

June 1888, Wilhelm II became the Emperor of Germany. He wanted to establish a maritime empire to rival the British and French by building a strong navy to complement what his grandfather Wilhelm I did for the German Army.

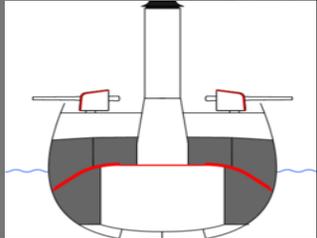


*“Vineta” Legendary Baltic City*

- Largest trading cities
- Sank into the ocean due to “sinfulness” of its inhabitants
- Probably became submerged by the rising waters due to changes in the channels of the Oder River



Vineta was laid down January 1896 Imperial Dockyard in Danzig.  
 Launched on December 9, 1897  
 Commissioned on September 13, 1899  
 Completed October 1900, 10,714,000 Marks  
 “Victoria Louise” Second Class Protected Cruiser  
 Victoria Louise, Hertha, Freya, Hansa, Vineta



SMS Vineta original configuration

363 feet long, beam 57 feet, Draught 22 feet 9 inches

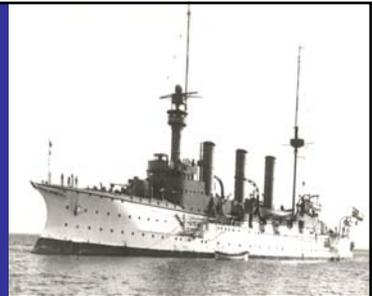
Displaced 6491 tons

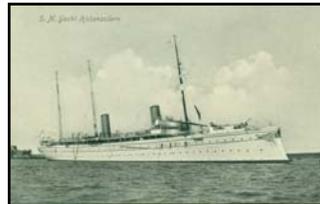
Powered by 3 shaft triple Expansion engines, 10,000 Shaft horsepower, Top speed 19.5 knots

Crew size 477

Armament: two 8.2-inch guns, Single forward and aft turrets Eight 5.9-inch guns, ten 3.4-inch Guns mounted in casements

Three 17.7-inch torpedo tubes





**SMY (Seine Majestät Yacht) Hohenzollern**  
 Built at A. G. Vulcan shipyard in Stettin, launched July 27, 1892  
 Length 360 feet  
 Beam 60 feet  
 Draught 16.8 feet  
 Engines two 9500 horse power  
 Armament 2 and 4 inch guns  
 1894-1914 Kaiser Wilhelm II  
 Enjoyed Mediterranean cruises in the spring and northern cruises in the summer.  
 He spent 4 years on board on 51 cruises.



### S.M.Y. Hohenzollern

A commemorative postcard featuring portraits of Prince Heinrich of Prussia and President Theodore Roosevelt, with the US and German flags. The text on the postcard reads: "Der Kaiserliche Kronprinz Wilhelm mit S.M.Y. Hohenzollern in New York auf der hundertjährigen Anniversarfeier des Jahres 1902".

- 1902 Prince Heinrich of Prussia, the Kaiser's younger brother, commanded the Hohenzollern in 1888, and represented him during a state visit to the US when he met with President Theodore Roosevelt.

### TWO FAMOUS GERMAN SHIPS

| S.M.S. VINETA                                                                                                                                                                                           | S.M.Y. HOHENZOLLERN                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Laid down January 1896<br>Imperial Dockyard, Danzig<br>Launched December 9, 1897<br>Length 363 feet long<br>Beam 57 feet<br>Draught 22.6 feet<br>Engines three 10,000 shaft horsepower<br>Crew size 477 | A.G. Vulcan Shipyard, Stettin<br>Launched July 22, 1892<br>Length 360 feet long<br>Beam 60 feet<br>Draught 16.8 feet<br>Engines two 9500 shaft horsepower<br>Crew size 348 plus small orchestra |

A black and white photograph of the S.M.S. Vineta, a dark-hulled steamship with two funnels, at sea.

**VINETA 1908-1911**

- Modernized with boilers replaced, one stack removed, tower mast replaced
- Training ship for the German Navy
- Coastal defense duties
- Did not participate in the Battle of Jutland
- November 1916, armament removed, assumed role as a barracks ship
- Decommissioned December 6, 1919
- Sold for scrap in 1920

1901 *Vineta* began a tour of ports on the east coast of South America, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico

A map showing the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. A red line indicates the route of the S.M.S. Vineta, starting from the Gulf of Mexico and moving through the Caribbean. A label "Des Allemands" is visible on the map.

