

CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Postal censorship in Finland 1914 - 1918

Introduction

Till the independence on December, 6, 1917, Finland was an independent part of the Russian Empire. They had their own stamps, their own coin and also an independent postal system. But, when Russia was in war during the First World War, Finland was in war as well.

Early censorship

The First World War censorship was not the first postal censorship in Finland. Like in Russia, also in Finland there was around 1900 press censorship: incoming foreign printed matters were occasionally seen by the censor.



Wrapper from the United States to Björneborg 1897. Censored in Björneborg with special press censor stamp Pressombudsmannen I Wiborg. (Only in Swedish language).

Variety

There is a wide variety of which are saying that a postal item has been censored: censor stamps, resealing tapes, wax seals and annotations. Also the variety in colours varies. Stamps mainly in red and violet, wax seals only in brown red or red, but resealing tape has a wealthy range of colours. Common is white and light brown, but there are also resealing tapes in red, green, yellow and blue.

Censoring towns

Only 10 places in Finland had a censor office:

Björneborg - Pori: November 1914 - March 1917

Helsingfors - Helsinki: September 1914 - January 1918

Kuopio: October 1914 - March 1917

Nikolaistad - Nikolainkaupunki: October 1914 - April 1917

Raumo - Rauma: November 1914 - March 1917

Uleåborg - Oulu: October 1914 - March 1917

Tammerfors - Tampere: November 1914 - April 1917

Torneå - Tornio: August 1914 - January 1918

Wiborg - Viipuri: October 1914 - November 1917

Åbo - Turku: October 1914 - November 1917

Literature:

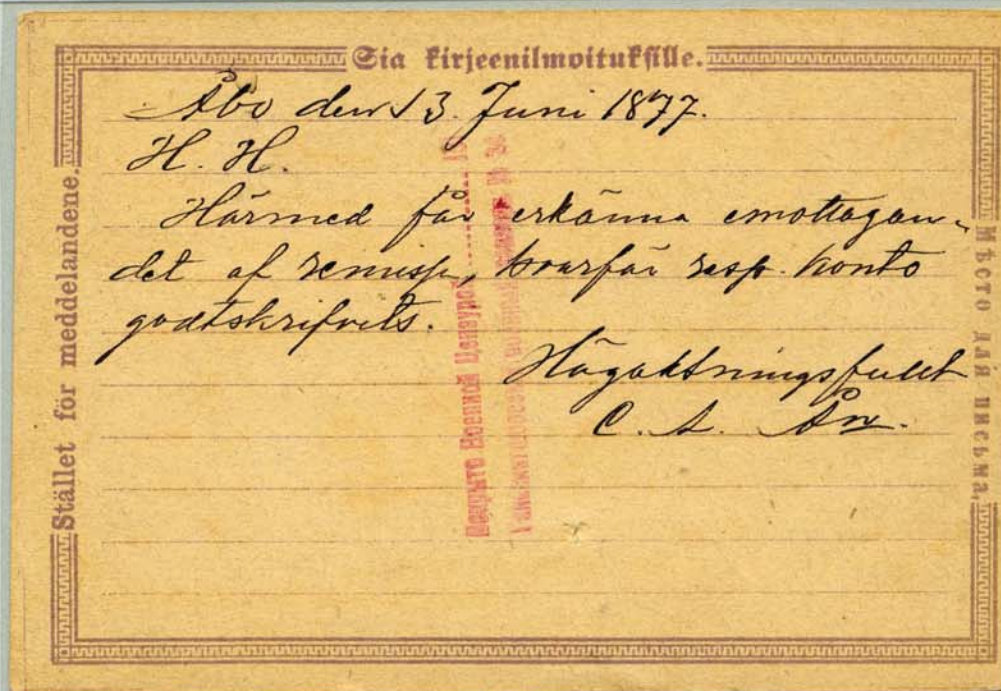
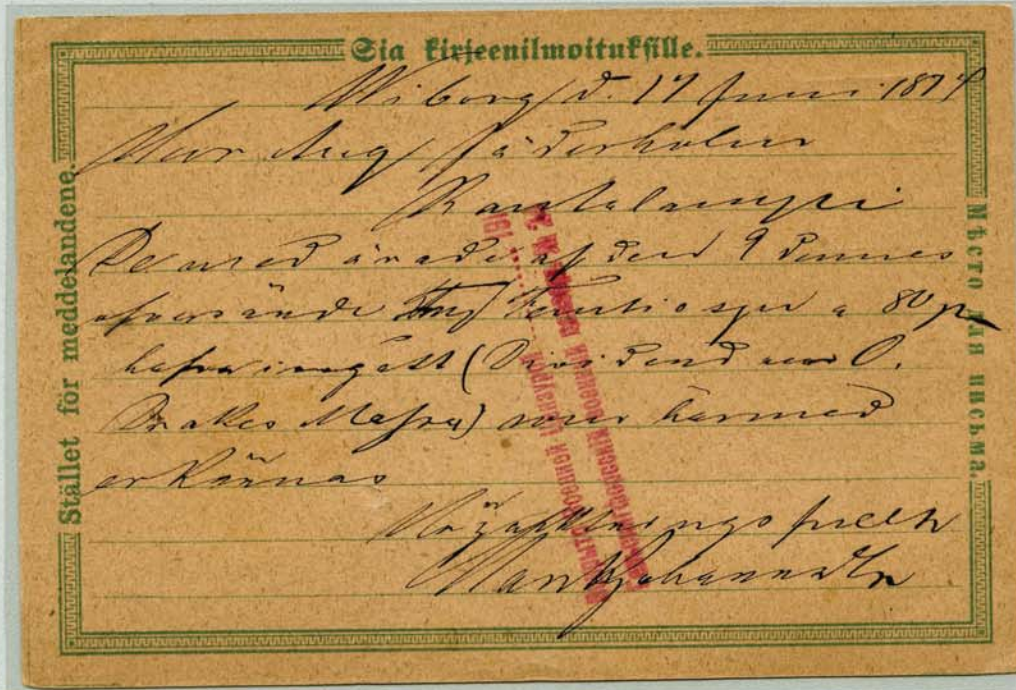
Die Postzensur in Finland, Hans G. Moxter, 1975

