



AUSTRIA

Journal of The Austrian Philatelic Society.

Number 170

Summer 2010



Austro-Americana.

D. S. D. „MARTHA WASHINGTON“. — Ausschiffung der Passagiere in Neapel.

The “Martha Washington” of the Austro-Americana Line loading passengers at Naples.
See article “Naval and Maritime Mail” on page 6.

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Edited by Andy Taylor

EDITORIAL 170

Dear Members,

Occasional discussions have been ongoing for some years as to the benefits and disbenefits of changing AUSTRIA from A5 to the more usual A4 format. It was always realised that you can't suit everyone. But, other than inertia, reasons for NOT changing were mainly the increased printing or postage costs or the fact that we had a large supply of binders for the A5 journal already in stock.

AUSTRIA is, of course, a top-quality journal, winner of many awards and the envy of other specialist societies. Its content and appearance have improved tremendously during Andy's editorship, but he is not one to rest on his laurels. There are problems with the A5 format, increasing content means that the A5 size is too thick and will not lay flat, and, having sold all but the last dozen or so binders, we can no longer obtain supplies of A5 binders at an affordable price.

In addition, the A4 page size provides the Editor with far more scope in the layout of the articles to show larger illustrations, proximity of illustrations to corresponding text, and so on, and has also enabled a small increase in type-size. As there is now no significant difference in the total cost of production and posting, it was agreed that, as a project, a 'mock-up' of a possible A4 Journal should be produced. Having taken soundings with a number of Members at the last two meetings, all were unanimously in favour of the proposal. I therefore asked Andy to implement the change.

The results of the project are before you. I hope you like it and will join with me in congratulating Andy on yet another improvement to AUSTRIA!

Martin Brumby
President

Don't forget to **book for the APS Weekend at Harrogate, 8-10 October**. Details were sent with the Newsletter; if yours has been mislaid the Editor, who is also this year's Festmeister, will be delighted to provide them again.

Dear Members,

Since the Autumn of 1988, I have been the Distributor of this our Journal: from issue 86 until 169. In that time I have posted over 22,000 copies to you, and the cost of postage has gone up from £82.55 to £238 per issue!

It has been a great job, and I have enjoyed doing it for our Society. Mind you, I've had a lot of good people working with me – the late Arthur Godden and John Giblin, plus Andy Taylor, Martin Brumby and John Anthony who have helped me a great deal. And not to forget our former Editor Nick Harty, who found us an excellent printer (Swiftprint of Huddersfield) when Albert Bagualy of Stockport retired.

All that remains to say now that I have retired is THANKS TO ALL, and my best wishes to Carol Ralph who is taking over as Postmaster of the Journal.

Brian Madeley

Gentle Reader!

You will probably have noticed that this issue is physically larger than previous ones, and “the big bird has flown” taking its red stripes with it. Issues 1–22 had individually-illustrated covers while 23–97 had the word AUSTRIA printed diagonally; the composite coat-of-arms first appeared on issue 98. There are several reasons in favour of the change, and several against: my editorial judgement is that the time has come to do it, and you are holding the result. Comments, for and against, are expected and may be published ☺

See also the note later about the A5 green binders: stocks are running out and it's no longer made. If you want one Get It Now!

The March issue of the *London Philatelist* contains a Note from its Editor, observing that “*the current stock of unpublished articles is getting somewhat lower than is normal, and all members are invited to send any original philatelic research to me for publication*”. We are not alone!

London 2010 has been and gone – and your Editor has been and gone to it. Results for known APS entries are on a later page, which is one reason why this issue is later than usual.

Many APS members have enjoyed the friendship, bargains, and refreshments at BSV Favoriten in Vienna. They were founded in 1935, suffered somewhat during the next 11 years, went from strength to strength thereafter, and celebrate their 80th Anniversary this year, 2010. Special events are to be held on 7 June & 17-18 September; details from your Editor.

The article below on Austrian History reminds me of an anecdote told by broadcaster Sandy Toksvig, whose father was an M.E.P. for Denmark. One evening he was sitting in the TV room at the Parliament watching football. A fellow M.E.P., Otto Habsburg, entered. "Who's playing?" he asked of Mr Toksvig. "Austria Hungary" came the reply. There was a slight pause until Otto asked, "against whom?"

Andy Taylor
Editor

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

We say farewell to G. Brian Williamson of Prenton, Merseyside, whose collecting interests have changed.

Gerry (Gerald Arthur) Roberts of Dawlish, who recently retired from membership, died on 19 March 2010. Born on 17 June 1919, he worked in banks, becoming a Manager. In WWII he saw active service in Beirut, Cairo & North Africa; then the whole length of Italy – finishing in Vienna. [See his article in *Austria 159!*] There, despite the Cold War, he expanded the collection he had inherited from his father, specialising in Austrian items. He was a founder member of the Dawlish Society and active in the Wessex Federation; also in the Rotary. He is survived by Barbara, son Paul, daughter Clare, and several grandchildren.

THE APS BOOKSHOP

To purchase any of these items, contact the Treasurer. NB! If paying by Paypal remember the £1 fee!

CDs

- ❖ CD prices include postage to anywhere
- ❖ "The History of Austrian Revenue Stamps" by Dr. Stephan Koczynski. Enhanced and

published it on CD in fully-text-searchable form. The CD costs £12. It is ISBN 978-0-900118-07-4

- ❖ Index to "Die Briefmarke" complete to 1999; in German but then so is the magazine. Prepared by Dr Moser of PKM Innsbruck. Available to APS members (only) for £12. In MSWord97 on CD.

Books:

- ❖ For all books, P&P costs £1.50 in UK, £2.50 to Europe, and £4.50 to Elsewhere
- ❖ "A Celebration of Austrian Philately": the APS 60th anniversary 'Festschrift'. viii+162 pp A4 in full colour. ISBN 978-0-900118-05-0 Price £19.95
- ❖ "The Pneumatic Post in Vienna" now reprinted in one A4 volume, ISBN 978-0-900118-06-7 Still only £40 (£32 to APS members)
- ❖ "The Postmarks of Dalmatia": Supplied complete with a 20-page update to the section on Military Unit Cachets (pages 166-171). ISBN 978-0-900118-02-9 Price £30
- ❖ "Przemysl 1914-1918" by Keith Tranmer. A very few copies still available; price £12
- ❖ "The Postal History of Ukraine: KuK Ukrainische Legion Feldpost correspondence cards 1914-1918" by Dubniak & Cybaniak. £14
- ❖ German/English Philatelic Dictionary, published by the Germany Philatelic Society in the USA. This is the 2005 edition, 298 sides of A5, spiral bound, with appendix of abbreviations. Copies cost £16 (plus P&P) and are available from the Treasurer.

Back numbers of "Austria"

- ❖ Nos 1-99 are £2.25 each; later issues £1.75. For ten or more ordered at the same time, a reduced price applies of £2 each for nos 1-99, £1.50 for 100 onwards. Some may be facsimiles or second-hand originals. Special offer: 1 copy of each issue of Austria, ie numbers 1 to date, will be sent to you for £275. These prices include P&P (by cheapest route).

- ❖ **Binders for A5 issues of ‘Austria’ cost £3.75 and hold 10-12 earlier issues, 8 of the recent issues. There’s very few left and it isn’t made any more – order now!**
- ❖ Non-members may also purchase back numbers of Austria, at **£5 per copy**. It may be better value to join the Society!

The Early Austrian Offices in the Levant

As his Presidential Display to the Society of Postal Historians on 10 April this year, Hans Smith put up 264 sheets on ‘The Early Austrian Post Offices in the Levant’ (i.e. Constantinople, Salonica, Smyrna, Bucharest, Jassy, Serres and Alexandria + an introductory paper). John Anthony kindly ‘burned’ the display on to a CD which is now available to APS members at cost. Any member who would like a copy is asked to send Hans a cheque or similar means of payment for £3, which includes the production cost, postage and a donation to the APS, at 99 North End Road, London NW11 7TA..

NOTES FROM PUBLICATIONS.

Die Briefmarke:

Issue 01/2010: Herbert Boeckl; Mount Athos; Lombardy-Venetia rates from 1814; Thematic: blood-donation; “The British in Austria”; Mail from WWI POW camp Sigmundsherberg; late-posting and the fees; Temporary Field Post Office, 5071 Wals; Öpost to issue ‘stamps’ in 0.999 silver (*not postally valid, it warns; and they tarnish if the container is opened*); “Patron Saint” series to end; future issues of Automatenmarken; exhibitions recent and future; news of societies; book reviews; etc

Issue 02/2010: “New Look” (central section is now ‘ALBUM the philatelic magazine of the Austrian Post’; main change appears to be longer articles on some new issues); thematic: Hieroglyphs; prephilatelic newspaper traffic; postage-dues on letters from German S W Africa; what does “post office fresh” actually mean?; different **R III** labels; post-WWII ration cards; news of societies etc including Hannes Margreiter at BSV Favoriten.

Issue 03/2010: “When is a blue Mauritius not The Blue Mauritius?”; prephilatelic cross-border misrouting; forgeries of the 2002 supplementary stamp; Ferdinand Schirnböck; 1938 Empfangschein; The Habsburg Folder series; post-WWII ration cards (ii); third Reich postzones; etc

Issue 04/2010: Shanghai; thematic: herbs & roots; mid-1800s costs of travel; the von Alt family; plate faults on R-labels (!); Hans Wannek; the 1959 Huning Congress stamps; more Habsburg Folders; events & auctions; society news; new Michel catalogues; etc.

ARGE Feldpost Österreich-Ungarn

Issue 100: 100 sides in full colour, celebrating their 100th issue! Diary of their own and other society meetings; several articles on unusual markings on WWI items censored at Feldkirch; ‘DUPLICAT’ in cachets; the “Zerstreuungsstation” system for processing returning soldiers after WWI; Lemberg censor office; POWs in Italy (14pp); Feldpost of the German States in Austria during the Austro-Prussia war of 1866 (8pp); inland packet cards, 1900-1916, with no postage dues affixed (de Bellis; 13pp); 1920: a Diary; 2009 Autumn excursion: a Diary; book reviews; Tarnstempel in Bosnia-Herzegowina (12pp).

This is accompanied by their auction list: 38 sides of A4 in full colour!! Your Editor’s eyes are green...

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Österreich e.V.

Issue 89: On seeking the 1837 Post Law; Südtirol-Trentino cancels project; Newspaper Tax Signets [*which are not as unobtainable as the author fears! Ed*]; late usage of straight-line Constantinopel; red landscapes (ii); inland airmail rates 1936-38; book reviews; and many one-page interesting articles.

APS^{US}

Issue X/2: Q&A; “Supplemental Franking” (Ferch 2008 vol II pp. 387-98); Mail in Austria after 1945: censorship hassles (Die Briefmarke 6/2008); Reading those old postcards (discussion on Frakturschrift!)

Czechout

Issue 1/2010: Meeting reports; letters; new editor wanted; reviews; “Haÿda” Austrian canceller used in Sudetenland in 1938; “Box 506” (WWII communications with the enemy); explanation of the mysterious location “PRAZEI”; new issues; etc

Germania

Feb 2010 vol 46 no 1: Much of WWII but non-Austria interest; International Mail via Trieste 1840-71 (RPSL display); Q&A; book reviews; etc

Jugopošta

Vol 93 Mar 2010: “The Serbs in Exile” part 2; updates and addenda; etc.

London Philatelist

Vol 119 Nr 1374: Advertisement for the Austrian Philatelic Society (!)

Stamp Lover

This, the magazine of the National Philatelic Society, will now be sent to the editor instead of to a previous secretary at the address he left some decades ago ☺

Vol 102/1: p14: Greek currency control marks; p18: possible changes to exhibitions; p21: review of SG part 2 noting some anomalies.

Vol 102/2: p42: anecdotes on the Austrian Anti-Fascist stamps of 1946.

Stamps of Hungary

Issue 180: Mar 2010: The Szigethvár Provisional (most probably made by perforating imprints from overordered or printers-waste 1867 postal stationery) and its likely perpetrator; Ös-Budavár (ii); etc.

Ukrainian Philatelist

Vol 57 No. 2 (2009): Stories from an Auctioneer; the ‘Economat’ document (official record of Austrian stamps with Ukrainian overprints); plate errors in the 3rd & 4th Stanyslaviv issues; Postal History review of

Ukraine, 1917-1923; postal stationery of Western Ukraine & related issues; watermarks of middle-Europe stamps; etc.

Wiener Ganssachsen- Frei- u Poststempelsammlerverein

Issue 1/2010: early Postauftragskarten (request-for-a-payment) of the 2nd Republic; etc etc.

Bookmarks

Christkindl

We have received from the Guild of St. Gabriel a copy of their publication ‘**The Christkindl Postmarks, a Checklist**’ which has been added to the library as number 270B. The first page gives a brief story of Christkindl and the first stamps and this is followed by 12 pages illustrating the cancellations with details of the dates of use and number of items cancelled. If all you want is to check the cancellation this book is fine but for more detailed information the recently up-dated Handbook, in German, number 270 is the one you need.

This checklist is available from Stanley Brown, 14 Buchan Drive, Perth, PH1 1NQ and costs £3.00 including UK postage. I am sure that he can also provide more information should anyone wish to learn more about the Guild of St. Gabriel which is an international society for collectors of Religion on stamps.

Joyce Boyer.

Stamp & Coin Mart

The monthly magazine Stamp & Coin Mart have an on-going series under the title ‘Life before Stamps’ considering the development of the postal system throughout Europe. The issues of January to April 2010 deal with the Austrian Empire.

With the kind permission of their editor I have copied these articles and they will be held in our library and available to the membership to borrow. In addition to details of the various cancellations used in the capital town of each province, the articles also include a potted history showing how the area became part of the Austrian Empire.

As a goodwill gesture, Stamp & Coin Mart magazine are also offering members of the Austrian Philatelic Society the chance to subscribe to the magazine and

receive the first three issues FREE, followed by £7.48 a quarter by Direct Debit. Call 01778 392030 and quote code 'SCM0104' to take advantage of this offer. (Offer closes on the 31st December 2010 and is open to UK residents only). To view more special subscription offers pay a visit to their web site www.stampandcoinmart.co.uk

Joyce Boyer.

“Life before Stamps - the development of the postal system throughout Europe”. The issues of Stamp & Coin Mart for January to April 2010 deal with the Austrian Empire; they have been added to the Cuttings File. Our Librarian writes:

Have you attended an Austrian Philatelic Society meeting where someone shows material from Galicia or Bukovina and you were not sure where these are or how they became part of the Austrian empire? I know I did in the earlier days of my membership. Unfortunately speakers can sometimes forget that not everyone is as knowledgeable as they are! This collection of four articles tries to resolve these problems and I learned a lot from them about areas in the eastern part of the Empire that are not in my collecting area.

