
Castellum



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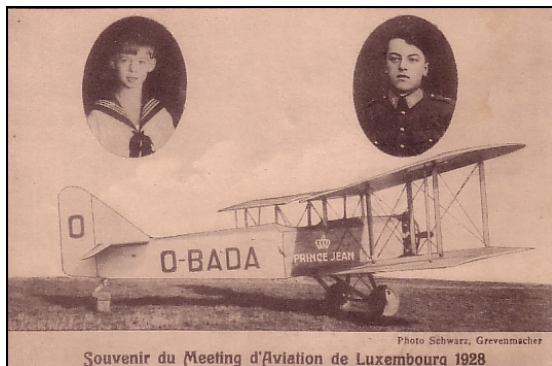
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President's Message

by Gary Little

In this issue of *Castellum* we have an in-depth article on the postal stationery cards issued by Luxembourg in 1945-46 shortly after the end of the World War II occupation. As frequent contributor Allan Wichelman notes, there can be great satisfaction in forming an interesting collection of these cards, especially since they're still fairly inexpensive to acquire.



I recently obtained this interesting postcard, on the left, which shows a biplane named *Prince Jean* as well as inset photos of the 7-year-old prince and the (unnamed) pilot. This plane made an appearance at a 1928 air show in Luxembourg.

I have seen other postcards showing aerial views of Luxembourg that were taken from this plane, but I have no other information about the history of the plane or the air show. Perhaps one of our members can fill in the gaps in a future *Castellum*.

Luxembourg's 1945-46 Provisional Postal Stationery

by Allan F. Wichelman

Luxembourg's 1945-46 post-World War II provisional postal stationery provides fertile ground for the frugal philatelist seeking to find inexpensive philatelic gems. In this article, I'll try to help you identify what you should be looking for at bourses and shows, in auctions, and on eBay!

As the Third Reich was being defeated, Luxembourg was liberated on September 10, 1944. The Nazi civil administration had completely collapsed by September 1, resulting in a total interruption of postal services. The Ardennes region in the north, as we know, was again occupied from December 16, 1944 until January 28, 1945, during the Battle of the Bulge.

After the war finally ended, Luxembourg's postal services were re-established fairly quickly. Charles Rousseau writes that official mail service between post offices that were not in the zone of military operations along the German border was re-established on September 23, 1944. On

September 29, the German stamps and postal stationery were declared obsolete and their sale was prohibited.

On February 19, 1945, urban service for civil correspondence was re-established; on March 26 domestic correspondence was authorized without restriction; and on April 9 foreign correspondence was re-established subject to censorship. New Charlotte definitives, which had been printed during the war by the American Bank Note Company, had already been issued on November 6, 1944. However, these stamps were not accompanied by the issuance of new postal stationery, and all pre-war postal stationery (and stamps) were demonetized on the date that the new Charlotte definitives were issued.

To remedy the immediate need for postal cards, Luxembourg surcharged its stock of pre-war Grand Duchess Charlotte postal cards, which had remained in storage since the Germans declared them invalid as of October 1, 1940.

- On February 19, 1945, 35-centime blue Grand Duchess Charlotte postal cards (with and without views on the left of the address side) surcharged to 60 centimes for domestic use and use to Belgium were issued coincident with the resumption of urban mail service. See Figures 1 and 2.
- In September of 1945, the 75-centime red viewcards and some 75-centime violet Grand Duchess Charlotte postal cards were surcharged to 60 centimes. See Figure 3.
- And sometime during 1945 (we don't know the exact date, but in May or earlier) some 75-centime violet cards were also surcharged to 1.50 francs to pay the UPU rate. See Figure 4.

These surcharged cards served as the only available postal cards until new 75-centime and 2-franc postal cards were issued on October 1, 1945 [Prifix 123 & 124].

