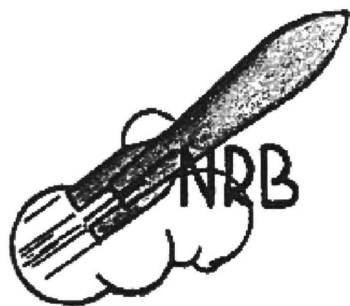


**airpost  
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march 1935







## Aero-Philately's Newest: **Rocket Posts**

**W**HILE some rockets burst in mid-air, other more successful projectiles carry their historic cargoes of mail rather safely to their pre-determined destinations and the present day vogue of rocket post experimentation goes merrily on throughout the world. Scientifically progressive Austria and Germany blazed the way for rocket post philately by issuing attractive semi-official sets in 1932 and 1933. Since that time, trials have been in progress in almost a dozen other countries and philatelic souvenirs of the firings are in as much or more demand than the more conservative and less radical official airposts.

Lightning-quick delivery of mail from continent to continent is presaged by the many experiments, partially financed by sets of semi-official rocket post stamps and weather-weight tissue paper covers with modernistic cachets. To date the

rockets have demonstrated that they can be directed with amazing accuracy over short spaces. It is planned that future rockets will use the stratosphere to attain their expected immense speeds.

While these experiments are still being made, and while the battle over the necessity of issuing semi-official rocket mail stamps still rages, it is to be noted as a quirk of human nature that, reluctant or enthusiastic, collectors will pick up these interesting items.

### Austria Leads

In Austria, the postal authorities have supported the work of developing rockets especially devised to carry mail. On August 8, 1932, three stamps were issued. They all depict a rocket in flight. Seven hundred and eighty of the three groschen lake-colored stamps were issued, 780 of the ten groschen in orange and 500 of the one schilling blue, in triangular shape.



AUSTRIAN ROCKET POST cover carried on "Post Rocket V-16", September 17, 1933. The cover bears a copy of the 1 Sch. blue triangular stamp.

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SEVERAL TYPES of the German Rocket Post stamps described in the text.

The one schilling blue has also been seen in imperforate condition, printed both on white paper and tinted blue paper.

Five hundred copies of an eight groschen green stamp of the same design as the three groschen previously described were put on sale March 16, 1932 for a flight on which 283 letters were carried. Early in the Fall of 1933, eight groschen and one schilling stamps were issued.

## German Issues Numerous

Germany has already had five distinct issues of semi-official rocket post stamps. Details are lacking on the initial issue. The three succeeding issues were used for mail carried on experimental rocket flights at Hasselfelde by Herr G. Zucker, the most noted inventor of postal rockets.

The second and third issues both carry a design of a rocket just arising from the ground and passing toward a body of water. Across the top they are inscribed "Deutscher Raketenflug" and the values in marks, are at the bottom. These issues are known in several varieties of perforation and imperforate. In making a change of value, a portion of the set has been surcharged. One and three mark varieties have been seen imperforate, printed in single subjects with black ink

on cherry and bright yellow-colored paper respectively.

The fourth issue of Germany is more ornate. It gives the value in a small tablet at the top (in a different color ink) between the words "Reichs Mark." The central design is that of a rocket supposedly in the stratosphere, with surrounding stars and a globe, representing the world, in the background. The lower panel is inscribed "2. Raketenstart."

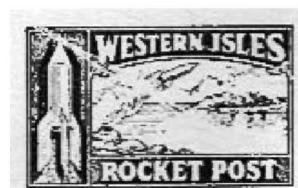
Another series of bi-colored German rocket stamps is comprised of three panels. The left panel shows a rocket rapidly ascending into the sky from a lofty peak. The center panel, which is double the width of the others, depicts a rocket high above the globe, while the right panel shows the rocket, power expended, descending to the earth on a parachute. Inscriptions at top read: "1. Deutscher Raketenflug 1934", and at the bottom "Zu Gunsten des Winterhilfswerks." The value appears in a small box in the upper right corner of the center panel. This set is known perforate and imperforate.

