

THE "V FOR VIKTORIA" PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN

In early 1941, when the Allied military situation looked bleak, Prime Minister Churchill developed the "V for Victory" campaign to boost morale among the Allies as well as in the overrun nations. This effort was quite a success and caused the Germans to consider a counter effort. With the Wehrmacht having won all of the battles up to that time, it was felt that Germany should have its own "V for Viktoria" campaign. Thus, starting in July 1941, the mail stream became the focus of the propaganda, including stamps, postmarks, vignettes and a variety of patriotic cachets. It is known that the handstamps were distributed to post offices and some postal agencies in the Polish Generalgovernment to be applied to letter mail, and presumably the same arrangements were followed elsewhere.

This exhibit shows a selection of the types of propaganda that were used on covers and postcards. Because the conquered people were not interested in the German propaganda and probably destroyed any such mail coming into their hands, nearly all of what is seen today is on fieldpost, letters from Volksdeutsch (ethnic Germans living in the various countries), German business mail and letters sent to Germany. The campaign was never very successful and it was wound down in early 1942 after the successful winter counter-attacks by the Red Army on the Eastern Front.



The order in which the material is shown is from Germany proper first, followed by the occupied territories in the order that they were taken over by the Germans.

GERMANY

The Nazis did not spend much time or effort in propagandizing the home front since the assumption was that Germans were supportive of the war effort. However, there were patriotic postcards, cachets and vignettes with the "V" motif used in or to the home country, and examples are shown at the beginning of the exhibit.

Feldpost
5 October 1941
13 September 1941



Familie

*Otto Baran & Witz
II. Kaffeehaus*

Wien II., 27

Prater-Hauptallee 8

Ostmark

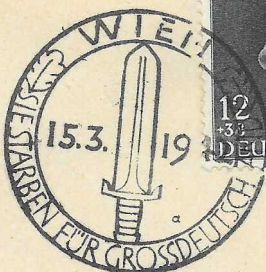
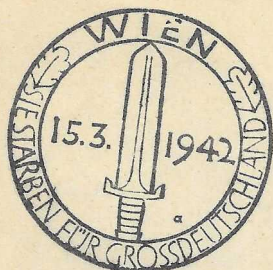


Examples of patriotic cachets applied to fieldpost covers sent to Saxony and Vienna. The upper example is inscribed "Germany Wins for Europe/Victory" which is the theme of much of this propaganda.

GERMANY

Wien
15 March 1942

Gotenhafen
29 May 1942



Shown here are a "V" cachet and a propaganda vignette with the identical wording "Germany wins on all fronts for Europe." The latter was applied to the reverse of a C.O.D. cover valued at RM 36.60 to Vienna.

GERMANY



Berlin
25 November 1941



Examples are shown above of the front and reverse of a "V" propaganda postcard prepared by Heinrich Hoffman in Munich, who was Hitler's official photographer. Considering that the map shows the offensive against the Soviet Union, it was produced after 22 June 1941. The special postmark is inscribed "Europe's United Front Against Bolshevism."

BOHEMIA & MORAVIA

Unlike in Germany proper, a considerable effort was made with the "V" campaign in the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, with machine and hand cancels, patriotic vignettes, and various cachets employed.



Olmütz
29 Aug. 1941

Prag
30 Sep 1941



Frau Joh. Müller,
Ing. Witwe,

Sal
Viktorie
Viktorie



Viktoria!!
Deutschland siegt an allen Fronten für Europa
Vítězství!!
Rise of the victor in front of the eyes of the world



Viktoria!!
Deutschland siegt an allen Fronten für Europa
Vítězství!!
Rise of the victor in front of the eyes of the world

Pan

V. Helebrant
st.
Krakov

PETROVICE

u Rakovníka



Upper fieldpost cover has an early cachet in German. Example below shows the red "V" postmark and black machine marking. These were used in a number of the larger cities and towns in the Protectorate.

