



# THE CZECHOSLOVAK Specialist

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## LET THE SEASON SPEAK ITS MESSAGE

With Thanksgiving upon us and Christmas fast approaching, let us all reflect on the passing year and be thankful for the goodness it has brought to our lives and to the lives of our families and loved ones. And as the year ebbs into history, let us rejoice in the spirit of the season, each in our own religious faith and fervor. For life is the passage of time and what we make of that time passes to our children and their offspring in a never-ending cycle of hope, dreams and the fulfillment of aspirations.

-The Editorial Staff

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Articles</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Transatlantic Air Routes: Czech & Slovak Mails .....	Richard Beith	3
2. Exhibits of Czechoslovakia at World Exposition.....	P. Pittermann	12
3. Egon Ervin Kisch, Journalist & Writer .....	G. N. van Zanten	14
<i>Columns</i>		
4. Charley's Chapter-Rarities of the Early Postage Due.....	C. Chesloe	16
5. For the Beginner.....	P. Freer	18

## AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS

It is time to remind our members to pay their dues for 1994.

The S.C.P. has seen some dramatic changes in the last few years. A new Constitution and Bylaws have been adopted. New Articles of Incorporation have given our Society full non-profit status.

Our activities have expanded. Under the leadership of a new, energetic circuit manager, our sales circuit is being streamlined. Our Society Library is growing and a complete catalog of all its available material will be released shortly. The SPECIALIST is offering a multitude of articles and columns on a variety of philatelic subjects and has just recently been awarded a Vermeil in the literary-periodical class of STAMPSHOW 93 in Houston, Texas.

In addition, some interesting projects are in the works for next year. An Index is being prepared of all material contained in the 54 years of our uninterrupted journal. An updated Postal Stationary catalog will soon replace the one issued by our Society in May 1974.

Despite all this as well as the rising inflation, the S.C.P. is holding the line on membership dues. To help avoid or delay an increase, members are urged to send in their dues in the self-addressed envelope provided in the centerfold of this issue before the end of the year. An added contribution by those able to do so will be gratefully appreciated. Remember - dues paid after Feb. 28, 1994 carry a \$3 late charge.

Finally, those who are not members and wish to join the Society, an application for membership may be obtained by contacting the Editor, Mirko Vondra; the Secretary, R.T. Cossaboom, Jr.; or the Treasurer, Ed Lehecka. Applications will also be available at the Society's lounge table at FLOREX for those who are there.

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## TRANSATLANTIC AIR ROUTES: CZECH AND SLOVAK MAILS TO THE END OF 1941

*By Richard Beith*

*(Born in Portsmouth on the south coast of England in 1935, Richard Beith is a Chartered Chemical Engineer, now working as a freelance technical writer. He is married, has three grown children and three grandsons.*

*He has been a stamp collector since about the age of 10 and has specialized in air mails since the late 1960's. Over the years he has contributed articles on air mails to a variety of magazines: The Aero Field, Air Post Journal(USA), Stamp Collecting, Stamps(GB), and Air Mail News. Consultant Editor of Stamps(GB) 1991-92. Currently Editor of the Bulletin of the British Aerophilatelic Federation(BAeF). Richard is also a member of the American Air Mail Society, the Aerophilatelic Federation of the Americas, the Czechoslovak PS of Great Britain and many other specialist societies.*

*Three of his books have been published: Scottish Air Mails 1919-1979(1981); Yorkshire Air Mails(1938) and The Italian South Atlantic Air Mail Service 1939-1941(1993). This latter book won an international Large Silver Medal and the Research Award at EurApex '93 in London.*

*The staff of the SPECIALIST is grateful to the Author and to the Editor, Alan Knight, for allowing us to reprint this article from the Sept. issue of CZECHOUT, Vol. II, No. 3.)*

As an aerophilatelist with a special interest in transatlantic mails and a growing fascination with Czechoslovak air mails from the 20s and 30s, I felt that a survey of early transatlantic acceptances from the Czech and Slovak lands seemed a worthwhile project.

To start the project, two short articles were published in 1992 with the idea of obtaining details of flown covers known to the members of the British Aerophilatelic Federation and the Czechoslovak PS of Great Britain (1,2). In particular, information was sought on the postal rates (air mail surcharges) which applied to this flown mail. My thanks to all the collectors who responded to those articles; their interest has made this survey far more complete. For those readers who wish to learn more about the mail routes mentioned below, I have included a detailed bibliography.

### 1. SOUTH ATLANTIC ROUTES:

'South Atlantic' is the name usually given to those direct air mail routes between Europe and South America (and return) which followed a more or less straight line from Europe to the north east tip of Brazil via the west coast of North Africa. These are given pride of place as they pre-dated regular North Atlantic services by several years.

#### 1.1 The French Service:

This service was in development from the end of the Great War. From 1919 onwards a route was initiated via Spain and Morocco with a regular Toulouse - Dakar(Senegal) air service running by 1925. From 1924 onwards, French interests sponsored the development of airlines in Argentina and Brazil and by November 1927 it was possible to fly from Natal in the north east of Brazil to Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina. Thus by 1928 the then French company Compagnie Générale Aéropostale(CGA) was able to open an air-sea-air service between France and South America with fast steamers linking Dakar and Natal. Experimental 'all the way air' flights over the South Atlantic in 1920, 1933 and 1934 were followed later by a regular all-air service in 1934. Air France had come into existence in 1933 and CGA was one of the airlines incorporated in the new national carrier. By 1937, the service had become a true weekly one in each direction and collaboration with Deutsche Lufthansa (see 1.3) gave letter senders a choice of two flights a week from Europe to South

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

America, one French(on the weekend) and one German(midweek). The Air France service continued on its own during the early months of WWII but with the fall of France, the last flight from Europe was on June 25, 1940. Note that the passengers were not carried on the Atlantic crossing, this was only for mail and express freight. The full story of this French enterprise to 1940 can be found in an excellent, fully illustrated, French language history by Collot and Conru(3). Note that during the late 1930s there was no other choice for sending mail from Europe to South America by air. Wherever the sender lived, (Czechoslovakia, Great Britain, the low countries, Scandinavia, etc.) the choice came down to the two services: the French and the German.

Covers flown from Czechoslovakia to South America by this route have been recorded from 1933 to 1938. There seems no reason why they shouldn't be found back to the start of the air-sea-air service in 1928. After all, the French airline CIDNA(Compagnie Internationale de Navigation Aérienne) had been one of the main carriers of air mail out of Prague since the early 1920s and there was a direct Prague-Marseille link operated by the Czech airline ČLS(Československá letecká společnost) from May 1935 to October 1, 1938 (but with some wintertime breaks). Deutsche Lufthansa had already carried mail from Prague to Marseille between August 1927 and October 1934. (4) (Marseille was particularly handy for making connections with flights to South America.) It should be noted that Mahr and Vouthsem (4,5) don't include this French service in their air mail booklets, directing their attention solely to

German air mail services across the Atlantic.

