

MILITARY MISSION IN TURKEY

The Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers on 4 November 1914 and later participated in the attack on the Suez Canal and the incursion into Persia. However, for much of the war, the Turkish forces were on the defensive against the Russians in the Caucasus and Eastern Anatolia as well as the British in Iraq and Palestine. After the Allies scored significant breakthroughs in these latter two areas, the Turks surrendered on 30 October 1918. German troops served in a liaison role with their Ottoman counterparts as well as logistical and service capacities.



Constantinople

The first German military mail from Turkey was sent via diplomatic pouch from the German Embassy in Constantinople to the Foreign Office in Berlin, where an official cachet was applied and the letters turned over to the postal authorities for delivery. The above are very early examples, postmarked in Berlin during December 1914 and March 1915. The upper cover has marking of the "Personal Adjutant/Military Mission/Constantinople," and the lower one a generic cachet of the Military Mission in Constantinople.

TURKEY

Constantinople

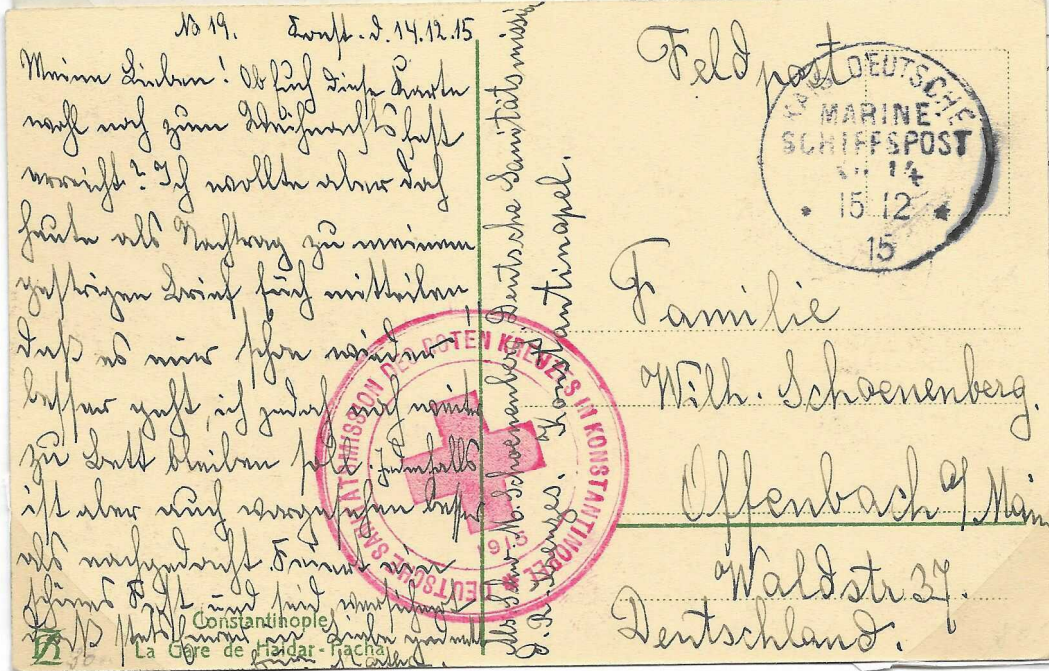
مرسل: پاور خاص حضرت شہزادہ فون در گولتس باغیا
 Absender:
 Freiherr v. d. GOLTZ PASTHA
 Generalfeldmarschall
 Crosses Hauptquartier Sr. Maj. des Sultans
Konstantinopel

Feldpostbrief.



An die

Zentralstelle des Jungdeutschland-Bundes.



Most mail from the Military Mission in 1915 and early 1916 was handled by a postal facility (naval P.O. 14) set up on board the steamship *General* (formerly of the German East Africa Line), which served as a floating headquarters. Examples above from the HQ of Field Marshal von der Goltz, the Field Telegraph Station at Osmaniye and the Red Cross Medical Mission.

TURKEY

Constantinople



Before the Military Mission postmarks with stated locations were introduced, two "generic" markings were applied to mail. One was a metal cds inscribed "Deutsche Militär-Mission/Feldpost" used from 10 October 1915 to 18 March 1916. The other was an undated rubber marking reading "Feldpost/der Deutschen Militärmission." An example of the latter is shown above on a card from an Austrian artillery officer aiding in the defense of the Gallipoli Peninsula; it is datelined 29 January 1916.

