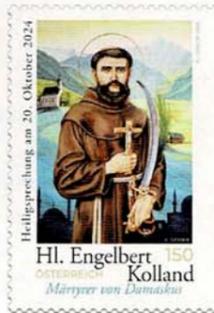




Johann Strauss (Son) 25 October 1825 – 3 June 1899



*A selection of the items discussed in this issue*

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**Edited by Hiroyuki Yamagata**

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We offer various items to buy. Order from the Editor and pay him, and he will arrange for whoever holds the stock to send it to you.

**The Society's web site on <http://www.austrianphilately.com> was formerly, and will be, regularly updated and enhanced. A major update and modernisation is in hand.**

**Meanwhile, most of its contents - and the current Auction - are available at <http://www.kitzbuhel.co.uk/index.htm>**

# AUSTRIAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY HONORARY OFFICERS

**Note the changes!**

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## AIDE MEMOIRE

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** are due on 1<sup>st</sup> April every year. UK and Europe £20. Airmail overseas £23. Please send membership applications (with payment) and queries to the Membership Secretary, but subscription renewal payments from existing members to the Treasurer. See below regarding ways of paying. You may pay in advance at the current rate for as many future years as you like.

**ELECTRONIC MEMBERSHIP:** If you wish to receive 'Austria' and any Newsletters by email, you can opt for e-membership. This costs only £10 per year. Notify the Membership Secretary and pay the subscription as below.

**EXCHANGE PACKET:** apply to the Secretary thereof. Non-UK resident members are welcome to sell through the packet, but cannot receive it because of tax problems.

**NEW ISSUES:** E-Mail [sammler-service@post.at](mailto:sammler-service@post.at) You can pay them by credit card. They send "Die Briefmarke" free to their subscribers; if that's all you want contact the President.

**ADVERTISING IN 'AUSTRIA':** we welcome full or half page adverts.

**WAYS OF PAYING:** If paying by cheque, please send sterling cheques payable to 'APS' and drawn on a UK bank. You can pay by bank transfer: email the Treasurer for details. Finally, we have a Paypal account: use [andy@kitzbuhel.co.uk](mailto:andy@kitzbuhel.co.uk) as the account identifier. Please pay so that we receive the requested amount in pounds sterling, and state "who from and what for".

## Officer's Observations

Many, many thanks to John Stover for his donation!

The article "*The First Austrian Postage Stamps: A Glimpse into Imperial Austria's Postal History*" on pages 4-5 of Austria 229 was constructed by Chat-GPT in response to the instruction "write a 2-page article on the first Austrian Postage Stamps". No more details were provided to it, and no human intervention! Award of merit to the only reader who noticed a touch of inhumanity in its words.

Andy Taylor has resigned from the Officer role of APS Treasurer w.e.f 1 April. He had occupied that role from 1990 to 1999 and again from 2017. The committee has co-opted Ian Bergel as Treasurer. NOTE YE that the APS's paypal address of kitzbuhel is actually Andy's personal account, since the APS is not a legally-defined entity nor does it have a registered address. A new paypal address will be announced SBWM/ASAP; meanwhile 'kitzbuhel' will remain available. **Please ensure that payments made to it specify "who from and what for"**, lest they be mistaken for a retirement gift.

This issue should reach you before the **International Exhibition at Birmingham** on 7-11 May. Hope to see you there! Don't forget the open meeting for anyone who is interested, on Friday afternoon from 13:00 to 17:00. Come along - even better, bring something to show! Layout plan of the event on next page.

**MIDPEX!** 5 July 2025, Warwick Exhibition Centre, nr. Leamington Spa, CV31 1FV.

Recommended reading: "**FEPA News**" (Federation of European Philatelic Associations). It's now becoming on-line only, to save money - sign up at [www.fepanews.com](http://www.fepanews.com) and read about past successes and future developments in philately, plus dates of exhibitions, fairs etc (including Ulm, now planning for the next 3 years).

### APS 2025 FEST ???

In the last 3 months or so, APS President Andy Taylor has asked for volunteers to organise a location etc for a Fest weekend in 2025 and to organise the programme for the weekend. While we have had a volunteer for the programme, we have not had a volunteer to organise the location etc. Volunteers have been requested because it is felt that committee members already have more than enough work to do for APS. Also, our last 2 Fest weekends have only attracted around 10 members each time. Taking account of the lack of a volunteer and the difficulty of making a Fest with low numbers viable, the committee at a recent meeting reluctantly decided that **there will be no Fest weekend in 2025**. We will consider the possibility of a joint weekend with another society in 2026.

# The Empire Strikes Back

The EurophilEx International Exhibition is to be held in Birmingham from 7 to 11 May 2025. We have reserved a 40-seat room for the afternoon of **Friday 9 May, 1pm to 5pm**. There will be a meet'n'greet session from 1pm, with displays being shown from 1:30pm onwards. Anybody and everybody will be welcome! **The venue is "Room 2"**.

The room will have two tables, electric power, and 4 double-sided 16-A4-sheet display frames. These are standard 4x4 International frames; a row will take two A3 sheets sideways so presumably takes three "square A4". The meeting is free; so is entry to the Exhibition on all days except the first.

The meeting is intended for collectors of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its successor states. Preference in the displaying-queue will be given to visitors from outside the UK. Displays of top-quality copies of your actual sheets will be equally welcome, and might avoid Irritating Difficulties with His Majesty King Charles III's Revenue and Customs. Book your slot with Andy Taylor.

Layout of Hall 9, with Meeting Room 2 red-arrowed.





# EuroPhilex

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- Fri 9 Roll of Distinguished Philatelists Ceremony and reception
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**www.europhilex2025.co.uk**

Telephone +44 (0) 1279 870488

## Notes From Other Journals

Note that most of the items described are not retained long-term by the Society, although copies may be available for a short period.

### ☺ *Die Briefmarke*

**1-2/2025:** 200<sup>th</sup> birthday of Johann Strauss II; the Telfs Schleicherlaufen, 2025; history of Girl Guides; 150 years of the Vienna Pneumatic Post; new Dispenser stamps; New book: 'Viennese Post Offices and registered mail'; society news etc

**3/2025:** Johann Strauss blocks-of-three; 2025 is Philatelic Jubilee Year\*\*; 125 years since blood groups discovered; 75 years since The Third Man; European ducks; cards from post-Przemysl POW camps; 150 years of the Vienna Pneumatic Post (ii); new issues; Traditional Philately discussed with reference to the British Penny Red; (long) letters to the Editor; society news etc; forthcoming exhibitions.

\*\* 175 years since first stamp for posting letters; 125 years since change to Kronen-Heller currency and corresponding stamps; 100 years since first Schilling stamps; 80 years since stamps overprinted Österreich.

### ☺ *Vindobona Vereins-Nachrichten*

**1/2025:** Fiscal Philately from N to Z; the Passau Bahnhof post office; the Hungarian double-deck routing mark, 1924-28; etc. Most of their issues are available at <https://www.vindobona.club/vindobona-nachrichten/>

### ☺ *The London Philatelist*

**Jan-Feb 2025:** Czechoslovakia 1918-1928: Postage Stamps used as Revenues. By Lubor Kunc FRPSL (there's other articles, of course)

### ☺ *Stamps of Hungary*

**Nr 240: March 2025:** Editor's corner, Membership news, Auction News. Mervyn Benford reminisces; The story of the 'lucky number' - Part 2b: Kiss Károly és Társa Bank r.t.; Interpreting postal charges on hyperinflation mail - Part 2; New issues.

### ☺ *Germania*

**Feb 2025 (61 1):** UPU procedures for postage-due on foreign mail; German-Austria 1918 to 1922 (*well worth a read! A.T.*); Judaica uncovered: the secrets behind names and addresses; West German customs control 1961; Website uses AI to decipher old German scripts; German letter rates from 1 January 2025; etc etc.

☺ *Wiener Ganzsachen- Frei- & Poststempel-Sammlerverein* [In cooperation with the Tauschvereinigung für Postwertzeichen In Wien]

**Spring 2025:** In memory of Postcards with Costumes Series imprints - official and private. Does anybody have a Costumes postcard cancelled earlier than 1950?

=====  
Found by RM on the Internet - a History of Austrian Money. The link downloads a "flipbook" to your computer for you to page through. First impressions: interesting contents, but thin grey lettering like this.

[https://www.oenb.at/dam/jcr:d8e98a25-eea2-4229-bd50-35ff41c6e7d0/oesterreichische\\_geldgeschichte\\_flipbook\\_2.pdf](https://www.oenb.at/dam/jcr:d8e98a25-eea2-4229-bd50-35ff41c6e7d0/oesterreichische_geldgeschichte_flipbook_2.pdf)

=====

## Book Reviews

### “Western Ukraine 1918 – 1919: A Specialized Philatelic Catalog”, by Inger Kuzych, as advertised in ‘Austria’ pp 43-44

Book review by Helmut Kobelbauer (Sinabelkirchen):

Towards the end of the First World War, not one but two Ukrainian nation states emerged: the West Ukrainian National Republic in the territory of Eastern Galicia (about 4 million inhabitants, capital Lviv) and the much larger Ukrainian National Republic (about 40 million inhabitants, capital Kyiv) on former Tsarist territory.

It should be noted that the Poles were much better prepared for the (re-)establishment of their state, especially through the two Polish Legions (Krakow and Lviv) as the core of a future Polish army. The Ukrainian Legion (under the command of the Habsburg Archduke Wilhelm) could not keep up.

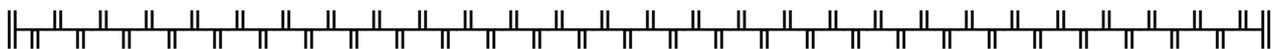
As a result, Polish troops took possession of Lviv on November 21, 1918, and the capital of the West Ukrainian National Republic had to be moved first to Tarnopol and later to Stanislaw. At the end of May 1919, military threats from the west (Poland) and south (Romania) led to the end of this short-lived state.

It can happen that if a state does not sufficiently develop and promote its defence readiness, it simply disappears from the map. From a philatelic point of view, such political (and human) catastrophes are of course an asset, since they represent a closed collecting area with a manageable ensemble of postage stamps.

Inger Kuzych, who has been a collector and editor of Ukrainian philately for many years and is even well-known in Europe with his postal history exhibit “Lviv: Cosmopolitan Crownland Capital of the Austrian Empire”, has comprehensively researched western Ukrainian philately in this special catalogue and presented it in all its aspects just as comprehensively. The book shows all (!) relevant stamps, postal stationery, OT and other stamps as well as the postal fees applicable at the time, each with notes on any special features and a consistent valuation (in US dollars). In addition, there are excellent quality images of special items and there is certainly no shortage of these in this difficult collecting area. I noticed that even the Austrian 10 Kronen on fibre paper, which was probably only issued in April 1919, was apparently available in Stanislaw - perhaps a souvenir from the Viennese stamp dealer Josef Baumgarten.

In all modesty, I would also like to point out the censorship stamp from Skole, which our good collector friend Petr Gebauer discovered and documented (“*The Sub-Carpathian Messenger*”, issue #021 (June 2012), page 16). There is also a connection with the postal history of the Sub-Carpathian region in that in January 1919 the Hutsul Republic on the upper Tisza requested military support from the West Ukrainian National Republic, which of course never came to pass.

This superbly illustrated and technically excellent book is available for USD 45 (plus USD 35 airmail to Europe) from Inger Kuzych, PO Box 3, Springfield, Virginia 22150, United States of America or can be ordered by email at [ingert@starpower.net](mailto:ingert@starpower.net).



Book review by Roger Morrell (Teddington)

“Western Ukraine 1918-1919; A specialised philatelic catalog”, by Inger Kuzych, publ. Ukrainian Philatelic Resources, Springfield VA, USA, 2024, ISBN 1-889581-20-8. Full colour, concealed spiral-bound, soft-bound, 215 x 280 mm, 150 + xv pages.

I guess that not many mainstream Austrian collectors bother with all the shenanigans that went on after the break-up of the Empire in 1918, ring-fencing themselves against mission creep into the weird and sometimes wonderful field of new countries and overprints of far-flung lost provinces or military occupations. I have to admit that I am not in that category. For many years I have relished collecting ‘provisionals’ and ‘locals’, even ‘fantasy’ stuff emanating from the 1918-1920 period as the Central European world slowly created order from chaos. Stamps reflect politics and history. My first ‘can’t-leave-behind’ local auction purchase back in the 1970s was a collection

of Hungarian locals (most of which turned out to be faked, but ne'er mind, one has to learn), but a little later another uncontested purchase was a small collection of Western Ukraine. So, as a small-time collector of such material (when I can find it and afford it!) I volunteered for the role of reviewer of this new publication with the objective of learning more about the background to the issues, about the overprinting processes, variations and errors, and above all about what constitutes genuine and what constitutes fake.

The previous issue of 'Austria' contained a two-page advertisement for this new work, so readers should be familiar with the list of contents and the approach that the author has taken. The opening introduction contains two very useful maps of the 1918-1919 proclaimed area of Western Ukraine National Republic, formerly the predominantly Ruthene-speaking parts of Eastern Galicia and Bukovina, but not the Carpathians which were claimed by others. These help to explain later where the philately and postal history came from.

