

Annexation of the Sudetenland

After absorbing Austria, Adolf Hitler set his sights on the German-speaking area of Czechoslovakia called the Sudetenland. The Sudeten Nazi Party had fomented riots and uprisings against the Czech regime ever since Hitler took power in Germany. On September 15, 1938, Hitler demanded the immediate cession of the Sudetenland, promising a German invasion if his demand were to be rejected. The Czech government resisted, but at a hastily convened conference at Munich, Czechoslovakia's allies, Great Britain and France, capitulated to Hitler. On October 1, German troops marched in, and by October 10, the occupation was complete. Poland occupied and annexed the Teschen area.

Provisional postmarkers, many of them containing Nazi symbols and slogans, were issued for use in towns conquered by Germany. This double-circle October 1938 example from Neuern includes a swastika. The 6-pfennig postal card with added postage for air mail to Prague (a foreign destination after Germany annexed the Sudetenland) was sent on October 26, 1938, denoted by a purple straight-line datestamp above the postage. The Czech language portion of the air mail etiquette has been over-written in German; a purple marking applied by a Czech censor verifies that the conflict continued.



Provisional postmarks were valid only until November 1, 1938, when the markers were replaced by standard German cancelers in the areas annexed by Germany.