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SLOVAKIA FIELD POST, 1941-1944

By Viktor Indra

Translated by V. Ladd

When the Second World War started, on September 1st, 1939, the Slovak State joined it in accordance with its international agreements on the side of the Axis powers. The Slovak military forces participated on the Eastern front in Soviet Russia. They had their own military field post which used adapted postmarks of the Czechoslovak military post from 1938 as well as their own military postmarks.

The letters and postcards of members of the Slovak military forces were not franked. Their mail which was addressed to the Bohemia-Moravia Protectorate, Germany, Hungary and other allies of Germany and countries occu-

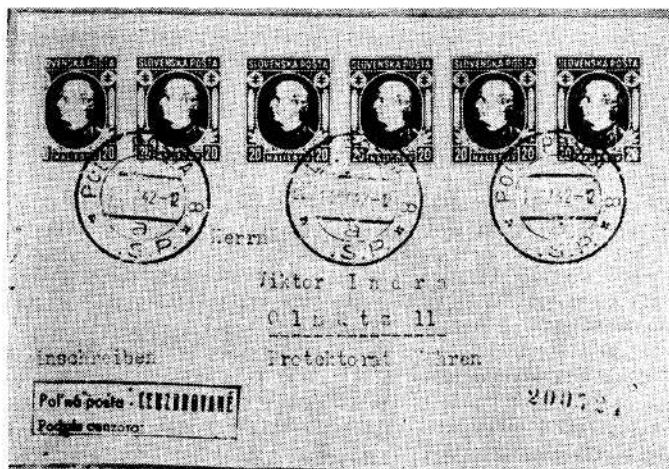


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

ried by Germany, could be sent unfranked. However, the majority of Slovak soldiers were not aware of this and used stamps on their foreign mail. Due to the varied stamps, these letters are very interesting philatelically and are a very welcome addition to any collection, specialized or general. The letters were franked either with Slovak stamps (figs. 1 and 2) or with the stamps of those countries where Slovak soldiers were stationed at that particular time, for example with stamps of the General Gouvernement (fig. 3), Ostland (fig. 4), Ukraine (fig. 5) or with stamps of Germany. Also instead of regular Slovak field postcards, the soldiers often used the captured postcards of the Soviet military field post (fig. 6). Finally letters and postcards franked with the German military air mail stamps also exist (fig. 7.)

Smaller Slovak military units were also assigned to service with the Ger-



Fig. 3

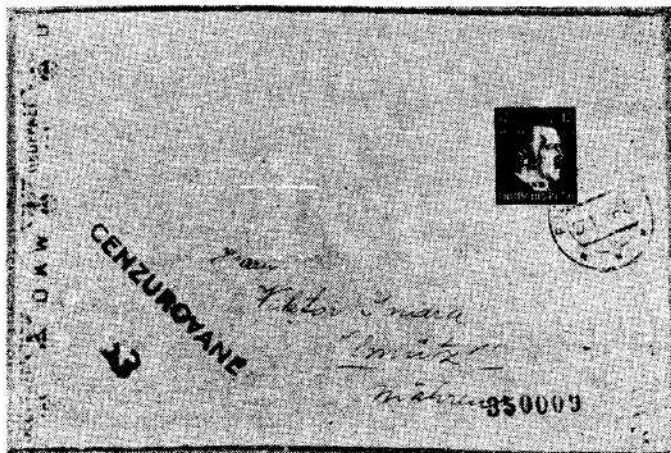


Fig. 4

man army units. Their mail was serviced through the German army units. Their mail was serviced through the German military mail system.

Not all the letters bear the usual rubber stamps of German censorship. Very often these letters and postcards have censor control marks handwritten with colored pencils. Some of this mail bears the marks of both German and Slovak censorship.

Registered mail used the R-stickers of the Czechoslovak railroad mail and was postmarked by the respective military field post offices. If this mail was placed by senders in civilian mail post boxes, it was serviced through regular civilian mail channels.