Part 1 contains an extensive listing of the stamps, issue by issue, starting with the extant wartime Austrian stamps, and then with technical details of the overprints, errors and minor varieties, backed up by excellent colour illustrations. Intermingled are examples of genuine usage. A plating guide to the registration labels is an excellent addition. There is also a listing of the definitive values prepared in Vienna but unissued before the collapse of the Republic, and of some rarely seen private provisional overprints. Finally, the CMT overprints from the partial Romanian 90-day occupation in 1919 are dealt with. In this particular case, the listing includes only those stamps, 13 in number, said to have been prepared and used within the timeframe of the occupation, and only mentions but does not list the 37 other overprinted Austrian stamp values that mainstream catalogues list without comment.

Part 2 lists the available Austrian postal stationery plus the stationery prepared employing the Austrian layout but with the unissued Western Ukraine stamp design of imprint. In terms of overprints, only the 'CMT' Romanian handstamp is listed.

Part 3 contains appendices, starting with a 'synopticon' of catalogue numbers from the various mainstream and previous specialist listings, excluding the Scott catalogue apparently for legal reasons, but providing a numerical algorithm therefore (ah! – the weird and wonderful machinations of publishing.....). Then follow listings of known contemporary postal markings, including datestamps, post office cachets, fieldpost markings, general and military censor marks, military unit marks and civilian authority marks. Finally, postal rates for most types of mail service are listed. The bibliography of 125 references provides the sources that the author has used in compiling this catalogue.

The only additional appendix that I would like to have seen was some detailing of known forgery types and suspect dealers' marks to compare with genuine stamps and reliable expertising marks. This would surely act as a useful guide for average collectors, because such information is otherwise so difficult to find. (Only a couple of eBay fakes of the registration labels are listed in P Clark Souers guide "Forgeries of Common Stamps after World War I: Eastern Front, Balkans, Caucasus".)

Overall, the author is to be congratulated on a very well produced, high-quality, detailed description of these elusive issues for which there was very limited usage but in which high levels of interest continue from Eastern Europe area collectors. Genuine usage commands very high prices. So do some of the overprints, of which only two copies of the 10K KuK Feldpost stamp were ever overprinted. My own copy of this stamp must therefore be a fake, along with a number of other similar-looking jobs in my auction lot, but the book has given me some confidence in the appearance of a good proportion of that auction 'find' as genuine. Whoopee!

## New Austrian Postage Rates

Produkt		Tarif in EUR bis 30.04.2025	Tarif in EUR ab 1.5.2025
<b>Brief</b>	Brief S	0,95	<b>1,00</b>
	Brief M	1,50	<b>1,55</b>
	Päckchen S	3,00	<b>3,10</b>
	Päckchen M	4,50	<b>4,65</b>
<b>Zusatzleistung Premium</b>	Brief S	1,20	<b>+ 0,30</b>
	Brief M	1,65	
	Päckchen S	3,30	
	Päckchen M	4,75	

>>Austrian Post is responding to an amendment to the Postal Market Act and is simplifying its letter products from May 1, 2025. The previous "ECO letter" with a delivery time of two to three working days will become the new standard "letter" product. The additional "Premium" service is available for faster delivery on the next working day. This simplifies the product structure. *"In Austria, fewer and fewer letters are being sent. Over 80 percent of all letters are already sent with a delivery time of two to three working days. With this simplification, we are adapting our product range to the Postal Market Act and to the changing needs of our customers,"* says Walter Oblin, General Director, Austrian Post AG. Like the previous ECO letter, the standard "letter" product can be franked with stamps and posted directly into one of the approximately 14,000 yellow mailboxes. The additional service "Premium" can be booked and submitted directly at the counter of a postal partner, in a post office or at a shipping station.

>>From May 1st, the price for the smallest letter format, the "Letter S", is 1 euro. The additional service "Premium" costs 30 cents for all formats and can be combined with additional services such as "registered mail"<<

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## Schoolboy Postcard Albums From WW1

By Andrew Brooks

Arthur Beer (born 1900) aged fourteen was a scholar at the secondary school in Reichenberg, Bohemia when two events occurred to affect his life considerably. His father died suddenly in February 1914 and in July of the same year Austro-Hungary declared war on Serbia and within weeks almost all the most powerful countries in Europe were involved in what today is now known as World War I.

During his time at school, he collected postcards and other ephemera before he was conscripted at seventeen into the armed forces. However, after a short spell in the army he was released for medical reasons and returned to school to complete his education.

In each of his five mini-postcard albums that have survived there are a total of sixty-two cards, twelve in each album. The front cover is a picture window so that the first postcard can be seen (fig 1-4). The front of the fifth album is damaged and is not shown. The majority of the cards are vertical in format and the few horizontal cards have to be shown sideways. Personalities of Royalty and Military leaders (Austro-Hungarian and German) form the largest group in the albums and many are postcards sold for war relief bodies. Arthur made a suitable pencil comment on the front of each album e.g. 'Heerfuhrer' (Military Commander).

A selection of the sixty cards is described in this article with many being postally used and sent to Arthur by his Uncle Adolf. Others were sent by family members with the unused cards probably collected by Arthur.



Arthur who lived with his mother in Reichenberg went on to university, survived an attack of polio and completed a Ph.D. at Berlin University in 1927. As a Jewish scientist working in Germany in the early 1930s, he managed to escape to England with his family and after World War 2 subsequently had a very successful career as an astronomer at Cambridge University.

This card is shown full-size; the others have had their ornamental frame trimmed.

A B/W real photographic card entitled 'Three Generations'. The group consist of the Emperor Franz Josef, Archduke Karl and Karl's son Otto. The postmark is impossible to read apart from the date, 25/7/16. It was addressed to Malvine Pollak, Arthur's maternal aunt who lived in Johannisbad. She must have passed it to him for his album.

		
<p>2: An unused card of Kaiser Wilhelm II and General Hindenburg with a title 'Deutschlands Stolz! (Germany's Pride)'. This is one of the few cards in the albums printed and published in Germany. A charitable card for the Well-being of the Volunteer Nursing Cooperative.</p>	<p>3: A card sent by Arthur's Uncle Ernst. It has a 5 heller stamp but no postmark, censor or manuscript date. It is from the large series of 650+ cards issued by 'Rotes Kreuz, Kriegsursorgeamt Kriegshilfsbuero Nr.10'. (Red Cross, War Ministry and War Relief Agency). This card has the print in grey on the reverse. The title on the card translates as 'Difficult fighting position on the Podgora'. This was a defensive position guarding Goriza during the first Battle of the Isonzo (19/6/15).</p>	<p>4: Unused postcard of General Hindenburg and General Conrad von Hotzendorf. Published by M.Munk of Vienna. Nr.978.</p>
		
<p>5: Card Nr.191 from the 'Rotes Kreuz, Kriegsursorgeamt Kriegshilfsbuero' series. Title; Artillery Spotter. The printing on the reverse is in green, which is the norm for this long series. The translation describes how artillery reconnaissance constructed a lookout in a burnt-out railway guard's house from where batteries could direct fire into enemy positions. The card was sent to Arthur from Vienna on the 17/2/17 by his cousin, Robert Bermann.</p>	<p>6: Card Nr. 268 from the same series illustrates another variation in this long series. The printing is still in green; however, it has a subtitle, 'Aus den Goldenen Buche Der Armee Series II'. The cards in this Army Golden Book series show mainly individual or group acts of heroism. A translation explains how during a night reconnaissance ride, the Hussar Valentin Szenassy of Hussar Regiment Nr.6 manages to observe enemy positions hidden in the forest. His report resulted in a successful night attack</p>	<p>7: This card was posted somewhere in Hungary on the 27/3/18. The picture on the front of the card is of a blown-up railway bridge and it has been used on a card published by the Military Assistance Office for a war photographic exhibition. The vignette appears to show a photographer capturing a cannon firing. It was addressed to Arthur at 15 Mozart Street, Reichenberg.</p>

		
<p>8: The postcard commemorates the issue of a medal to commemorate Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand who had been assassinated at Sarajevo with his wife on the 28/6/14. The card is unused; the picture is the entrance front of the Belvedere, Vienna.</p>	<p>9: A Korrespondenzkarte with an illustration of a Bosnian soldier allowing a small boy to hold his rifle. This was another charity card issued on behalf of widows and orphans. Cousin Hugo Beer who was stationed in Lebring sent the card on the 14/4/17. It has the cachet 'Von der Armee im Felde' needed to enjoy free postage as Hugo was not in an active war zone. Another cachet 'K.u.k. Transsenenabteilung/ des K.u.k. b.h. Infant. Regt. Nr. 2' indicated he was attached to the transport department of the Bosnian-Herzegovina Regiment Nr. 2.</p>	<p>10: One of the many cards sent to Arthur by his Uncle Adolf. It was postmarked Bohm. Leipa and dated 23/12/15. The stamps are from the 1908 issue. The message was written in the Beer family version of shorthand which Adolf, now Arthur's guardian had been using on letters and cards long before Arthur was born! The postcard is of the German General Eichorn who had recently been the general who captured the fortress at Kovno.</p>

## Tweet!

<https://onlineshop.post.at/en-AT/product/songbirds-postcard-booklet-0625005>

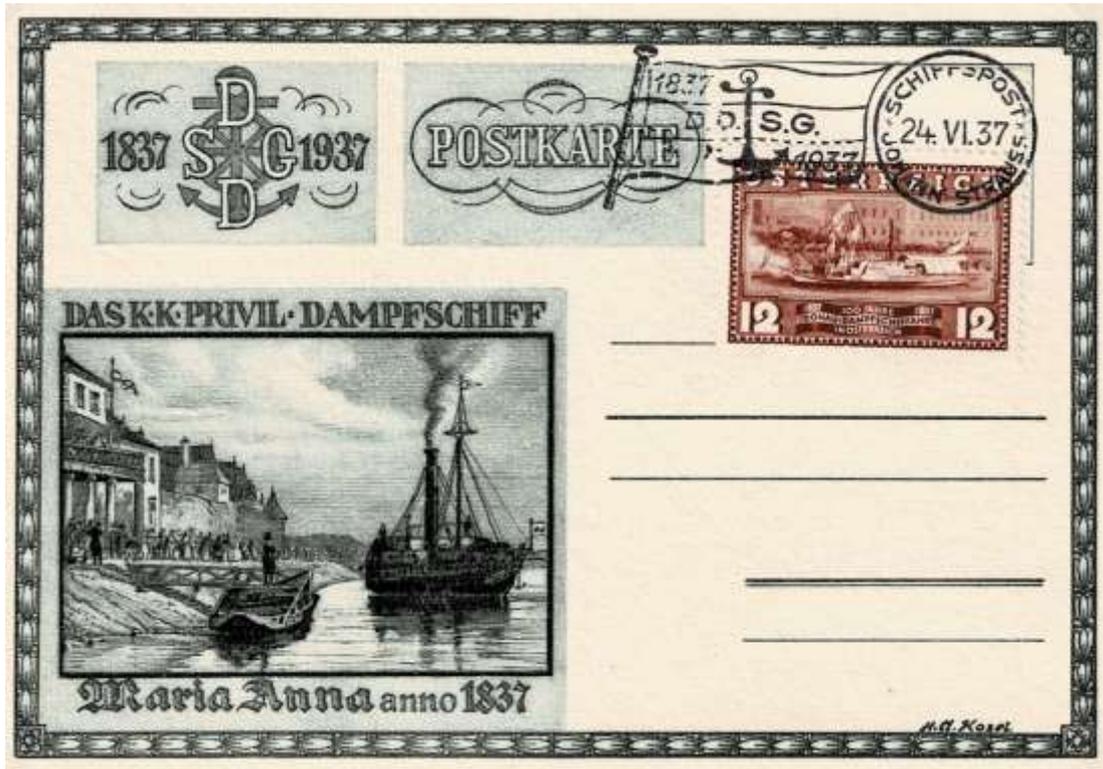
Just in time for the start of spring, Austrian Post AG is releasing the new “Songbirds” stamp and postcard booklet in cooperation with BirdLife Austria. What’s special? In addition to the stamps of the greenfinch, jay, wren and crested tit, QR codes are shown that lead directly to the chirping of the songbirds. In addition to the four stamps at 95 cents each, the booklet also contains four postcards.



# Johann Strauss The Younger

By Andy Taylor

In this year 2025, those musically inclined will celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Johann Baptist Strauss II (25 October 1825 – 3 June 1899), also known as Johann Strauss Jr. and Johann Strauss the Younger. My modest contribution is this collection of Austrian stamps and cancellations showing him and his locales.



One of the DDSG Centenary Postcards, posted and cancelled on the ship Johann Strauss



Austrian Post issued a series of 8 “Famous Composer” booklets; the first featured Johann Strauss the Younger and appeared on 1 March 2012. It included this strip-of-three of portraits, and several dual-language pages describing the Strauss family musical business.

## “Ordinary” Postage stamps with Johann Strauss’s portrait

Issued	ANK	Details
24.4.1922	423	Composers’ series
3.6.1949	946	50th death anniversary.
24.10.1976	1514	150th birthday
4.6.1999	2315	death Centenary
18.1.2025		200 <sup>th</sup> birthday

**The Musicians or Composers Set of 1922**

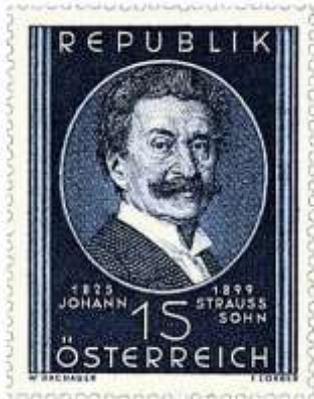
During the disheartening period after the First World War the Austrian Post Office started to issue sets of Charity stamps to raise funds for categories of needy persons. These stamps usually consisted of a beautiful portrait or view contained in an elaborately designed decorative frame; a tradition which started in 1908 and which continued into the Second Republic. The first of these sets appeared on 24 April 1922 and depicted seven famous Austrian composers (OK, Beethoven was born in Bonn and Mozart in the then independent country of Salzburg.)

