The Two-Wheeled (R)Evolution:

a Bicycle Tale

The sole difference between Evolution and Revolution is Time-scale. Bicycles stirred up the Industrial Revolution Society, evolved with us during last 200 years, and -without doubt bicycles will play a key role in the challenge of Climate Change.

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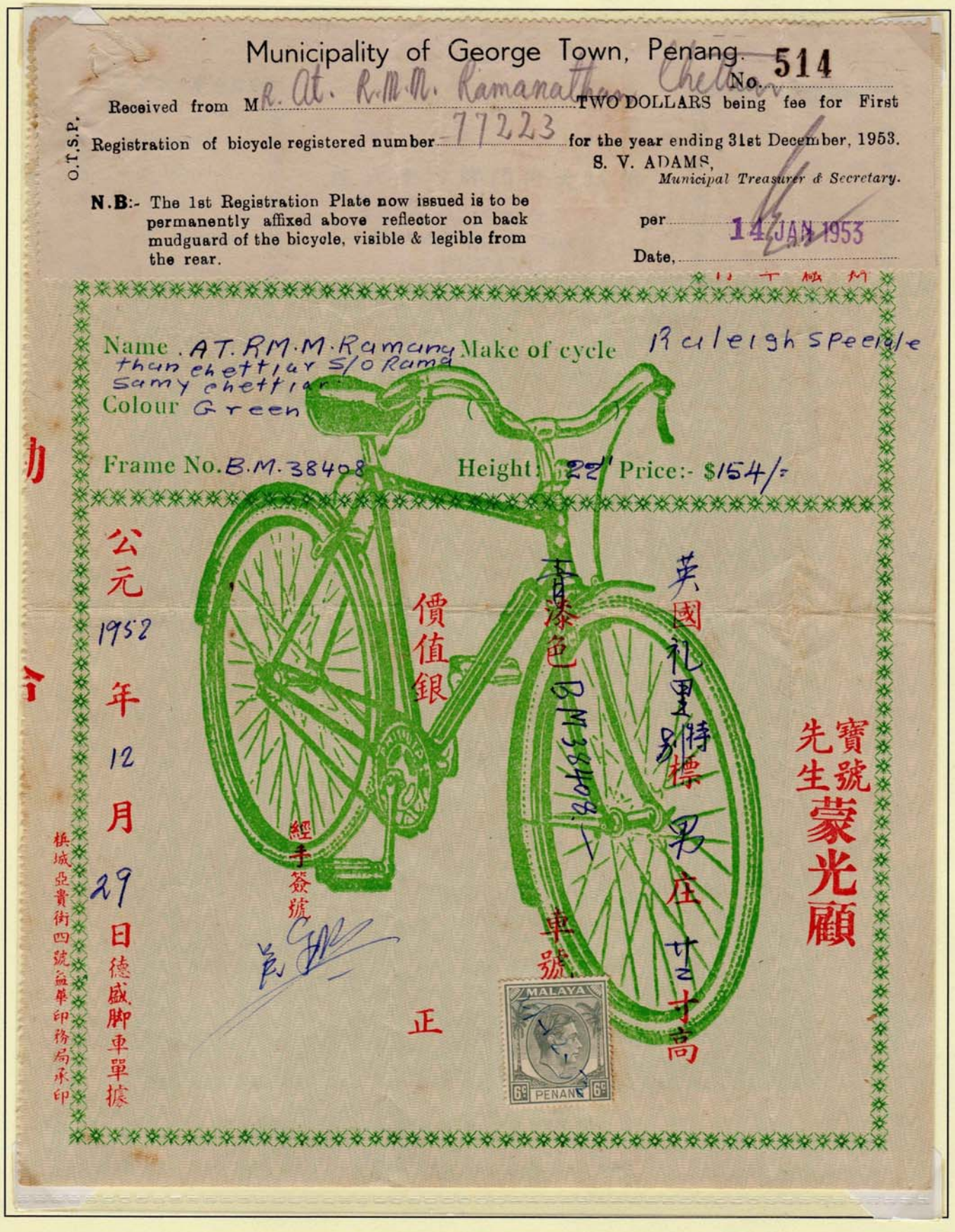
When a gifted brain tries to use a bicycle, don't think twice. Do it!



God save The Queen, and The Queen bless the use of bicycle ...

... with a gentle kiss on rider's forehead

GB (1978). Right bottom-hand corner of a complete sheet with traffic light marking on margin which indicate displacement of color. Gold color is not placed correctly and Queen head is displaced down.



(Malasia, 1953). Fiscal document. Registration form for bicycles in Penang city where taxes were paid using a 6c stamp of King George VI (issued on 1949). Fiscal document where taxes were paid with a postage stamp.

Bicycles have been a big part of our society for a while now; almost everyone in the first world has learned to ride a bike at some point. We all remember our first lessons from when we were kids, and of course, our first awesome wipeout.



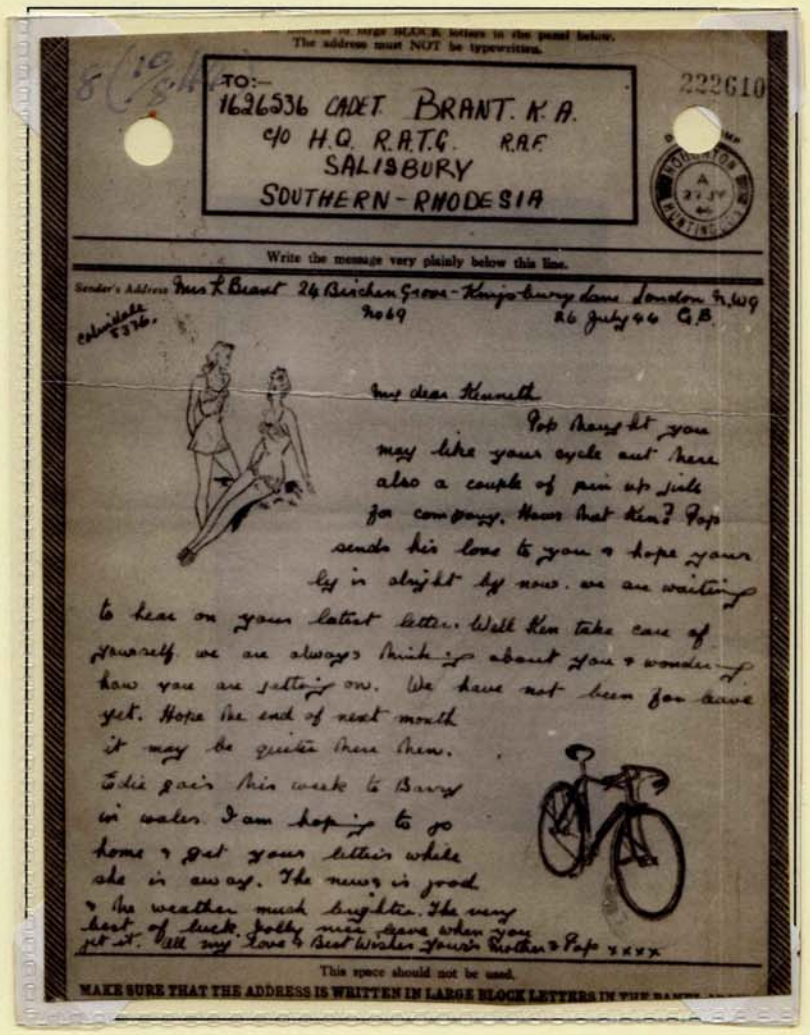
Bicycle: /ˈbaɪsɪk(ə)l/ (noun)

A Bicycle is a vehicle with two wheels which you ride by sitting on it and pushing two pedals with your feet. You steer it by turning a bar that is connected to the front wheel.

... but, is this a right definition of a bicycle? Yes, sure ... but... what kind of feeling can you have for your own bicycle that cause words like that, from family to a soldier in a war letter? (see airgraph):

"Pop (father) though you may like your cycle, and here also a couple of pin-up just for company ...." ... and they drawn them on it.

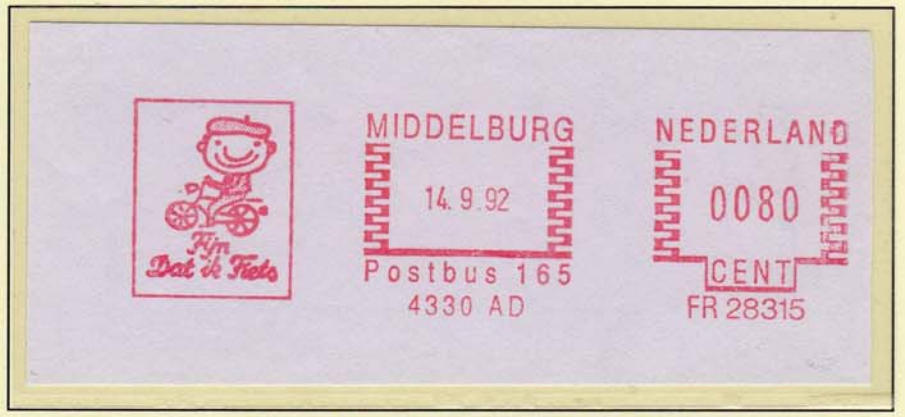
Bicycle is more than a cold dictionary definition. Would you follow me in this little bicycle-world tour? Ride on!



(GB, 1944) Hand drawn Airgraph, so unique and in no better condition available, from GB to Rhodesia. British airgraphs was a military post system devised in WWII by Kodak in which letters on standardized form were photographed and its negatives sent by airmail in order to save weight in airmail transport between UK and Middle East, when Italian army make terrestrial transport impossible. In destination they were developed on photographic paper and postally distributed. Often they were written on fancy printed forms; but sometimes they were hand-painted becoming unique, like here.



"Happy to pedal", said this adhesive label.



The Netherlands (1992). Francotyp "Cc" Dutch metter stamp.

What a bicycle is not? To ride is demanding. Oil and electric motors were/are attached to bicycles to be motor-assisted vehicles. But are these devices bicycles? A real bicycle is a human-powered transport. When the main source of energy are not your legs, when being untrained you can rode faster than an usual cyclist, sure you are not riding a bicycle. Call them as you want, but not bicycle... may be pedal-assisted vehicles instead of motor-assisted bicycles?



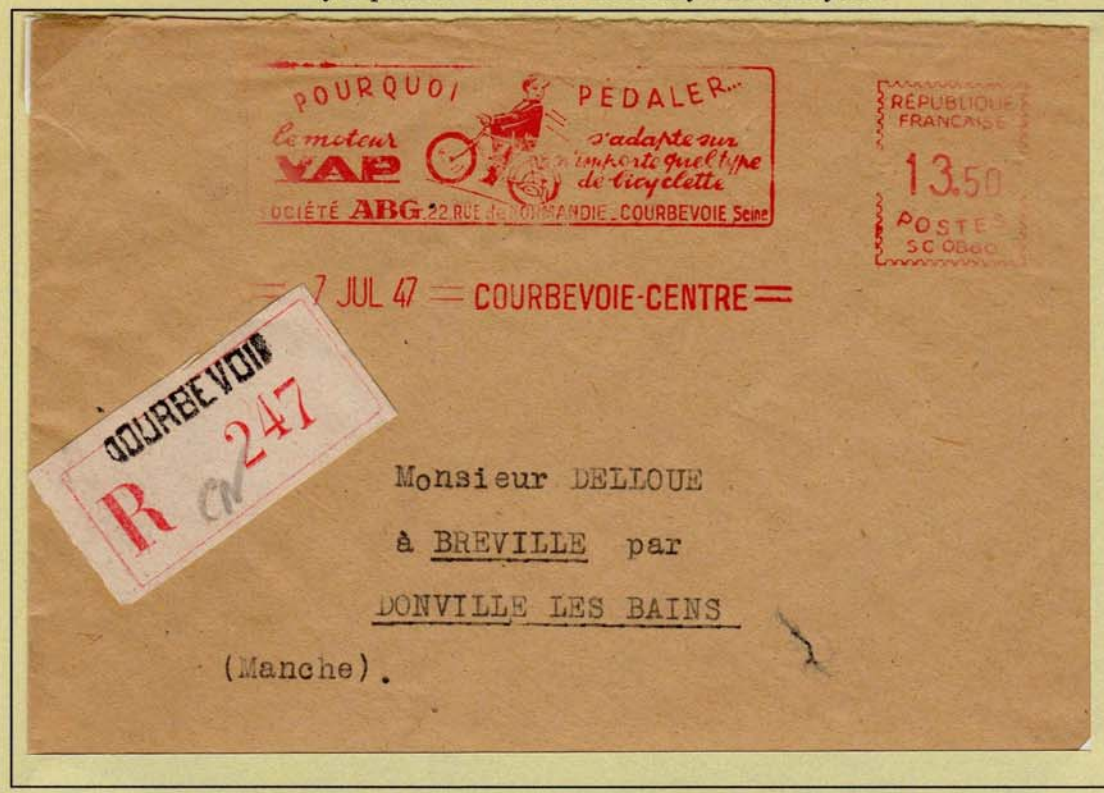
Moped



e-bike

Bicycle

"Why to pedal... VAP motor fits in any kind of bicycle".



France (1947). Registered letter from VAP's motors company with a Satas "S" multi-value French meter.

The bicycle is a tremendously efficient means of transportation. In fact cycling is more efficient than any other method of travel including walking. The one billion bicycles in the world are a testament to its effectiveness. Why? Let me you explain why .....

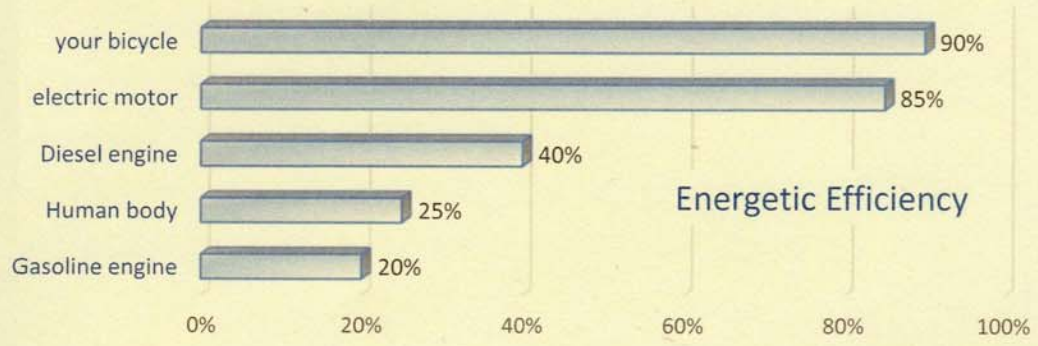


If we compare the amount of calories burned in bicycling to the number of calories an automobile burns, the difference is astounding. 100 calories can power a cyclist for 4.8 Km (3 miles), but it would only power a car 85 meters (280 feet)!...



The "walking machine" of Baron Von Drais (1817) was the first bicycle. In his patent he described his invention as:

"uphill, equal than a running man;
in a flat terrain, faster than a trotting horse;
downhill, so faster than a galloping horse"



Bicycle can be up to 10 times more efficient than mopeds



Germany (1988). Francotyp "Cc/Ccm/Cm" multivalue franking machine.



Always overcoming Resistance. Rolling bearings support and guide rotating bicycle elements and transfer loads between machine components. They provide high precision and low friction and therefore enable high rotational speeds. First ball bearings reduced friction 15000 times.

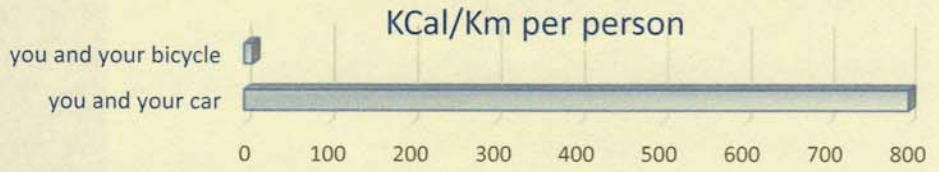
Since ancient times former civilizations used tar to lubricate its carts.

Leonardo da Vinci incorporated drawings of ball bearings in his designs around the year 1500.





Sven Wingqvist invented ball bearing in 1907 and he was one of the founders of SKF, one of the world's leading ball bearing and roller bearing makers.





Avoid car use.

It takes less energy to ride one mile than it takes to walk a mile. In fact, a bicycle can be up to 5 times more efficient than walking, and 2 times than running.





A HARMONY BETWEEN BALANCE AND INERTIA

The design of a bicycle have been optimized through the ages, largely through trial and error, to make it as efficient and stable as possible. Although the number of components of a bicycle is small, the interaction between them and the dynamic principles involved, is complicated. This is especially true with regards to bicycle stability, which is the result of a complex dynamic interaction within the bike-rider system.



Well-known **Newton laws apply to bicycle too**. Why are these laws important to Cycling? Cycling is done in the presence of forces which are constantly pushing and pulling on the Cycle. When you are not pedaling, the cycle coasts as a result of its inertial motion. Cycling is therefore an interactive dance between forces and inertial motion managed by the cyclist.



1st Law: An object at rest will remain at rest. An object in motion will continue at the same velocity in a straight line. This is the reason you set your bicycle against the wall and it remains there or the reason we are able to coast.

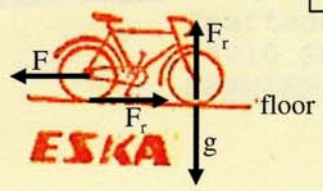
1st Law enables you stand your bicycle on the wall.

1st Law enables you to coast.

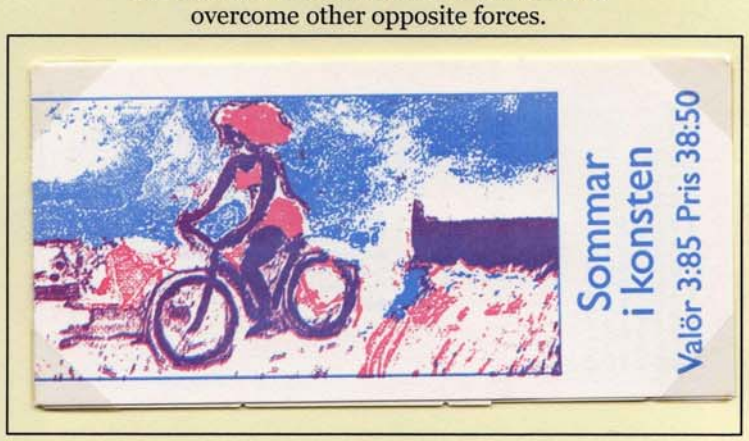
2nd Law: An object's inertial state only changes when forces act upon it. Newton's Second Law says practical cycling descriptions must account for the forces acting on the cycle. These include forces generated at the rear tire as a result of the pedaling, as well as aerodynamic drag, rolling resistance, and gravity.

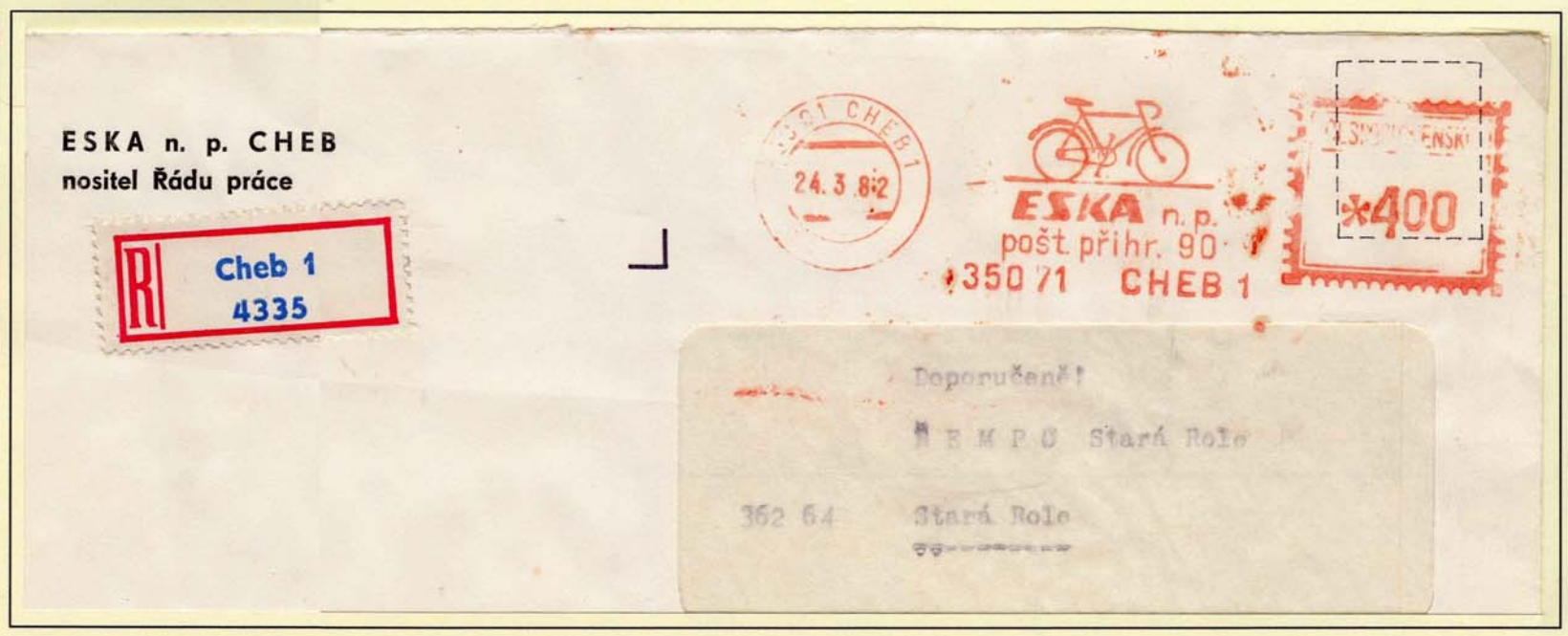
2nd Law: you need to make force to ride to overcome other opposite forces.

3rd Law: For every force (F), there is an equal an opposite reaction force (F_r). The rear tire generates a force against the road that is in the backwards direction against the road. However, the force that actually moves you forward is the reactionary force in the opposite or forward direction (F_r).



3rd Law avoid you to fall to center of Earth because the Gravity (g); an opposite floor force (F_r) maintains you on the road (an equal force; if not, you will take off and fly).





Assisted effects. Bicycles are inherently stable when riding. There are effects that assist the rider, including the gyroscopic effect of the wheels and the steering torque effect of rake.

Leaning effect into a turn. When riding a bicycle it is necessary to lean into a turn in order to compensate for the effect of centripetal acceleration. The inward lean balances the centripetal acceleration which makes the turn possible without falling over.



Caster effect. Castering is a self-guidance mechanism generated when the guidance axis is placed in front of the rolling contact point: it doesn't matter where you go, the wheel always faces the direction of motion.

The "trail" is an important contributor to bicycle stability. If trail is positive, meaning the projection of the steering axis with the ground is in front of the contact point of front wheel and ground, then the bicycle is more stable when riding.





t- trail
α- leaning angle



Gyroscopic effects play a key role to contribute to stability. The gyroscopic effect allows fast spinning objects to maintain their spinning direction in space. However, there is another effect: the angular momentum is kept constant. This means that when the bike wheel leans, the gyroscopic effect will steer the wheel stabilizing the bicycle.



When you win and you raise your arms, kinetic energy keeps you moving and gyroscopic effect stands you erect.



"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving."
Albert Einstein

A rider balances a bike by steering. To correct the lean the rider needs to generate centrifugal force that pulls to the left. Since centrifugal force pulls to the outside of a turn, the rider needs to turn right (into the lean) to generate centrifugal force to the left. When centrifugal force is greater than gravity, the bike moves back upright. The rider's brain is making very rapid and precise adjustments without the rider consciously thinking about it. It's as intuitive as walking.



Cyclists leaning due to curve.



Cambered velodrome.

First velodromes were flat, as shown on the back of the stationary of August Stukenbrok (bottom). But with the increase of the speed, due to the technical improvements introduced to bicycles, riders generate higher centrifugal force and it became necessary to slope the circuits.



Germany (1903). Commercial stationary of 10 pf of August Stukenbrok factory. Letter circulated from Einbeck (headquarters the factory) on the 18.05.1903 to Grunau (postmark of arrival 19.05.1903 on the reverse not shown in the image). Right rate.

Flat velodrome.





Tonga (1988). Chromalin proof VERY RARE. As an important part of the printing process, this chromalin proof was produced by Walsall Security Printers on thick card and in full colour directly from the color separations prior to final production of the printing plates. Each color is layered on top of the next thus building up to the full color design. It is at this stage that any final color change and occasionally design adjustment is made. As only 4 or 5 were done, chromalin proofs are scarce due to the very small number done.

Bicycle riders can use two main balancing strategies: steering and body movement relative to the bike. Body movements relative to the bicycle – like leaning left and right –allow a rider to make balance corrections by shifting the center of mass side to side relative to the bicycle and base of support.



Sport is not only speed and endurance. From Balance arises some sports like Bike-trial, Cyclo-ball or Artistic cycling … as well as Circus performances.









In this test, due designed to low center mass, bicycle always keeps stable.

A big part of balancing a bicycle has to do with controlling the center of mass of the rider-bicycle system. During straight riding, the rider must always keep that center of mass over the wheels.

This was the main problem with Ordinary bicycles. They had safety problems because it had the center of gravity very high and long fall over the handlebars were usual. The solution was Safeties, designs that sought ingenious solutions to stabilize the center of gravity.



So...Tricycles were the immediate solution.



The energy you use in cycling goes doing work.
When you are going uphill, 80% of your work goes overcoming the force of gravity...

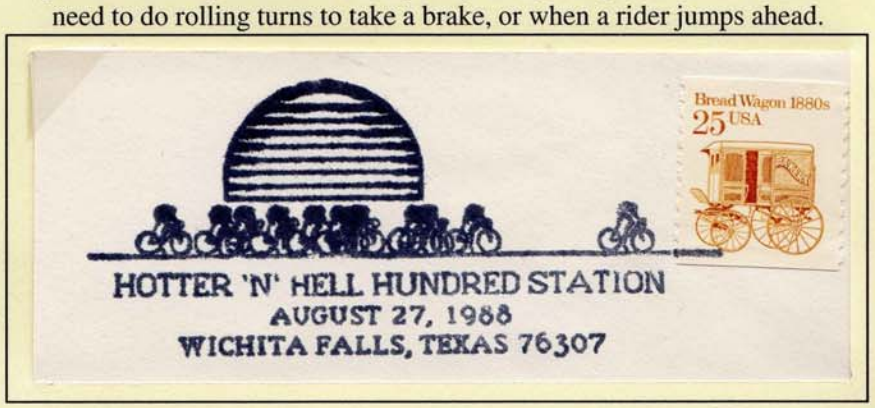




...but if you're going fast, you're working against the force of air resistance (drag) using 80% of your energy.



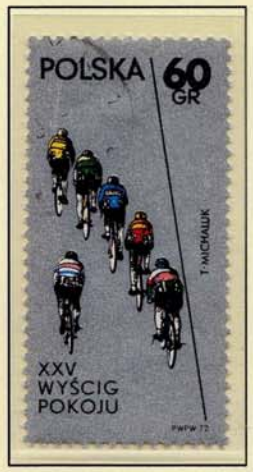
In competition, there are some tricks to avoid drag resistance: peloton provides wind protection to everybody except for pace line riders, who need to do rolling turns to take a brake, or when a rider jumps ahead.





In absence of wind, your speed generates drag resistance too.
Technical improvements in clothing, bicycle and racing techniques minimizes it.





Echelons are an effective way to negotiate crosswinds and cut through them like a knife.

... and competition takes profit of this fight against to Gravity to arise the Epic of Sport.

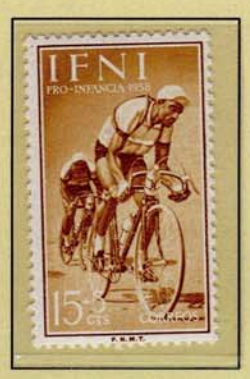
Le Tour staff desperately wanted to expand the Tour and make it even more monumental, so for the 1910 edition they included the first modern high mountain stage. They announced in L'Auto that the 1910 Tour route would include ascents of the Peyresourde, Aspin, Tourmalet and Aubisque pass mountains, in The Pyrenees range. The first cyclist to reach its summit of Le Tourmalet pass was Octave Lapize; he had to finish part of the tour on foot, carrying his bicycle on dirt and gravel road.



France (1951). Havas "K" meter stamp machine used from Ste. Marie de Campan
Le Tourmalet pass (2.114 m)



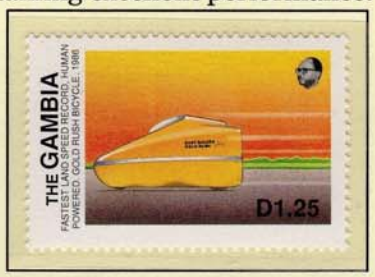
Dolomiti and Alps ranges are the scenarios of Il Giro.





Port d'Envalira (Andorra, 2.409 m) is highest pass in the Pyrenees and is visited by Le Tour, La Vuelta and La Volta of Catalonia from time to time.

Optimizing all factors you can minimize drag resistance, obtaining excellent performance.

