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The Yugoslavia Study Group

Founded in 1984 to promote the study of the stamps and postal history of Yugoslavia, its predecessor and successor states

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There will be a monograph published in 2018.

Additional copies of Jugopošta are available as shown on the back cover and a priced list of YSG publications is also located on the back cover.

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Jugopošta

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From the President

There will once again be a meeting of the YSG at Autumn Stampex this year. We look forward to having the opportunity to meet members there, and see some of their material.

We have an excellent magazine which gives us the opportunity to share our experiences and achievements with our fellow members. If you have won an award or competition let us know; or if you have thoughts on the organisation of the Group or on philately in general share them with fellow members in Jugopošta.

Yet again I make an appeal for someone to step forward and fill the job of Auction Manager. This post is an important role, providing an extra service to members; giving them the opportunity to sell their surplus material and acquire new items for their collections. Previous experience is not necessary as help and advice would be available to start the new person off. **Please consider taking over this vital role.**

A J Bosworth FRPSL

From the Editor

Tony looks forward above to meeting members at Autumn Stampex. Details of this meeting can be found on page 25.

In December 2017, we published our monograph entitled “The Postal History of the Serbian Nation in Exile 1915 - 1919” by Marcus Sherwood-Jenkins. This has produced 3 detailed responses from readers and these are published in this edition of Jugopošta together with a response from the author.

In JP125, I asked for help in finding information on the censorship markings on mail associated with occupied Serbia in World War 2. I am grateful to our members Duncan Colville and Milan Radovanović for providing me with information. One of the outcomes of this is that at about the same time I received a birthday present of an Amazon voucher and with that I bought a copy of Horst Landsmann’s book “Die Zensur von Zivilpost in Deutschland im 2. Weltkrieg.” I will now consider how this might lead to an article in a future JP.

Once again, I would like to draw your attention to the Joint Societies’ Meeting which is organised by Yvonne Wheatley on Saturday 4 August at the Latvian Club, Bradford. This is a meeting of members of YSG and the societies for Austrian, Czechoslovak, Hungarian and Polish philately. It is always an excellent day with good material and good food and I thoroughly recommend it. Details appear on page 25. If anyone wants more information they can email me at the address shown on page 2.

Responses received to Monograph No 13: “The Postal History of the Serbian Nation in Exile 1915 - 1919” by Marcus Sherwood-Jenkins

Response from Jerome Bourguignat

Dear Nick,

Thank you for your work done for *Jugopošta*. I have finally taken time to read the monograph about the Postal History of The Serbian Nation in Exile 1915-1919.

I have been collecting this subject for decades now, and I am always happy to read anything valuable concerning one of my collections. I feel for the efforts of Mr Sherwood-Jenkins in writing his book, his obvious goodwill and motivation, but it is disappointing.

There are several types of mistakes:

Firstly, the author Mr Sherwood-Jenkins in my view is not using the best sources. Most of its philatelic sources refer to articles from *Jugopošta*, two articles from *The London Philatelist* which are 40 years old now and the Rasic book which is equally old (Editor's note: *The Postal History and Postage Stamps of Serbia*, Mirko Rasic, 1979).

He missed the recent book written by Miodrag Vuković “*Serbian Military Postal System in Exile 1916-1918*” (Belgrade 2016) which, based on the original archives, is the essential reference on this subject. Also to be noted are the very good books by Milan Radovanović “*Allies and Serbs during Great War (1914-1915) - Silent Witnesses*“, “*French and Serbs in North Africa (1916-1918) - Silent Witnesses*”. There are also articles in French and Serbian magazines, in the Collectors Club Philatelist Journal, etc.

There is no real work here from the archives, except Education (which is not the core topic). As a member of the Academie de Philatelie, I pay careful attention to writing only by referring to indisputable sources, which are by essence administrative regulations, reports and so on from the archives. It is important not to propagate statements from book to book which might mislead.

Secondly, I feel that the quoting of entire paragraphs of my article on “Serbs in France in WW1” published in *Jugopošta* in 2014 is a breach of copyright as no introductory reference to it was made (though it is listed in the bibliography). It is so basically copied that you can read on page 150 “*I had the opportunity to buy the postcard reproduced in....*” But the “I” is myself, and not Mr Sherwood-Jenkins. Note that this article was first published in Documents Philateliques from the Academie de Philatelie.

Thirdly, there are quite a few mistakes spread over the pages (I marked more than 20). I have noted for example a significant misinterpretation of the French postal rates (page 80): the international rate did not change during the war. It remained valid until the 1st April 1921, after the UPU congress in Madrid. Only the internal rates changed on 1st January 1917. This mistake leads to the wrong comment on some items.

Fourthly, there are statements which are not substantiated. On page 77 it says “*As part of the process of maintaining their national identity the Ministry decreed that all items passing through the Serbian Post offices must be struck with a cachet “Postes Serbes” in addition to the postmark.*” This is an assumption propagated from book to book. However, for the time being,

there is no definitive explanation, nobody has found this decree. I spent many days in the French archives (Army, Archives nationales, Foreign Affairs, postal administration), and in the UPU in Bern. I only found slight references to “*Postes Serbes*” which are too vague to claim anything so far. And Miodrag Vuković did not find anything either in the Serbian archives.

Mr Sherwood-Jenkins’ book is well written and pleasant to read. There are interesting reproduced items and synthesis elements, but it does not bring more to a subject that I also passionately collect and exhibit. I appreciate that the author surely wrote this book to share his enthusiasm. I guess it missed peer reviews from subject matter experts which would have eliminated most of the mistakes and misinterpretations and would have improved significantly the rigour of the monograph.

Best regards

Jerome

Response from Dick Stevens

Dear Mr. Coverdale,

I was certainly surprised a couple months ago when I received my copy of the Study Group's Monograph No. 13. For a person who collected the Serbs-in-Exile material for over fifty years, and has published a number of articles about various aspects, including some in the Study Group's journal, here was a book from an author with whom he had never had any contact. Apparently the author chose to go it alone, doing his own thing. Having sold my collection of this area nearly two years ago, I hoped that I could respect Mr. Sherwood-Jenkins' decision not to involve me. However, after reading the Monograph, I find it to be a very troublesome publication. I might even say dangerous, because it will circulate in the English-speaking world, spreading misinformation, separate from any corrections that may be published later.

The author has presented a substantial body of interesting new information. Most of the problems in this book could have been corrected, if the author had read and accepted the facts and conclusions in M.R. Vuković's book *Military Postal System in Exile 1916-1918*, which is written in English, and was published in 2016.

Two fundamental errors are reflected throughout the book. One. The V.P. Br. 999 handstamp VOJNA POSTA BR. 999 was only used at Salonica, never at Corfu. If the author had shown the postcard on page 90 to anyone familiar with reading Cyrillic handwriting, they could have told him that it is clearly addressed to Solun (the Serbian name of Salonica) not Corfu, and therefore the receiving mark of Br. 999 was applied at Salonica not Corfu. Two. The mail to Switzerland, from both Ministarska and the military offices was charged the international postage rate, as set by the U.P.U. This was unchanged throughout the War. The mail to or from France was charged the domestic/military rate, which was changed on 1 January 1917 (by the Gregorian calendar).

It is risky to expertise covers from photographs, but I will point out three that I am certain are fakes. The card at the top of page 83 has an obvious fake Ministarska postmark: the vertical lines all touch the surrounding horizontal and curved lines. The cover on page 108 has had the pair of 30 centimes stamps added, perhaps where another stamp or stamps has been removed. The pair is typical of the cto stamps shown on page 88. On page 79 he correctly does not list the 30 as

used at Corfu. (This fake is particularly troublesome, because a casual reader may think the 30 was used at Corfu, and then judge a POSTES SERBES exhibit, penalising it for not having such a cover.) I also doubt the inclusion of the 20 centimes stamp in the list on page 79. Again on page 110, the POSTES SERBES handstamp was only used at Ministarska. A significant number of covers exist, all addressed to Voegeli, with a "Type II" POSTES SERBES, which, at best, can be described as added after receipt at Weesen, but probably should be called a fake. This cover appears to me to have had the four lower stamps and all the POSTES SERBES markings added.

On page 129 at the bottom, the author confuses the censor marks with and without parentheses around the number. The information from Vuković applies to the 22 in parentheses. The Type IV censor marks without parentheses (See page 98) were normally used in Salonica in 1918.

On page 136, the postcard at the bottom is NOT "a 1915 issue Serbian PSC". At the left side is the inscription of the printer at Corfu. The whole story can be found in Vuković's book. See pages 30 & 12 there.

