

HAMBURG.

By BERTRAM W. H. POOLE.

THE FIRST ISSUE.

The first postage stamps for Hamburg were placed on sale on January 1st, 1859, the set consisting of seven different values. The design, which was the same for all values, consisted of the Arms of Hamburg, partially covered by large open numerals denoting the value as a centrepiece. The Arms are composed of a castle with three towers, the central one being domed and the others battlemented. Above the central tower is a cross, while the side turrets are surmounted by stars. On a scroll at the top is "HAMBURG," and on a similar scroll at the base is "POSTMARKE," i.e. "post stamp." On the left, reading upwards, the value is shown in words, and on the right "Schilling" appears. As the inscriptions on the left side varied in length, according to the value which had to be expressed, small ornaments were introduced to fill the vacant spaces before and after the shorter words.

There was a separate die for each value, and these were engraved by a gentleman rejoicing in the euphonious name of Johann Friedrich RexZiesenist. There is no record of the name of the designer—probably he was not proud enough of his handicraft to let his name be handed down to posterity! From each die ninety-six casts were taken in ordinary type-metal, and these, arranged in twelve horizontal rows of eight, formed the printing plates. There was a space of $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm. between the vertical rows and of $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm. between the horizontal rows. A line of printer's rule was inserted between each of the vertical rows, and, as these were the same height as the *clichés*, they show at the side of the stamps. Each horizontal row was numbered in the margin, and at the top of each sheet the words "Hamburgische Postmarken" were shown. The plates were made and the stamps printed by Th. G. Meissner, printer to the State of Hamburg.

Whether by accident or design we cannot say, but in all the stamps engraved by Ziesenist there are so-called "secret" marks. As these are of considerable value in distinguishing originals from the many forgeries that exist, we give a list of these as follows:—

- $\frac{1}{2}$ Schilling.—There is a small dash in the space between the base of the right-hand tower and the line above "Schilling."
- 1 schilling.—The serif at the foot of the "T" of "POSTMARKE" ends with a dot at the left.
- 2 schilling.—There is a tiny dot under first "I" of "Schilling," and, in clearly printed specimens, a small dash above the "ng" in the same word.
- 3 schilling.—There is a dot on the left side of the "H" of "HAMBURG" near the top of the letter, and, in most cases, another dot is shown under the "r" of "Drei."
- 4 schilling.—There is a dot between the letters "Sc" of "Schilling."
- 7 schilling.—There is a dot in the space at the right of the Arms opposite the top of the "S" of "Schilling."
- 9 schilling.—There is a tiny dot after the "P" of "POSTMARKE" level with the bottom of that letter.

The stamps were all printed on white wove paper, each sheet being watermarked with twelve horizontal undulating lines, each undulation being about 15 mm. deep, bounded by a single-line frame. It was intended that these lines should correspond with the twelve rows of stamps, but owing to some of the sheets not being carefully "fed" into the printing press an outside row was occasionally printed on the plain portion of the paper, and the stamps were thus entirely without watermark.

The stamps of this issue were not perforated, and they were gummed with a brown gum, which makes some specimens appear to be on toned paper. The remainders of these stamps are all without gum, and as the stamps as issued, with the original brown gum, are so much scarcer than the remainders, our publishers give two lists of prices for the unused stamps in the Catalogue.

There are very distinct shades in the 4, 7, and 9sch values, but the colours of the lower denominations vary but little.

1859. *Wmk. wavy lines; imperf.*

	Unused.		Used.	
	With gum.	No. gum.	s. d.	s. d.
$\frac{1}{4}$ sch black,	10	0	4	0
1sch brown,	12	0	5	0
2sch red,	12	0	8	0
3sch Prussian blue,	15	0	8	0
4sch green,	6	0	4	0
7sch orange,	12	0	7	6
9sch yellow,	20	0	10	0

THE SECOND ISSUE.

In 1864 Hamburg occupied the Danish post office in the city, owing to the war between Prussia and Austria and Denmark, as explained in our introductory notes, and a stamp of the value of $\frac{1}{4}$ sch was wanted immediately. This was issued on February 29th, and a month later the retaliatory tactics pursued by Hamburg and Denmark resulted in the issue of a $2\frac{1}{2}$ sch stamp. Both of these values were produced by lithography, presumably to the fact that they were wanted in a hurry.

The central design of the $\frac{1}{4}$ sch is very similar to that of the series of 1859 but on a background of a network pattern. The name "HAMBURG" is arched at the top, "POSTMARKE" is on a straight label which extends right across the foot of the stamp, and the value is shown in words in the side tablets. In each of the upper angles an uncoloured Maltese cross is shown on a background of solid colour.