Personally I find the Stamp & Coin Mart an interesting magazine to read for the wide variety of articles including early postal history, new issues, classic issues and thematic.

ANTVERPIA 2010 - European Championship of Philately

This event was held from 9 - 12 April in the four halls of the Antwerp Expo building; it incorporated three philatelic exhibitions and appeared to be a success.

Hall 1 housed the Belgium National exhibition, some 450 frames covering all major classes together with displays relating to Antwerp, the Red Star Line, 175 years of Belgian Railways and a ‘Historical Box’ marking 120 years of the Federation of Philatelic Societies.

Next door in Hall 2 were the 225 frames of exhibits in ‘Birdpex’ an International, mainly thematic displays of stamps and other material featuring birds. Stands in this hall included paintings by the artist Buzin who has designed 100 bird stamps for the Belgium post office, nest boxes, DVDs of bird calls, which were played most of the day. In addition there were about 30 traders stands mainly from overseas countries. A refreshment area here was ideal for Tony to sit and pass the time with a glass of suitable liquid whilst I hit the dealers.

Hall 3 held over 50 Belgian stamp and coin dealers but from my point it was fairly disappointing - it would appear that Belgian collectors go for stamps and thematic rather than postal history.

Hall 4 which is separate from the other three housed the European Championship of Philately, some 1395 adult and 193 youth frames covering all major classes; with postal history the most popular followed by thematic and traditional. There were 12 entries from the UK and all came home with a reasonable medal. In the aero-philately Joyce Boyer received a Vermeil (silver gilt) for Austrian Airmails 1918-1938, Brian Presland a silver medal for Brazilian Air Mail Services 1925-1935 and Garth Taylor of the Czech Society (a visitor to the 2009 Bradford joint meeting) a silver for his study of the routes and rates of the Third issue of Czechoslovakian Airmails. Other successes include APS member Tonnes Ore, vermeil for Carpatho-Ukraine; and Klaus Schopfer, from our partner club in Innsbruck, Large Gold for Letter-mail from Austria to Italy 1848-1870 both in the postal history section – and both interesting displays. Verband Österr. Philatelistenvereine obtained a silver medal for “The 2009 issues of Die Briefmarke”, and the WIPA 2008 “Book of the Exhibition” a vermeil. The judges were available on Saturday morning and I had a rewarding talk with one, receiving some very helpful comments on how to change the display, both what to add and what to omit.

In addition to the displays this hall housed the vast Belgian Post ‘village’ that included printing and franking machines, posters of recent stamp issues and several areas for children’s activities. There were also about 40 Postal Administrations, including Austria.post, to enable collectors to buy the most recent issues.

Joyce Boyer.

Additions to the Library

Ref	Title	Comment	Pp	Author	Pub	Tx
270B	'The Christkindl Postmarks, a Checklist'		14	Guild of St. Gabriel	2009	E

LONDON 2010: REPORT AND APS RESULTS

Since this journal went to press 3 days after London 2010, the report is on the last pages!

AUCTION No. 98 Realizations

16	£7.00	67	£18.00	218	£4.00	278	£1.50
18	£5.00	70	£6.00	219	£4.00	280	£2.50
20	£7.00	77	£10.00	224	£2.00	282	£1.00
22	£7.00	89	£8.00	225	£3.00	283	£1.50
25	£5.00	100	£5.00	226	£2.00	284	£2.50
29	£18.00	102	£5.00	227	£5.00	285	£2.00
30	£12.00	104	£12.00	228	£3.00	286	£1.50
36	£17.00	113	£8.00	229	£3.20	289	£3.50
37	£15.00	114	£7.00	230	£2.00	293	£1.50
39	£19.00	115	£6.00	231	£2.00	294	£1.50
42	£14.00	134	£9.00	232	£2.00	295	£1.50
46	£25.00	153	£3.00	233	£2.00	296	£5.50
47	£12.00	158	£3.00	234	£2.00	297	£3.00
52	£18.00	163	£3.00	236	£2.00	303	£20.00
53	£9.50	169	£2.00	259	£4.00	304	£36.00
54	£12.00	171	£2.50	265	£2.00	305	£30.00
55	£15.00	177	£2.00	267	£4.00	306	£35.00
56	£13.00	178	£2.00	268	£3.00	308	£15.00
57	£13.00	192	£4.70	269	£3.00	309	£25.00
28	£20.00	193	£3.00	271	£2.50	310	£4.00
59	£18.00	195	£2.50	273	£2.50	319	£2.00
60	£20.00	197	£15.00	274	£1.50	320	£1.00
65	£15.00	201	£2.20	275	£2.50	322	£1.00
66	£8.00	202	£2.20	276	£2.50	327	£3.00
277	£2.00	328	£6.00				

FERCHENBAUER 2008

We have just discovered that Vaccari are selling this publication in single volumes.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF AUSTRIA with emphasis on its postal services

By the Editorial Team

Austria, its government web site tells us, *“looks back on a long and eventful history and is today a wealthy, stable and prosperous nation. Because of its rich cultural past and present, for its beautiful landscape as well as a dynamic and innovative economy, Austria is being appreciated throughout the world as a cultural nation, travel destination and business partner, and the inhabitants are proud of their country.”*

Austria is a small (84,000 km²) landlocked country in southern Central Europe. It contains most of the Alps east of Switzerland, and the Danube region. In the north, east, and south-east the terrain is flatter and permits extensive agriculture. Although settled by Celtic and Germanic tribes in prehistoric times, Austrian lands and their inhabitants first enter historical records in the writings of the Romans. The Roman encampment named Vindobona, built on the Danube in roughly A.D. 100, eventually became the city of Vienna.

Because of its location, Austria has always been a crossroads between the great economic and cultural regions of Europe. Today, Austria has common borders with eight countries: Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Italy, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Austria is a federal republic comprised of nine independent Federal Provinces (Länder): Burgenland, Carinthia, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Styria, Tyrol, Vorarlberg, and Vienna. The population in 2007 was 8.3 million; 99% German-speaking. There are six recognised ethnic minorities in today's Austria. And of course there's the Austrian way of life in which rules and regulations are issued centrally, interpreted locally, and ignored anyway

The boundaries of the Austrian Republic have been essentially unchanged since it was established at the close of the First World War. In 1921, the easternmost province of Burgenland – part of the old Kingdom of Hungary and hotly contested by Hungary but solidly German-speaking – was awarded to the fledgling country. From 1938 to 1945 Austria was part of the Third German Reich of Hitler.

The Danube, the most important river in central Europe, traverses the country from the German

border in the west to the boundary with Slovakia in the east, before proceeding through the Balkans to the Black Sea. Ever since Roman times, the flat land east of the mountains has been an important passage way for commerce and for migration from the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean and the Balkans. Additionally, the land around the Danube was a frequent point of entry for marauding nomadic tribes and hostile nations from the east. At the intersection of these routes lies Austria's capital, Vienna, a city of about 1.7 million inhabitants, and for centuries the historical, cultural, and artistic centre of Central Europe.

Austria has produced some of the most sublime achievements in the fine arts, the theatre, literature, architecture, medicine, and science. Twenty Austrians have been awarded Nobel prizes! The culture is part of the mainstream of Germanic culture shared with Germany and Switzerland. But what has shaped it and dominated it, what has made it essentially Austrian, are the Habsburg empire and the Roman Catholic church. The Habsburg dynasty's tradition of patronage of the arts has carried over to the modern republic of today; for example in 2005 the total expenditure on 'culture' by public bodies at all levels was 2 billion Euro, 0.94% of GDP. The church was a powerful influence in Austrian architecture, drama, and music. The great Romanesque monasteries and the Gothic St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna awe the beholder, and we owe to the Counter-Reformation the gilded wedding-cake splendours of the Austrian Baroque and Rococo even in the smallest village church. Many feature on Austrian stamps, especially the Christmas issues.

Austria is especially famed for its contributions to music, notably during the Classical and Romantic periods. Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Mahler and Bruckner spring to mind - and there were many many more. The Viennese operetta, drawing heavily from the Slavic and Magyar regions of the empire, reached its peak about 1900. We think of the Strauss family, Franz Lehár and Zierer; and of the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna State Opera. The Vienna Boys Choir, founded by the emperor Maximilian in 1498, still sings at Sunday masses in the chapel of the Hofburg in Vienna. In the cultural

context, as elsewhere, it is important to remember that there is more to Austria than Vienna! Some of the world's greatest folk music traditions had a marked influence on such composers as Janacek, Kodaly & Bartok; and the "Viennese School" of Schönberg, Berg and Webern still excites admiration or detestation amongst musicologists! "The Third Man", filmed in Vienna in 1949, brought the zither to a wide audience, and today's tourists can scarcely avoid the traditional Village Wind'n'Brass Band. Austria has issued about 150 stamps on classical, folk, modern, pop and other musical topics, and over 450 special cancellations – extensive thematic collections can be assembled.

Many authors and playwrights of previous centuries are still read and performed, such as Grillparzer, Raimund, Nestroy and Stifter; the 20th century brought Kafka, Roth, Musil, Bertha von Suttner, and many more. Their philatelic representation is rather sparse, especially for recent writers. And the notorious insularity of English speakers means that much superb work is unknown outside the German-speaking countries.

In the visual arts, Jugendstil – the Austrian Art Nouveau – is perhaps best known in other countries. Amongst its many artists Klimt, famed for his use of gold in his paintings, tried and partly succeeded in shocking Viennese society out of bureaucratic stagnation into a freer modernity. Other artists, from Waldmüller to Kokoschka, are less known abroad. Architecture has a long tradition, from Fisher von Erlach and Lukas von Hildebrand to Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos. Many architects, and their buildings, have received philatelic commemoration. Austria's museums and historic monuments are notable both on the ground and on the stamps. Film has a more prominent place than in many other countries, although the Cold War "cultural offensive" from the USA may have helped.

The Habsburgs

Before the First World War, Austria was part of a much larger state, the Habsburg Empire, of which Vienna was the capital city. At the time the Empire becomes of interest from a philatelic standpoint it included, besides the present area of Austria, all of Hungary, Bohemia and Moravia (now the Czech Republic), Slovakia, Slovenia, and Croatia, and also parts of present-day Poland, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine, and Italy. In addition, the Austrian Netherlands consisted of most of today's Belgium, and Vorderösterreich comprised various pockets in

southern Germany. These were lost to the Habsburgs in 1797 and 1805 respectively; philatelic items are rare and expensive.

The Habsburg family, originally Germans with a castle in Switzerland, appeared in Austria in 1276. Mainly through marriages, they acquired the territories mentioned above (and others strewn throughout Europe which later they lost again). They were Holy Roman Emperor, the nominally-elected Emperor of what is now Germany and some other territories: a title which in time became in name only. In the 16th century the Habsburgs held the dominating position in Europe when, as a result of dynastic marriage, they brought together the Holy Roman Empire and the Spanish Empire in the person of the Emperor Charles V. Following his abdication in 1555 they were separated again but different branches of the family ruled both empires and, had things turned out differently, Philip II (husband of Queen Mary) might well have been King of England too. This led to constant war in the 16th and 17th centuries between the Habsburgs and France, which saw itself as encircled - and with good reason! It also drove the Habsburgs to have a natural focus on Western Europe, accentuated by the dominant position of the Turks in the East. Ultimately the position changed because the Habsburgs eventually lost their dominance to France, starting in 1648 at Westphalia and culminating in the reign of Louis XIV.

It is also useful to note the catastrophic position of Hungary as a result of Turkish invasion and occupation in the 1520s-40s. The formerly strong kingdom was annihilated and only the northern and western parts remained outside Turkish control. The Hungarian nobility, defeated at Mohacs, invited the Habsburgs to assume the Hungarian crown which they did. The Habsburgs only began to extend their area of control after the Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683, which coinciding with the rising French power in the West caused the Habsburgs to look to compensate with gains in the East for their losses, e.g. in Alsace. Incidentally that logic continued to prevail later in Bosnia-Herzegovina which Franz Josef saw as a compensation for his loss of Italy. It was only in 1718 that the Turks were finally expelled from Hungary, by which time the country was largely desolated.

Following the French revolution of 1789-99, the military adventures of Napoleon I shook all of Europe for some 15 years. In 1804 Napoleon crowned himself Emperor of the French; and Francis II of Habsburg at once declared himself Francis I,

Emperor of Austria, foreseeing that in 1805 under the Peace of Pressburg he would be forced to renounce the title of Holy Roman Emperor.

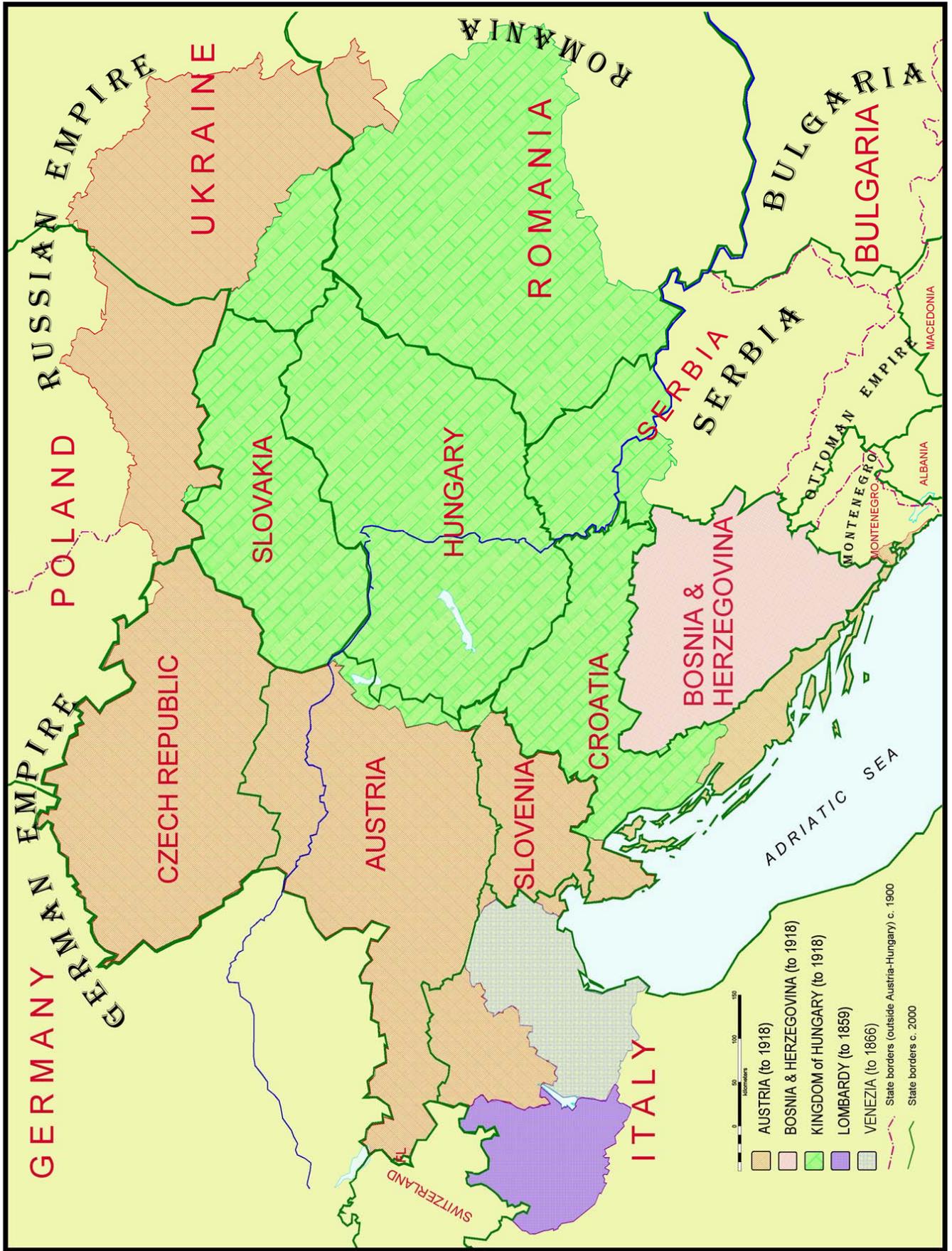
Napoleon defeated the Austrian army four times and occupied Vienna twice. As he came and went, many parts of Austria fell under his control for varying periods. Austria's lowest ebb was in 1809 when it lost everything in today's Italy, and Tirol, Vorarlberg, Salzburg, several districts adjoining Bavaria, and most of the former Yugoslavia. Venetia only came under Habsburg control in 1797; but it, Lombardy, and Manuta were lost, regained, lost again, and finally restored only in 1815. Interesting philatelic items can be found, even more so in the field of documentary revenues where both sides were anxious that the other should not profit from the use

of captured material (such as pre-stamped legal paper).

