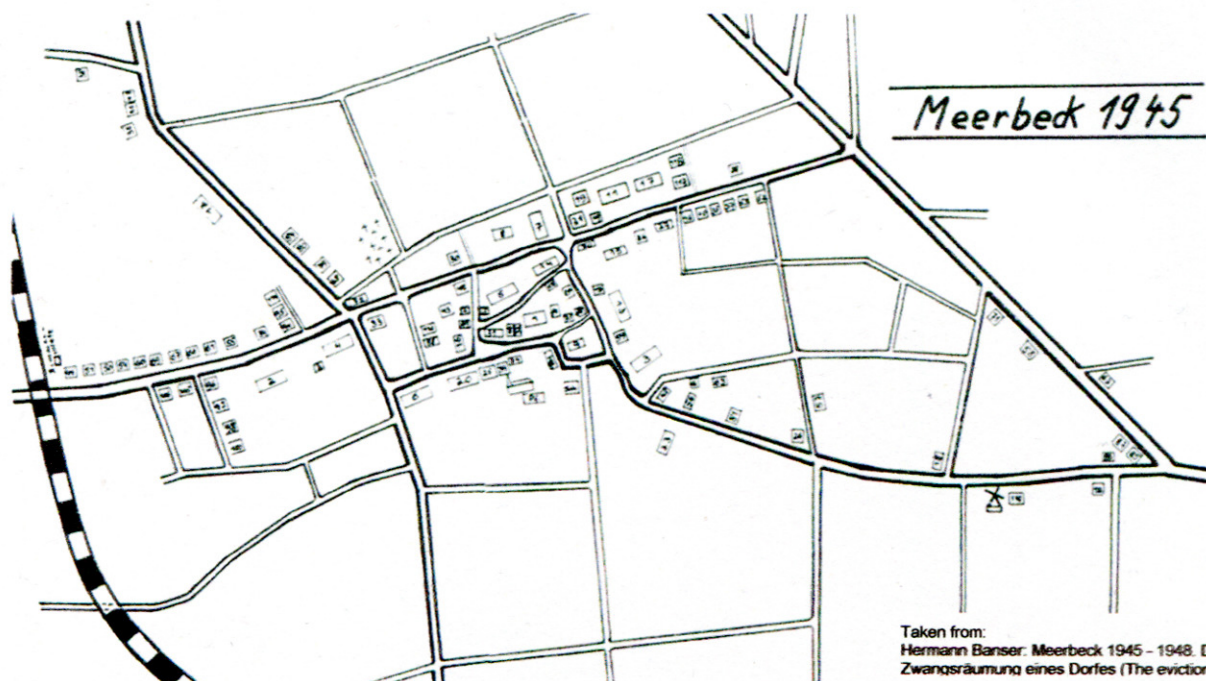


Free Franking for Displaced Persons in the British Zone of Germany

using the Example of the DP camp Meerbeck, 1945 - 1948



Meerbeck counted 1945 about 750 inhabitants. In addition, around 550 refugees and evacuees were accommodated in the houses. Everyone had to vacate the village on May 8, 1945.

Purpose of the exhibit

The exhibit documents local post historical and social background of the Displaced Persons (DPs) Camp Meerbeck in the time 1945 to 1948.

This exhibit studies the markings, labels and so called DP camp stamps of Meerbeck. The presentation try to clarify the postage free status of the DPs,, how to use it and the border to the reality.

Plan:

0. Displaced Persons in the camp Meerbeck

1. International Mail

Postage free status carried via British Military Post (FPO - Field Post Office)

Shipments via Deutsche Post abroad

2. Meerbeck camp assembly centre Post Office

3. Domestic mail

Postage free status carried via British Military Post (FPO - Field Post Office)

Postage free status carried via Deutsche Post

4. The End of rubber hand cancel of the assembly centre Meerbeck

5. Lagerpostmarken (DP Camp Stamps)

DP Camp Stamps

Baltic Philatelist Association "Baltia"

6. Meerbeck PST II (Post Office Meerbeck II)

Heinz K. Selig, Postbox 822; 71608 Ludwigsburg Germany
eMail: heinz.selig@t-online.de
Internet: www.schaumburgerpostgeschichte.de

0. Displaced Persons in the camp Meerbeck

The Situation.

In May 1945 more than 4 million "Displaced Persons" (DP's) were in the West Zones of the occupied Germany. 2.3 million of these were east Europeans. Million fold sorrow which protracted prisoners of war, political refugees, civilian internees and forced or voluntary foreign workers had not ended after the occupation by the Allies troops, further people were stateless. The original plan for those displaced as the result of WWII was to repatriate them to their countries of origin as quickly as possible.

The repatriation of many people to their old native country hadn't been possible yet, others wanted to emigrate to the USA or to Canada in order not to reach the Soviet sphere of influence. Over one million refugees could not be repatriated to their original countries and were left homeless as a result of fear of persecution.

In that borderline situation it was needful to organise camps for the DP. Most of the American und British took existing establishments as former barracks, former prisoner-of-war camps, former concentration camps and sometimes the British command requisition of a whole village. For example Meerbeck a little farmer village near the town of Stadthagen in Lower Saxony.

There is a rumour going around that an Anglo-American bomber had made on 26th November, 1944 a crash landing with seven crew members near the town of Meerbeck, and some of the townspeople beat four of the surviving crew to death. The sepulchre of the four crew members are nameless. Three of the crew died in the crash. This three are dishonourably buried on the churchyard of Meerbeck.

Based on this, the British banned all inhabitants from there town Meerbeck on the 7th May, 1945 all inhabitants of Meerbeck from their town. They were permitted to attend the church and tend their fields, but not keep their houses. The DP camp Meerbeck was operated and handled by United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). The UNRRA, a specialised agency of the United Nations founded in 1943 in Atlanta (US) with the support of DPs in Europe. In 1947 the responsibility was transferred to the International Refugee Organisation (IRO), also a function of the UN.

Status of Baltic Displaced Persons

Before refugees from Lithuania and other Baltic countries were moved to the DP camp Meerbeck, it had been occupied by DPs from the region.

First, the British institutionalised Russians and Poles for ten weeks in the camp. These people were so-called "Fremdarbeiter" (forced workers) out of several camps near Meerbeck. After the repatriation to their country of origin, Italian Military Internees (IMI - Italienische Militärinternierte) were sent to and remained there until they also were repatriated.

From September 1945 Baltic people came to Meerbeck camp.

There were four district groups of Baltic, the refugees out of fear of the Soviets, the ex-soldiers who fought on the German side, prisoners of war and forced workers (Ostarbeiter / Fremdarbeiter). Most Baltic soldiers in Germany were at first kept in British prisoner-of-war camps. In fall 1945 a lot of them had been transferred to a POW camp in Belgium before they came to Meerbeck. All groups of Baltic gets the status "Displaced Persons".

This exhibit shows the postage free status of DP mail. This system went into effect on 20. October 1945. In December 1945, a official DP post was established. The postage-free fees mail were under the supervision of UNRRA care. The British FPO (Field Post Office) was responsible for correspondence outside Germany and the German civil post (Deutsche Post) for handling of DP post internal Germany.

The End of the Free Postage and the end of the camp.

According to sources free postage ended in August 1947. The rubber cancel was collected by the Deutsche Post as the result of the British Military Government Introduction. Afterwards, the camp inmate's mail for domestic destinations was subject to postage. International post was franked although some sources speak of free postage.

Step by step western nations accepted the reality of the situation and opened their doors to immigrants from DP camps. Many Baltic DPs of Meerbeck made their way to new lives in the United States, Canada, Australia and Great Britain.

On the 15th September, 1948 the DP camp Meerbeck was closed. The inhabitants of Meerbeck came back to their houses.

1. International mail.

Postage free status carried via British Military Post (FPO - Field Post Office).

