

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Official Monthly Journal of the



Society for Czechoslovak Philately, Inc.

Silver Award — INTERPHIL '76

A.P.S. Unit 18

S.P.A. Branch 284

Vol. XXXX

January 1978

No. 1, Whole No. 376

Special Delivery and Registered Mail of 1919-20

By C. J. Pearce

(Editor's note: In 1975 our member C. J. Pearce ran a series of articles on the Special Delivery stamps of 1919. Inadvertently the series was never completed. This should complete the series which ran in the April, May, June, September and December 1975 issues of the Czechoslovak Specialist. Any new members wishing these issues may buy them from William V. Schoenig, 20 Charles Court, East Patchogue, N. Y. 11772 at 40c each. Make check payable to Society for Czechoslovak Philately. His series continues herewith.)

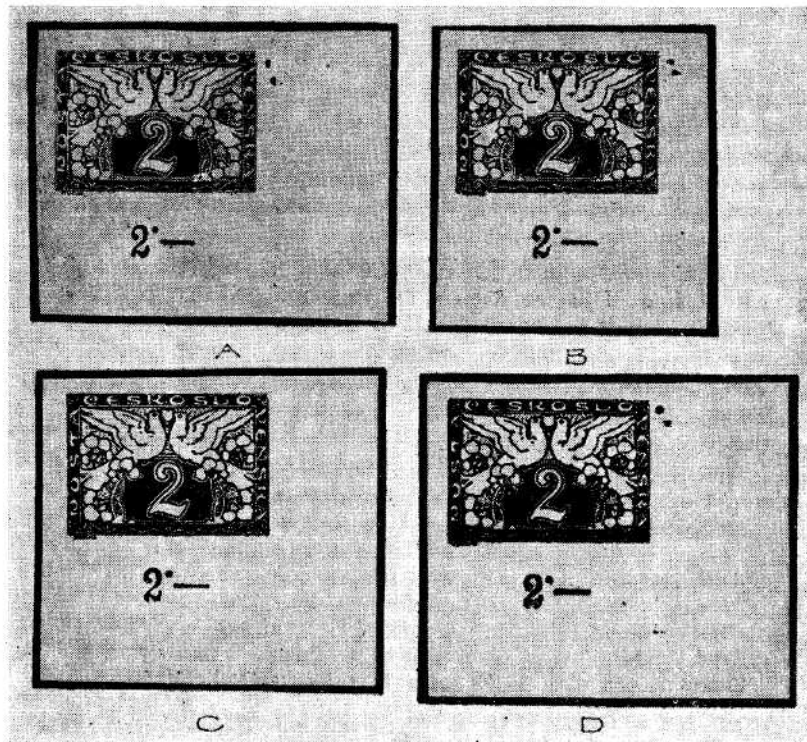


Fig. 1

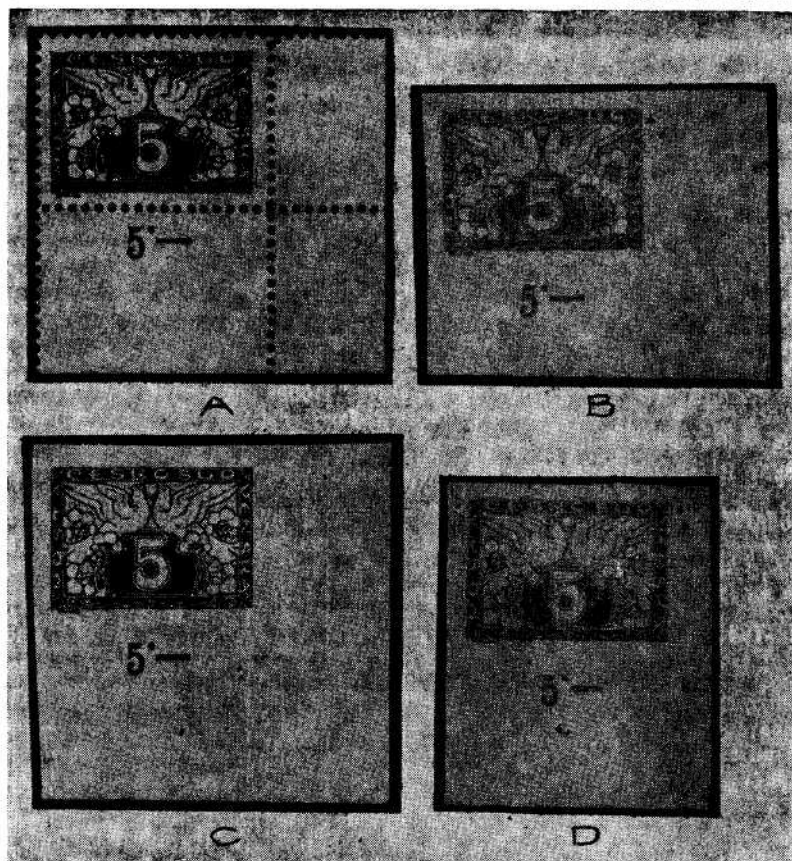


Fig. 2

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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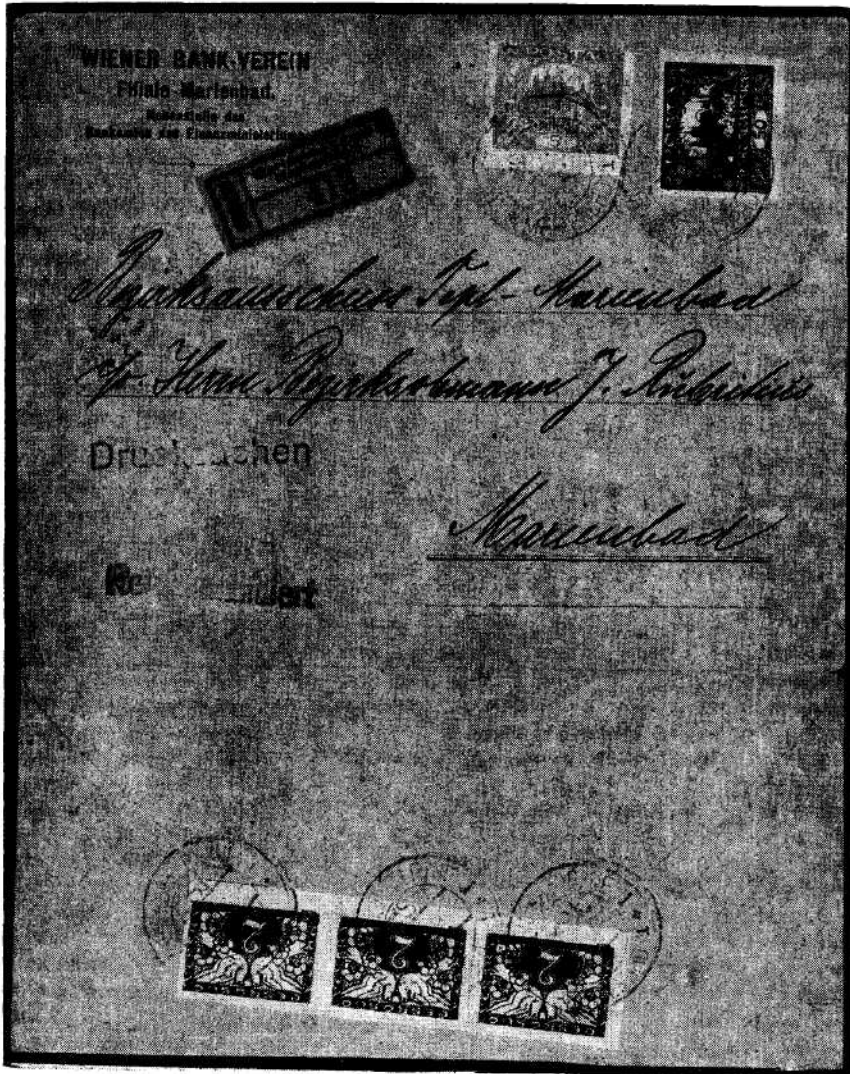


Fig. 3

BORDER MARKINGS
Two Heller Value

Plate One. First printing not illustrated as there were no nail markings in border.

"A"—Second printing, two nail impressions next to right upper corner, position 100.

"B"—Third printing. Marks show a slight difference in size and location.

Plate Two.

"C"—First printing, no nail impressions in border.

"D"—Second printing shows two nail impressions in right border, position 100.

