

NON-POSTAL FORMS FOUND IN THE MAIL STREAM AFTER THE 1952 MONETARY REFORM

Dinu G. Matei, Toronto, Canada

Despite not much being written about postal stationeries issued by the Romanian Post in the late '40's and early '50's, these are fairly well known to collectors and are relatively well presented in the Michel Eastern Europe Postal Stationery Catalog 2001/2002 edition. Less known is the fact that during this period various forms issued by other institutions or ministers were accepted in the mail stream by the Romanian Post. This article presents some interesting non-postal forms franked with postage stamps and mailed within Romania following the 1952 Monetary Reform.

The most common items are the forms issued by the Ministry of Justice, **summons** and **proof of summon delivery** respectively. Such items were issued by the Romanian Post as postal stationeries prior to 1947 and after 1954. Between these years they simply did not exist. One must note that summons were sent by registered mail by the Law Courts, while the proof of summon deliveries were hand-delivered by a so-called "procedural agent" and after proof of delivery (usually the signature of the addressee) they were returned to the respective Law Court by registered mail. Following the 1952 Monetary Reform the postal rate for locally mailing such an item was 2.35 lei and the postal rate for mailing them in other localities was set-up at 2.55 lei. These forms were not standardized, various formats and sizes being known. Apparently, they were printed locally at the order of the Law Courts. In some cases, these forms were actually made using a typewriter and multiplied using carbon paper.

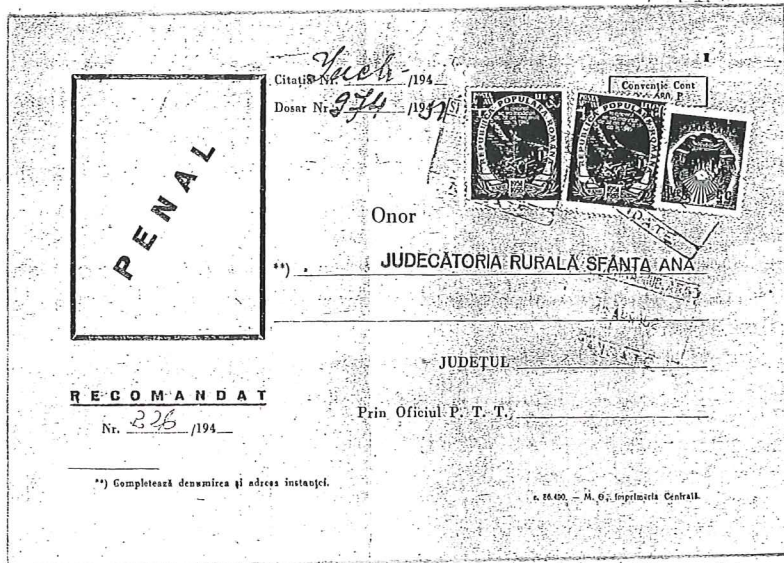


Fig 1a and Fig 1b depict front and back sides of a printed proof of summon delivery issued in April 1952 by the Sfanta Ana Rural Law Court hand-delivered to a person in the Olari village. Reason is not stated. After being signed by the addressee, it was returned to the Law Court the following day. For some

reasons, this item was mailed not from Olari, but from Sfanta Ana and it is franked with overprinted stamps following the 1952 Monetary Reform totaling 2.55 lei (two 1 leu overprint on 30 lei air mail stamp from the Five Year Plan issue, Scott #C37, Michel #1368, and one 55 bani overprint on 6 lei stamp from the National Arms issue, Scott #836, Michel #1326). One must note the scarce rectangular departure postmark (usually used for money orders) that reads "Sfanta Ana Judiciara/18 Apr 1952/Mandate". Perhaps a post office was located in the same building with the Law Court. This type of postmark has not been previously recorded.

