
Castellum



Luxembourg
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President's Message

by Gary Little

This year, the last one of the second millennium, will be an historic one for the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Just before Christmas, Grand Duke Jean, ruler of Luxembourg since 1964, announced that he will abdicate in September in favor of his eldest son, Crown Prince Henri. Henri, if he continues using his everyday name, would presumably become Grand Duke Henri VIII, not to be confused (for his wife's sake) with the English king of beheading fame. The last ruler of Luxembourg named Henri was the great Henri VII (1288-1310), the first of four leaders of Luxembourg to be elected Holy Roman Emperor in the 14th and 15th centuries.

The Luxembourg P&T will undoubtedly issue a new set of stamps to mark the abdication by Jean and the accession of Henri. Although specific details of such stamps have not yet been announced, I'm sure the P&T's designers and engravers are quite busy at the moment.

The September *Castellum* will be a Grand Duke Jean thematic issue, covering all aspects of his life from birth in 1921, war service in the 1940s, marriage in 1953, accession in 1964, and the abdication. All from a philatelic perspective, of course. Please take a close look at your collections to see if you have any interesting material that would be suitable for inclusion; I welcome all contributions that will help make this a memorable issue.



*Emperor Charles V (1500-1558).
His vast dominions included Luxembourg,
the Low Countries, and Burgundy.*

Now to more mundane news. This month, Luxembourg will issue nine new stamps, including one to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the birth of Emperor Charles V; one for the International Year of Mathematics; two for the towns Walferdange and Wasserbillig; a 9F Grand Duke Jean definitive; and a set of four showing different musical instruments.

Also, effective April 1, Luxembourg postal rates will increase for the first time in 5 years: the 20 gm domestic rate goes from 16F to 18F, the European rate goes from 16F to 21F, and the overseas rate goes from 25F to 30F.

Luxemburg in the USA

by Gary Little

In the last half of the 19th century, Luxembourg experienced a very high rate of emigration as many of her citizens abandoned the tiny country in favor of greener pastures in Europe and around the world. In the 50-year period from 1841 to 1891, for example, almost 72,000 people emigrated, representing about 1/3 of the population of the Grand Duchy in 1891 (212,800). The primary reasons for this exodus were general poverty and lack of opportunities at home coupled with an expectation of prosperity abroad, particularly in those nations that supplied generous land grants to new immigrants. The Luxembourg iron and steel industry, which would later become the source of an economic recovery in the early 1900s and staunch the flow of emigrants, provided little comfort to the citizenry in the 19th century.

Many of the emigrating Luxembourgers headed to the United States and settled in rural areas of several mid-west states, notably Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Wisconsin. Many also settled in the city of Chicago and by 1908 there were 16,000 people of Luxembourg origin living there.

The activities of Luxembourgers in the U.S. were well chronicled in Nicholas Gonner's 1889 book *Die Luxemburger in der Neuen Welt*. Gonner emigrated to the United States in 1866 and eventually settled in Dubuque, Iowa where he was the editor of the influential newspaper *Luxemburger Gazette*. His book served to orient and instruct potential, or recent, Luxembourg emigrants to life in the United States.

At least three immigrant communities were named *Luxemburg* in honor of the European homeland: one in Iowa (near Dubuque), another in Minnesota (near St. Cloud), and a third in Wisconsin (near Green Bay). I also believe there once was a Luxemburg in Mississippi, but I have not yet been able to confirm this.

An interesting sideline for anyone collecting material from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is to collect the different postmarks of all the Luxemburg communities in the United States.

The towns of Luxemburg in Iowa and Wisconsin still have operating post offices and recent postmarks are, of course, rather easy to obtain. Some examples are shown here, including a special millennium postmark from Luxemburg, Wisconsin that was used earlier this year. Note that the Luxemburg of Wisconsin was spelled *Luxembourg* before 1924, so look closely for older postmarks that include the additional "o".

