THE EVOLUTION OF ‘via Siberia’ MAIL . . 1897-1945

BACKGROUND

In an effort to connect Eastern & Western Russia, develop the vast territory of Siberia, improve and shorten the transmission time for mail and commerce as well as eventually connect with China, Russian Czar Alexander III authorized the building of a ‘Trans-Siberian’ railway on 17 March 1891.

Construction started at both the European and Asiatic ends and was completed in several phases over the period 1891-1916, completing a track length of approx. 9,259 km (5,723 miles) spanning seven time zones!

A major benefit of the completed railway network was the possibility of moving mail from China and the Far East to Europe about twenty days faster than using standard sea routes and improved mail movement to the West Coast of the United States, northern Africa as well as Latin America.

During the period of 1903-1945, the ‘via Siberia’ mail route was influenced by a historic events including wars, revolutions and expansion of Pacific sea routes. Airmail saw the decline of long-distance mail movement by train ‘via Siberia’, albeit such continued to be of importance well into the 1940s.
THE EVOLUTION OF ‘via Siberia’ MAIL.. 1897-1945

EXHIBIT PURPOSE
This postal history exhibit describes & shows the evolution of mail endorsed or routed ‘via Siberia’ from the trial & early mail period, through periods of war & revolution as well as the expansion of mail services upon connection of the trans-Siberian railway network with the southern Manchurian and eastern Chinese rail lines, thereby enabling movement of Far East, German Pacific Colony and other mail to/from Europe as well as North Africa & North America.

TEXT COLOR-CODING
BLACK: General historical, geographical & postal rate/route/marking information.

BLUE: Chapter-Start-Page Heading & important annotative information.
Blue-matted examples indicate particular importance & scarcity.

MAROON: Postal Rate Information

EXHIBIT OVERVIEW

I. Map & Background, Exhibit Overview

II. 1897-1903
    Trial & Early Mail

III. 1904-1905, 1906
    Russo-Japanese War & Resumption of Mail Services

IV. 1907-1913
    Expansion of Mail Services

V. 1914-1918
    World War I & Effects

VI. 1917-1920
    Russian Revolution & Civil War Period

VII. 1921-1922, 1923-1931
    Resumption & Expansion of Mail Services

VIII. 1931-1939
     Hostilities & War In Manchuria & China

IX. 1939-1945
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X. Epilogue
II. TRIAL & EARLY MAIL
1899-1903

First Trial Mail
1897

THE FIRST TRIAL MAIL USING THE RUSSIAN TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY TOOK PLACE BETWEEN DECEMBER 1896 – FEBRUARY 1897, where commercial mail endorsed "Via Siberia" was sent through the German Post Office at Tientsin, China, to Germany, effectively taking three weeks longer than for mail sent by the sea route.

27 JANUARY 1897
Commercial mail sent from Tientsin, China, to Hamburg, Germany.

Route:
Rider mail over the heretotore caravan route Tientsin-Peking-Kalgan-Urga-Kiachta (Kyakhta) to/and across frozen Lake Balkal (tracks laid prior to introduction of an ice-breaking ferry in 1900).

40 Pfennig...
UPU International Double-Weight (30 grams)
Letter-Rate.
Despite earlier attempts, the **FIRST EFFECTIVE MAIL TRIAL TOOK PLACE IN FEBRUARY, 1899,**
when commercial mail sent through the German Post Office at Tientsin, China, to Bremen, Germany, effectively took forty days transit time equaling the transit time for mail sent by the sea route.

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**8 FEBRUARY 1899**

Commercial single-weight mail sent from Tientsin, China, to Bremen, Germany. **40-day transit time.**

**Route:**
Rider mail over the heretofore caravan route Tientsin-Peking-Kalgan-Urga-Kiachta (Kyakhta) to/and across frozen Lake Baikal (tracks laid prior to introduction of an ice-breaking ferry in 1900).

**Arrival Postmark:**
(Reverse)
"Bremen,
20 March 1899, 7-8 AM"
(Haller Machine Postmark)

**20 Pfennig...**

**UPU International**

**Single-Weight (15 grams) Letter-Rate.**
DESTRUCTION OF A LARGE PART OF THE NORTHERN CHINESE RAILWAY, connecting to the partially completed eastern Chinese rail line, DURING THE BOXER REVOLT (1900-1901) NECESSITATED MAIL MOVEMENT BY SEA OR BY RIDER MAIL OVER THE EARLIER CARAVAN ROUTE to Kiachta in Manchuria with subsequent movement to Myssowaja station location on the Trans-Siberian Railway Route, crossing Lake Baikal by ferry.

SEA-MAIL VIA BRINDISI
(Suez Canal to Italy)

1 MARCH 1901
(Gregorian Calendar)

View-card, postmarked Shanghai, Russian Post Office, sent to Chaux de Fonds, Switzerland, with route endorsement "Via Brindisi". 32-day transit time!

Transit & Arrival Postmarks: "Hong Kong, 5 March 1901"
"Chaux de Fonds, 2 April 1901"

5 Kopeck:
Russian Post Office International Postcard-Rate,

RIDER MAIL OVER CARAVAN ROUTE TO TRANS-SIBERIAN RAIL CONNECTION

21 MARCH 1901
(Gregorian Calendar)

Commercial mail, postmarked Tientsin, Russian Post Office, sent to Bordeaux, France, with route endorsement "Par la Russie".

Route:
Rider mail over the heretofore caravan route Tientsin-Peking-Kaigan-Urga-Kiachta-Myssowaja and across frozen Lake Baikal (introduction of an ice breaking ferry took place in 1900).

10 Kopeck:
UPU Single-Weight (15 grams) International Letter-Rate.
29 January 1902 = 11 February 1902
(Julian Calendar) (Gregorian Calendar)

View-card, postmarked Tientsin, Russian Post Office, sent to Kolberg, Germany, via the Caravan Route in winter to the railhead and by rail to destination. 33-day transit time to Germany.

Transit Postmarks:
“Troitskosavsk, 15 February 1902”
(Julian Calendar)

“Moscow, 1 March 1902”
(Julian Calendar)

= 28 February 1902
(Gregorian Calendar)

= 14 March 1902
(Gregorian Calendar)

Arrival Postmark:
“Kolberg, 16 March 1902”
(Russian Post Office International Postcard-Rate, 5 Kopeck)

Route:
Caravan rider mail over the heretofore caravan route Tientsin-Peking-Kalgar-Urga-Kiachta-Myssowaja Station and across frozen Lake Baikal (initially.. by rail tracks laid over the ice/1900.. an ice breaking ferry).
SOLDIER’S MAIL THROUGH THE RUSSIAN POST OFFICE IN CHINA TO GERMANY

21 DECEMBER 1902
(Julian Calendar)
= 4 JANUARY 1903
(Gregorian Calendar)

View-card postmarked at the Russian Post Office at Peking, China, sent to Gera, Germany, with route endorsement “über Russland” (“Via Russia”).
26-day transit time.

Route:
Peking-Mukden-Harbin-Manchouli-Kiakhta-Irkutsk-Omsk-Moscow-Berlin-Gera

Arrival Postmark:
“Gera,
30 January 1903”

RUSSIAN POST OFFICE SPECIAL ROUTE ENDORSEMENT TO GERMANY

10 AUGUST 1903
(Julian Calendar)
= 23 AUGUST 1903
(Gregorian Calendar)

View-Card written (22 July 1903) and postmarked at Tientsin, Russian Post Office, sent to Obermoden, Alsace, Germany, with route cachet marking “Via Siberia” “Germany”.
21-day transit time.

Route:
Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Manchouli-Kiakhta-Irkutsk-Omsk-Moscow-Berlin-Gera

Arrival Postmark:
“Obermoden,
13 September 1903”

5 Kopeck...
Russian Post Office international Postcard-Rate
THE CITY OF TOMSK IS CONNECTED TO THE MAIN LINE OF THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY IN ASIAN-RUSSIA. Overseas-bound mail from there traveled by rail to Moscow for forwarding beyond.

