

British Black Propaganda Postcards of WWII

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Note: Portions of this article were originally published in the 28 December 1967 issue of the British newspaper Stamp Weekly with the title "British War-Time Black Postcards," the May 1969 American Philatelist with the title "Venomous Propaganda Postcards," and the June 1988 American Philatelist with the title "To Germany, with Love."

Many types of philatelic propaganda were produced by both the Axis and the Allied powers during World War II. "White," "gray," and "black" propaganda in the form of forged and parodied stamps, postcards, letters, and letter sheets rolled off the presses on both sides of the lines.

"White" propaganda may be defined as that issued by an acknowledged source, usually a government or an agency of a government. For instance, every airdropped issue of the World War II propaganda newspaper, Frontpost, bore the legend, in German, "Published by American troops in Western Europe." White propaganda is associated with overt psychological operations. It does not hide its origin.

Although there is no attempt to conceal the origin of "gray" propaganda, neither is the source specifically identified. A World War II example is the joint UK/US Political Warfare Executive (PWE) Office of Strategic Services (OSS) newspaper, Nachrichten für die Truppe (News for the Troops). It was never identified as an Allied product, but German readers knew very well that Allied aircraft (and especially the US Special Leaflet Squadron) were dropping the newspaper.

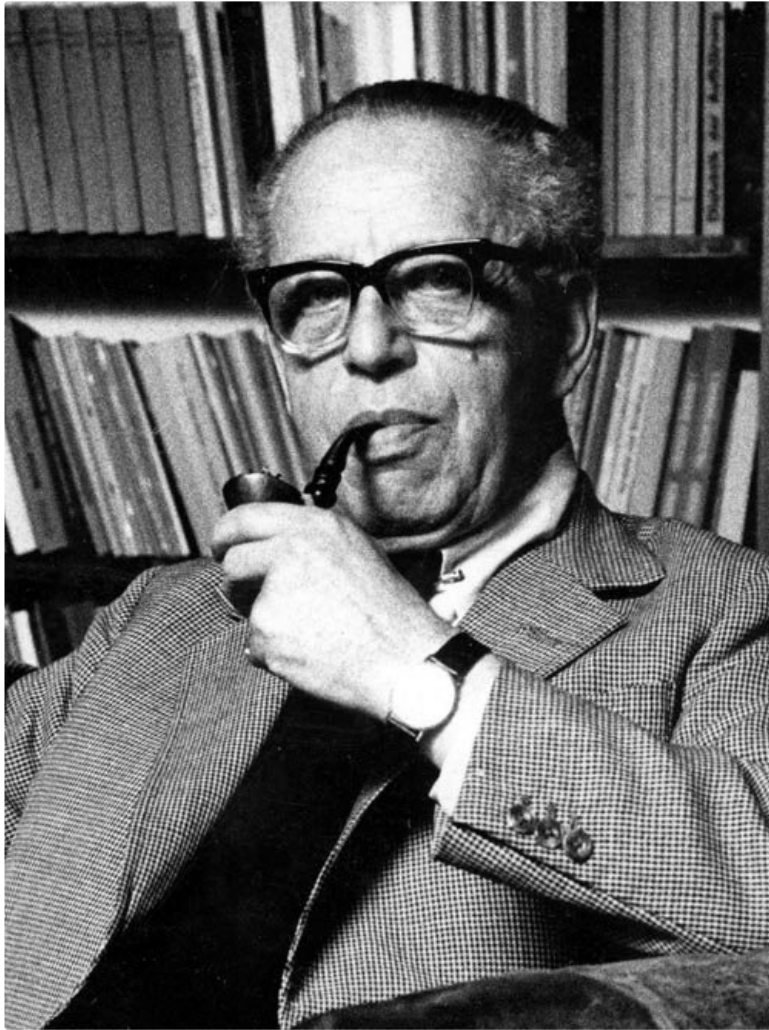
"Black" propaganda, the type associated with covert psychological warfare operations, purports to emanate from a source other than the true one. Examples include forged identity cards and ration coupons, counterfeit currency, and propaganda letters and postcards. During World War II, black propaganda accounted for approximately five percent of the material packed into leaflet bombs, with the other ninety-five percent being various kinds of gray and white propaganda. In this way, substantial quantities of black propaganda were distributed.

This article deals with those black items produced by Great Britain in the form of German postcards. These cards, which vilified the Nazi Party and its functionaries, were meant to cause dissension within the ranks of the German people. The British sincerely hoped that finders would believe an anti-Nazi group within Germany had printed the cards. However, it is doubtful that many finders believed the postcards to be of German origin, and their propaganda classification probably should be somewhere between black and gray.

The Official Secrets Act protected Britain's World War II covert propaganda system from public scrutiny for many years. Today, after publication of several conflicting books on the subject, it remains a confusing subject.

The first leaflets produced by the British were prepared by Department EH (Electra House), which had an independent existence until June 1940. At that time, the fall of France finally convinced the British government that it was in for a long and dangerous war that would require more professional management of psychological warfare operations. Section D did some subversive propaganda; other such operations were carried out by SO1 of the Special Operations Executive (SOE). A major reorganization put the printers under the supervision of the SOE, where they remained until 1941. On September 11 of that year, the Political Warfare Executive (PWE) was formed and given responsibility for

printed material. The PWE directed the British propaganda campaign against Germany for the remainder of the war.



British Master Forger Ellic Howe (AKA Armin Hull)

Ellic Howe joined the PWE Forgery Section in the first week of November 1941. A lance corporal in the Anti-Aircraft Command at Stanmore, Howe had written a paper in September 1941 entitled, "Political Warfare and the Printed Word - a Psychological Study." The merits of that paper earned him an invitation to join the PWE.



Sefton Delmer (Courtesy the Delmer estate)

Sefton Delmer described Ellic Howe (under the pseudonym, Armin Hull) in *Black Boomerang* (Viking: New York, 1962):

He was a printer who had made a special study of German typography and printing techniques. Even before the war he had regularly visited Germany and made a point of collecting specimens of German printing. He carried them all back with him in his baggage - newspapers, tram tickets, commercial and private stationery, business forms, police wanted posters, and anything else he could lay his hands on.

Ellic Howe turned out to be a gifted manager. Through his pre-war publishing contacts, he

proceeded to make arrangements for the PWE: with Fanfare Press in London, to do the forgers' printing; with Spicer's, Ltd., to supply the paper; and with Monotype Corp., to provide typography and other materials. Before the end of the war, his unit had produced hundreds of forged German documents. He once remarked that he could supply "anything from a few forged letterheads to several million forged German ration cards." (In 2004 British commercial Channel Four found much of the typeface and many of the machines from the old Monotype Corporation. They were filmed for use in a documentary on WWII psychological operations).



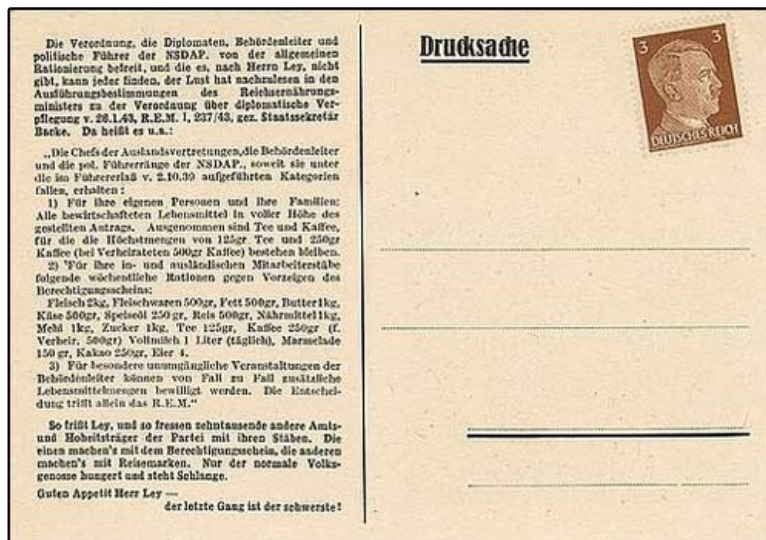
The Black Game

When requested to produce a forged document, Howe would code the item with an "H" number, the letter possibly referring to his own name. Although much of the black propaganda produced by British forgers was secret during the war years and for years afterwards, many documents have now been declassified and the "H" numbers of most of the German postcards are known. These files are kept in the Imperial War Museum in London and were classified until 1996. Readers who want to know more about the master forger Ellic Howe should read his book, *The Black Game* (Michael Joseph Ltd.: London, 1982).

Many of these propaganda postcards have a "Q" code in addition to the "H" code. The "Q" indicates that they were also disseminated to the enemy by balloon. During research for his book *Black Propaganda*, Lee Richards discovered that the PWE decided in 1943 that some of its black propaganda was suitable for restricted aerial dissemination. Selected leaflets were reclassified with a "Q" code letter and passed, with an English translation, to the RAF's Deputy Directorate of Counter Propaganda, (DDCP), for scrutiny. They decided if aircraft could drop a particular leaflet or if it could only be disseminated by the "M" Balloon Unit. "Q" series leaflets were mixed, at a ratio of 5 percent, with conventional white leaflets when dropped by RAF aircraft. The same rule applied with every issue

of Nachrichten für die Truppe dropped by the US 8th Air Force's Special Leafleting Squadron. From September 1943 the "M" Balloon Unit ceased disseminating white leaflets and concentrated only on the "Q" series. In all eighty-five different black leaflets were designated as "Q" leaflets. When an "H" code leaflet was reprinted, regardless of whether its text had been modified or not, it was assigned a new "H" code; however, the same "Q" code was retained.

