

By 1915 the front had stabilized, the Germans withdrawing to defensible high ground. The trench system, stretching from the channel to the Swiss border, assumed the general shape that it would have until 1918.

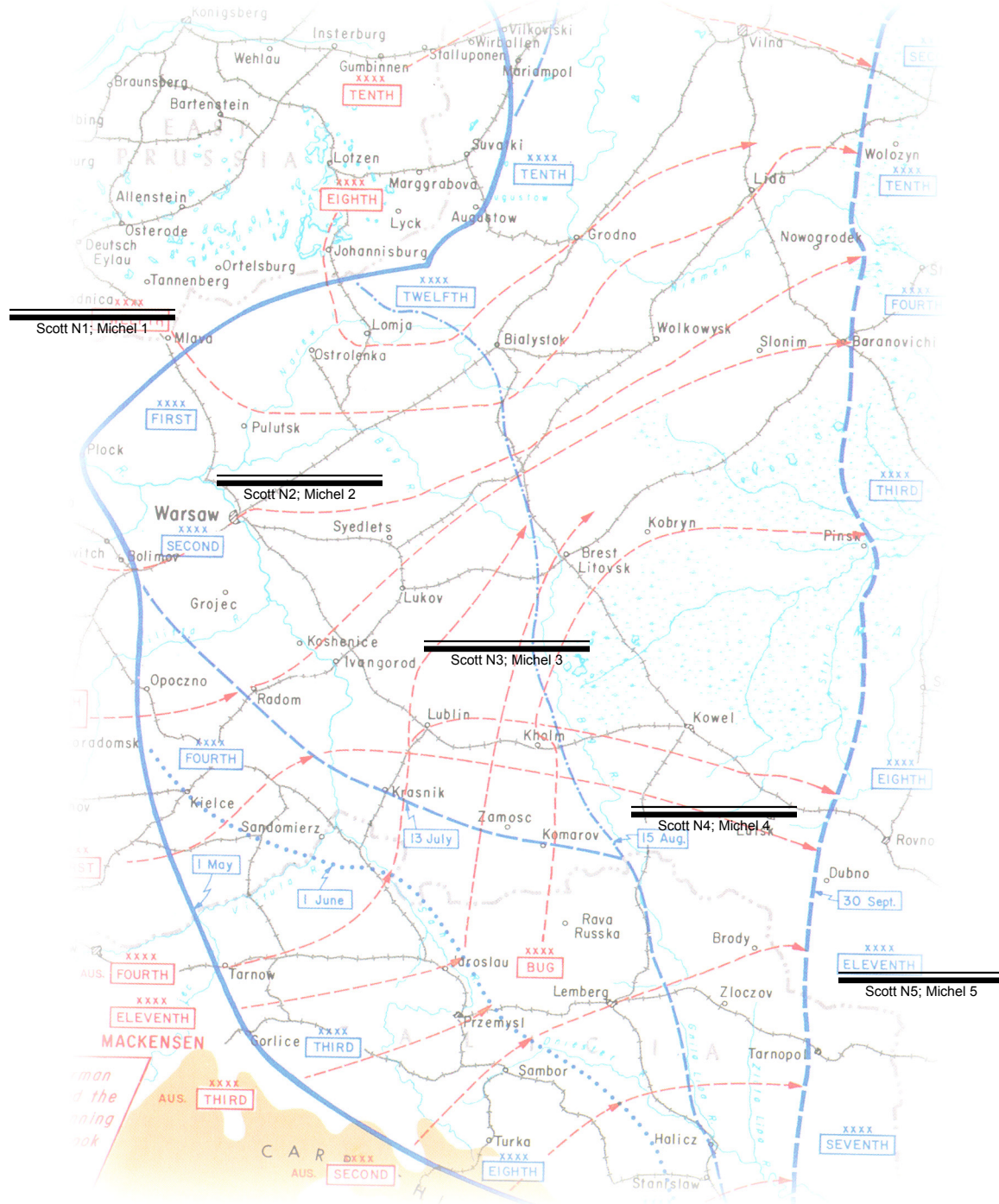
1915

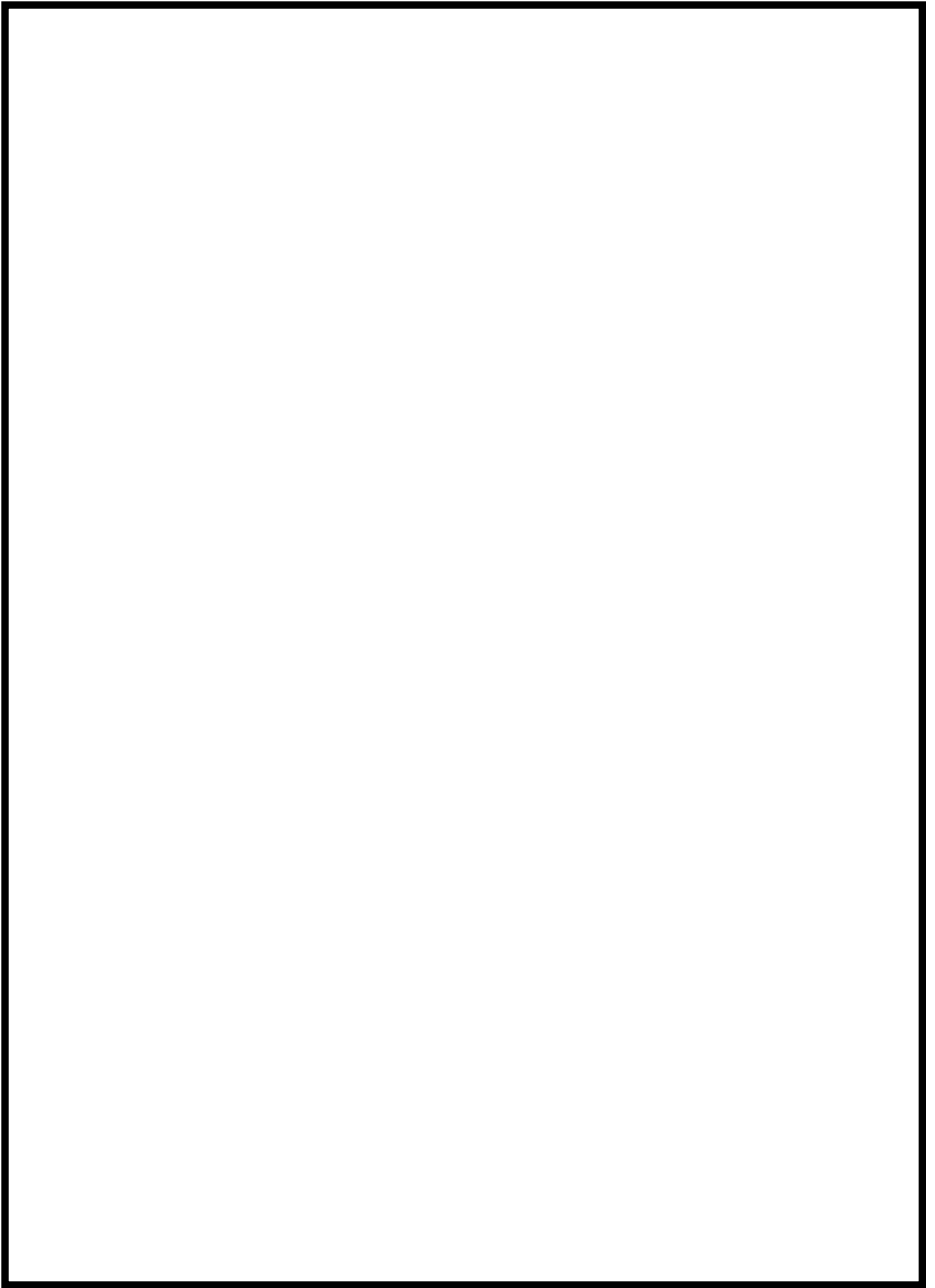
Schanzarbeit im Laufgraben. im Westen.

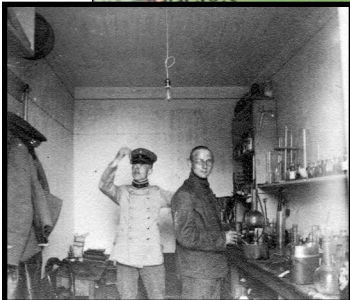
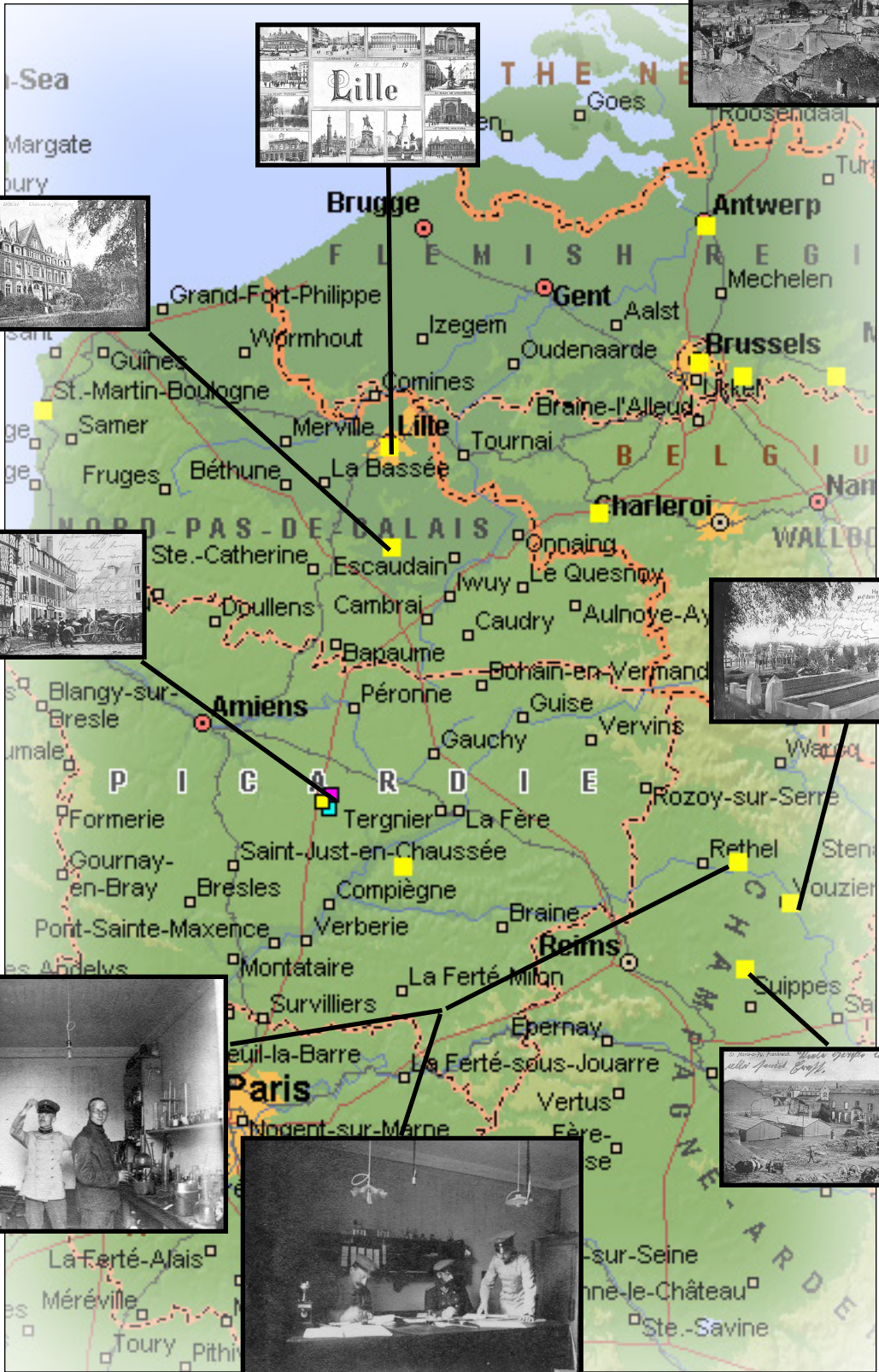


