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A. P. S. Unit 18

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HAPPY HOLIDUES!

No, this is not a spelling error! It is our way of sending best greetings to you for the holiday season while at the same time reminding you to pay your dues.

We are rapidly approaching the end of another successful publishing year. The officers, directors, and staff would therefore like to take this opportunity to wish all our members and their families a bountiful Thanksgiving, a peaceful and joyous Christmas, and a safe, prosperous New Year!

Perhaps one of your upcoming resolutions could be to remember to pay your 1992 dues on a timely basis (they are due January 1st). To help you, we are including both a membership renewal form and a pre-addressed envelope in this issue. Remember that any additional amount you may care to add over the above you dues helps the Society and lowers your taxes.



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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.
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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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LADA AND HAŠEK - A DELIGHTFUL TEAM

by Gerald M. Van Zanten

(What can be more appropriate during this holiday season philatelically than to contemplate the accomplishments of a delightful duo that gave pleasure and laughter to millions. Just as Laurel and Hardy enthralled countless silent movie fans, - just as Gilbert and Sullivan gave mirth and substance to lighthearted music, - so Lada and Hašek provided the reading public with a bumbling but patriotic military character - the Good Soldier Schweik! His exploits have been imitated in many lands at different times. In the U.S., for example, it was by "Sad Sack" during World War II. But it was the combination of a clever Czech writer and an adroit Czech illustrator that created the original character of Schweik. He embodied the epitome of clumsiness, flamboyance and dauntless heroism as only Hašek through his own experiences could put it across. Lada then embellished it with his stark but funny caricatures. -Ed.)

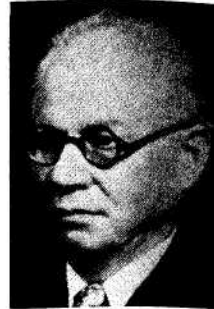


Fig. 1

Josef Lada, the artistic illustrator, was born on Dec. 12, 1887 in the valley of the Sazava River, now a highly popular tourist region. His birthplace was Hrušice, a small village about 30 kilometers southeast of Prague. The village takes pride in its Romanesque church.

His father was a cobbler. Since business in a small village like that is barely life-sustaining, money was always a scarce commodity in the household. So at the age of ten, Lada had to help his father by delivering repaired shoes to their owners in the surrounding areas.

In his book "Kronika mého Života" (A Chronicle of My Life), his reminiscences read like a fairy tale: "How a cobbler's son became a national artist!" (see fig. 1).

It was planned for Lada to become an interior decorator. But since he was too frail, he learned bookbinding. In Prague, he attended night classes in drawing. In 1906, he was admitted to the College of Applied Arts. Soon he found that he could make a living by creating cartoons for newspapers and periodicals such as "Karikatúry", of which he later became editor. He dropped out of college and became a full-time cartoonist, making the first illustrations for Jaroslav Hašek's "The Good Soldier Schweik" (see fig. 2) which is also featured on a stamp issued in August 1970 (see fig. 3; Scott 1696; Pofis 1838).

His style was typified by the use of unbroken thick lines to create hundreds of figures. His simplicity of presentation breathed life into his drawings of village folk, artisans, musicians, policemen, bureaucrats as well as beer-drinking companions. Four of these adorn a set of stamps issued in April 1970 under Scott 1681 to 1684; Pofis 1822 to 1825 (see fig. 4). In his book, "Bubáci a Hastrmaři" (Bogeymen and Water Elves - 1946), Emerald, the watergnome, is featured stitching his red boots by moonlight with a bat hovering over him. Dressed in his new hat plaited from long fish nets and

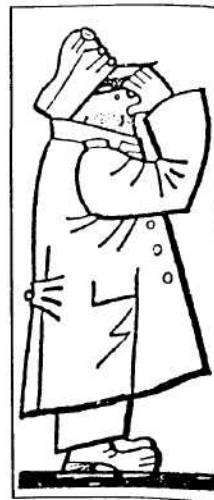


Fig. 2



Fig. 3



The Magic Sword,
an illustration for Czech Tales by
Bozena Nemečova



Autumn



Children in Winter



Water Goblin,
an illustration from Lada's book
Ghouls and Water Goblins

Fig. 4a, b, c, & d



Fig. 5

wearing his Sunday best green frock coat, he sits high atop an old willow tree with his native vil-
lage for a backdrop.

Animals are featured in Lada's books for children where he concentrated on their human pur-
suits. Subjects and themes involve goats, hares, cows, pigs, hedgehops and many others, working
and playing games or musical instruments. Shades of "The Cunning Little Vixen"!

His delightful books "Svět Zvířat" (The World of Animals), "Moje Abeceda" (My ABC) and
others are still being published in hundreds of thousands of copies and in repeated editions. In
addition to that, Lada spent many years working for newspapers not only as a creator of cartoons,
but even in the capacity of editor. In 1924, he made illustrations for a Sunday supplement of the
daily ČESKÉ SLOVO. Because of its popularity, the press run had to be increased from 60,000 to
160,000 and was changed to a color format. It was then that Lada was appointed its editor.



Fig. 6

Many of Lada's landscapes and rural scenes appeared on postcards (see fig. 5 & 6). Last but not least, he is credited with creating the scenery for backdrops for Bedřich Smetana's Opera "Prodaná Nevěsta" (The Bartered Bride). He is acknowledged and revered as a national artist! He died on December 14, 1957.

As Lada's contemporary and close friend since 1907, Jaroslav Hašek has appeared twice on stamps of Czechoslovakia. The first time was in 1982 on Pofis 2563; Scott 2432. The 1 k stamp shows an informal bust of him done by Josef Malejovsky (see fig. 7). A recent 50h. stamp again bears his likeness. (see fig.8).