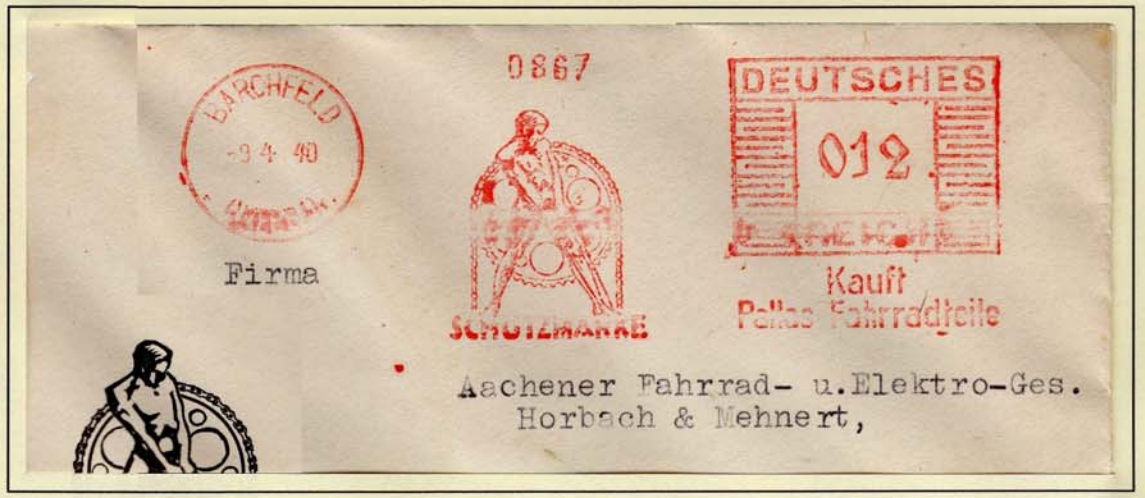




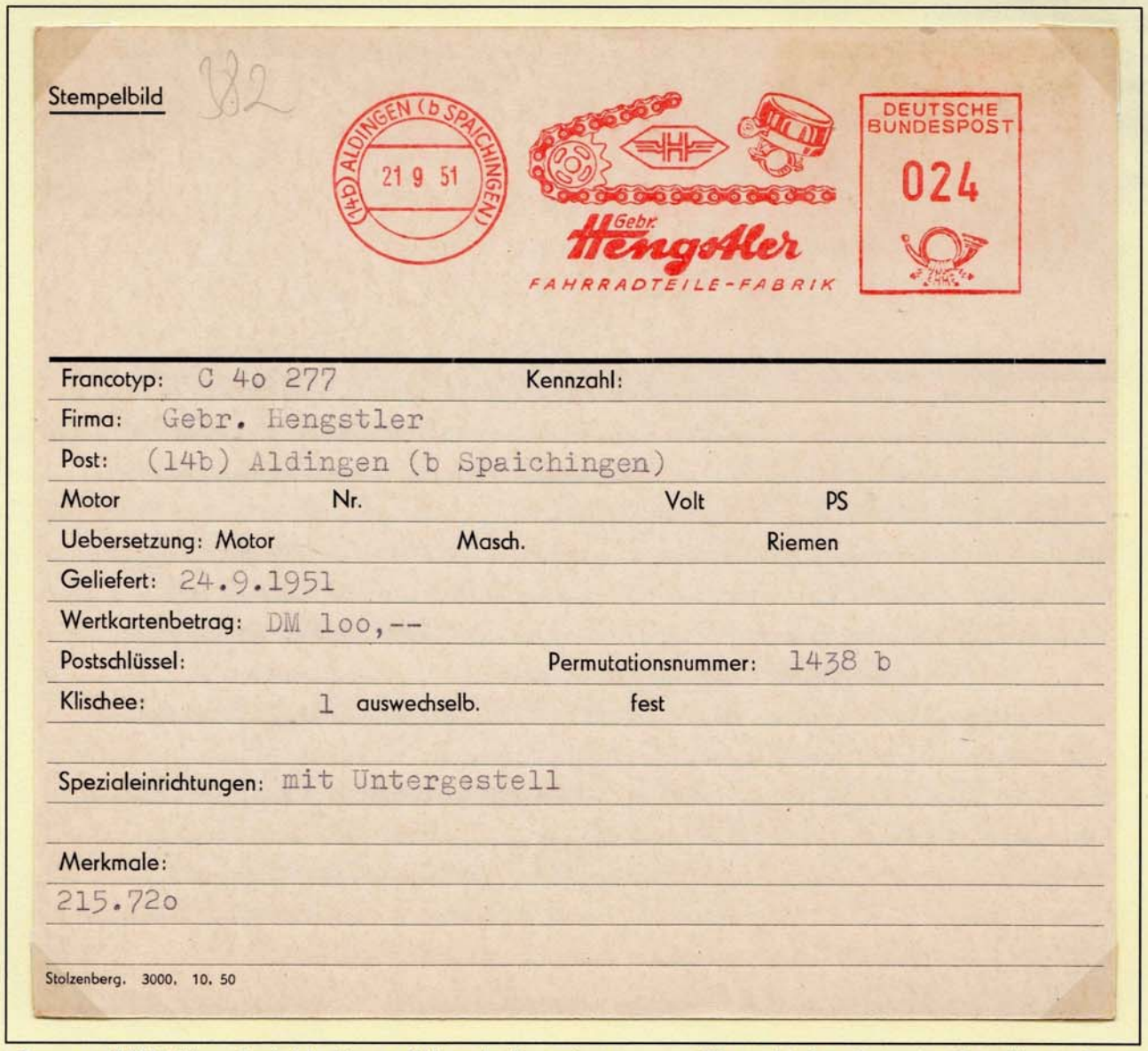
By training, professional cyclists usually work his rolling position in order optimize his racing performance.







Using Force cleverly. In scientific terms, a bicycle is a device that can magnify force or speed. A gear is a pair of wheels with teeth that interlock to increase power or speed. In a bicycle, the pair of gears is not driven directly but linked by a chain. At one end, the chain is permanently looped around the main chain wheel; at its other end, it shifts between a series of pinions, making the machine faster or easier to pedal.

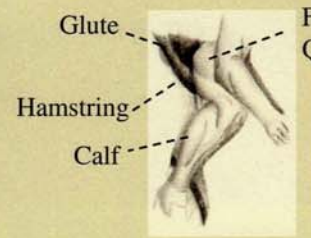


Germany (1951). Stammkarte (Archive card) from the Francotyp company. The card is for a Francotyp C machine, n. C 40 277, with a machine cost of cost of 100 DM. The delivery post office was Aldingen and this machine was used by the Gebr. Hengstler company from 24.09.1951.

A cyclist's legs provide the power for cycling. Muscle attached to the Thighbone (Femur) and the Shinbone (Tibia) do the majority of the work: Glute, Hamstring, Quadricep, Calf and Hip flexor.



Tonga (1992). Monochrome proof in Black and White on thin card to check the design. Only 20 were done by Walsall Security Printers of London.





That's why bikes are so clever: they make good use of the most powerful muscles in our body. *Specimen.*

From cyclist explotion of Force arised some sprint modalities of Track Cycling, like Sprint, Team sprint, Keirin or Track time trial.

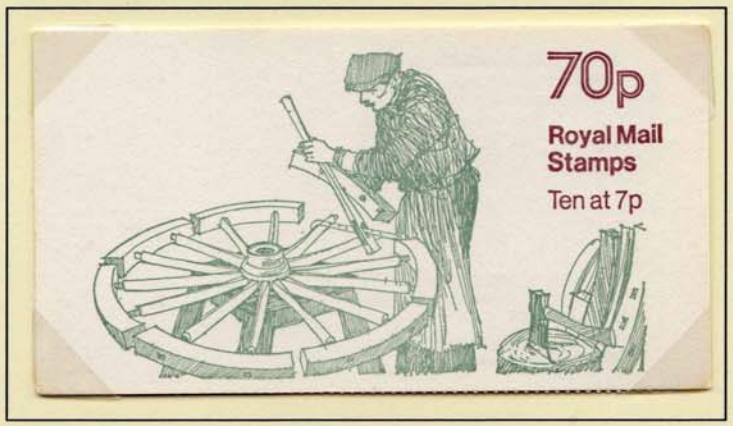


Always overcoming Resistance.
Rolling resistance is the energy that is lost when the tire is rolling. The main reason for the loss of energy is the constant deformation of the tire. Tire pressure, tire diameter, tire width, tire construction, tire tread and other factors all have an effect on rolling resistance

The Resistance dilemma: always avoiding Resistance, but you necessarily need it to roll (*e.g.* on a freeze road, you fall).



The Wheel. There's nothing that better describes a bicycle. Historians generally agree it originated in Mesopotamia in around 3,500 BC, under the Sumerian civilization, as a solid wooden disk wheels. The spoked wheel was invented more recently by Egyptians allowing swifter war vehicles. It would remain relatively unchanged for millennia until the Industrial Revolution.





Sumerian Culture.



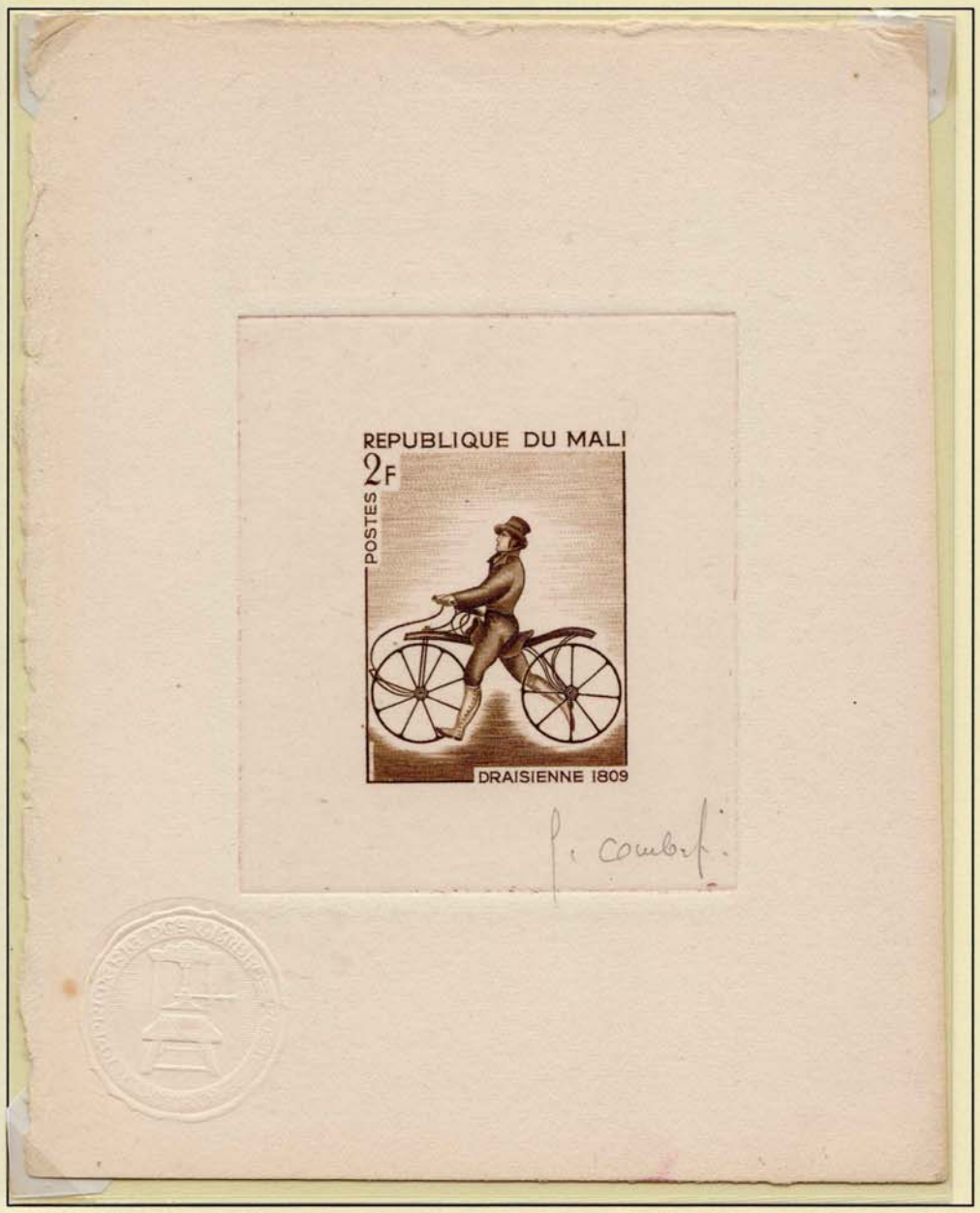
... and this design remained unchanged for last 6000 years just first bicycle (1817), the Draisianne, which used same kind of wheels.

The earliest sketch on record comes from 1534 in Italy in a Codex Atlanticus' margin sheet. Now is attributed to Gian Giacomo Caprotti, a pupil of Leonardo da Vinci, but its authenticity is still controversial. He envisioned a machine remarkably similar to the modern bicycle.





Spain (1859). Early usage of 'matasellos rueda de carreta' (wheel's cart postmark) from Barcelona to Manresa, franked with Isabel II 4 quarters stamp. This kind of postmark were used from the end of 1858 to 1871. Due to his use was to cancel the stamp itself, always date stamps were used too. Number in postmark point out its city and importance of its postal office. In that way, among eight main postal offices, Barcelona got numeral 2.



Mali (1968). Die proof signed from French engraver Jacques Combet showing a Johnson cycle, but erroneously named as a Draisianne. 28 die proofs were produced.

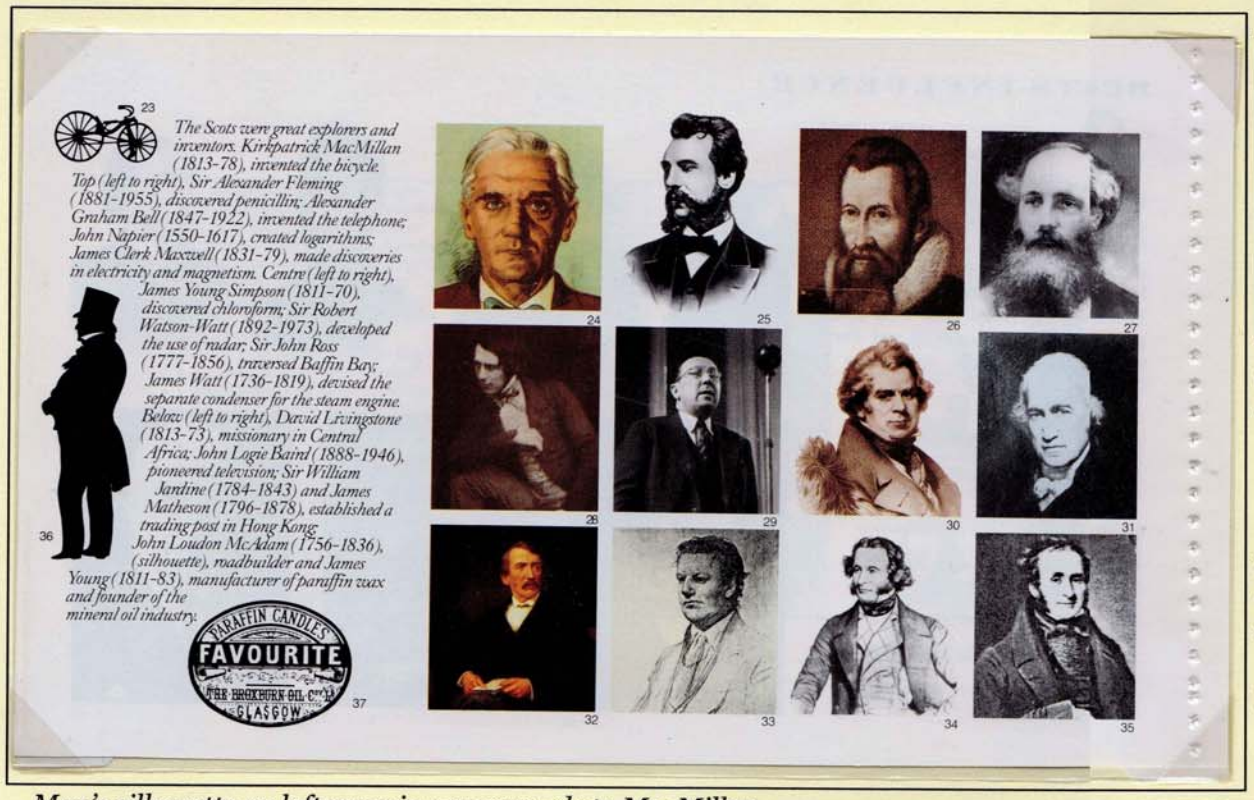
Italy (1939). Italian advertisement postage meter promoting last public exhibiton of Codex Atlanticus.



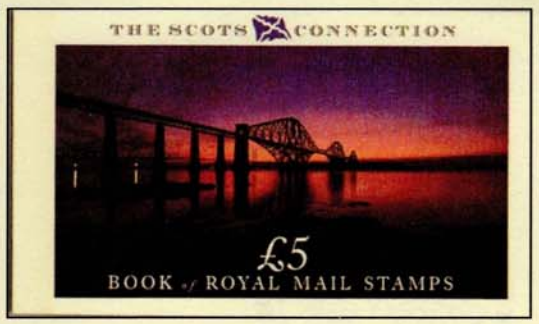


The first bicycle was made by Baron Karl von Drais in Germany. The Laufmaschine (Running Machine), was made of wood, had two inline wheels, didn't have pedals and it was propelled by the feet striking the ground by the operator effectively walking whilst seated. The front wheel assembly also had a handlebar that was hinged to allow for a small amount of steering.





Man's silhouette on left margin corresponds to MacMillan.



GB (1989). Inner page of Prestige booklet and cover copy at 45% reduction.



MacMillan's bicycle

in 1840, a Scottish black-smith named Kirkpatrick Macmillan made a two-wheel device that was operated by a treadle. Two years later he traveled as many as 40 miles (64 km) at a stretch during a record 140-mile (225 km) round trip to Glasgow.

He never patented or marketed it and he built it for his own use.

Drais' velocipede provided the basis for further developments: a couple decades later (1863), a Frenchman, Ernest Michaux added rotary cranks and pedals to the front-wheel hub, to create the first pedal-operated "bicycle" as we today understand the word.



The use of metal frames reduced the weight and provided sleeker, more elegant designs, and also allowed mass-production. Bicycle frame were made from Iron instead of wood, and soon they started including rubber tires and ball bearings.





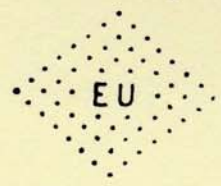
France (1867). Letter to Dijon from Exposition Universelle of Paris using its post office postmark. Rare postmark with certificate "c'



France (1983). Rubber pictorial postmark on sheet corner with signature of Jean Delpech, the stamp's engraver and ink control on selvadge.







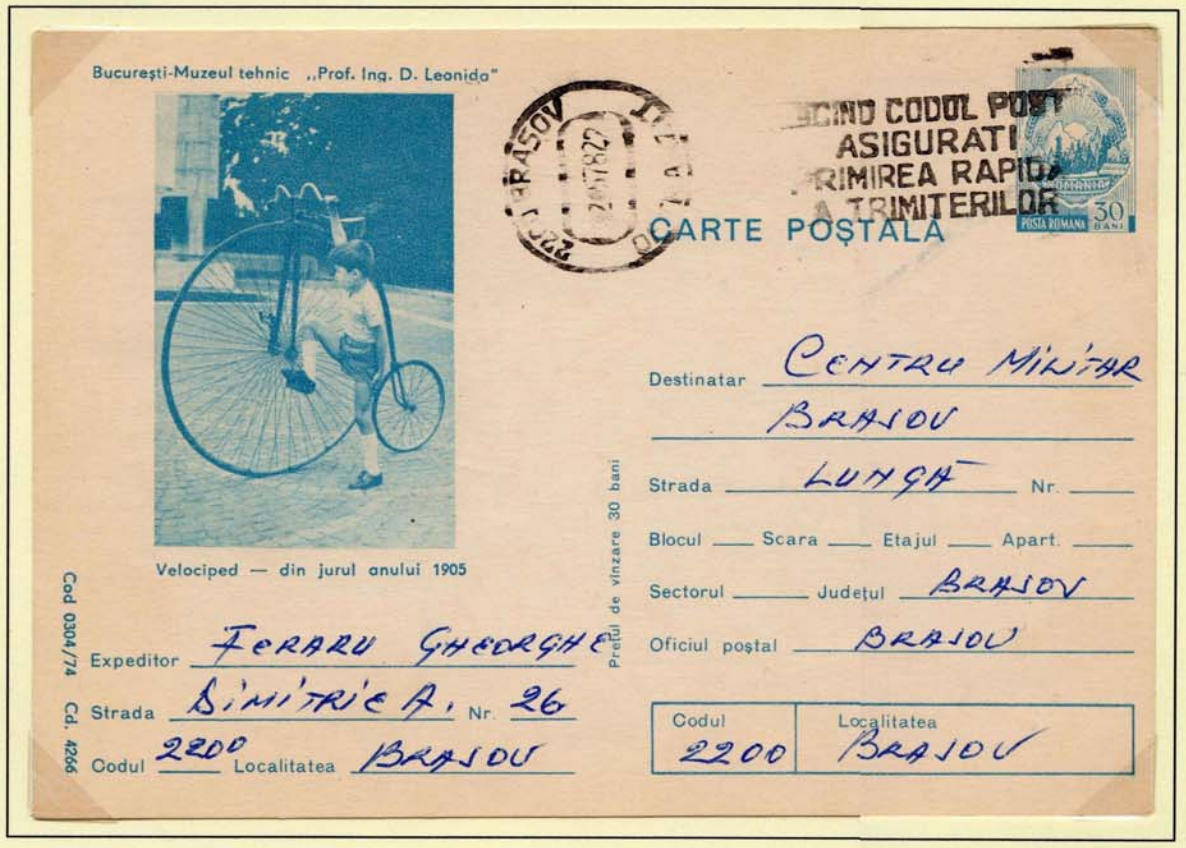
During the Exposition Universelle of 1867 in Paris, Michaux Company promoted very successfully its bicycle and it was the basis of his company later grown. Two years after, 500 workers produced 300 cycles daily.



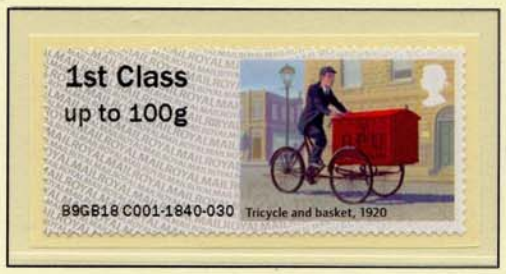
Transit and arrival postmarks on rear side.

THE ELEGANCE OF THE ORDINARY AND OF SAFETY

The rotational speed limitation of Michaux design created stability and comfort concerns which would lead to enlarge the front wheel of the high-bicycle with the rear wheel shrinking and the frame being made lighter, allowing higher speeds. Depending on the rider's leg length, the front wheel could now have a diameter up to 1.5 m



High-bicycles were fast, but unsafe. The rider was high up in the air and traveling at a great speed. He could easily be thrown over the front wheel and be seriously injured. The dangerous nature of these bicycles made cycling the preserve of adventurous young men.





The term "Safety Bicycle" was used in the 1880s for any alternative to the High-Wheels. The success of this kind of bicycle was the stabilization of the Center of Gravity. And caused a bike boom due to being lighter, less expensive and easier to ride.







The High-Wheeler bicycle was highly popular during end of Victorian Era. This type of bicycle was also retronymed the "Ordinary" (since there was then no other kind).





Several coil misperforations.



1887 Bochum Bicycle Local Stadtpost.

Tangent spokes, ball bearings, solid rubber tires and hollow-section steel frames became standard, reducing weight and making the ride much smoother.





1887 Frankfurt Circular Post.

Very popular in England, their use also spread to the rest of the World, chiefly because of the extent of the British Empire.



Ordinary bicycles was most fashioned and exclusive bicycle. When this type of cycle fell into disuse, modern cyclists laughed at their last users. Contemptuously this cycle was called the "Penny-Farthing", for its similarity with the larger and smaller English coins at that moment.



England (1875). In that same period the rate for the UPU foreign postcards was a penny farthing (from 01.07.1875 to 30.09.1891). One Penny Farthing imprint stationary card for foreign postage addressed from UK to The Netherlands on 28.09.1875.



The Netherlands (2020). Inner page of Prestige booklet.

Henry J. Lawson removed a lot of problems with its "Bicyclette", but failed due of its higher price.



John Kemp Starley produced the first successful Safety Bicycle, the Rover, in 1885. It featured equally sized wheels, a chain drive to the rear wheel, diamond frame made from metal, pneumatic rubber tires ...





This device (called Rover) ignited the era known today as "Golden Age of Bicycles". Since that time, bicycle design became standardized and they satisfied all four basic aspects – safety, speed, comfort and steering.



Diamond shape frame.



Mali (1968). Die proof signed from French engraver Jacques Combet showing a standard bicycle, but erroneously dated. 28 die proofs were produced. On top, regular stamp.

Honouring the Story of bicycle evolution.
At the 1900 Paris World's Fair took place the first reported retrospective of bicycle history. In 1900 definitive design of bicycle hogged the market and Draisianes, Michaux, Ordinaries and Safeties were seen as a part of History.





Spring usage was the most immediate solution.



The new bikes also presented inconveniences. As with the original velocipede, safety bicycles had been much less comfortable than high-wheelers precisely because of the smaller wheel size, and frames were often buttressed with complicated bicycle suspension spring assemblies.

The Hirondelle (1889) took advantage of the curved structure of the frame to absorb the irregularities of the terrain. In other hand, Anker patented flexible forks.



Anker company patented a curved fork

Solid rubber.



Germany (1936). Francotyp "A" multivalue franking machine.





radial spokes



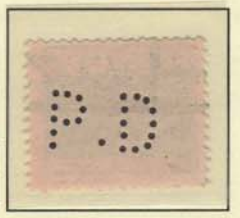
crossed spokes

James Starley changed spokes patterns from radial to crossed to have a more smoothly ride.



Italy (1922). Biglietto postale (B.E.P.) with Pirelli advertisement. B.E.P.s were issued from 1920 with advertisemens in order to get funds for disabled soldiers due to WWI.

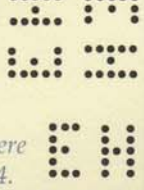
John Dunlop's reinvention of the pneumatic bicycle tire in 1888 had made for a much smoother ride on paved streets; the previous type were quite smooth-riding, when used on the dirt roads common at the time.



France. P.D. (pneumatiques Dunlop). Period of usage 1911-1934.

Founded in Milan in 1872 and specialized in rubber and derivative processes, Pirelli's activities were primarily focused on the production of tire and cables (for energy and telecommunications).

In 1853, H. Hutchinson obtained patents from Goodyear, using a technological monopoly to create rubber products, bicycle tyres among them.



France (1945). Bill sent by post from Hutchinson company. Perfins EH on fiscal stamps, which were used for postal purpose (so, legitimate use on thematic philately). Period of perfin usage 1896-1954.

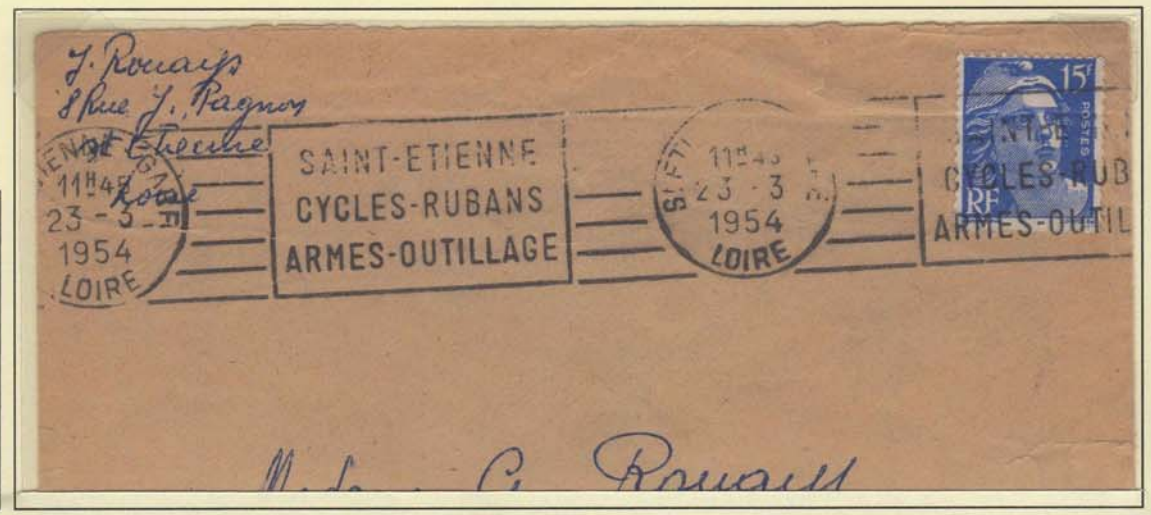


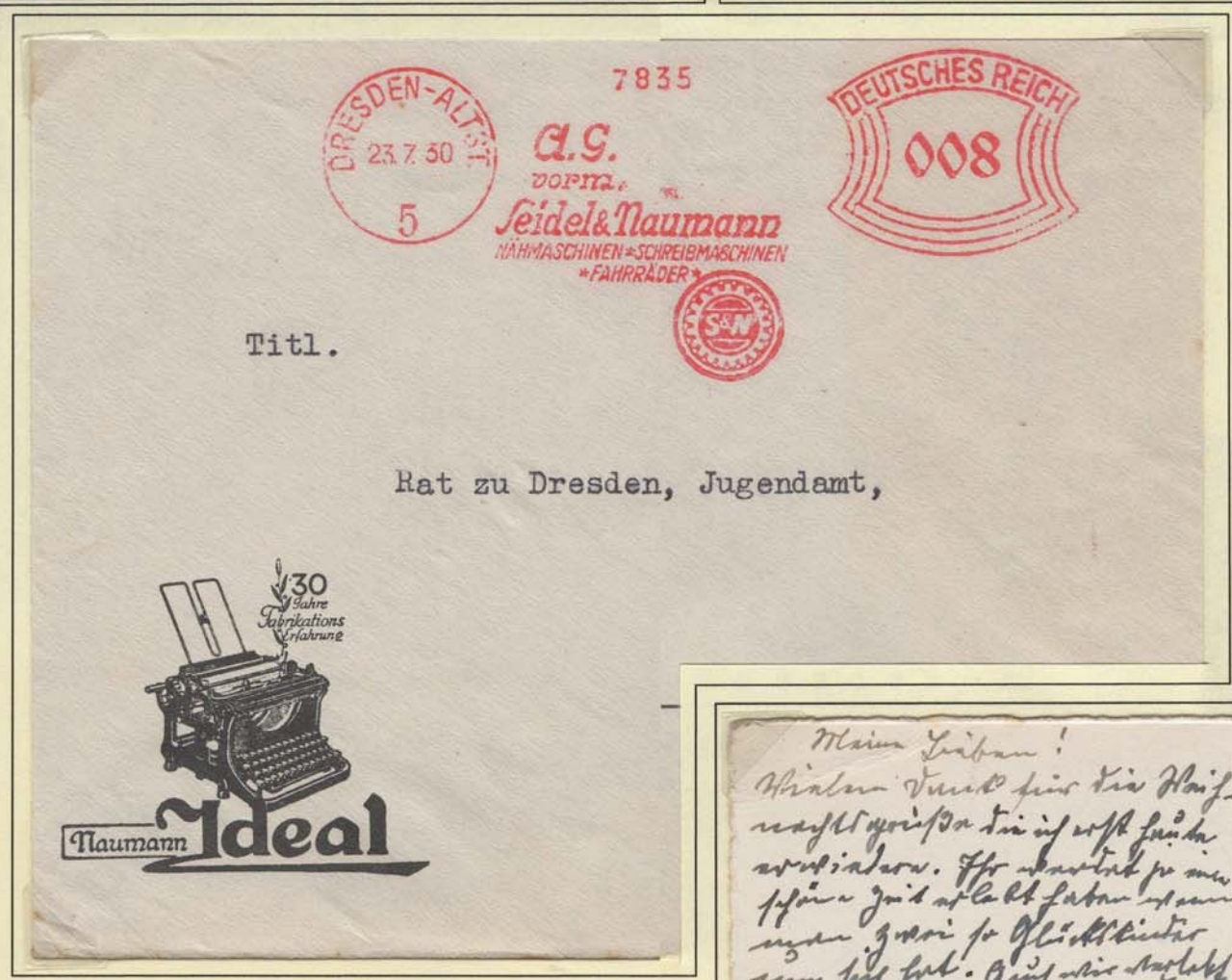
BICYCLE DARWINISM: THE ORIGIN OF INDUSTRY...