Howe is known to have designed and produced seven German-language propaganda postcards that were airdropped or ballooned over the enemy. These are cards that are mentioned in wartime records and archives. Other less well-known and more clandestine cards will be mentioned at the end of this article.



H.623 / Q.24, The Ley Postcard with forged 3-pfennig stamp - Drucksache

Dr. Robert Ley (1890-1945) was leader of the German Labor Front from 1933 to 1945. An ardent Nazi and a close friend of Adolf Hitler, he had joined the Nazi Party in 1925 and served as Gauleiter (roughly equivalent to a state governor) for Rhineland-South until 1931. In 1933, he founded the Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front), and then systematically destroyed Germany's free labor unions. The monolithic organization he headed eventually controlled more than 25 million German workers. Reichsleiter and "Reichswohnungskommissar" (Reich Housing Commissioner) Dr Robert Ley was the first person Delmer selected for his postcard operation in autumn 1943. Dr. Ley was a rabid anti-Semite and once declared, in a Karlsruhe speech, "It is not enough to isolate the Jewish enemy of mankind; the Jews have got to be exterminated."

Ley attacked the wealthy as "blue-blooded swine," while at the same time looting union treasuries and amassing a personal fortune. Because of his propensity for pompous speechmaking and heavy drinking, behind his back he was called the "Reich Drunk Master." At the end of the war, Ley was arrested attempting to flee to the mountains near Berchtesgaden. He cheated the Allied judgment at Nuremberg by hanging himself from a

toilet pipe on 25 October 1945.

Because of his reputation as a drinker and a liar, Dr. Ley was the subject of a British propaganda postcard parody. Sefton Delmer told the story behind this postcard in *Black Boomerang*. During the war, Delmer was in charge of a number of the "black" radio stations operated by the British. These broadcast in German, purportedly from pro-German patriotic groups opposed to the way the incompetent Nazis were fighting the war. One of Delmer's best broadcasters was a Pioneer Corps corporal named Paul Sanders, whose radio name was *Der Chef* (The Chief). He broadcast on Station *Gustav Siegfried Eins* (GS 1). Sanders had been born in Berlin, but had left Germany in 1938. His voice was virile and resonant, with a trace of Berlin drawl similar to that of Junkers officers of the Kaiser's Guards regiments.

Der Chef started a rumor that went as follows: "The father of a kitchen maid who had recently left her employ in the Ley household telephoned the Ley major-domo to ask for his daughter's ration cards to be sent to her.

'This is the Palais Ley,' grandly answered the major-domo. 'We have no ration cards here. We don't bother about them, you know. Here we have diplomatic rations'

A report like this was intended to infuriate the German people, who were suffering under a severe rationing system, and Delmer was pleased to hear that newly captured German POWs were repeating the Ley story. This encouraged him to go further:

We plugged the diplomatic-rations racket with such effect that Goebbels and Ley had to lay on a special campaign to counter it. Robert Ley himself went on record in Goebbels' newspaper, *Der Angriff*, October 12, 1943, to state, "We National Socialists know no such thing as diplomatic rations. Every man, whether he is a Reich minister or a Reich leader, has to live on rations just like any ordinary workman, mechanic and official. The normal rations are enough. I myself am a normal consumer and live on them."

But by the time they got around to this dementi we were able to quote the decree authorizing special rations for diplomats and party officials with representational duties (R. E. M. 1,237/43 of 26.1.1943). We were even able to give them the color of the certificates and the exact scale of the diplomatic rations.

The British postcard that parodied Ley's predicament is approximately 148 x 105 mm in size. On one side of the card, a photograph of Dr. Ley giving a speech is shown at the left. This is an old photo, because he is wearing the rank of SA-Gruppenführer. At the right, printed in German, are the words, "The Normal Consumer and Reich Commissar, Reich Leader Dr. Robert Ley." These are followed by Ley's "We National Socialists..." rebuttal reprinted from *Der Angriff*. The reverse side of the card proves Ley to be a liar. On it are printed, in German, the regulations that legalized diplomatic rations. The message reads:

The ruling for diplomats, civic leaders and political leaders of the NSDAP [Nazi Party] which frees them from rationing in general, but which according to Herr Ley does not exist, can be found by anyone who is interested in reading the regulations of the Reich's Food Administrator concerning diplomatic food provisions of Jan.26.43. R. E. M. 1,237/43 signed by Secretary of State Backe. Among other things it states as follows:

The chiefs of foreign embassies, civic and political leaders of the NSDAP, as much as they come under the Führer's edict of Oct. 2, 1939, and which fall under the listed categories, receive:

1. For themselves and their families: All domestic prepared foods to the full amount as asked. Exempted are tea and coffee for which the maximum amount is: 125 gr. tea, 250 gr. coffee (for married couples 500 gr. of coffee).
2. For their co-workers, domestic and foreign, the following are the weekly rations allowable by permit: Meat 2 kg., meat products 500 gr., lard 500 gr., butter 1 kg., cheese 500 gr., table oil 250 gr., rice 500 gr., nutriments 1kg., flour 1kg., sugar 1kg., tea 125 gr.,

were supposed to be mailed to German addresses, which we got hold of, or to Norwegian Nazis." I only show the original code number for the cards beneath the illustrations. The Ley Feldpost version was very popular and was reprinted with a new number each time. The reprints have the codes H.734, H.743, H.773, and H.792.

Writing in the 10 June 1974, issue of Linn's Stamp News, Peter L. Koffsky told of finding a pertinent German document stored in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. The document was on the stationery of the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, from Kreisleitung Alsfeld-Lauterbach, Gau Hessen-Nassau, to Gaupropagandaleitung, Frankfurt. It was dated 14 January 1944.

The document states that a large number of propaganda postcards were dropped on the districts of Ober-Ohmen and Gross-Eichen on the night of 11 January 1944. Most of these cards were addressed. They were also franked with forged 3-pfennig stamps, many of which had come off because of the early morning dampness. Ten of the postcards were enclosed with the letter for examination. The rest of the cards had been forwarded through the district magistrate to the Gestapo.

My copy of the original 4-page document shows that a list of 145 addresses taken from the postcards was attached to the letter. In his Linn's article, Koffsky broke the addresses down as follows:

The largest single group [of postcards] was addressed to Berlin. Another large selection went to the principal port, Hamburg. Heidelberg and Munich, two medium-sized cities relatively close to the point of the drop also received appreciable attention. There is also a scattering of smaller and more distant places represented in the list, just as one would expect from an average collection of mail.

Some of the names that appear on the list are:

Herrn Jak. Schmutz, Heidelberg, Schillerstr. 14
Herrn Dr. W. Stroetmann, Munster, Studtstr. 17
Herrn Adam Rittershofer, Durlach/1.B., Lammstr. 1
Herrn Karl Seltenreich, Heidelberg, Bergstr. 128

Sefton Delmer told me that American Flying Fortresses and Royal Air Force bombers dropped the propaganda postcards. One package of 600 of these cards was dropped over Luxembourg during a daylight raid in May 1944. Reports allege that all but seventy of them were found and destroyed. Others were dropped in the Netherlands and the Ruhr in late 1943 and early 1944. On 16 March 1945, the British released 100 balloons toward western Germany that contained 35 bundles of Ley cards. On 19 March, 200 more balloons carried another 48 bundles of Ley cards. The "Drucksache" cards were mostly dropped from 8 January 1944 to 19 March 1945. The "Feldpost" cards were disseminated from 26 November 1943 to 17 June 1944.

Jean Laplanche told of finding a large number of the Ley and Schieber postcards (see below) in an article published in Le Philatliste Belge at the end of 1947. He states that during the night of either 8 or 9 January 1944 Allied bombers dropped the postcards over Hombour, one of ten Belgian communities incorporated into the German Reich. Customs agents, policemen and German children collected most of the leaflets but Laplanche managed to find about 100 of the postcards and hide them. Many were addressed and stamped, so over the next several weeks he very carefully placed them in different mailboxes and post offices in the ten annexed settlements. We can't say that the cards actually passed through the German postal system, but we can say that at the least, they entered the system.

The "Drucksache" version of the Ley card was forged after the war. Ley's portrait has been

retouched and the fakes are darker and printed on a yellowish cardboard more crudely than the British parody. They are either unstamped or bear a genuine 3-pfennig German stamp.

Werner Bohne, the now-deceased expertiser of the German Philatelic Society, owned my favorite variety of a genuine card. I visited Werner one summer and he had a genuine Ley card that bore a WWII British luftfeldpost stamp forgery in place of the usual 3-pfennig Hitler forged stamp. It was surely a fantasy put together by a propaganda collector, but it was an extremely good one, and if genuine worth two to three times that of the standard Ley postcard.



