

# ROMANIAN POSTAL RATES FOR MAIL TO THE U.S.A. 1869 - 1948 \*

by Ing. Calin Marinescu, Bucuresti, Romania.

The foreign Romanian postal service was created on March 20/April 1, 1869 when the foreign posts were no longer allowed to operate in the country.

The evolution of Romania's postal rates over the years is chronicled in a number of agreements, treaties and resolutions from Postal Congresses. An outline of this history follows:

## March 20/April 1, 1869 to June 30, 1875.

Different postal rates were negotiated between each country or group of countries. A number of routes (via Ostende, Bremen or Hamburg, England and Colon) with different rates have so far been identified and the details are given in table 1. This list may not be complete.

## July 1, 1875 to December 31, 1920.

The provisions of the Bern International Postal Treaty of 1874 were applied in 1875. Participating countries became adherents to the Universal Postal Convention which was later named the Universal Postal Union (UPU). The rates of the UPU were in effect from July 1, 1875 to December 31 of that year and then again from about April 1/13 of 1880. During the period January 1, 1876 to March of 1880 and in accordance with some bilateral conventions different, more costly, rates were in effect for mail to the USA. Table 2. provides the rates from July 1875 to December 1920.

## January 1, 1921 to April 30, 1945.

Because there were no bilateral agreements the rates during this period are the general rates for all countries corresponding with Romania. In 1941 USA entered the Second World War against the Germans and their allies. Postal relations with the USA were suspended until August 23, 1944. Tables 3a & b. give the rates between Jan 1, 1921 and April 30, 1945.

## May 1, 1945 to June 30, 1948.

Table 4 provides the various rates during this period.

## The Airmail Postal Rates.

Although Romania did not have direct air links to the United States during this period the Romanian authorities accepted mail for air transportation from March 1, 1934. The rates were the same for all mail items except for the latter period May 15 - June 30, 1948 when there was a printed paper rate of 15 lei. See table 5 for details.



### Comments on Tables 1 to 5.

#### Letters.

Letters had a weight limit of 15g from March 20/April 1, 1869 through to October 1, 1907 when it was increased to 20g following the provisions of the 1906 Postal Congress in Rome.

#### Postcards.

Regular postcards were accepted from July 1, 1875. Military postal cards were accepted for the foreign mails from January 1927 but they are not found listed in foreign postal rate lists after May 10, 1940. They were treated as regular postcards.

#### Reply Cards.

These had a double postal rate in comparison to the regular cards.

#### Picture Postcards

These were accepted at the same rate as regular postcards.

#### Letter Cards.

These were employed between July 19/31, 1892 and December 31, 1921. They were treated as though they were regular letters.

#### Printed Materials.

These have been accepted since March 20/April 1, 1869 when the initial unit of weight was 40g. From July 1, 1875 this was increased to 50g. Visiting cards were treated as printed material.

#### Newspapers.

These were accepted at the same rate as printed materials.

#### Business Papers.

Here the initial unit of weight was 250g (the minimum charge based on this weight is given in tables 2, 3a & b, and 4) with each subsequent unit being 50g.

#### Periodicals.

These were accepted at the same rate as printed materials and newspapers with the same weight units.

#### Merchandise Specimens.

These had different postal rates and have been accepted for foreign mails since March 20/April 1, 1869. Initially weight units were, 40g and this was increased to 50g from July 1, 1875. From April 1/13, 1880 the minimum payment was based on 100g and this remained the weight unit until June 30, 1948 when the unit dropped to 50g again. Generally, merchandise specimens were accepted at the same rate as printed material.

#### Registered Letters.

Registered mail was accepted in all periods, 1869 - 1948.



#### Express Mail.

This was accepted from April 1, 1929 and continued through to 1948.

#### Return Receipt Notice.

This was initiated from July 1, 1875 along with the other signatories of the Universal Postal Convention. From January 1, 1922 there were two tariffs, the one when the sender requested the receipt at the time of mailing and the other if requested at a later time. Up until November 1, 1938 the second tariff was double the first; after this the second was the same rate as that charged for a claim.

#### Poste Restante Postage.

This postage was introduced January 1, 1920 and lasted through to June 1, 1932 when it was discontinued. The charge was not obligatory for the sender but a double charge was collected from the recipient if the item was mailed without the fee being paid.

#### A Claim.

This rate was introduced on January 1, 1876 and lasted throughout the period.

