, Memel district. Since the German occupation of the Memel region on March 22, 1939, the village had once again become a border town with Lithuania. We lived in the customs house because my aunt's husband was employed there by the German customs until the border was lifted after the German invasion of the Soviet Union.

It was all very exciting for me. We travelled by train from Berlin to Memel. There we had to change trains to get to Pöszeiten on the Memel narrow-gauge railway.

Before that we had another stop, which we spent opposite Memel's main station in a small railway shed. It was here that I discovered my first new things: Several peasant women were sitting in this common room, wearing black dresses and black headscarves, as I recall. They were carrying large baskets with the remains of what they had not sold at the weekly market. Some of the women may have been Lithuanian, the German population also benefited from the agricultural produce. These women all travelled on our little train, some of them, like us, to the terminus right at the barrier to what was then the Lithuanian border. The impression they made on me was strange and unfamiliar; I had never seen anything like it in Berlin.

The so-called "Bimmelbahn" (small train with a warning bell) travelled very slowly, I felt sick, and the smell of the market women may also have played a role, so I spent the rest of the journey on the perron (outside platform of the railway carriages).

In Pöszeiten

In the meantime, my father had been transferred from Vienna to Riga in 1942 and had finally found an apartment for us there. But to move from Berlin to Riga, which was then occupied by the Germans, we needed an entry permit.

This took too long for my father. He wanted to get us out of Berlin because of the air attacks, so he came up with the idea of putting my mother, my sister and me up at my aunt's in Pöszeiten, whom I already knew, until we finally travelled to Riga.

We moved there in the autumn of 1943, when my uncle, a customs officer, was called up to the Wehrmacht because there was no longer a border with Lithuania. So, our stay in Pöszeiten was very welcome. In the end, my father was unable to obtain an entry permit for us to the "Ostland", so we could no longer travel to Riga. Our packing cases had already returned from there to Pöszeiten, where we now had to stay indefinitely.

For me, the dream of my childhood began! Finally, out of Berlin, where you had to go to the air-raid shelter almost every night. A whole new world opened for me – it was heaven in times of peace! Our house was 100 metres from the railway station and the former border with Lithuania. There was a life waiting for me here, so different from life in the big city. I was eight years old. There was no electricity. When it was dark, paraffin lamps were lit. You could listen to the radio with battery-powered equipment. We fetched water with the pump in the kitchen or from the well in the yard with the beam pump. Irons filled with burning briquettes were used to iron the clothes. To go to the toilet, we had to cross the lawned courtyard to the so-called "PC". Something so exciting for me, it couldn't have been more different from Berlin! In the school there were several classes in one room, where was that in Berlin?

My mother received part of my father's salary directly from Vienna, so we were well looked after. My father also brought money with him when he visited. Obviously, my mother was doing so well that she kept some of this money and was able to put it into the post office savings account as a reserve for later. She had planned well, as we later found out after our escape to the West. The cancellations for the deposits in the Memel region and in Pomerania were made with the same Imperial German Post stamp that had been used on the 1915 postcard! How it has survived is a mystery to me.

I was also very impressed by the shopping in Pöszeiten. We children used to get our milk directly from the Karallus farm, where geese and their gander regularly met us. My eldest cousin had the courage to grab the gander by the neck and throw it back and forth a few times before it took off with its entourage. We bought the rest of our food in a quaint shop. It smelled of paraffin, yeast, pickles and so on, which was exciting for me again. They had everything except meat. To get meat, we had to cycle about eight kilometres through the forest to Prökuls/Priekule. Even if we wanted to go to church, we had to cycle to Prökuls.

Then came the winter of 1943/44, which was a fairy tale for me at the time. As far back as I can remember, there was always snow, and it snowed a lot. The horse-drawn carriages were replaced by horse-drawn sleighs. And every time a sleigh passed us – you could hear it from afar, the bells jingling around the horses' necks – we children would run after it and stand on the runners, only to fall into the snow after a while. We had to trudge through the woods and snow to get to school, and after school we girls were often let out ten minutes early to avoid being washed in the snow by the boys. None of us could have imagined how quickly it would all be over.

From time to time, we had to travel the 30 kilometres by small train to Memel. There we usually visited a hairdresser or an ear specialist, which was rewarded with a visit to a patisserie afterwards.

The summer of 1944 came and once again we children went to our favourite woods to pick blueberries, which were bigger than I had ever seen again. In the woods we could already hear the roar of the approaching front.

It was the school holidays, and as we had a school garden, we had to go there from time to time to weed and water it, under the guidance of a teacher. One day, while we were gardening, someone came running into the school garden and told us to come straight home, saying: "The Russians are coming. We must escape tonight."

That's right: in the evening we took the little train to Memel, from where we were taken by freight ship to Gotenhafen (Polish: Gdynia). Our escape route took us further west, where we found accommodation in the town of Naugard in Pomerania until February 1945. Here, too, the salary transfer from Vienna was still working, as evidenced by the deposit stamps.

In February 1945 our exodus continued westwards, ending in Eckernförde on the Baltic coast of Holstein. Here, thanks to our mother's foresight, we were able to rely on cash as refugees: only payments up to the last entry on January 14, 1948, are recorded.