Postal Censoring in Finland 1914-1918, Juhani Olamo, 2005

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Forgeries

Most of the censored material (stamps, tape) are not rare. Wax seals are much more exclusive. Even though censor stamps have been forged. Not in the way that they have been remade (as far as known), but that stamps have been used illegally and not during the time of censorship. Helsingfors censor No. 24.



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Björneborg - Pori



Postcard from Nikolaistad - Uusikaupunki 1917 to Björneborg. Blue censor stamp of censor 8.



Picture post card from Algeria 1917 via Petrograd to Björneborg. Violet censor stamp of censor 11. Second reported copy of this mark. ®

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Björneborg - Pori

The literature mentions only one censor tape for Björneborg. On this page there are two different types.



Cover from Wammala 1915 to Pori. This is the censor tape known from the literature.



Cover from Petrograd 1917 to Uleåborg. New type of censor tape. Note letters s and g. Reverse: Violet Censor stamps with censor No. 3 and unreported date stamp. ®

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Helsingfors - Helsinki



Registered cover from Helsinki III to Stockholm 1917. Correctly franked with strip of three + 15k imperforated and block of ten 2k imperforated. A block of ten 2k perforated should have been very common, but imperforated it is rare. Censor tape No. 6 and censor stamp of censor 135. This censor number is unknown in the literature. ®

