

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

A publication of the Czechoslovak  Philatelic Society of N. America

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Editor Frank J. Kovarik, 8748 Rockefeller Ave., Brookfield, Illinois

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## EDITORIAL

Kindly correct your last issue of the Specialist to read "No. 188" instead of "No. 168."

We begin a new volume of the Specialist with a new look. Our old masthead which was used since September 1942, more than 16 years and therefore more than 81,000 impressions was showing signs of old age and thru the efforts of John Velek, member Ray Van Handel promised to design a new one. It was accepted by the officers of the Chicago area unanimously and the designer had a cut made at his own expense. On behalf of the Society the officers thank Mr. Van Handel for a beautiful work of art and for his generosity.

We notified the members that our Specialist, dictionary and handbook were exhibited at ISPEX in New York and the National in Brno. At ISPEX we received the second award (a great distinction, competing nationally), thanks to the efforts of our New York member, Dr. Wm. Reiner-Deutsch and in Brno we obtained a small silver medal thru the help of member Jan Karasek, a member of the Board in Czechoslovakia.

Our Chicago and New York Chapters were getting unwieldy and took up much space in the Specialist. Several complaints were received and your editor took it upon himself to eliminate these and merely publish a notice when and where the next meetings take place. If condensed reports are wanted we suggest a chapter reporter who can give these reports in capsule form.

Holding or possessing counterfeit postage stamps was illegal until recently. A new law rescinds the old and so you who have the VEJPRTY fakes need no longer fear confiscation.

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Czechoslovak postage stamp, member Karel Basika, Praha I, Karlova 2, asked the famous and celebrated designer and engraver of Czechoslovak stamps, Jindra Schmidt, to engrave a portrait of the author of the first Czecho stamp, Alfons Mucha. It is a marvelous piece of work and can be had at 50 cents, plus postage. Interested members should contact the editor up to Feb. 1. After that you must order direct. He also has on hand from the same designer a portrait of Rowland Hill, father of the postage stamp, at the same price. Mr. Basika published a bibliography of the Penny Black, presumably in Czech, with the portraits of Queen Elizabeth, R. Hill and J. Chalmers. Cost is \$3 plus postage. Interested members may contact the editor before Feb. 1.

During Complex 58 we wanted to sell "The Postal Cards of Czechoslovakia, 1945-57," a mimeographed listing of cards, compiled by our sales manager W. Fritzsche and published by K. Woodbury. It is a work of love. Any member interested in this may send a letter to the editor now; there are not too

many copies available and first come is first served. Stencils cannot be saved and a reprint is not likely. We also have enlarged photos of the map of Czechoslovakia showing most of the Post Offices at \$2 each photo.

Interested in exchange of stamps: Ing. V. Kadrnka, Brno, Jiráskova 45, Czechoslovakia.

### SECRETARY'S COMMENT

#### Membership Drive for the Twentieth Anniversary Year:

Twenty years ago our Society's founding members envisioned a great organization for the promotion of Czechoslovak Philately. Almost immediately after the founding, the occupation of the country by the Nazis made the new issues those of an enemy country. Under these conditions it is amazing that the organization was able to survive.

Liberation of Czechoslovakia, six years later, brought a tremendous wave of interest and membership in our Society was finally on its way. A change in the political situation in Czechoslovakia placed our Society in the position of promoting the stamps of an Iron Curtain country.

Eleven years have passed and our Society has kept on an even keel, with a fixed income to operate on, and the constantly increasing costs have indicated that in order to maintain our organization we must make plans for the long term of our philatelic specialty.

Reports from various collectors who deal with youngsters who are stamp collectors report that interest in Czechoslovak stamps is very limited. The investment that we have individually and collectively in our holdings is only as good as the interest in the stamps of Czechoslovakia. Surely our immediate interest is to promote our stamps and our Society to gain as many new members as possible, but even more essential is the promotion of our chosen specialty. Show your collections, be available in youth organizations for talks on stamps, preferably those of Czechoslovakia. The present promotion of the Masaryk stamp may bring national publicity that may prove valuable if we are prepared in advance to take the fullest advantage of it.

