

Viewing the Feldman Austrian Levant Auction

by John F. Dunn

As we continue our “viewing” of the David Feldman Autumn Auctions, this next installment is as much a “reading” as it is a “viewing.” Befitting their status as a leading international auctioneer, the firm’s presentation of the “E.S.” Austrian Levant Collection included introductions to each section. These introductions provided historical backgrounds that also explained how the postal history of each area fit into the larger whole.

In my presentation, I was going to rewrite the information provided in the Feldman catalog, but decided instead it would be far better to present excerpts while leaving room for lot images that support the text, with as little rewriting [presented in brackets] as possible. I strongly suggest, however, that you go to <www.davidfeldman.com> to get the full flavor of this wonderful presentation. You will also find there colorful historical images that supplement the text.

In our presentation, I have placed lots from the auction with estimates and prices realized, with values converted from euros to dollars as of October 2, the date of the auction, and without the 19.5% surcharges added on to these hammer prices.

And now, to the Feldman presentation:

The enormous scope of “Greater Austrian” philately encompasses several centuries and every philatelic specialty. The Empire of Austria-Hungary had enormous territorial scope, from the Balkans to its Northern Slavic side (not offered directly herein) such as Bohemia, Galicia and parts of Ukraine. In addition to Austria-Hungary proper, the Empire included the Austrian portion of the Italian States, i.e. Lombardy-Venetia, and the extra-territorial Post Offices Abroad throughout the Mediterranean region, from Greece to Egypt, from the Holy Land to Turkey itself, all of which encompassed the Austrian Levant....

Most of the lots are estimated to reflect current market conditions, and as such the estimates reflect an attractive discount from the record price levels achieved over prior decades....

The “Cospoli” [Constantinople] Story

The French ambassador in Constantinople was the very first European dignitary to entertain a regular courier service with his home country. But after a series of Turkish defeats at the end of the XVIIth century, the Divan [high court of the Ottoman Empire] consented in 1699 to also authorize the Austrian embassy on the Bosphorus to hire special envoys for the official mail transport to the West. The bags were transported by six Janissaries [Turkish troops] on the Sofia-Belgrade route to the new frontier, which... followed the Danube and Sava rivers. From there, Croatian or Hungarian cavalry officers took the post in only three days riding to Vienna.

At that time, although in 1374 already Venice had enacted a law against the introduction and spread of pestilence, there existed no quarantine stations along the territorial frontier of the Habsburg Empire in the Balkans.... The plague outbreak in Vienna in 1713 compelled the authorities to temporarily stop the courier ser-



1843 folded letter to Syra with black oval “Agenzia Del Lloyd Austriaco/Costantinopoli” handstamp and slit-disinfected (horizontally, above the address), one of two covers in the lot, estimate \$564, realization \$451

vice until an elaborate sanitary cordon was established. By 1731 a “Purification Ordinance” could triumphantly proclaim that seven principal and twelve auxiliary “Contumaz” stations were in opera-



1866 Folded cover from Constantinople to Venice bearing five Levant 1864 5s, estimate and realization \$986.

tion from Croatia to Transylvania.

This was the breakthrough needed. Except for the Italians and the Russians, who relied on their own facilities, all nationalities present in Constantinople now started to take advantage of the Habsburg routings. In 1748, some 10,000 letters, an average of 800 on every monthly run, were forwarded by the Austrian Office in the Constantinople district of Pera....

By no accident were the Austrian posts considered the best available in Constantinople: speedy, correct, reliable. This goes back to the Emperor Joseph II, son of Maria Theresa, who within 10 years after her death in 1780 managed to completely reform the administration of his vast possessions....