Much of the old conservative and monarchic order was restored at the Congress of Vienna (1814-15) which danced its way to a Europe-wide settlement, orchestrated by Metternich. In Austria, there followed 30 years of authoritarian government under Chancellor Metternich. During this time (sometimes referred to as the Biedermeier Period), the aspirations of the middle and working classes grew, and the calm of the era abruptly finished with a turbulent revolution in 1848. Internal peace was re-established but Metternich was forced to resign and the emperor abdicated in favour of his 18-year-old nephew Franz Joseph.



The miniature sheet issued in 1996 to commemorate "A thousand years of Austria"



The Austrian-Hungarian Empire and today's national boundaries

Early postal arrangements

Western Europe in the Middle Ages did not possess a public post. Private individuals gave their letters to casual travellers whilst the Kings, the Monastic Orders, the Universities, and the great Corporations maintained their own postal systems. Establishments of permanent messengers were maintained by cities, bishops, and lay orders of Knights. However, nearly all these posts had died out by the fifteenth century.

In Austria in 1490 the first public post, available for business and commerce, was founded by the Italian family of Thurn and Taxis during the reign of Maximilian I. It extended its activities to connect the Imperial Dominions in Lombardy with those in Austria. Maximilian's son Philip-le-Bel, Duke of Burgundy, created Franz von Taxis "Hauptpostmeister" on 1st March 1500, and in 1504 made an agreement with him to provide a postal connection between the courts of Philip in the Netherlands and of those of Maximilian in today's Austria and Germany, and to link these with the courts of France and Spain.

The position of Imperial Postmaster carried two chief responsibilities: transferring the mail of the Emperor and court around the Empire and to other states of Europe; and facilitating the movement of the Emperor and court around the Empire, personally escorting them on ceremonial occasions. It was thus of great importance, and it could make its holder very rich. Unsurprisingly, two families sought to monopolise it: the House of Thurn & Taxis, and the House of Paar. Both were successful in different areas, and a Compromise of 1661 tried to settle the conflict between the Houses by allocating Court mail and persons to the House of Paar, and all the rest to the House of Thurn & Taxis. The House of Paar were bought out in 1722, and the House of Thurn & Taxis activities shrank and eventually ceased. So from 1722 the history of the Austrian Postal Administration was separate from any of the princely houses; being entirely a department of the Crown.

In 1722, the Crown appointed a "Court Postal Commission" (Hofpostkommission) and ordered that the two functions of transporting people and forwarding mail should be administered separately. Two bodies were set up in Vienna: the "General Mail Coach Administration" (Hauptpostwagendirektion) and the "General Postal Administration" (Generalpostdirektorium). The Court Postal Commission was abolished in 1783, and the two departments were then run completely independently.

At the same time the General Postal Administration was renamed the General Post Office Administration (Oberste Hofpostamtverwaltung). This policy of separation was maintained until 1830, when it underwent a complete reversal, the two departments being then coalesced into a General Postal Administration (Oberste Hofpostverwaltung).

The Era of Franz Joseph

In 1850 the Austrian Empire had a population of over 36 million and an area of 260,087 square miles. At the same date the United Kingdom (including Ireland) had a total population of 27.4 million in an area of 120,625 square miles, and the U.S.A. a population of 23 million in an area of 3,580,270 square miles. At the head of this vast Austrian Empire stood its absolute ruler, the young Kaiser Franz Josef I. The government of the absolute monarchy was under the Presidency of Feldmarschalleutnant Felix, Prinz von und zu Schwarzenberg. There were at least fourteen official languages, and a frequently changing set of rules on which had supremacy where.

Franz Joseph reigned from 1848 (two years before the first Austrian postal stamps were issued) until 1916 (two years before the Habsburg Empire collapsed). For the philatelist, the period is in effect the era of Franz Joseph, and a closer look at this Emperor is therefore warranted.

Franz Joseph was a simple and unsophisticated man, with no interest for music, art, or literature (except the military code). Although he lived in sumptuous palaces, he led an unpretentious, austere life and loved the type of food eaten by the Viennese bourgeoisie. He was a stickler for court ceremony and procedures, to the exasperation of most of his family, and he tended to be an authoritarian ruler. He reserved for himself administrative decisions of the greatest triviality; the result was a constipation in the machinery of government as piles of files accumulated untouched in his office.

His personal life was filled with tragedy: a brother, who had established himself as the Emperor of Mexico, was executed there in 1867; another died of typhoid after drinking water from the Jordan; his son committed suicide in 1889 at the hunting lodge of Mayerling because of a love affair disapproved of by court; his wife, the beautiful Empress Elizabeth, was assassinated by an anarchist in 1898; and his Heir Apparent, Franz Ferdinand, was assassinated by Serbian nationalists in Sarajevo in 1914, an event

that was the initial spark leading to the First World War. Because the common people could well understand this simple man, he was enormously popular (at least in the German speaking and in the less trenchantly nationalistic other provinces!), which certainly helped to maintain the unity of the Empire until it collapsed at the end of the First World War.

Franz Joseph saw his mission in a single task that filled his life to the exclusion of anything else: the

preservation of the Habsburg dynasty and wherever possible his Empire. To this purpose, during all his reign he fought losing battles against the three forces that menaced the stability and security of the Empire: the growing liberal tendencies among middle and working classes, the demands for autonomy or independence for the non-German peoples in his Empire (especially the Hungarians, Czechs and Italians), and the growing power of Prussia.

1.

Kaiserliches Patent vom 2. December 1848,

kundgemacht in allen Kronländern des Reiches,

womit **Se. k. k. Majestät, Kaiser Franz Joseph I.**, allen Völkern der Monarchie **Allerhöchsthre Thronbesteigung verkünden.**

Wir Franz Joseph der Erste,

von Gottes Gnaden Kaiser von Oesterreich;

König von Ungarn und Böhmen, König der Lombardei und Venedigs, von Dalmatien, Croatien, Slavonien, Galizien, Podomerien und Ilirien, König von Jerusalem &c.; Erzherzog von Oesterreich; Großherzog von Toscana; Herzog von Lothringen, von Salzburg, Steyer, Kärnthen, Krain; Großfürst von Siebenbürgen; Markgraf von Mähren; Herzog von Ober- und Nieder-Schlesien, von Modena, Parma, Piacenza und Guastalla, von Ansbach und Bator, von Teschen, Friaul, Ragusa und Bara; gesürsteter Graf von Habsburg, von Tyrol, von Kyburg, Görz und Gradiska; Fürst von Trient und Triken; Markgraf von Ober- und Nieder-Lausitz und in Istrien; Graf von Hohenems, Feldkirch, Bregenz, Sonnenberg &c.; Herr von Triest, von Cattaro und auf der windischen Mark.

Above is the start of the Imperial Patent in which Franz Josef announces to his subjects that he is their ruler.

The introduction of postage stamps

On the 1st February 1849 the General Postal Administration was made the third section of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Public Works. It was, therefore, the Minister of Commerce who was responsible to the Emperor for all postal matters.

The organisation of the posts beneath the central administrators was mainly in accordance with the territorial division of the Empire into provinces. Some provinces had systems inherited from their pre-Habsburg rulers: eg Galicia had a well-developed Polish system, and Venice had had a postal system (the *Compagnia fra Corriere di Veneti*) since 1200! Each province had its own postal administration, from February 1849 termed a "Postal Directorate". These controlled all the offices in their province, either directly or through intermediate Post Offices called "Postal Inspectorates" with a Postal Inspector in charge. Beneath them came the post offices; the official name of which depended upon whether they dealt primarily with stagecoaches or mail, although most offices handled both. Those which collected only mail were originally subordinated as "Letter Collections" to the other post offices, but later became independent of them. It would be a great aid to philately if comprehensive and authoritative lists of all offices at all dates were available: regrettably, they are not although many offices are well documented

Between November 1848 and May 1851 the Minister of Commerce was Karl Ludwig, Freiherr von Bruck. The Section Councillor for the Directorate of Communications was Franz Maximilian Freiherr von Löwenthal; he presided energetically over the development and consolidation of the Austrian Postal and Telegraphic Affairs and concluded postal treaties with Russia (1843), Germany (1850), Switzerland (1852) and France (1852, 1857). In January 1849 he advised his Minister that the example of Britain and many other countries be followed and adhesive postage stamps be issued for the pre-payment of mail. Dr. Herz, the Postal Inspector for Lower Austria, was sent to Munich, Brussels and London to study the production and use of postage stamps.

Based on Herz' report, the Minister compiled a long "Memorandum on the Reform of the Letter and Stage Coach Tariffs", and submitted it to the Emperor for approval. Postage for a single letter of 1 Viennese Loth (17.5 grams), would be fixed at 3 kreuzer up to ten meile (of 7.586 km), 6 kreuzer from 10 to 20

meile, and 9 kreuzer if farther; the Vienna city post would remain at 2 kreuzer. A 2-Loth letter would cost double these amounts, and so on. All letters should be franked by means of adhesive postage stamps. On 25th September 1849, the Emperor Franz Josef I agreed, writing "These proposals on the reform of the letter and stage coach tariffs receive my approval". The stamps were first used on 1 June 1850, and the rest is history!

The regions of northern Italy under Habsburg control – Lombardy and Venetia – used their own Italian currency. Therefore, special postage stamps had to be issued for use in these regions until in 1859 and 1866 respectively, when they became parts of Italy. Special stamps were also prepared for the postal service that Austria maintained in Crete and in various places in the Balkans and in the Levant. The region of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while formally still part of the Ottoman Empire, was occupied in 1878 by Austria and required separate postal services as well; it was annexed to the Austrian Empire in October 1908, an event which contributed to the outbreak of war in 1914.

The Austro-Hungarian "Ausgleich" (Compromise) of 1867

While the revolution of 1848 had been suppressed by armed might, the consequences were far more serious in Hungary which had declared independence under Kossuth and was ultimately brought back under Austrian control only with Russian help. Ever since then, the Imperial Dominions had been ruled from Vienna as a unitary state under an absolute monarchy. A series of reverses both military and diplomatic made the maintenance of this very difficult. The first reverse was diplomatic, when Austria sided with England and France in the Crimean War without actually taking up arms and thus lost the friendship of Russia. The second reverse was military when Austria lost the battles of Magenta and Solferino to France in 1859 and had to relinquish Lombardy to the House of Savoy. The final reverse was also military when Austria was defeated by the Prussians at the battle of Königgrätz (Sadowa) on 3rd July 1866. By the terms of the subsequent Treaty of Prague, Austria lost Venetia, and was excluded from the Germanic Confederation. Prussia thus displaced Austria from its leading role among the German states.

Thus finally ejected from both Italy and Germany, Austria began to turn to the various nationalities within her borders and to re-organise her internal

structure. The conflict between the Government of Vienna and the Hungarian nationalists was of long standing, including aspects concerning parliamentary representation, administration, and the official use of the Hungarian language. The work of reorganisation was entrusted to Friedrich Ferdinand Graf Beust who decided to placate the Hungarians and to make the Empire governable by dividing it into its two historic halves. In one of these the Germans would be the dominant people; in the other the Hungarians. The Slavs and the Rumanians would be subservient to both. This was the concept of “The Dual Monarchy” with two completely dominant peoples in two separate parts united only in the person of the Emperor-King, who controlled a joint Army and Navy and conducted a joint foreign policy. This separate administration was defined with great care in the “Ausgleich” which was concluded with Hungary, and the Dual monarchy was created. Needless to say, this arrangement did not satisfy anybody except the German- and Hungarian-speaking parts of the population.

Some historians hold a very interesting view, namely that the ultimate failure of the Habsburgs to transform the Monarchy into a multilateral organisation containing a number of states of different nationalities (a sort of Commonwealth) can be attributed to the Hungarians above all who, having gained a position of independence, then pulled up the ladder behind them. In this view it was Hungarian intransigence that defeated the Czechs and others. (Note that the Hungarians were very concerned that any compromise would inevitably lead to their losing direct control especially of Croatia and Slovakia and perhaps subsequently Romanian Transylvania as well. They were certainly intransigent but their reasoning can easily be seen!).

The treaty of 1867 on the relationship between Austria and Hungary has entered into history under the name “Compromise (Ausgleich)”. The official designation for the combined state was “The Austrian-Hungarian monarchy”. The parts had complicated formal names: Cisleithania was called officially “The kingdoms and countries represented in the Reichsrat”; while Transleithania carried the official designation “The countries of the Holy Hungarian Crown”. Designations of such kind failed to establish themselves, and Cisleithania was called “Austria” and Transleithania “Hungary”; from 1915 this became official. Both parts were equal, independent States, joined through the person of the sovereign as well as through certain common “pragmatic” affairs – notably the War Ministry..