REGISTERED MAIL TO ALGERIA VIA THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAIL ROUTE TO MOSCOW AND BY RAIL TO GERMANY-FRANCE AND BY SEA TO ALGERIA

26 MARCH 1903
(Julian Calendar)
7 APRIL 1903
(Gregorian Calendar)

Registered view-card mail through the Russian Post Office at Tomsk, Siberia, Russia, to Algiers, Algeria,

18-day transit time.

Arrival Postmark: “Algiers, 25 April 1903”

16 Kopec
5 Kopec.. UPU International Postcard-Rate +
10 Kopec.. Registration fee +
1 Kopec.. Convenience Over-Franking
Even before official opening of the completed eastern Chinese railway of the trans-Siberian network, WEST-BOUND MAIL THROUGH THE RUSSIAN POST OFFICE MOVED OVER THE NOW FULLY REPAIRED NORTHERN CHINESE RAILWAY TO THE EASTERN CHINESE LINE, OR BY SEA FROM SHANGHAI TO DALNY AND THEN BY RAIL BEYOND.

MAIL FROM PEKING USING THE LAND ROUTE

14 APRIL 1903

Letter through the Russian Post Office at Peking to Paris, France, with route endorsement "...Transsiberienne"

26-day transit time.

Arrival Postmark:
"Paris,
10 May 1901"

10 Kopeck.
UPU Single-Weight (15 grams)
International Letter-Rate.

MAIL FROM SHANGHAI USING SEA ROUTE TO DALNY AND RAIL BEYOND

16 MAY 1903

View-card, postmarked Shanghai, Russian Post Office, sent to Paris, France, with route endorsement "Par Transsiberien".

25-day transit time.

Arrival Postmark:
"Paris,
10 June 1901"

5 Kopeck.
UPU International Postcard-Rate
1903 French Post Office Transit Mail from Korea & China to Germany & England

FRENCH & RUSSIAN POST OFFICES' CONCLUDED AGREEMENT, effective 1 January 1902, ENABLED MOVEMENT OF FRENCH POST OFFICE MAIL, without having to affix both French, Russian or Chinese postage, OVER THE TRANS-SIBERIAN ROUTE.

20 SEPTEMBER 1903

Korean postal stationery card mailed at Inchon by a German sailor aboard HMS Prince Bismarck, heavy cruiser and flag ship of the German East Asia Cruiser Squadron on its third Korea voyage (20-22 September 1903), 35-day transit time.

Transit Postmark:
(French Post Office)
"Shanghai, China,
28 September 1903"

Arrival Postmark:
"Berent,
25 October 1903"

4 Cents
UPU International Postcard-Rate.

30 NOVEMBER 1903

Chinese mail routed through the French Post Office (China was not yet a member of the UPU) to London, England, with route endorsement "Via Siberia".

Transit Postmark:
"Shanghai,
30 November 1903"

4 Cents:
UPU International Postcard-Rate.
THE 1898 RUSSIAN-CHINESE LEASE AGREEMENT FOR THE LIAOTUNG PENINSULA JUSTIFIED THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT TO FINANCE & BUILD THE "CHINESE EASTERN RAILWAY LINE" (officially opened in June 1903) in order to connect the trans-Siberian, southern Manchurian and eastern Chinese rail lines with the Russian City/Port at Vladivostok and, more southern, Chinese City/Ports of Dalny & Port Arthur, thereby ESTABLISHING A 'TRANS-SIBERIAN RAIL NETWORK'.

CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO EARLY PASSENGER TRAFFIC USING THE NEW TRANS-SIBERIAN RAIL ROUTE FROM THE LIAOTUNG PENINSULA (DALNY & PORT ARTHUR TERMINALS)

16 MAY 1903

Over-franked mail sent by a German located at Tsingtau, Kiautschou (German Protectorate Lease Territory), to a friend at Honolulu, Hawaii indicating....

"I can today advise that I will be returning home next week. In order to visit you, I wanted to return by way of America. However, because of the disproportionate cost, I decided at the last moment to take the train from Port Arthur through Russia..."
Since China was not a member of the UPU until March 1914, EARLY FOREIGN-BOUND MAIL FROM CHINA HAD TO BE SENT THROUGH A FOREIGN POST OFFICE WITH BOTH CHINESE FRANKING AND THAT OF THE FOREIGN POST OFFICE.

CHINESE COMMERCIAL MAIL TO GERMANY FROM TIENTSIN USING RAIL ROUTE ... NEWCHWANG-HARBIN-IRKUTSK-MOSCOW-BERLIN-OSNABRÜCK, GERMANY

25 APRIL 1903

Commercial cover, postmarked by the Chinese Post Office at Tientsin, China, Russian Post Office postmark at Yingkou (Newchwang) on 1 May 1903 (Gregorian Calendar), sent to Osnabrück, Germany, with cachet route mark & hand endorsement "Via Siberia Germany"

22-day transit time.

Transit Postmark: (Reverse)  
“Newchwang, 27 April 1903”

Arrival Postmark:  
“Osnabrück, 17 May 1903”

30 Kopeck (Russian) & 30 Cents (Chinese) 
triple-weight (1.5 ounces / 34 grams) 
international letter-rate.
Germany-Bound Registered Mail from Shanghai
Using Sea Route to Dalny and Rail Beyond

14 August 1903
(Gregorian Calendar)

Registered commercial mail through the Russian Post Office at Shanghai, China, to Düsseldorf, Germany, addressed to renowned German manufacturer of photo projection equipment, Eduard Liesegang.

32-day transit time.

Transit Postmark: (Reverse) Arrival Postmark:
“Moscow,“ Düsseldorf” 61,
12 September 1903” 15 September 1903”
(Gregorian Calendar)

20 Kopeck:
10 Kopeck: UPU Single-Weight (20 grams)
International Letter-Rate.
10 Kopeck: Registration fee
AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GERMAN & RUSSIAN POST OFFICES TOOK EFFECT ON 1 OCTOBER 1903, permitting acceptance of German Post Office Mail from/to Europe or beyond routed over the Trans-Siberian Network.

EARLY KIAUTSCHOU GERMAN POST OFFICE MAIL TO EUROPE VIA THE TRANS-SIBERIAN NETWORK

5 NOVEMBER 1903

View-card, postmarked at Tsingtao, Kiautschou Territory, non-route endorsed, sent over the new Trans-Siberian Route, as evidenced by the Moscow Transit Postmark, sent to Budapest, Hungary. 24-day transit time.

Transit & Arrival Postmarks:

“Moscow,
13 November 1903
(Julian Calendar)
= 26 November 1903”
(Gregorian Calendar)

“Budapest,
29 November 1903”

10 Pfennig:
UPU International Postcard-Rate.
ANNOUNCEMENT IN GERMANY IN EARLY 1903 OF THE FUTURE OPENING OF THE TRANS-SIBERIAN ROUTE FOR GERMAN MAIL TO THE FAR EAST resulted in some early non-valid mail being endorsed for that route with such subsequently being re-directed by sea.

Postkarte mit Antwort Weltpostverein Carte postale avec réponse payée Union postale universelle

Mr. H. Havemann
Technischer Sekretär
Tsingtau (China)
via St. Petersburg - Port Arthur.

RE-ROUTED MAIL TO TSINGTAU, CHINA, USING SEA ROUTE SINCE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAIL ROUTE STILL CLOSED TO GERMAN POST OFFICE MAIL

17 JANUARY 1903

Postal stationery reply-card, postmarked at Wilhelmshaven, route endorsed "via St. Petersburg – Port Arthur", sent to Tsingtau, Kiautschou, China,

Since the Trans-Siberian Network Route was not yet open to German-origin mail, the route endorsement was altered by the German Post Office to "8p XI route closed... (route) via 8p 21" =
(by rail) Wilhelmshaven-Leipzig-Hof-Munich-Naples
(by sea) Naples-Tsingtau

41-day transit time.

Arrival Postmark:
"Tsingtau, Kiautschou,
27 February 1903"

10+10 Pfennig:
UPU International Postcard-Rate.
III. RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR
1904-1905

Europe-Bound ‘via Siberia’ Mail
Prior to Outbreak of War
on 10 February 1904

GERMAN-POST-OFFICE MAIL WAS POSSIBLE ONLY FOUR MONTHS
PRIOR TO THE OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES BETWEEN
RUSSIA AND JAPAN ON 10 FEBRUARY 1904,
resulting in closure of all mail movement over the Trans-Siberian
Network in Manchuria and China until late 1905.

