

THE AUSTRIAN LANDSCAPES SET OF 1945.

The Commanders-in-Chief of the three Western Occupying Powers arrived in Vienna during August 1945 with their staffs. The first meeting of the Allied Council was held on 11th September and the first meeting of the Vienna Inter-Allied Command on 19th September. A provincial conference of all the Austrian parties was held on 24th to 26th September in Vienna as a result of which the Government was broadened to include representatives of the provinces. Two more such provincial conferences were held in October at which the laws and ordinances of the Provincial Government were accepted as valid for the whole country. Then on 20th October, Dr. Renner was informed that the Provincial Government was recognised by the Western Powers as the Austrian Government. Free elections were held throughout Austria on 25th November as a result of which the People's Party obtained 1,598,444 votes and 85 seats, the Socialists 1,428,441 votes and 76 seats whilst the Communists obtained 174,387 votes and 4 seats. A Coalition Government was thereupon formed with Leopold Figl as Chancellor. This government (eight members of the People's Party, six Socialists and one Communist) was approved by the Allied Council on 18th December. On 20th December Dr. Renner was elected as Federal President by 204 votes out of 205; one member abstaining.

To symbolise the unity of the country, and because the previous issues in 1945 were not acceptable to all the Allies, it was decided to produce a generally usable definitive issue which would employ the politically safe theme of Austrian Landscapes. The actual designs were chosen to represent all the Austrian Provinces as equally as possible and were taken from lantern slides provided by the "österreichische Lichtbildstelle". The artist, Alfred Chmielowski (1896-1967) used much artistic license when reproducing these views as ink and wash drawings which were then printed in rotogravure (groschen values) using a rather coarse screen of 70 lines/cm as the finer screen of 100 lines/cm had been destroyed during the fighting in Vienna.

The values were not all issued on the same day as a complete set, but appeared as follows:

24th November 1945	3g; 5g; 6g; 8g (yellow-brown); 10g; green); 12g; 30g (brown-red); 40g; 50g (grey-blue); 60g (violet-blue)
21st January 1946	4g; 16g
8th April 1946	8g (bright purple); 25g; 38g; 42g
23rd April 1946	24g; 30g (greyish-blue); 35g
20th May 1946	70g; 3 S (Type I) *
13th June 1946	2S (Type I); 5S (Type I)
24th June 1946	1S (Type I)
6th August 1946	5S (Type II)
9th August 1946	3S (Type II)
24th August 1946	1S (Type II)
27th August 1946	8g (olive); 15g; 20g; 45g; 80g; 90g
29th August 1946	2S (Type II)
30th January 1947	10g (purple); 50g (purple); 60g (slate-violet)

* Here Type I refers to the first printing of the schilling values which took place on the Line-Recess machine using flat plates whilst Type II refers to the second printing which, for reasons of economy, took place on the rotogravure press. A very viscous recess printing ink was used in the first method which gave a beautiful impression with the stamp design very clear, the relief, obvious and visible from the reverse. In Type II the process gave a softer, more toned design with no relief obvious on the reverse side. Also in Type I the fine screen is visible under a magnifying glass but in Type II no screen is so visible.

The reason for the issuing of these specific values may be seen from the following table which lists the postage rates in force in Austria from 1945 to 1948 (48). This table distinguishes between (I) Inland Mail; (II) Mail to Hungary and Czechoslovakia and (III) Mail to the rest of the world so that many postal rates exist.

Class of Mail	Before 1.1.47			From 1.1.47			From 1.9.47		
	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
Printed Matter									
20 grams	3g			3g			10g		
50 grams	4g			4g	8g	8g	15g	20g	20g
Post Cards									
Local	5g			8g			20g		
Long Distance	6g	30g	30g	8g	25g	35g	20g	45g	60g
Letters to 20 grams									
Local	8g			12g			40g		
Long Distance	12g	50g	50g	18g	45g	60g	40g	75g	1S
Registration	30g	1S	1S	30g	1S	1S	1S	1S40	1S40
Express Delivery	20g			20g	2S	2S	80g	2S	2S

Lewy has given a graphic description of the difficulties under which the State Printing Works laboured to produce this Landscape Issue. Not only had the building been bombed in November 1941 and two wings destroyed but also the Russian troops had occupied it in 1945 and during the fighting the 100 lines/cm fine screen for the photogravure process was lost. Also there was a lack of pigments for the inks and of xylol which is used to dissolve the gravure inks.

Each printing cylinder for the groschen values had four counter sheets laid on it; the counter sheet consisting of four sheets of a hundred stamps. For the schilling values a printing cylinder was used which took only one sheet of fifty stamps per revolution. As mentioned previously the first printings of the schilling stamps were done from a flat plate until August 1946. The gum was applied immediately after printing, the sheet was trimmed and finally comb perforated (small format groschen values 14:13½; medium format groschen values 14 and schilling values 13½:14½), five sheets at a time.

