The Fraktur

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GIESSEN REVISITED

There are two good reasons for Wanda and me to remember Giessen.

We lived there for two years and adopted a daughter while in Giessen. A distant family member was a professor in the Giessen University when he was 21, for whom the university today bears his name.

In Giessen we lived on Lincolnstrasse where our third-floor apartment faced the motorpool. We were there one evening when we learned that President John F. Kennedy had been shot. We brought our adopted 15-month daughter home. And we made friends with local coin collectors.

A monthly duty assigned to me was to visit a military unit near Kassel, Germany, an hour north on the Autobahn. I quickly learned that the Kassel Coin Club met monthly, so my work visits soon coincided with their meetings. After work hours, I was in the Gasthaus where they met for supper, early coin chatter, and on with the meeting.

Giessen had no club at the time, but I made friends with several collectors, German and American.

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MONTHLY NOTGELD QUOTE. . .



Naunhof bei Leipzig
Set of 5 50-Pfennig notes
Red Cross theme
June 26, 1921 L-902

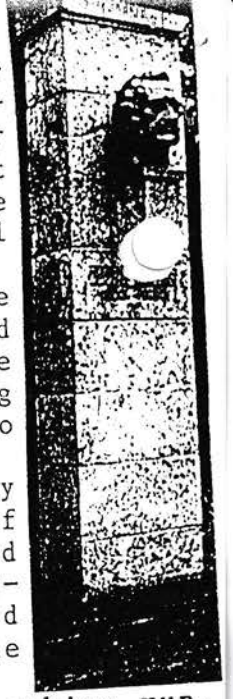
Edel Sei Der Mensch
Huelfreich u. Gut
Goethe

Let man be high-minded
Helpful and kind

Return to Giessen was on May 1, 1995, European Labor Day. I arrived by train from Hannover. One of the Giessen-area collectors, and a correspondent during the 30-year interval, was Werner Kroeck, who lives with his wife Margaret in Heuchelheim, a near-by village. From his house one can see the factory where the Minox camera is made. You will recall that the tiny camera was used in many spy thrillers.

Kroeck, now retired from a director position at the local Landesbank, is interested in local history and maintains his membership in the Giessen Numismatische Gesellschaft and a local historical society. Collecting interests include paper money, Notgeld and the books which go with them.

One of his favorite series is tied to me in two ways, my interest in Notgeld and the family connection. A portrait of Professor Dr. Justus von Liebig appeared on paper notgeld issued as admission tickets to a Giessen Notgeld Show July 2-4. 1921. Depicted were Liebig, a view of his laboratory and the building which housed it, now a museum. Kroeck was the author of the June 1944 feature on Giessen in THE FRAKTUR.



After a bombing run, the full-length statue of Justus von Liebig survived as only his head, later placed on a stone monument.

In the museum is a re-creation of the Liebig office, including some medals on which he is depicted and his chess set.

Unfortunately, at the moment, the roof leaks and a drive is under way to raise funds for restoration. On the day of our visit to the Museum, the director of the city Savings Bank came to the Museum to present a check for 10,000 Deutsche Mark, some $73,000, as seed money for the 100,000 DM project. The director had been a school chum of my friend Kroeck.

Also, currently in my office, are 100 and 1,000-Mark bonds issued by the I.G. Farben conglomerate depicting four German scientists, including Liebig. These include his contemporary and joint researcher Friedrich Woehler, and Liebig's students August W. Hofmann and August A. Kekule von Stradonitz.



A 1917 50-Pfennig note of Giessen, undated (1917) is listed as P-S 723.

Liebig coins included a German Democratic Republic 10-Mark piece, 1978A, K-M 69, with a facing bust of the scientist and a three-Mark probe piece of the Deutsches Reich, 1927F, struck in silver, K-M Pn 328.

At a meeting of the Giessen numismatic society, we heard Herbert Keller discuss St. Elizabeth of Marburg. We will mention Marburg and numismatics of the historical town in another feature. There was another connection with Herr Keller. He is a member of the Lions Club of Giessen. We gave him a club banner from the Iola Lions Club.

The Giessen Coin Club meets in the city hall. Also making use of the facility is the local chess club, which has been organized since 1858.

In 1986 the "Jahrbuch fuer Numismatik und Geldgeschichte" printed Keller's essay which described a find of Celtic coins about five miles northwest of Giessen. Keller points out that 14 other finds of Celtic coins have been found in the Middle Hesse region. The find of 27 coins was located on the Duensberg, a hill which rises 478 meters, dating from about the year 70 A.D.



