

Unusually Attached Postage

By Patrick Crosby

When I saw an online scan of the featured postcard from 1898, I wondered why someone would cut a stamp apart and then place it, separated, on the wrong corner of the card. Then I noticed an arrow in pencil by the postmark pointing to maybe an explanation. At \$3.20 I just had to satisfy my curiosity.



Stamp & cancel right side up.



The stamp is not cut apart, but the card itself has two slits with the postage stamp tucked in quite tightly. The outgoing postmark ties the stamp to the card. The arrow does point to an explanation and (according to a German friend) reads with frustration in an odd and antiquated fashion, "The pesky thing won't stick". Apparently, there was no paste handy.

Looking at the address side of the postcard with "Postkarte" at the top and the address written in the correct area, why was the stamp attached at the bottom? Universal Postal Union (UPU) regulations said the stamp was to be placed in "...one of the upper corners of the front."

The sender wanted to avoid interfering with the lovely Munich Maximilianeum Building and Bridge scene on the view side, and instead cut slits into the small message area. There is no street address, but it is addressed to a section of the city and "(Färberei)", which is "dye factory".

Bavaria had postal autonomy (separate from Germany) until 1920 but was never a separate member of the UPU and instead was considered part of the German Imperial Post Office for international purposes. The Bavaria (Bayern) 5pf (pfennig) stamp used is Scott 62a, the "a" is for toned paper, issued beginning in 1890. Interestingly, Scott 62 was not issued until 1900.

What postal rate did 5 pfennig (equal to 1 cent U.S.) pay? I'm not sure, but I can think of two possibilities. The first is that perhaps Bavaria and Austria-Hungary had a postal treaty providing reduced rates between close neighbors (like between the USA and Canada) and 5 pfennig was the card rate, the same as the German domestic card rate. Mailed from Bavaria, at the time still a kingdom but part of the German Empire, to Austria-Hungary, the distance between the two respective cities of Munich (Muenchen on the postmark = München) and Innsbruck was only around 110 miles by road. In fact the card was received in Innsbruck the same day it was posted in Munich, July 10, 1898. Also, a spoken dialect, Southern Bavarian, was shared in this Austro-Bavarian region. This dialect was common in the 11th to 14th centuries and persisted in Innsbruck because of its geographical isolation in the Alps. This could be why the card's wording seemed antiquated to my friend.

München
Maximilianeum

Lied Bayern inkreis!

Herrn den Herrn und auf Wiedersehen!

Großschöne Drüse Karl.

Obrig Herrns Puszey: Friedrich König

Alleinverk Paul Bergmann

München 7113

Maximilianeum MÜNCHEN

Soch Bayern inkens!
Heilig den Deus und auf Wiedersehen!
Großschote Drusse Karl.
Oino Gorus Puszey. Fröhlich König

Alleinverk Paul Bergmann. 7113

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