

MORE ON TRANSNATIONAL NEWSPAPER CANCELLATIONS

by Robert Lauer

In his article in March 2019 issue of SoH, "Transnational Newspaper Cancellations", Alan Soble ponders a number of reasons as to why one finds Hungarian newspaper stamps with Austrian cancels and Austrian newspaper stamps with Hungarian cancels, and in the end, is "attracted to the opinion that the cancellations... are arriving strikes". The section on the 1867 newspaper stamps in Dr. Ulrich Ferchenbauer's *Österreich 1850-1918, Handbuch und Spezialkatalog, Vol. II - Österreich 1867-1918* (Wien, 2008) confirms that Alan is indeed "attracted" to the correct answer to his question. Newspaper stamps issued by the various Austro-Hungarian postal authorities were only valid in the various territories of the Empire (pg. 101) and were generally cancelled by the post office that delivered the newspaper to the subscriber (pg. 103). Hence cancellations on newspaper stamps are indeed receiving strikes from the subscriber's post office.



At left is another interesting example of this, a block of 9 of the 1867 design newspaper stamps, cancelled at Budapest Vár on January 15, 1897. Newspaper stamps of this design were part of the first issue of stamps by the newly independent Hungarian postal administration on June 1, 1867. These newspaper stamps initially had a franking value of 1.05kr, which was reduced to 1kr effective January 1, 1868.¹ While most catalogues of Austrian stamps list the issue date of these stamps in the Austrian portion of the Empire as June 1, 1867, they were, in practice, only introduced into the Austrian section of the Empire as the existing stocks of the 1863 issue of newspaper stamps were exhausted. The first use of any stamps from the 1867 issue in the Austrian part of the Empire is some two months later.² These stamps remained valid for mailing newspapers in Hungary until July 31, 1871 and for mailing newspapers in the Austrian portion of the Empire until September 30,

1900. This block then would have been used to ship newspapers from somewhere in the Austrian portion of the Empire to Budapest.

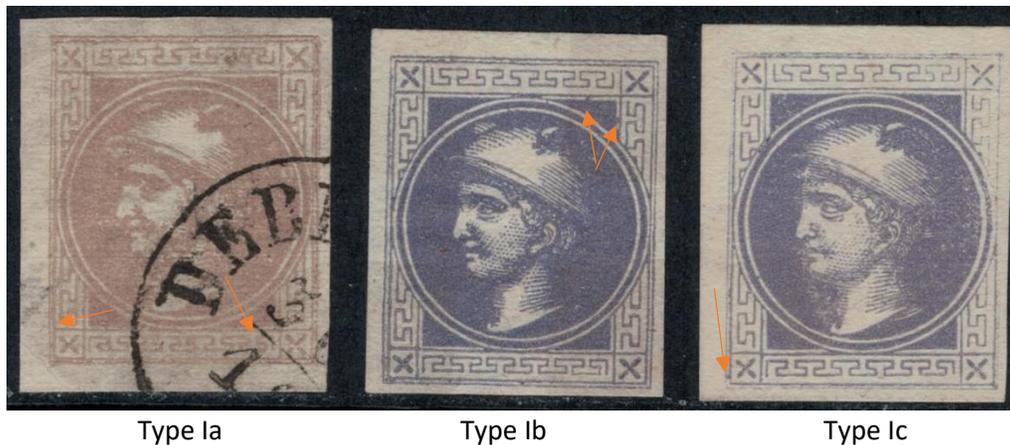
All of the above is fine as long as the stamp has a clear dated cancel on it; if it does not, one has to turn to the attributes of the stamp itself to figure out whether it could have been used for mailing newspapers in both parts of the Empire or just the Austrian portion. There are three types of these 1867 design newspaper stamps: a Type I that was printed between 1867 and 1874; a Type II that was issued between 1874 and 1878; and a Type III that appeared at the end of 1876 and ran until the issue was no longer valid in September 1900.

The three types are illustrated at right. In the Type I stamps, the back of the helmet and neck are not distinct and blur into the background, and the shadow of the helmet on the forehead is not distinguishable from the hair. In Type II the back of the helmet and neck is clearly defined and the shadow of the helmet on the forehead is clearly distinguishable from the hair.



In both Types I and II, the outer white circle around the head is closed at the top. In Type III, the Greek design in the border labels of the stamp is larger, filling up more of the space between the frame lines, and the outer white circle is open at the top, merging with the white frame line above it.³ Given the production dates of the three types, if a stamp is either Type II or Type III, it was valid for mailing newspapers only in the Austrian portion of the Empire; only Type I stamps would have been valid for mailing newspapers in both parts of the Empire. The block of 9 above is composed of Type III stamps.

However, the 1867-74 production run for the Type I stamps includes both the period during which these stamps were valid for mailing newspapers throughout the Empire (1867-71) and a period when they were only valid in the Austrian part of the Empire (1871-74). Again, one must look at the attributes of the stamp itself to determine which of these two periods it falls into. There are eight sub-types to the Type I stamp and only the first three, Types Ia, Ib and Ic, were issued in the period where these stamps were valid for mailing newspapers in both the Kingdom of Hungary and the Austrian part of the Empire.⁴ These three sub-types are illustrated below.



In Type Ia, the first pattern of the Greek design on the bottom right is open at the left side and rounded underneath, and there is a break in the inner frame line on the lower left edge just above the corner decoration, which is not very visible on the example above because of the lighter brown ink used, but it's the best I can do. In Type Ib, there are two coloured spots in the white frame around the coloured

triangular area in the upper right. In Type Ic, there is a coloured spot between the inner and outer frame lines in the bottom right corner just opposite to the lower legs of the “X” in the corner decoration. If a Type I stamp exhibits any of these characteristics, it was valid for mailing newspapers in both parts of the Empire; if not, it was only valid in the Austrian portion.

For newspaper stamps issued by the Kingdom of Hungary, the Austrian portion of the Empire and Bosnia & Herzegovina between 1867 and 1918, the cancellation only tells you where the newspaper was delivered; the design of the stamp tells you where it was valid for mailing newspapers.

Notes:

1. Ferchenbauer, Volume II (Wien, 2008), p. 83.
2. G.S. Ryan, “The First Stamps of Hungary, 1867” *Stamp Collecting*, November 29, 1979.
3. There are two sub-types of Type III, both of which have the larger Greek design in the border labels: Type IIIa, where the outer white circle is closed at the top; and Type IIIz, where the outer white circle is closed at the top but the bottoms of the Greek design in the lower label are straight across, rather than slightly bowed as in Type III.
4. There is a detailed description of all of the sub-types of each of the three types of the 1867 design newspaper stamps in Volume II of Ferchenbauer and also in the Austria Netto Katalog: Briefmarken (Wien, 2008). If one is interested in an English language explanation of these various sub-types, you can take a look at my article in the Austrian Philatelic Society Journal [Vol. XIV, No. 4 – October 2014], “The 1867 Series Newspaper Stamps: A Collector’s Guide”.