

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Official Monthly Journal of the  Czechoslovak Philatelic Society

Recipient of Silver Bronze Award Praga 1968

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Vol. XXXII

December 1970

Number 208

The Postal History of Eastern Slovakia During the Period 1939-1945 and Later

By Miroslav Blaha

Reprinted from the Journal of the Rossica Society of Russian Philately

I. THE HUNGARIAN OCCUPATION:

The Vienna Award of 2 Nov. 1938, a consequence of the outrageous surrender at Munich, resulted in the cession to Hungary of the southern districts of Slovakia and Subcarpathian Russia (Carpatho-Ukraine) by the Czechoslovak Republic. The occupation of this territory was naturally also manifested philatelically. Officially, the validity of Czechoslovak stamps and postal sta-



Fig. 1: MAP OF EASTERN SLOVAKIA



Fig. 2

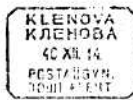


Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

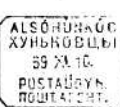


Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

tionery ceased on 19 Nov. 1938. Hungarian cancels were then introduced and magyarisation took place on all sides. A little later, the disintegration of Czechoslovakia came about on 15 March 1939. The protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the Slovak State came into being. The remaining territory of the Carpatho-Ukraine and small section of Eastern Slovakia, inhabited by Ukrainians, were forcibly incorporated into Horthyite Hungary.

Within two days of the beginning of the occupation, this area received the new Hungarian designation of "Kárpátalja" (Subcarpathia.) A whole series of adjustments came with the new frontiers, but the biggest change occurred in Eastern Slovakia (see the section marked "I" on the map shown in Fig. 1).

The following post offices in Eastern Slovakia were incorporated into Hungary (names given in Slovak, Hungarian and Ukrainian respectively):

1. Bežovce, Bezö, Bezhovtsy (Fig. 2).
2. Klenová, Klenova, Klenova (Fig. 3).
3. Remetské Hamre, Remetevasgyár, Remetskíe Hamry (Fig. 4).
4. Sobrance, Szobránc, Sobrantsy (Fig. 5).
5. Stakčín, Takcsány, Stakchin.
6. Ubl'a, Ublya, Ublya (Fig. 6).
7. Ulič, Utcás, Ulich.
8. Vel'ká Pol'ana, Nagypolány, Velika Polyana.

In common with the remainder of the territory of the Carpatho-Ukraine, these post offices used until 1 August 1939 temporary rubber and metal cancellers showing serial numbers. It is believed that these were also applied as fieldpost markings. They were not of a completely definitive character and several offices went through a series of them. For example, at the Chust (Huszt, Khust) post office, rubber markings numbered 101, 102, 103 and 232 and metal types with Nos. 310, 314, 363, 368 and 369 were utilized. The post office at Stakčín used metal canceller No. 317, Klenová had No. 251 and the rubber one for Sobrance bore No. 118.

On 1 August 1939, standard bilingual Hungarian-Ukrainian cancellers were introduced (see Figs. 2-6). The registration labels, as well as some items of postal stationery, were also in the two languages.

An interesting philatelic transition period occurred again after the liberation of this area by the Red Army at the end of October 1944. In accordance with acknowledged standards of international law, the integrity of the borders of the Czechoslovak Republic in their Pre-Munich form was guaranteed by all the Allies and this territory was then still a part of the republic. However, the situation was complicated by the fact that the official Czechoslovak delegation from London had its seat at Chust, while the western portion of the province

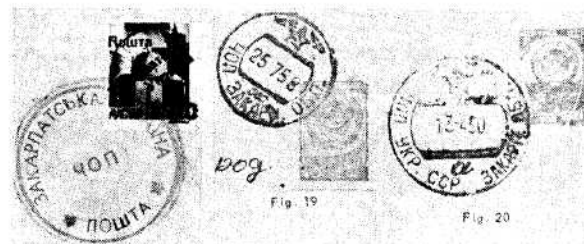


Fig. 17

was administered from Uzhgorod by the NRZU (Narodna Rada Zakarpats koyi Ukrayini—National Council of the Transcarpathic-Ukraine), which was oriented towards the Soviet Union.