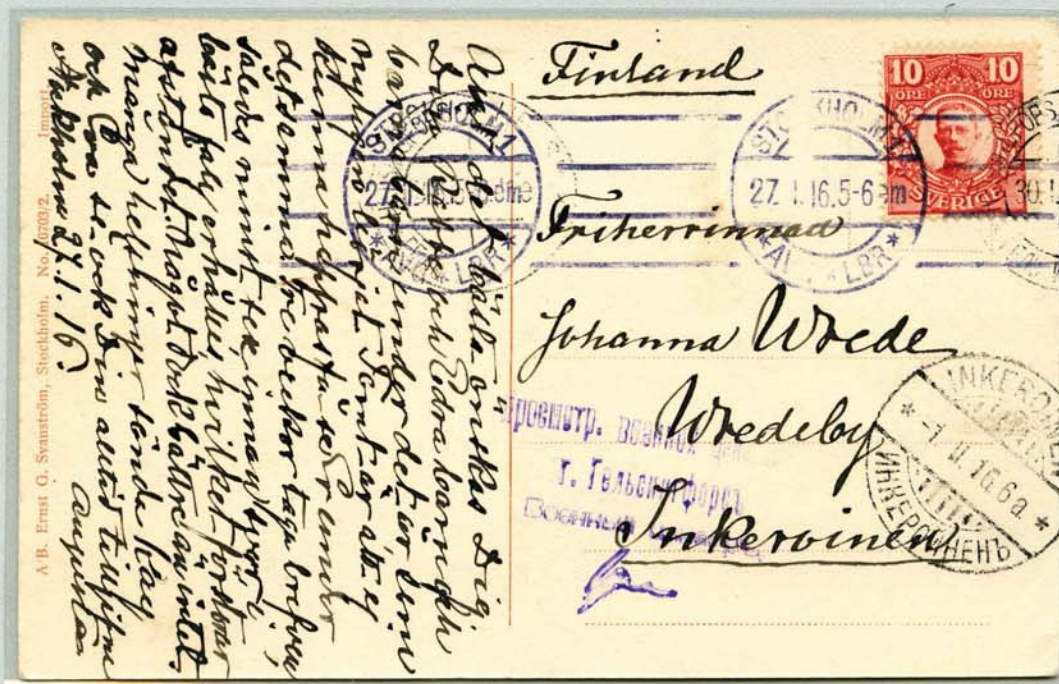


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Helsingfors - Helsinki



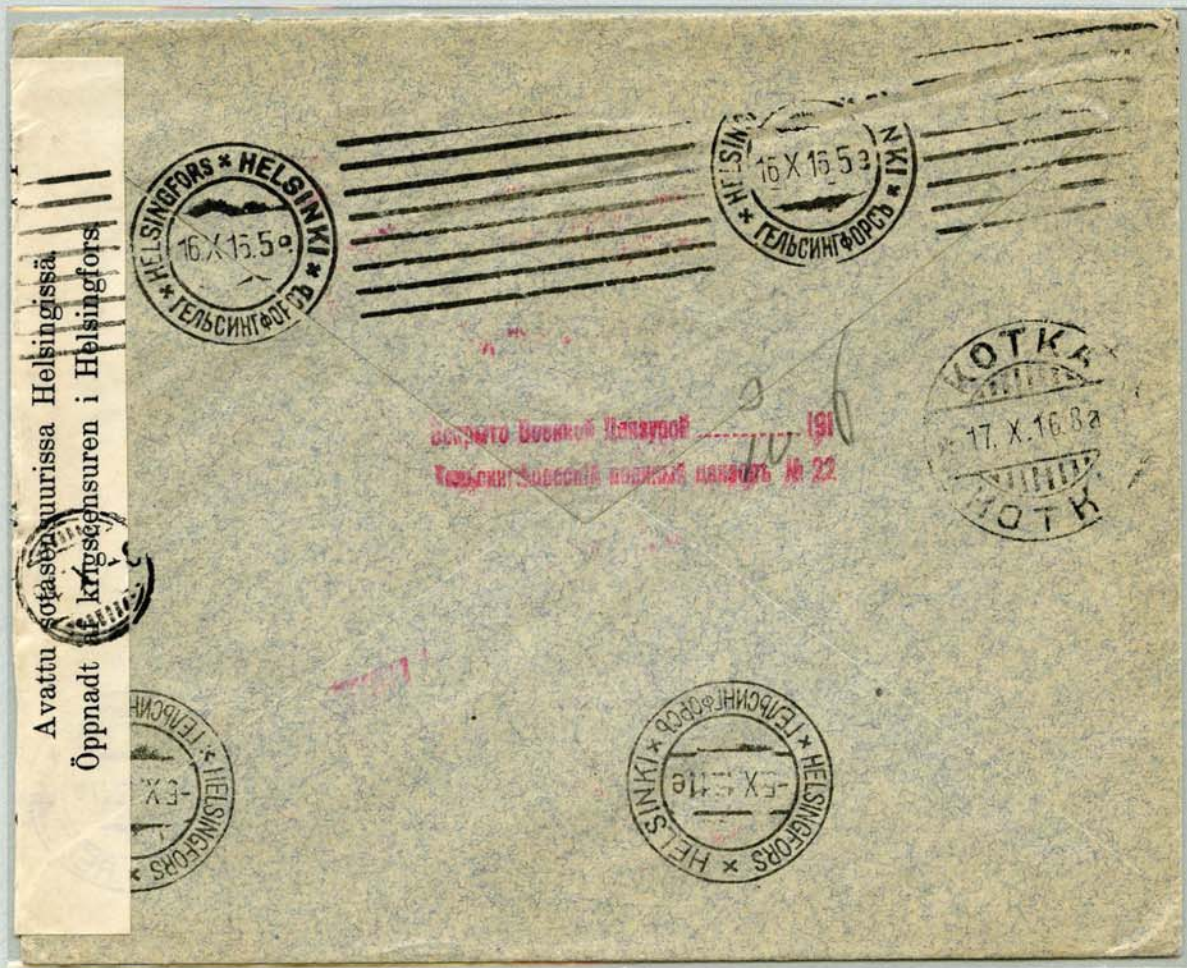
Cover from Wilppula 1915 to Helsingfors. Censor tape and censor stap No. 5 with censors signature.