The Slovak military field post used during 1941-1944 the following postmarks:

6a: This postmark was made out of the original Czechoslovak postmark

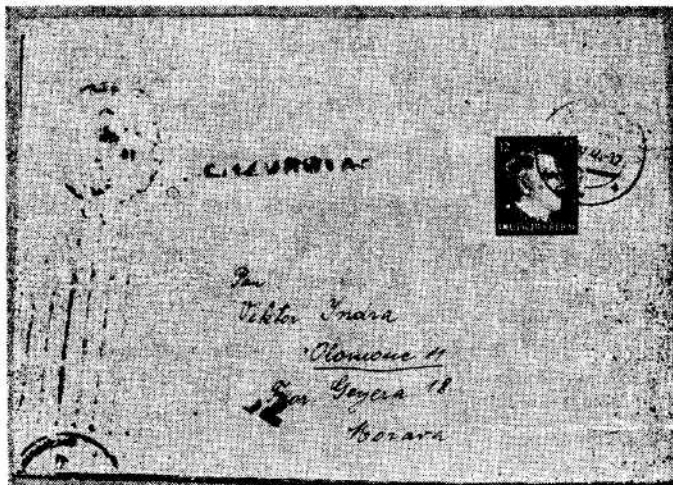


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

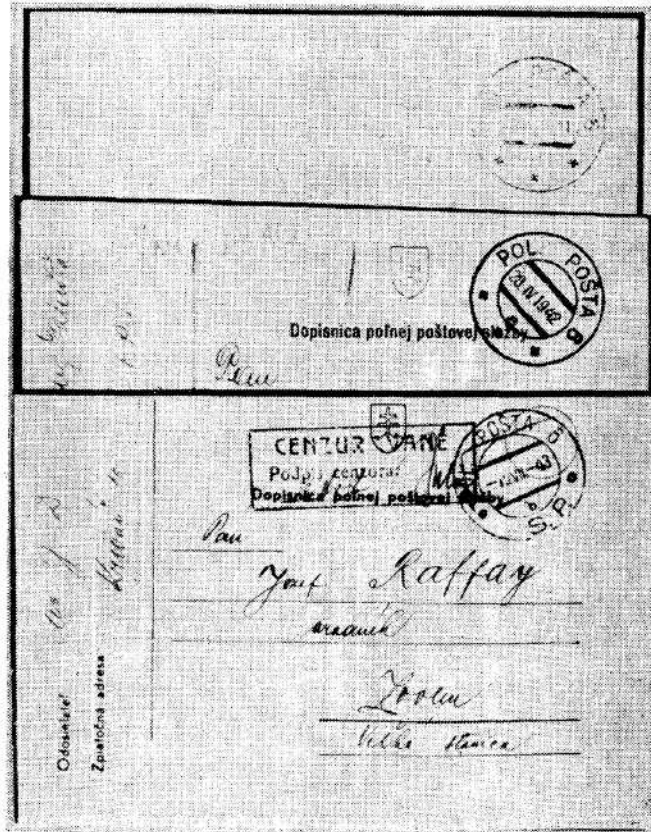


Fig. 7

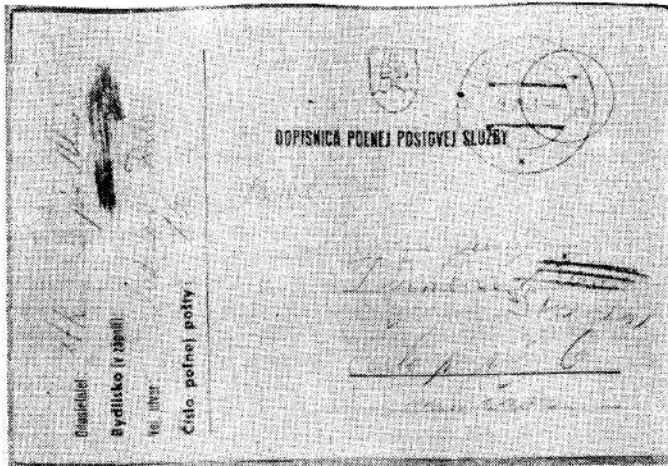


Fig. 8

of 1938, number 16a with inserting "POLNÍ" in place of the original "NÍ" and then used as 16a. In 1941 with additional removal of "I" the postmark was finalized as postmark 6a (fig. 8).

