



# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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## DON'T MISS NAPEX! THE SOCIETY'S MOST SIGNIFICANT CONVENTION by Henry Hahn

**SIGNIFICANT? DEFINITELY!** NAPEX'02 will be our first convention and show with significant participation by members of the SCP from Europe – three exhibits from the Netherlands and two from the Czech Republic.

While it is too late to exhibit, it is NOT too late to plan to attend and enjoy one of the best shows in the USA, hear three outstanding lectures, browse through numerous dealer booths, and enjoy the camaraderie at the show as well as at our post-show "decompression cook-out" at the Hahns.

NAPEX'02 will take place at the McLean Hilton (which is in a Virginia suburb of Washington D.C.) from May 31st to June 2nd. Rooms are available at the show location at \$99 for a single or double. The hotel's phone number is (703) 761-5111 or FAX at (703) 761-5100. Mention that you are coming to NAPEX. The show's web site is: [www.napex.org](http://www.napex.org). There you will find information for visitors including maps and schedules for public transportation.

Our Society booth (Table C) will provide the latest information on our activities, sell literature and cachets honoring the 600th Anniversary of the First Preaching by Jan Hus at the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague. *(Continued on Page 11)*

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**IN MEMORIAM  
JOSEPH EDWARD BUSH**

On Wednesday morning, December 5, Joseph E. Bush (member 1618) of Richmond, Virginia, died at the age of 90.

He was born in the USA in 1911 of parents that had emigrated here from Slovakia. He collected Czechoslovak stamps as well as those of the US, Canada and France. His love of books stayed with him to the very end. Among his most loved authors belonged Vaclav Havel, with his plays and books, as well as the French sci-fi writer Jules Verne. His quick wit and mind impressed all who knew him. He was an occasional contributor to the SPECIALIST and a frequent correspondent with other Society members.

From his wife Jean we hear that on December 4 Joe insisted on taking her and her sister to a Red Lobster restaurant to celebrate Jean's 78<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was very relaxed and cheerful. The next morning she found him seated in his favorite chair. His expression was very peaceful, so he must simply have stopped breathing and gone without pain.

We extend our sincerest condolences to his wife Jean, daughter Jackie, son Franklin and the entire Bush family.

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

**TWO ARTICLES FROM THE ISRAEL PHILATELIST**

[Ed. Note: These two articles were brought to my attention a while back by a member of our Society. Although they are 35 years old, they provide extensive details on a beautiful issue (Sc. 1475-1480/Pof. 1615-1620) which was not covered -- beyond a simple announcement of their issuance -- in the SPECIALIST before.]

\* \* \* \* \*

**NEW JUDAICA ISSUES FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA**

by Eric Lind



Fig. 1

In cooperation with the State Jewish Museum in Prague, the Designers Jiří Švengsbír and Karel Vodak, well known artists experienced in the creation of postage stamps



Fig. 3

The first is a 30 Heller stamp [Fig. 1] depicting a detail from a Torah draping of the Maisl Synagogue from the year of 1593 [Fig. 2].

A 60 Heller stamp [Fig. 3] shows the Coat of Arms of the Gersons, the Prague printing family known as the "Gersoniden" (1530)[Fig. 4]. The third value is a 1 Kronen stamp [Fig. 5] illustrated with a pitcher depicting the functions of a burial society, the "Chevra Kadisha" of Nikulov (Nikolsburg). The item is from the year 1804.

The most striking postal issues ever printed by any country outside Israel in the category of Philatelic Judaica will come to us from Czechoslovakia in January of 1967.

Just announced by the "Israelitiches Wochenblatt", Zurich, Switzerland, the Postal Administration of Czechoslovakia will print a series of six adhesives which will arouse great interest among philatelists all over the world.

In cooperation with the State Jewish Museum in Prague, the Designers Jiří Švengsbír and Karel Vodak, well known artists experienced in the creation of postage stamps have completed essays of six denominations.



Fig. 2

The first is a 30 Heller stamp [Fig. 1] depicting a detail from a Torah draping of the Maisl Synagogue from the year of 1593 [Fig. 2].

A 60 Heller stamp [Fig. 3] shows the Coat of Arms of the Gersons, the Prague printing family known as the "Gersoniden" (1530)[Fig. 4]. The third value is a 1 Kronen stamp [Fig. 5] illustrated with a pitcher depicting the functions of a burial society, the "Chevra Kadisha" of Nikulov (Nikolsburg). The item is from the year 1804.



