



# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

(USPS 808300)

Official Monthly Journal of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately, Inc.

Silver Award Interphil '76 - Silver Award Capex '78 - Silver-Bronze Praga '78 - Praga '88

A. P. S. Unit 18

ISSN: 0526-5843

Vol. 53

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1991

No. 1, Whole No. 505

### IT'S THAT 'S TIME AGAIN!

HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES? If not, please do so at once. It takes money to operate a Society like ours. The only steady source of revenue the S.C.P. has is the dues you pay each year. Those dues finance all its programs and provide you with all the benefits listed on page 2.

The centerfold contains the self-addressed envelope which was inadvertently omitted from the December issue. Please enclose your dues check in it and mail it to our Treasurer as soon as possible.

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### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

From time to time, the SPECIALIST received inquiries from both current members and prospective members for a listing of available Society benefits. Although these benefits have often been mentioned separately in individual issues, we are now listing a complete summary of what is accessible through the Society to our members:

1. A sales and exchange circuit is operated by Jack Benchik who has just become the circuit manager last month. (see December 1990 SPECIALIST, page 3). The circuit itself has been fully written up in the August/September 1989 SPECIALISTS, page 8. For complete details, contact Jack Benchik, P.O. Box 555, Notre Dame, Ind. 46556.
2. A book sales division is run by Edwin Lehecka. Ads listing philatelic books for sale appear regularly in the SPECIALIST. For further information, contact Ed Lehecka, 217 Hazel Ave., Westfield, NJ 07090.
3. A Society library is housed with Richard Palaschak, librarian. A complete write-up including contents of the library last appeared in the June 1989 SPECIALIST, page 10. For inquiries on borrowing books or making book donations, contact Dick Palaschak, 113 Joyes Lane, Dover, NJ 07801.
4. An expertization committee operates under the direction of Edwin Lehecka. Depending on the nature or substance of the item to be expertized, he will direct you to the appropriate source for expertization. Please contact Ed Lehecka at 217 Hazel Ave., Westfield, NJ 07090.
5. Stamp auctions are currently conducted through Tribuna Stamp Co., in Chicago and ads announcing forthcoming auctions appear regularly in the SPECIALIST. For catalogs and bid forms or for information on submission of philatelic material for future auctions, contact Charles Chesloe, 8300 South Wolf Road, Willow Springs, Ill. 60480.
6. THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST is the official bi-monthly publication of the Society. For inquiries on obtaining back issues, contributing original articles of related significance, translating articles from Czech to English, advertising rates and bound copies, contact Mirko Vondra, editor, 1511 Clearview Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601.

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(USPS 808300)

Official Journal of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately, Inc.

A.P.S. Unit 18

Vol. 53

January /February 1991

No. 1, Whole No. 505

Published bi-monthly - \$18.00 per year

Second Class Postage Paid at Lancaster, PA 17604

and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST, 1511 Clearview Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601

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## POSTAL SERVICE AND MARKINGS OF THE PROTECTORATE GOVERNMENT MILITIA

*by Henry Hahn*

*NOTE: The author is indebted for much of the factual information and for many of the illustrations to Dr. M. Vostatek, noted military postal historian of Pardubice, Czechoslovakia. Additional sources include the journals FILATELIE and INFORMACE (published for members of the East-Bohemian Commission for Postal History, Dr. M. Vostatek, Ed). Additional sources include Ing. Petr Blaha of Brno, Prof. J. Remeš of Telč and others.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

The occupation of the Sudetenland in October of 1938 deprived Czechoslovakia's defense forces of the majority of its military and natural defenses. When Hitler marched into what remained of the Czechoslovak Republic on March 15, 1939, Czechoslovakia's defense forces were dissolved. The process of liquidation was administered by an organization which earlier reported to the Czechoslovak Ministry of Defense. The task of liquidation was completed in the summer of 1939.

Jobs for some Army career officers and enlisted men were found in other branches of the Protectorate Government, including what was to become of the Protectorate Government Militia. While assignments to the Militia were made without specific consent of the assigned, those so assigned were not forced to serve. Thus, service was considered voluntary.

Some members of the Czechoslovak Armed Services escaped through Poland or by air to eventually fight alongside Allied Armies to regain Czechoslovakia's independence. Others found their way into internal resistance movements. Their high moral fiber and heroism have been well documented.

During the first tragic year of occupation, 1939, the German Government gave permission to the Government of the Protectorate to organize an armed military unit, whose Commander in Chief was to be the then President of the Republic, Dr. Emil Hacha. Dr. Hacha had succeeded Dr. Eduard Benes who had resigned following the sell-out of Czechoslovakia at Munich. The military Commander of the Militia, with the rank of General Inspector, was a former Czechoslovak General by the name of Jaroslav Eminger who, at the time of the occupation, was in command of the 3rd Czechoslovak Mobile Division serving in southern Slovakia. After WWII, he served as porter at Prague's railroad station.

The Militia was armed primarily with obsolete Austrian Manlicher vz. 95 rifles. No heavy or automatic weapons were issued. Officers were issued pistols. Their uniforms were those of the former Czechoslovak Army, except that rank designations now appeared on the collar rather than shoulder patch. The rank designations were mounted against a yellow background, which had previously been used to identify cavalry. Fig. 1 shows a group of soldiers from the 6th Battalion in front of the Hospital in Josefov. Three stars on their lapels indicates the rank of sergeant.

It appears that the Government Militia, or Vládní Vojsko, was composed of career officers and professional soldiers, though it may be argued it was also a volunteer force, a fact that counted in their assessment at war's end.

By law, the Militia was to serve only within the boundaries of the Protectorate. However, as the tide of war began to change in the direction of an Allied victory, this law was broken. Whether the Germans feared even this puny force on Protectorate soil or for whatever reason, the Militia was transferred to Italy despite formal protest by the Inspector General.

In Italy, the Militia performed guard duty and other non-combat duty. It was eventually disarmed by the Germans. At war's end, some officers and troops escaped to Switzerland, some cooperated with Italian partisan units, while those that remained were eventually incorporated into the post-war Czechoslovak Army for repatriation.

### II ORGANIZATION

The entire Military numbered about 7,000 officers and men, divided into 12 Battalions of about 500 men each. Each Battalion was subdivided into 4 Squads: 1. Infantry and Rifle, 2. Cyclists, 3. Cavalry, and 4. Ordnance, Communications and Technical, including Band.



Fig. 1

The Militia's Headquarters, i.e. the General Inspectorate, was initially located in Prague. Inspectorates were located in Prague, Brno and Hradec Králové.

Listed below are the names and locations of the twelve Battalions, the three Inspectorates and the locations of the Militia's fieldposts:

Table I—LOCATION OF BATTALIONS WITHIN THE PROTECTORATE

<u>Bn. #</u>	<u>Headquarters</u>	<u>Troop Locations</u>
1	Prague-Smichov	
2	Rakovník	Kralovice
3	Pisek	Týn nad Vltavou
4	Benešov, later Čáslav	
5	Kutná Hora	Čáslav
6	Hradec Králové	
7	Josefov	
8	Jicin	Turnov
9	Vysoké Mýto	
10	Bučovice	Bženeč
11	Kostelec nad Orlicí	Rychnov nad Kněžnou
12	Lipník nad Bečvou	

Upon orders dated May 8, 1944, the entire Militia with exception of the 1st Battalion was transferred to Italy. Actual departure took place between May 23rd and May 25th via Pilsen, Munich, Innsbruck, Brenner, Trident and Verona. The main body of the Militia arrived between May 27th and 29th, though small detachments arrived earlier to secure quarters. The General Inspectorate was initially located in Verona, but transferred to Chiari by July 20th, 1944. The General Inspectorate was assigned Field Post numbers 58 478 and 39 191.

