

# MERCURY STAMP JOURNAL

Published periodically by the MERCURY STAMP COMPANY

522 Fifth Ave., New York 36, N. Y.

Edited by Edwin Mueller

No. 24

Copyright, 1952, by Edwin Mueller

DECEMBER, 1952

## EUROPEAN CLASSICS

### VIII. BREMEN

As one of the smallest of the Old German States with an independent postal system, the Free City of *Bremen* covered only 74 square miles. It was situated on the estuary of the Weser river, surrounded by the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg on the west and the Kingdom of Hanover on the north, east and south. Its population was 79,000 in 1849 and 110,000 in 1867, of which the largest part, 53,000 in 1849 and 75,000 in 1867, lived in the city of Bremen, situated 40 miles from the North Sea. There were two more towns, Bremerhaven and Vegesack, both enclaves in Hanover territory, each of which had a little over 3500 inhabitants in 1849, and 58 villages of little importance.

Bremen has a long *history*. It was first mentioned in 782 as a missionary center and was made a bishopric in 787 by Charlemagne. After the destruction of Hamburg by the Normans in 848, the seat of the archbishopric was transferred from Hamburg to Bremen. The city developed in the following centuries into an important trade center and extended its commercial interests, especially to England and Scandinavia, founding a number of trading posts. In 965, it was made a market town by Emperor Otto I. In the 13th century, the city ruled over the Weser estuary to the sea and virtually became independent. In 1276 it joined the Hanseatic League, a confederation of principal trade cities on the North Sea and the Baltic which had been founded several years earlier. The Hanseatic League reached the top of its might in the 16th century but soon deteriorated, especially during the Thirty Year's War. After 1628, the League consisted only of the Free Cities of Hamburg, Lubeck and Bremen and lost greatly in influence. The last archbishop of Bremen was deposed during the Swedish occupation in 1644. In 1646, Emperor Fer-

dinand III made Bremen a "Free City". Early in the 18th century, Bremen lost control of the Weser estuary to Hanover and its sovereignty was confined to the city of Bremen and the villages in its suburbs as well as to the town of Vegesack. During the Napoleonic Wars, Bremen was occupied by the French in 1806, and in 1811, together with parts of Hanover and Oldenburg, incorporated into the French Empire as the department "Bouches du Weser", with the number "129". After the French left in December 1813, the Free City was re-established and in 1815 joined the German Confederation. A new constitution of 1849, amended in 1854, gave Bremen a republican form of government, with a Senate and a House of Burgesses at the head. In 1827, the town of Bremerhaven was founded, on a small strip of territory ceded by Hanover in 1826. Its port, opened in 1830, became one of the principal German emigration ports to America. The first U. S. mail steamer, the "Washington", arrived there on June 19, 1847. In 1857, the North German Lloyd Steamship Company was founded, with its seat in Bremen, establishing Bremerhaven as one of the most important German sea ports. In 1867, the Free City of Bremen became a member of the North German Confederation and in 1871 of the German Empire, of which it is still a part.

The *postal history* of Bremen started with the courier service which the Hanseatic League had organized in the 13th century, but this was no public service and handled only the mail of the merchant members of the League. The oldest real mail service was introduced early in the 16th century by the Family of *Taxis* which at that time

The Mercury Stamp Journal is sent regularly to friends and customers of the MERCURY STAMP COMPANY free of charge. Subscription price see p. 288.



provided a large part of Europe with postal facilities. Not much later the Free City created its own mail service, the "Stadtpost"\*)), competing with the Taxis mail service, which had developed into the "Reichspost". In 1672, a *Brandenburg* post office, which later developed into a *Prussian* post office, was opened and the director of the "Stadtpost" also was made director of this post office. Until March 31, 1727, this joint "Stadtpost"-Prussian service continued, when it was dissolved. The Prussian post office was conducted henceforth by the Thurn & Taxis post office, which now became an "Oberpostamt". *Hanover* opened a post office at Bremen in 1677 under the name "Koeniglich Grossbritannisch und Kurfuerstlich Braunschweig-Lüneburgisches Postamt", which became in 1709 a Hanover "Oberpostamt". During the Napoleonic Wars, the zone system was introduced in 1802 by the Taxis mail service, Bremen belonging to zone ("Rayon") 4. When the French occupied Bremen, they first closed, on Nov. 29, 1806, the Thurn & Taxis post office and, on July 31, 1808, all other post offices. Post offices of the Grand Duchy of *Berg* and of the Kingdom of *Westphalia*, both French satellite states, took over in 1806 and 1808 respectively, but continued the zone system. After the annexation of the territory by France, a *French* post office was established in July 1811 and the post offices of *Berg* and *Westphalia* were abolished.

When the French departed, the French post office closed. The Prussian post office was reopened on Dec. 10, 1813 and the others shortly thereafter. In 1823, the Prussian post office severed its relationship with the Thurn & Taxis post office and a new postal treaty provided that the director of the "Stadtpost" should in future also conduct the Prussian post office, which arrangement continued until the separate "Stadtpost" was discontinued. A postal treaty with

\*) We do not translate this term, which literally means "City Post", to avoid the impression that this service was for city mail only. Actually, it handled city mail, domestic as well as part of the foreign mail and was the postal service of the Free City of Bremen, headed by a "Post-Departement", appointed by a special committee of the Bremen Senate, the "Postdeputation".

*Oldenburg* in 1831 placed the mail service between Bremen and that country in the hands of the "Stadtpost". The "Stadtpost" had, aside from the city of Bremen, only two more offices, at *Veegesack* and *Bremerhaven*, both opened in 1847. In both towns, *Hanover* shortly thereafter also opened post offices, at Bremerhaven in 1848 and at *Veegesack* on Jan. 1, 1852. The latter was conducted by the postmaster of the "Stadtpost" office at *Veegesack*.

On Jan. 1, 1852, Bremen became a member of the *German-Austrian Postal Union* and at the same time competition between the different post offices in Bremen ceased, by assigning to each a limited field. The "Stadtpost" had a monopoly, in addition to all domestic and city mail, of all mail to *Hamburg*, *Lubeck*, *Oldenburg*, *Mecklenburg-Schwerin*, *Schleswig-Holstein*, *Lauenburg*, *Denmark*, *Sweden*, *Norway*, *Netherlands*, *Great Britain & Ireland with Colonies*, including *Heligoland*, and all transatlantic countries. The *Hanover* post offices accepted only mail to *Hanover* and *Brunswick*. The Prussian and Thurn & Taxis post offices handled all other mail. The Prussian post office served for mail to *Prussia*, *Mecklenburg-Strelitz*, *Saxony*, *Luxembourg*, *Austria* (except *Lombardy-Venetia*, *Tyrol* and *Vorarlberg*), *Poland* and *Russia*, as well as for transit mail through the last two countries and via *Trieste*. The Thurn & Taxis post office took care of all mail to its own postal territory, to *Baden*, *Bavaria* and *Wuerttemberg*, *Lombardy-Venetia*, *Tyrol*, *Vorarlberg*, *Switzerland*, the *Italian States*, *France*, *Spain*, *Portugal* and mail in transit through these countries. The service to *Portugal* was taken over in 1859 by the "Stadtpost". On April 1, 1866, the postal service in *Lauenburg* passed into the hands of *Prussia* and consequently mail from Bremen had now to pass through the Prussian Post Office and no longer through the "Stadtpost". Special treaties between the "Stadtpost" and foreign countries, especially with the *Scandinavian* countries, the *Netherlands*, *Great Britain*, *Portugal* as well as the *United States*, regulated the foreign mail service. In 1853, *travelling post offices*, conducted by the *Hanover* postal service, were established on the *Hanover-Geestemünde* railroad, which passed through Bremen and was the common property of *Hanover* and *Bremen*. At the railroad stations at Bremen and *Vege-*



sack, a special postal service was established in the form of mail boxes in which mail for most destinations could be posted.

Great Britain also had a postal agency at Bremen, but it was not a regular post office which accepted mail from the public. It served only as forwarding agency for mail for Great Britain and Ireland, as well as in transit through it, which had been accepted at the "Stadtpost" office. Such mail was carried from May 1, 1860 by ships of the North German Lloyd directly from Bremerhaven to Hull and London. The British postal agency may have started operation in 1860, although the earliest and only proof of its existence we know of is of December, 1867.

The end of the special postal conditions existing at Bremen came during the years 1866 and 1867. On Dec. 31, 1866, all Hanover post offices on Bremen territory were closed, because Prussia had taken over the Hanover postal service on July 23, 1866. On June 30, 1867, the Thurn & Taxis post office was taken over by the Prussian post office and closed the same day. On Dec. 31, 1867, the "Stadtpost", the Prussian post office and probably also the British postal agency ended their functions and were replaced, on Jan. 1, 1868, by post offices of the North German Confederation. This ended the administration of the Free City of Bremen as a separate postal entity and its separate postal service.

