

Pressombudsman Update Mariehamn, Uleåborg & Kotka Marks

During the Russian rule, printed matter mailed into Finland was censored. Designated press officials performed the censoring task.

The first handstamps for the press officials ("pressombudsmannen" – handstamps) came out in 1894. In 1905 when the censoring of printed matter was ended by a proclamation from the Czar, Pressombudsman officials were located in 35 communities. However, the handstamps are only known from a very few localities.

Locations of the sensors are in bold type for those localities whose strikes are known. This lists adds **Uleåborg** to the list previously published in TFP, February 2004, page 9). The list includes: Hamina, Hanko (**Hangö**), Heinola, Helsinki, Hämeenlinna, Iisalmi, Joensuu, Jyväskylä, Kajaani, Kemi, Kokkola, **Kotka**, Kristiankaupunki, Kuopio, Käkisalmi, Lappeenranta, Loviisa, Maarianhamina (**Mariehamn**), Mikkeli, Oulu (**Uleåborg**), Pietarsaari, Pori, Porvoo (**Borgå**), Raahе, Rauma, Sortavala, Tammisaari, Savonlinna, Tampere, Tornio, Turku (**Åbo**), Uusikarlepyy, Uusikaupunki (**Nystad**), Vaasa and Viipuri (**Wiborg**).

There are six Wyborg marks, including Type IA and Type IB. Apparently the early researchers of this little known area could not decide if Type IB was a separate mark or simply a worn Type IA; empirical observations of the marks are inconclusive. Five different marks were used in Åbo. Only one mark is known from Hangö, Kotka, Porvoo, Mariehamn and Uusikaupunki. (See TFP, February 2004, pages 10, 11.)

The covers shown in this article illustrate the Kotka, Mariehamn and Uleåborg marks. However, we do not know the exact periods of use for the Kotka and Uleåborg marks nor do we know if more than one color ink was used at each location. These three illustrated marks are quite rare, ink smudges and minor tears do not detract from these very collectable specimens. The illustrated wrappers are from the collection of Ed Fraser of New York.

The Editor would be very grateful for any additional information on the above handstamps and other related matters. Readers are also welcome to contact Ed Fraser at: 195 Marine St., Farmingdale, NY 11735, USA

Roger Quinby and Ed Fraser

Figure 3, right. This Uleåborg mark was struck shortly after July 7, 1894, the date the wrapper was cancelled in Leeds, England. Surely, other Pressombudsman marks must exist from Uleåborg. What are the dates of use for this mark? Who has another example?



Figure 1. The Mariehamn mark was known used only from October 9, 1904 until September 4, 1905. Does a reader have a wrapper that would expand the dates of known usages? Regrets the original could not transformed into a sharper image. This mark is rare.



Figure 2. The Kotka mark is very elusive. I could not find any information about this mark in the Post Museum Library. Can a reader help?