Hašek was born some four years before Lada on April 24, 1883 on Prague's Školská street not far from Václavské náměstí (Wenceslaus Square). Unfortunately he only lived till January 2, 1923. During those 40 years, he lived a "full" life and left us with many fond and memorable characters, the best known of which is "The Good Soldier Schweik"(see fig.9).

Hašek's father was a teacher of mathematics and an alcoholic who died in 1896 when his son was only thirteen years old. After the young Hašek failed his school examinations, his mother managed to get him a job in the chemist shop of Mr. Kokoška, where he lasted for three years. This episode is reflected not only in "Schweik", but also in "From the Old Chemist's Shop".

He wrote his first stories when tramping penniless through Moravia, Slovakia, Hungary and Galicia, surviving by begging, consorting with tramps and vagabonds and picking up many bad habits.

A rebel, anarchist and hoaxer, he had countless brushes with the police and authorities in Prague. He spent considerable time drinking in his favorite pub, The Chalice. He fell in love and married, but he and his wife soon parted company. While his alcoholic consumption increased, he ran a canine institute where he sold dogs and forged pedigrees. He next appeared as a cabaret star and founded a mock political party - "The Party of Moderate Progress Within the Bounds of the Law."



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

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Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11

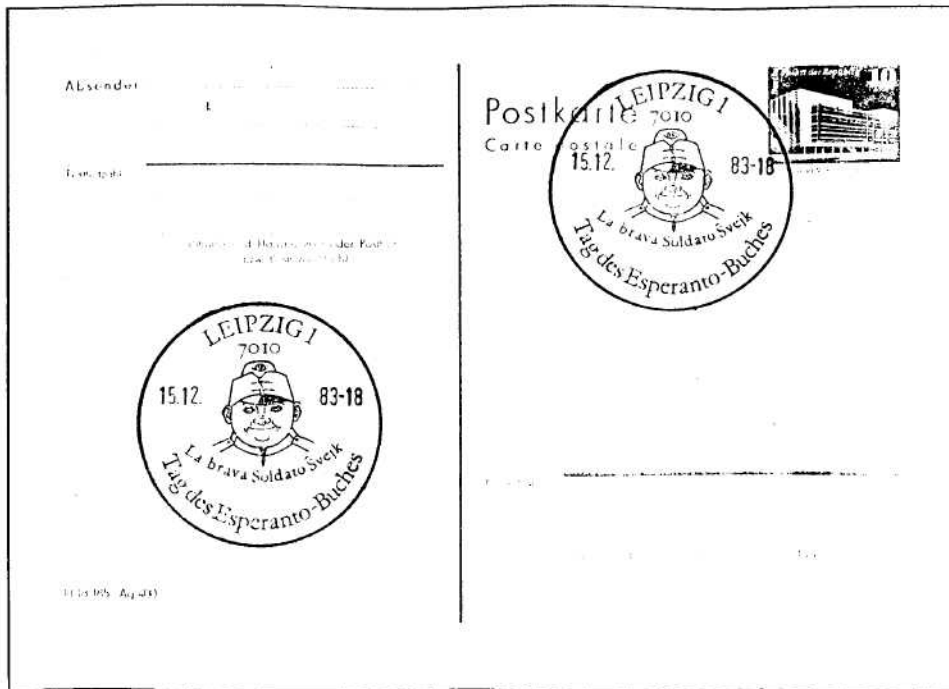


Fig. 12

Eventually he was swept into the First World War, captured by the Russians and recruited as a propagandist. He deserted to the Red Army, gave up alcohol and ended up as a Soviet commissar. (see fig. 10).

Returning to Prague with a Russian housekeeper "wife", he was hounded as a traitor, a Communist and a bigamist. He was soon back on the bottle and this hastened his demise. He died in 1923 at the age of forty at Lipnice having almost, but not quite, completed his masterpiece, "The Good Soldier Schweik". (see fig. 11). His funeral was arranged by the local Sokol, many of whom were ex-legionaries who otherwise would have regarded him as a traitor to the new Republic.

It is believed that altogether his works number some twelve hundred short stories and anecdotes. Despite that, he was a tragic-comic figure of whom "Schweik" is a perfect reflection. Were he alive today, he might be referred to as a "con man".

Laurel and Hardy, like Gilbert and Sullivan, were products of the British entertainment world. They were teams and they interacted with amazing compatibility. Lada and Hašek were, at best, friends who helped each other but acted independently most of the time. Acting independently was their forté. Their friendship was borne out by the fact that during most of 1913, Hašek seems to have been Lada's guest or tenant at his home. Whatever their relationship, Hašek did most, if not all, of the cooking and produced some wonderful meals.

On December 15, 1983, a special cancellation appeared on an East German postcard in Leipzig. Translated, it read, "The Good Soldier Schweik. The Day of Esperanto Books". This is indicative of the fact that his book had been translated into Esperanto. (see fig. 12).

A GLIMPSE OF THE 30TH REGIMENT AT VYSOKÝ MÝT

by Dr. Miroslav Vostatek

translated by Mirko L. Vondra

In the waning days of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the 30th Regiment of foot militia was stationed at Vysoký Mýt. They were the so-called "Home Guard" (Landveráci), as we have learned from Hašek's novel about THE GOOD SOLDIER SCHWEIK. A rose-colored postcard written by a Lt. Peřín is dated June 1917 and bears a fieldpost cancellation number 288. The addressee was J. Křivánek, a one-year volunteer who was with this regiment at Austria's Tull-on-the-Danube.