<b>ANK</b>	<b>Face</b>	<b>Colour</b>	<b>Design</b>	<b>Number</b>
418	2½Kr	Brown	Josef Haydn (1732 - 1809)	480,000
419	5Kr	Indigo	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 -1791)	530,000
420	7½Kr	black	Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827)	520,000
421	10Kr	purple	Franz Schubert (1797 - 1828)	530,000
422	25Kr	green	Anton Bruckner (1825 - 1896)	520,000
423	50Kr	lake	Johann Strauss the Son (1825 - 1894)	480,000
424	100Kr	olive	Hugo Wolf (1860 - 1903)	480,000

The set was designed by Dr Rudolf Junk; the dies for the printing of these stamps were engraved by Professor Ferdinand Schirnbock; and the stamps were printed by recess process at the Austrian State Printing Works, Vienna, on normal recess printing paper. However, a hundred sets were also printed on Japan paper, and presented in a special folder, signed by the artist, to highly placed officials. The stamps were line perforated 12½ and these are the stamps normally encountered. All the values, except the 5Kr and the 50Kr, also exist with a line perforation 11½, the 7½Kr being especially rare in this perforation. (And imperf stamps are found.) The stamps were sold, only at selected Post Offices, at ten times their face value, in aid of a fund for indigent Austrian musicians. They were useable anywhere for inland and foreign mail, and valid for postal use for about a month, until 22 May 1922.

This is the “presentation folder”, where the stamps are displayed behind cutout windows in a sheet of heavy ‘Japan’ paper which is signed by the designer Dr Rudolph Junk and the engraver Ferdinand Schirnbock. There were 100 folders issued; this is nr 39. The stamps are printed on heavy Japan paper, and numbered; this illustration shows the stamps themselves (with the presentation folder folded back).





50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of death. 3.6.1949



150<sup>th</sup> birthday. 24.10.1975



Death centenary. 4.6.1999

### 200th anniversary of the birth of Johann Strauss. 18.1.2025

The music of the waltz king Johann Strauss is an important part of the local culture and is still enjoyed today.



Johann Strauss was born in 1825 in the Viennese suburbs as the eldest son of the composer and conductor Johann Strauss (father). His brothers Josef and Eduard also became successful musicians. Johann Jnr. played piano and violin and gave his first concert in 1844 at the age of 19, in Café Dommayer in Hietzing. With his orchestra, he travelled throughout the monarchy, placing him in constant competition with his father. After the latter's death in 1849, he merged the two orchestras. Tours took him even to Russia and North America. In 1863, he was awarded the position of music director of the Imperial and Royal Court Ball. Strauss was married three times but never had any children. In order to be allowed to remarry after he had divorced, he became a citizen of the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha in 1887. He died of pneumonia in Vienna in 1899.

Johann Strauss – also written Strauß – remains the “Waltz King” to this day, an honorary title which was previously held by his father. He composed 16 stage works, including an opera. However, he is best known for his operettas “Die Fledermaus” and “Der Zigeunerbaron” and for his Viennese waltzes and polkas. The Blue Danube Waltz, the full title of which is “*An der schönen blauen Donau*” (By the beautiful blue Danube), composed in 1867, is considered Austria's unofficial national anthem and is one of the annual highlights of the Vienna Philharmonic's New Year's Concert. The stamp shows the figure from the Strauss memorial in Vienna in front of the title page of a version of this work for piano. The Stadtpark scene is also on the outside back cover of this issue!

### The Strauss clan

See <https://www.johann-strauss.at/forschung/stammbaum/> All the major musical Strausses (Strice?) are given here - much of my philatelic material has more than one Strauss per item. Their private lives were convoluted, but not philatelic.

Once upon a time there was a Johann Michael Strauss, born 1720, occupation unknown, died 1800. He had 4 children including a son Franz, who in turn had 6 children of whom only Ernestine and Johann I survived to adulthood.

**Johann Strauss I** (1804–1849), aka Johann Strauss Sr. He had six children: **Johann** (born 1825), **Josef** (born 1827), Anna (born 1829), Therese (born 1831), Ferdinand (born 1834 and living only ten months) and **Eduard** (born 1835).

**Johann Baptist Strauss II** (25 October 1825 – 3 June 1899).

**Josef Strauss** (20 August 1827 – 22 July 1870)

**Eduard "Edi" Strauss I** (15 March 1835 – 28 December 1916). Father of **Johann** Maria Eduard **Strauss III** and grandfather of **Eduard** Leopold Maria **Strauss II**.

**Johann** Maria Eduard **Strauss III** (16 February 1866 – 9 January 1939).

**Eduard** Leopold Maria **Strauss II** (March 24, 1910 – April 6, 1969), commonly known as Eduard Strauss II to distinguish him from his grandfather. He was an Austrian conductor whose father Josef (son of Eduard I) was not a musician.



18.5.1967



21.5.1967



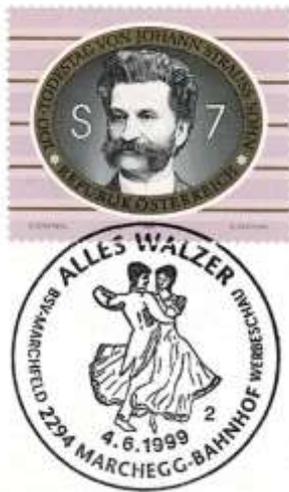
May 1969



24.10.1975



26.5.1999



4.6.1999

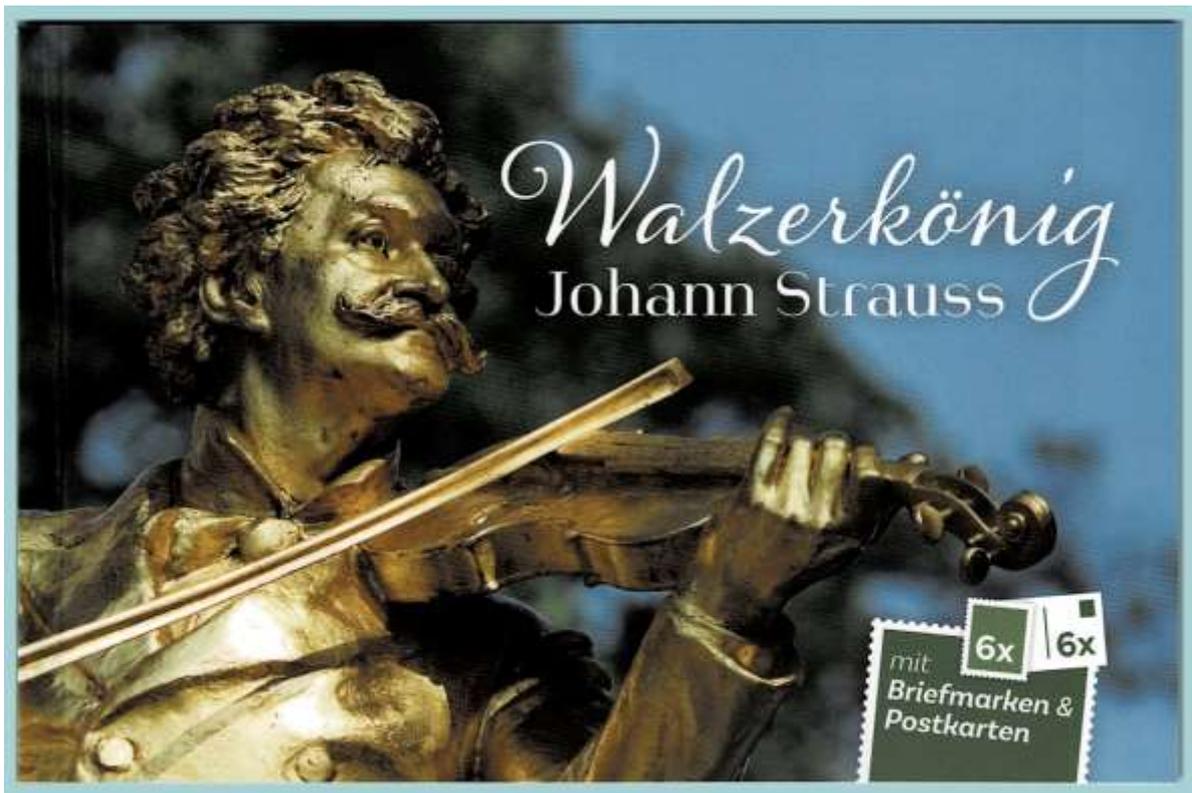


22.7.2010

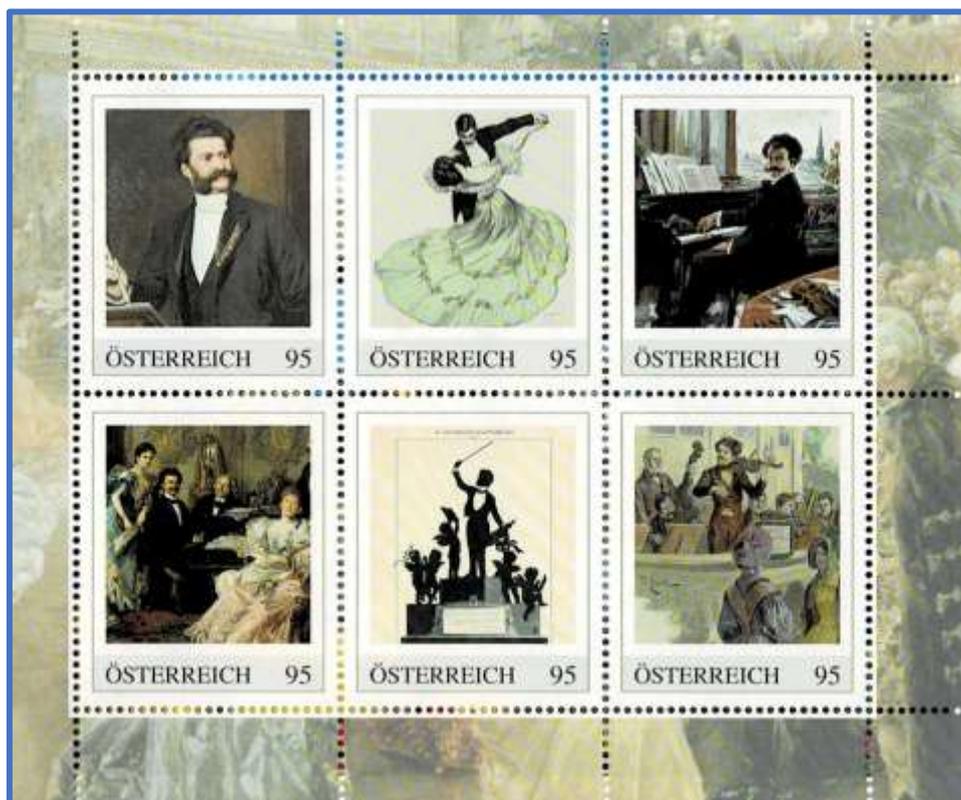


VOePh have announced a series of strips-of-three Strauss portraits; this is the first one, issued on 26 March showing photos of Johann Strauss taken in 1870, 1890 and 1882.

There is a postcard booklet dedicated to the “Waltz King”:



Inside it are six MeineMarke stamps, six postcards, and several pages of Strauss-background.



“Die Fledermaus” is of course mentioned, whence comes my theme “*Glücklich ist / Wer vergisst / Was doch nicht zu ändern ist*”; or if you prefer the Latin life-motto of one Holy Roman Emperor “*rerum irrecuperabilium summa felicitas est oblivio*”.

## 2025 New Issues

By Zöld Veltelini

The information given here is face value; issue date (dd.mm.yyyy); designer; engraver if any; printing method; printer; quantity printed; and details on the design. Many issues are also available in minisheets, blackprints, 'Buntdrucke' (ie printed in different colours from those issued) etc. The sequence is as published in Die Briefmarke; the pictures are scans of the Veltelini Collection since the OPost web site pictures won't download. As an experiment, some stamps have been scanned against a pale blue background, so that the perforations can be seen.

The images for two issues, the 2024 Xmas selfadhesives-on-rolls, weren't available in time for the last issue, so here they are again with the full-strength images. The grey fringe is the silicone paper the stamps are supplied on.

**Traismauer Christmas Crib festival.** 1Eu20; 14.11.2024; Marion Füllerer; Cartor Security Printers; Offset; 232,500 in rolls of 50. The Traismauer glove maker Ferdinand Scheibl is considered to be the creator of the figures and the stage of the nativity play, the final version of which probably dates back to 1810 although individual parts are probably even older. Until 1917/18, the dialect texts and scenes were only passed on orally. In the 1950s, the nativity play was rediscovered in the Traismauer Museum, and since then it has been performed every year. Around 30 people take part in a performance of the nativity play. With 42 rod puppets, religious themes such as the birth of Jesus are presented in 9 scenes and 28 songs, but folk figures are also presented and love songs and socially critical songs are performed. The Traismauer singing club organizes the performances, in which the audience is traditionally involved.



