



THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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an Incorporated Non-Profit Organization
Winner of Numerous Philatelic Literature Awards

A.P.S. Unit 18

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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1997

No.54, Whole No. 545

President's Corner

THE SOCIETY ON-LINE

On the last day I was in San Francisco, I received a phone call from my daughter. We had been working together on a home page for the Society, and she was calling to tell me that the page was actually on-line. I asked whether I should spread the word, but she said "I would rather you looked at it first, Dad. We still have a lot of work to do." She was right, of course, but I would have very much liked to have announced it during our annual convention. From then to now a lot of additional work has gone into the home page, enough to go public with the information that the page is now worth looking at. Of course it has to be understood that our page is a "work in progress", and it will constantly be just that. If it is to attract not only the dedicated, but also the interested or curious, it will constantly have to be up-dated and improved. And it will be.

There is a growing number of philatelic home pages on the Internet. These pages run the gamut from pages put up by individual philatelists, mostly as an ego trip it seems to me, to full blown on-line auctions. Our page falls among those of other societies, and its purpose is to provide information on our group both to members and to would-be members.

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The Society home page contains the following sections:

- Introductory page
- Membership benefits and how to join
- History of the SCP
- The Czechoslovak SPECIALIST
 - What is it?
 - Table of Contents for recent issues
- PRAGA 98
- Officers and Board Members
- What's Coming

One of the upcoming sections will be a listing of auctions which have a significant amount of Czechoslovak material. Such information is often available only on short notice, too short to make it into the *SPECIALIST*, so we'll put it on the Net. This will not be an exhaustive list, but it will be as complete as we can make it -- with the help of our members and whatever other information sources we can find. This section will also include dealers who advertize in *The Czechoslovak SPECIALIST*.

Check out your Society Web Page. You'll find it at "<http://www.erols.com/sibpost>".

Jaroslav J. Verner

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*All officers and board members serve the Society voluntarily
and without compensation.*

CZECH POSTCARDS MEANT TO DEFRAUD THE POST OFFICE

by Miloslav Vlček
trans. by Stephen Schoening

[Ed. Note: This article provides detailed information on this event and greatly expands upon the data provided in the article "Czech Republic Counterfeit Items" by Savoy Horvath contained in the May/June 1997 issue of the SPECIALIST.]

Before the division of Czechoslovakia into two independent states, the postal administrations of both countries were already preparing the issuance of new postage stamps and postal cards. At that time no one knew what the immediate future would bring.

The first Slovak postal card was issued in a short time, whereas the first Czech postal card took some time, and was not issued until August 3, 1993. The reason for such a late issuance is now known. The originally prepared postal card, which was to have been issued early in the spring, was in fact tainted by criminal events even during its printing, when a significant part of the printing run was stolen directly from the printing plant. This therefore led the issuers to decide that the entire prepared printing run was to be destroyed at the paper works. But now occurred a similar, further theft of these cards -- how many is not known.

In a short while these postal cards began appearing for sale at the newspaper stands of private individuals and thus got into postal circulation to the detriment of the postal service. These sales took place mainly at the places where these events

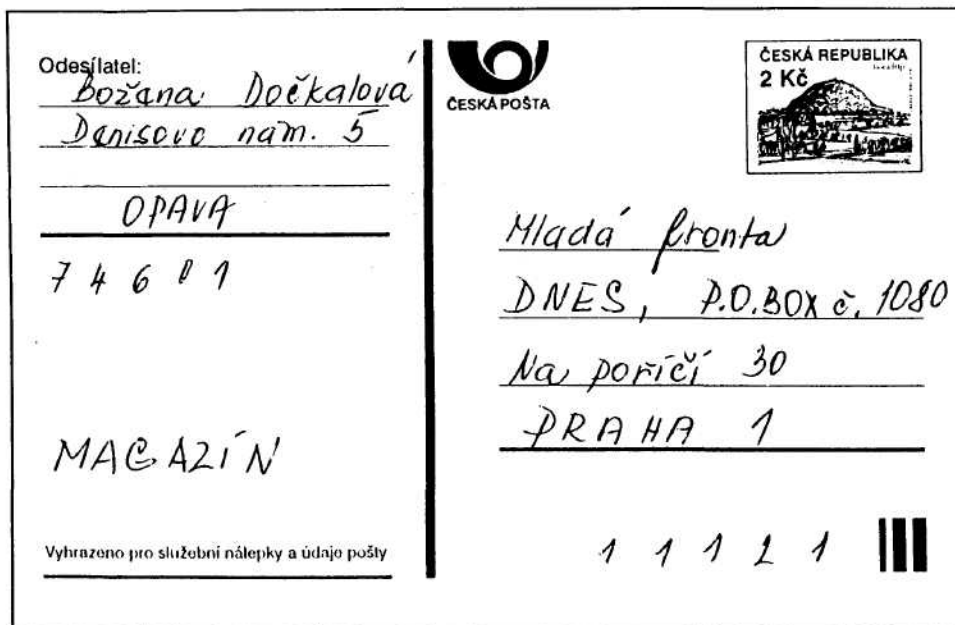


Fig. 1

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occurred, in Opava and Štětí. Today this postal card is mentioned in the philatelic catalogue as the unissued postal card CDV 1X, ŘÍP V RÁMEČKU [Říp mountain in a frame](Fig. 1). It is still sought after by collectors, and its catalogue value has reached the neighborhood of 500 Czech Crowns.

The first official postal card for common use was therefore issued in a hurry on August 3, 1993. This issue also had a picture of Říp, but without a frame. It was made using poor quality typography which aroused great criticism among collectors (Fig. 2).

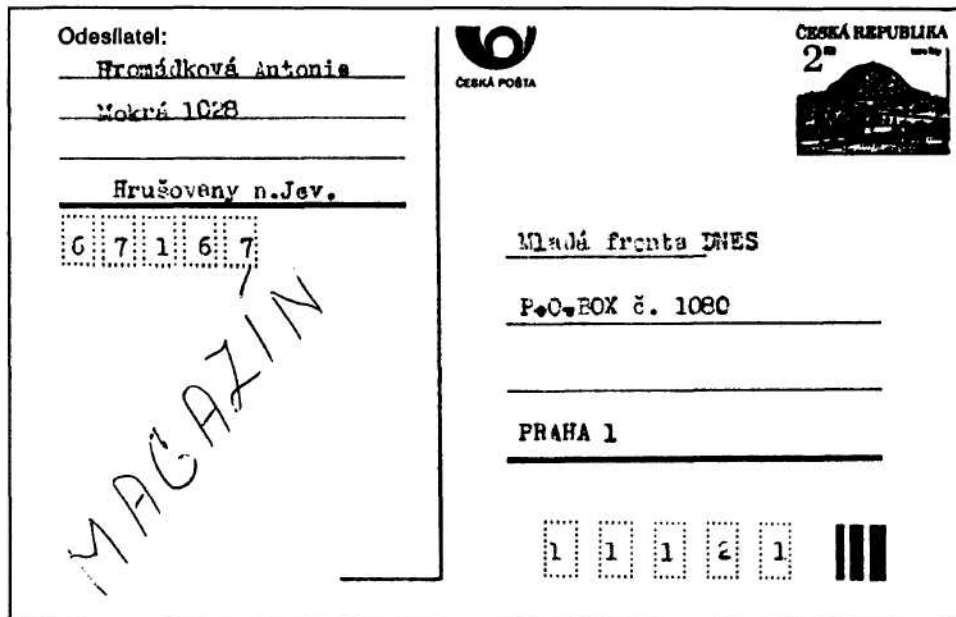


Fig. 2

After a short while a further printing run of these postal cards was put into circulation, but these were produced using offset printing and were of high quality. Perhaps already the issuers feared counterfeits of the printing, and so for the first time in the history of postal stationery, the postal administration used measures against forgers. This was achieved by using the microprinted and repeated text ČESKÁ POŠTA 93 as the first address line, easily seen when viewed under a magnifying glass (Figs. 3 and 4).

Another smaller group of these postal cards was issued towards the end of the year, but without the microprinted address line -- all of the address lines were solid. No explanation was given for this issue. It is introduced in the catalogue as postal card CDV 3b. Today this postal card is very much sought after by collectors and is quite highly priced. Its catalogue value has, according to the newest Trojan 1997 catalogue, reached the unbelievable sum of 800 Czech Crowns, and in the specialized POFIS II 1997 catalogue, 1200 Czech Crowns.

All subsequent postal cards, including commemoratives, were provided protection by using this microtext printing on either the first or second address line.

The microtext was differentiated [between issues] by containing the printing works and the year of manufacture; the printing works were distinguished by abbreviations of the printing company name -- VSP or PTC (Victoria Security Printing Inc., Prague, or Poštovní Tiskárna Cenin, Praha [postal stationery printery]). The readers of the journal "The Czechoslovak SPECIALIST" were already provided detailed information about these postal cards in the No. 6, 1995 issue.

The spring of 1996 was interesting when it brought excitement among collectors. During April there appeared in use a postal card with a value of 3 Czech Crowns having a village theme. Its microtext address line PTC ČESKÁ POŠTA 95 was unreadable, the miniature hatching on the stamp was smudged, and there was deterioration of the printing of the clouds. Many postal stationery collectors at first considered these forgeries to be prints with production flaws and blamed them on some kind of fault in the print shop. After being warned, even the issuer, PTC (Poštovní Tiskárna Cenin) in Prague, was unpleasantly surprised and confirmed that it was a forgery meant to defraud the post office (Fig 5). The forgeries could be purchased again only in private newspaper sales booths and in tobacco shops mainly in Prague and gradually in the vicinity up to 80 kilometers from Prague. The occurrence of these postal cards was not noted in other parts of the republic.

The forger was aware that his first runs were done in a low-quality manner and gradually - over a few months - perfected the following printings. It was determined that in all there were seven printings issued. Of these, five were printed by photogravure, and the sixth and seventh printings used a printing plate of two fields. These last two printings were of such a high quality that they reached an evaluation of 1 using a risk factor evaluation range of 1 - 3 [1 being the riskiest].