Table II—LOCATIONS AND FIELD POST OF MILITIA UNITS IN ITALY

<u>Inspect.</u>	<u>Bn. #</u>	<u>Des.</u>	<u>Loc. May '44</u>	<u>Loc. July '44</u>	<u>FP #</u>
I		ZI I	Bologna	Varese	47 006
	2	ZI I	Cremona	Vincenza-Udine	27 716
	3	ZI I	Cremona	Piacenze-Parma	47 248
	4	ZI I	Bologna	Ostiglia-Cremona	32 224
	5	ZI I	Bologna	Parma-Bologna	?
II		ZI II	Varese	Rovigo	16 639
	6	ZI II	Cremona	Milano (temp)	39 191
	7	ZI II	Alba	Aosta	?
	8	ZI II	Fossano	Cirie	22 182
III		ZI III	Torino	Bologna	?
	9	ZI III	Savigliano	Verona-Brenero	47 953
	10	ZI III	Aosta	?	37 787
	11	ZI III	Fossano	Traviglio-Brescia	17 183
	12	ZI III	Savigliano	Traino di Sesto Cal	?

Battalion #1 was not transferred to Italy, but remained in Prague as Hradčany's Palace guard. The above table, particularly locations after May 1944 are incomplete, particularly since work locations changed frequently. Field post numbers were generally followed by a dash and letters "A" through "E", indicating the Squad. Field post numbers 07 144, 29 019, 27 710, 32 224 and 47 953 are known to have been used but their assignments and locations are still undetermined.

### III. POSTAL SERVICES AND MARKINGS

The postal services available to the Militia may be divided into two basic groups: those available in the Protectorate prior to transfer of the Militia to Italy (except for the 1st Battalion,) the "Hrad" or Hradčany Guard (which was never transferred,) and postal services to and from Italy. The postal services available to the Militia while stationed in the Protectorate were similar to those available to non-military departments of the Protectorate Government.

Official mail required the use of Protectorate Service Stamp issues. An example of such mail is shown in Fig. 2. This is a postal money order, franked with a Protectorate 4K Service Stamp, postmarked in JITSCHIN/JIČIN on March 14, 1942. The full unit marking reads VLÁDNI VOJSKO, PRAPOR 8, HOSPODÁŘSKÁ SPRÁVA (Government Militia, 8th Battalion, Supply Administration).

Civilian mail to members of the Militia required regular Protectorate franking, as did mail originating with the Militia addressed to civilians. The Militia

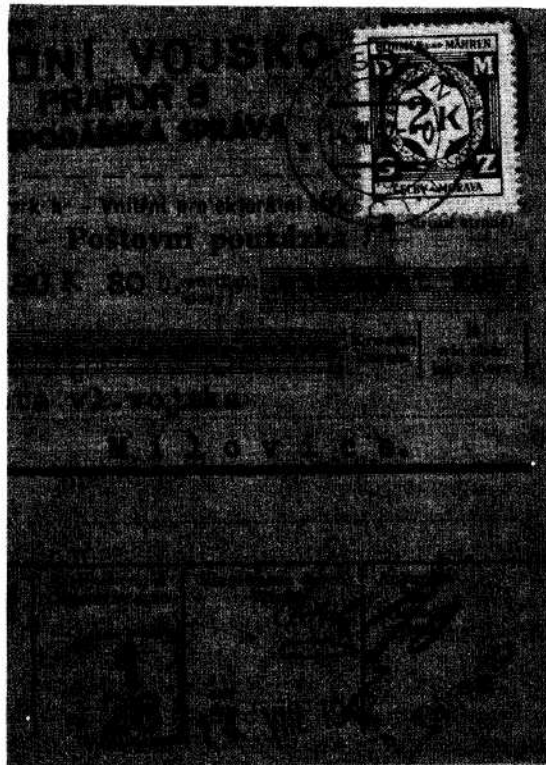


Fig. 2

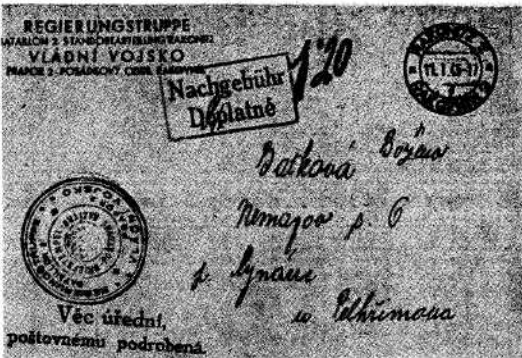


Fig. 3

had no German FELDPOST (Fieldpost) privileges, nor could it use the German DIENSPOST (Frank-free Service Mail) operating in the Protectorate. Even official Militia mail originating from Militia Commands addressed to civilians required postage to be paid to the addressee. An interesting example of such mail is shown in Fig. 3. Though the letter contained a printed message it was sent by First Class mail with single rate (1.20K) Postage Due was paid by the recipient. The letter was posted at RAKONITZ 2 (Rakovník 2), by a sender from Battalion 2, Detachment at RAKONICE (see Table I) toward the end of the war

on January 11, 1945 when the bulk of Battalion 2 was located in Italy in the Vicenza—Udine sector. The contents of the printed form inside the letter gives insight as to the state of the Militia at that time.

The form reads:

“Members of the Militia stationed in Italy are trying to get home by every possible means. They are aided by members of their families who try to secure for them telegrams announcing sudden illnesses of next of kin, etc., which are used to secure leave. Doctors are badgered to provide appropriate certifications. All such requests are subject to official investigation and all that is not correct must surface. In many cases, the incorrect facts were officially proven. In certain serious cases, leave is granted, which is of great benefit to the troops. It is therefore unacceptable and at the same time counter to the camaraderie of our troops to take unfair advantage of this opportunity.”

“If the present situation does not improve, our superiors will discontinue the practice of granting such leave altogether. Thus those who are in true need to be granted leave for good cause will suffer.”

“Government Militia, Battalion 2, Detachment at RAKONICE, January 1, 1945.”

The cover shows the typical round unit marking of the 2nd Battalion. This marking is similar to unit markings of other Battalions, differing in size and minor details. The unit markings for letter mail and used as postmarks of Battalion 2 and Battalion 12 are shown in Fig. 4.

Another example of mail illustrating the virtually unlimited services available to the Militia within the Protectorate is illustrated in Fig. 5. It a Registered Return Receipt for Court Mail signed for by the addressee, A. Cinka, Sergeant in the 11th Battalion of the Militia. The form is clearly an old one, using the Czech language text ahead of the German. It is dated on February 25, 1943 and addressed to the Sergeant at the town of RYCHOV nad KNĚŽNOU which, according to Table I, was one of the Troop locations of the 11th Battalion.

An example of official mail sent by a Militia warehouse to what was probably a supplier is illustrated in Fig. 6. The return address rubber stamp and round unit marking indicate the originator as the Militia Military Warehouse in JOSEFSTADT/JOSEFOV. The recipient, unlike the letter sent to a soldier's family, bears double rate postage due, i.e. 2.40K, paid with regular Protectorate Postage Due adhesives,



Fig. 4

postmarked at the recipient's destination, BOSKOWITZ/BOSKOVICE, April 10, 1942.

