

## **The Large Mark Values of the Germania Series**

In 1900 Germany issued the Germania series, a new definitive set. The four mark values were double-sized and were Germany's first pictorials. Mark values with the designs of these four were used until September 1923 when inflation had reduced their face value to nearly zero.

We show the stamps, varieties, used blocks, and usages for these mark values issued for Germany and overprinted for Bavaria, occupied regions, and plebiscite areas. The emphasis is on used though we sometimes show a variety in unused condition. Each section is presented in chronological order, showing a set with varieties and used blocks followed by usages.

Important items in the exhibit include: intermediate types of the 5 mark Reichspost and 5 mark Deutsches Reich, the double overprints of Upper Silesia and the occupation of Belgium, the Danzig overprint on a double printed German 2.50 mark, the Danzig inverted overprint on a German inverted center 5 mark stamp, and the used Saar 1 mark inverted overprint with the pointed "a" plate flaw.

Since post office clerks routinely separated sheets into vertical strips, used blocks are generally scarcer than covers, and the used blocks of the 5 mark Reichspost and the unwatermarked 5 mark UV yellowish red are important items.

Due to their high face values, usages of these stamps other than parcel cards and *wertbriefs* (insures letters) are scarce especially before the high inflation period. The exhibit is not a study of rates, but most covers are rated to show proper franking since surviving covers tend to be philatelic and overfranked. Most unrated covers in the exhibit are ones where rates are not known to the exhibitor, mostly early parcel cards and *wertbriefs*. For them the rate computations can be complex, and no general rate tables have been published. Fortunately, those covers were normally prepared by post office clerks, making overfranking unlikely. Only a few philatelic covers are shown and are ones where nonphilatelic doesn't exist, or forty-two years of searching has not produced one.

Some of the uncommon usages in this exhibit include: a grant of authority for a wife to handle husband's postal affairs, telephone receipt, telegrams, telegraphic money orders, *ortsgebührenkarte* (essentially a post office ledger sheet), newspaper redelivery order, civilian telegraph use permit, general delivery identification card, payment of storage fee for general delivery, a post office form rescinding a C.O.D. charge on an item already mailed, a post office transmittal form franked with stamps paying postage due for underfranked and unfranked mail on the Ship S.M.S. Thuringen, a form authorizing the post office to stop home delivery and hold mail at the post office, and a mixed franking of a mark value paying a redelivery fee for a letter franked with official stamps.

The footnotes refer to research published by the exhibitor.