

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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CZECHOSLOVAK FIELD POSTS OF 1918-1920

(Prague, Czechoslovakia)

By Bohumil Matejka

Reprinted from The American Philatelist

The first Field Post of the Czechoslovak Army within the territory of the republic, was used only by the Army operating in Slovakia. After Czechoslovakia's Declaration of Independence, Oct. 28, 1918, there was no doubt concerning the boundary lines of Bohemia and Moravia but those of Slovakia were vague and had to be definitively settled by the Peace Conference. The Hungarian intelligentsia living in Slovakia, as well as the Hungarian Army units posted there, immediately set up a movement of resistance refusing to free Slovakia. They resisted the Czechoslovak military forces from entering Slovakia to secure the Slovak border. The Slovaks themselves had no armed forces.

This uncertainty of territorial rights of Czechoslovakia in Slovakia lasted until Nov. 25, 1918, when the high council in Paris settled on a provisional line

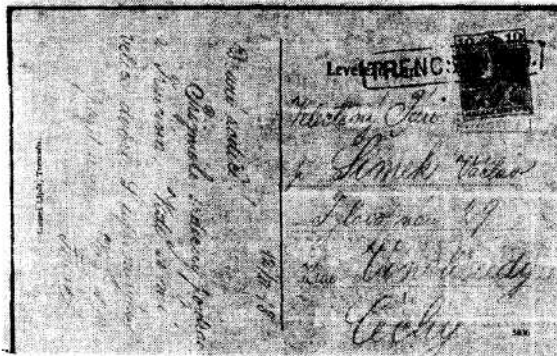


Figure 1: A postal card dated 12.XI.1918 and franked with a Hungarian stamp. Soldier posted card directly into the railroad station mailbox in Trenčín (Trencsen), which is indicated by the oblong Hungarian railway station handstamp.

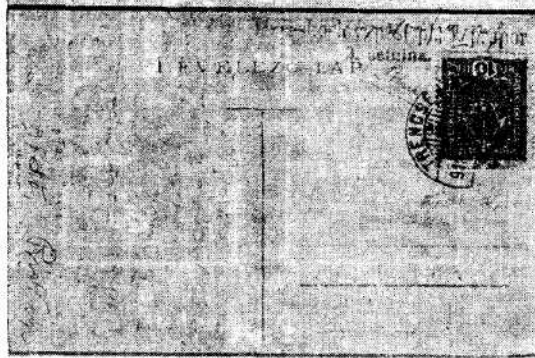


Figure 2: Another postal card, this one dated 29.XI.1918, bears the Hungarian Trencsen datestamp (30.XI.18) and the line stamp (above the adhesive) of the Army unit. It was mailed through the Trencin civilian post office. The card was unnecessarily franked with an Austrian stamp.

of demarcation between Czechoslovakia and Hungary. This demarcation line ran through the middle of the Danube from the Moravian border to the mouth of the Ypel River. Further, it ran through the middle of the Ypel River to Lucenec, then to Rimavská Sobota, Uzhorod, and following the middle of the Uhu River to the Uzocky Pass.

This boundary line, however, in no way took into consideration either the nationality groups of that region or its economic problems. So a note issued March 20, 1919, by the Ambassadorial Conference set a new demarcation line between the two countries according to which the Hungarians were ordered to withdraw farther—50-80 kilometers.

As a protest to this note, the existing Hungarian government under Károlyi resigned and Béla Kun set up a new government of Soviet councils which immediately made preparations for the recovery of the whole of Slovakia. This brought on a serious armed conflict between the two countries.

First Czechoslovak units from Bohemia and Moravia entered Slovakia to

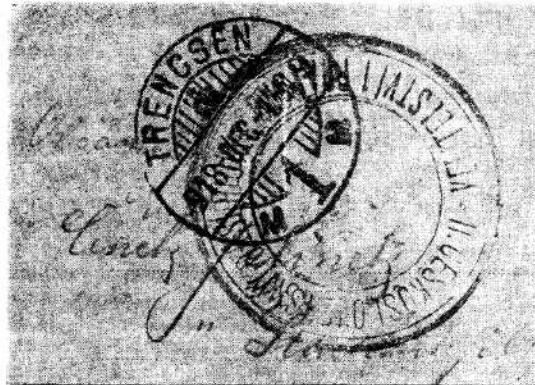


Figure 3: This item clearly shows that it had first been stamped with the round stamp of the Second Czechoslovak Infantry Regiment Command, First Battalion. Applied over military marking is Trencsen datestamp of civilian post office, dated 1.XII.1918.