Prior to its transfer to Italy, the Militia did not enjoy franking privilege, though mail was essentially unrestricted. Private, commercial, or unofficial mail for the most part bears no special postal or even unit markings to identify it as Militia mail.

Following departure of the Militia to Italy late in May, a new era of postal service came into being. This era is principally marked by the availability of the German Field Post to the Militia or other frank-free letter and parcel service, as well as by restrictions in postal communication.

An early card from Italy, sent the first week following arrival of the bulk of the Militia is shown in Fig. 7. The text of the message carefully circumvents saying that the soldier is in Italy—though he mentions the language problem, very hot weather, lush vegetation, etc., making it relatively easy to guess the location. The card bears the regular German Field Post cancel, dated June 3, 1944. The return address indicates F.P. 56 264 whose location is yet unidentified though, based on later correspondence, the writer is a member of the 9th Battalion, 4th Troop which in early June of 1944 was located in Savigliano. It is interesting to note that the FP card was originally imprinted on a cardboard box by the firm "KNACKE-WERKE" of BURG being MAGDEBURG, with instructions to the soldier to remove carefully for use as a fieldpostcard. The card, incidentally, tends to deny the belief by some collectors of Militia mail that there was no fieldpost communication in the early period following its arrival in Italy.

Numerous German F.P. card formats were available to the Militia, only some of which are shown in Fig.'s 8 through 11. In a card mailed by the same soldier later in June (Fig. 8), the text, just in case of any doubt where the soldier is writing from, mentions good wine and plenty of sunshine. The card shows that it was censored (*geprüft*) and bears the regular German F.P. cancel. However, the return address tends to support the belief that the F.P. did not operate regularly for individuals, or that it only carried soldiers' mail in bulk. The return address reads: Pfc. of the Government Militia, Mir. Pospichal, 9th Batt., 4th Troop, via General Inspectorate of Gov't Militia, Prague XIX/47, Kleistova (Street) 99. This return address is crossed out in

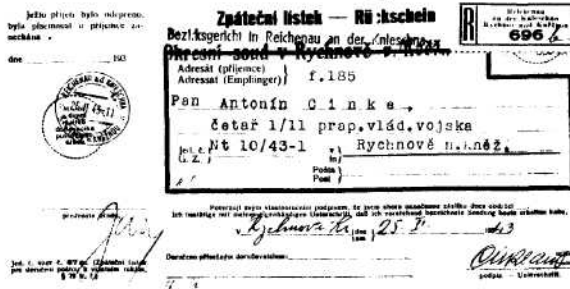


Fig. 5

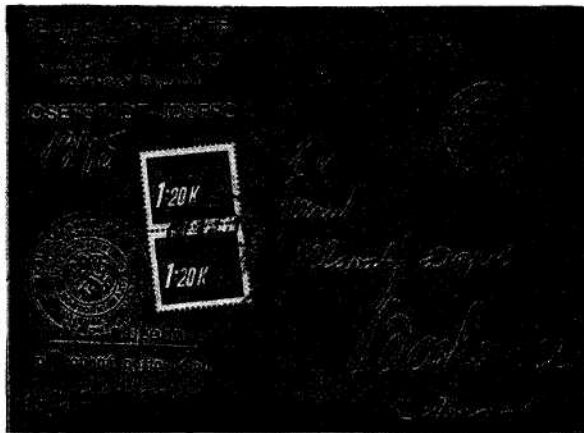


Fig. 6

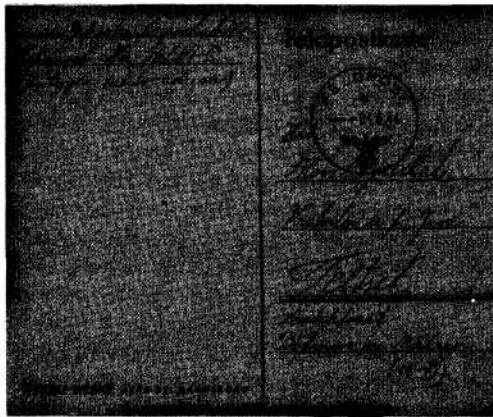


Fig. 7

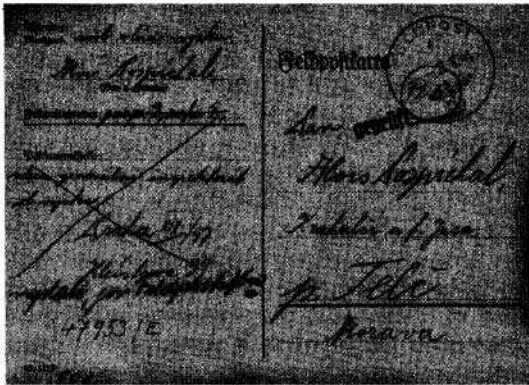


Fig. 8



Fig. 9

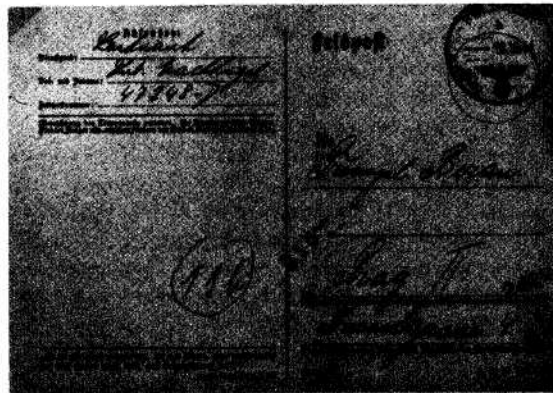


Fig. 10

red crayon and noted that the return address should only cite the Fieldpost number 47 953/E which, according to Table II, identifies this field post as serving the 9th Battalion, located at that time in Savigliano and from July on in the Verona—Brennero sector. Transfer of mail through the General Inspectorate in Prague was a temporary measure followed by normal delivery of mail to Militia personnel by the German Field-post. Whether the temporary service via the General Inspectorate was by bulk F.P. or by Militia courier is not known.

By September of 1944, regular German F.P. operated with some regularity and Militia troops of the 9th Battalion were issued illustrated cards as shown in Fig. 9. The card still shows the sender's return address at F.P. 47 953, though the F.P. number is now followed by the letter "D", indicating that he may now be assigned to a different Squad.

A somewhat different F.P. card format is shown in Fig. 10. This card contains a morale-building quotation (bottom left) which reads "... It is wholly unimportant whether we live, but it is essential that our people live, that Germany lives (Adolf Hitler, Sept. 1, 1939)." The date of this quotation, incidentally, coincides with Hitler's attack on Poland. The sender of this card is a Lieutenant at F.P. 47 248 which, according to Table II, is assigned to the 3rd Battalion by then located in the Piacenza—Parma sector.

Militia troops were not limited to the use of Field Postcards, but could also writer letters as evidenced by the Fieldpost Letter shown in Fig. 11. This letter, posted on November 22, 1944, violates all pretense of secrecy of location by displaying the watermark "VIA AEREA" in the upper left. The letter does not appear to be censored.

By 1945, the Germans were in full retreat and the Militia underwent numer-

ous changes, depending upon location of the individual units. Despite propaganda spread earlier by the Germans that Militia troops were uneducated ruffians and even rapists, much of the Italian population recalled the Czech Legion in Italy in WWII, its heroism at Dos Altos and its exemplary conduct and discipline. Stupidly, the Germans located the Militia in areas where WWII Czechs were remembered. In 1945, Militia troops were ordered to write addresses in German, this order was never fully obeyed and violated totally by 1945. A sense of taunting humor displayed by the troops is evident from the 1945



fieldpost card shown in Fig. 12. The address portion begins with an imprinted "A" (German "To"). The Czechs simply preceded it by adding "P", so that now the address read "Pan" (Mr. in Czech). The illustrated card originates from F.P. 22 182, assigned to the 8th Battalion, located at Cirie. Most cards addressed to the Protectorate include the "Zip" code 11b, which was assigned to the Protectorate.