The most interesting period for marcophilists [postmark collectors] begins in 1844 with the elevation of Constantinople or “Cospoli,” as people now started to say, to a full-fledged Austrian postal district. This brought the introduction not only of the elaborate “K.u.K.” [“kaiserlich und königlich,” which stands for “imperial and royal,” and refers to the Court of the Habsburgs] working methods, but also the arrival of several forms of handstamps, including the beautiful “great ornament” circular type, which had its origin in



1867 Austrian Levant 50 soldi with “Specimen” overprint. Estimate \$705, realization \$1,198.



1882 envelope to Cospoli [Constantinople] franked by 1867 10s tied by large "Sped. Post: Presso Lloyd / Smirne 20/9 82 c.d.s., estimate \$564, did not sell. Hungary.

However, the local Austrian postal director, in contrast to his French and Russian colleagues, had to wait until November 1863 before the adhesives of the first Soldi-denominated "Arms type" issue (from Northern Italy) became available for the Austrian "Cospoli" clerks, a full 13 years after the appearance of the first Kreuzer stamps in Vienna. As an indirect consequence, the man in charge dispensed himself from the introduction of a special "killer" handstamp to deface the adhesives, but continued to use the 1844 series of cancels without year plug until as late as 1873.



Austria 15s and 25s with circular ornamental cancel, part of a lot estimate \$423, realization \$282.

The Smyrna [today's Izmir] Story:

...Smyrna...is one of the oldest cities in the world, existing even before the ancient Greeks arrived in Anatolia [Asia Minor, including Turkey]....Around 1838, with the arrival of the paddle steamer, Smyrna entered a sustained period of prosperity. The courier route from Vienna to Smyrna by way of the Balkans used to take over a month...Now, with fast maritime connections, suddenly things became less burdensome....establishing viable commercial exchanges both ways between Europe and Anatolia.

And by 1845 already the Lloyd Austriaco (Austrian Lloyd)



1856 folded letter to Constantinople bearing black oval "Agenzie Del Lloyd Austriaco Smyrna" handstamp, estimate \$338, lot did not sell.

system of shipping lines had become the leading transport possibility in both directions. However, the old Austrian Consular Post Office insisted on its postal privileges. A certain rivalry with the Lloyd ensued....So far nobody seems to have fully explained why Smyrna was the first Austrian Post Office in the Ottoman Empire to issue "thimble" sized cancellers and year plugs, why they had to use makeshift local handstamps...or when and why exactly the Lloyd circular date stamps could take over the bulk of the work from the Consular Office.



1868 Folded cover to Turin bearing 1864 3s together with 1867 25s tied by neat Smirne 8/5 69 thimble c.d.s. and boxed Piroscapi Postal Italiani handstamp. Estimate \$507, realization \$479.

After 1870, the town again made a great leap forward. With the expertise and the material left over from the piercing of the Suez Canal, Smyrna's wharfs, piers and quays were upgraded and soon looked like a model of modernity....Towards the end of the XIXth century, Smyrna had become the most important trading center in the Aegean Sea.

The Balkans and Greece:

Before the Hellenic wars of independence between 1821 and 1829, the European part of the Ottoman Empire covered the totality of the Balkan peninsula, including what nowadays is Greece. When the first Austrian mail runs were opened in the XVIIIth century, Greece was just a historic notion...Even after 1829, Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Epirus, Albania, Rumelia, etc., remained under control of the Divan....



1753 folded letter from Constantinople to Venice, manuscript rating "51" and endorsed "Conbud° Di Sp° D' Catt°," sent before the establishment of the Austrian post office in Antivari, carried part of the route between Constantinople and Antivari by the Montenegrin "bandits," estimate \$564, realization \$1,198.

Salonica in 1777 was the first place after Constantinople to accommodate an Austrian postal service, be it on private initiative. Via Serres, it connected with Sofia (Bulgaria) on the main route from and to Vienna. Occasionally it still employed the time-old individual mail runners in their colorful local costumes, who, keeping in their hand a metal box containing the message, were capable of running 150 miles in 3 days for the reward of one single Theresienthaler.

After 1818, this rather hazardous connection over bad roads and mountainous territory also became a regular mail route, and from about 1840, a weekly mail coach operated all the way from the Aegean Sea via Sofia and Belgrade to Austria.