3. THE BICYCLE INDUSTRY

Prior to Industrial Revolution, technological benchmark was the manufacture of carriages. Bicycle industry would not have been possible without previous Steel industry of "small things": small machines of great mechanical complexity and wide deployment (weapons, sewing machines, umbrellas, typewriters, etc...) which had the necessary metalworking and engineering skills for bicycle manufacturing









Some steel industries turned to bicycle production due to high bicycle demand, like in St. Etienne, being in some cases the main activity, like Orbea in Spain.

Typewriters and bicycle parts on this commemorative rubber postmark from Germany (1935). Zella-Mehlis was known as "The city of typewriters and bicycles".



Opel brand started producing sewing machines in 1862 and bicycles 34 years later, and cars in 1899.



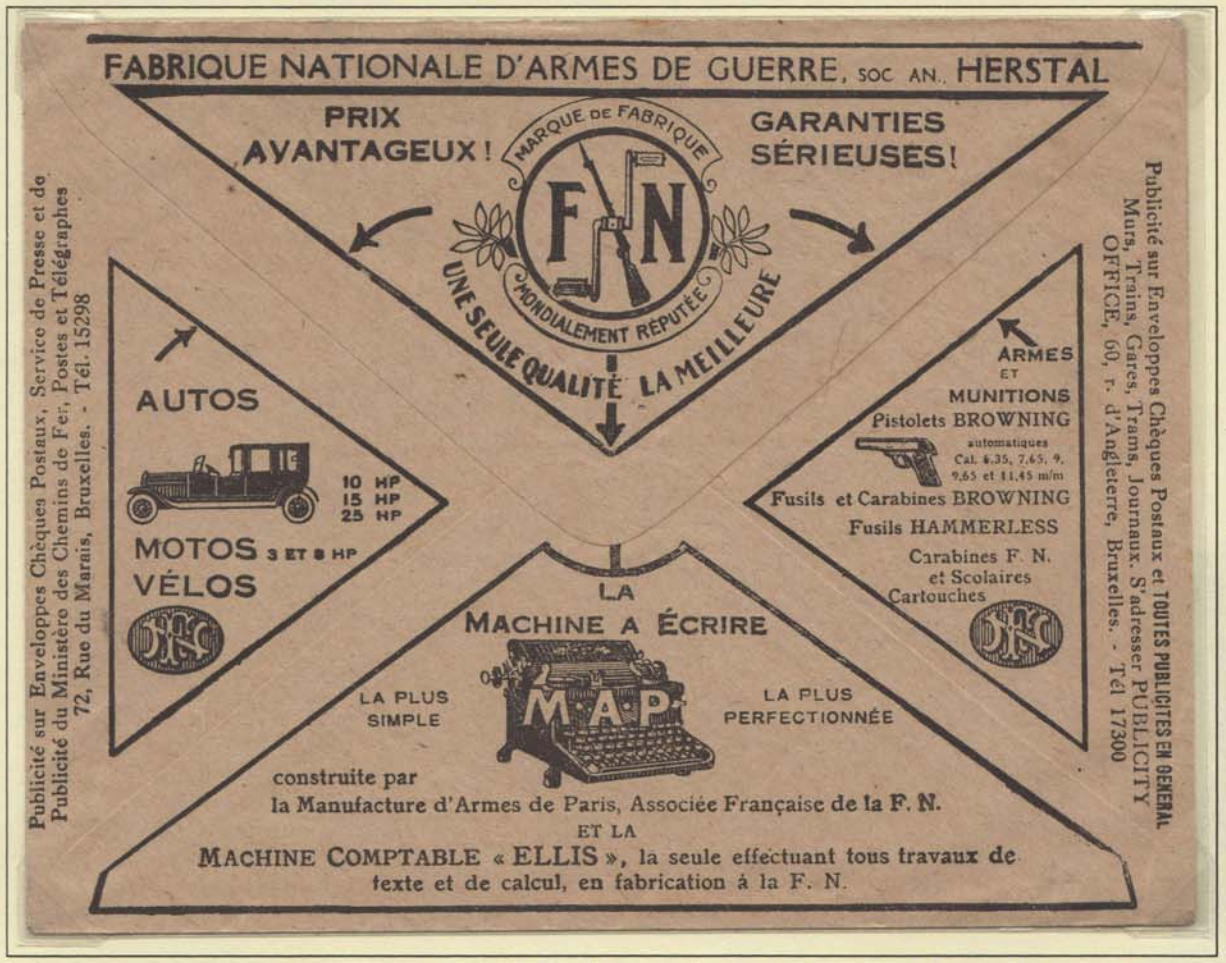
Germany (1930). Francotyp "C" multivalue franking machine.



Italia (1924). Advertising Singer industry tab.

Singer, known for its sewing machines, also produced bicycles.





Belgium postage free advertising cover from Postal Check Bureau with advertisement of Fabrique Nationale of war weapons, used on 01.08.1923. FN kept bicycle pedals in the logo even when they were no longer producing bicycles.

The solid structure of the bicycle manufacturing industries helped many brands to begin producing motorcycles and automobiles. Some brands carried on manufacturing both bicycles and motor vehicles (Peugeot, Derbi, Terrot...) but others abandoned the bicycle industry (Adler, FN, Opel, Triumph...).



The first automobile (1886), a Mercedes-Benz, was mounted on a cycle very similar to the safe model designed in 1877 by James Starley (left).







Germany (1910). Deustche Triumph Fahrrad Werke perfin. Period of usage 1905-1925

D. T. F. W.

Germany (1931). Francotyp "A" multivalue franking machine.



The German Miele, believed to be the world's largest family-owned appliance company, was at one point during its long history known as a bicycle manufacturer (1924-1960s).

Federal Republic of Germany (1946). Alterations of Francotyp "A" red meter machine with eagle removed due to de-Nazification of Germany after WWII.







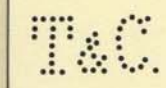
Germany (1905). Coin stamps from Opel. Reverse at 60%. In shortage of currency, salary of workers was paid with stamps equivalence.



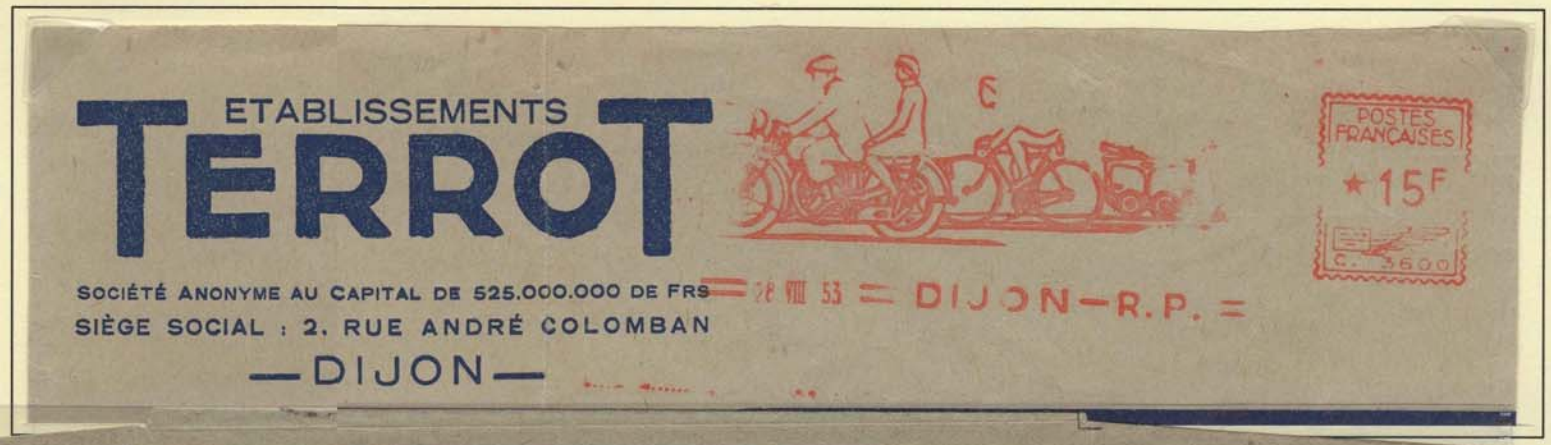
In the 1860s, the Michaux family get first commercial success in Europe with a company of 500 works producing 200 bicycles daily. Late production center of French bicycle industry was moved to Saint Etienne.



France (1953). Havas "G" multivalue franking machine.



France. Perfin (T&C.) (period of use 1902-1913) of Terrot on 10c red Semeuse issued in 1907.

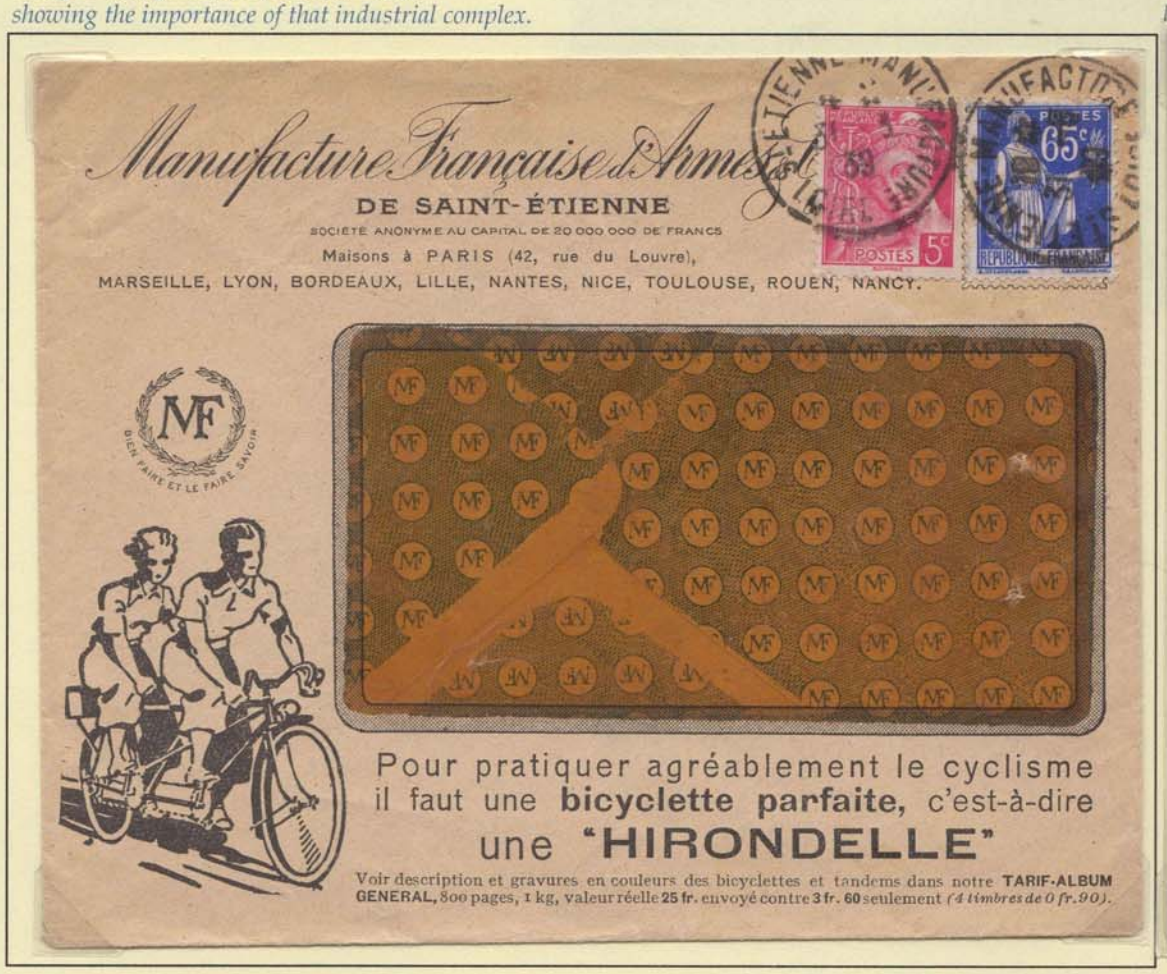


France (1926). Peugeot advertising telegram from Saintes to Fontaine Chalendroy used on 13.02.1926. Windowed document in fine condition.

Peugeot mass produced all kind of vehicles, bicycles too.



France (1939). Commercial cover of state company Manufacture Française d'Armes, sent on 31.03.1939 from its own post office using its own postmark (Manufacture), showing the importance of that industrial complex.



Italia (1921). BLP with ads, with special BLP stamp and reduced 5 cts rate in favour to WW-I injured soldiers

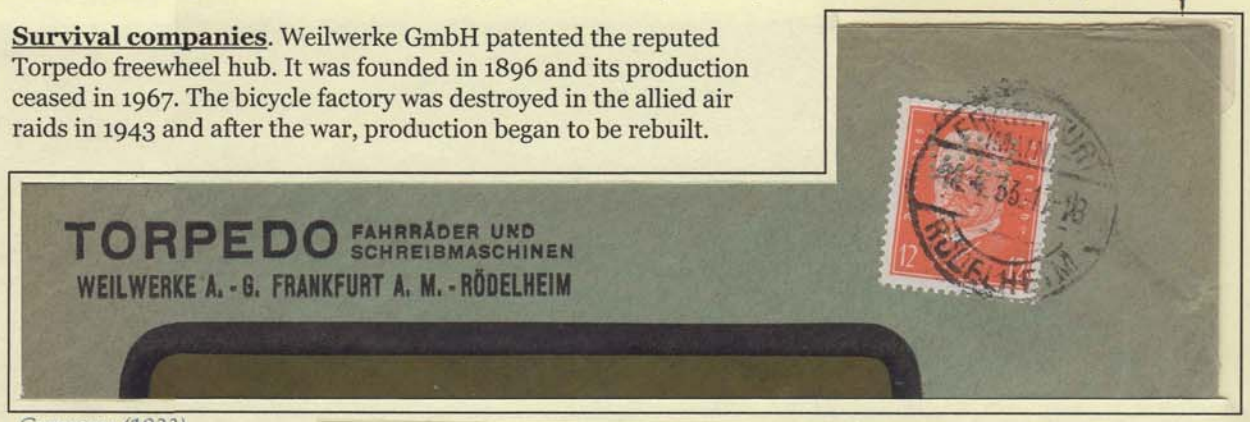


Until the early 19th century Germany retained its pre-industrial character. After the extensive development of the railway network during the 1840s, rapid economic growth and modernisation sparked the process of industrialisation. The largest economy in Europe by 1900, Germany had established a primary position in several key sectors, like steel production. The cumulative impact of the First World War on the German economy was disastrous. And the Great Depression struck Germany hard, starting already in the last months of 1927.



Germany (1916). True feldpost card offered for free to German soldiers during WWI and its cost paid by collaborator corporations like Weilwerke GmbH via publicizing its products on like Torpedo hub here.

Survival companies. Weilwerke GmbH patented the reputed Torpedo freewheel hub. It was founded in 1896 and its production ceased in 1967. The bicycle factory was destroyed in the allied air raids in 1943 and after the war, production began to be rebuilt.



Germany (1933). Perfin WW on commercial cover after 1920s crisis and WWI. Period of perfin usage 1921-1939.

WW

Germany (1959). Francotyp "A9000" post-war meter stamp from Federal Republic of Germany.



Crisis failure. The retail mail order company August Stukenbrok Einbeck was founded in 1888. While the catalog included bicycles and related accessories in the early years, it was enlarged soon to include other goods. Despite the successes before and after the WWI, the company was hit hard by the global economic crisis at the end of the Weimar Republic and had to cease business in 1931.



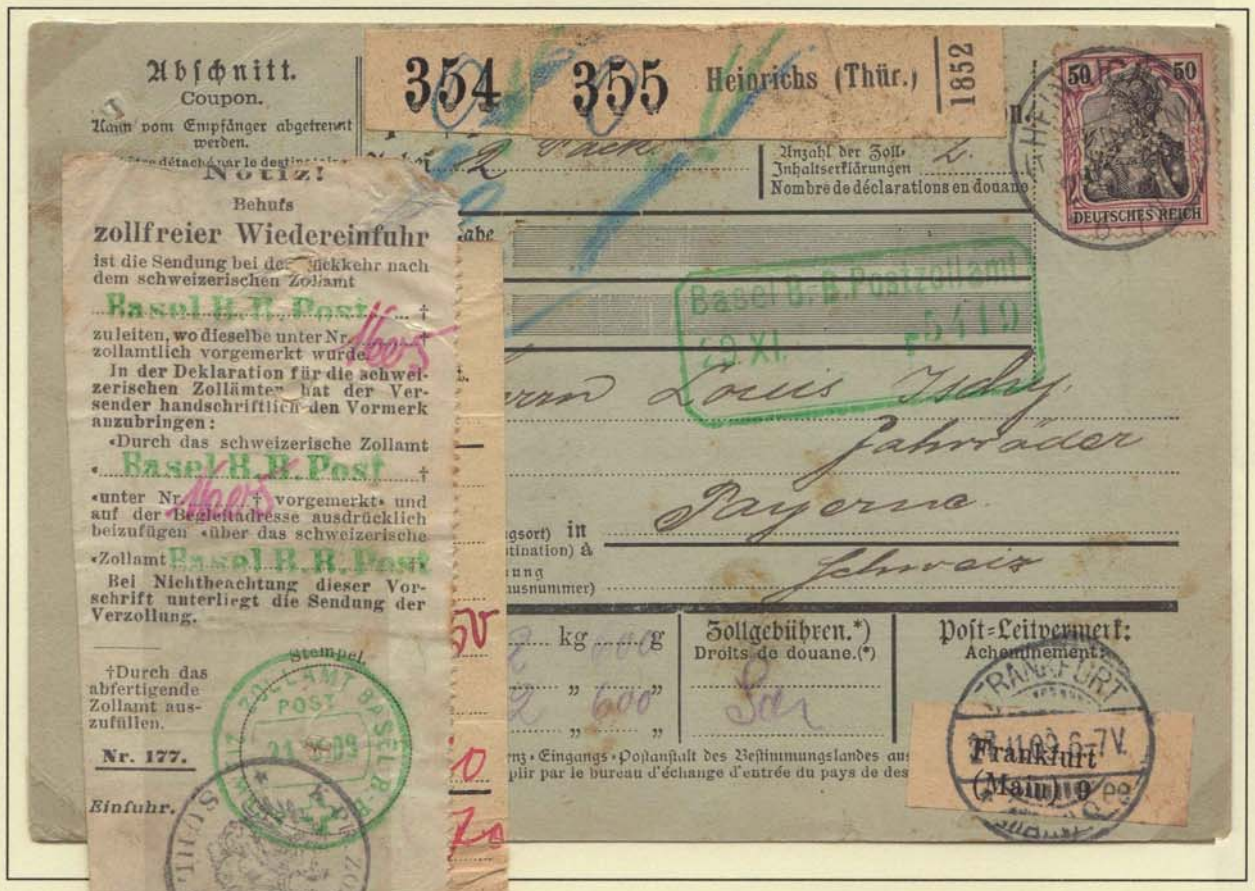


Germany (1919). Germany to Zurich on 22.12.1919 with postage paid with four perforated stamps. Period of perfin usage 1908-1925.

SLS

Germany (1903). Commercial stationary cover from Stukenbrok factory. Used on 09.07.1903 with postmark from Einbeck, the headquarters of the factory, to Swinemünde (today Poland).

Germany overcome the Great Depression and its destruction after WWI and WWII, and nowadays is the largest bicycle market in the European Union.



S&C

Jewish industries expropriatied by Nazis. Simson & Co., was founded In 1856. Under the Third Reich, the factory was taken from the Jewish Simson family and expropriated by Nazis.

Germany (1909). International parcel delivery service card from Heinrichs, where Simson & Co. was sited, to Switzerland via Frankfurt and Bassel. Right postage cost of 2,40 Marks, corresponding to 2 parcels of less than 5 Kg, and franked with six perforated stamps from Simson factory. Period of perfin usage 1898-1926. Border labels of both countries customs fee receipts. Reverse contain 5 additional perforated stamps.

Communist control due to war reparations. Zittau is a well-known vehicle manufacturing center. In 1888 G. Hiller obtained a license to build Rover Safety Bicycles and distributed them under the name "Phänomen-Rover". With the increasing arms production in Nazi Germany Phänomen produced mainly trucks for army, which ends with the capture of Zittau by the Red Army. Machinery was confiscated and dismantled to pay war reparations to Soviet Union and passed to public ownership (Zitthau was DDR).



German Reich (1939). Francotyp "A" red meter stamp with eagle at top and impresion counter commemorating its 50th jubilee. Windowed card in fine condition.

War destruction. In 1869, Bruno Naumann and Emil Seidel were already producing sewing machines based on an American patent. In the course of the company's history there have been several changes in the focus of production, bicycles related among others. Factory was destroyed, like the whole city, during aerial bombing attack on the city of Dresden (13-15.02.1945).



Germany (1887). Private mail Hansa of the city of Bremen. Stationery with advertisement of Seidel & Nauman company.

Jewish slave labor. Steyr-Daimler-Puch is one of the companies known to have benefited from slave labor housed in the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp system during WWII. Slaves from the camp were used in a highly profitable system and amongst them Puch had an underground factory built at Gusen in 1943.

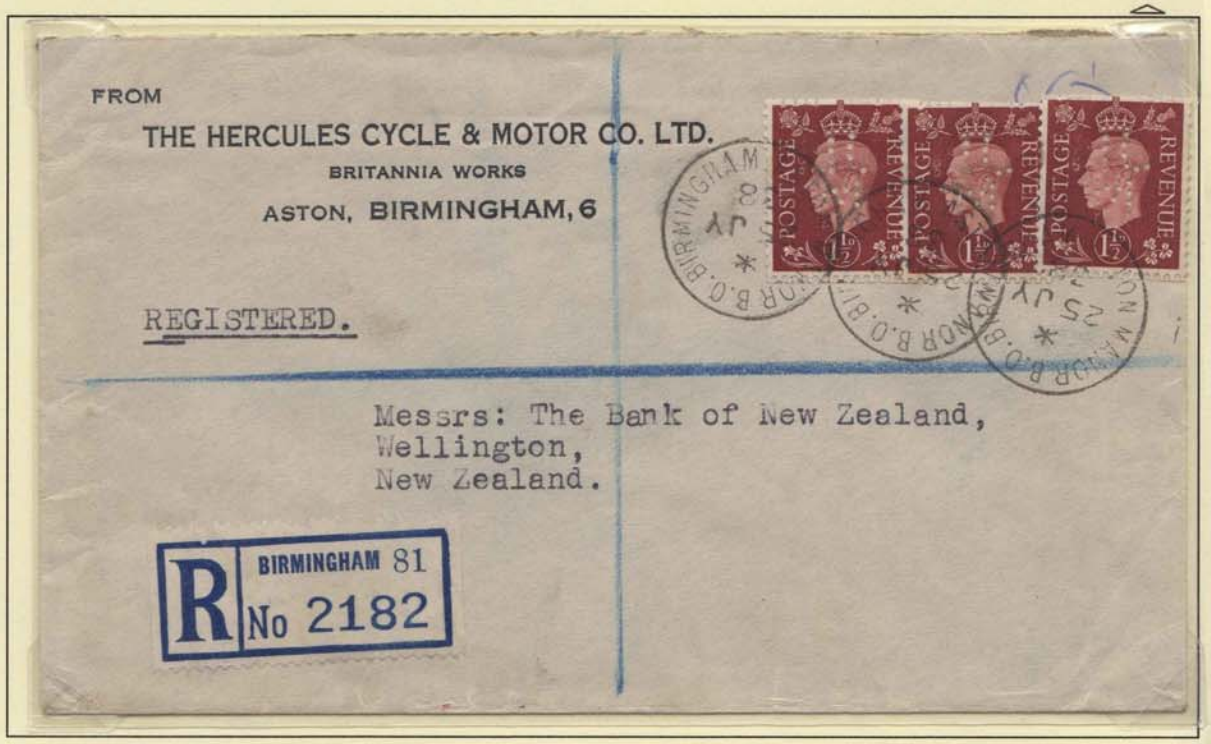


Federal Republic of Germany (1949). Alterations of Francotyp A red meter with removal of eagle and "Deutsche Reichpost" due to de-Nazification.

Denazification was an Allied initiative to rid German and Austrian society of the Nazi ideology following the WWII.

Former French bicycle industry was still recovering from the Franco-Prussian war, and due to War French production moves to England. Coventry, Nothingam, Birmingham and Manchester were the centers of the English bicycle industry, which also spread to the rest of the world, chiefly because of the extent of the British Empire.

Ted Crane, Hercules founder, was knew as the Henry Ford of bicycle industry, and improved production methods. After 1923, Hercules produced its part, inner tubes and tyres. Factories ran using mass-production, producing more than 1,000 cycles a day, each taking less than 10 minutes to assemble. In 1935 Hercules exported 40% of all British cycles



GB (1938). Registered letter with "all-up" Service from Birmingham to Wellington (NZ) franked with 3 1½ d perforated stamps from Hercules (H.C.M.) and Birmingham registration label. Perfin's period of usage 1929-1957. The "All-up" service was introduced in 1937 and allowed all first-class mail via air (blue airmail label was not required) at no extra charge to the normal surface mail and registration fees etc, from the UK to Britain's Commonwealth countries, including Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The service discontinued due to World War II. Rate was 1½ d. per one half ounce to NZ fee ("all-up" Service) + 3 d. registration fee. Birmingham registration label. All first-class mail via air at no extra charge; discontinued due to World War II, blue airmail label was not required.

Due to Franco-Prussian War, in 1868, The Coventry Sewing Machine Company received an order from Paris to produce a number of Velocipedes, an early type of bicycle that was popular in France. This event heralded the beginning of the city's cycle industry, with more than 450 bicycle makers settled in the city.

Long before it became the UK's 'motor city', Coventry was the country's 'Bicycle City'. Skills that had been developed producing bicycles were later necessaries to produce motorbikes.





The Raleigh Bicycle Company (1885) is based in Nottingham. Using Raleigh as their brand name, it is one of the oldest bicycle companies in the world. By 1913, it was the largest bicycle manufacturing company in the world. Raleigh bought rivals as Triumph, Sunbeam, Hercules or BSA that brought Raleigh complete dominance of the British bicycle industry, producing 80 percent of the cycles made in Britain. In addition, a large number of international trading or manufacturing subsidiaries were formed .



Germany (1952).Francotyp "A9000" multivalue franking machine.



Raleigh bicycle.



Perfin P.C. of The Premier Cycle Co.
Perfin's period of use 1900-1912.

P.C.

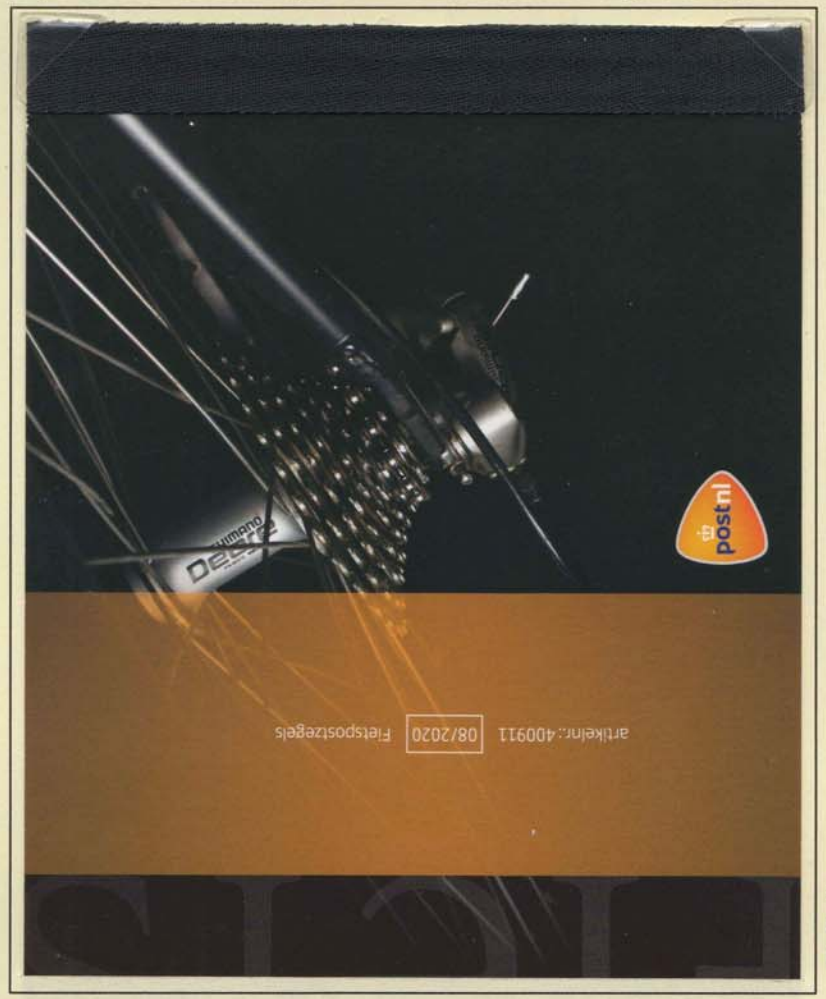
P.W.

Germany (1907). Perfin P.W. of Premier Works Co. mailed from the German delegation, over a 5 pf stamp for international postage. Perfin's period of use 1901-1938. Used on 12.12.1907 and arrived two days later to Hungary.



Asia have most population in Earth, being a big market itself and one of the biggest producer area due to its competitive costs. Although bicycles are produced in dozens of countries, the top four producers (China, India, Taiwan, and Japan) are responsible for 80% of global production. China alone has some 60% of the global market.

Japanese Shimano brand, a worldwide standard for bicycle components.



The Netherlands (2020). Inner page of Prestige booklet (partially windowed).

The Chinese government estimates that 500 million "Flying Pigeon" bicycles, the bicycle that was a symbol of Communist China, still circulate. With Mao's arrival, the bicycle industry was promoted in society where it played a key role in the development of the country, and the nation became known as zixingche wang guo (自行车王国) — the 'Kingdom of Bicycles'.

