



# THE CZECHOSLOVAK Specialist



Official Bi-Monthly Journal of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately,  
an Incorporated Non-Profit Organization  
Winner of Numerous Philatelic Literature Awards

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A.P.S. Unit 18

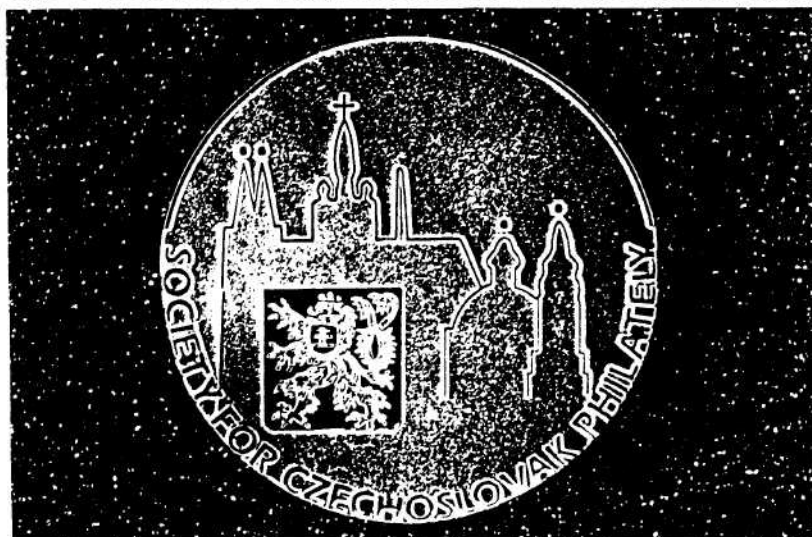
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## NEW SOCIETY PHILATELIC AWARDS MEDAL



*(Accompanying article on page 26)*

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## PNEUMATIC TUBE MAIL OF VIENNA AND PRAGUE

An original article  
by Henry Hahn

We are rapidly approaching the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the initiation of pneumatic mail service in Prague, which occurred on March 4, 1899. Unfortunately, we noticed no mention of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of the Vienna pneumatic service on March 1, 1875 in any US publication. If, indeed, no article was published, we would have missed an important date in the history of philately. Let this not happen with Prague.

It would be highly presumptive and in fact unnecessary to attempt detailed coverage of this entire subject. This has already been accomplished rather comprehensively by A. H. Godden<sup>1</sup> who cites a half dozen references and acknowledges the assistance of over a half dozen researchers and collectors. A more recent study by Smid<sup>2</sup> dealing with the pneumatic system in Prague, soon to be updated by this author, are excellent guides and provide the basic information needed by students of this fascinating subject.

The objective of this paper is primarily to present some interesting material not shown elsewhere, and to arouse interest among collectors. This interest has, in our experience, declined somewhat in the past decade. Gone are two of the truly great collectors -- Mr. Zdeněk Kvasnička of Prague and Dr. Ernst Theimer of New Jersey, both of whom were responsible for generating my interest in this subject.

Postal stationery for use in pneumatic tube mail was issued by Austria-Hungary, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. While the system operated in Prague during the period of the Protectorate, no postal stationery was issued. The invention of the pneumatic tube for mail transport is attributed to the Czech, Josef Ressel, who is better known and commemorated as the inventor of the screw for ship propulsion. Credit for the construction of the Vienna pneumatic mail system is given to Franz Felbinger, who went on to construct similar systems in Munich and Hamburg. Later in life, Felbinger turned to painting, studying art in Brno and Munich. He died in the Moravian town of Třebíč in 1906. Hence the early Czech connection.

While the Vienna system, referred to as the "Rohrpost", was not the world's first such system, Austria-Hungary was first to issue pneumatic mail postal stationery when operations opened to the public on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1875. The first system consisted of ten (10) stations. During its eighty years of operation it was continuously expanded to where it eventually included well over 100 stations.

Service in Prague was opened to the public almost a quarter of a century after the opening of the Vienna Rohrpost -- on March 4, 1899. The initial system included just three stations -- the Main Post Office of Jindřišská Street (Prague 1), the post office on Malý Rýnek in the Old Town (Prague 2), and a station on Malostranské Náměstí (Prague 10). This was later extended. In 1904 a line was laid between the post office in Jindřišská and Královské Vinohrady, and in 1908 the station at Hradčany was established. By 1908 the Prague system extended 3 1/2 miles. As in Vienna, red mail boxes were installed to collect pneumatic tube mail.

The Vienna pneumatic letter rate in 1875 was 20 Kr compared to just 3 Kr for ordinary local letters. When postcards were introduced in 1879, the pneumatic card rate was 10 Kr, compared with the ordinary card rate of 2 Kr. The 20 Kr letter rate was reduced to 15 Kr when letter cards were introduced in 1887. Letter cards also required 15 Kr franking. Nearly twenty (20) rate changes occurred in Vienna between 1875 and the demise of the publicly accessible system. These are as follows:

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From	Postcards	Letters	Lettercards
March 1, 1875	10 Kr	20 Kr	--
October 2, 1887	10 Kr	15 Kr	15 Kr
January 1, 1900	20 Heller	30 Heller	30 Heller
January 16, 1907	25 H	45 H	35 H
October 1, 1916	38 H	45 H	45 H
September 1, 1918	70 H	80 H	80 H
January 15, 1920	85 H	100 H	100 H
April 15, 1920	170 H	200 H	200 H
February 1, 1921	4 Kronen	3.5 Kronen	4 Kronen
August 1, 1921	12 K	13 K	13 K
December 1, 1921	25 K	27.5 K	27.5 K
May 1, 1922	62.5 K	70 K	70 K
August 21, 1922	250 K	280 K	280 K
September 18, 1922	500 K	560 K	560 K
November 1, 1922	1000 K	1120 K	1120 K
August 1, 1923	2300 K	2600 K	2600 K
December 1, 1923	2500 K	3000 K	3000 K
December 1, 1924	2700 K	3500 K	3500 K

Postage rates in Prague were identical to those in Vienna up to the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic. These were as follows:

From	Postcards	Letters	Lettercards
March 3, 1899	10 Kr	15 Kr	15 Kr
January 1, 1900	20 Heller	30 Heller	30 Heller
January 16, 1907	25 H	45 H	35 H
October 1, 1916	38 H	45 H	45 H
September 1, 1918	70 H	80 H	80 H
May 15, 1919	+ 60 h (ČSR)	+ 60 h	+ 60 h
August 1, 1920	+ 1 Kč	+ 1 Kč	+ 1 Kč
December 15, 1932	+ 40 h	+ 40 h	+ 40 h
November 1, 1940	+ 1 K (Protect.)	+ 1 K	+ 1 K

Up to May 15, 1919 the rates represent the full rate. From that date on the rate represents the surcharge for pneumatic delivery above the regular postal rate.

The last pieces of postal stationery for pneumatic service were issued by Austria in 1933 and by the Czechoslovak Republic in 1932. Nevertheless, the Vienna pneumatic mail system remained available to the public to 1956, while the Prague system unofficially ceased operating as such when rates were no longer published in 1945.

While letters were sometimes not folded in insertion into the pneumatic mail canisters (being rolled along the outer edges of the cylinders), postcards and lettercards were generally folded once or twice for placement in the center of the canister. Hence a fold in such postal stationery is not considered to render an item defective; it is in fact additional proof of pneumatic transport.

For the sake of completion, we must mention a third pneumatic postal system in Austria-Hungary, that of Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad) which linked the main post office with a branch office -- a distance of only 3/4 of a mile. The purpose was to accelerate the dispatch of telegrams during the summer months from the branch office to the main post office, from whence they were forwarded by wire. The system was not available to the public except during the course of a philatelic exhibition,



which lasted from August 20<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1909. Privately produced post cards embodying the 1908 diamond jubilee portrait of the Emperor were produced and mailed. In addition, purple commemorative postmarks were used and cancellations reading "ROHRPOST KARLSBAD" were applied to mail sent from the branch post office to the main post office during the show. The system was used by the post office until the summer of 1945.

As indicated earlier, the regularly issued pneumatic postal stationery, the postmark types, and the postal markings are well documented.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> I shall limit myself to describing some of the less common varieties of these.

#### Letters and Envelopes

The first is a folded letter -- shown in Figure 1 -- representing the first postal stationery in the world issued exclusively for pneumatic mailing. While such letters



Fig. 1

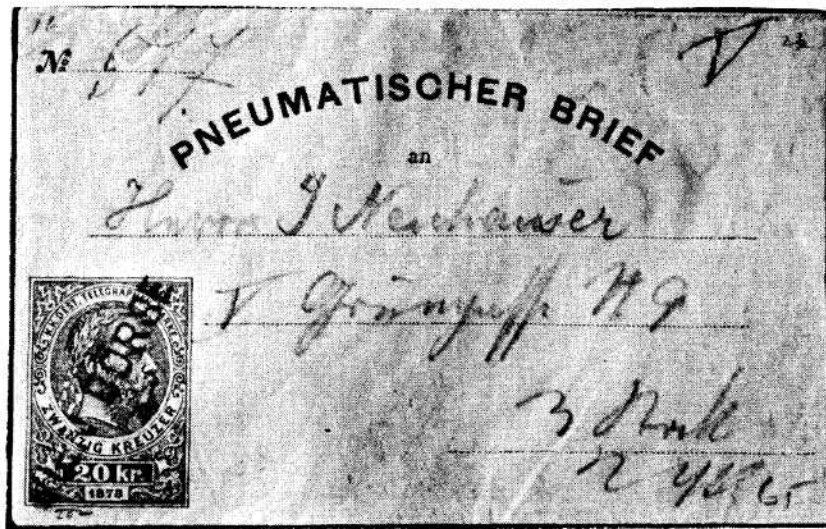


Fig. 2

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generally bear a postmark of any one of the first ten (10) stations in Vienna, this one is pen canceled. The postal markings include green crayon markings "30" which is a postal sequence number, and a Roman "III" which is the office of destination, also referred to as the "Intradierungs-Chiffre". The letter was posted at 8 a.m. on February 12, 1876 and was delivered to the addressee at 9 a.m.

A typical early envelope is shown in Figure 2. Envelopes of this issue had two flap designs, one with tongue and one cut straight. The one illustrated has a straight cut flap. It is postmarked "WIEN BORSE" which then was the provisional stock exchange on the Schottenring. It was posted on February 15, 1876 in the afternoon. The penciled sequence number on the upper left is "577", and the destination is Station "V", which was the telegraph office on the Karntnerring.

The last of the 20 Kr envelopes bearing the Telegraph Stamp was issued in 1892. The following year there was issued a new envelope bearing the Double Eagle design, shown in Figure 3. This cover bears the sequence number "46" in blue crayon, and the destination as "1" in red crayon. It was posted at FLEISCHMARKT on September 15, 1887 and received at TELEGRAPHEN-CENTRALE between 1 and 2 p.m. The "N" in the postmarks stand for "Nachmittags" (afternoon).

The lowering of the rate from 20 Kr to 15 Kr is reflected in the envelope of the issue of 1887, shown in Figure 4. The letter shows a penciled sequence number "8", a blue crayon destination number "9", and is dated October 10, 1888. It was posted at KARNTNERRING and received at TABORSTRASSE both between 6 and 7 p.m. -- the "A" designated "Abends" (evening).

A new imprinted stamp design showing Emperor Franz Josef's profile was introduced in 1890 and is shown in Figure 5. The letter was posted at TELEGRAPHEN-CENTRALE on May 18, 1891 at 1:40 p.m. and receiving postmarked at LANDSTR. HAUPTSTR. between 1 and 2 p.m. Its penciled sequence number is "40", and its blue crayon destination is marked "10".



