

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Official Monthly Journal of the



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A.P.S. Unit 18

Vol. XLVIII

December 1986

No. 10. Whole No. 464

## POSTAL REFORM ORDER DURING MARIA THERESIA'S REIGN

By Henry Hahn

Students of postal history of lands that were eventually to become part of the first Czechoslovak Republic are generally familiar with the decree issued by Ferdinand in 1526 establishing postal service in the Bohemian Lands.

Most basic refinements in the rules and procedures governing postal operations were promulgated significantly later by issuance of postal patents and regulations of March 8, 1672, April 16, 1695, and finally in Maria Theresia's ninth year of reign, on December 14, 1748. The frontis piece of the original issue of the latter is illustrated in Fig. 1. It updates rules under which postal administrations and postmasters were to operate. It requires that the postillon must be honest, trustworthy and Catholic. It specifies horses and vehicles to be used. It sets fines for various violations and establishes priorities. While somewhat general in dealing with specific issues, it nevertheless served as the basic regulation up to February 8, 1772.

The decree of 1772 was issued in response to massive abuse of the regulations of 1672, 1695 and 1748. The frontis piece of this rather comprehensive document is illustrated in Fig. 2. It cites complaints of abuses and disorders that had crept into the postal service. It mentions violations of postal patents and expresses extreme displeasure with the abuses and excesses by postal employees. The full document is subdivided into ten (10) paragraphs, each addressed to a separate issue. Warnings and in some instances fines levied against violators — whether postal employees of the public — are included. In brief, they read as follows:

*Paragraph 1* — Except for royal customers, their servants or the courts, trunks, boxes, or crates "which encumber the ordinary mail" shall not be accepted by postmasters. Mailers must bring these directly to the mail coaches. Also, nobody must ride with the "ordinary mail" except "well known and accredited persons."

*Paragraph 2* — Postmasters must not be charged for their premises "beyond what they owe as taxes on the serviceable houses and lands that they possess." They must also not be asked to perform any services as part of their rent.

*Paragraph 3* — Nobody except postal employees may carry ordinary mail. Passengers must refrain from interfering with the mail. They must not inflict "blows or wounds." Those found guilty are to be subject to fine or corporal punishment. A traveler must not let the servant sitting on the coachman's seat to have any whips or sticks (which excess continues, according to trustworthy reports) and the servants are "wont to keep striking with big whips at both the postboy and the horses and consequently to gallop the latter almost out of breath and to overdrive them."

Der  
Königlich Kaiserlichen  
zu Ungarn und Böhmen etc.  
Königlichen Majestät  
SARAE GRAVEN  
MARIAE THERESIAE,  
Größ-Berzogin zu Oesterreich,  
Herzogin zu Württemberg und Barr,  
Größ-Berzogin zu Toscana etc. etc.  
Unserer Allergnädigsten Frauen  
und Lands-Fürstin  
Neue  
Post-Ordnung  
In gesambt- Dero Osterreichischen Ländern.  
ANNO M. DCC. XLVIII.

WJERT, gedruckt bey Johann Jacob Jehu, Universitäts-Buchdruckern.

Figure 1

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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Editor: Frank W. Julsen, 8721 Via La Serena, Paradise Valley, AZ 85253  
Literary Editor: Henry Hahn, 2936 Rosemoor Lane, Fairfax, VA 22031  
President: Mirko L. Vondra, 1511 Clearview Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601  
Vice President: Henry Hahn, 2936 Rosemoor Lane, Fairfax, VA 22031  
Secretary: Joseph J. Janecka, 7306 Ogden Ave., Riverside, IL 60546  
International Secretary: Edward Lisy, 87 Carmita Avenue, Rutherford, NJ 07070  
Librarian: Richard Palaschak, Qtrs #7, Lake City AAP, Independence, MO 64050  
Treasurer: Ludvik Z. Svoboda, 4766 S. Helena Way, Aurora, CO 80015  
Advertising Manager: Dominick J. Riccio, 235 W. 76th St., New York, NY 10023  
Expertizing Chmn: Edwin W. Lehecka, 217 Hazel Ave., Westfield, NJ 07090  
Circuit Manager: Wolfgang Fritzsche, Box 8, Canandaigua, NY 14424

