

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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BALPEX 90 - FIRST NOTICE

At its meeting last October, the Society's Board of Directors voted to participate at BALPEX 90 during the Labor Day weekend this year. President Charles Chesloe immediately appointed Henry Hahn as the Society's program and exhibition chairman.

Mr. Hahn wasted no time in preparing for this year's big event. In January, he contacted members of the Executive Committee of BALPEX and suggested we invite our collectors and members in Czechoslovakia to participate in the show. He was told that the Hungarian Society had already invited their counterparts from Budapest and that BALPEX extended an invitation to them to stay at the Hunt Valley Inn, where the exhibition will take place, at BALPEX expense. The same offer has now been extended to our counterparts from Prague.

During the first half of February, Henry Hahn spent some time in Prague and attended a meeting of the official Commission for the Czechoslovak Stamp. Presiding at the meeting was the Committee's new chairman, Ing. František Hutýra. Other Commission members who were in attendance included Ing. Pitterman, Dr. Palkoska, Ing. Moliš and Ing. Aksamit. Mr. Hahn reports there was some discussion concerning the reorganization of the Svaz (Union of Czechoslovak Philatelists) which at present is in a state of flux. There is apparently some controversy dealing with representation, ie. whether by region, club, etc. Ing. Pitterman promised to send a detailed report to our SPECIALIST about this in the near future.

Henry Hahn presented a proposal to the Commission for participation with our Society at BALPEX. He inquired whether it might be more appropriate to deal with the Svaz, but was assured that it did not matter and that the Commission would be glad to accept on behalf of the Czech collectors. In doing so, the Commission agreed to send three or four exhibits to BALPEX. One or possibly more speakers will be there to give illustrated talks.

While the Society's cachet theme has not yet been selected, consideration is being given to the resurgence of democracy in Czechoslovakia, cooperation between our Societies or some other theme bearing upon the historic events that took place in the latter part of last year. Suggestions from the membership will be welcomed.

As soon as they are available, prospectuses for the big annual national stamp exhibition will be mailed or will possibly be inserted in the next issue of the SPECIALIST just as it was done last year with SEPAD. In past years, our Society's participation at BALPEX has always turned out to be a great success. Let us resolve to make this year's participation just as successful and possibly even add more luster to the show. As we look to renewed friendship and cooperation between the governments of the U.S. and Czechoslovakia, so too we prepare to greet our members and guest collectors from the land where freedom finally rings. BALPEX should serve as a fitting and festive reunion of Czechoslovak and Hungarian philatelists from both here and abroad.

Remember the place and dates: September 1, 2 and 3 in Cockeysville, Maryland.

PERFORATIONS ON NEWSPAPER STAMPS OF 1918-1938

By Tomáš Morovics

Translated by Mirko Vondra

There have been numerous articles written in the past which underscore the interesting aspect of privately-perforated typography stamps. This is an area in which market values have not yet been accurately established. Even though research has uncovered a whole new source of philatelic knowledge, it would be folly to say that the work is finished and the book is closed. Articles that have heretofore been published explain the appearance of private perforations existing in the Hradčany issue and on Special Delivery stamps. These stamps apparently were cancelled at the same postoffice where they were affixed to the parcel. Cataloging of such private perforations is possible based on the points of origin of the cancels.

In the case of newspaper stamps, the situation is entirely different. It is impossible to include them in the same category because they were assigned to individual administrators of newspapers and publications. In order to expedite deliveries, they were usually not cancelled until they arrived at their postoffice of destination. That is why they cannot be catalogued according to the locality shown on the cancel.

So the question comes down to how these stamps should be listed. There are two possible methods. A thorough approach presupposes gathering together large quantities of materials (letters, parcels, etc.) franked with newspaper stamps. Based on the return address labels, it would be easy to identify the senders and the offices at which the mailings originated. It would then be possible to determine which of those offices used newspaper stamps that were prepared either by line roulette, by hole roulette or simply perforated in accordance with standard perforating procedures. Perhaps that is the way these stamps can be catalogued in the future. For the time being, it is only possible

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to evaluate individually measured perforations.

All newspaper stamps were officially issued imperforated. This fact resulted in the manipulation of these stamps which, in the course of bulk mailings, might well have caused delays in deliveries. Laborious cutting by scissors was replaced in time with pin holing, line rouletting and finally line perforating. It should be noted that, as compared to other stamps, line or hole roulettes are found very seldom on newspaper stamps. (see fig. 2).

The most common way of separating stamps is by line perforating (see fig. 1) at gauge numbers 8 to 12 3/4. Some administrative offices had those stamps perforated only along one side and in one direction (see fig. 3 for vertical perforating). After being cut up, these stamps resembled coils. In perforating these stamps, a whole area of faults and imperfections was created. Most common of these are double perforations (see fig. 4), then missing perforations (see fig 5) and finally folding perforations (see fig. 6). As a result of some broken perforating needles, we can sometimes find spaces where there are missing perforated holes.