**Christmas tree.** 95c; 29.11.2024; Anita Kern; Cartor Security Printers; Offset; 695,000 in rolls of 50. A decorated Christmas tree is an important part of Christmas for many people. It is also a beautiful motif for a Christmas stamp. This stamp does not show a Christmas tree with baubles and candles, but the words of the first verse of the song "Silent Night! Holy Night!". The text is arranged in green tones in a festive font in the shape of a Christmas tree, with colored letters and flourishes representing decorations and garlands. The text of the song was written as a poem by the assistant pastor Joseph Mohr in 1816. In 1818, the village school teacher and organist Franz Xaver Gruber composed a melody for it, and on Christmas Eve that year the two performed the song together in the church of St. Nikola in Oberndorf, Salzburg. "Silent Night! Holy Night!" is one of the most famous Christmas carols today and is part of Austria's intangible cultural heritage.



Correction: the Austrian Mushroom described on page 35 of Austria 229 is suffering from DüS (displaced-umlaut syndrome): it's the Frauen-**Täubling** not the Täubling. Thanks, Dr Kobelbauer.

**200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Johann Strauss.** 1Eu20; 18.1.2025; Kirsten Lubach; bpost Stamps Printing; Offset; 180,000.

The music of the waltz king Johann Strauss is an important part of the local culture and is still enjoyed today.



Johann Strauss was born in 1825 in the Viennese suburbs as the eldest son of the composer and conductor Johann Strauss (father). His brothers Josef and Eduard also became successful musicians. Johann Jnr. played piano and violin and gave his first concert in 1844 at the age of 19, in Café Dommayer in Hietzing. With his orchestra, he travelled throughout the monarchy, placing him in constant competition with his father. After the latter's death in 1849, he merged the two orchestras. Tours took him even to Russia and North America. In 1863, he was awarded the position of music director of the Imperial and Royal Court Ball. Strauss was married three times but never had any children. In order to be allowed to remarry after he divorced, he became a citizen of the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha in 1887. He died of pneumonia in Vienna in 1899.

Johann Strauss – also written Strauß – remains the "Waltz King" to this day, an honorary title which was previously held by his father. He composed 16 stage works, including an opera. However, he is best known for

his operettas “Die Fledermaus” (The Bat) and “Der Zigeunerbaron” (The Gypsy Baron) and for his Viennese waltzes and polkas. The Blue Danube Waltz, the full title of which is actually “*An der schönen blauen Donau*” (By the beautiful blue Danube), composed in 1867, is considered Austria’s unofficial national anthem and is one of the annual highlights of the Vienna Philharmonic’s New Year’s Concert. The stamp shows the figure from the Strauss memorial in Vienna in front of the title page of a version of this work for piano. The Stadtpark scene is also on the outside back cover of this issue! There is a postcard booklet dedicated to the “Waltz King”: see earlier article.

**Saint Engelbert Kolland.** 1Eu50; 24.1.2025; Kirsten Lubach; Cartor Security Printers; Offset; 170,000.

On October 20, 2024, the martyr Engelbert Kolland, who came from the Tirolean Zillertal, was canonized by Pope Francis. Born in 1827 as Michael Kolland in Ramsau am Ziller, Kolland attended the archbishop's high school in Salzburg and then entered the Franciscan order, where he was given the religious name Engelbert. In 1851 he was ordained a priest. Since he had also studied Arabic, among other things, he was sent to the Holy Land as a missionary in 1855. In 1860 there were riots against Christians in Damascus, where he worked. Engelbert Kolland was also caught and, when he refused to renounce his faith, murdered. In 1926 he was beatified together with his fellow brothers, and in 2024 he was canonized. The Garnet Chapel in the shape of a crystal on the Tirolean Penken is dedicated to his memory. The stamp motif shows a portrait of Kolland on glass, created by the Tirolean glass painter Peter Sporer. The postcard set with a bilingual accompanying booklet for the Holy Year 2025 also honours Kolland's canonization.



**Sports on ice.** 0Eu95; 1Eu20; 1Eu90; 22.01.2025; Anita Kern; Enschedé; Offset; 280,000 180,000 and 150,000. The second edition of the “Sport in Motion” series, started in 2023, is dedicated to various sports on ice. It is possible that the 95c is sold only in carded sets of four.



**Curling** is about hitting the target - the puck - as accurately as possible. Sticks from the opposing team can be pushed away. The team whose curling sticks are closest to the puck gets points. Alternatively, there are also target and distance competitions. Curling is particularly widespread in the Alpine region. It is not only a club sport, but also a popular leisure activity that is primarily about fun and usually has less strict rules. It is often played on frozen lakes or on plastic rinks. In rural areas, homemade curling sticks are often used.

A very fast, physical team sport is **ice hockey**. Games in which a ball is moved on the ice with sticks have been depicted in Dutch paintings from the 17th century. However, modern ice hockey developed in the 19th century during the colonization by European soldiers in Canada, where it is still the national sport today. Since 1877, a flat puck has been used instead of a ball. A game lasts three times 20 minutes, but due to frequent interruptions it actually lasts much longer. The fast pace of the game and the many goals make ice hockey a particularly spectacular sport.

In contrast, the grace of the movements is the focus of **figure skating**. While people moved on ice on bone skates as early as the Neolithic period, ice skating became a social pastime in modern times. From the late 19th century, ice skating boots with screwed-on steel blades also made it possible to perform figures, turns and jumps. Today there are competitions for men, women and pairs, individual skating, pair skating and ice dancing, in which no jumping is permitted. Ice skating and ice dancing are of course also popular recreational sports in which you can glide more or less elegantly across the ice depending on your ability.

**150 years of pneumatic mail.** 3Eu50; 11.02.2025; David Gruber; Cartor Security Printers; Offset; 130,000 blocks of one.

When the pneumatic tube systems operated in some European cities proved their worth for particularly fast mail



also built in Vienna in 1875. The original pneumatic tube network connected ten stations, all of which were located within today's Ring. Pipes with an inner diameter of 65mm were laid at a depth of around one meter, through which letters, postcards and telegrams were transported in metal capsules using air pressure for a charge of 20kr. From 1880, there were special red-painted post boxes for the pneumatic tube, which were emptied every 20 minutes, and the mail contained therein was then sent on by pneumatic tube. In its heyday in 1913, the

route network comprised 53 pneumatic tube stations over more than 80 kilometers. Severe damage in the Second World War and the spread of telephones and telexes led to the pneumatic tube system being discontinued in 1956

**An extensive dissertation on Vienna's pneumatic system can be found on the APS web site, here: <https://www.austrianphilately.com/rohrpost/index.htm>**

**Swarovski Optics - the EL fieldglasses.** 3Eu; 11.02.2025; Martin Föbtleitner; Enschedé; Offset; 180,000.



This year's motif from the "Design from Austria" series, which was created in collaboration with *designaustria*, shows the EL binoculars from SWAROVSKI OPTIK. Wilhelm Swarovski, the son of the founder of the Tirolean family business Swarovski, founded SWAROVSKI OPTIK KG in Absam in Tirol in 1949 to manufacture all types of optical glass. The EL binoculars were developed at the end of the 1990s specifically for bird watching, but soon established themselves in the hunting sector as well. The design was created by Werner Hölbl, who has been awarded the State Design Prize for various products, including binoculars. Two slim lens tubes are connected by a narrow bridge, and the "through-grip" ensures a comfortable and secure grip. When designing the EL

binoculars (EL stands for ergonomic and light), particular emphasis was placed on low weight, easy handling and a smooth focusing mechanism.

**Definitives 1917-1918.** 350+95 cents (=4Eu45); 7.3.2025; Anita Kern; Enschedé; Offset; 115,000 blocks-of-two.

After the death of Emperor Franz Joseph I in 1916, postage stamps were issued with the portrait of his successor, Emperor Charles I. The new postage stamps of 15, 20, 25 and 30 Heller were issued on May 10, 1917. After another rate increase in September 1918, the most commonly used 20 Heller denomination was printed in a darker opal green shade. The 1917/18 postage stamps were designed by the graphic artist and engraver Alfred Cossmann and were produced using a letterpress printing process without watermarks and using different types of paper. All four denominations show the same portrait of the last Austrian Emperor, Charles I, in uniform in an oval frame surrounded by a geometric pattern. They were valid for postage until October 31, 1920. This issue marks the end of the "Monarchy Postage Stamps" series, which provided an insight into the history of Austrian stamps during the Habsburg Monarchy.



**Centenary of the Austrian Schilling.** 3Eu; 15.3.2025; David Gruber; Cartor Security Printers; offset; 120,000 in blocks-of-one.



A currency reform brought Austria the schilling on March 1, 1925, which accompanied the population through everyday life for many decades. After the end of the First World War and the collapse of the monarchy, hyperinflation occurred and the krone was massively devalued. The introduction of the schilling as the new currency brought economic stability and prices fell back to a normal level. 10,000 krone could be exchanged for one schilling, one schilling was equal to 100 groschen. The schilling developed into one of the most stable currencies in Europe and was often referred to as the "Alpine dollar". Since 1999, the euro has been

the common currency of the eurozone as book money, and since 2002 also as cash. The original round stamp shows a schilling from 1925 and a 20-schilling banknote as the background of the block - in the first issue from 1925, the plural "schillinge" was still used.

The fate of the Schilling in 1938 was discussed in a 2-page article in Austria 139, Autumn 2002, which is reprinted on the next pages.

**Common Teal.** 1Eu20; 15.3.2025; Lisa Fitzl; Cartor Security Printers; offset; 300,000 in flocks of 10.

The teal is this year's motif in the "Native Birds" series, in which the Austrian Post presents endangered birds in cooperation with BirdLife Austria. The smallest native duck, the common teal, is Austria's bird of the year 2025. Its breeding population has declined drastically in recent decades and now numbers just 80 to 130 breeding pairs. The reasons for this include the loss of water bodies through drainage and increasing disturbances. The common teal breeds in calm, shallow waters with dense bank vegetation, from reedy oxbows to moorland pools and small ponds. Males in breeding plumage are easy to recognise by their chestnut-brown head with the magnificent green shimmering eye stripe. Females, young birds and males in non-breeding plumage, on the other hand, are difficult to distinguish from other ducks. The green wing patch under the brown-spotted plumage is typical. The preservation and restoration of wetlands is crucial for the protection of the common teal.



**Mallow - the 2024 Subscriber Loyalty stamp.** 95c; 15.3.2025; Brigitte Heiden; Enschedé; offset; 280,000



The wild mallow is this year's motif of the loyalty bonus stamp with which the Austrian Post thanks its subscribers for their loyalty. The attractive five-petaled flowers of the wild mallow (*Malva sylvestris*) are pink to violet. It blooms from May to September and can be found on roadsides, on wasteland and in many gardens. The round seeds of the mallow are reminiscent of small cheese wheels; they used to be used to make children's porridge, or Papp - hence the also common name cheesepappel. The wild mallow is a proven medicinal plant because of its mucilage, as it forms a protective film on the irritated mucous membranes in the case of dry coughs and sore throats. Teas are made from the dried leaves and flowers, but they can also be added fresh to salads. Cooked leaves are used to thicken soups, and the unripe seeds can also be enjoyed as a snack.

## The Demise Of The Schilling In 1938

By A Taylor

An aspect of the "what happened in 1938" study is to consider the currency that was used **to pay for postal services**, as opposed to that in which they were denominated. It makes an interesting saga - collecting the information has been rather like doing a jigsaw puzzle; and until Dr Christine Kainz came to my rescue the pieces didn't even have parts of the picture on them!

I have as previously used "Land Austria" below to translate "Land Oesterreich", the post-Anschluß name of Austria; and "Germany" to mean "Das Reich", the country ruled by Hitler on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1938, sometimes referred to in the originals as "Altreich". Pre-Anschluß Austria is called "Austria".

From the transcript of the Nuremberg trial of Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, President of the Reichsbank: "On the 11<sup>th</sup> [of March 1938] someone ... inquired of me how the purchasing power for the troops in Austria was to be regulated if German troops should march into Austria - purely a matter of currency policy, whether it was necessary to have prescribed regulations. I told him that, of course, everything had to be paid for, everything that the troops might buy there, and that the rate of exchange, if they paid in Schillings and not in marks, would be one mark to two Schillings. That was the rate which ruled at the time, which remained fairly steady and was the recognised ratio of the Schilling to the mark".

However, it was announced on 17<sup>th</sup> March that "Legal tender in Land Austria is, as well as the Schilling, the Reichsmark, which has the value 1 Schilling 50 Groschen." [Ref 3§I31]. At the same time, Ref 4§51 reports a decree, signed on 17<sup>th</sup> March by one A Hitler and others, that the Österreichische Nationalbank (the Austrian National Bank) was put into liquidation with immediate effect.

