

**THE END IS NEAR!**

**LAVAR TAYLOR**

With the outbreak of World War I, Germany gradually began losing control of its ten colonies and its post offices abroad. Loss of formal political control over Germany's colonies and post offices abroad did not come until after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. Practical loss of control of its colonies and post offices abroad started almost immediately after the start of the War and continued over the next five years. The last German post office on colonial soil closed in 1917, and the last German post office abroad closed in 1919. This exhibit tells the story of Germany's loss of control of its colonies and post offices abroad, as reflected through postal history. It includes mail that was in transit to or from the colonies/post offices abroad as of the outbreak of the War. It also includes mail sent after the start of the War to or from the German colonies and post offices abroad, and mail sent within the German colonies after the start of the War, prior to the closing of the German post offices located there.

1. TOGO

The first fighting anywhere between English and German troops after the start of the War took place in Togo in early August, 1914. Before the month was out, British and French troops had defeated the Germans and took control of Togo. No civilian mail made its way into or out of Togo after the outbreak of the War but prior to the German surrender. The last mail left Togo on the ship Henny Woermann in late July. The ship took refuge in Brazil upon the outbreak of the War and returned to Germany in October of 1914. Internal mail from some German Post Offices in Togo was possible as late as the last week of August.

Cover postmarked Lome,  
Togo on July 27, 1914  
with the rare Lome "a"  
cancel. Carried on the  
Henny Woermann to  
Germany via Brazil.



## 2. SAMOA

Samoa was occupied by New Zealand troops on August 29, 1914. No shots were fired by the Germans when the New Zealanders arrived. International mail to and from Samoa is known after the start of the War until just prior to the German surrender.

International postal money order sent from Apia, Samoa on August 24, 1914 to Pago Pago, American Samoa. This was included with the last batch of international mail, carried on the ship Manua, leaving Samoa before Samoa was occupied by New Zealand troops.

**Abchnitt. Coupon.**  
Kann vom Empfänger abgetrennt werden.  
Peut être détaché de le destinataire.

**Deutschland. Allemagne.**  
**Auslandspostanweisung**  
**Mandat de Poste International**

über **25.-**  
de la somme de (arabische Ziffern)

**Amwandelkurs**  
(Cours de change)  
**Gezahlter Betrag**  
(Somme payée)  
\*) In Zahlungsbüchern  
zu führen.  
\*) scilicet par l'Office  
destinataire (Arr. art. 2)

**Postanweisungsbetrag.**  
Montant du mandat.  
**25**

**Name, Wohnort und Wohnung (Straße und Nr.) des Absenders**  
Designation de l'expéditeur

**Bestimmungsort**  
Lieu de destination  
**Pago-Pago**

**Wohnung (Straße und Nr.)**  
Adresse du destinataire

**Bestimmungsland**  
Pays de destination

**Gut für** **25** **gleich** **25** **M.** **25** **Pf.**  
Bon pour soit

**Interchrift des Annahmebeamten.**  
Signature de l'agent qui a dressé le mandat.  
**Möller**

**Postvermerk.**  
Indications de service.  
Aufgabe - Nr. **732**  
Numéro d'émission  
Aufgabe-Postanstalt  
Bureau expéditeur  
Tag der Einzahlung **24/8**  
Date d'émission

**Den** **24/8** **1914**  
Le

**A 24 (5. 07)**

## 3. GERMAN POST OFFICES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (TURKEY)

By agreement with the Ottoman Empire, all civilian German post offices in this country were closed on September 30, 1914. No other German post offices abroad or postal administrations in German colonies were closed voluntarily after the start of the War.



Cover sent from the German post office at Constantinople on September 17, 1914 to Brussels, Belgium, two weeks before all German post offices in the Ottoman Empire were closed, returned as undeliverable due to the War.



Registered Cover sent from the German post office at Constantinople to Paris, France on August 20, 1914, transited Brindisi on August 25, held by the Germans and marked undeliverable due to the War, somehow delivered into the hands of the French, censored by France and marked to be delivered by order of the French military, delivered January 5, 1916 per docketing on reverse.

