

PRINTED MATTERS

THE PHILATELIC MAGAZINE



130 YEARS OF THE AICHACH PROVISIONAL

INSIGHT POWER AT THE HEART OF EUROPE – 175 YEARS OF STAMPS FROM PRUSSIA

PROFILES IN PHILATELY HANSMICHAEL KRUG – THE IDEAL PHILATELIST, WRITER, AND STAMP EXPERT

TREASURE OF CLASSIC PHILATELY SENSATIONAL DISCOVERY – A FIRST DAY COVER FROM THE FIRST ISSUE OF PRUSSIA



HEINRICH KÖHLER

Germany's Oldest Stamp Auction House

Dear Readers,

As we look back on our 386th auction in autumn 2025, we are filled with both joy and justifiable pride as we report yet another milestone in our company's history. With 8,988 lots, a total starting bid volume of €4.3 million, winning bids reaching €5.1 million, our latest auction once again confirmed that our auction house remains an essential meeting place for a passionate global community of collectors. The high level of international participation was particularly striking: 2,114 bidders – present in the room, on the telephone, and online – created a vibrant, thrilling atmosphere. Of these, 806 hailed from Germany, while 1,308 philatelists joined us from across the world.

Several lots drew exceptional attention and sparked intense bidding wars. Two, in particular, deserve mention. One of the most sensational Heligoland covers, bearing a uniquely coloured franking, sold for an astonishing €42,000 – up from a starting bid of €8,000. Likewise, a strip of three of the Russian “Number One” stamp – the second-largest unit of this issue in private hands – opened at €12,000 and sold for an impressive €21,000.

We owe this success to you, our valued customers, whose passion for philately continues to inspire us. We look forward to writing the next chapter of our success story together – it would not

be possible without your enthusiasm and trust. Many of the fascinating subjects featured in this issue should whet your appetite for the philatelic and postal-history treasures that await in next year's spring auction.

We hope you enjoy this edition of PRINTED MATTERS.



Kind regards,

Dieter Michelson Tobias Huylmans

Dieter Michelson and Tobias Huylmans,
Managing Directors, Heinrich Köhler

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130 years of the Aichach Provisional – this unique and highly coveted item is

BACK ON THE WORLD STAGE OF PHILATELY

The Aichach Provisional stamp is one of the outstanding items in world philately, with a uniquely fascinating history. The stamp has its origins in an administrative emergency that occurred in late summer 1895, its story unfolds like a philatelic drama in three acts: starring a postmaster who created it as a stopgap, one of the greatest collectors of all time as its future owner, and additional provenances that make it unparalleled even today. The Aichach Provisional was only ever franked on three covers, and just one of them survived the passage of time intact. This singular item – created 130 years ago and last sold at Heinrich Köhler in 2009 for €130,000 – will return to auction in spring 2026 as part of the collection of Bruce Wright (“The American”). With it, a piece of German postal history once again takes the world stage.

1895 was a year of reforms for the Bavarian postal service: new fees, new franking rules – and, as so often, logistical bottlenecks. In the small Bavarian town of Aichach, one of these transitions created a moment that collectors still regard as among the most fascinating in German philately. Due to a reduction in postage rates

in 1895 the town temporarily ran out of two-pfennig postage-due stamps. Before replacements could arrive, the Royal Bavarian Postal Administration overprinted existing grey three-pfennig stamps with a red numeral “2” in each corner – a total of 216 sheets, or 21,600 stamps. A red numeral “2” was now emblazoned on each of

the four corners of the stamps. This provisional issue was intended only as a stopgap until regular stamps reached Bavarian post offices in early September 1895. However, production of the new two-pfennig postage-due issue was completed ahead of schedule, and about 200,000 stamps were already available by late August. →

A historical view of Aichach in the 19th century.



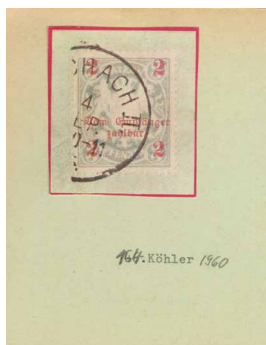
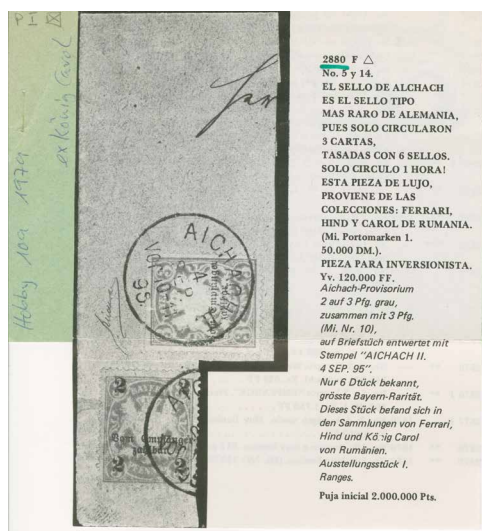
"Consequently, the Bavarian postal administration sent a telegram instructing post offices that the provisional stamps were no longer needed and should be returned immediately," explains Dieter Michelson, Managing Director of Heinrich Köhler. This is where the story's crucial detail lies: "This telegram reached the Aichach office on 4 September 1895 after 2 p.m. However, earlier that day, Postmaster Johann Pollinger had already mailed three local letters to himself, each franked with a horizontal pair of the provisional issue alongside other stamps. All three bear the postmark 'VOR 10-11,' indicating the time window 10:00–11:00 a.m." These three Pollinger letters are the only known covers bearing genuinely used Aichach Provisionals;

without them, this legendary emergency issue would have left no philatelic trace.

Three covers, six stamps, one global superstar of philately

When the remaining stock of the provisional stamps was officially destroyed, it created some unique items that still endure today: six famous stamps on three covers. No unused items are known to exist. Researchers have long agreed on this figure, but the stories of the three covers diverged dramatically. "To mark the 130th anniversary of the Aichach Provisional, we revisited their history using our long-standing card index – maintained since Heinrich Köhler's time – as well as our exclusive digital provenance finder

'ProFi' and specialist literature," Michelson explains. "One cover was cut into separate pieces over time, and the fragments entered different collections. The cover was later reconstructed and sold



Johann Pollinger (1857–1925), postmaster of the Bavarian town of Aichach from 1892 to 1904, laid the foundation for the legendary Aichach Provisional – a creation that continues to fascinate philatelic experts and connoisseurs around the world today.

for €50,000 at the second ERIVAN auction held by Heinrich Köhler in 2019." The second cover was apparently also divided early in its history. The left-hand Aichach Provisional later appeared in the collection of Fritz Kirchner, while the rest of the cover has vanished – another element of the legend surrounding these stamps. "The third cover, however, remained intact," Michelson continues. "It passed through the hands of several of philately's most important collectors. It was a highlight of the legendary collection of Baron Philipp von Ferrary (1850–1917) and later belonged to Alfred F. Lichtenstein and Louise Boyd Dale before joining the exceptional Bavaria collection formed by entrepreneur Fritz Kirchner." In 2009, the cover sold at Heinrich Köhler in Wiesbaden for 130,000 euros – cemented the Aichach Provisional's status as a true philatelic superstar. Now, as part of American collector Bruce Wright's celebrated

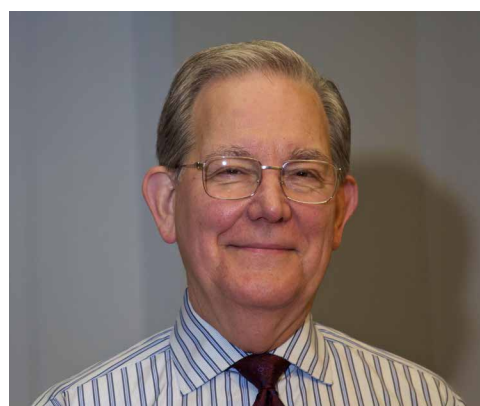
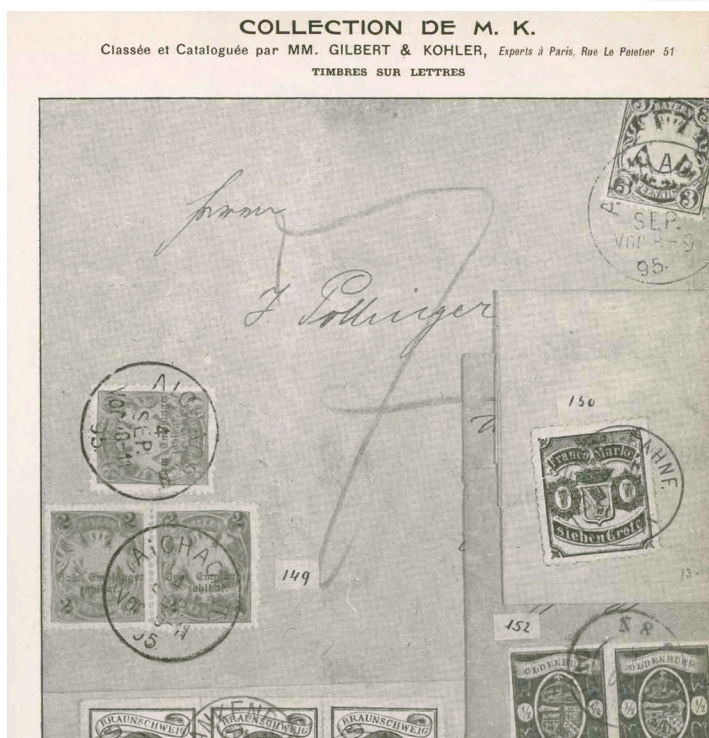
COVER 1: The reconstructed cover with the Aichach Provisional, sold for €50,000 in November 2019 at Heinrich Köhler in Wiesbaden as part of the ERIVAN Collection auction. The smaller item was once a highlight of King Carol of Romania's collection, while the larger piece belonged to leading Bavarian philatelist Jakob Sessler and was sold at the 160th Köhler auction in 1960. (As was customary at the time, only the franked Aichach Provisional was illustrated, not the full cover.)

BELOW: In 1908, **COVER 2** with the Aichach Provisional was still largely intact and was sold at the Gilbert & Köhler auction in Paris. It was later cut into separate items.

RIGHT: 100 years later, the left-hand stamp of the pair appeared in Fritz Kirchner's collection and sold at Heinrich Köhler in 2010 for €48,000 (starting bid: €15,000).



Baron Philipp von Ferrary (1850–1917), the “Stamp King,” is regarded as the greatest collector of all time. He owned the only intact Aichach Provisional cover – still unique today – which was sold at the Ferrary auctions in 1923.



Over several decades, Bruce “The American” Wright assembled one of the most important collections titled “Germany from 1849 and Austria from 1850”. The phenomenal cover featuring the Aichach Provisional remains one of his personal favourites.

collection “Germany from 1849 and Austria from 1850”, it comes full circle. Part III of Wright’s collection – comprising items of exceptional quality and aesthetic appeal – will be offered at Heinrich Köhler in spring 2026, where the Aichach Provisional is again expected to cause a sensation among bidders in the room, online, and by telephone.

