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## **Foreword**

The Stamp Collectors' Office (SCO) in the General Government was in charge of delivering not only stamps, but also postal stationeries, souvenir cards, cancels, and other philatelic products to customers. But how did it all work?

This handbook is intended to answer this question and all others related to the subject.

Since the SCO's Berlin and Krakau were the principal actors in the supply of customers, we will focus on both Offices. We will study the correspondence, collector wishes, terms of delivery, order-forms, delivery slips, consignor and official-cancels, collector information as well as the evolution of the SCO's.

We will supply an historical overview on the difficulties to supply customers, the different ways of delivery, the payment- and delivery-methods and the cancellations.

The structure of the handbook will make a quick identification and categorization possible for all collectors.

## **Acknowledgements**

At this place we would like to thank everyone who contributed in making this book a success.

Special thanks to Bernhard Albrecht, for his pioneering work in this field, and to Manfred Anlauf, Heinz Erwin Jungjohann, Hans-Herman Paetow (†), Detlef Pfeiffer, Gottfried Schoch, Rolf Ritter, Otto Tahl and Jürgen Zalaszewski , who made a large amount of personal data/copies available to us.

I wish you all pleasant hours of lecture!

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# **The Handbook**

## Subdivision

The handbook has been subdivided in 5 parts.

- General Remarks over the SCO's
- The SCO Berlin
- The SCO Krakau and the Post-Office Krakau 3
- The Post-Office Kattowitz
- Supply and Administration of the SCO End 1944/Beginning 1945

## Structure

In order to facilitate the assignment of covers to a certain category, each chapter will have its own overview. A general overview is presented at the end of this handbook.

## Pictures

To increase the difficulty of forgeries, pictures are not depicted at their real scale.

## Polish Letters

Polish names are written without diacritic signs.

## Use of operating modes and catalogue numbers

The use of cancel operating modes and catalogue numbers from the Bochmann Catalogue was made possible by courtesy of The Postal Cancel Guild e.V.

## Numbering

Forms and documents are numbered according to current knowledge.

## Sources

Literature sources are listed on the penultimate page of the handbook. Independently, sources are also listed where necessary throughout the handbook.

## Abbreviations glossary

This list can be found on the penultimate page of the handbook.

## Mistakes and additions

Should you detect any mistakes in this book, please notify the authors. Also, please inform us on any new discoveries so they can be included in future publications.

# 1 General Remarks

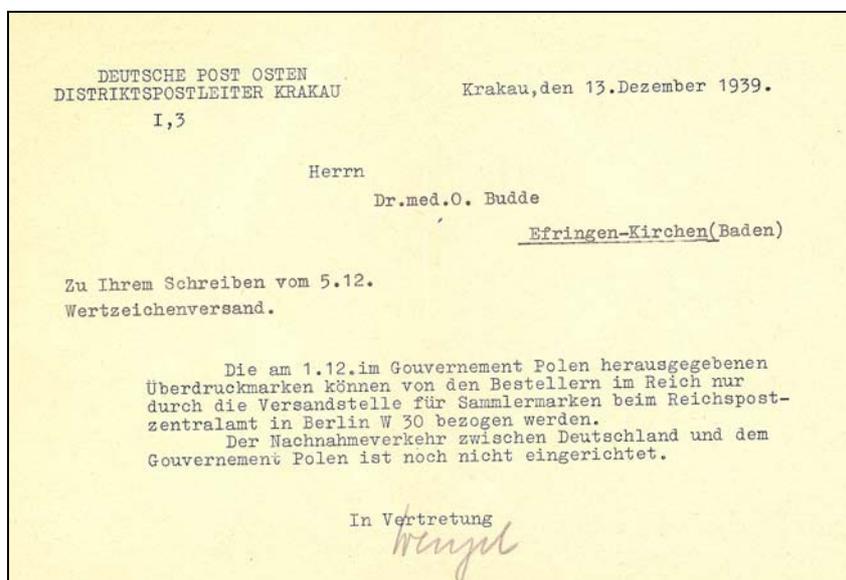
## 1.1 The General Government and its Foreign Currency

After the attack on 01.09.1939, and a Campaign that lasted only 18 days, Poland was overrun and divided into different parts. Some parts were reassigned to Hungary and Slovakia, while the westerly and north-westerly areas were divided between the Provinces Wartheland, Danzig, West- and East-Prussia. On decree of Hitler, the central and eastern parts of former Poland with the districts of Krakau, Radom, Lublin and Warschau were renamed General Government. As consequence of the Campaign against the Soviet-Union, the District of Galicia with Lemberg was added to the General Government on 01 August 1941. This district had been under Russian control as a result of the German-Russian agreement on the splitting of Poland.

