

SCHLESWIG

The first of the plebiscites to be held around Germany was in Schleswig, the northernmost province. There, the voting was held in two segments: the northern part on 10 February 1920 and the southern on 14 March. The results were nearly a mirror image, with the north voting to join Denmark by 75% and the south to remain with Germany by 80%. The official transfer of the northern territory took place on 15 June 1920.



The British troops and officials could send mail free of postage, but no fieldpost office was opened for this territory. However, it was necessary for letters and cards to be struck with official cachets to obtain this service. Those above include the the Press Bureau and two types of International Commission markings.

SCHLESWIG

Postage stamps were prepared for use by civilians in Schleswig as well as to pay fees on International Commission mail. The first set consisted of pictorials inscribed in Danish but denominated in pfennigs and marks. These were issued on 25 January 1920.

Aabenraa
25 May 1920

Flensburg
2 March 1920



Covers franked with various denominations of the first pictorial stamps issued for Schleswig, including the highest denominations on a value declared letter.

SCHLESWIG

Flensburg
22 February 1920
23 February 1920

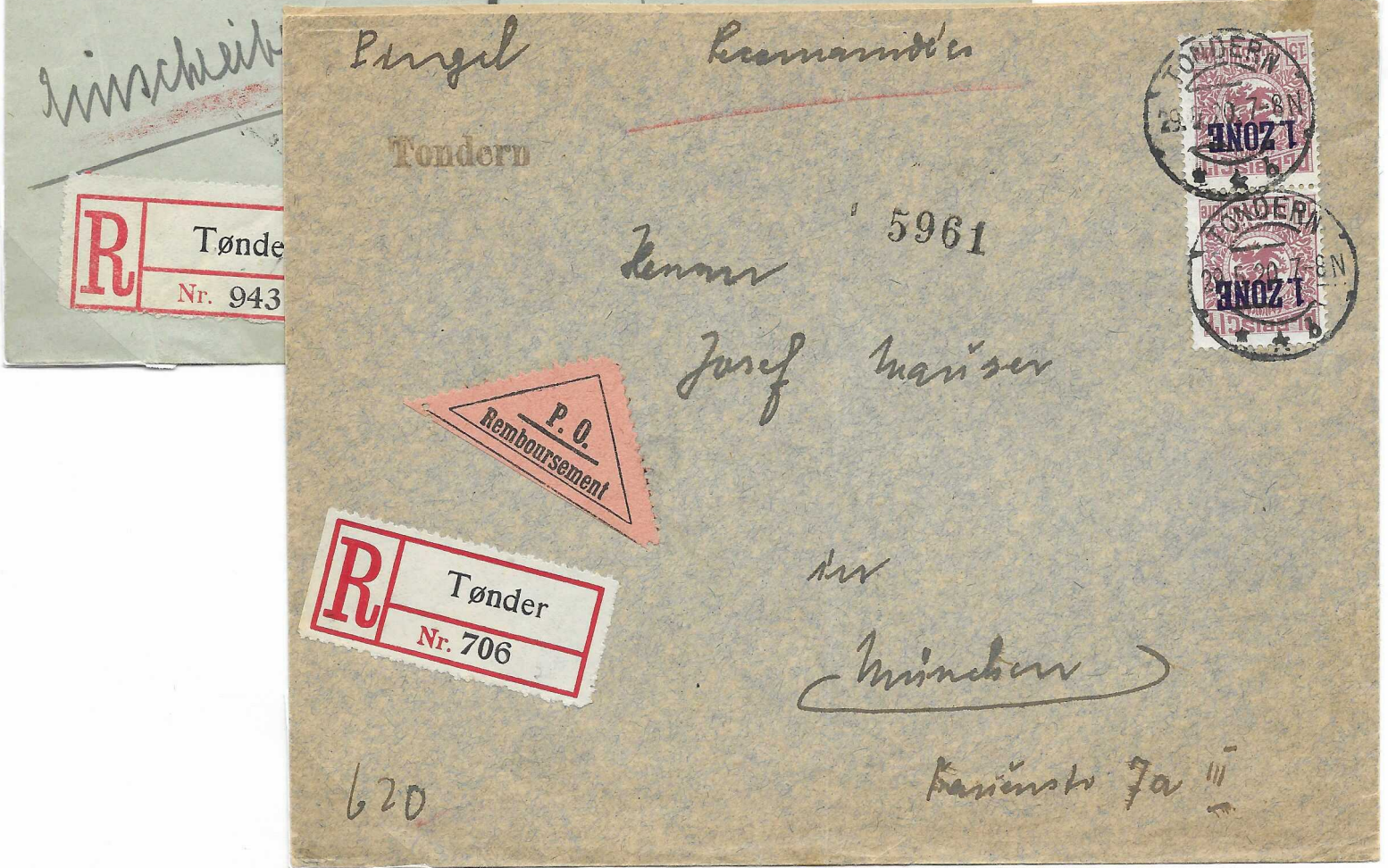


Registered covers prepared philatelically for sending to collectors in Germany franked with the Plebiscite stamps, including the 5 mark high value.

