
Castellum



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President's Message

by Gary Little

In past issues of *Castellum* I have written several times on foreign (i.e., non-Luxembourg) postmarks that include the word Luxembourg in the circular date stamp. Many of these are quite challenging to track down, particularly those using a non-Roman alphabet. Two years ago I discussed a cover from Georgia (in the old Soviet Union) with a bilingual Cyrillic and Mkhedruli postmark. Shown below is another Cyrillic postmark on a 1930 cover I've just discovered — the transliteration of the town name on this postmark is Luxembourg Ukrainskiy Mariup. Okr. (Luxembourg Ukrainian Mariup. Dist.). This town, now called Rozivka, is located near the port town of Mariupol on the Sea of Azov. It was apparently called Luxembourg for only a few years in the 1930s, perhaps in honor of socialist leader Rosa Luxemburg who died in 1919.



Luxembourg, Ukraine postmark on cover sent to Austria in 1930.

The Mystery of the Un Silbergros Reprint Sheetlet

by Timothy Bryan Burgess

For those interested in the fascinating story of the 1906 Reprints of Luxembourg's first postage stamps, a question naturally arises: what is the connection between the Un Silbergros Reprint Sheetlet of 10 and the 1906 Reprints derived from the cleaning of Left Pane Plate Position 4, and Right Pane Plate positions 36 and 37 of the Reserve Plate of 200?



Illustration 1
The Reprint Sheetlet of 10 of the Un Silbergros

Some definitions should be covered for the sake of clarity. The material examined falls into three categories:

1. Reprints made of the entire 200 Positions of the Reserve Plate. On the Un Silbergros this includes a total of 3 cleaned and repaired positions. Left Pane (LP) position 4 and Right Pane (RP) positions 36 and 37. At this stage the printings are not carefully managed and despite the cleaning and repair some of the scratches and damage from rust is visible. These will be defined as the "coarse" printings.
2. Reprints carefully executed with special care to remove ink from undesirable areas of the plates. It would seem likely that these printings were made by specifically inking only the cleaned positions LP4 and RP36 and RP37. The remaining 197 plate positions remained uninked. This would be a reasonable economic consideration in regards to reducing waste of ink and particularly the watermarked paper. These will be defined as the "refined" printings.
3. Reprints made in a Sheetlet of 10 from a die derived from the Reserve Plate. There is no published evidence to conclude that the Sheetlet was issued in 1906. However, it perhaps makes sense that the acquisition of the plate, the production of 1906 Reprints, and the manufacture and use of the die for the Sheetlet of 10 occurred within a relatively close period of time.

Upon close examination of the full reprint sheet of 200 from the Reserve Plate of the Un Silbergros, including the cleaned positions, and a number of singles from positions LP4, RP36 and RP37 in comparison with the Reprint Sheetlet of 10, it would appear without doubt that the

Sheetlet was produced from a die derived from one of the 200 positions on the Reserve Plate. 600 dpi scans were taken from a full sheet of 200 of the 1906 Reprint, along with various single examples of Position LP4, and pairs of positions RP36 and RP37.



Illustration 2
1906 Reprint Reserve Plate
Position LP4 "coarse" printing



Illustration 3
1906 Reprint Reserve Plate
Position RP36 and RP37 "coarse" printing

The above illustrations are images cropped from the full sheet printing of the Reserve Plate. These "coarse" printings show more details of the defacing and rust than do the single examples also closely examined. Obviously more care was taken in the execution of the "refined" printings of the single stamps and pairs than in the reprinting of the sheets of 200. As indicated in *The Story of Luxemburg Reprints of 1906*, the printings taken from the cleaned positions of the Reserve Plate was done in a very patient and painstaking manner which included the further remove of ink from undesirable areas of the plates with a piece of wood during the printing process.