1847 Small size outer letter sheet from Constantinople to Paris, bearing linear "Constantinople 12 MAI" of the Austrian Levant office, manuscript tax mark "90" soldi, carried by Tatars across the continent first to the border of Serbia, disinfected at Alexinatz on the border, carried across Serbia to the Austrian P.O. in Belgrade where linear "Belgrad 21.MAI" was applied, letter opened and cleaned a second time at the Austrian Quarantine Station of Semlin, with negative "Sigilium Sanitatis" circular handstamp lower left, letter then closed with red wax seal and inscription, "Sigil. Sanitatis Semlinensis," carried across Austria to the French border, with red double ring "Autr. Forbach 29.MAI 47" c.d.s. upper right. Estimate \$2,818, realization \$3,100.



1855 folded letter to Lyon, France sent 31 January 1855 (the Austrian post office was opened that month), with Antivari c.d.s., plus decorative missionary negative seal upper left, estimate \$282, realization \$1,550.



1857 Letter from Kragujevac to Neusatz (Novi Sad), transported by the Serbian post within the country, bearing oval "Posta Kragujevacka" and oval "Naplacena," both in the very rare black color (only two known), used only for letters across the border of Serbia. Sent first to Belgrad, transferred there to the Austrian consular P.O., which applied linear "Belgrad 23.NOV." handstamp, carried across the border and disinfected at the Semlin quarantine station. The manuscript St. Andrew's cross confirmed payment of the Serbian rate at Kragujevac. Only covers from the interior of Serbia were transported by both postal systems. Letters from Serbian Belgrade (Beograd) were posted directly at the Austrian P.O. there. Estimate \$1,691, realization \$2,536.



1859 folded letter to Thessalonika showing the only recorded example of the black double-oval Agenzia Del Lloyd Austriaco / Dardanelli handstamp, estimate \$2,114, realization \$2,255.



1864 envelope to Constantinople franked by 1863 15s tied by extremely rare oval cachet "I. R. Consolato Generale Austriaco In Corfu," also with blue "Corfu 30 Nov" c.d.s., estimate \$4,227, realization \$5,637.

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1867 cover front to Milan with 13 examples of 1867 15s plus one 5s all tied by "Tenedos 16/5" c.d.s., and large PD handstamp, estimate \$4,227, realization \$6,482.

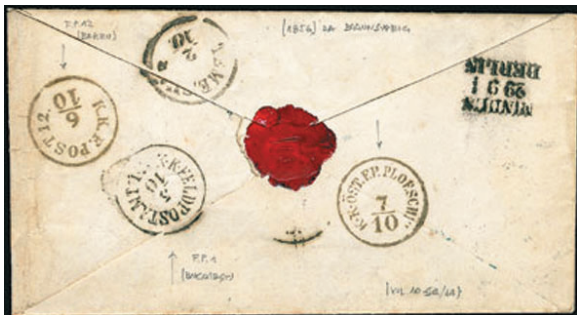
The Principalities of Romania:

Since the de facto union of Romania was only accomplished in 1859, and since the first constitutional prince (Carol I) did not arrive before 1866, the prephilatelic period in this region belonged to the so-called Danube principalities. Existing since the XIVth century, Valachia and Moldavia had come under Ottoman rule shortly after, but their princes (voivodes) had always achieved some autonomy, based on the popularity of the Orthodox faith....

The whole western frontier of the Principalities faced the Habsburg monarchy, bearing in mind that Transylvania belonged to Hungary at that time. Austrian mail routes and Consular Offices existed in 1791, with the regular run from Sofia via Bucharest to Hermannstadt, and prior to 1836 with postal services (extraterritorial post offices) in Kraiova, Jassy, Bottuschan and Galatz. From 1815 up to 1850, the region enjoyed remarkable stability, as Constantinople, Vienna and St. Petersburg had come to the conclusion that in the framework of the Holy Alliance their conflicting interests were served best by maintaining the status quo.