-5g-
URUGUAY
PARAGUAY
ARGENTINA
CHILE, PERU
BOLIVIA
Kc 15 + 2.50
= 17.50

-5g-
BRAZIL
Kc 12.50 + 2.50
= 15.-

Fig. 1

Nine covers flown to South America via Air France have been noted, destinations included Sao Paulo and Rie de Janeiro in Brazil and Buenos Aires in Argentina. At least two printed Air France envelopes have been seen with Czechoslovak postal rate information printed in the top right hand corner cover of the envelopes, See Fig. 1

The postal rates applying to mail carried by Air France to South America would appear to follow these rules:

Foreign surface postage	Kč 2.50/20g
Foreign printed matter, surface rate	Kč 0.50/50g
Foreign postcards	Kč 1.50
Air mail surcharge to Brazil	Kč 12.50/5g
Air mail surcharge to Argentina, Chile, Uruguay etc.	Kč 15.00/5g
Foreign registration fee	Kč 2.50
Printed matter air mail surcharge	????

That is, a letter to Brazil weighing between 10 and 15g should have cost Kč 2.50 + 3 x Kč 12.50 = Kč 40.00, or Kč 42.50, if registered. Note, when considering mail by this direct route, most European countries at this time differentiated between the charge for mail to Brazil and the charge for the other countries of South America. A typical flown cover is shown below at Figure 2.

## 1.2 The German Airship Service

German lighter-than-air craft made 73 regular round trips between Europe and South America during the period 1930-1937: 65 by the LZ 127 *Graf Zeppelin* and eight in 1936 by the LZ 129 *Hindenburg*. Their service came to an abrupt end in May 1937 as a result of the



destruction by fire of LZ 129 *Hindenburg*. Although the LZ 127 *Graf Zeppelin* was flying smoothly from South America back to Germany at the time, with passengers and mails, it never made another commercial flight.

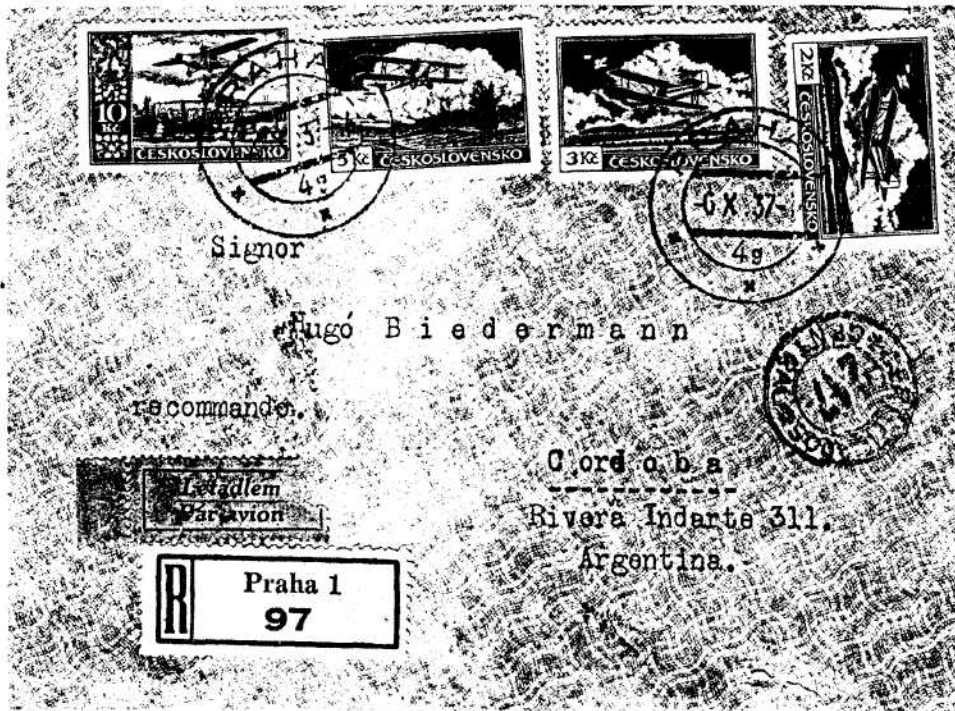


Fig. 2

Mail from Czechoslovakia can be found: see Mahr and Voushem, who illustrate four covers from 1931-1933 (5). The first of these carries mixed Czechoslovak/ German franking, but the three examples from 1932-1933 bear frankings of (a) Kč 17.00 on a registered cover from Bratislava to Pernambuco, Brazil, (b) Kč 41.00 on a registered cover from Litoměřice to Rio de Janeiro and (c) Kč 18.50 on a registered cover from Prague to Montevideo, Uruguay. These frankings are broadly along the same lines as the charges discussed above for the French service, but the arithmetic is not always perfect. (Mahr and Voushem seem to pay little attention to postal rates in general. It is always possible that the covers they illustrate may have had additional stamps on the reverse sides.) Cover (a) appears to be Kč 0.50 short; ie logic says it should be Kč 2.50 (basic rate) + Kč 12.50 (Air fee) + Kč 2.50 (registration) + Kč 17.50. Assuming cover (b) weighed between 10 and 15g, the rate could be Kč 2.50 (Basic rate) + 3 x Kč 12.50 (Air fee) + Kč 2.50 (registration) = Kč 42.50, ie the franking is Kč 1.50 short. Cover (c) is also Kč 1.50 short as this should presumably be franked at Kč 2.50 (basic rate) + Kč 15.00 (Air Fee to Uruguay) + Kč 2.50 (registration). Perhaps postal clerks were uncertain of the correct charges because of the rarity of letters sent by airship.

As the *Deutsche Lufthansa* seaplane service became established from 1934 onwards, (see 1.4), mails carried by the German airships tended to be restricted to philatelic mail specifically endorsed for flight by airship and mail posted on board by passengers. The seaplane service was faster than that provided by the airships and operated to a more regular timetable, hence the smaller amount of airship mail from 1934-1937.

### 1.3 The German Seaplane Service

The German airline *Deutsche Lufthansa (DLH)* experimented with air-sea-air services from 1930 onwards, but not in the regular manner adopted by the then French airline. Following experiments in 1933, *DLH* opened an 'all the way by air mail-only' service in 1934 which used Dornier Wal flying boats to make the transatlantic hop. Landplanes were used to carry the mails from France and Germany to Bathurst in British Gambia via Seville and Las Palmas in the Canaries and associated German airlines in Brazil and other South American countries were used to carry the mail on to Argentina, Bolivia, the rest of Brazil, Chile, Uruguay etc. The Dornier flying boats did not have sufficient range to cross from coast to coast so a mother ship was placed in the South Atlantic; half-way across. The Dornier landed alongside the mother ship, was winched aboard, refuelled and then catapulted off. In later years two mother ships were used, one near the African coast, one near Brazil. More powerful planes were used in subsequent years but the catapult system was maintained. (In comparison, the French always used seaplanes and landplanes capable of completing the transatlantic leg in one flight. In the late 1930s the French mainly used four engined Farman landplanes between Senegal and Brazil.)