SCHLESWIG

A vote was taken on 10 February 1920 in the northern half of the province (Zone 1), with 75% favoring joining Denmark. This caused a second set of stamps denominated in Danish currency and overprinted "1 Zone" to be issued on 20 May.

Tønder
29 May 1920
2 June 1920



Registered covers franked with various denominations of the second pictorial stamps issued for Schleswig, including a pair of 15 ore on a COD letter.

BRITISH FORCES
Schleswig

Flensburg
23 ___ 1920

Slesvig Commission Internationale.

Dringend

Herrn Postsecretär
Asmus Andersen.

Mehlby.

Mr. Happele

FLENSBURG.

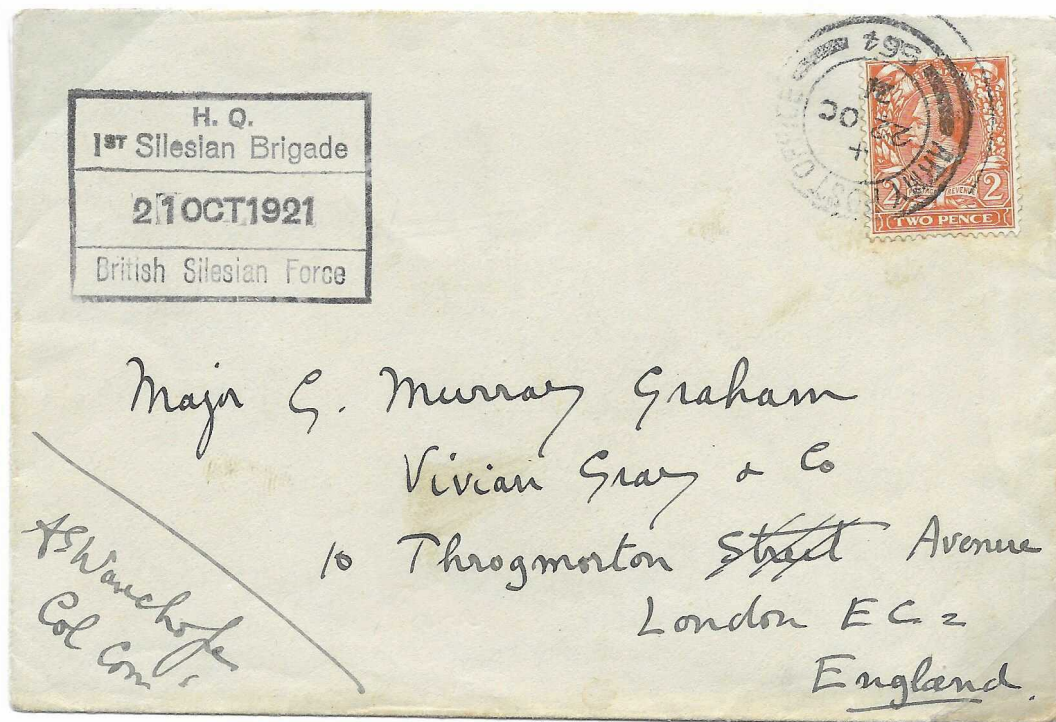
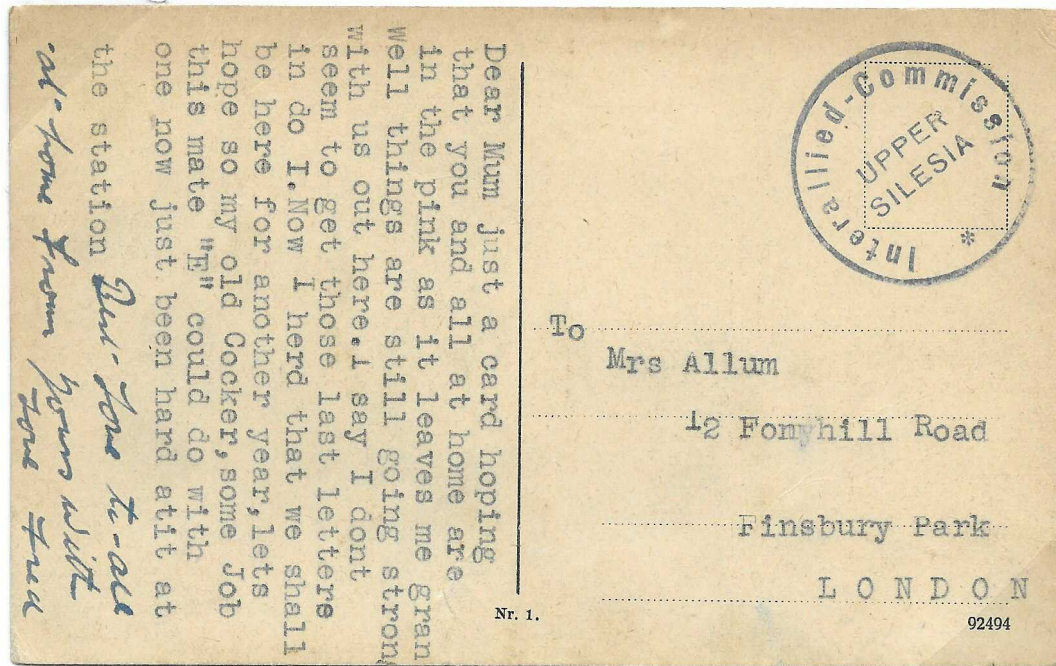
(Schles)



