



IIA Wikipedia

# Cancellation Devices of the International Institute of Agriculture

## Rome, Italy - 1906-1946



IIA Cover Census

### Introduction

International efforts to publish information on agricultural crops was first suggested by a Hungarian immigrant fruit farmer, David Lubin of Sacramento, California in 1904. His plan found favor with Victor Emmanuel III, King of Italy. The International Institute of Agriculture was founded in Rome & 40 countries formalized the Institute in a 1906 treaty. It became an international clearing house for agricultural information and statistics. Mail from the Institute is only known beginning in 1910. Institute property was absorbed by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization in 1946.

### Exhibit Scope

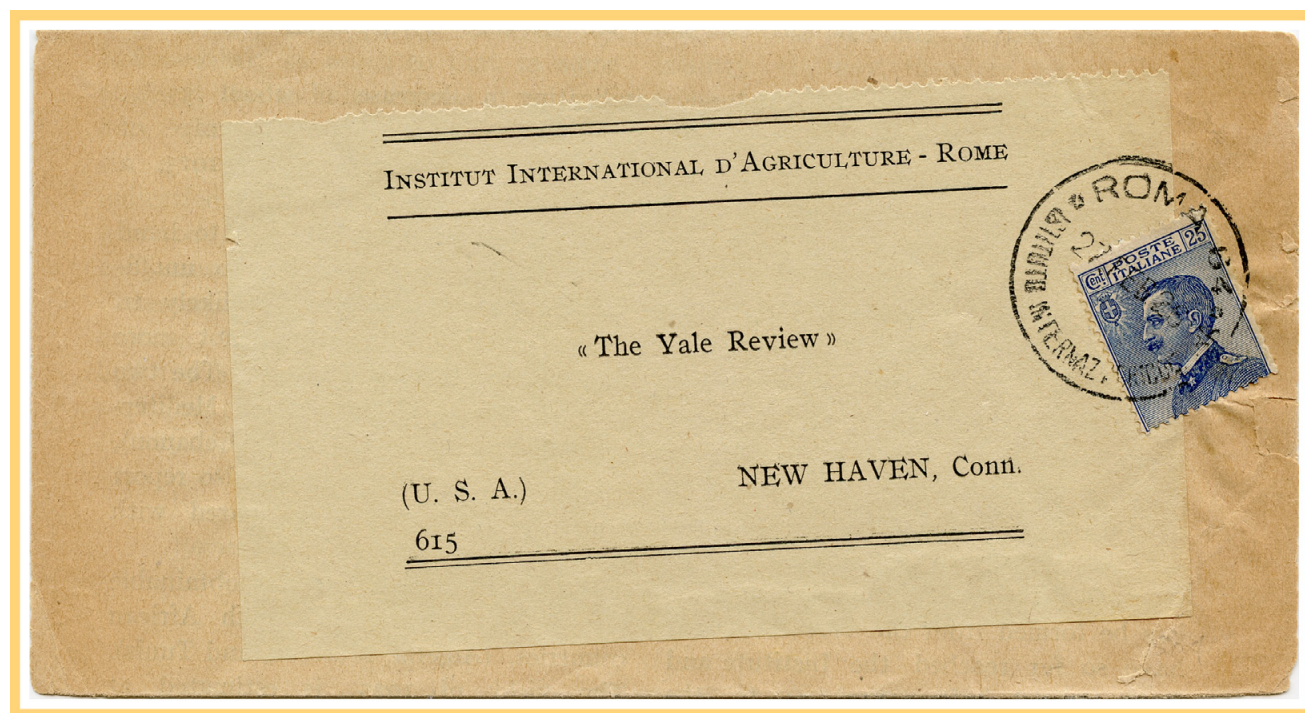
The International Institute of Agriculture in Rome used Italian postal services, but maintained an internal post office to track mailing expenses. This marcophily exhibit documents the cancellation devices used on mail from the Institute.

### Exhibit Development

The exhibit is organized in order of the earliest appearance recorded of each device. Official postal records of the organization are unknown.

### Exhibit Plan

- 0. Introduction  
(device types per Gaines U.N. catalog)
- 1. Barred Circle  
Type IIA.S1A  
Type IIA.S1B (discovery copy)
- 2. Plain Circle  
Type IIA.S2
- 3. Arced Circle  
Type IIA.S3A  
Type IIA.S3B  
Type IIA.S4



Example: Rome, Italy to New Haven, Conn., 27 February 1926, plain circle cancellation device type IIA.S2 25 centesimi, foreign printed matter rate <50 grams, Form 615 = 'Yale Review'

Although rates are not typically a requirement for a cancel study, they can assist in identifying the periods of use of cancel types when there is no published reference.

