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 Director: Alfred Heinz, 1 Circle Drive, Sunset Village
 Flemington, N.J. 08822
 Co-Director: Harry Meier, 4 Lawn Terrace, Cranford, N.J. 07016
 Information: Donald Slawson, Route 6, Box 173, Linchester, Va. 22601
 Myron Hill, P.C.Box 91081, Cleveland, Ohio 44101



**Gebühr
bezahlt**

Results Of SOJEX (only two months after the fact)

Our group managed to somehow amass the incredible total of four exhibits. My thanks to those who did show and a big urging for a much better turnout for GERMANEX. I showed my cork obliterations, newly expanded to two frames, and won a silver medal. John Barbour entered two frames of his Postmaster Provisionals and took a bronze. Jack Strawbridge had three frames of AMG's (an expansion of his NOJEX exhibit) and Harry Meier completely abandoned his Gebuhr bezahlt to show two frames of emergency cancellations and markings.

Clearly there is room for improvement. The number of entries was low, but I'll admit we had two factors working against us. First, the competition was classes rather than open, which means generally fewer medals, and second we had no judges who knew our material. The material and presentations were better than what our showing (award wise) would indicate. However the winning of medals is (or should be) quite incidental to our performance. I believe it is important for all of us to try to gain experience in exhibiting -- and our exhibits show others what we're doing, what direction our research is going, etc. I'm hoping for a much better performance at GERMANEX - at least in the number of exhibits.

Now the response to the special notice we sent out. It appears we are going to be pretty much limited to the old stalwarts in exhibiting, in fact there may be no takers for a 'Best first time exhibitor in Locals'. I hope some of you will consider this. It appears we should have at least a

half-dozen couples for our 'Costume affair' at Deutsche Nacht. I certainly hope if you are there you will join us in this affair.

I've been saying we had a tremendous work on Mecklenburg - here it is. This originally appeared in 'Der Deutschlandsammler' and was translated by the kind efforts of our member Inge Fisher (who incidentally is a native born German). I was going to delete the references to illustrations, but have just been informed that Harry Meier will provide copies of these when Myron Hill provides him with a copy of the originals. This should be a winner - I'm anxious to see how it turns out. Our first illustrated article. As with the Birkenfeld article the translation is a little rough, but I believe meanings are clear (also I myself favour these literal translations)

**Philatelic Memories from Mecklenburg from the
Postwar Years**

by Hans Schmidt, Stade

reprinted from 'Der Deutschlandsammler' published by Dr. Heinrich Wittmann, 8 Munchen 27

translated by Inge Fisher

Mecklenburg belongs to those areas inside the East zone which -- as well as Thüringen and Saxony -- did not solely experience Russian troops: it was conquered by American soldiers. The Elbe river was crossed on a wide front between Lauenburg and Dömitz, and the Americans advanced through Hagenow, Schwerin to Wismar, while another group occupied Ludwigslust and confined itself to connections with the Russians in Plau through patrols. Between the area connecting Plau - Güstrow - Rostock in the center of Mecklenburg and the area connecting Ludwigslust - Schwerin - Wismar the highways were jammed with westward pushing treks of disbanding German troops.

These days of the collapse caused the postal service to succumb also, as mail posted already in April did not reach the receivers anymore. With the interruption of the traffic routes through dynamited bridges and the cessation of rail-traffic there was no more moving or delivery of mail. Notes and news in the immediate vicinity had to be delivered by bicycle, as the days as a whole were filled with the worries of security and daily needs.

Since in fact the Russians from the beginning on saw the main centre of their work in the political sphere, the English speaking Western Powers on the contrary arrived with a clear conception of a postal service. In other words: The Russians allowed at first the use of former Hitler stamps (with corkcancels), the Americans brought with them their own stamps from the USA (the AM-Post stamps of the Washington print), which were used for the first time on March 19, 1945 in the Aachen area. The Russians tried eagerly that no Russian text on the face of the postage stamps was permitted. On the other hand AM means Allied Military Post (which translates into German 'Allierte Militärpost' and would carry the same first letters), and the British printed the first postal cards with the word 'prepaid'. There were other

reasons why the Russians later on overprinted such postal cards with cyrillic letters. But on the very same day they prohibited the issuance of the 'Potschta' stamp, the first postwar stamp of OPD Dresden, which appeared three days later without the Russian word.

The Americans remained for one week during the last days of April 1945 on the Elbe elevations on the Hanover side of the river. On 3 May they entered Neuhaus/Elbe, and the 'Amt Neuhaus', belonging to the district of Lüneburg on the right bank of the Elbe now became an important bridgehead in the direction of Mecklenburg. On 4/5 May the Americans reached Schwerin, the State capital of Mecklenburg and already on May 8, as is known, all warlike actions ceased with the signing of the Armistice Treaty. It is impossible to clear with certainty if the postal department officially delivered postal cards inside the area of the district of Lüneburg or if one asked friendly American soldiers to deliver letters to the next village, but it is certain that my wife sent an inquiry to Bleckede at the time of the American occupation which arrived at it's destination, which means crossing the Elbe river. The postoffice building in Neuhaus was occupied by the US Military mail. But the big powers had already exact conceptions discussed at Teheran and Yalta on how to divide Germany, therefore the US troops had to retreat to southern Germany. The area from the Harz to Mecklenburg was therefore given over to the British occupation army, and this after 20 May 1945.

Neither under American nor British occupation did the OPD Schwerin ever function under its own. The Mayor of Schwerin proclaimed the orders of the occupiers through wall-placards. The only certainty is that on or about May 25 the surrender of the Rights of Sovereignty was ended and the British announced through the mayor on 29 May 1945 at first: 'At the time there can be no civilian mail service allowed! A courier service of the Military Government in the district of Schwerin exists solely for official mail'.

Most of the remaining cards out of the first postwar weeks indicate the need to explain to family and relatives that one was still alive and news of the latest happenings. Search ads (locating ads) of refugees in Einwohnermeldeämter (centers for registry of inhabitants) and in City Hall made up the largest amount of the Ganzsachen. It can be assumed with certainty that the Americans also permitted a civilian mail service in Schwerin and other places, and maybe someday the history of the American Fieldpost will give total clarification. Only during the take-over did postal activity cease for a short time. It is surprising that the mayor on June 7, 1945 had it announced: 'The savingsaccount service at the PA Schwerin is to be resumed at once'. For every postal savingsaccount book up to 100.- RM were paid out.