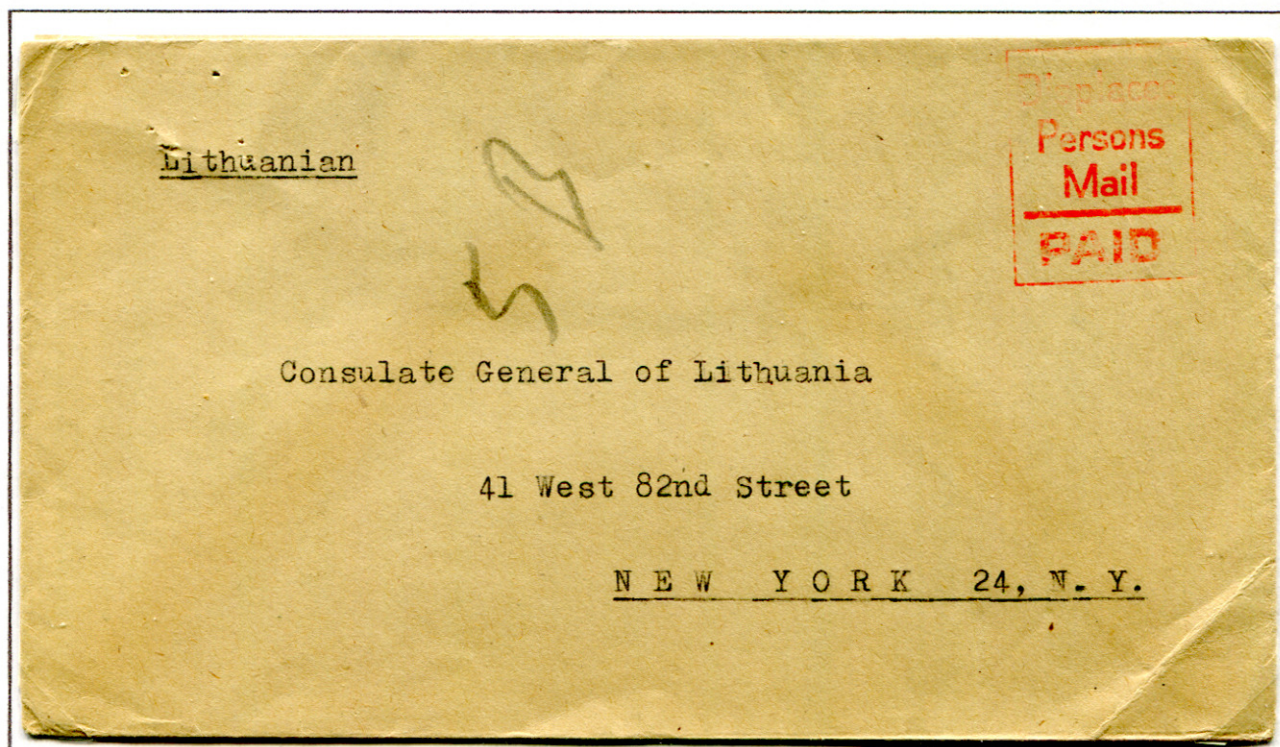
During that period of free Mail in the British Zone any correspondence from the camps to places outside Germany was possible only in urgent cases through the British FPO.

This system went into effect on October 20st October, 1945. The letters had to be provided with encrypted sender. The sender of the letters was not allowed to include place names. Instead of city name was only indicated the assembly Center (location number) AC 33 I 135 (for example Meerbeck), 800 Control Unit (Censorship Peine) and the note BAOR (British Army of the Rhine, short BAOR) (as Great Britain) indicate.

Note: The civilian postal service for Germans was allowed only from 1.04.1946 abroad.

From 1st December, 1945 all mail was cancelled by red four lines rubber postmark "**Displaced / Person / Mail / PAID**". The British carried the letter via their army postal service. The amount of Mail was delivered by the British Military Post in the town of Nienburg.

Domestic Mail was cancelled by the Deutsche Post in the town of Niedernwöhren or Kirchhorsten. At these post offices – in addition to the rubber DP mail postmark – the Deutsche Post cancellation was given.



Foreign letter postage free posted to New York (General consulate of Lithuania) cancelled by red four lines rubber postmark "**Displaced / Persons / Mail / PAID**". The letter was posted via the British Military Post in the town of Nienburg.

Information on the back: "D.P. Assembly Centre / B.A.O.R. (via Great Britain) / Lithuanian".

Route: camp assembly centre, via FPO (Field Post Office - British Military Post) to the censor office (Censorship Peine), cancelled with read rubber postmark ("Displaced / Persons / Mail / PAID"), by FPO to the civil post office (London Foreign Section - "F.S."), by civil post to the addressee.

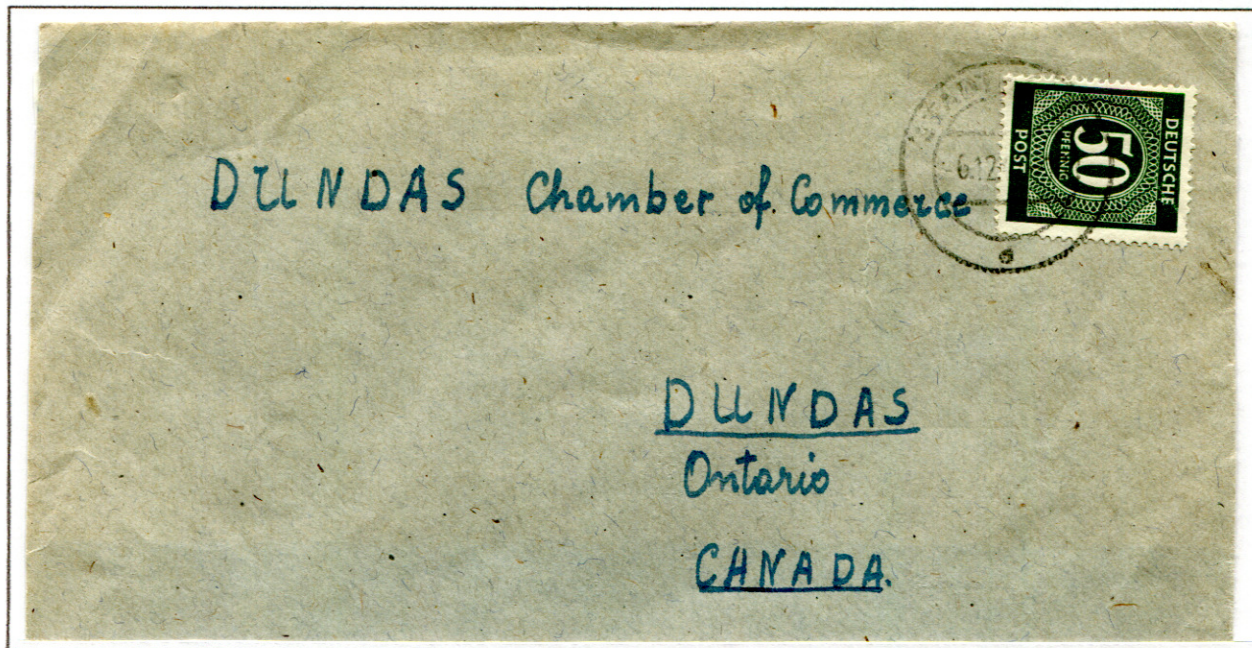
There is no challenge to date. This is typical for international DP covers out of this time. Also the return address "Agota Visockiene" gives no information.



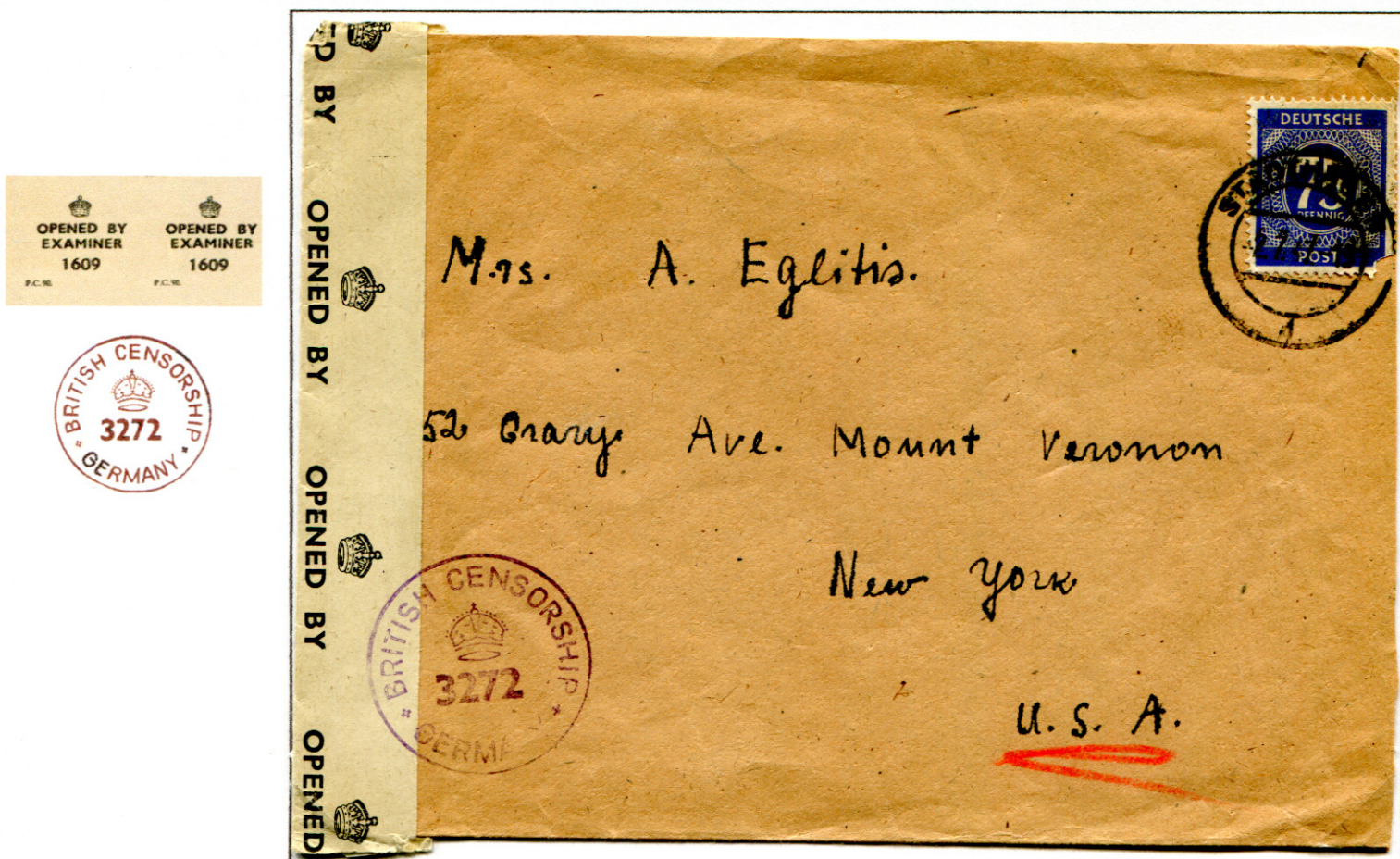
24 x 31 mm, thick bar PAID; used in Peine 20.10.1945 to 10.01.1947; then in Hamburg. The DP foreign mail was stamped "**Displaced / Persons / Mail / PAID**". The stamp was used at the District Censorship Station (DCS) - Peine, Bonn or Hamburg.

