

# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Postal censorship in Finland 1914 - 1918

### Introduction

Till the independence on December, 6, 1917, Finland was an independent part of the Russian Empire. They had their own stamps, their own coin and also an independent postal system. But, when Russia was in war during the First World War, Finland was in war as well.

### Early censorship

The First World War censorship was not the first postal censorship in Finland. Like in Russia, also in Finland there was around 1900 press censorship: incoming foreign printed matters were occasionally seen by the censor.



Wrapper from the United States to Björneborg 1897. Censored in Björneborg with special press censor stamp Pressombudsmannen I Wiborg. (Only in Swedish language).

### Variety

There is a wide variety of which are saying that a postal item has been censored: censor stamps, resealing tapes, wax seals and annotations. Also the variety in colours varies. Stamps mainly in red and violet, wax seals only in brown red or red, but resealing tape has a wealthy range of colours. Common is white and light brown, but there are also resealing tapes in red, green, yellow and blue.

### Censoring towns

Only 10 places in Finland had a censor office:

Björneborg - Pori: November 1914 - March 1917

Helsingfors - Helsinki: September 1914 - January 1918

Kuopio: October 1914 - March 1917

Nikolaistad - Nikolainkaupunki: October 1914 - April 1917

Raumo - Rauma: November 1914 - March 1917

Uleåborg - Oulu: October 1914 - March 1917

Tammerfors - Tampere: November 1914 - April 1917

Torneå - Tornio: August 1914 - January 1918

Wiborg - Viipuri: October 1914 - November 1917

Åbo - Turku: October 1914 - November 1917

### Literature:

Die Postzensur in Finland, Hans G. Moxter, 1975

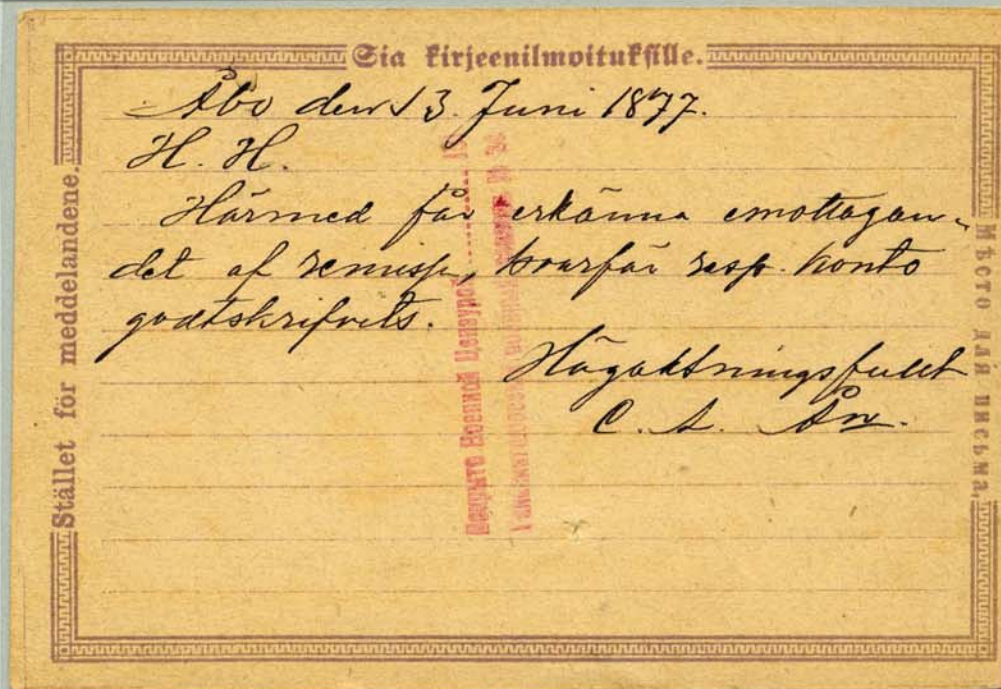
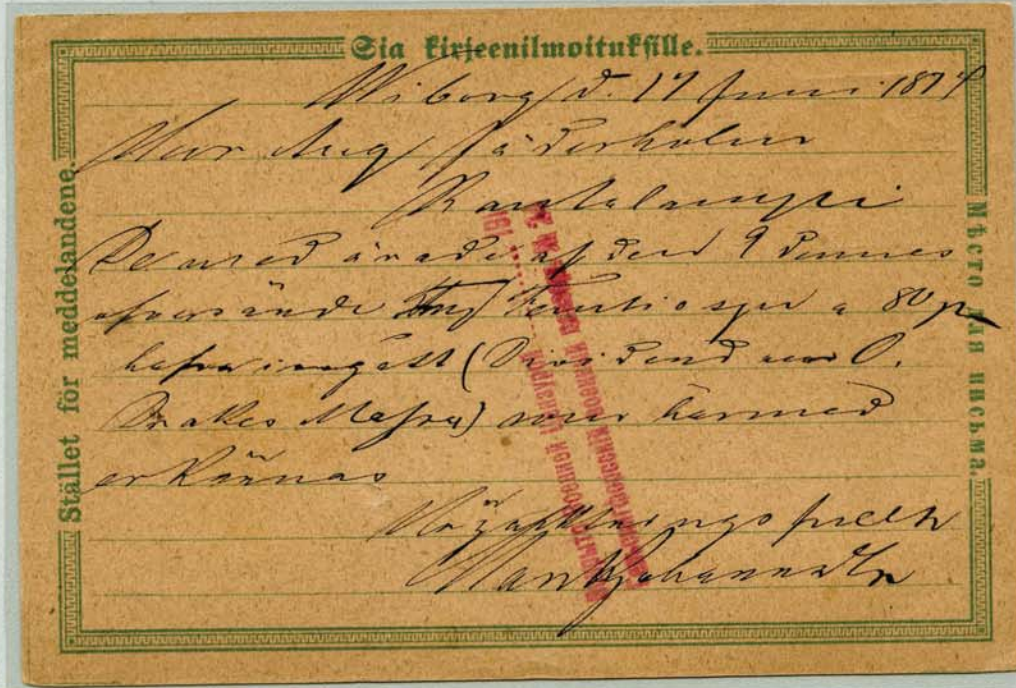
Postal Censoring in Finland 1914-1918, Juhani Olamo, 2005



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Forgeries

Most of the censored material (stamps, tape) are not rare. Wax seals are much more exclusive. Even though censor stamps have been forged. Not in the way that they have been remade (as far as known), but that stamps have been used illegally and not during the time of censorship. Helsingfors censor No. 24.