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

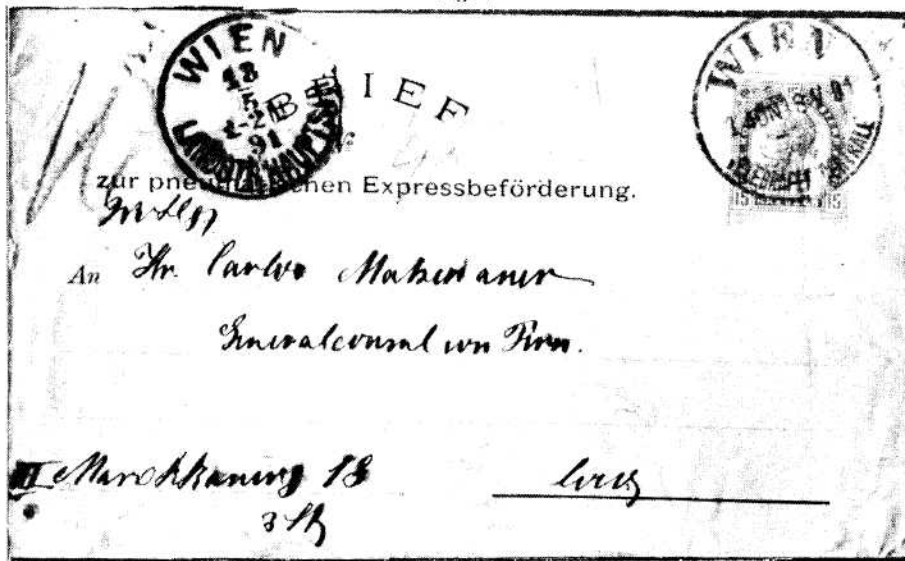


Fig. 5

The letter shown in Figure 6 is of the first issue introduced for use in Prague in 1898. The letter bears the penciled sequence number "33" and is destined for Station "1", marked in blue crayon. Posted at PRAGUE 2 (Old Town) it was addressed to Kgl. Weinberge (Královské Vinohrady), where at the time the pneumatic tube did not extend. It arrived at PRAGUE 1, the MAIN POST OFFICE at Jindřišská Street at the same hour as it was posted, at 10 a.m. From PRAGUE 1 it was delivered by courier, arriving at KRÁL VINOHRADY at 12 noon.

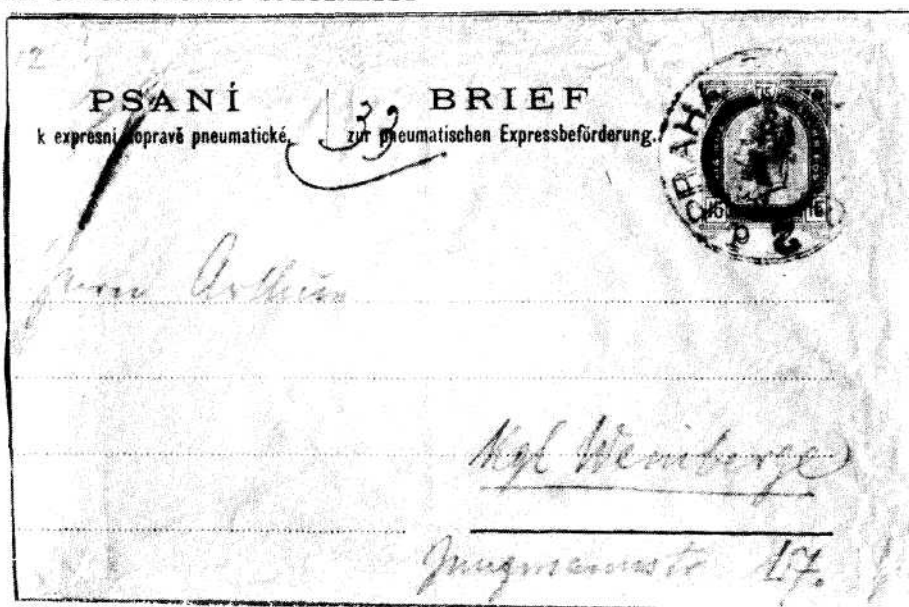


Fig. 6

With the change in currency on January 1, 1900, the pneumatic letter rate was changed to 30 Heller. With separate printings for Vienna and Prague, the issues of 1900, 1902, and 1904 reflect that rate. The rate was increased to 45 Heller in 1907, at which time a single envelope for use in Vienna and Prague was issued in orange-brown color. The last envelope issued by Austria-Hungary appeared in 1908. Its imprinted stamp represented a change in design, showing Emperor Franz Josef as shown in Figure 7. This letter was arrival postmarked in Vienna Station 62 on

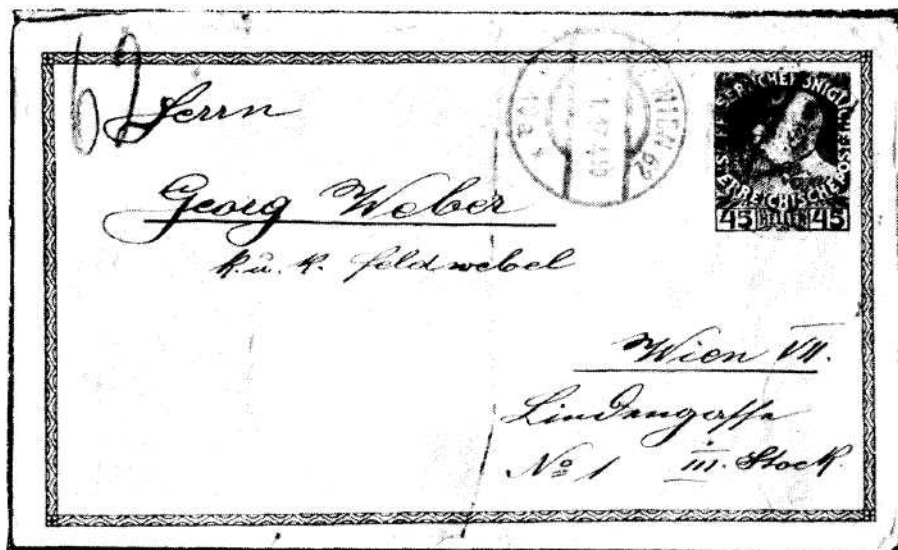


Fig. 7

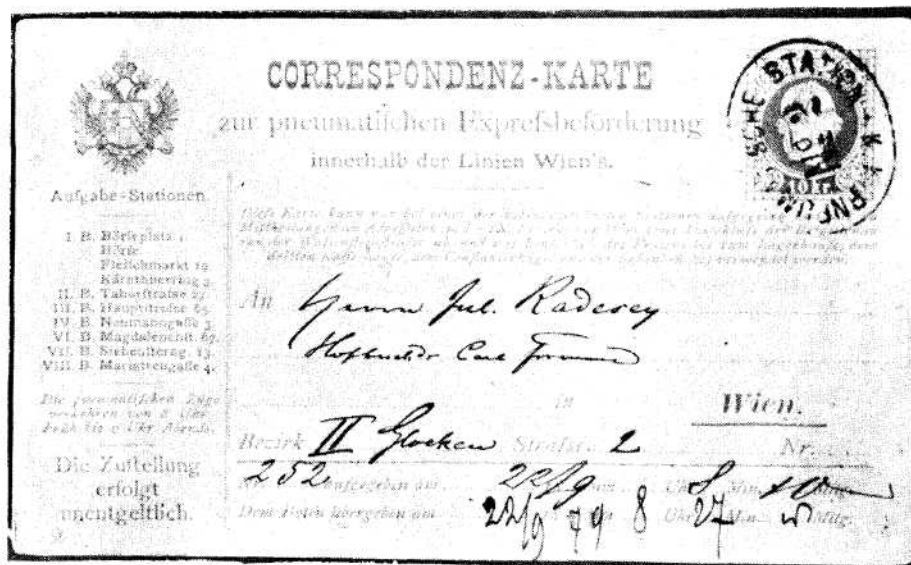


Fig. 8

January 12, 1917 at 4:50. It shows no sequence marking, but its destination is shown in blue crayon as "62".

## Postcards

The first pneumatic tube postcard issued in 1879 is shown in Figure 9. It is identified by having the 10 existing stations listed on its left side, anhaving the word "Bezirk" (district) located on the line below "Wien". The card was posted at Station

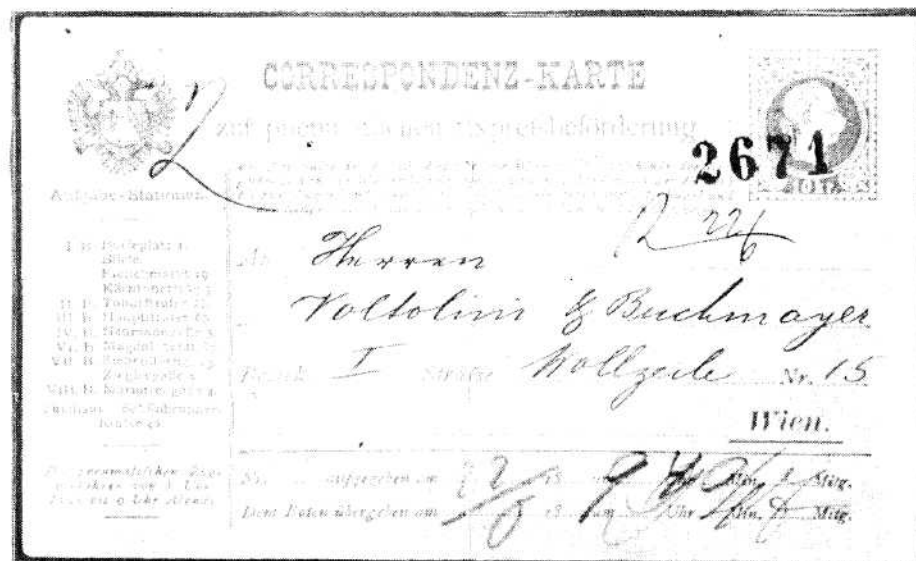


Fig. 9



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2, located in the I<sup>st</sup> District at FLEISCHMARKT 19 on September 22, 1879 at 8:10 a.m. It was dispatched by courier at 8:27 a.m. in the II<sup>nd</sup> District, Station 3, located at TABORGASSE 27.

A rather curious postmark, shown in Figure 9, occurred in 1882, when pneumatic tube mail was postmarked with sequential numbers. Whether this postmark was used in other years is not known. The card is of the altered issue of 1880, Type a with d ZIEGLERGASSE (Station listing VII.B.) spelled with long "s's". It was posted on June 22, 1882 at 9:40 a.m. and dispatched to Station 2.

Pneumatic tube postal stationery with supplemental franking is found for many reasons, the most prevalent of which is upfranking to meet new postal rates and mail going from one city to another, where the supplemental franking is to pay for the regular inter-city postage. Only later, in the Czechoslovak Republic, was supplemental franking applied for personal delivery service. The postcard illustrated in Figure 10 is of the issue of 1893, of the ultramarine/grey-blue shade. It was posted in Vienna 1/1 (First District/First Postal District) Pneumatic Mail Office 2 on October 1, 1894, at 4:10 p.m. (N = Nachmittags); transit postmarked in Vienna 2/2, Pneumatic Mail Office 28, at 4:20 p.m.; and arrival postmarked in Breslau, where it arrived on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The postage (treaty rate) to Breslau was 5 Kr. Pneumatic Mail Office 28, indicated by blue crayon as well as transit postmark, was located at the Nordbahnhof (North Railroad Terminal) where the card was transferred to the train.

Cards wandering through the Vienna Pneumatic Mail System are not common, but do exist as illustrated in Figure 11. The card, issue of 1900 (first card issued in Heller denomination) was posted at Vienna 2/7, Station 129 on July 29, 1901 at 9:20 a.m. The card was dispatched (black crayon marking) to Station 68 where it arrived at 10:40 a.m. It was then dispatched to Vienna 9/4, Station 69, arriving there at 10:50 a.m., from there to Vienna 19/1, Station 117 arriving at 11:10 a.m., and finally arrived at its correct destination, Vienna XIX<sup>th</sup> District, Station 118 between 12 noon and 1 p.m. All that apparently due to an error by the original postal dispatcher who did not notice the sender's marking for the XIX<sup>th</sup> district at the lower left.

