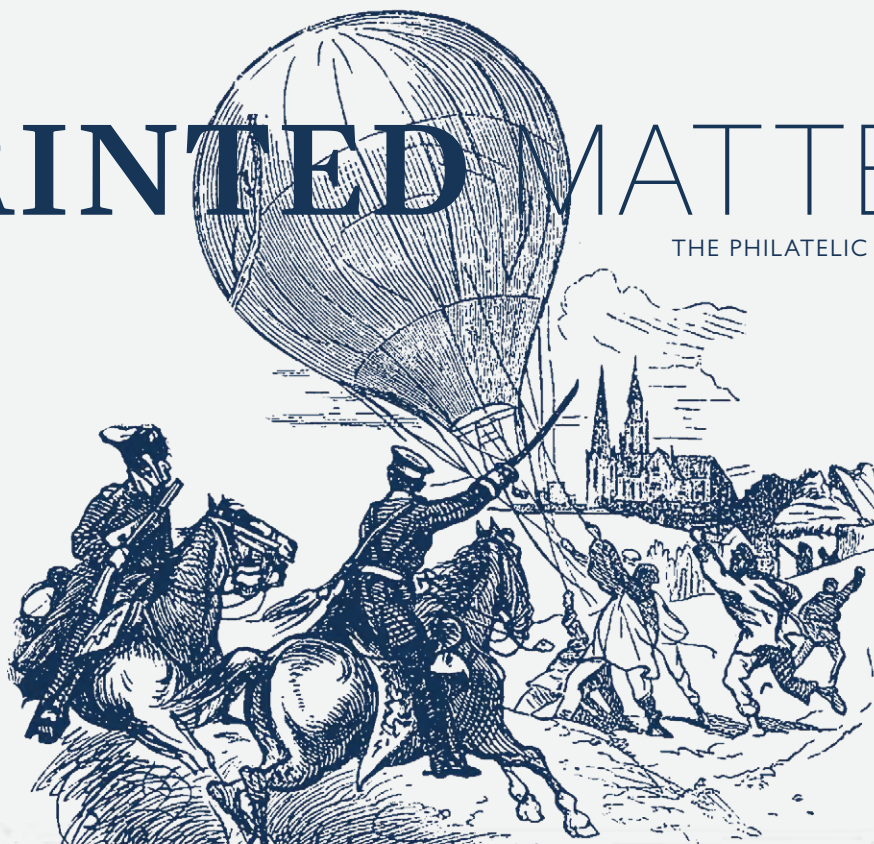


PRINTED MATTERS

THE PHILATELIC MAGAZINE



Cover story

150 years Franco-Prussian War

Experts and aficionados The fascination of the 'growing' stamps

Profiles in philately Chris King – A royal cosmopolitan

Looking abroad From ERIVAN to overseas



HEINRICH KÖHLER

Germany's Oldest Stamp Auction House

Dear Readers,

Plenty of interesting topics await you in the second edition of our customer magazine – on philately and history at its best. We intend to continue in exactly the same way as when we first entered into this customer magazine experiment. Inspired by the tradition of Köhler's Philately Magazine from 1925 to 1936. This time with detailed articles to commemorate some special anniversaries. The 'growing' stamps from the German State Bergedorf are celebrating their 160th anniversary. You can also read interviews with experts Joachim Friedsch and Dr Christian Mozek on pages 3 to 6. And the Franco-Prussian war ended 150 years ago. Our cover story on pages 7 to 9 has written eyewitness accounts of the path towards the German Empire as it happened and features the adventurous story of the balloon post from Paris. While our auction house is known for its philatelic qualities, there is also a non-philatelic aspect that is worth your attention. In this regard, I recommend the article on page 21 – as the Heinrich Köhler establishment has recently received an award for its excellent credit rating.



Enjoy your read!
Kind regards,

Berta Pérez Valverde
Chief Financial Officer of the Global Philatelic Network

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PUBLISHING DETAILS

Publisher:	Heinrich Köhler Auktionshaus GmbH & Co. KG Hasengartenstr. 25, 65189 WIESBADEN, GERMANY Tel.: +49 (0)61134149-0 E-mail: info@heinrich-koehler.de
Project manager:	André Schneider
Editor-in-chief:	Peter Platz
Production:	MEDIUM Werbeagentur GmbH, Bielefeld, Germany
Printing:	Bruns Druckwelt GmbH & Co. KG, Minden, Germany
Image credits:	Wiki Commons (p. 1, 4, 8, 11, 20), iStock (p. 7), Wolfgang Maaßen (p. 18), Peter Platz (p. 19)

The 160th anniversary of Bergedorf stamps – a visit with Joachim Friedsch

The fascination of the 'growing' stamps

Joachim Friedsch attended the 6th ERIVAN Auction in Wiesbaden where he bought two more top rarities for his Bergedorf collection.



Where it all happened: the Hamburg district of Bergedorf. It is a sunny Saturday in September 2021, and we are visiting with Joachim Friedsch, one of the most significant – if not the most significant – Bergedorf collectors of our time. The occasion: it was exactly 160 years ago that the little town of Bergedorf near Hamburg wrote itself into the history books of philately. And it did so with only a single set of five stamps. They were also the very first of their kind and today are much-sought-after rarities – especially on cover. We talk to Joachim Friedsch about the fascination of the 'growing' stamps from Bergedorf.

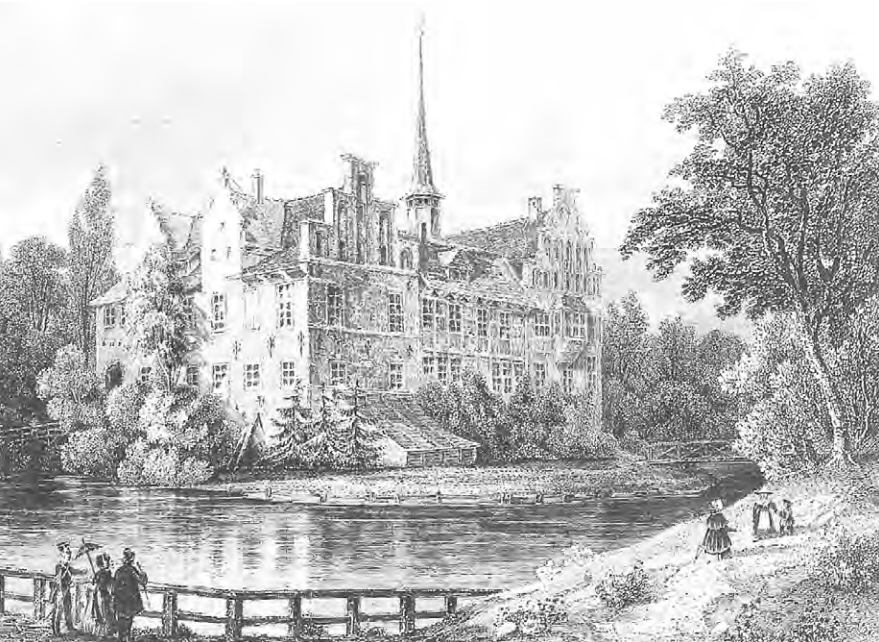
Dear Mr Friedsch, how long have you been so excited about the stamps from Bergedorf?

