

The Fraktur

VOL. V, NR. 10

OCTOBER 1992

ASPARAGUS and a PHONY WAR

By George Boyce

Most Americans to this day think that the BIG war in Europe was fought only with US soldiers on the US Front, from Normandy straight east.

But there was a very big shoot-out around Kranenburg in February 1945 between the XXX Corps, British and Canadians, and the Germans.

Kranenburg, a border crossing west of Kleve, seemed to have been spared, as were Calcar, Kevelaer and Geldern. But Kleve, Goch and to a lesser extent Xanten, were hit hard from the air. The people of Kevelaer felt their Madonna of Kevelaer (appearing on Notgeld, NG) spared them the horrors of war.

The image of the Madonna was transported from the cathedral in Luxemburg City. where it can be viewed today. Kevelaer is one of three official Catholic shrines in Europe. Many pilgrims visit it, some walking or crawling on their knees the last few miles in penance.

As it has been during every campaign since the Thirty Years War. Kevelaer is a Catholic shrine, once visited by the Pope. The Madonna of Kevelaer is a common theme from a large statue in the park to postcards. The "Haus zu Der fünf Ringen (appearing on Notgeld, NG) still stands in Goch and the "Stein Tor" (NG) is now the town museum.

The Schwanenburg castle (NG) still stands in Kleve, with its magnificent view of the border area, as does the Dom (NG) in Xanten. In the epic poem, "Nibelungenlied,"

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MONTHLY NOTGELD QUOTE. . .

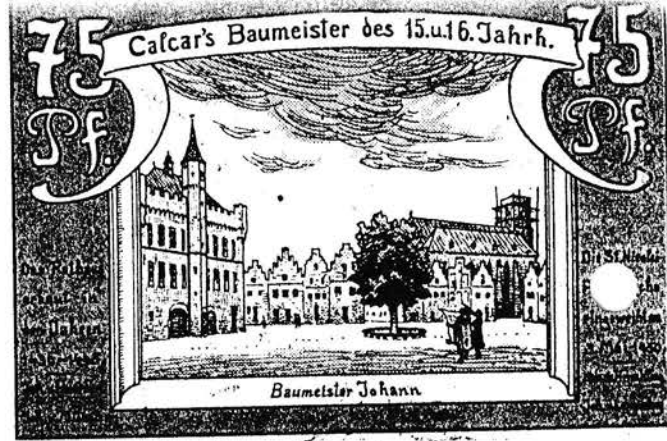


Year 1284: On the day of John and Paul, It was the 25th of June By a piper dressed in motley colors 130 Hameln-born children were led to Calvary, lost at the Koppen.

A Pied-Piper theme is followed on a 25-Pfennig piece of Hameln, L-549, dated June 1, 1921.



DRUCK: J. A. SCHWARZ, LINDENBERG / ALLGÄU



The cathedral (Dom) of Xanten appears on a 50-Pfennig note, L-1426; L-20, Calcar, 75-Pfennig, shows a downtown view.

Siegfried, the dragon slayer, was born in Xanten. But one never could find dragons in Geldern (NG) nor weasels in Wesel (NG)

Kleve reflects much history. From this town came Anne of Cleves, fifth wife of Henry VIII. Henry described her as "ugly as a cow."

In the Kleve Catholic church is an extensive memorial dedicated to the many Jews from Cleve who were victims of the Nazis.

The Northern Rhineland is predominantly Catholic. *Diebels Altbier* is the preferred beverage and asparagus is a major crop along the the border under the wings of the windmills.

For those unfamiliar with German asparagus, (Spargel) it is grown under earth to keep it white and succulent. As the shoots reappear, a special implement is used to cover them with soil. "Spargel and Schinken" (ham) is the dish of choice at every Gasthaus in the spring.

The dollar was not Notgeld yet in the early '70s and a kilo of fresh Spargel would have cost a Guilder or two in the Venlo market (25 to 50 cents US). Also, smoked eel, three for 2.50 guilders, is a caviar-like delicacy.

Venlo is on the Maas River (Meuse in France) with its attendant barge traffic. It always was a little startling to see the superstructure of a barge seemingly crossing through the Flat Dutch landscape, since the river channel is well below the level of the surrounding fields.



D. R. G. M. 795670.

A dragon seeths fire on a Mark Scheck of Geldern, L-400, undated. Three weasels run on the shield of Wesel, 50-Pfennig, L-1373.