Although a majority of perforated newspaper stamps which are available for sale or exchange are from the remains of newspaper repacking, other similar stamps exist which were not processed during bundling. These were prepared for collectors' use and have nothing in common with the ones designated for newspaper use. As in the case of the Praha 17 roulettes or those with perf. 13 3/4, we are dealing with whole series of mint stamps. Among them exist forgeries of private perforations. One of their characteristics is that the perforation holes are cut somewhat sharply. Fortunately, these perforation forgeries occur only sporadically.

The illustrated table on page 6 lists newspaper stamps from 1918 through 1938; also stamps overprinted "VZOREC" and "SO 1920", including stamps overprinted for use on commercial printed matter. The headings on top are divided into three groups: official "UNIE" perforations, private line and hole roulettes and private perforations. Shown under each category of perforations, a circle appears in the appropriate box. A black circle denotes used or cancelled stamps. A clear circle indicates the stamps were perforated either at the "UNIE" or specifically for collectors' use.



Fig. 1 thru 3



Fig. 4 thru 6



Fig. 7

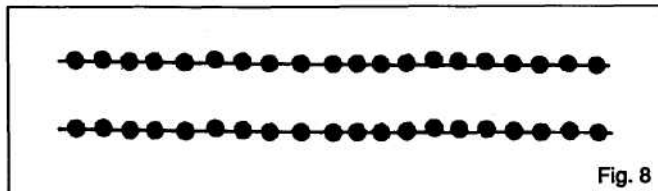


Fig. 8

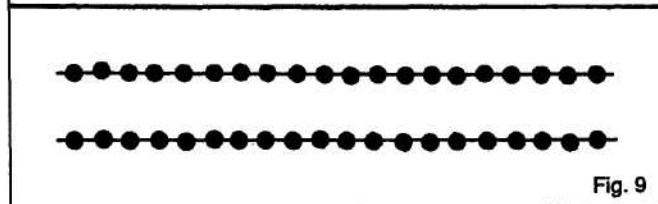


Fig. 9

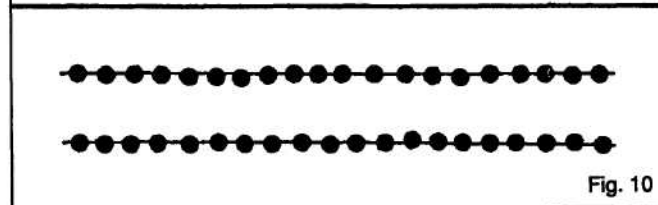


Fig. 10

Fig. 8 thru 10

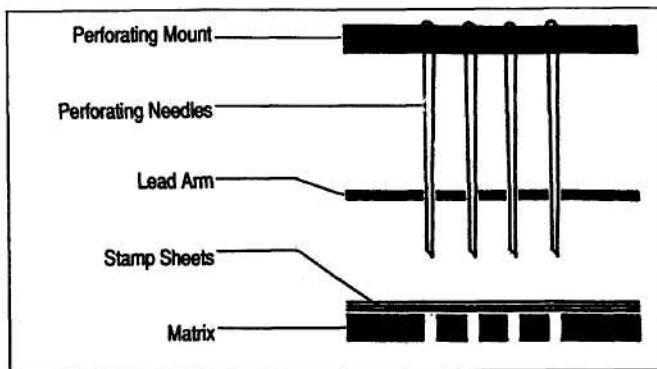


Fig. 11

This involves primarily stamps with perf 13 3/4, many of which may have been favor-cancelled. The table has been assembled in such a way that any further discoveries in this classification can be enumerated by the inserting of a black or a clear circle in the corresponding blank space.

Regarding official perforations, newspaper stamps with perf 11 1/2 or perf 13 3/4 were designated for use by the various government ministries. Similar perforating can be found on stamps overprinted "VZOREC" or "SO 1920". Here we cannot exclude the pressures brought to bear in those days by high philatelic circles. Although the illustrated table contains only those denominations which were available for my research, I have little doubt that other denominations may also have been officially perforated. There is a question whether it is possible to distinguish 11 1/2 and 13 3/4 officially perforated newspaper stamps from those that were privately perforated. To answer that question, certain realities need to be recognized. Official perforations could only be provided for stamps printed between the middle of 1919 and the latter part of 1920. This brings into account stamps printed from engraving plates which were without a sheet margin frame. The 5 h. green-black Sokol bird issued on Nov. 20, 1920 might be offered as an example. (see fig. 7).

In my opinion, perforating

machines at the "UNIE" were chiefly used for notching postage stamps. They were accurately maintained and exhibited flawless motion. In fig. 8, we see two strikes of a perforating mount, one following the other. It is evident that apart from the size of the perforated holes and the distances between them, the two rows are very much alike. During the perforating procedure, it is possible for the sheet to be pushed vertically in the direction of the perforators. Therefore the perforated holes are not always precisely aligned. Despite that, the repeating pattern made by the perforated holes serves as a basis for identifying it as the work of the UNIE's perforating machine.