Another card with supplemental inter-city franking dispatched from Prague to Berlin is shown in Figure 12. Since mail to Berlin was treated as domestic mail per

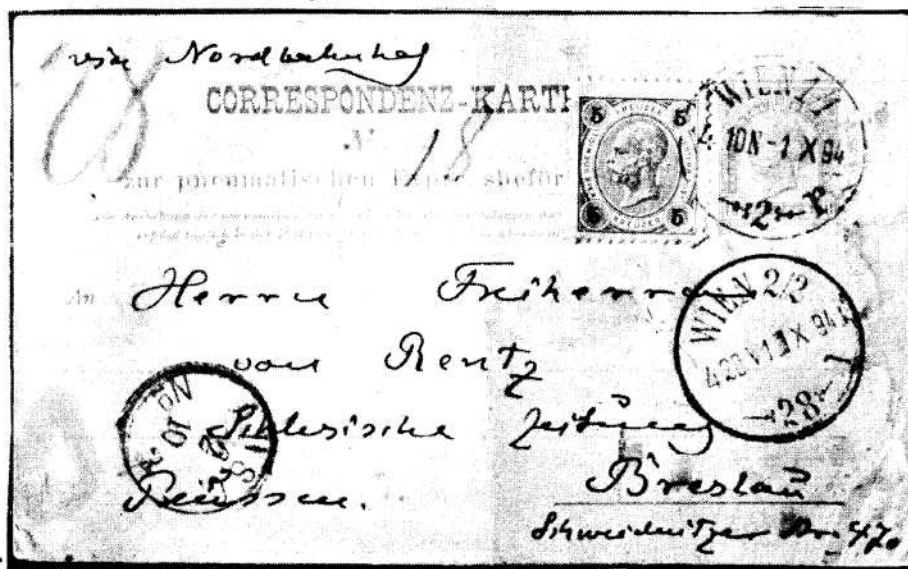


Fig. 10

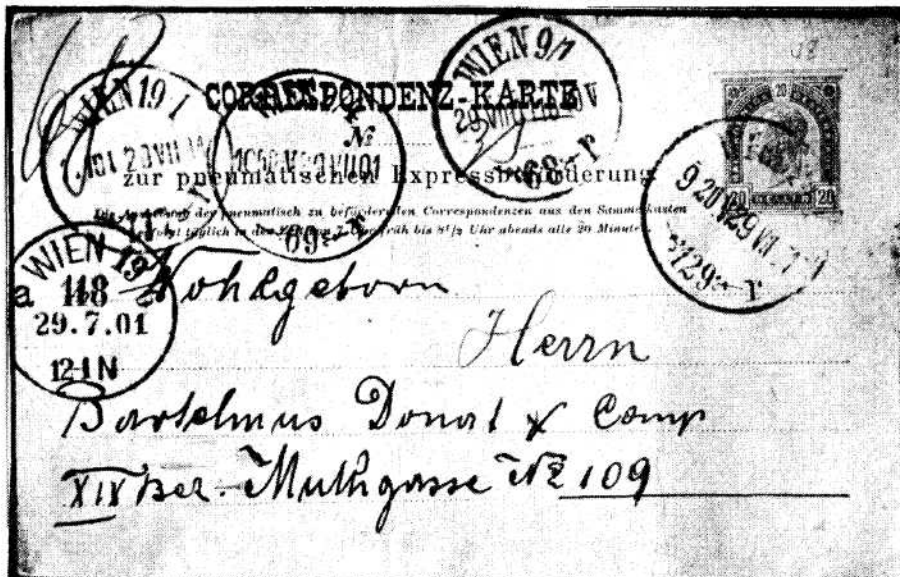


Fig. 11

Austro-German Postal Treaty, the supplemental franking applied is only 5 Heller, to pay the difference between the Prague Pneumatic Mail rate and the domestic rate. The card was mailed in Prague on May 8, 1906. Arrival postmark shows delivery in Berlin on May 9, 1906.

Upfranking by privately imprinting the 5 Heller old Franz Josef design or the new KFJ Jubilee design was carried out both in Vienna and Prague to meet the increase in rate from 20 Heller to 25 Heller, effective on January 16, 1907. The imprinting was done over the postcard issues of 1900 and 1904, both the single and double cards.

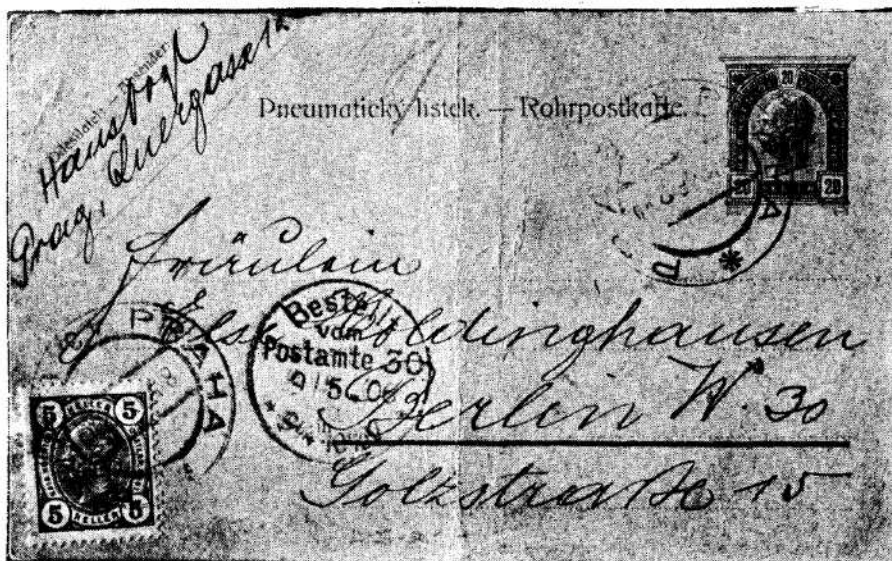


Fig. 12

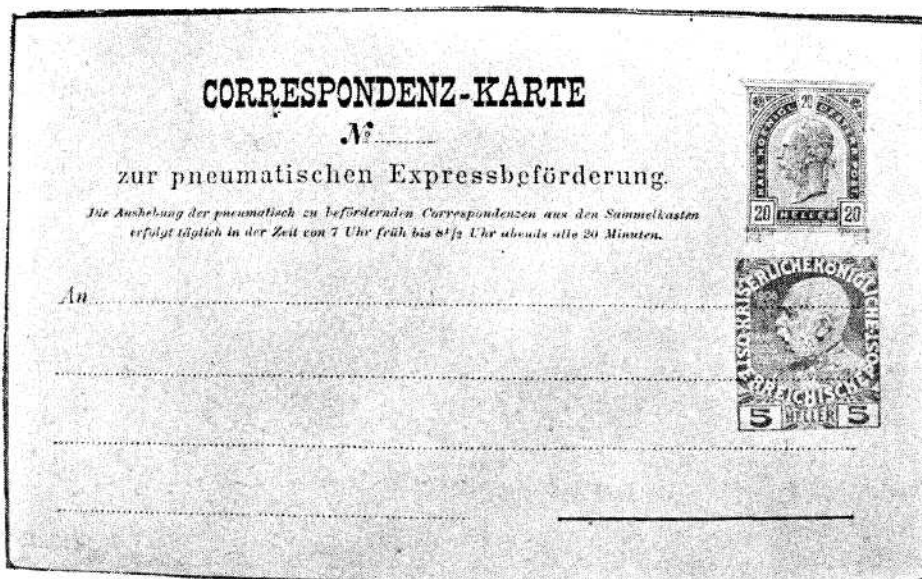


Fig. 13

The imprinting of the KFJ Jubilee 5 Heller stamp over both portions of the 1900 Prague issue of the double card is shown in Figure 13.

Upfranking due to another rate increase, that of October 1, 1916 from 25 Heller to 38 Heller, was accomplished by supplemental franking by adhesives to the postcard issue of 1906. The 13 Heller supplemental franking (10 Heller + 3 Heller) was added to the card -- shown in Figure 14 -- posted in Vienna IV<sup>th</sup> District, Station 50 on November 2, 1916. The card is arrival postmarked in Vienna 18/1, Station 110 at 10:30 a.m. The note on the upper left translates: "If delayed - will make claim". The



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

postal dispatcher originally marked the card in blue crayon to Station 110, which he crossed out and marked for Station 114. However, Station 110 was the final destination as evidenced by the receiving postmark.

The last rate change in Austria-Hungary occurred on September 1, 1918 -- too late for the new card issue to be distributed in Prague. The change was from 38 Heller to 70 Heller. Subsequent rate changes in post-war Austria included a rate increase to 85 Heller, reflected in the card issue of 1920, and to 25 Kronen with issue of Austria's last card of 1922. Upfranking was accomplished both by private imprinting or supplemental franking or by application of adhesives. Shown in Figure 15 is a card of the issue of 1920, with supplemental adhesive franking of 10 Kronen + 1 Krone + 15 Heller to meet the rate effective April 15, 1920 and valid through August 21, 1922. The card shown in Figure 15 was posted in Vienna on November 12, 1921 at 11 a.m. and marked in red crayon for Station 50.

*(To be continued next issue,*

✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠

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## THE CONTRACT POST OFFICE (POŠTOVNA) IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

An original article by Karel Holoubek  
trans. by Savoy Horvath and Ludvik Svoboda

The Czech Contract Post Office (CPO) serves the public by collecting and forwarding mail from places that are distant and remote from populated areas, yet are at times frequented by a lot of people. At first this was mainly in vacation areas so that tourists would not have to travel to distant post offices to send greetings to friends and relatives.

The name "Poštovna" comes to us from the Czech word "Pošta" (post office). It is also an historical matter as the first Czech CPO's are credited to the Austro-Hungarian empire. They were first established in Bohemia in 1874. At that time -- the official language being German -- they were called "Postablage" or "Briefablage". But in Hungarian they were called "Postai ügynökség". Based upon what services they provided the public, they were later divided into CPO's Class I or II. Their expansive growth reached its peak right after 1900.

The people who operated the CPO's (they were called Poštovní) were not the employees of the Czech postal system. They were just local people like innkeepers, store owners, tobacconists, or other dependable citizens. Their selection for this post was a competitive process. Typically the CPO was located in a small area of the business place with a service counter and a mail depository box.

The operators signed a service contract with the postal system which included a promise to maintain the privacy of the mails. In return, they were paid according to the kinds of services they provided. These typically included handling submitted mail, collection of mail from the deposit boxes, delivery of accumulated mail to the Czech postal system and, in certain cases, even included personal delivery of mail. These services always included the selling of postage stamps. A percentage of the stamp sales went to the CPO operators. Thus, it is easy to see that the name used in the USA of "Contract Post Office" best expresses the status of these institutions.

In 1918, the new state of Czechoslovakia absorbed the existing CPO's into its own postal system. They continued functioning throughout the First Republic, lasted throughout German occupation of WWII, and even into the Second Republic of 1945. Then, however, the general liquidation of all private property after the Communist takeover in 1948 also began impacting the CPO's. The last year of their existence is generally reported as 1958.

With the fall of the Communist regime in November of 1989, the new leadership conducted an evaluation of the economy and effectiveness of some of the former CPO operations. This process resulted in the reappearance of the CPO system with the first three going into service in 1993 (see table in Fig.1).

---

<u>Contract Post Office</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>Opened/Closed</u>	<u>Accountable Post Office</u>
Praha, Dolní Nové Město	1993 1.1.		Praha 07
Tolštejn	1.5.		Jiřetín pod Ještědem

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Kolín 40		1.10.		Kolín 2
Proskovice		1.11.	30.6.95	Ostrava 24
Bor-Vysočany	1995	1.1.		Bor u Tachova
Bujanov		1.6.	1.12.96	Kaplice 1
Pozlovice		1.6.	1.4. 1.8.96	Luhačovice
Sněžka		1.9.		Pec pod Sněžkou
Kobyly		1.10.		Pěčín u Liberce
Praha 1001		1.12.		Praha 10
Lesná u Tachova	1996	1.1.	13.5.	Tachov 1
Ždánice		1.4.		Kostelec nad Černými Lesy
Dobré Pole		1.5.	2.5.	Březí u Mikulova
Valašské Meziříčí		1.6.		Valašské Meziříčí 1
Chomutov 50	1997	1.1.	2.1.	Chomutov 1
Sosnová		1.3.	3.3.	Česká Lípa 1
Rožnov pod Radhoštěm		18.5.	16.5.	Rožnov pod Radhoštěm 1
Bulovka		?		?
Velkomoravské Mikulčice		1.6.		Hodonín 1

Figure 1. Contract post offices in the Czech Republic, when they were established, and what regular post office is accountable for their operation.