In this, our Twentieth Year, let us, in gratitude to the Founding Fathers of our Society, promote our Society and specialty. Let us take our Czechoslovak album to every stamp meeting, take our Society Dictionary, take our Society Handbook, take our Specialist, show what a collection of the pre-war issues look like, and also the colorful and beautiful new issues. Let your philatelic friends know of your interests and the fact that you are a member of our Society. Help us make this, our Twentieth Year, a re-dedication of the most important tool of our hobby, membership in the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of North America.

Certain members are doing a very wonderful job in this area, Mr. Stein of New York and Mr. Eric H. Rogers of England have been instrumental in getting several new members, all we need is 248 more fellows like them.

—J. Jiranek

#### NEW MEMBERS

- 646 Clark, William Stuart, 51 So. Terrace, Surbiton, Surrey, England.
- 647 Riddle, Keith Clifford, 10 Burwood Close, Hersham, Surrey, England.
- 648 Trager, Robert Miroslav, 12 Montagu Street, London, W. I., England
- 649 Gouville, L., 35 Gressey Grove, South Woodford, London E. 18, England
- 650 Goode, Charles, 1508 West Highland Avenue, Chicago 26, Ill.
- 651 Burian, Oldrich A., 15 Allen Place, Hartford 6, Conn.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- 609 Verner, Jaroslav, 309 West 109th Street, New York 25, N. Y.

**A TRIBUTE TO THE CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY  
AND J. W. LOWEY**

It is now 10 years since the founder and first secretary of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society passed on, and it is 20 years since our Society was born and has since grown to a big and fine organization. Words cannot express how proud I am the way you boys have carried on after the way your predecessor started the ball rolling. You have accomplished miracles.

I am familiar only with the names of some of the pioneers like Frank Kovarik (my dear old friend), Wolfgang Fritzsche, Lolly Horechny, Dr. Reiner-Deutsch, A. J. Hrivnak, Guy Greenawald, and of course some others—they performed wonders, and made the organization a great success. The Secretaryship is now in the hands of a very able, honest and devoted man, our friend Joseph Jiranek. I know that Joseph W. Lowey would be equally proud to see how that seed he planted 20 years ago grew up in dignity and respect and became known all over the continent. His labors bear fruit.

Also I have to mention my sincere indebtedness to the Society for honoring my membership and from the bottom of my heart thank you for the splendid work you are all doing around this fine organization. I hope and pray that it stays strong and enjoys a long life.

I know through experience what Czechoslovak stamp collecting can mean; education, knowledge, history, learning, wonderful philatelic fellowship and of course that spells and personifies

J. W. LOWEY

—Hattie Lowey

**CHAPTER MEETINGS**

Meetings of the New York Chapter are held in the Collectors Club, 22 E. 35th St., N. Y. C., every 3rd Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

Chicago chapter meetings: Every 3rd Sunday, 2:30 p.m.; Jan. 18, 1959, in the home of Robert Mitchell, 3833 S. Oak Park Ave., Oak Park, Ill.; Feb. 15, Jos. Janecka, 2723 S. Central Park Ave., Chicago and March 15, John Velek, 6218 W. Diversey Ave., Chicago.



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## Pošta Československá 1919 Overprint on Austrian and Hungarian Stamps

Zdeněk Kvasnička, author

George R. Skopecek, translator — Richardson L. Spofford, editor

### Overprint on Austrian and Hungarian Stamps

In this article we intend to consolidate the studies and information we have relating to the types of this group of Czechoslovak stamps. These stamps with the overprint "POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919" passed through all the philatelic infirmities which did not make them any too well liked by collectors. Finally they passed through a sort of "ordeal by fire," which left the real meat. This group is a rich mine for the specialists, but it is up to them to collect sensibly. Everybody cannot have the high values, but a good collection can be built without them and the blank spaces can be filled with the printers' waste, which seems to be plentiful with stamps of this class. It should be kept in mind that only undamaged stamps with a well centered overprint are worth collecting and also not to overvalue them.

