

THE EVOLUTION OF '*via Siberia*' MAIL, 1897-1945

ARTICLE SYNOPSIS

(May 2021)

Treatment & Philatelic Significance

This article, which appears in the 'Philatelic Congress Book 2021' (index attached), offers the reader a chronological overview of the postal evolution of mail sent by way of the trans-Siberian rail network between 1897 until 1945 and is not an in-depth study of a dedicated railway portion of that route, but does cover primary historical events affecting such mail. Illustrated are important maps showing routes along with postal history having '*via Siberia*' endorsements with occasional supplementary markings on mail relating to the article's chronological flow.

For the reader, this article can be considered a precis of the subject from many works listed in the article's bibliography.

Philatelic & Related Knowledge & Personal Research

The author has conducted extensive personal research on the subject and gathered information from various published sources of directly & indirectly related historical publications.

Based on his research, the exhibitor has developed a 'storyline' reflecting the chronological evolution directly involving '*via Siberia*' but also the historical effects of wars, revolutions or hostilities affecting the route and the related mails' rates, routes and markings, along with the rise of airmail over or relating to the route.

Portions of this article & illustrations were also extracted from the author's large-gold award multi-frame exhibit and even larger collection.

Condition & Difficulty of Acquisition

All illustrated postal history material has been the best found on the philatelic market during the last twenty-five+ years and acquired by the exhibitor piecemeal.

Although relatively common examples of '*via Siberia*' mail may indeed be found in dealers' stocks, the examples illustrated are in most instances scarce or even rare.

Bibliography:

Blackburn, J. Lewis & Sieh, Pingwen, *Postage Rates of China 1867-1980*, Directorate General of Posts, Taipei, Taiwan, 1981.

Dehnert, Willi/Dr. Kiepe, *Deutsche Post in China, Kiautschou, Via Siberia, Berichte*, Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Sammler Deutscher Kolonialpostwertzeichen eV, Berlin, Issue 88, September, 1988, pp. 1838-1873.

Durban, William, *From Moscow to Vladivostok*, Outlook Magazine, November 4, 1899 Issue, pp 587-595.

Friedemann/Wittmann, *Die Postwertzeichen und Entwertungen der Deutschen Postanstalten in den Schutzgebieten und im Ausland*, 4th Edition, Wittmann Verlag, Munich, 1988, p. 124.

Miller, Jerry H. *The Evolution of 'via Siberia' Mail 1899-1945*, German Postal Specialist, Volume 61, Nos. 4, 5 & 6, Whole Nos. 659-661, April/May/June, 2010, pp 141-153, 187-198, 225-236 respectively.