#### 4. MARIANA ISLANDS

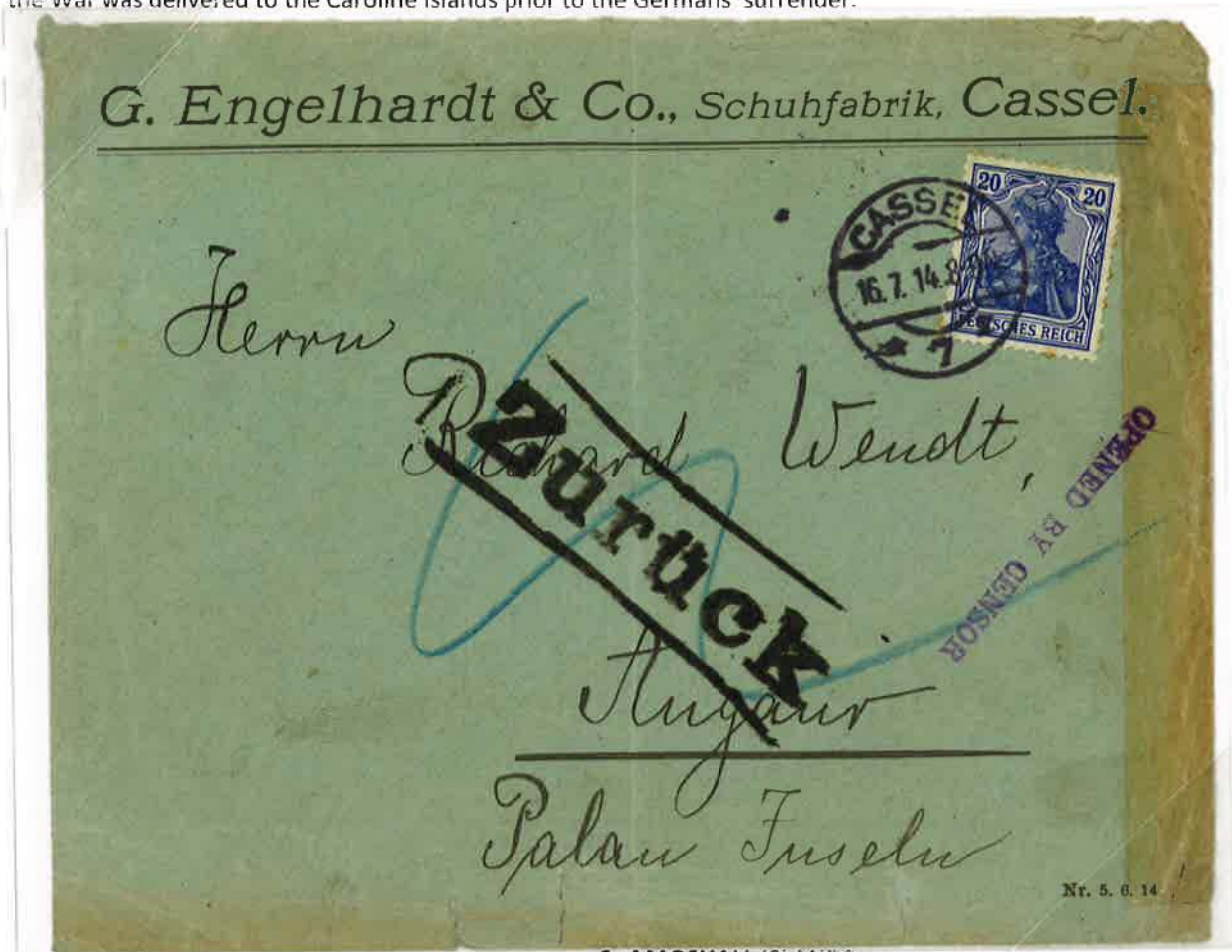
The Mariana Islands were occupied by the Japanese in September and October. No civilian mail sent after the start of the War was delivered to the Marianas prior to the closing of the sole German post office, located in Saipan. The last civilian mail steamer left Saipan in late June, 1914. The last civilian mail out of the Marianas left in early July, 1914 and was carried by German Naval ships. The German post office at Saipan closed on September 3, 1914.



Registered cover sent from Saipan on July 1, 1914 To Germany. Part of the last batch of civilian mail to leave the Marianas. Only a handful of covers from this batch are known. Carried by the SMS Gneisenau, transiting the Philippines on August 5, arriving in Germany on September 20, 1914.