<p>Dieser deutsche General und dreihundfünfzig andere wurden abgesetzt, weil sie eine andere Meinung aussprechen mochten. Die Meinung des geschulten Fachmanns, der kommen sah, was nach den militärischen Regeln kommen mußte, die sie von Grund auf gelernt hatten.</p> <p>Dieser deutsche General und dreihundfünfzig andere gehörten zu den Männern, die in jahrzehntelanger, genialer und solider Anbauarbeit aus dem Nichts die stärkste Wehrmacht der Welt geschaffen hatten – eine Waffe, die in berufenen Händen unschlagbar war.</p> <p>Dieser deutsche General und dreihundfünfzig andere wurden zum alten Eisen geworfen von einer Führung, die militärisches Wissen durch spontane Eingebungen und militärisches Können durch vage Wiltanausbrüche ersatz, und die Wahrheit nur ertragen kann, wenn sie günstig klingt.</p> <p>Dieser deutsche General und dreihundfünfzig andere mußten unbedeutenden Jasnagern und skrupellosen Karriereachtern weichen, die die Wahrheit günstig färben und, um an die Kruppe zu kommen, Versprechungen machten, die sie nicht einlösen konnten.</p> <p>Diesem deutschen General und dreihundfünfzig anderen, die von der Führung nur Unrecht und Undank bekamen, gibt die Geschichte recht. Ohnmächtig und blutenden Herzens müssen sie jetzt mitanschen, wie die Waffe, die sie schmieden halfen, trotz Heldenmut und Opferwill des deutschen Soldaten, in den Händen Unberufener zerschlagen wird.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Drucksache</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/>
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H.648 / Q.28, The General Halder Postcard Drucksache

Although General Franz Halder (1884-1972) was Chief of the German Army General Staff from 1938 to 1942, he secretly sided with Hitler's opponents in 1938 and agreed to arrest

the Führer to keep Germany out of a European war. Because of Hitler's political victory at Munich, this plot was never carried out.

As chief of staff, Halder was torn between his dislike of Nazism and his oath of loyalty to Hitler. Increasingly he was subject to the Führer's interference in military affairs. Nevertheless, he helped to plan the invasion of Poland and France, and he supported Hitler as long as the German armed forces were successful militarily. In 1942, however, Halder disagreed with the Führer over the order to divert Russian-front Wehrmacht troops to attack Stalingrad. He was dismissed on 24 September 1942.

Two years later, after the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Hitler in July of 1944, Halder was arrested and sent to a concentration camp. He was liberated by American troops in 1945, and later testified against the Nazis during the Nuremberg trials.

Because General Halder was well known and greatly respected, British propagandists decided the German people should be told of his disagreement with the Führer over the way the war was being fought.



The genuine Halder postcard

A postcard was produced that featured a portrait of General Halder in full uniform. This British production was an imitation of a genuine German postcard that carried a Hoffman portrait of Halder with the text, "General of the Artillery Halder, Chief of the General Staff of the Army." The British photographically reproduced the same picture, but they showed the portrait close-up and cropped some of the hair from the top of the general's head.

On the British parody, the text beneath the portrait was changed to read: "The German Countenance, II. General-Colonel put on ice." This message is in reference to Halder's dismissal and might be better translated as, "The German face, II. General dismissed."

Once again, two varieties of the address side of the card are known, one with the word "Drucksache" and a forged 3-pfennig stamp, the other with the word "Feldpostkarte." The

propaganda message on both varieties consists of five paragraphs that state, in German:

This German general and 53 others were dismissed because they dared to voice a dissenting opinion - the opinion of trained experts who saw what was coming in the military field they were expert in.

This German general and 53 others are the men who spent long decades of ingenious and solid work creating, literally from nothing, the strongest army in the world. A weapon that in suitable hands would be unbeatable.

This German general and 53 others were scrapped by a leadership that replaces military knowledge with spontaneous intuition and military ability with temper tantrums, and that can tolerate the truth only when it is favorable.

This German general and 53 others had to make way for insignificant yes-men and unscrupulous career-seekers that shaded the truth for personal benefit and made promises they could not live up to.

This German general and 53 others were rewarded by the leadership with injustice and ingratitude. They will be found just men in the eyes of history. Powerless and with bleeding hearts, they now have to watch the weapon they helped forge be destroyed in the hands of amateurs, despite the heroic sacrifices of German soldiers.

Several specimens of the Halder postcard were offered for sale in early 1986. One had the word "Feindpropaganda" (enemy propaganda) written on it by the finder. According to a notation on this card, it was dropped over Cologne in 1944. Another card was found with a French cancellation. I have seen a Halder postcard, addressed to "Frau F. Unger, Berlin Charlottenburg, Fritschestrasse 49." This card is believed to have been dropped sometime in 1943.

The "Drucksache" version was distributed from 26 January to 21 March 1944. The "Feldpost" version was distributed between 25 December 1943 and 17 June 1944. Some are known with 1944 postmarks and it is possible that they went through the German mail. Post-war forgeries of the Halder cards are known.




Dieser deutsche Mann ist frei

Dieser deutsche Mann ist frei
von Front- und Arbeitsgesetz durch ORW Gehelml/
Verfügung Az. 1135 AHA/As/E (Vb) Nr.
834/40 geb. v. 11. April 1940, nach der
er als hauptberuflicher Parteigestellter auf
Antrag seiner Parteidienststelle UH zu stellen
ist —
von Einquartierungen, insbesondere von Bomben-
geschädigten durch die Wohnraumlösungs-
verordnung v. 17.2.43, die seine Residenz,
ebenso wie die Wohnungen aller anderen
Hoheltsträger, Beamten und Angestellten
im aktiven Parteidienst und alle NSDAP-
Gebäude von Wohnmischschlagnahme und
Zwangseinquartierungen ausnimmt —
von der Lebensmittelversorgung durch die Verord-
nung über diplomatische Verpflegung vom
26.1.43, R.E.M. 1.237/43, die ihn als
politischen Führer aus Repräsentations-
gründen vom Kartenzwang befreit und ihm
auf Grund seines Berechtigungsscheins das
4-fache der Normalrationen sichert —
von Bezugsbeschränkung und Mangel an Haushalts-
bedarfsmitteln als eingetragener Bezahler der
55 Deutschen Ausüstungswerke, in denen
K.Z.-Gefangene ihm alles anfertigen, was
der gewöhnliche Volksgenosse im Laden
nicht mehr kaufen kann —
von allen Sorgen und Nöten des Deutschen Volkes,
vor denen ihn seine Beziehungen schützen,
schlief von der Bombennot, denn er bekommt
den Kraftstoff, um jeden Abend aus der
Stadt auf seinen bombensicheren Landsitz
zu fahren.

**Dieser Mensch ist
frei**
von jeder Zusammengehörigkeit mit
dem Deutschen Volke.

Drucksache



Herren

B. Bartels

Hausberg, Paderborn

1940

H.627 / Q.25, This German Man Is Free - Dr. Scheel Drucksache

The next two postcards - the Scheel and Schieber cards - are identical in every respect except for the portraits, and were once quite mysterious. On the picture side, both have the caption, "This German man is free" and both show a portrait of a high-ranking Nazi official.

Two varieties of the address side are known for each card. Both are found with either the word "Drucksache" and a forged 3-pfennig stamp; or the word "Feldpost," a printer's mark (Sch K 11.43), and Din numbers (Fp. Cl54 Din A6).

However, neither of the men portrayed on these two postcards is identified. As a result, there was a great deal of speculation about them. Who were they? Why were they selected? We know that the British copied the Halder portrait from a genuine German

postcard, so it would seem likely that they also copied these portraits from legitimate postcards. But no such cards came to light. It is almost as if the British simply selected photographs that showed what they considered to be "Nazi types" and then used those faces to attack the party. Or, more likely, it was believed that these individuals were so well known in Germany that no name was needed. At the time I first wrote this article in 1969 nobody was sure who they were. I made some educated guesses at the time that turned out to be correct.

The first card pictures Reichsstudentführer Dr. Gustav Adolf Scheel (1907-1979). In *Leaders and Personalities of the Third Reich* by Charles Hamilton (Bender Publishing: California, 1984), a photograph of Dr. Scheel is shown on Page 396. Although the man's age and uniform are different - in the Hamilton picture, he appears to be wearing the rank of SA Oberführer - the resemblance was close enough to identify him.

Fred S. Wolfe, who wrote about this postcard in the October 1973 issue of *The American Philatelist* said: "This writer has been trying for more than a year to identify this man and his background without success. Schlee (sic) would be the only clue. Who has the answer or seems to recognize this man?" Lucky for us today, both Scheel and Schieber are identified in declassified British records.

On the British propaganda postcard, Dr. Scheel is shown in uniform, in half-left profile. He wears the rank of Gaulieter.

Before the war, Scheel (1901-1979) was a physician, but in 1940 he became police chief in Alsace. During 1941-1942, he was senior SS and Police Leader WK. XVIII. In 1941, he was appointed Gaulieter of Salzburg, a post he retained until 1945. Given the rank of SS Obergruppenführer on August 1, 1944, Scheel also held the title of "Reichsstudentenführer" (Leader of the Reich Students League). Although he was little known outside of Germany, Scheel was among those named by Hitler to lead Germany after his death. On a list of appointments prepared by the Führer just prior to his suicide, Scheel was designated minister of culture. After the war, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Dr. Scheel later returned to medical practice.