secure the boundaries of Slovakia, Nov. 2, 1918, and virtually on that day the Czechoslovak Army Field Posts commenced to operate. Their function, however, was somewhat irregular to the normal set-up of field posts. At first, only small volunteer infantry units from Bohemia and Moravia arrived in Slovakia. It was a company of volunteers from Jaromer, Zelezny Brod, Nymburk, Koprivnice, from the Hané region, Karlovice, Kromeriz, two from Kladno, and so on.

All of these units were named for each city where the companies of volunteers had been organized. From Prague came the First and Second volunteer regiments, each consisting of a battalion. (In these days there were no auxiliary units such as the army service corps, medical, supply and base services, no plan of operation and also no Field post offices.)

The Czechoslovakian Republic was going through its birth pains. However, as the days passed, military forces were rapidly augmented and a month later a greater improvement and order was noted in the organization of the armed forces in Slovakia. Necessary auxiliary units were established and later Field Posts were put into operation.

For two months, November and December 1918, there existed no military post offices, but the servicemen even then wanted to write home with free franking privilege. (Covers and cards exist from this period, mainly from November 1918, when the soldiers franked their mail by using either Austrian or Hungarian stamps. They had not been informed that it was unnecessary to use stamps. (See Figures 1 and 2.)

Official military mail also had to be expedited and the question had to be solved without delay because the first units crossed into Slovakia from the Moravian border on Nov. 2, 1918.

The solution placed in practice was the following: Cards and letters written by the servicemen, marked with the words "Pólni posta" (Field Mail), were collected at the various units each day. The mail was first censored by the unit and then hand stamped with a line stamp of that particular unit. The whole batch of correspondence was then handed over to a civilian post office, which was under the control of the Czechoslovak Army. This civilian post office next applied its local round hand stamp to the mail and arranged for further transport and delivery.

If there happened to be a battalion command in the city, mail gathered together at the various companies was assembled there, where it received a

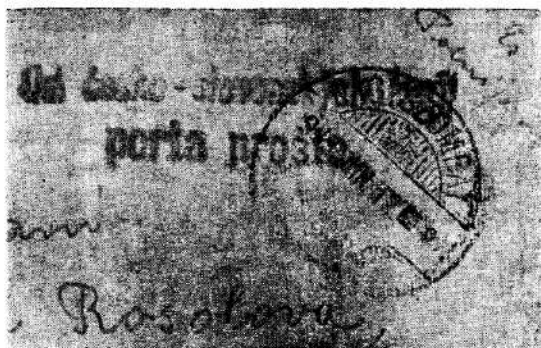


Figure 4: This card already carries the prescribed stamp "From the Czechoslovak Legion. Postage Free," plus Hungarian civilian post office datestamp, Nagyszombat / Trnava / of 12.I.19, the period when the first official Field Posts were already functioning.

round stamping of the command, then conveyed to the civilian post office, for further free expedition. (See Figure 3.) Although all post offices were under the supervision of the army, the clerks were usually Hungarian or pro-Hungarian in their feelings. So they continued to use the Hungarian blank forms and handstamps.

At the beginning, most military mail was forwarded to the Trencsén (Trencín) civilian post office by the military commands from the entire section of this front. In the first two months. (November and December 1918) mail dispatched to the men in combat had to be addressed as follows: Serviceman's Name, military unit and Trencín. The Command of the various sections took care of the delivery of mail to the addressee.

Mail delivered in this manner was the forerunner of items later delivered by the regular Field post offices. Thus we cannot omit, or neglect, these entires if we desire to have our collection of Czechoslovak Field Posts complete.

From their diversity, these forerunner items make interesting documentary material to depict the development of the first Czechoslovak Field Post in Czechoslovakia.

