



THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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CZECH FIELD POST SECTION FOUNDED by Lubor Kunc

In February 2001 in Prague a small group of collectors founded the Field Post Section of the Union of Czech Philatelists.

This section is open to field post collectors from all over the world -- its activities and interests are not limited to only Czechoslovak/Czech field posts. In order to facilitate this, the following sub-sections are being formed:

- 1) field post of all military units serving in UNO, OSCE, EU and WEU missions anywhere in the world
- 2) field post on the territory of the former Yugoslavia
- 3) Czechoslovak/Czech participation in international missions since 1954
- 4) field post of all states being members of NATO and the Partnership For Peace Program
- 5) postal stationery
- 6) information desk, publication and co-operation with similar sections worldwide.

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Czech Field Post Section Founded (Continued from Page 1)

In the case there are a sufficient number of collectors interested, we are prepared to create sub-sections on field post connected with World War I and with World War II.

We are starting a co-operative effort with the Prague Postal Museum to collect and save documents relating to Czechoslovak/Czech field post of the past as well as that of the present.

The first general meeting of this new section will be held on May 19, 2001 in Prague. The meeting has two primary functions -- to set the goals of future activities and to select its first board members.

Membership in this new section is open to all collectors without regard to nationality; membership in the Union of Czech Philatelists is not required. We plan to establish co-operative agreements with similar organizations in Slovakia, Austria, and other countries.

We are inviting you to join this new section. Please feel free to contact me (Lubor Kunc -- I am an SCP member, Brunclikova 7, CZ-16200 Praha 6, Czech Republic; e-mail is Lubor.kunc@seznam.cz) with your questions or applications. Please enclose stamps or an international response coupon for return postage and give us your name, address, e-mail address, and what sub-sections (including whether you are interested in the WWI and/or WWII sub-sections) you are interested in. When the various sub-sections are formally established, we will notify you.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO CZECH AND SLOVAK MUSICAL PHILATELY

by Richard Beith

Czech, Slovak and other postal authorities have, over the years, issued many stamps honouring Czechoslovak composers, performers and a variety of musical institutions. Stamps featuring Smetana and Dvořák were first issued in 1934, during the first Czechoslovak Republic. Special commemorative postmarks can also be found; Smetana was the first to be honoured in Litomyšl back in 1924 and a bilingual Czech/French slogan cancellation was used in Prague for the International Music Festival also in 1924. In recent years, other countries have issued stamps featuring composers such as Dvořák and Mahler, usually for good sensible reasons, at least once for no other discernable reason than to make money out of collectors! First Day Covers (FDCs), envelopes bearing a new stamp or stamps postmarked on the first day of their issue by the given Post Office, are an additional source of musical connections, particularly in their printed designs. For example, the FDC issued in the Czech Republic for the 1996 Christmas stamp bore an additional inscription relating to the 200th anniversary of the first performance of the well known Christmas Mass (*Česká mše vánoční*) by Jakub Jan Ryba. Postage stamps from the Czech and Slovak lands have always had a high reputation for quality of both design and printing. It is a pleasure to note that this dedication to quality remains in place today.

The following chronological listing is not guaranteed to be complete, but it does give an idea of the scope offered to musically inclined philatelists or philatelically inclined musicians. Of course, the permutations and combinations are endless; for example, a stamp showing the Spa at Luhačovice could be used to illustrate an episode from the life of Janáček, and so on. The numbers after each listing (1), (2) etc, give a cross-reference to the illustrations. It should also be noted that in recent years a number of illustrated postal stationery cards have appeared in the Czech Republic and Slovakia with musical subjects.

The First Czechoslovak Republic: 1918-1938

The very first Czechoslovak stamp with a music theme was issued on 24 March 1934 to honour the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Smetana. The single 50h value featured a head and shoulders portrait of the composer (1). Another similar 50h value appeared on 22 November in the same year to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the death of Antonin Dvořák (2). Again, on 17 December 1934, stamps to the value of 1Kč and 2Kč were issued to acknowledge the centenary of the Czech National Anthem - *Where is my home [Kde domov můj]*. These show an allegorical representation of the Anthem, based on an unfinished design by Josef Mánes. Special postmarks are also known from this time featuring the names of the composer František Škroup (1801-1862) and the dramatist J. K. Tyl. On 21 December, special miniature sheets containing 15 stamps with the words and music of the Anthem printed above and below the stamps were produced, one is shown here (3). Only 12,900 of the 1Kč sheets were printed and 9,600 of the 2Kč sheet. The resultant rarity of these sheets has led to the appearance of a number of forgeries. The ordinary single stamps from the normal large sheets are still fairly common.

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1



2



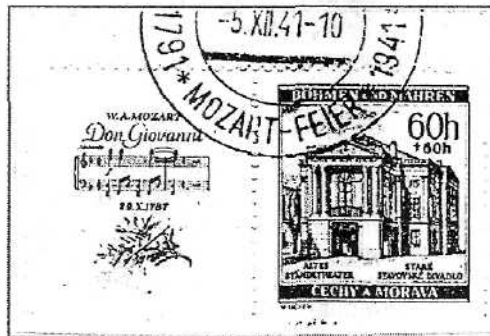
6



7



4



5



8

Kde domov můj?

1834

Andante con moto.

1934

Kde do-mov můj, kde do-mov můj? Vo-da
hu - ěi po lu - ěi - nách, bo-ry šu - mí



po - ska - li - nách, v sa-dě skví - se ja - ra
květ, zorn-ský ráj - to na po - hled! A to
je ta krá - šná ze - mě, ze - mě če - ská
do-mov můj... ze-mě če - ská... do-mov můj!

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The German Occupation: Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia: 1939-1945

Three short sets of relevant musical stamps were issued during the occupation period. On 25 August 1941, the birth centenary of Antonin Dvořák was commemorated (a few days early) with two portrait stamps of value 60h and 1.20K. A special postmark is known from 8 September 1941 (the actual birthday) with a Czech and German text: *Dvořák Feier - Dvořákovy Oslavy*; that is: "Dvořák Celebration". As with a number of stamp issues of this period the stamps were printed with *se-tenant* decorative labels of no postal value (4). Four stamps, all bearing a charity surcharge were issued on 26 October 1941 in honour of the 150th anniversary of the death of Mozart. Two of value 1.20K + 1.20K and 2.50K + 2.50K feature the composer. The two lower value stamps 30h + 30h and 60h + 60h show the Estates Theatre (*Stavovské divadlo*) in Prague, the venue for the first performance of *Don Giovanni* and *La Clemenza di Tito*. Again there is an adjacent label, of no postal value (5). On 12 May 1944 two stamps, again with a charity surcharge, appeared to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the death of Smetana. The values were 60h + 1.40K and 1.20K + 3.80K (6).

Czechoslovakia: 1945-1992

The first musical stamps of the post-war era again featured Smetana, this time in honour of the 125th anniversary of his birth. Two values were issued on 4 June 1949, 1.50Kč and 5Kč. Appropriately enough, the design, besides featuring the composer, also shows the National Theatre (*Národní divadlo*) to which Smetana gave so many years as composer and Director (7). The birth centenary of Zdeněk Fibich was celebrated on 15 October 1950 with 3Kč and 8Kč values showing a portrait of the composer (8). The sixth Prague Spring Music Festival (*Pražské jaro*) was publicized with four stamps issued on 30 May 1951; two -- the 1Kč and the 2Kč -- featured Antonín Dvořák and two -- the 1.50Kč and the 3Kč -- showed Smetana (9, 10).

The famous violinist and teacher Otakár Ševčík (1852-1934) was born in Horaždovice, led orchestras in Salzburg and Vienna and taught in Kiev, Prague and Vienna. His birth centenary in 1952 was recognized on 22 May with the issue of 2Kč and 3Kč portrait stamps (11). Stamps were again issued for the Prague Spring on 7 June 1952. The 1.50Kč and 5Kč values showed Beethoven in honour of the 125th anniversary of his birth, the 3Kč showed The House of Artists (Rudolfinum) in Prague and was lettered: PRAŽSKÉ JARO 1952 (12). On 10 February 1953 a fine view of the Smetana Museum in Prague was introduced on a 1.50Kč stamp (13), but the reason for its issue was to promote the 75th birthday of the museum's founder, the infamous Professor Zdeněk Nejedlý.

The 1953 Prague Spring featured two new stamps issued on 19 June. The 75h honoured the 120th anniversary of the death of the violinist Slavík (1806-1833) and the 1.60Kč celebrated the 25th anniversary of the death of Leoš Janáček (14, 15). Josef Slavík was born in Jince, near Příbram, and studied at the Prague Conservatoire. He was regarded as the first modern Czech violinist to gain an international reputation, he scored great triumphs in Vienna during his short life.

On 18 November 1953 the 70th anniversary of the National Theatre in Prague was celebrated with three stamps showing the great soprano Ema Destinnová



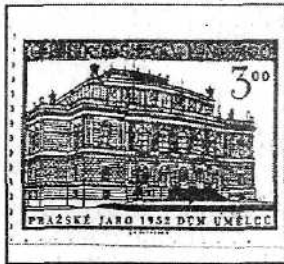
9



10



11



12



13



14



15



16-18

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(Emmy Destinn) (1878-1930) (30h), a fine view of the Theatre itself (60h) and a portrait of the actor E. Vojan (2Kč) (16-18). Destinnová was born in Prague, sang in Berlin from 1898-1908, at Bayreuth in 1901 and at Covent Garden and the Met in New York where she created the part of Minnie in the première of Puccini's *La fanciulla del West* (1910). (To Be Continued)

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E-MAIL, ADDRESS & PHONE # CHANGES

You can save us a great deal of trouble if you would please report to our Secretary, Tom Cossaboom, when your address, e-mail address or telephone number changes (that you reported to him when you originally filled out your membership application). So if any of these have changed for you in the recent past, please let him know. You can find his mailing address on page two of this issue -- a simple postcard will do fine. Thank you.

✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻

MASARYK MOURNING CANCELLATIONS – A DIALOGUE

by Phillip Melamed and Lubor Kunc

[Ed. Note: The following represents a dialogue via e-mails that recently took place over the span of about twelve days between the two authors (one is in Illinois and the other in Prague) on the named subject. It began as a result of Phil submitting a letter to the editor to me via e-mail (as well as directly to Lubor) on Lubor's article in the March/April 2000 issue on the subject topic. This generated a series of back-and-forth e-mails sharing information, research, and further questions on the cancels. With their permission, I am including selected portions of this series of correspondence to show our readers how the sharing of knowledge on philately has been tremendously enhanced and speeded up through the technological innovation we call the Internet. The illustrations that are included in this article were supplied by the authors.]

15 Feb 2001:

Dear Mr. Kunc: I read and enjoyed your article in the March/April 2000 issue about the 1937 Masaryk death stamps. I now know why so many of the 1937 Masaryk mourning cancels have the date Sep 21, 1937 (the date of the Masaryk funeral, one week after his death on Sep 14). However, I still have 2 questions:

(1) You mentioned the existence of the Sep-Oct 1937 mourning cancellation error, "Smutek Českoslevenská". Since the mourning cancellation exists for at least 23 different Czech Post Offices and was in use from Sep 16, 1937 until Oct 26, 1937 (per a 1947 Novotný catalog I have), could you be more specific as to what Post Offices and what dates this error is known for? I would imagine that the error would have been noticed and corrected relatively soon after the cancel started being used.

(2) Also, do you have any information as to when the mourning cancels were first used in each of the 23 different Post Offices? I have only seen a Sep 16, 1937, PRAHA 10 HRAD cancel (Fig. 1) and a Sep 20, BRNO 2, KOŠICE 1 and 2, and

PRAHA 7 CIZINA cancels. All other cancels are Sep 21 or later. I would appreciate any information you can provide.