### Postal Conditions Before Stamps Were Overprinted

In the first days of its existence the Czechoslovak Government did not intend to overprint the current Austrian and Hungarian stamps, because the supply was meager and the Vienna printery stopped deliveries. The Czech government was trying its best to produce its own stamps, which it accomplished in a rather short time, by Dec. 18, 1918. By order no. 3426-LV-19 of Feb. 8, 1919, the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs ordered the use of Austrian and Hungarian stamps stopped on March 1, 1919. However, postal stationery was not included in this order. The stamps in the possession of the public were exchanged for the new ones of same value at the various post offices until March 1, 1919. We have written several articles in the *Specialist* on this "post-transition period" and it will be necessary to be acquainted with them to understand the birth of the overprinted stamps.

Deliveries of stamps to the Central Office from the various post offices were slow. The stamps had to be officially counted, segregated and the small blocks had to be arranged into sheets, half sheets and quarter sheets by pasting on paper. According to Lešetický the total value of Austrian stamps was 7,593,868K and of Hungarian stamps 1,098,170K, totaling 8,692,038K. The post offices turned in everything they had and all stamps redeemed by the public. Many of these were damaged and demonetized.

The job of overprinting was awarded to the printing establishment of A. Haase in Praha, where the stamps were picked over and made ready for the overprint.

### Overprinting and Sale

By order no. 10214-VI-1919 the Postal Administration announced that the Austrian and Hungarian stamps with the overprint "POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919" would be on sale Dec. 19, 1919, at the philatelic windows, no. 33 and 34, located in the court of the General Post Office in Praha. This



order says in part—"the stamps will be sold in large or small groupings, some values in singles or in whole sheets until sold out. All these stamps, current, postage dues, airs, special delivery and newspaper stamps are valid as current postage at the same value on all domestic mail until Dec. 31, 1919." It also states—"the sale will be continued until all stamps are sold, even after the date of Dec. 31, 1919." To the face value of these stamps was added a





50 percent surcharge, which joker the authorities failed to explain. Later the validity of the stamps was extended to Jan. 31, 1920.

The short time in which these stamps were valid accounts for a small usage on correspondence. Lower values were plentiful at the post offices, but the higher values were scarce. These were apportioned to the buyers according to the size of their order for the lower values. Most of the stamps were bought by stamp dealers, who, by selling the lower values at a loss, made their profit by kiting the prices on the high values. Used stamps of this class come mostly from money orders, postal tags and from covers with mixed franking, most of which were made to order wholesale. These can be recognized by unusual franks.

Besides the regular or current stamps turned in, there were many stamps out of circulation. It would have been logical to separate these and the damaged ones, but for some reason this was not done and everything was overprinted. Of course, these were not distributed to the post offices, but found their way into collectors' hands, by a roundabout way from the printery. Among them were some Austrian airmail stamps not used in Czechoslovakia and the current 4K and 10K values on granite paper, which were issued in Vienna after Oct. 28, 1918. Also overprinted were the Hungarian 10f and 20f (reapers) with "Magyar Posta" which were issued after the transition period. For these there is the plausible excuse that they were sent to Slovakia by the Budapest office during the military operations. The 4K and 10K values on granite paper were written up by us in the "Specialist." The Czechoslovak currency was far more stable than the currencies of the surrounding countries, so it is believed that many Austrian current stamps were smuggled into Czechoslovakia.

Only stamps sold at the philatelic windows or at the Economic Central are considered officially issued. They consist of 65 Austrian and 53 Hungarian stamps, forming the so-called complete set. There are about 30 other stamps which were not officially issued and were supposed to be destroyed, but which got into the hands of dealers and collectors anyway.

The total number issued of these stamps is questionable, because there is no official count and even the Lešetický (who officiated at their birth) account can not be believed. Time, of course, showed which stamps would maintain their value. They are, among others, the 4K (about 8 issued), and 10K (about 15), on granite paper. We have a correct number of only the Hungarian 20f "Magyar Posta," which is 100, as sold at the philatelic agency.

The stamps themselves show little variation. Some values are on thick paper. There is a considerable difference in shades, missing perforations occur on the special delivery stamps and a complete offset on the 2 hal. newspaper stamp. There was a 2h newspaper stamp with a private perforation 11½ and a 10f (reapers) perforated with letters "G St." In the sheets of the triangular special delivery stamps are found four blanks, so-called "coupons," which are always overprinted, together with the stamps. The exceptions are the coupons which were assembled into sheets and had the stamps pasted on them. On soaking, these stamps came off, leaving the coupons blank. On the rectangular special delivery stamps, some coupons are overprinted and some blank.