5. CAROLINE ISLANDS

The Caroline Islands were occupied by Japanese troops in August through October of 1914. No civilian mail sent after the start of the War was delivered to the Caroline Islands prior to the Germans' surrender.

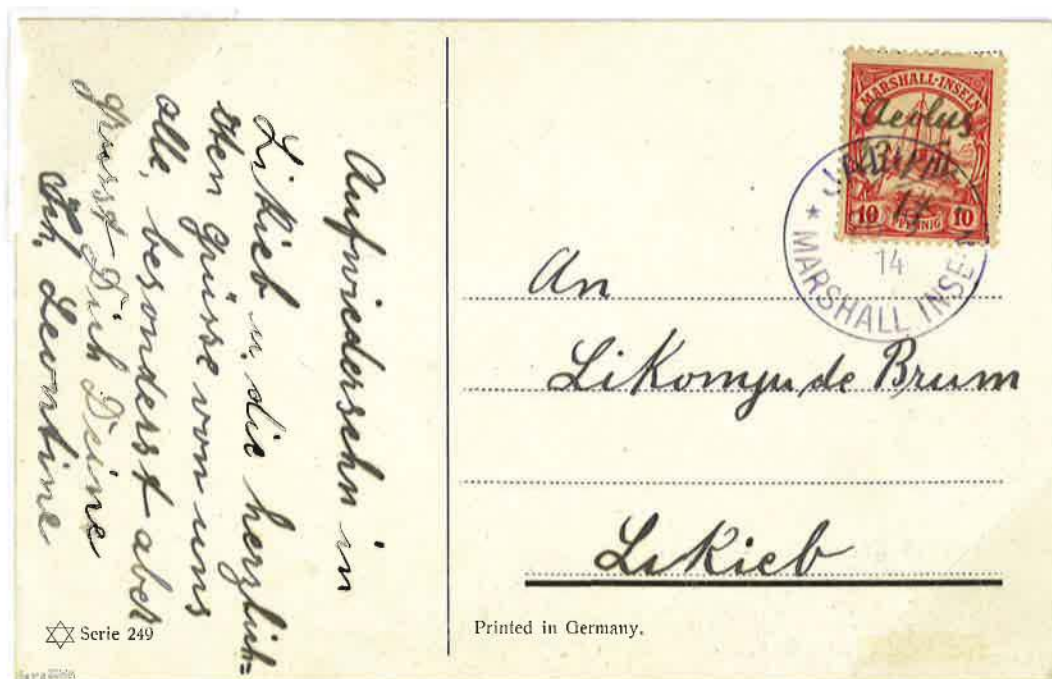


Cover mailed from Germany to Angaur on July 16, 1914, censored by the allies. Returned as undeliverable due to the war.