Phil Melamed

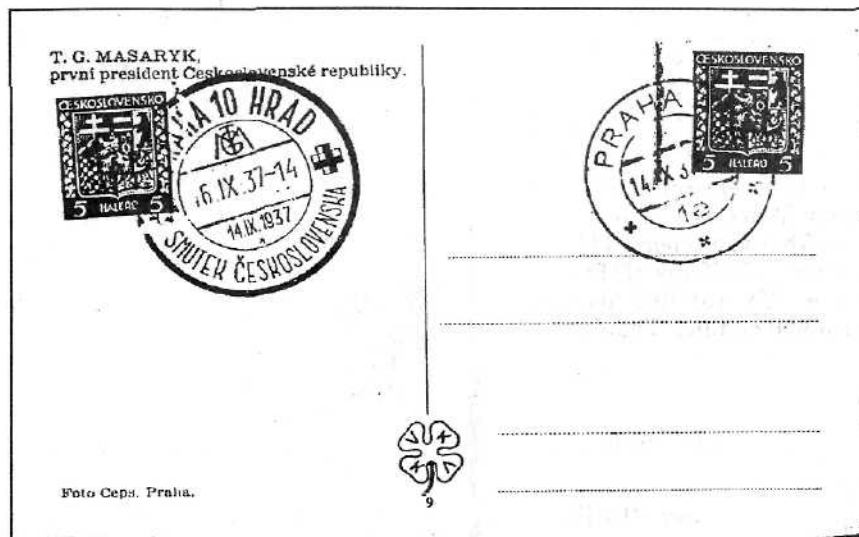


Fig. 1: Picture of Masaryk post card canceled on the day of his death, 14.X.37, and then again with the 1st day cancel of the special postmark PRAHA 10 HRAD, 16.IX

20 Feb:

Dear Mr. Melamed: . . . Here are my answers to your questions:

(1) If I remember correctly, the error cancel was used at the Brno 2 post office. Its usage period was short, and I have forgotten the exact date. It is not easy to find.

(2) The exact first date of usage of the mourning cancels at each of the post offices is unknown to me. Unfortunately, the 1970 issue of Novotný's handbook -- and in all of the newly issued catalogues and handbooks that I have -- it doesn't mention any information about the cancellations (probably because in communist times Masaryk was not popular with the Communist Party, and it was not allowed to remember him by "discussing" his death). In my personal opinion, the cancels were used at all post offices from the same day -- September 16. It seems that the people at that time expected that former President Masaryk could die at any moment (he probably supported such "expectations" by leaving the Presidency in 1935). I have in my collection a small memorial folder with Masaryk's portrait and the inscription "ZESNUL DNEŠNÍHO DNE" (died on this date) -- not giving a date of his death. There was enough space on the card to put stamps and a cancellation. It was postally used on Sep 14 (normal Prague cancel) when Masaryk really died (Fig. 2). So I believe the post offices using such mourning cancellations were chosen and warned about it some time before Masaryk's death. The drawing of the cancel was probably also already prepared, so the Sep 14th + 15th were used for cancel production and distribution only.

(3) Another interesting variation of the cancel that I did not mention in my article was the bilingual mourning cancel. However, stating that they were bilingual

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is not totally correct, because only the name of the town was bilingual. All other text (like Smutek Československa) was only in the Czech language. I know of Czech - German cancellations (e.g. OPAVA - TROPPAU) and Czech - Polish (BOHUMIN - BOGUMIN). I don't know if there also exist Slovak - Hungarian or Czech - Ukrainian cancels. Probably there are, but I have not seen them.

I hope that above information helps you in your collecting. And, might I ask you to send me the list of 23 post offices using the mourning cancellations? This is news to me, and I have not seen such a list.

Lubor Kunc

20 Feb:

Dear Lubor: Enclosed is my list of mourning post office cancels based on the information I have:

**LIST OF CZECHOSLOVAKIAN
1937 MASARYK MOURNING POSTMARKS**

All in black, with stylized initials "TGM" (Thomas Garrigue Masaryk), "14.IX.1937" (date of Masaryk's death), and "Smutek Československa" (Czechoslovakia mourns). Bratislava and Košice cancels use "Smutok" instead of "Smutek". Used Sep 16, 1937 to Oct 26, 1937 (16.IX.37 - 26.X.37). Most commonly used on Sep 21, 1937, the day of Masaryk's funeral.

<u>Post Office</u> (*bilingual town name)	<u>Valuation in Kčs (1947)</u>
Bohumín (*Bogumin) 1	18
Bratislava 1a, b (Fig. 3)	8
Bratislava 2	10
Brno 1a, b	6
Brno 2a, b	12
Břeclav 2	15
České Budějovice 3	12
Hodonín 1a, b (Masaryk's birthplace)	8
Cheb (*Eger) 2a, b (Fig. 4)	18
Košice 1a, b (Fig. 5)	20
Košice 2	25
Lány a, b	4
Opava (*Troppau) 1a, b	15
Pardubice 1a, b	12

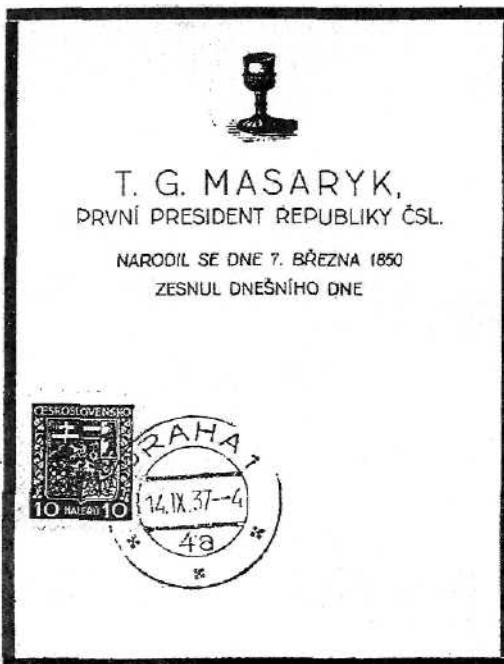


Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

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Podmokly (*Bodenbach) 1a, b	15
Praha 7 Cizina (Etranger) a, b (foreign post)(Fig. 6)	12
Praha 7 Letecká Pošta a, b (airmail post)	12
Praha 10 Hrad a, b, c, d, e, f (Hradčany post)	4
Praha 28 Senát N.S. a, b (Senate of National Assembly)	8
Praha 29 Poslanecká Sněmovna N.S. a, b (Chamber of Deputies of the National Assembly)(Fig. 7)	8
Praha 82 Letiště (Praha airport - Kbely)	15
Topolčianky	12
Užhorod (*Cyrillic text)(Fig. 8)	20

A list of these cancels was also published in the June 1973 issue of the SPECIALIST, pages 93-94. That list is almost identical to the list in my 1947 Novotný catalog entitled, "Katalog Celin, Československo, Čechy A Morava, Slovensko" which, besides listing postal stationery, lists commemorative cancels. The only difference between the lists is that the Novotný list also provides 1947 prices for the cancels, thus ranking them as to which are scarcer than others (at least in 1947). I included this information in the attached list. When I previously said there were 23 different post office mourning cancels, I was not counting the substation varieties (a, b, etc.), but I did count separately the different main post office stations such as KOŠICE 1 and KOŠICE 2.

The only reason I asked about what date these cancels were first used in each main post office is that I have seen only one example (PRAHA 10 HRAD) used on Sep 16, and then only a few cancels dated as early as Sep 20. So "T" would conclude that not all of the post offices started using these cancels on Sep 16 . . . The cancels I have from Bratislava and Košice, while not using a bilingual town name, do use "Smutok" instead of "Smutek" in the cancel.

Phil Melamed



Fig. 9

24 Feb:

Hello: Thank you for the list of post offices using the cancels.

The information about Slovak and Ukrainian cancels is great. The word "Smutok" used on Slovak cancels is correct. Smutok in the Slovak language is the same as Smutek in the Czech language.

I cannot support my statement -- about the use of the mourning cancels by all 23 post offices beginning on the same date -- with any proof (but who can . . .), this is really only my opinion. While I had not checked the cancels by date of use before, I have now checked my collection and have only found one item being used by Sept. 20, 1937 -- from post office PRAHA 10 HRAD. But I cannot say that there do not exist cancels that early from other post offices -- the collections of two people are not sufficient to make such a statement. Possibly the readers of the SPECIALIST could check their collections to see if they have an "early" cancel from another post office.

I may have found a model for the mourning cancellation (again only my idea). The key is Figure 9 which shows a card canceled as a souvenir on March 7, 1935 in HORNÍ DVORIŠTĚ - OBER HAID BEI KARLITZ (Southern Moravia). The color of the cancellation was red. The card was then postally used a few days later as a normal card, having been upfranked with a 50h stamp (50h being the domestic post card rate), and sent from Prague to Lukavec. When you compare this 1935 cancellation with the 1937 mourning one, you will find many similar signs.

Lubor

26 Feb:

Dear Lubor: Here are a couple more pieces to bring to your attention:

- I also have the small memorial folder that you mentioned [Fig. 2], although I didn't realize that

in the text it signified his death. But I also have another small memorial folder with a LÁNY, 14.IX.37 cancel which states "ZESNUL 14. ZÁŘÍ 1937" (passed away 14 September 1937)(Fig. 10).

- I have a post card with a normal postal cancel from LOVOSICE / LOBOSITZ, 18.IX.37 that contains a different rectangular memorial handstamp stating "+SMUTEK REPUBLIKY / TRAUER DER REPUBLIK+" (the republic mourns)(Fig. 11). Do you know anything about this special handstamp?

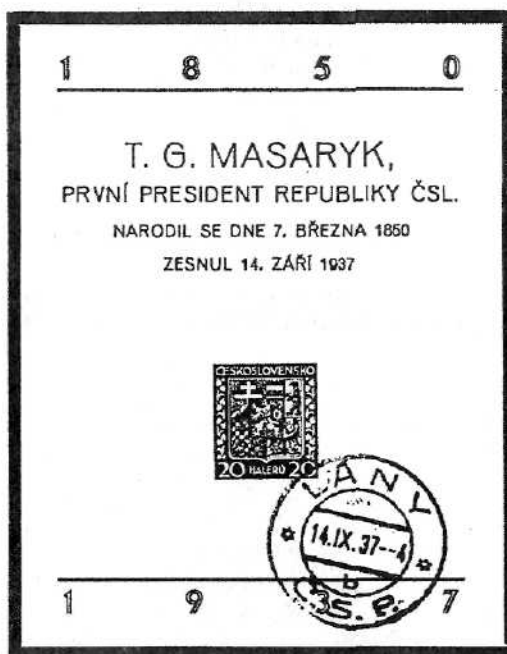


Fig. 10



Fig. 11

- Finally, here is a real oddity that must be a favor cancellation applied much later than it should have been (Fig. 12). Although it does not show well, it is a Chamber of Deputies memorial cancel of 21.IX.37 on a Masaryk commemorative souvenir sheet that wasn't issued until 3.VII.38!

Phil

26 Feb:

Dear Phil: I studied my old auction catalogs during the weekend and found that the error cancellation [Českoslevenská] was really used at the Brno 2 post office. I found the cancel on a sent cover (business correspondence) in KLIMA's 20th auction -- it was lot no. 420. The date was not mentioned in the catalog, nor was the cover picture clear enough to identify the mailing date. The starting and selling price of the lot was the same -- 300 Kč + auction fee. So the total amount paid by the buyer for the cover came to about \$10.