Values of this series reported, are ½ mark, red brown and ultramarine; 1 mark olive green and vermilion; and 3 mark, silver and black. The stamps are printed on honeycomb watermarked paper. Copies on cards and covers are cancelled with a modernistic cachet appearing in both red and black. The design is made up of an exploding rocket with oak leaves and acorns in the wash, the date 28-1-'34. Circumscribed about this unit is the inscription "Raketenstart Thale Harz." Details as to the actual firing experiment are lacking.

## British Trials

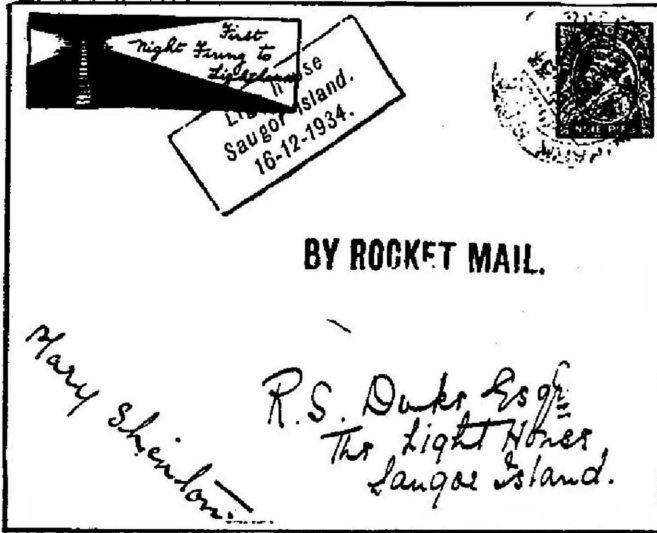
The initial British trials were conducted by the young German inventor, Herr Gerhard Zucker, who displayed his rocket at "Apex", the London International Airpost Exhibition, in May. The first firings were held at Sussex Downs on June 6, 1934 (for complete record, see AIRPOST JOURNAL for August 1934.)

Further attempts were made in the Summer of 1934 to shoot rocket mails between Harris and Scarp (Western Isles), but ended in failure because of the explosion of the projectiles. Most of the covers were damaged by fire, and are inscribed by handstamp on the reverse side "Damaged by first explosion at Scarp-Harris." The special stamps were issued in green for printed matter, and