For the first days in June local mail service in Schwerin and Wismar was reported to me. Therefore it is not correct what Becker-Hamburg lists in his handbook 1959, that only from '14 June 1945 on a confirmed postal service was started' - and Becker writes word for word: 'Until this time all activity of the postal departments were prohibited.' Here, the first day of issue of the postal cards is equated with the resumption of postal activity. In the same Handbook it is also stated, that the use of Hitler postcards 'was absolutely prohibited', and third that no AM-Post cards were issued in Mecklenburg. To this latter point I will return later. The only exchange of notes possible in all four occupation zones for the German civilian population was through postal cards. From May until September the need to write on the

side of the population was so great, that the new postal cards of the Occupation Powers were not sufficient anywhere and old Hitler postal cards, feldpost cards with postal cancel 'paid(Bezahlt)' or handwritten notice were customary all over.

In Ill. 1 I show such a Hitler card on which the Hitler portrait was pasted over as such, but the unchanged slogan on the lower left points still to the fact that the Führer only knows 'struggle, work, and cares'. On the other cards the words are illegible or partly so, only the word 'Führer' being crossed out. There also exist severed portraits, but there never is a date recognizable on the lower left. The lower letter piece is remarkable only because of the postleitzahl (20) in Mecklenburg. For the investigation are only of importance such pieces from the months of May-June 1945, and maybe this small hint will promote the delight of discovery for some collectors.

In any event there exist quite a few dateless pieces of mail out of these summer months. In howfar the old 'Ostarbeiter cards' are speculative I cannot say, but in any case I have seen these also.

Certain in any case is that the British from 14 June 1945 on sold in the part of West-Mecklenburg which they occupied postal cards printed by the Schwerin company W. Sandmeyer. These cards are in English, below in parenthesis the appropriate German translation. The value imprint in black shows in a rectangle which is divided into three parts the following:

prepaid

6

Pfg.

bezahlt

These cards are known with a capital 'P' in prepaid as well as with small 'p', which were both issued the first day. According to Beckhaus 'Prepaid' in 6000 and 'Prepaid' in 30,000 copies. According to other published sources the exact opposite. The 1st edition is recognizable through the following: On the left side underneath the address no further text is to be found while on the second edition (709,000), which appeared 2 days later, contained the text 'Correspondences only on the backside!' with German translation 'Mitteilungen nur auf der Rückseite!'. Nobody in Schwerin could confirm to me at that time if this 2nd edition also exists with small and capital p.

But since the English text translated word for word means 'Writing only on the back' there appeared a new postal card with the text 'Write only on the back', which would fit better with the German words. This 3rd edition in 200,000 copies appeared on June 20 on the windows, according to Beckhaus only on 27 June in an edition of 190,000 copies. The high issue of 709,000 of the 2nd edition (backside) deceives insofar as 380,000 copies had to be delivered to Lübeck, which also belonged to the British occupation area. Of the 3rd edition (back) very few used copies exist out of the British occupation area since to the majority of this issue Russian text was added. These postal card editions, relatively small for Mecklenburg with its large stream of refugees, were sold out so fast that provisional postal cards are explainable herewith.

With 30 June 1945 the rule of the British ended. The population of West-Mecklenburg was not allowed to leave their houses anymore after afternoon 30 June and - even so always contradicted by the British - the Russians moved into all towns of Mecklenburg west of the line Wismar-

Ludwigslust during the night to July 1. At the same time the Americans gave up Thüringen, Sachsen-Anhalt, and parts of Sachsen, and the British and Americans occupied instead the sectors of Berlin, assured for them.

Starting 1 July 1945 the S(oviet) M(ilitary) A(dministration) = SMA ruled in Schwerin, to which are now subordinated the whole of Mecklenburg and the former Vorpommern. The zone border started now in front of the gates of Lübeck and passed from there parallel to the Elbe-Trave canal down to Boizenburg on the Elbe, - even so it was situated on the right bank of the Elbe and belonged to the district of Lüneburg - as well as the village of Lassahn on the Schaalsee which belonged politically and postally to the district of Hagenow/Mecklenburg.

On July 1 and 2 the postal service rested. The British 'Postcards' now were overprinted in red color with Russian text (and as such in an exact translation of the English text).

On 3 July 1945 the 1st edition of these cards appeared on the postoffice windows in an issue of 60,000 copies, because from this day on postal activity was again allowed by the Russians. Permitted were as before only postcards and the Russians had allowed the cards out of the British occupation time only with the Russian additional text. With the shortness of time (2 days) these could not have been postal-card stocks asked to be returned from the separate postoffices, instead the postcards remaining with the printers Sandmeyer and at most with the OPD were overprinted and at once delivered to the postoffices. They are cream colored cards and the English text on the left front (Write only on the backside!) is not crossed out with a red Andreas cross as happened with following editions. There are lots of reasons why these 60,000 copies are printer's remains of the company Sandmeier, that is cards of the 2nd British edition (backside). This I would like to discuss more thoroughly.

An official notification says: 'On 16 July 1945 this same card was again issued in an edition of 160,000 copies.' The English text now is crossed out with an Andreas cross sideways in red or light brown. Besides this English text now reads 'back' instead of 'backside', therefore the 3rd edition under British rule. But things are not that simple. Already Beckhaus in his Ganzsachenkatalog points in justification to the fact that there are here in the 2nd edition a total of 4 types. Therefore the postal department cannot in any case pass on the thesis that it is the same card. We find:

- 1) prepaid with 'backside', paper cream colored
backside: 2 lines CORRESPONDENCE
- 2) prepaid with 'backside', paper cream colored
backside: 4 lines CORRESPONDENCES (clearly
in Latin script)
- 3) prepaid with 'back', paper cream colored
backside 2 lines CORRESPONDENCE
- 4) prepaid with 'back', paper grey
Backside: 4 lines CORRESPONDENCES (clearly
in Latin script)

Beckhaus points to the fact that cards Nr. 3 and 2 are new editions (Neudrucke), since these cards were not available on the

windows under British rule. Without Russian overprint there are only cards Nr. 1 and 4. If it proves right that the 1st edition of 3 July end only with 'backside', and the 2nd edition of 16 July with 'back', then Nr. 1 and 3 (translators note - this appears to have meant 1 and 2) would have appeared in 60,000 copies and Nr. 3 and 4 in 160,000. In the 1st Russian edition the Andreas cross is missing. Oddly enough there are also cards of Nr. 4 in Grey with such missing Andreas crosses, otherwise the 1st edition should encompass only cream colored cards. Something is wrong somewhere. There are 3 possibilities:

1. Cards Nr. 1-3 are 1st edition (cream colored cards)

Card Nr. 4 in grey 2nd edition

2. Cards Nr. 1-2 are 1st edition (backside)

Cards Nr. 3-4 are 2nd edition (back)

3. Card Nr. 1 is 1st edition

Card Nr. 4 is second edition

cards Nr. 2 and 3 in that case would have been printed to round out the full thousand. But it is also possible that Nos. 2 and 3 are begun printings, remainders of an expected raised issue amount of the British, or printers waste (through current shut-off after the first run through the presses packaged stock). Front and back were printed in two printing runs, therefore in the additional cyrillic texts the color front and back can also be different.