Not until 1994 did it become clear what the new CPO postmark cancels were going to look like. The traditional rectangular frame CPO cancel that had been used previously (Fig. 2) was abandoned, and a regular round postal cancel was introduced (Fig. 3). To distinguish these CPO cancels from normal ones, the locations of some of the cancel elements (posting location name, cross stars, and distinguishing numbers) were moved -- only the date bridge design remained unchanged. We know in addition, however, that there are some varieties to the design with respect to the cross stars, the ZIP code, and the general image.

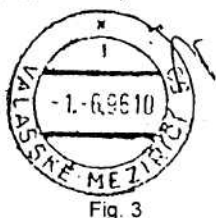


Fig. 3

printed up (Fig. 4).

Some of the CPO's provide additional services --



Fig. 2

While the previous practice was for the CPO to only handle normal mail (letters and post cards), the Czech Republic's CPO's accepted even registered mail. Thus, they needed registered mail labels. At first, they had for their use only registry labels from either their superior postal authority or ones that were blank. Only later were their own labels

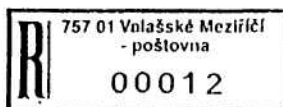


Fig. 4

accepting parcel post packages, processing postal money orders, selling newspapers/periodicals/picture post cards/national lottery tickets. In this way we can distinguish that there are several different types of CPO's.

Let's first look at the Poštovna -- KOLÍN 40. This CPO operates adjacent to the professional school where the postal admin-

istration educates and trains its new employees. It uses a machine cancel with accompanying text advertising the school (Fig. 5).

Next, we examine the two CPO's -- DOLNÍ NOVÉ MĚSTO and CHOMUTOV 50. These were established in large philatelic sales establishments, so they have a very commercial character to them.



Fig. 6

1. Žákovská poštovna v ČR  
SOU  
poštovního a telekomunikačního  
Masarykova 5, 280 02 Kolín 2  
tel.: 0321/276 30



Fig. 5

Then we have the CPO's of the more traditional style that service locations of visiting tourists -- HRAD TOLSTĚJN, VELKOMORAVSKÉ MIKULČICE, SNĚŽKA, and ROŽNOV pod RADHOŠTĚM. The last two have their normal cancels enhanced with added illustrations (Fig. 6) and even sometimes with an additional cancel (Fig. 7).

The CPO -- PARDUBICE 50 -- serves a large mail order house. This means that an overwhelming part of their postal business comprises packages and invoice processing.

The CPO -- BOR-VYSOČANY (BOR u TACHOVA) -- serves a group of businesses in an extensive project which is located at an inconvenient distance from any city or postal service. It provides services which are practically the same as a regular post office.

Finally, the CPO's -- POZLOVICE, KOBLY, LESNÁ u TACHOVA, and TYRA -- replaced nearby post offices.

Some of the CPO's have already been closed (see table in Fig. 1). Since the CPO's are still in an experimental stage, it is possible to predict that as time passes new ones will be created as others are faded out, and, just as the cancel and registry labels were changed, so the CPO services and operations will change. Although the CPO's may only be with us for a relatively short time, they bring with them many interesting philatelic opportunities, and we have not seen the last of them.



Fig. 7

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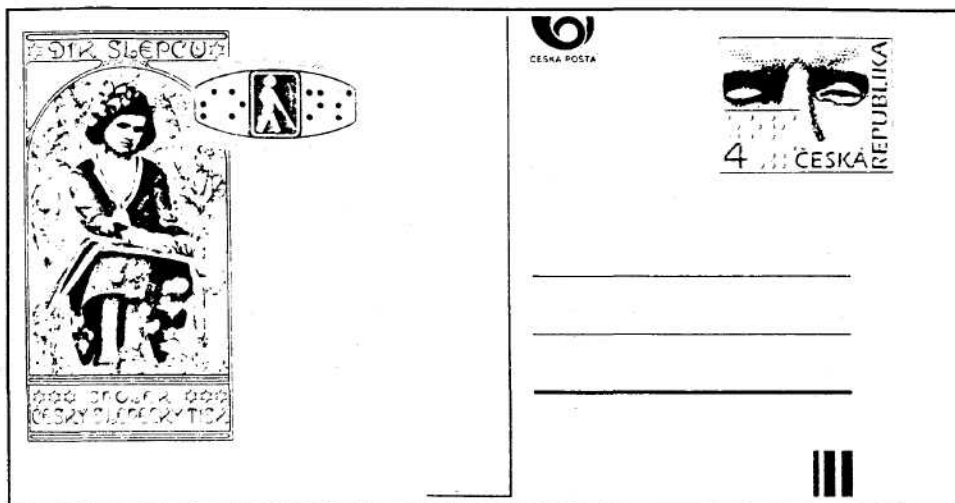
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## ANOTHER POST CARD FORGERY

by RNDr. Miroslav Vostatek  
and Savoy Horvath  
tr. by Henry Hahn

A second forged Czech postal card has appeared. Despite repeated warnings by the philatelic community in the Czech Republic of the ease with which typographed and recess printed cards may be forged, the Postal Service has taken virtually no precautions. The only measure they have taken -- the printing of one line in the address portion by microscopic lettering -- is grossly inadequate.



Second Type of Forgery

As one of the collectors has verified in the State Printing Office, nothing resembling the forgeries was printed there, and it is certain that these are forgeries to defraud the Postal Service -- to the great joy of collectors who have another modern forgery to chase after.

The card that was forged was originally issued on May 14, 1997. It was a commemorative 4 Kč postcard for "The Problems of the Blind and Partially Sighted" [Ed.Note: For additional details on this postcard, see the "New Issues" section of this issue.] The forged postal card has so far appeared only in the city of Pardubice (eastern ČR) in December 1997. It was sold at most of the city's kiosk news stands. The print quality of the forgery is excellent.

The genuine postcard has the micro-imprinting on the first address line reading "ČESKA POŠTA · PTC · 1997". The forgery simply has a line of micro-dots. Another significant indicator of the genuine card is denser printing of both the title "ČESKA POŠTA" (under the post horn symbol) and the words "Sjednocená organizace nevidomých a slabozrakých ČR" around the oval red logo on the left of the card. In addition, the red color is more intense on the genuine card. In the forgery, the illustration of the blind woman differs somewhat (though only slightly) in the color shading -- the brown color is shaded toward gray. It is significant that in the forgery -- typical of recess printing -- the design consists of a series of variously intense colored dots. This is not so in the original. The paper in the genuine is white, while that of the forgery exhibits a barely noticeable brownish hue. In addition, the paper in the genuine is smoother.



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## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Two different forgeries have been discovered so far. The first is more similar to the genuine, while the second (illustrated here) is cut somewhat eccentrically, as a result of which the entire printing appears shifted to the left. In the first forgery, the distance between the left edge of the card and the illustration of the blind woman is about 4.5 mm. But in the illustrated second forgery, this distance is only 1.7 mm. This left edge distance measures about 5.5 mm in the genuine card. These numbers, of course, vary somewhat and must not be taken too literally.

\* \* \* \* \*

## EXCHANGE PARTNER

The following individuals have contacted the Society with a request for an exchange partner. Any exchange relationships are strictly between the two individuals, because the Society is a disinterested and uninvolved party.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Jiri Kasalek<br>Svat. Cecha 458<br>760 01 Zlin<br>Czech Republic  | He writes in perfect English; collects USA mint and used, including blocks, booklets, panes of 20, and sheetlets; offers Czech Republic and Slovakia; uses Scott/Michel/Yvert.            |
| 2. Jiri Fiala<br>582 63 Zdirec nad<br>Doubravou 12<br>Czech Republic | Understands some English, but prefers to correspond in Czech; collects new or used USA, Great Britain, Canada, and Australia including postal stationery and FDCs; offers Czech Republic. |

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### ADVERTISEMENT

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## TRIBUNA'S 9<sup>TH</sup> AUCTION

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## JERSEY BOUND IN MAY 98

We now have a few more details available for you to plan around for our annual meeting at NOJEX 98. The show hotel, the Meadowlands Hilton in Secaucus, NJ, has a standard room rate of \$92 a night. However, the NOJEX committee will be issuing \$10 daily discount vouchers that can be applied to that rate. These vouchers will be sent to our show coordinator, Edwin Lehecka. He will then see that each of our members staying at the show hotel gets one of these vouchers.

There will be free bus service on a regular basis to and from New York City. Although this is mainly to accommodate New York collectors, it could also be used by wives and others that would like to go to the Big City for a visit or to shop.

Our preliminary schedule for Society activities goes like this. There will be a Board Meeting on Friday, May 22, at 1 PM. As usual, there will be a Society table manned throughout the show that will serve as a focal point for Society activities. On Sunday, May 24, we will have our Society general meeting. Our guest speaker, member John Miskevich, will make a presentation titled "Czechoslovak Onward Airmail from New York 1933-41". We will have our traditional awards breakfast on Monday, May 25, during which three lucky exhibitors will be the first recipients of the Society's new medals. The next issue (May/Jun) will have final details on these events. Contact Ed Lehecka if you have any questions (908-232-4159).



## ALPHONSE MUCHA POSTCARDS

by Ludvik Svoboda

A number of months back I received a very interesting large envelope from one of our members -- Michael Rogers of Orlando, Florida.

The envelope contained copies of pages from an auction catalog from Butterfield & Butterfield, fine art auctioneers from San Francisco, CA. What made this auction so interesting was that there were 187 lots of Alphonse Mucha postcards included (131 from his French period and 56 from the later Czech period). While I didn't get the opportunity to bid on any of them (most of them were really out of my realm with the range of estimated values being \$150 - \$7500), I did call the auctioneers and had them send me a copy of the prices realized.

While reviewing the auction lots, I was amazed at the extent to which Mucha's works were applied. We of course know him as the designer of all the first stamps of liberated Czechoslovakia. But these lots really made me aware of why he is a world famous artist renowned for his exquisite Art Nouveau style lithographs.

To start with he gained early renown for work that he did in Paris (about 1894 - 1904), including many legendary pieces commissioned by Sarah Bernhardt to promote her performances. But he certainly didn't stop there. His artistic flamboyance and generous employment of folk art motifs found their way onto posters, postcards, restaurant menus, calendars, invitations to formal functions, programs for performances, wall panels, stationery, banquet menus, magazine covers, fan designs, and ads for motorcycles, cigarette papers, cognac, wine, champagne, and even corsets. The various illustrations that were used for these

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

venues were then also applied to the manufacture of postcards. It is these postcards that represent the 131 lots of the French period as well as the 56 lots of the Czech period.

During his Czech period (about 1912 - 1939) he concentrated on more nationalistic themes. As a result, most of his works during this period were for festivals (including SOKOL), numerous charities, regional fairs, frescos for public and private buildings (including The Slavic Epic), the Komensky Society, the Moravian Teacher's Choir (he was born in Ivančice, Moravia), and the YWCA.



Fig. 1

I have selected a few of the lots to illustrate here and to give you an idea of the prices these items are realizing. Keeping in mind that all of these lots were postcards, if any member would like to have me check if a particular postcard sold, please drop me a line with a clear description (or better still a copy) of their card and a SASE, and I will let them know what price was realized. Since 136 of the 181 lots sold, there should be a good chance that I can provide a price.



Fig. 2

Figure 1. The Flowers. Group of four (Carnations, Irises, Lilies, and Roses), signed Mucha. Est. 750/1,000; sold \$805.

Figure 2. Moet et Chandon Champagne Menu Postcards. Set of 10, signed Mucha, circa 1900, the right side was blank to permit a restaurant to hand write the menu features of the day. Est. 5,000/7,500; sold \$4,312.50.



Fig. 3

Figure 3. Sarah Bernhardt. This design was used to advertise an article on Bernhardt from the magazine La Plume, signed Mucha. Est. 600/800; sold \$805.



Fig. 4

Figure 4. Design for Menu. Signed Mucha. Est. 150/200; sold \$103.50.