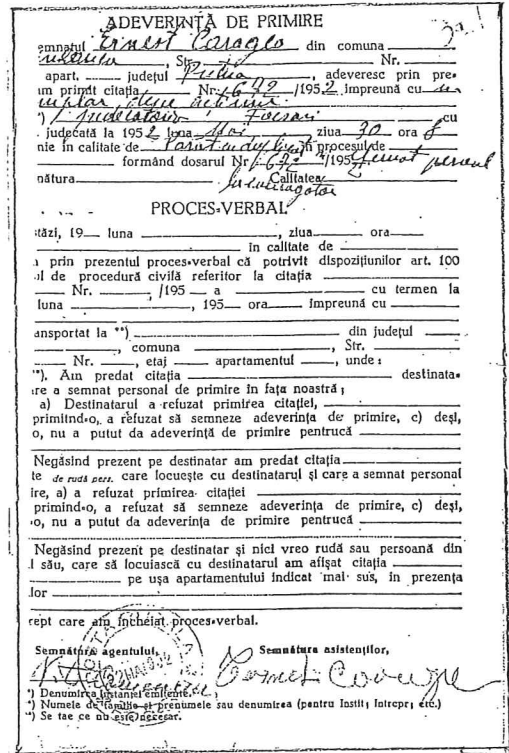


Fig 2a and Fig 2b depict another printed proof of summon delivery issued in May 1952 by the Focsani Popular Law Court hand-delivered to a person in Focsani requested to withstand a trial (reason not stated). It was returned to the Law Court the following day and it is franked with overprinted stamps totaling 2.35 lei, correct postal rate (a nice block of four of 55 bani overprint on 11 lei stamp from the Caragiale issue, Scott #818, Michel #1296, and one 35 bani overprint on 5 lei stamp from the Five Year Plan issue, Scott #864, Michel #1357).



Fig.3a and Fig 3b depict front and backsides of another proof of summon delivery issued in June 1952 by the Suraia Law Court, in today's Vrancea County. It was hand-delivered to a person residing in Suraia

requested to stand as a witness in a trial. The addressee returned the form to the Suraia Law Court by registered mail the following day. One must note the spectacular franking consisting of no less than 21 overprinted stamps, making-up the correct 2.35 lei required postage (20 of 10 bani overprint on 10 lei Pavel Tcacenco issue, Scott #872, Michel #1352, and 1 of 35 bani overprint on 5 lei from the Five Year Plan Issue, Scott #864, Michel #1357). The 10 bani overprint on 10 lei stamp is difficult to find as multiples on mail since it was intended for use as single franking for mailing printed matters items.

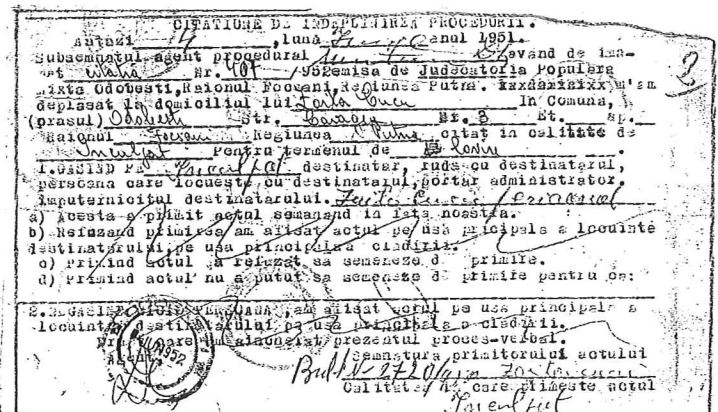
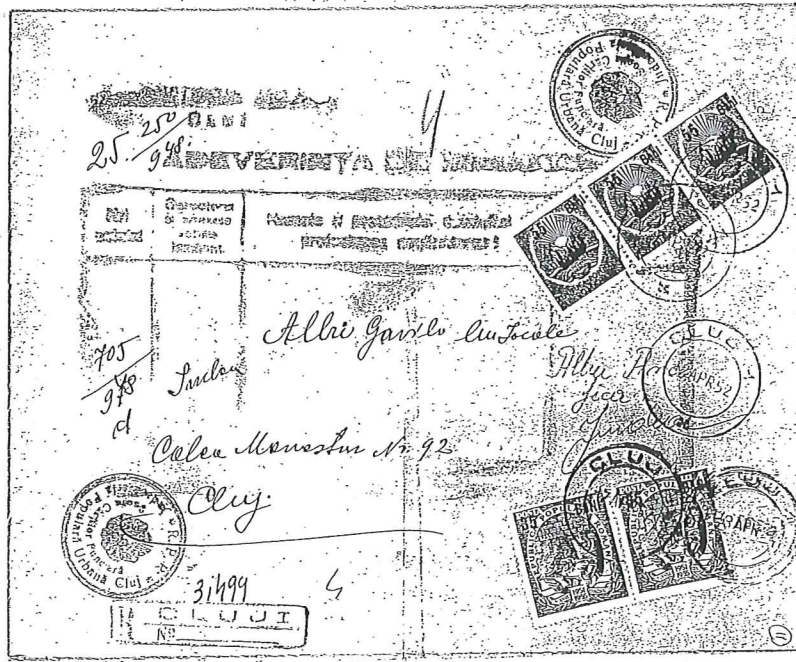