A shortage created a sensation

From a philatelic perspective, the appearance of the Aichach Provisional is relatively modest. It is a grey three-pfennig stamp bearing a typographic red “2” in all four corners – neat, precise, and devoid of the rough improvisation typical of many emergency issues. “It is precisely this clean functionality that gives the item its aura,” notes Dieter Michelson. “Nothing here was left to chance; the Bavarian postal service clearly showed its flair for practical improvisation, finding an elegant solution to an →

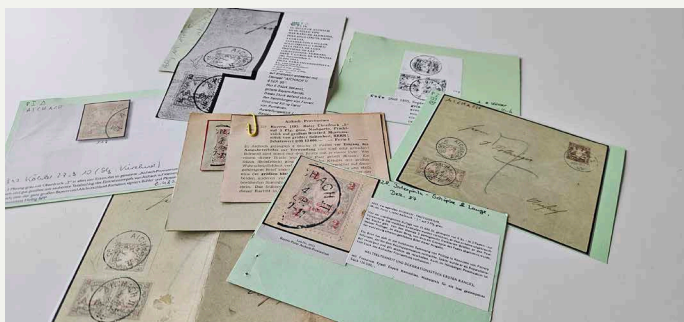


COVER 3: The only completely preserved cover with a horizontal pair of Aichach Provisional stamps from 1895 will once again be auctioned at Heinrich Köhler in spring 2026. A philatelic superstar makes its grand return to the world stage (ex Ferrary, ex Lichtenstein, ex Boyd-Dale, ex Kirchner).

unexpected problem.” The Aichach Provisional’s fascination lies in its marriage of technical precision and fleeting purpose – a stamp whose lifespan was measured in hours, yet whose legacy has endured for 130 years. It is, in every sense, a case of scarcity turned to sensation. Its rising market value reflects how collectors prize this kind of magic – the unrepeatable circumstances that make a unique object unforgettable. Even in 2009, the hammer price of €130,000 caused a stir – not merely for its monetary value, but for the remarkable interest it generated as the only surviving Aichach Provisional on cover. Its appeal was never based on rarity alone; it was the combination of story, provenance, and singular aura that electrified the philatelic world. “Today, at a time when German philately is once again experiencing a genuine boom, this cover belongs to a class beyond normal market activity,” Michelson explains. “Unique pieces with fully documented provenance and thrilling backstories are more than mere philatelic trophies – they are cultural artefacts that capture the spirit of an era. The Aichach Provisional is exactly such a treasure.”

2026 SPRING AUCTION – A REUNION AT HEINRICH KÖHLER

When the Aichach Provisional returns to the auction block in Wiesbaden in spring 2026, the event is sure to set collectors’ hearts racing once more. It will also mark a kind of reunion – a rare opportunity to see again one of German philately’s most iconic and storied items. “Heinrich Köhler Auction House – a name synonymous with philatelic excellence for more than a century – has once again been entrusted with finding a new home for this extraordinary cover,” says Dieter Michelson. “We are honoured by this commission, which recognises the great care and integrity with which we handle the world’s rarest and most significant philatelic treasures.”



1923 G. Gilbert > 6 / April 1923 Ferrari de la Renotiere > 171

04/25/1923 - 04/27/1923

— 1895. Surch. 2 en rouge sur 3 pf. gris-vert (n° 14) superbe paire j + 2 timbres obl. sur lettre. (Photo pl. 6.) Il n'existe que trois paires de ce timbre. Aichach Provisionum Mischfrankatur



CATEGORIES	CATALOGS	CATALOGPART	ORIGINAL CATALOG PART NAME	CONDITION	FORMATS
Bayern Postmarken		Ferrari de la Renotiere			

Starting bid: 0 FRF

2010 Heinrich Köhler > 340 / März 2010 > 117

03/27/2010 - 03/27/2010

1895, 3 Pfennig grau mit Überdruck "2" in allen vier Ecken, das so genannte "Aichach-Provisorium" farbfriß und gut gezähnt mit sauberem Teilabschlag des Einkreisstempels von Aichach auf kleinem Briefstück; eine der ganz großen Bayern- und Altduitschland-Raritäten; signiert Bühler und Pfenniger sowie Fotoattest Helbig BPP



CATEGORIES	CATALOGS	CATALOGPART	CONDITION	FORMATS
Bayern Postmarken	Michel PI	Fritz Kirchner		

Starting bid: 15,000 EUR

48,000 EUR

2019 Heinrich Köhler > 372 / Erivan Dezember 2019 > 46

12/14/2019 - 12/14/2019

1895. DAS AICHACH-PROVISORIUM "2" auf 3 Pfennig grau, der rekonstruierte Brief bestehend aus Briefstück und großem Briefteil mit jeweils einer Hälfte eines ehemaligen Paares mit Zufankatur auf unterfrankiertem Ortsbrief an den Postmeister Pollinger. Die linke Marke einige verkürzte Zahnschneidungen, teils bedingt durch die Trennung des Paares, sonst befinden sich beide Provisorien in einwandfreier Erhaltung; der Umschlag mit stärkerer senkrechter Faltung und einigen Randmängeln. Eine der großen Seltenheiten der Bayern-Philatelie. Die provisorische Aufdruck-Ausgabe wurde kurz nachdem die Auslieferung an die Postämter begonnen hatte zurück beordert, da die endgültige Ausgabe schneller als gedacht fertiggestellt worden war. Vor Rücksendung des an ihn übersandten Bestandes, fertigte der Postmeister Pollinger aus Aichach drei unterfrankierte Briefe an sich selbst an, auf denen jeweils ein Paar des Provisoriums ordnungsgemäß verwendet wurde. Die gesamte übrige Auflage wurde vernichtet, so dass auch keine ungebrauchte Marke existiert. Fotoattest Schmitt BPP für das linke Briefstück (1979) sowie Attest Friedl/Bloch für das große Briefteil (1962) Provenienz: Kleines Briefstück: König Carol von Rumänien (1979), Großes Briefstück: Jakob Sessler (1964). Heinrich Köhler-Auktion, 1960



CATEGORIES	CATALOGS	CATALOGPART	CONDITION	FORMATS
Bayern Ganzsachen Bayern	Michel PI	ERIVAN		

Starting bid: 50,000 EUR

50,000 EUR

The Köhler card index covering the German States is regarded as the most comprehensive and frequently cited archive of its kind. In the digital age, its natural successor is ProFi – the digital “Provenance Finder,” developed exclusively by Heinrich Köhler and containing millions of digitised records.

175 years of stamps from the Kingdom of Prussia

Power at the heart of Europe

Some fields of collecting make a lasting impression; others take hold of you and never let go. Without a doubt, the classic philately and postal history of the Kingdom of Prussia belong in the second category. To hold a letter bearing a stamp from Prussia's first issue, dated 15 November 1850, is to hold a fragment of history – politics, commerce, and human stories distilled into a small square of paper. It carries so much within it. This year marks 175 years since the dawn of the postage-stamp era in Prussia – and, at the same time, the 325th anniversary of the kingdom's founding. Together, these anniversaries invite us on a journey through history, for Prussia's postal service and philately offer a unique reflection of Europe's evolution as a whole. Join us on a journey into the history of this country; its postal service and philately are a unique testimony to the development of Europe as a whole.

The university in Berlin was founded on the initiative of Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835). Shown here is a view of the internationally renowned Zentrum geistiger Erneuerung (Centre of Intellectual Renewal) in 1850.





Prussian post house sign, circa 1720.



King Friedrich II (1712–1786) – also known as “Frederick the Great” or “Old Fritz” – ruled Prussia during its ascent into the ranks of the great European powers.



King Friedrich Wilhelm IV (1795–1861) authorised the Royal Prussian postal service to issue its first stamps.

While some condemn the Prussians as being overly subservient to authority, others view the Prussian state as having laid the groundwork for modern Germany. What cannot be denied is that without Prussia – established as a kingdom nearly 325 years ago – the histories of both Germany and Europe would look entirely different. Prussia took on a leading role in many areas – but more on that later: “It all began with a bold act,” explains Alfred Schmidt, President of the Bund Deutscher Philatelisten (Association of German Philatelists, BDPh) and one of the foremost Prussia collectors of our time. “Friedrich III, Elector of Brandenburg, unilaterally proclaimed himself Friedrich I, ‘King in Prussia’, with the consent of Emperor Leopold I.” His coronation on 18 January 1701 laid the foundation of the Prussian monarchy – a milestone that profoundly shaped Europe’s future. Under Friedrich I (1657–1713), Berlin was declared the royal capital and transformed accordingly. Eager to stand among Europe’s great royal houses, the king commissioned palaces and grand architecture in the Baroque style. “Today, we often associate Prussia with polished boots, spiked helmets, and unyielding obedience – attitudes satirised by Heinrich Mann in his novel ‘Der Untertan’ [‘The Loyal Subject’],” says Schmidt with a smile. “Friedrich I’s son, Friedrich Wilhelm I, however, expanded the ‘military state’ that embodied this mentality. He created a tightly controlled administration and built a standing army of over 80,000 men. History remembers him as the ‘Soldier King’ – a stern ruler indeed.”

“Old Fritz” Led Prussia into the Ranks of the Great Powers

Friedrich Wilhelm I, like his father, held the title of King in Prussia. His son Friedrich II (1712–1786), however, was the first to call himself King of Prussia – and would become immortalised as Frederick the Great. By waging the Seven Years’ War (1756–1763), he permanently secured Silesia for Prussia and elevated his realm to the ranks of Europe’s great powers. “Through significant territorial expansion, he brought Prussia onto the European stage and challenged the supremacy of the Habsburgs,” explains Alfred Schmidt. “He also commanded an army that he enlarged to 180,000 soldiers, even in peacetime.” Though strict and austere in leadership, Frederick was seen as a just ruler, affectionately known by his subjects as “Old Fritz.” It was he who coined the maxim that a ruler should be “the first servant of the state” – a principle that still resonates today. He was also a patron of education, science, and the arts, and gained fame as a flautist and composer. After Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835) founded the University of Berlin, a *Zentrum geistiger Erneuerung* – a centre of intellectual renewal – emerged there in 1810. Alongside the growth of Prussian national consciousness came a rising sense of German identity, a decisive factor in the creation of the German Empire in 1871. “In education, the military, the justice system, administration, and many other fields, Prussia became a model for other states and drove progress within what would become the German Empire,” Schmidt continues. “And the

postal service was no exception.” One name is inseparable from this transformation: Heinrich Stephan (1831–1897, later ennobled as Heinrich von Stephan). After decades of competing regional postal systems, Stephan worked tirelessly to unify and modernise them. His initiatives led to the creation of the North German Postal Union on 1 January 1868 and, later, the Universal Postal Union on 9 October 1874. “Heinrich Stephan became Postmaster General of the North German Confederation’s postal service on 26 April 1870,” Schmidt explains. “The independent postal services of the German states merged, and the confederation concluded new agreements with Austria, Luxembourg, and the southern German postal administrations.” For the

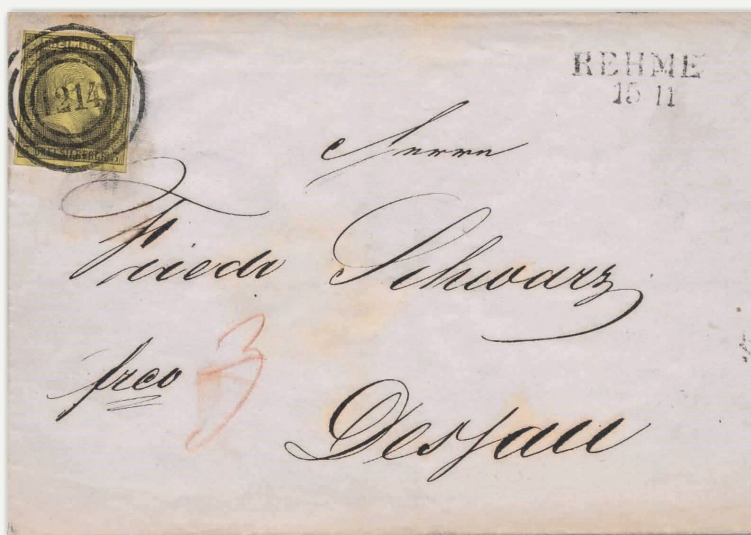


Heinrich Stephan (1831–1897, known as Heinrich von Stephan from 1885 onward) entered the Prussian postal service in 1848. His stellar career culminated in an appointment to the General Post Office in Berlin. It would be impossible to overstate his contributions to both German and international postal reform.

first time, a standardised, cross-border mail system came into being – something so commonplace today that it is easy to forget how revolutionary it was. “Without Prussia’s diplomatic skill and administrative foresight,” Schmidt adds, “we might never have achieved the universal postal convenience we now take for granted.”