Poland

Russisch-Polen







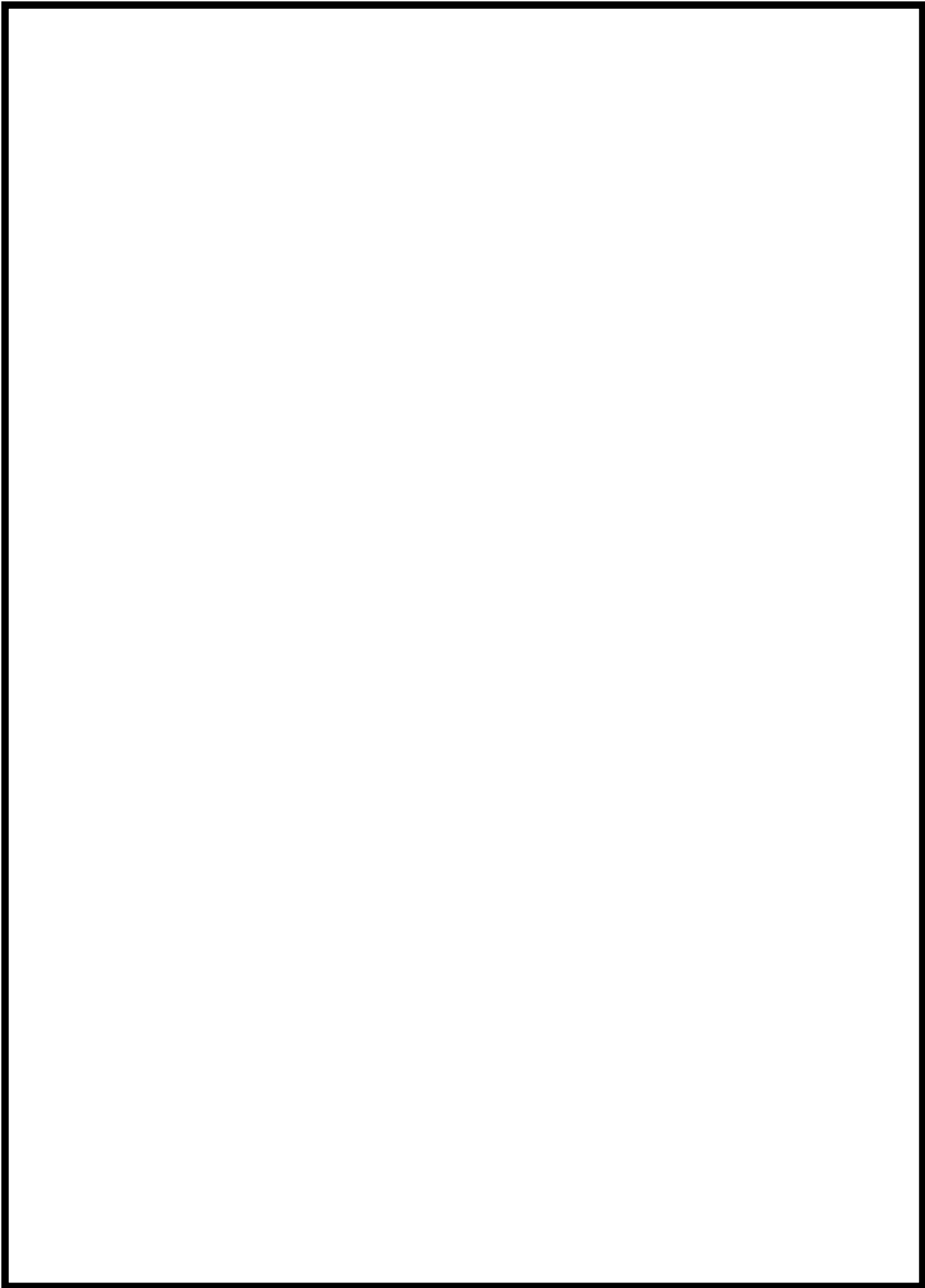
Douai

Roye

Vouziers

Amagne

St. Marie-a-Py



Military Hospitals

By May of 1915 a military hospital had evidently been established at Mons, Belgium.

