



Norway at War

- Extraordinary actions on mail from Norway



Germany's attack on Poland the 1st of September 1939, marked the start of the World War II. It is the most important conflict in the history, and the largest historical event that affected Norway in the 20th century. The German attack on Norway was 9th of April 1940, and the liberation was 8th of May 1945.

The goal of the exhibit is to show the extraordinary actions that occurred during the war. It shows mail in or from Norway during the whole of WWII, and how the war affected the mail. The postal censorship constitutes the major part of the collection, but it also shows other effects of the war, e.g. postal routes, postal tariffs, returned mail for different reasons due to the war, provisional cancels, etc.

Importance: Germany had a huge military force (at the most 380 000) that could have been used at other fronts. It was necessary to protect the iron ore export from Sweden during the winter, so Germany could continue the war armament. Additionally, the strategic location of Norway was a great threat for the supply convoys to the USSR. For this reason, was the Norwegian mail strongly affected by the war conditions.

The exhibit does not cover POW mail as a separate subject, but have some of these objects to show the censorship or postal routes. Neither does it show the German field post or "Dienstpost" in Norway. Letters from abroad to Norway is not a part of the collection.

All references in the exhibit goes to the books by Torstad (Norwegian censorship), Lindewald and Landsmann (German censorship), Morenweiser (British censorship), and Andreansen (postal routes).

Extraordinary objects are marked in *italics*, and the most important objects are marked like this: **Important object**.

Chapters:

1. Before the German Occupation
 - 1.1 Foreign Censorship before 9th of April 1940
 - 1.2 Invasion and the Unoccupied Norway
2. German Occupation
 - 2.1 German Censorship
 - 2.2 Non-German Censorship
 - 2.3 Postal routes
 - 2.4 Returned Mail
3. After the German Occupation



Literature

John Torstad: Den norske postkontrollen under første del av den annen verdenskrig

Trond Schumacher and John Torstad: Norsk Postkontroll under felttoget i april – juni 1940

John Torstad: Den norske post- og telegramkontrollen 1945-46

Ulf Lindewald: Tysk postkontroll av civil post i Norge 1940-1945

Horst Landsmann: Die Zensur von Zivilposten in Deutschland im 2. Weltkrieg

Konrad Morenweiser: British Empire Civil Censorship Devices WWII (all books)

Svein Andreansen: Postveier og sensur under den annen verdenskrig

Own articles (Per-Christian Wallén):

Brev til Japan 1941 (TKF #1/2007)

Sensurstempel fra Drammen (TKF #1/2009)

Brev fra Norge med amerikansk sensur (TKF #4/2015)

Nytt returstempel fra Trondheim (TKF #1/2018)

The usual postage fees for the period

Letter (Norway / Scandinavia, until 20 gr.) (1.1.1921 / 1.7.1921 – 30.9.1946)	20 øre
Letter (Europe + rest of the world, until 20 gr.) (1.1.1927 - 30.9.1946) (except the European postal union))	30 øre
Postcard (Norway / Scandinavia) (1.2.1921 – 31.5.1952)	15 øre
Printed matter (all) (1.7.1929 – 30.9.1946)	7 øre
Airmail fee Europe (1.4.1932 – 31.5.1945)	15 øre
Registered fee (Norway / Scandinavia) (1.1.1921 / 1.8.1927– 30.9.1946)	20 øre
Registered fee (Europe / rest of the world) (1.1.1927 – 30.9.1946)	30 øre

1.0 Before the German Invasion 9th of April 1940



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Letter to Denmark 20 øre (correct postage, Norway – Denmark 20 (period: 1.7.1920 – 30.9.1946)), posted onboard the "Amerikabåten" (America boat) to the USA, canceled paquebot at arrival in New York. Diverted/seized mail, censored in Liverpool, England with a P.C. 66 label (Morenweiser: type D usage: Sep. -39 to Apr. -40). Censored in Berlin with a currency control label (provisional usage, Landsmann: label BV1.1 usage Sep. -39 to Nov. -39). Sent between two neutral countries but got two censorships from two of the main belligerents.

Neutral Norway Before 9th of April 1940 and the Invasion

Germany's attack on Poland the 1st of September 1939, resulted in censorship from most of the participating countries. This resulted in that mail sent abroad from Norway often got censorship from one or several countries on their way to their destination.

