



GERMANY PHILATELIC SOCIETY 1945-1948 LOCALS STUDY AND RESEARCH GROUP

Vol 4 No. 3

Sept-Dec 1971

Co-Directors: Alfred Heinz, 1 Circle Drive, Sunset Village
Flemington, N.J. 08822

Harry Meier, 4 Lawn Terrace, Cranford N.J. 07016

Information: Donald Slawson, Route 6, Box 173, Winchester, Va. 22601
Myron Hill, 3900 Calvert St. N. W., Washington, D.C.



**Gebühr
bezahlt**

CONTENTS

| Page | |
|------|--|
| 13 | The ASCHAFFENBURG Cash-Register franking of 1945 by O. Winter |
| 15 | The BIRKENFELD, WURTEMBERG, Postmaster Provisionals of 1946 by A. Geisser and A. Heinz |
| 24 | The Titisee Fee Labels (1945/6) by H. Schöll |
| 27 | Members corner |

LOCALS SCANTY AT TORONTO

The participation of the Locals Group at the Annual Convention this year was rather sparse (although in our defense I must say it would have been more if all frames were not sold - an indication we're not disinterested, just "good guys" giving others the chance to show their material.). However, those who did show material fared rather well. Harold Peter showed more of his AMG's and captured both a GPS Gold and the Research Award. Al Geisser put together a hasty exhibit of 2 frames of "Thüringen Local Issues 1945" and two frames of "Town Issues" and won a GPS Silver. Steve Esrati (not even a member of our group) won a GPS Silver and the Postal History Award for four frames of covers from the 1945-7 period. One of our old standbys, Myron Hill, left the locals field to show four frames of "Postal War 1946-71 and took a Bronze GPS medal.

12.

The show was excellent. The Toronto group outdid themselves to make the stay enjoyable. I'm sure all who attended the event appreciate their efforts.

PLUG FOR SAN FRANCISCO

I'm sure you are all aware San Francisco (WESTPEX) will be our first West Coast organized participation. I hope that all our East Coast members will use this as an opportunity to show off some of their material out west, and the West Coast members will be able to take advantage of the opportunity to attend a show with more reasonable transportation costs. This meeting will be on 28-30 April, 1972 at the Jack Tar Hotel.

The GPS portion of the WESTPEX show will salute the centenary of the first German postage stamps which were issued in January 1872. Special WESTPEX/GPS cachets will be available, hopefully with a 'double cancel' from Bonn, Germany and San Francisco with appropriate stamps. The Bundespost has been invited to set up a special booth to sell German stamps.

The German exhibits will be placed in the El Dorado Room of the hotel and will consist of 104 twelve page frames.

The prospectus, as well as more detailed information, may be obtained from WESTPEX's secretary, Adrienne O'Neill, 298 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro, Cf. 94577.

Tentative reservations for frames for the GPS Exhibit may be obtained by contacting Chapter No. 24 President, O.R. Sanford Jr., P.O. Box 22058, San Francisco, Cf. 94122.

This is only the third issue for this year - as I'm sure you're all aware. I hope at least if quantity has gone down that quality will improve. In this issue we have some new information from Aschaffenburg, and the pictures illustrating the Birkenfeld article are printed on the mimeograph with an electric stencil - all earlier illustrations have been done by Xerox with the text printed in a second operation around the picture. I hope this will improve the picture. We'll see how this turns out.

Submit the results of your studies, and the 1972 year will improve our bulletin. Feel free to send illustrations for any articles.

The ASCHAFFENBURG Cash-Register Franking of 1945

by O. Winter, FRPSL

Though I have bored our members before with some short story about this subject, it was - at the time - couched in different terms and within the story of others, which need not to be mentioned again.

We find these cash-register frankings from Aschaffenburg, Düsseldorf and Nuerenberg, while one from Stuttgart, where the same method was used, has yet eluded every collector. Not a single letter with a Stuttgart franking has come to light, causing a hardening of the belief that this exists as a rumor only.

And now the Aschaffenburg one about which I want to tell a tale.

But first : What is a Cash-register franking?