There was a space of 3 mm. between the stamps in both the vertical and horizontal rows, and lines were ruled in these in both directions corresponding with the vertical lines shown in the preceding series. There were no figures at the ends of the rows and no inscription was shown at the top of the sheet. According to the late Mr. W. A. S. Westoby, "it would seem that later on in the same year another transfer was made, as the stamps are found closer together on the sheet, being $2\frac{1}{2}$ mm. apart, vertically and horizontally, with lines between and numerals opposite each vertical and horizontal row." The impressions from this transfer may be recognized by their indistinct and blurred appearance and the fact that the colour is always a deep red-lilac.

The design of the $2\frac{1}{2}$ schilling was similar as regards the centrepiece, but all the inscriptions were on straight tablets, and in the corners were Maltese crosses enclosed in small squares. The stamps were arranged about $2\frac{1}{2}$ mm. apart, both horizontally and vertically, and they show the dividing lines as in the case of the $\frac{1}{4}$ sch. There were numerals opposite the ends of each vertical and horizontal row.

Both values were printed on white wove paper watermarked with undulating lines as shown in the typographed stamps. They were issued imperforate and with gum of a much paler tinge than that of the preceding series.

The stamps were lithographed by the firm of C. Adler, of Hamburg, and the

design was apparently drawn by one of the employees of this firm. Mr. R. R. Thiele tells us that "the original stone is still in existence, on which the drawing of the $\frac{1}{4}$ sch may be seen in close proximity to the letterhead of a wholesale liquor dealer" (*Philatelic Record*, Vol. XXXI, p. 118). The $\frac{1}{4}$ sch may be found in a very wide range of shades, varying from deep lilac to grey, and it also exists in blue. Possibly some of these varieties owe their origin to climatic influences. In our list of varieties we have admitted three representative shades, but possibly the general collector will find one of these quite sufficient.

1864. *Wmk. wavy lines; imperf.*

	Unused.		Used.	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
$\frac{1}{4}$ sch lilac,	7	6	1	0
$\frac{1}{4}$ sch grey,	20	0	16	0
$\frac{1}{4}$ sch blue,	100	0	85	0
$2\frac{1}{2}$ sch blue-green,	15	0	10	0

THE THIRD ISSUE.

Between September, 1864, and April, 1865, all the values included in two series already described appeared perforated $13\frac{1}{2}$, the perforation being done by single-line machines.

In February, 1865, the colour of the 7sch was changed from yellow to mauve, probably to prevent confusion with the 9sch. Where fresh printings were made the stamps were produced by the same processes as before, i.e. lithography for the $\frac{1}{4}$ sch and $2\frac{1}{2}$ sch, and typography for the other values, and the same plates were used in each instance. The typographed stamps were printed by Meissner and the lithographed ones by Adler as before.

All values were printed on the paper watermarked with undulating lines, and, as in the previous issues, specimens from the outer rows of the sheets are occasionally found without watermark. The $\frac{1}{2}$, 1, and 2sch hardly vary in shade at all, but most of the other values exist in quite a variety of tints.

The 3sch in the ultramarine shade and the 7sch, mauve, are both known imperforate, but it seems highly improbable that either was ever issued for use in this state.

The $\frac{1}{4}$ sch and $2\frac{1}{2}$ sch were privately reprinted about 1872 and later (i.e. some time after Hamburg had ceased using stamps of its own) on white wove unwatermarked paper, and also on the surplus of the old watermarked paper. They are found imperforate, and with two varieties of perforation—clean-cut $11\frac{1}{2}$ and roughly-cut $13\frac{1}{2}$. Those on unwatermarked paper or perf. $11\frac{1}{2}$ can easily be distinguished, and those on watermarked paper, perf. $13\frac{1}{2}$, may be identified by the roughness of the perforations compared with those of the originals. The following are the "general collector's" varieties of this issue:—

1864-5 *Wmk. wavy lines. Perf. 13 $\frac{1}{2}$.*

	Unused.		Used.	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
$\frac{1}{4}$ sch black,	0	8	0	6
1sch brown,	1	0	1	0
$\frac{1}{4}$ sch mauve,	4	0	5	0
2sch red,	2	6	1	3
$2\frac{1}{2}$ sch green,	7	6	—	1
3sch blue,	5	0	2	6
4sch green,	1	0	0	2
7sch orange,	40	0	30	0
7sch mauve,	2	0	0	2
9sch yellow,	1	6	0	6

THE FOURTH ISSUE.

