

PHILATELIC BULLETIN



Sarasota Philatelic Club

2025

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

President: Patricia Stilwell Walker
VP Operations: Liz Hisey
VP Programs: Mark Issacs
Treasurer: Dan Walker
Secretary: Jack Harwood — acting
Editor: Vincent Centonze
Directors: Vacant
Dick Murphy
Vacant

2025 BOOSTERS

Frank Blum	Bill DiPaolo
Mariano DeLise	Dawn Hamman
Barbara Noah	John Hamman
Phil Billard	Liz Hisey
Al Light	Bob Inderbitzen
Pat & Dan Walker	Jim Mazepa
Joe Reichenbach	Dick Murphy
Gisela Weinland	Vernon Mayer
Phil Leber	Yamil Kouri
Mark Isaacs	David Landry
Jack Seaman	Larry Smith
Roy Smith	

Stamp Quiz



No one guessed last month's Stamp Quiz. The stamp was Egypt Scott 94 (Nile Post D93), the 3 mil-

lieme value from the first King Fouad definitive issue of 1923-24. Fouad became Sultan of Egypt in 1917, He replaced the title of Sultan with King when Great Britain declared Egyptian independence in 1922. Stay tuned for next month's Stamp Quiz!



Austria Hyperinflation Postcard

By Vincent Centonze

One of the more interesting areas in the study of worldwide postal history is the inflation period following the end of World War I and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. From 1920 to early 1925, rampant inflation occurred in the aftermath of high government spending during wartime. When the war finally ended, coffers were depleted and economies suffered, especially for the nations on the losing side. When wartime price controls ended, demand for goods and services increased, but disruptions in production and supply chains could not keep in. Money was printed continuously, and hyperinflation resulted to the point where a family's life savings could not purchase a loaf of bread. Postal rates and stamp costs were not exempt. Rates increased exponentially, sometimes in periods as short as a few weeks. Postcards and covers from this period are known as "inflation postcards and cover" and deciphering the rates for such material can be a challenge. Figure 1 shows the front of one such inflation postcard sent from Austria to Hungary. The card is partially folded-over; there is nothing written under the part that is folded and lightly glued in the center to the other part.

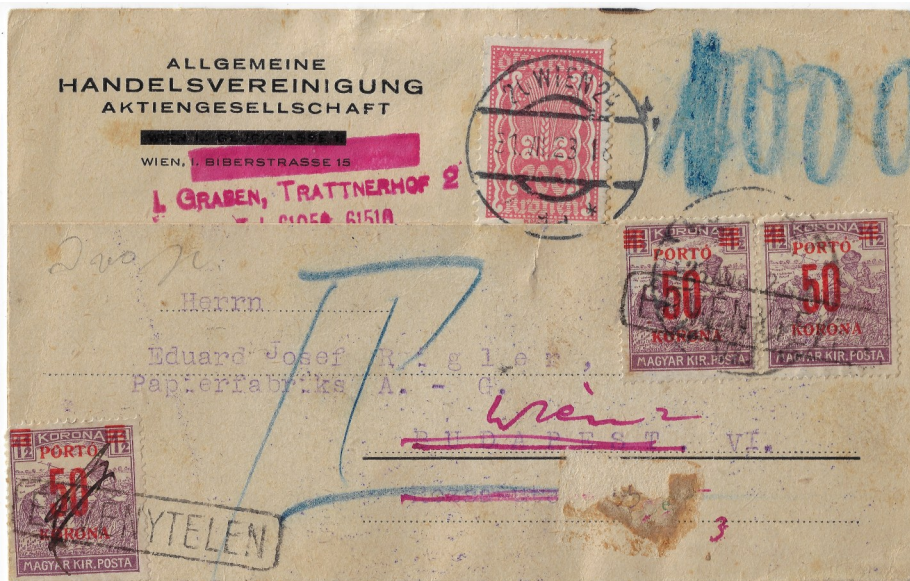
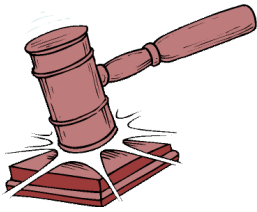


Figure 1. Front of a hyperinflation postcard from Austria to Hungary. The card is franked with 200 Kr and shortpaid by 520 Kr.

The postcard is franked with an Austria 200 Krone (Kr) (Austria Scott 273, Michel 383) "Symbol of Agriculture" definitive of 1922 and addressed to Budapest. The stamp is tied by a Vienna cancel dated 7/31/23. According to Michel, the domestic postcard rate within Austria from 11/1/22 to 8/1/23 was 200 Kr. The foreign rate was 900 Kr during the same period, with rates reduced to 720 Kr for certain neighboring countries, including Hungary.¹ Rates between Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Romania were reduced by an agreement known as the Portorozh Agreement which these countries signed on 11/23/21.² It is likely that the sender thought that rates to Hungary would be the same as the domestic rates within Austria. This was the case for Austrian mail to Germany, by a separate agreement; however, it was not the case for Austrian mail to Hungary. Therefore, the postcard was shortpaid by 520 Kr.