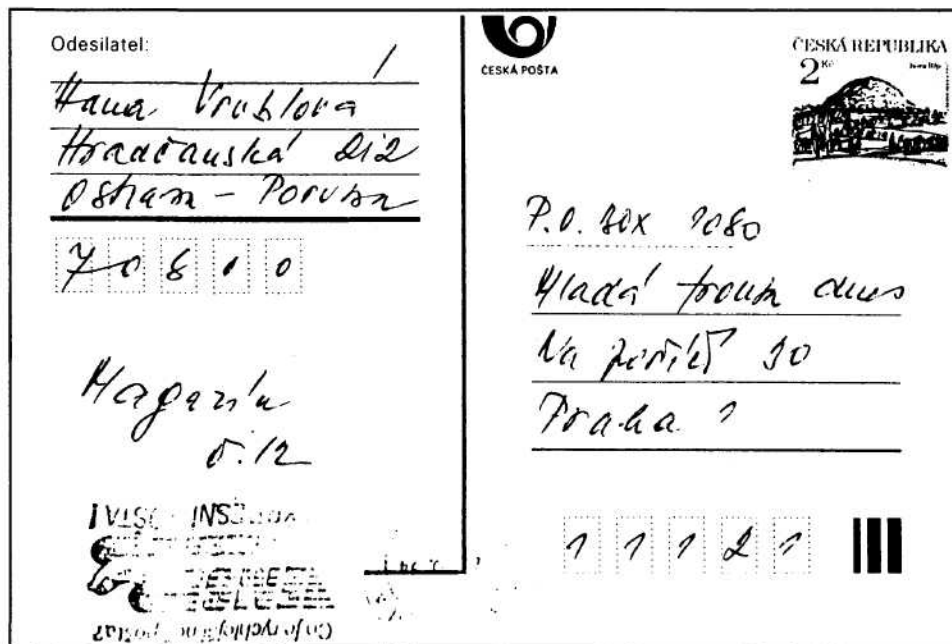


Fig. 3

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Certainly it would be interesting to know what kind of paper was used for the printing. The first printing was printed on paper from the Ratiškovice paper mill. Printings 2 - 6 are on paper from the Větní paper mill near Český Krumlov. Printing 7 is the only one not on original paper. The trail of the forger could be traced with the help of the original paper that was used in runs one through six.

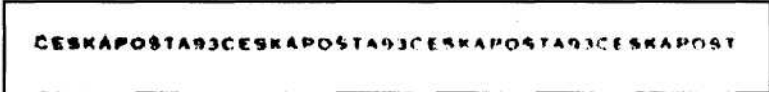


Fig. 4

The paper has an indestructible tag, through which, with the help of computer technology, the buyer of the paper could be found out -- in this case, the forger.

At the end of November, the forger was successfully revealed, and the unsold printed matter was recovered from the majority of the private shops.

Is it possible to find out how many were printed? Numbers have shown up that there were hundreds of thousands printed. Experts meanwhile estimate that the number could be 40 to 60 thousand pieces.

It was also determined that the great majority of the copies of these postal cards were used in non-philatelic correspondence. They were addressed for the most part to various magazine and daily press editors with solutions for crossword puzzles and other contests, in which this correspondence was usually destroyed after the contest ended.

It is therefore possible to claim that collectors found out about the appearance of these forged postal cards quite late, so it is probable that relatively few of the

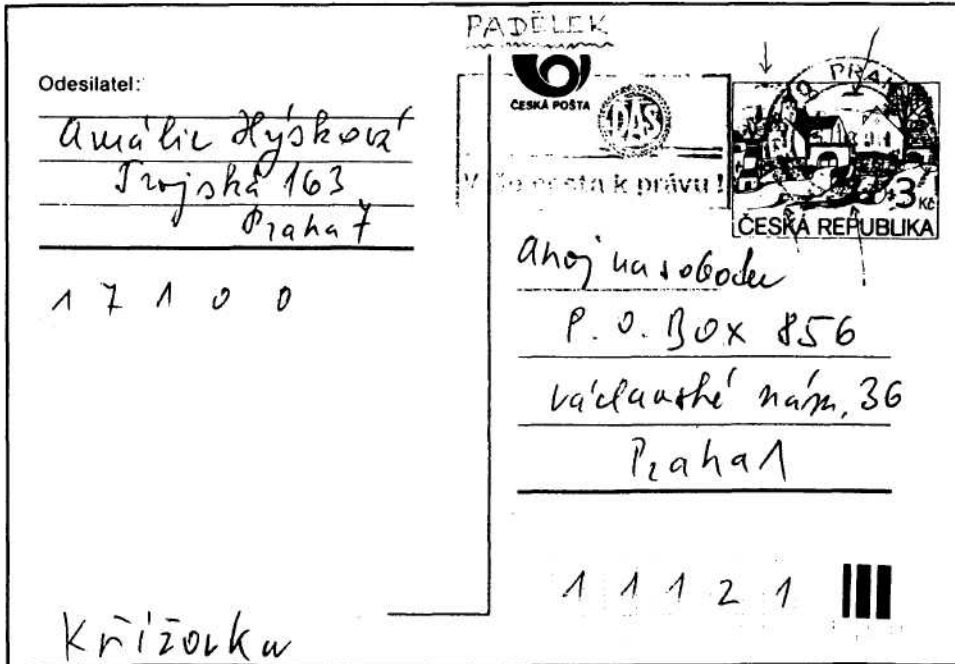


Fig. 5

postal cards that actually went through the mail were preserved. Thus in this situation it is possible to expect that in a short time they will be sought after by collectors and will be quite highly valued.

Currently, it is possible to acquire unused postal cards of printings 1 - 7 on the philatelic market, verified through written record specifying which printing it is, and provided with an official stamp of the philatelic expert J. Kraus (see Fig. 4, pg. 20, May/June SPECIALIST). A table to help determine the different printings has also been compiled (Fig 6). The price level of these postal cards on the philatelic market is currently reasonable. This confirms that there are many more mint copies of these postal cards than actual postally used ones.

As far as the collectible value of the forgeries, it is common practice to collect postally used forgeries that were made to defraud the post office. However, an unused forgery has reference value only. Only by postal use does a forgery meant to defraud the post office actually do so.

The first information on this issue was published in the USA by Linn's Stamp News on January 30, 1997 by Savoy Horvath, COUNTERFEIT CZECH REPUBLIC POSTAL CARDS BEING USED.

Figure 6: Table of Editions of Forged Postal Cards

Edition	Paper	Negative 1			Negative 2
		Primary Fault		Secondary Fault	
		e	C	E	K
1	normal	*	*	*	
2	whitened	*	*	*	
3	whitened	*	*		*
4	whitened	*	*		
5	whitened	*			
6	whitened				*
7	normal				*

Notes: e = clipped e in the word "odesilatel"
 C = interrupted C in the word "CESKA"
 E = interrupted E in the word "CESKA"
 K = incompletely etched upper leg of K

✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ ✱

UPDATED INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Good News!!! The Society for Czechoslovak Philately has yanked itself into the 21st century by going on line. Elsewhere in this issue you will find in the President's Corner column the announcement that the Society now has a Web Page. But more importantly for this publication, our editor, Lou Svoboda, is now accepting communications about the SPECIALIST at e-mail:

Lsvoboda1@aol.com

and FAX number: 303-627-9688. The FAX will only work if you first let the editor know to have the computer on before you send your material.

46th APOSTOLIC JOURNEY OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA
APRIL 21-22, 1990

by Arkadiusz Walinski

[Ed. Note: The *SPECIALIST* is proud to reprint the following article from *The COROS Chronicle*, the official bi-monthly journal of the Collectors of Religion on Stamps, with the permission of the editor, the Rev. Augustine H. Serafini, and the author, Arkadiusz Walinski, who supplied the text and illustrations.]

The Holy Father arrived at the Ruzyně airport in Prague, shortly before noon on Saturday, April 21. The Holy Father was greeted by Cardinal František Tomášek and President Vaclav Havel. From the airport, the Holy Father went to the St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague for a meeting with priests, religious and laity. Later the Holy Father celebrated Holy Mass on the Letná Esplanade for the faithful of Prague. In the evening the Holy Father paid a courtesy visit to President Havel in his residence, the Hradčany Castle, followed by a meeting with cultural leaders and officials of other churches.

On Sunday, April 22, the Holy Father travelled to the National Marian Shrine Sanctuary of Velehrad in Moravia, where he celebrated Holy Mass in honor of the Assumption of Mary and Saints Cyril and Methodius. From Velehrad, the Holy Father travelled to Bratislava, capital of Slovakia, where he celebrated Holy Mass at Vajnory Airport. In the evening, after farewell ceremonies at Bratislava airport, the Holy Father left for Rome.



Fig. 1

VATICAN

1. Commemorative travel postmark in Latin.
Portrait of Pope John Paul II
IO. PAVLVS II PONT. PRIMVS
CECOSLOVACHIAM VISIT * 21-22.IV.1990
POSTE CITTA DEL
VATICANO

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

2. First Day of Issue - April 16, 1990
1 Kčs Stamp
Portrait of Pope John Paul II and His coat of arms.



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

3. Praha - April 16, 1990
 First Day of Issue postmark.
 Crossed Peter's Keys.
 16.4.1990 / PRAHA



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

4. Praha - April 16-22, 1990
 Commemorative postmark.
 Papal Triple Crown (Tiara)
 PRAHA 012 / 17.4.1990 [cancel #1]
 PRAHA 012 / 21.4.1990 [cancel #2]



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

5. Velehrad (Moravia) - April 22, 1990
 Commemorative postmark.
 Papal Triple Crown (Tiara)
 VELEHRAD / 22.4.1990
 [cancel #1 and cancel #2]

6. Velehrad (Moravia) - April 22, 1990
 Commemorative postmark -
 Mobil Post Office
 Papal Triple Crown (Tiara)
 VELEHRAD / AUTOPOSTA /
 22.4.1990 [cancel #1]
 VELEHRAD / AUTOPOSTA /
 17.4.1990 [cancel #2]



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

7. Bratislava (Slovakia) - April 22, 1990
 Commemorative postmark.
 Pope John Paul II with crozier imparting his blessing.
 JAN PAVOL II / 22.4.1990 / BRATISLAVA 36
 VAJNORY

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Fig. 11

8. Bratislava (Slovakia) - April 22, 1990
Commemorative postmark.
Fragment of Pope's coat of arms.
JAN PAVOL II. / 22.4.1990 /
BRATISLAVA 1



Fig. 12

9. Bratislava (Slovakia) - April 22, 1990
Commemorative postmark.
Vatican coat of arms.
JAN PAVOL II. / 22.4.1990 /
BRATISLAVA 1

10. Praha - April 20-21, 1990

Postage meter cancellation.