I regret being so negative. Is this society not called a "Study Group"? The members should cooperate. If the author had asked M. Bourguignat, Mr. Vuković, and myself for our aid, I am sure he could have still told the story his way, and avoided so many mistakes.

Regards,

Dick Stevens

Response from Miodrag R. Vuković

I do appreciate Mr. Sherwood-Jenkins' interest in and hard work on studying the postal history of my country and nation, but I believe that his book needs some clarifications, corrections and updating. Before I get to the point I would like to make some general remarks:

1. Official records preserved in the Military Archives in Belgrade are far from being 100% complete, but there are *enough documents from the exile period to get a sufficiently clear picture*.
2. I'll try to be as concise as possible and to concentrate on the most important points.¹
3. As at that time the Julian calendar was in official use, all dates up to 19th January 1919 are given according to it. As of 19th January 1919 dates are given according to the Gregorian calendar.
4. I believe in sharing knowledge, but I also believe in proper acknowledgments. Copy-pasting someone else's findings and illustrations without reference to the source is not the right way to build one's own study. Everything else aside, if massive, indiscriminate and unverified, such a method sometimes produces misleading assertions and contradictions.

Serbian Postal System in Exile

The Serbian postal system (SPS) in exile consisted of two parts: civil (SCPS) and military (SMPS).

¹ Those interested in more details can find them in my book in English "Serbian Military Postal System in Exile 1916 – 1918" (Belgrade, March 2016) based on official documents and well known collections, and written with the most valuable help of Dr. Richard M. Stevens and Mr. Jerome Bourguignat.

SCPS was a rudimentary one – with **only one PO on Corfu** (not “Serbian posts” – p. 77), known as the Ministerial PO. It turned civil on 29th May 1916 (not “in April” – p. 77). Since I have still not found enough documents from the *civil* period of the Ministerial PO I’ll limit myself only to the following:

1. “POSTES SERBES” cachet was applied **only** at the Ministerial PO in the town of Corfu. Letters from the Salonika front (p. 110), Corse or even Belgrade with that cachet are **partial forgeries**. The original mail was “upgraded” with forged “POSTES SERBES” cachets long after the war ended.
2. “POSTES SERBES” was *not* the way to “maintain and express Serbian national identity and existence” (pp. 77 and 84) but *required a “patch” for CDS* “МИНИСТАРСКА ПОШТАНСКА СТАНИЦА” (comparable to “OESTER. POST/SALONICH”, “SCUTARI DI ALBANIA/POSTE ITALIANE” etc).

SMPS was a much more complex one, with at least three types of POs, a ramified network of detached postal officers on the Salonika front and abroad, travelling postal officers, postal routes...

1. **Main PO of GHQ** – opened to all military (later civil refugees as well) in Corfu then Salonika, Skoplje and Belgrade where it was closed on 15th June 1920. It used four (*not* three – p. 53) CDSs for letters and four for postal order services. *No Serbian subject outside the Salonika front and Bizerte had any postal code*. CDS Nr. 999 was used **only** at the premises of the Main PO of GHQ. Handwritten number 999 on the Legation’s administrative cachet (p. 38) is a *registration number* assigned to telegrams in the Main book. Only by *mere coincidence* does it correspond to GHQ’s postal code. CDS 999 on a PC from Paris to FPO 414 (p. 45) is a Salonika transit, *not* a Paris dispatch postmark. And the PC on p. 90 was sent from Corfu to Salonika, not locally to Corfu.
2. **Field Post Offices** – POs assigned to military and POW units and moving with them.
3. **Military Post Offices** - POs at fixed geographical locations, open-type, serving the general public.
4. **Hybrid FPO/MPOs** – POs at fixed locations designated to serve both as regimental FPOs and MPOs (FPOs VIII and XX, on Corfu FPOs of Drina, Danube and Morava divisional authorities).

SMPS on the island of Corfu

1. On 26th January 1916 “*PO at the Port*” was opened for *official* correspondence.
2. On 5th February 1916 limited private mail was introduced. **At that moment FPOs operated at 20 old units**. Next day a reorganisation of the Serbian Army was triggered, ending in April. Old and new FPOs coexisted, with the old ones gradually fading out. Two pre-exile CDSs are known used.
3. On 10th February 1916 two post offices were opened in the town of Corfu for *private* mail – **Main PO of GHQ** serving all the military, and **its Branch PO** serving Ministries and the Royal Court. On the same day the 10 para “PC of Serbian warriors” was issued and distributed to all FPOs.
4. On 2nd March 1916 **standing MPOs** were opened in camps **Govino** and **Ahileon**. By April 1916 the reorganisation was finalised, with a **total of 43 new FPOs, 3 MPOs and 1 MaPO of GHQ**.
5. As of 30th April 1916 at 8 a.m. Branch PO continued to work as a standalone **MPO at the Military Ministry**. *Only on 29th May 1916 (not in April and not all POs – p. 77)* it was taken over by the Ministry of Public Works and transformed into a *civil* PO known as the “Ministerial PO”.

6. Standing MPOs in Govino and Achileon remained under the Military Ministry. On 28th February 1918 a new ***Military P&T office of the main military station at Corfu*** was opened in Corfu.

SMPS on the Salonika front

1. On 13th April 1916 at 2.p.m. two PT officers, two attendants and a quartermaster embarked for Salonika to establish ***temporary post offices in Salonika and Vassilica*** (training camp).
2. On 5th May MaPO 999 was opened for the public in Salonika (*official mail handled from 2nd May*).
3. By mid May all units and their FPOs arrived in training camps. FPOs were *fully functional immediately upon arrival* (not “in the second half of 1916” – page 51).
4. The disposition of Serbian troops to the front lines started in mid May and ended on 2nd August.
5. On 3rd January 1917 (not “late 1917” – p. 55) six infantry regiments and combat parts of 3rd Army HQ were disbanded and reassigned to other units. HQ staff and the rest of the 3rd Army were disbanded on 15th March (not “in late 1917” – p. 55). FPO 333 remained at Army HQ in liquidation until 3.3.1917 when its staff was sent to Vertekop, then on 13.4.1917 reassigned to Voden to help establish and run MPOs 80 and 96, where they used CDS 333 until the last decade of June 1917.
6. In January 1918 the 2nd Voluntary regiment, being successor to the 24th regiment, claimed code 96. After 45 days of dispute with MPO Voden, it *finally* got the code and CDS 96 on 10.3.1918.
7. ***The Prilep Detachment*** was established on 1st May 1918 (not “late 1917”) and *disbanded* by the end of August 1918. At the latest on 4th May part of FPO Nr. OF with its CDS was assigned to it (not FPO 111 – p. 55) as the Detachment’s FPO. In early July 1918 it was replaced with FPO Nr. OB.
8. Most FPOs were closed in April/May 1919 (not 1920). MaPO 999 was closed on 15.6.1920.

MPOs in Greece (pp. 60-61):

1. *Usage of CDSs 64, 68, 76, 80, 96 and 333 by MPOs he classified as “Non Standard usage of FPOs”.* FPOs and MPOs are *not* the same and there was no “Non Standard usage of FPOs”.
2. He “*interpolated*” the list of MPOs with some FPOs. FPOs and MPOs should *not* be confused.
3. For reasons unknown to me he *omitted* MPO Prilep (opened on 19.9.1918) from the list.
4. For reasons unknown to me he *singled out* MPO Bitolj from the list of MPOs and omitted opening and closing dates. There was *only one* PO in Bitolj (not “all POs in Bitolj” – p. 60)

Postmarks

1. CDSs for MaPO and FPOs arrived at Corfu on 25th April 1916, while ink was delivered as late as July 1916. CDSs were distributed to MaPO and FPOs *upon* arrival in Salonika. Therefore, it was *impossible for MaPO to “apply FPO 999 cancels January to April 1916 on Corfu”* (p. 53).

2. Earliest dates of use for CDS Nr. 999 known to me are 21st May in thin black violet ink and 24th May 1916 in blue ink. During June and the first few days of July green ink was also used.
3. Earliest dates of use for CDSs at lower levels of command known to me are from early June (FPOs from the Cavalry division from 6th to 8th June 1916) in violet or red ink (*not* August 1916).
4. According to a report from the *third decade of June 1916*, due to the lack of proper ink FPOs from the 1st Army *did not use CDSs*, while *all other FPOs applied CDSs in violet or red ink*.
5. Green (MaPO 999 only) and violet ink were occasionally used from 1916 to 1918 as well.
6. There are *two variants of CDS 999 with a complete inner circle*: with 14 and 12 vertical bars.
7. The telegraph section of MaPO 999 occasionally applied a **“mute” CDS** – a pre-exile CDS with the inscriptions in the upper and lower arch being removed (*not* recorded in the book).
8. **CDS Nr. 497** is also an old pre-exile CDS (with posting hours in the date bridge) with the old plate being replaced by a newly engraved one. Only CTO and *partial forgeries* are known to me.

