WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

When Germany invaded Belgium in 1914, the Railway Parcels stamps in use at the time were looted in huge quantities. Even the highest values (5fr & 10fr) can still be acquired for less than one Euro.

These stamps were invalidated when the German Post Office took over the handling of parcels weighing up to 5 kilos. Stamps of the then current Germania issue were overprinted 'Belgien', with new values denominated in 'centimes' (later 'cent.') for both letter and parcel use.

German-style 'bridge' cancellers were brought into use in major post offices, though other offices continued to use pre-war Belgian-style cancellers.

Basic parcel rate of 50 centimes/cent. with bridge type cancellations of MAESEYCK and NAMECHE

A 'Paketkarte' (bulletin d'expedition), printed in German with French and Flemish translations, was required to be franked with the appropriate postage, and the stamps cancelled on despatch. A further 10c stamp had to be applied and cancelled at the destination.

10c with Belgian circular date stamp cancellation of SENEFFE
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

Standard Paketkarte - printing reference 'A 20 Belgien (1.16)'

11.9.18
From Brussel Nord
To Bouillon
3.3 kg
'par Vicinal'
'P.R.Paliseul'
Backstamp
PALISEUL/13 dots

c. 1.10.17
From Verviers
To Waremme
5 kg
'Luttich'
Arrival mark 2.10.17
(not usually found)

Backstamp 3.10.17
BORGWORM/WAREMME
bridge type
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

Nachname Paketkarte - *printing reference 'A 20a (5.14)'*  
(not specifically for Belgium; French translation only)

26.8.18  
From Brussel Nord  
To Corbion  
4.5 kg  
Remboursement  
147.96 Mk  
'par Paliseul'  
Backstamp  
PALISEUL/13 dots

Franked 50 Cent. + 10 Cent.  
=60 c

24 IV 18  
From Dison  
To Neuchateau  
3 kg  
Remboursement  
348 Mk

Backstamp 26.4.18  
Neuchateau/Prov Luxemburg  
bridge type  
Franked 75 Centimes + 10 Cent.  
=85c

It is not clear why the second packet cost 25c more than the first, even with a higher amount of Remboursement.
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

Recommande (Registered) with red station labels

Nachnahme Paketkarte

27.7.18
From Brussel Nord
To Namur
2.4 Kg

Remboursement
58.40 Mk

Backstamp 29.7.18
Namur-Namen bridge type

Franked 50 Cent. + 25 Cent. = 75c

Both packets were charged 75c, i.e. 25c premium, despite the second one using the Remboursement service as well as the Recommande charge.
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

10 centimes payable when packet was collected from arrival office.

3 VII 1918
ANGLEUR 1
(Belgian datestamp)

15.9.18
BRUSSEL (NORD BHF)
(bridge type)

+ 'Gebuhrenbezahlt'
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

The responsibility for parcels weighing over 5 kilos remained with the railways. These two documents headed 'Frachtbrief' are waybills for gifts for Belgian prisoners-of-war, carried free-of-charge under Article 16:2 of The Hague Orders.

i) from LIEGE 18 August 1915 with: indistinct Nord Belge line departure mark; state line CHARLEROI-SUD transit mark; German occupation arrival mark of MONS 24 August 1915

ii) from BRUSSELS, 29 December 1915 with: BRUXELLES/TOUR ET TAXIS departure mark; German occupation arrival mark of MONS 1 January 1916

***************

The Belgian Government Ministry for Railways, Marine, Post & Telegraph was evacuated to le Havre. This letter was sent to 'Chef de section principal des Chemins de fer Etat Belge' at Roosendaal in Holland.

MINISTÈRE DES CHEMINS DE FER, MARINE, POSTES ET TÉLEGRAPHES.

MINISTERIE VAN SPOORWEGEN, ZEEWEZEN, POSTEN EN TELEGRAAF.

Franked by two 20c Pellens large head without designer's name (cob 124). Postmark LE HAVRE (SPECIAL) 28.5.15, backstamp ROOSENDAAL 2 on 5.VI.15
**Frachtbrief**

(Für den Frachtvertrag gelten die Vorschriften der Militär-Generalkommission.