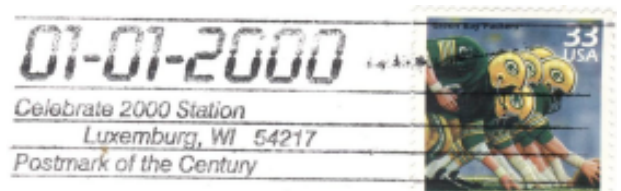
Examples of postmarks from Luxemburg, Minnesota (in Stearns County) are much rarer. This post office opened in 1865 under the odd name of *Luxemburgh* but in 1894 its name was



Nicholas Gonner (1835-1892), author of *Die Luxemburger in der Neuen Welt* (1992 stamp).



Luxemburg, Wis. machine cancel (1954).



Luxemburg, WI millennium postmark (2000).

changed to *Luxemburg* (i.e., the mysterious “h” was dropped). The post office was shut down in 1905 when it was transferred to nearby St. Cloud. Examples of the Luxemburgh and Luxemburg postmarks from Minnesota are shown on complete envelopes below.

Luxemburg, Minnesota might soon change its name once again, according to an article that appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* in February. There is a proposal for Luxemburg to merge with the nearby town of St. Augusta to form a new city named in honor of the governor of Minnesota, former professional wrestler Jesse Ventura! As explained in the article, “St. Augusta and the neighboring hamlet of Luxemburg are seeking to merge and incorporate as a city—a city that, naturally, needs a name of its own. Using St. Augusta would tick off the folks of Luxemburg. Using Luxemburg would enrage those in St. Augusta. So the town board decided to come up with something fresh. ‘Ventura’ emerged as the winner.” If this proposal is adopted, no collection of Luxemburgensia will be complete unless it includes a Ventura, Minnesota postmark!



Luxemburg, WI hand cancel (1999).