In contrast, perforating machines which were available to small printing firms have exhibited numerous shortcomings. This is due to the fact that a small printer using a single machine would perforate all kinds of printed matter including thick fibrous paper used for admission tickets to the theater or sports events. They did not get

the kind of care they deserved. Even so, the exception seems to confirm the rule. In fig. 9, please note two strikes made by a private perforator. The two rows are not compatible with each other even though the distances between the holes appear to be the same.

Now skip to fig. 11 which demonstrates the principle of a perforating machine. The perforating needles are imbedded in a "mount" guided by the lead "arm" to pierce a stack of paper sheets. In piercing the sheets, the needles drop through and penetrate the correspondingly-fitted openings in the base matrix. What this means is that each needle has its permanent place and movement defined for it by the guiding arm and the matrix. As a consequence, we find each perforated hole in its designated position in relation to the other holes. That applies to those machines which are regularly maintained and deteriorating parts are replaced with new ones.

Machines used by small printing firms generally did not get that kind of care. Needles which lost their sharpness were not replaced, causing indistinct and irregular holes. Similarly, lead arms and worn matrixes were not discarded. (Matrixes were generally made of softer metal than the needles themselves). Wear and tear causes larger openings in the arm and gives the needles greater "play". For that reason, the two rows of holes drawn in fig. 9 do not compliment each other even though they were made by the same line of needles. If you then add to that the possibility that the sheet was shoved vertically in the direction of the perforators, there is then no similarity whatsoever between the two rows, as in fig. 10. Such irregularities are often indicative of private perforating methods. On the other hand, if it were officially perforated material that was involved, it would be a sign of forgery. As far as official perforating of newspaper stamps is concerned, we have to deal with mint stamps printed from engravers' plates without sheet margin frames. These include the issues from May 1919 through September 1920. But their perforations must show signs of consistency as in the case of the two rows in fig. 8.



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

Have you entered your bid in the Tribuna Mail Stamp Auction?

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

○	UNIE		ROULETTE		PRIVATE PERFORATING														
	11½	13¾	---	8	8½	9¼	9¾	10	10½	10¾	11	11¼	11½	11¾	12½	12¾	13¾	
I S S U E D 1 9 2 0	2		○	○						○	●			●					○
	5	○	●	●		●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		
	6		○	○										○					
	10	○		○					●	●	●	●		●	●				
	20	○		○					●	●	●		●	●		○			
	30	○	○	○					●		●	●	●	●					
I S S U E D 1 9 2 0	50		●					●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				○
	100							●	●		●		●						
	5/2								●	●			●						
	5/6												●						
	5/2								●				●						
	5								●	○			●						
I S S U E D 1 9 3 7	10								●			●		●					
	2								●	●		●	●						
	5						●	●	●		●	●	●	●					
	7							●	●	●	●	●	●						
	9										●	●	●						
	10							●		●	●	●	●						
	12										●	●	●						
	20									●	●	●	●						
	50									●		●	●						
VZOREC		○																	
	SO 1920	○	○																
O.T.	10					●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●			○
	20							●		●	●	●	●						○
	30											●							○

The question of the private perf 13 3/4 (or more precisely the "unofficial" perf 13 3/4) is still an open one. Clearly we are dealing with philatelic perforations. A much larger quantity of stamps was prepared with those perforations though they were never postally used, - at least I have not seen any. However, there are some newspaper stamps with this perforation that have been favor-overprinted "10 h. O.T."

An important point involves the measuring of private perforations. The illustrated table does not list the different perforations that these stamps are found to have, as for example 10 1/4 x 12. Personally I believe that some of these perf combinations can be related to each other in their progressions: eg, 9 3/4 x 10; 10 3/4 x 11; 11 1/2 x 11 3/4. So-called private perforations exhibit irregularity in a substantial number of instances. One might even find a variation in the measurements of the upper and lower horizontal perfs on a single stamp even though the same perforating arm had been used. Fig. 12 shows a horizontal pair of the carrier pigeon newspaper stamp of 1939. When measured by gauge, the upper perf is 11 while the lower perf is 10 3/4. In no case does the gauge precisely match the perforation. The correct description of their perforation should be 10 3/4 - 11. Fig. 13 shows a comparison of the smallest and largest perforations known to exist in these stamps (perf 8 and perf 13 3/4).

In concluding this research article, I wish to thank Richard Bayer of Vienna and František Žampach of Brno for their invaluable assistance and cooperation. And to those who specialize in this area of philately, I extend an invitation to supply me with any helpful information to supplement whatever research has been done thus far which I have gladly shared with our readers.

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A LOOK AT NEWSPAPER LABELS

by Tomáš Morovics

Translated by Mirko Vondra

In recent years the collecting of newspaper labels has undergone a striking revival. Tied in with this is the research necessary to arouse the interest and curiosity of the collector. That research is lacking. There is much exhaustive work to be done in this area and apparently the work force (or possibly the enthusiasm) is not there to undertake it.

