

Cancellation Devices of the International Institute of Agriculture, 1906-1946

16 Aug 2023

Introduction

Efforts to publish international agricultural information was first suggested in 1904 by David Lubin (1849-1919), a Hungarian fruit farmer in Sacramento, California. His plan found favor with King Victor Emmanuel III (1869-1947) of Italy. The International Institute of Agriculture was founded in Rome and 40 countries formalized the Institute in a 1906 treaty. It became an international clearinghouse for agricultural information and statistics beginning in mid 1909.

Exhibit Scope

The International Institute of Agriculture used Italian postal services, but maintained an internal post office to track mail volume and expenses. This exhibit documents mail of the Institute and devices used by the Institute.

Exhibit Development

Development is chronological. Official postal records of the organization are unknown but survey information indicates the earliest mail is from 1910.

Exhibit Plan

0. Introduction
 - Background, Scope & Development
1. Barred Circle
 - Lines in Dater
 - No Lines in Dater
2. Plain Circle
 - Single Circle
3. Arced Circle
 - Letter placement high (A)
 - Letter placement low (B)
 - Letters in Parenthesis (C)



Rome, Italy to Greiz, Germany, 20 August 1910, (Barred circle device with lines in dater)
5 centesimi, foreign printed matter rate <50 grams

Earliest recorded example of printed matter mail

Although mail on Institute business was possibly sent between 1909 and 1910, no example has been found to date. A 30 mm circular date stamp device was used on official institute mail beginning in 1910.

Eight barred circle with horizontal lines



(150% Enlargement)



Cert - GEC 2930

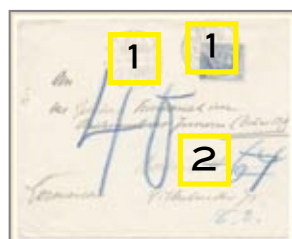
Rome, Italy to Berlin, Germany, 9 March 1910, 25 centesimi, foreign letter rate < 15 grams
Forwarded from Berlin districts '4' to '64' (manuscript) - backstamp 10 March 1910
Forwarded from Berlin districts '64' to '40' (manuscript) - backstamp 11 March 1910
Received Berlin district '40', 11 March 1910