GERMAN POST OFFICE IN CHINA
MAIL TO ENGLAND

9 JANUARY 1904

Viewcard, postmarked at the Shanghai German Post Office, sent to London, England, with route endorsement “Via Siberia”.

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GERMAN POST OFFICE IN CHINA
MAIL TO HOLLAND

29 JANUARY 1904

Viewcard, postmarked at the Shanghai German Post Office, sent to Rotterdam, Holland, with route endorsement “Via Siberia”, 25-day transit time.

Arrival Postmark:
“Rotterdam, 23 February 1904”

10 Pfennig:
UPU International Postcard-Rate
14 JANUARY 1904
Registered cover, postmarked at the Shanghai German Post Office, sent to Chur, Switzerland, with route endorsement "Via Siberia".
27-day transit time.
RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR
1904-1905

BETWEEN '9 FEBRUARY 1904 - LATE SUMMER 1905', FOREIGN-POST-OFFICES' IN CHINA MAIL WAS SENT BY SEA WITH ROUTE ENDORSEMENT "VIA SUEZ", since the trans-Siberian rail route was closed as a result of the Russo-Japanese War.

REGISTERED GERMAN-POST-OFFICE IN CHINA
MAIL SENT TO GERMANY DURING THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

13 APRIL 1905

Registered bank mail, postmarked at the Tientsin German Post Office, sent to a military district office at Schöneberg, Germany, with route indication "Via Suez".

39-day transit time.

Service Postmark:
(reverse)
"Schöneberg,
22 May 1905"

60 Pfennig:
40 Pf.. Double-Weight (15-30 grams)
UPU International Letter-Rate
20 Pf.. Registration fee
RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR
1904-1905

Since hostilities officially ended with the Russo-Japanese Treaty of Portsmouth (New Hampshire) signed on 5 September 1905, MAIL SERVICE RESUMPTION EAST & WESTBOUND RESUMED EARLIER, ALTHOUGH ONLY THE EARLIER RIDER/CARAVAN ROUTE TO REACH THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAIL NETWORK AT MYSSOWAJA, since the eastern Chinese portion of the rail network was war damaged.

FRENCH POST OFFICE MAIL TO FRANCE
22 MAY 1905

Cove, postmarked at Tientsin, with route endorsement "Voie Sibérie" sent to France.

30-day transit time.
(Tientsin-Peking-Kalguan-Urga-
Myssowaja-Irkutsk-
Moscow-Berlin-France)

25 Centimes...
Single-Weight
UPU International Letter-Rate

GERMAN KIAUTSCHOU MAIL TO GERMANY
12 DECEMBER 1905

View-card, postmarked Tsingtau, Kiautschou, China, with route endorsement "Via Siberia" sent to Weissenburg, Province Alsace, Germany.

35-day transit time (Kiautschou-Tientsin-Peking-Kalguan-Urga-
Myssowaja-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Weissenburg)

Arrival Postmark: "Weissenburg (Els), 16 January 1906"

2 Cents...
Postcard-rate for mail from a German colony to Germany

Chinese Handstamp (red) = Address of Sender...
"Hamel, No. 1, Sijfang"
Despite the resumption of mail services, WINTER WEATHER-RELATED DELAYS, and continued non-operational track network in Eastern China, OFTEN RESULTED IN MAIL TAKING AS LONG AS SEA-ROUTED MAIL.

14 FEBRUARY 1906

Commercial cover, postmarked at the German Post Office at Tientsin, China, with route endorsement "via Russland" sent to Hamburg, Germany.

42-day (weather-related delay) transit time
(Tientsin-Peking-Kalgan-Urga-Myssowaja-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Hamburg)

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Hamburg,
28 March 1906"

10 Cents:
Single-Weight (15 grams) UPU International Letter-Rate
RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR
1904-1905

Resumption of Mail Service
Russian Post Office in China
1906-1907

On 12 February 1907, THE ROUTE ON THE LIAOTUNG PENINSULA (Dalny/Port Arthur/Harbin) AND IN SOUTHERN MANCHURIA REOPENED, now again enabling full use of the southern Manchurian and connecting trans-Siberian rail network.

1906
CHINA TO GERMANY
MAIL

26 OCTOBER 1906
(Gregorian Calendar)

Postal stationery card postmarked Tschifu (Chefoo).
Russian Post Office, to Suhl, Germany.

29-day Transit time
(Tschifu-by sea to Dalny-
Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-
Berlin-Suhl)

Arrival Postmark:
“Suhl,
24 November 1906”

4 Kopeck
International postcard-rate

1907
CHINA TO GERMANY
MAIL

12 MAY 1907
(Gregorian Calendar)

View-card postmarked Tientsin, China, without route endorsement “Via Siberia” to Stuttgart, Germany.

22-day transit time
(Tientsin-Peking-Mukden-
Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-
Berlin-Stuttgart)

Transit Postmark:
(Reverse)
“Peking,
13 May 1907”

Arrival Postmark:
“Stuttgart, 3 June 1907”

4 Kopeck
International postcard-rate
+ 2 Kopeck over-franking
IV. EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

By June 1907, EXPRESS TRAIN SERVICE (three times weekly),
EXPEDITED HANDLING OF MAIL ALONG WITH PROMOTION OF ROUTE MAIL SERVICE
between Europe/European Russia-Eastern Russia/Far East.

CHINA TO SWEDEN MAIL
(German Post Office)

30 MARCH 1907
View card, postmarked at
Shanghai, China, to Stockholm,
Sweden, with route endorsement "via Siberia".

26-day Transit time
(Shanghai-by sea-Dalny-by
train-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-
Berlin-Kiel-by sea-Stockholm)

4 Cents
UPU International Postcard Rate.

CHINA TO GERMANY MAIL
(Kiautschou ... German Colony)

11 JUNE 1907
View card, postmarked at
Tsingtau, Kiautschou, China, sent
to Uslar, Germany, with
route endorsement "via Tschifu - Siberia".

23-day Transit time
(Tsingtau-Tschifu-by sea to
Dalny-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-
Moscow-Berlin-Uslar)

(Reverse)
2 Cents.
Postcard Concession Rate for
German Colony to Germany.

CHINA TO ENGLAND MAIL
(British Post Office)

18 APRIL 1907
Missionary mail postmarked at
Hankow, China, with endorsement
"Via Siberia"
To Selby, Yorkshire, England.

29-day transit time:
(Hankow-by sea to Dalny-Harbin-
Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Hamburg-
by sea to England)

Transit & Arrival Postmarks:
(Reverse)
"Peking, 22 April 1907"
"Selby, 17 May 1907"

4 Cents
(Hong Kong Postage)
UPU International Letter-Rate

Rev. J. W. Brewer.
Wesley Villa,
Brooke St.,
Selby,
Yorkshire,
England.
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

Along with standard mail service,
REGISTERED MAIL WAS POSSIBLE USING THE STANDARD SEALED MAIL
BAGS WITH THE EXPRESS TRANS-SIBERIAN TRAIN SERVICE.

KIAUCHOU-CHINA
TO GERMANY MAIL
(German Post Office)

11 JUNE 1907

Cover, postmarked at
Tsingtau, Kiautschou,
China, sent to Deutsch-
Eylau, Germany,
with route endorsement
"Via Siberia".

23-day transit time
(Kiautschou...by sea...-
Dalny...by train...Harbin-
Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-
Deutsch-Eylau)

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Deutsch-Eylau,
4 August 1907"

18 Cents..
8 Cents.. up to 250 grams
+ 10 Cents.. Registry Fee/
concession letter-rate for
German Colony mail sent
to Germany

DUTCH ENGINEERING WORKS
NEDERLANDSCHE FABRIEK
van WERKWIJGEN EN SPOORWEG-MATERIEEL
SHANGHAI

CHINA TO
HOLLAND MAIL
(German Post Office)

24 OCTOBER 1907

Commercial mail,
postmarked
Tientsin, China, with
route endorsement
"Via Siberia" sent
to Amsterdam,
Holland.

