

Czechoslovakia's Business Printed Matter Stamps

Synopsis

Single Frame Team Competition

Chicago 2025

Treatment: This single frame exhibit tells the story of the business printed matter stamps from the period of the First Czechoslovak Republic (1918-1939) and defines what "business printed matter" was. The three values, 10, 20, and 30 haler stamps, were issued in November 1934 because the Czechoslovak Ministry of Posts & Telegraphs finally formally codified the system of paying for mass mailings by commercial enterprises after years of approving such uses on a case-by-case basis.

Importance: Business Printed Matter Stamps were special purpose stamps. The special purpose was that they paid for full-service postal delivery services at discounted rates for commercial mass mailings. These issues are little-known and little-studied. It is the goal of this exhibit to illustrate the impetus for this discounted service, define what business printed matter was, and to examine each stamp and their uses. Their existence and use helped commercial ventures advertise and market their products in the young Czechoslovak Republic. **What you will see:** Since over 88 million 10h stamps were produced, it is common to find covers franked with this value. Less common are covers with 20h stamps (about 6.2 million stamps produced) and 30h stamps (just under 1.7 million stamps produced). The exhibit will show postally used examples of all three issues, perforations, and plate numbers along with examples of multiple frankings (rarer still). These stamps had only one special type (the 30h value), which is covered. **What you will not see:** Because the stamps were overprinted on previously designed and produced newspaper stamps, no pre-production material truly exists for these issues.

Knowledge, Study, and Research:

Specific research and study efforts include:

- Research in the Czech Postal Museum Archives in Prague to translate the relevant postal bulletins and regulations during personal trips to the Czech Republic (three in past 2 years).
- Research in the American Philatelic Research Library (APRL).
- Writing an article on these issues for the journal of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately

Selected Bibliography: There is very little written about these issues, either in English or Czech, except what one can find in the POFIS catalogs. All source titles are translated from Czech into English (**In bold in the bibliography**). *The Czechoslovak Specialist* is available on the internet at www.csphilately.org under the "Publications tab – publications for free". (The recognized "bible" for information on these issues is the Monografie Československých Známek 4. Díl. but it is in the Czech language, which makes it difficult for non-speakers of the language).

Beneš, František, *Československo 1918-1939*, POFIS, Praha, 2023. (**Specialized Catalog of Czechoslovakia 1918-1939**)

Buckner, James, "The Business Printed Matter Stamps of 1934", *The Czechoslovak Specialist*, No. 2024-2, pp. 2-4.

Karásek, Ing. Jan et al, Monografie Československých Známek 4. Díl., Praha, 1986, pp. 251-259 (**Monograph of Czechoslovak Postage Stamps**)

CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S BUSINESS PRINTED MATTER STAMPS



Purpose and Scope: This one frame exhibit presents the Business Printed Matter Stamps issued by the First Czechoslovak Republic beginning in November 1934 and ending in December 1939, the rates and usage for sending such mail, and demonstrates what Business Printed Matter was. The exhibit includes the three stamps issued for the service, private perforations, plates, types, and uses.

Treatment: Headers at the top of each page will follow the exhibit plan. Important and key items will be enclosed in **Red Boxes**. **Bold Text** will be utilized to recognize important facts and features.

Background and Importance: Prior to November 1934, the Czechoslovak Ministry of Posts & Telegraphs had instituted a practice of issuing single-use permits (on a case-by-case basis) for the mailing of business printed matter at reduced rates which were typically the same as newspaper rates. For the sake of better control of the situation and to systematically modify its previous practice, on 15 November 1934 three special purpose stamps with the overprint "O.T." (for **Obchodní Tiskoviny**, or Business Printed Matter) were issued along with related rules and regulations. The stamps issued were previously issued newspaper stamps overprinted with a large "O.T." (**example to the right**) on three denominations: the 10 haler, 20 haler, and 30 haler. Stamps overprinted included those from existing, previously printed stock as well as those newly printed from existing plates and then overprinted specifically for this service. These stamps were not for sale to the public but only to duly registered commercial enterprises who had to meet certain requirements. These requirements included having to mail at least 100,000 pieces a year (after 1 January 1938 this was reduced to 50,000 pieces), ordering and buying at least 15,000 Kčs of these special purpose stamps in whole sheets of 100 initially (after 1 January 1938 this was reduced to 5,000 Kčs), and dispatching shipments from the same post office where the commercial enterprise had registered for this service and from which they had purchased their stamps. The validity and usage of these stamps (as with all Czechoslovak postage stamps) ended on 15 December 1939 as the Nazis completed their takeover of all facets of the First Czechoslovak Republic.

- Exhibit Plan
1. Title Page

2. What is Business Printed Matter?

3. The 10 h Issue

4. The 20 h Issue

5. The 30 h Issue

6. Multiple Frankings

7. Epilogue

Newspaper Stamp Essay on which Overprint was applied



Overprint

RATES FOR PRINTED BUSINESS MAILINGS:

From 15 November 1934 until 15 December 1939:
10h for each 50 grams
Maximum weight 300 grams (max postage 60 haler)
Companies (commercial enterprises) had to register with the Post Office and had to mail at least 100,000 pieces per year (lowered to 50,000 pieces in 1938)

In comparison, postal rates for regular postage for this period:
20h for first 20 grams, 30h for each additional 20 grams