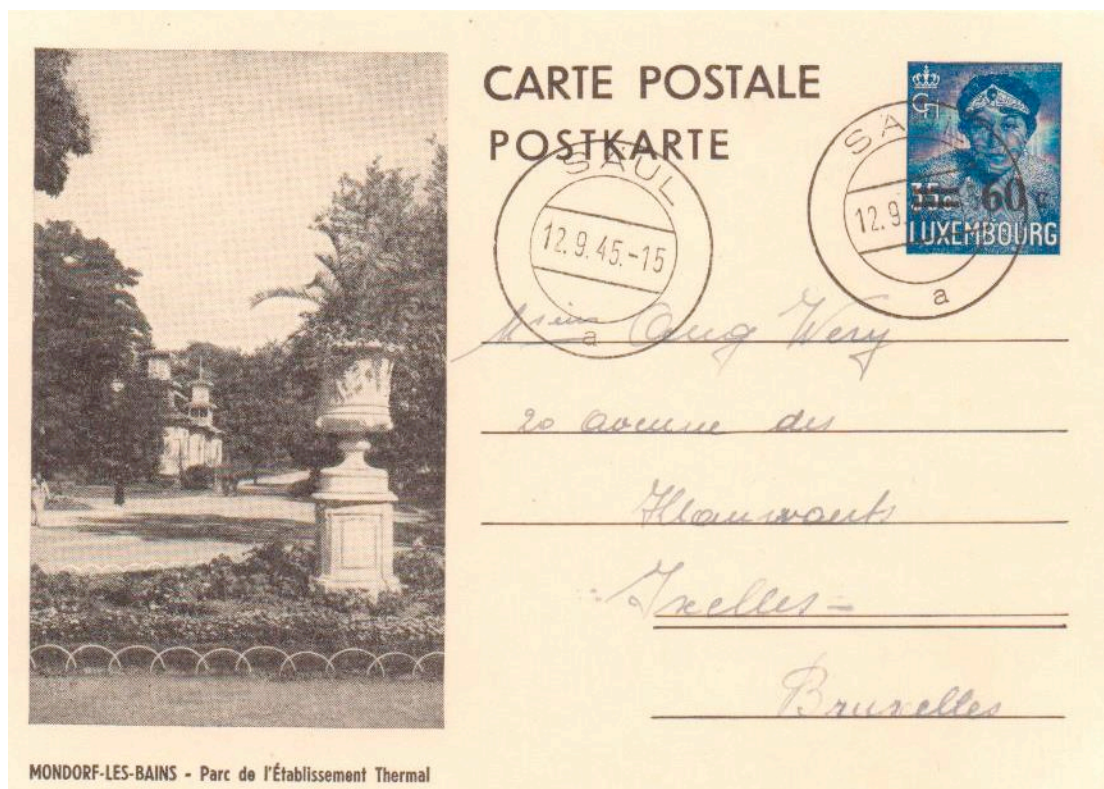


Figure 1: An example of one of the 60c/35c postal stationery cards issued on February 19, 1945. [Prifix 116]