Postcard from Sweden 1916 to Inkeroinen. Censored in Helsinki with censor stamp No. 10 with signature. Stamp 10 is 2 mm wider than stamp 7.

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Helsingfors - Helsinki



Cover from Noray 1915 to Kotka. Censored in Helsinki. Unusual combination of censor tape and censor stamp No. 17, October, 3. In red censor stamp with number 22 (not common). Note that the cover was censored on October, 3 and back in the postal process on October, 5 and actually sent as late as October, 16 to arrive on October, 17 in Kotka. ®



Postcard from Denmark 1916 to Helsingfors. Censor stamps 10 (violet) and 17.

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Helsingfors - Helsinki

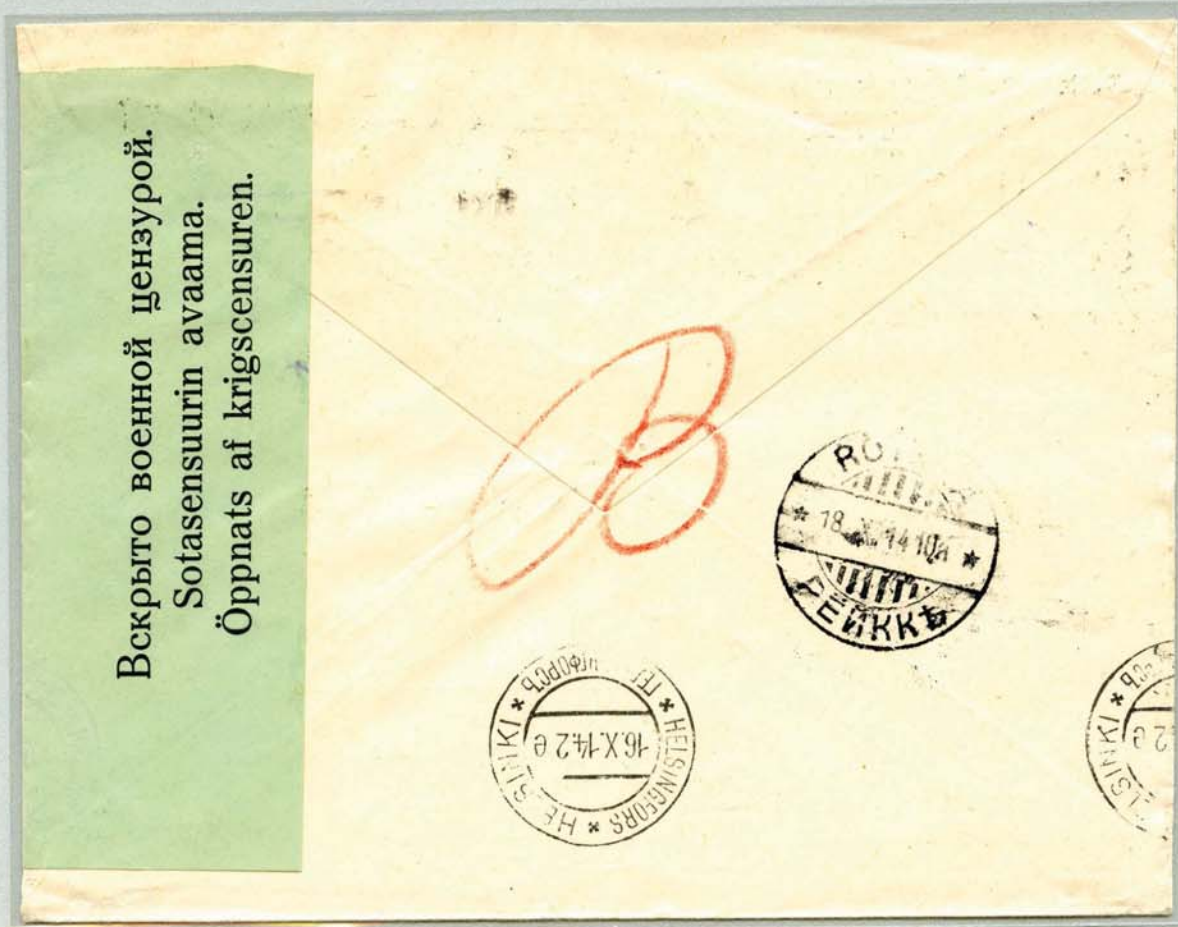


Cover from Helsinki As. 2-11-1917 to Twello, Holland 15-1-1918. Thus, the letter has been sent from Finland under the Russian rule, and arrived when Finland was independent. Censor tape and red Censor stamp of censor 8. Via London 13-1 and censored there. ©