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 10

commemorated on a 1.20 Kčs stamp [Fig. 7]. Another, the Kčs 1.40 value [Fig. 8], pays tribute to the great catastrophe [sic], the holocaust which befell Jewry under the Hitlerites and shows a part of a wall in the Pinkas Synagogue, Prague, containing a list of 77,297 names of victims who came from Bohemia and Moravia [Fig. 9]. The last stamp, the Kčs 1.60 value [Fig. 10], honors the famous Jewish astronomer, scientist and historian, David Gans (1541-1613). The adhesive pictures his tombstone which is still preserved in the old Jewish cemetery in the capital of Czechoslovakia [Fig. 11].

In addition, the postal administration of Czechoslovakia will prepare three postal stationery items in the form of covers dedicated to the millenium[sic] of the Jewish community of Prague. These envelopes will be illustrated with cachets containing folklore motifs and symbols of names which can still be found on old gravestones in the ancient Prague cemetery known as the "Judenfriedhof".

On the first day of issue of these commemoratives, the Czechoslovakian Postal Administration will use a special cancelling[sic] device which will emboss the Coat of Arms of the Jewish Community, a Star of David, and a Swedish helmet together with the number 1000. The illustrations on the postage stamps are derived from the priceless items in the collection of the Jewish State Museum in Prague.

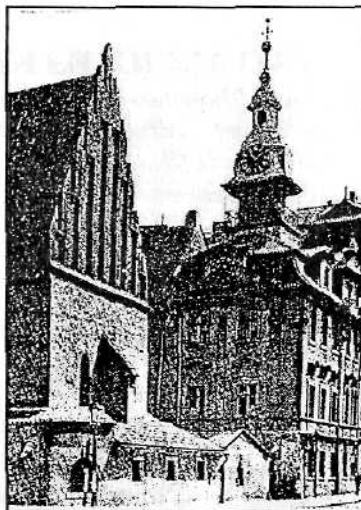


Fig. 6



Fig. 9



Fig. 11

We collectors of Philatelic Judaica look forward to these issues which will adorn our albums. They will enrich the pages and bring to life the old Jewish history of Central Europe. The oft asked question which arises, is it, or isn't it, a true Judaica issue can this time be eliminated. We can all agree about this new issue on this point, and we are grateful to those who worked toward the realization of this series.

[Ed. Note: *The SPECIALIST* is pleased to reprint the preceding article from *The Israel Philatelist*, November-December 1966 with permission of the current editor, Dr. Oscar Stadler, and the author of Detroit, Michigan.]

## THE CZECH STAMPS

by Dr. Eli Grad

My colleague, Mr. Eric Lind, reported on the exciting Czech set of philatelic Judaica in a magnificently illustrated article which appeared in the November-December issue of *The Israel Philatelist*. I am pleased to supplement the fine article by Mr. Lind with some additional background information.

The 30 Heller stamp depicts a portion of a Torah curtain presented by Mordecai Meisel and his wife Frumet to the Meisel Synagogue in Prague in 1593<sup>1</sup>. Mordecai, the son of Samuel Meisel was born in Prague in 1528. Having amassed great wealth, Mordecai Meisel built the Jewish town-hall, the Hohe Synagogue and the Meisel Synagogue which bears his name to this day. He enlarged the old Jewish cemetery of Prague, built a hospital, paved the streets of the ghetto and spent considerable sums of money ransoming Jewish prisoners. His wealth and philanthropy [sic] became proverbial among the Jews of Czechoslovakia, and many anecdotes are connected with his name. The costly golden and silver vessels with which he furnished the Synagogues he built were lost over the years. Among the few gifts remaining is the magnificent curtain (Parochet), embroidered with hundreds of pearls, which adorns the 30 Heller stamp, and a similarly embroidered wrapper for the Torah.

The 60 Heller stamp shows the coat of arms of the Jewish printing family of Prague known as the "Gersonides". Gershon ben Soloman Cohen, who began printing in 1513 with a prayer book, was the founder of this illustrious family. From 1513 to 1526 Gershon ben-Solomon worked in Prague. In 1530 he reappeared at Oels in Silesia, printing a Pentateuch with the Megillot and Haftarat. He transferred his activity to the Southwest at Augsburg, where in 1533 he published an edition of Rashi on the Pentateuch and Megillot. The next year he published an Haggadah, in 1536 a letter-writer and German prayerbook, and in 1540 an edition of the Turim, followed by rhymed Judeo-German versions of the Books of Kings (1543) and Samuel (1544). In 1544 Gerson ben-Solomon moved to Ichenhausen, between Augsburg and Ulm, and finally settled in 1546 at Heddernheim where he published a number of additional works. His descendants -- Mordecai, Bezalel and those who followed them -- re-established themselves at Prague where they continued the family tradition of Jewish printing.