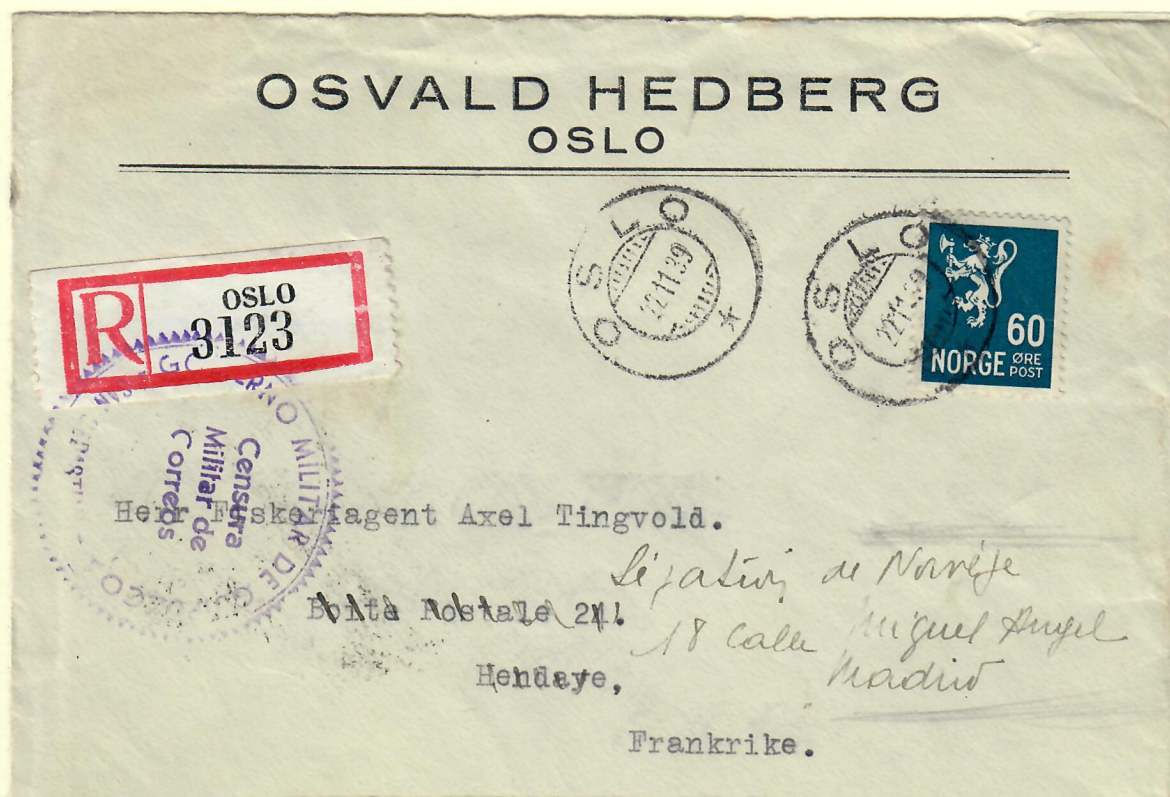
Most usually from the main countries Germany, Great Britain, and France. But other destinations that were friendly to the allies would also often leave traces of censorship that occurred in the mail path. This is often mail to a Norwegian sailor located in a harbor far away.

Norway was a neutral country in the period until 9th April 1940, when the Germans attacked and occupied Norway. So, in this period until the attack it is only censorship from foreign countries that leave traces from WW II on the mail.

After the invasion we got Norwegian field post and censorship, as well as some other extraordinary actions on the mail in Norway that was not occupied by the German forces. The forces in southern part of Norway retreated 30th April 1940, and the only resistance left was in north of Norway. Already 10th June 1940 the Norwegian forces were forced to surrender, so it is only two months period after the German attack.

1.1 Foreign Censorship Before 9th of April 1940

Spain
South-Africa



Registered letter sent to France and then forwarded to Spain, censored in San Sebastian. Usage of this cancel type is 1939 – 1940. Postage is 60 øre (letter world 30 øre period: 1.1.1927 – 30.9.1946 + registered world 30 øre period: 1.1.1927 – 30.9.1946).



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Letter to South-Africa censored in Johannesburg with bilingual U.C.8 (small) label (usage: Feb. – 40 to Nov. -44). After the invasion of Norway (Apr. -40), it became illegal to send letters to South-Africa. Posted onboard the railway wagon from Oslo to Sweden, five days before the invasion of Norway. Postage is 30 øre (letter world 30 øre period: 1.1.1927 – 30.9.1946).