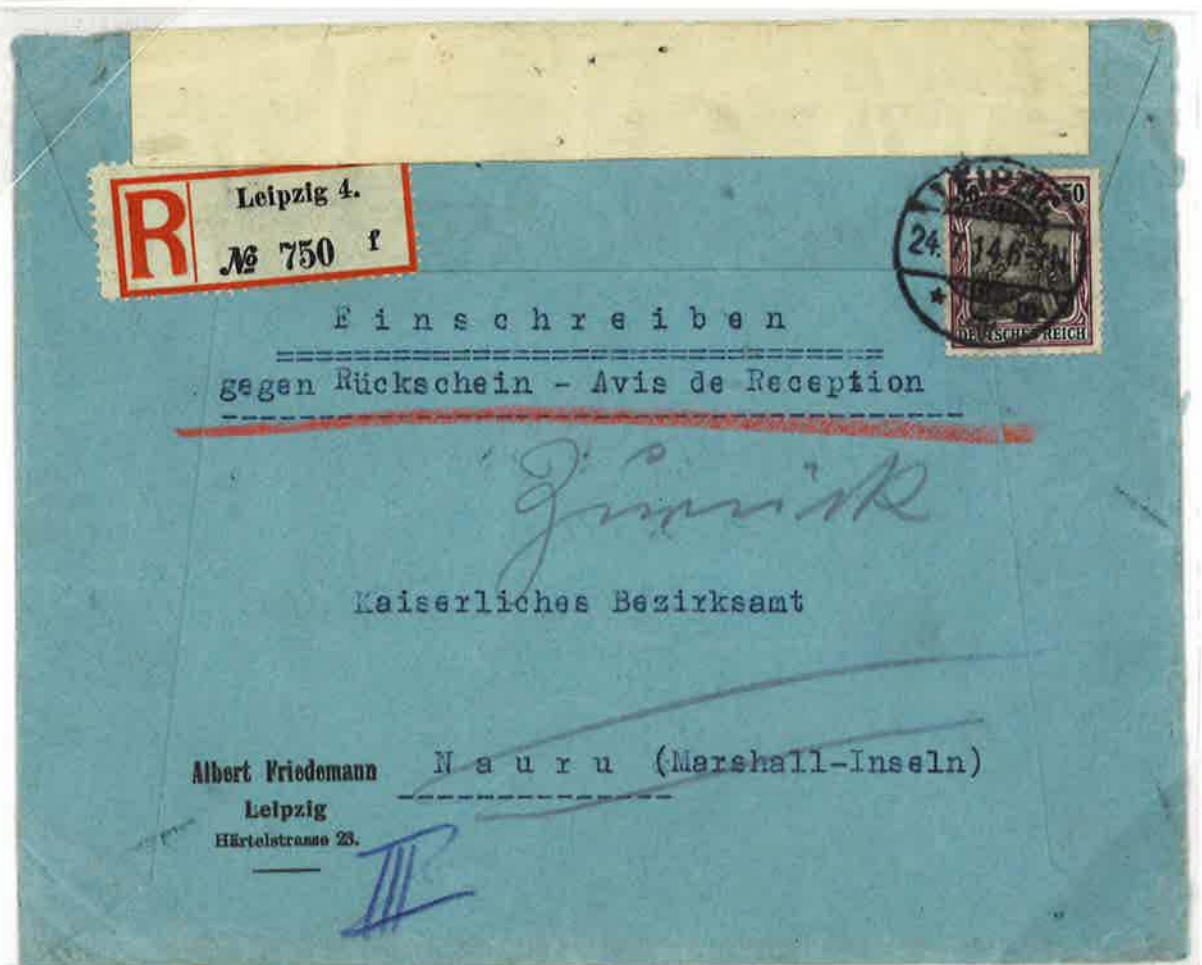
6. MARSHALL ISLANDS

This colony included a large number of islands, including both Jaluit and Nauru. Jaluit was occupied by the Japanese on September 29, 1914, while Nauru was occupied by the Australians on November 8, 1914. The German post office in Jaluit stopped operations in late September, while the German post office in Nauru remained open until November 8, 1914.

Post card mailed aboard the German ship *Aeolus* on August 23, 1914, addressed to Likieb, an atoll in the Marshall Islands, transiting Jaluit on September 26, shortly before the Japanese occupied Jaluit. The *Aeolus* carried copra from the Marshall Islands to Hawaii. It was destroyed by the Japanese navy in November before it could enter U.S. territorial waters in Hawaii.



Registered cover  
 mailed from  
 Germany to  
 Nauru on July 24,  
 1914, intercepted  
 and held by the  
 Australians,  
 returned to  
 Germany in 1920.