As I once read, the Austrian military administration detected signs of "excessive Czech activity" in this Regiment which had been transferred to the above-mentioned area. In foreign surroundings, patriotism began to wane. The message on this card bears that out. The writer heard that the "30th" might return to Vysoký Mýt. Even more interesting and significant is a dark violet cancellation on the reverse side of the card (see illustration). It shows a picture of a soldier in the field (where the card was written) beneath which is a Czech "greeting from the front". The horn symbolizes the mails which bind the troops with their homes. Apparently the writer added the words "30 z. p. pluk" even though the "30" already appeared inside the horn. The numeral therefore identifies this particular regiment of foot militia.

There are many such postcards as these, but similar identifying cancellations are hard to find and are becoming valuable. As to their purpose, clearly any small diversions such as these special cancellations helped to focus attention away from the troops' distressing morale on the front lines, especially when fighting in an army that did not represent their cause.



Help!!! If you have an IBM-compatible PC that can translate philatelic material from Czech to English and have even a minimum of time available, please contact Henry Hahn (2936 Rosemoor Lane, Fairfax, VA 22031). Work involves translation of program containing Czech specialized catalogue and philatelic inventory.

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE FIRST AIRMAIL ISSUE OF 1920

by *Vladimír Bubák*

The First Republic of Czechoslovakia was among the first European countries to commence regular air transport. That was in 1920.

For this purpose, the Czechoslovak postal authorities introduced the first set of airmail provisional stamps. The 200h, 500h and 1000h. values of Hradčany were overprinted to show revised values of 14k, 24k, and 28 kčs. They featured a drawing of a monoplane designed by F. Novák who was then Postal Ministry officer. These stamps were first issued imperforated on August 11, 1920 and later perforated on September 11, 1920. They were intended to cover airmail surcharges for the following:

14kčs/200h. - From Prague to Strasbourg

24kčs/500h. - From Prague to Paris and Warsaw

28kčs/1000h. - From Prague to London



For a long period of time, it was believed that the first flight (provided by the French-Rumanian Company, C.F.R.N.A.) took off from Prague on October 5, 1920. But a well-known aerophilatelist and expert from Prague, the late Bedřich Kavan, discovered some ten years ago that on that day there was a severe storm west of Czechoslovakia's borders and the flight would have been impossible. Even after this fact was confirmed by the Meteorological Institute in Prague and Paris, some philatelists still believed in the information provided by Jaroslav Šula in his book "Letecké poštovní známky Československé Republiky 1920", where the first flight is dated October 5, 1920.

Meanwhile Mr. Kavan had learned about a collector who purchased a large, valuable airmail collection of Czechoslovakia. He arranged a meeting with that collector because of his extensive interest in airmail covers and other postal documents. It was there that Mr. Kavan discovered a comprehensive list of all flights, no doubt handwritten by Mr. Vegner, postmaster at the Prague



Airport Postoffice. The list clearly disclosed that the first flight took off as late as October 14, 1920. This fact, of course, does not detract from the value and originality of these letters prepared for the October 5 and October 9 flights, but delivered by train. They are really the pioneer covers of Czechoslovak aerophilately.

Covers franked with stamps of the first airmail issue are considered among the highlights of European philately. It is estimated that about 500 pieces of mail were sent between October 5, 1920 and March 31, 1921. From April 1, 1921, the new low price for airmail surcharge was introduced and stamps of the first issue were demonetized by the end of that month. Covers of that airmail issue which are very rare can be divided into several groups:

1-Covers sent from Prague to Strasbourg, Paris, London and to other places via those three cities. The smallest quantity of mail from Prague seems to have been sent to Strasbourg (approximately 20 percent) and to Paris and London (approximately 40 percent).

2-Covers Properly franked.

3-Covers franked with the whole set (these are mostly philatelic).

4-Covers from the year 1920.

5-Covers from the year 1921.

6-Mail sent from "Praha 1" or other Prague postoffices.

7-Mail from other places in the country (theoretically it is possible to find airmail letters stamped with "S.O.1920" overprints).

8-Mail that was actually flown by plane.

9-Mail delivered for various reasons by train.

Possessing samples of all these categories is presently the boast or dream of most every collector of Czechoslovak airmails. However, those actually flown by plane with proper franking are the real gems.

Fig. 1 illustrates an airmail cover delivered by train to Zurich, Switzerland on Nov. 23, 1920,

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three days after the last flight was made that year. Fig. 2 shows a beautiful philatelic cover sent on April 29, 1921 and delivered to Brussels via Strasbourg by the very last possible flight on April 30, 1921. The first provisional airmail issue was no longer valid the next day. Note the rubber handstamp of the philatelic counter at the main postoffice at "Prahá 1". Philatelic literature lists all flights of the first airmail issue to the end of March 1921 only. However, the stamps were still valid till the end of April 1921. Therefore collectors should note the dates of the April 1921 flights. They are: April 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14, 16-19, 21, 24, 26, 28 and 30 to Paris and April 24, 26 and 30 to Warsaw.

It is not necessary to downgrade the so-called philatelic covers or to interpret them too strictly in aerophilately. Many of the popular rubber cachets and handstamps were in use primarily to attract collectors rather than to serve postal needs. This is also true in the case of the famous Zeppelin flight covers. It must be remembered that without collectors and their use of improper franking, we would not have any evidence of these flights at all.