Coat of arms and portrait of Pope John Paul II.

NAVŠTĚVA / PAPEŽE JANA PAVLA II. / PRAHA - VELEHRAD - BRATISLAVA
/ 150 00 PRAHA 21.4.1990

Applied
with red
ink.



Fig. 13



Fig 14

11. Praha - April 21, 1990
Mechanical postmark. Coat of arms
and portrait of Pope John Paul II.
NAVŠTĚVA / PAPEŽE JANA
PAVLA II. V CESKOSLOVENSKU
120 00 PRAHA 2 / 21.4.90



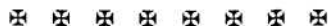
Fig 15

12. Praha - April 21, 1990
Mechanical postmark. Coat of arms
and portrait of Pope John Paul II.
NAVŠTĚVA / PAPEŽE JANA
PAVLA II. V CESKOSLOVENSKU
160 00 PRAHA 6 / 21.4.90

13. Praha - April 21, 1990
 Mechanical postmark.
 Coat of arms and portrait
 of Pope John Paul II.
 NAVŠTEVA / PAPEŽE JANA
 PAVLA II. / PRAHA - Letenska
 plan 21.4.1990
 170 00 PRAHA 7 / 21.4.90



Fig 16



AN OPEN LETTER

THANK YOU, MR. VERNER

I visited San Francisco and PACIFIC 97 privately, as a Czech exhibitor displaying the thematic collection "Troubled Times in Bohemia and Czechoslovakia 1620-1945". I was very happy to be invited to take part at the Society For Czechoslovak Philately Breakfast on May 31st and at the Society Membership Meeting on Sunday June 1st. So I was able to meet personally both Jaroslav Verner, President of the SCP, and Lou Svoboda, Editor of The Czechoslovak Specialist which I highly appreciate. And it was nice to meet again Mr. Henry Hahn with whom I served as apprentice at PRAGA 88 Jury, and Mrs. Jane Sterba whose exhibits I know from PRAGA 68 through PRAGA 88, and many more friends -- members of the SCP.

Somewhere in San Francisco I read: "We need actions, not words". So I took the chance and informed the SCP members about the present state of preparations for PRAGA 1998, which actually started only a year ago, after me having been elected as President of the SCF or: Union of Czech Philatelists in December 1995. A lot has been done so far, a lot still has to be done. It was very good, dear Jarka, we could meet immediately after the Society meeting to work out jointly the drafts of the PRAGA 1998 Exhibition Program, and of the program of the International Congress of Czechoslovakia collectors and exhibitors which is to be held on Saturday, September 12, 1998. All proposals and standpoints of the SCP will be taken into consideration at the September 1997 session of the PRAGA 1998 Coordinating Committee whose main goal is to approve a definitive program for PRAGA 1998.

Closing my open letter, I'd like to invite you and all the members of the SCP and their partners to the PRAGA 1998 International Stamp Exhibition which will take place at the Trade Fair Palace and Postal Museum, Prague from Thursday September 10 to Sunday September 13, 1998. More details about how to plan a trip to Praha and PRAGA 1998 will be sent to you in September 1997.

With best greetings to you, Jarka, and your colleagues and friends,

Sincerely Yours,

Lumír Brendl
 SCF President
 Praha
 Czech Republic

SV. VOJTĚCH -- SAINT ADALBERT 956 - 997

by Gerald van Zanten, Savoy Horvath et al



Fig. 1

The year 1997 sees the millennium of the martyrdom of St. Adalbert in 997. In recognition an international panel with representatives from the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Vatican City chose the design of a Czech graphic artist, Vladimír Suchánek, for the release of a joint-issue commemorative stamp for this 1000 year anniversary.

On April 23, 1997, stamps with the same motif were issued by the five above-named countries. They differ only in the country name, the different languages of the text, and the currency of denomination. Vladimír Suchánek's design pictures the saint against a dark background and was inspired by a historical medieval stained glass window. The Czech version of the stamp is dark violet (Fig. 1). It was printed by the recess engraving method from a flat plate in small sheets of 8 stamps per sheet (two blocks of four divided by an artistically designed gutter).

In 1947 -- the 950th anniversary of St. Adalbert's death -- a set of three stamps were issued (Fig. 2) refer Scott 326-328. Each showed a profile portrait of a work by sculptor K. Dvořák; they were engraved by Jindra Schmidt. They also came with a decorated coupon attached on left or right.



Fig. 2

A brief history is in order here. Saint Adalbert -- or Svatý Vojtěch as he is known in the Czech Republic -- was born around the year 956 at Lidice in Bohemia into the powerful Slavník clan.

Called the Slavníkovci, they were a rival family to the ruling Přemyslids. Since the young Vojtěch had an unusual intellect he was sent to the cathedral school at Magdeburg when he was just 15 for his higher education. There he received his education in philosophy and theology under the supervision of Archbishop Adalbert to prepare him to be a churchman. The Archbishop administered the sacrament of Confirmation and gave him the name of Adalbert. Upon his return to Bohemia in 981, he was reputed to be the best educated man in the country and was shortly thereafter ordained a priest.

Upon the death of the bishop of Prague, Dětmar, King Boleslav II (967-999) appointed the young clergyman Adalbert as the new bishop. Wishing to give public proof of his commitment to reform, he entered the city barefoot and opened the Bishop's kitchen to the poor, with whom he thereafter shared his meals. The conversion of Bohemia to Christianity was completed during Adalbert's stewardship. He is also credited with having baptized the son of the Magyar Prince Vajk, the future St. Stephen, first king of Hungary. He spared no efforts to lead the people

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towards a more christian way of life, but it was an uphill battle. Resistance from the nobility and the population against his fanatic beliefs and rigorous reforms made him resign from his seat and leave Prague after 6 years. He attempted to return to his ministry in Prague on several occasions in the ensuing years, but he found his Slavnikovci kinsmen to be in continual conflict with Boleslav.

He devoted his final years to the attempted conversion of the pagan areas of Poland and Prussia. It was on one such mission to the Prussians that he was killed on April 23, 997. His body was interred with great ceremony by the king of Poland at Gniezno (Gnesen). In the year 1053, Btetslav I (1037-1055) on a foray into Poland captured the town of Gnesen, where the victorious Bohemians retrieved the body of Adalbert and carried it in triumph back to Prague.

Adalbert became one of the great European saints and one of the creators of a common European cultural consciousness.

[Ed. Note: Our member, Savoy Horvath, has provided some illustrations of philatelic items associated with this issue. Figure 3 shows a postcard with a commemorative cancel for the first day of validity of the issue. Around the edge of the cancel it reads:

997 - Sv. Vojtěch - 1997 (and) 23.4.1997 - PRAHA 01

Savoy also manufactured several commemorative covers for the occasion. He took two illustrations produced by Czech artists, added appropriate words and numbers, and put them on covers. Figure 4 shows the illustration by Bedřička Znojemská of St. Adalbert preaching with a bird behind his miter hat. This cover contains the stamp issue with the first day of use cancel. Figure 5 shows the illustration by M. Florian of the figure of St. Adalbert with Prague in the background. This cover is postmarked St. Adalbert, Ontario, Canada, on the first date of use of the issue.]

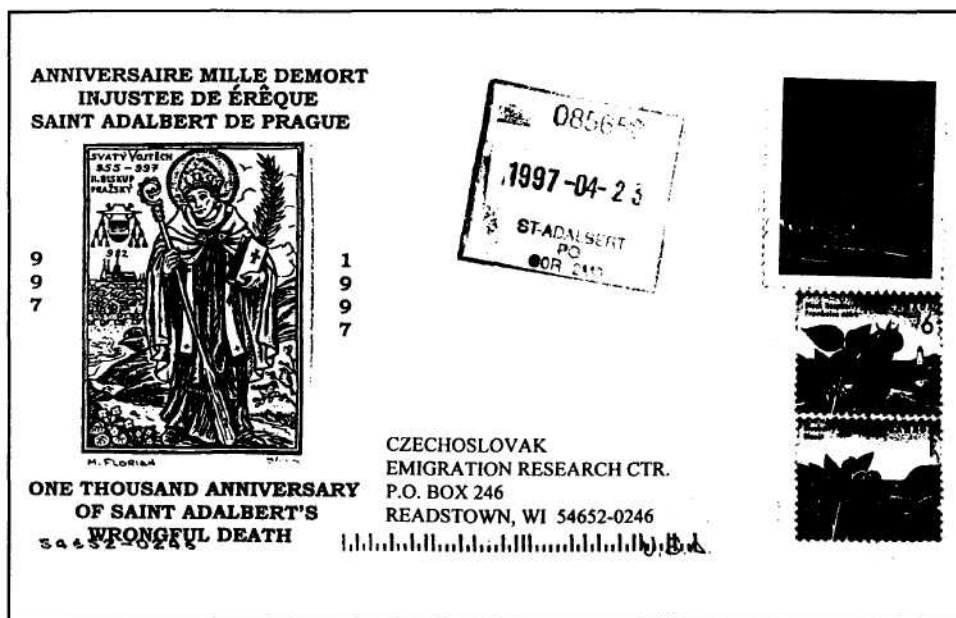


Fig. 5

PRAGA 98 POSTAL ISSUES

by Jaroslav Verner



Fig. 1

The Czech Post has announced up-coming stamp and postal stationary issues to publicize the international philatelic exhibition PRAGA 98. The exhibit will commemorate the 80th anniversary of the first Czechoslovak stamp, the 60th anniversary of the first PRAGA exhibition, and the 5th anniversary of the first stamps issued by the Czech Republic. Each of the issued items will bear the logo of PRAGA 98 (Fig 1).

A 4 Kč postal card was the first item issued and went on sale on March 26, 1997. It was designed by Alfred Fuchs and depicts a view from Charles Bridge toward the Old Town. Following are the additional issues that are planned.

