

FLYING MERCURY



**GIOVANNI DA BOLOGNA
(1529-1608)**

The Central motif was taken from the famous bronze statue by Giovanni da Bologna (1529-1608) which is in the national museum, Florence: Italy.

The sculptor, also called Giambologna, was not as one would expect born in Bologna, Italy, but in Douai, northern France.

BACKGROUND

In 1899 the Greek Postal Authorities made a ten year contract with the London paper and printing firm of J.P. Segg & Co., who were in a sense actually the agents of the Greek Government, their proprietor being a Greek National, G. Skliros, for the printing of new postal stationery, a new definitive stamp issue, a definitive A.M. set and a new set of postage due stamps. J.P. Segg & Co. gave the order to Johnston of the Johnstonia Engraving Co. who had invented what he thought was a new method of printing from engraved plates. During 1900, Johnstonia Engraving Co., made the dies not only for the postage stamps but also for the A.M. set and the postage due set.

PRINTING AND TECHNICAL DETAIL

Although the Johnstonia Engraving Co. was charged by J.P. Segg & Co. to print the stamps, they could not do so owing to machine troubles arising from the new method invented by Johnston. So, in March 1901, Johnston handed over his dies, two for each of the lepta values, to Perkins, Bacon and Co., who had been awarded the contract, and they chose the better of the dies to start the printing run. The printing plates of 10 X 10 stamps were made from these dies; the lepta values and the 1 Dr. being engraved and the top three values being lithographed, owing to the metallic colours not lending themselves to engraving.

THE PRINTING PLATES

In the printings of the stamps of this issue, it is generally possible to distinguish two printing periods. In the first period, 1901 to 1905, all values were printed, for the lepta values the plates consisted of 100 stamps made up 10 X 10 and for the drachma values 50 stamps of 5 X 10. During this period only the plates of the 1 and 5 lepta were replaced.

- Rather early, in the 1903 run, it became necessary to produce new printing plates for the 1 and 5 lepta stamps, being the most used values. The second plate of the 1 l. was produced from the same die as the first plate and therefore it is impossible to distinguish between plates 1 and 2 from the stamps only.
- The second plate for the 5 lepta value was made from the same (but retouched) die as was used for the first plate. By means of this retouch the stamps of plates 1 and 2 of the 5 lepta can be identified.
- During the second printing period 1906 - 1910, the values of 1,2,3,5,10,25 and 50 lepta were produced in plates with two blocks of 100 stamps, which would give a gutter. These sheets of 2 X 100 stamps were not delivered as such to the Greek Post Office but were cut into sheets of 100 even before perforating. This is why there exist differences on the printing of plates with the previous printing, for the values 1,2,3,5,20 and 50l.
- For the 10 lepta plate the original die was retouched and produced stamps that conformed to Types 1 and 2 of the 5 lepta.
- For the 25 lepta the same die was used and no differences have been noted.
- The 30 and 40 lepta values were only printed in 1901 - 1902 and the stock remained sufficient until the end of the life of this issue, and therefore no new plates were produced.
- The engraved 1 Dr., however, was not only printed in the first period but, as stock ran out, was printed again in the second period but from the same die.

THE PAPER

The paper was originally supplied by J.P. Segg & Co. This original thick paper was made by Allen.

The thin paper was supplied by Jas. Wrigley & Co.

All lepta values and the 1 Drachma were printed on both kinds of paper whilst the 2, 3, and 5 drachma values were printed on thick paper.

FLYING MERCURY

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FLYING MERCURY

DIE PROOF



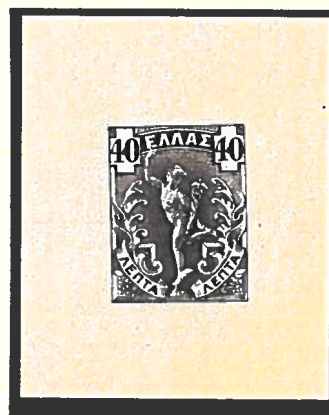
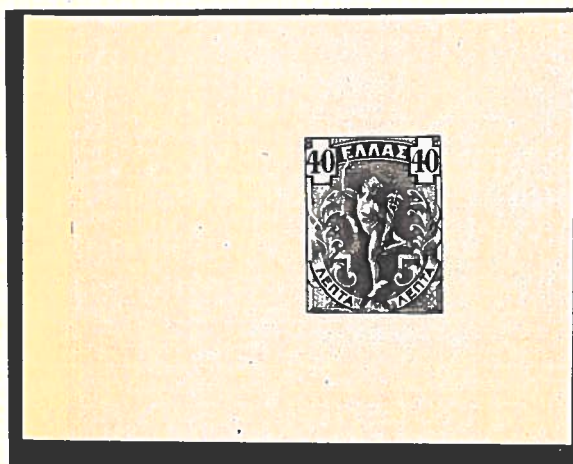
Proof on cartton paper without value in red colour.



Die proof on cartton paper without value in red colour.

FLYING MERCURY

DIE PROOF



Die proof of the 40c in black colour type I and type II.



Double die proof of the 40c value showing the two types of the stamp in black.

FLYING MERCURY

DIE PROOF



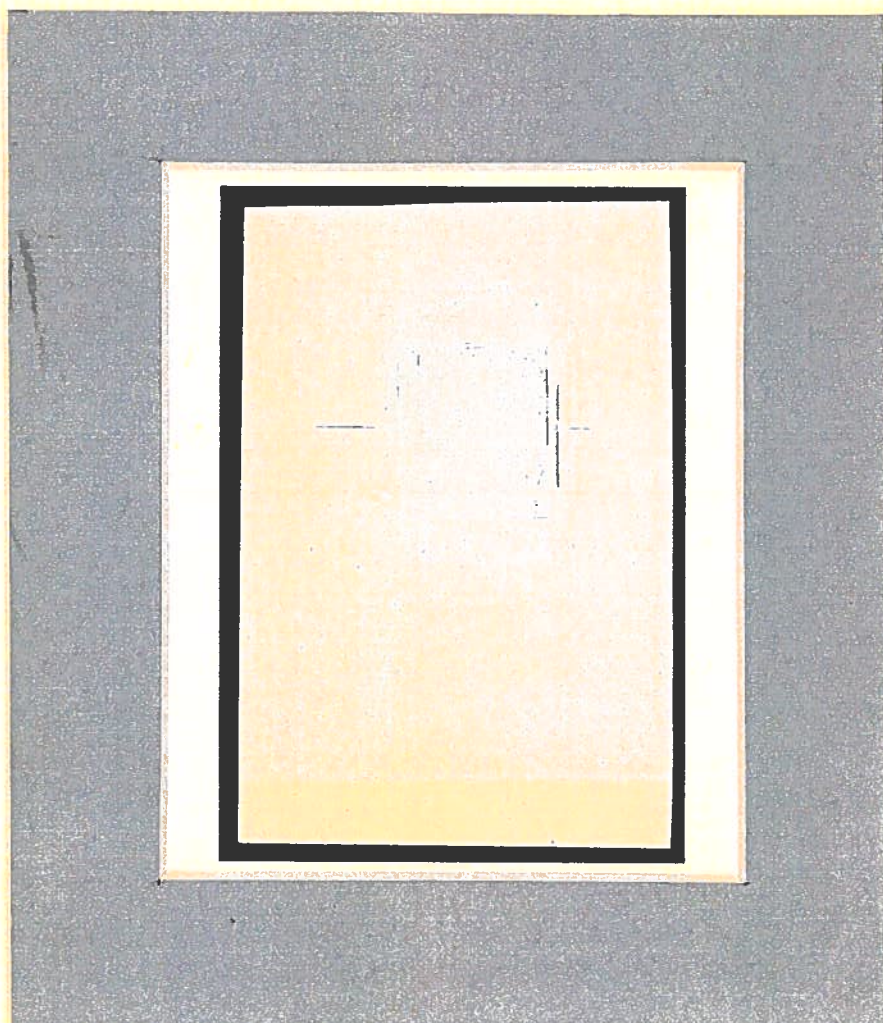
Die proof of the 10l value in red colour thin paper.



Final die proof of the 5 dr. in thin paper

FLYING MERCURY

DIE PROOF



Die proof of 10c on thin paper.
A very dry print almost without colour but strong embossing.

FLYING MERCURY

"SPECIMEN"

Hermes 1 lepta brown to 5 drachma gold, the smaller lepta values in blacks of nine, the larger drachma values in blocks of eight (4X2), all perforated "SPECIMEN" six punctures for each lepta block, four punctures per drachma block, all inverted or reversed, all affixed to four ledger pages and one part page.

From an archive of material supplied by Perkins Bacon & Co Ltd. To the paper makers John Dickinson & Co Ltd. of London











FLYING MERCURY

BLACK COLOUR PROOFS



Thick paper 1l type I.



1L on thin paper type I



Thin paper 2l type I.



Thick paper 3l type I.



Thick paper 5l type I.



Thick paper 10l type I.

FLYING MERCURY

BLACK COLOUR PROOFS



Thick paper 1L type I.



1L on thin paper type I



Thin paper 2L type I.



Thick paper 3L type I.



Thick paper 5L type I.



Thick paper 10L type I.

FLYING MERCURY

BLACK COLOUR PROOFS



Thick paper 40l type II.



Thin paper 3 dr.



Thick paper 1 dr.



Thin paper 2 dr.