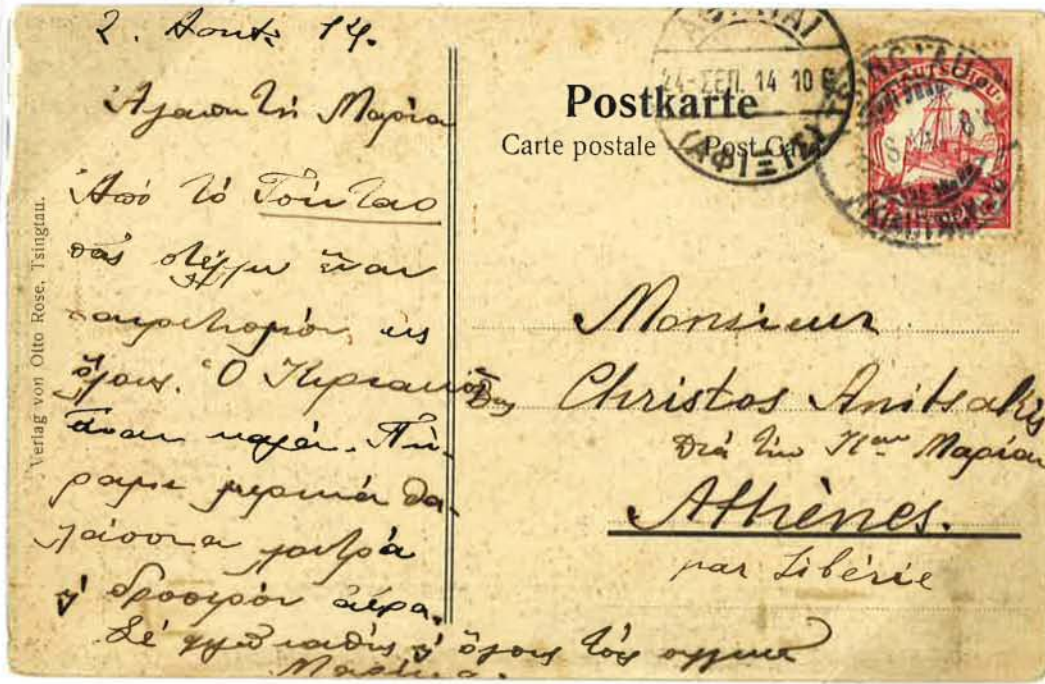


Registered Cover  
 mailed from  
 Germany to Jaluit  
 on July 7, 1914  
 intercepted and  
 held by the  
 Japanese,  
 officially sealed  
 and returned to  
 Germany in  
 1920.