The Kingdom of Prussia’s First Stamp Issue Was a Double Premiere

When Prussia introduced its first postage stamps on 15 November 1850, it was not only a milestone for the kingdom itself but also a dual debut in European postal history. It marked both the beginning of Prussian philately and the introduction of adhesive stamps for the entire North German region. These first issues – a one-silbergroschen blue for letters within Prussia and a two-silbergroschen red for correspondence to other German states – reflected the administrative precision and aesthetic restraint characteristic of the Prussian state. They bore the large royal eagle and the inscription “Freimarke” (“postage stamp”), printed in relief with remarkable clarity. The engravings were produced at the Royal Prussian Mint in Berlin under the direction of Georg Wilhelm von Müller, with printing executed by the Royal Lithographic Institute. “The first Prussian stamps were admired for their crisp, elegant design,” notes Alfred Schmidt. “Even today, their execution stands out for technical refinement and remarkable durability. The fine embossing and clear impression demonstrate the care and craftsmanship of Prussian production methods.” As a symbol of administrative efficiency, the new stamps embodied the values that came to define the kingdom itself: order, discipline, and progress through precision. Their introduction also represented an early step toward the eventual unification of Germany’s fragmented postal landscape. In philatelic terms, they are far more than just early adhesives – they are historical documents that capture a moment when Prussia’s bureaucratic rigor met the dawn of modern communication. Collectors have long been fascinated by the subtle variations and plate characteristics of this first issue. The early postal markings, too, reveal much about the development of Prussia’s regional networks and trade routes, making →



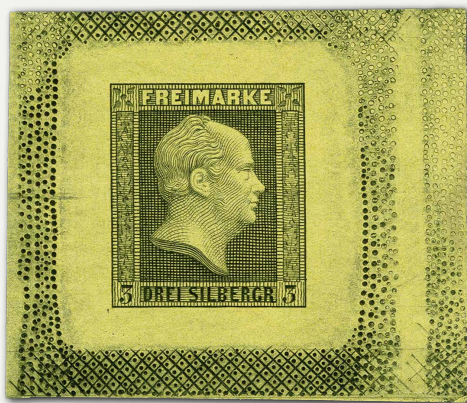
This phenomenal first day cover bearing a 3-silbergroschen stamp from Prussia’s first issue is an exceptionally rare piece of German philately (from the collection of Alfred Schmidt). Until recently, it was thought to be unique; however, a second example was discovered not long ago (see “Treasure of Classic Philately,” page 8).



This spectacular cover, franked with a horizontal pair of 1-silbergroschen stamps from 1850 showing the full plate inscription “Platte No. 9,” ranks among the great rarities of Prussian philately (ex Caspary, ex Boker, ex Haub). Only a handful of covers bearing complete plate inscriptions are known.



The legendary Stettin cover, sent to Great Britain in 1850, bears a strip of seven 1-silbergroschen stamps from Prussia’s first issue – the largest known unit of this stamp on cover and the only one of its kind. It remains one of the most spectacular rarities in German philately (from the collection of Alfred Schmidt).



This single print of a 3-silbergroschen proof from 1850 – produced in block format with a guilloché-style border – is a superb piece of postal history from the dawn of Prussian philately. Fierce bidding erupted over this item from the ERIVAN Collection at Heinrich Köhler's 374th auction in June 2020 (ex Haub).

the study of these stamps a rich field that bridges postal history, politics, and technology. “The first Prussian issue is a cornerstone of European philately,” concludes Schmidt. “It tells a story not only of stamps, but of how a state saw itself – disciplined, innovative, and determined to connect its people through order and structure.”

Prussia's Economic Clout Expedited the Postage Stamp's Rise to Success

The success of Prussia's first stamp issue was not merely the result of administrative innovation – it was also a reflection of the kingdom's growing economic power. By the mid-19th century, Prussia had become

the driving industrial and commercial force of Central Europe, and its efficient postal system played a key role in supporting that rise. “Prussia's economic and political influence ensured that its postal reforms set the pace for much of Europe,” says Alfred Schmidt. “The introduction of uniform postal rates and the rapid spread of postage stamps went hand in hand with the growth of trade and communication.” With its strong economy, expanding railway network, and increasing literacy, Prussia offered ideal conditions for the postal revolution. Letters became faster, cheaper, and more reliable,

allowing merchants, scholars, and ordinary citizens alike to exchange information at an unprecedented scale. What had begun as a bureaucratic reform soon evolved into a cultural shift: the written word became a vital conduit for business, governance, and private life. As the postal system expanded, so did the prestige of the postage stamp itself. In an age of technological progress and civic order, the stamp became a miniature emblem of modernity – a tangible symbol of Prussia's disciplined efficiency and administrative precision. Every letter franked with the Prussian eagle was a small act of participation in a wider national project: to connect, to organise,

and to communicate. “Prussia's postal system,” Schmidt concludes, “was a model for how statecraft and communication could work together. Its success was not only measured in delivered mail but in how it bound the nation – intellectually, economically, and emotionally. That is why the stamps of Prussia remain so fascinating: they embody the very idea of progress in miniature form.”

Communication was affordable, but not cheap

Although Prussia's postal system became a model of efficiency, communication in the mid-19th century was still far from inexpensive by modern standards. Postage rates, though uniform, reflected the economic realities of the time – and for many citizens, sending a letter remained a modest luxury rather than an everyday habit. “The introduction of the postage stamp certainly made communication easier and more transparent,” explains Alfred Schmidt, “but it didn't necessarily make it cheap. For a worker or craftsman, even a few silver groschen represented a noticeable expense.” At the same time, the principle of prepayment revolutionised the way people approached correspondence. By fixing clear postal rates, Prussia removed the uncertainty and inconsistency of earlier systems, where postage was often paid by the recipient and fees could vary dramatically by distance. For the first time, letter writers knew exactly what their message would cost – a small but transformative step toward modern communication. The design and production costs of the stamps themselves also reflected Prussia's ambition. Their high-quality engraving, the precision of the embossing, and the care in paper selection all contributed to the image of an advanced, well-ordered state. Even something as ordinary as a stamp became a statement of craftsmanship and national pride. “The Prussian postal system was run with a degree of discipline that other nations admired,” Schmidt adds. “The idea was to make communication accessible – but not trivial. Sending a letter was still a conscious act, an investment in connection and meaning. And perhaps that is what gives those early stamps their enduring charm: they represent a time when written words truly mattered.”



This unique bottom-margin block of six 3-silbergroschen stamps from 1857 – with red circulation number “1” in the lower margin and row counters “4,” “5,” and “6” – is an exceptional treasure of Prussian philately. Unused blocks from the second Prussian issue are exceedingly rare; this is the only known block unit featuring a row counter (ex Haub).

Cancellations are the fingerprints of postal history

With a total of just 26 postage stamps, Prussia ranks among the smaller stamp-producing states, yet as a field of collecting it offers remarkable depth. The sheer diversity of cancellations alone is endlessly fascinating: from ringed numeral cancellations – introduced alongside the “Kopfmarken” – to countless local types. The numbering of ringed cancellations followed the alphabetical order of post towns: 1 for Aachen, 103 for Berlin, and 763 for Gröben in the province of Posen, to name just a few. There were 1,987 ringed numbers in total. “And no collector in the history of philately has ever succeeded in compiling a complete

set of ringed number cancellations in truly desirable condition,” notes Alfred Schmidt. “The stamps should have full or wide margins, and the cancellation should be as close to the centre as possible.” He continues: “Cancellations are the fingerprints of postal history. A local or transit cancellation tells us where and when a letter travelled – and often, the quality of the cancellation itself reveals how carefully the postal clerk performed his work.” Additional postal services also provide rich material for collectors: registered mail, express delivery, cash on delivery – all produced fascinating mixed frankings that are now coveted items, sometimes even unique rarities. “Postage rates are a philatelist’s compass,” says

Schmidt. “A collector who understands them can read postmarks like a novel – or better still, like a gripping short story.”

Tiny paper wonders of the world

The mere thought of the “great items” of Prussian philately is enough to make any collector’s pulse quicken. Among them are legends such as the Stralsund cover with its unique franking – one of the most beautiful bisects from the German States and a world-class rarity. Almost as famous is the Stettin cover, sent to Great Britain in 1850, another global treasure. It bears a strip of seven 1-silbergroschen stamps from the first issue – the largest known unit of that stamp on cover, and the only example in existence. “These kinds of items reappear on the market perhaps once every two generations,” says Schmidt with enthusiasm. “To me, they’re like tiny paper wonders of the world. Collectors grow into Prussian philately. At first, they seek beautiful stamps. Then they discover cancellations. Later, they explore covers. Eventually, they’re not just collecting stamps or envelopes – they’re collecting stories and histories.” Ultimately, the philately and postal history of Prussia are much more than a chapter in Germany’s past. They mirror an era poised between tradition and modernity, between the royal court and the Industrial Revolution, between provincial towns and the emerging global market. Every letter is an ambassador from that world; every stamp a heartbeat of an age that helped shape Germany and Europe into what they are today.



World-class and unique: this letter to Holzminden in the Duchy of Brunswick bears the only known bisect of Prussia's first issue (2-silbergroschen stamp, 1850). Unlike in Brunswick or nearby Hanover, bisects were not valid in Minden (which was in Prussia), so the letter was challenged and marked “ungültig” (invalid) and “2” (silver groschen postage due) before being forwarded (ex Haub).



Speaking of “one of a kind” and “bisects”: without question, the famous Stralsund cover is one of the most beautiful bisects from this period of German philately. As a unique item, it stands among the top rarities in the Prussian field. The right-hand stamp of a pair of 2-silbergroschen stamps from the second issue of 1857 was bisected (from the collection of Alfred Schmidt). Because of its special significance, the Stralsund cover was chosen as the motif for Germany's 2023 Tag der Briefmarke (Stamp Day) issue.



Alfred Schmidt has been President of the Bund Deutscher Philatelisten (Association of German Philatelists, BDPh) since 2016 and is one of the foremost Prussia collectors of our time. His exhibit Preußen – die ersten drei Ausgaben 1850 bis 1859 (Prussia – The First Three Issues 1850–1859) has won numerous international awards, including several Grand Prix medals.

Sensational discovery – a first day cover from the first issue

Rare and phenomenal item from Prussia



This treasure of classic philately was presented to the public for the first time in 175 years: the newly discovered first day cover from the Kingdom of Prussia.



Michael Hilbertz has been Senior Philatelist at Heinrich Köhler Auction House since 2009.

