

Early letter of **1588** carried from *Meiningen* to *Frankfurt am Main* by Thurn and Taxis foot messenger.



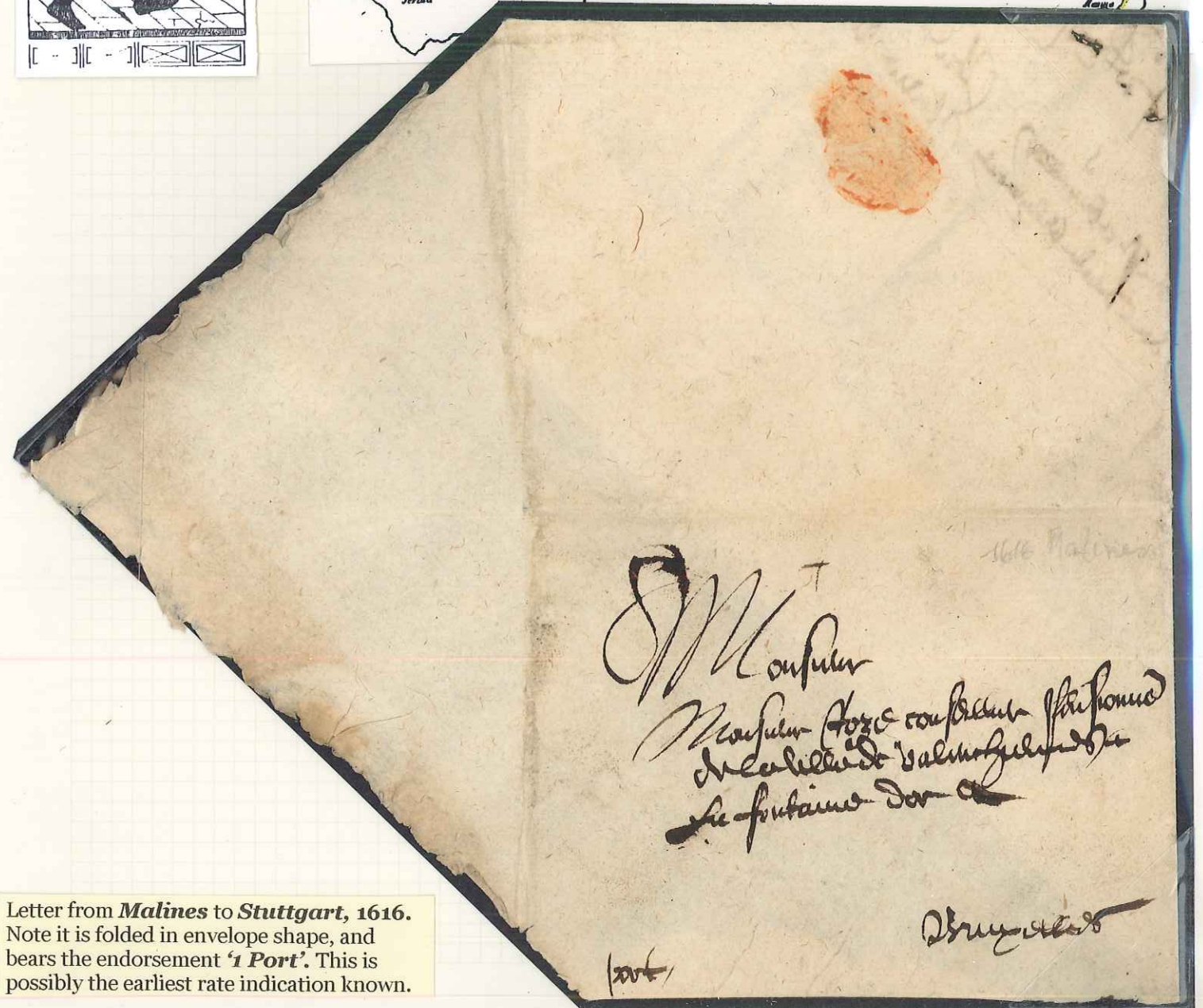
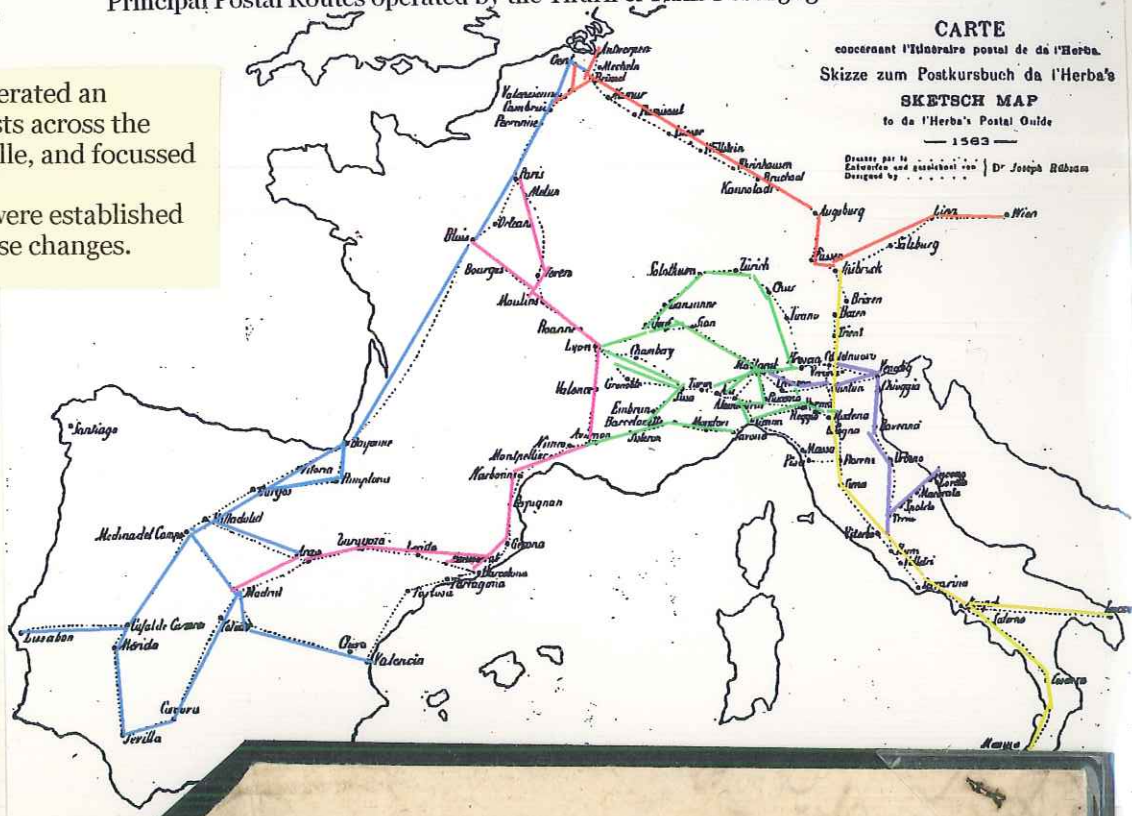
*Linn Linnoson, Linnosson. Und
adelskärsten Linn M: Nicodemus
Sjöen, Statsrättern, und Syndico
zu Göteborgs Majestätens Rådere
Christligen Liden, Linnen und Sonnet.*

