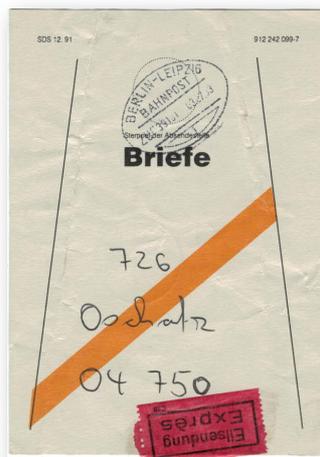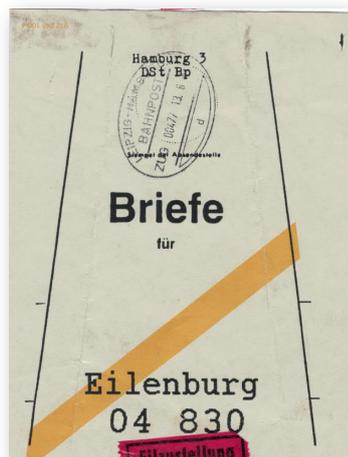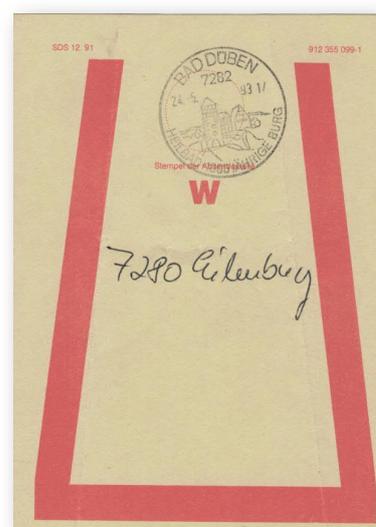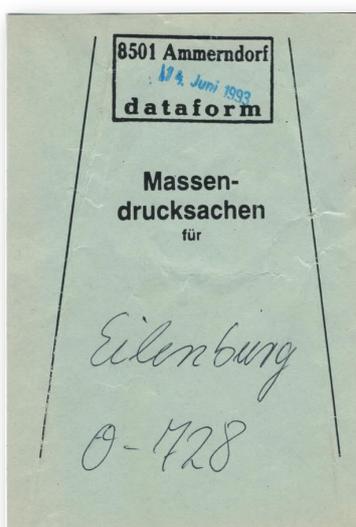# Perhaps unknown things about the bag

The German language is extremely diverse and has various terms for packaging material, including in the postal sense. It is remarkable that there are regional differences without the terms being assigned to a dialect: Sack, Beutel, Tüte, Tasche. The endings "chen" and "lein" make everything small, with the "a" becoming "ä" - for example, Säckchen. There are also extensions and double meanings in this context, such as Alter Sack or Geldsack, or Kartoffelsack or Hodensack, depending on the contents. It is worth noting that terms ending in "ack" are always masculine. Even ChatGPT had to admit this to me; at first the AI wanted to sell me Plackerei and Jack as female. But then I thought of an exception: the pack is neuter.

Three express mail pouch flags with railroad postmarks for pouches in which letters were transported.

But back to philately: the "postal pouch" is well-known philatelically; in some exhibits you will find a pouch flag that identifies the postal pouch in which certain types of letters or destinations are packaged. These mail pouches come in three sizes and are closed with a string or wire and sealed if necessary. In addition, the so-called pouch flag is attached, which is stamped and on which the destination is noted. These pouch flags are also an interesting collector's item. Depending on the pouch flag, they were used for letters, parcels, valuables, registered mail, express mail, newspapers, printed matter, bulk printed matter, sacking or filing. A few such pouch flags are shown in this article.

Three pouch flags for pouches in which parcels, bulk printed matter and insured letters were sent.

With the abolition of rail mail and, some time later, the switch to letter centers, the pouch flags gradually become superfluous. Now only unstamped information carriers are needed for the mail containers.

The pouch flag is also the subject of a well-known parody of bureaucratic German by Wolf Wondratschek in one of his novels. This parody is based on a very similar commentary on § 49 of the "Dienstanweisung für den Postbetrieb Teil 2", which deals with the fact that in linguistic usage, a pouch is also sacked and not bagged, similar to my thoughts above. So here's the parody - maybe someone will understand the bureaucratic German:

"In beginner's circles, the terms "value sack", "value pouch", "sacking pouch" and "value parcel sack" are often confused. In order to remedy this problem, the following information sheet is attached to § 49 of the ADA:
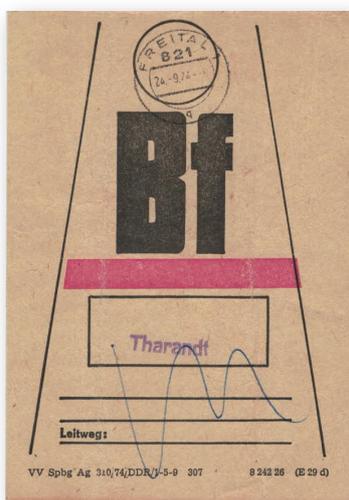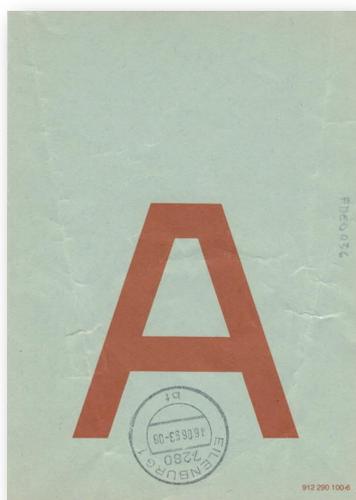
The value sack is a pouch which, due to its special use in the postal transportation service, is not called a value pouch but a value sack because its contents consist of several value pouches which are not pouched but sacked into the value sack.

However, this does not change the fact that the value pouch flag used to designate the value sack is also referred to as a value pouch flag and not as a value sack flag, value sack pouch flag or value pouch sack flag. If, when determining the contents of a value sack, it turns out that a sacking pouch bagged in a value sack should have been bagged in one of the value pouches bagged in the value sack instead of in the value sack, the bagging point in question must be notified immediately.

After it has been emptied, the value sack becomes a pouch again and is to be counted as a pouch rather than a sack when counting the pouches.

However, a pouch marked "value sack" on the loading slip is not a value sack, but a value parcel sack, because a value sack is not designated as such on the loading slip, but it is merely indicated by the note "sacked" that the sacked value pouch is a value sack and not a value parcel sack expressly designated as a "value sack.

Confusion is also ruled out insofar as every postal employee knows that a pouch labeled as a value sack is not a value sack, but a value parcel sack."

Three more pouch flags: A again for a parcel pouch? Where to? The last two pouch flags are from the former GDR, the latter for the transportation of ZKD letters.

Literature: https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postbeutel