Austria comprised the archduchies of Austria under and over the Enns (alias Lower and Upper Austria), the dukedoms of Styria, Salzburg, Carinthia and Krain (Carniola), the princely county of Tirol, Vorarlberg, the kingdom of Bohemia, the Margraviate of Moravia, the dukedom of Silesia, the kingdom of Galizia, the dukedom of Bukowina, the princely counties of Gradisca and Görz and the kingdom of Dalmatien. In 1867 the combined population was about 20 million. You may find the full German designations in works written in that language. They are: Erzherzogtüm Österreich unter der Enns, Erzherzogtüm Österreich ober der Enns, Herzogtüm Steiermark, Herzogtüm Salzburg, Herzogtüm Kärnten, Herzogtüm Krain, Gefürsteten Grafschaft Tirol, Land Vorarlberg, Königreich Böhmen, Markgrafschaft Mähren, Herzogtum Schlesien, Königreich Galizien, Herzogtum Bukowina, Gefürstete Grafschaft Gradisca, Gefürstete Grafschaft Görz, and Königreich Dalmatien. The ruler’s titles are printed, usually in a florid typeface, at the beginning of many pre-1918 laws.

The sovereign of all of these was the same person: that is, Franz Josef was Archduke of Austria under the Enns; and was Duke of Salzburg; and Princely Count of Tirol; and King of Bohemia; and Margrave of Moravia; and so forth. Indeed in earlier times the linkage between the component parts of ‘Austria’ was solely the person of the sovereign, and laws had to be reissued in each part under the corresponding name of the sovereign. When in 1804 Francis II of Habsburg declared himself Francis I, Emperor of Austria, there was in reality no Austria for him to be Emperor of!

“Hungary” was somewhat simpler; it comprised Hungary proper (which included Slovakia, Carpatho-Ukraine, the Batschka and the Banat), the Great Princedom of Transylvania, the kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia, and the port of Fiume. In 1867 about 15 million people lived there. [In German these are: Königreich Ungarn (with Slowakei, Karpato-Ukraine, Batschka, & Banat), Großfürstentum Siebenbürgen, Königreich Kroatien und Slawonien & Adriaahafen Fiume.] Franz Josef was King of Hungary, and Great Prince of Transylvania, and etc.

On the 11th February 1867 Julius Graf Andrassy was appointed as the first prime minister of the new parliamentary regime in Hungary, and on the 8th June 1867 Franz Josef I was crowned as Apostolic King of Hungary in the great cathedral of St. Matthias in Buda. Transylvania was united with Hungary, and in 1868 a further Ausgleich between

Croatia-Slavonia and Hungary joined the former to the latter under a law guaranteeing the equal rights of nationalities. The Hungarian Ministry of Commerce took over from the Austrians the administration of the posts in Hungary, Transylvania, the Temeser-Banat, Croatia-Slavonia and the military Border Region. Austrian stamps were no longer used in the Hungarian half of the Dual Monarchy after June 1867 (the joint issue of that year, first appearing in Hungary, was adopted in Austria as stocks of the previous issue ran out: separation of earlier printings is possible if the stamp is legibly cancelled).

Thus neither Austria nor Hungary (anticipating the modern terms) alone could declare a war or pursue their own foreign policy. Certain financial resources benefitted both parts, and counted among the common affairs were the War Ministry (Reichskriegsministeriums; the Hungarians objecting to the prefix "Reich" on the grounds that they did not recognise any entity that came between them and their King) and the Foreign Ministry (Außenministeriums) as well as the common Treasury (Finanzverwaltung). When Bosnia and the Herzogowina were annexed in 1878 the administration was declared as common. It was not until 1883 that the words "Österreichische Post" (Austrian Post) first appeared on the stamps of the western part of the Empire. Both halves contained much territory besides present-day Austria and Hungary: Cisleithania included Bohemia and Moravia, Slovenia, Dalmatia, and parts of southern Poland, western Ukraine, and northern Italy; Transleithania also comprised Slovakia, most of Croatia, and parts of Romania, Serbia, and Ukraine.

The Austrian Republic

Franz Joseph died on 21 November 1916 during the First World War and was succeeded for two years by the Emperor Karl. When the war was lost the Empire disintegrated, and Karl "withdrew" (he did not formally abdicate). On 30 October 1918 the German-speaking part of the former monarchy was proclaimed by the new National Assembly as the independent state of Deutsch-Österreich (literally German-Austria); it would seek union with Germany. This lasted for just under one year, until 21 October 1919, when the Austrian national assembly reluctantly accepted that under the Treaty of Saint Germain the name had to be just Austria and any efforts to unite with Germany were banned. Interestingly, the name of Deutsch-Österreich remained in use on Austrian stamps until 1922

The First Republic, which lasted from 1918 until 1938, was a state nobody really expected to last. As a result of the war, Austria had lost much of its heavy industry in Bohemia, its food provisions from Hungary (which was itself in turmoil), its access to the Mediterranean, the southern part of Tyrol, and for a while its attraction for tourism. To this was added a disproportionately large capital city, the deadly flu epidemic of 1918-19, high unemployment, a hopeless political split between the conservative countryside and the socialists in Vienna and the industrial centres, black markets, and marauding armed ex-soldiers who started forming paramilitary organisations on the political left and right. There was rampant inflation, although a continued flow of Charity Stamps appeared, heavily surcharged and now difficult to collect.

The First Republic, surrounded by mostly totalitarian states, finally became a pseudo-fascist state in 1934 under Engelbert Dollfuss, whose government, backed by the army and the Heimwehr (Home Defence Force), crushed a Socialist uprising. Soon he abolished all political parties except for his Fatherland Front. In July Chancellor Dollfuss was assassinated (the 10 Schilling memorial stamp is famous, and expensive) and Kurt Schuschnigg took over. His right wing and anti-democratic government was quite unpopular, but in retrospect was perhaps unavoidable, since Austria was wedged between the competing and expansionist states of Hitler and Mussolini. When in 1938 German troops occupied Austria (the "Anschluss"), there was negligible resistance. Austria's Jews had their assets expropriated, and unless they could escape were deported to concentration camps such as Mauthausen and Auschwitz.

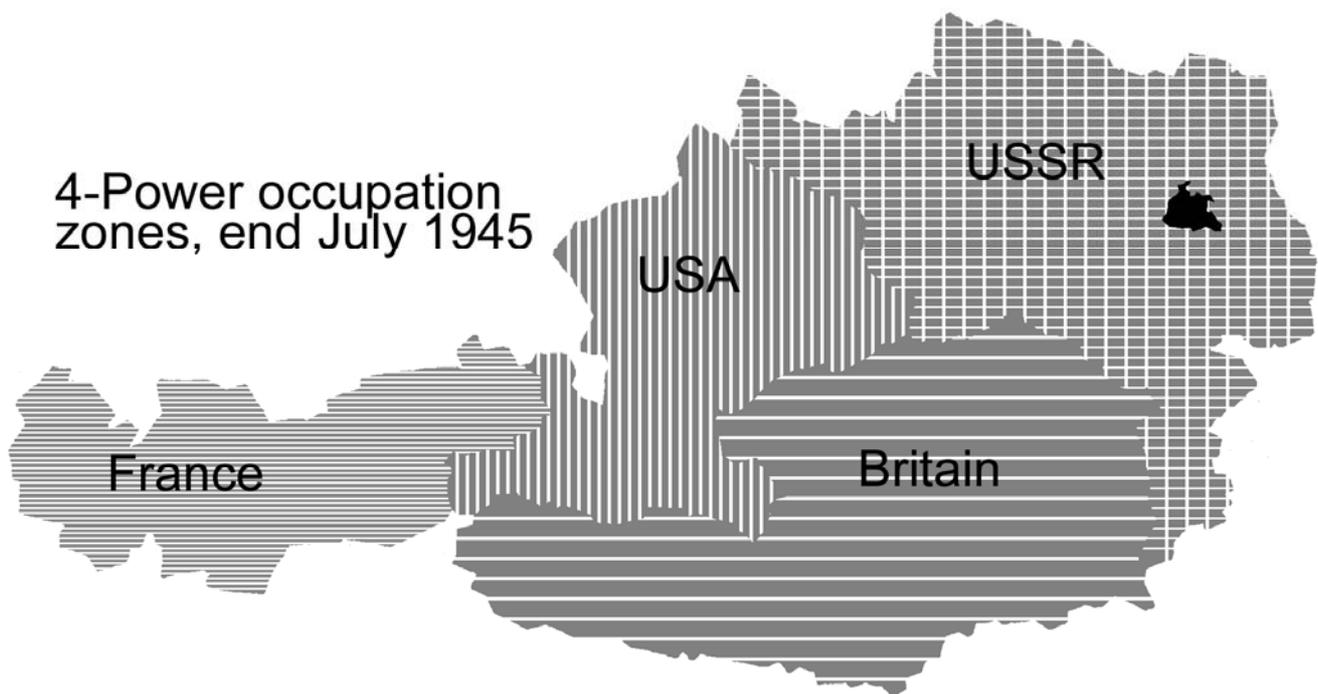
From 1938 until 1945, the Austrian state ceased to exist and the stamps and postal materials of the German Reich were used. The philatelic feature of greatest interest relating to these events was the use for several months of a mixture of Austrian and German stamps, during the several stages of the transition from the Austrian to the German system.

At the end of the Second World War, Austria was resuscitated. The situation at that time was worse than after the First World War. A large fraction of the adult male population had been killed, had gone into exile, or were still missing or being held prisoner - many not returning from the Soviet Gulags until after Stalin's death. This time the war had hit Austria proper. Many historical buildings in Vienna, such as the Cathedral of St. Stephen, the Burgtheater, the Opera House, and the City Hall had been

destroyed or seriously damaged. The country was divided into four zones, each one occupied by one of the four victorious powers, as was Vienna itself.

The occupying powers were the Soviet Union, Britain, France, and the United States. Soviet intransigence led to the decade-long occupation; the other nations had wanted to end their presence quickly. As the differences among the powers

mounted, communication between the zones became difficult. It was only in 1955 that it became expedient to establish Austria as a neutral buffer. The Austrian State Treaty was signed and the occupation was lifted, and Austria was permitted to freely govern itself and join the United Nations. The border with Hungary, in the meantime, had become part of the Iron Curtain, to the detriment of commerce between the two states.



The Second Republic

This time, however, the Austrians had learned from their past mistakes. To avoid any future split between the left and the right, a procedure called the “Proporzsystem” was established, in which an even sharing of power between the parties was assured. (This tended to mean that everything was duplicated, and jobs filled on political considerations rather than on competence.) In an extraordinary effort, the destroyed landmarks of Vienna and elsewhere were rebuilt as faithfully as possible. A system of strict neutrality in foreign policies was established, and, in large measure thanks to this effort, tourism was re-established and Austria became a European center for the activities of the United Nations. Especially in the immediate post-war period, the design of postage stamps carefully avoided controversy, concentrating on scenery, old buildings, and traditional costumes. Unfortunately, it proved more difficult to

re-establish the extraordinary cultural position that Viennese art and science had occupied before the war, and to replace or reverse the exodus of culture and civilization that had occurred. The political approach of “Don’t mention the war” and “Austria was an innocent victim of Hitler” led to a collective amnesia - it has been said “What other country could persuade the world that Beethoven and Mozart were Austrian while Hitler was German”! [Mozart was born in 1756 and died in 1791, during all of which time Salzburg was an independent Prince-Archbishopric.]

This cosy consensus lasted until 1986 when the former UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim was elected president, despite growing international controversy over his role in the German army in World War II, the details of which he had forgotten. Austria was viewed in a different light now, and reacted by asserting its right to govern itself as it saw fit. Far Right-wing parties began to win substantial

numbers of votes in national elections, and joined the governing coalitions.

This re-emergence of the Right prompted much reflection, especially from the post-war generation, and produced a slow swing back to the centre. Also, in 1998 the Austrian Government set up an independent Historical Commission to examine Austria's role in the expropriation of Jewish assets during the period of Nazi rule in World War Two, and in returning those assets afterwards. When it reported in 2003, public and private funds were used to make some redress for past wrongs – and the “it wasn't us” approach was dropped.

When the Cold War ended, Austria found itself no longer at the border between East and West but at the centre of a larger Europe. Conflict was replaced by new forms of partnership and co-operation. Austria started to set a new and important international course for itself, and joined the European Union on 1 January 1995.

Austria actively supports the peace missions of NATO, the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Austria has participated in missions in the Middle East, Cyprus, and Africa by providing troops and other assistance. A considerable diversity of philatelic fieldpost is thus generated!



Further reading

Some older classics:

Bérenger Jean, “A history of the Habsburg Empire 1700-1918” [ISBN 0 582 09007 5]

Brion M, “Daily life in the Vienna of Mozart & Schubert”, London 1961

Brook-Shepherd G, “The Austrians: a 1000-year odyssey”. London 1997. [ISBN 0 00 638255X]

Brook-Shepherd, G, “The last Habsburg”. London 1968.

Bullock M, “Austria 1918-1938. A study in failure”. London 1939.

Crankshaw E, “The Habsburgs”. London 1971. [ISBN 0 297 00427 1]

Gedye G E R, “Heirs to the Habsburgs” (1932) and “Fallen bastions” (1939)

Macartney C A, “The House of Austria” [ISBN 0 85224 351 0]

Macartney C.A. “The Social Revolution in Austria”. Cambridge. 1926.

Marboe E, “The Book of Austria” Vienna 1948. Stadler K R, “Austria”. London 1971

Tapié V L, “The rise and fall of the Habsburg Monarchy” [ISBN 0 269 027912]

Taylor A J P, “The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918” London 1948

Some more modern works:

Beller, Steven: “A Concise History of Austria” Cambridge University Press 2006

Clare, George: “Last Waltz in Vienna” Macmillan 1981 *growing up in Vienna in the 1930s and having to leave*

Okey, Robin: “The Habsburg Monarchy - from Enlightenment to Eclipse” St. Martins Press 2001

Slesin S. & Cliff S., “Mittel Europa - Living in Style in Vienna, Prague, Budapest & the Lands of the Danube”, Thames & Hudson 1994.

Wawro, Geoffrey: “The Austro-Prussian War Cambridge” University Press 1996 *brilliant readable story of a hugely important and largely forgotten war*

R Toman (Ed); “Vienna Art & Architecture” [ISBN 3-8290-2044-9]. *It's more a dining-table than a coffee-table book, but the coverage is comprehensive and the photos excellent*

Fiction:

Biggins, John: “A Sailor of Austria” and three more Otto Prohaska novels - reprinted in a paperback edition

Roth J, “The Radetzky March” London 2000 [ISBN 0 14 1185279] and “The Capucin Crypt”

Last but not least:

Grunauer P et al, “Viennese cuisine: the new approach”, London 1989 [ISBN 0 7195 46087] *some maintain that Austria's cuisine is more important than its history!*

NAVAL AND MARITIME MAIL.