St. Glensfurt

[illegible]

Principal Postal Routes operated by the Thurn & Taxis Post 1563

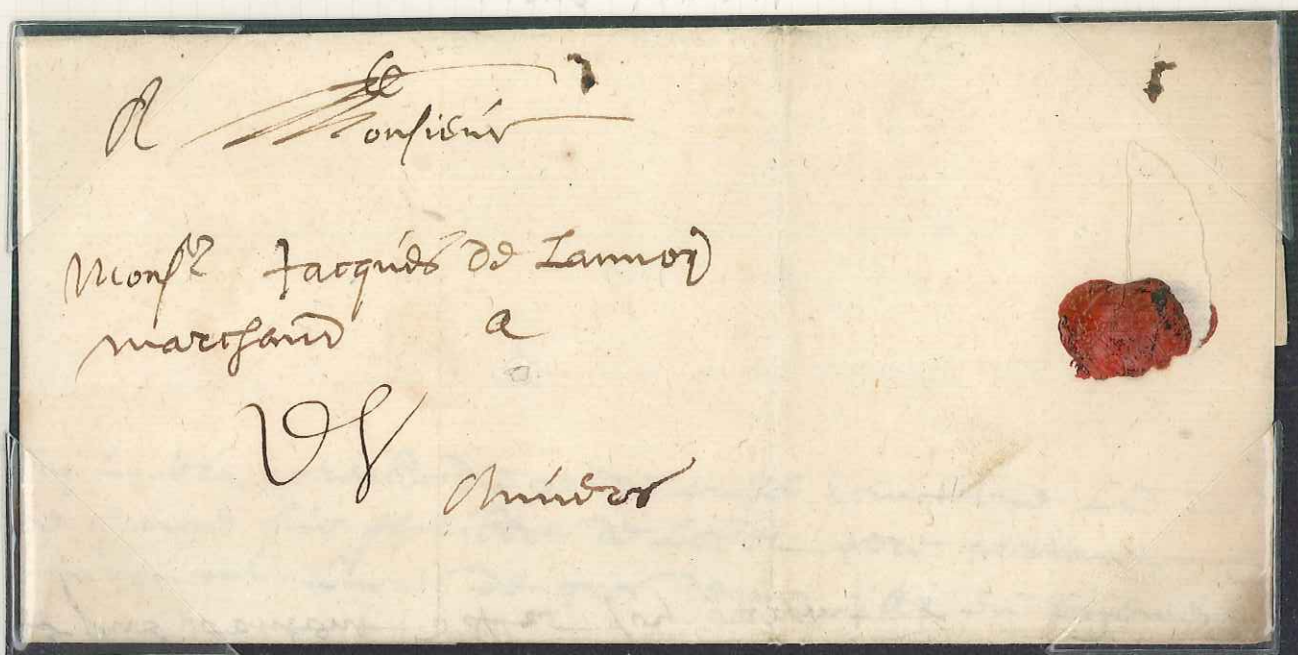
By 1600, the princely house operated an extensive network of horse posts across the Continent, from Vienna to Seville, and focussed on Brussels and Innsbruck. A network of posting stations were established 7 leagues apart to allow for horse changes.