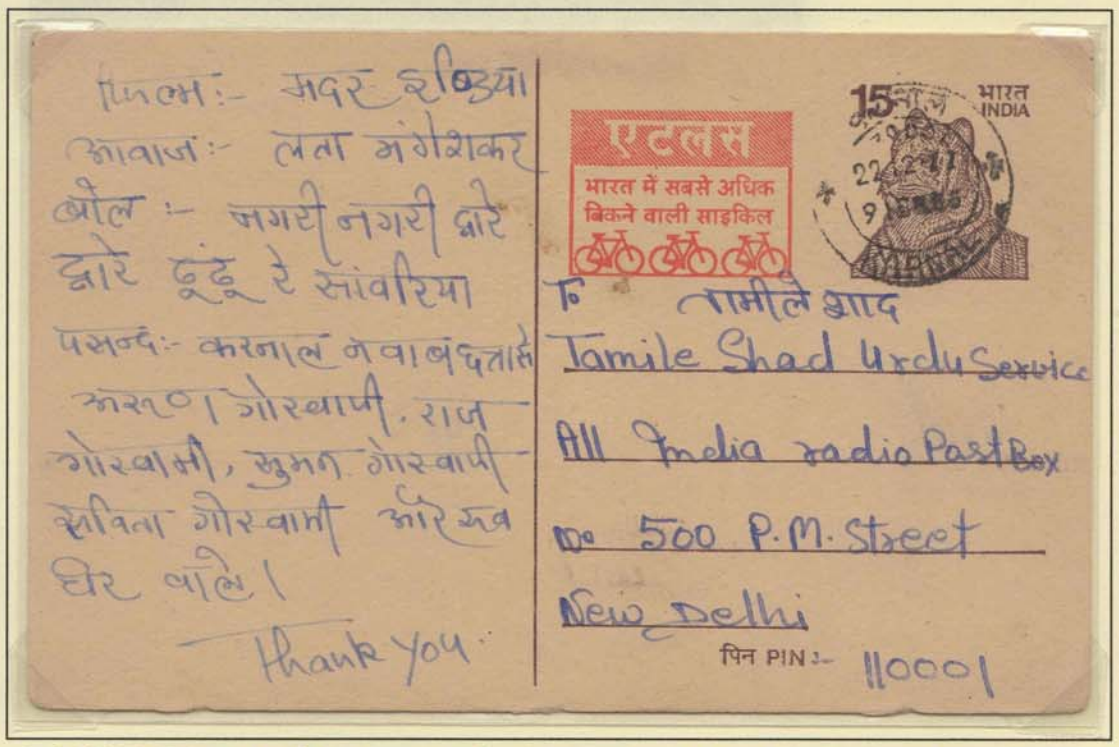


P.R. China (2002) stamp of 60 fen devoted to New Year of the Horse. Used imprinted stationary card.

Postman carrying a Flying Pigeon bicycle.

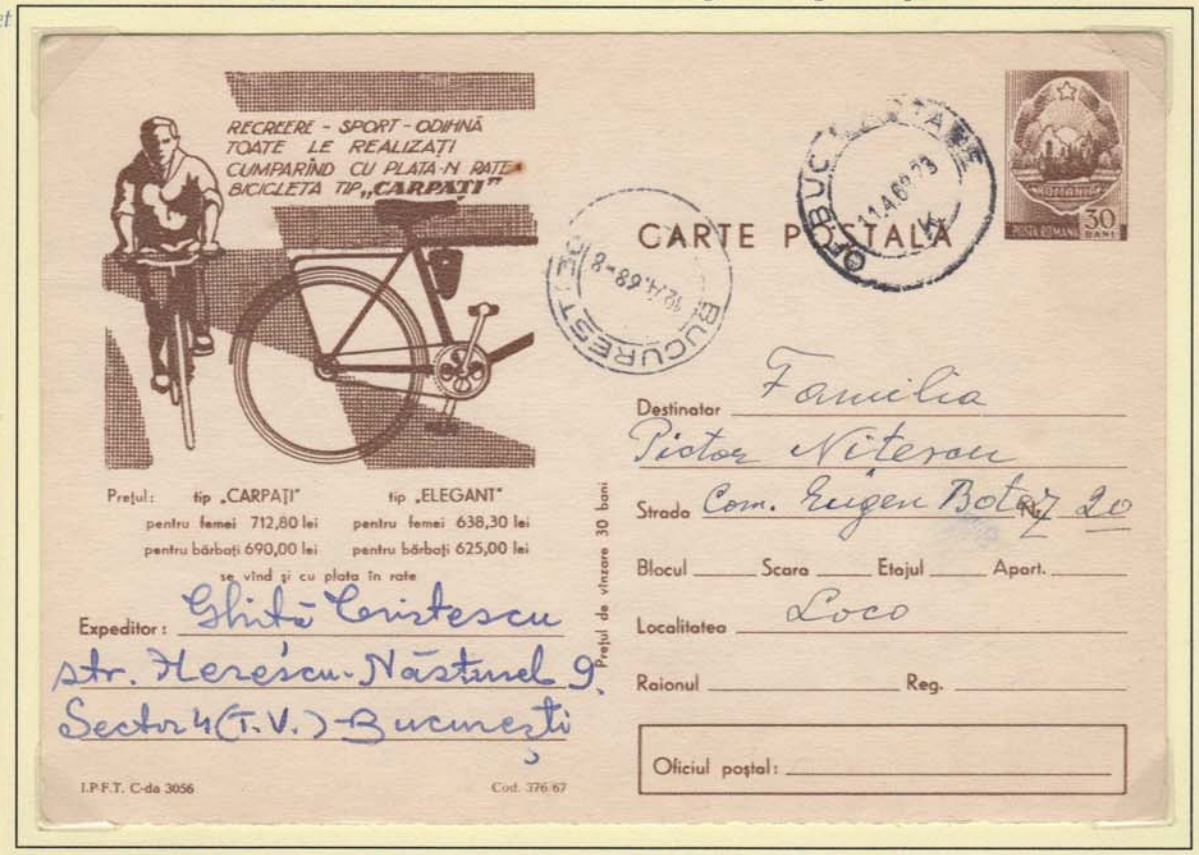
Eastern European countries remained outside the international market because of their own socialist and anti-capitalist ideology. In order to maintain domestic demand, each country had a reference brand.

Carpati bicycles advertisement, advertising its strength and prices.



India (1977). Private to order stationery card.

Slogan said: "Atlas, the most sold bicycle in India".



Romania (1968). 30 bani imprinted stationary envelope for inland mail, used on 11.04.1968.



Shift perforation.



Black ink dry.

Mexico Exporta stamps (1975-1993) were designed by Rafael Davidson to promote Mexican exports. These deftnitive stamps, which are much collected and appreciated due to their unique graphic design, cover 28 themes in 14 sub-series, with a total of 112 official variations, and were printed in an array of designs, papers, tagging, colors, and perforations. Probably were the most recognized and collected series of Mexican stamps. During this time, Mexico opened its market to the World after a protectionist period and these definitive stamps were best marketing. Mexico Exporta stamps concluded with an hyper inflationist period and invasion of goods produced in Asia.

Bicycle stamp was first stamp issued as a 1.60 $ airmail stamp. As a regular stamp, facial grew up from 20 $ to 2100$

Three types of perforation exist: types Comb and Harrow, and an additional Comb perforation sub-type with two control pins in the center of stamp (only for 3rd print).



Harrow perforation on 1.60$ of 4th print.



Comb perforation on 20$ of 5th print.



Comb perforation sub-type with two control pins in the center of stamp (only for 3rd print).



1st print, Airmail, 1977-81, Phosphorescence on front.



2nd print, Airmail, 1977-81, Phosphorescence on front.



3rd print, Airmail, 1981, Fluorescent on both sides.



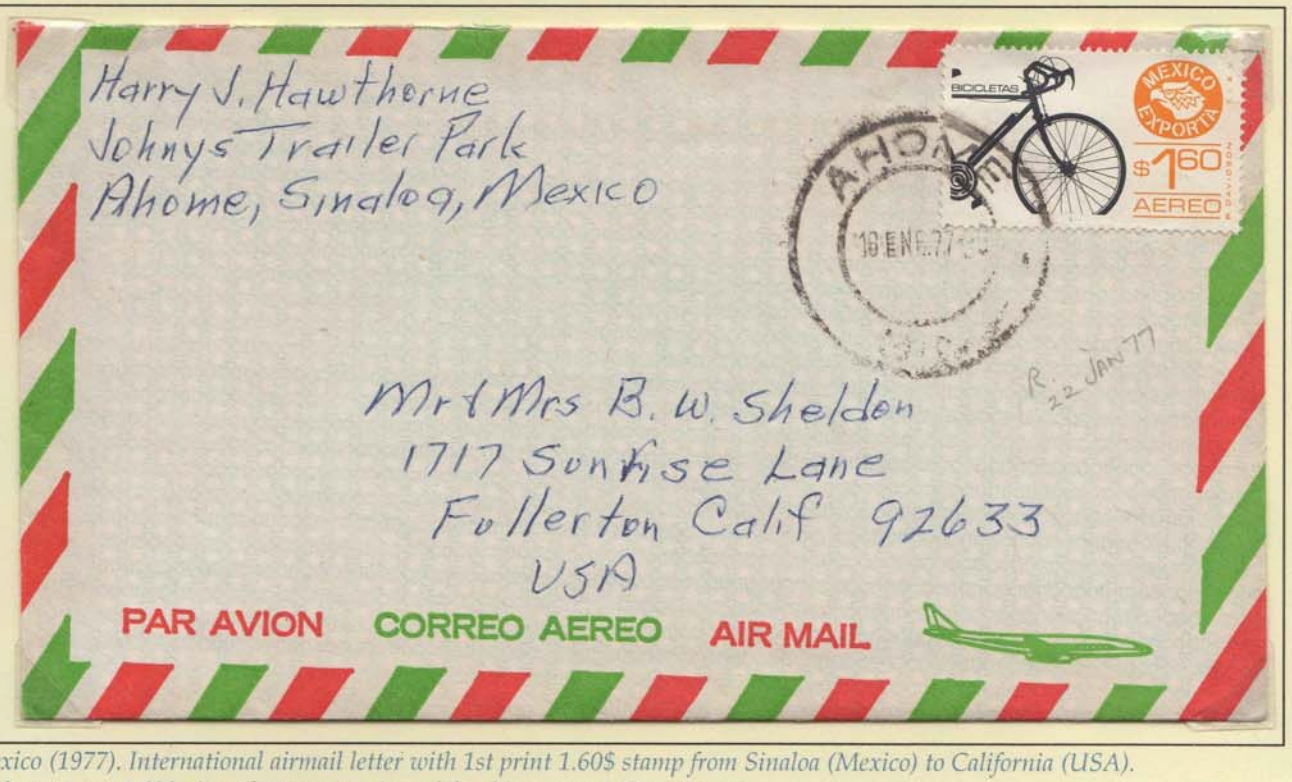
4th print, Airmail, 1981, Fluorescent on boih sides.

8th print, 1987, facial 20$. From here on not special postage use, High Phosphorescence on front.



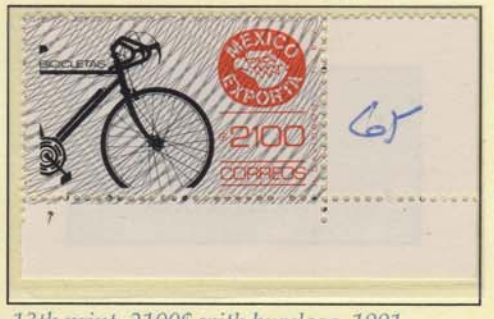
10th print, 2100$ with burelage, 1991, Rose Phosphorescence on front.





Mexico (1977). International airmail letter with 1st print 1.60$ stamp from Sinaloa (Mexico) to California (USA). Right postage. 1.60$ airmail stamp was issued for this purpose. Genuine use.

In 1991, 2100$ stamp was printed with burelage as a security print due to its high facial value…



13th print, 2100$ with burelage, 1991, Soft Phosphorescence on front.

… but currency devaluation made its 1992 reprint inexpensive and burelage print was not considered.



13th print, 2100$ without burelage, 1991, Soft Phosphorescence on front.

	Made in	Weight g/m²	Paper finish	Watermark	Gum	Print Run
1st print	USA	85	glossy	no	Synthetic-bright	260 M
2nd print	UK	97	glossy	MEX-MEX	Synthetic-matt	260 M
3rd print	UK	65	glossy	no	Synthetic-bright	15 M
4th print	UK	97	matt	no	Synthetic-matt	59.5 M
8th print	UK	97	glossy	no	PVA-Ivory	15.5 M
10th print	Mexico	105-110	glossy	no	Dextrin-matt	6.5 M
13th print	Mexico	105-110	glossy	no	Dextrin-Ivory	5.5 M
13th print	Mexico	105-110	glossy	no	Dextrin-Ivory	4.5 M

Fairs is where bicycle companies present itself to the costumers, sportsmen and society in general. Trends and ground-breaking innovations are presented under patent protections. Fairs are a key point for bicycle industry where it try to increase its sales and foreign presence by licensed products, sales representatives or subsidiaries companies.



Germany (1899). Stationary sent on 26.10.1899 from Leipzig's 10th Bicycle Fair (Fahrradmesse) post-office to Gottinger





Early postmark mention to 'bicycle' word. (Fahrradmesse means Bicycle Fair).



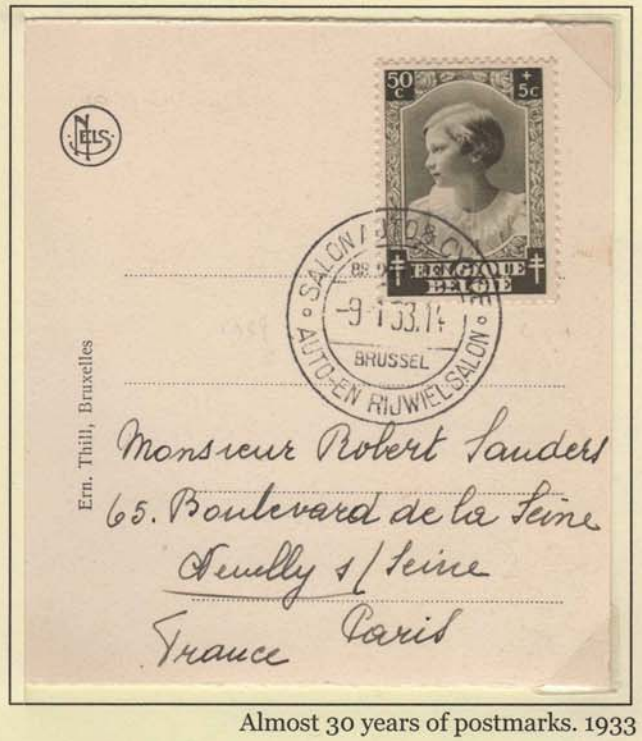


Germany (1995). Francotyp-Postalia "EFS3000/NEF300" meter machine.

Before motor and car industry appearance, bicycle fairs were specialized, as sometimes now. Later bicycle was the little sister in multisectoral fairs, shows and events.



Germany (1956). Pictorial roll cancellation advertising the Frankfurt's bicycle and motor fair.



"1re Exposition du Cycle" took place in Bruxelles in 1892 and it was in 1899 when its name included motor vehicles. This fair runs at present.

Same rubber postmark used yearly during almost 30 years.



Almost 30 years of postmarks. 1933 -> 1964.

The successes of the great champions would not be possible without great bicycles. For all brands, a big win is their best publicity, so they would like to be present in the big competitions.

Maurice Garin, the first winner of Le Tour de France (1903), as well as the rest of the first five in the classification, used La Française-Diamant bicycles. In 1923 it was absorbed by Alcyon, another of the glorious brands, with 6 Tours of France, 12 Paris-Roubaix and innumerable great successes in 50 years of presence in the top competitions.



France (1923). Perfin (H) of La Française.
Period of use 1920-1927. Windowed complete letter.

A great triumph, the best publicity, as this French booklet stated.



France (1924). Booklet cover containing 20 Pasteur stamps.

The bicycle industry needs customers to continue producing. A wide commercial network that includes fairs, marketing, exporting and importing companies, wholesalers, department stores and specialized bicycle stores.

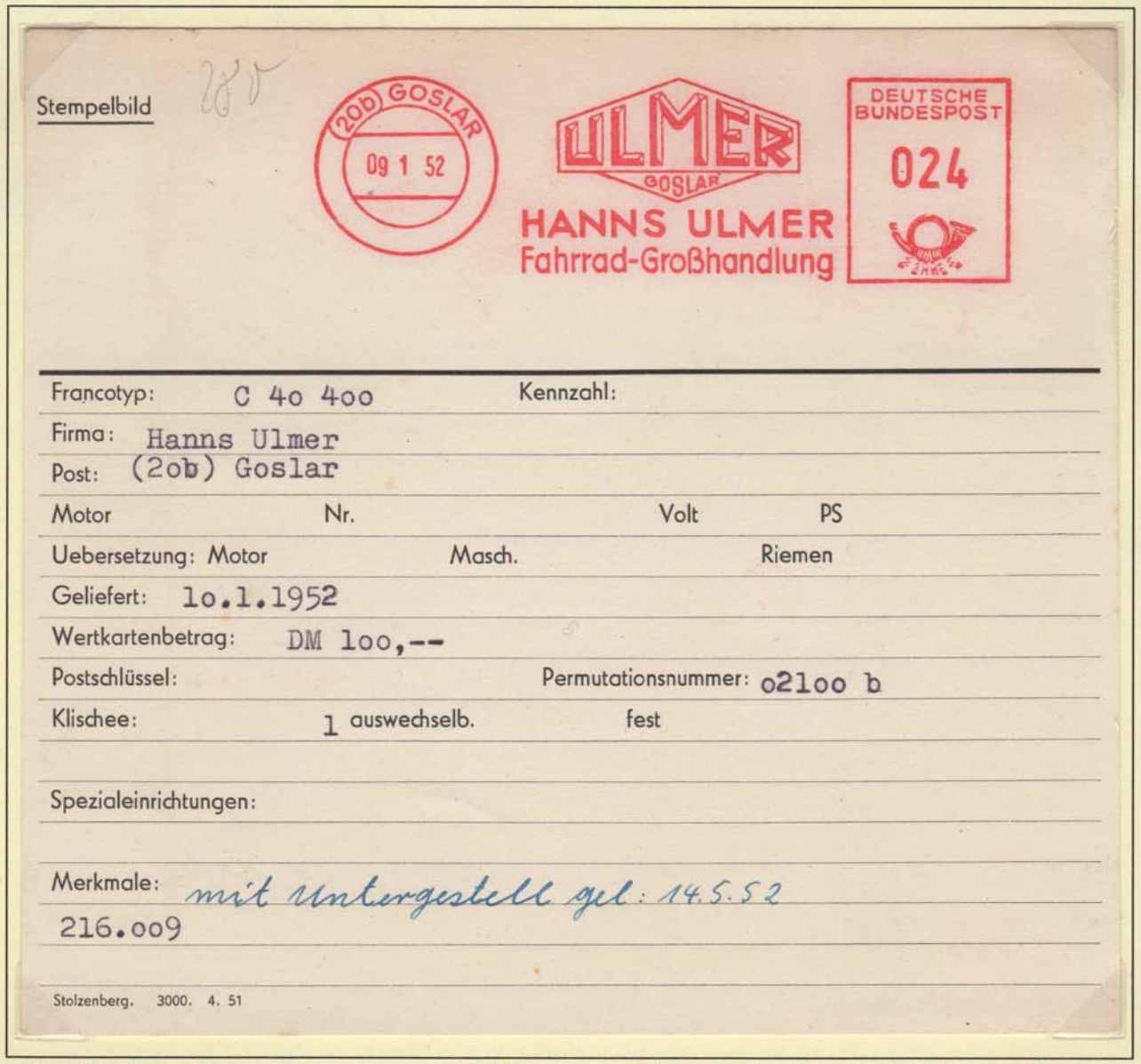


Germany (2020). Digitally printed stamp from Deutsche Post's "Internetmarke" online postage system, introduced in June 2008.

The Centenary Bianchi (1885) is the great Italian bicycle brand. With them legends of Le Tour and Il Giro as Bartali, Coppi, Gimondi or Marco Pantani have given glory to Italian Cycling.



Italia (1932). Perfin (S.E.B.) of Bianchi. Period of use 1924-1929. Windowed complete cover.



Germany (1952). AFS Stammkarte (Archive card) from the Francotyp company. The card is for a Francotyp C machine, #40400, with a machine cost of 100DM, the delivery post office was Goslar and put into operation from 10.01.1952. This machine was used by Hanns Ulmer Co., a bicycle wholesale.

A NEW ARISTOCRATIC TOY

4. 1890s-1940s. THE GOLDEN YEARS OF THE BICYCLE

In the first century of bicycle evolution bicycles were extremely expensive (one year of salary) and only aristocracy got access to its. Because road infrastructure was in poor condition, cycling could only be played as pure enjoyment and social interactions, in parks or cycling schools for aristocracy. In each early step of bicycle evolution, aristocracy took cycling as a source of amusement...

Britain's first velocipede school was founded by Johnson on the Strand in London in 1818. The craze for hobby-horse riding was short-lived, with few riders after 1820.



Mini-sheet showing on centre and margins several passages of bicycle-related social interactions.



... in fact, the Célérifère, an early bicycle precursor invented in 1790, was usually decorated with carved horse heads, probably because two wheels devices replaced horses as amusement for high class people and children imaginary.



The end of bicycle evolution was coetaneous with Industrial Revolution benefits and the *Belle Epoque*. Aristocracy and elite families could devote themselves to bohemian life-style, including early sport and early tourism ...





... as multitalented Ramon Casas profusely did. Self-portrait "Ramón Casas and Pere Romeu on a Tandem" (1897, oil on canvas, MNAC museum) is one icon of Catalan Culture.



Royal families also sign up for bicycle fashion. It seems that its pleasant life of hunting and playing chess was not enough to fill their 'busy' lifes.

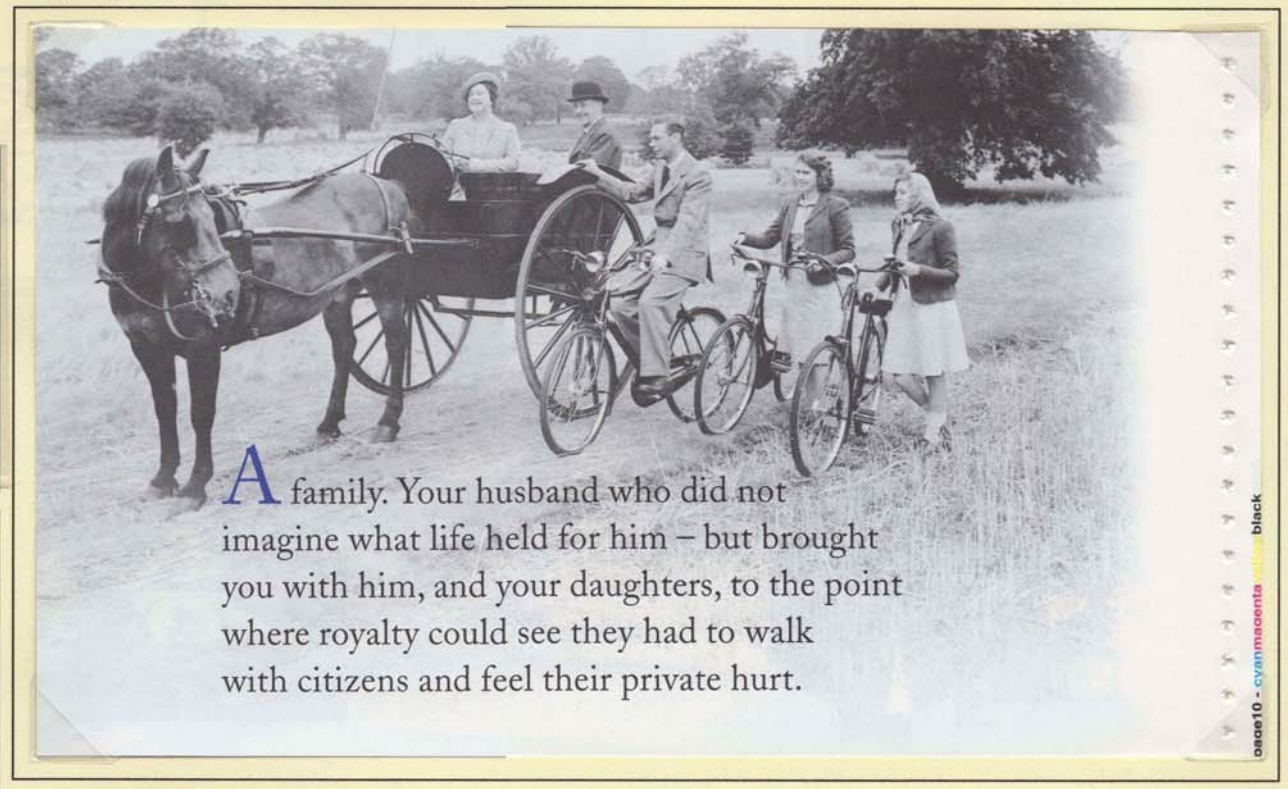


Queen Victoria ordered few Salvo safety tricycles for her family. Salvo model was renamed to Royal Salvo.

GB (1840). Penny Black with Maltese Red Cross postmark. Plate's position: J Column – C Row.







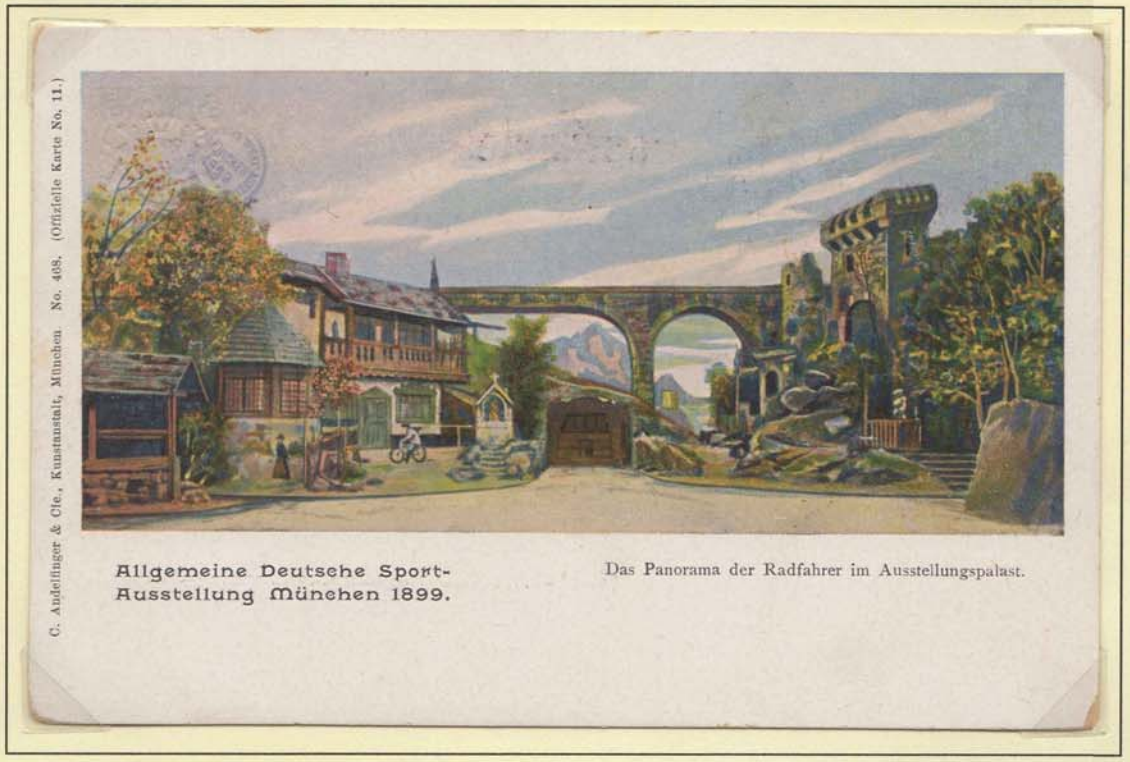
GB (2000). Inner page of Prestige Booklet (cover at 40%).



THE BOURGEOISIE BEGIN TO TRAVEL BY BICYCLE

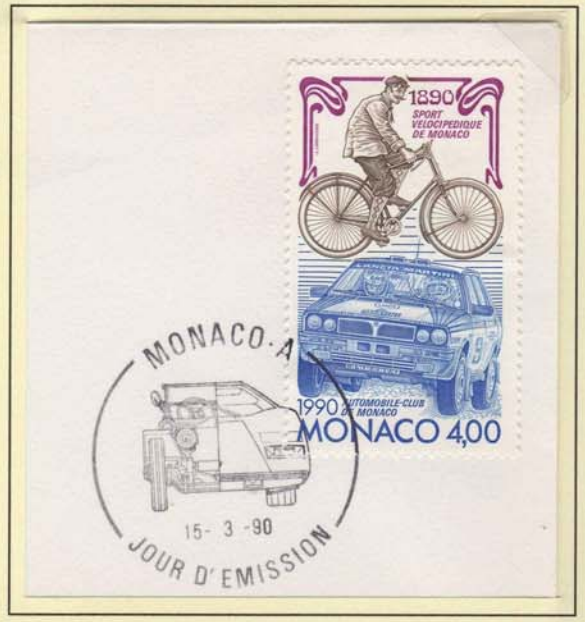
Due to the advent of the bicycle, for first time in History, bourgeoisie got a mean of transport that made people independent with an autonomous means of transport. And the concept of free time raised into our industrial society permitting people to develop personal inquisitiveness. One of these was the knowledge of the surroundings; tourism for leisure was born.

The bourgeoisie began to practice bicycle tourism en masse. First cycling associations and touring clubs appeared in Europe and America with great success. For exemple, by 1898, the League of American Wheelmen organization's membership peaked with more than 100,000 members.



Germany (1899). Unused private stationery card (Bayern State, 5 Pf.) issued by Allgemeine Deutsche Sport to promote his meeting in Munich. Card showing bicycle tourism visiting countryside.

RadClub of Germany joined most of former German cyclists associations.





Germany (2004). Neopost "Portostar" or "Portoprinter" digitally printed meter stamp.

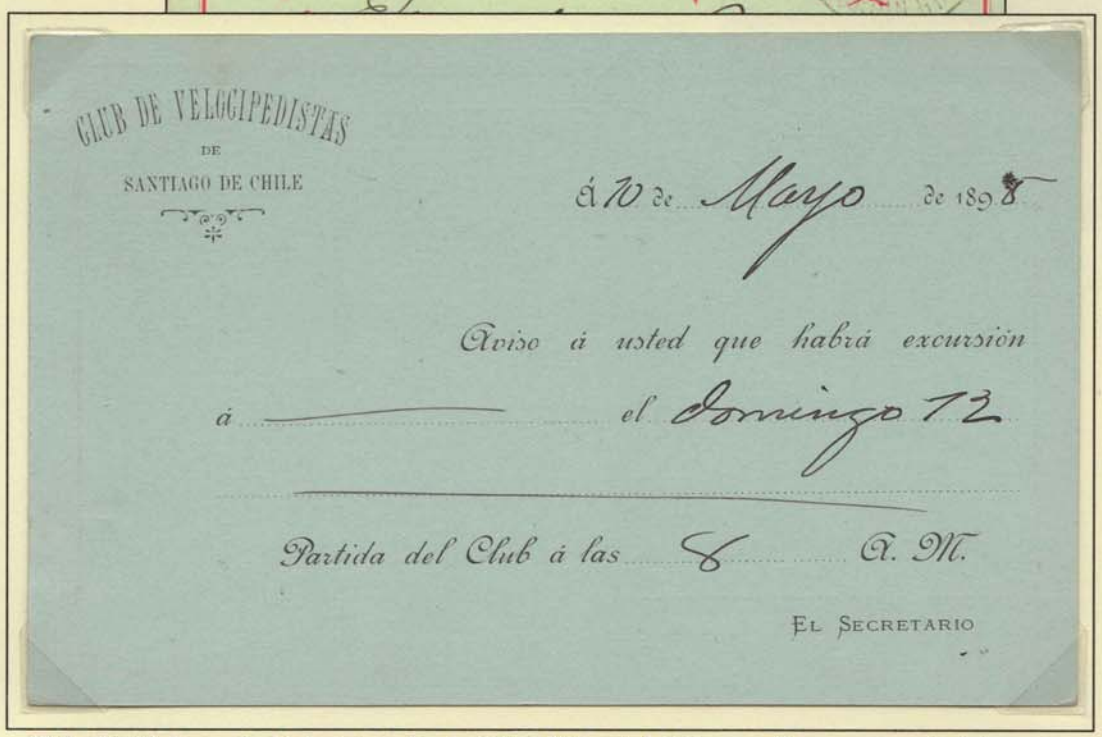
The Touring Club Ciclistico Italiano was founded on 1894 by a group of bicyclists to promote the values of cycling and travel. It published its first maps in 1897. By 1899, it had 16,000 members. Later it lost the word "Ciclistico" being mainly an autotourism club.