Sensational philatelic discoveries still occur from time to time – such as a recent find at the offices of Heinrich Köhler in Wiesbaden. Senior Philatelist Michael Hilbertz could hardly believe his eyes when he came across a remarkable rarity: a first day cover franked with a 3-silbergroschen stamp from Prussia's first issue. Until then, only one other such cover was known – the example in the award-winning Prussia exhibition of BDPH President Alfred Schmidt. This newly discovered and exceptionally rare item of German postal history was offered in the 2025 Heinrich Köhler autumn auction with a starting price of €3,000. After a spirited bidding war, the hammer fell at €10,500, to the delight of its proud new owner.

But what is the significance of the handwritten red "3" found on both known first day covers? Michael Hilbertz explains: "My colleague Cliff Schön had received a small consignment containing an album of German covers of mixed quality, and he asked me to take a quick look – hoping there might be one or two items suitable for auction. As I flipped through the album, I noticed that most of the letters were addressed to Vlynn in the Rhineland. Then one item caught my eye – it was sent from Steinheim. I couldn't immediately place the name, but that hesitation made me look closer. The cancellation date, '15.11.', immediately stood out – because Prussia's

first stamps were issued on 15 November 1850. Then I spotted the handwritten red '3' on the front, and it struck me at once: this had to be a first day cover! When I unfolded the letter and saw the year, my suspicion was confirmed. It was a thrilling moment. To explain: in the early days after the introduction of Prussia's first stamps – until around March or April 1851 – it was common practice for postal clerks to accept payment for a letter and note the fee in red ink on the front, for example '3' silbergroschen. The stamps themselves were then affixed in the back room of the post office according to this notation. So, if you find a Prussian cover

franked with stamps and also bearing a red handwritten postage mark on the front, you can be almost certain it dates from this early period of stamp use. That was precisely the case with the cover I found. I realised immediately that I was holding something truly sensational – a previously unknown first day cover from the Kingdom of Prussia."

This newly discovered gem was one of the highlights of the 2025 autumn auction in Wiesbaden. It would be difficult to imagine a more fitting introduction to the endlessly fascinating field of Prussian philately.

Hansmichael Krug – the ideal philatelist, writer and stamp expert

Seven decades of pure passion



Hansmichael Krug and Dieter Michelson, Managing Directors of Heinrich Köhler Auction House, present EDITION D'OR Volume 67 – documentation of the collection Transatlantische Post zwischen dem Deutschen Reich und den USA von 1871 bis 1875 (Transatlantic Mail between the German Empire and the USA from 1871 to 1875) by Hansmichael Krug – at the International Stamp Exhibition IBRA 2023 in Essen, Germany.

He speaks quietly, yet everyone listens. Hansmichael Krug delivers philatelic expertise at its finest. Those who meet him quickly discover that he is more than a brilliant expert – he is an exceptionally kind, modest man, generous with both his time and his knowledge. “Passing on what I’ve learned has always come naturally to me,” says the 77-year-old. “Philately depends on the exchange of ideas and on a shared sense of community.” For nearly seven decades, Krug has pursued philately and postal history with undiminished passion.

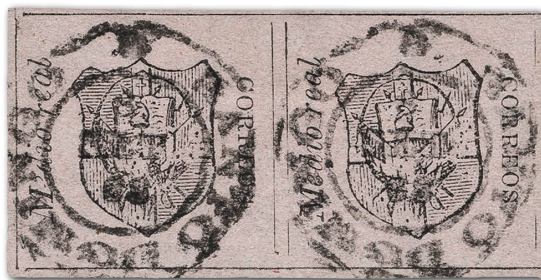
His lifelong enthusiasm began early – he was just eight years old. What started as a childhood hobby soon grew into a vocation, leading him to become one of the world’s most respected philatelists, authors, and experts. Born in Marburg an der Lahn on 3 February 1948 and raised in Frankfurt am Main, Krug completed his schooling and began studying chemistry, earning his diploma in 1979. While studying, he also taught mathematics at a Frankfurt night school, helping countless pupils overcome their fear of numbers. Yet his greatest passion remained philately. “Even as a boy, I realised that philately is condensed history,” he reflects. “Every stamp and letter is a tangible record of the past – you can literally hold history in your hands.” At 31, Krug made a bold decision: he left his secure teaching position to turn his beloved hobby into his profession. Together with business partner Wolfgang Meier, he opened a stamp shop

in Frankfurt-Niederrad. At the same time, he began working as a freelance philatelist for the long-standing auction house Heinrich Köhler in Wiesbaden, at the invitation of then-owner Volker Parthen. His deep knowledge soon laid the foundation for his later career as an independent expert.

Philatelic expert with scientific curiosity

Krug’s interests quickly became highly specialised. While others built broad collections, since 1980 he has focused almost exclusively on the German Empire – from the Shield issues to the early Crown and Eagle stamps – and on the Dominican Republic (1865–1920). These two fields became his lifelong domains, both as collector

and expert. “Assessment requires curiosity,” he explains. “I always want to dig deeper, to understand structures and find clear answers to complex questions. That’s what makes expertising valuable items so essential – it serves collectors’ best interests.” In 1988, →



Hansmichael Krug also serves as a philatelic expert in the field of “Dominican Republic, 1865–1920.” He has built an unparalleled collection on this subject. Shown here is one of the rarest and most spectacular items from his collection: a horizontal pair of Medio real black on rose-pink (ex Ferrary). Only two pairs of this first stamp issued by the Dominican Republic in 1865 are known to exist. In 2021, Krug decided to part with this award-winning collection to focus on his other philatelic passions, and Heinrich Köhler Auction House had the honour of bringing these exceptional items back into philatelic circulation.



When the German Empire issued its first stamps – the famous shield issues – the empire still had two currencies: the thaler in the north (one thaler = 30 groschen) and the gulden in the south (one gulden = 60 kreuzer). The introduction of a postcard fee of just one groschen (or four kreuzer) from German ports to the USA, beginning on 1 December 1873, significantly increased the exchange of mail across the Atlantic. With the exception of Switzerland, sending postcards to all European countries from Germany was much more expensive than sending them to the USA. This postcard from Frankfurt to New York via Bremen, from Krug's fascinating transatlantic collection, is one of the earliest sent at this reduced rate, as it is postmarked 3 December 1873.



The ideal philatelist, writer, and stamp expert Hansmichael Krug in conversation with fellow collectors – interactions that, for him, are at the very heart of philately and the aspect he enjoys most.

Krug closed his stamp shop to concentrate entirely on his work as a philatelic expert for auction houses, insurance firms, banks, and private collectors. He passed the entrance examination for the German Federation of Philatelic Expertisers (BPP) in 1994, specialising in “German Empire/Breast Shields,” and became a member of the international association A.I.E.P. in 2002. “Being a philatelic expert means

responsibility,” he emphasises. “A valuable item deserves equally valuable expertise. Trust is everything – and our job is to earn it.”

Going above and beyond for associations and exhibits

Alongside his work as a philatelic expert, Hansmichael Krug has always maintained close ties with the philatelic community – and continues to do so today. As a teenager, he founded a philatelic club at St Michael's parish in Frankfurt, and later joined a wide range of associations, from INFLA Berlin to the Royal Philatelic Society London. For Hansmichael Krug, voluntary work has always been more than a mere badge of honour: “For me, volunteering is serious work that carries responsibility – and it serves a cause that is very close to my heart.” He has received numerous awards in recognition of his achievements, including the Bronze (1992) and Silver (1999) service badges, the Baurat-Luce Medal (2011), the Medal of Merit from the State Association of Hesse (2013), the Friedrich Spalink Medal (2017), and multiple honorary memberships, among them honorary membership of the Shield Association

in 2022. In 2020, he was appointed to the BDPH's renowned Consilium Philatelicum – its “Council of Elders.” It is an honour bestowed upon only a select few philatelists.

One of the leading voices in his field

In addition to his work with these associations, Hansmichael Krug has also shaped the field of philately as an author and journalist. Numerous articles, handbooks, and catalogues bear his distinctive style, including the 1872 Shield Plate Error Handbook, the catalogue on the North German Postal Union, and the stamp catalogue Neue Deutsche Reichspostorte 1872–1875 (New German Imperial Post Locations 1872–1875). He and Friedrich Spalink also quite literally wrote the book on the postal stationery envelopes of the Invalid Charities from 1868 to 1875. His tireless work on newsletters and specialised publications has made him one of the leading voices in his field. And speaking of Friedrich Spalink – the retired frigate captain and accomplished philatelist who authored the handbook Die deutschen Hufeisenstempel (The German Horseshoe Postmarks, 2nd revised edition, 1974; see “Fascinating Facts”, pages 19–21) – he made an important and lasting mark on philately before his death in 2006. In 2008, the North German Postal Union Association created the Friedrich Spalink



Hansmichael Krug is an internationally renowned expert in fields such as “The German Empire – Shields” and also serves as a specialised assessor in this area.

Medal, awarded to outstanding philatelists who have significantly enhanced the reputation of a philatelic association through their work as collectors, researchers, and authors. That distinction was presented to none other than Hansmichael Krug in 2017. Incidentally, he and Friedrich Spalink also played a major role in redesigning the Michel Germany Catalogue. After numerous discussions, they succeeded in convincing the editors to list the stamps of the North German Postal Union directly before those of the German Empire – as befitted a federation of states – rather than under “German States,” where they had been incorrectly classified for years.

Successful exhibitor and internationally sought-after speaker

Hansmichael Krug was also remarkably successful as an exhibitor. By 1972, he was

already competing with his collections at philatelic exhibitions, and in the years that followed, his exhibits won gold and large gold medals. His collections on the Dominican Republic and on transatlantic postal transport between the German Empire and the USA (1871–1875) were especially acclaimed, earning the highest honours at major shows around the world. Auction houses Heinrich Köhler and Corinphila paid tribute to Krug’s exceptional achievements with dedicated volumes in their prestigious series EDITION D’OR and EDITION SPÉCIALE, ensuring that his work is preserved for future generations. These include EDITION D’OR Volume 67, Transatlantische Post zwischen dem Deutschen Reich und den USA von 1871 bis 1875 (Transatlantic Mail between the German Empire and the USA, 1871–1875), and EDITION SPÉCIALE: Die Marken des

Norddeutschen Postbezirks zur Zeit der Deutschen Reichspost ab 4. Mai 1871 (The Stamps of the North German Postal Union in the Era of the German Imperial Post from 4 May 1871 Onward). Today, Hansmichael Krug remains in high demand internationally as a speaker, consultant, and engaging conversationalist on all things philatelic. Meeting him in person, it becomes instantly clear how much he enjoys sharing his knowledge – he is never patronising, always patient and encouraging. “Contrary to popular opinion among non-collectors, philately isn’t a lonely pursuit at all,” Krug says. “It thrives on community and on the joy of helping one another appreciate the value and beauty of stamps and letters.” And that perfectly captures the essence of Hansmichael Krug: the ideal philatelist, writer, and stamp expert.

Looking at this beautiful cover from the collection Transatlantische Post zwischen dem Deutschen Reich und den USA von 1871 bis 1875 (Transatlantic Mail between the German Empire and the USA from 1871 to 1875), one can almost hear the thunder of horses’ hooves and perhaps even the crack of a Colt revolver fired by a postal rider or stagecoach guard to deter pursuers. The item vividly evokes the spirit of the Wild West. It was franked with three groschen of shield stamps and sent from Dresden to Silver City, Idaho, via Cologne, Aachen, Ostend, London, and Liverpool in 1873. From England, it travelled on the Cunard Line across the Atlantic to New York, where it was handed over to the legendary private transport company Wells Fargo for its onward journey to Salt Lake City, Utah. From there, Wells Fargo used literal “horsepower” to carry the letter across the prairie to the gold- and silver-mining town of Silver City, Idaho. It truly was the Wild West – Idaho would not become the 43rd state of the USA until 1890.