It may be assumed with certainty that all in Schwerin available postcards were overprinted by the printing plant of Sandmeyer, and maybe the missing Andrews cross on the postal cards No. 4 in grey may be explained as follows, here too stocks still remained with the printers - and the difference in the edition of the last British issue explained with the following: Beckhaus reported the in reality delivered 190,000, and the Postal Authorities state 200,000, which indeed were ordered but maybe did not have to be delivered in the full amount. Therewith the 4a would have been overprinted by Beckhaus as remaining printer's stock of the first edition and therefore would have to be valued somewhat higher.

In illustration #2 I am showing postal cards under British and Russian occupation, even though they cannot be recognized as such from their appearance. I can well imagine that some reader of the D.S. did not pay attention to the date of 1 July until now and therefore looked at all postal cards as belonging to the British occupied zone. Ill. #3 shows 2 cards, which indeed are cards from the British occupation era but they were forwarded under Russian administration. Here the card from Wismar is easily explained as still having been in the hands of the company, while the other one from Rostock - forwarded in September - probably originated from Wismar.

On 3 July 1945 the sending of postal cards was possible again. On 11 July 1945 the mayor of Schwerin made known:

"Effective immediately the delivery service for letters for official and medical (doctor's) use and the postal card service for the remaining postal patrons will be resumed for Schwerin and the adjoining area."

On 14 July 1945 inside the Soviet occupation zone the following was resumed:

a) letter service for official and administrative purposes, for commerce and industry

b) postal card service 'for the public'.

On July 19, 1945 with the expiration of 19 July, all postal activity of the SMA was again forbidden. The SMA appointed a German Landesverwaltung (district administration) whose president commissioned Postrat Westphal of Schwerin with the conduct of the Postal and Telegraph Administration of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, which happened on 28 July 1945.

From August 7, 1945 on the civilian postal service was again possible, on the other hand a central administration for the postal department in the SBZ was created on 1 October 1945. The postal service to the western occupation zones of Germany was, to my knowledge, only possible from the start of December 1945 on.

The amazing fact remains, that indeed on August 7 the postal service in Mecklenburg was permitted, but only on August 28 the first postage stamps of Mecklenburg could appear at the postoffice windows. (According to Becker-Hamburg on August 24). The value 12pfg. black on red paper appeared first in an edition of 7 million. Only 2 days later (Aug. 30) the first Mecklenburg postal cards (green value imprint on creme colored carton) appeared and one more day later the 6pfg. stamps black on green were sold. The cards don't carry the printer's mark (WSS) in a circle anymore like the prepaid cards did, the printer's mark now is 'Druckerei Nr.2' which very simply documents an expropriation. And with the expropriation the accounting of postal cards has ended. Now there were reprints according to demand - and as long as paper was available. Exact figures were not to ascertain.

Why Becker-Hamburg has the 8pfg. value as also issued on August 28 I do not know. Officially issued by the post office it appeared however only on 6 October in an edition of 2 million. As the usage of varied provisional postal cards from the Hitler era during the months of August/September proves, the new postal cards could not be delivered in the sufficient amounts that demand asked for. The illustration shows a cancel from Rostock with the Mecklenburg coat-of-arms (Ox head), but even from Schwerin and other places are such later uses of the Hitler postal cards with cork cancels known, similar to the issues of Saxony. A short detour to the provisional issues may be allowed here.

In Saxony the total reconstruction of a German administration was expedited with speed. Already on May 12, 1945 the OPD Chemnitz was able to order there an obliteration of the hitherto Hitler stamps with the help of a corkcancel and black color, while the OPD Dresden decreed a similar order on June 23, 1945. Such blotted Hitlerstamps were only made in the small country town of Grabow (south of Ludwigslust). The Americans occupied the towns Hagenow (airbase) and Ludwigslust (garrison) during their advance in May 1945. The small town of Grabow to the south of these two towns on the other hand was occupied by the Russians, who advanced from the direction of Karstädt (Brandenbg.).

With the occupation by the Russians the postoffice of Grabow was placed under the district administration, which they appointed. A limited postal service began here with the approval of the Landrat and the commandant of the town, and on May 17, 1945 the approval was given to obliterate the Hitler stamps that were on hand with black color and

a corkcancel. It is not clear who originated this, but it should be a correct assumption that it was fathered by philatelic ambitions. Postal cards and letters up to 100gr. in local and rural delivery area were admissible. Stocks of stamps were not to be prepared, instead the blackening was to be undertaken solely during the sale at the postoffice window. Therefore the responsibility was transferred to the postal clerk and also led to the production of so-called 'collector stamps'. The available low values up to 24pfg. could have covered the demand, but instead there are:

1pfg. - 50 copies, 3pfg. - 300 copies, 4pfg. - 150 copies, 5pfg. - 300-500 copies, 6pfg. - 600-1300 copies, 8pfg. - 200-400 copies, 10pfg. - (typographed) 500 copies, 12pfg. (typographed) - 1500 copies, 15pfg. - 300 copies, 20pfg. - 250 copies, 24pfg. - 100 copies, 30pfg. - 100 copies. In addition the following values became known: 12pfg. engraved, 25, 40, 42, 50, 60, and 80pfg., which are supposed to have been produced in issues of less than 50 copies each. All things considered, it is to be supposed that the Russian SMA in Schwerin ordered Grabow also to cease the postal service in Mecklenburg after 19 July, 1945. With the knowledge of the Russian power of authority it is unbelievable that the Russian commander of the town and the subordinate German official quarters could have ignored the ordered directive to cease all postal activity after 19 July, 1945 for the whole of Mecklenburg. Because I have in front of me a notification from the OPD Schwerin, File No. IA h 204-0, which declares:

"In Grabow (Meckl.) the values 3, 6, 12, and 24pfg. were overprinted with a round corkcancel on July 19 and 20, 1945 until it was noticed by the OPD and prohibited."