The Giessen Market Square, as it appeared between the wars.

When a box full of treasures arrived from Giessen after my return to Iola, there was a banner from the Justus v. Liebig Lions club of Giessen for presention to the Iola Lions Club.

Also attending the Giessen Numismatic Society meeting was Herr Diel, a coin collector I had met in the 1960s.

A few points of comparison.

When we lived in Giessen, 1963-1965, there were still evidences of bomb damage. The U.S. Army Quartermaster Depot was a presence, and a major employer of German civilians. Rivers Barracks, out Licherstrasse, held other U.S. Army units. There were few U.S. Army women personnel.

Today, one sees no evidence of bomb damage. The Army is still in Giessen, leaner, many of the civilian jobs being performed by the military, and many of those, women. Rivers Barracks has been closed. A new bridge spans the Lahn River and another has been opened downstream, toward Wetzlar, a few clicks (GI term for kilometers) away.


Gutschein der Stadt Gießen

Die Stadtkasse Gießen zahlt gegen diesen Gutschein

EINE MILLION MARK

Der Zeitpunkt der Einlösung wird durch die Tagesblätter bekanntgegeben

Gießen, im August 1923 №47549

Der Oberbürgermeister

Keller

An August 1923 issue from Giessen was a Million Mark note, K-1788a.

The Leica camera is still made in Wetzlar, with the Dom or cathedral under restoration. The downtown area is preserved in the old style, with winding, hilly streets, the half-timbered buildings (Fachwerk) a strong reminder of earlier construction methods.

They say what goes around comes around. While in Giessen, Wanda and I visited German dentists on occasion, Frau Dr. Wetzel by Wanda, Herr Dr. Wetzel by myself. We were intrigued by their name, since there are Wetzels on my Grandmother Liebig's side of the family.

The Wetzels had left their home in Dresden before the Berlin Wall went up, arriving in West Germany with nothing. Their office was on the third floor of a tall, for Giessen, office building on the Ludwigsplatz. The top floor of the building housed the Dach Cafe, with a stunning view of the countryside.

Now we fast forward to 1994, when a German urologist began reading THE FRAKTUR, especially interested in Notgeld concerning Bads, or Spas. We met Erwin Rugendorff and his wife Karen at a lecture in early June 1995 in Minneapolis, (see THE FRAKTUR, June 1995) and learned that in the 1970s, he had offices in Giessen, on the second floor of the Ludwigsplatz office building, and his dentist: Herr Dr. Wetzel. A recent letter from Dr. Rugendorff stated he still makes weekly visits to Giessen. Dr. Wetzel is in a nursing home.

From Giessen we had planned to visit Frankfurt and the money museum in the Bundesbank. However, the section of the building occupied by the museum had been closed for asbestos removal. The bank had a facility in Neu-Isenburg, across the Main River just south of Frankfurt.

Once it had printed paper money. Now that function has been moved to Berlin, and currently, the Neu-Isenburg facility temporarily houses the money museum and many of the functions of distributing money to banks.

Classified Advertising

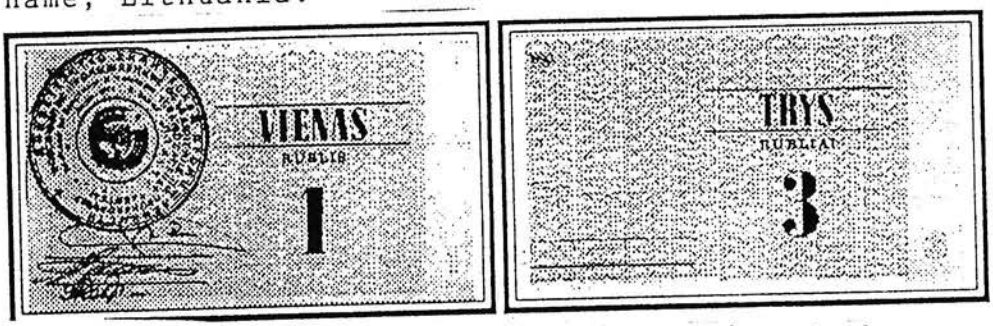
WANTED; World paper, Notgeld depicting bridges. Please send photocopy and price to: Mohamad Hussein, 6295 River Run Place, Orlando, Fl. 32807, U.S.A.

OF PLASTALITAS & ANUZIUKAS

Circulating ruble notes were paid to factory workers in Kaunas and Vilnius, Lithuania, in 1990 and 1991, according to Aleksandras Kubilas, Vilnius.