Year	Letter Rates (15/20g)			Printed Matter Rates (50g)		Postcard	
	Domestic	Local	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign
1905	15¢	5¢	25¢	2¢	5¢	10¢	10¢
1916	20¢	10¢	25¢	2¢	5¢	10¢	10¢
1919	25¢	15¢	25¢	5¢	5¢	15¢	10¢
1921	40¢	20¢	60¢	10¢	15¢	25¢	40¢
1925	60¢	30¢	1 Lire	10¢	20¢	40¢	60¢
1926	60¢	30¢	1.25 Lire	10¢	25¢	40¢	75¢
1927	50¢	25¢	1.25 Lire	10¢	25¢	30¢	75¢
1940	50¢	25¢	1.25 Lire	10¢	25¢	30¢	75¢
1946	4 Lire	3 Lire	15 Lire	1 Lire	1.50 Lire	3 Lire	3 Lire

*Items of special interest are matted on olive/sunflower colored matts.*

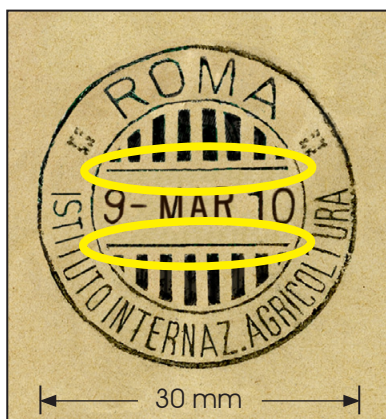


# 1. Barred Circle Device (IIA.S1A)

1910

Although mail on Institute business was likely sent between 1906 and 1910, no record of such has been found to date. A 30 mm circular date stamp device was used on official institute mail beginning in 1910.

Eight barred circle with horizontal bars (150% Enlargement)



(Gaines type IIA.S1A)

3 examples of this device are recorded of which 2 are in this exhibit



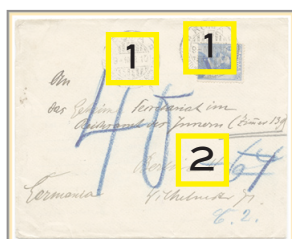
Cert - GEC 2930

Rome, Italy to Berlin, Germany, 9 March 1910, 25 centesimi, foreign letter rate < 15 grams  
Forwarded from Berlin districts '4' to '64' (manuscript) - backstamp 10 March 1910  
Forwarded from Berlin districts '64' to '40' (manuscript) - backstamp 11 March 1910  
Received Berlin district '40', 11 March 1910