In opposition to the Polish regions which had been assimilated in the Reich territory, the General Government was only affiliated to it. Even today it is not clear why, but one reason was certainly the fact that, in the previous course of History, these territories had never been German possessions.

This affiliation to the Reich meant a great deal of independence, for example, own Jurisdictional System and currency. So, in regard to the Reich, the General Government became an international territory, with its own currency. This also meant that all imports and exports had to be regulated through the Exchange Counter (Devisenstelle).

Stamp collectors had to abide the regulations of the Exchange Counter at all times, be it for just sending a franked letter to a fellow collector or receiving postal fresh stamps from the other side. The regulations also applied to the Stamp Collectors' Office. The differences in the regulations for the SCO's in the Reich and in the General Government will be detailed in each chapter.



Early letter dated 13 December 1939 to the Director of the Deutsche Post Osten (DPO). A collector from the Reich wanted to purchase the Hindenburg Overprint series (Mi # 1-13) directly. Through the answer it appears that COD invoices would shortly be put in place between the Reich and the GG. Due to Currency Exchange Regulations, it was not yet to be!

## 1.2 Ban on stamps import and export.

From 1<sup>st</sup> June 1940, the import and export of stamps is only allowed with a special authorization delivered by the „Reichsstelle für Waren verschiedener Art“ in Berlin.

All invoices must be submitted to the Customs Office of the consignor's place of residence. This Office will control the goods, seal the invoice and appose the following notice on the outer packing:

Ausfuhrbewilligung Nr. . . . . . hat vorgelegen

*(Export-authorization #has been presented)*

Sendung ist abgeschrieben

*(Invoice has been written off)*

Verschuß . . . . .

*(Sealed by)*

Dienststempel

*(Official Seal)*

Unterschrift

*(Signature)*

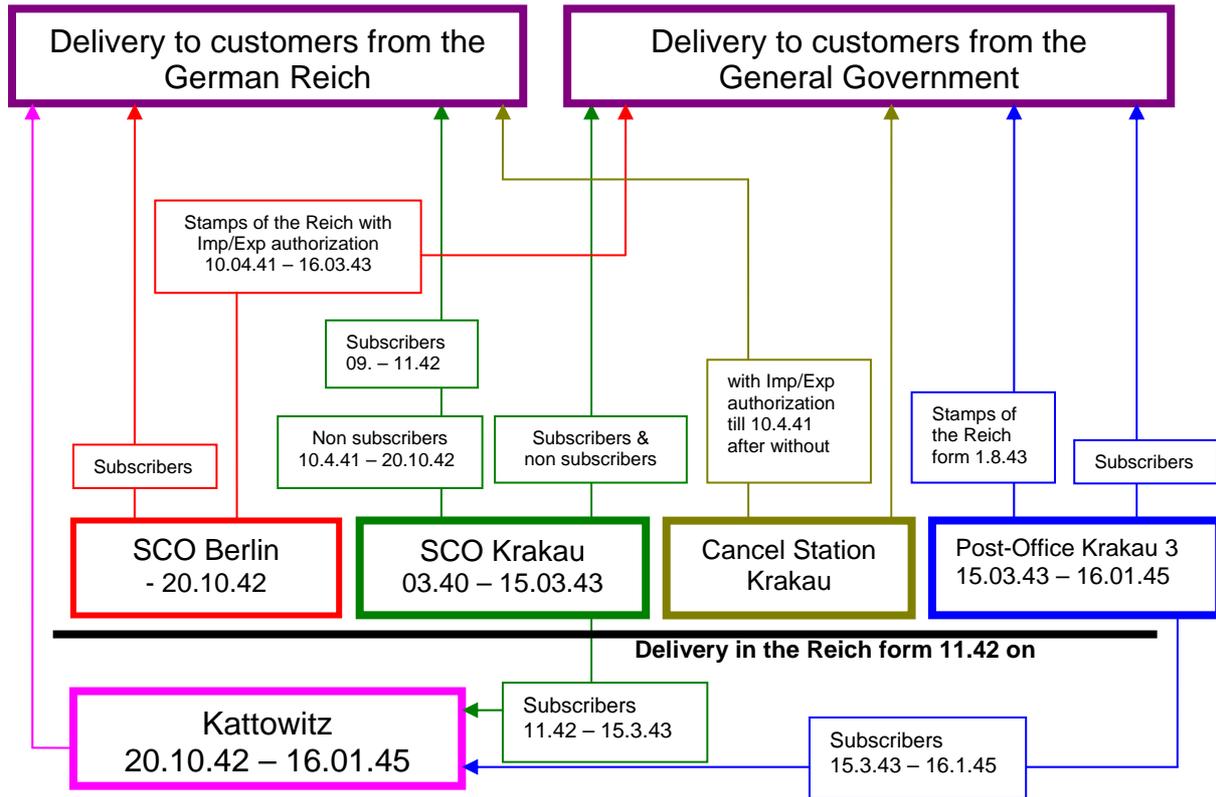
Regulations for export authorization of currency-goods apply for all stamps.