Bremen's currency was a gold currency, based on the goldthaler (gth) equivalent to 72 grote (g). 1 Grote was divided into 5 Schwaren. For the foreign mail service, in conforming with the currency of the neighboring countries, the silberthaler (th) was used as basis, equivalent to 30 silbergroschen (sg). There was a considerable disagio of the silberthaler, so that one goldthaler actually valued 33 silbergroschen, therefore 10 silbergroschen being equivalent to about 22 grote. The unit of weight was the pound divided into 32 loth (one loth equivalent to about 1/2 ounce). Distances were measured by miles, equivalent to about 7 1/2 kilometers.

Several years before Bremen issued its own postage stamps, the foreign post offices there had started to use adhesives. Generally, they were introduced at the Bremen post office at the same time as in the mother country. The Hanover post office started to use postage stamps as early as Oct. 1,

1850. Prussia, which had started to use postage stamps on November 15, 1850, but specifically had withheld use in Bremen, started to use them there on Aug. 1, 1851. Thurn & Taxis began to use postage stamps on Jan. 1, 1852, and on the same day introduced the stamps in silbergroschen currency at its post office at Bremen. They could be used only on mail to countries of the German-Austrian Postal Union, only from July 1, 1853, also to other countries. All three postal administrations also used their postal stationery at their post offices at Bremen, generally from their day of issue. Envelopes were in this way used by the Prussian post office from Sept. 15, 1851, by the Hanover post offices from April 15, 1857, and by the Thurn & Taxis post office from Oct. 1, 1861. The Hanover post offices possibly also used, from August 1865, Money Order Cards, but we have no actual proof thereof.

When eventually postage stamps were issued at the "Stadtpost" offices, they were still not its own adhesives, but based on an agreement with the neighboring Oldenburg, the first postage stamps of that country, for use on mail to Oldenburg post offices only. The 1/30 thaler value was the only value issued by the Bremen "Stadtpost" and its use started on the same day as in Oldenburg, namely, on Jan. 15, 1852. Consequently, the 1 groschen values of the issues which followed were issued at Bremen and used in the same way, as were, from Jan. 1, 1861, envelopes of 1 groschen. Other values of the postage stamps are also known used at Bremen, but it is not known whether they were issued there or secured from other Oldenburg post offices by private users of the mail. We are inclined to believe that from 1855 also 1/3sg and later 1/3g stamps for printed matter and from about 1865 also 2g and 3g for heavier and registered letters were actually available at Bremen.

The first postal items of its own, sold by the Bremen "Stadtpost" office were not adhesives, but Envelopes, introduced by a decree, dated Dec. 26, 1853, for city letters only. The first Postage Stamps were issued on April 10, 1855. No other kinds of postal stamps or postal stationery were issued by the "Stadtpost".

The use of Bremen stamps and envelopes ceased on Dec. 31, 1867. On the following day, the stamps of the North German Confederation, in groschen currency, came into



sole use. The use of Oldenburg stamps and envelopes at the Bremen "Stadtpost" offices ended also on Dec. 31, 1867, as did the use of Prussia stamps and envelopes by the Prussian mail service at Bremen. The use of Hanover stamps and postal stationery was discontinued some time earlier, by replacing them, on Oct. 1, 1866, with Prussia stamps and envelopes. Both kinds remained valid for postage simultaneously for one month, until Oct. 31, 1866. Thurn & Taxis stamps and envelopes were withdrawn and demonetized on June 30, 1867, the day the Thurn & Taxis post office was closed.

Bremen issued during the 12 years and  $8\frac{3}{4}$  months of use of its own postage stamps six different values. After the first value, 3 grote, which was issued on April 10, 1855, came a 5 grote, issued on April 4, 1856. The next value was a 5 silbergroschen, of which the exact date of issue is unknown but it was probably shortly after July 1, 1859; the first known use is October, 1859. The fourth value issued was a 7 grote, by decree of July 10, 1860, without a fixed day of issue. A 10 grote value was supposedly issued in November 1861, but the exact day of issue is unknown. The last was a 2 grote stamp, which was issued by decree published on April 29, 1863, but also without specific day of issue. Of the envelopes, only one value, 1 grote, was issued.

The Bremen postage stamps were all issued to cover specific rates. The first value, 3 grote, was the domestic letter rate for each loth. Its use was not obligatory and unfranked letters paid no additional postage due. A reduced rate of 2 grote, charged for letters between Bremen and Vegesack, remained in force and continued to be paid in cash. The second value, 5 grote, was the single letter rate to Hamburg. The third value, 5 silbergroschen, equivalent to 11 grote, was the single letter rate to Great Britain and Ireland. The fourth value, 7 grote, paid for a single letter to Lubeck, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Schleswig, Holstein, Lauenburg, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The fifth value, 10 grote, was for single letters to the Netherlands and the United States, but letters within a 30 miles border zone of the Netherlands paid only 7 grote. The last value, 2 grote, was for the reduced letter rate between Bremen and Vegesack, which from then on had to be paid with stamps. The 1 grote envelope could be used

for city letters only and no other usage is known. Generally, postage on letters to foreign countries was paid in cash, before the specific stamps for such mail were issued. Most of the values issued for mail to specific countries could be also used on other mail, but the 5 silbergroschen is very rare on letters to other countries and grote values are not known used on letters to England, except to cover the registration fee. The two values of 2 grote and 3 grote, originally issued for domestic mail only, were later also used as additional values on foreign letters as well as on foreign printed matter and samples. Postage on domestic printed matter and samples first continued to be paid in cash. The registration fee was 5 grote, to be paid in stamps. A delivery fee of 1 grote was collected in cash, except for city letters for which the 1 grote fee included delivery. There were a number of changes in the postal rates during the use of Bremen stamps. Of the domestic rates, the letter rate was generally reduced on Jan. 1, 1867. Letters up to 1 loth now paid 2 grote, over 1 loth up to 15 loth 4 grote. The new rate for printed matter and samples was 1 grote for the first  $2\frac{1}{2}$  loth and 2 grote for more than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  up to 15 loth; as no 1 grote stamps existed, postage continued to be paid in cash, at least for that rate. The letter fee to Schleswig-Holstein was reduced on Oct. 15, 1867, for a 20 mile border zone, from 7 grote to 5 grote. Letters to Heligoland were accepted by the "Stadtpost" from Aug. 1, 1866, and paid 4 grote, from June 15, 1867, 3 grote. There were special rates for printed matter and samples to Great Britain and special letter rates for Portugal and to a number of transatlantic countries, partly in odd grote amounts such as 21, 23, 24, 28 grote, etc., which made necessary the use of several stamps on one letter.

Mail to Oldenburg was subject to the domestic Oldenburg rates which were for single letters  $1/30$  thaler up to 10 miles distance and  $1/15$  thaler for more than 10 miles. From April 1, 1858, they were made uniform,  $1/30$  thaler (from 1859, 1 groschen), regardless of the distance. Hanover also charged domestic rates, for single letters 1 guter groschen, from Oct. 1, 1858, 1 groschen, equivalent to  $1/30$  thaler. No mail between its post offices at Bremen, Vegesack and Bremerhaven was handled by the Hanover post offices, as the domestic



service on Bremen territory was reserved for the "Stadtpost". For letters delivered by the Hanover post offices a delivery fee of 2 pfennig was charged, payable in cash. Prussia and Thurn & Taxis charged at their Bremen post offices the rates established by the German-Austrian Postal Union, for single letters 1 silbergroschen up to 10 miles, 2 silbergroschen from 10 to 20 miles and 3 silbergroschen for more than 20 miles. Only for printed matter, the Thurn & Taxis post office had a reduced rate of  $\frac{1}{4}$ sg (instead of  $\frac{1}{3}$ sg) to other Thurn & Taxis post offices. Delivery of mail by the Thurn & Taxis post office was started on May 17, 1860; the delivery fee, which could be paid in stamps in advance, was  $\frac{1}{4}$  silbergroschen. The mail of the Prussian post office was, as was the mail from Oldenburg, delivered to the addressees by the "Stadtpost" which collected the delivery fee of 1 grote for them.

The designs of all Bremen stamps, including the envelope stamp, show the coat of arms of the Free City, a key placed diagonally on a shield. Three values (3g, 5g, 7g) and the envelope stamp show the key correctly on a shield of vertical lines, with the citizen crown above. The other three values (2g, 10g, 5sg) have the key in an oval, without crown, the first two on vertically lined, the 5sg on solid ground. Each value has a different design, of which those of 5g and 7g are rather similar, but with different ornaments in the corners and between FRANCO and MARKE, aside from other differences in the lines of the background, etc. The outer frame is rectangular on the 3g, irregular on the other values. Four values (2g, 3g, 10g and 5sg) have the inscription BREMEN, the other two (5g and 7g) FRANCO MARKE instead. Only the two values for domestic mail (2g and 3g) have the additional indication STADT POST AMT. Three (2g, 3g and 10g) have the figure of value in all four corners, the

3g in addition to two larger figures "3" in the design. The 5g and 7g have the figure of value twice. All values except 3g and 5sg have the value indication repeated in words; the 5sg has a Roman "V" twice instead, while the 3g does not even have a currency indication. The envelope stamp is a small oval, with the arms in the center, STADT POST AMT at the top, BREMEN at the bottom; it has no value indication. The origin of the designs is unknown; probably they were the work of an artist, employed by the printer.