But after the Russian military steamroller in 1849 had made short shrift of the Kossuth rebellion in Hungary, everything changed. The Tsar, at the head of his victorious armies, was convinced he could topple the old order and "liberate" his orthodox Slav "brethren" south of the Pruth.

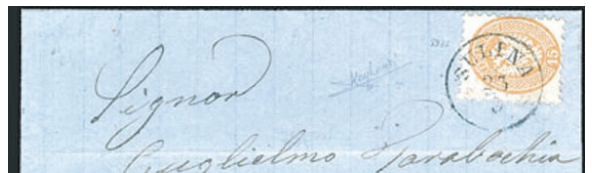
In Vienna, the old chancellor Clemens Metternich, who always had refused to open the "box of Pandora" (as he called the ethnic mix of the Balkans), was forcibly retired after the revolution of 1848.



1856 cover from Braunschweig, sent first to Buzeo and then forwarded to Ploesti, with (on reverse, shown) Minden-Berlin TPO and Austro-Hungarian Temesvar transit and several Austrian fieldpost circular date stamps, an important showpiece from the "forerunner" period of the Austrian P.O.s in Romania, estimate \$8,455, realization \$7,750.



The "Tultscha Combination Cover," an 1866 folded entire from Tultscha in Romania to Yenikioy via Galata, franked by 1864 Austrian Levant 10s blue (left) tied by Tultscha c.d.s. in blue, rare in combination with Liannos Post "Post Locale" 40pa black on rose (right), tied on arrival by black rectangular grid cancel, with "Galata / 3.JY.66" oval date stamp. Estimated at \$14,092, it did not sell.



Top, 1868 folded letter to Trieste franked by 1863 15s tied with "Sulina 23/3" c.d.s., estimate \$1,409, realization \$1,268; Bottom, 1871 folded cover to Venice bearing 1867 15s, 3s and 5s tied by "Sulina 21/5" c.d.s. and "PD" handstamp, estimate \$986, realization \$2,536.

And the young Austrian emperor Francis-Joseph mistrusted tsar Nicolas I with regard to Russian ambitions in Rumania, Bulgaria, Serbia and even Greece.

As a consequence, at the beginning of the Crimean War, he refused to side with the Russians, and on the contrary, proceeded to invade the Principalities as "a token of our neutrality." This military occupation not only brought the new adhesives from Vienna to an Ottoman province, it stimulated for a number of years all Austrian postal activities in the region, evidently with the able assistance of the "Donau Dampf Schiffahrts Gesellschaft" (the "D.D.S.G."). In the long run however, the "K.u.K" imperial incursion into the "East" proved to be the wrong decision. The newly-uniting Romania did not side with Vienna but rather with St. Petersburg. Russia continued to attack the Ottoman Empire, and, at the end, at Sarajevo and after Sarajevo, Francis-Joseph paid with his son's life and a crushing defeat in World War I for his unlikely endeavors to assert Austrian dominance in the Balkans.

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As we continue our “viewing” of the David Feldman Austrian Levant auction, we come to the “Donau Dampf Schiffahrts Gesellschaft” (the “D.D.S.G.”). As with last week’s installment, in this presentation, I have relied on excerpts from the Feldman catalog text, and placed lots from the auction with estimates and prices realized, the values being converted from euros to dollars as of October 2, the date of the auction, and without the 19.5% surcharges added on to these hammer prices.

And now, to the Feldman presentation:

The D.D.S.G. Story:

These four initials used to be quite a popular acronym under the imperial Habsburgs. From Metternich and the Rothschilds onwards it came to be understood as a symbol of Austrian efficiency and of commercial penetration into the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire.

When the “pyrosoph” [an early steamer] started paddling on the most majestic waterway in Europe, the rival “steamhorse” had not yet made its appearance. Within a few years, an entirely new approach became possible when tackling the difficult transport problems in a region where roads, security and regularity so far had been cruelly inadequate. Astonishingly fast progress was made with regard to speed, reliability and capacity of the DDSG ships on the Danube, which henceforth remained their undisputed playing field for over one hundred years.

