2.2)  English Print

The stamps of the English print were printed in the London printing works, Harrison & Sons. Unlike the other two prints, the English stamps were printed using the photogravure method, which can be clearly seen on closer inspection of the stamp design. Another feature which allows conclusive identification of the English print is the "dotted" structure of the stamp design, as well as the fine perforation.

As with the American print, a sheet of these stamps also comprised four counter sheets arranged in the same way. For identification purposes, the sheets always had a plate number above field 2 and were marked A, B, C, D clockwise. A half cylinder sheet consisted of only two counter sheets arranged side by side. The English print also had a number of special features in the margins which were later used to aid adjustment of the sheets in the perforator or for counting the sheets.

There are gauge pins (like the crosshairs of a rifle sight) in various positions in the margins depending on the position on the counter sheet.
Gauge holes only occur in the case of whole cylinder sheets. Gauge holes with a right-angle are located in the upper margin (above field 7) of sheet A and in the lower margin (under field 97) of sheet D.

The B and C sheets of the 6 and 12 Pfennig values of some of the type 1 sheets have gauge holes without a right-angle in the upper margin (above field 4) and in the lower margin (below field 94).

During the printing and cutting of the stamps in the London printing works of HARRISON & SONS Ltd a number of unintended variants occurred. There are, however, far fewer of these than is the case with the American and later German prints.

Offsets were also possible here, as the ink was air-dried, these occurring as a result of inconsistencies in the sequence of printing or simply of carelessness on the part of the print workers.

Extra perforations in the margins of the sheets occur in the upper margin, the lower margin and the left-hand margin causing gutters of various widths.

The 5- and 6-digit numbers which can be seen above were typically used in the English print for counting the sheets. They appear in the upper or lower margins in various positions, depending on the type of sheet or cylinder.

Printing plate errors also occurred in the English print but, as they are relatively small and inconspicuous, they are not illustrated here.
2.2) German Print

The German stamps were printed by the company Westermann in Brunswick. Initially only the values which were most urgently needed for over-the-counter use were printed. As only simple letters and postcards were permitted for local and long-distance mail, only the values required for this were produced. Ultimately the German print comprised 20 different values.

Although the Allied Military Government very quickly made the stamps of the American and English prints available for sale over the counter in large numbers, it soon became clear that the number was far from sufficient to meet the existing demand for postal services.
It was quickly realised that sufficient numbers of stamps could only be produced in Germany. In June 1945 the Allied Military Government charged the Brunswick Regional Postal Directorate (RPD) with finding a printing works capable of producing adequate numbers of stamps. The company Georg Westermann in Brunswick was the one finally chosen as suitable. Westermann was able to supply essays to the RPD before the end of June.

All values of the first series of essays were printed in violet, either on card paper (left) or normal paper (middle and right). In addition, all values were printed again on normal paper in ochre and submitted to the RPD Brunswick without perforation.

After the Allied Military Government was satisfied that Westermann was able to meet the requirements, further essays were ordered. This time the values ordered were those which were actually sold over the counter at this time, these being 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15 and 25 Pfennig.

All values were printed on available label paper in the original colours which were later to be sold over the counter. The second series of essays were delivered to the Braunschweig RPD between 30 June and 3 July 1945.

From documents still in existence it can be seen that the Allied Military Government ordered further essays on 4 July 1945, providing exact specifications for quantity, colour and design.

The third series of essays with the values as seen above was already delivered to the Brunswick RPD at the end of July 1945. The print used Bremen paper which has a grey tinge, is of inferior quality and can be clearly distinguished using uv light from the stamps which were later available at post offices. This same order also included other values which were urgently needed for standard everyday postal services.
Further values were needed to streamline service at the post office counter as, over time, supplementary services and charges over and above the standard postcards and letters were planned. It can be seen from delivery notes and invoices of the Westermann company that by mid August 1945 essays of all the additional values of the German print had been delivered to the Brunswick Regional Postal Directorate.

The paper of the 4th series of essays is white and relatively thick compared with the samples shown earlier. These essays are clearly distinguishable from the final print under uv light. The gum is coarser and somewhat thicker.

The production of essays was not the only work being done by Westermann in July. While the production of essays 3 and 4 was still ongoing, the firm received orders for the regular production of stamps. Various quantities were produced depending on the values of the stamps. The sheets were cut after printing and perforated after cutting. A counter sheet consists of 100 stamps, arranged 10 by 10.