## The Arrival In New Orleans

- January 26, 1901
- Anchored in the Mississippi River off the Julia Street Wharf
- 12 blocks walking distance to Jackson's Square, in the heart of the French Quarter
- January 27, 1901, Kaiser Wilhelm II 42<sup>nd</sup> Birthday
- Vineta planned a 14 day stay in New Orleans to celebrate the Kaiser's birthday

## Local Newspaper Coverage

- Daily Picayune- Sunday, January 27, 1901 "the crew was turned loose to enjoy the City's sights and with the warning that good behavior was imperative"
- Times-Democrat- January 28, 1901 reported that "the Kaiser is forty-two years old"
- The New Orleanser Deutsche Zeitung gave a thorough account of the Vineta's visit and the Grand Banquet

1876

ST CHARLES HOTEL

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Originally built 1837, rebuilt after a fire 1841, occupied by Federal Troops commanded by "Spoons" Butler 1862, additional changes after fires in 1876, 1880 and 1897

St. CHARLES HOTEL 1900

### *The Grand Banquet at The St. Charles Hotel*

*Hosted by the New Orleans German Community to honor the officers of this warship on the occasion of its goodwill visit*

*St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans, c. 1900*

*"The sixteen guests looked smart in their becoming gold-trimmed gala uniforms, and a more splendid gathering has seldom been seen."*  
*New Orleanser Deutsche Zeitung*

- The guests arrived at 7:15 PM and were greeted by the German Consul, Baron Ernest Von Meysenbug and the hotel's owner, Mr. R. A. Blakely. They were escorted to the Grand Banquet Hall.

*German Consul, Baron Ernest von Meysenbug*

*Captain Hermann da Fonseca-Wollheim*

*Attending the Banquet at the St. Charles Hotel were 16 officers from the S.M.S. Vineta, and 48 local hosts from the New Orleans German community.*

### Grand Banquet Menu

- Orange Frappe au Madere
- Bayou Cook Oysters
- Salted Almonds Olives, Celery
- Canapes Scobeleff
- Turtle Soup
- Boiled pompano al la Maitre d'Hotel
- Bouchees Bavaroises
- Potatoes Gerolstein Moselbluemchen
- Sweetbreads braises Hohenzollern
- Tomatoes Dusseldorf
- Aperges de Lubeck Mousseline
- German Punch
- Roast Philadelphia
- Squab aux Truffes

### Grand Banquet Menu

- Salade Louisianaise
- Ice Cream in Form
- Bon Bons
- Neufchatel and Roquefort Cheeze
- Toasted Crackers
- Café
- Cigars, Cigarettes
- Sauternes
- Mumm's Extra Dry Assorted Cakes



Baron von Meysenbug,  
Kapitel der deutschen Nation.



Kaiser Wilhelm II

**THE PINE TREE TOAST**



Ferdinand Freiligrath, 1810-1836

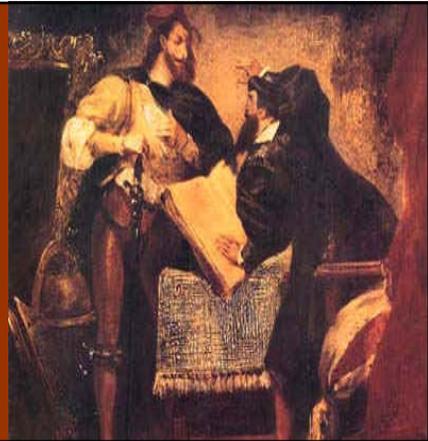
**Captain da Foncesca-Wollheim**

**“Germans need not fear sending her sons to America. Those now living in this beautiful country should not forget their German Origin.”**



Commandant da Foncesca-Wollheim.

Charles Buck Said he would follow Faust's advise:  
"that no words were needed where feelings ran so high. Faust fights mediocrity and strives for ideals. And so it is with Germany. Surrounded by enemies, it has striven for the highest ideals and achieved glory."