A very interesting subject for collectors is the plate numbers.

#### Printers' Waste

In the process of overprinting, spoilage was very great because many sheets were composed of small blocks of different origin. All of this was supposed to be destroyed. Officially, this was done April 17, 1920, when stamps to the value of 2,043,340K were fed into the furnace of the central heating boilers, but a great deal of this material reached the market. This

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consists mostly of overprints reversed, upside down, printed on gummed side, offsets, double and shifted overprints, differently placed overprints, and others. Careless feeding of the sheets into the press accounted for some stamps not being overprinted at all. Many damaged stamps were also overprinted. Other interesting waste consists of sheets of stamps upside down or of different values.

Stamps not officially issued are considered those trial prints in red on the dark blue 2K value or black color on used stamps, or stamps with an overprint of a different type, or stamps not sold by the philatelic agency, or overprinted with an unusual color. All these are fully described in the Ekstein Catalogue of 1938.

Now we come to the most interesting part—the detailed study made by Hirsch, Franěk, and Mrňák, together with the illustrations published in the "Study of the Philatelic Collections in the Postal Museum." This was published in book form by the Ministry of Communications in 1956. E. Hirsch describes the origin of the various types in detail. Because the whole article is too long to quote here, we will content ourselves with the differences of the types only.

Our definition of TYPE, as accepted at present is:

Fundamental, easily detected and regularly repeated differences in the design or printing, otherwise the same, which is a result of printing technique.

#### Classes of Overprints

Each of the seven groups of the basic overprints is called a CLASS and is assigned a letter from "A" to "G."

A—overprints for the Austrian regular current stamps in heller and Kronen values.

B—overprints for the Austrian postage dues, airmails and special delivery (triangles).

C—overprints for the Austrian special delivery (rectangles) and Hungarian Parliament views.

D—overprints for the Austrian newspaper stamps and postage dues.

E—overprints for the Austrian 3K postage dues.

F—overprints for the Hungarian current stamps.

G—overprints for the Hungarian postage dues.

The source of each of these type classes is, by the same manufacturing process from individual material, from one of the six type faces and two stereotypes. Thus, each has a character of its own as to the size of the type, length of the words and the location in respect to each other.

Small variations, such as differences in the individual letters and the location of the lines to each other are called TYPES.

#### Types

Each of the seven classes show regularly repeating variations, called TYPES, originating in the process of manufacturing the overprinting plates. Details of each type are shown with each class in the illustrations, which, for convenience, are shown in a horizontal position. All illustrations are enlarged without regard to the original size.

#### Class A — Types I-II

For all current regular Austrian stamps in the heller and Kronen values overprint "A" was used in two types, stereotyped from two different type sets. The illustrations and the descriptions of main features of both types make them easily recognizable. There are numerous other variations which we do not mention.

TYPE I—The hook over S in POŠTA touches the letter S

TYPE II—The hook over S in POŠTA is separate from the letter S and has a different shape.



Five basic and 1 corrected plates for overprinting were used, each of 100 subjects.

Plate I—for 3h values, Plate Ia for 3 and 15h values.