Provisional postmarks of FPO 315: CDS Nr. 72 and CDS Nr. 208 (pp. 58 – 60)

1. The withdrawal of **CDS 72** mystery was solved by *Mr. Bourguignat* who in the French archives found that in early April 1918 the Serbian authorities wanted to open a *MPO in Lerin with postal code 72*. Therefore, the CDS 72 was withdrawn from FPO 315 and replaced with CDS 208². The earliest known date of use of CDS 72 at FPO 315 is 10.11.1917 *not* 15.11.1917.
2. As for “*why the short use of 208*” (page 60), well, a new CDS with the *proper* code 315 (Type II) was finally produced and given to FPO 315 so there was no more need for provisional CDS 208. Since *CDS 315 Type II is known used from 28th April* it is *impossible* to find mail from “early May” (p. 59) cancelled with CDS 208. The latest day of use of CDS 208 known to me is 24th April.

Serbian POs in North Africa

1. There were **two** Serbian POs in Bizerte (*not* one – page 60):
 - a. **Serbian MPO Bizerte** at the Command of reserve troops and NCO schools, and
 - b. **FPO 1917** at the 1st (later 2nd) Serbo-Croat-Slovenian infantry regiment.
2. MPO Bizerte received **two CDSs** with the inscription “**Poste militaire Serbe/Bizerte**” in spring 1918. Before April 1918 the MPO occasionally verified postal order receipts with its censor mark.
3. FPO 1917 had no CDS. Only administrative cachets are known.
4. There was *no other Serbian PO, POF or censor in North Africa*. Locations mentioned on pages 65 – 69 are hospitals *covered by the civil Tunisian/Algerian, not the Serbian military postal system*.

FPO at Serbian voluntary corps in Odessa/Dobrudja (pp. 71 – 74)

² By the way, figures in “208” add up to 10. Serbian word for ten is “deset”, i.e. it has the same initial “D”.

Commenting on the subject, Mr. Sherwood-Jenkins writes: “He (Miodrag Vuković) wrongly assumes that the unit cachet is evidence of a Serbian FPO operating in Russia ... It (post card sent from Petrovgrad) also bears the standard Russian war censor mark ...” (p. 73).

Here I respectfully disagree with Mr. Sherwood-Jenkins:

1. The cachet in question is *not a unit cachet, but the cachet of its FPO*. The inscription on it clearly reads “**ВОЕННАЯ ПОЧТА СЕРБСКАГО ДОБРОВОЛЬЧЕСКАГО КООПЕРАЦИОННОГО КОРПУСА**”, or in English translation “**FIELD POST OFFICE OF SERBIAN VOLUNTARY CORPS**”. It is not clear to me *how the existence of FPO’s cachet proves the non-existence of the FPO itself*.
2. The late Prof. Dr. Jovan Veličković had a post card with one of the unit’s official cachets. It is similar in design but *there are no words “ВОЕННАЯ ПОЧТА”* (i.e. Field Post Office) in its inscription.
3. I am not an expert in Russian war time censure, but simple “**Война / цензура**” mark is hardly a “*standard Russian war censor mark*” used in Petrograd during autumn 1916. It is a *Serbian* censor mark, most probably produced in Salonika at the same time as the FPO’s cachet.

Serbian military postal officers (POFs) in France and Italy

1. Only the Military school in Jausiers, the Depot in Toulon and the Delegate in Marseille are confirmed in archives. *Le Vaguemestre* cachets are known from Jausiers and Toulon. POFs *maybe* existed in Bordeaux and Le Havre. Other locations (schools, hospitals etc) were *not* covered by the Serbian military but by the French civil postal service. Some hospitals had *French* vaguemestres.
2. There was *no* Serbian or French subject called the “27th Brigade Cadre, Marseille” (page 150). But there was (and still is) a *building at 27 Boulevard Corderie, Marseille*, near the old port, in which were premises of the Serbian military *Delegate at the port of Marseille*. Address “27 B^d Corderie, Marseille” is clearly written in red ink. *État Major* does *not* mean “Chief of Staff”.
3. Serbian military POFs in Italy existed in Rome and Brindisi, but no postal or censor marks are known. A letter from Dr. H. Dietz’s collection suggests that there was one in Taranto as well.

Unexpected transit datestamps and censor marks (not covered)

1. As a rule, mail from regimental FPOs received transit CDSs/censor marks in the superior unit. But during the preparation and execution of major offensive actions some regiments were detached to another higher or stand-alone unit, or transferred over a long distance. In such cases mail from them received datestamps and censor marks at *temporary higher or the nearest unit*.
2. Twelve such cases are known to me, eight of them confirmed by official documents. One of them is mail from FPO 4 bearing transit datestamps/censor marks of FPO 315 instead of 603.

Important parts of postal history in exile being paid little or no attention

1. ***Links with foreign postal services.*** Foreign (and to a much lesser extent domestic) postal traffic was highly dependent on foreign postal systems. Links (permanent or upon need) were: **a) French:** TeP 512 (*Corfu*), 502, 504 and 510 (*Salonika*). TeP 520C and upon

- need 509 (*Bohemica*) and 511 (*Itea*). **b) British:** BAPO X (*Salonika*, upon need). **c) Italian:** civil POs in Rome, Brindisi and Taranto, military POs in Santi Quaranta, Ersek and/or Kastoria. **d) Greek:** civil POs in Corfu and Salonika for mail to Greece (Greek stamps only).
2. **Correspondence with occupied Serbia and Austro-Hungary** was established in May 1916. Correspondence of *volunteers from Austro-Hungary with their families* was enabled in August 1918. The topic is too complex to be dealt with in detail in this article.
 3. **POW correspondence.** Except from copy-pasted Mr. J. Bourguignat's PC of an Austrian POW and a short (end erroneous) notice on p. 107, there is nothing else on this part of Serbian POW postal activities. The topic is too complex to be dealt with in detail in this article.

Interesting parts of Serbian postal history in exile not covered by Mr. Sherwood-Jenkins

1. **"Short cut" mail.** Mail thrown over front lines. Such mail is rare.
2. **Rescued mail.** Mail saved from bombed train or torpedoed ship (J. Bourguignat) Scarce.
3. **Intercepted mail.** Mail intercepted by German agents in Switzerland (discovered H. Dietz).

Postage stamps, IRCs and postal stationery (not fully covered)

1. **Serbian postage stamps.** The definitive ("Corfu") issue was released on 1st October 1918 and distributed to Ministerial PO, MPO Bitolj, MaPO 999 and FPOs of the 1st and 2nd Armies.
2. **Serbian International reply coupon** was (re)introduced in exile on 19th May 1917. Only one used copy (in very poor condition) is known to me, sold on 11.8.1917 at the Ministerial PO.
3. **Greek postage stamps and postal stationery.** In the early days soldiers and refugees were advised to use Greek stamps and postal stationery. Later they were used for destinations in Greece only, and senders had to buy them at local Greek PO. Serbian POs did not sell them.
4. **French postage stamps and postal stationery.** Stamps were sold at all Serbian POs except regimental FPOs and MPO Zeytinlik. A document from March 1918 states that the following were sold at MaPO at that moment: 5, 10, 25 and 40c. Yet, Serbian POs accepted all properly pre-franked mail. Postal stationery is either philatelically inspired or brought from France.
5. **Tunisian stamps and stationery.** 5, 10, 15/10, 25 and 35 c stamps and 10 c letter-card.
6. **Italian postage stamps.** Used for mail sent in sealed bags to POFs in Brindisi and Rome for distribution to Italy and Switzerland, not sold to the public.

Serbian military stationery (not covered)

1. Throughout the exile period old *pre-exile military PCs* are known used by Serbian soldiers.
2. Two **central issues** are known to me: "PC of Serbian warriors" with imprinted 10 para stamp "King Peter on battlefield" and military picture PCs with war scenes and photo of King Peter.