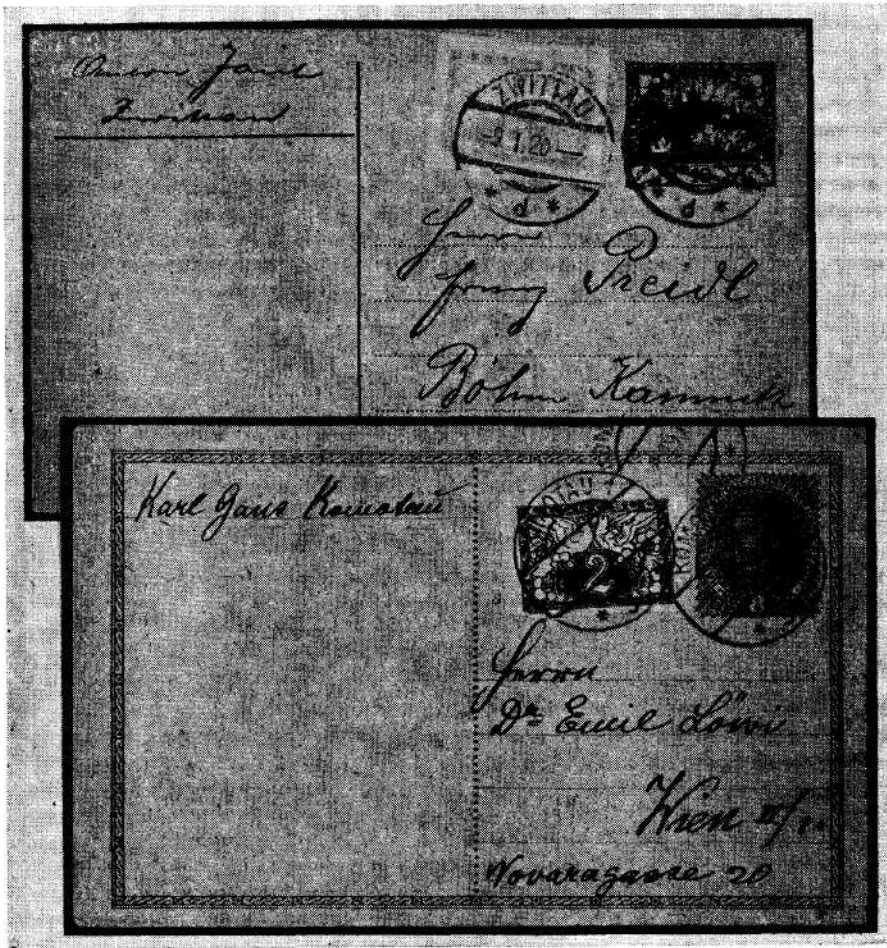


Fig. 4

Five Heller Value

- "A"—Plate One. First printing has no markings in border.
 "B"—Second printing, two nail markings in right border.
 "C"—Plate Two. First printing has no nail markings in border.
 "D"—Second printing, two nail markings in border.

It is the custom in the United States that only letters which contain valuable documents or which convey important information, are sent as registered mail. During the period of the First Republic in Czechoslovakia, a high percentage of letters, as well as post cards, were sent by registered mail. This was due, no doubt, to the low cost of the registration fee which was 50 hellers—two cents.

The cover, illustration #3, is clearly marked "Drucksachen" (printed matter) but it was sent by registered mail. Why, if it was so important, was it not sent as first class mail? The answer probably is a very simple case of

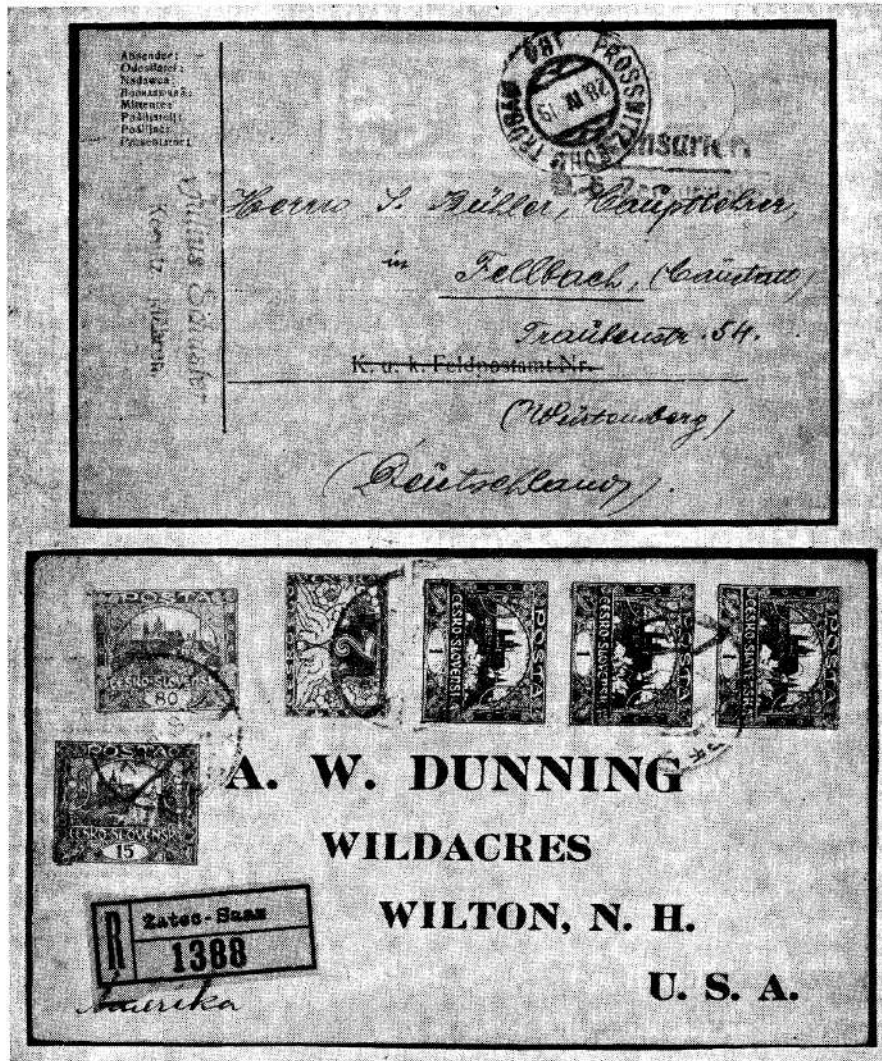


Fig 5

economics. The rate for first class mail during this period of time was 25 hellers, while the printed matter rate was only 5 hellers. If the sender wanted this handled as first class mail, he only had to add a 5 heller Special Delivery issue or a 5 heller regular issue stamp, receiving the same service but saving 15 hellers. For individuals mailing only one letter this savings would have been insignificant but for a business firm, mailing several hundred letters, it could become very profitable.