The Oesterreichische Nationalbank became the Vienna Hauptstelle of the Reichsbank. Its comparatively high gold and foreign exchange reserves, stated to be about 423 (DöW) or 471 (OeNB) million Schillings, were taken over by the Reichsbank and moved to Berlin. To the OeNB came also private handings-over of 1,700 million Schillings, probably from the forced sales of over 26,000 Jewish businesses and the exit levies on their former owners. By the end of the war in 1945, the liquidation of the OeNB was still incomplete. [Ref 2]

Therefore, the effective exchange rate until the 17<sup>th</sup> March decree had been 2Sch to 1Rm; this "political" exchange rate of  $1\frac{1}{2}\text{Sch} = 1\text{Rm}$  was (*according to DöW; see Ref 2*) determined by Hitler personally against the advice of the Reichsbank, and meant an upwards revaluation of the Schilling and an increase in Austrian real incomes.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> March, a new scale of the basic rates for letters and postcards was decreed, expressed in Reichsmark currency, to take effect from 4<sup>th</sup> April. [Ref 5§I56]

On 1<sup>st</sup> April, the Land Austrian post switched to conducting its transactions (both postal and financial eg money orders) in Reichsmark; the entire financial transaction was carried out in Reichsmark, even though the payment could be made in Schilling notes and coins. [Ref 4§I50.1,2] Austrian postage stamps were still sold; but the payment could be made in Schillings, or in Reichsmark at the official rate of  $1\text{RM} = 1\frac{1}{2}\text{S}$ . Postal forms etc preprinted with 'S' and 'g' were to have this manually amended to 'RM' and 'Rpf' by hand or with a suitable canceller [ref 4§I50.3]

From the 4<sup>th</sup> of April, the basic rates were calculated according to the new German schedule and charged in Reichspfennig, while the ancillary charges for express, airmail, registered and pneumatic services remained at the Austrian rate and were calculated in Groschen. For both, either German stamps, or those Austrian stamps still valid, could be used (the latter at  $1\frac{1}{2}\text{Gr} = 1\text{Rpf}$ ).

In a decree made on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, the Österreichische Nationalbank's power to issue banknotes was terminated. From Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April, Schilling **notes** were no longer legal tender and were withdrawn from circulation. They were still accepted at banks and Post Offices (until 15<sup>th</sup> May), and were exchangeable for Reichsmark at the Reichsbank and at the ÖNB-in-liquidation until 31<sup>st</sup> December [Ref 6§I81.1a and Ref 7§3&4]. A reminder was issued in November [Ref 12§161] that any residual ÖNB notes must by 31<sup>st</sup> December be taken to a branch of the Reichsbank for exchange; they could not be used or exchanged at Post Offices.

The position of **coins** is less clear! The 25Sch and 100Sch gold and the 2Sch and 5Sch silver ones were formally withdrawn (the 1Sch silver had been withdrawn around 1932). [See Ref 10§134§1&2, which publicises on 11<sup>th</sup> June a decree of 25<sup>th</sup> May effective 31<sup>st</sup> May.] The gold coins could be exchanged for Reichsmark up to 15<sup>th</sup> July, the silver up to 31<sup>st</sup> December.

The 1 & 2 Groschen became useable as 1 & 2 Rpf [Ref 7§5(2) and Ref 11§306]. The others - 5Gr, 10Gr, 50Gr bronze & 1Sch cupro-nickel, according to ANK - were declared "valid till otherwise stated" [Ref 7§5(1)] but seem to have faded away in May without a formal announcement.

It is typical of these times that the decree invalidating the Austrian currency is first announced in the Berlin Reichsgesetzblatt [Ref 7], signed by Generalfieldmarshall Göring. In Ref 8 (the Land Austria 'Legal Gazette') it is reprinted on 25<sup>th</sup> April, with an appended note from Seyss-Inquart that it had come into effect on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2 days before. And in Ref 9 (the Post Office Gazette) it is again reprinted, now 5 days in arrears!

From 15<sup>th</sup> May, Schilling notes were no longer accepted at Post Offices. All postage rates and also the sale price of the postage stamps had to be converted into Reichsmark.

From then on, ancillary charges although calculated and expressed in Groschen and indicated by Austrian Postage Dues could only be paid in Reichspfennig coins!

This anomaly lasted until the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, when a new postage rate table was introduced, with all rates in Reichspfennig. The use of Postage Due stamps was abolished.

## References

Ref 1: The somewhat sketchy Oesterreichische Nationalbank History on its website ([www.oenb.at/content/Die%20%OeNB--200/Geschichte--900.xml](http://www.oenb.at/content/Die%20%OeNB--200/Geschichte--900.xml))

Ref 2: The details of an exhibition "1938 NS Terror in Austria: text and pictures" by the DöW, which is the "Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes", the "Document Archive of the Austrian Resistance"; linked from their website at [www.doew.at](http://www.doew.at)

Ref 3: "Post- und Telegraphenverordnungsblatt" 17/1938 dated Vienna 21 March [the PuTvob contained the decrees of the Vienna Post & Telegraph Ministry]

Ref 4: "Post- und Telegraphenverordnungsblatt" 23/1938 dated Vienna 29 March

Ref 5: "Post- und Telegraphenverordnungsblatt" 24/1938 also dated Vienna 29 March

Ref 6: "Post- und Telegraphenverordnungsblatt" 35/1938 dated Vienna 22 April

Ref 7: "Reichsgesetzblatt I" 60/1938 dated Berlin 23 April

Ref 8: "Gesetzblatt für das Land Österreich" 30/1938 dated 25 April

Ref 9: "Post- und Telegraphenverordnungsblatt" 39/1938 dated Vienna 28 April

Ref 10: "Nachrichtenblatt der Abwicklungsstelle des Reichspostministeriums für das Lande Österreich" 14/1938 dated Vienna 11 June

Ref 11: "Amtsblatt des Reichspostministeriums, Ausgabe A" 85/1938 dated Berlin 29 July [this is the Official Gazette of the Berlin Postal Ministry]

Ref 12: "Nachrichtenblatt der Abwicklungsstelle des Reichspostministeriums für das Lande Österreich" 64/1938 dated Vienna 6 November

## PRIOrity Posting Using Adhesive Stamps

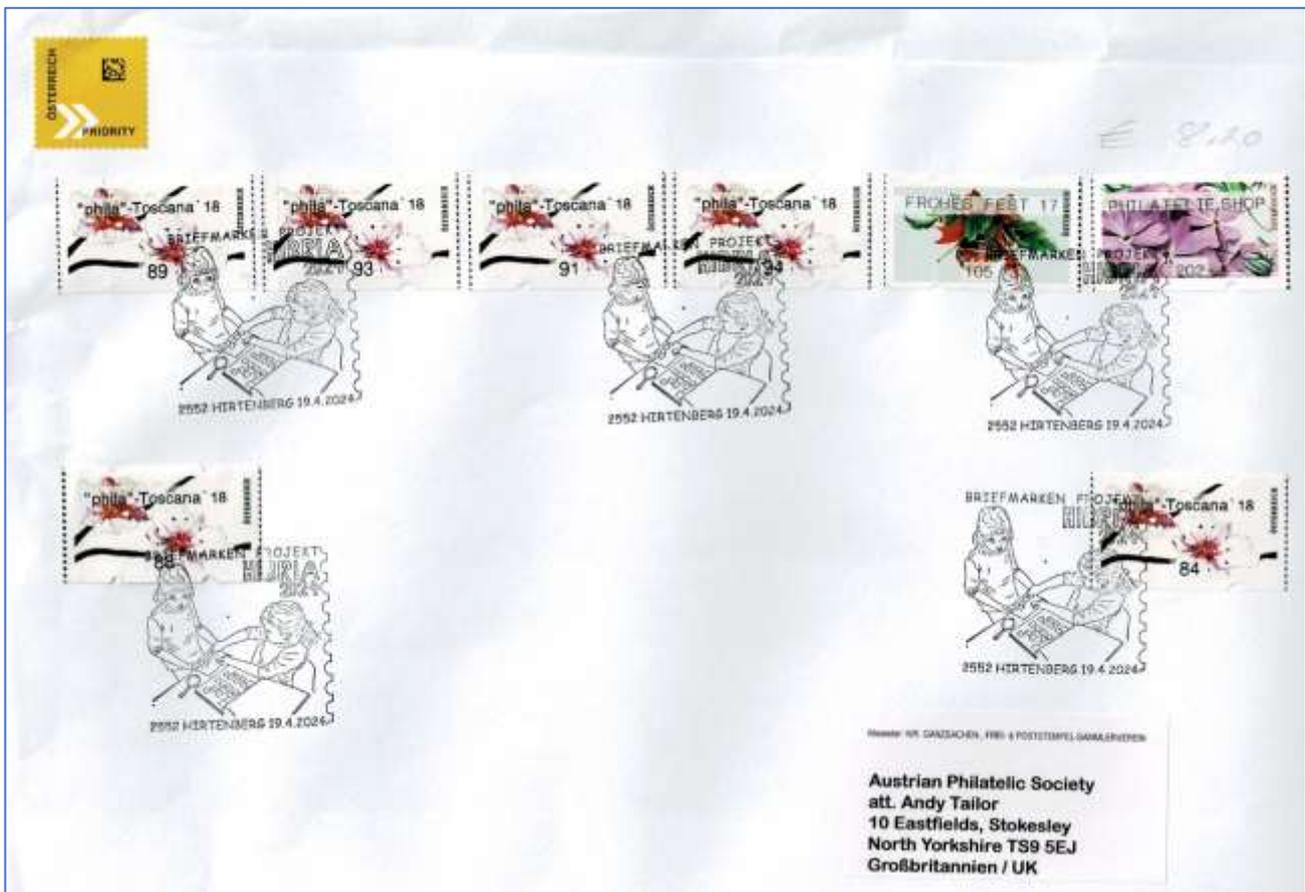
Andy Taylor

Due to popular requests from their customers, from 1 April 2024 OPost offered a “goodwill solution” (Kulanzlösung) on how you can frank your mail with adhesive stamps and still send them as a fast PRIO shipment. It's this easy:



- ✓ Frank your mail with adhesive stamps at the corresponding PRIO rate.
- ✓ Bring the franked postal item to the counter of your post office or to a postal partner and inform the employee there that the postal item should be sent PRIO.
- ✓ At the counter, the employee will then stick the additional PRIO stamp next to the stamps on your mail item and forward it as a PRIO shipment. There will be no additional costs for you.

Important: the PRIO supplementary adhesives are not available for purchase. Postal items can only be sent when handed in at the PRIO counter, not when dropped into a letter box. With this solution, you can continue to add beautiful stamps to your mail in the future and send them as fast PRIO shipments within the country or abroad.”



Priority mail from the Wiener Ganzsachen-, Frei-, & Poststempel-Sammlervereine.

[In reality, what the counter clerk attached to my letters last December were AIR MAIL labels!]

## Social Philately

Herbert Robisch has written a 3-page article in ArGe Feldpost's Rundbrief 153 on what can be discovered about the sender of a letter, and allowed us to translate it. [*Italicised interpolations are Editorial*]

It is always worth paying attention to both the sender and the recipient on a letter or a (field post) card. This is called "Social Philately" - it combines philatelic and postal history documents with the social, cultural or economic history of the period in question. And you can learn a lot by researching....



The recipient was Baron Anton von Kiss (also Baron Kiss de Entebbe), 1880-1970, the son of Katharina Schratt. The address is the Palais Königswarter, 4 Kärntner Ring. [*Clarification; this is building 4 on Kärntner Ring, where the Badnerbahn trams stop; nothing to do with Bezirk IV.*]

[*Entebbe? Rings bells - what does The Internet offer?*]

- *Ittebe first became a British colonial administrative and commercial centre in 1893 when Sir Gerald Portal, a colonial Commissioner, used it as a base. It served as the British administrative centre of Uganda until 1958.*
- *Katharina Schratt, Baroness Kiss von Ittebe (11 September 1853 – 17 April 1940) de da de da*
- *Srpski Ittebej is a village in Serbia. It is situated in the Žitište municipality, Central Banat District, Vojvodina province. The village has a Serb ethnic majority and a Hungarian minority.*
- *The 1910 Verzeichnis lists the village as Szerbittebe*

*“Baron Anton Kiss de Entebbe” is a chimera - he was Kiss von Ittebe.*

Katharina Schratt was the daughter of the paper and office supplies dealer Anton Schratt (1804-1883). She discovered her love of the theatre at the age of six. Her parents tried everything to keep their daughter away from acting. They sent her to a boarding school in Cologne. She worked hard to make her dream come true. At the age of 15, she performed for the first time in Leobersdorf. The play she was acting in happened to be called Eigensinn (=Obstinate). Afterwards, she was allowed to attend the Kierschner Acting School in Vienna.

The seventeen-year-old made her debut as a guest of the Vienna Theatre Academy in her hometown of Baden. Her first permanent engagement took her to the Court Theatre in Berlin in 1872, where she achieved notable success after only a short time. Katharina Schratt only stayed in Berlin for a few months before accepting the call

to the Vienna City Theatre. After an engagement at the German Court Theatre in Saint Petersburg, she took a self-imposed break.

In the spring of 1879, she married the Hungarian consular official Miklos Baron Kiss de Ittebe (also: Nikolaus Baron Kiss von Ittebe, 1852-1909). She separated from her husband, who was considered a *bon vivant*, in 1880, but without getting a divorce. In the same year, her son Anton was born (1880-1970). [*Her husband was soon appointed as the resident Consul in Morocco. See <https://time.com/archive/6785881/austro-hungary-end-of-k/>*]

After a guest performance in New York, she returned to the leading theatre in Vienna, the Hofburg Theatre, in 1883. Once again, "Schratt" celebrated one success after another and became one of the most popular actresses of her time in Austria. In 1887, she was appointed Court Actress.