#### Non-postal Charges.

Obligatory charges that were paid to other than postal authority funds, were levied on both foreign and domestic mail. The Cultural Stamp. With a value of 2 lei this was applied to picture postcards as per a ministerial decision between January 28 and April 8, 1932. The IOVR Stamp (Invalids, Orphans, Widows of War). This had a value of 1 leu and was applied between December 8, 1947 and December 31, 1948 on all regular and registered mail, regular and picture postcards and visiting cards that were to be sent out of the country.

Voluntary charges were also made at other times without the penalty of a postage due charge for the recipient if the appropriate stamps had not been applied to the mail. Examples of these were the Anti-tubercular Stamp and the Victims of Disasters stamp.

#### Airmail.

The rates for the Hindenberg airship LZ 129 to the USA were in 1936 155 lei for letters and postcards up to 20g and in 1937 145 lei for letters and postcards up to 20g, while they were 53 lei for other items.

\* This article is an extract from a manuscript by the author entitled "The evolution of the postal rates for Romanian foreign mail items between 1869 and 1990."

The illustrations with legends have been provided by the editor.

Table 1. (Bani)  
March 20/April 1, 1869 - June 30, 1875.

		March 20/ April 1, 1869		July 15, 1869		April 1871		1874	
		Paid	Un- paid	Paid	Un- paid	Paid	Un- paid	Paid	U n - paid
Via Ostende	letters 15g	85	120			60	120	50	95
	printed material 40g	20	-			20	-	20	-
Via Bremen or Hamburg	letters 15g	60	95	65	90	50	95	45	85
	printed material 40g	15	-	19	-	15	-	15	-
Via England	letters 15g			240	275				
	printed material 15g			17	-				
Via Colon	letters 15g			90	115				
	printed material 40g			23	-				

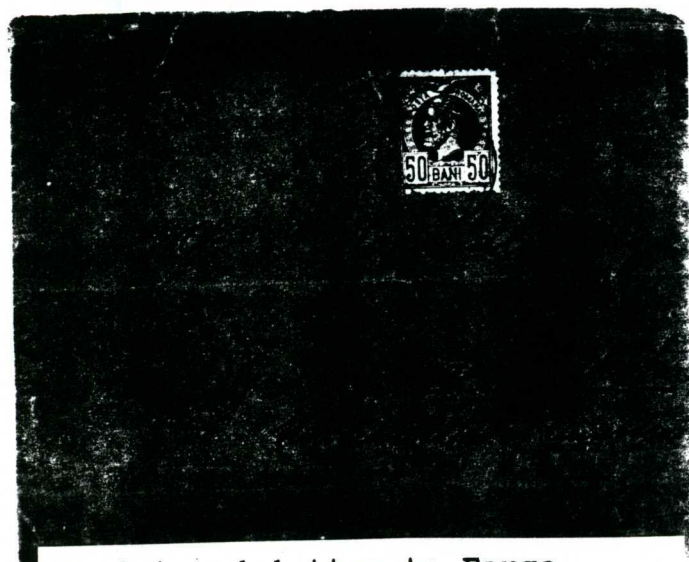
Material to the U.S. during this period is extremely uncommon.

