

THE STORY BEHIND THE STAMP

1949 Quer durch Deutschland um das grüne Band der IRA¹ (1949 Across Germany for the green ribbon of the IRA)

By Thomas Matthies 19 Jun. 2017

The 'Tour of Germany' has an incoherent history in realization and naming². In 1949 the postal administration of the Bizone³ in Germany decided to publish two commemorative stamps for the 3rd holding after the war under the title "Quer durch Deutschland". But there is only little information about the stamps and the design: Graphics by Staatsdruckerei Berlin, First Day of Issue on 15. Mai 1949 and technical details.

One day when researching on 'Quer durch Deutschland' I found an old issue of '**DER SPIEGEL**' - the german newsmagazine - with a story about the tour of 1949 and it's winner, Harry Saager⁴. I was surprised about the similarity between the stamp image and the title page showing Saager – just 'ge**SP**IEGEL' (= mirrored).

Was the photographer inspired by the stamps?

As I'm looking for antiquarian books about cycling sport from time to time a few years later I have found an official program of this tour with the stamp motif on the cover. An advertisement – "Commemorating stamps promoting bicycle sport" was found inside.



DER SPIEGEL 31/1949





**Sondermarken
werben für den
Radsport**

Zum erstenmal in der Geschichte der Philatelie hat die deutsche Postverwaltung ein Sonder-Wertzeichen anlässlich des Rennens „Quer durch Deutschland“ herausgegeben, das in Sammlerkreisen schon vor dem Start zu einem begehrten Sammelobjekt geworden ist. Die zwei Werte 10 Pfennig plus 5 Pfennig Aufschlag in Grün und 20 Pfennig plus 10 Pfennig Aufschlag in Rostrot zeigen das schon von der Werbung her bekannte prächtige Bild eines Straßenfahrers in voller Fahrausrüstung in wilder Jagd, gefolgt von der Meute des Feldes. Die Herausgabe der Marke unterstreicht neben den zahllosen Sonderausgaben der deutschen Tages- und Fachblätter während der Tage vom 9. bis 23. Juli, welchen sportlichen und wirtschaftlichen Wert die Öffentlichkeit dem Rennen beimißt.



Sad to say that I have not read the advertising carefully enough ('... show the splendid picture of a road cyclist already known from advertising ...') and of course I thought the

¹ IRA = Industrial consortium to promote cycling and bicycle racing

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grünes_Band_der_IRA_1949

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deutschland_Tour#history

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bizone>

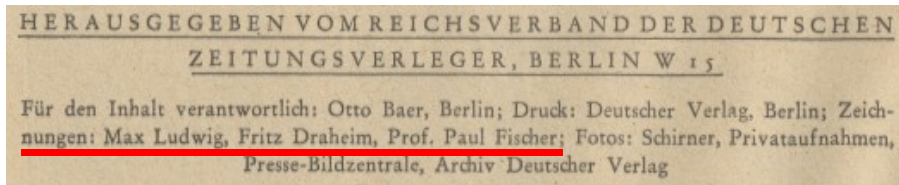
⁴ Los, Matze! (DER SPIEGEL 31/1949) www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-44437403.html

program editor was also inspired by the stamps – I did not notice my mistake until I have found the next one:

The program of 'Deutschlandfahrt 1938' – showing the same motif 11 years before the stamps were published.

The cover of the 1937's program (see at the end) was a different so the design was first used in 1938 (and again in 1939).

In opposite to the 1949er this program has a detailed publishing info and there are 3 persons named for illustrations (same as in 1937):



And when we use our microscopic vision we can see the artist's signature:



M. گنسی ... **Max Ludwig** is the artist that has designed the original motif for this stamp. I suspect that was previously unknown. Sadly I couldn't find any information about this artist. There was an artist Max Ludwig in this time but that is another person who died in 1940. As one can see the signatures are similar but not identical. The same applies to the cover illustrations. So now we can play a 'finding differences game' to clear which is the real template for the stamp.¹



Proof of the stamp:
'STAATSDRUCKEREI'
instead of 'DEUTSCHE
POST' and without
added value.
(catalogued in "Michel
Deutschland Spezial")



More proofs (value!!)

What can we conclude from this?

- The motif of the stamp based on a design by Max Ludwig for the program
- The original and printer's material seemed to be lost during the war
- Program's editor Otto Baer (1938 & 1949) has ordered the same design from Max Ludwig again (1949 or for 47/48 programs?)
- Staatsdruckerei has used it as template for the work of an employed (?) engraver

But that are only speculations!

Up to now I have no further programs found before or after 49 with the same design up to now but in 1950 there was a badge published with it. And during the researches I found some

... more remarkable stuff

Newsreel: Welt im Film 218/1949 from 01.08.1949

www.filmothek.bundesarchiv.de/video/583650?set_lang=en



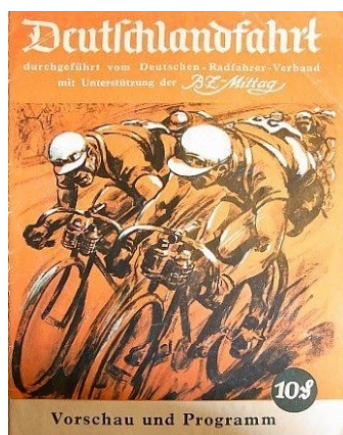
"Helden der Landstrasse"
A documentary from 1950



Lost film footage found in the archive of former IRA member August Rabeneick GmbH
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gz_RnZDk9Ow



The program of "Quer durch die Ostzone" 9.-18.9.1949
(Soviet occupation zone)



The program of
Deutschlandfahrt
1937

... and 1939



¹ Pay particular attention to the last rider of the peloton and leading rider's right brake lever