During the thirties the German postal authorities - and that had nothing to do with politics - embarked upon a rationalization programme by installing cashregister machines at the parcel counters of the larger offices to speed up the service. Stamps therefore were no longer used but the amount printed onto the parcelcard.

Parcelcard? What is that?

In Germany and other countries as well, the stamps are not stuck onto the parcel to receive the abominable killer-cancel as in Great Britian, but are stuck onto a parcelcard. This is handed to the counter-clerk by the sender together with the parcel. It consists of 3 parts, two small sections right and left and the main center portion. All 3 parts are connected by a roulette, the left portion showing the name and address of the receiver as on the parcel. This is datestamped and handed back to the sender as a receipt. The right portion shows the sender's name and address and is detached and given to the recipient together with the parcel. The main portion shows both the sender and recipients addresses, all the necessary postal information such as C.O.D., registered, insured, etc., and here the stamps are affixed. This main portion in the middle is retained by the post office for control purposes after the receiver has signed the reverse showing receipt of the parcel.

These cards are conveyed by letterpost, while the parcels are transferred by express freight train - or aeroplane - as the case may be.

The card and parcel meet at their destination and are "married" by

a number which the accepting official assigns. They are gummed and numbered labels, consisting of two sections, a large one and a small one. The large one is stuck onto the parcel, while the small one is stuck onto the card, both bearing the identical number and the sender's town office.

And why am I so explicit about all this?

Wait and see !

Because some time ago, an acquaintance of mine from Hamburg asked me whether I could get for him some letters with Aschaffenburg cashregister franking. He had asked around the various dealers of his neighborhood but could not find what he was looking for. I asked one specialist dealer here - no names shall be mentioned - and received 7 or 8 such letters and cards 'on approval'. It goes without saying that I studied them first.

Hallo, what was that? There was a letter which showed two printed impressions from the same cashregister machine, the long and familiar one in its correct position and a short one some 12 cm to the left. To that, at the end of the long impression the well known emblem, Swastika in circle with eagle in embossed form (probably not reproduceable in print), when the date was clearly to be read ; 30. Apr. 45.

I kept this letter as a matter of course. But I did more. I sent it with some specific questions to Aschaffenburg, asking the postmaster there whether perhaps they had used their cashregister already towards the end of the war, probably having run out of stamps for a short period, etc.

Almost by return I not only received the letter returned but also the reply which was almost staggering.

The U. S. Army, after heavy fighting had occupied the town on 4 and 5 April, 1945. As soon as possible all available postal employees were gathered together to begin a cleaning-up campaign in order to bring the Post Office No. 2 into such a state that it could be used again. This was accomplished on 20th April and application submitted to the local Commander of the occupying forces to open the postoffice for the public on a local service. This application was granted on 24 April, 1945, and on 30 April, 1945 the office opened its counters for a local letter service.

One cashregister machine on the parcelcounter was still in working condition and was taken to the letter counter for franking letters and cards, since the old stamps were not allowed to be used anymore.

The Postmaster from Aschaffenburg Continued :

This letter has not only been conveyed on the first day, it must have been accepted by the counter within the first hour of opening, because the cashregister counting machine had not yet been converted from parcel to letter service, meaning the shorter impression line on the left was not taken away yet.

How this letter could at all pass the most rigorous censorship examination is a puzzle, because nobody has spotted that emblem which, like the old stamps, was not allowed to be shown anywhere.

The first adhesives were supplied to this office on 27.7.45. until which date the cashregister was certainly used. This also came in use at later occasions when the supply of stamps ran out but no entry in our record books show when that may have been nor how often or until what time.

Here we now are: The first authenticated local service for civilian population after the war started on 30 April, 1945.

Can anyone come up with an earlier date (excepting some localities in the eastern zone) ?

The BIRKENFELD, WURTEMBERG, Postmaster Provisionals of 1946

by A. K. Geisser & A. Heinz

The town of Birkenfeld (1970 population of 7000) is located at the northern tip of the beautiful Black Forest. Its founding is placed between 600-900 AD and it was first mentioned in official archives in 1302. Recent excavations revealed that the area had been inhabited by Celts, Romans, and Alemans. Originally, the town was an integral part of Baden. However, in 1322, the then Markgraf Rudolf von Baden borrowed 100 Fl. silver from his friend Graf Eberhard von Wurttemberg. For this loan he pledged the town of Birkenfeld. As the loan was not repaid within the stipulated 2 years, Graf Eberhard purchased the other half of the town. This created quite a furor for a number of years but was eventually settled in 1361.