Therefore neither the amount of the issued values nor the given issue dates correspond, nor is the reference correct that the OPD would have prohibited the issue.

As I explained above a German district administration (Landesregierung) was formed only between July 19 and 28, and only from August 7 on was postal operation newly permitted. We can assume with certainty that on July 19 or 20 the sale of the Grabow provisionals ceased, and it is not surprising that the SMA in Schwerin with a directive to the town commandant demanded all stock on hand to be turned in by July 27, 1945. This in any case was explained to me by the later director of the postage stamp distributing center in Schwerin. Its own postal independence of the newly founded OPD Schwerin could have therefore occurred at the earliest on July 28, therefore it could not on its own prohibit the Grabow stamps on July 20.

The fee labels of Demmin - issued on suggestion of the then Landrat - with handwritten '10' for local letters and '20' for out-of-town letters are not postage stamps in the normal sense, especially since the amount of the postage does not correspond with the postal rates then in use. Also the fee labels in Altentreptow as well as the provisional postal cards of August/September are solely a temporary solution to fill a need due to the low stock of stamps and cards.

The first postwar postage stamps of Mecklenburg were designed by Postamtman Otto, Schwerin. They were printed in the Landesdruckerei Nr. 2 (former Sandmeyer, Schwerin). The maigrün 6pfg. (yellow-green paper) and the karmesinrot 12pfg. are the worthy values of this issue. Hereby it is remarkable that neither in the printing plant nor at the OPD the color variations were noticed, instead philatelists were first

to point out this condition. After this the stocks of the red 12pfg. stamps, issued in January 1946, were examined and the official count showed 10,000 copies of this karmesinrot 12pfg., but it is questionable if really all could have been included. In the opinion of local knowledgeable people the real amount is somewhat higher. The Müller catalog lists 'circa 20,000' and Becker-Hamburg mentions in his specialized catalog 10,000 copies, which in either case is wrong. The real amount lies in my opinion at 18,000. Unsolved on the other hand is the edition of the maigrün 6, but it has to be stated that most stamps believed to be maigrün are not. Its value is at least three times higher than that of the expensive 12pfg. The paper also appears in the 8pfg. values (Michel Nr. 13 and 14). A communication from the OPD Schwerin speaks only of 'small amounts'.

As is known, this first definitive issue has a large amount of mis-perforated, part-perforated, miscut stamps, which were mostly used by collectors for franking purposes. There also exist enough color smears (Verschmierung der Farbe). My inquiry at the OPD, why this apparent printers waste had not been sorted out more carefully, was answered with the following explanation: that at the time one was glad to even have enough stamps available for sale. The then director of the postage stamp distributing center, Herr Postrat Burmeister, explained to me after my puzzled question how he happened to possess the many varieties: "My employees had to check all pockets and since there were a good amount of collectors among them, they took some for themselves, delivered some to the postoffice windows in the lower part of the building and gave the rest to me." This is the reason that later on through the postal employees large stocks of imperforated stamps of Mecklenburg could be delivered to auctions. It was also explained to me that one was however always glad for every new delivery from the printers, because the printing firm Sandmeyer as well as the printing firm Niemann were never used before for this kind of work since qualified printers in Berlin and Leipzig used to be available for this. With the federalistic principle of the new state construction every state had to advance mostly with its own resources. The printing companies on the other hand cited plausible reasons as excuse for the poor quality of their products: continuous shutoffs of the current, lack of trained personnel, shortage of paper, and difficulties with the securing of printing ink.

A special chapter are the commemoratives of Mecklenburg. The publisher Sauerland in Ludwigslust - to older collectors still known as publisher of the philatelic magazine "General Anzeiger für Philatelie" - is the instigator of the ANTIFA set which especially stands out in size and poor workmanship. During October 16, 1945 he tried several times to contact the village mayor of Eldena (Kreis Ludwigslust) in which he finally succeeded around 1900 hours. During the confusions of the postwar years a Berlin engraver happened to remain in the village of Eldena and through a KB-Exhibition he came to the attention of the people in Ludwigslust. To this refugee Bartholomäus the mayor transmitted the request of Sauerland to design a stamp set "Victims of Faschism". We have to thank the well known Leipzig philatelist for the knowledge of the diary entries of the Berlin artist; and it seems rather odd today that within five days designs became stamps and could also be delivered printed and ready to the postoffice windows. Let me quote essentials from this diary in cut and dried shortness:

"WEDNESDAY, 17 Oct. 1945: In the morning with borrowed bicycle (at that time train connections still did not exist) to Ludwigslust. From there by car to Schwerin. Three stamps were selected to be ready by 21 Oct. 45, the memorial day for the victims of Fascism. Same day evening and night at the printing-office of Niemann, Ludwigslust. The master printer and I sit over small leaden plates and carve the transferred drawings into lead. There was no plant to manufacture clichés. Therefore the crude work with unusual large size.

"THURSDAY, 18 Oct. 1945: morning: Dogtired, but done. The post-office sent civil servants for supervision to the plant. To a small town viewed postally, a sensation to produce stamps for the country. - Trip to Schwerin. Stampdesigns not accepted (Laurelbranch 12+28pfg. - Links of an iron chain 6+14pfg. and bowed mother beneath a cross 8+22pfg.).

Evening returned with the task to draw three portraits of murdered Antifascists and to carve into lead. By Sunday everything has to be ready for the sale of the stamps. I am searching for models for the portraits of Thälmann, Breitschied and Klausner. In the first two cases I succeed, in the last found only a photo - transmitted by wire - where Klausner stands small at a speakers desk. Magnifying glass and good intentions helped to overcome the impossible, to make something from the picture.

FRIDAY, 19 Oct. 1945: Start of the new cuts, earlier pencil sketches, transfers to lead-plates, reversed like a reflection. Again through the night two people at work, the master printer engraving, myself guiding and correcting."