**Earliest recorded example of official service mail and device type IIA.S1A**

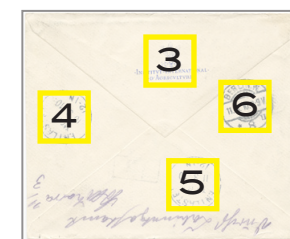
## Markings Key

Front



1. S1A dated handstamp
2. Redirection instructions blue crayon manuscript

Obverse



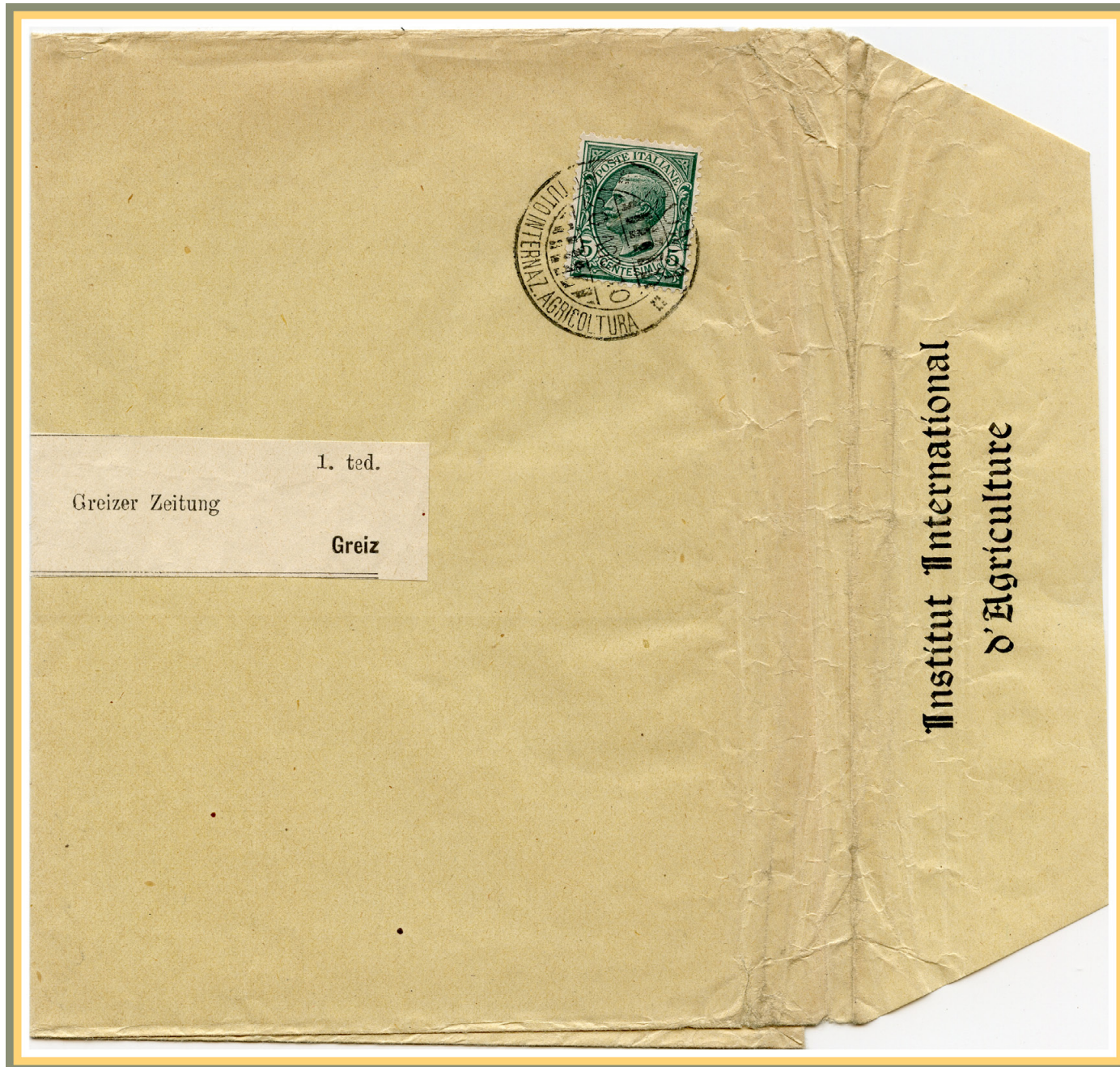
3. Institute logo
4. Transit marking
5. Transit marking
6. Berlin receiving mark



Reduced copy of obverse with Institute logo



Institute mail included not only first class letter mail, but also reports and other printed matter which was sent at the then prevailing postage rates. As printed information was the mainstay of mail originating from the Institute, pre-printed mailing labels were often used for mail to regular recipients such as newspapers.



Rome, Italy to Greiz, Germany, 20 August 1910, (device type IIA.S1A)  
5 centesimi, foreign printed matter rate <50 grams

*Earliest recorded example of  
printed matter mail*

*Examples of mail between 1910 and 1914 are unknown to date.*



## 1. Barred Circle Device (IIA.S1B)

1914 - 1918

Type IIA.S1B (without horizontal bars) was discovered by the exhibitor as a result of original research and is not listed in the Gaines United Nations catalog. After review of other collections and exhibits, eight additional copies were found dating between 1914 and 1918.



Eight barred circle  
without horizontal bars  
(150% Enlargement)



30 mm  
(Gaines type IIA.S1B)

Rome, Italy to Stockton, New York, 23 April 1917 (device type IIA.S1B)  
5 centesimi, foreign printed matter rate <50 grams

*Discovery copy*



# 1. Barred Circle Device (IIA.S1B)

1914 - 1918

Device type IIA.S1B was also discovered on letter mail (latest known use below).

