

EVOLUTION OF THE POSTAL CODING SYSTEM IN GERMANY

ARTICLE SYNOPSIS

(September 2021)

Treatment & Philatelic Significance

This article, which appeared in the Postal History Journal (Summer 2021), offers the reader a chronological overview of the postal evolution of the postal coding system in Germany between 1941 to current times using a numeric system which became a forerunner to many systems since introduced worldwide, including the one used in the United States, where its technical and format approach enabled more expeditious processing and handling of mail.

For the reader, this article can be considered a precis of the subject from many works listed in the article's bibliography.

Philatelic & Related Knowledge & Personal Research

The author has conducted personal research on the subject and gathered information from various published sources of directly & indirectly related publications.

Based on his research, the exhibitor has developed a 'storyline' reflecting a chronological evolutionary approach..

- I. **25 July 1941:** Germany introduces small-package numeric system
- II. **19 October 1943:** Germany adopts small-parcel coding system for letter-mail
- III. **8 May 1945:** End of WW II; Allies adopt heretofore coding system for mail in their respective zones, albeit with some minor expansion & definition.
- IV. **3 November 1961:** 4-digit coding system introduced for Western Germany with differentiation of "O" and "W" for East and West Germanies.
- V. **1 July 1993:** 5-digit coding system established for fully united Germany, eliminating separate East and West Germany systems with more thorough and expansive town and city definition.

Condition & Difficulty of Acquisition

All illustrated postal history material has been the best found on the philatelic market during the last twenty years, taken from the author's research collections, and acquired by the exhibitor piecemeal.

Bibliography

Handwörterbuch des Postwesens, Bundesministerium für das Post- und Fernmeldewesen, Frankfurt (Main) 1953, pp 536-537.

Ortsverzeichnis I, Reichspostzentramt, Berlin-Tempelhof, May 1944, 479 pages.

Das Postleitzahlenbuch 1 July 1993, Deutsche Bundespost, (53105) Bonn, Germany, 986 pages.

Verzeichnis der Postämter des Reichspostgebietes mit Angabe der Postleitzahlen, Reichspostministerium, Berlin, July 1944. 64 pages.