René Hillesum Filatelle, Zwijndrecht



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Björneborg - Pori



Postcard from Nikolaistad - Uusikaupunki 1917 to Björneborg. Blue censor stamp of censor 8.



Picture post card from Algeria 1917 via Petrograd to Björneborg. Violet censor stamp of censor 11. Second reported copy of this mark. ®



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Björneborg - Pori

The literature mentions only one censor tape for Björneborg. On this page there are two different types.



Cover from Wammala 1915 to Pori. This is the censor tape known from the literature.



Cover from Petrograd 1917 to Uleåborg. New type of censor tape. Note letters s and g. Reverse: Violet Censor stamps with censor No. 3 and unreported date stamp. ®



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Helsingfors - Helsinki



Registered cover from Helsinki III to Stockholm 1917. Correctly franked with strip of three + 15k imperforated and block of ten 2k imperforated. A block of ten 2k perforated should have been very common, but imperforated it is rare. Censor tape No. 6 and censor stamp of censor 135. This censor number is unknown in the literature. ®



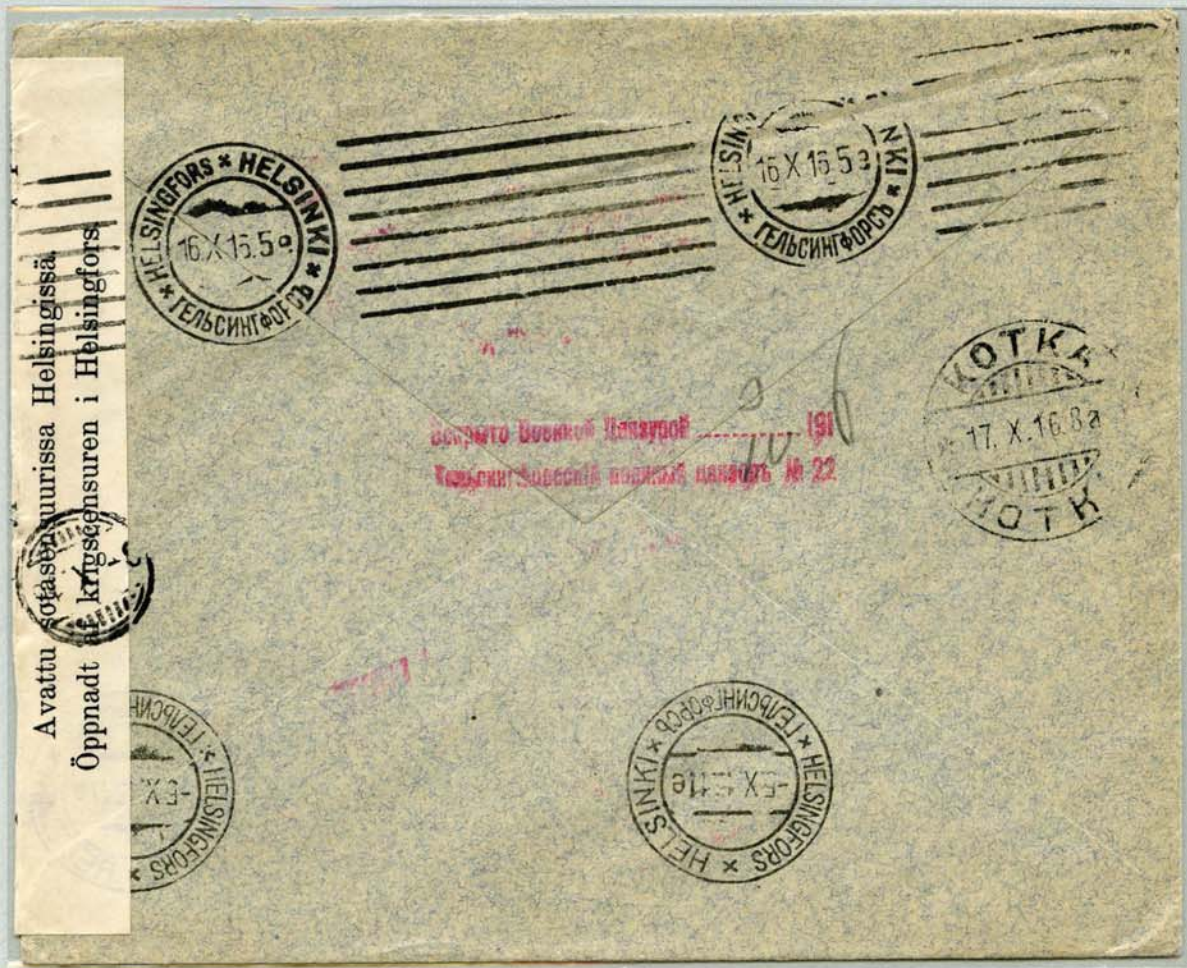






# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Helsingfors - Helsinki



Cover from Noray 1915 to Kotka. Censored in Helsinki. Unusual combination of censor tape and censor stamp No. 17, October, 3. In red censor stamp with number 22 (not common). Note that the cover was censored on October, 3 and back in the postal process on October, 5 and actually sent as late as October, 16 to arrive on October, 17 in Kotka. ®



Postcard from Denmark 1916 to Helsingfors. Censor stamps 10 (violet) and 17.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Helsingfors - Helsinki



Cover from Helsinki As. 2-11-1917 to Twello, Holland 15-1-1918. Thus, the letter has been sent from Finland under the Russian rule, and arrived when Finland was independent. Censor tape and red Censor stamp of censor 8. Via London 13-1 and censored there. ©