The first official document regulating the procedure for servicemen stationed in Slovakia to send mail was issued by the Chief Command of the military forces, Dec. 18, 1918, under Noč V. O. 16503/Inf. ref. It states (verbatim); "Troops leaving for Slovakia and dwelling in Slovácko should be informed that letters and cards sent by men in Slovácko must be marked with the stamp 'From Czechoslovak Legion. Postage free.'" (See Figure 4.) The wording of this official document mixing "Slovensko—Slovácko" reflects the unadjusted conditions of those early days of the republic.

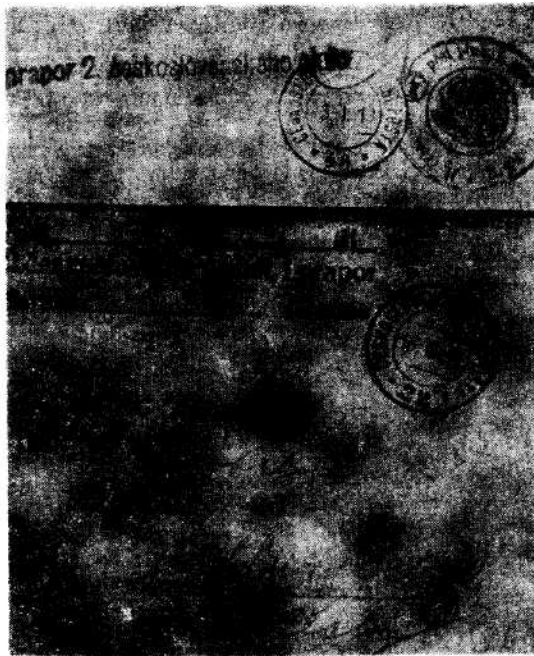


Figure 5: Portions of two cards illustrating markings of first Field Posts. Top shows No. 46 Field Post Office, dated 3.I.19. Bottom is marking of No. 22 Field Post Office, dated 16.III.19.

Since there was a lack of the prescribed stamps, this method was used only in isolated cases. Less than two weeks later—Jan. 1, 1919—the first three Field post offices started to function. This explains why only a few cards so marked have been preserved.

The mode of sending private mail of the soldiers stationed in Slovakia through the civilian post offices was practiced by many of the army units even after the Field Posts had been set up, because mail sent in this manner reached its destination more quickly. (See Figure 6.)

And so it can only be stated that the first Field Posts on the territory of Czechoslovakia, handled mail of the armed forces in two ways: (1) Through the civilian post offices which were under the surveillance of the Army. (2) Through the regular Military Field Post Offices.

This Military Field Post is noted for one curiosity. Correspondence so stamped carried much information that could well have been made use of by the enemy for its strategic purposes. Evidently, the Czechoslovak Chief Command had no fear as to enemy espionage in that direction. In those days, telephone connections between the Czech and Hungarian fighting units were, in most cases, unbroken so that both sides could either negotiate together or even threaten each other via the telephone. And there was no continual, unbroken front between them.

On Dec. 20, 1918, the Czechoslovak Army Command in Slovakia issued an addendum to the Day's Order No. 21, announcing that from Jan. 1, 1919, Field Post Offices for the Army stationed in Slovakia would begin to function with a mail sorting office in Uherské Hradiste. Three Field post offices were established at that time: No. 22, for troops of Colonel Sembera; No. 46, for troops of Colonel Hrbensky, and No. 75, for the Czechoslovak Army Command