What we do have is philatelic literature which attests to over twenty different newspaper labels the prices of which vary from exchange meeting to exchange meeting and from one auction to another. In the final analysis, the standard of value constantly fluctuates and depends on what the market will bear at any one time.

In this article, I am focusing on the most recent of these labels - the one which reads: "Národní



Fig. 1



Fig. 2 thru 9

Politika/Franko/Hotově/Zaplaceno". Positioned within a frame 27 x 28 mm. in size, the letters and the frame are reddish brown on yellowish paper. The printing plate allows for 32 labels and is produced in the following manner:

1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4

Fig. 10

Four individual dies were made from letter set and by typography. This produced four subject clichets which were arranged horizontally and interrupted lines were then drawn between them. A paper matrix was constructed from this for the production of a single stereotype. This was duplicated eight times, resulting in eight stereotypes of four subjects, all of which contain the same flaws corresponding to the original letter set. The stereotypes were arranged one above the other and separated by horizontal serrated lines.

Because of this method of production, it is possible to identify four different types which can be philatelically distinguished by these characteristics:

1. The relative position of the words "Hotově" and "Zaplaceno". In fig. 2 note that the letter "1" in "Zaplaceno" is lined up with the center of the first "o" in "Hotově". But in fig. 3, the letter "1" is lined up with the right side of the "o".
2. The oval of the "P" in "Politika" is precise in fig. 4. In fig. 5, the lower part of the oval almost touches the bottom of the stem. This is due to the fact that a letter from a different type-set was used.
3. The letter "1" in "Politika" ends in a straight cut at the bottom as shown in fig. 6. But in fig. 7, it ends in a slanted cut.
4. The thin border line below "Politika" touches the thick

vertical line of the frame in fig. 8. In fig. 9, the thin border line stops short of the frame, producing a mini-gap.

As noted above, there are 32 label cuts on a single printing plate. Each of those cuts comprises one of four types. The following table identifies those types:

Type	Alignment of "1" with "o"	"P"	"1"	Border Lines
1	Aligned thru center of "o"	Oval extended	straight cut	touch
2	Aligned thru center of "o"	Oval normal	straight cut	touch
3	Aligned thru center of "o"	Oval normal	slanted cut	mini-gap
4	Aligned with right side of "o"	Oval normal	straight cut	mini-gap

Fig. 10 shows the layout of the four types on the printing plate itself. These four types constitute faults and imperfections within the type-setting on the plate. In addition, there are many faults on the plate itself. These, however, are outside the realm of this particular research.

THE WOODEN CHURCH AT JASINA

Part One of "Ukrainian Wooden Churches in Philately"

by Inger Kuzych

(Andrew Cronin specializes in Russian philately. He had been editor of *YAMSHCHIK* since its inception about fourteen years ago. *YAMSHCHIK* is the official journal of the Canadian Society of Russian Philately. Translated, the name means "The Post Rider". In the November 1982 issue, Mr. Cronin published the first of his two writings on mail in the Carpatho-Ukraine. Titled "Pre-Stamp and Stampless Mail from Carpatho-Ukraine", it ran 13 pages and contained illustrations of official ecclesiastic mail dating as far back as 1692. The second writing, titled "Pre-Stamp Mail and Adhesives Used in Carpatho-Ukraine Until 1871", was published in the May 1983 issue and comprised 10 pages. It too was filled with remarkable illustrations of mailed documents and early covers.



Fig. 1 A.C.

Inger Kuzych is the current editor of the *UKRAINIAN PHILATELIST*. He was so impressed by Cronin's two articles, he reprinted them in his Society's journal complete with illustrations. These articles may be found in the 1989 *UKRAINIAN PHILATELIST*, vol. 36, no. 1, pages 24 to 37 and no. 2, pages 37 to 47. Because of their length and because they have already been reprinted, we are not reprinting them here. But we certainly recommend that collectors of the Carpatho-Ukraine seek them out for their own reading pleasure if they have not already done so. However, because of their in-depth treatment of the subject, Mr. Kuzych was inspired to write a short article of his own, the first part of which appeared in the 1989 *UKRAINIAN PHILATELIST*, vol. 36, no 1 at page 19. He has graciously consented to let us reprint the first part of that article which deals mainly with the Church of the Resurrection at Jasina).

My interest in the subject of Ukrainian wooden churches in philately was first perked by a survey-article in *Yamshchik* (*The Post Rider*) No.22 (June 1988) pp. 66-70 authored by Andrew Cronin. In his survey (the title of which I borrowed for this article) Mr. Cronin describes the philatelic material known to him which consists of issues depicting structures in Carpatho-Ukraine. However, fellow UPNS member Andrij Solczanyk and I have been able to come up with a great deal more material and we believe the following listing is fairly comprehensive.