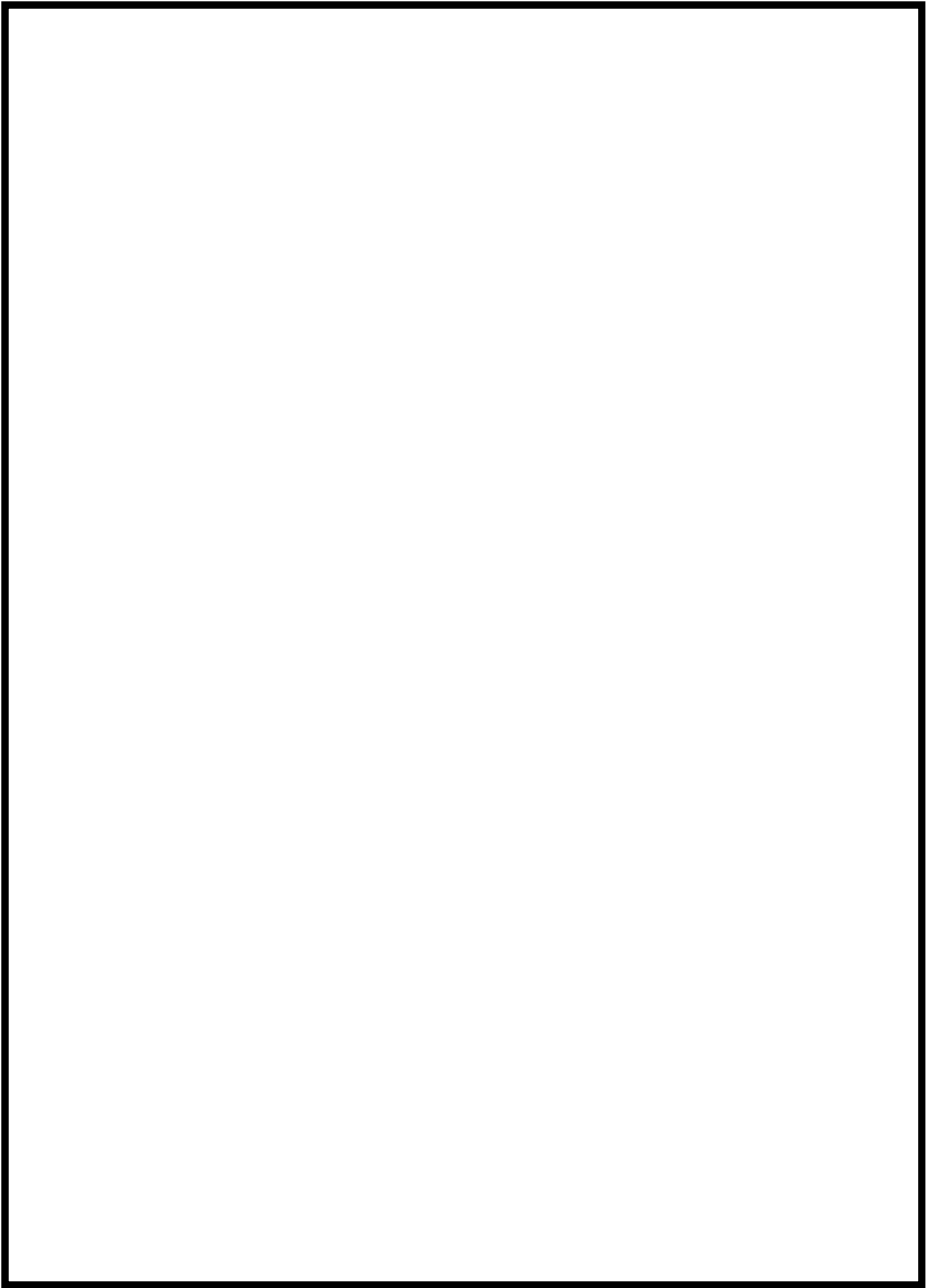
Posted by F. du Bois-Reymond who appears to be a mastersergeant of a medical unit. Both the writer and the stamp in the lower left of the envelope identify the unit as a military hospital ("Kriegslazarett). This does not appear to be prisoner mail or Belgian army despite a name more typical of France or Belgium.

The letter is to a Fraulein Olga Grunewald at the hotel Wever in Antwerp.

On the reverse appears to be the instruction to forward the letter if the addressee has continued her travels.
(I have some difficulty translating the phrase - see below.)



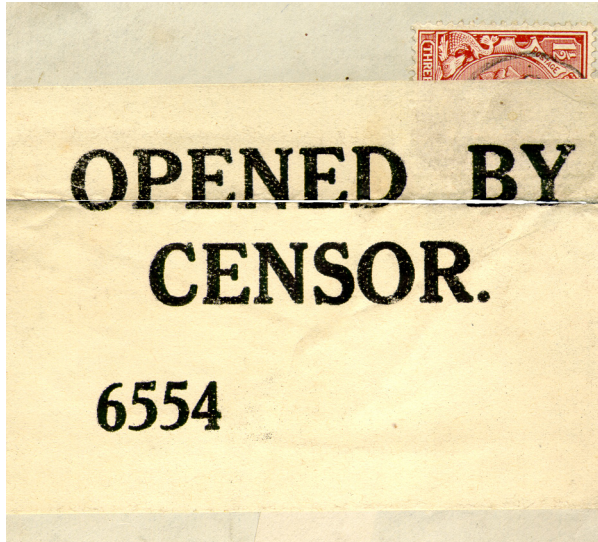
A piece of white paper with handwritten text in black ink. The text reads: 'Wenn Adressat verreist, Bitte zurück.'



Civil Censorship

British

The tape to reseal the envelope is the most common indicia of censorship.
The tape contains an announcement of the act and what purports to be a number identifying the opener.



Letter from Great Britain to Virginia. Date and place of mailing covered by censor tape.

Serifs on letters

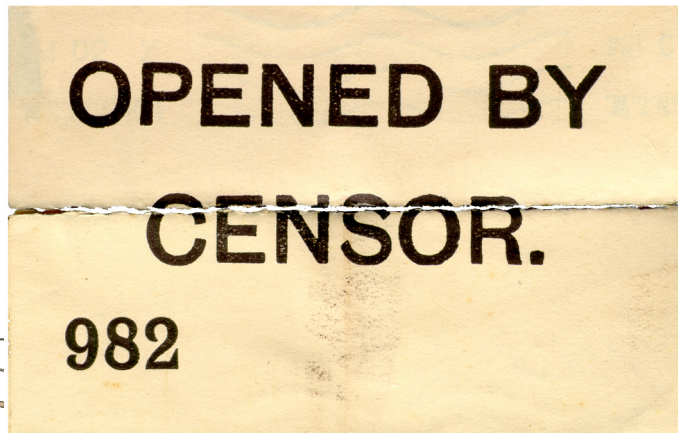
1st line: 8mm high, 66.7 mm long, D & B 8.6 mm apart.
4.6 mm down to 2nd line

2nd line: 8 mm high, 45.2mm long

9.8 mm down to third line

3rd line: 6.4mm high, 16.4 mm long

Letters are thicker and wider than other example with serifs (bottom of page.)