For letters containing stamps for import, the Letter Control Centre (*Briefprüfstelle*) will attach a green notice to the letter, with the mention „Der Zollstelle vorzuführen“ (*to be presented to Customs*).

This letter from the SCO Krakau dated 19.11.40 received this sticker „Im Deutschen Reich dem Zollamt vorzuführen!“ (*To be presented to Customs in the German Reich*).

### 1.3 Orders and deliveries by the SCO's



The individual parts of this overview can be found in each chapter with extended contents.

## 2 The Stamp Collectors Office (SCO) Berlin

### 2.1 General Remarks on the SCO Berlin

A Stamp Collectors' Office was first introduced in 1920 and opened in the Spandauer Str. 19-22, at the Head Post Office of Berlin. Later the SCO was placed under authority of the Central Reich Post-Office and located in the Post-Office Berlin W 30, Geisbergstr. 7-9 till the end of March 1940.

The SCO Berlin sold stamps and souvenir cards from 1939 on till 20 October 1942, and only to subscribers. Occasional customers could only purchase stamps through the SCO Krakau, collectors within the Reich however, could only do this from 10.04.1941 on.



On 07.11.1939 the SCO Berlin W 30, Geisbergstrasse 7 issued a souvenir card (G1) on the occasion of the Assumption of Office by the General Governor

#### Communication by the SCO # 1103/1940

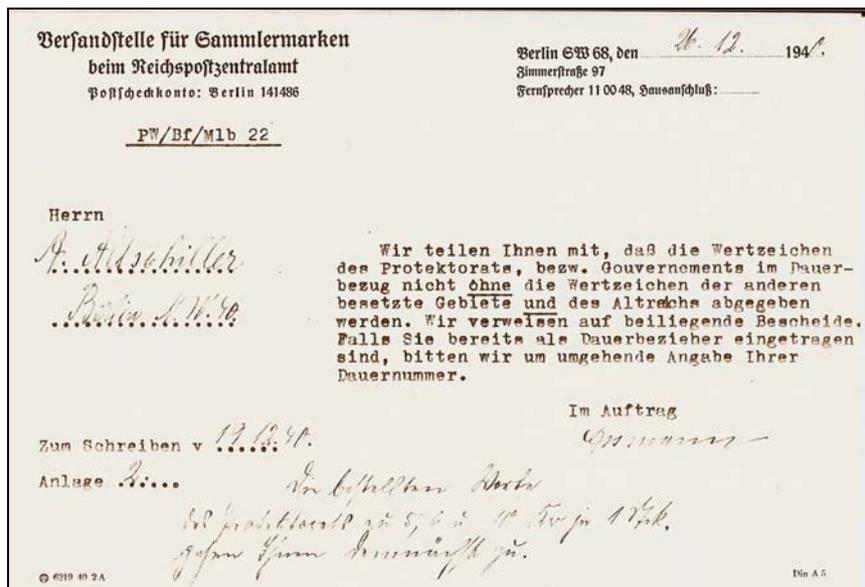
*In the next few days, the SCO will be transferred from Berlin W 30, Geisbergstr. 7, to Berlin SW 68, Zimmerstr. 97. The Collectors Counter will be closed between 8 and 15 April. The handling of orders for overprinted Polish Stamps of the General Government and others, which have been received by end of February, will therefore be delayed in part till end of April. Reminders are thus unnecessary and will receive no reply.*