The designs of the postage stamps were intended for reproduction in lithography and therefore drawn on a lithographic stone. This job was probably done by an unknown employee of the printers, the G. Hunkel Printing Works at Bremen. For the first value, 3 grote, the design was drawn three times, forming a strip of three. The three designs are very similar but differ in many details, so that three types can easily be distinguished. Of the second value, 5 grote, two designs were drawn, forming a pair, in a similar way creating two types. Of the other four values, only one design was drawn on the stone. Each design was surrounded by a thin frame line, about  $\frac{3}{4}$ mm. to  $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm. away from the design, the two extremes being the 5sg ( $\frac{3}{4}$ mm.) and 7g ( $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm.). There is no indication that intermediary transfer stones were used for the manufacture of the printing stones and it can be assumed that they were laid down directly from the original stone. The printing stones of the two first values, 3g and 5g, contained 120 designs each, in ten horizontal rows of 12. The printing stones of the 5sg and 10g had 36 designs each, the former in four horizontal rows of 9, the latter in six rows of 6. The 7g printing stone contained 35 designs, in seven horizontal rows of 5. The size and layout of the printing stone of the 2g is unknown, but it is believed that it consisted of two panes, one above the other,



Fig. 31



Fig. 34



with a 10mm. wide gutter between, but this is only a supposition, predicated upon copies with perforated gutters attached at top or bottom. In laying down the printing stones, the thin frame lines surrounding the designs were used as dividing lines between the stamps. For this purpose, the designs were quite accurately transferred in such a manner that the frame lines matched with those of the adjacent designs; in this way there was usually a single dividing line between the stamps; only in those spots where the transfer operation was less accurate, a double line resulted. An exception was the 5sg, of which the original design had the frame lines closer than the other values, and therefore, to space the stamps wider, double dividing lines, about 0.2mm. apart, appear between the stamps. The outside frame lines of the margin designs formed a frame around each printing stone, separated by 3/4mm. to 1 1/2mm. space. Only on the printing stone of the 5g did the dividing lines and frame lines remain during all printings. On the printing stone of the 2g they were removed before the printing started, on the 3g immediately after the start of the printing, so that only a few used copies with dividing lines are known. On the printing stones of the 7g, 10g and 5sg, the dividing lines and frame lines were intact on the first printings but became fragmentary or were completely removed in later years, so that all printing stones, except that of the 5g, eventually had no dividing lines. There was no margin print, but the dividing lines were in some cases continued on the margins. On the stone of the imperforate 7g, for example, all horizontal dividing lines run through the side margins.

The original stone and the first printing stone of the 5g had the erroneous inscription *FRANCO MARKEN* instead of *FRANCO MARKE*. When the first printing from this stone was delivered by the printers, it was rejected. The printers hurriedly changed the word "MARKEN" to "MARKE" on both 5g designs of the original stone and laid down another printing stone which was used for a new printing. It was delivered only ten days later and was the first issued printing. It is reported that the printers sold the rejected stamps with the wrong inscription, supposedly 26,400 copies, in 1868, to a stamp dealer. They do not exist genuinely used.

When the *printing stones* were laid down, the printer used guide lines and guide dots to help in the proper transfer of the designs to the stone. These were usually removed before the printing started or shortly afterwards, but more or less distinct traces remained visible in a few cases. In other cases such guide lines must have been on the original stone and were transferred with the design to the printing stones. The most conspicuous of these cases can be found on the 3g, where on two stamps in Type I (positions 40 and 43) and one in Type II (position 41) a curved guide line above the crown was left almost intact, while it was removed in all other designs (Fig. 31, positions 40, 41 and 42 of the stone, Type I, II and III, the first two with the variety curved line above crown). These varieties remained unchanged in the only printing stone which was used for the 3g and can be found in all printings, imperforate, rouletted and perforated. It can be taken for granted that for the 5g also only one printing stone was used for all issued printings, but for the 5sg at least two different stones must have been used. For the 2g also at least two printing stones were used, possibly also for the 7g and 10g, but this has not been ascertained. It seems probable that in the later cases only a number of worn designs was erased on the printing stones—at the same time removing the dividing lines which had become unnecessary—, and new designs transferred in their places from the original stone. In several cases, improved transfer methods must have been used for new printing stones or the first printing stones were strengthened, because the printing stones used for later printings show some details much better defined than on the early printing stones. A good example of this is the 5sg, of which the design of the first printing stone (imperforate stamps) shows many indistinct lines, for example the end of the ribbon in the frame at the right only with traces of shading, while the later printing stones (rouletted and perforated stamps), which generally show much more details, have two strongly defined shading lines. In other cases, there seem to have been individual retouching of some printing stones. This is rather obvious for the 2g, which shows in its first printing stone the "G" of "GROTE" similar to a "C" (rouletted and perforated stamps). On a later



printing stone (perforated stamps only), which has the whole design more strongly defined, among other improvements this letter was retouched individually on almost every design by adding a short horizontal bar, making it resemble a "G". In several cases it seems that another effort was made to improve the appearance of the stamps, by working over the printing stones. For example, the first printings of the 3g were rather heavily shaded and gave the design a dark appearance. This was corrected by removal of shading lines, etc., so that in later printings the design looked much lighter. Similar efforts to improve the designs seem to have been made also for other values.

There are few *plate varieties* and only one conspicuous double transfer is recorded, on the 5g, Type II, showing some parts of the design doubled, especially the figure of value at right (Fig. 32). This variety, which is known in a few examples, unused and used, does not seem to exist on the early printings (imperforate stamps) nor on the last printings (perforate stamps), only on the rouletted stamps. This makes it probable that the variety occurred when a design of the printing stone, which had become defective during the printing and which was to be replaced, was not completely erased before another design was transferred to the stone. This theory is supported by the fact that obvious attempts were made later to remove the doubling from the printing stone, as the variety comes more or less distinct, but always from the same position on the stone.

For the *envelope stamp*, another method of production was used, as it was intended to be *handstamped* on the envelopes. The simple design was cut in steel, probably by the engraver Johann Friedrich Brennicke of Bremen, who manufactured most of the postmarks of the "Stadtpost". After this handstamp (Type I) had become worn, it was replaced, probably in 1867, by a new hand-



Fig. 32



Fig. 33

stamp (Type II), which was quite similar to the original one but had many minor differences in the size and shape of the letters, which makes it rather easily distinguishable.

The *printing* of the postage stamps was also done by the printing works of *G. Hunkel* at *Bremen*, on lithographic hand presses. No major printing varieties have been found, except on the imperforate 5g which is known, in a few used single copies and an unused pair, printed on both sides. The printing on the back is inverted and only fragmentary (Fig. 33); probably one sheet of printer's waste was turned over and regularly printed on. Of minor varieties, some rather worn prints can be noticed in later prints, especially of the 5g. The *envelope stamp* was handstamped singly by the *Bremen "Stadtpost" office* at the top left corner of the envelopes and another handstamp, *FRANCO*, 18mm. long, added at the bottom left corner. There exist several varieties of the envelopes, without stamp or with the stamp in colorless embossing, and without *FRANCO*, as well as both handstamps inverted in the right corners of the envelope.