Feldpostkarte

Absender: Dienstgrad *Oberleutnant*
 Name *Große-Weizsäcker*

Armeekorps
 Division *10*
 Regt. Nr.

Bataill.
 Abteil.
 Komp.
 Batterie
 Eskadr.
 Kolonne

Besondere Formationen
 (Flieger, Franter usw.)
 Bei diesen ist die Armee
 oder die Etappeninspektion
 anzugeben. *Romanianer*
Front O. d. Romania

MILIT. MISS./FELDPOST/A.O.K.5.
 9 MAR. 1916
 Gallipoli

Aufgabestempel

An *Herrn*
Große-Weizsäcker

in *Westhofen* *Heft*

Wohnung
 Strasse und Hausnummer

Bigali 30/8/16

alps - Schw. Dürth
haben feiern schon
wieder, in swar
Bier hat - Senken bei
bei Pinarowhowled!
mesembaya. mil. Ver-
dienst - Orden -
grob - Grüns! The
Stovelle
Anden fange. Griffe
grob. Griffe. Griffe

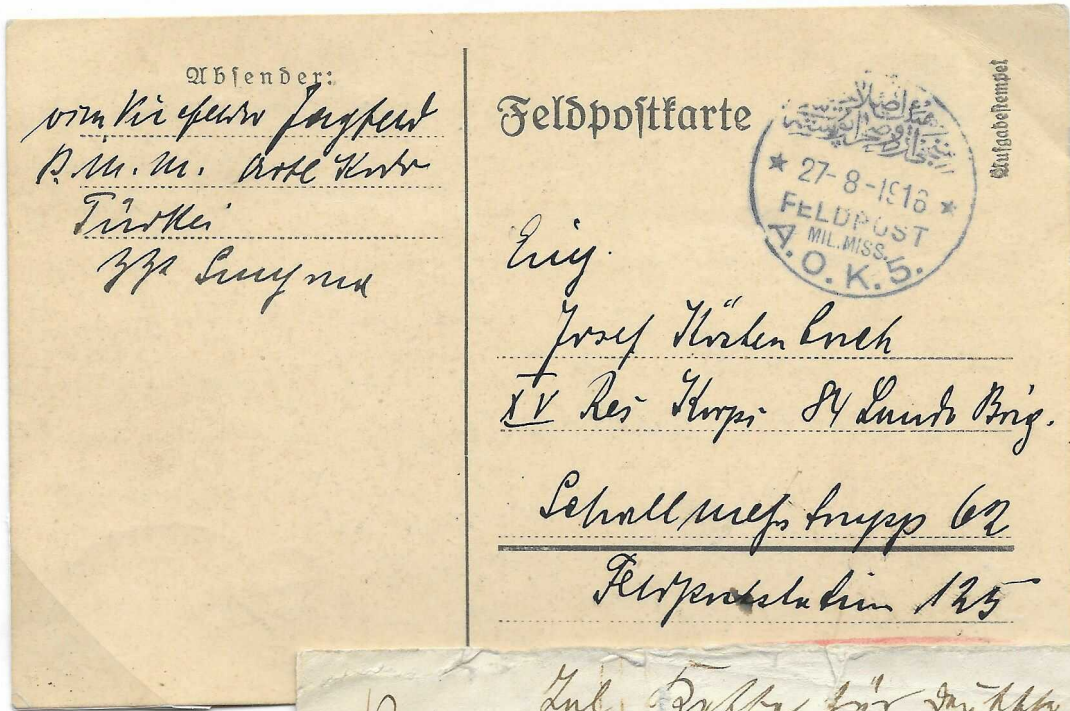
Abol. Versand. Vollrad. Wassmuth. Amalposthof

*Kochschiff 12
 Hamburg*

MILIT. MISS./FELDPOST/A.O.K.5.
 30.8.16
 LANGFUHR

Rüth v. Kries
Adr. B. Krasing
Kiel Feldstr. 144

Some of the Military Mission postmarks were identified by unit rather than location. For example, the High Command of the Turkish Fifth Army was assigned to the Gallipoli Peninsula during the period of the Anglo-French invasion. A special postmark inscribed "Milit. Miss./Feldpost/A.O.K.5." was used from 28 November 1915 to 16 November 1916. The upper card is datelined "Gallipoli, 7 March 1916." After the Allied withdrawal, this unit moved out, so the lower card is datelined "Bigali, 30 August 1916."