3 examples of this device are recorded
2 are in this exhibit

Earliest recorded example of official service mail and dater type with lines

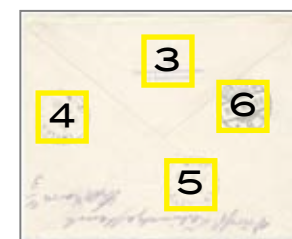
Markings Key

Front



1. Dated handstamp
2. Redirection instructions blue crayon manuscript

Reverse



3. Institute logo
4. Transit marking
5. Transit marking
6. Berlin receiving mark

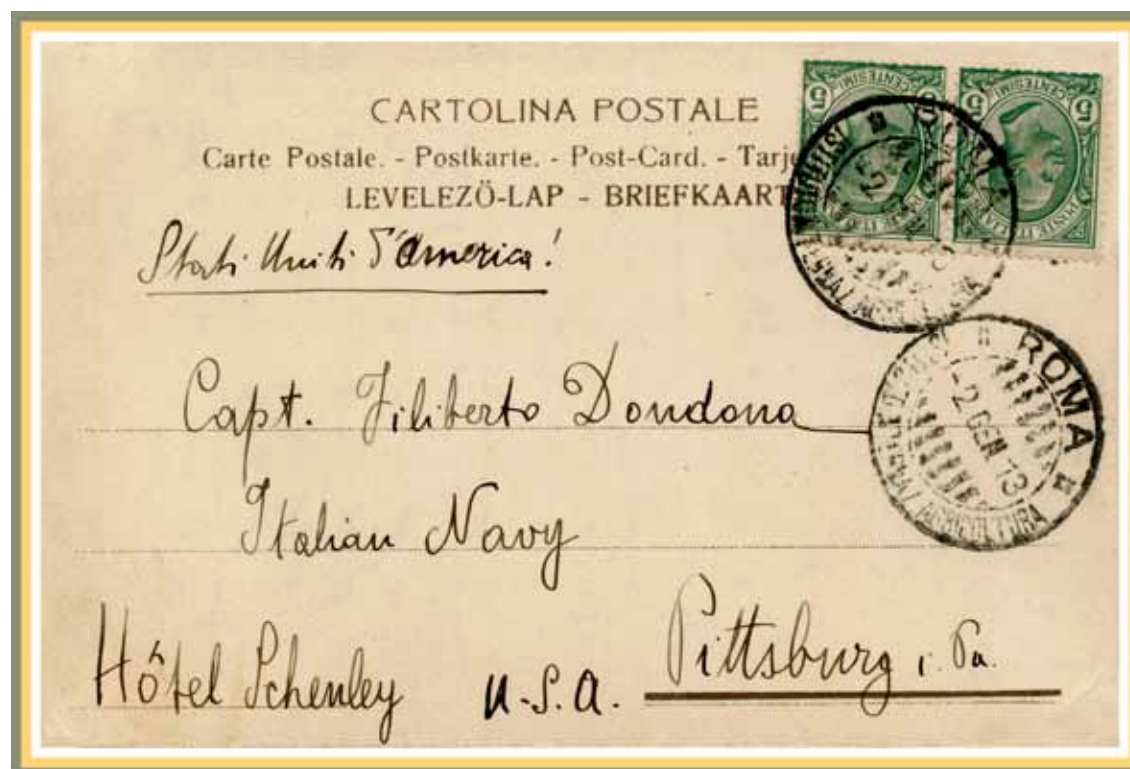


Reduced copy of reverse with Institute logo

Dater without horizontal lines was discovered by the exhibitor as a result of original research and is not listed in the Gaines United Nations catalog. After review of other collections and exhibits, eight additional copies were found dating between 1913 and 1918.

Rome, Italy to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
(Italian Navy Captain at Hotel Schenley)
2 January 1913 (device type IIA.S1B)
10 centesimi, foreign post card rate