It was only after the eastern border between the CSR and the USSR was finally fixed on the basis of an agreement signed in Moscow on 29 June 1945 that the official designation of the post offices under the control of the Košice postal district in Eastern Slovakia was altered.

COMMENT by editor of the Rossica Society Journal: The section of Eastern Slovakia to which Mr. Blaha refers is part of the "Pryashivs'ka Rus" or "Prešov Rus" where many Ukrainians dwell. We can add to the list and types of post offices established by the Hungarians in this area, drawing on a series of proof strikes of cancels in the collection of Lauson H. Stone of Brooklyn, N. Y. Please see Figs. 7-11 for the bilingual postal agency markings assigned to the following villages:

- (a) Bežovce, Bezö, Bezhovtsy
- (b) Huňkovce, Alsóhunkóc, Khun'kovtsy
- (c) Jenkovce, Jenke, Yenkovtsy
- (d) Krčava, Karcava, Karchava
- (e) Starina, Cirókaófalú, Starina

The last-named hamlet was also known to the Slovaks as "Stará Ves nad Cirochou," i.e. old village on the Cirocha, which is an exact equivalent of the Hungarian name. It is now called Starina pri Snine (Starina near Snina).

II. THE 1945 ADJUSTMENTS IN THE ČOP-SURTY DISTRICT:

The adjustment of the southern portion of the frontiers between the Soviet

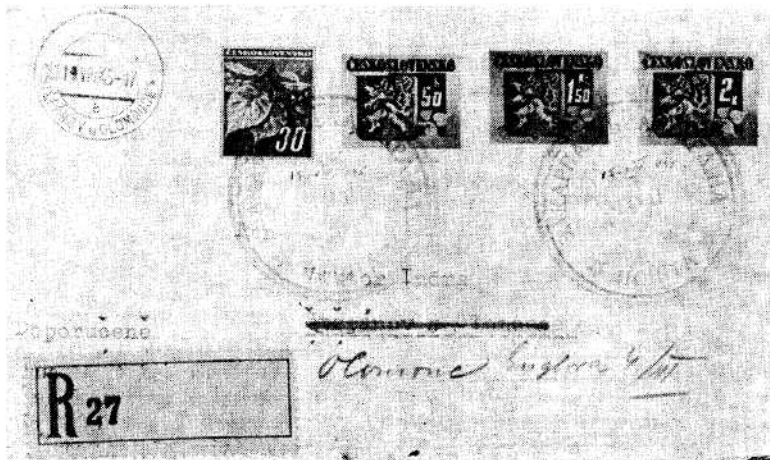


Fig. 18



Fig. 16



Fig. 21



Fig. 22



Fig. 23

Union and Czechoslovakia, a consequence of the agreement of 29 June 1945 is also reflected in the story of the postal services in Eastern Slovakia (see the section marked "II" on the map shown in Fig. 1). As is known, this area was placed under Hungarian administration by the Vienna Award in November 1938. After its liberation by the Red Army, it was arranged that the border be shifted to the west for strategic reasons, so that the railroad and state highway between Čop and Užgorod would not be broken. The following two post offices were ceded with this small part of Slovakia:

- (1) Čop, Csap, Chop
- (2) Surty, Szürte, Strumkovka

Some details on the postal history of these offices are now given:

(1) ČOP: Fig. 12 shows the first single-circle cancel used here during the first Hungarian administration (Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy period), Fig. 14 the circular date stamp used during the Czechoslovak period, Figs. 15 and 16 the bilingual Czechoslovak-Ukrainian types for RPO(TPO) No. 1001 between Čop and Užok (Chop and Uzhok), Fig. 17 the Ukrainian cancellation of the post office at Čop which was under the administrative control of the NRZU before the signing of the treaty in Moscow on 29 June 1945. Figs. 19 and 20 show the types of Soviet cancels which have been used there since 1945.