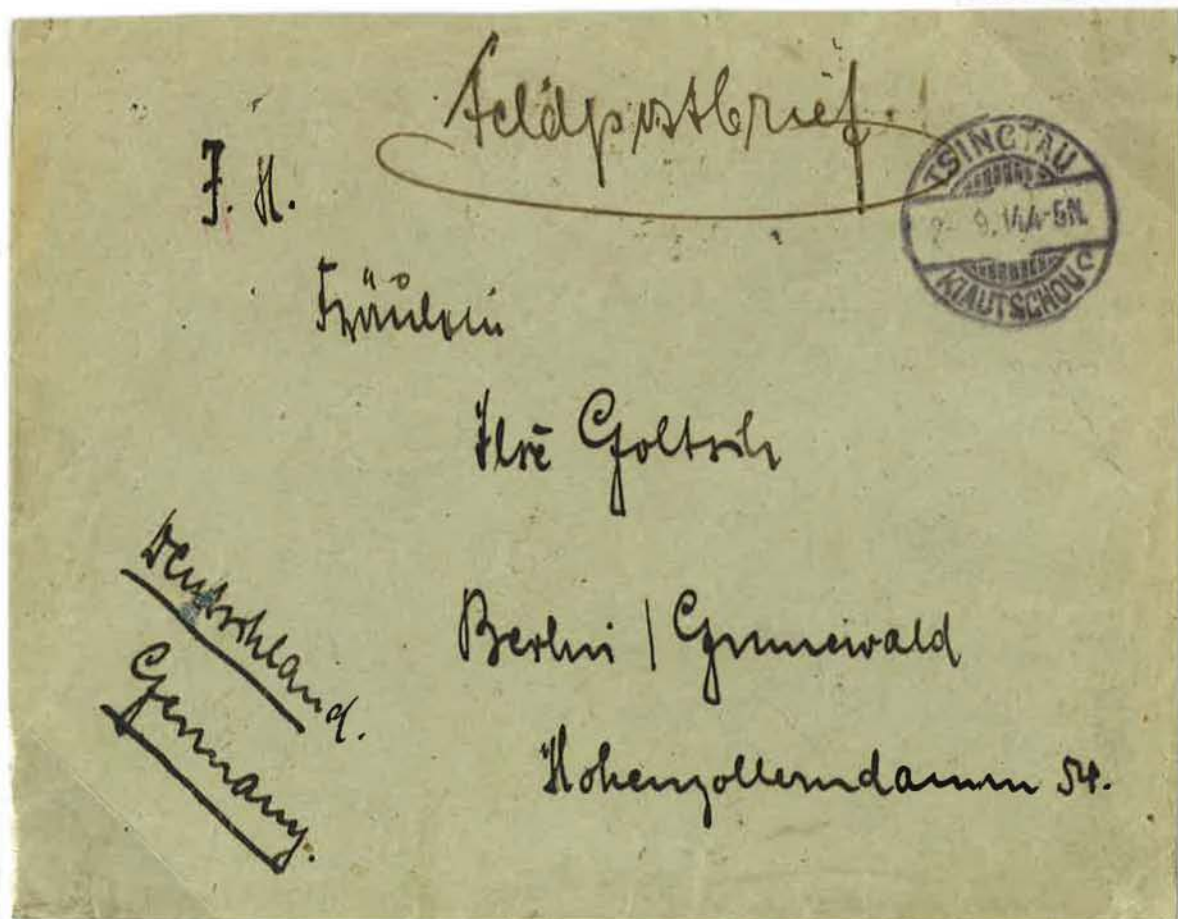
7. KIAUTSCHOU

Kiautschou was the home of Germany's East Asia Naval Squadron, which went to sea at the start of the War. In late August, Japan declared war on Germany, with the goal of seizing this colony for itself. A siege was initiated by the Japanese, which culminated in the Germans' surrender on November 7, 1914. Outgoing and incoming mail service continued from the start of the War until September 28, 1914. After that date, mail from the colony had to be smuggled through the lines to Tsinanfu or Shanghai.



Post card mailed from Tsingtau to Greece on August 3, 1914, the day before the UK declared war on Germany. Remarkably arrived in Greece on Sept. 24. Most mail sent to Germany and other European countries at this time did not arrive until November or December because it could not travel via Siberia. The route traveled by this card is unknown.

Cover sent by German soldier from Tsingtau to Germany on September 2, 1914. The Japanese had started their blockade, but regular mail service to outside countries continued until September 28.



Postal card written in Tsingtau on September 30, after regular mail service to the outside had stopped, smuggled through the lines to Tsinanfu, where it was postmarked on October. 12.



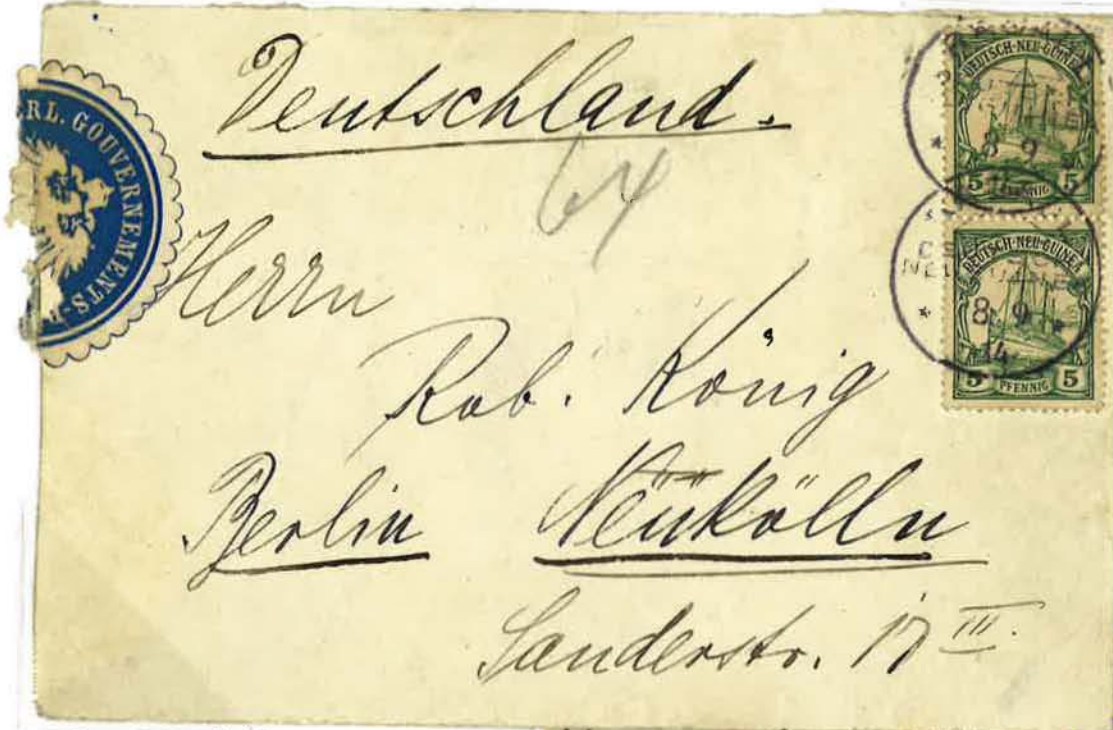
Cover mailed from Bavaria to Tsingtau on August 3, 1914, returned to sender due to the War.