I have often thought about the entry of 22 Oct! What can the artist have had in mind when he speaks of a sell-out? (too bad the entry of 22 Oct. is not shown - ed.) Surely only the first delivery of the printers on October 21, 1945. There exist cancellations from later months as well as this issue in variations of color, which would indicate further printings of the Antifa-stamps even after October 22, 1945. Whosoever remembers the train connections in Mecklenburg from before the war knows exactly how difficult the diagonal connections are. Only the lines Berlin-Scandinavia, or East-West of Hamburg, Lübeck-Bad Kleinen and further on to Bützow (south of Rostock) and Lalendorf (near Güstrow) are railroad intersections, and generally all large cities are away from the main lines. Also during the war it was totally impossible to get on week-end leave from the garrison of Rostock for instance to Neuhaus/Elbe, it was easier for the people of Cologne. What do I want to prove with these sentences? That a delivery to the different postoffices was totally impossible between Sunday morning and Monday. Only those post-offices could be supplied, which were situated in the immediate vicinity of Schwerin, to Wismar in the north and Ludwigslust or Hagenow in the south. All first-day cancellations of the Antifa stamps for the rest of Mecklenburg had to be later favor cancellations out of necessity.

Becker-Hamburg very correctly subdivides in his special catalog the 12pfg. value Thälmann into 17a) carmine-red and 17b) vermilion-red. It is odd that Müller calls this color in his catalog redorange, but the 12pfg. Children's help red, which is not so intense in the red color. This of course is not correct, although I would prefer tomato-red as color, but this is not a customary color designation in philately. And even though the two low values of the Antifa issue exist in 2 color variations: the 6pfg. green must be separated into bluegreen and pale green, the 8pfg. with the picture of the catholic Reichstagsabgeordneten Dr. Klausner exists in deep lilac and pale violett. In

540

the Michel catalog the color for the 8pfg. is called violett, Müller calls the same value lilac.

The misperforations of this issue produced a few possibilities which are very much sought after by specialists: The date 21 October 1945 is below the name of the country, Mecklenburg is above the picture, the vertical perforation separates Mecklenburg and Vorpommern. All these part-perforations should have never have passed the post office control, as well as the many color smears which made unrecognizable either the name of the murdered or the value to the right of the portrait. The defect may have occurred through uneven application of the ink, and the color differences could be accounted for with unequal mixtures by unskilled personnel in Ludwigslust. I have illustrated a set if Unika, in which I would like to point out the value 8pfg. which in the photo only lets one imagine the peculiarity: The name of the country is in a vivid shade, the remainder of the stamp in a very pale violett shade. Since the stamp was bought in this condition at the postoffice, there can be no talk about bleaching through sunlight, even so it has to be stated in this connection that the 8pfg. Antifa value as well as the 12pfg. Bodenreform 1 value are extremely sensitive to light.

It should be sufficient to mention only shortly the two Bodenreform sets which are mentioned in the catalogs in one case as two times 3 principal numbers and in another case as a) and b).

The commemoratives for the Children's Aid again show the striking color variations. The colors values reach in the 6pfg. range from orange to redorange, in the 8pfg. from pale blue to ultramarine, and in the 12pfg. from pink red to carmine red. In a specialized work these differences have to be acknowledged, because with the missing information of printing dates they are still proof of the inking of the printing plates. The shut-offs of the current set the work rhythm.

The favored explanation of the vertical tete-beches of the Children's Aid stamps and the horizontal tete-beches of the 12pfg. Antifa, is an accidental insertion of a die plate row (Druckstockreihe) of 10 stamps. With the 12pfg. Thälmann there appeared at first only the tete-beche because of the inverted 5th row. Schwerin specialists inform us that soon after inverts of other rows were also discovered. I am convinced that here a try was made to create artificially rarities. Why were they not confiscated by the OPD? The collecting interest of the postoffice employees in Schwerin caused the appearance of much unusual material on the market through auctions in Schwerin in later years, which was very detrimental to the collecting field. Thus these stamps are not only tainted through a poor grade of manufacture but also through a worse supervision of quality.

The following fact in regard to these stamps I find especially curious: The printing of the commemoratives of Mecklenburg at Ludwigslust was not paid for in money but paid off in stamps! In reply to my question I was informed by the director of the postage stamp distributing center that the company Niemann-Ludwigslust received 10,000 stamps, each of the Antifa set, the Children's Aid and the two Bodenreform sets as compensation for the printing costs. I do not know of any case in postal history in which occurred the like. With a nominal value of 90pfg. for the 3 stamps of the Antifa set, it would come to a total amount of 9,000.- RM for occurred expenses for the production, if we assume an issue of roughly 200,000 copies. In the Children's Aid set this sum

would come to a little more than 2% of the issue. I have no opportunities for comparison in order to judge how favorable or unfavorable of a business this was. One can well imagine how a philatelic oriented businessman made an offer to a financially weak postal administration in Schwerin, that seemed very favorable at the start of reconstruction, because its postal sovereignty was not in the least hampered during the printing process. And besides the postoffice does want to sell the stamps! What wonder therefore! - I happened to notice the many advertisements in the "General Anzeiger für Philately" during the years 1947/48, in which under cipher sets of Antifa and Children's Aid were offered in amounts of 1,000. At that time at least unusual offers. Since the retired Postrat Burmeister happened to be country chairman (Landesvorsitzender) of the section philately, my inquiry brought forth the reply that these were probably stocks of Niemann.

In the specialist collection of Postrat Burmeister I then saw many black-prints (Schwarzdrucke) of different issues, proofs from the printers to the OPD Schwerin, so-called gum prints, that is the stamp imprint on the gum side, imperforated issues which were known only perforated, and others. Rarely were these copies to be had at the postoffice windows, and the older philatelists in Schwerin were able to acquire some through their acquaintances in the OPD, but not at the nominal value. Even the Postrat knew how to evaluate these varieties. Postrat Burmeister added very many of these abnormal copies to the circulars and I could acquire a few of these copies. In the meantime a lot of the misperforated material went to the West as I know out of years of observations.

