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RESTORATION OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK POSTAL SERVICE AFTER WWII

by Karel Holoubek
trans. by Savoy Horvath

[Ed. Note: This was a speech that was prepared for the Congress of Collectors of Czechoslovak and Czech Republic Stamps which occurred in conjunction with PRAGA'98. It was not presented because of technical difficulties at the presentation site.]

Restoration of the Czechoslovak postal operations after World War II began with the end of the war, that is, on May 8 or May 9, 1945. But this is not entirely correct. For the beginning of the new Czechoslovak Postal Service we have to return to 1944.

October 1944 brought the liberation of Podkarpatská Rus (Ruthenia) by the Soviet Army, and the area became somewhat stabilized. The Czechoslovak government in agreement with the leadership of the Red Army and the Soviet government dispatched a government delegation. It was led by minister plenipotentiary and member of parliament, František Němec. The delegation consisted of several members with expertise in various areas.

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PhDR. STEFAN MOYSES

1797 – 1997

by Joseph E. Bush

By the time the big guns of Austerlitz were silent, Stefan Moyses was already an orphan at the age of 7. He was born in the poor hut of a farm laborer in the small town of Veselé (just outside the Piešťany spa) on October 10, 1797, not too far from that historic battlefield.

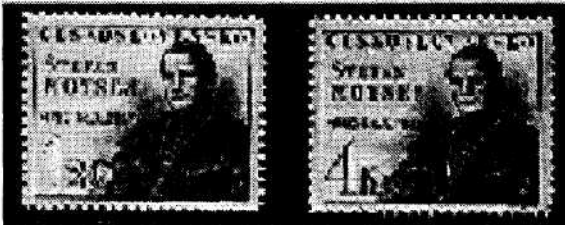


Fig. 1

Fortunately for him the custodian of Count Revay's estate took him in. Here young Stefan saw the calloused hands of the Slovak farmer and the terrible living conditions of the peasant. This experience decided him to try to help them.

He became the best student in the local school and soon went on to higher

schools in Trnava and Ostrihom determined to become a priest. He finished his schooling and ordination early and became a tutor to the king's counselor.



Fig. 2

After going on to serve at several parishes, he was awarded a doctorate and appointed as professor at the Faculty of Arts in Zagreb where he taught for 17 years (1829-47). This period saw him champion the rights of Croats as a fighter for their national and political liberties. In 1847 the Zagreb bishop -- who was from Trnava -- made him a canon. This precipitated his becoming involved in further attempts to broaden the Croatian language and culture.

During 1849-50 while he was the king's trustee in Vienna he succeeded in having the Zagreb bishopric

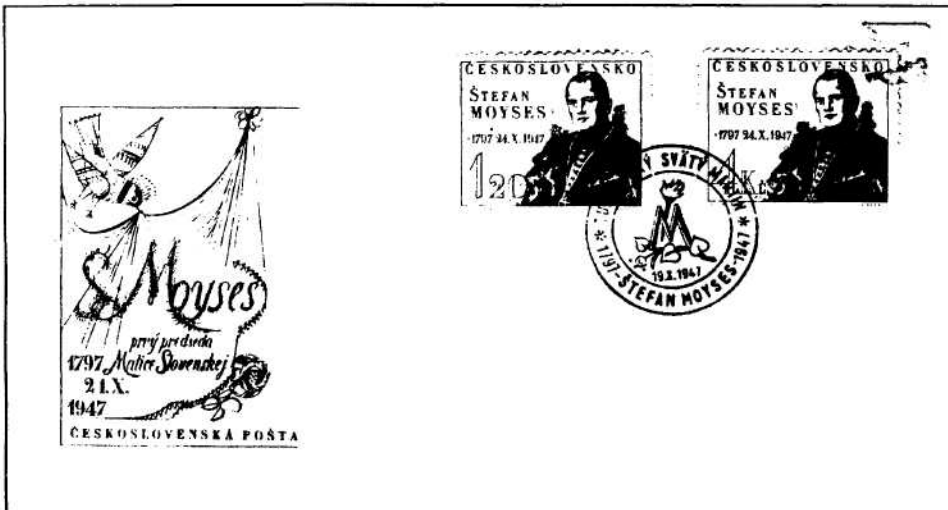


Fig. 3

elevated to an archiepiscopal see. These capabilities resulted in the Emperor appointing him as Bishop of Banská Bystrica.

Up to now he was looking out for the welfare of the Croats, but now upon his return to Slovakia he begins to work for the spiritual and cultural welfare of his own people. He along with others started a codification of the Slovak language. He also



Fig. 4

helped found a teacher training college that taught in Slovak and German.

Moyses could see that the Slovak nation was being decimated and Magyarized by brute force. For example, the Hungarian government decreed all Slovak secondary school teaching must be in Hungarian. He decided to call this situation to the attention of the Emperor. As a result, a Slovak deputation with Moyses at its head went to Vienna. They presented their case and after a forceful speech by Moyses, Emperor Franz Joseph agreed to their requirements.

The concept of an organization to further the language and culture of Slovaks -- one of the approved requirements -- took root in the founding of the Matica



Fig. 5

Slovenská. Moyses' idea was to create an organization which, by educating the people, would promote national unity and ideals, and the right of the people to a higher education. The permission to establish the Matica acted as an electric shock to Slovakia.

After foot dragging by Budapest, the Matica was founded on 4 August 1863, and the town of Turčianský Svätý Martin (now Martin) was chosen as headquarters. Moyses was elected as the first president with Karol Kuzmany as deputy. Together they helped heal differences of religion, working well so that the main ideas should prosper. His messages of 1864/65 reinforced the ideals for national unity.

Even after his retirement in Svätý Kríž he continued to lead and protect the Matica from all outside attacks until his death on 5 July 1869. It is because of his fight for national rights (Slovak and Croatian) and for Slovak literature and culture that he is honored.

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The 150th anniversary of his birth (10 Oct 1947) led to a Czechoslovak two stamp issue -- a 1.20Kč rose violet and a 4Kč blue (Fig. 1). The portrait was probably based upon a postcard showing him as a bishop (Fig. 2). A first day cover and a first day of issue appeared 19 October 1947 -- one from Turčianský Svätý Martin (Fig. 3) and the second from Hradec Králové (Fig. 4).

Slovakia issued a brown colored postal card on 21 May 1941 commemorating the 80th anniversary of the meeting of the Matica at Turčianský Svätý Martin on 5 May 1881 (Fig. 5). It shows sixteen members posed as a group. The imprinted 50h stamp in green features portraits of Stefan Daxner and Stefan Moyses.

Finally, in honor of the 200th anniversary of his birth, the Slovak Republic in 1997 issued a 3Sk multi-colored stamp with his portrait (Fig. 6). That same year they also issued a 200Sk coin with the curious effort to have his whole face shown -- a dubious effort at best. The differences in his face are striking comparing the 1947 and the 1997 issues. In the later he looks much sadder and even morose. The strain of age?



Fig. 6

[Many thanks to Bella Polla, Dr. Otto Gata of Martin, and especially to my new found relative, Zelmira Gerhalová, of Bratislava.]

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1. Polla, Dr. Bella: Anniversary of the Birth of Dr. Stefan Moyses, PhD, *The Czechoslovak SPECIALIST*, Feb 1948, pp15-18.
2. Lettrich, Jozef: History of Modern Slovakia, Praeger Publishing, New York, 1955.

SPECIALIST ISSUES NEEDED (Patron members especially take note)

Your Society has suddenly come up with a shortage of some recent issues. If you no longer need your January/February 1997 or March/April 1997 issues, the Society could really use them.

If you were a Patron member during that period, you just recently received your bound volume covering the years 1997/1998, and therefore will have your loose copies as extras. Please send them to our librarian, Richard Palaschak -- his address can be found on the inside of the cover. Thank you.

**S/S VARIETIES
INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF POSTAGE STAMPS –
PRAGA 1955**

**Scott 719, POFIS A853-857
by Frank Garancovsky**

The comprehensive 1998 POFIS catalog lists all issued stamps and souvenir sheets for the years 1945 through 1992. When it comes to the more elaborate souvenir sheet varieties that include types and plates, a reasonable English translation of the Czech text is warranted for our American collectors.

When confronted with the mass of information and illustrations on pages 50-53, one may give it a glance and move on for two reasons. The information may appear to be too lengthy and difficult to understand. Secondly, they may feel that the s/s is too expensive. Well, neither is the case. Taking the information in small bytes makes it quite manageable for study. The sheets (Fig. 1) are moderately priced considering the small number issued -- there were 199M of the perforated sheet and 143M of the imperforate sheet issued.

[In the catalog, both the varieties of stamps and the varieties of s/s are called "types". To avoid confusion here we will use "types" to refer to the varieties of stamps and "varieties" to refer to the varieties of s/s.]

The first catalog group illustration (Fig. 2) reveals the types of the stamps contained in the s/s. Only three stamp values are of any concern here -- the 30h, 45h, and 1.60Kčs. Combinations of the types of these three stamps make up the 9 s/s varieties. These stamp types are the major plate flaws that are constant in all 9 varieties.

There were a number of possible plates prepared for the print run. During the printing various corrections were made to some of the plates prepared for the gray color. These corrections resulted in the 9 varieties of the



Fig. 1

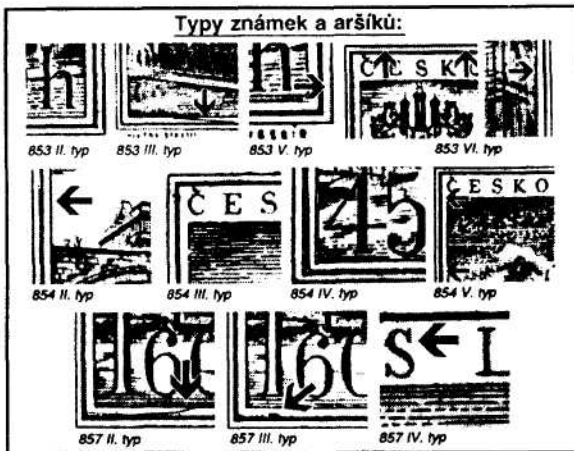


Fig. 2

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s/s, which are reliably differentiated through the various combinations of the 30h, 45h, and 1.60Kčs stamps contained in the s/s. The main indicators of these various stamp types are as follows:

30h Types (#853)

- I Standard design (with no irregularities)
- II Thin vertical frame line at right is doubled in places
- III Between the lower thin and thick frame lines there is a slanted line above the designer's name
- IV Some of the letters of the engraver's and designer's names are doubled
- V Under the upper frame line there is a barely visible long line, the thinner vertical frame line in the lower right corner is doubled
- VI Under the upper frame line there is a long line, the right vertical frame line is deformed above the first floor window

45h Types (#854)

- I Standard design (with no irregularities)
- II The left vertical frame line above the bridge is deformed
- III The thick vertical line at left is doubled in the upper third with two straight lines of the same thickness
- IV A doubled thin and tripled thick frame line at the lower left corner
- V The left vertical thick frame line is doubled its entire length

1.60Kčs Types (#857)

- I Standard design (with no irregularities)
- II There is a bowed line beneath the value figures
- III There are vestiges of the obliterated bowed line
- IV The second letter "S" in Ceskoslovensko has the upper loop of the "S" doubled

A table correlates the s/s varieties, stamp types, and the various printing plates used (Fig. 3). The 1st column lists the s/s varieties. The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th columns give the individual stamp types that are found on the s/s variety listed in the 1st column. The 5th column refers to an earlier catalog identification system (ignore this column). The last column identifies all the printing plates which contain that line's stamp

types grouping. Note that the first line of the table indicates all Type I. This means that all stamps are normal. Printing plates A, E, F, G, I, and X contain these normal stamps. However, some small insignificant faults may be found, but they do not change the basic major plate flaw markings.

typ aršíku	typy známek v aršíku:			dosud vedeno jako	tiskové desky
	30 h.	45 h	1,60 Kčs		
I	I	I	I	I, al	A,E,F,G,I,X
II	I	III	I	al	B1
III	IV	IV	I	all	B2
IV	I	II	I	I	C
V	III	I	II	II	D1
VI	II	I	III	III	D2
VII	VI	V	I	al	H1
VIII	V	V	I	alll	H2
IX	I	I	IV	IV	K

Fig. 3

The second catalog group illustration (Fig. 4) shows some of the so called secondary plate flaws. A listing of these flaws follows. In this listing DV means "plate fault" (desková vada), DO means "plate variety" (desková odchýlka), RE means "retouch" (retuš), and the final capital letter corresponds to the printing plate designation.