# Maria Theresia von Gottes Gnaden

Römische Kaiserin, Wittib, Königin zu Ungarn, Böhmen, Dalmatien, Croatien, Slavonien etc., Erzherzogin zu Oesterreich, Herzogin zu Burgund, zu Steyer, zu Kärnten, und zu Crain; Großfürstin zu Siebenbürgen; Marggräfin zu Mähren, Herzogin zu Brabant, zu Limburg, zu Lützenburg, und zu Gelbern, zu Württemberg, zu Ober- und Nieder-Schlesien, zu Mantua, zu Parma, zu Macenz, zu Quastalla, Fürstin zu Schwaben, gefürstete Gräfin zu Habsburg, zu Flandern, zu Tyrol, zu Hinterpau, zu Kyburg, zu Gorz, und zu Gradisca, Marggräfin des Heil. Römisch. Reichs, zu Burgau, zu Ober- und Nieder-Ausnig, Gräfin zu Ramur, Frau auf der Windischen March, und zu Neuchâten, etc. vermittelte Herzogin zu Lothringen, und Barr, Groß-Herzogin zu Toscana etc. etc.


nbieten allen und jeden Unseren nachgesetzten Obrigkeitlichen; geistlichen und weltlichen; nicht weniger allen, und jedren Postmeistern, Verwaltern, Postbesetzern, und allen denen, so bey dem Postwesen bestellet, und demselben verwandt sind, wie auch denen Städten, Märkten, Gerichten, und auf der Post hin- und wieder reisenden

Figure 2

On the other hand, postmasters are to transport promptly and well the parties traveling by post, as soon as they arrive at their station. If not, the postmaster may be fined 10 florins.

*Paragraph 4* — Postmasters and mail-forwarders shall be spared when soldiers pass through from all billeting at their posthouses, guard duties, and other burdens. However, if the postmasters simultaneously carry out a civilian occupation, then they shall be liable for the payments which are required of the citizens but remain free of billeting or the billet tax.

*Paragraph 5* — Nobody may take (postal) horses from the stable or compel a postmaster to do so with "insulting words, threats, blows, kicks, wounds, or in some other unbecoming manner." The fine for such an act is 100 florins, and those unable to pay shall be liable to undergo bodily punishment.

*Paragraph 6* — If persons of distinction or even common folk traveling by post need more horses than are available, then local authorities must help the postal service and/or urge the citizens to lend the needed horses for a fee to be paid by the postmaster. The fee is 6Kr per horse on a single post, 9Kr on 1½ posts, etc.

Also, passengers must not send a postal rider ahead from the penultimate stop to secure lodgings — as has been the (illegal) practice. However, such a horse and rider may be provided if he and the stage leave at the same time. This insured that the rider and horse did not have to suffer 4–5 hours without food and fodder.

*Paragraph 7* — Postmasters are given the authority to demand removal of obstructions on post roads and to keep them open and in good condition. Posts are also given the right to take byways and even cross private territory and peasants “are not to dare to make them the least trouble” . . . Yet, it is understood that only in extreme emergencies are the post servants to travel through the byways and ridges, and perhaps even break through hedges. Otherwise they are to be severely punished and the postmasters will take responsibility for any such excesses by their postillions and servants.

*Paragraph 8* — To avoid abuse of postal horses, postmasters are not to accept for carriage by post trunks, chests, or valises weighing over 40 pounds or at most 60 pounds, depending on the horse. Horses must be changed at each post and anyone abusing a horse will be accountable to the postmaster.

*Paragraph 9* — Stagecoach drivers and horsemen belonging to feudal estates must no longer carry mail. This was edicted in 1748 but apparently not strictly enforced. Henceforth, violators would be punished 1 florin per letter and 4 florins per parcel, except in emergencies which must be declared to the postmaster.

Mail carriers must not permit servants to board with valises attached to them.