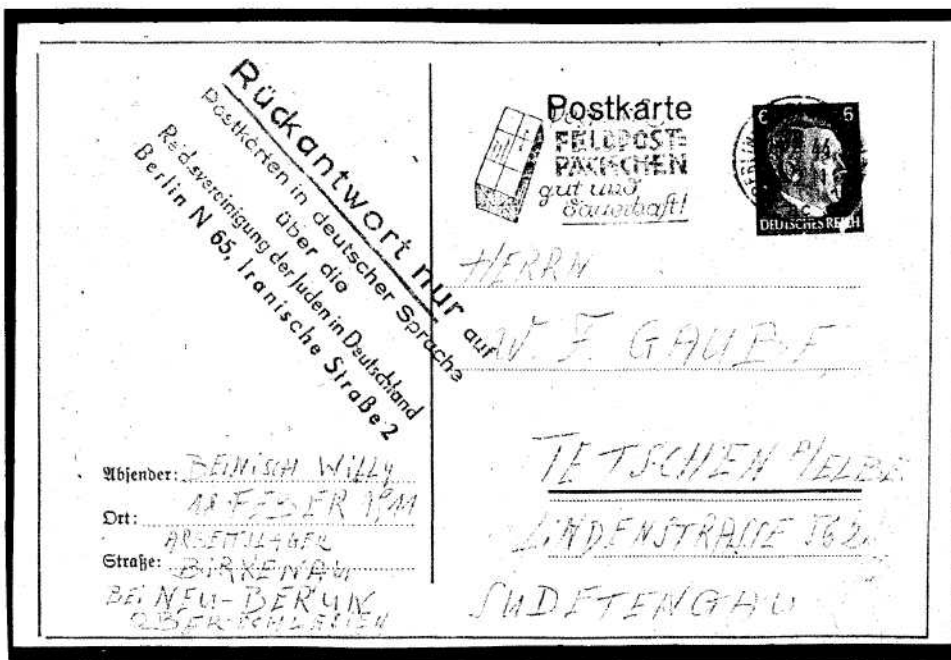
FAMILY CAMP WITH SIX MONTHS QUARANTINE

By Vratislav Palkoska

Translated by Henry Hahn

Nearly 139,000 Jewish prisoners passed through the gates of the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp during the period of November 24, 1941 to May 8, 1945. Almost 34,000 died there due to starvation, epidemics and catastrophic living conditions. About 87,000 were deported to the "East", i.e. to death camps, from which, following terrible suffering, only 3, 100 survived.

The main destination of twenty five (25) transports containing men, women, and children was Osvětim II - Birkenau (Auschwitz II - Birkenau). The last stop for the majority was the "selection ramp". Those truly fit were, according to testimony by SS doctors, selected for hard labor. The others went to gas chambers directly. The first exceptions were two transports of September 6th, 1943 which included 5, 007 persons. These were permitted to keep their belongings and were



transported, including the elderly, the infirmed, and the children to Camp BIIB. This camp was referred to as the "Czech Camp", or "Family Camp", since prisoners were not required to work outside of the camp, as was the general practice for Jewish prisoners at Auschwitz, and the prisoners were from time to time permitted to write postcards and even receive parcels. The camp was designated by the Germans "SB - transport of Czech Jews with six months quarantine". "SB - Sonderbehandlung," i.e. "special treatment", was the term applied by the Nazis to extermination by gassing. What was the significance of the "six months quarantine?" We are not certain of that.

On December 15, 1943 two additional transports, marked Dr and Ds, left Theresienstadt, again with 5,007 prisoners. These were also sent to the "Czech Camp". On March 2, 1944 these prisoners were again issued postcards with instructions to write and to date the postcards March 25, 1944 or later, supposedly because of the long time it was to take for censorship. The prisoners were simultaneously informed that they would be relocated to another camp, supposedly located at Heydebreck in Upper Silesia.

On March 7th, prisoners from the September transports were relocated from Camp B II b to Camp B II a and were told that they would again be moved. However, a day later they were loaded onto trucks and during the night between March 8th and 9th they were gassed; about 3,700 of them. Nearly 1,200 died during the 6 months quarantine due to prison suffering and due to malnutrition.

The postcards, all dated March 25, 1944, were sent to Berlin, and there mailed at the BERLIN-CHARLOTTENBURG 2 post office, with the postmark of April 26, 1944. The return addresses always include the name of the prisoner, his date of birth, and the domicile of "Arbeitslager Birkenau bei New-Berun, Upper Silesia". All cards include the rubber stamp reading "Ruckantwort nur auf/Postkarten in deutscher Sprache/ uber die/ Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland/Berlin N65, Iranische Strasse 2" (Response only on/ postcards in the German language/via the/Reichsorganization of Jews in Germany/Berlin N65, Iranian Street 2). For completeness, I add that this marking is also found on postcards written by Jewish prisoners in Theresienstadt addressed to the territory of what was then Germany, with the exception of cards destined to the former Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia. (Look out for forgeries!)

The addressees received the cards several days later, when the writers had already been put to death.

In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the tragedy of the Jewish "Family Camp" at Auschwitz, the Theresienstadt Memorial Organization sponsored an international symposium and exhibit of documents pertaining to the "Family Camp".

The author acknowledges the reference book: Lagus - Polak, CITY BEHIND BARS, published by SPB publishers "Naše vojsko" in 1964.