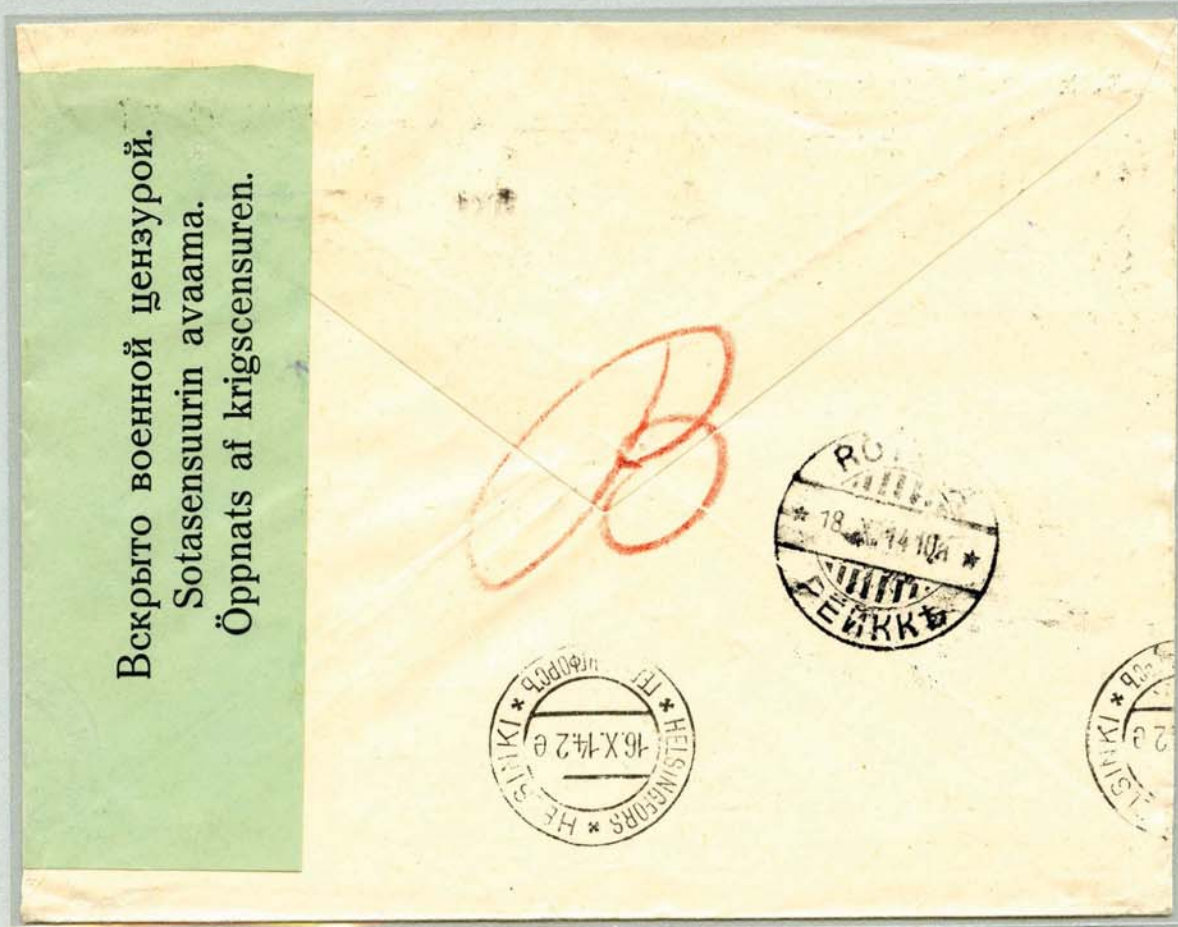






# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Helsingfors - Helsinki



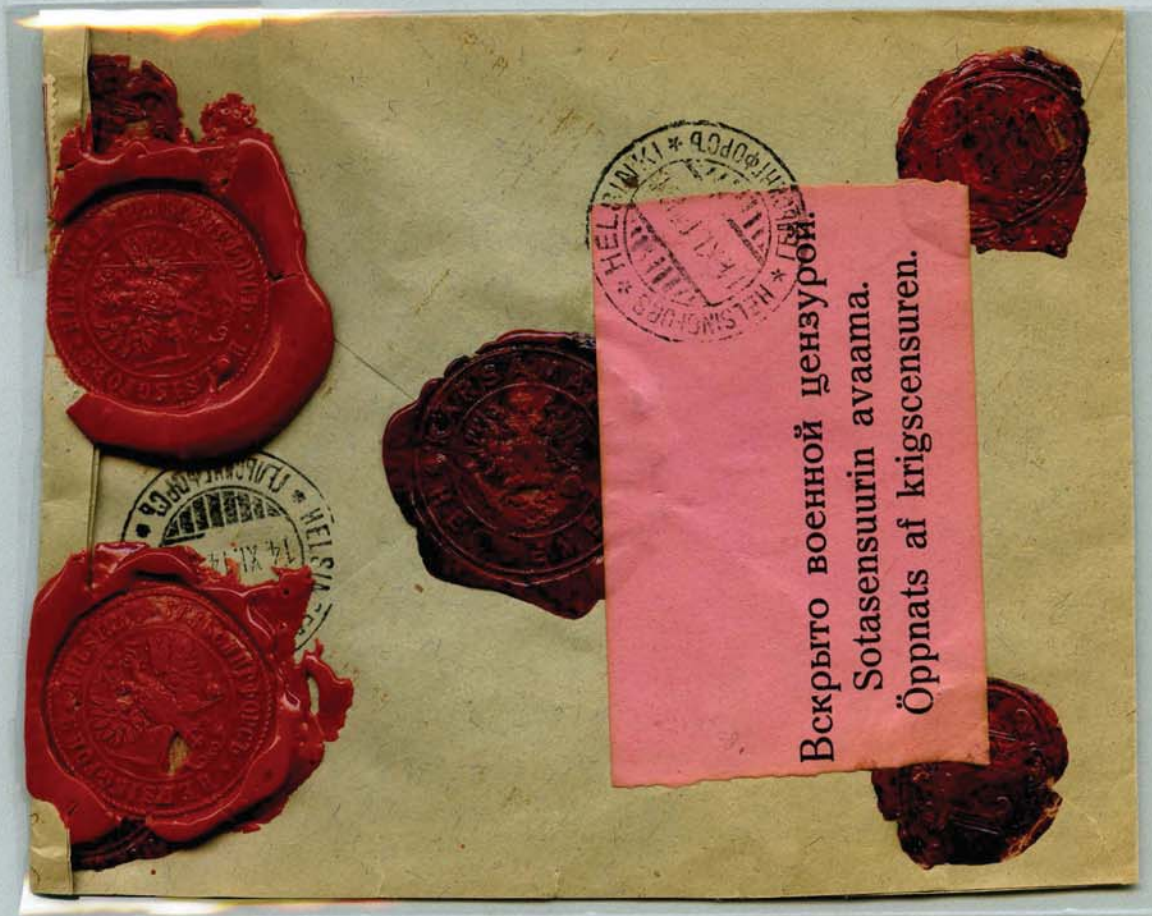
Censor tape is very often used in combination with censor stamps. Rarely one find a censor initials. It could be that this was done here because there was a sender name on the envelope. The cover was sent from Helsinki to Nummela 1914. Green censor tape of the first type (no city mentioned). There is a big Initial of the censor. This initial has not been recorded before. ®





# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Helsingfors - Helsinki



Insured cover from ärsämäki 1914 to Helsinki. Red censor tape (first type, without Helsinki, variety II). The cover has been postally sealed in Kärsämäki, which means a surcharge of 5p. Normally the (postal) wax seals used by the censor are placed over the censor tape, but unusually not in this case. The censor tape has been tied with a date stamp. ©



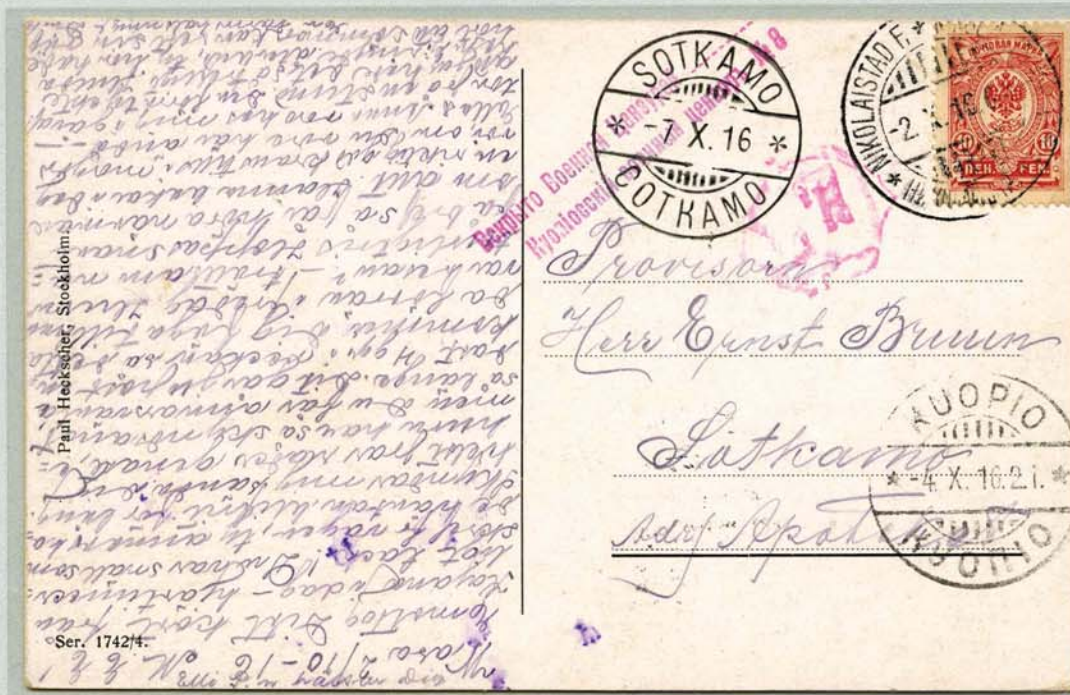


# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Kuopio



Cover from Pitkälähti to Tuusniemi 1915. Censored in Kuopio with censor stamp No. 1.



Picture post card from Nikolaistad F.-Uusikaupunki H.o. 1916 to Sotkamo. Pink blurred censor mark of Nikolaistad and censored in Kuopio by censor no. 8. First date of usage.







# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Nikolaistad - Nikolainkaupunki

This town you will not find anymore on the map. It was between 1855 and 1917 the name of the town Wasa - Vaasa.



Money order in Finnish marks from Uusikirkko As. To Nikolainkaupunki 1915. Large size framed censor stamp.



Picture post card from Ilmajoki As. 1915 to Wasa. As can be seen, the name Was was not strictly forbidden. Small size framed censor stamp.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Raumo Rauma

All mail sent to Raumo had to be inspected by the Raumo censor office. That's the official rule, but lots of mail sent to Raumo where censored elsewhere. That makes Raumo not easy to find.



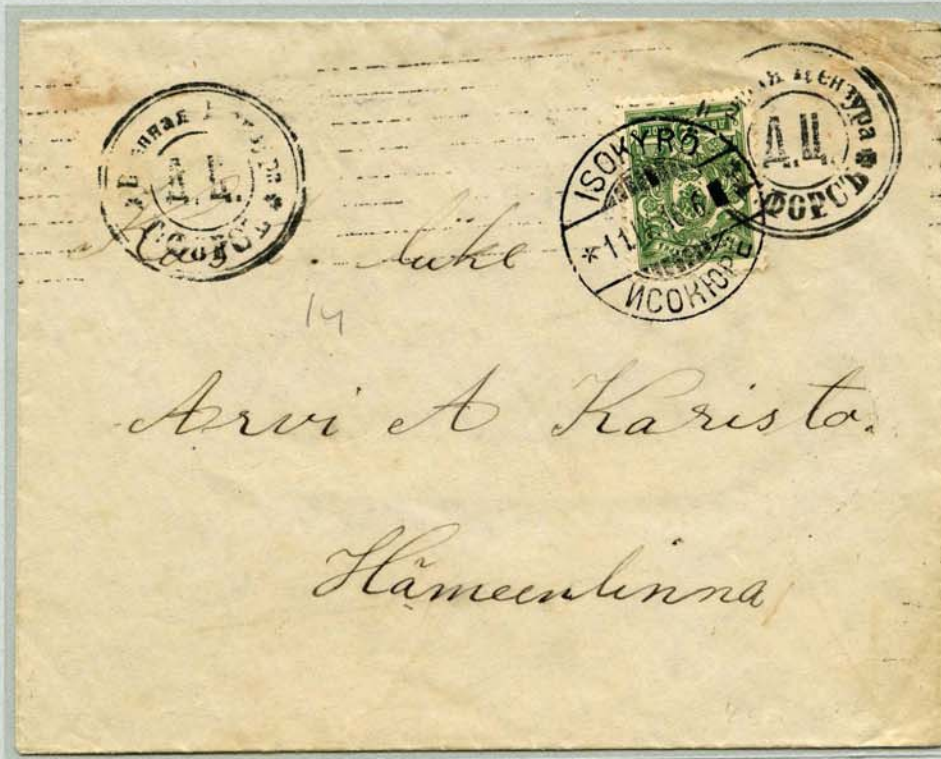
Top: Cover from Petrograd To Raumo 1915. Censored in Helsinki. Censor stamp No. 5. Bottom: Cover from Rovaniemi to Raumo 1915. Censor stamp 3.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Tammerfors - Tampere

Tampere used a lot a Krag machine for censored mail. They were often not very greedy with ink, so a lot of those machine marks are blurred.