Another thing of importance are the cancellations. In the eastern parts of Mecklenburg and especially in Pommern, in spots heavy fighting was still going on. Along with the villages and towns the postoffices also ended up in rubble and ashes, and many a postoffice had only temporary quarters for a long time. The lost cancellation stamps were replaced with rubber ones, shape and design often differed from the original norm. We know the emergency stamps from the whole area of the battle front on the Oder. Yes, I own quite a few mail proof (Postbelege) from the year 1948, which exclusively had to be cancelled with a "community stamp" (Gemeindestempel) as used by the village magistrate. (This should probably be the year 1946 - ed)

Illustration #5 shows such emergency cancellations and I only showed the one from EBERSDORF because of the additional date cancellation, even so I own quite a few similar kinds of playfulness from Mecklenburg. Sometimes the pen cancellations in memoriam had to replace the stamp, sometimes a written notice sufficed, sometimes there were other postal stamps (as for instance district stamp from 37 Eggesin), which prove the material shortage and need of these times even in the postal sector.

Thankfully not all postoffices in Vorpommern were destroyed. Especially on the island of Rügen the old cancellation stamps with the Postleitzahl (4) could still be used for some years, and until the year 1948/49 the postoffice documented unvoluntarily that Stettin was at one time the capital of Pommern. As well as the Stettin district number 38 was applied to the Währungsprovisorien (currency reform provisionals) in 1948, thus was Vorpommern in the postal sense not "inside" with the OPD Schwerin. We are not surprised that Neuhaus/Elbe in the southwest corner of Mecklenburg still looked upon itself as belonging to the province of Hanover, and the slogan "temporarily put

the Michel catalog the color for the 8pfg. is called violett, Müller calls the same value lilac.

The misperforations of this issue produced a few possibilities which are very much sought after by specialists: The date 21 October 1945 is below the name of the country, Mecklenburg is above the picture, the vertical perforation separates Mecklenburg and Vorpommern. All these part-perforations should have never have passed the post office control, as well as the many color smears which made unrecognizable either the name of the murdered or the value to the right of the portrait. The defect may have occurred through uneven application of the ink, and the color differences could be accounted for with unequal mixtures by unskilled personnel in Ludwigslust. I have illustrated a set of Unika, in which I would like to point out the value 8pfg. which in the photo only lets one imagine the peculiarity: The name of the country is in a vivid shade, the remainder of the stamp in a very pale violett shade. Since the stamp was bought in this condition at the postoffice, there can be no talk about bleaching through sunlight, even so it has to be stated in this connection that the 8pfg. Antifa value as well as the 12pfg. Bodenreform 1 value are extremely sensitive to light.

It should be sufficient to mention only shortly the two Bodenreform sets which are mentioned in the catalogs in one case as two times 3 principal numbers and in another case as a) and b).

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to Mecklenburg"(zeitweilig Mecklenburg zugeschlagen) was a favorite expression with the natives of Neuhaus. All cancellations of the first Mecklenburg definitive set therefore proudly carried the old Postleitzahl (20). Only with the so-called farewell set were the new Postleitzahlen (3) added to the cancels. Neuhaus temporized with its old cancels NEUHAUS(ELBE)LAND and NEUHAUS(ELBE)L, which could not be supplemented with a postleitzahl because of lack of space. The cancels 'b' and 'c' are still in use today with the Postleitzahl in the circle.

Finally I would like to point to the rarities a London dealer wanted to offer at the Interposta for 90.- (presumably DM) per copy. Illustration #7 shows the "postage stamp" described above as proposed design by the artist B. They are the essays already printed on stamp paper, the OPD rejected the designs and ordered the portraits of the murdered Antifascists. Since these designs originated besides through the initiative of a philatelist they are lacking all official postal character and one should deliberate upon such "issues" if they are really worth the demanded price.

Until now the AM-POST STAMPS IN MECKLENBURG are not to be found in any published catalog. But they do exist as may be proven through Ill.#8. After release from captivity I was able to acquire the illustrated 5pfg. AM-Post from the police chief of Neuhaus, who in the meantime is again on leave of absence. The copy remained at first unnoticed until I approached the postoffice of Neuhaus for enlightenment and explanation. Herewith arose immediately the difficulty of an exact explanation of the occurrences during the first weeks of the occupation era. From the deputy office administrator I received then further postage stamps AM-Post of 6 and 12pfg. out of a drawer of which I gave some 6pfg. stamps to other collectors during the years. The cancellation date of 3 September 1945 on the Ill. 12pfg. AM-Post and on the equal value of the following Mecklenburg series was explained to me thus: the AM-Post stamps on hand had to be delivered to the OPD Schwerin on this day and one wanted solely to create documents of the last day. To my objection that this date clearly showed the cancellations to be from the Russian occupation era, the immediate reply was that remaining stocks of the Americans were found.

During the search for explanations two 6pfg. were presented to me years ago from the area of the East Harz with the cancellation Ilfeld, here again the month of August as the date of cancellation. As far as both strips of land are concerned they are areas which were first occupied by Americans, then by British and lastly by the Russians. But the Russians moved into both these areas already on July 1, yet the discovered stamps are without a doubt the so called American AM-Post issue, and the cancellations are accordingly from the month of August.

The values 5pfg. green, 6pfg. yellow, and 12pfg. purple existed without a doubt at the postoffice Neuhaus/Elbe. These were values which were already given out since March 1945 to the postoffice by the Americans with the advancing occupation, while other values (3 or 4pfg.) were only available starting in July. As is known, the Americans allowed already postal cards since 24 January for official use of the German authorities in the Aachen area. The Müller catalog states that of the 15,000 forwarded postal cards until now not one copy has remained. There also may have been only a few men in the occupied territories during the months January to May which had any interest in philatelic matters, the women and children of the home front had at that time truly different cares. There remains today to clarify in how far the

Americans allowed progressively postal service during their advance to the Harz and the Lüneburger Heide (in the first place probably Patton's troops). Every person in the Neuhaus area questioned by me could not remember after all these years. But there remains no doubt that after the capitulation of Germany on May 8 the Occupation powers were interested to advance a normal life in a democratic direction.

There remain two possibilities as explanations for the existing stamps:

1. The Americans permitted in West-Mecklenburg in May a postal service for official mail with the AM-Post stamps. They occupied the area approximately 3 weeks.
2. The Americans did not take with them stocks of AM-Post stamps which were stored in the postoffices of their evacuated towns. They were left behind even after the change of the Occupation authorities. They were therefore still in the cabinets of the departments concerned with the beginning of the final postal activity.

During the course of my article I had already pointed out that there remains surprisingly a span of 3 weeks between the permission of postal service (on August 7) and the first issuance of the Mecklenburg postal cards (on August 28). The cancellations of the AM-Post stamps known to me originate from this time. These stamps would then be an interim issue due to the need of the times. This would explain the "last-day" on 3 September, 1945, the OPD noticed the usage of American stamp stock and prohibited its further use.