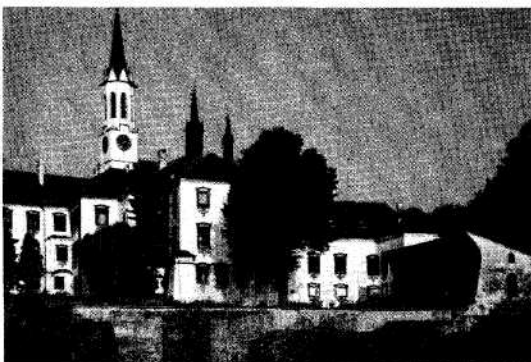
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A BRIEF VISIT TO PRAGUE'S POSTAL MUSEUM

By Henry Hahn



Of course, even a visit to Prague on business deserves a couple of hours "off" to see what's new at Prague's lovely Poštovní Museum (Postal Museum), located at Nové Mlýny 2, in Prague 1. Nové Mlýny means New Mills, but I have not inquired whether there is any connection between this location name and the fact that the building in which the museum is located was formerly the residence of one of Prague's prominent (and obviously wealthy) millers. However, I was told that near this loca-

tion, along the Vltava river, there were once many mills.

Part of the museum's stamp collection is housed in frames, similar to the ones in which part of the Smithsonian stamp collection is housed in Washington DC. But there the similarity ends; for the Prague collection is full of specialized material, including prestamp and postal history-much of it identified as to the donor.

A guard and a pleasant lady kept watch over the downstairs portion of the museum, which at the time of my visit had about a half dozen visitors. Two were young French collectors interested in the postal history exhibits and my "elaborations" on the printed descriptions of the items displayed. We saw the Klapačková pošta (Klapperpost) cover originating from Václav Konštant's magnificent former collection which was donated to the Museum as part of the arrangement when the collection was sold. We also saw the Seizinger stamp designs and proofs donated to the Museum by Fred Hefer and his family. Most of our time was spent in looking over Czech rarities, superb pre-stamp covers and old Austrian material.

I could not help but notice the printed, or rather embossed, pages on which some of the material was displayed. Some of the older material was shown on pages embossed with the Royal Czech Lion, proudly wearing the Royal Crown. However, some of the more recently added pages, though pre-Velvet Revolution, had the Royal Lion overpasted with a label showing the lion wearing a star while other pages displayed the same lion wearing a star printed directly on the display pages. I pictured in my mind the Museum staff soaking the labels off some of the overpasted pages, hoping the pasters had the foresight to use peelable or water removable labels.

My main mission to the Museum was in search of information sources dealing with pre-stamp postal rates and some postal maps dealing with postal routes in the 18th and early 19th century, primarily to help me explain some of the "Roethel" rate markings that have recently been the subject of my collecting. I was directed to the library, located one floor above, where I met Dr. Jiří Hanl, probably the principal curator, who reports directly to Dr. Pavel Ctvrtník, the Museum's

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Circuit Manager, Jack Benchik (see top of page 2).

director. I spent a pleasant half-hour scanning complete volumes of postal orders issued by Maximilian Ottenfeld, the Highest Postal Administrator in Vienna between 1820 and 1830. Dr. Hanl made careful note of my requests and promised to send me the specified maps and postal rate information and firmly refused my offer of payment for the copying and mailing. He also mentioned that their main archive, (archiv státních cenin) is located at the Smíchov district of Prague, which also catalogs and stores our Society's SPECIALISTS. He brought me some postal rate tables contained in books issued by the postal administration in the period of my interest, i.e. 1817 to 1842, but these pertained primarily to passenger rates for postal coach travelers. The postal maps and information I needed are apparently also stored at the Smíchov archive.

On my way out, in the downstairs hall, I noted with interest some early postal artifacts; from postman's shoes to horse paraphanelia. Most interesting to me, however, were the actual clappers (noisemakers) used by Klapperpost mailmen in the 1782-1820 period. Several recent papers appearing in the PTT Revue, publication of the Ministry of Communications, were on display, one by Dr. Hanl himself, on the Origin and Development of the Postal Savings Bank.

Prague collectors are indeed lucky to have such fine material and facilities available for serious study.

AGRICULTURE AND SCIENCE - A NEW DISCOVERY

by Thomáš Morovics - Translated by Mirko Vondra



Fig. 1

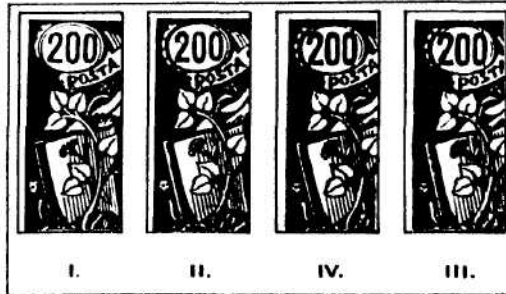


Fig. 2

After a considerable period of neglect, the Agriculture and Science set of 1923 has become a favorite subject of research among First Republic collectors. Quality literature, including a handbook, has contributed in no small measure to this development. It gained the attention of a significant number of philatelic readers. Even though I tried to emphasize the highlights and call attention to what needed to be done, I was unable to cover all aspects of this most interesting issue.

For the longest time - actually from the beginning of my preoccupation with this issue - I was unable to convince myself of the fact that the 200h. value does not exist in Type I (see fig. 1). I could not understand that this denomination was not issued initially because only the 100h. and 300h. values were needed. If it mattered, it would have been pointless to issue any stamps of 200h. denomination. Yet they exist in this set in Types II, III and IV. Within that context, I suspect the basis for their non-issuance was of a technical nature. This was confirmed for me about a year ago when I gained access to some 200h. trial prints in black on chalky paper in the format of definitive stamps. They clearly satisfy the characteristics of Type I (see fig. 2).

As I stated, the trial prints possess all the markings for identifying them as Type I stamps. This includes other details like the different drawings of the numerals within the denomina-

tion oval. The distinction between these individual types becomes more apparent when they are laid side by side as in fig. 2.