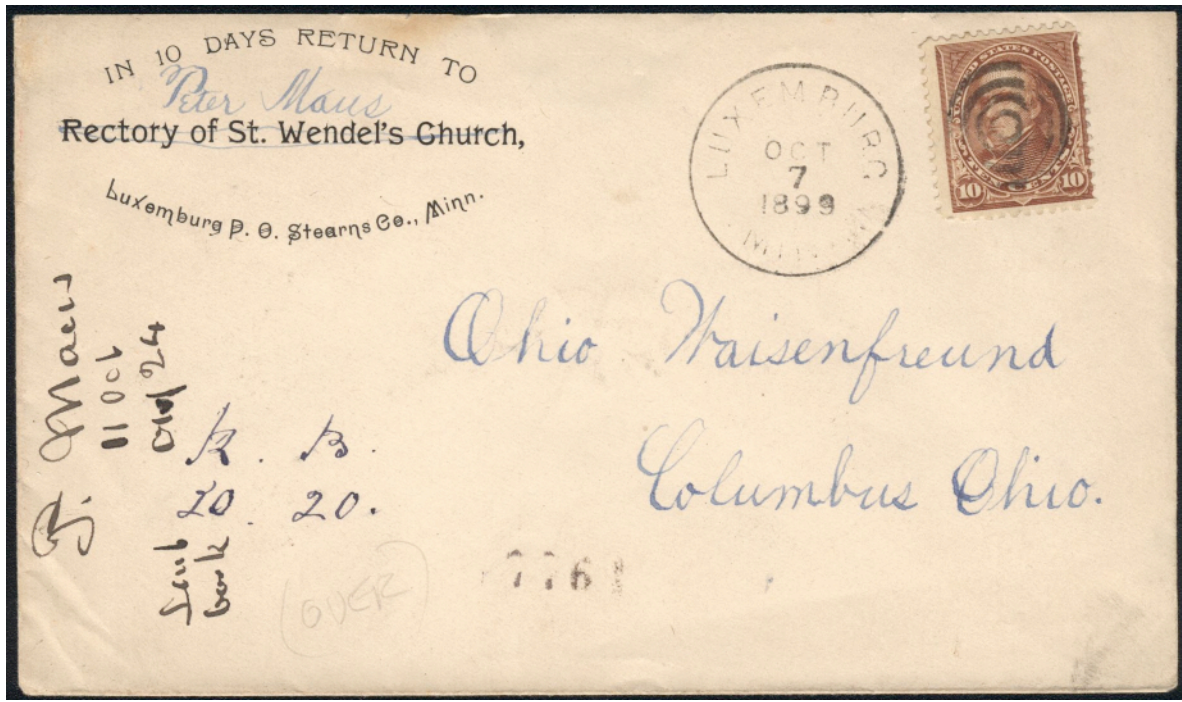


Luxemburg, IA hand cancel (1999).



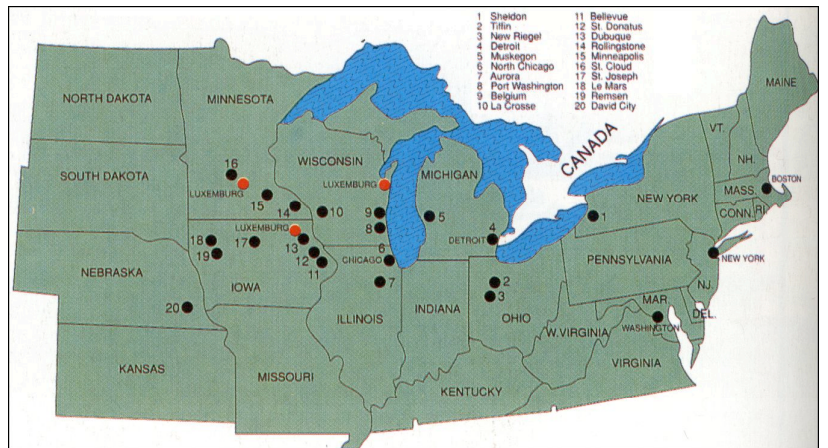
Envelope from Luxemburgh, Minn. to Chicago (1894).

The Luxembourg Stamp Club Federation (FSPL) has published an interesting catalog of foreign postmarks with a Luxembourg theme: *Catalogue des Cachets Etrangers avec le Motif “Luxembourg”*. Over 200 such postmarks are listed, though most are of philatelic origin. Since the current edition includes only three varieties of Luxemburg postmarks from the U.S.A. I’ve provided the FSPL with the above examples to ensure the next edition is more complete.



Envelope from Luxemburg, Minn. to Columbus (1899).

To learn more about early immigration from Luxembourg to the United States, I recommend reading *Luxembourgers in the New World*, the English translation of Nicholas Gonner's classic 1889 work. It was re-published in 1987 by Editions-Reliures Schortgen of Luxembourg and is still available. There are two volumes: Volume I covers Luxembourger immigration and settlements and Volume II is a name and locality index to Gonner's *Luxemburger Gazette*. I also suggest visiting Lisa Oberg's Luxembourg genealogy web site at <http://www.eskimo.com/~lisanne/>.