Stamps

- 9/24/97 "Hundred Spired Prague" issue consisting of two 15 Kč stamps and a sheetlet which contains both of the stamps plus tabs. One stamp depicts the Hradčany Castle and the Lesser Town, while the other depicts the Old Town and Charles Bridge.
- 1/20/98 "Tradition of Czech Stamp Production" issue consisting of one 12.60 Kč stamp in sheets plus booklet form.
- 2/25/98 A souvenir sheet on the "History of PRAGA Exhibitions" with a 30 Kč denomination.
- 6/17/98 "Artwork on Stamps" issue consisting of two stamp honoring František Kupa (22 Kč value) and Paul Gauguin (23 Kč value).

Stationery

- 5/5/98 A special cancellation will be prepared for use on the 8 Kč postal card commemorating the 50th anniversary of the first Czechoslovak Airlines flight from Prague to Tel Aviv. This card will also honor ISRAEL 98.
- June 98 6 Kč postal card commemorating 250 years of mail delivery.
- Spring 98 4 Kč postal card depicting the Czech Postal Museum, one of the venues for PRAGA 98.
- Spring 98 4 Kč postal card depicting the Exhibition Palace, main venue of PRAGA 98.
- Date not set Postal card honoring the "Day of Postal History".
- Date not set Postal card honoring the "Day of Czech Philatelists".
- Date not set Envelope with a "Head of Mercury" imprinted stamp.

The next issue of the SPECIALIST will carry preliminary information on travel arrangements and schedules for PRAGA 98 to assist our members in planning their visit to that exhibition.

Exhibitors, dealers, and visitors may request additional information on PRAGA 98 from U.S. Commissioner Jaroslav J. Verner, 8602 Ewing Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817-3846.

64th APOSTOLIC JOURNEY OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND POLAND
MAY 20-22, 1995

by Arkadiusz Walinski

[Ed. Note: The *SPECIALIST* is proud to reprint the following article from The *COROS Chronicle*, the official bi-monthly journal of the Collectors of Religion on Stamps, with the permission of the editor, the Rev. Augustine H. Serafini, and the author, Arkadiusz Walinski, who supplied the text and illustrations. The portion of the article giving the details and postmarks from the Polish portion of the journey has been edited out.]

The Holy Father visited the Czech Republic on May 20-21, and Poland on May 22. The focal point of His visit was the canonization on May 21, of Blessed Jan Sarkander, a priest martyred in 1620, and Blessed Zdislava of Lemberk, a 13th century wife and mother who was a Dominican tertiary known for her charity towards the poor.

The Holy Father arrived at the Prague airport on Saturday morning, May 20, where he was greeted by President Vaclav Havel and authorities of Church and State. The Holy Father's first day in the Czech Republic, included meeting with the country's Bishops, and a meeting with the leaders of other Christian denominations. In the evening he led a prayer meeting with the people of Bohemia in the Strahov Sports Arena. Later the Holy Father left by helicopter for the city of Olomouc. On Sunday, May 21, the Holy Father celebrated the Canonization Eucharistic liturgy at the Neredin airport in Olomouc. In the late afternoon, the Holy Father met with young people of the Czech Republic in front of the Marian Shrine of Svaty Kopecek.

On Monday morning, May 22, the Holy Father was taken by helicopter to Skoczow, Poland, . . . to Ostrava in the Czech Republic, for departure ceremonies for his return to Rome.



VATICAN

1. Commemorative travel postmark in Latin.
PRAGAM / OLOMUCIUM / SKOCZOVIUM /
INVISIT / IO. PAVLVS II / * POSTE VATICANE
*20-22.V.95

Fig. 1

CZECH REPUBLIC

2. Postal Card
 First Day of Issue - May 17, 1995
 Stamp - 5 Kc - violet
 Pope John Paul II
 Navsteva Jana Pavla II. 1995
 (visit of Pope John Paul II 1995)
 Illustration: Saint Jan Sarkander
 Size: 4 1/8" x 5 13/16"



Fig. 2

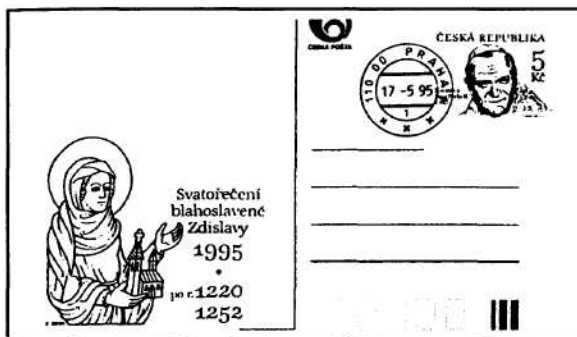


Fig. 3

3. Postal Card
 First Day of Issue -
 May 17, 1995
 Stamp - 5 Kc - brown
 Pope John Paul II
 Navsteva Jana Pavla II. 1995
 (visit of Pope John Paul II 1995)
 Illustration: Saint Zdislava
 Size: 4 1/8" x 5 13/16"

4. Olomouc - May 21, 1995
 Commemorative postmark
 Coat of arms of Pope John Paul II
 SVATOREČENÍ / OLOMOUC
 21.5.1995 /
 PAPEZSKÁ NAVSTEVA / CESKA
 REPUBLIKA 95 / OLOMOUC 2
 (Canonization - Olomouc May 21, 1995
 Papal visit - Czech Republic)
 Cancel #1 and #2
 Size: 1 3/16" x 1 1/4"



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

5. Olomouc - May 21, 1995
 Mechanical cancellation
 Coat of arms of Pope John Paul II
 OLOMOUC / 21.5.1995 / PAPEZSKÁ NAVSTEVA / +CESKA REPUBLIKA '95+
 Size: 1 3/16" x 1 15/16"

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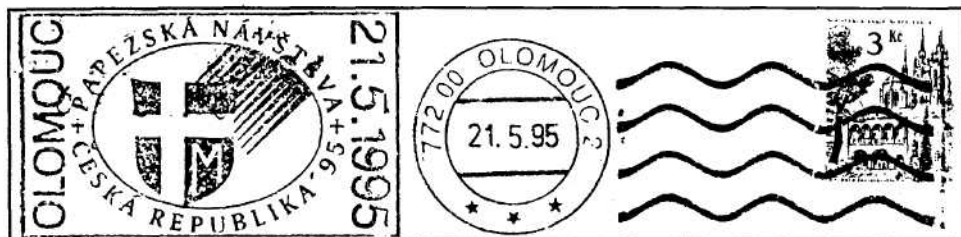


Fig. 6

6. Prague - May 5, 1995

Postage meter

Portrait and coat of arms of Pope John Paul II.

NAVŠTEVA / PAPEŽE JANA PAVLA II / 160-17 PRAHA 617 / 20.5.95

Visit of Pope John Paul II.

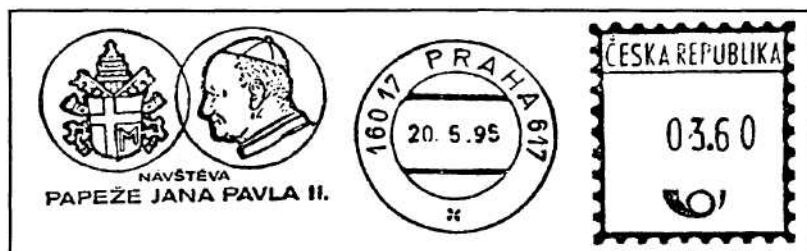


Fig. 7

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SLOVAK NEW ISSUES SERVICE -- UPDATE

by Frank Garancovsky

I recently received some new information on future mailings of Slovak new issues that is of interest to any of you that are taking part in this service. The service was originally announced in the Jan/Feb issue of the SPECIALIST, page 17.

The new information is contained in a note from the Chief of POFIS, Jana Horváthová, and addresses the frequency of future mailings.

"Dear Customers:

We would like to inform you that the Tariffs and Fees for the export of the Postage Stamps have changed in our country and therefore we can send you the stamps once a year.

If you would like us to send new issues more often, we would have to charge the Postage and Manipulation Fee, as well, which would be 0,58 USD (equivalent value is 20,- Sk).

Thank you for understanding of our situation. We believe that despite this situation you'll stay loyal to the Slovak stamps collecting.

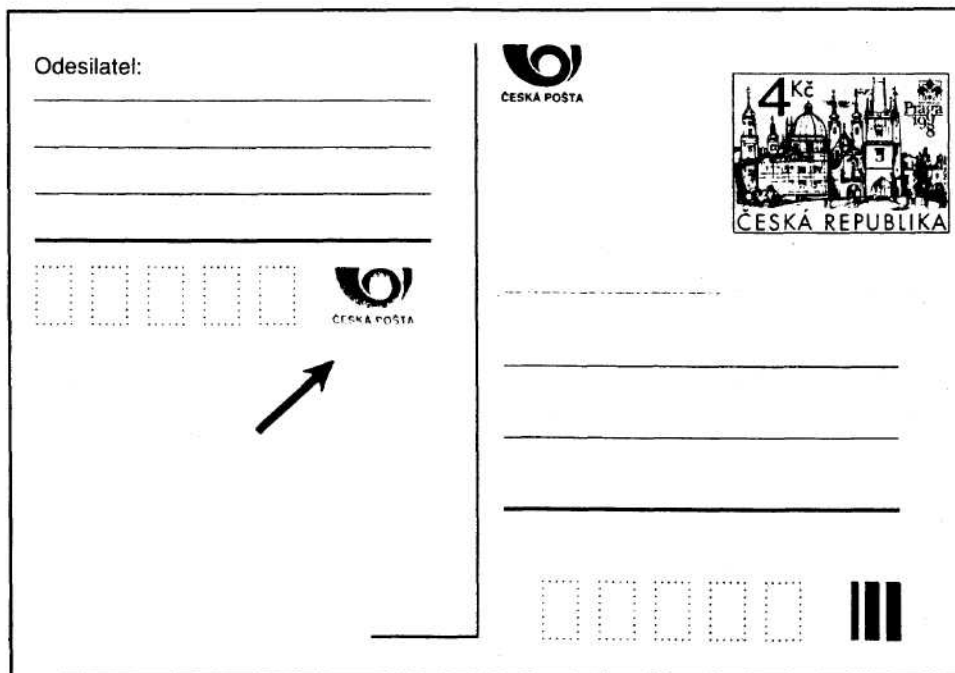
With best regards,

Jana Horváthová
Chief of POFIS"

POSTAL CARD FORGERY PROTECTIONS

by Miloslav Vlček
trans. by Ludvik Svoboda

Some new information on this subject was validated in the journal *FILATELIE* 4/97. On March 26, 1997, a postal card was issued with an imprinted 4 Kč stamp for normal postal service (Fig. 1). The stamp image captures the view from the Charles Bridge in Prague showing the tower of the old town bridge, the cupola of the church of St. Francis, the front of the church of St. Salvatore, the double spires of the baroque church of St. Clement, and other spires and towers.