In its early years, the town population derived its existence from farming. This, however, changed when in 1839 the nearby city of

16.

Pforzheim inaugurated a flourishing jewelry industry.

A near death blow was struck when on February 23, 1945 a squadron of Lancasters attacked the city and leveled it to the ground. Only houses on the periphery escaped the holocaust.



Ill. # 1 Pforzheim after Airplane Attack



Ill. # 2 Contemporary Photo of Monte Scherbelino

A grim reminder of this tragedy is the so-called Monte Scherbelino created from the rubble removed from the devastated city. It is now the highest peak of the area and is shown in Illustration #2.

Birkenfeld itself suffered very little in the way of war damage. More specifically, the Birkenfeld post office remained untouched and is illustrated below.



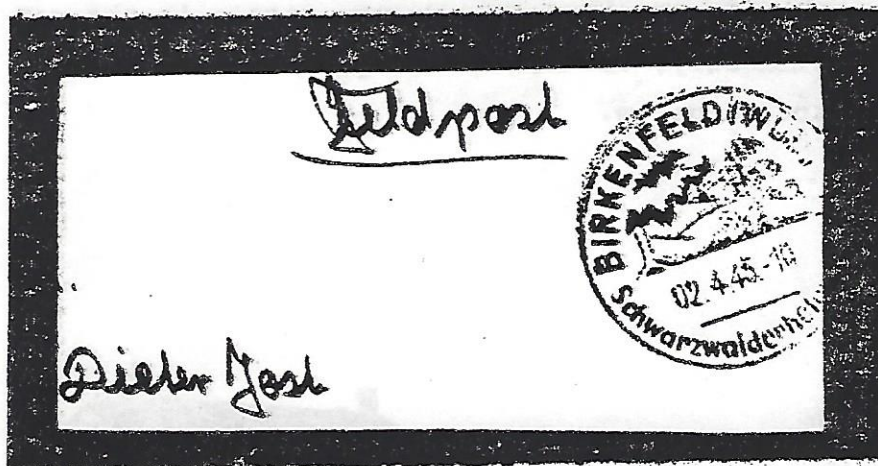
Ill. # 3 Birkenfeld Post Office (1946)

At war's end, Birkenfeld itself, the neighboring city of Pforzheim and suburbs became part of the French Zone of Occupation. Some weeks later, approximately July 1, 1945, Pforzheim itself and its Baden suburbs transferred to the American Zone of Occupation, while Birkenfeld continued under French authority.

Within the French Zone, as elsewhere in Germany, recovery was slow and resumption of postal service did not take place until September 26, 1945. To be sure, courier mail services between administrative bodies was permitted earlier, but the mails were not opened to the public until the date indicated. Actually postal services broke down prior to the May 8, 1945 armistice; and this breakdown is clearly evident from the item shown in illustration # 4. It carries the handstamped legend: Weiterleitung durch Kriegsverhältnisse Verhindert - which translates