BOHEMIA & MORAVIA

Leitomischl
27 Aug. 1941

Zlin
31 July 1941

Prag
14 Nov. 1941

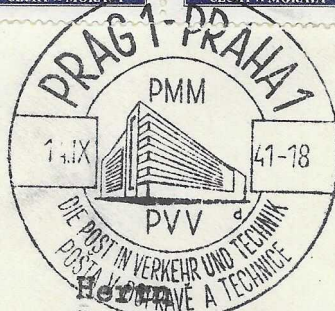
Viktoria!!
Deutschland siegt an allen Fronten für Europa!
Vítězství!!
Říše vítězí na všech frontách pro Evropu!



Viktoria!!
Deutschland siegt an allen Fronten
für Europa!



Lagodzinski
117,
liedru 72,
inm des Luecke.



Herrn
Wilhelm Theiss,
Regierungs u. Baurat,
Berlin - Charlottenburg, 5.,
Neue Kantstrasse 15.

Viktoria! Deutschland
siegt an allen Fronten für Europa.

Different examples of "Germany Wins on All Fronts for Europe" cachets, including ones in German and bilingual Czech/German language types.

BOHEMIA & MORAVIA

Prossnitz
Sept. 1941

Mahrisch
Ostrow
2 Oct. 1941

Pardubitz
6 Aug. 1941

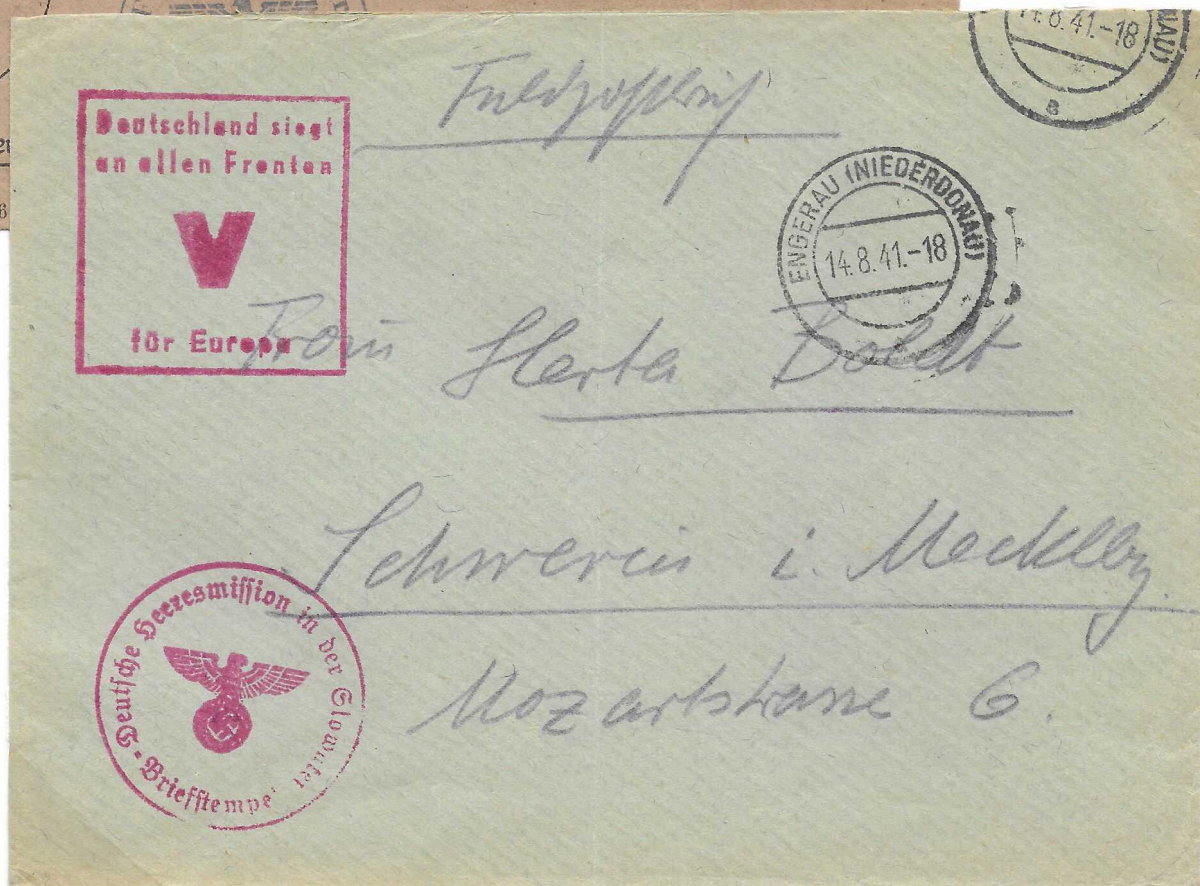


Unusual bilingual propaganda label (only such example seen by exhibitor) and very large cachet used on official Protectorate mail.

BOHEMIA & MORAVIA; SLOVAKIA

Deutsche
Reichspost
15 Sept. 1942

Engerau
14 Aug. 1941



Upper cover originated from a fieldpost station at Prossnitz in Moravia. It was handled through the office for German Mail in Prague, which used the marking inscribed "Deutsche Reichspost." Lower example was from the German Army Mission in Slovakia and sent through the town of Engerau, which had been annexed by Germany at the time of the Munich Agreement.

POLAND