For around 35 years. I met two notable Bergedorf collectors, Arthur Salm and Richard Willing, at a stamp exhibition in the mid-1980s. With their fascinating stories and anecdotes, they sparked a love in me for the classical stamp issues from the place of my birth. Together with Arthur, I visited the Boker auctions at Heinrich Köhler and met Erivan Haub there. He

was someone who could bid powerfully against all of us on the Bergedorf front. So I had to find another way to build my collection.

So how did that work?

Really simple! In the early 1990s I had the opportunity to buy Richard Willing's Bergedorf collection. With that I acquired some excellent foundations for my collection –



The Bergedorf Palace in the middle of the 19th century.

all in one go. I could then build on that really well. My collection today encompasses the entire postal history of Bergedorf – from pre-philately and proof issues, larger stamp units and rare postmarks to the later usages of the Bergedorf postmarks on the stamps of the later North German Postal Confederation and, occasionally, even the shield issues of the German Empire. On top of that there are the Danish stamps used in Bergedorf as well as those of Schleswig and Holstein. This meant that, for any postal traffic with neighbouring states, the stamps of those states had to be used. But, as there were no separate post offices for Denmark or Schleswig there, the foreign stamps were sold at the Bergedorf post office.

What, in your opinion, makes the Bergedorf stamps so fascinating?

On that, I'll have to elaborate a little further. The German postal district of Bergedorf, which was under the joint ownership of the Free and Hanseatic Cities of Lübeck and Hamburg, issued its own stamps in 1861. These were five postal stamps that were in circulation for six years and still valid for postage until 31 December 1867. After that, the stamps of the North German Postal Confederation were also used in Bergedorf. So the Bergedorf collection area comprised only five stamps. You can easily get all of them if you collect unused stamps. And you can still get them at a fairly accessible price, as very many unused Bergedorf stamps have survived to this day. The square Bergedorf stamps all carry the same motif, by the way, consisting of the combined coat of arms of Lübeck and Hamburg along with their issuing area, their value indication and the 'Postmarke' designation. Yet there is no confusion between these stamps. They are distinguished not only by the different colours of their print and paper, but also by their different sizes. This means that the size of the stamps grows as their face value increases.

This is how the Bergedorf stamps became the first 'growing' stamps. Other countries followed this example, including Mongolia with its first issue of stamps and Tonga with its numbers 128 to 139 in the Michel catalogue. The reverse phenomenon – 'decreasing size' stamps – is also known, by the way, where the size diminishes with increasing face value. An example of this is a series of stamps from 1951 that were used for a long time in Afghanistan.

Admittedly, the subject of 'growing' stamps is exciting. But was that the deciding factor that made you collect Bergedorf stamps?

What tipped the scales for me was of course the rare number of covers with Bergedorf stamps. If you take a look in the current stamp catalogue, you'll see that an unused set of Bergedorf stamps will currently fetch 330 euros. But this is completely different for the cancelled stamps. Depending on their issue, they can fetch between 500 and 7,000 euros. And on cover, the Bergedorf stamps have yet another quality. According to the Michel, the most expensive stamp here is the ½ schilling one in its rare dark blue shade for 35,000 euros. These prices give you a good idea of how rare the Bergedorf stamps are on cover. And there are quite simple reasons for this. Firstly, Bergedorf's status as a postal authority lasted only six years when the stamps were issued, and secondly, the entire Bergedorf postal area had a population of only 12,000 people. So the volume of mail was always manageable. Another factor was that cash franking was also possible after the stamps were introduced, so pre-paid letters were also delivered by the post even without stamps. And this type of franking accounted for a large part of the volume of mail. Above all it is the high values of three and four schillings that are very rare on covers. You can almost count the number of 4-schilling frankings that exist today on two hands. But even covers that are franked with the dark blue ½-schilling stamp are, as already mentioned, extremely rare.

Do you actually have a favourite piece from your Bergedorf collection?

Not one, but three! And this concerns three pieces that were last seen together in the same collection at the end of the 1970s: a pair of 3-schilling stamps on a cover along with the only known pair of letters that carry a mixed franking of the 3-schilling stamp together with a 1-schilling stamp. These three top items were the absolute highlights at a stamp auction at the end of the 1970s, where the outstanding collection of Dr Puls, the great Bergedorf collector,

was offered. These three world rarities then went their own ways. After more than 40 years I was able to re-unite them in my collection, most recently with the purchase of the 3-schilling and 1-schilling stamps on cover during the 5th ERIVAN auction in Wiesbaden.

Talking about highlights, which item is the undisputed pinnacle of the Bergedorf rarities?

Without any doubt, it is known as the Bergedorf one-of-a-kind – a cover with a strip of three 3-schilling stamps plus a pair of the 4-schilling stamps. This cover has gone missing, however. The last time it appeared was at a Heinrich-Köhler auction in 1932. This world rarity was sold there to an unknown bidder. The item has never been seen in public since then. The letter was originally sent by none other than Franz Paalzow, the Bergedorf postmaster at the time. It was addressed to the postmaster of Paris. So I assume that the letter contained Bergedorf stamps and that Paalzow had sent it to his colleague in Paris. And while we are in the realm of speculation, there is an intriguing story about the discovery of this letter. Shortly after the end for the Franco-Prussian War, a German officer met with a high-ranking French postal official – let's assume that this was the aforementioned postmaster from Paris. The Prussian had a fondness for fine French wines and the Frenchman probably had something to offer in this respect. They got chatting as they emptied a few

glasses, and the Frenchman learnt that the Prussian officer's wife came from the small town of Bergedorf. The French postman knew the place well and, by way of proof, he pulled out the cover with the 17-schilling postage. In a nutshell then, the Frenchman gave his former enemy the cover as a present – and then it was taken along to Berlin in the officer's luggage. The story goes that the Prussian officer's son later paid a gambling debt with the cover. But not without first cutting off the back of the envelope to calm his religious conscience – since the French official had written a personal dedication on it.