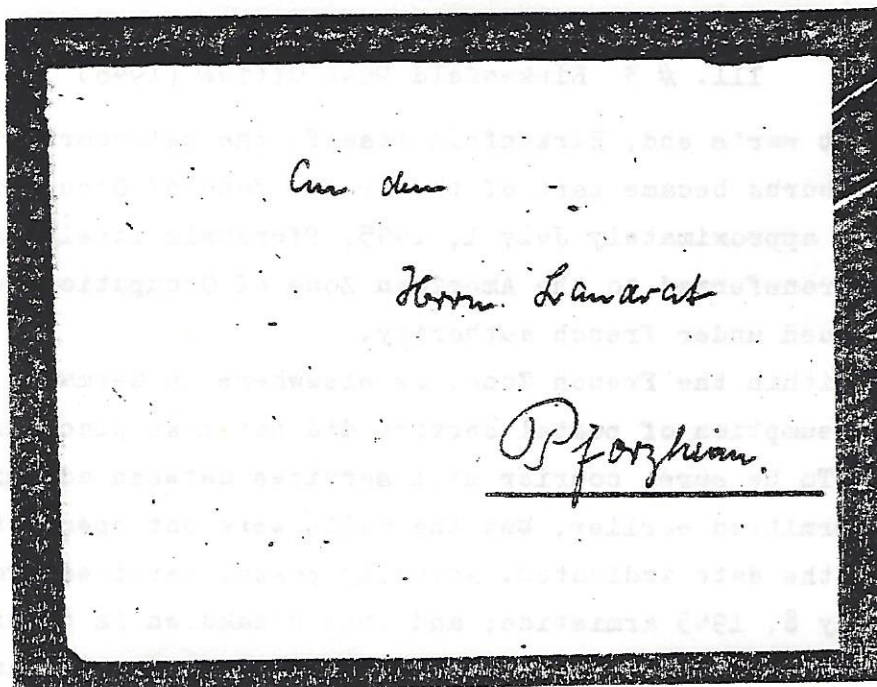
18.

to "Forwarding prevented by war circumstances". The postmark shows an April 2, 1945 date, which is approximately 5 weeks prior to the armistice.



Ill. # 4 Birkenfeld "Feldpost" Letter Carrying a "War Circumstances" Notation

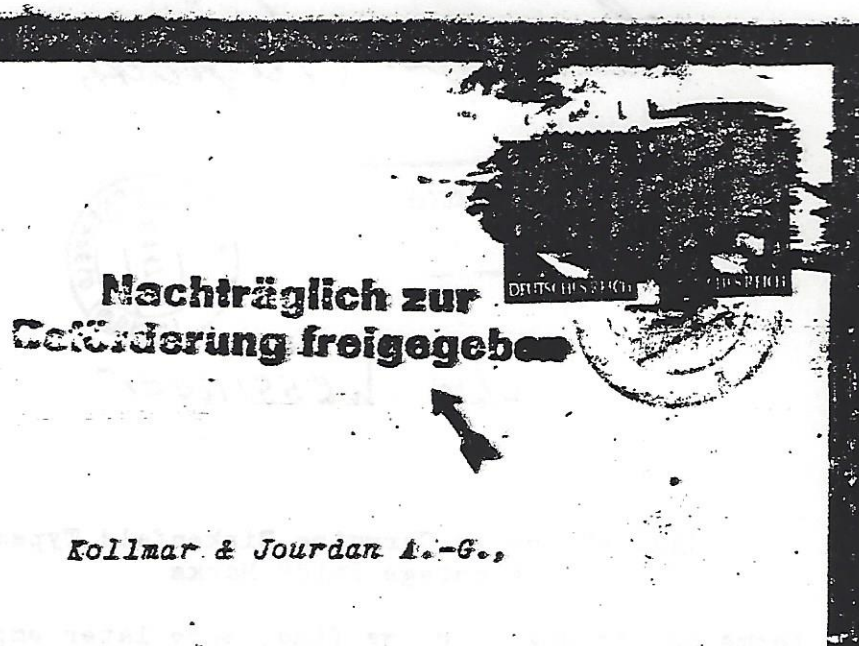
As noted before, courier mail between government agencies was permitted prior to the opening of mail to the public. For Censorship purposes, such courier mail had to clear through the Landrat's office. One such cover, not from Birkenfeld but from the neighboring town of Buchenbronn is shown below.



Ill. # 5 Courier-Mail Cover from Buchenbronn

For completeness, it may be mentioned that many clandestine courier-mail systems flourished and were often tolerated by military authorities, particularly later on.

When the mails were finally opened to the public, much mail that had been confiscated, and retained for "intelligence" purposes, by the victorious armies was released to the addressees. Such mail carries the characteristic corkmarks applied to block out Nazi symbolisms in keeping with SHAEF directives. One such cover is shown below.