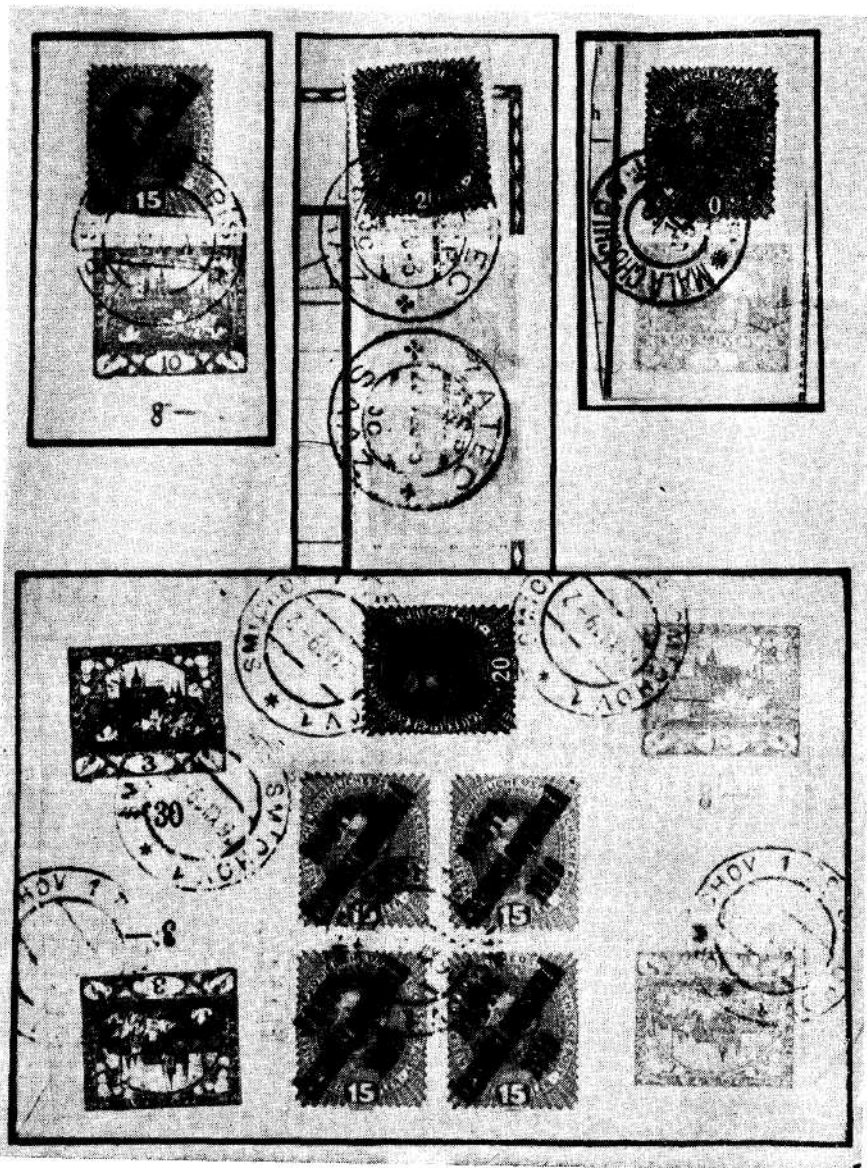
Plate II—for 3, 5, (12?), 25 and 50h values

Plate III—for 6, 10, 12, 20, 30, 40, 60h and 1K values

Plate IV—for 3, 12, 20, 25, 40, 60, 80 and 90h values

Plate V—for 2, 3, 4, and 10K values of all colors and kinds of paper.

In all plates the percentage of TYPES is approximately 1 to 1.



**Class E — Types I-II**

For the highest values of the Austrian postage dues the CLASS E overprint was used and is in two TYPES, probably originating from a matrix of a single type set, which accounts for only one type difference.

TYPE I—K in Česko almost closed at the top (shown dotted in the illust.)

TYPE II—K in Česko is open (illustration shows full contour)

For overprinting, one plate of 20 subjects (5x4) was used and the 80 stamp sheets were cut up into blocks of 20 before overprinting. Types are represented in overprints in a ratio of 1:1.

**Class C — Types I-II-III**

For the special delivery (Austrian 1917) and the current Hungarian Parliament, Class C overprint was used, in three TYPES, originated by stereotyping 3 different type sets.

TYPE I—Hook over S in POŠTA touches the letter S, letter K in ČESK is open on top.

TYPE II—Hook over S in POŠTA touches the letter S, letter K in ČESK is almost closed at the top.

TYPE III—Hook over S in POŠTA is separate from the letter S, shifted to the left and has a different shape.

**Class D — Types I-II-III**

For all Austrian postage dues of the heller values (1910-1916) and all Austrian newspaper stamps (1909-1916) the Class D overprint in three TYPES was used. The TYPES originated from the use of three different stereos.

TYPE I—The letter T in POŠTA is vertically above the space between letters O and V in SLOV. The word POŠTA is 3.1 mm above the word



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TYPE II—The letter T is vertically above the left leg of the letter V in SLOVENSKÁ. The word POŠTA is 2.7 mm above the word SLOVENSKÁ and the numerals 1919 are 3.00 mm below the word SLOVENSKÁ.