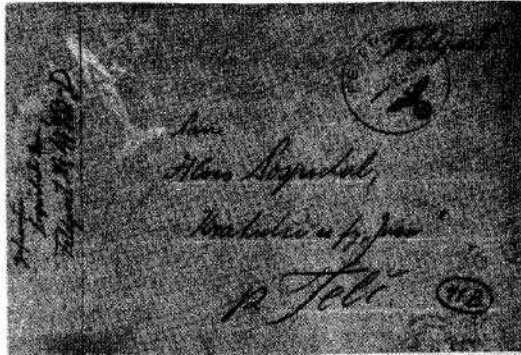


Fig. 11

The sending of parcels by Militia troops was restricted to one per month, duty free, but nevertheless permitted. Corresponding markings are illustrated in Fig. 13. The time period during which these mailings took place is not known, but appears to be late in the campaign.

Throughout the campaign, but particularly as F.P. services broke down, Militiamen made use of travelers to occupied Austria where they posted letters. Other letters mailed through the regular Italian civilian mail are also known to have reached their destination in the Protectorate.



Fig. 12

A letter sent by a Militiaman to his family by having it posted in VILLACH, Austria is shown in Fig. 14. The letter is regularly franked with the 12 pf. Hitler adhesive, zip coded for the Protectorate (11b) and displays the Italian "POSTA AEREA" (AIR MAIL) marking, though it of course went by surface mail.

An example of Militia mail sent via Italian railroad service in May, 1944 is shown in Fig. 15. German censorship of mail, including civilian mail, was relatively common.

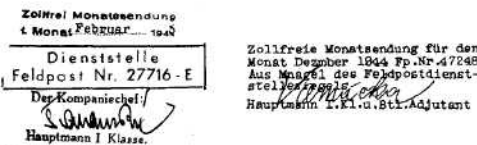


Fig. 13

The end of the Militia which by the spring of 1945 was largely disarmed by its German masters, came in various ways. Some troops were said to have joined the Italian partisans, others made their way over the Alps into Switzerland, while the bulk reported to post-war Czechoslovak Military authorities in Italy for repatriation.

Based on the cover shown in Fig. 16, the General Inspectorate of the Militia in Prague became the "Former Militia Liquidation Unit". The unit's postage was "Poštovně pausalovano" (paid in bulk), as a result of which the cover bears no franking. The postmark, bearing the date July 13, 1945, is the typical post-WWII "nationalized" postmark with the German "PRAG" removed.

Repatriation of the Militia was a lengthy process, with some of the troops having to wait more than a year. This is illustrated by a card sent by a member of the Czechoslovak Military Transport Group in Fig. 17, postmarked in TRIESTE on May 9, 1946. The postage paid by the recipient and postmarked in ČESKÉ BUDĚJOVICE (1.20 Kčs) represents the regular letter rate paying postage from the original



## MAIL FROM THE 22ND CZECHOSLOVAK REGIMENT

by Petr Reiniš

Translated by Mrs. Frances Svoboda

Not often can a collector come across material documenting postal contacts with a member of the 22nd Czechoslovak Regiment from the period of the First World War. What correspondence does survive gives us an idea of the kind of postal communications and the manner of sending mail during the 1918-1919 era.

After the issuance of the Presidential decree in France in December 1917, it was possible to create an independent Czechoslovak Army politically under the Czechoslovak Council in Paris, but militarily under the French Army. In fact, the 21st Czechoslovak Regiment was formed during January 1918 and then, in May, the 22nd Regiment came into being. The numbering of Czechoslovak Regiments was done pursuant to agreement with all involved Armies. The regiments comprised former prisoners of war in Russia (two transports had left Russia for France), Czechoslovak volunteers from the Siberian Army and volunteers from the United States.

Mail from this period sent by the soldiers of the 22nd Regiment to parents and other relatives in the U.S. was marked with the letters "F.M." (Franchise Militaire) in the upper right-hand corner and by daily imprint cancels of the different postoffices. Also present are oval imprints with the text "Ouvert par l'autorite militaire" and a number in the center together with a military post registration label, "Controle Postal Militaire". Postal items were sent from Tresoretta and later from the region around Terron and Vuziers, where fighting was still going on until October 30, 1918. Each envelope had a recipient address, the name of the sender and also the address: "National Postal Conseil, 34 rue Bonaparte, Paris."

In January 1919, the regiments returned to their homeland and for the first time we encounter letters with a designation of the specific region. Mail was cancelled with a large round imprint bearing a Czech-French text "22 Česko-Slovácký Pluk, Velitel Praporu, 1. Prapor" (22nd Czechoslovak Regiment, Company Commander, 1st Company). (see fig. 1) Letters were directed through France, marked by a censor, and most have the number "17" imprinted in the upper right-hand corner. In the course of the following months, censorship was suspended and the mail to the U.S. went through Paris. A unique piece (not shown here) is a letter sent through the assistance of the Czechoslovak Consulate General, 154 Nassau St., New York, in May 1919. It was sent from Prague by courier post, having the imprint of the 22nd Regiment across which the Consulate pasted a three cent U.S. stamp. Having been given the identification of the Consulate General and then passed to the postal authorities, the letter was delivered to the addressee.

This is the route most such letters took until the end of August 1919. A daily imprint cancel of different Paris postoffices (eg. "Paris XII Crozatier") was placed next to the stamp of the 22nd Regiment (see fig. 1). Also through assistance of the YMCA, it was possible for senders to make contact with their



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



Fig. 3

homes. An example of such mail shows the imprint of a round cancel in blue color, the center of which contains a logo of the YMCA with the number "3" directly above it and the name "M. R. Pellissier" (the director) surrounding it. The work "Prahá" is in the upper part of the cancel which appears in the upper right-hand corner. Superimposed over it is a cancel of the Paris postoffice dated "23-8-1919". (see fig. 2). The sender is identified on the reverse side of the envelope as a member of a division of disbanded Americans, 22nd Regiment, 5th Troop, Prague-Vrřovice.

The last letter shown was sent before the sender departed from France for the U.S. It carried the cancel "Cognac, Charente, 12-9-1919". A purple imprint of a round cancel "Depot des Regiments Tcheco-Slovaques" appears with a five-pointed small star in the lower left-hand corner. Near the middle is a two-line inscription "Franchise Militaire." (see fig. 3).

The last letter shown was sent before the

HRADČANY AS PART OF POSTAL HISTORY

The fastest growing branch of philately today - especially in the U.S. - is Postal History.

Probably the most collected phase of Czechoslovak Postal History is the Hradčany issues and the study of the postal rates as they progressed during that period from late 1918 through 1920. Perhaps the

most fascinating aspect of the Hradčany issue is its use in Slovakia where postal rules were occasionally violated due to a lack of communication or because some postal clerks simply did not know those rules. This article offers a brief insight into an aspect of Postal History in Slovakia during this interesting period.