Shipments via Deutsche Post abroad.

From 1 st April, 1946 the Germans were also allowed to send letters abroad with Deutsche Post. The DPs of the camp Meerbeck mainly use the fee-based service via Deutsche Post.



Foreign letter posted to Dundas (Canada). Post office postmark „STADTHAGEN“ 6.12.1947. Fee 50 Pfennigs (normal paying rate for foreign letters to USA and Canada for up to 20 grams by ship in the time 15th September, 1947 - 31st August 1948. **Sender:** Sakalauskas Juozas; 33/135 D.P. A.(semble) C.(enter) Meerbeck /20a/ Krs. Stadthagen.



Foreign letter posted to New York. Post office postmark „STADTHAGEN“ 2.07.1947. Fee 75 Pfennigs for foreign letters up to 20g. **Sender:** M. Kampars; 33/135 Assemble Center Meerbeck /20a/ Krs. Stadthagen. British Postal censorship of this civil mail. Censorship strips of the British Censorship Bonn. Censorship cancel from the British censor office in Bonn (range of censor numbers 3000 – 3499). Censorship closure strip 38mm wide.

2. Meerbeck camp assembly centre Post Office

**Displaced
Persons
Mail
Paid**

Dimensions:
height 20 mm
width 19 mm

Using time:
01.12.1945 -
18.09.1947

MEERBECK
**Displaced
Persons
Mail
Paid**

Dimensions:
height 29 mm
width 24 mm

Using time:
08.07.1946 -
29.08.1947

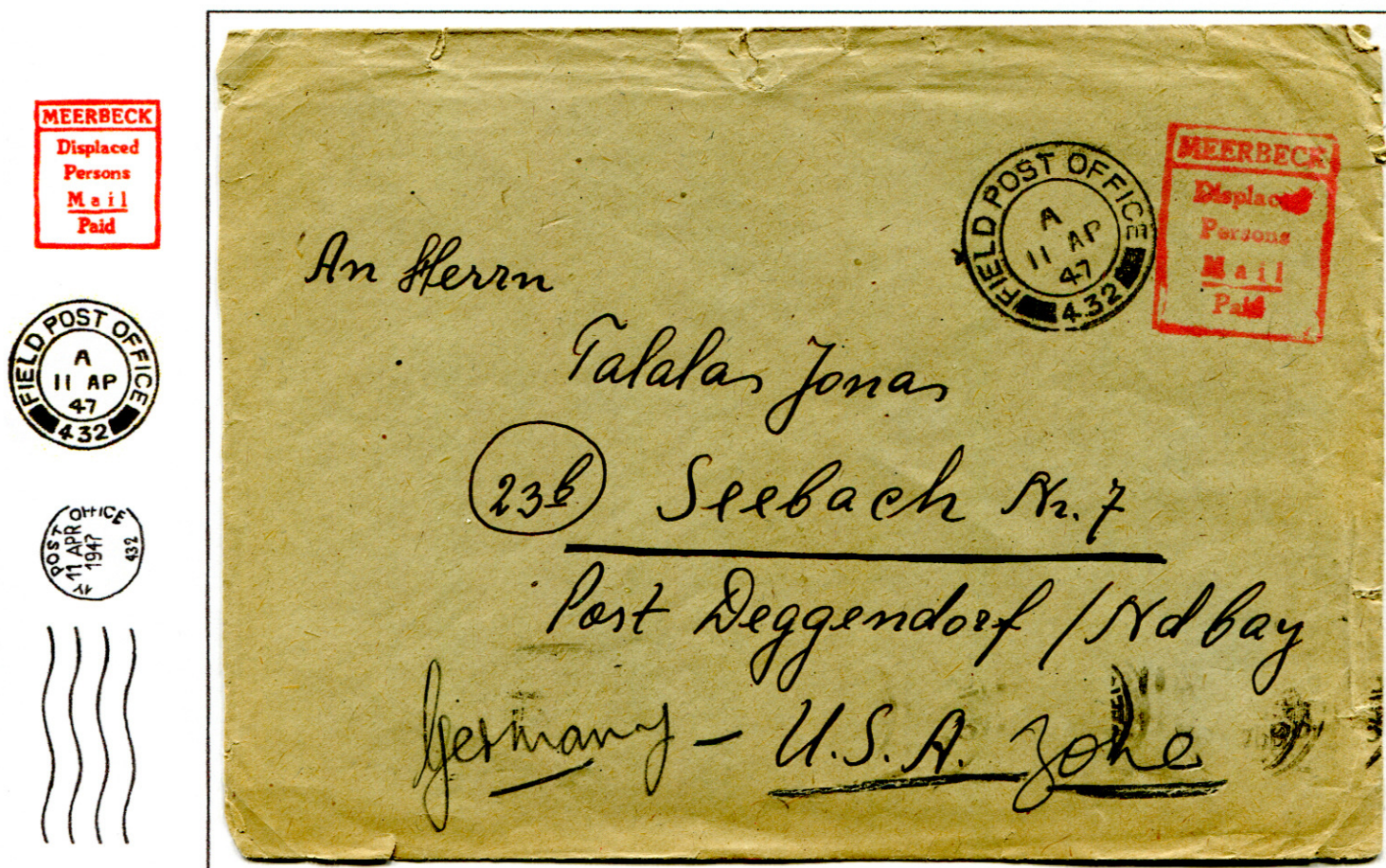
Official DP post was established in December 1945 under UNRRA care for the postage free status of DP mail included domestic and international mail. As the camp increased to more than 3,000 DPs, the amount of mail was so large that English Colonel Krolikevies set up a camp post office. The "Meerbeck camper assembly centre" used two different rubber stamps to legitimised the shipments as postage free. Only a few DP camps used "Paid" markings with the camp name.

The Rubber hand cancel of the assembly centre Post Office Meerbeck.

Left: four-line handstamp with the words "**Displaced / Persons / Mail / Paid**", the dimensions is 20 X 19 mm. Right: Five-line handstamp with the words "**MEERBECK / Displaced / Persons / Mail / Paid**" measuring 29 X 24 mm.

3. Domestic mail

Postage free status carried via British Military Post (FPO - Field Post Office).



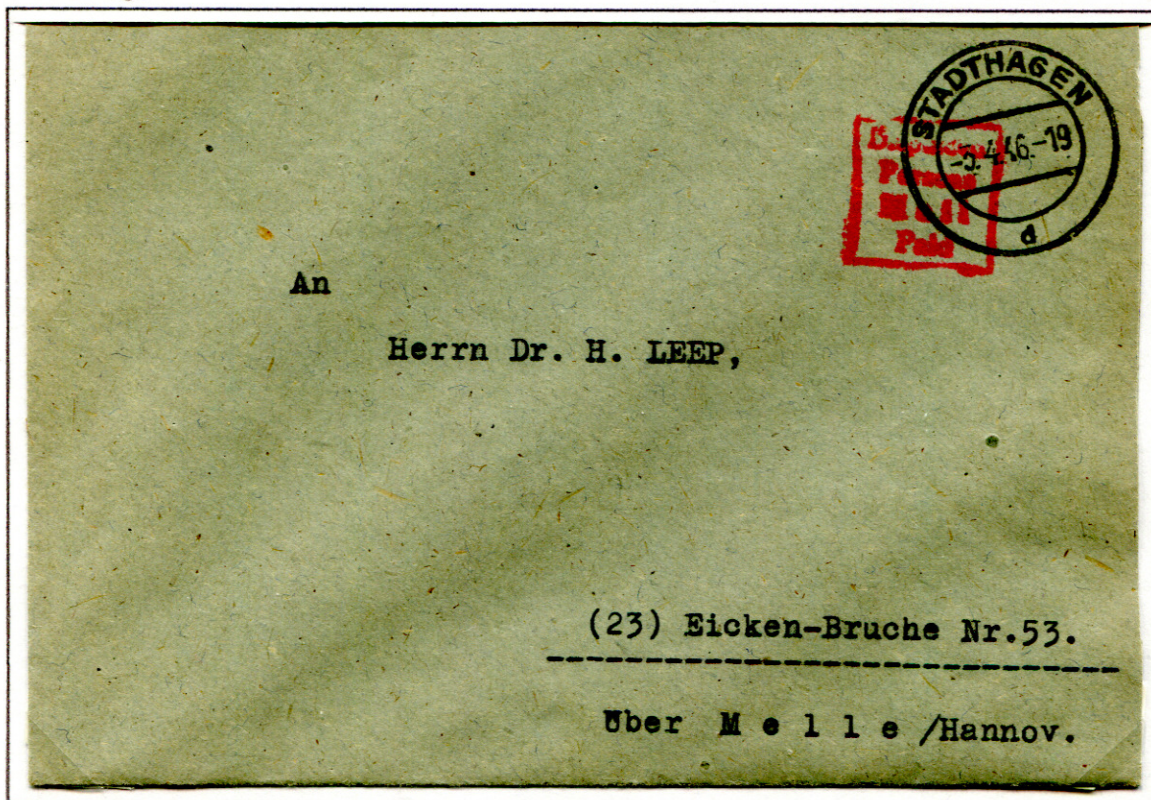
This Letter were misinterpreted as international mail to the USA. Carried via British Military Post (FPO - Field Post Office) to Seebach Post Deggendorf/Ndbay. Sender: Balčiūnas Stasys, 21 Meerbeck, Kreis Stadthagen. Britische Zone Lithuanian.