Figure 5. Design for a Calendar. Est. 350/500; sold \$258.75.



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

Figure 6. Brightness of Day (one of four Times of the Day set). Image taken from a set of decorative panels published in 1899. Est. 250/350; sold \$149.50.



Fig. 7

Figure 7. The Fruit & the Flower. Set of two, from a pair of decorative panels, signed Mucha. Est. 2,000/3,000; sold \$3,450.



Fig. 8

Figure 8. Spring Festival. This is widely considered the most beautiful card from Mucha's Czech period, circa 1928. The text on the bottom translates: Anniversary get together, exhibition and festival of the Czechoslovak songsters community, year 1928, in Prague. Est. 200/300; sold \$207.



Fig. 9

Figure 9. Y.W.C.A. Signed Mucha. Est. 400/600; sold \$287.50.



## EXCHANGE RATES

Over the past nine months there has been a significant change in the monetary exchange rates between the US dollar and both the Czech Republic koruna and the Slovak koruna. Similar changes have occurred with respect to other country currencies as well. But for the purposes of simplicity, we will limit our discussion to US dollars.

Last spring the typical exchange rates were a US dollar for about 25 CR korunas and 28 S korunas. Then occurred a monetary devaluation by the Czech Republic. As a result, the current exchange rates (as of Feb. 2, 1998) are one dollar for 35.47 CR korunas and 35.53 S korunas. These rates fluctuate daily. By the time that you are reading this article, the rate will almost certainly have changed to some degree again.

How do you know what the current rate is? If you live in a major city, the business section of your paper will possibly have these rates. If you can't find them there, go to a newsstand and look at the business/financial section of the Washington Post, the New York Times, or the Wall Street Journal. If the newsstand won't let you look at that piece of the paper, go to your library.

Why do you need to know this information? If you are conducting any kind of philatelic exchange with another member or person in the Czech Republic or Slovak

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Republic, then you need to know what comparable values you are dealing with. As an example, going by the rates quoted above, a standard 32 cent US stamp is the approximate equivalent of a 12 koruna stamp from either the Czech Republic or Slovakia.

If there is another significant movement in the exchange rates in the future, we will bring it to your attention.

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## MARCO POLO SHEETLET VARIETIES

by Frank A. Garancovsky

Two types of the 1994 Marco Polo souvenir sheetlet have surfaced. Mine were received in two different mailings, and the varieties were noted quickly. To my surprise a catalog published by FILETELIE PENKAVA failed to list this variety among others for 1993 and 1994. To date there has been no announcement in the philatelic press here or abroad.

I mentioned my find to other collectors in May while attending PACIFIC'97 in San Francisco. Since nothing has appeared in the meantime, I am happy to supply this article.

The varieties exist on the "elephant" stamps in the sheetlet, Scott #2916/Pofis #PL36 (Fig. 1). At first I felt that I had a printing shift variety. However, a check with other Czech collectors revealed one other collector had both types. I now feel that I have two distinct plate varieties.

Specifically, the varieties are found in the lettering of "ČESKA" and the cane held by Marco Polo. The letters have green diagonal lines throughout the word ČESKA and the body of the cane. In the stamps where these features are located



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

within the letter outlines and the body of the cane, I call Type I. The stamps that have these features protruding outside and to the left of these outlines are Type II. These specifications are constant in both stamps of each type sheetlet.

In the highly magnified copied



Fig. 3

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

illustration of Type I (Fig. 2), the features appear as solid colored lettering and cane. In Type II (Fig. 3), the features appear as shaded letters. Both types are readily discernable to the naked eye.

Having a specialized collection of Czech Souvenir sheets and sheetlet varieties, the variety is a first for the larger format issue printed by the new Czech Republic with more than one plate variety. Another is the Ema Destin sheetlet, Scott #2985/Pofis #114, providing four plate varieties.

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## SOCIETY MEDALS FOR PHILATELIC SHOW WINNERS

by Henry Hahn

At the PACIFIC'97 Board Meeting, the Society Directors appropriated funds for the design and manufacture of medals suitable for awards at Society exhibits and at exhibits featuring Czechoslovak stamps. I was given the task to have the medals designed and to arrange for the manufacture of 150 medals -- 50 each in gold, silver, and bronze.

The design was developed by Society member, Olech Wyslowsky (the medal -- shown a little larger than life -- graces the cover of this issue). His design was approved by the Board at their VAPEX'97 meeting in November. Its simplicity and elegance features the outline of Hradčany Castle and the seal of Czechoslovakia (including the Slovak seal) with the Society name arched along the bottom. The medals are finished in bright gold, silver, or bronze and have a diameter of 2 inches. They represent the prestige of our Society and will undoubtedly be treasured by our show winners for many years to come.

The medals will be available for awards at NOJEX'98 as well as at PRAGA'98 and all subsequent Society exhibits.

The manufacturer of the medals is National Custom Insignia, Inc., of Oldsmar, Florida. The final cost, including presentation boxes, was less than the amount appropriated by the Board.

The Society wishes to express its thanks and appreciation to Olech Wyslowsky for the excellent design.

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## Obituary

### WILLIAM ALEXANDER PAGE FRPSL 1921-1997

It is with the greatest sadness and regret that we received the following notice from Colin W. Spong, editor of CZECHOUT, the official publication of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain:

Alec, or Bill Page, as he was known to different societies passed away on Tuesday, 16 December 1997, in Livingstone Hospital, Dartford. Alec had suffered a relapse after treatment he had undergone for several serious operations during the past two years.

He was born in Hammersmith in 1921. At 14, he joined APV Engineering Company, where he completed 50 years service, retiring as Company Treasurer in 1985. During WW2 he joined the Royal Air Force as a Ground Wireless Operator, going first to South Africa, then serving three years in India.

Alec was a member and officer in a great number of local, national and international philatelic societies -- too numerous to list them all here. He joined the [British] Czechoslovak PS in 1976, was a member of the Committee by 1980, became Publications Officer, was elected Chairman in 1996, and a Life Member of the Society in 1997.

Alec visited many societies around the UK giving displays, but excelled in the writing, printing and distribution of bulletins and magazines for several societies, greatly serving the hobby he enjoyed so much.

He was a founding member, treasurer, and past Chairman of the Philatelic Writers Society. He had been writing magazine articles since 1947, mainly of a specialist content, including being the author of several monographs for both the South African and Czechoslovak Societies.

He will be greatly missed, and philately is the poorer for his going.

Colin W. Spong FRPSL

We extend our heartfelt condolences to Alec's family and friends. Our feelings could not be better presented than for you to read the personal tribute to Alec from our former editor, Mirko Vondra, in the "Letters to the Editor" section of this issue.

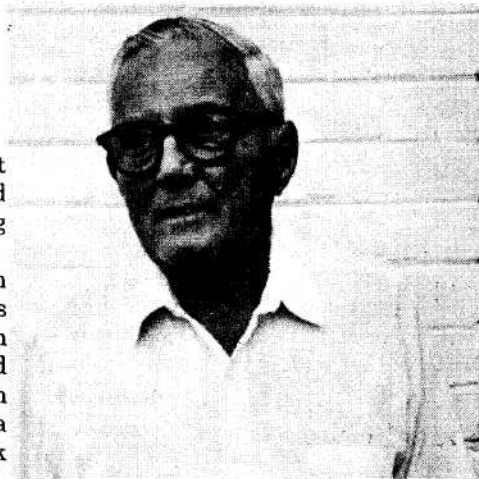
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## *Obituary*

### **OTAKAR M. KREJCI 1915-1997**

Just before Christmas Eve, we lost one of our beloved members, who died suddenly and mercifully without having suffered prolonged illness.

Otakar was born on May 31, 1915 in New York City. He and his parents returned to Skalica, Czechoslovakia in 1924, where he attended school and graduated from the Gymnasium (high school) in 1933. He returned to America in 1935 and worked at the Tatra Slovak Travel Bureau. During World War II, Otakar served in the U.S. Army Air Corps from which he was discharged in 1943. He went to work for the Czechoslovak Information Service in New York City. Later that year, the U.S. Office of War Information needed an announcer and writer for broadcasting to Czechoslovakia, and Otakar was able to fill that position. In 1954 the U.S. Information Agency, successor to the Office of War Information, was



## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

transferred to Washington, D.C. In this office he served in numerous positions -- writer, editor, announcer, Acting Chief, and finally Chief of the Czechoslovak Service. Otakar retired in 1981 after over 37 years of Government Service.

Otakar was primarily a collector of Slovakia, and for many years participated in the Society meetings of the Washington Branch.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Vera, sons Peter and Tom, and two grandsons, Chris and Andrew.

We shall cherish his memory.

---

## SALE OF UNBOUND SPECIALIST'S

The Society has back copies of the SPECIALIST available for sale to members at reduced prices. Years 1981-1996 are priced at 25 cents per copy. Prior years are priced at 50 cents per copy. We do not have all years complete, and in many cases only have a few copies of an issue. Therefore, the issues will be sold on a first come first served basis. Photocopies can be made (at cost -- about 3 cents per page) to provide a limited number of copies to complete some year's issues, if specifically requested.

You may order the SPECIALIST's which you wish to purchase by submitting a request to the Society Librarian:

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Chantilly, VA 20151-2613

Please include your membership number and a deposit of \$10.00 (make the check out to Richard Palaschak and not to the Society) to cover the cost of postage and packaging to mail the SPECIALIST's to you. (If you are purchasing less than five SPECIALIST's, the deposit may be reduced to \$5.00.) Unless requested otherwise, the SPECIALIST's will be mailed to you as Third Class mail. You will be billed for the SPECIALIST's which you are purchasing when they are mailed to you. Any balance from your deposit after subtracting the cost of postage and packaging will be applied to your bill (or refunded, if your total purchase cost plus postage is less than the deposit).

SPECIALIST's are available for the following years: 1966, 1968 to 1971, and 1973 to 1996. Not all years are complete! If you only want complete year sets, please say so; otherwise I'll send those copies currently available for any year which you request.

I sometimes obtain a very limited number of loose issues from earlier years; if you are missing an issue from one of these earlier years, I may be able to help, but these will be sold to you at the cost which the owner sets.

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## *Book Review*

### CATALOGUE OF PRIVATE OVERPRINTS ON CZECHOSLOVAK AND CZECH POSTAL STATIONERY, 1945 - 1996

An entirely new catalogue in scope and concept has been published, covering an area of philately which is virtually unknown among members of our Society.

Privately overprinted postal stationery -- together with such fringe philatelic areas as revenues, maximum cards, modern black prints, 1945 "Revolutionary" overprints, and others have become part of our hobby. While not accepted by many traditional collectors, they are nevertheless part of the modern scene, and deserve our attention.

The newest of the series of Trojan catalogs contains 432 pages, describing and illustrating (in black and white) essentially all private overprints that have appeared since 1945. The author points out that private overprints go back to Austria's first postcard issue, imprinted with advertising, price lists, etc. Overprints appearing since 1945 are divided into four categories:

- A. Those delivered to central postal institutions by the Czech postal service
- B. Those delivered to local post offices for private clients
- C. Surcharges custom-made for private clients
- D. Cachets, printed individually on any postal stationery

Group A began only in 1993, and such surcharges are classified as on the boundary between "official" and "private" overprints.

For each item listed, the catalog designates the cachet type, title of overprint, place of origin, catalogue number, overprint publisher, catalogue number of basic stationery, overprint color, general notes, and price in Kč. The catalogue prices of the items listed range between 10 Kč and 200 Kč, making such collecting attractive to young collectors and collectors with limited budgets. Catalogue numbers are listed as year of publication/sequence number for that year. Included in the back are introductory remarks in German and English as well as several indexes such as an index of localities where overprints originated, an index of overprints by categories A and B, a topical index, and an index of basic postal stationery that received overprints.

It is not intended that the catalogue will be re-published periodically, but that new material will be added in supplements to the basic catalogue. We recommend this catalogue to those of our members daring to enter this rather rich and relatively virgin byway of our hobby. It may, some day, achieve international (FIP) status, as has maximum philately and revenue collecting. The catalogue itself is, in our opinion, "first class". Watch for an announcement of its sale by our Society.