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Helsingfors - Helsinki

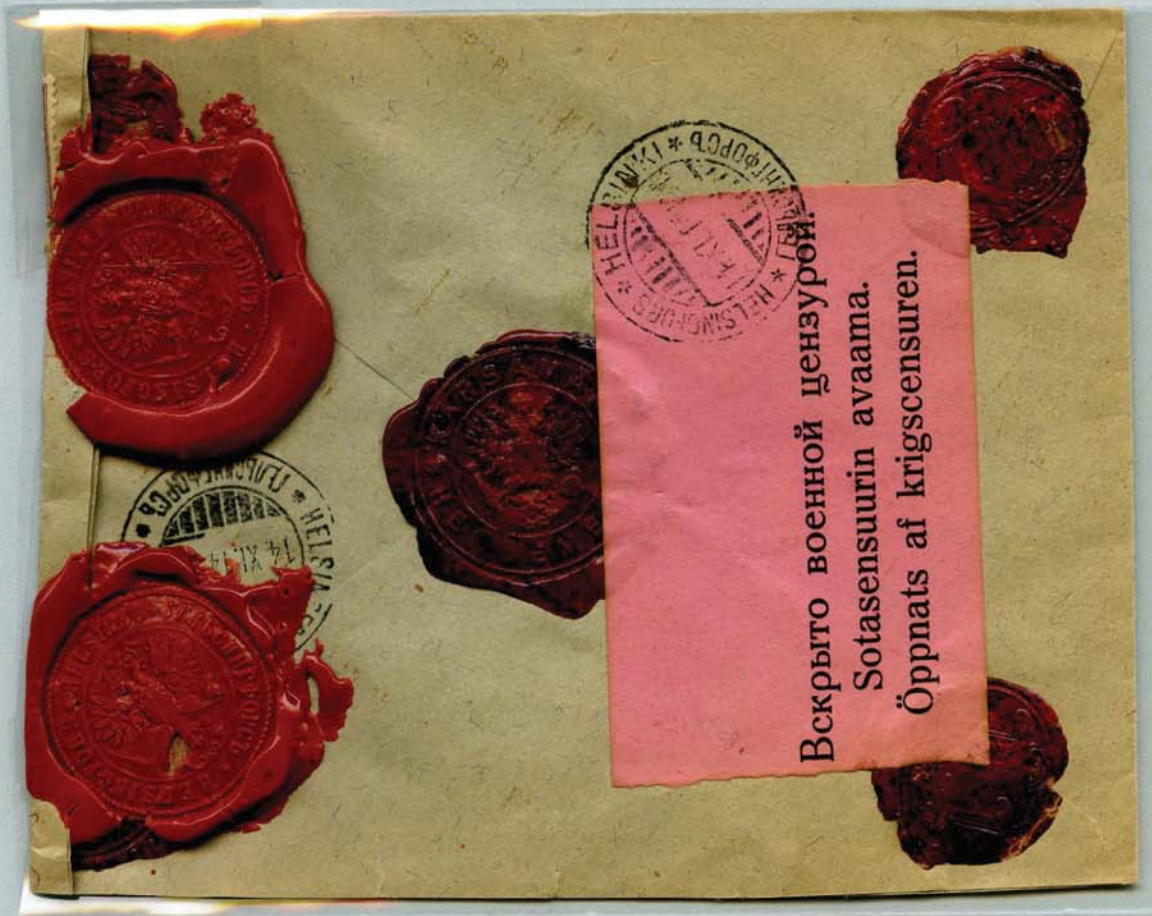


Censor tape is very often used in combination with censor stamps. Rarely one find a censor initials. It could be that this was done here because there was a sender name on the envelope. The cover was sent from Helsinki to Nummela 1914. Green censor tape of the first type (no city mentioned). There is a big Initial of the censor. This initial has not been recorded before. ®



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Helsingfors - Helsinki