Route: Meerbeck camp assembly centre, read postmark "**MEERBECK / Displaced / Persons / Mail / Paid**". Via FPO (Field Post Office - British Military Post) to the British censor office Hamburg (Censorship Hamburg), postmark Field Post Office 432 (= Hamburg) "**FIELD POST OFFICE - 432 -**", date 11. April 1947. Error found. Handwritten added "**Germany**" and "**Zone**". Underline USA and Zone. Continue via FPO 432 Foreign Office (wavy line handstamp "**ARMY POST OFFICE / 11 APR 1947 / 432**" on the back side). Sent to Seebach/Post Deggendorf/Nordbayern in the American zone.

Domestic mail

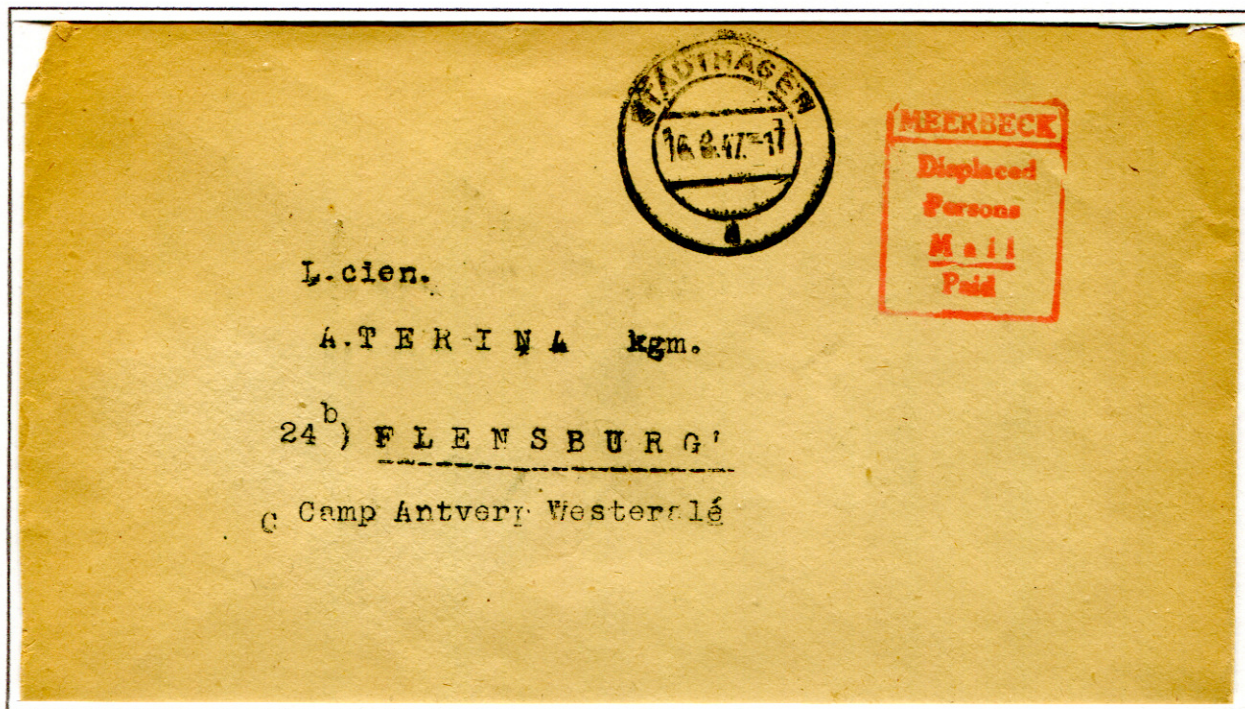
Postage free status carried via Deutsche Post

Transfer Post offices: PST 1 Niedernwöhren, PST 1 Kirchhorsten, from 11st March 1946 PA Stadthagen.



Displaced
Persons
Mail
Paid

Postage free status carried via Deutsche Post to Eicken-Bruche near Melle (Hanover). Transported without complaint to civil address. **Sender:** Anna Berzina, (21) Meerbeck, Kreis Stadthagen. Haus 110. Wohn. 1. **Route:** camp assembly centre, cancelled with read rubber postmark ("Displaced / Persons / Mail / PAID"), postage free status carried via Deutsche Post. Transfer Post offices: PA Stadthagen. Postmark of "STADTHAGEN", day of posting 3rd April 1946.



MEERBECK
Displaced
Persons
Mail
Paid

Inter-City-Letter postage free posted to DP UNRRA Flensburg camp on 16. August 1947. Cancel by red five lines rubber postmark "MEERBECK / Displaced / Person / Mail / PAID". The domestic Mail cancelled by the post office of the town of Stadthagen dated from 16. August 1947. Rubber cancel was used by the camp post Meerbeck office. It said in five lines "MEERBECK / Displaced / Person / Mail / Paid".

Domestic mail
Postage free status carried via Deutsche Post

LATVIEŠU TEĀTRIS
MĒRBEKĀ

VILHELMS TELLS

Fridriha Šillera drāma 12 ainās.

PERSONAS

Hermans Geslers, keizarskais sogis Svīces un
Ori kanionos
Rūdolfs Harass
Berta Brunecka
Verners, Atinghausēz brīvkungs
Ulrichs Rudenca, viņa māss dēls
Roselmans, mācītājs
Verners Staufachers
Gertrude, viņa sieva
Valters Fūris
Itels Rēdins
Arnolds Melchālietis
Konrāds Baumgartens
Struts Vinkelrīds
Armgarde
Vilhelms Tels
Hedviga, viņa sieva
Valters } viņu bērni
Vilhelms }
Ruodījs, zvejnieks
Kuonijs, gans
Frisbards } karavīri
Leutholds }
Kāds cēlinieks
Kāds karavīrs

Jākabs Zekis
Edgats Podiss
Milda Zilava
Kārlis Lagzdins
Rūdolfs Mucenīks
Kārlis Dzelde
Kārlis Gēmanis
Alma Mača
Vilberts Stāls
Edgars Podiss
Osvalds Urkšēns
Olgars Parnickis
Pēteris Ozoliņš
Mariana Zile
Jānis Saberts
Tonija Kalve
Māris Zekis
Pēteris Dumpis
Edgats Podiss
Mikēls Sveitls
Juris Zaķkalns
Vilvaldis Kononovs
Arnolds Platin

Laudis un karavīri

Lugas darbība notiek šveicē 1289 g.

Starptīrī pēc 3. un 8. ainās.

Lugu tulkojis: Jūlijs Roze.