Italy (1937). Francotyp "C" meter stamp from T.C.I. to Asciano.

Red ink stain. Front at 80%





Chile (1898). Error. Red ink stain in front of this 1882 postal stationery. Reverse was privately printed by the Chilean Bicycle Club and used to advice members for social outings and trips. 1c, 2c postal stationery and 2c+2c reply card were printed in New York in 1882 by American Bank Note Co. Inland postage fee from 1874 to 1912 was 2c for this kind of letters.





G.B. (2007). Francotyp-Postalia "JetMail" stamp from digital meter.

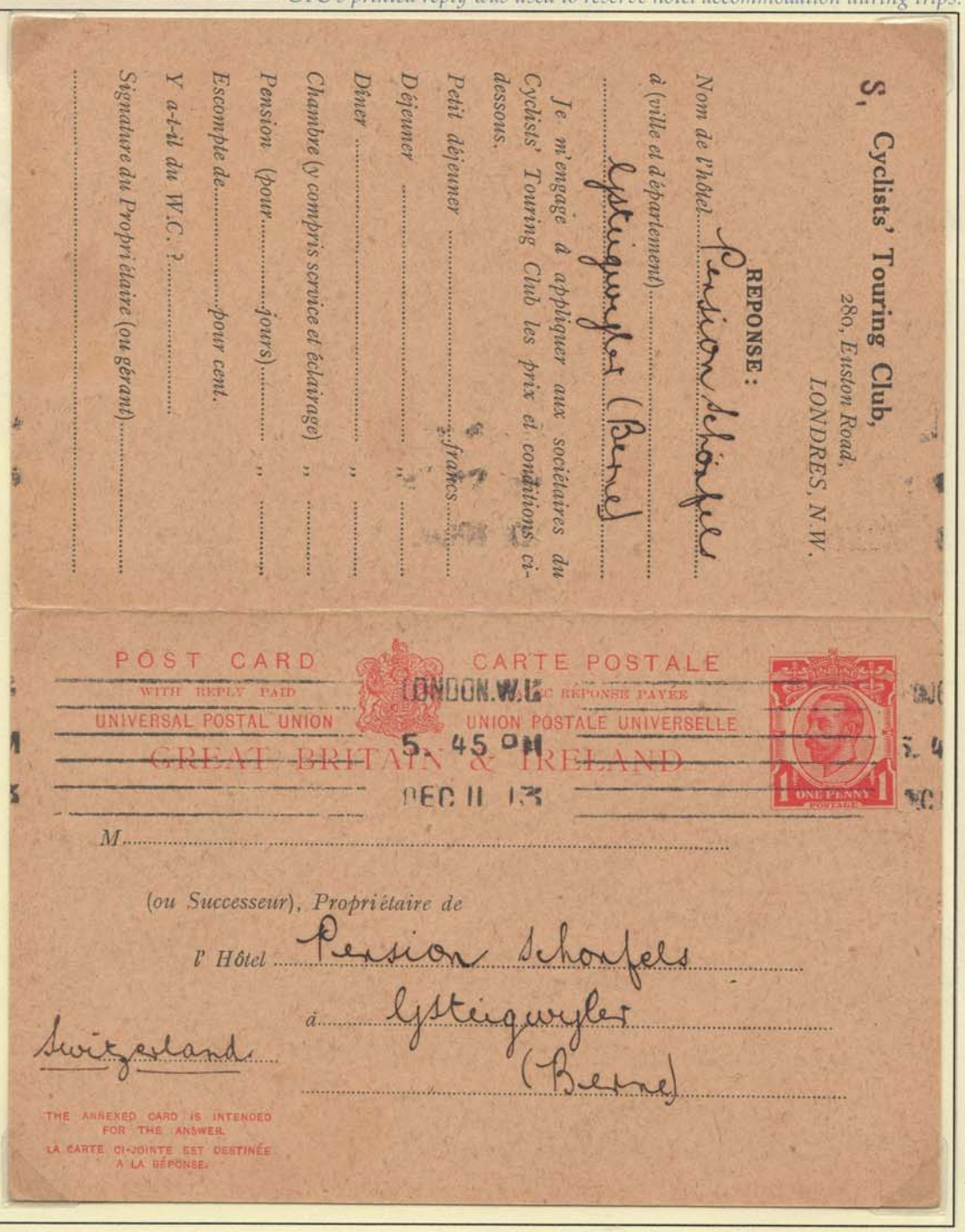
By 1878, recreational cycling was enough established in Britain to lead to formation of the Bicycle Touring Club, later renamed Cyclists' Touring Club. It is the oldest national tourism organisation in the world. Centennial jubilee took place in 1978. CTC inspired creation of French Touring Club, which turned to Fédération Française de Cyclotourisme.



G.B. (1913). Double stationary card with prepaid reply of 1 £ to Switzerland. CTC's printed reply was used to reserve hotel accommodation during trips.



G.B. (1978). Pictorial rubber commemorative postmark of C.T.C. Centenary.





France (1921). Perfin T.C. of French Touring Club. Period of usage: 1902-1938.

T.C.

Membership of the CTC inspired the Frenchman, Paul de Vivie - known as Velocio-, to found what became the Fédération Française de Cyclotourisme, the world's largest cycling association, and to coin the French word cyclo-tourisme. Cycloturing meetings, knowns as "La Velocio", honoring his figure.



WORKERS GET ACCESS TO THE BICYCLE



The first cyclists, often aristocratic or rich, flirted with the bicycle and then abandoned it for the new motor car. It was the lower middle class which profited from cycling and the liberation that it brought. In addition, due to oil shortage after the war, people take its bicycles again.

Henry Ford was chief developer of the assembly line technique of mass production in the Ford Motor Company, converting the automobile from an expensive curiosity into an accessible conveyance.

Ted Crane, founder of Hercules company, was described as 'the Henry Ford of the cycle industry'. He applied assembly line technique for first time in bicycle industry. In 1921 the company produced 20,000 cycles and were the cheapest cycles on the market. Ted Crane had great marketing skills too. His success came from marketing the bicycle as a mode of transport rather than a weekend of fun conveyance. The company used bright yellow delivery vans with the slogan on the side, proclaiming: 'The Best that Money can Buy.'



GB (1937). Perfin's period of usage: 1929-1957



Germany (1933). Hercules company. Komusina type machine meter stamp from its German subsidiary company. Perfin's period of usage: 1929-1957

Mass production and competition brought lower prices. A quality bicycle could be bought for less than $100 (about six months' salary), and the bicycle's popularity soared and increased their use all over the world, The immediate consequence was that bicycles were present everywhere, in each act of our lifes.







When working class gained access to the widespread use of the bicycle, it also used it as a tool in its social and political struggles and demands.









Island (1996). Rear cover of Prestige Booklet.

Til vinstri: Reo-bifreiðar voru burðarásinn á norðurleiðinni um miðja öldina.
LJÓSMYND. ÁRNI BÖÐVARSSON.

Til hægri: Oft var annasamt hjá Bifreiðastöð Akureyrar við komu eða brottför áætlunarbifreiða.
LJÓSMYNDASAFN FORNBÍLAKLÚBBSINS.
LJÓSMYNDARI ÓÞEKKTUR.

On the left: The Reos were the workhorses on the northward route in the middle of this century.

On the right: A bustle of activity generally marked the arrival and departure of scheduled coach services in Akureyri.





When the 'safety' bicycle was introduced in the 1890s, it immediately altered women's social position wherever it was introduced, as it allowed them for the first time to travel unchaperoned, on their own, to wherever they wished.

Due their role in society and the dress code at that time made riding bikes very difficult. However women raised her voices to support certain fair causes that involved his dignity.









"Let me tell you what I think of bicycling. I think it has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. It gives women a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel...the picture of free, untrammeled womanhood."

– Susan B. Anthony
women's rights activist who played a pivotal role in the women's suffrage movement.



The bicycle at the end of 19th century became a symbol of freedom for the feminist movement and was often associated with fair women's struggles. Soon the bicycle became a way of challenging the male chauvinism in society of that time and women emerged who raised the use of the bicycle as a symbol to fight for equality.



The Netherlands (1999). Frama "Sensonic" digital stamp meter.

Bicycle industry turned to this new demand. In 1912, Diamant Werke introduced the "Damenrad" (ladies' bicycle), a new bicycle frame design for ladies, with a top-tube curving down, allowing to step through, instead of over, the bike.

The bicycle also provided a form of exercise for women that demonstrated they could be athletic, as during most of the 19th century women were discouraged from or outright barred from most athletics and athletic competition.





Germany (1899). 5 pf stationary card from Munchen to Leipzig.



Tjejvättern is the largest recreational bike ride in Scandinavia for *women only.*



Specimen (Muster)



GB (1978). Gold color is not placed correctly and Queen head is displaced down.



In a few years, pedestrians, carriages, bicycles and motor vehicles began to mix in the city streets without any regulation. Road coexistence became chaotic and the authorities started to regulate the presence of vehicles on the road.



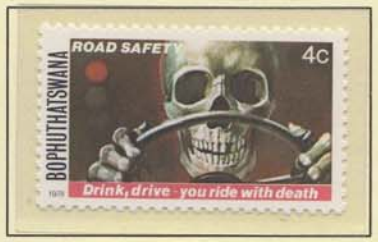
GB (1898). 1/2 p stationery card for inland mail.



France (1947). Havas "G" meter stamp from Dunlop showing all kind of vehicles that were present in the streets at that time.

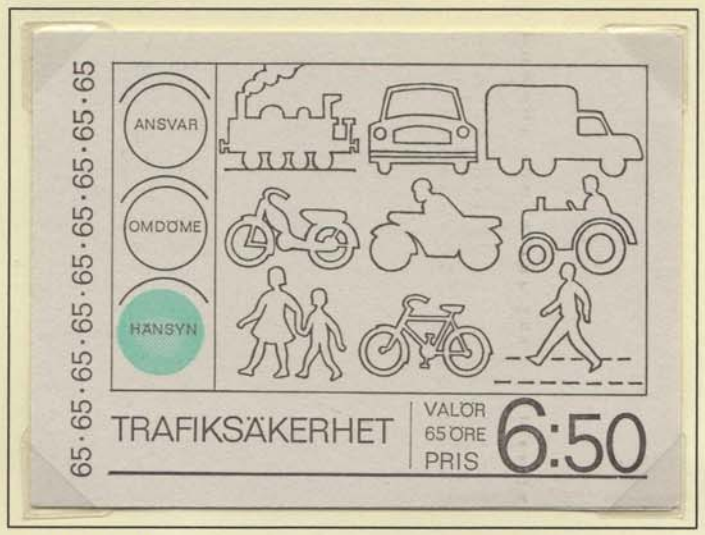


France (1940-1950). Bicycle registration card with some fiscal stamps which were overprint specifically for bicycles control. Here fiscal stamps were used as tax payment, non for postal purpose. Note that this card was used several years and yearly renewal stamps were affixed on previous stamp. Due to war-time, probably this document was mandatory.



First road sign of STOP was introduced in Germany in 1892: an illuminated skull that was scary.





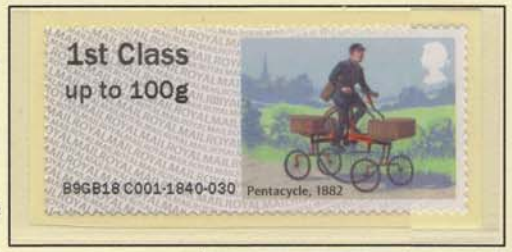
Sweden (1971). Booklet.



The Netherlands (1936). Slogan said: 'Safety Road is a matter for everybody and concerns everybody who runs'.

THE BEGINNINGS OF POSTAL DELIVERY BY BICYCLE

Prior to the advent of bicycle, most common forms of mail delivery was on foot, horse (local routes), and train for longer distances. But with appearance of bicycles, postal administrations quickly introduced bicycle delivery for fast and locals routes.



Stabilized bicycles were used for his first trial.



However distribution systems had gaps that were covered by private services. Most usual at that time was from Germany, where private companies covered local distributution, uncovered by postal administration.



Germany (1895). 4 pf stationery letter from Kiel. Unused. Rates of service were on margin.



First trial was in Paris in 1830, where Draisiennes were used for telegram service delivery. However, winter snow cancelled this first trial.





First trial.

Next French trial was in 1890 using tricycles for parcel delivery in Paris by Messengers Nationaux.

For this service, 25 cts stamps were issued, which contained three parts: the matrix for officers, the stamp itself and the receipt for recipient.





Germany (1887). Bochum (top) and Frankfurt (bottom) local post services.



Germany (1888). Hammonia post service from Hamburg. Regular stamp and misperforations, as well as colour varieties.





Germany (1889,1894). Hammonia post service from Chemnitz. Stationary indicium shows change of local rate along time.

SPECIAL DELIVERY GOES FASTER USING BICYCLES

4.2. THE BEGINNINGS OF POSTAL DELIVERY BY BICYCLE

But where bicycle come out on top was in the special delivery or express delivery. Bicycle efficiency could not (and can't) be overpassed by any other postal transport.



Cuba (1913). Letter from Manicaragua (Sta. Clara) to Habana. Regular letter of 2 ct. up-rated to 12 ct. with 10 ct. messenger stamp due to special delivery service. #85914 and #110 are special delivery register numbers for this letter at origin and final post offices. Reprinted stamp with 'nm'.

In 1885 UPU established the rules for special delivery service by an additional stamp and rate, not valid for regular post.



Cuba (1910). Cutt-off. Regular letter rate, up-rated to special delivery service with a 10 ct. messenger stamp and cancelled with numeral postmark "1" of La Habana.

Cuban 1899 Special Delivery stamp was the first stamp issued by a postal authority showing a bicycle. By these years, Cuba was under US adminitration. This stamp was produced by American Bank Note Co. by american engravers who engraved erroneously immediata instead of spanish inmediata. With a second print this error was corrected.



Cuba (1899). 1st print with 'mm'



2nd print with 'nm'

Express Delivery Service in Panama began in 1926 and in 1929 a set of two stamps were printed. It seems that use of Express Delivery Service was definitively not popular. Number of printed stamps by Waterloo house was excessive for real use of this service. According to data, of these 500.00 stamps 390.000 stamps were used for airmail overprints from 1929 until 1941. So, less than 20% of genuine bicycle stamps were used and aerial post overprint were consequence of unappropriate stamp production in 1929 and its large stock of unused stamps.





Proof with control punch hole from Waterlow and Sons Co.









Regular stamp and several aerial post overprints.



Panamá (1929). Airmail registered letter from Colon (non in Canal Zone) to Nicaragua (22.05.1929) franked with 3rd overprint. First flight Panamá-Nicaragua. Most of 1st fly covers (1929) were unfair and philatelic produced. However later overprints and dates, like in this cover, were genuine postal used.

SPECIAL DELIVERY GOES FASTER USING BICYCLES

US started its special delivery service in 1885 using walking postmen. However, with the strengthening of bicycle as an efficient way of transportation, a bicycle special delivery stamp was issued in 1902, which reprints were needed in 1911, 1916 and 1917 using different perforations and watermarks.



USA (1907). Special delivery letter franked with 1902 stamp, 1st print, perforation 12, ultramarine color.

USA (1917). Special delivery letter franked with 1914 stamp, 3rd reprint, perforation 10, ultramarine color, without watermark.





Color varieties: dark Blue and pale Blue.



Philippines (1953). Misuse of special delivery service; only one stamp is necessary to pay its service. Love letter from a Philippine girl to his USA naval soldier boyfriend recruited in a US navy ship, dated few days ago (11/Feb) to Saint Valentine's Day (14/Feb). It seems that this girl though letter would be quickly delivered if an extra stamp was affixed. Delivery on board (18/Feb) was hard, as stated multiple enrooting postmarks (rear, not shown). 46 cts was a fortune for a Philippine girl; this is love. Special Delivery service in Philippines started in 1947.





Bulgaria (1943). Domestic rate (1 l.) plus 2+2 l. due to express delivery service. Rubber stamp cancellation from Express delivery service including a bicycle mention.

Express Delivery service using bicycle postmen started in Bulgaria in 1933. In 1937 postmark showing a cycling postman was introduced and in 1939 a set of five stamps were issued.



4.2. THE BEGINNINGS OF POSTAL DELIVERY BY BICYCLE

Barcelona Postal Express (1904-1933) was a courier service that operated in the center of Barcelona city issuing its own local stamps and postal marks. Service was operated by cyclists that could deliver mail and parcels in a few minutes.

Two types of postmarks were used. Type-I was a circular datestamp, while Type-II was oval, undated, where a cyclist postman was drawn.



Type-I



Type-II



Barcelona (1904). 10 cts. postcard franked with 1st print (Black ink, rare) and pictorial type-II postmark.

Local stamps were lithographic printed in sheets of 30 different images of some most popular actresses. First print (1904) is rare and it was Black ink printed. Sold out this first print, a second re-print (1905) with Dark Blue ink was done. Most used rate was 10 cts., which was the rate for a post card within city walls (see covers addressed 'Interior'). However range rates raised from 5 cts. to 2 ptas. stamps due to parcel delivery service.



Barcelona (1904). 10 cts. postcard franked with 1st print (Black ink, rare) and pictorial type-II postmark.

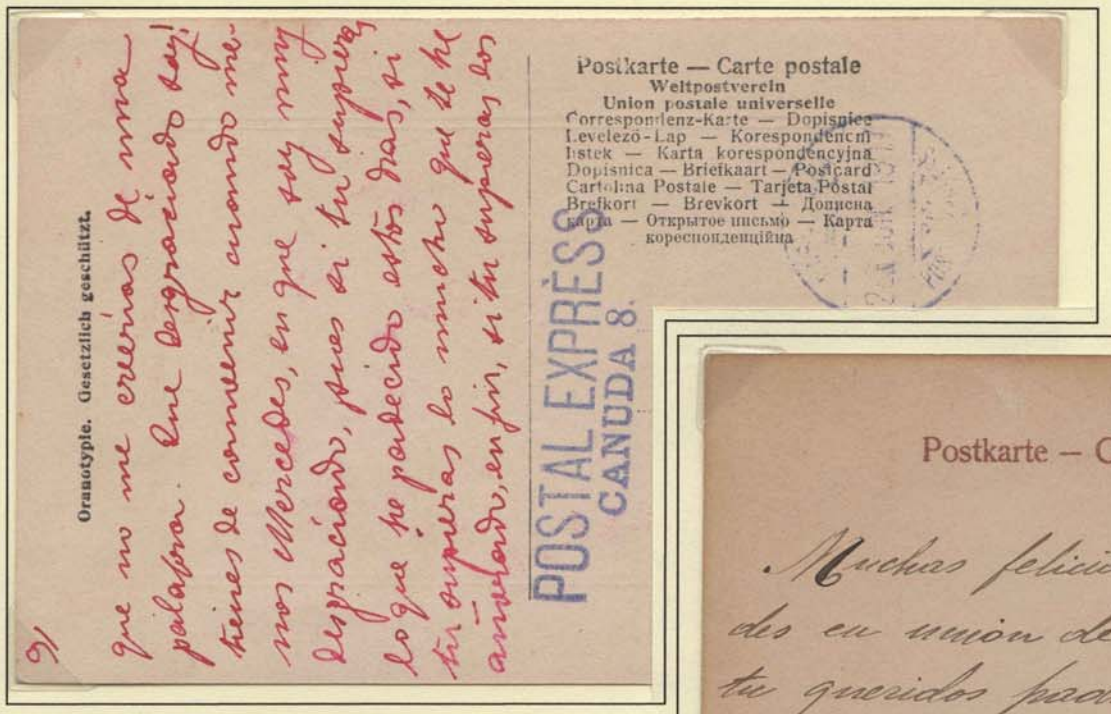


Barcelona (1905). 10 cts. postcard franked with 2nd re-print (Dark Blue ink, most common) and round type-I postmark in Blue.

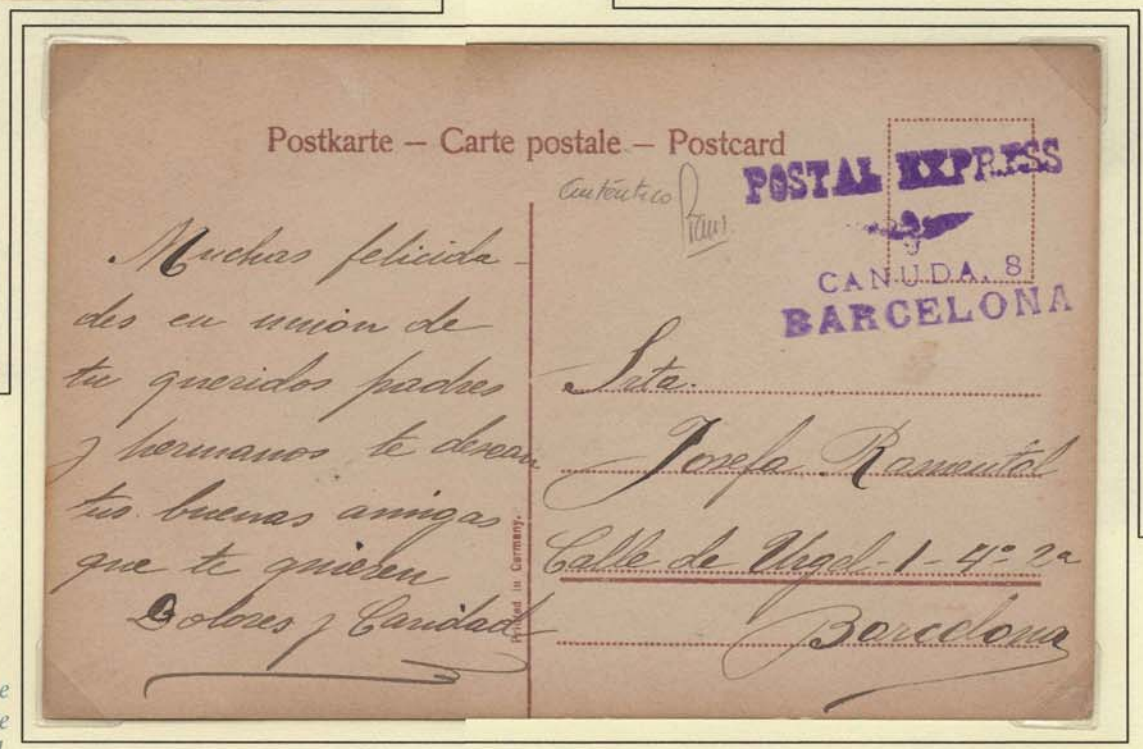
A ministerial decree of October/1906 forbid the use of local mail stamps; consequently, Barcelona Postal Express postmarked its items with its own postmarks both type-I and II and some rubber marks.



Barcelona (1907). Due this postcard was circulated beyond 1906, any stamp was affixed because they were forbidden from 1906. Round type-I blue strike without any evidence of rate applied.



Barcelona (1907). Postcard postmarked with booth type-I strike and lineal rubber mark "POSTAL EXPRESS / CANUDA 8" . Unadressed postcard because this postcard is a part of a long message distributed in more postcards (this one is #16 and not the least); this way to behave show us that this service was really unexpensive and efficient.



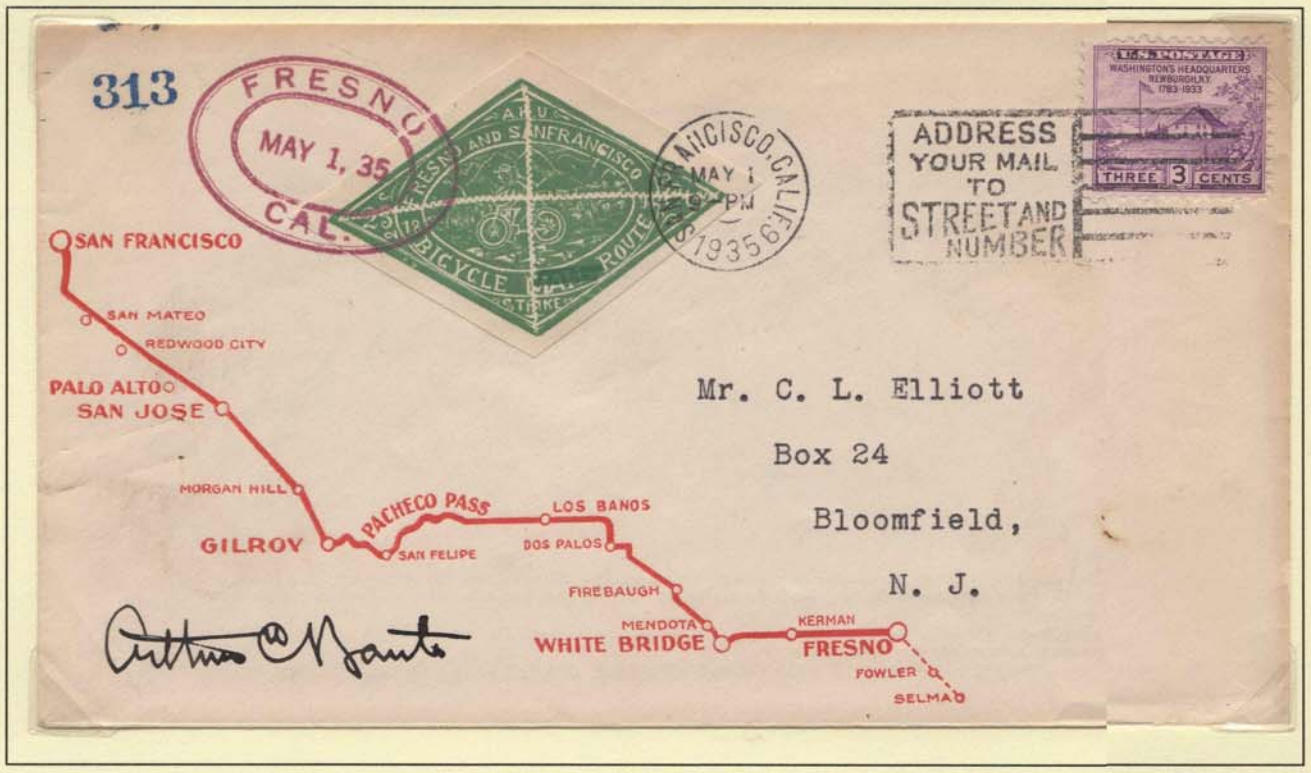
Barcelona (1907). 'Rolling Wheel' Blue strike without any evidence of rate applied and date circulated.

Several additional rubber marks were later introduced, being "POSTAL EXPRESS / CANUDA 8" and "POSTAL EXPRESS / CANUDA 8 / BARCELONA with a rolling wheel" most common used.



Barcelona (1908). Due this letter was circulated beyond 1906 any stamp was afixed. Round type-II blue strike and 'Rolling Wheel' Blue mark without any evidence of rate applied and date circulated. Gracia is now a Barcelona's district, but in those times Gracia was a village few kilometers far.

The first instance of bicycle mail delivery in the U.S. is tied closely to the railroad Pullman Strike of 1894, during which there was a suspension of mail service between many cities. The distance between Fresno and San Francisco is approximately 200 miles, and the mail was carried between the two cities in relays by different riders who had to cover anywhere between 15 to 60 miles.





Fransisco



Francisco
Re-engraved die

USA (1894). Original die was engraved with the spelling error Fransisco instead of Francisco. Die was re-engraved eroding this area to correct S to C, rocks and engraver initials were added and minor engraving errors were also corrected. First Day usage for both on 7th July of 1894. At the end of service, die was defaced with two wavy diagonals. Defaced die was reprinted to jubilee the 40th anniversary of service and some mail carried by cyclists along the former route (letter on left).

The Coolgardie Cycle Express was created (1894) due to the discovery of gold, which resulted in a sudden and booming population around Coolgardie (Australia) in the 1890's; Australian postal system don't covered this area. The Cycle Express was created to meet postal needs around the goldfields. Camels were used too. It delivered the mail until 1896 when the Western Australian postal service began servicing the area.



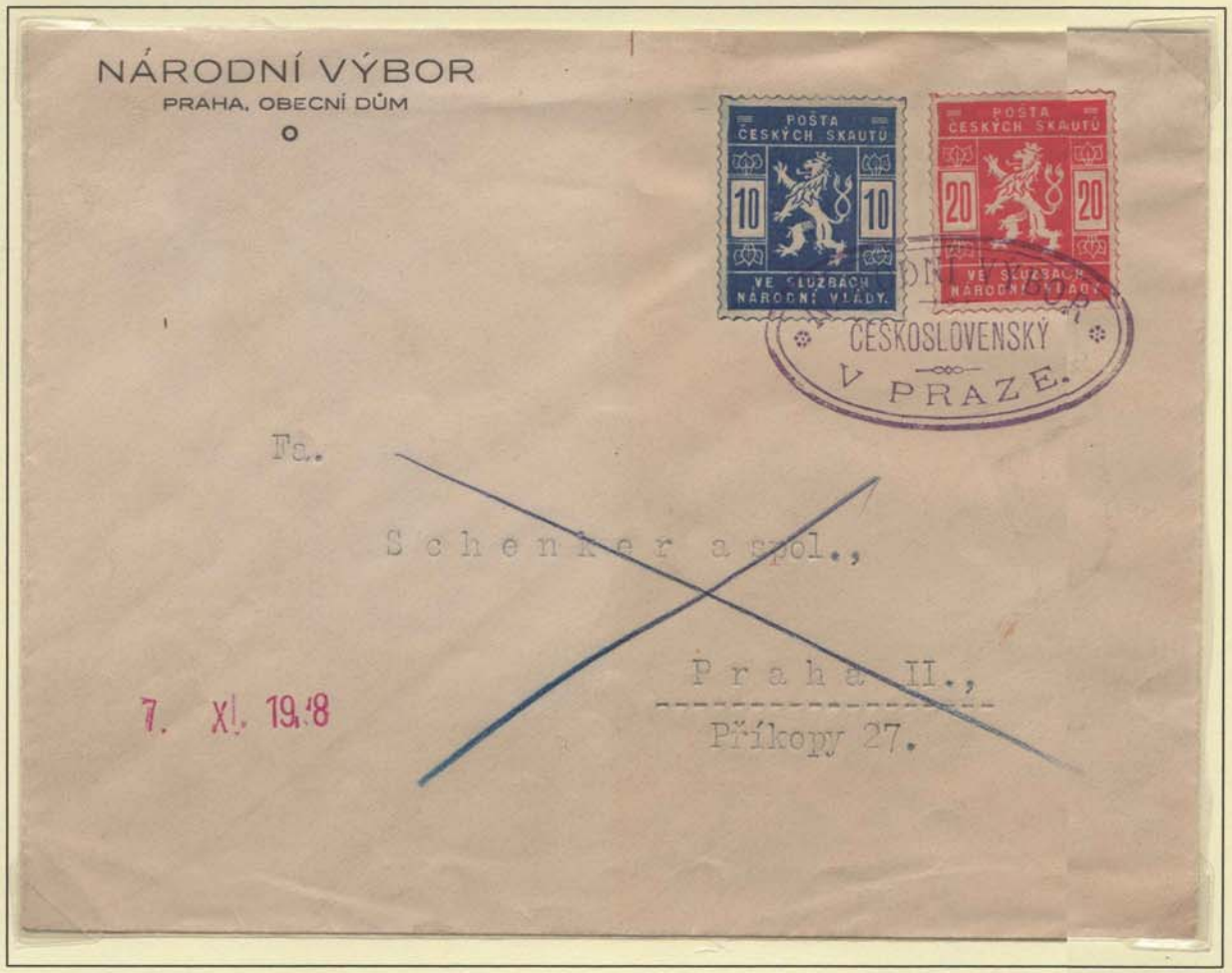
Australia (1894). 1st issue, 2/6 pences.