Lubor



Fig. 12

**A PHILATELIC OBITUARY
FROM AN OLD MEMBER
An Epitaph by Mirko L. Vondra**

An epitaph on an old Florida tombstone reads: "I told you I was sick".
Sickness is but one face of old age that creeps up on you like a malady. When it overtakes you, you can write your own obituary. But why get morbid?

Since I was nine years old, my father, working at the Czechoslovak Consulate in New York, would bring home stamps and covers with stamps from the old country. It was the start of what was to become my chief hobby and greatest joy. (My other hobby was enjoying classical music, especially that of the great Czech masters.)

Now suddenly that chief and greatest joy has come to an end. In the last week of March this year, my entire stamp collection disappeared. A leading Czech auctioneer (I'll let you guess who) picked up the collection to be sold or auctioned off.

Reminiscences there were many. My file cabinet still holds the many medals received at shows like the Silver in Sarasota, Florida (2001); Vermeil in Providence, Rhode Island (2000); Gold in Brno (2000); Vermeil in COLOPEX, Ohio (2000); Vermeil in Cleveland, Ohio (1999); Vermeil in NOJEX, New Jersey (1999); Gold at BALPEX, Ohio (1997); Vermeil at MILCOPEX, Wisconsin (1992); Vermeil at STAMPSHOW, Wisconsin (1995); Vermeil at NOJEX, New Jersey (1994); Vermeil at BALPEX, Maryland (1993); another Vermeil at BALPEX (1992); Vermeil at FLOREX, Florida (1992); Silver at CHICAGOPEX, Illinois (1993); Silver-bronze at BALPEX, Maryland (1980); and Small Silver at NOJEX, New Jersey (1979). Even the early beginnings when I was exhibiting locally while residing in Rochester, New York got me an honorable mention and, while in Westfield, New Jersey, I received a Silver award.

And let me not forget to mention that while I was editor of the Czechoslovak SPECIALIST, I received a Silver medal at STAMPSHOW 89 in Anaheim, California at the Palmares Philatelic, a proud achievement for its day.

Am I patting myself on the back? Of course, wouldn't you?

Reminiscences don't stop there. I recall while residing in Westfield, New Jersey, our Board meeting at my home while I was then President of the Society. Present were members of our entire Board including Henry Hahn, Charley Chesloe, Ed Lisy and Joe Stein. It was at this meeting that Henry Hahn proposed incorporating the Society and changing its name from the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society to the Society for Czechoslovak Philately Inc. The Board approved the proposal. But where is the photo of the entire Board lined up on the front lawn of my home? I remember seeing it, but I cannot find it. The picture would reveal exactly who all the members were.

Finally I recall putting together the first 40-page issue of the SPECIALIST on the occasion of the publication's 50th anniversary. Among other things it reprinted a photo of the first issue of the SPECIALIST and also bore a detailed photo of the fourteen founding fathers of the Society.

It now behooves me to say that all the above memories linger and will follow me to the grave. And as I lay buried in my grave, the tombstone above it will bear the following epitaph: "I told you the loss of my stamps would be my doomsday!"

Bless you all.

*Jiří Majer and
Jaroslav Thraumb Auctions
announce their 17th auction
on May 26, 2001*



Majer & Thraumb's auction 17 will have an excellent selection in all of the major collecting categories. Included in the sale are the 50 heller, blue Legionnaire stamp with the rare 10 1/2 line perforation (29E), as well as a rare Husite issue color trial (with denomination of 100).



Catalogs will be sent to all of the past bidders. Others desiring a catalog or other information should contact us through our American representative:

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8602 Ewing Drive
Bethesda, MD 20817-3846
FAX 301-530-7489
e-mail: sibpost@erols.com*

Souvenir Sheet Varieties
 by Frank A. Garancovsky

Treasures of Czech Castles/Fortresses
 Scott 2418a/POFIS A2545/2548

This four stamp 1982 souvenir sheet features the Křivoklat and Nitra castles as they appear today (Fig. 1). The 50h and 1 Kčs stamps show the exterior and interior of Křivoklat castle. The interior view presents some beautiful art work. The 2 Kčs stamp pictures the formidable Nitra castle, while the 3 Kčs stamp displays pottery discovered on the site of the Nitra castle by the Slovak Academy Archaeological Institute.

The design is complemented by an additional four designs above and below the four stamps. The Křivoklat castle at upper left pictures the foreground view. The bottom right design of Křivoklat pictures the guarded approaches to the castle. Both views are circa 1643. The two Nitra castle views are of the 17th and 19th century respectively.

The printing of this souvenir sheet used one plate with eight position varieties. Fortunately the minor flaws are all visible with 10 power magnification.

AP1: There is a partial retouching of the positioning cross above the castle roof just right of the triangular peak, and a small rectangular bump on the left side of the roof on ZP1

AP2: There is a complete positioning cross located in the same area as is described

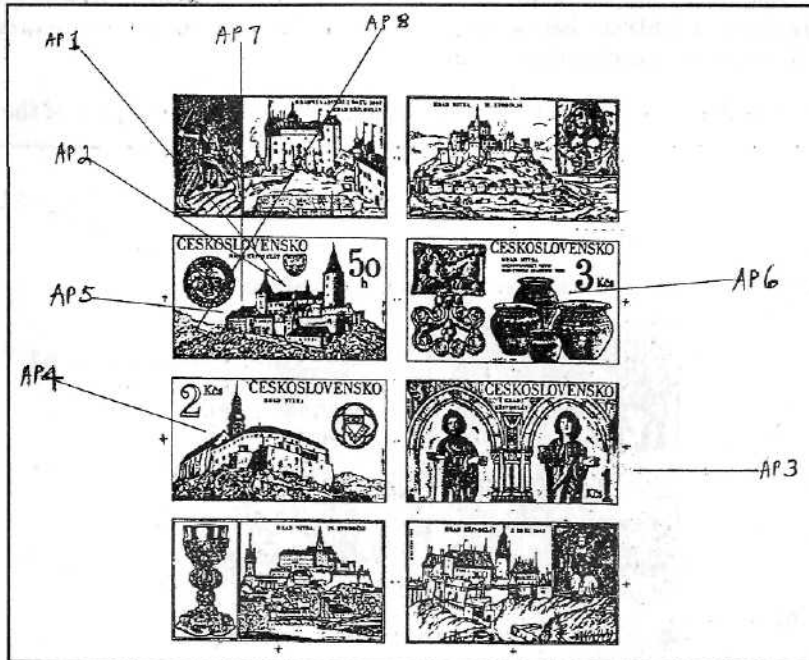


Fig. 1

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in AP1

- AP3: There is a red stain outside the right frame line of the stamp and the numeral 1, next to the perforations of ZP4
- AP4: There are a pair of slanted lines above the left portion of the roof in ZP3. They appear very faintly below the "K" of Kčs, and one is longer than the other.
- AP5: There is a short black slanted line at right and below the emblem on ZP1, and/or at the first step in the roof line
- AP6: A red dot is located 2 mm left of the "3" and 1.8 mm above the far right pottery on ZP2
- AP7: There is a red stain 2.5 mm above the second step of the roof line at far left, and right from the emblem in ZP1
- AP8: There is a blue stain 1 mm below the ridge line of the forest below the emblem in ZP1

70th Anniversary of the ČSSR Postal Museum, Prague
Scott 2699a/POFIS A2840

Commemorating the 70th anniversary of its founding, the souvenir sheet consists of two (2 Kčs + 4 Kčs) stamps featuring early post offices (Fig. 2). The 2 Kčs stamp has the Praha 1 (circa 1873) and the Bratislava 56 (circa 1984) post office sites. The 4 Kčs stamp features the communications center in Prachatice (circa 1982), along with a historical postman and the post office at Maltežské Square post office in Prague (circa 1622).

This souvenir sheet is a one plate, four position variety -- A, B, C, and D. Most flaws are readily visible, however, as in most of these position varieties, the greater magnification available the better they can be seen. In copies that I have examined, A1 and B2 were the most difficult to find.

A1: In the upper inscription there is a red dot on the lower inner part of the horn

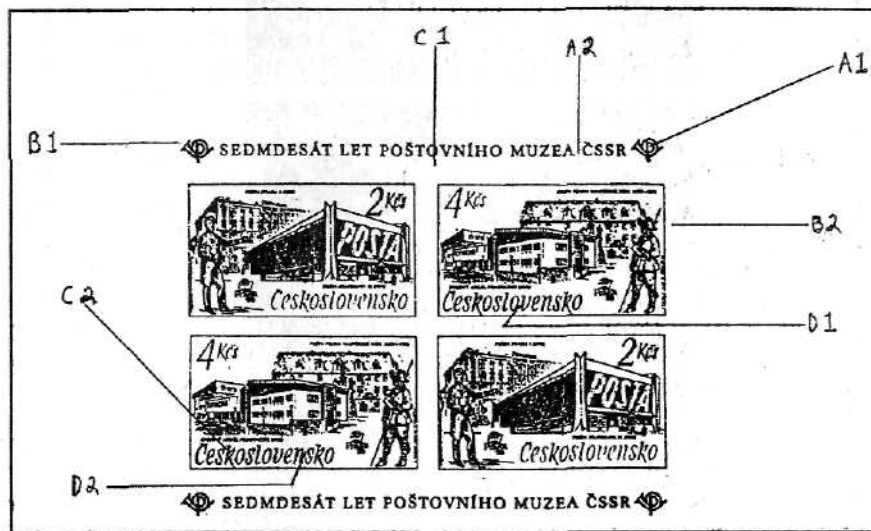


Fig. 2

- A2: In the upper inscription there is a small black dot between the "A" of Muzea and the "Č" of ČSSR
 B1: In the upper inscription there is a red dot above the horn mouth at upper left
 B2: There is a short vertical line right of the head and hat in ZP2
 C1: There is a small red dot left of the first "k" of Československo in ZP3
 D1: At ZP2, there is a red dot between the "o" and "v" of Československo
 D2: In ZP3, there is a red dot between the "n" and "s" of Československo

✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ ✱

THE KOŠICE MARATHON

by Joseph M. Lacko

Our story begins in an ancient town in Greece named Marathon. It was probably located somewhat south of the modern town of Marathon on the heights of modern Vrana.

The Battle of Marathon in ancient history dates back to 490 or 491 B.C. The Greek forces of 9-10 thousand defeated the Persian forces, who had established a beachhead below a marsh at one of the edges of the plain. This was adjoining the Bay of Marathon. It was the Greeks with spears that crushed the Persians (who were using arrows) when the battle moved to close quarters. In the confusion the Persians broke and ran for their ships, losing 6400 men killed. The Greeks lost only 192 men. Their bodies were burned on a huge pile and were covered with an earthen commemorative mound, 50 feet high. Excavation of the mound in 1890 revealed the remains of the dead Athenians along with funeral vases and weapons.

The marathon comes from the commemoration of the feat of the soldier, Pheidippidis, who it is said, ran more than 20 miles to Athens with the news of the victory at Marathon over the Persians. According to legend, Pheidippidis ran into the Athenian Agora, gasped out his news and fell dead.

The Marathon race is a regular event in the modern Olympic Games. The marathon is a long distance race, being standardized in 1908 to a length of 26 miles and 385 yards. The course varies with the topography or layout of the roads. The race is a feat of unusual endurance.

The Košice Marathon is an important athletic event which takes place annually in the metropolis of Košice, which is located in the eastern part of Slovakia. The race was named the Medzinárodný Maratón Mieru (International Marathon of Peace) or MMM. The name was given during the communist regime.