This tape is on a 7 October 1915 letter from Londn to Copenhagen, Denmark. Letters are sans serif.

1st line is 8.6 mm high, 71 mm long, D & B 5.9 mm apart

9.1 mm down to 2nd line

2nd line is 8.8mm high, 52.7 mm long

6.8 mm down to 3rd line

3rd line is 6.9 mm high, 15.1 mm long

Tape is 57.2 mm high

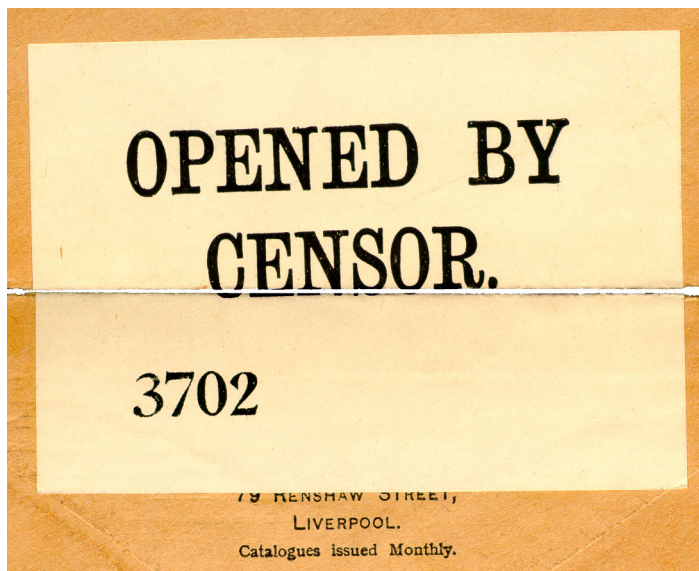
Roller cancel partially obscured by tape.
Stamp has perfin shown at left.



LONDON SW

7. 30 PM

7 OCT 15+



Serified letters on tape resealing letter from Liverpool to San Francisco.