Lugu iekārtājis: Latvijas teātra celotājs, aktrise un inženieris

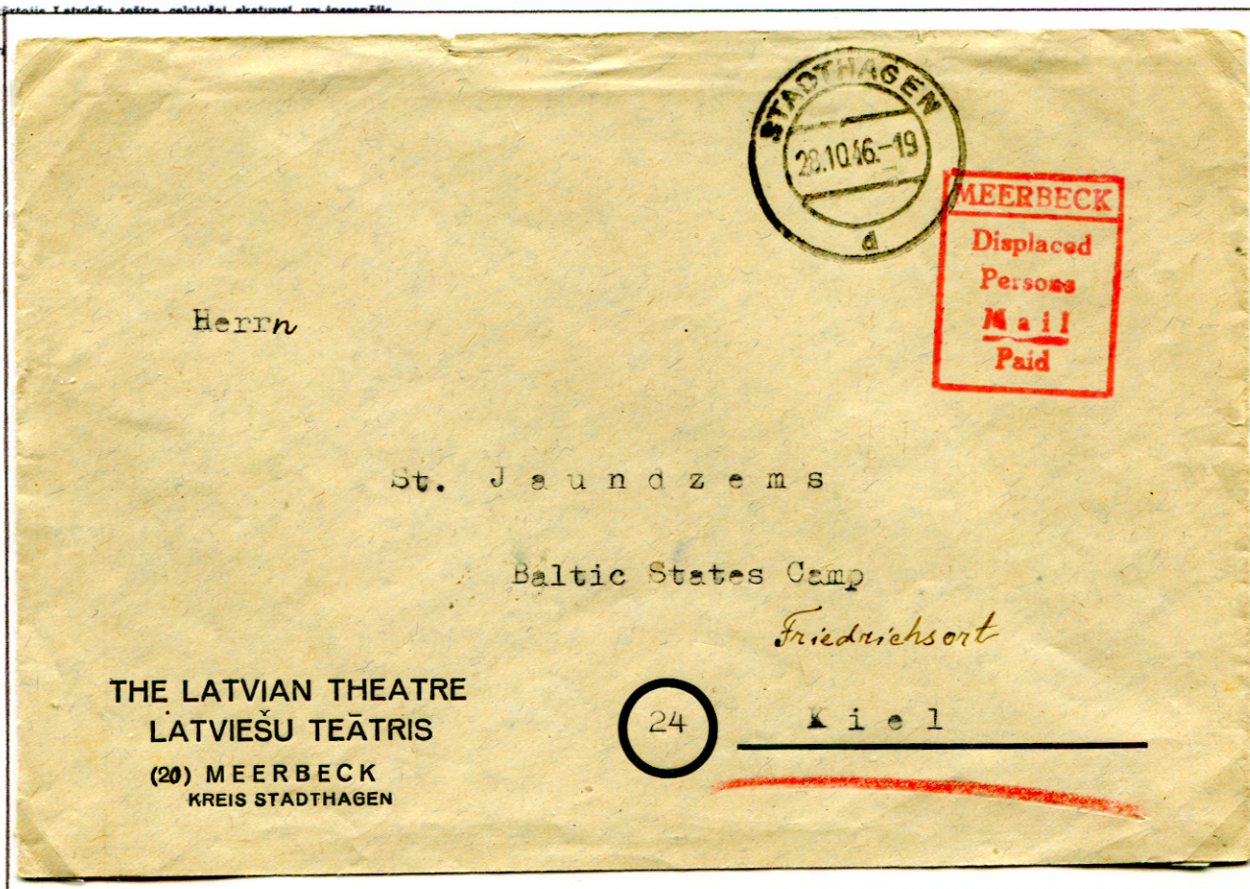
Dekor

With the insight to return to the homeland of their ancestors in the short term or not at all, life in the refugee camps normalized.

There was a yearning for mental activity in various cultural areas. The aim was to preserve Latvian identity.

At the beginning of 1946, the Latvian Central Committee art agency investigated the creative potential of the refugees. Latvian schools, dance, painting, choral singing and sculptures were found in the camp.

Particularly noteworthy is the camp Meerbeck because of a professional Latvian theatre. Most actors and actresses of the former Latvian National Theatre were in the DP camp Meerbeck. They have rebuilt the Latvian theatre in DP camp Meerbeck. Guest performances within the British Zone were announced.



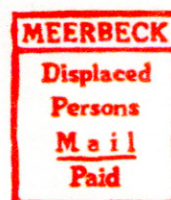
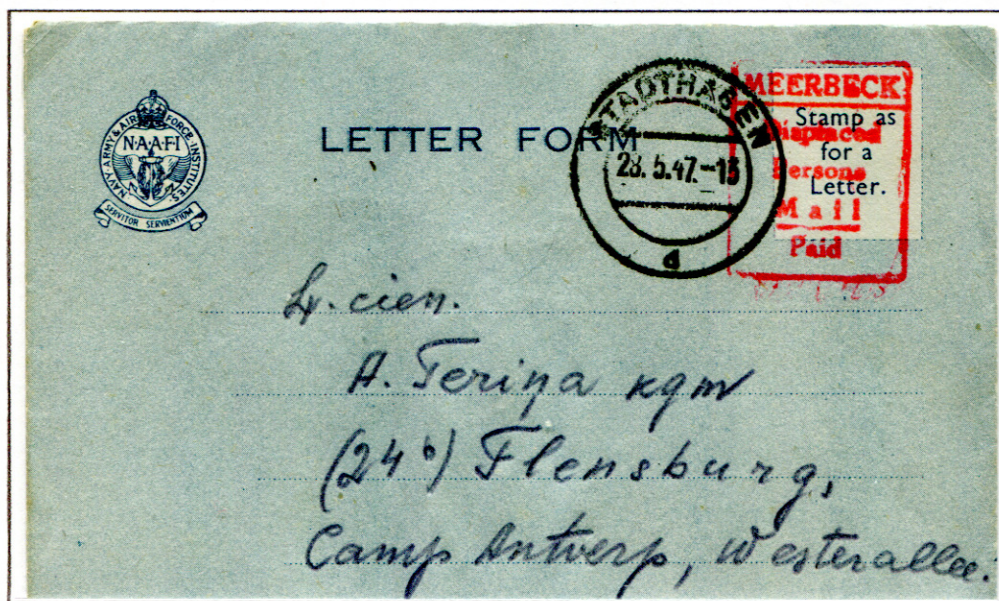
Postage free status carried via Deutsche Post to the Baltic States Camp Friedrichsort / Kiel.

Sender: The Latvian Theatre Latviesu Teātris (20) Meerbeck Kreis Stadthagen

Route: camp assembly centre, cancelled with read rubber postmark ("MEERBECK / Displaced / Persons / Mail / PAID"), postage free status carried via Deutsche Post. Transfer Post offices: PA Stadthagen. Postmark of Stadthagen, day of posting 29th October 1946.

Domestic mail

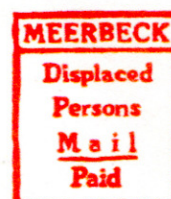
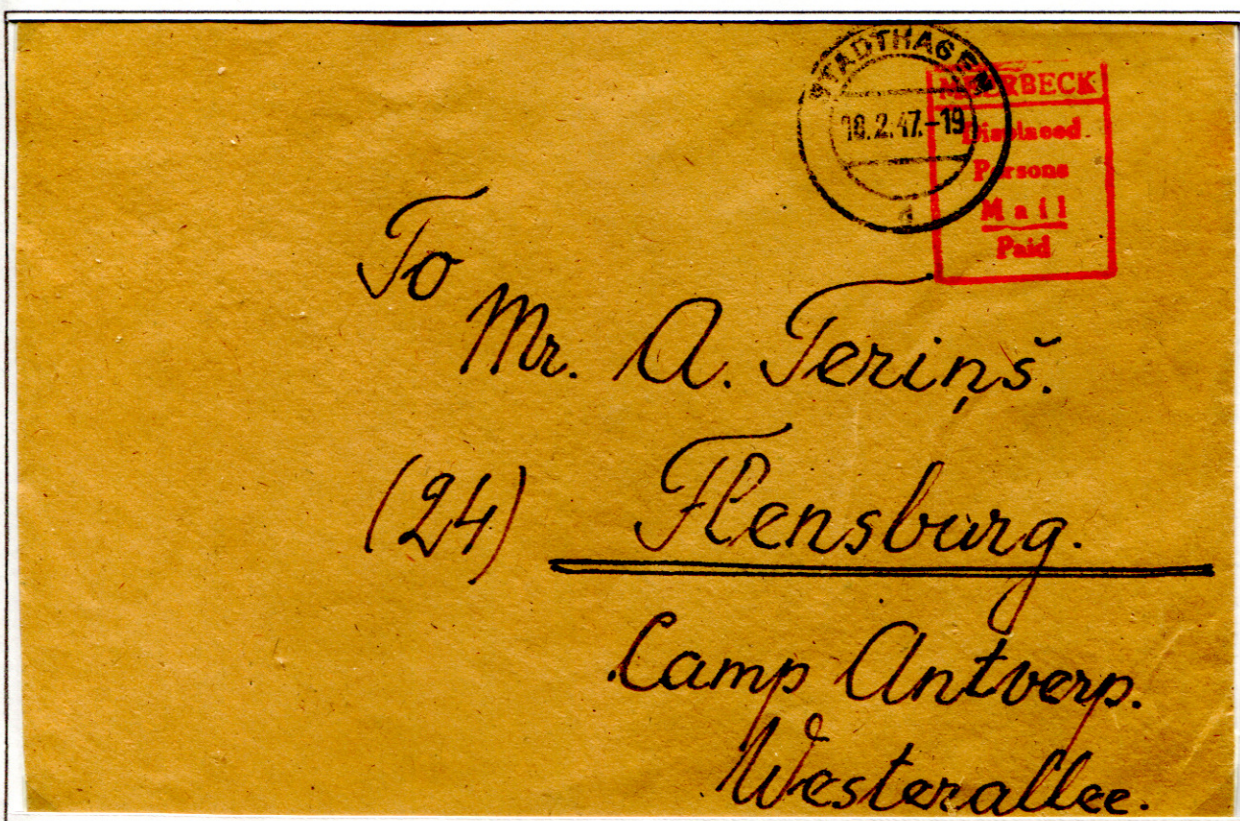
Postage free status carried via Deutsche Post



Inter-camp-mail postage free posted to DP UNRRA Flensburg camp. Cancel by red five lines rubber postmark "MEERBECK / Displaced / Person / Mail / PAID". The domestic Mail cancelled by the post office of the town of Stadthagen dated from 28. May 1947.