Mail carriers must not abandon the mails. They may not take “another opportunity” until they have stayed 3 days in one Place. Innkeepers, citizens and peasants may not carry travelers on post roads for money. However, such citizens may convey a post passenger for pay to the nearest post stop.

*Paragraph 10* — Authorities and citizenry must provide dwellings and stables for new post offices to be established or moved. The postmasters may only be charged reasonable amounts and given help in meeting their needs.

The posts were generally spaced 12 to 13 miles\* and the document applied to all routes leaving or terminating in Vienna, Prague, Brunn, Troppau (Opava), Linz, Gratz, Lanbach, Klagenfurt, Gorz and Triest.

Postal documents of the type described here provide our best insight into postal services of days long gone by. We never cease to marvel at the detail to which postal service was regulated and at the broad authority and responsibility granted postmasters. Moreover, the documents in their original printing represent a great deal of dignified beauty and should be included in serious postal history collections.

\*1 Austrian mile equals about 7.5 Km.

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## NEW ISSUES

By G. M. van Zanten — Courtesy ARTIA of Prague

On the 11th September 1986 two commemorative stamps were issued in the series "HISTORICAL MOTIFS OF BRATISLAVA."

The stamps were designed by the Slovak artist Ivan Schurmann, and contrary to earlier information, printed as usual in sheets of 4 stamps. The size of the pictorial part is 50×40mm. Printing by the Post Printing Office in Prague.

3 Kčs — shows the 15th century Sigismund Gate, entrance to the castle grounds, bearing the name of the Hungarian, Roman and Czech king and later Roman emperor of the Luxembourg dynasty; he lived from 1361 to 1437.

The engraver was Miloš Ondráček. Colors: black, brown-red and blue.

4 Kčs — features a theme from the interior of the castle. It is a tile in rich relief depicting St. Margaret with a lamb, which bears witness to the gentle character of this popular patron saint.

The engraver was once again Miloš Ondráček. Colors: black, brown-red and green.

Both stamps bear the usual emblem of Bratislava. F.D.C. cachet shows part of the Bratislava castle with a spreading tree in the foreground.



On the 18th of September 1986 a set of five stamps appeared to publicize "THE PROTECTION OF NATURE-BIRDS."



The stamps were designed by Hana Čápková, typographical layout by Zbyněk Kočvar. Stamps are in sheets of 50 and the rotary recess printing process, combined with multicolor photogravure, was employed. The picture part of the stamps is 30×23mm. Printing by the Post Printing Office in Prague. There are 3 F.D.C.'s with the set.

|                                |                 |                       |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 50 h shows the great eagle-owl | – Bubo bubo     | engraver Josef Herčík |
| 2 Kčs shows the horned owl     | – Asio otus     | " Miloš Ondráček      |
| 3 Kčs shows the tawney owl     | – Strix aluco   | " Miloš Ondráček      |
| 4 Kčs shows the barn owl       | – Tyto alba     | " Václav Fajt         |
| 5 Kčs shows the screech owl    | – Asio flammeus | " Josef Herčík        |

Fauna protection in Czechoslovakia is very strict and all owls are protected.

On the 1st October 1986 was issued a sheet containing 2 stamps measuring 50×40mm to commemorate: "THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL BRIGADES IN SPAIN."

Typographical layout by Jan Solpera, engraver Václav Fajt. Multicolour flat recess print was employed by the Post Printing Office in Prague.

5 Kčs — stamp designed by Vladimír Sychra (1903–1963) brings to mind an anti-war composition in the form of a very intensely effective picture for the curtain of the avant-garde D37 theatre in Prague. This theatre was founded by Emil František Burian, an outstanding theatrical expert, dramaturgist, director, composer and publicist.

With the stamp comes one F.D.C. The postmark on this shows a head with a bugle.



On the 6th October 1986, four commemorative stamps were issued to commemorate: "CZECHOSLOVAK RAIL VEHICLES."





Design of the stamps, as well as engraving, are the work of Jiří Bouda. The stamps are printed in sheets of 50 units. The rotary recess print, combined with multicolour photogravure, was employed by the Post Printing Office in Prague. The pictorial part of the stamps is 40×23mm. There are 2 F.D.C.'s with the set.