Australia (1896). 2nd issue. Set of 3.



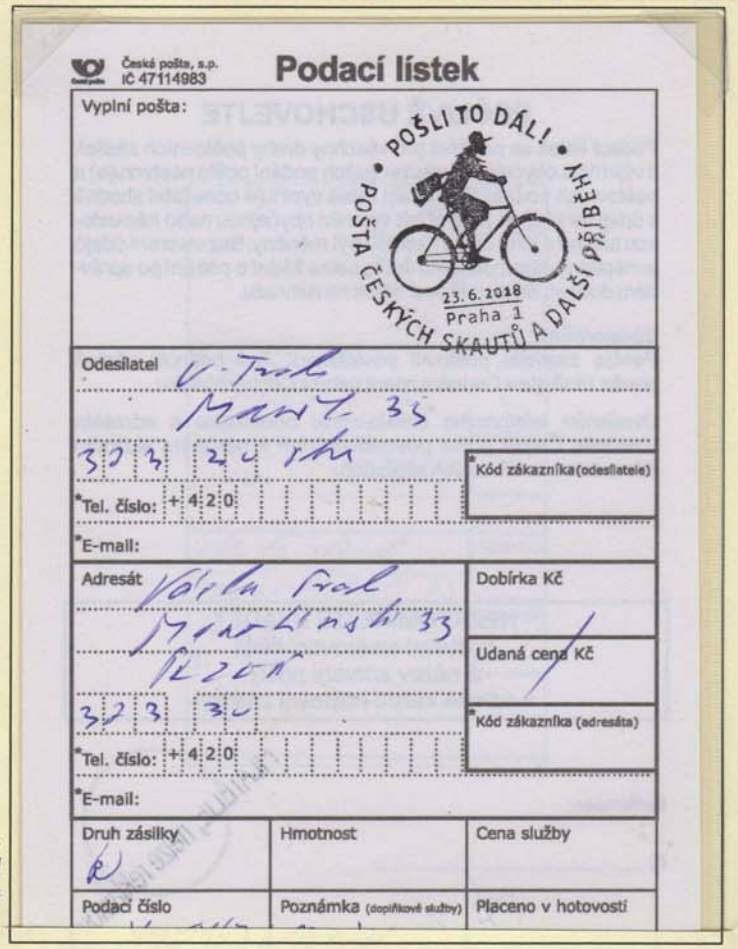
4.2. THE BEGINNINGS OF POSTAL DELIVERY BY BICYCLE



Czechoslovakia (1918). Czech scout mail. According Pitermann classification: authentic stamps, authentic cachet and probably delivered letter but without certification. Letter circulated on first day of service (07.11.1918) from the National Committee (printed cover from Národni Výbor), addressed to Prague city center, with a genuine postmark from National Committee (even though is not most common postmark). Stamps -typogravure, plate with perforations and embossed, all made in one impression- were issued for city centre (10h, 30.000 produced) and outside city centre (20h, 50.000 produced). Rate for this letter should be 10h (city centre); however rates were not clear for end users and double franking stamps were also usual, probably non-philatelic prepared cover. Cover letters were returned to sender as a delivery receipt. Other common marks can be not necessary present in all letters, as here.

During the first days of Independence of the Czechoslovak Republic (28th October 1918) an auxiliary Scout Post Service was created in Prague to assist the National Committee in order to ensure trust communications without Austrian secret service and post officers influence.

Between the 7th and the 25th November 1918 (first-last day), official correspondence from and to the Members of the National Committee, the Police, different organizations and government stations, as well as individual personalities was guaranteed a rapid, secure and discrete delivery made on foot or with a bicycle by the Scouts.

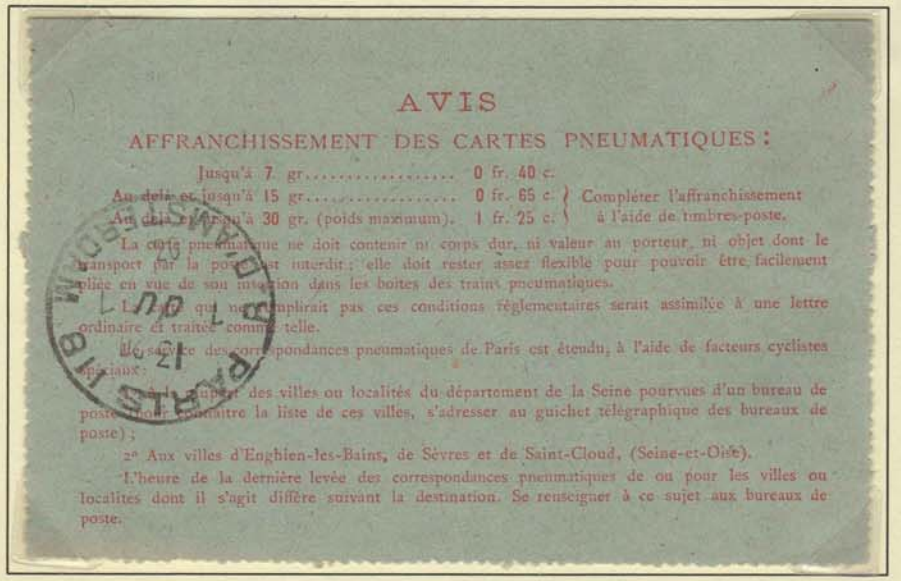


Czech Republic (2018). Commemorative rubber pictorial postmark on registered receipt depicting a scout messenger.





The Paris pneumatic post was a pneumatic tube message-carrying service that operated from 1866. It was established because of the popularity of the electric telegraph and its fast communication, which was improved by fast delivery to addressee, using bicycles too, as pneumatic forms stated in the text.





France (1920, 1922, 1926). Three different stationery forms for pneumatic post where the use of bicycle was mentioned.

The industrial revolution had led to a more sedentary lifestyle for many people and there was an increased awareness that this had the potential to be harmful to health. This was a key motivating factor for the forming of a physical culture movement. But not was easy for cycling; some late-19th-century doctors warned that — especially for women — cycling could lead to a terrifying medical condition: bicycle face, "characterized by a hard, clenched jaw and bulging eyes".





(Germany, 1899). German General Sports Exhibition held in Munich in 1899. Printed-to order Stationery card to promote the German General Sports Exhibition in Munich in 1899. Used on 06.06.1899 from Muenchen to Karlsruhe.

An allegory of Sport and its future is shown: a woman as a symbol of victory taking care for future athletes, shown around her as young children with various sports equipment (shooting, horseback riding, weightlifting, tennis, polo, cycling, fishing, ...).



With the popularization of the practice of the sport, clubs and groups of practitioners quickly emerged and were in need to self-organize at national level in order to promote activities and to structure their competitions. Thus emerged the nuclei of crystallization of what would later be national federations.



UCI leads international Cycling Sport organization since 1900.

The Allgemeine Radfahrer-Union was the founding nucleus of the German Federation (BDR, Bund Deutscher Radfahrer) as well as the Union Vélocipéde de France (U.V.F.) was of the French Cycling Federation.



Bavaria (1901). Postal stationary card, printed to private order announcing the 16th Congress of the Allgemeine Radfahrer-Union. 5 pfenning Green, used on 08.07.1901.





France (1927). Slogan pictorial postmark, advertising a cycling event in Reims organized by Union Vélocipéde de France. Used on 26.07.1927.

The first bicycle race is popularly accepted to have been a 1,200-meter race on 31.05.1868 at the Parc de Saint-Cloud, Paris. It was won by Englishman James Moore.



Cuba (2018). Pictorial rubber commemorative postmark from Matanzas given the same day (31th May) in which the race was held in 1868, but exactly 150 years later



1896 was a huge year in bicycling history; it marked the first time that competitive cycling appeared in the Olympic games.

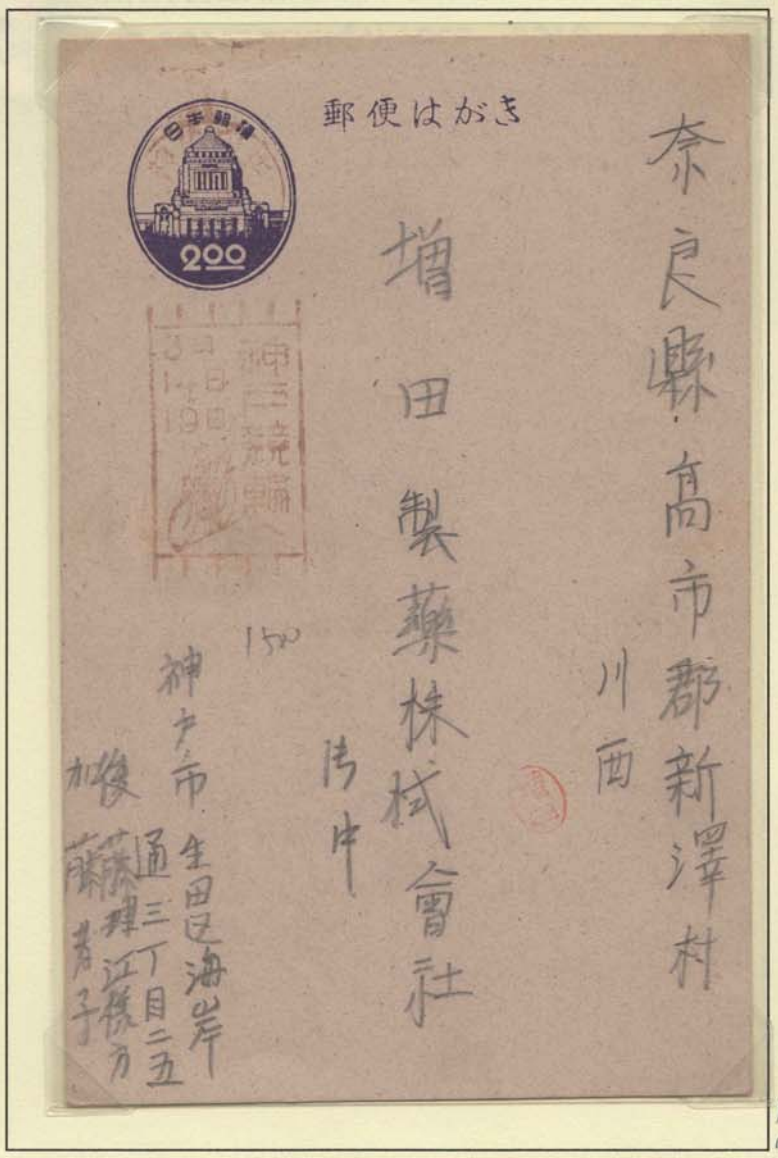
After the success of the 1896 Games, the Olympics entered a period of stagnation which threatened its survival. The Olympic Games held at the Paris Exposition in 1900 and the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at St. Louis in 1904 were little more than side shows.



The Cycling Track is the oldest modality of cycling since it was easier to build a track than to have a paved road network in conditions. As early as 1870, track races in England were regularly attracting large crowds. The riders competed on wooden indoor tracks which were knows as "Cycling cathedrals". Such tracks ensured the event could be competed all year round.



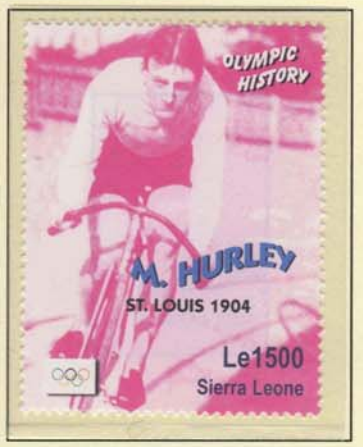
France (1904). FIRST thematic cycling cancel, corresponding to the winter velodrome (Vel d'Hiv) in Paris during the Youth Festival held in this venue and organized by Le Matin newspaper. Perfin M related to Le Matin newspaper, period of usage 1903-1908. Used on 19.06.1904.



Japan (1950). Rubber postmark on postal stationery announcing a Keirin race in Kobe city.



Aristidis Konstantinidis. First Cycling Olympic champion.



Marcus Hurley was the winner of the most track events, and most riders and all podium places were from the USA.



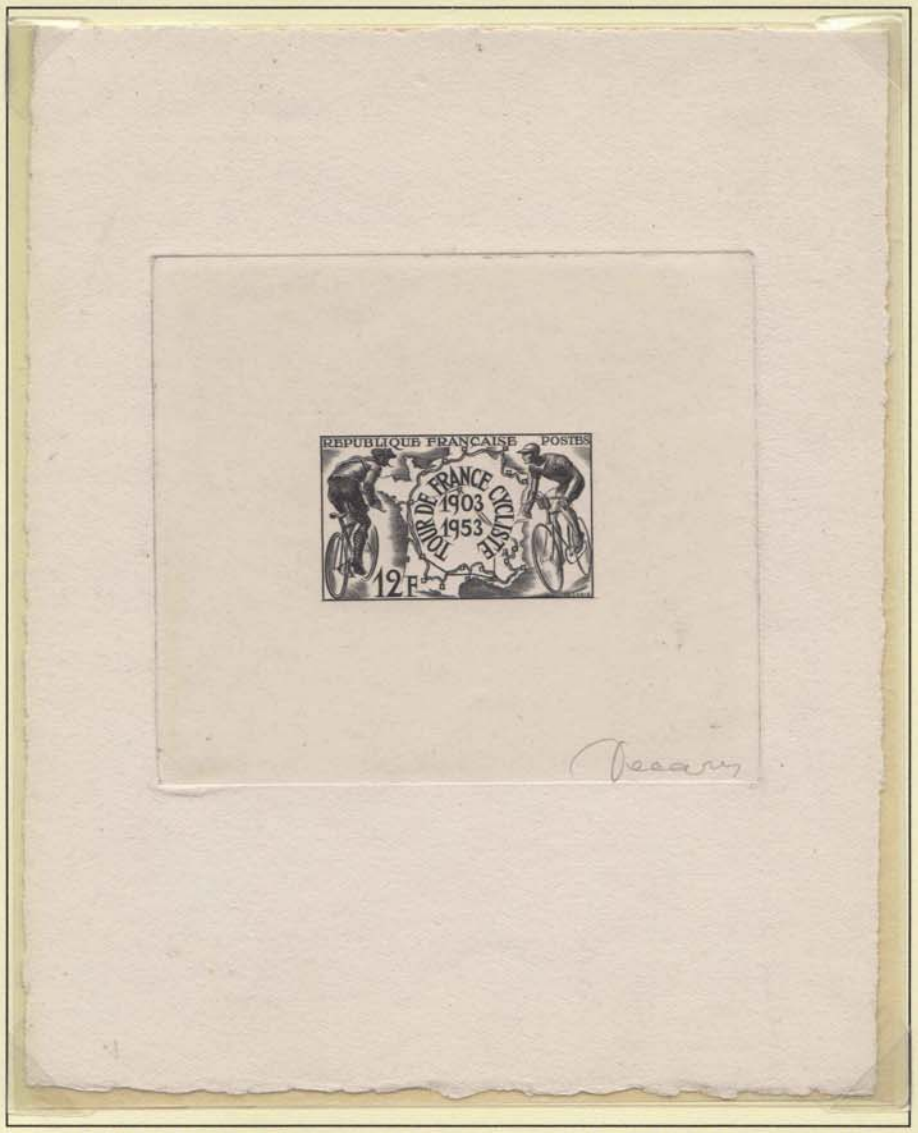
At the beginning they were literally inhuman endurance races of 6 uninterrupted days. The first race was held at Madison Square Garden in NY in 1893 and the winner gone down 2,575 Km riding 18 hours per day. Early track races attracted crowds of up to 2,000 people. The big prizes money favored the first cases of doping.



In some countries, Track races convert velodromes into a social fest were spectators rest there all night long.

AN EPIC ERA

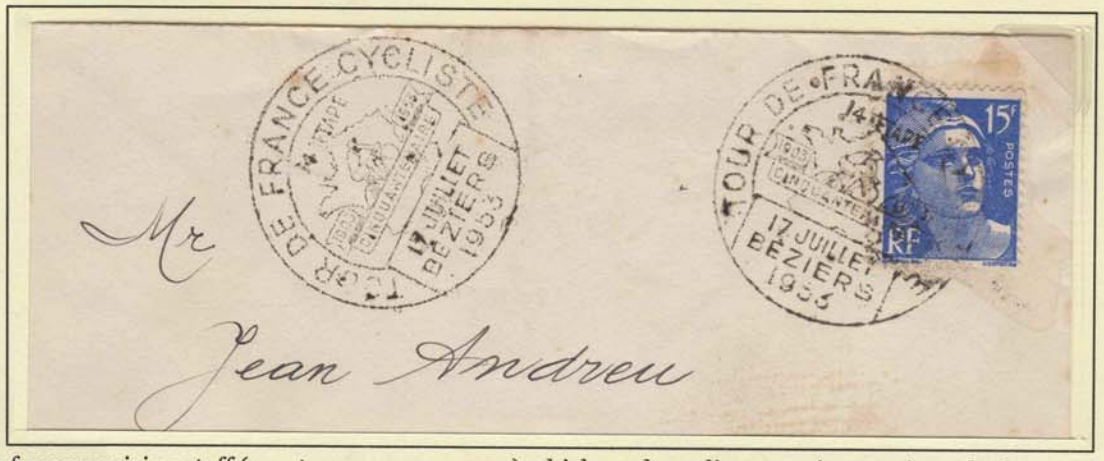
Road racing in its modern form originated in the late 19th century. It began as an organized sport in 1868. The sport was popular in the western European countries, and some of those earliest road bicycle races remain among the sport's biggest events, like Le Tour, Il Giro or La Volta a Catalunya as well as Classic Races as Paris-Roubaix or Tour of Flanders.



France (1953). One of 23 engraver's die proof, printed in Black solid color, signed by the engraver Jean Decaris. Stamp issued to commemorate the 50th edition of Le Tour.

Paris-Roubaix
The Hell of the North





Races were business for orgarnizing staff (sport press newspapers) which made cycling an epic sport introducing marathoning stages of cobbled roaads or in poor condition, as well as high Pyrenees and Alps mountain ranges since 1910s.



France (1959). Machine cancellation type Havas "M" used on 05.08.1959.



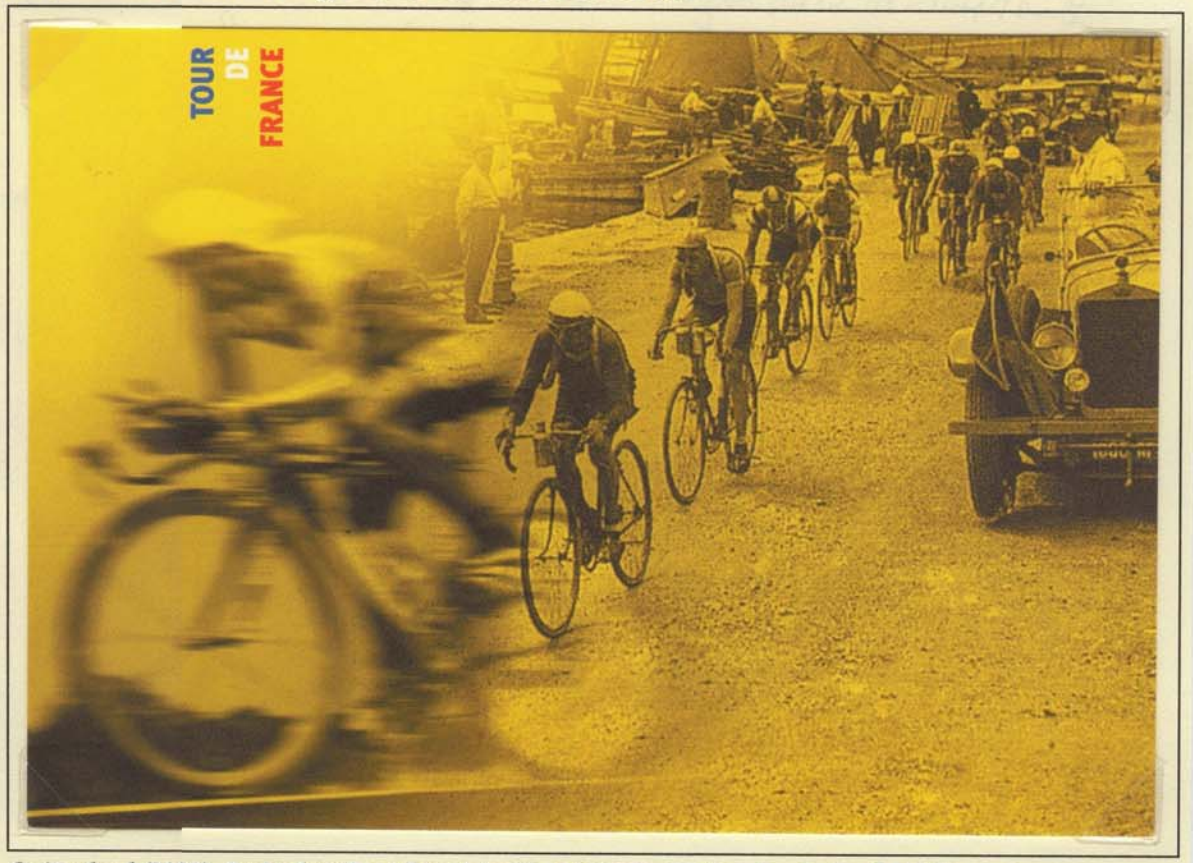








France (1953). Regular stamps and several imperforate color proofs and progressive color proofs with color control on margin of the commemorative stamp of the 50th anniversary of Le Tour. From the original engraving a black test was done to detect errors in the matrix and, later, various color tests, from the basic colors to different color combinations were done too.



Switzerland (2000). Paid value (Taxe Perçu) imprint stationary postcard exclusive for UCI's postage.

THE ROLE OF THE BICYCLE IN WARS

4.4. BICYCLES REPLACE HORSES IN WARS

Back in the 1880s, when two wheeled steeds with pneumatic tires were state-of-the-art technology, the military saw their usefulness in traveling quickly and silently over rugged terrain. Armies worldwide, from Allied to Axis, adopted such innovations as folding bicycles. Bicycles eventually replaced horses, even as they were in turn superseded by their motorized counterparts.



The folding bicycle was designed to make bikes more portable. Military troops had begun using bicycles for scouting missions, so the need for a more portable and easy to carry bicycle was great.





France (191?). Military franchised letter from a non-bicycle section of French Army. This kind of letters were free for soldiers and it cost defrayed by private companies like Dunlop in this case, which shows great performance of his tires in war field, one of the reasons for the introduction of bicycles in army corps.



Belgium (1921). Military post with postal franchise of the Cyclist Battalion of the 2nd Cavalry Division.

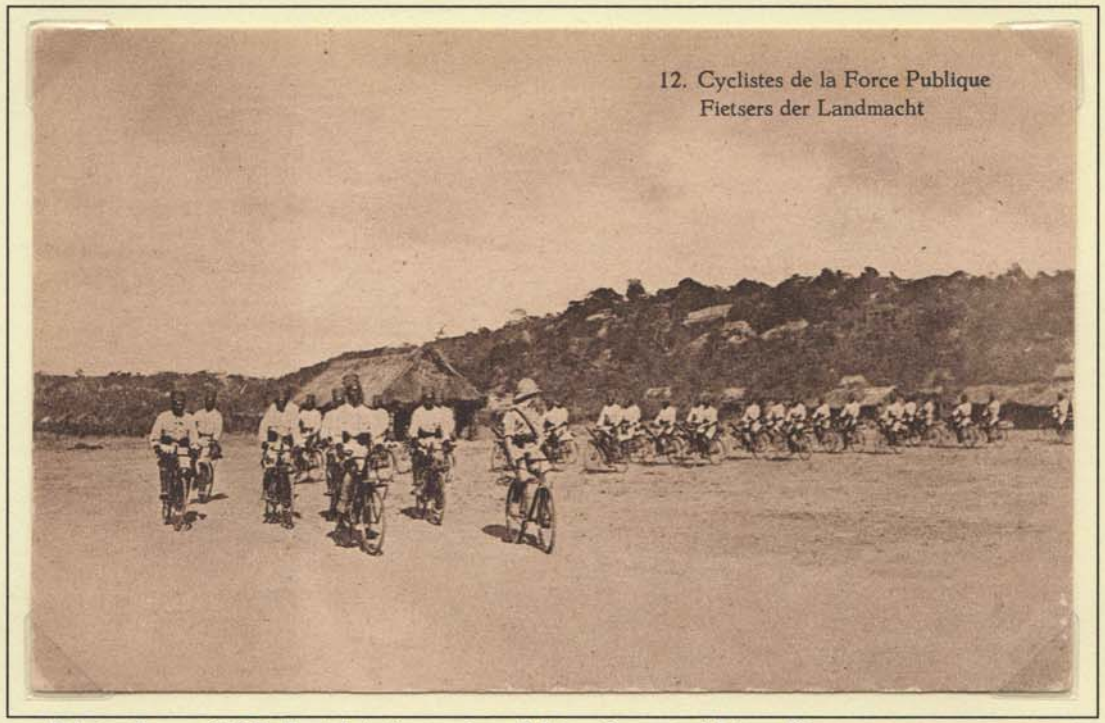


Italy (1918). Censored militar post with franchise of 2nd bicycle company of 7th battalion of Sharpshooter.



Germany (1916). Feldpost letter with militar franchise of 3rd bicycle battalion.

The first known use of bicycles in actual combat took place during the Jameson Raid (a failed raid against the South African Republic in late 1895 by a British colonial statesman and his troops) in which cyclists were used as messengers. In the Second Boer War (1899-1902), military cyclists were primarily used as messengers and scouts.

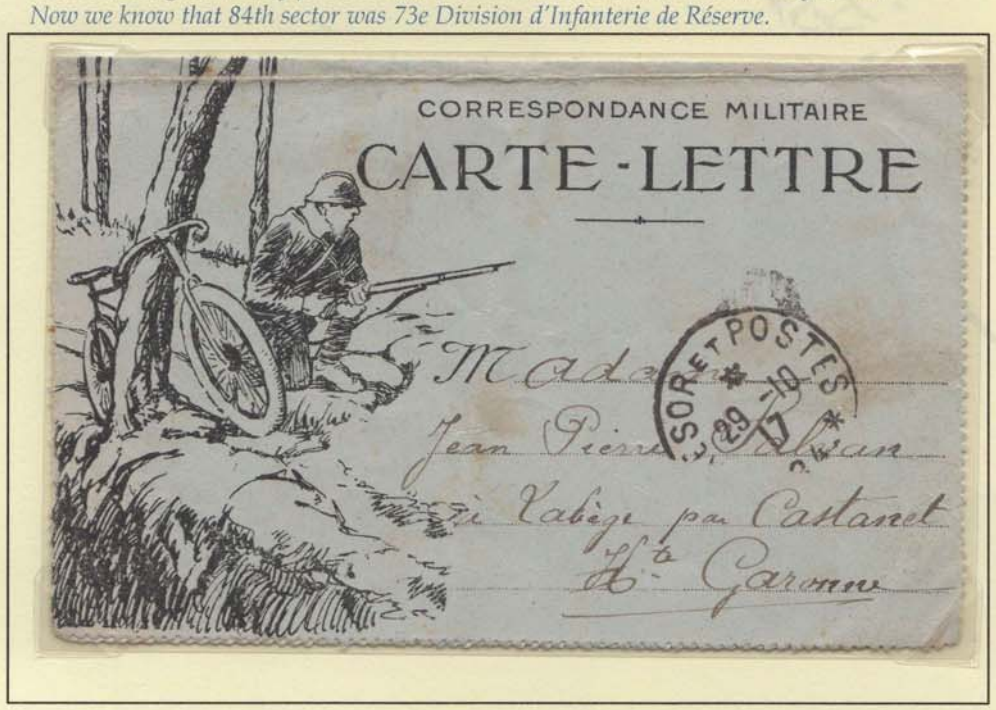


Belgian Congo (1927). Postal stationery from Belgian Congo to Metropoli showing native bicycle troops. Indicia side reduced at 50% (right).



Finally, a well developed, useful and robust bicycle played its key role at the beginning of WW1, before the rise of aerial war, tanks, trenchs and chemical war.

*France (1917). Military post with "Tresor et Postes * 84" 'round postmark with star' from 84th sector on semi-official military post letter. Each soldier received a letter or postcard daily, free of cost and free of postage. From middle 1914, all military post by this kind of stationery (easy to be censored) were redirected from military field post bureau via 'Bureau des Tresor et Postes' in Paris, to be redirected to other military sector or to civils by La Poste. This Bureau managed military post between sectors whose location was a military secret. Now we know that 84th sector was 73e Division d'Infanterie de Réserve.*



The Siege of Mafeking -during the Boer War in the Cape of Good Hope (South Africa)- started on October 1899 and it lasted 217 days, having been ended on May 1900.

On 9 April 1900, to keep up morale, Baden-Powell set up a local Bicycle Post to enable the troops to communicate with each other. Local post was intended mainly from Mafeking to the Brickfields, where the Cape Police, etc., were stationed, about 1 Km far.

Due to shortage of stamps and in order to assure postal operations during the siege, Colonel Baden-Powell ordered at the outset the overprint of the existing entire supply of stamps with the "MAFEKING BESIEGED" overprint together with new values. When this stock was finished, he ordered the issue of two new stamps for local postal use only.

The 1d design showed Sergeant-Major Goodyear of the Cyclist Cadet Corps riding on his bicycle. The 3d value depicted a portrait of Colonel Baden-Powell himself, fact that angered Queen Victoria because the absence of any reference to his person, always present in British imperial postage. The ferroprussiate process was used to produce both values.