The Plasta factory, Vilnius, issued privately made ruble notes in 1990, which remained in circulation until 1992. The notes were partial payment to employees; they were redeemed in the company store.

Since the workers disdained the word "ruble," of Russian connotation, they nicknamed the notes "Plastalitas," based on the nasme of the factory, Plasta + Litas, taken from the country name, Lithuania.



"Plastalitas" of Vilnius, one ruble (yellow) and three rubles (green) were issued by the Plasta factory in 1990 and 1991.

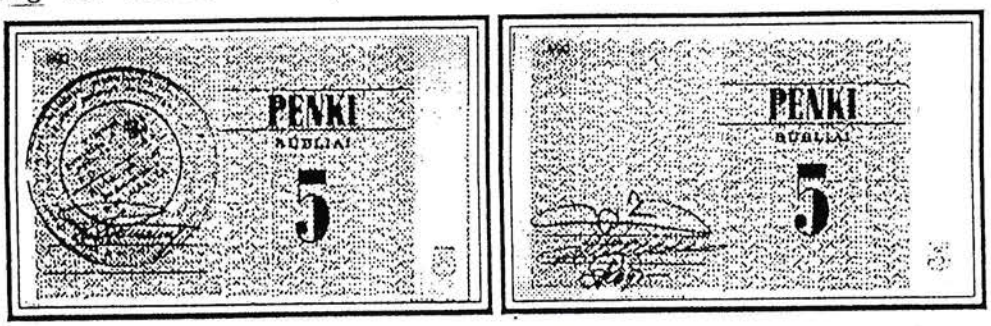
The Spindulis printing firm in Kaunas printed the notes, generally on two types of paper. The notes were printed on only one side.

The word "Plasta" is printed in small type, repeated throughout the face of the note; different colors represent different denominations.

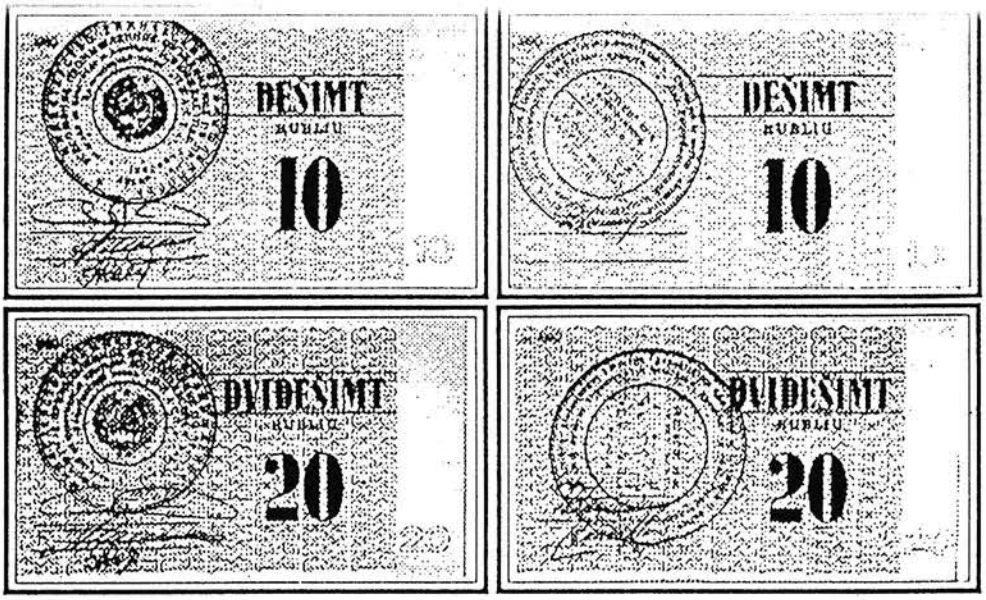
A coat of arms appears in the Russian language, with three signatures, or the Trade Union's seal appears with the Lithuanian and Russian languages; also some are without seals and bear one or three signatures. Only one of the seals appeared on a note.

Denominations and colors include one ruble, yellow; three rubles, yellow green; five rubles, light blue; 10 rubles, dark chrome; 20 rubles, light violet; and 50 rubles, pink, all dated 1990.

Many notes were improperly printed or cut. Most notes used in trade were later destroyed, so the defective notes are now most common. As many as 50 different can be found, according to Kubilas.



Five ruble Plastalitas show, at left, the trade union seal; at right, no seal but three signatures.



Ten- and 20-ruble notes, at left, bear the coat of arms seas in Russian; at left, trade union seal in Lithuanian and Russia Russian languages; above, right, one signature; below, two.