A second type of A.O.K.5. postmark came into use somewhat later, being recorded as used from 6 February 1916 to 5 November 1918. At the time the postcard and registered cover shown above were mailed, the Fifth Army had reached its permanent station at Smirna.

Feldpost der Militär-Mission.

Bitte schreiben!

R Feldpost der M. Militär-Mission in Konstantinopel. 015

Herrn



Ober-Postsekretär V. Appel



Carte Postale — Postkarte

Correspondance
Bitte schreiben!
Bitte nicht mehr Nahrungsmittel nach der Türkei!
Frankfurt/Main
Sumboldt-Str. 69

Adresse
Sendet keine Nahrungsmittel nach der Türkei!



Frankfurt/Main
Sumboldt-Str. 69

5486

The Military Mission fieldpost service was authorized on 2 January 1916, with Major Hensel as director. However, the new bilingual (German-Turkish) postmarks were not placed in service until the following month. The postmark of 28 February 1916 on the gray cover is a very early use (ERD 7 February). Note the red cachet on the lower card, which warns family members and friends not to send foodstuff to Turkey.

TURKEY

Arghana Maden
Bosanti
Diarbekir



Military Mission post offices were established in a number of other locations in Turkey proper. (Offices in areas outside of Anatolia, i.e. Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, etc., will be dealt with in separate sections.) The cds for Arghana Maden was in use only from 6 July to 10 October 1918, while Bosanti is recorded from 4 February 1917 to 30 October 1918 and Diarbekir from 17 May 1917 to 8 September 1918. The latter has unit cachet of the "Imperial German Telegraph Unit in Asia Minor."

TURKEY

Eskischehir
Baghdad Railhead



One of the dreams of the German empire builders was a railway under their control from Berlin to Baghdad. With the occupation of Serbia and Bulgaria as an ally, this goal was now in sight except for construction remaining in central Anatolia. This work proceeded, and a Military Mission post office was established at the end of track (Gleisspitze). Eskischehir cds recorded from 18 June 1917 to 29 October 1918. Gleisspitze known from 21 March 1917 to 4 November 1918. Note that Turkish postage was required (German stamps were not valid) on all mail sent to countries other than Germany and Austria-Hungary.

TURKEY

Konia
Kutahia
Mamure

Ein Brief

R Feldpost Militär-
Mission Konia
№ 265

350

Feldpost!



1074

Pa

Seldpostbrief

Franz Maria Ropf



Kaufmannshaus

*Ropf
Lagepost Anstand*

über Berlin C. 3

Feldpostkarte

Mons.

Leon Adjemian



*Ingenieur.
Kutahia*

us. Türkei

*rg a Lauf - Oberbayern
lutz 153/II*

Abfender: *Offizier Ropf*

Dienstgrad: *Leutnant*

Name: *Ropf Franz Maria*

(Nachfolgende Spalten geben nur bei dem Truppenteil gegebenenfalls an.)

Sonstige Formationen: *2. Bataillon*

(Kolonnen, Flügel, Jäger usw.)