This perhaps explains why there is a variance in the visibility of rust marks and defacing lines amongst the "refined" reprints taken from the Reserve Plate. Illustration 4 shows the vertical lines of the defacing quite clearly as seen on Position LP4 as it appears in the full sheet printing of 200. The scratches are most evident running vertical behind the nose and across the cheek. In an example of the "refined" or more carefully executed reprint (illustration 5) taken from the same position one can see the defacing marks are much fainter. This proved to be the case upon examination of several singles and pairs of the "refined" printings of the reprints from positions LP4, RP36 and RP37.



Illustration 4
Vertical Scratches of Defacing
Position LP4 "Coarse" Printing



Illustration 5
Very faint sign of defacing
On the "Refined" LP4 Reprint

It also became evident in the process of examining the defacing marks visible on the cleaned positions of the Reserve Plate and the Reprint Sheetlet of 10 that there was no match in regards to the positions of the defacing marks. It is a positive sign that defacing marks appear on the Reprint Sheetlet of 10 and contributes towards confidence that the Sheetlet is in fact connected to the Reserve Plate.

The prominent defacing marks on the Reprint Sheetlet of 10 consist of two diagonal lines running upwards from the left vertical frame line into the upper north east corner across the foot of the "1" and the foot of the "P" of "POSTES" as seen in illustration 6. There are also 3 deep diagonal scratches on the back of the neck as shown in illustration 7.



Illustration 6
Defaced north east corner
Reprint Sheetlet of 10

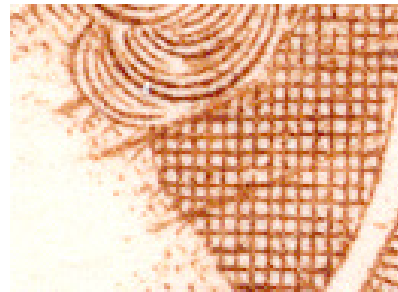


Illustration 7
Defaced back of neck
Reprint Sheetlet of 10

However, it is apparent upon close examination of the 600 dpi scans of the Reprints taken from the sheet of 200 and more carefully printed singles and pairs that there are no prominent scratches on the back of the neck nor any matching diagonal scratches in the north east corner. In fact, we can confidently eliminate Position RP36 (illustration 8) which has a similar series of diagonal scratches crossing above the foot of the "1" and touching the middle of the vertical bar of the "P" of "POSTES."



Illustration 8
Diagonal scratches in north east corner
"refined" reprint RP36

Another problem worth consideration is why the manufacturer of the die was not very successful in removing the prominent defacing marks in the north east corner and back of the neck on the Sheetlet. As can be seen through examination of the reprints taken from the Reserve Plate and the carefully made Reprints, The printer was successful in minimizing the visibility of the scratches. Furthermore, we have learned from the examination of the material and can see from the

illustrations that the scratches on the Sheetlet of 10 simply do not match the scratches on Positions LP4, RP36 and RP37.

If the defacing scratches on the Sheetlet Reprint of 10 do not match any of the scratches visible on the reprints taken from the Reserve Plate Positions LP4, RP36 and RP37, where do we look for an answer to our mystery? Perhaps one explanation would be that the manufacturer of the die obtained the impression for the die used to create the Sheetlet of 10 from an entirely different location on the Reserve Plate.

The process would be quite different. Instead of painstakingly cleaning the impressions on the original rusted and defaced steel reserve plate, he produced a roller die from the steel plate using the same softening and hardening plate and die manufacturing technology of the day. The creation of the die used in the Reprint Sheetlet required "reverse engineering." Instead of making plate impressions from a transfer die, a transfer die was produced using the plate impressions.

The Reserve Plate was in fact manufactured in 1852 by Perkins, Bacon & Co. using the hardening and softening process they perfected. The rest of the process would have involved the much easier task of cleaning up the transfer die impression with the scratches and rust marks standing out from the surface of the die.

It would appear that the Reprint Sheetlet is the product of a die produced from the Reserve Plate of the Un Silbergros. The quality and accuracy of the die used to create the Sheetlet, in comparison with the impressions of the Reserve Plate relieves any doubt of the connection between the two. On the other hand it would appear that there is no connection between the cleaned Positions LP4, RP36 and RP37 in relationship to the defacing scars on the impressions.