Various kinds of *paper* were used for the postage stamps as well as for the envelopes. The first three values (3g, 5g, 7g) were printed on colored paper, the other three (2g, 10g, 5sg) on white paper, all machine-made of unknown origin. The paper of the 3g is gray blue, with almost no shades, and is laid, having about 11 lines in 2cm. width and single lines, crossing them about 28mm. apart. The paper sheets were cut in both directions and the first printings (imperforate and rouletted) therefore come horizontally or vertically laid. They are not of equal rarity; first (imperforate stamps) vertically laid was rarer than horizontally laid, later (rouletted stamps) horizontally laid became considerably rarer than vertically laid. The last printings (perforated stamps) come only horizontally laid. Originally (imperforate stamps), this paper had an additional papermaker's watermark, a conventionalized lily, covering six stamps, supposedly three times in each sheet. Later (rouletted and perforated stamps) no such papermaker's watermark can any longer be found. The imperforate 3g is reported also on wove blue paper, but it is probably only a copy on which the laid lines accidentally are indistinct or possibly it is a proof. The paper of the 5g was rose and wove. It shows



no spectacular shades but was very sensitive and easily became discolored in the later printings (rouletted and especially perforated stamps), so that it can frequently be found pale rose to almost white. Only the first printings (imperforate stamps) have real rose paper, while the last printings (perforated stamps) exist only on paper in pale shades. The 7g was printed on yellow paper, sometimes having a greenish tint but only in insignificant shades and with no tendency to fading. The 2g, 10g and 5sg were printed on a thin white wove paper, but several printings (imperforate, rouletted and perforated) of the 5sg were printed on a chalky paper and some of the 2g (rouletted only) on a highly glazed and shiny white chalky paper. For the stationery, probably not specially prepared envelopes but stock of an envelope manufacturer or dealer was used without any system, which seems to be the reason for the various kinds of paper on which they come. At first, occasionally also later, envelopes on white wove paper of various textures were used, from about 1862, envelopes on light blue paper which was diagonally laid, the lines running from top left to bottom right, with single lines, crossing them about 26mm. apart. About 1863, similar light blue paper, but with a wavy line watermark, the wavy lines running from bottom left to top right, also with single lines crossing them, was introduced and used from then on.

The envelopes come in three different sizes (140 x 80mm, 149 x 82mm. and 147 x 79mm.) and are cut by four different knives, with straight or curved upper flaps and different kinds of side flaps. Combined with the two types of the envelope stamps and the three kinds of paper used, eight major varieties and several sub-varieties of the envelopes can be distinguished.

Four values as well as the envelope stamp were printed in black, allowing little variation in color. Only two values, 2g and 5sg, were printed in color and both show considerable shades which are characteristic for the various printings, but were obviously used without any system. The first printing of the 5sg was a deep moss green, later printings were yellowish green, light green, sometimes with a bluish tint, and green. The 2g varied from yellow orange to red orange, with slight tints of ochre.

The gum was applied by hand with broad

brushes. A vegetable glue was used which was usually colorless, but became yellowish and even brownish in some cases, especially on the imperforate 3g and several values of the perforated stamps. The 5sg also comes with a strongly brownish gum, which sometimes darkens the paper. It is claimed that the stamps with this brownish gum come from sheets which were delivered by the printers insufficiently gummed and were regummed by the "Stadtpost" office before being issued. The envelopes were first issued un-gummed, then, probably from 1860, the top flap was gummed.

The first printings of the four original values, 3g, 5g, 7g and 5sg, were issued imperforate and the sheets of these stamps had dividing lines to facilitate separating single stamps, except the 3g which had such dividing lines only on the very first printed sheets. They must have been removed from the printing stone of that value, without any obvious reason, after a few sheets had been printed. Late in 1861, the printer started to manufacture rouletted stamps and gradually introduced this aid to separation, so that early in 1864 three of the original values had been issued rouletted. The two new values, 2g and 10g, were issued rouletted from the beginning, while the 7g was never issued rouletted, the supply of imperforate stamps being so large that even after the stamps started to be perforated, this value was next to the last one to be issued with that kind of separation. A few copies of the 10g are known imperforate but considered to be proofs. The roulette used was a serpentine roulette, which showed 16 wave crests on each 2cm. width. In a letter written by the printers in 1863, it is stated, that this roulette was set up by the printer from typographical material and that each full sheet was rouletted in a single operation on a hand press. As the sheets of the six values had different sizes, the printer had to assemble a separate rouletting form for each value. As multiples, especially blocks, of the rouletted stamps are extremely rare, there is no possibility to check on this. The brass wavy lines used for the rouletting were first broken up in short stretches of about 3 to 5mm. length; the unrouletted short stretches of less than 1mm. should prevent the rouletted sheets from falling apart (Roulette I). This roulette I, which sometimes, due to the steep wavy



lines, looks almost like a saw-tooth roulette, was used first for the 10g, then for the 5g and the first printing of the 5sg. It proved unsatisfactory because the stamps were difficult to tear apart. Early in 1863, the printer started to break up the wavy lines into smaller pieces, so that eventually only the crests of the waves were left intact (Roulette II), giving this kind of roulette almost the characteristics of a point roulette (Fig. 31). During the period of breaking up of the wavy lines, which was done by the printers with file and knife, it became necessary to roulette the sheets of a new value, the 2g, and the sheets of the first printing of that value showed the roulette partly in the old, partly in the new state, creating stamps which had on one side the old, on the other the new kind of roulette. It seems that the printer completed the job of breaking up the roulettes shortly afterwards and the following printings of the 2g, later printings of the 5sg and all rouletted 3g stamps obtained roulette II. No major rouletting varieties are known; we can not substantiate a report, that the 5sg exists with double roulette. Of the rouletted stamps, only the 5g and the new 10g had the now unnecessary dividing lines, while they had been removed, except for some insignificant traces, on the 5sg; the 2g stamps never had any. In the fall of 1866, the printer abandoned the unpractical rouletting of the sheets and acquired a *perforating* device which supplied a *line perforation 13*. All six values were now perforated, but the last values—7g and 10g—were issued only during the first half of 1867. The perforation comes either *clean cut* or more or less *rough*. All values exist with the former kind of perforation while with the latter kind the 3g value, as well as the 5sg on chalky paper, are unknown. As major perforation varieties the 2g and 5g exist in *horizontal pairs, imperforate between* (Fig. 34) as well as bottom margin copies of the 3g, without perforation between stamp and sheet margin. They are all known unused only, therefore probably were found in the remainders. There are no dividing lines between the perforated stamps, except on the 5g, on which they were retained, for unknown reasons.

The printed sheets were delivered by the printer *undivided*, but it seems possible that sale to the public was made in *horizontal*

*strips* only, as we have never seen used vertical pairs or vertical strips of any Bremen stamp. According to data found in official Bremen publications, the following approximate quantities of the six values were sold before Dec. 31, 1867: 2g 125,000, 3g 152,500, 5g 101,000, 7g 21,000, 10g 26,500 and 5sg 124,000. These figures seem somewhat incomplete, at least for the 5sg for which they do not include the quantities sold in 1859 and 1860, but otherwise they seem to give a good picture of the quantities used for mail plus a rather insignificant number of stamps bought before 1868 by oldtime stamp dealers, such as J. B. Moens and others, for sale to stamp collectors.

The imperforate and rouletted stamps were not withdrawn or demonetized after the rouletted and perforated stamps respectively were issued. All were *demonetized* on Dec. 31, 1867. The *remainders*, said to have been about 20,000 copies of all values, almost all of the perforated issue but a small number of imperforate sheets, were sold in 1868 for the sum of 5 thaler (!) to a Dutch dealer, Cornelis van Rinsum. He later lived at Heidelberg and published there, together with W. Faber, a philatelic magazine "Bazar für Briefmarkensammler", in which he presented the readers in each issue with a stamp as a gift. A large number of the remainders of the Bremen stamps seem to have been used up in this way, which explains their relative rarity, especially in multiples, despite the rather large quantity of remainders. In *mint* condition, the rouletted stamps are the most elusive and only very few multiples, almost no blocks, seem to have survived and, of course, there are no full sheets. Of the imperforate stamps, all four values are known in original sheets, that of the 3g probably being unique. Unused blocks are rare, but they exist. Of the perforated issue, as far as we know, only one full sheet, of the 10g, is known, of the other values only multiples and blocks, of some larger ones, but no full sheets, seem to exist. The remainders of the envelopes, quantity unknown but probably not large, were also sold to a stamp dealer, probably in 1868.

Almost all Bremen stamps and envelopes are scarcer *used* than unused, some much rarer, especially the envelopes and the perforated stamps, with the 7g being the rarest used Bremen stamp. While used single



copies of all Bremen stamps are obtainable at a price—used copies with sheet margin are very rare of all values—it is extremely difficult to collect used multiples. The largest known are horizontal strips of three but only of a few values. We are not even sure that used horizontal pairs of all values exist. We know of no used vertical pairs or vertical strips and of no used blocks of Bremen stamps. All used multiples deserve a high premium but their rarity is sometimes not fully appreciated and they can be bought as bargains.

The rarity of used stamps is accentuated when we look for stamps *on entires*, as all Bremen covers belong to the little cover rarities, although they are by far not in the same category as, for example, Bergedorf covers. But all Bremen stamps on cover deserve a considerable premium over stamps off cover; this premium is the largest for the real cover rarity, the perforated 7g, of which not more than a dozen covers may exist. But other values are also hard to find on cover, mainly all 2g and 10g stamps, as well as the 7g imperforate. Multiples on entires are real rarities; only very few are known.