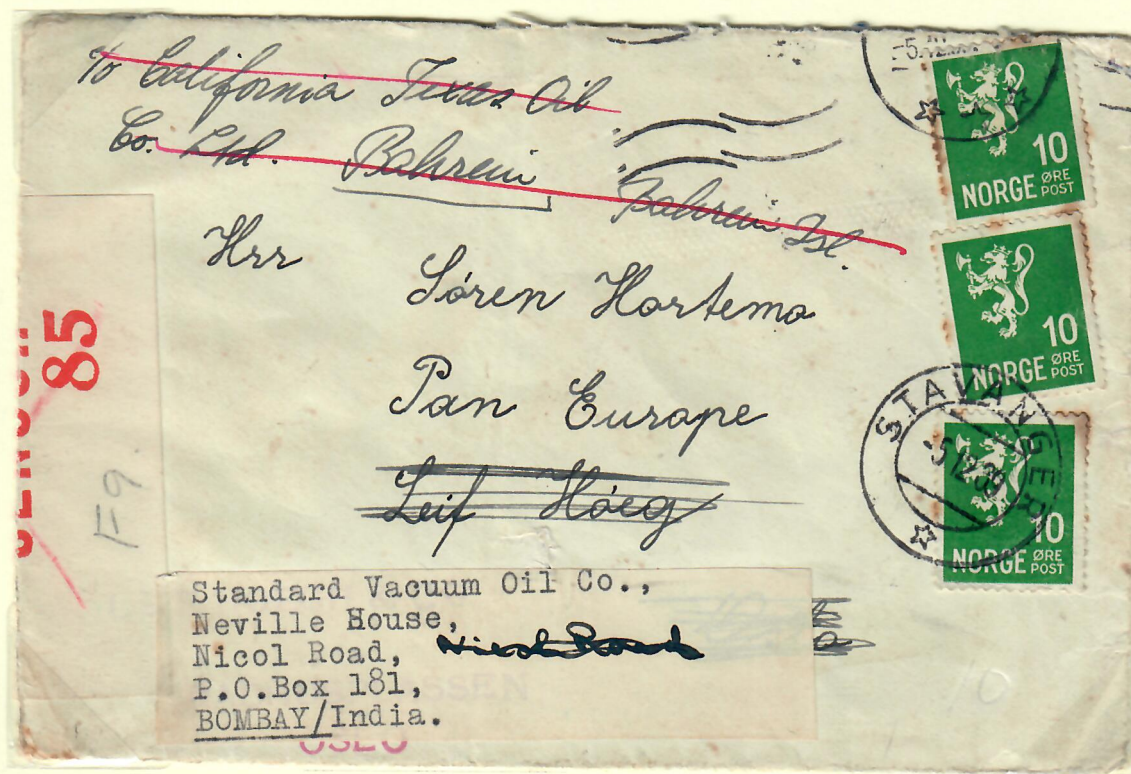
1.1 Foreign Censorship Before 9th of April 1940

Gibraltar
Bombay, India



Censored in Gibraltar (Morenweiser: label T1Aa only one recorded usage Oct. -39 (this is the second usage)). After the invasion of Norway 9th of April -40, it became illegal to send mail to the British Commonwealth. International letter rate until 20 gram, 30 øre (period: 1.1.1927 – 1.10.1946).

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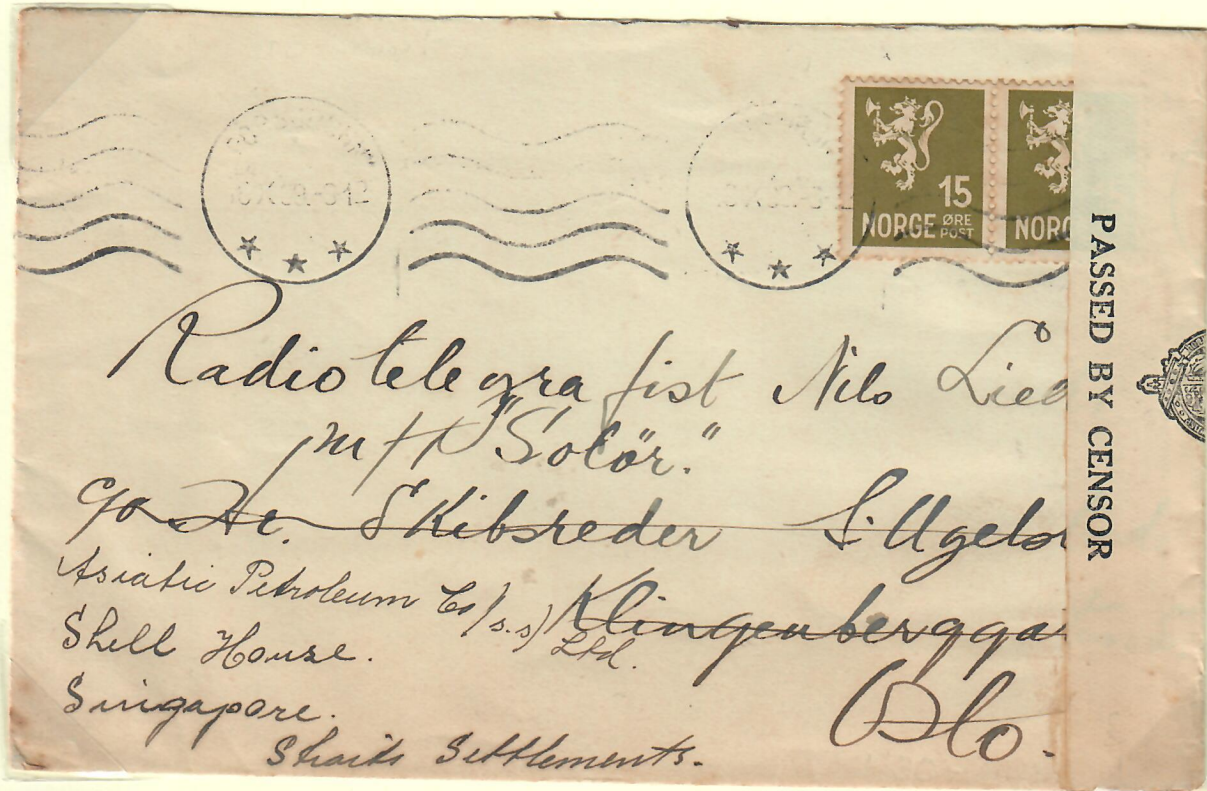