If ever this highlight of Bergedorf philately appeared again and was auctioned today, in your opinion what price could it reach for the hammer to fall?

In my opinion, this unique item from Bergedorf would be the absolute top postal item in the philately of the German States, right after the Baden 9-kreuzer error. Based on the fact that it is only the front side of an envelope, it could presumably reach a premium of around 300,000 euros. It could also be significantly higher – as the item is not only a first-class world rarity, it also tells a highly exciting historical and post-related story.

Many thanks for talking to us, dear Mr Friedsch.

BERGEDORF

LHPA 1847-1867



The decision to issue postage stamps in Bergedorf was made in October 1861. The stamps could be bought from 28 October 1861 at the Bergedorf post office and were approved for postage from 1 November 1861.



Three questions for Dr Christian Mozek

Dear Dr Mozek, what are the special challenges for a philatelic expertiser with regard to the Bergedorf collection area?

The late Ewald Müller-Mark had already pointed out the rarity of genuinely used Bergedorf stamps in his standard reference volume 'Altdeutschland unter der Lupe' ('German States under the magnifying glass'). Assessing the line postmark on loose specimens is a challenge, especially with the small-format dark values. On the other hand, there are also characteristic features of the line postmark that immediately expose any good forgeries. The colour of the postmark also plays an important role here. This can be verified with reference to letters without postmarks.

As the numbers of stamps used for franking letters are relatively low, Bergedorf stamps with postmarks are rare and thus valuable. How often does it happen that counterfeit or falsified used Bergedorf stamps are submitted?

It happens more and more often, especially as incorrectly cancelled stamps. The line postmark is often falsified, and there are also some very good forgeries (such as the Grünheider ones). There are also some very dangerous forgeries that have presumably been lithographed – some of them from famous collections – and many of which have been expertised as genuine.

Official reprints and unauthorized reprints also play a role with Bergedorf. How are they distinguished from the originals?

Some of these reprints, such as the 1½ schilling value, are very easy to distinguish. The originals carry the SCHILLING inscription, whereas the reprints show this inscription as SCHILLINGE. There are various reprint runs where the printed image deteriorates from one run to the next. This is particularly visible in the wavy background or in the mutilated cyphers. Distinguishing the early reprints or the new prints from the proofs is rather more difficult, especially for the untrained eye, without any pieces to compare with.



These three Bergedorf world rarities were last united in the same collection 40 years ago. They are among the highlights of Joachim Friedsch's collection today.



This strip of four 1-schilling stamps from Bergedorf on cover is unique, and has been part of Joachim Friedsch's outstanding Bergedorf collection since the 6th ERIVAN auction in Wiesbaden.



Written documentation that witnesses
the path towards the German Empire



Otto von Bismarck
and Napoleon III after
the Battle of Sedan.

150

YEARS

Franco-Prussian War

The Franco-Prussian war ended 150 years ago. In fact this armed conflict turned the existing balance of power on its head. Up to that date, France was considered the strongest military power in central Europe. Yet Germany was the winner and became the German Empire, with France, the loser, becoming known as the Third Republic. The Heinrich Köhler Autumn 2022 sale will feature a collection of unique written contemporary documentation that witnesses the path towards the German Empire.





The bombardment of Paris by the German artillery in 1870.

'We were on the march from 1 o'clock onwards yesterday morning. Hardly had the day dawned when the thunder began. It was so unrelenting that we with the artillery were under fire for eight hours. Only in the afternoon did the French give way. Our army suffered terrible losses, but the French did not suffer any less. We took countless numbers of prisoners.' This account of the Battle near Sedan on 1 and 2 September 1870 was reported by Georg Ferdinand Stamm, a volunteer in the 2nd company of the Hesse Infantry Battalion No. 11, in a letter to his parents. The German victory in 'Hell's Cauldron' at Sedan was decisive for the outcome of the Franco-Prussian

war. And the capitulation of the French troops, along with taking Emperor Napoleon III as a prisoner, led to the proclamation of the Third Republic. The war was to go on for another eight months before the bloodshed ended on 10 May 1871. But we are getting ahead of ourselves. How did things come to this military confrontation between France and the Prussian-led North German Confederation?

A deceptively harmless conversation and summer idyll

The summer of 1870 seemed very carefree to the public. As he often did, King Wilhelm I of Prussia took a cure in the fashionable spa town of Ems an der

Lahn. In the morning of 13 July 1870, Vincent Graf Benedetti, the French ambassador to Prussia, sought an audience with the King on the spa promenade. Historian Christoph Jahr described this key moment thus: 'No one had any idea that this apparently harmless scene would become the cause of a war that was to forcefully change the face of Europe'. He continued: 'The summer idyll was deceptive. Unnoticed by the public, a diplomatic crisis had been developing since February 1870 that, from today's point of view, seems to have unfolded like an operetta. Prince Leopold von Hohenzollern, scion of a Catholic branch of the ruling Hohenzollern dynasty in Prussia, was to have assumed the vacant throne of the king of Spain. His discreetly arranged candidacy for the Spanish throne was leaked to the public at the beginning of July, causing a wave of chauvinist outrage in France'. In an internal telegram known as the Ems Dispatch (Emser Depesche), Heinrich Abeken, an employee of the North German Foreign Office, reported to his superior, Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, about the conversation between Count Benedetti and the Prussian King. King Wilhelm had agreed to France's request. 'But that was not enough for the French', said Michael Hilbertz, Senior philatelist with Heinrich Köhler. 'An additional demand was made that no candidate from the Hohenzollern



This letter from Mosheim to Nancy, in the 7th German and 5th French rate, is the highest known double postage rate and one of the most spectacular covers from Alsace-Lorraine.

dynasty should ever lay claim to the Spanish throne'. Bismarck then leaked this demand to the press. With both sides continuing to provoke each other, Bismarck's intended result came about – and France declared war on 19 July 1870. Even after Emperor Napoleon III was captured by Germany at Sedan on 2 September 1870, the French were still not ready for peace. They called out the Republic for the third time and lost more battles until Paris was besieged (see more about this on page 10). A peace settlement was first reached only in 1871, when Wilhelm was proclaimed the German Emperor and the German Empire was founded. 'That was how Bismarck achieved his objective. The nation rallied around Prussia and the North German Confederation, and even the southern German states had now become part of a new German national state,' said Michael Hilbertz.