Thin paper 5 dr.

FLYING MERCURY

BLACK COLOUR PROOFS



2l type I thick cream paper



5l type I thick cream paper



10l type I thick cream paper



20l type I thick cream paper



50l type I thin cream paper



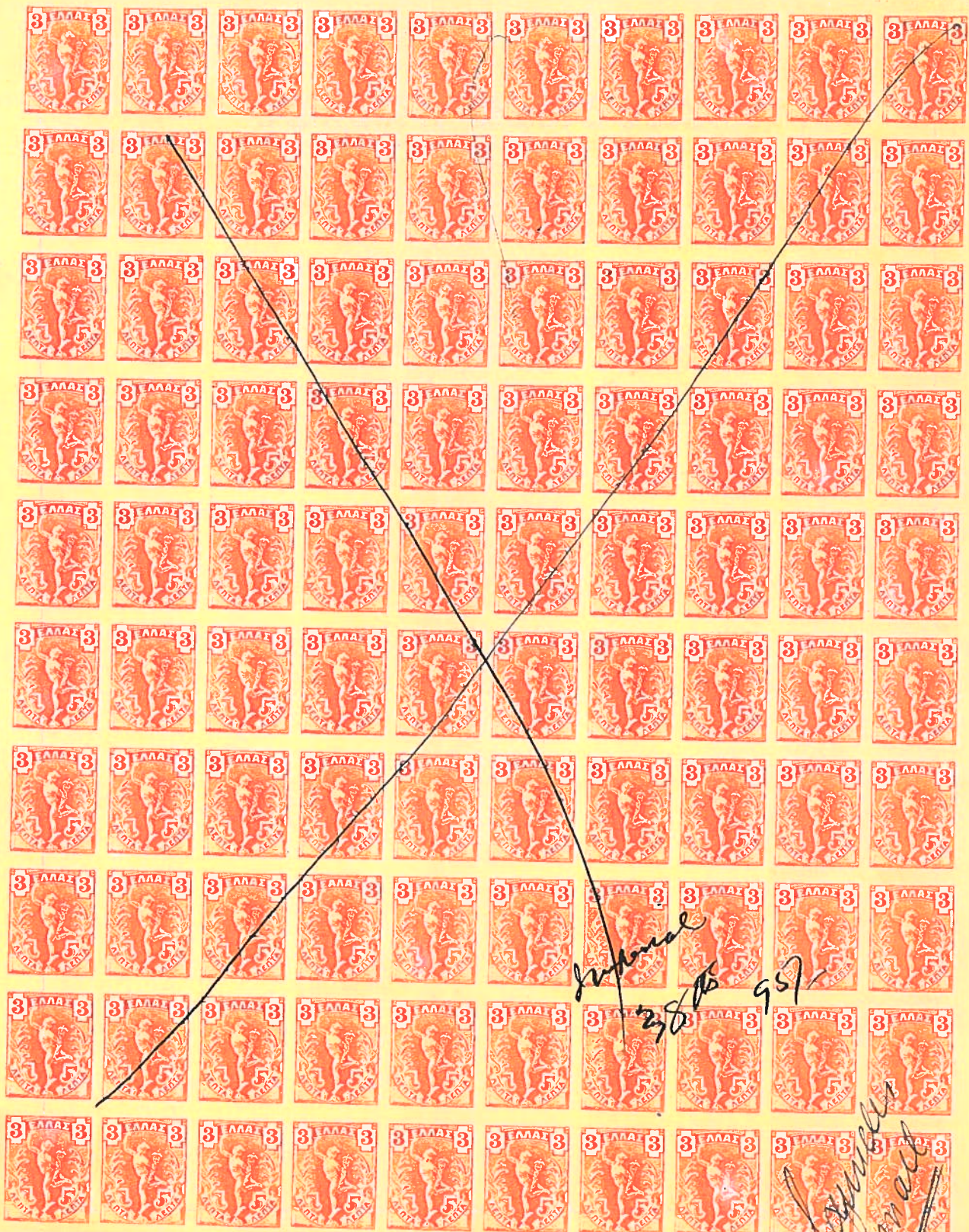
30l type I thick cream paper

FLYING MERCURY

COMPLIMENTS CARD



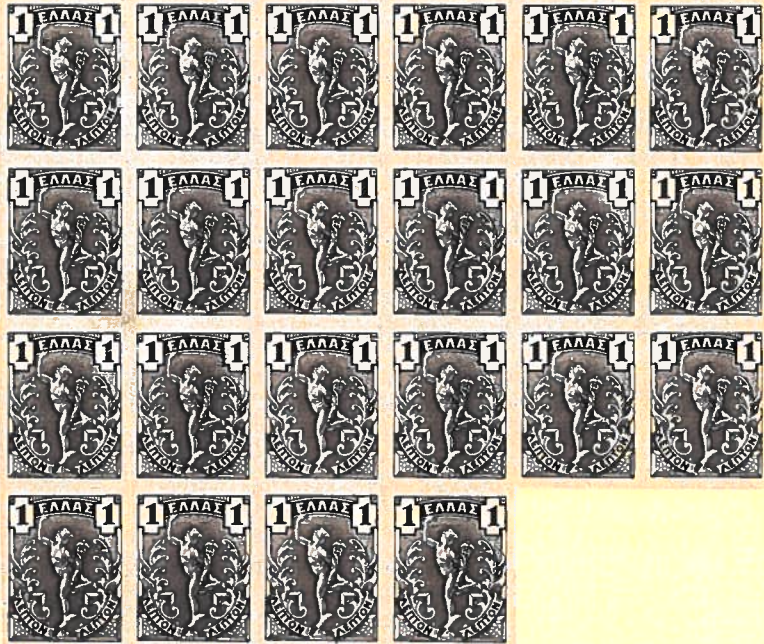
In 1900, after approval of the die proofs, the greek postal authorities ordered from J.P. Segg & Co., a new year card to announce the appearance of the new sets to be made in 1901. This card is a remarkable piece pf professional skill. It is printed on thick cream coloured card, with gilt edges, on which the 5 L., 10 L., 25L., 50 L. values of the flying mercury set of postage stamps, the 3 lepta value of the postage due, the 1 Dr., value of the A.M.Set and the text are all engraved, the golden 5 Dr. of the F.M.Set is lithographed and the greek coat of arms, in gold, silver and blue is embossed.



Final proof of the 3l, orange in full sheet of 100, showing also a part of the neighbouring sheet.
Manuscript of the printer by pen, for approval.



Part sheet of 100, 1l black proof - 18 pieces missing - on carton paper signature METAXAS.



Metaxas

FLYING MERCURY

COLOUR PROOFS



51 scarlet colour carton paper



51 pink "WEAKENING" of colour



51 colour carmin carton paper



51 in brown-lake with hole punched in each stamps of security reasons on thin paper.



51 green on thin paper



51 Bright Green on thin paper

FLYING MERCURY

COLOUR PROOFS



20l olive bistre on thick paper



20l Brownish Grey on thick paper



20l Grey on thick paper



30l Yellow Brown on carton paper



20l emerald on thick paper with perforation



30l carmin rose on carton paper

FLYING MERCURY

COLOUR PROOFS



40l black on carton paper



50l Brown Lilak on thin paper



50l Yellow orange on thin paper



50l Light Brown on thin paper



50l Red Brown on thin paper



50l Final colour on thin paper



2 Dr. Final colour on thin paper



5 Dr. Final colour on thin paper

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1 Dr. on thin paper in corner strip of 3, imperforated horizontally