The question that still haunts us is why if this was in fact the case were all signs of the scratches not removed from the newly made die? However, these very same scratches, serve as a blueprint to the location on the Reserve Plate which gave birth to the Sheetlet of 10! The next step towards resolving this mystery is to make a patient examination of the remaining 197 positions of the Reserve Plate and discover which position shares the same defacing marks as those featured throughout all 10 positions of the Sheetlet.

Acknowledgements:

All scanned images of the 1906 Reprints and the Un Silbergros Reprint Sheetlet of 10 are courtesy of Edward Jarvis.

Bibliography:

Anonymous: *The Story of Luxemburg Reprints of 1906*,
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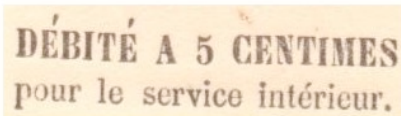
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Jarvis, Edward: Discussions with the author of this article during the examination of the 1906 Reprint and Sheetlet of 10 provided by Edward for this study.

Luxembourg's 1878 Surcharged Postal Stationery: A Typology

by Allan F. Wichelman

When Luxembourg increased the six-centime treaty rate to Germany to 12 1/2 centimes on May 1, 1878, the country's stock of six-centime postal stationery became obsolete. On September 12, 1878, this situation was rectified when the government recalled and surcharged the unsold stock of 7,000 six-centime cards — comprising the last three six-centime issues¹ — to five centimes with a two-line, black type-set surcharge reading *DÉBITÉ A 5 CENTIMES pour le service intérieur.* (See Figure 1.)



DÉBITÉ A 5 CENTIMES
pour le service intérieur.

Figure 1. 5 centimes on 6 centimes surcharge

The surcharge is usually found just below the stamp imprint, although sometimes you will find it printed across the bottom of the imprint, as the cards were not always cut apart uniformly. (See Figures 2 and 3.)



Figure 2. Prefix No. 25 — Plate Type 8 (split first O in CORRESPONDANCE)



Figure 3. Prefix No. 26 or 27
Cut square cancelled *Luxemburg*, October 20, 1878

The same setting of type appears to have been used to surcharge all of the cards as I have not observed any significant variation in the surcharges. The cards that were surcharged are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The Surcharged Cards

Prifix 16/25	5¢/6¢ red-violet	4 address lines	Feb. 9, 1877	14,920	8 plate types
Prifix 19/26	5¢/6¢ carmine rose	4 address lines	May 15, 1877	9,800	8 plate types
Prifix 21/27	5¢/6¢ carmine rose	3 address lines (three printings)	Sept. 12, 1877	26,004 ²	24 plate types
			Dec. 13, 1877		
			Feb. 9, 1878		

These cards still occasionally appear on the market so the ambitious collector may aspire to acquire a complete set of the 40 plate types. If an equal number of each type was surcharged, 175 (7000/40) of each would have been surcharged. However, this does not seem to have been the case. The 5¢/6¢ red-violet (Prifix 25) is by far the scarcest of the three cards. Presumably most of the stock of this card had already been depleted when the rate changed and the unsold six-centime cards were recalled. The surcharged card found most frequently, not surprisingly, is Prifix 27. And of the three printings of this card, those from the third printing — issued less than three months before the rate change — are the most common. Since *unsurcharged* cards from the third printing are scarce, probably most of them remained unsold and were therefore available to be surcharged when the rate changed.

The cards were printed in eight-card settings. The plate types had already been identified in the 1920s by collectors such as Bernard du Vol, whose typewritten manuscript describing the plate types in detail was not published until 1962 when François Kaufmann published it in *Le Moniteur du Collectionneur*³ (without attribution to du Vol or his contemporaries!). In the *Le Moniteur* articles, Kaufmann identifies several distinctive characteristics for each plate type. In Table 2, below, I have selected just one *unique* characteristic as a key identifier for each plate type in an effort to simplify and facilitate identifying the types.