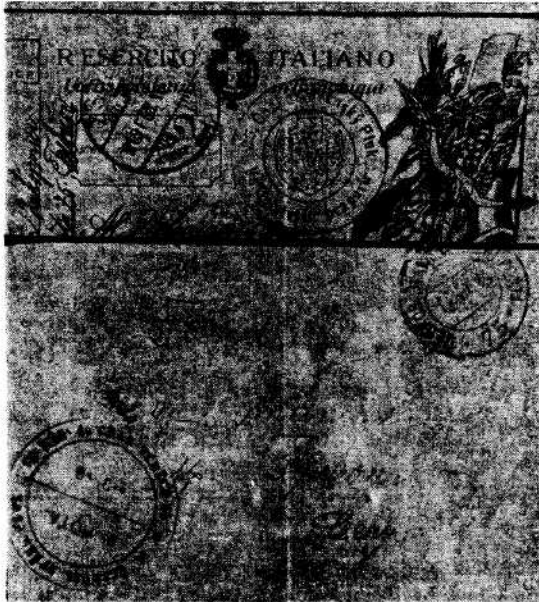
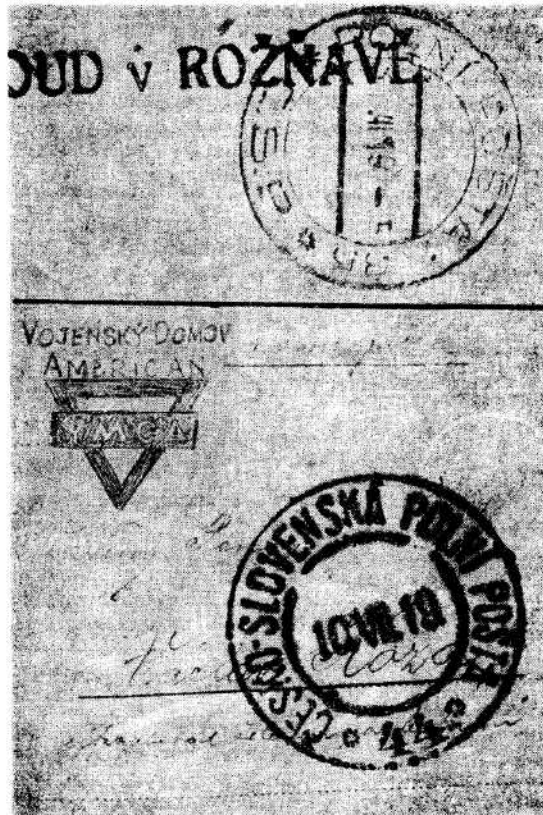


Figure 6 (top): Portion of card from an Italian Legionnaire of the 35th Regiment, dated 10.II.19. It was sent through the civilian post office of Zsolna (Zilina). Figure 7 (bottom): A French Legionnaire cover from the Scutzen Regiment 21 (Strelecky), sent through Field Post No. 75.

in Slovakia and troops stationed in Zilina—the Sixth and Seventh divisions of Czechoslovak corps from Italy (Italian Legionnaires). (See Figures 5, 6, and 7.) Additional Field post offices were established later, totaling 20 in all, with one collecting office in Opava and one field mail sorting office. The stamps of these various Field Posts are divided into specific types and subtypes. (See Figures 8 and 9.)

Material of this sort is scarce in Czechoslovakia and, as a result, there are not many collectors specializing in this material. Since literature on the subject is scarce, this first exhaustive monograph might be of help to the philatelist who collects Field Post material.

(If readers of *The American Philatelist* show an interest for further information, author Matejka has expressed a willingness to illustrate and describe the stamps of all Czechoslovak Field Posts, 1918-1920, in Slovakia, plus the stamps which Italian and French Legionnaire regiments brought with them for use in the combat area. If you are interested in an expansion of this postal history subject, please write to Editor James M. Chemni, 5932 N. 14th Place, Phoenix, Ariz. 85014.)



Figures 8 and 9: Additional types of Field Post markings. Top shows "C. S. P. Polni posta: 35." Bottom card shows "Cesko-Slovenska polni posta * 44." Bottom card also carries the red marking of the United States YMCA soldiers' home.

Padělky Československých Poštovních Známek

Translated by Henry Hahn

Continued

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SCOUT DELIVERY SERVICE STAMPS

with overprint

10 h blue — overprint brick-red

20 h red — overprint black

On December 21, 1918, the day of President Masaryk's arrival in Prague, the Scout mail delivery service was once again called upon. Its mission was rapid message service between the railway station, city-hall, the Castle (Hradčany) and the council chambers. A small number of Scout stamps (reportedly 600 pairs) was provided with a diagonal three-line overprint "Příjezd presidenta Masaryka". (Arrival of President Masaryk). The overprint was produced at the Knapp print shop in Karlín, on both denominations of the first and second printing. The black overprint is dull, and upon enlargement is translucent. Because of the printing pressure employed, the ink forms clear letter outlines.

(Catalog numbers listed)

Overprinted by typography

| Illustration | length of overprint: |
|--------------|----------------------|
| | 1. 12.5 mm |
| | 2. 18.5 mm |
| | 3. 19.1 mm |

Genuine

1. The letter í in the word Příjezd has a bump in the lower left hand portion.
2. The letter j in the word Příjezd has the upper right hand portion of the dot and letter cut skewly; the lower bend is sharp.
3. The letter t in the word presidenta is bent to the right at the bottom.