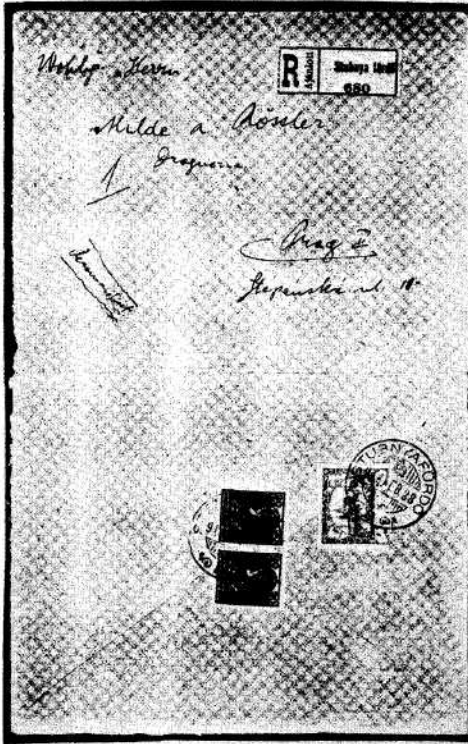


Fig. 1

Fig. 1 shows a registered cover with two 20-filler issues of King Karel and a 5 h Hradčany cancelled "Stubyna Fúrdö- 919 Feb 28" (Stubnianská Telice) with correct rate of 45 hellers - 20 hellers for the letter and 25 hellers for a registry fee.

Fig. 2. shows an express registered letter sent from "Vag Besztercze - 919 Feb 23" (Povážska Bystrica) with correct rate of 1.05 kčs. - 20 hellers



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 7

for the letter, 25 h registry fee and 60 hellers for Special Delivery.

Continuing with Hungarian postal stationary mixed with Hradčany issues, Fig. 3. illustrates a registered postal card with hand-written registration marking "R Stará Turá 718". The cancel reads "O Tura - 919 Mar. 13" (Stará Tura) and is in a very scarce blue color. The 35 h shows the 10 f. postal card rate and the 25 h. registry fee.

In fig. 4, we see a postal card sent from "Szakolcza - 919 Jul. 1" (Uherské Skalica). The 15 h. postal card rate comprises a Hungarian postal card of 8 f., two 1 h. Hradčany stamps and one 5 h. Hradčany.

Fig. 5 shows a very scarce and unlisted type of cancel from Feledince Germeská Župa and sent "919 Aug. 24 - Postaí Ugyn". The upper portion of the Hungarian cancel is illegible nor can I find that type of cancel in any of the Monografie volumes.

Fig. 6 has the new correct postcard rate of 20 h. by means of a postal card revalued form 10 to 15 filler and a 5 h. Hradčany stamp. The card was sent from "Körmöczbánya - 919 Sep. 9" (Kremnica) where the mint is located.

Fig. 7 has the correct postal rate of 20 h. even though it went to Austria. An envelope imprinted with 15 filler plus a 5 h. Hradčany stamp makes up the rate from "Divekrudno - 919 May 12" (Nitriánske Rudno).



Fig. 6



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

In fig. 8, a letter sheet with proper franking of 20 h. consisting of a 15 filler imprint on a Hungarian letter sheet and a 5 h. Hradčany stamp is shown. It was sent from "Cserne - 919 Aug. 12" (Cierne pri Čadci).

Fig. 9 is probably the most interesting and valuable of these pieces. The letter sheet is registered with the correct rate of 75 h. - 25 h. letter rate and 50 h. registry fee. It comes from Červená Skála in Slovakia. The cancels "Veresko" are interesting because the two left cancels are date-stamped "4 Okt. 19" and the right cancel is dated "5 Okt. 19". Apparently the postal clerk forgot to move the date stamp up to "5" when he

applied the first two cancels on the left.

He then noticed his mistake and moved the date up to "5" and applied the last cancel on the right. Also worthy of note is the strip of three Hradčany 15 h. stamps perforated 13 3/4 x 13 1/2. The plate positions of this strip are 73, 83 and 93 and come from Plate One. This makes the middle stamp the open scroll variety type I and the others the closed scroll variety type II. This makes for joined types on cover!

Fig. 10 shows another registered express cover with a handwritten registration. The cancel reads "Felbár - 920 Mar. 26" (Horní Bar Slovakia). The 1.40 kčs rate breakdown consists of a 30 h. letter rate, a 50 h. registry fee and a 60 h. special delivery rate.

In fig. 11, we see another unique cover with a hand-written registry marking and an unlisted cancel. The registry marking "Ajanlott" is in orange crayon and "271" is written in ink. The underlined "3" at the top of the cover and the box enclosing the registry marking are in blue crayon. The cover seems to be overfranked and is cancelled in Hungarian "Uszor Postaí Ugn - 919 Aug. 20."

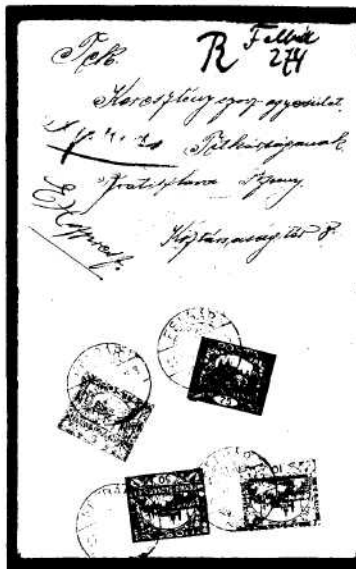


Fig. 10



Fig. 10

— Charles Chesloe

## CZECHOSLOVAK FIELD POST 1938

By Stig Asklund

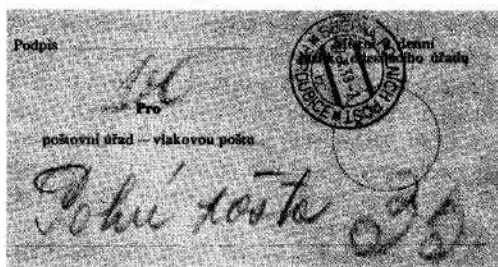
On September 23, 1938 the Czechoslovak government, forced by the political developments in central and eastern Europe, declared general mobilization.

A field post organization had for long been planned and could start functioning without delay. It had the following set-up:

1. *Ustředna polních pošt* - This was the Field Post Central Office, located at Pterov in Moravia. Three different date stamps were used, one of these indicating the location.
2. *Třídírna polní pošty* - The five Field Post Sorting Offices, using the numbers 1 to 5 in the date stamps, were located at Deutsch Brod/Německý Brod (now Havlíčkův Brod) in Bohemia, Brno and Olomouc in Moravia and Vrútky and Poprad in Slovakia.
3. *Sběrna polních pošt* - The eight or nine Field Post Collecting Offices, all of them indicating the town names in the date stamps, were located in Prague, Plzeň, Pardubice, Trenčín, Brno, Pterov, Opava, Vrútky and Košice. The status of the Opava office is unclear. It is mentioned by Novotný, but not illustrated like the other eight. Neither Vostatek nor Danesch list it.
4. *Vojenská vlaková pošta* - There were twelve Military Railway Post Offices, but only ten of these started functioning before mobilization ended. Another eight had been planned. (See illustration below)
5. *Polní pošta* - The 64 Field Post Offices, using the numbers 1 to 64 in the date stamps, were located all over the country. Date stamps usually had the text "Polní pošta" and the number, but in five cases (units 10, 22, 25, 50 and 63) the text was "Československá polní pošta".