Pure postal history and the very finest of philatelic adventure

What is truly remarkable is that the postal exchange between the occupied and unoccupied areas of France continued to function in spite of the war. The historical developments are also reflected in postal and philatelic terms – in a unique way, however. They generated a double postage system that is really exciting in terms of postal history, which has documented the events leading up to creation of the German Empire with unique written material that witnesses the history of the time. 'The French did not want to capitulate in any way, nor tolerate any indignity', said Michael Hilbertz. 'So they refused to recognise the carriage fee collected by the enemy as valid payment for postal services'. Consequently, shortly after the Battle of Sedan, the French began to charge the full French postage rate on every letter that came from the occupied territory. 'And the Germans did the same', said Michael Hilbertz. That is how the attractive double-frankings of German and French stamps came about – pure postal history and adventure philately of the finest kind.



This 1871 cover from Colmar to Saigon also bears a combination of postmarks. It was subject to an additional 35 centimes tax, as the total carriage to Saigon was 60 centimes.



The only known registered cover with a combination postmark from the German Imperial Territory of Alsace-Lorraine and France.



Another really exciting written witness of the time of the military confrontation between France and Prussia – this 1871 letter from Philippville in Algeria in occupied France was channelled across Switzerland and has the blue 'Stopped by military order' censor postmark on the back.

The Paris Balloon Post

Stamps whisper, letters tell stories

On 19 September 1870, the Germans enclosed their siege ring round Paris. For the more than two million inhabitants of the city, it cut off all connections with the outside world. Even the buried telegraph cable was cut off immediately by the Germans. How was Paris going to communicate with the unoccupied parts of France and, above all, with its government that had fled to Bordeaux? The only possible way had to go through the air.



One of the rarest destinations for the Ballons Montés – this letter to Japan, which left Paris on 25 October 1870, carried the transit postmark of Marseille (2 November) and arrived in Yokohama on 25 December.

'Stamps whisper, letters tell stories'. This legendary quotation is often attributed to the great philatelist, Günther Heyd. If you take a look at the mail that left Paris in one of the 67 hot-air balloons when it was besieged by the Germans in the Franco-Prussian War, this quotation quickly makes sense. These letters tell the very finest of adventure stories. At the same time they are recognised as the precursors of airmail and are very popular. For two million people in Paris, these balloons were the only connection to the free part of the country. They carried a total of eleven tons of mail out of Paris and the letters all contained the concerns of their senders.

Indescribable joy, to live, to eat

Günther Heyd describes the adventures of the balloonists in vivid detail in his excellent monograph 'The Balloons of Paris 1870 – 1871', published in 1970: 'Was it yesterday or the day before? They floated upwards at midnight over Paris, the distressed city. (...) Then they drifted on through a white nothingness. How long has it been? There! Land at last – wonder of wonders – salvation. (...) A new will to live. (...) But where are we heading? Snowy mountains all around. (...) Hearts beating like mad (...) there, a solid hut. Indescribable joy, to live, to eat. And then they hear footsteps and two fur-hooded beings are staring at them (...) 'Partis de Paris



The Neptune, the first balloon used to transport the mail during the siege of Paris, was prepared for its launch on 23 September 1870.

en ballon', they say, gesticulating, but the woodcutters don't understand their language. (...) When one of them pulls out his matches, the Parisians read 'Christiania' on the box and suddenly they realise where they are. Christiania, Norway! The balloon had carried them to Norway ...'. It was, by the way, the furthest distance any balloon had travelled from besieged Paris. Two courageous Frenchmen, Léonard Bézier and Paul Rolier, had achieved this enormous feat.

The dawning of a new age

In an impressively short time, the French succeeded in creating a fleet of balloons out of thin air. The first successful balloon launch out of besieged Paris took place on 23 September 1870; the last one was on 28 January 1871. The balloons took more than 2.5 million mail items, 238 passengers and even six dogs. Just like hot air balloons today, these balloons were carried by the wind and could not be steered. The trips took between 20 minutes and 15 hours. The distances covered were between 12 and 1,300 kilometres. For the French, the balloons of Paris were an innovative achievement in many respects. It was the first time mail was carried by air. And it was the first time that flying devices – the balloons – were made in serial production. And they left behind a really exciting field of collecting for philately. Any letters and cards marked 'par ballon monté' are among the most sought-after and valuable collectors' items today. A final word on the subject from Günther Heyd: 'When it happens

today that we hold a small balloon mail cover in our hands. (...) It emits its own sense of adventure, as it was actually there – on one of the historic ascents out of Paris, at the dawning of a new age'.

Chris King plays in the Champions League of philately

A royal cosmopolitan

There are people who fill entire halls with their presence. And Christopher Miles Bertram King, the internationally renowned philatelist, is one of them. This charismatic Englishman has been a collector since he was six years old and – true to his name – he has become a royal cosmopolitan. He was President of the venerable Royal Philatelic Society London from 2013 to 2015 – and promoted the opening up of traditional society to worldwide cooperation. As someone who has always been a dedicated European and citizen of the world at heart, he has visited and supported philatelists and exhibitions in all corners of the globe, building up philatelic collections that were second to none – collections that have been honoured with the highest awards.

‘I suffered from asthma from childhood into my teens. In hindsight, there was something positive about that. It gave me plenty of spare time for reading and collecting stamps’, said Chris King. At the age of 16, he had already put together a sizeable collection of British intaglio printed stamps from the reign of King Edward VII and the British Empire at the time of George VI. ‘I still regret selling that collection to this day’, said Mr King. It happened like this: The young Christopher parted with his stamp collection to buy a state-of-the-art tape recorder to impress a girl he had fallen for at the time. ‘I don’t even know what manufacturer it was anymore. But one thing I know for certain, and I’ll happily pass on this advice to younger people: think twice or even three times before you let go of any key items or your whole collection. You may come to regret it – as I did. It is much better to continue expanding and building up your stamp collections. There is nothing more educational and inspiring than philately’.

Prize-winning philatelic commitment

Chris King was born in 1948 and went to London at the age of 20 to attend the Royal Central School of Speech

and Drama. Whether it can be attributed to his basic training in acting or whether he was already born with that talent, the fact is that Chris King’s public appearances as an ambassador for philately always leave a lasting and inspiring impression. Indeed, there was only a brief period when stamps did not play a large role in his life. In the time between 1965 and 1972 he was more concerned with finding his vocation as a teacher as well as with his marriage to his wife, Birthe, in 1970. His stamps were left to one side, then. But that changed considerably starting in 1972. ‘The stamps of Great Britain were on the agenda once more, as well as those of Denmark, as my wife Birthe is Danish’, said Mr King. ‘European countries such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were also added to this, as well as the German electoral districts of Allenstein, Marienwerder, Upper Silesia, the Saar region and Schleswig, as well as the Memel Territory and the Free City of Danzig’. Chris King’s philatelic commitment is just as varied as it is prize-winning. And speaking of Schleswig: Chris King has assembled three collections that have close connections with the Duchy of Schleswig. These are: 1: Schleswig: from Danish Duchy to a Prussian Province: 1625–1867. 2: Denmark, Schleswig and Holstein: invasion, occupation and their impact

‘Ars longa, vita brevis – art is long, life is short’.