Fig 4a and Fig 4b depict front and back sides of a similar proof of summon delivery issued in June 1952 by the Odobesti Popular Law Court hand-delivered to a person in Odobesti being accused of beating another person. It was returned to the Law Court the following day after the delivery and it is franked with overprinted stamps totaling 2.35 lei, correct postal rate (horizontal pair of 50 bani overprint on 12 lei stamp from the New Constitution issue, Scott #820, Michel #1300, 35 bani overprint on 5 lei and 1 leu overprint on 11 lei from the Five Year Plan Issue, Scott #864, 868, Michel #1357, 1361). Note the form was produced using a typewriter.

Much scarcer than the items presented above are the so-called **certificates** (*adeverinta* in Romanian) issued and mailed to land or property owners by the Government Real Estate Offices (*Sectia Cartilor Funciare* in Romanian), belonging to the Ministry of Justice. Since, with very few exceptions, most of the private land was nationalized by the Communist regime following 1948 one can assume these certificates were issued for apartment and/or house owners. Such certificates were required by notaries when a sale/purchase was made, when someone wanted to transfer the ownership title of a particular property to another person, or when someone inherited that property. They prove there is no lien upon that property. It is somehow difficult to understand why such documents were not introduced in envelopes and were mailed as such. It is not known for how long the procedure of mailing these certificates was in use. Nowadays they are not mailed-out, but can only be picked-up upon request by the interested person directly from the *Sectia Cartilor Funciare* after paying a large fee.



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A község elöljárósága

1952. szeptember hó 1-én

[Signature]

[Signature]

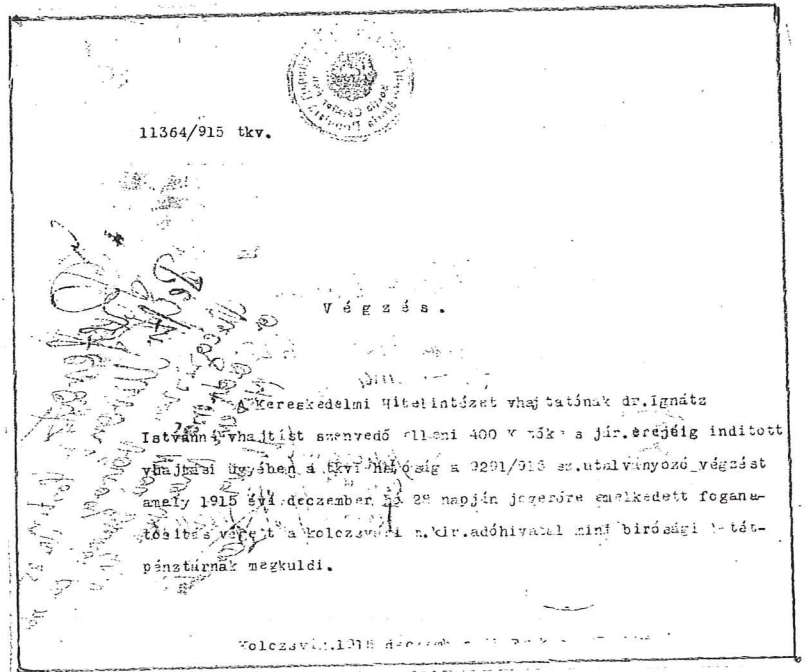
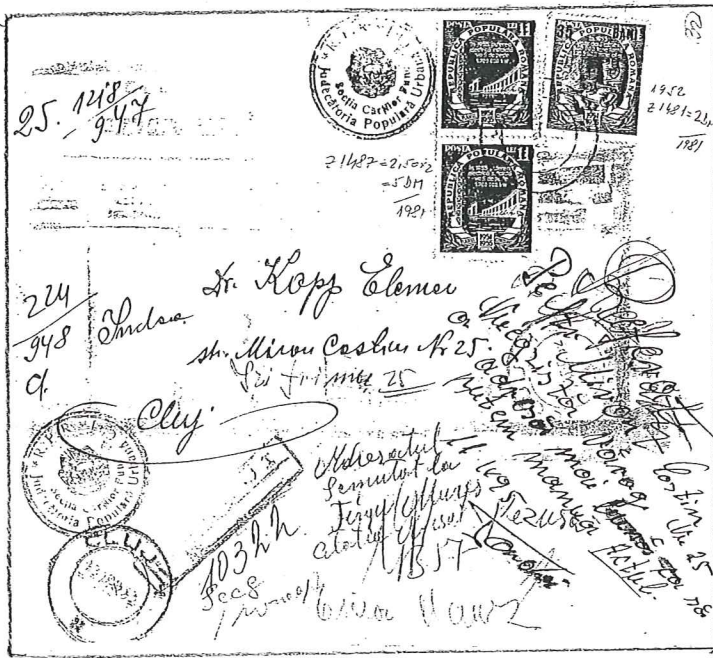
1910