A reunion

At the beginning of our escape in the summer of 1944, I saw Memel for the last time until 1972, when I arrived in the port of Klaipėda/Memel on the cargo ship "Amasis", on which my husband and I were serving. In the meantime, the political situation had changed, and my rural idyll was now in the USSR. I would have loved to visit the little railway shelter in Memel again. I really wanted to experience the familiar, unforgettable smell of the market women. Unfortunately, the shelter was no longer there, and the tracks had just been removed. The only way to get to Pöszeiten was by bus. But we were not allowed to, because during the USSR we were not allowed to leave the port as a ship's crew. Everything was so inaccessible and far away!

Later, after reunification (of East and West Germany, ed.) in 1990, everything came closer again and many a dream could be fulfilled. As a souvenir, the well-known Latvian philatelist Z. Romanowskis gave me a Lithuanian postal stationery with the still used Soviet postmark from Pöszeiten, a great rarity (see the picture on the next page)! My dream came true in the summer of 2002. It was hard to believe when I suddenly found myself standing with my husband and our car in Pöszeiten / Pežaičiai next to "our" former residential customs house. A lot had changed. The small rural hamlet had grown into a vil-

lage that stretched across the former Lithuanian border. Today, oil is extracted there, and the forests of those days have been largely cut down.

Unless otherwise stated, the illustrations are from my possession.

For further reading: Petri, Olav and Löbbering, Thomas 2020: Memel / Klaipėda 1923 – World Politics in the Mirror of Philately. In: BALTIKUM 10 (2020). p. 58-70.

Fig. 1: My mother's Postal Savings Book, front cover; the symbols of the "Third Reich" are covered by two slips of paper, the top of which is handwritten "British Zone". The legitimacy of the book was attested by five ECKERNFÖRDE stamps in the period 5.9.46 to 17.7.47, as far as the dates are legible².

Figs. 2a, b and c: My mother's postal savings book, first to third page, postmarks from BERLIN, MEMEL, PÖSZEITEN, NAUGARD (town in Pomerania north-east of Stettin, today Nowogard/Poland) and ECKERNFÖRDE.

Figs. 3a and 3b: Postcard from Pöszeiten, German Empire, Postmark from 1.3.00, when the village with 166 inhabitants was also a border town, as it was later in 1939 (Photos: eBay)

Fig. 4a: Pežaičiai cancellation, Fu 1000³

Fig. 4b: PEŽAIČIAI cancellation on Lithuanian stamp MiNo. 220

Fig. 5a: Postmark with date 19.9.39 from Becker plate X 2 (end of March 1939: Temporary handstamp)

Fig. 5b: Postcard from Pöszeiten, stamp cancelled with rubber stamp cancelled, additional postmark MEMEL 26.7.39 (Picture: Lindeiner)

Fig. 6: Pöszeiten/Memel area postmark from Becker plate WS 2

Fig. 7: Map of the Memel area⁴, Pöszeiten additionally marked.

Fig. 8a: Postal savings book sheet 1, cancellation BERLIN dated 1.7.42

Fig. 8b: Postal savings book sheet 1, MEMEL cancellation dated 3.8.42

Figs. 9a and 9b: Old picture postcard from the imperial era with the Memel small railway to Pöszeiten, postmark 3.4.1915 on the reverse (field post, photo: eBay)

Fig. 10a: Postal savings book cancellation PÖSZEITEN dated 5.5.44.

Fig. 10b: Postal savings book cancellation Memel 27.1.44

Fig. 10c: Postal savings book cancellation PÖSZEITEN 5.7.44

Fig. 10d: Postal savings book cancellation NAUGARD 8.12.44

Fig. 10e: Postal savings book cancellation ECKERNFÖRDE dated 9.9.46

Figs. 11a and 11b: Reused USSR cancellation PEŽAIČIAI / ПЕЖАЙУЯЙ dated 21.09.90 on the first postal stationery issued by Lithuania after renewed independence.

² A brief, preliminary presentation of the one postal savings book was made in: Masch, Doris 2003: Postal Savings Book 1944. in: Lithuania (Newsletter of the Lithuanian Research Association) No. 19/2003. pp. 1280-1281.

³ Fugalevičius, Vytautas & Bechstedt, Martin 2015: Postmarks in Lithuania. Standard postmarks and provisional cancellations 1918–1940/41. Bargteheide. p. 123.

⁴ Huylmans, Tobias 2015: Memelgebiet (Memel area). Handbook of cancellations 1920-1925, Nierstein. p.4

Current developments at Lithuanian Post: Activities – post offices – new tariffs – postmark specialities

Bernhard Fels, Soest (D)

Thanks to the good online presence of Lietuvos Paštas and our contacts there, we once again have up-to-date, reliable information on the number of post offices and, above all, logistics centres (see the article "Subsequently cancelled by a Lithuanian postal logistics centre" in this issue). We consider the publication in print media to be important, as philatelic researchers have repeatedly criticised the fact that such data for the period before 1945 cannot be found in periodicals of that time. We are doing it!