The “V” campaign in the Generalgouvernement, which was the part of western Poland not annexed directly to Germany following the division of territory with the Soviet Union, was fairly low key since the Poles were unlikely to become supporters of a German victory. However, several different cachets can be found.



Koluszki
10 Aug. 1941

Radomski
1 Aug. 1941



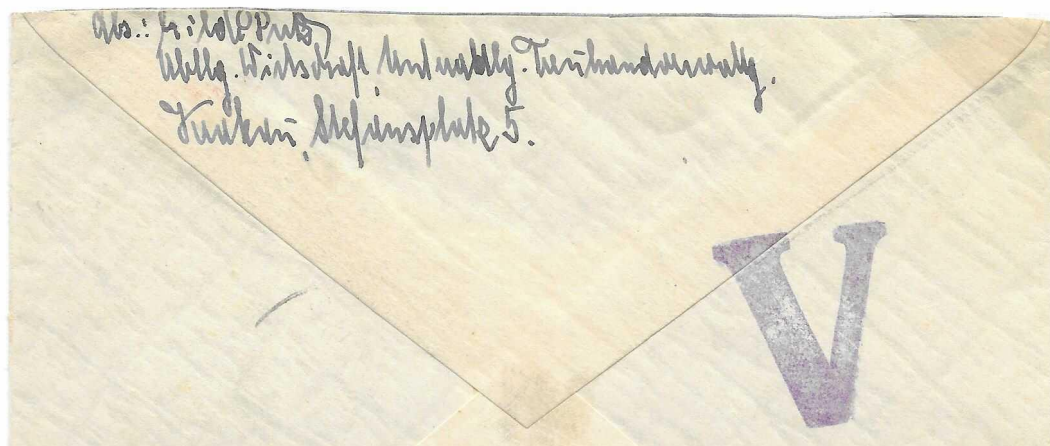
Postal card and cover with "Germany Wins on All Fronts" cachets in Polish and struck in red and purple. Interestingly, the lower example was sent to the International Red Cross in Geneva.

POLAND

Krakau
7 Aug. 1941

Tarnow
27 July 1941

Lezajsk
3 Sept. 1941



Cover and postal cards from the Generalgouvernement struck with different versions of the "V" cachet. The lower card was sent to an addressee near Lwow in the former Soviet Zone following the German invasion of Russia.

NORWAY

This occupied country was the only one that issued special “Viktoria” stamps under the German occupation. In August 1941, the entire set of the entire set of 19 definitive stamps depicting a posthorn or the Norwegian lion was overprinted with a large “V” in black. In addition, a twentieth stamp with a white “V” in the design and overprinted postal cards were issued.

Oslo
20 Sept. 1941
23 Jan. 1942

Sandvika
22 Sep. 1941



Cover shows five of the overprints plus the white "V" stamp used to Finland. Below are overprinted postal cards sent to Germany and the Netherlands. Two of the items have the "V" machine cancel that was supplied to the larger cities and towns.