Haberer has produced a clear, easy to use, German language listing of all these German flights from 1934 to 1939 (7). The last through-flight from Europe took place on August 24, 1939. No attempt was made to operate the line during WWII, though the Italian service (see 1.4) could be regarded as a successor operation. Mail from Czechoslovakia flown to South America over this route is not that common. The author has details of eight covers flown between January 1936 and March 1939 and Mahr and Voushem illustrate another four examples. Addresses on these 12 covers range from Bahia and Rio in Brazil to Buenos Aires,

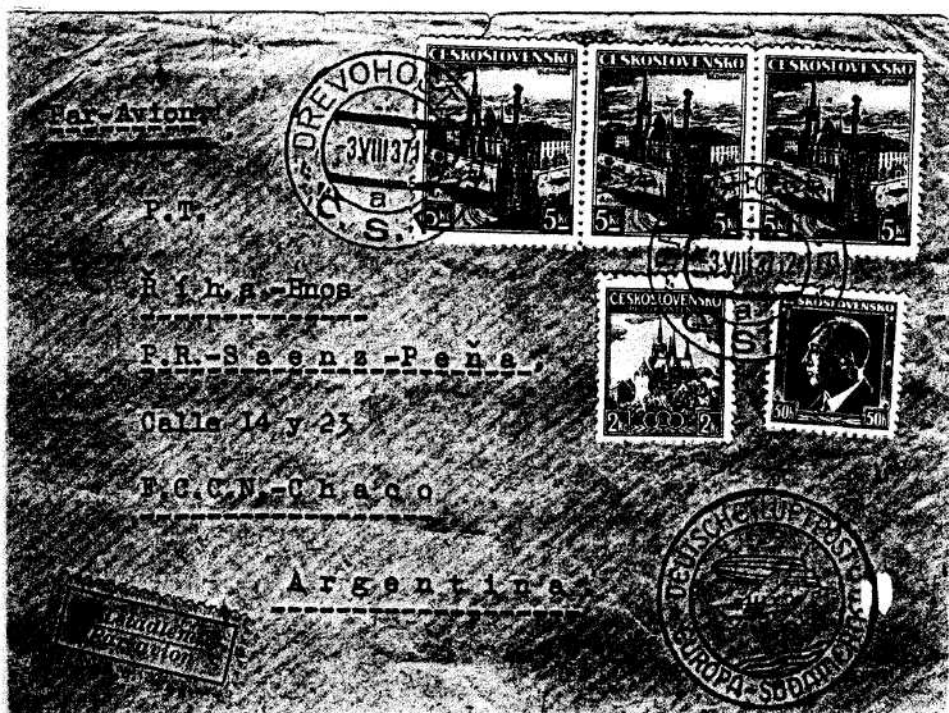


Fig. 3

Montevideo in Uruguay and Port of Spain Trinidad. Franking adheres quite carefully to the rates given under 1.1. All 12 covers bear the well known red ink cachet lettered DEUTSCHE LUFTPOST \* EUROPA-SUD AMERIKA, which shows an airship and a flying boat in the design. This means exactly what it suggests: "This cover may have been flown by airship or it may have been flown by seaplane"; it does not mean that the particular cover has automatically been flown on a Zeppelin! The design of the cachet was not changed after the withdrawal of the Graf Zeppelin from the South Atlantic route in May 1937. The same cachet continued in use until August 1939. A typical flown cover, bearing the cachet, is shown in Figure 3.

Mail can also be found from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and from Slovakia flown by DLH to South America between March and August 1939, but it appears quite rare.

#### 1.4 The Italian Service

A new service on the South Atlantic was provided from December 1939 by the Italian Line *Linee Aeree Transcontinentali Italiane*, usually known by its initials LATI. A roughly weekly service was maintained using Savoia Marchetti tri-motor landplanes along the route: Rome-Seville-Villa Cisneros (Spanish Sahara)-Sal (Cape Verde Islands)-Natal/ Recife-Rio de Janeiro. The line was extended southwards to Buenos Aires in July 1941 but came to an abrupt end in December 1941 as the German and Italian declaration of war on the USA allowed the United States government to persuade the Brazilian authorities to withdraw facilities for the Italian line (8).

Mail from Bohemia and Moravia to South America sent via this Italian line is not uncommon, 18 flown covers have been recorded by the writer to various destinations in Argentina, Brazil and Ecuador, posted between February 1940 and December 1941. One suspects that some (much?) of this mail was sent to and from Czech nationals in South America who had been lucky enough to emigrate before their homeland was invaded. The majority of the covers bear a boxed cachet, approx 15 x 45mm and inscribed *Mit Luftpost/nach Südamerika*. The closure of the line was so abrupt that late December 1941 letters intended for South America can be found with a two line 'return to sender' cachet lettered *Zurück/Postverkehr eingestellt*, probably applied in Berlin. Mail was usually censored by the OKW (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*) in Frankfurt.

Unfortunately, the franking on these 18 covers does not follow a precise pattern, but the best estimate to emerge is:

Foreign surface postage	K 2.50/20g
Foreign postcard	K 1.50
Air mail surcharge to Brazil	K 14.00/5g
Air mail surcharge to Argentina etc.	K 19.00/5g
Foreign registration fee	K 3.00 (rather than Kc 2.50?)

Of the eight covers to Buenos Aires, six fall in with the above scheme. Five are franked at K 21.50, equivalent to K 2.50 + K 19.00 plus a registered cover at K 24.50, equivalent to K 2.50 + K 19.00 + K 3.00.

On the six covers to Brazil there is a greater variety of frankings. However, four covers fall in with the above suggestions, being franked at K 16.50 or K 19.50 (registered). One member of the Czechoslovak PS of GB has suggested an air surcharge to Brazil of K 15.50/5g to explain a K 21.00 franking on a registered letter. The cover shown below as Figure 4 is typical of mail from Bohemia and Moravia sent via LATI.

An August 1940 cover has been reported from Slovakia to Chile, flown by LATI, and franked at Ks 21.50.

#### 2 NORTH ATLANTIC ROUTES

Although the distances between suitable stopping-off points on any proposed North Atlantic air route were not much different than those on the South Atlantic, conditions for fly-

#### THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

ers in the 1930s were much more difficult in the north, with adverse weather conditions and strong winds. Thus it was only natural that viable commercial, North Atlantic air routes took much longer to appear.

##### 2.1 North Atlantic Catapult Services

Both French and German interests evolved a different kind of catapult service on the North Atlantic. Here, aeroplanes were carried on board a handful of crack liners, the plane being catapulted from the ship and proceeding to New York or to an English Channel port with the mails ahead of the vessel. That is, only accelerated ship-air services were provided, not 'all the way by air' service. Haberer (9) has also catalogued these accelerated services, listing the limited number of mails carried by the French ship *Ile de France* between 1928 and 1930 and



Fig. 4

the much longer German involvement with the ships *Bremen* and *Europa* between 1929 and 1935. In 1990 Stanley-Smith published a detailed two-volume English language handbook and catalogue on these services which provides much useful background information (10).

Czechoslovakia did have some kind of agreement with the German post office so that Czech mails could participate in this accelerated service, but quantities dispatched were very small, too small to be listed in the statistics on 'treaty states' mail given by Stanley-Smith. He records the first arrival of Czech mail in New York as taking place on June 6, 1930, but adds: "Only a very few Czech despatches are recorded and it is doubtful whether any more than a handful of pieces were ever carried on any particular catapult." Of the covers illustrated by Mahr and Vohsem (5), some bear mixed frankings, some have all Czech frankings. Sometimes the all-Czech frankings were not accepted, at other times there seems to have been no problem. A 1933 cover, postmarked in Czechoslovakia, appears to bear a Kc 9.00 franking for a 10g rate. While limited amounts of business mail may have been sent by this route,



much of the surviving mail is obviously of philatelic inspiration.