Still I would like to receive further information from the reader circle to eliminate unclear facts out of the beginning of a new postal activity.

AM-POST DOCUMENTS FROM THE SBZ

Postscript to "Philatelic Memories from Mecklenburg" by H. Schmidt-Stade

I received a few supplementary informations from the reader circle to my presentations in "D.S." 2/61, and through final inquiries to the postal authorities the complex of the AM-Post in the SBZ could be cleared up. Searching for the earliest date of a mail delivery I was shown the copy in Ill.#1 among a larger accumulation of Hitlerblot covers. The letter bedazzles on first sight because of its early date 26 April 1945! Alas, the time of the capitulation.

" At first sight one is tempted to regard it as an overtaken letter (Überrollungsbrief), those letters which were deposited before the capitulation, remained in the postoffice during the postal and military collapse, and then were blotted out and forwarded after the resumption of postal service. But this hardly applies in this case, since the letters would have been deposited in Wittenberg (Bz. Halle) on 26 April addressed for delivery in the same town with the arrival cancel on the back of the same evening, in the case of another letter the next evening.

The owner of these letters is a refugee and will have received the pieces as well as the lose stamps in his possession from the mail. My inquiries ascertained that the Russian and American points met at Torgau/Elbe on 27/28 April 1945. The town of Wittenberg is likewise situated on the Elbe river between Dessau and Torgau. Even if one would

assume that the Russians could have reached Wittenberg already on 26 April 1945, it is totally obscure how the postmaster of Wittenberg could have already guessed the blotting out of Hitler stamps, ordered later on by the Russians. Because on 12 May 1945 this procedure was ordered for the first time in the OPD Chemnitz. But the OPD Halle - to which belongs the PA Wittenberg Lutherstadt - only resumed postal service on 2 July 1945 and only with blottings of Hitler stamps in the manner of Illustration #1. But after one is informed through catalogs that Wittenberg also issued the arms series of the province of Saxony with its own postmaster perforations in October 1945, or after one contemplates the omnious "Luther souvenir sheet", only then can one also evaluate the Hitlerblots of April 1945 in the right category.

(editor's note: I believe he is saying there's something rotten about this stuff. I myself have a set of Hitlerblots, 1pfg.-5RM, with cancellation 26.4.45. Sturm has said this is an 'officially backdated cancellation'. The moral is: don't use towns where philatelic influence is known to have existed in trying to prove a point.)

The Illustration #2 is a nice supplement to my reports on the prepaid postal cards of Mecklenburg. In Mecklenburg - probably through the additional stream of refugees from the East - these cards sold out fast. Of the 380,000 prepaid postal cards delivered to Lübeck some were still in stock at the postoffice after the OPD issues were already replaced with the first Kontrollrats series. It is a nice document from the month of June 1946 as is shown by the sale cancel on the left side, and the raise in postal rates was paid for with the added stamp.

The AM-Post stamps with the Neuhaus/Elbe cancellations were submitted by a Stuttgart reader, who acquired the stamps through an exchange and otherwise was unable to tell anything about their origin. The day cancels used were available on 3 June, 28 June and 30 June 1945, the Postleitzahl (20) also corresponds with that time. But since these stamps are the complete so-called "American" issue, I became dubious because as is known only the values 5pfg. green, 6pfg. yellow, 8pfg. orange, and 12pfg. purple were available at first, on the other hand it is proven that only in July 1945 the values 3pfg. violett, 4pfg. grey, 10pfg. brown, 15pfg. red, and 25pfg. blue were issued.

As is known I showed in "D.S." 2/61 that

1. Either the Americans allowed a postal service in West-Mecklenburg during their occupation era or
2. They left the AM-Post stamps on hand in the postoffices of their evacuated towns behind.

My inquiry at the CPD Hannover received a clarification only in the case of "Amt. Neuhaus" but not for the possible postal service in Schwerin or Wismar. The communication states:

"According to the notes of the Amtsvorsteher (head of office) of the postoffice Neuhaus/Elbe received by us, the complete postal- and Fernmelde- (telephone and telegraph) service at the end of the war during the occupation of the postoffice by the American occupation Force came to a complete standstill. It only started to a limited extent after the area Neuhaus(Elbe) was turned over to the British armed Forces on 1 June 1945. After resumption of the connection with the OPD Hannover the postoffice Neuhaus(Elbe) was also supplied through the district postage stamp center of the OPD Hannover with the stamps issued in the

meantime by the Military Government. With the 30 offices of the post-office Neuhaus(Elbe) the postal service was started to a limited extent. On 30 June 1945 before noon, the postoffice Neuhaus(Elbe) was turned over to the Russians without prior notification of the administrative supervisor (Amtsvorsteher). The postal service which had been built up in a modest way during the 4 week long British occupation period came with this to a sudden end. Preparatory measures, among which the withdrawal of all AM-Post stamps would have belonged, could not take place. The stamps were probably at first used further without the Russian occupation force taking offense.

My thesis is therefore wrong that it was stock the Americans left behind. Instead it was the British who delivered the American issue of the AM-Post to the OPD Hannover and it in turn sent them to Neuhaus (Elbe). According to the Müller catalog the American series was issued in both the British and American zones. Only unexplained remains the cancellation of whole sets in June 1945.

Somewhat different are things in the eastern South-Harz. Here Dr. Lohoff had the courtesy to put some postal evidence at my disposition. Ill. 4, 5, and 6 show undisputable evidence of AM-Post from places which belong today to the East Zone. These are letters directed to government agencies in Nordhausen. Ill. 7 shows a letter from Nordhausen with blotted Hitler stamps, thus the normal franking of that time under Russian occupation. But Ill. 8 also shows such a Hitler blot, this time from Bad Sachsa, situated in the Bundesrepublik. The date again as in "D.S." 2/61 August and September 45!

