

KRIEGSFÜRSORGE **(War Relief Agency)**

From the beginning of WWI, there was a continuous collection for local “war care” in Germany.

Keen to demonstrate patriotism, many people volunteered their time for the war charity “Kriegsfürsorge” in Frankfurt and elsewhere.

Initially (1914), the charity supported only injured soldiers, their wives and widows; but as the war evolved, food and clothing shortages joined healthcare-related entities needing assistance. Soon the Kriegsfürsorge had to drastically expanded their remit to include those who had lost their livelihoods because of the war.

At first, by way of motivation, the results of collections were regularly published in the media as “gift lists”, but the diminishing returns to appeals over the months inferred very different. Of course, there were numerous other *ad hoc* collections – Opfertag - competing for income; the Kaisersgeburtstag donation (27 January, the Emperor's birthday) and the strange Kaiserin's Reichswollwoche (Empress' Empire Wool Week), the East Prussia Aid (8 October 1914), the Hindenburg Donation (21 January 1916) and the Submarine Donation (30 April 1917), "Help for German prisoners of War" (15 May 1917) and Tobacco Day, amongst many others.

Below are Patriotic postcards sold through the Kriegsfürsorge solely to raise funds for the Deutsche Rotes Kreuz.

Catalogue entries:

1. Offizielle Kriegsfürsorge, Rotes Kreuz, Kriegsfürsorgeamt, Kriegshilfsbüro Nr. 49 (Embossed Postcard Official War Relief Service, Red Cross, War Relief Office, War Relief Agency No. 49)
2. Postcard HelferIn vom Roten Kreuz, DRK, Armbinde (Postcard helper from the Red Cross, German Red Cross, armband).

Though outside the scope of this collection, it is worth mentioning some important collectable modalities other than postcards that were used to motivate and support morale throughout the war years: Posters, Cinderella stamps bearing city or town heraldic images and “Good For” notes (values 5 Pfg, 10 Pfg, 50 Pfg) endorsed Freiwillige Kriegsfürsorge. Diese Karte wird an den bezeichneten Stellen mit 5 Pfg. in Zahlung genommen. Quedlinburg 1915. Der Ausschuss. (Voluntary War Care. This card will be taken in payment at the designated places with 5 Pfg [10 Pfg, 50 Pfg.] Quedlinburg 1915. The Committee.)

On 17 September 1915, a medal of honour for war care was donated by Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig of Hesse-Darmstadt, then an officer at Kaiser Wilhelm's headquarters. It was intended to be awarded to people who had made outstanding contributions to war care during the First World War. From 27 June 1916, this medal was only given to women who did not meet the conditions for the award of the Military Medical Cross.