853A DV G	"twig" on top of tree crown
853A DO G	doubled letters in authors name
853A DV I	damaged letter "S", line above 2 nd letter "O" of Československo
853A RE I	undamaged letter "S", line above 2 nd letter "O" of Československo
853B DV A	blemish in the branches of the tree
853B DV B2	diagonal line between frames, blemish outside of frame
854A DV E	diagonal line across frame above the letters "OS" of Československo
854A DO I	extended engraving line in upper left
854B DV A	blemish between numbers "4" and "5" of value figures
854B DV X	small line across frame in the lower right
857A DV A	diagonal line between the letters "IR" of the name "Švengsbír"
857B DV A	diagonal line between the letters "IR" of the name "Švengsbír"



Fig. 4

Differentiating Between the Printing Plates

The first six printing plates (A,B,C,D,E,F) have a print positioning dot above the second grouping of the letters "SK" of Československo on the 30h value stamp in the souvenir sheet. This print positioning dot is not found on the remaining five plates (G,H,I,K,X).

PLATE A: The positioning dot is above the upper line of the frame. Plate A is known in both

perf and imperf souvenir sheets. The plate flaws on the 30h and 45h stamps are found on the imperf souvenir sheet.

- 30h Has a blemish of varying size in the branches of the tree (on part of the print run)
- 45h Has a well defined black dot or a blemish (only a vestige after retouching) between the numerals 4 and 5 (on part of the print run)
- 1.60Kčs Has a slanted line between the letters "IR" of the name Švengsbír (on part of the print run)

PLATE B: The positioning dot lays tightly under the upper frame line. This plate is known only in the imperf souvenir sheet. There are two varieties of this plate -- B1 and B2.

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- 45h The outside vertical frame line in the upper right corner is doubled for 1 mm.
- B1-45h The upper 1/3 of the thick vertical frame line on the left is drawn as two identical straight lines of equal thickness (type III), the upper part of the numeral 4 is printed very light
- B2-30h Some of the lettering in the names of the designer and engraver are doubled (type IV), there is a slanted line about 8 mm from the top between the left vertical frame lines (on part of the print run), there is a black dot outside the frame line
- 45h The left lower corner of the frame line is drawn with weak doubled lines and a thick tripled middle line (type IV)

PLATE C: The positioning dot lays tightly under the upper frame line. It is known in both perf and imperf souvenir sheets.

- 45h The thick line of the left frame line is deformed just above the bridge and then consists of two lines, the left one thins out above the bridge and then ends about even with the lowest lines of the clouds, the right one is just the opposite by thickening in the same area (type II)

PLATE D: The positioning dot is between the lines, closer to the upper one. This plate is known in the perf souvenir sheet. There are two varieties of this plate -- D1 and D2.

- D1-30h A slanted line about 7 mm long is found between the inner thin and thick frame lines at the lower left (type III)
- 1.60Kčs Between the thin and thick frame lines under the value figures there is a bowed line approximately 5.5 mm in length (type II)
- D2-30h The right thin frame line is doubled in places, the bowed line in the lower frame (as in plate D1) is missing
- 1.60Kčs Following retouching, there are little remainders left of the bowed line under the value figures (type III)

PLATE E: The positioning dot is between the lines like in plate D but a little lower. This plate is known in the perf souvenir sheet.

- 45h Above the letters "OS" of Československo there is a slanted line across the thin upper frame line.

PLATE F: The positioning dot of the 30h value is less distinct. In addition there is a positioning dot on the 45h value above the letter "L" of Československo. This plate is known in the perf souvenir sheet.

- 1.60Kčs There appears a vertical line about 1 mm to the right of the left frame line in the top of the spire (on part of the printing run)

PLATE G: There are no positioning dots. Plate is known in the perf souvenir sheet.

- 30h The "twig", in addition there is a small line from the left tree limb that lines up between the letters "PR" of PRAGA in the emblem at the upper left, the letters of the designer's name are doubled (on a part of the printing run)

PLATE H: There are no positioning dots. The plate is known in the imperf souvenir sheet. There are two varieties of this plate -- H1 and H2.

- 30h A short line along the left frame line about 2.5 mm from the lower corner of the frame
- 45h In the inner left vertical frame line there is a blemish about 5 mm from the top corner of the frame
- H1-30h Under the upper line there is a long line, in the upper window on the first floor at right is a deformed (thickened) frame line (type VI)
- 45h The left thick vertical frame line is doubled for its entire length (type V)
- H2-30h The line under the top line is thinner, the thin vertical frame line in the lower right corner is doubled (type V)
- 45h Same as in plate H1 (type V)

PLATE I: There are no positioning dots. Plate is known in the perf souvenir sheet.

- 30h A slanted line (often broken) above the frame line over the second letter "O" of Československo, the second letter "S" of Československo is damaged (as shown in the photo)(on part of the printing run)
- 45h Line vestiges along the overextended engraving, a vertical line across the upper left frame corner (on part of the printing run)

PLATE K: There are no positioning dots. Plate is known in the perf souvenir sheet.

- 30h Along the thicker frame line at left and down about 13 mm from the upper corner there is a 1 mm sized line
- 1.60Kčs Upper loop of the second letter "S" in Československo is doubled (type IV)

PLATE X: There are no positioning dots. Plate is known in the imperf souvenir sheet.

- 30h There is a small line under the upper frame line about 8 mm from the left
- 45h There is a long hairlike line on the left above the bridge and one 2.5 mm above the lower right corner across the frame
- 1.60Kčs A small line in the frame of the stamp on the left over the letter "C" of Československo

To make the task of differentiation simpler and to avoid unnecessary confusion I suggest concentrating on the three stamp values and forget about the secondary plate flaw listings. Go to a good duplication shop and make copies of these illustrations (preferably from the catalog). Brighten the contrast one or two steps and enlarge the copy about 25% or until you have a clear picture of the flaws. However, caution is advised in identifying these plate flaws as presented in the catalog illustrations. Some flaws are quite obvious, whereas others may be much smaller in size or density.

There is another source of information on this s/s in the Czechoslovak Handbook of 1988. The POFIS catalog is a revised version with a better grouping of illustrations and text. The illustrations in the Handbook may add some depth to identification of individual stamps involved.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA AIRMAIL FLOWN WITHIN
THE UNITED STATES 1927-1931

by John Miskevich

Prior to the initiation of transatlantic airmail service in 1939 with the United States, mailers in Czechoslovakia desiring the fastest possible transportation used combinations of air and surface mail in Europe and in the United States. To obtain speedy service required a detailed knowledge of steamship sailings, air routes, and air rates. Before aviation had conquered the North Atlantic for regular mail routes,

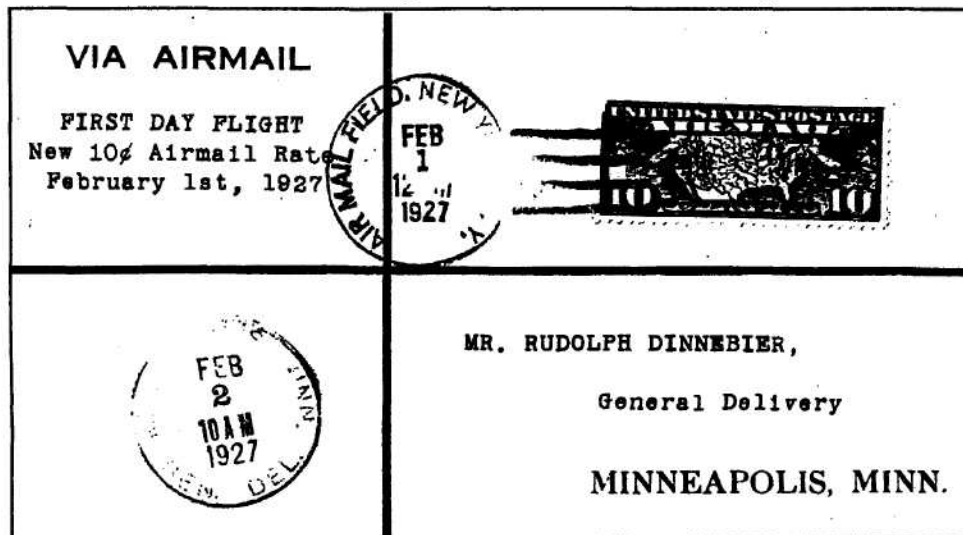


Fig. 1

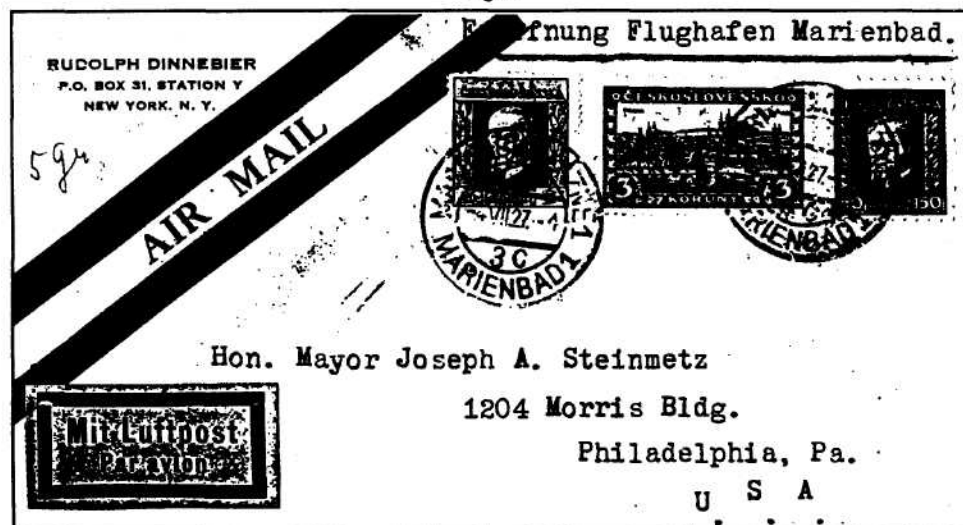


Fig. 2

it was entirely possible for a letter to travel by air, then by ship, and then by air again. This article will concern itself with the rates, the routes, and the markings associated with Czechoslovakia air mail flown from New York City to addresses within the United States -- the final leg of the journey from Europe.

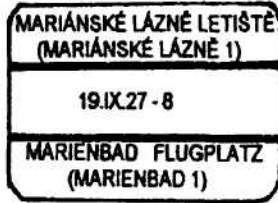


Fig. 3

On February 1, 1927 United States domestic airmail changed to a uniform postal rate structure. The uniform airmail rate applied both to Government and Contract Air Routes with one set rate to anywhere within the continental United States.¹ The new domestic airmail rate was based on each half ounce, not full ounce as in the prior rate period. Ten cents was charged for the first half ounce and for each additional half ounce or fraction thereafter. The postcard rate was the same as the letter rate. (As a point of information remember that one ounce is equal to about 28 1/2 grams.)

The cover shown in Figure 1 was sent via airmail from AIR MAIL FIELD, NEW YORK, N.Y. to Minneapolis on February 1, 1927 and is a first day cover for the new 10¢ airmail rate.

