

Filatelistengroep

HET BALTISCHE GEBIED

RAILWAY POST IN LITHUANIA



Jan Kaptein and Eugenijus Uspuras

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The cover



On the cover a folded letter, 1862, from Werzbolovo (Lithuanian Virbalis) to Wilno, bearing pale blue & carmine pink Poland nr 1 stamp cancelled by Russian “14” in a hexagon of dots, and showing postmark “S.P.B. WARSHAVSK. ZH. D / POCHT. VAG No 3”.
(Station No 37 = Werzbolovo) (11-9 J.C).
(collection Eugenijus Uspuras)

Officially the railway line Sankt Peterburg - Wilno - Warsaw started operating on December 15, 1862. Some routes, however, were constructed and used earlier.

Postmarks with figures 12, 14, 15 and 16 were introduced for TPOs – Travelling Post Offices- of the St. Peterburg – Warsaw railway in 1861.



This is the only letter known bearing Poland No 1 cancelled by Russian “14” in a hexagon of dots.

INTRODUCTION

Dear readers,

Six years ago, in 2004, our editor Jan Kaptein wrote an article in “Het Baltische Gebied” (The Baltic Area) bearing the title “Railway Post in Lithuania 1” (Sporpost in Litouwen 1). The addition “1” promised more, and, indeed, Jan kept his word. In 2008 he finished an interesting series of articles on mail transport by train in Lithuania with article number “9”.

In these nine articles a picture emerges of the construction of the first Russian railways in the future republic of Lithuania –from-around 1860 until the end of the mail processing transport in mail vans during the Soviet occupation up to the beginning of the nineties of last century.

The construction of railways, the use of mail vans, and the use of railway cancels is described not only for the Lithuanian heartland, but the Memel and Vilnius areas are also taken into account. Russian, German, Lithuanian, Polish, and Soviet cancels are shown and an inventory is made.

The Lithuanian collector Eugenijus Uspuras was co-author -it was his vast exhibition collection “Railway post in Lithuania 1869-1969” that formed the basis for the series of articles.

Jan Kaptein tracked him down by searching philatelic magazines for exhibition awards for Baltic collections. Contact was made and for many years e-mails were exchanged, with or without picture scans.

In the course of time it became clear that we had published information in “Het Baltische Gebied” that had not been available to collectors before, and by and by the idea of bundling the nine articles into one whole publication grew. During the Wipa-exhibition in Vienna in September 2008 Eugenijus Uspuras, Ruud van Wijnen, and a number of German collectors met at the information stand of the four Baltic philatelist groups. The idea was discussed and generally accepted, with the express wish to publish the survey in English. By doing so as many collectors as possible within and outside “our” own Baltic circle can access the information, especially those philatelists interested in railway post.

These past two years a number of people have been working to realize this special issue of “Het Baltische Gebied”: Jan Kaptein edited the separate texts into one whole, Joop van Heeswijk took care of the translation into English faithfully and with his characteristic accuracy, and Eugenijus Uspuras reread the texts and

added the most recent information and tables. Here our well-meant thanks for their efforts.

This is the second issue of “Het Baltische Gebied” in colour and for this purpose new scans were made of many pictures. This could no longer be done, however, with the postal items originally belonging to the collection of the outstanding collector Gerhard Hahne who died in 2006. This survey of the railway post in Lithuania contains the most recent information in this area, but, of course, nothing is ever finished. There will always be a collector, somewhere in the world, discovering something new. It is our hope that such new additions will be reported to Jan Kaptein.

“Het Baltische Gebied” aspires, among other things, to record and spread the philatelic knowledge of the Baltic countries. With this extra voluminous and special issue of our magazine we certainly hope to contribute to this aim. I wish everybody much reading-pleasure.

Ruud van Wijnen

Gerb. skaitytojai,

Prieš šešerius metus (2004 m.) žurnale „Het Baltische Gebied“ (liet. „Baltijos regionas“) mūsų redaktorius Janas Kapteinas paskelbė straipsnį „Geležinkelio paštas Lietuvoje 1“ („Sporpost in Litouwen 1“). Skaičius „1“ pavadinime buvo tęsinio užuomina ir iš tiesų J. Kapteinas laikėsi duoto žodžio: 2008 m. devintuoju straipsniu jis pabaigė itin įdomių straipsnių seriją apie traukiniais gabenamą paštą Lietuvoje.

Šiuose devyniuose straipsniuose aprašoma pirmųjų geležinkelių statyba Rusijoje, būsimoje Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje nuo maždaug 1860 m., sovietų okupacijos laikotarpiu, kai paštas buvo gabenamas pašto vagonais, iki devintojo praėjusio amžiaus dešimtmečio. Jame aprašoma geležinkelio statyba, pašto vagonai, geležinkelio pašto ženklų nuvertinimas ne tik centrinėje Lietuvos dalyje, bet ir Klaipėdoje bei Vilniaus apskrityje. Taip pat pateikiami ir inventorizuojami Rusijos, Vokietijos, Lietuvos, Lenkijos bei sovietiniai pašto ženklų nuvertinimai.

Visus šiuos metus straipsnių bendraautorias, lietuvis filatelistas

Eugenijaus Ušpuro didžiulė parodomoji kolekcija „Geležinkelio paštas Lietuvoje 1869–1969 m.“ buvo šių straipsnių pagrindas. Janas Kapteinas jį surado filatelinuose žurnaluose ieškodamas apdovantų parodinių Baltijos regiono kolekcijų. Buvo užmegztas kontaktas ir kelerius metus buvo susirašinėjama elektroniniu paštu, kartais siunčiant ir skenuotus pašto siuntinius.

Prabėgus kiek laiko paaiškėjo, kad informacija, kurią buvo pateikta žurnale „Het Baltische Gebied“ iki šiol kolekcininkams nebuvo žinoma. Netrukus kilo idėja visus devynis straipsnius sujungti į vieną. „Wipac-exhibition“ parodoje, vykusioje Vienoje 2008 m. rugsėjį, Eugenijus Ušpuras, Ruud van Wijnenas ir keletas vokiečių kolekcininkų susitiko prie informacinio keturių Baltijos regiono filatelistų grupių stendo. Jie aptarė šią idėją, visi ją palaikė ir išreiškė norą paskelbtus straipsnius išleisti anglų kalba. Tokiu būdu kur kas daugiau kolekcininkų iš mūsų Baltijos šalių rato ir už jo ribų galės susipažinti su pateikiama informacija, ypač tie, kurie domisi geležinkelio paštu.

Pastaruosius dvejus metus nemažai žmonių dirbo su šiuo ypatingu „Het Baltische Gebied“ leidiniu: Janas Kapteinas sujungė atskirus tekstus į

vieną, Joop van Heeswijkas su jam būdingu kruopštumu rūpinosi vertimu į anglų kalbą, o Eugenijus Ušpuras tikrino tekstus, pridėjo lentelių bei pačios naujausios informacijos. Labai dėkojame jiems už pastangas. Tai antrasis spalvotas „Het Baltische Gebied“ leidimas ir jam prireikė iš naujo nuskenuoti daugybę iliustracijų. Deja, nebegalėjome nuskenuoti pašto siuntų priklausiusių įžymiam kolekcininkui Gerhardui Hahne'ui, kuris mirė 2006 m. Šioje apžvalgoje pateikiama pati naujausia informacija apie Lietuvos geležinkelio paštą, tačiau visada yra kur tobulėti. Visada pasaulyje atsiras kolekcininkas atradęs kažką naujo. Tikimės, kad bet kokia nauja informacija pasieks Janą Kapteiną.

Be viso to, „Het Baltische Gebied“ siekia prisidėti prie filatelinų žinių apie Baltijos šalis kaupimo ir skleidimo. Išleidę šį itin išsamų ir ypatingą mūsų žurnalo numerį, tikimės prisidėti prie minėto tikslo. Linkiu visiems malonaus skaitymo.

Ruud van Wijnenas

CHAPTER 1 CZARIST PERIOD

The railway post in Lithuania is a remarkable collecting area. We deal with the special cancels of the 'travelling post offices' and the railway station post offices.

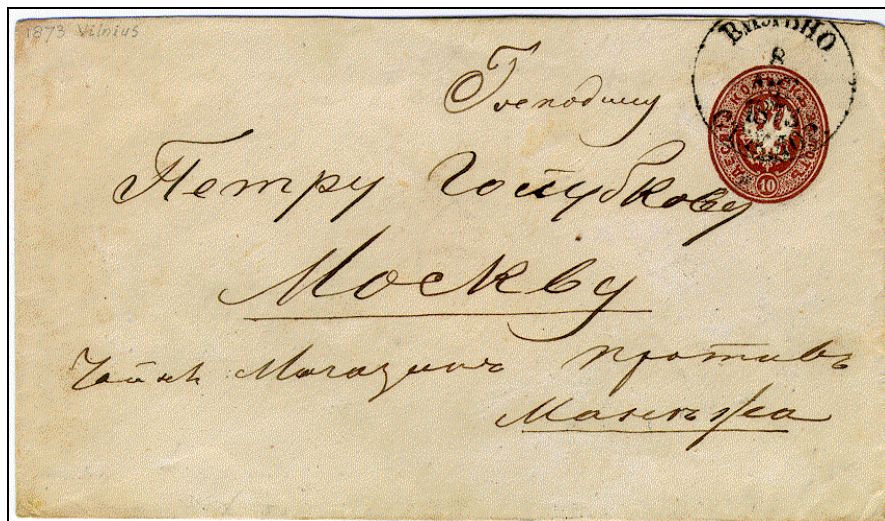
Articles on the railway post of Lithuania had already been published in HBG issues 1, 2, and 3.

This publication is meant as an addition., particularly concerning the Czarist period, and above all it's aim is to show many items.

The illustrations are partly from my collection, and for a great part from the award-winning exhibition collection of Eugenijus Uspuras's 'Railway post in Lithuania 1869-1969'.

The first railways in Lithuania: the Czarist period

In 1851 the Czarist government decided on the construction of the St Peterburg - Warsaw railway. This main railway line was to lead from **ДВИНСКЪ** (Dwinsk, Latvian Daugavpils) via **ВИЛЬНО** (Wilno, Vilnius) to **ВАРШАВА** (Warsaw). The line was completed in 1862. In the same year the line from **ВИЛЬНО** (Wilno, Vilnius) to Eydtkuhnen in East Prussia was also completed. The first part, **ВЕРЖБОЛОВО** (Werzbolovo, Lithuanian Virbalis) – **КОВНА** (Kowna, Lithuanian Kaunas), had been opened on April 28, 1861. Via Eydtkuhnen - Königsberg the line ran to Berlin and further westward. On May 9, 1862 this line was extended, via Kosedary (Kaisiadorys), to Wilna. Here this line then links to the main line **С. ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ** (St Peterburg) – **ДВИНСКЪ** (Dwinsk, Daugavpils) – **ВИЛЬНО** (Wilno, Vilnius) – **ВАРШАВА** (Warsaw). This line to Warsaw was officially opened on December 15, 1862. In 1871 the line from **ВИЛЬНО** (Wilno, Vilnius) to **ЛИБАВА** (Libava, Liepaja in Latvia) followed. These lines are shown on the map (ill. 2), on which the network of the Czarist railways within present-day Lithuania can be seen.



III. 1. (81 %)

Letter with a **ВИЛЬНА** (Vilnius) cancel to Moscow from 1873. In earlier single circular cancels **ВИЛЬНА** is used instead of **ВИЛЬНО**.

Below in the cancel it reads **СТ Ж ДОР**, the abbreviation of **СТАНЦИЯ ЖЕЛЕЗНОЙ ДОРОЖКИ**, *Stantsiya = Zheleznodorozhnyi = railway station.*

Of course the lines do not take into account present-day borders, but also did not take into account the borders of the provinces.

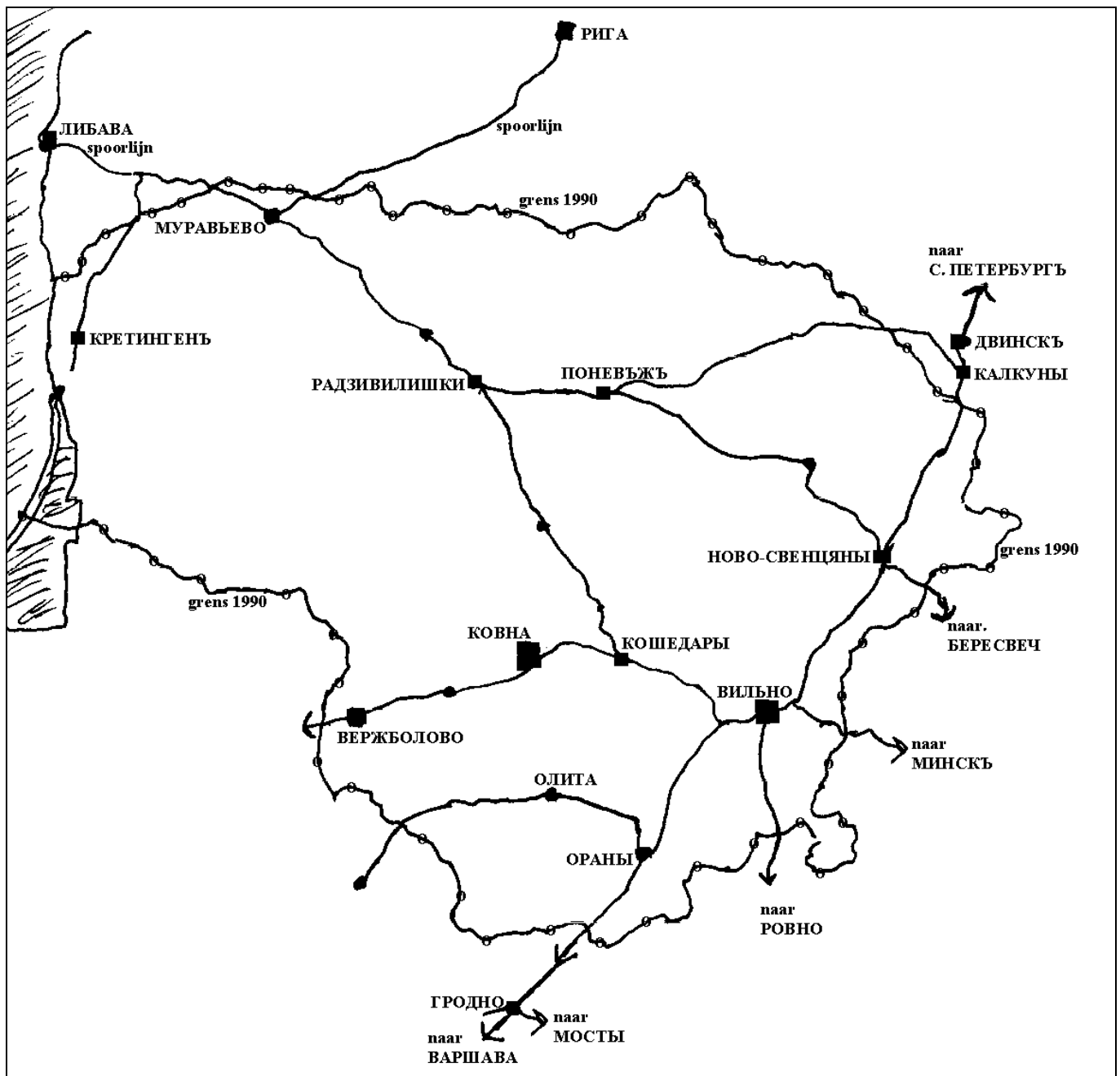
Railway post

From the very beginning, in 1851, there were agreements between the Postal Department and the railway companies concerning the transport of mail by train. The Postal Department had special mail vans constructed in which the mail was carried. Each passenger train carrying mail had at least one mail van (two were allowed if really necessary). In the mail van the mail was also sorted, collected, and delivered to the stations along the route by post office employees. In 1857 new regulations came into being, that stipulated that the private railway companies had to carry the mail for free with trains having a special mail compartment. If an actual

mail van was necessary the Postal Department had to pay the charges. In addition it was permitted to place letter boxes at the railway stations. In 1858 hexagonal number cancels were introduced for use on the railway mail. For railway stations and mail vans on the **С. ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ** (St Peterburg) – **ВИЛЬНО** (Wilno, Vilnius) – **ВАРШАВА** (Warsaw) line the number cancels 12-17 were introduced.

Introduction of Railway Post Administration in 1869

In 1869 a special organization for the railway post was set up for the management of the travelling post offices and station post offices. Although this organization was closely connected with the Imperial Post it remained, however, a separate organization.



III. 2 (81 %) 'spoorlijn' = railway, 'grens 1990' = border 1990, 'naar' = to
 Map of the railway network in Lithuania 1861-1915. **НОВО-СВЕНЦИЯНЫ** (Švenčionėliai) – **ПОТАВЫ** (Pastovis, on the line to **БЕРЕСВЕЧ** (Bereswetsch) in present-day Belarus) was a narrow-gauge railway (750 mm), as was - **НОВО-СВЕНЦИЯНЫ** (Švenčionėliai) - **ПОНЕВЬЖЬ** (Panevėžys). The other lines had the Russian broad-gauge railway width (1524 mm).

Special cancels were introduced for the 'travelling post offices'. The station post offices, too, received special cancels, which are sometimes difficult to recognize (*ill. 1*). At the reorganization existing post offices on the main railway lines were transferred from the Postal Department to the new Railway Post Administration, and new station post offices were also built. Here the mail from general post offices was collected and sorted, and thence transported by train.

These station post offices were often also open to the general public, if no other general post office nearby was open.

Introduction of route numbers

Just before the 1869 reorganization the sections of the railway post were being numbered. The station post offices controlled the travelling post

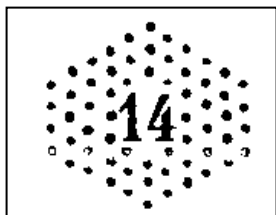
offices and staff on the route concerned.

A section received an uneven number for the outgoing route from the controlling station post office, and an even number for the reverse direction. E.g. a main line through Lithuania: from 1872-1881 nr 3 was attributed to the route St Peterburg- Werzbolovo, and nr 4 was used for Werzbolovo- St Peterburg.



III. 3

Cancel of the **ВАРШАВСК Ж. Д.**, the abbreviation for **ВАРШАВСКАЯ ЖЕЛЕЗНАЯ ДОРОЖКА** = Warsaw railway line. The letters **С. П.** of course stand for **С. ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ**, (St Peterburg). On the bottom outer ring is the number of the mail van: **ПОЧТ ВАГ № 1**, the abbreviation for **ПОЧТОВЫЙ ВАГОНЪ** (Pochtoviy vagon, mail van). This illustration comes from the handbook of A.V. Kiryushkin & P.E. Robinson 'Russian Railway Postmarks'. On the left side of the day of the date, is the number of the station where the postal item had been delivered.



Hexagonal number cancel, used for a very short period (1861-1863) only. On the line to Werzbolovo the vans operated with the numbers 12, 14, 15, and 16. Being considered an unlucky number, number 13 was omitted.



III. 4 (83 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on 24-3-1890 to Velmony, province of Kovno, via route nr 3 St Peterburg-Werzbolovo. At this time the number codes next to the day of the date had been abolished. In the upper part only the route number is given:

ПОЧТОВЫЙ ВАГОНЪ № 3 (Pochtoviy vagon, Mail van nr 3). In addition a clear cancel can be seen of **КОВНА** (Kowna, Kaunas), which is situated along this route, and was a transit-station in this case. From here the letter went to the post office of Cekiske (small circular cancel of March 26, 1890) with the ordinary mail, and further along to the small town of Veliony, which had no post office of its own.

Wilno (Vilnius) as junction: the route to St Peterburg and East Prussia

It is obvious from the map that **ВИЛЬНО** (Wilno, Vilnius) is a real junction within the railway-system. The first special cancels for the travelling post offices were introduced in April 1860; these were to replace the dotted number cancels in 1863. These were single circular cancels, which did indicate the mail van number but not really a section number (*ill. 3*).

Yet the name of the railway and the date was indicated. To the left of the date the code number was indicated (sometimes side-ways) of the station where the postal item had been delivered. This number had to be changed at every station, and if another mail van was put in on the same route, this van sometimes carried a different station numbering.

On the line to Warsaw Vilnius had 33 as station code, and Werzbolovo 37.

It was not, however, facile in its use, and in 1881 these station number codes were abolished.

Shortly before the foundation of the Railway Mail Administration, 1869, the section numbers were introduced.

The section **С. ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ** (St Peterburg) – **ДВИНСКЪ** (Dvinsk, Daugavpils) – **ВИЛЬНО** (Wilno, Vilnius) **КОВНА** (Kowna, Kaunas) – **ВЕРЖБОЛОВО**

(Werzbolovo, Lithuanian Virbalis) received section number 3 from 1872 until 1881 and number 4 for the return journey to St Peterburg. We also find these numbers in the cancels. These cancels had appeared in several shapes.

The oldest are the circular (single circular) cancels, which appear in different shapes again:

- with both section numbers e.g. No. 3-4, and below the number of the cancel itself in parentheses. In addition next to the day of the date the code numbers of the intermediate stations.
- by 1880 with one section number (*ill. 4*), and below the cancel number between ornaments.

The station code numbers were abolished in 1881.

After 1890 the cross-date cancels are introduced. On the busiest routes - on route 3 sub-post offices -

ОТДѢЛЕНИЕ (Otdelenie) – were also put in service from September 1893 onwards, receiving octagonal cancels, sometimes with the date on three lines (*ill. 5*), sometimes as a cross-date. Later on these travelling post offices also received single circular cancels (*ill. 6*).

Werzbolovo-Kibarty as border station

ВЕРЖБОЛОВО (Werzbolovo, Virbalis in Lithuanian, and Wirballen in German) was a very important transfer station between Germany and Russia. Gauges of different widths were present, the West European and the broader Russian gauge. The Czarist (broad gauge) width was 1524 mm and the West European width was 1435 mm. The station itself was 4 kilometres distanced from the border, and the small village of **КИБАРТЫ** (Kibarty, Lithuanian Kybartai) was directly situated on the border. As the result of the growth of Kibarty into a sizable town the border station Werzbolovo became engulfed by this town¹.

Later on the station was also called Kibarty: from 1881 until 1884 mail van nr 3-4 was running the line St Peterburg - Kibarty, and from 1884-1903 the line St Peterburg-Werzbolovo was operative again.

From 1903 until 1913 mail van nr 3-4 ran on the St Peterburg-Warsaw line. In this period a mail van may have run between Werzbolovo and Wilno, but according to Vytautas Fugalevičius's cancellations handbook mail van nr 5-6 was put into service on this line between 1910 and 1914 only. The data from Kiryushkin & Robinson's handbook seem more logical. From Dec. 1, 1903 mail van nr 3-4, and also the sub-post-offices, on the line St Peterburg - Warsaw, and at the same time mail van nr 5-6 is transferred to the line Wilno - Werzbolovo.

¹ See on this: 'Grenzbahnhof Werzbolowo / Kibarty [Border railway station Werzbolowo / Kibarty] / Witold Fugalewitsch. – In Lithuania 1999 ; nr. 12. – p. 782-784



III. 5 (81 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard from Werzbolovo to New York, 3 **ИЮЛЬ** (Iyul, July), 1884 or 1894 with section nr 3 St Peterburg-Werzbolovo. The number below -4 - is the cancel number. The date is according to the Julian calendar, and so until 1900 12 days must be added to get our 'Gregorian' date. A.V. Kiryushkin & P.E. Robinson's handbook also gives the earliest and latest reported date of all cancels, for this cancel 8-12-1885 and 10-2-1887, respectively, thus this cancel may probably be from 1884(?).

Because of the different gauge widths an interchange of train material was necessary. For Prussian trains this took place in Werzbolovo, for the trains coming from Russia this occurred at the German border station Eydtkuhnen ('Russian Platform').

The German name for Werzbolovo was Wirballen, the Lithuanian name is Virbalis.



III. 6 (84 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard. 12-1-1902 from Kaunas to St Peterburg via route nr 4 Werzbolovo-St Peterburg. Many cancels are a bit unclear, but on this cancel we can clearly see **ОТДѢЛ...**, so a travelling sub-post office. The route number is also clear, and between the ornaments is the number - 5 - of this cancel.

This is also confirmed by items from the collection of Eugenijus Uspuras (*ill. 7*).

On these items from 1904 and 1908 no oval cancels have been used for route 5-6.

The oval cancels, with the route number above and the terminus names, were prescribed in 1903, and introduced gradually, but such a cancel is not known with

ВЕРЖБОЛОВО ВИЛЬНО

(Werzbolovo – Wilno) and route number 5 or 6.

We find, however, between 1910 and 1915 the cancel **ВЕРЖБОЛОВО – ВИЛЬНО** (Werzbolovo – Wilno), used without a number (*ill. 8*).

On the bottom ring inside the cancel should be **ОТД**, the abbreviation for **ОТДѢЛЕНИЕ** (Otdelenie), so a travelling sub-post office.

The picture side of the card is also nice with the 'Grüss von der Deutsch-Russischen Landesgrenze' (Greetings from the German-Russian state border) in Werzbolovo, or, called in German- Wirballen (*ill. 9*).

According to Fulgalewitsch mail van 5-6 was put into service between Werzbolovo and St Peterburg in 1914, so the route was extended from Vilnius. We find, however, the cancel of mail van nr 6 **ВЕРЖБОЛОВО 6 С. П. БУРГЪ** (Werzbolovo 6 St Peterburg) already in 1913 (*ill. 10*). According to Eugenijus Uspuras mail van nr 5-6 ran between Werzbolovo and Wilno (Vilnius) from Dec. 1, 1903 until Oct. 14, 1910.

From Oct. 15, 1910 up to 1914 the route is Werzbolovo - via Vilnius - to St Peterburg, and during this period the oval cancel **ВЕРЖБОЛОВО 6 С. П. БУРГЪ** (Werzbolovo 6 St Peterburg) (*ill. 10*) is used.

From Dec.1, 1903 until October 1915 the sub-post office **ОТДѢЛЕНИЕ** on the route 5-6 is transferred to the route Wilna - Werzbolovo. Then this van, too, ran onwards to Petrograd.

Because of St Peterburg sounding too 'German' its name was changed into Petrograd in 1914 - also in the cancels.

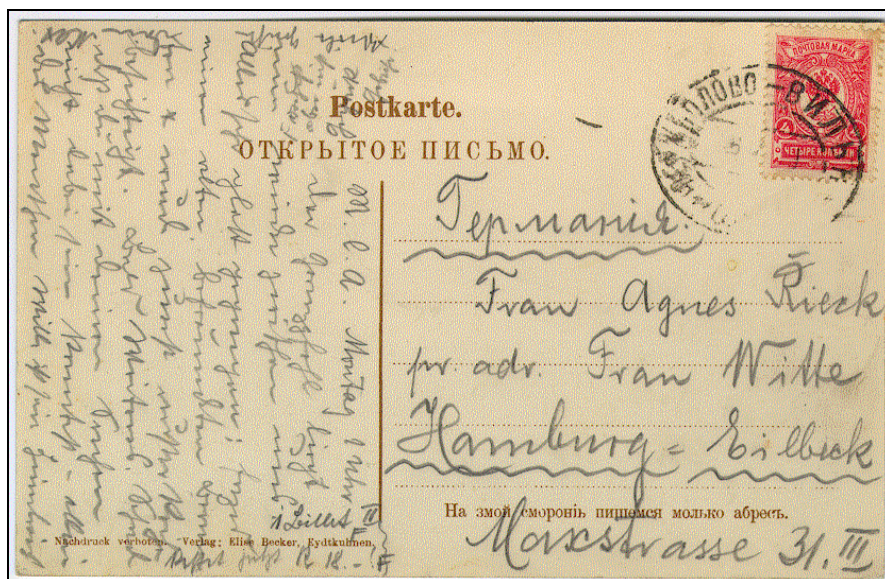
There were fast trains, too, operating on the section Werzbolovo - Wilno, also with a mail van and a cancel of its own (*ill. 11*), probably from Oct. 15, 1910 onwards.



III. 7 (82 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent on May. 23, 1908 Stettin via route nr 5 Wilno-Werzbolovo. The number below - 1 - is the cancel number.

Although prescribed the oval train cancels were but slowly introduced. This cancel is still a cross-date cancel : the day first, below it the month, to the left of the whole the century, and to the right the remaining part of the year. At a suggestion of the U.P.U. an instruction had come to use Roman numerals for the month, instead of a Cyrillic abbreviation. In Eugenijus Uspuras's collection is a postcard, sent Aug 5, 1904, from Werzbolovo to Karbad via route nr 5 Wilno-Werzbolovo, also with a cross-date cancel. This cancel shows below a number 2 as the cancel number. In addition a postcard sent on march 29, 1909 to Vilnius via nr 6 Wilno - Werzbolovo with cancel number 4.



III. 8 (83 %)

Postcard to Hamburg with the cancel **ВЕРЖБОЛОВО – ВИЛЬНА** (Werzbolovo – Wilna). Following Germany's example Russia, too, introduced the oval cancels for the railway mail in 1903.

III. 9

The picture side of the postcard with the 'Gruss von der Deutsch-Russischen Landesgrenze' (Greetings from the German-Russian border).



III. 10 (82 %)

Postcard to Wilno (Vilnius), sent on March 24, 1913, with the oval railway cancel of the section Werzbolovo – St Peterburg: **ВЕРЖБОЛОВО 6 С.** **П. БУРГЪ**, the abbreviation for **С. ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ** (St Peterburg)



III. 11 (82 %)

(ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

The cancel **ВЕРЖБОЛОВО 6 BIS ВИЛЬНО**

(Werzbolovo 6 BIS Wilno) stems from the fast train on this line. 'bis' is the abbreviation for Russian 'Bistro' (fast). Such a cancel with '5 BIS' is also present in Eugenijus Uspuras's collection.



Period	Direction Werzbolovo	Period	Direction Warsaw
		Aug. 1868	Nr 3-4 St Peterburg - Warsaw
Oct. 1871 – 1881	Nr 3 St Peterburg – Werzbolovo (return: nr 4)	Jan. 1869 – 1903	Nr 5 Wilna – Warsaw (return . nr. 6)
1881 – 1884	Nr 3 St Peterburg – Kibarty	1884-1903	Nr 5 ОТД Wilno-Warsaw
1884 – 1903	Nr 3 St Peterburg – Werzbolovo		
Sept. 1883 – 1903	Nr 3 ОТД St Peterburg - Werzbolovo		
per 1-12-1903	Nr 5 Wilno - Werzbolovo	per 1-12-1903	Nr 3 St Peterburg – Warsaw
per 1-12-1903	Nr 5 ОТД Wilna - Werzbolovo	per 1-12-1903-1910	Nr 3 ОТД St P.burg – Warsaw
per 15-10- 1910	Nr 5 St Peterburg – Werzbolovo	per Dec. 1910	Nr 3 ОТД St Peterburg – Wilna
?15-10-1910	Nr 5BIS Wilna - Werzbolovo		
in 1914	Nr 5 Petrograd – Werzbolovo	July 1914	Nr 3 ОТД Wilna - Warsaw
in October 1915	Nr 5 ОТД Petrograd - Werzbolovo	in 1914	Nr 3 Petrograd - Warsaw

Afb. 12

Wilno (Vilnius) as junction: the route to Warsaw

After the opening of the line between St Peterburg and Warsaw at first single circular cancels were used with the name of the railway (*ill. 3*).

After the introduction of the route numbers we see the same kind of cancels as we saw previously.

- From 1872 onwards mail van 5-6 ran on the line **ВИЛЬНО – ВАРШАВА** (Wilno – Warsaw). a single circular cancel with both section numbers
- with one section direction

As we saw before this changed on 1-12-1903: mail van nr 3-4 ran on the St Peterburg - Warsaw line, while at the same time mail van nr 5-6 ran on the Wilno - Werzbolovo line. Both routes can be seen schematically above (*ill. 12*).

Next the single circular cancel with both route numbers 5-6 is pictured (*ill. 13*).

So after the introduction of the oval cancels (1903) this line became 3-4, but only from Jan. 12, 1912 onwards can the oval cancel with the route number 3 (St Peterburg 3 Warsaw be found.

Yet the cancel **ВИЛЬНО – ВАРШАВА** (Wilno – Warsaw) was also used without a number. Below in the cancel it reads **ОТД**, the abbreviation for **ОТДЪЛЕНИЕ** (Otdelenie), i.e. a travelling sub-post office.



III. 13 (89 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent on Jan. 23, 1879 from **ГРОДНО** (Grodno) to Wilno (Vilnius). Grodno was situated south of present-day Lithuania on the line to Warsaw - see map (*ill. 2*) - and so the postcard went via route 5-6. With the cancel **ПОЧТОВЫЙ ВАГОНЪ Nr 5-6** (Pochtoviy vagon, mail van nr 5-6)

Wilno (Vilnius) as junction: the route to Minsk and Libava

One of the main lines through present-day Lithuania was also the line from **ЛИБАВА** (Libava, Liepaja in Latvia) via **ВИЛЬНО** (Wilno, Vilnius) to **МИНСКЪ** (Minsk). The line between Wilno and Minsk was completed in the period 1871-1874, between Wilno and Libava in 1870.

From 1884 to 1915 mail van nr 45 Minsk - Libava and nr 46 Libava - Minsk was in service (*ill. 14*). During the preceding period 1871-1884 this mail van ran as nr 45 from **ЛИБАВА** to **ЕТКНЫ** (Libava to

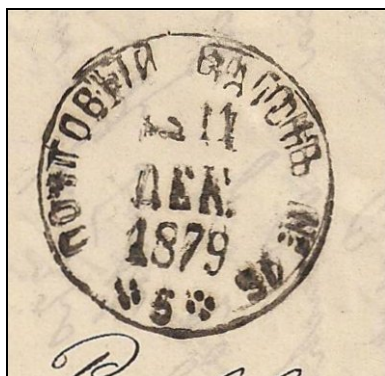
Etkany) and as nr 46 in the reverse direction. The numbers in the cancel were interchangeable and were inserted after the 'no.', sometimes with the number upside down. Thus it was more legible from the outside. In the assignment of the numbers the odd numbers indicated the direction of departure, seen from the capital St Peterburg or a big city. The return direction was then indicated with the following even number. On the route Libava-Etkany Libava was the big city and Etkany but a station, so route nr 45 departed from Libava.

The return direction 46 departed from Etkany.

On the route to Minsk (after 1884) of course Minsk was the most important city and route 45 departed from Minsk. The return direction 46 now departed from Libava.

Of course something could go wrong with the insertion of the numbers, but mail was also sent with the first train - sometimes in the wrong direction -, and then also received that particular cancel and was sent in the opposite direction again, after the sorting.

Next (ill. 15) we see a postal item from this period, sent from Libava, from the period that at every station a 'station number' was inserted in the cancel. This practice was abolished in 1881. The station number - in this case 1, of the departure station Libava - might have been placed sideways, or upright, on the left or right side of the date. It is obvious that it is visible in this case, but sometimes it is not always easy to perceive which number then is the date.



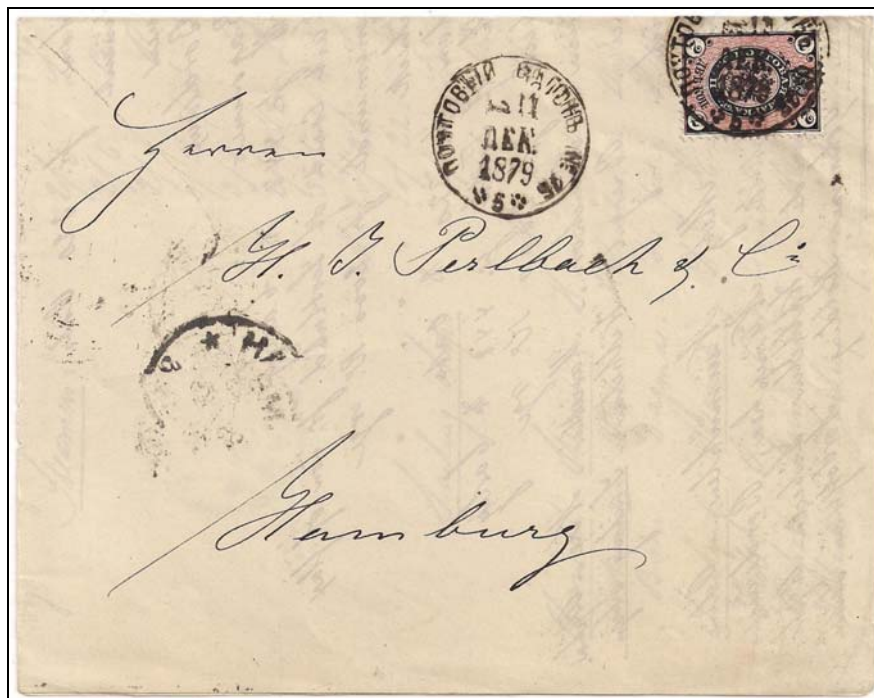
Via **ЕТКНЫ** (Etkany) this printed matter went along to Hamburg. **ЕТКНЫ** (Etkany) started as a railway station in 1862. Then the railway from Vilnius to Kaunas and the German border was constructed. In 1884 the town was renamed **КОШЕДАРЫ** (Kosedary, Kaisiadorys). The map alongside shows that this town became an important town, because of its location, especially when connected with the port **ЛИБАВА** (Libava), - from 1871 onwards..

Another branch existed on the line from Libava before the present Lithuanian border leading to **КРЕТИНГЕНЪ** (Kretingen, Kretinga) in Western Lithuania. On this route there was no railway mail.



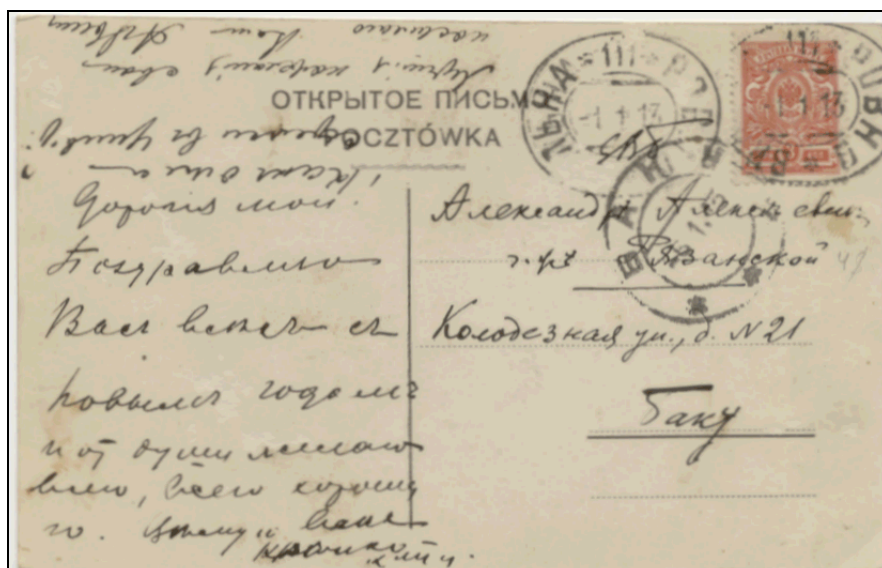
III. 14 (82 %)

Postcard to **КОВНА** (Kaunas, arrival cancel 13-12-1912) The oval railway cancel **ЛИБАВА МИНСКЪ** it reads – hardly legible - the route number 46. So Kaunas was not situated on this line, and, coming from **РАДЗИВИЛИШКИ** (Radziviliski, Lithuanian Radviliskis) a return ought to be made at **КОШЕДАРЫ** (Kosedary, Kaisiadorys) to reach Kaunas. This was not convenient, as Kaunas became more and more important, also as a military fort. So during the German occupation in the First World War a small cut was quickly constructed (section between Gaiziunai and Palemonas) resulting in a direct connection from Kaunas to the Libava - Wilno line.



III. 15 (81 %) (ex. Ruud van Wijnen)

Printed matter from **ЛИБАВА** (Libava, Libau, Latvian Liepāja) to Hamburg, December 11, 1879. Mail van 45, with station number 1 of Libava.



Wilno (Vilnius) as junction: the route to Rovno

Between 1891 and 1915 the mail van with route number 111 operated on the section **ВИЛЬНО – РОВНО** (Wilno – Rovno) (ill. 16) and thus route number 112 ran the opposite direction (ill. 17).

In 1883 the line was completed from Vilnius southward to Lida (now in the north of Belarus). From there the line ran further southward to Baranovici and Rovno. Rovno was already situated far to the south.

III. 16 (84 %)

Postcard to **БАКУ** (Baku) with route 111 cancel.



III. 17 (82 %)

Postcard to Riga, arrival cancel 18-5-1906, via mail van 112. The text on the other side is quite illegible, but the postcard seems to have been posted in Wilna on May 16.



III. 18 (89 %) (ex. Ruud van Wijnen)

Postcard, postal item from **ЛИБАВА** (Libava) to **РИГА** (Riga). The dates in the cancels 13 and 14 АВГ, the abbreviation for **АВГУСТ** (August) 1875.

The day cancel features the name of the railway line:

ЛИБАВСК П.О * ЛИБАВСК Ж.Д. (Libava mail division * Libava railway).

Here again we find the abbreviations **ЖЕЛЕЗНОЙ ДОРОЖКИ**, Zheleznodorozhnyi = rail-

The mail van cancel:

ПОЧТ ВАГОНА (ПОЧТОВЫЙ Pochtoviy vagon, mail van) with indication of the line and station number 9:

РИГО-МОЖЕЙКОВ Ж.Д. (Riga- Murajevo Railway) (Mosjeikor).

The connection with Riga

On the tract **РИГА** (Riga) to **МОШЕЙКИ** (Možeiki), too, we find the oldest cancels - the period 1873-1878 - mentioning the railway name and indicating the station where the postal item was handed over (*ill. 18*). As these numbers were inserted it is not clear if it is a 6 or a 9, but probably it is the 9 of Možeiki here². There was a junction of lines here, where a transit cancel would be logical.

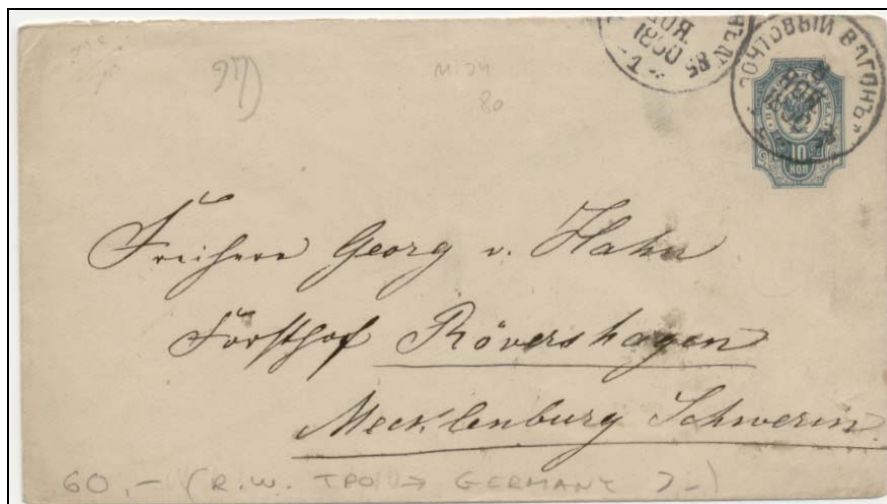


Between July and December the section - and the mail van - was numbered 85-86 and until 1881 the cancel was used with both numbers, 85-86, afterwards only one direction was indicated in the cancel (*ill. 19*). From 1881-1900 onwards the mail van ran as nr 85 from **РИГА** (Riga) to **МОШЕЙКИ** (Možeiki), but between 1900 and 1913 this mail van ran from Riga to **МУРАВЕЕВО** (Muravevo). In fact this is the same town: Možeiki is the Lithuanian name, and after the Russification - probably in 1891 - it became Muravevo.

And so section nr 86 was the reverse direction.

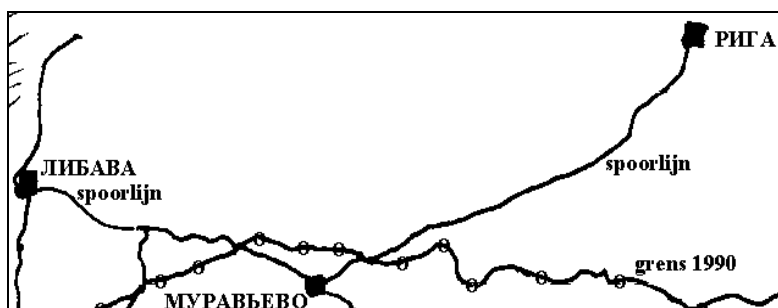
The oval cancel of this route appeared from ca 1905 until 1912. By April 18, 1913 the mail van went on to Libava, and so this was put into the cancel. For a short period, from April 18, 1913 until 1915 a mail van, nr 105, ran from **РИГА** (Riga) to **ВЕРЖБОЛОВО** (Werzbolovo) via **ДВИНСК** (Dwinsk) (*ill. 20*).