Sides of bacon (Speck) enter the black market in Germany, seen on 50-Pfennig note of Cranenburg, on the Dutch border, L-236. Yet in Kevelaer are the "Haus zu Der fuenf Ringen" and the Stein Tor, on a 50-Pfennig note, L671.

There are no military tokens from RAF Laarbruch of which I am aware. The British draw a selected portion of their pay in the local currency wherever they are stationed. The remainder goes to a bank account in the UK. There is no town of Laarbruch. The name comes from a part of the forest from which the base was carved after WWII, between Weeze and Twisteden. The runway ends a few meters from the Dutch border.

Venlo, just inside The Netherlands across from Germany, was the focal point of cloak-and-dagger intrigue in the early days of World War II. As related by Tom Shachtman in *The Phony War 1939-1940*, published by Harper and Row in 1980, S. Payne Best, one of England's best agents (007?) made contact with a German refugee in The Netherlands.

"The Phony War" was not an invention of Shachtman. U.S. Senator William E. Borah, referring to the period between Sept. 1, 1939, and May 10, 1940, said "This is a phony war." In England they called it the phoney war or the bore war; in France, "la drole de guerre," and in Germany, "der Sitzkrieg."

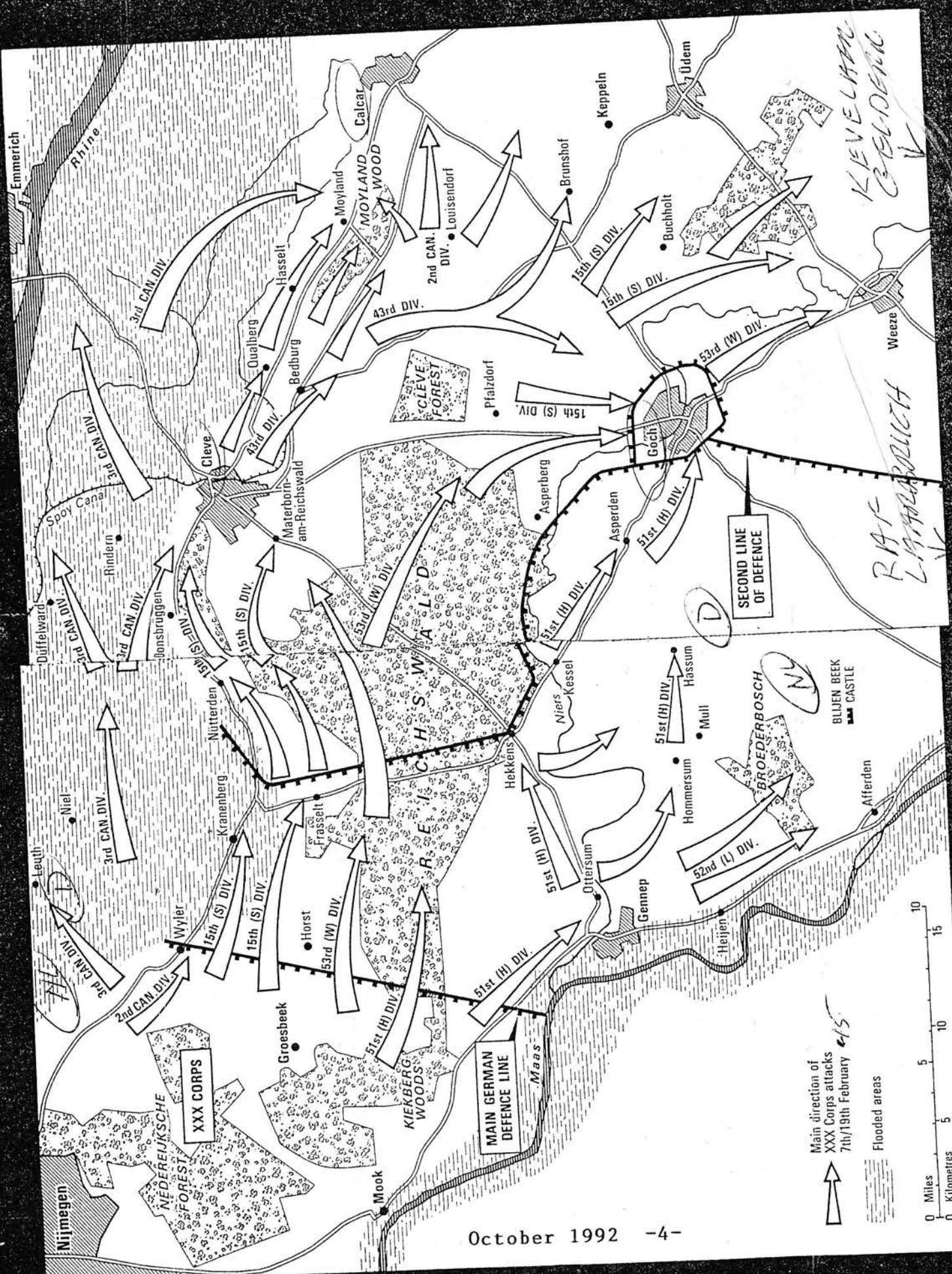
In the early days of the war, Best met in clandestine meetings with some German officials who were said to oppose the war.