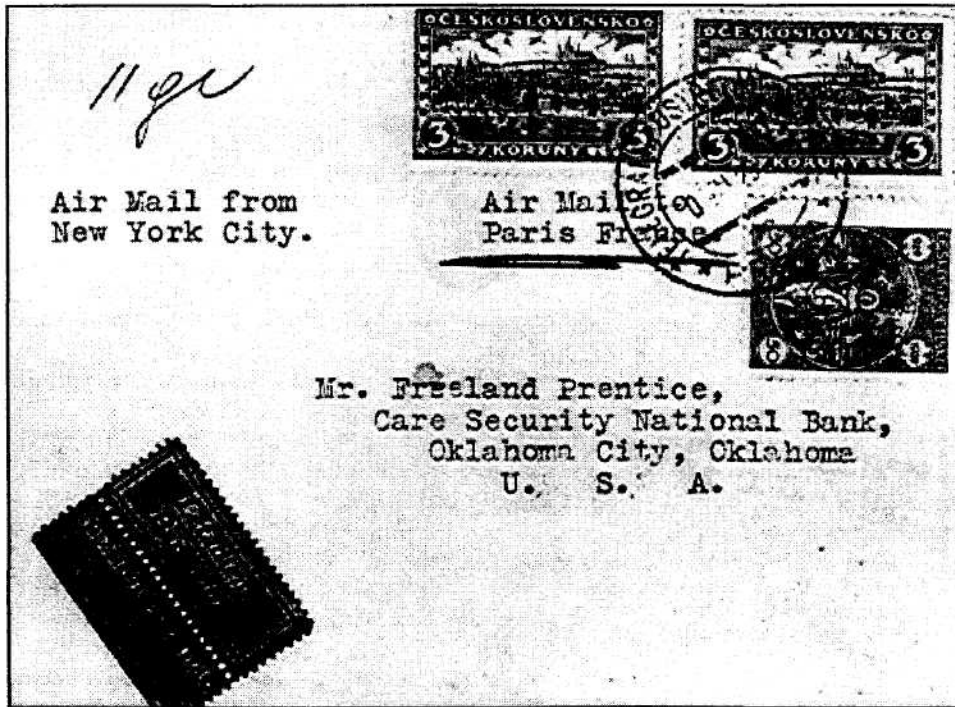


Fig. 4

As a result of the change over to a uniform domestic airmail rate structure in the United States, beginning February 10, 1927, airmail from Czechoslovakia to be flown in Europe and within the United States went to a rate of 6 Kč for the first 20 grams. A fee of 6 Kč was charged for each additional 20 grams or fraction thereafter up to

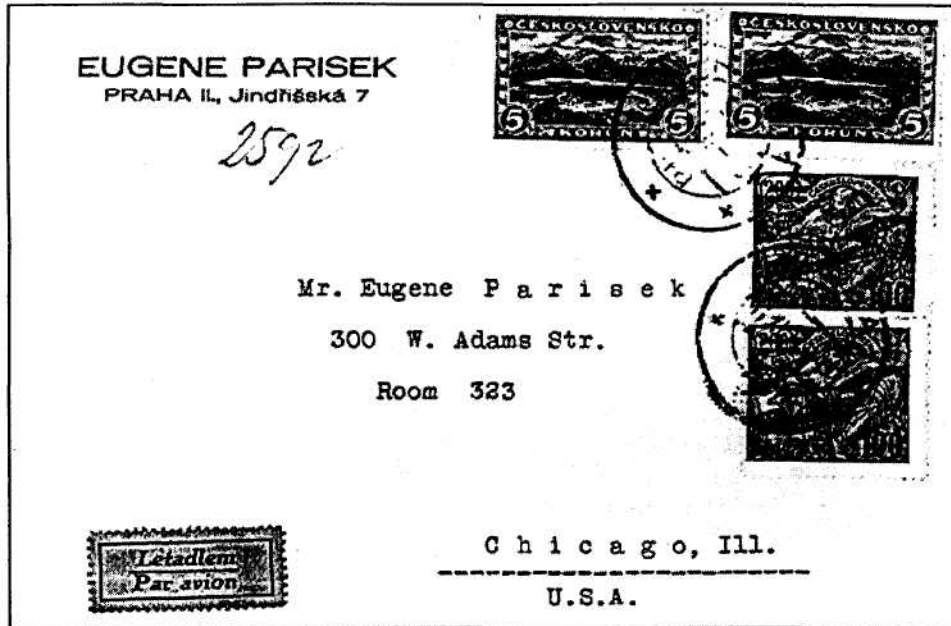


Fig. 5

a fixed weight limit. At Figure 2 is a cover weighing 5 grams flown from MARIANSKÉ LÁZNĚ 1 / MARIENBAD 1 on July 4, 1927 to Philadelphia. Postage in the amount of 8.50 Kč pays the foreign letter rate of 2.50 Kč plus an airmail fee of 6 Kč. Postal services provided air transport in Europe as far as Paris, a steamship voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, and a United States domestic flight from New York City. All mail from Czechoslovakia sent by steamship arrived in New York City. Of further interest is the notation on the cover, "Eröffnung Flughafen Marienbad" (Inauguration of the Marianské Lázně Airport). A rectangular airport postmark -- Marianské Lázně Letiště -- was not issued by the Ministry of Posts & Telegraphs until August 1, 1927 (Fig. 3).

According to *Československá Letecká Pošta 1918-1939* (Trojan, 1997) the 6 Kč airmail rate was reduced to 5 Kč on May 1, 1930.² However, there is evidence that the rate for Czechoslovakia airmail flown within the United States (and Europe) had been reduced to 4 Kč for every 20 grams by 1929.

Posted at the TELEGRAFNÍ ÚSTŘEDNÍ STANICE, PRAHA on July 10, 1929, and according to mailing instructions typed on its face, the cover at Figure 4 was sent "Air Mail to Paris, France" and "Air Mail from New York City". The envelope weighed 11 grams (upper left). There is 6.50 Kč postage that figures to be 2.50 Kč letter rate plus 4 Kč airmail for letters weighing up to 20 grams. The cover was flown from New York City to Oklahoma City.

The cover at Figure 5 is airmail flown in Europe (to Paris then by railroad to an ocean liner at Le Havre) and from New York City to Chicago. Upper left below the return address is a notation "25 gr". Posted from PRAHA on November 11, 1929 the

12 Kč in postage stamps pay the 3.75 Kč letter rate as well as an 8 Kč airmail fee for mail weighing over 20 grams but no more than 40 grams.

This cover and the previous one bear New York City backstamps serving as airmail exchange transit markings (Fig. 6). The straight-line postmark reads FOREIGN SECTION (M. D. G. P. O.) The initials stand for "Manhattan Division General Post Office".



Fig. 6

Why was there already by 1929 a reduction in the surcharge for Czechoslovakia airmail flown in the United States? One reason may be that on August 1, 1928 the United States domestic air rate was reduced to 5¢ for the first ounce (not half ounce) with additional ounces or fractions thereof at 10¢.³

The cover illustrated in Figure 7 was mailed from PRAHA 7 to Cleveland on November 3, 1930 and traveled by airplane in Europe before being flown in the United States from New York City. Postage paid is 7.50 Kč representing a 2.50 Kč letter rate plus a 5 Kč airmail surcharge for mail weighing up to and including 20 grams. On May 1, 1930 the air rate had been raised to 5 Kč for each unit of 20 grams. On the reverse of this cover is an airmail transit cancel similar to the one found at Figure 6. This one reads FOREIGN SECTION G.P.O. N.Y. The initials are deciphered "General Post Office New York".

If you take another look at the Czechoslovakia airmail covers featured in this article you can't help but notice a very pressing need for high value airmail stamps.



Fig. 7

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

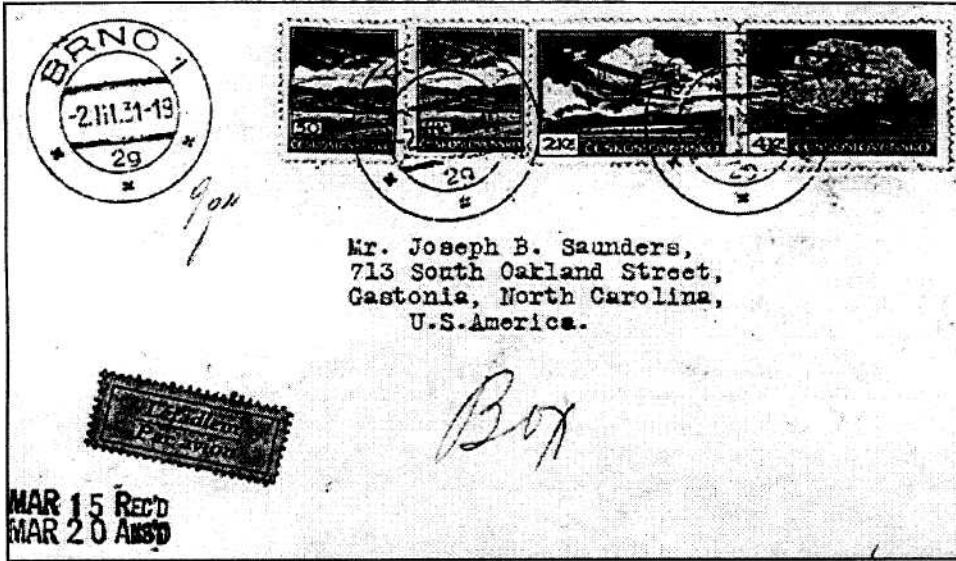


Fig. 8

This insufficiency was not met until December 16, 1930 with the release of Czechoslovakia's first set of stamps actually designed and printed for the purpose of airmail. At Figure 8 is an air cover flown in the United States from New York

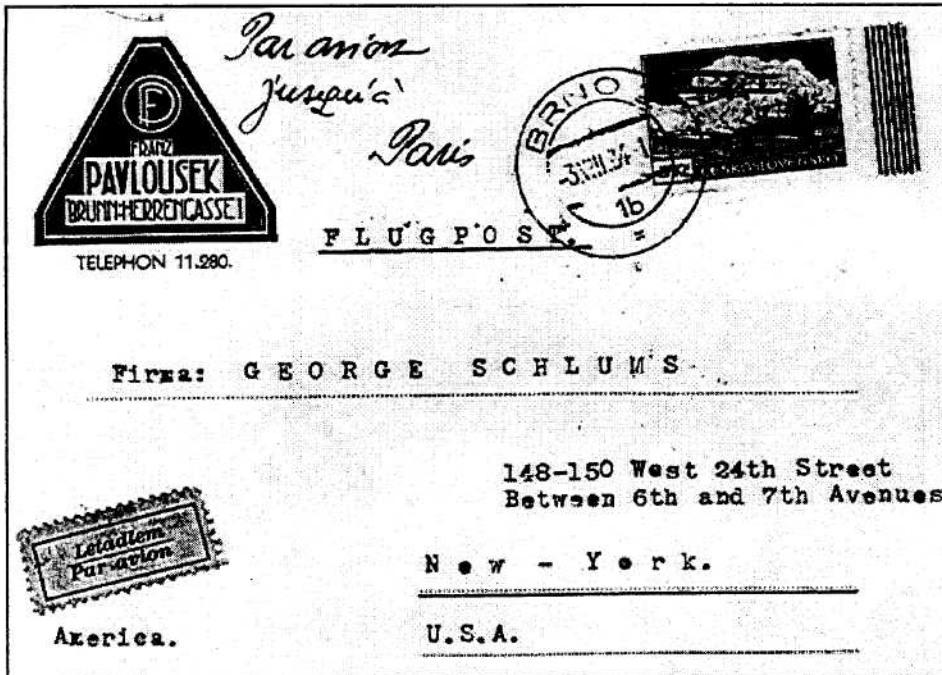


Fig. 9

City to North Carolina. It was mailed in Brno on March 2, 1931 and bears four of the new airmail stamps which pay the proper 7.50 Kč rate.

Very helpful in the analysis of airmail rates of many countries are markings used to determine or regulate how far an envelope would travel by air before being transferred to surface transportation or the airmail system of another country. One of the most helpful signals for the movement of airmail during the mid-1920's and 1930's was the 'jusqu'a' marking. The airmail cover shown at Figure 9 was posted at BRNO and addressed to the United States. The words "Par avion jusqu'a Paris" have been written in red ink. As an inscription on an airmail letter, the French word "jusqu'a" simply means "as far as". This cover was dispatched from Brno by air but traveled only "as far as" Paris by air. In truth, the inscription on this particular cover added little to the airmail rate routing, since usage of the envelope with an address in New York City determined there would be no further air transportation beyond Paris.

The study of airmail rates and routes offers as much of a challenge as can be found in Czechoslovak philately. The study of overseas airmail up to the Second World War has taken a giant step forward with the publication in 1997 of the Trojan Czechoslovakia Airmail Catalogue. However, the territory is still open waiting for postal historians to ferret out additional airmail rates, routes, usages, and markings.

Endnotes

¹ Prior to February 1, 1927 the air rates had been based upon fixed zones into which an air route might be divided. The zones were New York-Chicago, Chicago-Cheyenne, and Cheyenne-San Francisco. Postage was not based upon the number of miles flown as in the case of parcel post but instead, zone boundaries governed. If a letter was carried only a few miles but across a zone boundary, it was charged at a higher rate. Czechoslovakia airmail was flown in the United States during the Government Zone - Contract Period (June 30, 1924 - January 31, 1927). Mail from Czechoslovakia for air transportation within the United States prepaid with Czechoslovakia stamps commenced March 1, 1925. Different airmail rates were possible based upon the different zones for airmail within the United States and, as always, based upon weight. Prior to June 15, 1927 it was permissible for the United States airmail fee to be affixed with United States stamps at the same time the envelope was mailed in Czechoslovakia. See James R. Adams, "United States Domestic Airmail Rates", via Airmail, An Aerophilatelic Survey of Events, Routes, and Rates, The American Airmail Society, 1992 pp 1-36; Richard B. Graham, "U.S. Domestic Airmail Rates, 1918-1926", Linn's Stamp News, October 31, 1988 at page 12; also, Rainer E. Lütgens, "The Rates for Airmail from Germany to the United States 1924-1945", The Airpost Journal, August 1994, pp 313-325.