Its conception oddly enough occurred in the stands of the Paris Colombes Stadium during the 1924 Olympic Games. A few of the delegates attending the games became fascinated and enthused with such a lengthy race which was called the marathon. They had a special name for this event at Colombes Stadium -- "The Duel with the Sun". Why not bring this long distance run home? Certainly it would be somewhat different, especially since athletic events were then at a minimum. Thus, during one of the meetings of the Carpatho-Ukrainian section of the Čsl.AAU (Czechoslovak Amateur Athletic Union), which was held in the Cafe Slavia on August 19, 1924, the marathon question came up and was subsequently formulated.

Košice did have some athletes who were fit for this type of race. Names such

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as Jozef Koščák and Karol Halla came to mind. And there was a good long distance runner named Zatloukal, a Czech soldier stationed in Košice. It was assumed that these three would make a trial run of 30 km. The KAC (Košice Athletic Club) organized this event for August 24, 1924. The invitations were sent out for "The Trial 30 km Run" to ten clubs. These invitations were written in the Slovak and Hungarian languages. Fourteen invitations were accepted. True to form it was a big event for the city. A Sport Day was declared, and it was held while a beautiful day prevailed. The fans were also treated to women's handball, other track events, and cycling races. All this and the entire sport atmosphere really caught the interest of Košice. All of the seats as well as the standing room were filled at the stadium. The local populace lined the streets, viewers looked out of the windows, and business people shouted encouragement to the local athletes to win the race.

All together there were 9 starters for the race. The marathon contained seven control stations, with additional stations for refreshments and rests. The runners were allowed to receive aid, such as drinks and massages. Of course, this is no longer allowed. The small village of Barca was the turning point back toward the finish. The first athlete to reach this point was Koščák, who almost gave up near the town of Zalesi, complaining of a pulled muscle. Now it began to rain, but the spectators stood their ground, not letting the rain spoil the festive sporting affair. In Košice the police had a hard time keeping the spectators on the edge of the road. Hall came in first with a time of 2:04. Schuller was second with 2:05.30, while the third place went to Koščák with 2:13.

This trial run was considered enough of a success and sufficiently encouraging to the committee for them to promote the first marathon. The course would measure 42 kilometers and 195 meters. On September 3, 1924, the committee met and decided that the date of the first marathon would be October 28 -- it was a national holiday, thus blending festivity with the event. The central AAU in Prague gave its approval. It was also decided that the stadium would be the place where the race would finish. This time, however, the course of the marathon would be in one line, one way only. Therefore, the proposed starting line was to be located by the old castle in Turne. Other localities were also considered.

The final memorandum was prepared and accepted by the Čsl.AAU on October 2, 1924. It read:

"The Eastern Slovakian and Carpatho-Ukrainian Section of the Čsl.AAU, on Oct. 28, 1924 will hold first Slovak marathon. The distance will be 42 km and 200 m. The start will be located at the railroad station in Turne on Bodvou, and the finish line will be on the field of the KAC near the Gajdove Kúpele (Gajdejev Spa). The direction of the course will be the towns of Drienovec, Mokrance, Čečejevce, Ludvíkov Dvor, and to Košice via the brewery and Museum Street to the field and finish line. Eight control stations will be located along the marathon route, which will have comfort and refreshment facilities. The participants must have the following qualifications:

1. athletes from Slovakia must be registered with the Čsl.AAU, or
2. any soldier on active duty serving in Slovakia
3. all applicants must meet the deadline with attached medical record taken after Oct. 1, 1924.

The committee will pay the transfer from Košice to the starting point. Starting time is 12:00 noon. The first one crossing the finish line will

receive the title "The winner of the 1st Slovak Marathon", an honorary prize, and a certificate."

Seventeen athletes applied for this event. It was a great day. Košice had its first marathon, and it was also an Armed Forces Day. From near and far people flocked to the city and to the route of the marathon race, to witness the great spectacle. Even the senior citizens could not remember such an elaborate occasion. The date was October 28, 1924, National Independence Day.

Karl Hall was the winner of the First Košice Marathon with a time of 3:05.55.

The Košice Marathon was commemorated by special cancellations. The first cancel in blue was issued in 1937 (Fig. 1) and read:

KOŠICE 1 -- XIV SLOVENSKÝ MARATON -- 28.X.1937.

The next cancel did not come out until after WWII. It was used in Košice on 27 Oct. 1945, and except for the date, looked the same as the previous one.

In the cancels that followed, there were changes made. On October 23, 1949, the cancel became:

KOŠICE 1 -- XIX. MEDZINÁRODNÝ MARATÓN SLOBODY -- 23.X.1949.

The XX marathon was renamed back to "Medzinárodný Maratón". The cancel omitted the word "Slobody", was in black, and was dated October 29, 1950. It should be noted that the word "Sloboda" -- translating as "freedom" -- was dropped and never again used. In the future it was substituted by "mier" -- peace. This word had a broad use in the days of the old regime.

The XXI marathon acquired the name "Medzinárodný Maratón Mieru" on October 28, 1951 in black.

The XXII marathon slightly expanded it to "Medzinárodný Maratón Mieru 1952" on October 5, 1952 in black.

On October 18, 1953 the XXIII marathon became "Maratón Mieru - Československá Súťaž" in black.

The XXIV marathon returned to "Medzinárodný Maratón Mieru" on 10 October, 1954 in black.

On October 16, 1955, the name changed again, this time to "Medzinárodný Maratón Mieru - Přebor Republiky" in black.

In 1956 -- the XXVI marathon on October 7 -- the "Přebor Republiky" was dropped, so it was back to "Medzinárodný Maratón Mieru". It was again in black.

The cancel remained the same for at least the next 13 years (through 1969) (For example, Fig. 2) except that in 1958 they added "-- Přebory ČSR", and the one for 1967 showed two dates, 30.IX. and 1.X.

I'm quite sure that the annual cancels continued after 1969, but I do not have any definitive information on what they looked like or said.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

POSTAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE
SORBIC LANGUAGE AREA OF BOTH LUSATIAS

by Dr. Walter J. Rauch

edit. by Henry Hahn

(Continued from the March/April 2001 issue)

The actual start of philatelic interest in the Sorbs came only with the introduction of the Zip-code in the DDR, with the connections of bilingual designations of postal towns, and with the accompanying profusion of special and occasional cancellations -- which often reached way beyond the settlement districts and were mostly of an ideological or economic/political character. Found here are also bilingual machine cancels and sender-free cancels from industry, postal self-promotions, etc., almost always with German text inserts.

Anticipating the question: registration labels, delivery instructions, and other adhesive stickers in fact remained in one language. The same was true with postal forms and with descriptions on picture postcards (exception: decorated telegrams), although there were and are bilingual printings and illustrations pertaining to the Sorbic nationality on special postcards, as for example on the occasion of a public celebration, a cultural festival, or an exposition.

However, this extensive landscape of cancellations was not reliably documented anywhere. Exact dates of introduction of bilingual labels, their withdrawal because of changed population structures, the down-sizing of postal establishments, and all kinds of grammatical corrections of the Sorbic names of towns cannot be reconstructed today through the general post offices nor with the official governmental archives. Thus, new discoveries and insights always offer surprises to the collector.

Bilingual Postal Cancellations

ZIP-codes were gradually introduced in the DDR on January 1, 1965, and along with them new postmark designs. The first official announcement (103/66) designates as bilingual German-Sorbic cancels, besides others, 75 Cottbus/Chosebuz and 759 Spremberg 1/Grodsk.¹

In district Cottbus --

for ZIP-code district 75:

Cottbus/Chosebuz (25/-)

Forst/Barsc (1/-)

Lübben/Lubin (3/2)

Weißwasser/Bela Woda (7/-)

for ZIP-code district 77:

Hoyerswerda/Wojerecy (10/2)

In district Dresden --

for ZIP-code district 86:

Calau/Kalawa (5/5)

Guben/Gubin (3/-)

Spremberg/Grodsk (1/1)

1 The number of bilingual postmarks (cities and postoffices) are shown in parentheses. A postal town was counted as one location even though it could have several branches. The effect of the postal organization on the individual postmarks at any particular time are a subject unto itself.



Fig. 9 - 10.28.1966: Early bilingual cancellation: 86 Bautzen/Budyšin from the infamous political prison, uncanceled, delivered by the Central Courier Service (ZKD)

Bautzen/Budyšin (6/7)(Fig. 9)
for ZIP-code district 89:
Niesky/Nizka (1/-)

Kamenz/Kamjenc (6/1)

Many changes, often of only short duration, were caused by the differentiation of the ZIP-code from 2-numbers (code regions) to 3-numbers (code areas) and to 4-



Fig. 10 - Sorbic congratulation telegram (part) from 7586 Boxberg/Hamor (Kreis Niesky)

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numbers (postal town)(Fig. 10).²

New variations resulted in the East German states from the currency conversion of July 1, 1990 (DM-Ost : DM-West, i.e., German Mark East : German Mark West) and through the intergration of the acting "German Post" with their own postal system. The first issues appeared on July 2 and the last on October 2, 1990. They were valid until December 3, 1991 even in the old Federal Republic of Germany and in the former West Berlin (Fig. 11).

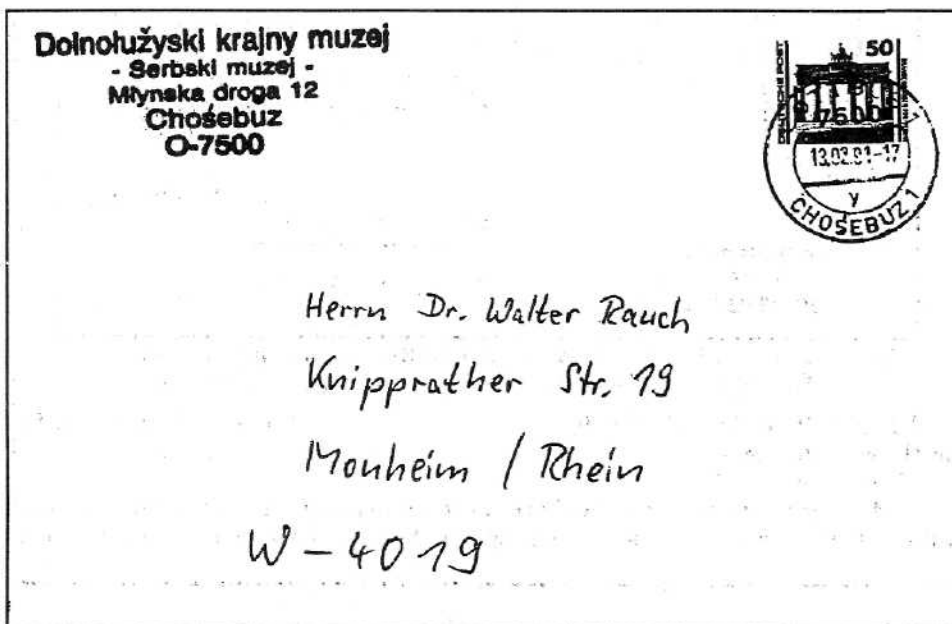


Fig. 11 - 1991: Letter with stamps of "German Post" from Cottbus/Chosebuz

Postal Operations after German Reunification

Within the framework of the then operating German Bundespost, a series of bilingual cancels of cities and post offices was discontinued, so the number of the practically used bilingual local cancelations changes according to the chosen fixed date.

The service districts of Cottbus and Senftenberg were effected in the new Federal Republic of Brandenburg. Here we should also mention the renaming of the city in 1991 and thus also of the town cancel: Wilhelm-Pieck-Stadt Guben 1 / Gubin 1 to Guben/ Gubin.

The new system affected the administrative post offices Bautzen and Hoyerswerda in the new Republic of Saxony.