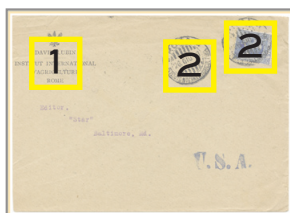


Rome, Italy to Baltimore, Maryland via Genoa, 28 June 1918, (device type IIA.S1B)  
50 centesimi, <30 grams double weight foreign letter rate

*Only recorded example of  
service mail from the office of David Lubin, Institute Founder*

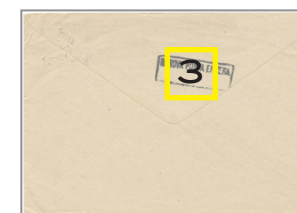
## Markings Key

Front



1. David Lubin cornercard
2. S1B dated handstamp

Obverse



3. Genoa transit marking  
(*Genova Posta Estera*)



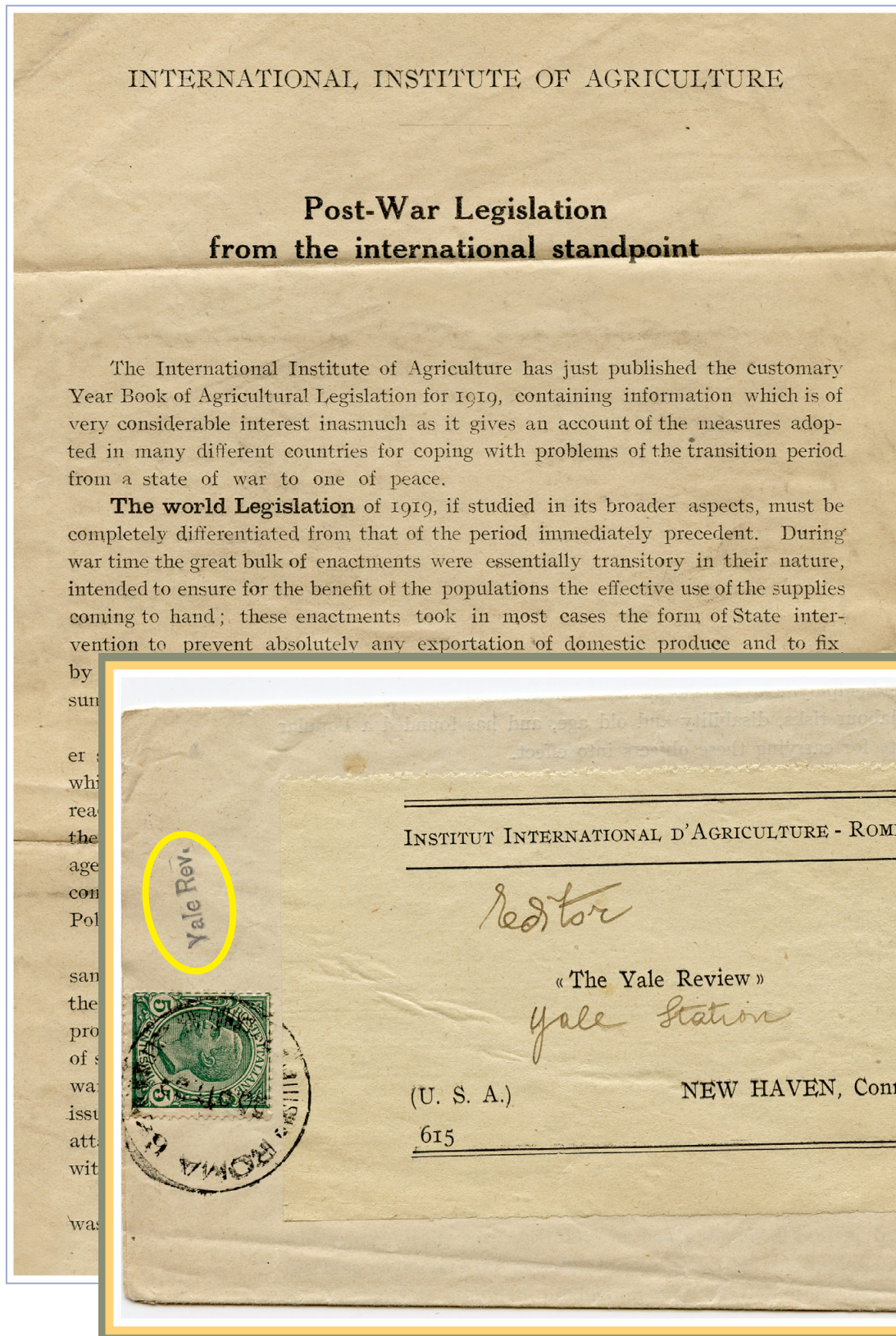
Reduced copy of obverse with Genoa transit marking



## 2. Plain Circle Device (IIA.S2)

1920 - 1928

Due to wear, a 32 mm single ring circular date stamp device replaced the 8 vertical bar device on official institute service mail.