All illustrations reduced to 64%

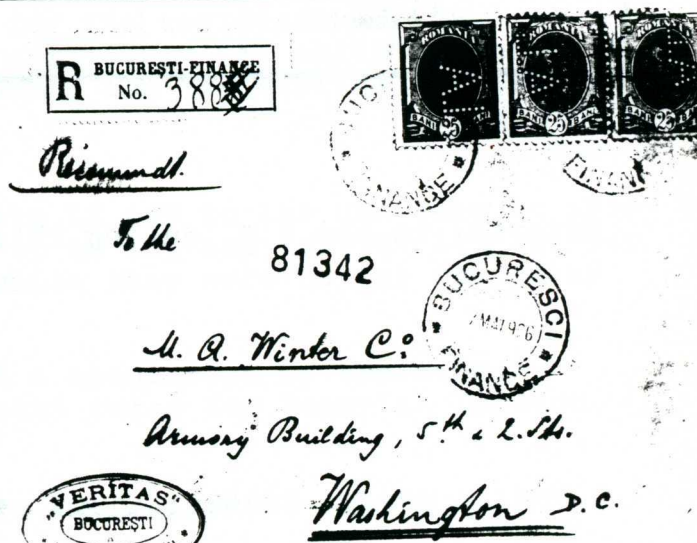


Table 2 (Bani)  
July 1, 1875 - December 31, 1920

	July 1, 1875	July 1, 1876	April 1/13, 1880	July 19/31, 1892	October 1, 1907	? 1920
Letters 15g	25	40	25	25	25(20g)	
Each addtl. 15g	25	40	25	25	15(20g)	
Postcards	10	10	10	10	10	
Reply cards	20	20	20	20	20	
Picture PCs	-	-	-	10	10	
Letter cards	-	-	-	25	25	
Printed Material 50g	10	8	5	5	5	
Newspapers	10	8	5	5	5	
Business Papers 250g	-	40	25	25	25	
Each addtl. 50g	-	8	5	5	5	
Registration	30	30	50	25	25	
Return Receipt	10	20	25	25	25	
Claim			25	25	25	



Registered letter to Fargo,  
Dakota in 1891. Rate, 25b(15g)  
+ 50b(Reg.) = 75 Bani.  
? underfranked by 25 Bani.



Registered letter to Washington,  
DC. May 1906. Rate, 25b(15g)  
+ 25b(15g) + 25b(Reg.) = 75b







Table 3a (Lei)  
January 1, 1921 - March 30, 1929

	Jan 1, 1921	Jan 1, 1922	Feb 1, 1922	May 15 1923	Sep 1, 1924	Oct 1, 1925	Jan 1, 1927
Letters 20g	2	3	3	6	10	10	10
Each addtl 20g	1.20	1.50	1.50	3	5	6	6
Postcards	1	1.80	2	4	6	6	6
Reply Cards	2	3.60	4	8	12	12	12
Picture PCs	1	1.80	2	4	6	6	6
Letter Card	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Printed Material 50g	0.40	0.60	0.60	1	2	2	2
Newspapers 50g	0.10	0.60	0.60	1	2	2	2
Business papers 250g	2	3	3	6	10	10	10
Each addtl 50g	0.40	0.60	0.60	2	2	2	2
Registration	2	3	3	6	10	10	10
Express Mail	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Return Receipt Tariff 1	2	3	3	6	10	10	10
Return Receipt Tariff 2	-	6	6	12	20	20	20
Poste Restante	-	0.50	0.50	2	2	5	10
Claim	2	6	6	12	20	40	40
Minimum Postage	-	1.80	1.80	4	6	4	4







Postcard to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
in Nov. 1923. Rate = 4Lei. Only 2Lei payed.  
? underpaid.

Tremba, Cluj, str. Elisabeta ul. Romanien.

Mrs.

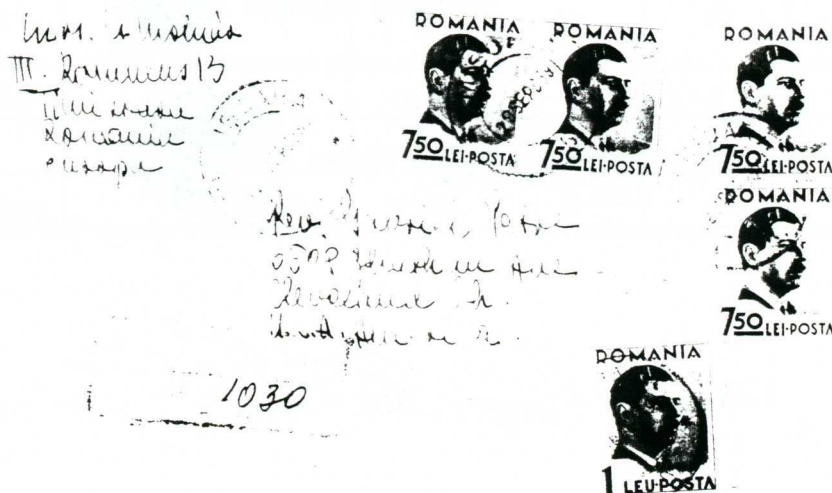
Hedwig Dinczer

357-37 th Street

Brooklyn N.Y.

U.S.A.

Letter to Brooklyn, New York in  
1930. Rate = 10Lei (20g).