The “First Imperial Royal Privileged Steam Navigation Company” [the DDSG] was founded on March 18, 1829, on the initiative of two English shipbuilders.... They acquired a 15 year privilege for trading rights on the Danube.... No less than the emperor himself baptized their first steamer with his name: *Franz I.*

By 1834, the D.S.G. fleet counted already five units.... the *Maria Dorothea* ventured out into the Black Sea and all the way to

Constantinople.... By 1837, when the Lloyd Austriaco launched the *Arciduca Ludovia* on its maiden trip from Triest, the D.S.G. were already operating their postal services in most of the Levant ports. These paddle steamers with sails were no longer afraid of maritime storms and considerable distances. Besides Odessa, Saloniki, the Dardanelles and Smyrna, they went to Beyrouth and even Jaffa, as documented by recently discovered postmarks.

[By] 1845... with the high operating costs of extensive fleets, two major shipping companies under the same flag were unsustainable.... it was decided to nominate the Lloyd Austriaco sole official postal agent in the Mediterranean ports and to restrain the D.S.G. to the Danube. An additional “D” (for Danube) was added to the original company name, meaning that the D.D.S.G. schedule had to stop at Sulina on the Danube delta.



DDSG fiscal stamp with DDSG “anchor” design, from an accumulation lot with an estimate of \$423 and a realization of \$676.



1867 cover to S. Elpidio a Mare franked by 1867 3s, 5s and 15s all tied by “SULINA / 3.VIII” c.d.s. of the Danube Company offices. Estimated at \$7,046, it did not sell.

Up to 1875, when the Austro-Hungarian Empire joined the U.P.U., the activities of the D.D.S.G. with its 40 steamers and over 50 agencies between Ulm and the Black Sea remained to be an exceptionally rich treasure trove for postal historians... the collector is



1844 folded letter to Constantinople with framed “Port.Paye.” cachet used by DDSG ships—one of only two examples recorded and dating from the year of the first big expansion of the D.D.S.G. Estimate \$2,536, realization \$4,227.



1867 entire from Sistov to Vienna franked by DDSG 17kr red, cancelled with oval “Agentie / D.D.S.G. / Sistov” in blue with thimble date stamp, used in combination with Austria 1864 5 kreuzer red and Lombardy-Venitia 1864 5s red, tied by oval blue “Fanzjosef / 10” blue maritime cachet and “Alt Orsova” c.d.s. Estimated at \$70,458, it did not sell.

easily fascinated by the prephilatelic conflicts up to 1866, and after that by the wealth of private issues and postmarks.

Without authorization to handle foreign mail, the D.D.S.G. agents rapidly developed imaginative means to accept and transport such letters all the way from the delta (and even Odessa) to Baziasch in Hungary, where the railway could take over. In 1878, after the Congress of Berlin, the D.D.S.G. was forced to abandon all its mailing functions to the official government posts of each of the countries involved.

The Black Sea Story:

After the Crimean War and its wealth of maritime experiences, the Black Sea no longer was a daunting obstacle to passenger and mail connections between Constantinople and the continent. Leaving their moorings in front of the new Galata bridge, the steamers henceforth could either turn to the South and West, towards the Dardanelles and the Aegean Sea, or to the East and North towards the Bosphorus and the Black Sea coasts of Bulgaria and the Dobrudja... In fact...the merchant community had the choice between not two, but three already well functioning routings to Europe. Number one, the traditional overland coach was rather slow, uncomfortable and hampered by various quarantine regulations; number two, the Mediterranean shipping lines, all had to circumnavigate the Peloponnesus before reaching Trieste or Marseilles; number three, the more direct Danube connection via the Black Sea, was under exclusively Austrian management.