Plain circle  
(150% Enlargement)



(Gaines type IIA.S2)

Timely news articles on folded letter sheets were sent to the news outlets of member states with the latest political and agricultural information.

Rome, Italy to New Haven, Connecticut, 20 October 1920, 5 centesimi, foreign printed matter rate <50 grams  
Received by Yale Review in New Haven ('Yale Rev.' single line auxiliary handstamp), Form 615 = 'Yale Review'

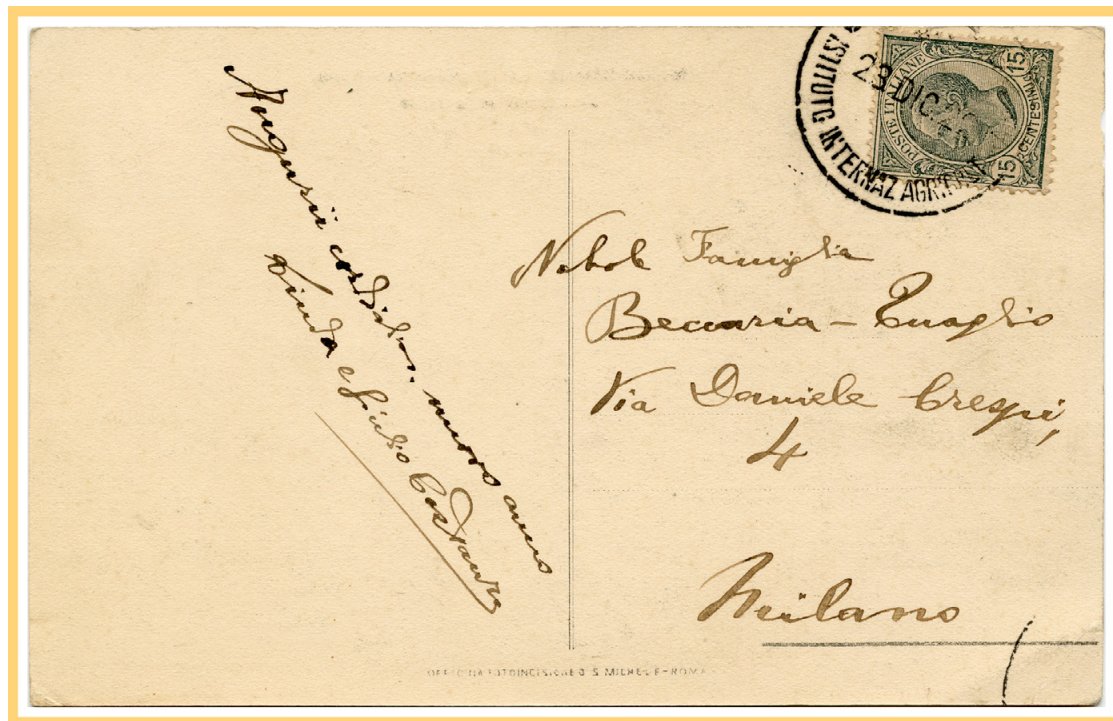
***Earliest recorded example of device type IIA.S2***



## 2. Plain Circle Device (IIA.S2) - Headquarters

1920 - 1928

The Institute operated from the Villa Umberto, named after King Umberto I, in Rome.

