

## PERFINS IN THE LANDS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

by Richard G. Palaschak

Perfins are stamps that have been perforated with designs, initials, or numerals by private businesses and government agencies to discourage theft and misuse. During our Society's annual Board meeting in Sarasota, FL, SCP member Jerry Hejduk proposed the establishment of a Perfin Study Group within the Society. The purpose of the Group is to provide a forum for members to share information, trade or sell stamps with perfins, and learn more about this niche of Czechoslovak philately through collective research.

As with other philatelic aspects of the lands encompassing the First Republic of Czechoslovakia, the philatelic history follows the rich political history of the country. As a result, Austrian stamps (Figure 1) and Hungarian stamps (Figure 2) are known to have perfins from businesses located within the boundaries of what was to become the First Republic. During the period of the First Republic (1918-1939) numerous companies were using postage stamps with perfins. Some were elegant (Figure 3) and some were utilitarian (Figure 4). During World War II companies continued using perfins both in Slovakia (Figure 5) and in Bohemia & Moravia (Figure 6). There are over one thousand perfin patterns that have been identified as being used within the lands encompassing Czechoslovakia.

Following up on Jerry Hejduk's proposal, we reached out to our counterpart society in the Czech Republic, *Svaz Českých Filatelistů* (SČF), to determine if a perfin club existed within their society. They do indeed have a Perfin Club with about 60 members from the Czech Republic and Slovakia. This Perfin Club publishes a quarterly bulletin, *Perfíny*, which can be obtained via the internet by their members. This electronic periodical can be translated into English using Google Documents and Google Translate. We are looking to coordinate our Study Group's efforts with those of the SČF Perfin Club.

The last catalog of Czechoslovak perfins in general use was published in 1987. The Society Library has a copy available for loan. There is an

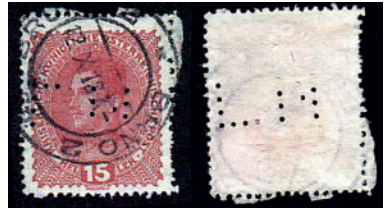


Figure 1. People's Newspaper, Brno, Austrian Monarchy.



Figure 2. J. Palugyay and Son, Pozsony, Hungarian Monarchy.



Figure 3. Adolf Jakob, Liberec, Czechoslovakia.



Figure 4. Heinika, Prerov, Czechoslovakia.



Figure 5. Bratislava General Bank, Bratislava, Slovakia.

English translation of the introduction that makes the catalog easy to use. We were recently informed by Vladimír Munzberger, Vice Chairman of the SČF Perfin Club, that a new catalog is being prepared. The catalog is expected to be available next year.

Jerry Hejduk has agreed to organize and lead our Society's Perfin Study Group. Jerry is the former President of the U.S. Perfin Club. SČP members interested in joining our Study Group should contact Jerry at [hejdukgr@gmail.com](mailto:hejdukgr@gmail.com) or P.O. Box 459, Altoona, FL 32702-0459.



Figure 6. Iron Company, Prag, Bohemia & Moravia.

**SOURCES:**

Figure 1 and Figures 3-6 are from the collection of Richard G. Palaschak.  
Figure 2 is from the collection of Vera Devlin.



## HRADČANY POSTAL STATIONERY CARDS (PART 1)

by Robert Lauer and Johan Sevenhuijsen

The Hradčany design used for the first Czechoslovak stamps was also used for the first postal stationery after the provisional issue of overprinted Austrian postal stationery cards. While there exists a veritable mountain of English-language literature about the stamps, there has been very little published in English on the Hradčany postal stationery. This dearth of accessible information became painfully apparent as we set about the task of sorting out what we had in our own accumulations of Hradčany postal stationery. The section on postal stationery in Volume 1 of the *Monografie*, translated by Mark Wilson, provides a useful introduction, but some of the variations listed in this section left us scratching our collective heads. Using the interactive indexes for *Czechout* from the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain and *The Czechoslovak Specialist*, we could only find a single article on the 20 h postal stationery cards in *The Czechoslovak Specialist* from September/October 1992. Even the Pofis cataloging of this postal stationery, which is by far and away the most detailed, leaves a little bit to be desired. The origin of the dies for the Hradčany postal stationery cards also does not seem to be particularly well understood. Volume 1 of the *Monografie* at page 96 states that: "Near the end of their printing, some of the printing plates for the First Design 10 h, the 15 h, and the Fifth Design 20 h were cut into individual printing blocks, they were used to print postal stationery." With the exception of one of the plates used to print the 15 h postal stationery cards, this was not the case.

This stationery and the imprinted stamp on it (or indicium, as it is properly called) is definitely worthy of more attention; it represents a whole separate and intriguing area of collecting. In this article, we limit ourselves to discussing the postal stationery cards (hereafter referred to as postcards) and the postal stationery lettercard issued with a Hradčany indicium. We will attempt to correct what we see as errors in the existing English-language sources, in the Pofis catalog, and provide some elaboration of the differences between and the origin of the dies for