Similar to Plastelitas were Anuziukas, issued by the State Synthetic Fiber Company in Kaunas in 1991 and 1992. As the Plastelitas, they were used to obtain high demand goods in the company store. The 105-by-60 millimeter notes were also printed at the Spindulis printing firm in Kaunas.

The notes followed the scheme of different colors for different values, without signatures, but stamped with one of three different seals, as used in Vilnius.

The five and 100-ruble notes were stamped with the seal of the State Synthetic Fiber Co. Trade Union, printed in light blue and light green, respectively

The light violet 20 ruble note was printed with the factory's office seal.

The staff department's seal appeared on the pink 50-ruble note.

Kubilas explains how the system worked. Notes expended in the company store were collected by management at the end of each month, and reissued to employees, giving the scrip notes a sense of circulation.

Apparently the value distributed to each employee depended on profits. In June 1991, Kaunas workers received one 50-ruble note; two 20-ruble notes; and six five-ruble notes, for a 120 ruble total.

In July 1991, distribution was for only 50 rubles; in August 1991, 100 rubles; September 1991, 60 rubles; and October 1991, 100 rubles.

Printings of the various denominations include:

5 Rubles	20,040
20 Rubles	8,880
50 Rubles	6,480
100 Rubles	5,338

There were 3,000 workers at the factory. The average worker received 10 notes, though only two notes, on average per worker.

Except for a few notes retained as collector items, the notes were destroyed.

Aleksandras Kubilas is a professional numismatist. His address is Ab. Dez. 159, 2000 Vilnius, Litauen.

Austria

Aschach/Donau 10 Heller, 1 Krone Campbell 1313, 1316 $10*
Eisenerz ND 10, 50 Heller; 1, 5, 10, 20 Kronen POW Ost. Alp. Montan Ges. Campbell 1523-4, 1528-31 $40*
Sigmundsherberg NO ND 10, 20, 50 Heller Campbell 1449-1451 $35*
Steyr ND 50 Heller Campbell 1568 $35*

Belgium

Societe Generale (Not Notgeld) Nov. 20, 1916 2 Francs bilingual K-M 22 $3

Danzig

Danzig April 15, 1919 50 Pf P-S 455d $12.50

France

Havre 1920 50 Centimes, 1, 2 Francs C-C B-H H1 $18
Libourne May 12, 1917 1 Franc B-H L2 $.50
Marseille June 5, 1917 1 Franc B-H M5 $.75
Nancy Dec. 1, 1917 50 Centimes B-H N1 $1
Nancy 1918, 1919, 1920 50 Centimes, 1, 2 Francs B-H N1 $6
Paris Dec. 31, 1917 25, 50 Centimes, 1 Franc B-H P1 $3

Morocco

April 6, 1944 50 Centimes, 1 Franc Pick 41, 42 $10*

Germany

Halle Sept. 25, 1922 500 Mark K-249 $3
Hamburg ND 30 Pf overprinted 2.50 Neustaedter Gesellschafts P-S 905b Karton $35
Hannoverische-Muenden ND 235, 75 Pf, 1, 1.25, 2 Mark L-560 $3.75
Hannoverische-Muenden July 1, 1921 10, 25, 50 Pf L-559 $5*
Harburg/Elbe Sept. 15, 1921 50 (4) Pf L-562 bridges, boats $3*
Harzgeroda July 7, 1921 75 Pf L-564a $.60*
Harzgeroda July 7, 1921 25, 50 (2), &5 (2) Pf L-564b $3*
Harzgeroda July 7, 1921 25 (2), 75 Pf L-564c $2*
Hasloh ND 25, 50 (2), 75 Pf L-566 $7.25*
Hattingen Aug. 10, 1923 500,000 Mark K-2265a $3.25
Heessen/Bad Eilsen Jan. 1, 1921 25 (4), 50 (3) Pf, 1 Mark (6) L-569 $9*
Heide ND 20, 50 Pf L-570 $1.50*
Heidelberg Aug. 1, 1923 100,000 Mark K-2279a $3
Heidelberg Aug. 8, 1923 1 Million Mark K-2279e $3.25
Heisterbach Nov. 1, 1921 50 (3) 75 (3) Pf L-575 $10*
Helgoland April 1921 20, 25 (2), 50 (2) Pf L-577a Schiestl $6.50*
Helmarshausen/Diemel May 15, 1921 50 Pf, 1, 2 Mark L-578 $4*
Helmstedt, Bad ND 25 Pf Max Herbst P-S 977b $5
Hemdingen ND 25 (2), 50 (2), 75 Pf L-581 black KN $10*
Hermsdorf April 4, 1919 10, 25, 50 Pf P-S 981 $6*
Hermsdorf May 1, 1921 75 Pf L-583 $.60
Herne/Westfalen Aug. 1, 1923 5 Millionen K-2339d $3
Herne/Westfalen Aug. 25, 1923 100,00 Mark K--2339i $3
Herne/Westfalen Aug. 1923 100,000 Mark K-2343b Hibernia $3.25
Herne/Westfalen Oct. 1923 1 Milliarde Mark K-2343n Hibernia $3.75
Herne/Westfalen July 1, 1921 50 (10) Pf L-584a $7.50*
Hersfeld Nov. 4, 1918 2, 10 Mark K-217c $4
Herstelle Nov. 1, 1921 50 Pf, 1, 2 Mark L-586 $1.75*