1 Dr. perforation 11 1/2 x 12 1/2



1 Dr. corner copy



1 Dr. in corner block of 4 perforation 12 1/2 x 14, imperforated between upper pair and margin



1 Dr. imperforated between

FLYING MERCURY

IMPERFORATE STAMPS



30l thick paper



5 Dr. on thick paper double print of the lower stamp one inverted



3 l on thick paper

FLYING MERCURY

IMPERFORATE STAMPS



5l on thin paper type I



25l on thin paper type I



10l on thin paper type I



1 Dr on cream thin paper



1 Dr. on white thin paper



1 Dr. on white thick paper

FLYING MERCURY

IMPERFORATE STAMPS



1l Light Brown on thin paper
type II



1 | Brown on thin paper
type II



2l Grey on thin paper
type II



2l Light Grey on thin paper
type II



5l on thin paper type II

FLYING MERCURY

IMPERFORATE STAMPS



50l on thin paper
type II



10l Carmine
on thin paper
type II



10l on thin paper
type II



20l on thin paper type II

FLYING MERCURY

VARIETIES



11 perforation 11 1/2



11 with commemorative red postmark



51 Ultramarine never used



51 Ultramarine imperforation never used



40l with slant



25l imperforated between

FLYING MERCURY

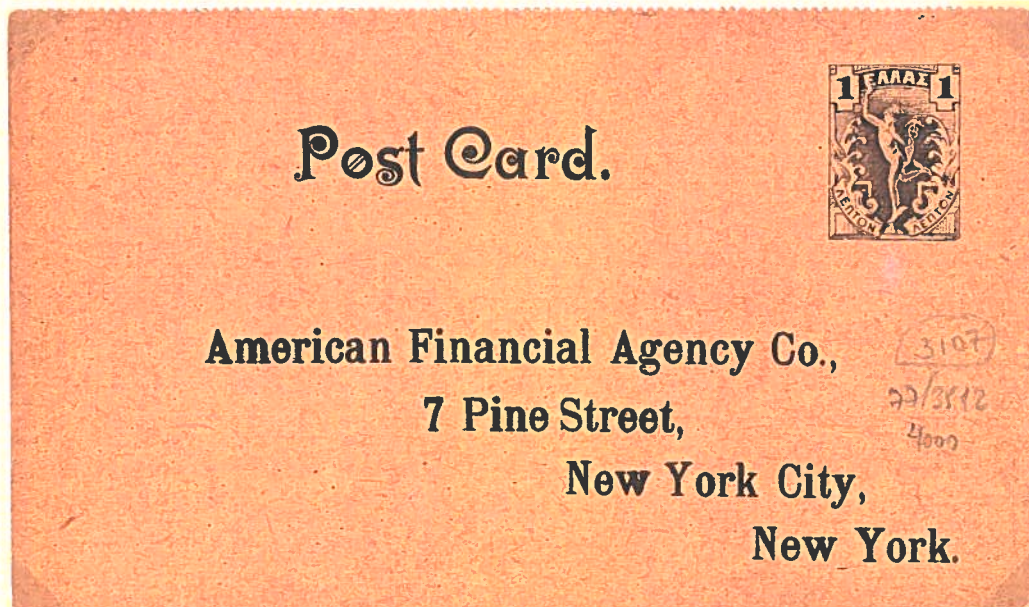
IMITATION



5 Dr. forgery



Australian stamp of 1934 showing desing the Flying Mercury



Imitation of flying Mercury 11 in primate printing of the American Financial Agency Co

FLYING MERCURY



Large fragments of 50l value used

FLYING MERCURY

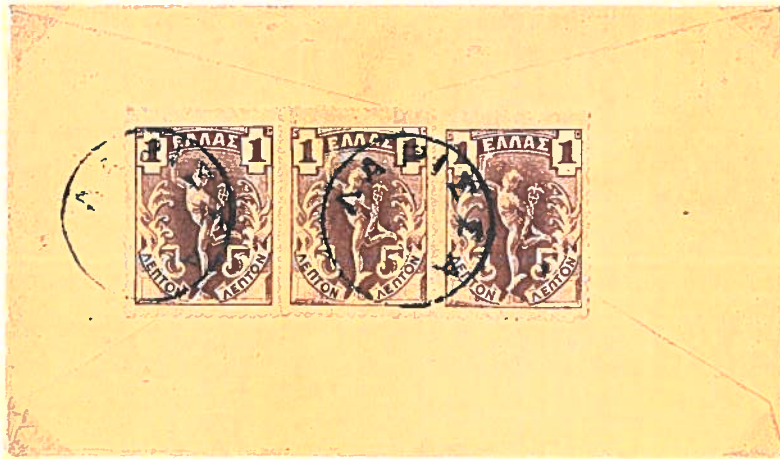
Some values of the flying Mercury issue that remained in stock at the Post Office, were used later, when there was immediate need for a new issue of stamps but there was not enough time to print them. Hence, we meet stamps of this issue used by the Post Office on 3 Special Occasions between the years 1912-1917, as follows:

- 1) 1912-13: Overprint "ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΙΣ" on the 20l value
- 2) 1912-13: Overprint "ΛΙΜΝΟΣ" on the 20l value
- 3) 1917: Overprint "Κ.Π." on the values of 1, 3, 20, 30, 40, 50l and 1 Dr.

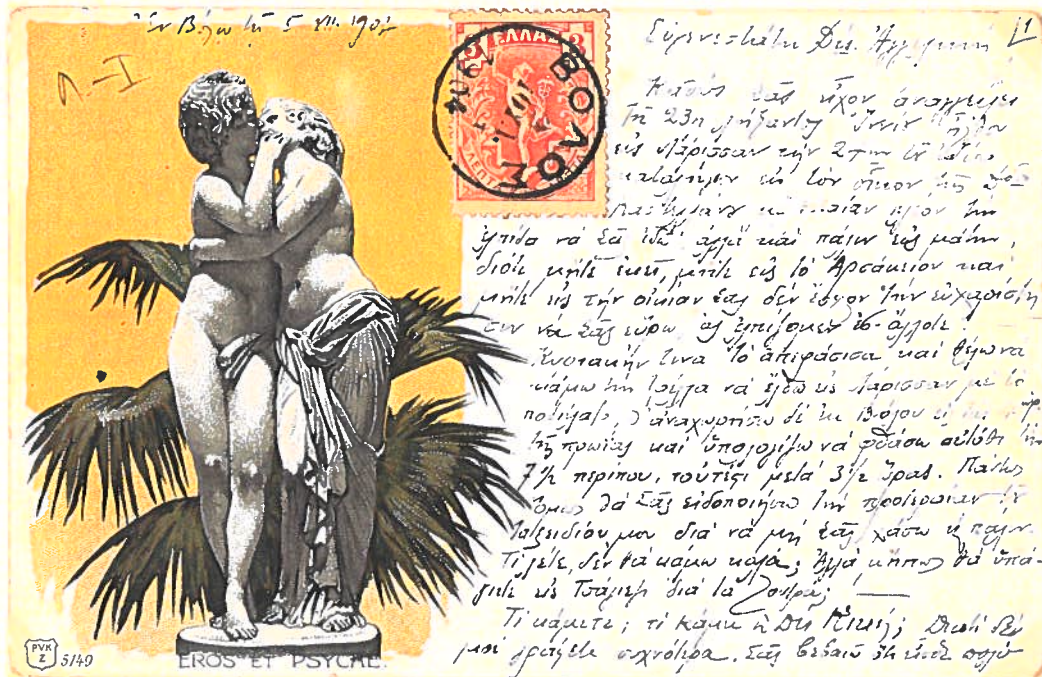


FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



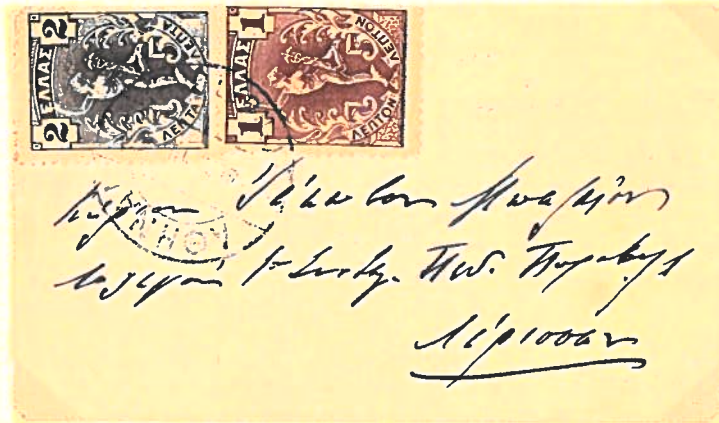
Card visit 3x1 lepta cancellation LARISSA



Post card 3 lepta VOLOS 3 Jul. 1904

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Little cover sent from Athens - 9.12.10 - to Larissa, with 3l rate.

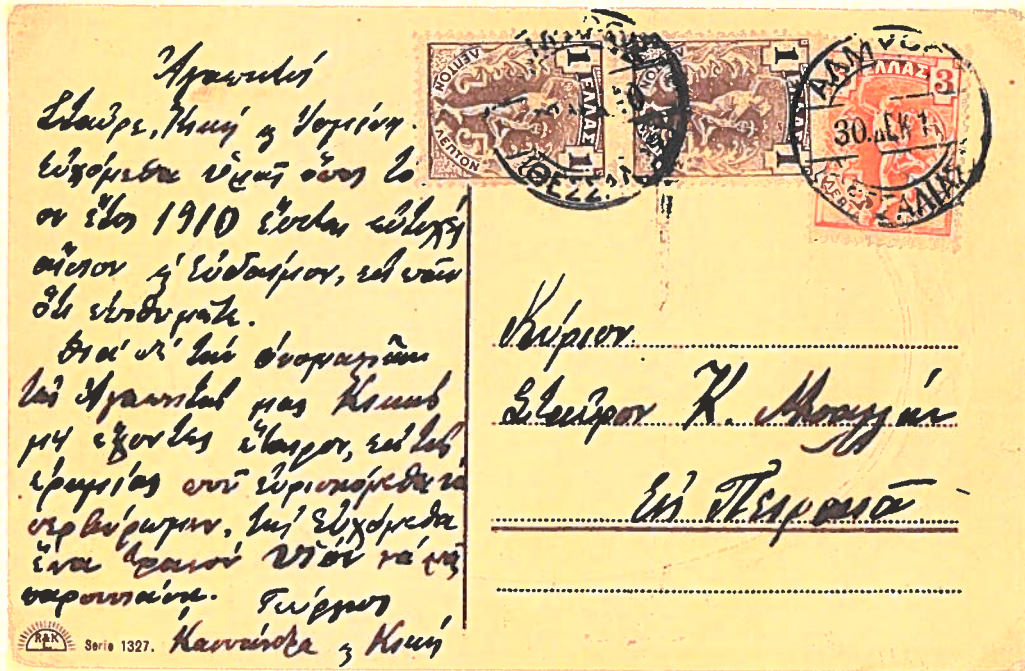
The 3l was the normal rate for an open including a visiting card sent from town to town in the country



Cover from KALAMAI - 29/1/1910
to Athens (arrival backside) with 2l rate.