At first the quality of the paper used varied significantly from yellow at one end of the spectrum to grey or bluish at the other. However, after 1947, it was possible to obtain pure white paper so that the variations ceased. It had no watermark and was known as "Machine Finished Medium Sized Calendered Printing Quality". At first it varied very significantly in thickness from almost card thickness to paper so thin that it was almost transparent. As might also be expected, there are many shades amongst the colours of individual values but the printers were able to avoid printing quite distinct colour variations. However, perhaps the most interesting features of this Landscape Issue are the actual designs and these are described below.

3g light blue. Lermoos (3264 ft) in the north of Tirol. A small village in a broad valley on the railway line from Pfronten to Garmisch-Partenkirchen. A favourite tourist centre and starting point for mountaineering expeditions it is also renowned as a skiing district - indeed an error on the 55th stamp of the sheet is known as "Skier on the Slope". [issued 24.11.1945]

4g orange red. Erzberg (5033 ft), or iron-ore (siderite - ferrous carbonate, FeCO₃) mountain, near the town of Eisenerz in Styria. The mining since pre-historic times is carried out on terraces, as if it were slate, so that the mountain has a remarkable shape. [12.1.1946]

5g carmine. Leopoldsberg (1388 ft, 873 ft above the Danube) near Vienna. A castle, built by St. Leopold about 1100 AD on this easternmost spur of the Wiener Wald, was destroyed in 1529. On its site are an inn and a church of 1718 AD with two towers. These are now favourite spots for a Viennese outing. [24.11.1945]

6g grey-green. The former fortress of Hohen-Salzburg (1778 ft) is seen from the walls of the provincial capital of Salzburg. This fortress was founded in 1077 by Archbishop Gebhard but its present form was constructed by Archbishop Leonhard about 1500 AD. Below it may be seen the towers of Salzburg Cathedral which date from the 17th century. [24.11.1945]

8g yellow brown. The "Praterallee" is one of the Donau-Auen or well-loved walks along the banks of the Danube near Vienna. It was soon realised that this particular design did not convey anything of the true beauty of these walks and it was decided to replace it with the following stamp. [24.11.1945]

8g bright purple. This substituted view is of the Rathauspark, with a silhouette of the Vienna Rathaus seen through the gardens in front of it. The Rathaus was constructed to a design by Friedrich von Schmidt between 1872 and 1882 in the Gothic style with Renaissance details. [8.4.1946]

8g olive. Same design, different colours. [27.8.1946]

10g blue-green. Here is shown the castle of Hoch-Osterwitz (2234 ft) which was built as a fortress by Georg, Baron von Khevenhüller between 1570 and 1586, on an isolated rock of triassic limestone. [24.11.1945]

10g purple. Same basic design, different colours. When the design and colour were changed in 1947 to give the castle greater prominence, the fictitious lake in the foreground was removed. [30.1.1947]

12g sepia. This stamp pictures the Mondsee (1578 ft, 6¾ miles long and 1-1¼ miles wide) and the Schafberg Mountain (5200 ft) behind it. They are located in the Salzkammergut district of Upper Austria and the mountain has a hotel on its summit with a funicular railway leading up to it (from St Wolfgang). [24.11.1945]

15g grey-blue. Schloss Forchtenstein (1650 ft) is shown through snow laden trees on this stamp. The castle was constructed in 1340 on an abrupt adonite rock but was altered in the 17th century and given bastions. It is the property of the Princes Esterházy and is situated near the village of St. Martin in Burgenland. [27.8.1946]

16g chestnut. The last of the small stamps (20x25mm) in this Landscape Set depicts the entrance of the gigantic gorge of the Gesäuse in Styria: a narrow valley, of the River Enns, which is 10 miles long and is bordered by lofty limestone cliffs. The Enns here falls down 500 ft between the Gesäuse-Eingang to Hieflau. [12.1.1946]

20g ultramarine. This, the first of the medium size stamps (23½x29mm), shows a view of the Gebhardsberg (1969 ft), which stands to the east of Bregenz, with an old castle, a small church and a tavern looking across Lake Constance with a good view of the town. [27.8.1946]

24g yellow green. Here is depicted the Höldrichsmühle near Mödling in Lower Austria; celebrated for its connections with Franz Schubert. *“The master often made pilgrimages to Modling and its neighbourhood. Here was Schubert's chosen world, a world full of flowers, grapes, music and song Here Schubert's music was born”.* [23.4.1946]

25g blue grey. This stamp shows the village church of Vent in the Ötztal district of the Tirol. At a height of 6211 ft, Vent is the second highest village in Austria (the highest is Ober-Gurgl at 6322 ft) situated at the foot of the Talleitspitze (11,178 ft). The district is a centre for skiing in the winter. [8.4.1946]

30g brown red. The Neusiedler See in the Burgenland is featured on this stamp. This is the second largest inland lake (130 square miles in area) but it is only about 10 feet at its deepest. It is under a nature conservation order because of its varied population of water-fowl, and is surrounded by a belt of reeds. [24.11.1945]

30g greyish blue. Same design, different colours. [30.1.1947]

35g lake. Here is shown the Belvedere Palace in Vienna, the masterpiece of the architect Johann Lukas von Hildebrandt, who built it for Prince Eugen of Savoy between 1714 and 1723. It consists of two separate palaces on a gentle slope with a large terraced garden connecting the two buildings. Prince Eugen lived in the Lower Belvedere in the summer whilst the Upper Belvedere was used for receptions and balls. Bought by the Emperor in 1752, the two palaces are now museums. [23.4.1946]