Continued on next page



The Prez Sez ...

Dear Club Members -

Important news! Starting in September we will be meeting in a new location—the Sarasota Library Fruitville. The address is 100 Apex Road, Sarasota FL 34240: and it is just east of the I-75 Fruitville Road interchange.

It is with many thanks to members Jim Mazepa and Phil Leber that this is happening. The excellent news is that there is no charge to use the room. We will need to make a few minor adjustments. Here are the two most important:

1. No money is allowed to change hands at a meeting; that is Library Policy —we will implement some type of IOU system as we know collectors like to buy and sell material. Details to be worked out.
2. We need to conclude our meeting a bit earlier than in the past to be able to vacate the room by 7:45 PM as the library building closes at 8PM. We will plan to gather at 6PM with the program (when there is one) starting at 6:30.

The September meeting will be an exploratory one where we check out our new space and have a show and tell in the time available—the October and November meetings will have a speaker (Jim Mazepa will begin soliciting a list). The December meeting will be the annual Christmas Party at Liz Hizey's house.

Pat

August 5th Meeting:

**Bob Evans at Fruitville—
6:30PM—Show and Tell**

Austria Hyperinflation Postcard (continued)

The postal clerk wrote "1000" (Kr) in blue crayon, which was not quite double the deficiency; doubling the 520 Kr should have been 1040 Kr. In Budapest, the postcard was also assessed as being shortpaid. For postage due purposes on international shortpaid mail, the amount due was predicated upon standard rates stipulated by the Universal Postal Union (U.P.U.) Congress held in Madrid in 1920, namely 50 gold *centimes* for letters and 30 gold *centimes* for postcards. This was despite the fact of the Portorozh Agreement which reduced only the *outgoing* rates to other signatory countries.³ In addition, the U.P.U. Congress stipulated that there was to be a minimum of 30 gold *centimes* postage due on covers and cards.

On 7/31/22, the day the cover was sent, 30 Kr was the equivalent of 1 gold *centime*. Therefore, when the clerk marked 1000 Kr due, that was the equivalent of 33⅓ gold *centimes*. However, just two days later on 8/2/23 when the card arrived in Budapest, the Austrian Krone had been devalued such that 40 Kr was now the new equivalent of 1 gold *centime*.⁴ This made 1000 Kr postage due the equivalent of 25 gold *centimes*. Because this was below the minimum postage due amount set by the U.P.U. Congress, 30 gold *centimes* was the amount assessed in Hungary. On 8/2/23, 5 Hungarian Korona (K) was the equivalent of 1 gold *centime*. Accordingly, 150 K was the equivalent of 30 gold *centimes*. Three 50 Hungarian Korona surcharged Wheat Harvester stamps (Hungary Scott J89; Michel 89) were applied; two are tied by a Budapest handstamp dated 8/2/23. Ironically, it was subsequently discovered that the addressee was in Vienna, because "Budapest" was crossed out in red and a manuscript "Wien" is written in for forwarding to Vienna. The three Hungary postage dues were then handstamped with a boxed "ERVENYTELEN" ("Invalid") marking, since the postage due was not collected in Hungary.

When the cover was received in Vienna, two Austrian 100 Kr postage due stamps and one Austrian 800 Kr postage due stamp (Austria Scott J118, J123; Michel 118, 123) were affixed on the back for a total of 1000 Austrian Krone. Figure 2 shows the back of the postcard. Curiously, the Austrian postage due stamps were cancelled on two different dates: the two 100 Kr stamps were cancelled on 8/6/23, but the 800 Kr stamp was cancelled on 8/7/23. Regardless, 1000 Austrian Krone postage due (including the penalty) was collected upon return. This poses an interesting situation. It can be argued that when the card returned to Vienna, the Austrian Krone had been devalued. As stated earlier, 1000 Austrian Krone at 40 Krone per 1 gold *centimes* would equal 25 gold *centimes*. To reflect the minimum tax of 30 gold *centimes* at the new exchange rate, 1200 Austrian Krone in postage due stamps should have been affixed. Perhaps because the initial prepayment had been from Austria, with the amount due already written in Austrian Krone, and now the card was back in Austria, the amount of 1000 Austrian Krone was honored rather than the conversion to gold *centimes*. We may never know that for sure; nevertheless, the postcard is an excellent example of the challenges posed by inflation postal history.

