

1955

THE AUSTRIAN REPUBLIC ISSUE, 27 APRIL 1955.

On 27 April 1945, Dr Karl Renner, as Chancellor-Designate of the Second Austrian Republic, was received in Vienna by Marshal Tolbukhin who gave the Provisional Government *de facto* recognition. The Austrian Post issued a set of five stamps on 27 April 1955 to mark the 10th Anniversary of the restoration of Austrian independence. The set was designed by Alfred Chmielowski, engraved as described below and recess printed in an impression of 2 million sets; comb perforated 13^{3/4}:14^{1/4}. In all cases the inscriptions, frames and the Austrian coat-of-arms (with the dates 1945-1955) were the work of Maria Olinowetz.



70gr deep reddish purple (engraved by Georg Wimmer). This stamp depicts the Parliament Buildings in Vienna, built in 1874-83 in the Greek style by Theophilus von Hansen for the Imperial Diet. In front is the statue of Pallas Athene, erected in 1902 by Karl Kundmarin.



1S deep blue (engraved by Ferdinand Lorber). This stamp shows the new West Railway Station in Vienna rebuilt by 1950-52 to replace the 1858-60 structure which had been badly damaged by the war in 1945.



1S45gr scarlet (engraved by Rudolf Toth). The Austrian red-white-red federal flag on this stamp is actually formed by the word "FREIHEIT" (Freedom for Austria); after an idea by August Schmid.



1S50gr sepia (engraved by Georg Wimmer). This value depicts the Per Albin Hanson housing estate in Vienna to exemplify the building reconstruction which had occurred in this decade. This estate, in Bezirk 10 (Favoriten), is named after a Swedish Prime Minister.



2S40gr blue-green (engraved by Ferdinand Lorber). The final stamp of this set shows the Limberg dam of the Tauern Hydro-electric Power Generation Works at Kaprun in the province of Salzburg. This dam is 370 feet high and work started on it in 1948. Kaprun could generate 180 million kilowatt hours of electricity. There are two very rare plate errors with this value. On the 38th stamp of the sheet there is an especially large coloured spot to the right next to the shield and larger than the numbers of the year 1955. Also, on the 5th stamp of the sheet, due to movement of the comb perforations, the horizontal perforation does not really reach up to the right border of the stamp.

DEATH OF DR KARL DWORSCHAK.

It is perhaps apposite to note here the death on 3 February 1955 of Dr Karl Dworschak, the Director General of the Austrian Post and Telegraphic Administration. He was born on 24 October 1903 in Cracow and graduated Dr jur in 1927 at Vienna University. He immediately joined the Telegraphic Administration, going in 1934 to the Ministry of Commerce (Posts and Telegraphs) where he became a Ministerial Secretary in 1936. The Germans dismissed him but he was reinstated and became Director General in 1945. The whole reconstruction of the postal and telegraphic system took place between 1945 and 1955 under his guidance.

THE AUSTRIAN STATE TREATY STAMP, 15 MAY 1955.



Dr Karl Gruber, the Austrian Foreign Minister, has described in considerable detail the prolonged negotiations which had to be undertaken with the U.S.S.R. before the latter would agree to sign a State Treaty with the Austrian Republic. The Western Powers had early declared their desire to finalise this treaty, the first draft of which had been prepared in 1946 for the London Conference of 12 January 1947.

It was however the intransigence of the Russians which continually delayed the agreement upon this treaty and it was not until 15 May 1955 that the Austrian State Treaty was signed by the Foreign Ministers of Great Britain, France, the United States and Russia together with the Foreign Minister of Austria. This treaty finally marked the end of four-power occupation of the country and re-established Austria as a sovereign and independent state.

To celebrate this historic event, the 2S arms stamp of 21 November 1945 was reprinted in bluish slate and overprinted "STAATSVERTRAG 1955". It was issued on 15 May 1955 in an impression of 2 million stamps, line perforated 13½. A plate error is known on the 13th and 18th stamps of the sheet: a mark like a spider at the bottom left in the background as on the original stamp.

THE 4TH WORLD T.U.C. STAMP, 20 MAY 1955.

The Fourth Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (I.C.F.T.U.) was held in Vienna from 20 to 28 May 1955. This event was honoured with a special 1S deep ultramarine stamp which was issued on 20 May 1955. This stamp was designed by Professor Viktor Theodore Slama, engraved by Professor Ferdinand Lorber and recess printed by the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of 770,000 stamps, comb perforated 13½:14¼. The design itself depicts three workers, each of a different race, helping each other by joining hands to climb to the top of the globe. Above them is the German inscription "4. WELT CONGRESS INTERNATIONALER BUND FREIER GEWERKSCHAFTEN I.B.E.G. WIEN 20-28 MAI 1955". Below them the information is given in English, French and Spanish: "4th World Congress I.C.F.T.U.>"; "4eme Congress C.I.S.L."; and "4º Congreso Mundial C.I.O.S.L." to stress the truly international nature of the event. The I.C.F.T.U. in 1955 consisted of 108 trade unions in 77 countries representing 54.5 million members.



The Congress was opened in the Konzerthaus with speeches by Dr Korner, the Federal President, Herr Raab and Dr Schärf. This support by the Austrians was in marked contrast to their deliberate cold shouldering of the Communist controlled World Federation of Trade Unions at its Vienna congress in 1953. This had been boycotted by the Government and the Austrian T.U.C.

