

Herbert J. Bloch's signature

In May 2005 on an eBay auction I found a rare Czechoslovakian stamp, Pofis 89, Scott B64. Originally a Hungarian Turul 1 Fillér stamp overprinted Pošta Československá 1919. The seller describes this item as a very rare stamp, signed by Bloch.



Herbert J. Bloch was the leading expert of his time in European stamps. Born: 21. 11. 1907 deceased: 7. 09. 1987. He was a member of the Friedl's Expert Committee in USA. In the early 1970s he became chairman of the expert committee of the Philatelic Foundation.

Unfortunately, I have never seen his expert signature.

As you can see on the reverse side of this stamp, for some reason somebody wrote there 2378 twice. There are also other numerals, 55 / 22, but it's unknown to me what they mean.



What are more interesting and what the seller of this item has missed is the small mark in the right corner. It's an A with a crown above. This mark belonged to a Czechoslovak expert, **Jaroslav Šula**. Born 1865 deceased 1927. As an expert in Czechoslovakian stamps, he was without comparison. First of all in "Pošta Československá 1919" overprint. Šula's expert mark is even today a guarantee of solidity.

But, on the reverse side of this item we can see one more signature above Šula's mark. It's a hand written signature. Even if I contemplated this signature from all angles, I couldn't find any likeness with Bloch's name. Is it Herbert J. Bloch's signature?

In August 2005, thanks to **Mr. Gunhard Kock** from Finland, I found the answer to my question. Mr. Gunhard Kock is the webmaster of the excellent web site PHILATELIC EXPERTS. He wrote to me and sent me a scan of an old philatelic certificate from Friedl's Expert Committee, dated April 13th 1978. This certificate is signed Herbert J. Bloch!

In this certificate issued by Herbert J. Bloch, says: "...picture below is in my opinion genuine. I have signed it":



This certificate is also signed with Herbert J. Bloch's autograph:



Now when I have seen this attest with its expert signature and compared it with "my" mark I could state that the mark really belonged to Herbert J. Bloch!

What still remained was to figure out what is written in his signature!

Thanks to Mr. Gunhard Kock I also got **Mr. Richard Frajola's** name who was one of Mr. Bloch's friends and co-workers. Mr. Frajola runs a stamp firm in USA and on my request concerning Bloch's expert signature he wrote:

"I did know Herb Bloch rather well. The signature on the stamp you show is what he used when he signed stamps and also what he used when he was briefly chairman of the Philatelic Foundation when he signed PF certificates as Chairman. It is his name in old German "fast" script".

He also sent me another scan with Bloch's signature:



So, after some time of "detective work" we know how Herbert J. Bloch's signature looks like and that it's his name in old German fast script!

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