Reduced
copy 75 %

Letter sent to Oslo, Norway to the shipping company that forwarded it to Bombay, India. Censored in Bombay, India with censor label (Morenweiser: label 10B2 usage: Dec. -39 to Feb. -41). After the invasion of Norway 9th of April -40, it became illegal to send mail to the British Commonwealth. International letter rate until 20 gram, 30 øre (period: 1.1.1927 – 1.10.1946).

1.1 Foreign Censorship Before 9th of April 1940

Singapore, Malaya
Egypt



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Letter sent to Oslo, Norway to the shipping company that forwarded it to Singapore, Malaya. Censored in Singapore, Malaya with label and cancel (Morenweiser: label 3 (usage: Nov. -39 to Sep. -41) and cancel 2A (usage: Sep. -39 to May -40)). After the invasion of Norway 9th of April -40, it became illegal to send mail to the British Commonwealth. Postage world is 30 øre (correct postage, period: 1.1.1927 – 30.9.1946).



Letter sent to Oslo, Norway to the shipping company that forwarded it to Egypt. Censored in Cairo, Egypt with label and cancel (Morenweiser: label II (usage: Sep. -39 to Aug. -45) and cancel type 5 (usage: Apr. -40 to Nov. -44). Type 5 cancels were introduced 31st January 1940 and was numbered from 1 to 100. After the invasion of Norway 9th of April -40, it became illegal to send mail to Egypt. Postage world is 30 øre (correct postage, period: 1.1.1927 – 30.9.1946).



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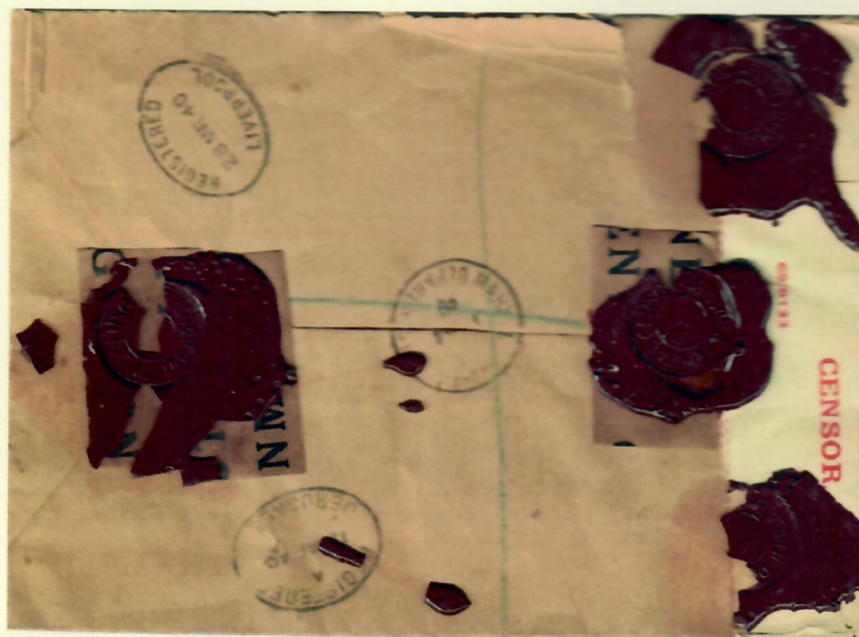
Letter sent via Siberia to Hong Kong and censored there (Morenweiser: label 3B usage: Feb.-40 to Feb. -41). Returned in April -40, and censored again in Liverpool, UK (Morenweiser: label PC.90 type 1F usage: Jan. -40 to -Aug. -45). Censored in Munich on the way back (Landsmann: label DV3.2 usage Apr. -40 to Mar. -45 and cancel DP2.3.3 usage Dec. -40 to Aug. -44). The letter was back in Norway after December 1940 or later (one year roundtrip). After the invasion of Norway 9th of April -40, it became illegal to send mail to the British Commonwealth.