Cover from Isokyrö to Hämeenlinna 1916. Censored in Tampere with a machine mark No. 14.



Post card from Utti 1915 to Hämeenlinna. Unreported type of machine mark (without bars).<sup>®</sup>



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Tammerfors - Tampere

Only two different censor tapes are used in Tampere. The letter type differs a lot.



Cover from Lahti to Kuhmoinen. 1916. Censored in Tampere. First tape in white and censor marks no. 16 (with date) and no. 20 (with censor number 9).

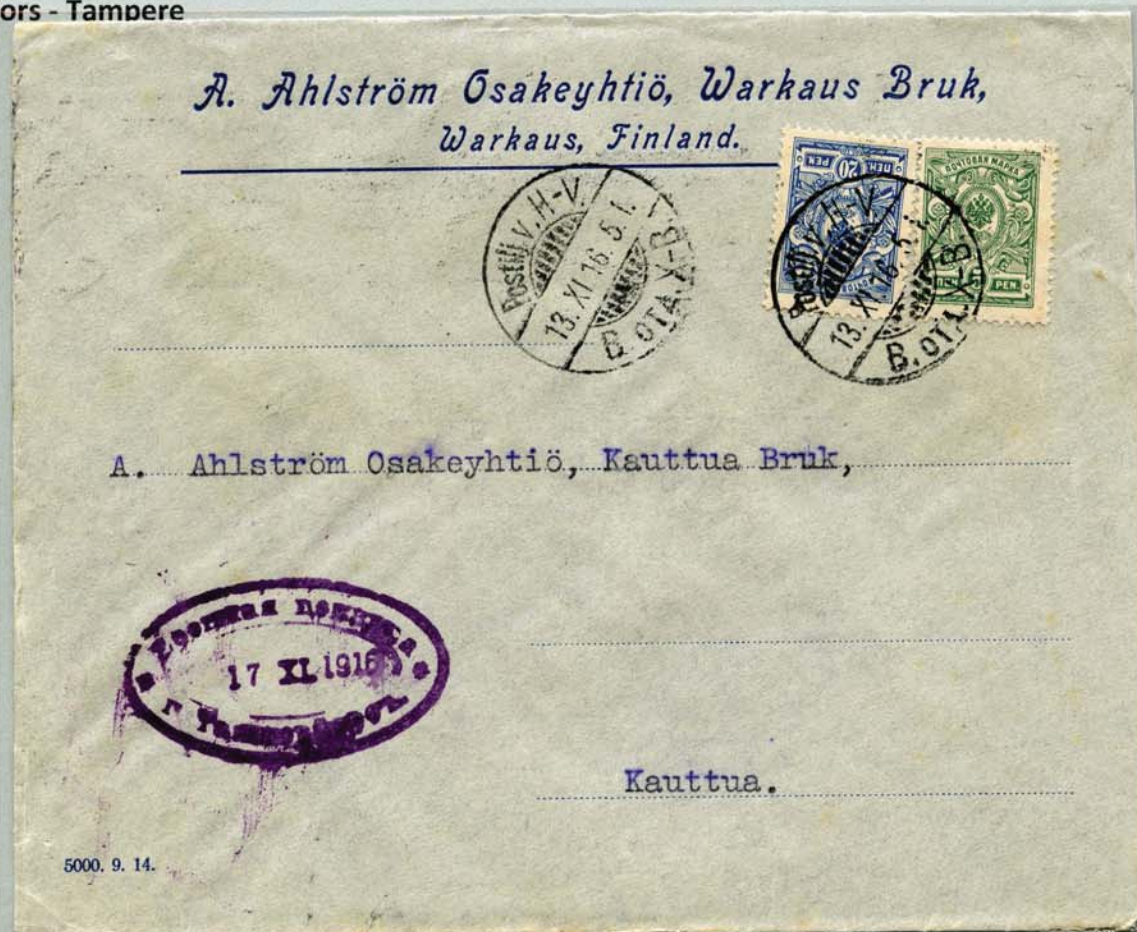


Cover from Helsinki to Kuhmoinen. Second type censor tape in light brown. Censor stamps 17 and 19.