Hessische-Oldendorf Oct. 1, 1921 25, 50, 75 Pf, 1 Mark L-588 $3.50*
Heydekrug/Memel Ostpreussen 50 Pf L-589 $3
Hildburghausen 1921 25 (2), 50 (2) Pf L-590 $3*
Hirschberg/Schlesien ND 10 Pf P-S 999 $.50
Hirschberg/Schlesien ND 25 Pf L-594 $.75*
Hoerde Sept. 20, 1922 500 Mark K-274 $3
Hoerde Sept. 1, 1923 10 Millionen Mark K-2399a $3.25
Hoexter May 1, 1921 10, 25, 50 (3) Pf L-600 $3*
Hofgeismar ND 50, 75 Pf, 1, 1.50 Mark L-601a $6*
Hohenwestedt July 3, 1921 50 Pf, 1 Mark L-604 $2.25*
Hohndorf/Chemnitz ND 50 (6) Pf L-605 $4*
Hohenfriedberg ND 25 (4), 50 (4), 75 Pf, 1.25 Mark Scheck L-602 $6.25*
Hohenmoelsen ND 50 Pf L-603 $.50
Holzminden ND 25, 50, 75 Pf, 1 Mark (4) L-607 $7.50*
Honnef, Bad Oct. 1, 1921 50 (4), 99 (4) Pf L-609 $10*
Hornberg/Baden Dec. 1, 1918 5, 10 Mark K-228b $7
Horneburg May 1, 1921 25, 50, 75 Pf L-612 $1.75*
Hoym/Anhalt July 1, 1921 20, 25, 50 green (5) Pf L-616 $4.25*
Hoym/Anhalt July 1, 1921 20, 25, 50 (4) brown Pf L-616 $4*
Husby ND 50 (2), 7 (3) Pf L-619 $3.25*
Husbyholz July 1, 1921 50 (5) Pf Plebiscite L-620 $3.25*

Hungary

Braunau (Bohemia) July 22-24, 1921 50 Heller P-S 2864 $4

Italy

Milano Jan. 29, 1976 50 Lire Associazione Italiana $3*
Reggio Emilia March 3, 1976 100 Lire Ass. Prov. Commercia $3*
Torino July 19, 1976 100 Lire A Confesercenti $3*
Verona March 23, 1976 100 Lire AS.Co. $3*

Liechtenstein

Vaduz ND 20, 50 Heller K-M 2, 3 $10*

Morocco

Morocco April 6, 1944 50 Centimes, 1 Franc K-M, 41, 42 $10*

Poland

Bielsko/Bielitz, Schlesien Aug. 1, 1919 1 Krone/Korona P-S 2855d Bilingual $7.50
Bielsko/Bielitz, Schlesien Aug. 1, 1919 50 Heller/Halerzy P-S 2855d Bilingual $7.50
Bielsko/Bielitz, Schlesien 1920 10, 20 Heller/Halerzy P-S 2855c Bilingual $10
Litzmannstadt/Lodz May 15, 1940 50 Pf, 1 Mark Campbell 4201; 4202 $40
Teschen/Cieszyn Oct. 25, 1919 1 Krone/Korone P-S 2911c $7.50*

*Uncirculated

H-B A. Hanot, P. Bourg: Billets de Necessite Francais 2nd ed 1987 Luxembourg
Campbell: Prisoner of War and Concentration Camp Money of the 20th Century, 2nd ed 1993
K-M: Standard Catalog of World Paper Money

K-Keller catalogs; L-Lindman, Serienscheine; P-S Pick-Siemsen

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