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



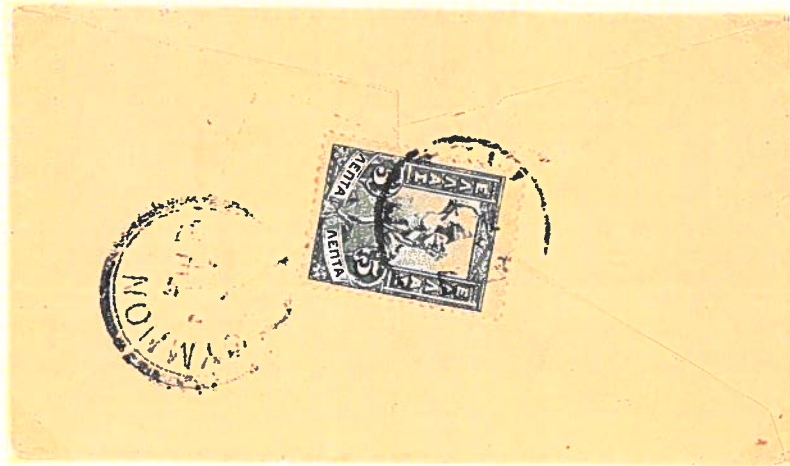
Picture post card with 5l (2x1l+3l) interior rate for postcards. Cachet= ALMYROS-30.12.10



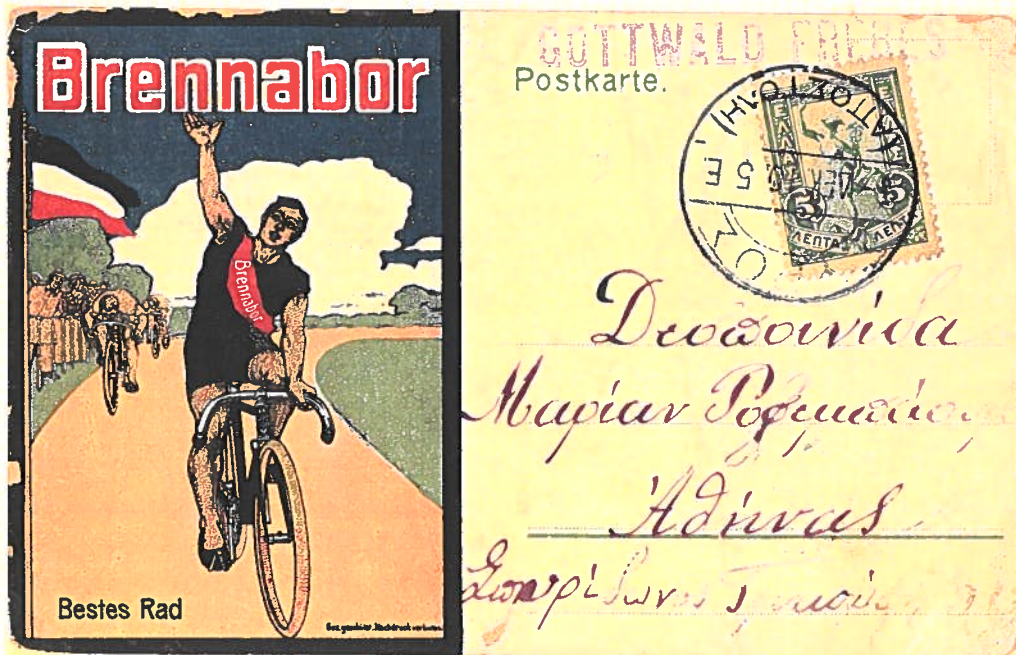
Postcard from KERKYRA (CORFU) franked with 10l (2x1l+3l+5l) to USA exterior (foreign)

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Card visit with 51



Postal card with 51

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Commercial cover, normal rate of 25l total 2 different types of the 5l stamps

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES

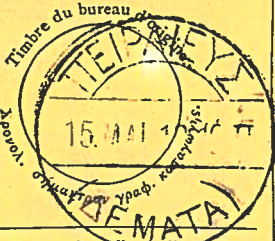


Commercial cover franked with a total of 251 stamps, sent from LEFKAS, via KERKYRA, to Genova, Italy.

FLYING MERCURY

POSTES HELLÉNIQUES.
ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΑ ΤΑΧΥΔΡΟΜΕΙΑ.

COUPON.
ΑΠΟΚΟΜΜΑ.



Nom, prénom et domicile de l'expéditeur.
Όνομα, επώνυμο και κατοικία του αποστολέως.

Per. Papa-
michaelopoulos
Pireo

À remplir par l'envoyeur.
Συμπληρώσετε παρά του αποστολέως.

POSTES HELLÉNIQUES
ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΑ
ΤΑΧΥΔΡΟΜΕΙΑ



COLIS POST
ΤΑΧΥΔΡΟΜ
ΔΕΜΑΤΑ

BULLETIN D'EXPÉDITION
ΔΕΛΤΙΟΝ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΗΣ

Ci-joint } *paquet* } paquet, rouleau, boîte, panier, etc.
Συνημμένον ζδε } *εμπόγιο* } δέμα, κυλινδρός, μπιτόνι, καλάθος κ.λ.π.

Déclaration du contenu }
Δήλωση του περιεχομένου }
Déclarations en douane, N° }
Τελωνειακά διασαφήσεις, 'Αριθ. }

Adresse du destinataire } *Michel Tsappas*
'Επιγραφή του παραλήπτη }

Lieu de destination } *Stockholm Suède*
Τόπος προορισμού }

Domicile du destinataire } *Obs. S. Ostergsgatan 50*
Κατοικία του παραλήπτη }

Poids vérifié
Βάρος επαληθευθέν.

N° *597* G*4650*
N° *598* G*4650*
N° *599* G*4650*

Numéro du colis
Αριθ. του βέλους

Numéro de l'expédition
Αριθ. αποστολής

Berlin N° 4

LE PIRE	LE PIRE	LE PIRÉE
597	598	599
1912	1912	1912



The back side

Parcel Post card with printed 75l for 3 parcels to Stockholm franked with 5x2 Dr. F.M. and 1 Dr. and 25l engraved

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES

N. G. CREMIDI
PATRAS

Herrn



P. K.
PAUL KAPFF

GERMANIA

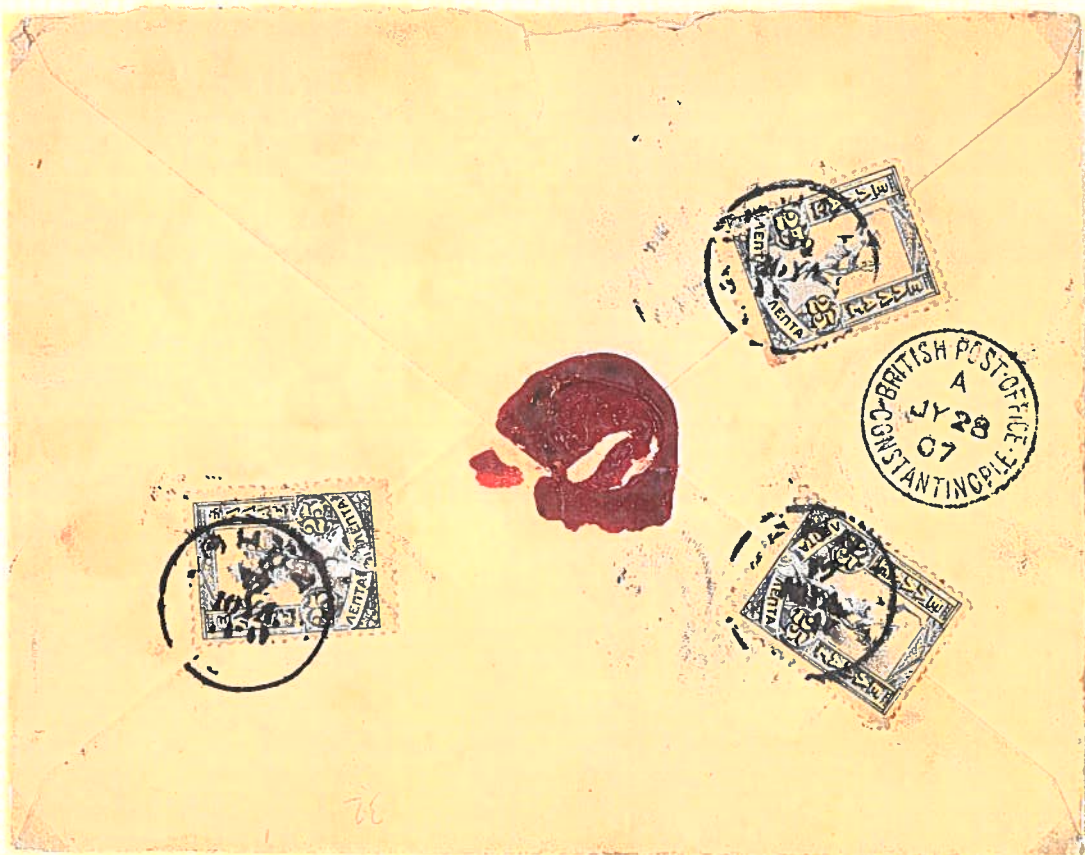
STUTTGART

12 LINDENSTRASSE 12

Registered commercial cover, franked with 25L. and 1 Dr. (Olympics) sent from Patras (14.10.09) to Stuttgart, Germany.