Sender: L. Bergmann; 32/135 D.P. (20a) Meerbeck Kreis Stadthagen, Rigaer Str. 105-5

Route: camp assembly centre, cancelled with read rubber postmark ("MEERBECK / Displaced / Persons / Mail / PAID"), postage free status carried via Deutsche Post (philatelic influenced letter).



Inter-camp-mail postage free posted to DP UNRRA Flensburg camp. Cancel by red five lines rubber postmark "MEERBECK / Displaced / Person / Mail / PAID". The domestic Mail cancelled by the post office of the town of Stadthagen dated from 18. February 1947.

Sender: A. Ubelitis (20a) Meerbeck Kr. Stadthagen, 32/135 B Latvian D.P. Camp House Nr. 80

Route: camp assembly centre, cancelled with read rubber postmark ("MEERBECK / Displaced / Persons / Mail / PAID"), postage free status carried via Deutsche Post (philatelic influenced letter).

Note: Antwerp-Westerallee Displaced Persons Camp in Flensburg, Germany

As in many other Baltic-population DP camps, a high value was placed on education. Flensburg even featured a UNRRA-sponsored maritime "navigation" school for DPs.

Domestic mail

Postage free status carried via Deutsche Post

"Aufbrauchausgabe" (After using the previous postcard)

Postage increase from 1.3.1946: Postcard in the local area from 5 Pfennig to 10 Pfennig and domestic postcard from 6 Pfennig to 12 Pfennig. After the postage increase on 1.3.1946 there were bottlenecks in the supply of postcards. By imprinting a "**Gebühr bezahlt**" (fee paid) stamp, the previous postcards could continue to be used.

The camp assembly centre post office used the rubber hand cancel "**MEERBECK / Displaced / Persons / Mail / Paid**". This postcards are philately manipulated. Not listed in the catalogue of stamp collectors.

The image shows two examples of German postcards from 1945. The top postcard is unused (light green) and the bottom one is used (yellow) with handwritten addresses and a circular postmark from Stadthagen.

Top Postcard (Unused):

- Absender: (Vor- u. Zuname)
- Wohnort, auch Zustell- oder Leitpostamt
- Straße, Hausnummer, Gebäudeteil, Stockwerk oder Postschließfachnummer; bei Untermietern auch Name des Vermieters
- Sprache:
- Language:
- Postkarte*)
- MEERBECK Displaced Persons Mail Paid DEUTSCHLAND

Bottom Postcard (Used):

- Absender: *Baldemar Meier*
- Wohnort, auch Zustell- oder Leitpostamt: *20a Meierstr., K. Stadthagen*
- Straße, Hausnummer, Gebäudeteil, Stockwerk oder Postschließfachnummer; bei Untermietern auch Name des Vermieters: *33/135 DPAC*
- Sprache: *German*
- Language: *German*
- Postmark: *STADTHAGEN 29.8.47-13*
- MEERBECK Displaced Persons Mail Paid DEUTSCHLAND
- Handwritten address: *Herrn Walter Herdel*
- Handwritten address: *20c Stadthagen*
- Handwritten address: *Eingeh. Nr. 61*
- Handwritten address: *Straße, Hausnummer, Gebäudeteil, Stockwerk od. Postschließfachnummer; bei Untermietern auch Name des Vermieters*
- *) Empfänger, Absender, und Sprachangabe mit Maschine oder in großen lateinischen Druckbuchstaben schreiben!

Appreciation by rubber postmark "**MEERBECK / Displaced / Persons / Mail / Paid**".

Above: 5 Pfennigs (light green of the November 1945 issue) postcard. Unused.

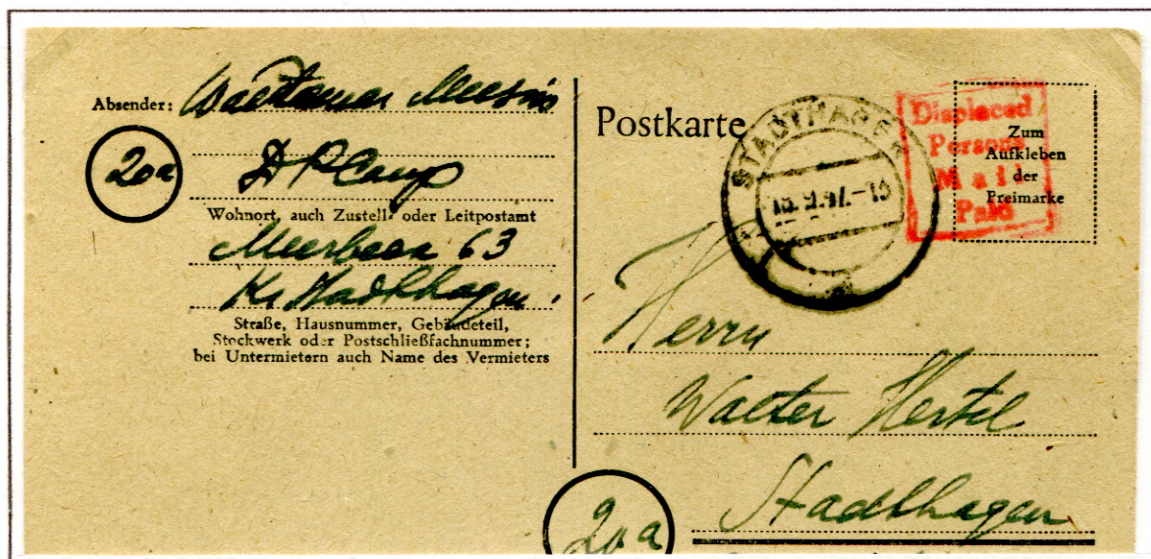
Below: 6 Pfennigs (yellow of the November 1945 issue) postcard. Inter-city postage to Stadthagen. The domestic Mail cancelled by the post office of the town of Stadthagen dated from 28. August 1947.

4. The End of rubber hand cancel of the assembly centre Meerbeck

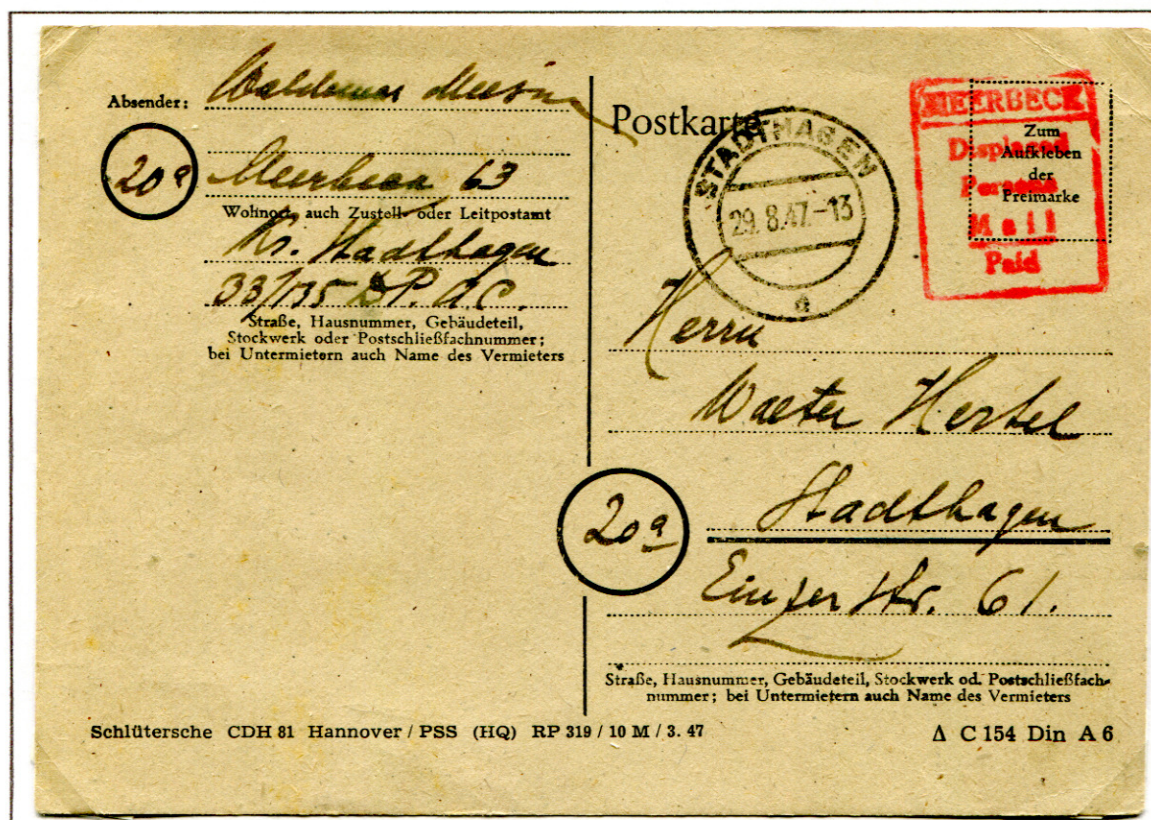
The British order for postage-free shipments has been increasingly ignored. Originally, only shipments from camp to camp were permitted. Shipments outside the camp to private persons were inadmissible. Such shipments were, however, promoted without reservation by Deutsche Post.