11.120 = 0.16

100 = 10000

100 = 10000

Fig 5a depicts such a certificate issued by the Cluj Urban Law Court in April 1952 locally sent by registered mail and franked with overprinted stamps totaling 2.35 lei (horizontal strip of three 55 bani overprint on 31 lei stamp from the National Arms issue, Scott #840, Michel #1330, and a horizontal strip of two 35 bani on 4 lei stamp from the Five Year Plan issue, Scott #863, Michel #1356a).



Postal rates for mailing such items are not given anywhere in the available literature but one can assume they would have required the same postal rates as for summons and proof of summon delivery, as proved by the surviving examples. A similar certificate, issued by the same institution in the same month of 1952, also franked with overprinted stamps totaling 2.35 lei (vertical pair of 1 leu overprint on 11 lei stamp, Scott #868, Michel #1361 and one 35 bani on 4 lei, Scott #863, Michel #1356a stamps from the Five Year Plan issue) is shown in Fig 6a. The latter was redirected to Tirgu-Mures, where the addressee has moved in the meantime. Note the manual inscriptions in a very poor Romanian by the local mailman.

What makes these certificates even more interesting is the fact they were not printed, but a large rubber handstamp in the form of the required table was made and applied on half sheets of paper torn off from old files remained from the Austrian-Hungarian administration at the end of WW1, as shown in Fig. 5b and 6b. It is obvious the lack of paper at this institution in early 1952 and the need to fulfill the requirements by improvising using paper from documents from old files.

167-7

Sfatul Popular _____ Anexa 12.
 Secțiunea _____ DATA: _____
 Se aprobă plata sumei de Lei _____
 (Președintele Comitetului Provizoriu (ordonator).)

Referat de plată

Nr. _____ din _____ 195 _____
 Pe baza „Referatului de aprobarea cheltuielilor” Nr. _____ din _____
 195 s'a aprobat _____

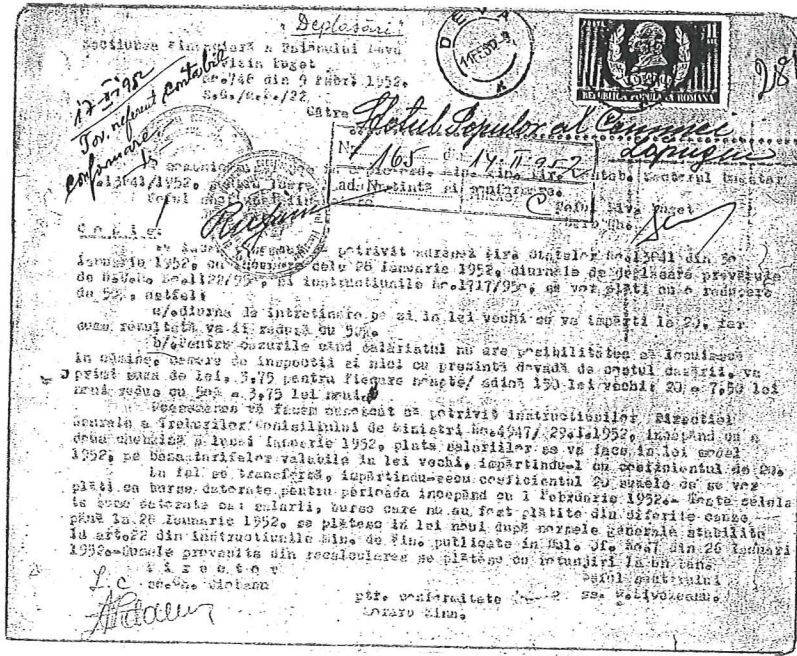
Și în consecință, rugăm a aproba plata sumei de:

Lei _____ (_____)
 dela art. _____, al. _____ paragraf _____, capitol _____, titlu _____ Partea _____