The illustrated portion of the card is supplemented by the logo of the International Exhibition of Postage Stamps, PRAGA 98. The artistic designer of the stamp is academic painter and graphic artist Alfred Fuchs. The postal card was produced using offset printing by the Poštovní Tiskárna Cenin, Prague, using the colors brown and brownish red.

The postal card is provided two protection elements against forgery. One is a verticle mother-of-pearl colored stripe between the vertical dividing line and the horizontal lines for the senders address. The other is the Czech postal logo to the right of the sender's ZIP code blocks. The logo is printed in a thermal-sensitive light gray color which disappears during contact with heat (for a trial it is enough to touch it with a finger; with heat, the color begins to fade until disappearing, and then with cooling it begins to darken). The price of the postal card is 4.40 Kč.

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[Ed. Note: Three additional comments here. First, this card has a third forgery protection technique. It has the first address line consisting of microprinted text -- which now seems to be a standard for Czech Republic postal cards. Second, when held at a sharp angle against the light, the vertical mother-of-pearl stripe appears as a rectangular area that seems to have a very light layer of glue on it. This area actually has fluorescent hairs impregnated in it. And third, neither of these two protection techniques can be photocopied.]

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Charley's Corner

50/50 SELLS FOR \$37,375



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

In the Ivy & Mader auction at PACIFIC'97 on June 2, 1997, spirited bidding which started at \$7,500 brought the winning hammer price bid to \$32,500. To this one must add the 15% auction fee which brings the price to \$37,375.

This is probably the highest price ever paid for a Czechoslovak stamp and points to the fact that the 50/50 DOPLATIT error, Scott J52a, is the rarest Czechoslovak stamp (Fig. 1). The stamp is signed on the back by F. Brunner (Felix Brunner) and Kessler (Arthur I. Kessler) who originally were stamp dealers in Prague (Fig. 2). They eventually settled in New York City back in 1939-40. This particular 50/50 error is in extremely fine condition. It was used 6.I.27 which coincides with the time of validated use -- the first week of January 1927. All copies were used at Praha 14 (Hološovice). This particular 50/50 error came with a Fritz Billig certificate dated 3.10.67 stating it to be genuine in every respect.

Two interesting sidelights regarding the error. In *Tribuna Filatelistu*, the fall 1937 issue, there was pictured 2 exhibit pages of Arnost Berka who reportedly had the finest Czechoslovak collection during the 1st Republic. On his Czechoslovak page he shows a block of 4 of the rare 10 Kop. blue Russian stamp with the overprint "ČEŠSKJA POČTA" in Cyrillic lettering and a horizontal pair of the 50/50 error!

Then in an early issue of *The Czechoslovak SPECIALIST* in 1939, society founder, Joseph Lowey, tells of his visit to Arthur Kessler. He describes his pleasant visit and also his viewing many Czechoslovak rarities including a 50/50 error on cover! Could this cover still exist?

I know of two stories as to how the 50/50 error was created. The first is that a 50 heller carmine sheet was accidentally placed in the pile with the 20h carmine and 150h carmine allegory issues. The second story is that an employee with the urging of a collector or entrepreneur put in a sheet of the 50h carmine deliberately. But, he was called away for a moment, and as a result, lost tract of the sheet. Thus, the sheet wound up in the Praha 14 (Hološovice) station.

There are also conflicting stories as to the number originally found -- whether it is the 14 or 17 copies that were recorded by Hirsch. Jan Karásek and I discussed this at length in 1985. We concluded that no more than 12 - 13 copies exist today. I myself can think of only 8 copies, and one of those is in the Prague Postal Museum.

The last time I saw a 50/50 error at auction was in 1973 at the Kirstein sale in Munich. It sold for over 10,000 marks plus auction commission to a German

collector. It is now the property of a well known Czech collector.

Regarding its rarity -- I have maintained for over 25 years now that the 50/50 error is the rarest Czechoslovak stamp; but, various collectors and authorities maintained that the Austrian 4 Kcs and 10 Kcs granite papers with the overprint "POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKA 1919" were the rarest stamps. To this I took exception since the 4 Kcs and 10 Kcs granite paper values were not printed in Austria until the spring of 1919! Therefore, these were merely essays prepared by entrepreneurs to extract big money from wealthy collectors in those early days. These values did not come back as postal remainders from the various post offices within the republic, and it's certain that Czechoslovakia was not buying stamps from Austria in the spring of 1919. I rest my case.

Charley Chesloe

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ERRATA

- In the Membership List published on page 17 of the March/April 1997 issue, we erroneously indicated that Malcome Ferguson, member #1744, and John Panda, member #1650, lived in Maine. We should have shown they actually lived in Massachusetts. We regret this error. But wouldn't life be easier if it were this easy to move?

- The "PACIFIC'97 - The Show and Exhibits" article in the July/August 1997 issue regrettably had several errors or omissions:

- the author's by-line was left out. It should have shown that Henry Hahn had been it's father.

- the list of SCP exhibitors and their awards failed to indicate the Frederick Lawrence exhibit, "Scouting on Stamps "Classics": Three Specialist Studies' had won a Large Vermeil medal judged as a 5-frame special studies exhibit. One-third of the exhibit covers the 1918 Czech Scout Post and showed pieces not shown by exhibitors Pytlíček, Fischmeister, Klein, and Hahn, including the inverted "Arrival of President Masaryk" overprint on the 20h red stamp (one of four copies, two in state museums in the Czech Republic and two in private hands).

- the list of SCP exhibitors and their awards failed to indicate the

Anthony F. Dewey exhibit "First U. N. Definitive Issue, 1951" had won a Large Silver as a 5-frame exhibit. This was his very first time to compete at the international level. The exhibit had received Gold at the national level as a 10-frame exhibit. We regret these oversights.

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Editorial Hinges

Thomas Garrigue Masaryk

Several of you have written me recently reminding me that September 14, 1997 is the 60th anniversary of the death of the founding father of the state of Czechoslovakia. Along with the reminder was a burning question: Why wasn't the Czech Republic issuing a stamp to commemorate their George Washington/Thomas Jefferson/Thomas Payne all rolled into one?

I don't have the answer. And so far none has come forth from the Czech Republic either, even though some of you have written to the highest levels of the government for an explanation.

It just seems very odd that someone who devoted most of his adult life to the establishment of a nation should not be honored by it. He agitated (peacefully) within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He wrote books and articles advancing the

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cause of an independent Czech nation. He traveled the world explaining the cause to whoever would listen. He devoted himself to the little chores of nation building like establishment of a new Czech university in 1882, pushed for a Czech dictionary, formed groups of Slovak students, published journals, and, above all, advocated the cultivation of the citizen. During WW I, he lead the effort to coordinate the various Czechoslovak Legionnaires fighting on five different fronts, and he became the Commander-in-Chief of all the allied forces in Siberia. After the war, he presided over the birth of the nation, became its first president, and was re-elected three more times before he died in 1937 at the age of 87.

From March 7, 1920 through September 14, 1947, he appeared on 63 issues of Czechoslovakia. Since the rebirth of Czechoslovakia in 1989 (and carrying through with the Czech Republic to the present), he has appeared on only one stamp (Scott 2772, issued 9 January 1990). This was one of a set of six that was commemorating the anniversaries of famous personalities, and one of the people being honored was no less than Vladimir Ilyich Lenin! The set originally contained only five stamps, and Thomas Garrigue Masaryk was apparently added at the last minute.

I would be very interested -- as I'm sure many of you readers would be also -- to find out why this great man has been overlooked so far in this modern era.

Ludvik Zdenek Svoboda

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NEW MEMBERS

ARKANSAS

1816 Oldfield, R. L.

MINNESOTA

1808 Reckmo, S.

1810 Plasek, F.

NEBRASKA

1819 Wineteer, S. A.

WASHINGTON

1812 McConnell, R.

1813 Larson, J. W.

CALIFORNIA

1811 Ritschy, V.

1815 Gary, D. M.

1817 Maddock, D. H.

1820 Kallik, J. F.

1821 Safranek, G. J.

NEW YORK

1807 Albrecht, H. A.

1814 Kanturek, J. B.

NEW JERSEY

1809 Suk, C. J.

CANADA, ONTARIO

1818 Sprott, D.

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TRIBUNA'S 8th AUCTION -- GREAT SUCCESS

by Charley Chesloe

Tribuna Stamp Company's stamp auction held on May 4, 1997, turned out to be a huge success with many lots bringing very high prices. Most lots realized prices way over their estimates.

An unused Scout imprinted postal card sold for \$1250 and was estimated at \$500-600. A Hradcany money letter with 70 copies of the 1000h Hradcany had an estimate of \$500-600 and was hammered down for \$875. A very rare "Česká

"Družina" cancel on a postal card mailed in 1914 fetched \$1600 against an estimate of \$800-1000. A se-tenant vertical gutter of the 3h value realized \$600, and 3 dieproofs from the 1928 commemorative series sold for \$260 (the 60h value), \$235 (the 3 Kčs value), and \$250 (the 5 Kčs value). A rare die proof of Hitler, Scott B19, engraved by Jindra Schmidt brought \$370. A vertical pair of the Hradcany 15h value, perforated 13 3/4 x 10 3/4 in a joined type sold for \$1750. Cross gutter blocks of 16 of the 1945 Košice issue brought \$575. All prices listed are hammer prices and to this the buyer paid an additional auction commission of 12 1/2%.

Of the 255 lots offered, only 15 remained unsold. For a catalog and prices realized, please send \$5 to: Tribuna Stamp Co., P. O. Box 100, Willow Springs, IL 60480.