Page 362

Counterfeit A (to defraud collectors)

10 h blue, overprint brick-red

20 h red, overprint black

The insignificantly small printing of the overprint and its price rise soon enticed counterfeiters to reproduce it. We publish (herein) only one type of counterfeit, which appears most frequently, the counterfeited overprint appearing both on genuine stamps and on counterfeits C. The counterfeiters also utilized genuine letters, upon whose mounted stamps they subsequently placed their overprint. In the case of the 10h denomination, the overprint is made with dull red ink, which upon enlargement appears translucent. In the case of the 20h denomination, the overprint is black, shiny, and more heavily applied. The letters have indistinct, smeared outlines.

Letters delivered during the President's day of arrival have only circular post marks with the text POŠTA SKAUTŮ-PRAHA-1918 or PRESIDÍUM MINISTERSKÉ RADY REPUBLIKY ČESKOSLOVENSKÉ.

| | |
|--------------|----------------------|
| Illustration | length of overprint: |
| | 1. 12.8 mm |
| | 2. 18.8 mm |
| | 3. 19.2 mm |

Counterfeit

1. Letter í in the word Příjezd lacks the bump.
2. Letter j in the work Příjezd lacks the typical skew corner of the dot and letter; the lower portion of the letter is rounded.
3. The letter t in the word presidenta differs in its lower portion.

Page 363**Illustration**

Letter with Scout delivery stamp with overprint sent on Dec. 21, 1918, from the Presidium of the Ministerial Council of the Czechoslovak Republic.

Page 364**Illustration**

Letter with Scout delivery stamp with overprint sent on Dec. 21, 1918, by the National Committee in Prague.

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Illustration of air mail letters with stamps of the 1st issue

Illustration

Initial flight on the route Prague-Paris on October 5, 1920. Posted at Královské Vinohrady on October 4, 1920, also postmarked by the delivering post office, Paris, on October 6, 1920, on reverse side.

Illustration

Postal validity of the first air mail issue ended on April 30, 1921. The letter to Strassburg was sent from Levosic on April 9, 1921, and delivered on April 11, 1921. (Transl. note: not clear; letter appears to have been returned to the sender.)

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 Filatelie (Philately)

E. Hirsch-J. Franěk:

Czechoslovak Stamps

E. Hirsch

30 Years of the Czechoslovak Postage Stamp 1918-1948

E. Hirsch

Studies of the Philatelic Collections of the Postal Museum

Pofis Catalogue of Czechoslovak Stamps

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PADELKÝ ČESKOSLOVENSKÝCH POŠTOVNÍCH ZNÁMEK

Inž. Jan Karásek—Zdeněk Kvasnička—Břetislav Paulíček

Translated by J. J. Verner

INTRODUCTORY PAGES

Page 9

Counterfeits of Czechoslovak stamps can be divided into the following categories:

- I. Counterfeits (entire counterfeits)
- II. Forgeries (partial counterfeits)

I. Counterfeits

Counterfeits were intended to:

- A. Defraud the Post Office
- B. Defraud the philatelist

We define counterfeits intended to defraud the Post Office those stamps which were actually used to send matters through the mails, thus depriving the Post Office of franking fee. Typical of this type are the counterfeits of the Hradčany 100 h, 200 h, 300 h and the green 50 h, blue 60 h and brown 100 h chainbreaker stamps.

Those intended to defraud the collector are counterfeits of hard-to-find and rare stamps which are offered to the collector either as genuine stamps or as cheaper replacements for the genuine ones. Legal protection against

counterfeiting was originally not very effective, a situation which was well exploited by the counterfeiters.

II. Counterfeit overprints and Forgeries

1. Counterfeit overprints on genuine stamps
2. Altered types
3. Altered perforations
4. Intentionally altered color
5. Altered paper
6. Forged watermarks
7. Forged gum
8. Forged or removed cancellations

1. Counterfeit Overprints

Counterfeit overprints intended to defraud the Post Office are unknown on Czechoslovak stamps. These overprints were manufactured for the collector if the price of the genuine was high and/or if the price of the overprinted stamp was higher than the stamp to be overprinted. Overprints were also counterfeited on cheap stamps (i.e., Pošta Československá 1919 and SO 1920) if there was an adequate supply of cheap stamps at hand or if the counterfeiter needed the low values to deceive the collector by supplying him with the entire series.