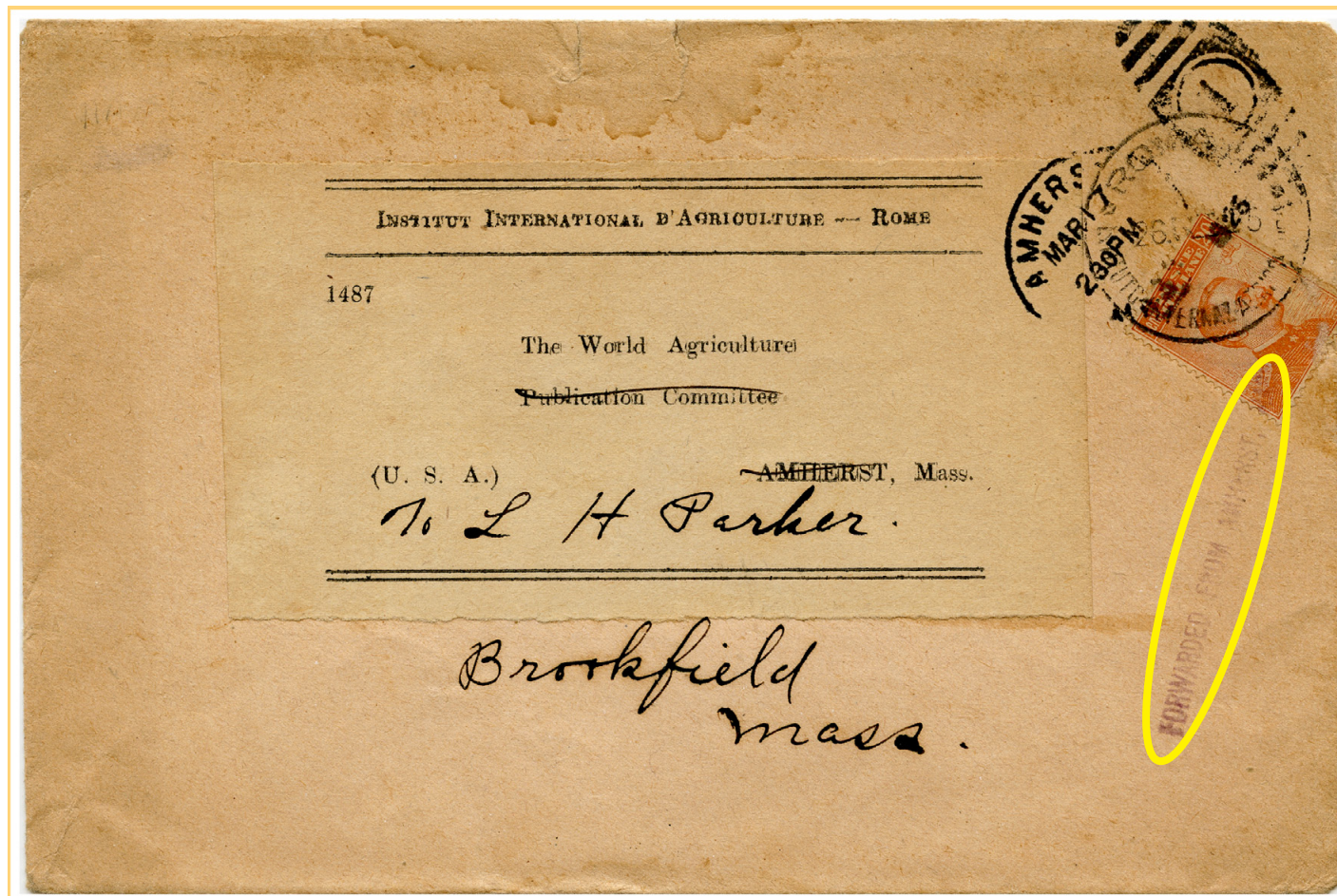


Villa Umberto



Official souvenir post card depicting the 'Balustrade et fontaine' garden view (reduced card front)

Rome to Milano, Italy  
23 December 1922  
15 centesimi, local post card rate



Rome, Italy to Amherst, Massachusetts, 26 February 1925, Received Amherst, 17 March and forwarded to Brookfield, Massachusetts, 20 centesimi, foreign printed matter rate <50 grams  
Single line auxiliary handstamp "FORWARDED FROM AMHERST, MASS."



The International Institute of Agriculture also hosted an independent organization with similar interests and goals, the International Society of Soil Sciences, founded in 1924. The organization's office was housed within the Villa Umberto and they were allowed to use the IIA postal facility.



Rome, Italy to Bucharest, Romania, 11 May 1926, 1.25 Lire, foreign letter rate <20 grams  
International Society of Soil Science stationery

*Only recorded example of mail from the  
International Society of Soil Science in Villa Umberto*