An: Agence Belge à Remimorwes des Bataillons zu Gobron des

in: (Wohnung) G. de la Varrin

Bestimmungsstation: Mons

Antrag: P.-G. de la Varrin

Bestimmungsort: Mons

(Zeichnungen von maßgeblichen Erklärungen wie beiliegend, Anhaftungsvorleistung, Zoll- oder

Veranstaltungstätigkeit am

w. u. g.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adresse oder</th>
<th>Art der Verpackung</th>
<th>Gewicht kg</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haus 15</td>
<td>Material für belgische</td>
<td>17.50</td>
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Fracht bis

vernichtung. 17.50.


Unterschrift des Absenders.

Wagenteil

Duplikat

Stempel der Versandstation

Wagenteil

Stempel der Verwaltungsgaststätte

Zoll bescheinigt

21.01.1915

Stempel der Umhaut- und Umhautstationen.

Den 12. Januar 1915

Vom Empfänger zu erhalten

Gebühr für das Interesse an der Lieferung

Nachnahme

Nachnahmegebühr

Fracht bis
**Frachtbrief**

**Agency Belge de Renseignements**

**Pour les Prisonniers de guerre et les Internes**

in Mons, rue Kamix 19

Bestimmungsort: Mons, Belgien

**Adresse oder Zeichen**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artikelbezeichnung</th>
<th>Inhalt</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artikelnr. 1</td>
<td>10 kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artikelnr. 2</td>
<td>20 kg</td>
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</table>

**Von**

Mons, der Abordnung

**Nachnahme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gutschrift</th>
<th>Fracht bis</th>
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<tr>
<td>11.11.1918</td>
<td></td>
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**Rechnung**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nach Eingang</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stempel der Versandstation**

BRUXELLES

**Stempel der Liefer- und Unbehandlungstationen**

**Stempel der Abordnung**

Mons

**Stempel der Lieferungstation**

Mons

**Duplikat**

(Aufnahmeschein)
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

In the unoccupied part of North-West Flanders the Belgian railway parcels service continued to operate. The Belgian Government Ministry for railways, located in Le Havre during the war, issued two sets of railway parcels stamps for use in unoccupied Belgium.

The first, on 22 June 1915, was a provisional set comprising overprints on the 1912 Pellens issue. Quantities genuinely overprinted were extremely small - between 200 and 750. Forgeries and reprints from a reserve plate exist in much larger quantities - the stamps below fall into this category.

![First set of stamps](image1)

The second set, known as the 'du Havre' emission, was issued on 20 December 1915; this was printed by Waterlows of London. It was, of course, not used in Le Havre and the stamps below with LE HAVRE (SPECIAL) post office cancellations would have been cancelled by favour.

![Second set of stamps](image2)

The next sheets display:
> proofs in issued colours with value tablets blank
> set (excluding 1,10 Frank) imperforate, with gum
> set as issued
> 10c and 25c imperf between stamp and margin
> 35c and 1F in mint blocks of 4 and 2F in irregular block of 14 used
RAILWAY STAMPS - 1912

Waterloo 'du Havre' issue

Printed in issued colours with value tablets blank
Imperf and no gum

70c
Grubben 143

90c
Grubben 142

1 F 10c
'FRANKEN'
Grubben 144

3 F
Grubben 146

4 F
Grubben 147

5 F
Grubben 148

10 F
Grubben 149
1915 - Winged wheel and Train - 1st set
Printed for Belgian Government in exile at L’Havre (France) by Waterlow & Sons
Small figures of value in lower corners
RAILWAY STAMPS - 1915

Waterloo 'du Havre' issue

Imperf between stamp and margin. 10c used. 25c mint x 3

Unit blocks of 4 x 1 Fr & 4 x 35c

Used block of 14 x 2 Fr
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

UNOCCUPIED BELGIUM

There were five railway stations operating in the unoccupied area: ABELE ADINKERKE-PANNE, AVECAPELLE, FURNES and POPERINGHE. Cancellations below are of ADINKERKE-PANNE (‘LA’ removed) and FURNES used in 1917.

There were also five post offices handling parcels for the railway service: LOO, NIEUWKERKE / NEUVE EGLISE, OOSTVLETEREN, RENINGHELST and WATOU. Cancellations below are of RENINGHELST and WATOU used in 1917.

