

FUN WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA PERFINS

by Jack Brandt (LM#14)

I recently purchased a Czechoslovakia perfins collection in one of Bob Szymanski's (LM#145) Private Auctions. After receiving my purchase, I immediately had to go through my Czechoslovakia perfins collection to see what I could add. In this process, I found several unusual and interesting items that I thought you might enjoy also.

Large Perfins / Small Stamps

Many Czechoslovakia perfins are large and do not fit on one stamp, which may be small in size. Other times, a misalignment of the sheet of stamps in the perforator splits the perfin between two stamps.

In many cases, the "M. E./B." perfin spans two stamps, with the top letters "M. E." on one stamp and the bottom letter "B." on the second one. This is so common that the single letter "B." was listed as a distinct pattern in some of the older catalogs, but this has been corrected in the newer ones. The complete "M. E./B." perfin along with the single letter "B." are illustrated in Figure 1. Looking closely at the "B.", it is obvious it is part of the "M. E./B." perfin -- not an individual pattern.

Figure 2 illustrates three additional examples of single letters split from their individual patterns, along with their complete patterns. These are all the result of the length of the perfin exceeding the width of the stamp. As with the previous example, without the complete pattern it would be tempting to identify the single letters as individual perfins.

Missing a Letter or a Complete Perfin

Sometimes there is sufficient space on the stamp for the complete perfin, but part or all of it is missing for some unknown reason. Maybe it is a broken machine, a misalignment problem or just inattention by the operator of the perforator. Figure 3 shows the first instance -- the stamp is large enough for the complete "B.& W." perfin but the "B." is completely missing.



Figure 1
Complete "M.E./B." Perfin

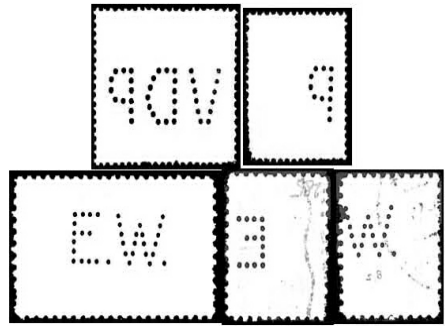


Figure 2
Complete "VDP" perfin and single "P"
and complete "E.W." And single letters
"E." and "W."



Figure 3
Complete "B.&W." Perfin and missing "B."
Missing "B." Probably the result of a
broken machine

The unusual pair of stamps shown in Figure 4 is undoubtedly the result of inattention by the operator of the perforator. Maybe the person was distracted or called away from their job for some reason. In any case, the result is that one stamp, and probably the entire row of stamps, was not punched. Then, for this to survive as an intact pair is a special treat.

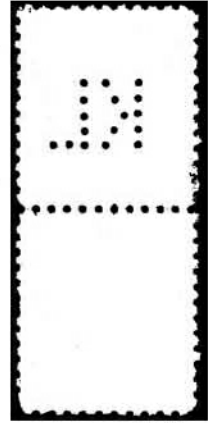


Figure 4
Perfin "KL" in top stamp and completely missing in bottom stamp, probably

The perfinned stamp shown in Figure 5 has two aspects that caused me to stop and ponder it for a while. First, there is the missing hole at the top of the letter "K." However, more intriguing is that the external perforations at the top and right sides of the stamp are shifted. Can anyone explain how this might have happened?

Missing Hole

There is nothing really unusual about finding perfins with a missing hole or two. We all probably have many such examples in our duplicates. However, I thought the series of perfins shown in Figure 6 is out of the ordinary, with an amusing item at the end.

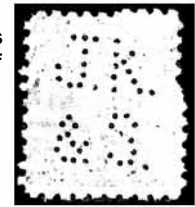


Figure 5
Most interesting aspect of this perfinned stamp is the shift of the external perforations at the top and right sides.

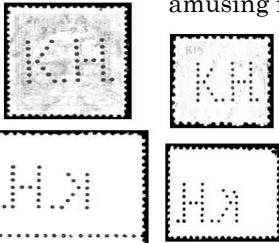


Figure 6
Amusing variations of the "K.H." Perfin. Top row shows complete perfin and then one missing hole at the top of the letter "K." The second row carries on with the top two holes missing on letter "K." In the strip of three and then the missing top two holes plus bent pin at top of letter "K".