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New Issues

CZECH REPUBLIC

by G.M. Van Zanten and P.Z. Kleskovic

1. On January 20, 1997, the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Czech Republic issued a 3.60 Kč stamp entitled "The Tradition of Czech Stamp Production" (Fig. 1). The base color of the stamp is blue with only the denomination being in another color, red. The design depicts the 1920 V. H.



Fig. 1

Brunner stamp entitled "The Liberated Republic". The graphic artist was Jiří Rathouský, and the engraver is Bohumil Šneider. The stamps are printed in sheets of 50.



Fig. 2

2. On March 12, 1997, the Ministry issued a 3 Kč stamp commemorating Easter (Fig. 2). Its colors are yellow, grey, bluegreen and red. The design shows traditional Easter symbols -- a large hare, birds, a colored egg, and a plaited willow cane. The graphic artist was Olga Čechová, and the engraving was done by Bedřich Housa. The stamps are printed in sheets of 50.

3. On March 12, 1997, the Ministry issued a set of 4 commemorative stamps entitled "Nature Conservation - Protected Flora" (Fig. 3). On the stamps are depicted the flowers from our Republic whose survival is endangered and which are therefore protected.

- 3.60 Kč Erythronium Dens-canis L. (trout lily)
Colors: yellow, green, pink, red-brown, brown
- 4 Kč Calla Palustris L. (bog arum or water dragon)
Colors: yellow, green, red-brown, brown
- 5 Kč Cypripedium Calceolus L. (lady's slipper orchid)
Colors: yellow, yellow-green, green, red-brown, brown
- 8 Kč Iris Pumila L. (dwarf bearded iris)
Colors: yellow, pink, green, rose-brown, brown

The graphic designers of the stamps are academic painters and graphic artists Libuše and Jaromir Knotek. The engraving is the work of Václav Fajt. The stamps have been printed by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print



Fig. 3

combined with photogravure in printing sheets of 50 pieces. There will be 4 FDC's bearing the flowers occurring in the same habitat as those depicted on the stamps.

- The 3.60 Kč FDC depicts *Lilium Martagon* L. (turkscap lily) in brown (Fig. 4).
- The 4 Kč FDC depicts *Trollius Altissimus* Crantz (globe flower) in green (Fig. 5).
- The 5 Kč FDC depicts *Dictamnus Albus* (burning bush) in brown-red (Fig. 6).
- The 8 Kč FDC depicts *Adonantha Vernalis* (L.) Spach (adonis) in brown (Fig. 7).

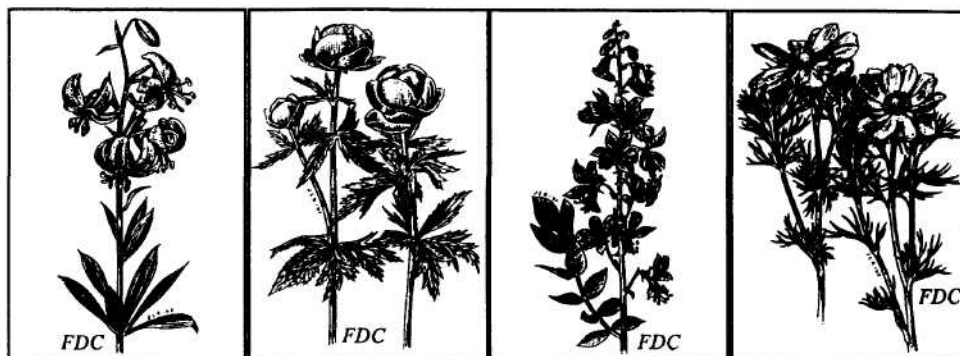


Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

4. On March 26, 1997, the Ministry issued a 4 Kč stamp entitled "Best Wishes" (Fig. 8). The design shows a small girl holding a little cat in her arms while three other cats at her feet are trying to draw her attention. Symbolic hearts and flowers are pictured on the four corners of the stamp. The graphic design was by the academic painter and artist Jindřich Kovařík. The stamps were produced in multicolored offset in sheets of 50 pieces by the Post Printing House. The FDC depicts an ornamental vase with carnations.



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

5. On March 26, 1997, the Ministry issued a 4.60 Kč definitive stamp in the Historical Building Styles series entitled "Rococo" (Fig. 9). Its colors are pink and green. The design depicts a window reminiscent of a house with elements of the rococo style in the center of Třeboň. The image is completed

by the inscription "Rococo" in Czech, and there are shell ornaments at the base of the stamp. The graphic artist was Jan Solpera, while the engraver was Bohumil Šneider. The stamps were produced in a combination of one-color intaglio and photogravure in sheets of 100 pieces by the Post Printing House. No FDC was issued.

6. On April 23, 1997, the Ministry issued a 7 Kč stamp to commemorate the millennium of the death of St. Adalbert -- Sv. Vojtěch in the Czech Republic [see the illustrations and additional text in an accompanying article in this issue]. This was a joint issue with Germany, Hungary, Poland and the Vatican City. The color of the stamp is violet. It depicts a portrait of St. Adalbert inspired by a medieval stained-glass window. The text on the sheetlet commemorates the UNESCO world cultural anniversary -- 997-1997 ADALBERT S MILLENNIUM--UNESCO in the Czech language. The graphic artist was Vladimír Suchánek, while the engraving was by Miloš Ondráček. The stamps were produced in one-color recess printing in sheetlets of 8 pieces by the Post Printing House. The FDC shows a drawing of the saint in a popular woodcut of the time.

7. On April 30, 1997, the Ministry issued a pair of 8 Kč stamps in the "EUROPA - Tales and Legends" series (Fig. 10). The design of the stamps was executed by painter and designer Adolf Born, most likely, because the designs of his previous Marco Polo stamps issued May 4, 1994, were considered as some of the best in the world. He picked for his design two stories ("About Bruncvík" and "Žito the Magician") from The Old Czech Tales. The one about Bruncvík is still told today. It alludes to a heroic prince who has defeated various monsters and countless enemies with the help of his magic sword and his faithful lion. [A statue of Bruncvík stands on an ornamental pedestal beside the Charles Bridge in Prague. According to legend his original sword is walled up somewhere in the bridge where it can be retrieved to defend the country.]



Fig.10

Supposedly, at the time when the Czech nation would suffer greatly, the knights who now slumber under Blaník mountain will rise up and will be led by St. Wenceslas into battle with Bruncvík's sword in his hand. The stamp shows the heroic Bruncvík with sword together with his beautiful wife Neomenie, his faithful lion, and the heads of serpent-like monsters. For the second stamp, he selected the tale of the unbelievable tricks of a magician named Žito who was at the royal court of Wenceslas IV. This stamp shows the court jester sitting on a two wheeled cart which is being pulled by three pairs of roosters. The king, Wenceslas IV, is shown watching the ride from his window. Both stamps bear the EUROPA logo and were engraved by Václav Fajt, who also engraved the drawings on the FDCs. The stamps were produced using a combination of intaglio and five-color photogravure printing in sheets of 8 by the Post Printing House. The first FDC depicts a dragon with six heads and a knight on a horse. The second contains a drawing of Ctirad and Šárka from a story of "The Girl's War". This one shows a girl tied to a tree that contains birds singing to her; she is being guarded by a knight on a horse. The FDCs were printed in one-color intaglio in brown.



Fig. 11

8. On April 30, 1997, the Ministry issued two commemorative stamps in the Beauties of Our Country series focusing on Jewish Monuments in Prague and entitled "Old-New Synagogue" and "Tombstone of Rabbi Loew" (Fig. 11). This is a joint issue with the postal officials of Israel. The stamps colors are black, red, and blue. The 8 Kč stamp shows a view in the Jewish synagogue called the Altneuschul. It is the oldest existing synagogue in Europe today. It was built in the Gothic architectural style with construction being completed in 1270. It was originally called the "New" or "Great" synagogue, but over the years as the Jewish population of Prague increased and

additional synagogues were built, it required a new name. Therefore, it was called the Altneuschul (Old-New Synagogue). The view inside the synagogue shows the east wall with a five part Gothic ribbed vault and the Holy Ark where the Torah scrolls are housed. The space where the passages from the Torah are read is surrounded by a Gothic grille which originates from the end of the 15th century. Above a window are inscribed the Hebrew letters that form an acronym for the expression "Know before Whom you stand". The 10 Kč stamp depicts the tombstone of Rabbi Yehudah Loew ben Bezalel (1512-1609), better known as the Maharal of Prague. He is renowned as the most famous of the many illustrious Jewish scholars of the Bohemia and Moravia region. He wrote books and gave many sermons containing extraordinary philosophical thoughts on the place of the Jewish people among the nations and the nature of nationalism. The stamps were designed by the graphic artist James Janíček, with engraving by Miloš Ondráček. The stamps were produced by three-color intaglio in sheets of 8 pieces by the Post Printing House. Of the two FDCs, the first shows a silver pointer used while reading from the Torah, and the second shows a crown for the Torah used during Jewish feasts.

9. On May 14, 1997, the Ministry issued a three se-tenant stamp souvenir sheet commemorating an exhibition titled "The Prague of Rudolf II" (Fig. 12). The souvenir sheet colors are brown, red, and green, and it measures 118 x 91 mm. The exhibition was held in Prague from May 30 through September 7. More than 1,500 items from the reign of Rudolf II, including art objects and archive documents, were on display. Rudolf II was born in 1522 in Vienna. He succeeded his father as Holy Roman Emperor in 1576, and held that title until his death in 1612, but was



Fig. 12

considered an incompetent ruler. During his reign he made Prague his home. He reputedly transformed his imperial court into the cultural and spiritual center of central Europe. He was fascinated with the arts and sciences, and was an avid collector. His collection of rare works of art was considered the finest of its time. The 6 Kč stamp depicts a composition of diverse and interesting objects (including musical instruments, flowers, the image of a bearded man) which were collected by Rudolf II. The 8 Kč contains an allegorical portrait of the Emperor Rudolf II with a laurel wreath around his forehead, holding a rose lightly in his fingers while he listens to the Muses. The 10 Kč stamp depicts a portrait of the emperor's court painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo, who is known for his bizarre portraits, landscapes and still life's of parts of animals, vegetables, or other common objects from everyday life. His likeness is surrounded by a skull, moth's wings, a tree, flowers, leaves and fruit. At the base of the souvenir sheet is a decorative motif containing flowers and fruit with the text Prague of Rudolf II in the Czech language. Miloš Ondráček converted the drawings of graphic artist Oldřich Kulháněk into engravings. The souvenir sheet and the FDCs were produced using recess printing by the Post Printing House. There are three FDCs. The first shows the architecture of palaces and churches of the Little Quarter with the fortified Prague castle in the background. Also included are the coat-of-arms with the Czech lion and a plant and fruit motif. The second contains a drawing of St. Vitus cathedral and an initial R in the front of the imperial crown. The third FDC shows a view of the Charles Bridge and both sides of the Vltava river with the coat-of-arms of the Little Quarter and a plant and fruit motif.