The collector who is looking for *frankings* also will not have an easy time of it. Because all values covered specific rates, they are usually found singly on cover. Multiple frankings to make up a higher rate, for example two 5g for the 10g rate, or for heavier letters, are known up to four copies of the same value, but they are very rare. We know of no Bremen cover with more than three different values. Such frankings are rare, sometimes including imperforate plus rouletted or perforated stamps, or rouletted plus perforated stamps. The least rare combinations are 3g+2g for the 5g rate, 5g+2g for the 7g rate, 7g+3g for the 10g rate, and 10g+5g for the 15g rate to Cuba. The 5sg stamp was usually only used on letters to or in transit through Great Britain and Ireland; on letters to other countries it is very rare. In mixed frankings with grote values, the 5sg is known on covers to England—5sg postage plus 5g registration fee—as well as on covers to other countries, in which case 5sg were considered equivalent to 1l grote, for example in a 30 grote franking on a double letter to Havana, made up of 3g+5g+5sg+5sg. Such mixed frankings are rarities. We know of no mixed

frankings of Bremen stamps with those of the foreign post offices or of the North German Confederation and of no emergency frankings.

It can be assumed that the "*Stadtpost*" had available at its main office at Bremen all values of its own stamps and the envelopes for city mail, but we are not sure that this was also the case at all times at the "*Stadtpost*" offices at Bremerhaven and Vegesack. The envelopes were certainly not sold there and the 2g stamp was, until Dec. 31, 1866, sold at Vegesack only but not at Bremerhaven. Of the 3g value, for which there was originally no use at Vegesack—at least until June 15, 1867, when it became the letter rate to Heligoland—very few must have been sold there. Of the Oldenburg stamps, the "*Stadtpost*" had available the 1/30 thaler stamps and later the 1g stamps and 1g envelopes, which replaced them, at its Bremen office; these were obviously also available at Bremerhaven and Vegesack. The additional 1/3sg and 1/3g stamps, as well as the 2g and 3g, used later on, were probably only available at Bremen, although they are also known used from the two other towns.

The *foreign post offices* had generally only those values available which were needed for the mail service they rendered at Bremen. As they did not handle city mail, the value needed only for the local rate was usually not available. The Hanover post offices on Bremen territory handled only mail to Hanover and Brunswick and therefore had no use for high values. The 10g value was in all probability not sold and is not known used at Bremen. The Prussian and Thurn & Taxis post offices at Bremen to a large extent served foreign mail, even to far away countries and it is therefore not surprising that the 10sg and 30sg stamps of Prussia and the 5sg and 10sg stamps of the Thurn & Taxis mail service are known used at Bremen. A complete list of all foreign stamps and envelopes, known used at Bremen, with indication of their rarity—most of the Hanover and the single letter rate Oldenburg stamps, as well as some values of the Prussia and Thurn & Taxis stamps and envelopes are rather common, others scarce, rare or very rare—would give a very good insight into the mail service of the various post offices.

(To be continued)



geries nor books about them. The old books about forgeries are interesting items in the history of our hobby. The new books of this kind have only some general value, as record of the forgeries known to the author, but they are of no value to the expert. All together, the literature of this kind is dangerous, as now can be seen, by misleading inexperienced philatelists in the belief that such books are valuable accessories for "home" expertizing, that they are a substitute for the many years of experience and the vast knowledge of the expert. A warning against this danger seems to be a timely one.

In speaking of *specific philatelic publicity* we mean publications which intend to propagate stamp collecting but concentrate their effort on one country, a group of countries or a certain group of stamps, on a particular method of collecting, on a single issue or even on a single stamp. Such specific publicity frequently, by the way, does not only try to influence the general philatelic public but is also directed toward the editors of philatelic catalogs. The initiators of such publicity have usually an idealistic motive, although subconsciously there may be the underlying thought that an increase in the number of philatelists interested in the publicized material may also increase its cash value. But it is a disturbing aspect when philatelic publicity is made without any intention of providing new philatelic information but solely for increasing the sales value and the marketability of certain items. In extreme cases, such publicity is directed towards a certain philatelist or a philatelic institution which the present owner of an item thinks can

thereby be induced to buy it. Veritable publicity campaigns of this kind have been staged, especially for selling some unique items, describing the often "romantic" history, the features and the reasons for their rarity, discussing them again and again in the philatelic press to further this purpose. We can even deduce from the appearance of such articles in the philatelic press that the item in question is again up for sale, that the present owner of that unique item wants to dispose of it at a handsome profit. The practice of publicizing a philatelic item which is for sale, seems to have become so general that the instigators of the publicity for an item do not hesitate to approach well-known philatelists, asking them to write an article about the stamp in question, of which only one or a few copies are known, offering a commission should a sale result from such publicity. In some such cases, especially when they concern unique items, a backing by a prominent philatelist seems actually necessary to allay the suspicions of a prospective buyer that all may not be well, because the character or even the genuineness of such items had been questioned previously. We are old-fashioned enough to believe that good things do not need publicity campaigns, that they advertise themselves and that the alert collector will only get an unfavorable impression of all philatelic material which is publicized with the obvious intention of stimulating sales and of furthering a business which is not based on real values but on publicized facts. Such facts may or may not be correct but there is always the possibility that they may be repudiated at a not too distant future, with disastrous results to the value of the item.

## EUROPEAN CLASSICS

### VIII. BREMEN\*

The study of Bremen *postmarks* is a rather difficult one, due to the co-existence of four different postal systems in Bremen. During the pre-stamp period it is especially difficult to ascertain, which of the post offices used a certain type of postmark, although there is some guidance by similarities to the postmarks used in the mother countries. Es-

pecially difficult becomes the task of separating the postmarks of the different post offices during the Napoleonic period and in the years immediately after, because the postal service which replaced another one continued to use partly the old postmarks either unchanged or with appropriate changes. Even during the period of use of stamps in some cases no definite classification of the origin of some postmarks is possible because of the handling of the Prus-

\* Concluded from page 274, Vol. II



sian mail service by the postmaster of the "Stadtpost". This led to an occasional interchange of the postmarks of both services for cancelling purposes. Furthermore the use of railroad station mail boxes in which most mail could be posted and of which the cancellers were used rather indiscriminately on stamps of all postal services increases the difficulty of classification.

The *oldest Bremen postmarks* were straight line BREMEN without date. The first one is known of 1784 and was in all probability used by the Thurn & Taxis post office. It had the initial B larger than the other letters. There were several types, the last one being used until 1802. Before the French replaced all postal services with their own, only one other postal service, the "Stadtpost", seems to have introduced postmarks, also straight line BREMEN, but with all letters of the same size. The first such postmark believed to be one of the "Stadtpost" is of 1804. While the Thurn & Taxis postmarks were all black, this one is red.

The *Napoleonic period* first manifested itself in Bremen in the last quarter of 1802 when the Thurn and Taxis post office extended to Bremen the zone system, which was based on the postal treaty with France of Dec. 14, 1801. Bremen was included in Zone ("Rayon") 4 and the first postmarks with this indication were in use at the Thurn & Taxis post office from October 1802. The first "Rayon" postmarks were straight lines in italics, without date, with "R.4" either before or above BREMEN. A straight line marking "T.T.R.4" in italics was also used, in addition to postmarks without the "R.4" designation. The use of this additional marking was curiously enough continued at least until 1830, although there was no "Rayon" mail after 1811 at Bremen. The other "Rayon" postmarks were used until 1806, when they were taken over by the mail service of the Grand Duchy of Berg, which had absorbed the Thurn & Taxis post office in that year and in 1808 together with a newly established post office of the Kingdom of Westphalia took over all mail service at Bremen. Until 1807, the old "Rayon" postmarks were used. The first new postmarks seem to have been straight line BREMEN, with date and year in a second line, which are only known of 1807. In the following year, "R.4" was added at the top and such

postmarks remained in use until 1811. They exist also with "P.P." before and after "R.4", for use on paid letters. In 1807 and 1808, another straight line, "BREMEN R. 4", in a second line with date and year, but "B.G.D." before the date, was also used, these three letters standing for "Bureau Grand Ducal", designating it as a postmark of the post office of the Grand Duchy of Berg. After all mail service was taken over by the French in 1811, first straight line BREMEN without date, which were obtained from the above postmarks by removing all other indications, were used for a short period. Then, the usual French department postmarks, straight line BREMEN with "129" above it, but without date, were introduced. They exist also with "P" on each side of the department number for paid letters and probably also with DEBOURSE for forwarded letters. They were in use until the end of the French postal service in December 1913. All these postmarks of the Napoleonic period were either black or red.