THE RETURNED P.O.W. RELIEF FUND STAMP, 29 JUNE 1955.



The fate of the Austrian prisoners-of-war in Russian hands was a cause of constant concern to the Austrian people. Even by 1948 it was estimated that 14,000 prisoners-of-war still remained in Russia and its satellites. However, these were released in small numbers over the next six years until, by the end of 1954, they had all returned home.

In celebration of this happy conclusion, and to raise money for the benefit of the returned prisoners-of-war and their relatives, the Austrian Post Office decided to issue a 1S+25gr red-brown stamp on 29 June 1955. This stamp was designed by Professor Josef Seger, engraved by George Wimmer and recess printed by the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of 760,000 stamps, comb perforated 13½:14¼.

The design chosen was a symbolic one of an industrial worker inviting a returned prisoner-of-war to take part in the industrial reconstruction of his country. In the background on the left may be discerned a building destroyed by the war, whilst the beam of light illuminates on the right an industrial plant now in full peacetime operation again. The stamp symbolises the destruction and subsequent reconstruction of Austria.

THE RE-OPENING OF THE BURGTHEATER AND STATE OPERA HOUSE, 25 JULY 1955.



To celebrate two important cultural events in Austria, the re-opening of the Vienna Burgtheater in October 1955 and the re-opening of the Vienna State Opera House on 5 November 1955, the Austrian Post Office issued on 25 July 1955 two stamps depicting these two buildings. The 1S50gr sepia and the 2S40gr deep blue stamps were both designed and engraved by Professor Hans Ranzoni the Younger and were recess



printed by the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of 2 million sets; comb perforated 13½:14¼.

The original Burgtheater was founded inside the Hofburg by the Emperor Joseph II in 1776 and became famous for its excellent acting during the 19th century. The present building, on the side of the Ring, was constructed in an elaborate late-Renaissance style by Semper and Hasenauer between 1880 and 1886. The lofty central building contains the foyer, the auditorium and the stage. The two staircases are in the wings. It opened on 14 October 1888 and was destroyed on 10 April 1945 when it was hit by bombs and the stage and auditorium set ablaze. It re-opened in October 1955 with a performance of Franz Grillparzer's play "König Ottokars Glück und Ende".

The original Staatsoper was founded by the Emperor Joseph I in 1708 and was moved in 1744 into the Hofburg. Then in 1810 it took over the Kärntnerthor Theater so it was appropriate that the new building should be erected on the Opern-Ring which continues the Kärntner-Ring on the West. It was constructed in the early French Renaissance style between 1861 and 1869 by E. van der Null and A. von Siccardsburg. These two architects are depicted, together with the Opera House, on the 40gr brown value of the 1934 Austrian Architects set. This Opera House was opened on 25 May 1869 and was destroyed by incendiary bombs on 12 March 1945. The interior was sumptuously decorated. Adjoining the foyer, which was embellished with operatic scenes by Schwind and busts of famous composers, was an open loggia towards the street. The auditorium seated 2263 people. The rebuilt Opera House was re-opened on 5 November 1955 with a performance of "Fidelio" by Ludwig von Beethoven.

There are three plate errors known with this 2S40g stamp:

- 1) Coloured stroke in the corner of the Opera House, "first visitor to the opera" and "crack in the wall" (18th stamp)
- 2) Major coloured spot between C and H in ÖSTERREICH (26th stamp)
- 3) The cross-stroke in the H of ÖSTERREICH missing and a double spot between C and H.

THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF U.N.O. STAMP, 24 OCTOBER 1955

The United Nations Organisation (U.N.O.) was constituted at the San Francisco Conference in 1945 as the successor of the League of Nations. The Conference opened on 25 April 1945, the Co-ordinating Committee completed the text of the Charter of the United Nations on 23 June and this was signed by the delegates on 26 June. On the same day the World Security Charter was signed by 50 nations. As an occupied country, Austria was not admitted as a member until its State Treaty had been finalised. It was thus not until 14 December 1955 that Austria became a member of U.N.O.

However, the Austrian State Printing Works decided to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the foundation of U.N.O. by issuing a 2S40gr deep green stamp displaying the globe circled by the flags of the member states of U.N.O. A blank space is left with a question mark, between the flags of Turkey and Cuba, to pose the question of the pending admission of Austria. The globe is viewed from the North Pole with Alaska oriented towards the centre and the mainland of Asia to the left.

This stamp was designed by Professor Viktor Theodor Slama, engraved by Georg Wimmer and recess printed by the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of 1.5 million stamps; comb perforated 13½:14¼. The stamp was issued on 24 October 1955.

THE STAMP DAY ISSUE, 3 DECEMBER 1955.



For the special stamp day issue of 3 December 1955, the Austrian Post Office reverted to a somewhat conventional design of a teenage boy looking at the stamps in his album. This was the 20th anniversary of the origination of the "Day of the Postage Stamp" in Austria and the raising of funds, with the surcharge, to help the development of Austrian organised philately, especially junior philately.

The 1S+25gr purple brown stamp was designed by Professor Josef Seger, engraved by Hans Ranzoni the Younger and recess printed by the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of 590,000 stamps; comb perforated 14½:13½. Five fly-speck plate errors are occasionally found. It may also be pointed out that the stamp album in the design is depicted with the reprehensible practice of having stamps mounted on opposite sheets of the album since both the left- and right-hand paper can be seen to carry stamps!