

Perfin Catalog of the Czechoslovak Territory
published by KF 00-65 Prague 1976 Vojtech Maxa

Preface

You are holding the second edition of the Catalog of Perfins from the territory of Czechoslovakia. It was necessary to prepare it not only because the private Hlohovec edition of 1971 of 450 copies has already been sold out and many newcomers to our perfins are missing this catalog, but also because in the past five years our knowledge of Czechoslovak perfins has expanded considerably: 200 new patterns have been added and over 150 more perfin users have been identified.

Today we can state that we have managed to save Czechoslovak perfins from complete destruction and oblivion (after all, until recently they were considered worthless and as such discarded) and to ensure their rightful place in Czech philately.

Czechoslovak perfins also gained international recognition: the English version of the catalog was published by the Perfins Club in the United States in two editions (1970 and 1974) and in 1971 the German version was published as an appendix to the newsletter of the working group for the study of Czechoslovak stamps of the Association of German Philatelists.

The interest in our perfins is so great that it was possible to establish a group of collectors of Czechoslovak perfins at KF 00-65 Kovoprojekta Praha, who publish a newsletter PERFINY for their members. It informs the readers about the news in this specialty, explains various technical matters, prints interesting facts from the world, brings exchange of experiences and provides specialist literature and exchange of perfins. The number of members of the group has exceeded one hundred and twenty issues of the Newsletter have been published so far.

It is this relatively broad membership base and the involvement of other colleagues in collecting and studying Czechoslovak perfins that has allowed the catalog to be substantially expanded, supplemented and improved. From the very beginning, i.e. from February 1969, when I decided to study our perfins (fortunately, I had no clear idea of the scope and difficulty of this task at that time), I had to gain the cooperation and interest of the wider collecting public. It is impossible to list here all the collectors who helped me in studying our perfins and thus make this new catalog publication possible. I mention some of those who have contributed to it: Engineer Otto Barton, Josef Dobeš, Václav Fejtek, Dušan Franc, Josef Fürich, Josef Kopřiva, Jaroslav Kuřil, Jan Mezirka, J.D. Otto Parma, Bohuslav Schnal and Josef Zima.

My sincere thanks to all Czechoslovak and international collectors of Czechoslovak perfins who have selflessly helped me in my work. At the same time, however, I would like to emphasize that all the mistakes, errors and shortcomings, which certainly exist in this publication, are the responsibility of the author alone. I would be grateful for any comments and corrections.

In particular, I would like to thank the management of KF 00-65, from whom I have received full support for my work and who founded a group of collectors of Czechoslovak perfins and provided for the printing and publishing of the newsletter and catalog.

Prague, May 1976

Vojtěch Maxa

Instructions for Catalog Users

The catalog contains perfins of companies that have been operating in the lands of Czechoslovakia since 1877. This, therefore, includes perfins on the stamps of Austria and Hungary before 1918; also perfins on German stamps, that is, in the Bohemia-Moravia protectorate and the Slovak state. The occurrence of perfins on the stamps issued by the postal administrations of these states is indicated in the catalog by the following letters:

R- Austria (to 1918)	M- Hungary (1939-1945)
U- Hungary (to 1918)	P- Bohemia-Moravia (1939-1945)
Č- Czechoslovakia (1918-1939)	S- Slovakia (1939-1945)
N- Germany (1939-1945)	Čs- Czechoslovakia (after 1945)

The catalog is arranged alphabetically and, in addition to a drawing of the perfin in actual size, it also contains information about where the company, that used it, was located. The name and type of business of the perfin user is also stated, for which the following abbreviations were used:

T- factory	P- business, firm	V- wholesale firm (store, shop)
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Identification data, when relying on identification based on a envelope or postcard with printed company address or with imprint of company stamp, are marked with the symbol (+). Identifications that were not so derived, were obtained by comparables or by studying business and telephone directories.

The numbering of perfins in the catalog is not the same as in the first edition. Newly discovered perfins were assigned new numbers ordered progressively; therefore, the numbers are not straightforward. Conversely, some numbers were dropped because the perfin was identified as Austrian. The alphabetical sequencing of perfins was adhered to although some exceptions arose during the preparation of the designs for the catalog as new types of perfins were discovered.

Supplements to the catalog and additions or corrections to the text will be continuously printed in the newsletter and, from time to time, a special data supplement for the catalog will be issued.

History of Czechoslovak Perfins

Perfins, a protective perforation intended to prevent the theft of stamps, were authorized by the Austrian Ministry of Commerce decree, issued on April 4, 1877. It was, then, possible to imprint perfins on postage stamps; the decree of 1886 extended permission to include postal stationery - postcards, money orders and parcel dispatches.

Czech companies used this innovation during the 1880s. The first was probably the Josef R. Vilimek publishing house in Prague (V 13).

After October 28, 1918, perfins continued to be used, as the Czechoslovak post took over the Austrian authorization permitting the use of perfins along with other decrees (and has not yet repealed it). Some perfins, established in Austria or during the Hungarian dominion in Slovakia, continued to be produced, others disappeared. In the 1920s and early 1930s, numerous new perfins emerged, but in the mid-1930s, frankotypy [similar to metered mail] began being used, representing a more perfect and reasonable way of franking.

Perfins were also in circulation in the years 1938-1945, when existing perfin types were imprinted on the stamps of the new postal administrations. A small number of businesses perfinned stamps even after 1945; the last one still in circulation is perfin P (P3), Orbis publishing house, which uses a department of the Postal Newspaper Service, which has its workplaces in the Orbis building in Prague.

The most recent Czechoslovak perfin is P 35, used by KF 00-65.P

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Perfins were not collected or studied in our country. The prevalent opinion of the old philatelic school was that stamps perforated with private company-driven monograms were worthless and should not be included in collections. The only perfin that was taken as worthwhile was G. St. (G 28), belonging to the company Stollwerck Brothers in Bratislava, and only because it occurs on a relatively expensive stamp, Pof. č. 99, from the overprinted series P.Č. 1919. (However, the user of this perfin had been unknown - I was unable to identify it until 1970).

In the philatelists' Tribune in 1940, an article appeared drawing attention to various types of official and private perforating of postage stamps. It emphasizes, among others things:

"... a collection that would contain all perforated stamps, and which would capture all known types, has not yet been created; however, it would certainly be more interesting, more instructive and original, than so many special collections, which require more imitative drive than philatelic talent, knowledge, and patience. "

Similarly, philatelists in England and the United States began to notice perfins during wartime. The reason is obvious: the war restrictions forced collectors to pay attention to the hitherto unexplored sections of the postal history of their own country, whose stamps were most easily accessible. Only in these countries (which were not influenced by Austrian and German philatelic schools) was there a lasting interest, which culminated with the establishment of the Perfin Collector's Club: SEPS in England (Security Endorsement & Perfin Society of Great Britain) and Perfins Club in the USA. Unique collectors of perfins exist in perhaps all major stamp producing countries in the world. The perfin collector group at KF 00-65 is the youngest organization of its kind, and is only the third in the world.

Perfins can be collected in a variety of ways. It is possible to create general (one's own country or groups of states), specialized, regional, branch (ie: perfins of a certain type of company) or even study collections. Perfins are also very collectible as thematic or regional collections. Perfins serve to provide an interesting insight on a large section of the history of our social and economic life.

translated by Joe Colbourne / Vera Devlin / Lou Svoboda 2021