By John Pitts

After years spent collecting the stamps of Austria I fancied a change. Not that there's anything wrong with collecting stamps, but filling those blank spaces was becoming more and more difficult - and costly! I was introduced to Austrian naval and maritime mail by Arthur Godden (ex HMS Drake and HMS Aurora), a founder member of the Austrian Philatelic Society and its first librarian, and more recently by member Alfred Pirotte whose offerings to the APS auction provided rich pickings. The result was the discovery of a new, exciting and stimulating part of Austrian philately that has fascinated me ever since.

Introduction.

Austria-Hungary was never a great imperial power in the colonialist sense that England and France were. She never had any colonies, but she did have a coastline and for this reason alone she needed a navy to defend it. Unusually for a country with a capital on a river (Vienna on the Danube) and a coastline (the Adriatic), there was no connection between the capital and the coast, for the Danube flows into the Black Sea. In the 18th century Kaiser Karl VI built a road between Vienna and Trieste over the Semmering Pass and this led to Trieste and Fiume becoming major commercial ports serving not only the Adriatic coastline and the many islands but also destinations such as the Americas and the Far East. The port of Pola became headquarters of a navy which, although substantial, never reached the size of navies of other European imperial powers. This was partly because the Hungarians were reluctant to grant funding for the navy, preferring to invest in maritime matters. Many vessels not only transported mail but also generated it from naval and merchant vessel personnel alike, and occasionally from government-operated post offices on board. Thus there are obvious opportunities for the postal historian as well as collectors of various markings applied to the mail from ships and other vessels, both on board and in port.

Maritime mail.

Mention 'Austrian maritime' and one thinks immediately of Austrian Lloyd. Its name was a symbol of shipping supremacy and reliability; their vessels attracted the best clientele and it carried a greater percentage of mail than any other during the long period of peace leading up to the First World War. Around this time maritime traffic was expanding and the Lloyd devoted all its energy renovating its fleet and replacing old vessels with new ones. The Lloyd steamers with new, bigger and faster ships looked to the Levant, the main lines to India and the Far East (these are described elsewhere). Under the Lloyd umbrella, picking up the cast-off old vessels, were the smaller Austro-Hungarian maritime companies operating mostly locally in the Adriatic and along its coastline, more or less independently of the Lloyd and occasionally in conjunction with it, for example the Adria Shipping Company of Fiume operating a regular line to South America created by the Lloyd.

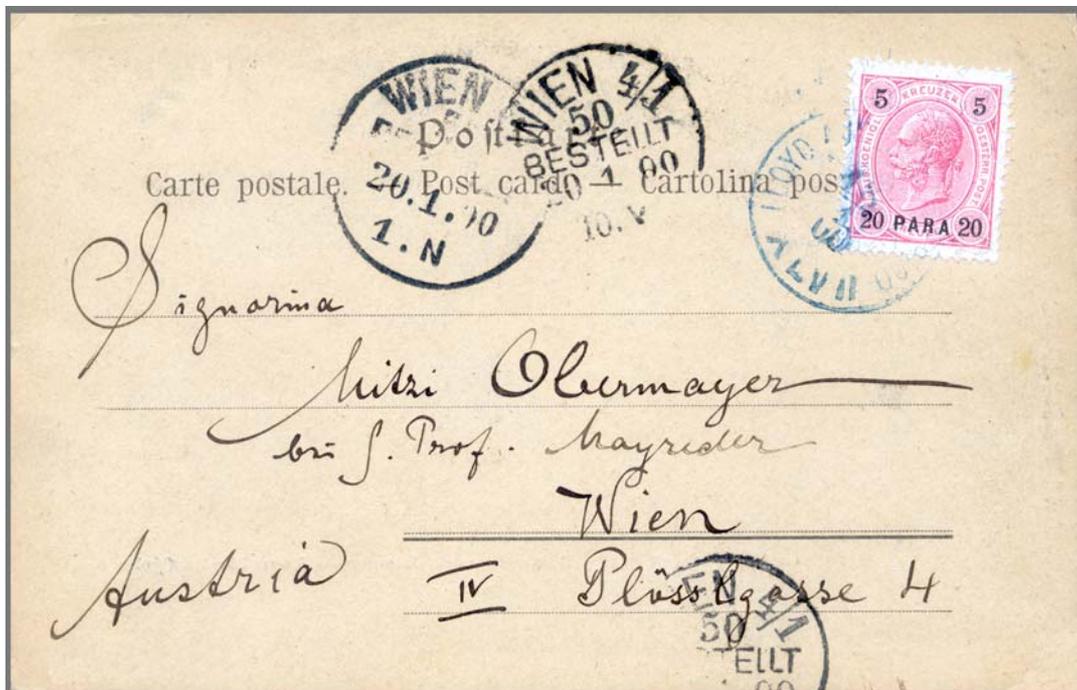
The Lloyd Austriaco was founded in September 1835 with its headquarters at Trieste. The official language of the Company was Italian, and it remained thus until 1914. Its objective was to link Trieste by steamships with the *scali del Levante* – ports of call in the Levant, and to this effect six paddle steamships were ordered from England and delivered in 1837. In the following decade more units were ordered from England, and by 1850 the Lloyd had 24 paddle steamships in operation. Work started in 1853 for the construction of the Lloyd's own shipbuilding yards in Trieste. Thereafter most of Lloyd's vessels were built there. About this time a revolutionary improvement was introduced – the substitution of a screw propeller for the paddle-wheels.

Over the years the Lloyd came to private understandings with other European shipping companies over the carrying of mail; as such they were "carriers" against a fixed remuneration. Some activities of the Lloyd in the Adriatic are described briefly here, followed by examples from some of the smaller Austrian maritime lines.

Austrian Lloyd: Adriatic, Dalmatian and Istrian lines. Cattaro-Trieste, 1880.



In 1879 and 1880 Lloyd steamers on the Cattaro-Trieste line also called in at 22 other Dalmatian ports. The single line “LETTERE DI VAPORE” and “*Leta Arrta per Mare*” hand-stamps (above) were applied on un-cancelled ship mail arriving at Gravosa, the harbour of Ragusa, and Trieste respectively.



Austrian Lloyd ship cancels are many and varied. Thus the vessel is sometimes identified by company and number, such as ‘Lloyd Austro-Ungarico / 18.1.00 / XLVII’ above. This number indicates the *S.S.Bohemia*; the cancellation was used between 1898 and 1900.

In 1901 *S.S. Bohemia* began using a cancel which identified the ship by name – “*BOHEMIA / OE. LLOYD*”. The card below, addressed to Switzerland and dated 28.3.1903, pictures the *Bohemia*.



The *S.S. Almissa* (above) served on the Adriatic lines to Dalmatia, with weekly Sunday trips to Venice between Dalmatian sailings, during the early 1890s.

From around 1909 she was diverted, with her sister ship the *S.S. Metkovic*, to the daily Trieste-Venice service. The franking of 10 heller (shown on the reverse) shows the on-board cancel “ALMISSA / OE.LLOYD”, applied whilst the vessel was in the Bight of Cattaro, 26.4.1903, thence the cover travelled to Tivat/Teodo (28.4), then re-directed via Erzeg Novi/Castelnuovo Presso Cattaro (29.4), to (on the front of the envelope) Dubrovnik/Ragusa (30.4), where it received the 2-line cachet “LETA. ARRTA. / PER MARE” on arrival. The

envelope is addressed to one Gustav Gabler, the captain of the yacht *S.M.S. Lussin*. On the outbreak of war, *S.M.S. Lussin* was requisitioned and became a torpedo depot ship based at Pola.

The official Austrian Lloyd picture postcard shown below carries a similar circular date cancellation identifying the steamship, this being in carmine. The *S.S. Carniolia* served until 1914 on the fast lines to the Levant, Black Sea and Egypt.



The card was written (21 April 1912) and posted on board the *S.S. Carniolia*, destination Germany. A damaged second letter 'I' is recorded in the cancel and this is just evident in the example above.

Austrian Lloyd. Adriatic express lines.

The express service between Trieste and Cattaro carried government operated on-board travelling post offices, in use between October 1908 and August 1914. The attractive cancellations, numbered 1 to 3, depicted a steamer together with the route direction, and examples of these are shown below.



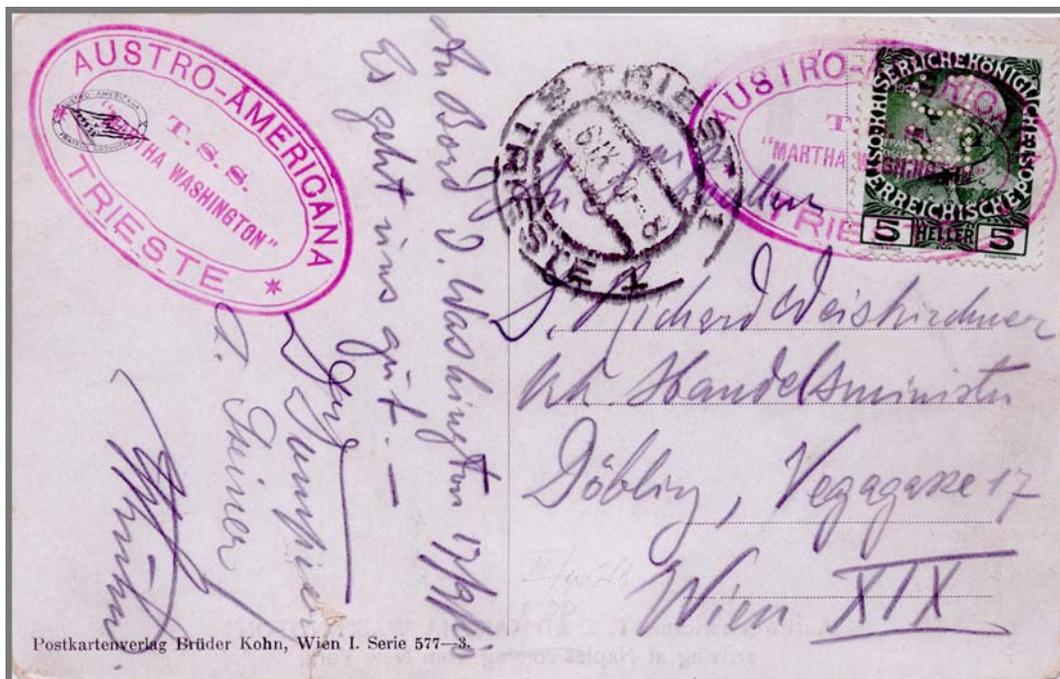
Occasionally, a cachet identifying the vessel was applied to mail posted at sea on the fast lines as an indication of maritime origin. *S.S. Baron Gautsch* hit a mine and sank off Brioni Island later in 1914.

Other Austrian Steamship Navigation Companies.

Austro - Americana.

Known also as Unione Austriaca, the Austro-Americana shipping line was founded in 1903 by Fratelli Cosulich of Trieste. Passenger services from Trieste for Sicily (Messina and Palermo), Naples and New York started the following year. The main purpose of this new company was to create a regular line, by freighters, between Trieste and ports in North and South America, with accommodation for emigrants to the 'New Continent'. The 'Austrian' period lasted from 1903 to the end of WWI. The first ships were second-hand old and battered British freighters. These were subsequently replaced by new and larger vessels, one of which, the 8,000 ton *Martha Washington* was primarily intended for emigrants. Official postcards such as the one above were on sale on board. According to Tchilinghirian and Stephen (1963) "*information is scant and postal material unbelievably elusive*". The official postcards in colour were published by Brüder Kohn, Wien 1 (Serie 577), and there are at least 11 different designs. It is stated that "*these postcards, franked with stamps cancelled with the markings of the Company, should exist, but appear to be of so great a rarity that no examples have been recorded*". This would seem to be supported by the fact that the largest known collection of Austro-Americana (Bill Sandrik, Austrian Philatelic Society display to the Royal Philatelic Society, 2005) comprised 12 items, 11 of which were postcards, none issued by the Company. The emigrants were largely illiterate; unable to write they kept the cards rather than posting them, a point poignantly portrayed in the 2006 film "The Golden Door", a harsh but beautiful story of a peasant farmer setting sail for the 'American dream' in 1910, quite possibly on a vessel of the Austro-Americana line.

It is important that potential new collectors of maritime mail should not be put off by comments such as 'no examples recorded'. Very little has been published on Austrian maritime mail since these comments were made nearly half a century ago and it would seem that more material has come on to the market but has not been widely reported in the literature. A significant auction lot of maritime mail appeared recently, inadequately described, which sold for just a few pounds per item. Yes, it did include some 'one of a kind' items - some are displayed here.



Take, for example, the postcard shown above, posted on board the passenger vessel 'Martha Washington' of the Austro-Americana Shipping Line in 1910. The 5 heller stamp carries the (unlisted) perfin 'F.C.', probably that of Fratelli Cosulich, the owners of the shipping company based in Trieste. This combination with the Company cachet on an official card suggests that the item may justly be celebrated as "one of a kind".

It is probable that the ships of this line had no posting boxes. Mail would be handed to an officer, who would either cancel the stamp with the rubber hand-stamp of the vessel or apply the cancel away from the stamp as per UPU regulations in force at that time, and deliver this mail to the local post office at the port of arrival where the stamp would be cancelled. Tchilinghirian's check list is limited to two items, one each from the *Martha Washington* and *Marianne*, whose markings have been seen (1963). Sandrik has identified a further seven, namely *Erny*, *Carolina*, *Atlanta*, *Alice*, *Oceania*, *Lucia* and *Kaiser Franz Josef*. To this short list can now be added *Clara* (below), built in 1903, with a displacement of 3932t. The envelope, marked 'Par Vapour Clara', carries a French Colony franking (Guadeloupe, West Indies) cancelled on board by the official hand-stamp of *Clara*, with arrival back-stamp 'Bordeaux / Gironde 2-8 10'. New Orleans-Trieste line. The letter enclosed, similarly marked, is dated 11 July 1910 (3 weeks before arrival in Bordeaux), from Emile Fleurot, Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe.



“Martha Washington” at Naples. Passengers embarking. Official Austro-Americana postcard.

Austrian Steamship Navigation Company “Dalmatia” .