1.1 Foreign Censorship Before 9th of April 1940

Palestine
Jerusalem



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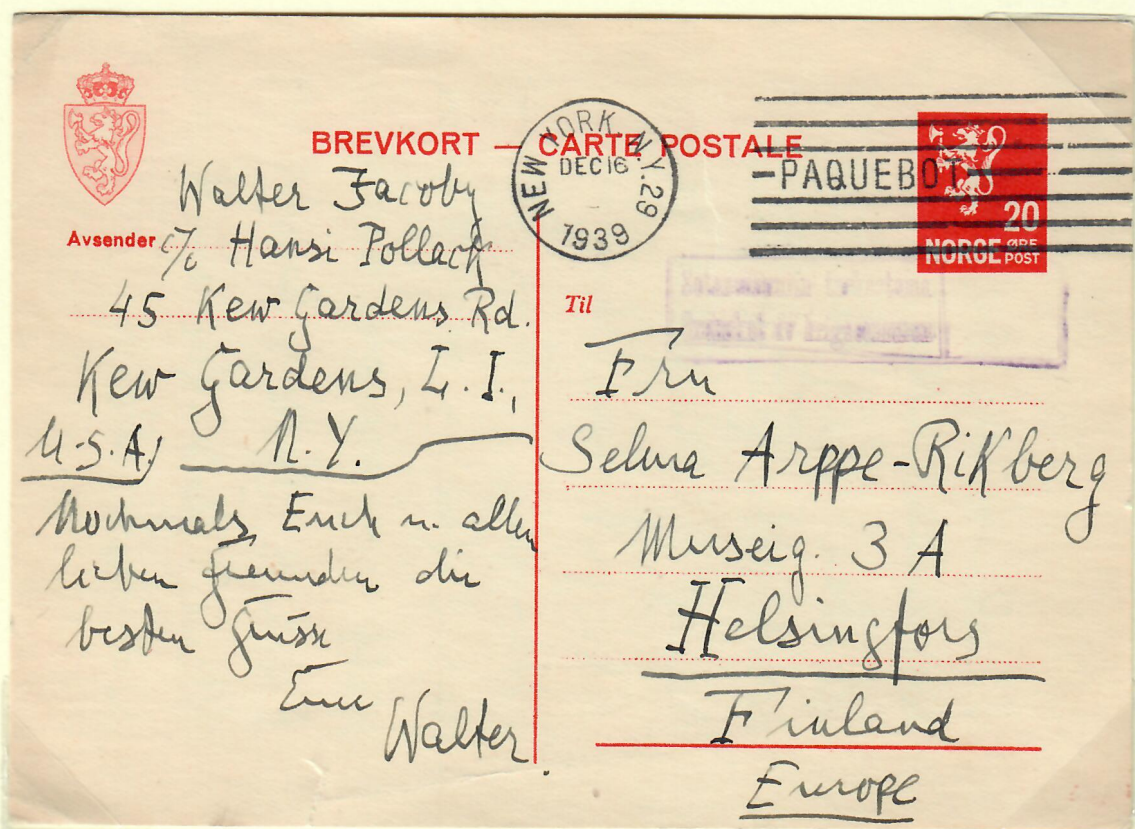
Value letter censored in Jerusalem, Palestine (Morenweiser: label 6A1 usage Feb. -40 to Jul. -45 and seal W1A usage from mid-Sept. -39), censor seals are very rare.
Postage is 80 øre (30 øre. (letter 0-20 gram) + 30 øre (registered) + 20 øre (insurance) (period: 1.1.1927 – 30.9.1946)).
After the invasion of Norway 9th of April -40, it became illegal to send mail to the British Commonwealth. Additionally, it became illegal to send any valuables (money, stamps, coins, etc.) abroad from the German occupied areas in Norway.

1.1 Foreign Censorship Before 9th of April 1940

Finland
Turku and Helsinki



Censored in Turku/Abo with a label and cancel (label usage: Dec. -39 until Mar. -40). Machine cancel with the slogan "Trygg din by / luftskyts for Oslo" (Safeguard your city / Air defense for Oslo) was a campaign before the invasion to get funds for air defense in Oslo (usage, only in Oslo in March 1940). The campaign for the fund collecting lasted from 3rd to 10th of March 1940.