This is the only registered "printed matter" cover that I have been able to locate throughout my years of collecting, but I am sure that many firms took advantage of this savings covering this aspect of philately can be found.

Illustration #4 has the 5 heller value used on a 10 heller post card. This



Fig. 6

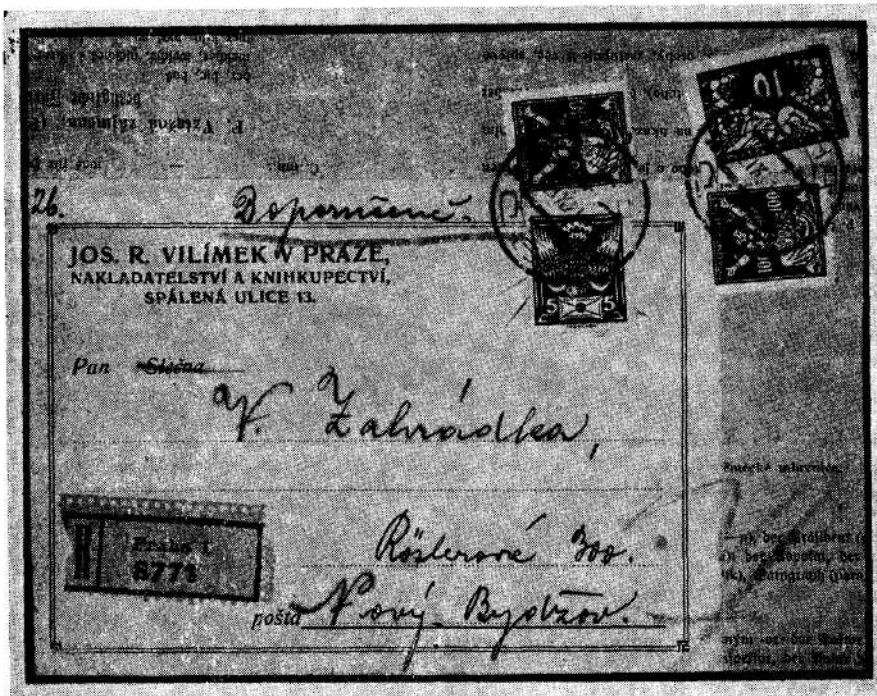


Fig. 7

is to comply with the 15 heller postal rate which was in effect from May 15, 1919 through March 14, 1920. Illustration #4 also has a 2 heller value used together with a 8 heller Austrian card to up-frank it to the 10 heller rate.

Illustration #5 has a post card which has two 5 heller value stamps affixed to the card, provisionally used as postage. The railway cancellation is on route 180 between Prossnitz—Bohm, Treau—together with a German censor mark.

On the cover sent to the United States, also appearing on illustration #5, a 2 heller Special Delivery stamp was used with other values to make up a total of 100 hellers. This was the proper rate for registered mail sent to a foreign country between the period of May 15, 1919 and July 21, 1920.

An 8 heller Austrian post card was used together with a 2 heller value and a 5 heller Hradcany stamp, illustration #6, to conform to the 15 heller rate. Illustration #6 also shows a 3 heller Hradcany issue stamp used on a parcel, dated August 14, 1920.

During the period of August 1, 1920 to December 31, 1921, the proper postal fee for sending 40 grams of printed matter was 145 hellers. Illustration #7 has the 20 hellers affixed to cover the most of the printed matter, plus 125 hellers registration fee. By adding the 10 heller Special Delivery stamp, the package was handled as first class mail while the sender realized a substantial savings.

From the President's Stock Book

Henry Hahn, 2936 Rosemoor Lane, Fairfax, VA 22030

My term of office as President of the SOCIETY expired at the end of 1977. Regretfully I can't congratulate my successor at this time, since the election took place on December 17th, and we go to press on December 1st. I know that I speak for all outgoing Officers and Board Members when I wish those taking over in 1978 much success.

Having served our SOCIETY for several years as SPECIALIST Editor and the past two as President, I am keenly aware of the need to avoid dependence of the SOCIETY on any one individual. This is now insured by our By-laws which limit the terms of office for Board Members, and forbid re-election to the Board (and hence to an Office) for a two-year period. Thus the SOCIETY will remain vital and those willing and capable will have ample opportunity to serve it.

My two years as Prexy have been fun, — just as editing had been in prior years. I couldn't have had nicer or more effective fellow Officers, fellow Board Members or appointed functionaries, to all of whom I am much indebted for what we have accomplished. I hope that our administration will be remembered for our two great conventions—INTERPHIL '76 and BALPEX '77, our all-time high in membership, our "solvent" treasury and the spirit of co-operation that has existed among ourselves as well as with other organizations.