The ‘Dalmatia’ Company was formed by the amalgamation of a number of smaller companies operating coastal passenger services along the Dalmatian coast. Its formation was not completed until 1908. The intention was to unite all Dalmatian coastal passenger traffic, but some companies, namely Ungaro-Croata of Fiume and Ragusea, refused to join. However, the Austrian Lloyd agreed to co-operate (and became one of the main shareholders) by ceding to the “Dalmatia” some of its oldest units, including the *Bosnia*, the *Danubio* and, later, the *Sultan*. Despite their small tonnages (540, 820 and 752 respectively) they were the largest of a motley assortment of over 30 vessels, many of which were less than 50 tons. Two ‘modern’ units, the *Split “D”* and *Trieste “D”*, the first to be built at the Monfalcone shipyards, were delivered in 1909. Supplemented by the *Bosnia* ceded by the Lloyd, they undertook a regular passenger and mail service on the Trieste-Metcovich line, formerly operated by the Lloyd. The *Danubio* was engaged on another passenger and mail service between Trieste and the island of Curzola (Korcula). The importance of these two lines is emphasized by the fact that the ships concerned had Government-operated post offices on board.

Trieste-Metcovich Line

The date-stamps supplied to the ships of the Dalmatia Company were of single circle type depicting a 2-funnel steamer heading right. Tchilinghirian reports no known examples of the cancellation TRST - METKOVIC (and return) as shown on the upper postcard below, and concludes that the box centre-bottom would contain ‘different numbers’, in this case clearly ‘31’. The one known example (collection H.P.) apart from the two shown here has a number not fully legible, but believed to be ‘32’. The example below (bottom) used in the same direction as the H.P. example (Metkovic - Trst), also has an unclear number in the box but it is believed to be a distorted ‘32’.



Regarding the postal history of the Dalmatia Company, Tchilinghirian and Stephen made the following comments in "Austrian Post Offices Abroad, Part III" in 1963: "Although the postal activities of the Dalmatia were mainly limited to the 1910's, they must have been considerable, not only because the network of its lines was so wide, but also because all its ships were passenger steamers, and would naturally be selected for the conveyance of the mail bags of the Postal Administration, particularly to and from the less important islands to the nearest port on the coast. Likewise, many letters will have been given direct to the ships for quicker transmission. On most of the smaller units, this ship mail may have been cancelled with the hand-stamp of each vessel, intended for general use on documents and all non-postal business. Unfortunately not a single example of these hand-stamps cancelling mail has been recorded so far and it is too early to express an opinion as to whether such Company - cancelled letters exist. The possibility remains that correspondence may have been handed over in un-cancelled condition to the P.O.s at the ports of arrival, but this cannot be taken as a foregone conclusion, for the simple reason that even the markings of the Government - operated P.O.s on board the larger ships were unknown until quite recently, although they must have existed in greater quantities. If these commoner markings could remain unnoticed for 50 years, it is hardly surprising that the scarcer Company markings of the smaller ships should not have been detected yet. The fact is that the postal history of the Company has not been investigated, and no-one can foretell what finds will be made when this gap is filled".

Austro-Croata Steamship Company.

The Austro-Croata Steamship Company was established in 1906 with its headquarters at Punat on the island of Krk (Veglia) in the Kvarner bay. It provided shipping services in the Fiume gulf area. The company owned 2 small ships, namely the *Frankopan* (144t), earlier known as the *Kvarner* (some sources refer to two separate vessels) and the *Slavija* (234t). During WWI, the *Frankopan* was requisitioned and assigned to the Lagunen Flotilla. The *Slavija* was assigned to the Submarine Search Flotilla ("S-Flotille"). Again, there are no other recorded examples of mail carried by the Company and bearing the Company's cancel.



The cachet reads "Austro-Hrvatsko / Parobrodarsko Drustvo na Dionice u Puntu" around the oval, and "Zapovjedništvo / Parobroda / Frankopan" within the oval.

Austrian Steamship Navigation Company "Ragusea".

The Navigazione a Vapore Ragusea was a limited company with head office at Ragusa (Dubrovnik). Although a small company, and based on a secondary port whose importance could not be compared with Trieste, the Ragusea had an active life from the 1890's to 1914, when it operated regular lines from Ragusa to Trieste. Ragusea also secured the contract from the Austrian Lloyd to operate the shuttle service San Giovanni di Medua to Scutari. When negotiations began for the foundation of the Dalmatia Company, efforts were made to induce Ragusea to join, but the latter felt that it was strong enough to hold its own against the competition. The steamships *Lokrum* and *Lovrjenac*, each 924 tons, were delivered by the yards of Monfalcone in 1909. They replaced the *Bojana*, *Lapad* and *Sipan*, and by 1914 the Company had six ships in operation.

Two standard types of oval hand-stamp (44 x 23 mm) are listed as being issued by the Ragusea to its ships for cancelling the mail. The first was issued to the *Bojana* for use on the shuttle service; the second has only been found on mail posted on board the *Albania*. It is inscribed 'Navigazione a Vapore Ragusea / da Bordo / Albania'. Tchilinghirian comments that 'in the absence of postal material, no indication can yet be given as to whether the *Lokrum* and *Lovrjenac*.... were supplied with an oval cancel.... or with an oval in a different design'. The postcard below (c.1910/11) suggests that the latter possibility was correct. The inscription in a larger double oval (45 x 29 mm) is the same but with the words 'Societa Inazioni' (?) inserted above 'da Bordo'. This is thought to be the only known example recorded to date and it has been signed and authenticated by Franz Hochleitner of the V.Ö.B.



From 1912 through to the later years of the war, Government operated P.O.'s existed on the two fast ships of the Ragusea Company, the *Lokrum* and the *Lovrjenac*. The circular cancel with ship design was similar to that used by the Dalmatia Company and is only recorded in black; the example above is clearly in blue. It is not known what significance, if any, can be attributed to the use of this colour.

Lake Mail.

Austrian ship mail is found from three lakes, Maggiore (to 1859), Garda (to 1866) and, most commonly, Constance. Lake Constance (German *Bodensee*) on the Rhine lies between Germany, Switzerland and Austria. As Central Europe's third largest, after Lake Balaton and Lake Geneva, it is 63 km long and 14 km at its widest point. Before 1918 the lake was bordered by five different stamp issuing entities – Baden, Wurttemberg, Bavaria, Switzerland and Austria. In 1885 Austria became one of the first to place letter boxes on the steamers for passenger mail, and date-stamps were simultaneously supplied. It was agreed that mail posted during a vessel's journey could bear the postage stamps of any other of the shore states, thus Austrian stamps are found cancelled by Swiss and German cancels etc. This facility was withdrawn around 1900. The south-eastern coast of the lake either side of the port of Bregenz and incorporating the influx of the Rhine, belonged to the Austrian Empire. Following chaotic competition between the states, the rival shipping companies reached an agreement in 1846 to regulate navigation on the lake, an agreement which lasted until 1914. The Austrian ship cancels most likely to be found are shown below; others exist, especially for the ambulatory postal service between Bregenz and Konstanz. The cancellations are described with reference to "Die Schiffspost auf dem Bodensee" by Friedrich Steinmeyer, Chairman of the Working Party on Ship Post of the Bodensee, 1989.



Clockwise from top left: Type 081, 27mm diameter, "K.K.OESTERR. SCHIFFSPOST / AM BODENSEE". Written 10.6.1893 on board a steamer between Constance and Lindau and delivered to Bregenz where the date cancel was applied. Type 082, 28 mm diameter, inscription as above, but first 'K' of 'K.K.' close to 'A' of 'AM'. Cancelled on arrival at Bregenz, 26.6.1905. Type 083, 29mm diameter, inscription as above, cancelled on arrival at Bregenz, 12.7.1899. Type 095, double circle cancel in use between 1925 and 1939 on mails arriving at Bregenz.

The Austro-Hungarian Navy.

"Few people nowadays have ever heard of the Austrian or Austro-Hungarian Navy", so writes the former naval officer Anthony Sokol, in his eloquent official history of the Austrian Navy entitled *The Imperial and Royal*

In 1897, the Greeks rose against the Turks on Crete. When Greece sent warships to the island, the European powers imposed a blockade, drove the Greek ships away and prevented the Greeks from taking reprisals. Austrian ships were assigned to one of the most active fronts and their crews became involved in fights mostly with the Turks.

International Expedition to blockade Crete, 1897.



The postcard carries an Austria Levant stamp cancelled by a single circle 'I.R. SPEDIZIONE POSTALE / CANEA' – a literal translation of the German 'postexpedition' or 'postal agency'. The card, dated Canea 29.10, travelled via the disinfecting station 'Lazaretto vecchio No.1' (in manuscript) to the naval base of Pola, arriving Trieste 5.11.1897. The picture - side, dated 'Kanea 27.X.97.', depicts a celebration of the birthday of Franz Josef I in Canea on August 18, 1897. The harbour and other views are shown together with an illustration of the cruiser *S.M. Schiff K.u.K. Maria Theresia* which arrived in Crete on 19 August and stayed until 4 September 1897.

Austro - Hungarian presence in the Far East, 1897 - 1901. The Boxer Rebellion.

Unlike other Occidental powers and Japan who established their presence in China by acquiring harbour facilities, Austria-Hungary chose to work through Austrian traders living in the Far East, and a legation was opened at Peking in April 1897. Efforts by the Occidental powers to gain further privileges caused widespread unrest in China which fuelled the activities of the extremists, the most notorious of whom was the secret society "The Fist of Righteous Harmony", nicknamed the Boxers. When the Boxer Rebellion started in 1900, Austria-Hungary did not send any troops to China, but she did send ships. The small cruiser *Zenta*, already there, was

joined by the armoured cruiser *K.u.K. Königin Maria Theresia*, the small cruisers *Kaiserin Elisabeth* and *Aspern*. Detachments from these ships, 400 men all told, took part in every major operation. Austria-Hungary kept at least one cruiser permanently on station and supplied a detachment of some 220 men as legation guards. Mail to and from the detachment, the station ships and legations in Peking and Tientsin is highly sought after.



Left and below: illustrated postcard from K.u.K. Fregatten Capitain Heinrich, Commandant, *S.M.S. Aspern*, 12.5.1901 to Wien thence redirected to Ischl (30.6.01). The picture shows Chinese workers at the Whitehead torpedo workshops. The obligatory 'feldpost' marking was incorporated in the blue circular *Aspern* hand-stamp.



In accordance with regulations, the card received the 'FRANCO' hand-stamp at the Wien sorting office, however such compliance was more the exception than the rule. The framed 'PAKET BOOT' is only seen on items sent from *Aspern* during May and June 1901.

Action on the rivers and lakes - the Flotillas and the start of WWI.

World War I began when the monitor *Temes* of the Austro-Hungarian Danube Flotilla opened fire on the defences of Belgrade. From that day until the end of the war the Flotilla remained active. Other smaller river and lake flotillas were subsequently formed using requisitioned vessels, and their existence has to some extent escaped the close scrutiny given to that of the Danube Flotilla by military and postal historians, probably because of the scarcity of material available for study. The examples below represent the flotillas of the River Danube, Bodensee (Lake Constance), Skutarisee (Lake Scutari) and the Vistula (River Weichsel, Austrian Galicia).

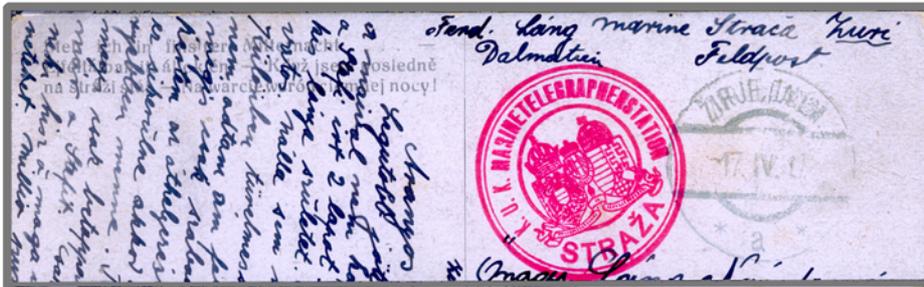


The search for correspondence from naval sources is today a challenging but rewarding one. Its study highlights a feature that was to provide the seeds of the Empire's eventual dissolution, namely the increasing friction between the various nationalities within its boundaries (Croats, Magyars, German Austrians, Italians, Czechs, Slovenes, Poles, Rumanians, Ruthenians and Slovaks). In July 1914 some units of the navy were almost 50 years old, but as a result of the European armaments race, others were newly constructed and represented the latest ideas in naval engineering. The fleet consisted of over 100 vessels made up of 15 battleships, 3 armoured cruisers, 9 small cruisers, 86 destroyers and torpedo boats, 6 submarines and 6 Danube monitors. During the war 4 more destroyers were completed, 19 more submarines were added as well as 4 new monitors. With respect to the availability of war time mail from particular units, this is governed by the vessel's complement and length of service. The heavy warships spent the entire war in the Adriatic, mostly in port and inactive, holding down a large part of the Italian and French battle fleets as well as units of the Royal Navy. Sailors had

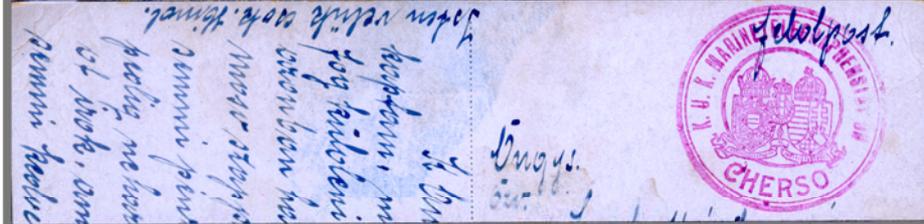
ample opportunity to write home. Flotilla, naval air and submarine personnel, considerably fewer in number, were kept much busier which explains the relative scarcity of their correspondence. Battleships' crews ranged from about 400 to over 1000, cruisers from just under 200 to over 500, destroyers' from 65 to 100, torpedo boats from 20 to 40 and submarines up to 20. Not every ship would be fully manned all the time, and some older vessels were called into duty as guard or training ships and would only employ a fraction of their normal complement. Mail from all naval forces was post free during the war so the collector is seeking postmark or cachet items rather than adhesives. Postmarks and cachets typical of the period are shown below.



Above: 'Tegetthoff' (Battleship); Below: 'Pandur' (Destroyer)



Straza, on Zuri, an island off Sebenico.



Cherso, an island off Pola & Fiume.



Grpastjak, island Dagi Otok off Zara.