The mobilization was in effect for 67 days. Most of the field post offices started operations from the 1st of October and were in business for only 3 to 6 weeks. Field post offices in Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine were the last to close down. The very last one was, according to Vostatek, no. 12, first located at Užhorod, later moved to Perečín, closing on the 6th of December. Novotný, however, states that the last one was no. 59 at Bratislava.

When mail had been sorted at a post office, it was bundled and forwarded to the receiving post office, using a kind of covering slip. The illustration shows a slip from Field Post Collecting Office in Pardubice, dated October 27, 1938, for mail directed to Field Post Office no. 35, located at Prague.



**References:**

- Novotný, L.: Speciální příručka pro sběratele československých známek, Praha 1970.  
 Vostatek, M.: Die tschechoslowakische Feldpost im Jahre 1938. In Forschungsberichte des Bundesarchivs Tschechoslowakei 1985.  
 Danesch, H.: Die tschechoslowakische Feldpost während der Sudetendrise 1938. In Forschungsberichte des Bundesarchivs Tschechoslowakei 1990.

## IMPORTANT CHANGES IN 1991 SCOTT CATALOG, VOL. II

*By Henry Hahn*

*Scott Catalog-bashing is as popular among collectors of Czechoslovakia as collecting itself. No wonder! This popular catalog has for years contained errors and inconsistencies with respect to its stated policies, i.e. to serve as a general rather than as a specialized catalog.*

*About a year ago, I was asked by Scott's editorial director, Richard L. Sine, to assist his staff in the complicated task of revising the Czechoslovakia portion of the 1991 edition. I was happy to comply and even happier to see nearly all my contributions incorporated.*

*Below is a copy of my letter to Mr. Sine containing last year's recommendations for critical review by SPECIALIST readers and Society members. Since the task is far from completed and I have promised to continue the work, I will appreciate comments, realizing fully that some areas are quite sensitive. I urge you to purchase the 1991 edition of Scott's, vol. II, to compare what I recommended with what was accepted.*

Dear Dick,

Below are my contributions to the Czechoslovakia section of the Scott Catalog. As I mentioned in my earlier letter, I have this year limited myself to the pre-WWII period and have concentrated on cor-

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recting some errors. Since major political and economic changes are now taking place in Czechoslovakia and the Czech crown might soon become a free (or freer) currency, this is probably not a good time to make major changes in pricing.

I realize that some of the errors in Scott have been there for so long that you will be reluctant to make the necessary changes. However, I see changes in other catalogs as new information becomes available, and by making these changes in Scott, it will become much more useful to Czecho collectors.

1. A most serious error is the listing of Slovakia #1, i.e. the overprinted Czecho #266. The overprinted stamp is also a stamp of Czechoslovakia; it was issued by the Czechoslovak Government. It belongs chronologically between 254 and 255 (i.e. 254A) since it was issued on January 18, 1939. Slovakia did not become an independent entity till March, as you correctly state. The opening of the Congress was NOT that of the future puppet state. Your Slovakia section should therefore start with #2.

2. The Scott #255, incidentally, was issued on March 30, 1939 and #256 was issued on April 23, 1939—both dates being AFTER the occupation of Czechoslovakia on March 15, 1939. You now don't list the issue dates of 255 and 256—but really should.

3. A footnote should be added under Scott #63 stating: "61b, 61c, and 63a are UNISSUED varieties." However, if your policy indeed is not to list unissued stamps, the three items should be deleted.

4. A similar footnote or deleting applies to Scott #65b, 66b, 67a, 68a, 69a, 70a, 71c, 72a, and 73c.

5. A similar footnote or deleting applies to Scott #74a and 75a.

6. A similar footnote or deleting applies to Scott #76a, 771, 78b, 79a, 80b, and 81b.

7. A similar footnote or deleting applies to Scott #82c, 83c, 84c, 85a, 87c, 88b, 90a, and 91a.

8. I realize that deleting an item is not very popular, and hence I would recommend the footnotes. But if you do that, you may in the future want to list other unissued varieties, mainly imperforates, to be consistent. Please let me know if you would like me to provide a listing of other unissued imperforates.

9. In the light of your policy not to list gutter pairs (which are issued items and much more "basic" than the imperforates which you list) you should at the very least place the following footnote under #73: "#71a and #73a also exist as tete beche gutter pairs. Their valuation is significantly higher than that of ordinary tete beche pairs.

10. As above, but under #91: "82a, 83a, 84a, 87a exist as gutter tete beche pairs. Their valuation is significantly higher than that of ordinary tete beche pairs." For example:

#82 gutter tete beche pair	\$ 8.00
#83 gutter tete beche pair	4.50
#84 gutter tete beche pair	50.00

11. Carpatho-Ukraine #1. This stamp is in reality a Czechoslovak stamp, having been issued by the Czechoslovak Government on March 15, 1939—the day of Czechoslovakia's occupation. It was issued for use in the Carpatho-Ukraine, a province of Czechoslovakia—but printed and issued simultaneously in Prague. Your pricing of a used copy—if usage is genuine and the stamp bears a black ordinary cancel, should be at least \$175. If you prefer to leave the pricing as it now reads, it should be followed by a footnote saying that the used price applies to the red commemorative cancel. Ordinary usage with black cancel is rare. The correct listing of the stamp is Czechoslovakia, #254B.

12. It has in recent years been established that #B21 was actually issued in three shades. The correct listing would read:

B21	10K light violet	165.00	90.00
	a. black violet	240.00	135.00
	b. dark violet	200.00	125.00

There is no reason for assigning the dark shade variety B42A. (B8 and B8a are listed correctly as the basic stamp and shade variety).

13. B18 is also not listed correctly. The basic stamp is of the narrow variety (25 x 30mm) and exists in two shades. It should be listed as:

B18	A40 2K light blue (25 x 30mm)	1.90	1.40
	a. 2K dark blue	3,500.00	3,500.00

There are also wide varieties—ISSUED STAMPS—(25.7 x 29mm) which could be assigned B18A, thus



B18A	A40 2K light blue (25.7 x 29mm)	1.90	1.40
	a. 2K dark blue	2,250.00	2,250.00
14. The situation is the same with B19. The correct listing is:			
B19	A40 3K carmine rose (25 x 20mm)	50.00	27.50
	a. 3K claret	850.00	775.00
B19A	A40 3K carmine rose (25.7 x 29mm)	1,200.00	1,200.00
	a. 3K claret	1,200.00	1,200.00
15. The situation is the same with B20. The correct listing is:			
B20	A40 4K yel grn (25 x 30mm)	15.00	8.25
	a. 4K dp grn	40.00	26.00
B20A	A40 4K yel grn (25.7 x 29mm)	30.00	16.50

Incidentally, B20Aa does not exist. While this may appear too "specialized" for Scott, please note that these are ISSUED varieties, and NOT listing them is extremely dangerous because the prices of some of the varieties are so high.

16. The B22 to B25 are listed consistently with most catalogs. However, B24 and B25 are UNISSUED stamps at best. They could not have been on Czechoslovak territory on October 28, 1918 since the basic Austrian stamps were issued much later. The stamps were never sold at any post office, were never used postally, and were "instant rarities". The originator, the top postal official, had the stamps overprinted for personal gain. This fraud has only recently come to light. While there is some controversy on this, I nevertheless would recommend that they be deleted on the basis that they are UNISSUED STAMPS.

17. The footnote which appears under B25 should be relocated to appear under B123 and should read "Excellent counterfeits of overprints on Nos. B1-B123 exist."

18. #101A-101D. There should follow a footnote saying: "Four vertical positions of watermark are known. The above prices apply to the least expensive position." This footnote is very important since some of the positions, such as position 3 of 101C are valued 4-5 times the cheapest position.