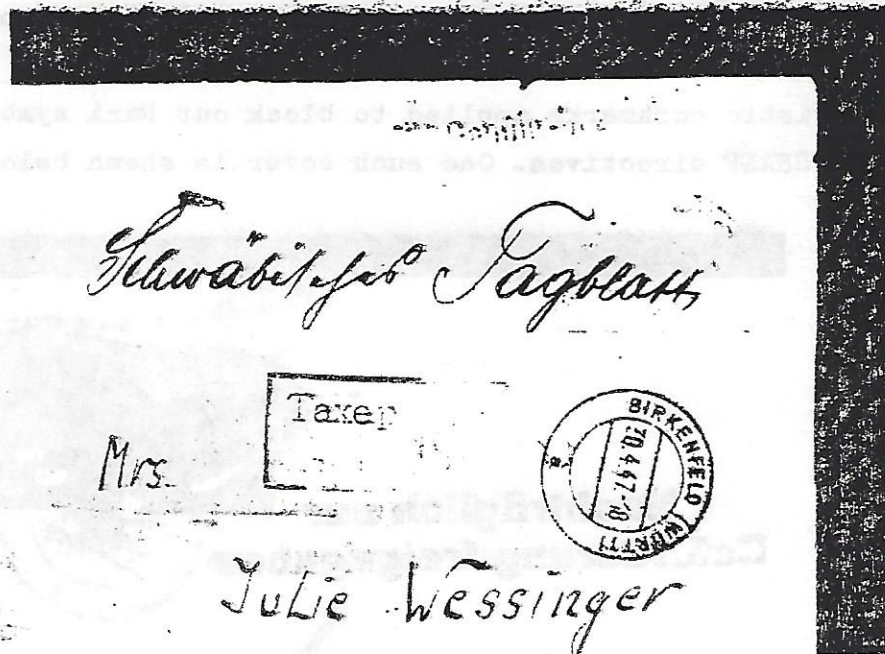
Ill. #6 Corkmask (Überrollungsstempel) Applied to Confiscated Letter

Stamps were not available when the mails were finally opened to the public. The French Zone "Coat of Arms" series had not made its appearance as yet and the erstwhile Hitler stamps had been invalidated by occupation authority edicts. This inspired wide usage of cash payments for postage; payments which were usually documented on each piece of mail by a "postage paid" mark (Gebühr bezahlt) of one kind or another. These were usually applied by hand stamps or by manuscript notation if hand stamps were not available. The stamp shortage also inspired postmaster provisionals in some areas. Both emergency measures were invoked at Birkenfeld.

Two basic types of "Gebühr bezahlt" hand stamps saw service at Birkenfeld. At first, a single-line variety was employed. It was later replaced with two variations of a two-line, box-type "postage paid"

20.

mark, approximately 40x20 mm in size. The top line carries the French legend "Taxe percue" and the bottom line " Rm Rpf". The amount of postage was entered in manuscript in the appropriate places. |



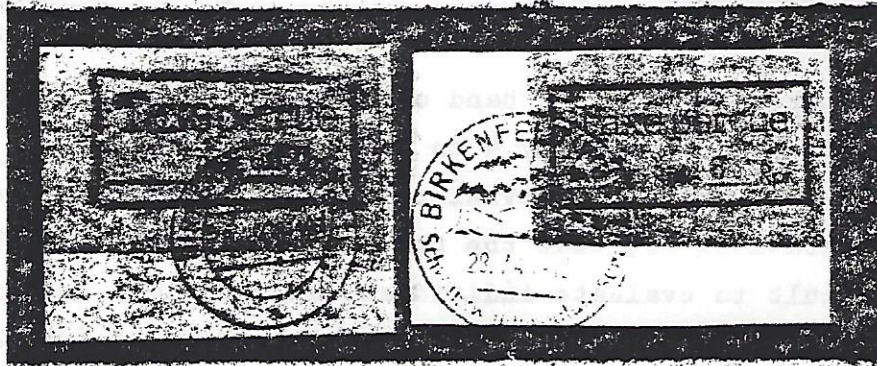
Ill. #7 Covers Carrying Birkenfeld Types of "Postage Paid" Marks

Two forms of the box type, we find, were later employed in printing a relatively large set of provisionals in mid-1946. Still later, these were again employed to process mail during intermittent periods of stamp shortage.