Although the letter rate to Lübeck was reduced to $\frac{1}{4}$ sch on October 1st, 1865, and the printed matter rate to the

Netherlands was fixed at the same figure on July 1st, 1865, the authorities did not trouble about issuing a stamp of this value until April, 1866.

In this month a series of envelopes with embossed stamps of the values of $\frac{1}{2}$, $1\frac{1}{4}$, $1\frac{1}{2}$, 2, 3, 4, 7sch was issued, these being manufactured in Berlin by the Prussian State Printing Office. The die for the $1\frac{1}{2}$ sch envelope stamp was made use of in the construction of a plate for printing the adhesive stamp of the same value. The plate consisted of one hundred impressions arranged in ten horizontal rows of ten, and the stamps were embossed in colour on plain white wove paper. These stamps were rouletted 10 instead of being perforated.

The central portion of the design is very similar to that of the stamps of the preceding issues, and shows the numerals and Arms on a ground of solid colour within an octagonal frame. Around this the usual inscriptions are placed in the same order as before, and these are separated at the corners by six-rayed stars or asterisks, each having a big uncoloured circle in the centre. The whole is enclosed in a double-lined octagonal frame.

In the following June the lithographed $1\frac{1}{4}$ sch stamp was superseded by an embossed one of similar value. This was also manufactured by the Prussian State Printing Office, and as in the case of the $1\frac{1}{2}$ sch, the plate was constructed from the die for the $1\frac{1}{4}$ sch envelope stamp.

The design is very similar to that of the $1\frac{1}{2}$ sch, the inscriptions being on an octagonal border separated by stars; but the stamp was converted into a complete rectangle by adding a number of slanting parallel lines to each corner.

This stamp was likewise embossed in colour on white wove unwatermarked

paper and rouletted 10.

Both values were reprinted about 1872 and in later years on white wove unwatermarked paper, and these exist rouletted $8\frac{1}{2}$ as well as 10. The reprint of the $1\frac{1}{4}$ sch is from a retouched die, and differs from the original stamp in having the small circles in the centres, of the four rosettes, which separate the inscriptions, filled in with colour. There is also no line in the upper part of the "g" of "Schilling." The $1\frac{1}{2}$ sch was reprinted from the envelope die, and has a longer line in the upper part of the "g" of "Schilling." The paper is thicker, and the colour of impression does not show through as it does in the originals. Both reprints exist with forged postmarks.

1866. Embossed. No wmk. Rouletted 10.

	Unused.		Used.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
$1\frac{1}{4}$ sch mauve,	1	3	2	0
$1\frac{1}{2}$ sch rose,	0	4	7	6

THE FIFTH ISSUE.

In June, 1867, one more change took place in the stamps of Hamburg before they gave way to the issue of the North German Confederation in 1868. A further supply of $2\frac{1}{2}$ sch stamps was required, and as these could not be satisfactorily produced by Mr. Adler's lithographic stone, typography was resorted to and the old type of 1859 was rehabilitated.

These stamps were manufactured by Th. G. Meissner, of Hamburg, and it is probable that the die was engraved by J. F. R. Ziesenist, who was responsible for the dies of the other values of the same type. The "secret mark" on this value corresponds with that found on the 2sch stamp of the 1859 series—that is, there is a small coloured dot under the first "l" of "Schilling."

The stamps were printed on the paper

watermarked with wavy lines, and were perforated $13\frac{1}{2}$.

There are a number of distinct shades, and the stamp is also known imperforate.

Compared with the other typographed stamps this value was produced in a very inferior manner, due, possibly, to the fact that it had to be manufactured in somewhat of a hurry.

1867. Wmk. wavy lines. Perf. $13\frac{1}{2}$.

	Unused.		Used.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
$2\frac{1}{2}$ sch green,	1	0	0	4

CONCLUSION.

The few reprints, as we have already pointed out, were made privately some years after the stamps of Hamburg were obsolete, and these should present no difficulties to the collector. Forgeries of most of the values are very common, but as these are in the majority of cases but roughly executed they should hardly deceive the collector exercising ordinary care.

As the majority of Hamburg stamps are rarer used than unused, genuine stamps with forged postmarks are by no means uncommon. A common form of cancellation consists of a circle containing the name of the town and the date, and collectors should take note of the fact that such marks with a star or floret before and after the word "Hamburg" are undoubtedly bad. Equally common is a postmark composed of four parallel lines, either thick or thin, 20 mm. long and about 5 mm. apart. The forgeries of these usually have the lines too short, more than four, irregularly spaced or thickened at the ends. There is also a cancellation composed of four wavy lines, but the use of this seems to have been confined to the first issue only, and it is but rarely met with.—*Gibbons Weekly.*