

Back Into the "Weeds" of German Postal History

By Stan Cronwall

I seem to have built a bit of a reputation for stomping around in the "weeds" of the greater world of philately. This short trek will be no different.

Journey with me back to yesteryear after the end of World War II. Recall, that the victorious Allies in effect partitioned Germany (and separately its former capitol Berlin) into four pieces. The Soviets got the east, and the west was divided up between the U.S., Great Britain and France.

It was 1948. The greater effort was to get Germany back on its feet economically. In the British-American Zone of Occupation (Bi-Zone), German firms were issued special "airmail etiquette" labels for business related airmail when the companies registered with the Joint Export Import Agency (J.E.I.A.) after May 1, 1948. The desired effect was by permitting and subsidizing airmail for businesses it would be a boost to the Germany post-war economy.

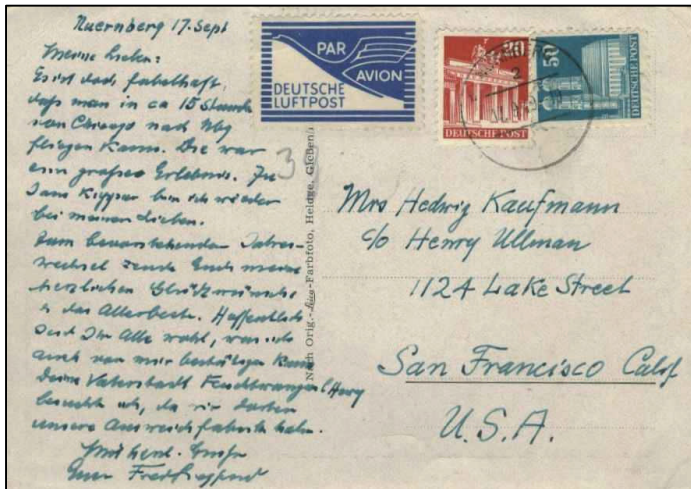


This label wasn't easy to get and shows permission for airmail, not a "polite" request for that service.

All other airmail was restricted so that most German firms and individuals only had access to aerogrammes.

Airmail restrictions for the Bi-Zone were lifted on October 19, 1948. After that date all J.E.I.A. airmail permission labels had no special value and thus became nothing more than the "airmail etiquettes" which they had resembled all along.

Each of these images of covers from that time frame have the label, but were date canceled after the air restrictions were ended, making them merely "airmail etiquettes".



As seems to be never-ending in our chosen hobby, forgeries are quite common.

Watch for the dates, the rates paid and the cancels.

For example, all mail going to West Berlin during the Soviet blockade had to go by airmail, so if you were a registered firm with the J.E.I.A. using one of these precious labels was plain stupid.

***Stan Cronwall** is a member and his collecting interests include Germany: Third Reich 1933-45 and the areas it occupied (stamps covers & cards). He also collects U.S. World War II Patriotic Covers and Cards; Civil War Patriotic Covers (both U.S. and CSA); U.S Naval Covers; DDR stamps; and, Post WW II Soviet Zone Hitler Head Obliteration stamps, covers & cards.*