Table 2. The 40 Plate Types⁴









Prifix	Descp.	Type	Illus.	Plate Type Identifier	Check List	
					*	o
25	5¢ on 6¢ red-violet (Prifix #16)	25-01	01	Second <i>l</i> in <i>Allemagne</i> is inverted.		
		25-02	03	Top right corner of Arms is slanted.		
		25-03	17	18 mm bar is broken on the right side.		
		25-04	10	<i>T</i> in <i>CARTE</i> and <i>C</i> in <i>Correspondenz</i> are split.		
		25-05	11	Third address line dips down in the middle.		
		25-06	12	Third address line has a space near the end.		
		25-07	13	Accent on the <i>à</i> in the notation is shifted to the right.		
		25-08	14	<i>R</i> in <i>CARTE</i> and 1 st <i>O</i> in <i>CORRESPONDANCE</i> are split.		



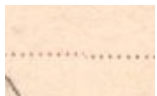


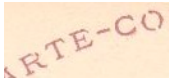
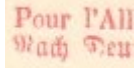
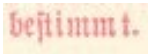
26	5¢ on 6¢ carmine-rose (Prifix #19)	26-01	01	Second <i>l</i> in <i>Allemagne</i> is inverted.		
		26-02	04	<i>Nach Deutschland</i> on top of <i>Pour l'Allemagne</i> .		
		26-03	15	<i>N</i> and <i>D</i> damaged in <i>Nach Deutschland</i> .		
		26-04	16	Final <i>t</i> in <i>bestimmt</i> stands offside		
		26-05	09	Space on the right side of the joint in the middle of the 18 mm bar.		
		26-06	02	Top of the Arms cross is broken off.		
		26-07	06	<i>o</i> in <i>Pour</i> is too large.		
		26-08	05	9 mm bar is broken on the right side.		
				2nd address line 108 mm long; bar 18 mm long		
27 First Printing		27-1-01	09	Space on the right side of the joint in the middle of the 18 mm bar.		
		27-1-02	06	<i>o</i> in <i>Pour</i> is too large.		
		27-1-03	08	18 mm bar is broken twice on the left; once on the right.		
		27-1-04	01	Second <i>l</i> in <i>Allemagne</i> is inverted.		
		27-1-05	04	<i>Nach Deutschland</i> on top of <i>Pour l'Allemagne</i> .		
		27-1-06	05	9 mm bar is broken on the right side.		
		27-1-07	02	Top of the Arms cross is broken off.		
		27-1-08	18	Mutilated <i>e</i> in <i>bestimmt</i> .		
				2nd address line is 112 mm long; the bar is 18 mm long		
27 Second Printing	5¢ on 6¢ carmine-rose (Prifix #21)	27-2-01	09	Space on the right side of the joint in the middle of the 18 mm bar.		
		27-2-02	05	9 mm bar is broken on the right side.		
		27-2-03	07	<i>P</i> in <i>Pour</i> stands offside from <i>our</i> .		
		27-2-04	19	<i>b</i> in <i>bestimmt</i> is overly rounded.		
		27-2-05	02	Top of Arms cross is broken off.		
		27-2-06	03	Top right corner of Arms is slanted.		
		27-2-07	20	<i>nde</i> in <i>Correspondenz</i> is damaged.		
		27-2-08	08	18 mm bar is broken twice on the left; once on the right.		
				2nd address line is 112 mm long; the bar is 13.5 – 16.5 mm long		
27 Third Printing		27-3-01	21	13.5 mm — <i>e</i> in <i>Karte</i> is damaged.		
		27-3-02	05	13.5 mm — 9 mm bar is broken on the right side.		
		27-3-03	22	14 mm — second address line slants up below <i>pon</i>		
		27-3-04	02	14 mm — Top of Arms cross is broken off.		
		27-3-05	07	14.5 mm — <i>P</i> in <i>Pour</i> stands offside from <i>our</i> .		








		27-3-06	23	15 mm — 9 mm bar is broken in two places.		
		27-3-07	03	15.5 mm — Top right corner of Arms is slanted.		
		27-3-08	05	16.5 mm — 9 mm bar is broken on the right side.		