## 2.2 The German Airship Service

In 1936 the German airship LZ 129 *Hindenburg* was used to open a regular North Atlantic service from Germany to the USA for mail, express freight and passengers. In 1936 ten return flights were made between 6 May and 12 October. It was on the first scheduled flight of 1937 that the hydrogen filled *Hindenburg* was destroyed by fire as it was about to land in New Jersey. Again, Mahr and Vohsem (5) have demonstrated that Czech mail was carried on the LZ 129. Registered covers from the first and seventh flights of 1936 are shown franked at Kc 15.50 and Kc 9.50, weights not stated.

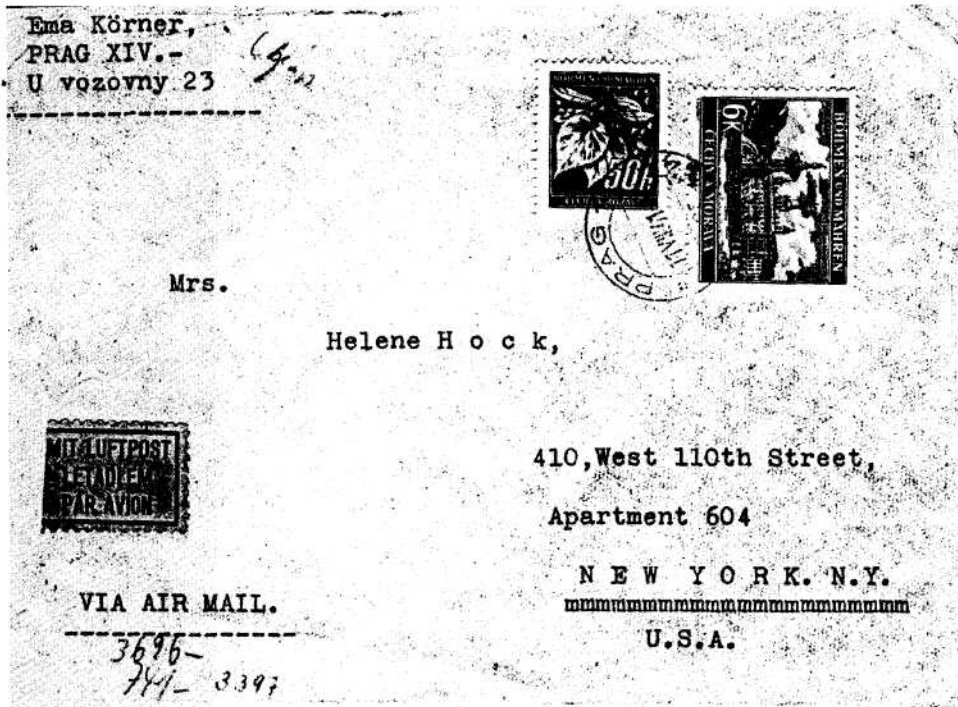


Fig. 5

## 2.3 The Pan American Flying Boat Service

After many years of planning, Pan American Airways launched a regular transatlantic service for passengers, mail and freight in May 1939 using the mighty Boeing 314 flying boat. The service, known as FAM 18 (Foreign Air Mail Route 18 of the United States Post Office) was operated over a variety of routes. The service is well written up in the catalogue published by the American Air Mail Society, but unfortunately the appropriate volume is currently out of print (11).

### 2.3.1 The 'Southern' Route

Initiated on May 20, 1939, the Boeing flew New York-Horta (Azores)-Lisbon-Marseille. The first flight utilized the Boeing 314 NC 1806 *Yankee Clipper*. At the outbreak of WWII, neutral Lisbon became the European terminus. Because of range limitations, calls often had to be made at the British colony of Bermuda. (Much fuss was caused in still neutral USA when the British authorities removed the mails for censorship when the *Clipper* stopped at Bermuda.)



### 2.3.2 The 'Northern' Route

Initiated on June 24, 1939, also by Yankee Clipper, Pan American flew New York-Shediac (New Brunswick)-Botwood (Newfoundland)-Foynes (Irish Free State)-Southampton. At the outbreak of WWII, neutral Foynes became the European terminus. At October 7, 1939, the weekly northern trip routed from Lisbon via Foynes was suspended.

### 2.3.3 The 'Alternative Southern' Route

This route was only flown in the westbound direction from Europe from February 2, 1941 onwards: Lisbon-Bolama (Portugese Guinea)-Trinidad-San Juan (Puerto Rico)-New York. (The Azores route was still used, as required, depending on season and weather)

Mail from both Bohemia and Moravia and from Slovakia was regularly flown via Pan American to North America until the end of 1941. Mail for South America could also be

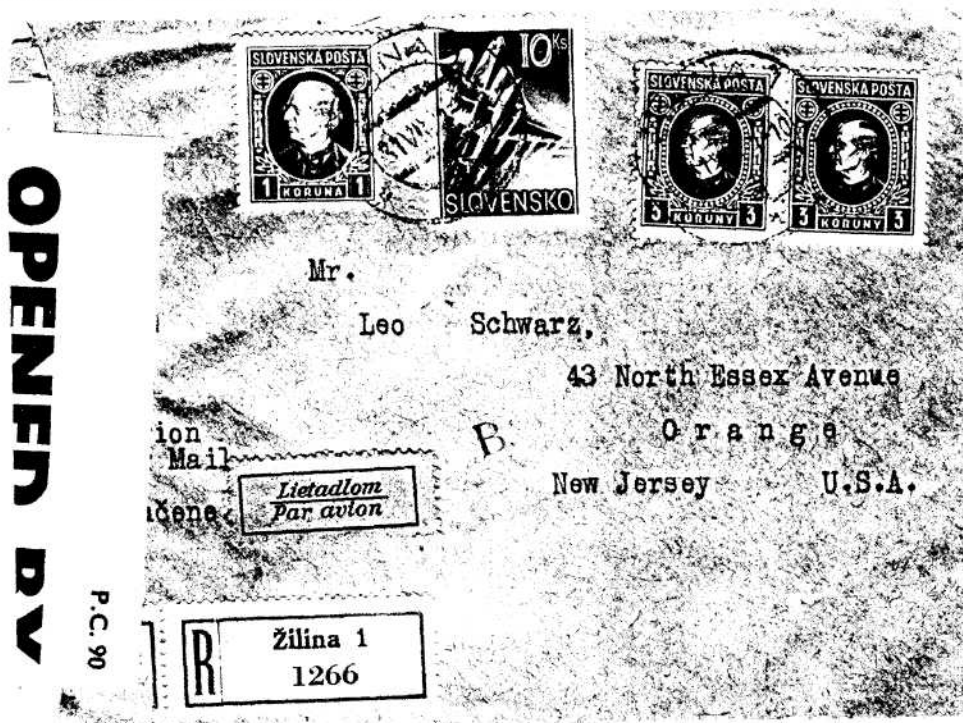


Fig. 6

flown via Lisbon to New York as an alternative to the direct LATI route.