In describing the items displaying churches in Carpatho-Ukraine, I have drawn heavily on Mr. Cronin's article both for text and illustrations. For subsequent postal releases, particularly those of

Bid for your choice in Tribuna's May Auction Catalog

Figure 2 A.C.

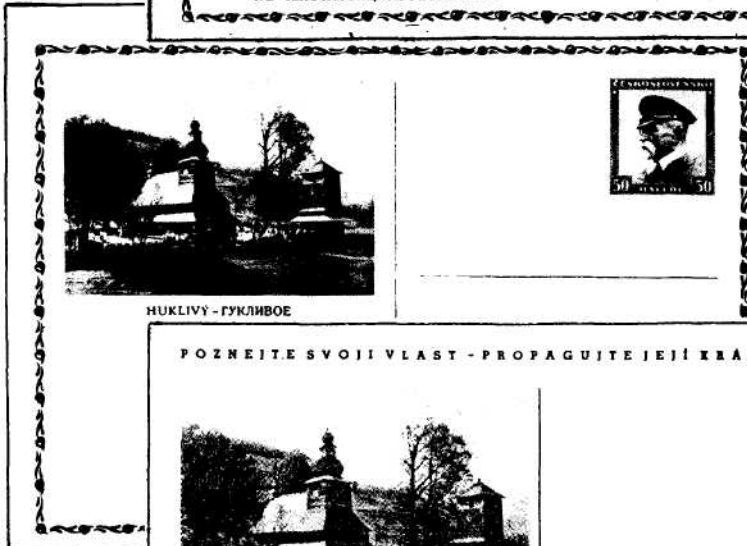
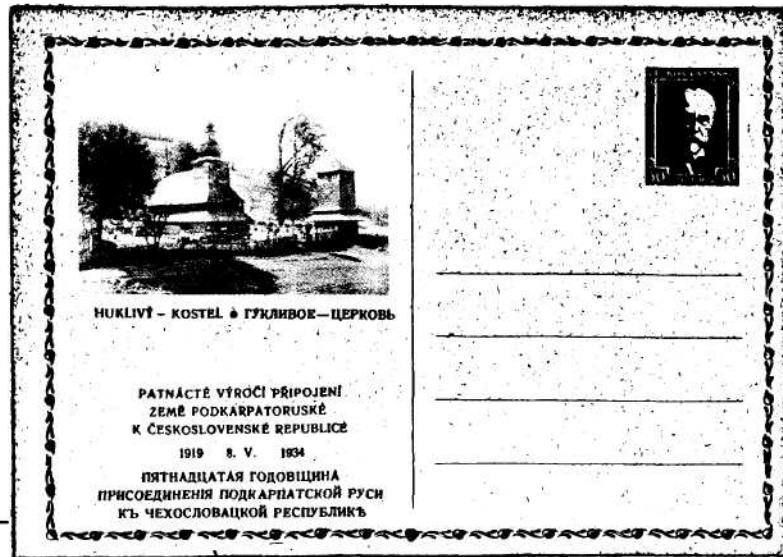
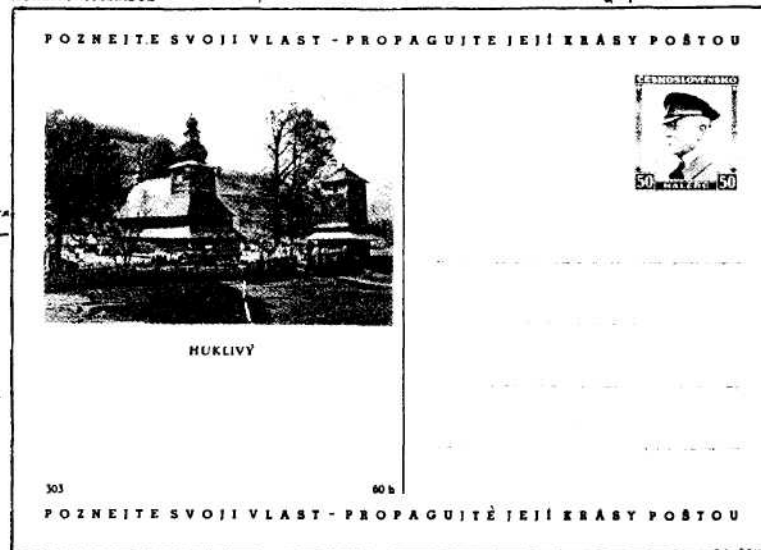


Figure 3 A.C.

Figure 4 A.C.



Poland and the USSR, I hereby acknowledge my debt to Mr. Solczanyk who kindly sent me copies of pages from his award-winning exhibit "Christianity in Ukraine." An A.C. designation after a figure number indicates the illustration is from Mr. Cronin's article while an A.S. signifies that the object is from Mr. Solczanyk's collection.