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Registered cover franked with 3x25l stamps, sent from Athens to Constantinople.
Proper rate for a double registered letter sent to a foreign country.

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Envelope total 25 lepta ATHINA - ENGLAND 20 Mar. 1904

FLYING MERCURY

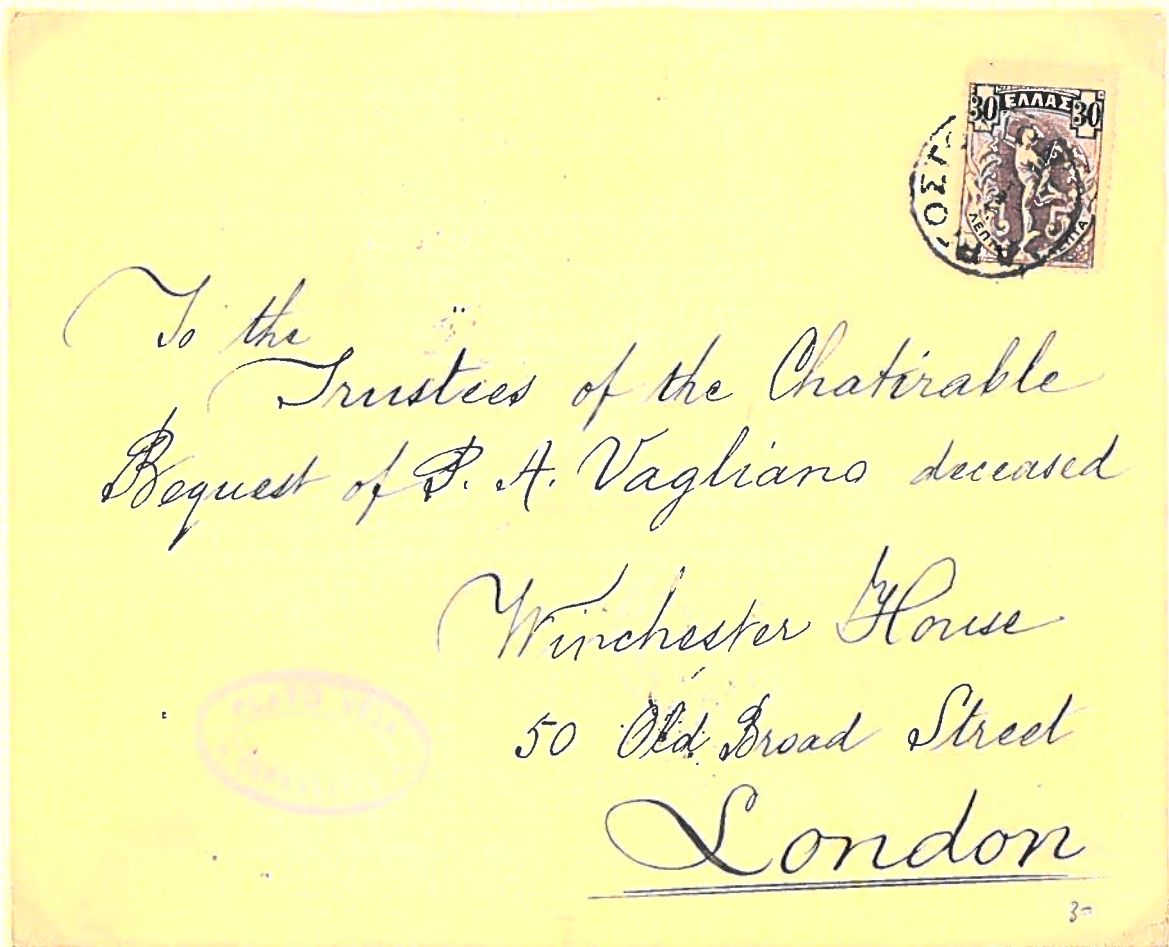
THE RATES



Envelope 50 lepta ATHINA - PARIS

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Envelope 30 lepta from ARGOSTOLI via LONDON

FLYING MERCURY



Commercial cover franked with a total of 251 stamps

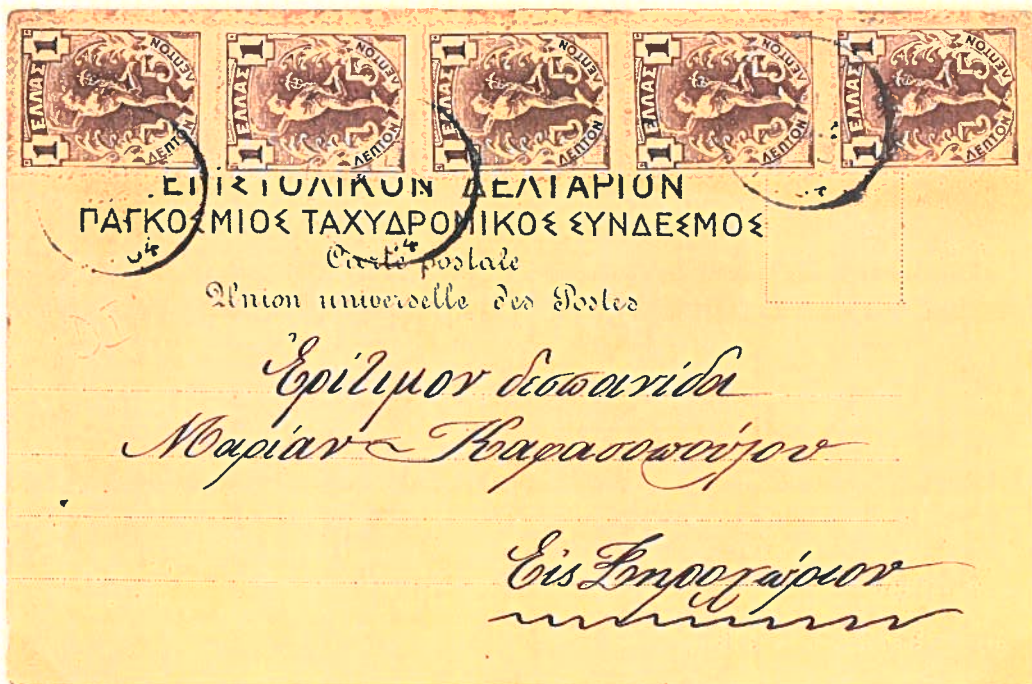


Commercial cover franked with a total of 251 stamps

FLYING MERCURY



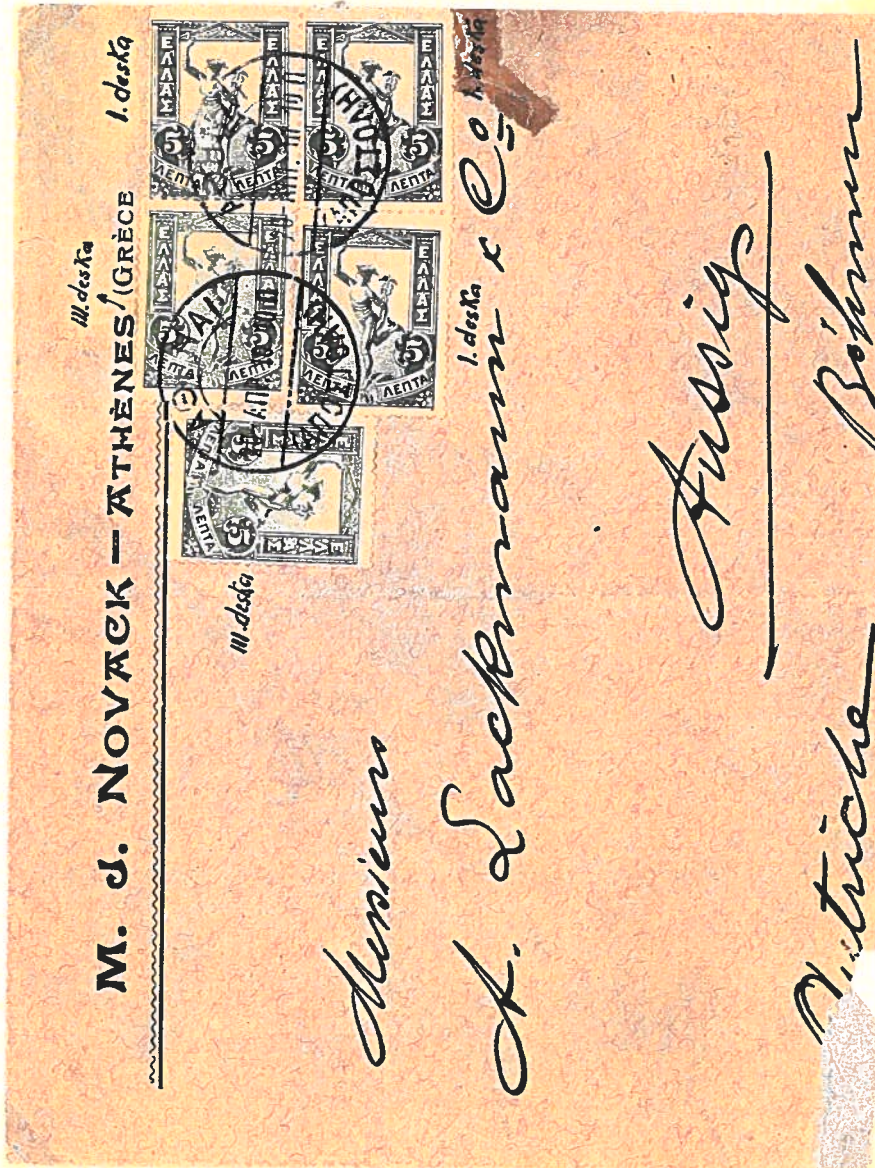
Commercial cover from Piræus - 22/7/1907 to Constantinople. Normal rate of 25l comprised by values of the two different types of the 5l stamps