1st row is 8.8 mm high, 58.8 mm long, D and B 7.8 mm apart

5.6 mm down to 2nd row

2nd row is 8.6 mm high, 38.3 mm long

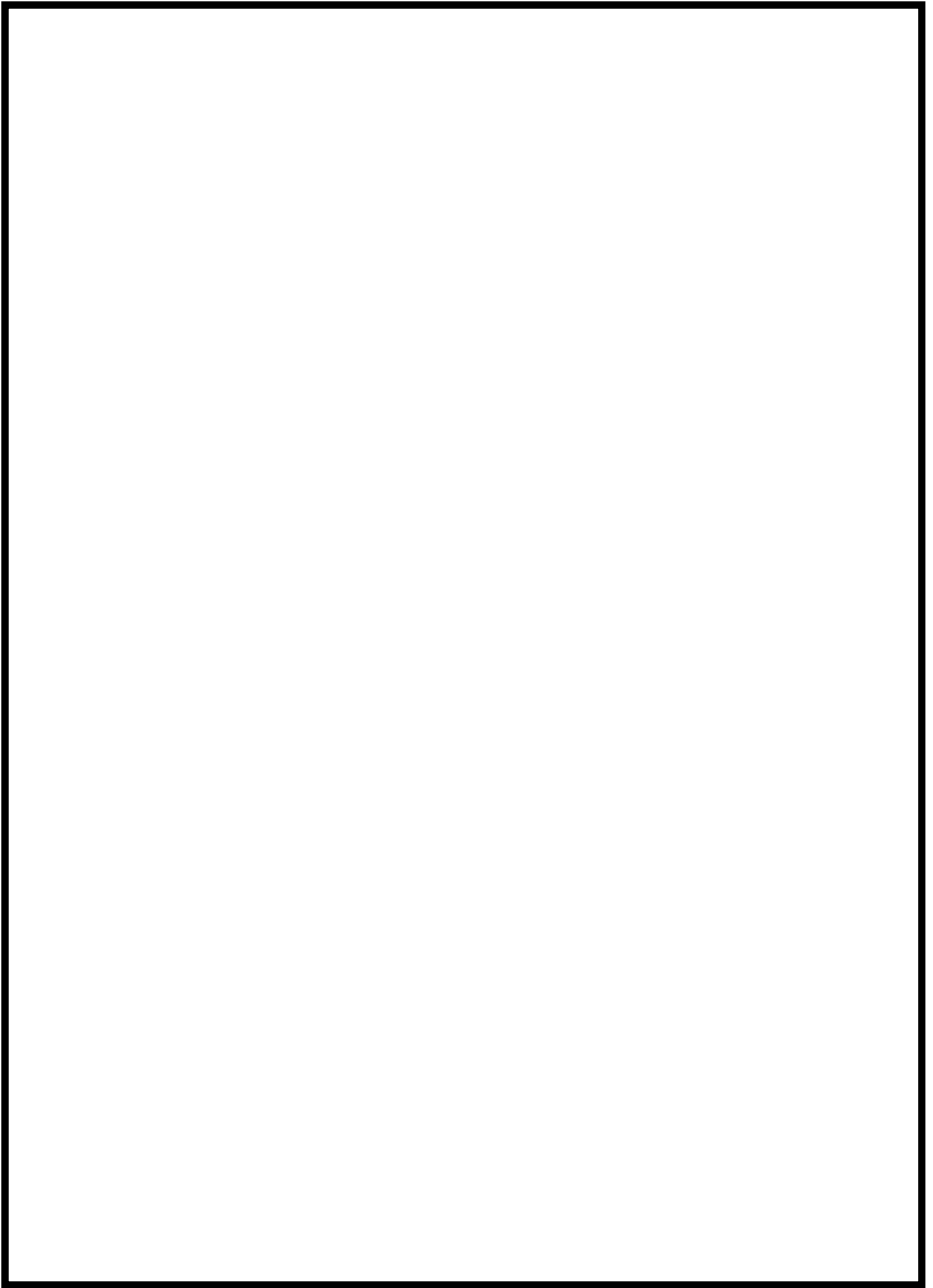
6.8 mm down to third row

3rd row is 6.9 mm high, 15.1 mm long

Tape is 57.2 mm high

Return address can be see below tape. First visible line appears to be 70 Kenshaw Street.

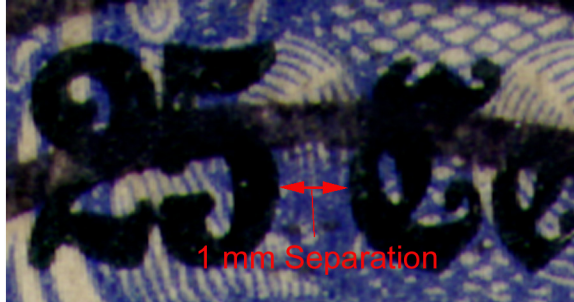
I suspect it is from a stamp dealer. It says catalogues are issued monthly and the envelope was saved by the recipient (only a stamp collector loves the envelope after it has completed its duty.)



German / Belgian

Business letters from Brussels to Heidelberg (6/1) and Hamburg (12 / X).
The cancellations appear to be from the same machine, apparently a machine cancel.

The letters are franked with the overprinted germanias. The 5 Centimes on 5 pf. is Michel 2. The 25 Centimes on 20 pf. is Michel 4 I. There are varieties of these issues based upon the overprint. One, which applies to the 25 Centimes, is based upon the distance between the value "25" and the "C" in Centimes. Others are based upon the distance between the two lines of text.



Here, type 4 I, the distance is a mm. The other type is 1.4 mm.

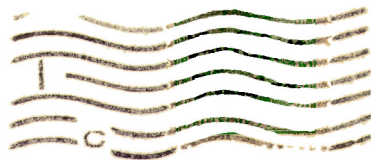
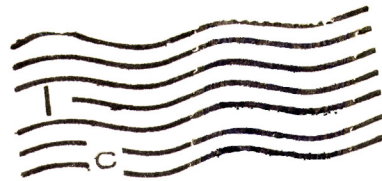


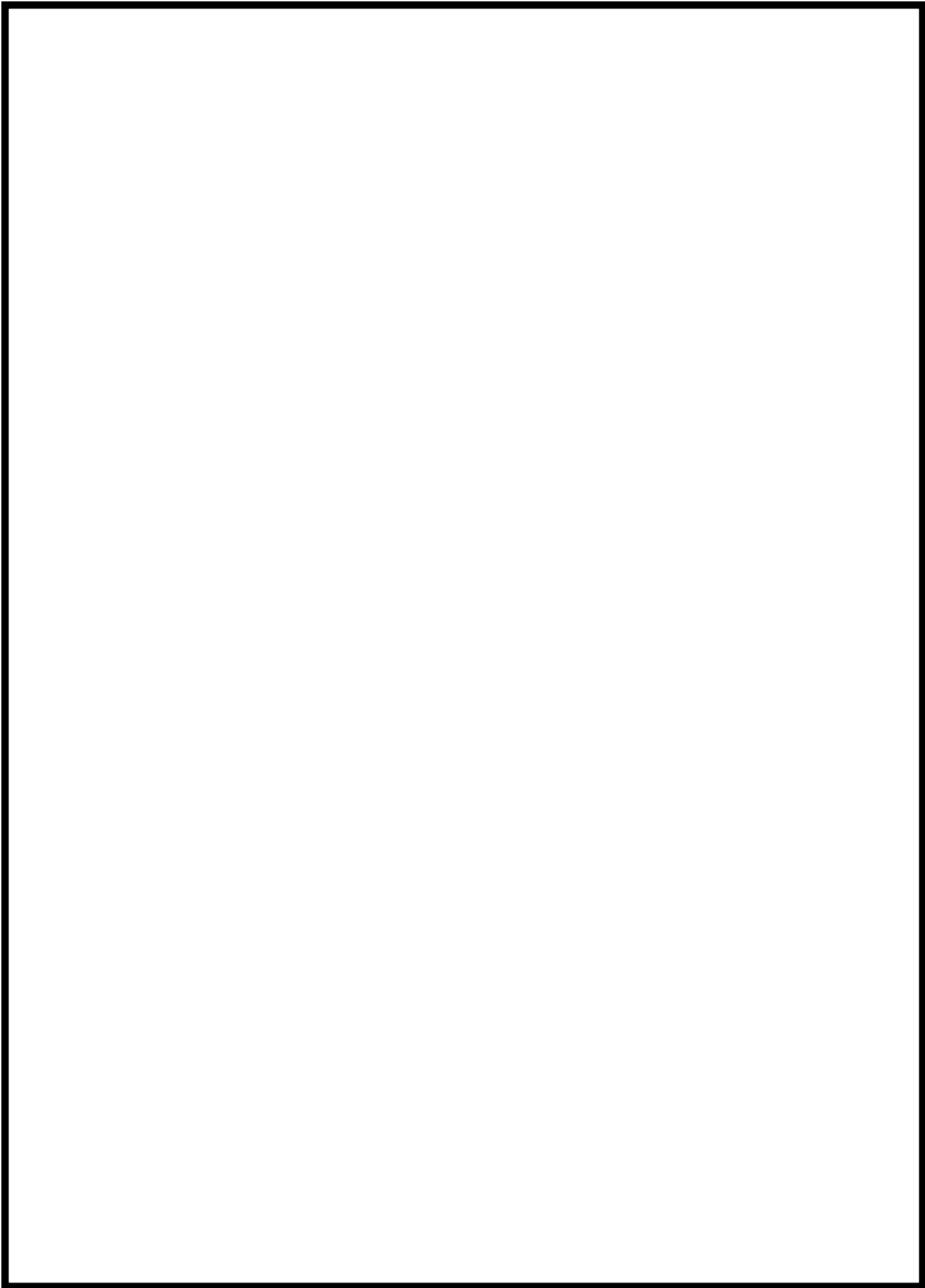
From 6/1/15 letter.