6b: Czechoslovak postmark from 1938 adapted with removal of letter "NÍ" (fig. 8).

8a, 8b: Both postmarks from 1938, adapted and used in 1939 (figs. 1 and 2). Both new postmarks with Slovak text.

16a: New Slovak postmark (fig. 9).

16b: Czechoslovak postmark from 1938, adapted and used from 1939 (fig. 10).

51a, b, c: New Slovak postmarks, small diameter (fig. 11).

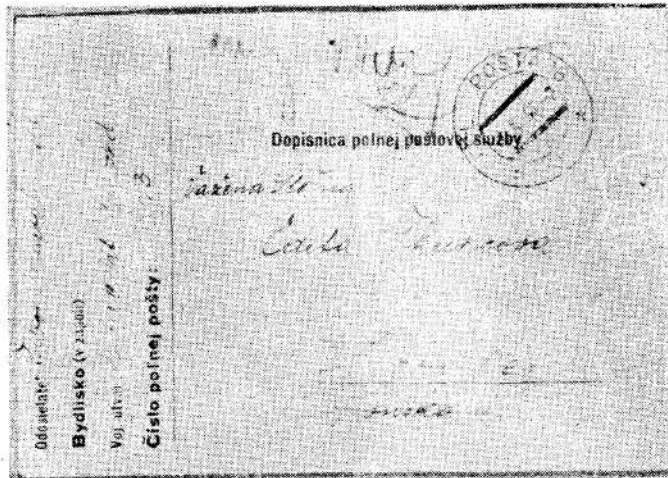


Fig. 9



Fig. 10

- 52a, b: New Slovak postmarks, small diameter (fig. 7).
 - Field post central a, b (2 crosses at the bottom) new Slovak postmark (fig. 12).
 - Field post central a, b (1 cross at the bottom) new Slovak postmark (fig. 13).
 - Field post collection office, Prešov 1: new Slovak postmark (fig. 14).
 - Field post collection office, Bratislava 2: new Slovak postmark.
 - Postmarks 6a and 8a exist also in blue.
- The Slovak military field post ceased its activities at the end of 1944.