Censored in Helsinki/Helsingfors with a censor cancel (usage: Dec. -39 until Aug. -44).
Postage to Finland 15 øre (5 øre over franked, although postage to the USA was 20 øre for postcard)
(period: 1.2.1921 – 1.6.1952).
Posted onboard the "Amerikabåten" (America boat) to the USA, canceled at arrival in New York.

1.1 Foreign Censorship Before 9th of April 1940

France
Paris and La Roche-s. – Yon



Airmail, censored in Paris, France (UA 3, numbers 1 through 10 exists), with label and cancel (usage: Sep. -40 – 25th June -40). Postage world was 30 øre (correct postage, period: 1.7.1920 – 30.9.1946) and airmail fee 15 øre Europe 1.4.1932 – 1.6.1945). The Queen Maud stamps was made illegal by the Germans 30th Sep. -40.



Censored in La Roche-s. – Yon (KB 144), France with label and cancel (usage: : Sep. -40 – 25th June -40).

Machine cancel with the slogan "Bruk / Dronning Maud / merker" (Use / Queen Maud / stamps) was a campaign to use the stamps used on the letter above. The additional fee was for Queen Maud's relief fund established in 1914 intended to help those who were particularly disadvantaged as a result of the World War. The stamps was forbidden to use by the Germans from 30th September 1940, and the machine slogan was not used anymore.

M. skjema 2.

Militærsak, haster.

STASJON

Fr adressen
konvolutten og s
da kvitteringen

Dette brev ekspederer postverket uten portomærke
når militær betalingsmann eller avdeling er ført
op på konvoluttens bakside.

Mob.terminen 1940

M.-skjema 1.

Fra Ingenlærregimentets landvornsbataljon

Til Hon sersjant Berkeland
Rogalandsgyl. 96
Kåregesund

Da skal settes opp på krigsfot, skal De snarest mulig*)
..... dag den*)

møte fram på Hvalsøen

for å gjøre tjeneste som ved skumb. vaktens Komp. 2

Meld Dem ved framkomsten for Kompanisjefer

Feltutrustning fåes utlevert før avreisen*) — ved framkomsten*) —

Ingenlærregimentets landvornsbataljon

On the morning of Tuesday, the 9th April 1940 the German forces attacked Norway. Due to unclear reasons today, it was decided to make the mobilization secret and it was sent by mail.

Mobilization order sent 9th of April 1940, postage free. This was the first and only time that Norway has mobilized the army. The content instructs the receiver to meet at Hvalsøen (military camp) as soon as possible.

Very few mobilization orders exist today.

1.2 Invasion and the Unoccupied Norway

Field Post
Field Post Office Number 9 and 15

Field post office number 9, was opened at Setermoen 29th of January and closed 10th of June 1940. Censored in Svolvær (Torstad: label 2 usage mid April to early June 1940).



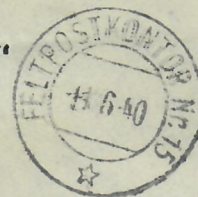
Åpnet av postkontrollen

Fru Borghild Krog

Svolvær



„FELTPOST“



Porto-
fritt

Töken Birna Rind

Tromsø

Kontrollert.

Postkontrollkontor nr. 11.

Kontrollør nr.