19. Scott's presentation of #105 to 108 and #130 is partially incorrect and highly confusing. Michel is now correct and consistent with the most recent Czech catalog. Illustrations such as in Michel would help, but it CAN be done without them.

Starting with #105:

Third Engraving			
Wmk. Horizontally (107)			
105	A10 1K car rose, perf 13 3/4 (18.7 x 21.4mm)	17.50	15.00
	a. Perf 9 3/4 (19.2 x 22mm)	1.75	10.00

(The reverse is chronologically correct. The perf 9 3/4 rotary printing came later than the flat plate printing).

Fourth Engraving			
Wmk. Horizontally (107)			
Size: 19.2 x 22.0mm			
106	A10 1K car rose, perf 9 3/4	1.25	8.00
107	A10 3K brown, perf 13 3/4	7.00	12.00

Fifth Engraving			
Wmk. Horizontally (107)			
Size: 19.2 x 22.0mm—long mustache, Perf. 9 3/4			
108	A10 1K car rose	1.25	8.00
	a. Unwatermarked	10.00	75.00

Sixth Engraving			
Unwatermarked			
Size: 19.2 x 22.0mm—short, pointed mustache, Perf. 9 3/4			
108A	A10 1K car rose	1.25	8.00

You appear to list the above stamp as #130 and price it at 5.50 and 15.00. The price is closer to what would apply to the unwatermarked stamp from the Fifth Engraving, i.e. the one with the long beard. In

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any case, there are TWO (2) unwatermarked stamps issued, and you list only one. This is dangerous because of the significant price differential. In any event, the Masaryk engraving is NOT part of the set which includes #130.

A better summary of the distinguishing marks of the engravings could be presented. The present one covers only the four engravings you list. I would suggest presenting it as follows:

DISTINCTIVE MARKS OF THE 1K ENGRAVINGS					
ENGR.	LETTERING AND NUMERALS	BACKGROUND IN TABLETS	FRAMING TABLETS	LEFT SHOULDER	LOCA OF "T" IN POSTA
I	shaded	lined hor.	thin lines	cross hatch	over cent. of "U"
II	shaded	lined hor.	thin lines	cross hatch	over rt. arm of "U"
III	shaded	lined hor.	thin lines	lined	over rt. arm of "U"
IV	shaded	cross hatched	thin lines	cross hatch	over left arm of "U"
V*	clear	cross hatched	heavy lines	cross hatch	over left arm of "U"
VI*	clear	cross hatched	heavy lines	cross hatch	over left arm of "U"

\*The major difference between the fifth and sixth engraving is that the fifth has the "long mustache" and the sixth has the "short mustache".

I hope you will find the above information of some use. If indeed so, I will concentrate next year on pricing and possibly get into the newer issues . . .

Sincerely,  
Henry Hahn

### THE CZECHOSLOVAK MUSIC SCENE OSKAR NEDBAL—March 26, 1874–December 24, 1930

*by Gerald M. van Zanten*

Though he is not considered one of the Big Four of Czechoslovak music, Oskar Nedbal is nevertheless a respected musician of whom his country's Postal Ministry thought well enough to issue a stamp in his honor.

Born on March 26, 1874 in Tabor in Southern Bohemia, he studied violin with the choirmaster Ender and later with Bennewitz at the Prague Conservatory between 1885 and 1892. He was a pupil of Bláha (trumpet and percussion) as well as Dvořák (composition); he adopted the most appealing attributes of Dvořák's music—accessibility and melodiousness accompanied by brilliant orchestration in the Czech idiom. Together with Novák and Suk, he was one of Dvořák's most successful pupils.

Nedbal played the viola for fifteen years between 1891 and 1906 in the famous Bohemian String Quartet, subsequently renamed the Czech Quartet. Other members of the Quartet included K. Hoffmann, Joseph Suk and O. Berger. Together with Suk, he was a founder member of the Quartet, which was formed by Hanuš Wihan. This ensemble raised the standards of Czech chamber playing to an international level.

Nedbal was recommended by Dvořák to conduct the Czech Philharmonic in 1896. Though only 22 years of age, he turned his debut into a glorious triumph. He conducted that orchestra regularly until 1906.

In 1902, he undertook his first major tour outside Austro-Hungary—to England. He also appeared as guest conductor throughout Europe, displaying his temperament and his accomplished understanding of works by Mozart, Beethoven, Berlioz, Brahms, Tchaikowsky as well as Czech composers like Smetana, Dvořák, Fibich, Novák and Suk.

From 1907 until the end of World War I, Nedbal headed Vienna's "Tonkünstler-Verein", an orchestra which, under his baton, competed successfully with the Vienna Philharmonic.

After the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic, he returned to Prague and there conducted the Šak Philharmonic in 1920–1921. At the end of that period, he left for Bratislava where he became a leading light in the musical life of Slovakia as manager of the Slovak National Theater. Under his leadership, the Theater rose to a new level of brilliance. But the general economic crisis in the late twenties brought

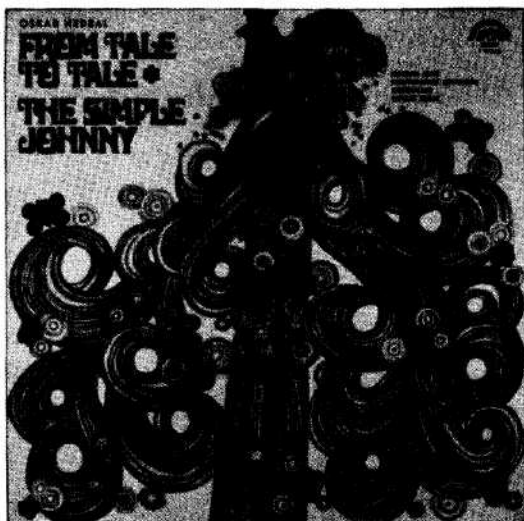


Fig. 1

Viennese style, making use of Czech, Polish and Yugoslav themes and rhythms.

The worldwide depression of 1929–1930 may have been the catalyst for his tragic death. On Christmas eve, December 24, 1930, he threw himself out of the window at the National Theater in Zagreb, Yugoslavia, where he was guest-conducting his “Johnny Simpleton”. He was laid to rest in Zagreb’s Mirogoj Cemetery.

Most impressive of Nedbal’s accomplishments is his ballet music. He was the founder of Czech ballet pantomime. Of his five compositions in this area, the two most popular are: “From Tale to Tale” and “The Tale of Simple Johnny”. Selected suites from both appear on a delightful stereo record by Supraphon, the cover design of which is just as delightful (see fig. 1).

On August 23, 1960, a set of stamps commemorating famous cultural personalities was issued. One of them—the 40 h stamp—was dedicated to Oskar Nedbal. It was designed by Vladimír Silovský and engraved by Hindra Schmidt (see fig. 2). A total of 1,820,000 copies of the stamp were issued in green color (see Pofis no. 1135; Scott no. 1000).

The following is a list of his operettas with the dates when they were composed:

Die Deutsche Barbora	1910
Polenblut	1913
Die Winzerbrat	1916
Die Schöne Saskia	1917
Mamzel Napoleon	1918
Donna Gloria	1925

#### Letters to the Editor

#### COMPLIMENTS AND COMMENTARIES

The following letters, addressed to various Board Members, should be of interest to our readers. The first is a letter to your editor from W.A. Page, FRPS, L, author of MONOGRAPH No. 1, published by the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain:

Dear Mr. Vondra:

While in New Zealand recently, I was browsing through some recent Czechoslovak SPECIALISTS and noted with interest one item in the March 1990 issue which I wish to comment upon. On page 11/12, reference is made to, and an illustration (fig. 6) is shown, of a cover addressed to Mr. J. W. Lowey. The same cover is also illustrated in our Monograph No. 1 Supplement on page 53. It reads:

many difficulties to the Theater with which he found himself unable to cope.