Wooden churches in Ukraine deserve particular attention because of their beautiful contours, proportions, and functionality. The

oldest preserved churches (15th - 17th centuries) are mostly in the Carpathian Mountains, particularly in the Boiko region, but are also found in different styles as far east as Cherkaskyi Byshkyn in Kharkiv Province. All of these structures are marvels of folk architecture. Although some of these churches have now been declared "architectural monuments" and are under state protection, many others have been permanently closed to worshippers or have fallen into disrepair.

A good portion of the early philatelic material concerning this theme was issued by pre-WWII Czechoslovakia and features churches in Carpatho-Ukraine.

(a) The 60-haléřů value in vermilion of the set issued on 22 October 1928 for the 10th anniversary of the Republic, shows

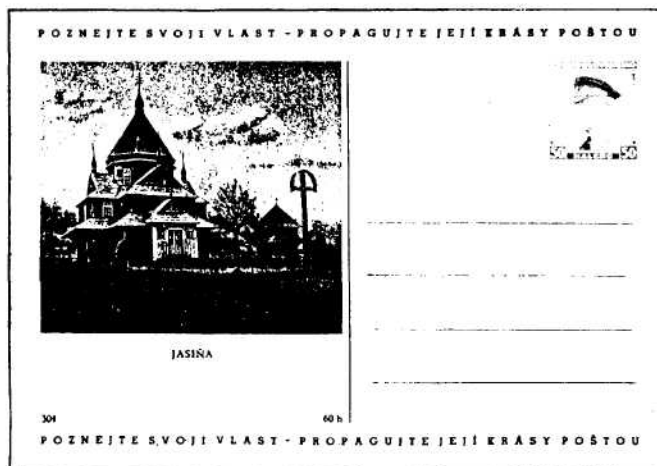


Fig. 5 A.C.

the Church of the Resurrection (built 1824) and its bell tower at Yasinia (note the plate number in Figure 1). The die was engraved by Prof. Karel Seizinger and die proofs exist in various colors.



Fig. 6 A.C.

(b) The Czechoslovak Posts issued a series of 8 stamped cards of 1 June 1934, inscribed in Czech and Russian, to commemorate the incorporation of Sudcarpathian Rus' (Carpatho-Ukraine) into the Republic, 8 May 1919-1934. One of these cards shows the wooden Church

of the Holy Ghost (built in the 1700s) and adjacent bell tower at Huklivy, Volovets' Region. There were only 20,000 complete sets printed of these cards on two types of paper stock and they are therefore rare (Figure 2). The cards were beautifully produced by photogravure in dark green.

(c) This same card for Huklivy was reissued on 11 July 1936 with a new stamp printed and just the name HUKLIVY-GUKLIVOE in Czech and Russian (Figure 3); it is rare.

(d) The same scene was repeated on 28 May 1937 as card No. 303 in a tourist propaganda series

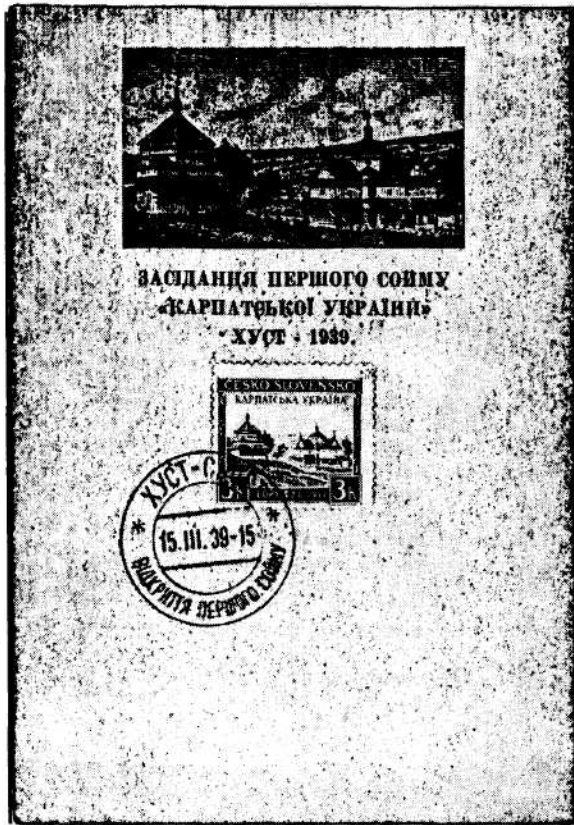


Fig. 7 A.C.

prepare for the opening of parliament at 3 p.m. The stamp had validity until 4:30 p.m. the next day when the Hungarian army occupied the post office in Khust and its Czech postmaster, Mr. Pisek, was killed. Two examples of this stamp's usage are shown in Figures 7 and 8. The card in Figure 7 has an illustration matching that on the stamp; the registered cover No. 1384 (Figure 8) was personally prepared in Khust by the well-known Ukrainian philatelist Eugene Vyrovj. Mr. Vyrovj tragically committed suicide in 1945 after the liberation of Prague. The stamp had no validity in the Czech lands but usages are known there by oversight during the Protectorate Period, which began on 15 March 1939. A printer named Kominek in Dolany, near Olomouc in Moravia, sold 200 copies of a bogus souvenir sheet of this stamp in March 1939 before being arrested by the



with the slogan: GET ACQUAINTED WITH YOUR COUNTRY-PUBLICIZE ITS BEAUTIES THROUGH THE MAILS, in Czech and Slovak (Figure 4). Also a rare item.