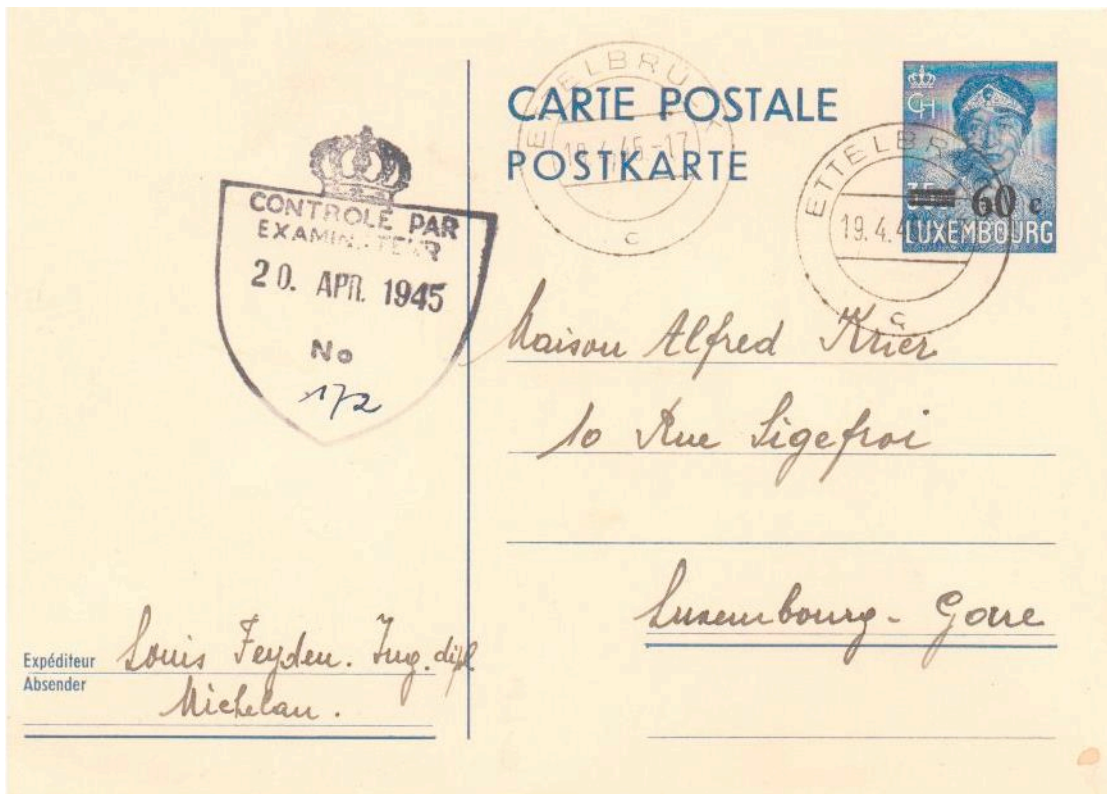


Figure 2: A 60c/35c postal stationery card with no view issued on February 19, 1945. [Prefix 118]



Figure 3: An example of one of the 60c/75c postal stationery cards issued on September 4, 1945. [Prefix 117]



Figure 4: The 1^F 50 / 75c postal stationery card issued around May 1945. [Prefix 120]

In January of 1946, two provisional surcharged message-reply (double) cards also appeared. The old (and apparently seldom used) 1931 40c + 40c double card was surcharged to 75c + 75c to pay the increased domestic rate and rate to Belgium that took effect on October 1, 1945 (see Figure 5), and the old 75c + 75c card (which had been demonetized and therefore apparently could not be used again to pay the new 75-centime rate!) sprang back into life, and was surcharged to 2F + 2F to pay the increased UPU rate that took effect on the same date. No other message-reply cards were issued until February 1, 1949, when double cards reappeared as part of an issue of newly designed Grand Duchess Charlotte postal stationery.



Figure 5: The reply half (sent from Belgium) of the 75c + 75c / 40c + 40c double card. [Prefix 121]

In 1945, the Differdange stamp club printed patriotic cachets on substantial quantities of some of these cards to celebrate the country's liberation and sell as souvenirs to raise money for post-war reconstruction projects. Most are found cancelled to order, unaddressed, and often with added franking. The example shown in Figure 6 is number 823 of 2,500 cards and has the text of a song written in the Luxembourgish language (*Lëtzebuergesch*) but the May 20, 1945, double-circle cancel still shows the Germanic spelling of the town name — *Differdingen* — as the German-issued canceller had not yet been replaced with one with the French spelling of the town name.



Figure 6: Post-war postal card with private patriotic cachet designed by Philatelia Differdange.

Table 1 identifies the time periods during which sole uses of the 60-centime and 1.50-franc cards were possible (i.e., uses paying the correct rate without any adhesives added):

Table 1: Post-War 60-centime and 1.50-franc Postcard Rates*

Destination	Rate	Feb. 20, 1945→	Apr. 6, 1945→	Oct. 1, 1945→	Apr. 1, 1947→	Jul. 15, 1958→	Sep. 16, 1963→
Domestic	60c			[75c]			
Belgium	60c			[75c]			
UPU	1.50F			[2.00F]			
France	1.50F						[2.00F]
Belgium	1.50F						[2.00F]
Netherlands	1.50F			[2.00F]			[2.00F]

* The 1.50-franc rate also applied to Belgian Congo from April 6, 1945 to January 1, 1946, and again from January 1, 1949 to July 15, 1958. Prior to April 1, 1947, the UPU rate applied to The Netherlands. When postal service to Germany resumed on October 1, 1945, the 2-franc UPU rate applied.

Table 2 summarizes basic information about the provisional postal stationery. The two printings of the viewcards (Prefix 116 & 116a and Prefix 117 & 117a) are easily distinguished by the address lines. On the first printing, lines 1, 2, 3 and 5 (counting from the top) are very fine, whereas line 4 (actually a double line) consists of a thick line immediately below a fine line. On the second printing, all of the lines are dark and of equal intensity. See Figure 7.