2. Forged Types

The appearance of various types did not escape the attention of the forgers. The 40 h chainbreaker denomination (Pofis No. 154) has the tenth leaf colored over on type II, creating type I. This was done both single stamps and on pairs (to give the impression of joined types).

3. Forged Perforations

On Czechoslovak stamps we find line and comb perforations often forged by perforating low denomination imperforate stamps or by re-perforating stamps bearing a common perforation size with a more valuable (rarer) size. The commemorative sheet "Kde Domov Můj?" also had its frame perforation forged. We describe such forgeries in the following sections.

A. Comb Perforations

The perforation machine used to produce a comb perforation, has teeth resembling a comb which perforate the top horizontal line and the perpendicular lines between the stamps of the top row in one strike. Following strikes progress downward, perforating successive rows in a like manner. The final strike completes the sheet of 100 and at the same time perforates the lower margin. This not only applies when the sheet is placed in the perforator right side up, but also when the sheet is inverted except that in this way the top margin of the sheet would be perforated. The exception to all this is the horizontal comb which proceeds from right to left or vice versa and perforates each vertical row of stamps on one side as well as the top and bottom of each stamp in that row. The horizontal comb is most easily identified by the perforation of the right or left margin caused by the final strike of the perforator.

When the comb perforator functions perfectly, the perforation holes at all corners are exactly aligned. In testing the genuineness of the perforations, we measure with a good perforation gauge and check to see if individual holes conform with their counterparts in parallel rows. A good testing aid is an inexpensive stamp with the same perforation. The perforations of the tested stamp align perfectly with those of the control stamp. Also any irregularity of the tooth in the comb will be repeated in the same position on each stamp in the affected row.

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EDITORIAL

We had a very interesting experience early in September. We were asked by the acting secretary general of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts & Sciences, our member, Dr. Walzel, to give an opening address at their 3rd International Convention on September 3rd at Columbia University. There was an exhibit in an exhibition hall of manuscripts from the 17th and 18th centuries as well as Czechoslovak stamps. The exhibition was opened by the general secretary who introduced the speakers. A Columbia professor whose collection it was, presented an address on the manuscripts and then we followed with a talk on Czechoslovak postal history. We were greatly pleased to note the interested reception we received. We were not aware of the fact that the talks were being taped and in fact we were speaking extemporaneously.

Our national secretary Frank Kosik suggested some months ago that we enter the first six issues of the 1966 Specialist in the Chapter competition of the American Philatelic Society. This was never done before as far as we can remember. The result of this step was most gratifying because the Specialist received a special award along with the felicitations of the jury. Entering a publication for competition is a very different matter from that of exhibiting philatelic material at a show because a publication represents the efforts of numerous members of a society and of the editor. It does not depend on how much money one has at his disposal for the purchase of valuable stamps and funds available for the work up of the pages for an exhibition. A journal is solely the work of the contributors to it and whether they possess only \$10.00 or \$10,000.00 does not count at all. We wish at this time to express our special thanks to all of our members who made this recognition possible, as well as to Mr. H. Miller, the printer of our Specialist.

We understand that a member wrote to our president asking for an article on Hungarian postal markings in Slovakia in the early days of the republic and for the purpose of studying forerunners of Czechoslovakia. We have been working on this and hope to have such a list as complete as possible ready for publication before the end of this year.

The article of B. Matějka which we are reprinting in this issue from the American Philatelist received numerous highly favorable comments according to the editor of that publication. Two such letters were published in the September issue of the American Philatelist written by members Hrivnak and Cifka respectively and addressed to editor Chemi. We are indeed very pleased that the literary offerings of our correspondent Matějka are so welcome and upon our request more such articles will be forthcoming.

Our Mr. Verner sent us greetings from Kharkov informing us that his next stop will be Rostov on the Don. He is Deputy Director of the U. S. Tool exhibits in Russia. We wish him continued pleasure in his work.

Captain Benchik has quite recently been reassigned. He has returned from Germany to serve at an installation in Long Island City. All the members in New York are looking forward to meeting him. Welcome back, Jack!