Of course I'm not "fading away." Considering myself more of a philatelist than philatelic functionary anyway, I now hope to devote a larger fraction of my "stamp time" to my collection, to exhibiting, judging and writing. And if the new SOCIETY officers should need me for any reason (though they shouldn't) they'll know where to find me.

NEW MEMBER

1190 Aladar B. Dory, 329 Stowe Court, Kanata, Ont., Canada K2K 1Z6

Editor's Gazette

By Jane Sterba, 6624 Windsor Ave., Berwyn, Ill. 60402

PRAGA-78 PREVIEW

Compex-78 will be held in Chicago, June 2, 3 and 4, 1978. The Chicagoland Czechoslovak Philatelic Society will salute PRAGA-78 by presenting the philatelic collections that will be exhibited in Prague, where the World Exhibition of Postage Stamps, PRAGA-78 will be held, September 8-17, 1978.

SCP member Charles Chesloe has been appointed chairman of the Chicagoland exhibit. Charlie, as well as the entire Chicagoland group, extend a cordial invitation to all members of our Society who plan to exhibit at PRAGA 78, to participate in Compex-78.

There will be no frame charge and no more than 5 frames will be allocated to each exhibitor, for each entry. Each frame will accommodate 16--8½x11" album pages. Compex will be non-competitive. For further particulars and prospectus please contact Charles Chesloe, P. O. Box 237, Willow Springs, Ill. 60480.

ATTENTION MEMBERS SCP—YOUTH DIVISION

Juphilux-78 will be held in Luxembourg from April 6-10, 1978. This special international show will have a variety of classes and sections for all types of collections and has been compiled by the Juniors Commission of the International Federation of Philately.

Juphilux-78, under the patronage of Princess Marie-Astrid, is open to stamp collectors up to the age of 25 years.

Anne Brown, a member of the American Philatelic Society, Junior Activities Committee, has been named commissioner of Juphilux-78.

For provisional entry forms and other information, please contact Mrs. Brown, 22 Pearl St., Oyster Bay, N. Y. 11771, enclosing 50 cents for postage.

REGARDING "SOMETHING NEW"

In our Specialist of May, 1976, your Editor announced that she would endeavor to compile a table of collecting interests of our SCP members. There was very little interest shown regarding this project. Your Editor received a listing of collecting interests from approximately 8 members.

To those of you who responded, Thank You for your interest and support.

TWO PHILATELIC REQUESTS

Our Society has received two requests from Czechoslovak philatelists, relative to establishing a philatelic exchange. Those members interested in exchanging stamps please contact either or both fellow stamp collectors.

They are: Jaremir Cerny, Fucikova 254, 257-41 Tynec nad Saz, Czechoslovakia—correspondence in Czech, English or German; and Miroslav Strnad, Vitezna c. 269, 257-41 Tynec nad Sazavou, Czechoslovakia—correspondence in Czech, Russian or German.

DUES ARE STILL DUE

Inadvertently the dues envelopes were omitted in the December Specialist. It is enclosed herewith. Dues remain:

Patron membership \$15.00. Regular membership \$7.50. Youth membership \$3.00

The enclosed envelope is provided for your convenience and is **THE ONLY STATEMENT AND DUES NOTICE YOU WILL RECEIVE**. Promptly remit your dues. It will be appreciated by the officers of your Society.

ADDRESS CHANGE

730 Dennis G. Paz, 1124 North 40th St., Omaha, Nebr. 68131

Charley's Corner

P. O. Box 237
Willow Springs, Ill. 60480

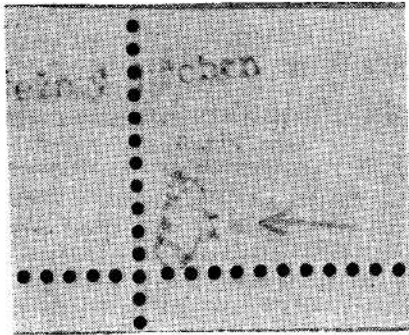


Fig. 1

Many months ago I promised to identify several other expertizing marks on the 1 heller (large numeral) essay postage due stamps. The first mark is the expertizing mark of B. Sperling, a stamp dealer from Brno, who used his signature as an identifying mark. This can be seen below the perforations of the stamp shown in figure 1 (see arrow). The LU shown on the corner is the mark of Lesetinsky Ustredna, while the marks of Tribuna, Hirsch and Gilbert can also be seen.



Fig. 2

The signature, "Benol," appears on figure 2. I have seen this signature several times, but only on "Posta 1919" issues. I have no knowledge about "Benol" or his philatelic background.

A new name has appeared in the expertizing field of Czechoslovak

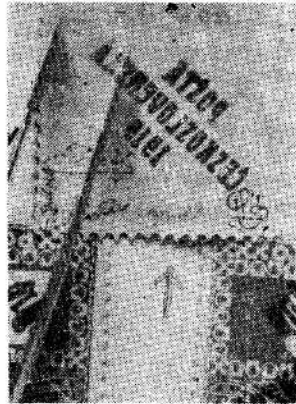


Fig. 3

stamps, mainly on the issues of 1920. The name is "Sramek," as shown in figure 3.