Registered letter to Cleveland,  
Ohio in Sept 1939. Rate = 12Lei (20g)  
+ 7Lei (20g) + 10Lei (Reg.) = 31Lei





Registered postcard to Seattle, Washington.  
March 1938. Rate, 6Lei(card) + 10Lei(Reg)  
= 16Lei

Form 2865  
Post Office Department, United States of America  
Administration des Postes des Etats-Unis d'Amérique

**Return Receipt**  
Date de réception

(To be filled in by the office of origin)  
A remplir par le bureau d'origine

Registered article ( ) ( )  
Parcel insured for \$  
Colts avec assurance de \$  
Mailed at the YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO  
HASLTON STATION  
OCT 24 1946 under No. 61302  
Mailed by Mrs. Marie P. Person  
and addressed to Mrs. V. No. Radu  
at Constantinople, Roumanie  
Indicate in the parenthesis the nature of the article (letter, print, etc.).  
Strike out the indications not applicable.

(To be filled in by the sender)  
A remplir par l'expéditeur  
who will indicate below his complete address  
qui mentionnera ci-dessous son adresse complète

FOREZ  
3670 Power Key  
Youngstown 2 Ohio  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Etats-Unis d'Amérique  
POSTAL SERVICE  
Service des postes

The undersigned declares that the  
Le soussigné déclare que l'envoi mentionné d'être.

on 19 10 1946

Signature of the agent of the office of destination  
Signature de l'agent du bureau destinataire

of the addressee:  
du destinataire:  
Radu V. Antoneu  
9.100.7776

of the agent of the office of destination  
de l'agent du bureau destinataire  
10.10.1946

This receipt must be signed by the addressee, or, if the regulations of the country of destination so provide, by the agent of the office of destination, and returned by the first mail direct to the sender.  
Ce reçu doit être signé par le destinataire, ou, si les règlements du pays de destination le permettent, par l'agent du bureau destinataire, et renvoyé par le premier courrier direct au destinataire.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 8-11654

Return receipt Request from the U.S.  
to Horez, Romania in October 1946.  
Why did recipient pay 1600Lei?. It  
is noticed that the reply portion of  
the card is registered - is this related?



Table 3b (Lei)  
April 1, 1929 - March 30, 1945

	April 1, 1929	July 1, 1930	June 1, 1932	Nov. 1, 1938	Dec 1, 1939	May 10, 1940	July 1, 1941
Letters 20g	10	10	10	12	12	16	20
Each addtl 20g	6	6	6	7	8	10	12
Postcards	6	6	6	7	8	10	12
Reply cards	12	12	12	14	16	20	24
Picture PCs	6	6	6	7	8	10	12
Letter cards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Printed material	2	2	2	3	3	4	4
Newspapers	2	2	2	3	3	4	4
Business papers 250g	10	10	10	12	12	16	20
Each addtl. 50g	2	2	2	3	3	4	4
Registered	10	10	10	12	12	16	20
Express Mail	30	30	20	24	24	32	40
Return Receipt Tariff 1	10	10	10	12	12	16	20
Return Receipt Tariff 2	20	20	20	23	23	30	30
Poste Restante	10	10	-	-	-	-	-
Claim	40	35	35	23	23	30	30
Minimum Postage	4	4	4	2	2	4	4



Table 4 (LEI)  
May 1, 1945 - June 30, 1948

	May 1, 1945	Nov. 1, 1945	June 1, 1945	Dec. 1, 1946	April 1, 1947	July 1, 1947	Aug 15, 1947
Letters 20g	45	350	1500	3000	15000	45000	15
Each addtl 20g	25	200	900	1800	11000	27000	8
Postcards	25	200	900	1800	11000	27000	8
Reply cards	50	400	1800	3600	22000	54000	16
Picture PCs	25	200	900	1800	11000	27000	8
Printed Material 50g	10	70	300	600	3000	9000	3
Newspapers 50g	10	70	300	600	3000	9000	3
Business papers 250g	45	350	1500	3000	15000	45000	14
Each addtl 50g	10	70	300	600	3000	9000	3
Registration	60	500	2200	4200	21000	65000	21
Express mail	90	750	3200	6300	32000	100000	31
Return Receipt Tariff 1	45	375		3200		45000	16
Return Receipt Tariff 2	60	500	2200	4200	21000	65000	21
Post Restante	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Claim	60	500	2200	4200	21000	65000	21
Minimum Postage	10	70		600		10000	4





Postcard to New York in 1941 and  
forwarded to Los Angeles with U.S.  
adhesives. Rate = 12Lei(card).  
Overpaid by 50b

### International News

A BUCHAREST WEEKLY FOR SOUTH EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

ROMANIA — BUCHAREST — 5, Grădina cu Cai St.  
P. O. B. 395

First Romanian Episcop. Church  
1201 Getz Street  
AKRON, Ohio  
U. S. A.