² About this route see also: *Riga: die Postgeschichte bis 1919* [Riga: the postal history up to 1919] / V. Marčilger. - pp. 15.23-15.27

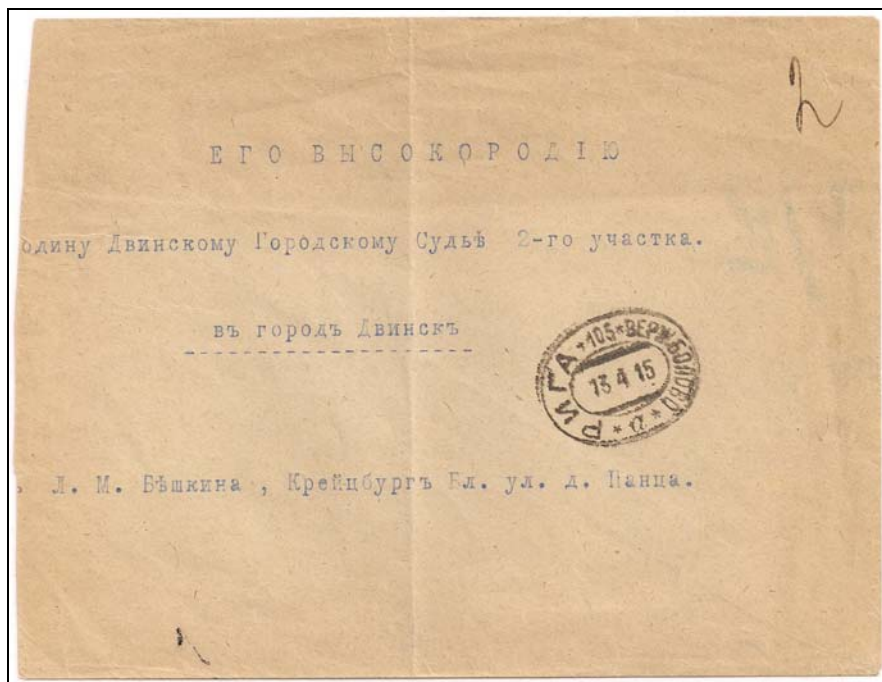


Ill. 19 (51 %)

Letter with the cancel of mail van nr 85.



1873: extension of the line Riga-Mitau to Možeiki. Možeiki was later renamed (1891?) Muravevo, after the Governor-general who rather violently struck down the Lithuanian revolt of 1863.



Ill. 20 (68 %) (ex. Ruud van Wijnen)

Letter from **КРЕЙЦБУРГЪ** (Kreuzburg in German and Krustpils in Latvian), 13-4-1915 to **ДВИНСКЪ** (Dwinsk, in Latvian Daugavpils). This oval cancel was still in use in the twenties



III. 21 (85 %)

Picture postcard from 1915, field post of the 28th Field Reserve Hospital in Ponevezys. To Pskov. The picture side of the postcard shows a street scene from Ponevezys, Lithuanian Panevėžys.



III. 22 (81 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent on March. 9, 1915 via route nr 201 **ПОНЕВĖЖĲ – БЕРЕСВЕЧ** (Ponevėž – Beresveč).



Index letter is 'g', the fourth character of the Cyrillic alphabet.

Also indexletter 'a' is reported on a postcard sent on Dec. 23, 1912 from Utena to Kvetki.

Remaining lines

Route nr 9

- 1881-1906 **КАЛКУНЫ – РАДЗИВИЛИШКУ** (Kalkuny – Radziviliški)
- 1906-1915 **ДВИНСК - РАДЗИВИЛИШКУ** (Dwinsk- Radziviliški)

and 10 for the reverse direction.

КАЛКУНЫ (Kalkuny) is the town just before **ДВИНСК** (Dwinsk, Latvian Daugavpils), where the line from **РАДЗИВИЛИШКУ** (Radziviliški), completed in 1873, had been connected with the main line St Petersburg-Vilnius-Warsaw

The map (ill. 2) shows that **ПОНЕВĖЖĲ** (Ponevezys) is situated on this line and so we can thus see the cancel

РАДЗИВИЛИШКУ... on a postcard from Ponevezys (ill. 21).

Near Ponevezys there was also a branch to Novo-Svencjany, Lithuanian Švenčionėliai.

The line from **НОВО-СВЕНЦЯНЫ** (Švenčionėliai) to **ПОТАВЫ**

(Pastovis) was the first narrow-gauge railway line (750 mm) in Lithuania and was completed in 1895. The line ran on to **БЕРЕСВЕЧ** (Bereswetsch) in present-day Belarus. Two years later work had begun on the extension – also narrow-gauge - to the west and the line went via Utena and Anyksiai to **ПОНЕВĖЖĲ** (Ponevezys, Lithuanian Panevėžys), and was completed in 1899.

On this tract a mail van was also in service, nr 201 (ill. 22):

- 1900-1905 **ПОНЕВĖЖĲ - НОВО-СВЕНЦЯНЫ** (Ponevėž – Novo-Svencjany)
- 1905-1915 **ПОНЕВĖЖĲ – БЕРЕСВЕЧ** (Ponevėž – Beresveč)

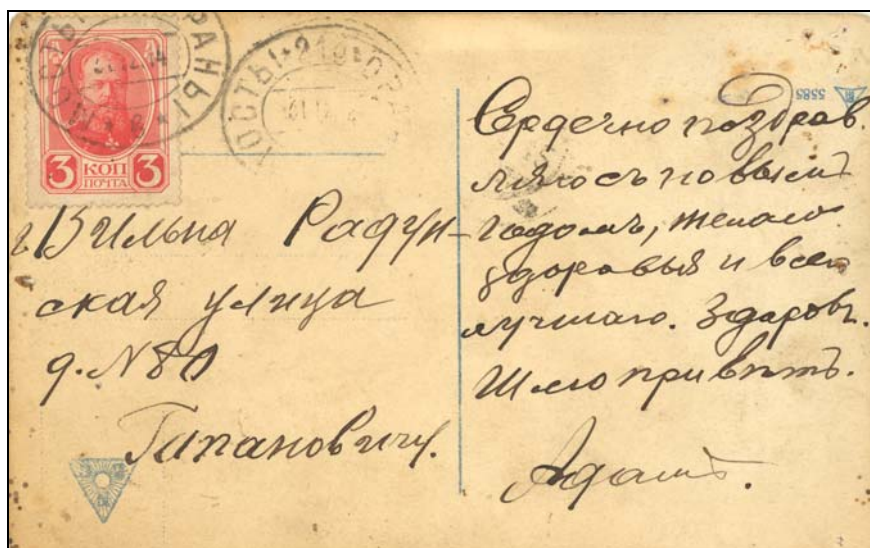
and 202 for the reverse direction.

In the south of present-day Lithuania mail van 213 was also in operation:

- 1899-1900 **ГРОДНО – ОЛИТА** (Grodno – Olita)
- 1900-1908 **ГРОДНО – ОРАНЫ** (Grodno – Orany)
- 1908-1915 **МОСТЫ – ОРАНЫ** (Mosty – Orany) (1908-1915) (ill. 23)

and 214 for the reverse direction.

Olita is Lithuanian Alytus, Orany is Lithuanian Varėna.



III. 23 (85 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent to Vilnius via route 213 **МОСТЫ – ОРАНЫ** (Mosty – Orany on Dec. 31, 1914: Index letter 'B'.



III. 24 (81 %)
Postcard with the cancel of the railway post office of **НОВО-СВЕНЦЯНЫ** (Novo-Svencjany, Lithuanian Švenčionėliai).

The station cancels

From 1869 onwards the station post offices were under the jurisdiction of the Railway Postal Administration. For these station post offices oval railway cancels are also known, with below the indication **ВОКЗ.** or **ВОКЗАЛЬ** (Voksal = station). Not many of these cancels are known from the Lithuanian area: **НОВО-СВЕНЦЯНЫ** (Novo-Svencjany) (ill. 24), **КИБАРТЫ** (Kibarty, Lithuanian Kybartai), **ВИЛЬНО** (Wilno, Vilnius) and –discovered by Eugenijus Uspuras- **ВЕРЖБОЛОВО** (Werzbolovo, Lithuanian Virbalis) (ill. 25).

Station cancel Vilnius

Some towns had no real railway station post office under the jurisdiction of the Railway Postal Administration, yet the indication **ВОКЗАЛЬ** (station) can be found in the cancel. The handbook by A.V. K Kiryushkin & P.E. Robinson shows a list of these post offices, which were under the jurisdiction of the ordinary State Post, and this is also the case with the post office with the circular cancel '**ВИЛЬНА ВОКЗАЛЬ**' (Wilno, Vilnius station)³ (ill. 26). This station used the German name Wilna instead of Polish Wilno. Probably the post office was (very) near or even inside the station, hence the name in the cancel. So the name indicates the location, and only the location.

As well as this cancel a '20-dots-cancel' was also used (ill. 27). On October 16, 1908 circular nr 75 of the Post and Telegraph Department was published announcing special cancels. These really pierced the stamps - to prevent re-use -, but weren't really fit for letters and postcards. Later on the pins were replaced by dots and also used for letters and postcards: the 20-dots-cancel.

³ About these Vilnius station cancels see: *The Russian imperial provinces of Kovno and Vilna* / Leonard L. Tann. In: *LPS* 1992: nr 2(213). - pp. 22-28



As we already saw at the beginning of this chapter there are also cancels of the railway post office of Vilnius (*ill. I*). Alongside another postcard with, at first sight, a common single circular cancel of **ВИЛЬНО** (Vilnius) (*ill. 28*). When looking attentively - with a magnifying glass - it reads below: **ВАРШАВАСК Ж. Д.**, the abbreviation for **ВАРШАВСКАЯ ЖЕЛЕЗНАЯ ДОРЖКА** = Warsaw Railway Line. After **ВИЛЬНО** also **П.О.** can be read in the cancel, the abbreviation for **ПОЧТОВОЕ ОТДѢЛЕНИЕ** (Postal Department).

Quite late in this period we find the real oval railway post cancel of the Vilnius railway station, and so this cancel is a bit rarer (*ill. 29*). The Vilnius railway station was built in 1858-1860. Near the station heavy fights took place between Polish and Russian troops in September 1939. In 1944 the station was burnt down when Vilnius was liberated, but it was rebuilt in the same mould.

Literature not mentioned in the notes:

Doniela, V.

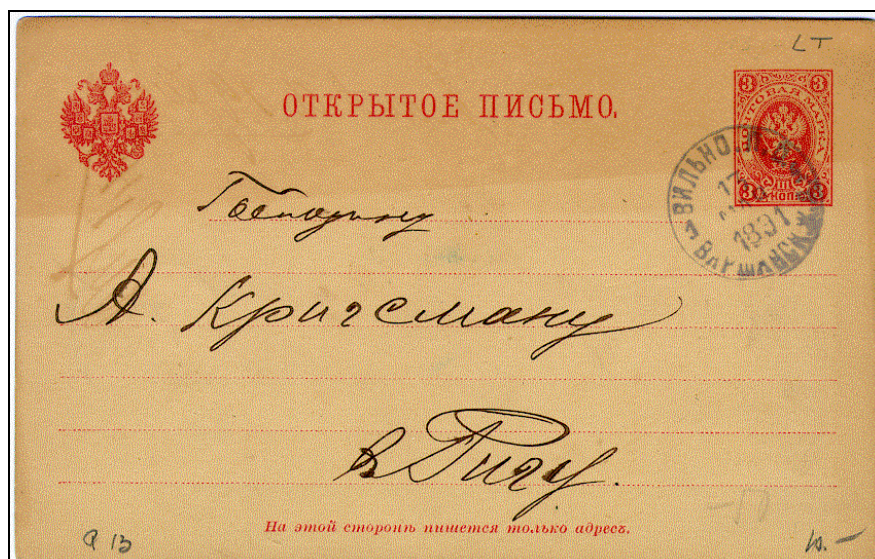
The railroad lines in Lithuania - before 1918 / V. Doniela. - In: BLP-SNY 1982; 122. - p. 8259-8264

Doniela, V.

Traveling Post offices (T.P.O.) in Lithuanian territories: before World War I / V. Doniela. - In: BLPSNY 1982; 123. - p. 8283-8288

Muller, W.

Litouwen - treinpost: de trajecten, de stempels [Lithuania - railway post: the sections, the cancels] / [W. Muller, R. van Wijnen]. - In: HBG 1983; 1. - [16 p.]
(Over the spoorpost 1918-1940 Aanvulling 1984 [On the railway post 1918-1940 Supplement 1984]; 3. - [1 p.]



III. 28 (80 %)

Postal item (P13) to Riga, may 13, 1891.



III. 29 (83 %)

Picture postcard with oval cancel of the Vilnius railway post office. The date is a bit strange, July 5, 1917. The Russians had left Vilnius already a long time before 1917. Can anyone give an explanation?

Paštas ir Filatelija Lietuvoje

1994; nrs 11 and 12. - in these issues many articles on the railway post. In Lithuanian, but a lot of information can be obtained without knowing the language (e.g. station codes, illustrations, dates).

Tann, Leonard L.

The Russian imperial provinces of Kovno and Vilna / Leonard L. Tann. - In: LPS 1992; nr 2(213). - p. 22-28

Wijnen, Ruud van

Litouwen 1915-1940 [en] de ontwikkeling van de spoorlijnen in het Memelgebied [Lithuania 1915-1940 (and) the development of the railway lines in the Memel area] / Ruud van Wijnen. - In: HBG 1982; 2. - [2 p.]

CHAPTER 2 GERMAN PERIOD UNTIL 1923

In this chapter we see material from the German period until 1923.

In this case we deal with the railway post of the German period in the German Memel area, Lithuanian Klaipėda from 1923 onwards.

During the First World War there is no question of railway post in the strict sense in occupied Lithuania, part of Postgebiet Ob. Ost, yet railway constructors still left their philatelic marks.

In this chapter, too, many illustrations are from the - award-winning - exhibition collection of Eugenijus Uspuras 'Railway post in Lithuania 1869-1969'.

The railway post in the Memel area

The Memel area was part of the German Empire before and during the First World War, and thus follows the postal history of Germany.

The general background about this period can be found in the article on Memel in HBG 40, and here we specifically go further into the matter of the railway post.

From the beginning the relation between the Post and the Railways in the German Empire was rather untransparent.

Bavaria and Württemberg had an independent 'Postverwaltung' (Postal Board) of their own, while the railways were partly Imperial property and partly in the hands of the larger confederal states and private railway corporations.

The first big step was the Reichspostgesetz, the Imperial Post Act of Oct. 28, 1871. A little later the relations were arranged extensively in the Eisenbahnpostgesetz (Railway Post Act) of Dec. 20, 1875 and the executive regulations of the Reichskanzler (Imperial Chancellor) of Feb. 9, 1876.

Many regulations were put into place especially concerning the main route. Foremost was the obligation of the Railway Company to coördinate their needs with the needs of the Post.



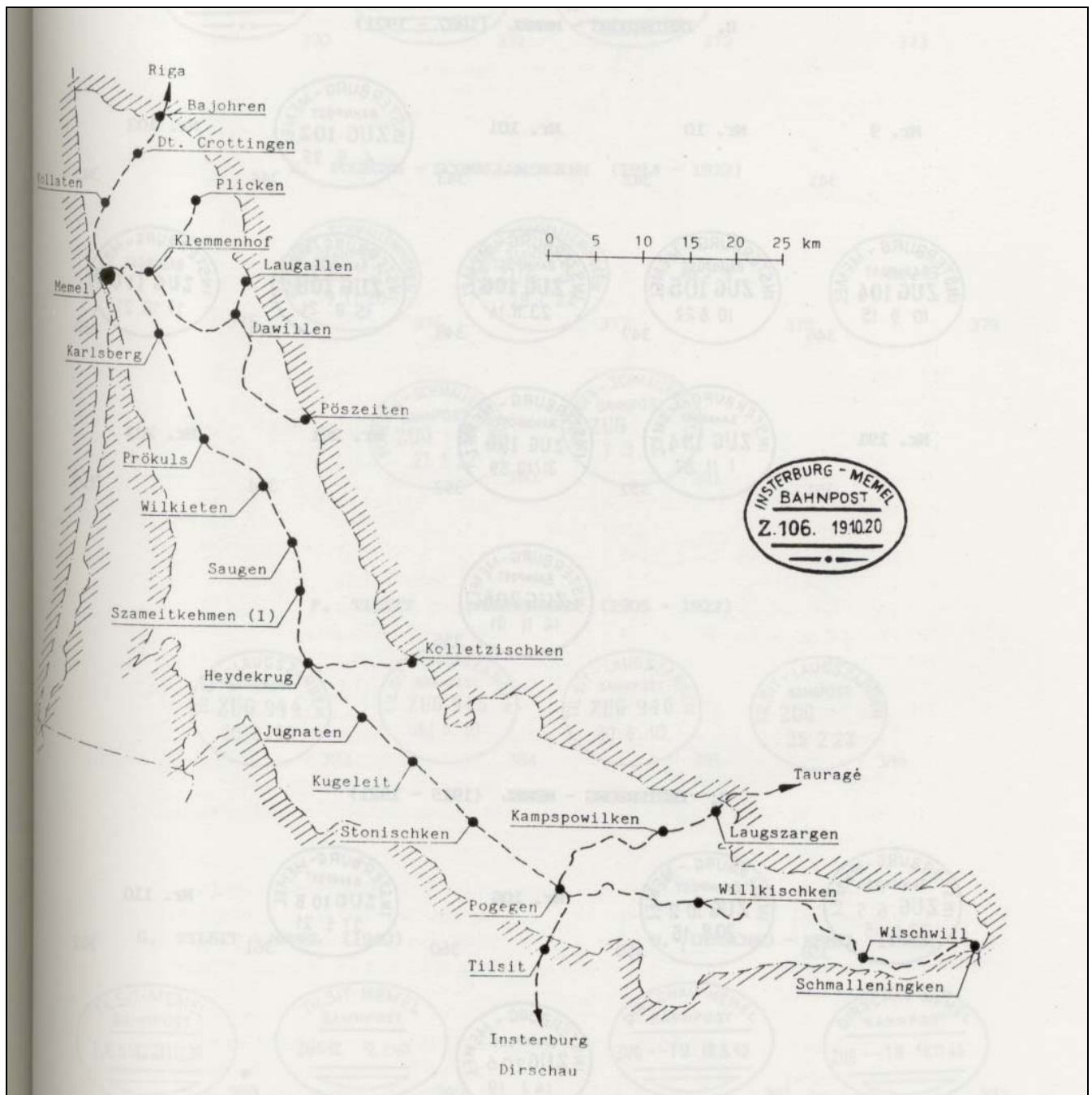
III. 1

Part of a map - with the railways - showing the situation of May 13 - July 12. Memel is still German. The map is an annex to: Der Weltkrieg 1914 bis 1918 (The Great War 1914 to 1918), part VIII

Thus it was determined among other things, that the Postal Board had the right to cooperate with the arrangement of the time-table, and to assign the trains to be used for mail transport.

The mail carriages were built and maintained at the expense of the Post.

Mail and newspaper packets were also taken for no charge with trains without mail carriages, carried by accompanying post employees or with the aid of railway staff.



III. 2

Detail of Memel map, with the railway lines. Map from: *Pašto antspaudai Lietuvoj* / V. Fugalevičius. – 1990. – p. 135

The Railway Board also were also in charge of emptying the letter boxes at the stops without post offices. The interests of the Post were to be taken into account at the lay-out of new railway stations. There were regulations even for responsibility in the case of accidents.

The Railway Act and the complementary Reichskanzlererlaß remained in operation until after the First World War.

In 1924 a new regulation came into being.

The railway cancels in the Memel area

When the Railway Act was introduced in 1875, standard cancels had not yet been introduced-

This only occurred much later, in 1883. Up to then cancels in various shapes were used. The commonest cancel was the 'line cancel', viz. three lines without square frame.

In addition 'railway segment cancels' came into use, a circular cancel with the station of delivery and addition of

'Bahnpost (No...)' (=Railway post (Nr...)).

Known from the Memel area is the three-line cancel, and in addition the oval standard cancels.

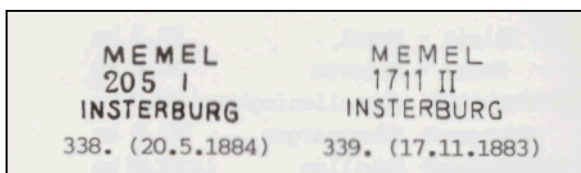
By general decree of May 18, 1883, Oct. 26, 1883, and Sept. 6, 1884 uniform standard cancels were also introduced for the railway post.



III. 3 (85%) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on March 7, 1902 to Kuršėnai via the railway post line Insterburg-Memel, train nr 106 (1887-1921).



III. 4 (85%) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on Sept. 16, 1900 to Pilkallen via the railway post line Insterburg-Memel, train nr 111 (1887-1921).



III. 5
The three-line cancel (1883-1884). From the handbook of Fugalevičius



III. 6a



III. 6b

III. 6
Two numeral types next to each other. Also from Fugalevičius' handbook

The first standard cancel type was 'Small-oval' (ill. 3). From about 1907 onwards these cancels were gradually replaced by the 'Large-oval' cancels. In the Memel area the German railway post was active from 1887 to 1922.

Memel after 1918

After the First World War, under the Versailles Treaty (section 99) the Memel area came under French administration, as a mandated territory, on Jan. 10, 1920. Initially German stamps, overprinted Memelgebiet, were used and later on the overprints on French stamps. On January 15, 1923 Lithuania occupied the city of Memel and the area became Lithuanian territory. Yet the allied powers stipulated that the area should have a certain amount of autonomy. In 1923 stamps were issued, at first in Marks, and afterwards in the Lithuanian currency. From August 1925 onwards only Lithuanian stamps were allowed. The 'Deutschen Reichsbahn' (German Imperial Railways) remained active until Aug. 7, 1923, at the expense of the Memel area. On August 8, 1923 the railway traffic was taken over - unannounced - by Lithuania. The 17 railway stations became Lithuanian property, and the 17 engines present at the time were also taken over by Lithuania.

The oldest line: Tilsit – Heydekrug – Prökuls – Memel¹

The first part of this line, Tilsit-Insterburg, was put into use on 16-6-1865 (53.62 km). This line was a private enterprise until July 1, 1881 and was linked with the 'East Line' (Königsberg-Eydtkuhnen). In 1866 already there was a bill concerning the Memel bridge near Tilsit, but the financing remained a problem. Only after the French-German war (1871) were things making headway, and in the spring of 1872 the construction of the railway started (92.32 km).

¹ An overview of the lines: De ontwikkeling van de spoorlijnen in het Memelgebiet [The development of the railways in the Memel area] / [Ruud van Wijnen. – In: HBG 1983 ; 2

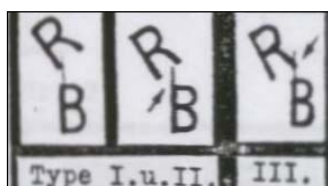
The section Memel-Pogegen (86.09 km) was completed on June 1, 1875. Pogegen –Tilsit (6.23 km) was completed on Oct. 1, and on Oct. 15, 1875 the railway bridge over the Memel river was opened. Herewith Memel, the north-easternmost province of the German Empire, was connected to the Prussian railway net. On the map (*ill. 2*) we see the main line Insterburg via Tilsit to the port of Memel (91 km). After the opening two trains rode daily in both directions.

A three-line railway cancel (*ill. 5*) and the well-known oval cancels (*ill. 3 and 4*) are known of this route. Fugalevičius' handbook mentions the railway cancels with the various train numbers on this line:

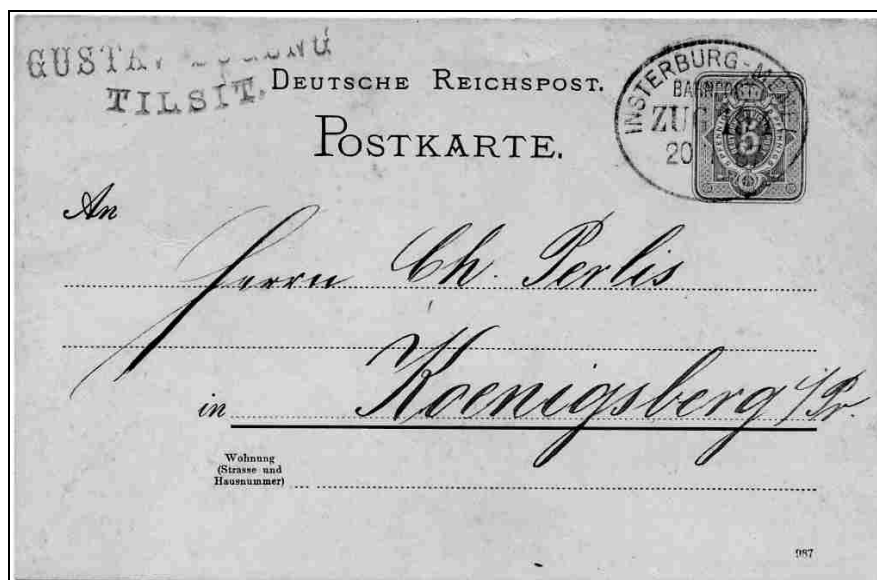
- 1887 en 1921: ZUG 9, 10, 101, 102, 103, 104 (*ill. 7*), 105, 106 (*ill. 3*), 108, 110, 191, 194, 196, 201, 203, 206, and - not mentioned in the handbook - 111 (*ill. 4*).
- 1915-1921: a different numeral cancel, of which a thinner numeral is printed and the last numeral of the train number is somewhat set apart (*ill. 6b*): ZUG 65, 102, 106, 108, 110, 206.
- 1920-1923: a new type of cancel with Zug abbreviated to Z., and together with the date between horizontal lines. A clear illustration of this type can be seen on the postcard (*ill. 2*). This cancel appears as: Z. 9, 10, 101, 103, 105, 106, 108, 110 (*ill. 8*), and 115.

The oldest cancels were 'insert cancels' where the train number and the date were inserted. With this kind of cancel types can be distinguished with the train numbers (*ill. 6 and 7*). It is also clear already that the '10' was inserted as one block. This explains the different distances.

E. Becker also distinguishes different types of the frame of the insert cancels.



If one extends the small line of the letter B of Bahnpost upwards, then the



III. 7 (%) (ex. Walter Kolb)
Postcard, sent on Nov. 20, 1887 via the railway-post line Insterburg-Memel, with ZUG 104.



III. 8 (77 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent to Fülhingen via the railway-post line Insterburg-Memel, trainnumber Z. 110 (1920-1922).

right leg of the B is touched: this is type III.
Moreover the small line between Insterburg and Memel is a short one.
If on extending the small line of the B the left line of the R is touched: type I.
If the middle of the letter R is touched then we are dealing with type II

In addition the lowermost small line of the E (of Memel) is broken off.
The cancel Insterburg-Tilsit still has a separate frame type, too: type IV, the B of Bahnpost below the E of Insterburg.

Later on the more modern 'Typenradstempel' ('Schweizerstempel') was introduced on the main line Insterburg-Memel, on which cancel every train number and date could be adjusted with a kind of cylinder (*ill. 8 and 9*).



These cancels had a larger format and also remained in use in Germany after the First World War.

This cancel was used even up to Aug. 18, 1926 with the indication Insterburg-Memel, and on Aug. 19, 1926 the cancel Z. 101 was finally put out of use and sent to the factory in Berlin. These modern cancels were never used on other lines.

These cancels were used from 1920 to 1923, but the stamps show that we are in the next period of Memel's turbulent history.

On this route a system of paired numbers existed. According to the 'Reichskursbuch' (RKB) of 1908 nr 2 and RKB July 1914, three pairs of trains transported railway mail. From Insterburg-Memel: trains 101, 103, and 111, with trains 102, 104, and 106 in the opposite direction. I.e. the odd train numbers to the north and the even ones to the south. In RKB 1915 nr 1 no train numbers are indicated (not on the cancels, either) - because of the camouflage during the war.

There were also two pairs of trains (mornings and afternoons) with railway post Tilsit-Memel. In this case no cancels from this period exist, as probably the Insterburg-Tilsit cancel was used.

The period after 1920 has been described extensively in an article by E. Becker.

After 1920 it was normal practice to use the train numbers in number pairs: the odd numbers on the outward journey, e.g. Insterburg-Memel, and the even numbers on the return journey.



III. 9 (%) (ex. Walter Kolb)

Letter, sent on Feb. 26, 1923, via the train-post line Insterburg-Memel, Z. 110.

Pairs on the line Insterburg-Memel were:

Outward	return
9	10
101	110
103	106
105	108

A number of these cancels also exist in various forms.

The cancels may be found on stamps of various countries - on account of Memel's turbulent history in these times.

Before July 1, 1920 cancels can be found on German stamps (*ill. 7*).

From July 7, 1920 up to and including March 31, 1923 stamps of the French administration were used (*ill. 8*).

Lithuanian stamps in the Mark currency were still used for years afterwards (*ill. 9*).

From January 11 to 19, 1923 the trains did not journey further than Tilsit, due to the uncertain situation. Later on the trains did journey further, but the mail carriages only went as far as the border.

Memel-Bajohren

This line (20.63 km) was opened on November 1, 1892. No train post of this line is known.

The line ended just short of the Russian border, just like the Pogegen-

Laugszargen line. Only after the First World War are both lines connected to the Russian network. One could then travel to to Schaulen and Mitau via Laugszargen. From Bajoren a connection was then constructed to Libau via Prekuln.

'Kleinbahnen (Narrow-gauge lines)'

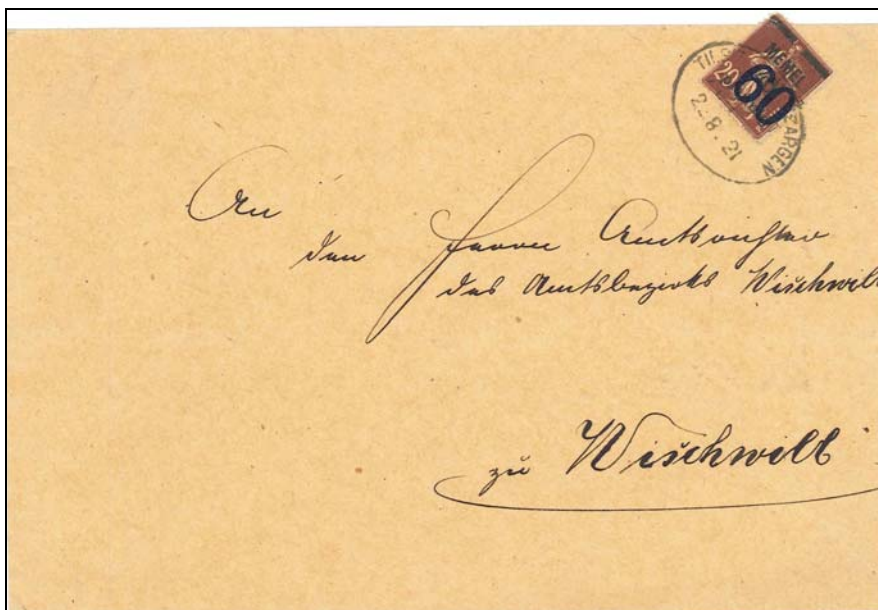
With Bismarck's Narrow Gauge Act (1892) a simplified railway construction on the flat countryside became possible, in various gauge widths.

The 'Memeler Kleinbahn' (gauge width 1000 mm) was operative on Nov. 22, 1906 with the lines Memel-Poszeiten, with a branch to Plicken and to Laugallen (in total 49.2 km). In addition the line Heydekrug-Kolleschen with 'Normalspur' (normal gauge) was used on Dec. 14, 1913 (16.23 km).

Finally there was also the Tilsiter Kleinbahn (gauge width 1000 mm) with the line Pogegen-Schmalleningken (Aug. 1, 1902). Of these lines we find train post on this last line only. This line also had a branch Mikieren-Tilsit (May 1, 1914). The total length was 65.5 km.

Pogegen-Laugszargen

On May 1, 1904 this line (22 km) was opened. On this line railway cancels of its own were used after the war with the indication 'Tilsit-Laugszargen'. In the cancels only the word ZUG was present, without a train-number indication (*ill. 10*).



III. 10 (61 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on Aug. 22, 1921 to Wischnwill via the train-post line Tilsit-Laugszargen (1905-1922).

Older cancels with a train number are also mentioned by Fugalevičius: nr 944, 945, and 946.

Pogegen-Schmalleningken

The date of opening of this line (ca 50 km) is August 1, 1902. It was a narrow-gauge railway, with railway width being 1000 mm. Train cancels were used with the older insert cancels with train numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 (*ill. 11*).



III. 11 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on June 15, 1921 to Wischnwill via the train-post line Pegegen-Schmalininken (1914-1922), train number 2.

First World War

During the First World War railways were also of great military importance (ill. 12). In his memoirs (ill. 13) Erich Ludendorff² wrote:

“ The construction of fortifications and lodgings, just as the whole front life, suffered from the bad railways situation. The Russians had thoroughly destroyed the lines everywhere. The bridges over the river Njemen and other big rivers were completely blown up, the stations burned down, water supplies destroyed, the telegraph lines taken down. The military railway authorities with their construction- and industrial troops, supported by the telegraph troops for the very important lines construction, had to accomplish a gigantic job. The ‘Feldeisenbahnchef Ost’, Oberst Kersten, knew his job.” At the end of September the Kaunas railway bridge could be used again and for a long time this was the only connection between the 10th and 12th army with the right wing of Army Group Scholtz.

The ‘Eisenbahntruppen’ (Railway Troops)

The construction and recovery - and at retreat the destruction - of the railways in the war zone was entrusted to the ‘Eisenbahntruppen’ (Railway Troops). Before the First World War there were three of these Railway Troops, but at the outbreak of the war they were re-organized. The railway troops were divided in - rather independently operating - companies and several companies formed a division³. The ‘Chef des Feldeisenbahnwesens’ (chief of the field railways) was the commander-in-chief and formed part of the Grand General Staff, established in the Grand Head Quarter. He decided that ‘Militär-Eisenbahndirektionen’ (MED, Military Railway Directories) and ‘Linienkommandanturen’ had to be



III. 12 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Picture postcard depicting an image from the Memel area: Bajoren, nördl. Post- und Bahnstation Deutschlands, während der Truppen-transporte 1916 (Northern Post- and Railway station of Germany, during the troop transports 1916).

Der Stellungen- und Unterkunftsbau sowie das ganze Leben an der Front litten unter der schlechten Eisenbahnlage. Der Russe hatte überall die Bahnen gründlich zerstört. Die Brücken über den Njemen und die anderen größeren Flüsse waren durchweg gesprengt, die Bahnhöfe verbrannt, die Wasserversorgungsanlagen vernichtet, die Telegraphenleitungen umgelegt. Der Bahnkörper war zum Teil aufgerissen, die Schwellen und Schienen waren entfernt. Die Militär-Eisenbahnbehörden mit ihren Bau- und Betriebstruppen, unterstützt von Telegraphentruppen für den überaus wichtigen Leitungsbau, hatten eine ganz ungeheure Arbeit zu leisten. Der Feldeisenbahnchef Ost, Oberst Kersten, wußte, wozu er da war.

III. 13



III. 14a (86 %) (ex. Klaus Schmidt)

Postcard, sent by field post station 175 (between Dec. 1915 and Dec. 1918 in Schaulen, Lithuanian Siauliai. The picture side of the postcard: 1 Jahr Eisenbahn-Dir.8, 1916 (ill. 14b).

² *Meine Kriegserinnerungen 1914-1918* / Erich Ludendorff. – Berlin, 1919
Ludendorff was general-chief of staff under commander-in-chief East Paul von Hindenburg:

³ Information about this on Internet: www.eisenbahntruppen.de.tf

organized in the conquered areas. With reference to the management of the railways these became MED 5, 8, and 11. Just as in Germany Betriebs- (factory), Maschinen- (machine), Verkehrs- (traffic) and Werkstätten-ämter (workshop services) came under the competency of a MED.

Thus MED 5, established for Lithuania, was established in Vilnius (from Oct. 10, 1915 onwards, previously established in Kaunas). These various Militär-Eisenbahndirektionen also had, of course, letter cancels of their own for the field post, like MED 8 for Courland and northwest Lithuania, established in Schaulen (Lithuanian Siauliai) (*ill. 11a*). The postcard shown here was issued to commemorate the first year anniversary of this MED 8, established on Nov. 5, 1915. In addition, MED 11 also existed in Dorpat for Estonia, part of our collecting-area. Units in the then still German Memel also fall into our collecting-area (*ill. 15*).

At the capture of Libau (spring 1915) 100 carriages also fell into German hands, of course fit for wide gauge. There was no railway connection with Germany and a wide-gauge railway company for the supply of the 8th Army operated from Libau to Kurschany. Between May 4 and July 19 a 600 mm 'Feldbahn' was also constructed from Laugszargen to Kiemyn (78 km, with 80 bridges) for units of the 8th Army still fighting near Schaulen.

After the capture of Schaulen the wide-gauge railway net was at first extended, but when supply via the port of Libau became more and more dangerous, a decision to 'renail' was taken.

In the east an important duty of the Railway Troops was the repair and the renailing of the (wider) Russian railway gauge (1524 mm) to the German - West European - railway width (1435 mm). During the summer offensive of 1915 alone already about 7500 km of railway gauge was renailed to 'Normalspur

III. 14b
The picture side. Also with the letter cancel of MED 8



III. 15 (83 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
An S.B.-Soldaten Brief (Soldiers' Letter) -, so field post, from the Railway Machine Park in Memel.

(normal gauge)', the West European railway width.

From July 30, 1915 a single gauge railway was also constructed from Bajoren in Northern Memel to Prekullen, where a connection was made with the Libau-Murajewo line.

MED 8

Fortuitously some more is known about the Militär-Eisenbahndirektion 8, MED 8. In total this MED managed 1488 km of railways, under which the 1000 mm 'Kleinbahn (narrow gauge)' Libau-Hasenpoth.



III. 16 (85 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent by Mob. Bahnh. Kom. 5 III via field post station 175, established in Siauliai.

From Oct. 15, 1918 there were three 'Machineämter' (Radziviliszki, Murajewo, and Riga). Then there were 'Betriebsämter' in Schaulen, Prekultn, Mitau, Radziwiliszki, and Riga. Workplaces for the maintenance of the locomotives were available, in Libau (*ill. 17*). A 'Militär-Betriebswerke (Military Factory)' was also established in Riga.



MED 5

Immediately after the conquest of Kaunas, on August 17, 1915, MED 5 was at first established on August 21, 1918. In Kaunas (Kowno in German) lodgings for the Eisenbahntuppen (*ill. 18*) were also established. On Sept. 18 Wilna (Vilnius) was conquered in the Battle for Vilnius (Sept. 9 - Oct. 2). In Kaunas the destroyed Njemen (Memel or Nemunas) bridges and the tunnel were quickly repaired. After 'renailing' there was a railway connection with Wilna on October 11. After the conquest of Vilnius many troops were stationed here. From Oct. 10, 1915 MED 5 was also established here (*ill. 19*). In addition 'Soldatenheime' (soldiers' homes) were soon established, too. Five in total.



III. 17a (89 %) (ex. Klaus Schmidt)
Postcard, sent March 31, 1916 via field post station 168. The picture side is a photograph of the harbour of Libau, and from May 1915 to January 1919 this field post station was also established in Libau.

On the 'Stadtplan von Wilna' map we also find an 'Eisenbahnerheim' opposite the station. These lodgings for the Railway Soldiers were already established on December 27, 1915. The 'Militär-Eisenbahndirektion' can also be found on this map⁴. Several railway stations fell under MED 5, of which yet again letter cancels exist (*ill. 22-24*).

⁴ The map is published in 'Postgebiet Ob. Ost ; 1983 ; Forschungsbericht nr. 9.

Stadtplan von Wilna



From:

Ich weiss Bescheid : kleiner Soldatenführer durch Wilna. - Wilna, 1916.

On internet: Kujawsko-Pomorska Digitale Bibliothek in djvu-files

<http://kpbk.umk.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=28997>

III. 18 (85 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras
Postcard, sent from Kaunas by field
post, Aug. 14, 1917. Letter cancel of
'Deutsches Eisenbahnerheim Kowno
Russland'.



III. 19 (90 %) (ex. Klaus Schmidt)
Postcard with letter cancel of MED 5 in
Vilnius. The field-post station 166 was
stationed in Vilnius from September
1915 until the end of December 1918.



III. 20 (87 %) (ex. Klaus Schmidt)
Postcard, also via field-post station
166 in Vilnius, with the letter cancel of
an Eisenbahn-Baukomp. (railway
construction company).



Railways which also remained in use after the war

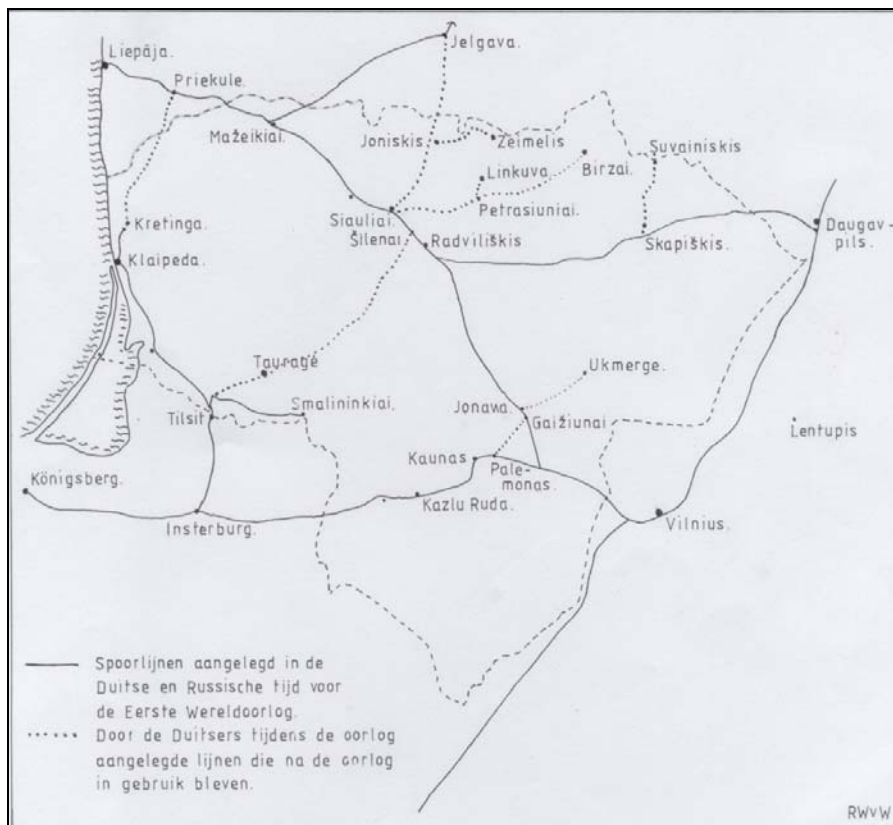
Many railways constructed by the German troops were destroyed or broken down at their withdrawal. A number of lines remained as part of the Lithuanian railways net even after the war.

Of the lines with the standard West European gauge width the lines constructed for the connection with the German railways net in the - later Lithuanian - Memel area remained in use:

The line from Bajoren to Prekultn and the line from Laugszargen to Silenai (just south of Siauliai).

Already mentioned in the previous HBG issue is the shortening at Kaunas between Palemonas and Gaiziunai. Of course this small line remained.

Finally the line Siauliai via Joniskis to Mitau (Latvian name: Jelgava) remained as a line with standard width.



III. 21

Narrow-gauge railway lines which remained after the war⁵

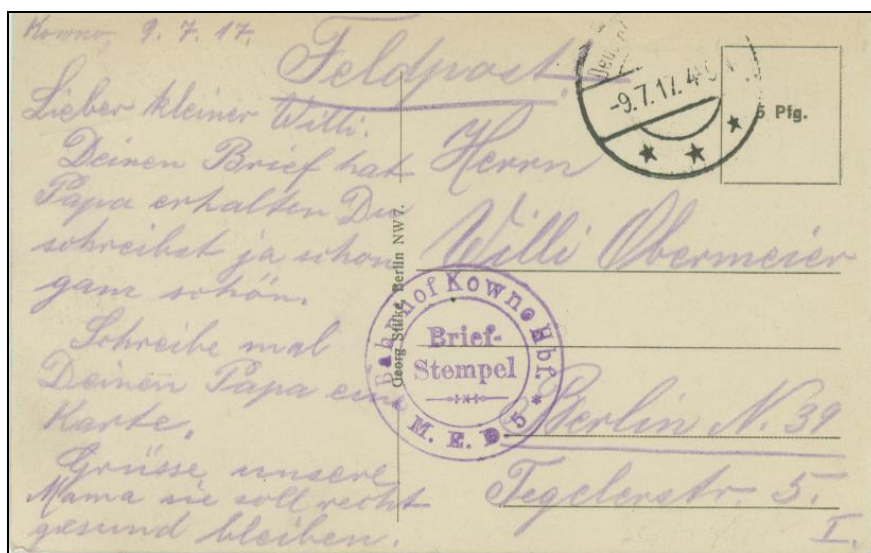
The narrow-gauge railway, 600 mm, from Joniskis to Zeimelis was also constructed during the German occupation. This 29 km line was later dismantled by the Germans, but rebuilt between 1920-1922.