Earliest recorded example of device type without lines



Eight barred circle without horizontal lines

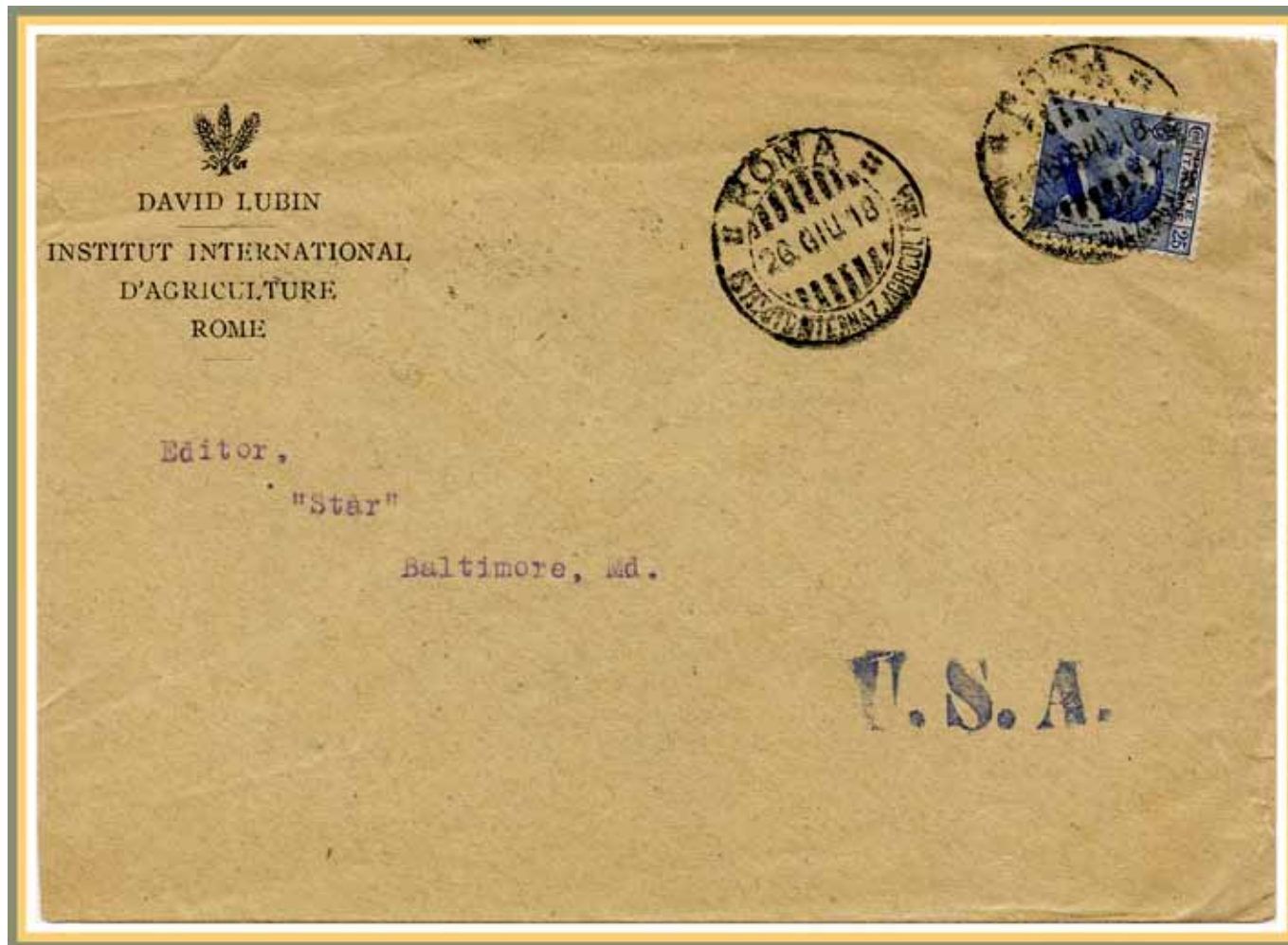


(150% Enlargement)

Rome, Italy to Stockton, New York, 23 April 1917, dater without bars
5 centesimi, foreign printed matter rate <50 grams

Discovery copy

Device without lines was also discovered on letter mail (latest known use below).

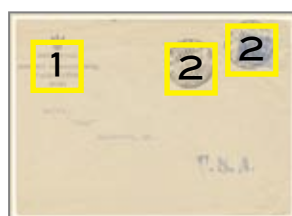


Rome, Italy to Baltimore, Maryland via Genova, 28 June 1918, dated without lines
50 centesimi, <30 grams double weight foreign letter rate

*Only recorded example of
service mail from the office of David Lubin, Institute Founder*