Semnătura _____ Intocmit _____

<p style="text-align: center;">Semnătura Financiară</p> <p>Serviciul _____ Data _____</p> <p>Acele justificative, anexate prezentului „Referat de plată”, s'au verificat și constatat că îndeplinesc condițiile legale ca formă și fond pentru a se efectua plata sumei de lei _____ (_____) Semnătura verificatorului dela Contabilitate _____</p>	<p>DATA: _____</p> <p>Emis ordinul de plată:</p> <p>Nr. _____ în valoare de Lei _____ Nr. _____ în valoare de Lei _____ Nr. _____ în valoare de Lei _____ Semnătura funcționarului dela Serviciul-Ordonanțări _____</p>
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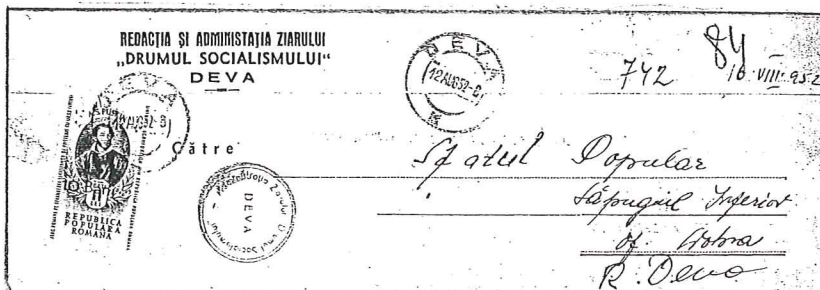
Another interesting non-postal form accepted in the mail stream by the Romanian Post is illustrated in Fig 7. It is actually a **payment report form** (*referat de plata* in Romanian) sent in April 1952 to the townhall of Lapugiu from the Budget Department of the Deva's branch of the Ministry of Finances. The item was folded three times before it was mailed-out and the address appears on the back of the image (not shown here). Total postage affixed is 60 bani (horizontal strip of four and horizontal pair of 10 bani overprint on 6 lei stamp from the Aurel Vlaicu issue, Scott #843, Michel #1336). In this case one can assume this form was franked according to the postal rate required for a simple letter rate and for some reasons (lack of proper stamps perhaps) the postage affixed is 60 bani instead of 55 bani, which would have been sufficient.



A similar item is illustrated in Fig 8. Originated from the same Budget Department of the Deva's branch of the Ministry of Finances, as the previous one, it is a **note on submitting expense reports** addressed in February 1952 to the townhall of Lapugiu. It is franked with a 55 bani overprint on 11 lei stamp from the Caragiale issue (Scott #815, Michel #1296) and it has been folded in two before being mailed-out. It is shown open for display. This is another case when, due to the lack of paper and forms, such a note was typewritten on a piece of paper torn off from an old document (back side not shown).



The item illustrated in Fig 9 is a **pre-delivery notice** for a quantity of lumber from the Ministry of Agriculture to a high school in Iernut, Mures county. The notice is typewritten on plain paper which is folded in two (appearance is like a folded business card) and is franked with 55 bani according to the postal rate for sending a letter up to 20 grams within Romania at that time (55 bani overprint on 20 lei stamp from the National Arms issue, Scott #839, Michel #1329).



Finally, the item illustrated in Fig 10 is a **subscription renewal form** originating from the “Drumul Socialismului” (“The Road to Socialism”) newspaper in Deva. It has been folded in two prior to sending and it is shown as such. In this case, the postage affixed is 10 bani (postal rate for printed matters sent within Romania at that time). The stamp used for franking is the 10 bani overprint on 11 lei Puskin stamp (Scott #821, Michel #1306), a difficult stamp to find on commercial mail.

One can assume that mailing-out such forms by various institutions was relatively common in the early '50's and these were all accepted by the Romanian Post in the mail stream. Others than just the ones presented here remain to be discovered. The surviving examples are scarce. First, because mostly were filed in archives and not available to the public and second, because their relative unattractive appearance and large format they were not popular among collectors. Except for summons and proof of summon delivery forms for which postal rates were established by the Romanian Post, the others were either franked with 55 bani (postal rate for sending a letter up to 20 grams within Romania) or with 10 bani (postal rate for sending printed matters up to 20 grams). It is not known how the postal rate for mailing such items was established by the senders. In some instances printed forms were used, in others such forms were locally produced by various means. The re-use of paper from old documents is a clear indication of the lack of paper in Romania in the early '50's. No wonder, since the Sovrom enterprises were busy sending out most of the raw material from Romania to the Soviet Union, including wood, pulp, and paper, among others.

AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE IN ROMANIA DURING 1948

By Robert M. Bell, Sedona, Arizona, USA