Sebenico: Collecting station

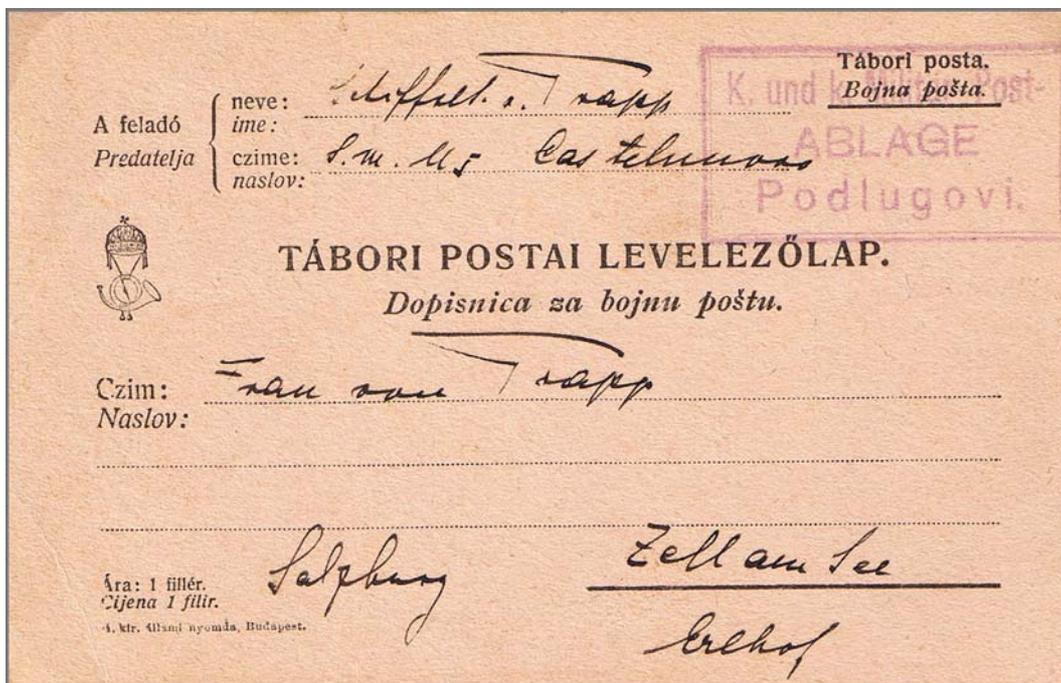


Radio Rose (in manuscript), Opp. Castelnuovo.

In conclusion, it pays to scrutinise closely even those dull, uninspiring items such as the plain postcard below. This was offered to me by a dealer as, allegedly, “Austrian U-boat mail” from S.M.U (boat) I, Castelnuovo. He hadn’t done his homework. A close look revealed some surprising information. The violet boxed cachet indicates that the card was posted at the military collecting agency of Podlugovi, north of Sarajevo; there is no on-board cachet; it was not from a U-boat. The sender was Schiffsleutnant Georg von Trapp, commander of

S.M.U.5 (not 1), home base Castelnuovo, Bight of Cattaro, who later founded the Trapp Family Choir, and the card, dated 23 May 1915, is addressed to his wife at the family home in Salzburg. The message on the reverse reads: (in German) “Approaching Sarajevo”, (in English) “I’m getting flowers on the way, was photographed but want to have done with all that sort of thing. I suppose I’ll be on board in time, war is to be declared (by Italy on Austria) tomorrow. There was never such a set of rascals”. (In German) “How are the children? Missing you already, your Georg”.

History shows that on 27 April 1915, less than a month before von Trapp sent this card, submarine U.5 under his command sank the 12,500 ton French armoured cruiser Leon Gambetta in the Straits of Otranto with the loss of 684 men. U.5 then returned to base at Castelnuovo to have a malfunctioning periscope fixed. Von Trapp took the opportunity of taking a short leave and returned home to find himself a national hero. The Italians, displeased by this attack on their French allies, planned to declare war on Austria-Hungary. Von Trapp’s leave was cancelled and he returned to his U-boat base at Castelnuovo, posting this card en route. His sensitive comments about declaration of war and the (Italian) ‘rascals’ were in English – to avoid censorship and possible recriminations from semi-literate officials at the military letter collection agency? War was indeed declared that day – 23.V.1915.



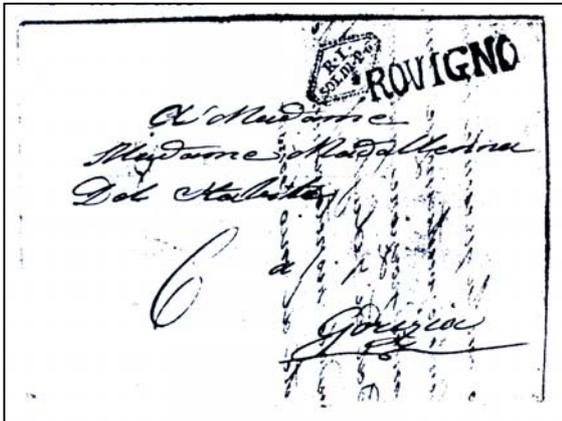
Postscript and References.

This article offers a brief commentary on some Austrian maritime and naval matters. If one is excited by apparently ubiquitous “one of a kind” items, then a total immersion in the subject of the former may be necessary with the occasional need to ‘dig deep’ for the better items. The latter is a field which will provide plentiful pickings requiring only a modest budget for the newcomer to the subject. Maritime references are to “Austrian Post Offices Abroad” Parts 1-3 by Tchilinghirian and Stephen (ASCGB 1963) and “Il Lloyd Austriaco e Gli Annulli Marittimi dell’Austria - Ungheria, Part 1, Le Linee dell’Adriatico, (Umberto del Bianco, Milan, 1976). See <http://www.stile.coventry.ac.uk/cbs/staff/beece/ahnavy/index.htm> for John Beech’s excellent Austro-Hungarian Navy Homepage. The comprehensive history of the Austro-Hungarian Kriegsmarine together with an extensive bibliography is presented by John Beech in the recent “Celebration of Austrian Philately” published by the Austrian Philatelic Society (2008). Naval activities during the Boxer Rebellion are described in detail by Fred Pirotte in issues of “Austria” between Autumn 2005 and Spring 2008 and in his book “Postal History of the Austro-Hungarian Empire’s Activities in the Far East 1898-1920” available through f.pirotte@yahoo.fr

TWO MYSTERY LETTERS FROM ROVIGNO

by Keith Brandon and Associates

In AUSTRIA 52 of Summer 1980, the following letter and illustration from Keith Tranmer were featured as a letter to the Editor.



I enclose a photocopy of an unusual pre-stamp cover from Rovigno to Gorizia sent on the 30th November 1835. Tied by the Rovigno postmark is a small label inscribed "R.I. Soldi 2.6" over a small star in black with a single line and dotted frame. The contents of the entire are of a private nature and I do not think it originated at an official source. The front is indicated 6 which I take to be the postage rate but the envelope is not marked for paid or for collection by crossing through.

I recall in the 1950s the discovery of the SPITAL stamp which pre-dated the 1850 adhesives of Austria and some of the early ASC bulletins contain the story. That was bogus but is this

stamp or label for postage or a tax or also bogus? Was it a label taken from something else and fixed to this cover? Newspaper tax stamps of the time were handstamped on to the paper so far as I recall, but did they take this form? Perhaps some of our postal historians would like to comment.

It is now the thirtieth anniversary of this unanswered letter, and I thought I would have a go at replying, particularly as I now have a similar letter of my own! Hereafter, Keith Tranmer's letter will be referred to as the KT letter, and mine as the KB letter. In the search for an explanation of these letters, I have had the benefit of the views of Messrs Ebner, Mintert, Brumby, Taylor et al for which I am most grateful.

Let us sum up what we know about these two covers:

- ❖ both letters are written in Italian in Rovigno (now Rovinj in Croatia) by the same hand, and were addressed to the same recipient in Gorizia (now Görz in north-eastern Italy).
- ❖ we no longer have access to the KT letter, but KT described the contents as of a private nature. The KB letter is from a son to his mother, thanking her for an advance of his allowance.
- ❖ the KT letter was written on 30 November 1835, and the KB letter on 16 February 1837.
- ❖ both letters have small diamond-shaped label stuck on them, apparently tied with a postmark. The KT letter was postmarked **ROVIGNO** at origin, the KB letter **V. TRIEST** in transit. Both labels contain the description **R.I. / SOLDI. 2.6** with a star.
- ❖ the KT letter has been marked **6** kr for the addressee to pay; the correct rate for a ½ loth letter over seven to nine postal zones. The KB letter is marked **2** kr to pay; the rate for up to three postal zones. This suggests that the KB letter was taken to Trieste for posting rather than posted in Rovigno.



There seem to be three possible explanations for the existence of the labels affixed to these letters:

1. They were attached as “stamps” to pay the postage and defraud the Austrian post;
2. They were attached by the sender as propaganda labels, and postmarked by sympathetic postal clerks;
3. They are a “confection”, the labels attached and postmarks falsified by the addressee or any subsequent owner over the almost 150 years from 1832 to 1980, the purpose being to fool collectors.

We can surely dismiss the first explanation quickly. The labels are denominated in Lombardy & Venetia’s soldi currency, and R.I. stands for “Regno d’Italia”, but the letter’s route would not have taken it out of Austria’s Küstenland province. Moreover, none of the Italian States used such a “stamp”, several years before Rowland Hill introduced the Penny Black in Britain. Furthermore, the soldi currency, which had been used in Lombardy and Venetia in Napoleonic times, was not in use during the eighteen-thirties, and did not reappear until 1858. It seems inconceivable that any sender would think that this label would successfully pass for postage paid.

The second possible explanation deserves more attention. Rovigno is on the Istrian peninsula, and was part of the Republic of Venice for five centuries until 1797. After the Napoleonic Wars, Austria gained Istria. The population, however, remained mainly Italians and Southern Slavs, with the German-speaking Austrians a recent and minority group in the 1830s. Even today, in a predominantly Croatian population, 16% of the inhabitants of Rovinj still claim to speak Italian as their first language. Could our writer have been an Italian nationalist making a quiet protest by putting the Regno d’Italia label on his correspondence? Quite



possibly the postal clerk was also sympathetic to the cause, but this would have had to be the case in both Rovigno and Trieste.

In order to test this hypothesis, we carefully peeled up the left-hand side of the label on the KB letter. To the surprise of some of the team, the **V. TRIEST** postmark did not continue under the label. It looked as if the label had indeed been affixed by the sender, and that it had been tied by the postmark.



However, we were still sceptical, and looked more closely at the **V. TRIEST** postmark. Under great magnification, the right-hand serif of the second “T” appeared pointed, and quite different to the left-hand serif. However, most of the letters were to a greater or lesser extent broken and irregular under this degree of magnification. More conclusive, however is that the postmark is a dull blue except for the part on top of the label, which is black. This can only be seen under a powerful magnifier.

Our conclusion therefore is that the KB letter has had the label affixed after the event, and that the postmark has been doctored. It seems that the original **V TRIEST** postmark was either incomplete or has had the final part removed. The label was then affixed, and the last part of the postmark carefully drawn on to the label. Further evidence is that the label lifted quite easily, the gum being water-soluble. Such adhesives would not have been around in the mid-nineteenth century, and the gum of that era would have been more difficult to dissolve. We haven’t had the opportunity to carry out the same tests on the KT letter, but it seems likely to have the same provenance.

So where did the label come from? It is a cut-down fiscal signette from the (Napoeonic) Kingdom of Italy. The graphic decoration around the central lozenge has been trimmed away. The forger probably had a pile of them; they are not uncommon.

It would appear that Keith Tranmer and myself have letters which were genuinely sent through the post, with the postage paid by the addressee, but that the covers were “improved” at a later date by the addition of the label and doctoring of the postmark.

ATTENTION! LAST CHANCE TO BUY "AUSTRIA" BINDERS.

We have a few A5 binders left. After that, there won't be any more. Details on page 3. First come, first served.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, LETTERS etc

Slogans continued

Geoff Frost wondered why England and Italy had been singled out for derogatory slogans on labels and stickers.

A good start is to appreciate that Italy was allied to Germany and Austria before the war (Triple Alliance, 1882) but was persuaded to join the Allied powers under the Treaty of London (1915). Hence the poster stamps calling for God's punishment of the treacherous Italians.

An even better discussion is in "The White War" by Mark Thompson (available from Amazon). Thompson also gives Italy's case for claiming that a failure to consult by Austria had effectively abnegated the Alliance. Whilst this view cannot just be dismissed it is clear that the Treaty of London was an egregious piece of skulduggery which arguably laid a foundation for some of the problems which after the war gave rise to Mussolini and the issues which precluded a lasting peace in the Mediterranean. (Which isn't to say that the Versailles and subsequent Treaties weren't even more short sighted. Compare and Contrast Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points with the outcome so far as Süd Tirol, the Sudetenland, Transylvania, etc. were concerned. Victors' Peace.)

So far as England is concerned, I think that there was a perception that England had been spoiling for a fight with Germany for at least a decade (although, of course, arguably the converse is also true) and, (rather like attitudes to the USA over the last 50 years), UK Foreign Policy was not universally admired.

I'm not sure if there were poster stamps giving propaganda messages against Russia & Serbia (or France, for that matter). There are certainly a good number of propaganda postcards. But England & Italy do seem to have irritated the Central Powers more than the others.

Martin Brumby

A possibly interesting 1914 Parcel Card

440
3986

Kufstein 1 145 144 143

Post-Begleitadresse.

12 h

Gattung und Inhalt: 3 Pakete Bäckereier

Zufällige Wertangabe

An: Frau
Veronika Hrobl,
Hopfgarten,
Brixental

Straße und Hausnummer

Post und Land

Gewicht 4 kg g
3 g
3 g

Postvermerk

Raum zum Aufkleben der Frankomarken

Porto K h
..... 42h
..... 42h
Bestellgebühr 40h
Summe K h
138

I recently acquired this parcel card, and am told it is uncommon as few unfranked cards from this period seem to have survived. Others may find it interesting too.

It's a card for three parcels containing 4, 3 & 3kg of bakery products, sent from Kufstein to Hopfgarten in Brixental on 14 April 1914. (They probably went by train, changing at Worgl.) The right hand column has NO adhesives nor traces thereof.

Kufstein to Hopfgarten is 14.8 km which is Zone 1. The rate up to 5kg before 1 Oct 1916 was 30h. It was permitted to send parcels (but only up to 5kg) without prepaying the postage; the recipient then paid a surcharge of 12h as well as the postage. So each parcel cost 30h + 12h = 42h, as is shown in faint

pencil at the bottom right of the front, below the blue 12 and above the 138. The "Aviso fee", ie the fee for telling the recipient that there was a parcel for them, has been charged at 4h per parcel; this is shown on the

back by three 4h dues and on the front by the blue 12. The total charge to be collected is then $3 \times 42h + 12h = 138h$. Perhaps making the recipient pay for the postage etc was simpler than adding it to the invoice. I bet it was bread & cakes for a hotel.



Could this 12 be the cost of the card? NO. MB remarks that he has never seen a card from this period where the 2h cost for the card and the 10h tax (both of which would be payable by the sender) are included in the sums on the card. Invariably, the sender would have had to buy the card for cash, as it's a piece of paper with an intrinsic value. Unprepaid cards are unusual - probably more unusual than they used to be as they are more likely to have been recycled instead of clipped. Perhaps the dues saved it for philately!

