

Finland's 3 Registration Labels

By Matti Sipari, translated by Carita Parker, edited by Roger Quinby, from *Filatelisti*, 8/2005

Editor's Note: Additional information from Kaj Hellman and P. Savolainen has been added to the original text from *Filatelisti*. See references.

Some philatelists may not know that Russian language registration labels were also used in Finland from 1910 through March 1918. These labels were meant for registered postal items to the Empire. The use of the Cyrillic language text was connected to the Russian Ministry of the Interior's efforts to "Russify" the Finnish Post, that is, to remove Finnish national identification from stamps, postal forms, labels and marks insofar as this was practical.

The 3 labels are the size of the regular R-labels and imperforate except for the Helsinki label. The frame is red and the location name black. In place of the letter R is a Cyrillic letter 3 representing the word for registration 'ЗАКАЗНОЕ.' Such mail as this, however, is rarely seen, because the items disappeared or stayed in the vast land of Russia.

The 3's, as they were called, were used in post offices that had received them, which consisted of large postal places, towns with garrisons of Russian soldiers, postal locations on the Karelian Isthmus or other locations with substantial commercial mail to the Empire, such as Voikka.

The time period for the use of the 3-labels was 1910-1918. The mailings are from the 1910-1918 period and franked with Russian 1909-1918 definitive series stamps. Figure 1, Vuoksi to St. Petersburg 28. VI. 10, is a very early use. There are 13 different locations on loose labels and seven on covers or cards, a total of 20 locations. Hopefully, additional locations will be discovered, although at this point in time it seems unlikely.

After the Russian Ministry of the Interior relinquished authority of the Finnish Post to the Senate, the FGPO took steps to reassert Finnish national identity to postal services. One measure was to withdraw the 3-labels from use. Circular No. 1423 of July 10, 1917 states that "The 3-labels used for registration of mail items to Russia will no longer be sent from the main storage, instead when the labels run out post offices are to use the regular R-labels." According to Savolainen, the letter card addressed to Odessa, Figure 7, cancelled March 25, 1918, is the last recorded use of a 3 Registration label in Finland, (albiet, Red Finland).

We would be interested in establishing extreme dates or each location and if you should have a 3-label not listed here, please bring it to the attention of the editor.

References:

P. Savolainen, "Punaisen Alueen Postia," *Fennoscandia*, No. 5, 22.10. 1964

Kaj Hellman, "Finland's Russian Language Registration Labels"

Registration Labels	3 Number
Kaitärvi	Nos. 21 & 36
Johannes	No. 139
Koirinoja	No. 149
Kavantsaari	No. 166
Tornio	No. 419
Viipuri	Nos. 644 & 736
Åbo	No. 808
Uleåborg	No. 903
Tammerfors	No. 319
Tammerfors A.s.	No. 517
Tasvastehus	No. 224
Voikka	No. 47
Imatra	No. 722
Ekanäs	No. 172
Helsinki	No. 633
Helsinki (perforated)	No. 530
R Labels on Cover	3 Number
Kotka	No. 247
Björneborg B.	No. 730
Åbo-Turku	No. 791
Sveaborg	No. 877
Hangö	No. 32
Helsingfors B	No. 1000
Vuoksi	No. 122

Table 1. Known 3-labels. Ekanäs and Imatra are also known on cover, but are not pictured in this article.



Figure 1. VUOKSI, 28. VI. 10, to St. Petersburg, 16. VI. 1910. Printed matter item. The 3-labels were introduced in 1910. Helsinki, 26. IV. 10 is the earliest recorded date for this type registration label.



Figure 2, left. KOTKA 9. V. 16, to Petrograd 27. IV. 1916, postage and registration each 10 kopeks. On the cover front and reverse side there are many notations. On the cover left upper corner the word "Заканное" was written, "registered" in Russian.

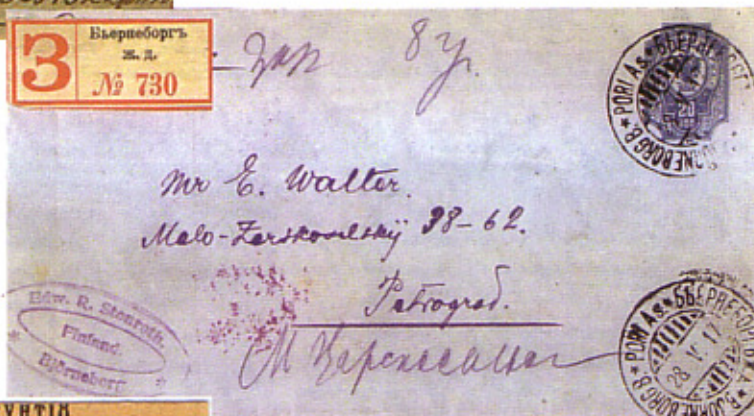


Figure 3, right. BJÖRNEBORG B. 28. V. 17, via Åbo 29. V. 1917 on back, to Petrograd 19. V. 1917 (Russian calender). Postage and registration each 10 kopeks. On the cover left lower is sender's private mark.



Figure 4, left. HELSINGFORS B. (railway station) 21. VI. 17, Petrograd 14. VI. 1917. Letter in transit six days. The label No. 1000 is the highest number for this label type.



Figure 5, right. SVEABORG, 1. X. 17, via Helsingfors 1. X. 1917, to Vetluga - -1917. Letter weight 12 gram, postage 15 kopeks, registration 20 kopeks. The cover was returned and re-mailed. Cover was opened and inspected by the Helsinki war censor, markings on the inside.



Figure 6. ÅBO-TURKU 29.VII.17, to Jurev 18. VII. 19(Russian calendar). The Jurev arrival mark is partly on top of label. Rare bi-lingual Turku-Åbo 3-label in Russian.

Figure 7. Last reported use of 3 label from Finland, albeit Red Finland. Hango, 25. III. 18, to Odessa, Russia, returned because of war. 85 kopeks Red Finland rate is correct.