Cash processing of mail was the order of the day throughout the French Zone until the Coat of Arms stamp series was released in December 1945. Even then, some localities continued the practice on an intermittent basis, as distribution of stamps was found wanting, due to excessive war damage to transportation facilities. It was during one of these stamp shortage intervals, July-August 1946, that the Birkenfeld provisionals were born. True provisionals are transient in nature and the fleeting products of changing and difficult times. The end product usually reflects these circumstances and most provisionals do not have a stamp-like appearance but resemble makeshift stickers. The Birkenfeld provisionals are no exception. Using rolls of conventional brown sealing tape as a basic paper supply, the postmistress generated the provisionals by simply hand-

stamping the tape and cutting individual units from the rolls with scissors. The sealing tape was, of course, gummed and that solved the "adhesion" problem. The hand stamping procedure involved the box-type hand stamps discussed earlier plus a simple numeric type that established values. Violet ink was used for the large box-type hand stamp and red ink for the numeric. The provisionals so produced may be classified as imperforate coils in that they were made from rolls rather than sheets of paper.

As noted previously, two types of box-type hand stamps were used in provisionals. They are illustrated below:



ILL. #8 Basic Types of Birkenfeld Provisionals

The type I (left) has a 41 x 21 mm format. The frame lines are heavy and curved and corners are rounded.

The type II (right) is slightly smaller, 39 x 19 mm. Frame lines are straight and relatively thin. Corners are sharp.

A closer look at the two types suggests that they may have been made with the same hand stamp. Rubber hand stamps deteriorate rapidly in use. Lines deform and become heavier, etc. Thus, it would appear that the heavy curved lines of type I may be the result of extensive usage of a hand stamp that initially yielded type II. This theory, however is in disagreement with the fact that both types have been found on earlier stampless mail. It would seem then that two hand stamps were actually used and that one of them, type II, may have been a metal hand stamp. Both of these possibilities are at variance with the postmistress' claim that only one hand stamp was employed.

22.

The Birkenfeld provisional series includes a total of 13 values, ranging from 6 Pf to 1.08 Rm.

| Value (Pf) | Values reported to date (June 71) | |
|------------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| | Type I | Type II |
| 6 | x | x |
| 8 | x | x |
| 10 | x | x |
| 12 | x | x |
| 15 | - | x |
| 16 | x | x |
| 24 | x | x |
| 30 | - | x |
| 48 | x | x |
| 60 | x | x |
| 80 | x | x |
| 84 | x | x |
| 1.08 Rm | x | x |

Based upon material on hand or reported to us, the provisionals were used for about a month, July 4 to August 6, 1946.

The exact number of provisionals issued or still in existence is not known. Indications are that the number is rather small. This makes it very difficult to evaluate individual denominations and types.

Two types of postmarks were used at Birkenfeld during the provisional period. One is the regulation type, the other a promotional kind that promotes Birkenfeld as a Black Forest recreation area. Both are shown in illustration # 8.

Birkenfeld provisionals have been under continual challenge. They do not enjoy a high standing in the provisional family (Hallensia IV) and for valid reasons. The rather large series of 13 values and their late issue, July-August 1946, suggest manipulation. An early inquiry to the Birkenfeld post office brought this reply: "The labels were made up in July 1946 due to a shortage of stamps, with no intention of creating any specialty but simply to facilitate accounting. No permission from the OPD was asked for, nor therefore granted. They were in use a short time only. The exact number of labels prepared and sold is not known and none are available anymore." signed: P. Thumm, May 27, 1947.

Visits to the Birkenfeld post office by both authors at later dates brought similar responses. Inquiries to the Neuenburg district headquarters also proved negative. They disclaimed any knowledge of the provisionals in question. In short, Birkenfeld postal authorities admit that provisionals were issued as a stop-gap measure to bridge a period of stamp

shortage but they reject hints of manipulation. So much for the official position.