COMMENT by the editor of the Rossica Society Journal: To fill out the story of this office, we can cite Hungarian RPO No. 59 reading "SIANKI—CSAP—NYÍREGYHÁZA," dated 14 Aug. 1912 (Fig. 13). An unusual cover in the Viktor Indra collection bears Czechoslovak postage to the value of Kčs 4.30, which was sufficient for registration service at the time of mailing. Dropped into a letter box at Čop on 15 Aug. 1945, i.e. after it officially became part of the Transcarpathian Ukraine, it was cancelled at the Ukrainian post office there and forwarded on the Chop-Biela pri Čopi RPO (TPO), which placed registration label No. 27 on the cover at lower left. (See Fig. 18). It was received at Štěpánov near Olemouc on 19 August.

(2) SURTY: Fig. 21 shows the first single-circle Hungarian type, Fig. 22, the Hungarian cancel taken over in 1919 during the Czechoslovak period and Fig. 23 the current Soviet registration cachet for domestic usage.

STAMP MARKET TIPS — by John G. Ross

Reprinted from Stamps Magazine

CZECHOSLOVAKIA—When Hitler invaded and occupied this country in 1939, he split it into Slovakia and Bohemia-Moravia; both sections issued their own stamps. The first issue for Bohemia and Moravia was in 1939, effected by surcharging the available Czech stamps in a series of nineteen stamps, Scott Nos. 1-19. The mintage was only 275,000 complete sets. After the close of World War II the set was plentiful in the U.S.A., and sold for as little as \$1.50, but in the last few years it has become quite scarce. Recent retail lists price the set at around \$10.00, and is starting to rise higher. I believe it will eventually go much higher. I believe it will eventually go much higher. There are plenty of buying advertisements for it in German stamp magazines, offering about \$6.00. If they cannot get enough to meet their needs at that price, they will be forced to go higher. Meanwhile, I suggest you look around over here to see if you can find a set.

EDITORIAL

Even though this edition of the Specialist might not reach you in time for the holiday season, the Merriest of Christmases and the Happiest of New Years is wished to each and everyone of you. To repeat a greeting which was first said almost 2000 years ago and it still applies today "Peace on Earth to Men of Good Will."

For those interested in faster communications with Czechoslovakia than that offered via the mail, the following news brief was recently in the Wall Street Journal: "American Telephone and Telegraph Co. announced new rates on telephone calls from the U. S. to Czechoslovakia. The new rates, which make station-to-station service calls available for the first time, are \$9 for three minutes and \$3 for each additional minute. The previous charge, which was person-to-person only, was \$12 and \$4 for each additional minute. AT&T also said the 15 calls that are placed in the U. S. to Czechoslovakia on an average business day are going by direct circuit instead of being routed through Germany."

Your editor is happy to announce that the Specialist has just received the 3rd award, Unit Class of the Chapter Publications Contest from the American Philatelic Society. A sincere thanks to those of you who through your help and cooperation made this possible.

Don't forget your dues as the society needs all the financial assistance that it can get. Your officers and staff are absorbing costs out of their own pocket and when this can't be done, they are cutting expenses as much as they are able. Nevertheless it takes your dues dollars to operate the society. The largest single expense is the Specialist. It has been placed on an austerity budget as exemplified by the first page of the last three editions. If you noticed the same illustration was on the first page of each edition, which meant obtaining maximum use from one cut. Mail your dues to the treasurer as soon as possible to save the additional cost of sending our reminders. In case you have misplaced the self-addressed return dues envelope sent to you with the last Specialist, and don't have the treasurer's name and address close at hand, please send your dues today to

Tom Meeks
532 West 145th St., Apt. 6
New York, N. Y. 10031

Active and Associate dues are \$5.00 and Patron membership is \$10.00. Live it up and be a Patron member this year!

While on the subject of money, note in the listing of the society's publications for sale that both the Handbook and Vocabulary have increased in price. Like everything else these too go up. Therefore please save yourself and the treasurer additional time and effort by sending him the correct amount, which is now \$2.50 for the Handbook, and \$2.25 for a hard cover Vocabulary and \$1.50 for a soft cover Vocabulary. It is with regret that this was done, but it was a necessity due to increases in postage, inflation, etc. All is not gloomy concerning the cost of the society's publications because for the present we are able to retain the same advertising rates and hold the line on back issues of the Specialist. But for how long this can be done only the Good Lord knows, so if you need back issues get them now or if you want to advertise, do it now while the price is still low.