3. PC described as “French printed for use only by Serb soldiers” (p.112) is the *second Serbian Corfu issue of military PCs*. *First issue*, discovered by R. M. Stevens, has a somewhat different header.
4. **Local Jausiers issue**, originally presented by Mr. J. Bourguignat, is described in the book.
5. **Local Bizerta issue** is similar to contemporary Tunisian military PCs, but with text in Cyrillic.
6. **Local Odessa multicolour illustrated issue** was printed in Odessa for regiments of the Serbian voluntary corps. It bears Coat-of-Arms, flags and header with denomination of regiments.
7. **Post cards for POWs in Serbian captivity**. Two different PCs are known to me, one single (most probably an essay) and one with a reply card.

Censorship service (pp. 90 – 106)

Organisational structure of Serbian military censorship system (pp. 92–93).

1. There were *not* four different censor offices at GHQ and *no* censor office operated at PT Department of GHQ. There was *just one operating at MaPO of GHQ*.
2. Staffing and periods of operation given in the table on p. 93 are mostly *wrong or incomplete*.
3. Censor offices at MPOs are *completely omitted* (unless confused with FPOs).
4. There were *no* Serbian censors/postal clerks in French schools and hospitals.
5. I have no idea what censure at “*MPO at the Ministerial Post Office on Corfu*” means.
6. The main “missing link” is **Main military censure** - umbrella body for two offices with *specific tasks and not meddling in everyday correspondence*: **a)** *Main military censure for combat area (MMC/CA, at Intelligence Department of GHQ, Salonica)* with 2 censors in the PTT section and 2 in the newspaper section. **b)** *Main military censure for rear area (MMC/RA, at the Military ministry, Corfu)* with 4 censors in the PTT section and 2 censors in the newspaper section, and **c)** *MMC/RA branch office for North Africa* – established in summer 1918 in Bizerte.
7. Another “missing link” in the Serbian exile censorship chain is **Commissioner (confidential agent) for censure** – existed at the Ministry of Public Works, Corfu, with 1 censor (commissioner).

Censor marks used on Corfu (covered partially or not covered at all)

1. **Before 29th April 1916** – *Four (not one) censor marks were used at Corfu during the early period*: **a)** the one described and depicted in the book; **b)** same, but with (dotted?) line for signature at the bottom; **c)** old, pre-exile censor mark “Војном контролом / прегледано” (i.e. By military control examined), and **d)** Censor mark in Type IV (**cI**) (at least Nr. 6 – Dr. R. M. Stevens).
2. **After 29th April 1916** – **a)** First type in French (decorated letters) was introduced *only in mid December 1916*. In March/April 1917 it appears *with visible distortions*. Last known date of use of “A” variant is 6th June 1917. **b)** Second type in French (sans-serif, lightface letters) known used in Corfu from 30th June 1917 to mid March 1919. Until late October 1917 known *only* in red ink. From April 1919 to late February 1920 used in Belgrade. Known in *green* ink as well. **c)** Censor mark “ГЛАВНА/ВОЈНА ЦЕНЗУРА” meaning “Main military censure” (not “Chief military censor”) was a “*helping hand*” extended by MMC/RA from 6th to 29th June 1917.

3. **Commissioner for censure at the Ministry of Public Works** (not listed in the book) – Double-circle cachet with inscription “Прегледала/Војна Цензура” and a dot in centre. Used 1917 – 1918, in violet. Before that the commissioner applied some *nihil obstat* notice and his initials in m/s.

Censor marks used on the Salonika front not listed in the book

1. **Provisional censor mark used at FPO 216** – Straight-line cachet reading “ПРЕГЛЕДАЛА ЦЕНЗУРА / БОЈНЕ ПОШТЕ БРОЈ 216” (i.e. “EXAMINED BY CENSURE / AT FIELD POST OFFICE NR. 216”). Used for a few days only in early September 1917 at FPO 216. Scarce.

Table “Cross reference of censor marks...” (pp. 99 – 102); other (pp. 103, 129, 165)

The table is compiled from sources 10 to 40 years old and needs serious updates and brush ups.

1. Out of 69 known censor marks in Type IV/A and V/A (his **cIb** and **cIIb**) 43 are not recorded.
2. In 53 instances the periods of use of regular and/or (listed or not listed by Mr. Sherwood-Jenkins) distorted cachets are extended, so that they *overlap* considerably or totally. That implies simultaneous use of regular and distorted censor marks, thus *sending the wrong information* that there were two different cachets, not just stages of deterioration of the same one.
3. Total of 51 known variants of ink colour are *not recorded* in the table.
4. Total of 26 censor marks are *not referenced* to all FPOs/MPOs at which they were used.
5. *The field for ink colours is blank* for ten censor marks. I have no idea what that could mean.
6. In two instances *censor marks in Type IV and Type VII are confused* (Nos. 22 and 34).
7. An interesting (and rare) *sub-variant of “A” variants* is not recorded at all. Namely, cases are known when censors provisionally *repaired* their damaged cachets by thin wire and thread, controlled heating or solvent, leaving visible traces on censor marks themselves.
8. He adds two *previously not recorded* Type V/A variants (his **cIIb**) – Nr 38 and 62 – without illustration. However, given the period of use of the distorted cachet 62 (“during 1918”) does not fit in with what I have or have seen. Namely, undistorted cachets are known *as late as March 1919*.
9. A number of periods of use should be updated, but that is less important.
10. Censor marks Nr 48 and 50 in Type V/A are *not “previously not recorded type”* (p. 103). Gradual deterioration from slightly to heavily distorted cachets can be easily traced.

Censor marks in Type VI (cIII) used before 29th October 1918

Commenting on the subject Mr. Sherwood-Jenkins wrote: “*This is another of those areas where official records differ from actual practice... It is logical that MPO 333 was up and running from 25th. During the first four days of operation from 25th-29th October 1918 censor marks of this type were usually cancelled with datestamp of br. 999.*” Well, I again respectfully disagree with him.

1. On 11th October 1918 eleven censors were appointed to the censor office at the yet-to-be Serbian MPO Salonika 333, six of them already working as censors at MaPO 999. *Consequently, they received new censor cachets.* Upon receiving new cachets, censors had to return the cachets they had been using up to then. At the same time they had to

continue their work at MaPO 999. That is why one can find new censor marks used in conjunction with CDS 999.

2. The bulk of MaPO 999 headed for Skoplje on 27th October early in the morning. However, a part of the staff (with one CDS 999) stayed in Salonika for the purpose of handing over duties, premises and equipment. Taking over took place on 27th and 28th October 1918. How could SMPOS 333 use CDS 999 from 25th to 29th October?
3. 25th October 1918 as earliest known date of use of new censor marks is some *40 years old*. Current earliest known date of use is *17th October 1918*. And on that day SMPOS 333 was definitely *not* up and running. Well, to be honest, *I made the same mistake in 1977*.
4. Up to now seven (*not* six) cachets of this type are known, with numbers running from 60 to 66, four of them used before 29th October 1918. Since there were 11 censors, we can expect that cachets with numbers 67 to 70 are waiting to be discovered. As 6 out of 11 censors were from the censor office at MaPO 999, we can expect two more cachets used in conjunction with CDS 999 (probably Nos. 60 and 61), possibly even as early as 14th or 15th October.

Censor marks used by Serbian Voluntary corps in Odessa.

1. Rectangular boxed straight line cachet in Russian “Война / цензура” (i.e. Military censure).
2. Boxed cachet “І. бригада/І Сербской Добровольческой/дивизіи/Д. Ц.” (i.e. “I brigade/of the I Serbian Voluntary division/D.C.”). Initials Д. Ц. are an abbreviation for “Департамент цензуры” (meaning “Department of censure”). From Prof. Dr. Jovan Veličković’s collection.

Now it is time to amend myself

I just noticed that in my previous works, including the book from 2016, I missed out on giving some important explanations, FPO of the 3rd Army being the only exception.

Disbanding the unit ***does not necessarily mean the immediate and complete termination of activities of its FPO***. After redeployment of the combat and logistic parts to other units, FPOs continued to serve HQs in liquidation for a certain period of time. Such mail from regimental FPOs is not known to me, but it is quite possible that CDSs of regiments disbanded on 3rd January 1917 exist used for a certain period of time after this date. With FPO 333 that lasted two months, but on the regimental level I do not believe it exceeded two or three weeks. The same goes for the military school in Jausiers.

Editor’s note: Mr Vucković kindly provided a number of illustrations along with his comments. Due to lack of space, I have not used them in this edition but I hope to be able to use some in the future.

Reply to responses to Monograph 13 by the author Marcus Sherwood-Jenkins

First of all I would like to thank all those who have sent me their comments. The response to the monograph has, overall, been very positive. As expected with any such work it becomes dated as soon as it is published as the very act of publication draws out new information. There are some areas of academic disagreement, differences in interpretation, focus and methodology. Similarly there are one or two instances where the odd mistake has crept under the radar and has been spotted by the eagle-eyed reader.