Markings Key

Front



- 1. David Lubin cornercard
- 2. Dated handstamp

Reverse

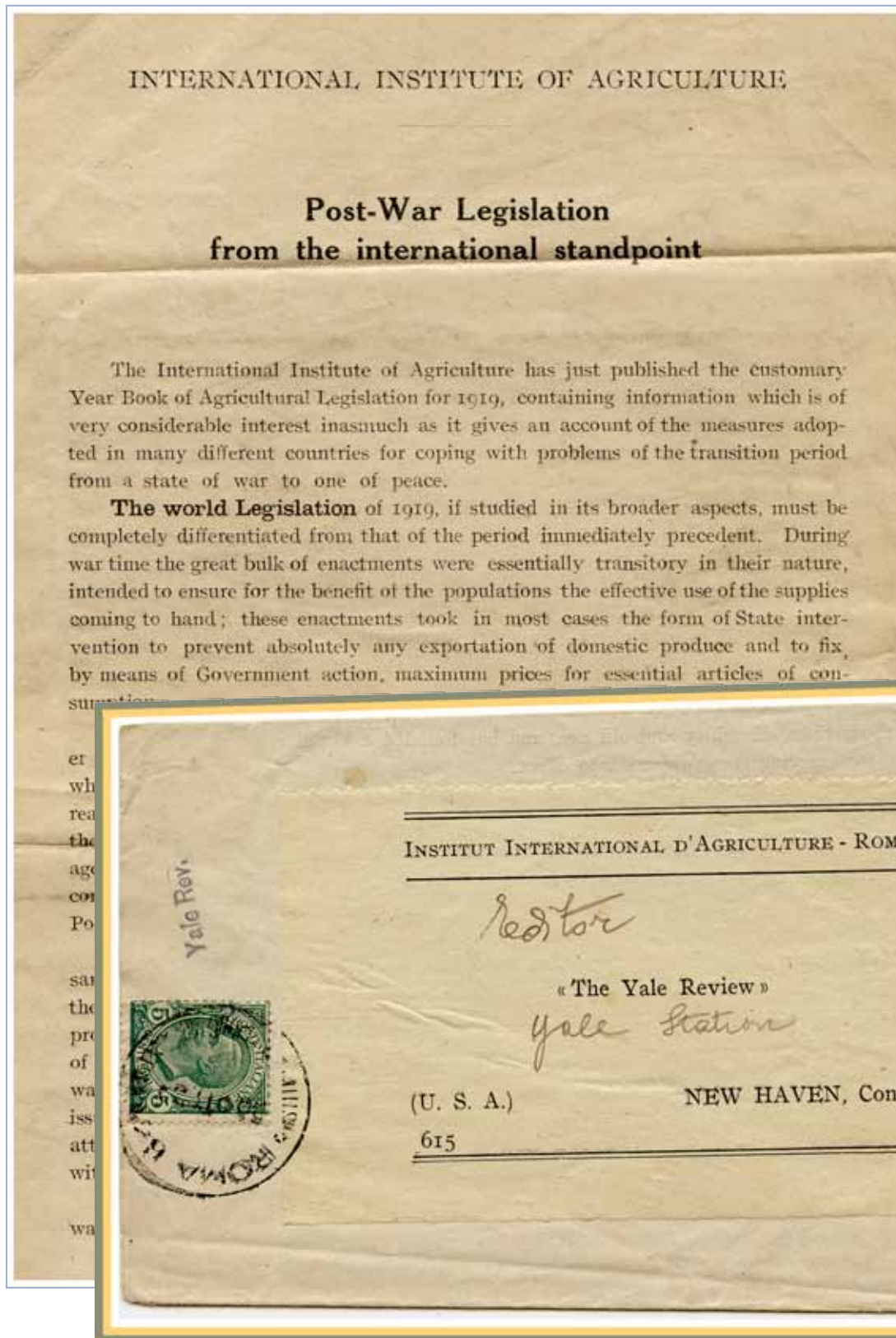


- 3. Genova transit marking
(Genova Posta Estera)



Reduced copy of reverse with Genova transit marking

Due to wear, a 32 mm single ring circular date stamp device replaced the 8 vertical bar devices on official institute service mail.



Single plain ring



(150% Enlargement)

Timely news articles on folded letter sheets were sent to the news outlets of member states with the latest political and agricultural information.

Rome, Italy to New Haven, Connecticut, 20 October 1920, 5 centesimi, foreign printed matter rate <50 grams
Received by Yale Review in New Haven ('Yale Rev.' single line auxiliary handstamp), Form 615 = 'Yale Review'