The Germans were described as being "skittish" during the meetings, Shachtman wrote.

When meeting in a cafe near Dinxperloo, on the Dutch-German border northwest of Bocholt, Germany, Best and another agent (008?), Captain R. Henry Stevens, were speaking with some Germans when Dutch border guards became suspicious.

The border guards were reassured by a Dutch policeman, Klops, who was in cahoots with the British.

12 FEB 1945



October 1992 -4-

XXX Corps breakthrough



Um desuns Ohren sich rauschend schmiegt
 Der Wälder dunkler Aranz
 Die zu zu deinem Füßen liegt
 Gehüllt in Duft und Glanz
 Vom Berge schaut die Schwanenburg
 Aus in's Land so weit
 Gott schütze Gott schütze dich heut
 und alle Zeit! Clevel Lied-2



Notgeld of Cleve, 75-Pfennig, depicts a map of the area and the Schwanenburg castle, L-223.



Wohl können rings des Rheines Lauf
 viel Städte stolz und reich
 Doch keine kommt an das Land auf
 An Schönheit anet gleich
 O Cleve, erlaube Vaterstadt
 Du schütze weit und breit
 Gott schütze Gott schütze dich heut
 und alle Zeit! Clevel Lied-1



To provide communication, the Germans were given a radio transmitter by the British agents.

Later a German major named Schaemmel told Best and Stevens that the German army wished to stage a coup against Hitler but needed reassurance that the British would negotiate honorably with the new German government.

Best said he would pledge himself to that goal, without committing his government.

Hitler was said to be tiring of the cat-and-mouse game played with the British agents, and was looking for an excuse to prove the Dutch were not neutral, thus giving the Germans cause to invade The Netherlands.

Major Schaemmel, who really was Walter Schellenberg of the SS, transmitted on his radio a desire to let Best speak with a high Nazi official in Venlo on the afternoon of Nov. 6.

As the agents arrived with Klops, they noticed Dutch border guards on the alert. Schaemmel was seen on the veranda of the cafe and they went ahead to meet with him. Suddenly other German cars boxed them in, machine guns were fired over their heads and they were asked to surrender.

