Plating Guide for Plates I and II of the Fifth Design
HRADČANY 25 H

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by
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22/1994
Hradčany 25h V.
Rekonstrukce I. a II. TD.

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Společnosti sběratelů československých knihtiskových známek
by Dr. Mark Wilson

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Despite the large illustrations from the original accompanying the written descriptions for each stamp position, quite often the flaws mentioned are not readily apparent in them or cannot be found at all. The Translator

Cover Illustration – Edge block of four, se-tenant lower left inner frame types.
Previously Published Information

The 25h denomination was meant to be the first stamp published in the Fifth Design, but as a result of needs brought out by the changes in the postal rates on April 15, 1919, its release was preceded by the 15h denomination for domestic letters and later the 75h for registered mail. As a consequence, the 25h denomination was delayed and not released until June 9, 1919.

Printing blocks using the 25h denomination were employed in the construction of the auxiliary setup used to produce every stamp in the Fifth Design. This was done by covering up the printed 25h denomination in the value tablet by pasting over it with a new value. As a result, for all the other values, the Numeral Types (Position and Trimmed) occur, but of course none of these Numeral Types are present in the 25h denomination. However, corrections to the fourth spiral and the right dove’s tail were carried out.

Repairs to the fourth spiral were only done on the first two plates, and even then not to every stamp position. Seven stamp positions were left unrepaired. Repairs on the right dove’s tail were performed only on Plates II and III.

It is interesting to note that some 25h stamp positions show an odd correction to the incomplete (open) fourth spiral. That correction was carried out such that the vertical line never touched the slanted connecting line between the two spirals. It came close to closing the Type I spiral. It is possible to distinguish by comparing the size of the opening with stamps that have actual Type I fourth spirals. This is only necessary for identifying Type I stamps from Plates I or II to establish their position.

The printing plates were derived from an auxiliary setup which was photographed on a glass negative, which was then subsequently used for etching in manufacturing all four plates of the 25h denomination. This is indicated not only by secondary flaws, but by the irregular distances between several stamp positions which are in the same place on every plate.

Printing was always done with four plates held by nails to a wooden substructure. This grouping of plates was called a printing form. This was done to maximize the capacity of the printing press. After printing, the printed sheets were cut up into panes.

Two printing forms were known to be used for the 25h stamps. On one, the 25h plates were combined with two 15h plates, and the second known printing form held only 25h plates.

After printing about 40,000 sheets, the printing form was taken apart and the plates were cleaned. Afterwards, any plates still needed were put into a new printing form, possibly in another combination.

Individual plates may be identified by anomalies in the control numbers and stamps.
Plate I – The control number 2.50 is normal, the 91st stamp has an underlined CHA in MUCHA and a Type II fourth spiral.
Plate II – There is a slice from the decimal point in control number 2.50, the 91st stamp has an underlined CHA in MUCHA, a Type II fourth spiral, and a large slice in the left frame.
The entire issue of 97,220,000 stamps were printed from all four plates. For the issue, 25h stamps were produced in the following distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>Plates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperforate</td>
<td>48,120,000</td>
<td>(Plates I-IV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perforated:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comb 13 3/4 x 13 ½ – A</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
<td>(Plates I-IV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 3/4 – B</td>
<td>43,300,000</td>
<td>(Plates I-II)²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 11 ½ – D</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>(Plates I-II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 ½ x 10 3/4 – E</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td>(Plates I-II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 3/4 x 11 ½ – F</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>(Plates I-II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 3/4 x 10 3/4 – H</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>(Plates I-II)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹The authors indicate that only Plate I is represented – Tr.
Philatelic Information

A. Types
   1) Spiral
      Type I – Open (uncorrected) fourth spiral
         Plate I – Positions 3, 12, 13
         Plate II– Positions 10, 27, 31, 59
      Type II– Closed (corrected) fourth spiral
         Every other position on both plates.

B. Repairs before printing
   Right dove’s tail:
      Top and right open (++) Plate III
      Top open (+ –) Plate II
      Plate flaw (– –) Plates I and IV

C. Repairs after printing
   None reported.

D. Colors
   purple, dark purple, black purple.

E. Paper
   Porous gray or smooth white, thickness from 0.03 to 0.1 mm.

F. Plate Flaws (From the Monographs)
   1) Secondary (on all plates) – 13, 61, 77, 91.
   2) Tertiary – Plate I: 1, 41, 72, 73, 86, 87, 92.
      Plate II: 3, 16, 24, 30, 36, 40, 50, 67, 69, 72, 74, 76, 80, 83, 86, 95, 99.

G. Printing Faults:
   1) In the design – prints on the gummed side
   2) Transfers – the entire machine output and partial panes
   3) Smears (Fogs or Veils) – in the lower left corner 20/I.
   4) Wandering rings – In various places.
   5) Colors – too little or too much.
   7) Perforations – Line: double, private, horizontally disbursed
      Comb: split, restricted, extended

H. Forgeries
   Changing perforation gauge:
      D – Line 11 ½
      H – Line 13 3/4 x 10 3/4
New Findings

In addition to correcting the fourth spiral in Fifth Design stamps, corrections were also directed at the lower part of the left innermost white frame line. Just like the fourth spiral, this frame line was not corrected for every position on all plates. Instances of this correction for individual positions and by printing plate is described in Filatelii 1983, page 424, and in this series of studies, Number 5/88, which is sold by the Typographic Stamp Collectors Society. The occurrence of variations in the lower left innermost white frame line are illustrated and described for individual positions in that study.

Other notable secondary flaws:

- 18 – White spot on the top of the V’s right leg.
- 21 – Colored line from the bottom of the V crosses the oval.
- 25 – White spot in the tenth spiral.
- 32 – White spot in the right dove’s tail.
- 70 – Bump on the left side of the Š under the hacek.
- 99 – White spot in the right dove’s tail.

Determining Stamp Positions

It is possible to distinguish stamps from Plates I and II by their open fourth spiral – Type II – except for positions where the fourth spiral was not corrected. Further, line perforations were only used on stamps from Plates I and II. The right dove’s tail cannot be used to distinguish stamps from Plates I and II as a consequence of the fact that evidently not all corrections were made on Plate II.

For several stamp positions, we were unable to find distinctive flaws, thus there was a need to identify some positions by the rays in the sky. These are distinctive for individual stamp positions and are accurately depicted in the drawing (detail) part. The form and occurrence of rays to the left of the third tower’s left turret may also be used.

In closing, we want to say that all of the text and the descriptions with each stamp position were done by F. Hamr, and all of the sketches and drawings are the work of the artist Z. Ryvola. Both wish to all those who drudge at reconstructing printing plates, much success and happiness, and hope that they will welcome this addition to these Studies.

F. Hamr, Z. Ryvola

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2Expect to see a translation in Volume 6 of Series I published by Knihtisk.
Fifth Design Schema