2 Example: 759 Spremberg/Grodok 1, 2 and 7590 Spremberg/Grodok 1, 2, 3, 5

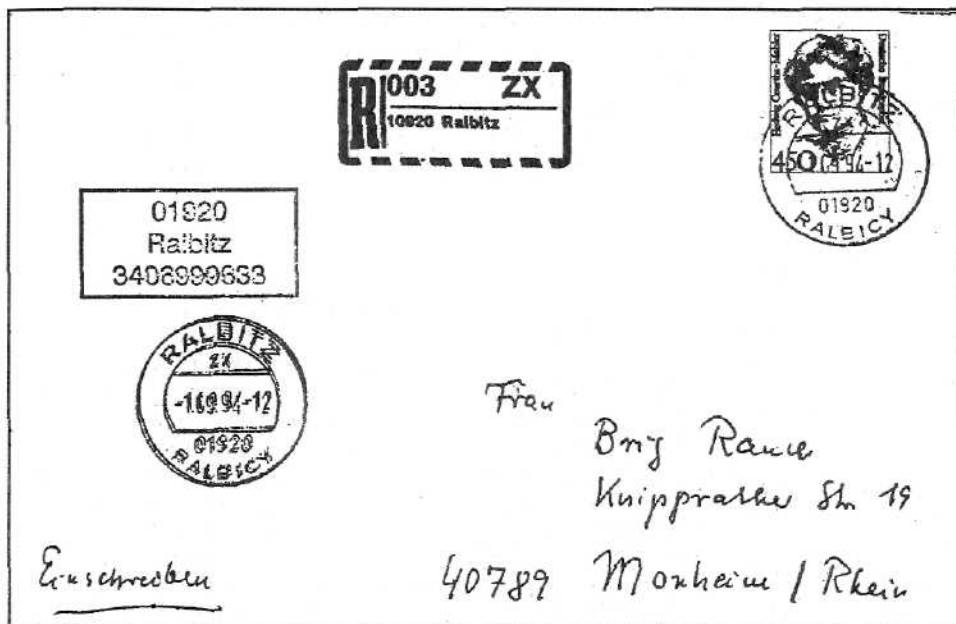


Fig. 12 - 1994 from a grocery store post office:
01920 Ralbitz/Ralbicy mit Sonder-Recozettel

Beginning July 1, 1993 further aggravating postponements were caused by the intergration of the Eastern ZIP-code system into the All-German one. After that the Sorbic settlement area was divided in Saxony into Zip-code region 01/Dresden and 02/Bautzen, and in Brandenburg into 03/Cottbus and 15/Frankfurt (Oder).

Of interest for philatelists are the few bilingual postal sites in stores (mostly of food items), for example: 01920 Ralbitz/Ralbicy; on registered letters we can find here single languaged R-labels "ZX 10920 Ralbitz" (Fig. 12)[This seems to be a missprint on the R-label since all three other marks are 01920]. Also worth mentioning is the bilingual "post-defacing" postal cancel of Forst/Barsc as versus the single languaged one used by 02692 Grosspostwitz (which still used a bilingual one until 1993: Budestecy).

With the privatization of the German Federal Post and its renaming to "Deutsche Post AG" (German Post Inc.; AG = stock corporation), the former post offices became branches of their main post offices.

Automation of postal operations at the end of 1995 included testing of a self-service system ABAS1. This included, among others, the city post office of 03045 Cottbus (single language postmark). Only simple letters (also registered and express) could be submitted at the accepting office, at which time an automated receipt was issued. After technical problems these ABAS tests were soon abandoned; documents from it are sought after by philatelists.

The technically new postal distribution system brought incisive changes for the language oriented philatelic specialist of the Sorbic region. With this new system all local mail is shipped to centers (Briefzentrum), there automatically and uniformly canceled, and distributed throughout the land. For our subject, the

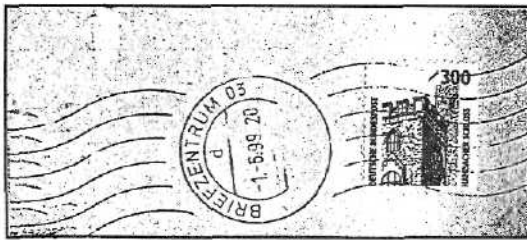


Fig. 13 - 1999: Machine cancellation by the letter center 03 for Cottbus

relevant mail centers in Saxony are 01/Dresden-Okrilla (since January 12, 1995) and 02/Bautzen (since April 30, 1997), and in Brandenburg are 03/Cottbus (since November 27, 1996)(Fig. 13) and 12/Berlin-Schönefeld (since January 12, 1996). The center 12/Berlin is also responsible for ZIP-region 15 with service to a few German-Sorbic locations.

Bilingual postmarks are still available in the Sorbic territories at post office counters. But since post office counters are not always open, a visit to the post office may not be useful. Hence the collection of bilingual postmarks may be more difficult than the collection of some pre-philately.

Finally, it should be mentioned, that with privatization of postal services in 1997, a local delivery service was established in Cottbus, which uses stamp-like adhesives (Fig. 14). At this time three such services are in operation in Cottbus.

The "Sorbic Theme" described here makes one thing clear: the term "Postal History" (perhaps more correctly "Postal Operational History") is too narrow in its present definition. Without the knowledge and presentation of contemporary historic and interrelated occurrences, which the collector must learn and which are unknown to many jury members, the important general historic circumstances of a collecting area must be presented by the collector. For philately is much more than collecting stamps according to catalogs -- it is an adjunct to history.

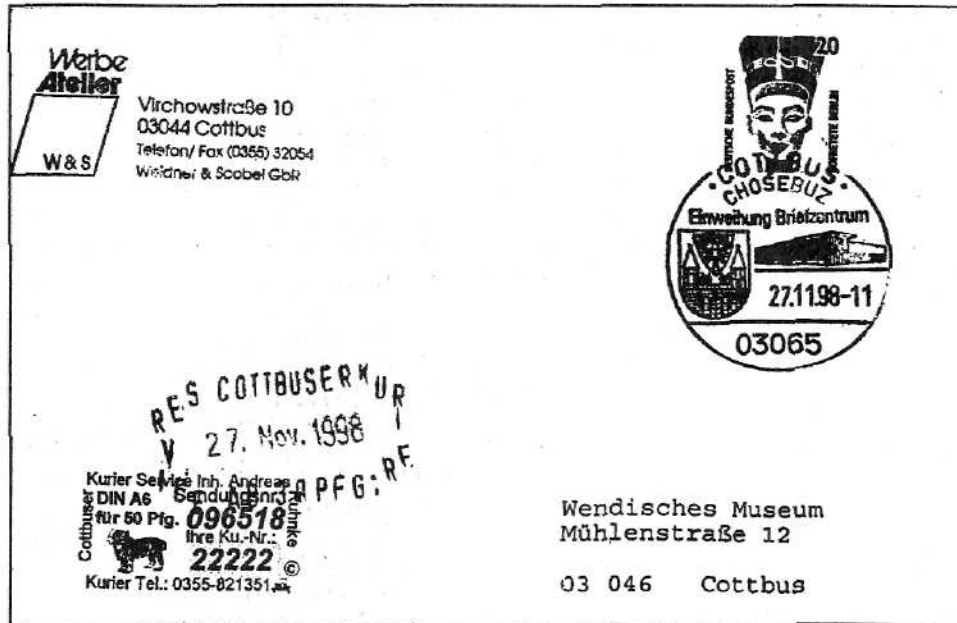


Fig. 14 - Letter with special cancellation for the opening of the letter center Cottbus with local additional payment of the local courier service in Cottbus [lower left corner]

FOKKER OR ANT 9 OR WHAT?

by Richard Beith

Steidler's questioning of the claimed identity of the aeroplane featured on the 50h, 1Kč, 10Kč and 20Kč air mail stamps first issued in 1930 and the 30h issued in 1939, seems quite justified (1). There seem to be four possibilities:

1: Fokker F.VIIb-3m or Fokker F.IXD?

A total of 18 F.VIIb-3m's were built under license in Czechoslovakia by the Avia company (2). Four of these had French registrations -- F-ALGR, F-ALGS, F-ALGT and F-AMBH -- and were destined for CIDNA, later Air France. The remaining 14 received Czechoslovak registrations as follows:

For ČLS: OK-ABM, OK-ABN, OK-ABO, OK-ABP, OK-ABR, OK-ABS, OK-ABT and OK-ABU

For ČSA: OK-AFA, OK-AFB, OK-AFC, OK-AFD and OK-AFE

For Bata: OK-ATC

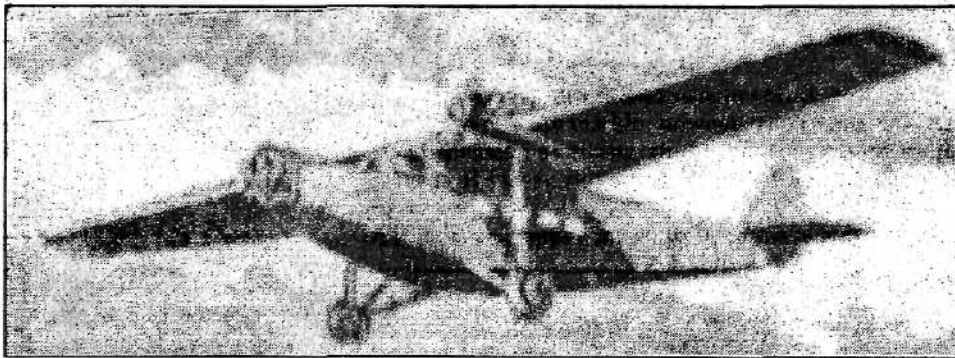


Fig. 1: The plane shown on the 20Kč stamp of 1930

The Fokker F.IX was the biggest of its tri-motor transport monoplanes and was intended for KLM's route to the Netherlands East Indies. However only two were built, one each in 1929 and 1930. In 1935 Avia built two further examples under licence for use by ČSA -- OK-AFF and OK-AFG. They could carry 20 passengers. They were known both as the Fokker F.IXD or as the Avia F.39 (2). It should be noted that these were the only two planes to which the 'D' was added in F.IXD, hence Stanley Gibbons were wrong to use this description as it referred to a plane built in 1935 for stamps issued in 1930.

Comparing an enlargement of the airplane on the stamp (Fig. 1) with typical Fokker tri-motors (Fig. 2 and 3), it is quite obvious, as noted by Steidler, that the Fokker had its outer engines suspended below the wing and that the plane on the stamp had the outer engines mounted on the leading edge of the wing. A study of Stroud (2), Allen (3) and Postma (4) fails to show any example of a Fokker tri-motor with such an engine mounting.