² See the table listing airmail rates as they apply to the United States, page 213.

³ Adams, "United States Domestic Rates", p. 25 and the chart relating to the Uniform Rate period (February 1, 1927 - June 30, 1934), p. 26.

HRADČANY
will be featured in the
Jiří Majer and Jaroslav Thraumb Action
on May 22, 1999



Seldom offered rarities of Czechoslovakia's first stamp series, like this horizontal gutter, will be offered in addition to material from all other areas of Czechoslovak philately.

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AEROGRAMME'S AND NOT REALLY AEROGRAMME'S

by Savoy Horvath

This is a story about aerogrammes with seven covers as illustrations.
What I don't understand is why the Czech Post has an aerogramme postal rate

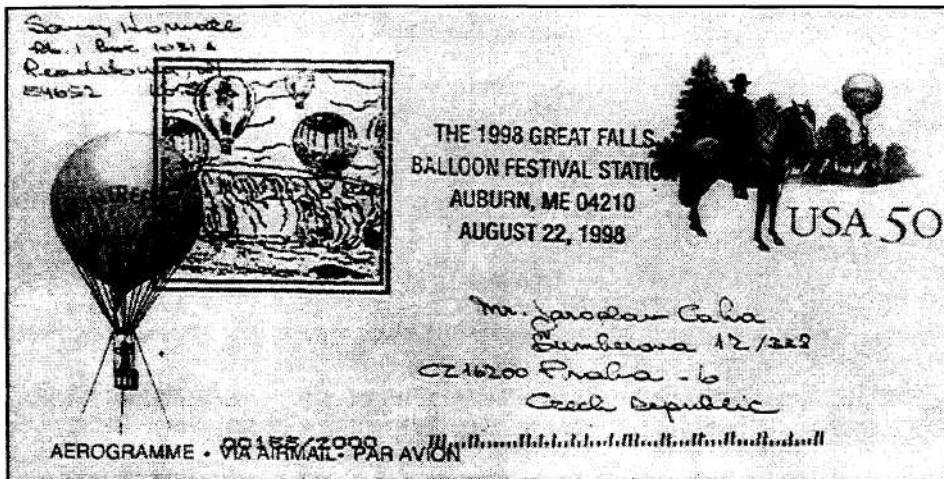


Fig. 1

on it's books which last April was even changed from a 7 Kč rate to an 8 Kč rate then they issue something that looks like an aerogramme, but they actually mean something else by it. Yet that something else -- PRIORITAIRE mail -- is not on their books as yet.

Figure 1 shows a typical aerogramme used for the discounted postage of 50¢ -

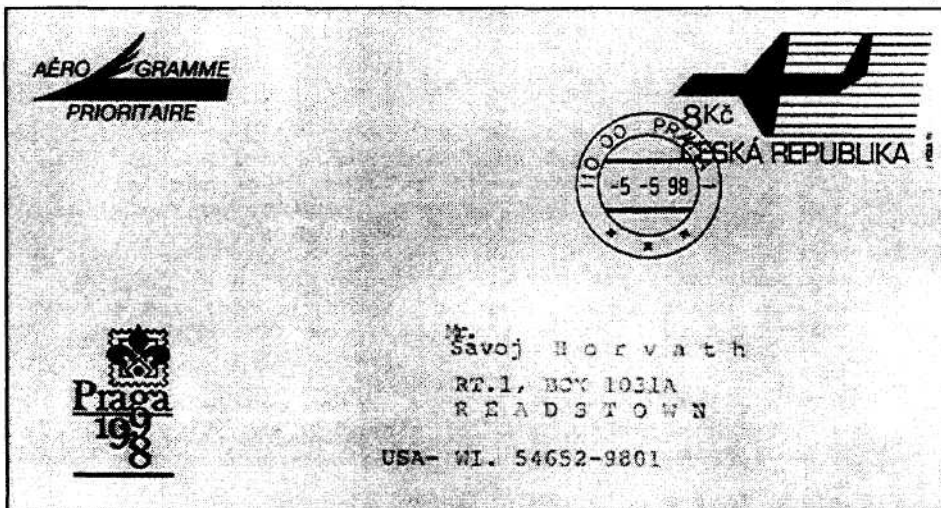


Fig. 2

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

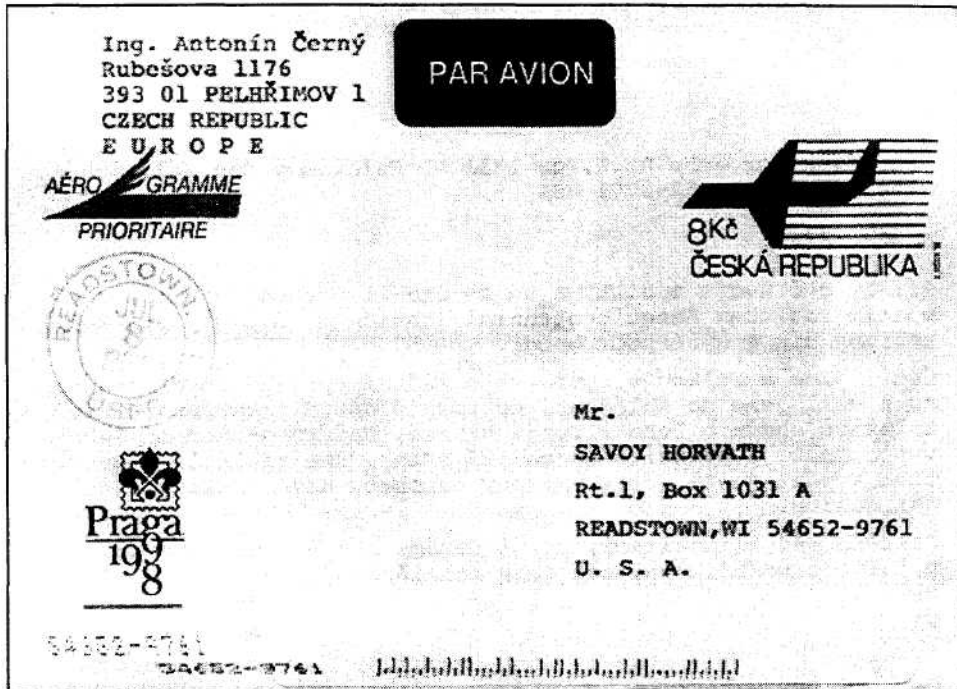


Fig. 3

not 60¢ like a regular airmail letter. Aerogrammes in most parts of the world are sold for face value; there is no surcharge when posted.

The Czech Republic issued its first aerogramme on May 5, 1998 (Fig. 2) or

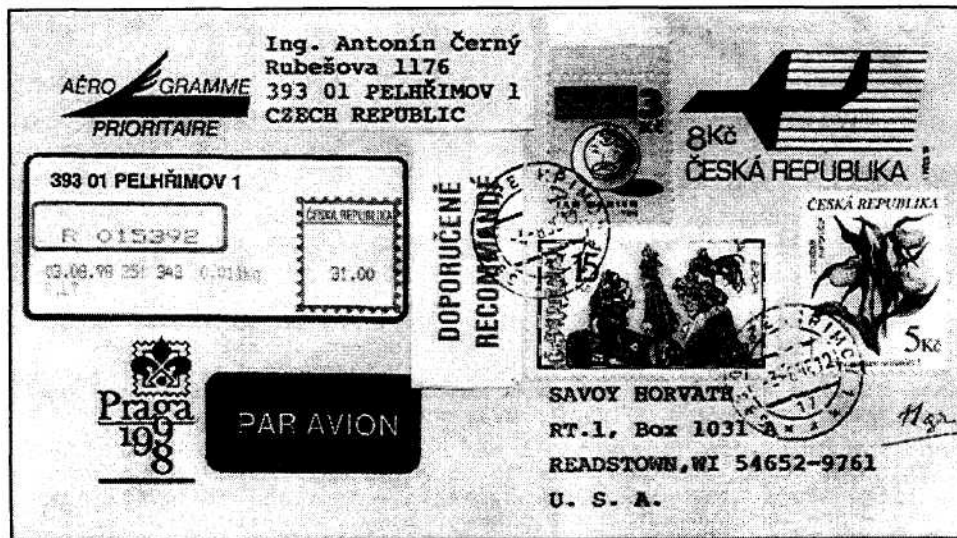


Fig. 4

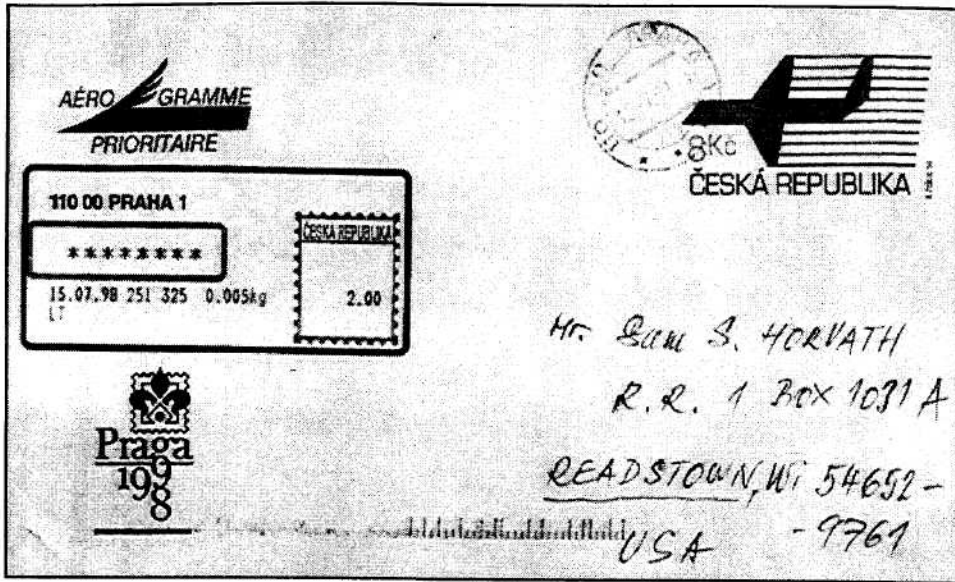


Fig. 5

so it seems. This philatelic item was for sale only at the main post office at PRAHA 1 (later also at PRAGA'98). The general public was unaware of its availability, and so were most of the Republic's post offices.



Fig. 6

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

I have received this item uncanceled (Fig. 3), registered for a total of 62 Kč (more than double the rate) (Fig. 4), also with added postage of 2 Kč (Fig. 5) and of 3 Kč (Fig. 6).

While in Prague and at the PRAHA 1

post office, I tried to mail a couple of aero-grammes. After paying 15 Kč apiece for them I was told that I also had to pay an additional postage of 2 Kč each. I did not want to argue as there was a line behind me, so I asked to talk to the supervisor. He came and explained that what I have here is not actually an aerogramme but a priority letter.

I was told the same recently by a friend and Society member Karel Holoubek. He writes that this was not meant for actual foreign air delivery but rather for domestic air priority delivery. Notice that this so called aerogramme actually has the wording "PRIORITAIRE" on it's front.

The Czech post office claims the higher sale price (15 Kč) is to cover the production cost. I comment that they could have saved money by printing the "AEROGRAMME-PRIORITAIRE" on blue paperstock instead of printing one whole side with blue microdots to give the allusion of blue paper. (As a comparison, the Slovak Republic aerogramme shown in Fig. 7 is actually printed on blue stock paper.)

No matter what one calls this item, there are so many printing varieties one can build a substantial collection out of them.

Figure 7 shows the new Slovakian aerogramme with 8 Sk value. It shows a Savoia Marchetti SM-73 aircraft in its stamp design. Notice that the cloud spills out of the stamp to the left. The cloud certainly resembles the outline of the old Czechoslovakia. On the left side is shown St. Martins church in Bratislava. The rear of the aerogramme shows a picture, a small map of Slovakia, and a message in Slovak, "Bratislava - Panoramic view of the Old City and the shoreline of the Danube from the tower of the New Bridge".