In particular Messrs Bourguignat, Stevens and Vuković have written to YSG with some points that require a response, rather frustratingly in some cases Messrs Bourguignat and Stevens however make bald statements or pronouncements of ‘facts’ without providing backing evidence or information. I shall address all points individually.

There is one question they have all asked however which is why the work did not reference Mr Vuković’s recent publication “*The Serbian Military Postal System in Exile 1916-18*” Belgrade 2016. To this there is a simple answer, I was not able to obtain one and received no response to the two letters sent to the author, one personal and one in my capacity as Library Acquisitions Manager for the Royal Philatelic Society Library in London. I am happy to say that this situation is now resolved, the book had sold out and the letters it seems never reached Mr Vuković who has kindly offered to let me have an electronic copy both for myself and for the RPSL Library.

Now to the detailed responses:

Response to the points raised by Jerome Bourguignat:

1. **French International Postal Rates.** Mea culpa on this one, simply an oversight, whilst the internal domestic/military French rates used within the French Empire were changed on 1st January 1917 the International U.P.U. rate used to send mail from the government to Switzerland did not change during the war. For the benefit of our readers I hope to reproduce the full range of French tariffs relevant to the period in a future JP.
2. **Sources:** Mr Bourguignat wraps up several distinct points in a couple of sentences and it is worth deconstructing these and taking each point individually:
 - a. **That not all available sources were used: ‘There are articles in French & Serbian magazines...etc’** there are a couple of issues that Mr Bourguignat overlooks:
 - i. Whilst I am fine with Russian, Dutch, German and Italian I cannot be expected to speak and read every language in the world nor read every publication in the hope that it *might* contain an article of interest. Many publications have no detailed indexes available nationally let alone internationally or in searchable form.
 - ii. Even in the archives and library of the RPSL (perhaps the largest specialist philatelic library in the world) there is no comprehensive database of all philatelic publications. In addition to which there are many known publications which decline to provide copies or indexes to such libraries.
 - iii. Likewise there are many authors who do not supply reference copies of their works to libraries such as that of the RPSL. The small number of publications in the RPSL library on Serbian philately was in fact one of the drivers behind my work and as the Library Acquisitions Manager I would welcome copies of any and all works (books, monographs, research papers etc) on Balkan philatelic subjects as this is an under-represented

area in the library's collections. (Donations can be sent to me at The Royal Philatelic Society, London. 41 Devonshire Place, London, W1G 6JY, UK).

3. **Archival research:** Mr Bourguignat's assertion that there is only one way to approach a work such as this '*...writing only by referring to indisputable sources, which are in essence administrative regulations, reports and so on from the archives.*' is fundamentally flawed, archives are by their nature selective and his approach can and does lead to many inaccurate conclusions. Research and the advancement of knowledge requires a multi-disciplinary approach that combines archival research, field research, historical context, an understanding of human nature and of the advantages/disadvantages and problems inherent in each discipline. This is a topic of highly significant import for philately which I would like to expand on in future.
4. **Copyright breach:** Mr Bourguignat claims that I have breached his copyright by quoting from his earlier work published in YSG. This is not the case,
 - a. The work credits Mr Bourguignat.
 - b. The YSG copyright statement clearly states that copyright on the content of the YSG journal is jointly owned by the author and YSG. If something written by Mr Bourguignat has appeared in YSG before and I am writing a YSG monograph then I have every right to use the material.
 - c. I would draw his attention to the monographs preamble in particular pages 9 & 10 – 'Conventions' and the sub-section on page 10 'cited works'.
 - d. The Journal and monograph are published in England and under English law in academic works, research and journalism there is the principle of 'fair use'. Given that the author is not seeking nor obtaining any commercial gain from the monograph which is published by a 'study group' fair use also applies.
5. **The origin of the Postes Serbes cachet.** Mr Bourguignat criticises the statement on page 77 that "*as part of maintaining their national identity the ministry decreed that all items passing through Serbian Post Offices must be struck with a cachet "Postes Serbes" in addition to the postmark.*" His critique is based upon the fact that such a decree has not been found in the French, Serbian or UPU archives. This critique is a classic clash between the pedantic archival researcher and a historian who is looking at a wider picture and allowing for nuances of meaning.
 - a. A decree is simply an official order, it is not always written, it may for example be a verbal order, a command or a proclamation none of which would necessarily appear in the archives.
 - b. Archives are seldom complete and the absence of the decree does not mean it did not happen.
 - c. The original writer from whom the quote originated many years ago may well have had access to a source that has been lost or remains in a private archive.
 - d. The decree would be consistent with the known aim of the Serbian government which was to preserve 'Serbia' as a 'Nation in exile' rather than a collection of refugees. The allies initially wanted to integrate Serbian forces within the allied armies at Salonika but the Serbian government insisted on maintaining a separate army for this very reason just as they maintained a government on Corfu.
 - e. The "*Postes Serbes*" cachet served the purpose of maintaining national identity – it has no other purpose than declaring that an item of mail is being handled by the Serbian Post Office.
 - f. National Archives, like all archives, are subjective in the selection of documents that they keep and often documents which are not deemed relevant, do not 'fit' with government policy or are an embarrassment of some sort are destroyed. The

French, bleeding white at Verdun in 1916, were arguing strenuously to incorporate the Serbian forces into the allied armies but the Serbs, anxious not to be French cannon-fodder, wanted to remain as independent as possible. It is quite possible given the ‘spin’ the allies put on the Serbian exile and later Serb-French relations that documents relating to delicate disagreements were quietly pruned from the archives.

- g.** It is highly unlikely given the history of Serbia post WW1 that the Serbian archives are complete – besides Bureaucratic weeding, War, German occupation and Communist dictatorship will all have taken their toll.

So, whilst Mr Bourguignat is correct that a written decree has not yet surfaced and the decree cannot be proven ‘beyond reasonable doubt’ (burden of proof in a criminal court) I would say that, ‘on the balance of probabilities’ (burden of proof in a civil court) it is correct.

Response to the points raised by Richard Stevens:

- 1. Opening remarks:** Aside from the issue of reference to Mr Vuković’s book already addressed, Mr Stevens expresses his concern that the odd mistake and the publication of views contrary to his own may ‘*spread misinformation*’ because the monograph may be read separate from any corrections that may be published later. Whilst I do not in any way accept this comment, differences of opinion do not constitute misinformation, he does highlight one of the reasons behind my writing the monograph. Prior to the monograph (and Mr Vuković’s book) the information regarding Serbian Postal History of the 1915-19 period was fragmented and spread across various publications, journal articles and letters to the editor many of which are contradictory and also very poorly written. They also have to be read in conjunction with each other and when writing up my collection I had become exasperated with having to keep a dozen journals and books, written over a period of decades, open on the desk and keep cross referencing to check whether that what was written in one was not corrected next month or the month after. There was a definite gap for a consolidating work. Thus the idea for the monograph was born. Unbeknown to me of course Mr Vuković was working on a similar project, his book, which I became aware of during 2017 but was unable to access. A YSG monograph is subject however to stricter print deadlines than a book and the monograph had to go into print without my being able to incorporate Mr Vuković’s work.