Nineteen examples of mail from Bohemia and Moravia to the USA have been reported, plus a further three to Argentina and Ecuador via Lisbon and New York. Over half the covers bear a boxed cachet *Mit Luftpost nach Nordamerika und ab New York*, Frankfurt is the commonest centre for censorship by OKW. Again, observed postal rates vary somewhat, but the consensus for mail to the USA seems to be:

Foreign surface postage rate	K 2.50/20g
Foreign postcards	K 1.50
Air mail surcharge to the USA	K 4.00/5g
Foreign registration fee	K 3.00 (rather than K 2.50?)

For unregistered mail this would give a total cost of K 6.50 for a letter under 5g, K 10.50 for a letter under 10g and K 14.50 for a letter under 15g, etc. The same weights of registered

mail should cost K 9.50, K 13.50 and K 17.50 respectively. Of the 19 letters reported, nine fit the above schedule including one postcard at K 5.50 (K 1.50 + K 4.00). A typical cover from Bohemia & Moravia to the USA is shown as figure 5.

Five covers have been reported from Slovakia to the USA from this period. Two unregistered covers were franked at K 8.50, three registered covers at K 9.50, K 16.50 and K 17.00 respectively. Guidance on the interpretation of this data would be welcome. A typical cover from Slovakia to the USA is shown in figure 6.

### 3. AFTER END OF 1941.

From the end of 1941 onwards, (ie. after Pearl Harbor and the German and Italian declaration of war on the USA) there was no reason why Pan American shouldn't continue carrying mail via Miami or New York for delivery to South American countries which remained neutral. Hence transatlantic covers from the Czech and Slovak lands to Argentina could exist up to January 26, 1944, the date when Argentina broke off diplomatic relations with Germany & Italy. While Brazil broke off diplomatic relations with the central powers on January 28, 1942, there seems no reason why mail shouldn't be found addressed to Chile and to Uruguay up to the end of 1944.

### 4. CONCLUSION.

I hope this article has provided some guidance on the range of transatlantic air mail routes utilized by the postal authorities in the Czech and Slovak lands to the end of 1941. The author welcomes comments, corrections and additions to the story. Obviously the postal rate data is a 'best guess' taken from a study of flown covers. More light would certainly be shed on the matter if any readers could produce copies (and translations) of the relevant postal regulations from the period covered. Again, the story could be expanded by studying the routes by which mails reached the transatlantic planes from Czech and Slovak territory.

### Acknowledgments

My thanks to the following members of the BAeF and Czechoslovak PS of GB for supplying data and photocopies: Franz van Buveren, C Cordes, John Duggan, John Hammonds, Alan J. Knight, Ian Nutley, Alec Page, Joe Roberts, Colin Spong, Peter Wingent and C F Zeigler. Special thanks to John Johnson Jr. Vice President of the American Air Mail Society for information on Pan American route changes during WWII.

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## EXHIBITS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA AT WORLD EXPOSITION - POLSKA 93

by Pavel Pittermann

Translated by Henry Hahn

### Part II

*(Ed. Note - Part I which was published in our last issue contained the Table of Awards. Unfortunately the "Key" to the letter symbols was inadvertently omitted. The Table is therefore being reprinted at the end of this article with the "Key" added for proper reference. The reader should bear in mind that the three columns on the right contain (1) the awards made by the judges at PRAGA 88, (2) the awards made by the judges at POLSKA 93, and (3) the awards as they should have been made according to the author.*

*This chart with its explanatory article demonstrates how judges' opinions differ because, apart from interpretation of the rules themselves, there is a human factor that enters into the judging of any form of competition regardless of how stringent the rules of judging may be.)*

A separate article should be devoted to the three postal history exhibits, but this is not being done. We can only observe at this time that the extraordinarily high valuation for the exhibits of J.L. Klein and P. Jensen are fully justified, and that the huge philatelic effort by both of the above has rendered an invaluable service to our postal history on the international level. The material of the two exhibits, shown by chance side-by-side, constitute a degree of completeness which is not likely to be surpassed in the future. Its value in terms of postal history is difficult to enumerate.

The overall valuation of our Czech and foreign participation at the POLSKA 93 show is truly favorable. I can maintain that the unusually large number of exhibitors showing Czech related material at an international level gave a good account of themselves, and thus strengthened the reputation of high quality enjoyed by Czech philately. However, it would be senseless to close our eyes to the reality that any attempts by our Czech Union of Philatelists (Svaz) to excel will fail if we will not soon return to the traditions of our past exhibitors and if we do not resume to intensively popularize that which is truly rare, good and of high quality. A good illustration of our problem lies in the valuation of the exhibit of J.L. Klein. At the present time, the significance of this exhibit is in the broadest sense maximal and, in comparison with past international exhibits, should not have been denied a large gold. Despite this, it did not receive one.

The problem does not lie in the fact that the jury would not have liked to award the large gold. The problem lies in the reality that the jury is unaware of the significance of this material on an international level. This situation will remain unchanged as long as the only known criterion for judging remains the presence of the dreamt-up rarities of the semi-official "PC 1919" issue, and in the case of more sophisticated jury knowledge of "some kind of" a provisional "50/50h" Postage Due. Only the "Granites" and the "50/50" are known and recognized by many international juries. This is indeed sad and frightening but unfortunately true. Thus, if we ourselves fail to precisely identify and describe our Czech rarities and unique items and if we fail to achieve an international consciousness through improved catalogue entries and education through vigorous publication in philatelic journals, we will not have a chance at achieving equality in recognition, particularly in comparison with older "classical" material. It is naturally essential that we set our goals for achievement, based on experience at international exhibits of recent vintage, which confirm that 1918-1939 exhibits DO have a chance at large golds and the immediate post-WWII period exhibits at large vermeils.

The sad state of awareness cannot be reversed by the presence of one or two of our Czech

judges on international jury panels. Our judges can only prevent catastrophic discrepancies due to "overlooking" by the other panel members, or due to absolute ignorance. The latter DOES occur at world exhibitions. However, we speak of an even deeper and long-time dilemma of having failed to sustain our drive for international recognition of our material despite the fact that on an international scale, interest in Czech philately is relatively strong in terms of numbers of collectors, and that the philatelic public appears prepared and ready to accept the results of our research, and valuation. Not to theorize further, I shall provide an example which is paralleled in postal history. The fact that two foreign collectors of Czech postal history simultaneously received large golds (at POLSKA 93) and that others have achieved large golds for postal history in the past, is not due to differences in evaluation criteria or knowledge within the jury, as is often claimed. It is ONLY because of the tireless popularization by our postal historians who have brought the subject of Czechoslovak postal history to the attention of such individuals as the late W. Reiner-Deutsch, Rudiger-Wurth, and others. This, in turn, affected Czechoslovak postal history by popularizing it, attracting worldwide attention, helping establish valuation criteria, and leading to the creation of collections and exhibits. The Czechoslovak territory thus became independently, at least from the European point of view, an object of postal history, and the fruits of this long process are now harvested in more than ample measure.