Jiří Bouda is the son of National Artist Professor Cyril Bouda, painter, illustrator and foremost designer of Czechoslovak postage stamps, now deceased.

- 50 h — depicts the KT8 three-part large capacity tram  
(Historical picture: the motor vehicle of a Prague tram from 192?)
- 1 Kčs — shows an electric shunting locomotive from the E458.1 series  
(Historical picture: local railway locomotive production 1882–1913)
- 3 Kčs — represents a motor locomotive of the T466.2 series  
(Historical picture: a locomotive manufactured from 1900–1924)
- 5 Kčs — depicts a light motor vehicle from the M152.0 series  
(Historical picture: the so-called rail bus, manufactured from 1930–1935)

**NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:** We continue to experience difficulty obtaining timely and complete information on New Issues from Prague. Until such information is sent to New Issue editor Gerald van Zanten on an advance basis, he shall report on an "as available" basis.

## FROM THE LITERARY EDITOR'S STOCK BOOK

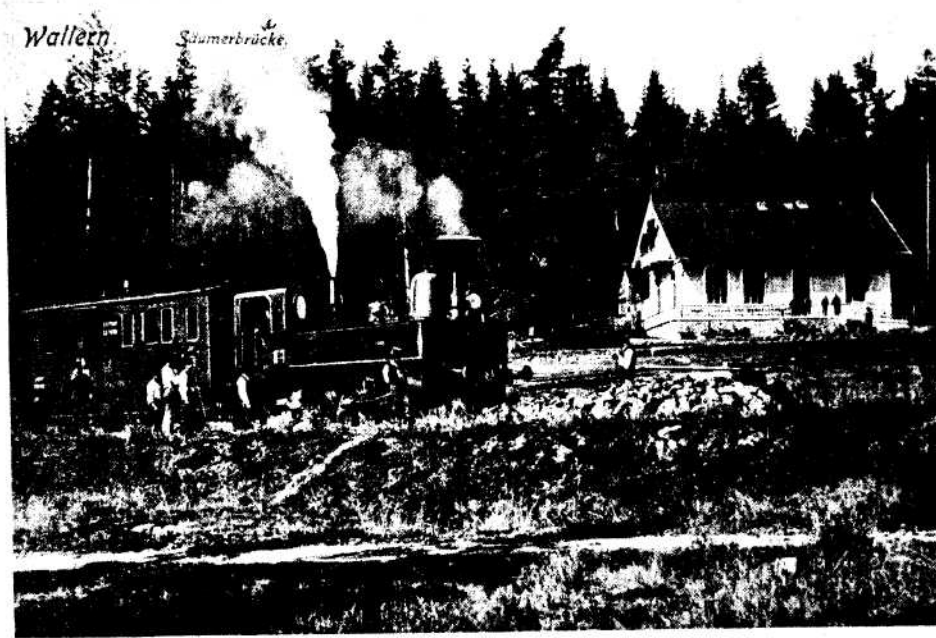
By Henry Hahn

Our frequent author and correspondent from Pardubice, Czechoslovakia RNDr Miroslav Vostatek has sent us two interesting photographs which add further insight to two popular areas of collecting.

The first is of the inside of the main post office of the Siberian Legion Field Post — which was a converted box car — and shows the Commander of the Czechoslovak and Allied Field Posts in Siberia, Capt. Antonín Novotný (standing). Novotný was born in Nachod and on his return from Siberia he provided much of the information we have on Legion Mail via a booklet he published.



The second photograph shows an Austro/Hungarian Railway Series 310 engine pulling a postal wagon. The picture dates from about 1900. The wagon is marked K.K. Post/C.K. Pošta and the location is in Wallern (Volary).



AN UNUSUAL SLOGAN CANCEL

A reader in Czechoslovakia has sent us the tracing of a slogan cancel, shown below, and wonders whether a similar slogan cancel is in the possession of any U.S. collectors.