Earliest recorded example of dater with single ring

2. Plain Circle Device with Single Ring

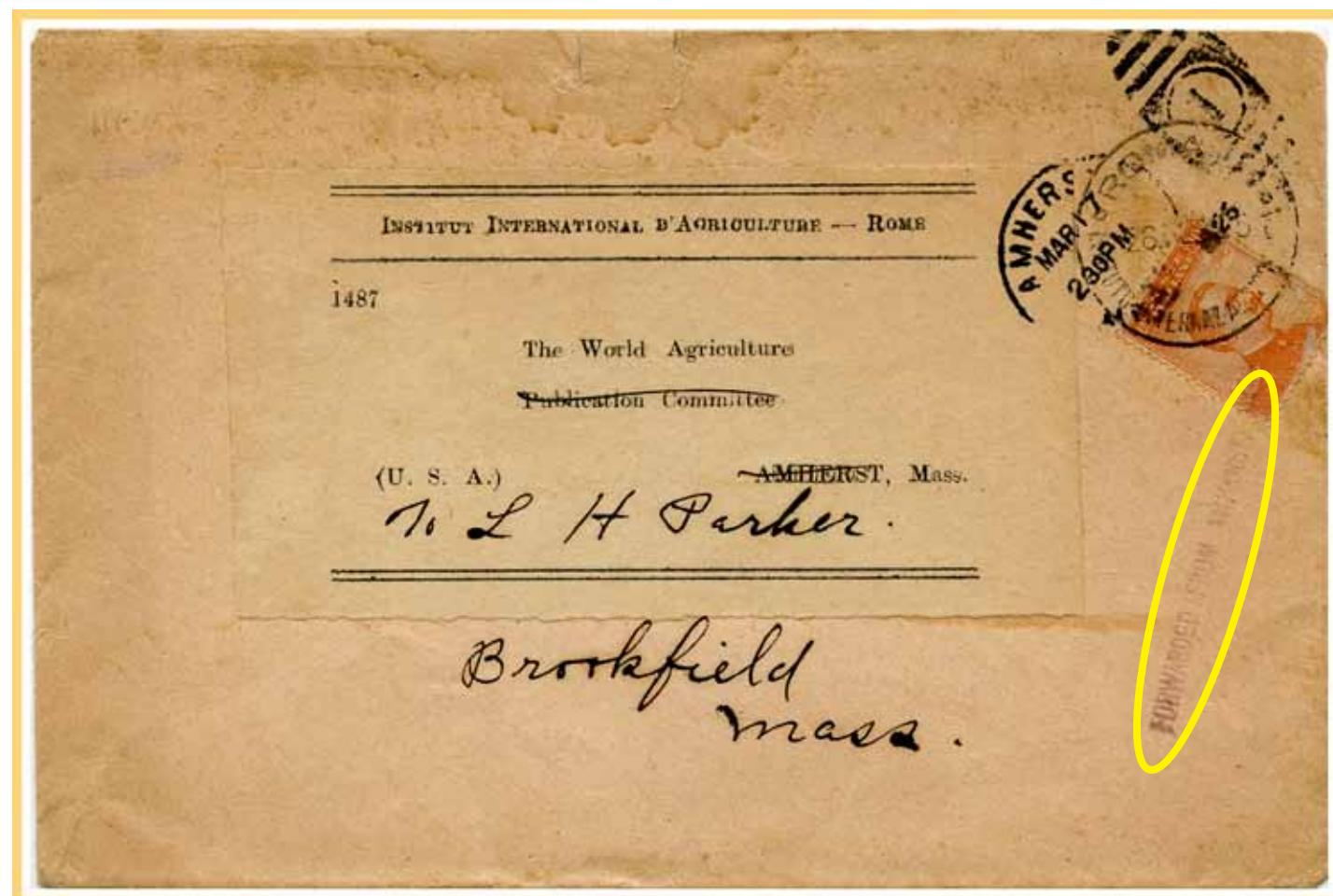
1920 - 1928

Rome, Italy
6 May 1926
20 centesimi, local post card rate



Rome to Bari, Italy
15 October 1925
40 centesimi, domestic post card rate

Rome, Italy to Amherst, Massachusetts,
26 February 1925, Received Amherst
17 March and forwarded to
Brookfield, Massachusetts,
20 centesimi
foreign printed matter rate <50 grams
Single line auxiliary handstamp
"FORWARDED FROM AMHERST, MASS."



The International Institute of Agriculture also hosted an independent organization with similar interests and goals, the International Society of Soil Sciences, founded in 1924. The organization's office was housed within the Villa Umberto and they were allowed to use the IIA postal facility.



Rome, Italy to Bucharest, Romania, 11 May 1926, 1.25 Lire, foreign letter rate <20 grams
International Society of Soil Science stationery

*Two recorded examples of mail from the
International Society of Soil Science in Villa Umberto*

The purpose of the ISSS is to promote all branches of soil science and its applications, to promote contacts among scientists and other persons engaged in the study and the application of soil science; to stimulate scientific research and to further the application of such research.

A 26.5 mm circular date stamp device with arcs replaced the plain circle device on institute service mail.