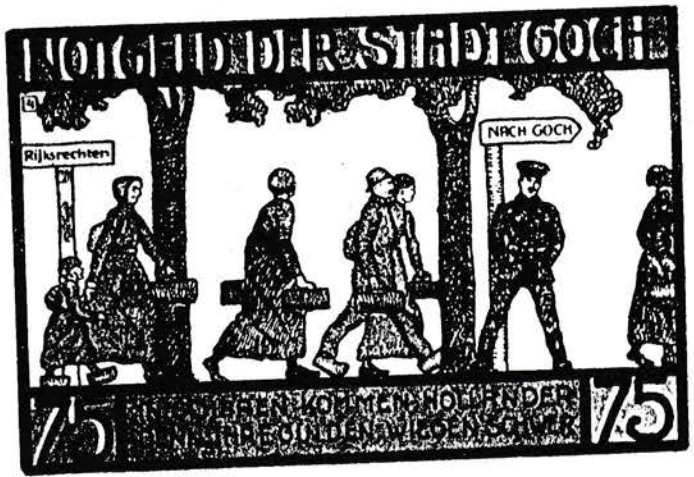
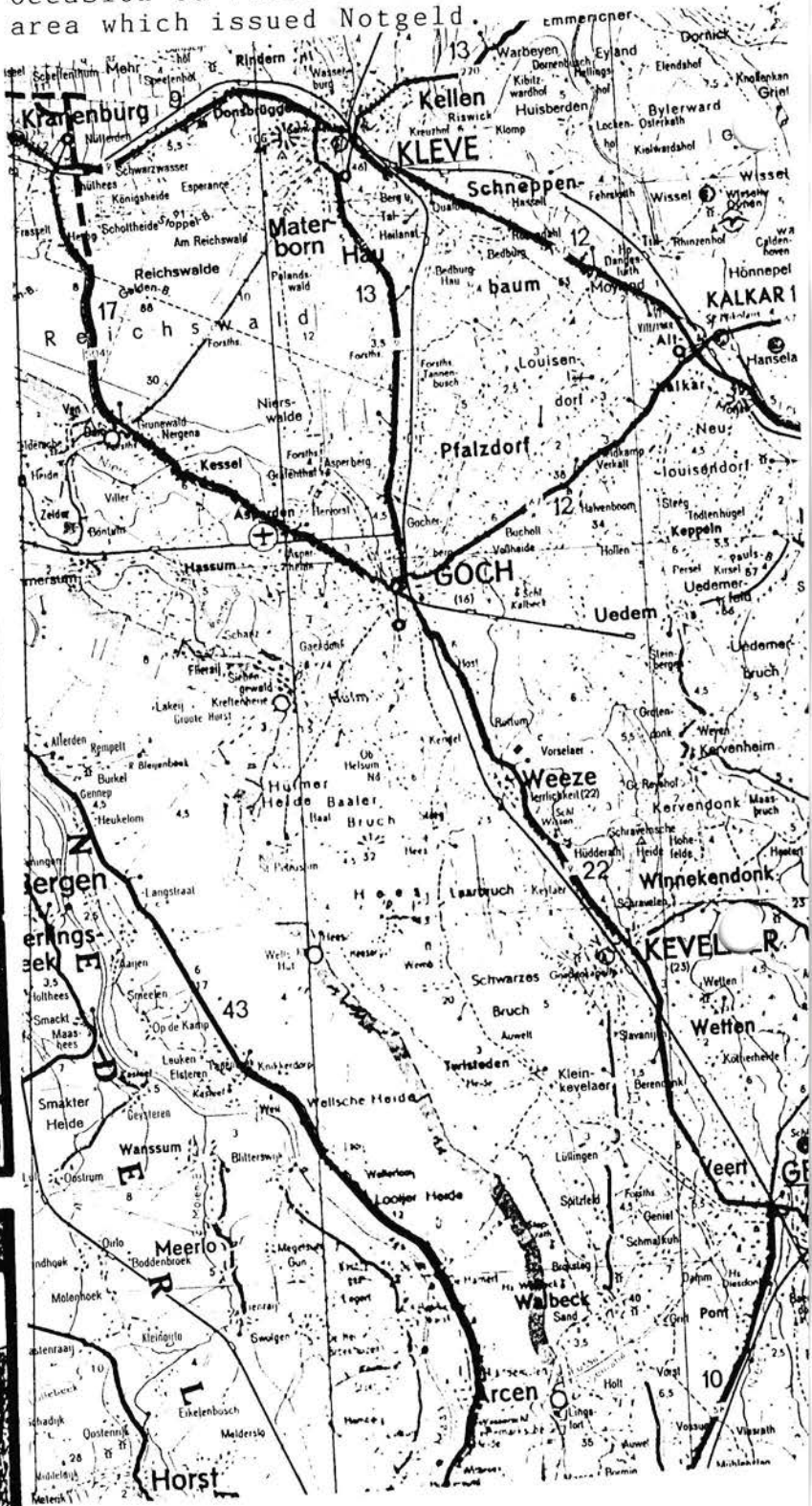
The agents raised their hands over their heads but Klops fired back and was instantly killed. The British agents were taken across the German border as prisoners.

Schellenberg/Schaemmel's last transmission on the radio was "Negotiations for any length of time with conceited and silly people are tedious. You will understand, therefore, that we are giving them up. You are hereby bidden a hearty farewell by your affectionate German opposition. (signed) THE GESTAPO."

Twelve minutes after Hitler left the Buergerbraeu Keller in Munich on the evening of Nov. 8, 1939, two days after the Venlo affair, a bomb exploded behind the rostrum from which he spoke. The speech commemorated his speech in the same location on that date in 1923. The British were blamed by Hitler for the blast.