Postal Stationery

10. On March 26, 1997, the Ministry issued a postcard with an imprinted stamp

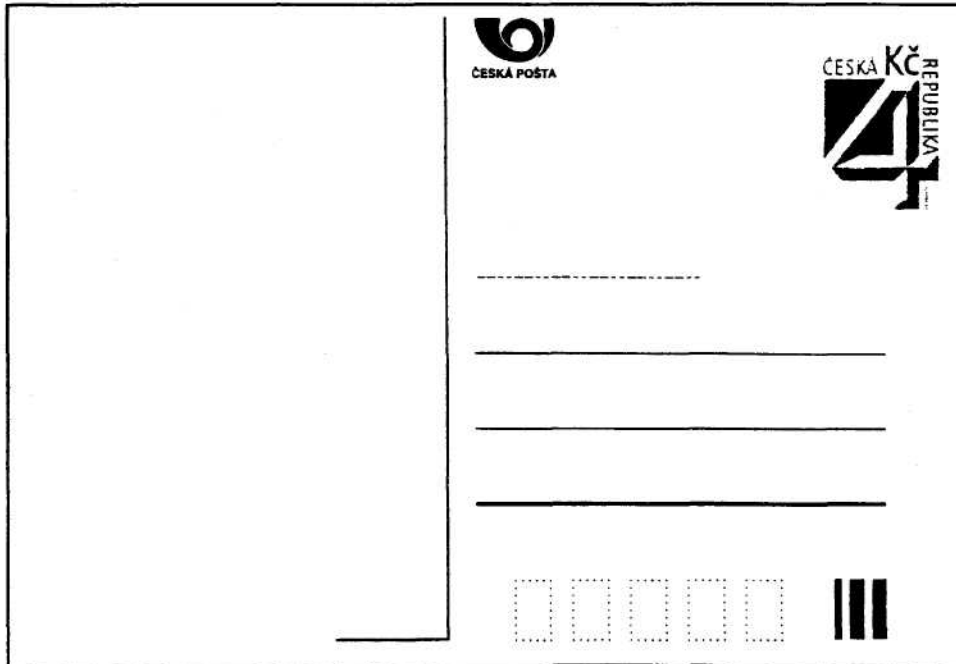


Fig. 13

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

showing the view of Prague from the Charles Bridge. The card is denominated 4 Kč and is for normal postal usage. Its selling price is 4.40 Kč. [See the article in this issue titled "Postal Card Forgery Protections" for all other details of this issue.]

11. On March 26, 1997, the Ministry issued a postcard with imprinted stamp in the denomination of 4 Kč for commercial and promotional purposes (Fig. 13). The left part of the card is free (it has no lines for the senders address) and is reserved for additional printing. The designer was graphic artist Jan Solpera. The postcard was produced using offset printing by the Post Printing House in colors of black and blue-green. Its selling price is 4.40 Kč.



Fig. 14

SLOVAKIA

by F. Garancovsky and G.M. Van Zanten

12. On March 25, 1997, the Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications issued a 16 Sk commemorative stamp entitled "700 Years of the Franciscan Church in Bratislava" (Fig. 14). The stamp displays an architectural motif image of the spire with four tall interior windows as a backdrop. The Franciscan church is the oldest church in Bratislava. It was completed in 1297, and the unadorned choir stall dates from that period. On the side altar stands a remarkable Late Gothic sandstone pieta. The church was extended several times at later dates. During the 18th century it was even adorned with a Loreto chapel. The stamp was designed by Peter Augustovič and engraved by František Horniak. It was produced using rotary-recess printing combined with recess printing on sheets of fifty stamps by the Postal Stationery Printing House, Prague. The FDC gives details of the Gothic interior decoration of the church.

13. On April 15, 1997, the Ministry issued a 9 Sk definitive stamp commemorating the city of Žilina (Fig. 15). The stamp depicts the Holy Trinity Parish Church of Žilina, which is situated not far from the town's market square. It is an imposing building (originally Romanesque, but rebuilt in early Gothic style about 1400) with an additional free-standing tower in Renaissance style, built in 1540. Also shown is the coat-of-arms of Žilina (refer also to the 1971 stamp in the coat-of-arms series, Pofis 1882/Scott 1742). Žilina is on the river Vah in sight of the Mala Fatra mountains, was first mentioned in 1208, and became a town in 1312. The town was occupied by the Hussites from 1429 until 1434 and was devastated by fire in 1521. Towards the end of the 16th century some 2000 drapery workers were employed in Žilina. The Thirty Years war precipitated the towns decline, only to recover in the late 19th century when a rail link occurred. Today it is one of the most important rail junctions in Slovakia. In addition, the oldest surviving manuscript in the Slovak language was discovered here, just in this century. It is known as the Žilina Book and dates back to 1370. It is a statement of the rights of citizens belonging to a free town. The stamp design was produced by Marián Čapka, and the engraver was František Horniak. It was produced using rotary-recess printing combined with recess printing in sheets of 100 multicolored stamps by the Postal Stationery Printing House, Prague. The FDC depicts a still life showing a town book and a privilege document.



Fig. 15

14. On April 15, 1997, the Ministry issued a 10 Sk commemorative stamp entitled "100 Years of Wireless Telegraphy" (Fig. 16). The stamp shows a symbolic drawing of G. Marconi with his hand up to his ear listening for the signal emanating from a radio tower in the background. It was designed by Oliver Solga and engraved by Martin Srb. It was produced using rotary-recess printing combined with recess printing in sheets of 50 multicolored stamps by the Postal Stationery Printing House, Prague. The FDC contains a symbolic drawing in gray-green color.



Fig. 16

15. On May 5, 1997, the Ministry issued a 9 Sk commemorative stamp with a label in the "EUROPA -- Tales and Legends" series (Fig. 17). The stamp depicts the words "Miraculous rain near Hron" vertically on the upper left and the word "EUROPA" vertically on the upper right. It further shows rain falling from an eye in the sky down onto the upturned faces and hands of Roman soldiers and into the mouth of a horse. The label shows Roman unit-emblem standards against a backdrop of trees. The legend of the "miraculous rain near Hron" originates from the time when Roman legions under Marcus Aurelius (Roman Emperor from 161-180 AD) crossed the Danube river. They were involved in the wars against the Marcomanni and Quadi (between 167-175 AD) along the Hron river which flows into the Danube just west of the Danube bend. The hot and thirsty Roman soldiers were rescued by the



Fig. 17

"miraculous rain". [Hron region architecture is shown on Pofis 1877/Scott 1735. Also refer to the G.M. van Zanten article on Trenčín, Sept 1983 issue of the SPECIALIST, pg. 8. It gives more details about the Roman legions across the Danube.] The stamp and label designs were performed by Karol Ondreička, and the engraving was done by František Horniak. They were produced using rotary-recess printing from flat plates producing sheets of 7 stamps and 3 labels in an alternate format. They were printed by the Postal Stationery Printing House, Prague. The FDC depicts a scene from the historical relief of Marcus Aurelius's pillar in Rome.



Fig. 18

16. On June 12, 1997, the Ministry issued a souvenir sheet containing an 11 Sk stamp entitled "FOLKLORE FESTIVAL VÝCHODNÁ" (Fig. 18). The stamp depicts a dancing couple in folk costumes from the waist up. The lower portion of the dancers is illustrated on the remainder of the souvenir sheet. These beautiful types of Slovak

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folk costumes include festive as well as workday costumes from the Liptov region, which includes Východná, the subject of this stamp. The restoration of privately owned costumes - evident at folklore festivals in Východná - testifies to the great cultural interest of the villagers of these regions. The multicolored souvenir sheet was designed by Sibyla Greinerová, and the stamp was designed by Martin Činovský; both were engraved by Rudolf Cigánik. The sheet was produced using rotary-recess printing combined with recess printing by the Postal Stationery Printing House, Prague. The FDC pictures a dancing couple in folk costume.



Fig. 19

17. On June 12, 1997, the Ministry issued a set of two stamps in the "Splendours of our Homeland" series (Fig. 19). The topic of this set is natural caverns. The 6 Sk stamp shows the Domica cavern, one of the most beautiful in the world. This cavern

was discovered on

October 3, 1926, by Ján Majko. Near the entrance is the so called "chimney" by which the inhabitants - during the second half of the third millennium BC - used to descend into the cavern. Here they found shelter, because the temperature inside remains at 10° C all year round. Items uncovered during excavations included stone tools, axes, daggers, a bone ring, and clay vessels. There are a wealth of white stalactites in the "Front Hall", while clay vessels of beautiful shapes decorated with engravings and drawings were found in the "Hall of the Eleven Flames". The 8 Sk stamp depicts the Ochtina cavern which is approximately 18km west of Rožňava on the western edge of the Slovakian Karst. This cavern has exceptionally delicate crystal formations -- mostly in the form of flowers. The multicolored stamps were designed and engraved by Martin Činovský. They were produced using recess printing from flat plates in sheets of eight stamps with the symbol of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage between the two blocks of four. They were printed by the Postal Stationery Printing House, Prague. The two FDCs are canceled in Dlhá Ves and Ochtina respectively.

18. On June 26, 1997, the Ministry issued a 3 Sk commemorative stamp entitled "Triennale of Naive Art" (Fig. 20). The stamp depicts the work of art of Martin Jonáš from Kovacice called "Dance". It is a brightly colored work showing villagers dancing and generally having fun. The stamp was designed by Pavel Blažo and engraved by Václav Fajt. It was produced using rotary-recess printing combined with recess printing in sheets of fifty stamps by the Postal Stationery Printing House, Prague. The FDC reproduces a work of art by Ondrej Šteberl called "On Walking".



