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## WWII NORWEGIAN POSTAL STATIONERY FOR RATIONING

Frederick A. Brofos

A legacy and memento of rationing in Norway during the last war has been left to philatelists, in the form of a unique series of postal stationery cards. They were bought by the general public at post offices around the country and used to apply to the Government ration and supply offices for purchase permits. Thus, most of the cards saved for posterity were those not used, but bought and saved by stamp or postal stationery collectors.

Most of the time, the thousands of cards that got mailed were not postmarked by the post office. This was in order to save time and labor, as the cards were, after all, just going to the government and not being returned to the public. Practically all the Ration Office archives and card files were burned after the war. Some cards were saved from a few places, however, but relatively few and of certain issues only. All cards that are actually postmarked bring a good premium, of course.

As most people today are not familiar with the background and regulations connected with these cards, a short review should be useful.

A Department of Supplies (Forsyningsdepartement) was inaugurated in Norway already in the Autumn of 1939. In all Norwegian communities (towns and districts), Communal Supply or Rationing Offices (Forsyningsnemnda) were started, which supervised local supplies, distributed rationing cards, and enforced the decisions of the main Department of Supplies in Oslo.

After the sudden invasion of Norway by the Germans in April 1940, with the resultant Allied blockade, an increasing shortage of goods occurred. The first things to be rationed were

sugar and coffee. However, it was not long before many other types of goods became rationed. As the occupation period lengthened into 4 and then 5 years, eventually every kind of necessity of life, from vegetables to soap, was brought in under rationing. Furthermore, the individual ration portions were steadily reduced.

Footwear, textile materials and clothing were rationed from Autumn 1940 on. At first, people could buy an application card and apply for what they needed. Eventually they received a card by mail granting or denying the application. From January 1941, special ration cards for clothes were issued, initially with 300 "points". Each clothing article needing various numbers of points, the necessary coupons were clipped off at the shop.

Together with the distribution of the first clothing ration cards, there was announced the availability of special franked application cards (Søknadskort) for household equipment (blue cards) and for footwear (white cards). Later came buff cards for half-soleing of shoes, green cards for equipping new homes, pink cards for baby equipment and light brown cards for work clothes. The applications were decided upon according to the Department's special occupation list.

The text on the application cards was changed as the distribution rules were made stricter, and more information and attestations were demanded. Certain categories of goods were dropped altogether or were not allowed to be supplied to private individuals. Eventually, permits were issued for workclothes made out of paper, half-soleing only in rubber, etc. Footwear rationing was particularly noticeable and the regulations were such that eventually, if one already had a pair of usable shoes, there was no possibility of getting a permit for a new pair.

## Søknadskort for utstyrsvarer.

### MERK:

For å få tillatelse til kjøp av utstyrsvarer må søknadskortet fylles tydelig og nøyaktig ut og sendes eller leveres forsyningsnemnda på det sted søkeren bor. På hvert søknadskort kan det bare søkes om kjøpetillatelse for EN vareart.

Om utstyr til private husholdninger skal det søkes i hovedpersonens navn. Det innskjerpes at rubrikken for „nåværende beholdning" må fylles nøyaktig ut. Hvis ingen beholdning has, er det ikke nok å sette „0" i rubrikken, men det må også angis grunnen til at ingen beholdning has.

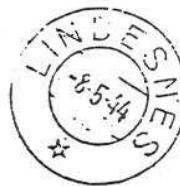
Når det samtidig forlanges opplysninger om „beholdning av varer av lignende art", skal dette forstås slik at hvis søknaden gjelder f. eks. glasshåndklær, så skal det oppgis beholdning av håndklær av ALLE SLAG; gjelder den laken, oppgis også beholdning av dynetrekk; gjelder den ulltepper, oppgis også beholdning av dyner, vattepper, pledd o. l.

Videre innskjerpes at hvis søknaden gjelder metervarer, f. eks. stoff til laken eller håndklær, må stoffets BREDE oppgis.

Ved søknad om gardiner eller portierer må ikke benevnelsen „lag" nyttes alene, men ANTALL METER og stoffets BREDE må også oppgis. Det skal samtidig gis opplysninger om vinduenes (eventuelt dørenes) størrelse (.....m X .....m).

Ved søknad om utstyrsvarer til hoteller, pensjonater o. l. skal søkeren gi opplysninger om årsforbruk, beholdning og andre opplysninger som kan ha betydning ved behandlingen av søknaden.