So the SCO was transferred in April 1940 to the Post-Office Berlin SW 68.

The postal address of the SCO was Zimmerstr. 97. The Post-Office however, was located in the Lindenstr. 30.

In principle new stamp issues were advertised in the daily press, gazetted by the Reich Post and published in the Official Regulations Bulletin of the DPO.

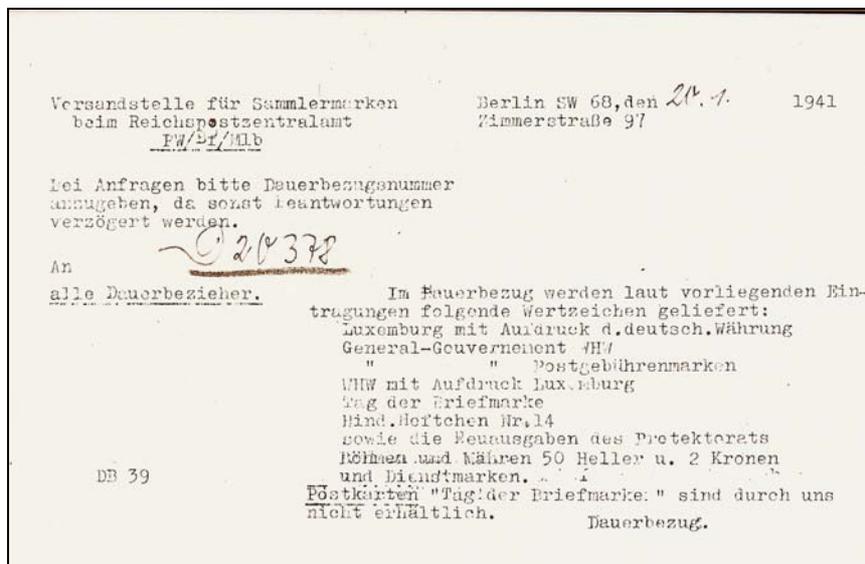
Orders could only be placed by means of the order-forms available from the SCO.



Notice to a collector that it is not possible to obtain stamps of the GG without ordering those stamps of the Reich and from the other occupied countries.

This type of answer was one of the reasons why collectors within the Reich wanted to shift to the SCO Krakau.

The SCO Berlin supplied the collectors within the Reich with mint (MNH) stamps only. To obtain a day cancel or a special cancel it was necessary to send the stamps to the Cancel Station of the Post-Office Krakau 1, by registered letter. If the face value of the stamps equalled the requested rate, one would receive in return a postal matter card, a letter or a registered letter, with the stamps affixed and cancelled. But there still remained the aspects of the Currency Exchange regulations! This meant that prior to sending stamps, collectors from the Reich had to introduce a request and obtain the mandatory import/export clearance.



Confirmation of a stamps order for subscribers.

Foreign customers could only be supplied through the SCO Berlin.



COD Letter going abroad dated 18.6.41 from the SCO Berlin. Letters going abroad could not be delivered as “postal-matter”. The word „Postsache“ was struck through and the letter franked with 1,35 RM. The letter was presented unclosed, examined by the Currency Exchange Control, closed and sealed on the reverse, and foreseen with a stamp stating that all regulations had been complied with. The letter received a further “A.C.” stamp when passing through the Censor Office for mail going abroad (Censor Cancel Riemer: C-30a).