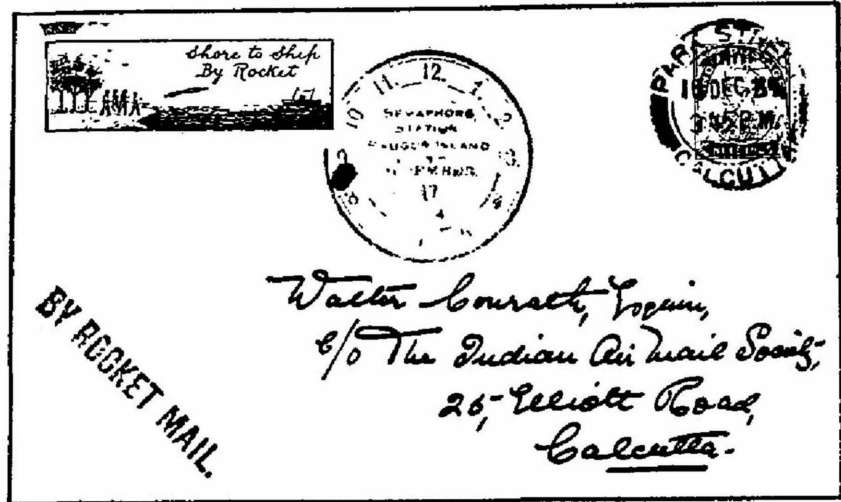


BRITISH ROCKET etquette for Western Isles firing

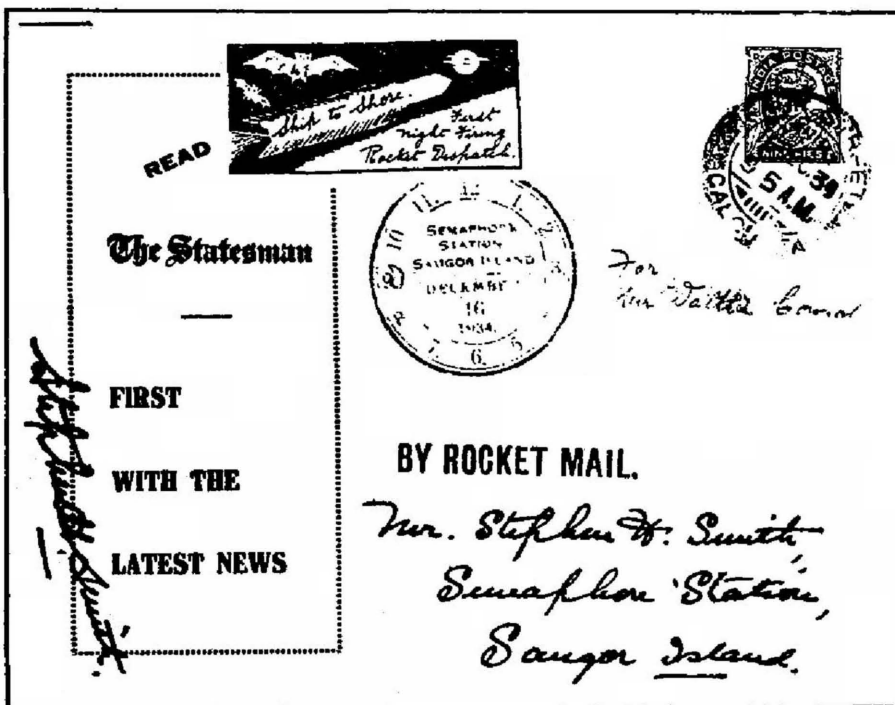
# Indian Rocket Posts



ROCKET COVER with imprinted vignette for the event. The first night firing in India. Autographed by Miss Mary Shenton, who discharged the rocket.



FIRST Shore - to - Ship rocket mail in India. The rockets landed in the sea, but 250 pieces of mail were recovered



SHIP - to - Shore rocket flight cover from India. This cover was shot through the air for a distance of 1,532 yards. — Covers courtesy of Stephen H. Smith

# THE AIRPOST JOURNAL

in red for letters. They were printed in sheets of 12 and rouletted.

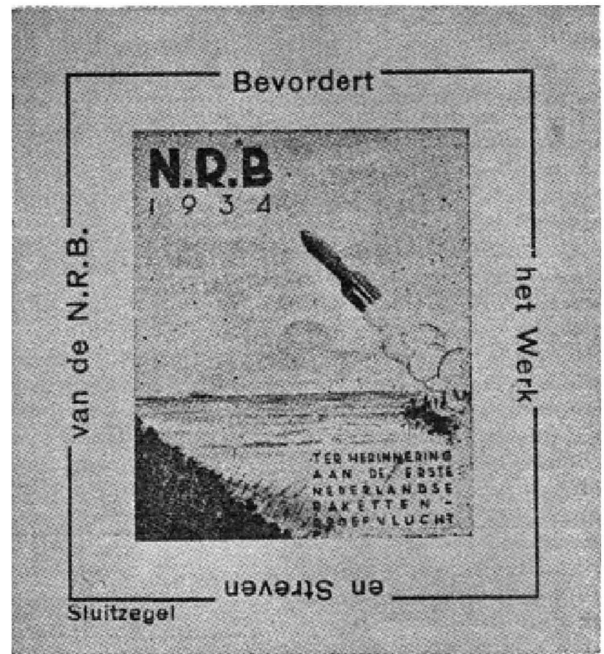
Herr Zucker is now attempting to shoot rocket mail across the Channel. It is proposed to use a new type of rocket with a radius of well over 25 miles. The mail will consist of 400 letters and 1,000 stamps will be printed for the event.