22-day transit time
(Tientsin-Peking-
Mukden-Harbin-
Irkutsk-Moscow-
Berlin-Amsterdam)

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Amsterdam,
14 November
1907"

20 Cents...
10 Cents.. UPU
Single-Weight
International
Letter-Rate +
10 Cents..
Registry Fee
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

CHINA TO ITALY MAIL
(German Post Office)

20 DECEMBER 1907

Single-weight letter postmarked at
Shanghai, China, sent to
Rome, Italy, with route endorsement
"via Siberia".

26-day Transit time
(Shanghai.. by sea to Dalny..
by train.. Harbin-Irkutsk-
Moscow-Berlin-Hof-Munich-
Rome)

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Roma,
15 January 1908"

20 Cents...
10 Cents..
UPU International
Single-Weight
Letter-Rate
+10 Cents.. Registry fee

CHINA TO
GERMANY MAIL
(German Post Office)

5 JUNE 1908

Triple-weight commercial mail postmarked
Shanghai, China, with route endorsement
"Via Siberia" sent to Stuttgart,
Germany

23-day transit time
(Shanghai.. by sea to Dalny., by
train.. Harbin-
Irkutsk-Moscow-
Berlin-Stuttgart)

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Stuttgart,
27 June 1908"

32 Cents...
22 Cents..
Concession
Letter-Rate to
250 grams +
10 Cents..
Registry fee
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

German Concession-Rate Mail
1908

EFFECTIVE 1 JULY 1908, THE GERMAN POST OFFICE REDUCED ITS RATE FOR MAIL EXCHANGED BETWEEN THE GERMAN POST OFFICE IN CHINA WITH GERMANY PROPER RESULTING IN A 'CONCESSION RATE' for such mail which now was significantly less than the standard UPU international mail rates with the difference subsidized by the German Post Office.

NON-CONCESSION-RATED
CHINA TO GERMANY
MAIL
(German Post Office)

6 MARCH 1908
Postal card, postmarked at Shanghai, China, sent to Bremen, Germany, with route endorsement "via Siberia".

19-day Transit time
(Shanghai... by sea...-Dalny... by train...-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Bremen)

Arrival Postmark: "Bremen, 25 March 1908"

4 Cents...
UPU international Postcard Rate.

CONCESSION-RATED
CHINA TO GERMANY
MAIL
(German Post Office)

25 AUGUST 1908
View card, postmarked Shanghai, China, with route endorsement "via Siberia" sent to Hanover, Germany.

Route: Shanghai... by sea...-Dalny... by train...-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Hanover

2 Cents...
German concession-rate valid for German Post Office in China Mail to Germany
(1 July 1908-9. September 1915)
GERMAN LEGATION GUARDS AT PEKING
using the German Post Office,
ROUTE-ENDORSED THEIR MAIL “via Siberia”.

REGISTERED CHINA TO GERMANY MAIL (German Post Office)
3 NOVEMBER 1908
Registered postal card, postmarked at Peking, China, sent to the Imperial Ministry of War, Berlin, Germany, with route endorsement “via Siberia”.
19-day Transit time (Peking-Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin)
Arrival Postmark: “Berlin, 22 November 1908”
12 Cents...
2 Cents.. Concession postcard-rate +10 Cents.. registry fee.

CHINA TO GERMANY VIEW CARD MAIL (German Post Office)
13 JANUARY 1908
View card mail, postmarked Peking, China, with route endorsement “Via Siberia” to Spandau/Berlin, Germany.
Route: Peking-Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin
Military Unit Cachet Handstamp: "Legation Guard Staff..Validated Mail"
2 Cents...
Concession-rate for German Post Office in China Postcard Mail to Germany
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913
Chinese Post Office Mail
1908

THE CHINESE POST OFFICE FIRST BECAME A MEMBER OF THE UPU IN SEPTEMBER 1914 REQURING ANY OVERSEAS-BOUND MAIL BEFORE THAT DATE TO BE ROUTED THROUGH A FOREIGN POST OFFICE IN CHINA.
Agreements with foreign post offices in China were eventually concluded eliminating any double-franking requirements.

CHINA TO UNITED STATES OF AMERICA MAIL
(Japanese Post Office)
26 DECEMBER 1908
Printed-matter mail, postmarked at
Tientsin, with route endorsement
"via Siberia", sent to
New Britain, Connecticut.
Transit Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Mukden, UP, 28 December 1908"

Route:
Tientsin-Mukden-
Harbin-Irktusk-
Moscow-Berlin-
Hamburg-USA

2 Cents...
Printed Matter rate up to two ounces

INTERNATIONAL REFORM BUREAU
A BUREAU OF LECTURES, LITERATURE AND LAW
FOR PROMOTING MORAL AND SOCIAL REFORMS
E. W. THWING, Secretary, Tientsin, China.

B. B. Bassette, Esq.,
New Britain, Conn.,
U. S. A.

CHINA TO SWITZERLAND
(French Post Office)
12 DECEMBER 1908
View-card, postmarked at Hankow, route endorsement
"via Siberia", sent to
Bern, Switzerland.
Transit Postmark:
"Peking, 16 December 1908"

Route:
Hankow-Peking-
Mukden-Harbin-Irktusk-
Moscow-Berlin-Basei-
Zurich-Bern

4 Cents...
UPU International Postcard-Rate
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

CHINA TO SWEDEN MAIL
(Chinese & French Post Offices)

16 July 1910

Up-rated postal stationery card, postmarked at Kiao-chow, China, sent to Stockholm, Sweden, through French Post Office, with route endorsement "Via Siberia".

Transit & Arrival Postmarks:
"Tientsin, 21 July 1910"
"Stockholm, 5 August 1910"

20-day transit time (Kiao-chow-Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irktusk-Omsk-St. Petersburg-by sea...Sweden)

CHINA TO ITALY MAIL

29 November 1910

'Christmas Greetings' mail, postmarked at Amoy, China, sent to Naples, Italy, with route endorsement "Italy Via Siberia".

Transit & Arrival Postmarks:
"Shanghai, 5 December 1910"
"Naples, 20 December 1910"

25-day transit time (Amoy/Shanghai...by sea...Dalny...by train...Harbin-Irktusk-Moscow-Berlin-Munich-Naples)

CHINA TO ENGLAND MAIL

27 December 1910

'New Year's Greetings' mail, postmarked Tientsin, China, with route endorsement "Via Siberia" to Boston, Lincolnshire, England.

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Boston, 12 January 1911"

16-day transit time (Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irktusk-Moscow-Berlin-Hamburg-England)

Franking:
4 Cents.

UPU International Postcard Rate.

Chinese Post Office Mail
1910-1911
OPENING OF THE TRANS-SIBERIAN NETWORK ALSO ENABLED FRENCH POST OFFICE EXPANSION ALONG THE COAST.
In support of commerce and shorter mail movement to France.

CHINA TO SPAIN MAIL (French Post Office)
15 JUNE 1908
View card, postmarked at Chefoo, China, sent to San Sebastian, Spain, with route endorsement "Via Transiberia".

Route:
(Chefoo..by sea..- Dalny..by train..- Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Paris-San Sebastian)

4 Cents...
UPU International Postcard-Rate.

CHINA TO SWITZERLAND MAIL (French Post Office)
12 NOVEMBER 1909
Commercial cover, postmarked Canton, China, with route endorsement "Via Dalny & Siberia". Sent to Affoltern/Zurich, Switzerland.

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse) "Affoltern, 4 December 1909"

22-day transit time: (Canton/Shanghai.. by sea..-Dalny.. by train..-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Basel-Zurich)

25 Centimes...
(Indo China Stamps/ 5 & 15 Cent. values with printing error "CanPor")
UPU International Single-Weight Letter-Rate.
MAIL FROM TIEN TSIN TO GERMANY

17 APRIL 1908 (Julian)
30 APRIL 1908 (Gregorian)

Reply postal stationery card, postmarked at Tiensin, with route endorsement "Via Siberia" to Berlin, Germany.