A curious observation has been made about the Czechoslovak stamp issued March 8, 1968, for the 25th anniversary of the Battle of Sokolovo, fought



from March 8 to 13, 1943, in the Ukraine. It is believed to be unique in the history of stamp design in that it actually reproduces a military plan showing the situation of the Czechoslovak battalion in the Soviet Union just before the Nazi attack. Besides being the first battle of World War II in which Czechoslovak troops participated as a unit, the stamp also commemorates Captain Otakar Jaros, bearer of three of the highest Soviet decorations and the first Czechoslovak ever to be named a Hero of the Soviet Union. Collectors of Czechoslovak stamps already know him: his portrait appears on the 20h and 2 Kčs stamps issued in 1945 and printed before the end of the war in the London printing house of Thomas de la Rue. (Scott 274 and 282).

He was the first foreigner awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. Unfortunately the award was made posthumously. He was killed during the summer of 1948. At the time of his death, Capt. Jaros fought under the command of then Colonel Ludvík Svoboda (later General and now president of Czechoslovakia), head of the First Bogdan Khmeinitzky Czechoslovak Brigade. A quote from the Information Bulletin of the USSR Embassy, dated Oct. 16, 1943, especially the last part, is ironic in view of the events which have taken place in the last couple of years.

"Nadporučik Otakar Jarosh, who fought with the Czechoslovak troops in the USSR and was posthumously awarded the Order of Lenin and the Gold Star of Hero of the Soviet Union, died a glorious death in action. 'Do not let the enemy pass, Brother Jarosh,' said his commander, Colonel Svoboda. 'He shall not pass, Sir,' Jarosh replied. He kept his word, remained faithful to his people and to the pledge he made on the day he realized that his place was at the front fighting the enemy of his country and of the fraternal Soviet Union. Jarosh's memory will remain forever fresh in the hearts of the Czechoslovak and Soviet peoples. A nation with such sons will never be subjugated!"

It's refreshing to see in this world torn with war and strife that all is not lost, but that there is a glimmer of hope for mankind. This involves an uncommon aspect of postal operations. To give credit when it is due, a news announcement has recently been made to the effect that if letters and packages for Allied and American prisoners of war (POWs) captive in North Viet Nam are mailed thru Moscow, the Russians will insure their arrival to the intended recipient. This has rarely happened in the past for items sent directly to Hanoi. Let's hope that the USSR will not only keep their word and make sure the POWs get their mail, but also go a step or two further and convince the government of North Viet Nam to perform the humanitarian gesture of releasing these victims of circumstances, especially the sick and wounded.

Lately in the philatelic press, there have appeared articles on the society, particularly about the Specialist and our library. Understandably so, quite a bit of confusion has resulted because some of the information given in these articles is now obsolete, i.e. Dr. Reiner-Deutsch is listed as the editor of this magazine when in actuality Jack Benchik is. Due to a mistake, articles written five years ago to publicize the society were accidentally utilized and incor-

rectly modified to reflect the present situation. Please don't become uptight as there haven't been any changes as might be implied from these articles. The status quo remains. Remember "To err is human and to forgive is divine."

The society is in need of the following back editions of the Specialist:

September 1945, Vol. VII, Number 7

June 1948, Vol. X, Number 6

March 1958, Vol. XX, Number 181

If any member has a copy or copies he or she does not require, please send them to the editor, whose address is in the masthead on the top of the first page.

POSTAL STATIONERY COLUMN

By Wolfgang Fritzsche and George Blizil

ENVELOPES

Issued April 14, 1970, size 165x95 mm, sideseam, stamp shows Lenin, 60h gray-black, at lower left in dark red: "V.I.L. * 1870-1970."

Regular current President Svoboda 60h stamp imprinted on a larger size envelope (6 $\frac{3}{8}$ x4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "). A cachet reads "50th ann. of Cs. Filatelistu v Pisku" (50th anniversary of the Pisek Philatelic Club) and pictures arms, and views of Pisek in same dark red (maroon) ink as the stamp is printed. Issued in July 1969.

Another commemorative 60h envelope (like above) except the cachet shows an ancient post office building and the bridge at Pisek. Legend reads "190 Let Postovniho uradau Mesta Pisku" (190th anniversary of Piske post office). Issued July 5, 1969.