From 12/X/15 letter.

Ctr.	- Unknown
Militarische Überwachungsstelle	- Military Surveillance Office
Geprüft	- inspected





Prisoner Of War Mail

Three German Camps: Custrin, Giessen, Gutersloh

Two of the letters are addressed to Copenhagen, undoubtedly for forwarding.

One goes via Holland.

With the horrendous casualties, one tends to forget that there were also prisoners.



Kriegsgefangenen-Lager
Giessen.

At Giessen the camp commandant allowed a barracks to be erected where prisoners with electrical skills gave lessons to other prisoners of war. An art studio was also provided at the camp.

After a state of war existed between Germany and Great Britain, the American Embassy cared for British interests in Germany, including interned civilians and prisoners of war.

Custrin
prisoner of war camp



Each of these letters is identified as prisoner of war mail by the word "Kriegsgefangenen." Adding the word "lager, as on the two following letters adds the word camp. adding the word "sendung," as is done below, results in "prisoner of war consignment or sending." Each of the envelopes have the initials "F.a." stamped on them. I have not positively identified a usage, but the initials FA were used by the german post to refer to an exchange office - here, an office to exchange prisoner of war mail between Germany and Great Britain. I note that these two letters, to Copenhagen, were sent in May and June. The one sent via Holland was postmarked in November.

Kriegsgefangenen sendung



Lt.-Kapitan N. Golubeff
Prisoner of War in Fort Gorgast
royal command
Custrin
6 / 1915

*Lt.-Kapitan N. Golubeff
Kriegsgefangener auf Fort Gorgast
Königliche Kommandantur
Custrin*



These Copenhagen cancels come from the reverse of the two envelopes on these facing pages. The one on the left is from the envelope above. On the right is the one from the envelope on the facing page.



Gutersloh
prisoner of war camp

Each of the envelopes is stamped "Geprüft" which indicates that it has been inspected by the censor. The November letter, via Holland, has a circular stamp with Geprüft in the center. The letter above has both a separate stamp, and the circular stamp with the German eagle has, in the center, the postal censor office (or control office) - "Postprüfungsstelle." Note that the seal indicates that this is a prisoner of war camp for officers.



Geprüft.

From the names involved in these two letters to Denmark, it is possible that the mail was from Russian prisoners of war. The Germans followed the practice of mixing the allied prisoners together. Thus Denmark is a conduit for letters with Russia and Holland for Great Britain.

Note that the addressee is the same on both letters:
Leonidas von Tjankoff



Russ. Leutnant Fanviky N124
offizier - kriegsgefangenenlager
Gutersloh
Haus D

Russ. Leutnant Fanviky. N124
offizier - kriegsgefangenenlager
Gutersloh.

Haus D
27.6.15.124N

Giessen
prisoner of war camp



Note the early London machine cancel on this cover. It appears to be a Colombia continuous machine cancel. They were in use from 1901 to 1921. Sent via Holland it goes to Mrs. R. Russell, 34 Salisbury Rd., Highgate 1/3, London N. The sender is:

Companie 2
Baraque D 724
Sergt ___ Bailey
(or that's my guess)



Companie 2 Baraque D 724 Sergt ___ Bailey
KRIEGSGEFANGENENSCHÜDUNG

Kriegsgefangenensendung

Kriegsgefangenen-Lager
Giessen.