Postcard with 5l (5x1l) - Interior rate (1904)

FLYING MERCURY

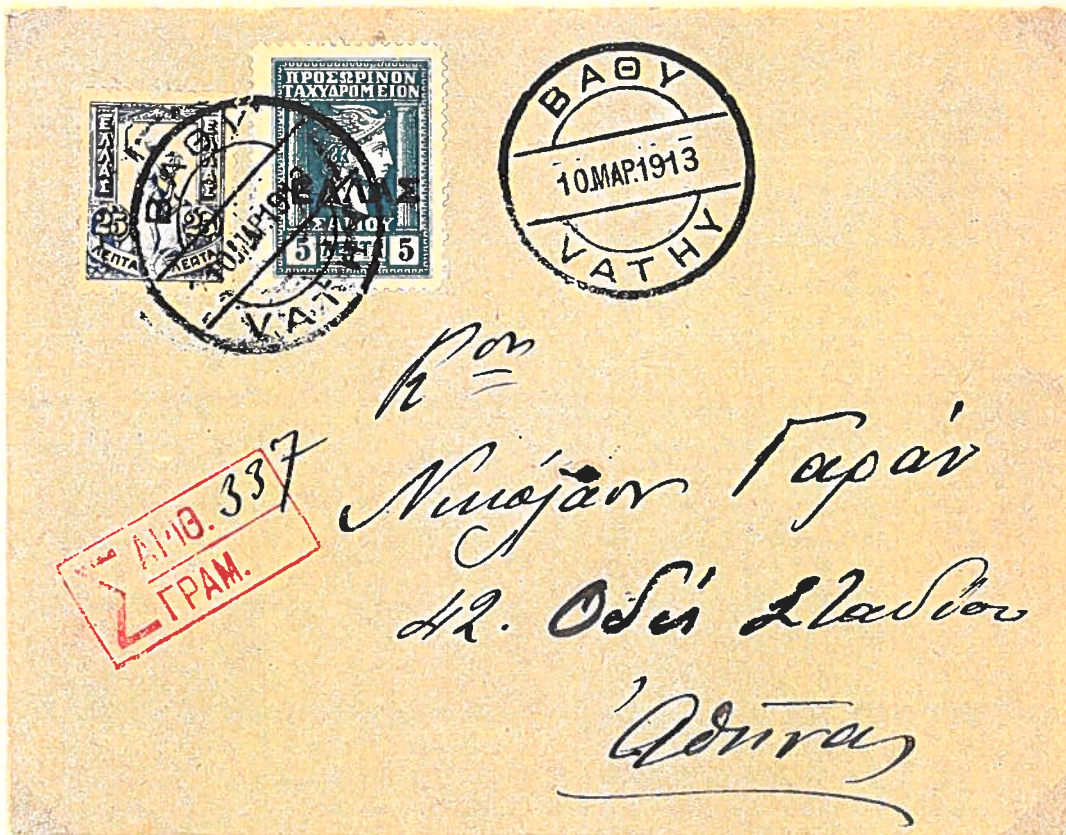
THE RATES



Commercial cover, normal rate of 25l total 2 different types of the 5l stamps

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Registered cover franked with 5 lepta big "HELLAS" from the SAMOS
With 25 lepta F.M. cancelled VATHY 10 Mar. 1913 Second day of use
Of Greek stamps in SAMOS

FLYING MERCURY



10 lepta: Postcard PIREAS 15 Nov. 1903 via SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE
 26 Dec. 03 via SINGAPORE Dec. 22-1903
 Readdressed NECHIN 10 Fevr. 1904 (Belgique) and from there ROUBAIX
 11.02.04 (France).



Envelope 2x10 lepta F.M. double postage. ATHINA (Forwarding) 25. Aug. 09 KERKYRA (arrival) 27 Aug. 09.

FLYING MERCURY



17.2.11-10L(2x2l) exterior rate, from Athens to England.



Printed cover of the French Delego



301 large block of 50 (down part of the sheet) with two margin lines



50 lepta: Large block of 50 (Down part of the sheet) with two (2) margin lines

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Fragment showing 40l F.M. on thick paper used together with 5x1dr and 30l E.T., 8 Mar. 1921 very late use



Double wright registered cover, franked with a total of 75l stamps, sent from Sparti to Illinois U.S.A.

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Double weight registered cover, franked with a total of 751 stamps

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Triple weight (30-40grs) registered letter in a cover

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Envelope 50lepta (2x25 lepta) from ATHENS via NAPOLI - ITALIA

FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Registered envelope posted from Athens to Leeds Franked with 50l F.M. on thick paper

FLYING MERCURY



A "COMMEMORATIVE" POSTCARD

Looking at the 3 cancellations on this postcard, one cannot come to a logical conclusion. But, when reading the text on the other side, he can approach, quite safely, to a possible one:
The sender of this postcard had been, for some reason, in Athens, during September of 1901. He left for England taking with him some souvenirs and, one of them happened to be, this postcard, cancelled -possibly- at the Post Office just to verify the fact of being there.
Then, some time after, this "souvenir" postcard, was normally sent from England to Italy, where it finally arrived.

FLYING MERCURY



Short letter card 10 lepta and 15 lepta Small Hermes Head

FLYING MERCURY



Postal stationery card with unprinted back side perforated 13 1/2

FLYING MERCURY



Fragment of postal order of 500 value with additional stamps 5x50! Olympics and cancellation: ARGOS



Fragment of postal, order of 500 value and additional stamps 6x25!. Olympics and cancellation: POROS

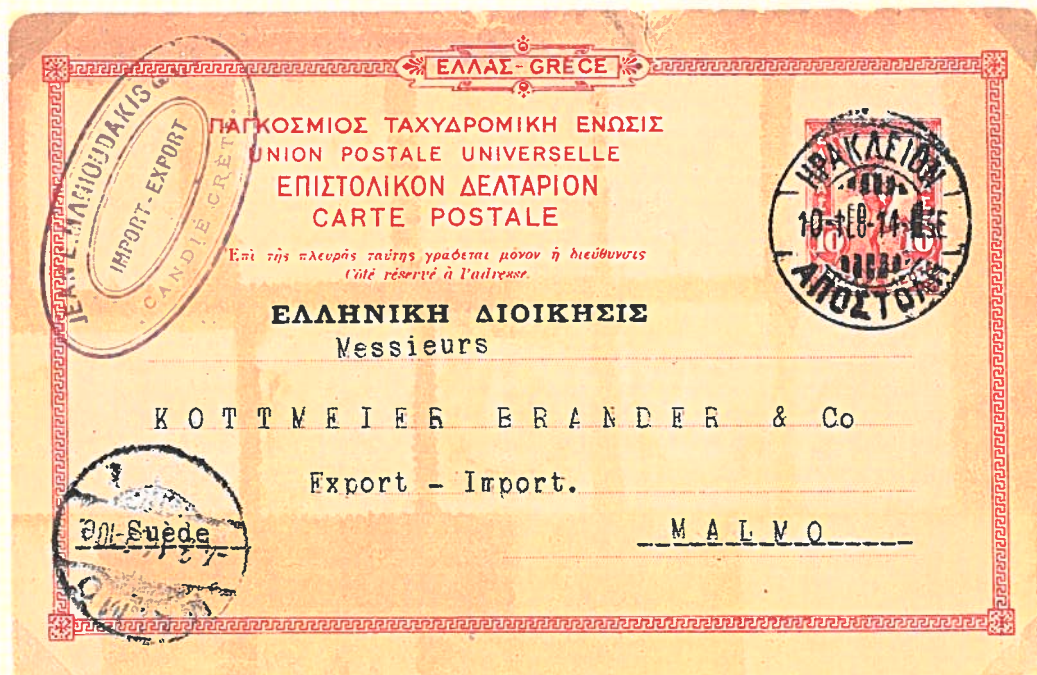
FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Carte Postale - Reponse ATHINA 5 14 Aug. 1902 via BERLIN BESTELT
VOM POSTAMTS 50 31 Aug. 02 readdressed. SASSINTZ 1 Sept. 02
6 Sept. 02 return BERLIN 7 Sept. 02