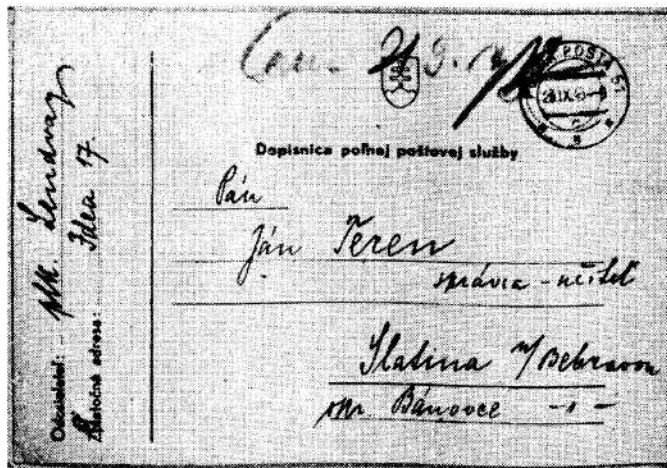


Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

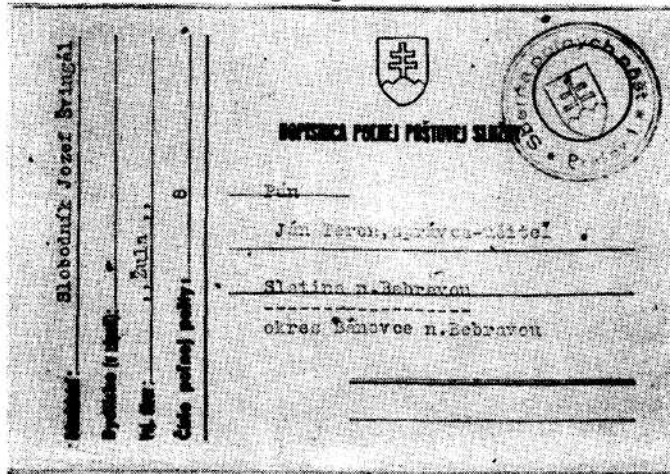


Fig. 14

Charley's Corner



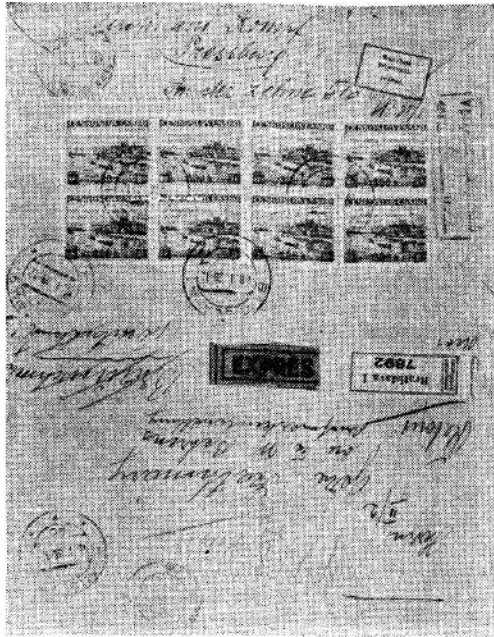
This month we will discuss the first issue of Slovakia, the Czechoslovak 10 Kč. Bratislava issue of 1936 overprinted for the opening of the Slovakian parliament—on January 18, 1939.

This issue carries Scott—Slovakia #1 and Pofis—Czechoslovakia #350. Copies are easily obtainable in mint condition but one should be on the lookout for used specimens and especially on covers.

The stamps come in two types of overprint illustrated in the Pofis catalog and also in the Slovakia section of the handbook on sale from the Society. By the way, every member should have this handbook as it is skillfully done.

There are top and bottom coupons and the lower right corner copies have the plate numbers 1 and 1A. The selvage was removed at the right and left margins of the sheet before overprinting.





Most covers I've seen have the commemorative "Autopošta" cancel as illustrated on the cover showing the block of four with the top coupons. We have also seen a few covers with the regular "Autopošta" cancel picturing the mail bus. A cancel one must consider quite rare for this issue is the regular town cancel shown on the exploded cover.



All cancels were applied in Bratislava on January 18, 1939, the only official day of use. We have seen only one other cover used on a different date and this one was cancelled in Nitra, January 24, 1939. This must have been done by favor of a postal friend.

Many of the covers were manufactured so one must exercise care and study if the cover actually saw postal service.

In the case of registered covers, one must look for the backstamp of the destination or route markings.

We must assume that most of the copies on piece were actually favor cancelled, so postally run covers are what one should look for.

If anyone has any further information on this issue and its use, let us hear from you and we will gladly pass it along to the members. Good hunting.

Also illustrated are the Moscow issue of the Masaryk stamps discussed in last month's "Corner."

See you next month.



New Issues

50th Anniversary of the Daily Rudé Právo



The Federal Committee of Posts and Telecommunications issued on 21st September, 1970, a commemorative stamp "50th Anniversary of the Daily Rudé Právo."