The line between Skapiškis via Suvainiskis to Latvia, too, stems from this period. This line was still used up to 1960.

In Kazlu Ruda, on the line between Kaunas and Verbalis, a camp with a large saw-mill was built for prisoners of war. The line between Kazlu Ruda and Pavilkija was constructed for the transportation of wood to this site. Other remaining narrow-gauge railways:

- Siauliai-Petrasiunai-Biržai (600 mm)
- Jonava-Ukmerge
- Linkuva-Petrasiunai

The line between Pabrade and Lentupis was situated on Polish territory between 1920 to 1939.



III. 22 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

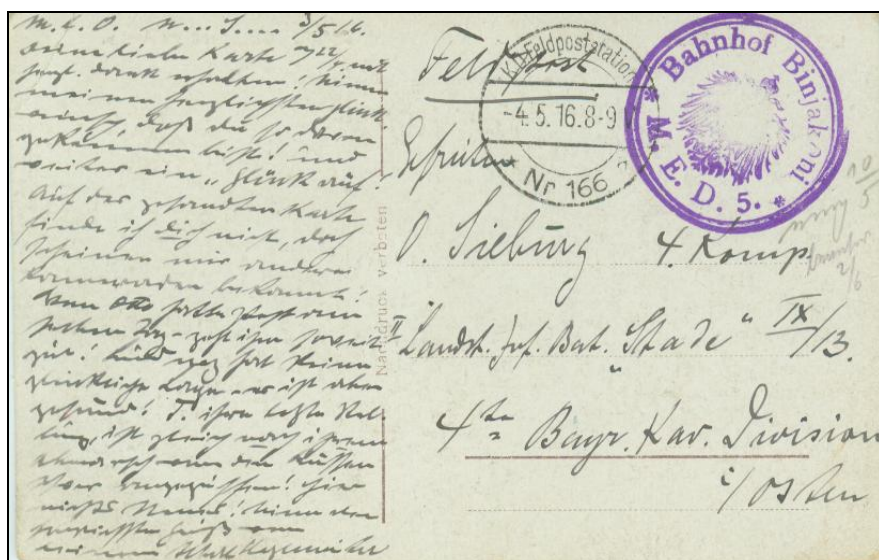
⁵ Information about this:

www.ngr.lt/siaur_istorija_angl.htm

III. 23 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)



III. 24 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard



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E. Becker. - 1929

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The railroad lines in Lithuania –
Before 1918 / V. Doniela. – In: BLP-
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p. 8262: The Klaipeda district.
p. 8263: Railroad construction by the
Germans in World War I

**Hesselink, Herman Gijsbert
en Norbert Tempel**
Eisenbahnen im Baltikum / Herman
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Michel
Michel Stempel-Handbuch : II
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Deutschen Reichspost 1975-1900

Paštas ir Filatelija Lietuvoje
1994; Nr 11 and nr 12. – These
issues contain many articles on
the railway post. They are in
Lithuanian, but even without
knowledge of the language much
information can be derived from
these (e.g.
station codes, pictures, data).

Der Weltkrieg 1914 bis 1918
Der Weltkrieg 1914 bis 1918 :
die militaristische Operationen zu

Lande / bearb. Im Reichsarchiv. –
Bd. VIII : Die Operationen des
Jahres 1915 : die Ereignisse im
Frühjahr und Sommer, im Osten
vom Frühjahr bis zum Jahres-
schluss. – Berlin : Mittler, 1932.
– XIV, 666 p.

Sautter, Karl
Geschichte der Deutschen Post :
teil 3 : Geschichte der Deutschen
Reichspost (1871 bis 1945) / von
Karl Sautter. - 1951

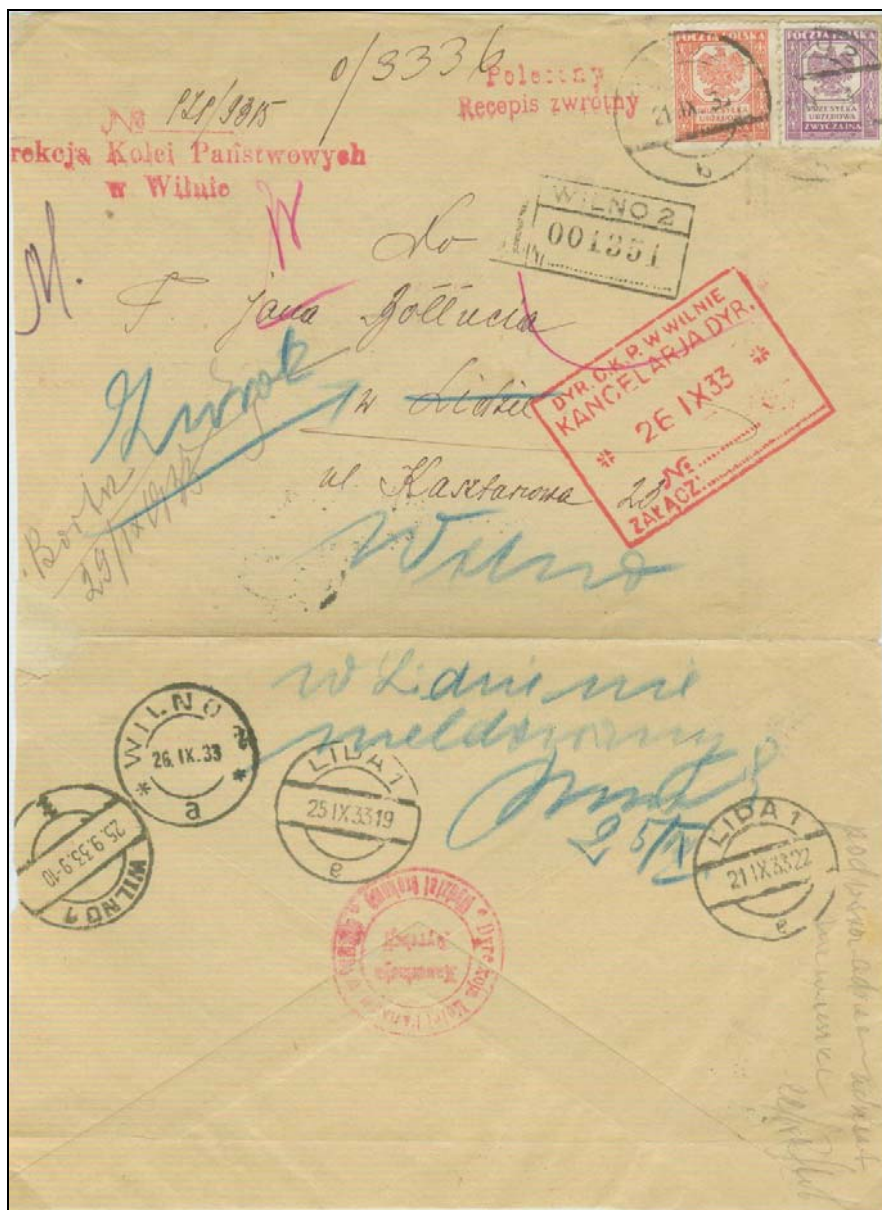
CHAPTER 3 POLISH PERIOD

This chapter deals with into the matter of the railway post in the Vilnius (Wilno) area during the Polish period (1920-1939). In this case, too, various people contributed to the result by submitting information and illustrations. Most illustrations come from the collections of Eugenijus Uspuras and Gerhard Hahne.

The Vilnius area

The turbulent history of the Vilnius area has been described in a previous issue of HBG (36). After the German capitulation on November 11, 1918 Vilnius, in Polish Wilno, became the capital of independent Lithuania, but would soon fall under Polish administration. After the first occupation of Vilnius by Polish insurgents on January 3-4, 1919 the seat of the Lithuanian government was removed to Kaunas. On this day Vilnius was also occupied by the Bolsheviks for the first time. There was a second Polish occupation of Vilnius on April 19, 1919, but on August 26, 1920 a second Lithuanian administration period commenced. On October 9, 1920 the Polish general Zeligowski occupied Vilnius and the next day the new state of 'Srodkowa Litwa' (Central Lithuania) was proclaimed. This state included Vilnius and the surrounding area. This state issued stamps of its own, but Polish stamps were also used. On April 16, 1922 the whole area became Polish. This period would last until September 19-22, 1939, when Vilnius was occupied by Soviet forces. On October 10 the area was again ceded to Lithuania and from October 28 onwards the area was Lithuanian again.

III. 1 (67 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Official letter, sent on Sept. 21, 1933 by the Directory of the Polish Railways in Wilno to Lida and back to Wilno on Sept. 25, 1933.



Railways

After Poland (again) became independent on November 11, 1918, a Railway Department within the Ministry of Communications was also established. The name in Polish: PKP, Polski (Polish) Koleje (Railways) Państwowe (State). These words can also be recognized in the cancel of the letter alongside (*ill. 1*). This red cancel - above left - is the indication of the sender: the letter was sent by the Directory of the Polish State Railways in Wilno.

The letter to this Directory (*ill. 2*) was sent by railway post and has a railway post cancel.

Ill. 2b (100 %)



The Wilno district of the Polish Railways Board (*ill. 1 and 2*) included the lines Grajewo-Białystok-Brest-Luniniec-Mokaszewice in the east and north as far as the border. In addition parts of Belarus, the Vilnius area proper with the region around Suwalki, also belonged to this district. The main line of course was the Warsaw - Wilno line. As parts of the line had been destroyed in the war the former route of the St Petersburg - Warsaw line was not continued. The through trains now went via Siedlce - Lida. Train traffic with Latvia, Russia, and Germany¹ did not commence until 1923..

The regional lines were also controlled from Wilno, and in addition the line from Turmont (Polish - Latvian border

¹ See: *Eisenbahnen im Baltikum / Herman Gijsbert Hesselink, Norbert Tempel. – cop. 1996. – p. 51-52: Das Wilna-Gebiet (1918-1940)*



Ill. 2a (60 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent Aug. 4, 1933, to the Directory of the Polish Railways in Wilno. The letter was sent via route nr 295, Zdobunow – Wilno.

at Dünaburg) via Wilno to Warsaw, and the line from Wilno - Lida – Luniniec.

Naturally Lithuania never recognized the annexation of the Vilnius area, and there were also no railway connections between the Polish Vilnius area and independent Lithuania. The remaining connections, too, were disrupted: car, mail, and telephone. Not before a Polish ultimatum, March 17, 1938, were diplomatic relations restored on March 19. Thereafter the destroyed road connections and the railway Wilno - Kaunas were restored. Of the four railway lines to the Lithuanian border this was the only one restored (April 11, 1938). Only now was Poland connected with Riga via the West European standard railways gauge width (1,435 mm). The route via Daugavpils to Riga remained at the Russian broad-gauge width (1,524 mm). On May 10, 1938 the post, telephone, and telegraph connections were also restored.

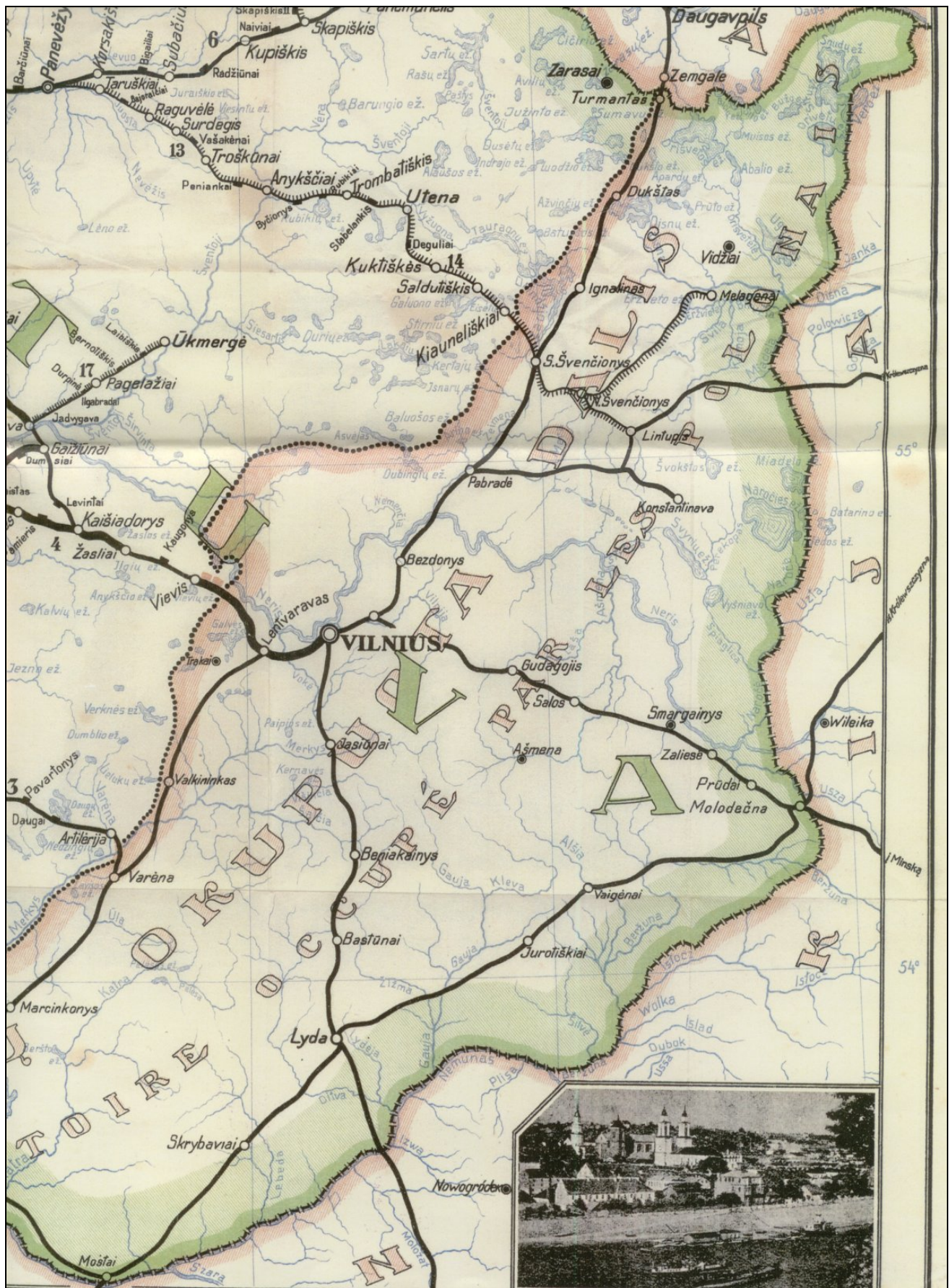
Railway post

The turbulent history of this area is also reflected in its postal history. Lithuania's first stamps were issued in Vilnius, afterwards we find the Central Lithuania stamps on postal articles and Polish stamps were used until the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1939.

A part of a Lithuanian railways map from the thirties (*ill. 3*) also indicates the 'Territoire occupé par les Polonais'. The whole area was considered part of Lithuania, even parts which would not become Lithuanian in 1939 but Russian.

Here we deal mainly with the Polish railway post. In the Czarist period the railway post was already an important service with many mobile post offices, and the Polish post quickly commenced with railway post again. Just as in Czarist times the railway post routes had numbers, but now the same number for both ways. Certain groups of numbers were assigned to a certain region and the lines were controlled by a post office in that region, mostly near a railway station. Not all numbers were actually used: a list from 1938-1939 gives 705 as the highest number, but there were 243 different numbers in use. Thus numbers 281 up to 301 were assigned to the north eastern part of Poland, the Vilnius area.

The lowest numbers were assigned to the area around the capital Warsaw, but a few main lines linking the city with the Vilnius area were also controlled from Warsaw.



III. 3 (85 %) (ex. Eugenijis Uspuras)
 When looking at the town names we see that Lithuania turns out a bit large.

The main line Kalkuny Wilno - Warschau

The main line remained the line from Wilno to Warsaw. On this section we find several mobile post offices.

Line 7 ran between Wilno and the main railway station of Warsaw. This line was controlled by Post Office Warszawa 2. Route number 7 was initially in use for the section Warsaw-Kalkuny (*ill. 4*).

Kalkuny in Latvia is situated just before Daugavpils on the main line to Petrograd/Leningrad.

The article by Berrisford and Bojakowski (*lit. 1*) also gives the cancel types and the cancellation date noticed by them.

For line 7 this is:

KALKUNY – WARZAWA

code letter a: 28-8-1922

code letter b: 29-8-1922

code letter c: -----1925

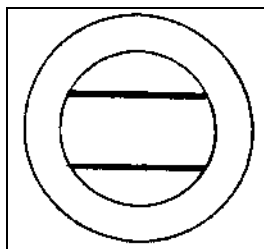
Many different frames were used in the Polish cancels. The position of the code letter, the section number, and the ornament may also differ.

In addition several different ornaments were in use. All in all quite a lot of possibilities. Not all possible combinations were present in the Vilnius area, but yet we can distinguish a number of cancel types in this area.

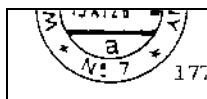
The cancel type in use for the above-mentioned cancels of section 7 with code letters a and b:

Cancel type 1

In this cancel the frame shown below was used. The two horizontal lines are rather thick.



The positioning of number, code letter, and ornamentation:

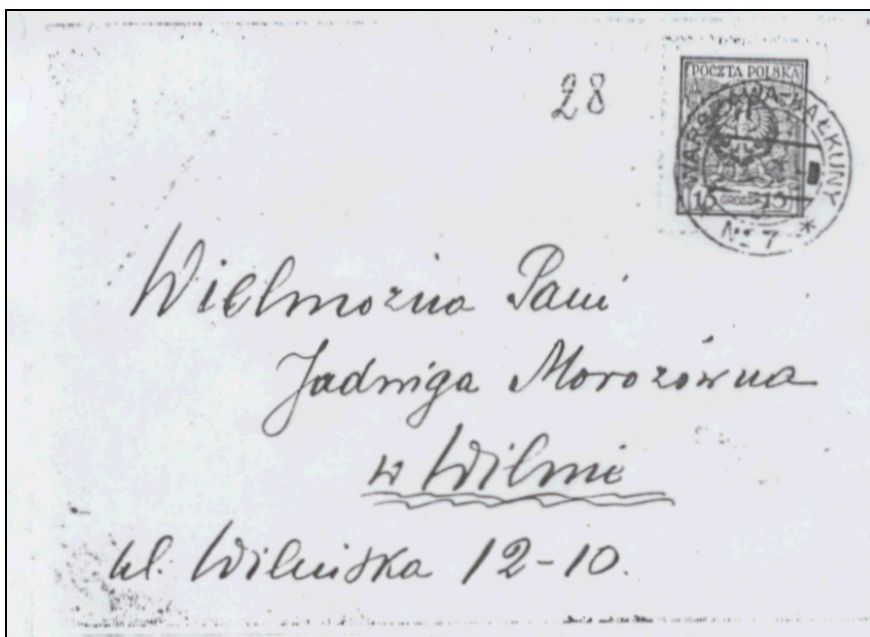


(From: Pašto antspaudai / Fugalevičius)



III. 4 (75 %) (ex. Gerhard Hahne)

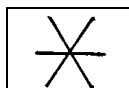
Part of a letter with the cancel WARZAWA – KALKUNY No 7, with code letter a, March 1, 1926 (1 III 26 –6). The Wilno arrival cancel is dated March 2, 1926.



III. 5a (81 %) (ex. Gerhard Hahne)

Letter to Wilno with quite a clear railway cancel WARZAWA – KALKUNY No 7, with code letter a.

There may be differences in the ornaments, too. The ornamentation used in this cancel here:



Thus far cancel type 1.

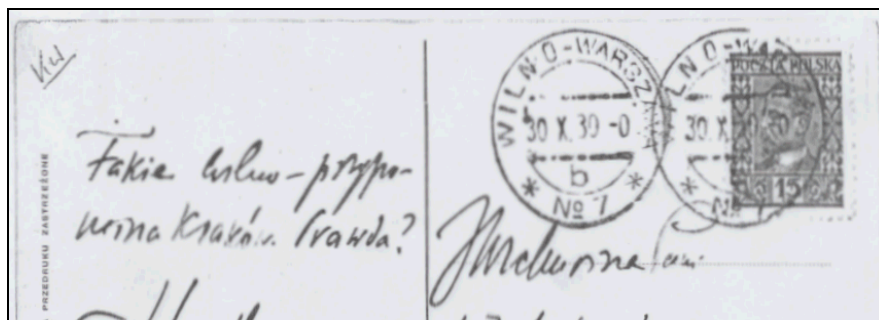
For the above-mentioned cancels of section 7 the diameters of the inner and outer circle are 19 and 28 mm, respectively.

The opposite direction of line 7 WARZAWA - KALKUNY code letter a: 6-3-1925 (Berrisford), and later dates exist: 1-3-1926 (*ill. 4*) code letter c: 15-1-1926

Both code letters: same frame type, but now with the sizes 18 and 29 mm. The number and code letter positioning and ornamentation type are also the same (*ill. 4 en 5*).



III. 5b (120 %)



III.6 (80 %) (ex. Gerhard Hahne)
Postcard sent via section 7 with code letter b, Jan. 30, 1930.



III. 7a (81 %) (ex. Gerhard Hahne)
Postcard to Warsaw, May 7, 1932, cancel of postal route nr 7, code letter c

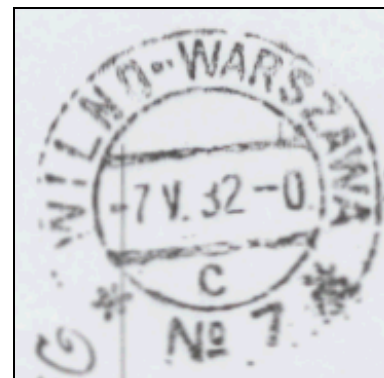


III. 8a (78 %) (ex. Gerhard Hahne)
Postcard sent August 23, 1939, via railway-post section 7, code letter c. The text on the left side resembles the mention of a sender: Wilno

Line 7 is mentioned on official lists from 1931 and Sept. 1938. The section was not always the same. From 1926 to 1939 we see the indication of Wilno-Warsaw in the cancels of route 7.

WILNO – WARZAWA

Dates of use of the code letters:
code letter a: Sept. 6, 1927-1928
code letter b: Oct. 30, 1930 (*ill. 6*)
code letter c: Oct. 16, 1926-1927 (Berrisford) and May 7, 1932 (*ill. 7*)
All code letters: frame, insertion of number and code letter, and ornamentation type remain the same. The diameters of the inner and outer circle are again 19 and 28 mm, respectively.



III. 7b (100 %)

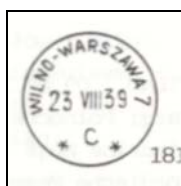
Cancel type 2

Much later a completely different cancel type was used on this section (*ill. 8*). This type (*ill. 8b*) with a single circle and the number halfway to the right, code letter c, and the already mentioned ornamentation, occurs on one other route in the Vilnius area - nr 296.



III. 8b (100 %)

Of course Vytautas Fugalevičius shows this type, too, in his book of cancels:



So **line 7** provided for the section Wilno-Warsaw, and to this end ran onwards to Kalkuny in Latvia. As can be deduced from the table below from 1923 onwards a different mail van was put in for the part of this line between Wilno and Latvia: section 291 Wilno-Zemgale.

Zemgale was also situated in this line, just near the border. On the map by Vytautas Fugalevičius:



The table gives a survey of the lines. Indicated here are the periods based on the detailed survey of Jankowski (*litt. 3*). For most of the years he based the survey on the official publications of the Ministry of Post and Telegraph. In addition he used time-tables and a handbook for the dispatch of postal items.

In the table is also indicated -as far as possible- the cancel type:

Type 1:

with thick horizontal lines in the frame and the ornamentation (see above)

Type 2:

with the single circle frame (see above)

Type 3:

similar frame as type 1, but with thinner horizontal lines and without ornamentation

Type 4:

similar frame as type 1, so thick lines, but without ornamentation.

The dates of observed cancels are also included in the table: the date observed by Berrisford (B) or/and the dates from the collections of Eugenijus Uspuras (U) or Gerhard Hahne (H).

Section nr	Section	Period according to time table	Type	Code letter	Date(s)	Diameters of circles in mm	Controlled by
7	KALKUNY - WARZAWA	1922-1923	1	a	Aug. 28, 1922 (B)	19 and 28	Warszawa-2
			1	b	Aug. 29, 1922 (B)	19 and 28	
				c	1925 (B)		
	WARZAWA - KALKUNY		1	a	March 6, 1925 (B)	18 and 29	
				a	Date? (H) <i>ill. 5</i>		
				a	Oct. 24, 1925 (H)		
				a	March 1, 1926 (H) <i>ill. 4</i>		
			1	c	Jan. 15, 1926 (B))	18 and 29	
	WILNO - WARZAWA	1923-1939	1	a	Sept. 6, 1927-1928 (B)	19 and 28	
			1	b	Oct. 30, 1930 (B,H) <i>ill. 6</i>	19 and 28	
			1	c	Oct. 16, 1926-1927 (B)	19 and 28	
			1	c	June 21, 1930 (H)		
				c	May 7, 1932 (H) <i>ill. 7</i>		
	Different type!		2	c	Aug. 23, 1939 (H)		
	WARZAWA - WILNO		1?	c	Dec. 30, 1929 (U) <i>ill. 9</i>		
			1?	d	March 27, 1936 (U) <i>ill. 10</i>		
17	WILNO – WARZAWA v.v.	1937-1939	?				Wilno-2
95	WILNO - LWOW	1937-1939	4	b	1939 (H) <i>ill. 16</i>		Wilno-2
	LWOW – WILNO		4	a	March 15, 1938 (H)		
					March 20, 1938 (U) <i>ill. 17</i>		
117	WARZAWA - WILNO	1923-1934	3	b	Jan. 31, 1936 (B)	17 and 28	Warszawa-2
		+1934-1939	1	c	May 24, 1929 (U) <i>ill. 11</i>		
			1	c	Aug. 24, 1931 (U) <i>ill. 12</i>		
				c	Feb. 19, 1935 (H)		
	WILNO - WARZAWA		4	a	Dec. 2, 1936 (B)	17 and 28	
			3	b	July 1, 1923-1936 (B)	17 and 28	
			3	d	Oct. 30, 1934 (B)	17 and 28	
127	WILNO - BIALYSTOK	1933-1934					

282	WILNO - WOLKOWYSK	1922-1938	1	a	Nov. 14, 1922-1935 (B)	20 and 27	
			1	b	March 30, 1926 (B)	19 and 28	
	WOLKOWYSK - WILNO						
	LIDA - WILNO	1938-1939					Lida-2
	WILNO - LIDA						
287	WILNO – LUNINIEC v.v.	1922-1923					
	WILNO – BARANOWICZE v.v.	1923-1924					
289	WILNO - OLECHNOWICZE	1922-1924					
	OLECHNOWICZ - WILNO	+1936-1938	1	a	Dec. 16, 1929 (B)	19 and 29	
	WILNO - MOŁODECZNO	1924-1936					
	MOŁODECZNO - WILNO						
	WILNO - KROLEWSZCZYNA	1938-1939					
	KROLEWSZCZYNA - WILNO						
290	WILNO - KROLEWSZCZYNA	1922-1928	1	a	Oct. 18, 1922 (B)	19 and 28	Wilno-2
	KROLEWSZCZYNA - WILNO	+1936-1938		a	Sept. 4, 1927 (U) <i>ill. 19</i>		
			1	a	Sept. 3, 1922 (B)	19 and 28	
	WILNO - ZAHACIE	1928-1936					Wilno-2
	ZAHACIE - WILNO	+1938-1939		a	April 18, 1933 (U) <i>ill. 20</i>		
			4	a	Sept. 2, 1934 (H)		
					April 9, 1935 (H)		
			4	a	Nov. 17, 1937 (H)		
			4	c	April 25, 1932 (B)	19 and 29	
291	WILNO - KALKUNY	Not in time table					Wilno-2
	KALKUNY - WILNO		1	a	Dec. 28, 1927 (B)	18 and 28	
				b	(H) <i>ill. 14</i>		
			1	b	Sept. 5, 1922 (B)	18 and 28	
	WILNO – ZEMGALE	1923-1939					
	ZEMGALE - WILNO		1	b	July 3, 1929 (B)	18 and 28	
			1	b	May 30, 1932 (H)		
				b	Jan. 12, 1935 (H)		
293	WILNO - KALKUNY	1922-1923	4	b	May 20, 1928 (B)	19 and 28	
	KALKUNY - WILNO						
	WILNO – ZEMGALE	1923-1927			Date? (H)		Wilno-2
	ZEMGALE - WILNO	+1928-1934	1	a	March 29, 1934 (H) <i>ill. 15</i>	19 and 28	
		+1935-1939	4	b	July 24, 1932 (B)		
				?	April 14, 1938 (H)		
	WILNO – TURMONT v.v.	1927-1928					
	WILNO – ZEMGALE(Grodno) v.v	1934-1935					
295	ZDOLBUNOWO - WILNO	1924-1932	1	a	June 30, 1928 (B)	18 and 28	Wilno-2
			1	a	Date? (U) <i>ill. 22</i>		
			4	c	Dec. 22, 1928 (U) <i>ill. 23</i>		
	WILNO - ZDOLBUNOWO		1	a	Dec. 24, 1925 (B)	18 and 28	
			4	b	Feb. 19, 1926 (B)	18 and 28	
			4	c	Aug. 14, 1930 (B)	18 and 28	
	LUNINIEC - WILNO	1932-1933	4	a	July 23, 1932 (B)	20 and 28	
			4	a	Aug. 20, 1932 (U) <i>ill. 24</i>		
	WILNO - LUNINIEC						
	ZDOLBUNOW - WILNO	1933-1939	4	a	Dec. 10, 1933 (H)		
			4	a	1937(H)		
			4	c	Aug. 4, 1933 (U) <i>ill. 2</i>		
	WILNO - ZDOLBUNOW		4	c	Jan. 8, 1931 (U) <i>ill. 25</i>		
296	WILNO - ZAHACIE	1939					
	ZAHACIE - WILNO						

The tables used by Jankowski run from:

Feb. 15, 1921-March 31, 1922
 April 01, 1922-May 27, 1923
 May 28, 1923-May 31, 1924
 June 01, 1924-June 04, 1925
 June 05, 1925-May 14, 1926
 May 15, 1926-May 14, 1927
 May 15, 1927-May 14, 1928
 May 15, 1928-May 14, 1929
 May 15, 1929-May 14, 1930
 May 15, 1930-May 14, 1931
 May 15, 1931-May 14, 1932
 May 15, 1932-May 14, 1933
 May 15, 1933-May 19, 1934
 May 20, 1934-May 14, 1935
 May 15, 1935-May 14, 1936
 May 15, 1936-May 21, 1937
 May 22, 1937-May 14, 1938
 May 15, 1938-May 14, 1939
 May 15, 1939- ?

For 1922/1923 and 1923/1924 Jankowski used the 'Urządowy (official) rozkład jazdy (railways time table) pociągów (train)', and from these data it is clear that in 1923 already line 7 did not run on to Kalkuny.

Thus it is stated in the above table, but the cancel was used until sometime during 1926. Only then the cancels Warszawa-Wilno and v.v. appeared.

Also indicated in the table is that from 1923 onwards route 291 and 293 were used for the section from Wilno to the Latvian border (Zemgale/Kalkuny) and this was in accordance with the alteration in 1923.

These lines will be dealt with extensively later in this article.

Line 7: the reverse direction:
 WARZAWA- WILNO

From Eugenijus Uspuras' collection:
 code letter c: Dec. 30, 1929 (*ill. 9*)
 code letter d: March 27, 1936 (*ill. 10*)

Line 17 between Wilno and Warsaw main station (1937-1939) was controlled from Wilno 2, but no further data are known.

Yet Vytautas Fugalevičius shows in his cancels book a cancel of this line with code letter a: cancel type 4 with the same frame as type 1, but without ornament below.



III. 9a (83 % (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
 Postcard to Wilno, Dec. 30, 1929 via section 7, code letter c.



III. 10a (80 %)
 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
 Postcard to Wilno, March 27, - 1936, also via section 7, now code letter d.



III. 9b (100 %)



III. 10b (100 %)

Line 117 is mentioned in official lists from 1931 and 1938-9, and again was controlled by Warszawa 2. This mobile post office ran between Wilno and the Wilno Station in Warsaw (1923-1939). Probably the old Prague Station was meant by this latter station.

In the time-table 1933/1934 nr 117 was only used for the outward journey to Wilno. In that year nr 117 was also used for the return journey from Białystok to Warsaw.

Line 117

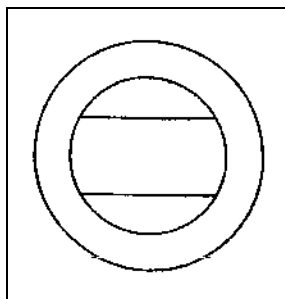
WARSZAWA - WILNO

code letter b: Jan. 31, 1936

A different cancel was used here:

Cancel type 3

The frame has thin horizontal lines:



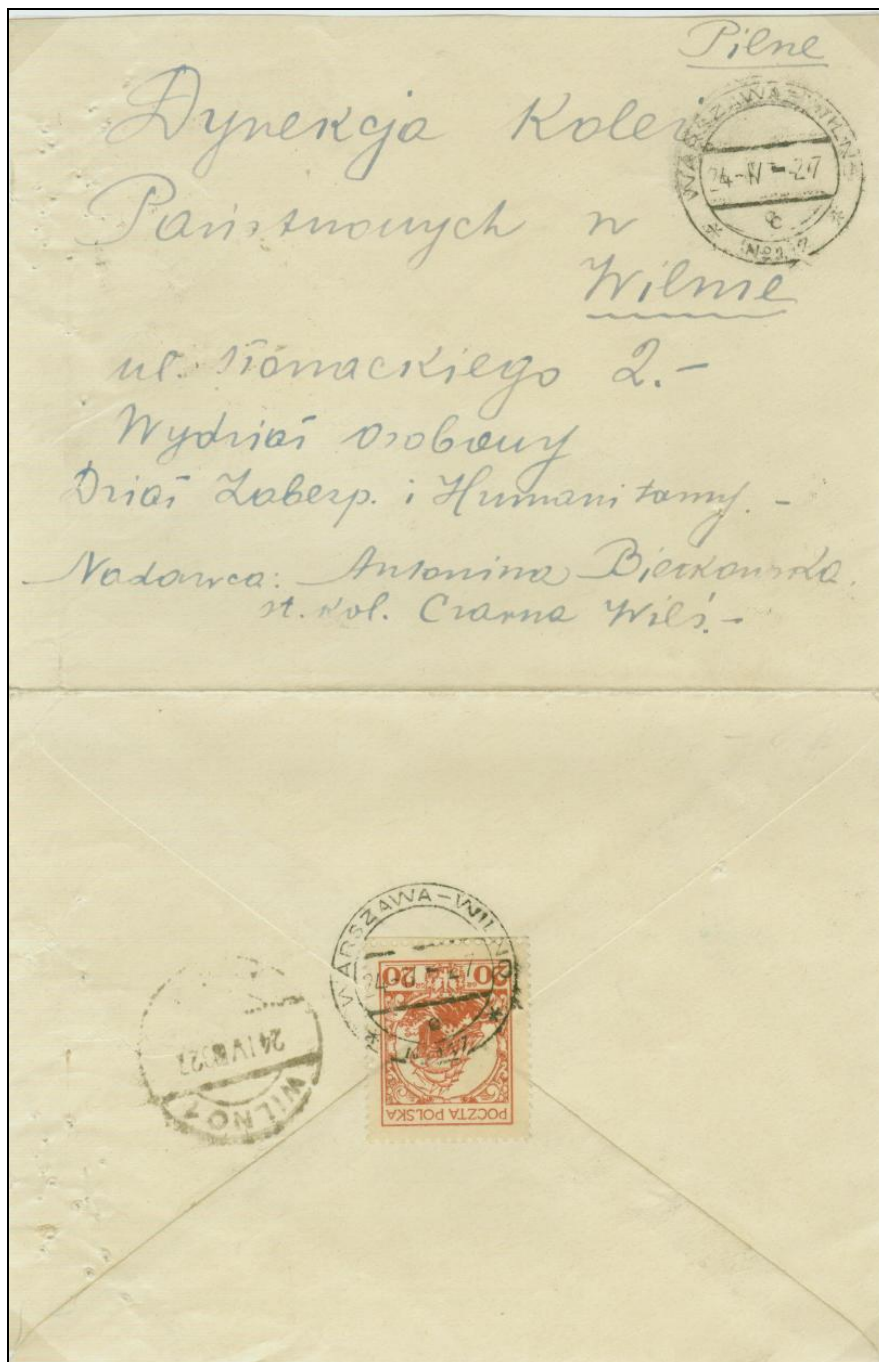
There is no additional ornamentation, so it looks a bit different. The circle diameters are 17 and 28 mm.

The cancel in both other letters mentioned in the table (*ill. 11 and 12*) seem type 1 to me :
thicker lines, with ornamentation:



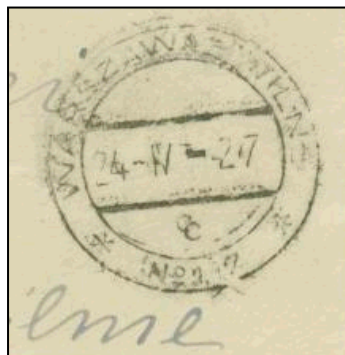
III 12b

In my opinion: code letter c.



III. 11a (84 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on May 24, 1929 to the Directorate of the Polish Railways in Wilno, via section nr 117 Warszawa-Wilno.



III. 11b

This cancel, too, in my opinion, cancel type 1, with thicker lines and with ornamentation, and also code letter c.

A somewhat clearer cancel on a postcard from Gerhard Hahne's collection:



(100 %)

The reverse direction:

WILNO - WARSZAWA

code letter a: 2-12-1936

code letter b: 1-7-1923-1936

code letter d: 30-10-1934

All cancels have circle diameters 17 and 28 mm.

The cancels with code letter b are of the above-mentioned cancel type 3.

The cancel type with code letter a is of a different type again:

Cancel type 4

This cancel type has the same frame as cancel type 1 - so with somewhat thicker horizontal lines- but without ornamentation, so it looks a bit different.

Line 291

As in the table, -according to official sources- line 291 was in use for the route Wilno-Zemgale (1923-1939) (*ill. 13*) and Kalkuny is not mentioned here.



III. 13b (143 %)

Yet a cancel was used with the indication Kalkuny-Wilno (*ill. 14*). When we look at the map this is not that strange. Both towns are situated in Latvia, very near to each other, close to the border.



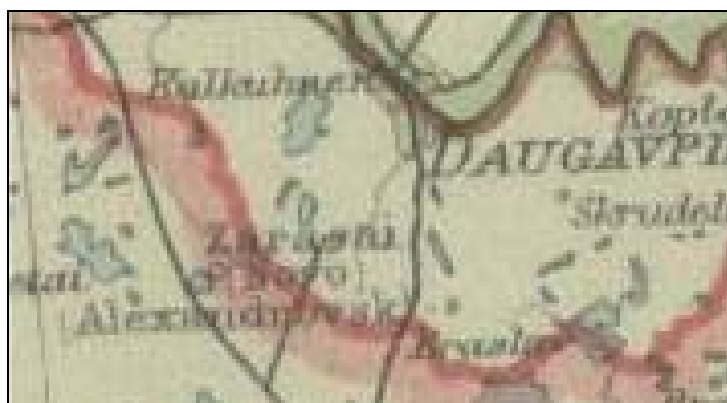
III. 12a (100 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Printed matter, sent on August 24, 1931 to Wilno with section nr 117 Warszawa-Wilno.



III. 13a (78 %) (ex. Gerhard Hahne)

Railway-post route 291, Zemgale - Wilno, code letter b



Kalkuni (Kalkuhnen in German) on a map from Times Atlas 1922, a junction near Latvian Daugavpils.

Kalkuni is situated close to Daugavpils.



III. 14b (150 %)

Zemgale is one of the three parts of Latvia, but also a small town close to the border, so on the Latvian side. The next station on the direction of Lithuania, Turmantas (Turmont in Polish) is already situated in (Polish) Lithuania.

According to the Handbook this last-mentioned town was the terminus of railway post route 293, Wilno-Turmont, for dispatching mail in 1927-1928. No cancels are known from this route, probably the same cancel as before was simply used, Wilno-Zemgale.

In the table above it can be seen that the cancels Kalkuni-Wilno, with code letters a and b, have been used for a rather a long time - 1927. From 1929 onwards the cancels Zemgale-Wilno were used, also with code letters a and b.

Line 291 was under the control of the post office Wilno 2, just as the other line on the same route, line 293.

Line 293

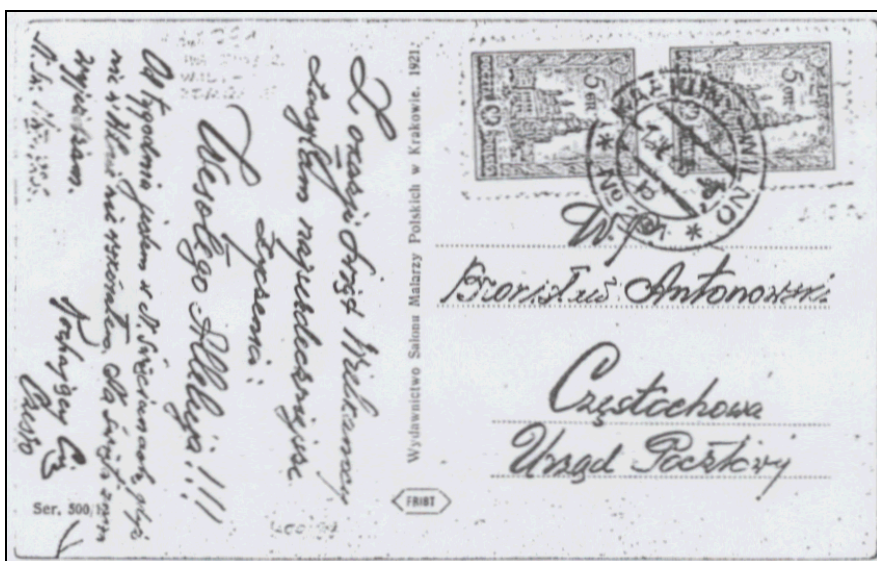
This railway post route (*ill. 15*) was used on the same line, from Wilno in the direction of Latvia. According to the initial time-table, 1922-1923, to Kalkuni, and subsequently to Zemgale.

In the season of 1927-1928 to Turmont, still in Lithuania, just before the Latvian border.

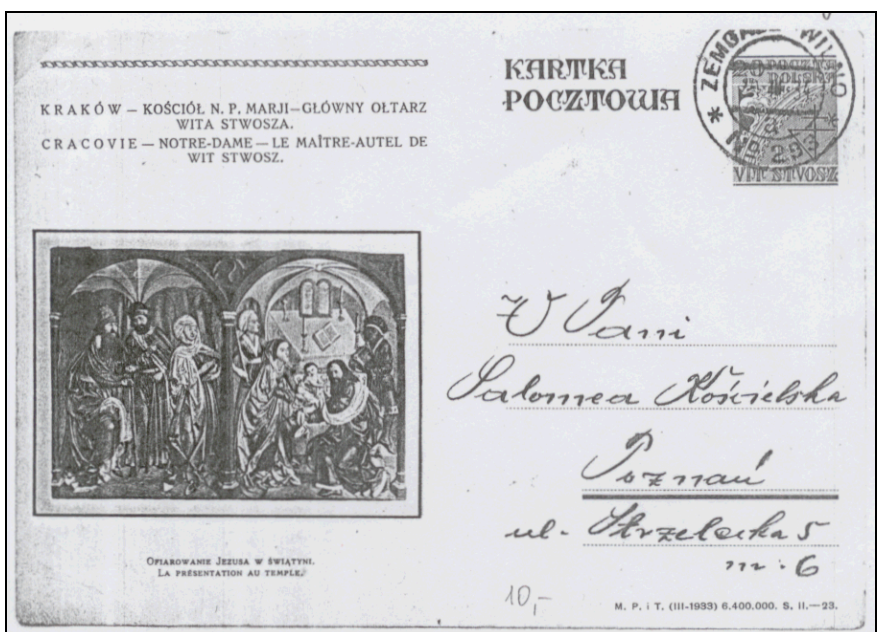
For the season 1934-1935 the documents state Zemgale (Grodno) as terminus, but it is not quite clear to me what is meant by this. Here, too, we see indicated in the cancels used Kalkuni for a rather long period (1928), and Zemgale later on (1932).



A fragment of the railways map of ill. 3: Zemgale is indicated right at the Latvian border. At the Lithuanian side: Turmantas.



III. 14a (82 %) (ex. Gerhard Hahne)



III. 15 (75 %) (ex. Gerhard Hahne)

Mail from Ignolino, delivered at the railway post route Zemgale-Wilno, March 29, 1934, a clear cancel of route 293, code letter a.