Chris King is a highly sought-after lecturer and ambassador of philately at numerous international exhibitions and events.

on the postal service. 3: From Prussia to the referendum – the Duchy of Schleswig from 1868 to 1920. Large gold medals were awarded at international exhibitions for the first two collections. The third collection was internationally honoured with gold medals multiple times.

The ambition to fill in philatelic gaps

Chris King also collects Denmark during the Napoleonic Wars; Denmark until 1949; the stamps, postal history, and railway post of Jutland; postal censorship in Denmark during the World War II; and famous philatelists from history, their portraits, biographies, photographs and obituaries. Another of his favourite areas is the postal history of the German city of Lübeck. How did he come to be involved in this exciting field? ‘The simple answer is that originally, there was naturally a relationship between the Danish postal service and the postal service in Lübeck beginning as early as 1697’, Chris

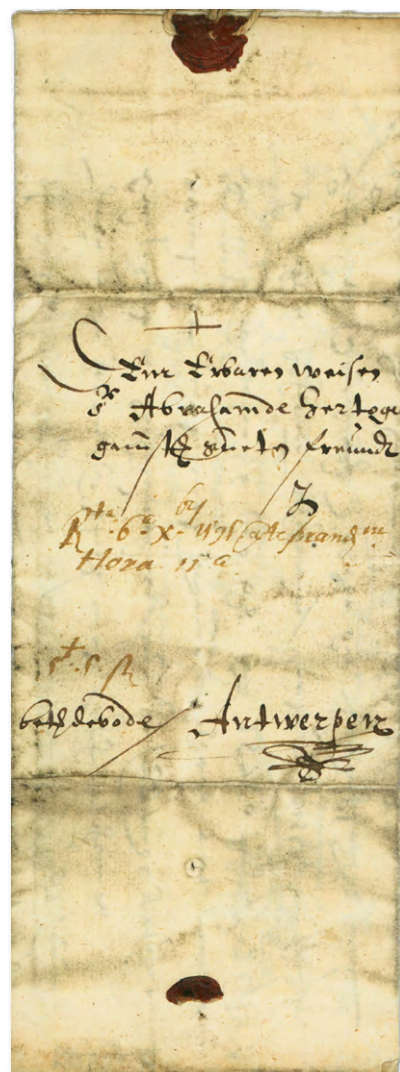
King explains. ‘Later on, I discovered that Lübeck had an extremely complex postal service, and there were only very few philatelic exhibits entered for international competition’. In short: Once Chris King discovered this gap in the philatelic market he developed an immediate, burning ambition to fill it. Chris’ wife Birthe is a partner whose passion and expertise for the subject is on par with his own. ‘In fact, Birthe got me back into philately shortly after our wedding, and she has been an invaluable advisor in all my collecting and exhibiting activities. It’s simply wonderful’, Chris King gushes. He and his wife also share a love of opera and literature, travel to far-off countries, decorative and historical porcelain, and their garden. Birthe and Chris King follow the motto of the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates: ‘Ars longa, vita brevis’ (‘Art is long, life is short’) – they view philately as their mission in life, and it’s the pastime that brings them the most joy.



One of the philatelic treasures in Chris King's collection: The famous Lübeck error 'ZWEI EIN HALB' instead of 'ZWEI' on cover and as a single item. This cover is a world-class rarity and was previously part of the exceptional collections belonging to Alfred Caspary, John R. Boker Jr. and Erivan Haub. Its history can be traced back to a 1912 auction by Gilbert & Köhler in Paris, where it first went under the hammer.



Chris King is also a member of the renowned Club de Monte Carlo. This photo shows him alongside the club's president, Patrick Maselis, at MONACOPHIL 2011.



Another incredible piece from Chris King's collection is what may well be the earliest Lübeck cover sent from the east to Flanders; it was transported by private courier in September 1595. The Lübeck courier service was part of the Guild of the Scania Traders, one of the eight oldest merchant guilds in Lübeck. The earliest ordinance governing this courier service came into force two years later, in 1597.



This Thurn and Taxis postal stationery from 1864, sent from Mainz to Clausholm near Randers in Jutland, Denmark, is a piece of pure Schleswig history. It is franked with a total of 16 kreuzers with precise postage amounting to five silver groschen. However, as the southern route via the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein was closed at the time due to the Second Schleswig War, the letter had to be rerouted via Copenhagen, where it was additionally franked with eight skillings in Danish postage. And thus this historically significant mixed franking was created.

The autumn auction at Heinrich Köhler once again delivered outstanding results

From ERIVAN to overseas – sensational auctions and exceptional philatelic treasures



Snapshot of a thrilling moment: Auctioneer Dieter Michelson just before the winning bid on the unique first day cover from Hanover to Chile.

The hotly anticipated autumn auction at Germany's oldest stamp auction house, Heinrich Köhler, was held from 20 to 25 September 2021 in Wiesbaden. Ten auction catalogues caused a big stir in the run-up to the auction week. The impressive auction schedule delivered a multitude of highlights and even a few surprises that no one could have predicted.



At a starting price of 25,000 euros, this exceptional rarity of Bavarian philately ultimately sold for 54,000 euros to a collector who was participating in a stamp auction for the very first time.



bidders were spellbound. The cover with a strip of three of the 1 kreuzer black and a 3 kreuzer blue is a true rarity of Bavarian philately. In the run-up to the auction, this unique piece had already caused

Rediscovered treasures, valuable rarities and exceptional pieces such as those from the ERIVAN Collection kept auction attendees on the edge of their seats. Numerous stamps, letters and covers each told their own unique and fascinating stories. The strong demand and interest from bidders once again resulted in thrilling bidding wars, breathtaking price escalations and a myriad of fantastic winning bids.