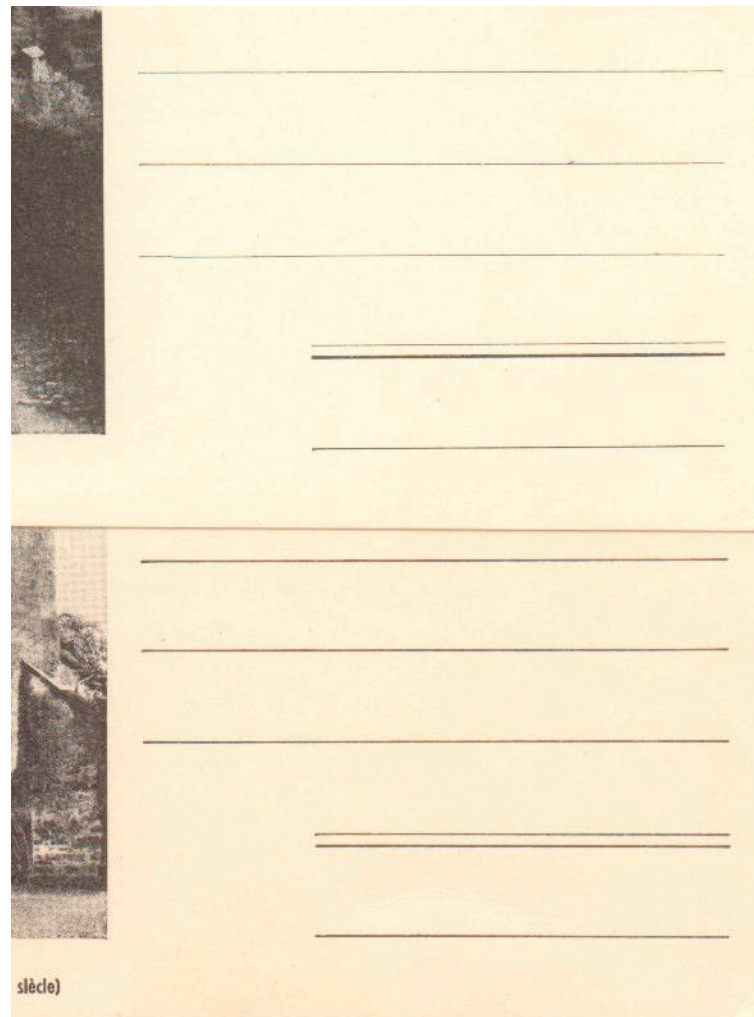


Figure 7: For the first printing of the viewcards there is a thick fourth line.
For the second printing all lines are dark and of equal intensity.

The printings of the cards without views (Prefix 118 & 118a/b, Prefix 119 & 119a, Prefix 120 & 120a) also are easily distinguished. The fonts used to print *Expéditeur* and *POSTKARTE* are different. The first printing used a slightly smaller font. The later printings used a larger font, in which *Expéditeur* has the *t* curling at the bottom and the *r* curling at the right. See Figure 8. The widths of *Expéditeur* and *POSTKARTE* also vary as indicated in Table 2.

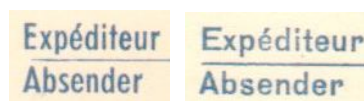


Figure 8: The two different styles of *Expéditeur* / *Absender* used.

Table 2: 1945-1946 Provisional Postal Stationery*

Postal Card	Date of Issue	Prifix No.	Kaufmann No.	Varieties		Views
60c/35c (blue)	02/19/45	P116a/111 (19 views)	K116a/111a (19 views)	Lines 1,2,3,5: fine Line 4: thick		Reported only on view 9 (Remich)
60c/35c (dark blue)		P116/111a (19 views)	K116b/111b (19 views)	All address lines are dark and similar		Reported on all 19 views
60c/75c (red)	09/04/45	P117a/112 (19 views)	K117a/112a (19 views)	Lines 1,2,3,5: fine Line 4: thick		Not yet reported on views 4, 9, 11, 13, 17, or 18?
60c/75c (deep red)		P117/112a (19 views)	K117b/112b (19 views)	All address lines are dark and similar		Reported on all 19 views
60c/35c (blue)	02/19/45	P118/113	K118a/113a	<i>Expéditeur</i> 9 mm.	POSTKARTE 31 mm.	No view
60c/35c (dark blue)		P118a/113a	K118b/113b	<i>Expéditeur</i> 11 mm.		
60c/35c (dark blue)		P118b/113b	Not listed		POSTKARTE 29 mm.	
60c/75c (violet)	09/13/45	P119/115	K119a/115a	<i>Expéditeur</i> 9 mm.	POSTKARTE 31 mm.	
60c/75c (violet)		P119a/115a	K119b/115b	<i>Expéditeur</i> 11 mm.	POSTKARTE 29 mm.	
1.50F/75c (violet)	May 1945 (earlier?)	P120/115	K120a/115a	<i>Expéditeur</i> 9 mm. + POSTKARTE 31 mm.	Canceling bars level with top of surcharged numeral "1"	
			K120b/115a		Second canceling bar below the surcharged numeral "1"	
1.50F/75c (violet)	May 1945 (earlier?)	P120a/115a	K120c/115b	<i>Expéditeur</i> 11 mm. + POSTKARTE 29 mm.	Canceling bars level with top of surcharged numeral "1"	
			K120d/115b		Second canceling bar below the surcharged numeral "1"	
75c/40c+75c/40c	Jan. 1946	P121/85	K121/85			
2F/75c+2F/75c		P122/86	K122/86			