OZNAČUJTE  
SVÉ TELEGRAMY  
DO AMERIKY  
VIA "RADIO PRAHA"



"RADIO-PRAHA"  
JE JEDINÉ PŘÍMÉ  
RADIOVÉ SPOJENÍ  
ČSR S AMERIKOU

He is also interested in any background information pertaining to the subject. The slogan cancel reads:

MARK  
YOUR TELEGRAMS  
TO AMERICA  
VIA "RADIO PRAHA"

"RADIO-PRAHA"  
IS THE ONLY DIRECT  
RADIO CONNECTION  
BETWEEN ČSR AND AMERICA

Please direct your response to the Literary Editor.  
H.H.

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## ROCKING THE BOAT — #2

By Frank W. Julsen

You might put this down to sheer envy on my part: I can't find, nor could I probably afford to buy, copies of the 4 Kčs and the 10 Kčs granite paper POŠTA 1919 varieties, considered as premier Czechoslovakia items most sought-after by specialists.

All this was brought to mind the other day when, at a local stamp shop, I was thumbing through the Czechoslovakia section of a very large, very comprehensive general collection that ended with issues of the late 1940s. Lo and behold! There was a 10 Kčs POŠTA 1919 on granite paper, a used copy with an indistinguishable postmark!

After recovering from a near-coronary, I examined the stamp thoroughly and was not really too surprised to learn it was a rather well-made forgery. Such experiences have occurred with me in the past, so I didn't go out to the parking lot and shoot myself.

Seriously, it brought to mind a conversation I had had not too long ago with one of the truly knowledgeable members of Czech philately, Charley Chesloe, who had ticked off some points about these stamps that cast serious doubt on their authenticity so far as having been regularly issued POŠTA 1919 stamps. We recalled some of the background regarding these issues: as a result of a proclamation to all post offices within the new Republic, all unsold remainders of Austria and Hungary stamps were to be returned forthwith to Prague. Most, if not all of these stamps, we know, were overprinted with the POŠTA 1919 ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ text and placed on sale at 50% over face value. Usage was to be confined, incidently, to domestic mail, although I have seen some registered mail covers with these and other values to the United States and other countries. We also should point out that there were at least two groups of these overprinted stamps — those overprinted and sold in relatively large quantities and those not regularly issued because there were only few copies available for overprinting (in some cases less than 100), not enough for regular sale. The latter made their way eventually into the philatelic market through certain, favored channels.

Among the stamps returned to Prague from the post offices, there were fairly substantial quantities of the 4 K in light and dark green and the 10 K stamps in light and dark violet on "ordinary" paper. As for these two values on granite paper, they were issued in Austria in the Spring of 1919 (you could "look it up," as they say in baseball) and never saw the inside of a Czech post office.<sup>1</sup> And of course there was no reason for the Czech postal authorities to order these two new varieties from the Austrians just to overprint them with the POŠTA 1919 text. (It should also be pointed out that over the years I have yet to find an un-overprinted 4 K or 10 K granite paper with a Czech postmark).

All this leads to the probability that these two varieties are at best essays that were struck off for some private reason and eventually found their way into the philatelic marketplace. For otherwise, with the abundance of these two values on regular paper, what was the sense of even printing examples on granite paper stamps which had to be brought in from Austria?

One answer might be that, as we well know, there were many unusual things happening in those days: controls within the printing office were literally nonexistent, witness the abundance of double, triple, inverted, sideways and backwards, on gum side, etc., overprints existing within the POŠTA 1919 category. Thus, there were many opportunities for some of the contemporary philatelic opportunists to engineer the creation of "rare varieties" which were then sold to anxious and trusting buyers. We even have the episode of forged granite paper 4 Kčs and 10 Kčs stamps being added (later) to genuine covers and then postmarked, surreptitiously we must assume, with a genuine canceller. (Cf. the January 1986 issue of *The Czechoslovak Specialist*.)

Only after the production of postage stamps came under Civil Service was the situation corrected, but by that time the damage had been done.

