

# Peter Mitterhofer: The Man Who *Almost* Invented the Commercial Typewriter

Peter Mitterhofer was born in 1822 in the South Tyrolean village of Parchines, about 100 miles southwest of Innsbruck, Austria. A carpenter like his father, he loved inventing tools. Mitterhofer's tinkering resulted in five typewriter prototypes from 1864 to 1869. The first three models were constructed of wood.



Left: Pictorial cancel of the bust of Peter Mitterhofer commemorates the sesquicentennial of his birth. Center: Reduced image of maxicard with 1993 stamp and picture of the inventor's actual first typewriter, now housed in the Technical Museum of Vienna. Right: Printer's proof. Stamp issued February 19, 1993. Design: Professor Johannes Kral, Printer: Austrian State Printing House.

Later typewriter models by Mitterhofer included metal components, upper and lowercase lettering and a platen. Mitterhofer sold his final prototype to Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I, but no other support from the monarch was forthcoming. Without funding or appreciation of the magnitude of his invention, Mitterhofer abandoned his efforts. Just five years later, American Christopher Latham Sholes would create a typewriter that would become known to the world as the Remington Model 1.



Submitted by:  
Michele M. Bresso, PhD

Far left: Mitterhofer's image & second typewriter from a 2017 minisheet incorporating other typewriters in the selvage. Left: Austria 1867 issue: Emperor Franz Joseph I. Above: Postcard celebrating 100th anniversary of Mitterhofer's first typewriter & depicting his fifth and final model.