

Ever Heard of Sparrigummi or Vollgummi? by Stan Cronwall

No they are not new flavors of gummi bears, or the fun cartoon-like characters for the upcoming summer Olympic Games in Tokyo Japan in 2020.

Nope, guess again.

After WW II there were shortages of almost everything in European countries. Believe it or not that included the makings for the gum to go on the adhesive side of postage stamps.

Sparrigummi was an effort to economize stamp production by applying the adhesive in a golf ball pattern which used only half as much gum. If your stamp was vollgummi it has gum across the entire reverse side.

This how a stamp with sparrigummi appears:



Reverse of stamp values 3pf to 8pf (Scott# 16N 1-5)

Check your post war mint stamps from Thuringia in the German Soviet Zone of Occupation. This is the set issued starting October 1, 1945 and continuing through January 1, 1946.



Complete set of Scott #16N 1-8
(including the imperfs of 16N 7a
and 8a)

If your Thuringia stamps from this set are on cover or card, or otherwise used chances are you will never know if they were sparrigummi or vollgummi. (Licking or otherwise moistening the gum destroys the “evidence”)

But, if you want to start hacking through the weeds surrounding Thuringia in the Soviet Zone of Occupation, you will be tasking yourself to deal with 14 different paper types and gum combinations for this set alone.

I'm told this is the kind of thing that separates a true collector from an amasser. Good luck and happy hunting.

Note: These stamps, plus extra values, were purchased at the stamp club meeting on Feb. 10, 2018.

Stan Cronwall is a member and his collecting interests include Germany: Third Reich 1933-45 and the areas it occupied (stamps covers & cards). He also collects U.S. World War II Patriotic Covers and Cards; Civil War Patriotic Covers (both U.S. and CSA); U.S. Naval Covers; DDR stamps; and, Post WW II Soviet Zone Hitler Head Obliteration stamps, covers & cards.