As a prominent member of the Hofburg Theatre, the actress was invited to all of Vienna's major festivals, including the "Industrialists' Ball" in 1885, where she had a lengthy conversation with Emperor Franz Joseph I for the first time (apart from an audience in 1883). After a theatre performance in the Moravian castle of Kremsier for the Russian Tsar Alexander III, the artists present were invited to supper with the monarchs. On this occasion, Katharina Schratt met Empress Elisabeth for the first time, who from then on promoted contact between the actress and the emperor.

The friendship between Katharina Schratt and Emperor Franz Joseph lasted, with an interruption in 1900/01 (after disagreements with the Emperor), until his death in November 1916, although it had already cooled somewhat after the death of Empress Elisabeth in 1898.

The actress, who had a lavish lifestyle and was also a passionate gambler, repeatedly received financial donations from the emperor to pay off her enormous debts. The emperor also showered her with valuable jewellery and gave her a villa at Gloriettegasse 9 in Vienna, near Schönbrunn Palace. He also made Villa Felicitas on the road to Pfandl in Bad Ischl available to her, which soon became known to everyone as "Villa Schratt." In 1909, her husband died and left her the Palais Königswarter on Kärntner Ring 4, diagonally opposite the Vienna State Opera, which she had lived in since 1890 and which he had purchased in 1907.

The Emperor, for his part, actively sought Schratt's company and went for walks with her in the park of Schönbrunn Palace almost every day; sometimes, when the weather was good, he had himself driven out of the Hofburg specifically for this purpose. When he was residing in Schönbrunn, he regularly came to Gloriettegasse for breakfast and picked up the actress again in the afternoon for a walk. He often dined with her in the evening, and she occasionally invited individual guests to join him. Since he did not want to do without this kind of company even during the summer, she rented the Villa Felicitas in Bad Ischl near the Imperial Villa.

Her closeness to the Emperor was a thorn in the side of the Second Lord Chamberlain, Prince Alfred von Montenuovo, which is why he plotted against her. At his behest, Burgtheatre director Paul Schlenker rejected a play proposed by Schratt, for which she had acquired the performance rights. The rather flimsy justification was that the figure of Emperor Napoleon I could not be allowed to appear on a Viennese stage. After this snub, 47-year-old Schratt took a long vacation and finally resigned in October 1900, presumably with the intention of getting the Emperor to intervene. But the Emperor avoided any confrontation and, to her indignation, approved her resignation without the slightest objection. As a result, Schratt stayed away from Vienna and the Emperor for a whole year in revenge. Although visits to the Burgtheatre were one of the few distractions the lonely 70-year-old monarch had, he is said to have never set foot there again.

Since the death of the Empress in 1898, Schratt had lost her strongest advocate at court, even though she was still close to the Emperor. With the departure of the lady-in-waiting Ida Ferenczy from court, Schratt also lost the opportunity to arrange lunches with the Emperor. His daughter Marie Valerie was also annoyed by her father's relationship with the actress; she feared a bad moral influence on her children and tried to rebel against the friendship.

Katharina Schratt caused the biggest theatre scandal in the monarchy in 1903 when she - the "friend of the emperor" - played the empress of the same name in Franz von Schönthan's comedy Maria Theresia at the German People's Theatre. In his magazine *Die Fackel*, the journalist Karl Kraus denounced the fact that Schratt was seen as the empress as "the height of bad taste." Kraus spoke of "shabbiness of mind, fraud and the most disgusting lewdness in order to help fill the empty coffers of a commercial theatre in front of an audience hungry for gossip." In this production, she is said to have even worn the jewellery that Franz Joseph had given her. Franz Joseph could not believe the scandal and wrote to her in irritation "I read in the newspaper that you are going to play

Maria Theresia. Is that true?" For Katharina Schratt, this also meant the end of her acting career; after the scandal, she never stepped onto a stage again.

When Emperor Franz Joseph died on November 21, 1916, Katharina Schratt was present at Schönbrunn Palace and waited with the family in an adjoining room of the death chamber. After the monarch's death, the new Emperor Karl I led her by the arm to the deathbed. She placed two white roses in the hands of the deceased emperor, which were then placed in his coffin. However, she did not attend the emperor's funeral; the court had not reserved a place for her. To her great disappointment, Franz Joseph had not included her in his will. She turned to Emperor Karl I with a request for financial support, but this was not granted.

After Franz Joseph's death, the former actress lived a life of almost complete seclusion in her 500 m<sup>2</sup> apartment on the third floor of her palace. The dedicated animal lover (she herself owned a monkey, three parrots and seven dogs at one point) only appeared in public now and then, for example for readings in aid of charitable organizations. Otherwise, putting together jigsaw puzzles became one of her main activities. However, she lived a rather lavish lifestyle well into old age, which she was only able to maintain by gradually selling off her properties and valuables. On April 17, 1940, Katharina Schratt died at the age of 86. She was buried in the Hietzing Cemetery (Group 19, Number 108) in Vienna.

## Joint Meeting of the Austrian and Czechoslovak Philatelic Societies at the York Stamp and Coin Fair, 18 January 2025

Three members who attend this event regularly were, unfortunately unable to be present. Nevertheless, six members enjoyed six varied presentations.

**Barry Clark** began with a combined display of his particular interests, mountain huts and postal agencies. It was well illustrated with a picture of each hut and its respective postal agency handstamp. The service usually operated in the summer months to cater for visitors to the area.

**Yvonne Wheatley** followed with postage dues, in particular covers with Austrian stamps repurposed as postage dues following the independence of Czechoslovakia.

**Martin Brumby** contributed his latest study, Michael Fischer of Linz, one of the early engravers of postmarks. Drawings of some of the postmarks of Upper Austria and Salzburg were shown to illustrate Fischer's individuality of incorporating decorations and eccentric date and dispatch details into the design.

**Keith Brandon** showed a number of examples of Austrian covers with mixed frankings. Starting with mixed-issue frankings, he continued with mixed currency, mixed varnish-bars, mixed shades, etc. He concluded with 'mixed ears'; a commemorative cover with two blocks of the 6 groschen folk-costumes set of 1934, one block showing the ears back-to-front and the other block with the re-engraved correct ears.

**Barry Clark** followed with 'War Leaders'. A well-researched study illustrated with photographs of commanders of the Austrian Army when Italy entered the war in 1915. The commanders were accompanied by postal cards addressed to them during the conflict.

**Ian Bergel** concluded the meeting with the 1933 issues for the International Ski Championship Fund and the International Philatelic Exhibition Vienna

Reported by Yvonne Wheatley

## The Austrian Newspaper Tax, 1789 To 1792

by Andy Taylor FRPSL

### Introduction

The complex 111-year history of taxes on newspapers in Austria is closely tied to the political events of the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in Austria and the rest of Europe. Kaiserin Maria Theresia died on 29 Nov 1780. Her son Kaiser Josef II was at last free to introduce all manner of reforms, but was continually frustrated by the “Law of Unintended Consequences” and ultimately by his death in 1790. In May 1789, Josef announced a tax effective 1 July on all newspapers and pamphlets, whether published in Austria or imported from abroad; the official justification was “to raise funds for education”. Josef II died on 20 Feb 1790 and was followed by his younger brother Leopold II, who in turn died on 1 March 1792 and was succeeded by his son Franz II; as the succession progressed the urge for change reduced!

*“Austria” has been used here as a convenient term for “those countries ruled by Kaiser Josef II and his successors except for Austrian Netherlands, Hungary, Lombardy, Bosnia & Herzegovina, the Military Border etc when they had different arrangements”; these will be mentioned occasionally but not in comprehensive detail.*

Payment of the tax was at first shown by an impressed device which will be referred to here as a “**signet**” [not as a “signette”, “stamp”, “seal”, or “signature”]. The verb “to signet” will be used. In 1853 an adhesive revenue stamp was introduced; from then until abolition of the tax on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1900 the usage of signets and stamps overlapped. This article will discuss only the first phase of the tax, from 1789 to 1792. Between 1792 and 1803, there was no tax.

### Overview of significant events

Date	Event
29 November 1780	Maria Theresia dies; her son Josef II becomes Kaiser.
1 July 1789	Newspaper Tax introduced: ½kr CM on all newspapers; 1kr CM on pamphlets. Payment shown by same-type-for-all signet <b>bearing no statement of value.</b>
20 February 1790	Josef II dies; succeeded by his younger brother Leopold II.
April/May 1790	Letters <b>ZS</b> added to ½kr CM signet, and <b>BS</b> to 1kr CM, to distinguish them.
1 March 1792	Leopold II dies; succeeded by his son Franz II.
1792	Newspaper tax abolished.

### 1789: Introduction of a Tax on Newspapers

On 5<sup>th</sup> June 1784 Kaiser Josef II issued a lengthy Stempelpatent, ie the law concerning revenue taxes; as 1784 RGB 301 it occupies 18 pages in the Reichsgesetzblatt. It introduced or changed the taxes on documents, playing-cards, and Kalenders (the Austrian Kalender is the British almanac); but it does not impose a tax on newspapers. (The document tax was referred to as the “Papierstempel” although it was not levied on paper as such.) On 30<sup>th</sup> January 1788 he issued another and even longer Stempelpatent (1788 RGB 776: 28 pages), again for documents, playing-cards, and Kalenders but not newspapers. However, in 1789 two Imperial Decrees were issued, “arising from” the Stempelpatent.

On 6<sup>th</sup> May 1789 an Allerhöchste EntschlieÙung stated that “Zeitungen und Tagblätter” would be liable to a tax of ½ kreuzer CM (= Conventions Münze) and for “Broschüren” 1kr per sheet (Bogen). The payment was to be indicated by “**the same Signet for all ... with the Austrian Arms but no indication of value or currency**”. This was followed on 11<sup>th</sup> May by a more detailed Gesetz prescribing what was taxable (eg all newspapers and pamphlets, whether published in Austria or imported from Hungary or abroad) and what was not (eg bound books); the interaction with the Censors; the responsibilities of various people; and the considerable penalties (eg fines of 30 times the mistake) for non-compliance. The “Wiener Diarium” and the “Brünner Zeitung” were both exempted from the tax because “*their publishers had a private arrangement with His Majesty!*”

It seems that the Gesetz was reset and reprinted in each principal city, possibly due to the peculiar structure of the Austrian Empire which in effect consisted of numerous more-or-less separate states all having the same ruler. Copies exist with slight differences in layout, paragraph numbering, and wording from Linz dated 19 May 1789;

and from Innsbruck dated 22 May 1789. Wurth (XIV p105) transcribes what is most probably the Vienna edition of the Gesetz which is dated 11 May 1789; section 7 fixes the tax on inland and foreign papers at ½ kr per copy irrespective of size. “Broschüren and Komödien” were taxed at 1 kr per sheet (Bogen), to be stamped on the first page. It is again clearly stated that the signet shall not show the value. It is odd that an Innsbruck edition was produced, as the tax seems not to have been applied in the Tirol until the 1820s.

Although the decrees specify the tax as “per Bogen”, the official definition thereof has proved elusive. However, Kořinek states that “one sheet of paper is 252 square Vienna Zoll, 18 high by 14 wide”. A Bogen, in this context at least, is then 474 by 369 mm. This is consistent with physical newspapers of that period.

**The tax began on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1789.** The literature contains two different interpretations of how the tax was shown (there is no dispute about the tax rates themselves, namely ½ kr and 1 kr). The “wisdom of the 1900s” is that payment of the ½ kr for newspapers was shown by a signet stamped on the paper, which had a crowned shield flanked by **Z S**, all in a 15mm diameter circle. Payment of the 1 kr on pamphlets was shown by a similar stamped signet, having the crowned shield in a circle but no flanking letters. The earliest statement of this seems to be in Frankl, page 4 (see References below), carefully repeated by Tkalcšics and Tettinek who do not mention signets with **B S**. This interpretation does agree with the more-readily-available newspapers, but unfortunately not with the Imperial Entschließung or the physical examples now available (eg in ANNO ie Austrian Newspapers on Line, a wonderful treasure trove of the copies held by the Austrian National Library. See <https://anno.onb.ac.at/>).

Detailed research by Ladislav Hanus in 1935 showed that until April-May 1790, every item had a stamped signet with a crowned shield in a 15mm diameter circle and **no flanking letters**, whether taxed at ½ kr or at 1 kr; and that from that date until the tax was withdrawn in 1791 the blank signet was replaced with a **15mm Z-S signet** for the ½ kr rate and a **20mm B-S signet** for the 1 kr rate. However, perhaps due to the political events before during and after WWII, this research was forgotten until Kořinek and Mintert’s researches in the early 2000s. ANNO for 1789 and 1790 shows only one paper with signets, the Wiener Kirchenzeitung. Kořinek (see refs; his Př. 12) illustrates the B-S signet - which is extremely rare: it was an experiment in Prague and only 2 copies are known!

## The Münzkabinett

It is possible to apply to visit to the archives of the Münzkabinett of the Kunsthistorisches Museum on Maria-Theresien-Platz, Vienna. (You need a good reason, an appointment, and your passport. As you face the building from her statue, the entrance is round the left-hand corner) The extremely helpful staff will show you their very large collection of Austrian revenue stamps (it may be that of Koczyński, of Krug, or of Mittelmeier; the Hanus collection is in Prague). They have newspapers, specimens of signets prior to 1850, many document tax stamps, Kalendar tax, tax stamps for hair-powder & rouge... A selected few of the vast store of riches in the Münzkabinett appear here, beginning with these two newspaper mastheads, from 1789 and 1790.