The inside right fold side has illustrated instructions on how to fold the aerogramme, and also includes "WARNING! If one encloses additional writing paper or any other object, the aerogramme will be delivered by surface mail" in Slovak. At

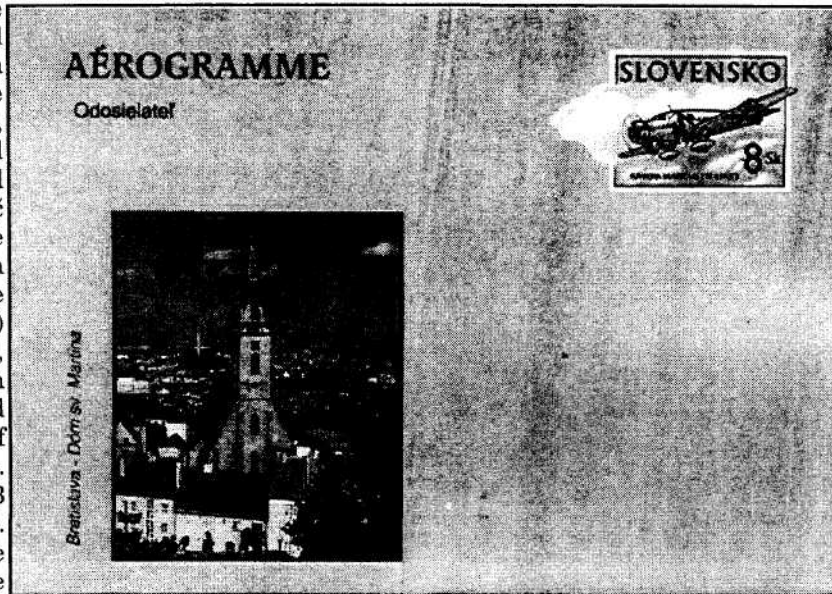


Fig. 7

the bottom is the selling price of 12 Sk and the copyright with letters "MDPT SR".

The inside left fold side has a brief history stating "BRATISLAVA - The capitol city of the Slovak Republic (1998 population - 452,000) spreads out on the left bank of the Danube river up to the foothills of the Low Carpatian Mountains. The territory of Bratislava was settled in the Neolithic, Neo-Neolithic, and Bronze ages -- the Celts lived there as did the Romans. It became a Slavic settlement during the 5th Century. Bratislava Castle and Devin were important centers of politics, economy and the military for the Greater Moravia. The city grew around the castle's walls -- first recorded in 907. It received a city status in 1291, and from 1405 was designated as a Royal Seat. It was one of the most important cities in Slovakia and the former Hungarian Empire, and a center of commerce, culture, business and trade. In the period between 1526 - 1784 it became the empire's capitol. The Hungarian congress took its seat in the city beginning in 1848. In the years of 1563 to 1830 it became the place where the future kings of the empire were crowned. The year 1465 brought the Istropolitan Academy, the first university in Slovakia. From the 18th Century it was the primary center of the Slovakian national cultural movement. In 1954 part of the city became a national reservation, full of historical monuments. Technical monuments can be seen at the Bratislava - Vajnoroch airport. Regular air travel service started in 1923 connecting Bratislava to Prague by air. Today's air transport is from M.R. Štefaník Airport.

The airplane pictured on the postage stamp is the Savoia Marchetti SM-73 and was in use during 1937-38 by the ČSA Airline on flights to Klagenfurt (Austria) and Genoa (Italy). (Note the underwing letters BAD.)

✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST
Cumulative Index: 1939-1992
CORRECTIONS
 by Ludvik Svoboda

Occasionally it has been brought to our attention that there are some needed corrections to be made to the Cumulative Index. The corrections will be periodically published in order to bring them to the attention of all of our members:

- Page 2; AIR MAIL - ISSUES; 1920 - First issue - Counterfeits and Forgeries; Karásek, Jan . . . Apr 70, pp22-23 should be: pp52-53.
- Page 30; COLLECTORS AND COLLECTING - INDIVIDUALS; Svoboda, Ludvik . . . Mar 88, pp3-4 should be: Apr 88.
- Page 31; COUNTERFEITS AND FORGERIES; Chesloe, Charles . . . Feb 89, pp4-7 should be: pp4-6.
- Page 49; EXPERTS AND EXPERTIZATION; Kovarik, Frank J. . . May 56, pp66-67 should be: pp65-66.
- Page 51; FIELD POST - 1918-1920 - SIBERIA; Chesloe, Charles . . . Feb 89, pp5-6 should be: pp4-6.
- Page 51; FIELD POST - 1918-1920 - SIBERIA; Chesloe, Charles . . . May 90, pp7-9 should be: pp6-9.
- Page 76; OVERPRINTS; Provisional and Revolutionary Overprints, 1918-1919; Hirsch-Fraňek Handbook . . . Nov 53, pp129-130 should be: pp129-130, 135-136.
- Page 81; PNEUMATIC MAIL; Nekvasil, Jiří . . . Jan 68, pp17-19 should be: Feb 68, pp17-19.
- Page 87; POSTMARKS, Commorative should be: Commemorative.

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST
WHERE ARE WE HEADING?
 by RNDr. Miroslav Vostatek
 trans. by Henry Hahn

There are a large variety of stampless letters these days. The payment of their postage now occurs by various new means as we here in the Czech Republic are noticing daily.

Let us therefore examine at least two current examples that presently exist.

The first is the abbreviation "P.P."

These are the starting letters of two French words, "Port Paye" or the English words "Postage Paid". In translation this means that postage has been paid. In the Czech Republic -- with increasing frequency -- we are beginning to see envelopes on which is printed in the place of stamps a rectangular frame within which authorizing data are presented (Fig.1). These data are P.P., the number of a permit with its year of issue, and the place of mailing with its zip code.

In some instances the printed message also says "OT" for "Obchodní Tiskovina" (commercial printed matter) as was already used on pre-WWII postage stamps. In such mail the sender offers technical publications for sale. Somewhat different is the case of the firm CHS in Sezemice near Pardubice. The item (Fig. 2) includes the P.P. of the post office 530 02 PARDUBICE 2, but in addition there is an APOST registry label of the post office 533 04 SEZEMICE. It is assumed that the sender simply used the A5 format envelope with the printed P.P. legend for the mailing of a registered item.

Another marking on mail is "TAXE PERCUE" (Fig. 3). From a translation of the French word

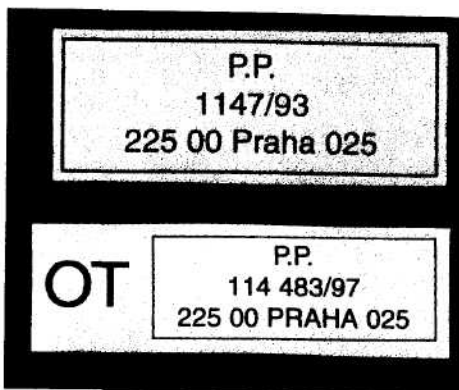


Fig. 1

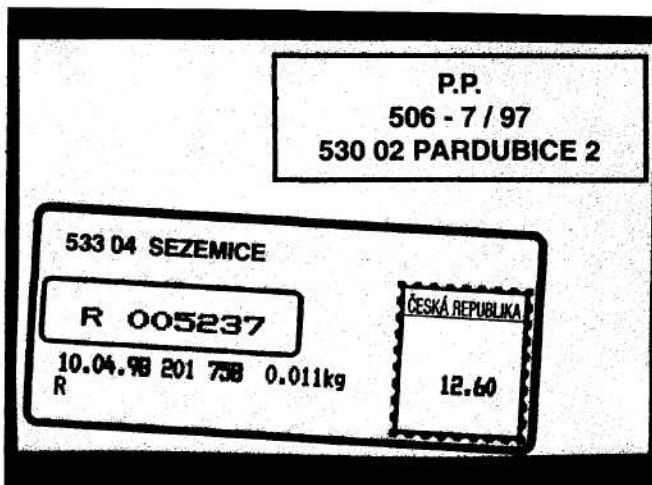


Fig. 2

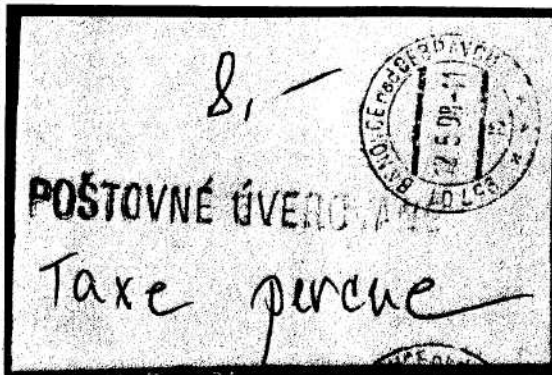


Fig. 3

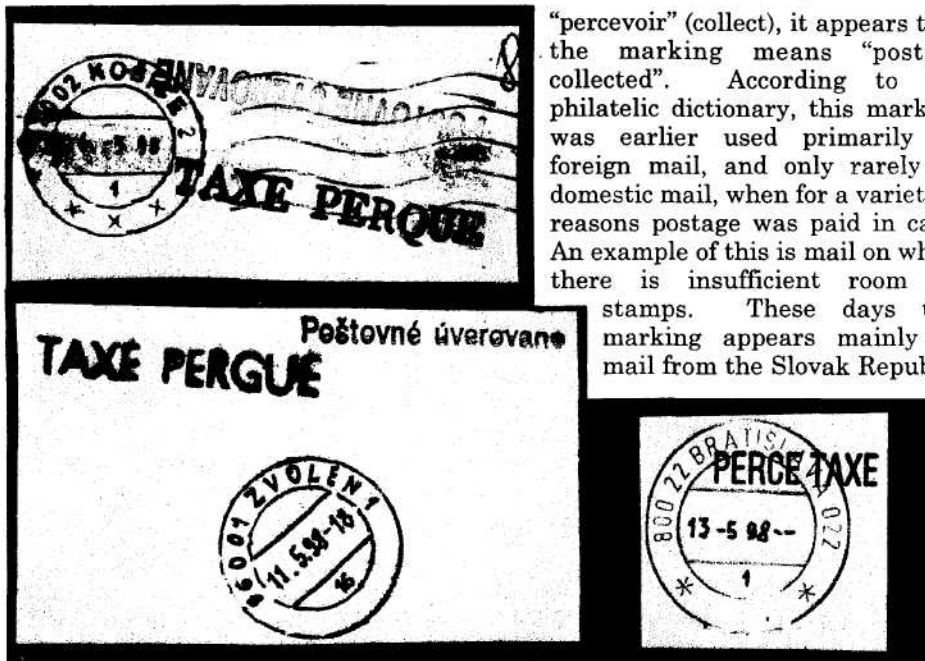


Fig. 4

The marking is sometimes accompanied by a coarsely printed or hand marked notation "poštovné úverované" (postage debited). Since French is no longer as popular a language, it is no surprise that errors appear, such as "TAXE PERQUE", "TAXE PERGUE", or even "PERCE TAXE" (Fig. 4).

Finally, the illustrated random samples speak to the interesting phenomenon we encounter on our everyday correspondence.

* * * * *

ERRATA

-- There was a major error in the March/April 1999 issue. The article found on page 20 and titled "Annual Convention of the Union of Czech Philatelists" (in Czech, Svaz Českých Filatelistů) should have been titled "Annual Convention of the Society of Collectors of Czechoslovak Stamps" (in Czech, Společnost Sběratelů Čs. Známeč). The Society (Společnost) is like a daughter organization of the Union (Svaz). Thus it is the Society that elected Ing. Pavel Pittermann as its chairman. The Union continues to have Lumír Brendl as its president. We would like to apologize to the two organizations and their members for any difficulties or misunderstandings that we may have caused.

-Henry Hahn

-- In the descriptions of two of the nominees for the election to the Board of Directors on page 43 of the Mar/Apr issue, there is an error in concept. It states that both Peter Kleskovic and Savoy Horvath "emigrated" from Czechoslovakia in 1948. Savoy Horvath comments that, "With the exception of a few people that legally emigrated from CSSR in 1968, only communist agents or spies emigrated from CSSR between 1948 and 1989 -- everybody else escaped. One can hardly be called an emigrant when he is being shot at while leaving his country."

CZECHOSLOVAK STAMP COLLECTORS ON LINE
by Ludvik Z. Svoboda

Recently one of our members, John Miskevich, came up with an excellent suggestion which I would like to pass on to you and solicit your thoughts.

Several other philatelic organizations have begun to run a column in their publications which is designed to encourage members with similar philatelic interests to correspond via internet e-mail. Such a column would probably be titled like this one is and would go on to say and look like this:

The following individuals have expressed an interest in corresponding with other collectors via e-mail. Names are followed by specific interest (where known) and complete e-mail address. If you would like to join this list in future issues of the *SPECIALIST*, send me a note via e-mail at Lsvoboda1@aol.com.

