

THE MAGICAL KING'S HEAD ON STAMPS

This is a traditional collection for special subject. It illustrates a set of magically designed stamps of Serbia in 1904. However, just three months after its issue, the stamps were withdrawn from sale for political reasons.

During the First Serbian Uprising, Serbians were led by Karadorde Petrovic (3 November 1768 - 24 July 1817), Serbia was independent country.

Aleksandar Obrenovic (14 August 1876 to 11 June 1903) was king of Serbia from 1889 to 1903. Aleksandar was killed in 1903 at the age of 27.

Peter I Karadordevic (29 June 1844 to 16 August 1921), was King of Serbia from 1903 to 1918, and then King of Yugoslavia which comprised of Serbia. He is the grandson of Karageorge.

In order to celebrate ascension of Peter I as King of Serbia, as well as to commemorate the achievements of his grandfather Karageorge, Serbian post office decided to issue a set of commemorative stamps. The designs of stamps were opened to public competition. The winning design was by D. Jovanovic's. The engraver was done by E. Moushon.

After the stamps were issued on 8th September 1904, it was then discovered that the designs of the five stamps from 5 para to 50 para contained magically a third hidden head. This head is that of King Aleksandar, who was assassinated and whose throne was usurped by Peter I. Hence, the design of the stamp to commemorate Peter I and Karageorge is in fact a protest against Peter I. Thus just three months after its issue, this set of commemorative stamps was withdrawn from sale. But this is the only one magical stamp design in history of the world stamp.

1. *The Magical Stamp Design*

On page 2 is the die proof for basic design, with black colour on white cardboard paper. On page 3 is die proof of complete set of print in black on thin greyish un-gummed paper. There are the trial prints on non-gummed paper with different colours for die proof on page 4. Design background as shown king of Aleksandar whose portrait stamp was prepared to issue but withdraw then instead of with coated of arm overprint on his face. New king of Peter I whose portrait stamp issued later is on page 5.

2. *Stamp Issue*

The magical stamps are printed as 11 degree perforation and all on thick yellow gummed thin paper. The face value are 5 para, yellow green. 10 para, rose red, 15 para, violet, 25 para, blue, 50 para, grey brown, the full set of 8 shown on page 6 and research for forgeries on page 7.

3. *Stamp Printed With Varieties*

Mis-perforations and comparing with gutter print are shown on page 8.

4. *The Post History*

Example of 10 para stamps were used on postcards and covers for international mails on page 9 to 11. Example of 5 para stamp combined with prepaid postcards were used are illustrated on page 11 to 13. Example of 5 para stamp was used in a domestic mail on page 13. Example of combined 5 and 10 para stamps were used for an international registered mail on page 14. Example of 15 para stamp was used for a overweight cover on page 15. Example of 25 para stamp was used on cover for international mail on page 16.

Bibliography:

<<Stanley Gibbons Stamp catalogue>>; <<Scott Stamp Catalogue>>; <<Europe Stamp Catalogue>>. <<Focus on Forgeries - by Varro E. Tyler>>

Website:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Serbia#Independent_Serbia_1878-1918

THE MAGICAL STAMP DESIGN

1904 Imperforate plate, accepted PRINT PROOF in black on white shiny cardboard for 10 para denomination. This die proof was printed by Engraver E. Moushon after D. Jovanovic's idea and design.



1904 print proof in black on white shiny cardboard for 10 para denomination.

THE MAGICAL STAMP DESIGN

1904 complete set imperforated in black print on thin greyish ungummed paper. This die proof was engraved by Engraver E. Moushon after D. Jovanovic's idea and design.



THE MAGICAL STAMP DESIGN

1904 complete set in horizontal and vertical imperforated pairs printed on not gummed paper as specimen.



THE MAGICAL STAMP DESIGN

The magical stamp design background



1903 postcard shows Aleksandar (hidden head) with his wife was a king of Serbia as shown above.



1904 postcard shows Peter I became a king of Serbia as shown below.



25 para stamp with coated of arm overprint error shifted.