Innvilges søknaden, får søkeren tilsendt en anvisning som gjelder i 2 måneder og SOM IKKE VIL BLI FORNYET. Er anvisningen ikke nytlet innen denne frist, må ny søknad sendes eller leveres forsyningsnemnda sammen med den ubrukte anvisning. Ny anvisning vil ikke bli utstedt hvis søkeren ikke gir en fyllestgjørende grunn for at han ikke har kunnet nytte den først utstedte anvisning. Blir en søknad avslått, underretter forsyningsnemnda søkeren om dette.



Til forsyningsnemnda

*Spangrud*

Footwear was divided into 17 main types, from Group A: boots of leather, to Group S: skin shoes or boots with wooden soles. Furthermore, the distribution rules were not the same in town and rural

districts. Nothing exactly can be said about what the individual consumer was entitled to receive, as permit decisions were based on the applicant's sex, age, kind of work, place of domicile, as well as their existing supply of footwear and other equipment.

The first stamped cards were the 20 + 20 øre red application for textiles and leather goods and the 15 + 10 øre ultramarine application for footwear, both issued in December 1940. These were followed by others in April 1941 and continuing in varying editions until the last Household Equipment and Work Clothes cards of March 1951. Thus some, but not all, of the cards continued in use for almost six years after the war ended.

The seven main types of stamped cards were for:

- Half-soling of shoes (Halvsåling) May 1941-Nov 1945. 15 øre brown stamp.
- Household equipment (Utstyr) Jan 1941 - Mar 1951. 15 + 10 øre blue.
- Footwear (Skotøy) Dec 1940 - Nov 1945. 15 + 10 øre ultramarine, later olive.
- Textiles and leather goods (Tekstil og lærvarer) Dec 1940. 20 + 20 øre red.
- Work clothes (Arbeidsklær) Apr 1941 - Mar 1951. 25 + 10 øre green.
- Bicycle tires (Sykkelgummi) Oct 1941 - Nov 1945. 25 + 15 øre red-brown.
- Bicycle (Sykkel) Oct 1941 - Nov 1945. 25 + 25 øre red-brown.

There are sufficient differences in layout and text to determine the different card issues without difficulty. In addition, many carry the government printer's imprint at lower left on the front or back - "E.M." standing for Emil Moestue A/S, Oslo. The cards were printed by offset, from cylinders for 18 or 36 cards. The text was usually printed in black, but sometimes, as with the later Work Clothes cards, in the same color as the stamp. The stamp itself is like the Liotype III, but usually with two values: one for postage and one for fees to the Department of Supply. The unwatermarked cardboard ranges from white to colored, in many qualities. Sizes were 250 x 205, 92 x 122 or 128 mm.

**Søknad om sykkel fra:**

Efternavn: **Vestfinnmark Politikkammer**

Fornavn: **Hammerfest**

Adresse: **Sjøgt. 16, Tromsø**

Født (år og datum): .....

*(Utfylles av søkeren.)*



**Bevitelse av gitte opplysninger.**

Riktigheten, av de opplysninger som søkeren har gitt på denne søknad om bolig, arbeidssted/skole og reiseavstand i km samt beholdning bevitnes.

Eventuelle opplysninger: **Sykkelen skal brukes til tjenestekjøring for polititjenestemenn ved Vest-Finnmark politikkammer i Tromsø.**

den .....

Denne bevitelse må være underleget ved søknadens innsendelse av to myndige personer.





**HASTER.**

**Til forsyningsnemnda**

T r o m s ø .

SR3VI



Besides the aforementioned cards, several other types exist. As they were without imprinted stamps, they have been rather overlooked by collectors. However, they are still part of rationing history. Most of them were also printed by the Emil Moestue firm. Here is the list of the formular cards to apply for rationed goods:

1. Application for clothes and equipment for children under age one. Price 40 øre, including return postage. Black on pink. Six different types. Two have printer's imprint (E.M. XI-44 60 000 or E.M. VI-45 25 000). 1942/45. (One of these, mailed without postage from Tromsø in December, 1945, is illustrated in the article. The word "PORTO" in the upper right corner indicates that postage was to be added when the card is mailed.)
2. Application for bicycle. Black on white. 1945.
3. Application for bicycle tires. Black on white. 1945.
4. Application for household equipment to establish a new home. Price 40 øre, including return postage. Black on light blue-grey. 3 types. 1943/45.
5. Application for permission to use clothing ration coupons in advance. Price 40 øre, including return postage. Black on white. 1942.