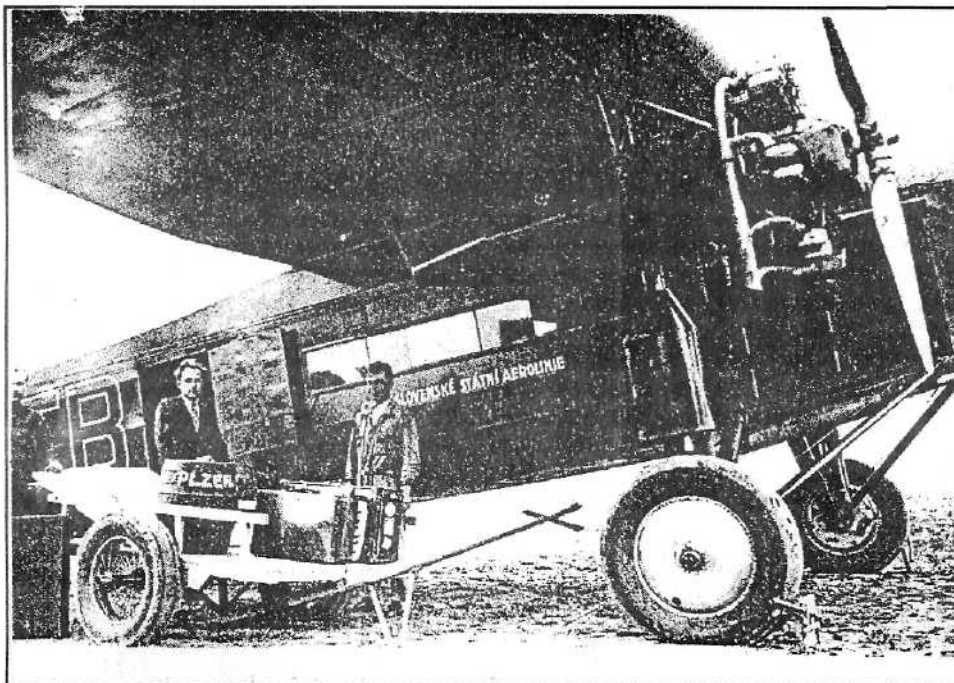


Fig. 2: The ČSA Fokker F.VIIb/3m OK-AFB at Prague

2: ANT 9?

This nine seat tri-motor passenger plane first flew on 7 May 1929, the prototype, URSS-309, making a successful European tour between 10 July and 8 August that year (5). Figure 4 shows a drawing of this plane, the main difference between this and the stamp design, being in the vertical fin. On the drawing (and in photographs of the plane) the fin has a stepped appearance, whereas the stamp shows a smooth curve. Perhaps the ANT 9 did have a smooth fin in later life, as

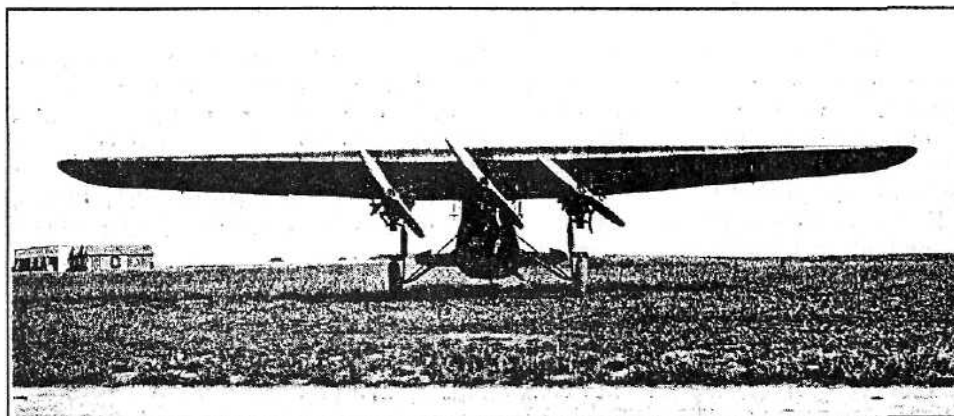


Fig. 3: An unidentified ČLS Fokker F.VIIb/3m at Prague

shown in Figure 1 of (1), but not at the time the Czechoslovak stamp was designed.
3: A French design?

The Franco-Romanian company CFRNA [*Compagnie Franco-Roumaine de Navigation Aérienne*] was the first airline to provide international air services calling at Prague, starting in 1920. On 1 January 1925 this line was reorganized as CIDNA [*Compagnie Internationale de Navigation Aérienne*] and continued to operate through Prague until incorporated in the creation of Air France in 1933.

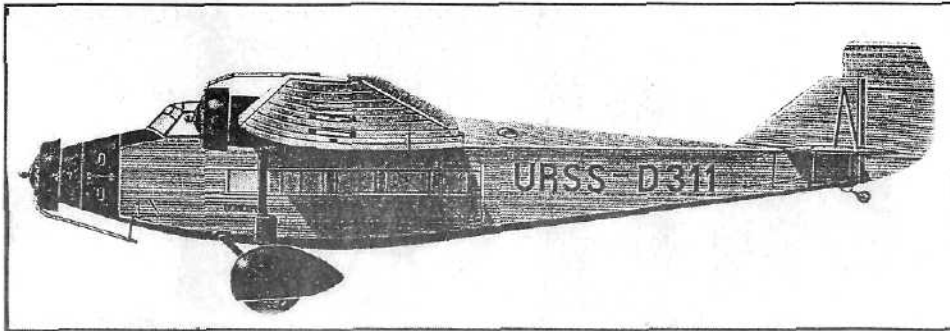


Fig. 4: An ANT 9

Hence it is quite possible that the designer of this stamp was familiar with French aircraft passing through Prague and/or was familiar with their airline publicity material. About 1930, CIDNA advertising for their Orient Arrow route [*Fleche d' Orient*] from Paris via Prague to Istanbul, featured an aeroplane that looks remarkably like the plane featured in the stamp design (see Fig. 5). In general, it resembles a member of the Farman 300 series, but it has been pointed out that: (a) no Farman 300 series ever flew with CIDNA, (b) such planes had underwing and under-rudder support guys, not shown in the design, (c) that although engines were mounted in the wings, they were rather 1/4 above the wing and 3/4 below, rather than the 3/4 above and 1/4 below indicated in Figure 1, and finally, (d) the registration -- F-ASJB -- which should facilitate identification, is actually fictitious (6).

4: A Czechoslovak Design?

Czechoslovakia had an active aviation industry in this period, but perusal of a number of references failed to indicate a matching design (2, 7-11).

Conclusion

It seems most reasonable to agree with Steidler and say that the stamp design does not show a Fokker plane. Is it based on the ANT 9? This design of plane would certainly be well known in view of the success of its 1929 tour of Western European capitals, but if it was used as the basis of the engraving, then there has been some smoothing out of the outline.

It seems more likely that the design was a product of the artist's imagination. No doubt he wished to show a modern plane with clean lines and an absence of struts, etc., perhaps incorporating features from more than one real aeroplane.

What do readers think?



Fig. 5: CIDNA publicity poster showing the mythical F-ASJB

Acknowledgement

Many thanks to my good friend Gérard Collot, President of the *Cercle Aérophilatélique Française* for his help in discussing the French option.

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Book Review

**SPECIALIZED CATALOGUE 2001 OF
SLOVAKIA 1939-1945 AND 1993-2000 –
POSTAGE STAMPS AND POSTAL STATIONERY
by L. Floch, M. Gerec, J. Sobihard, B. Synek,
J. Tekeľ and E. Smažák**

This 223 page catalog, soft bound, is of high technical quality and richly illustrated in color. Published by the Union of Slovak Philatelists, it is authored by an outstanding collective of Slovak authors headed by Doc. Ing. Josef Tekeľ and assisted by the Slovak Expert Committee and two Czech Experts, Jan Karásek and Pavel Pittermann. Non-Slovak readers will have little difficulty using this catalogue. The introductory portion is also in English, while the dictionary of philatelic terms is in English, German and French. The text, while in Slovak, is easy to understand and well illustrated. Included in each copy is a Black Print of Slovakia #126, chosen by the Slovak public as the most beautiful stamp of 1996. Each Black Print is numbered from 0001 to 3500 and is not available except by purchase of the catalogue.

The Contents and System of Catalogue Data Processing chapter, presented in excellent English includes data not seen previously. It lists compound perforations and identifies these by type. Abbreviations and markings are explained in Slovak and English.

The description of forerunners is significantly expanded over what is found in

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the Czech Trojan (1995) catalogue. Some of the items have not been seen by this reviewer previously, and their listing is somewhat surprising. They may be important new discoveries, and hence taken seriously by the readers. Details of the overprint varieties on the first Slovak issue in 1939 are presented in considerable detail. Plate varieties in the Hlinka issue are well illustrated, as are the details of subsequent issues. Particularly well illustrated are the plate varieties of the 1944 Children's souvenir sheet. Varieties and plate numbers of the newspaper issues are covered with no less detail than in other published catalogues.

The chapter on forerunner and issued postal stationery is well presented and includes picture illustrations of all cards. Also included are money orders, parcel cards, letter cards and international reply coupons.

The 1993 and post-1993 issues, somewhat poorer in plate and printing varieties, are nevertheless presented in great detail. The artistry displayed in recent issues is very high, rivaling the best of the current Czech issues. A separate chapter is devoted to stamp booklets and maximum cards. Both are very pretty and inexpensive by our standards, and help this catalogue achieve the objective of stimulating young collectors.

Another chapter is devoted to Black Prints, such as come with the purchase of this catalogue, and which present a small but growing area of collecting. The end of the catalogue is devoted to Slovakia's colorful postal stationery, aerograms, and official service envelopes.

The catalogue, we believe, succeeds in its basic objective which is to broaden the state of knowledge and encourage the collecting of Slovakia. It will probably become the "bible" of collectors of Slovakia, a subject well worth our pursuit. I encourage the purchase of this catalog from the Society through Edwin Lehecka, 217 Hazel Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090. The postally prepaid price is \$20 [within the USA].

Henry Hahn

✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻

Philatelic News and Views

From Savoy Horvath:

-- Here are the results of the vote for the best Czech Republic stamp of the year 2000. They are listed in descending order:

1. "Bruneta (1897)" by Alfons Mucha, Art on Stamps series, 2580 votes
2. "Simeon with the Infant Jesus" by Petr Jan Brandl, Art on Stamps series, 2238 votes
3. "Prague -- European City of Culture", souvenir sheet, 1184 votes
4. "Nativity -- Mary and Joseph around Jesus in a cradle", Christmas, 641 votes
5. "St. Luke the Evangelist (c. 1365)" by Master Theodoricus, Art on Stamps series, 607 votes;

with the least votes going to the Václav Havel definitive stamp.

-- Here is an update on the missent mail to the Czech Republic. The Czech Post -- after years of taking flak from Czech mail recipients for late, undelivered, and

lost mail, and for others robbed of their contents -- asked the Post-Europ international organization for help. They in turn hired a German consulting firm, Ipsos. Here are some of the mail tracking results:

- the rate of mail delivery to neighboring countries, incoming or outgoing is 25% next day and 70% the second day

- airmail coming in to Ružyně Airport in Prague is delivered next day provided the plane lands before 3 P.M.

- the average delivery time between the Czech Republic and Great Britain is 2.8 days

- the worst delivery time is for letters or packages posted from the United States, according to Czech postal inspector J. Havelík.

The consulting company ran a two week long test on mail posted in the United States for the Czech Republic. During this two weeks, Czechs received 3800 items originating in the US that had to be remailed from other countries; through Denmark 1210, England 695, Germany 275, Italy 275, Croatia 175, Austria 170, Poland 160, and others through some 30 other countries including Israel, Libya, Egypt, Japan, South Africa and China.

Director of International Delivery for Czech Posts, P. Dřimalka, has been unsuccessfully trying to warn the US Postal Service of this problem. As recently as two years ago, Director Dřimalka has contacted his counterpart in the USPS, but to date no answer.

Slovakia, besides having similar problems as the Czechs with mail originating in the US, has an additional problem in the form of mail originating from P.R. China. It seems that the PRC Post has not as yet registered the separation of Czechoslovakia into two new countries. All of the PRC's mail addressed to the Slovak Republic is automatically routed to Prague, ČR.

My personal experiences in letter mail to the ČR and SR for the second week in February: I mailed six airmail letters of which one arrived in record time of 4 days to Hodonín, two more letters got to the area in 6 days, one came back stamped Warsaw in 8 days (confirmed by Černík Auctions), another took 12 days, and finally the sixth letter took also 12 days to Prague but was back stamped Bratislava. I guess I was lucky at that, as I always add "EUROPE" to my ČR and SR mail addresses. I guess that keeps them out of Africa.