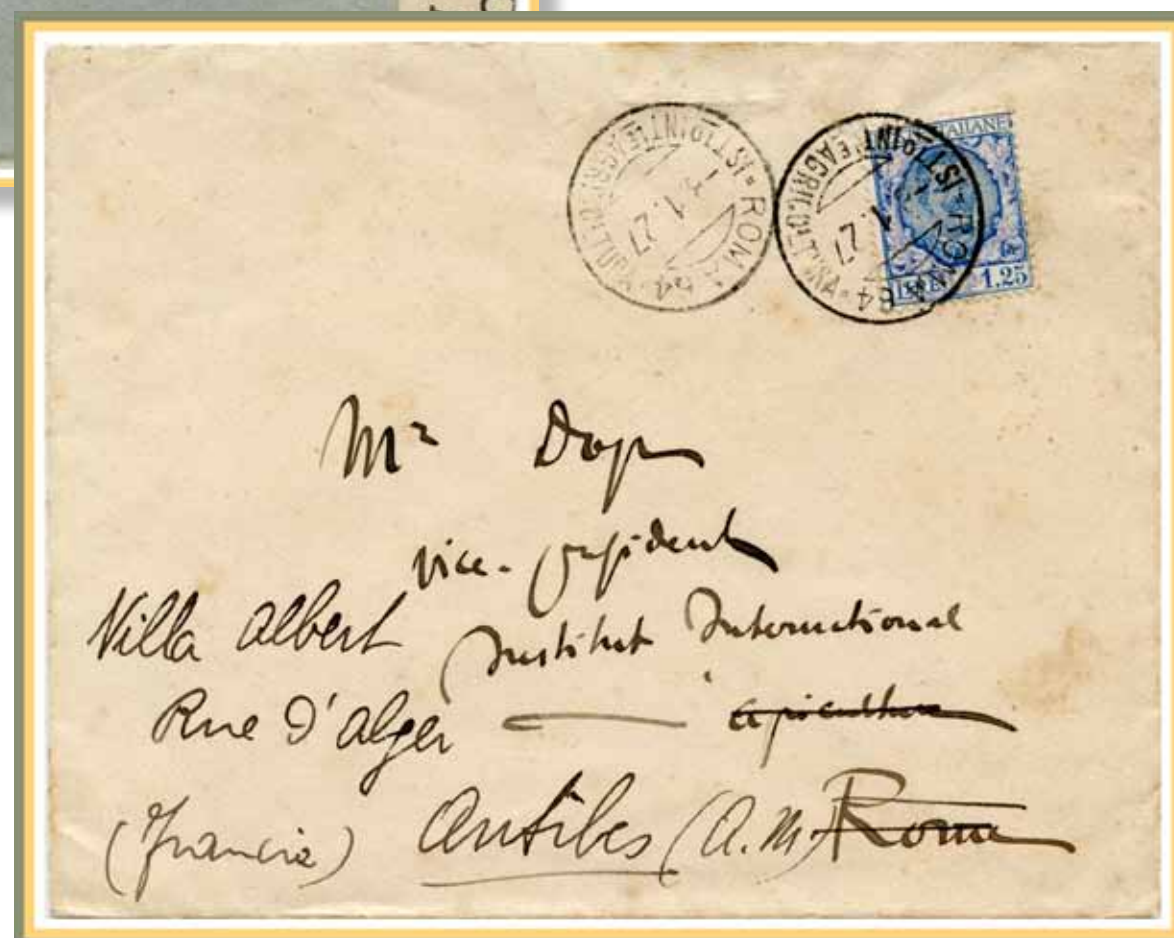


Lower arc extends between letters 'C' and 'O' on right

Arced circle type A



Rome, Italy to Geneva, Switzerland
16 June 1941
25 centesimi printed matter rate <50 grams
Italian censor tape with handstamp seal with control number
Hand applied origin cachet



Rome local mail, 8 January 1927
Hand carried Italian official Senate mail
Addressed to Mon. Louis Dop
Vice-President of the Institute
Redirected to Antibes, France
1.25 Lire, foreign letter rate <20 grams
Stamp added by the Institute for forwarding to France
Seal of the Italian Senate on reverse flap



Seal of Kingdom of Italy Senate on reverse flap

Only recorded example of mail forwarded by the Institute

Rome to Merano, Italy, 17 July 1934
 50 centesimi domestic post card rate
 1.50 Lire registration fee
 (stamps missing on left)
 Addressed to Entomology Laboratory
 Forwarded to Grand Hotel des Alpes
 in Madonna d' Comsiglio, 17 July 1934
 Transit Amb. Roma - Trieste, 17 July 1934
 Received Madonna d' Comsiglio, 19 July 1934