Highlights of the 'ERIVAN' Collection

The continuation of the auction series 'Altdeutsche Staaten und Brustschilde' ('German States and shield issues') from the ERIVAN Collection once again presented an outstanding selection of pieces for sale; this collection offers everything connoisseurs of classic German philately could possibly desire. The best example is probably a first day cover from the German Empire, which thrilled and amazed the crowd. The cover with mixed franking, 1872, ¼ groschen (Catalogue No. 1) and 1872, ½ groschen from the first day of issue, 1 January 1872, started at 5,000 euros and ultimately sold for an incredible 130,000 euros! The combination of first day with the Catalogue No. 1 on this cover motivated bidders to new heights. It was a truly remarkable occurrence, surpassed only by a Hanover cover from the ERIVAN Collection, which went for 145,000 euros. This was also a first day; the mixed franking with values of 10 groschen (pair), 1 groschen and 3 groschen (two) – used on cover to Caldera, Chile – was sent on the first day of use of the 10 groschen stamp, the highest value of the set. And these are just two examples of the ERIVAN Collection auction lots, all of which sold exceptionally well.

Philatelic treasures, thrilling history

The discovery of a very special cover also caused a bit of a sensation. A letter from Bavaria, which had been tucked away in a family archive in the German region of Franconia, came up in the market after more than 170 years – and

ripples extending far beyond philatelic circles and attracted a great deal of media attention and public interest. The unique backstory of this find also left a lasting impression on the highest bidder, who won the lot for 54,000 euros (starting bid: 25,000).

Excitement from the auction room to the entire world

Naturally, the fascination for all of these rarities, big and small, extended far beyond the auction room. The option to bid online had collectors and dealers from around the world vying for these philatelic treasures; however, the special collections from German States were in just as much demand as the lots from Europe and overseas. Examples include the collection 'Bavaria since 1849 – The Eliahu Weber Collection (Part 1)', which experienced intense bidding and achieved impressive winning bids. The lots from the collection 'Duchy of Brunswick' and 'Bremen: Hanover Post Office, Northern German Postal District and shield issue' from Friedrich Meyer were also extremely popular. In terms of international philately, the collections 'International Mail via Trieste (Part 1)' and 'Austria – First Issue Used in Hungary (Part 1)' from Rolf Rohlf and the collections 'Gems of Indian States 1864 – 1950' and 'Dominican Republic since 1863 – the Hansmichael Krug Collection' also impressed bidders.

New interest in philately

'The response to the unparalleled ERIVAN Collection and media reports on the auctions have recently led to a new development: People are delving into their wardrobes and attics to pull out old collections, and they are discovering spectacular treasures', said Dieter Michelson, Managing Director at Heinrich Köhler. 'And in terms of the bidders, we are happy to see new faces at the ERIVAN auctions, and at our other auctions, as well. The coronavirus limitations also gave people time to invest time and money in their existing stamp collections, or to take up philately as a new hobby'.



The number 1, used on the first day: This phenomenal first day cover from the German Empire ultimately achieved 26 times its starting price, skyrocketing from 5,000 to 130,000 euros at auction.



This first day cover from Hanover to Chile, with a starting bid of 50,000 euros, achieved 145,000 euros, making it the most expensive item of the day.



This incredible letter from Mecklenburg-Schwerin – sent from Germany's oldest seaside resort town, Heiligendamm – went under the hammer at a starting bid of 30,000 euros and sold for 60,000.

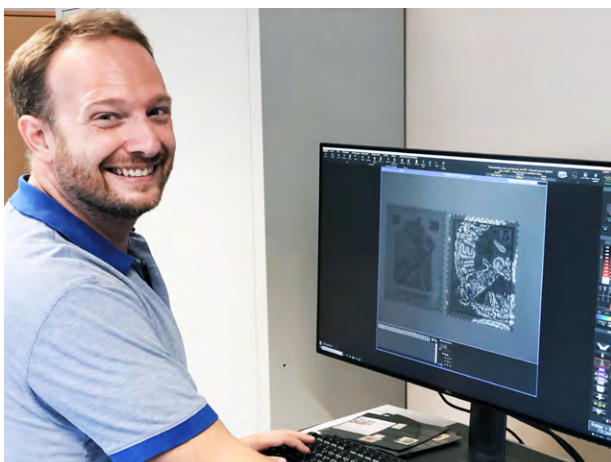
Forensic examinations at Heinrich Köhler

Cutting-edge technology ensures quality

‘The VSC 8000 is the gold standard for real-time examinations’, said Tobias Huylmans, Managing Director at Heinrich Köhler. VSC stands for ‘video spectral comparator’. ‘This cutting-edge system combines clever digital image capture with multi-wavelength LED technology for inspecting historical documents of communication. The VSC 8000 is used by forensic experts, government offices and immigration authorities around the world; the German State Offices of Criminal Investigation use it, for instance’. And now, it is also in use at the Heinrich Köhler offices in Wiesbaden for quality assurance of valuable stamps.



Heinrich Köhler was one of the first to use this type of quartz lamp for his stamp inspections, beginning in the mid-1920s. Ultraviolet rays made it possible for him to visually identify whether a pen-stroke had been removed, for instance.

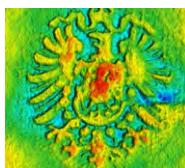


100 years later, at the traditional Wiesbaden auction house: Tobias Huylmans, Managing Director at Heinrich Köhler, uses the spectral analysis function of the VSC 8000 to present an authentic handstamp of China.



The stamp on the right with the China handstamp is genuine, as the glow of the cancellation ink shows. The stamp on the left has cancellation ink with a different consistency and was therefore falsified.

Heinrich Köhler has a long tradition of working with cutting-edge technology to inspect and authenticate stamps. The company's founder himself began using a new, modern quartz lamp in 1926; back then, lamps like this were not only very large, they were also very expensive. Today, the VSC 8000 from Foster & Freeman is the state of the art in technical document verification. 'Let's take a look at these two stamps with China handstamps, for example', said Tobias Huylmans. 'An ink known as Hammer cancellation stamp ink was used for the China handstamp overprint, as well as for postal cancellations of the time. The special consistency of this ink means that it glows in a spectral analysis of 640 to 725 nanometres. So as we can see, the piece on the right is genuine, while the one on the left unfortunately isn't'. The ink, which was developed by a Berlin-based chemist named Hammer, was not water-soluble and soaked deep into the paper. This was intended to prevent cancellations from being removed from the stamps after the fact.



A 3D analysis of the eagle embossed on a crest stamp from the German Empire. The highest points of the embossment are marked in red, and the lowest points in blue.