POSTAL CARD

A current 30h Praha postal card with a maroon cachet printed on left "5th Celostatni Sjezk Pestitelu" (5th Congress of Mushroom Growers in Czechoslovakia).

The above three items were sold at a premium for the sponsoring organizations.

CASH ON DELIVERY CARDS

Which have not been reported, all with 60h postage due stamp, on white paper with the following issue dates:

Printing date I-1968 — OTK 11-14-945-67-G-2

Printing date II-1968 — OTK 11-14-1586-68-G-2

Printing date III-1967 — OTK 11-14-6681-67-G-2

On orange-yellow paper:

Printing date IV-1967 — OTK 11-14-173-67-G-2

AEROGRAMME

A 1.20 Kčs stamp flying crane in steel blue on light gray paper issued Oct. 5, 1970, blue printing in lower left: "1970 50 let ceskoslovenske postovni letecke dopravy" and 2 planes, a new jet and a 1920 plane. Three types exist, the difference is the legend on back:

- a) 2 lines of equal length (10mm)
- b) 1 long and one short line, the short line 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ mm
- c) 1 long and one short line, the short line 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ mm

Postal card, 30h Praha, brown but now in yellowish paper.

44th MAIL SALE

The collection we are selling in this sale belongs to a Sudeten German who lives now in Germany. There are no limits but we suggest MINIMUM prices, under these prices nothing will be sold.

Suggested minimum prices

1. Austrian stamps with cancels on Czech territory, about 30 old and before 1918 -----	6.00
2. Covers and cards all before 1918 with Czech cancels, abt. 45 -----	5.00
3. About 200 covers of Hradcany and others -----	10.00
4. 45 picture postcards of only PRAGUE, 11 all with stamps -----	5.00
5. 22 folders and spec. cancels on diff. occasions -----	5.00
6. 300 covers all periods of Czecho. -----	15.00
7. About 200 cancellations all on pieces some multicolor -----	5.00
8. SCOUT issue compl. mint -----	2.00
9. Same used on pieces signed Gilbert -----	2.00
10. Budejovice set up to 10K -----	5.00
11. Same in red -----	5.00
12. I Statni vlada set to 10 K -----	20.00
13. II Statni vlada set to 10 K -----	20.00
14. Jeliczska stamp in a block -----	4.00
15. Srobar issue only 10 values -----	10.00
16. Skalice complete set -----	20.00
17. 8 overprints, all 1918 -----	6.00
18. 10 covers of the first period -----	5.00
19. HRADCANY set up to 1000 h imperf. -----	2.00
20. set perforated -----	3.00
21. 10, 20h and 30h IMPERF -----	20.00
22. 30h imperf but DARK violet -----	15.00
23. on covers, about 200 -----	10.00
24. 4 complete sheets ** -----	8.00
25. 116 waste prints -----	7.00
26. a used collection starting with Hradcany, nice -----	25.00
27. Another collection but only unused stamps -----	30.00
28. blocks perf and imperf 20 blocks -----	8.00
29. POSTA 1919 20h Karel LIGHT green -----	6.00
30. 10 K violet, signed -----	35.00
31. Collection of 64 different -----	13.00
32. 6 inverted overprints -----	6.00
33. Hungarian Parliament set from 50f to 5Kor -----	13.00
34. Postage dues complete from 1f to 30f -----	23.00
35. Part sheets of POSTA 1919 -----	10.00
36. Some used, nice lot -----	10.00
37. 4 covers with Posta 1919 -----	4.00
38. MASARYK 1920 complete * -----	1.00
39. Vertical watermark used set -----	7.00
40. 1 K raminke (Scott No. 102) -----	10.00