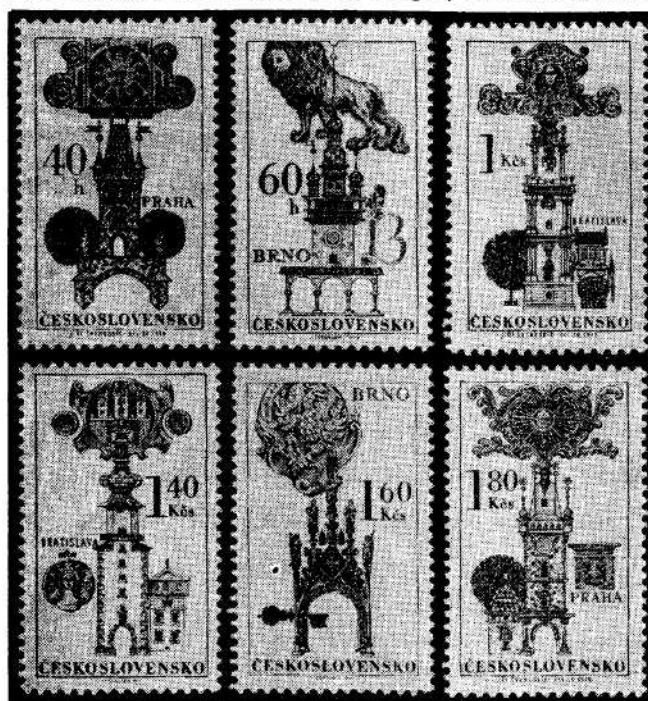
The stamp of the value of 0.60 h was designed by the academic painter

Jar. Lukavský and engraved by academic painter Bedřich Housa. This stamp shows the composition of typographic design of the title Rudé Právo's with the year and five-cornered star in red, black and golden color. It was printed at the Post Printing Office in Prague by rotary recess print combined with two colors photogravure in sheets of 50. The dimensions of the picture on the stamp are 40x23 mm.

One First Day Cover, designed by J. Lukavský and engraved by J. Goldschmied, was issued with the stamp. The motif depicted on the FDC is a top of a page of Rudé Právo, issued on Anniversary day, on the day of issue of this stamp.

The stamp is valid in international and inland postal use from September 21, 1970, until further notice.

Old House Emblems and Portals of Prague, Brno and Bratislava



On September 23, 1970, a commemorative set of 6 values, was issued called "Old House Emblems and Portals of Prague, Brno and Bratislava."

40 h PRAHA "The Golden Sun"—House Emblem of Lesser Town Bridge Tower of Old Town. Colors: black, yellow, blue, red.

60 h BRNO "At the Blue Lion"—House Emblem of a destroyed house; the tower of Old Town Hall, gothic initial "B". Colors: black, green, blue and pink.

1.— Kcs BRATISLAVA—Gothic bolt of the vault of town hall; Town Hall Tower. Colors: black, green, red, blue.

1.40 Kcs BRATISLAVA—Coat-of-arms of Bratislava, Michal Gate, medallion of the gothic bolt with woman-head. Colors: black, green, violet, orange

1.60 Kcs BRNO—Moravia eagle, gothic portal of the Old Town Hall. Colors: black, blue, yellow, pink.

1.80 Kčs PRAHA—"At the Black Sun" and "At the Green Frog"—House Emblems of the Old Town, New Town Hall. Colors: black, yellow, blue, and green.

The stamps were designed by J. Švengsbír. This academic painter performed always the engraving, in cooperation with J. Herčík, B. Housa, and M. Ondráček.

The set was printed at the Post Printing Office in Prague by rotary recess print combined with three colors photogravure in sheets of 50. The dimensions of the picture on the stamps are 23x41 mm.

Three First Day Covers, designed and engraved by J. Švengsbír were issued with the set.

The stamps are valid in inland and international postal use from 23rd September, 1970, until further notice.