### New York Times Jan 27, 1901

- Festivities on board the Vineta marking the Kaiser's 42<sup>nd</sup> birthday
- Baron von Meysenbug was the master of ceremonies
- 21 gun salute in honor of the Kaiser
- Local newspapers covered the events with interviews with crew members and many photographs

Vineta leaves for Mexico, and newspapers reporting the events caught up with the ship at Port of Spain Trinidad



## Service Regulations for the Imperial Naval Ship Mail Rooms

- Postal Regulation of May 14, 1897 specified 5 pfenning for printed materials up to 50 grams, postcards and letters. This was in effect until November 1, 1901.
- The domestic rate rule for newspapers up to 50 grams was 3 pf. In peacetime, Naval units could use domestic rates for mail from the ships to Germany.
- The 5-pf rate was reduced to 3 pf per order No. 129 of May 9, 1899, but the service regulation of 1897 was never amended. No ship commanders were officially advised of order No. 129.
- Service regulation of August 29, 1901 changed the rate for printed materials and newspapers to 3 pf. This change took effect on November 1, 1901.
- When stamp supplies were depleted, the postage would be collected, the letters were marked "postage due" and the letter stamped signifying the origin as Naval ship mail room. The material would receive proper postage by the Naval Postal Service in Berlin after receiving prepayment by postal money order.
- Naval ships carried adequate 5-pf stamps but were not routinely supplied with 3-pf stamps.

## Marine Schiffspost System

- Introduced in 1897 for all Naval ships deployed for official overseas cruises leaving German territorial waters
- On board postal facilities managed by the Chief Paymaster, serving as Postmaster
- Marine postal Bureau in Wilhelmshaven issued circular cancellers used by the ships throughout the deployment, which were returned to the postal Bureau after the cruise and reused often by different ships.
- Each canceller had Kais. Deutsche Marine Schiffspost and had a designated MSP number and the date.
- At the beginning of World War I cancellers 1-88 were in use



## S.M.S. Vineta's Options

- Use 5-pf stamps per postal regulation of 1897
- Could have used manuscript markings
- The ship's Postmaster Wegener chose to use 3-pf for the newspapers. Was this choice based on the "domestic rate rule", or was he aware of the postal regulation #129 of 1899 changing the rate for printed material to 3-pf?

## Vineta's Solution

- Chief Paymaster, Officer Wegener also served as Postmaster
- Chief Postal Clerk Sanftenberg
- Proposed overprinting 3 panes of 100 5-pf with a crude rubber stamp which would apply 3-pf to each side of the stamp
- The sheets were bisected yielding 600 stamps
- Captain da Fonseca-Wollheim approved

3PF



Sanftenberg used a penknife to cut a piece of soft rubber which was used for a cleaning tool such as for cleaning a glass window. The effects of usage, tropical heat saltwater and exposure caused small particles to break off of the handstamp.



South America

First day of issue to the crew April 13, 1901

First day of cancellation April 17, 1901 Vineta Arrives in Pernambuco, Recife, Brazil

April 23, 1901, Vineta arrives in Bahia Salvador

First batch of "Vineta's" Arrive at Naval Post Office In Berlin May 6, 1901

Reichspostamt begins investigation in the "Vineta" incident May 21, 1901

Letter sent to Vineta from Naval Secretary June 7, 1901

Letter arrives on board June 28, 1901 Ship arrives in Rio de Janeiro Last day of "genuine cancellation"

## INQUIRY BY THE GERMAN NAVAL SECRETARY

- Letter dated June 7, 1901
- For what reason was the "Vineta" created
- Was this done purposely
- Was the ship's canceller used without authority
- How many specimens were produced
- What was done with the cash difference
- Response dated July 2, 1901
- Captain aware of postal regulations
- 3-pf stamps were not available on board
- Alternative means of mailing large volumes of newspapers needed
- Desire not to overburden Berlin with excess mail
- No philatelic interests
- No unauthorized use of ship's canceller
- December 16, 1901 ends investigation

### VINETA CANCELLATIONS

Genuine Cancellations dates begin with April 17, 1901

Used on newspaper wrappers, postcards and letters

M.S.P. #1-Vineta, M.S.P. #74-Mainz July 10, 1901

June 28, 1901 last day of genuine use

"Favor" cancellations May 12, 1901- common date

August 12, 1901- last known date of cancellation

September 22, 1901 date of private reprints or forgeries with backdated cancellations with ship's canceller to May 12<sup>th</sup> or May 18, 1901



Of the 600 copies, majority were used.  
Mint copies are rare.  
Mint blocks of 6 and 8 are reported.  
One inverted overprint dated May 12, 1901.