V.P.Br.999 handstamp: Mr Stevens is adamant that this was only ever used in Salonika and never at Corfu. Unfortunately he cites nothing to back up the claim, I have yet to receive Mr Vuković’s text so it is possible that the answer lies there but until I receive definitive evidence I shall keep an open mind.
- 2. Postcard on page 90:** A fair cop, as always the mistakes in the manuscript are down to me and this one is mis-captioned. I acquired the item shortly before the monograph went to print and missed the obvious.
- 3. The card at the top of page 83:** As Mr Stevens rightly says it is difficult to expertise items from photographs.
- 4. Cover on page 108:**

 - a.** Mr Stevens makes the definitive statement that ‘*this cover has had the two 30 centimes stamps added, perhaps where another stamp has been removed*’. He does not however explain why he thinks this is the case other than the similarity of the pair to the CTO examples on page 88. These two stamps are however tied

- by the cachet to the cover, the cachet is not simply applied to the stamps themselves.
- b. He then states that *'On page 79 he correctly does not list the 30 as used at Corfu'*. This is wrong on three counts:
 - i. The table on page 79 shows the stamps *'Supplied to the Serbian Posts on Corfu'*
 - ii. *'Supplied to'* is not the same as *'used at'*.
 - iii. The text continues on page 80 *'note also that other values of French stamps are known to have been used legitimately as any French stamp was theoretically valid. These are rare though and usually arise when a soldier or official is travelling between France and Corfu and uses the stamps in his wallet rather than buying additional ones at the post office.'* It is thus perfectly possible to find a genuinely used 30 centimes stamp used at Corfu although it would not have been supplied by the post office there.
 5. Mr Stevens also states that *'I doubt also the inclusion of the 20 centimes stamp on the list'* without providing any reason for his doubt.
 6. **Page 110** – Mr Stevens states that the *'Postes Serbes'* handstamp was only used at Ministarska but then in the very next sentence goes on to say that a significant number of Voegeli covers exist with a 'Type II' Postes Serbes *'added after receipt at Weesen.'* He then goes on to say that these type II Weesen cachets *'should probably be called a fake'* – again without any back up for his claim.
 - a. Voegeli was acting as an agent of the Serbian Government in Switzerland processing Serbian mail, whilst it is quite possible that he saw an opportunity for some philatelic profit from his work it is also equally possible that the 'type II' Postes Serbes handstamp was being used at Weesen genuinely. On the balance of probability given his work in processing the mail and in the absence of any documentation of official protest I would suggest that these be treated as genuine usage.
 7. **Page 129** – Agreed, I mixed up the two number 22 censor marks.
 8. **Page 136** – I have to reserve comment on this as I have yet to see Mr Vuković's information on this, yes the printer's imprint shows printed at Corfu but the design is the 1915 King Peter on the Battlefield.

Response to the points raised by Miodrag Vuković:

Before addressing these I would like to add a special thanks to Mr Vuković for the offer of an electronic copy of his book for the detailed additional information which he has sent me, the time he has taken in doing this and last but by no means least for the gracious and polite nature of his correspondence.

I shall not comment on the additional information provided save to say thank you and will only comment on:

- Areas where I think there is scope for different interpretation.
- Areas where official process/records are at odds with events on the ground, (I note that Mr Vuković acknowledges my earlier point regarding the incompleteness of the Serbian records.)
- Areas of misunderstanding.

1. **An understandable misunderstanding:** There are one or two points at which Mr Vuković is at pains to point out that there was no Serbian military involvement in the post – for example some of the schools & hospitals in Bizerte and France. I have not made any claim that all these establishments were under the aegis of the Serbian military or Serbian Post Office. There is a basic crossing of wires here...Mr Vuković's book and his focus is "The Serbian Military Postal System in exile..." The subject of the Monograph is "The Postal History of the Serbian Nation in exile..." In places he writes as if my focus is the same when it has a wider vista. There is a lot of common ground but there are also differences. My title and the prominence given to the schools and hospitals outside the military system were deliberate choices as the entire philatelic focus to date has been on the military alone. One of the objectives was to bring to a wider audience the existence of Serbian exile postal material outside this narrow scope and to put the military postal history in a wider context. The fact that the mail of Serbian children in Algeria was outside the military post and that at Jausiers was within it does not make the postal history of the Algerian school any the less important or less worthy of study. However the concentration of philatelists on the military/government mail alone has resulted in these other establishments and exiles being hidden from view.
2. **'SCPS.....Only one PO on Corfu' (not Serbian Posts – p77)** We do not actually have a disagreement here I simply think that the slightly archaic English usage has not been understood 'Serbian posts' in the sentence 'The function of the Serbian Posts..' simply means 'The function of the Serbian Postal organisation'.
3. **'Postes Serbes' & Cover on page 110.** See comment 7 under response to Richard Stevens.
"'Postes Serbes' not the way to maintain and express national identity....but a required patch". I fundamentally disagree on this matter, any canceller – Greek, French, British, consular, fiscal or even a dumb cancel made from a key or block of wood could have provided a 'patch' suitable to cancel mail – *and all these solutions have at one time or another been used by other nations*. Likewise a straight line 'Corfu Post' 'FPO Corfu' or 'P.S.' could have sufficed. The very fact that the cancel states 'Postes Serbes' in full is an indication that it was intended to be a conscious statement of national identity. Parallels can be drawn with the '*..Francaise Libre..*' Free French handstamps of WW2, the cachets of the Czech Legion in WW1, the free Czech forces of WW2 and others. In all these cases the cachets had a clearly political function as well as a practical one of cancelling stamps. In respect of archival evidence as to why a decision was taken...I doubt it will turn up. We are not dealing with a huge bureaucratic machine like Royal Mail or the French Empires Postal Ministry we are dealing with a small government in exile on a small island trying to reform a government and army in the middle of a war. The decision on the wording of a postal handstamp would have been a decision taken by just a small number of officials, possibly as few as two – the postal official asked to design it and the minister who approved it. With the government and officials all present on Corfu within a small confine this decision may not even have been felt worth documenting, being simply made and executed – the specification and perhaps order/invoice for the handstamps may well exist but a written rationale for the wording?
4. **MPO's in Greece** – MPO's/FPO's standard/non standard usage. I understand the bureaucratic and on paper distinction between MPO's and FPO's - but I also understand that what is in the procedure manual of a bureaucrat can be very different from reality on the ground. The only real substantial difference on the ground is in respect of staffing and mobility. A FPO can be anything from a single junior officer in a tent to a company of 120 men, whereas an MPO has a fixed location and usually fixed establishment. Other

than that there is little difference except that the FPO will be more flexible in their interpretation of 'rules' taking a more pragmatic approach to the issues before them.

5. **Serbian Voluntary Corps Pgs 71-74.** There seems to be some misunderstanding here in terminology, 'Field Post Serbian Volunteer Corps' is a unit specific cachet. The unit is identified in the cachet. I have a very large collection of WW1 Russian censor and unit markings and the circular cachets often identify units down to a low organisational level – e.g. 1st Platoon 3rd Company 2nd Regiment, Hospital train of the 2nd company... 10th regiment etc etc. The existence of a circular cachet inscribed '*Field Post Serbian Volunteer Corps*' is an indication that a small military unit (the physical unit – e.g. an officer an N.C.O. and a couple of clerks in a tent) existed but is NOT evidence of a functioning independent Serbian Military Postal System – the Serbian FPO of the Volunteer Corps did not have a separate Serbian Postal System it used the Russian system. There is a fundamental difference between the Volunteer Corps in Russia and the Serbian Army in Salonika, the army in Salonika was independent and under the command of the Serbians themselves. The Volunteer Corps in Russia was formed by the Russians and was an integral part of the Russian Army – it fought as a unit but within a Russian corps/army command structure. Therefore its soldiers mail may well have been handed in at a 'Serbian FPO' tent but once it left the tent it was carried by the Russian Military Post. In respect of Russian war censorship this is a complex area of study but the basic censor mark is a simple Voijna Tsensura. Initially a quite complex system was initiated but the volumes of mail were so great that the censors were overwhelmed causing delays in the mail and a lot of simplification. I would add that Russian mail going abroad was sent via either Petrograd or Vladivostok these and Archangelsk being the only exit points Russia had once Turkey came in on the Central Powers side. The mail from the Serbian volunteers would have exited via Petrograd in 1916 as there was no route out South or Westwards from Odessa and the Vladivostok route would make no sense. The route would most likely be Odessa – Kiev – Moscow – Petrograd. The Russian war censors for foreign mail were concentrated at Petrograd and Vladivostok.
6. **Etat-major.** Mr Vuković states that this does not refer to a chief of staff, based upon my own NATO experience I disagree. The term refers to the staff of an army including all officers above the rank of colonel, all adjutants, inspectors, quartermasters, commissaries, engineers, ordnance officers, paymasters, intelligence officers, signallers and military Judge Advocates. It can also be used to refer to the warrant officers attached to such. Its precise definition in any given circumstance can vary according to the post, size of unit and context. In the context of the card in question I can see that Mr Vuković is correct regarding the address – the addressee being a military staff officer followed by 27 Bd. I incorrectly read Bd. as Brigade – the military abbreviation rather than Boulevard, the civilian abbreviation. In the context, believing the card addressed to 'Lt. Blagotich Etat-Major Serbe 27th Brigade' it would have translated into English as I said 'Lt. Blagotich, [office of] Chief of Staff, 27th Brigade'. Obviously the mistake regarding the abbreviation changes this to 'Lt. Blagotich, Serbian Staff, 27 Boulevard....'. Well spotted!

Thanks again to all who have contributed and continue to contribute to this fascinating area of study.

