

The "Costumes" Definitive Issue of 1934-1936

From the resignation of Mr. Seipel in April 1929 up to the end of the chancellorship of Dr Karl Buresch in May 1932 there were six changes in the holder of the office of Chancellor. Each change was the occasion of a major political crisis due mainly to the world financial crisis and to the refusal of the Social Democratic Party to form a real coalition government.

On 20th May 1932 Dr Engelbert Dollfuss became Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs with a parliamentary majority of one. In order to govern effectively, in the autumn of 1932 he used a War Emergency power to deal with economic problems without reference to Parliament. A special session of Parliament in March 1933 was convened to discuss the measures necessary to deal with the then-current railway strike. It ended in disorder when the President (i.e. Speaker) Dr Renner, and the two Vice-Presidents (Dr Ramek and Dr Staffner) of the Assembly resigned.

Dr Dollfuss then assumed responsibility for the work of the government although within a few months he was faced with the advent of Adolf Hitler as Dictator of Germany and the spread of Nazi ideas in Austria. A national movement was needed to match this, and Dollfuss founded his "Fatherland Front" in May 1933 with a direct appeal to Austrian patriotism. To counterbalance the Nazi influence, Dollfuss strengthened his ties with the Italy of Mussolini, suspended the Assembly, dissolved the Nazi party and suppressed the Social Democrat Party by the armed force of both the Army and the Heimwehr in February 1934. He was engaged upon the creation of an Austrian corporate state when, on 25th July 1934, a number of young Austrian Nazis attacked the Ballhaus where a cabinet meeting was being held. The Chancellor was trying to leave the building when one of the Nazis, Otto Planetta, fired two shots at him; Dollfuss died at 3.30 pm that day. At the same time the Vienna broadcasting station was occupied by Nazis but the whole revolt was suppressed by the Austrian armed forces. Mussolini massed his troops on the Brenner Pass and Hitler did not invade.

Dr Kurt von Schuschnigg, the Minister of Education and Justice, was appointed as acting head of the government; being officially installed as Chancellor on 26th July 1934. Special commemorative stamps portraying Dollfuss were issued later in 1934 and also on the anniversary of his death.

The "Costumes Series", which started to appear on 15th August 1934, was probably planned by the government of Dollfuss to symbolise the unity of the country since it displayed the costumes traditionally worn by the peasants, workers and soldiers in the various federal provinces of Austria. The design was entrusted to Georg Jung who had been born in Salzburg in 1899 and who specialised in production of portraits and figures. Some of his preparatory designs are illustrated in "100 Jahre Österreichische Briefmarke".

ANK	Face	Colour	Issued	Type*	Subject
567	1g	deep violet		a	Peasants: Burgenland
568	3g	vermilion		a	
569	4g	olive green		a	Peasants: Carinthia
570	5g	magenta		a	
571	6g	blue		a	Peasants: Lower Austria
572	8g	yellow-green		a	
573	12g	brown		a	Peasants: Upper Austria
574	20g	yellowish brown		a	
575	24g	blue-green		a	Peasants: Salzburg
576	25g	violet		a	
577	30g	claret		a	Peasants: Styria
578	35g	carmine		a	
			15 Aug 1934		

579	40g	slate grey	b	Peasants: Tirol	
580	45g	chestnut	b		
581	60g	ultramarine	b	Peasants: Vorarlberg	
582	64g	brown	b		
583	1S	purple	b	Artisan: Vienna	
584	2S	grey-green	b	Officer and 2 soldiers, Kaiserschützen Regiment, Tirol	
585	2S	emerald	3 April 1935	b	
586	3S	orange	28 June 1936	c	Harvesters
587	5S	brown-black	2 June 1936	c	Builders

* Type: (a) 16.5mm x 21.5mm. Typographed. Comb p.12; (b) 21.5mm x 26.0mm. Typographed. Comb p.12½; (c) 30.0mm x 31.0mm. Recess printed. Line p.12½

There are several listed plate faults; also there exist prints on the gum side of the paper (or gum on the print side, depending on which was done first!); and a range of entirely or partly imperforate items; and colour trials of the 3S & 5S.