This is the reason that most of the letters with the handstamps are philately manipulated. There was no control by the assembly centre post office and the letters were delivered without objection by the Deutsche Post. The stamp with the five lines "**MEERBECK / Displaced / Persons / Mail / Paid**" was used in that time most.

In August and September 1947, the stamps were confiscated by the military government via the German Post. From then on, all mail of the camp inmates was subject to a charge.



Inter-city-mail postage free posted to Stadthagen. Cancel by red for lines rubber postmark "**Displaced / Persons / Mail / Paid**". The domestic Mail cancelled by the post office of the town of Stadthagen dated from 18. September 1947. **Last day of using the rubber cancel.**



Intercity mailing for free to Stadthagen. Canceled by red five-line cancel "**MEERBECK / Displaced / Persons / Mail / Paid**". The domestic post office was canceled on 29 August 1947 by the post office of the city Stadthagen. **Last day of using the rubber cancel.**

5. Lagerpostmarken (DP Camp Stamps)

The DP camp stamps are not in the category of local or provincial issues rather than also not to the official country issues.

In various DP camps so-called DP Camp Stamps (vignettes) were issued. These appeared partly with the permission of UNRRA (United Nations Relief Rehabilitation Administration). These stamps were a private initiative of camp inmates. These stamps were not valid stamps, they could not be used to pay the transport fee. On national and international mail, however, these were tolerated as vignettes.

The Latvian camp inmates of DP Camp Meerbeck have published their own DP Camp Stamps on 8.09.1947.

These DP memory vignettes "Meerbeck" appear on the occasion of "400 years of the first printed book in Lithuania". The vignettes were designed by Eduard Krasauskas. The picture shows an open book in front of a rising sun, in the background a house. Following text: above: **"LIETUVIU / PASTAS"** (Lithuania / post Office; Lietuvos Pastas - Latvian Post) and below **"1547 - 1947 / D. CAMP MEERBECK"**.

The stamps appeared in the postage amounts 20 Reichspfennig plus 80 Reichspfennig donation; 50 Reichspfennig plus 1.20 Reichsmark donation and 80 Reichspfennig plus 1.50 Reichsmark donation.

The donations went to the Latvian Red Cross, one of the main Latvian organizations, which made every effort to help the Latvians who experienced poverty and hardships in Germany immediately after the war. From the stamps there were the following versions: imperforated, perforated and with overprint as well as souvenirs sheets.



Souvenir cover on the occasion of "THE ANNUAL ..." on 5.10.1947. Postmarked with black "THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE PHILATELISTIC SOCIETY * BALTIA". DP Camp Stamps 20 Reichspfennig plus 80 Reichspfennig donation; 50 Reichspfennig plus 1.20 Reichsmark donation and 80 Reichspfennig plus 1.50 Reichsmark donation.

Note: The Latvian Red Cross (LRC) established in 1918. In the spring of 1945 two LRC administrations were in the three Zones (British, American and French Occupation Zone) organised. The General Board of LRC was established in Detmold, DP Camp Stamps "MEERBECK". After the activity of the LRC was resumed, it started to work on surveying Latvian soldiers and fighting for their release, looked for missing family members and take care for orphaned children. Also the LRC also helped with the completion of documents for those people who wanted to emigrate.

Lagerpostmarken (DP Camp Stamps)

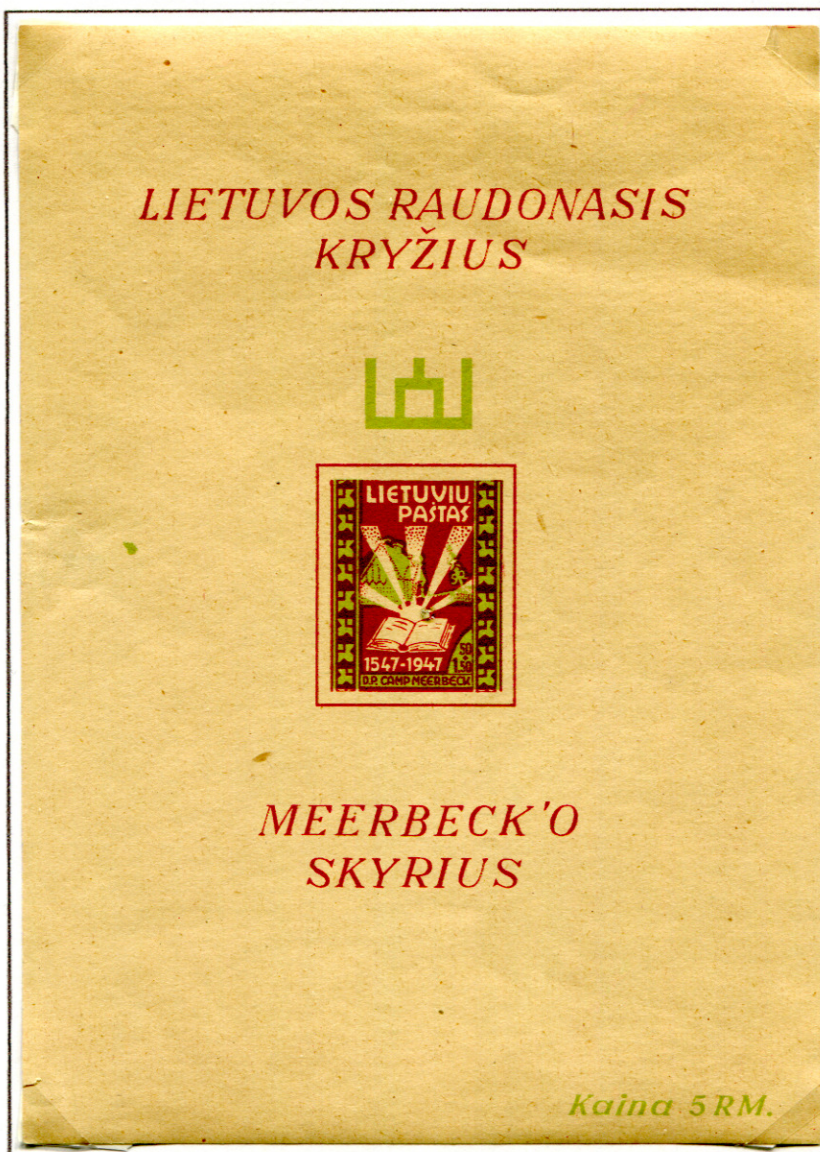


"1547 MEERBECK D.P. CAMP
1947 * LIETUVIU PASTAS" LRK
1947-IX-8



"THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF
THE PHILATELISTIC SOCIETY *
BALTIA" 5-X-1947

The vignettes were partially "stamped" with the displayed special cancellation.



Edition of the print: vignettes per 5610 pieces; cut version each 660 pieces; with imprint "1918 18.2.1948 / Vokietija" each 660 pieces; Cover book in total 830 pieces.



Note: Eduard Krasauskas was the designer of the stamps (vignettes) of the issue "DP camp Stemp Meerbeck". He also designed numerous posters and postcards. His homeland was Latvia, from which he fled to Germany in 1944. He lived as a painter in Munich before he emigrated to the USA. KRASAUSKAS, EDUARD was born 26 May 1911 and died April 1979 in Waterbury, Connecticut, USA.

Lagerpostmarken (DP Camp Stamps)

When in 1917 the October Revolution in Russia brought about the decline of the Tsarist empire, Lithuania did not hesitate and proclaimed itself on 16.2. 1918 for independent. On the occasion of the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence on 16.2. in 1918, 50 years ago, the DP camp vignettes "**Meerbeck**" were printed on with the inscription "**1918 - 16.2. - 1948 / Vokietija**" ("**1918 - 16.2. - 1948 / Germany**").



Vokietija
1918-16.2.-1948

1918-16.2.-1948
Vokietija



Inter-City-Letter posted to Hanover on 16. February 1948. The regular total of 24 Pfennigs (24 Pfennigs paying the inter-city-letter up to 20 g); plus 60 Pfennigs special charges for registered letter, in sum 84 Pfennigs. The letter is overcharged and has not registration label. A typical philatelic influenced letter. Entrance stamp by post office "**NIEDERNWÖHREN über STADTHAGEN**" dated 16. February 1948 (first day cover ?). **Sender:** Ig. Zemaitis, (20a) Meerbeck, Kreis Stadthagen, /b. Hannover/. **Address:** Jad. Karuzienė, (20a) Hannover, Baltic D.P. Camp. **Note:** Regular special stamps of Deutsche Post (Community issue for the American, British and Soviet zones) on the occasion of the Leipzig autumn fair 1947 (12 Pfennigs carmine red, 75 Pfennigs violet-blue). Three (20, 30 and 50 Pfennigs) DP camp vignettes "**Meerbeck**" with overprint "**1918 - 16.2. - 1948 / Vokietija**" and three (20, 30 and 50 Pfennigs) DP camp vignettes "**Meerbeck**" with reversed overprint "**1918 - 16.2. - 1948 / Vokietija**".