(e) No. 304 in this same series shows the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul (18th century) and its bell tower at Yasinia-Plytovate (Figure 5); it is rare. All the cards in (c), (d), and (e) were beautifully printed in dark green by photogravure; the last two were sold for 60 haléřů each.

(f) We now come to the famous 3 k. stamp in blue, the die for which was modified from that of the 60 h. stamps of 1928. The issue shows the Resurrection Church and bell tower at Jasina and additional Ukrainian inscriptions CARPATHO-UKRAINE and FIRST PARLIAMENT 2. III 1939. There were 900,000 copies printed from two electros "1" and "1A," both with a vertical row of 16 stamps at far left, followed by 6 vertical rows of 14 stamps, six blank coupons at top, five blank coupons at bottom right. The stamp went on sale at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, 15 March so as to pre-



Jan
Karel Kasal,
FRÝDEK
Zamek

Fig. 8 A.C.



Fig. 9 A.C.

Protectorate police.

(g) The next item to be considered is part of a rare, unissued set of five stamps for the General-government designed by Prof. E. Puchinger and engraved by Prof. Karel Seizinger. It was printed in Vienna in 1944 and show scenes from "Distrikt Galizien," i.e. Western Ukraine, which then formed part of the General-government under German occupation. The 40-groszy value in blue along with a green proof in Russian, both recess-printed, show the 18th century wooden Church of St. Demetrius in the village of Tatariv, Nadvirna District, Ivano-Frankivs'ke Province.

UMĚNÍ A ZNÁMKA – ART AND THE POSTAGE STAMP ALBRECHT DÜRER - MAY 21, 1471 TO APRIL 6, 1528

by Gerald M. van Zanten



Collectors of topicals such as Art on Stamps are indeed fortunate. Each year since 1966, the Czechoslovak postal authorities have treated those collectors to many sets of stamps depicting the works of various artists. Among them were two reproductions of works by Albrecht Dürer. Thereafter more stamps and even cachets included works by this prolific giant among art painters.

Albrecht Dürer was born on May 21, 1471 in the then-prospering city of Nürnberg (Nuremberg). In those days, the city had some 20,000 inhabitants and boasted thriving textile and mining industries. Today the city has a population of approximately 468,000.

Dürer's father was a goldsmith and, as many tradesmen of his time, was trained in the Netherlands. The name Dürer came from a small town in Hungary called ATJAS. It appears to have some connection with the Hungarian word for "door"; hence "Tur" or "Dür" in German. This accounts for the family name and explains the inclusion of a door in the artist's coat-of-arms.

Although credited with many paintings, some of them outstanding masterpieces, Dürer actually had no ties with the Czech people. Therefore only those paintings have been illustrated on Czechoslovak stamps up to this point which at some-time or another found their way to Czechoslovakia and were exhibited in that country. The following are included in that group:

1484: The earliest work by Dürer in Czechoslovak philately appears on a first-day cover for the 1968 issue of the "Feast of the Rose Garlands". It is a self-portrait done at the tender age of 13. In later years, he inscribed the original with this text: "This I drew of myself in front of a mirror in 1484 when I was still a child. -Albrecht Dürer." It is also one of the earliest self-portraits in the history of art. (see fig. 1).

The portrait was done in silver-point, a drawing technique popular especially in the 15th and 16th centuries in which an instrument with a silver wire tip was used on specially prepared paper. The original of this work measures 275 x 196 mm., is dated 1484 and hangs in the Albertina



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Museum in Vienna.

1498: Another self-portrait is seen on the cachet of the 1971 first-day cover for the 2.40 Kčs. value of the Art on Stamps series for that year (see fig. 2).

The reproduction of the cover omits by design or otherwise the inscription, the artist's monogram and the date "1498". The oil-on-wood measures 52 x 41 cm. The original hangs in the Museo del Prado in Madrid, Spain. Dürer was obviously proud of his appearance - he seems to be elegantly dressed

and in the height of current fashion. He fancied himself as a cultured gentleman rather than a humble artisan which had been the traditional status of artists in that day. The original was presented by the city of Nuremberg to Charles I of England through the Earl of Arundel in 1636 and went to Spain not long afterwards.

1505: "The Great House", painted that year, appears on a stamp of 1.80 Kčs. value which was issued as part of a set in 1969 titled "Riding". This particular work was one of two engravings executed by Dürer in 1505; the other was called "The Little Horse". The copper engraving measures 167 x 119 mm. The original hangs in the National Gallery in Prague. It derives from the early period of Dürer's engravings when he produced a number of outstanding allegorical as well as mythological canvasses with deep philosophical allusions (see fig. 3).

