

200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONCLUSION OF THE PEACE OF BRATISLAVA



The wars waged by Napoleon Bonaparte from 1796 to 1815 also affected the western part of the territory of Slovakia, at that time part of the Habsburg Monarchy. Napoleon's armies first intervened in Slovakia in connection with the preparations for the battle known as the battle of the three emperors, fought on 2nd December 1805 at Austerlitz (Slavkov). Napoleon's army triumphed over the armies of the Emperor Francis I of Austria and of Czar Alexander I of Russia. The allies suffered substantial losses and Austria was forced to capitulate.

The final peace talks between the Austrian and French diplomats were held at the end of December 1805 in Bratislava, then called Pressburg. The peace treaty was signed on 26th December 1805 in the Neo-Classical residence of the Archbishop of Esztergom, today known as the Primaciálny palác. It contained harsh conditions for Austria and changed the political map of Europe. Austria lost its influence in Germany and all its territories in Italy, Dalmatia, Tyrol and Vorarlberg. However, further battles occurred in the following year and the map of Europe again changed. The end to the wars and a final settlement of the situation in Europe came only with Congress of Vienna in 1815.

The National Bank of Slovakia declared a public anonymous competition for an artistic design for a coin to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the conclusion of the Peace of Bratislava. Only five artists participated in it with six works submitted. Since none

of them was approved for production, a repeated public anonymous competition was declared and 12 works by 11 artists were submitted.

The expert commission for assessing the artistic designs for Slovak coins recommended production of the design of the Kremnica artist Pavel Károly, who won first prize. The design showed high quality sculptural work and expression of the given theme. On the obverse, the artist depicted the Primaciálny palác, where the treaty was signed and a military standard of Napoleon's army. The eagle in its upper part is a symbol of Napoleon I. The composition is completed by the seal of the city of Bratislava with the crossed swords of the defeated Austrian and Russian armies bound by a ribbon below. The reverse design consisted of a portrait of Napoleon I and military motifs – weapons put down after the battle in the lower part and a galloping soldier in the upper part of the coin field. After certain reservations on the form of the reverse side of the design, the National Bank of Slovakia agreed a revised version with Pavel Károly. The new version depicts portraits of the two emperors, whose states concluded the Peace of Bratislava – the Emperor Napoleon I of France and the Emperor Francis I of Austria.

The commission awarded second prize to the artist Karol Ličko for capturing the given theme and for compositional harmony between the obverse and reverse of the design. On the obverse, the artist used the motif of the Primaciálny palác and a military stan-

dard. The reverse shows a scene from the Napoleonic Wars supplemented by a sword.

Two lower third prizes were awarded in the competition. The design by the artist Hieroným Balko addressed the commission with its well-chosen motifs and noteworthy plasticity of depiction. On the obverse is the Primaciálny palác, on the reverse a scene from the Napoleonic Wars with a drummer in the foreground. In the case of the design by the artist Miroslav Ronai, the commission positively evaluated the choice of the characteristic dominant architectural features of Bratislava on the obverse and especially the excellent depiction of Napoleon I on a horse on the reverse.

The commemorative coin with a value of 200 SKK, diameter of 34 mm and weight of 18 g was struck in silver with a fineness of 900/1000 at the Kremnica Mint in the number of 5,100 pieces of standard quality and 3,400 pieces of proof quality. The striking of the coin is limited to a maximum of 10,000 pieces of standard and 5,000 pieces of proof quality. The edge bears the inscription: 26 DECEMBER • 5 NIVOSE AN 14. The National Bank of Slovakia issued the coin on 23rd December 2005.

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