Ludvik Z. Svoboda [airmail, general all] -- Lsvoboda1@aol.com

Being listed in this way will give members a great advantage in pursuing there interest area. If you have corresponded with someone in Europe/Australia/Far East, you know how long it takes to send and then receive an answer. If you are able to do it by e-mail, you can conceivably get an answer in minutes (realistically it will take as long as it takes the recipient to discover that he has the e-mail message waiting). There are many of us who are already taking advantage of this rapid turn around in our communications with other members/friends in the Czech Republic. Needless to say, the same benefit accrues if you correspond here in the States -- it's just not quite as dramatic, but still a tremendous help.

So if you would like to be listed in such a future column, please send me an e-mail with the significant data. By sending it to me, you are giving me permission to publish your e-mail address in the *SPECIALIST*. I will not sell or give away this list; but I cannot control who gets to see it in the *SPECIALIST*.

Please select your special interest area or areas from among the following (you may select several if necessary):

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| - airmail | - forgeries | - postal stationery |
| - Bohemia & Moravia | - general all | - pre-stamp |
| - cancels | - Hradcany | - provisional/revolutionary |
| - Carpatho-Ukraine | - perfins | - revenues |
| - Czech Republic | - philatelic literature | - Scouts |
| - Eastern Silesia | - plate numbers | - 2 nd Republic |
| - essays, proofs | - POSTA overprints | - Siberian Legion |
| - FDC | - postage dues | - Slovakia |
| - field posts | - postal history | - Sudetenland |
| - 1 st Republic | | |

If your interest area is not here, send it on, and I will consider it.



NEW MEMBERS

CALIFORNIA

- 1844 Bartlett, Susan Smyth
1851 Valitchka, Douglas

FLORIDA

- 1849 Christensen, John C.E.

GEORGIA

- 1837 Buckner, James A.

ILLINOIS

- 1843 Elwell, Walter Dr

IOWA

- 1836 Cimburek, John
1858 Snitil, Raphael

MARYLAND

- 1860 Krizek, Donald T.

MASSACHUSETTS

- 1846 Hill, Roger E.

NEW JERSEY

- 1112 Green, Richard
1838 Winkelmann, Karl
1855 Fluta, Patricia
1856 Doremus, Albert F Dr.

NEW YORK

- 1859 Agrell, Nils
1861 Ryan, Timothy J.

OHIO

- 1852 Critser, L. Douglas

OKLAHOMA

- 1857 Burian, Dennis

TEXAS

- 1850 Petty, Charles S.

VIRGINIA

- 0744 Sandrik, William A.
1839 Mangold, Jeff

WASHINGTON

- 1845 McKnight, Sheri
1848 Halva, Karel

BELGIUM

- 1841 Wijnants, Paul

CANADA

- 1840 Pascual, Alena
1842 Thibert, Alain

CZECH REPUBLIC

- 1853 Renc, Vlastimil

FINLAND

- 1854 Markku, Korhonen

JAPAN

- 1847 Iida, H.

UNITED KINGDOM

- 0961 Wheatley, Yvonne
1862 Hornung, Otto

BRNO 2000
by Jaroslav Verner

BRNO 2000 is somewhat of an anomaly as exhibitions go. It is neither a national nor an international exhibition, but a "National Exhibition with International participation". What this means is that the Czechs want this exhibition to be something more than just another national exhibition, because it commemorates the 150th anniversary of Thomas Garrigue Masaryk's birth. The Union of Czech Philatelists plans to invite philatelists from those countries where Masaryk lived and worked before and during World War I. This approach is expected to include the following countries:

- Austria where, prior to World War I, Masaryk was a professor of philosophy at the University of Vienna and a member of Parliament;
- The Netherlands where, in the autumn of 1914, Masaryk lived in the Hotel Weimar in Rotterdam while seeking allies;
- Switzerland where, in the summer of 1915, Masaryk declared the beginning of the Czech and Slovak battle against Austria-Hungary;
- Great Britain where, from the house at Platts Lane 21 in London, he directed the Czechoslovak struggle for independence, and where he wrote *The New Europe*;
- France, where the National Council was located, and where Eduard Beneš and Milan Štefaník directed the Czechoslovak effort, published the newspaper *La Nation Tchèque*, and where Rota Nazdar and the Czechoslovak French Legions were established;
- Italy, where the Czechoslovak Legion in Italy was established;
- The United States, from where much of the early financing came, where Americans of Czech and Slovak ancestry volunteered for service in the Czechoslovak Legions, and where Czechoslovak independence was declared;
- Russia, where Masaryk worked most of 1917, and the Czechoslovak Siberian Legions were formed.

The exhibition will run from Saturday, March 4, 2000 through Saturday, March 11 (March 7 is Masaryk's birthday). It will be held at the Brno Congress Center's "Brno" and "Morava" pavilions on the Brno Fair grounds. Relevant displays will also be held in Mikuláš Koperník's Observatory and Planetarium. The exhibit organizers are the South Moravian Division of the Czech Post and the Union of Czech Philatelists as well as several associate organizations.

The exhibit organizers will adhere to the special regulations of FIP and FEPA, and foreign exhibitors will be judged by FIP accredited judges using international standards. Bulletin 1 states that "Brno 2000 would like to exhibit the broadest possible collection of exhibits from the Czech Republic and abroad displaying Czechoslovakia, whose stamp issuing activity ended in 1992, and modern collections of the Czech Republic". Preliminary applications should be sent to the Organizing Committee as soon as possible, and final applications are due by June 30. I have a few copies of Bulletin 1 and would be happy to send them to interested members. However, it is suggested that you immediately contact the Organizing Committee regarding your interest in exhibiting. (You will find its address at the end of this article.)

Those of you who enjoyed PRAGA 98, but complained there was too much to do for the short time available, will note that the time allocated for BRNO 2000 is double the time available at PRAGA. Time should not hang heavy for the philatelist

attending this show. In addition to a dealer's bourse and auctions there are a large number of special philatelic activities planned.

Brno is the second largest city in the Czech Republic and the capital of Moravia. As a settlement the location pre-dates the arrival of the Slavs and was originally settled by the Celts. In fact, even the Celts were late comers for it was near Brno that remains were found of a Paleolithic man (Homo fossils) who had lived, and died, there some 30,000 years ago. The first reference to Brno is in Cosmas' Chronicle Boemorum from 1091 when it was a Slav stronghold on Petrov Hill, in the territory of the Margraves of Moravia. In 1243 the town was granted a charter by Vaclav I (of Good King Wenceslas fame). During the 14th and 15th centuries the castle of Špilberg -- which to this day dominates the town center -- was the seat of the Margraves of Moravia. From the middle of the 14th century, Brno was an important trading center. It withstood sieges by Hussite armies in 1428 and 1430. During the next two centuries its massive walls protected the city from sieges by Swedes, Tatars and Turks. Unfortunately those walls were demolished in 1861, and in their stead today we will see a ring of parks and gardens. In addition to its fame in trade and manufacturing, Brno also has strong intellectual and cultural traditions which are reflected in the theaters, concert halls, and museums available to residents and visitors alike. There is much to see and do in Brno and beyond -- after we have viewed the exhibits and/or spent our money on those philatelic treasures we all will expect to find at BRNO 2000.

The Brno Organizing Committee can be reached at:

National Stamp Exhibition BRNO 2000
Organizing Committee
P.O. Box 3
601 03 Brno, Czech Republic
Tel./FAX: 011-420-5-4115-8504
e-mail: jpuncochar@fides.cz
Web site: www.fides.cz/BRNO 2000

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Philatelic News and Views

From Savoy Horvath:

- The Ministry of Transport and Communications has given the Czech Postal Service its permission to raise the postal rates. The major reason given is the modernization and automation of postal services to be on par with the EU (European Union) when the Czech Republic joins it in the next century. The international rates have been raised an average of 10.5% as of January 1, 1999. As for the domestic rates, the Ministry has not come to a decision yet. The debate centers around an 8% raise to take effect later this winter or in the spring. Most of the money is needed for the automation of postal services (called APOST) in the smaller post offices in the countryside. Most big city post offices are already automated. At PRAGA'98 the smaller city/town postmasters came in to Prague and saw the new systems in operation. In the first quarter of 1999, almost 140 small post offices will get APOST. This upgrade of capabilities is estimated to cost over a billion koruny. Incidentally, the postal service posted a profit of 1 billion+ by September 1998 and is projecting a total profit for 1998 of 800 million koruny.



Fig. 1

- A new postal card has been issued by the Czech Post to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of Czechoslovak Postage Stamps (Fig. 1). The anniversary commemoration material has been added to a postal card originally issued March 26, 1997 for commercial and promotional purposes.



Fig. 2

- Hradcany in Tokyo: Tokyo, Japan had an "80" anniversary cancel for the 1st Czechoslovak postage stamp (Fig. 2). Also, a stamp show was held at that time in Tokyo's postal museum. The exposition theme was Hradčany with a total of 31 frames.

- Jindřichův Hradec: this town in southern Bohemia had the only postal cancel commemorating the 80th anniversary of ČSR (Fig. 3). In addition the first ČSR postage stamp was



Fig. 3

remembered. This one -- along with the event in Japan and the ones in the USA -- were preserving the memory of ČSR. One wonders, what happened in Slovakia? Well now we have an answer. Postal cancels commemorating this anniversary were utilized in Košice (Fig. 4) and Trenčín (Fig. 5).

- Tradition of Czech Stamps (see Mar/Apr issue, pp40): The label associated with this stamp shows the BRNO 2000 logo consisting of the historical face of Brno -- Petrov and Špilbérk. Petrov reflects the cathedral of St. Peter and Paul. On the mount on the right is Špilbérk. Just as

Prague has it Hradčany castle, so Brno has Špilbérk. Over the centuries this castle has served many purposes. During the Hussite wars, the Thirty Years War, WWI, WWII, it was a detention jail with torture chambers. Between wars it served as an army camp and training center.

- A ballot of Czech Republic philatelists by the Czech Post and the magazine MF Dnes has identified the 16 Kč Art on Stamp issue, "Pradlena" (The Spinner), by Josef Navratil, engraved by Bedřich Housa -- issued December 9, 1998, as the most beautiful Czech Republic stamp of 1998.

- When earlier this year the Czech Post issued a revised 1999 stamp program, everyone was surprised with the Easter stamp having a 3 Kč value, which by itself is useless unless it was used with additional stamps. Two rumors developed among philatelists as to why this rate -- one that the 3 Kč was an error, and second being that the Czech Postal Service was tied to having the total values of all issues per given year come to 290 Kč. The Easter stamp was thus rounded down to 3 Kč. Now, however, along with the stamp being issued, the post office also announced that if this stamp is used on Easter greeting cards between March 20 and April 2, the cards can be mailed for only 3 Kč!



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

From Prague Post, Jan 27, 1999:

- A judge's ruling could set precedent on a legally sanctioned two-tier pricing system that discriminates against foreigners. A Prague attorney was visiting a Prague location with a group of German-speaking colleagues. When he tried to purchase the tickets for the "Czech" price of 50Kč, the clerk told him his friends must pay twice the Czech price because "foreigners are richer". The attorney decided to sue. Many tourist venues and services such as restaurants, museums, galleries, cabdrivers and other service providers still discriminate. The differences between Czech and foreign prices range from moderate to outrageous. Legal experts agree that the verdict could signify a changing attitude towards the practice of overcharging foreigners. As a candidate for membership in the European Union, the Czech Republic will have to comply with its legislation according to a legal expert with the Delegation of the European Commission in Prague. Double pricing is not possible within the unified internal EU market.

AN INCIDENTAL OBSERVATION
IN A COMMON STAMP

by RNDr Miroslav Vostatek
trans. by Henry Hahn

The 1928 Jubilee and the 1929 Cities and Regions issues are popular among collectors. The design of the 3 Kč brown of the latter issue (as well as the 2 Kč blue of the former issue) was taken from a painting by Jaroslav Šetelík which portrays the cathedral of St. Peter in Brno. The engraving originated in the studio of Karel Seizinger.



Of the 3 Kč value, 13.71 million copies were printed. According to Hirsch and Fraňek of 1935, the entire length of the upper selvage is covered by several lines. As shown in the figure, the number of lines is not constant, though only one plate was used. That is probably due to the trimming of the sheets or on how the sheets went through the perforating equipment. The differences in distance between the upper edge of the stamp design and the lowest line is a mere fraction of a millimeter. In addition, the lines are of varying thicknesses.

In the 3rd and 4th stamps it appears that the last two lines merge into one thick line apparently due to excessive inking. In any event, we may count from 5 to 8 lines. In the 2nd stamp it appears that the lowest line widens toward the right side.

Thus, we can claim that it is possible to discover a number of interesting variations even in common stamps issued over 70 years ago.