In addition to managing the Slovak National Theater, he was director of the Bratislava radio station (an important position in those days) and lecturer at both the University and the Music Academy. During this time, he also conducted concerts for the Cultural Union of Slovakia.

He achieved world renown for his operettas, written to Viennese librettos in



Fig. 2

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"A detachment of the Czechoslovak Army was sent to the Faroe Islands in January 1943 for garrison duty. As such, they were to all intents a part of the British Forces and shared the same postal facilities."

The British Field Post Office cancellation no. 219 was in use in the Faroe Islands from May 1940 to September 1943. The military censor stamps no. 4331 would have been applied in the Faroes, while the letter would have been opened in U.K., in transit to U.S.A. The "PC 90" sealing label is the standard British-type censor label. It is fortunate likewise that one of the Czech "freedom" stickers is tied by the Field Post Office cancellation—making this a very desirable piece of military postal history.

(signed W.A. Page, FRPS,L).

And then there is this letter addressed by E. Skovbo Jensen to Henry Hahn:

Dear Mr. Hahn:

My compliments for the article by Dr. Palkoska and you. (see *SPECIALIST* for February 1990, page 10). I have been doing a bit of research in the matter myself some years ago, as I had a POB 506 Lisbon letter included in an exhibition of Slovakia letters. A Danish postal historian, Menne Larsen, has written an article about the subject, in which he tells about the origin of the POB 506:

"After the fall of France and the German occupation of the Channel Islands in June 1940, there was a great need for contact between the many refugees in England and their relatives in the occupied islands. Therefore the permission to establish the POB 506 in Lisbon with Thomas Cook and Son's office in London in charge of the whole business. The regulations for correspondence were issued by the Channel Islands' Refugees Committee and, as we know, others were soon allowed to make use of this service. A similar cover address had existed in Holland, POB 604 Amsterdam, until that country was occupied on May 10, 1940."

In his article, Menne Larsen also mentions that A.E. Gilbert had tried to register all such known letters. So far (and that was more than five years ago), he had a list of 92 letters, four of which were from the Czechoslovak area (Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia as well). Two of them were from 1940; one from 1941; and one from 1944. Unfortunately I have no more information about Mr. Gilbert. When I bought this letter, I had to pay a price in Danish Kronen equal to 100 U.S. dollars. I did not know anything about the matter at that time, so I asked a Danish specialist for advice. He said to me that if the letter had been sent from the Faroe Islands, the price would have been 400 dollars. He suggested if I want the letter, I should buy it; it may well be my only chance to get hold of such an object.

(signed E. Skovbo Jensen).

And finally there is this commentary from the other side of the world:

Dear Mr. Vondra:

I would like to add my compliments to the *SPECIALIST*. The last few months has seen a tremendous improvement in the type and quality of articles and Society news. I know that the editorial staff does not get enough appreciation for the work it puts into it, voluntarily and without reward, but rest assured that I for one appreciate it.

(signed Vladimír Králíček,  
Auckland, New Zealand).

***Editorial Hinges***

**EDWARD LISY NAMED HONORARY MEMBER**

Congratulatory comments are not confined to a one-way street. The Society's Board has recently voted to name Edward Lisy as an honorary member.

Mr. Lisy, member number 419, became the Society secretary in 1972, succeeding both George Schabow as national secretary and George Blížil as international secretary. He held the combined post of general secretary until the end of 1987 when he asked to be relieved because of his health and other compelling reasons. During those 16 years he worked hard and diligently in keeping the Society intact,

functional and solvent, (see May 1989 SPECIALIST, page 12).

The Board expresses its gratitude for his loyalty and devotion to the perpetuation of our organization and extends its heartfelt congratulations to Ed Lisy for his appointment as honorary member.

#### THE EDITOR'S DUNCE CAP

A dunce cap may be worn by anyone. It fits all mortals. Since all mortals are imperfect and your editor is a mortal, it is his turn to wear a dunce cap this month.

On page 2 of the December 1990 SPECIALIST, your editor made this profound statement: "Do not wait till February or later (to pay your dues). The Society cannot function on credit. This issue therefore contains an addressed envelope in the centerfold. Please remove it, fill it out, enclose your renewal of membership dues and mail it to our treasure this month".

Considering that no envelope was enclosed, this was an empty and pointless appeal. Although most members knew well enough to catch the treasurer's name and address near the bottom of the same page and mail him their dues in their own envelope, some may have overlooked that altogether. If you are one of those, please avail yourself of the envelope enclosed with this issue and mail in your dues NOW! Remember, after February 28, there is a \$3 reinstatement fee for late payment !

#### ABOUT THE EXCHANGE CIRCUIT

In the November 1990 SPECIALIST on page 9, we advised you that Jack Benchik had assumed the post of circuit manager due to Wolfgang Fritzsche's retirement. So there is no misunderstanding how this transition will affect those presently utilizing the circuit's facilities, Mr. Fritzsche has suggested we publish the following clarification:

Mr. Fritzsche will still handle all circuits which *he* put into circulation, phasing them out with the passage of time. Mr. Benchik will handle all circuits which were started *on or after* November 1, 1990. These new circuits will have a different numbering system. Thus for a while there will be two sets of circuits making the rounds, running parallel—one phasing out; the other phasing in. All members who have blank sales books on hand are urged to fill them and send them to Mr. Benchik. A full supply of these bland books has been turned over to Mr. Benchik, together with the mailing list. Since all report sheets have the name of the applicable sales manager on them, there should be no mistakes in sending remittances to the appropriate manager.

#### *Member of the Month*

#### MEET CHARLES R. COLLINS

Mothers-in-law have an established place in society. Though they have been vilified and stereotyped, Charles R. Collins will tell you that simply is not the case in his family. As a matter of fact, it was his mother-in-law who got him interested in Czechoslovak philately.



Known to his friends as Chuck, he joined our Society in 1972 during the NAPEX show in Arlington, Va. At the S.C.P. lounge table, he picked up his first copy of POFIS which he could not read. His mother-in-law helped him and he found it provided him with an excellent check-list. He was impressed by the collection of Czechoslovak stamps she had accumulated and was persuaded to sign up as a member. He attended a meeting of the Washington, D.C. branch and before he realized it, he found himself on the editorial staff of the SPECIALIST.

One thing led to another and within four years, he was elected to the Board of Directors and appointed as the Society's treasurer. He reorganized the Society's bookkeeping system and established a single interest-bearing bank account. He revised the Society's mailing procedures and helped attract new members. Through his efforts, the paid membership increased to the point where dues were able to pay for most of the S.C.P. operations.

#### THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Chuck Collins is not typically an exhibitor. He is a worker who is willing to roll up his sleeves and assist in the Society's various functions. This despite the fact that philately is not his sole hobby. He is a prolific collector of postcards and has attended and exhibited at many postcard shows over the years. This caused him to temporarily put his philatelic ventures on a back burner.

Recently he has reactivated and is again in the running as a candidate for the Society's Borad. Those who know him wish him well. Those who don't may soon hear more of him.

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##### CZECH BOOKLETS

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