Two recorded examples of
 a registered post card

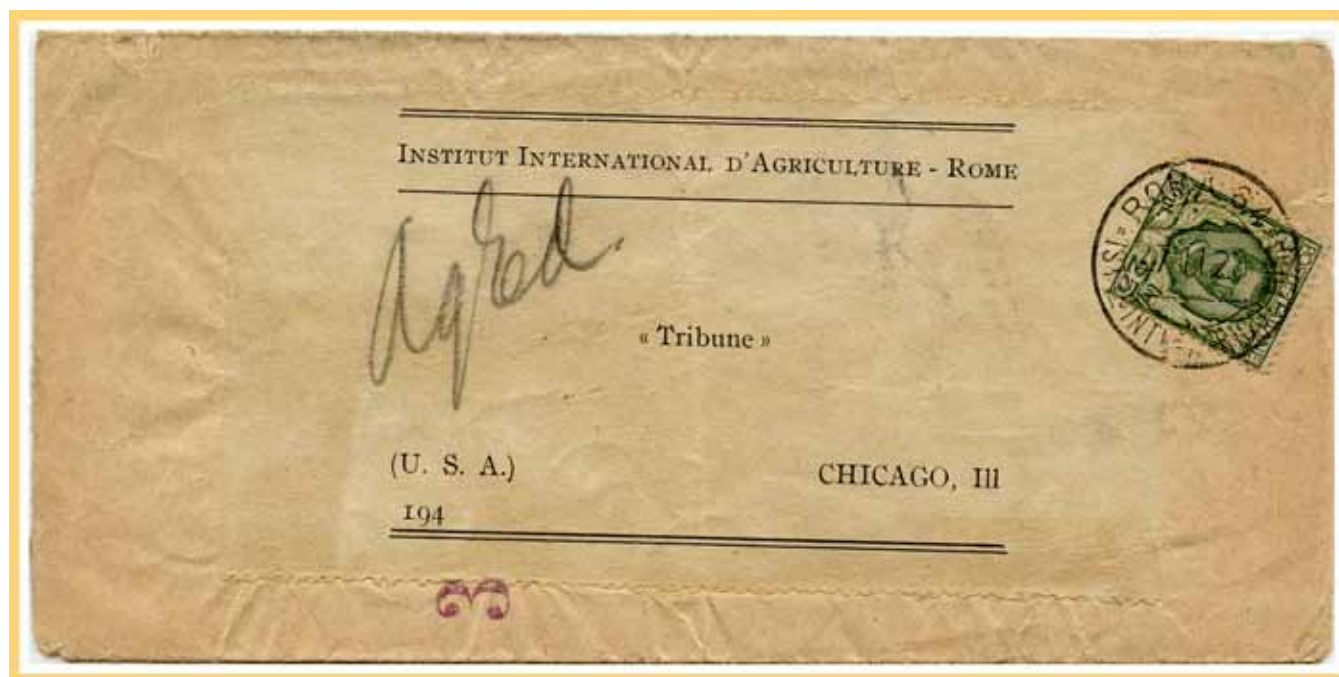


Rome, Italy to Anvers, Belgium, 24 November 1937, 1.25 Lire, foreign letter rate <20 grams,
 1.50 Lire registration fee. Institute used standard Italian registration label with handstamp 'ROMA 64'



Rome, Italy to Seattle, Washington, USA
 6 December 1928, 50 centesimi
 foreign printed matter rate <100 grams
 Label on packet piece

A second arced circle device was introduced two months after the first and used simultaneously with the earlier device. This may indicate a greater quantity of mail demanded a second clerk to help process outgoing mail.



Rome, Italy to Chicago, Illinois
27 November 1928
25 centesimi
foreign printed matter rate <50 grams
Routed to the Agriculture Editor
within the *Tribune* - 'AgEd' in manuscript
Label form number 194
addressed to the Chicago 'Tribune'

Lower arc above
'C' and 'O' on right

Arced circle type B



(150% Enlargement)



Rome, Italy to Utrecht, Netherlands, 31 December 1941
1.25 Lire, foreign Letter rate <50 grams
German censor tape with multiple controller numbers
(possibly looking for monetary instruments)