FLYING MERCURY



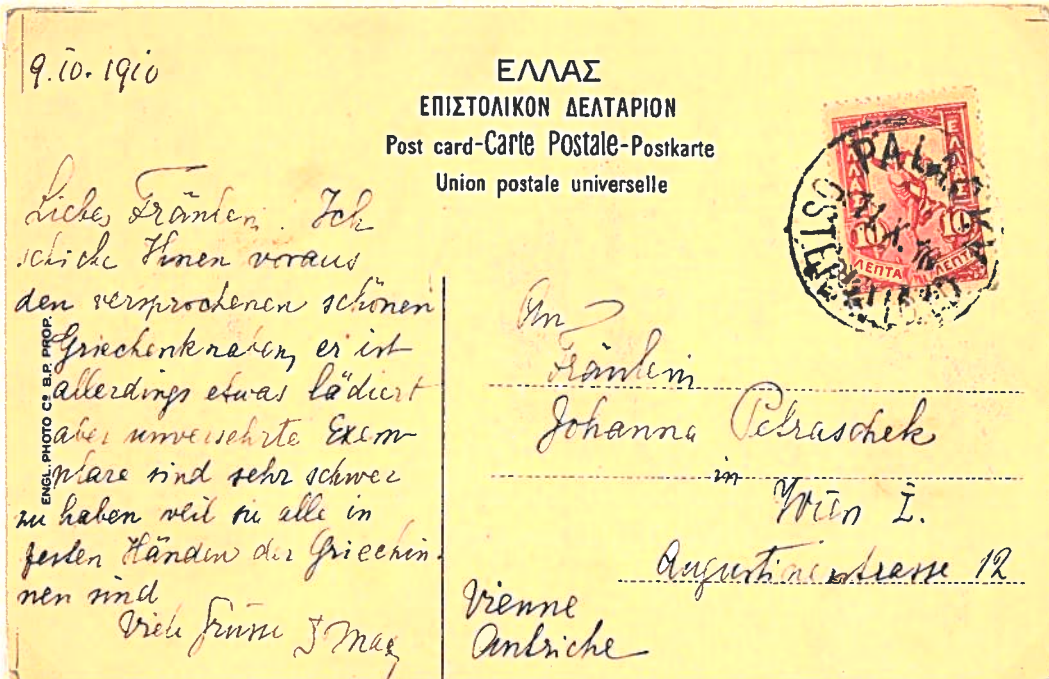
Card Postal 10 lepta print and ELLINIKI ΔΙΟΙΚΙΣΙ.

FLYING MERCURY

MARITIME POSTMARKS



"GORICIA OF LLOYD 15-9-03"



"PALACKY OSTERR. LLOYD 11-X-10"

FLYING MERCURY

MARITIME POSTMARKS



Steamship Company "H ANATOLI" Syros Agency



Steamship "ARCHIPELAGOS" Karlovasio Agency



New Hellenic Steamship Argostoli Agency



Hellenic Steamship Δ.Π. ΓΟΥΔΗ Volos Agency

FLYING MERCURY

MARITIME POSTMARKS



Samos Steamship - Athen's Agency Hellenic Steamship



Hellenic steamship "A. DIAKAKI" Steamship "Q. Olga"

FLYING MERCURY

MARITIME POSTMARKS



SERBIA - PIROSCAFO POSTALE ITALIANO



PEUGETA - PIROSCAFO POSTALE ITALIANO

FLYING MERCURY

MARITIME POSTMARKS



PELORO - PIROSCAFO POSTALE ITALIANO



SCILLA - PIROSCAFO POSTALE ITALIANO

FLYING MERCURY

MARITIME POSTMARKS



BULGARIA - PIROSCAFO ITALIANO



ROMANIA - PIROSCAFO ITALIANO

FLYING MERCURY



PAQUEBOT



COLVAPORE DAL LEVANTE



Compagnies - Messageries Martitimes

FLYING MERCURY

VARIOUS POSTAMARKS



POST & TEL. LAMIAS



B' POST BRANCH



Archaeological Congress ATHINA

FLYING MERCURY

RAILWAY POSTMARKS



AIVALI - STATION



KRIONERIOU - AGRINIO



RAILWAY STATION VOLUOS- STATION



PIREA (straight line)



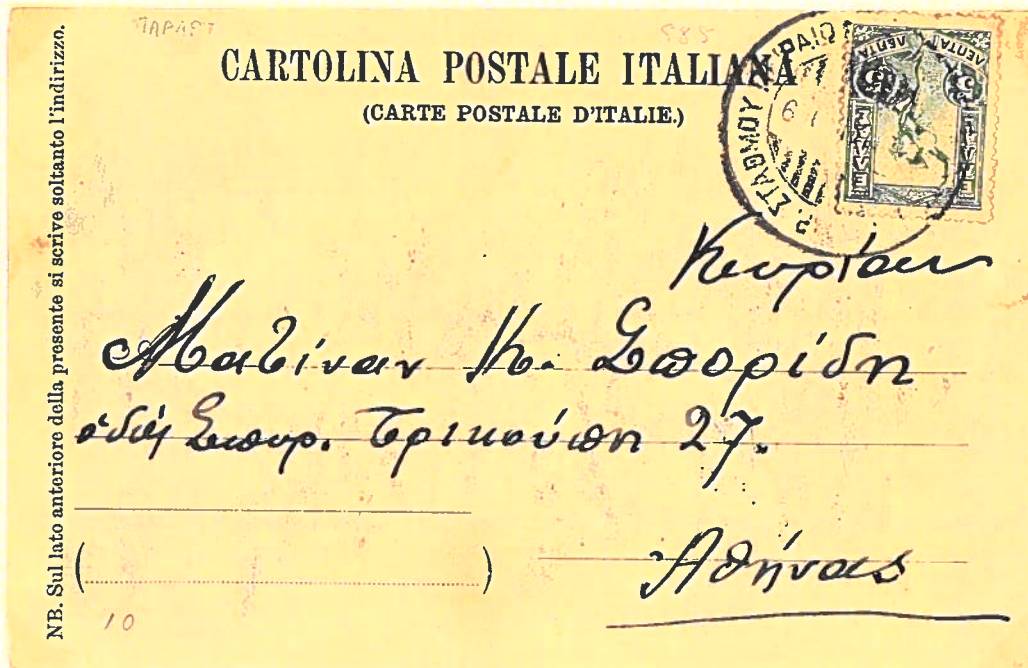
PIREA - ATHINA

FLYING MERCURY

RAILWAY POSTMARKS



ATHINAI - PATRA



POST & TEL. Branch Railway Station Pirea

FLYING MERCURY

RAILWAY POSTMARKS



LARISSA - ATHINAI - PIREA
(ambulance)



PYRGOS - PATRA



PATRA - PYRGOS



KALAMAI - TRIPOLIS



Branch Post office of Railway
Station Pirea



ATHINAI - PATRA - PIREA

FLYING MERCURY

VARIOUS POSTMARKS



AMFISSA Type III



SANT. PETROS - 115
type III



EDIPSOS 211 type III



NEAPOLIS type V



KIFFISSIA type V

FLYING MERCURY

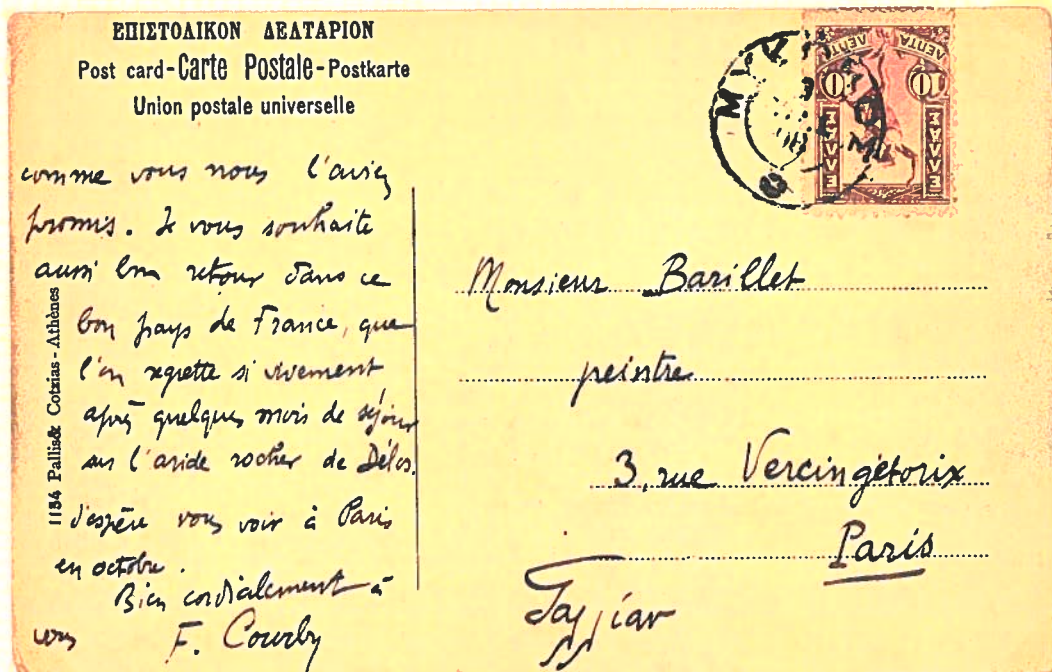
VARIOUS POSTMARKS



LIGUDISTA Type III



ETOLIKON Type V



MYCONOS Type V

FLYING MERCURY

"WRAPPER"



Wrapper with 1l imprint and additional stamps, values = 4 x 1l., 2l., 3l. = 10l total (28/7/1901)



Wrapper with 2l imprint additional stamps, values = 2 x 1l., 2l., 3l., = 9l total (18/7/1901)

Ἐπὶ ταυρίαν ἀποστέλλονται μόνον τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου
ἐπιτρεπόμενα ἀντικείμενα. Τοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς ταυρίας ἐνσήμου δὲς
δύναται νὰ γίνῃ χρῆσις πρὸς ἄλλον σκοπὸν.