The portrait of Aleksandar on stamp designed in 1903 was overprinted coated of arm after he was murdered.

The portrait of Peter I on stamp designed in 1905



Успомена на крунисање Њ. В. Краља Петра I. 8. IX. 1904.
Les Fêtes du couronnement du roi Pierre I. 21. Sept. 1904.

STAMP ISSUE

1904 issued complete set with 11 degree perforation and all gummed. The face value as

5 para, yellow green. 10 para, rose red, 15 para, violet, 25 para, blue, 50 para, grey brown.

1 dinar, bister, 3 dinar, blue green, 5 dinar, violet. (all values in dinar design as not for magical stamp)



How can you find third hidden head to follow this way



➡
Rotate 180°



↓ Put a line to cross two heads



← Find a third head



STAMP ISSUE

The Genuine set of stamps were stuck on an envelope with all cancels for collection on 1904 September 20.



Two forgers imitated the stamps of this Death Mask issue, so called because the two portraits on the paras denominations of the issue when viewed upside down are said to show the death of King Alexander Obrenovich. Lucian Smeets and his Belgian Gang flooded the philatelic market with their counterfeits of this issue in the period just prior to World War I. Francois Fournier made forgeries of the 5-para to 50-para values only, but his creations are much less common than those of Smeets. Genuine: The fourth and fifth Cyrillic letter in the word in the upper right-hand corner of the stamp are close together but do not overlap. There is no break in the outline of the bridge of King Peter's nose. My collection and research also shows both forgeries were printed as different colours and with white thin gum on the back. The genuine stamps are all with yellow thick gum on the back.



Forgery type I:
The photolithographic Smeets forgeries have a somewhat blurred or smudgy appearance in comparison with the genuine typographed stamps. In the upper right-hand corner of the stamps, the fourth and fifth letters in the Cyrillic word resemble a backward "N" and a "J". The end of the hook of the "J" appears to slightly overlap the vertical stroke on the backward "N" that precedes it.



Forgery type II:
The Fournier forgeries show a distinct break in the outline of the bridge of the nose of the profile of King Peter I, who is on right.

STAMPS PRINTED WITH VARIETIES

1904 issued 10 para, rose red and 15 para, violet are the same as other common stamps appearing perforation shifted as shown below.



variety



10 para stamp with perforation error shifted to right.



variety



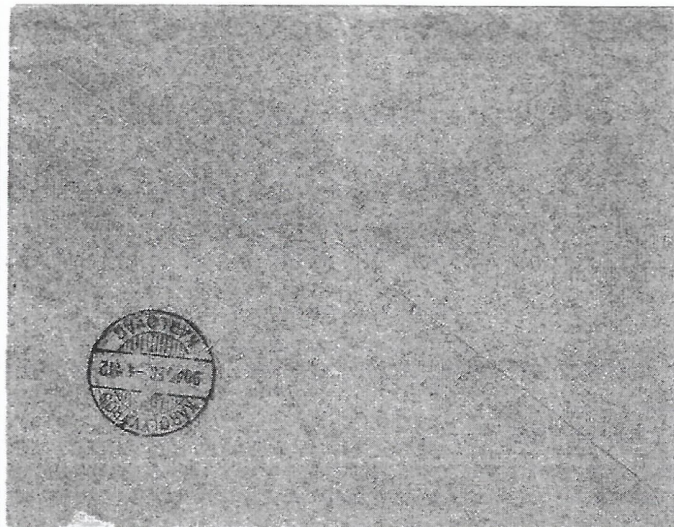
15 para stamp with perforation error shifted at top.

50 para stamps with gutter between



THE POST HISTORY

This 10p single stamp franking on letter with Jewish trader Schumacher heading sent from Velika Plana on 19 November 1904 to Karlovac, Croatia on 4 December 1904.



THE POST HISTORY

This postcard with a 10 para magical stamp cancels was sent from Belgrade Serbia on 4 November 1904 to St. Petersburg, Russia as an international post rate in history. The date arrived was 26 October 1904 on Russian date as 8 November 1904.