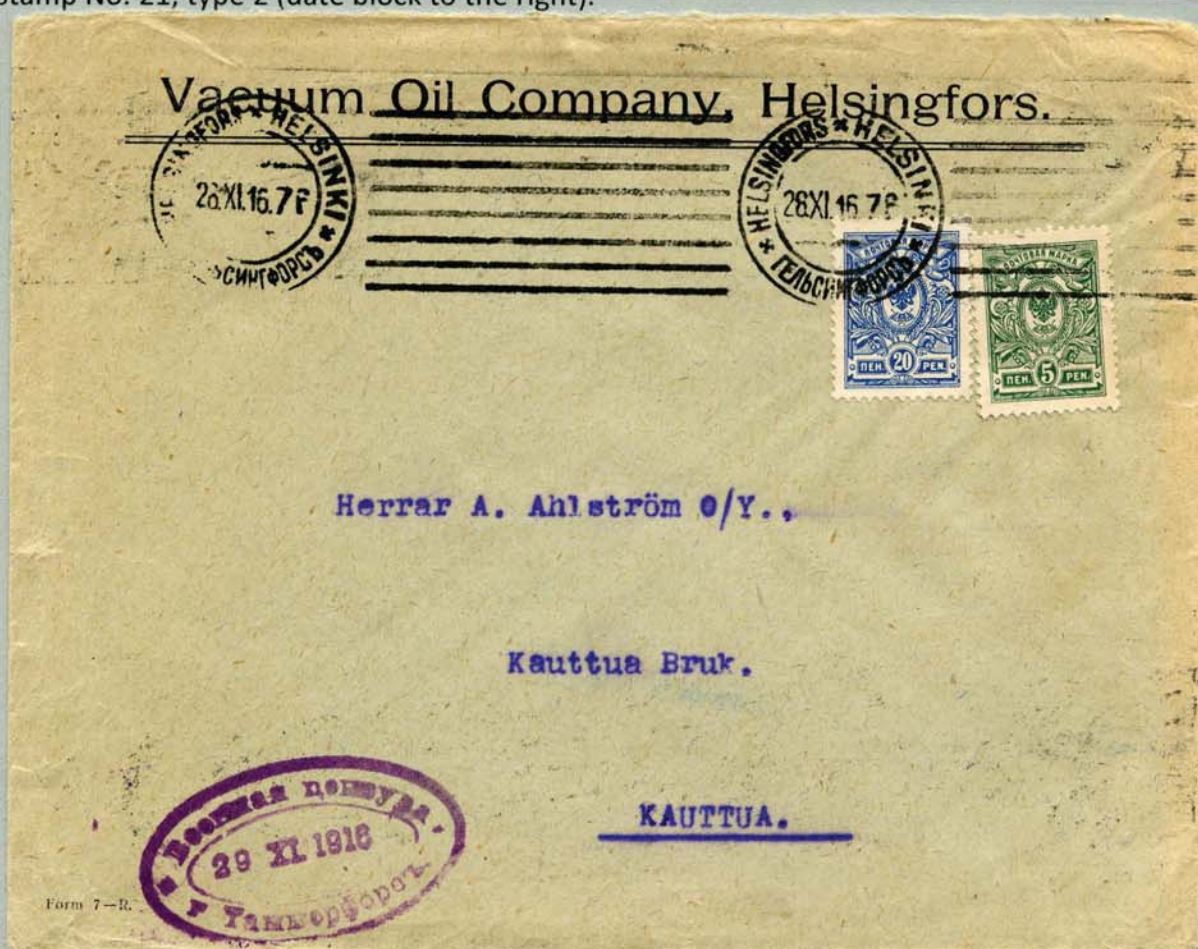


# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Tammerfors - Tampere



Cover from Warkaus, with railway postmark H V (Huuroposki-Varkaus vv) 1916 to Kauttua. Tampere censor stamp No. 21, type 2 (date block to the right).



Cover from Helsingfors t 1916 to Kauttua. Tampere censor stamp No. 21, type 3 (date block to the left).



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Torneå - Tornio

The censors were Fins, no Russians. Most of the censor marks are however in Cyrillic and in the case that also the name of the censor is included in the mark, it is also transcribed into Russian.



Ярвиненъ

Picture post card sent from Tornio railway station 1915 to Stockholm. Stamp No.1 with the name of the censor Järvinen.



Ярвиненъ

Picture post card from Ödkarby on the Åland Islands to Mjölby, Sweden., 1915. As most of the foreign mail westwards was censored in Tornia, this picture post card traveled some 2140 km instead of the normal ca. 400 km. What a service for just 4k! The name of the cesor in this stamp no. 1 is Ränänen.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Torneå - Tornio

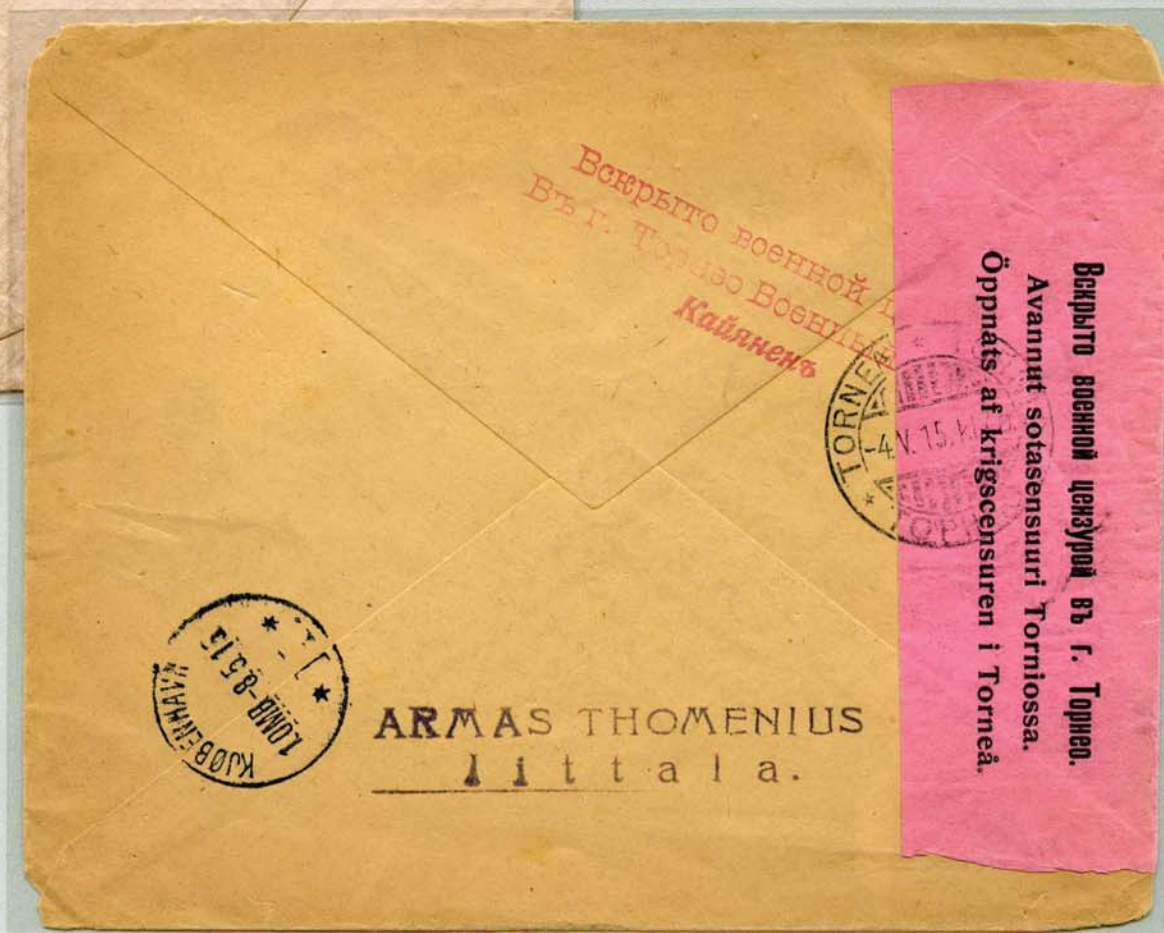
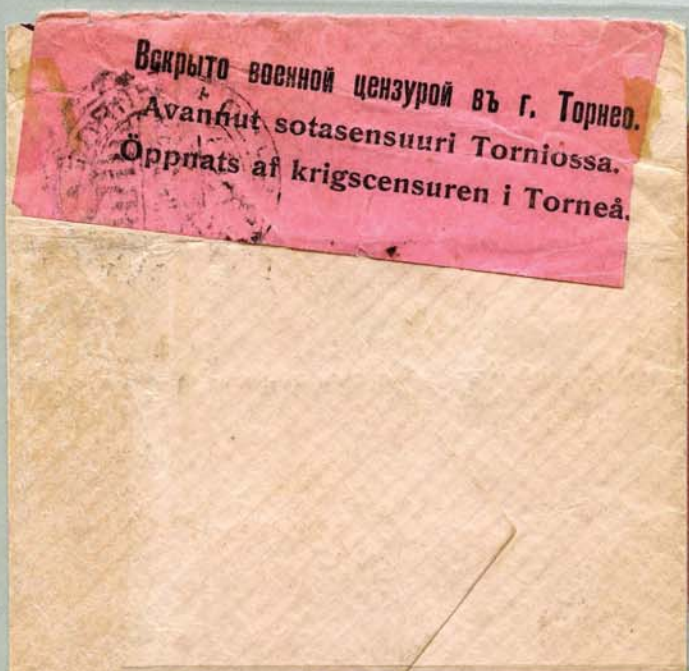
Most of the censor tapes in Tornio are white or light brown. One type is reported in red and now two types in red are known.