Arrival Postmark: "Wilmersdorf bei Berlin, 18 May 1908"

18-day transit time: Tiensin-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin

4 Kopeck... UPU international postcard-rate.

REGISTERED MAIL FROM PEKING TO GERMANY

6 SEPTEMBER 1910 (Gregorian)

Registered postal stationery, postmarked at Peking, with route endorsement "Via Siberia" sent to Giengen, Württemberg, Germany.


26 Kopeck...

Either
10 Kop. Single-weight (15 grams) letter-rate +
10 Kop...Registry fee +
6 Kop. Over-franking

Or
4 Kop.. Under-franking double-weight (30 grams) letter-rate
MAIL TO PRAG
(Austro-Hungary)

11 SEPTEMBER 1908

Printed-matter/newspaper
wrapper mail
postmarked at Hankow,
China, sent to Prag
(Austro-Hungary)
with no route
endorsement necessary.

Route:
Hankow-Peking-Tientsin-
Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-
Moscow-Berlin-Dresden-
Prag

2 Kopeck.
UPU international
Printed-Matter Rate
for mail up to 50
grams.
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

MAIL TO FINLAND FROM SHANGHAI

10 DECEMBER 1909

View-card, postmarked at Shanghai, China, with route endorsement "via Siberia" sent to Nystad, Finland (Russia).

Arrival Postmark: "Nystad, 28 December 1909"

18-day transit time: Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin

3 Kopeck., Russian inland postcard-rate.

MAIL TO FINLAND FROM HANKOW

24 DECEMBER 1912

'Christmas Greetings' Card, postmarked at Hankow, China, to Helsinki, Finland (Russia).

Arrival Postmark: "Helsinki, 8 January 1913"

15-day transit time: Hankow-Peking-Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-Omsk-St. Petersburg-Helsinki

3 Kopeck., Russian inland postcard-rate.
JAPAN-ORIGIN MAIL FOR EUROPE WAS USUALLY ROUTED THROUGH THE JAPANESE PORT OF TSURUGA FOR SEA TRANSPORT TO VLADIVOSTOK, RUSSIA, WHERE IT THEN TRAVELLED BY TRAIN TO EUROPE via the Trans-Siberian railway network southern route.

26 JULY 1908

'Imperial Hotel' Cover, postmarked at Tokyo, Japan, sent to Bern, Switzerland, with route endorsement "via Siberia".

21-day Transit time
(Tokyo-Tsuruga.. by sea..-Vladivostok.. by train..-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Bern)

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Bern, 16 August 1908"

10 Sen...
UPU International
Single-Weight
(20 grams)
Letter- Rate.

JAPAN-ORIGIN MAIL TO GERMANY
(Japan Post Office)

22 JUNE 1910

Commercial postal card, postmarked at Kyoto, Japan, with route endorsement "Via Siberia" sent to Beuel/Bonn, Germany.

Transit Postmark:
"Tsuruga, Japan, 22 August 1910"

Route:
Kyoto-Tsuruga..by sea..-Vladivostok..by train..-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Bonn

4 Sen...
UPU International
Postcard Rate
MAIL TO GERMANY
(Japan Post Office)

15 SEPTEMBER 1910

Cover through Japanese Post Office at Tientsin, China, sent to Giengen, Württemberg, Germany, with route endorsement "via Siberia".

Transit Postmark: “Changchun, IJPO, 17 September 1910”

Route: Tienstin-Mukden-Changchun-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Stuttgart-Giengen

11 Sen...
10 Sen.. Single-weight (20 grams)
UPU International Letter-Rate with 1 Sen over-franking
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

German Post Office in China Mail
Coastal Offices 1908-10

OPENING OF THE TRANS-SIBERIAN ROUTE WITH ITS CONNECTION TO
MOSCOW-BERLIN ENABLED MAIL TO MOVE TO WESTERN EUROPE MUCH MORE
EXPEDIENTLY THAN BY USING THE SEA ROUTE
enabling the German Post Office to extend its post office locations in support of
commerce expansion along the coast and inland.

CHINA TO GERMANY
MAIL
(German Post Office)

18 DECEMBER 1908

Cover,
postmarked at
Canton, China, sent to
Augsburg, Germany, with
route endorsement
"via Siberia".

Route:
Canton/Shanghai..by
sea..-Dalny..by train..-
Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-
Berlin-Augsburg

4 Cents...
German concession rate for
letter-mail sent to Germany.

THE SCHWEIGER IMPORT & EXPORT CO. LTD
HEAD OFFICE: MILAN

Via Siberia

HANKOW

Messrs.
Hankau
(Deutsch. Post)

Via Siberia

HAMBURG

steidtmann & Nagel

Merchants

CHINA TO GERMANY REGISTERED MAIL
(German Post Office)

12 NOVEMBER 1909

Commercial mail, postmarked at
Hankau, China, with route endorsement
"Via Siberia" sent to Hamburg, Germany

24-day transit time
(Hankau/Shanghai..by sea to Dalny.. by train..-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Hamburg)

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Hamburg, 24 June 1910"

14 Cents....
4 Cents .. Single weight (20 grams) letter concession-rate +
10 Cents .. Registry fee
EFFECTIVE 1 SEPTEMBER 1909, MAIL FROM THE GERMAN PACIFIC COLONIES HAD ACCESS TO THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAIL NETWORK, based on agreement between the German & Russian Post Offices.

Such mail moved by steamer to Hong Kong or Shanghai and subsequently by coastal vessel to Dalny on the Liaotung Peninsula/China, with access to the Eastern Chinese Railway of the trans-Siberian rail network.

GERMAN MARSHALL ISLAND MAIL (NAURU) TO GERMANY
(German Post Office)

24 FEBRUARY 1913

Postal stationery card, postmarked on the Island of Nauru, manuscript route endorsed "via Siberia", sent to Berlin, Germany

Sender:
"Martha Brauns", wife of the German engineer in charge of the German government telegraph station on Nauru.

Estimated 34-day transit time
(Nauru-Hong Kong-Dalny-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin)

5 Pfennig...
Postcard concession-rate for
German colony mail sent to Germany
The 1904 completed German-built Shantung Railway connected Tsingtao with Tsingtafu. A British-German Consortium built the Tientsin-Pukow Railway between 1909-1912 connecting southern China at Hankow to northern China at Tientsin along with connection to the Shantung Railway. BOTH RAIL LINES EXPEDITED THE MAIL MOVEMENT TO THE CHINESE NORTHERN AND EASTERN RAILWAYS, THE LATTER BEING PART OF THE TRANS-SIBERIAN NETWORK.

CHINESE TIENTSIN-PUKOW RAILWAY FORERUNNER MAIL
(Chinese & French Post Offices)

7 FEBRUARY 1909
Commercial cover, postmarked at Tsingtao, China, sent to Berlin with route endorsement "via Siberia".

Transit Postmark:
"Tien-Tsin, French Post Office China, 7 February 1909"

Arrival Postmark:
"Berlin, 21 February 1909"

14-day Transit Time:
Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Inrutsch-Moscow-Berlin

10 Cents...
UPU International Single-Weight Letter-Rate

Kaiserlich Chinesische Tientsin-Pukow Mail

SHANTUNG RAILWAY
T.P.O. MAIL
(German Post Office)

9 JUNE 1909
View-card mail sent by German Provincial Administrator "Walter" at Kaumi, Klautschau, postmarked "Tsingtau-Tsinanfu Train 2" to Leipzig, Germany, with route endorsement "Via Siberia".

Route:

2 Cents....
German concession postcard-rate for mail to Germany
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

German Post Office in China Mail
German Transit Mail 1909

MAIL SACKS FOR NON-GERMAN DESTINATION IN TRANSIT MAIL WERE ALSO HANDLED BY THE RUSSIAN & GERMAN POST OFFICES

CHINA TO HOLLAND MAIL
(German Post Office)
17 SEPTEMBER 1909

View card,
postmarked at
Shanghai, China, to
Amsterdam, Holland,
with route endorsement
"via Siberia".