The Scheel cards are found both addressed and unaddressed. The "Drucksache" version was disseminated by balloon on 8 January 1944. The "Feldpost" version was dropped from 25 December 1943 to 31 December 1943.

The propaganda message on both of the "This German man is free" postcards is:

This German man is free.

From front and work duty through OKW [German High Command] secret memoranda Az 1k35 AHA/Ag/E (Vb) Nr. 834/40 from April 11, 1940, because he is a professional party employee and accordingly is under his party official office Uk.

From housing others, especially victims of bombing, through the home routing rule of 17.2.43, by which his residence, and the homes of other higher-ups, civil service men and employees in active party service, and all NSDAP houses, are exempted from confiscation of lodgings.

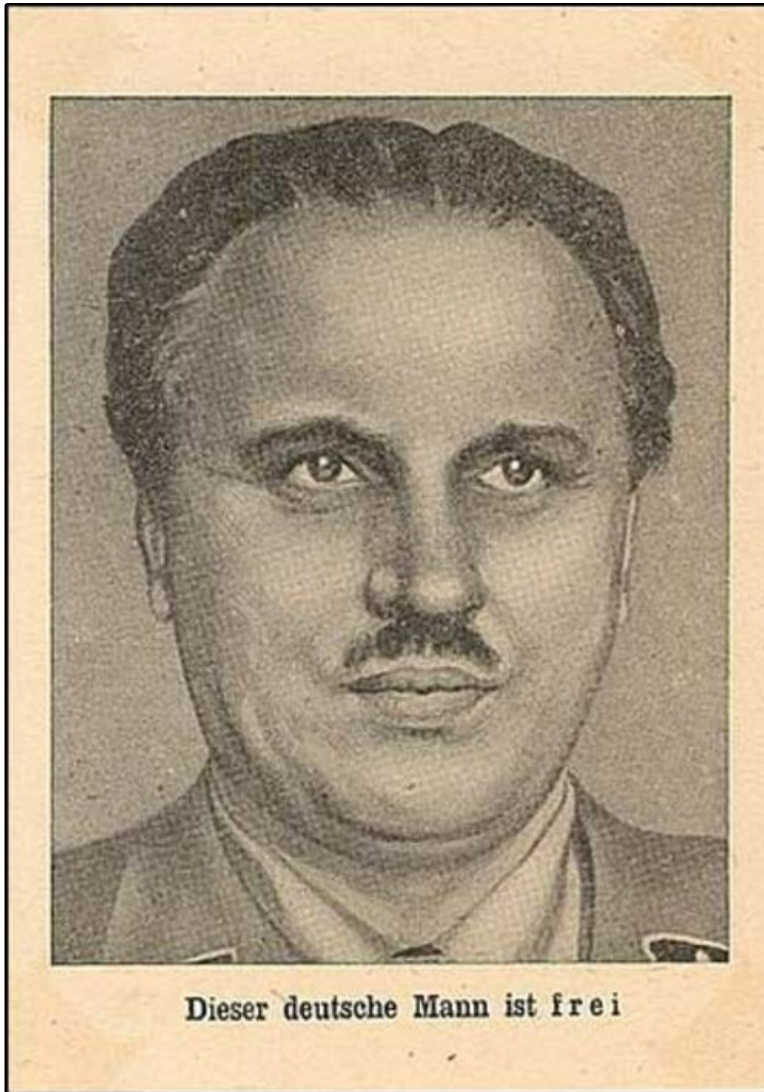
From food rationing through the ruling of Diplomatic Food provisions of 26.1.43 R.E.M. 1,237/43, which frees him, as a political leader, from rationing cards, and which because of his representational duties entitles him to 4 to 8 times more than the normal amount of rations.

From a needed purchase permit for household and useful articles because he is a qualified shopper of the SS German armaments works in which K-Z [concentration camp] prisoners can manufacture everything for him that the ordinary comrade is unable to obtain in stores.

From all the suffering and needs of the German people from which he is sheltered because of his connections, even from bombings, since he receives gasoline to drive home from the city each night to his country estate.

This man is free from any togetherness with the German people.

A copy of the Scheel postcard was dropped over Sint-Kruis, north of Ghent, Belgium. Other Scheel postcards were dropped in the neighborhood of Eupen-Malmedy, in the eastern part of Belgium, near the German border. Still other specimens of the Scheel card were found in the Netherlands, scattered around Het Heeske, a very small village near Maasbree. A boy who was bicycling through the countryside noticed a balloon about two meters wide blowing into some bushes. As he watched it, the balloon discharged a group of leaflets, rose slightly, and exploded. When the area was searched, several hundred Scheel postcards were found on the ground.



Dieser deutsche Mann ist frei

von Front- und Arbeitsgesetz durch OKW. Geheim-Verfügung Az. 1135 AHA/As/E (Vb) Nr. 834/40 geb. v. 11. April 1940, nach der er als hauptberuflicher Parteigestellter auf Antrag seiner Parteidienststelle UH zu stellen ist —

von Einverfügungen, insbesondere von Bombengeschädigten durch die Wohnraumbekunftsverordnung v. 17.2.43, die seine Residenz, ebenso wie die Wohnungen aller anderen Hoheltträger, Beamten und Angestellten im aktiven Parteidienst und alle NSDAP-Gebäude von Wohnbeschlagnahme und Zwangsvermietungen ausstritt —

von der Lebensmittelrationierung durch die Verordnung über diplomatische Verpflegung vom 26.1.43, R.E.M. 1. 237/43, die ihn als politischen Führer aus Repräsentationsgründen vom Kartenzwang befreit und ihm auf Grund seines Berechtigungsscheins das 4-fache der Normalrationen sichert —

von Bezugsersatzung und Mangel an Haushalt- und Bedarfartikeln als eingetragener Bezieher der 15-Deutschen Ausrüstungswerte, in denen b.z. Gefangene ihm alles anfertigen, was der gewöhnliche Volksgenosse im Laden nicht mehr kaufen kann —


von allen Sorgen und Nöten des Deutschen Volkes, vor denen ihn seine Beziehungen schützen, schlat von der Bombenot, denn er bekommt den Kraftstoff, um jeden Abend aus der Stadt auf seinen bombensicheren Landsitz zu fahren.

Dieser Mensch ist frei
frei
von jeder Zusammengehörigkeit mit dem Deutschen Volke.

Drucksache

Herrn
B. Barkels

Haus...
Feldpost





H.899 / Q.49, This German Man Is Free - Dr. Schieber Drucksache

The second of these postcards, virtually identical to the Scheel card in every way except for the portrait, shows a full-face view of Nazi leader Dr. Walter Schieber. The Michel Deutschland-Spezial Catalogue once identified the man as Ludwig Schieber. I have no references on Ludwig, but Walter Schieber was Chief of Armaments Deliveries in the Reich Ministry for Armaments and War Production, Head of the Central Office for Generators, and Deputy Head of the Reich Organization "Industry." Walter Schieber held the rank of SS Brigadeführer. This same photo of Schieber appears twice in the Nachrichten für die Truppe, in the issues of 11 October 11 1944, and 22 February 1945.

It is possible that Schieber was selected because the German word "Schieber" can be translated as "profiteer." That is exactly the kind of pun that Delmer would have enjoyed. In fact, it is now known that the Gestapo was investigating him for being less than enthusiastic about the war effort. In the book, Inside the Third Reich (The MacMillan Co.: New York, 1970), Albert Speer wrote, "Hitler hinted that Himmler suspected Schieber, my department head, of planning to flee Germany." That suspicion might have been politically motivated. Speer later mentions that Schieber complained about the SS stealing 50,000 of his armaments workers and using them to further its own economic interests. All of this would have been grist for Delmer's mill.

The "Drucksache" version was dropped between 5 June 1944 and 19 March 1945. The "Feldpost" version was dropped by balloon on 28 February, 16 March, and 19 March 1945.

The Royal Air Force dropped the Schieber postcard over Choisy-le-Roi, just south of Paris, France. This card bears the notation, "dropped, Danlager des FBA6," but the meaning of this comment is unknown. It could be a map reference or, perhaps, a code name of some sort.

Early in 1987, a strange variety of this card was offered at a postcard auction in New Jersey with the comment, "not a postcard." This item had the Schieber portrait on front, but the back was blank. It is impossible to say if this was a very rare proof of the British forgery or a reproduction made after the war.

KRIEGSARTIKEL FÜR DAS DEUTSCHE VOLK

Artikel

I

Alles kann in diesem Kriege möglich sein,
nur nicht, dass die Parteiführer jemals
ihre Vorrechte aufgeben.

Diese Vorrechte sind u.a.:

1. Die Freistellung von Parteibeamten von der Wohnraumlenkungsverordnung vom 27.2.43. Sie sind von der Pflicht befreit, Flüchtlinge in ihren Wohnungen aufzunehmen.
2. Die Freistellung von Parteiführern vom Frontdienst. Sie werden durch OKW-Verfügungen vom 26.10.39 und 11.4.40 uk-gestellt, oder machen 3 bis 6 Monate Scheineinsatz in der Etappe.
3. Die Sonderverpflegung der Parteiführer durch Zubilligung marktfreier Lebensmittel für Repräsentationszwecke, die ihnen 3 bis 4 mal soviel Lebensmittel zusichert wie gewöhnlichen Karteninhabern.
4. Die Freistellung der Parteiführer von der ordentlichen Gerichtsbarkeit und ihre Unterstellung unter die Sondergerichte der Partei, die ihnen selbst bei schweren Vergehen Straffreiheit zusichern.