If we do not succeed in repeating this process in the area of collecting Czechoslovak postage stamps, we will remain at best controversial on the international scene.

I have often in the past drawn attention to the fact that F.I.P. evaluation criteria are basically rather tolerant and in many ways benevolent in that they afford high valuation mainly to those who do not have "millions" at their disposal. This is singularly demonstrated, for example, in Poznan by a cursory look at the Palmares. It demonstrates, that the F.I.P. judging criteria must be rigorously adhered to. It is shown that international recognition is limited to exhibits having a precisely formulated objective and plan, which must be conveyed to the observer, and that unusual items and rarities be clearly identified and appropriately marked, and that all items be precisely classified and described. Only this will keep present international juries, in an attempt not to undervalue, from taking a bit away from the highest awards, and adding a bit to the lower awards. This happens mainly when the jury does not have available time previously established and agreed to criteria for a particular subject.

Naturally, I am far from being able to point out a single source of the disproportionate judging from the viewpoint of the exhibitor. The technique of judging, the means of training and education of judges, would require similarly detailed analysis. However, due to the previously indicated absence of better established criteria for Czech-related exhibits, such as in the area of significance or philatelic importance and work-up (knowledge and research), we sometimes fruitlessly blame and criticize the work of the jury. Thus, had all of our Czech exhibits at Poznan been in better harmony with the above, the results would have more closely conformed with the last column in the Table shown below. We most assuredly would liked that far better than the official results.

CORRECTED TABLE I

Exhibit Class	Exhibitor	Country	Evaluation		
			PRAGA	POLSKA	PITTERMAN
Traditional	J. Klein	NL	G + SP	G + SP	LG
	Henry Hahn	USA	G	LV	G
	J. Stupka	CR	LS	V	LV
	Vlad. Cermak	GERM	S	V	V
	Sv. Sablatura	SR	LS	LS	LV

CORRECTED TABLE I - CONTINUED

Exhibit Class	Exhibitor	Country	Evaluation		
			PRAGA	POLSKA	PITTERMAN
	Zd. Molis	CR	LS	LS	LS
	E. George	GB	LSB	LS	LS
	Stig Asklund	SWEDEN	-	S	S
	Frant. Hutyrá	CR	LS	LS	V
	K. Fischer	CANADA	-	LS	LS
Aerophilately	J. Karasek	CR	LS + SP	G	G
	B. Helm	CR	LS	V	V
Postal History	J.L. Klein	NL	G	LG	LG
	P.H. Jensen	NORWAY	-	G + SP	LG
	J.F. Cervený	USA	-	S	LS
LG = Large Gold		V = Vermeil	LSB = Large Silver-Bronze		
G = Gold		LS = Large Silver	SP = Special Prize		
LV = Large Vermeil		S = Silver			
CR = Czech Republic			NL = The Netherlands		
SR = Slovak Republic			GB = Great Britain		

## EGON ERVIN KISCH, JOURNALIST AND WRITER

by Gerald N. van Zanten

Postal stationery of Czechoslovakia is a fascinating subject which offers many possibilities for articles. Unfortunately not many have been presented in our publication especially from the standpoint of thematics.

On going through some older stationary material, I came across a 1985 card issued to com-

PŘÍLEŽITOSTNÁ POŠTOVNÍ DOPISNICE.

Egon Ervín Kisch



ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ POŠTA



Fig. 1



memorate the birth of Egon Ervin Kisch.

The card shows his profile, his signature and the UNESCO emblem embossed as a stamp impression together with the value "5 Kčs." and the name "Československi." The impression on the left is a simplified image of the portal of the Old Town House "U Dvou Zlatých Medvědu" (At the Two Golden Bears) on the corner of Kožní Street and Melantrichová, not far from Staroměstské Náměstí. (see fig. 1). The Renaissance house dates from 1559, modified in the Baroque style in 1683 and 1750. This house has the most beautiful Renaissance portal in Prague, dating from the end of the 16th century (see fig. 2). It also has an arcaded courtyard.

Egon's father was a Jewish trader. The son was born in this lovely home on April 29, 1885. He became a writer and journalist, writing for German language newspapers such as PRAGER TAG-BLATT and BOHEMIA. He travelled long distances to meet ordinary people about whom he wrote. (see fig. 3).

Kisch was known as the best authority on Prague in the first fifteen years of this century, passionately in love with the historic city and its people, as documented by his books "Adventures in Prague" (Abenteuer im Prag, 1919) and "From Prague Streets and Nights" (Aus Prager Gassen und Nachten, 1908).

During World War I he was conscripted into the Austro-Hungarian Army and fought on the Serbian front as a rank-and-file soldier, reporting on the horrors of the fighting. Soon thereafter he became a convert to Communism.

In 1925 he visited the Soviet Union for the first time and wrote a book titled "Czars, Popes and Bolsheviks" (Zeren, Popen und Bolschewiken, 1926). Following a visit to the United States, he published a book called "The American Paradise" (Paradies Amerika, 1929).

He studied and depicted the lives of a variety of American social strata and wrote of his meetings with people like Charley Chaplin with whom he struck up a lasting friendship.

During his life as a journalist, he travelled all over the world, filing reports on all events of international importance. His reports were outstanding examples of great literary art and form, always expressing his commitment to the cause of peace and social progress.

On February 28, 1933, the night the Reichstag was set on fire, he was imprisoned by Hitler's storm troopers for over a year. Upon his release, he visited Australia to lecture on the advent of Fascism.

After covering the Civil War in Spain, he returned to Australia in 1938 as a delegate of the World Committee for Struggle Against Fascism and War. He was first denied permission to



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

disembark, but he displayed personal courage in securing an entry permit. He spent four months in Australia. Over 20,000 people came to hear him for his first public speech in Sydney, where he talked about his experiences and his encounters with Hitler. He attended almost a hundred meetings throughout that country. When he left Australia's shores, tens of thousands saw him off.

During World War II, Kisch spent his years in exile in Mexico. After the War, he returned to Czechoslovakia. He was enjoying partial retirement when his heart stopped beating on March 31, 1948.

#### References

1. POKLADY PRAŽSKÉ ARCHITEKTURY, by Bohumír Kozák (Orbis, Praha, 1965)
2. CZECHOSLOVAK LIFE, April 1985
3. WALKS THROUGH PRAGUE, by Plička and Poche, 1984.

#### Charley's Chapter

### RARITIES OF THE EARLY POSTAGE DUES



Fig. 1



Fig. 2 above & Fig. 3 below



Among the most interesting and challenging aspects of Czechoslovak philately are the postage due issues. Perhaps the most famous error of Czechoslovakia and one of the true rarities of the twentieth century is the "50/50 Doplatit" error, Scott no. J52a. The Scott price of \$5,750 for this item seems somewhat absurd. PROFIL, a philatelic firm in Prague, has a buying price of one million Czech crowns which translates to approximately \$37,000 in U.S. dollars.

Due to the frequent change in postal rates during the middle 1920's, there was a great need for postage due stamps. Instead of throwing away the old obsolete issues, postal authorities decided to overprint these issues with new values and with the word "DOPLATIT" meaning "additional payment due on postage."