**Catalog of Private Overprints on Czechoslovak and Czech Postal Stationery, 1945-1996**, published by FILATELIE TROJAN, Prague 1997. Compiled and authored by Doc. Ing. Jaroslav Špaček, CSc.

Henry Hahn

*[Ed. Note: The Society has this catalog listed in Available Publications in this issue for \$12.00 post paid.]*

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## **Book Review**

### **Čsl. Armáda v Roce 1938 (The Czechoslovak Army in 1938)**

This book is an objective survey of the buildup period of the Czechoslovak Army up to 1933, its nonpartisan position and attitude during the crisis phase 1934/37 as well as in September 1938 when it had a staffing of 1.3 million men of proven battle

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

power. The 300,000 drafted Germans remained essentially unarmed and assigned to work units or were isolated in Slovak home bases. The Czechoslovak Army command operated under the supposition that Poland would remain neutral; however, the 558 km extension of the defensible border (caused by the annexation of Austria) came as a surprise.

Of interest to the reader is the differing assessment between the politicians and the military. Important to the collector is the organization of the mobilized units, their locations, their code names and the structure of their command elements. While the field posts are not mentioned, they can be reconstructed based on the presented documents.

In the high command structure of the army, it is interesting to note that not a single German or Hungarian name makes an appearance -- which was also true of the employee hierarchy of the democratic Czechoslovak Republic.

Čsl. Armáda v roce 1938; Pavel Šrámek. Edition Fakta vol. 1, Brno/Náchod 1996, 80 pages with numerous illustrations and maps.

Dr. Walter Rauch, Monheim  
*tr. from German by Henry Hahn*

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## New Issues

### 1998 ISSUE PLAN FOR CZECH REPUBLIC STAMPS

Date of Issue	Name of Issue	Number in set	Value Kč
Jan 20	Tradition of the Czech Stamp Production	1	12.60
Jan 20	Winter Olympics, Nagano 1998	1	7
Feb 4	Love	1	4
Feb 25	World Bobsled Championships at Špindler's Mill 1998	1	8
Feb 25	History of PRAGA Exhibitions (s/s)	1	30
Mar 25	Easter	1	4
Mar 25	100th Anniversary of Ondřejov Planetarium	1	4.60
Apr 1	The Prague of Charles IV	3	
	- Charles University		15
	- New Town		22
	- Parlérův Motif		23
Apr 23	World Day of Books & Author's Rights	1	10
Apr 23	Protection of the Environment -- Endangered Animals	4	
	- White Deer		8
	- European Elk		8
	- Field Partridge		4.60
	- Common Wood Grouse		4.60
May 5	EUROPA - National Celebrations/Holidays	2	
	- Ride of the Kings		11
	- Mardi Gras Masks		15



May 27	Anniversaries of Personalities:	3	
	- F. Palacký		4.60
	- F. Kmoch		4
	- R. Kubelík		6
May 27	150th Anniversary of the 1848 Revolution	1	15
May 27	For Children	1	4
Jun 17	PRAGA 98: Art on Stamps	2	
	- František Kupka		22
	- Paul Gauguin		23
Oct 7	UNESCO - Beauties of Our Country	2	
	- Kutná Hora		8
	- Lednicko/Valtice Countryside		11
Oct 28	PRAGA 98: 80th Anniversary, Founding of	3	4.60
	Czechoslovakia		5,12.60
Nov 18	Art on Stamps	2	
	- Jan Preisler		15
	- Josef Navrátil		16
Nov 18	Christmas	2	4, 6

[Ed. Note: Thanks to Savoy Horvath, Peter Kleskovic]

## CZECH REPUBLIC

by G. M. van Zanten

1. On January 1, 1998, the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Czech Republic issued a 12.60 Kč stamp entitled "The Tradition of Czech Stamp Production" (Fig. 1). This red-brown and green "stamp on a stamp" bears the design of the 1920 Agriculture and Science issue designed by the Czech painter, graphic artist, and sculptor Jakub Obrovský. The graphic designer was Jaroslav Fišer, and the engraver was Václav Fajt. The stamp was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print combined with photogravure in sheets of 30. This stamp was



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

also produced in a philatelic booklet containing 8 stamps and 4 labels bearing the PRAGA 1998 logo. A FDC in grey-blue shows a motif from the unaccepted design of the original stamp by Jakub Obrovský accompanied by the PRAGA 1998 logo.

2. On January 20, 1998, the Ministry issued a 7 Kč stamp commemorating the XVIII<sup>th</sup> Olympic Winter Games "Nagano 1998" taking place February 7 - 22, 1998 (Fig. 2). This multicolored stamp shows the Olympic rings and a flying hockey puck on which are Olympic rings in grey all against a background made up of the grooved ice rink floor. The designer

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

of the issue was Aleš Najbrt, while the engraver was Bohumil Šneider. The stamp was produced by multicolored offset in sheets of 50 pieces by Victoria Security Printing in Prague. A FDC in dark blue shows again the Olympic rings with two stylized hockey pucks.

3. On February 4, 1998, the Ministry issued a 4 Kč stamp entitled "Love" (Fig. 3). The black, ocher, red, blue, and gold stamp shows a flying Cupid -- with his bow drawn -- above a large red heart, ready to inspire true love for St. Valentine's Day. The graphic design was by Vladimír Suchánek, and Miloš Ondráček was the engraver. The production was by the Post Printing House in Prague using rotary recess print with photogravure in sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in gold illustrates a hand passing a rose accompanied by the text "With Love" in Czech.



Fig. 3

## Postal Stationery

4. On May 14, 1997, the Ministry issued a commemorative postcard dedicated to "The Problems of the Blind and Partially Sighted" (Fig. 4). The 4 Kč imprinted stamp depicts a partial portrait (only showing his blinded eyes) of Louis Braille (1809-1852) the inventor of the system for writing and reading by the blind. It is accompanied by a Braille form of the title of the magazine Zora which was founded in 1917 for the rehabilitation of blinded soldiers coming back from the front during WWI. In the left part of the card is Alfons Mucha's illustration "A Word of Thanks From the Blind" created in the 1930's for a sticker for the club "Czech Braille". These

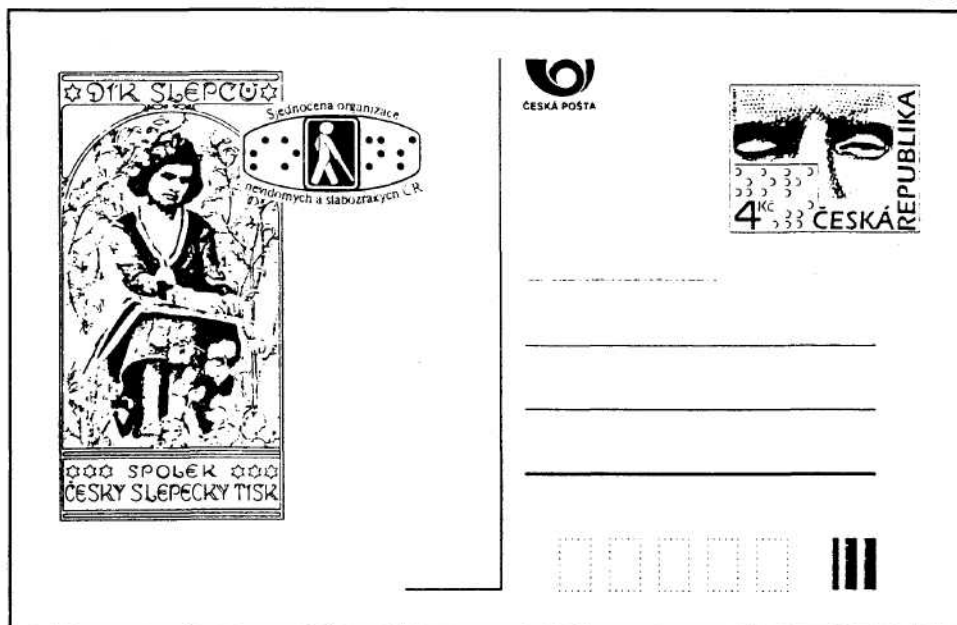


Fig. 4

stickers were given out by the club to its sponsors as thanks for their contributions. The illustration is joined by the logo for the United Organization of the Blind and Partially Sighted of the CR. The designer of the card was Jaroslav Fišer, it is brown and red, and it sold for 4.40 Kč.

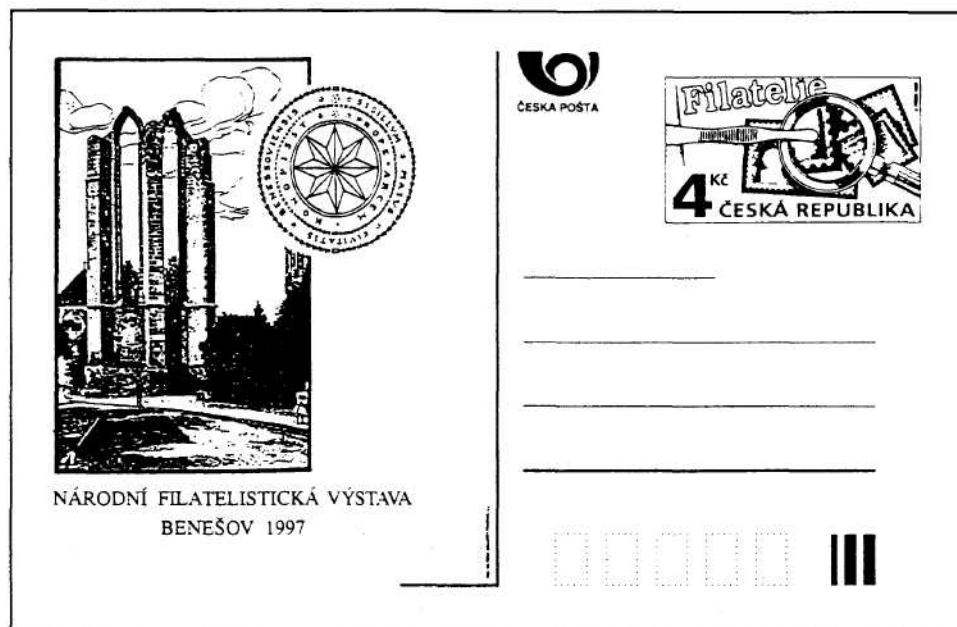


Fig. 5

5. On May 28, 1997, the Ministry issued a commemorative postcard for the "NATIONAL PHILATELIC EXHIBITION BENEŠOV 1997" (20-22 June 1997) (Fig. 5). The 4 Kč imprinted stamp depicts a philatelic "still life" including stamps, a magnifying glass, tweezers, and the word "Filatelie". The pictorial part of the card shows the ruins of the Minorite monastery in Benešov along with the seal of the city from around 1601. The designer of the card was Jaroslav Fišer, it is blue-black and blue, and it sold for 4.40 Kč.

6. On September 10, 1997, the Ministry issued a postcard for "Ozone Layer Protection" (Fig. 6). The card commemorates the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer. Czechoslovakia was one of the 157 states that signed the protocol. The 7 Kč imprinted stamp depicts a drawing symbolizing life on earth, in water, and in the air. In the pictorial part of the card is the logo of the Montreal Protocol representing nature protection on earth. It shows a large hand cupped over a symbolic earth made up of flowers, birds, and butterflies. Underneath the pictorial (in Czech) is "10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer 1987-1997". The designer of the card was Jaroslav Fišer, it is multicolored, and it sold for 7.40 Kč.

