

# Rail and Ship Marks of the St Petersburg City Post, 1870-1916

## 1. Introduction

**Context:** The St Petersburg (SPB) City Post used three Categories of special postmarks on a tiny fraction of the mail sent via local railways and ships: a) Station and Port marks, b) “Poezd” (train) and “Pochta” (post) sorting marks, and c) TPO-like cancellers. They are distinct from ship and rail marks used elsewhere in Russia, and the sorting marks lack an analog in any European country of the time.

**Purpose, importance and organization:** This exhibit classifies the three Categories in terms of Series and Types. Sub-Types are defined for the first time, based on an unprecedented assemblage of material, including items that are unique or exist in very small numbers. Novel explanations are provided for the modes of use of some markings. The arrangement of the Categories is chronological, taking into account new discoveries and new information regarding usage.



An 1895 German PC sent from Bastet (near Berlin) via Tsarskoe Selo to Pavlovsk. Two Series B Poezd marks (1 Poezd Type B1, and 4 Poezd Type B4 from Pavlovsk) were applied along with the normal CDS receiver; a unique and attractive combination, ex-Faberge & Bergholm, with Faberge’s notations. The Cyrillic ms. at top left is a transliteration of the recipient’s name.

*The grey-green ink of the above Pavlovsk markings was not used in SPB, where black and red prevailed. Russian postmasters had to purchase their own ink, and the Pavlovsk postmaster used several non-standard colors, probably to save funds. The matching ink of the receiver and Poezd marks on this and similar items demonstrates that Series B marks were mostly used in suburban offices, not in SPB. The presence of two Poezd marks from the same location is rare; it may have occurred due to human error or operational problems.*

Russian words are transliterated, but usually translated only on first use.

*Informational text is in italics.*

Unique and/or most important items are matted in Red

Other more significant items are matted in Dark Blue

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