The owner of the letters was with me of the same opinion that these could only be stocks of the Americans which were here still used up under the Russian occupation. The blotted Hitler postal card from Bad Sachsa raised the doubt something in our considerations could not be correct. Because the card was sold on 7 August 1945 in the postoffice Bad Sachsa as proven through the cancel on the left side. So, I dug up an old atlas out of the Kaiser era and found here in a hurry the solution to the puzzle. Nordhausen and Bad Sachsa belonged to the Prussian province Saxony, as well as Wernigerode and Thale. The town Blankenburg (between Wernigerode and Quedlinburg) belongs with considerable parts of the Lower Harz to the country of Braunschweig. East of Zorge an elongated enclave of the province Hannover passes by Nordhausen, which encloses the towns of Niedersachswerfen, Ilfeld, and Sülzhayn. I only needed the conformation from the Postal Department and did receive this from the OPD Braunschweig on 19 June 1961. There it states:

"Ilfeld, Niedersachswerfen and Sülzhayn belonged to the district of the Reichspostdirektion Braunschweig; the towns were therefore also delivered with AM-Post stamps after the occupation. Only in August 1945, officially only from 23 February 1946 on, these towns were turned over to the Oberpostdirektion Erfurt. The use of AM-Post stamps in these towns is therefore not unusual.

"To your question in connection with the use of corkcancels on Hitler stamps in Bad Sachsa (South-Harz) it is to be said that this town changed only on 1 August 1945 from the OPD Erfurt to the OPD Braunschweig. The corkcancels on Hitler stamps could therefore have been used in Bad Sachsa before 1 August 1945.

"We can also make to you the following statements for the highest official authority for the district of the Reichspostdirektion Braunschweig after the collapse: Date of the military occupation of the district: 11 April 1945

- a) from 11 Apr. - Dec. 1945 Reichspostdirektion Braunschweig
- b) from Dec. 45 - 5 March 1947 Reichspostoberdirektion for the
British Zone in Bad Salzufflen
- c) after 6 March 1947 Chief administration for Post
and telephone/telegraph service
for the American and British
Occupation district in Frankfurt/
Main. "

To this letter of the OPD Braunschweig there only remains to remark that the use of the Hitler-blot card still happened at the time after subordination to the OPD Braunschweig, and otherwise the AM-Post stamps were still used in the three named places after being placed under OPD Erfurt, therefore under Russian occupation.

A collector in Stade owned a few AM-Post 3pfg British issue, cancelled at Sülzhayn on 12 September 1945. Dr. Lohoff was first of the opinion that in this case it could only be a later forgery. But if the OPD Braunschweig delivered still to these places until August 1945 then the British issue would have been available in a few values and would have been sold.

It will be of benefit to look over the stocks for AM-Post cancellations from West-Mecklenburg and the eastern South-Harz. Maybe you are lucky dear reader!

End

Trying to give you some idea of prices currently being fetched by our material here are some of the realizations from the H.R. Harmer auction of 24 April. In general the prices seemed quite favourable, perhaps because it was summer, compared to many of the prices realized in Germany. Prices courtesy of Jay Carrigan.

Lot	Cat.	price (\$)
A.M.G. 6pfg. imperf	DM 120.-	8.50
A.M.G. 12pfg. bisect used on card	-	21.-
A.M.G. 15pfg. imperf. strip of 3 used	-	22.-
A.M.G. 30pfg. imperf.	DM 300.-	16.-
Berlin 6pfg. imperf. (Mi. 2AU)	DM 150.-	5.-
Berlin 10pfg. imperf. (Mi. 4AU)	DM 300.-	12.50
Berlin rouletted set (Mi. 1B-7B)	DM 125	7.-
Mecklenburg 8pfg. double print (11b DD)	DM 700	26.-
Mecklenburg Child help imperf tete-beche (Mi. 26-28 imp)	DM 600	29.-
Dresden FOCETA water color	DM1400	87.50
Dresden FOCETA oil color block of 4	DM2800	200.-
Dresden Mi. 56U-60U comp. set imperf.	DM 500	22.-

41.

OPD Halle	Mi # 80X	DM 360.-	26.-
Thuringen	Mi #92-97 imperf	DM 400.-	8.-
"	Mi Blk 1X (Antifa sheet, grey paper)	DM 1,300.-	45.- (How's that for a price?)
"	Mi Blk 1Y (Antifa sheet, white paper)	DM 300	16.-
"	Mi Blk 1x sheet of 6 sheets of 3	DM 7,800+	440.-
"	Mi Blk 2X Christmas sheet	DM 1,500	42.-
"	Mi Blk 2Y Christmas sheet	DM 1,500	47.50
"	Mi Blk 3A,B Weimar sheets	DM 180.-	15.-
"	Mi Blk 4 gum wrinkles, tiny tear	DM 400	13.-
West Saxony	Mi 127XU 4pfg. Imperf pair	DM 2,000	85.-
"	Mi 150X, 151X, 153X, 155X	DM 450	13.-
"	Mi 164F 24+26pfg violett color error	DM 3,000	160.-
"	Mi Blks 5X and 5Y, several lots mint and used	DM 180 - DM 200	5.50 to 10.-
Bad Nauheim	Mi 4-8 on 5 covers including 2 registered with mixed franking	DM 175+	16.-
Strausberg	Mi 7-11,13-30	DM 225	7.50

MEMBERS CORNER

Changes of address:

R. J. Thoden
% Arabian-American Oil Co.
Box 1802
Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

Jay T. Carrigan
12448 Over Ridge Road
Potomac, Md.
20854

James M. Franz
1910 N. Calvert St. Apt. 103
Arlington, Va. 22201

Joachim G. Heckert
409 Hamilton St.
Roselle, N.J. 07203

Absender: *Fritz Schimm C.,
Lottische
Weichsmünde* Postkarte
 Nr. 1

Absender: _____ Postkarte

MUECK-GRÜNDE
 1895. 1

Chemnitz
 1895. 1

Centralbankdienst der Provinz
 Sachsen-Anhalt Brandenburg
 in 2. *Palast*
 Hauptstadt 1895. 1

Postcard
 ADDRESS
 (Empfänger)

SCHWEINICH
 22. 5. 93 - 13
 AC

SCHWEINICH
 AC

Herrn
 Bürgermeister v. re. *Stahinke*
 Neuhaus / M. *msburg* ¹⁸⁹⁵
 1895. 2

Postcard
 ADDRESS
 (Empfänger)

MÜSTOCK
 1895. 3

Jense

Frau
Elfrida Stier
 3 *Stier & Stier*
Prinzenstr. 22
bl. Stahke
 1895. 3



R
Postkarte
Firma
Kaz Jarne.
(3) Seestadt Rostock.
Schlössfach 160

Post
Seestadt R
12247. 4

11. Aug 1957
Ebers
über Löbau

Spremsberg 12247. 5