After all postal services which were active before 1806 were reestablished in *December 1813*, the "Stadtpost", as well as the Thurn & Taxis and Hanover post offices introduced straight line BREMEN, with all letters of the same size, of which those of the "Stadtpost" were partly obtained by removing the department number of French postmarks. The Hanover straight lines were usually accompanied by a separate date stamp, for example "31 AUG.", in two lines in a single circle. From now on, each of the post offices went its own way and produced a variety of types of postmarks. First the Thurn & Taxis post office, probably as early as 1814, started to use a characteristic semi-circular type, which has the inscription "F.TH.u.TAX. O.P.A." (O. P. A. means "Ober-Post-Amt"), in addition to BREMEN. The first type has BREMEN at the bottom and no date, the second one, used from 1819, had BREMEN at the top and the date without year at the bottom. The third type, used from 1840, is similar but has a line between inscriptions and date; from 1844 the year was also included in this latter type of postmark. These were the only Thurn & Taxis postmarks until the end of the pre-stamp period. Prussia, which officially introduced postmarks at its post offices only on Jan. 1, 1817, at the same time supplied its Bremen post office with a post-



mark, a straight line with date in a second line, which remained in use until 1837. In 1836 small circle postmarks of about 20mm. diameter started to replace the straight lines, they served almost to the end of the pre-stamp period. In 1849, a new type of postmark, boxes with rectangular frame, BREMEN at top, a star below, and the date, or date and hour, at left and right of the star, made its appearance. These rectangular postmarks, in a number of types, served during the remainder of the pre-stamp period and outlived even the end of the Bremen stamp period. The so-called BREMEN "kidney" postmark, a semi-circle with rounded corners, used occasionally from 1827 to 1833, is also of Prussian origin. A double circle BREMEN with date in center was used by the Prussian post office concurrently with the other postmarks from 1840 to 1848. The "Stadtpost" also contributed to the diversity of postmarks. First in 1818, a rectangular box, with BREMEN at the top, date with year below, was introduced, followed by a similar straight line type, without frame. Then, in 1821, the "Stadtpost" introduced a pompous large "key" postmark, a double circle with the Bremen coat of arms in the center, BREMEN at the top and date with year at the bottom; it remained, in two types, in use until 1840. It was replaced in that year by a small double circle, "ST.P.A." at the top, BREMEN at the bottom and date in the center, which in a number of types remained in use into the stamp period. Concurrently, the "Stadtpost" used several straight lines with date and from 1840 also rectangular boxes, which type was used until after 1867 and became more and more similar to those of Prussian origin, so that any distinction became impossible. The Hanover post office started in 1818 with boxed postmarks most of which had a wavy line frame, with BREMEN at the top and date with year at the bottom. Straight lines with date in a second line, sometimes with additional circular date marking, were used from 1834 to 1846. At the same time small circles of 20mm. diameter, very similar to the Prussian single circles of 1836, appeared and, in several types, remained in use until the stamp period.

The offices of the "Stadtpost" at *Bremerhaven* and *Vegesack* used from 1847 small double circles, with a key at the top, the

town name at the bottom and the date in the center. A short time later, Bremerhaven received a large double circle, town name at the top, key on shield at the bottom and date in the center. From then on, the small double circle was used as an arrival marking only. Hanover used at Bremerhaven from 1848 a straight line with the date in a second line; it had the spelling BREMERHAFEN, like all postmarks of the Hanover post office there.

A number of *additional markings* were used. The "Stadtpost" had a small "St P" which is known on letter from 1835 to 1839. Several kinds of "Too Late" postmarks, "Nach Abgang der Post" or similar legends were also in use, together with rate markings, etc.

The *ink* used for the postmarks after 1813 was predominantly black, with very few red markings. Only the additional circular date markings of the Hanover post office were usually red.

The *pre-stamp period ended* at Bremen at different times for the various post offices, first for the Hanover post office, on Sept. 30, 1850, and last for the "Stadtpost", on April 9, 1855. It took quite some time before the payment of postage for letters by cash was abolished at the "Stadtpost"; for letters between Bremen and Vegesack it took until May 1863 before a 2g stamp covering the rate was issued. Generally, the postmarks, which were used before the introduction of stamps were also used as *cancellers* for the postage stamps. The only exception was Prussia which started simultaneously with the introduction of postage stamps to use a *special canceller*, a four-ring with the number "182" in center, of the same type as used from Nov. 15, 1850, in the mother country. Thurn & Taxis first used the regular postmarks as cancellers but also a special canceller "T.T." and date in a single circle, with town postmark alongside of the stamps on the cover. With decree of June 15, 1853, it introduced, as at all other Thurn & Taxis post offices, a special canceller, a four-ring, which had the number "301" for the Bremen post office. The use of these special cancellers was continued at the Thurn & Taxis post office until its closing but was abolished at the Prussian post office and replaced on April 1, 1859, by the use of the regular town postmarks as cancellers.

In *Bremen* itself, the "Stadtpost" first



used as cancellers the pre-stamp double circles "ST.P.A./BREMEN, in a number of types, then, starting in September 1857, the rectangular boxed BREMEN, with date and hour, in many types, until the end of the separate postal service. The Prussian post office, which was managed by the director of the "Stadtpost", first used the "182" four-ring canceller, with the rectangular boxed BREMEN, with date, usually with, but also without the hour, which were very similar or even identical to the "Stadtpost" types, alongside of the stamps on the cover. For the 4pf and 6pf stamps from May 1, 1857, and after abolition of the numeral cancellers on March 31, 1859, for all values, the rectangular boxes were used as cancellers; they were replaced by new single circle BREMEN postmarks, with hour and year date, late in 1866. The Hanover post office first used the small single circle as canceller, which was replaced in 1853 by a double circle, with the hour at the bottom and a star at left and right. From 1860, a similar double circle, but without stars, came into use. This double circle frequently comes only with traces of the inner circle or even with this circle completely missing and then resembles a single circle postmark. The Thurn & Taxis post office first used until 1853, occasionally also in 1854, an unusual special canceller, which had "T.T." at the top, with the date below, in a single circle, but also the last type of the rather spectacular semi-circle "BREMEN/F. TH. u. TAX. O. P. A.", with date and year. From June 1853, the four-ring "301" was used as canceller and the semi-circular town postmark used only alongside of the stamps on the cover, but cancellations with the town postmarks were not infrequent. In 1856, the semi-circular type was replaced by single circles "BREMEN TH.u.TX." in several types, all with hour, partly with, partly without year date, others with a small ornament.

The *Bremerhaven* office of the "Stadtpost" first used none of its two double circles as canceller but cancelled the stamps with a straight line FRANCO, usually struck twice on the stamp, and stamped the large double circle BREMERHAVEN alongside of the stamps on the cover. Only from 1866, this large double circle was used as canceller. The small BREMERHAVEN double circle was regularly used as arrival postmark but not as canceller. The *Vegesack* office of the

"Stadtpost" used as canceller the small double circle, the only town postmark it had. The Hanover post office at *Bremerhaven* first used as canceller the straight line BREMERHAFEN, then, from 1859, a new small double circle BREMERHAFEN, with date and hour. A large boxed BREMERHAFEN, with date and hour, possibly a marking of the railroad office and not a regular postmark, can also be found occasionally from 1863. The Hanover post office at *Vegesack*, which was opened during the stamp period, used as canceller only a large double circle VEGESACK, with date at the center.

Special attention has to be given to the *mail box cancellers* at the railroad stations at Bremen and Vegesack, as the former comes on the stamps of all four postal services which worked at Bremen, the latter on stamps of the "Stadtpost" and of Hanover. At Bremen, a boxed "BREMEN/Bahnhof" without date was used from 1862 and was replaced in December 1866 by a single circle BREMEN-BAHNF., with hour and year. While the boxed marking was either of Hanover or of "Stadtpost" origin, the single circle seems almost certainly to be of Prussian make. At Vegesack, the postmark was a boxed "VEGESACK/BAHNHOF", with date and the dispatch number, either of Hanover or of "Stadtpost" origin.

The *travelling post offices* on the railroad from Hanover to Geestemuende, which passed through Bremen and Vegesack, from 1866 used special postmarks of Hanover origin as cancellers, straight lines with town names at top and bottom, date and dispatch number (I to IV) between. The town names were either the terminals, GEESTEMUNDE at the top and HANNOVER at the bottom, or vice versa; or they showed the terminals abbreviated—"HVR-GM" or "GM-HVR"—at the top, and the place of mailing—BREMEN and GEESTEMUNDE are known—at the bottom, or vice versa. For those postmarks of the travelling post offices which did not show the place of mailing, it was usually added on the letter in manuscript.