The mail of the Allied Plebiscite Commission was designated with either a special cachet or printed corner card. On 26 January 1920, a small quantity of the German-denominated stamps was overprinted "C-I-S" for the International Schleswig Commission. The use of these stamps on cover is very uncommon.

UPPER SILESIA

The last of the plebiscites to be held around Germany in this period was in Upper Silesia, where the territory was disputed with Poland. The voting took place in March 1921 with the overall result being 60% in favor of Germany. However, the preference was heavily for Poland in certain districts. As a result, the Allies decided to divide the territory, with the western portion remaining with Germany and the eastern going to Poland.



Initially, there was no British fieldpost service in the territory so mail was forwarded by the Army Courier Office in Berlin. Later, APO S64 was opened in Tarnowitz. Cachets on the covers above are for the Inter-allied Commission and the British Silesian Force.

BRITISH FORCES
Upper Silesia

Oppeln
20 March 1921

Beuthen
18 October 1920

Commission Interalliée
de Gouvernement et de Plebiscite
de Haute-Silésie.

Département de l'Intérieur.



C.T.A

Portpflichtige Dienstsache.



Herrn

W. H. Frerichs

Docuermarkt, 3^{te}

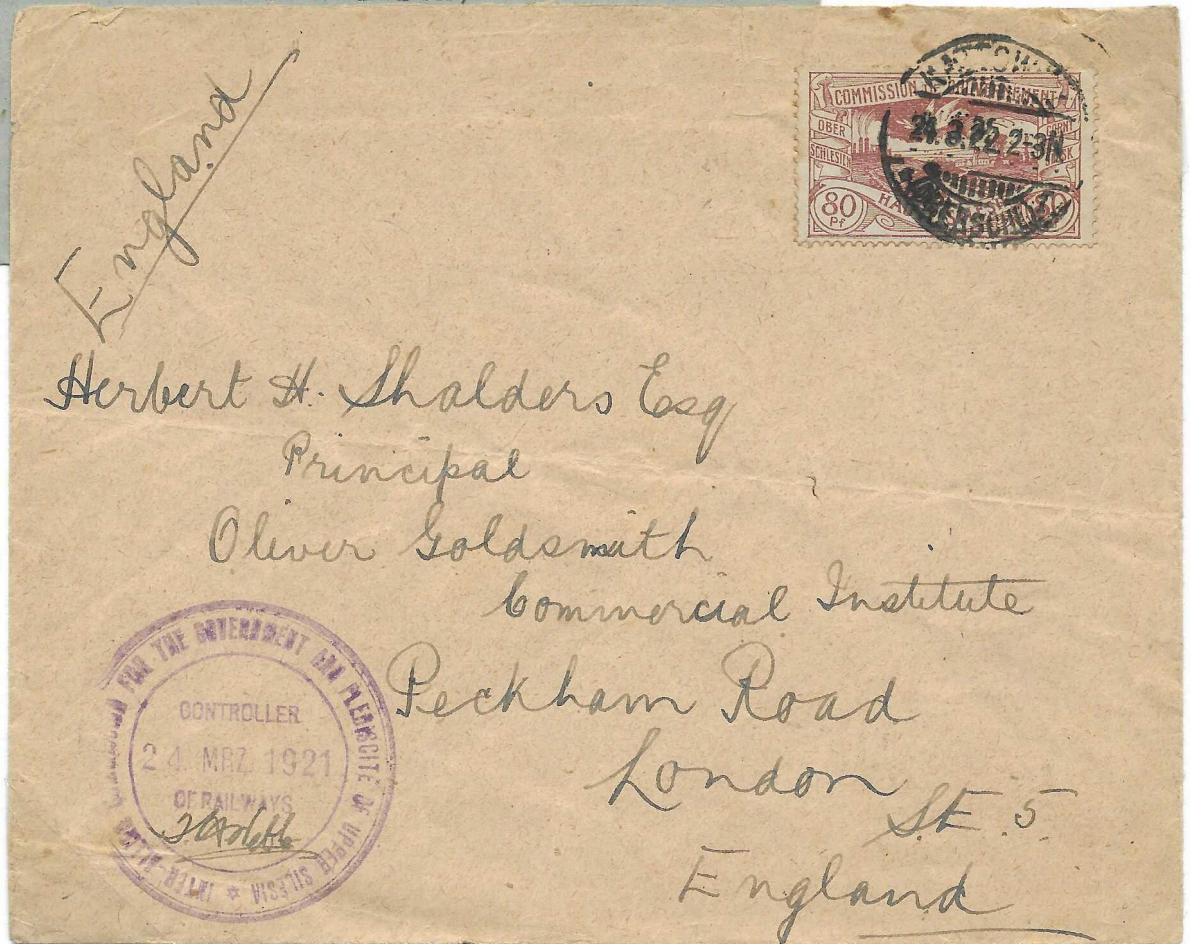
Beuthen O/S.



On occasion, generally when addressed locally, official mail was sent through the German post office operating in Upper Silesia and franked with the special stamps issued by it. Two examples are shown, including one with an adhesive overprinted to commemorate the Plebiscite and valid for postage only on that day.

BRITISH FORCES
Upper Silesia

Kattowitz
6 November 1920
24 March 1921



Official covers of the Inter-Allied Commission, showing two different markings of the Controller of Railways.