(a) 16.5mm x 21.5mm. Typographed. Comb perf 12

	Peasants of the Burgenland. 1g deep violet, 3g vermillion. The man is a horse herd who guards the herds of horses on the plains; some of his charges and the Zicksee windmill being visible in the background. The woman is carrying a basket of fruit to market and is wearing the typical short sleeved blouse and laced corsage with coloured kerchief. Forchtenstein castle is in the background	
	Peasants of Carinthia. 4g olive green, 5g magenta. The man from Heiligenblut wears a large-brimmed hat with a light-coloured cord. He carries a staff, decorated with flowers and tassels, as a friend of both families when he goes round the Lesachtal villages to invite guests to a wedding. The woman wears a rather flat crownless black hat. Both wear knitted white stockings with bright garters and laced boots. The "Maria Worth" church is visible on the 5g	
	Peasants of Lower Austria. 6g blue, 8g yellow-green. The man from the Wachau (Aggstein) is a vine-grower or vine-dresser and the apparatus in his left hand is a glass Weinheber which is a combination of a bottle with a tube used for taking samples of wine out of the barrel. The woman's strange stiffly-pleated head dress is worthy of note as well as her beautifully embroidered dress. She carries her prayer book in her hand and is wearing her national costume for church going. Rosenburg im Kamptal may be seen in the background of the 8g stamp.	
	Originally the 6g stamp was issued with the man's ears reversed (left); it had to be reissued on 15th July 1935 with them corrected (right)!	
	Peasants of Upper Austria. 12g brown, 20g yellowish brown. The man from the Traun Kreis wears the distinctive broad hat and big cloak of the district; behind him is Orth castle on the Traunsee. The woman is wearing the famous "Goldhaube", a head dress woven entirely of gold thread and heavily embossed all over. Behind her is Mondsee with the Schafberg.	
	Peasants of Salzburg. 24g blue-green, 25g violet. The wood-cutter	



wears a short jacket, tight breeches, strong boots and a round, red, flowerpot-shaped hat. The woman's head-gear is a quaint flat hat. She is carrying a very large umbrella of a type much favoured (and needed!) in the Pinzgau. Behind the wood-cutter may be seen the Zellersee and the Kitzsteinhorn whilst behind the woman is shown Untersberg and Hohensalzburg.



Peasants of Styria. 30g claret. 35g carmine. The man is a chamois hunter and wears a green trimmed jacket and deerskin or chamois shorts. A Chamois "beard" is held on his hat by a huntsman's-heirloom silver pin; behind him is Pürgg with the Grimming. The woman, from Alt-Aussee, wears a simply-embroidered dress and an extremely large hat over a head cloth of fine linen dyed with vegetable dyes. Behind her is Graz with its clock tower.



(b) 21.5mm x 26.0mm. Typographed. Comb perf 12½



Peasants from Tyrol. 40g slate grey, 45g chestnut. On the 40g is shown the famous Zillerthal hat with two gold tassels hanging in front of a crown and brim of black felt. The cross-lacing on the coat and the lace on the sleeves are unusual. Behind the couple is the fortress of Kufstein. The couple on the 45g are from the Kalsertal; behind them is Lermoos and the Wetterstein mountain. There the women still retain their peaked hats made of black felt and with a stiff brim. The men wear a broad-brimmed felt hat.



Peasants from the Vorarlberg. 60g ultramarine, 64g brown. The 60g shows a bridal pair on their wedding day with the Körbersee in the background. The blouse sleeves of the woman are a distinguishing feature of the district. They are very full and are richly embroidered with patterns of stags, birds, flowers and vases. Her hat is a kind of crown of stiffened lace. The man wears a cravat and top hat. In the more mountainous parts, such as Montafon, the furry head-dresses shown on the 64g are worn. The two peasant women are praying at a wayside shrine on the mountain. A portion of the crucifix is plainly visible to the left of the stamp whilst in the background may be seen the village of Innerberg.



An artisan and his family from Vienna. 1S purple. He wears his overalls with tools in his breast pocket. The spire of St. Stephen's Cathedral rises in the background



2S. An army officer and two soldiers of the Kaiserschützen Regiment of the Tyrol with a typical Tyrolean background. The officer carries a map and a pair of field glasses. Dollfuss served in this regiment of "Tyrol Rifles" throughout World War I. The original grey-green stamp (left) has a larger eagle with five feathers; only 87,600 were printed. The later emerald stamp (right) has the same design but has a smaller eagle with seven feathers. Some 'grey-green' stamps are chemically-changed 'emerald' stamps - count the feathers!



(c) 30.0mm x 31.0mm. Recess printed. Line perf 12½





The 3S orange (left) depicts harvesters to typify the agriculture upon which the prosperity of Austria depends. The 5S brown-black (right) depicts builders to typify the industry upon which the prosperity of Austria also depends.

