

## A Few More Holes

BY JERRY JENSEN

Improper stepping of the comb perforation machine on inflation period stamps was the topic in the December, 1991 Specialist (and Odds #2). Here we will discuss another series of varieties caused by the perforating equipment. These stamps are much scarcer and carry high Michel listed catalog prices.



Each and every value of the first fifty stamps issued by the German Empire (Mi #1- 50) can be found with very rare perforation varieties. Slight mismatching between the distance stepped by the perforation comb and the actual spacing of the stamps required occasional corrections in the positioning between the sheets and the perforator during the operation. Depending on the direction of the perforating operation, stamps can be found that are taller, wider, shorter or narrower than normal stamps.

The premium for these varieties on the eagle issues is from 50 to 200%, with a minimum of 10 to 25 Marks. On the later issues, there are individual listings for each value from Mi #31 to #50. In this period, the value can be as high as 950 Marks! Copies of short and tall stamps are shown above.

The stamps of the two eagle issues normally have 16 perforation holes along each side of the stamp. The "short" varieties have 15 holes and the "very short" stamps have only 14 holes on each side.

Occasionally the spacing on the last row of the sheet was stretched, leaving 16 holes but a very large perforation tooth on the top side of each stamp. These are known as the "somewhat larger (tall)" varieties.



On later issues (Mi#31-50), the variety can be much more subtle. Here the spacing differences are across the width of the stamp.

Normal stamps have 13 perforation holes and measure from 19.5 to 20 mm wide. The narrow stamps have only 12 holes and measure from 18.5 to 19 mm wide. These are Michel type "C".

The wide stamps have 13 holes, measure 21 mm wide and show a complete hole **at the right** or they measure 21.5 to 22.5 mm, which includes an irregular, right hand corner tooth. These are Michel type "B". Many of the "B" have a "pulled perf" at the upper or lower right. This was caused by the extra wide (and strong) last perforated tooth. The stamps at the left show the "B" at the top, the "C" and the "D" varieties.

For completeness, Michel lists a "CE" variety which is 19.5 mm wide (filling the gap between the "C" and "D" width ranges).

The "enlarged" stamps measure 20.5 mm and have 14 perforation holes. These are Michel type "D".



The 2 Mark value (Mi #37) is in a horizontal format. Here, the variety is in the height of the stamp rather than the width. The widened hole/tooth is at the **lower** right and left side of the stamp

If you have a number of these issues, the variety can be found by simply stacking them up and looking for height or width differences. If you only have a few single stamps, they should be carefully compared to a normal stamp's width and height. The appearance of the top and bottom **right hand** corner perforation holes is also an indication of the variety.

The Michel catalog lists the premiums for these varieties. As with the rest of the Michel pricing structure, the premium should be added to the base price of the stamp or cover.

The "short" or "narrow" stamps can be easily fabricated from normal stamps. They should be collected only as expertized copies.

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