Continued on next page

Austria Hyperinflation Postcard (continued)

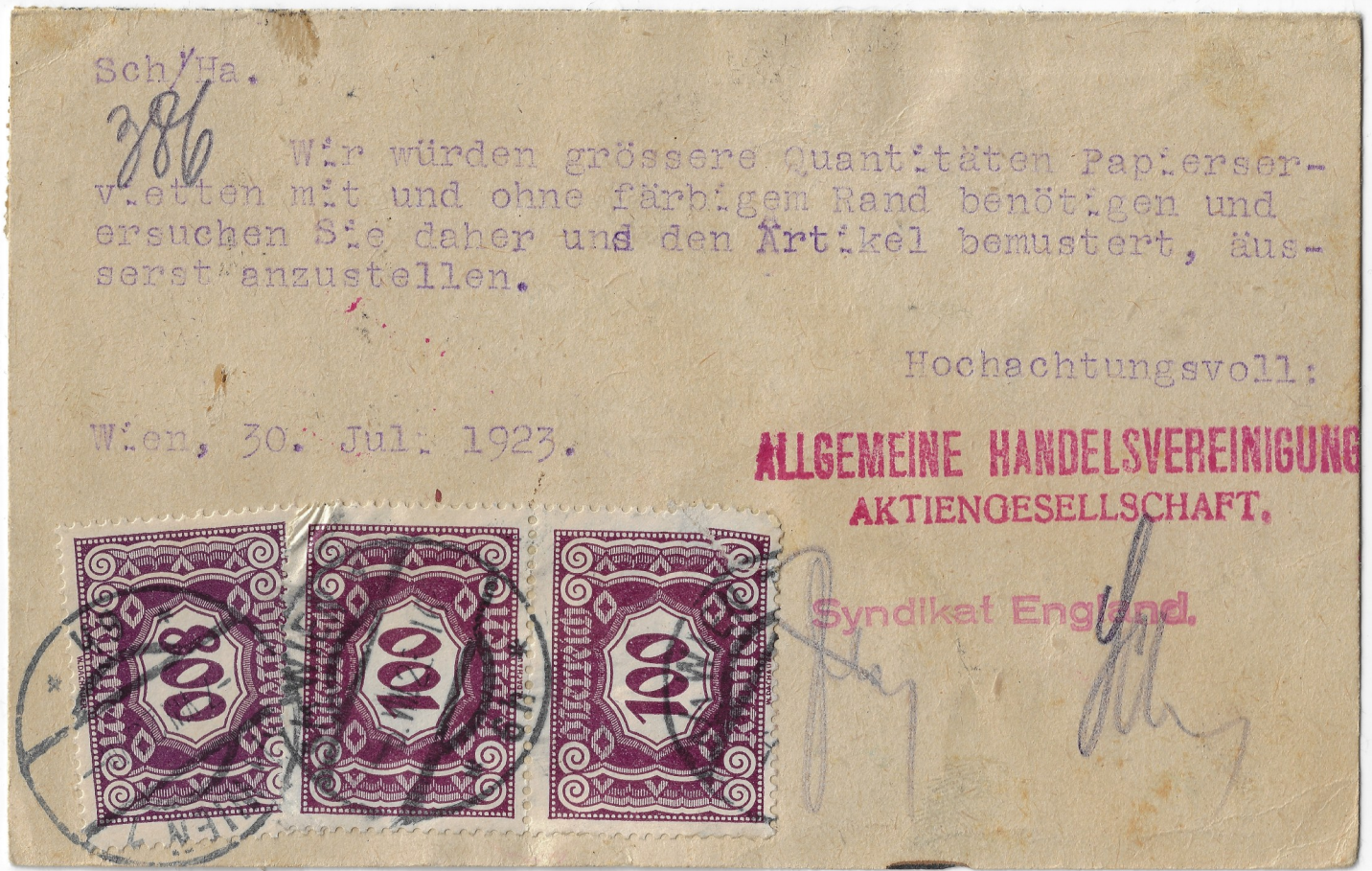


Figure 2. Back of the hyperinflation postcard from Austria to Hungary. By the time the card was forwarded back to Vienna, the Austrian Krone had been devalued; therefore, 1000 Kr was no longer the equivalent of 30 gold centimes. It may have needed an additional 200 Kr in postage due stamps, unless the postal clerk honored the earlier 1000 Kr notation without converting it to gold centimes.

References

1. Michel Österreich-Spezial-Katalog 2009, Munich, Germany: Schwaneberger Verlag GmbH, 2009, p.585.
2. Furfie, Michael, "The Portorozh Agreement for Reduced Postage Rates in Europe, 1922-1939, Part I: Postage Due Mail, 1919-1921," *Stamps of Hungary*, No. 230, London, UK: The Hungarian Philatelic Society of Great Britain, September 2022, pp.9.
3. Furfie, p.9.
4. Ibid, p.10.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!

Have anything on your mind? We would love to hear from you. We are also constantly in need of articles. Articles don't have to be very long; in fact, you don't have to write anything... just send us a scan of your favorite cover or stamps. We all have our philatelic favorites that we'd like to share. If you do, or if you would like to comment on articles in the *Philatelic Bulletin*, or perhaps you just want to suggest ideas on how to make our bulletin even better, contact the editor at: centonzevincent@gmail.com

Happy Collecting!

Sarasota Philatelic Club

PO Box 20625 Bradenton, FL 34204

www.sarasotastampclub.com



APS Chapter 353

For information: snse-exhibits@comcast.net