Based on the characteristics of these trial prints, I surmise we are not as much concerned with the imprint from the original printer's block with its engraved numerals as we are with the printing from the lithographic stone. That would of course denote that many more of these trial prints exist. But where are they? Will they be found?

The trial prints lack their renowned sharpness and clarity, which seems typical of blackprints. It is more likely that one will find larger or smaller color spots, especially around the letters "KO" in "ČESKO", indicative of the fact that the 200h. in Type I (ie. the trial print) did not turn out as expected. In my opinion, that is the main reason why the printing of the 200h. in Type I was abandoned.

Some collectors tend to undervalue blackprints while others overvalue them. Including trial prints of whatever kind in any collection or exhibit is of significance only when they serve to document the basis for issuance of the stamps themselves and that relationship is aptly described. Merely to label them as "trial prints" says nothing.

In conclusion, it should be noted that what is involved here is an exceptionally rare trial print that confirms the existence of the 200h. in Type I, albeit only as a blackprint. It must also be recognized that after many years of extensive research, it still cannot be categorically stated that everything that is to be learned about the Agriculture and Science set of 1923 is now known. Such an assertion would certainly be far from the truth.

"PRAGUE CASTLE"

THE WHITE TOWER OF HERMES AND ATHENA

by Gerald M. van Zanten

On May 7, 1970 a 3Kčs stamp was issued in the Prague Castle series on the subject of Hermes and Athena, (see Pofis No 1832, Scott No. 1690) as shown in Fig. 1. The subject is a fine example of Rudolphine Art by Bartholomeus Spranger.

Spranger was considered the founder of this art form and in the 1580's he stood in the very foreground of artistic activity in Prague.

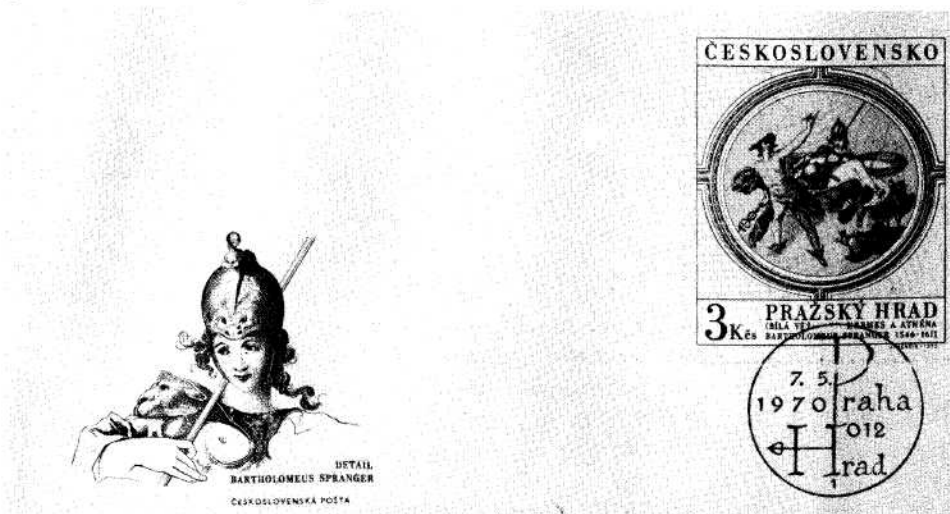


Fig. 1
14

The stamp shows him in a self-portrait dated about 1590 (oil on canvas measuring 62.5 x 45 cm and exhibited in the Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum), (see Fig. 2). This was during the reign of Rudolph II (1576-1612). Rudolph was a passionate collector of art works. He was only 24 when he became King of Bohemia; he died on January 20, 1612.



Fig. 2

Bartholomeus Spranger was born in Antwerp in 1546. Between 1560 and 1564 he studied in the Netherlands and then travelled a great deal, visiting Paris, Milan and Parma. Between 1566 and 1575 he visited Rome. The next five years he spent in Vienna where he became an influential artist. In 1580 he was summoned to Prague. About the year 1585, he embellished the flat copula of the White Tower's interior with the figures of Hermes and Athena (see Fig. 3).

Spranger completed the work in memory of his father-in-law. The White Tower (an artillery bastion) dates from the end of the 15th century and was originally used as a prison. It formed part of the Prague Castle's Northern defense works and was connected to the Dalibor tower as well as to the Zlata Ulička (Golden Lane) by a wall-walk.



Fig. 3

The beautiful fresco (the subject of the stamp) measures 275cm in diameter. It represents Hermes, the Greek God of commerce, invention etc., who also served as messenger and herald for the other Gods, wearing winged sandals. (Roman counterpart of Mercury)

Also represented is Athena, the Virgin Goddess of wisdom, the arts, practical skills and prudent warfare, also called Pallas Athena. (Roman counterpart of Minerva). She was born fully armed from the head of Zeus.

The first day cover also shows a detail of the complete work. Just 556, 000 copies of this stamp were issued in beautiful pastel shades with a pale blue background.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

FAREWELLS AND REFLECTIONS

This November ends my second and final term as your President. To that extent, I wish to thank all the members who voted for me to serve on the Board of Directors and to those Board members who supported me as President.

Two very important matters were accomplished and these should be of immeasurable benefit to our Society for years to come. First, a new Constitution was written and the Society was once again incorporated after its corporate status was lost due to a failure to submit required annual reports to the incorporating jurisdiction. Many long hours were spent by numerous Board members rewriting the Constitution and, after several drafts, one was finally adopted. Board members Jack Benchik, Frank Julsen, Ed Lehecka, Jane Sterba, Lou Svoboda, Mirko Vondra and I worked several days tying it all together. The final results are certainly gratifying. The new Constitution will be published shortly, probably in the next issue.