Arrival Postmark:
"Amsterdam,
3 October 1909"

16-day Transit Time
(Shanghai...by sea to
Dalny...by train...
Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-
Berlin-Amsterdam)

4 Cents...
UPU International
Postcard-Rate

CHINA TO DENMARK MAIL
(German Post Office)
12 NOVEMBER 1909

Re-directed cover,
postmarked at Peking,
China, for Hellerup,
Denmark, with route endorsement
"Via Siberia".

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Hellerup,
7 June 1909"

14-day Transit Time
(Peking-Tientsin-
Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-
Moscow-Berlin-
Denmark)

10 Cents....
UPU Single Weight
(20 grams)
International
Letter-Rate
A 1910 AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN & GERMAN POST OFFICES NOW PERMITTED GERMAN PARCEL POST TO BE SENT BY WAY OF THE TRANS-SIBERIAN NETWORK.
(up to 5 kg and 2800 Marks in value to Shanghai/otherwise 800 Marks)

German-origin/transit parcel post did not move over the standard route of Berlin-Alexandrowo-Moscow-Harbin... but rather the more northerly European rail route...
Berlin-Eydtkuhnen (Prussian-Russian border)-St. Petersburg-Omsk-Harbin...

PARCEL POST TO JAPAN
(German Post Office)

30 MARCH 1910

Early ‘via Siberia’ parcel post card (3½ Kg parcel), postmarked at Hamburg, Germany, manuscript route endorsed “via Siberia”, sent to Kobe, Japan

Border Crossing Marks:
German: “Eydtkuhnen, 1 April 1910”
Russian: “Eydtkuhnen, 20 March (Julian Calendar) = 2 April” (Gregorian Calendar)

Transit Route:
Hamburg-Berlin-Eydtkuhnen-St. Petersburg-Omsk-Irkutsk-Harbin-Vladivostok-Tsuruga-Kobe

RM 4.60...
German flat-rate parcel post charge for international parcels up to 5 Kg in weight.

Reverse Side Franking
Upon the murder of two German missionaries in Shantung Province in November 1897 and subsequent occupation of the City of Tsingtao by German marines in 1898, China & Germany signed a 99-year lease of the Kiautschou Bay area in the north-eastern part of the province in March 1898.

THE GERMAN FAR-EAST CRUISER SQUADRON WITH ITS CONTINGENT OF MARINES SUBSEQUENTLY HAD THEIR OVERSEAS HOME PORT/BASE AT TSINGTAO/KIAUTSCHOU BETWEEN 1898-1914.

CHINA TO GERMANY REGISTERED MAIL
(German Post Office)

8 APRIL 1910
Registered German marine’s mail
(2nd Unit/3rd Marine Battalion),
postmarked at Tsingtao, Kiautschou,
China, with route endorsement
"Via Siberia" sent to
Dresden, Germany

14-day transit time:
Tsingtao/Kiautschou..by sea to Dalny..by train..-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Dresden

18 Cents...
8 Cents.. double-weight (up to 250 grams)
German concession letter-rate +
10 Cents .. registry fee
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES 1907-1913

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS-ORIGIN MAIL TO EUROPE HAD A SURCHARGE OF TWO CENTAVOS FOR POSTAL CARDS ENDORSED ‘Via Siberia’ VERSUS MAIL TO AMERICA AT FOUR CENTAVOS, WHILE LETTER MAIL HAD THE UPU INTERNATIONAL RATE.

INSUFFICIENTLY FRANKED POSTCARD MAIL TO GERMANY

21 SEPTEMBER 1910

Viewcard postmarked at Manila, Philippines, with route endorsement “via Siberia”.

Cachet Handstamp: “INSUFFICIENTLY PAID for Trans-Siberian Route”

4 Centavos
2 Centavos underfranked for routing “Via Siberia” for rate of 6 Centavos.

REGISTERED COMMERCIAL MAIL TO SWITZERLAND

10 JUNE 1935 (Reverse)

Registered mail postmarked at Manila, Philippines, with endorsement “Via Siberia” to Brugg, Switzerland. 54-day transit time.

Arrival Postmark: “Brugg, Aargau, 4 August 1935”

Route: Manila...by sea...- Vladivostok...by train...- Harbin...- Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Basel-Brugg

36 Centavos...
16 Centavos...
‘Via Siberia’ single-weight (20 grams) letter-rate + 20 Centavos...
registration fee
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

CHINA TO SWEDEN MAIL
(Chinese & French Post Office Services)

16 JULY 1910
Uprated postal stationery card, postmarked at
Kiaochow, China, sent to
Stockholm, Sweden, through
French Post Office, with route endorsement "Via Siberia".

Transit & Arrival Postmarks:
"Tientsin, 21 July 1910"
"Stockholm, 5 August 1910"

20-day transit time
(Kiaochow-Tientsin-Mukden-
Harbin-Irkutsk-Omsk-St.
Petersburg-by sea.-Sweden)

CHINA TO ITALY MAIL
29 NOVEMBER 1910
‘Christmas Greetings’ mail, postmarked at
Amoy, China, sent to Naples, Italy,
with route endorsement
"Italy Via Siberia".

Transit & Arrival Postmarks:
"Shanghai,
5 December 1910"
"Naples,
28 December 1910"

29-day transit time
(Amoy/Shanghai.. by sea.-Dalny.. by
train...Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-
Munich-Naples)

CHINA TO ENGLAND MAIL
27 DECEMBER 1910
‘New Year’s Greetings’ mail, postmarked Tientsin, China, with
route endorsement "Via Siberia" to
Boston, Lincolnshire, England.

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Boston, 12 January 1911"

16-day transit time
(Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-
Moscow-Berlin-Hamburg-England)

4 Cents..
UPU International
Postcard-Rate.
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

North African & European Mail
to China ... 1910-1911

MAIL FROM EGYPT
TO SHANGHAI
(Egyptian Post Office)

1 JULY 1910

View card,
postmarked at
Cairo, Egypt, sent to
Shanghai, China, with
route endorsement
"via Siberia".

Arrival Postmark:
(British Post Office)
"Shanghai BPO,
29 July 1910"

28-day Transit Time
Probable route:
Port-Tajo (Egypt)-by
sea to Brindisi-by rail
to Berlin-Moscow-
Irkutsk-Harbin-
Mukden-Dalny-
by sea to Shanghai

4 Milliemes...
UPU International
Postcard-Rate

RE-DIRECTED MAIL
GERMANY-CHINA
(German Post Office)

25 DECEMBER 1911

Re-directed mourning cover,
postmarked at Stuttgart,
Germany, for
"Mrs. Max Müller,
German Consul's wife",
at Shanghai, then
re-directed to Hankau, China,
with cachet route endorsement
"via Siberia".

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Hankau, 15 January 1912"

21-day Transit Time
Probable route:
Stuttgart-Berlin-Moscow-Irkutsk-
Harbin-Mukden-Dalny-by sea to
Shanghai-Hankau

10 Pfennig.
Concession-rate for
single-weight
(20 grams) letter-mail from
Germany to a German Post
Office in China
**EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES**  
1907-1913  

**Eastern United States-Bound Mail 1910**

**BECAUSE OF TRANSIT TIME SAVINGS, MAIL TO THE EASTERN UNITED STATES COULD ALSO BE ROUTED “VIA SIBERIA”** traveling between 20-25 days total from China until arrival in the United States, including 7-days by sea from Hamburg to the U.S.A., rather than via Yokohama-Seattle (or San Francisco) by sea and overland by train to destination.

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**GERMAN P.O. IN CHINA MAIL TO PENNSYLVANIA**

20 JANUARY 1910

“Peking Club” cover, postmarked at Peking, China, sent to Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, with route endorsement “Via Siberia”.

Route:  

10 Cents.  
UPU International Single-Weight (20 grams)  
Letter-Rate.

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**GERMAN P.O. IN TERRITORY OF KIAUTSCHOU MAIL TO NEW YORK**

19 JANUARY 1910

Commercial cover, postmarked Tsingtao, Kiautschou, China, with route endorsement “Via Siberia” sent to New York City.