Right top: Cover from Isokyrö 1915 to England. Red censor tape type 17.

The only reported red tape in literature.

Right under: Cover from Iittala 1915 to Denmark.

A not before recorded red censor tape. Not the reversed date block in the Iittala postmark. ®





# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Torneå - Tornio

Insured and some registered letters have the censor tape sealed with wax. This wax seal is mostly the ordinary wax seal used at the post office.



Registered letter from Borgå - Porvoo to Denmark 1914. ®



The censor tape is type 13, light brown. The wax seal has left of the post horn letter A and on the right 1.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Torneå - Tornio

Insured and some registered letters have the censor tape sealed with wax. This wax seal is mostly the ordinary wax seal used at the post office.



Insured letter from Gamlakarleby-Kokkola 1916 to Sweden. In the envelop 35 Swedish crowns. It is notable that there is no indication in French francs which was obligatory for sending money abroad.



The censor tape is type 22. The wax seal has no letter and number around the posthorn.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Torneå - Tornio

The First World War was censorship officially closed down on January, 28, 1918. During the Civil War which started in 1918 there was also censorship. There are little varieties, but important: No Russian text anymore.



Insured letter from Helsinki FI 30-8-1918 to Utrecht, Netherlands. Censor closing tape en post office wax seal. Both without Russian text. ®



The wax seal shows now the Finnish coat of arms, instead of the Russian.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Uleåborg - Oulu



However there are already 7 varieties known of censor stamp No. 1, the one on this postcard from Helsinki 1914 to Oulu is not reported yet. L in Oulu under S and no dot behind Sotasensuuri.



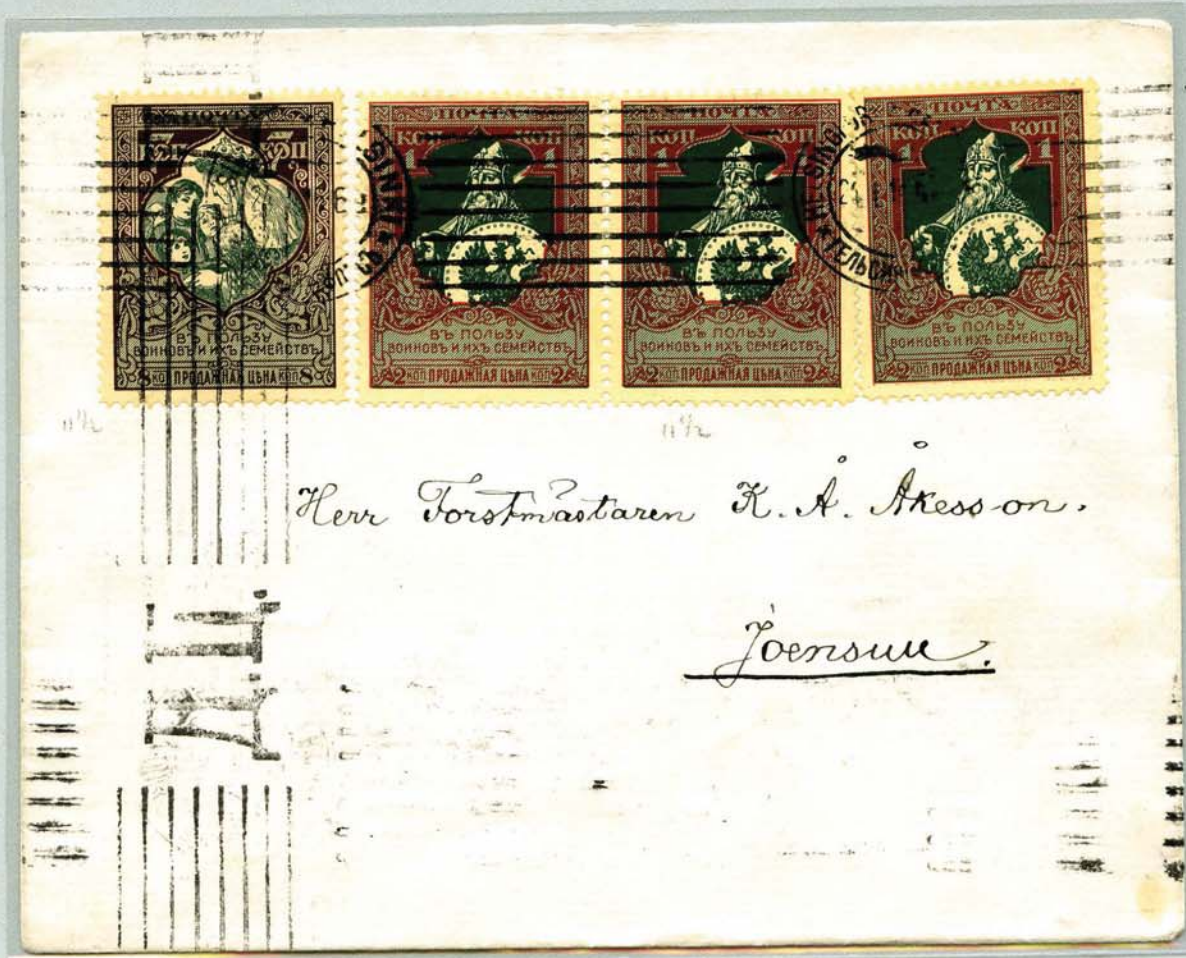
Cover from li As. 1916 to Kalajoki. Censored in Oulu with violet censor stamp No. 5. (Second period)



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Wiborg - Viipuri

Like in Tampere, also in Viipuri the Krag machine for censor stamps was much in use. But, here they Took more care about the amount of ink.