With his unique collection Die Marken des Norddeutschen Postbezirks zur Zeit der Deutschen Reichspost ab 4. Mai 1871 (The Stamps of the North German Postal Union in the Era of the German Imperial Post from 4 May 1871 Onward), Hansmichael Krug created compelling documentation demonstrating that the North German Postal Union stamps should be regarded as German Imperial Post issues as of 4 May 1871 – the very day the Reichspost was founded. The stamps of the North German Postal Union (1868–1871) were withdrawn from circulation on 31 December 1871. This monumental example of classic transatlantic communication from Krug’s collection, sent from Hanover to Montevideo, Uruguay via England in October 1871, stands out for its rare and exotic destination – making it one of the true highlights of 19th-century German philately and postal history.

The “King Johann” issue from the Kingdom of Saxony

Global appeal

This painting by German landscape artist Johann Friedrich Witzani (1770–1838) shows a view of Leipzig from the east in the early 19th century.

In the mid-19th century, when Germany was still divided into numerous independent states and its postal services were governed by complex, multi-layered agreements, the Kingdom of Saxony made its mark with postage stamps that continue to captivate collectors today: the celebrated “King Johann” issue of 1855–1863. These stamps are far more than delicate paper portraits of a monarch; they possess a distinctive aesthetic and global allure. Each tells a story of Saxony’s flourishing era – an age when the kingdom held remarkable international influence. Letters bearing these stamps, sent to distant corners of the world through intricate postal routes and often under challenging conditions, reveal much about the trade, economic strength, cultural confidence of the time, and – last but not least – the exciting story of the development of communication.

The Kingdom of Saxony, which existed from 1806 to 1918, was far more than a landlocked realm between Prussia and Austria. Dresden, known throughout Europe as the “Florence on the Elbe,” was a magnificent royal capital celebrated for its art and architecture. Leipzig grew into one of Central Europe’s great commercial

and exhibition centres, while Saxony as a whole became a cradle of German industrial innovation. The region was the birthplace of German engineering, producing world-class textile machinery, printing presses, and precision tools. Saxony’s industries exported their products to every continent, and this international

reach is reflected vividly in the postal history of the period. Letters franked with the “King Johann” issue not only travelled within the Austro-German Postal Union but also reached far-flung destinations such as North and South America, India, China, and even Australia. “Letters like these are the best evidence that Saxony was a globally connected economic powerhouse,” explains Michael Schewe, leading philatelist and internationally recognised expert in the “Kingdom of Saxony” field of collecting. “At the same time, they are among the rarest treasures of the German states – because sending a letter to the other side of the world cost a small fortune.”

Omnipresent, dignified, statesmanlike

In fact, the “King Johann” stamps were the first Saxon issues authorised for franking mail sent to other nations within the postal union – but more on that later. The immediate reason for the new issue was a tragic one: King Friedrich August II was killed in a carriage accident in 1854, and his brother Johann ascended to the throne.



The famous “Canton Cover” franked with stamps from the Kingdom of Saxony’s King Johann issue. In 1864, this first-rate rarity made the perilous journey from Leipzig to Canton [Guangzhou] in China via France and Hong Kong. Its exceptionally rare destination has earned it the title of “most spectacular single franking with a 10-new-groschen stamp.”



King Friedrich August II (1797–1854) ruled Saxony from 1836 until his tragic death in an accident.



King Johann of Saxony (1801–1873) succeeded his late brother Friedrich August II in 1854. He appears on the postage stamp series that bears his name, issued by the Kingdom of Saxony and in circulation from 1855 to 1863.



Historic view of Dresden, c. 1850.

Just one year later, the Saxon postal service released new stamps bearing the portrait of the new monarch – dignified, commanding, and unmistakably regal. “The ‘King Johann’ issue is a perfect example of the interplay between political ambition and artistic expression,” explains Michael Schewe. “It illustrates the kingdom’s determination to assert itself within the Concert of Europe by means of its own distinctive imagery.” Unlike the earlier Friedrich August issue, the new monarch no longer looks to the right but to the left. To improve legibility of the cancellations, the portrait of King Johann was placed within an oval frame set against a background of wide vertical hatching – replacing the previous design’s seemingly smooth surface, which was in fact composed of extremely fine horizontal lines. The postal administration also introduced two new high denominations, the five- and ten-new-groschen stamps, to prepay letters sent to countries outside the Austro-German Postal Union. “Before the ‘King Johann’ issue,” notes Schewe, “cash payment was the only option for correspondence leaving the Kingdom of Saxony. In that sense, every letter franked with ‘King Johann’ stamps and sent to an exotic destination represents a philatelic first.”

Beauty, aesthetics and elegance

If we look back at the first stamps issued by the Kingdom of Saxony, we can see how closely their introduction was linked to the founding of the Austro-German Postal Union. The union began operations on 1 July 1850, establishing standardised rules for postage rates and the handling of mail across its entire territory.

Member states agreed to issue their own stamps for prepaying postage, and Saxony’s first stamp appeared just in time for the occasion: the world-famous 3-pfennig Sachsen-Dreier. Though ready on schedule, the Sachsen-Dreier was intended only as a provisional issue and lacked the representative splendour befitting a royal state.

Among collectors, it remains the most famous of all stamps from the German states – beloved for its rarity and charm – but it was never the most beautiful. “That honour belongs to the issues that followed,” says Michael Schewe with a smile. “The postal service had already prepared designs that met the highest aesthetic →



Unique and exotic: this decorative folded letter with two 10-new-groschen stamps and additional postage travelled from Schneeberg to Arica, Peru, via the USA and Panama in 1859. The combination of rare, colourful franking, overseas destination, and complex routing makes this item one of a kind.



One of just two examples known to exist: in 1861, this remarkable letter travelled from Bautzen to the Cape of Good Hope via Belgium and England. Only one other cover franked with King Johann stamps and sent to South Africa is known.



From the kingdom to the empire: this registered letter with splendid and extensive franking is another fine example of the appeal of the King Johann issue. It travelled from Leipzig to Moscow in 1861 – from the Kingdom of Saxony to the Russian Empire.



Sensational and rare: this philatelic treasure from the Kingdom of Saxony is one of only six letters known to have been sent to Sweden bearing King Johann stamps. This extraordinary item features the largest known strip of the 3-new-groschen stamp – a horizontal strip of five – making it “first among equals,” so to speak.

standards. The green 3-pfennig stamp issued on 1 August 1851, for example, displayed the Saxon coat of arms, while the four stamps in the ‘King Friedrich August II’ series released at the same time featured the monarch’s portrait in exquisite intaglio printing on coloured paper.”

The new stamps were introduced alongside a simplified system of postal fees established under the Postal Union agreement. Despite these reforms, letters – apart from printed matter – were still subject to different rates depending on distance and weight. Most importantly, the new stamps could only be used within the Postal Union’s territory; they were not valid for foreign destinations. “This didn’t change until the introduction of the ‘King Johann’ issue,” explains Schewe. “That series combined, for the first time, the option to prepay mail for destinations

abroad with a design that equalled – and in some ways surpassed – its predecessors in beauty, refinement, and elegance.”

A world full of exciting philatelic and historical surprises

Interestingly, the type of mail sent with the “King Johann” stamps offers a remarkably clear picture of the culture and economy of the time. Three examples in particular stand out. “First and foremost is undoubtedly the famous 1864 ‘Canton letter’ from Leipzig, bearing a single franking of 10 new groschen,” says Michael Hilbertz, Senior Philatelist at Heinrich Köhler. “It travelled via France and Hong Kong all the way to Canton [Guangzhou] in China.” The exotic destination alone makes this letter one of the rarest items in Saxon postal history. “But when you combine that destination with the single 10-new-groschen franking, it becomes the most spectacular recorded

use of the King Johann issue – and that’s no exaggeration,” Hilbertz adds. Equally remarkable is the 1859 cover from Schöneberg, bearing two 10-new-groschen stamps with additional franking for transport to Arica, Peru, via the United States and Panama. This extraordinary route makes the item unique – a postal document that not only fascinates collectors but also illustrates the astonishing complexity of transatlantic mail routes in that era. “One other rare and exceptional piece is the 1861 letter sent from Bautzen to the Cape of Good Hope,” Hilbertz continues. “It travelled via Belgium and England to South Africa – where, to this day, only two letters franked with King Johann stamps are known to exist,” adds Michael Schewe. “The magic of the King Johann field of collecting lies in its intricacy,” Schewe concludes. “It combines the beauty of the stamps, the complexity of the postal rates, and the rarity of surviving examples. Anyone who delves into this area of collecting enters a world still rich in philatelic and historical discovery – even today.”

2026 SPRING AUCTION



United in one collection alongside many other exceptional items, the philatelic treasures shown here form a remarkable gallery of classic rarities – living proof that Saxony’s great issues remain highly prized around the world. Discover these gems for yourself at our 2026 Spring Auction, where Michael Schewe’s sensational “King Johann” collection will be featured. Will we be seeing you in Wiesbaden?



Michael Schewe has built a unique and world-renowned collection of King Johann stamps from the Kingdom of Saxony.

The history of the German horseshoe postmark

Precision and progress



Cliff Schön – shown here in conversation with breast shield expert Hansmichael Krug (see Profiles in Philately, pages 9–11) – has worked as a philatelist at Heinrich Köhler Auction House for nearly 15 years.

If you've ever seen a horseshoe postmark on a stamp from Lübeck, Prussia, Saxony, Württemberg, the North German Postal Union, or the German Empire, you'll know that it records not only the location and date but also a concise record of the time of day. The distinctive date and time stamp clearly shows the "time group" in which the item of mail was posted, positioned just above the day, month, and year. Horseshoe postmarks possess a look that is both austere and elegant – a striking expression of precision and progress. At first glance, they might appear to be a minor detail of postal history, but on closer inspection they reveal a fascinating chapter in Germany's philatelic story, spanning just 20 years (1864 to 1884). It's a brief window in time that nonetheless offers profound insight into the organisational challenges faced by 19th-century postal services.

"Around 1860, the postal authorities of the German states were confronted with a problem: rapid industrialisation had caused an explosion in the volume of mail, and existing postal processes could no longer keep pace," explains Cliff Schön, philatelist at Heinrich Köhler Auction House. "They needed a faster and more efficient way to handle the growing tide of correspondence." To understand the solution, we can look to the Kingdom of Prussia, whose methods of documenting postal operations were among the most advanced of the period. In his authoritative work *Die deutschen Hufeisen-Stempel* (The German Horseshoe Postmarks, 2nd revised edition, 1974), Friedrich Spalink described how "as early as 1839, many towns and cities in Prussia were using postmarks with two

concentric circles; the space between the circles indicated the name of the town or city, while the centre displayed the day and month in Arabic numerals." At larger post offices, these postmarks also included a time interval – such as "8–9" (8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.) – to denote when the item had been processed. Philatelists refer to this as a "time group." Crucially, postal workers typically used different cancellation devices for each time group, an ingenious system that reflected both the precision and the pressure of a rapidly modernising postal network.