Cover mailed from Germany to Tsingtau on October 16, 1914, while the Germans were in control. By the time it arrived, the Germans had surrendered and the addressee was a POW. Forwarded to him in a POW camp.

8. GERMAN NEW GUINEA

German New Guinea was spread out over a very large area. This resulted in a very unusual situation. The German governor of this colony surrendered to the Australians on September 17, 1914, but a portions of German New Guinea remained under German control until as late as early 1915. The last German post office is believed to have closed in January of 1915. Mail leaving the country from post offices under German control is known through late September. Incoming mail to German New Guinea was delivered as late as December. The head of the German Post Office in German New Guinea, after being captured, was obliged to swear an oath of neutrality and serve as an advisor to Australian postal officials for three months after his surrender.



Cover sent from Rabaul to Germany on September 8, 1914 on the last ship to leave the colony before the formal surrender of the Germans. Censored by local German officials. Censored mail is very rare.

Post card mailed from Bavaria to Finschhafen on July 29, 1914, returned due to the outbreak of the War.

*Groß! Geben Gott, daß es fünf gut  
 ist, wir dürfen das nun und sagen  
 in dem Kriege für ein Offizier  
 vom Militär abhängt, Grafen-  
 wörter für uns sind Landstr. in auf  
 für fünf von uns, auf dem Weg  
 in dem Volk von uns, das  
 ist M. gebietet, ist aber im  
 Keller an der Stelle, daß es  
 ist...*



Cover mailed from Germany to sailor aboard the SMS Komet at Rabaul on July 30, 1914. Traveled via Japan, arriving in Rabaul in late October, 1914. Forwarded to a POW camp in Liverpool, Australia.





9. GERMAN SOUTHWEST AFRICA

After the outbreak of the War, no mail went into or out of German South West Africa prior to the surrender of the Germans on July 9, 1915. The last civilian mail steamer left the colony on August 3, 1914. Internal mail service continued until the German surrender.

Cover mailed from Windhuk to Germany on July 30, 1914, carried on the Gertrude Woermann to Brazil and then to Germany, arriving there in October, 1914.



Berlin C. 2.  
in Friedrichstr. 3

Post card mailed from Bavaria to Luderitzbucht on July 30, 1914, returned due to the War.

Field Post card mailed internally from Okaukwejo to Windhuk on Dec. 1, 1914 by a member of an expedition that attacked Fort Naulila in Angola later that month.



Geopend door Censor.

Opened by Censor.



*v. Kühle, Log.*

*M. D. ...*

*Kindhuk.*

*German South-West  
Africa*



Cover mailed from the Dutch Indies in March of 1915, censored in Straits Settlements and South Africa, returned in April, prior to German surrender, via India, arriving back in Dutch Indies in July, 1915, shortly after German surrender. Cover front has pink Retour label with Weltevreden postmark dated July 28 which has been folded back to view front of cover.

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

TIEDEMAN & VAN KERCKHOF  
BATAVIA.



10. CAMEROUN

Cameroun was attacked by both British and French troops after the outbreak of the War. The last civilian mail ship to leave before the outbreak of the War was the Henny Woermann. Because the Spanish colony of Rio Muni was nearby, the War did not completely stop the flow of mail into and out of Cameroun. The last German post offices closed in January of 1916, and the last German troops surrendered at the northern fort of Mora in February, 1916. Internal mail continued until the German surrender.

Post card sent from Edea on July 21, 1914 to Germany, traveled via Brazil on the Henny Woermann, arriving in October, 1914.



Post card sent from Duala to Holland on August 17, 1914, censored in Buea.

Postal card sent from Buea to Germany on August 30, 1914, censored in Buea, forwarded within Germany.



Field post cover sent internally from Ambam to Bidjoka on October 8, 1915. 1915 year slugs were never delivered, so so year was written in ink. Ambam cancel is very rare.



Post card sent from Jaunde to Bata, Rio Muni on August 26, 1915, censored in Jaunde.

Cover mailed from Philadelphia, PA to Batanga on September 14, 1914, via London, where held and marked undeliverable due to the War.