In October 2023, Lithuanian Post provided the following information about itself:

- 36 million items per year: We ship and receive items from nearly 200 different countries around the world.
- 352 LP EXPRESS postage meters: This is the most popular way to send and receive parcels within the country.
- 3276 employees: We work throughout Lithuania so that postal services reach all residents of the country.
- **171 post offices:** For those who prefer live service.
- 2054 post persons, of which more than 540 are mobile: Every day, post persons deliver more and more parcels directly to customers' homes.
- **9 logistics centres:** Logistics centres are the invisible side of Lithuanian Post, where thousands of letters and parcels are sorted every day.

Source: https://post-lt.translate.google.com/veikla-ir-istorija?_x_tr_sl=lt&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=wapp
[4.10.23]

Table 1: Overview of currently active post offices in Lithuania

Status: October 1, 2023

No.	Post Office	Postcode	Addresses
1	Akademijos paštas, Kauno r. sav.	53067	Pilėnų g. 1, Akademija, 53347 Kauno r. sav.
2	Akmenės paštas	85022	K. Kasakausko g. 7, Akmenė, 85022 Akmenės r. sav.
3	Alytaus paštas	62025	Naujoji g. 2C-1, 62025 Alytus
4	Alytaus Putinių paštas	62020	Ūdrijos g. 1/Naujoji g. 7E, 62020 Alytus
5	Anykščių paštas	29001	J. Biliūno g. 5, 29001 Anykščiai
6	Ariogalos paštas	60019	Vytauto g. 102, Ariogala, 60019 Raseinių r. sav.
7	Avižienių paštas	14013	Sudervės g. 9, Avižieniai, 14013 Vilniaus r. sav.
8	Baltosios Vokės paštas	17035	Vilniaus g. 6, Baltoji Vokė, 17035 Šalčininkų r. sav.

9	Birštono paštas	59009	S. Dariaus ir S. Girėno g. 14, 59009 Birštonas
10	Biržų paštas	41001	J. Basanavičiaus g. 1, 41001 Biržai
11	Daugų paštas	64009	Sofijos Smetonienės g. 3, Daugai, 64009 Alytaus r. sav.
12	Domeikavos paštas	54066	Bažnyčios g. 4, Domeikava., 54066 Kauno r. sav.
13	Druskininkų paštas	66001	M. K. Čiurlionio g. 111, 66001 Druskininkai
14	Dusetų paštas	32029	K. Būgos g. 31A, Dusetos, 32029 Zarasų r. sav.
15	Eišiškių paštas	17017	Gegužės a. 18, Eišiškės, 17017 Šalčininkų r. sav.
16	Elektrėnų paštas	26001	Trakų g. 4A, 26001 Elektrėnai
17	Ežerėlio paštas	53079	Liepų g. 3-8, Ežerėlis, 53079 Kauno r. sav.
18	Galgių paštas	13001	Žvaigždikių g. 2, 13001 Vilnius
19	Gargždų paštas	96001	Žemaitės g. 74, Gargždai, 96001 Klaipėdos r. sav.
20	Garliavos paštas	53030	Vytauto g. 60, Garliava, 53030 Kauno r. sav.
21	Gelgaudiškio paštas	71085	Taikos g. 76, Gelgaudiškis, 71085 Šakių r. sav.
22	Grigiškių paštas	27001	Vilniaus g. 6, Grigiškės, 27001 Vilnius
23	Ignalinos paštas	30001	Laisvės g. 64, 30001 Ignalina
24	Jašiūnų paštas	17038	M. Balinskio g. 2, Jašiūnai, 17038 Šalčininkų r. sav.
25	Jiezno paštas	59058	Vytauto g. 34, Jieznas, 59058 Prienų r. sav.
26	Jonavos paštas	55001	Žeimių g. 11, 55001 Jonava
27	Joniškėlio paštas	39027	Vytauto g. 21, Joniškėlis, 39027 Pasvalio r. sav.
28	Joniškio paštas	84001	Vilniaus g. 47B, 84001 Joniškis
29	Juodšilių paštas	14001	Mokyklos g. 9, Juodšiliai, 14001 Vilniaus r. sav.
30	Jurbarko paštas	74001	S. Dariaus ir S. Girėno g. 72, 74001 Jurbarkas
31	Kaišiadorių paštas	56001	Gedimino g. 61, 56001 Kaišiadorys
32	Kalvarijos paštas	69030	Laisvės g. 1, 69030 Kalvarija
33	Karmėlavos paštas	54085	Vilniaus g. 54, Karmėlava, 54085 Kauno r. sav.
34	Kauno 10-asis paštas	46001	J. Borutos g. 13, 46001 Kaunas
35	Kauno 14-asis paštas	52005	R. Kalantos g. 55, 52005 Kaunas
36	Kauno 20-asis paštas	45009	Didžioji g. 82, 45009 Kaunas
37	Kauno 22-asis paštas	48009	Baltijos g. 58, 48009 Kaunas
38	Kauno 23-iasis paštas	52001	Pašto g. 1, 52001 Kaunas
39	Kauno 26-asis paštas	48005	Varnių g. 41, 48005 Kaunas
40	Kauno 28-ojo pašto ketvirtasis poskyris	48013	Žemaičių pl. 23, 48013 Kaunas
41	Kauno 28-ojo pašto trečiasis poskyris	44033	Jonavos g. 3, 44033 Kaunas
42	Kauno 31-asis paštas	51001	Kovo 11-osios g. 20, 51001 Kaunas
43	Kauno 39-asis paštas	47019	Islandijos pl. 32, 47019 Kaunas
44	Kauno 41-asis paštas	50019	V. Krėvės pr. 97A, 50019 Kaunas
45	Kauno 41-ojo pašto poskyris	50027	V. Krėvės pr. 49, 50027 Kaunas
46	Kauno 43-iasis paštas	49001	P. Lukšio g. 58-1, 49001 Kaunas
47	Kauno 44-asis paštas	44051	Karaliaus Mindaugo pr. 49, 44051 Kaunas
48	Kauno 8-asis paštas	47009	Chodkevičių g. 6, 47009 Kaunas
49	Kauno 9-asis paštas	50001	Savanorių pr. 214A, 50001 Kaunas
50	Kauno Aleksoto paštas	46011	Veiverių g. 150 B, 46011 Kaunas
51	Kauno Šančių paštas	45010	A. Juozapavičiaus pr. 11, 45010 Kaunas
52	Kauno Vilijampolės paštas	48018	Raudondvario pl. 94B, 48018 Kaunas
53	Kavarsko paštas	29021	Respublikos a. 9, Kavarskas, 29021 Anykščių r. sav.
54	Kazlų Rūdos paštas	69083	J. Basanavičiaus g. 6A, 69083 Kazlų Rūda
55	Kėdainių paštas	57001	J. Basanavičiaus g. 59, 57001 Kėdainiai
56	Kelmės paštas	86001	Vytauto Didžiojo g. 86, 86001 Kelmė