## First Australian Flight

In "The Airpost Collector", R. E. Dalwick reports that on December 4th, 1934, a rocket flight (mail) was made to commemorate the arrival in Brisbane of H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester. The flight was sponsored by the Queensland Air Mail Society.

The special envelope bears the following inscription, "This cover will be fired from the S.S. 'Canonbar' in the vicinity of and posted at Pinkenba on the Brisbane River. No responsibility accepted for loss or damage in transit nor for postponement nor abandonment of flight due to any accident or unforeseen circumstances."

A special "stamp" is affixed to the back of the cover portraying a rocket in flight over a river, and worded "Australia First Rocket Flight 1934 S.S. Canonbar—Brisbane." The vignette is printed in dark purple.



**SPECIAL DUTCH** rocket stamp issued for the three experimental flights held January 24, 1935.

## Successful Italian Trial

According to an Associated Press dispatch, a successful rocket trial was conducted in Italy by Herr Zucker on October 30, 1934. It is reported that the rocket travelled two and one half miles at a velocity estimated at twelve miles a minute, safely landing a cargo of 1,600 pieces of mail. The projectile weighed 26 pounds, including nine pounds of explosives and five pounds of mail. The rocket, fired from a field on the side of Monte Castiglion, mounted in a parabolic curve to an altitude of 2,100 feet before it started to descend, coming down in a valley where it was soon found. Examples of this rocket mail have not been noted to date.

## Rockets in India

The first experimental rocket mail flight in India took place on September 30th, 1934 and was fully described in the January, 1935 AIRPOST JOURNAL, by Mr. Stephen H. Smith, Hon. Secy. of the Indian Air Mail Society. We are also indebted to Mr. Smith for information and examples of the most recent night firings.

The first ship-to-shore night firing rocket dispatches were made at sea, off Saugor Island at 9:00 P.M., December 16, 1934. Mr. Stephen H. Smith fired the two rockets, which traveled a distance 1,532 and 1,121 yards respectively, and carried 110 pieces of mail each. The covers (illustrated) bear an imperforate vignette printed in black, showing a night scene consisting of the rocket in flight, two bats and the moon. The rockets employed were manufactured by James Pain.



**EXPLOSION** of the first Dutch rocket experiment, December 6, 1934. Below: Katwijk aan Zee. Placing the feather-weight mail in the steel tube preparatory to firing.

The initial night firing from the Semaphore Station to the Lighthouse was made by Miss Mary Shenton at 9:30 P.M., December 16, 1934. The two rockets covered 320 and 476 yards. The mail in each of the projectiles consisted of 125 pieces of Military and Civil Xmas greetings. The rockets used were manufactured by the Oriental Fireworks Company. Special envelopes were used, with imprinted vignette in black, showing two diverting rays of light projecting from the lighthouse.

The first shore-to-ship night rocket mail in India was fired by Mr. Walter Shenton at 8:00 o'clock in the evening of December 17, 1934. The first rocket traveled 250 yards, the second 463 yards. Rockets of the Oriental Fireworks Company were used, and the firing took place at the Semaphore Station. The first rocket carried 150 pieces of mail and the second 110 pieces. A portion of the mail was made up of miniature sheets of Indian newspapers. Covers (illustrated) bear the dispatch cachet of the Semaphore Station and a special imperforate vignette in red, showing four persons on the shore firing a rocket to a boat at sea. Although the rockets alighted in the sea, the mail was later retrieved by boat.