The second and even more important matter achieved is that the S.C.P. is finally about to qualify as a non-profit organization under the Internal Revenue Code. That process is in its final stages now. Once approved, the status will qualify our Society for reduced postal rates and other tax benefits. This could save us hundreds of dollars a year. The form that had to be completed was gigantic and very complicated. Only through the tireless and voluntary efforts of Ed Lehecka and Lou Svoboda, who submitted all the financial data, was all this accomplished. There were some minor corrections that had to be made in the Articles of Incorporation. Once these are recorded by the State of Illinois, our non-profit status will take effect. These corrections needed financial input from Lou Svoboda, audit by Ed Lehecka and other informational assistance from Jack Benchik and Jane Sterba. Their cooperation enabled me to make the necessary corrections to the Articles and to our By Laws.

I was fortunate to have Mirko Vondra as the editor of our publication. Because of that, the *SPECIALIST* is perhaps better than it has ever been - excellent format, good printing and timely mailings. Several of our members are constant contributors of articles and I look forward to seeing this list of contributors expand in the future.

Our circuit manager, Jack Benchik, is doing an excellent job in filling the shoes of our legendary fifty-year manager, Wolfgang Fritzsche. It was a thankless task, but he undertook it with the zeal of a truly devoted member. It is now up to the membership-at-large to see that the material keeps coming in so that the circuit can function smoothly.

The Society Library is in the best condition it has ever been, thanks to our erstwhile librarian, Richard Palaschak. I sincerely hope that those of you who still have books belonging to the Library and have not returned them over many months or even years, will do so soon. (see top of page 22, *SPECIALIST* for July/August 1991).

Our book sales department under Ed Lehecka is operating smoothly and flawlessly and is bringing in much-needed revenue to enable the Society to undertake and maintain its various functions.

To two of our Board members I owe special thanks: our secretary, Jane Sterba; and our Vice-President, Jack Benchik. Without their material and moral support, I could not possibly have executed my responsibilities to their fullest.

On the lighter side, my presidency spanned two related international exhibitions - AMERIPEX 86 here in Chicago and PRAGA 88. At AMERIPEX, many Society members gathered in Chicago and I believe that apart from PRAGA 88, it was the largest gathering of noted Czechoslovak collectors from all over the world. On one of those days, my wife and I hosted an afternoon brunch with cocktails at our home and the response was most gratifying. Present were Jan Karásek, J.L. Kline, Paul Jensen, Ladislav Dvořáček, Fred Hefer, Max and Mrs. Mahr, George Connelly, Joe and Erma Janečka, Henry and Marilyn Hahn, Frank Julsen, Jane Sterba, Bud Pearce and a few

others. A few days later, almost all of our members and friends attended a fabulous pizza and beer party at Chicago's famous Home Run Inn. It was a marvelous evening with superb food, lots of laughter and the usual philatelic fun. Helping me arrange for that memorable evening was Jane Sterba.

Needless to say, the exhibition at PRAGA 88 was extensive and commendable but, in my humble opinion, not as noteworthy as the one in 1978. Henry Hahn did an excellent job as U.S. commissioner in 1988, but the atmosphere was not the same. Small wonder, for matters must have already been brewing, setting the stage for the political upheaval that took shape in November and December of 1989.

In 1978 when Dr. Matejka was U.S. Commissioner, he was a dynamo and things just happened. He may have been a controversial figure, but his life was devoted to philately and his presence added dignity and stature to philately as a hobby. That year nearly 10,000 frames were on display, making it the largest show ever. By 1988, a new format was adopted and only about 4,000 frames could be shown according to the new F.I.P. rules.

In conclusion, let me once again express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all the members, the Board and its officers who helped me lead the Society for the past eight years. They are years that I will never forget. And for what has been accomplished in those eight years, I owe to the tradition of my mentors in philately, Frank Kovařík, Dr. James Matejka and John Velek.

Jaroslav Ježek

(1908 - 1991)

Following a brief illness, Czechoslovakia's finest philatelic author and student of postal history, has passed away.

A friend and literary contributor of our Society and a literary contributor to the SPECIALIST (see page 13, June 1984 issue), he combined his love of postal history with a superb writing style. (see page 1, Nov. 1974 issue) Aided by his diligence, his writings appeared in many journals throughout the world. His research has led to the resolution of numerous philatelic mysteries.

Jaroslav Ježek has been an inspiration to a whole generation of postal historians in Czechoslovakia as well as abroad. His excellent command of the English as well as the German languages enabled him to correspond with a large group of colleagues and friends worldwide. One of his most recent and possibly last challenges was the "real" first-day of issue of Austria's first postcard. (see Austrian Bulletin, Winter 1990/1991, page 22).

Mr. Ježek, a professed bachelor and an ardent student of Czechoslovak philately, was cremated in Prague-Strašnice on September 12 after having reached the age of 83.

NEW ISSUES



The Federal Ministry of Communications has announced the issuance of two commemorative stamps on September 2 honoring the 13th bi-annual illustration awards in Bratislava. Both stamps show selected drawings from children's books of previous competitions in Bratislava along with a typographic logo "BIB". The denominations are in the lower left-hand corner while the name of the artist and country is in the lower right-hand corner. The stamps are:

1. 1k.-Binette Schroeder of SRN
Color-Black, yellow, red, green, and reddish brown.
2. 2k.-Stasys Eidrigėvičius of Poland
Color-Black, dark green, grey, pale green and red.