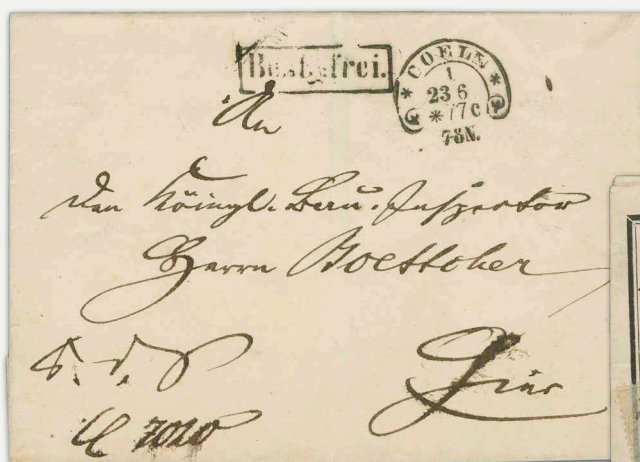
Cologne: the birthplace of the horseshoe postmark

Larger post offices possessed extensive sets of cancellation tools, and postal

workers would simply reach for whichever stamp corresponded to the required time group. These sets often included multiple identical cancellers to handle the busiest periods, and because they were used so frequently, they wore out quickly and had to be replaced or re-engraved. "Post offices or counters that processed smaller volumes of mail, or that were open for only limited hours, often used cancellers with replaceable time-stamp components," wrote Friedrich Spalink. However, changing these components required both effort and dexterity – luxuries that busy postal clerks seldom had. On 27 August 1862, the Prussian General Post Office issued a directive requiring that, with immediate effect, a two-digit indicator of the year also be included in postmarks. Why →

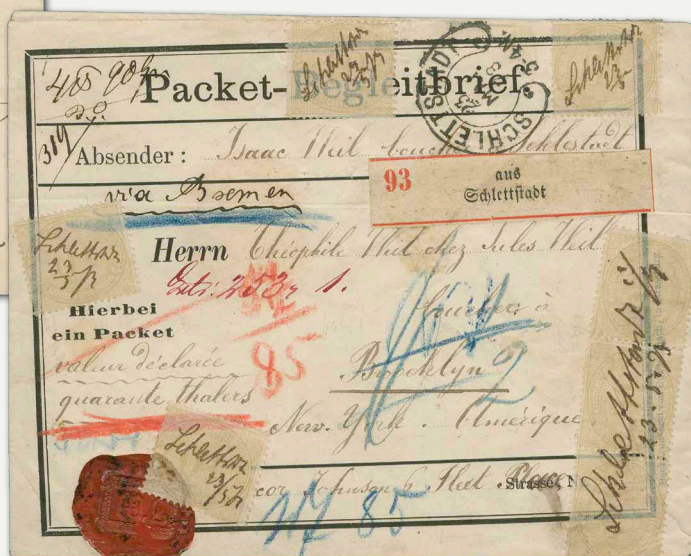
The main post office in Cologne in the 19th century.





This radiant gem of philately and postal history could easily be the centrepiece of multiple collections. Bearing a rare horseshoe postmark from Schlettstadt – in use for only three years (1872–1875) – this envelope once accompanied a registered parcel and would be the highlight of any horseshoe postmark exhibit. Its destination, New York, makes it equally valuable to transatlantic collections. In addition, the striking franking – nine hand-cancelled 10-groschen stamps from the North German Postal Union and a ½-groschen small breast shield on the reverse – renders this treasure ideal for any collection documenting the evolution of the German postal system.

◀ The first German horseshoe postmarks entered use in Cologne in 1864. One particularly notable successor is this “COELN 1” horseshoe postmark, introduced in May 1875 and shown here dated 23 June 1877 on a postage-due official mailing with a boxed “Bestfrei” (“Bestellgeld frei” – “No delivery fee”) marking. This combination of postmarks is exceptionally rare and may well be unique.



such a detailed digression into Prussian post-marking? The answer is simple: Prussia was the birthplace of the horseshoe postmark – specifically the city of Cologne (then written Cöln or Coeln), where the first German examples were introduced. The preceding developments are essential for understanding why the horseshoe design was created in the first place. “Horseshoe postmarks are a textbook example of Prussian thoroughness and the kingdom’s devotion to progress,” explains Cliff Schön. “The aim was to develop a single postmark that could be used for all time groups – reducing both mail processing times and the long-term

costs of maintaining large sets of cancellers.” The horseshoe postmark provided the perfect solution. Its innovation lay within the device itself: a small rotating cylinder that the postal clerk could easily adjust by hand to set the day, month, year, and time group. To make room for the prominently displayed time group, the designers first removed the outer of the two concentric circles found in earlier Prussian postmarks, and later the inner one as well. What remained was the distinctive contoured shape that gave the new design its name – resembling the outline of a horseshoe. “The numbers tell us that the introduction of this tool was

far more than a minor procedural change – it represented a genuine leap in efficiency,” Schön notes.

“From April 1864 to July 1875, German postal services used a total of 107 horseshoe post-marking devices.” The Royal Prussian Postal Service employed 21 different horseshoe postmarks. On January 1,

1868, the North German Confederation Postal Service took over the system and with it all the postmarks from Lübeck, Prussia, and Saxony. The postal location of Kiel was added with its own postmarks. From 4 May 1871 onward, the German Imperial Post (Reichspost) carried this innovation into the new era, employing 76 different horseshoe postmarks – at least 19 of which were in use during the period when North German Postal Union stamps were still valid (until 31 July 1871). “Postmarks from these transitional periods are particularly fascinating from both a philatelic and postal-historical perspective,” Schön observes. “They are tangible documents of an era when continuity and reform literally coexisted side by side.”

Insight into the history of classical communication

If we look closely at how the visual design of the horseshoe postmark evolved over the years, it becomes clear that it was never uniform or static. Instead, it represents a whole typographical landscape. Fonts, numeral forms, spacing, and patterns of wear – all these subtle differences emerged around a shared, dependable design principle. “For experts, every horseshoe postmark offers a glimpse into the history of classical communication,” says Cliff Schön. “You can almost see the hand of the postal worker and sense the



This horseshoe postmark from Düsseldorf is exceptionally scarce. According to Friedrich Spalink’s Handbook of German Horseshoe Postmarks, only three covers bearing this cancellation are known to exist. Current research suggests the postmark was likely withdrawn by the end of 1873. This postal stationery card from the German Reichspost features a cancellation dated 31 December 1873 – the latest known use – making it the finest of the three surviving examples.

rhythm of postal traffic at the time.” Technology played a central role in this. The easy-to-adjust cylinder inside the postmarking device allowed postal clerks to work quickly and precisely, and it soon became a natural part of their daily routine. It may sound mundane, but from a philatelic standpoint, it’s pure gold. The time groups, in particular, serve as precise coordinates. “If you want to trace the exact dispatch and arrival of a letter, the horseshoe postmark offers far more accurate navigation than most other types of cancellation,” Schön explains. This accuracy stems largely from the distinctive design of the horseshoe postmark itself, which provided considerably more space at the bottom of the cancellation for the time group than the earlier double-circle design ever allowed.

Outstanding items that electrify researchers and auction bidders alike

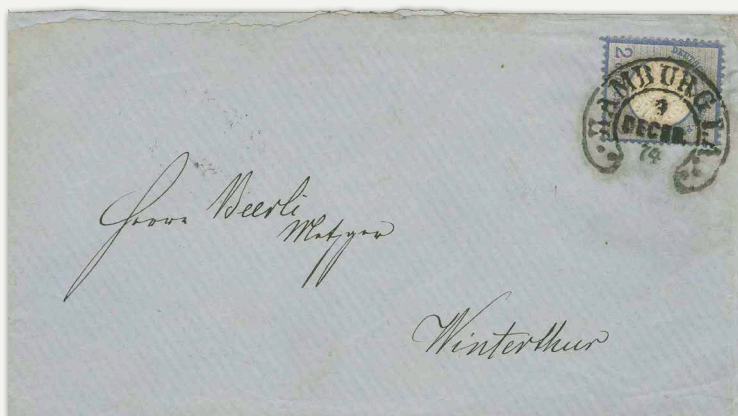
With the founding of the German Empire in 1871, the postal service shifted its focus from experimentation to expansion. The newly established Reichspost integrated the horseshoe postmark into a broader system that also included local cancellations, railway postmarks, circular datestamps, and double-circle postmarks with a horizontal bar across the middle. The horseshoe design, however, remained the preferred choice wherever speed and clarity were paramount – at major post offices, transport hubs, and dispatch centres handling vast volumes of mail. “The horseshoe was never an end in itself,” summarises Cliff Schön. “It was a precise instrument for visualising the efficiency and rhythm of postal operations.” Even today, the horseshoe postmark continues to fascinate philatelists. Collectors value its crisp legibility and the depth of information it conveys. A single letter from 1867 bearing a Prussian stamp, a horseshoe postmark, and an early time group can reveal more about mail routing than an entire stack of archival documents. The transitional periods – from Prussia to the North German Confederation, and from the North German Postal Union to the Reichspost – produced some of the most thrilling items in this field. Such covers ignite excitement among both researchers and auction bidders. “Anyone who begins collecting in this area rarely stops at just one example,” says Schön. “The 107 different postmarking tools used over the 20-year lifespan of

the horseshoe postmark create a collecting field that unfolds like a map – town by town, cylinder setting by cylinder setting.” The first two horseshoe postmarking devices equipped with time-group cylinders entered service in Cologne in April 1864. The final tools were introduced to Reichspost offices in July 1875, though some remained in use until 1884. So why collect horseshoe postmarks? Because they are far more than decorative impressions of time and place. They are precision instruments that allow us to synchronise timetables, official records, and real postal routes. They are also miniature feats of design – clear, structured, and utterly functional. As Schön concludes: “If you understand the field of horseshoe postmarks, you can read postal history as though it were unfolding right before your eyes.”

YOU, TOO, CAN EXPERIENCE POSTAL HISTORY AS THOUGH IT WERE THE PRESENT – AT OUR 2026 SPRING AUCTION



We look forward to welcoming you to our 2026 Spring Auction, where one of the most significant horseshoe postmark collections of our time will go under the hammer. This extraordinary assemblage tells countless stories of postal history through remarkable frankings, rare usages, and extraordinary destinations. These stories are just waiting to be discovered!



Remarkably, this horseshoe postmark from Hamburg was in use for only a few weeks (November and December 1874). Its appearance on a foreign letter to Switzerland elevates this cover to the ranks of the great rarities in German philately.



This folded letter is an outstanding example of mixed franking, combining stamps from the Pfennige issue of 1875 with groschen stamps from the large breast shield issue of 1872. Sent from Hamburg to Hong Kong via Brindisi in 1875, it features multiple Hamburg horseshoe postmarks struck in crystal-clear perfection. The postmark was used from mid-1874 to mid-1875. According to ProFi, Heinrich Köhler Auction House's exclusive digital provenance finder, only one other cover exists bearing the same combination of franking sent to Hong Kong.

The world's first daily newspaper was published 375 years ago



The latest news – and spectacular philatelic rarities



The Red Mercury of 1856 is Austria's most famous classic stamp and, among the legendary "Mercury" newspaper issues, it remains the undisputed philatelic highlight. Leon A. Bernhard, philatelist at Heinrich Köhler Auction House, recently rediscovered this vividly coloured gem in the estate of a late collector. "It was a thrilling find," he recalls. "A woman contacted us to say her late husband had left a number of stamps, though she knew nothing about them. When I examined the collection, I came across a Yellow, a Pink, and a Rose Mercury. You can imagine my excitement!" There is no doubt that these newly uncovered "living legends" of newspaper philately will attract enormous international attention at the 2026 spring auction at Heinrich Köhler.