9th World Football Championship, Mexico 70



On 29th October, 1970, the Federal Committee of Posts and Telecommunications issued six commemorative stamps "9th World Football Championship MEXICO 70":

- 20 h — Emblem of the Championship and flags of the participating countries. Engraved by Josef Herčík. Colors: black, yellow, blue, red.
- 40 h — Two players of the semifinal match: West Germany—Uruguay, with coats-of-arms. Engraved by Lad. Jirka. Colors: black, yellow, blue.
- 60 h — Two players of the match: England—Czechoslovakia, with coats-of-

- arms. Engraved by Josef Herčík. Colors: black, red, blue-green.
- 1.— — Three players of the match: Roumanian—Czechoslovakia, with coats-of-arms. Engraved by Jindra Schmidt. Colors: black, red, yellow, blue.
- 1.20 — Three players of the final match. Brazil—Italy, with coats-of-arms. Engraved by J. Mráček. Colors: black, red, yellow, blue.
- 1.80 — Two players of the match: Brazil—Czechoslovakia, with coats-of-arms. Engraved by J. Herčík. Colors: black, yellow, blue, red.

The stamps were designed by academic painter A. Podzemná and printed by the Post Printing Office in Prague by rotary recess print combined with multicolor photogravure in sheets of 25 stamps. Dimensions of stamp picture: 49x30 mm.

Three First Day Covers designed by A. Podzemná and engraved by J. Goldschmied were issued with these stamps. Their subjects represent the motives of Mayan and Aztecan art.

The stamps are valid in internal and international postal use from 29th October, 1970, until further notice.

Congress of the Socialist Youth Union



On 9th November, 1970, the Federal Committee of Posts and Telecommunications issued a stamp to commemorate the first congress of the Socialist Youth Union in Czechoslovakia.

The 30 h stamp was designed by academic painter Ivan Strnad and engraved by J. Herčík. Its subject represent worded red and blue flags, symbol of socialism and youth situated on the golden disk symbolizing the sun. Therein are written white letters "SSM," initials of the union mentioned above.

The stamp was printed by the Post Printing Office in Prague by rotary recess print combined with multicolor photogravure in sheets of 50 stamps, in black, red, blue and golden color. Dimensions of stamp picture: 23x30 mm.

One First Day Cover designed by J. Strnad and engraved by J. Goldschmied was issued with the stamp. Its subject presents the sign of the Socialist Youth Union with decorative background.

The stamp is valid in international and internal postal use from 9th November, 1970, until further notice.

Art 1970

If an event occurs several times in succession, and moreover at regular intervals, one more or less expects it to be repeated continually. And so it is with Czechoslovak stamps of the notable "Art" series which are being issued for the fifth time already, at the close of the year as always. This series is eagerly awaited and counted on in advance by all thematic and subject collectors specializing in art stamps. Their aesthetics quality has won Czechoslovak postage stamps a good reputation both at home and abroad. Though this applies to all the stamps issued by the Czechoslovak Post it is all the more true of the art series.



With the issue of each of the preceding "Art" series those interested were acquainted with the depth and breadth of the rich cultural tradition of the Czechs and Slovaks and shown how for centuries all branches of art mirrored the life of the people, serving as an inspiration in their striving for a better future.

Now, as before, it is necessary to supply some information about the make-up of the new series, about the subject matter, artists, engravers and execution.

Contrary to the usual practice let us start with the highest denomination inasmuch as the subject of the stamp picture was created at a time that is farthest from the present day and age. This stamp has a value of 2.40 Kčs and depicts one of the beautiful illuminations from the Vyšehrad Codex, a book of Gospels probably prepared for the coronation of Vratislav as King of Bohemia in 1085. It is known as the Vyšehrad Codex because it is linked with Vyšehrad, a stronghold on the right bank of the Vltava River in Prague which at one time was the temporary seat of the Bohemian princes. The Vyšehrad Codex is a priceless gem of Czech literature. The illustration chosen for the stamp picture is an illumination depicting the Three Kings bringing gifts to the newborn saviour.