Letter from **Malines** to **Stuttgart**, 1616. Note it is folded in envelope shape, and bears the endorsement '1 Port'. This is possibly the earliest rate indication known.



At the end of seventeenth century, rate markings began to appear on individual Commercial letters to indicate fees to be collected from recipients.
 In Flanders the mark was 'V8' meaning 8 stuivers.
 (top) *Mons* to *Antwerp*, May 4th 1694.
 (bottom) *Tournai* to *Antwerp*, April 1700.



ANWERP
 Mijn Heer
 D^r L^r Lucas franc: 1747
 jacobsen
 tot ghenot

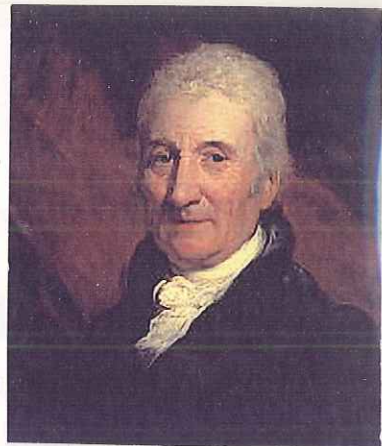
Mijn Heer
 D^r Heer Jean Louis
 de wolf Coopman
 tot kop
 tot alth

D^r Heer J. L. de Wolf
 Coopman
 tot alth

Throughout the 18th century when the Netherlands were in Spanish and Austrian Occupation, the couriers of Thurn and Taxis, numbering over 20,000 across the entire system maintained a regular horse post throughout Flanders and Brabant from their Headquarters at Brussels. Shown here are three letters from **ANTWERP** (1747, 1761 and 1787) to various addresses in Flanders, with the rate of 2 (stuivers) to be paid by the recipient. Despite the ravages of War postboys maintained a regular service.