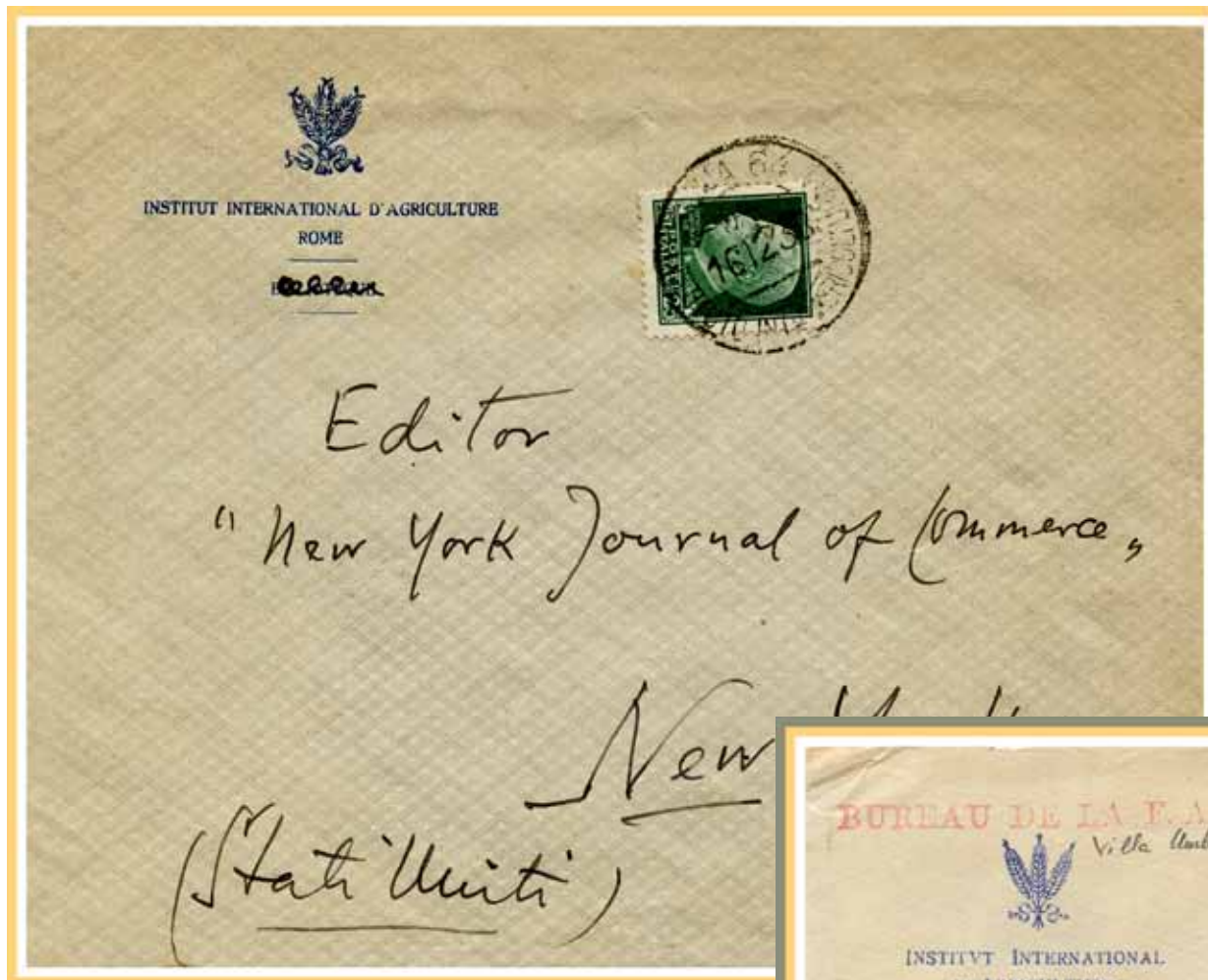
3. Arced Circle Device - Type C

1938 - 1947

The circular date stamp device with arcs design was modified to include text in the lower crescent enclosed in parenthesis.

Lower arc text
with word 'Istituto'
not abbreviated
and letters enclosed
in parenthesis

Arced circle type C



(150% Enlargement)

Rome, Italy to New York, New York, USA, 16 December 1938
25 centesimi, foreign printed matter rate <50 grams

Rome, Italy to Geneva, Switzerland, 7 March 1947
15 Lire, foreign letter rate <20 grams
'BUREAU DE LA F.A.O. à ROME'
Single line auxiliary origin handstamp
Villa Umberto 1 (in manuscript)

BUREAU DE LA F.A.O à ROME
(handstamp overprint)

**5 recorded examples of
overprinted IIA stationery used by FAO**



Epilogue - Demise of the International Institute of Agriculture

The functions of the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) after World War II were assumed by the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Coordination with refugee relief was added and the focus of the IIA changed from reporting information to assisting with distribution and providing educational and advisory resources. IIA property transferred to the FAO in 1946 and it ceased operations. The organization's remaining stationery stock was overprinted by hand for FAO use (*see cover above*).