As early as the beginning of July 1945 Westermann received an order by word of mouth to print and deliver as soon as possible 2,000,000 stamps @ 6Pf . The written order followed on 11 July. By then, the 2 million stamps had already been printed, made ready for delivery and had been cleared as suitable for sale. This first print contains stamps of two slightly different colours and these are different again from those of the final print. They appear dark brown or brown under uv light, whereas the final print is ochre in colour.

Thereafter all other values were printed and delivered to post offices in line with demand and availability. Delivery was made to the RPD Brunswick and stamps of the German print were sold solely in post offices in the British Zone.
The time pressure under which the stamps were printed in Brunswick was many times greater than that experienced by the other prints. As a result a number of variations occurred in all values.

Sheets of paper which were glued together could come about in various ways - for example, when during printing a sheet tore and had to be repaired or during the production of the paper one sheet came to an end and a new one had to be attached to it.

Beim Druck wurden auch immer wieder Quetschfalten produziert, die den Kontrolleuren meist entgingen, da sie erst beim auseinanderziehen des Papiers deutlich erkannt werden konnten.

During printing folds in the paper often occurred which were mostly missed by quality controllers as they only became apparent when the paper was smoothed out later.

Offset images are relatively frequent in the German print simply on account of the fact that more values were produced than in either of the other prints of AM POST stamps.

The ink was air dried and if the sheets were printed in too quick succession it might happen that the ink was still moist when the next sheet was placed on the finished pile.
For various reasons, a relatively large number of **plate errors** occurred in all values of the German print. These might already occur in the design of the stamps and be transferred to the photographic film used for the production of the printing plates. Damage could occur in every phase of the work, including damage to the plates themselves.

Every **error** imaginable in perforation occurs in the German print. Though the sheets were checked before delivery, the high demand for stamps probably meant that any quality deemed just about acceptable was delivered to the post offices.

On the left we can see 3 errors in one block - double perforation in the margin with two very wide stamps and one very narrow one. On the right, a fold in the margin.

**Partial perforation** occurred when a row was forgotten or omitted. This could happen at all margins or even between two stamps.

Incomplete margins do not necessarily mean an unperforated stamp; if the perforation slips too far to one side, it might be cut off (which happens even today).
Sheet numbers were mainly used in the first half of the print period to facilitate counting of the sheets and to prevent pilferage of materials through the use of consecutive numbering. Initially the numbers were in black, later there were 2-, 3- or 4-digit numbers in red.

It occasionally happened that a number was omitted, wrong or illegible. In such cases, the number was added by hand, usually with a red pencil but sometimes with a standard or indelible pencil.

Packer marks were added by a Westermann employee (above left, next to field 10 or 20) to confirm that the correct number of 50 sheets per package had been handed over. The sheets were also dated and signed.

Checker marks (in the lower right margin usually next to field 100) were added by a post office employee to confirm due acceptance of the packages from Westermann by the RPD Brunswick.

Thus margin inscriptions in the German print were chiefly used for counting and inspection purposes before the stamps were sorted into packages of 50 sheets and delivered to the post offices to fulfill their real purpose - to be used on letters and postcards in Germany.
3.) The resumption of mail services after the War.

Before the new AM POST stamps became available, mail services for postcards and letters was authorised in many regions of the country at least on a local level.

Local postcard from Hamburg, sold on 18 June 1945 and used on 26 June 1945.

Letter from the first day of use of AM POST stamps in the RPD Hanover, 20 June 1945.
At first mail services were limited to the sending of postcards and letters within the individual RPDs. However, on 2 July 1945 clearance was given for services between most RPDs within the British Zone.

Postcard from the first day of resumption of services in the British Zone from RPD Siegen (RPD Cologne) and Meschede (RPD Dortmund)

In the American Zone it took longer until the AM POST stamps were available. Here is a local postcard from Munich dated 16 July 1945 - the first day of use in that city.
Yet more time elapsed before all values were available for use. The first day of use for 5 and 8 Pfennig stamps in Munich was 16 July 1945; the other values did not become available until the beginning of September."


Early example of a long-distance postcard with emergency postmark, Murrhardt (Württemberg), dated 7 September 1945. AM POST stamps were first used by the RPD Stuttgart on 5 Sept 1945.
When postal services first resumed, only simple postcards and letters were allowed. The charge for a local postcard was 5 Rpf and for local letters 8 Rpf. For long-distance mail the charges were 6 Rpf for a postcard and 12 Rpf for a letter. In the RPDs in Kiel and Hamburg the special rates for local mail were abolished for a short period.

In the RPD in Kiel from 14 June to 11 August 1945 the charges for long-distance mail were applied for local letters and postcards. In the Hamburg RPD long-distance charges were used for local mail from 10 July to 11 August 1945.