

## **Exhibit Synopsis**

### **Independent Finland's First Postal Cards – The Saarinen Postal Cards 1917-1930**

#### **Purpose:**

This is a postal stationery exhibit showing the first postal cards of the Independent Republic of Finland, 1917 - 1930.

The postal card was an inexpensive and widely used postal medium for commercial and personal correspondence during the 1920s, much more then, than now.

The postal cards are a witness to the social and political history of the times – this is seen with the usage during and immediately after the Finnish War of Independence: rival government use, POW cards, postal censorship, special rates and during difficult economic times, continued use of obsolete cards, resulting in an extraordinary array of upfranked cards in normal everyday use.

#### **Challenge Factor:**

While there might not be world-class rarities here, some of this material is difficult to find. The variety of upfranked cards shown here is not likely to be easily duplicated – also, some of the destinations are scarce. The unissued cards are now and again available at Finnish auctions, but by no means are they readily available. Some upfranked cards are very difficult and the 20 penni cards used in the rate period are extremely difficult. There are some items that I have identified but have not found in the 17 plus years I have been collecting this material.

#### **Presented Material:**

All the Saarinen single and doublecards are shown. Also shown are the five unissued cards. These cards were printed and distributed to UPU countries as specimens but were not overprinted as such; they were not sold by the Finnish Post. Copies not distributed to UPU countries were destroyed. The Unissued cards are scarce. The emphasis here is to show the variety upfranked cards to meet rising rate changes.

#### **Organization:**

Generally, the cards are presented by order of the value stamp, from the 10 penni card to the 1 Fmk card with the 1:20 Fmk preceding the last card issued, the 1 Fmk card. Rate changes overlap dates of card use – that is when new rates went into effect the older obsolete cards in stock were upfranked at the post office and sold until the inventory was exhausted. These are carefully detailed in the exhibit. Each new section is highlighted in this **color**.

#### **Highlights:**

Inasmuch as there were very few printing errors and different card types, the highlights are found in the usages rather than in obscure printing errors or different shades.

#### **Exhibit History:**

This exhibit has been entirely remounted for NORDIA 2011. Originally, the exhibit contained the 1918 Vaasa cards. That material has been dropped and the Saarinen material expanded from seven to eight frames. Earlier versions of this exhibit were shown in five frame formats for several FIP shows. In the US, the exhibit has been awarded WSP gold medals and the Marcus White Award.

#### **Major References:**

The Norma (2010) & Lape Catalogues (2004)

*Suomen Postimerkkien Käsikirja*, Vol. 5, Helsinki, 1970

Lauri Siivonen, "Postal Traffic during the War of Independence," *Finlandia 95 Bulletin*, Vol. 3, 1995

Easa Mattila, *Suomen Postimaksuja, 1881 – 1985*, Loimaa, 1985

*Postoffices in Finland, 1638 – 1985*, Philatelic Federation of Finland, Vol. 9, 1988

*Handbook of the Finnish Postmarks, IV; The Russian type cancellations*, Philatelic Federation of Finland, 1997

*Handbook of Finnish Stamps, V*; Philatelic Federation of Finland, 1986

Various articles in, *Abophil*, *Filatelisti*, and *The Finnish Philatelist*