Absender: _____

Postkarte

H.1362 / Q.73, Articles of War for the German People

The fifth propaganda postcard is different from the four discussed above in that it has no picture. It is printed on grey cardboard. The address side of the card bears only two words, "Absender" with three lines at the upper left, and "Postkarte" with four lines for addressee information at the right.

The other side of the card is all text. Under the title, "Articles of War for the German People: Article I," are, an introduction and four numbered paragraphs that reiterate, in condensed form, the arguments from the previous cards in relationship to the privileges of high NSDAP party members:

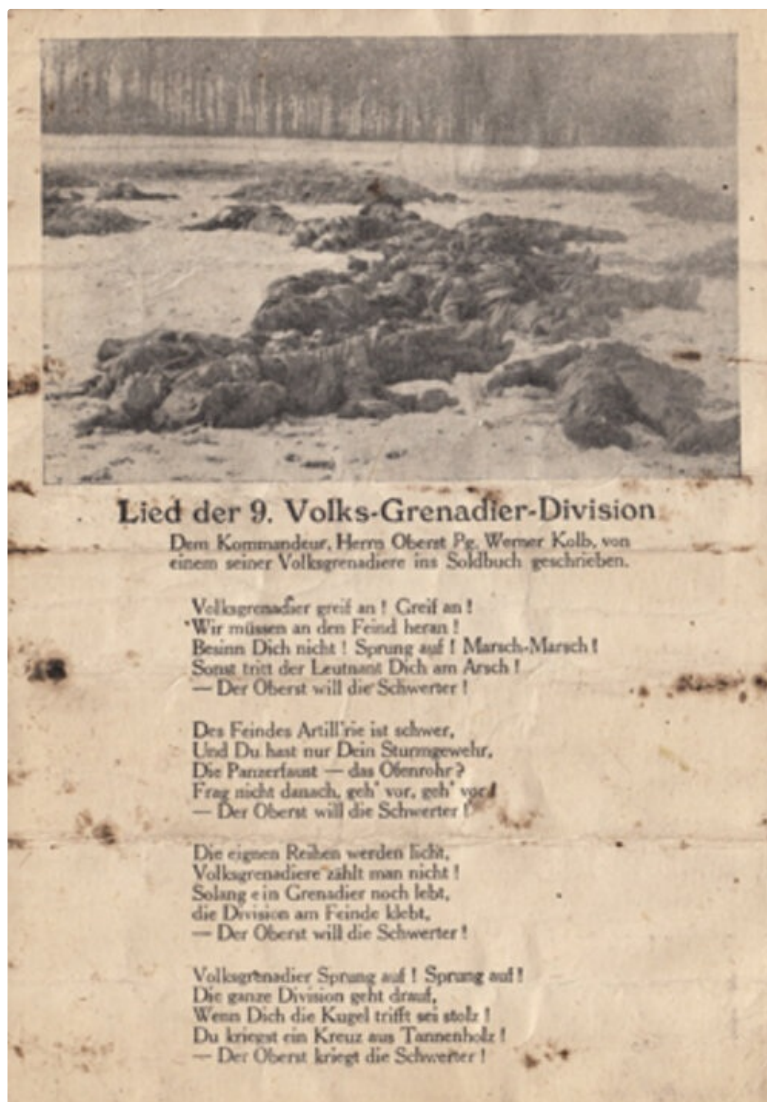
Anything is possible in this war. The only thing that is impossible is that the Party leaders will give up their privileges. These privileges, among others, are:

1. The exemption of Party officials from the "Wohnraumlenkungsverordnung" regulations governing residential living space dated 27.2.43. They are not required to take refugees into their homes.
2. The exemption of Party officials from service at the front. They are declared "indispensable" and relieved of this duty by Army Headquarters regulations dated 26.10.39 and 11.4.40, or they serve 3 to 6 months of pseudo-service in the rear areas.
3. The special food privileges of Party leaders, which provide them with ration coupons free for representational purposes. This gives them 3 to 4 times as much food as the average ration card user.
4. The exemption of Party leaders of their civil and legal responsibilities and subordinating them to special Party courts which grants them immunity even in cases of the most severe crimes.

A German eagle and a swastika appear below the text.

This card is Delmer's answer to a 1943 German Propaganda Ministry brochure entitled "30 Kriegartikel für das deutsche Volk" ("30 articles of war for the German people"). Delmer also forged the actual brochure.

There are few reports of the dissemination of these propaganda postcards. They were airdropped by the Royal Air Force on 15 April 1945, over Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. A second drop was made in the vicinity of Ouderkerk on the Amstel, close to Amsterdam. The postcards were dropped with bundles of the British-produced black propaganda newspaper, Nachrichten für die Truppe coded T362. One is filed in the Rijks Instituut voor Oorlogs Documentatie in The Netherlands. Perhaps two other specimens are in private collections.



translation actually says, "The Colonel wants his medal!" It is clear that this was the intended meaning of the text. Delmer's mentioned the song in his Nachrichten für die Truppe, 1 March 1945.

The address side is similar to that of a genuine German postcard. The "MGH" monogram imprint at the upper right, in the area where the stamp would be placed, signifies "Martin Groot of Hamburg," who distributed various commemorative cards bearing his distinctive monogram. The British identified the printing firm as Robert Franke of Hamburg. There was a German printer by that name in Hamburg at the time. Curiously, the Russians also forged German "MGH" postcards, but they placed no printer's name on their imitations.

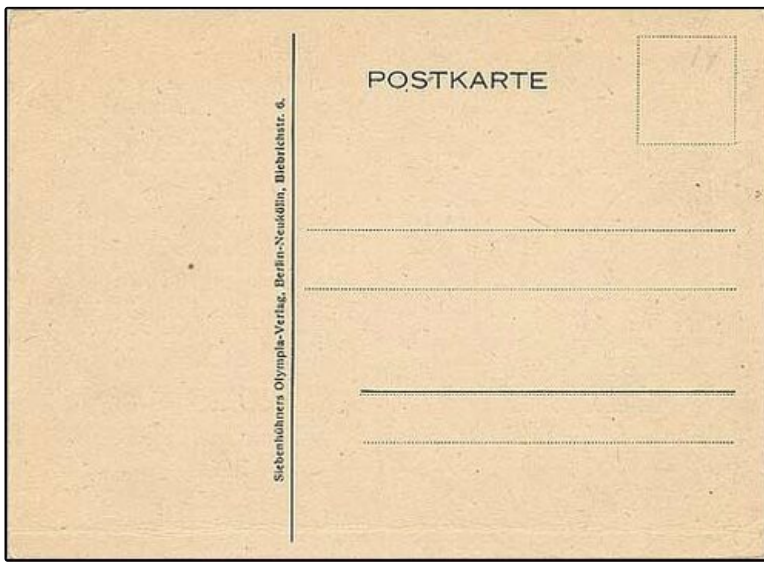
The 9th People's Grenadiers, originally the German 9th Infantry Division, fought in France in 1940 as part of Panzer Group von Kleist, then spent 1941-1944 in the south of Russia. In August 1944, the division was cut off and almost wiped out at Kishiniov in the Ukraine near the Romanian border. The men who survived were then quartered in the Ossboel-Esbjerg area of Denmark, where the division was reinforced, retrained, and renamed the 9th Volksgrenadier Division in October 1944.

The concept of the new name is interesting. In late 1944, Hitler decreed that decimated divisions, disbanded units, and reserves be combined to form new divisions, and that they be given the honorable name of "Volksgrenadier," a title previously awarded only to units that had performed heroically in battle. It was hoped that this historical title would invoke instant "esprit de corps" in the members of the new units. However, these divisions were smaller (about 8,000 men) and not so well armed or trained as those sent into battle earlier in the war. Although they fought bravely, they won few battles for the Führer.

The "new" 9th Division took part in the Ardennes offensive, where it was mauled once again. In 1945, it was headquartered in Idar-Oberstein in southwest Germany, approximately fifty kilometers east of the Luxembourg border. The last battle the weakened division fought was in defense of Nuremberg. After the city was taken, surviving members of the 9th surrendered to the Allies.

The RAF airdropped the propaganda postcards showing dead Grenadiers in the Ardennes over the Netherlands in January and February 1945, in the neighborhood of Woold, a small village south of Winterswijk, about two-and-a-half kilometers from the Dutch-German border. They were also disseminated in Germany around Dorsten, approximately thirty kilometers south-southeast of Winterswijk and north of the industrial Ruhr area. The cards were dropped with bundles of Nachrichten für die Truppe at least once. One comment in a British dissemination logs states that 123,500 copies were dropped.





H.765 / Q.43, What's Going On in Germany?

The seventh and final British propaganda postcard is a parody of a genuine German card produced by Olympia-Verlag in Berlin in the early 1920s.