The Brits built all their RAF stations west of the Rhine for defensive purposes, except for Guetersloh, which was an Air Defense Station closer to the potential threat in the east.

with the British between 1970 and 1972. It was at a coin show in Goch in that period that I first saw Notgeld and have been hooked ever since. I also had occasion to visit all the towns in the area which issued Notgeld.



"The Smuggling Game" is the theme of a series of six 75-Pfennig notes of Goch, L-431.

THE FRAKTUR PRICELIST

OCTOBER 1992

Fuessen April 1, 1918 50 Pf P-S 683 \$1.25*
 Greiz und Zeulenroda Nov. 1, 1918 5 Mark K-185b \$2.50
 Groemitz May 12, 1921 1 Mark (50+50 Pf) L-460 \$.65
 Greussen/Thuer. ND 25, 50 Pf L-458 \$2.50*
 Grimma Nov. 4, 1918 10 Pf \$.40
 Grimma Dec. 1, 1920 10, 25 Pf P-S 783 \$2.25
 Groemitz May 12, 1921 75 Pf, 1 Mark L-460 \$1.25
 Grossbreitenbach ND 50 Pf L-464 \$1.75*
 Gross-Flottbek Aug. 1, 1921 10, 25, 30, 50, 75 Pf, 1 Mark L-468 \$4*
 Grossrudestadt Oct. 1, 1921 25 Pf L-471 \$4*
 Gross Salze Aug. 10, 1921 P-S 824a \$.25
 Grube Ilse ND (1917) 2, 5, 10, 20 Pf P-S 832g \$4.50*
 Gruenberg/Hesse March 9, 1922 50, 75 (2), 100 (2), 200 (2) Pf L-473 \$5 (Paste marks)
 Gruenberg/Schlesien ND 25, 50 Pf P-S 396a \$1.25
 Gruenberg/Schlesien ND 50 (2) Pf L-466 V a blue moon L-466d \$2.50*
 Gruenberg/Schlesien ND 1 Mark L-467 \$1*
 Gruenberg/Schlesien ND 75 (2) Pf; 1 Mark (6) L-474c \$5*
 Gruenberg/Schlesien ND 25 Pf L-474 \$.60*
 Gruenberg/Schlesien ND 75 (4) Pf L-474d \$5*
 Gruenberg/Schlesien ND 75 Pf, 1, 1.50 Mark L-475 Schecks \$2.25*
 Grundhof/Angeln April 1, 1921 75 Pf L-478 Plebiscite \$.75*
 Guestrow Feb. 1, 1922 50 (3), 75 (3), 100 (2) Pf L-480b \$10*
 Guhrau/Schlesien Dec. 1, 1920 10 Pf \$.65*
 Guhrau/Schlesien ND 1, 2 Mark L-481 Schecks \$1.25*
 Haag Aug. 25, 1923 1 Million Mark Hoermann & Co. \$2.50
 Hachenburg Jun 1, 1921 10 (2), 25 (2), 50 (3) Pf L-483 \$4.50*
 Hadersleben, Denmark 1920 10, 50 Pf P-S 847f \$2.25*
 Hainholz ND 25, 50, 75 (2) Pf L-487 \$8*
 Halberstadt Nov. 2, 1920 10, 20, 50 Pf L-489 \$1.75*
 Halberstadt April 27, 1921 25, 50 Pf L-489c \$2.25*
 Halle/Saale ND 10 (4), 20 (5) Pf L-493* \$4.50*
 Halle/Saale May 1, 1917 50 Pf \$.60
 Halle/Saale May 1, 1920 50 Pf P-S 857e \$.50
 Halle/Saale Nov. 6-13, 1921 50 (4) Pf L-491 Notgeld Show \$5*
 Halle/Saale Sept. 18, 1923 500 Million Mark Reichsbahndirektion \$4
 Halle/Saale Sept. 26, 1922 100 Mark K-249 \$2.50
 Halle/Saale Oct. 1, 1923 500,000 Mark Reichsbahndirektion \$2
 Hamborn/Rhein Sept. 1, 1923 10 Millionen Mark K-21061 \$3
 Hamburg June 1, 1920 50 Pf P-S 871b \$.65*
 Hamburg May 15, 1921 40 Pf L-508 Drei Turme Verlag \$10*
 Hamburg July 1, 1921 50, 75 Pf, 1 Mark L-515 \$1.75*
 Hamburg Aug. 12-24, 1921 50, 75 Pf, 1 Mark (2) L-522 \$2.25*
 Hamburg ND 50 Pf L-526 Lehrerseminar \$4
 Hamburg ND 50 (4) Pf L-546 Zoo \$3*
 Hamburger Hallig ND 50 Pf, 1 Mark L-547 \$5.50*
 Hameln July 1, 1918 25, 50 P-S 924b Pied Piper \$2*
 Hameln June 1, 1921 25, 50, 75 Pf 1 Mark L-549a Set \$2.50*
 Hameln Sept. 1, 1921 50 (5) Pf L-549bI \$6.50*
 Hameln Sept. 1, 1921 75 (6) Pf Set L-549c \$7.50*