IN.F.S

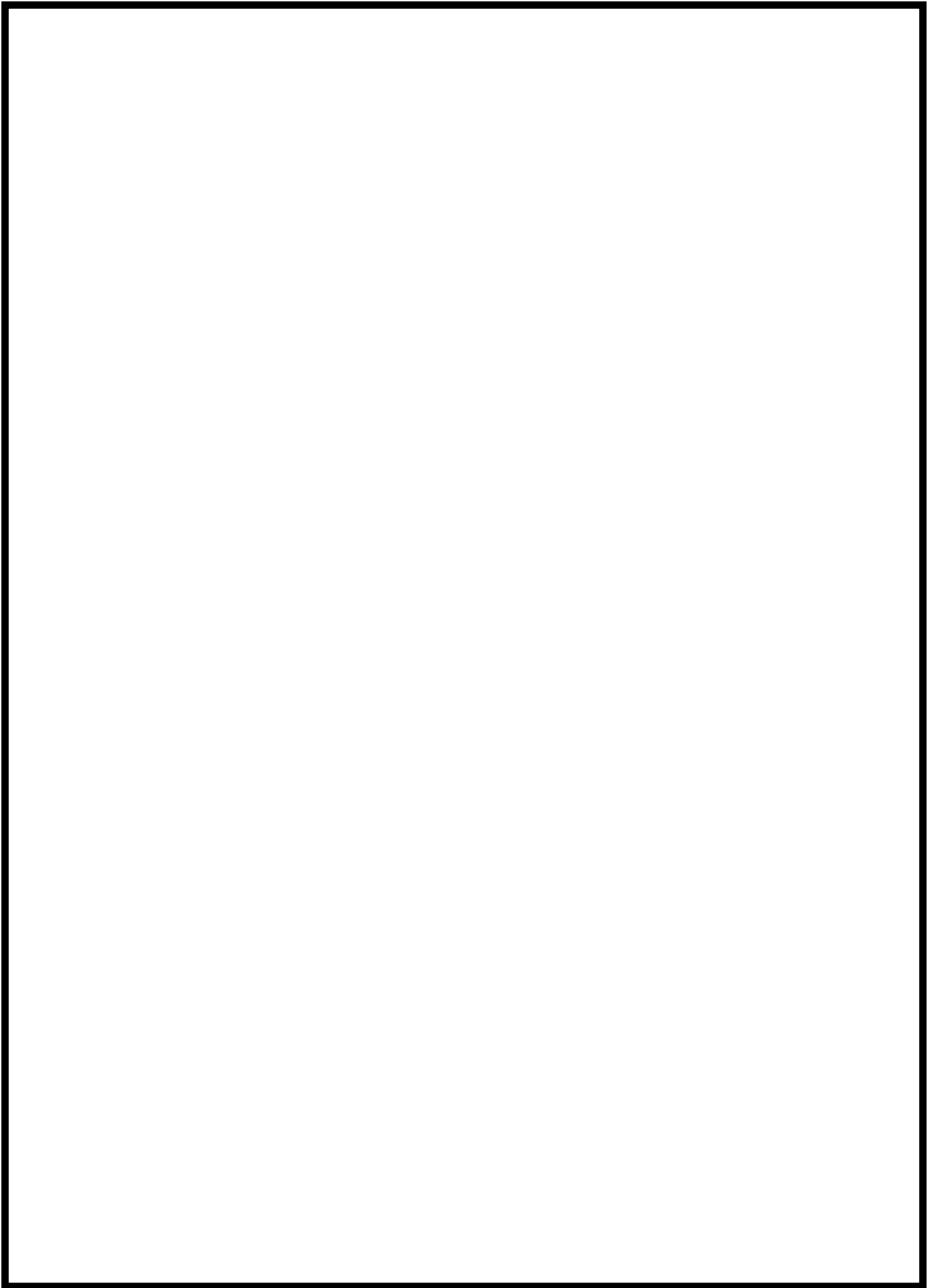
10

3 15

LONDON.F.S

PAID

DEC 3 15



Germania

watermarked

The 1905 issue uses the same design as that of 1902 but on watermarked paper.

Watermark diamonds or lozenges.

Typography pf. values - engraving mark values - Perforated 14

This long running design lasts into the Republic. With the coming of World War I shortages affect the quality of the materials available for stamp production. Beginning in 1915 these issues are characterized by

- unclear printing
- lusterless, coarse paper
- the middle part of the design is usually poorly defined
- watermark not easily visible
- gum shiny and flat

An intermediate type which does not show all of the characteristics of the peacetime issues is considered one of the wartime printings.

In addition, problems with the quality or the paper required a change in the size of perforations in the Mark values. These have perforations of 25:17 perforations rather than the usual 26:17. (The number of perforations found on the top and side of the stamps.)

The two pfennig was only part of the peace time printings.

1915 Issues

Scott does not distinguish between peacetime and wartime printings except in a general manner.

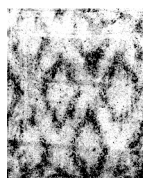
Wartime Printings

Michel lists the peacetime and wartime printings separately, including color and paper varieties.

Michel lists 30 distinct stamps for the wartime pfennig printings.

"II" designates the wartime printings.

The 30 and 50 pfennig are printed on two types of paper.



Michel 84 II a
light brown to olive brown

Michel 84 II b
dark brown

Michel 85 II a
dark grain

Michel 85 II d
bluish green

Michel 85 II e
black blue green

Michel 86 II a
red

Michel 86 II c
carmine to lilac carmine

Michel 86 II d
lilac red

Michel 86 II e
light red

Michel 86 II f
orange red

Michel 87 II a
(gray) ultramarine

Michel 87 II b
violet ultramarine

Michel 87 II c
(pale) blue violet

Michel 87 II d
violet blue (shades)

Michel 88 II a
has a metallic sheen

Michel 88 II b
no metallic sheen

Michel 89 II x
on pale chrome yellow

Michel 89 II y
on pale yellow orange

Michel 90 II a
carmine red
brown black

Michel 90 II b
lilac red
brown black

Michel 91 II x
on pale chrome yellow

Michel 91 II y
on pale yellow orange

Michel 92 II a
dark red lilac

Michel 92 II b
violet purple

Michel 92 II c
gray lilac

Michel 93 II a
carmine with a metallic
sheen
black on pale red

Michel II b
carmine red
brown black
on rose

Colonies

Kamerun

typography - watermarked lozenges - perforated $14 \times 14\frac{1}{2}$, $14\frac{1}{2}$

Scott 24; Michel 24
this and the 1919 printing
would not have been
placed in use

Karolinen

The Kaiser's Yacht Hohenzollern

watermarked lozenges - typography/engraved - perforated $14 \times 14\frac{1}{2}$
neither of these stamps were placed in use

Scott 22; Michel III

Scott 23; Michel 22

Empire
1915

Deutsch-Ostafrika
The yacht Hohenzollern

Scott 39; Michel 38

Samoa
The yacht Hohenzollern

watermarked lozenges - typography pf. values engraving mark values - perforated 14, 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14

Scott 70; Michel 20

Scott 71; Michel 21

Scott 72; Michel 22

Scott 73; Michel 23

Togo

The yacht Hohenzollern
watermarked lozenges - engraving mark values - perforated 14¹/₂ x14

Scott 23; Michel 23