Postcard dated April 23, 1901 when ship arrived at Bahia, Salvador, over franked by 1-pf



## Philatelic Motivation

- Captain insists there was no philatelic interest
- Stamp was used until August 1901, after the letter from Berlin arrived on June 28, 1901
- Use on letters and postcards
- Blocks, pairs and over franking examples
- Captain da Fonseca-Wollheim owned 30 copies for 3 months
- Postcard dated April with a provisional alerted addressee to save stamp
- Sanftenberg granted favor cancellations, backdated, manufactured provisionals as late as September 22, 1901

"The belief that the "Vineta" was created with good intentions is one of the worst concoctions in German Philately"

Tröndel believed that with the passage of time, the notoriety of the "Vineta" led to significant philatelic and financial interest by dealers, collectors and philatelic organizations who manipulated the truth for their own personal agenda

"Touching story, fairy tale, speculative show, poetry, fantasy, scandal, charade, fraudulent stamp"

### Das „Vineta-Provisorium“



Ludwig Tröndle

Schwaneberger Verlag · München

## THE "FRISIA"

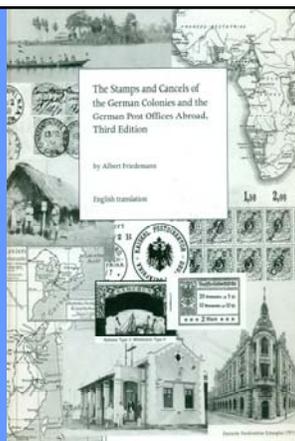
- Wilhelmshaven Exchange Association (Frisia) commissioned a publication in 1907, "The Vineta Provisorium"
- Georg Dister, a shipyard worker, vice chairman of Frisia performed an extensive investigation into the "Vineta"
- Conclusion: The "Vineta" in every respect was legitimate in accordance with 1904 postal regulations

## Dister and the Frisia's "Charade"

- Dister cites postal regulation of 1904, not 1901
- Dister makes no reference to the "domestic rate rule"
- Dister and other members of Frisia owned 48 original and 23 reprints, and forgeries
- Dister advertised in the *Wilhelmshaven Daily* to buy "Vinetas" and resold them to dealers
- International Stamp Exhibition in Berlin in 1904, 32 of the Frisia's "Vinetas" were rejected as forgeries

*International Society of Philatelists, Dresden, Germany 1000 members, review of the Vineta Incident 1906-1908, reported by Albert Friedemann*

*"Serious concerns about the Frisia's conclusions, and their self appointed status as experts and authorities on all aspects of the "Vineta"*



## Chief Postal Clerk Sanftenberg

- Produced "favor" cancellations, reprints (forgeries)
- Postdated at crews request
- Favor cancellations used on letters, some with only one cancellation
- Variations in ink color
- Possibly produced 200 "reprints" Sept. 1901
- Kept the handstamp and ink pads
- Dister claims he threw the handstamp overboard

## Dr. "K"

- Albert Friedemann reported that Dr. Koswig claimed to be the "brainchild"
- Discussed with a nephew who was a *Vineta* crewman manufacturing a German provisional like the "German-China"
- Dr. "K" claimed to have received a large number of "Vinetas" from his nephew
- Story changed to a conversation with a German Naval physician who had died
- Dr. "K" withdrew his story

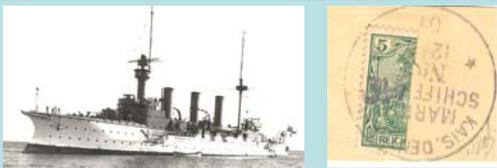
*What is the real truth about the "Vineta"?*

*Was the Vineta was created out of need to send home printed material, letters and postcards from the crew?*

*Was the Vineta was created for philatelic and monetary gain?*

*Was the Vineta was a premeditated creation and the "worst concoction" in German philately?*

*Some have suggested that the "Vineta" does not deserve a noteworthy place in stamp albums or catalogs and should be relegated to the back of the book among marine cancellation issues.*



The "Vineta" was probably created out of need and without intentional violation of existing postal regulations. With the passage of time it was a natural consequence that there developed a genuine philatelic interest in the provisional. This led some to seek financial gain. To condemn the "Vineta" because of philatelic interests that ultimately developed is not fair treatment of the events when considered as a whole.

Although the "Vineta" has passed through controversial waters during its existence, it now deserves safe harbor with other gems of philately.