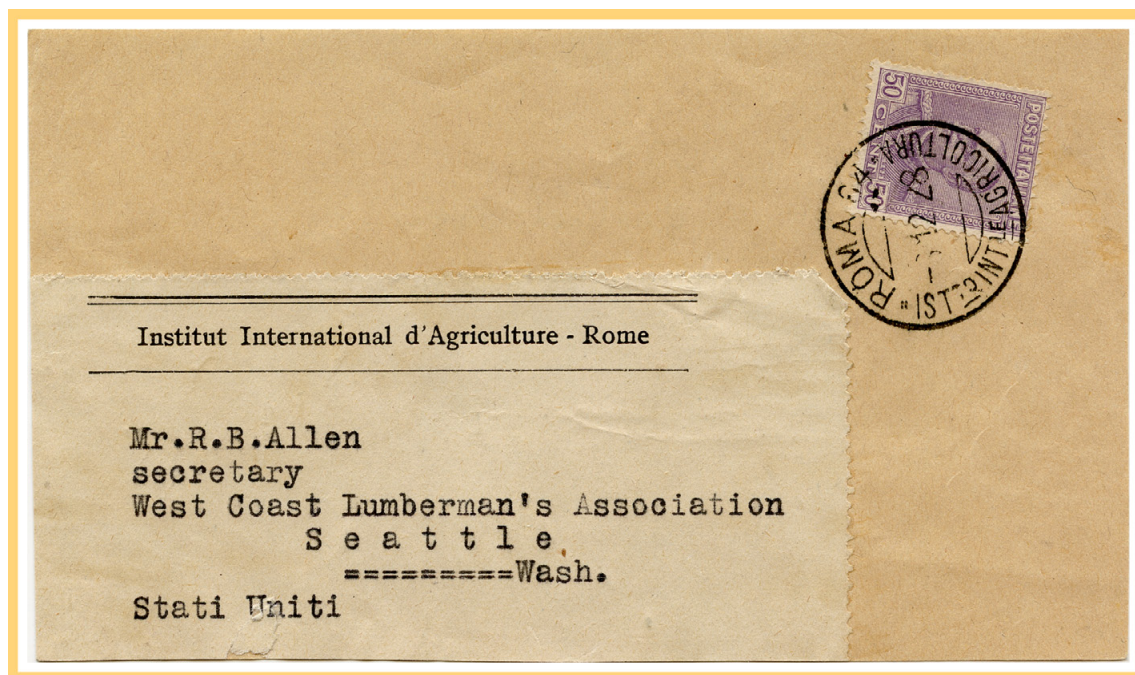
The purpose of the ISSS is to promote all branches of soil science and its applications, to promote contacts among scientists and other persons engaged in the study and the application of soil science; to stimulate scientific research and to further the application of such research.



### 3. Arced Circle Device (IIA.S3A)

1926 - 1943

A 26.5 mm circular date stamp device with arcs replaced the plain circle device on institute service mail.



Lower arc between  
'C' and 'O' on right

Arced circle  
(150% Enlargement)



(Gaines type IIA.S3A)

Rome to Seattle, Washington, 6 December 1928, 50 centesimi, foreign printed matter < 100 grams



Rome, Italy to Anvers, Belgium, 24 November 1937, 1.25 Lire, foreign letter rate < 20 grams, 1.50 Lire registration fee. Institute used standard Italian registration label with handstamp 'ROMA 64'



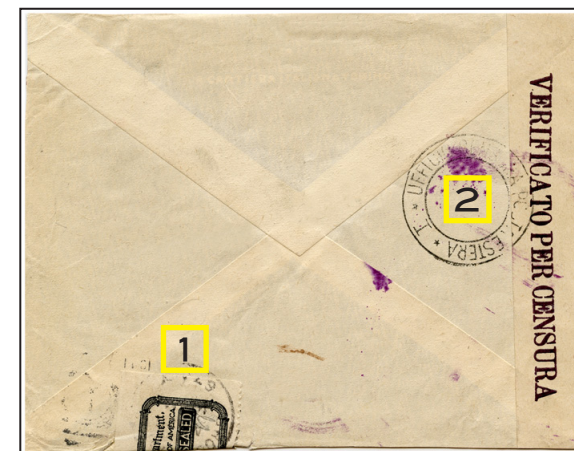
### 3. Arced Circle Device (IIA.S3A)

1926 - 1943



Rome, Italy to Brooklyn, New York  
27 June 1941  
1.25 Lire, foreign letter rate <20 grams  
Italian censor tape  
U.S. Post Office seal applied to damaged area

#### Markings Key



Cover obverse - reduced copy of markings  
1. U.S. Post Office seal with manuscript initials  
2. Italian censor official closure handstamp 'I'

Even during WWII, agricultural information continued to flow.