A Taylor

Dear Editor,

I obtained this envelope at York Fair; the sender's address is Villach and the cancel is a special one for the Gross-Glockner Race on 9 June 1946. Wurth lists it at 70 brownie-points; he doesn't specify who was racing but I'd expect cars not athletes or horses! It's franked with 3 groschen, the minimum to qualify for a cancellation.

Then it went to Linz Postlagernd, where it acquired an American censor mark. Josef Schmiedleitner seemingly paid 30 groschen dues. The letter rate then was 12g; it had 3g; deficiency 9g; amount due was double-deficiency = 18g but with a minimum of 20g. To that add the Postlagernd fee of 10g (see Bernadini & Pfalz p358) making 30g; shown by $24 + 5 + 1$. These are mixed; two Eagles and a PORTO-overprinted posthorn.

My question is, it looks a little bit too good – can it be genuine?

M A Rillen





← What is this?

This is a Kaiser Karl 1917 stamp with a box cancel “III over 34”. Such cancels are known on money-handling forms, as the reference number of the money-handling office; and on (stampless) Feldpost, where they are known as Tarnstempel and supposedly conceal the office of posting. What’s it doing on an adhesive?

These can be found at the end of the First Republic Local Issues in Netto. They were used in a few offices in Südtirol; office 34 is ALGUND

And this? →

It looks like a postage stamp from an unknown country, or maybe a child’s plaything.

The clue is the E. MUSIL WIEN under the bust: it’s a proof of an unadopted design submitted by Musil of Vienna for a proposed reissue of the revenue adhesives.



← And this??

This illustration arrived by email from Sweden on 5th April (not 1st). The item purports to be a first issue newspaper postage stamp: but a detailed examination of the lettering suggests that it’s a forgery – a conclusion reinforced by the unknown type of cancel. Also, it is bright green!



Prof Zimmerl commented (Hans Smith translation) thus: “This is undoubtedly a bogus printing. I have never in fact seen prints of this kind myself before but there was a time when they were quite common. To be precise, they are not fakes, because they were not produced with a view to deceive. They are, rather, curiosity or bogus products. There was a whole industry in the past for forgeries of this kind. The old pre-printed albums were to blame. Every collector had empty spaces in his album but never an opportunity of ever filling them, if only a few such stamps existed worldwide. (Every album had a space for the Blue Mauritius, although only 12 copies existed worldwide.) To help these collectors, stamps (pictures) of this kind were imitated and sold quite honestly as cheap reprints. Nowadays we often don’t know what to do with products of this kind – as in the present case.”

KRANKENKASSE: A SMALL CORRECTION

Or a better understanding... Austria 139 page 26 says:

The 3rd German - Austrian rates period (1st August - 31st October 1938)

1. August: Parts of the ordinance of 9 July 1938 came into effect; the following consequences were announced:

(d) Printed matter with receipt cards for disability insurance or printed matter from professional associations or insurance companies are permissible only in Germany

This is not quite true. The information is from Dr C Kainz article in Wurth's Handbook volume 3 page 112, where she has for 1. August 1938:

Die "Verordnung über die Einführung neuer Postgebühren und die Angleichung des Postdienstes im Lande Österreich vom 9. Juli 1938" tritt hinsichtlich des Abschnittes I "Briefsendungen" in Kraft. (ABl. Nr. 81/1938, Verf. Nr. 289, bzw. NBl. Nr. 27/1938, Verf. 1.94.)

Was die mit diesem Tag verfügte Einführung neuer Postgebühren und die Angleichung des Postdienstes im Lande Österreich betrifft, ist folgendes zu beachten:

4. Drucksachen mit Zusätzen nach § 8, VIII Nr. 11 und 12 der Postordnung (Zusätze bei Quittungskarten der Invalidenversicherung und bei Drucksachen der Berufsgenossenschaften oder Versicherungsanstalten), sind nur im Altreich zulässig.

I have checked all the available Postordnung for that period, and am convinced that what this means is that the "Old Germany" equivalent of the Krankenkasse cards was only permitted within Old Germany; it does not mean that the Austrian cards were abolished. Indeed, the specimen on the last page of the "Krankenkassen Rates" article shows that they remained in use.

2010 NEW ISSUES: THE PLAN

All stamps are printed by the Österreichische Staatsdruckerei unless otherwise stated. The descriptions are taken from the English version of the Post.at website and ruthlessly abbreviated. The Austrian Post Office web site has a table of the year's new issues; it was last updated on 3 February and is subject to change. They add that new issues are available at all postal branches, except stamps marked with * which are only available at selected postal branches and have to be ordered. Stamps marked with ** are only available from the Collector Service Centre and only while supplies last.

Type codes: SM - special issue stamp, SMZ - special issue stamp with surcharge, SMS - special issue series (BLS - series with souvenir sheet), DM - definitive series, KBS - special stamp series on a small sheet, BL - souvenir sheet, FMRL and FMSK - self-adhesive stamps, KB - small sheet, KBZ - small sheet with surcharge, PK - postcard, BU - envelope, MX - maxi card.

Type	Issue	Description	Face	Pre-issue	Date of issue
FMFK	250,000	Trout and otter (10 stamps at 75 cent each)	0.75	21.12.2009	08.01.2010
FMRL	6,110,000	Wildcat (roll of 100 stamps at 65 cent each)	0.65	21.12.2009	13.01.2010
SMS*	250,000	UNESCO World Heritage Site- Salzburg centre	1.00	22.01.2010	29.01.2010
KBS*	900,000	Austrians in Hollywood - Otto Preminger (minisheet of 10 stamps)	0.55	22.01.2010	05.02.2010
SM	300,000	Roger Federer	0.65	22.01.2010	08.02.2010
SMS	400,000	Modern Art in Austria - Helmut Kand	0.55	22.01.2010	08.02.2010
SM**	200,000	Prince Eugen	0.65	22.01.2010	12.02.2010
SMS	400,000	Classic trademarks - Kleinbahn	0.55	22.01.2010	16.02.2010
BL**	170,000	200 th anniversary of the death of Andreas Hofer	1.75	12.02.2010	19.02.2010
SM*	250,000	Vienna State Opera - Medea	1.00	12.02.2010	24.02.2010
SM	300,000	100 th birthday of Max Weiler	0.75	06.03.2010	18.03.2010
KB*	900,000	Wien Museum - Max Kurzweil	0.65	06.03.2010	19.03.2010
KB*	900,000	Belvedere Palace	0.65	06.03.2010	24.03.2010
SMS*	300,000	Trains - 150 years Graz Köflacher Bahn	1.00	19.03.2010	10.04.2010
SMS**	200,000	Old Austria - Prague	0.65	19.03.2010	16.04.2010
BL	500,000	Shanghai exhibition	0.55	16.04.2010	30.04.2010
KB*	900,000	Imperial Palace Hof	0.55	16.04.2010	13.05.2010
SM*	300,000	350 years Maria Taferl	0.55	16.04.2010	16.05.2010
KB*	900,000	100 years second alpine spring water system	0.55	06.05.2010	May 2010
SM*	250,000	150 th birthday of Gustav Mahler	1.00	06.05.2010	18.05.2010
SM*	250,000	Mendelbahn	0.65	16.04.2010	08.05.2010
SM*	300,000	90 years Salzburg Festival	0.55	06.05.2010	20.05.2010
SMS*	250,000	Sacred art in Austria- Gebhardstab Admont Monastery	0.75	06.05.2010	28.05.2010
FMRL	21,124,000	European roller (roll of 100 stamps at 55 cents)	0.55	06.05.2010	28.05.2010
FMRL	21,124,000	Golden eagle (roll of 100 stamps at 75 cents)	0.75	06.05.2010	28.05.2010
KB**	494,000	Simon Wiesenthal-joint issue with Israel	0.75	01.06.2010	10.06.2010

Type	Issue	Description	Face	Pre-issue	Date of issue
SM*	250,000	Europa 2010 - Children's books "Fridolin"	0.65	01.06.2010	11.06.2010
SM*	250,000	120 th birthday of Egon Schiele	1.40	01.06.2010	June 2010
SM*	250,000	Ioan Holender's 75 th birthday	1.00	01.06.2010	20.06.2010
SMS	300,000	Austria's oldest churches - Pfalzkirche in Karnburg	1.00	01.06.2010	June 2010
SM*	250,000	Grete Rehor's 100 th birthday	0.55	01.06.2010	30.06.2010
SM*	pending	15 years Rainbow Parade	0.55	01.07.2010	03.07.2010
BL*	pending	100 years International Society of photogrammetry	1.40	01.07.2010	July 2010
FMRL	5,749,000	Grafenegg (roll of 25 stamps at 55 cents each)	0.55	01.07.2010	12.07.2010
SMS	300,000	125 years Grenzlandbahn	0.65	01.07.2010	July 2010
SM*	250,000	150 th birthday of Alfons Maria Mucha	1.15	01.07.2010	July 2010
SMS	300,000	Traditional handicraft: pottery	0.75	Aug 2010	Aug 2010
SM	300,000	50 years diocese Eisenstadt	0.55	01.08.2010	01.08.2010
SM*	250,000	100 th birthday of Mother Teresa	1.30	01.08.2010	Aug 2010
KBZ	pending	Day of stamps 2010 [1€30 surcharge on face value]	2.65	01.08.2010	16.08.2010
SM	200,000	Flower-bonus gift (<i>cannot be ordered!</i>)	0.55	01.09.2010	Sept 2010
BL**	200,000	Joint issue with Romania	1.30	01.09.2010	Sept 2010
SMS**	250,000	Sacred art in Austria- St. Peter's Abbey, Salzburg	1.00	01.09.2010	Sept 2010
BL**	180,000	Petit Point (embroidered)	2.65	01.09.2010	17.09.2010
SMS*	300,000	Trains - 100 Years Wechselbahn	1.00	01.09.2010	Sept 2010
SM*	250,000	Day of Sports 1	1.00	01.09.2010	25.09.2010
SM *	250,000	Day of Sports 2	1.00	01.09.2010	25.09.2010
SM*	250,000	Maria Theresa	1.00	Oct 2010	Oct 2010
SM*	250,00	250 th birthday Jakob Degen, inventor	1.25	Oct 2010	Oct 2010
KB**	700,000	Austrian Army- 50 th anniversary of first operation abroad	0.65	Oct 2010	26.10.2010
SMS	250,000	UNESCO World Heritage - Vienna city centre	1.00	Nov 2010	Nov 2010
SM	pending	Advent 2010	0.65	Nov 2010	Nov 2010
FMRL	pending	Christmas 2010 (roll of 25 stamps at 55 cents each)	0.55	Nov 2010	Dec 2010
SM	pending	Christmas 2010	0.55	Nov 2010	Dec 2010
FMSK	pending	Dragonfly and European green toad (10 stamps at 75 cents each)	0.75	Nov 2010	Nov 2010

LONDON 2010: APS RESULTS AND NOTES

Exhibitor	Exhibit	Exhibitor's description thereof	Result
Johannes Haslauer	Die erste Korrespondenzkarte der Welt mit dem Wertzeicheneindruck der Ausgabe 1867 [8 frames]	First Issue of Postcards of the World.	92: Gold
Andy Taylor	The Austrian Newspaper Tax [5 fr.]	The Austrian empire imposed a tax on newspapers from 1789 to 1899, indicated by imprinted or adhesive stamps. These are displayed, classified and explained in detail.	85: Large Vermeil
Brian Presland	Austrian-Hungarian Military Medical Services 1914-1918 [5 fr.]	The treatment, evacuation and care of the sick and wounded soldiers, extending from the operational casualty stage to various medical units and specialist hospitals.	80: Vermeil
Hans Smith	The Austrian Post in the Balkans 1750-1914 [8 fr.]	A history of the Austrian consular and shipping agency posts in the Balkans from the 1750s to 1918.	90: Gold

Exhibitor	Exhibit	Exhibitor's description thereof	Result
Bill Hedley	A Survey of Hungarian Postal History 1729-1919, illustrated through postal services in Pozsony. [5 fr.]	The exhibit surveys the development of the letter and parcel post in Hungary during two centuries of change and upheaval: concentrated on Poszony (now Bratislava).	86: Large Vermeil
Dan-Simion Grecu	Postal History of Romania during World War II: International Connections [8 fr.]	The foreign connections of the military, political and postal situation in Romania during WWII (and the first post war years).	85: Large Vermeil
Edwin Muller	Mail of unoccupied Belgium, 1914-1918 [5 fr.]	Functioning of the mail in unoccupied Belgium and the Belgian Army during WWI	80: Vermeil
Rex Dixon	Deutsche Nothilfe 1924-1935 [5 fr.]	German emergency aid	83: Vermeil

Andy's Notes:



The Business Design Centre is in general excellently suited to such events. Chairs had been thoughtfully provided for weary philatelists and bored partners, and tables for those who had brought their own lunch instead of trying the excellent Thai curry sold by the snackbar. The lighting in the main display hall was good; some of the rows in the ancillary rooms were in deep gloom as were some dealer or



postal-authority stands. Many of the dealers were besieged by customers – mostly European ones with the narrower stands – and some of their prices reflected the overheads.

The physical frames seemed to work excellently – but like a swan swimming on a river all the hard work is hidden! The Jury's official report commends the work of the bin room, mounting and dismounting teams. A few curious sheet layouts had had to be coped with. Exhibitors need to note that their display may wrap round the end of a row of frames, or even from one row to the next, or have a break for a roof-supporting column. This could impact ones style of displaying, on which I plan to write more in the next issue. One exhibit was "not judged" because the key items were covered up 'to protect them from the light' – on which matter I also plan to write.

Some wonderful Austrian (and other) material was there to be seen – although several lively exchanges of views confirmed that not everything appeals to everybody. "If one is good, are ten better?" There were a surprising number of errors on sheets (eg newspaper tax stamps were NOT used to pay for local delivery in Trieste!). Several Austrian collectors were there, and useful exchanges took place in my best Germlish!

to which Joyce adds:

The venue was larger and better than I expected and I was pleased exhibits change over was completed as planned so that all were available to view when I arrived. It suffered from the usual problem with lighting exhibits. Whilst some areas were good others were fairly dark.

A personal gripe was the very low number of aerophilately exhibits (12) compared with the number of postal history (130). It would not have caused too many problems to have had a few more of one and less of the other. At Antwerp (a smaller show) there were 17 aero and 7 astro exhibits!.

What is usually the dealers area at Stampex was mainly taken over by large auction houses and whilst it was a chance to see copies of some very expensive material I am sure most visitors were more interested in adding to their own collection at reasonable cost. Some of our party commented that material was expensive but that could be just a comparison with Lincolnshire prices where bargains can be found especially with bulk items.

Aide Memoire

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