The back side shows the Peter I became a king of Serbia paraded on the street.



THE POST HISTORY

This postcard with a 10 para magical stamp was sent from Leskovac Serbia on 2 November 1904 to Prag, Czech Republic on 17 November 1904 as a international post rate in history.



This postcard with a 5 para magical stamp plus 5 para prepaid was sent from Belgrade, Serbia on 1 November 1904 to Bern, Switzerland on 3 November 1904 as a international post rate in history.



THE POST HISTORY

This postcard with a 5 para magical stamp plus 5 para prepaid was sent from Belgrade, Serbia on 29 September 1904 to Reutlingen, Wurttemberg, German on 1 October 1904 as a international post rate in history.



This postcard with a 5 para magical stamp was sent from Belgrade Serbia on 21 November 1904 to Nurnberg, Gemany on 23 November 1904 as a mixed rate used for international post rate in history.



THE POST HISTORY

This postcard with a 5 para magical stamp was sent from Bagnasoko Serbia on 23 December 1904 to Belgrade Serbia on 24 December 1904 as a national post rate in history.



This postcard with a 5 para magical stamp plus 5 para prepaid was sent from Kragujevac, Serbia on 29 November 1904 to Vienna, Austria on 3 December 1904 as a international post rate in history.



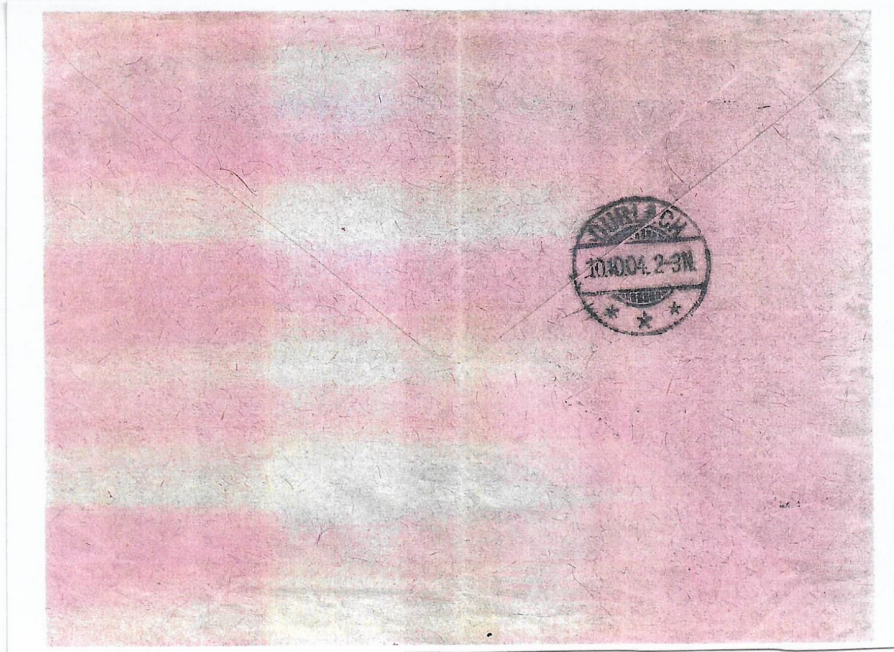
THE POST HISTORY

This registered cover correctly franked with 2 x 5 para and 4 x 10 para magical stamps, that was sent from Pojarevatz, Serbia on 9 December 1904 to Polska Ostrava, Czech Republic 23 December 1904. 25 para is for standard international letter rate, 25 para is for a registered service.



THE POST HISTORY

These 10p +15p stamps franking on letter sent from Belgrade Serbia on 08 October 1904 to Durlach, Baden Germany on 10 October 1904. Extra 15p is for overweight.



THE POST HISTORY

This cover with a 25 para magical stamp was sent from Belgrade, Serbia on 10 November 1904 to Zurich Switzerland on 12 November 1904 as a international post rate in history.



↓ This picture postcard with a 50 para magical stamp in front of picture is still shown third magical head issued later for stamp rejected