The Wounded Allies Relief Committee with Serbs in the Great War Part 2

by Prof.dr Milan Radovanović

Activity of The Wounded Allies Relief Committee in Serbia in the period 1916-1918

After the crossing of Albania and Montenegro, "On the appeal of the Serbian Red Cross, medical assistance from the Serbian Relief Fund and The Wounded Allies Relief Committee were among the first. The Wounded Allies Relief Committee sent through France one medical mission (two doctors, four nurses, ...) to Vido Island (near Corfu)".

The board of directors of this mission entrusted management to Major Alwyne Maude, so a Corfu hospital was established at the San Stefano villa in Agios Stefanos, about 20 km from Corfu.

"In February 1916 the French Red Cross invited him to open a hospital in Corfu to serve the retreating Serbians, and the following month, accompanied by his professionally qualified niece Dorothy (Dorothea) Clara Maude, (1879-1959), daughter of his brother Ashley and a doctor in Oxford, he set off for Brindisi from where, with much kit, they were carried by French destroyer to Corfu. Maude's account is vivid and personal, evidently based on a contemporary journal, and names and records conversations, but is at the same time modestly matter-of-fact - they knock up an 80-bed hospital in no time, with two extra marquees holding 25 beds each, and build the road to it. He outlines in detail the problems they faced - the provision of clothes (all the men's clothes were burned the moment they arrived), the Serbs' feeding habits, the prevalence of TB, how to bury the dead. The work, however, takes its toll, and eventually, exhausted and ill, he returns to England - loudly singing the praises of the Serbs he has left behind." (7)

"At the beginning of 1916 Dr. Dorothea Clara Maude met for the second time with the Serbs at Corfu at the invitation of her uncle Alwyne Maude (for the first time she came to Serbia as an anaesthesiologist and surgical assistant within the Fifth Unit of the Serbian Relief Fund (Second Unit of British Farmers)), who worked in Pozarevac since May 1915, and then shortly in Belgrade."

"Maude made her third expedition of the war, this time travelling to Serbia. She offered her service to the Serbian Relief Group and was recruited into No.5 Unit of the Second British Farmer's Ambulance ... Her destination was a small town in northern Serbia, Pozarevac... To prepare, Maude and those travelling with her spent the journey reading up on diseases new to her and rampant in Serbia including typhus, smallpox, malaria and relapsing fever, and other potential dangers such as plague and cholera... The Serbian offensive, which was the reason for Maude being sent to northern Serbia, had been delayed because of the Russian retreat, in fact, most of her work in and around Pozarevac would be checking disease instead of treating battle casualties." (8)

In mid-October 1916, the Corfu hospital was moved 60 miles north of Thessaloniki to Voden. Dr. Maude left the hospital on April 30, 1917 due to illness (9).



Figure 7: Picture of Dr. Maude (in white) with her dog Nitsa in Mikra in 1916 with nurses. (10)

“In Voden, on the Thessaloniki front, many Serbian soldiers were treated and found a cure for the body and soul in this hospital by advocating Dr. Maude ... The reorganised hospital extended its activities under the new name ‘Temporary Serbian-English Hospital No.1’.”

“In her diary, preparing to depart for Britain, she wrote: ‘Leave Vodena with many, many regrets for the dear Serbs whom I can never forget... All the possible patients and all the Serb soldiers whom we had brought from Corfu were lined up to say goodbye. Shook hands with all latter, who saluted and shouted ‘Spogum’ (goodbye) in unison. It was a dreadful moment.’”(10)

In Figure 8, the reverse of the Corfu Postcard (issue of Aspiotis) is shown: the PPC was sent in 1916 to England with the cachet of the English Field post office / W.4, the English censorship mark "Passed by censor No.231" and the administrative cachet of the Wounded Allies Relief Committee, reddish (card was auctioned at Philatelie Christoph Gärtner GmbH). This cachet is shown separately in the following figure (Figure 9).



Figure 8: PPC to England including the administrative cachet of the Wounded Allies Relief Committee (see Figure 9 for detail)



Figure 9: the cachet of the Wounded Allies Relief Committee (see Figure 8)

Note in conclusion: Dr. William Harold Graham Aspland, the head of the Hospital for the Wounded Assistance Committee in Kragujevac, among many other decorations, was decorated with the honorary Major of the Serbian Army.

Literature

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Letter to the Editor

In JP125 (March 2018), Dave Foster posed a question about a 1919 parcel card. The following answer was sent by Roger Morrell:

The imprint was a tax of 10 fillér (and equally 10 heller on Austrian cards) on the transport of parcels. It is not completely clear how much the card itself was (the 'ara' in Hungarian), possibly 1 fillér or 2 fillér, and these two costs do not normally appear in the charges that are written on the cards, nor in the value of the stamps that were applied to the card. It had to be paid in cash in addition to the postal costs for the parcel. The later SHS cards printed in Zagreb were also 10 fillér (filira). So the Hungarian imprint was not discounted under the SHS which continued to follow the same scheme of charging until the currencies were rationalised to the Dinar. Pre-war Serbia also had a similar tax on parcels.

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SATURDAY 4 AUGUST 2018

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On the first floor of the Latvian Club, 5 Clifton Villas, Bradford, BD8 7BY

Full details from Yvonne Wheatley

Convenor: Yvonne Wheatley, Weltevreden, 7 Manor Croft, Leeds, LS15 9BW.

Tel: 0113 2601978

Email: whyareuu@outlook.com

Macedonia Postal History, Part 3.

by Mike Whittaker

In the last of these articles I will look at the period from the late 1930's to independence in the 1990's, beginning with the issue by the Yugoslav P.O. of a set of four stamps on 1st August, 1938 to mark the opening of the King Alexander I Memorial Hospital in Demir Kapija. This treated railway employees, hence the Winged Wheel device in the commemorative cachet applied in red to an official cover to Cavtat (Figure 1).



Figure 1

From later in 1938 is an illustrated stationery card with a railway postmark for the route DJEVDJELIA – BEOGRAD 1 with a design frequently used for T.P.O. postmarks at the time, a double circle with the inner circle abbreviated to make space for the large figure of the route number beneath (Figure 2). In issue No 120 of “ Jugopošta “ I showed a 1935 T.P.O. mark of this type for the route SKOPLJE – BEOGRAD 2 : by 1939 this had been renumbered as 43, as shown on the cover to Maribor (Figure 3).

From 6th to 8th October, 1940, Skopje held its first Philatelic Exhibition: mail posted there received a 51mm x 37mm cachet reading “First Promotional Philatelic Exhibition of the Vardar Region in Skopje” with a drawing of the Vardar Bridge and the opening date. Illustrated in Figure 4 is a numbered commemorative cover with the title in an antique Cyrillic script and a vignette reproducing a Serbian 10 paras patriotic label of 1912.

On 6th April, 1941 the Axis invasion of Yugoslavia began and – as in 1915 – Bulgaria participated by invading Macedonia: Bulgarian troops occupied Skopje on 19th April and