23-8-1918

FELDPPOST

Postamt: *Kutahia*

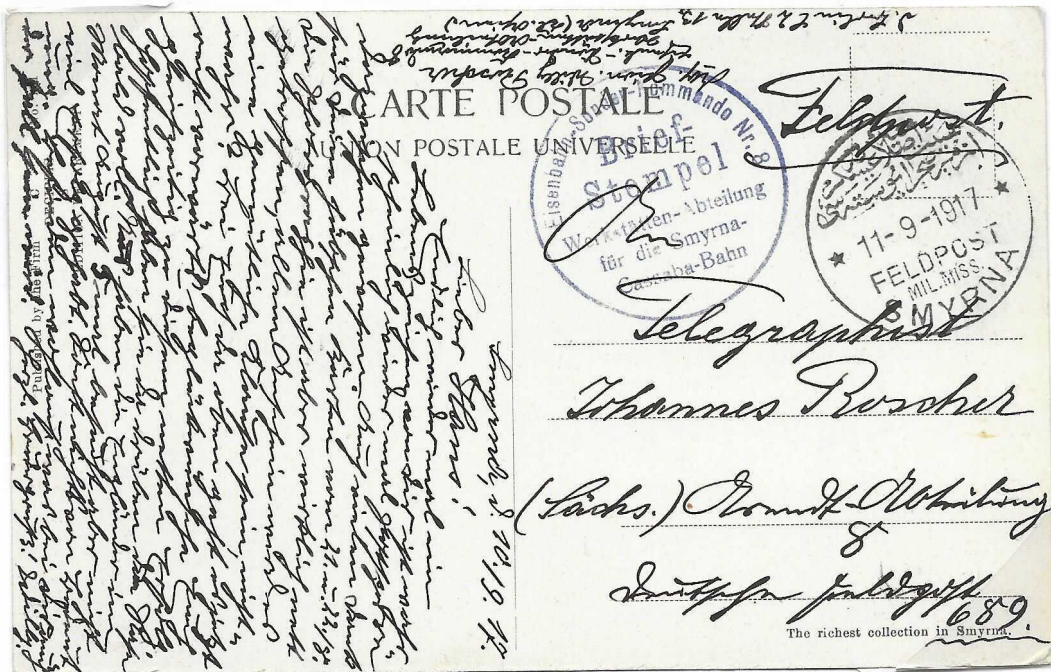
Batterie: *1. Batterie*

Escadron: *1. Escadron*

Deutsche Feldpost-Nr. *2100*

Feldpostnummer darf bei Säben von Armeekorps, Divisionen und Brigaden und bei formations, in deren Bezeichnung die Angabe eines Regiments vorkommt, nicht angegeben werden.

The cds for Konia was in use from 11 October 1916 to 8 November 1918, while that for Kutahia is recorded only from 9 July to 2 November 1918 and Mamure from 15 July 1917 to 7 October 1918.



The last two (alphabetically) Military Mission stations in Anatolia were in Mardin (cds in use from 28 April 1917 to 7 October 1918) and Smyrna (from 2 September 1916 to 28 October 1918).

TURKEY

Gulek
Haidar-Pascha
Jedikule



In addition to the special Military Mission postal stations, units located in other towns had their own cachets which were applied to mail and forwarded to the nearest FPO for processing. Some of these are very elusive.

TURKEY

Kadikoi
Moda
San-Stefano



Additional unit cachets from Military Mission offices in Turkey. Of special interest is the marking in red from the Anti-Aircraft Artillery School in San-Stefano.

TURKEY

Other Markings



Postcard from a member of the 509th Motor Truck Column located in Taurus. Postmarked Constantinople but has a special cachet "From the Interior of Turkey" sometimes applied to mail originating in the hinterland. This is a scarce marking with only about 10 examples recorded.



Special rubber postal markings were created for use on parcel post packages. Several examples are shown above, including two different from Constantinople, one from Damascus and one for Fifth Army Headquarters. All are very elusive and sought after by specialists.

IRAQ

The principal threat to the Turkish positions in Iraq came from the Indian Expeditionary Force which landed at Basra and advanced up the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The Turks with their German advisers managed to halt the British thrust at Kut-al-Amara, where a siege resulted in a British surrender on 29 April 1916. Later, a new British expedition advanced successfully and captured Baghdad, the capital, on 11 March 1917.