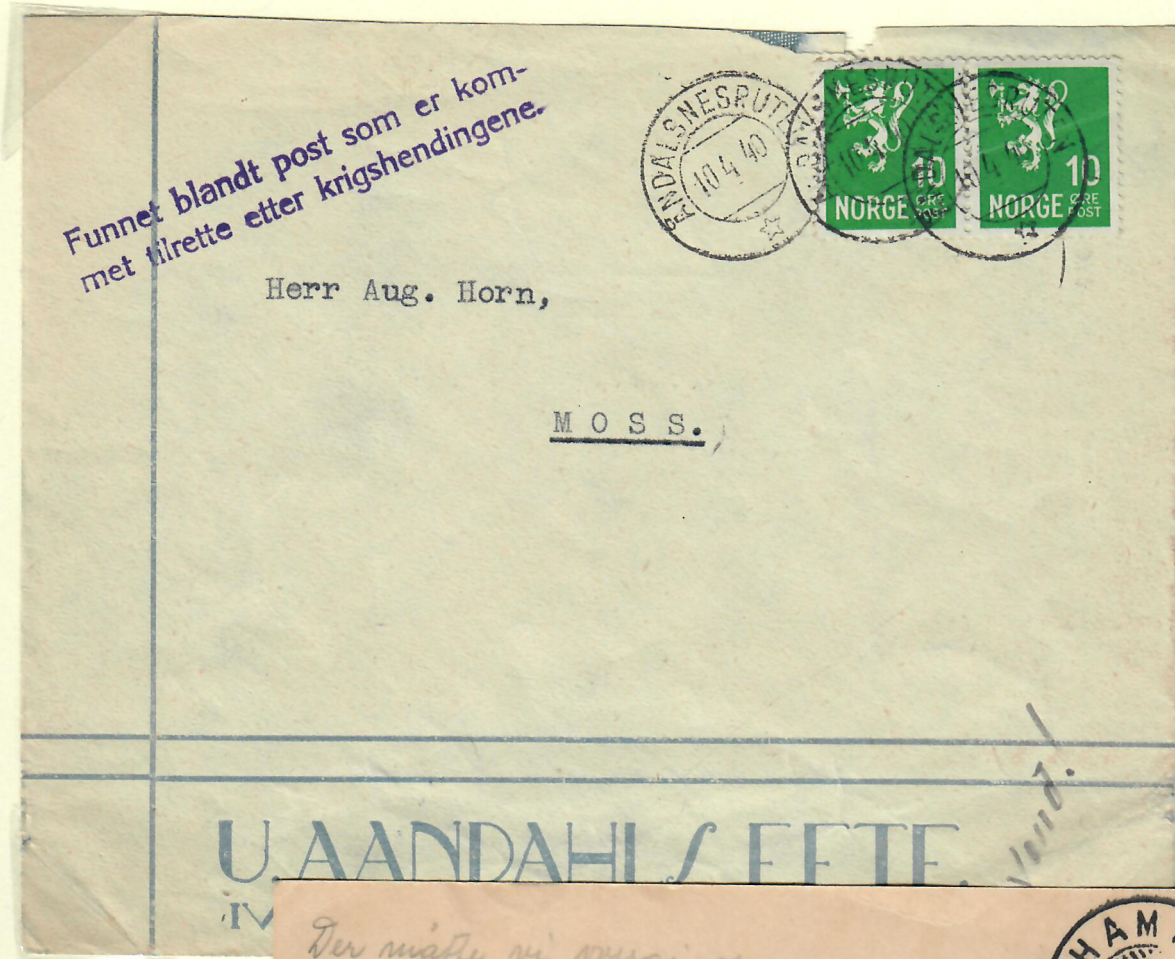
2

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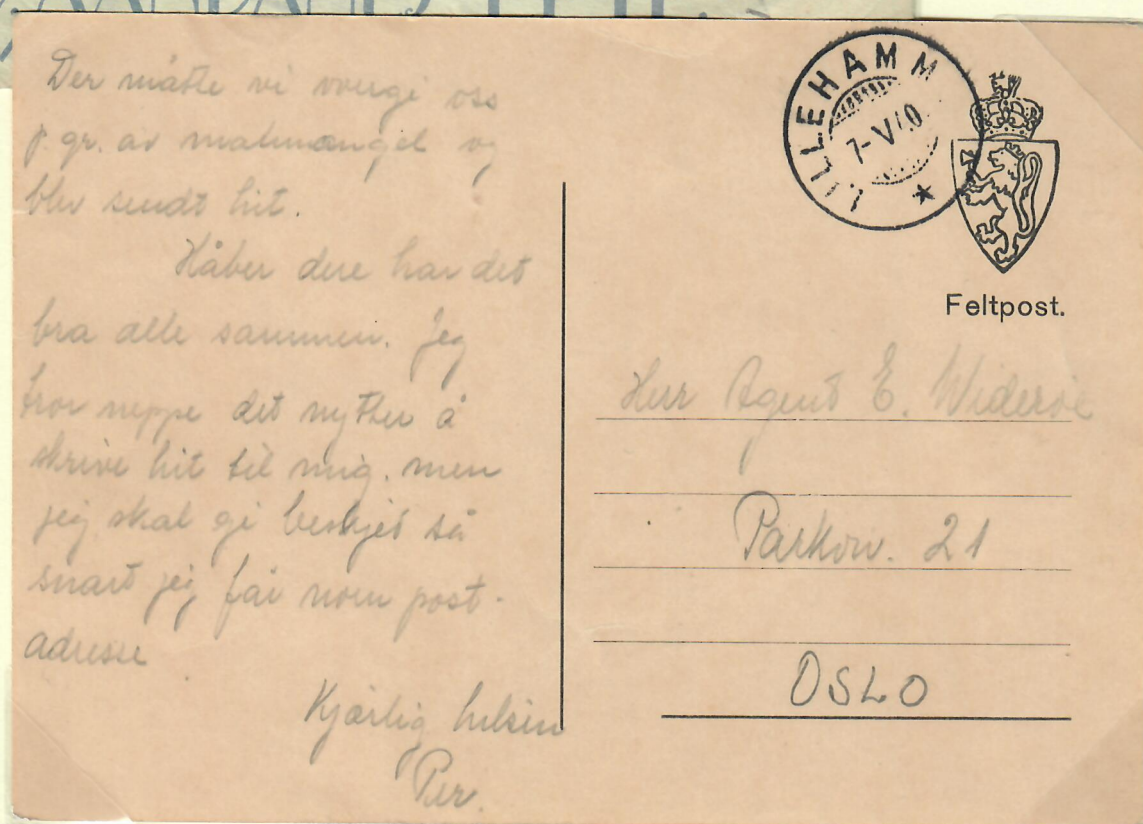
Field post office number 15, was opened at Nyborgmoen 26th of April 1940 and closed at 18th of July 1940. Field post letters are postage free. The envelope is printed in Tromsø. Censored in Vadsø (Torstad: label 1 usage April to June 1940). Envelope pre-printed postage free.