Figure 2

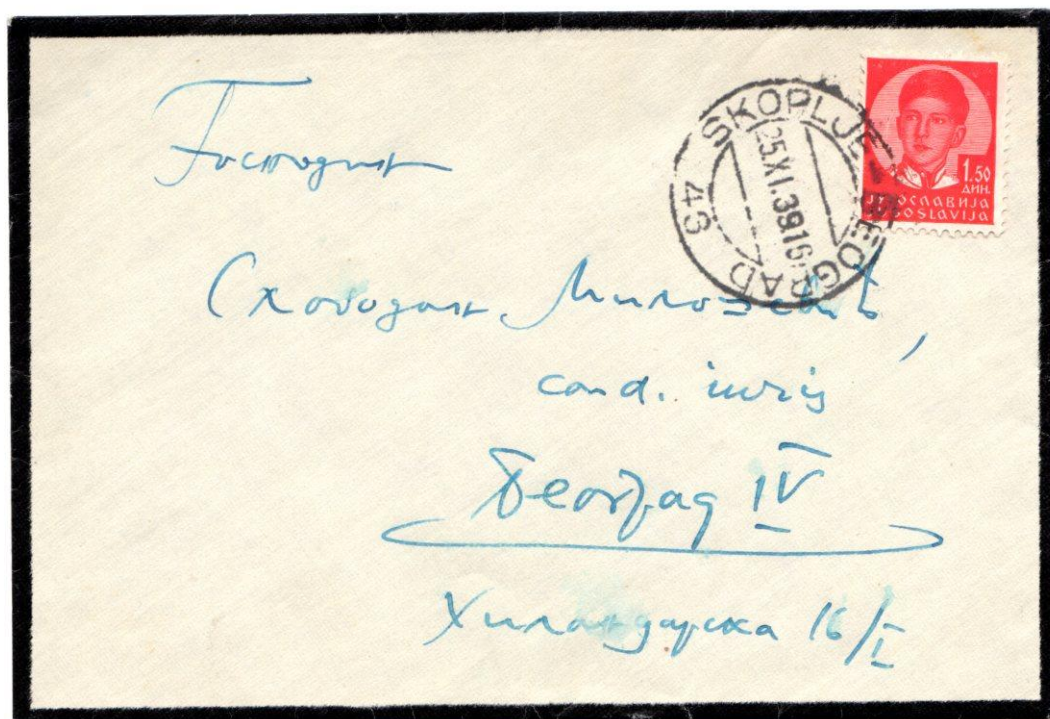


Figure 3



Figure 4

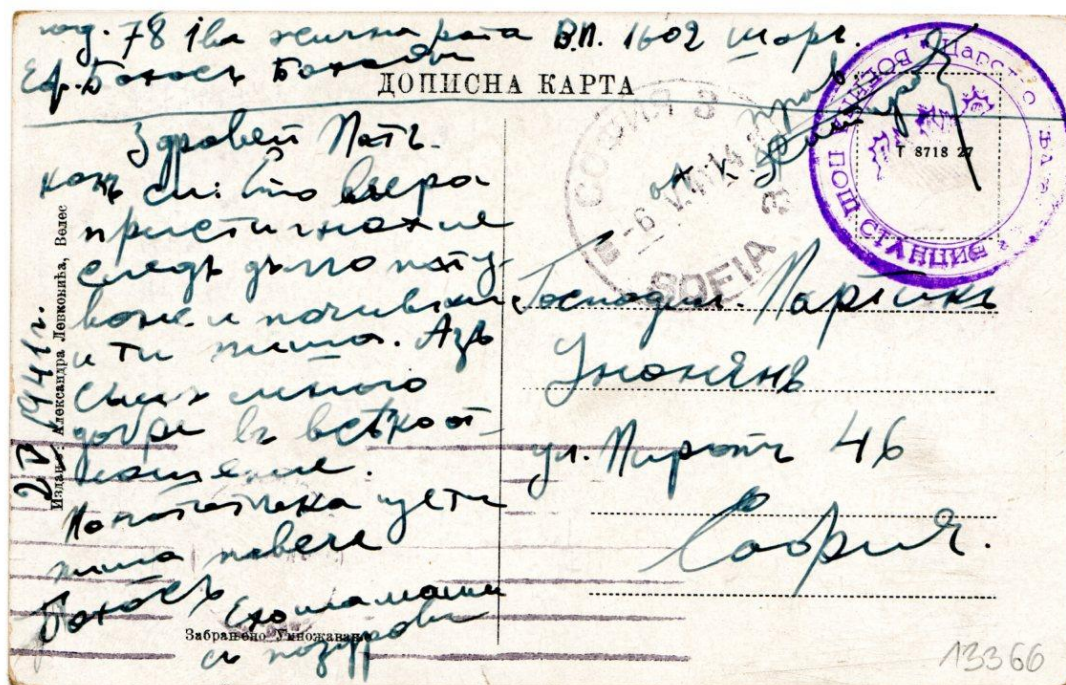


Figure 5

remained for three and a half years. Figure 5 shows an item from early in the occupation, a postcard (view of Veles Station) with a violet censor mark “Empire of Bulgaria / Military Post Office” and an arrival mark of Sofia No 3 Office of 6th May 1941. Bulgarian Inland postal rates applied in the occupied area: Figure 6 shows the common 1 lev Postcard rate on a card from Ohrid to Graf Ignatiev village in Bulgaria, 2nd August, 1942. Less common is the 7 leva Foreign Letter rate to destinations elsewhere in Occupied Europe, in this case (Figure 7) from Skopje to Cambrai in France, 19th May, 1942 with Wehrmacht censor markings and resealing strip applied in Vienna.



Figure 6 (reduced)



Figure 7 (reduced)

The occupation also brought another railway postmark: from 1941 to 1944 Skopje was linked with the Bulgarian capital by a T.P.O. which used a 30mm single circle marking “P(odvizhno) P(oshtenska) P(alishte) (“Travelling Post Office”) / Skopie – Sofia”, seen here on a postcard from Ohrid to Sofia, 28th May, 1942 (Figure 8).

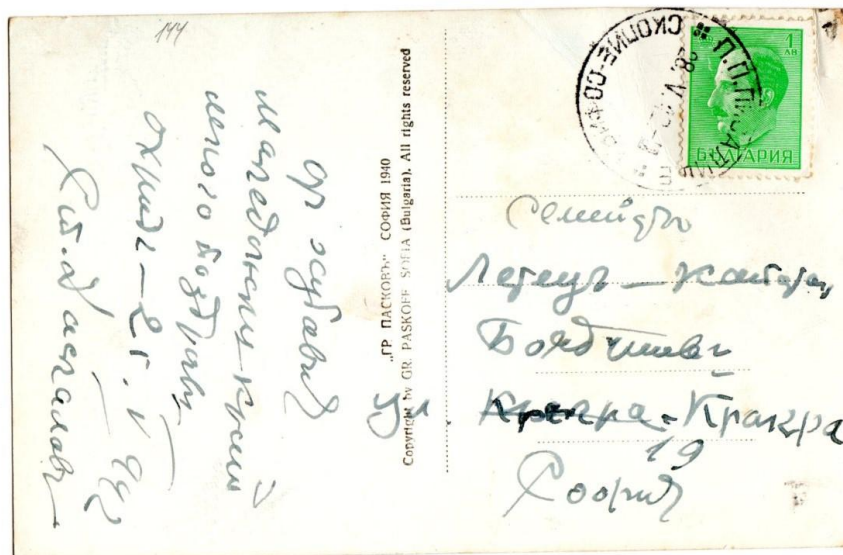


Figure 8 (reduced)

As the progress of the war became increasingly unfavourable to the Axis, the political situation in the Balkans changed significantly and on 5th September, 1944 Bulgaria broke off diplomatic relations with Germany and signed an Armistice with the Soviet Union. Macedonia was then occupied by German troops and declared independent. On 28th October eight Bulgarian stamps were overprinted with Macedonia and the date “8.IX.1944” then surcharged with new values by the Skopje printers A.D. Krainichanets. Gibbons list some of the many errors and varieties which are found on this issue and note that genuine use from Skopje and Kumanovo is known between 28th October and early November: I have not yet been lucky enough to add any of this material to my collection.

As part of their withdrawal from the Balkans, the Germans left Macedonia on 13th November. Partisan forces then controlled the area until its incorporation into the Democratic Federation of Yugoslavia in 1945. For more than 45 years Macedonia ceased to exist as a stamp-issuing territory but the Yugoslav P.O. occasionally issued commemoratives relating to historic and political events in the country. Emerging relatively unscathed from the civil wars in Yugoslavia and following a referendum, Macedonia declared independence on 8th September, 1991.

Yugoslav stamps were used in Macedonia until 1993: illustrated in Figure 9 is a cover from Skopje to Belgrade, 13th January, 1992 showing Yugoslav definitives of the 1990 issue used to pay the 6 dinars Foreign Letter rate in force from 10th December, 1991 to 31st January,



Figure 9 (reduced)

1992. In addition the cover bears the 2.5 dinar Obligatory Tax stamp issued on 30th December, 1991: the first issue of independent Macedonia, Gibbons notes that it was used throughout the country up to 8th September, 1992 (when it was superseded by the 30 dinars Wood Carvers stamp) but from rural post offices until the end of March, 1993.

Since 1991 nearly 800 Postage stamps and around 200 Obligatory Tax stamps have been issued - a substantial number, though the topics inspiring the many commemorative issues are always relevant to the history, geography and culture of the country. There have also been regular issues of postal stationery and Macedonia is a prolific issuer of commemorative postmarks: Figure 10 shows the two neatly combined by an 80 dinars stationery card and a cancellation commemorating the 150th anniversary of the 1843 Ottoman postmark of Bitolj so taking us back full circle to the first of these articles in "Jugopošta" No 117.

I hope that I have shown something of the interest to be found in the tremendous variety of postal history of one of the neglected areas of Yugoslav philately. While finishing this article in fact, Macedonia has been in the national news as attempts are once more made to reach an accord with Greece over an acceptable name for the country: whatever the result, it is bound to result in yet more fascinating postal history from Macedonia in the years ahead.



Figure 10 (reduced)

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