All post offices during the stamp period also used a number of *additional markings* which were not intended as cancellers but occasionally, due to mistakes, are to be found on stamps. The "Stadtpost" used "FRANCO" markings on foreign mail, especially the one of the Bremen office which



marking was  $23\frac{1}{2}$ mm. long, while the "FRANCO" of Bremerhaven, which was also used regularly as canceller, had a length of 25mm. For letters to England and some other countries, oval "P.D." and "P.P." markings were used. To facilitate the accounting of the rates which were divided between two countries, special rate markings, which state the amount due to the country of destination, were used, sometimes combined with a "P.D." marking. This latter fact shows that previous authors erred when they believed that these markings indicated the amount of postage to be collected from the addressee; actually, foreign mail had to be sent from Bremen fully prepaid. Other markings showed deficiencies of postage, for example, a marking "UNGENUGEND FRANKIRT", used by the Thurn & Taxis post office. Letters collected from mail boxes sometimes obtained a special marking "Aus der Brieflade" or "Aus dem Briefkasten", while the Hanover post office for the same purpose used "BK", abbreviated for "Brief-Kasten", with a number (1 to 18), in a circle. The "Too late" markings of the pre-stamp period and several new ones also can be found. Registration markings read "Recommandirt" for letters within the German States and "Registered" to England and America. In June 1867, delivery markings, small circles "AUSG." ("Ausgabe", which means "Delivery") and "No."—"1", "2" or "3"—, with date in the center, were introduced by the "Stadtpost".

The ink of all postmarks used as cancellers was black, except for the postmarks of the Hanover post offices, which by decree of April 23, 1852, started to use blue ink exclusively from 1853. Only the first Hanover postmarks of Bremen and Bremerhaven also exist in black; the former comes, as a rarity, also in red. The boxed BREMEN of the "Stadtpost" can be found occasionally also in blue. The small double circle of the Vegesack post office of the "Stadtpost" is also known in blue, which is not surprising because the Vegesack postmaster also used the Hanover Vegesack postmark which is always blue. The cancellers of the railroad station mail boxes and of the travelling post offices are always blue, because they were handled by the Hanover postal service. The registration, "Paid", rate and other markings were frequently red.

Due to the entangled postal conditions, the use of the postmarks of the various postal services as cancellers was not confined to its own stamps but occasionally they were also used on the stamps of other postal services. Such use was regular only at the Bremen "Stadtpost" office, which beside its own stamps also used those of Oldenburg and handled also the Prussian mail service, leading to the intermingled use of "Stadtpost" and Prussian postmarks on the stamps of all three countries. Similar conditions occurred at the Vegesack post office of the "Stadtpost", which also handled the Hanover postal service in that town. The postmarks of the mail boxes at the railroad stations at Bremen and Vegesack can also be found regularly on the stamps of all countries which had post offices there. The same is true of the postmarks of the travelling post offices. Other Bremen cancellations on the stamps or envelopes of the wrong country are accidental, but nevertheless very much sought for by specialists.

To make matters even more complex the rarity of the various "regular" postmarks is not the same on the different stamps. On the one hand, some cancellations come on certain stamps much more frequently than on others and may be rarities on some of them. On the other hand, some stamps come predominantly with a specific type of cancellation and are scarce to rare or even unknown with some other cancellations. These conditions are the result of specific mail connections or rates which made the use of certain stamps more frequent at one post office than at another. For example, 3g stamps were used only as the letter rate between Bremen and Bremerhaven which was 3g until Dec. 31, 1866, and therefore practically never come with Vegesack cancellation because the Bremen-Vegesack rate was only 2g. The 2g stamps, in turn, which paid from April 1863 until Dec. 31, 1867 the letter rate between Vegesack and Bremen and only from Jan. 1, 1867 to Dec. 31, 1867, also between these two places and Bremerhaven, are naturally much more common with Bremen or Vegesack cancellations than with those of Bremerhaven. Due to the fact that almost all foreign mail was posted at Bremen and very little at Bremerhaven or Vegesack, cancellations of the latter two places are rare to very rare, partly even unknown, on 5g, 7g, 10g and 5sg stamps.



A survey of the *regular cancellations* which can be found on the various stamps and envelopes used at Bremen may give a good insight into the complex problems involved. The stamps of the "*Stadtpost*" show up to 95% the boxed BREMEN markings as canceller on all three issues. The double circle "ST.P.A." is considerably scarcer and comes on the imperforate stamps only. The Bremerhaven straight line FRANCO comes on the imperforate and rouletted stamps, mainly the 3g imperforate, the attractive large double circle BREMERHAVEN on all three issues. They are all scarce, but the small double circle VEGESACK, which comes on all three issues, but mainly the perforated 2g, is even scarcer. The railroad station mail box cancellers are scarce to rare, especially that of Vegesack, which is also found mainly on perforated 2g stamps. The cancellations of the travelling post offices are rare and seem to come on perforated stamps only. Almost all Bremen stamps are cancelled in black; blue cancellations—with the boxed BREMEN, the small double circle VEGESACK, all three railroad station mail box cancellers and the postmarks of the travelling post offices—are a small minority. Red cancellations are purely accidental, all with "P.D.," "P.P." or rate markings; we have seen them on the 5sg only.

The *Oldenburg* stamps used at Bremen generally come with the same postmarks as the stamps of the "*Stadtpost*". But the double circle "ST.P.A. BREMEN" is more frequent here, due to its longer use for these stamps, but it can be found on the 1852 issue only. The Bremerhaven FRANCO and the large double circle BREMERHAVEN are both rare, the Vegesack double circle very rare on Oldenburg stamps. Neither the railroad station mail box cancellers nor the cancellations of the travelling post offices can regularly be found on them. Black cancellations can be found almost exclusively, with occasional blue cancellations as on Bremen stamps.

The stamps of *Prussia* first came almost exclusively with the "182" four-ring canceller; almost all stamps of the 1850 and 1857 issue used at Bremen show this cancellation, except the 4pf and 6pf, for which regularly the town postmarks were used as cancellers. Only from April 1, 1859, the boxed BREMEN postmarks, identical to or very similar to those used by the "*Stadtpost*" came

into use for all values and now can be found as cancellers regularly on the stamps of 1858, which also still come with the "182" canceller. The boxed BREMEN was used until 1866 on the 1861 issue, then the single circle BREMEN can be found rather frequently. Of the railroad station mail box cancellers, only the two used at the Bremen railroad station can be found on the Prussia 1861 issue, the circular one curiously enough as rarity only, while those of the travelling post offices come on Prussia stamps only after the Hanover postal service was taken over by Prussia in 1866. All Bremen cancellations on Prussia stamps are black except the railroad station mail box cancellers and those of the travelling post offices which were blue.

The *Hanover* cancellations are characterized by the blue ink used for them from 1853 and 1854 respectively. Of the earliest cancellations which are not in blue, the black small circle BREMEN is scarce, the same cancellation in red a rarity and the black straight line BREMERHAFEN rare. The other Bremen markings, all in blue, are more or less frequent, those of Bremerhaven and Vegesack scarce, the large boxed BREMERHAFEN very rare. Of the railroad station mail box cancellers, only the boxed ones of Bremen and Vegesack, not the circular BREMEN-BAHNF., are known on Hanover stamps, the first scarce, the latter rare. The cancellations of the travelling post offices can also be found; they are rather scarce. All these were in blue only.

On *Thurn & Taxis* stamps, we find on the 1852 issue the "T.T." canceller which is scarce and popular, and, more frequently, the "301" canceller, as well as the semi-circular postmark, which is scarce. On the later issues, the "301" is the most frequent, but town cancellations with the single circle postmarks are not scarce. Of the railroad station mail box cancellers, both types used at the Bremen railroad station can be found on Thurn & Taxis stamps, the circular one mainly on the 1865 and 1866 issues. Neither the Vegesack railroad station canceller nor the postmarks of the travelling post offices regularly come on Thurn & Taxis stamps. All Bremen cancellations on them are black, except the blue ones with the Bremen railroad station mail box cancellers.

The *British postal agent* at Bremen used as far as we know, only one postmark,



on registered letters. It was a British-type single circle BREMEN/REGISTERED, with date in center, which can be found on registered covers to England. We have seen it used in red on covers, alongside of regularly cancelled "Stadtpost" stamps, from December 1867 only. Obviously, it was never used as a canceller.

For the cancellation of the Bremen envelopes, no special rules seem to have existed. Many of them were not cancelled at all because it was in any event impossible to use them a second time; others were cancelled by pen strokes. Relatively few envelope stamps were cancelled by postmarks, especially in later years, but those which were show a wide variety of cancellations, as not only the postmarks of the "Stadtpost" including FRANCO and other markings usually not used as cancellers can be found on them, but also those of the Prussian post office, even the "182" canceller. The envelopes of the foreign post offices were cancelled at Bremen as provided by the regulations of the mother country, either with the regular postmarks or by the characteristic pen strokes, with the postmark alongside of the stamp on the envelope.

When in 1866 Prussia took over the Hanover post offices on Bremen territory, the postmarks were partly continued in use and therefore come also on the 1861 issue of Prussia, namely the small BREMEN and BREMERHAFEN double circles, the large boxed BREMERHAFEN and the large double circle of VEGESACK. Blue ink was continued to be used for them; only for the BREMEN postmark black was later introduced. The railroad station mail box cancellers of Bremen and Vegesack, as well as those of the travelling post offices can now also be found on Prussia stamps, first in blue, later in black.