Philatelically speaking, the picture is not quite as clear. Much of the material in our own collections, or reported to us, bears the return address of one Dr. Krieg and is generally improperly franked. He is not a native of Birkenfeld but was employed there at the time and may have been the driving force behind the issue. It is quite possible that he persuaded the postmistress to go along with his manipulations without her being aware of the consequences. In any event, Fraulein Thumm's integrity and honesty is not being questioned. She inherited the postmaster job after her father's death. He had served as postmaster in Birkenfeld's first post office, 1907, and continued to serve until 1944. Prior to his regime, Birkenfeld mail was processed at the railway station. The foregoing summarizes the results of many years of study. Perhaps the slightly tarnished nature of the Birkenfeld provisionals did not justify all the attention that was showered upon them, but then who can deny a collector the pleasure of studying the postal history of his homeland and presenting his findings in the most favorable light.

This is the very sentiment that inspires many collectors to build "home" collections (Heimatssammlungen). They are attached to their respective home areas and being there facilitates research.

In the case in point, the sentimental attachment was there but the research had to be of the long distance variety. Both authors are native to the area. One was born in Birkenfeld, the other in Buchenbronn, 3Km to the south. Both served jewelry apprenticeships in Pforzheim - the city that was completely destroyed in February 1945 - prior to emigrating to the USA several years after World War I.

That was many years ago, but the attachment to the beautiful Black Forest area continues strong as ever. In short, our study was a labor of love. It resolved some grey areas but did little to enhance the stature of Birkenfeld Provisionals.

Bibliography

1. "The Postmaster Provisionals of Freudenstadt" A. Heinz, The German Philatelic Society, Inc.
2. "The Postmaster Provisionals of Birkenfeld/Wurttt." Paul Rossbach-Emden Jr., Jan/Feb 1969 bulletin of the GPS Locals Group

The Titisee Fee Labels (1945/6)

by H. Scholl

reprinted with permission from "Deutsche
Zeitung für Briefmarkenkunde" Nr. 8/1970

translated by Inge Fisher

As former postmaster of the post office of Titisee, I feel it is my duty to account for the origin and development of the Titisee postage fee labels with their philatelic value to collectors and dealers.

After the cease fire all rail and mail service was at a standstill in the area of Neustadt/Hochschwarzwald and Titisee, the hub of tourist traffic. The French Governor, an understanding person and gentleman, resided at Neustadt. I have to thank him, that I was not suspended because of my postal service record in Lettland and the Ukraine during World War II. My philatelic and other experiences as director of the Dienstpost in the East (Europe) shall remain for a possible later article. The French Governor in collaboration with the Postmaster of Neustadt created shortly after the collapse a courier service, which encompassed the district up to the Feldberg for official mail of the Government and the offices of the mayors. The routes were distributed and the delivery was through mailmen on bicycle, which were given identity papers and armbands, stamped by the Government in order to pass through the many sentries (posted due to fear of werewolf and SS). The task was very dangerous since the sentries often started shooting at the slightest noise. The letters carried the official handstamp of the office and the notation "courier mail" as well as the date cancellation.

As soon as the railroad mail started again, regular letters were allowed. The postage fee was 12 Pfg. and was charged in cash. The receiving postal clerk applied the notation "Gebühr bezahlt 12 Rpf" to the letter. The postal clerk sorting the mail checked the correct receipt of the fee with his signature. Next to this the date cancellation was applied. The local post office sent their consignments to the district post office, where the mail was again checked for the right amount of postage.

In Titisee some branch offices (Feldberg, Hinterzarten, Schlöschsee and Altglashütten) had Gebühr bezahlt stamps. They needed only to add the paid amount and the signature. The post office Titisee, the small post offices (Poststellen) Breitnau, Falkau and Saig did not possess such stamps. In order to speed the processing of lettermail and to help ease the work-

load of the postal clerk receiving the mail, I decided to make the above mentioned fee labels, which were known to me from the times after World War I.

An old discarded Hektograph machine was repaired and started up again. For paper I used the gummed lightbrown labels, as they were used at that time for re-use on used envelopes. The large piece was divided into 36 squares with "Gebühr bezahlt 12 Rpf". The single labels were then cut out along the lined edges (fee label 1).

Then, when the Hektograph machine went on strike one day, we were out of ink, I made the labels with the typewriter in a similar fashion with carbon copies (three times), (fee label 2).

Not really essential was the third typewriter made label in two languages "Gebühr bezahlt, Port payé ...Rpf. Gepr...", which was anticipated for foreign mail, after resumption of this service, as well as for packages, on which the Gebühr bezahlt stamp was mostly illegible (fee label 3).