NORWAY

Feldpost
9 Oct. 1941



A special "Viktoria" vignette was supplied to the troops in Norway to be used on mail. Examples exist only on fieldpost letters (usually on the reverse and uncanceled) but postmarked copies are quite elusive.

NETHERLANDS; LUXEMBOURG

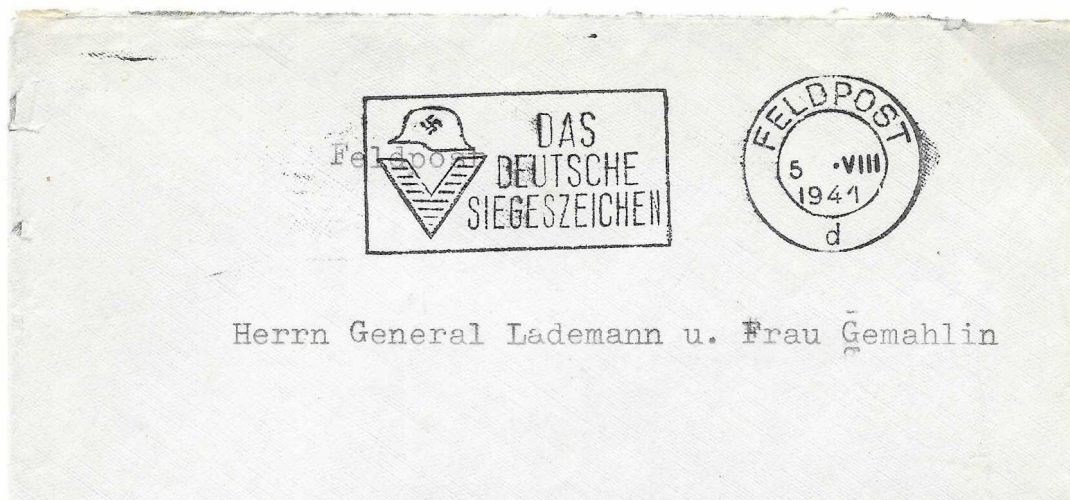
Shown below are the only examples of Victory propaganda from these territories that have been found by exhibitor in a couple of decades of collecting. The vignette inscribed "Germany Wins on all Fronts for Europe" was printed in the Dutch national color of orange. The card from Luxembourg has a large "V" and says simply "Hitler Wins."



Upper example is affixed to a special delivery letter sent from Amsterdam to Berlin. The postcard was sent by SS fieldpost through the German official mail office (Dienstpost) in Luxembourg.

BELGIUM

A special machine cancel with the inscription "The German Victory Symbol" was used at the main fieldpost office in Brussels. The only other example of Victory propaganda seen used from this country by exhibitor is a vignette with the same wording.



Feldpost
5 Aug. 1941

Liege
13 Sept. 1941



Above is shown the special machine cancel on a personal fieldpost letter from a German female guard (Wachtführerin) to a General and his wife in Berlin. Cover below sent by a member of the Armaments Command in Liege to a commercial firm.

SERBIA

For some reason, the occupation authorities in Serbia were enamored of propaganda vignettes, and large ones at that. As a result, several different designs were provided.

Prokuplje

Petrovac
17 Dec. 1941



Upper example is an official cover sent from Prokuplje to Nish. Fortunately, it was unfranked so that the huge label didn't cover any stamps. Below is a cover from the Banat with a small label of the same design depicting a hand with torch.

27 Ex. ~~Турсов~~ П. Погода
апреля 1877
всего 100 руб. 37.

Svrljig



YUJUGOSLAVIJA
a Jugoslavija
le Yougoslavie

DOPISNA KARTA

POSTALE



Personale degli



Сврљиг
Svrljig
№ 40

R

№ 40

A second design, again in two sizes, shows a German soldier striding across the landscape. In addition, there is an example of a third design, tied to a piece of a registered cover by the censor marking.