Newspaper, 3 July 1789 - no letters in signet; 15mm dia



Newspaper, 14 August, 1790 - letters Z S in signet; 15mm dia

Domestic publishers had to take their printed newspapers and brochures to the finance office for signetting, which was done with a hand stamp. (To be pedantic, they were supposed to get the blank paper signetted before they printed on it, not afterwards.) Accusations of a “tax on knowledge” and “interference with Press freedom” led to more and more exemptions; eg on 12 July 1789 “scientific journals” were exempted, on 28 February 1790 “folk-songs”, in September 1791 “original newspapers”. By 1792, the tax was effectively abolished; according to Frankl it remained in force only for “newly printed foreign newspapers”.



A Viennese and a Hungarian newspaper from December 1789 - **no letters in signet**; 15mm dia

Brünner Zeitung, Saturday 1 October 1796. No tax.



Examples on newspapers

The author has recently acquired a large collection of 1700s-1800s newspapers, which illustrate the progression from no tax, to tax, to no tax, to tax. Examples from the first period of taxation reinforce the signet-design statements made above.

Before the tax was introduced:

<p>7 November 1778</p>	<p>28 April 1781</p>
<p>Above: 6 May 1786 On right: 23 June 1789</p>	

1 July 1789 to April/May 1790: newspapers taxed, shown by coat-of-arms in circle with NO letters

<p>22 December 1789</p>	<p>17 April 1790</p>	<p>13 April 1790</p>

April/May 1790 to 1791: newspapers taxed, shown by coat-of-arms in circle with letters ZS

	
<p>5 October 1790</p>	<p>9 April 1791</p>

September 1791: newspaper tax abolished - no marking

	
<p>21 October 1791</p>	<p>Saturday 1 October 1796</p>

References

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- “Der Zeitungsstempel” by R. Tkalcsics in Die Briefmarke 1/1992 pp 40-42.
- “Das Signet, Vorläufer und Mitläufer der Zeitungsstempelmarken”, Prof. Dipl.Ing. Dr W Tettinek, Die Briefmarke 94/1 pp 17-24.
- L Hanus published “Stempelsignetten-Katalog von Oesterreich-Ungarn” in Prague in 1930; the subsequent volumes which were to include Zeitungsstempel were never published although his manuscript exists.
- “Die Geschichte Der Stempelmarken in Österreich” by Dr. Stephan Koczyński (816+ pp, Vienna 1924).
- “Novinový Kolek v Českých Zemích 1789-1853” by J Kořínek, Praha 2006. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)

# The Newspaper Control Stamp Of 1850-1852

By Andy Taylor



Control Stamps (scanned and enhanced from physical examples): Brünn, Eger, Marienbad, Prague, Teplitz.

The **German-Austrian Postal Union** came into effect on 1 July 1850. Newspapers from signatory countries (eg Saxony, Bavaria, Prussia) ordered by advance subscription at a Post Office were tax-free and that a **Control Stamp** was applied to them to indicate this.



“Deutsche Volkshalle” from Cologne dated 6 September 1850, with Wi Control Stamp indicating tax (of zero) paid. “Wi” is an unusual code for Vienna.

The use of this Controllstempel on advance-subscription newspapers from Postal Union countries was thought to have ceased after 6 December 1852, a normal post office cancellation being used instead. However, this shows it in use in Vienna on 5 January 1853

The Ministries of Finance and of Commerce had for some time been discussing changes to the systems for handling taxable documents. By 1852, Minister Baumgartner had become head of both ministries, and the numerous objections to any change disappeared as if by magic. He decreed on 6 December 1852 that the control stamp should be abolished and replaced by a cancel, soon specified as the normal cancel of the Post Office concerned (the Newspaper Section, if it had one). The instructions on implementing it weren’t printed until 31 December 1852, and the latest one I know is dated 5 January 1853 with the Viennese Wi control stamp often found on newspapers imported under the German-Austrian Postal Union system.



“Allgemeine Zeitung” from Augsburg in Bavaria, dated 5 January 1853 with Wi control stamp.

## Hard Times For Collectors Of Austrian Postmarks

Written by Hubert Jungwirth; published in Die Briefmarke, 9/2010; translated by Jean Toghill

One of the most mysterious occurrences in Austrian postal history is the virtual disappearance of cancellations. In reality, it was not the cancellers themselves that disappeared, but rather the marks they made on letters. Whilst in neighbouring countries they were in regular use, it was a lean time for the collectors of postmarks in Austria. However, the cancellers themselves were brought partly into use again twenty-eight years later.

### The 1751 Tariff

For the first time, on November 1 1751, a tariff was introduced whereby postal charges for letters were calculated according to the distance over which the letter had to be conveyed. That cancellers appeared at the same time was certainly no coincidence but a logical conclusion. In order to be able to check that the assessments of the charges were correct, it was necessary for the place of posting to be visible on the letters.

Now there was a rule that required that the sender should write the place of posting right at the top on the front of the letter. However, the rule did not take into account the individual sender and the legibility of his handwriting. If the place of posting had been omitted or was not legible, the postmaster himself had to write it on the letter. It is, therefore, no wonder that in the large post-offices cancellers were used to make this onerous task easier.

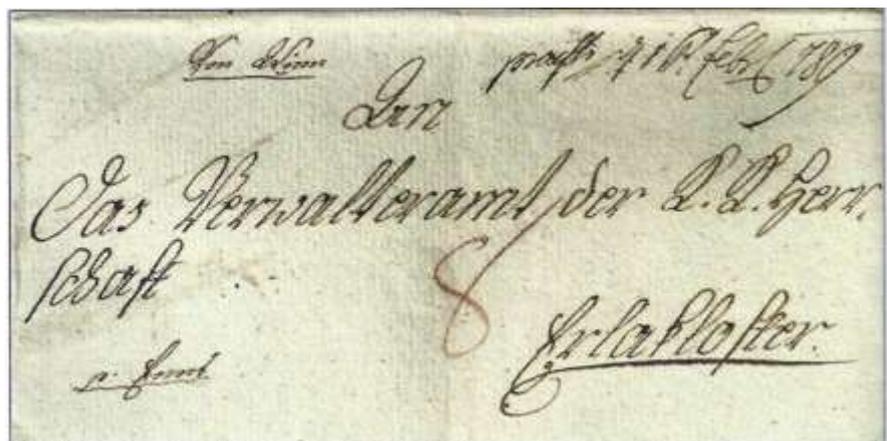


A canceller was still in use at Vienna on December 28 1788 (at top right)

### The 1789 Tariff

A new letter-post tariff appeared on January 1 1789. This laid down a half-postage-paid charge of 4kr for all single letters irrespective of the distance it had to travel. As if a secret command had been given, the place-name cancellations disappeared from the entire empire at the same time as the new tariff was introduced. They were no longer needed to check the assessment and, should it have been necessary to send a letter back, there was still the rule that required the place of posting to be written at the top on the front of letters.

In February 1789, "Vienna" as the place of posting was only written by hand (at top left).





For once, the post-office at Carlsbad using a canceller in August, 1816.

**Twenty-eight Years without cancellations**

A new tariff was introduced in 1810, reverting to charges relating to the distance a letter was to be conveyed. However, the old place-name cancellers continued to gather dust at the post-offices. There were only very few post-offices where an old canceller was brought back into use, if necessary.

**1818: Re-birth of the use of cancellers on Letters**

On June 1 1817, a tariff for seven different distances came into force, and the exact control of the assessments had to be reintroduced. Once again, one thought of the blessings of the old place-name cancellers, and on November 18 1817 an order was passed requiring their use at all the larger post-offices by January 1 1818 at the latest.

On September 17 1817, no canceller was used at Vienna.



Naturally, at the post-offices in Vienna place-name cancellers were being used again in 1818.



## An Old Letter That Was Redelivered After A Century

By Hiroyuki Yamagata

While searching for prephilatelic letters on Delcampe, I found an old letter with postage stamps of the Second Republic. At first sight, I couldn't understand what this letter was and how such a combination was made. With a close look, however, this turned out to be a letter that had been sent and delivered twice, once during the prephilatelic period and once in a century after that.



### 1847: An official letter from Leoben tax authority

This letter was originally an official letter (ex-offo letter) from a Leoben tax authority to Bruck an der Mur, a city 15 km from Leoben (Figure 1). Because it was sent from a government organisation, it was carried free of charge. This was indicated by the ex-offo symbol in red crayon in the centre, which looks like an extravagant "P". It weighted ½ loth. The content of the letter was about the necessary procedure for the transfer of lands (Figure 2).



Figure 1. A ex-offo letter sent in 1847



Figure 2. content of the original ex-offo



Figure 3. A domestic letter sent in 1847

### 1947: At the same place and at the same time after a century

A century after this ex-offo letter had been delivered, a philatelist turned it into a memorable philatelic material. This person folded this letter into a small piece with brown tape (Figure 3.).

Then, on March 15<sup>th</sup> 1947, on the exact same day of the cancellation of this ex-off letter, the passionate philatelist presumably went to the Leoben post office, got the cancellation and resent to Vorderberg, a municipality in the district of Leoben. The then postal tariff was 18 groschen for a domestic letter/distance mail up to 20 grams (1.1.1947-31.8.1947): correctly franked. Voilà. With 100 years time, such a philatelic item was made!

## A 2003 Souvenir From Innsbruck

By Andy Taylor

At the "Tirol 2003 Philatelistischer Salon" held by Innsbruck Merkur on September 5-7, the club members followed the normal Austrian practice of bringing items to sell to each other - and to us. "Look at this", said Joyce, "it's Kitzbühel and might interest you." So I bought it... and it does!

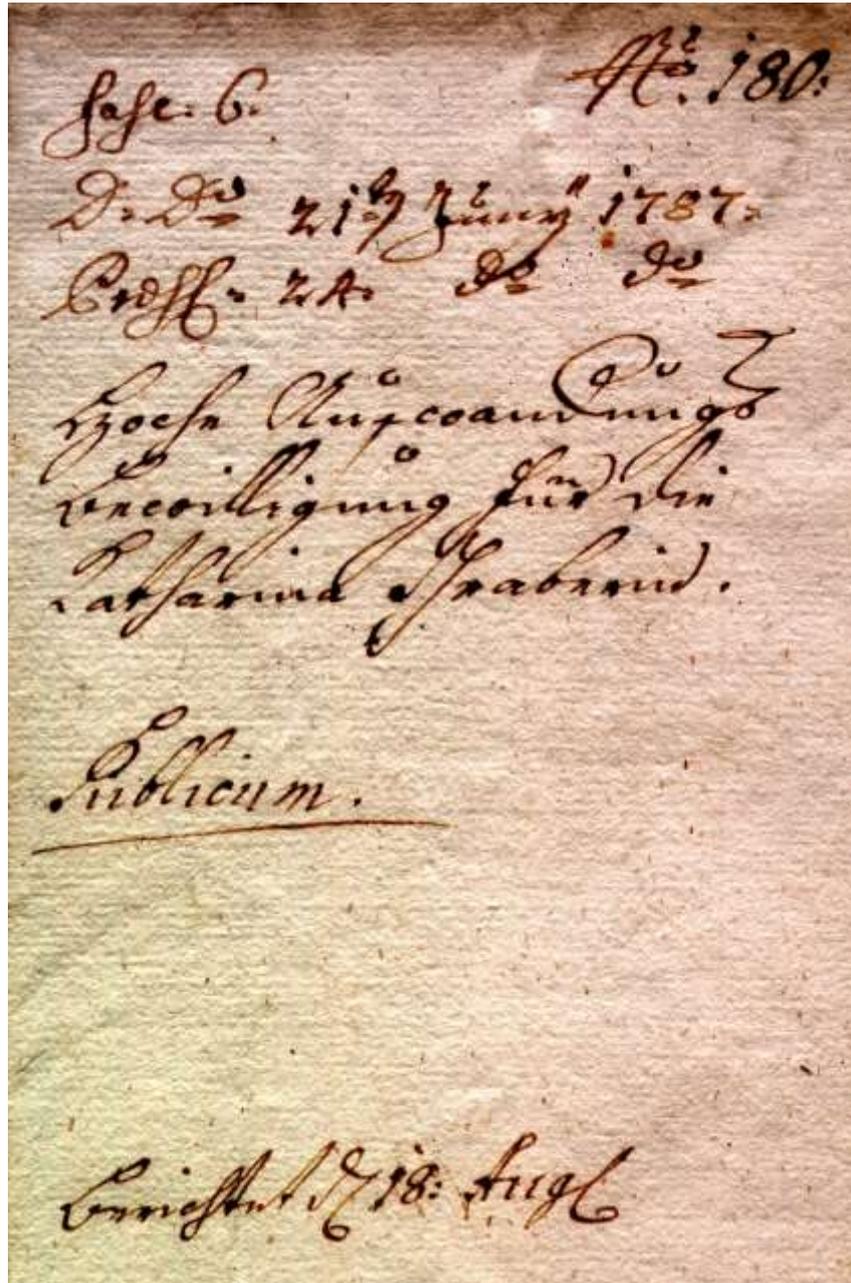


It is addressed to "Dem Stadt Magistrat zu Kitzbühel / Kitzbühel / Partheysach" ie "To the local government office of Kitzbühel, at Kitzbühel [a] Partheysach". It was sent in 1787 from the Kreisamt in Schwaz. It's a double sheet of cartridge paper, 445mm x 350mm when opened, and weighs 12+1 grams. If I assume the Vienna system, the Viennese Pound weighed 560 grams and contained 32 Wiener-Loth each of 17.5 grams; so ~12 grams = 0.686 Loth which counted as 0.7 and fell into the "1 Loth band". The rate (confirmed by "Über alte Tiroler Briefe", p18) for this date for letters within Tirol is "6Kr + 6Kr for 1 Loth". The document has a diagonal red line and the figure 6, which implies that the sender has paid half the rate, leaving the recipient to pay the other half. (The vertical line is dirt on an old paper fold!) There is no visible mark indicating arrival or payment, which is normal.