1.2 Invasion and the Unoccupied Norway

War Actions



Found after war actions and canceled "Brev som har kommet til rette etter krigshandlingene" (Letter found after war actions). This information cancel was used in Oslo (very few letters known with this cancel). Used as illustration in Torstad's book (Den norske postkontrollen...) page 17.



Field post card, used by Norwegian POW at Lillehammer May 1940, postage free.

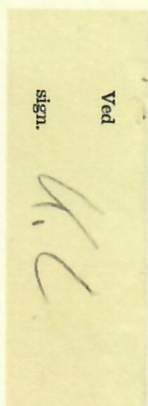
The field post card was printed in Lillehammer and intended to be used by the Norwegian forces. In May 1940, the fighting in this area was over and the Norwegian POWs used the cards to inform family that they were fine.

1.2 Invasion and the Unoccupied Norway

Norwegian Censorship in the South 1940 Mysen and Voss



Censored in Mysen (Torstad: label 1 usage less than a week in April). Less than 10 recorded usages of this label. The censor office in Mysen was established 11th April 1940 and closed 13th April 1940.



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copy 75 %



Unique letter that passed the postal blockade across the frontline. Bergen was occupied by the Germans already 9th April 1940, while Tyssdal in Hardanger was controlled by the Norwegians. It was illegal to pass the mail across the frontline, but this letter has most likely crossed the Hardangerfjord by boat to Granvin, and sent to the censorship office in Voss, before passed further on. Censored in Voss (Torstad: label 2 usage less than two weeks in April 1940). This is the only recorded letter crossing the frontline in Norway while the fights were ongoing.

1.2 Invasion and the Unoccupied Norway

Norwegian Censorship in the South 1940 Lillehammer / Harstad and Lillehammer



Censored at
Lillehammer
(Torstad : label 1
usage two weeks in
April 1940) and in
Harstad
(Torstad : label 5
usage April to June
1940). Double
Norwegian
censorship is very
rare.
Letter sent from
Redalen 13.4.1940,
to Harstad and
arrival cancel
Harstad 3.6.1940.
The postal route is
improvised with boat
from Hasselvika 27th
April via Utvorda
and further to
Mosjøen. There it
has been handed
over to Norwegian
military authorities.
By end of May it was
sent further north
with arrival in June.



Southern Norway



Postcard censored in Lillehammer with (Torstad: cancel 1 usage two weeks in April 1940).

Text has been made unreadable by censor.

The censor office in Lillehammer was established 12th April 1940 and closed 29th April 1940.

Postage is 20 øre (correct postage for postcard was 15 øre in the period 1.2.1921 – 1.6.1952).

1.2 Invasion and the Unoccupied Norway

Norwegian Censorship in the South 1940 Tynset and Ålesund

Sensurert

Småbrukskand. Kari Lie,

Hurdal,

Dal st.

Letter censored in Tynset in Trønderlag (Torstad: label 4 usage around a week in April 1940). The censor office in Tynset was established 17th April 1940 and closed 24th April 1940. Six letters have been recorded from Tynset censor office.

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Kontrollert

Ålesunds postkontor

*fr. Pagnhild Ringdal
Sfanda.*

Letter censored in Ålesund (Torstad: label 1 usage 10 days in April 1940). The censor office in Ålesund was established 17th April 1940 and closed 1st May 1940. This letter was censored last day of service for the censor office.

1.2 Invasion and the Unoccupied Norway

Norwegian Censorship in the South 1940 Brandbu and Molde



Letter censored in Brandbu (Torstad: cancel 1 and label 1 usage very short time in April 1940). Correspondence from this place are not canceled with Brandbu, but the censor cancel was used instead. Four recorded letters/postcard with this censorship. The censor office in Brandbu was established 14th April 1940 and closed 16th April 1940. The censor label was just normal package tape.



Letter censored in Molde (Torstad: cancel 1 usage two weeks in April 1940). Three letters recorded with this censor cancel. The censor office in Molde was established 17th April 1940 and closed 2nd May 1940.