Route:  
Tsingtao... by sea.. Dalny... by train...-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Hamburg-New York

10 Cents...  
UPU International Single-Weight (20 grams)  
Letter-Rate
CHINESE P.O. MAIL TO PENNSYLVANIA
(Chinese/Japanese Post Offices)

7 SEPTEMBER 1912
Cover, postmarked at Peking, China, sent to Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, with route endorsement
"Via Siberia".

Transit Postmark: (Reverse)
"Mouken, 9 September, 1912"

Arrival Postmark: (Reverse)
"Bryn Mawr, 29 September 1912"

22-day transit time:
Peking-Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow
Berlin-Hamburg-Philadelphia-Bryn Mawr

10 Cents...
UPU International Single-Weight (20 grams) Letter-Rate.

BRITISH P.O. MAIL TO PENNSYLVANIA
(Hong Kong Postage)

10 FEBRUARY 1913
"Shanghai Club" Cover, postmarked Shanghai, with route endorsement
"Via Siberia".

Route:

20 Cents...
UPU International Single-Weight (20 grams) letter-Rate
MAIL TO THE MIDWESTERN UNITED STATES WAS ALSO ROUTED "VIA SIBERIA" rather than via Yokohama-Seattle or San Francisco by sea with train overland to destination.

USA-BOUND MAIL TO OHIO
(German Post Office)
3 JULY 1911
Single-weight cover, postmarked at Peking, China, sent to Gettysburg, Ohio, with route endorsement "Via Siberia".

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Gettysburg Received, 27 July 1911"

24-day transit time
Route:

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE
Tientsin, China.

Burt Meana, Esq.,
321 North Newton st.,

VIA SIBERIA

Minneapolis,
Minnesota,
United States of America.

USA-BOUND MAIL TO MINNESOTA
(Chinese & French Post Offices)
20 MARCH 1912
Official wax-sealed American Consular cover, postmarked at Tientsin, China, with route endorsement "Via Siberia" sent to Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Transit Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Tien-Tsin-Chine, 21 March 1912"

Route:

10 Cents.
UPU International Single-Weight (20 grams) Letter-Rate.
Ditto.. 1911 Plague in Manchuria

BETWEEN JANUARY-MARCH OF 1911, OPERATION OF THE MANCHURIAN RAILWAY, (south of Harbin) & THE CHINESE EASTERN RAILWAY TO DALNY, WAS HALTED BECAUSE OF AN OUTBREAK OF PLAGUE IN MANCHURIA.

24 JANUARY 1911
(German Post Office, Kiautschou)

Printed-matter, postmarked at Tsingtau, Kiautschou, routed "via Yokohama & America", sent to Port of Spain, Trinidad.

2 Cents...
UPU International Printed-Matter Rate (50 grams)

17 FEBRUARY 1911
(German Post Office in China)

Commercial-mail, postmarked at Shanghai, China, route-endorsed "via Siberia", with diversion route most probably Shanghai-Yokohama-San Francisco-New York-Hamburg-Vienna, sent to Vienna, Austria

10 Cents...
UPU International Letter-Rate (20 grams).
LATE 1911 & EARLY 1912, INNER-CHINA RAIL INTERRUPTIONS TOOK PLACE AS A RESULT OF REVOLUTION IN CHINA, commencing on 10 October with establishment of the Chinese Republic in December 1911.

EUROPE-BOUND MAIL WAS TEMPORARILY ROUTED FROM SHANGHAI BY SEA TO JAPAN, THEN VLADIVOSTOK, RUSSIA, FROM WHERE MAIL MOVED OVER THE NORTHERN TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY ROUTE WESTWARD.

During this revolutionary period, the Provisional Government abolished ‘pigtails’, adopted the Western Calendar, and Sun Yat-Sen, became leader of the Kuomintang (Nationalist) Party, and, later, in 1921, was elected China’s president.

10 DECEMBER 1911
(German Post Office)
Commercial mail, postmarked at Shanghai, route- endorsecl "via Japan-Vladivostok", sent to Vienna, Austria.

Route:
Shanghai by sea - Japan-Vladivostok, Russia, by train - Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Vienna.

10 Cents....
Single-weight (20 grams)
UPU International Letter-Rate

ANDREWS, VON FISCHERZ & GEORGE, Ltd.
1, Foochow Road
SHANGHAI

Via Siberia.
via Japan-Vladivostok

Titl. ZENTRAL - BUREAU der Glasfabriken und Raffinerien

VIENNA.
VI/2. Mariahilferstrasse 103.

AUSTRIA

27 DECEMBER 1911
(German Post Office)
Commercial mail postmarked at Shanghai, route endorsed "Via Siberia", sent to Bremen, Germany.

Route:
Shanghai by sea - Japan-Vladivostok, Russia, by train - Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Bremen.

4 Cents....
Single-weight concession-rate for letter-mail from a German Post Office in China to Germany.
VLADIVOSTOK
ORIGIN MAIL TO
ENGLAND

25 AUGUST 1911

English sailor's mail written on-board the "SS Den of Ogil", mailed at Vladivostok, Russia, for Redcar, Yorkshire, England.

Route:
Vladivostok-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Hamburg-England

4 Kopecks, UPU International Postcard-Rate

TRANS-SIBERIAN EXPRESS T.P.O. MAIL

11 JULY 1912

Art-Card, postmarked aboard 'Train 3', sent to Leipzig/re-directed to Blumenau, Germany.

Route:
Vladivostok T.P.O.-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Leipzig-Blumenau

4 Kopecks... UPU International Postcard-Rate
MAIL FROM EGYPT
TO SHANGHAI
(Egyptian Post Office)

1 JULY 1910

View card, postmarked at Cairo, Egypt, sent to Shanghai, China, with route endorsement "via Siberia".

Arrival Postmark: (British Post Office)
"Shanghai BPO, 29 July 1910"

28-day Transit Time
Probable route:
Port-Tajoio (Egypt)-by sea to Brindisi-by rail to Berlin-Moscow-Irkutsk-Harbin-Mukden-Dalny-by sea to Shanghai

4 Millimes...
UPU International Postcard-Rate

RE-DIRECTED MAIL
GERMANY-CHINA
(German Post Office)

25 DECEMBER 1911

Re-directed mourning cover, postmarked at Stuttgart, Germany, for "Mrs. Max Müller, German Consul's wife", at Shanghai, then re-directed to Hankau, China, with cachet route endorsement "via Siberia".

Arrival Postmark: (Reverse)
"Hankau, 15 January 1912"

21-day Transit Time
Probable route: Stuttgart-Berlin-Moscow-Irkutsk-Harbin-Mukden-Dalny-by sea to Shanghai-Hankau

10 Pfennig.. Concession-rate for single-weight (20 grams) letter-mail from Germany to a German Post Office in China
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

Commercial Mail to Germany
1912-1913

THE REDUCED ‘CONCESSION RATE FOR MAIL SENT FROM A GERMAN POST OFFICE IN CHINA TO GERMANY’ AS WELL AS A MUCH SHORTER TRANSIT TIME (Approx. 15 Days) TO EUROPE. EXPANSION OF MAIL FROM/TO CHINA FROM GERMANY INCREASED.

TIENTSIN-ORIGIN MAIL
(German Post Office)

16 SEPTEMBER 1912

Cover, postmarked at Tientsin, China, sent to Berlin, Germany, with route endorsement "Via Siberia".

Route:
Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin

PEKING-ORIGIN MAIL
(German Post Office)

8 FEBRUARY 1913

Cover, postmarked at Peking, China, with route endorsement "Via Siberia" sent to Munich, Germany.

Route:
Peking-Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Munich

Single-weight (20 grams) concession letter-rate for mail sent to Germany.
19 DECEMBER 1912

Cover, postmarked at Zehlendorf, Germany, sent to "Carl Klatt - Custom House" at Harbin, Manchuria, with route endorsement "Via Siberia".

Upon arrival at Harbin and finding no "Carl Klatt", the cover was forwarded to Tientsin, China, and, again not finding the recipient, subsequently returned to Zehlendorf where opened & inspected for the sender's address, resealed with a hand-stamp applied indicating the sender could not be determined.