TYPE III—The letter T in POŠTA is vertically above the center of the letter V, the word POŠTA is 2.8 mm above the word SLOVENSKÁ and the numerals 1919 are 2.8 mm below the word SLOVENSKÁ. The ratio of the types to each other is 1:2.

Class F — Types I-II-III-IV

The stereotypes used for the overprinting of CLASSES F and G were made from a one line type set of the face "Herold." Inasmuch as the original material for CLASSES D, F, G was the same, the overprint plates contain similar defects in the letters. The differences in the vertical distances between the lines and the relative positions to each other created the four TYPES, showing that four matrices were used in making the plates.

TYPE I—The word POŠTA is 3.1 mm above the word ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ and the numerals 1919 are 2.7 mm below that word. Center line of the letter T in POŠTA is over the right leg of the letter V in SLOVENSKÁ.

TYPE II—The word POŠTA is 2.9 mm above the word ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ, and the date 1919 is 2.9 below it. The center line of the letter T drops between the letters V and E.

TYPE III—The word POŠTA is 2.7 mm above the word ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ and the date 1919 is 3.1 mm below it. The letter T is over the right leg of the letter V.

TYPE IV—The second numeral 9 is not cut off at the bottom. Only one plate was used in overprinting all current and special delivery Hungarian stamps. A total of 31 varieties were overprinted



by one plate. This was possible because of the uniform size of Hungarian stamps. For the Hungarian 2f newspaper stamp, overprinted with the same CLASS and TYPES, another plate was made because of a slightly different size of the stamp sheets.

#### Class G — Types I-II-III-IV

The different size of Hungarian postage dues made it necessary to arrange the 3 line overprint in a slightly different manner and of course, a new plate. This is also in four TYPES, being made from the same one line type set. The ratio is 1:3.

TYPE I—The word POŠTA is 3.1 mm above the word ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ and the numerals 1919 are 2.7 mm below it.

TYPE II—The letter O in the word SLOVENSKÁ has a break at the top.

TYPE III—The word POŠTA is 2.8 mm above the word ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ and the numerals 1919 are 3.0 mm below it.

TYPE IV—The second numeral 9 is cut off at the bottom. The letter T in all TYPES is directly over the letter O.

#### Class B

The smallest stereotypes made from the original one line type set were used for a group of stamps which differed from the others by their size or degree angle, or because they had already been overprinted. Thus it was necessary to arrange the stamps to be overprinted not only as to their size, but also as to their location in the sheet and degree angle. That required special stereotypes and plates. This created an unusual condition not encountered in the other CLASSES. Alike overprints differ in TYPE not only in CLASS but also in GROUP. It means that TYPE I or II in one GROUP is not the same as TYPE I or II in another GROUP, even when we disregard the different degrees of slant. For that reason it is necessary to note in which GROUP the 7 TYPES



appear. In the description we will note not only the TYPE but also the GROUPS. The GROUPS are a) triangular and special delivery stamps, (2 TYPES), b) airmails and provisional postage dues, except the 1h (Karel), (2 TYPES) and c) 1h Karel postage due, (2 TYPES).

#### Class B — Group A

Austrian special delivery stamps of 1916 because of their triangular shape, required not only special stereos, but a special arrangement in the plate.

There are 3 TYPES.

TYPE I—A deep nick in the top of the letter S in the word ČESK and a small nick in the bottom of the letter K in the same word.

TYPE II—The numerals 1919 are 1.2mm below the word ČESKOSLOVENSKA

TYPE III—The numerals 1919 are 0.9 mm below the word ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ.

The arrangement of the plate is not known, but a 26 subject plate is indicated.

#### Class B — Group B

For the Austrian provisional postage dues of 1916-1917, 10/24, 15/33, 20/54, and 50/42h were set up in a 100 subject plate of two different TYPES, and an unknown plate of same TYPE for the 15/2h and another small plate of 15 subjects for the air mail stamps. The print of this plate is in the Postal Museum.

TYPE I—A nick in the top of the letter S in ENSKÁ.

TYPE II—The letter S without the nick.