Remaining lines from Wilno

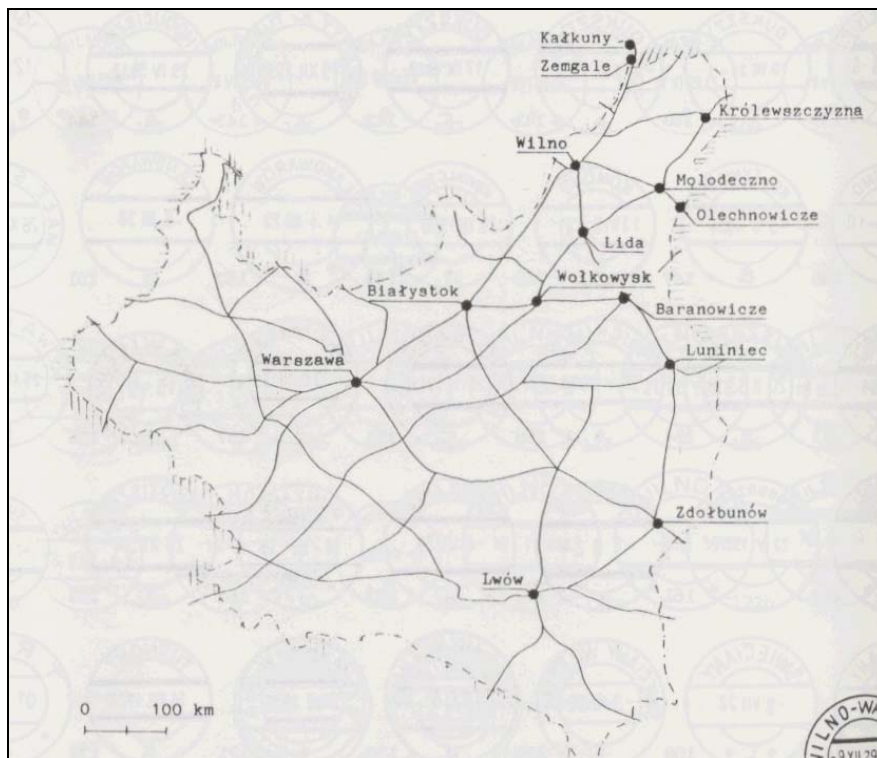
To the Vilnius area Wilno/Vilnius was of course an important junction, whence several railway post routes departed. The towns appearing at the remaining railway post lines are indicated on the map alongside.

Line 95

Another important line went from Wilno to Lwów, to the south. Between 1937 and 1939 the mobile post office with nr 95 ran on this line, under the control of the post office Wilno-2 (*ill. 16 and 17*).

It was operated via Baranowicz, Równe.

The cancel of Wilno-Lwów, code letter b, is the cancel type 4, discussed before: with thick lines and without ornamentation next to the number.



From: *Pašto antspaudau Lietuvoj = Poststempel in Litauen = P.O. cancels in Lithuania* / [V. Fugalevičius]. – [2^e ed.]. 1990



III. 16b (100 %)
Code letter b (?)



III. 17b (100 %)
Cancel type 4, code letter unclear



III. 16a (76 %) (ex. Gerhard Hahne)
Postcard, sent in 1939 via route nr 95, Wilno-Lwów.

On a postcard from Gerhard Hahne's collection route 95 and code letter a can be clearly distinguished:

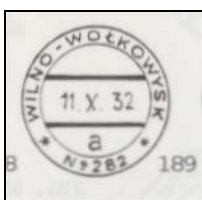


III. 18 (120 %) (ex. Gerhard Hahne)
March 15, 1938, route 95, code letter a, and also cancel type 4.

Line 127

This railway-post route was in use during 1933-1934 for the section Wilno-Białystok only, and but only for this direction. So it is not surprising that nothing more can be found about this.

Line 282 was set in on the section Wilno-Wolkowysk v.v. in the period 1922-1938. Lida is situated half-way along this section and nr 282 was used for another year, 1938-1939 on the section Wilno-Wolkowysk v.v., controlled from the post office Lida-2. Berrisford notices the code letters a and b, both with cancel typw 1. With code letter a the circles are a bit closer to each other (20 and 27 diameter) and this cancel is also mentioned by Vytautas Fugalevičius:

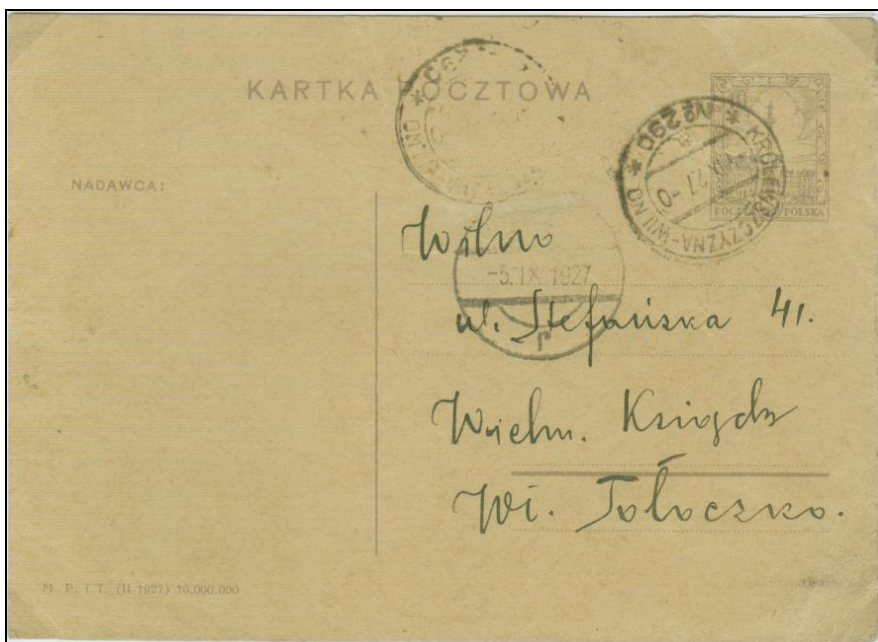


Cancel 282-b has diameters 19 and 28, so has more space between the circles.

Line 287 initially ran on section Wilno-Luniniec v.v. (1922-1923) for one year, and subsequently on the section Wilno- Baranowicze v.v. (1923-1924) for one year. No cancels for these are known. Both towns are situated on the route to Zdobunowo, and this section was taken over by nr 295 from 1924 onwards.



III. 17a (64 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on March 20, 1938 to Wilno via section nr 95 Lwów-Wilno.



III. 19a (77 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on Sept. 4, 1927 to Wilno via route nr 290 Krolewszczyna-Wilno,

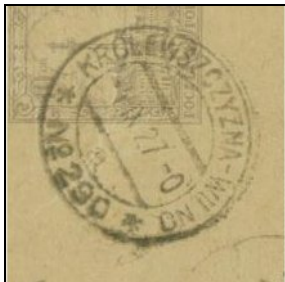
Line 289 was firstly assigned to the route Wilno-Olechnowicze v.v. (1922-1924), afterwards to Wilno-Molodeczno v.v. (1924-1936). Thereafter it was again used for the route Wilno-Olechnowicze v.v. (1936-1938). Actually this is the same route: Olechnowicze is situated on the Russian border, and Molodeczno is situated on the same line just before the border. Only the cancel with

Olechnowicze has been noticed (Berrisford) and only this cancel has been inserted in Fugalevičius' book

Finally nr 289 is the indication for the route Wilno-Krolewszczyna v.v. (1938-1939), in the north-eastern part of the Vilnius area.

Line 290

More or less in connection with the former: nr 290 ran from Wilno to Krolewszczyna between 1922 and 1938 (*ill. 19*), so nr 289 ran this route afterwards.



Ill. 19b (100 %)

Between 1928 and 1936 nr 290 is the indication for the route Wilno-Zahacie (*ill. 20*). But where is Zahacie situated?

In my search for Zahacie I found - via internet- the complete text of 'Treaty of peace between Poland, Russia and the Ukraine, signed at Riga, March 18th, 1921'². Rather early on, in article 3, a detailed description is given of the eastern border of Poland: '...the railway line near the town of Orzechowno, and turning towards the South West, shall run along the railway line, leaving the station of Sahacie (Zagatie) to Poland, the village of Zahacie to Russia and the village....'.

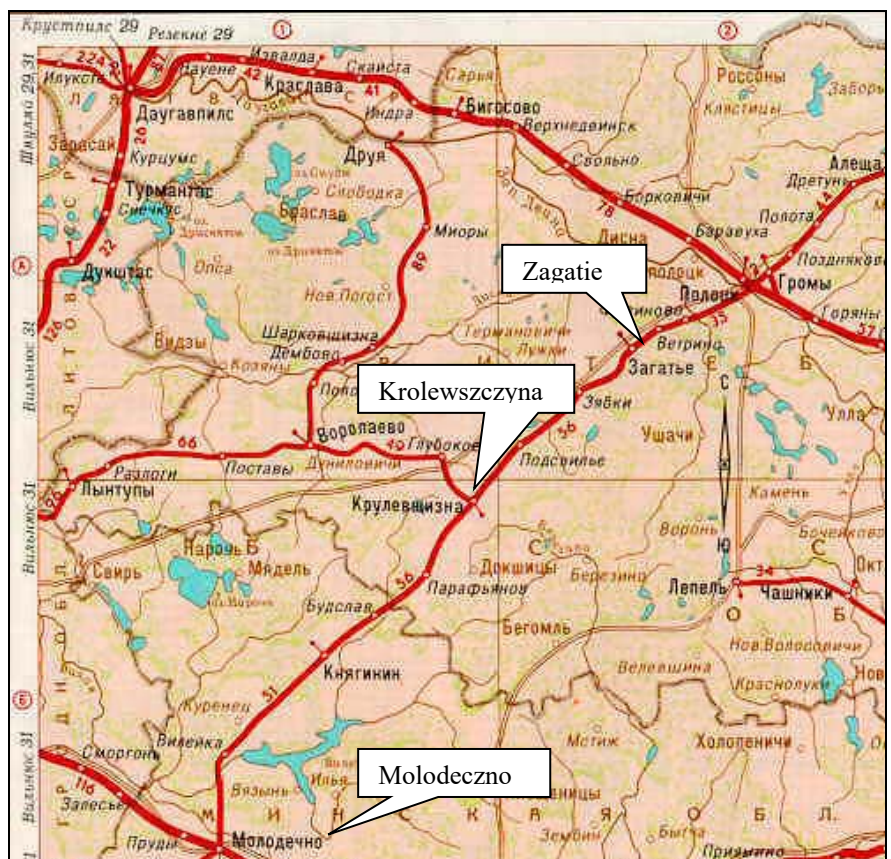
Zahacie was not more than a few houses. We here discuss the north-east, and probably the line continued to Krolewszczyna to the direction of the border, to Zahacie (now in Belarus/White Russia) (*ill. 21*).

In 1939 the route Wilno-Zahacie is yet assigned to **line 296**, but no further details about this are known.



Ill. 20 (82 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent April 18, 1933 to Wilno via route nr. 290 Zahacie-Wilno, code letter a.



Ill. 21

Railway map of north-eastern Belarus (on internet: www.belarusguide.com/nature1/Maps.html) On this site still more areas of 1939 are indicated. Part of it went to Lithuania, and part of it went to Russia (now Belarus).

Daugavpils is indicated tot the upper left on the map.

² www.forost.ungarisches-institut.de/pdf/19210318-1.pdf

Line 295 ran between 1924 and 1939 between Wilno and Zdolbunow. In 1932-1933, however, the route went no further than Luniniec (*ill. 24*), also on this line (see map on p. 23). The spelling in the cancels differ: for the first period -until 1930(?)- we see Zdolbunowo, and for the second period - from 1931(?) onwards- the spelling became Zdolbunow. The new spelling filters through in the time-table - see table - in 1933. In the table - and the illustrations - we also see that several cancel types were used.

Cancel type 1:

Zdolbunowo-Wilno v.v., 295 a, (*ill. 22*) and

Cancel type 4:

Zdolbunowo-Wilno, 295 c (*ill. 23*)

Wilno-Zdolbunowo, 295 b en 295 c

Luniniec-Wilno, 295 a (*ill. 24*)

Zdolbunowow-Wilno, 295 a, 295 c (*ill. 2*)

Wilno-Zdolbunowow, 295 c (*ill. 25*).

The last letter (*ill. 25*) was sent on Jan. 8, 1931. In the 1930-1931 time-table Zdolbunowo is still indicated, but the cancel had already switched to Zdolbunow.

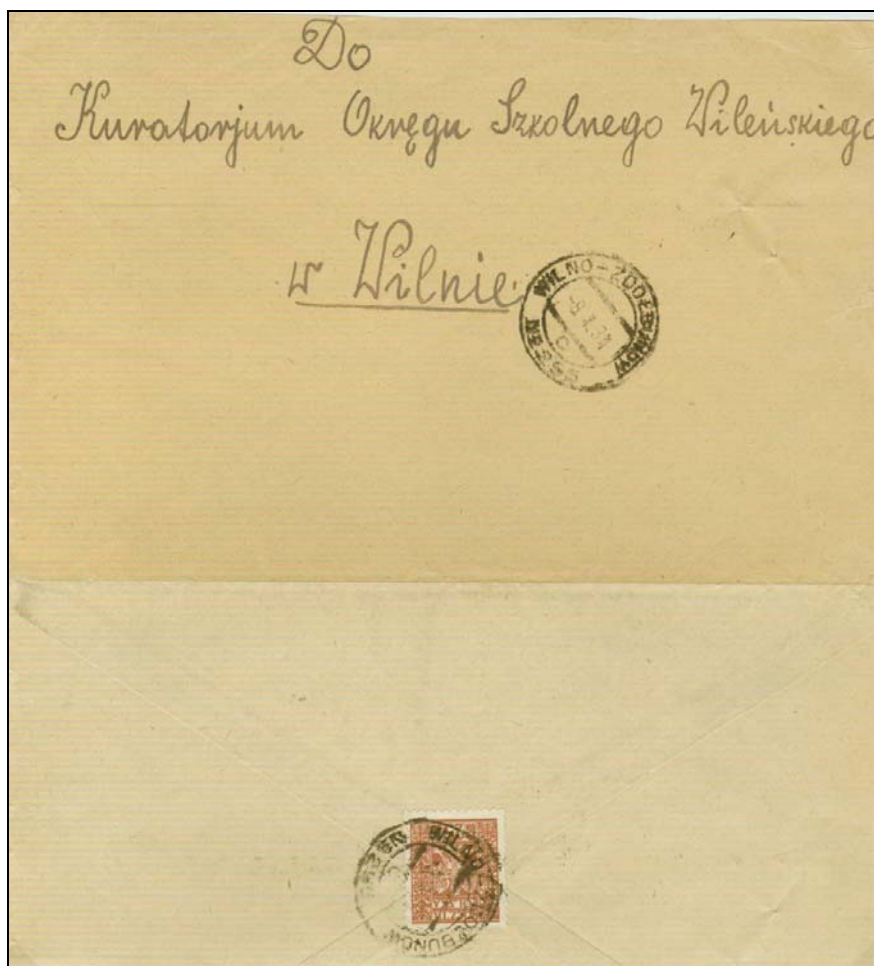
Platform post

A special service was the so-called 'platform post' at a number of bigger stations (*lit. 5*). An employee sold stamps and postcards on the platform. Cancels of this 'POCZTA PERONOWA' can also be found on railway post.

In the Vilnius area the Wilno station also had platform post during the trial period (from June 15, 1934) and a one-line case cancel 'Poczta peronowa Wilno' (69 x 11 mm) is known. Later on platform post was also found in Turmont (near the Latvian border) and on the bus station in Wilno (Plac Oreszkowej).

Epilogue

The Polish railways were formed in 1918 from former German, Austrian, and Russian lines of different gauge widths. In 1919 Poland had four currencies alongside each other, the German and Polish Mark, the Austrian Crown, and the Russian Ruble. Cancels from all these areas remained in use in Poland.



Ill. 25 (63 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on Jan. 8, 1931 to the Directorate of the Polish Railways in Wilno with route 295 Wilno-Zdolbunow.

All this, together with the particular political history of the Vilnius area provide an - also philatelistically - interesting area.

Literature not mentioned in the footnotes

1. Berrisford, A.A.

Polish railway travelling post offices 1919 – 1939 / by A.A. Berrisford and R.Z. Bojakowski. – Published a few years ago in the SPP (Society for Polish Philately) magazine

2. Fugalevičius, Vytautas

Pašto antspaudau Lietuvoj = Poststempel in Litauen = P.O. cancels in Lithuania / [V. Fugalevičius]. – [2nd ed.]. – 1990. – p. 324-325: map and cancels of the Polish railway post in the Vilnius area

3. Jankowski, Krzysztof P.

Spis pocztowych ambulansów kolejowych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1921- - 1939 / author: Krzysztof P. Jankowski. – [1999?]

4. Vaumund, Ardo

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5. Welvaart, A.

Perronpost in Polen.[Platform post in Poland] – In: Op het spoor van Oost-Europa [On the track of Eastern Europe]. – 1992. – p. 9-18.

6. Wydra, Andtzej

Das vergessene Datum – der 10. Mai 1938 [The forgotten date - May 10, 1938] / Andrzej Wydra. – In: Lituanica 2000 ; nr 13. – p. 836-846.

CHAPTER 4 ROUTES 1-2 AND 3-4

With this chapter we have arrived at the railway post of independent Lithuania. This topic has been dealt with in an earlier issue of HBG : in its very first issue W.R. Muller and Ruud van Wijnen gave a survey of the Lithuanian railway post. This present article is an addition to it, especially by the illustrations from Eugenijus Uspuras's collection.

After the Declaration of Independence, February 16, 1918, it was of the utmost importance to the Lithuanian state to get transportation and communications going again. The Voldemaras government was in office on November 11, Armistice Day. The Minister of Finance, Martinas Ycas, was also appointed Minister of Communications in order to set up this ministry. On November 14 he appointed a Council to the Ministry of Communications, one of whose members among others was Benediktas Tamosevicius.

The new ministry was responsible for the railways, navigation, aviation, road transport, post, telephone, and telegraph. Benediktas Tamosevicius was appointed for the management of the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone connections, and became Lithuania's first Postmaster.

On July 4, 1919 the withdrawing German Army handed over the first part of the railways, Kaišiadorys – Radviliškis, to the Ministry of Communications. On July 6 the railway station Kaišiadorys was also handed over, and on the same day the first train departed to Radviliškis: the start of the Lithuanian Railways.

Railway post and cancel types

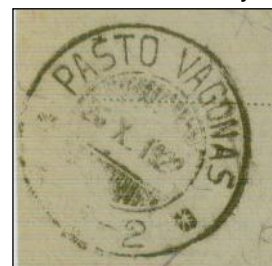
According to Czarist tradition the railway-post sections in independent Lithuania, too, were numbered in a similar way: successive in pairs - odd and even - for both ways.



III. 1a (78 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Face side of a letter, sent on Oct. 26, 1922 to Hanover in Germany with the railway post route nr 1-2, Riga-Kibartai.

The cancel types in a row:

1. Large Circular (diameter 30 mm) with section number below
2. Small Circular (diameter 25 mm) with three sub-types
 - a. section number below
 - b. section number above and code letter below
 - c. both place-names
3. Oval cancel



III. 1b (100 %)



III. 3b (100 %)

The first two cancel types - the circular - are the oldest and were in use between 1921 and 1927. The oval cancels didn't come into use until 1927. Using the featured postal items the cancels will be studied in more detail.

Section 1-2

Line 1 was the indication for the section Kybartai - Riga, and so line 2 was for Riga - Kibartai. The route went via Jelgava, Šiauliai, and Kaunas.

For cancel type 1 - large circular - both lines are mentioned below in the cancel '1 - 2', and the same cancel was used in both directions.

From a destination such as Hannover in Germany one might say that it concerns line 2 (*ill. 1*). The letter went in the direction of Kybartai, the border town at the German border.

On this letter to Hannover we see cancel type 1: large circular (30 mm diameter), above 'PASTO VAGONAS' and below:

* No. 1 - 2 *

From the date of the letter we may conclude that this cancel type is the oldest.

Later on we see the smaller circular cancel, type 2, appear, with a 25 mm diameter (*ill. 2 and 3*).

Here we see sub-type 2a, with the code letter a. Code letter c also appears on this line, and can be seen here on a 'Latvian' postcard (*ill. 4*).

III. 4 (81 %) (ex. Jan Kaptein)

Picture postcard to Germany, with the Lithuanian railway cancel type 2a, section 1 - 2, code letter c, and the date 2-XII-24.

The stamp is Latvian, and from the written text it can be derived that the postcard had been sent from Riga and had been written on November 30, 1924. The postcard was published by the 'Verein für das Deutschtum im Rusland' (Society for German identity in Russia). The other side is a beautifully coloured postcard, too.



III. 4b (175 %)



III. 2 (85 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent on Oct. 28, 1925, to Moscow, USSR, with the railway-post route nr 1 - 2, code letter a.



III. 3 (74 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

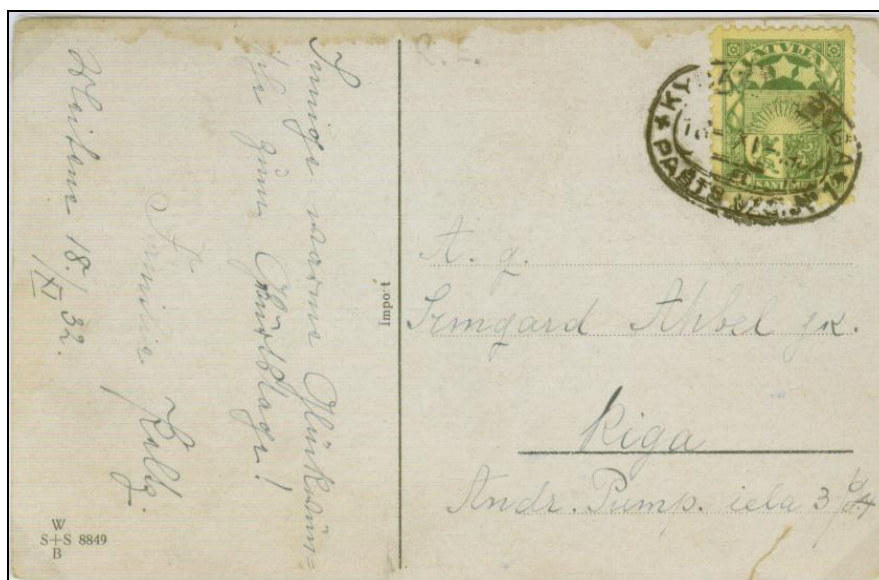
Part of a firm letter, sent on Feb. 5, 1927, from Kaunas to Berlin, with the railway-post route nr 1 - 2 Riga - Kybartai. The small circular cancel (25 mm) was used for the cancellation, with the route indication below, and thereafter code letter a. So here we see cancel type 2, sub type a.



III. 4a (81 %) (ex. Jan Kaptein)

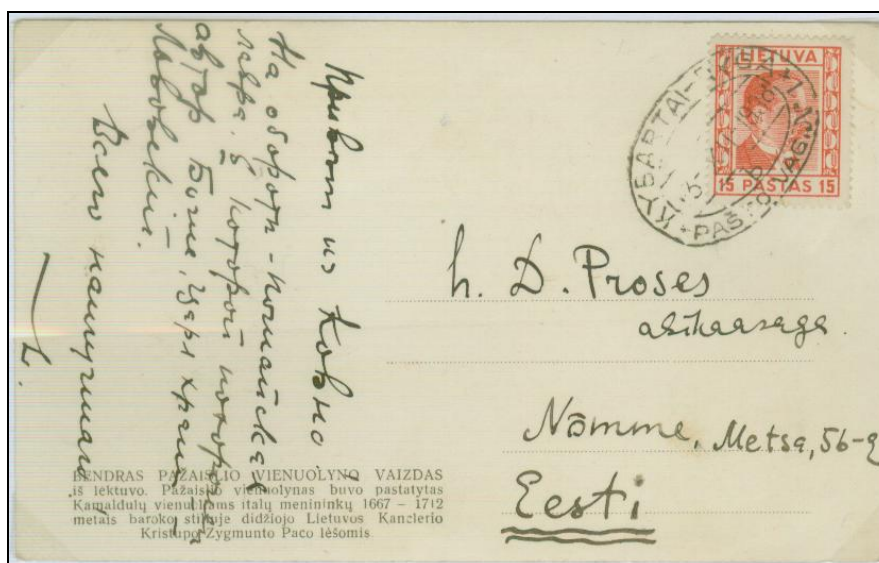


III. 5 (83 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Another Latvian postcard to Germany, section 1-2, Nov. 15, 1927, code letter indistinguishable. Yet there is a cancel with mention of the sender: obviously mailed in Riga.



III. 6b (100 %)

III. 6a (82 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on Nov. 18, 1932 to Riga with Lithuanian railway-post route nr 1 KYBARTAI – RYGA, code letter 'a'. The postcard was mailed in Latvia, and transported in Latvia only, so a Latvian stamp, with the Lithuanian railway-post cancel.



III. 7a (83 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on Dec. 3, 1938 to Nõmme in Estonia via railway-post route nr 1 KYBARTAI – RYGA, code letter 'b'.

From the text it can be concluded that the postcard was sent from Kaunas.



III. 8a (73 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on Dec. 14, 1928 to Berlin, via railway-post route nr 2, Riga-Kybartai, with code letter 'a'.

In 1927 the oval cancels - cancel type 3 - came into use.

For route 1 on the section Kybartai - Riga code letter 'a' (*ill. 6*) and code letter 'b' (*ill. 7*) were used.

The cancels have the indication PASTO VAG. N 1. below and the route indication KYBARTAI - RYGA above.

The cancel with code letter 'b':



III. 7b (100 %)



III. 9 (75 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent by the Danish Embassy in Kaunas on Sept. 9, 1930 to Charlottenlund in Denmark. The letter is cancelled with the oval cancel of the railway-post route nr 2 RYGA - KYBARTAI, code letter - a quite enlarged - 'a'(?).



In cancels for the reverse direction, railway-post section 2, Riga - Kibartai, the codeletters 'a', 'b', and 'B' can be found, below is the indication PAST VAG. N 2, and above the route indication RYGA-KYBARTAI.



III. 8b (100 %)



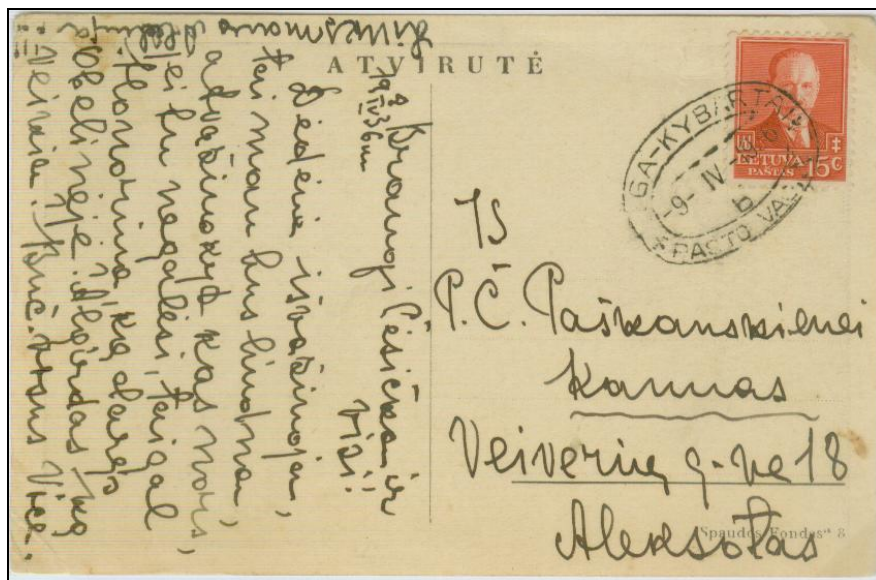
III. 10a 73 %) (ex. Jan Kaptein)
Business letter, so from Kaunas, sent
via railway-post route nr 2, Riga -
Kybartai, Oct. 14, 1931, code letter
clearly 'a'.
Also obvious is the German influence
in Lithuania: the business heading is
bilingual.



III. 10b (100 %)



III. 11 (83 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, 29-VI-1932, Riga - Kybartai,
code letter 'b'.



III. 12 (81 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard form, sent to Kaunas on April 9, 1936 via route 2 Riga-Kybartai, code letter 'b'.

Another even later cancel with route 2 and code letter 'a', on a postcard to Kaunas, August 5, 1936:



III. (100 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

According to the article by Ruud van Wijnen & W.R. Muller (in HBG 1) the code letter 'B' was also said to have been found on route nr 2. This I have seen in V. Fugalevičius's book and is now also in the collection of Mr. Uspuras:



The cancel types with dates in the table below again:

1. Large circular (diameter 30 mm) with section number below
2. Small circular (diameter 25 mm) with three sub-types
 - a. section number below
 - b. section number above and code letter below
 - c. both place-names
3. Oval cancel

Where cancels are concerned V. Fugalevičius's cancels book is of course the standard work: Pašto antspaudai Lietuvoj = Poststempel in Litauen = P.O. cancels in Lithuania / V. Fugalevičius. – ed. 1990

The cancels in HBG are also based on V. Fugalevičius's data.

CANCEL TYPES ROUTE 1-2 WITH DATES

U = collection Uspuras F = cancel book V. Fugalevičius K = Kaptein H = article in HBG 1

Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
1-2	Kybartai-Riga v.v.	1	---	June 25, 1921 (U)	Oct. 26, 1922 (U) Feb. 20, 1923 (U)	Feb. 14, 1924 (F) Dec. (?) 30, 1924 (H)
		2a	a	July 2, 1923 (U)	Jan. 23, 1925 (F) March 6, 1925 (H) Oct. 28 1925 (U) Feb. 5, 1927 (U)	Sept. 7, 1927 (U)
		2a	c	July 2, 1924 (H)	Nov. 20, 1924 (F)	Dec. 2 (?) 1924 (K)
		2a	?			Nov. 15, 1927 (U)
1	Kybartai-Riga	3	a	Sept. 1928 (F)	March 1929 (H)	Nov. 18, 1932 (U)
		3	b	May 14, 1928 (F)	July 22, 1938 (H)	Dec. 3, 1938 (U)
2	Riga-Kybartai	3	a	Dec. 14, 1928 (U)	July 4, 1930 (H) Aug. 28, 1930 (F) Sept. 9, 1930 (U) Oct. 14, 1931 (K) Aug. 5, 1936 (U)	Jan. 19, 1941 (U)
		3	b	May 9, 1928 (F)	Nov. 9, 1929 (H) June 29, 1932 (U)	April 9, 1936 (U)
		3	B	Sept. 3, 1937 (U)	Oct. 21, 1937 (H)	Feb. 5, 1941 (F)



III. 13a (82 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard form, sent on April 25, 1920 to Kaunas, via railway-post route nr 3-4 Kybartai-Klaipėda. The cancel PAŠTO VAGONAS No 3-4, with asterisks, is the earliest known use of a Lithuanian railway-post cancel.



III. 13b (100 %)



III. 14 (100 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Part of a postcard, sent on April 22, 1924 to Kaunas, cancelled with the same cancel type.



III. 15a (73 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
A letter, sent on July 16, 1926 to Palanga, with a fine clear cancel of the railway-post route 3-4, code letter 'a'.



III. 15b (100 %)

Section 3-4

Railway-post route 3-4 was the section Kybartai-Klaipėda.

On this route, too, the large circular cancels are the oldest (type 1).

A postcard form with this cancel is also the earliest known use of a Lithuanian railway-post cancel, April 25, 1920 (ill. 13).

This route also went via Kaunas and Šiauliai.

Before the First World War Klaipėda was named Memel and was the most important town in the - then German - Memel area.

The railway-post section must have run via Latvian Priekule, certainly in 1920: the direct line from Šiauliai had not yet been constructed: to Telšiai (1924-1925) and further on to Kretinga (1930-1932). In Kretinga it was connected to the line Priekule-Bajohren-Klaipėda, constructed in 1915.

Priekule was situated on the line Liepāja-Mažeikiai (Murajewo!) and until 1915 there was no connection with German Memel. From Memel the line ended in Bajohren, just short of the border. For strategic reasons the line Bajohren-Kretinga-Priekule was quickly constructed, in 1915.

After Memel had become Lithuanian Klaipėda became the most important Lithuanian port, but the connection ran via Mažeikiai and Latvian Priekule. Of course Lithuania did not wish to remain dependent on the Latvians and so a new line was constructed from Šiauliai to Kretinga, which was situated on the line between Bajohren and Priekule. Because of political difficulties the connection via Mažeikiai was not always reliable, of which more is said elsewhere in this publication.

On this route a different type of railway cancel was also used: small circular (diameter 25 mm), type 2, with the route numbers below in the cancel (sub-type a) (ill. 15). The cancel appeared, however, later than the large circular cancel, but also sometime the same time as the large circular cancel without code letter.



III. 16 (81 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard form, sent on June 1, 1921 to Kaunas, via railway-post route nr 3-4 Kybartai-Klaipėda, with code letter 'a'.

This postcard was sent to a Jewish institution (ministry?) - just as the postcard to the left above (ill. 11). In the address we recognize 'Žydu' (Jewish). An article was dedicated to the Jewry in pre-war Lithuania earlier in HBG 42 (Žydai Lietuvoje : Joden in Litouwen' [Jews in Lithuania]).



III. 17a (82 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent on Dec. 31, 1924 to Kaunas via railway-post route 3-4. The cancel type is small circular with the route numbers below (type 2a). The code letter is 'c'.



III. 17b (100 %)

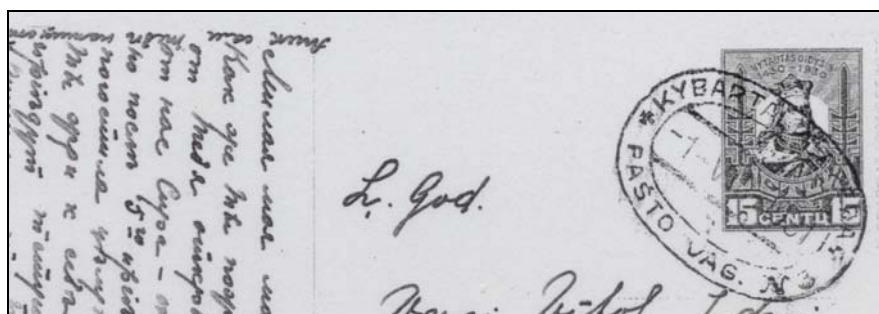
The cancel, type 2a, with clear code letter 'c'. Alongside another similar cancel, to be found on a postcard to Tallinn, sent on March 14, 1926, but here the code letter had fallen off (probably 'c').



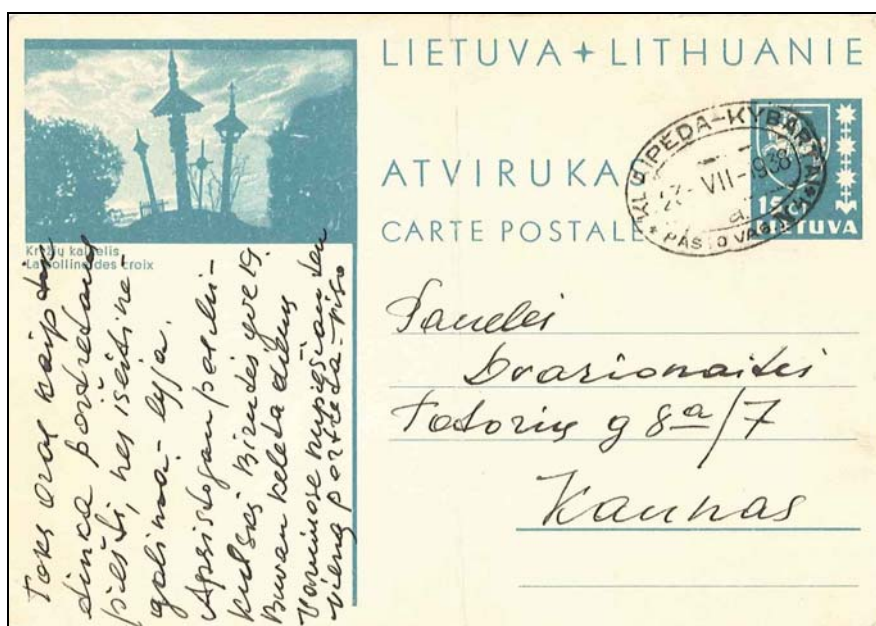
III. 18 (73 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on March 19, 1931 to
Riga, via railway-post route nr 3
Kybartai – Klaipėda, code letter 'a'.



III. 18b (100 %)



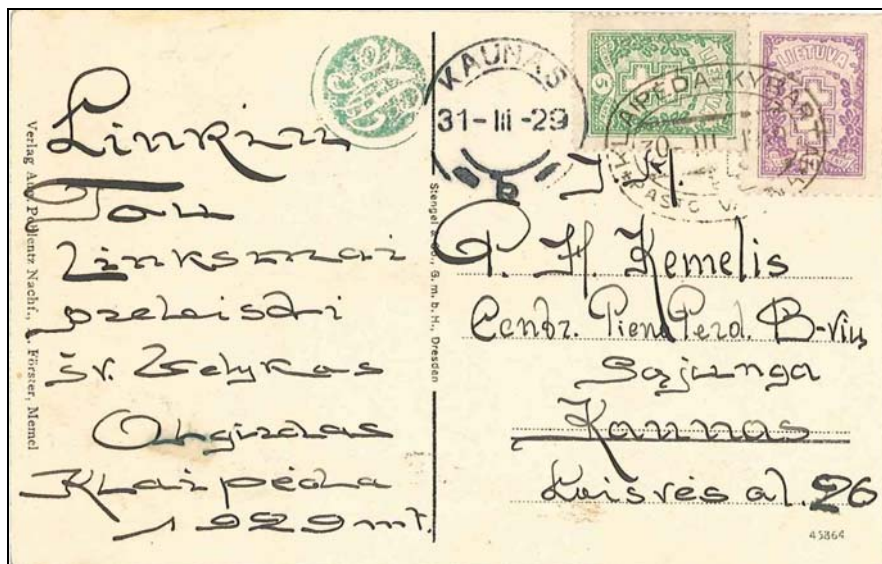
III. 19 (84 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Part of a postcard, with a slightly
different cancel, railway-post route 3,
code letter 'a', date July 1, 1931
In this case the asterisks are situated
more or less in the middle between the
date bars (compare with ill. 18).



III. 20a (78 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, July 23, 1938, via
railway-post route nr 4 Klaipėda –
Kybartai, code letter 'a'.



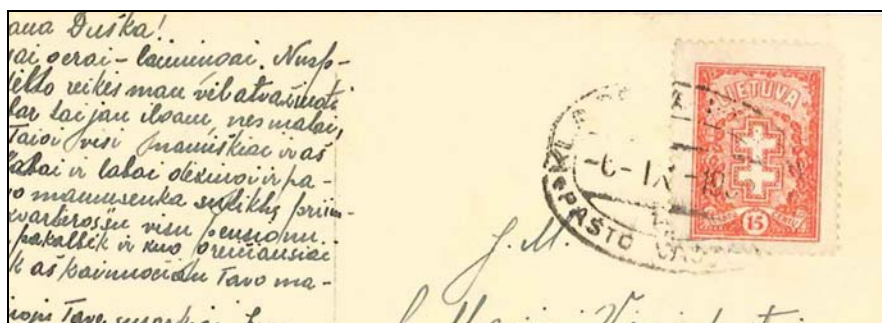
III. 20b



III. 21a (83 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on March 31, 1929,
railway-post route nr 4 Klaipėda –
Kybartai, code letter 'b'.



III. 21b



III. 22 (100 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Part of a postcard, sent on Sept. 6,
1932, , letter 'b', from Klaipėda to
Kaunas, so with railway route nr 4.



III. 23 (77 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on July 26, 1938, to
'Voketija' (Germany), via railway-post
route nr 4 Klaipėda – Kybartai, code
letter 'b'.

MEMEL-KLAIPĖDA

On the map alongside it can be seen that the name of railway-post route 3 had been changed in 1940: Kybartai - Kretinga, and of course this had to do with the turbulent history of this area.

After the First World War Lithuania claimed the town of Memel and the surrounding area. It was important to the new state especially because of the port. With the Versailles Treaty, on June 28, 1919, Germany had to cede the Memel area (article 199), but Lithuania's situation was still very uncertain, and the area came under the mandate of the League of Nations. On behalf of the League of Nations France was going to administrate the area. This French administration also left its philatelic marks: surcharge 'Memel' on French stamps.

In the autumn of 1922 a 'Committee for the Salvation of Lithuania Minor' was founded by local Lithuanians, and on January 9, 1923 the Lithuanian leaders announced that they were going to take over the administration. The Lithuanian troops marched in on January 10, and on January 19 Lithuania controlled the whole area. The town of Memel received the Lithuanian name of Klaipėda. On February 16 a conference of Allied Ambassadors as a matter of fact sanctioned the course of affairs. On March 8, 1924 the Memel area became an autonomous district within Lithuania.

We saw before that a railway-post cancel on route 3-4, the section Kybartai - Klaipėda, also was the earliest known Lithuanian railway-post cancel. The date is April 25, 1920, and of course it is type 1, so without the place-names. When looking at the above-mentioned dates one may wonder how far this section ran at that time.

On the railway map (p. 59 ; ill.), probably from the late twenties, the Memel area is Lithuanian and Memel is indicated with the Lithuanian name Klaipėda.

In addition the line between Telsiai and Kretinga still belonged to the 'Projektierte Eisenbahnlinsen' (projected railway lines). Before this



III. 24a (81 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent via railway-post route nr 3 Kybartai - Kretinga, April 7, 1940, to Kaunas

line was constructed (1930-1932) trains had to go to Klaipėda via Latvian Priekulė.

In the 'Zeichenerklärung' (symbols legend) Vilnius is also indicated as the capital and Kaunas as the 'Provisorische Hauptstadt' (provisional capital). The Vilnius area is separated from Lithuania by the 'Demarkationslinie zwischen dem unbesetzten und dem von Polen besetzten Litauen' (demarcation line between unoccupied Lithuania and Polish occupied Lithuania). In addition the 'Staatsgrenze' (state boundary) of Lithuania had been drawn quite liberally: including the area around Gardinas, the Lithuanian name for Grodno.

Another change occurred just before the Second World War concerning Klaipėda/Memel: under pressure from Hitler Germany the Lithuanian troops withdrew from this region on March 22, 1939. On March 23 Urbsys, the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs signed an agreement with which Memel is again joined with the German Reich as from March 22 (13.00 a.m.). Yet Lithuania got a 'free zone' in the port area.

The oval cancels, in which the place-names appeared, mention Kybartai and Klaipėda (*ill. 18-23*).

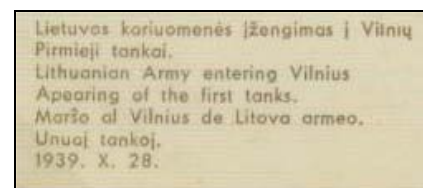
After the hand-over to Germany of the Memel area the place indications in

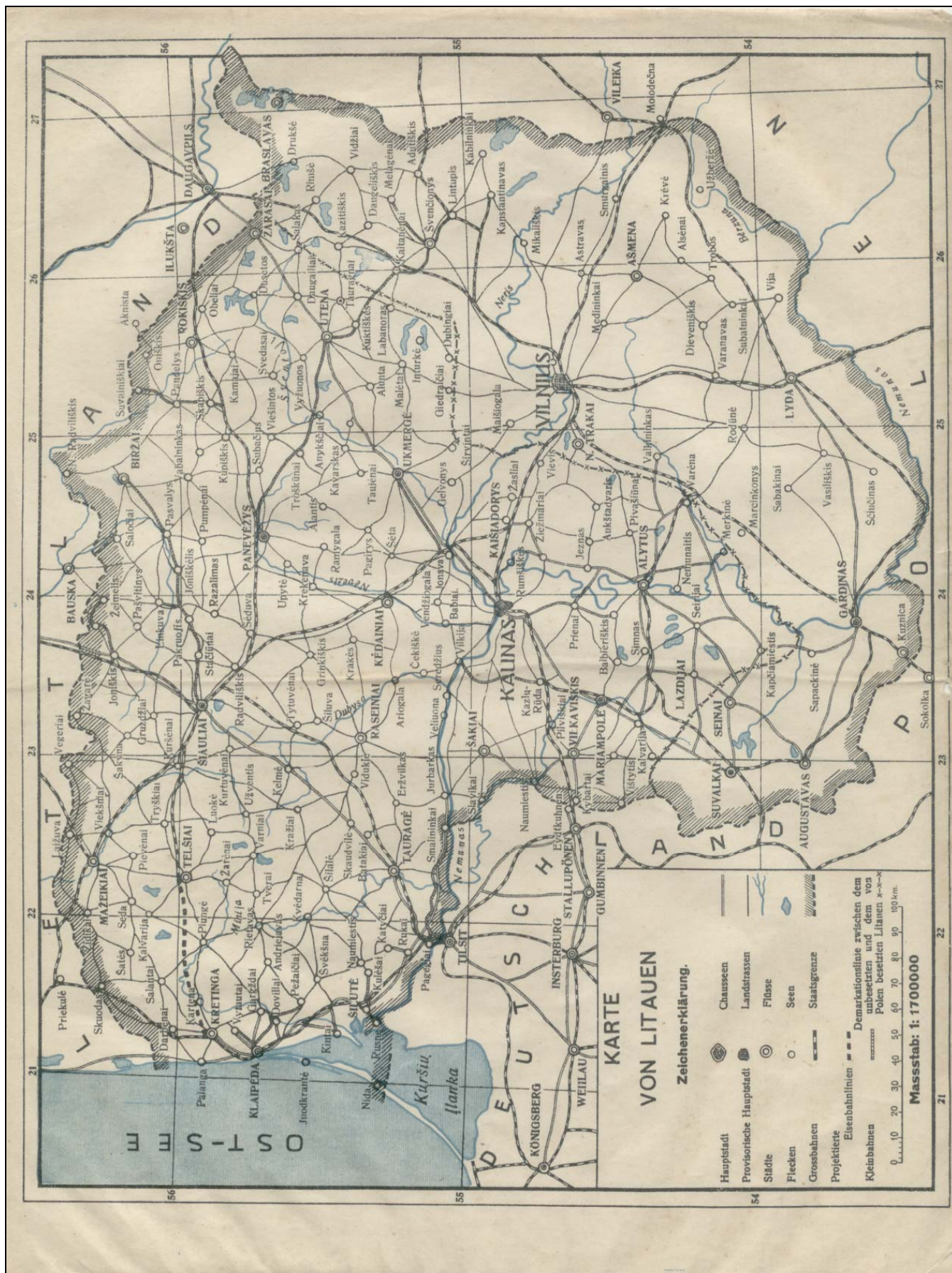
the cancels of the railway-post lines nr 3 and 4 also changed. The section ran no further than Kretinga, the last large Lithuanian town before the new border (*ill. 24 t/m 27*).