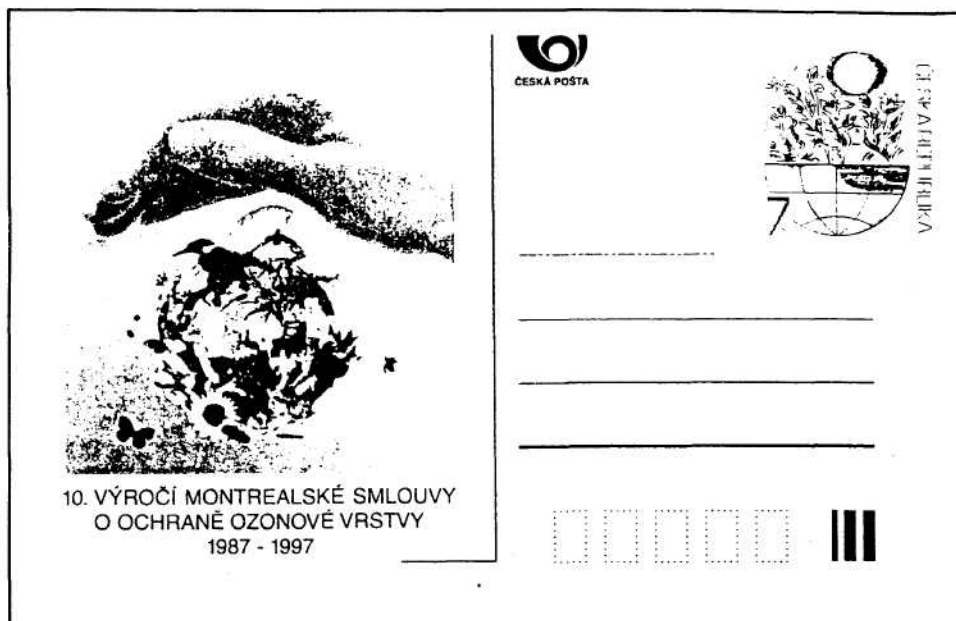


Fig. 6

7. On January 1, 1998, the Ministry issued a postcard to commemorate the "5<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC" (Fig. 7). The 4 Kč imprinted stamp depicts a figure 5 formed from five national flags accompanied by "1993-1998".

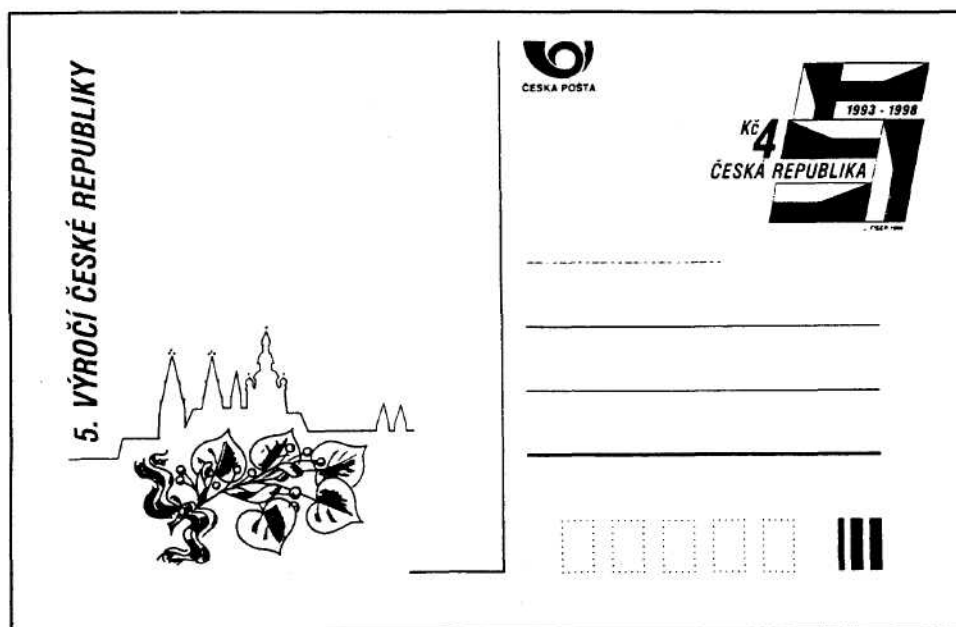


Fig. 7

The picture part of the card is a stylized outline panorama of Prague Castle and a lime twig with berries bound by a tricolor. The designer of the card was Jaroslav Fišer, it is black/red/blue/green, and it sold for 4.40 Kč.

## SLOVAKIA

by F. Garancovsky and G. M. van Zanten

8. On September 1, 1997, the Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications issued a special 4 Sk postage stamp to commemorate the "5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic" (Fig. 8). This multicolored stamp -- in red, blue, and gold -- shows the Slovak state shield (doubled cross sitting on a three topped hill) surrounded by lime leaves. The stamp was designed by Jozef Baláž and engraved by Martin Činovsky. It was printed by the Postal Stationery Printing House, Prague, using rotary-recess printing combined with recess printing in sheets of 50. A FDC in blue showing a special cancellation from Bratislava was also issued.



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

9. On September 17, 1997, the Ministry issued a set of 3 stamps -- each with a 9 Sk value -- from the "Nature Conservation" series with a "Mushrooms" theme (Fig. 9). The three stamps are arranged in a pyramid fashion on a handsome multicolored sheet measuring 155 x 103 mm. With names in Latin, the stamps show the mushrooms *Boletus aereus*, *Morchella esculenta*, *Catathelasma imperiale*, while the gutters and margins of the sheet show *Miriostoma coliforme*, *Clavariadelphus*

#### THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

truncatus, Tremiscus helvelloides, Leccinum rufum, and Sparassis crispa. All of the mushroom names, whether on the stamps or on the sheet, also appear in Slovak. The sheet/stamp design was by Dušan Kállay, with the engraving by Václav Fajt. The sheet was printed by the Postal Stationery Printing House in Prague using recess printing from flat plates combined with offset. Three FDC's were produced depicting additional mushrooms and each bearing a Bratislava cancellation.

10. On September 17, 1997, the Ministry issued a 9 Sk stamp commemorating the "6<sup>th</sup> World Half Marathon Championship, Košice 1997" (Fig. 10). The multicolored stamp shows competitors running through the streets against a background of the dominant architecture of Košice. The designer was Igor Piačka while the engraving was done by Bohumil Šneider. Printing was by the Postal Stationery Printing House in Prague using rotary-recess printing combined with recess printing on sheets of 50 stamps. The FDC in dark brown shows a group of running competitors and is canceled in Kosice.



Fig. 10

11. On October 15, 1997, the Ministry issued a set of 3 multicolored stamps in the "Year of Slovak Creative Art" series (Fig. 11). All three stamps were produced using multicolor recess printing from flat plates at the Postage Printing House of Postage Stamps in Prague. They are formed in the traditional sheetlet of four stamps with two blank fields between.

- The 9 Sk issue shows a painting titled "Ján Kupecký (1667-1740): A Self Portrait of the Artist Painting a Portrait of his Wife" from the National Gallery in Prague. Ján Kupecký was the son of poor weavers. Originally he wanted to learn his father's trade. However, he soon gave up and went to Zurich and then finally Italy, where he lived in Venice and Rome. It was here that he became an excellent portrait painter. In 1707 he went to Vienna, and became a painter for the aristocracy and even for members of the imperial family. For a short time in the 1720's he lived in Prague and painted a number of major works. In 1723 he moved to Nuremberg where he was a highly regarded portrait painter. Today, his works can be seen in many of the world's major galleries. Another of his portraits can be seen in the 1966 Czechoslovak first "Art on Stamps" series depicting "Mrs F. Wussin" [Sc. 1436, Pof. 1575]. The stamp design was by Martin Činovský, with



Fig. 11



engraving by Miloš Ondráček. The FDC in black shows a self portrait of J. Kupecký from a copper plate engraving by J. G. Saiter from 1758. The cancellation is from Pezinok.

The 10 Sk issue shows the figures of St. Lucia and St. Peter as seen on an altar in Bojnice. Included is the text "NARDO DI CIONE (14<sup>th</sup> Century)" and "Slovak National Museum, Museum Bojnice". Bojnice lies in the Nitra Valley about 78 km NE of Nitra, which is a very popular tourist spot in Slovakia. The design of the stamp was by Martin Činovský and engraving by Rudolf Cigánik. The FDC in dark brown shows a detail from "Madona with Child". The cancellation is from Bojnice.

The 12 Sk issue shows a painting titled "For Aim 1931" by Koloman Sokol (\*1902) from the Slovak National Gallery. Other works by Sokol found on Czechoslovak stamps include the 1971 "At the Edge of Town" [Sc. 1730, Pof. 1872] and the 1992 "The Old Rafter" [Sc. 2872, Pof. 3025]. The design is by Martin Činovský, with the engraving being done by Josef Herčík. The FDC in dark brown shows a work of Art Paralytik. The cancellation is from Liptovský Mikuláš.

12. On October 24, 1997, the Ministry issued a 4 Sk stamp commemorating "Černová 1907" (Fig. 12). The stamp shows a symbolic painting of a lamenting woman above a church facade as well as the text "27.10.1907 ČERNOVÁ". Some history of this event is appropriate. After Andrew Hlinka was released from prison for political agitation, he collected funds for a new church in the village of Černová. The church's consecration was placed in the hands of a notorious "Magyarone" priest to the indignation of the entire community. On October 27 a large crowd of peasants demonstrated against this priest and his companions. The peasants remained entirely passive when the squad of gendarmes -- who had accompanied them -- suddenly opened fire, killing twelve men and three women on the spot, and wounding as many as sixty. In March 1908, fifty-nine of those who had survived "The Massacre of Černová" (as it came to be called) were tried on charges of violence against the authorities and received sentences totalling thirty-six years including three years for Hlinka's own sister, a woman of 57. The designer of the stamp was Jozef Baláž, with the engraving by Martin Činovský. They were produced by the Postage Printing House of Postage Stamps in Prague using rotary recess printing in combination with recess printing in sheets of 50. A FDC in black and pastel red shows a symbolic painting by Jozef Baláž with a cancellation from Ružomberok.



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

13. On November 3, 1997, the Ministry issued a 5 Sk stamp commemorating the figure skater "Ondrej Nepela" (Fig. 13). The stamp depicts Nepela performing a horizontal split jump. The designer was Igor Piačka, and the engraver was Rudolf Cigánik. Production was by the Postage Printing House of Postage Stamps in Prague using rotary recess printing in combination with recess printing in sheets of 50 stamps. A FDC in dark brown shows a portrait of O. Nepela and has a cancellation from Bratislava.

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

14. On November 3, 1997, the Ministry issued a 3 Sk stamp commemorating Christmas (Fig. 14). The multicolored stamp depicts a stylized vision of the "Birth in Bethlehem". Design was by Mikuláš Klimčák, and engraving by Martin Činovský. Printing was by the Postage Printing House of Postage Stamps in Prague using rotary recess printing in combination with recess printing in sheets of 50. The FDC in green depicts a group of angels and "Christmas 1997" with a cancellation from Humenné.



Fig. 14

15. On December 1, 1997, the Ministry issued a 4 Sk stamp depicting an illustration by Vincent Hložík titled "Spiritual



Fig. 15

Renewal" (Fig. 15). It displays an illustration of Jesus Christ resurrected among his Disciples which is taken from Hložík's cycle titled "Old and New Testament". The designer and engraver of this multicolored stamp was Martin Činovský. It was produced by the Postage Printing House of Postage Stamps in Prague using rotary recess printing in combination with recess printing in sheets of 50. The FDC in dark brown depicts a Christmas motif of Christ's birth and has a Bratislava cancellation.

16. On December 18, 1997, the Ministry issued a 4 Sk stamp commemorating "Postage Stamp Day" (Fig. 16). The brown-blue stamp shows a symbolic illustration of the Slovak Post logo in the form of a bradawl (a tool used by stamp engravers) which has been twisted into the shape of a post horn, against a background of engraved lines. On an attached coupon is shown an eye in a square sitting on its corner. The stamp was designed by Robert Brun and engraved by František Horniak. It was produced by the Postage Printing House of Postage Stamps in Prague using rotary recess printing in combination with recess printing in sheets of 30 stamps and 40 coupons. The FDC in dark blue shows a motif including a magnifying glass and a bloom and has a cancellation from Bratislava.