From 1867 onward, the popularity of the Danube run increased tremendously. A private British company under Ottoman license, the D.B.S.R. (Danube and Black Sea Railway), had made use of the

remaining earthworks of Roman times, the Trajan Wall, to build a rail link between Kustendje and Czernawoda. This direct crossing of the Dobrudja, though implying the transfer of the mail bags from ship to railway and again to ship, brought two decisive improvements. It shortened the total transit time by 24 to 36 hours in dropping the 1,000-mile-loop via the delta in the North, and it avoided the shipping dangers in the winter months, when the Danube delta carried ice or was completely frozen....

Only 2 years later, a still better rail connection was inaugurated between Varna and Rustschuk. Varna, like Burgas, had been a sleepy Lloyd agency since before the Crimean War, but now the Austrian administration, having seen the success of the Kustendje run, organized matters on a grand scale....For the philatelic heart, Varna has for a long time been a postmark paradise. It was the first Austrian Post Office south of the Danube to introduce a year plug into its cancellers (a "feat" which other foreign posts in the Ottoman Empire had accomplished long before)....



1871 large-part folded cover to Vienna bearing Levant 1867 10s and 5s tied by boxed "Lettere Arivate / Per Mare / Varna / 7.6.71" date stamp, estimate \$282, realization \$141.



Varna (Bulgaria) 1872 cover front to Genoa franked by 1867 3s, 5s and 15s, tied by "Varna 22/6" thimble cancel. Estimated at \$423, it did not sell.



Top, an 1867 folded stampless entire from Galatz via Czernawoda, Vienna and Milan, bearing "20s" paying the 20 soldi fee received upon arrival, plus "10" para handstamp fee applied on arrival at the station, only recorded usage of this company rate marking; Bottom, an 1868 folded entire from Kustenje to Genova, Italy, bearing the Danube & Black Sea Railway Local Post 20pa in mixed franking with Austrian Levant 1864 10s and 15s pair, all tied by "Lloyd Agenzie / Kustendje 13 / 3" c.d.s. and adjacent P.D. in red. From a larger lot of four covers and a specialized collection of essays and reprints of the Danube & Black Sea Railway. It sold at the top end of its \$28,183 to \$42,275 estimate.

The South, From Crete to Egypt, From Rhodes to Palestine:

The southernmost outposts of the Austrian administration were actively present on the great islands of Crete, Rhodes and Cyprus, and on shore as far as Beyrut, Jerusalem and Alexandria....

It must be remembered that Crete under the Minoan kings was the first thalassocracy (sea power) ever...even before the Phoenicians...

The story of the smaller Rhodes (Rhodos), though also going back to the Minoan age, evokes essentially the destiny of the Crusaders. Most of the impressive castles and fortifications of the Knights



1878 envelope to Philadelphia bearing 1867 3s, 5s and 15s tied by "Berutti [Beyrut] 14/3" c.d.s. with "New York / Paid All" transit in red and boxed "Franco," estimate \$564, realization \$1,127.



Alexandria Ipi red, single (left) tied on folded cover to Trieste by black "Poste Vice-Reali Egiziane / Cairo / 18.Nov.67" c.d.s. in combination with Austrian Levant 15s brown (right) applied in transit at Alexandria and tied by "Alexandrien / 18.11" c.d.s. The 1 piastre paid the domestic rate to Alexandria and the 15s paid for the onward journey to Trieste. Estimated at \$9,864, it did not sell.



1874 envelope to the Papal States franked by 1867 10s pair and 3s single, tied by "Gerusalemme 9/10" c.d.s., boxed "Piroscrafti Postali Austriaco" and "PD," estimate \$338, realization \$775.



1870 folded cover to Syra, Greece, franked by 1867 2s vertical pair and two 3s, all tied by "Porto Said 12/4 70" thimble c.d.s., charged on arrival for internal postage with Greece Large Hermes 20L tied by "Syros 12 Apr 70" c.d.s., estimate \$14,092, realization \$18,318.



1876 folded letter to Meteline bearing 1867 10s tied by "Larnaca Di Cipro 10/8" c.d.s. Estimated at \$1,409, it did not sell.

Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem can still be admired today. Their heroic resistance to the Turks for over 200 years has been seen as a symbol for the rights of Christianity on this island....before the Knights evacuated Rhodes in 1522 under an honorable capitulation. After that, the island remained under Ottoman rule for nearly four centuries until in 1912...The Austrian post office was then shut, to the dismay of the mostly Hellenic islanders. Only in 1947 did Rhodes finally come to Greece.

Cyprus, for postal historians, seems to be the most popular of all Mediterranean islands. This may be due to the impressive performance of the British administration, which between 1878 and 1960 issued a rich variety of philatelic material. But in our perspective the merit has to be shared with its predecessors, the Austrian Consular Office and the Lloyd Office in Larnaca, which succeeded, prior to 1878, in catering to the mailing needs of a large

Greek merchant community, for which the Ottoman authorities had not really much understanding.

...The Austrian Larnaca [post]marks continue to be among the most sought after pieces from foreign posts offices in the Ottoman Empire.

The Austrian Lloyd Story:

As indicated by its name, the Austrian Lloyd was meant to be an insurance company, specialising in maritime trade. However, the Vienna government was not slow in recognising the strategic importance of regular shipping connections throughout the Mediterranean Sea. In 1836, only three years after its inception, the company, having received the necessary financial guarantees, decided to build their own steamers for the transport of goods, passengers and mails.

Ten years later, the ships from Trieste had become a common feature...along the far away coasts of the Ottoman Empire.... However, if the Lloyd Story is closely linked to the successes and failures of the Habsburg monarchy confronting the Divan, it also stands by itself as a fascinating field of research for postal historians....

With the arrival of the paddle-steamer, and the development of

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1901 Registered envelope to Vienna bearing Austria 1901 5h(2) and 25h tied by "KUK Kriegsmarine SMS Maria Theresia," part of a lot that also included a censured picture post card from Pola, estimate \$423, realization \$1,057.

a large scale enterprise actively supported by the state, it gradually overtook (for central Europe and beyond) the more cumbersome overland mail....

Among other aspects of the Lloyd presence in the Ottoman Empire let us mention the language problem....When the Lloyd insurance company had turned to active shipping, at first in Northern Italy and the Adriatic Sea, it had naturally embraced the local language....when the runs were extended to the eastern Mediterranean and even the Black Sea...When the Lloyd's agents had to work hand in hand with the Austrian consular officer in a port of call, it occasionally used German along with French....Besides Greek, however, no language seemed better suited than Italian. Since the medieval forays of the Amalfitani, the Genovese, the Pisans and the Venetians into these parts of the world, every mariner and trader in the Ottoman Empire was more or less familiar with ...the language



1902 Greek 10L post card to Lussinpiccolo with blue "Helios / OE.Lloyd" c.d.s., from a lot that also contained a 1900 Ipi lettercard to Vienna with blue "Lloyd Austriaco / XXVIII" c.d.s. Estimated at \$705, the lot did not sell.

of Dante Alighieri.

In fact, for almost 30 years the Lloyd Austriaco was pioneering, with quasi-revolutionary implications. Trieste concluded postal treaties with the Papal State, the Two Sicilys, the Ionian Islands, Greece, Serbia, Russia, Romania, Egypt and, of course, the Ottoman Empire. For all these countries, the politically involved shipping line became a schoolmaster not only in shipping matters, but also in postal expediency, diplomacy, export, import, communications, customs, working conditions, bookkeeping and (why not?) modern tourism.

After the achievement of the Suez canal, the Austrians went even one step farther by initiating a direct run to India. With the creation of the dual monarchy in 1867, the company was renamed "Lloyd Austro-Hungarico." But from the 1860s onward, the glorious Lloyd monopoly in the Eastern Mediterranean area came to an end. France, England, Russia and others had successfully taken up the gauntlet and wanted part of the cake. Finally, after 1875 and the U.P.U., an entirely new era was dawning.