Note: With regular payment of the sender comes together a sum of 9 Reichsmark and 87 Pfennig. The cost of living for a family of four per week was at least 50.70 Reichsmark (according to the "**Westdeutsche Volksecho**" in a study of the cost of living from 1947 to 1948). The stamps of Deutsche Post alone cost 0.97 Mark, an equivalent to one working hour.

Lagerpostmarken (DP camp stamps)

There was a camp for Lithuanian DP's at Detmold. At the initiative of the Lithuanian Scouts three vignettes were issued in the DP camp Detmold. The so-called "**Detmold Scout Stamps**" were available in the levels 10, 20 and 50 Pfennigs.

The 10, 20 and 50 Pfennig stamps were printed together in sheets of 88 stamps (48 X 10 Pfennigs, 24 X 20 Pfennigs and 16 X 50 Pfennigs).

About 450 sheets were printed. This results in approximately 21,000 10 Pfennigs, 10,800 20 Pfennigs and 7,200 50 Pfennigs vignettes.

The background colours, which were apparently applied simultaneously to the entire sheet, did not always register exactly. The print quality was very low. The sheets were perforated but a very small amount remained imperforated.

The scouts provided a scout post system. For this purpose, the pictured scout stamps were used. The integration into the scout post system can not be proven for the camp Meerbeck. Only philatelic souvenir covers with "**Detmold Scout Stamps**" are available.



Local mail postage free posted to Stadthagen. Cancel by red for lines rubber postmark "**MEERBECK / Displaced / Persons / Mail / Paid**". The domestic post was cancelled on 11. July 1947 by the post office of the city Stadthagen. In addition is this covers prepared with the 10 and 20 Pfennigs "**Detmold Scout Stamps**" as philatelic souvenir.



Left: Historic membership badge of Lithuanian Scouting. Illustration on the "**Detmold Scout Stamps**"

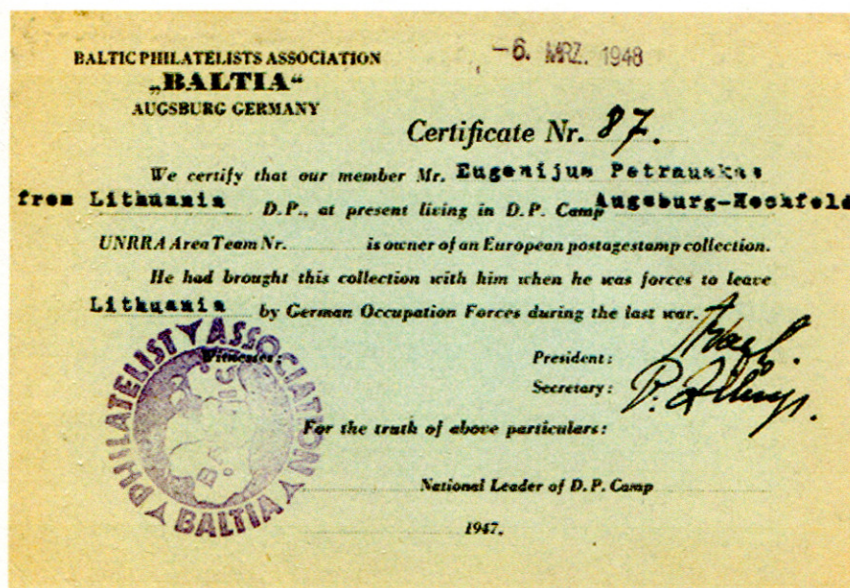
Right: This is the official symbol (scouting lily) for Lietuvos skautija (Lithuanian Scouting), used as part of member activity badges and the official organisation logo now.

Note: The Scout Association of Lithuania has been registered as a member of the World Bureau. Lithuania was a member of the World Scout Movement from 1923 to 1940. In 1940, the Soviet occupation of Lithuania resulted in Scouting being banned. In the years after World War II, scouting movement started again in the camps for displaced persons.

Baltic Philatelist Association "Baltia"

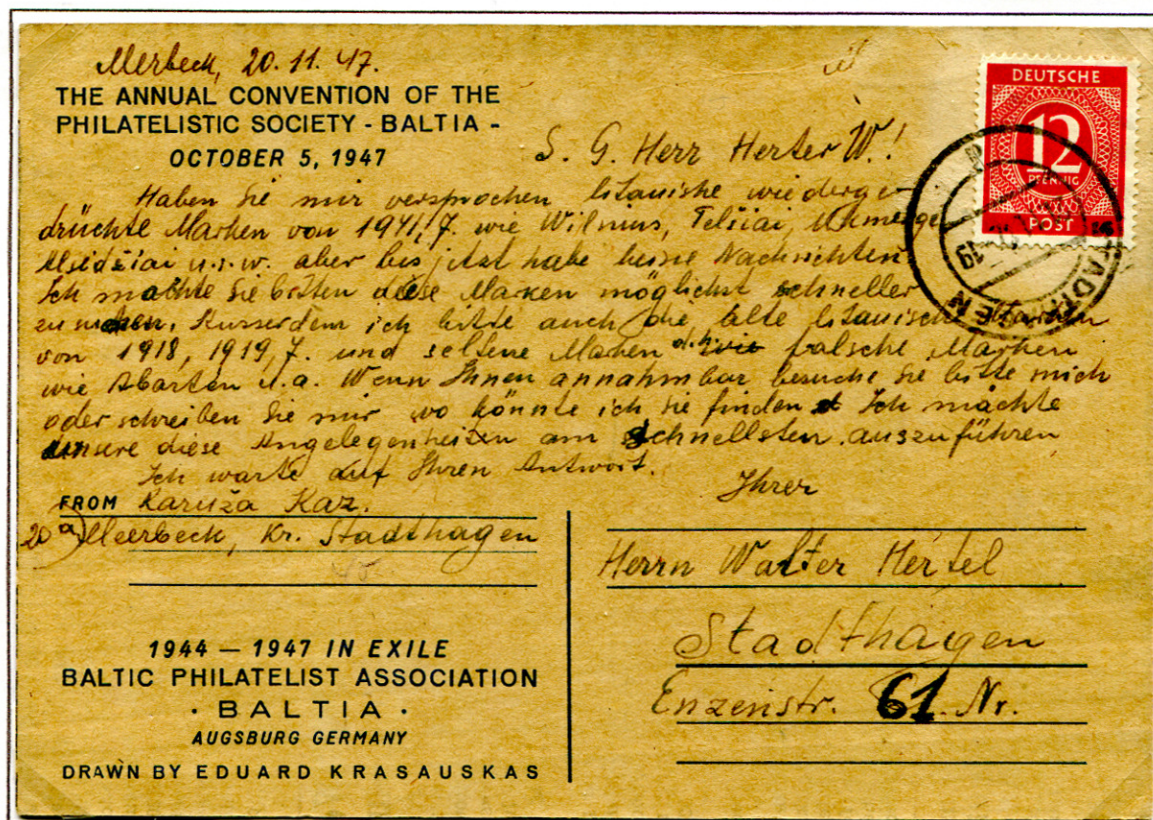
The Baltic Philatelist Association "Baltia" was established on July 17, 1946.

The Society had a respectable number of 300 members. This was a valuable basis for contacts between German, later American philatelists, collecting stamps of the Baltic States.



Above is a member certificate listed that the member was legally allowed to be in possession of a stamp collection.

Right: Shows the image side of the postcard from below. Publisher: Baltic Philatelist Association - BALTA. Designed by Eduard Krasaukas.



Local mail posted to Stadthagen. The domestic post is cancelled on 21. November 1947 by the post office of the city Stadthagen. Recipients and senders are known for many philately influenced letters from Meerbeck (Walter Hertel, Stadthagen und Karuza Kaz, Meerbeck). Kaz wrote "... you promised to procure me Lithuanian stamps ..."

6. Meerbeck PST II (Postoffice Meerbeck PST II)

In August and September 1947, the red "...paid" stamps were confiscated by the military government via the German Post. From then on, all mail of the camp inmates was subject to a charge. The camp inmates brought their mail to the post office in Niederwöhren. A village that borders directly on Meerbeck. In the delivery area of the Post Office Niederwöhren was the DP camp Meerbeck.



Express-Brief franked with 4,66 Reichsmark (complete 1. Freimarken issue 1947/48) from Dettingen (Urbach) Württemberg-Hohenzollern (French zone) to Meerbeck from 3.5.1948. Fee: letters up to 20 g 24 Pfennig plus express delivery 80 Pfennig, in total 104 Pfennig. The letter is overpaid with 3.62 Reichsmark.



After on 15.09.1948 the owners of the houses were allowed to move back into the village, also a post office "Meerbeck PST II" of the German Post was opened, which was closed on 9 May 1945 by order of the British military government. Rubber stamp of the PST II Meerbeck after 1948.