Both cards are entitled, "What's going on in Germany?" On both, a list of fifty nouns is printed beside an equal number of adjectives that all end with the letters, "los." This syllable generally can be translated as "without" or "less"; it reverses the meaning of a word.



The Genuine "What's Going On in Germany?" Postcard

The genuine card describes the hopelessness of the German people during the inflationary period after World War I and has such combinations as: The Reich / Defenseless, Taxes / Endless, War bonds / Valueless, 90 Percent of the people / Without means, Inflation / Aimless, Nights / Sleepless, Business / Terrible, Honest people / Without

funds, Tax officials / Merciless, People / Godless, Young girls / Pantyless.

Some of the satirical combinations on the British parody postcard are: The People / Defenseless, The Situation / Terrible, Buildings / Without windows, Nights / Without sleep, Leadership / Without scruples, Propaganda / Beyond measure, The mark / Without value, The middle class / Without existence, Optimism / Without reason, Mass graves / Without cost, The best generals / Without commands, Millions / Without housing, Education / Godless, Radio / Shameless, Mussolini / Gone without fanfare, The present / Hopeless, The Nazi Party / Helpless, The war / Senseless, Politics / Aimless, Ribbentrop / Without cheer, Adolph / Without sanity, The present / Without future, Speeches by the Führer / Endless.

Across the bottom of the parody card is a line that reads: "When are we finally going to get rid of all this mess?"

The address side bears the word "Postkarte" and a vertical imprint by the printer, "Olympia-Verlag." There are also lines to indicate where the address and the stamp are to be placed.

Erik Gjems-Onstad mentions postcard H.765 in *Psykologisk Krigføring I Norge* (Psychological Warfare in Norway), by (Sollia Forlag: Oslo, 1981). Gjems-Onstad stated that 350 of the "What is going on in Germany" postcards were sent into Norway through Stockholm in March 1945. It is known that they were also dropped over Diepenveen, in the center of the Netherlands, on the night of 12 June 1944.

None of the seven British propaganda postcards were legitimately mailed during World War II. Some cards have been found with postmarks, but most experts agree that these cancellations were forged after the war, to defraud collectors.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Although I have discussed the seven black propaganda postcards presently disseminated by air, additional varieties are known to exist. These cards are far rarer and many exist only in archives or official records. In some cases there is no record of their dissemination.

There is, for example, a leaflet in the form of a folded Feldpost postal stationery card, with the message inside entitled, "Heil Himmler." Rektor Palle Schmidt, a Danish scholar and collector, first showed this item to me. The text consists of a lengthy, erudite, and closely reasoned argument, in German, against Himmler and the SS. It purports to be directed from an officer in the Wehrmacht to other thoughtful military officers.

On the front of this propaganda letter-sheet is a famous poem by Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) that was meant to prepare readers to take the actions called for in the longer message on the inside of the leaflet. It reads:

You must believe in Germany's future, and the resurrection of your people.

Don't let them rob you of this belief in spite of everything that has happened.

You shall act as if the fate of things German depended upon you and your actions alone, and the responsibility was yours.

This propaganda forgery was assigned PWE code No. H.856. In *Psykologisk Krigføring I Norge*, author Gjems-Onstad states that 5,750 of these leaflets were sent into Norway through Stockholm in March 1945.

Palle Schmidt mentions another letter sheet-leaflet in his original, personally printed manuscript, *Sort Propaganda fra Anden Verdenskrig*, dated 6 May 1980. With "Feldpost" printed in capital letters and a place for an address, this leaflet had a long propaganda

message asking German troops to defect to neutral countries. Some of the text states:

Comrades, A single step leads from war to peace - the step across the border into a neutral country. Everyone who has any sense and can make a decision can simply "go next door," and then the war is over for him.

The message then goes on to discuss conditions for defectors in Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, and Turkey. For instance, the reader is told that nobody will be returned to Germany from Sweden, where there is a special camp, Schloss Alingsass (Comradeship Camp Castle Alingsass), where refugees can move about freely. Names can be kept secret, and families in Germany can be notified through private organizations. Refugees may or may not work, as they wish. Food and clothing are first class and free to the refugee.

If he prefers Switzerland, the German reader is told that he may learn a trade through vocational courses or get a college education free of charge.

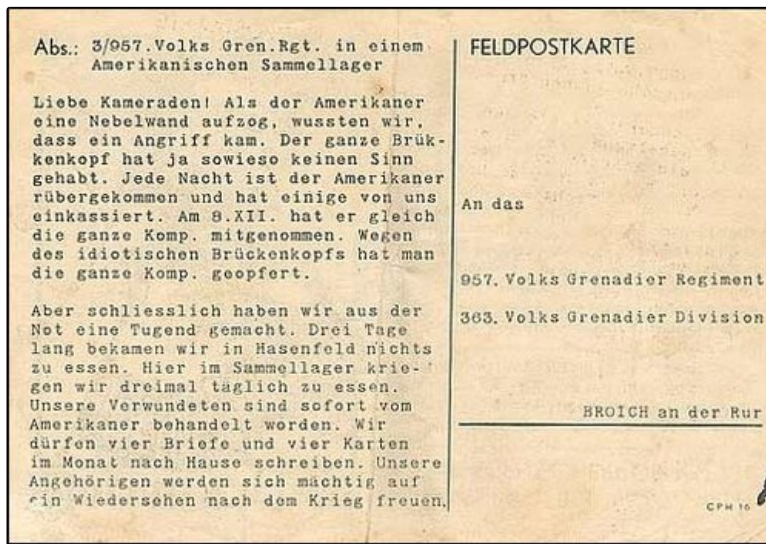
Spain and Turkey are not so highly rated, and are recommended mainly for troops from the peripheral areas of Germany, the annexed or occupied countries.

The message concludes:

Everybody who has taken this step from war to peace has had the same experience. It takes a while to sink in. There is no war in the neutral countries. The life you can lead is a normal one. You can interest yourself in a civilian job or in education. It takes a while for you to understand how unnatural and senseless life in Germany has been. You get this unbelievable feeling of liberation. Thousands have already made this decision - thousands who have taken this one short step from war to peace.

This leaflet-letter sheet bears the British code No. H.934.





CPH16, The Florian Geyer Postcard

There is one other black propaganda "Feldpostkarte" that can be identified as being of Allied origin. The Psychological Warfare Division (PWD) of Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), produced this card.

Generally speaking, PWD was the only propaganda agency with military status. Although it was somewhat dominated by the Americans, the division's chain of command was set up in such a way as to share leadership responsibilities between the United States and Great Britain. I will place this leaflet-postcard in this article although a strong argument could be made that it was really American in origin.

One mobile psychological warfare team made up of the 2nd and 5th Companies of PWD/SHAEF worked with the U.S. 9th Army. Starting in October 1944 the team produced approximately forty tactical leaflets coded "CPH." The letters might mean "Command Propaganda Headquarters," but there is no evidence of this at present. Tactical propaganda is directed at specific audiences, usually named, and is prepared and executed in support of localized combat operations. A request for an immediate surrender addressed to a surrounded enemy unit is a typical example of such a leaflet. The PWD leaflets were delivered by artillery, grenade, and, on occasion, aircraft. Initially, they were printed in a shop in the Dutch town of Maastricht. Later, the CPH leaflets were produced by mobile printing presses in the field. Seven million leaflets were prepared by the unit's presses, another four million by local printing shops under contract. One leaflet was in the form of a postcard and coded CPH16.



Colonel Waldemar Baron von Gall (Photograph courtesy von Gall estate)

This card bears an imprinted "FELDPOSTKARTE" in block letters and is addressed to the 957th Volks Grenadier Regiment of the 363rd Volks Grenadier Division near Broich an der Rur. The card was purportedly sent by Company 3 of the 957th Volks Grenadier Regiment, then in an American collective camp. The text reads:

Dear Comrades! When the Americans put up a smoke screen, we knew that an attack was imminent. The whole bridgehead obviously made no sense anymore. The Americans came across every night and captured a few of us. On 8 December they took our whole company. Because of that idiotic bridgehead the whole company was sacrificed.

But at least we made a virtue of necessity. For three days we had nothing to eat at Hasenfeld. Here in the collection camp we eat three times daily. We are allowed to write four letters and four cards home monthly. Our relatives will be happy to see us after the war.

The back of the card depicts a woodcut illustration of a knight in medieval clothes holding a banner. The text above, below, and on the banner reads: "Florian Geyer / Colonel Florian Baron von Gall / only seems to be dead!" To the right of the caricature, in large block letters, are the words: "The men of the 3rd Company, 957th Volks Grenadier Regiment accuse you, Colonel." The text reads:

Why did we have to push our bicycles on the march from Ede to Titz? Why were the

officers allowed to ride their bicycles while you sat in your automobile?

Why could we not hold on to the Hasenfeld farm? Because you had taken no measures to blow up the Rur bridge. Do you honestly think that a foolish motto like "Florian Geyer only seems to be dead" can replace shot-up pneumatic boats?

You, Mr. Colonel, are guilty of the fact that the last German bridgehead between Linnich and Jülich west of the Rur near the Hasenfeld farm was taken by the Americans. You wanted to sacrifice us pointlessly to save the bridgehead. But we saved ourselves.