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<sup>1</sup>On the other hand, the common 2 K and 3 K Austrian granite paper varieties had been issued about one year earlier, and thus were available in quantity for the POŠTA overprint.

One must wonder why, if the 4 Kčs and 10 Kčs granite paper varieties were officially authorized, only ten and fifteen copies of each value respectively are recorded by the eminent scholar Ing. Jan Karásek? If they in fact had been officially authorized for regular sale and use, one would expect more than a dozen or so copies to have survived. And why cannot we find a few genuinely postmarked examples? Equally puzzling is the absence of a complete set of both stamps, both types, in the Postmuseum Prague? One would expect that examples of these, as with other stamps, would have come to the official files at the time they were "issued." (Another nice touch is the 4 Kčs in the Postmuseum with *reversed* overprint.)

In essence, these and some other POŠTA 1919 items fail the basic test of a legitimately issued stamp: was it generally available to the public for regular postal use?

All of this is very intriguing, although none of the above of course can be undeniably proved — especially at this late date. In deference to my good friends who possess examples of these granites my purpose simply is to raise a question that I am certain has crossed the minds of many of our fellow philatelists. Meanwhile, these two granite paper varieties will occupy places at the head of the table in Czech philately.

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**MEMBERSHIP DUES**

A gentle reminder to those who have not as yet used the handy mailing envelope provided in the November issue: we need your support!

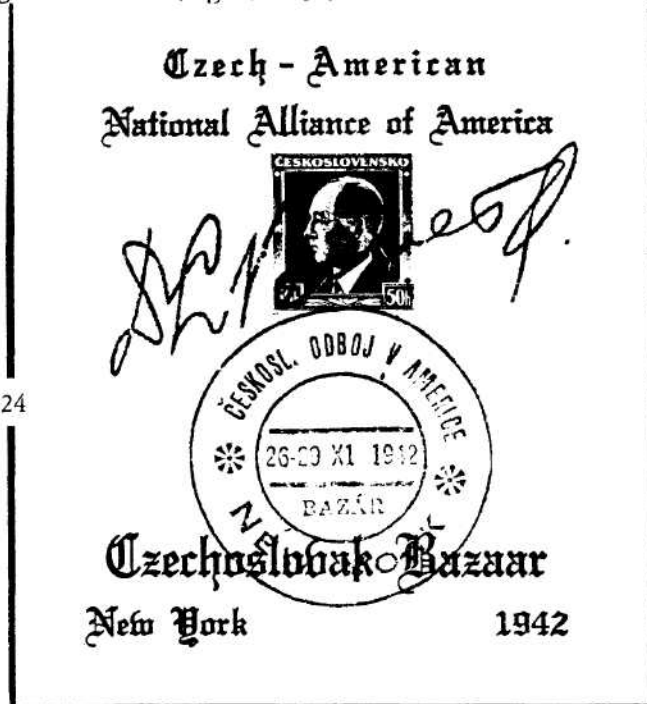
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**CHARLEY'S CORNER**

(Continued from October issue)

Fig. 24 shows a souvenir card distributed at a Czechoslovak bazaar in New York during the period November 26–29, 1942. These types of affairs were held to raise money for refugees and the exiled government.

Figure 24



The next two items, Figs. 25 and 26, represent covers cancelled in Joliet, Illinois, May 22, 1943, to commemorate the building of the village Lidice, Just outside of Peoria. Present at the ceremony was president Edward Beneš. Also, Fig. 27 shows a souvenir cover honoring Lidice and is additionally autographed by President Beneš.

At a reception in Chicago on May 23, 1943, honoring the President Benes the following souvenir card, autographed, was issued (Fig. 28).