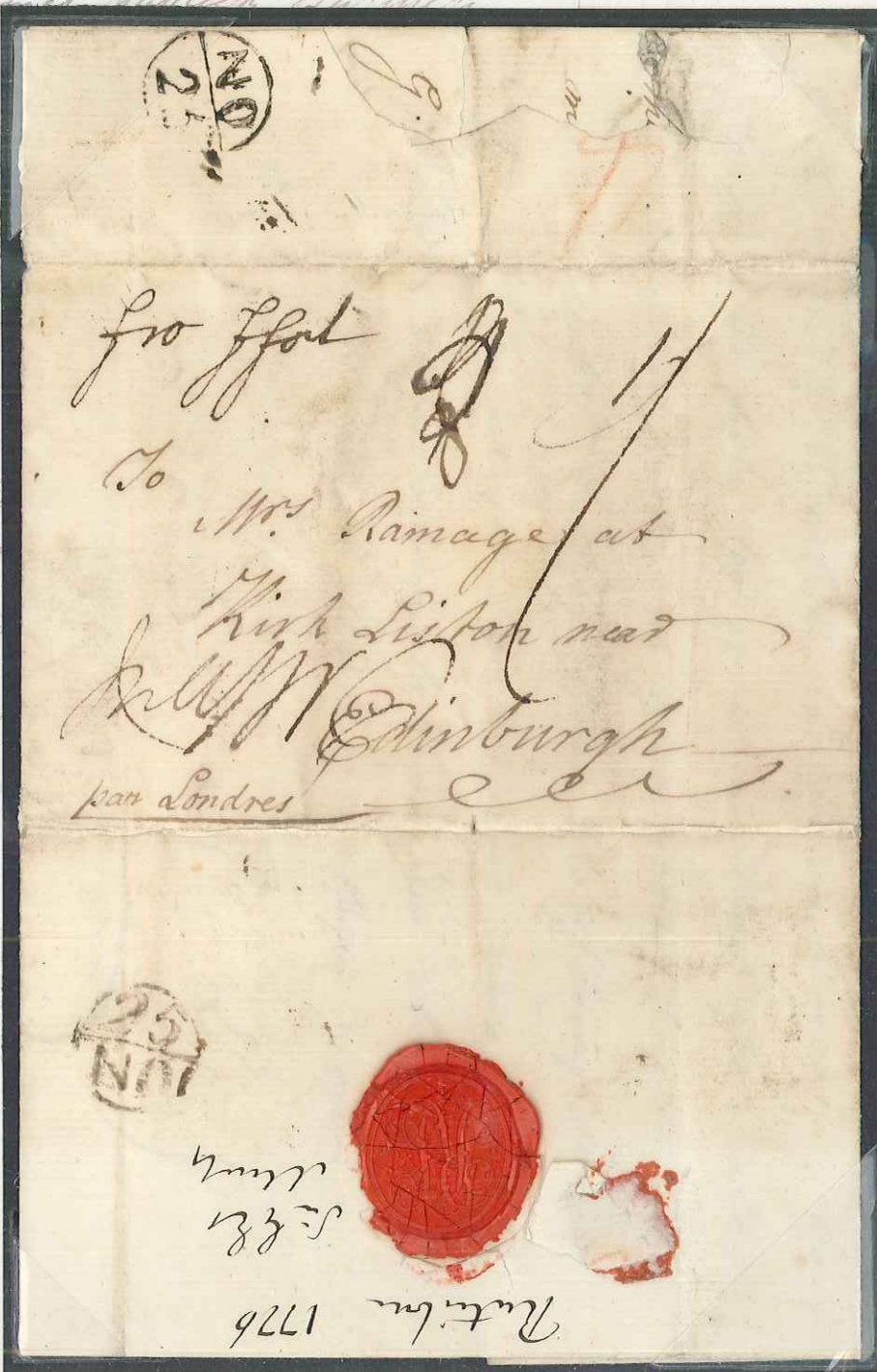
14/

Ratibon 13 Novr 1776



My dear Henney

This is my regular Day of writing;
 & you must allow a person who is charged with this
 day's important affairs at the Diet of the Holy
 man Empire, to have sometimes publick business
 of consequence to transact
 must be laid aside.
 some letters to write to
 state's office, which makes
 the pleasure of conversing
 with. — This comes there
 in good health &c. &c. — at
 the ordinary time past with
 is better. — So the Cap
 he succeeded. How has the
 for your wheat Land? —



Diplomatic Letter from **Sir Robert Liston** (1742-1838), dated November 13th 1776 from **Ratibon** to **Edinburgh**. Liston was attending the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire as an observer for the British government and the letter is addressed to his sister Henrietta ('Hetty') and describes the Diet's proceedings in detail. Carried free to (probably) **Hamburg**, via **Frankfurt am Main** (endorsement in ink, **Fco ffort**). Strikes of home and overseas Bishop Marks for November 25th in London, and rated 1/-.

COBURG.
90 APR. 1846

[Faint circular postmark]

Im Auftrag von K. H. Sch.

Ducal mail from Coburg. These letters are from the personal correspondence of Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Coburg Gotha (1818-1893), the elder brother of Prince Albert. From 1844 he ruled as sovereign Prince and in return for allowing the Thurn & Taxis post to operate in his territory, he received a free postal concession.

These letters with the straight-line **COBURG/** date mark in red, indicating free of postage. Each letter has an elaborate printed heading and are sealed by the ducal seal. Note that these letters show evidence of having been sewn closed, a method used to secure sensitive or important correspondence.

Im Namen Seiner Hoheit des Herzogs
Ernst
Herzogs zu Sachsen Coburg und Gotha. &c. &c.

COBURG
31 JUN. 1846

[Handwritten signature]
Coburg.