

## Synopsis

### Certified Mail in Northern Bavaria , 1945

Mention of the term “certified mail” will cause a US philatelist to immediately think of the Certified Mail service offered by the USPS. This exhibit has nothing to do with that.

#### Background

The resumption of postal services in Germany after World War II took place on a regional and even a local basis. In northern Bavaria , under occupation by the U.S. Army, a form of self-censorship or “certification” was practiced in the summer of 1945. A certified cover was allowed to skip the detour to the American censorship office and thus be delivered to the recipient several days sooner than normal. This privilege was at first granted to official mail and later extended to business mail.

As exceptions that prove the rule, a few (3) censored certified covers are known, and a handful of certified covers originating from outside of northern Bavaria (mostly “border crosser” mail) are also known. I have an oversized cover from Landshut in southern Bavaria which is not included in the exhibit.

Reliable information on this byway of postal history was sadly lacking until Wolfgang Strobel published his article *Die nordbayerischen Zulassungsvermerke im Jahre 1945* in Sammlerdienst no. 14, 1981. He pulled together information from contemporary newspapers, official reports of the Military Government and numerous other sources, and produced a classification of certification types and periods of use that is still employed today. This reference is so important to this subject that I have provided an English translation at:  
<<http://www.jaypex.com/Exhibits/Cert/strobel.htm>>.

#### Exhibit History

Ameristamp Expo 1998 ( Houston )	Gold
COLOPEX 2003	Gold
Ameristamp Expo 2003 ( Biloxi )	Gold
BALPEX 2005	Grand

Since Biloxi , a second cover has been added to several pages, including the second earliest recorded certified cover and a cover with a handwritten certification. In addition, the cover on final page has been replaced with one that shows proper use of certification on an overweight letter. These changes resulted in receiving the Single Frame Grand Award at BALPEX 2005.

#### Challenge Factor

Certified covers are extremely difficult to obtain. Most collectors and dealers do not know what they are. When I have shown this exhibit, a few people have thanked me for explaining the “mystery” covers in their collections.

The 1981 Strobel article includes a census of 213 certified covers. Another collector in Germany is currently working on a revised census, and I would expect that the new total would be at least 500 covers. New covers do turn up from time to time. When I told Strobel that I had

acquired a July 12 cover (previously the earliest known cover was July 14), he told me that he had recently acquired a July 11 cover! The search continues.

This exhibit shows the best items from a collection which is undoubtedly the largest of its kind in the United States , and one of the 3 or 4 largest in the world. The entire collection can be seen at <<http://www.jaypex.com/Germany/Cert1/>>.

### **Organization of Exhibit**

The exhibit is organized per the Strobel article. Certification requirements changed as postal conditions improved, so that 3 distinct periods of use are identified. Official Mail is treated first, with two types of certification endorsements and usage in all three periods. Business Mail, with a different certification endorsement, concludes the exhibit with usage in Periods 2 and 3. For more information see the Title Page.

### **References**

In addition to the translation of the article by W. Strobel  
<<http://www.jaypex.com/Exhibits/Cert/strobel.htm>>,  
the following references contain information about certified mail.

Halle , Ltc. Herman, *Passing in Review, German Postwar Postal History, 1945-1949*. Baltimore, 1984. [Includes official reports of the Military Government]

Riemer, Kark-Heinz, *Die Postzensur der Alliierten im Besetzten Deutschland nach dem II. Weltkrieg*. Düsseldorf, 1977.

Strobel, Wolfgang, *Die Aufnahme des Posverkehrs in Deutschland nach der Besetzung 1945 bis 1950 (6<sup>th</sup> edition)*. Bonn, 2002.

Strobel, Wolfgang, *Die Bewertung früher Briefe in Deutschland nach der Besetzung 1945 bis 1950 (6<sup>th</sup> edition)*. Bonn , 2002.

I can supply copies of the following references by fax or mail. Send requests to  
<[jay@jaypex.com](mailto:jay@jaypex.com)>.

Apelt, Dr. H., *The Special Notes for Official and Business Mail after the Resumption of Postal Communication in 1945 in Bavaria*, English translation of an article in *Der Sammler*, No. 7, 1971.

Heinz, Alfred, *Certified Letters of 1945-46*. *German Postal Specialist*, Vol. VIII, No. 4, April, 1957.

Meier, H.C., *Certified Mail*, *Germany Philatelic Society, 1945-1948 Locals Study and Research Group*, Vol. 6 No. 6, Nov. 1972/Oct. 1973.

Lewerendt, W., *Nachtrag zur AMPOST – amerikanische Ausgabe*, *Der Deutschland-Sammler*, No. 6, June 1971.