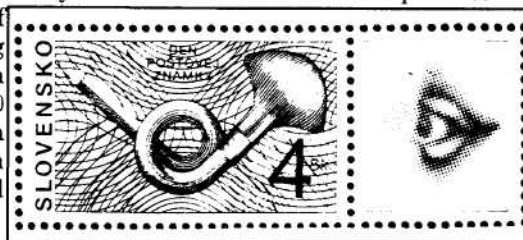


Fig. 16

## Postal Stationery

17. On March 19, 1997, the Ministry issued a special envelope to commemorate Jozef Miloslav Hurban (Fig. 17). He was first commemorated on a Czechoslovakian stamp on August 27, 1948 in a set for the centenary of the 1848 insurrection against Hungary (refer Scott #357, Pofis #481). The envelope bears an imprinted stamp of the state emblem of the Slovak Republic with a denomination of 8 Sk. In the lower left corner is a graphic presentation of the honoree seated at a desk with books, papers, and an ink well. Below the illustration is text reading "1817 BECKOV", "1888 HLBOKE", and Hurban's signature.

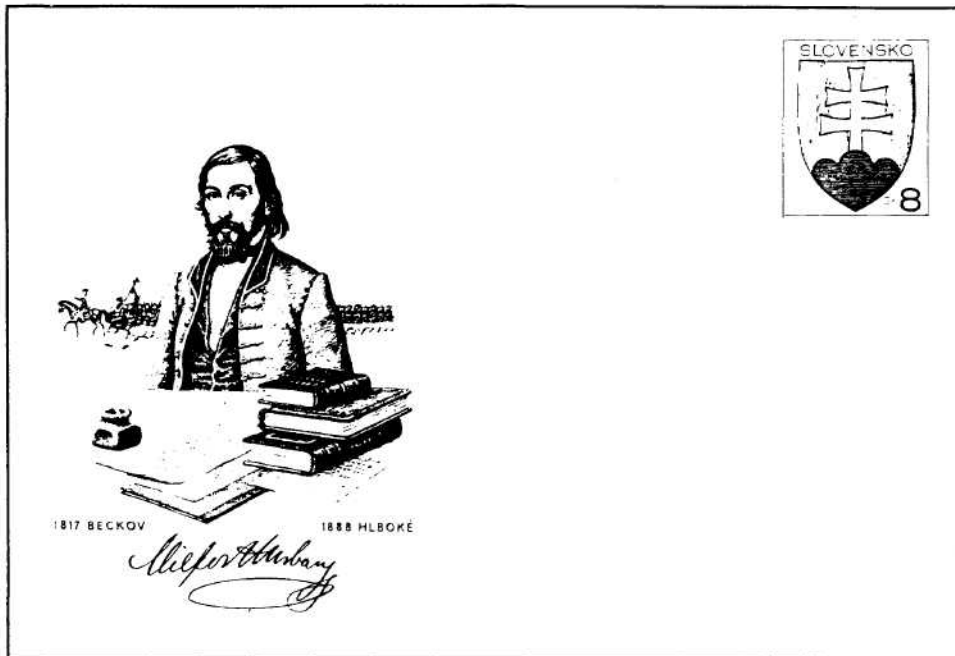


Fig. 17

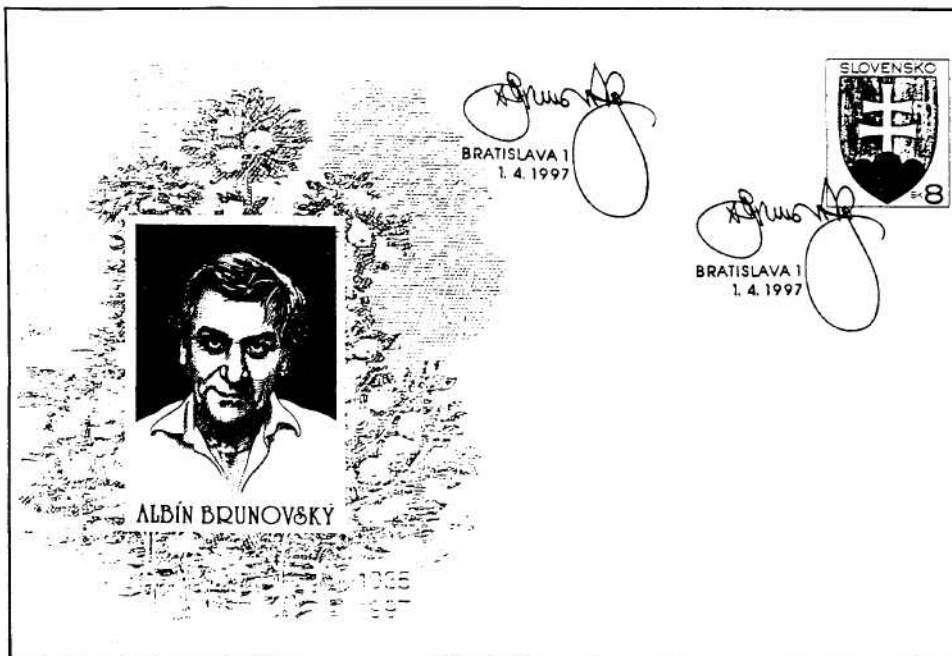


Fig. 18

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

18. On April 1, 1997, the Ministry issued a special envelope to commemorate Albín Brunovský, 1935-1997 (Fig. 18). Brunovský was born on Dec. 25, 1935 in Zohor, West Slovakia. He studied free graphic art and illustration at the College of Fine Arts in Bratislava, graduating in 1961. His range was extensive, including applied graphics, illustrations, postage stamps, bank note designs, and poster art. He won many prizes and awards during his working life. But he is probably best known as the founder and organizer of the renowned Bratislava Biennial of Books for Children, a forum for illustrators from all parts of the world. He was a member of the Biennial jury. The envelope bears an imprinted stamp of the state emblem of the Slovak Republic with a denomination of 8 Sk. In the lower left corner is a picture portrait of the honoree with the inscription "ALBÍN BRUNOVSKÝ" below, all against an illustrated background of fruit trees.

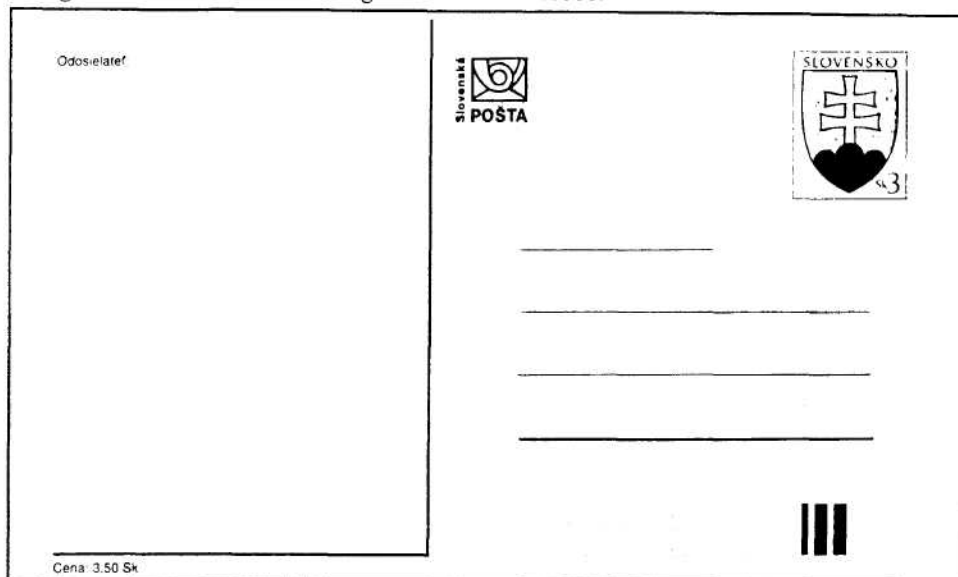


Fig. 19

19. On April 1, 1997, the Ministry issued a 3 Sk postage sheet with an imprinted stamp of the state emblem of the Slovak Republic in four colors (black, red, blue, silver)(Fig. 19). The lines, text, and a logo of the Slovak post on the address side are in black. The first line of the address area is actually micro-printed text reading "Slovak Post". In the lower left the price of the sheet is shown as 3.50 Sk.

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### *Letters to the Editor*

1. Dear Lou:

Every year in the past five or six, W. Alec Page and I exchanged Christmas cards. This holiday season just past was not different -- except in one respect. In the past, we always appended messages or letters to each other. Though I wrote him again this time and wished him a year of better health, his card contained nothing

more than the word "Alec". It must have been mailed about two or three days before he passed away.

Alec was a man of fine character and deep convictions. An Englishman through and through, he was immensely interested in covers originating with the Armed Forces of the Overrun Nations during World War II. Of these, Czechoslovakia was in the forefront of his philatelic interests. Hence he was not only Chairman of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain, he was also a member of our own Society.

Noteworthy among his contributions to the S.C.P. was his journey to New Jersey in 1994 where he addressed our Society's general meeting at NOJEX and gave a remarkable slide presentation on that very subject [The Czechoslovak Exiled Forces -- World War II]. The Jul/Aug and Sep/Oct 1994 issues of the SPECIALIST contain both a summary of his presentation as well as some photos of the speaker and some of his material.

We all miss Alec not only as a member, but also as a true gentleman and a fine friend.

Sincerely,  
Mirko Vondra

2. Dear Editor:

The Emission Plan of the Czech Republic for 1998 shows that they are planning to issue stamps for the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of Czechoslovakia from the works of J. Preissig, a Czech graphical artist. I am not familiar with his works. However, on this occasion the Czech Republic should be honoring its founders, the Presidents Masaryk and Beneš, and General Stefaník. I have written to President Havel in this regard, however, without reply or success. Maybe our Society could send a petition to the Czech president asking him for support.

Best regards,  
Peter Z. Kleskovic

3. Dear Lou:

I have been reading with interest the article and letters in the SPECIALIST on the topic of 1945 Revolutionary Overprints. This has been complemented by the articles which have appeared in the German Society's magazine on the same theme.

I have met with Karel Holoubek . . . on a number of occasions and have been impressed with the amount of knowledge he can recall on the subject of the history of the liberation overprints and the wealth of documentary evidence he has to support this. Likewise I have been in written communication with Juan Grau on the same subject and am certain that he has a deep comprehension.

I do understand . . . the role that successive Communist governments played in covering up what had gone on, especially in the area of the destruction of records and the banning of the overprints from philatelic exhibitions. Likewise it is no surprise to me that these issues were not officially approved, the government in exile was in London at the time -- the local national committees did, mainly, a very good job of running local services. Of course "fantasies" exist, in much the same way as certain overprints were not allowed because the originators face "did not fit" with the local committee.

Of one thing I am absolutely certain, the longer that time goes on, the greater the chance that one of the harbingers of this knowledge is no longer with us, and I urge that a meeting be convened at PRAGA 98 to discuss this important topic. To my knowledge, the following should be included:

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Karel Holoubek  
Juan Grau  
Vladimír Marcus  
Otto Barton  
Jurgen Hammer/Ctibor Sobotka

Hradec Králové  
Barcelona  
Vienna  
Bratislava  
German Society

Best regards,  
Robert J. Hill, UK

4. Dear Lou:

I have just finished reading the SPECIALIST [Nov/Dec 1997] from cover to cover. I have to say this is a very interesting issue just like all the others.

I did belong to the Society up to 1987 and for some reason I dropped out. I now look back at the move as dumb. I just wanted to tell you the journal is outstanding and I really enjoy it. It was in PACIFIC'97 where I joined and am I glad I did.

Thanks for being a good editor.

Yours truly,  
Wallace Craig

5. Dear Lou:

I [found] a rather interesting cover a couple of years ago that had a cancellation dated 15 May 1935, postmarked in Praha, with a spectacular advertising slogan (Fig. 1). I don't read Czech, but I do make out "1000 New Pilots" wanted, etc. The envelope itself was not sealed, so I suspect it carried some printed matter. The cancellation was printed with a light blue ink.

I went on to do some historical research for this area and time. It's obvious that 1935 was a very stressful period for the new Czechoslovak Republic. The Czech lands were blocking the route to the east for the German "lebenstraum"; Hitler planned to weaken the Czech government by firing up the tensions between the Sudeten German minority and the government; and in the 1935 elections the Sudeten German Party received 65 percent of the votes cast in the German-speaking sections of Czechoslovakia, thus becoming the second largest party in the country. Bearing these conditions in mind, was the cancellation a call to arms? Were these 1000 pilots needed to bolster the Czech air force?

Sal Rizza



Fig. 1



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