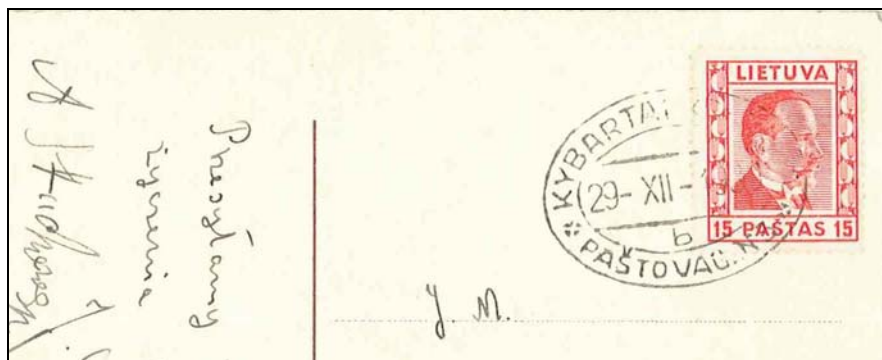
III. 24b (100 %), kenletter 'b'.

The picture side of the postcard also gives a good indication of the changes in this area: the first Lithuanian tanks in Vilnius, 28 X 1939.





III. (82 %) (ex. Jan Kaptein)



III. 25 (100 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Part of a postcard, sent on Dec. 29, 1939, with railway-post route nr 3 Kybartai – Kretinga, code letter 'b'.



III. 26a (73 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Air mail letter, sent on April 7, 1940 to New York via railway-post route nr 4 Kretinga - Kybartai



III. 26b (100 %)
The town of Kretinga is clearly legible, the code letter 'b' is not so clearly legible.



III. 27a (79 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Part of a business letter, from Telšiai, sent on Dec. 29, 1940 to Kaunas. I.e., - even when looking at the railway map above - via railway-post route nr 4, Kretinga - Kybartai.



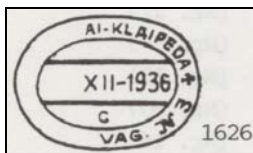
III. 27b (100 %)
After enlarging and editing the code letter resembles 'a'(?).

CANCEL TYPES ROUTE 3-4 WITH DATES

U = collection Uspuras F = cancellations book V. Fugalevičius K = Kaptein H = article in HBG 1

Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
3-4	Kybartai-Klaipėda v.v.	1	---	April 25, 1920 (U)	April 22, 1924 (U)	June 28, 1924 (F)
		1	a	June 1, 1921 (U)	Sept. 11, 1924 (F) May 10, 1926 (H)	July 16, 1926 (U)
		2a	c	Aug. 14, 1924 (F)	Dec. 31, 1924 (U) March 14, 1926(?) (U)	June 4, 1927 (U)
3	Kybartai-Klaipėda	3	a	June 16, 1929 (U)	Feb. 25, 1930 (H) March 19, 1931 (U)	Oct. 19, 1937 (F)
		3	a (variety)?	July 1, 1931 (U)		Dec. 31, 1931 (H)
		3	b	April 10, 1927 (F)	Sept. 9, 1930 (U)	Nov. 18, 1938 (U)
		3	c	Match 25, 1932 (U)		Dec. 1936 (F)
4	Klaipėda-Kybartai	3	a	Dec. 28, 1929 (U)	Jan. 15, 1930 (F) March 7, 1937 (H) July 23, 1938 (U)	Oct. 20, 1938
		3	b	Oct. 13, 1928 (U)	March 31, 1929 (U) April 15, 1929 (F) Sept. 6, 1932 (U)	July 26, 1938 (U)
3	Kybartai-Kretinga	3	a	Jan. 21, 1940 (F)		
		3	b	Dec. 29, 1939 (U)	March 23, 1940 (F) July 3, 1940 (U)	Dec. 2, 1940 (U)
4	Kretinga-Kybartai	3	a	Feb. 17, 1940 (U)		Feb. 7, 1941 (F)
		3	b	April 7, 1940 (U)	June 10, 1940 (F)	Dec. 29, 1940 (U)
3-4	Kretinga-Kybartai	2c	c	Nov. 28, 1940 (U)		Jan. 31, 1941 (F)

1. Large circular (diameter 30 mm) with section number below
2. Small circular (diameter 25 mm) with three sub-types
 - a. section number below
 - b. section number above and code letter below
 - c. both place- names
3. Oval cancel



The cancel of line 3 after the change of name, Kybartai-Kretinga, is also pictured in the afore-mentioned book with code letter 'a'.



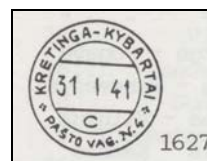
Type 2, sub-type c, too, was used on this line very late. This is the small circular type, with above the place-names:

With line 3, Kybartai – Klaipėda, type 3, code letter 'a', appears in two shapes. The first shape: the K of Kybartai and the last A of Klaipėda nearly reach to the lower date bar (*ill. 18*). The second shape has the asterisks about halfway down the date bars (*ill. 19*).

In Fugalevičius's book cancel type 3 also appears with the code letters 'b' and 'c' for this line.



For line 4 after the change of name, items from Eugenijus Uspuras's collection can still be seen, but the code letters are not very clear. Clear cancels can be found in the cancel book with the code letters 'a' and 'b':



With the lines 5-6, Šiauliai-Klaipėda, we are also dealing with the changes in the Memel area. On this, more in the next chapter.



CHAPTER 5 LINES 5-6 and 17-18

In this chapter we continue with the railway post of independent Lithuania.

In the last chapter the division of cancel types was already given with the description of lines 1-2 and 3-4. We come across these cancel types again for the remaining lines.

The cancel types of the last chapter recapitulated:

1. Large circular (cross-section 30 mm) with section number below
2. Small circular (cross-section 25 mm) with three sub-types
 - a. section number below
 - b. section number above and code letter below
 - c. both place names
3. Oval cancel

Section 5-6

Line 5 was the sign for the section Šiauliai - Klaipėda, and so line 6 was the reverse direction Klaipėda – Šiauliai. In the last issue of HBG we already established that the straight connection from Šiauliai to Klaipėda ran via Latvian Priekulė. The line between Telšiai and Kretinga was also constructed between 1930-1932 for this reason.

Concerning the route of line 3-4 here an addition to our last chapter¹. Line 3-4 yet continued following the route via Latvia after 1932: Kybartai - Klaipėda via Kaunas, Šiauliai, Priekulė. This route was run from autumn 1923 until March 22, 1939. So thereafter the shortened route was run to the new border (Kretinga). Line 5-6 ran quite a different route to Klaipėda: via Pagegiai, and from there it ran the same route as the German railway post Insterburg - Memel. As we can see on the detail of the railways map from this period: via the south of the Memel area.

¹ See: *Russian Travelling Post Offices through Lithuania – Lithuania The Travelling Post Offices / J.P. Visser en Cyril Kidd in TPO 37 (1983) ; 2. – p. 27-38:*



III. 1a (81 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on July 3, 1927, to München in Germany via route nr 5-6 Šiauliai – Klaipėda.



III. 2 (61 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on Feb. 9, 1927, to Klaipėda via route nr 5-6 Šiauliai – Klaipėda. The stamp had been damaged and therefore it was surcharged with 50 cent. This was the double rate for an national letter.

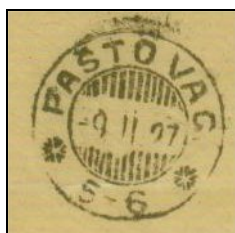
Because of the return of the Memel area and its capital Memel/Klaipėda to Germany on March 22, 1939 the route of line 5-6 was changed too. Then line 5 was the section Šiauliai – Tauragė, and line 6 ran the reverse direction.

When the new connection was ready line 17-18 Šiauliai – Telšiai was extended via Kretinga to Klaipėda. When Klaipėda/Memel became German again, this line, too, was shortened as far as Kretinga.

We find the known cancel types on line 5-6, too.



III. 1b (100 %)
Cancel type 1.



III. 2b (100 %)
Cancel type 2a, but without code letter.

Of course a very special one is the oval railway surcharge cancel of this line reading: 'PRIMOKĖTI PAŠTO VAG. 5-6'.



III. 2c (100 %)
The oval surcharge cancel.

The oval railway cancels came into use in Lithuania in 1927, with different cancels for the outward and return journeys. On the map above (*III. 3*) the section Šiauliai – Klaipėda can still be read



Detail of a railways map from the thirties (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)



III. 3a (81 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent to the 'Memeler Dampfboot', on May 26, 1933, via route nr 5 Šiauliai – Klaipėda, code letter 'a'

clearly, the route number '5', however, is only legible with magnifying-glass or computer enlargement:



The code letter is illegible, even after enlargement, but according to Fugalevičius the code letters 'a' and 'b' do occur in this cancel. People still had to get accustomed to the new name Klaipėda: the postcard still has 'Memel' as its address.



III. 3b (100 %)

The reverse direction, line 6 Klaipėda – Šiauliai, also has this cancel type with the code letters 'a' and 'b'. After the shortening of the route as far as Tauragė the code letters became 'A' and 'B'.



III. 4a (84 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras
Picture postcard, sent on March 16,
1937 to Leningrad, arrival on March
23, 1937, via route nr 5 Šiauliai -
Klaipėda, code letter 'b'.
The picture side is 'bildseitig frankiert'
(stamp on the picture side), again with
railway post cancel, and shows - in
colour - a Memel city scenery.



III. 4b (100 %)



III. 4c (84 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras
Picture postcard, picture side.



III. 5a (74 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras
Letter, sent on Sept. 5, 1935 to Kö-
nigsberg in Germany, via route nr 6
Klaipėda – Šiauliai, code letter 'b'.



III. 5b (100 %)



III. 6b (100 %)

Even after enlargement the date is not clearly legible. This letter clearly shows that no direct (post) connection existed between Klaipėda and Germany. Apparently the other letter, too, went via a roundabout way, ill. 5.

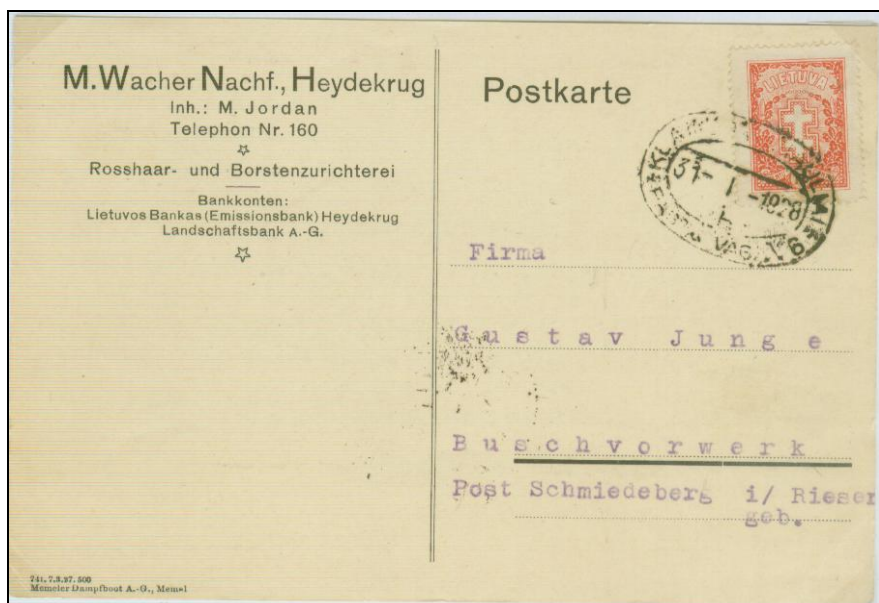


III. 6a (73 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Business letter, sent to Berlin, via route nr 6 Klaipėda – Šiauliai, code letter 'a'.



III. 7b (100 %)

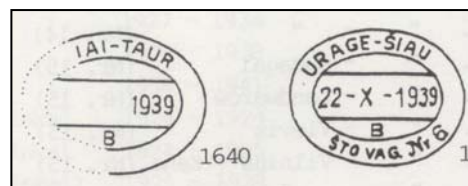


III. 7a (75 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent on January 31, 1928 to Schmiedeberg in Germany via route nr 6 Klaipėda – Šiauliai, code letter 'b'.

III. 8 (from V. Fugalevičius's cancel book)

The cancels, type 3, after the transition of the Memel area to Germany in 1939. The line was shortened as far as Tauragė (see detail of the railways map shown before).



CANCEL TYPES ROUTE 5-6 WITH DATES

U = collection Uspuras F = cancel book Fugalevičius K = Kaptein H = article in HBG 1

Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
5-6	Šiauliai - Klaipėda v.v.	1	---	Aug.25, 1922 (U)	Aug. 25, 1925 (F) May 31, 1927 (H)	July 3, 1927 (U)
		2a	---	Feb. 28, 1925 (U)	Feb. 7, 1927 (H) Feb. 9, 1927 (U)	Nov. 16, 1927 (F)
5	Šiauliai - Klaipėda	3	a	Oct. 22, 1928 (F)	May 15, 1933(H)	May 26, 1933 (U)
		3	b	Sept. 9, 1929 (U)	Nov. 8, 1930 (F) Oct. 7, 1932 (H)	March 16, 1937 (U)
	Šiauliai - Taurage	3	A	Nov. 25, 1940 (F)		Nov. 26, 1940 (H)
		3	B	- - 1939 (F)		
6	Klaipėda - Šiauliai	3	a	Aug. 19, 1928 (U)	Sept. 24,1928(H) Oct. 26, 1928 (F)	Jan. 18, 1939 (U)
		3	b	Jan. 31, 1928 (U)	Nov. 8, 1928 (H) Sept. 5, 1935 (U)	Sept. 6, 1939 (U)
	Taurage - Šiauliai	3	A	April 8, 1940 (F)		Sept. 10, 1940 (U)
		3	B	Oct. 22, 1939 (F)		

The cancel types with dates recapitulated again in the table below:

1. Large circular (cross-section 30 mm) with section number below
2. Small circular (cross-section 25 mm) with three sub-types
 - a. section number below
 - b. section number above and code letter below
 - c. both place names
3. Oval cancel

Concerning cancels the cancel book of Vytautas Fugalevičius is, of course, the standard work: Pašto antspaudai Lietuvoj = Poststempel in Litauen = P.O. cancels in Lithuania / V. Fugalevičius. – ed. 1990. The cancels in HBG are also based on data by V. Fugalevičius

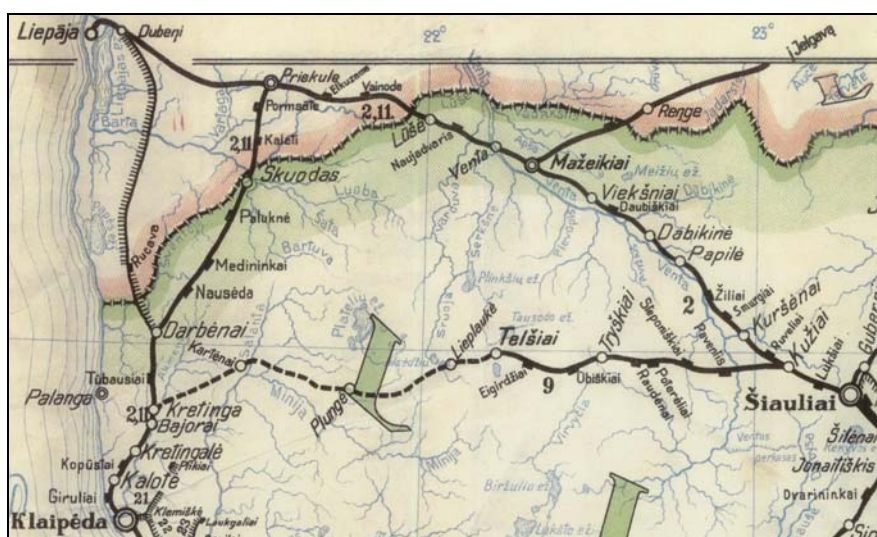
Section 17-18

On the railway map alongside the railway between Telšiai and Kretinga is still indicated as projected. After completion of this line in 1932 the railway post section 17 - 18 could be extended: Šiauliai – Telšiai - Kretinga - Klaipėda.

Line 3-4 continued following the route via the Latvian Priekulė also after 1932, but now people were less dependent on this line. When Klaipeda/Memel became German again line 17 - 18 was shortened as far as Kretinga.

III. 9 (73 %)

Printed matter, April 6, 1928, to Prague via line 18, Telšiai –Šiauliai.



Before the line was extended to Kretinga the mail van ran as far as Telšiai (ill. 9, 10 and 11).

We see two cancel types in this period (1923-1934), type 2c (small circular with the place names above) and 3 (oval).

Cancel type 2, sub-type c, small circular, was used initially and the cancel of line 18, Telšiai – Šiauliai, has been depicted in V. Fugalevičius:

the place names of line 18, Telšiai – Šiauliai, above in the cancel.



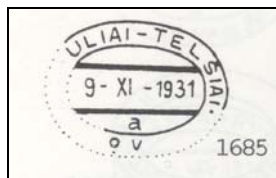
June 18, 1927

The same cancel for line 17, Šiauliai – Telšiai, has not yet been found, but it will surely exist.

In ill. 9 we see cancel type 3, the oval cancel.

This cancel was used on the same route in the period 1927-1934. Both directions have the code letter 'a' in the cancel.

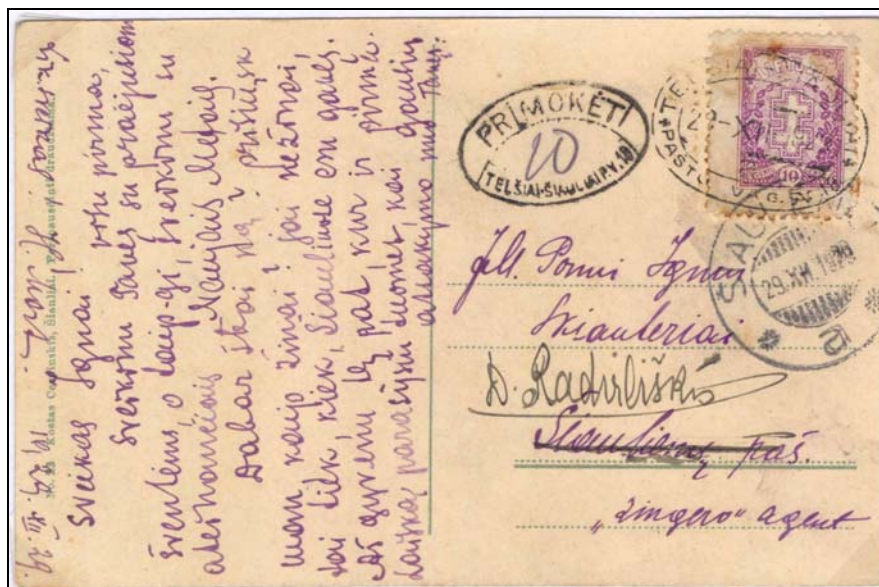
Line 17 from Vytautas Fugalečius's book:



Line 18:



III. 11b (100 %)



III. 10a (82 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

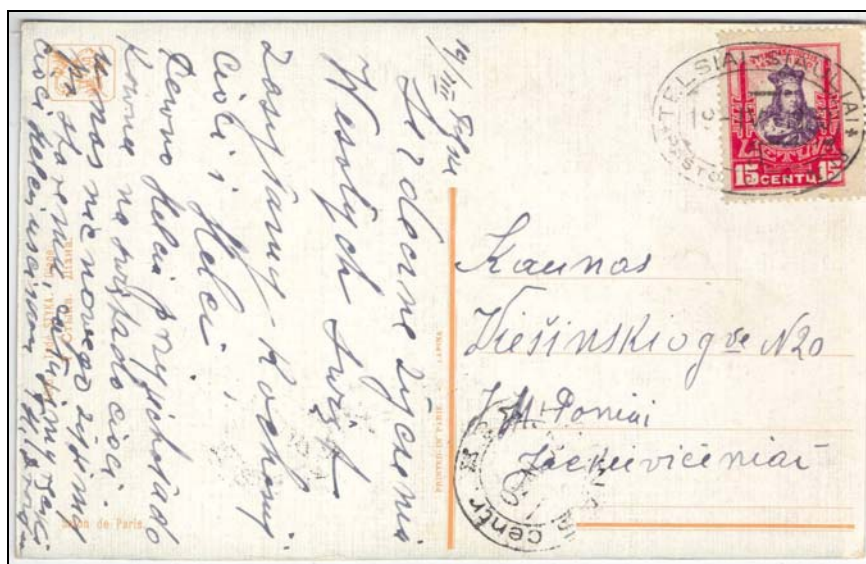
Postcard, sent on Dec. 29, 1929 to Šiaulėnus, via route 18 Telšiai - Šiauliai and back to D. Radviliškis. However, the stamp on the postcard was 10 cents short for the national postcard rate, and so an additional 10 cents was added in mail van 18.



III. 10b (100 %)

Special, of course, is the post cancel of the mail van: PRIMOKĖTI Telšiai – Šiauliai P.V. 18

This cancel has not been noticed elsewhere, and was discovered by Eugenijus Uspuras.



III. 11a (82 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent on April 19, 1930, from Telšiai to Kaunas via route 18, Telšiai – Šiauliai, code letter 'a'.

From 1934 to 1940 the new cancel with the indication of the place names Šiauliai en Klaipėda was used. These names can be found above in the small circular cancel (type 2c) with the code letters 'a' and 'b' for both directions.

In *ill. 12* we see a postcard with this cancel type of line 17, Šiauliai – Klaipėda, with code letter 'b'. The postcard was sent to Helsingfors in Finland on August 4, 1937, and is supposed to have continued its way via the port of Klaipėda.



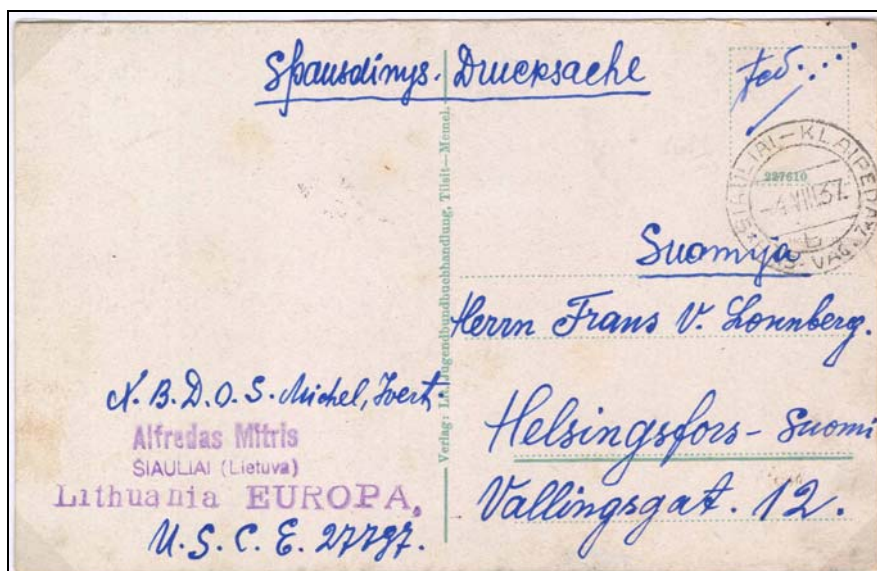
Ill. 12b (100 %)

More illustrations of line 18, Klaipėda – Šiauliai can be seen from Eugenijus Uspuras' s collection. Probably a large part of the mail in this period with the cancel of line 17 found its way to the wider world via Klaipėda harbour.



Ill. 13b (100 %)

Ill. 13a (72 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter with the railway-post cancel of line 18, Klaipėda – Šiauliai, March 14, 1938 to Silalė. Code letter 'a'.



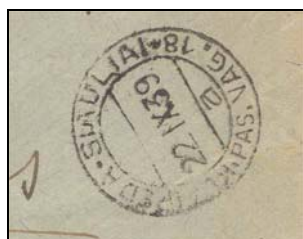
Ill. 12a (82 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on August 4, 1937 to Helsingfors.



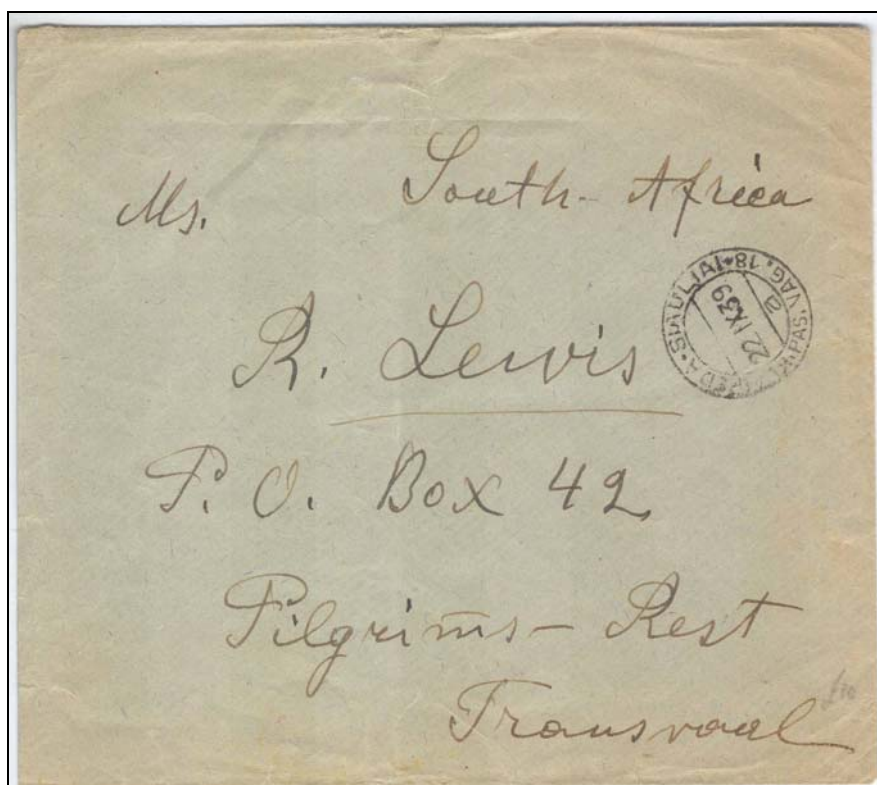
III. 14 (77 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on Feb. 12, 1939 to
Kaunas via line 18, Klaipėda – Šiauliai,
code letter 'a'.

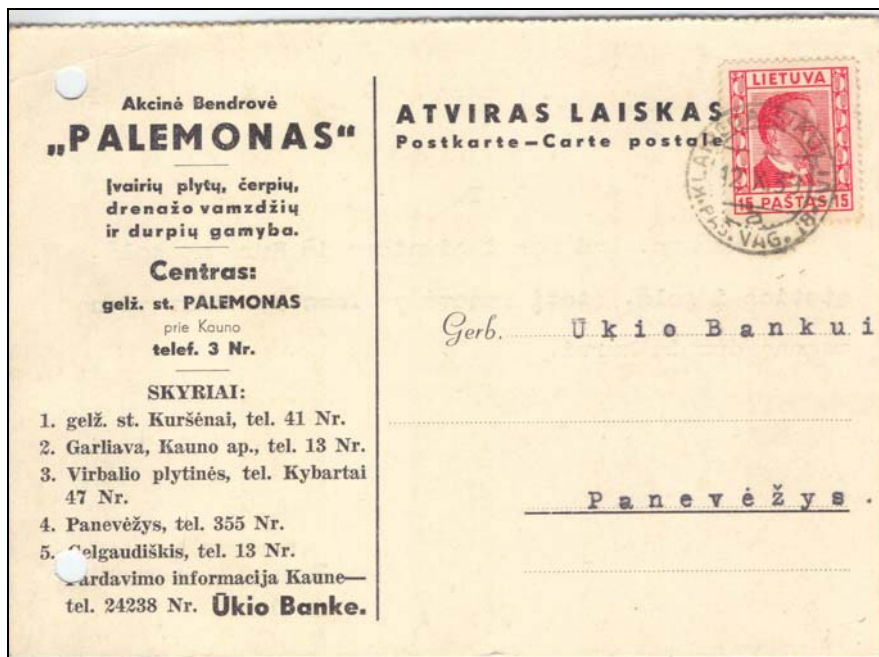


III. 15a (80 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on Sept. 22, 1939 via line
18, , Klaipėda – Šiauliai, code letter 'a'.
The stamps can be found on the
back: 4 x 15 = 60 cents, the rate for a
letter abroad.

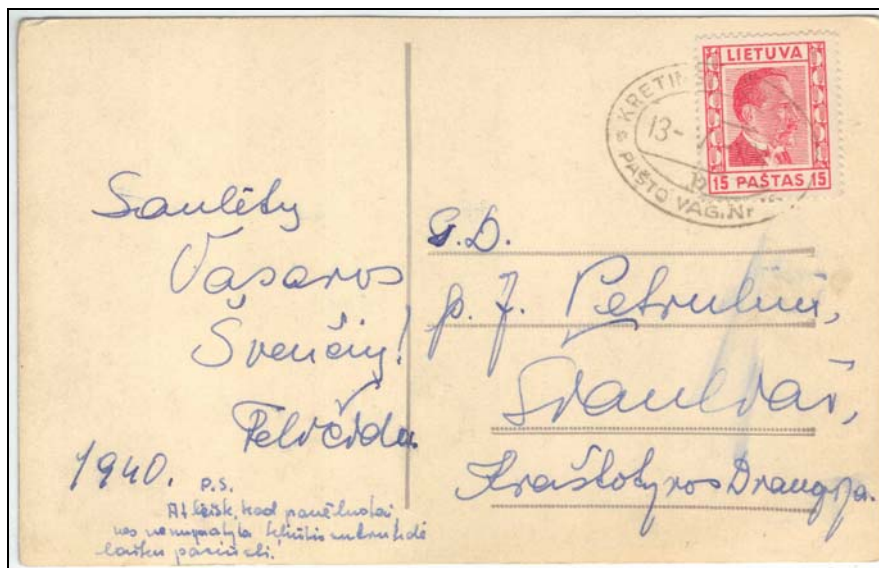


III. 15b (100 %)





III. 16a (80 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
 Postcard via line 18, Klaipėda - Šiauliai, Oct. 12, 1939, type 2c, code letter 'a'.
 Firm 'Palemonas', Production of bricks, tiles, conduits, and turf.
 Centre: railway station Palemonas near Kaunas, telephone 3 Nr Divisions: 1. railway station Kursenai, telephone 41; 2. Garliava, Kaunas distr., telephone 13; 3. Virbalis brick works, telephone. Kybartai 47; 4 Panevezys, telephone 355; 5. Gelgaudiskės, telephone 13.
 Sales information in Kaunas - telephone 24238 in Ukio bank.



III. 17a (82 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
 Postcard, sent on May 13, 1940, to Šiauliai via the shortened line 18 Kretinga - Šiauliai, code letter 'b'(?).

The illustrations shown of line 18 Klaipėda - Šiauliai with the cancel type 2c all have code letter 'a' (ill. 13, 14, 15, and 16).

In V. Fugalevičius's cancel book the cancel can also be found with code letter 'b'.



III. 16b (100 %)

Under pressure of Germany the Memel area was ceded in the spring of 1939, and on March 23, 1939 the railway lines - 134 km standard gauge - was handed over to the German Reichsbahn. At the same time material was handed over. Under the Treaty of May 20, 1939 Lithuania did get the right to a 'Free trade zone' in Memel harbour. This zone could be reached with Lithuanian - closed - goods trains. Lithuania also had plans to extend the fishing port of Sventoji, but because of the war this came to an end.

It is not clear how long the mail van still continued running to Klaipėda / Memel. It is also not clear how long the cancel was still used. The line was shortened as far as Kretinga and initially the old cancel might still have been used

Anyhow we see the new oval cancel of line 18 Kretinga - Šiauliai appear in 1940, so type 3 (ill. 17). Code letters 'a' and 'b' do occur.



III. 17b (100 %)

Probably the reverse direction, line 17, also received a new cancel in 1940, but of this no data are known - not even from Vytautas Fugalevičius.

In 1941 the route of line 17 changes again, and runs from Šiauliai to Riga. So line 18 went the opposite direction. This change is yet mentioned by Vytautas Fugalevičius, but no additional data are present. Because of the war these railway routes came to an end in 1942.

Literature not mentioned before

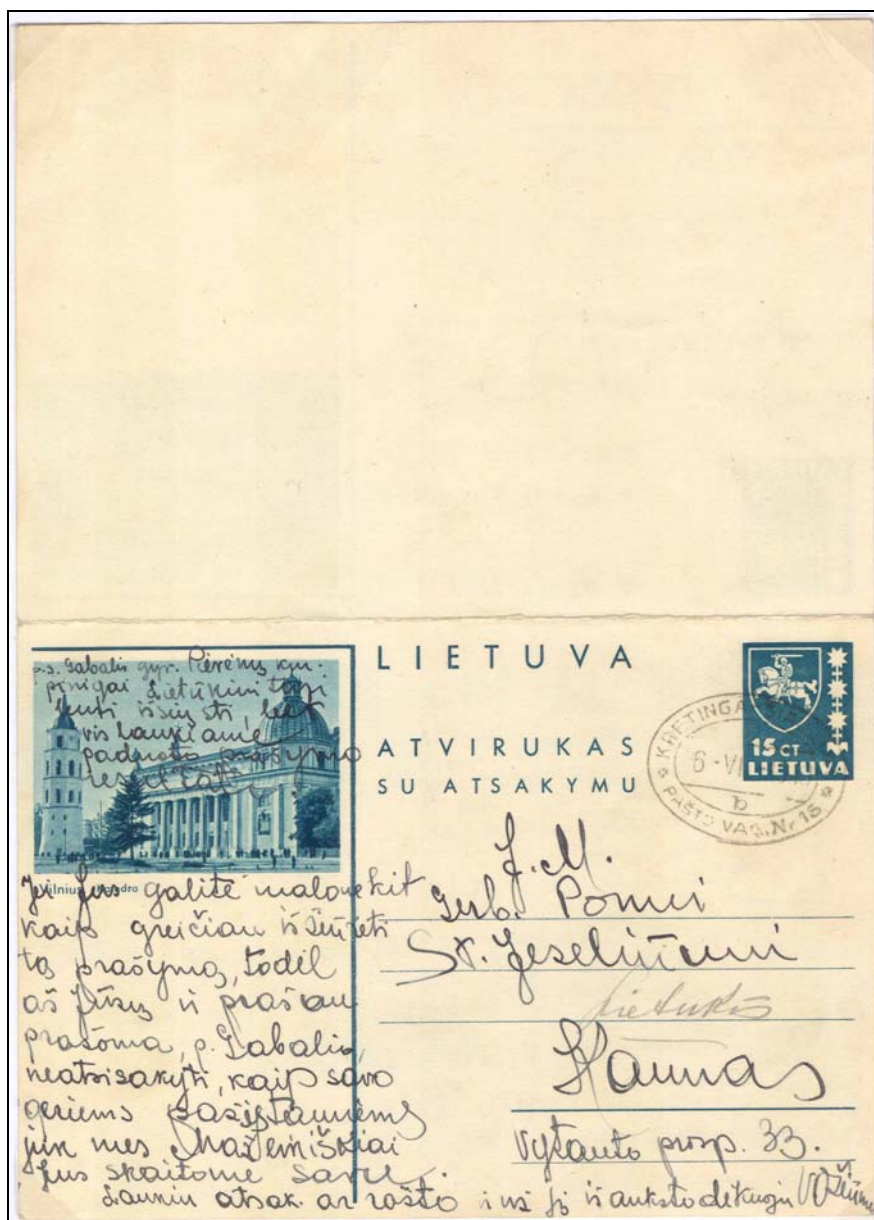
Visser, J.P.

Russian travelling post offices through Lithuania / by J.P. Visser and Cyril Kidd. – In: T.P.O 37 (1983) 2. – p. 27 - 38.

III. 18 (76 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras
Double postcard, sent on June 5,
1940, to Kaunas via the - now
shortened line 18, Kretinga – Šiauliai.

CANCEL TYPES ROUTE 17-18 WITH DATES

U = collection Uspuras F = cancel
book Fugalevičius H = HBG 1-2
V = Visser



Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
17	Šiaulia – Telšiai 1924-27	2c	--			
	1927-34	3	a		Nov. 9, 1931 (F)	
	Šiauliai – Klaipėda 1934-40	2c	a	Jun.20, 1938 (U)		July 15, 1938 (F)
		2c	b	Aug. 4, 1937 (U)		May 10, 1938 (U)
	Šiauliai – Kretinga 1940-41	3	a			
		3	b			
	Šiauliai – Riga 1941-42					
18	Telšiai – Šiauliai 1924-27	2c	--	June 18, 1927 (F)		Aug. 23, 1927 (U)
	1927-34	3	a	19-12-1927(F)	April 6, 1928 (U) Dec. 29, 1929 (U)	April 19, 1930 (U)
	Klaipėda – Šiauliai 1934-40	2c	a	11-9-1934 (V) Feb. 27, 1936(U)	14-3-1938 (F)) Feb. 12, 1939 (U) Sept. 22, 1939 (U)	Oct. 15, 1939 (U)
		2c	b	17-11-1937 (F)		Sept. 5, 1938 (U)
	Kretinga – Šiauliai 1940-41	3	a	April 11, 1939(F)	Feb. 24, 1940 (U)	Oct. 6, 1940 (U)
		3	b	13-5-1940 (U)	June 5, 1940 (U) March 2, 1941 (F)	March 3, 1941 (U)
	Riga – Šiauliai 1941-42		b			

CHAPTER 6 LINES 7-8, 9-10, and 11-12

In this chapter we continue with the railway post of independent Lithuania. The lines under discussion functioned in north-eastern Lithuania. Again the illustrations are from the collection of Eugenijas Uspuras.

Section 7-8

Initially line 7 was the indication for the section Radviliškis – Kalkūnai (1928-1934), and line 8 for the direction Kalkūnai – Radviliškis. On the map (*ill. 3*) Kalkūnai is the railway junction just south of Daugavpils, just across the border in Latvia.

In 1934 the section had been changed and then Obeliai, the Lithuanian railway station near the Latvian border, became the terminus.

A summary of the cancel types of last chapter:

1. Large circular (cross-section 30 mm) with section number below
2. Small circular (cross-section 25 mm) with three sub-types
 - a. section number below
 - b. section number above and code letter below
 - c. both place names
3. Oval cancel

The oldest cancel, type 1, had also been used on this route (*ill. 1 and 2*). In addition only the oval cancels – type 3 – had been used on this route for line 7 as well as for line 8.

The railway was important for the connection with the eastern part of the country. The Vilnius area, as is known, had been occupied by Poland and was closed to Lithuania. In 1929 the railways on the line Tilsit-Pagegiai-Radviliškis-Obeliai had been very much improved. As a result the fast train Moscow-Berlin could again run through Lithuania (instead of Poland).

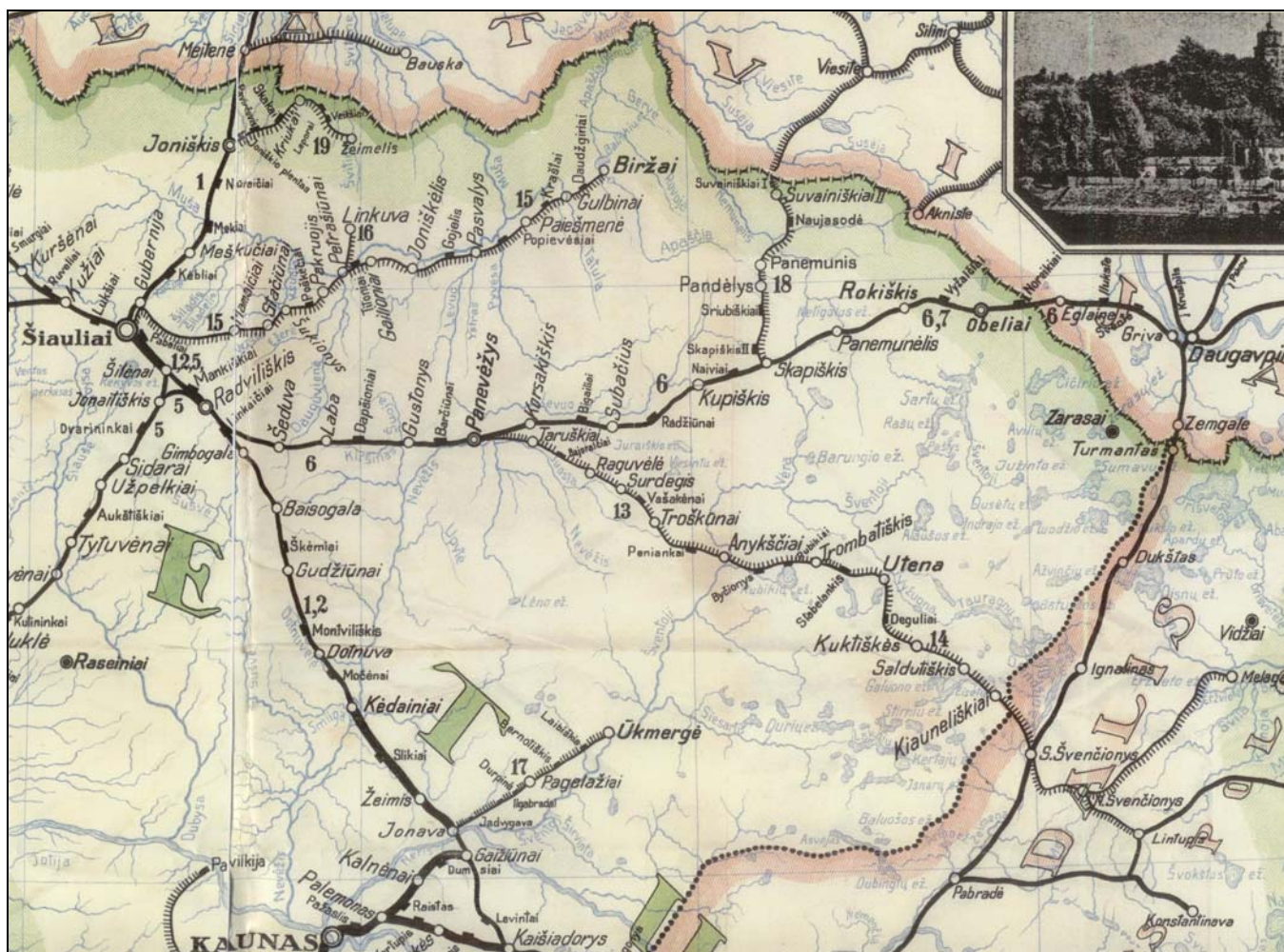
III. 2 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on August 3, 1925 to Kaunas via railway-post line 7-8.



III. 1 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard with the large circular railway-post cancel (so type 1), with the indication of line 7-8. The postcard was written on Feb. 14, 1921 in Radviliškis and sent to Panevėžys. It is clear from the map alongside that the destination was situated on the route of section 7-8.





III. 3 (74 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras) Railways map from the thirties.

According to tidings from those days this fast train could travel as fast as 100 km per hour.

After Oct. 10, 1939 the Vilnius area became Lithuanian, including the railways.

Even in the Czarist period Radviliškis – Kalkūnai was a railway-post route: then line 9-10 (see HBG 44). The railway was completed in 1873 and connected in Kalkūnai near Dwinsk (Daugavpils) with the main line of St Petersburg via Vilnius to Warsaw.