1506: "Das Rosenkranzfest" (The Feast of the Rose Garlands, or Ruženčová Slavnost). This painting is perhaps Dürer's most important work. The original, measuring 162 x 194.5 cm., now hangs in the Prague National Gallery. Copies are also exhibited in Vienna and at Hampton Court. Although the work has been the subject of several previous postage stamps issued by the Czechoslovak postal authorities, the souvenir sheet issued in 1989 showed the complete work for the first time (see fig. 4). "Poklady Národní Galerie v Praze" (Treasures of the National Art Gallery in Prague) is inscribed across the top. The Gallery's logo appears in red in the upper right corner. Below the complete work itself are two 10 Kčs. stamps showing different character details of the whole. The one on the left is the central portion of the painting and is a closer view of the Virgin and child which appeared on a similar 5 Kčs. stamp in 1968 (see fig. 1).



Fig. 3

The original work underwent major repairs in the 19th century. It is said that the faces of the Virgin and child are somewhat uncharacteristic of Dürer in that they are now unlike earlier copies of the picture. It was in the early 17th century that the work went from Venice to the Royal collection in Prague. Not being a totally modest individual, Dürer has been credited with the remark that "there is no better Madonna picture in the land than mine."

In addition to the focal subject in the center, there are some familiar figures to be recognized. For example, there is St. Dominic in the black habit just left of the Madonna; Pope Julius II can be seen in the left foreground; the Madonna herself is seen placing a rose garland on the head of Emperor Maximilian I in the right foreground. As for the artist, look closely and you will see Dürer leaning against the tree on the right holding a scroll with the Latin inscription: "Exegit Quinquemestri Spatio Albertus Durer Germanus MDV (I)" with the usual monogram.

With the two stamps on the souvenir sheet came two first-day covers. Though not illustrated here, the cachet bears another work by Dürer in a different color for each stamp. Unfortunately, the title and year of the drawing are not stated and its identity eludes the writer. However, in reexamining fig. 2, please note that the 2.40 Kčs. stamp is actually the upper right corner of the complete painting on

the souvenir sheet and on it, the artist is more clearly discernible.

1514: In the Art series of 1979, a 5 kčs. stamp shows a 1514 copper engraving of a "Dancing Peasant Couple". The original is housed in the National Gallery in Prague. Scenes like this one were frequently incorporated in religious and mythological pictures, thus giving us a glimpse of life in those early days (see Fig. 5). The cachet shows Dürer's concept of "The Bagpiper" completed that same year, 1514. The picture of the Dancing Peasants measures 11.8 x 7.5 cm.

As with France and a few other countries, stamps showing works of art have become a trademark of Czechoslovak philately. Czech artists of the classical and modern periods have, of course, been featured on many stamps and that is the way it should be. But the works of non-Czech artists like Albrecht Dürer certainly deserve their place in philately. As long as there is a plausible connection between the paintings themselves and the country issuing their reproduction on stamps, justification for their existence has been affirmed. Let us hope Czechoslovakia will continue its Art series and will show more works by outstanding artists like Albrecht Dürer.



Fig. 4

(Editor's Note: In conjunction with this article, it is noteworthy that on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of postal services in Europe, West Germany issued a special first-day cancellation showing a portrait of Maximilian I done by Albrecht Dürer and showing the dates "1490-1990".

However, the beginnings of postal services in the Czech lands were not initiated until 1526 and then only in connection with the election of Ferdinand I).

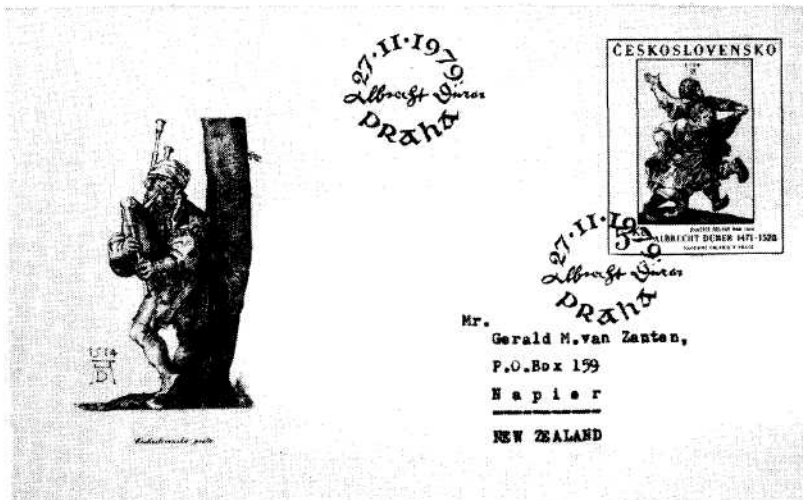


Fig. 5

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