Hamm/Westfalen Oct. 1, 1921 25, 50 Pf L-551d \$3*
 Hammelburg/Bayern March 10, 1918 10, 25, 50 Pf P-S 930 \$4.50*
 Hanau Aug. 12, 1920 10 Pf P-S Bros. Grimm on back P-S 931c
 \$.60*
 Hannover Sept. 1, 1918 50 Pf P-S 936b Edler & Krische \$6*
 Hannover Dec. 1, 1919 25 Pf P-S 933e \$1
 Hannover Feb. 1, 1922 2, 3, 5, 10, 20 Mark P-S 1276 \$8*
 Hannover/Linden Aug. 10, 1923 1 Millionen Mark K-2188 \$4
 Hannover-Muenden ND 75 Pf, 1.25 Mark L-560 \$2.25
 Hannover-Muenden July 1, 1921 25 Pf L-559 \$.75*
 Harburg/Elbe Sept. 15, 1921 50 (4) Pf Set L-562 \$3*
 Harzgerode July 7, 1921 50 Pf L-564a \$.65*
 Harzgerode July 7, 1921 25, 50, 75 Pf L-564b \$2*
 Harzgerode July 7, 1921 25 (2) Pf Haenechen L-564c \$1.25*
 Harzgerode July 7, 1921 25, 75 Pf L-564c \$1/25*
 Haslach Sept. 27, 1917 50 Pf P-S 950 \$1.50*
 Hasloh ND 25 Pf L-566 \$1.75*
 Hessischer-Oldendorf Oct. 1, 1921 25, 50, 75 Pf, 1 Mark Set
 L-588 \$3*
 Heessen, Bad bei Eilsen April 1, 1921 25, 50 Pf, 1 Mark L-569
 \$2.50*
 Heilbronn/Neckar December 1917 50 Pf P-S 965e \$3
 Heidelberg/Neckar Aug. 1, 1923 100,000 Mark K-2279 \$2.50
 Heiligenhafen March 1, 1922 1, 2 Mark L-573 \$4.50
 Heisterbach/Siebengebirge Nov. 1, 1921 50, 75 Pf L-575 \$3.25*
 Helgoland Oct. 1919 25, 50 Pf P-S 974c \$2
 Helgoland April 1921 20 (2), 25 (2), 50 (2) Pf; Dec. 1920,
 1 Mark Heinz Schiestl L-577 \$5.50*
 Helmarshausen/Diemel May 15, 1921 50 Pf, 1, 2 Mark L-578 \$4*
 Helmbrechts ND 50 Pf P-S 976 \$1.25*
 Hemdingen ND 25 (2), 50 Pf L-581 \$6*
 Herford March 4, 1920 10 PF P-S 980d worn \$.50
 Hermsdorf/Sachsen April 4, 1919 10 Pf P-S 981b \$1*
 Herne/Westfalen July 1, 1921 25 Pf L-584 \$.65*
 Herrstadt/Schlesien ND 25, 50 Pf P-S 985b \$1.50*
 Hersfeld Nov. 4, 1918 1, 2, 10, 20 Mark K-217 \$10
 Herstelle Nov. 1, 1921 1, 2 Mark L-586 \$1.25*
 Herzberg/Elster ND 10, 25 Pf P-S 988 \$2.25*
 Hessische-Oldendorf Oct. 1, 1921 25, 50, 75 Pf, 1 Mark Set
 L-588 \$3*
 Hohndorf Sept. 30, 1921 50 (6) Pf Set L-605 \$4*
 Holzminden ND 25, 50, 75 Pf Set L-607 \$1.75*
 Honnef, Bad Oct. 1, 1921 50 (4), 99 (4) Pf Set L-609 \$10*
 *Uncirculated

K-Keller catalogs; L-Lindman Serienscheine; P-S Pick-Siemsen

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