These cards were sold by the Ration Offices, except number 4, which was sold at post offices. Numbers 1, 2, and 3 were cards sent as is to the Ration Office. Numbers 4 and 5 were sent to the Ration Office enclosed in an envelope. A couple of other cards which were sent directly to the Ration Office, franked with adhesive stamps of 15 øre or local rate of 10 øre, were:

6. Report of sale of damaged or uncurrent footwear. Black on buff. Imprint: J.C.G. 461 / V.42 5000.
7. Report of sale of fishskin shoes with soles of waste leather. Black on buff. Imprint: Stamnes VIII.43 50 000.

Selges av Forsyningsnemnda.

**Søknad om bekledning og utstyr til barn under 7 år.**

For å få tillatelse til kjøp av bekledning og utstyr til barn under 7 år, må dette kort utfylles nøyaktig og tydelig. Kjøp av spebarnsutstyr kan ikke foregå før moren befinner seg i 4. svangerskapsmåned. At dette er tilfelle, må attesteres av lege eller jordmor. Hvis barnet er født, må fødselsattest eller døpsattest vedlegges søknadskortet, og sendes forsyningsnemnda i lukket konvolutt. Beholdning av beklednings- og utstyrsgjenstander må nøyaktig oppgis i rubrikk for samme, og de varer som ønskes kjøpt oppgis i rubrikk for ønsket mengde. Det tillates kjøp av både stoff, ferdige plagg eller garn. De vil bli tildelt en bestemt mengde bånd, strikk og sysaker. Innvilges søknaden, får søkeren tilsendt et beklednings- og utstyrskort for barn under 7 år.

Pris 40 øre.

1945

Porto

Til Forsyningsnemnda i

Utfylles med blokk.

Morens etternavn: Jaerboen

Fornavn: Aulbjørg Fødselsår og datum: 4-1-1945

Nøyaktig bostedsadresse: Bjørnøygt 11

Undertegnede lege/jordmor attesterer at Aulbjørg Jaerboen er svanger i 4 m

Tromsø den 5/12 1945

**Skriv tydelig!**

E. M. VI-45. 25 000

ADDENDUM TO NORWEGIAN RATION STATIONERY ARTICLE  
 Frederick A. Brofos

There is an addendum to the Norwegian Ration Application Postal Stationery article by F. A. Brofos. Referring to the September article in LUREN on this subject add, under the list of the formular cards, under no. 5:

1942/45 4 types, including 2 with printer imprint (E. M. IX-44 and 1000 000 E. M. 11-45.

V.C. 24. no. 10

Søknad om sykkelgummi fra:

Efternavn: Importkompani A/S,

Fornavn:

Adresse: Strandgt. 35, Tromsø.

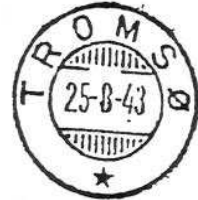
Født (år og datum):

(Utfylles av søkeren.)

Bevitelse av gitte opplysninger.

Riktigheten av de opplysninger som søkeren har gitt på denne søknad om bolig, arbeidssted/skole og reiseavstand i km. bevitnes.

Eventuelle opplysninger:



Til forsyningsnemnda

i Tromsø.

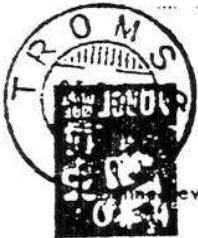
Tromsø.

den 1. 194

~~Importkompani~~ **Importkompani X**

(Arbeidsgivers eller klasseforstanders underskrift.)

Bevitelse må være undertegnet ved søknadens innsendelse.



NORWEGIAN POSTAL STATIONERY RARITIES

Undoubtedly the most spectacular error in the field of Norwegian postal stationery occurs on one of the special application cards for rationed goods, issued during WW II. The card is an application card for permission to buy bicycle tires (sykkelgummi), catalog number 7-I in the Norwegian catalog, where the stamp was accidentally printed upside-down in the lower-left corner. Postmarked at Tromsø on 25.8.43, it may well be the only surviving example of this invert, as the archives of the ration offices were mostly destroyed shortly after the war.

Another interesting error occurs on an application card for a bicycle, catalog 8-V, where the text on the reverse is completely missing. Since it is blank, it would, of course, not make a suitable illustration!

The application card for half-soleing of shoes, catalog 1-XV, also exists without any stamp impression at all.

The double set of figures on the stamps of most of these cards make them look like semi-postals. In a way, they are; the extra fee went to the Ration Office to cover administrative costs. Considering the huge numbers printed, the number of errors that slipped through has been remarkably small.

Of these three errors, only the first-mentioned is recorded in the Catalog of Norwegian Postal Stationery, published in 1980 by the Oslo Philatelic Club, but since I have seen the other two personally, I know they exist as well.