



Introduction to The Carl Aage

The Schleswig-Holstein "Revolutionary" postage stamps of 1850-51 are amongst the most rare in German Philately, and Carl Aage Møller has probably contributed more in his research on this issue than any other philatelist since Hugo Krötzsch and Albin Rosenkranz in 1897.



A provisional Schleswig-Holstein Government was established in Kiel on 24th March 1848 and responsibility for the postal service was given to the Department of Finance. The university lecturer and publisher, Dr. Wilhelm Ahlmann (1817-1910) was given the task of organising the postal service. He was a leading figure in Kiel, the founder of the Ahlmannbank in 1852, and the "Kieler Zeitung", the leading liberal paper in Schleswig-Holstein, in 1864. He was a city councillor in Kiel from 1867 to 1873.

Ahlmann extensively reorganised the operations of the post office, and under his leadership Schleswig-Holstein was a founder member of the German-Austrian postal union (Deutsch-Österreichischer Postverein) on 1st July 1850.

The Provincial Assembly of 26th March 1850 authorised the Department of Finance to arrange for the manufacture of stamps, or "Postschillinge", that could be attached to letters in accordance with the postage rate. These were to carry the coat of arms of Schleswig-Holstein. The Post Office Gazette of 9th April 1850 made the announcement that stamps were to be issued. Two values were eventually approved, the 1 Schilling blue, and the 2 Schilling in red. Dietrich C. Claudius was responsible for the design and engraving of the stamp; Köbner and Lehmkuhl of Altona were the printers, and a series of security measures were introduced. Firstly Dickinson silk thread paper was used, then printing was in three stages, the Arms of Schleswig-Holstein were added in either pale blue or rose, then the stamp design, and finally, the arms of the Province were embossed on the centre of each stamp.

The introduction of the stamps was announced by the Department of Finance on 5th November 1850, and they were available for sale from 15th November. Between 10th November 1850 and 14th February 1851, 1.3 million 1 Schilling stamps, and 700,000 2 Schilling stamps were delivered to 42 post offices, including two railway offices and the field post. Each of these received barred "killer" type cancellers with numerals 1-42 in the centre, numbered, except for 41 and 42, in alphabetical order of the name of the post office.

Møller Collection of Holstein

Mint copies, even in multiples, are not uncommon and it would be interesting to know the total number of remainders that came on to the market in the nineteenth century. What then makes the used stamps so scarce? Firstly very few were sold. There was no financial incentive to use postage stamps since postage was the same when either paid with stamps or cash. Krötzsch states that only 8000 of the 1 Schilling and 4000 of the 2 Schilling were sold, franking 8701 letters in total. Carl Aage Møller and his predecessors as experts for Schleswig-Holstein, Carl H. Lange, Ewald Müller-Mark, Walter Engel and Wolfgang Jakubek, have recorded fewer than 1100 individual cancelled stamps, 45 covers with 1 Schilling stamps, 49 covers with 2 Schilling stamps, and 7 franked with both "Postschillinge". Six pieces have been recorded with mixed frankings. A further complication is that postal rates changed on 1st January 1851, and the sale of stamps stopped during March 1851. They continued to be used until August 1851 and 6589 postal items were franked during this period, leaving only 1112 possible covers used in the very short lived first rate period 15th November - 31st December 1850.

Add to this the fact that these small numbers of used stamps are spread over a theoretical 42 post offices, and the rarity is explained. Furthermore, numerals 39 and 40 could be used, theoretically at eight different locations. Some postmarks are known in only one copy, and six offices have no recorded usages.

Carl Aage's knowledge and persistence have brought together what is almost certainly the finest collection of this issue ever assembled with 37 out of the possible 48 post office locations shown, in an unusually fine quality. Many of these stamps are unattractively cancelled, whereas this collection has been put together with a discerning eye and great care.

It's an enormous pity that the collection will not stay together, but, it's an equally great opportunity for collectors to acquire some of the finest used examples available of this difficult issue.



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Carl Aage Møller's registration of cancellations on and off covers on next two pages