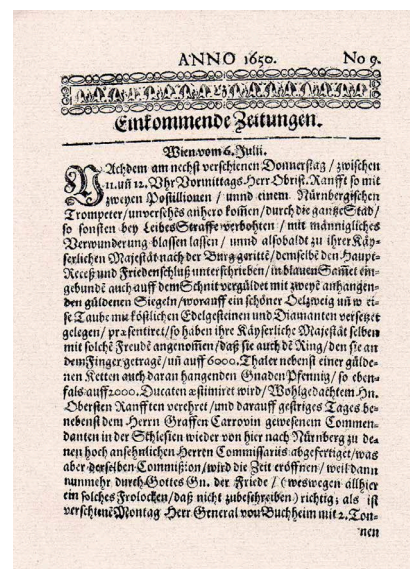
It all began with Johannes Gutenberg. In the 15th century, he revolutionised book production by inventing the moveable-type printing press, freeing text from the slow labour of hand-copying – and laying the foundation for the birth of print journalism. We've now been able to read a daily newspaper for 375 years: the world's first was published in Leipzig in 1650. In those early days, when the press was still in its infancy, the latest news quite literally travelled by post. After the introduction of postage stamps, special issues for printed materials soon followed – designed for mailing newspapers and other unsealed correspondence. Today, some of these stamps rank among the rarest and most spectacular items in international philately.

Timotheus Ritzsch (1614–1678) was merely trying to build a business – and ended up making history. On 1 July 1650, he printed the world's first daily newspaper in Leipzig. His *Einkommende Zeitungen* ("Incoming News") appeared every weekday on four pages. Leipzig, already a major trade fair city, was the ideal birthplace for this new medium: it was an international marketplace and a crossroads for numerous postal routes, alive with information from every direction – more than enough to fill a daily publication. "From the very beginning, newspapers were closely tied to the postal service. The post didn't just deliver papers; in many cases, it published them," explains Tobias Huylmans, Managing Director of Heinrich Köhler. Even before Ritzsch, the newspaper business was already taking root. Frankfurt postmaster Johann von den Birghden (1582–1645) began publishing

a regular newspaper in 1615, and other cities soon followed. By 1618, around 20 newspapers were in circulation, and by the end of the Thirty Years' War that number had tripled. But it was Timotheus Ritzsch who first took the bold step of publishing every day – and in doing so, changed the way the world received its news.

An enormous need for reading material

Demand quickly became overwhelming. "Germany offered ideal conditions – a central location, trade routes criss-crossing the country, and a relatively high literacy rate," explains Tobias Huylmans. The number of newspapers expanded exponentially throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. With the international postal reforms introduced in 1840 and the rapid growth in newspaper circulation, special postage



Timotheus Ritzsch's *Einkommende Zeitungen* newspaper, first published in July 1650, became the world's first daily newspaper, appearing six times per week.



Johann Friedrich Gottlob Koenig (1774–1833) revolutionised newspaper production with his invention of the cylinder printing press, which greatly accelerated the printing process.

stamps were created in the mid-19th century to enable newspapers to be sent at reduced rates. Among these, one example stands out above all others.

The “Magical Mercuries”: Icons of Classic Philately

The classic 19th-century stamps for printed materials and newspapers are among the purest artefacts documenting the evolution of media and communication. They are authentic witnesses to a time when newspapers were the primary vehicle for information – and none are more celebrated than Austria’s legendary “Mercury” issues, first introduced in 1851. These stamps were among the world’s earliest newspaper issues, created to make it more affordable to distribute newspapers across the vast, multilingual Habsburg Empire – thereby helping to propel the newspaper trade itself. The design, depicting Mercury, the Roman messenger of the gods, was more than decorative: it symbolised the drive to deliver news swiftly, reliably, and across great distances. “The Mercuries are true icons of classic philately, and they exert an almost magical fascination on collectors,” says Tobias Huylmans. “The Red Mercury issue of 1856, in particular, ranks among the most famous and coveted philatelic rarities in the world.”

An outstanding item and an undisputed treasure

Of no less significance is the famous 3-pfennig Sachsen-Dreier, issued by the Kingdom of Saxony in 1850. With a face value of three pfennigs, it was intended for mailing newspapers and pamphlets. Today,



An outstanding item from the German States – the only surviving complete sheet of the Saxony Number One (from the collection of Joseph Hackmey). This celebrated stamp for printed materials, also known as the Sachsen-Dreier, was issued by the Kingdom of Saxony in 1850 for mailing newspapers and pamphlets.

it stands as one of the most important and sought-after classic stamps of the German-speaking world. “The Sachsen-Dreier embodies the pioneer age of German philately like no other issue,” says Tobias Huylmans. One outstanding example of this red Saxon number one remains an undisputed treasure to this day: the sensational original sheet of the Sachsen-Dreier. The sheet comprises four horizontal rows of five stamps each – and what makes it truly extraordinary is that it is the only complete sheet known to have survived. Today, it forms part of the exceptional collection of leading philatelist Joseph Hackmey, thanks to a sale brokered by Heinrich Köhler Auction House.

Monuments to Newspaper Communication

Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, another remarkable development was taking shape. In 1865, the United States issued its first three newspaper stamps, with denominations of 5, 10, and 15 cents – and they remain, to this day, the largest postage stamps ever produced in the world. Measuring 3.9 by 2.2 inches, these monumental designs reflected the nation’s recognition of the

vital importance of news circulation. “The American newspaper stamps are virtual monuments on paper,” Huylmans explains. “They symbolise the fact that the postal service carried not only letters, but entire streams of information. And whether found on cover or in larger multiples, they are rare and highly coveted items.” A close look at the history of stamps for printed materials and newspapers reveals that these issues are far more than philatelic curiosities – they are historical documents in their own right. Created to support the flow of information in an age when newspapers dominated the media landscape, they stand as enduring witnesses to a period in which the written word formed the very foundation of modern society.



The first three newspaper stamps of the United States, issued in 1865, remain among the largest postage stamps ever produced. Measuring 3.9 by 2.2 inches, they stand as virtual monuments on paper – striking symbols of the country’s commitment to the free flow of information.

The Red One Penny Post Office of Mauritius

Lady in red

A historical view of the harbour in Port Louis – the capital city of Mauritius.

Only a select few have ever had the honour of owning this exceptional philatelic treasure – chief among them the legendary “stamp king” and greatest collector of all time, Baron Philipp von Ferrary (1850–1917). Yet this “lady in red” also once graced the collections of two other giants of philatelic history: Jean-Baptiste Moens of Belgium (1833–1908), the pioneering stamp dealer and first biographer of the Mauritius “POST OFFICE” issue, and Théodore Champion (1873–1954), one of France’s foremost philatelists. This particular item is one of only two unused examples of the Red Mauritius „POST OFFICE“ known to exist. The second is preserved in the Mauritius Two Penny Blue Museum, the No. 1 of the Postal Museums in Port Louis. Just imagine, then, the excitement if the only privately held unused item were ever to come back onto the market!



This lady in red is one of the world's rarest and most significant items and an extraordinary cultural artefact deserving a place in UNESCO's World Heritage list.

The world's most famous stamps – the Red One Penny Post Office of Mauritius and the Blue Two Pence Post Office of Mauritius – are true global icons of communication history. Yet the blue Two-Pence stamp is not, as is often assumed, the “elder sister.” In fact, the orange-red one-penny stamp holds that distinction. Philatelists define the first stamp of an issue as the one with the lowest face value; therefore, even though both stamps were issued on the same day, the Red One Penny Post Office of Mauritius remains the “first-born” of the two legendary sisters from this island paradise.

Legends Don't Have a Price – They Have a Value

And speaking of legends: true legends have no price – only value.

How could one ever put a price on the Mona Lisa, for instance? Or the bust of Nefertiti? Or the Koh-i-Noor diamond? Were such treasures ever to appear at auction, their future custodians – connoisseurs capable of recognising their unique cultural and historical importance – would understand their value instinctively. Incidentally, the Koh-i-Noor, one of the largest diamonds in the world, hails from India – the nation that gave its name to the Indian Ocean, in whose waters lies the island of Mauritius. Yet in terms of value by weight and surface area, the two Mauritius “POST OFFICE” stamps far surpass even the most famous diamond on Earth. So, be honest, dear readers: how much would the “lady in red” be worth to you?

+++ OUR 2026 SPRING AUCTION – THE COUNTDOWN IS ON +++

The postal history and stamps of India

The fabulous South Asia

It is a land of mysticism and absolute extremes – seemingly endless deserts and lush fairy-tale landscapes on the one hand, and sprawling, chaotic metropolises on the other: India. The modern-day country covers enormous territory – nearly 3.3 million square kilometres, stretching from the snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas in the north to the palm-lined beaches of the tropical south. And yet, there was a time when the territory of India was even larger: the era of British India. And the postal history and stamps of this period are just as fascinating as the magical country itself.

Giants of India's Classical Postal History

British India became a part of the British colonial empire in 1858, and at its largest, it encompassed not only the majority of what is today the Republic of India, but also the territories of the present-day states of Bangladesh, Myanmar (formerly Burma), Pakistan and parts of Kashmir. However, by the time India was colonised, the British had already been making history on the Indian subcontinent for almost two and a half centuries – we are referring, of course, to the legendary British East India Company. Its massive

influence and continuous expansion of power laid the foundations for nearly 200 years of British colonial rule. It began with the establishment of a trading post in Surat in 1612, which was facilitated by Queen Elizabeth I signing a trading company agreement. Further trading posts soon followed. Between the 1770s and the 1830s, the British East India Company developed from a purely mercantile company focused on trade with India into an autonomous administrative organisation and ruling body. And the importance of communication increased accordingly during this period; at the beginning of October 1854, the East India Company finally issued its first postage stamps for the whole of India – three values of 1/2, 1 and 2 anna. A 4-anna stamp was added in mid-October. On cover, these early Indian stamps are now highly sought-after treasures, and they are a unique testament to the fascinating postal history of the fabled subcontinent.

The giants of India's classical communication history depicted here will go under the hammer at our spring auction next year and are sure to attract international attention. Please join us for the auction; we look forward to welcoming you!



A total of three periods of printing were used in the production of this 4-anna stamp from India in 1854. The different plates produced noticeable variations in the stamp image. This extremely rare cover to Canton [Guangzhou] in China was franked on the reverse with no fewer than twelve individual stamps bearing the markings of the first period of printing.

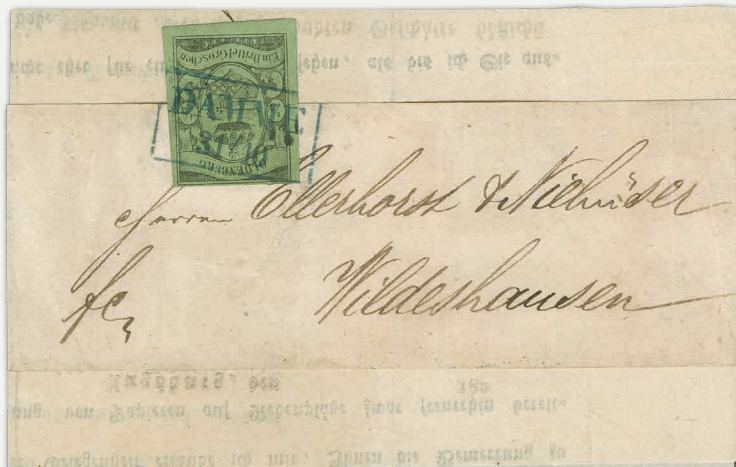
This cover from 1856 to Bury St Edmunds features one of the most beautiful pairs ever recorded of the third period of printing of the 4-anna stamp with a blue postmark in the centre. The mixed franking with a pair of the 1-anna stamps creates a stunning liaison, making this item an absolute highlight of Indian philately.