President Horechny decided to call a spring meeting during Interpex which will be an informal get-together. We hope many of you can make it. Further details later on.

Many thanks to Dt. Jakes for sending a copy of Pofis 1966 to our Librarian.

NEW MEMBER

851 Kenneth D. Burns, 10 Wellesley Rd., Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, England

WASHINGTON BRANCH SEPTEMBER MEETING

The Branch held its September meeting on the 10th, at 8:00 p.m. at Mr. Hahn's residence. After the business part of the meeting the members discussed in length the Revolutionary overprints and displayed some newly acquired sets of them. Member Hahn also showed his highly specialized collection on the Pošta Československá 1919 issue with different types of overprints, and member Sandrik displayed his early postal history of forerunners and cancellations. The meeting ended at approximately 1:00 a.m. The next meeting will be held on October 1, 1966, at which time we will have the pleasure of seeing some of member Krejci's highly specialized Slovakia. (W. A. S.)

NEW YORK BRANCH SEPTEMBER MEETING

At this meeting member Reiner-Deutsch brought along 40 pages of the Siberian collection of member J. J. Verner which he showed the members present with explanations of some of the items. Interest was so great that he was asked to bring to the October meeting the second half of the collection which had been entrusted to his care for presentation of the entire 80 pages at the Branch evening at the Collectors Club.

Our September 21st evening at the Collectors Club was quite successful. Dr. Reiner-Deutsch substituted for Jerry Verner in the presentation of his Siberian five frames' showing. Lolly Horechny spoke on the early newspaper issues, postage dues and on the Masaryk issue, in his seven frames. Member Koplowitz discussed his Hradčany plate varieties, black proofs and color trials shown in two frames and member Reiner-Deutsch explained the field post set-up after the first world war when Czechoslovak troops took over the area of Slovakia ceded to the new republic of Czechoslovakia, in six frames.

The president of the club, Dean Woodward, expressed his appreciation to Lolly Horechny and the others for their presentations and his gratification to note that the meeting room was filled by members and guests in spite of the miserable weather. By the end of that day over five inches of rain had fallen on New York City.

POSTAL STATIONERY COLUMN

Wolfgang Fritzsche

Pigeonogram:

Size 130 mm x 55 mm, with imprinted stamp similar to the current stamp of cities of Brno with 2 K but in denomination of 60 H and in red color.

Printing in upper left: Slavnost miru a družby Brno 8.5. 1966, Dopraveno poštovním holubem č . . . and near bottom is one line for address. It is of very thin paper and printing on back—issued for Brno Philatelic Club.

The pigeonograms are all numbered and mine has No. 05551. They were returned to sender in a special airmail envelope which is franked with the 1959 Brno Fair stamp of 1.60. In the upper left corner is the blue silhouette of Brno, below it is date 8.5.1966 Brno and under that an airmail-like label inscribed "Pigeonogram". The outer envelope has the same number imprinted as the enclosed pigeonogram.

The 1939 Stamp of the Carpatho-Ukraine

By Viktor Indra

Reprinted from the Journal of the Rossica Society of Russian Philately

(continued)

The commemorative was printed in Prague at the State Printing Office by the Stickney rotary press, in sheets of 100 stamps. To accommodate 100 stamps in printing with this machine, an unusual sheet make-up was necessary for a design of this format, which was also the case for similar Czech stamps. The sheet had 16 horizontal rows, with the first and last rows having only one stamp at far left together with six empty spaces in the size of the stamps. The other 14 rows had 7 stamps each. The last empty space at bottom right bore the plate number, either "1" or "1A". The stamps have a streaky gum and are line-perforated 12½. The left and right vertical sheet margins also have the perforations extending towards the edges.

These stamps were only available in Chust and Prague, as stated previously. The stamps which were subscribed and paid for at Chust were not delivered, and the money was later returned from Prague. According to regulations, the stamps were only supposed to be applied to sendings mailed in the Carpatho-Ukraine. However this was not practicable, and as the stamps were on sale at Prague for about 10 days, they were also used in occupied Bohemia and Moravia for franking mail (see Figs. 9 and 10). The postal service had no objection and tolerated such usages. Today, such frankings on covers and cards cancelled in Bohemia and Moravia have now become quite scarce.