Figure 4 has the familiar pencil mark of Herbert Block of New York City, as well as the faint outline of Ev. Vilem Ekstein, noted stamp dealer formerly located in Prague.

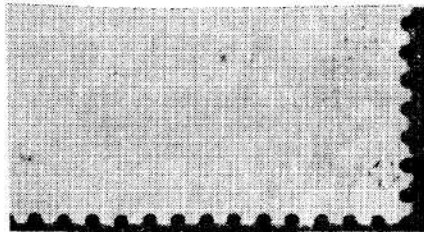


Fig. 4

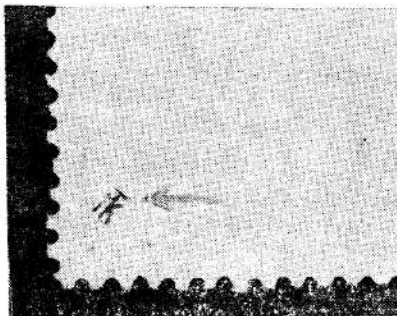


Fig. 5

The logo that is shown on figure 5, appears to be an expertizing mark, but its significance is unknown. On this figure the faint outline of a linden leaf also can be seen, superimposed with the letter "F". This is more clearly seen in figure 6.

If any of our members can identify or supply any information in regard to these marks, please send them to "Charley's Corner," address above.

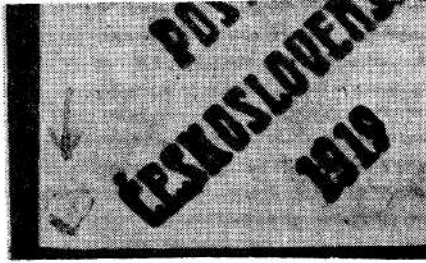


Fig. 6

SELL - SWAP - WANT

Every member is entitled to one free 15 word ad each year. Word count does not include name and address. Send ad to Wm. Schoenig, 20 Charles Ct., East Patchogue, NY 11772.

WANTED: Hradcany 3h gutter Tetebeche and 100h Weipert forgery, also any blocks or strips. T. M. Austin, Apartado 10007, San Jose, Costa Rica.

WANTED: 50h and 1000h first issue postage due blackprints, also first issue Siberia set—imperforates. T. Buresch, 21 Amboy Street, Vauxhall, N. J. 07088.

WANTED TO BUY

pre 1900 Czechoslovak territory town cancellations or stampless covers, stamps on covers or pieces. Send description or xerox copy together with price wanted to:

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A Philatelic Tour of Prague

By Mrs. Jos. F. Sterba, Jr.
(Continued)

To honor the International Philatelic Exhibition Praga-68, a series of 6 stamps were issued on June 5, 1968. They are known as the New Prague (Nova Praha) series. The 1.40 Kcs stamp illustrates the tapestry known as "Prague, 1787" which hangs in Tyl Theatre as the stage curtain. You will note that Tyl Theatre appears woven into the tapestry of illustration #12.

We must hurry along the street, "On the Moat" (Na Prikope) crossing St. James Square (Vaclavsky Namesti) continuing on to Jungmann Square (Namesti). Pause a moment to study Jungmann Square named after Joseph Jungman who died in 1847. His statue stands in the center of this quiet square. He was one of the leading figures of the Czech national revival of that period.



Fig. 12

The church "Our Lady of the Snows" (Kostel Panny Marie Snezne) was founded by Charles IV. This was in the year of 1347, the day after his coronation as King of Bohemia. The monastery of the Carmelite order is standing next to the church. Originally the church was planned to fill all of Jungmann's Square. The completion of the plans for the church were interrupted by the Hussite Wars. What you now see is just the presbytery which was completed in 1397. The monastery has a garden which is open to the public. Would you like to rest for a few moments, if any of the benches are available?

Feeling refreshed we continue on National Street (Narodni Trida). This is the main street leading to the Vltava River from Jungmann Square. This street was filled in during the year 1871. It originally was a moat part of the defences which separated Old Town from the New Town, as did the street "Na Prikope," which was also filled in. Both of these streets are now busy thoroughfares. There are many shops on these streets, all containing books, records and antiques which you can purchase as lovely mementos of your visit to Prague. Always try to remember—44 pounds of luggage is all that will be carried free of charge by your airline. Maybe this will assist to resist some of the love'y temptations appearing in the shops.

At about the end of the first block (which is a long one) turn right. You will be following a winding street, past Bartholomew and Kettle Streets (Bartholomeska a Konviktska Ulice), winding your way thru Old Town to locate and visit the Bethlehem Chapel.