"Mafeking Besieged" Overprint.



Dark blue.





Pale blue.



Mafeking's (Cape of Good Hope) regular postmark

This Mafeking set was the first bicycle stamp (1900), being the starting point of Cyclophilately.

In addition, Baden-Powell wrote his experience leading cadet troops which were also read by boys and was an inspiration for the Scout Movement. He was the founder of the Scout Movement, and this set is also the starting point for Scout Philately.











The composition of the bicycle infantry regiments of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy at the time of the Great War consisted at first of a sole bicycle battalion. Later 4 Honvéd bicycle companies were added. Additionally a Landsturm bicycle battalion was formed. By 1918 three bicycle battalions were in existence: Nr.1 and Nr.2, the latter the former Landsturm bicycle battalion as well as an Honvéd bicycle battalion formed from the original Honvéd bicycle companies.



Austria (1916). Feldpost letter with militar franchise of 3rd Landstrum (Infantry) bicycle battalion from 1st company.

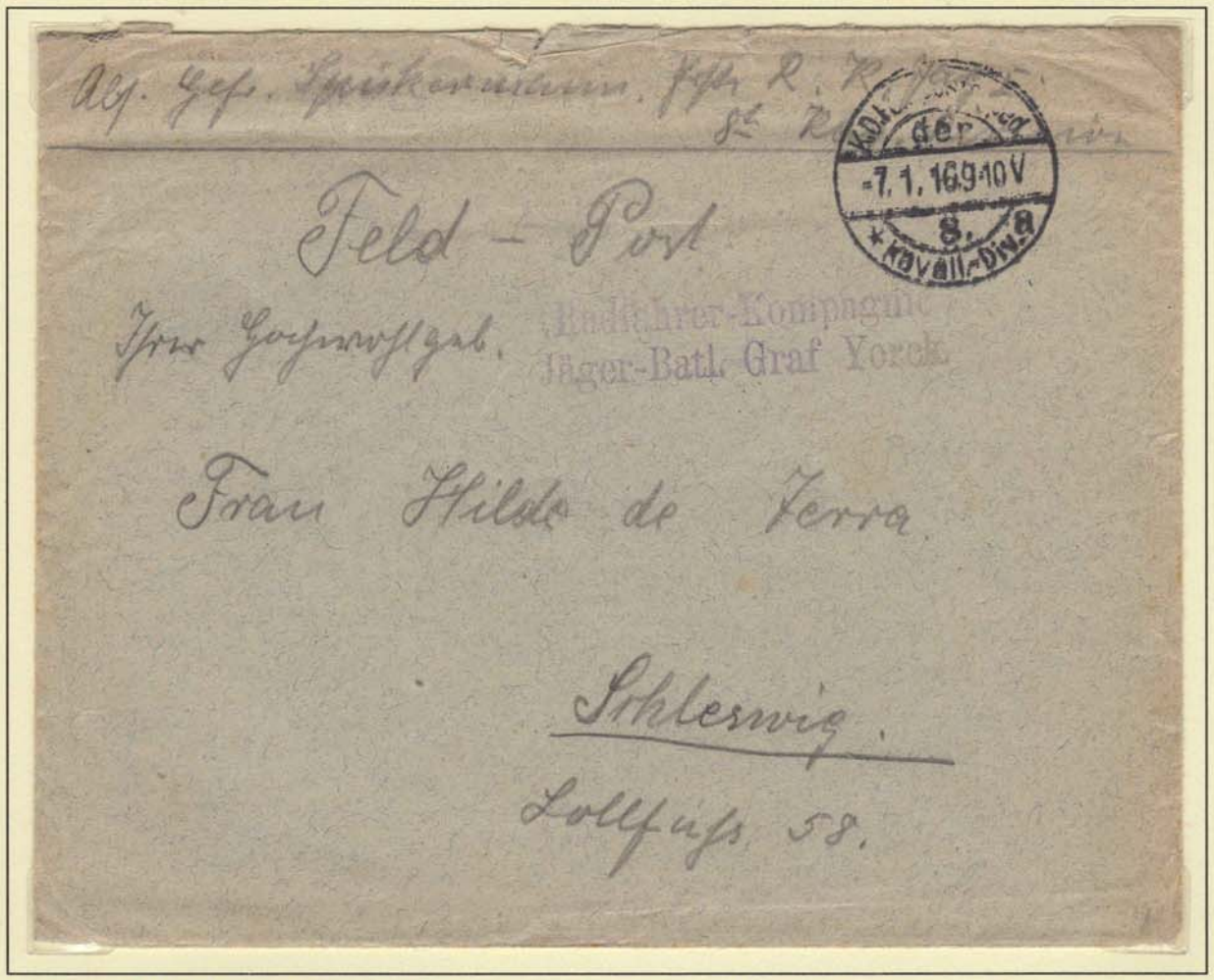


Austria (1915). Censored militar feldpost of a cycling company of 11th hunter battalion.

German Army Jäger battalions (light infantry) each had a bicycle company (Radfahr-Kompanie), and they proved so useful that additional cycle-mounted units were formed during the conflict, bringing the total to 80 companies at the outbreak of the war. A number of these were formed into eight Radfahr-Bataillonen (bicycle battalions).

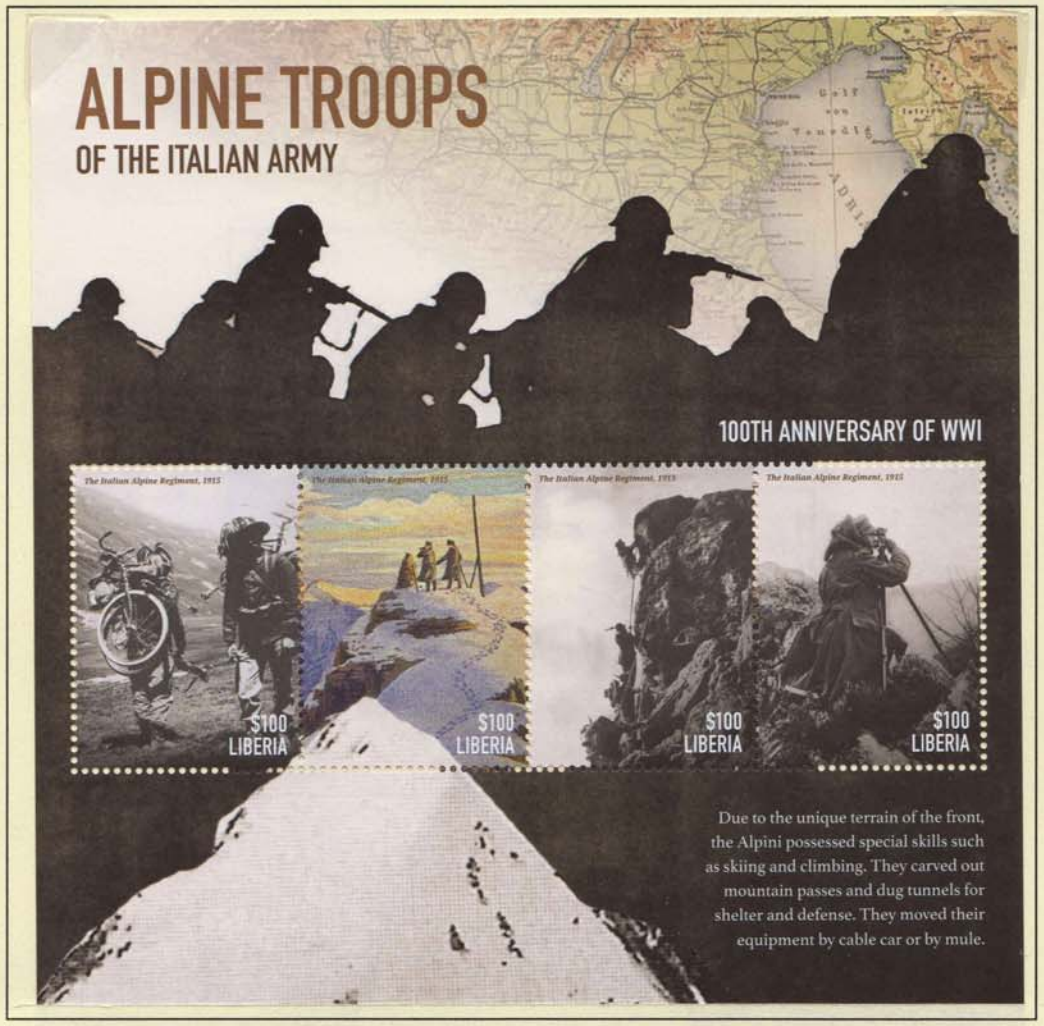


Germany (1917). Feldpost letter with militar franchise of 2nd Jäger bicycle company.



Germany (1916). Feldpost letter with militar franchise of Graf Yorck's Jäger Bicycle Company and postmark of its superior 8th Cavalry Division.

The Italian Bersaglieri (light infantry units) expanded their established role as fast-moving light infantry through the extensive use of bicycles from the 1890s onwards. They were very useful due to the unique mountain terrain of Alpine front of war.



Italian Bersaglieri with folding bicycles strapped to their backs.



Italia (1917). Letter from 4th battalion of Bersaglieri Ciclisti (blue postmark and printed logo on rear) to Vercelli (arrival postmark two days later on rear). For unknown reason (private use?) this letter was not circulated by miltar post but by regular post mail (illegible postmark on 2x10ct and arrival postmark).



Italy (1918). Censored militar post letter with blue franchise postmark of 8th Bersaglieri bicycle company.

Enrico Toti was a young one-legged guy due to a workplace accident as a railway worker. Non-conformist with his disability, he discovered the bicycle as a way to overcome his situation and he started to travel around Europe and Africa with his bicycle. When WWI started he reached the front of war as a volunteer and there he joined Bersaglieri Ciclisti. He died heroically in combat, becoming an Italian War Hero. Fatally wounded in a clash, he hurled his crutch at the enemy. Before falling on the ground he shouted: "I do not die!". This gesture became iconic in Italy and reproduced everywhere, in a 1934 stamp too.





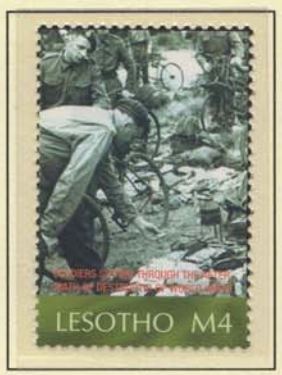
He was posthumously awarded the Gold Medal of Military Valor (Italy's highest award for valour) and two Italian submarines were named with his name. One of them is preserved in an Italian technological museum.

The British Army had cyclist companies in its divisions, and later two whole divisions became cyclists: 1st and 2nd Cyclist Divisions.

Due to changes in war strategies (from Napoleonic concept at start of the war to aviation and heavy armament at the end) the Corps was disbanded in 1920; by 1922 all remaining Territorial cyclist battalions had been converted back to conventional units.









India (1924). Telegram with several advertising, including a Singer one.

Singer (established in 1874 in Coventry) provided bicycles to British army during WWI. Due to earnings of this contract, they obtained enough founds to develop his car industry after the war, which was very successful. Singer Motor Co was the first motor manufacturer to make a small economy car in UK.



B.S.A. (Birmingham Small Arms) began in June 1861 in Birmingham manufacturing guns. In 1880 BSA branched out into bicycle manufacture. During the WWI, the company returned to arms manufacture and greatly expanded its operations. BSA produced rifles, Lewis guns, shells, bicycles, motorcycles and, through Daimler, aero engines, aircraft and other vehicles for the war effort as well as machine tools.

The Netherlands (09.05.1925). BSA authorised advertising on postal stationery. These cards were issued from 1924 - 1926 in aid of the "Dorus Rijkers Sea Heroes Fund" for retired life-savers which received 5ct per card (see bottom of the card). BSA advertisent said: "The Ideal. BSA Bicycles and Motorbikes fitted with Terry Saddle"

In France, several experimental units were created, starting in 1886. They developed folding bicycles, that could be collapsed and carried slung across the backs of their riders, from an early date. By 1900 each French line infantry and chasseur battalion had a cyclist detachment, intended for skirmishing, scouting and dispatch carrying. In the years prior to WWI the availability of an extensive network of paved or gravel roads in western Europe made military cyclists appear a feasible alternative to horse mounted troops; on the grounds of economy, simplicity of training, relative silence when on the move and ease of logistical support.

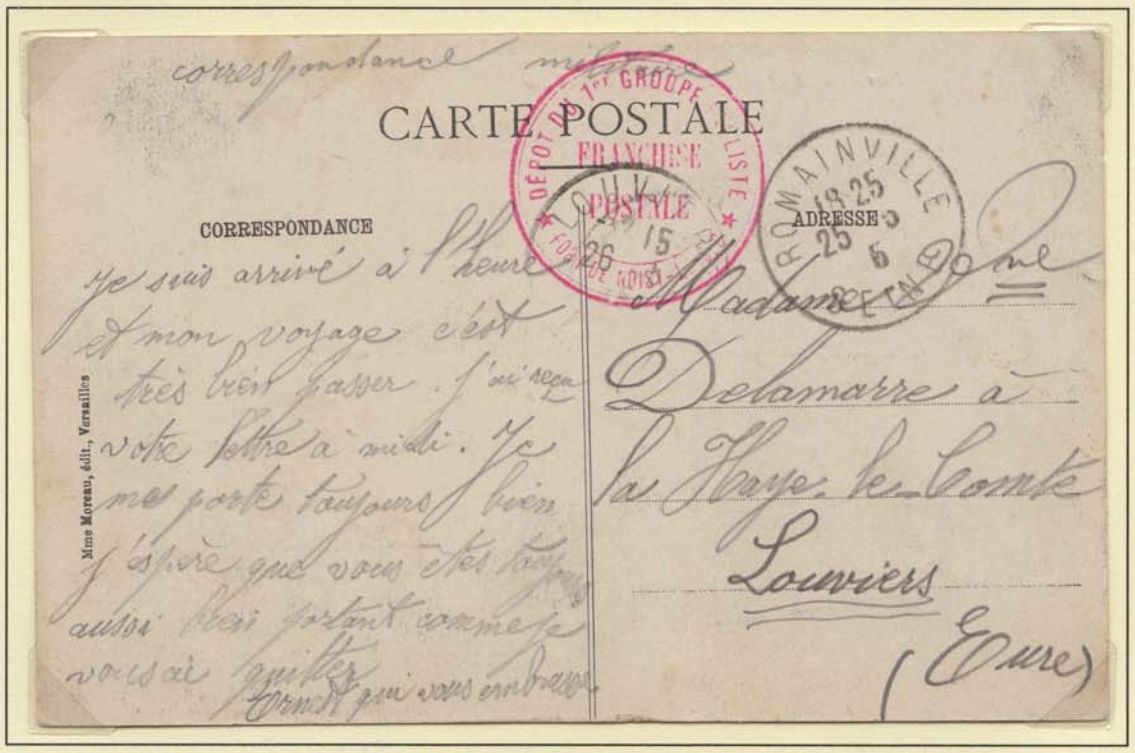




France (1914). Military franchise of a 7th Bicycle Group depot, with transit postmark in Orleans and arrival postmark from Dordogne.

France (1917). Military franchise of a Bicycle Group depot of 1st Calvary Division of 20th Infantry Battalion, sited in Fort de Noisy (Seine) to Vincennes (rear arrival postmark 2 days later) via Romainville.

Their role was to assist their own cavalry and provide them infantry combat capabilities against the enemy cavalry and infantry. These groups were used in the borders battles and in the Battle of the Marne, but their activity ended with the trench warfare. It resumed during another phases of conflict from 1916 to 1918.



France (1915). Military franchise of the 1st Bicycle Group depot. Handwritten "correspondence militare". Romainville date postmark (25.05.1915) and arrival postmark from Louviers one day later.



France (1915). Military franchise of the Bicycle Group depot (hunting cyclists handwritten) from 5th Calvary Division, sited in Fougères (Ille-et-Vilaine). FM handwritten. Fougères date postmark (09.03.1915) and arrival postmark from Neuilly-sur-Seine one day later.

... AND THE WINNER IS ... 5. 1950s-1970s. THE OSTRACISM OF BICYCLES IN THE CAR ERA

Politicians and planners were deeply dismissive of 'proletarian' mass cycling – instead, they were attracted to the social and economic potential of motoring. The former status symbol of bicycle now bore the reputation of being merely a poor man's car. The new sex symbol of our Society was born: the car.



Germany (1936). First 1000 Km of highways in Germany lead by the Führer...

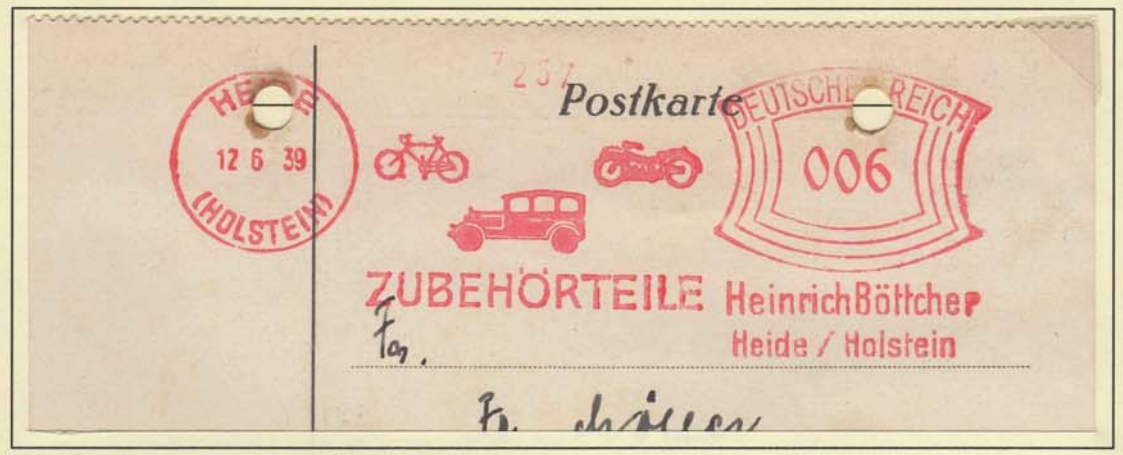


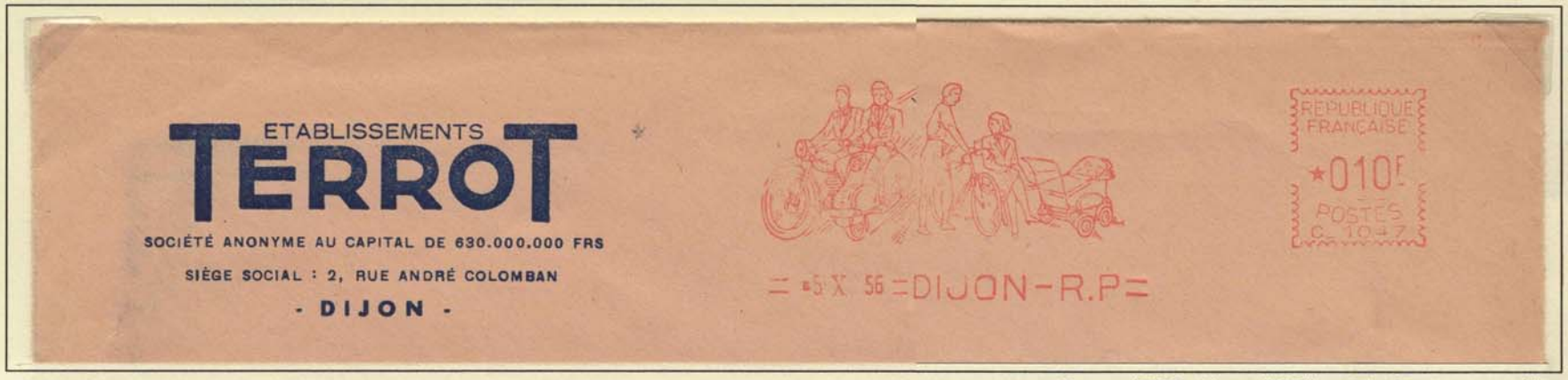
Heavy missperforated coil pair.

... or during Eisenhower period, 70.000 Km of highways were carried out in USA, but at an enormous social cost. Many Black neighborhoods were bulldozed and replaced with ribbons of asphalt and concrete.

During some decades the car was seen as the greatest success of Human Evolution. Really?







France (1956). Havas "CG" multivalue meter machine.

Motorcycles, cars, vans, trucks. All kind of motor vehicles invaded cities and roads. New demand moved bicycle industry to build every kind of vehicles.

Developed societies evolute to petrol societies and to be a car owner become a dream.



Volkswagen Beetle or Fiat 600, the symbol of proletariat access to the middle class.

With the advent of the motor car, conflict arose between the increasingly powerful car lobby and bicycle users. By the 1920s and 1930s the car lobbies initiated efforts to have cyclists removed from the roads so as to improve the convenience of motoring.

Urbanism plans growth of cities. Since some moment, those plans protected changes in our cities to impose the presence of cars...



Ildefons Cerdà planned (1860) a rational growth of Barcelona City... and when cars appeared, they took over the city.

... and asphalt made some changes irreversible.



...and, unfortunately, the car-bicycle issue is a long tale, full of death.



At the beginning of 20th Century first cycle paths were created, not to protect cyclists but to remove them to roads ... because they were 'annoying' for motor drivers.





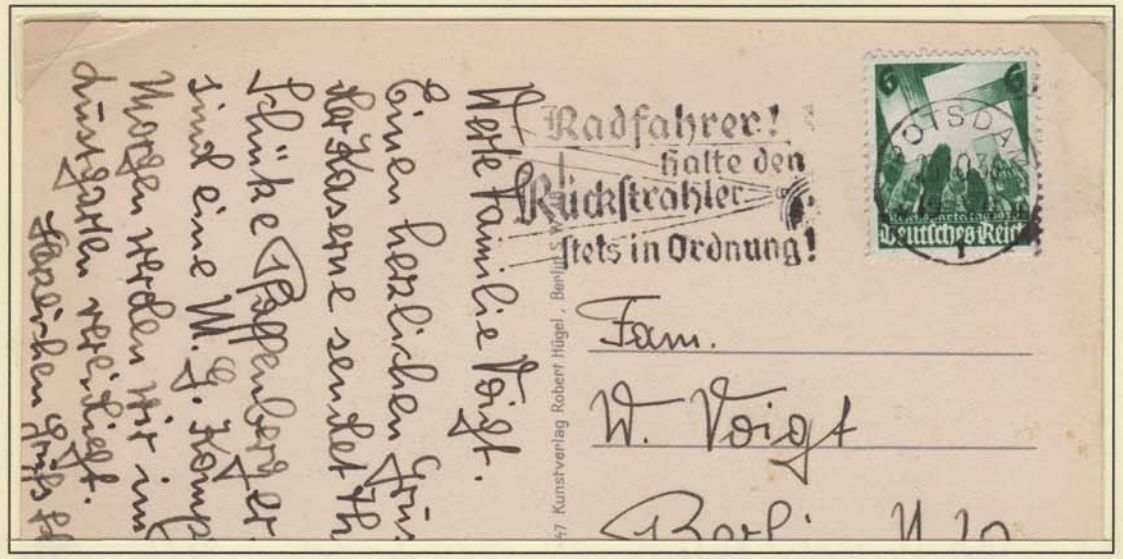


Traffic became more and more intense and involved all citizens on streets: children, pedestrians, cyclists, drivers. Mobility began to be regulated through traffic codes, and these rules had to be known by citizens through awareness campaigns.

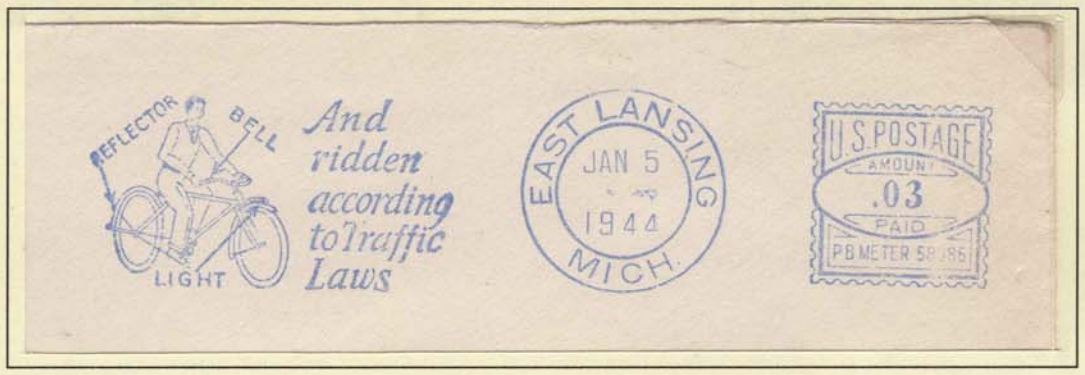
Awareness-raising campaigns and safety and traffic education are a pilar of fine operation of road and city mobility.

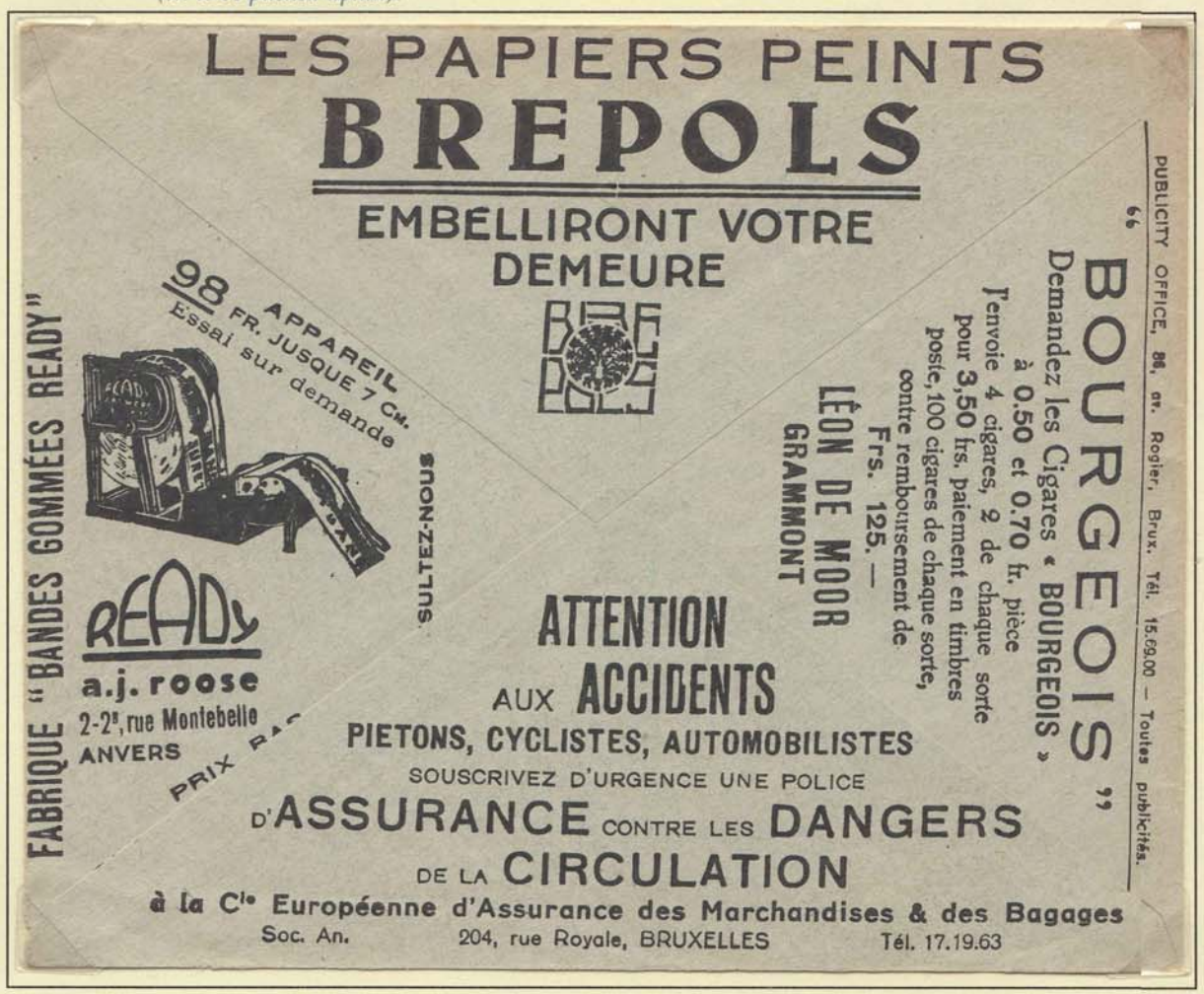


Germany (1936). Some safety advices were directed towards to change some inappropriate behaviours. This slogan said: Cyclists! Don't attach to trucks! (… to be pushed uphill).



Germany (1936). Pictorial slogan 'cyclist! Maintain your retroreflector in order!'.





In spite of prevention, crashes and dies where cyclist were involved were a disaster for Society. For example, 1536 cyclists died on the roads of Britain in 1934.









Germany (1960). Machine cancellation type Francotyp "Cc/Ccm/Cm" with slogan "Avoid traffic accidents. Do you want to be next?".

In most cases cyclists were severe injured. Insurance companies can't restore crashed bones, but can help cyclists to gave back some justice.

Belgium (1936). Belgium postage free advertising cover from Postal Check Bureau with advertisement of insurance company for cyclists, used on 09.06.1936.

BICYCLES STILL USEFUL IN MODERN WAR

In the WWII bicycle's role was mostly to speed up communications because heavy war arms were sophisticatedly developed. A bicycle seems a ridiculous weapon of war in front of tanks and heavy artillery. However allied use of the bicycle in World War II was limited, but included supplying folding bicycles to paratroopers and to messengers behind friendly lines. The term "bomber bikes" came into use during this period, as US forces dropped bicycles out of planes to reach troops behind enemy lines. The use was definitely efficient during D-Day, 06.06.1944 in Normandy coast.





The Finnish Army used bicycles extensively during the Winter War (Nov-1939 to Mar-1940), Continuation War (1941-1944) and Lapland War (Sep-1944 to Apr-1945). Bicycles were used as a means of transportation. Bicycle units (called Polkupyöräpataljoona and shortened as PPP) spearheaded the advances of 1941 against the Soviet Union, and in Autumn 1944 spearheaded the Finnish advance through Lapland against the Germans -in contrast, tanks had to be left behind due to the German destruction of the Finnish road network-.



Finland (1939, Winter War). WWII, Bicycle Battalion Unit Cancel "PPP 7" (the PPP being an abbreviation of the Finnish language name of the Unit, Polkupyöräpataljoona, which means Bicycle Battalion). This is a Winter War Field Post Cover sent from the battlefront as free Military Mail to Kiuruvesi on 18.12.1939. The address has been changed to Keskuskenttäpostikonttori (The Main Field Post Office), as the recipient worked there as a postal clerk. Beside the Unit Cachet, the cover bears other markings including written "Kenttäpostia" (Field Post), as well as a boxed KENTTÄPOSTIA cancel, a boxed cencorship cancel in Finnish and Swedish language, and a dispatch cancel of Kenttäpostikonttori 1 (Field Post Office Nr. 1).