BRITISH FORCES
Upper Silesia

Oppeln
21 July 1920

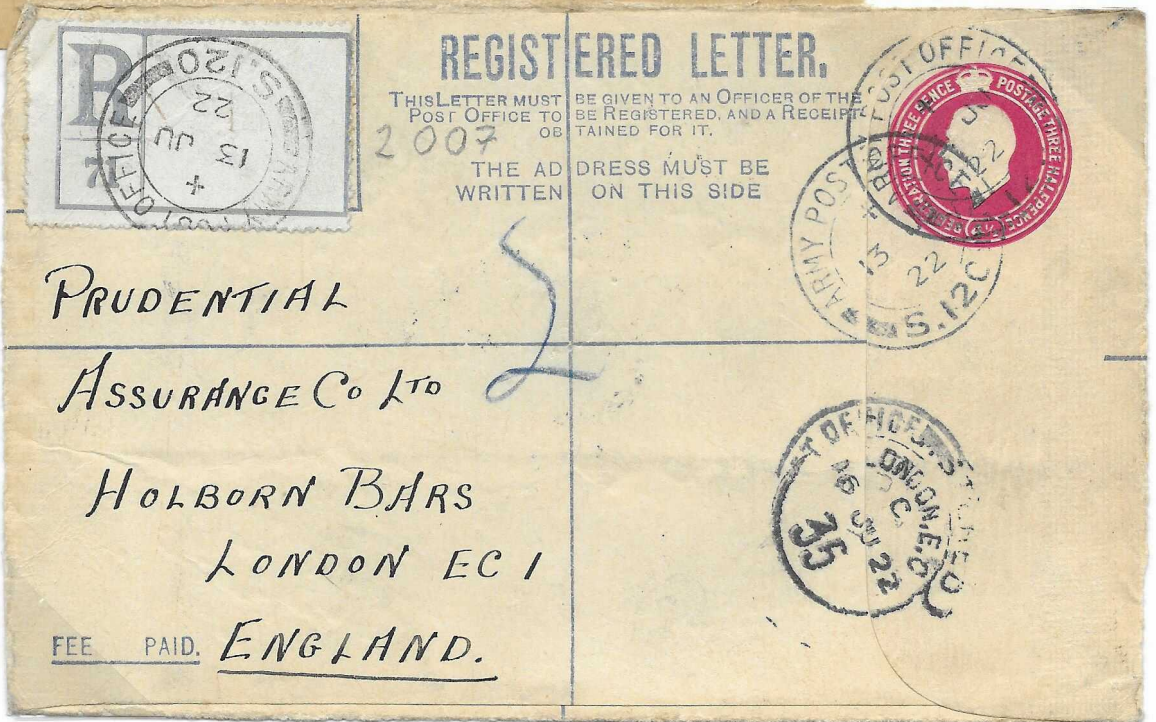
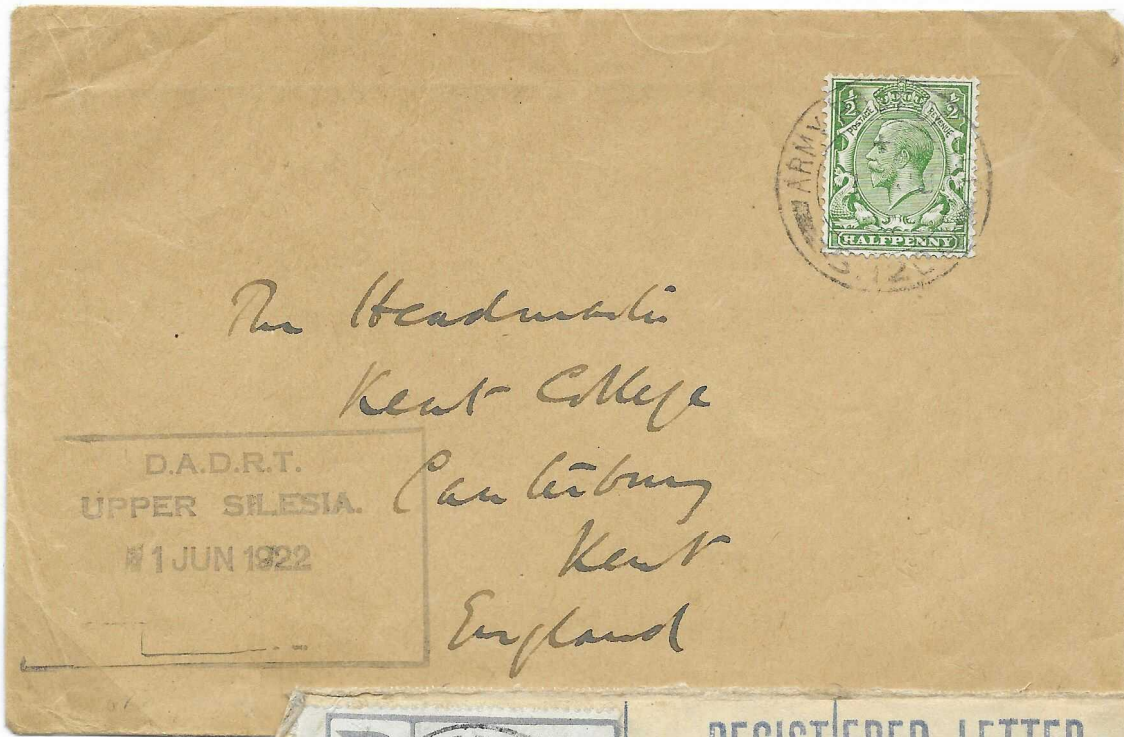
Army Post Office S.40
2 August 1921



The card above was sent in 1920 through the civil post office in Oppeln by a member of the British Section of the Allied Administrative Commission in Upper Silesia, with the appropriate cachet. The cover below was sent from the rail transport office Regulatory Station in Oppeln. It went by military pouch to Cologne, where it entered the mails at APO S.40.

BRITISH FORCES
Upper Silesia

Army Post Office S.120
11 June 1922
13 June 1922



As a result of the plebiscite, which came out about 60% for Germany and 40% for Poland, the Allies decided to partition the territory. APO #S.120 is recorded used at Oppeln in the sector allocated to Germany from April 1921 to June 1922. Printed matter envelope above has marking of "D.A.D.R.T. (Deputy Assistant Director of Railway Transport)/Upper Silesia." Registered mail (LRD above) from this period is very unusual.