Fig. 20

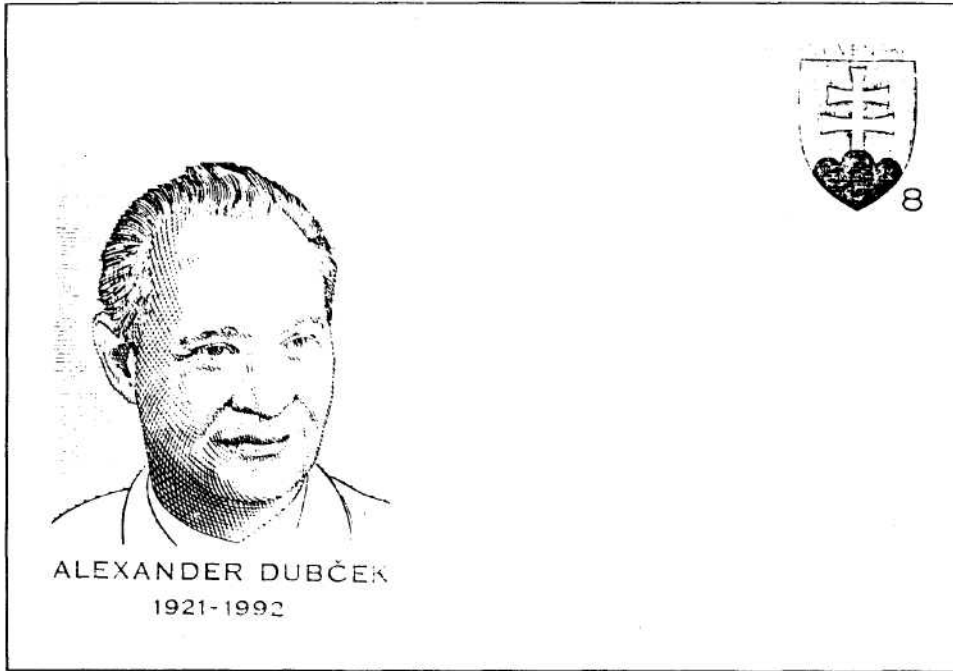


Fig. 21

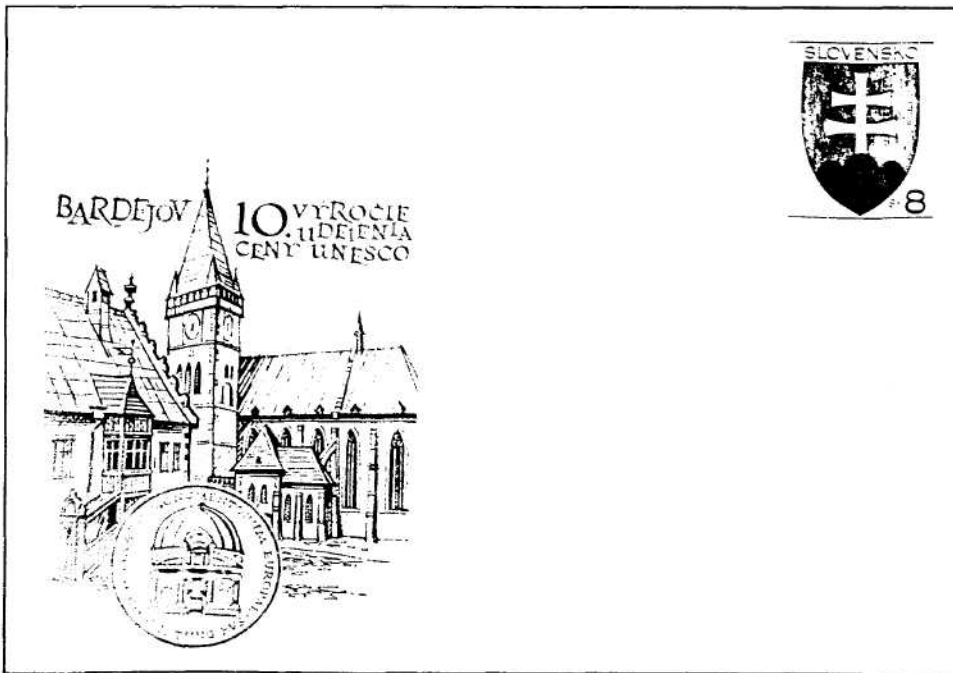


Fig 22

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Postal Stationery

19. On November 22, 1996, the Ministry issued a special envelope to commemorate the 75th birthday of Alexander Dubček (Fig. 21). The envelope bears an imprinted stamp of the state emblem of the Slovak Republic with a denomination of 8 Sk. In the lower left corner is a printed picture of the honoree with text beneath showing "ALEXANDER DUBČEK 1921-1992".

20. On November 27, 1996, the Ministry issued a special envelope to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Bardejov's connection with UNESCO as a European Cultural Heritage Site (Fig. 22). The cachet in the lower left of the envelope depicts the Gothic parish church of St. Egid (Kostol Sv. Egidia) and a burgher house. The church -- which dates back to the first half of the 15th century -- boasts eleven magnificent altars as well as sculptures coming from the workshop of the famous wood-carver Master Pavol of Levoča. In addition, the painting of Christ on the altar of the Holy Cross is attributed to Albrecht Durer. The town of Bardejov was founded in the early 13th century and was declared a free Royal town in 1376. The town center was restored between 1970 and 1990 at significant expense. As a result, in 1986 it earned a gold medal for its contribution to Europe's architectural heritage. The envelope bears an imprinted stamp of the state emblem of the Slovak Republic with a denomination of 8 Sk.

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Letters to the Editor

1. Dear Editor:

The enclosed illustrations help your readers to visualize the various three types of the counterfeits of the Village Scene postal cards discussed in the article on page 20 of the May/June 1997 issue of the SPECIALIST.

The stamp imprint of the village scene (Fig. 1) has five arrows added which point at the areas that show significant variations from the original.

The four lines of magnified microtext (Fig. 2) show the genuine line of microtext and the three types of counterfeits.



Fig. 1

Miloslav Vlček

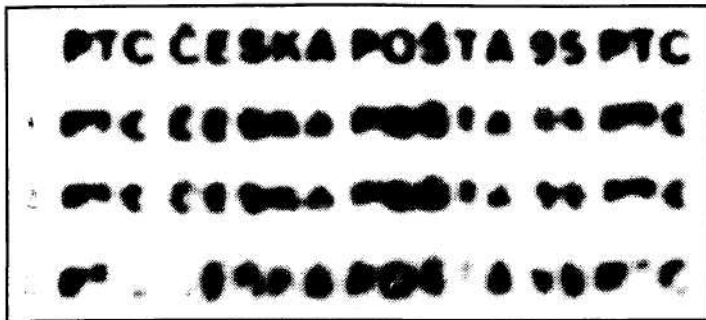


Fig. 2

[Ed. Note: The three lines of counterfeit microtext appear to be in reverse order from that described in the referenced article.]

2. Dear Mr. Svoboda:



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

postmark from Slovakia (Figs. 3 and 4). It commemorates the 5th Anniversary of the Gabriel Guild. I met the president, Rev. Fr. Jan Vallo, in 1992 just after the new guild had been established.

Rev. Fr. Augustine Serafini

[Ed. Note: The wording around the postmark reads -- "Five Years of the Society of St. Gabriel in Slovakia * Nitra 1 * 3.5.1997".]

3. [Ed. Note: We received two letters answering the question asked about an engraving by J. Herčík that was posed on page 30 of the May/June 1997 SPECIALIST.]

a. Dear Mr. Svoboda:

The engraving is a "volná studie" (free study) done as preparation for the Intersputnik issue of April 30, 1974 [Scott 1936, Fig. 5]. It was later used in a promotion in September 1975 by the newspaper, "MLADÁ FRONTA", and the ministry of posts.

Ctibor Sobotka

b. Dear Lou:

Just as Linn's has its yearly balloting for best US stamp, Czechoslovakia also

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had yearly balloting for its best stamp. The practice started in 1963 and ended in 1990. The Czech Republic has resumed this practice in 1994. Mirko's item should be called a ČSSR's souvenir keepsake print (upomínkový tisk).

The first and second prints were printed by a newspaper, MLADÁ FRONTA. This paper also carried the ballots. All the subsequent prints were printed by the Postal Print House. Prints for 1963 through 1969 were for actual stamps; prints for 1970 through 1988 were for the original but not accepted designs. Then 1989 and 1990 were for the actual stamps again.

What Mirko has is the 1974 original unaccepted design for POFIS 2082 [Scott 1936], 30h Intersputnik issue. The designer [of that issue] was I. Strnád and the engraver was J. Herčík.

All such prints were given to all that participated in balloting. The prints were always in a folder. Mirko's folder should have another engraving, this one by M. Ondráček, showing Bratislava Gobelin.

In 1963, there were 5,260 ballots cast and 5,500 prints of Max Švabinský's self portrait printed. For other issues, printings were as high as 23,500. The value of these prints is from \$5.00 for #1 (1963) to 35 cents for most of the later issues.

Numbers 1 and 2 of the ČSSR prints had actual postage stamps applied to the print, as did the two issues of the Czech Republic.



Fig. 5

Savoy Horvath

4. Hi Lou:

Just as US stamps of T. G. Masaryk, the Czech flag, and Sokol are collectibles to Bohemica collectors, so is the Vietnam memorial stamp, Scott 2109.

Responsible for the memorial is a Vietnam veteran, Robert W. Doubek. His family came from southern Bohemia, and he was born in Berwyn, IL, in 1944. Doubek, as a lawyer and former US Air Force intelligence officer set up a non-profit charitable organization. A two year campaign brought contributions from half a million corporate and private donations of seven million dollars. The monument lists hundreds of Czech names.

My question, is there a way to find out how many listed were born in Czechoslovakia -- not only KIA but MIA also?

By the way, the website for all the names on the wall is www.cpeq.com/~wall/. And, Alan Oskwarek's website of hometowns is www.goodnet.com/the wall/.

Savoy Horvath

Society's Circuit

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