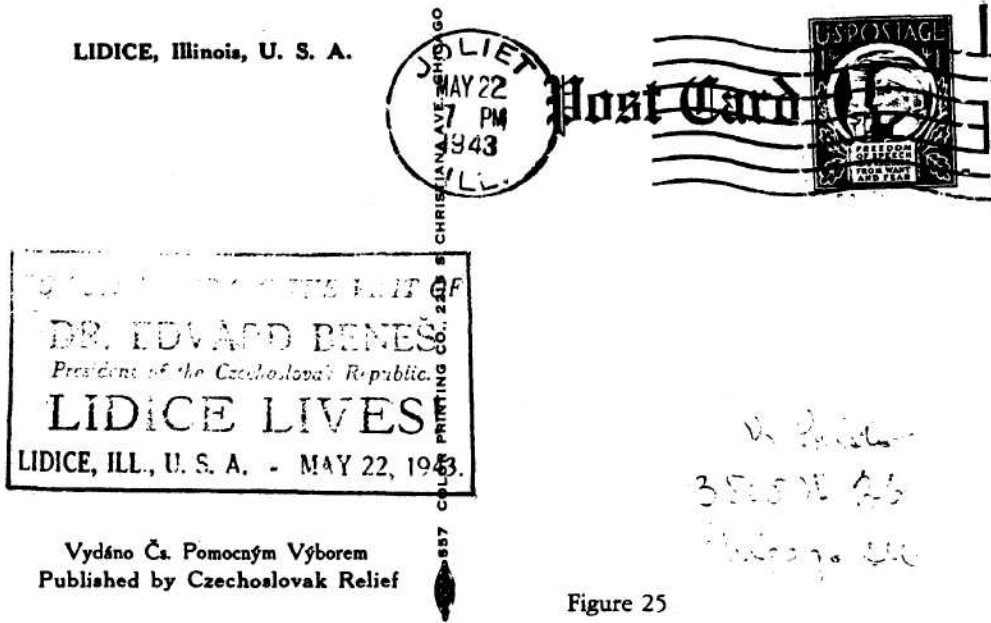


Figure 25

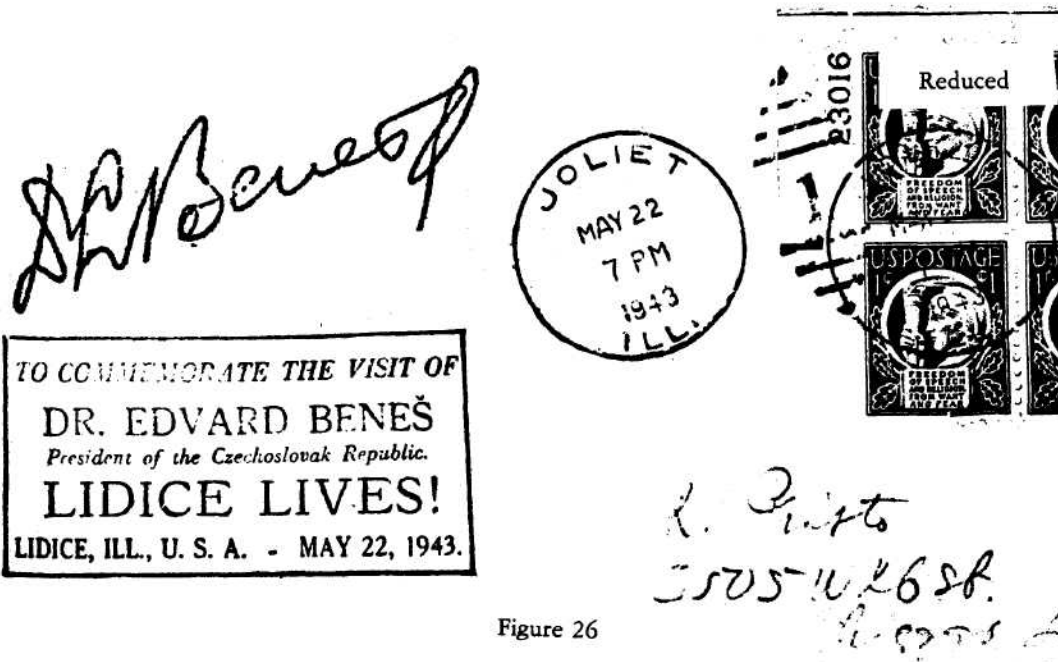


Figure 26



Figure 27

**DR. EDUARD BENEŠ,**  
president Československé Republiky,  
návštěvou v U. S. A.



Figure 28

Chicago, Ill., 28. května 1943.