**Holland's First Rockets**

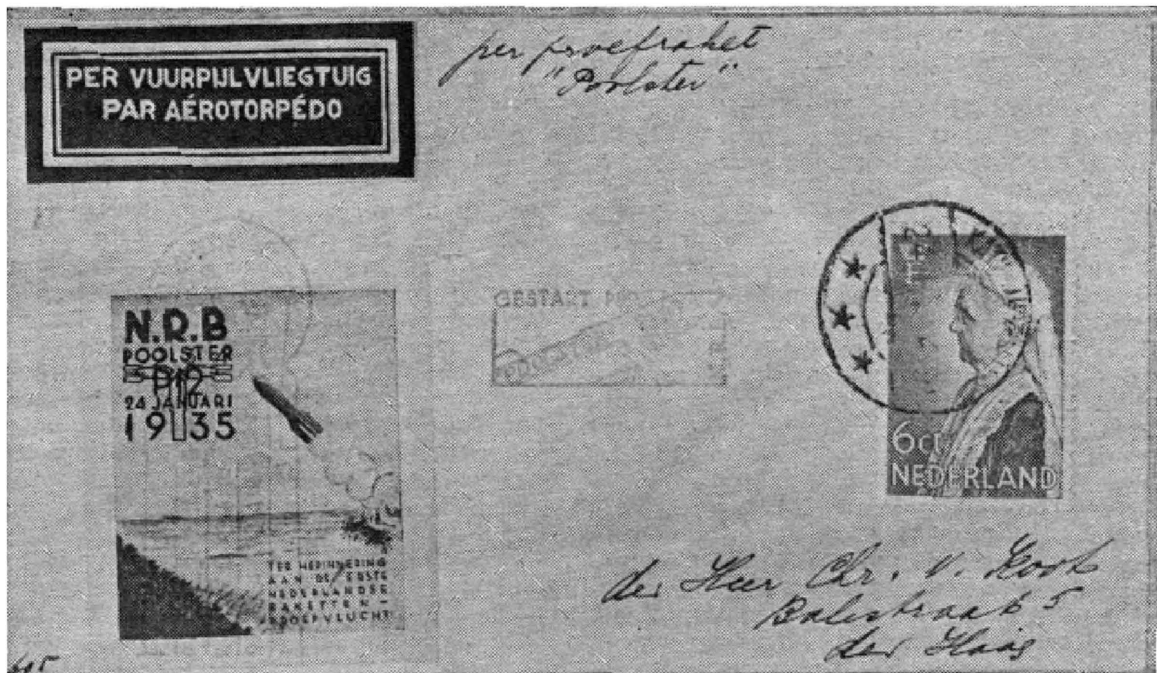
Through the courtesy of Mr. Raad van Beheer, of 's-Gravenhage, we are able to chronicle the first rocket post experiments of Holland. Organized by the "Nederlandsche Rakettenbouw," the first flights were held at Katwijk aan Zee on December 6, 1934. The three rockets employed were the "Meteoor", "Orion" and

"Komeet", each of which carried 200 pieces of mail. Although all three rockets exploded with great violence, some the souvenir mail was salvaged. The covers bear the special cachet reading "Ter herinnering aan de eerste nederlandse rakettenproefnemingen Katwijk aan Zee 6 December 1934" and are signed by the inventor, K. Roberti.

The second attempts, sponsored at the same location on January 24, 1935, were all successful. On this occasion the three rockets, "Poolster" 10, 11, and 12, all made beautiful flights to Katwijk aan Rijn, and transported 1,200 covers. A special stamp (illustrated) was issued in individual sheets printed in orange and surcharged in black with a design bearing the date and number of the rocket. The covers bear attractively modern designed cachets in blue and rocket identification cachet in red. A special rocket-post etiquette, in deep blue, has been affixed to the upper left corner of the cover. (Stamp and photos courtesy of Raad van Beheer.)

**GREEK AIR MAIL TRAFFIC SHOWS 1934 INCREASE**

According to announcement recently made by the Ministry of Communications, Athens, during the past year 223,570 pieces of air mail were transported in the interior as compared to 172,197 pieces in 1933. 797,798 pieces of air mail were carried out of Greece and arrived from foreign countries in comparison to 718,325 pieces in 1933—P. J. Drossos.



**HOLLAND'S FIRST successful rocket mail.** This interesting cover bears two special etiquettes and two attractive cachets. The flight took place January 24.—Cover courtesy G. A. G. Thoolen.