The second, 1.80 Kčs stamp, shows a detail from a picture by the Slovak graphic artist Dominik Skutecký (1848-1921). The work of this artist deals primarily with the life and work of the Slovak people, viewed with a socially critical eye and likewise marked by a proportional measure of pathos. After completing his studies and spending some time abroad Skutecký settled in the middle Slovakian town of Banská Bystrica whose market, a milieu the artist doubtless knew well, is the subject of the stamp picture.

The third stamp (1.40 Kčs) depicts the art of the present day, namely the work of the painter and draughtsman František Hudeček (b. 1909), who besides

figural paintings, portraits, posters and pictures of the city life of today, has for many years also found time to produce some remarkable gems for the miniature format of the stamp. This time the subject is not one created explicitly for stamp production but a copy of his picture "Walk in the Night." This motif of a figure walking the streets of the city at night is the subject of several of Hudeček's pictures, almost always painted in shades of blue and green and always extremely effective. Now one of these figures, a Hudeček hallmark, has found its way to the postage stamp.

The fourth stamp (1.20 Kčs) presents the work of Prof. Karel Svobinský, National Artist and State Prize Laureate (b. 1896), who, along with the late Max Švabinský, is the greatest designer of Czechoslovak postage stamps. His work embraces drawings, book illustrations, all types of graphic art as well as monumental pieces. Chosen for depiction on the stamp is his "Bridesmaid," a delightful picture of a young girl in old-style village folk dress, the kind girls wore for festive occasions.

The fifth and last stamp of 1 Kčs denomination depicts the work of the Slovak painter and graphic artist Mikuláš Galanda (1895-1938). It is the picture of a woman cradling her child in her lap. Mikuláš Galanda was a pioneer of the modern Slovak school and to this day his work has a positive influence on the young generation of Slovak artists. He devoted himself primarily to creating a new picture of the working man, social motifs in concise form, e.g. fishermen, the home, etc.

Each of the foregoing stamps is being issued with a First Day Cover decorated with a drawing based on the work of the respective artist or depicting a detail of the given stamp picture. Taken in the same order as the stamps the First Day Covers depict a detail of the illumination from the Vyšehrad Codex, a detail from the self-portrait of Dominik Skutecký, another of František Hudeček's "Walk by Night" pictures, "The Village Girl" by Karel Svobinský and Mikuláš Galanda's "Pastoral Song."

The five engravers who transposed the works of these eminent Czech and Slovak artists to stamp format engravings to be printed by the exacting technique of multicolor offset print are also responsible for the graphic design, mainly the script, and likewise for the design and engraving of the First Day Covers. Their work is remarkable, precise and reflects the true spirit of the work of the given artists.

On Nov. 27, 1970, the "Art 1970" series of stamps was issued:

- 1.— Kčs — Mother (seated) 1933. Mikuláš Galanda 1895-1938. Slovak National Gallery. Engraved by Bedřich Housa. Colors: red, yellow, violet, black.
- 1.20 Kčs — Bridesmaid 1956. Karel Svobinský 1896-. Prague National Gallery. Engraved by Ladislav Jirka. Colors: yellow, red-violet, red, blue, blue-black.
- 1.40 Kčs — Walk by Night 1944. František Hudeček 1909-. Engraved by Jiří Švengsbír. Colors: Blue, yellow, violet, green, brown.
- 1.80 Kčs — Banská Bystrica Market 1889—detail. Dominik Skutecký 1849-1921. Slovak National Gallery. Engraved by Jindra Schmidt. Colors: black, yellow, red, brown, blue.
- 2.40 Kčs — Vyšehrad Codex—1085. State Library of the Czech Republic in Prague. Engraved by Josef Herčík. Colors: yellow, red, blue, black, gold

Graphic design by the respective engravers.

The stamps were printed at the Post Printing Office in Prague by flat recess print in four and five colors in sheets of four. The dimensions of the stamp pictures are 40x50 mm.

A First Day Cover, designed and engraved by the engravers of the stamps were issue, decorated with a drawing based on the work of the given artist.

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