# EXAMINER 212



Mr.  
Karel MATIASKA,  
11217 Methyll Avenue

CLEVELAND, OHIO

U.S.A.

JUL - 2 1941



ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ  
POŠTA  
28 MAY 1941  
ČECHOSLOVAK  
FIELD POST



LEAMINGTON SPA  
R No 8538

VIA AIR MAIL

Transatlantic

*Registered*

*Left twice*

Figure 30

An interesting cover is illustrated below, being a First Day Cover for the Czechoslovakia stamp of the "Overrun Nations" series, decorated with a handpainted cachet memorializing Lidice.

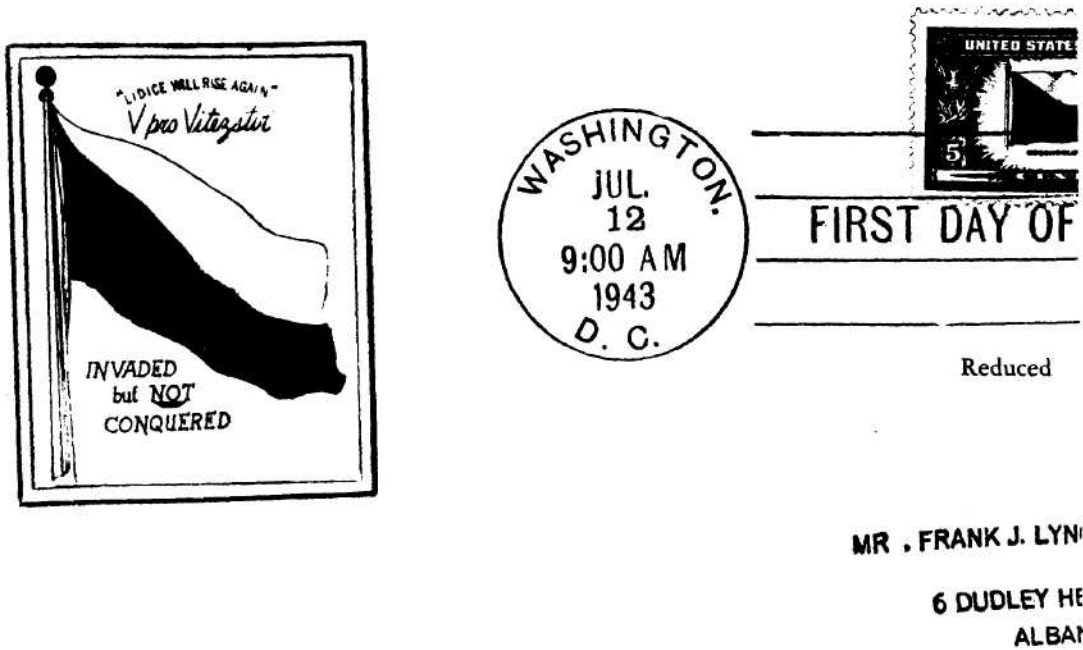


Figure 29

Now we will jump across the Atlantic Ocean and take up activities of the Czechoslovak Field Post in England, beginning with (part of) a large registered letter sent to the United States (Fig. 30). Cancelled on May 28, 1941, this was the first day of use of the regular boxed cancel. Also, that day commemorated the birthday of President Edward Beneš, as shown by the commemorative cancel in the upper right corner. Note that these stamps were cancelled by the old Leanington Spa cancel and the Leanington Spa registration label. On later covers you will notice the Field Postoffice had its own registry labels.

To be continued

## BALPEX 87

The Society's 1987 Convention and Exhibit will take place in conjunction with Balpex on Labor Day Weekend. We shall once again join forces with the Austrian and Hungarian Societies. We are currently thinking about a cachet which might be of common interest to all three societies. All ideas or suggestions will be much appreciated and should be sent to my attention.

Henry Hahn



---

(Advertisement)



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- 10) Czechoslovakia's stamps are neither too large or small — just stamps as stamps should be!

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