New cancellers were brought into use during the War, rectangular in format, with ‘C.F.B.’ on the first line, date on the second and ‘1ERE SECTION No 1’ or ‘No 2’ on the third line. These continued in use after the War. Cancellations below are dated 1916 and 1918(with ‘191’ inverted)
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH

The railway infrastructure suffered severe damage during the War, as depicted by this postcard of the Ruins of Ypres Station.

Cancellers in a similar format to that used in the unoccupied area continued to be used by stations on the lines from Ypres. Below are ‘C.F.B.’ cancellations of ‘3e SECTION No 2’ and ‘7e SECTION No 12’ used in 1919.

‘C.F.B.’ cancellations were used by the stations of POELKAPELLE, WESTROOSEBEKE, STADEN and ST JOSEPH on the Ypres to Kortemark line; a ‘C.P.B.’ cancellation was used by WERVICK on the Ypres to Menin line. The canceller of WESTROOSEBEKE (see next page) was still in use in 1935.
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - Old cancellers brought back into use

Pre 1879 relict

MOULINS (dependence of Warrant)

Hexagons

ACHEL (broken '8' to make '9')

ERQUELINNES (no centre)

EYNE FROIDTHIER ('1919') GAMERAGES (manual date) WAUTHIER-BRAINE

Later dates - WESTROOSEBEKE (1935) SYNGHEM (1925)
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - Continuing use of pre-War chamfered rectangles

The 1915 Waterlow stamps, which had been in use in the unoccupied enclave, were after the War brought into use throughout Belgium. The normal cancellation found on this issue is the chamfered rectangle widely in use before the outbreak; a high percentage of Waterlow stamps received such cancellations.
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - abnormal and 'fortune' cancellations

In many localities, the cancellers in use at the outbreak of war were destroyed or mislaid. When the parcels service resumed, railway and postal officials employed whatever means of cancellation was readily to hand or could quickly be manufactured with available resources. The rest of this display comprises emergency cancellations from the early post-War years grouped into the following categories:

i) cancellations used at State line stations including manuscript, various forms of manufactured or adapted cancellers, reweighing cachets

ii) cancellations used at private line stations

iii) telegraph office cancellations (parcels could be posted at telegraph offices when railway station offices were closed)

iv) post office cancellations (from localities not served by the rail network)

v) electoral cachets (being a handy source of a handstamp with adjustable date)

vi) other non-standard cancellations

Manuscript: COURTRAI DIEST (indelible pencil) GEMBLOUX (handstamp date)
GOUVY (no date) HAL (handstamp date) HASSELT MONS TIRLEMON (red ink) DATE ONLY

Home-made from printing set, some mixed upper & lower case letters: CHenee ETHE GOUVY LA HULpe O0stROOsebeke
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - abnormal and 'fortune' cancellations

Station name on first line; Le ___________ on second line; unframed

Station name on first line; date on second line; unframed. Range of style and quality of print. AUDERGHEM BORGERHOUT CORBEEK LOO FLORENNES GEDINNE LEIGNON LIGNE MASTA MARLOIE QUIEVRAIN SILENRIEUX SOIGNIES SOMBREFFE VIGNEE VISE WILDMERT
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - abnormal and 'fortune' cancellations

Letters in white (cut into block): VEDRIN

Station name on one line (2 lines for bilingual) without frame; date in various forms, or not dated

Station name on one line with frame
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - abnormal and 'fortune' cancellations

Station name in box with space for date on second line

Station name in box with printed date on second line

Three-line rectangle with centre line blank for insertion of date: AUVELAIS / MARCHANDISES BOURG-LEOPOLD / no 1 BRUGGE / BRUGES COURTRAI / KORTRIJK\FACTEUR COUILLET No ? / ornaments MONS No /BERGEN ROULERS / ROESELAER TOURNAI / No 8

Green ink similar to ink used in 19th Century for railway marks on letters

Three lines without frame: ENSIVAL / Marchandises GRAND LEEZ /
THOREMBAIS Verviers-EST / No 1
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - Reweighing cachets used as cancellers

BRUXELLES-OUEST DISON DAMPREMY-STATION COUVIN ENGHIE N (2 types) FLORENVILLE

Bilingual: BRUSSEL-WEST / BRUXELLES OUEST WIELSBEKE

Date inserted by handstamp: FARCENNES MARLOIE

Date inserted manually: MONS SILENRIEUX SILLY SOIGNIES

Without station name: Accepte / Poidsreconnu
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - Private Lines - Chemin de fer de Chimay