The printer, Pierre Brück, reused portions of earlier settings to make up subsequent settings. Thus, some of the identifying characteristics occur in more than one setting, as shown in Table 3, below.

Table 3. Key Identifying Characteristics Illustrated

Illus. 1	Illus. 2	Illus. 3	Illus. 4	Illus. 5	Illus. 6	Illus. 7	Illus. 8
Inverted 2 nd l of Allemaigne	Broken cross	Arms slanted (right corner)	Nach Deutschland Pour Allemaigne	9 mm bar faint break at right	o in Pour too large	P in Pour offside	18 mm bar with 3 breaks
							
25-01	26-06	25-02	26-02	26-08	26-07	27-2-03	27-1-03
26-01	27-1-07	27-2-06	27-1-05	27-1-06	27-1-02	27-2-05	27-2-08
27-1-04	27-2-05	27-3-07		27-2-02			
	27-3-04			27-3-02			
				27-3-08			

Illus. 9	Illus. 10	Illus. 11	Illus. 12	Illus. 13	Illus. 14	Illus. 15	Illus. 16
Space before right joint of bar ⁵	Split T and C	Dip in ctr 3 rd address line	Space 3 rd line, at right side	Accent on à shifted right	R & O Split	N & D misprinted	t in bestimmt offside
							
26-05	25-04	25-05	25-06	25-07	25-08	26-03	26-04
27-1-01							
27-2-01							

Illus. 17	Illus. 18	Illus. 19	Illus. 20	Illus. 21	Illus. 22	Illus. 23
18 mm bar broken on rt	<i>e</i> in <i>bestimmt</i> mutilated	<i>b</i> in <i>bestimmt</i> too rounded	nde damage d	<i>e</i> in Karte damaged	2 nd adr line slants up	9 mm bar broken twice
						
25-03	27-1-08	27-2-04	27-2-07	27-3-01	27-3-03	27-3-06

The most sought after cards are Prifix 26a and 27a, these being the cards on which the inscription at the lower right shows “Nach Deutchland” on top, instead on the bottom, of “Pour l’Allemagne.” Statistically, this type should not be any scarcer than the other plate types in either of the two settings in which it occurs.

Used examples of the surcharged cards are scarce. The prevalence of these cards in unused condition suggests that collectors may have acquired many of them at the post office window. This was also the case with the obsolete stationery remainders for which the stamp imprints were obliterated with three concentric-rings in 1918 for use with adhesives during the severe paper shortage during the last year of World War I⁶. The few surviving used examples probably found their way into postal history collections as many of the early stationery collectors were purists who preferred unused cards; others appear to have met the sad fate of having become cut squares (many of the old printed albums contained spaces to mount postal stationery cut squares).

Collecting these cards by plate type is challenging, but with the challenge comes the excitement of acquiring new plate types for one’s collection at a bourse, on eBay, or through exchanges with other postal stationery enthusiasts. And don’t forget, these same plate types exist for the unsurcharged cards (Prifix No. 16, 19 & 21). Thus, a complete collection of these cards — surcharged and unsurcharged — would include 80 different cards (160 if you were to collect them mint and used, as some of us do!).

¹Prifix No. 16, 19 & 21.

²Sources are not clear on whether this figure includes the third printing. The ACEP catalog does not even list the third printing, but gives this quantity as the total printed.

³ François Kaufmann, *Die Postkarten von Luxembourg mit Abarten*, Le Moniteur du Collectionneur, (5/1962 pp. 117-127; 6/1962 pp. 146-174; 7/1962 pp. 187-215; 8/1962 pp. 235-249; and 1/1963 pp. 10-11). Kaufmann refers to these cards as a “provisional issue.”

⁴ Subtypes have been identified for some of the Prifix 27 plate types (e.g., Plate Type 27-2-01 can be found with “cc” instead of “ce” in the instruction at the lower left). See Kaufmann, *supra*, note 3.

⁵ This plate type also shows the right part of the foot of the *T* in CARTE broken off.

⁶ In a future article, I will discuss the 1918 emergency use of obsolete postal stationery in more detail.