57	Kybartų paštas	70065	J. Basanavičiaus g. 33, Kybartai, 70065 Vilkaviškio r. sav.
58	Klaipėdos 14-asis paštas	95001	Vingio g. 16, 95001 Klaipėda
59	Klaipėdos 17-asis paštas	92030	Naujoji g. 29, Kalotės k., 92030 Klaipėdos r. sav.
60	Klaipėdos 18-asis paštas	91031	H.Manto g. 7, 91031 Klaipėda
61	Klaipėdos 19-asis paštas	94013	Taikos pr. 139, 94013 Klaipėda
62	Klaipėdos 2-asis paštas	92001	Taikos pr. 61, 92001 Klaipėda
63	Klaipėdos 8-asis paštas	92011	H.Manto g. 90-1, 92295 Klaipėda
64	Kretingos paštas	97001	Rotušės a. 10, 97001 Kretinga
65	Kudirkos Naumiesčio paštas	71049	S. Dariaus ir S. Girėno g. 26, Kudirkos Naumiestis, 71049 Šakių r. sav.
66	Kupiškio paštas	40001	Vytauto g. 41, 40001 Kupiškis
67	Kuršėnų paštas	81001	Vilniaus g. 3, Kuršėnai, 81001 Šiaulių r. sav.
68	Lazdijų paštas	67001	Senamiesčio g. 1, 67001 Lazdijai
69	Lentvario paštas	25001	Geležinkelio g. 40, Lentvaris, 25001 Trakų r. sav.
70	Linkuvos paštas	83046	Vienybės a. 7, Linkuva, 83046 Pakruojo r. sav.
71	Maišiagalos paštas	14025	Kiemelių g. 11, Maišiagala, 14025 Vilniaus r. sav.
72	Marijampolės paštas	68024	V. Kudirkos g. 3, 68024 Marijampolė
73	Mažeikių centro paštas	89099	Žemaitijos g. 38, 89099 Mažeikiai
74	Molėtų paštas	33001	Vilniaus g. 43-1, 33001 Molėtai
75	Naujosios Akmenės paštas	85001	L. Petravičiaus a. 3, 85001 Naujoji Akmenė
76	Nemenčinės paštas	15019	Švenčionių g. 18, Nemenčinė, 15019 Vilniaus r. sav.
77	Neringos paštas	93012	Taikos g. 13, Nida, 93012 Neringos sav.
78	Neveronių paštas	54093	Šiltnamių g. 1, Neveronys, 54093 Kauno r. sav.
79	Obelių paštas	42006	Vytauto g. 12, Obeliai, 42006 Rokiškio r. sav.
80	Pabradės paštas	18017	Pašto g. 13, Pabradė, 18017 Švenčionių r. sav.
81	Pagėgių paštas	99032	Vilniaus g. 26, 99032 Pagėgiai
82	Pagirių paštas, Vilniaus r. sav.	14004	Šiltnamių g. 21, Pagiriai, 04130 Vilniaus r. sav.
83	Pakruojo paštas	83001	Vytauto Didžiojo g. 17, 83001 Pakruojis
84	Palangos 2-asis paštas	00009	Šventosios g. 14, 00009 Palanga
85	Palangos paštas	00001	Malūno g. 10, 00001 Palanga
86	Pandėlio pašto agentas	42071	Klaipėdos g. 2A, Pandėlys, Rokiškio r. sav.
87	Panevėžio 1-asis paštas	36001	Žemaičių g. 21, 36001 Panevėžys
88	Panevėžio 5-asis paštas	37001	Klaipėdos g. 82, 37001 Panevėžys
89	Panevėžio 6-asis paštas	37010	Rožių g. 25, 37010 Panevėžys
90	Panevėžio Basanavičiaus paštas	36014	Ukmergės g. 18, 36014 Panevėžys
91	Panevėžio PC RYO paštas	37015	Savitiškio g. 61, 37015 Panevėžys
92	Pasvalio paštas	39001	Vilniaus g. 3, 39001 Pasvalys
93	Plungės paštas	90001	S. Dariaus ir S. Girėno g. 2, 90001 Plungė
94	Priekulės paštas	96047	Žirgų g. 41, Priekulės II k., 96047 Klaipėdos r. sav.
95	Prienų paštas	59001	J. Brundzos g. 1, 59001 Prienai
96	Radviliškio paštas	82001	S. Dariaus ir S. Girėno g. 16, Radviliškis, 82001 Radviliškio r. sav.
97	Ramygalos paštas	38031	S. Dariaus ir S. Girėno g. 3, Ramygala, 38031 Panevėžio r. sav.
98	Raseinių paštas	60001	Maironio g. 2, 60001 Raseiniai
99	Raudondvario paštas	54001	Instituto g. 1A, Raudondvaris, 54001 Kauno r. sav.
100	Riešės paštas	14028	Molėtų g. 13, Didžioji Riešė, 14028 Vilniaus r. sav.
101	Rietavo paštas	90018	Plungės g. 21, 90018 Rietavas
102	Rokiškio paštas	42001	Respublikos g. 113A, 42001 Rokiškis
103	Rudaminos paštas, Vilniaus r. sav.	13031	Gamyklos g. 28, Rudamina, 13031 Vilniaus r. sav.
104	Rūdiškių paštas, Trakų r. sav.	21016	Trakų g. 67, Rūdiškės, 21016 Trakų r. sav.
105	Rukainių paštas	13016	Vilniaus g. 30, Rukainiai, 13016 Vilniaus r. sav.