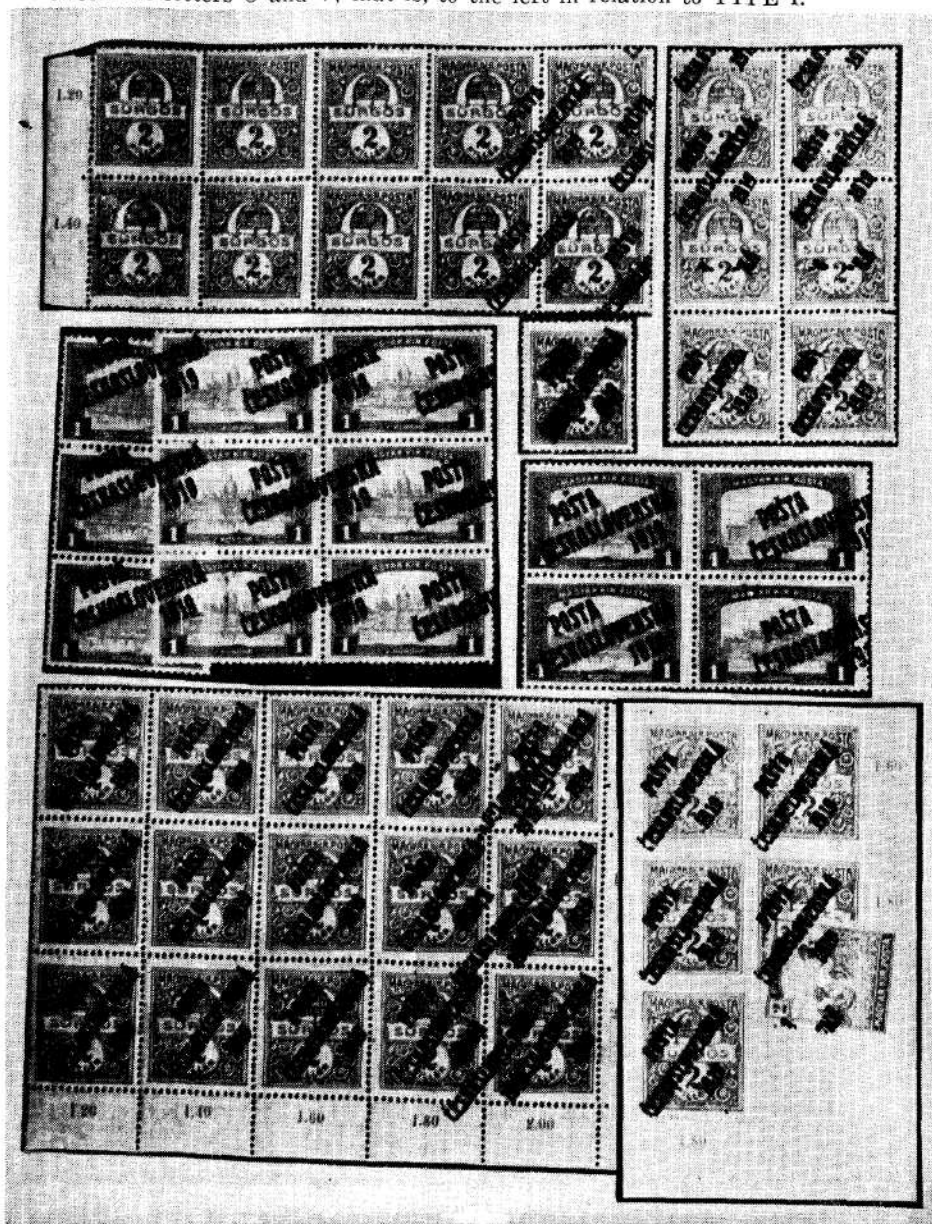




Class B — Group C

The 1h provisional postage due required a special plate to accommodate the different degree of angle of the stamps. Probably a plate to overprint a whole sheet was made. The difference in the two TYPES is almost negligible.

In TYPE I the letter T in the word POŠTA is over the left leg of the letter V in VENSKA, while in the TYPE II the letter T is over the space between the letters O and V, that is, to the left in relation to TYPE I.



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