41.	1923 *	3.00
42.	Same, used	3.00
43.	Congress *	18.00
44.	Same used on pieces	18.00
45.	Slet *	15.00
46.	Same used on pieces	15.00
47.	TYRS, complete set *	2.00
48.	TATRY * complete with watermark	5.00
49.	Same without watermark	5.00
50.	3, 4, 5, 10 K large pictures *	4.00
51.	TETE BECHE set with 20h and 50h *	15.00
52.	Same with large inbetween	15.00
53.	set used	12.00
54.	Some covers TETE BECHE	10.00
55.	AIRMAIL, first set C1-3 *	10.00
56.	C4-6 perf complete vf	16.00
57.	C7-9 complete	1.00
58.	6 cards and covers of this issue	7.00
59.	S. O. set up to 1000 h and the dues complete	4.00
60.	MASARYK S.O. superb set. Scott \$120	35.00
61.	Collection of about 50 S.O. stamps	6.00
62.	SIBERIA, first 3 perf and imperf.	10.00
63.	First 3, perf. 11½	10.00
64.	Lion set complete, mixed sabres	20.00
65.	Cover and card	18.00
66.	SUDETEN, cards and covers, 20	10.00
67.	Bohemia-Moravia Collection complete	12.00
68.	First set	4.00
69.	Diff. gutter pairs and spec. items	8.00
70.	About 50 covers	4.00
71.	Accumulation of stamps many 100	20.00
72.	THIRD REPUBLIC, 200 picture stamps, all different	1.00
73.	60 miniature sheets, all periods	6.00
74.	FDC and others, about 100	10.00
75.	KDE DOMOV MUJ, sheets vf in 2 folders	120.00

Ask for an approval.

Books close February 20th

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PHILATELIC ADVENTURES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

By Paul Gapp

Reprinted from the Journal of the S. Allan Taylor Society

Some months ago, I received a fascinating letter from B. S. Armstrong of Manchester, England. I'd hoped to relate his story long before this, but the passage of time has not dimmed its philatelic importance. I'll let him tell the tale by quoting a major portion of the letter:

"In August of 1968, I had to go to Czechoslovakia to make a television documentary on the Russian invasion, and arrived in Prague some three days after the first tanks had occupied the streets.

"As you are no doubt aware, all normal mail services to the West—and, indeed, anywhere—were cut. The Russians had occupied the main post office and had clamped down on communications.

"Throughout the five rather hairy days I spent in Prague, I was constantly stopped on the streets by Czechs who wished to give me letters and cards for friends abroad. By the time the crew and I were finally checked out, we must have had about 100 such letters.

"Just before we left, a member of the underground produced a rubber stamp, and for propaganda purposes it was used to hastily imprint all of the letters. This handstamp, in red ink, shows a Russian tank and carries the following words, in the Czech language: 'Soviet Occupation, Prague, 25 August '68; Truth Shall Prevail.' Written by hand on each letter were the words 'Courier Post.'

"I addressed six such covers (bearing the hand cancel) to myself. Obviously, the situation being what it was, there would have been some risk had we been caught with all these letters. The Russians had denied all along that it was an 'occupation.' And so these letters came out of Czechoslovakia hidden in the panel of an automobile door.

"We drove back across the West German border and I posted the letters at Nuremberg after they were franked with West German stamps. Others, I know, came out via an Austrian courier through eastern Austria. Whether the handstamp was applied to any other letters after we left, I don't know."

No one knows exactly how many covers were struck with the Czech propaganda hand stamp, but the chances are they will remain philatelically scarce or even rare. I'll take a wild guess and say that right now I could probably get \$25 for the cover Armstrong generously sent me.

Most of these covers went to persons who were interested only in the letter inside. A majority of the covers were probably thrown away or simply shelved by philatelically naive recipients. So far as value is concerned, two of the basic laws of the philatelic market will ultimately prevail: scarcity and demand. Condition will be secondary.

PRAGUE ROBBERY SOLVED—BLUE MERCURY SHEET INTACT

Thieves who took the Blue Mercury Sheet—80 copies of the first Austrian

newspaper postage stamp—in the daring daylight robbery of the Prague Postal Museum last March have been caught and convicted reports J. P. Krouman of Prague.

Apprehended were three brothers for the crime, and implicated were a girl and the Charge d'Affairs of the Greek Embassy in Prague, writes Krouman. The sheet was returned undamaged to the Museum on July 27.

Convicted of the robbery were a 30-year-old taxi driver and his two younger brothers. Implicated are the taxi driver's fiancée, who has left the country, and the Charge d'Affairs, who attempted to smuggle one of the principals across the border in the trunk of his car, details Krouman.