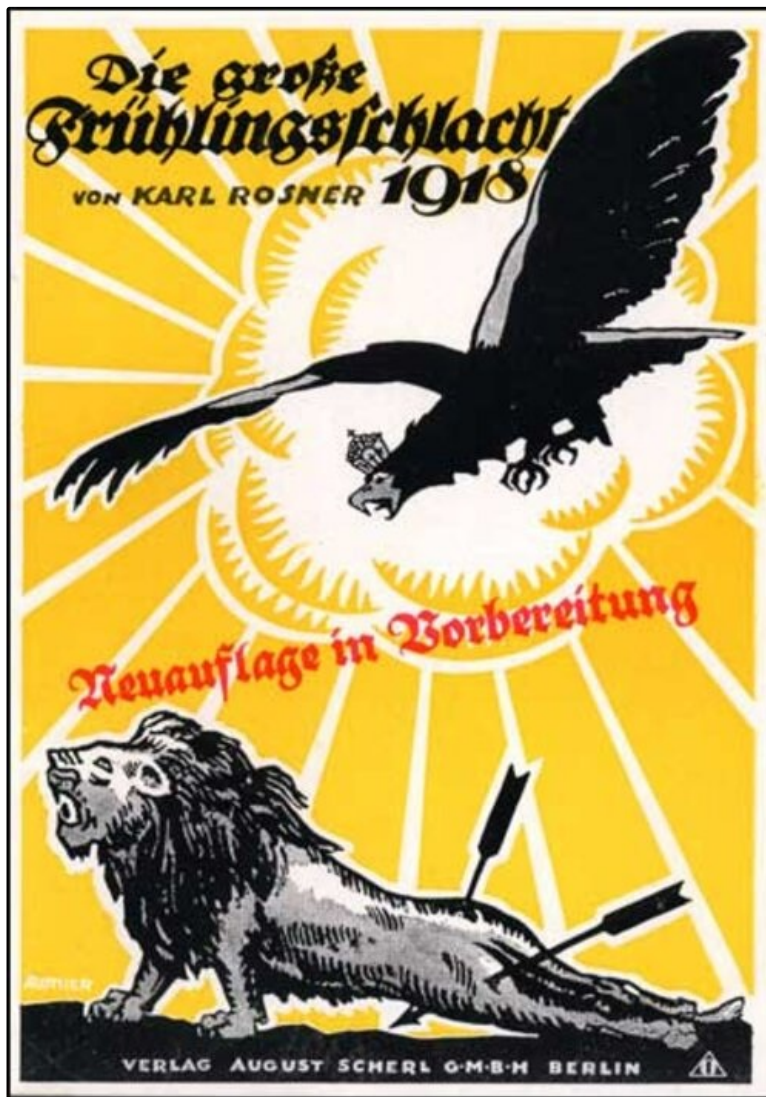
The accused colonel of the 957th People's Grenadier Regiment was Waldemar Freiherr von Gall (Freiherr = baron). We originally believed that his first name was Florian since that is what the propaganda postcard says, but it seems that the Americans were being sarcastic and calling the baron by the medieval knight's name. In 2011 his son Andreas Freiheer von Gall pointed out the discrepancy.

In Leaflets from the U.S. Armies for German Soldiers in Western Europe 1944-1945, author Klaus Kirchner adds that Colonel von Gall was captured by U.S. troops and interviewed on 7 March 1945. He stated that he had seen the leaflet and was amused by it. He thought that the leaflet text was a joke. The motto "Florian Geyer only seems to be dead" was designed to raise the morale of his men who were trapped in the Falaise Gap. In addition, he felt that no German soldier would expect his commanding officer to walk on foot with the infantry rather than ride in an automobile. He was sure that his men considered the American propaganda text foolish.

The 363rd Volks Grenadier Division was reorganized on 17 September 1944 from the 566th People's Grenadier Division and the survivors of the 363rd Infantry Division that escaped the defeat in the "Kessel von Falaise" in France. It fought the U.S. 101st Airborne Division near Nijmegen and, later, the British in the Arnhem area of Holland. It opposed the U.S. 9th Army in the Rur River area from November of 1944. As told in the text on the card, the Division was unable to hold the lines and lost the last bridgehead of this front sector on 8 December 1944 to the American troops. It was during this time that the CPH leaflet was prepared.

In *Geschichte der 363 Infanterie Division*, (History of the 363rd Infantry Division, Selbstverlag: Lubeck, 1977), author Helmut Gohlke illustrated CPH16 and stated that it was fired by artillery on and around the night of 10 December 1944. Being a tactical leaflet, the undated CPH-16 postcard was produced one or two days after the defeat. Kirchner mentions that 50 artillery rounds loaded with CPH16 were forwarded to the front on 17 December 1944.

Florian Geyer (1490-1525) was a Franconian knight. Although he was brought up among the wealthy and privileged, he was a follower of Martin Luther and a religious and social reformer. Geyer envisioned a new Reich, one free from the rule of the church and the princes. He was a captain and leader during the peasant's wars (Bauernkriege). In 1525, he joined the peasants in their fight against the aristocracy and the clergy. On 9 June 1525, a person in the service of his brother-in-law stabbed him to death in the town of Würzburg. His fight for a "better Reich" was obviously a shining example for the military leadership in the Third Reich since the 8th SS Cavalry Division was called "Florian Geyer".



H.216, The Bücherzettel card

There is another item that is not exactly a postcard, but was in the form of a card to be placed in the mail. It is a fake "Bücherzettel" (book order form). The card alleges to be an order form for the Karl Rosner book *Die große Frühlingschlacht 1918* (The great Spring battle of 1918). Karl Rosner was a German poet and writer who served as a war correspondent from 1915 to 1918 with the German 5th Army. The title of his book refers to the unsuccessful 1918 German offensive commanded by General Ludendorff.

On the right of the address side the British printed "Bücherzettel" with four dotted lines for an address and a dotted box for a stamp on top right. An order form appears at the left: "To the bookstore", with two lines for data, and "Herewith I order the book indicated overleaf." There is a place for the sender's address, "Town, Residence, Date" with two lines for data, and "Name, profession" two lines to fill in. All the horizontal lines are dotted.

A copy of the "Bücherzettel" card is in the Imperial War Museum in London. It is inscribed by hand "5000 delivered on 26.10.42".

Finally, I want to briefly mention a number of cards that have been found in the British War Museum and archives. Many of these were first mentioned by the British researchers Lee Richards, Dr. Rod Oakland, and Reggie Auckland. Some of this information has already been published in *The Falling Leaf*, Journal of the Psywar Society, in autumn 1997. In general, few illustrations of these cards are available since photographing of the album samples is only allowed for personal research and as long as no harm is done to the original leaflet. In those cases where a leaflet has been pasted down or stapled to a page, there is no way to see the back of the item. I will mention some of the more interesting cards. I have left out a number of known postcards, including several that were used against Italian Fascist forces.



H.9, England uns aushungern? Ach nee! postcard

H.9. Produced in late November 1941, depicting a fat girl holding a bottle of champagne and a pig (from a German 1916 New Year's Girl picture) with the text:

What, England starving us out? No way!

400 copies were delivered on 1 December 1941. It is hard to understand why this card was made unless you understand that this theme was used on German WWI propaganda to ridicule the effectiveness of the British blockade. Generally, the propaganda showed fat German soldiers to convince the world that the British was failing to starve them out. Then before WWII the same Germans printed propaganda showing starving children and telling the world that they must rearm because in WWI the British had starved their women and children. The Germans wanted it both ways. This card depicts a fat little child with the same text. The British seem to be reminding the Germans that they said the blockade did not work and cannot change their mind and story at this late date.



An original German card found by German specialist Wolfgang Baldus. The British made a rather accurate copy.



Wolfgang also found several of the original WWI German postcards that featured the text: What, England starving us out? Oh no. Those Germans do not look hungry!

H.10 (A, B, C). Three similar postcards. The first depicts a German soldier and a girl in a negligee drinking champagne. 400 copies delivered on 5 December 1941. The second depicts a German soldier and French girl toasting with champagne. 400 copies delivered on 5 December 1941. The third card depicts a German soldier and a girl in a negligee

embracing in a luxurious room. 400 copies delivered on 19 December 1941 The common headline is "Prosit Neujahr" (Happy New Year). The cards have inscriptions in German and French.

H.47 (A, B, C). Three song cards similar to the Volksgrenadier card. All designated "Kamplied Der R.W.A." The first card depicts a sailor and song lyrics. 700 copies delivered on 9 April 1942. The second card also depicts a sailor and song lyrics. 700 copies delivered on 9 April 1942. The third card depicts a laughing sailor playing an accordion and song lyrics. 700 copies delivered on 9 April 1942.

H.83. The poem "When the golden morning sun" is printed on the front of this postcard. Music is printed on the reverse. 10,000 copies delivered on 7 May 1942.

H.90. This card features a black and white photograph of Colonel Mölders, one of the most successful German pilots, who died in an accident on 22 December 1941. The card illustrates Mölders from his waist upwards, in uniform. 5,000 copies delivered on 23 May 1942.