The fee labels were meant to cover only an immediate need and given to the postal clerks like any registration-, airmail, and special delivery labels. They were however never sold and received the value only after application of the clerk's signature and the date cancel.

These measures were considered simple interoffice functions by me and under the given circumstances belonging also to the duties of the postmaster. Therefore I did not ask for approval by the OPD Freiburg. Only many months later did the OPD ask for a statement from me, due to an inquiry of a dealer who had asked in Freiburg if these labels were officially sanctioned. I reported to my superior office what had taken place and why I had made the labels and enclosed proof. After this I have never again heard from the OPD Freiburg, therefore I assume that the issue of the fee labels did find their belated approval.

Had I suspected the growing developments of the Titisee fee labels the work and monetary costs due to replies to inquiries, as well as the vexations and anger, I would never have started the old Hektograph machine and the typewriter. Further, I would never even have dreamt that these plain labels would someday value 100 DM. Only the mayor of Titisee seems to have had the foresight or at least an inkling of the situation, as he collected all covers which came into his office.

At a guess approximately 1000 letters were thus franked at the mentioned four post offices (Titisee, Falkau, Breitnau and Saig) dur-

ing the years 1945/6, of which surely 80-90% went into the fire. It is fantastic to imagine how much value was therefore destroyed.

After the "Müller-Spezialkatalog" appeared, on which I collaborated, I was astonished to find, that a second fee label was listed, which never passed through my hands. I had already left Titisee some time ago before I received this surprise. How this label appeared, who manufactured it and passed it around, I have never been able to find out. Maybe one day the labels ran out and a clerk created without intention the "rare variety" - the label with two lines.

The second big surprise happened some time ago, when a stamp dealer sent me a cover franked with the Titisee fee label. It was a perforated label of white paper. Such luxury was not at my command. Had an unselfish patron tried to ease the workload of the post office personnel and these personnel accepted it? A forgery? This question cannot absolutely be answered in the affirmative, as far as I can see. The letter had the cancel and signature of the clerk and was formally in order. I can state definitely, that it was not an official fee label, and this seems to be the most important point.

If we consider the Frankenauer fee labels of 1946 in extra large format, which are already valued with DM 600.- on cover and which have been made by private persons, as has been proven, one can only say that in this area many strange things occurred, which were later honored. It just happened to be a crazy time and we have to close our eyes to some of it.

How did the huge price evaluation for this plain Titisee fee label happen?

1. The small area of jurisdiction of the post office of Titisee with its majority of rural population, missing industry, few tourists at that time, caused from the start a small issue of the fee labels.
2. The plain make-up contributed to the discarding or destroying of the thus franked covers.
3. No commercial profit, no following "reprints".

As an oddity I'd like to mention that a Berlin dealer ordered at the time 10,000 labels. I thought this at the time to be a bad joke. Believe it or not: I did not get rich through the Titisee fee labels, and in my own stamp collection there is not one single Titisee fee label.

MEMBERS CORNER

For Sale:

by Al Geisser

2877 Hillwood Terrace N.E.
Apt 5

Atlanta, Ga. 30319

- Cottbus 1-20 mint \$3.25 (Mi 18.-Mk)
- 25-31 mint \$1.25 (Mi 7.- Mk)
- Storkow 9-14 mint \$1.00 (Mi 5.50 Mk)
- Schwarzenberg type I short set
(42Pf and Mark values
missing)
\$10.00 (Mi 96.- Mk)

For sale:

Netzschkau 12Pfg. (must be
Mi #8 - I don't have my
Michel handy)

Complete sheet of the
second printing - mixed
gitters and blocks.

\$ 100.00

Manfred Walther
P.O. Box 250
West Hill, Ontario, Canada

All of you (except the German members) got the cork obliteration offer of pieces from Germany. Four people asked for additional specific items and all got at least one of the items they wanted. If any others have specific wants in these pieces write me and I'll see what can be gotten for you. (Slawson)

Hope you all had a Merry Christmas and Happy New year.
Send in your articles and pieces for the members corner.

Don Slawson