Jan Hus has been both a religious and national symbol for the Czechoslovak people. In all past history, down to the present time, nationalism for their country has roots growing back to Jan Hus and his humanistic teachings. The National Library in Prague contains the largest collection of Wycliffiana in the world, including over 100 of John Wycliffe's own writings. You may ask yourself, "Why would an Englishman's writing be housed in Prague?" As you know, the Oxford Professor, John Wycliffe, advocated the bible as the basis of Christian life, defying the wealthy clergy in doing so. He was condemned a heretic but not inhumanly abused. When the Czech Princess Anne



Fig. 18

of Bohemia, daughter of Charles IV, became the wife of Richard II of England, many Czech students traveled to Oxford, where they studied and became acquainted with Wycliffe's teachings. The manuscripts they brought back with them, initiated a line of thinking which eventually led to Jan Hus and his teachings. The Bethlehem Chapel (Betlemska Kaple) as well as Jan Hus appear on illustration #13. They were issued on July 5, 1952, to honor the event—the 550th anniversary of Jan Hus as pastor of Bethlehem Chapel. He was also rector at Charles University. The Bethlehem Chapel is the most revered of all the Hussite monuments in Prague for it was here that he preached from 1402 until he left Prague. He was burned at the stake by the decree of the Council of Constance in 1415. The chapel was founded in 1391 by two ordinary tradesmen long since lost in history, Kriz and Jan of Milheim. In 1796, the chapel was demolished and the walls integrated into houses later built on the same site. When independence came to the Czechoslovak people in 1918 it was felt that the chapel should be restored. This restoration took a long period of time to be accomplished. The original vote to reconstruct the chapel was taken by the Cultural Commission of the National Assembly in 1920. A world war intervened before reconstruction work went forward between the years 1948-1954. The entire chapel has been rebuilt from evidence painstakingly collected, evaluated and reassembled. When the chapel was dedicated in 1954 by the people of Prague on the eve of the anniversary of the death of Jan Hus, the square was packed with people and the air was charged with emotion. The restoration of the Bethlehem Chapel was a vindication of Jan Hus, his life's work together with the nation's resistance to oppression.

The most amazing factor about the chapel itself is its air of antiquity. When we measure periods of time in history, a visitor can hardly believe that it was built only yesterday. The solid oak doors were hand rubbed with sand and stained with bull's blood to give the appearance of antiquity. A guide is available to point out the important points of interest in the chapel. The one you should not fail to observe is the wooden threshold of the pulpit. This is protected by a glass cover. More than 500 years have elapsed since John Hus walked daily over this threshold on his pathway to the pulpit to preach here in the Bethlehem Chapel.

After visiting the Bethlehem Chapel, inquire directions to reach the Vltava

River. There make a right hand turn, walking back toward the Charles Bridge. Your view of Hradcany Castle across the river, up on the hill, is as lovely as ever. Bring along some rolls or slices of bread to throw down to the wild ducks swimming in the river, oblivious of the beauty and history surrounding them. Continue walking on the embankment along the Vltava River until you arrive at Manes Bridge (Manesuv Most) which was built between 1911-14 and named after the famous Czech artist Josef Manes. Remember the paintings on the astronomical clock "Orloj" located in the Old Town Square—they were painted by Manes. On the quay is a statue of the Czech artist.

Forming one side of the square at this bridge-head is the House of Artists (Dum Umelcu). This lovely building was formerly called Rudolfina and was the joint work of J. Zitel and J. Schultz and built during 1876-84. It houses concert halls and the offices of the Academy of Art and The Czech Philharmonic. On June 7, 1952 three stamps were issued honoring the International Music Festival being held in Prague. Illustration #14 has the House of Artists



pictured on it. To really enjoy music, you should visit Prague during the period when music festivals are held there.

(to be continued)

Austro-Hungarian Naval Forces During the 1914-1918 World War

By Jiri Nekvasil

Translated by Henry Hahn

(Reprinted by permission of the Postal History Journal)

By world standards, the Austro-Hungarian Navy—the K.u.K. Kriegsmarine (Imperial Navy)—represented merely a third-rate fleet; nevertheless, the Monarchy was extremely proud of its naval force.

Initially developed by Admiral Wilhelm Tegetthof (pictured on the Austrian 60 Groschen semipostal stamp of 1935), the Navy was designed to serve alongside the German Navy during the execution of the Central Powers' planned expansion in the Balkan, and was manned by citizens of the various nations of the Monarchy. Every sixth man was a Czech or a Slovak: Czech engineers were in key positions based in naval arsenals and Ship Yards, where other Czechs worked as masters and foremen. On the ships, they occupied leading positions as commanders, gunnery officers, torpedo service officers, master mechanics, etc. Here they made use of professional skills which they brought with them from civilian occupations.

Toward the end of the War, Slav sailors stationed in Boka Kotorska

organized a mutiny which contributed to the decline of the Navy and lowered its fighting power at a time when the fleet was most needed by the Central Powers.