+++ UNIQUE ITEMS AND COLLECTIONS – A LITTLE

Grand Duchy of Oldenburg – the Jens Kuhn Collection (Part I)

“Big guns” of classical philately



The 1/3-groschen stamp from the second Oldenburg issue (1859) – shown here on wrapper from Damme to Wildeshausen – is, on cover, among the rarest items the Grand Duchy has to offer.

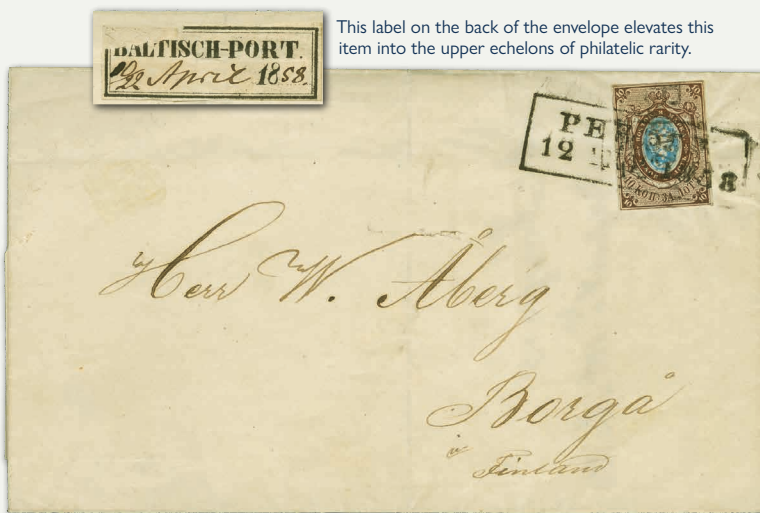
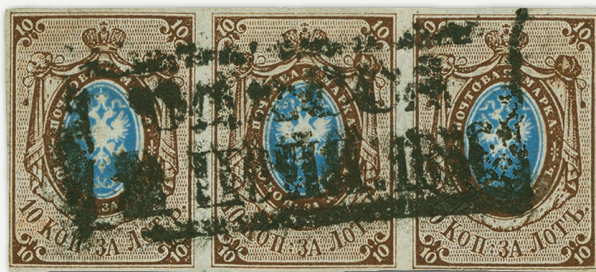
The “Grand Duchy of Oldenburg” field of collecting stands among the most prestigious areas of German philately. Between 1852 and 1862, only nineteen stamps were issued – a modest number, perhaps, yet their impact on classical philately has been profound. Bearing denominations in Thaler, Grote, Silbergroschen, and Scharen, these stamps mirror the economic and political tensions of a small but proud independent state. Oldenburg offers some of the true “heavy-weights” of classic philately, particularly on cover. Its combination of historical resonance, distinctive local postage rates, and the variety of currencies makes it a domain for connoisseurs – collectors who seek depth, nuance, and rarity. Over several decades, Jens Kuhn applied his deep expertise to assemble a collection that brings these treasures vividly to life: rare multiples and frankings, remarkable postal uses, and fascinating routing examples. Part I of this extraordinary collection will be presented at our 2026 spring auction – an unmissable event for admirers of German classic philately. We look forward to welcoming you.

Russia number one – the “Elin” Collection (Part II)

Birth of a legend

In January 1858, a legend was born: the first Russian postage stamp. Its story is as unusual as it is fascinating. A temporary fault in the perforating machine forced an improvised decision – the lowest denomination, 10 kopecks, would have to be issued imperforate. The machine was soon repaired, and later printings were perforated, but this very first issue has retained its status as a coveted rarity ever since. One particularly notable feature is the extreme scarcity of genuinely used examples: only 458 items have been documented to date. The outstanding Elin Collection includes a remarkable number of these exceptional treasures. Following the tremendous success of Part I of this collection at our autumn auction, the 2026 spring auction will once again showcase an array of exquisite philatelic and postal history items – each one a testament to the birth of a legend.

Two items of Russian postal history that electrified numerous bidders during the auction of Part I of the “Elin” Collection: first, a cancelled strip of three of Russia's first stamp from 1858 (starting bid: 12,000 euros; winning bid: 21,000 euros). Only six strips of three are known to exist. And second, the legendary Russia number one on cover from Reval [Tallinn] to Borga [Porvoo]. The use of the label reading “BALTISCH-PORT” on the back, rather than a departure cancellation, makes the cover one of the top rarities from the Russian Empire. It went to its new owner for 16,000 euros (starting bid: 4,000 euros).



This label on the back of the envelope elevates this item into the upper echelons of philatelic rarity.

PREVIEW OF OUR 2026 SPRING AUCTION +++

Germany from 1849 and Austria from 1850 – the collection of Bruce “The American” Wright (Part III)

High standards of quality

Bruce Wright has always upheld the highest standards in his approach to collecting. Imperforate stamps had to display full margins wherever possible, while perforated issues needed to be perfectly centred – ideally in unused condition. Cancelled items were only ever admitted in exceptional cases. In German-speaking collecting circles, Bruce Wright has earned the respectful nickname “The American” – a nod both to his nationality and to his formidable reputation as a “feared” counter-bidder at auction. And rightly so: few collectors outside Europe have invested such passion, knowledge, and enthusiasm into building collections of such exceptional depth on the themes of Germany and Austria.

A draft sketch for the legendary Germania series of the German Empire – in circulation from 1900 to 1922 and designed by Albert Krüger (1858–ca. 1910) – shown alongside a cancelled 30-pfennig Germania stamp from 1905 and a never-hinged 2-mark Germania from 1920. Both are outstanding rarities: the 30-pfennig stamp bears a horizontal rather than the usual vertical “rhombus” watermark, while the 2-mark stamp features the rare “quatrefoil” watermark that was originally intended for tax stamps. According to ProFi, the exclusive digital provenance finder from Heinrich Köhler, only three cancelled 2-mark Germania stamps with the “quatrefoil” watermark are known to exist – and, as of now, the never-hinged specimen appears to be unique.



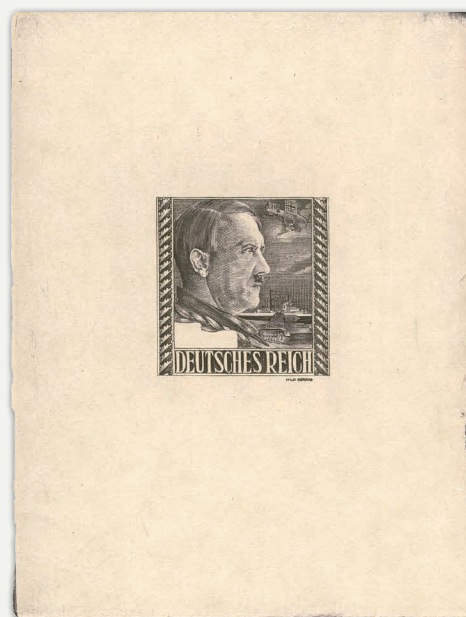
Weimar and the Third Reich with varieties, proofs and essays – the Nils Schmidt Collection

A mirror reflecting back the art and style of bygone eras

Nils Schmidt’s remarkable collection, “Weimar and the Third Reich,” goes far beyond the first regular postage issues. It encompasses a wealth of fascinating material – from drafts and essays to varieties and proofs – offering deep insight into the creative process behind stamp design. As early as the 1960s, renowned philatelist Professor Alois Joerger observed: “Anyone who delves into the history of how a stamp was created, tracing the individual phases of its development and the different variations, is essentially looking into a mirror reflecting back the artistic intentions and styles of bygone eras, allowing

them to come alive again.” These miniature works of art from the pre-production phase are also extraordinarily rare, since only a handful – sometimes just a few individual examples – were ever produced. Would you, too, like to gaze into a mirror reflecting the artistry and style of a bygone age? Then don’t miss our 2026 spring auction – where history and design come vividly to life.

One superb example of the coveted “pre-production” field of collecting is this single print of a draft by artist Milo Bernas; the Nazi regime planned this special “Adolf Hitler/Wehrmacht” stamp, but it was never issued. Only a few similar items are known to exist.



2026 SPRING AUCTION – NOW OPEN FOR CONSIGNMENTS



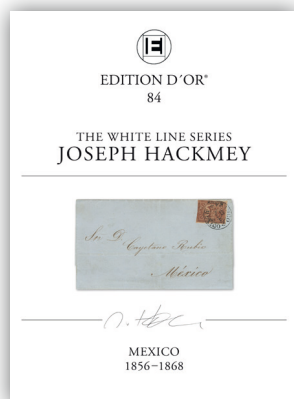
If you are considering selling your collection – in whole or in part – our 2026 spring auction and the following auction season offer an ideal opportunity. Current market conditions are exceptionally strong. Submit your consignment to Heinrich Köhler now and benefit from the best of both worlds: the tradition and trust of a renowned auction house, combined with the reach and efficiency of state-of-the-art online bidding technology. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Mexico 1856–1868 – Joseph Hackmey (The White Line Series)

A book with superlative qualities: with volume 84 of the renowned EDITION D'OR, you are about to hold both traditional philately and postal history per excellence in your hands. Joseph Hackmey's collection is amongst the finest in the world, and this volume definitely does it justice. With **448 pages**, this is the **most extensive EDITION D'OR tome ever**. A must-have for lovers of Mexican classic issues, one of the most popular collectible areas in American philately.

Limited edition: 200 copies (only 120 on free sale)

Number of pages: 448

Price: 99 €



2. Classical elegance

"Löwen und Schwäne": Bavarian Classics – The Prof. Dr. Gerd Gigerenzer Collection

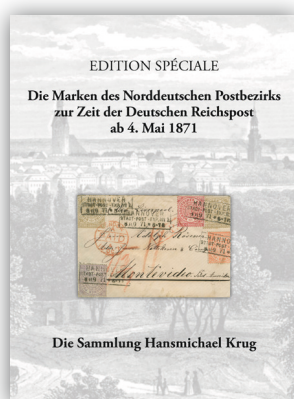
Bavaria is among the most popular areas for collectors of German philately. Entitling it poetically "Löwen und Schwäne" (Lions and Swans), Prof. Dr. Gerd Gigerenzer firstever presents his outstanding collection – hitherto undisclosed to the world. Experience the elegance of the "One Kreuzer Black" and subsequent issues paired with well-founded and exciting information on the accompanying contemporary events in an EDITION SPÉCIALE, combining research and history.

Limited edition: 120 copies

Language: German

Number of pages: 248

Price: 79 €



3. Post-historical precision

The stamps of the North German Postal District during the era of the German Imperial Postal Service from May 4, 1871 – The Hansmichael Krug Collection

This EDITION SPÉCIALE is dedicated to a fascinating transitory period in German postal history. The Hansmichael Krug collection highlights the use of stamps from the North German postal district in the context of the newly founded Reichspost. A volume of great philatelic depth and historical relevance.

Limited edition: 80 copies

Language: German

Number of pages: 144

Price: 79 €