On the map we can also see that after Panevėžys the railway line had a branch off to the south-east, in the direction of Utena. From 1921 onwards this was the section of route 9-10. In 1940 the Vilnius area returned to Lithuania and the connection with Švenčionėliai had been restored. This town, on the map at the other side of the demarcation line in the area 'occupied by Poland' then became the terminus of railway-post route 9-10.

On the map the railway line Šiauliai – Biržai, the section of railway-post route 11-12, is also marked.



In the key to the map it can be seen that the lines in the direction of Utena-Švenčionėliai and the direction of Biržai were narrow-gauge railways. The first narrow-gauge railway in Lithuania, 71 km with a width of 750

mm, was finished on November 11, 1895. This line ran from Švenčionėliai to Pastoviai (now in Belarus). Two years later this line was extended from Švenčionėliai to Panevėžys.

Two railway stations were also added to it: Utena and Troškūnai, also marked on the map. The train service was already running on September 28, 1899, and the formal opening took place on May 13, 1901.

The line between Gubernija and Pasvalys, constructed by the Germans in 1916, was extended to Biržai and Šiauliai at the beginning of the twenties, and had been improved in 1935 from 600 mm to a width of 750 mm. On the map the line Joniškis – Žeimelis is also marked. This line was also constructed as a 600 mm narrow-gauge railway in 1916. In addition a line from Skapiškis via Suvainiškiai in the direction of Latvia was then also constructed, which still functioned in the sixties. In 1937-1938 the line Panevėžys-Joniškėlis (750 mm) was also constructed in this area.

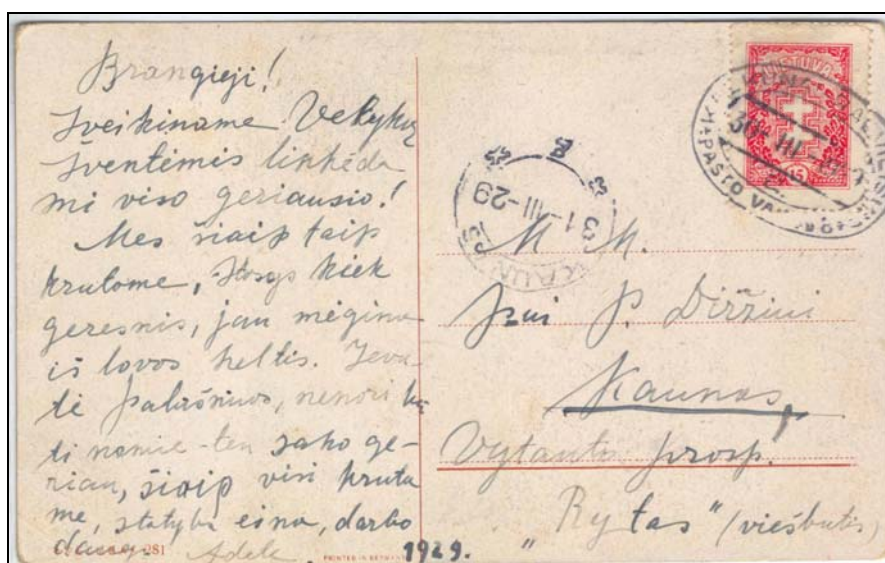


III. 4a (73 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on Oct. 5, 1931 to Saločiai, via railway-post route nr 7. On the back: the railway-post cancel of line 7, Radviliškis - Kalkūnai, the oval type, code letter probably 'b'.

The address side of the letter indicates the dispatch town: Raseiniai. Also striking is the printed text with the summons to replace the Polish administration in Vilnius with the 'Lithuanian right' to this town.



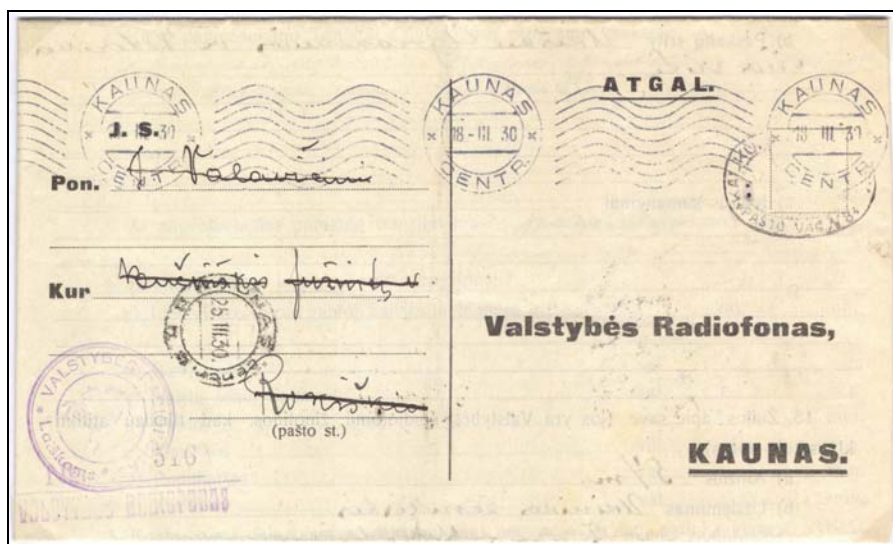
III. 4b (120 %)



III. 5a (83 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on March 30, 1929 to Kaunas via line 8, Kalkūnai – Radviliškis, code letter - after magnifying - 'a'.



III. 5b (100 %)



III. 6a (59 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent by the State Radio on March 18, 1930 from Kaunas to Rokiškis. On the postcard the line 8 cancel, Kalkūnai – Radviliškis, can be seen and the violet cancel of the State Radio. The code letter is - even after magnifying - not clear.



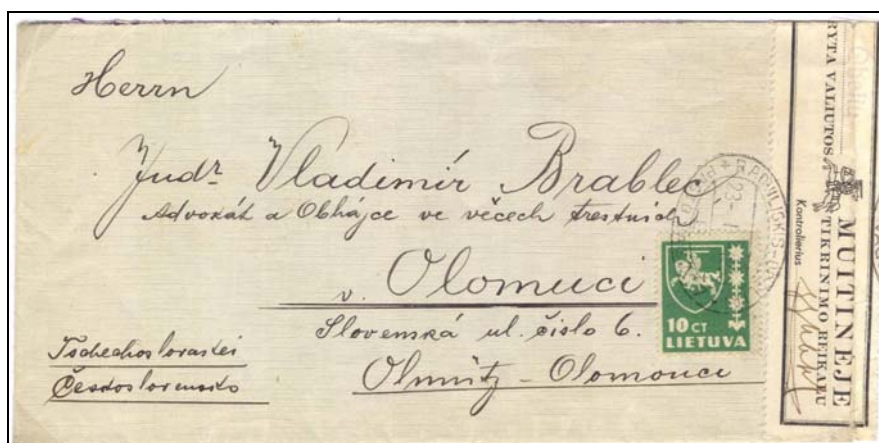
III. 6b (100 %)

The oval cancel type 3 of line 7, Radviliškis – Kalkūnai, was used with the code letters 'a' (Fugalevičius) and 'b' (ill. 4).

The reverse direction, line 8, also used type 3 with code letters 'a' (ill. 5) and 'b' (Fugalevičius).

In 1934 the route altered and ran as far as the Lithuanian border town of Obeliai.

In ill. 7 a letter, opened by the Obeliai customs. In Fugalevičius's handbook a number of these kinds of control tapes are depicted, with the place name. With this type of control tape the place name could be filled in.



III. 7a (61 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on January 23, 1930, to Olomuc in Czechoslovakia via line 7, Radviliškis – Obeliai. The closing strip was from the Obeliai customs who checked the letter.



III. 7b (100 %)

The code letter 'B'.

Line 7 continued to use type 3, but now with the code letters 'A' (Fugalevičius) and 'B' (ill. 7).

Line 8, too, used the code letters 'A' (ill. 8) and 'B' (ill. 9).



III. 7c (61 %)

The reverse side of the letter.



III. 8a (83 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on February 8, 1939 to Benoni in South Africa with the railway cancel of line 8, Obeliai – Radviliškis. The code letter is 'A'.



III. 8b (100 %)



III. 9a (75 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on January 4, 1936 to Klaipėda, via line 8, Obeliai – Radviliškis. The code letter is 'B'.



III. 9b (100 %)

CANCEL TYPES ROUTE 7-8 WITH DATES

U = collection Uspuras F = cancel book Fugalevičius H = article in HBG 1

Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
7-8	Radviliškis - Kalkūnai v.v. (1920-1927)	1 large circular	---	May 29, 1920 (U)	Sept. 19, 1921 (F) X ?, 1921 (H)	Sept. 10, 1927(U)
7	Radviliškis - Kalkūnai (1927-1934)	3 (oval)	a	..., .. 1931 (F)		Aug. 31, 1933 (U)
		3	b	Oct. 5, 1931 (U)		Sept. 1, 1933 (U)
	Radviliškis - Obeliai (1934-1940)	3	A	Nov. 3, 1935 (F)		
		3	B	July, 27, 1934 (U)		Jan. 23, 1938 (U)
8	Kalkūnai - Radviliškis (1927-1934)	3	a	Dec. 25, 1927 (U)	Sept 1, 1930 (F) Sept 14, 1930 (H)	Jan. 1, 1933 (U)
		3	b	Dec. ?, 1928 (U)	July 3, 1930 (F) July 13, 1930 (U)	Oct. 1, 1933 (U)
	Obeliai - Radviliškis (1934-1940)	3	A	Nov. 2, 1934 (F)	Dec. 28, 1934 (H)	May 25, 1939 (U)
		3	B	Jan. 1, 1934 (U)	June 26, 1934 (U)	Sept. 26, 1938 (F)

III. 10a (77 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on June 26, 1934 via the railway-post route 8, Obeliai – Radviliškis. The code letter is unclear.



III. 10b (100%)



Section 9-10

Line 9 was the indication for the railway-post section Panevėžys – Utena, and line 10 for Utena - Panevėžys. As we saw on the map (ill. 3) this railway line is the first narrow-gauge railway line in Lithuania, and for the railway post it had to become a separate route.

The cancel first used on this route was type 2a, the small circular cancel with the route numbers 9-10 below (ill. 11). The postcard also has a violet cancel of the military Hussar Regiment (and a reduced rate: 20 sk. skatiku). The standard rate for an inland postcard was raised to 100 sk. as from March 1, 1922.



III. 11a (83 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on April 24, 1922 to Vilkiya, via route nr 9-10, Panevėžys – Utena.



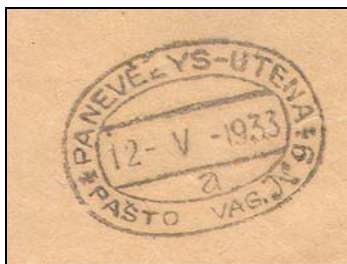
III. 11b (100%)

Cancel type 2a, small circular, with section number below.

This period was, however, a period of inflation. The rate for a postcard started with 20 sk. on January 1, 1919, raised to 50 sk. on July 1, 1921, doubled to 100 sk. on March 1, 1922, shortly afterwards, on July 15, 1922, doubled again to 200 sk., and doubled again to 400 sk. on September 10, 1922. This led to a new currency: on October 1, 1922 Lithuania switched to the Litas (=100 Centu). A survey of the Lithuanian postal rates can be found in Martin Bechstedt's 'hand-book' (with data by Prof. U.E. Klein and Dr V. Doniela, p.217).

After the early small circular railway-post cancel only the oval cancel type 3 with code letter 'a' can be found on this section.

Line 9, Panevėžys – Utena:



III. 12b (100 %)

Code letter clearly 'a'.

And line 10, Utena – Panevėžys:



III. 13 (100 %)



III. 12a (69 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter with the indication of the sender below left '...Tvarkymo depattamento Kultūrtechnikas'; a postage-free official letter. The letter was sent on May 12, 1933 via railway-post route 9, Panevėžys – Utena, to Kaunas.



III. 13a (77 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard, sent on May 9, 1929 to Kaunas with route nr 10, Utena – Panevėžys.

CANCEL TYPES ROUTE 9-10 WITH DATES

U = collection Uspuras F = cancel book Fugalevičius H = article in HBG 1

Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
9-10	Panevėžys - Utena v.v.(1921-1927)	2a (small circular and nr below)	a	May 23, 1921 (U)		Feb. 25, 1926 (F)
9	Panevėžys - Utena (1928-1940)	3 (oval)	a	April 4, 1930 (U)		May 12, 1933 (U)
	Panevėžys - Švenčionėliai (1940-1943)	3	a	Dec. 3, 1941 (U)	June 21, 1942 (F)	July 30, 1943 (U)
10	Utena - Panevėžys (1928-1940)	3	a	July 24, 1928 (F)	Sept. 5, 1929 (U) Sept. 5, 1930 (H)	Dec. 6, 1937 (U)
	Švenčionėliai - Panevėžys (1940-1943)	3	a	June 13, 1940 (U)		Nov. ?, 1940 (F)
9-10	Panevėžys - Švenčionėliai.ca. 1942	2a	a	Feb. 25, 1942 (H)		

In the table: cancel type 2a, 1942, is mentioned in HBG. It seems to me a case of 'reuse'.

III. 14a (63 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on August 17, 1936 to Kaunas, via route nr 10, Utena – Panevėžys, code letter clearly 'a'.



III. 14b (100 %)

After the surrender of the Vilnius area to Lithuania the railway connection with Švenčionėliai was also restored (1940). Apparently the railway-post route was also extended: in the table above the new cancels are also mentioned.

I have only seen these cancels in Vytautas Fugalevičius's cancel book.



With the increase of the Lithuanian economy the railways became more important, too. In order to raise efficiency the management of the narrow-gauge railways and the 'standard' railways had merged. As is often the case with reorganizations it only got worse, and in 1928 the organization was split again. This led to great progress within the narrow-gauge railways as a whole. The longest lines, Panevėžys – Utena and Šiauliai – Biržai, were connected to each other in 1937-1938. This line ran from Panevėžys to Joniškėlis. Panevėžys became the centre of the narrow-gauge railways net, which would eventually reach a length of 450 km. There was also a plan to construct a narrow-gauge railway connection between Troškūnai – on the line Panevėžys – Utena- and Ūkmergė, where the narrow-gauge rail-

way line from Jonava ended. This, however, never left the drawing-table. In Anykščiai, between Troškūnai and Utena, the 'Narrow-gauge railways Museum' has now been established. It is a complete narrow-gauge railways complex with century-old station buildings and, of course, narrow-gauge rails, water-supply system, and a steel railway bridge. In 1972 the railway transport on the section Anykščiai – Utena – Švenčionėliai ended. The part between Rubikiai and Utena was also demolished. The section Panevėžys Anykščiai - Rubikiai (68.4 km) was still used for goods-transport, passengers, and tourism. One can make a trip by narrow-gauge railway train from Anykščiai to Rubikiai, where there is a well-known lake.



III. 15a (84 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on December 23, 1923
to Pailgotas via route nr 11-12, Šiauliai
– Biržai.



III. 15b (100 %)



III. 16a (83 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, to the same address in
Pailgotas, also sent on December 26,
1923. Concluding from the hand-
writing: also by the same sender.



III. 16b (100 %)

Section 11-12

This last railway-post section in North-East Lithuania was also a narrow-gauge section. Here it concerns the route between Šiauliai en Biržai.

Alongside you can see a postcard and a letter with cancel type 2a, small circular, with the route numbers below, and with the code letter 'a' (**ill. 15 and 16**).

From 1927-1941 on this line, too, the oval cancels, type 3, were used, in both directions with the code letter 'a' and 'b'.



III. 17b (100 %)



III. 17a (82 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Cancel, type 3, on a postcard to Pasvalys, sent on April ?, 1930, via route nr 11.
The code letter is not clear.



III. 18b (100 %)



III. 18c (100 %)



III. 18a (73 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter to Silale, June 23, 1929, via route 12, code letter 'a'.

CANCEL TYPES ROUTE 11-12 WITH DATES

U = collection Uspuras F = cancel book Fugalevičius H = article in HBG 1

Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
11-12	Šiauliai - Biržai v.v. (1928-1940) ??	2a	a	Aug. 16, 1924 (U)	Dec. 26, 1925 (F)	Dec. 26, 1926 (U)
		2a	ß	Dec. 23, 1923 (U)	Aug. 30, 1925 (H)	April 16, 1927 (U)
11	Šiauliai - Biržai (1928-1940)	3	a	April 20, 1930 (U)		Dec. 1, 1939 (F)
		3	b	March 8, 1930 (U)		June 17, 1937 (H)
12	Biržai - Šiauliai (1928-1940)	3	a	June 23, 1929 (U)	March ?, 1931 (H) April 15, 1938 (U)	Sept. 14, 1940 (U)
		3	b	Dec. 16, 1929 (U)	March 12, 1931 (F) Oct. 4, 1934 (H)	Aug. 20, 1940 (U)



III. 19b (100 %)



III. 19a (76 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard to Kaunas, sent on May, 8, 1938, via route nr 12.

Literature

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Pašto antspaudai Lietuvoj = Post-stempel in Litauen = P.O. cancels in Lithuania / V. Fugalevičius. – ed. 1990

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Visser, J.P.

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Internet

www.ngr.lt

Also gives a survey of the history of the narrow-gauge railways in Lithuania. One can go from the homepage to the English version.

ADDITIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS

Station Kibartai

ВЕРЖБОЛОВО (Werzbolovo, Virbalis in Lithuanian, and Wirballen in German) was a very important transfer station between Germany and Russia. The station itself was 4 kilometres away from the border, and the small village of **КИБАРТЫ** (Kibarty, Lithuanian Kybartai) was directly situated on the border.

A postcard from tsarist times with a picture of station **КИБАРТЫ** (Kibarty, Lithuanian Kybartai), The cancel is also of station **КИБАРТЫ**.



III. (100 %)

III. (82 %)



Station Vilnius

Station Vilnius on a postcard, used as field post during World War I.

III. (82 %)



CHAPTER 7 LINES 13-14, 15-16, 19-20, 21-22 AND THE UNNUMBERED LINE UKMERGĖ - JONAVA

In this chapter we pay attention to the lines not dealt with before in independent Lithuania during the interbellum.

Section 13-14

Line 13 was the indication for the section Kaunas-Alytus, and line 14 for Alytus-Kaunas.

Yet there had been a strange interruption: according to Fugalevičius the indication of line 14 had been in use for the section Kaunas-Alytus between 1934 and 1938.

A summary of the cancel types of the previous issues:

1. Large circular (cross-section 30 mm) with section numbers below
2. Small circular (cross-section 25 mm) with three sub-types
 - a. section number below
 - b. section number above and code letter below
 - c. both place names
3. Oval cancel

The oldest cancel, type 1, was not used on this section. Type 2b, small circular, with the section number above and code letter below, was used until 1927 (*ill.1*).



In the first issue of HBG (1983) a cancel type 2a was shown, too: the section number 14 below (Nov. 19, 1923).



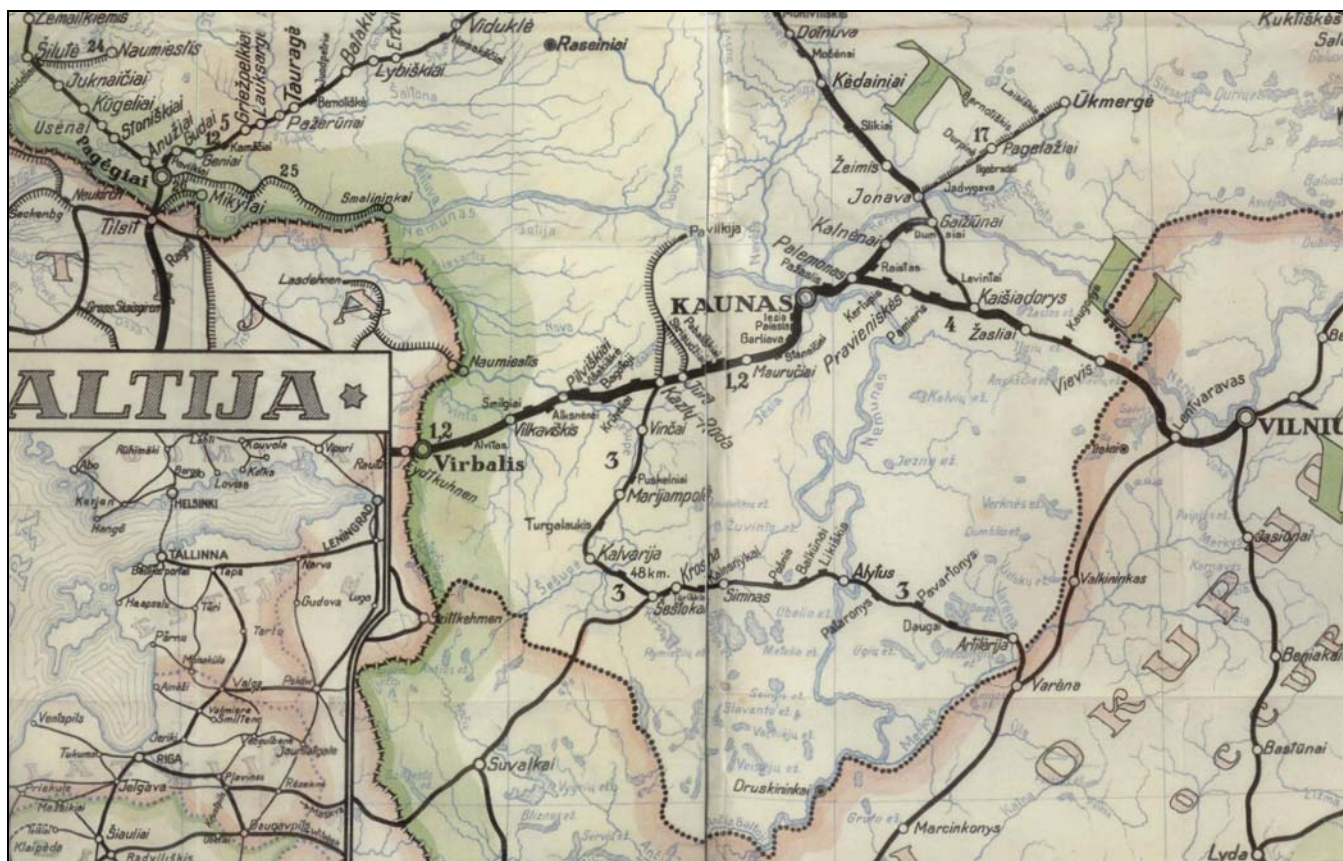
III. 1 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Postcard to Šventėžeris with the railway cancel of line 13, type 2b, dated April 15, 1927 and code letter 'a'. Apparently written in Mariampolė.



III. 2 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter with the oval railway cancel of line 13, date Nov. 13, 1934 and code letter 'A'.



III. 3 (67 %) (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras) Railway map from the thirties.

For the period 1927-1941 we see the oval cancels, type 3, on this line (III. 2).



To the map

On the map above, the railway line from Kaunas to Alytus in the south can be seen. The line runs further eastward, but then approaches the border with the Polish administered Vilnius area. The connection between Alytus and the - then Polish - Varėna was no longer in use, and it was never restored.

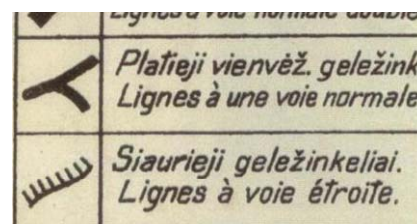
On the map the railway line of post route 15-17 can also be seen: Kaunas - Vievis. Vievis, too, had become a border town as a result of the occupation of the Vilnius area. Thus the railway traffic had been severely restricted, and not before 1928 was a second railway constructed to



Vievis.

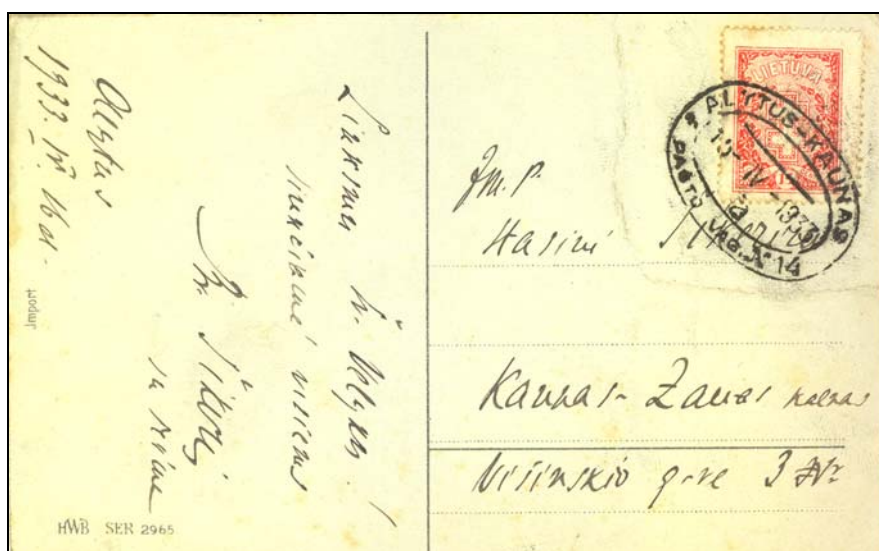
Under Polish pressure the Polish - Lithuanian border was opened again on March 19, 1938, and the connection between Kaunas and Vievis could be restored. Between Vievis and Landvarono the rails had bent or disappeared and the sleepers had rotted or burned. Not before April 11, 1938 did trains run again. On Oct. 10, 1939 a part of the Vilnius area was returned to Lithuania., and this time, too, the railway-post routes had been adjusted to the new situation.

Above to the left the line Smalininkai - Pagėgiai can still be seen, firstly the section of railway-post route 15 -16 (1924-1928), thereafter that of post route 19 - 20 (1928-1934). This narrow-gauge railway line (Pogegen-Smalleninken) was opened on August 1, 1902.

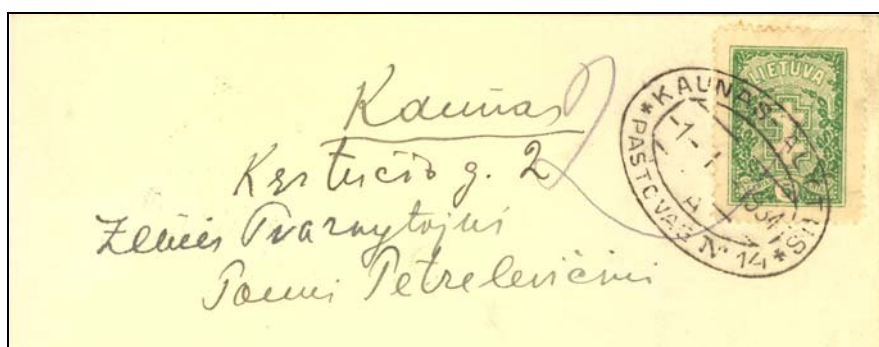




III. 4 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on March 16, 1927, with the cancel of railway-post route 14, code letter 'B'.



III. 5 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, April 16, 1933, with the oval cancel of railway-post route 14, code letter 'a'. The postcard was sent to Kaunas, and in the text it can be read that the postcard was written in Alytus. So it went the right direction.



III. 6 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Small letter, sent on Jan. 1, 1934, code letter 'A'.

CANCEL TYPES ROUTE 13-14 WITH DATES

U = collection Uspuras F = cancel book Fugalevičius H = article in HBG 1

Section	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
13	Kaunas - Alytus (1920-1927)	2b	a	April 15, 1927 (U)		
		3	a	? ?, 19?? (F)?????		
		3	A	Feb. 3, 1933 (U)	Nov. 13, 1934 (U)	Oct. 10, 1939 (F)
14	Alytus - Kaunas (1920-1927)	2a	--	Nov. 19, 1923 (H)		
		2b	B	June 12, 1926 (U)	June 25, 1926 (F) Dec. 29, 1926 (U)	March 16, 1927 (U)
	Alytus Kaunas (1927-1934)	3	a	Nov. 5, 1927 (H)	May 5, 1928 (F)	April 16, 1933 (U)
	Kaunas Alytus (1934-1937)	3	A	Jan. 1, 1934 (U)	March 11, 1934 (F)	Jan.?, 1936 (U) April 11, 1948 (U)
	Alytus-Kaunas (1937-41)	3	A	Oct. 16, 1937 (U)		

Type 2a: Small, section number below in cancel

Type 2b: Small, section number above in cancel

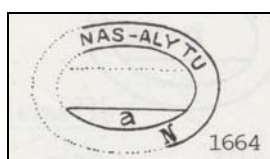
Type 3: oval

Kaunas - Alytus

Thus cancel type 2a was observed for route 14 in HBG only.

Cancel type 2b had code letter 'a' for route 13 (*ill. 1*) and code letter 'B' for route 14 (*ill. 4*).

The oval cancel type 3 at first clearly had code letter 'a' for route 14 (*ill. 5*), observed by Fugalevičius for route 13 without a clearly visible year:

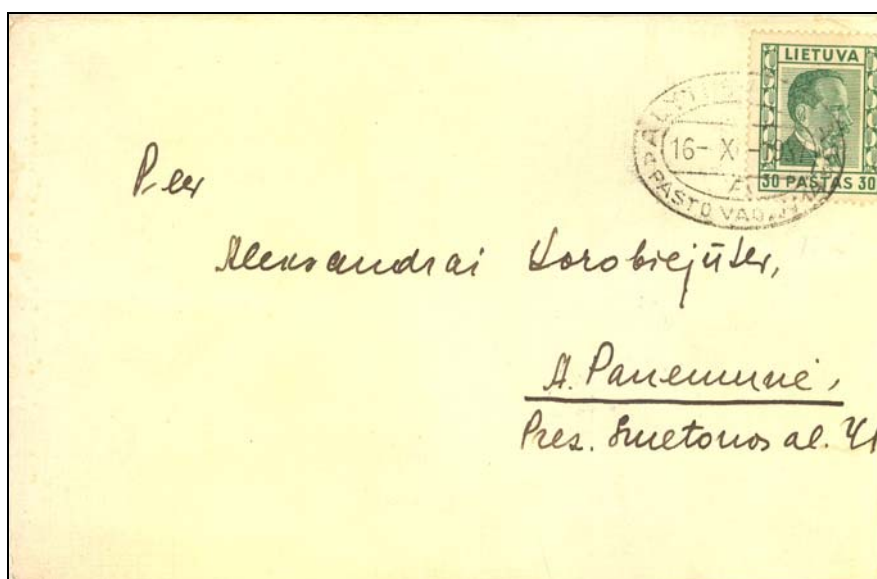


Later on the oval cancel had the code letter 'A' for route 13 (*ill. 2*) and for route 14 (*ill. 7*):

The change in the cancel of route 14 in the period 1934-1937 remains strange. Even if we look at the small letter (*ill. 6*), we see that the letter had to go to Kaunas, the starting-point of line 14. It seems that the cancel was used for both directions during this period. In the cancel below the indication is Alytus - Kaunas again.



On the railway map shown before there is also a railway line indicated



III. 7 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on October 16, 1937, via railway-post route 14, with the oval cancel, code letter 'A'. The letter went in the direction of Kaunas and the ultimate destination was Panemunė, a small town south of Pagėgiai.

between Alytus and Varėna. Opposite Alytus (then OLITA) the town Poteronys (then POTARANTSY) is situated on the far side of the river Nemunas. The railway had already been opened in February 1885 between Poteronys and Varėna (then ORANY). On October 15, 1899 Alytus and Poteronys were connected by a railway bridge. The withdrawing Russian troops destroyed this bridge in August 1915, but the Germans constructed a new bridge and the connection was restored again. During the Polish occupation of Varėna the trains ran as far as Artilerija, just before the new 'border' - until 1927. In the Second World War the railway


connection was cut off again, and it was decided not to repair the part between Alytus and Varėna. Also taken into consideration was that it was then not necessary to repair the railway bridge¹. The railway-post cancel of route 14 was still used on a very late document. It was a document for the collected revenues of the railway station for delivery to the station-master. This was the responsibility of the railway-post employees, so we often find a cancel of the railway-carriage post or the railway post office on such documents (*ill. 8*).

¹See: www.olitaorany.projektas.lt/olita_orany_istorija_en.htm

9933,-

ПУТЕВАЯ ВЕДОМОСТЬ № _____
по сбору станционной выручки и по раздаче начальникам станций
порожних сумок за _____ 1945 г.

№ п.п.	Название станций	Сдано сумок для доставки в банк или нач. станции		Сдано о порожних или для копир.	Размер сумм вложенных в сумки		Подпись начальника станции
		Количество (прописью)	№		наличными	Документами	
1	Копискода	1	1	1	14804452		
	Кисо	1	446				



Расписка № 1

к путевой ведомости № _____

выдана _____

в том, что принято _____

штук кожаных (брезентовых) мешков за номерами, указанными в путевой ведомости № _____ для раздачи начальникам станций.

Подпись агента, нкассирующего выручку _____

1945 г.

Расписка № 2

к путевой ведомости № _____

выдана представителю _____

в том, что от него принято _____

штук кожаных (брезентовых) мешков с выручкой станций согласно путевой ведомости № _____

Подпись агента Госбанка, уполномоченного на прием сумок с выручкой _____

1945 г.

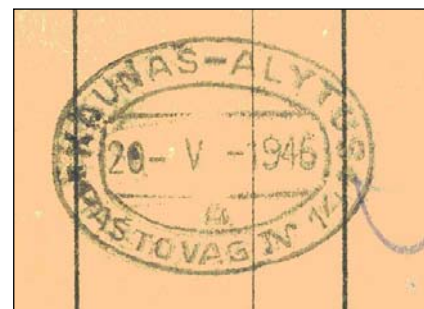
Тип. из-ва „Железнодорожник Литвы“ зак. № 800-10000

Section 15-16

In 1924 line 15 was the indication for the section Pagėgiai - Smaleninkai and so line 16 for Smaleninkai - Pagėgiai. Cancel type 2c was used for both directions, with both place names in the cancel.



Indeed Pagėgiai was wrongly spelled as 'Pajėgiai' in both cancels.

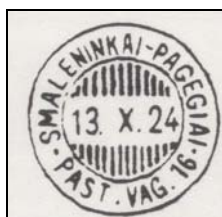


III. 8 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Document from 1946 with the cancel of railway-post route 14, Kaunas-Alytus, May 26, 1946.
Title of the document: 'Route pronouncement Nr. ...'

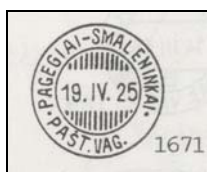


III. 9 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on July 14, 1926, cancel type 2c, without the route numbers
Below in the cancel initially seemed to read 16, but - after considerable magnifying - it reads VAG.

In HBG a cancel of this type is also shown with route 16 and the correctly written place name, but this time the place names are situated above.



In 1924-1927 cancels of the same type were used, now with Pagėgiai, but without number indication (ill. 9). Fugalevičius shows the reverse direction.



Type 2b, too, a small circular cancel with the section number above, was used (1925?-1928?). In this cancel both section numbers, 15-16, were indicated above with the code letter 'a' below.



Afterwards the indication of railway-post route 15-16 was used for a different section: Kaunas – Vievis (1928-1939) (ill. 10, 11, and 12). As we saw on the railway map shown before, Vievis was the terminus on the line in the direction of Vilnius.



III. 11 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on May 10, 1938, code letter 'a', via railway-post route 15, Kaunas - Vievis and back, May 12, 1938 from Vilnius. Arrival in Kaunas on May 13, 1938.



III. 10 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on Dec. 18, 1931, via railway-post route 15, Kaunas - Vievis.

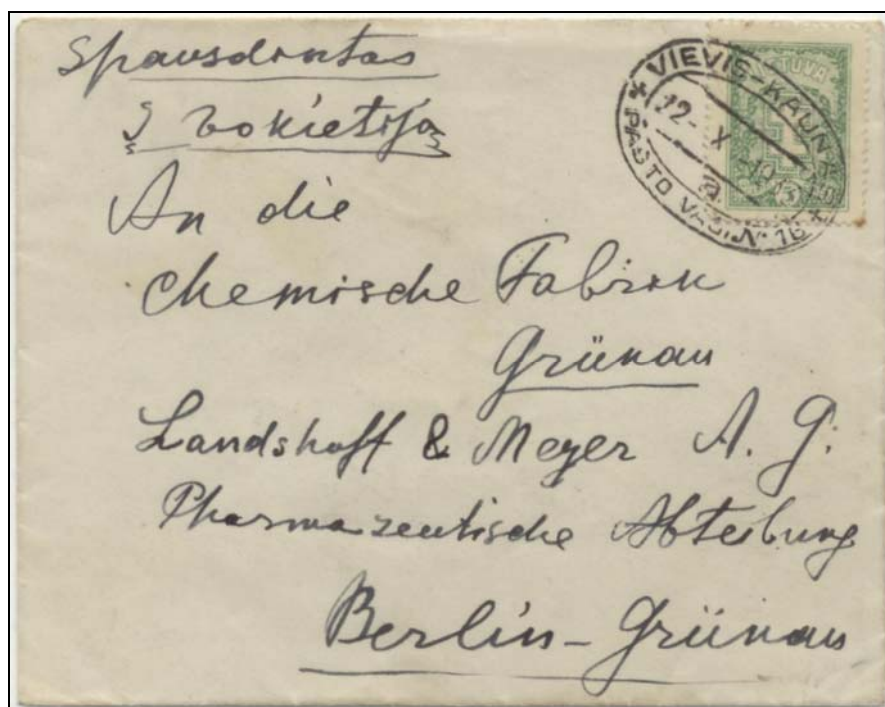


CANCEL TYPES ROUTE 15-16 WITH DATES

U = collection Uspuras F = cancel book Fugalevičius H = article in HBG 1 K = collection Kaptein

Section	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
15	Pajėgiai-Smaleninkai (1924)	2c	--	Aug. 25, 1924 (H)		
Nr. --	Pagėgiai-Smaleninkai (1924-1925)	2c	--	April 19, 1925 (F)		
15-16	(Pagėgiai-Smaleninkai) (1925?-1928?)	2b	a	Aug. 30, 1926 (H)		
15	Kaunas - Vievis (1928-1939)	3	a	March ?, 1929 (F)	Dec. 18, 1931 (U)	May 10, 1938 (U) Nov.?, 1938 (U)
	Kaunas – Landwarów (1939)	3	A	Feb. ?, 1939 (F)		March 17, 1939(U)
	Kaunas - Gudagai (1939-1940)			May 17, 1940 (U)		
	Kaunas – Vilnius – Turmantas (1940)	3	b	May 20, 1940 (F)		
	Kaunas – Vilnius – Kena (1940-1941)	3	a	? ?, 1941 (F)		
16	Smaleninkai - Pajėgiai (1924)	2c	--	June 19, 1924 (F)		Aug. 29, 1924 (H)
16	Smaleninkai - Pagėgiai	2c		Oct. 13, 1924 (H)		
Nr --	Smaleninkai - Pagėgiai (1924-1925)	2c	--	April 19, 1924 (???) (F)	July 14, 1926 (U)	July 7, 1927 (H)
16	Vievis – Kaunas (1928-1939)	3	a	April 4, 1929 (F)	Oct. 22, 1933 (K) Dec. 4, 1934 (H)	May 14, 1937 (U)
	Landwarów – Kaunas (1939)					
	Gudagai – Kaunas (1939)	2c	a	June 12, 1940 (H)		June 19, 1940 (F)
	Turmantas – Vilnius - Kaunas (1940)					
	Kena – Vilnius – Kaunas (1940-1941)	3	a	Dec. ?, 1940 (F)	Aug. 7, 1947 (U)	Nov. 11, 1947 (U)

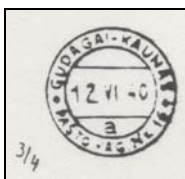
Type 2b: small, section number above in cancel Type 2c: small, place names in cancel Type 3: oval



III. 12 (ex. Jan Kaptein) (59 %)
Letter, sent on Oct. 22(?), 1933,
via railway-post route 16, Vievis -
Kaunas.



On the railway-post route Kaunas - Vievis we see, in both directions, only the oval cancel type 3.
 When on October 10, 1939 the Vilnius area became Lithuanian again the indication Kaunas - Landwarów appeared in the cancel. On the railway map this town can be found just past the - then former - border, but under its Lithuanian name. It is a bit strange that the indication 'Landwarów' was used: the Polish name. In the Czarist period the Polish name ЛАИДВАРОВО (LANDWAROWO) was also used. The Lithuanian name is Lentvaris or Lentvariškės. On the railway map the town is still situated in the Polish area on the line to Vilnius. Here there is a branch of the line to the south, in the direction of Varėna.
 Afterwards we find the name Gudagai in the cancels for a short period. This town is situated further eastward, nowadays just past the present Lithuanian border.



In 1940 the section of the railway-post route was changed again, this time running from Kaunas via Vilnius to Turmantas in the extreme north of the former Vilnius area, near the Latvian border (ill. 14).

During the period 1940/1941 the section again went via Vilnius to the east, and we find in the cancels the town of Kena. This town is situated eastwards on the line, just before the present Lithuanian border.



III. 13b

Of course cancels from this period 1939-1941, with all its changes, are rare. Vytautas Fugelevičius shows a number of these, but there are still some white spaces concerning these in his cancel book.

ПУТЕВАЯ ВЕДОМОСТЬ № 1
 по сбору станционной выручки и по разлаче начальникам станций
 порожних сумок за 7-8-194 г. поезда 209

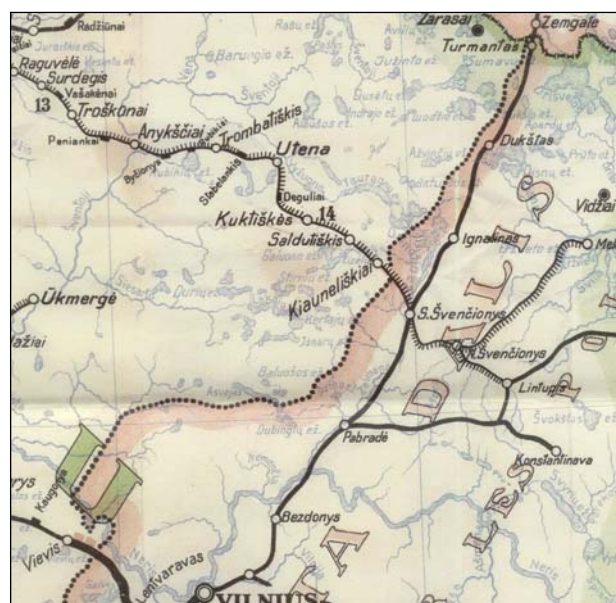
№ п. п.	Название станций	Сдано сумок для доставки в банк или нач. станций		Состояние сумок по прибытии в пункт назначения	Размер сумм вложенных в сумки		Подпись начальника станции
		Количество (прописью)	№№		излич-ными	Докумен-таль	
1	Лентварис	одна	442	хор.	3930	✓	Монета
2	Белые	одна	2	хор.	824	✓	Синица
3	Масельно	одна	5	хор.	873	✓	Масельно
4	Камингари	2		хор.	2463	✓	Камингари
5	Браваинин	одна	2	хор.	264	✓	Браваинин
6	Талейно						
7	Мусденей	одна	4	хор.	671	✓	Мусденей
8	Оморо	6		хор.	9234	✓	Оморо

Расписка № 1
 к путевой ведомости № _____
 выдана _____
 в том, что принято _____
 штук кожаных (брезентовых) мешков за _____
 номерами, указанными в путевой ведомости № _____ для раздачи начальникам станций.
 Подпись агента, инкассирующего выручку _____ 194 г.

Расписка № 2
 к путевой ведомости № _____
 выдана представителю _____
 в том, что от него принято _____
 штук кожаных (брезентовых) мешков с выручкой станций согласно путевой ведомости № _____
 Подпись агента Госбанка, уполномоченного на прием сумок с выручкой _____ 194 г.