The stamp pictures measure 23 X 30 mm. each. The typographical layout was designed by graphic artist Oldřich Pošmurný and engraved by Martin Srb. Manufactured at the Communications Printery in Prague on rotary steel press combined with multi-color recess printing, the stamps were issued in sheets of 50.

In conjunction with their release, a single first day cover with a special cancellation was made available. The cover bears the illustration made by Stasys Eidrigėvičius along with the typographic logo "BIB". Printed on a flat plate press, it is steel engraved in red, green and black.

The stamps are valid for franking domestically and internationally from Sept. 2, 1991 until withdrawn from circulation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

In the January 1988 *SPECIALIST*, page 8, I reported on printing varieties of this issue resulting from misregistry of printing plates. The degree of misregistry could most easily be observed by noting the plate registry mark; a little gold cross above the head of Count Paar.

Another interesting observation has been reported by our member, Karel Fischer of Toronto. His finding does not appear to comprise a printing variety, though I can not be certain, not having examined any reasonable number of copies of this sheet.

The variety involves the presence of a "ring" on Count Paar's finger, illustrated in Fig. 1. All other copies I have examined do not have this "ring", as shown in Fig 2. Both magnified views have been taken from sheets showing a single cross above Count Paar's head, i.e. from printings which have about the same degree of plate registry. The "ring" does not appear in the other sheets. The reason is because the impression and /or inking is heavier on those other sheets of which the one shown in fig. 2 is an example.

I am indeed appreciative of Karel Fischer's keen observation and thank him for bringing this variety to my attention. Readers' comments would be most welcome.

Yours Truly,
Henry Hahn



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

LIBRARY NOTES

The following are additions to the Society's Library and continue the numbering sequence of the Library Catalog published in the June 1989 SPECIALIST and the additions noted in the July/August 1991 SPECIALIST. Of particular note is the addition of all MONOGRAFIE volumes which were missing from the Library's holdings; the Library now has a copy of each volume published in this important series of Czechoslovak philatelic reference material:

180. Českobrodský Filatelický Zpravodaj (38pp, Czech).
181. Praga 88: Bulletin No. 2 (28pp), 3 (44pp), 5 (12pp), 9 (20pp), 10 (28 pp); (1978-88, Czech, Russian, French, English, German, & Spanish).
182. Negus, James; Monograph No. 7, Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain, Index to Articles on Czechoslovak Philately, 1950-1979 (1988, 15pp, English).
183. Neumann, Jiri; Monograph No. 8, Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain, The Occupation of Czechoslovak Frontier Territories by Beck's Poland from the Postal History View -Point (1989, 46pp, English).
184. Vlček, Miloslav; SCSF Klub Filatelistu 06-5 Kroměříž, Pošta na Zámku Kroměříž 1848 (1988, 14pp, Czech).
185. Katalóg, Filatelistickej Výstavy 1960. Výročie I. Slovenskej Výstavy Poštovních Známk", Trenčín (1988, 26pp, Czech).
186. Melnichak, Dr. Michael; The Typographic Overprints of the 1919 Krakow Issues of Poland (1990, 41pp, English).
187. Darásek & F. Žampach: Výplatní Známký 1923-1939; Papoušek: Celyny; Monografie Československých Známek, Vol. III (1979, 430pp, Czech).
188. Karásek, Bláha, Frolík, F. Žampach, & S. Žampach et al; Známký Letecké, Novinové, Doplatní, Spěšné a Doruční (1918-1939); Monografie Československých Známek, Vol IV (1986, 473pp, Czech).
189. Votoček et al; Česká Poštovní Razítka od Nejstarších Dob do Roku 1918; Monografie Československých Známek, Vol XIV (1978, 687pp, Czech).
190. Votoček et al; Poprkevratová Razítka 1918-1920; Monografie Československých Známek, Vol XVI, Part I (1982, 526pp, Czech).
191. Votoček et al; Poprkevratová Razítka 1918-1920; Monografie Československých Známek, Vol XVI, Part II (1982, 411pp, Czech).
192. Votoček et al; Československa Poštovní Razítka 1919-1939; Monografie Československých Známek, Vol XVII, Part I (1988, 503pp, Czech).
193. Votoček et al; Československa Poštovní Razítka 1919-1939; Monografie Československých Známek, Vol XVII, Part II (1988, 613pp, Czech).

- Richard Palaschak

AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS

Your Society continues to expand its stock of popular philatelic publications. These are being offered to its members at reasonable prices on a "first come; first served" basis.

Meanwhile a large portion of our supply of bound SPECIALISTS from prior years has been depleted by brisk sales. Nevertheless a supply of the more recent years is still available. If these years are missing in your philatelic library, this is your opportunity to add them individually to your collection without having to buy the complete set. All purchases are postpaid.

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We have a limited number of exhibit catalogs of various Czech stamp exhibitions. Many have extensive articles on all aspects of Czech philately, in addition to exhibit data.

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New Handbook

A new 104 page handbook on the Agriculture and Science Issue of 1923. Authored by Žampach, Karásek and Pittermann. Published in 1990, this is a new study on a famous issue. In Czech. \$10.00 Postpaid

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There is also a limited number of Czech language books related to philately available:

SVĚT FILATELIE (PHILATELIC WORLD)

By F. Švarc. Various articles on world philately scene.
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FILATELISTICKÝ MARATON

By Jiří Nováček. Published to commemorate PRAGA 68.
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By Václav Nebeský. Published in 1975. Contains various articles.
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Please search through your old unbound SPECIALISTS. If you have any of the above issues and can spare a copy for the good of the Society, please send it to your editor at this address: Mirko Vondra, 1511 Clearview Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601

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