Station name unframed: AGIMONT Mariembourg ROMEREEN Seiloignes-Monceau

Three-line rectangle: AGIMONT-VILLAGE BOUSSU-EN-FAGNE MOMIGNIES ROMEREEN SELOIGNES-MONCEAU VILLERS-LA-TOUR

Three lines: MARIEMBOURG / blank / RECETTES, CHEM. DE FER DE CHIMAY / blank / SELOIGNES MONCEAU, Chem de Fer-Chimay / MOMIGNIES / date

POIDS RECONNU A AUUBLAIN
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - Private Lines - Others

Nord Belge line:

ERQUELINES (2) FRAMERIES JAMBES JEMEPPE-SUR-SAMBRE LOBBES (2)

Gent-Terneuzen line: TERDONCK
Malines-Terneuzen line: ST NICOLAS M-T / MAGASIN

Chemins de fer Prince Henri (Luxembourg): ATHUS
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - Telegraph Offices - pre-War octagon cancellers

a) centre blank: COUVIN **** LANAEEKEN (ST.)* STAVELOT 1914 (year not changed) THIENEN/TIRLEMON bilingual

b) date in manuscript: LA HULPE/TER HULPEN NINOVE *** TERVUEREN-STAT.*

c) dated by separate handstamp: BLATON*** LEUZE-LONGCHAMPS*

d) complete except year slug: GEMBLOUX** THEUX***

Provisional rectangular cancellers with three x's on third line: BARVAUX COURRIERE PETIT ROSIERE
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - Telegraph Offices - provisional rectangular cancellers

Three stars in third line; date in centre, sometimes blank, usually manuscript, occasionally separate handstamp; various coloured inks.
a) sans-serif lettering: AERSEELE ANDERLUES BLANDAIN COURCELLES-MOTTE QUIEVRAIN SOIGNIES VILLE-POMMEROEUL b) letters with serifs: EERNEGHEM JAUCHE KAIN SCHAFFEN

Date incorporated into canceller:
a) in box: BEERNEM EPPEGHEM MOORTZELE SCELLEBELLE ZARREN
b) in central segment: LIEGE-PALAI (third line - only two stars with and without '1' between
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SRVICE

AFTERMATH - Post Office cancellers

a) centre blank: DENDERLEEuw (year still '14') NEDERHEIM *OISQUERCQ*

b) date manuscript: DENDERLEEuw (year '14') EGHEZEE (year '15?') HUPPAYE

c) '19' century used as year: LIBIN MIGNAULT *PONDROME* ST HUBERT

d) German occupation cancellers with 'BELGIEN' erased: BRAIVES FALLAIS GRAND-HALLEUX MOL (BELGIE.) ROANNE-Coo SPONTIN Thimister-Clermont
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - Post Office cancellers

e) '1919' emergency cancellers: COGNELEE JESSEREN NECHIN SIVRY SAINTES

LEOPOLDSBURG/BOURG LEOPOLD - three types - (i) no inner or outer circle (ii) outer circle only (iii) both circles but no '1919', with & without manuscript date

LODELINSART: top segment and centre blank, with & without manuscript date
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - Electoral cachets etc

Place name in a curve, letters with serifs, purple ink, date in straight line below:
HOUGAERDE OBIGIES

Place name in a curve, letters without serifs, black or blue ink, date in three lines, 'E B' or '1E B' at base:
EYGENBILSEN JEMAPPES MUNSTERBILSEN (date manuscript)

Place name in a curve, letters without serifs, black ink, date in three lines:
ASSCHE DEERLYK HALANZY INGELMUNSTER THUILLIES (with & without year; with date manuscript) WAREMME WAVRE (purple ink, time instead of year)
WORLD WAR I - THE PARCELS SERVICE

AFTERMATH - various non-standard cancellations

Outer circle comprised of dashes:
ST DENIYS WESTREM LEDE LENS LIERRE (centre blank)

LIEGE GMINS / No 1 / ornament; '38'

Cachets normally used for other purposes:
REMBOURSEMENT EXPRES SPOEDBESTELLING / EXPRES FRANCO DEBOURSES (with and without frame)

MANAGE / ACCEPTE / PESANT / LE PESEUR; VLAAMSCH HOOFD / TETE DE FLANDRE