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BRITISH Rocket Mail TRIALS

GREAT BRITAIN, according to recent reports, has rapidly taken to the recently progressive wave of experimentation in rocket mails. None other than Herr Gerhard Zucker, the brilliant young German inventor of the more successful type of this newest means of postal communication, personally conducted the initial trial flights on the Isles.

The British Postmaster General, Sir K. Wood, questioned as to whether he had considered the possibility of the use of postal rockets, especially in the case of islands where it is difficult to land the mails by ordinary methods when the sea is rough, replied that he shall be prepared to consider their use, if such a method is found to be practicable.

Rocket posts, the most ultra-rapid means of direct communication, have been going through their early pioneering stages in continental Europe for the past three years. The imaginative and romantic aspect of their nature and purpose has quickly captured the readily receptive public eye and mind. Practical experimentation has taken place in England. America is not far behind, with trial flights scheduled for an early date.

The initial British trials to carry mail by rocket were executed early on the morning of June 6 at Sussex Downs, two miles from Rottingdean. Although the delivery of mail between two specified points was not attempted, and there was no support of the trial flight on the part of postal authorities, it is interesting to record this experiment as it will undoubtedly lead to others of greater significance, perhaps even to regular scheduled British service.

The trials, which were conducted by Herr Zucker and his British assistant, were witnessed by only four other people, all newspaper representatives, among whom was Mr. Albert H. Harris, editor of the English Philatelic Magazine. The two experiments conducted were extremely successful, and plans are now under way for cross-channel trials.

The mail carried on these trial flights was franked with labels of the "Apex" Exhibition, which had been overprinted in two curved lines: "ROCKET POST — FIRST BRITISH FLIGHT." 1,000 of each of the six colors of labels were overprinted. The total number of labels used on covers, which represents the amount of mail carried, was 2,864. A large portion of the balance of the labels have been destroyed, according to the Philatelic Magazine.

A special cachet and frank was applied in black to all covers carried on the rocket trials. The frank, in the left portion, is in the form of a small map of England, composed of the following words, repeated in miniature characters: "ZUCKER ROCKET POST. ROCKET FEE TWO SHILLINGS SIXPENCE PAID" The cachet was prepared by Universal Postal Frankers, Ltd. A circular cachet was at first submitted to the Postoffice for approval, but objection was raised that it too nearly resembled the ordinary type of postmark. The Postoffice approved the revised form, as illustrated. In addition all covers were franked with ordinary British stamps for postal purposes.

After being recovered from the rocket the covers were taken to the Brighton Postoffice where they were postmarked at 9:15 A.M., June 6th.