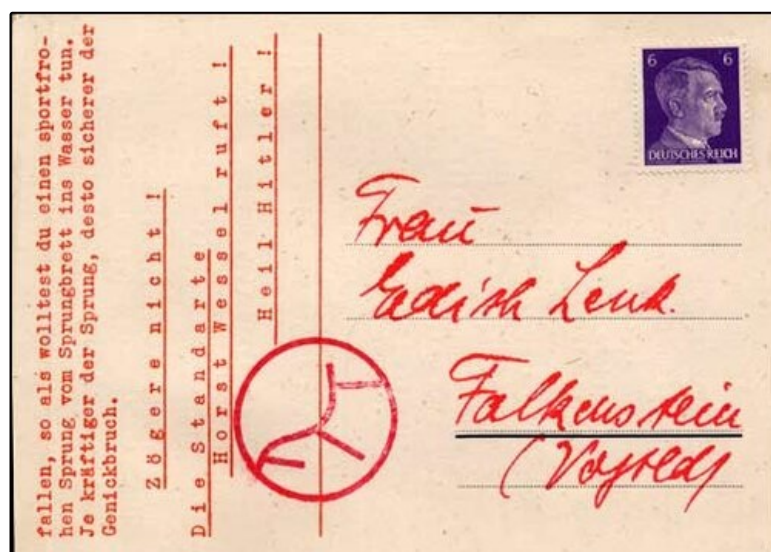
H.112. Postcard entitled "Inter-zone." 5,000 copies delivered to the French Section on 29 August 1942.

H.463. A 1943 montage photograph of Rudolf Hess and a woman talking with a British policeman on a city street.

H.789. A postcard showing a pornographic forged photograph of Adolf Hitler with his penis in hand. The text is a pun; starting with a speech made by Hitler on 8 November 1942 in Munich, "What we have, we hold on to..." 2,500 postcards were delivered on 13 March 1944. The operation was cancelled on the order of the Director General of the PWE.

H.808. A postcard similar to the pornographic card H.789 except that this propaganda piece was meant to be held to the light. The card depicted an original Grimm photograph of Hitler on a balcony. The text is "The sun brings it to light. Hold up to the light and the Führer's secret weapon is revealed." Once again, when the card is held to the light, Hitler is depicting holding his penis in his hand. What is particularly interesting is that the British depict Hitler's penis as circumcised, an interesting attack on a rabid anti-Semite. The operation was cancelled on the order of the Director General of the PWE.

H.967. A postcard depicting a sketch of Vienna from the Ringstrasse at the Parliament House, surmounted with a floral arrangement with a ribbon proclaiming "A Free Austria," the slogan of the anti-Fascist Austrian Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg. 2,000 copies were prepared for the SOE on 16 August 1944.



H.1321, Hanging Instructions postcard. This one is addressed to "Frau Edith Lenk, Falkenstein, Vogtld." Vogtland is an area in the easternmost part of Germany in Saxony/Sachsen.

H.1321 (and H.1380). This card, produced in March 1945, is entitled "Instructions for suicide by hanging." Seven suggestions are listed. The text is written in a ponderous and unusual style of German that required frequent use of a dictionary. The text starts on the back of the card (all text, no image) and is printed in red giving the impression of being typewritten.

"If you want to avoid useless suffering pay attention to the following instructions:

- 1.) Choose a strong cord, about the strength of a clothes-line. A thin one cuts and hurts.
- 2.) Tie the knot of the bow in a way that the bow will not tighten the cord. The cord must go unhindered through the bow.
- 3.) Grease the bow and cord well to achieve a sleek fastening of the noose.
- 4.) Avoid getting strangled before jumping, or you will have to struggle longer.
- 5.) Secure a full jump. This guarantees a break of the neck instead of getting strangled. Climb a chair or a table and fix the noose high enough (use a hook in the ceiling or wall), so that your feet will hang free after the jump.
- 6.) Put the neck through the noose. Make sure that the knot and bow are behind the neck, not in front of the throat.
- 7.) Jump courageously. If you want to be sure, then jump as high and bold as you can to fall down near your jumping location,"

The rest of the message appears on the front of the postcard, typed vertically at the left side.

"as if you wanted to make a joyful jump from the diving board into the water. The stronger the leap, the safer the break of the neck.

Don't hesitate!

The Horst Wessel standard is calling!

Hail Hitler!"

A second reprinted version of this card is coded H.1380. On the address side is a bright red hand-stamped figure of a stylized horse, the alleged symbol of the fictitious anti-Nazi "Red Horse" resistance movement. 1,500 copies of H.1321 were delivered on 1 March 1945 and another 1,000 copies on 10 April 1945. We note also that the card bears a 6-pfennig Hitler head stamp. It is unknown if this stamp is genuine or one of the British black forgeries of this denomination.

Kem Postcards

The British were not only producing postcards for use against the Germans. In the Near East they produced postcards in the hope of keeping the loyalty of Iran. A series of five postcards were printed in a booklet. They could be torn out and used to send messages through the mail.

The cards were modeled on a series of six posters that formed a modern-day retelling of scene from the Shahnameh (Book of Kings), the Iranian national epic of over 50,000 rhyming couplets recorded by the tenth-century poet Firdowsi. The Shahnameh contains couplets describing the rise and fall of the mythical tyrant Zakhak; these were used as the basis for a depiction of Hitler's downfall, brought about by the three Allied leaders

Churchill, Stalin, and Roosevelt. In the legend, a patriotic citizen, Kavah, protests Zahhak's usurpation of the throne of Feridun, the legitimate ruler of Persia.

The posters and postcards were drawn by the political cartoonist Kem (Kimon Evan Marengo 1907-1988), who during the war produced over 3,000 propaganda cartoons for the British Ministry of Information. Of the eight books he wrote and illustrated for the Ministry of Information, several appeared not only in European languages but in three forms of Arabic (classical, Moghrabi, and Ladino - the Hebrew script for Moroccan Jews) and Farsi.

Kem was also involved with the French and North African sections of the Political Warfare Executive (PWE), which throughout the war operated under cover of the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office, where he ran what was known as "the Kem Unit."

In January 1942 Dr Arthur Arberry, a member of the Arabic Committee and Editor of The New Age, wrote to Mojtabi Minovi, who became a Persian announcer for the BBC and a noted specialist on the Shahnameh. On January 4th, Minovi replied to a letter from Arberry:

I would like Zahak depicted like Hitler with Mussolini and Tojo (or some other Jap) as the two snakes growing from his shoulders. The first scene may show Hitler thus presented, with Iblis disguised as a young cook in front of him.

He outlined the verses from the Shahnameh that could be transposed into a modern propaganda tale leading to the ultimate fall of the tyrant.

Zahak tied and broken is loaded in a heap on a mare to be conducted to his dungeon on the Mount of Dama Vend: but that is for the future to see ... Although the verses I have suggested do not refer to the present day, I prefer them to any modern original verse, because they are Firdawsi's own verses, and they are known to every Persian. My people are accustomed to putting new interpretation to old and familiar quotations.

ابرکت سخاک جادو و دمار
یزت ویرآمد ز مردم دمار



نیم گشت آیین فرزندان
بارگنده شده کام روزگان
شده بر روی دست جانان
زینگی نویدی سخن بر زبان





چنان دید که کاخ شاهنشاهان
سب جنگی پدید آمدی ناکهان

خروشید و زد دست بر سر شاه
که شاه ستم کاوه داد خواه
ستم رایسان و کرانه بود
بمیدون ستم را بهمان بود





بندی بشتن دو دست و میان
که گمشاید آن بند بیل ثریان



KEM Postcards

Kem prepared the posters between March and October 1942. He prepared the booklet of six postcards to coincide with the Teheran Conference, held in Iran between 28 November and 2 December 1943, and to which was an official observer. During the conference, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin signed a Declaration on Iran that committed the three powers to Iran's independence. The story of the first five postcards is told in depth by Valerie Holman, "Kem's Cartoons in the Second World War," *History Today*, March 2002. In 2013, the British Library opened an exhibition entitled *Propaganda: Power and Persuasion*. They depicted a sixth and final card. We depict that card and also add some of the Library's comments on each card directly below the comment by Holman.

Hitler, embodying Zahhak, sits on a throne, with a blossoming tree in the background. Josef Goebbels, (Hitler's cook), causes serpents with the faces of Mussolini and Tojo to grow out of his shoulders.

Hitler exults in the conquest and punishment of his enemies. Hitler executes the innocent and tyrannizes the population.

Hitler anxiously dreams of the arrival of three saviors on horseback. Hitler's dream, in which the three warriors who will cause his demise appear – here depicted as Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt.

Kavah waves his leather flag before Hitler. Kavah represents the spirit of revolt, and his flag represents the triumph of good over evil. The tree is now in full leaf. Kavah, the symbol of liberation for the Iranian people, coming before Hitler and raising his blacksmith's apron as a banner of rebellion.

Kavah, holding aloft his flag, leads a weary horse bearing a bound and crownless Hitler, while the three-horsed saviors ride alongside. The arrival of the promised warriors, Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt. The trio is led by the symbol of Iranian national liberation, Kavah with his banner.

Hitler is nailed to Mt Damavand by the liberated Iranian people, with the Mussolini and Tojo snakes on his shoulders appearing rather deflated.

This ends our look at British black propaganda postcards. Readers who care to comment on any aspect of this article are encouraged to write the [author](#) at sgmbert@hotmail.com.