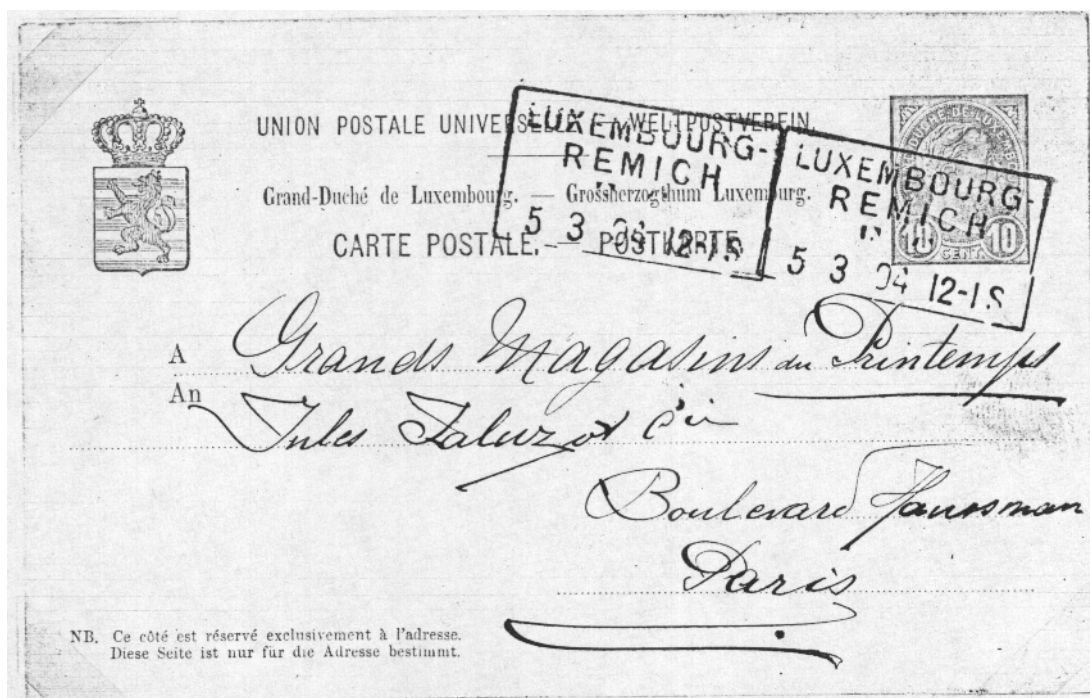
Early settlements of Luxembourgers in the United States. The three towns named Luxemburg are indicated in red (lighter dots).

Left: Promotional poster for the Red Star Line from the offices of emigration agent J.P. Diendoné-Derulle of Grevenmacher.

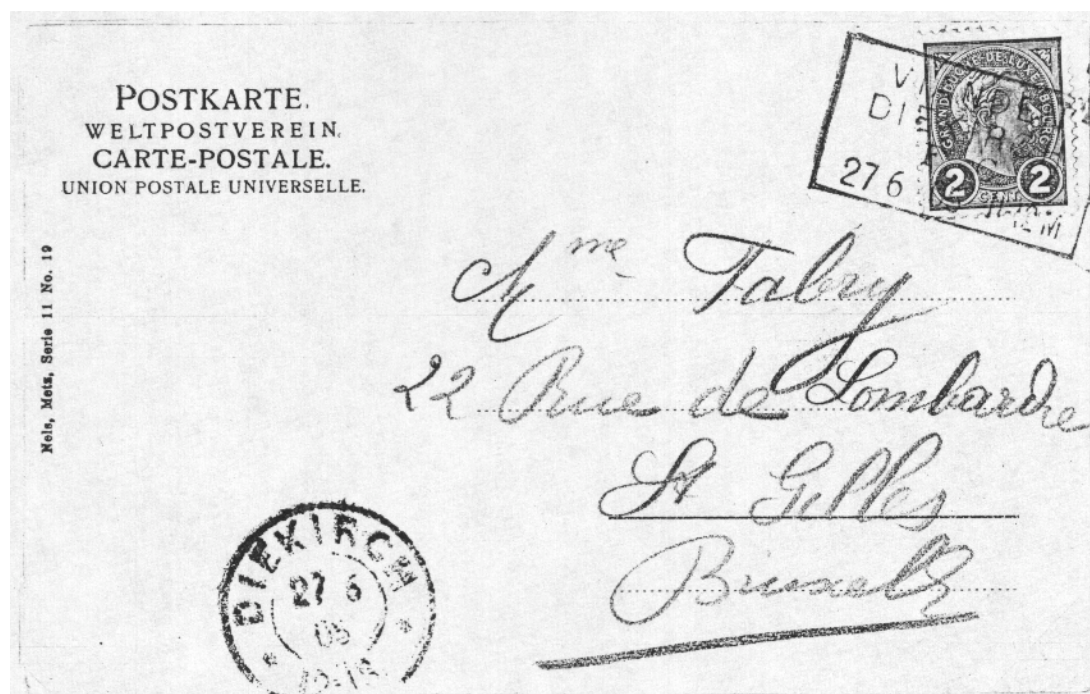
Railway Postmarks of Luxembourg, Part 2
by Thomas Post