Business card to Buffalo 1927.  
Rate = 2 Lei. 3 Lei affixed,  
? overpaid.

Newspaper wrapper to Akron, Ohio. May 1947.  
Rate = 3000Lei

### International News

A BUCHAREST WEEKLY FOR SOUTH EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

RUMANIA — BUCHAREST — 5, Grădina cu Cai St.  
P. O. B. 395

First Romanian Episcop. Church  
1201 Getz Street  
AKRON, Ohio  
U. S. A.



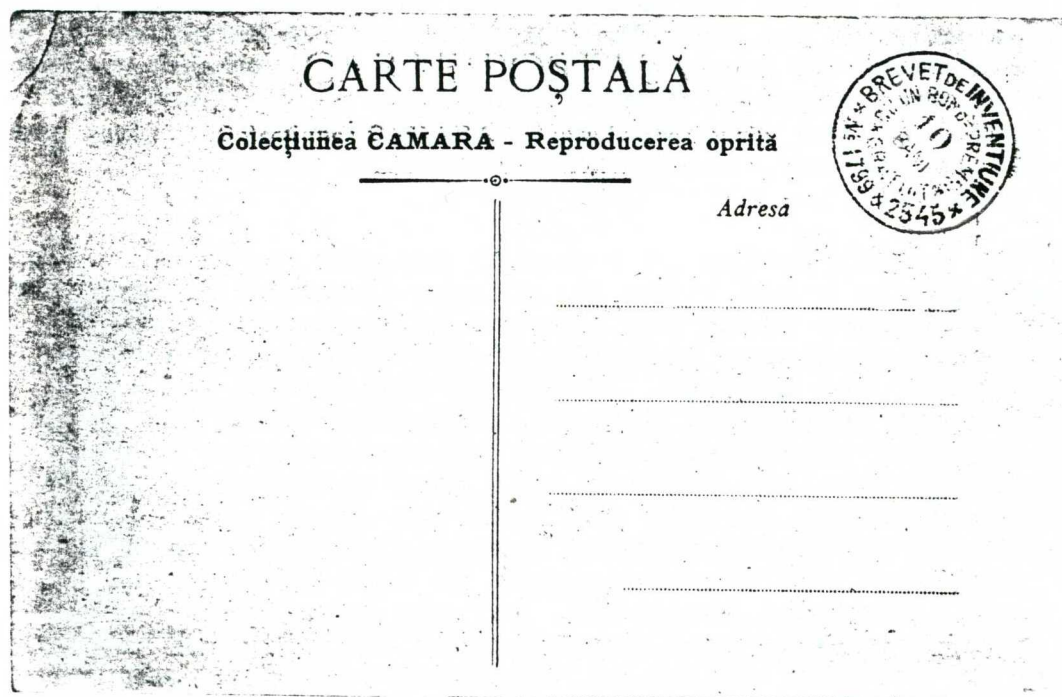
Similar newspaper wrapper to Akron, Ohio.  
Nov. 1947. Rate = 3Lei

Table 5 (LEI)  
(For each 20g.)

Mar. 1, 1939	Nov. 1, 1938	Jan 1, 1940	Apr. 1, 1940	May 1, 1940	Jul. 13, 1940	Apr. 1, 1941		M a r 1 , 1947	July 1, 1947	Aug. 15, 1947	May 15, 1948
30	38	113	126	189	180	45*		10000	160000	51	44**

\* Each 5g.

\*\* 15 Lei for Printed material, newspapers, periodicals, mechandise specimens and business papers.



Earl Galitz asks can anyone help him with this 1913 postcard marking.

The marking (actual size) is in red and reads around the outside "Brevet de Inventiture - No. 1799 & 2545." In the center is the denomination 10 Bani surrounded by what seems to read "Gratuit(?)" at the bottom and "????N BON??PREM?" at the top.

The picture is of soldiers on a bridge and bank of a river. The caption reads "1913 - Armata romana in Bulgaria (6) : Pod de luntre peste rdul Isker." [This presumably translates as "Romanian army in Bulgaria - Bridge of boats across the river Isker." - editor]