Folded Strip

Mirror pairs of perfins are not unusual. They are the result of folding a sheet of stamps before placing it in the perforator. However, we do not normally see the result of folding the sheet more than once. Figure 7 shows a strip of three perfinned stamps where the sheet was folded at least two times -- maybe more. The outcome of how this strip was separated from the sheet of stamps is unusual to say the least.



Figure 7
A strip of three stamps perfinned with the "NEW" perfin. Obviously the sheet of stamps was folded multiple times before being placed in the perforator. This unusual item only survived because of the way the three stamps were removed from the sheet.

Overprint, Cancels, and Smear

While we as perfin collectors tend to concentrate on the back of a particular stamp because it is much easier to see the perfin, we should also at least take a glance at the front. Sometimes, there is as much or more of interest there.



Figure 8
Why was stamp revalued from 80 to 10?

The stamp shown in Figure 8 is a Scott #34 that has been perforated with the "H&C" pattern. However, notice that the 80h (haleru) value is written over with a manuscript 10(h?). Was this a provisional stamp or why was the value changed?



Figure 9
Stamp with two different cancels

Many times the cancel on the stamp provides an additional facet to study. These can show the complete (or near complete) city where the stamp was used. Many times part or all of the postmark date is included. Finding one with two distinctly different postmarks is not normal. Figure 9 shows such an item. The 10h, Scott #43 shows a nearly complete "R.H." perfin with part of two different postmarks.

Cancels with different color ink are the subject of many specialty collections. In this particular collection that I was sorting,

I was fortunate enough to find one such item.



Figure 10

The 1Kc (koruna), Scott #212, with a complete "OT" perfin [like an O superimposed on a T] pictured in Figure 10 has an attractive green colored cancel. It now resides in a special place in my Czechoslovakia perfin collection.



The perfin with the single letter "P" seems to be the most common Czechoslovakia perfin. Even so, this lot contained a couple of "P" per-



Figure 11
A couple of interesting examples of the common "P" perfin.

pins that I thought you would like to see (Figure 11).

First, is a 50h, Scott #116, where the ink is smeared. This is probably the result of not properly cleaning the printing press between printing the sheets of stamps. The second item is a 1Kc, Scott #211, showing its use on a piece of newspaper -- an attractive item to include in my collection.

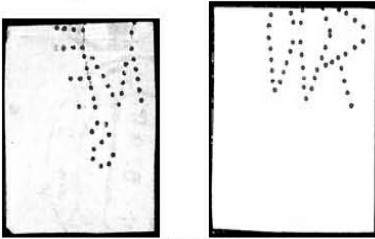


Figure 12

Perfins “MF./S” and “WK” in imperforate stamps where sheet was improperly folded.

Folds and Multiple Punches

When sheets of stamps are folded before being placed in the perforator, the operator is not always careful to make sure the fold is in the margin between the stamps. This makes for some intriguing items to study. Consider the two perfins shown in Figure 12. They are both imperforate stamps from a folded sheet. As the

folds were not perfect, part of the second perfin can be seen.

The Unknowns

Whenever I go through a lot of perfins, it always seems like I find one or two “unknowns” that I cannot identify. Usually they are not in the catalogues or are significantly different than what has been previously reported. Here are two such examples.



Figure 13
New pattern or partial punch?

The first is a single letter “M.” (Figure 13). I have this in two different stamp issues, and cannot find it in any of the catalogues that I own. Is this part of a larger pattern similar to the perfins shown on the [first] page or a new pattern?

The second one shown in Figure 14 completely mystifies me. Is this a design or a partial punch with some of the holes missing? Which way should it be orientated? I can find nothing really close to this perfin in any of my catalogues.

Your Turn

Throughout this article, we have shown and discussed several items that one does not normally see, and suggested some reasons for them or asked questions concerning them. If you have any other ideas or answers to the questions, we would greatly appreciate hearing from you. In particular, what about the “unknowns” shown in Figures 13 and 14? Do you have any explanation for these?

Please send your thoughts to the Editor. He will then forward these on to me and we will share them in a future *Bulletin*. His contact information

is on page [2].

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