UPPER SILESIA

Beuthen
10 September 1920

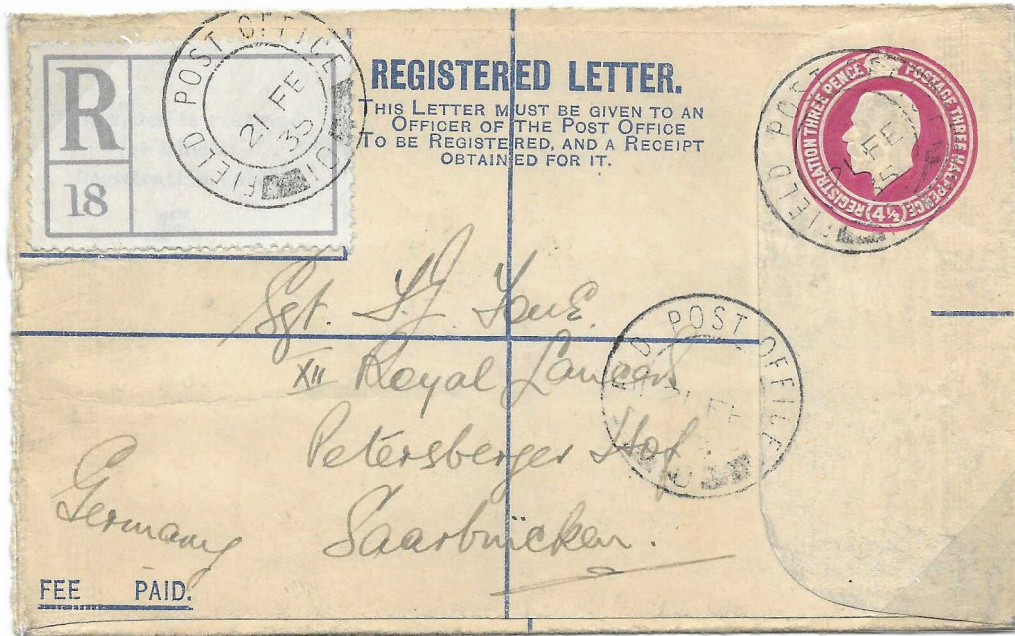


In April 1920, German official stamps were overprinted "C.G.H.S. (Commission du Gouvernement Haute Silesie)" for use by the various Allied-controlled administrative bodies in the territory.

SAAR

The final chapter of the British military presence in Germany in the aftermath of World War I was a plebiscite held in the Saar territory on 13 January 1935 after 20 years of French occupation. The inhabitants were given the chance to vote to join Germany or France or to remain independent under the League of Nations. Some 1,500 British troops were sent (along with Dutch, Italian and Swedish forces) to oversee the voting. FPO 10 was established to provide a postal service for them between December 1934 and February 1935.

Field Post Office 10
21 February 1935



Registered letter sent internally by a member of the British Saar Force to another member at Saarbrücken. Postage was 4 1/2 pence, the same as if it had been mailed domestically in the United Kingdom.

SAAR
Military Mail

Saarbrücken
13 January 1935
17 January 1935



British mail could be sent through the civilian Saar post offices if postage was paid in local stamps. These examples show two different cachets of the Headquarters of the British Saar Force. Upper cover has the special commemorative postmark used only on the day the plebiscite was held, 13 January 1935.

SAAR
Official Mail

Field Post Office 10
25 December 1934

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE



*O.B.,
1st Bn. Essex Regt,
Saar.*



Official O.H.M.S. cover sent within the Saar Territory. It has the uncommon unit cachet of the "Saar Force/Headquarters" applied at lower left. Mailed and apparently processed on Christmas Day.

SAAR
Inbound Military Mail

to Field Post Office 10
23 January 1935
21 February 1935



Inbound mail to the Saar Force is unusual, with registered examples being even more so. Upper cover sent from England to Saarbrucken, where it was received two days later. Lower example sent from FPO 10 to England and then returned to the Saar as the addressee's unit had been assigned there. A most unusual usage.

SAAR
Military Mail

Field Post Office 10
21 February 1935

Final Day of British Military Postal Service in Germany



The Saarlanders voted over 90% to rejoin Germany. Accordingly, the troops supervising the plebiscite were withdrawn after the administrative work was completed. The last day in service for FPO 10 was 21 February, and the above cover -- endorsed with the cachet of the Commander of the Royal Lancers -- was sent on the final day of usage.