Reference file allows for precise comparison

The multispectral light sources of the VSC 8000, which range from UV to the visible spectrum infrared, make details visible that would otherwise be imperceptible to the naked eye. 'But that's not all,' Tobias Huylmans said. 'The video spectral comparator also creates a reference file that makes it possible to precisely compare pieces of the same type by visually superimposing them'. This congruency check can verify whether surcharges or overprints are a geometric match, for instance. 'Our primary focus is on assuring the quality of valuable stamps and covers in the interest of collectors and philately as a whole. Additionally, philatelic expertisers are not available in every area of philately. In many cases, our spectral analysis is

an exceptional alternative'. Another highly precise inspection option offered by the VSC 8000 is 3D analysis. The 3D software utilises a photometric stereo process and captures images generated using three different illumination angles.

An analysis of the three images can then reveal topographic details on the surface. 'The process creates a 3D model image, like a topographical map of the stamp', Huylmans explains. 'The highest points of the image are displayed in red, and the lowest points in blue'. Huylmans demonstrates the process using a stamp with a shield stamp of the German Empire, which famously features an embossed eagle in the centre. 'There are forgeries of shield stamps from the German Empire that could easily be mistaken for the real thing', Huylmans explains. The stamps embossed with the 'small shield' and the Prussian eagle in the centre of the image were first issued on

1 January 1872. Stamps embossed with the 'large shield' and the Hohenzollern eagle were issued beginning mid-1872. 'In mint condition, the stamps with the small shield are substantially more valuable, so forgers began attempting to change the embossment of the eagle from the large to the small crest very early on', Huylmans explains.

3D analysis makes altered embossments visible

'However, these altered embossments are relatively easy to detect with enough expertise and by comparing the stamps with the reference file in the 3D model'. Conversely, of course, this also means 3D analysis can verify the authenticity of the embossment just as quickly. 'There's no question – we vastly prefer the latter version of events. After all, the analyses we conduct with the VSC 8000 are primarily intended to confirm the quality of valuable stamps and covers', Huylmans said. So there are no nasty surprises for the new owner when buying or selling them later.

150 years of public stamp expertising

Genuine or fake?

For as long as there have been people passionate about collecting stamps, there have also been forgers who have attempted to copy stamps and fraudulently sell them as originals. In 1871 – 150 years ago – a man in Germany became the first philatelic expertiser. And he was a true authority: Alfred Moschkau, who was just 23 years old at the time, had an almost complete international stamp collection.



Generalist Alfred Moschkau began offering public stamp expertising beginning in 1871.

At that time, Alfred Moschkau was expertising approximately 400 to 500 stamp submissions annually. But by 1877, he had already decided to end his career as an expertiser because he had been intentionally tricked by a forged Thurn and Taxis cover and was facing a lawsuit. During the same year, retired postal secretary Waldemar

Hermann established his 'Öffentliche deutsche Markenprüfungsstelle' (Public Stamp Expertisation Office) in Berlin. And it wasn't long before others began offering similar services. The Switzerland-based company R. Deyle & Co. established a special expertisation office for Swiss cantonal stamps sometime around 1880, and the Verein für Briefmarkenkunde (Philately Association) in Munich also began offering stamp expertisation. By the end of

the 1880s, stamp expertisers were firmly established in Europe. According to Theodor Haas, the long-serving Editor-in-Chief of the illustrated stamp journal published by the Gebrüder Senf company in Leipzig, there were more than 150 stamp expertisation offices by 1905. The Expert Committee of the Royal Philatelic Society London was established in 1894; it expertised only 121 stamps during its first year of existence. Expertising committees also led the way in the USA. The most renowned institution is the Expert Committee of the Philatelic Foundation, established in 1945. Its members included famous collectors such as Alfred Lichtenstein, Alfred Caspary and Theodore Steinway. In 1955, ten years after its founding, it had issued 6,000 expert certificates. The American Philatelic Society also

offers an expertising service since 1975. But let's look back across the pond to Germany: Heinrich Köhler became involved with the authentication of postage stamps at a very early stage. By 1924, he had already implemented an expert certificate system that is still standard in German

expertisation processes today. 'The main idea is and must be that the mark is placed differently on unperforated, perforated, overprinted stamps (...) but also in a different position on damaged stamps, and in yet another position on repaired stamps', wrote Heinrich Köhler in his 'Philatelistisches Magazin' in the mid-1920s. This was the period when he established his 'Allgemeine Prüfungsstelle' (General Expertisation Office). A few years later, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce

in Berlin appointed him a chartered expert for stamps. Heinrich Köhler was a true expert on classic stamps, and in addition to numerous German territories, he expertised stamps from places such as Romania, Switzerland, the French colonies and Paraguay.

As the number of global stamp issues grew so overwhelmingly that cultivating a general collection became impossible, the overall trend in stamp collecting began to move toward specialisation. Consequently, philatelic expertisers also began to specialise. This is why the Deutscher Bund Philatelistischer Prüfer (The German Federation of Philatelic Expertisers), founded in 1958, stopped allowing general expertisers many years ago.



To mark German Philatelists' Day in Berlin in 1927, Heinrich Köhler – collector, dealer, auctioneer, publicist and expertiser – was honoured with a special postcard.

Heinrich Köhler is among the top two per cent of all companies in Germany



Excellent financial standing

Heinrich Köhler, Germany's oldest stamp auction house, was awarded the CrefoZert credit rating certification from Creditreform. 'We are very pleased to have received this high acknowledgement, which certifies our excellent financial standing', said Dieter Michelson, Managing Director at Heinrich Köhler.

And Berta Pérez Valverde, Chief Financial Officer at Heinrich Köhler, added: 'This confirms that we meet the highest standards of solvency and creditworthiness'. The CrefoZert seal of approval is awarded after a complex certification process. The certification is based on comprehensive analyses of annual financial statements.

Consignors can bank on Heinrich Köhler

The process also takes data from the Credit reform credit report and solvency index into account. It additionally involves a dialogue with management regarding the current situation and the company's future prospects. 'We passed the strict certification process with flying colours: The analysis of our financial transactions, our credit report, and

our company balance sheet were all perfectly in line with the requirements for receiving certification. In other words, consignors can bank on Heinrich Köhler', Berta Pérez Valverde said. CrefoZert has been awarded to 2,300 companies in Germany so far. Germany is home to more than 3.9 million companies across all industries – just two per cent of all companies in the country meet the requirements for CrefoZert.

Extremely bright prospects for the future

'This certificate attests that our professional conduct is always flawless and our prospects for the future are extremely bright', Dieter Michelson said. 'The seal of quality is a testament to our financial reliability and consistency'.

Michael Hilbertz, Senior Philatelist at Heinrich Köhler

Accomplished expert and renowned researcher

This year, Michael Hilbertz celebrates his 30th anniversary as a philatelic expert at Heinrich Köhler. He has also been the company's Senior Philatelist since 2009. He performs brilliantly as a point of contact for collectors and philatelists from around the world, demonstrating extensive expertise and providing personalised consultations in person and on the phone.