106	Salantų paštas	97035	M. Valančiaus g. 5, Salantai, 97035 Kretingos r. sav.
107	Salininkų paštas	02017	Pupinės g. 7, Salininkai, 02017 Vilnius
108	Sedos paštas	89051	A. Baranausko a. 1, Seda, 89051 Mažeikių r. sav.
109	Simno paštas	64037	Vytauto g. 28, Simnas, 64037 Alytaus r. sav.
110	Skaudvilės paštas	73028	Vilniaus g. 8, Skaudvilė, 73028 Tauragės r. sav.
111	Skuodo paštas	98001	Gedimino g. 6, 98001 Skuodas
112	Smalininkų paštas	74009	Nemuno g. 23, Smalininkai, 74009 Jurbarko r. sav.
113	Subačiaus paštas	40033	Biržų g. 19, Subačius, 40033 Kupiškio r. sav.
114	Šakių paštas	71001	Birutės g. 14, 71001 Šakiai
115	Šalčininkų paštas	17001	Vilniaus g. 61, 17001 Šalčininkai
116	Šeduvos paštas	82007	Laisvės a. 8, Šeduva, 82007 Radviliškio r. sav.
117	Šiaulių 15-asis paštas	76028	Tilžės g. 109, 76028 Šiauliai
118	Šiaulių 16-asis paštas	78014	Aido g. 8, 78014 Šiauliai
119	Šiaulių Tilžės paštas	76033	Tilžės g. 225, 76033 Šiauliai
120	Šilalės paštas	75001	J. Basanavičiaus g. 21, 75001 Šilalė
121	Šilutės paštas	99001	M. Jankaus g. 8, 99001 Šilutė
122	Širvintų paštas	19001	I. Šeiniaus g. 6, 19001 Širvintos
123	Švenčionių paštas	18022	Švenčionių g. 2, Švenčionėliai, 18022 Švenčionių r. sav.
124	Švenčionių paštas	18001	Vilniaus g. 18, 18001 Švenčionys
125	Tauragės centrinis paštas	72001	S. Dariaus ir S. Girėno g. 16, 72001 Tauragė
126	Telšių paštas	87001	Plungės g. 4, 87001 Telšiai
127	Tytuvėnų paštas	86061	Maironio g. 1, Tytuvėnai, 86061 Kelmės r. sav.
128	Trakų paštas	21001	Vytauto g. 90, 21001 Trakai
129	Trakų Vokės paštas	02021	J. Tiškevičiaus g. 1, Trakų Vokė, 02021 Vilnius
130	Troškūnų paštas	29033	K. Inčiūros g. 1, Troškūnai, 29033 Anykščių r. sav.
131	Ukmergės paštas	20001	Vytauto g. 60-2, 20001 Ukmergė
132	Utenos paštas	28051	J. Bartašiaus g. 1, 28051 Utena
133	Užvenčio paštas	86036	Žemaitės g. 1, Užventis, 86036 Kelmės r. sav.
134	Vabalninko paštas	41033	B. Sruogos g. 11A, Vabalninkas, 41033 Biržų r. sav.
135	Varėnos paštas	65001	Vytauto g. 21, Varėna, 65001 Varėnos r. sav.
136	Varnių paštas	88050	M. Valančiaus g. 1, Varniai, 88050 Telšių r. sav.
137	Veisiejų paštas	67043	Santarvės g. 3, Veisiejai, 67043 Lazdijų r. sav.
138	Ventos paštas	85019	Žemaičių g. 39-16, Venta, 85019 Akmenės r. sav.
139	Viešnių paštas	89094	Dariaus ir Girėno g. 2, Viešniai, 89094 Mažeikių r. sav.
140	Vievio paštas	21058	Vilniaus g. 55A, Vievis, 21058 Elektrėnų sav.
141	Vilkaviškio paštas	70001	S. Daukanto g. 31, 70001 Vilkaviškis
142	Vilkijos paštas	54015	Vytauto g. 1, Vilkija, 54015 Kauno r. sav.
143	Vilniaus 11-asis paštas	07016	Ozo g. 25, 07016 Vilnius „Akropolis“
144	Vilniaus 16-asis paštas	10001	Nemenčinės pl. 2, 10001 Vilnius
145	Vilniaus 17-asis paštas	05009	Rygos g. 8, 05009 Vilnius
146	Vilniaus 1-asis paštas	01013	Vokiečių g. 7-13, 01013 Vilnius
147	Vilniaus 21-asis paštas	08018	Jeruzalės g. 4, 08018 Vilnius
148	Vilniaus 22-asis paštas	06001	Medeinos g. 8, 06001 Vilnius
149	Vilniaus 26-asis paštas	12001	Ukmergės g. 308, 12110 Vilnius
150	Vilniaus 38-asis paštas	02011	S. Dariaus ir S. Girėno g. 8, 02011 Vilnius
151	Vilniaus 3-asis paštas	06005	Priegliaus g. 1, 06005 Vilnius
152	Vilniaus 40-asis paštas	10007	Antakalnio g. 75, 10007 Vilnius
153	Vilniaus 42-asis paštas	08009	Kalvarijų g. 121, 08009 Vilnius
154	Vilniaus 43-asis paštas	04001	Architektų g. 19, 04001 Vilnius