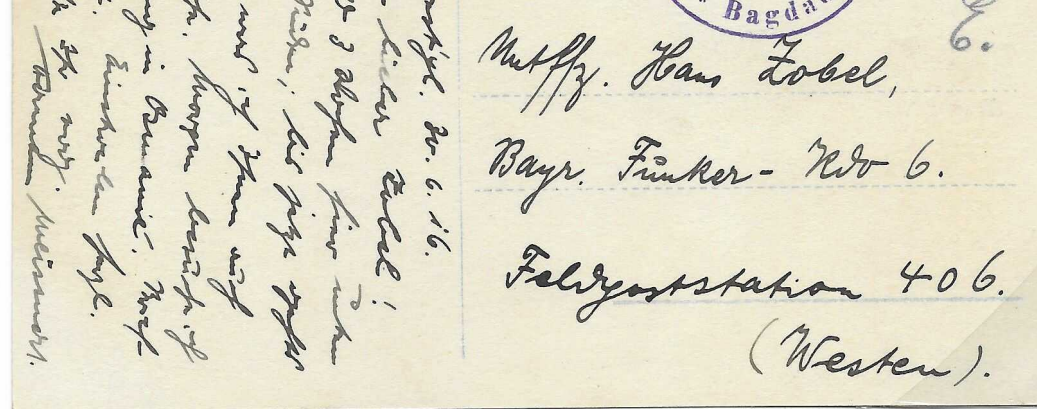
Baghdad



Above covers were sent from Iraq through the Military Mission post offices at Constantinople and for Sixth Army HQ (located in Baghdad during October 1916). Unit cachets of the "Iraq Formation" and "Iraq Group" are shown.

IRAQ

Sixth Army Headquarters
Bagdad



Early on, military mail from Bagdad received the marking (above in red) of the Fieldpost of the 6th Army, which was sent elsewhere (Aleppo in this case) for processing. A 6th Army Military Mission postmark was used in Bagdad during October 1916 (and later in Mosul).



The A.O.K.6. Military Mission station operated in Mosul from March 1917 until the end of the war. Mosul also had an identified cds, which is known used from 11 July 1917 to 16 October 1918.

ATTEST

ROLF HASPEL

Verbandsprüfer

des Bundes der philatelistischen Prüfer e.V. im BDPH und APHV
D-O-4401 Thalheim-Bitterfeld, Wolfener Str. 1

Nr. 04/2000

Datum 9.1.2000

Dt. Militär-Mission in der Türkei

Doppelt verwendeter Umschlag als Einschreib-Brief mit Normstempel Konia vom 11.9.1918 nach Berlin mit R-Zettel Nr.265 der Militär-Mission Konia. Rückseitig befindet sich der Stempel Konstantinopel xx vom 18.9.1918 als Durchgangsstempel.

Vorher (innen) ging der Umschlag von Aleppo vom 24.7.1918 an die Telegraphen-Abteilung in Konia.

Der Aufgabestempel ist schwach lesbar und die Anschrift ausradiert. Für die Doppelverwendung ist der Beleg sehr gut erhalten und R-Briefe aus Konia sind selten.

Der Brief ist echt und ohne mein Signum.

Rolf Haspel

ATTEST

ROLF HASPEL

Verbandsprüfer

des Bundes der philatelistischen Prüfer e.V. im BDPH und APHV
D-O-4401 Thalheim-Bitterfeld, Wolfener Str. 1

Nr. 01/2000

Datum 9.1.2000

Dt. Militär-Mission in der Türkei

Feldpost-Akarte mit Normstempel Smyrna vom 11.9.1917 an die deutsche Feldpost 689. Die Karte wurde in Smyrna am 10.9.1917 geschrieben. Sie trägt den blauen Briefstempel "Eisenbahn-Sonder-Kommando Nr.8/Werkstätten-Abteilung/für die Smyrna-/Cassaba-Bahn". Dieser Stempel ist für das Jahr 1917 nachgewiesen

Die Stempel sind alle sehr deutlich und die Karte ist in einem sehr sauberen Zustand.

Der Beleg ist echt und ohne mein Signum.

Rolf Haspel

ATTEST

ROLF HASPEL

Verbandsprüfer

des Bundes der philatelistischen Prüfer e.V. im BDPH und APHV

D-O-4401 Thalheim-Bitterfeld, Wolfener Str. 1

Nr. 02/2000

Datum 9.1.2000

Dt. Militär-Mission in der Türkei

Feldpost-Akarte mit Normstempel Konstantinopel Xx vom 1.7.1916 eines Angehörigen der Radio-Groß-Station Bagdad. Die Karte trägt den entsprechenden Briefstempel der Station und einen privaten Absenderstempel.

Die Karte wurde am 30.6.1916 in Konstantinopel geschrieben und stammt von der Anreise der Einheit.

Alle Stempel sind klar und deutlich und die Karte sehr sauber erhalten.

Der Beleg ist echt und ohne mein Signum.

Rolf Haspel