Due to defeat of Fascism and German troops in Italy (1943-45), communications network in northern area was so disastrous that the Government authorized the creation of private postal services, complementary to the official Italian post. In many cases, moreover, these emergency postal services used bicycles due the shortage of petrol.







Three sets of stamps which were issued by CORALIT (Corriere Alta Italia) to cover his private mail service around Milan area covering 10 big cities around.





D-Day, 06.06.1944 in Normandy coast. Parachutists and marine corps used folded bicycles.



Italia (1946). Private post. S.A.B.E. (Soc. An. Barbèra – Editore) company delivered post in Florence and Venice area during armistice period. A set of 3 stamps were issued to cover his service. Letter to Gorizia with mixed postage with private and regular postage rates to cover booth services. Postmarks in Firenze of correspondence between both services. Arrival and SABE transit postmarks on rear at 80%.

CONSOLIDATION OF CYCLING AS A MASS SPORT

During second half of 20th Century cycling sport become very popular and in some countries attracted crowds to road ditches, circuits, velodromes and indoor halls. Major races, world championships and major track meetings stand out people attention through sport media.



Andorra (1980). Color proof margin sheet with Pink, Blue and Grey with color control on margin and handwritten color code, and issued stamp.







"Muestra" (specimen).

Olympic Games was the most important event for amateur cyclist, where cyclists from countries with non-professionalized sport could compete with others.





"Mihon" (specimen).

overprint in Red color.

First organized in 1948, the Peace Race was a bicycle race held in the Eastern Bloc states, and it was known as Le Tour of East. It was originally created with the intent of relieving tensions existing between Central European countries following the interwar period and WWII. It was a key race for amateur cyclists in order to gain a place for Olympics. The fall of Communism in 1989 professionalized the race, but quickly succumbed to the difficulty of finding sponsors and be relevant in the European calendar of the UCI.



Czechoslovakia (1953). Letter used on 11.07.1953 during the transition period from the time the monetary reform was declared until the new stamps were issued. Non-local letter (circulated from Podborany to Liberec) up to 20g, with a rate of 3Kcs before the reform, but during the reform need to be franqued with old 30Kkcs, which was equivalent to 0.6Kcs (30: 50 = 0.6). Right postage. RARE due to short time of usage (18 days).

In communist countries, during this period of time, popular and amateur sport play two essential roles: success in big events was synonim of success of political system, and people got access to sport (the legend in these Cuban stamps said: in socialist Cuba sport is practiced by Working Class).



Cuba (1962). If your perforation is misplaced, you loose your philatelic race, sometimes due to photo finish.

Technological improvements were introduced at Olympics, like photo finish.



CONSOLIDATION OF CYCLING AS A MASS SPORT

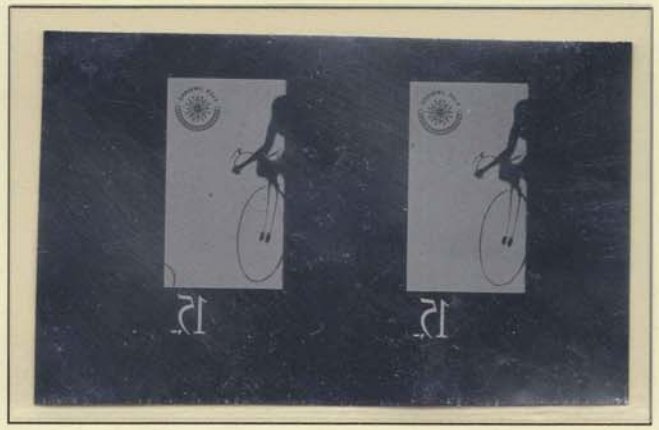
At this moment cycling as sport was popular around the world. National and international events allow amateur riders to compete like professionals in great scenarios.



Argentina (1963). Issued stamp and two Red colour shift errors.









Indonesia (1962). Piece of steel plate cylinder and final stamp. In three-colour intaglio rotary printing machines, the plate cylinder is made of 3 printing cylinder parts (in brass or steel) screwed on the printing cylinder.

Minor disciplines in some parts of the world remained very popular in others, like cyclo-ball, cyclo-polo or artistic cycling.



Cyclo-cross and track cycling keep its popularity and toke turns its seasons with road cycling.





Germany (1958). Advertisement postage meter, type Francotyp "C".

This period of time were golden years for road cycling, where most ancient and reputed races and spectators contemplated first great champions.



Spain (1954). Registered letter receipt with first Spanish pictorial rubber stamp devoted to Cycling used as a dater, from Tour of Catalonia.

Eddy Merckx and Jacques Anquetil, first cyclists to reach five Tour de France.





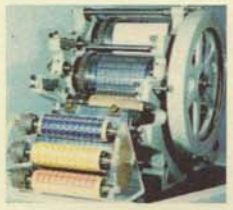
Fausto Coppi and Gino Bartali, the great rivals and Italian champions, symbolizing each two political visions of Italy.





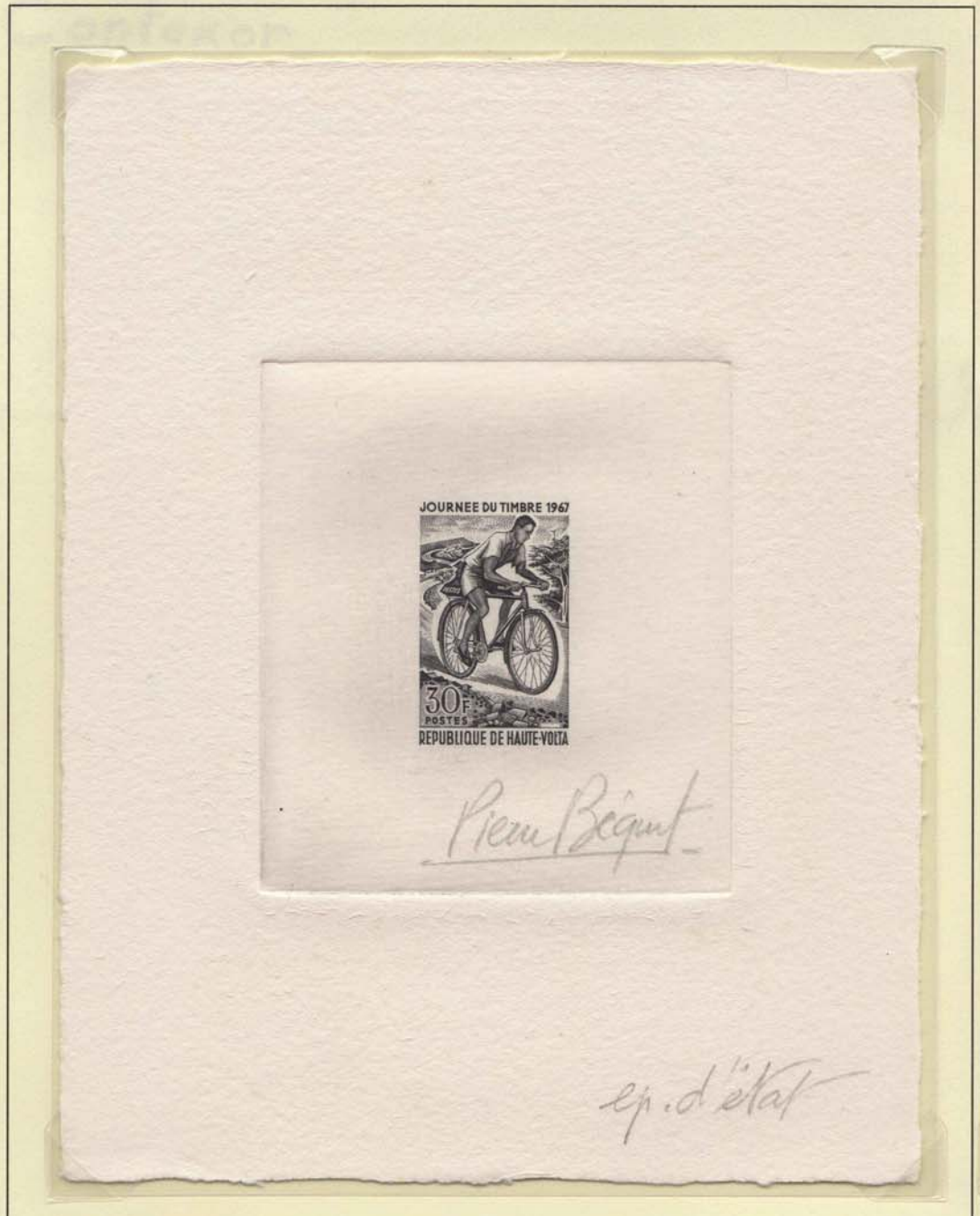
Burkina Faso (1968). Windowed letter from Haute-Volta to Besançon (France) with genuine use of JdT 1967 stamp on circulated cover.

Burkina Faso (1969). Piece of rubber form roller. Each of three printer plates cylinders inks the cylinder in three-colour intaglio rotary printing machines (TD3)









Burkina Faso (1967). Artist Pierre Béquet signed Die Proof and market with pencil as design stage proof, and final stamp.

Along 20th Century fast and long delivery was achieved by the use of trucks, trains and airplanes, which were well developed. Bicycle use was restricted to rural delivery in developed countries.



Poland (1964). Pictorial postmark with slogan: 'You can write too'.









France (1958). Polychromatic artist's die proof, signed by P. Gandon. Black and Green polychromatic essay. The polychromatic artist's proofs are very rare (usually this kind of proofs were monochromatic). After 1950, proofs were pencil signed. Final colours for definitive stamp were Green, Brown and Black for French regular issue, and Orange for its usage in Algerine territory.

... however, in underdeveloped countries bicycle delivery was yet a key step of its distribution system. Remote areas without road, rail or air infrastructures can be easily dealt with bicycle postmen.

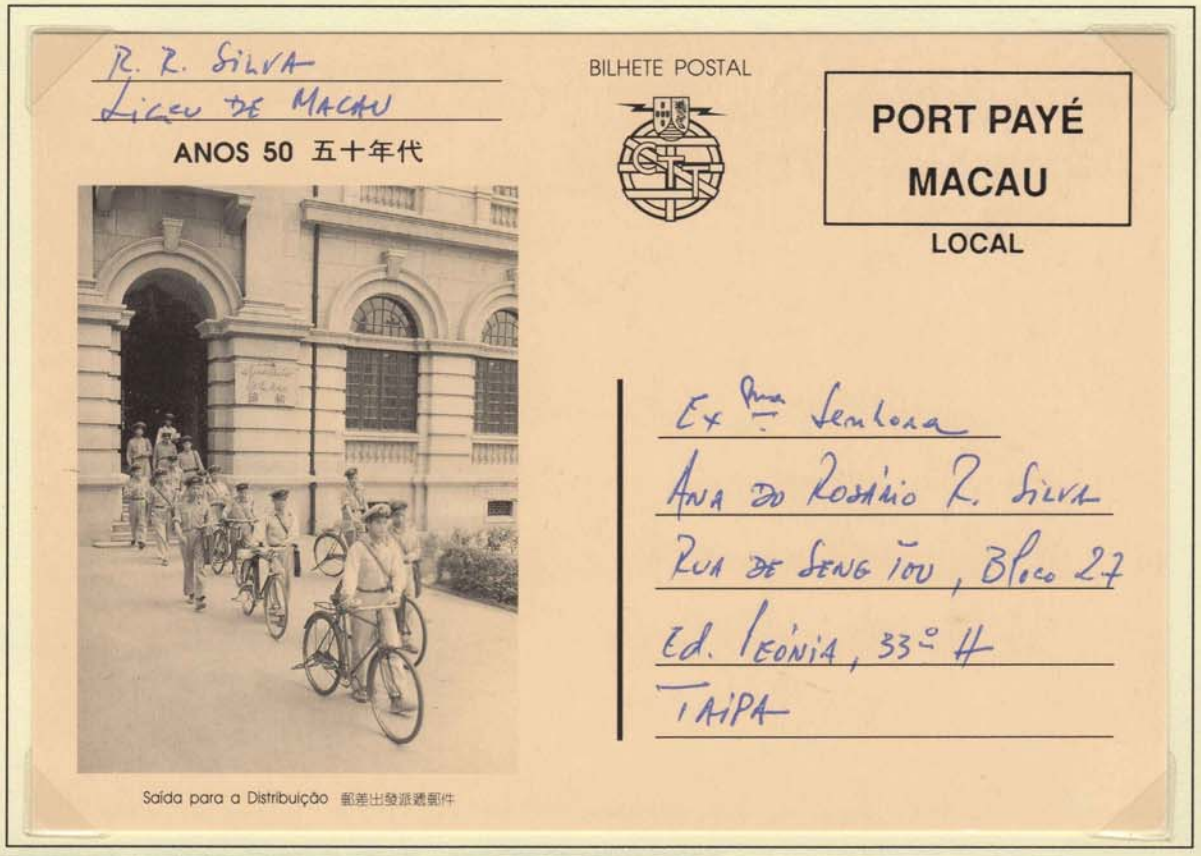


Black colour shift



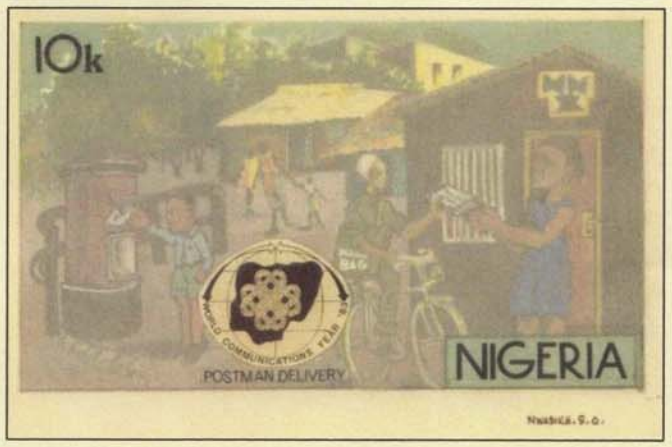


Benin (1978). Tax stamp. Colour trial proof sheet made by TD3 press. Dessigned by A. Assouto and engraved by Jean Pheulpin, sheet contains colour control, date of proof's printing (16.08.1978), few weeks before issue date (05.09.1978) and colour codes, as well as number controls and identification number of press machine (T.D.3-17). Expertized by E. Berck. Three-colour intaglio rotary printing machines (TD3 presses) allow to print at most three colours during one turn of a plate cylinder thanks to three ink reservoirs.









25% reduction of Artwork with the overlay showing country name, value and inscription.

Nigeria (1983). World Communications Year. Original hand-painted artwork for 10k value (set of 4 stamps), unadopted design by S.O. Nwasike. Ever since Nigeria went independent, they get 4 or 5 artists to prepare designs for each stamp and each issue, from which they make a choice as to which design is adopted. In this case, the artwork is one of the unaccepted designs. Artworks normally consist of a main design paint on board or card with an overlay on which is the country name, value and inscription. This allows modification to say the face value without affecting the main design. This is general practice for most modern issues.



Nigeria (1983). Adopted design.

ECOLOGISM AND NEW VALUES FLOURISHED

6. 1973-PRESENT. A NEW HOPE. GO BY BICYCLE.

Our Planet beg a change on that way we get resources from it. After ten thousand years of settled societies, and only two hundred years of substantial industrialisation, human activities and the pollution they generate threaten irreversible changes on an unprecedented scale to the world's sustainability. And bicycles have something to tell. Lets go to the Future pedalling.



As a result of global politics and global economy conflicts, 'The Oil Crisis' blow up in 1973. The price of oil sky-rocketed (300%) and motorists were asked to economize in their use of fuel. Instead, and predictably, long lines formed at filling stations. The oil crisis resulted in a greater number of cycle-campaigning recruits.

Increasing traffic congestion and the 1970s oil shocks contributed to a resurgence in cycling in some countries.







Pacifism, anti-nuclear movement, anti-militarism, Ecology, Sustainability, Climate-change ...

... new values and different ways of thinking penetrated into our societies, that seemed to be unsustainable, to try to change its Status Quo from bottom to top.

Modern age of bicycles started in the 1960s and '70s with the increase of citizens consciousness of the benefits of exercise and energy efficient transport. From 1975, dozens million cyclists started riding a new sort of much lighter and cheaper bicycles.





Faced with the evidence that our Planet needed a change, governments began to conduct awareness and policies campaigns.



Non-polluting transports.



Car-free Day.



In addition, cycling associations around the world began to self-organize in order to put pressure on and influence mobility and urban planning policies that governments should develop in the future.

In 1970s, due to Oil Crisis, awareness about Planet's integrity began. The ecological movement began its particular struggle to turn in great changes. Bicycle was one of its great symbols, as it represented a non-polluting way to live. Bicycles represent the confluence of fiscal, environmental and social responsibility. They embody what we must do to live well in the 21st century

Switzerland (1960). Stationary card advertising the bicycle rental service joined to railroad service, in order to promote migration from car to public transport.

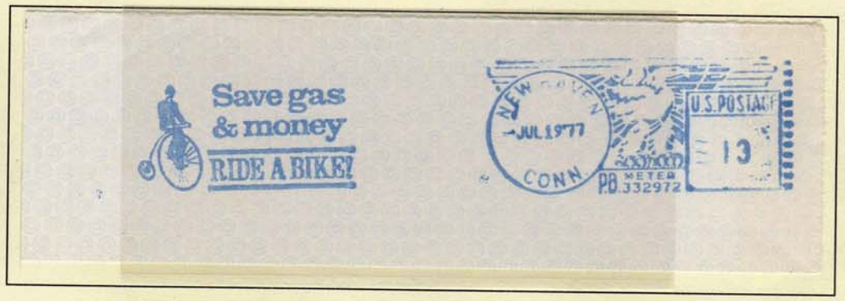






The use of bicycles to achieve a clean city was lead from municipal administration, as this Italian slogan pictorial postmark.







2011 "Go Green" set of Forever stamps or

1971 PB meter "Ride a bike" are some of the many small actions that the US government proposed to citizens along the time to preserve the environment. As a result, in 1970 in USA more bicycles were sold than cars.



China (2015). Ruber postmark promoting "low carbon emissions Day and Energy savings Week".

Slogan said: "the use of bicycle is perfect to low your Carbon footprint".

A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases (mainly CO_2 and Methane) that are generated by our actions. Use of bicycle is perfect to cope with it.



Spain (2016). Stationery card.



In 2016 , European postal administrations selected this urban cyclist as image for Europa stamp theme, with slogan "Ecology in Europe – Think Green".



Slogan said:
"The bicycle keeps you fit and respect the Environment".

Germany (1996). Machine cancellation type Hasler "Mailmaster".

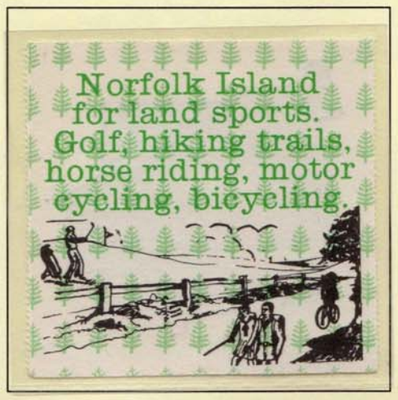


Slogan said:
"turn on your intelligence, turn off your motor".

Germany (2015). Pitney-Bowes digital meter stamp promoting to low your carbon footprint in short distances.



"Nationale Fiets Projecten" (National Bicycle Project) provides bicycles as a means of transport for commuting in agreement between responsible employer and employees by means of fiscal and social profit for everybody



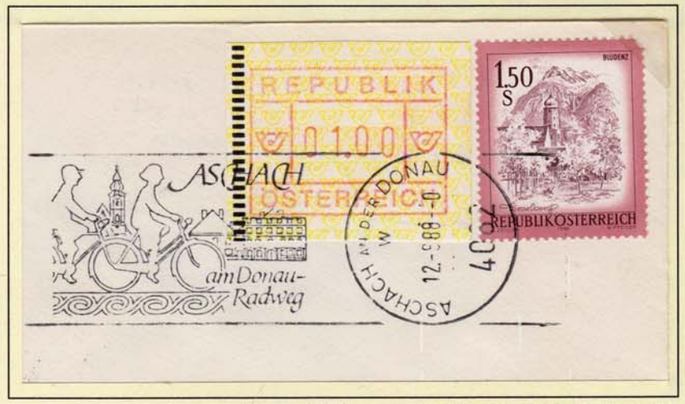
Back stamp from Norfolk.

Cycle tourism is a travel experience that focuses on the bicycle as the primary mode of transport. Cycle tourism combines particularly suggestive localities (whether mountain range, countryside or urban scene) that you can easily visit on your bike! This form of tourism represents an alternative to markedly traditional tourism.

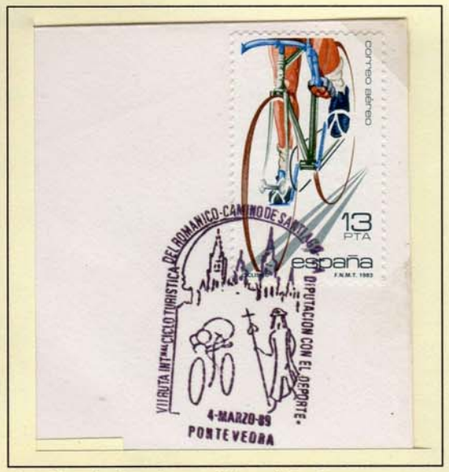
The primary national bicycle-touring organization in the U.S. is Adventure Cycling Association, former called Bikecentennial, which organised a mass ride in 1976 from one side of the country to the other to mark the nation's 200th anniversary. The Bikecentennial route is still in use as the TransAmerica Bicycle Trail.

USA (1976). Machine cancellation type Pitney Bowes "RT-3" with slogan "See America best by bicycle". Postage meter stamp with reduced rate and without date due to Bikecentennial was a non-profit organization. Bikecentennial's headquarters was sited in Missoula (Montana).





Donau-Radweg = The Danube River cycle path.



Camino de Santiago = Way of St. James.



Irish youth hostel network.

Ancestral paths, medieval pilgrim ways, fluvial ways or abandoned railroads are recovered for tourism purposes as both walking and cycling paths.

The Netherlands: a milestone of social success. When the Dutch economy began to boom in the post-war era, more and more people were able to afford cars, and urban policymakers came to view the car as the travel mode of the future. Entire Amsterdam neighbourhoods were destroyed to make way for motorised traffic. The use of bikes decreased by 6% every year, and the general idea was that bicycles would eventually disappear altogether.

The number of traffic casualties rose to a peak of 3,300 deaths in 1971. More than 400 children were killed in traffic accidents that year. This staggering loss led to protests by different action groups, the most memorable of which was "Stop de Kindermoord" (stop the child murder). Stop de Kindermoord held bicycle demonstrations and went on to develop ideas for safer urban planning. Due to these popular movements was a serious concern for politicians and the way Dutch cities and roads are built today is largely the result of deliberate political decisions in the 1970s.



"Give them a hand" said this meter stamp of Veilig Verkeer Nederland.



Veilig Verkeer Nederland emerges from the fusion of pedestrian association 'deVoetgangersverenigingand' and children foundation 'de stichting Kinderen Voorrang!'. Is committed to a sustainable approach to road safety with special attention for the vulnerable.

The Netherlands (1998).
"The (Government of) Province (of Noord-Holland) build cycle paths", remark this Dutch red meter stamp.



"...87.000 Km of adapted roads and cycle lanes in The Netherlands." said this booklet's page.

The Netherlands (2020). Inner page of Prestige Booklet.



Specimen





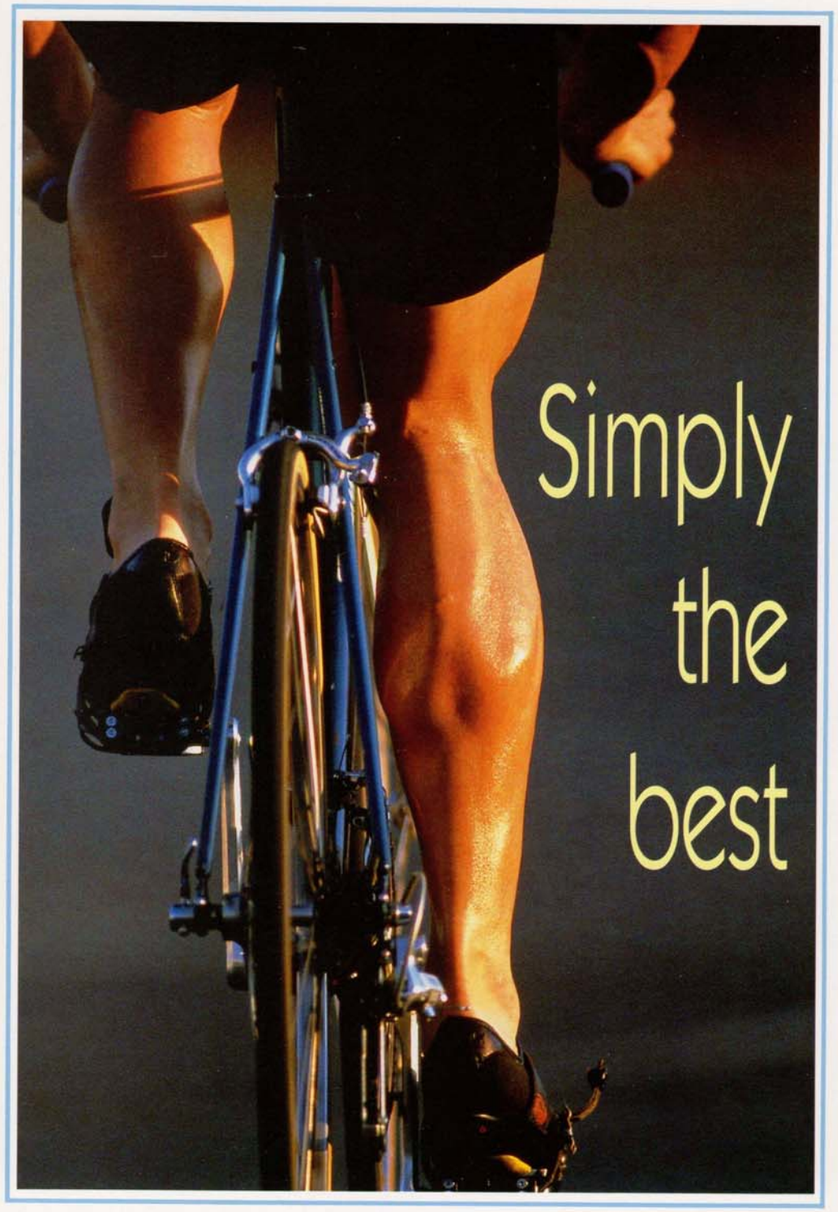
In Cyprus Keyline Black
Stars Red Special + Blue Special
+ for S/S

Philippines (1984). Original final artwork, watercolor on cardboard, pencil notes from design process and acetate overlay for lettering. UNIQUE. Additionally in the top left-hand corner specimen of "Red stars" variety is shown.

Given the lack of liquidity of the Philippine postal authority, this emission was considered speculative when entrusted to an international agency; in fact, it does not appear in some catalogs. However, the issue was used regularly for postal purposes. Only reprints of "Blue stars" variety in minisheets and imperforate are considered bogus stamps.







Belgium (1996). Postogram service followed Deluxe Telegrams in Belgium when this service ceased. Two types exist: Mourning and Greeting items (like in this case). Postage paid around Belgium, that inside includes an illustrated postcard. Users can choose desired delivery date.



Are great champions, with their deeds, that make cycling a sport full of heroism. And the reward is the recognition of the world of sport and society.





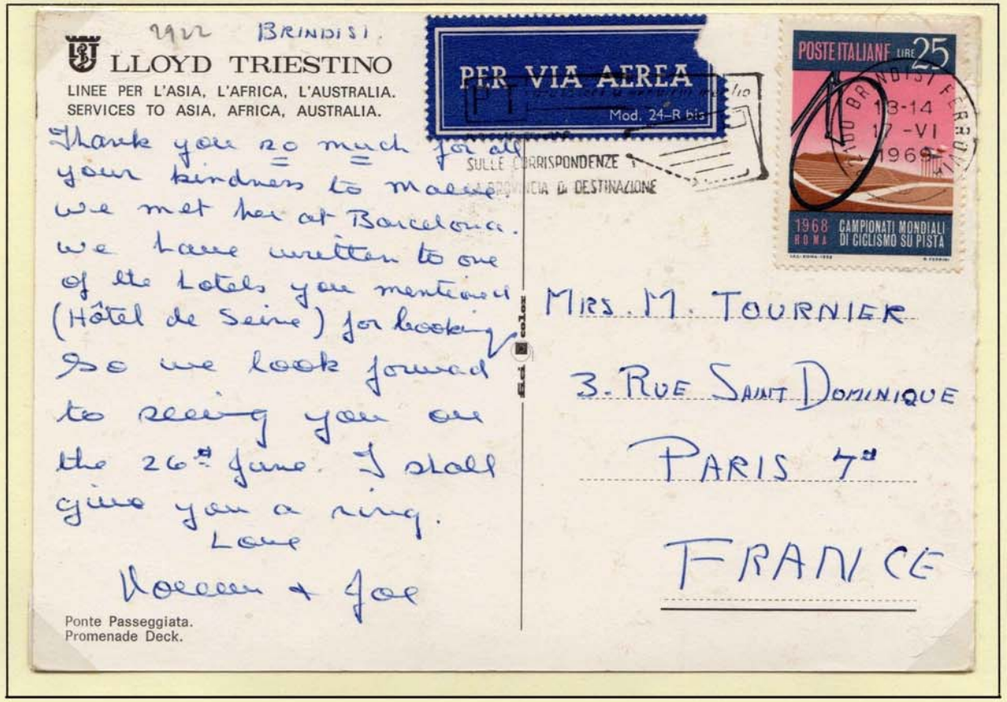
POSTE ITALIANE LIRE 25



1968 ROMA CAMPIONATI MONDIALI DI CICLISMO SU PISTA

I.P.S.

R.FERRINI





Italia (1968). Original Artwork of Renato Ferrini. Oil on cardboard, over canvas.

Renato Ferrini (1910-2005) was a renowned Italian artist and graphic designer He quickly became an acclaimed and prolific poster designer for major film companies such as Warner Bros, Fox or Paramount, and for many famous film directors as Fellini , Visconti , De Sica or Pasolini. At that time, many of the main companies and industries (e.g. Pirelli) used his graphic work for their advertising campaigns.

In 1955, the Italian Postal Authority issued its first stamps designed by Ferrini. It wa the beginning of a notable production of artworks for stamps made and issued by Poste Italiane. In 1962, he issues its first postage stamp for United Nations Organization, after been recruited to be part, as representative of Italy, of a group of designers on payroll. Renato Ferrini was under contract with the United Nations for his entire life. Renato Ferrini was also an acclaimed painter, engaging in numerous exhibitions.