Insured cover from ärsämäki 1914 to Helsinki. Red censor tape (first type, without Helsinki, variety II). The cover has been postally sealed in Kärsämäki, which means a surcharge of 5p. Normally the (postal) wax seals used by the censor are placed over the censor tape, but unusually not in this case. The censor tape has been tied with a date stamp. ®

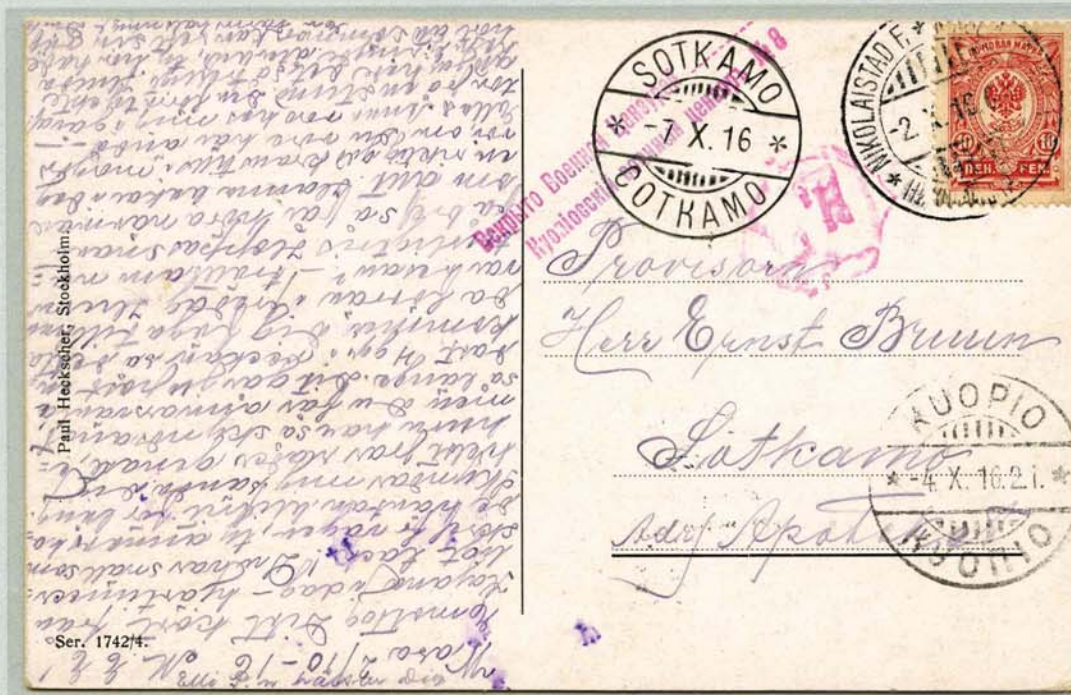


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Kuopio



Cover from Pitkälähti to Tuusniemi 1915. Censored in Kuopio with censor stamp No. 1.