* * * * *

Letters to the Editor

1. Dear Lou:

-- I might be wrong, but I believe that the letter prefix on the Czech country zip code is CZ and not CS. This is because CS stood once for Czechoslovakia, and today by international agreement it's changed to CZ on zip code prefix and automobile stickers. Only Czech Airlines OK still uses ČSA. But even here this will likely be changing, because about six years ago Slovakia filed a large international trade mark law suit at the Hague over this issue.

Savoy Horvath

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-- The country code for the Czech Republic (page 29, Mar/Apr) is CZ and not CS. The CS code belonged to Czechoslovakia. After 1993 [the separation into ČR and SR] we use CZ.

Lubor Kunc

[Ed. Note: Readers Horvath and Kunc are correct. I originally took the word of a postal worker who apparently did not read the fine print. After receiving the two comments above, I went back to the USPS and insisted upon a more thorough reading.]

2. Dear Lou:

I feel that I need to comment on Frank Schubert's letter [Mar/Apr 2001 SPECIALIST, p41].

Dear Frank:

I think that it's nice of you to point out gaffes in the SPECIALIST, it shows your interest in our publication, but unless you have tried your hand at translating, ease up, it is hard work. Only accidents are caused, errors in translations just happen.

Best regards to you,
Savoy Horvath

[Ed. Note: I should have researched Frank Schubert's comments better at the time, but his letter came in just before my deadline. First of all, I inserted the "Slavonic Epic" portion of the write-up on the Mucha stamp, it did not come from Gerald van Zanen. I added it to what Gerald had provided me. I took it word-for-word from the Czech Post's 2000 Issue Plan. It is their translation of the term "Slovanská epopej". Their translation work is generally excellent.]

3. Dear Lou:

In "Specialist" No. 6/2000 I found some little errors. So I would like to make remarks to the notes:

1) from Henry Hahn, page 35:

- Královo nad Tisou (today Korolevo) means in Hungarian: Királyháza (Királyhájén does not exist)

- Ševlus (today Vinogradov) means in Hungarian: Nagyszöllöes (not Nagyrjöllöes)

2) from Karel Ruzicka, page 40:

- in German: Glatz, name in Czech: Kladsko

- the Bohemian king George Podiebrad formed the Lower Silesian territory to a county, which 1534/61 fell to the Hapsburg dynasty, in 1742 it was conquered by king Frederic II, and in 1763 became a part of Prussia (after World War II to Poland).

Dr. Walter Rauch

4. Dear Ludvik:

1) Newspaper stamps (page 40, Mar/Apr): In the Editor's Note it is correctly stated that each newspaper was charged 2 hellers. The higher denominations were

used for packages of newspapers having a so called "novinová páska" [newspaper wrapper]. When an addressee ordered more than one copy of a newspaper (e.g., newspaper dealers, large companies, etc.) then a novinová páska was used to mail the group of newspapers. It was franked with a sufficient quantity of stamps to pay the 2 heller postal rate for each of the newspapers in the bundle. This system was in use since 1851 when the first newspaper stamps of the world (the Merkur issue) were printed by the Austrian Postal Administration. This system also resulted in some of the first Austrian Merkur stamps becoming rarities -- especially the "rumělkový Merkur" [vermilion Mercury] which belongs among the rarest of stamps in world philately. They were supposed to have been used to mail bundles of newspapers, but only a few publishers were mailing bundled newspapers at that time because there were very few subscribers for more than a single newspaper, and thus the publishers tended to frank these bundles with multiples of the more common "blue Merkur". An interesting situation developed in conjunction with the mailing of newspapers during WWI, when the Austro-Hungarian Field Post issued their own newspaper stamps used for the delivery of newspapers to soldiers (while at the same time civil newspaper stamps issued by the Austro-Hungarian Postal Administration were being used for newspaper delivery to the general public).

I do not know of any lists of postage rates for newspapers, but interesting information on this subject can be found in Monografie 5, p171, where procedures valid on the 1920 Plebiscite Area (SO 1920) are described -- it should be noted that they were valid for all of Czechoslovakia. As you read there, the postage rate was determined by how often the newspaper was published and how much it weighed.

Sometimes you can also find newspaper stamps used on envelopes, but not often, because the majority of newspapers were sent without envelopes. Some people (including especially stamp dealers and auctioneers) may try to convince you that a cover with a newspaper stamp on it is a "rare" usage of newspaper stamps as normal postage, but this is not true. Some of the publishers preferred to mail their newspaper in an envelope (e.g., a specialized newspaper for businessmen in the textile industry), so they mailed them in an open envelope. But such items are not unusual, and thus there is no reason to pay "huge" amounts for such "rarities". There are two criteria that you can use to help you to determine whether an envelope that bears a newspaper stamp was used to transport a newspaper:

- does the affixed newspaper stamp value correspond to the standard newspaper postal rate of the time (in the majority of cases it will be 5h);
- does the address of the sender reflect an industry (e.g. textiles) that was known to send out technical newsletters to businessmen.

And now a final note on the newspaper stamps. Not many people know that the cancels on the Austrian, Hungarian and Czechoslovak newspaper stamps were not the cancels of the mailing post offices, but rather that they were applied by, and the cancels of, the arrival post office. This practice evolved because every newspaper's banner head contained its town name and publication date [which would indicate where it was mailed from]. So a newspaper with an affixed newspaper stamp departed the mailing post office without a postal cancel, but had it applied by the receiving post office.

2) Cancels on the Hradčany stamps (page 41, Mar/Apr): About figures 1 & 2, the crown over the upper bar is a normal part of Hungarian cancels from the time of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy -- it is Saint Stephan's Crown = svatoštěpánská

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koruna. The first cancel is the original Hungarian one used in Czechoslovakia. Hungarian cancels showed the date as year/month/day. Figure 2 shows the Hungarian cancel that was "znárodněny" [nationalized], i.e. the date field was changed to meet the normal form used in Czechoslovakia, day/month/year.

In figure 4 the location of the letters ČSP over the upper bar is normal for bi-lingual cancels -- this cancel has a Czech BRUNTAL 1 in the upper arc, and the German FREUDENTHAL 1 in the lower arc (where normally the ČSP would have appeared but now there wasn't sufficient space). You can find additional information on this area in Votoček's Monografie 17, which describes all of the versions of Czechoslovak cancels of the 1st through 3rd types. The 1st type (having the letters ČSP in the lower arc) was originally used in February 1919, but it took time to produce the cancels for all of the Czechoslovak post offices. Thus, some of the original Austrian and Hungarian cancels continued in service into 1919 and even 1920 (see Votoček's Monografie 16).

I do not agree that in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy it was normal to include in postal cancels both the Czech and German names of the town. This is not correct. In the pre-philatelic period, all cancels had the German text only. Having the German text + the town name in another language started in the second half of the 19th century. In Bohemia/Moravia the bi-lingual cancels (German -- Czech) were used only in areas where the Czech populace was in the majority. In all other areas the cancels contained only the German name (or German -- Polish in Silesia). Until 1919 in Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine all of the cancels were in the Hungarian language only (see Votoček's Monografie 13 and 14).

Lubor Kunc

5. Dear Lou:

Many thanks for the Mar/Apr *SPECIALIST*.

With regards to Petr Horka's article in the March/April *SPECIALIST* on OAT handstamps, the author and readers may like to know that in 2000 the American Air Mail Society published the second edition of *OAT and AV2 Markings* by Murray Heifetz. [ISBN 0-939429-22-5, price \$15 + postage from Greg Schmidt, 1978 Fox Burrow Court, Neenah, WI 54956, USA]. This 144 page fully illustrated softback is an essential volume for any aerophilatelist's library. Heifetz lists and illustrates no less than 19 different OAT handstamps.

Yours sincerely
Richard [Beith]

6. Dear Lou:

In Frank Garancovsky's March/April article on Czech souvenir sheet Scott #239, he mentions the Alfons Stach private printing of blank tabs of Czech stamps. Here are several examples of these for publication. I have seen only a few of them, so I assume they are somewhat scarce. Enclosed are illustrations of the following Stach overprinted tabs from my collection: Sc. 202-205 (Masaryk)(Fig. 1a/b), 206-207 (Arras)(Fig. 2), B144-146 (Children's Care)(Fig. 3), and 213-214 (Macha)(Fig. 4). Note that for 202 and 203, the advertising is on the wide side sheet margins, not on true blank tabs. Also note that the illustrated top 207 tab, which is scarce now, apparently wasn't that scarce when Stach overprinted these. I am sure that I have



Fig. 1a



Fig. 1b

also seen Scott B147-149 with these advertising overprints (white letters on a colored background), but I can't find it in my collection. In every case Stach used a color for the overprinting which very closely matched the color of the stamp, so someone might easily have concluded that the stamps and Stach ads were actually printed



Fig. 2

by the Czechoslovak postal officials. But Frank's comments about these makes it clear that these were private unauthorized overprints.

Note that there are two types of overprints (apparently depending on which stamp issue Stach was overprinting), colored letters on a white background and white letters on a colored background. Since the ad wording is the same on each type, you might also publish a translation of the ad and explain why it mentions both Praha AND Chicago.

Best wishes
Phil Melamed

[Ed. Note: The text of the ad reads "Auction House of Postage Stamps", Stach's name, address in Prague, and (Palais Chicago) -- the Palais is Palace in French. I believe this is the name of a building or convention center. Does anyone know for sure?]



Fig. 3

7. Dear Lou:

I have been corresponding by e-mails with another member, and after considerable research we still have unresolved questions dealing with the Anniversary/Allegory of the Republic issue of late 1938. Perhaps one of our readers can help us.

The issue consists of two stamps (2 Kč and a 3 Kč)(Sc. 253/254) and a small souvenir sheet containing a perforated copy of the 2 Kč stamp (Sc. B153)(Fig. 5). It was originally intended as a commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the



Fig. 4

founding of Czechoslovakia and was to have been released on 28 October 1938. However, the events of that fall (the Munich Accords) completely disrupted these plans. It was then rescheduled to be released as a commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the release of the first Czechoslovak stamps (Hradčany).



Fig. 5

What were the actual issue dates for the two stamps and the souvenir sheet? Here is a listing of what various catalogs say: Michel and Minkus have Dec. 19 for the stamps and Dec. 15 for the souvenir sheet; Novotny (1970) has Dec. 19 for both; Specializovaná Příručka (1988) has Dec. 15 for both; Trojan (1995) has Dec. 15 for both; Scott's has Dec. 19 for the stamps, and just 1938 for the souvenir sheet; POFIS (1999) has Dec. 19 for both; and Monografie 3 has Dec. 19 for both.

What focused my attention on all of this were two things. First, I have a cover that went from Czechoslovakia to Chicago bearing a copy of the 2 Kč stamp (plus a 50h green Štefaník), containing the handstamp "PRVNÍ DEN PLATNOSTI" (first day of validity), and each of the stamps has a cancel of Dec. 15, 1938 (note that the Štefaník was issued on Nov. 21). And the second thing is three copies of the souvenir sheet that

each bear a cancel dated Dec. 19, 1938. I have never seen a souvenir sheet with an earlier date (I have one with a later date).

As you can see, there is no agreement between all of these sources or pieces of information.