***Table Notes**

- Only one example of P116a (K116a) — the Remich view — has been reported.
- Writing in 1962, Kaufmann reported that for card K117a (P117a) the following views had *not* been reported:

04 Echternach (Town Hall) 09 Luxembourg (Towers) 11 Luxembourg (Casemates)
13 Mondorf-les-Bains 17 Differdange (Park) 18 Differdange (Castle)

- The Prifix 2005 catalog states that 15 of the 19 views are known for P117a (K117a), but does not indicate which ones. The ACEP catalog mentions that only one example of view #19 (Dudelange) has been reported.
- Kaufmann states that K120a, K120b, K120c and K120d (P120 and P120a) had a print run of 144,175 cards. He also reports that 38,500 of the 75c + 75c message-reply card (K121 / P121) and 11,500 of the 2F + 2F message-reply card (K122 / P122) were issued.

- P111, P111a, P112 and P112a (K111a, K111b, K112a, K112b) were issued in identical sets of 19 with the views listed below:

01 Bourscheid	02 Clervaux	03 Diekirch
04 Echternach (Town Hall)	05 Echternach (Pavilion)	06 Esch-sur-Alzette
07 Ettelbrück	08 Larochette	09 Luxembourg (Towers)
10 Luxembourg (Uptown)	11 Luxembourg (Casemates)	12 Mersch
13 Mondorf-les-Bains	14 Remich	15 Vianden
16 Wiltz	17 Differdange (Park)	18 Differdange (Castle)
19 Dudelange		

With the foregoing information in mind, what should you look for? Here are some suggestions:

(i) Sole uses

- 60-centime cards used during the 223-day domestic and Belgian provisional period (i.e., February 20 to October 1, 1945) and 1.50-franc cards used during the 178-day UPU provisional period (i.e., April 6 to October 1, 1945). Finding these uses is challenging but provides a lot of philatelic satisfaction as this was a period during which the country was still in great disarray during the aftermath of World War II.
- 1.50-franc cards used to France between February 20, 1945 and July 15, 1958.
- 1.50-franc cards used to the Belgian Congo between April 6, 1945 and January 1, 1946.
- Late sole uses to Belgium, the Belgian Congo and the Netherlands.
- Sole uses of the 75c + 75c and 2F + 2F cards (possible January 1946 onward).

(ii) Rare and Unreported Views

- Any views for K116a (60c/35c blue, fine lines).
- Any views for K117a (60c/75c rose, fine lines).

(iii) Miscellaneous

- The earliest and latest uses within each rate category and period.
- All 19 views for K116b (60c/35c dark blue, dark lines).
- All 19 views for K117b (60c/75c carmine, dark lines).
- K120b and K120d (scarcer than K120a and K120c; K120c is scarcer than K120a).
- I've never seen K118b (P118a) (*Expéditeur* = 11 mm.; *POSTKARTE* = 31 mm.).
- P118b, a 60-centime card that appears in the Prifix catalog but not in Kaufmann's study.
- P114 (the 75-centime carmine card without a view), which is recorded as never having been surcharged. It would be a delight to prove the catalogers wrong!

In summary, this remains a relatively under-collected area of Luxembourg postal stationery, and is still open to new discoveries. A very nice 16-page single-frame exhibit could be put together showing sole uses for all or most of the rate categories. And this is an area of Luxembourgian philately where philatelic knowledge trumps economic resources. Opportunities abound to find scarce (and even unique) items for your collection at modest prices. Don't let them slip by!

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