One of the most challenging postage due stamps is the "30 Doplatit" on the 15h Hradčany and the "40 Doplatit" on the 15h Hradčany. They are listed as Scott nos. J42 and J43 appearing on a perforated 15h Hradčany, Scott no. 44. Scott's lists the perforations as 14 and 11 1/2. Perfs of 11 1/2 are great rarities. The 30 on 15h is listed as 4R and the 40 on 15h is listed as 2R in the POFIS catalog. The common perforations are comb perf 11 3/4 and line perf 13 3/4. The comb perf 13 3/4 x 13 1/2, although not rare on the 30 on 15h value, becomes scarce when you look for the 40 on 15h value. The other line perfs 13 3/4 x 11 1/2; 11 1/2 and the comb perf 11 3/4 x 13 3/4 range from 2 R to 5R.

Fig. 1 and 2 show varieties of the line perf 13 3/4. In the first, there are dots between the letters "L" and "A" (Position 85). In the second, the dot appears between the numbers "4" and "0". Fig 3 shows the scarce 40 on 15h with comb perf 13 3/4 x 13 1/2.

In the same series, fig. 4 shows what may be a block of



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

the extremely rare line perf 11 1/2. Note again the dot between the letters "L" and "A", plate position 85. In fig. 5, we see a vertical imperf pair of this same issue which is a very rare item and is unlisted in the POFIS catalog.

Another issue overprinted in 1926 is the 400h Agriculture and Science stamp of 1920 with overprint varieties, listed as



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

Scott no. J48. Fig. 6 shows a horizontal pair with the sheet margin at right and with the vertical perforation missing. In fig. 7, the same 400h value is shown with an overprint error of 50 over 400h instead of 60 over 400h. This error came



Fig. 8

from a sheet of 100 that was originally owned by the famous Czech stamp dealer, Alfons

Stach. Fig. 8 illustrates the only recorded error of a missing "50" overprint on the right side of the left samp of the 20h Liberated Republic issue. This particular error is pictured in the Hirsch-Franek handbook published in Prague in 1935. It is shown along with the 50 on 50h error on page 385 of that book.

Here we see but a sampling of gems in the fertile field of early postage due issues of Czechoslovakia. A discerning collector, searching at bourses and dealer stands, could conceivably find something like the 11 1/2 line perf of the overprinted 15h Hradčany inasmuch as Scott's catalog does not seem to recognize it as a rarity. This can operate in the collector's favor, for if he finds it, he has found the equivalent of a winning lottery ticket!

--Charles Chesloe

*For the Beginner*

## POSTAL STATIONARY

In general, there is not the widespread interest in postal stationary of the world that there is in postage stamps. There are exceptions. Czechoslovakia is one of them. Why? Perhaps because it is still possible to acquire a complete collection including all varieties that exist in the country's postal cards, letter cards, parcel dispatch cards, change of address cards, telegrams, envelopes, letter sheets, aerograms, pigeongrams, etc. at an affordable price. Or perhaps because the postal stationary of Czechoslovakia offers many rewards in its numerous interesting categories that fascinate the ever-growing mushroom of collectors that the country has recently attracted.

But before delving into the subject itself, it might be appropriate to explain to the novice - a beginner in Czechoslovak philately - just what Postal Stationary means.

Postal Stationary may be described as any form of paper issued by postal authorities which allows for a written message to be transmitted through the mails from addressor to addressee on which the cost of mailing is PRINTED in the upper right-hand corner. The emphasis is on the word "printed" because that is what distinguishes it from any other kind of mailing. The



Fig. 1

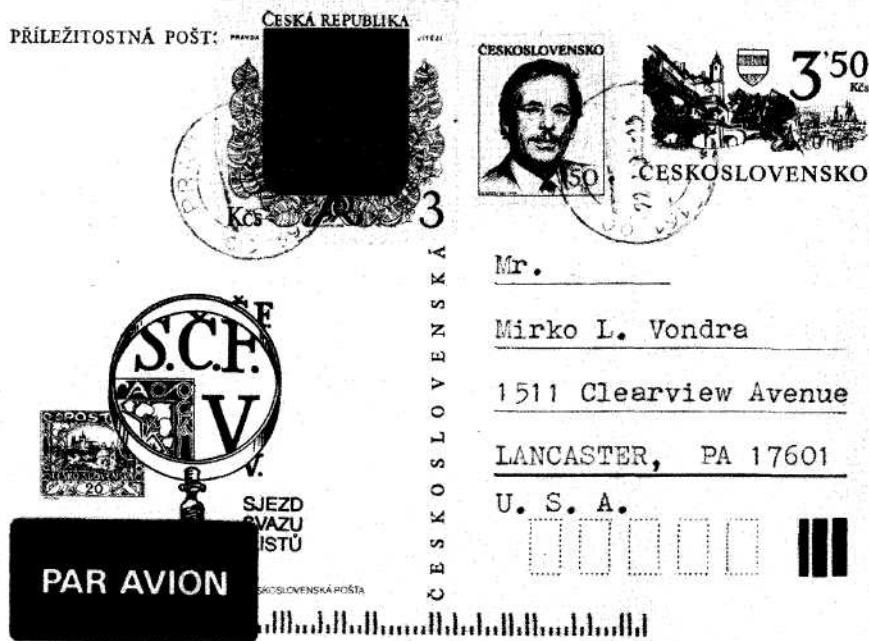


Fig. 2



Fig. 3





Fig. 4

cost of mailing is printed on the paper usually in the likeness of a postage stamp. The paper may take any of the forms listed in the paragraph above. The cost of mailing is the basic rate current at the time of issuance for that mode of delivery. The rate may change -generally upward - in which case either a new cost is printed on the form or the old cost is revalued by overprinting with the new denomination.

Ordinary postal cards were issued for domestic use or for neighboring foreign countries. Later airmail cards were issued mainly for distant foreign countries. For each category, they