1 Hirsch E. and Fraňek J., ČESKOSLOVENSKÉ ZNÁMKY, Fr. Borovy, Prague II, p307



RESTORATION (Continued from Page 1)

The Department of Communications was headed by Dr. Krupský. The delegation chose Chust as its headquarters and began operations on October 24, 1944. Its authority was based on President E. Beneš' decree of August 3, 1944 published in London in Úředním Listu (Official Documents).

On November 11 a decree was issued stating "... For the time being, until regular Czechoslovakian postage stamps become available, existing stocks of postage

stamps will be overprinted with a special cancel of the Czechoslovak Post and used on all mailings using the existing postal rate of these stamps in all areas and regions of liberated Ruthenia. (The overprinting is to be continued until all remaining stocks are exhausted.) The stamps will be sold at their old valuation. . . ." This was agreed to by all members of the delegation. They wanted to show that the Czechoslovak administration in this region was operational. This was also confirmed by Dr. Pražák, who, among others, states that in the summer of 1945 all the documentation, including the cancels, was turned over to M. Fedeleš at the Ministry in Prague. With this November 11 decree, the first actual postwar Czechoslovak postage stamps became a reality -- while the 2nd World War was still in progress.

The overprint had a simple appearance. The top line said ČSP (ČESKO-SLOVENSKÁ POŠTA = CZECHO/SLOVAK POST) and below that the year 1944 with a dot on either end. As was implied by the decree, the use of a rubber stamp for the overprinting was considered, but tests of this idea revealed that this was not satisfactory. Therefore, a local engraver, Izak, was contacted to create an engraved metal hand stamp. All existing stocks of stamps from the Chust post office and from others were collected and then overprinted by hand with a matte black ink by postal undersecretary Filip Michal under the supervision of Chust Postmaster, Michal Fedeleš, and Dr. Kupský. On December 4, M. Fedeleš signed a record listing all of the overprint types and the numbers of stamps created. This amounted to 28 definitive stamps and 10 postage dues. Besides this there were two additional stamps that were overprinted but never included in the list. Postal cards were also overprinted. On the same day the overprinted stamps were put up for sale at post offices in Chust, Sevžuc, Tačov, Rachov and Volove. They were used not only locally but also for mail to foreign countries -- namely to Moscow and London.

The Chust overprint inspired overprints in other places. The first ones appeared in Mukačevo (December 1944 and the beginning of January 1945) and in Berehovo. As liberation advanced, the overprinting carried over into Slovakia. Most of these overprints were similar to the Chust issue. In Slovakia (as well as later in the rest of the Czech lands) overprinting was requested by some commanders of local Red Army garrisons.

Recollecting the Chust issue, however, is not the end of the road to the past. The Slovak National Uprising must also be mentioned. During the insurrection the postal service was operational, and I believe its participation has not been sufficiently studied and appreciated. Here -- for the first time -- the postal service actually operated as the Czechoslovak Post. They did not have stamps or anything like them to use. The only postal memento is the newspaper delivery label for the uprising newspaper "NOVÉ SLOVO" from August 1944.

If we return to the first years after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, we find an overprinted series that had a similar fate -- this was Šrobár's Žilina overprint of 1919. On December 10, 1918 the National Assembly approved Statute No. 64 which included a special provision for Slovakia. It's paragraph §7 stated ". . . From the date of taking over the government, the usage of old revenue stamps, stock and bond papers, and postage stamps is allowed only if they are marked with the Czechoslovak Republic's markings . . ." Using this statute, the minister from Slovakia, Dr. Vavro Šrobár, had two different overprinting plates created. At this point the accounts differ: was the overprinting merely experimental, or, at the end of 1918 were the known 30 values of Hungarian stamps really

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overprinted? The second account is substantiated by the fact that there are many postally used covers. The overprint is in three lines: "ČESKO/SLOVENSKÁ/POŠTA". Most postally used covers are postmarked in February 1919 but continue into April.

If corrections were to be made in catalogued overprints, this overprint should also be re-evaluated -- after all, it has the backing of a statute.

Both overprints -- first Šrobár and then Chust -- share the same characteristics and fate. They have been shunted into a historical black hole. In contrast to the above is the "POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919" overprint. It is well known that its creation was not driven by postal necessity and that some of the stamps were not postally used, and yet the overprint issues have a dedicated place in catalogs. The values of some of the overprinted stamps did not correspond to the postal tariffs. Some of the stamps used for overprinting never appeared in the Czechoslovak territories or were actually issued after October 28, 1918. The manner of sale of this issue unambiguously attests to the fact that it was created merely for philatelists. Included in this issue are later "discovered" values which -- according to official documentation -- were supposed to have been destroyed. The overprint "PC 1919" of course does have one virtue -- it was created by the ministry -- an authorized institution. Silence regarding the Chust overprint had a different motivation -- political. The Communist government did not want to remind the people of how the republic got its easternmost part. During the creation of the Czechoslovak Republic, our grandfathers were much more foresighted regarding their overprints. They recorded everything so that today there is practically nothing "new" to discover.

Let us listen to what was written about overprinting in the philatelic press. Quoting Ervin Hirsch on the transition and restoration of the Czechoslovak Post in 1945: "In the preceding epoch, the before mentioned issues were highly regarded by Czechoslovak philately. Perhaps we have corrected our earlier fault by timely avoidance of that dangerous jingoism which made such a lot of noise in 1918 in the guise of ignorant philatelic publicity which -- in the long run -- hurt Czechoslovak philately . . ."

A somewhat different observation was held by Hirsch's contemporary František Novotný: "Before making an evaluation of the 1945 issues and overprints, the overprints of 1918 should be assessed . . . They both have the same value, for there is no difference in the concept, and to the degree there is, it is only in that the 1918 issues were produced under secure conditions. . . ." The article concludes with: ". . . We can admit the mistakes from the past, for only then do we defend the viewpoint that democracy rules in Czechoslovak philately and judges all equally."

According to reports in philatelic publications in 1945, a listing of all May 1945 overprints was being prepared and about to be published. Allegedly it amounted to approximately 250 items. Just what would Mr. Hirsch say today if he could look through the work of J.S. Grau of Spain, whose latest edition lists 472 places of issue with some having 2 or more different overprints. For instance, Pilsen has 12 different overprints. I presume that under these circumstances he would not press so hard with his initiative.

Now we have to return to the date in the introduction of this text. Insurrections and uprisings in Bohemia began much earlier than commonly accepted as May 5th. On May 1st the city of Přešov exploded in insurrection. May 2nd brought Nymburk's railroad workers revolution. Following their example, other places in northeastern Bohemia erupted. By May 3rd the whole area from Nový Bydžov to Železný Brod

including the towns of Lomnice, Semily, Nová Paka, etc., were in the hands of Czech citizenry. This area became too dangerous for any Germans as was reported to Prague by local Gestapo.

Unfortunately many of the events of May 1945 fell into oblivion. Some particulars were recorded, luckily before the opinions of Mr. Hirsch and his allies were accepted. We know that some of the 1945 issues were prepared during the protectorate, others after the Prague uprising. We also know that many were allowed or subsequently approved by revolutionary organs and local military command, or even were produced at their request. In Vsetin the commander of a partizan brigade asked the local post for an overprint, and visited the postmaster heavily armed to make this point. Places are known where the postmasters overprinted stamps from existing Protectorate stocks, sold them for face value and later accounted for everything. The money was turned over to the state. Of course the situation differed from place to place. For instance, nothing was heard for quite some time about the overprints from Velké Meziříčí. The reason was stark reality -- the Germans retook the city, shot the revolutionary commission, and hung its leader in the town square as an example.

A very different approach to valuation of overprints from both eras existed for many years. There was nothing for a long period as far as specialized publication on the 1945 era. And that was hypocrisy. Well known Spanish collector J.S. Grau specialized in 1944/45 overprints and eventually put together an exhibit and later a catalog. His collection and catalog were entered in many stamp shows and won medals not only in Spain but other countries including in Prague starting in 1978.

One of the arguments the anti-overprint experts use is that many overprints were created "later". This is a weak argument. How could they know what is later? What are they using to substantiate this argument? Existence of "later" issues is possible only because there is no official listing of overprints. Of course, if we took this attitude every time in every instance, we could collect practically nothing. New as well as old stamps are forged -- with their individual features -- and postal cards and postal stationery are also forged.

Another argument posed by the opponents is that the overprint producers did not possess the proper authority to issue them. This is partly true. During this revolutionary period no legal authority existed. Overlooked also, for example, is that nobody approved the "nationalizing" of Protectorate postal cancelers. This was a common practice occurring in some places early and in others later. This is accepted as a fact, and there are no discussions about it.

Generally the 1945 overprints are called "revolutionary" by both proponents and opponents. And what is the common meaning of the word "revolutionary"? If one gives it any thought, it becomes clear that obtaining official approval during "revolutionary" times is absurd!

During May 1945 revolutionary organizations assumed authority which during normal times they would have had no right to exercise. They made decisions on matters belonging to other institutions. They had the power to arrest and imprison, to confiscate property, and to draft men into armed units. Today's conception of their authority comes from the current peacetime views which do not correspond to the situation in May 1945. Therefore, logically we may consider these revolutionary organizations as legal authority for the creation of overprints.

We have to add to this that contact with higher authorities was virtually nonexistent. Happiness at liberation, the need to show that the Czechoslovak

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Republic was free again, and that the German Reich was not "our home" provided the dominant motivation for this activity.

In today's get together, I see an opportunity to come to an agreement on how we will evaluate overprints be they from the year 1919, 1944 or 1945. Maybe the time has come to break the silence -- which only hurts the situation -- and admit that things were different. Different prognoses of what should belong in philately and what should not, have always turned against collectors themselves. The most blatant example is the "Kde Domov Můj" souvenir sheets. Had they only looked further than the tip of their noses they would have seen how an analogous problem was solved by our neighbors in Germany.

We want only to acknowledge how it was and to truthfully state the reality. We must recognize that all arguments are double edged. We should heed František Novotný's advice and make the radical cut for which he called 50 years ago. We have people who lived through this period and still remember it. We must do our best so our followers won't say that we knew but did nothing about it. With a little good will and willingness, solid solutions can be found. And to the degree that collectors could agree on this, perhaps the editors of catalogs will respect it.

[Translator's Note: I also collect, specialize and study the 1944/45 overprints. My interest began in the middle of May 1945 when my Dad took me to our post office in Nový Hradec Králove, and there purchased almost full sheets of the three value set of the Kostelec nad Orlicí overprint. This overprint was stocked in most post offices in northeastern Bohemia.]

* * * * *

STAMPSHOW 99

by Bruce Sebek

Well, we are only three months away from our annual meeting being held in conjunction with STAMPSHOW 99 in Cleveland, Ohio, on August 26-29, 1999. Here is a preliminary schedule of Society activities at the event.

-- The Board of Directors will meet at 1 P.M. on Wednesday, August 25.

-- The Society general membership meeting is set for Saturday, August 28 from 2 - 4 P.M. After a run down on the condition of the Society, Henry Hahn will make an interesting presentation on our theme for this annual meeting -- "The Pneumatic Mails of Vienna and Prague".

-- A Society dinner -- open to all members and guests -- is being planned (hopefully at a nearby Czech restaurant) for Friday, August 27.

-- The traditional Society awards breakfast is also being considered.

The July/August issue of the SPECIALIST will have complete and last minute details about all of these events.

As usual, there will be a Society table manned throughout the show -- look for it. It is the focus of our activities. Here you will find the sign-up sheet for attending some of the Society functions (dinner and breakfast). Also here you will find for sale the Society cachet commemorating the 100th anniversary of public use of pneumatic mail in Prague and the traditional literature related to Czechoslovak philately.

MAY/JUNE 1999

Since our table must be manned whenever the show is open, we need members to volunteer for time slots to cover the table. This is especially true for those members who live in the Cleveland area.

If you would like to volunteer for table duty (no extensive knowledge of Czech philately or our Society is required) or have questions, please direct them to Bruce Sebek at 216-991-2356 or e-mail: BASebek@webtv.net.

✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻

SALE OF UNBOUND SPECIALIST's by Richard Palaschak

The Society has back copies of the *SPECIALIST* available for sale to members at reduced prices. Years 1981-1998 are priced at 25 cents per copy. Prior years are priced at 50 cents per copy. We do not have all years complete, and in many cases only have a few copies of an issue. Therefore, the issues will be sold on a first come first served basis. Photocopies can be made (at cost -- about 3 cents per page) to provide a limited number of copies to complete some year's issues, if specifically requested.