Michael Hilbertz has been Philatelist at Heinrich Köhler since 1991.

The stamps of the German States are one of Hilbertz's philatelic focuses. His profound knowledge and experience working with each of the individual areas of the field are impressive. The Heinrich Köhler card index is the basis for the quality descriptions and provenances in classic German philately, for which the company has been known and respected for years. The ERIVAN Collection has been Hilbertz's 'baby' for the last few years. 'It all started with selecting and describing a number of letters for the book 'Auslandsbriefe der Altdeutschen Staaten' (Foreign Letters

of the German States)', Hilbertz explains. 'In the years that followed, Erivan Haub and I met up regularly to delight in his philatelic treasures and organise the collection'. As an accomplished expert and renowned researcher, Hilbertz managed to win the trust of the great collector Erivan Haub, who was generally rather reserved.

Appealing and expertly prepared auction catalogue

Today, Michael Hilbertz is responsible for detailing and describing the auction lots from the German States that are part of the ERIVAN Collection. And Hilbertz also brings his enormous expertise and professional experience to bear on the field of international philately. No area is too exotic for Hilbertz to get to grips with it in a short time and present it in the auction catalogue in an appealing and expertly prepared way. His many years of experience as a philatelic expert have brought him into contact with nearly all collecting areas around the globe. 'Michael Hilbertz needs no help from a philatelic expertiser to verify the authenticity of a DILIGENCIA stamp from the first issue of Uruguay, for example,' master philatelist Wolfgang Jakubek said approvingly. And nothing escapes the experienced philatelist's sharp eye in the catalogue production process, either. Hilbertz is responsible for the descriptions, composition and sorting of the catalogue. He is also responsible for selecting the images and setting the auction schedule.

Like his predecessors Jürgen Kahrs and former owner of Heinrich Köhler, Volker Parthen, Michael Hilbertz also initially comes up with the auction lot descriptions out loud, taking them down on a voice recorder. 'I suppose I'm a bit old-fashioned in that sense', the Senior Philatelist said with a smile. But considering that he creates such exceptional auction descriptions in such a short time, he might just be going about things the right way.

Your opinion is important to us

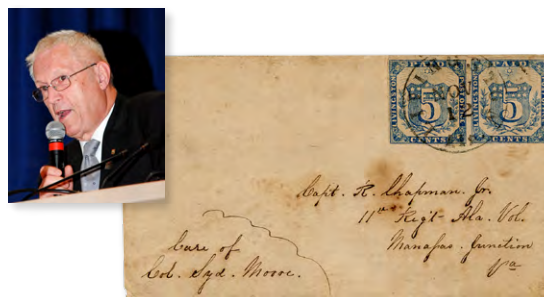
Letters to the editor

Dear readers, thank you for your many positive letters regarding the first issue of our customer magazine. We will be very happy to receive letters with your critical comments also in the future. We would like to learn more about your expectations and improve our performance in the process.

Stories that inspire us to dream are particularly important right now.

'Dear Sir or Madam, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for sending me a copy of your customer magazine. I enjoyed reading it a great deal – particularly the fascinating article about Mr Jaretsky. In my opinion, philately thrives on stories like these, particularly when one's own wallet allows for a few indulgences, but perhaps not as many as one would like. Stories that inspire us to dream a bit are particularly important right now'.

Jörg Spenger



Rolf Dieter Jaretsky, who has collected stamps since he was eight years old, compiled many fantastic collections, including a first-class collection of stamps from the Confederate States of America. One of the absolute highlights of that collection is the Livingston cover – a unique item bearing a pair of the 5-cent Livingston stamps, which many consider to be the finest issue of the Postmasters' Provisionals.

Philately as an elixir of life

'To the esteemed members of the Heinrich Köhler team: I read the first issue of your magazine with great interest. It was lovely, and very much in keeping with your company's style. Naturally, I am looking forward to the publication by our colleague Heinz Jaeger with great anticipation, and with this message, I would like to place an order for it'.

Dr Jürgen Wiedemann

In his book 'Es muss nicht immer Mauritius sein' ('It doesn't always have to be the Two Pence Post Office'), Dr Heinz Jaeger takes us on a thrilling journey through the history of philately, and explains why he believes philately is a true elixir of life. The book is available for 19.80 euros (plus shipping) and can be ordered by telephone: +49 (0)61134149-0 or e-mail: info@heinrich-koehler.de.



Thrilling to the end

'Dear Sir or Madam, Thank you for sending me your customer magazine. It was a thrilling read from beginning to end! I wish you all the best and hope you have the passion and drive to publish many more issues'.

Hans-Ulrich Stauffer

Educational and exciting

'Dear Sir or Madam, I enjoyed the first issue of your customer magazine very much – in particular, the 'Travelling back in time interview' with Heinrich Köhler in 1930 is a perfect example of how an article about philately can be both educational and exciting. The interview made me feel like I was at IPOSTA 1930 myself; it was fascinating to read about the major collectors and collections of the time, and I learned a great deal about the beginnings of air mail and highlights of the early days at Heinrich Köhler. Congratulations, and keep up the good work!'

Rüdiger Voss



The legendary IPOSTA souvenir sheet from 1930. A few specimens bear the signatures of the event's jury members, including Heinrich Köhler.

Provenance

“Collection Schwerin”
 Warren H. Colson (1963)
 John R. Boker, Jr.
 General Robert J. Gill
 Horst und Arnim Knapp (2011)
 The ERIVAN Collection (2019)

Rarity

only known block of four

Importance

only one larger block known

Saxony, Error of Colour ½ Neugroschen black on matt prussian blue in a block of four, Michel no. 3F

A stamp is more than just a catalogue number. The Köhler card index knows more.

Auction descriptions require more than just catalogue numbers and values. The Köhler card index of German States can be used to provide information about provenance, rarity and importance. A knowledge advantage that pays off when selling your rare stamps and covers with Heinrich Köhler.

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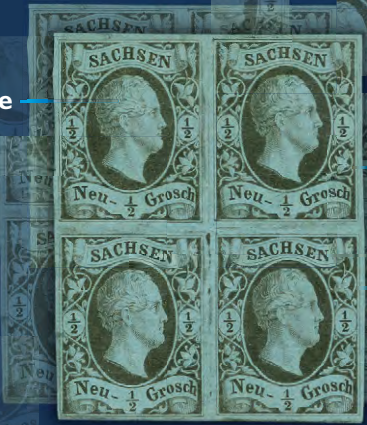
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