Monsieur
F. Salzmann
Justice 30
Suisse
Berne



Wrapper with 1l imprint and additional stamps, values = 2 x 2l., = 5 l total
(7/7/1901)



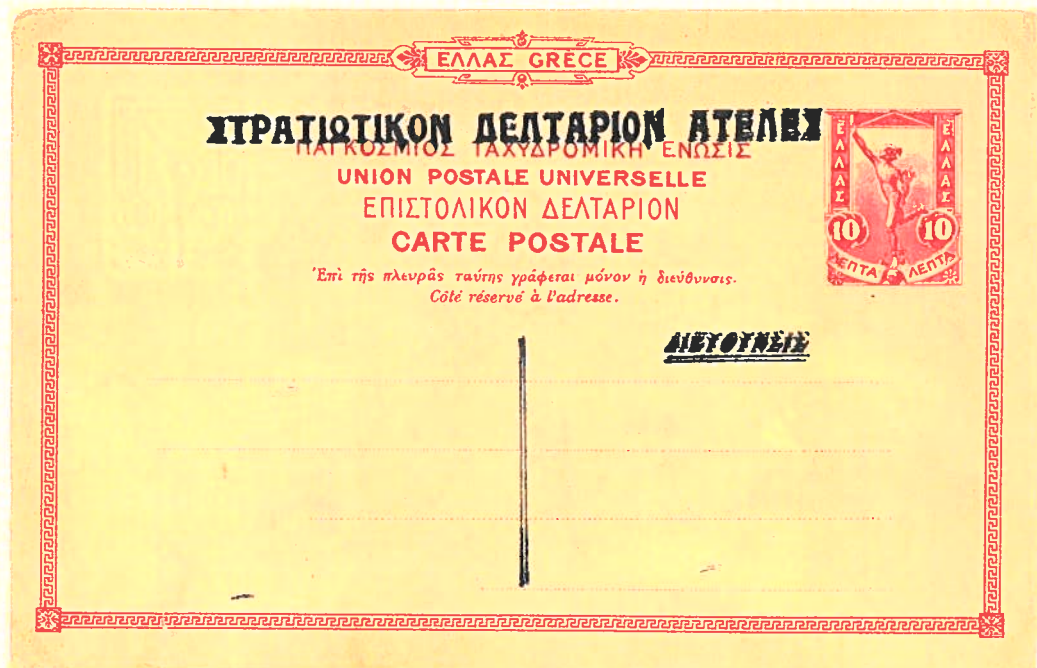
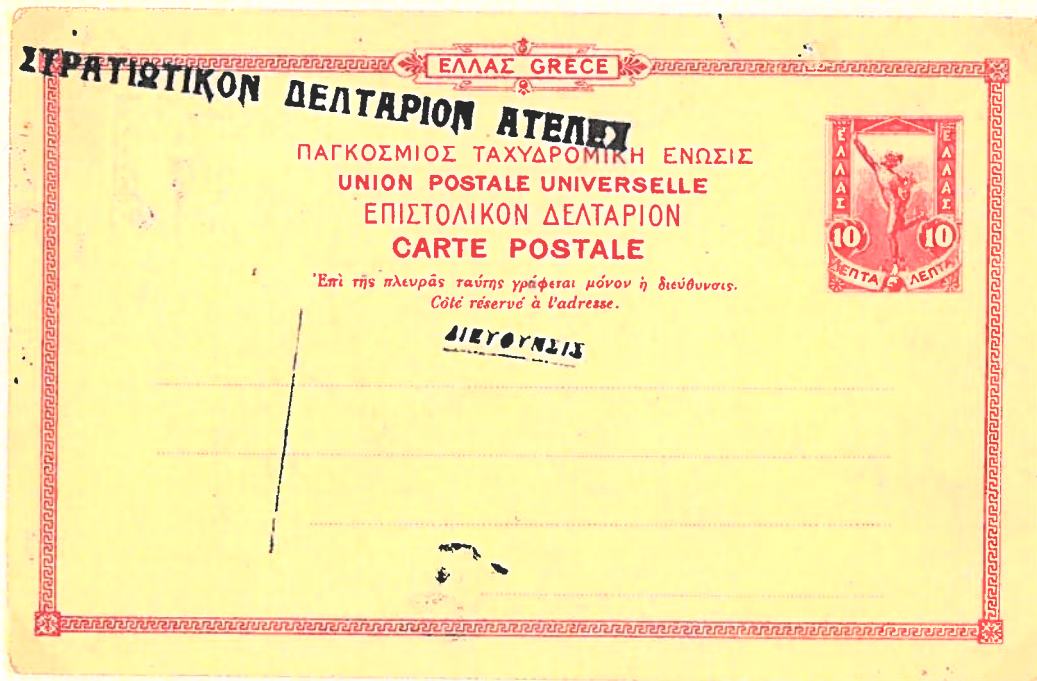
Ἐπὶ ταυρίαν ἀποστέλλονται μόνον τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου
ἐπιτρεπόμενα ἀντικείμενα. Τοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς ταυρίας ἐνσήμου δὲς
δύναται νὰ γίνῃ χρῆσις πρὸς ἄλλον σκοπὸν.

Herrn
Alex. Triantafyllidis



Wrapper with 5l imprint and additional stamps, values = 3 x 5l., = 20l total
(27/7/1901)

FLYING MERCURY



Varieties of the military overprint on unused postal card with 10l impint

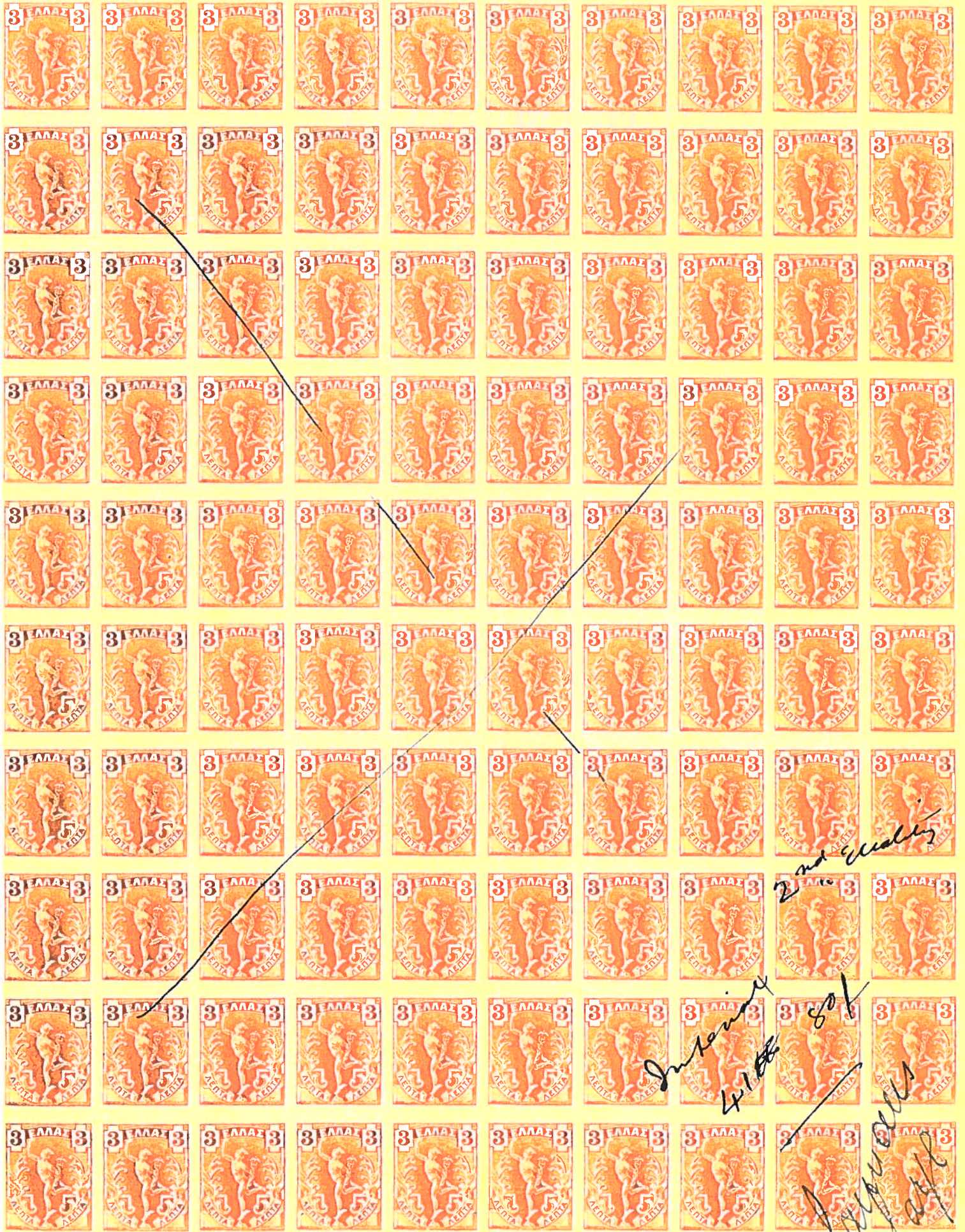
FLYING MERCURY

THE RATES



Envelope registered 100 lepta: $(1 \times 4) + (3 \times 2) + 40 \text{ lepta} + 50 \text{ lepta}$ ATHINAI 3 22 Apr. 02
via MUHLHAUSEN 10.05.02





2nd quality
4188
80k
W. J. ...