Anyway, there was no post office at Kitzbühel in 1787; it opened on 1st May 1840. In 1850 the main postal route ran from Wörgl via Söll to St Johann, then to Waidring and onwards to Lofer & Salzburg. Kitzbühel was served by a by-post from St Johann and seems to have sent its outgoing mail by a messenger to St Johann, 3 times per week. There may have been a messenger fee, but there is no marking indicating this. See Refs.

[The green tinge is a scanner artefact!]

On opening it out, further wonders are revealed! The document has a filing note on the back in a different ink, saying "Hoche Auswand[er]ungs Bewilligung für die Katherina Graberin Berichtet d. 18. Aug." which means "Official emigration permission for Katherina Graber, 18 Aug." [plus assorted file numbers.]



The other half is dated 21 June 1787, with a 10Kr revenue stamp (shown below). The document was sealed with either red paper or very thin wax, with an imprinted seal, and cut around that to open it. The paper has a large Makers Watermark: two outward-looking single-headed eagles supporting a crowned shield with the letters CI/N/II.



The book "Stempelsignetten Katalog von Österreich-Ungarn I. Band: Die Urkundenstempel" by L. Hanus, describes documentary stamp tax imprints up to the introduction of revenue stamps in 1854. It seems that until Josef II's reign the stamp tax was rather chaotic, with different parts of the Empire paying different rates (or none!) all indicated by different imprints. Such untidiness offended him, and he introduced a simpler system, the "Neues Stempelpatente", on 5 June 1784. The Tirol was granted reduced rates, paying 10Kr for documents concerning sums over 100 but not over 500 Gulden; most of the rest of the Empire paid 15Kr for these. The special Tirolese rate was shown by a special imprint; the 10Kr is a rococo frame containing 'a lean eagle'. These rates applied until 1 May 1792, when they were abolished. See Hanus pages 43-44.



### So what is it about?

The document is an official permission to Katherina Graber of Kitzbühel to emigrate to Salzburg [NB: in 1787 a separate country from Austria, ruled by the Prince-Archbishop Colloredo] when 32 kreuzer have been paid, and some arrangement has been made for when she receives property in the Tirol. Incidentally, Decrees of Josef II between 1781 & 1785 abolished the requirement to seek the Feudal Lord's permission before leaving or marrying. Transcribing & translating (with the patient assistance of John Whiteside and Henry Pollak: my thanks to both).

Stadt Magistrat zu Kitzbühel Publium Nr 481	[Signette] The Local Government Office of Kitzbühel, Nr 481
Dem Kreisamtlichen Einrathen vom 11ten dieses Monats gemäss wird in Folge Gubernialdekrets vom 12ten Currentis der Katherina Graberin von Kitzbühel die Auswanderung und Verheirathung in das Salzburgische gegen deme verwilliget, daß die Vorsorge zu treffen, wenn ihr seiner Zeit ein hierländiges Vermögen <sup>1</sup> zufallen sollte, die Abfahrt und Emigrations Gebühr gehörig entrichten werden solle.	There follows in accordance with the Kreisamt Council Meeting of the 11th of this month, an Official Decree of the 12th to Katherina Graber of Kitzbühel [ <i>giving her permission to</i> ] emigrate and marry in Salzburg, in accordance with [ <i>the</i> ] full agreement to take precautions for when in due course property <sup>1</sup> devolves upon her in this country; the appropriate leaving and emigration taxes shall be paid.
1: Vermögen means especially money - is this her future inheritance?	
Vornach dann die Impetrantin <sup>2</sup> , und daßelben Vatter zu verständigen ist.	The petitioner and the father thereof are to be informed of this.
2: derived from the latin 'impetro', meaning "to procure by entreating"?	
Vor den k.k. Kreisamt Schwaz 21 Juni 1787	[ <i>done by</i> ] the k.k. Kreisamt at Schwaz 21 June 1787
Signature	
Der Gubernial Stempel zu 10 kr dann Kreisamth Stempel und bezahlte Porto zu 22kr zusammen 32 kr kommen anher einzusenden.	The Official Stamp for 10Kkr with the Kreisamt Tax and postage [ <i>already</i> ] paid of 22Kkr totalling 32Kkr require paying.
The same signature	

### Further reading

"Der k.k. Post-Direktionsbereich Innsbruck vor 150 Jahren" by Jungwirth & Klieber, in the PKMI Festschrift

"Ergänzungen zur Postgeschichte 1850-1900 Auszüge aus Amtsbüchern der K.k. Post- und Telegraphen-Direction für Tirol und Vorarlberg"

L Hanus published "*Stempelsignetten-Katalog von Oesterreich-Ungarn*" in Prague in 1930; the subsequent volumes which were to include *Zeitungsstempel* were never published although his manuscript exists.

"*Die Geschichte Der Stempelmarken in Österreich*" by Dr. Stephan Koczyński (816+ pp, Vienna 1924).

# Centenary of Kronen/Groschen Mixed franking : Official Postcards

Hiroyuki Yamagata

## Introduction

This spring marks the centenary of the Kronen/Schilling mixed franking. On 1 March 1925, a new currency, groschen and schilling, was introduced, and on 1 June 1925 groschen/schilling-denominated postage stamps were issued. During the transition phase, mixed frankings of two currencies were used.

## 500 Kronen and 700 Kronen postcards

500 Kronen postcards (from April 1924 to June 1926)

Issued for the 12<sup>th</sup> period of inflation (from 1<sup>st</sup> December 1923 to 31<sup>st</sup> November 1924). The exact issue dates of official postcards during the inflation were in most cases unclear. The earliest known usage of the 500 kronen postcard was in April 1924. From 1<sup>st</sup> December 1924, during the 13<sup>th</sup> period, it was used with additional 200 kronen stamp(s) (Figure 1). Then, it remained valid until 30<sup>th</sup> June 1926. It had an exceptionally long life, two years and three months.



4<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1924  
from Vienna to Salzburg (Figure 1)  
500 kr + 200 kr = 700 kr  
700 kr / inland postcard  
(1<sup>st</sup> Dec. 1924 - 30<sup>th</sup> Sep. 1925)

700 Kronen postcards (from February 1925 to June 1926)

Issued for the 13<sup>th</sup> period (from 1<sup>st</sup> December 1924 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 1925) (Figure 2), the earliest known usage was in the middle of February 1925.

28<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1925, last day usage as 700 “kronen”  
from Vienna to Vienna (Figure 2)  
700 kr / inland postcard  
(1<sup>st</sup> Dec. 1924 - 28<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1925)



## 1 March 1925: Introduction of the schilling currency

On 1 March 1925, the new currency was introduced, but groschen/schilling postage stamps appeared three months later. And, first groschen postcard was issued in 1926. Thus, the 500 and 700 kronen postcards remained to be valid as 5 “groschen” and 7 “groschen” respectively, for another 13 months.

## 1 June 1925: Start of the mixed frankings

Groschen/Schilling postage stamps were issued. The mixed frankings began!

As the 700 kronen postcards already existed for inland postcards, mixed frankings occurred in two cases; (1) to use old 500 kronen postcards (Figure 3) and (2) to send something other than simple inland postcards (Figure 4).

27<sup>th</sup> Jun. 1925  
 from Pöggstall to Vienna (Figure 3)  
 500 kr (as 5 gr) + 2 gr = 7 gr  
 7 gr / inland postcard  
 (1<sup>st</sup> Mar.1925 - 30<sup>th</sup> Sep. 1925)



19<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1925,  
 from Vienna to Vienna (Figure 4)  
 500 kr (as 5 gr) + 200 kr (as 2 gr) + 20 gr = 27 gr  
 7 gr / inland postcard (1<sup>st</sup> Mar.1925 - 30<sup>th</sup> Sep. 1925)  
 20 gr / inland express (1<sup>st</sup> Mar.1925 - 30<sup>th</sup> Sep. 1925)

## 30 September 1925: End of kronen postage stamps on official postcards

The kronen postage stamps became invalid on 30 June 1925, and the transition period lasted just one month. But, there was one exception. As long as kronen denominated-postage stamps were franked on the 500 kronen or 700 kronen official postcards, postage stamps were valid until 30<sup>th</sup> September 1925 (Figure 5 and 6).

3<sup>th</sup> Mar. 1926  
 from Altheim to Vienna (Figure 5)  
 500 kr (as 5 gr) + 200 kr (invalid) + 3 gr = 8 gr  
 8 gr / inland postcard (1<sup>st</sup> Oct.1925 -30<sup>th</sup> Nov.1926)



15<sup>th</sup> Mar. 1926  
 from St.Martin im Innkreis to Linz (Figure 6).  
 500 kr (as 5 gr) + 200 kr (invalid) + 1 gr + 2 gr = 8 gr  
 8 gr / inland postcard (1<sup>st</sup> Oct.1925 -30<sup>th</sup> Nov.1926)

(Dear inflation collectors. While Kronen/ Schilling mixed frankings on covers were only possible in the month of June 1925, they were possible on postcards for 13 months, until June 1926. The latter is much easier to find, and there may be more room to explore!)

1 October 1925: Tarrff rise for both inland and foreign postcards

On 1 October 1925, new tariffs were introduced. For instance, the inland postcard rate rose from 7 groschen to 8 groschen (Figure 7 and 8). Then, simple 700 kronen postcard couldn't be sent without additional franking.

30<sup>th</sup> Sep. 1925, last day usage before the tariff rise from Unterach am Attersee to Vienna (Figure 7)  
 700 kr (as 7 gr)  
 7 gr / inland postcard (1<sup>st</sup> Mar. 1925 - 30<sup>th</sup> Sep. 1925)



1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 1925, first day usage after the tariff rise from Horn to Vienna (Figure 8)  
 700 kr (as 7 gr) + 1 gr = 8 gr  
 8 gr / inland postcard (1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 1925 - 30<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1926)

Various usages

As the 500 and 700 kronen postcards remained valid, there was a wide range of usages (Figure 9 and 10).

20<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1925  
 from Braunau am Inn to Vienna (Figure 9).  
 delivered by pneumatic system from Vienna 101 to 54  
 700 kr (as 7 gr) + 1 gr + 20 gr = 28 gr  
 8 gr / inland postcard (1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 1925 - 30<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1926)  
 20 gr / inland express (1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 1925 - 30<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1926)



21<sup>st</sup> Aug. 1925  
 from Mitterbach to Brno in Czechoslovakia (Figure 10)  
 700 kr (as 7 gr) + 1 gr + 10 gr = 18 gr  
 18 gr / reduced foreign postcard  
 (1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 1925 - 30<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1926)  
 Reduced foreign rate (18 gr instead of 24 gr) was applied for Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Italy and Poland.

## Continuous usage of kronen postcards

Contrarily to the last kronen postage stamps, the last kronen postcards had longer transition period (Figure 11).

19<sup>th</sup> Jun. 1926, a very late usage of 700 kr postcard from Lambach to Wels (Figure 11)  
 700 kr (as 7 gr) + 1 gr = 8gr  
 8 gr / inland postcard (1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 1925 - 30<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1926)



## 1 July 1926: End of the mixed frankings; Kronen postcards finally became invalid

The transition period finally came to an end on 1 July 1926. Thereafter, kronen-denominated postcards became invalid, and mixed frankings ceased to appear. (Figure 12 and 13).



30<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1926  
 from Grossreifling to Graz (Figure 12).  
 700 kr (invalid) + 1 gr = 1 gr  
 8 gr / inland postcard (1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 1925-30<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1926)  
 due amount = 7 gr. & twice the due amount = 14 gr

30<sup>th</sup> Apr. 1929, a very late attempt to use a 700 kr postcard from Baden bei Vienna to Vienna (Figure 13).  
 700 kronen (invalid) = 0 gr  
 10 gr / inland postcard (1<sup>st</sup> Dec. 1926 – 31<sup>st</sup> Aug. 1932)  
 due amount = 10 gr. twice the due amount = 20 gr



## Further Collections

Highly specialized collections of mixed frankings will be displayed at Marke+Münze 2025, Graz-Seiersberg: 23rd-25th May 2025. If you have a chance to visit, do ☺

## References

-Helmut Seebald "Exhibit: The Use of Official Austrian Postcards during the Inflation 1918 - 1925 (1926)"  
<http://www.japhila.cz/hof/0598/index0598a.htm>

-Peter Kroiß; "Austrian Inflation – periods of usage of the official post- and letter-cards" [From the Festschrift "120 Years Österreichische Philatelisten Club Vindobona / 150 Jahre Österreichische Briefmarke" pp243-252] translated & paraphrased by Andy Taylor.