According to facts given to Prague journalists in a news conference at City Police Headquarters on July 27, the attempt to smuggle the taxi driver across the border was discovered by the Czech Border Control on March 31.

Not included in the report given to journalists were the names of the three brothers or the girl friend. The Charge d'Affairs was identified as Elias L. Lymberopoulou, says Krouman. He was declared "persona non grata" in April. He undertook the attempt to smuggle the robber out for \$1,000.

Faced with the attempted border crossing, the discovery of the fingerprints of the youngest of the trio at the scene and pressures of other evidence, the taxi driver admitted to authorities his part in the crime on July 27. His testimony led to the recovery of the sheet.

The sheet was hidden behind a painting in the apartment of the taxi driver's fiancée since the robbery. According to police the girl friend had left the country to arrange for the escape of the boyfriend.

Additional investigation into the matter brought to light that the Charge d'Affairs was involved with the carrying of other citizens out of the country in the trunk of his car and other irregularities. The evidence led to his removal from Czechoslovakia, reports Krouman.

New Issues

Archaeological Discoveries from Slovakia and Moravia

The Czechoslovak Postal Administration in Prague issued on September 30, 1969, a commemorative set of five stamps entitled "Archaeological Discoveries in Moravia and Slovakia:"

Kčs 0.20—Found at Šála nad Váhom and Holiare, 8th-9th century—bronze belt-fittings with animal motifs. Engraver: Josef Herčík. Colors: black, blue, violet, golden.

Kčs 0.30—Discovered at Žitavská Tón, 6th-8th century—Gilded Halter fittings with masks. Engraver: Jindra Schmidt. Colors: black, blue, yellow, golden

Kčs 1.00—Želovce, 8th century—Old Town 9th Century—Three Gold earrings with glass pendants and granulation. Engraver: Jan Mráček. Colors: black, yellow, red, green.



Kčs 1.80—From archaeological diggings at Uherské Hradiště, 9th century—front and back of a crucifix with a Greek liturgic inscription. Engraver: Josef Herčík. Colors: black, blue, violet, orange-yellow

Kčs 2.00—Archaeological findings from Mikulčice, 9th century—Gilded end-piece with human figure with princely attributes. Engraver: Josef Herčík. Colors: black, green, violet, golden.

The motifs chosen reflect the fact that archaeological discoveries in Czechoslovakia have been concentrated on the earliest Slav state in this territory, the Great Moravian Empire, which originated in the ninth century, and the period before its founding, the seventh and eighth centuries during which the social and economic developments which made this relatively advanced state possible took place.

As can be judged from the stamps, elaborate metal jewelry and decorations found in ancient burial grounds, testify to a high degree of skill.

The motifs used—chiefly geometric designs, plants, animals and men—can be traced to Egypt and the Byzantine world, and some of them to China and other parts of the Far East.

They were adapted to the taste of the early Slavs and a new delicate technique was used, filigree work.

The stamps were designed by the academic painter Jozef Baláž, and printed by the Post Printing Office in Prague by rotary recess print combined with photogravure in sheets of 25 stamps. Dimensions of the stamps are 30x49mm.

Together with this emission three First Day Covers designed by J. Baláž and engraved by J. Goldschmied were issued. The design shows two buttons, necklace and earrings.



Six Commemorative "Coat of Arms"

On October 25, 1969, the Federal Committee of Czechoslovak Post and Telecommunications issued a set of six commemorative stamps entitled "Coat of Arms."

- 50h Bardejov—Colors black, blue, red, golden
- 50h Hranice—Colors: black, blue, red, golden
- 50h Kežmarok—Colors: black, blue, red, golden
- 50h Krnov—Colors: black, blue, red, golden
- 50h Litoměřice—Colors: black, red, silver, golden
- 50h Manětín—Colors: black, red, silver, golden

The design of the stamps as well as the engraving are the work of Josef Herčík. The stamps were printed by the Post Printing Office in Prague by rotary recess print combined with multicolored photogravure in sheets of 50 stamps. The dimensions of the stamp pictures are 30x23mm.

Six First Day Covers, each with one stamp, designed and engraved by Josef Herčík were issued with this series.

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