You may order the *SPECIALIST's* which you wish to purchase by submitting a request to the Society Librarian:

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Please include your membership number and a deposit of \$10.00 (make the check out to Richard Palaschak and not to the Society) to cover the cost of postage and packaging to mail the *SPECIALIST's* to you. (If you are purchasing less than five *SPECIALIST's*, the deposit may be reduced to \$5.00). Unless requested otherwise, the *SPECIALIST's* will be mailed to you as Third Class mail. You will be billed for the *SPECIALIST's* which you are purchasing when they are mailed to you. Any balance from your deposit after subtracting the cost of postage and packaging will be applied to your bill (or refunded, if your total purchase cost plus postage is less than the deposit).

SPECIALIST's are available for the following years: 1966, 1968 to 1971, and 1973 to 1998. Not all years are complete! If you only want complete year sets, please say so; otherwise I'll send those copies currently available for any year which you request.

I sometimes obtain a very limited number of loose issues from earlier years. If you are missing an issue from one of these earlier years, I may be able to help, but these will be sold to you at the cost which the owner sets.

New Issues

******* REVISED *****
1999 ISSUE PLAN
FOR CZECH REPUBLIC STAMPS**

Date of Issue	Name of Issue	Number in set	Value Kc
Jan 20	The Tradition of Czech Stamp Production	1	4.60
Feb 17	Animal Care/House Pets -- Cats	3	4.60,5,7
Mar 10	Easter	1	3
Mar 10	Nature Conservation -- Butterflies/Birds	4	4.60,4.60 5,5
Mar 12	Czech Republic into NATO	1	4.60
Apr 14	50 th Anniversary -- Council of Europe	1	7
Apr 14	100 th Anniversary -- Czech Olympic Committee	1	9
May 5	POSTEUROP National Parks	2	11,17
May 26	Children Cartoonist -- Ondrej Sekora	1	4.60
May 26	Beauties of our Country -- Old Bridges	2	8,11
Jun 23	Geologist -- Joachim Barrande:Souvenir Sheet	2	13,31
Jun 23	750 Years -- Jihlava Miner's Rights	1	4.60
Jun 26	125 th Anniversary -- Postal Union	1	9
Sep 8	200 th Anniversary -- Vincence Priessnitz	1	4.60
Sep 29	Folk Art -- Bee Hives	3	4.60,5,7
Oct 20	Humor on Stamps	3	4.60,5,7
Oct 20	Beroun School of Art: Souvenir Sheets	2	11,13
Nov 10	Art on Stamps	3	13,17,26
Nov 10	Christmas Stamp	1	4

*This revised listing has one new issue, several different dates, and numerous changes in the value column.

CZECH REPUBLIC
by G. M. van Zanten



Fig. 1

1. On February 17, 1999, the Ministry of Transport and Communications issued a set of 3 multicolored commemorative stamps entitled "Cats" (Fig. 1). The graphic artists of all three stamps were Libuše and Jaromír Knotek. The engraver was Martin Srb. All

three were produced by the Post Printing House Prague by rotary recess printing combined with photogravure in printing sheets of 50 stamps.

- The 4.60 Kč stamp (in black, blue, ocher, red-brown, and brown) depicts a

"funny fellow" Tom-cat. A FDC in brown shows a kitten exploring its surroundings
 - The 5 Kč stamp (in black, ocher, red-brown, brown, and grey-green) depicts a cat with a kitten. A FDC in brown shows two kittens observing a flying butterfly.
 - The 7 Kč stamp (in black, ocher, grey, red-brown, and brown) depicts two cats. A FDC in black shows once again two kittens.



Fig. 2

2. On March 10, 1999, the Ministry issued a multicolored 3 Kč stamp commemorating the coming spring festival of "Easter" (Fig. 2). The black-brown, yellow, red, light blue and dark blue stamp depicts an ornate cockerel with a traditional plaited willow stick under its wing, proudly inspecting its colorful plumage. The graphic designer was Karel Franta while the engraver was Miloš Ondráček. It was produced by the Post Printing House Prague by rotary recess printing combined with photogravure in sheets of 50 stamps. A FDC in brown shows an ancient playing box with a hen, and a plaited willow stick.

3. On March 10, 1999, the Ministry issued a set of 4 multicolored commemorative stamps in the "Nature Conservation" series depicting endangered birds and butterflies (Fig. 3). The set was designed by Hana Storchová and engraved by Josef Herčík. They were produced by the Victoria Security Printing a.s. using multicolored offset in sheets of 50 pieces, se-tenant, always two stamps alternating in chessboard arrangement (bird + bird, butterfly + butterfly).



Fig. 3

- The first 4.60 Kč stamp depicts *Merops apiaster* (bee eater). A FDC in blue-grey shows feathers of *Merops apiaster*.
 - The second 4.60 Kč stamp depicts *Upupa epops* (chocolate hoopoe). A FDC in violet shows a thyme with a small feather of *Upupa epops*.
 - The first 5 Kč stamp depicts *Catocala electa*. A FDC in grey-green shows a drawing of willow twigs.
 - The second 5 Kč stamp depicts *Euphydryas maturna*. A FDC in green shows a drawing of an herb.

4. On March 12, 1999, the Ministry issued a 4.60 Kč stamp to commemorate the occasion of the acceptance of the Czech Republic into NATO (Fig. 4). This blue and red stamp shows the logo of the North Atlantic Alliance along with the text Czech

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Fig. 4

Republic - a member of NATO. The designer of the issue was Zdeněk Ziegler with the engraving by Bohumil Šneider. It was produced by the Post Printing House Prague using rotary recess printing combined with photogravure in sheets of 50 stamps. A FDC in blue shows the logo of the 50th anniversary of NATO.

Postal Stationery

5. On March 24, 1999, the Ministry issued a postal card with imprinted 4 Kč stamp for commercial and promotional use with a free left part for surcharges (without lines for sender), completed by a hologram in the lower left part of the postal card (Fig. 5). The hologram was added as a security element and was made especially for

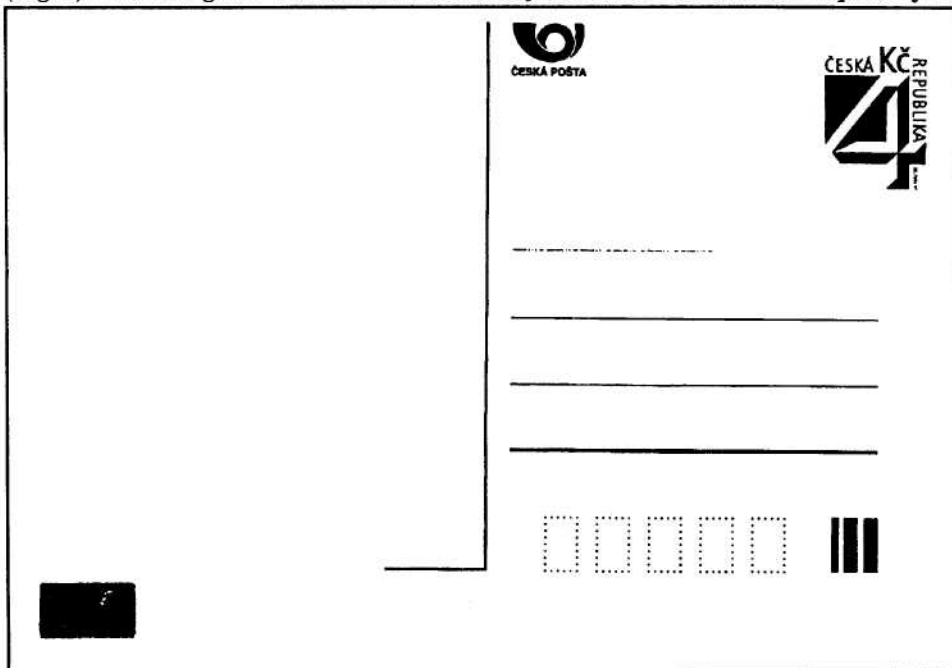


Fig. 5

the Czech Post. From various angles of view the logo of the Czech Post alternates with a flying pigeon and the color changes. The postal card was produced by the Post Printing House Prague by offset in black and blue-green and sells for 4.70 Kč.

SLOVAKIA
by F. Garancovsky

6. On January 12, 1999, the Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications



Fig. 6

issued a 12 Sk multicolored stamp entitled "19th World Winter Universiad Games, and 4th EYOD" (Fig. 6). The stamp depicts winter sports. The two tablets alternate the logos of the two

mentioned games. The designer of the issue is Ivan Schurmann with the engraver being Bohumil Šneider. The stamps were produced by the Postage Stamps Printing House - Prague using rotary recess printing in combination with recess printing in sheets of 30 stamps and associated tablets. A FDC shows a winter sports scene; it bears a postmark from Poprad.

7. On January 28, 1999, the Ministry issued a set of 3 commemorative stamps in the "Personalities" series (Fig. 7). The multicolored stamps were designed by Josef Baláž. Engraving of the stamps was by Rudolf Čigánik (3 Sk), Martin Činovský (4 Sk), and František Horniak (11 Sk). They were produced by the Postage Stamps Printing House - Prague using rotary recess printing in combination with recess printing in sheets of 50 stamps each.



Fig. 7

- The 3 Sk stamp depicts Matej Bel (1684 - 1749), a distinguished scholar who was appointed rector of the Bratislava Lyceum in 1714 -- it was known as the Great Embellishment of his country. His portrait also appeared on an earlier Czechoslovak envelope as an imprinted stamp with a value of 6 Kcs.

- The 4 Sk stamp depicts Juraj Haulík (1788 - 1869).

- The 11 Sk stamp depicts Pavol Orszagh Hviezdoslav (1849 - 1921). He was a well known poet and has appeared on previous occasions on stamps of Czechoslovakia (refer Sc374/P502 and Sc1038/P1174).



Letters to the Editor

1. Dear Lou:

Thanks for another very good Jan/Feb issue -- it made interesting reading. Looking at Ruzicka's letter on the Olomouc overprints, firstly there were two which have been authenticated, this issue (accredited to Alois Novotný) and the Orlice eagle (A. Beran). Secondly there were a variety of cachets and cancelers used.

However, to the stamps in question for which production work began on

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Tuesday, 15 May 1945. The overprint was developed and then prepared prior to the end of the war by the head of the Olomouc 6 post office, Alois Novotný. The engraving was undertaken by V. Miks. It was authorized by the National Committee and sold in Olomouc 1 and 2 post offices.

The production was done in great haste with the approval and help of the National Committee and the Chief of the Olomouc 1 post office at the Hanacké printing works in Olomouc and records show that 29,750 complete sets were made ready on Tuesday, 15 May 1945. These were printed on the unissued stamps held at the post office, and the perpetrators went to extraordinary lengths to ensure that all stamps were accounted for.

The stamps overprinted were Hitler head 30h, 40h, 50h, 60h, 1.20K -- the lowest and highest values were overprinted in blue, the others in red. The 80h value was also prepared with a blue overprint but not put on sale.

As soon as they were ready, distribution and sale commenced, although some records show them going on sale on Saturday, 19 May 1945. The set cost 4 Kč, a levy of 1 Kč being made to "help the needy". They were sold until Thursday, 24 May 1945, and the stamps were valid for use until Sunday, 27 May 1945.

The real interesting part of the letter is the reference to 1977. I know from a conversation with Karel Holoubek that the overprints were "outlawed" by the Communist regime so this really interests me. Does Karl Ruzicka still have this correspondence?

Yours truly,
Bob Hill

2. Dear Mr. Svoboda:

In Munchen I have seen the last numbers of "The Czechoslovak Specialist".

My field of interest is crash mail (mail from accidents/disasters or fire) on railroads. From more than 250 different accidents there are mail pieces with official notes (rubber stamps, manuscripts or slip of paper affixed on mail). From Czechoslovakia I have found only one which took place on 8th July 1961 on a TPO Praha - Bratislava. Although I have watched the market for 20 years, I have seen only two items of this fire in a train. In both cases there was a slip of paper attached that was canceled with a CDS and had the following printed on it:

Endommagé à l' incendie de vagen du bur. Ambulance
Praha --- Bratislava 801 du 8.7.61.

My questions are:

1. Do you know other covers/cards from this fire/accident? Any other information about it?
2. Do you know of mail from other railway accidents like this inside Czechoslovakia?
3. Are there articles in your paper since Volume 1 about such accidents?

With kind regards,
Herbert Pfeifer

[Ed. Note: I cannot find any articles on this subject in past SPECIALISTS. Do any of our members have any knowledge or covers from this accident? If so, please let me know. I will publish the information here and pass it on to Mr. Pfeifer.]

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