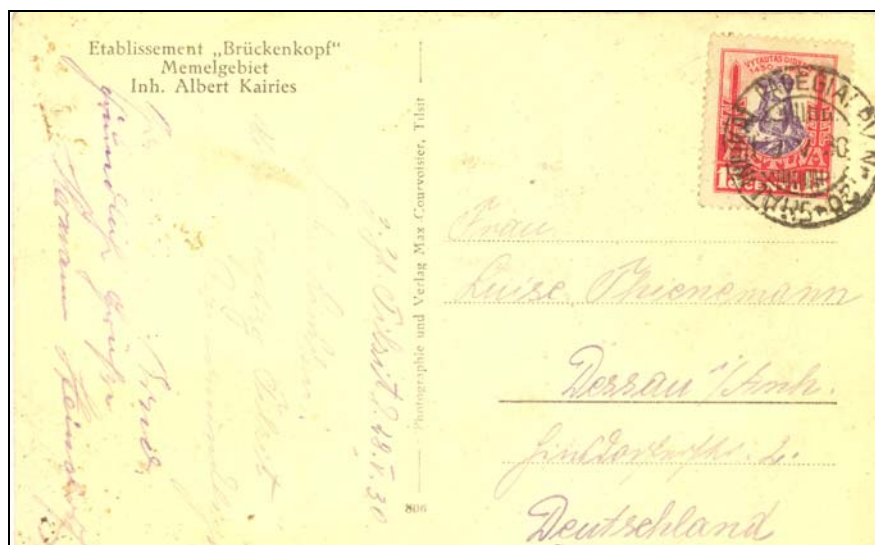
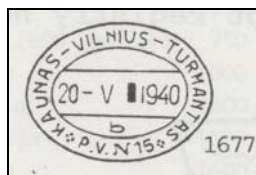
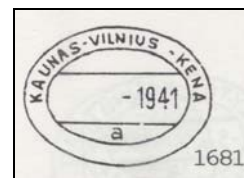
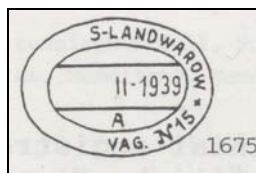
Тип. «Литва» г. Вильнюс. Лист № 1120-10.0.0

III. 13a (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras) Document with the cancel of railway-post route 16.



III. 14 Map with Turmantas in the extreme north of the former Vilnius area.

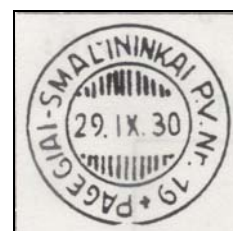
Cancels of route 15-16 from Vytautas Fugelevičius's cancel handbook:



III. 15 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard with a picture from the 'Memelgebiet' (Memel area) on the picture side, sent on May ?, 1930 via railway-post route 20.

Section 19-20

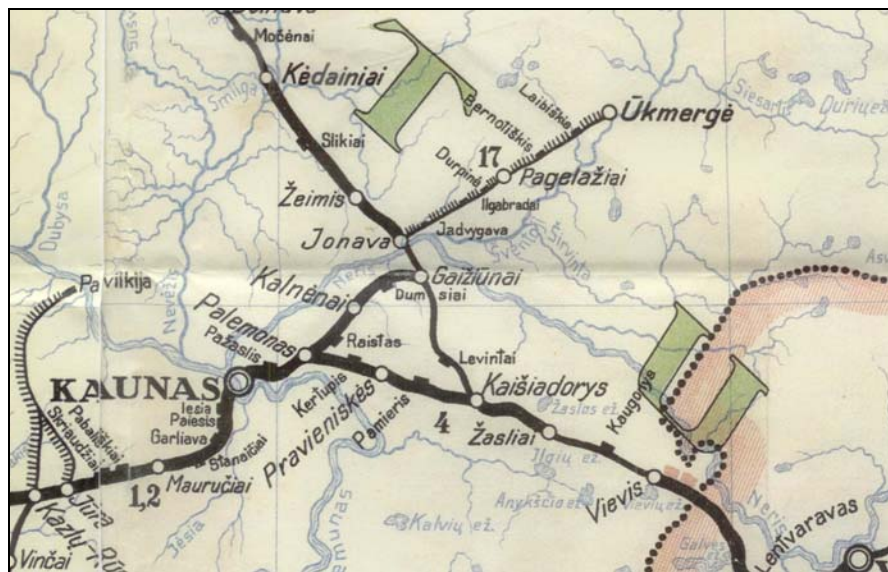
Line 15-16 ran on the section Pagėgiai – Smaleninkai until 1928, but from then onwards line 19-20 ran this section. This remained so until 1934. After 1934 there was no railway-post route on this section. As a part of the Memel area this area returned to Germany and is then called again Pogegen – Schmalleninken. As cancel types we find type 2c, small circular with both place names, only on this section.



line 19



line 20



For a short time in 1940-1941 line 19 was the indication for the section Vilnius – Varėna, and so line 20 for the reverse direction. No cancels have (yet) been found from this short period.

CANCEL TYPES ROUTES 19-20, 21-22 , and Ukmergė-Jonava WITH DATES

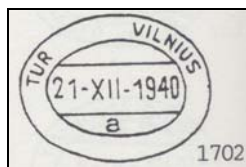
U = collection Uspuras F = cancel book Fugalevičius H = article in HBG 1

Section	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
19	Pagėgiai - Smaleninkai (1928-1934)	2c	--	Sept. 29, 1930 (H)		
19	Vilnius - Varėna (1940-1941)					
20	Smaleninkai – Pagėgiai (1928-1934)	2c	--	May 20, 1928 (H)	Dec. 4, 1929 (F) Dec. 15, 1929 (U) May ?, 1930 (U)	April 4, 1931 (U)
20	Varėna - Vilnius (1940-1941)					
21	Vilnius – Turmantas (1940-1941)			March ?, 1941 (U)		
22	Turmantas – Vilnius (1940-1941)	3	a	May 14, 1940 (U)		Dec. 21, 1940 (F)
No nr	Ukmergė - Jonava (1937-1940)	3	a	Nov. 20, 1938 (F)		
		3	B	Feb. 23, 1937 (U)	Nov. 23, 1937 (U)	May 14, 1940 (F)
	Jonava – Ukmergė (1938-1940)	3	A	May 9, 1938 (U)		

Type 2c: small, place names in cancel Type 3: oval

Section 21-22

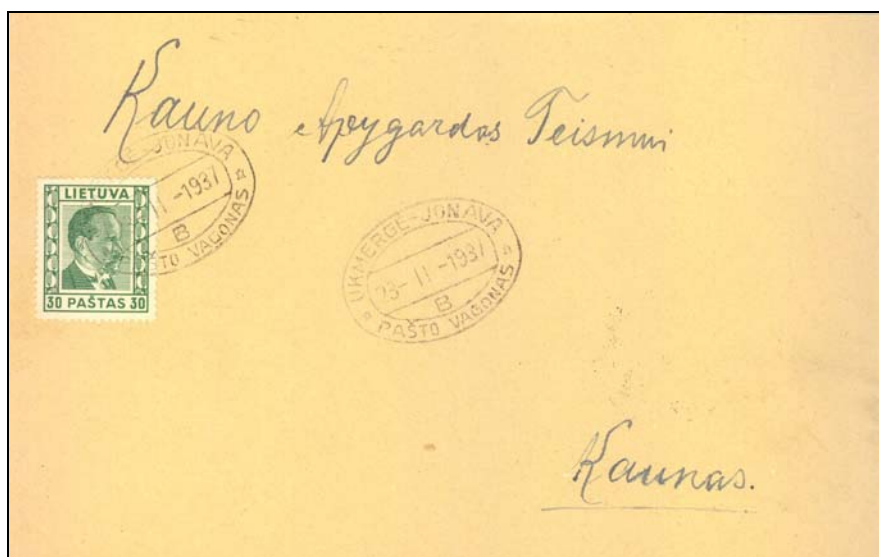
For a very short period railway-post route 21-22 was the indication for the section Vilnius - Turmantas (1940-1941). Vytautas Fugalevičius mentions a cancel:



Ukmergė – Jonava

During the period of 1938-1940 a railway-post route was also used without a number: Jonava – Ukmergė and Ukmergė – Jonava. On the map alongside it can be seen that it was a narrow-gauge railway line.

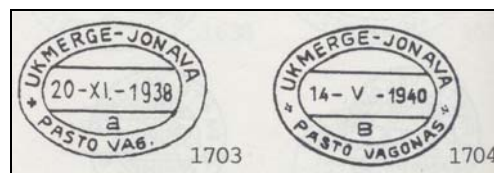
◀



III. 14 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on November 23, 1937.



The more distinct cancels from the cancel book:



CHAPTER 8 OSTLAND PERIOD

On June 22, 1941 Germany invaded the Soviet Union and the Lithuanian Soviet Republic was been occupied within a week. Of course the occupied territories had to be administered and to this purpose the Ostland as an administrative unit was introduced on July 17, 1941 under the new 'Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete' (State Ministry for the occupied Eastern Territories).

Alfred Rosenberg became minister and Hinrich Lohse became the first Reichskommissar für das Ostland (State Commissioner for the Eastern Territories). The Reichskommissar initially had his seat in Kaunas, now renamed Kauen again, but moved to Riga on September 1. The Ostland was divided into Generalbezirk (General district) Litauen, Generalbezirk Lettland, Generalbezirk Estland, and Generalbezirk Weissruthenien (White Ruthenia).

The Generalpostkommissar Ostland was initially, on July 25, 1941, also established in Kaunas, but was relocated to Riga at the end of September. In addition post offices for the Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland (German Official Post for the Eastern Territories) were established in Lithuania. In Kaunas this had already occurred on July 26, 1941. Officially September 1 was also the resumption of the civilian post in the Lithuanian part of the Ostland and the set up of activities within the German postal system. There had already been postal activities before: the well-known local surcharges of Telšiai and other towns on Soviet stamps. The surcharges in Vilnius with the text 'Nepriklausoma Lietuva' ('Independent Lithuania') were the cause of a clash with the German authorities. A large part of the stamps was destroyed. After September 1 initially the Hindenburg stamps were used, and somewhat later the surcharged Hitler stamps, issued on November 4, 1941. Stamps valid in Germany were also valid in Ostland.



III. 1 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on Dec. 3, 1941 to Šilalė from Anykščiai, via railway-post route nr 9, Panevėžys – Švenčionėliai. Anykščiai was situated on the narrow-gauge route Panevėžys – Anykščiai – Utena - Švenčionėliai. The rate, 12 Pfennig for a letter up to 20 gram, is correct.

Railways 1940-1941 : Sovietization

With the 'Non-aggression Pact' Lithuania was initially considered to belong to the influence sphere of Germany. After the conquest of Poland Lithuania was brought under the influence sphere of the Soviet Union. On June 21, 1940 Soviet troops marched into the Baltic states and within a few weeks the formal affiliation with the Soviet Union was arranged.

Under the People's Commissar for Traffic the Directorate Vilnius of the

Soviet Railways came into being, too, with three districts, established in Vilnius, Kaunas (Kauen or Kowno), and Siauliai (Schaulen). In March 1941 the 'Re-arrangement' of the European 1,435 mm railways to the Russian 1,524 mm width was started in Lithuania. This was done because, of course, the railways from Vilnius were also of military importance.

The German occupation

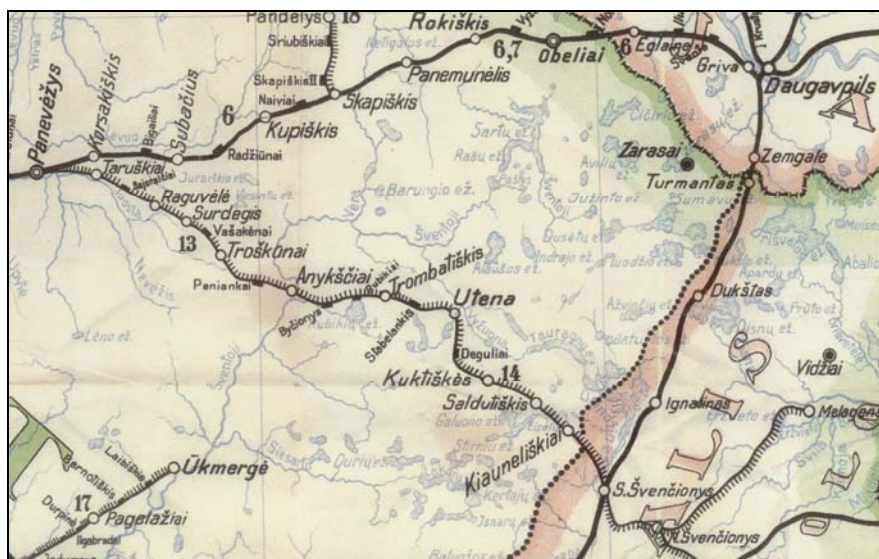
With the withdrawal the Russians took much material with them, and what remained was mostly destroyed.

Vilnius had already been occupied on June 24, and on July 9 the German troops were already in Tartu. The railways organization was to be administered by the 'Feldeisenbahndirektionen' (Field Railways Board) of the German army. For the administration of the railways a Haupteisenbahndirektion Nord (HBD) (Supreme Railways Board North) was installed in Riga. In 1942 the name was changed into Reichsverkehrsdirektionen (RVD) (State Traffic Board). As could be expected the railways track width change had started (again). Between July 1 and 7, 1941 the first orders were issued to re-arrange the Wilna-Daugavpils line to the West-European railways width, 1,435 mm. In the autumn of 1941 the Russian railways width 1,524 mm had been changed into 1,435 mm.

Postgebiet Ostland

Contrary to Estonia and Latvia the Lithuanian postal authorities did not continue their work in Lithuania. Everything was submitted to the German 'Postkommissar' in Kaunas.¹ This may well explain the variety of Lithuanian overprints on Russian stamps.

The Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland, now becoming active in Lithuania, was an independent organization, alongside to the Reichspost. As mentioned before 'Dienstpostämter' were rather quickly opened, the first on July 26, 1941 in Kaunas. The Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland had various tasks. Not only taking care of the 'Dienstpost' - in the sense of mail from official bodies -, but also the private mail of all civil servants, labourers, voluntary or not, etc. After a limited civil mail traffic had already been allowed on September 1, in the towns where Official post offices were situated, this was extended further to many much smaller post offices in Lithuania.



Part of a railways map from the thirties (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras), on which the narrow-gauge line Panevėžys – Anykščiai – Utena – Švenčionėliai in North Eastern Lithuania can be seen.

These post offices, together with the former Lithuanian staff, were linked to the Official post offices as 'Postzweigstelle', postal agency. Herewith the whole Lithuanian postal organization came into German hands. By an act of the State Ministry for the occupied eastern territories, April 24, 1942, the name 'Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland' was changed into 'Deutsche Post Ostland' with a branch civil mail and a branch official mail².

So at the top was the Generalpostkommissar for Ostland, under whom fell the four Postkommissars for the four areas. Many cancels were in use in Ostland, and this is quite a special collecting area including not only the cancels Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland, but also the reconstructed Russian cancels, special cancels for the 'Postzweigstellen'.

In this article we further restrict ourselves to the cancels used for the railways mail.

Railway post and railway post cancels

A railway connection was soon established between Riga and Tilsit, with daily courier fast trains for the official mail traffic. The use of the remaining railway lines slowly got on its way. In Ostland all railway routes fell under the central railways post office Riga. As to the railway post cancels no distinction can really be made between Dienstpost (official mail) and Civil mail, as Dienstpost was also transferred on all lines. The types which occur:

- The oval Lithuanian railway cancel
- The German oval standard railway post cancel
- The German new standard railway post cancel with 'Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland'
- Oval bilingual railway post cancel
- Double circular chopped Latvian cancel
- Oblong in frame

The use of Lithuanian cancels

As we can see on the letter alongside (ill. 1) the pre-war Lithuanian cancels were still used. Railway-post route 9-10 has been extensively discussed in HBG 49. The old cancel had still been used up to July 30, 1943.

¹ Most of the information on the history of the postal organization in Ostland can be found in the standard work 'Deutsche Dienstpost 1939-1945' van Hermann Schultz, 4. Lieferung, p. 215-248

² Schultz, p. 228: "Beim Erlass der VO. Des Reichsministers für die besetzten Ostgebiete vom 24.IV.1942..., die den Namen der Postverwaltung 'Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland' in 'Deutsche Post Ostland' anderte, ..."



Pre-war Lithuanian cancels of the station post offices have also remained in use, a.o.. Vilnius (*ill. 2*)



In addition the pre-war Lithuanian cancels of Kaunas (*ill. 3*) and Baisogala (*ill. 4*) are also shown here.



III. 3b

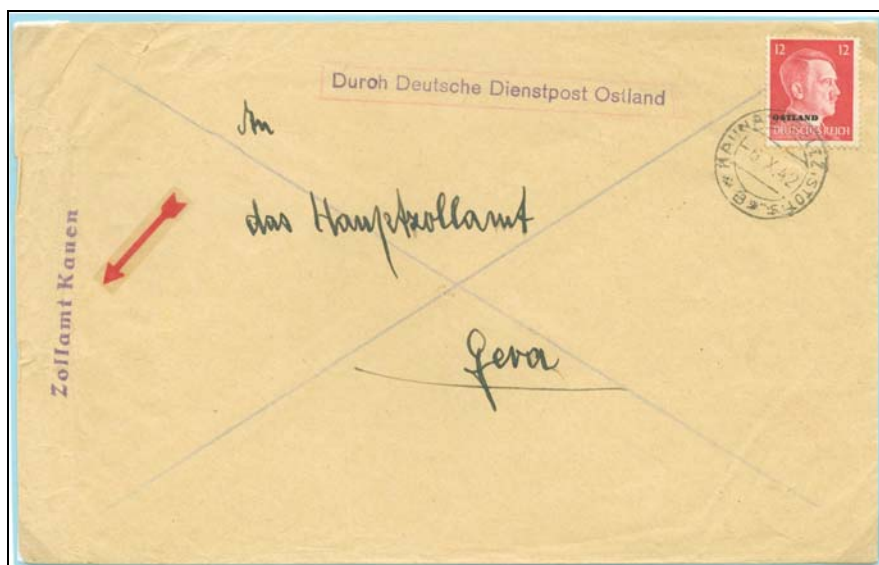


III. 4b



III. 2 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Registered letter, sent from the Vilnius railways post office (June 23, 1943) to Warsaw (June 28, 1943). On the cover the violet censorship cancel 'Aa' in a circle: censored in Königsberg. The rate, 42 Pfennig, was in accordance with the rates introduced on September 1: 12 Pfennig for inland letters up to 20 gram + 30 Pfennig for registration.



III. 3a (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent from the Kaunas railways post office, October 6, 1942, to Gera with a violet cancel of the Kaunas customs office. The postage, 12 Pfennig, is in accordance with the rate for inland letters up to 20 gram introduced on September 1.

German cancels for the railway post

German railway-post cancels, too, were used in several types: oval, double circular, oblong.

For the railway-post line Tilsit-Memel with Zug (Train) 91 and 92 the oval German 'Bahnpost' (Railway post) cancels were used (*ill. 5 and 6*).

From Riga the line ran across Lithuania to Tilsit in North-East Germany (see map below).



III. 5b

Cancel Zug 91, 40 x 28 mm

Here we see the use of the standard railway-post cancels of the German Reich. This is quite obvious, as the area had already become German before the outbreak of war. On March 23, 1939 the Memel area had officially been taken over by Germany. At the start of the war with the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941 Memel, of course, did not - formally - belong to the occupied territories. On October 10, 1944 Memel was encircled, and the following day all civilians were evacuated.

On January 28, 1945 the city was occupied by the Red Army.

Werner Mack has written an article about Zug 114, also Tilsit-Memel, and in the article is also reported (by von Lindeiner) Zug 406, Tilsit Memel.



III. 4 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Ostland postcard, 6 Pfennig, sent from railways post office Baisogala, July 14, 1942, to Kaunas. The rate is in accordance with the rate introduced on September 1, 1941.

The German postcards with "Hitler" and black surcharge "OSTLAND" were issued in November 1941.

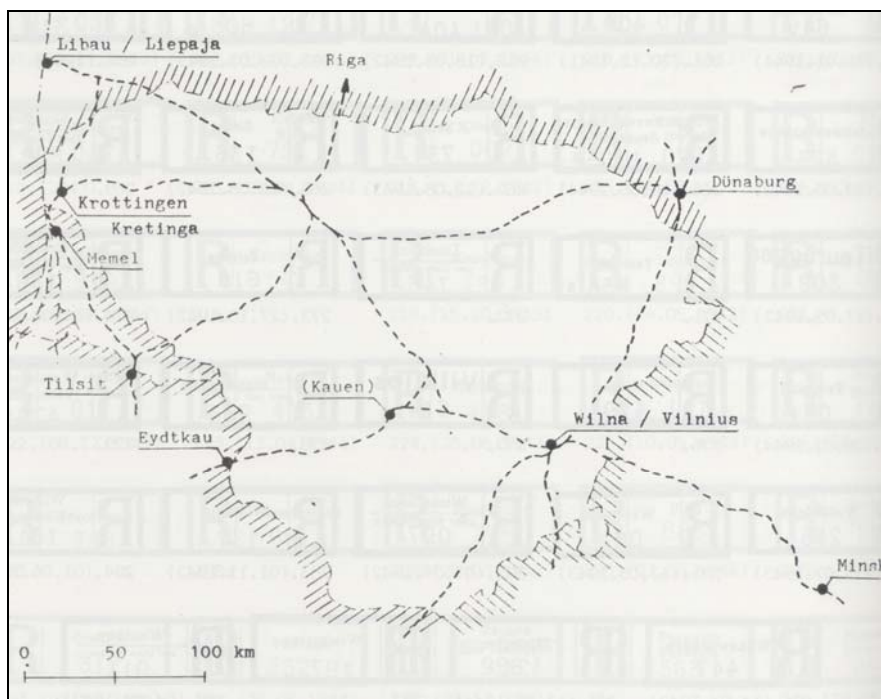
On July 3, 1943 a 5 Pfennig postcard was also issued: for local use.

The cancel of Baisogala was in use between February 25, 1939 and July 25, 1942.



III. 5a (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Field post letter, sent on August 6, 1940 via railway-post route Tilsit - Memel to Vienna.



Map from the cancel book of Vytautas Fugalevičius with the main railway lines.



III. 6a (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent from Memel via railway-post route Tilsit - Memel, March 1, 1940, to Bad Pymont, stamped with the correct rate for a postcard, 6 Pfennig.



III. 6b
Cancel Zug 92, 40 x 28 mm

In the Memel part of Vytautas Fugalevičius's cancel book (1990, p. 137) the following route in the table alongside, Dirschau - Memel, can also be found.



Tabel

In the table the lines with the cancels used from various sources are grouped together. The data mostly come from the collection of Eugenijus Uspuras, the cancel book by Vytautas Fugalevičius, and the Ostland handbook by Harry v. Hofmann. Harry v. Hofmann deals with the Zug Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland cancels, and I take it for granted that each time the known cancel type Oval II is meant, with below the indication 'Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland'.

CANCEL TYPES DATES

U = collection Uspuras F = cancel book Fugalevičius H = Harry v.Hofmann E = Arnold Engel M = Mack
 Type oval German I : standard railway-post cancel Germany, Type oval German II/DDO: with 'Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland' below, Type oval German III: bilingual German-Lithuanian

Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
9	Panevėžys – Švenčionėliai (1940-1943)	Oval Lithuanian	a	Dec. 3, 1941 (U)	June 21, 1943 (S)	July 30, 1943 (U)
Zug 91	Tilsit – Memel (1940)	Oval German I	-	Dec. 1, 1939 (F) ??		Aug. 6, 1940 (U)
Zug 92	Tilsit - Memel	Oval German I	-	March 1, 1940(U)		July 12, 1940 (F)
Zug --10	Dirschau – Memel	Oval German I	-	Aug. 18, 1942 (F)		
Zug --18	Dirschau - Memel	Oval German I	-	Nov. 10, 1943 (F)		
Zug 114	Tilsit - Memel	Oval German I		Jan. 19, 1940 (M)		
Zug 406	Tilsit - Memel	Oval German I ?		Mentioned by Mack/Lindeiner		
Zug 532	Birsen - Schaulen	Oval German II	b	June 21, 1942 (U)		July 29, 1942 (U)
Zug	Libau - Memel	Oblong	-	March 17, 1943 (H)		July 13, 1943 (S)
Zug ?	Minsk (Ostland) -Wilna	Oval German I	a	March 13, 1944(S)		
Zug 0118	Riga - Memel	Oval German I	b	June 15, 1943 (copy U)		
Zug 0151	Riga - Memel	Oval German I	a	Dec. 1,1943(E)(H)		
		Oval German I	b	March 11, 1944(H)		
		Oval German I	b	March 8, 1944 (H)		
Zug 0152	Riga - Memel	Oval German I	a	March 8, 1944 (H)		
	Riga - Tilsit	Oval German I	a	Possible, but not yet found (H)		
		Oval German I	b	Possible, but not yet found (H)		
		Oval German I	c	Possible, but not yet found (H)		
		Oval German I	d	May 10, 1944 (H)		June 23, 1944 (H)
Zug 695	Libau - Krottingen	Oval German III	a	May 27, 1944 (F)		
Zug 1021	Riga - Tilsit	Oval German II	a	Possible, but not yet found (H)		
		Oval German II	b	Nov. 11, 1942 (H)		
Zug 1022	Riga - Tilsit	Oval German II	a	Mentioned by Fugalevičius and Schultz (1943)		
		Oval German II	b	Mentioned by Schultz (1943)		
Zug 3001	Riga - Tilsit	Oval German II	a	Possible, but not yet found (H)		
		Oval German II	b	May 21, 1942 (H))		
Zug 3002	Riga - Tilsit	Oval German I	a	Possible, but not yet found (H)		
		Oval German I	b	Possible, but not yet found (H)		
		Oval German I	c	March 8, 1942 (H)		
		Oval German II	a	March 8, 1942 (H)		May ??, 1942 (H)
		Oval German II	b	Possible, but not yet found (H) Mentioned (S)		
		Oval German II	c	March 8, 1942 (H)		May 16, 1942 (H)
		Oval German II	c	Possible, but not yet found (H) Mentioned (S)		
Zug 3110	Riga - Tilsit	Oval German II	a	Possible, but not yet found (H)		
		Oval German II	b	May 24, 1943 (H))		
Zug 5109	Riga - Tilsit	Oval German II	a	Possible, but not yet found (H)		
		Oval German II	b	Feb. 13, 1944 (H)		
		Oval German II	c	Jan. 10, 1944 (H)		
Zug 5110	Riga - Tilsit	Oval German II	a	Possible, but not yet found (H) Mentioned (S)		
		Oval German II	b	Feb. 13, 1944 (H)	May15,1944(F)	June 8, 1944 (U)
		Oval German II	c	June 21, 1943 (F)		
Zug 8152	Riga - Tilsit	Oval German II	a	Feb. 23, 1942 (H)		
Zug ----	Riga - Tilsit	Double circular	A	Dec. 23, 1941 (S)		Jan. 31, 1942 (H)
		Double circular	B	Possible, but not yet found (H) Mentioned (S)		
		Double circular	C	Nov. 29, 1941 (H)		Jan. 11, 1942 (F)
Zug 8508	Wilna - Dünaburg	Oval German I	a	Possible, but not yet found (H) Mentioned (S)		
		Oval German I	b	March 28, 1943(F)		
Zug 8812	Panevėžys - Joniškėlis	Oval German III	a	May 15, 1944 (U)		
Zug ----	Wilna – Eytkau	Oblong German (F)	-			
Zug ----	Eytkau - Wilna	Oblong German	-	July 23, 1943 (S)		
Zug ----	Wilna (Vilnius) - Eydtkau	Oval German I	a	Mentioned by Schultz (1943)		
		Oval German I	b	Mentioned by Schultz (1943)		
		Oval German I	c	Mentioned by Schultz (1943)		



III. 7 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Front of a letter, sent on June 21, 1942, to Kaunas via railway-post route Birsen – Schaulen with Zug 532. Code letter 'b'.



III. 8



III. 9 (copy Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter with the standard German train cancel Riga – Memel, Zug 0118, code letter 'b', June 15, 1943. This cancel has not been seen anywhere else.

III. 7 is a very special item, showing the railway-post cancel Zug 532 of the line Birsen – Schaulen, discovered by Eugenijus Uspuras.



The cancels shown before were the standard railway-post cancels of Germany. This is a different cancel type with the indication 'Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland' below in the cancel.

The line between Latvian Liepāja (Libau) and Memel is mentioned only by Vytautas Fugalevičius. Harry v.Hofmann also shows a cancel. A different type again, in an oblong frame (*ill. 8*).

No fresh data of the next railway-post line in the table, Minsk - Wilna, although mentioned by Vytautas Fugalevičius.

The cancel of van Zug 0118 was used on the line Riga – Memel and this is a standard German railway post cancels, here alongside with the code letter 'b' (*ill. 9*).

On this line a different train was also running. The cancel of Zug 0151 Riga – Memel can be seen in the article by Arnold Engel in BLPSNY. A bit unclear, but with some magnifying probably Dec. 1, 1943, code letter 'a':



A different cancel type again can be seen on the line Liepāja – Kretinga or Libau – Krottingen. Both place names are included in this bilingual cancel.



Riga - Tilsit

The line Riga - Tilsit was an important connection, on which many trains ran. The line started in Latvia, so the trains with Zug numbers on this line, and the well-known cancels, are extensively dealt with in Harry v. Hofmann's Ostland handbook.

The table shows an inventory of the train numbers with dates, with the well-known cancel type: oval with below the indication 'Deutsche Dienstpost Ostland' (ill. 10).

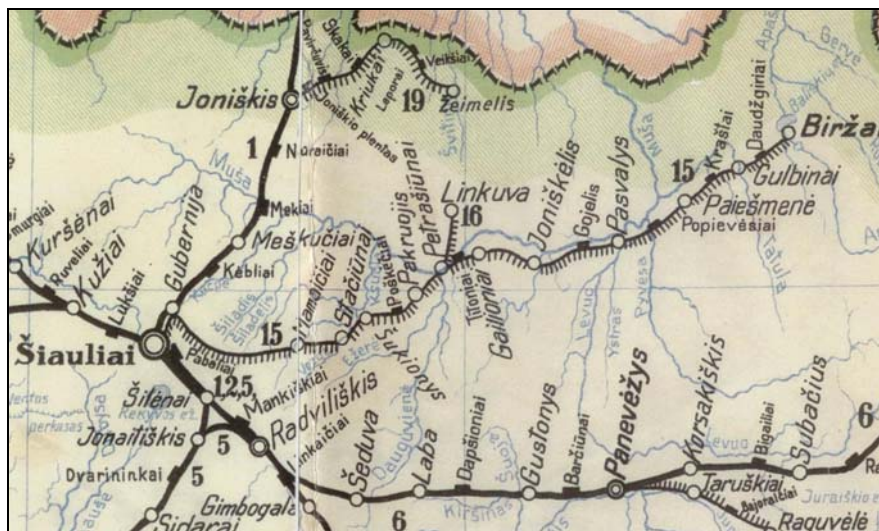


III. 10b

On this line a double circular cancel without train number has also been observed by Vytautas Fugalevičius:



Here we deal with the originally Latvian cancels, from which 'LATVIJA' below had been removed. Hermann Schultz suggests the possibility that these may have been reconstructed old German cancels



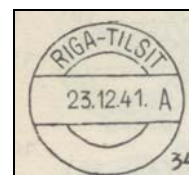
Part of a railways map from the thirties (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras), on which the narrow- gauge railway line Birsen – Schaulen (Biržai – Šiauliai) and the line Panevėžys – Joniškis are shown.



Afb. 10a (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

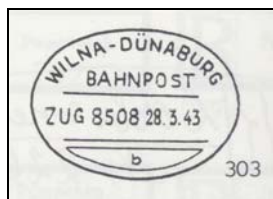
from the Ober-ost periode (1914-1918).

Hermann Schultz shows the same cancel with code letter A, and probably code letter B is also possible:



Wilna - Dünaburg

On this line the German standard cancel had been used, Zug 8508



Panevežys - Joniškėlis

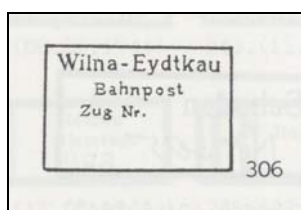
On the map above the route of Zug 8812 can be seen. Eugenijus Uspuras discovered a letter with the bilingual cancel (ill. 11).



Ill. 11b

Wilna - Eytkau

Vytautas Fugalevičius observed this oblong cancel, 35 x 23 mm, on the line between Vilnius and the German border town of Eytkau.



Hermann Schultz also shows the other cancel:



Ill. 11a (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on May 15, 1944 via Zug 8812 of the Panevežys – Joniškėlis railway-post line. Discovery by Eugenijus Uspuras. Cancel: PONEWESCH – JAUNISCHKELE BAHNPOST ZUG 88.

The train number and the date had to be written in it, but this was also often forgotten.

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Mitarb. Zahlr. Philatelisten. – Hamburg : Harry v. Hofmann Verlag, 2001 pp 36 – 46: Währungen und Posttarife pp 164 – 166: Bahnpoststempel p. 171 Bahnpost p. 180 – 182 Bahnpoststempel

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ADDITIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS

Station Mažeikiai

In tsarist times this place was named Muravjevo, in honour of Michail Nikolajevitsj Muravjevo. In 1902 a new station was built, see illustration. Between 1901 and 1918 the name of the station was officially Muravjevo, МУРАВЬЕВО.



The line Libava-Vilno Minsk: mail van nr 45 and 46 (since 1873).

The numbers of the stations are mentioned in the older postmarks up to 1881:

- 1 = ЛИБАВА
Libava / Libau / Liepāja.
- 2 = ГАВЕЗЕНЬ
Gavesen / Gavieze
- 3 = ПЛЕЙКЕ
Pleike / Raplaka
- 4 = ПРЕКУЛЬНЬ
Preekuln / Priekule
- 5 = ВАЙНОДЕНЬ
Vainoden / Vainode
- 6 = ЛУША
Luscha / Luša.
- 7 = ВЕНТА
Venta
- 8 = МУРАВЬЕВО
Muravjevo / Mažeikiai.
- 9 = КУРШАНЫ
Kurschenen / Kuršėnai
- 10 = ШАВЛИ
Schaulen / Šiauliai.

A reversed numbering was used later on.

On the line Riga - Muravjevo another numbering (van nr 85-86): here 9.=МУРАВЬЕВО / Muravjevo / Mažeikiai.

More about this station and the railway lines:

Muravjevo, meer dan Michail Nikolajevitsj [Muravjevo, more than Michail Nikolajevitsj] / Ruud van Wijnen. – In HBG 2005 ; 47. – p. 40-53



(coll. Eugenijus Uspuras)



(coll. Ruud van Wijnen)

Postcard from ШАВЛИ / Shavji / Šiauliai to Riga, Feb. 28.. 1875.
Transported with mail van nr 45-46. Station number 10 = Šiauliai.

CHAPTER 9 SOVIET-PERIOD

With this chapter we finish the series of articles on the railway post in Lithuania. Not much attention has yet been paid to the Soviet period of the philately of the Baltic area. Railway post from this period is rarely shown.

Railways after 1945

After the Second World War a large part of the railway infrastructure had been destroyed. In addition various track widths were in use: the Vilnius and Klaipėda districts 1524 mm., the Šiauliai district three different widths (1524, 1435, and 600 mm.), and the Panevėžys district had narrow gauge (750 mm) only.

With the reconstruction a quick start was made in changing the track width to the Soviet wide gauge (1524 mm). This was finished in 1951. In Lithuania most narrow-gauge railways had been closed down or transformed to wide gauge in 1959.

The railway post in Soviet Russia had been reorganized after the take-over of power. All Post and Telegraph departments were relegated to the Post and Telegraph departments on government level. The Railway Post did not function independently from the State Post anymore. The post processing divisions were soon abolished and the mail vans became the property of the People's Commissariat for Post and Telegraph (НКПТ, НАРОДИЙ КОМИССАРИАТ ПОЧТ И ТЕЛЕГРАФОВ).

From the beginning of the thirties onwards the processing of the mail became more and more decentralized. The station post offices became the exchange points for the mail vans.

Lithuanian cancels

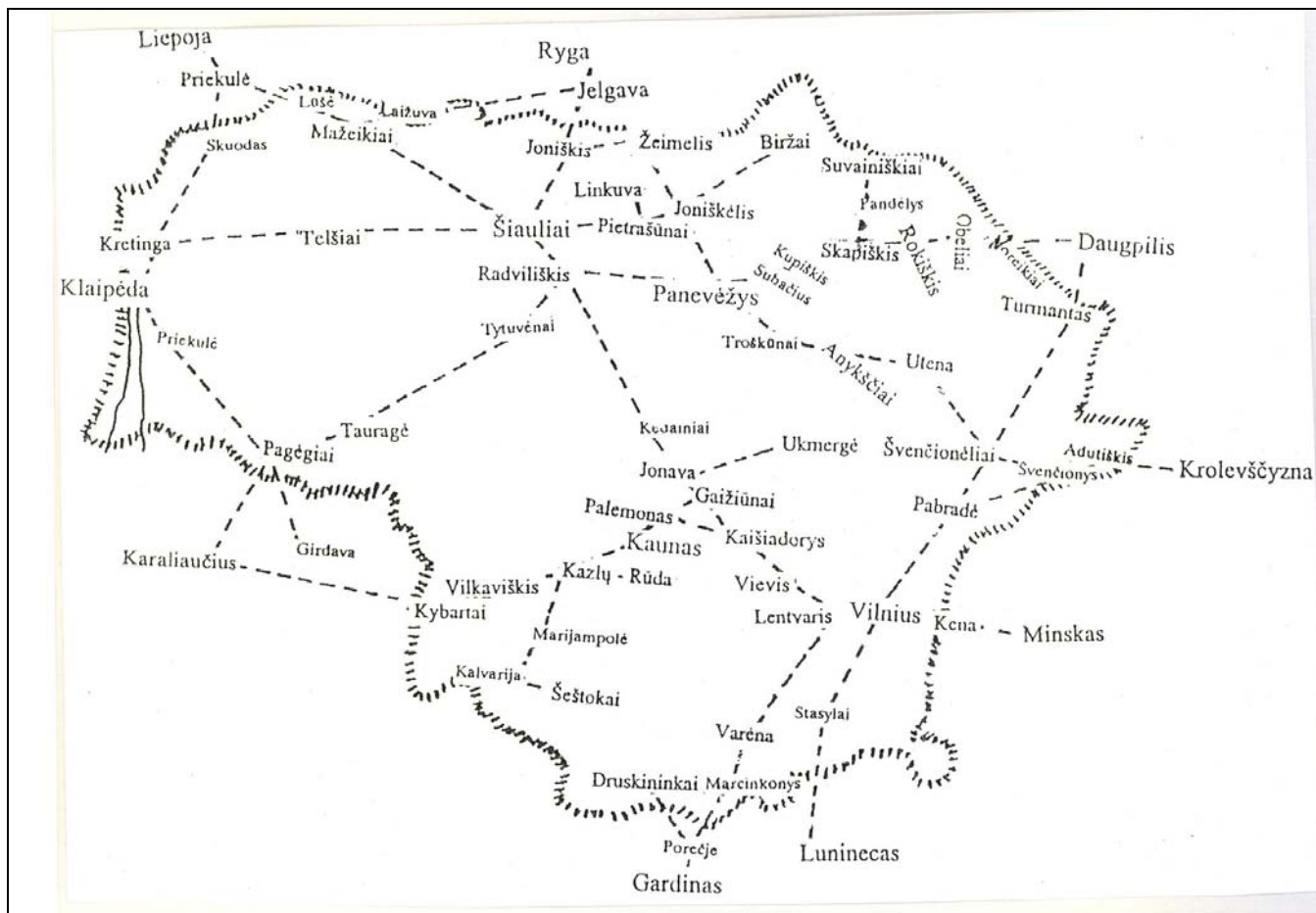
Old Lithuanian cancels were still used up to December 31, 1949 (*ill. 1*). Concurrently the Soviet cancels were introduced from 1944 onwards.

№ п. п.	Название станции	Сдано сумок для доставки в банк или почт. станции	Количество (пропись)	№	Сдано сумок для доставки в банк или почт. станции	Размер сумы вложенных в сумки	Подпись начальника станции
1	Шенготиан	сдано	неизвестно	в м. Бане			
2	Каймарь	сдано	2	468	✓		
3	Вилна	сдано	1	121	✓		
4	К. Рига	сдано	2	194	✓		
5	К. Вилья	сдано	1	неизвестно	✓		
6	М. Сурду	сдано	1	853	✓		
7	М. Сурду	сдано	1	284	✓		

III. 1 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Forms, on which the railway-post cancels from the period of independent Lithuania were used: route 14 Kaunas – Alytus April 11, 1948 and route 16 Kena – Vilnius – Kaunas Dec. 21, 1946.





III. 2 (afb. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Soviet railway-post lines which functioned after the Second World War

Soviet cancels for the railway post

On first sight two clear types of Soviet cancels had been in use: Russian indication only of departure station and of station of arrival, and cancels with Lithuanian as well as Russian indication (III. 3).



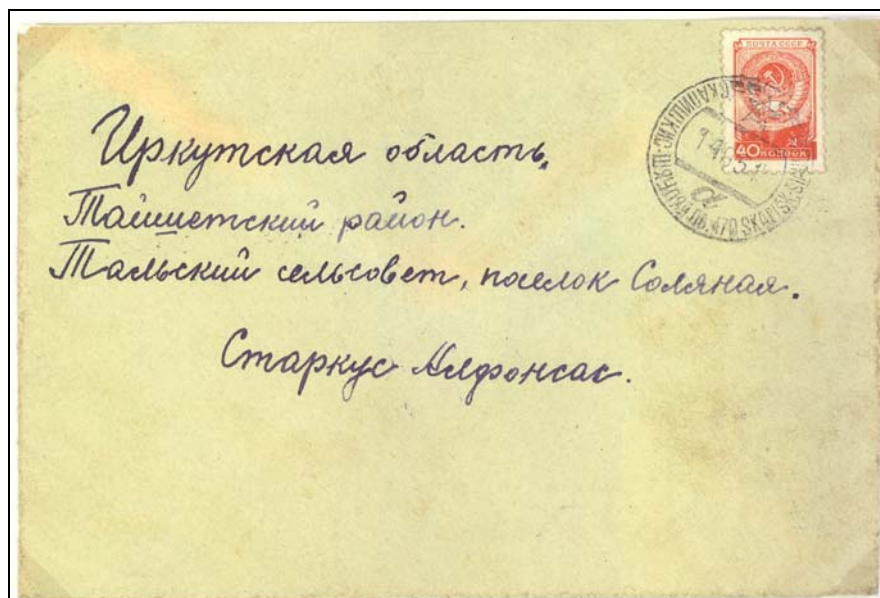
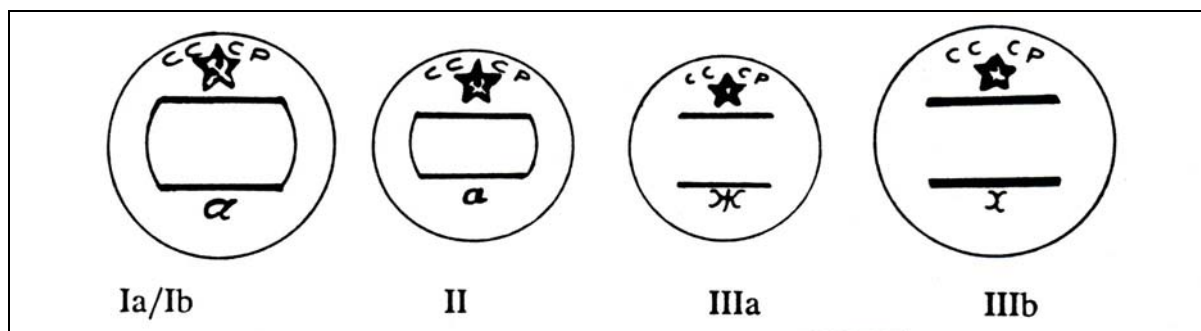
In an article¹ by Ruud van Wijnen on the Latvian cancels from this period

¹ Treinstempels in Letland na 1945 / Ruud van Wijnen. – In: HBG 1990 ; 16. – p. 5-8.



III. 3 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on August 1, 1951 to Solianaja in Russia, via railway-post route Šiauliai - Skapiškis

Cancel types



III. 4 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on March 14, 1951, to
Solianaja in Russia via railway-post
route Skapiškis – Šiauliai.

more types are distinguished. These types may probably also occur in Lithuania. This article also mentions lines running to or via Lithuania: these, too, are included in the table at the end of this article. Alongside the illustration from HBG 16 with the different types

Type Ia Russian text
Type I b Russian text and Lithuanian text

- diameter ca 29½ mm
- colour: black or red
- period of use 1951-1968
- bars above and below the date, connected left and right by arcs

Type II Russian text
-diameter ca 24½
-colour: black or red
-period of use: 1957-1968
- thick bars above and below the date, connected left and right by arcs

Type III Russian text
- IIIa diameter ca 25 mm
- IIIb diameter ca 29½ mm
- colour: red
- thin bars above and below the date, no connecting arcs left and right.
In the cancels may also be indicated:
-**П.В.** (P.V.) Sometimes also: **Б/Н** (B/N)
-Sometimes **ЛИТ.ССР** (LIT.SSR) the abbreviation for the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic
-The cancels may also differ by the series letters. The first seven letters of the Russian alphabet:
A, b, v/w, g, d, e, zh

а, б, в, г, д, е, ж

Section Šiauliai - Skapiškis

The cover shown on page 105 (*ill. 3*) clearly bears a cancel of the type Ib: Russian and Lithuanian text, diameter ca 29½ mm.
This cancel type seems to be the oldest.

The Russian indications:
СКАПИШКИС (SKAPISHKIS) and **ШЯУЛЯЙ** (SHYAULYAI).
The cancel also shows - after quite a bit of magnifying - a number: it seems to be 468, but probably is 469, the reverse direction of 470 (*ill. 4*) from the same period.



On page 107 a map with the lines - with the assigned numbers - from 1959.

When we look at the map (*ill. 5*) from 1959 it can also be seen then that route 469 runs in the direction of Daugavpils, and 470 in the direction of Radviliškis.