155	Vilniaus 4-asis paštas	08001	Saltoniškių g. 9, 08001 Vilnius
156	Vilniaus 50-asis paštas	04013	L. Asanavičiūtės g. 17, 04013 Vilnius
157	Vilniaus 53-asis paštas	02029	Vaduvos g. 5, 02029 Vilnius
158	Vilniaus 57-asis paštas	08013	Ozo g. 18, 08013 Vilnius „OZAS“
159	Vilniaus 58-asis paštas	12011	Visalaukio g. 1, 12011, Vilnius
160	Vilniaus 59-asis paštas	03023	Kedryų g. 4, 03023 Vilnius
161	Vilniaus 60-asis paštas	07018	Ukmergės g. 233, 07018 Vilnius
162	Vilniaus 61-asis paštas	01068	Totorių g. 8, 01068 Vilnius
163	Vilniaus 6-asis paštas	03011	Mindaugo g. 25, 03011 Vilnius
164	Vilniaus 8-asis paštas	09023	Žirmūnų g. 64, 09023 Vilnius
165	Vilniaus 8-ojo pašto pirmasis poskyris	09026	Kareivių g. 11 A, 09026 Vilnius
166	Vilniaus Kalnėnų paštas	02045	Moravų g. 7, 02045 Vilnius
167	Vilniaus Naujosios Vilnios paštas	11016	Pergalės g. 40, 11016 Vilnius
168	Visagino paštas	31001	Veteranų g. 2, 31001 Visaginas
169	Zarasų paštas	32001	Pakalnės g. 2, 32001 Zarasai
170	Žagarės paštas	84019	Miesto a. 41, Žagarė, 84019 Joniškio r. sav.
171	Žiežmarių paštas	56017	Žaslių g. 5, Žiežmariai, 56017 Kaišiadorių r. sav.

New postal tariffs as of February 1, 2023

Lithuanian Post introduced new postal rates on February 1, 2023. There will be only two weight categories for domestic letters:

- Normal letters up to 50 grams and 51 to 500 grams
- Large letter up to 500 grams and maxi letter 501 up to 2,000 grams (see table 2)

These weight categories only apply to domestic mail items. Different weight categories are still used for international postal items. Items sent abroad are always sent as priority items. The tariff table is set up with different tariffs for different countries. For example, a letter weighing up to 20 grams to Vietnam costs 1.10 euros, while a letter of the same weight to Germany costs 1.40 euros.