There are several other complicating factors here. First, the exact date of the issuance of the first Hradčany stamps is itself a little murky, but is generally shown as being Dec. 18, 1918. Second, the souvenir sheet in its entirety was not to be used as postage to frank a piece of mail -- although the stamp could be torn out and used. It was thus almost indistinguishable from the regular issue stamp (the regular stamp is blue, while the souvenir sheet is ultramarine according to the 1999 POFIS catalog). Despite the prohibition, some copies of the souvenir sheet on cover did sneak through the post. And third, according to Monografie 3 there was no advance public announcement that the issue was to be released for any date. Its existence was not officially announced until the Bulletin of the Ministry of Transportation, #1, for Jan. 7, 1939, which was released on Dec. 30, 1938.

So we have a 2 Kč stamp with a seemingly earliest cancel date of Dec. 15 and a souvenir sheet with a seemingly earliest cancel date of Dec. 19, and these facts do not agree with any of the catalogs referenced.

Can anyone help?

Phil Melamed

New Issues

CZECH REPUBLIC
by G. M. van Zanten

1. On March 14, 2001, the Ministry of Transport and Communications issued a 9 Kč commemorative stamp in the Czechs for Europe series entitled "Comenius (J.A. Komenský)" (Fig. 1). This new series -- in harmony with our country's effort to join the European Union -- is dedicated to outstanding Czech personalities whose work contributed to learning beyond the borders of our land. The stamp bears a portrait of Comenius (Jan Ámos Komenský, 1592-1670), a great Czech humanist, writer, educationalist, philosopher, social and religious thinker. He was ordained as a clergyman in 1616 and later served as the last bishop of the Czech Brethren. Because of his religious convictions, he went into hiding in 1621 and into permanent exile in 1628. As a respected scholar, he became the political spokesman of the emigration after the battle of Bílá Hora and strove to work for the Czech reformation with the Protestant powers. He was active in many European countries as an educational reformer and was the first modern philosopher of



Fig. 1

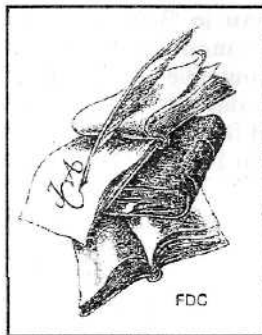


Fig. 2

education. In 1657 he published his *Didactica Magna* (Great Didactic) which dealt with a unified system for the education of youth. Although he was offered the presidency of Harvard College, Komenský did not accept the position. His greatest literary work was *The Labyrinth of the World and The Paradise of the Heart*, 1623, an allegory on the vanity of life in this world. His most significant philosophical work is his *General Consultation concerning the Improvement of Human Affairs*. After 1620 he lived most of his life in exile. He died in Holland and is buried in the town of Naarden. Komenský has been featured on many Czechoslovak stamps -- in 1935, 1952, 1955 (twice), 1957 (four times), 1970 and 1992 (a miniature sheet). The stamp was designed by Oldřich Kulhánek and engraved by Miloš Ondráček. It was produced by the Post Printing House, Prague, using rotary recess printing in black combined with photogravure in brown-red and red-violet in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in greenish-grey contains an illustration of the symbols of Komenský's erudition -- a book with a contemporary pen completed by his initials (Fig. 2).

2. On March 28, 2001, the Ministry issued a multicolored commemorative sheetlet entitled "1000 Years of Architecture in the Czech Lands", containing three stamps, and including an illustration of drawing tools and the ground plans for an ecclesiastical building (Fig. 3). From a thousand years of architectural history in the Czech lands, the designer of this issue has chosen three architectural styles -- Romanesque, Renaissance and contemporary. The sheetlet was designed by Jan Kavan and engraved by Martin Srb. It was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by recess print from flat plates in black, orange and blue-green.

-- The 13 Kč stamp depicts the church in Jakub u Kutné Hory, built in 1165,



Fig. 3

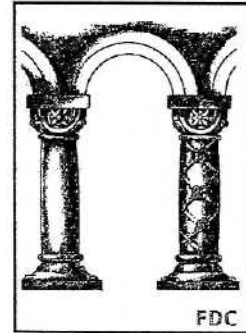


Fig. 4

and is one of the most valuable Romanesque buildings in the Czech Republic. It is a single-nave aristocratic construction of ashlar masonry with a pulpit, an apse and a western tower with triple Romanesque windows on two floors, one above the other. The decorative sculpture on the south face, among the oldest monumental representative sculptures in this country, is of exceptional value. The stamp depicts part of this decoration and an overall view of the church. A gray-black FDC shows a drawing of Romanesque columns from the interior of St. Jacob's church and bears a PRAHA cancel (Fig. 4).

-- The 17 Kč stamp depicts the Renaissance chateau in Bučovice near Vyškov. It was built in 1567-1582 for the Moravian nobleman Jan Šembera Černohorský of Boskovice. The chateau is square and has a central courtyard that has arcades on three sides and has extensive gardens. The internal facades were austere and undecorated. However, the rooms on the ground floor still have their exceptionally valuable original wall and ceiling decorations. In 1633 corner towers

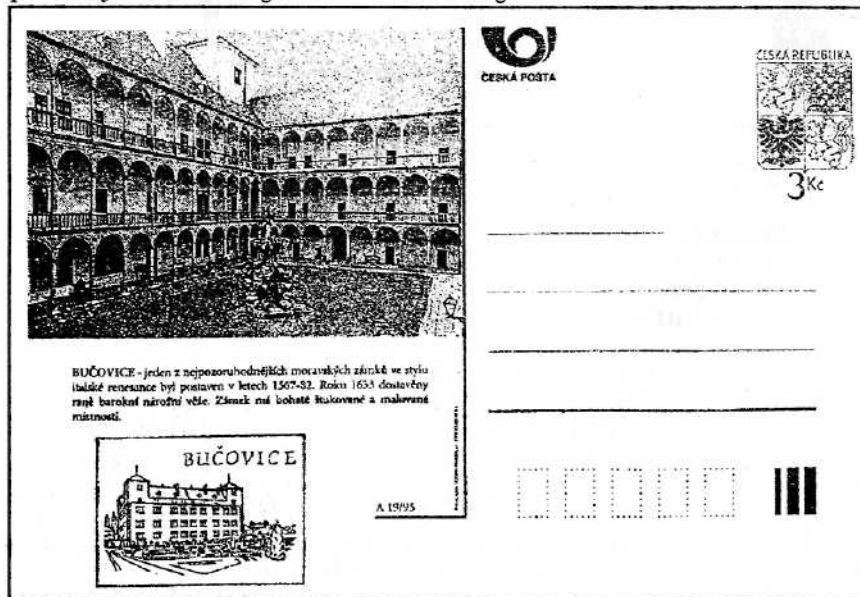


Fig. 5

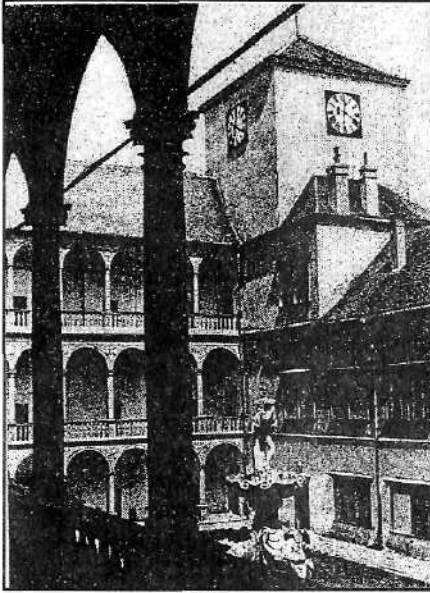


Fig. 6

were built on to the chateau. The whole complex was enclosed in castle walls (a type of four-winged northern Italian castle) and a water-filled moat. The chateau itself has survived to today, albeit altered many times, as has part of the front court and garden. The stamp shows part of the decorations of the arcades and an overall view of the chateau. Refer also to card A19 in the ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENTS series of 1995 (Fig. 5) and the photo of the courtyard and one tower (Fig. 6). The gray-black FDC shows a drawing of Renaissance columns from the arcades of the courtyard of the Bučovice chateau and bears a PRAHA cancel (Fig. 7).

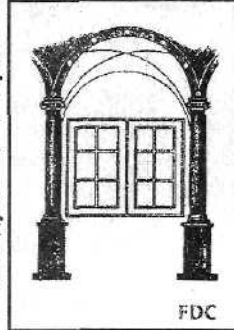


Fig. 7

-- The 31 Kč stamp depicts the Tančící Dům (the Dancing House), designed by Croatian architect Vlado Milunič and Canadian-born American Frank O. Gehry. The building, on the Rašín embankment in Prague, is a representative example of contemporary architecture.

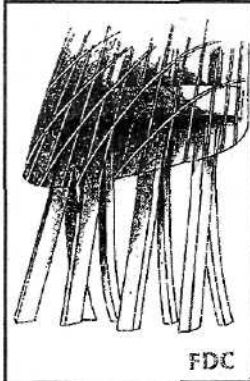


Fig. 8

The foundation stone of the reinforced concrete structure was laid in 1994 and the carcassing was completed in 1996. The Dancing House is named after its tower, reminiscent of the dancing figure of Fred Astaire. The building -- owned by the Dutch insurance company Nationale Nederlanden -- was opened to the public on June 20, 1996. The gray-black FDC shows columns situated at the entry to the Dancing House and bears a PRAHA cancel (Fig. 8).



Fig. 9

3. On March 28, 2001, the Ministry issued a multicolored 5.40 Kč commemorative stamp entitled "Easter" (Fig. 9). The stamp shows a brightly colored cockerel with a farmer's wife in the background holding a wicker bowl full of beautiful red Easter eggs. The stamp was designed by Zdenka Kabátová-Táborská and engraved by Martin Srb. A green FDC depicts a farmer's wife with a pannier full of Easter eggs (Fig. 10).



Fig. 10

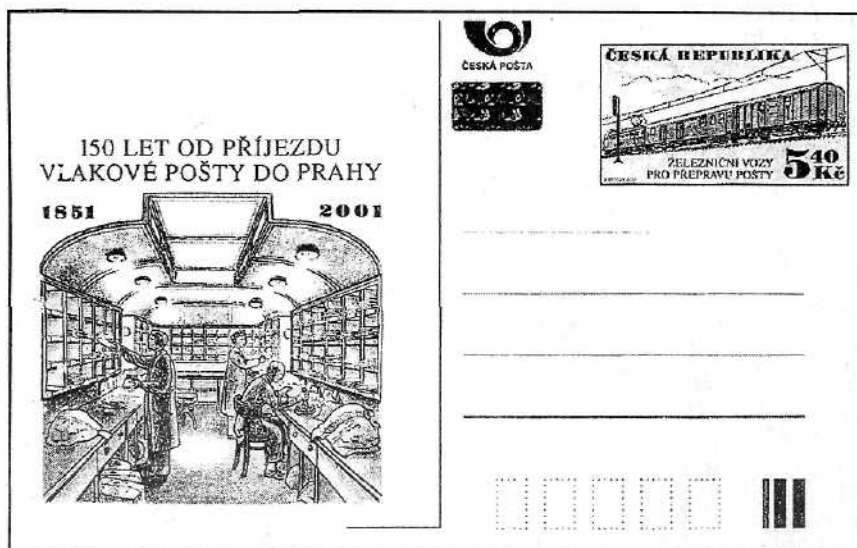


Fig. 11

Postal Stationery

4. On March 28, 2001, the Ministry issued a commemorative postal card with imprinted 5.40 Kč stamp for "150 Years Since the Arrival of the Train Post to Prague"(Fig. 11). The imprinted stamp depicts an illustration of an electric locomotive pulling two baggage cars; the first one was used for the sorting of postal items during the journey, while the second was for the transport of packages. The left portion of the card shows the interior of the first carriage with postal employees using the various equipment and facilities to sort the mail. The postal card was designed by Jiří Bouda and was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague. It sells for 6.10 Kč.

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