[continued from the December 1999 issue of *Castellum*]

TYPE 3



LUXEMBOURG- REMICH F.C. 5 3 04 12-15



VIANDEN DIEKIRCH F.C. 27 6 05 11-12M

Both routes are secondary, narrow gauge routes.

TYPE 4: Three rectangles in large rectangle, top with 2 lines for town names, middle with 1 line for date and time, bottom with 1 line for service.

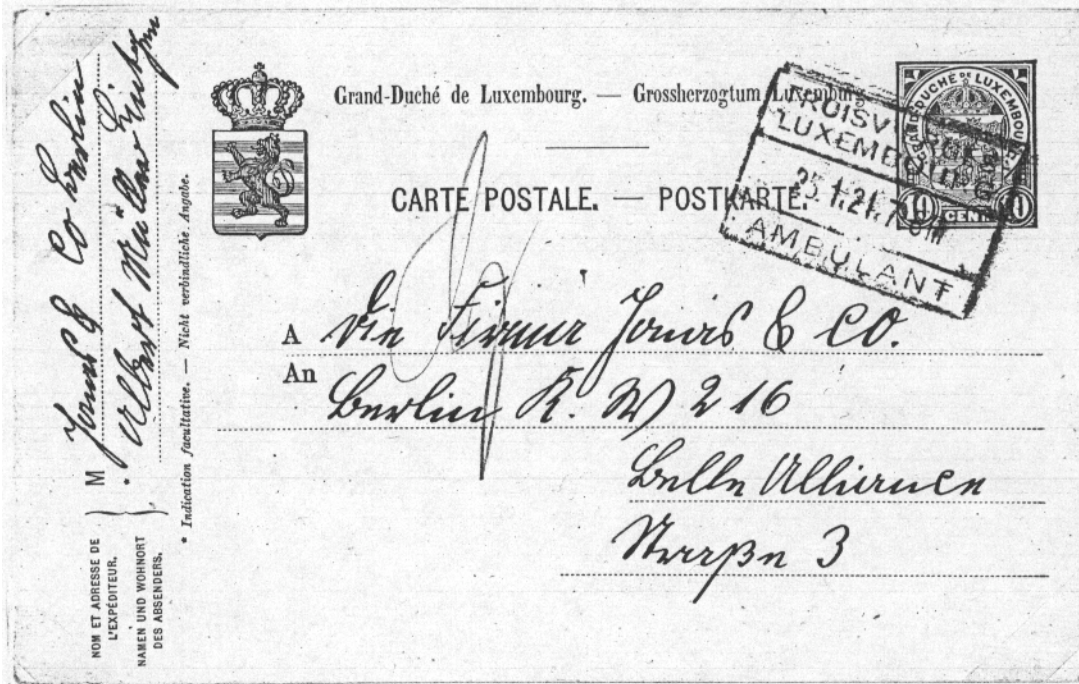


LUXEMBURG- TRIER -7.6.16.6-7V BAHNPOST

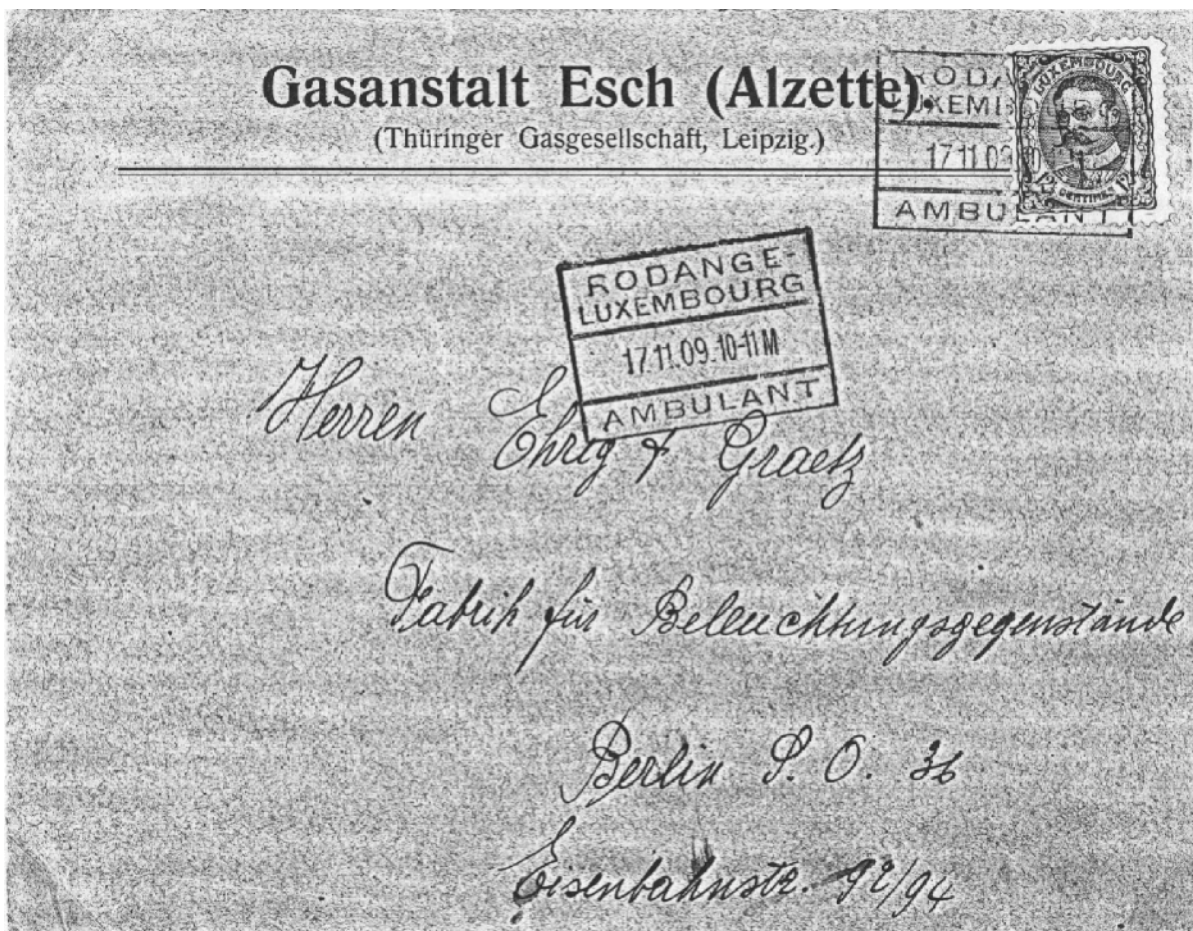


TRIER- LUXEMBURG -9.9.11.11-12V. BAHNPOST

Bahnpost route on the mainline between Luxembourg Ville and the German city of Trier. Note German censor marking used during World War I occupation. Type 4 devices used from 1908 to 1940.



TROISVIERGES- LUXEMBURG 25.1.21.7-8M AMBULANT



RODANGE- LUXEMBURG 17.11.09.10-11M AMBULANT

Ambulant service routes between Luxembourg Ville and Troisvierges to the north and Rodange to the west on the route to Longwy, France.



ECHTERNACH-ETTELBRUCK -2.11.17.6-7S CONVOYAGE



KLEINBETTINGEN-ETTELBRUCK -9.11.14-5S CONVOYAGE

Convoyage (route agent) service routes on secondary routes. Note World War I German censor marking applied at Trier.

[to be continued in the next issue of *Castellum*]