After the postal service of the North German Confederation took over all post offices at Bremen, the postmarks were in part continued in use for some time and therefore can be found on stamps of the North German Confederation. Of the "Stadtpost" postmarks, the double circle "ST.P.A. BREMEN" and the boxed BREMEN, as well as the large double circle BREMERHAFEN and the small double circle VEGESACK are known. Of the Prussian postmarks the boxed BREMEN, even the type with the hour omitted, and the single circle

can be found. The four Hanover postmarks of Bremen, Bremerhaven and Vegesack which were used after Prussia had taken over, now come also on the North German Confederation stamps, the first in black, the others in blue. The boxed and circular railroad station mail box cancellers of Bremen and Vegesack as well as the postmarks of the travelling post offices are also known on stamps of the North German Confederation. They are all scarce to rare.

Several of these old cancellers remained in use until 1872 and can also be found on the 1872 issue of the *German Empire*, the postmarks of the travelling post offices even on the 1875 issue.

There exist no reprints of Bremen stamps. The original stones and all six printing stones were destroyed on Feb. 26, 1873. The so-called "Reprints", made in 1878 for the Hamburg dealer E. W. C. Bredemeyer, are imitations, printed by the printer of the originals, G. Hunkel, from new stones, which show many differences in the designs. The 3g has always Type I, while the 5g comes in both types. The whereabouts of the two handstamps which were used for the envelope stamps are unknown but they must have been at least for some time in private possession as a number of unauthorized reprints, cut squares only, on various papers, mostly not identical with those of the original envelopes, are known.

The rarity of Bremen stamps has led to a great number of forgeries of all values, from crude ones, some eighty years old, to very well executed ones of later vintage. Nevertheless, fakes for which genuine stamps were used, are much more dangerous, especially faked cancellations which are sometimes not easy even for the expert to detect, so that some collectors prefer to collect used Bremen stamps on cover only, as faked covers are easier to unmask. Another kind of faking consists in trimming of rouletted or perforated stamps to simulate imperforate ones. To dispose advantageously of copies with damaged roulettes or perforations, often even stamps which are cheaper imperforate are converted in this way. The fakers also work the other way, by making perforated stamps from imperforate or rouletted stamps, and rouletted stamps from imperforate or perforated ones. Such forgeries present, with the knowledge of the characteristics of the various printings, no real diffi-



erty to the expert, but the collector should be especially careful in buying Bremen stamps and ask for certificates of an expert committee for all rare items. The Bremen envelopes were also extensively forged and faked; they should be bought only after careful examination by an expert.

In regard to *condition*, the collector need anticipate no difficulties with the imperforate stamps, as stamps with full margins—from 1½mm. for the 7g, down to ¾mm. for the 5sg—are not too hard to get. The rouletted and perforated stamps, especially the former, pose much greater difficulties. The centering, mainly on the perforated stamps, is not too good and perfectly centered copies deserve a premium. The rouletted and in part also the rough perforated stamps cannot be separated easily and many copies suffered rather conspicuous defects of the roulette or perforation. Combined with the desirability of having the stamps clearly cancelled—to be on the safe side in regard to faked cancellations—the selection of perfect copies of Bremen stamps is rather small and the average collector will have to be less particular if he wants to fill the empty spaces in his album.

Bremen is one of those countries which have *unsolved philatelic problems* and therefore seems a ripe field for *research*. It has no cheap stamps—no Bremen stamp is priced lower than \$8 in the Scott Catalog—and this is partly responsible for the fact that no really intensive study has been made in the field. On the one hand, the collectors of moderate means were afraid to specialize in such a rather expensive country and, on the other hand, the big collectors were not attracted because Bremen has no great rarities, as the highest priced stamp, disregarding the difference between unused and used, is priced at \$40. The lack of spectacular large blocks and similar items may also have something to do with the fact that the old-time collectors did not achieve much in respect to Bremen research. There was also not much effort made to search the files of the Bremen postal administration and of the printer of the Bremen stamps. Today, it is obviously too late to do this, as these files do not seem to exist any longer. Almost all documentary evidence about postal conditions in Bremen and its stamps were collected from contemporary Bremen publications, especially newspapers, and they give

only incomplete information. This lack of sufficient official data has long been felt and has led to the founding of the "Bremer Kartei" at Bremen, a file for which all available information about existing Bremen items, with their photos, was collected. But although a great amount of Bremen material has been registered there, only few gaps in our knowledge were closed.

The *philatelic literature* about Bremen is decidedly poor. We can dismiss almost all older writings and consider the Kohl Handbook as the first step toward creating a basis for a systematical research. On 13 pages plus one page supplement all facts known at that time were compiled, but there was so much inadequate and inaccurate information included that Dr. Munk was forced to publish another large supplement in "Die Postmarke" in 1929. All this has been translated into English and was published in "The Collectors Club Philatelist" in two parts, in 1931 and 1950. Aside from that, the specialized Michel Catalog of Germany (1940) and the Kricheldorf Catalog of Germany (1948) provide good additional information. A few of the open questions have been answered since 1930 by articles in the German philatelic press, especially those written by W. Rummel, who has contributed much toward solving some problems, but there are still numerous problems unsolved. Concerning the envelopes, Carl Lindenberg's "Die Briefumschläge von Bremen" (1894) is still the standard reference book. The pre-stamp postmarks are best treated in a booklet by F. W. Thalmann "Alte Bremen-Stempel" (1931). Nothing comprehensive exists about the foreign post offices at Bremen, and information about the stamps and postmarks used there, if published at all, is scattered in literature about the stamps and postmarks of the mother country.

Only two Bremen stamps are cheaper used than unused. Scott prices the 15 numbers it lists unused at about \$335, used at a bit over \$1,000. Although Bremen has no cheap stamps, it also has no great rarities, the highest price listed is \$275 for the perforated 7g, used. For the collector, who looks for very fine copies only, collecting unused Bremen stamps is possible with moderate means, while used stamps and especially fine covers will require a greater amount of money. But a collector of small means can



also collect Bremen, provided he is not fussy about condition and is satisfied with stamps which have small thin spots, slight creases, or similar defects, which are plentiful and therefore available at low prices. Bremen is a fertile field for a collector, who wants to find a very interesting and still not too expensive field for specializing, and it is really surprising, judging from recent international exhibitions, how few specialized Bremen collections exist. There are not many fields where such a diversity exists, with the colorful stamps and cancellations of the various post offices, the interesting rates and frankings, etc. The philatelic student can earn laurels which seem easy to harvest. The distinction between the various stones of the different values is a first rate

problem and the plating enthusiast will find plenty of work and also many difficulties when he tries to reconstruct or even to reassemble the various stones. Printings, shades and papers, in some cases even the actual dates of issue, offer a wide field of unsolved problems, as do some of the postmarks, the frankings and actual usage of the different issues and values of stamps and envelopes of the "Stadtpost" and of the various foreign post offices at Bremen. There are plenty of questions to be answered and an inquisitive philatelic student who has ingenuity and endurance should be able to do a good job, enriching our knowledge of a field which, although considered a "popular" country, has been frightfully neglected.

(Next: IX. Brunswick)

## TWO GREAT AUCTION SALES

THE DR. OTTO HOPFINGER COLLECTION  
OF IMPERFORATE CLASSIC STAMPS OF EUROPE

March 19, 1953

We have been entrusted with the sale at auction of one of the finest collections of imperforate classic stamps of Europe ever assembled in this country. It is the property of Dr. Otto Hopfinger, prominent dermatologist of New York City, who has been collecting for over twenty years.

The collection contains exclusively material which rightly can be called the dream of every condition collector. The late Otto W. Friedl, who was Dr. Hopfinger's friend and adviser, selected and checked every stamp before it was purchased and placed in the collection. Only stamps far above the average condition were found worthy for this purpose and every stamp is at least very fine, a great majority being superb by the most critical standards.

Purchases were made privately or at auction and many items came from famous collections and have been signed by the best-known experts. The collection is not a large one and by no means "complete" in the ordinary sense as quite a number of stamps are missing which could not be found in the outstanding condition required. But every item in the collection is a show piece which will be admired by all collectors who love beautiful items.

It is natural that such a collection of philatelic gems contains not only outstanding copies of many lower priced stamps—

margins and corners, multiples, attractive cancellations, covers, etc.—but also quite a number of rarities which will delight every connoisseur. The *Old German* and *Old Italian States* are especially well represented and include two rare Bergedorf covers—one with two 1s and another with the 1½s—as well as a magnificent 3pf red of Saxony on piece, furthermore the rare 6b Romagna in a flawless copy on piece and superb Naples ½t Trinaeria and ½t Cross on newspapers. Especially strong is the representation of *Switzerland*, which was one of Dr. Hopfinger's favorites. Of the Zurich 4r a single copy and a copy on cover, both in extremely fine condition are included, as