Table 2: Domestic postal rates

Mail item	Non-priority	priority	Registered non-priority	Registered priority
Up to 50 g	1,20	1,30	1,80	1,90
51 – 500 g	1,50	1,55	2,10	2,30
Up to 500 g *	1,40	1,50	2,05	2,10
501– 2.000 g*	1,75	1,80	2,35	2,40

* Large letters

Table 3: Country table (extract)

Country	Up to 20 g	21 – 50 g	Registered up to 20 g
Belgium	1,45	1,75	5,05
Bulgaria	1,00	1,40	2,90
Chile	1,25	2,10	3,30
Germany	1,40	1,75	5,65

Current stamp specialities

"Date header"?

Correctly, this is not an upside-down date, but rather the rubber text plate has been turned 180 degrees and glued to the stamp carrier upside down.

Name additions in the post office designation

The suffix paštas (English: Post) has recently appeared in the branch names of some post offices, currently at the Vilnius 8 and 16 and Utena post offices (figs. 2a, b and c). The place name is now in the genitive case: Vilniaus instead of Vilnius, Utenos instead of Utena.

Simultaneous use of two identical distinguishing letters at the Ignalina post office

According to international conventions, only different distinguishing letters should be used side by side in postal operations. No information could be obtained about the use of the two-day cancellations from Ignalina. It is also not yet known for what purposes black or green postmark colours are used (figs. 3a and 3b).

Fig. 1: Day cancel type 6c of the Vilnius 4 post office dated June 24, 2023

Figs. 2a and b: Type 5d, stamp colour: black, distinguishing letter: a or c

Fig. 2c Type 5a*, stamp colour: Green, distinguishing letter: ž

Fig. 3a: Type 6c, stamp colour: black

Fig. 3b: Type 5a*, stamp colour: green

Subsequently cancelled by a Lithuanian Post logistics centre?

Bernhard Fels, Soest (D)

The Lithuanian Post is not known to have cancelled postmarks on postal items. The postmark of the Soest post office was cancelled very faintly on the cover shown here. The Vilnius Old Town Parcel Centre probably thought that the stamp had not been cancelled and applied the date cancel of the Parcel Centre (Vilniaus senamiesčio siuntų centras, distinguishing letter g). In addition, the same date stamp was affixed on the back as a receipt stamp. It is noteworthy that this type of postmark was only used as a processing and transit postmark (postmark handbook type 7b, see bibliography) by the various sorting centres, but not for cancelling stamps. This cancellation is the only one known to date.

Further information on distribution centres and their stamps:

Bechstedt, Martin & Fels, Bernhard 2022: The Daily Postmarks of the Independent Republic of Lithuania since 1990. Handbook and Companion to the Internet Database. Bargteheide/Soest. pp. 105–108.

Fig. 1: This letter was posted at the Postbank in Soest on July 19, 2023. It arrived at the Vilnius Logistics Centre (Vilniaus logistikos centras/VLC) on July 24, 2023, as can be seen from the barcode label U of the Logistics Centre with the date; this is mainly applied to items from abroad. It is used exclusively for internal control of postal items; it is not yet possible for private customers to track items. The letter was forwarded to the parcel centre in Vilnius on July 25, 2023, where it was stamped on both sides and then delivered to the addressee. Based on the information provided by the Lithuanian Post, we now know that nine such centres are currently in operation. We do not know to what extent the goal of routing all mail through the large central distribution centre at Vilnius airport has been achieved.

Fig. 2: Rear processing stamp with the same device

Unusual franking on Lithuanian postal items with franking marks

Bernhard Fels, Soest (D)

Franking is a separate and sometimes neglected area of philately. The misleading German term "Freistempler" ("franking machine") refers to the device known as a franking machine, not the cancellation. This is correctly called a "franking mark". A distinction is made between private company or sender postmarks, which include government and local authorities, and postmarks applied after delivery to a postal facility. Unusual covers are usually caused by incorrect franking machine settings. The aim here is to show un-

sual covers with sender's cancels that also represent connections to other areas (covers with stamps, return letters). The franking labels shown are of the Pitney Bowes GB type.

Due to an incorrect setting on the franking machine, 0.65 litas was missing from the item in fig. 1. The sender made up for this by printing, cutting out and affixing an additional value frame. From January 1, 2000, to August 31, 2007, the charge for a letter weighing up to 20 grams was one litas.

Covers like the one shown in fig. 2 do not occur frequently: A second franking mark at the bottom left after turning the envelope by 180 degrees. The first cancellation of August 24, 2001, did not serve its purpose! The zero setting in the value indication is probably because the franking machine was forgotten to be loaded with new postage. The correct postage of three litas was reset on the franking machine on the same day, but the item was only posted three days later at the Vilnius 38 post office. Therefore, the postmark of the post office had to be cancelled with the date of posting or dispatch dated August 27, 2001.

The consignee could not be found at the destination, so the item was returned.

Zero value settings can be found on sample printouts for demonstration purposes by the equipment manufacturer or on first day of issue franking labels, usually produced at the request of collectors. However, this is a commercial cover.