Cover from Helsinki to Joensuu 1916. Censored in Wiborb, stamp 5 in black.



Picture post card from Rantasalmi 1915 to Raivola. Censored in Wiborg, stamp 5 in red.



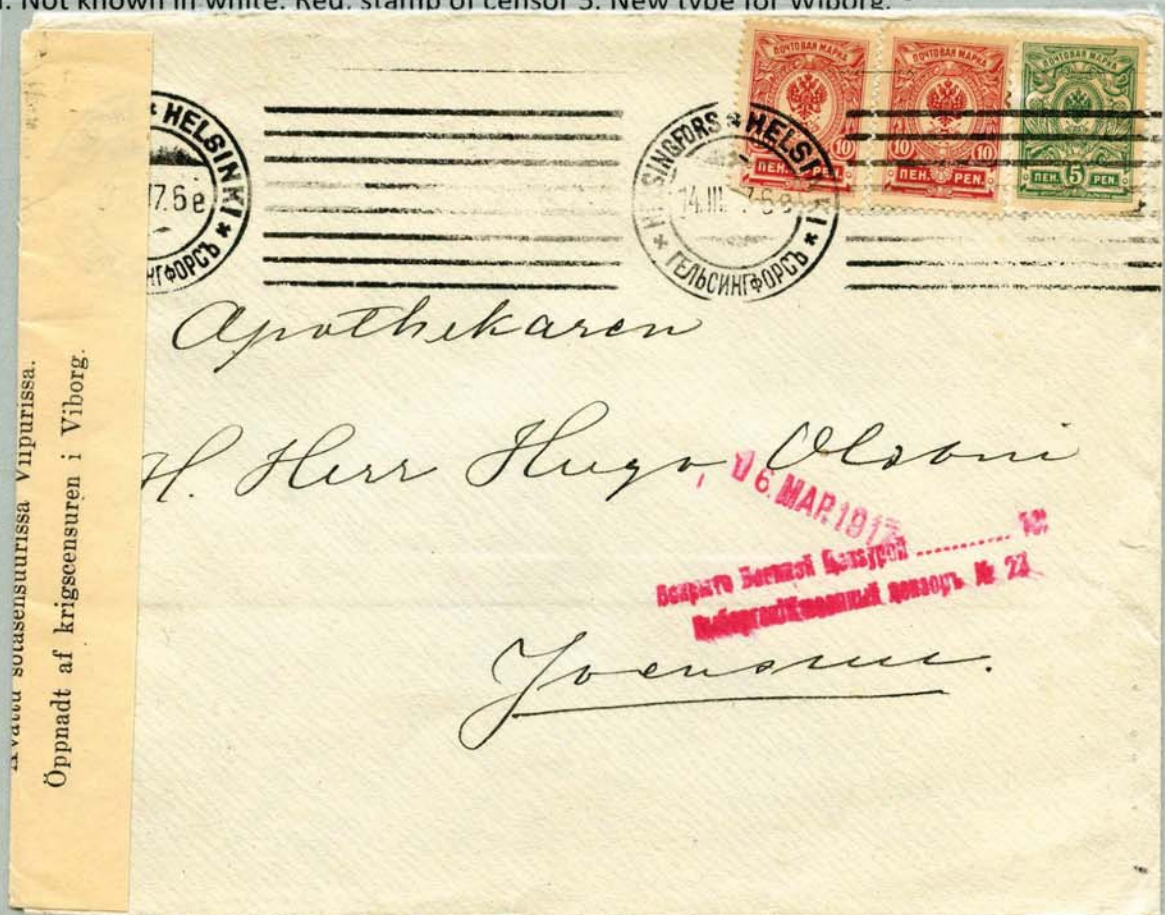
# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Wiborg - Viipuri

Вскрыто военной цензурой.  
 Soikasensuutti avaimella.  
 Öppnadt af krigscensuren.



Cover from Helsinki to Joensuu 1916. Censored in Wiborg 1915. Censor tape without town name type 1/II. Not known in white. Red. stamp of censor 5. New type for Wiborg. ®



Cover from Helsinki to Joensuu. Wiborg censor stamp of censor 22 and date stamp. Types 14+18.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Wiborg - Viipuri



Cover from Halila 1917 to Reval. Censored in Wiborg. Unreported type censor tape. Stamp of censor 111 and an unreported date stamp. ®



Cover from Turku to Karhula 1914. Yellow censor tape. First general type, without city name.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

Åbo - Turku



Three post cards 1915 with censor stamp no. 3: red, pink, violet.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Åbo - Turku

Wax seals are not reported so far from Åbo - Turku.



Insured letter from Wärtsilä 1914 to Åbo. Insured value Fmk 20. The stamp ARVO = value in Finnish. Standard censor tape (no place name mentioned) in blue. ®



Not a single wax seal from Åbo - Turku has been reported so far.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Åbo - Turku

There was no censorship on the Åland Islands. All mail to and from Åland was censored in Åbo.



Picture post card from Wårdö to Ekenäs on the mainland 1916. Censored in Åbo.



Cover 1915 from Mariehamn to Åbo, and there censored.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Åbo - Turku

The censor post marks are known in a variety of colours. Most of them are red or violet, but between the colours there are many very different shades.



Not everybody at the post office spoke the Russian language., But it was possible to address mail in Russian, even when it was an inland shipment. This postcard was sent from Kirvu 1916 to Åbo. It was clearly written in Cyrillic, but after censoring it went to Nystad. There they figured out that it was not even for Åbo but Nådendal, near to Åbo. Censor stamp 6 in rose-red.



Picture post card from Helsinki to Lemland, Åland Islands. The same censor stamp no. 6, but in brown red.



# CENSORSHIP IN FINLAND 1914-18

## Åbo - Turku

Money orders are, when censored, mostly stamped between the form and the coupon. As complete forms in this period are not seen that often, it is not easy to find a complete censor stamp on such a document.



Postcard from Westankär in the Åbo archipelago via Kimito 1916 to Turku. Censor stamp no. 10.



Money order in Rubles from Helsinki to Turku. Censor stamp 10 unusually on the right side.