The reverse direction of the section (*ill. 4*) has a similar cancel - with somewhat more clearly the indication in Russian -, now - after rather strong magnifying - with number 470. In front of the numbers - a bit more distinctly with 470 - is the indication П.В. (P.V.), and this will be the abbreviation for: ПОЧТОВЫЙ (POCHTOVYI) БАГОН (VAGON), Mail van.



Alongside a table of the 1959 lines, pp 197-198 from: "Lietuvos TSR rysių imonių abecelinis sąrašas", Lietuvos TSR rysių ministerija, Pasto skyrius, Kaunas, 1959, 200 pp. "Alphabetical list of post offices of the Lithuanian SSR", Ministry of Communication of the Lithuanian SSR, Post Division, Kaunas, 1959, 200 pp.

The numbers have not (yet) been further reported in cancels, but the table does give a good impression of the network of the railway-post lines. In the article by Leonas Veržbolas, two more maps with the railway-post lines (and numbers) in Lithuania in 1965 and 1972 can be found. The table in this article is largely in accordance with the accompanying table.

Section Mažeikiai-Daugavpils

The cover shown in *ill. 6* bears a cancel with the Russian indication of departure and terminus only: МОЖЕЙКИ (MOZHEIKI) and ДАУГАВПИЛС (DAUGVPILS). The first indication somewhat resembles the Polish name Mozeiki, for the second indication the Latvian name Daugavpils has been transposed to Russian letters.

Pašto vagonų, kursuojančių Lietuvos TSR teritorijoje, maršrutų sąrašas, nurodant mazgus

Pašto vagonų maršrutų numeriai	Mazgų pavadinimas
45	Minskas — Kena — Vilnius — Lentvaris — Kaišiadorys — Palemonas — Kaunas — Kazlų Rūda — Virbalis — Kaliningradas
46	Kaliningradas — Virbalis — Kazlų Rūda — Kaunas — Palemonas — Kaišiadorys — Lentvaris — Vilnius — Kena — Minskas
445	Priekulė (Latv.) — Skuodas — Kretinga — Klaipėda — Pagėgiai — Kaliningradas
446	Kaliningradas — Pagėgiai — Klaipėda — Kretinga — Skuodas — Priekulė (Latv.)
447	Radviliškis — Pagėgiai — Železnodorožnyj
448	Železnodorožnyj — Pagėgiai — Radviliškis
449	Luninec — Stasylai — Vilnius
450	Vilnius — Stasylai — Luninec
451	Krulevščizna — Adutiškis — Pabradė
452	Pabradė — Adutiškis — Krulevščizna
463	Joniškis — Žeimelis — Joniškėlis — Panevėžys — Švenčionėliai
464	Švenčionėliai — Panevėžys — Joniškėlis — Žeimelis — Joniškis
465	Vilnius — Lentvaris — Marcinkonys — Druskininkai — Grodno
466	Grodno — Druskininkai — Marcinkonys — Lentvaris — Vilnius
467	Šiauliai — Kretinga
468	Kretinga — Šiauliai
469	Daugavpils — Noreikiai — Skapiškis — Panevėžys — Radviliškis
470	Radviliškis — Panevėžys — Skapiškis — Noreikiai — Daugavpils
471	Vilnius — Pabradė — Švenčionėliai — Dūkštai — Turmantas — Daugavpils
472	Daugavpils — Turmantas — Dūkštai — Švenčionėliai — Pabradė — Vilnius
473	Šiauliai — Mažeikiai

— 198 —

Pašto vagonų maršrutų numeriai	Mazgų pavadinimas
474	Mažeikiai — Šiauliai
475	Kaišiadorys — Gaižiūnai — Jonava — Radviliškis — Šiauliai — Joniškis — Ryga
476	Ryga — Joniškis — Šiauliai — Radviliškis — Jonava — Gaižiūnai — Kaišiadorys
477	Šiauliai — Petrašiūnai (Linkuvos) — Joniškėlis — Biržai
478	Biržai — Joniškėlis — Petrašiūnai (Linkuvos) — Šiauliai
491	Jelgava — Laižuva — Mažeikiai — Lušė — Liepāja
492	Liepāja — Lušė — Mažeikiai — Laižuva — Jelgava
601	Kazlų Rūda — Šeštokai
602	Šeštokai — Kazlų Rūda
603	Jonava — Ukmergė
604	Ukmergė — Jonava
605	Palemonas — Gaižiūnai
606	Gaižiūnai — Palemonas
607	Skapiškis — Suvainiškis
608	Suvainiškis — Skapiškis
609	Petrašiūnai (Linkuvos) — Linkuva
610	Linkuva — Petrašiūnai (Linkuvos)
611	Švenčionėliai — Švenčionys
612	Švenčionys — Švenčionėliai

Pašto vagonų maršrutų mazgai yra:

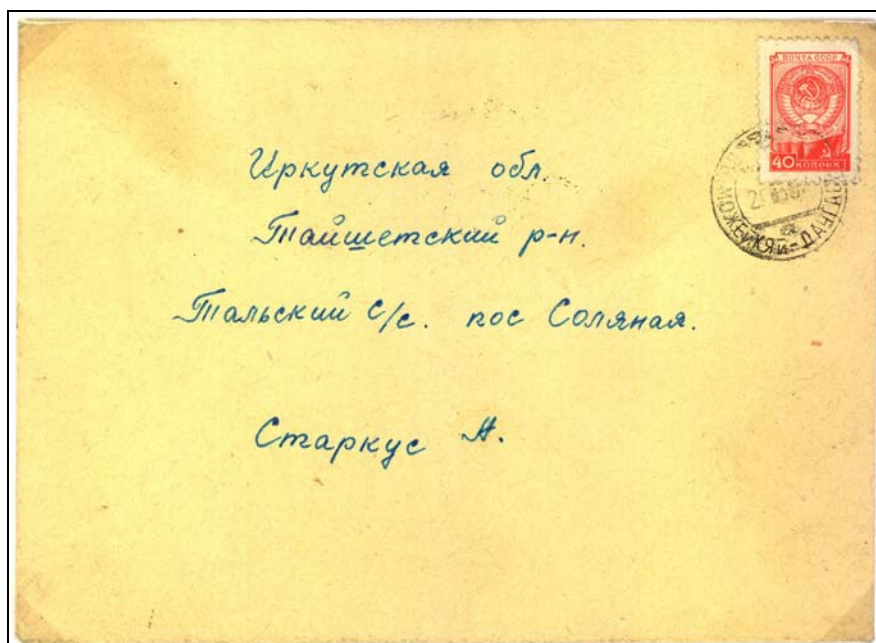
- pašto vagonų maršrutų pradžios ir pabaigos punktai;
- pašto vagonų maršrutų susikirtimo punktai Lietuvos TSR teritorijoje;
- Lietuvos TSR pasienio punktai, per kuriuos praeina pašto vagonų maršrutai.

For the greater part the line runs via the territory of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, but it ends in Latvian Daugavpils: that is why we do not see the indication ЛИТ. in this cancel. When we look at the map (ill. 2) it seems a later extension of the line discussed before: thus the cancel is of a later date (1957).



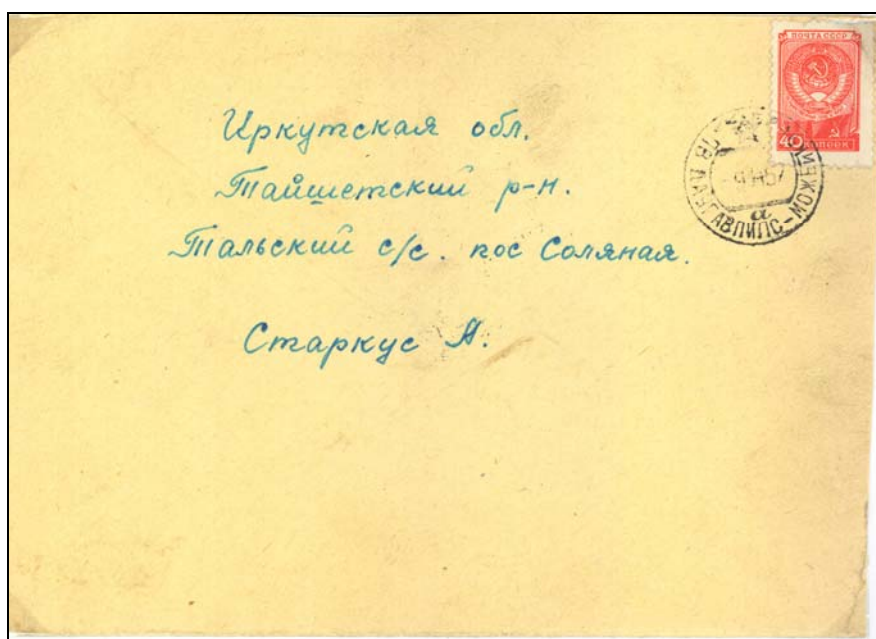
The type is clearly type II (size ca 24½, bars connected by arcs).

The reverse direction, Daugavpils – Mažeikiai (ill. 7), has a similar cancel:



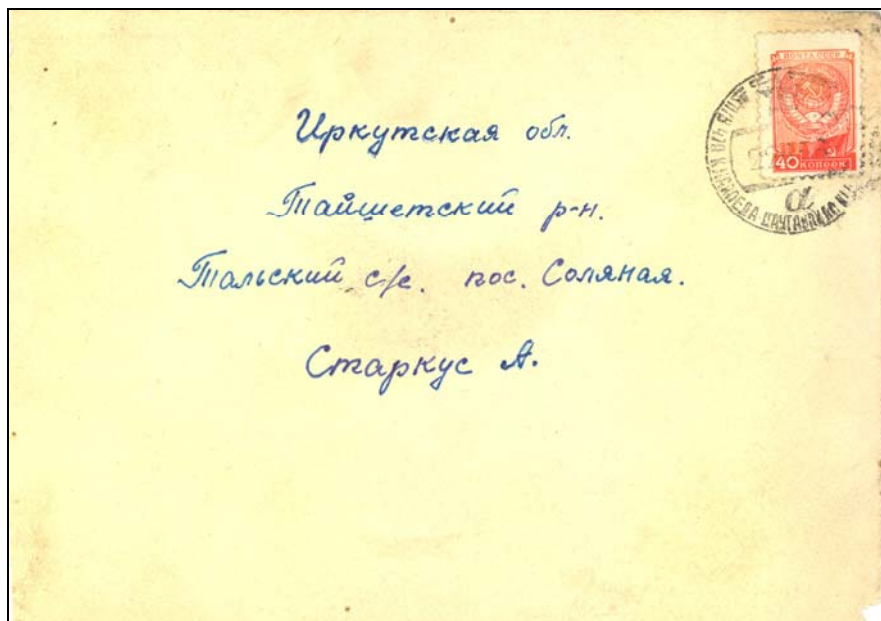
III. 6 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on March 26, 1957 to Solianaja in Russia, via railway-post route Mažeikiai - Daugavpils.

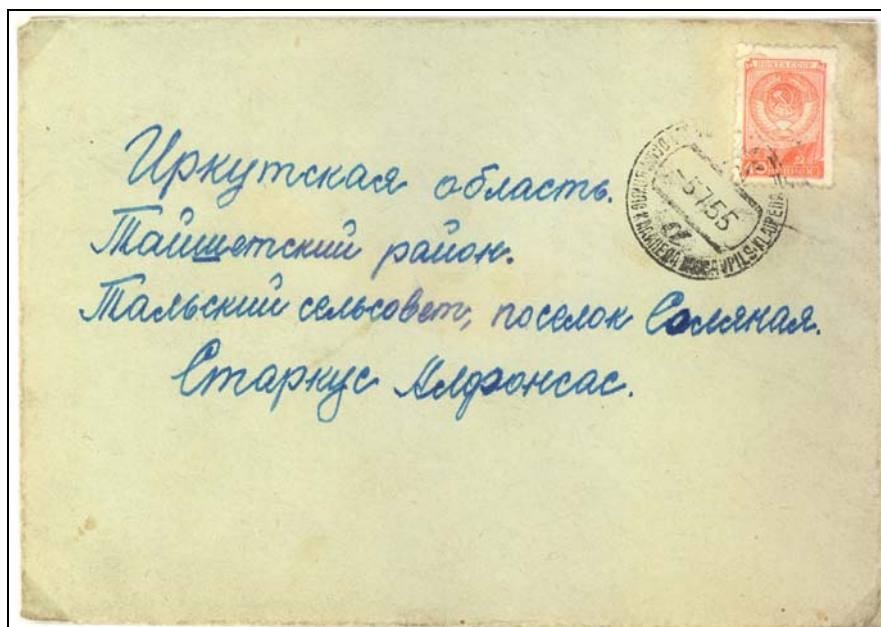


III. 7 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on April 9, 1957 to Solianaja in Russia, via railway-post route Daugavpils – Mažeikiai.



III. 8 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on August 23, 1956 to
Solianaja in Russia,
via railway-post route Klaipėda -
Daugavpils.



III. 9 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on July 5, 1955 to
Solianaja in Russia, via railway-post
route Daugavpils – Klaipėda.



III. 10 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on September 2, 1960 to
Šepeta via railway-post route
Panevėžys - Biržai

Section Klaipėda-Daugavpils

The cancel of the direction Daugavpils-Klaipėda (*ill. 9*) is clearly one of type Ib. It is not clearly visible on a letter in the opposite direction, but it may be assumed that the same cancel type was used (*ill. 8*).

In the cancel Klaipėda-Daugavpils (*ill. 8*) we can see in the cancel - again after quite a bit of magnifying - a number -479 ? -:



III. 8b

In the cancel of the reverse direction (*ill. 9*) no number can be distinguished, but this may be due to the unclear cancellation.

Section Panevėžys - Biržai

Here, too, type Ib was used (*ill. 10 and 11*), with the indication П.В. without number.



Section Panevėžys - Švenčionėliai

On this section only Russian was used in the cancel. Because of their length these place names would not have fitted bilingually in the cancel:

ПАНЕВЕЖИС (PANEVEZHIS) –
ШВЕНЧЕЛЯЙ

(SHVENCHELYAI)

So Type Ia.
During the Soviet period the narrow-gauge railways between Panevėžys



III. 11 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on February 29, 1960 to Šepeta via railway-post route Biržai – Panevėžys.



III. 12 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on December 28, 1962 (?) via railway-post route Panevėžys.-Švenčionėliai



and Šiauliai had been transformed to the Russian wide-gauge railways. The narrow-gauge railways between Utena

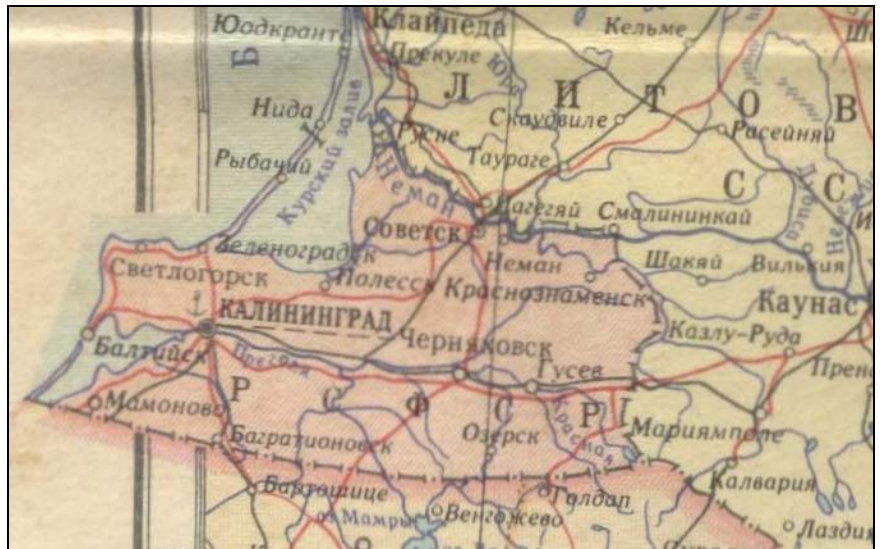
– Švenčionėliai, too, had been replaced by wide-gauge railways. The remainder of the narrow-gauge railways was more or less demolished or neglected, and only the line Panevėžys-Anyškiai-Rubikiai (68.4 km) remained more or less intact and was used for goods transport and tourism. The last narrow-gauge railways trip according to the time-table took place on March 25, 2001 between

Section Černiachovsk - Radviliškis

III. 13 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on July 6, 1966 to Vilnius
via the railway-post route Černi-
achovsk – Radviliškis.



Map from a Soviet atlas (1954) with **ЧЕРНЯХОВСК** about halfway between the capital **КАИНИНГРАД** (KALININGRAD) and **КАУНАС** (KAUNAS).

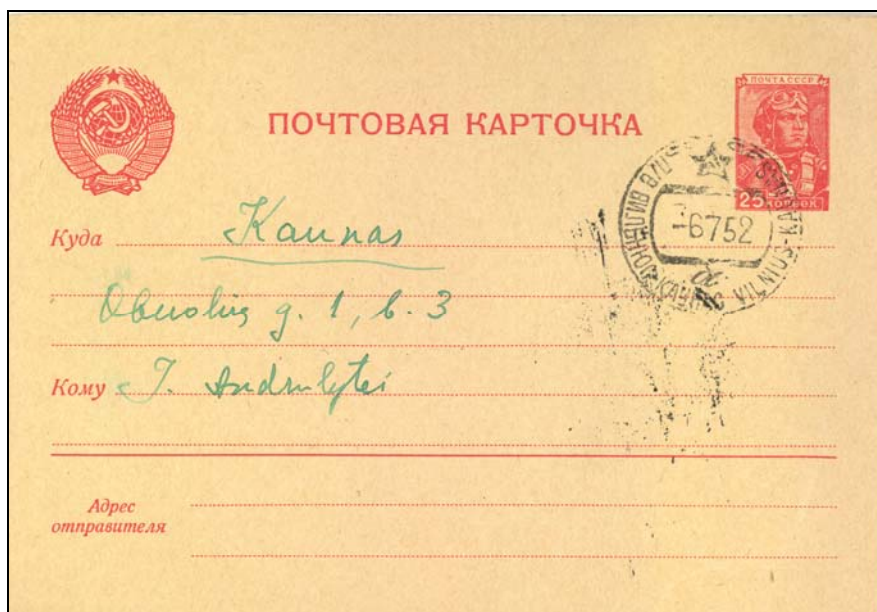


Section Vilnius - Kaunas

This cancel belongs to type Ib: 29.5 mm and bars connected by arcs, bilingual text.



III. 14 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard to Kaunas, sent on July 6, 1952 via the railway-post route Vilnius - Kaunas.



Section Kaunas - Vilnius

The cancel is clearly a railway-post cancel - with the indication **II.B.** (P.V.). The place of departure is Kaunas, but the remainder is not clearly legible: type II.



III. 15 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Postcard, sent on May 15, 1958 via railway post.

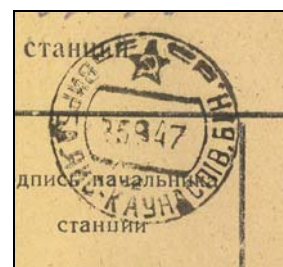
ПУТЕВАЯ ВЕДОМОСТЬ № 46146
по сбору станционной выручки и по разлаче начальникам станций
порожних сумок за 24-25/IX 1947 г.

№ п. п.	Название станций	Сдано сумок для доставки в банк или нач. станции		Сведения о приеме сумок в других конторах	Размер сумм вложенных в сумки		Подпись начальника станции
		Количество (прописью)	№		наличными	Документами	
1.	Потисай	одно	2	✓	29625285	Коробов	
2.	Вирбалис	"	2	✓	3919=1163	Понев	
3.	Вилвицки	"	2	✓	1067=	Тиндт	
Итого		др/3/три			7949,50	7428	
наименование сумм		девятьсот сорок девять руб. 50 копеек					

III. 16 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Covering letter of a money remittance, sent on September 25, 1947 via the railway-post route Virbalis - Kaunas.

Section Virbalis - Kaunas

The cancel below is clearly type II: bars connected by arcs, diameter 24½ mm and Russian text only.



In the cancel we see the indication: П/В. Б/Н (P/V.B/N).



П.В. (P.V.) means – as already mentioned - **ПОЧТОВЫЙ ВАГОН** (POCHTOVYI VAGON), Mail Van.

Б/Н is the abbreviation for **БЕЗ НОМЕРА** (BEZ NOMERA), without number

Section Kaunas - Mažeikiai

The cover ill. 17 is clearly cancelled with the Soviet cancel type II: diameter 24½, bars connected by arcs and Russian text only.



The code letter is 'b':



III. 17 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)
Letter, sent on February 11, 1965 to Vilnius via the railway-post route Kaunas - Mažeikiai.

On this letter, sent in the opposite direction, Mažeikiai - Kaunas, cancel type Ib was used: bilingual, diameter 29½, bars connected by arcs:



This cancel also has the indication: **ЛИТ.ССР** (LIT.SSR) the abbreviation for the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic.

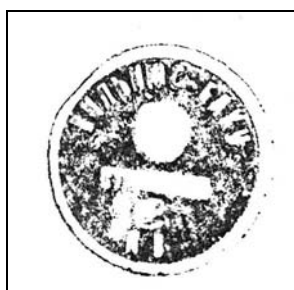
Lines from and to Vilnius

The line Vilnius - Kaunas had already been mentioned before (*ill. 14*), but later on we see Vilnius as departure point or terminus in many more cancels, especially of very long lines. Eugenijus Uspuras collected quite a number of these cancels shown below. They are cancels on pieces of paper, not on real postal items, and were stamped at a philatelist's request. At the end of the eighties cancels of type III also appear. Also among the cancels a different - probably older - cancel type, Type IV, such as Vilnius - Baku below.

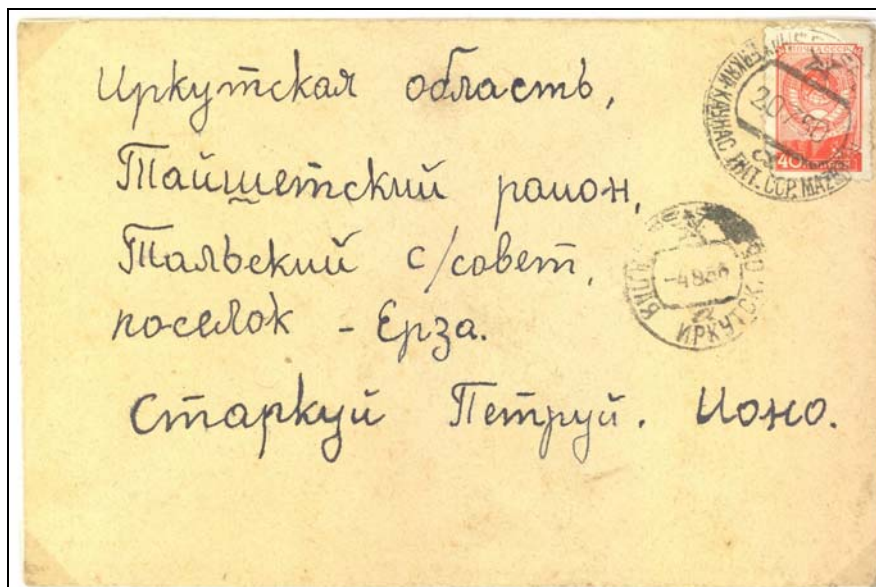
Baku - Vilnius

Baku is the capital and largest port of Azerbaijan in the southern part of the Caucasus.

The cancel shown below was used for the sealing of e.g. money remittances.



Vilnius-Baku, a different cancel, used for sealing



III. 18 (ex. Eugenijus Uspuras)

Letter, sent on July 20, 1950 to Erza in Russia via railway-post route Mažeikiai - Kaunas.



Baku-Vilnius, March 1, 1977

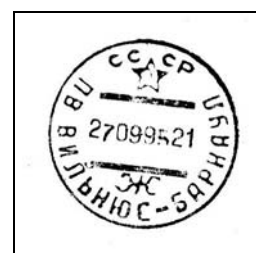
Barnaul - Vilnius

In the cancel **БАРНАУЛ** (BARNAUL) can be distinguished. It is one of the oldest towns of Siberia and the capital of the border province (Krai, a historical indication) Altai Krai. The area borders are, among others, Kazakhstan and the province of Altai.

Barnaul is connected with the Trans Siberian Railways via the railway connection with Novosibirsk.



Barnaul-Vilnius, July 25, 1994



Vilnius-barnaul, Sept. 27, 1995

Daugavpils - Vilnius

The line to Daugavpils in South-East Latvia.



Daugavpils-Vilnius, Jan. 27, 1973, type II



Vilnius-Daugavpils, Jan. 28, 1973, type II

Druskininkai - Vilnius

Druskininkai is situated in the very south of Lithuania, near the Memel River.



Druskininkai-Vilnius, Nov. 5, 1990



Vilnius-Druskininkai, Oct. 8, 1990

Irkutsk – Vilnius

Irkutsk, in the south of Eastern Siberia, is situated on the Trans Siberian Railways near Lake Baykal. The Trans Siberian Railway runs from Moscow via Nizjni Novgorod, Kirow, Sverdlovsk, Oms, and Novosibirsk to Irkutsk. Then this railway runs further on along the south bank of this lake just north of Mongolia, and then along the Chinese border in the direction of Vladivostok.



Vilnius-Irkutsk, 18-23-?

Kaliningrad - Vilnius

Kaliningrad is the capital of the province of the same name. The area is now an exclave between Poland and Lithuania.

Before the Second World War the city was called Königsberg in East Prussia. In 1946 the city was renamed Kaliningrad, after Michael Ivanovitsj Kalinin (1875-1946), a stalwart of Stalin.



Vilnius-Kaliningrad, cancel in use for sealing

Klaipėda - Vilnius

The cancel type Ib - in use on the section Vilnius-Klaipėda - can be seen in the article by Leonas Veržbolas-kas. The cancel is bilingual and, in spite of its size 29½, it does not really fit in: the Lithuanian indication becomes KLAIP.



Klaipėda-Vilnius

Red cancels also appear: typical for the Soviet railway-post cancels in this period.

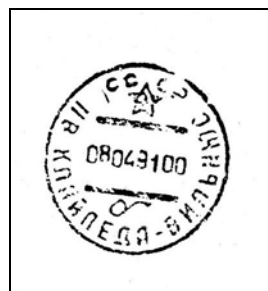


Klaipėda-Vilnius, Nov. 13, 1987, a red cancel, type IIIa, 25 mm



Cancel of the same line, same type, but different serial letter, also red, Dec. 2, 1987

About 1960 black-red ink had to be used in the railway-post carriages according to section 16 of the post regulations. However, black, lilac, or violet was also often used.



Klaipėda-Vilnius, April 8, 1991?



Vilnius-Klaipėda



Vilnius-Klaipėda, cancel a bit reddish, apparently the ink was running out, Nov. 20, 1987. Also type IIIa.



Vilnius-Klaipėda, April 8, 1991

Kuznica - Vilnius

Only the cancels featured below have been noticed from this line. These are cancels for sealing.

Kuznica is situated in Poland and was the first railway station in Poland past the Soviet - Polish border. The route: Vilnius-Lentvaris-Valkininkai-Varėna-Marcinkonys (all now situated in Lithuania), and then further along: Grodno (Belarus)- Kuznica-Belostock etc.



Kuznica-Vilnius, cancel in use for sealing



Vilnius-Kuznica

Leningrad - Vilnius



Leningrad-Vilnius, March 28, 1961

Mažeikiai - Vilnius



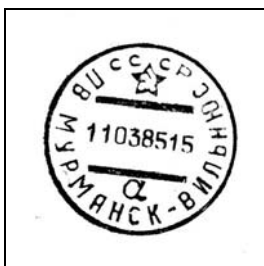
Mažeikiai-Vilnius, March 11, 1985



Vilnius-Mažeikiai, Sept. 27, 1999

Murmansk - Vilnius

The indication in the cancel: **МУРМАНСК** (MURMANSK). The city is situated at the Barents Sea in the extreme north-west of Russia.



Murmansk-Vilnius, March 11, 1985

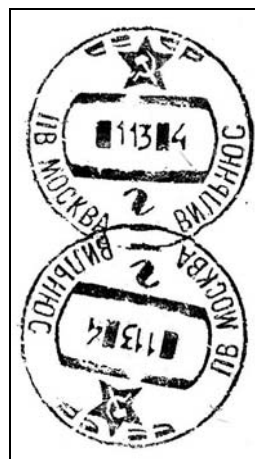


Vilnius-Murmansk, Aug. 26, 1982?
Apparently it reads 2698... , but the 0 and 9 are next to each other in the cancel (and the keyboard)

Moscow - Vilnius



Moscow-Vilnius, date ??



Moscow-Vilnius, date ??



Moscow-Vilnius, March 10, ??



Moscow-Vilnius, Sept. 27, 1992



Vilnius-Moscow, Dec. 4, ??



Vilnius-Moscow, Oct. 12, 1960?, slightly different: more space between Vilnius and Moscow



Vilnius-Moscow, March 31, 1988

Novosibirsk - Vilnius

Nowadays Novosibirsk is a big city - 1.4 million inhabitants - and the third city in Russia after Moscow and St Peterburg. The city is situated near the Trans Siberian Railways in the south of Siberia.

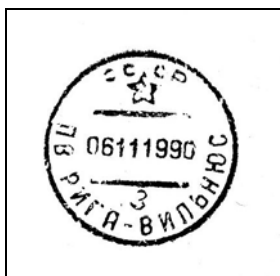


Novosibirsk-Vilnius, April 22, 1988



Vilnius-Novosibirsk, Jan. 4, 1985

Riga - Vilnius



Riga-Vilnius, Nov. 6, 1990



Vilnius-Riga, Nov. 4, 1990

Šeštokai - Vilnius

Šeštokai in the south-west of Lithuania is just a small town, 755 inhabitants in 2001. The town, however, is situated near the only railway connection between Lithuania and Poland.

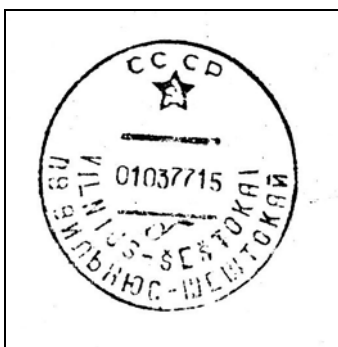
Here, too, the gauge width changes from the West-European standard gauge (1425 mm) to the Russian wide gauge (1524 mm):

i.e. change trains or reconstruct.

It is obvious that the town is also the terminus of a railway-post route, and it shows in the railway-post cancel.



Šeštokai-Vilnius, March 1, 1977
Cancel looks similar to type IIIb, but - just as the cancel shown below - a bit larger and also bilingual.
New type IV



Vilnius-Šeštokai, March 1, 1977

Tallinn - Vilnius



Tallinn-Vilnius, cancel used for sealing



Tallinn-Vilnius, Nov. 6, 1990



Vilnius-Tallinn, cancel used for sealing



Vilnius-Tallinn, Nov. 3, 1990

Turmantas - Vilnius

Turmantas is situated in the north-east of Lithuania, very near the Latvian border.



Turmantas-Vilnius



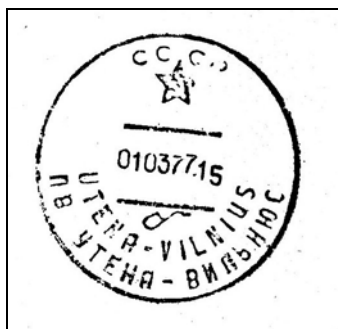
Vilnius-Turmantas

Utena - Vilnius

Utena can be found on the map (*ill. 2*) in the north-east of Lithuania



Vilnius-Utena, March 1, 1977



Utena-Vilnius, March 1, 1977

Vitebsk - Vilnius

Vitebsk is a town in the north-east of Belarus.



Vitebsk-Vilnius, Dec. 31, 1990?



Vilnius-Vitebsk, Dec. 30, 1990

Table

As in the previous articles on the railway post in Lithuania the data from this period are arranged together in a table. The line Riga-Kaliningrad and vice versa may certainly have run via Lithuania.

The types:

Lithuanian oval

Soviet Type 1a Russian text

Soviet Type 1b Russian text and

Lithuanian text

-diameter c. 29½ mm.

-colour: black or red

-period of use 1951-1968

- bars above and below the date,

connected left and right by arcs

Soviet Type II Russian text

-diameter c. 24½ mm.

-colour: black or red

-period of use: 1957-1968

-thick bars above and below the date,

connected left and right by arcs

Soviet Type III Russian text

IIIa diameter c. 25 mm.

IIIb diameter c. 29½ mm.

-colour: red

-thin bars above and below the date,

no connecting arcs left and right In

the cancels may also be indicated:

Soviet **Type IV**: as III, but bilingual,

diameter c. 33½ mm

Soviet cancel used for sealing. The period of use is not known.

CANCEL TYPES WITH DATA (R= Collection Ruud van Wijnen) (V= Article Veržbolauskas)

Lines from/to Kaunas

Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
14	Kaunas -Alytus	Lithuanian oval	A		April 11, 1948	
	Kaunas-Mažeikiai	Soviet II			Feb. 11, 1965	
	Mažeikiai-Kaunas	Soviet Ib	a		July 20, 1950	
	Virbalis-Kaunas	Soviet II	?		Sept. 25, 1947	

Lines Kaunas-Vilnius

Sectionnr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
16	Kaunas-Vilnius-Kaunas	Lithuanian oval	a	Dec. 21, 1946	March 18, 1947 Aug. 7, 1947	Nov. 15, 1947
	Vilnius-Kaunas	Soviet Ib	a		July 6, 1952	
	Kaunas-Vilnius	Soviet II	b (?)		May 15, 1958	

Lines from/to Vilnius

Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
	Baku-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa	ж		March,1, 1977	
	Vilnius-Baku	Soviet sealing				
	Barnaul-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa	п ?		July 25, 1994	
	Vilnius-Barnaul	Soviet IIIa	ж		Sept. 27, 1995	
	Daugavpils-Vilnius	Soviet II	б (?)		Jan. 27, 1973	
	Vilnius-Daugavpils	Soviet II	a		Jan. 28, 1973	
	Druskininkai-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa	б		Nov. 5, 1990	
	Vilnius-Druskininkai	Soviet IIIa	б		Oct. 8, 1990	
	Vilnius-Irkutsk	Soviet IIIa	?		18-23- ????	
	Vilnius-Kaliningrad	Soviet sealing				
	Klaipėda-Vilnius	Soviet Ib	a		April 7, 1951 (V)	
	Klaipėda-Vilnius	Soviet II	(g)?		????	
	Klaipėda-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa (red)	a		Nov. 13, 1987	
		Soviet IIIa (red)	б		Dec. 2, 1987	
	Klaipėda-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa			April 8, 1991 ?	
	Vilnius-Klaipėda	Soviet II	б		?????	
	Vilnius-Klaipėda	Soviet IIIa (red)	g (?)		Nov. 20, 1987	
	Vilnius-Klaipėda	Soviet IIIa	б		April 8, 1991	
	Kuznica-Vilnius	Soviet sealing				
	Vilnius-Kuznica	Soviet sealing				
	Leningrad-Vilnius	Soviet II	б		March 28, 1961	
	Mažeikiai-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa	б		March 11, 1985	
	Vilnius-Mažeikiai	Soviet IIIa	б		Sept. 27, 1999	
	Murmansk-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa	a		March 11, 1985	
	Vilnius-Murmansk	Soviet IIIa	м		Aug. 26, 1982 ?	
	Moscow-Vilnius	Soviet Ia	б		????	
	Moscow-Vilnius	Soviet Ia	g?		?????	
	Moscow-Vilnius	Soviet II	g?		March 10, ??	
	Moscow-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa	к		Sept. 27, 1992	
	Vilnius-Moscow	Soviet Ia	б		Dec. 4, 19?2	
	Vilnius-Moscow	Soviet Ia	б		Oct. 12, 1960?	
	Vilnius-Moscow	Soviet IIIa	б		March 31, 1988	
	Novosibirsk-Vilnius	Soviet IIIb	ж?		April 22, 1988	
	Vilnius-Novosibirsk	Soviet IIIb	?		Jan. 4, 1985	
	Riga-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa	з		Nov. 6, 1990	
	Vilnius-Riga	Soviet IIIa	ж		Nov. 4, 1990	
	Šeštokai-Vilnius	Soviet IV	a		March 1, 1977	
	Vilnius-Šeštokai	Soviet IV	б		March 1, 1977	
	Tallinn-Vilnius	Soviet sealing				
	Tallinn-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa	a		Nov. 6, 1990	
	Vilnius-Tallinn	Soviet sealing				
	Vilnius-Tallinn	Soviet IIIa	?		Nov. 3, 1990	
	Turmantas-Vilnius	Soviet II	?		????	
	Vilnius-Turmantas	Soviet II	a?		????	
	Utena-Vilnius	Soviet IV	б		March 1, 1977	
	Vilnius-Utena	Soviet IV	б		March 1, 1977	
	Vitebsk-Vilnius	Soviet IIIa	б		Dec. 31, 1990 ?	
	Vilnius-Vitebsk	Soviet IIIa	б		Dec. 30, 1990	

Remaining lines

Section nr	Section	Cancel type	Code letter	earliest		latest
	Biržai- Panevėžys	Soviet Ib	a		Feb. 29, 1960	
	Panevėžys-Biržai	Soviet Ib	a		Sept. 2, 1960	
	Černiachovsk-Radviliškis	Soviet II	a		July 6, 1966	
???	Daugavpils-Klaipėda	Soviet Ib	a		July 5, 1955	
479 ?	Klaipėda-Daugavpils	Soviet Ib (?)	a		Aug. 22, 1956	
	Daugavpils-Mažeikiai	Soviet II	a		April 9, 1957	
	Mažeikiai-Daugavpils	Soviet II	a		March 26, 1957	
	Panevėžys-Švenčionėliai	Soviet Ia	a		Dec. 28, 1962 (?)	
468	Šiauliai-Skapiškis	Soviet Ib	a		Aug. 1, 1951	
470	Skapiškis- Šiauliai	Soviet Ib	a		March 14, 1951	

Lines where no Lithuanian place is included in the cancel, but which are supposed to have run via Lithuania

	Kaliningrad-Riga	Soviet Ia (red)	b		1967 (R)	
	Kaliningrad-Riga	Soviet IIIa (red)	з		1984 (R)	
	Riga-Kaliningrad	Soviet IIIa (red)	З, ж		1984 (R)	
	Riga-Lvov	Soviet IIIa (red)	c		1984 (R)	
	Lvov-Riga	Soviet IIIa (red)	c		1984 (R)	

The large bilingual cancels, type IV, were used on railway-post lines within Lithuania only.

At the end of the fifties the number of railway-post lines had increased considerably, but the cancellation was done in the railway-post carriage itself in a few case only. Most of the time the mail went from the railway-post carriage to the large mail processing centres ПЖДП / CSP and ОПП. Here the railway mail was processed together with the ordinary mail.

Remaining cancels in relation to the railway post

Postage due cancels

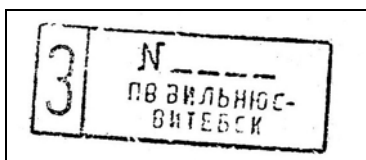


With the indication П.В. (P.V.), the abbreviations are for:
ПОЧТОВЫЙ (POCHTOVYI) ВАГОН (VAGON), Mail Carriage.
Vilnius-Leningrad

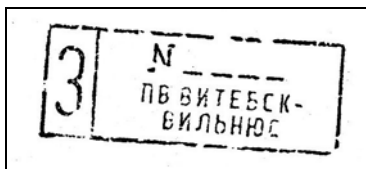


Vilnius-Klaipėda.

Registration cancels

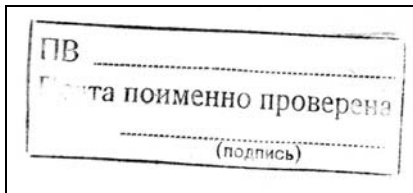


With the indication П.В. (P.V.), Vilnius-Vitebsk



With the indication П.В. (P.V.), Vitebsk-Vilnius

The cancel shown below is probably - with the indication П.В. (P.V.) - a railway-post cancel, but the meaning is not (yet) clear to me:



Size 70 %

PV.....

The mail is by name

.....
(signature)

ПЖДП / CSP and ОПП²

At the end of the sixties a beginning was made with automatic processing in special offices at the departure points and terminuses of the main railway-post lines and junctions in order to deal with the increase in mail traffic.

The indication ПЖДП / CSP and ОПП appears in cancels

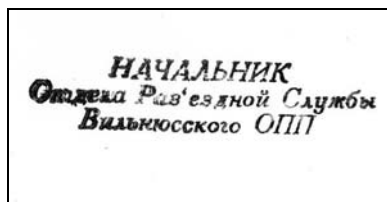


² On this subject see the article of A. Winokurow en W. Lewandowski in Deutsche Zeitschrift für Russland-Philatelie 2001 ; nr. 74. – p. 18

The registration cancel with **ОПП**:



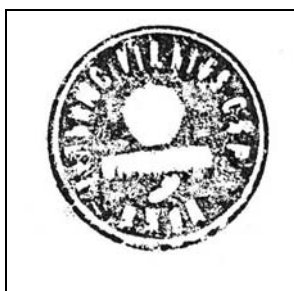
Another cancel unknown to me with **ОПП**:



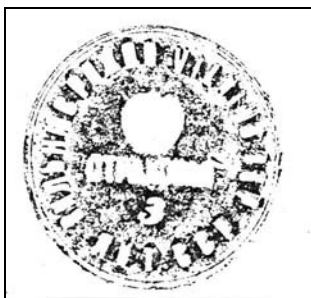
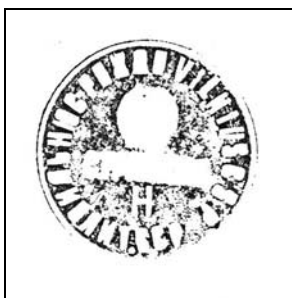
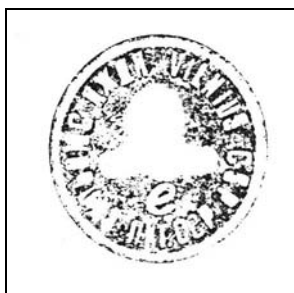
ОПП (OPP) is the abbreviation for **ОТДЕЛЕНИЯ ПЕРЕВОЗКИ ПОЧТЫ**, Department for Mail Processing.

ПЖДП (PZHDP) is the abbreviation for **ПРИЖЕЛЕЗНОДОРОЖНЫЕ ПОЧТАМТЫ**, Post office at the railways. These post offices are a combination of **ОПП** and town post centre.

The Lithuanian indication for **ПЖДП** (PZHDP) is **ССР**. This last mentioned indication can be clearly recognized in a number of cancels, used for sealing, shown below.



With a clear series letter:



The cancels are rather worn and the white round spot may be the state coat of arms. This can clearly be seen on the cancels of the line Kuznica - Vilnius:



Below in the cancel the indication **ЛИТ.ССР** can be read faintly

In the cancel below one can read **РПЖДП** (RPZHDP), and the Lithuanian indication **ССР**. In this case a Rajon centre for railway-post processing is involved.



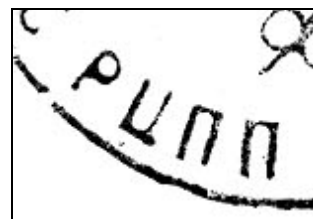
A registration cancel with the indication **РПЖДП** :



Concerning cancels with the indication **РЦПП** (RTSPP) and the Lithuanian indication **РРРС** a centre for mail processing was involved, but it had nothing to do directly with railway post:



A different cancel type with **РЦПП** :



The modern Lithuanian cancel after the Soviet period:





Epilogue

The Soviet cancels used within the Baltic countries are a special collecting area, which have had too little attention.
Additions are welcomed by the editor.



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ADDITIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS

Station numbers

From the beginning the mail vans on the railway line Libava-Wilno-Minsk carried the numbers 45 and 46, and up to 1881 the cancels bore the station numbers. Illustration 15 in chapter 1 shows a mail van cancel from 1879 with station number 1, undoubtedly from Libava.

Right a postcard from 1876 to Libau/Libava/Liepāja with 'a different l' is shown. On the back the author writes that he is living in 'Kowno'. At the station he delivered his postcard to mail van nr 3-4 and its cancel mentions the station number 38. The mail van nr 3-4 ran from St Petersburg to the border station Kibarty/Verzbolovo at the border with German East Prussia, and numbered the stations commencing from the Russian capital. So St Petersburg was number 1, that of Dunaburg/Daugavpils we know as nr 25 and so nr 38 for Kovno/Kaunas. In Vilno/Vilnius the postcard was handed over to mail van nr 45-46 part of the train to Libava. The cancel mentions 1 as the station number.

Summarizing: in 1879 Libava was nr 1, in 1876 this number was assigned to Vilno.

For those interested: see further the article on Muravjevo in HBG 47 (2005).

In any case it remains remarkable that the postcard arrived in Libau/Libava within one day, September 13. The arrival cancel on the back confirms this.

From: HBG 47 (2005), p. 63-64



III. (89%)