The main striking force of the Adriatic fleet were four modern dreadnoughts: S.M.S. (His Majesty's Ship) VIRIBUS UNITIS, PRINZ EUGEN (Fig. 1), TEGETHHOF and SZENT ISTVAN each with a displacement of 20,300 tons. The four ships had good fire power, heavy steel plate armor and excellent maneuverability. The first three ships were armed with guns manufactured at the Skoda works in Pilsen, with armor and heavy forgings manufactured at the iron works at Vitkovice and Ostrava, and with engines and electrical gear made at CKD-Prague. The ship S.M.S. VIRIBUS UNITIS, the flag ship of the Adriatic fleet, is pictured on the 20+3 heller Austrian stamp of the semipostal "War Set" of 1915.

The Austrians fared worst in the construction of the last dreadnought, SZENT ISTVAN (St. Stephen) which was to be constructed in accordance with the tax share rule in the Monarchy by a Hungarian firm. Due to lack of expertise in this field of technology, which included lack of experience in the construction of basic whole sections, the entire ship building project was a source of embarrassment. Construction had to be taken over by the Admiralty itself in its own shipyards and arsenals. The first three dreadnoughts were in service before 1914, but the last was only completed at the beginning of World War I. Eventually, the SZENT ISTVAN was sunk by an enemy torpedo.

The Adriatic fleet also included several divisions of war ships and cruisers, 10 divisions of torpedo cutters and torpedo boats, approximately 50 submarines, and—supporting ships of various categories and classes such as mine layers and mine sweepers, hospital ships, school ships, ships containing machine ships, tugs and rescue ships, all of which were necessary for the smooth operation of a Navy. Also included was an Air Force, and broad range naval installations on land including naval fortifications, artillery, machine ships, supply depots, marine units, and so forth.

At the beginning of hostilities the Supreme Commander of the Navy was Admiral Anton Haus; but at the end, the commanding Admiral of the Adri-

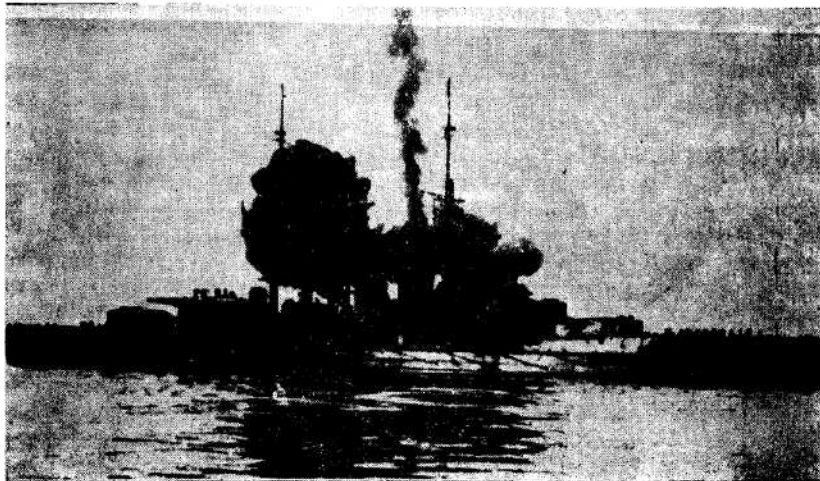


Fig. 1. S.M.S. (His Majesty's Ship) Prinz Eugen

atic fleet was Nikalos Horthy von Nagybaya, the future Regent of Hungary, who was a friend of Adolf Hitler, and in infamous co-destroyer of Szechoslovakia in 1938.

In 1970 the Postal History Journal published my study which dealt with ship mail of the Austro-Hungarian Navy on the Danube, Vistula and Bug Rivers. It is my hope that the present article will be accepted by lovers of postal history and field posts with equal favor.

Location of the Adriatic Fleet

For every collector of mail of the Austra-Hungarian Navy it is essential to know the location and also the names of individual ships. Each ship had as a minimum one postmark with which all field post mail of the crew was canceled. Each postmark had the basic designation—K.u.K. Kriegsmarine and the name of the ship. Before the ship's name appeared one of the following abbreviations:

S.M.S.=Seine Majestat Schiff (His Majesty's Ship).

S.M.D.=Seine Majestat Dampfer (His Majesty's Steamship).

S.M.U.=Seine Majestat U-Boot (His Majesty's Submarine).

S.M.Tb=Seine Majestat Torpedoboot (His Majesty's Torpero boat).

Each torpedo boat included within its postmark, in addition to its destination number, a letter such as SMTb83F. The letter was an abbreviation for the shipyard where the torpedo boat had been constructed: T for Trieste, F for Fiume, M for Monfalcone, and so forth.

The large dreadnoughts were constructed during the years 1911-1915; the torpedo cutters and boats originated from the turn of the century. Old casemate ships (equipped with armored turrets) served during the war as hulks with permanently anchored bases on which marine schools, training facilities, torpedo depots, and such, were located. In addition, former Austrian Naval Customs Service vessels were also incorporated into the Navy. During mobilization, the Navy took possession of various steamers of Austro-Hungarian commercial steamship companies. Also included were barges, motor boats, yachts, freighters, tankers, and other craft. The mechanical condition of these varied considerably, but they filled a broad variety of naval needs throughout the war.

(To be continued)

CORRECTION

In spelling, #1183 should be Frank R. Cignaek

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