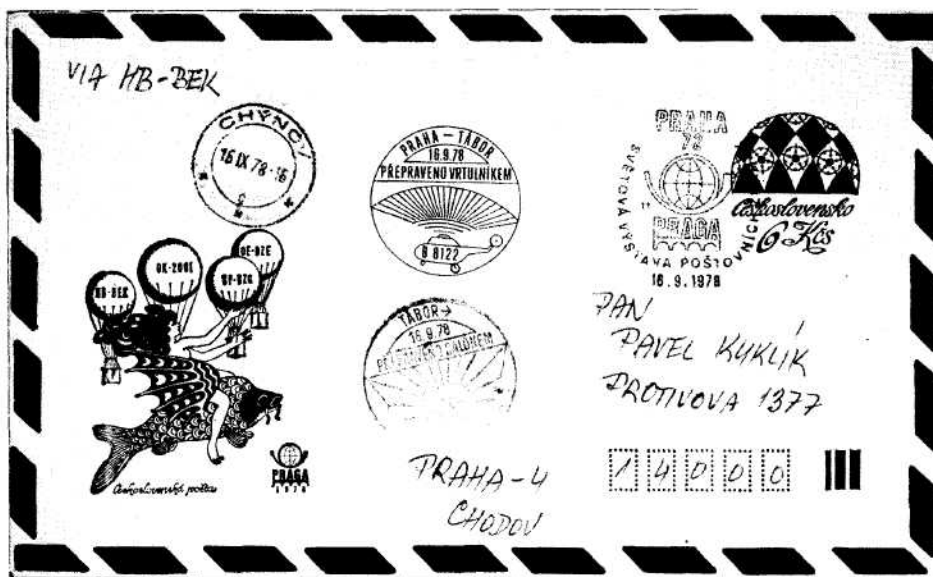


Fig. 5

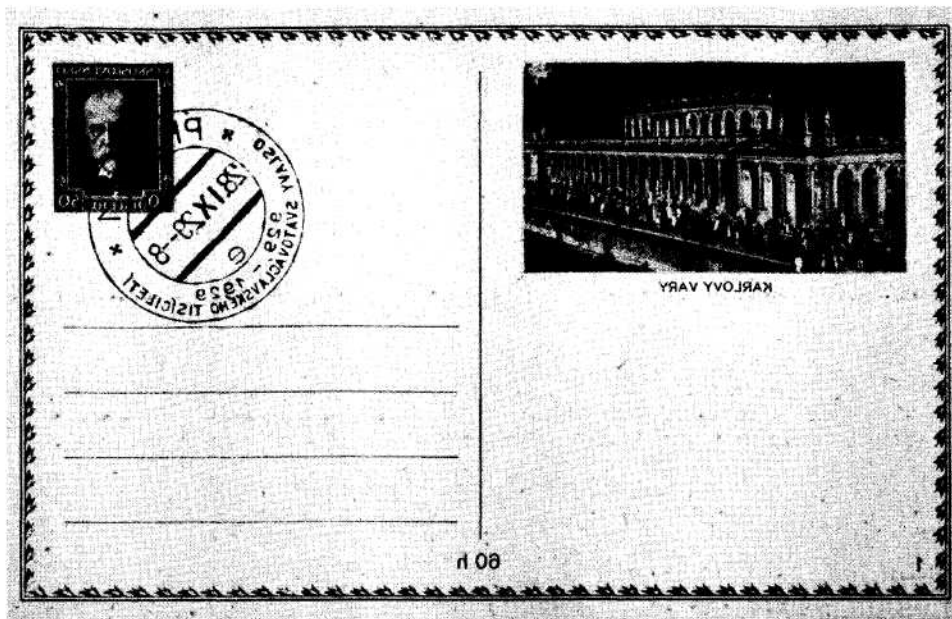


Fig. 6

were issued as single cards though double cards (with reply cards attached) were also available. The earliest Czech postal cards issued in 1918 were Austrian and Hungairan cards overprinted with "CŠR" and the denomination "10". They were first used in December 1918 and were valid until October 14, 1919. There are several varieties of this overprint. The first truly



Fig. 7

Czechoslovak postal cards were imprinted with the classical Hradčany stamps designed by Alfons Mucha. Subsequent cards bore the imprint of the "Chainbreaker" stamps, Masaryk stamps and others.

But perhaps the most prolific area of postal stationery are the envelopes with printed stamps. The deluge began in the early 1970's and includes envelopes for both surface and air-mail use. These are of considerable current interest in both the U.S. and abroad because of the varied subject matter they encompass and because they are so colorful.

Like postage stamps, postal stationery is valued or catalogued on the basis of "mint" and "used" condition. A postal card, an envelope or any other form of postal stationery is "mint" when it appears exactly in the condition as issued by postal authorities, including revalued overprints. But once something is added to it such as a message, a handwritten address, a postage stamp or a cancellation, it is no longer "mint". It would be then be deemed "used."

During the 1920's and even later, some businesses issued envelopes with their names and addresses printed on the address portion of the envelope. These would have to be considered "used" covers even though they actually never passed through the mails, just as a cover that was favor-cancelled but never mailed to any addressee is a "used" one. On the other hand, some businesses actually printed advertising cachets to the left of the address portion of a postal card or envelope. In fig. 1, a card which has an imprint of a 20h Hradčany stamp was cancelled and mailed to an addressee in Vienna in July 1920. Clearly it is a "used" card. But suppose it had not been cancelled, no address typed on it and no message placed on the reverse side. Would it still be a "mint" card despite the advertising cachet on the left? Yes, it would qualify as a "mint" card because anyone totally unrelated to that business enterprise could write a message and mail it to whomsoever they chose. The postoffice would have to accept that card (assuming the rate was correct) and cancel it. At that point it would lose its status as a "mint" card.

Advertising cachets are private in origin. There are many of those. Despite that, most postal cards and envelopes that comprise postal stationery abound in official cachets. Offered here are illustrations of two such cards and two envelopes. Fig. 2 shows a 5 kčs. stamp imprint of a globe with spiraling arrows and a cachet showing it was issued for the 23rd Meeting of the Commission on Telecommunications. Fig. 3 is a card issued in 1989 with a 3.50kčs. imprint of a view of Brno and a cachet showing it was issued for the Fifth Congress of Czech Philatelists. The card was sent airmail to the U.S. in 1993, requiring additional postage which was properly affixed. Fig. 4 illustrates a stylized dove on a 3.60 kčs. imprint and a cachet showing the envelope was issued for the Second Conference of the Federation of Czechoslovak Philatelists. And finally, Fig. 5 shows an airmail envelope with a 6kčs. imprint of the top portion of a balloon and an imaginative cachet on the left. The cancels indicate the letter went by balloon mail on Sept. 16, 1978.

Cachets such as these are always found on the left side opposite the addressee lines. Most of them are similar to the cachets found on first day covers. However, starting around 1930 and continuing until almost 1970, pictorial cards were in vogue. For a single printed image of a stamp, the Ministry of Posts issued as many as 18 cards, each with a different photographic subject. Fig. 6 and 7 show two cards with photos of spas opposite a 50h imprint of Masaryk. They belong to a set of 36 pictorial cards issued in 1929. The cards illustrated here were favor-cancelled. Hence they are considered "used", not "mint". Other pictorial cards included subjects like mountain views, towns and cities, architectural structures, sporting events, etc. In one particular case, a set of cards contained several hundred different pictures.

In the early 1970's our Society decided to expand the Czechoslovakia section of the Higgins and Gage "Priced Catalog of Postal Stationery of the World". In cooperation with the late Edward G. Fladung of H & G Inc., it undertook to issue a Supplement to that section.

Wolfgang Fritzsche, our former circuit manager, was in charge of compiling the material which was published as the May 1974 issue of the CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST. Today, almost 20 years later, a second Supplement is being prepared by members of our editorial staff in cooperation with a few philatelic experts in Prague. This Supplement, when completed, will update the nation's Postal Stationary in catalog form up to the end of the united era when, on January 1, 1993, the country peaceably split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

This catalog will contain an innovative system of numbering. Unlike Scott's, there will be but one number for each individual item and that number will list the face value, description of item, catalog price and illustration. Gone will be the concept of listing each illustration under a different number than the item itself. The editorial staff firmly believes this will simplify the user's search in finding whatever he is looking for.

--Phillips B. Freer

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