Transit/Arrival Postmarks:
(Reverse)
"Harbin, Russian Post Office, 30 December 1912"
(Gregorian Calendar)
"Tientsin, Chinese Post Office, 27 March 1913"
"Zehlendorf, (manuscript) 11 April (1913)"

Route:

20 Pfennig....
Single-weight (20 grams) international letter-rate
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913
French Post Office in China
Registered Mail to Italy
1913

REGISTERED MAIL FROM PEKING TO ROME
(French Post Office)

9 APRIL 1913

Registered cover, postmarked at the French Post Office at Peking, sent to Rome, Italy, with route endorsement "via Siberia".

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Roma,
27 April 1913"
18-day transit time

Route:

20 Cents...
10 Cents.. Single-Weight (20 grams)
UPU International Letter-Rate +
10 Cents.. Registration fee
TIENTSIN-ORIGIN OVERSIZED
(320 x 250mm)
REGISTERED LETTER MAIL
SEN TO GERMANY
(German Post Office)

3 OCTOBER 1913

Registered cover,
postmarked at the German
Post Office at Tientsin, China,
with route endorsement
"Via Siberia"
sent to Schwerin, Germany.
12-day transit time.

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"15 October 1913,
Schwerin (Mecklb.)"

Route:
Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-
Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-
Schwerin

18 Cents...
8 Cents..
Double-weight
(260 grams) concession
letter-rate for mail sent to
Germany through a German
Post Office in China +
10 Cents.. registration fee
(Validity: 1 July 1913 –
8 September 1915)
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

 COMMERCIAL MAIL TO U.S.A.
1912-1913

THE TRANS-SIBERIAN ROUTE ENABLED AN EXPANSION OF COMMERCIAL MAIL USAGE TO NORTH AMERICA FROM CHINA BECAUSE OF LESS TRANSIT TIME (Approx. 21-25 Days) WITH THE IMPROVED RAIL CONDITIONS AND EXPRESS TRAINS VERSUS THE SEA ROUTES.

PEKING-ORIGIN
BANK-MAIL TO
WASHINGTON D.C.
(German Post Office)

29 MARCH 1912

Bank mail, postmarked at Peking, China, sent to Washington D.C., with route endorsement "Via Siberia".

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
Washington D.C., April 20, 1912

22-day Transit Time:

10 Cents...
UPU Single-Weight International Letter-Rate.

Union Business Agency
36, Rue de l'Amirauté
TIENTSIN

Messenrs. Montgomery Ward & Co.
Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.

TIENTSIN-
ORIGIN
REGISTERED-
MAIL TO
CHICAGO
(German Post Office)

28 OCTOBER 1913

Commercial mail, postmarked at Tientsin, China, with route endorsement "Via Siberia", sent to "Montgomery Ward & Co.", Chicago.

Arrival Postmark:
(Reverse)
"Chicago, Illinois, November 22, 1913"

25-Day Transit Time:
Tientsin-Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Hamburg-U.S.A.

20 Cents...
10 Cents: Single-Weight (20 grams) UPU International Letter-Rate +
10 Cents: Registration fee
COMMERCIAL MAIL SENT TO GERMANY
PRIOR TO OPENING OF THE 'PUKOW-TIENTSIN RAILWAY'
(German Post Office)

11 FEBRUARY 1912

Commercial cover written by “Carlowitz & Company”,
postmarked at Hankau, China,
with route endorsement
"Via Shanghai-Dalny-Siberia",
sent to Graudenz, Germany.

Route:
Hankau-Shanghai- (by sea) -Dalny- (by rail) -Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin-Graudenz.

8 Cents....
Double-weight (20-250 grams) concession rate for
German Offices in China mail sent to Germany
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

Mail from/to Central China-Europe
‘Pukow-Tientsin’ Railway
1913

THE ‘PUKOW-TIENTSIN RAIL LINE’,
built by a German-British Consortium between 1909-1912.
CONNECTED WITH THE CHINESE NORTHERN AND EASTERN RAILWAYS,
THE LATTER BEING PART OF THE TRANS-SIBERIAN NETWORK.
With completion of the 1271m (4131 ft.) bridge across the Hoangho (Yellow) River,
effective 1 January 1913, German Post Office mail bags from Shanghai and
Hankau could move by express train to/from Europe over the
Trans-Siberian Rail Network in as little as 15 days!

MAIL FROM
GERMANY TO
HANKAU, CHINA
(German/Russian Post Offices)

2 JUNE 1913

Patriotic view-card,
postmarked Satteldorf,
Germany, sent to a
German Consulate
employee at
Hankau, with route
endorsement “via Siberia”.

Arrival Postmark:
“Hankau, Russian
Post Office China,
8 June 1913
(Julian Calendar)
= 20 June”

18-day Transit Time:
Satteldorf-Stuttgart-
Berlin-Moscow-
Irkutsk-Harbin-
Mukden-Tientsin-
Hankau

5 Pfennig.
Concession postcard-rate for
mail to a German
Post Office in China.

HANKAU-ORIGIN MAIL
TO SWITZERLAND
(German Post Office)

4 DECEMBER 1913

View-card,
postmarked at Hankau,
China, sent to Geneva,
Switzerland, with route
endorsement “Via Siberia”.

Route:
Hankau-Tientsin-
Mukden-Harbin-Irkutsk-
Moscow-Berlin-Suttgart-
Basle (Basel)-Geneva

4 Cents....
UPU International
Postcard-Rate
EXPANSION OF MAIL SERVICES
1907-1913

German Embassy Medical Doctor
‘Via Siberia’ Correspondence
Japan-Germany

12 SEPTEMBER 1913
(German Ship P.O. Mail)

Cover, sent by German Embassy “Dr. Ohse”, postmarked on-board a “Norddeutscher Lloyd” vessel of their “Far-East Main Line”, with route endorsement “Via Siberia”, sent to Berlin, Germany,

Transit & Arrival Marks:
“Kobe, Japan, 12. September 1913”
“(Berlin)
26/27 September 1913”
15-day transit time.

Route:
Kobe-Tsuruga (by sea) - Vladivostok (by rail) - Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin

20 Pfennig,
Single-Weight
(20 grams) UPU
International Letter-Rate.

EMBASSY DOCTOR
MAIL AFTER ARRIVAL
IN TOKYO
(Japan Post Office)

23 DECEMBER 1913

Cover, sent by German Embassy “Dr. Ohse” at Tokyo, Japan, to Berlin, Germany, with route endorsement “Via Siberia”.

Route:
Tokyo-Tsuruga (by sea) - Vladivostok (by rail) - Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin

10 Sen....
Single-Weight
(20 grams) UPU
international Letter-Rate.
2 DECEMBER 1913

Registered cover, sent by German Embassy "Dr. Ohse", postmarked at Tokyo, Japan, with route endorsement "Via Siberia", to Berlin

Arrival Postmark: "Berlin C2, 17 December 1913"

15-day transit time.

Route:
Tokyo-Tsuruga.. (by sea) to Vladivostok (by rail) to Harbin-Irkutsk-Moscow-Berlin

50 Sen...
30 Sen..
Triple-weight UPU International Letter-Rate + 20 Sen...
Registration-fee
Ditto. German Post Office Control Mail, 1912-1913

THE GERMAN REICHSPOST AT BERLIN MONITORED & CONTROLLED THE MAIL BAGS PREPARED AND SHIPPED ‘VIA SIBERIA’ TO THEIR POST OFFICES IN CHINA IN FORM OF CONFIRMATION-OF-RECEIPT CARDS...

to be completed by the recipient post office and returned to Berlin. Information requested: date of receipt, bag number and transit time.

GERMAN POST OFFICE AT HANKAU

27 MARCH 1912

Manuscript completed card indicating:

"Bag 28 shipped on 4 March received on 21 March. 17 days transit time"

Route:
Berlin-Moscow-Irkutsk-Harbin-Mukden-Peking-Tientsin-Hankau

Free-frank post office official mail

GERMAN POST OFFICE AT PEKING

16 MAY 1913

Pre-printed hand-completed card indicating:

"Bag 52 shipped on 1 May received on 16 May. 15 days transit time"

Route:
Berlin-Moscow-Irkutsk-Harbin-Mukden-Peking

Free-frank post office official mail