The item shown in Fig. 3, dated June 14, 2000, was subsequently posted as registered mail. The missing fee of two litas was made up by two additional B stamps, which were worth one litas from July 1, 1994. From January 1, 2000, to August 31, 2007, the charge for a letter weighing up to 20 grams was one litas and the additional charge for registered mail was two litas.

The recipient of the letter in fig. 4 had probably sent a prepaid envelope with a stamp for one litas (domestic rate). In addition, a Vilnius City Council postmark was cancelled, but the usual value of one litas was forgotten to be set to zero. The letter is over-franked with one litas, as from January 1, 2000 to August 31, 2007 the fee for domestic letters up to 20 grams was one litas.

Fig. 1: Double franking mark

Fig. 2: Return letter with double franking mark and additional postmark

Fig. 3: Additional franking

Fig. 4: Over-franked letter with stamp plus franking mark (type Francotyp "T1000" (digital))

More than just stamps – a suggestion

Torsten Berndt, Constance (D)

The well-known researcher and publicist Horst Diederich – who published a standard work entitled "Die Umgestaltung des deutschen Postwesens zwischen der Französischen Revolution und dem Wiener Kongress" – "The reorganisation of the German postal system between the French Revolution and the Congress of Vienna" made an interesting suggestion in the latest Club announcements of the Hanover Stamp Club from 1886. He pointed out that, historically, the postal service was not only responsible for the transport of letters and parcels: "My many years of experience as a passionate (and self-proclaimed) postal historian have taught me to see postal history as an integral part of the telegraph and telephone system. Ultimately, postal history cannot be reliably presented without postal legislation". He therefore suggests that the purpose of the Association should not be reduced to the collection and documentation of stamps. "In my opinion, the whole range of postal services should be represented in a philatelic and forward-looking association, including telegraphy and telephony¹.

I think this approach should be discussed in general, in local associations and working groups. Yes, I would go one step further and say that traditional postal transport is only part of the history of communication. Philately has already integrated some of it. Telegraph and telephone stamps, for example, have their own chapters in the catalogues, as do telegram forms. The criterion for inclusion is advance payment of the fee or charge. Articles on telegrams can be found in the newsletters of the working groups, sometimes also on forms for the telecommunications service – not to mention the postal savings bank service. Lastly, pre-philatelic collections and exhibitions contain a wealth of documents that were rarely sent by the traditional postal route, with consignments transported on fixed routes, but rather delivered directly by messengers or by a kind of home post. Philately has thus already opened to the history of communication and, of course, to the history of banking.

Continuing along this path will enrich philately. Looking beyond the catalogue should also help to attract new members, especially for the working groups dedicated to the postal history of individual countries or regions. So far, there has only been significant competition for German postal history; the German Society for Postal and Telecommunications History tore down its walls decades ago. Of course, there are limits to collectability and presentation. Just as a railway enthusiast cannot place locomotives in his garden, a researcher of the history of telecommunications must refrain from placing telephone boxes – exceptions prove the rule; the author knows private owners of steam locomotives. It would also be difficult to develop exhibition rules comparable to those for philately. However, this should not be a reason to ignore the related areas of postal

¹ Hanover Stamp Club from 1886: Club announcements 137th year, no. 3, September 2023, pp. 12 and 13.

history and continue to concentrate on a small area. Philately has already shown in one area that it can open: It is impossible to imagine modern philately without philocartography.

Successful trade fair stand in Ulm

Torsten Berndt, Constance (D)

Our trade fair team had many interesting discussions at the Ulm International Stamp Fair. Friedhelm Doell, Reinhard Heinrich, Thomas Löbbbering, Ruud van Wijnen and the rapporteur formed the core of the team, Oliver Hanschmidt and Olaf Hoffmann the enhancements. Once again, we worked with partners, this time the Nordic States Working Group on the right, the Russia/USSR Working Group on the left, the Austrian Working Group two stands away and the Greek Working Group opposite.

Oliver Hanschmidt had brought his new book on Estonian railway mail as well as Peeter Pärn's catalogue of Estonian Provisionals from 1991 to 1993 – you can find reviews in this issue of BALTIKUM. We were able to sell one or two volumes, and Oliver Hanschmidt had the idea to collect an additional tenner for the working group at the exhibition stand – treasurer Michael Haslau was able to book an unplanned income of 50 Euros.

On Saturday we had a very interesting discussion with Frank Blechschmidt and Jürgen Witkowski. They were trying to find out how the Association of German Philatelists (BDPh) could better support the working groups. We had an intensive discussion about the judging of literature exhibitions, in particular the fact that the judging form gives points but no further information. It does not tell us how to improve the quality of the exhibition. Literature exhibitors are therefore like students whose teachers only give them a grade between A and F, but no further information. Blechschmidt and Witkowski promised improvements for the next literature competition in 2024. The board and the editors will decide a participation in due time. We also brought up the fact that most of the members of the international jury for IBRA 2023 did not speak German but had obviously not looked at our English-language entries.

Although we were not able to recruit a new member this time, we consider our participation to have been an overall success. We are planning to have an information stand again next year. As we heard on the last day of the fair, the contracts have been signed, so Ulm will take place.

Fig.: Olaf Hoffmann with the new trade fair posters he designed

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