Rome, Italy to Bern, Switzerland  
12 July 1943  
1.25 Lire, foreign letter rate <20 grams  
Office of the Secretary General  
Uncensored

#### Markings Key



Cover obverse - reduced copy of markings  
1. Origin handstamp 'Employee'  
2. Approval handstamp 'Secretary General'





### 3. Arced Circle Device (IIA.S3B)

1926 - 1947

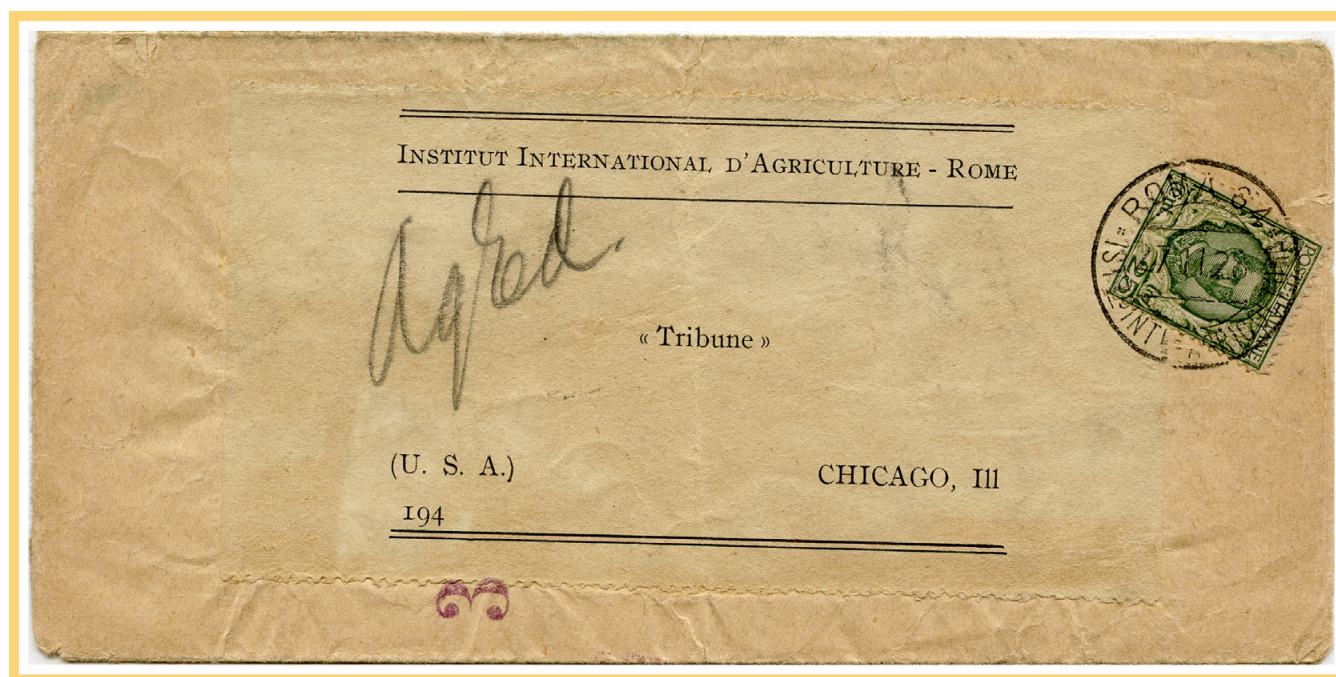
A second arced circle device was introduced approximately two months after the first and used simultaneously with the earlier arced device. This may indicate a greater quantity of mail demanded a second clerk to help process outgoing mail.

Lower arc between  
'O' and 'L' on right

Arced circle  
(150% Enlargement)



(Gaines type IIA.S3B)



Rome, Italy to Chicago, Illinois, 27 November 1928  
25 centesimi, foreign printed matter rate <50 grams  
Routed to the Agriculture Editor within the *Tribune* - 'AgEd' in manuscript  
Label form number 194 addressed to the Chicago '*Tribune*'



### 3. Arced Circle Device (IIA.S4)

1938 - 1947

The circular date stamp device with arcs design was modified to include text in the lower crescent enclosed in parenthesis.

BUREAU DE LA F.A.O. à ROME (handstamp overprint)



Lower arc text  
with 'Istituto'  
not abbreviated  
and enclosed  
in parenthesis

Arced circle  
(150% Enlargement)



(Gaines type IIA.S4)

Rome, Italy to Geneva, Switzerland, 7 March 1947, 15 Lire, foreign letter rate <20 grams  
'BUREAU DE LA F.A.O. à ROME' Single line auxiliary origin handstamp  
Villa Umberto 1 (in manuscript)

**5 recorded examples of  
overprinted IIA stationery used by FAO**

### **Epilogue - Demise of the International Institute of Agriculture**

The functions of the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) after World War II were assumed by the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Coordination with refugee relief was added and the focus of the IIA changed from reporting information to assisting with distribution and providing educational and advisory resources. IIA property transferred to the FAO in 1946 and it ceased operations. The organization's remaining stationery stock was overprinted by hand for FAO use (*see cover above*).