Picture post card from Nikolaistad F.-Uusikaupunki H.o. 1916 to Sotkamo. Pink blurred censor mark of Nikolaistad and censored in Kuopio by censor no. 8. First date of usage.

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Nikolaistad - Nikolainkaupunki

This town you will not find anymore on the map. It was between 1855 and 1917 the name of the town Wasa - Vaasa.



Money order in Finnish marks from Uusikirkko As. To Nikolainkaupunki 1915. Large size framed censor stamp.



Picture post card from Ilmajoki As. 1915 to Wasa. As can be seen, the name Was was not strictly forbidden. Small size framed censor stamp.

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Raumo Rauma

All mail sent to Rauma had to be inspected by the Rauma censor office. That's the official rule, but lots of mail sent to Rauma where censored elsewhere. That makes Rauma not easy to find.

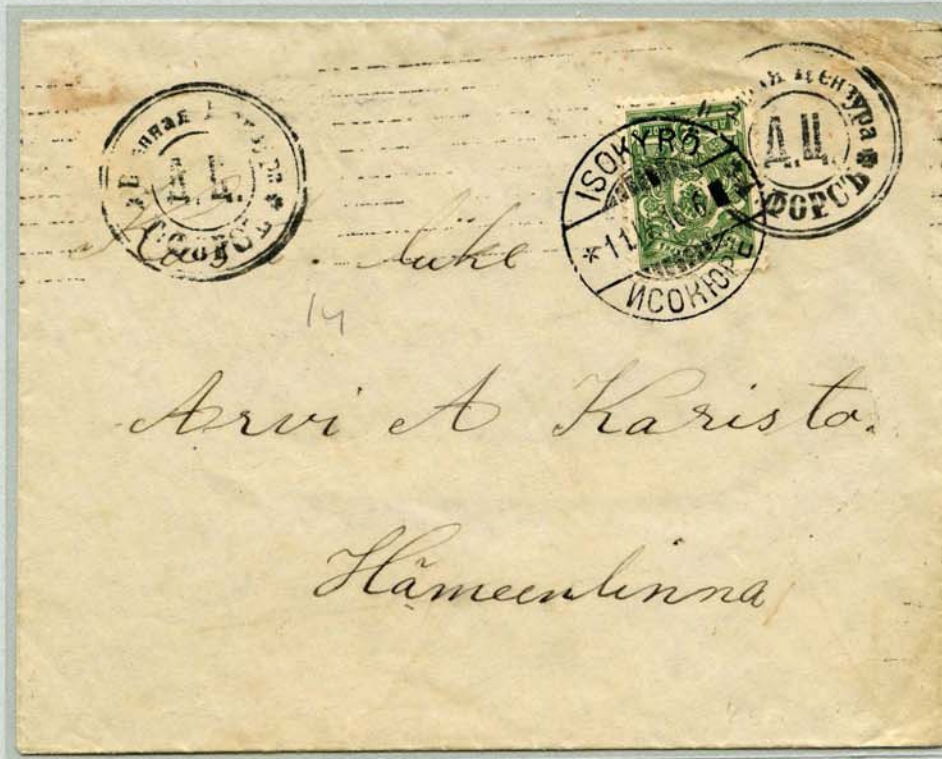


Top: Cover from Petrograd To Rauma 1915. Censored in Helsinki. Censor stamp No. 5. Bottom: Cover from Rovaniemi to Rauma 1915. Censor stamp 3.

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Tammerfors - Tampere

Tampere used a lot a Krag machine for censored mail. They were often not very greedy with ink, so a lot of those machine marks are blurred.



Cover from Isokyrö to Hämeenlinna 1916. Censored in Tampere with a machine mark No. 14.



Post card from Utti 1915 to Hämeenlinna. Unreported type of machine mark (without bars).[®]