A few years ago, I found in a kiloware sample one of the commemorative stamps, which had unfortunately been cut off a cover and showed portion of a Prague cancel reading 15... (probably March 15, 1939). However, this cancel does not touch the stamp but only the margin at far right. It appears that the letter was mailed in Prague and addressed to the Sudetenland, then under Nazi occupation. Prague apparently had its doubts about the validity of the stamp, but it was cancelled in transit with a typical oval German R.P.O. marking reading "MAHR. SCHONBERG-TRIEBITZ-MAHR. TRUBAU/BAHN-POST/ZUG 2186. 16.3.39", from the train No. 2186 (see Fig. 11). It is great pity that such an interesting cover was destroyed!

In addition, I acquired a few years ago a cut-out from a cover, showing the commemorative cancelled in black with a provisional Hungarian rubber stamp, reading "MAGYAR KIR. POSTA" (Hungarian Royal Post) at top, the figure "102" at bottom and the Hungarian arms in the center. This marking was used at Chust in the early days of the occupation and the application noted here is either a case of a favor cancel, or it may have come from a letter found in a letter-box and cancelled by the postal service after the Hungarians arrived. (Mr. Indra's first supposition appears to be the correct one, as Mr. Stone has the commemorative affixed to a blank sheet of paper and cancelled with the same type of marking in black, but now reading "103" at bottom: see Fig. 12. This number is also known to have been applied by the Hungarian postal service at Chust).

Finally, it would be fitting to give details of the bogus souvenir sheet of the Carpatho-Ukraine. The political confusion and uncertainty at the time was taken advantage of by an enterprising young man, a certain J. K. of Dolany, near Olomouc in Moravia. From the cliches he had ordered, he had blocks produced in a printery at Olomouc (see Fig. 13). The printing sheet was composed of six impressions, in two rows of three designs, the rows being tete-beche, but each impression was separated before sale. In the upper half

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pan

Indra

Jirí P. P. P. P.

meznohla

patoku ...



Fig. 10.

of the souvenir sheet, there is poor typographic representation of the 3 K. stamp, as opposed to the engraved process which was employed for the genuine stamp. In the center, there is a typographed two-line inscription in Ukrainian, reading "OTVORENNYA 1. SOIMU KARPATS'KOI UKRAYINI/2.III.1939." ("Opening of the 1st National Assembly of the Carpatho-Ukraine, March 2, 1939"), demonstrating another version for the word "opening," while the Cyrillic inscription shows one spelling mistake and some of the letters are not well formed. In the bottom half of the sheet, the arms of the Carpatho-Ukraine are typographed in natural colors; the left side consists of four blue and three alternate yellow bars placed horizontally, while the right side shows a bear in red. The stamp and the inscription are in blue and the sheet is printed on yellowish paper, which was cut to measure 97x80mm. prior to sale and then crudely gummed by hand! Mr. J. K. barely sold 200 sheets, at 20Kčs a copy, when the police were already on his trail. Upon searching his home, they confiscated all the completed sheets and the same fate befell the unfinished specimens at the printery. There were 1000 sheets prepared altogether of which, as stated above, only 200 got out, together with a few ungummed examples in various formats. After the trial, the confiscated souvenir sheets were destroyed and the surviving examples are now much sought after by specialists, and collectors of bogus material.

EDITORIAL COMMENT: Mr. Indra is a keen cover collector and postal historian of many years standing in Czechoslovakia, with especial emphasis on unusual countries such as Carpatho-Ukraine. We believe that by incorporating details of material held in the U. S. by Messrs. Paul M. Steele of Westerville, Ohio, Lauson H. Stone of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Yaroslav S. Terlecky of

Philadelphia, Pa., we have given our members the best possible coverage of this fascinating subject and we invite comments from our Ukrainian, Czechoslovak and Hungarian readers. We also like to announce that comprehensive articles are being prepared on the 1944-45 issues of the Carpatho-Ukraine, as well as on interesting aspects of the country's varied postal history.

Finally, we would like to thank Dr. Wm. Reiner-Deutsch for advising us of Mr. Steele's unusual cover and notifying us of a short article on the 1939 stamp, published some years back in "The Czechoslovak Specialist." Our grateful thanks also go to Messrs. Steele, Stone and Terlecky for allowing us to feature these items for their collections.

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