38g olive. On this stamp is shown the Langbath Lakes in Upper Austria. A road leads up from Ebensee through the wooded Langbathtal to the Vorderer Langbathsee (2215 ft) and thence up to the Hinterer See (2385 ft) in a magnificently isolated position at the base of the Höllen-Gebirge. [8.4.1946]

40g blue-grey. A winter scene at Mariazell in Styria is pictured on this beautiful stamp. Mariazell, a market village at 2828 ft, is the most famous pilgrimage shrine in Austria and on this stamp may be seen the towers of Gnaden-Kirche. [24.11.1945]

42g brown-red. Here is shown another view of the Salzkammergut; that of the Traunsee with the Traunstein Mountain (5548 ft) in the background. [8.4.1946]

45g bright blue. The considerable remains of the 12th century castle of Hartenstein, near Krems in Lower Austria, are shown here superbly situated on a high rock (1640 ft) in a ravine on the Kleine Krems. Part of the castle was converted into a Hydropathic Hospital in 1892. [27.8.1946]

50g grey-blue. These stamps depict the Grosse Litzner peak in the Silvretta Group of mountains. The latter is a massif, composed mainly of gneiss, on the frontier between the Vorarlberg, the Tirol and the Swiss Grisons, and is a favourite district for climbers. [24.11.1945]

50g purple. Same design, different colours. [30.1.1947]

60g violet-blue. These stamps show the Semmering Mountain with its village colony, founded in 1886 on its fir-clad heights, as a week-end refuge of the Viennese. The slope depicted is the Polleroswand, pierced by the famous Semmering railway tunnel (3215 ft) completed in 1854 with a length of 1560 yards. The audaciously built railway viaduct may also be discerned on this slope. [24.11.1945]

60g slate-blue. Same design, different colours. [30.1.1947]

70g Prussian blue. On this stamp is depicted the well-known spa of Bad-Gastein in Styria, split in two by the roaring torrent of the Gasteiner Ache. It is also noted for its warm springs and is famous as the place of the Austria - Prussia treaty of 1865 which settled the Schleswig-Holstein question. [20.5.1946]

80g brown. This shows the "Wilder Kaiser", a peak of the Kaiser-Gebirge range of mountains in the Tirol. This rugged rocky bastion is one of the most popular rock climbing centres in the Alps. [27.8.1946]

90g turquoise. The last of the groschen values shows a wayside crucifix near Tragöss Oberort in Styria. This is a summer resort beautifully situated in a basin-shaped valley near Bruck which was made famous by Peter Rosegger's novel "Der Gottsucher". [27.8.1946]

1S brown. The first of the schilling values shows the little mediaeval town of Durnstein in Lower Austria, complete with its walls and fortifications. Here is the castle where Richard I of England was imprisoned in 1193 by Duke Leopold VI before being delivered up to the Emperor Henry VI. [13.6.1946]

2S blue-grey. Here is depicted the tiny alpine resort of St. Christof, situated on the Arlberg Pass (5912 ft), which has grown up around the old hospice of St. Christopher. It is now a centre for skiing. [13.6.1946]

3S green. The penultimate stamp of the set shows the famous village of Heiligenblut (4226 ft) in Carinthia; at the foot of the great Grossglockner Mountain. The tower of the church (1483) may be seen in which is kept the phial of the Holy Blood brought from Constantinople by Bl. Briccius. [20.5.1946]

5S brown-lake. The set concludes with a view of the gardens of the Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna looking from the lantern on the terrace steps towards the Gloriette built by J.F. von Hohenburg in 1775. [13.6.1946]

THE LANDSCAPE SERIES OF 1945-1947.



Lermoos,
Tirol



Erzberg,
Steiermark



Leopoldsberg,
Wien



Hohensalzburg,
Salzburg



Prater,
Wien



Town Hall Park,
Wien



Town Hall Park,
Wien



Hochosterwitz,
Kärnten



Hochosterwitz,
Kärnten



Schafberg,
Salzkammergut



Forchtenstein,
Burgenland



Gesäuse,
Steiermark



Gebhartsberg,
Vorarlberg



Höldrichsmühle,
Niederösterreich



Vent, Öztal,
Tirol



Neusiedlersee,
Burgenland

THE LANDSCAPE SERIES OF 1945-1947.



Neusiedlersee,
Burgenland



Belvedere,
Wien



Langbathsee,
Oberösterreich



Mariazell,
Steiermark



Trauenstein,
Salzkammergut



Burg Hartenstein,
Niederösterreich



Silvretta,
Vorarlberg



Silvretta,
Vorarlberg



Semmering,
Niederösterreich -
Steiermark



Semmering,
Niederösterreich -
Steiermark



Badgastein,
Steiermark



Wilder Kaiser,
Tirol



Tagloss,
Steiermark



Dürnstein,
Niederöst



St Christof,
Tirol



Heiligenblut,
Kärnten



Schönbrunn,
Wien