11. GERMAN POST OFFICES IN CHINA

The German Post Offices in China remained open after the start of the War through March 16, 1917, when China broke diplomatic relations with Germany. International and domestic mail service to and from these post offices continued until they closed.

Registered POW cover mailed from the German PO at Tientsin on Feb. 11, 1917 to the Red Cross in Denmark via US, arriving on April 21, 1917.



Registered cover mailed from Bavaria to the German PO at Shanghai on August 4, 1916, intercepted and held by the British, released after the War.



Registered cover mailed from the German PO in Shanghai on January 5, 1917 to Berlin. At the time the cover was transiting the United States, the US suspended mail service to Germany. The cover was held and opened by the US authorities, then officially sealed, and returned to China, where it was censored and returned to the sender on March 12, 1918.



12. GERMAN EAST AFRICA

International mail into and out of the colony continued sporadically after the outbreak of the War, through Portuguese East Africa, until September of 1915, when, due to British pressure, the Portuguese stopped allowing mail to travel this route. Incoming mail is quite rare. Internally, mail service continued after the War started and came to an end in October of 1917, when German troops, led by General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, left the colony and entered Portuguese East Africa. These troops were never defeated and did not surrender under November 25, 1918, after learning of the armistice.

Postal card sent to Germany from crew member of the SMS Königsberg, which was trapped by the British in the Rufiji Delta, postmarked Lindi in May, 1915, via Portuguese East Africa.



Postal card sent from Mozambique to Dar Es Salaam on Nov. 22, 1914 by crew member of the German ship Khalif, which took refuge there after the start of the War.



Post card mailed from Switzerland to Dar Es Salaam on August 13, 1914, returned to Switzerland in late October, then sent outward again via Aden, to Dead Letter Office, Bombay.



No communication between India & the country of destination.

DEUTSCHES REICH  
 5  
 DEUTSCHES REICH  
 5  
 Postkarte  
 Salina S. Rocco, B. III  
 J. Müller  
 Herr Oberst Schindler  
 Salina S. Rocco, B. III  
 am 19. März 1915  
 Mein lieber Herr,  
 Ich habe mir erlauben zu  
 schreiben um Sie zu  
 ersuchen dass Sie mir  
 ein Postkarte von  
 Salina S. Rocco, B. III  
 an Herrn Oberst Schindler  
 Salina S. Rocco, B. III  
 senden wollen.

Herr Oberst Schindler  
 Salina S. Rocco, B. III  
 Deutsch-Ost-Afrika  
 Neu Moschi  
 Usambara

GENOVA  
 23-24  
 15-118  
 1915  
 FERROVIA

Sig. von Donop,  
 Klingano,  
 Neu Moschi,  
 Usambara,  
 Africa Oriental.  
 via Tanga

German postal card  
 mailed "under cover" from  
 Italy on March 15, 1915 to  
 small town near Moshi.  
 Intercepted by British at  
 Zanzibar and never  
 delivered. Italy was  
 neutral until May of 1915.

Cover sent from Bavaria on May 14, 1915  
 to Amani, endorsed to travel via Portugal  
 and its colonies to avoid interception by  
 the British, Amani receiving mark dated  
 August 16, 1915 on reverse.

Über die Ostlandstraße  
 Lissabon - Moschi  
 Porto Amella - Palma  
 Else Brönnle  
 Amani  
 Deutsch-Ost-Afrika

BSB  
 20  
 BAYERN

Cover mailed from Norway to "Uoschi, Ost Afrika" on August 31, 1915 via Amerika, censored by the British and returned as undeliverable due to the War.



via Amerika  
pr. direkte Damper.

*aos...*  
Peter Jn F. H. Pehlhoff



Message-reply card sent internally from Liwale to Rupanda on September 27, 1917, via Field Post Office No. 3, shortly before all German post offices closed.

13. GERMAN POST OFFICES IN MOROCCO

Germany maintained post offices in both the French area of Morocco and the Spanish area of Morocco. When WWI broke out, all German post offices in French Morocco were promptly closed. German post offices in Spanish Morocco remained open, but most of them closed by the end of 1914. The post office at Larasch remained open until June 11, 1919!



Post card sent from Larasch in October, 1914, addressed to the former German postmaster of Tangier, then in Brussels, Belgium. The sender states that he is the only German postal official currently in Morocco and that the German postal worker Seyfurt in Casablanca had been killed by the French.