The 1 Kronen stamp depicts a pitcher of the Chevra Kaddisha of Mikulov, a town in southern Moravia. The pitcher dates from the year 1801<sup>2</sup>. The name "Chevra Kaddisha", which means "Holy Society" was originally used to describe

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congregations and religious societies generally. Gradually, the name became associated with the charitable societies which care for the sick -- especially for the dying -- and bury the dead. An often quoted tradition<sup>3</sup> attributes to Löw ben Bezalel, Chief Rabbi of Prague, the organization of the first Chevra Kaddisha in 1593. Other Prague Jewish leaders similarly have been given credit as the founders of this society. Be the actual founder whoever he may, there appears to be very little doubt that the Chevra Kaddisha was indeed founded in Prague.

Membership of the Chevra Kaddisha was traditionally limited to Jewish males over the age of thirteen, but children were frequently admitted as contributing members. It was, in fact, customary for wealthier members of the community to enroll their children in the Chevra Kaddisha at the time of birth. Women formed their own societies to attend the dying and wash the dead; these were usually called "Nashim Zadkaniyot"<sup>4</sup>.

The members of the Chevra Kaddisha and their families enjoyed certain benefits after death. They were buried in that part of the cemetery reserved for the privileged, and their funeral expenses were lower. In the modern Jewish congregation, the voluntary performance of the duties to the dead<sup>5</sup> is no longer common, and the functions of the Chevra Kaddisha are generally performed by paid workers.

The Altneuschule is featured on the 1.20 Kčs stamp. Scheduled to observe its 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1968, the Old-New Synagogue has lasted through the ages as a testimony to past suffering and past glories, and as a symbol of the continuity of the famous Jewish community of Prague. This oldest synagogue of Prague stands near the entrance to the cemetery. Nine steps lead from the street to a dark vestibule from which doors open into a square nave with black walls and small Gothic windows. In the center of the synagogue there are two rows of pillars running from east to west and obstructing the view of the Ark. Within the synagogue proper there is no space reserved for women. They have access, however, to an outer room. The framework of the roof, the gable and the party wall apparently date from the Middle Ages.

This synagogue was the only building spared when the ghetto was plundered in 1744. During the fire of 1754 the flames reached the northern side of the building, but were extinguished by members of the Jewish community at grave risk to their own lives. Today the Altneuschule stands, as of old, in the center of the district, whose every stone could tell of a past rich in memorable events witnessed in the course of centuries.

The 1.40 Kčs value commemorates the Holocaust, showing the "Wall of Martyrs" which is part of the Pinkas Synagogue of Prague. On this wall are inscribed the names of 77,297 Jewish victims of the Nazi catastrophe who came from Bohemia and Moravia. Actually, the number of Czech Jews who perished was much greater, but Jews of Slovakia were not included in the listing on the Memorial Wall. The Pinkas Synagogue was probably built towards the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century or the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century by Phinehas Horowitz. It was enlarged and rebuilt by his descendant, Aaron Meshulam, in 1535.

The 1.60 Kčs stamp features the tombstone of David ben-Solomon Gans, born at Lippstadt, Westphalia in 1541 and died in Prague on August 25, 1613. His tombstone is in the famous Jewish cemetery of Prague. After having acquired a fair knowledge of rabbinical literature at Bonn and Frankfurt/Main, David Gans went to Cracow where he studied under Moses Isserles. Later he attended the lectures of the brothers Löwe ben Bezalel of Prague, who introduced philosophy, mathematics

and astronomy into their studies. From them Gans received the inspiration to devote himself to these branches of science.

David Gans lived for a time at Nordheim, spent several years in his native city, and probably settled in Prague in 1564. There he came into contact with Kepler and Tycho Brahe, and took part in astronomical observations at the Prague observatory.

Among Gans's [sic] works, the most widely known is his history entitled "Zemach David" which was first published in Prague in 1592. It is divided into two parts, the first containing the annals of Jewish history, the second those of general history. It must be noted that his was the first work of its kind among German Jews, who at the time had very little appreciation for the study of history. David Gans wrote also a number of works on cosmography and astronomy.

I fully share Mr. Lind's sense of excited anticipation of this set. Regrettably, at the time of this writing, "technical difficulties" have caused a delay in the issuance of the set . . . I hope and pray that by the time you receive this issue of *The Israel Philatelist*, the outstanding contribution of Czechoslovakia to philatelic Judaica will indeed "adorn our albums".

NOTES:

- (1) I am most grateful to Dr. Vilem Benda, Director of the State Jewish Museum in Prague for providing technical data and dating some of the objects appearing on these stamps.
- (2) The date of 1801 was provided by Dr. Benda, on the basis of which it would appear that the date suggested in the Nov.-Dec. Issue of THE ISRAEL PHILATELIST (page 1757) may be in error.
- (3) See: Jewish Encyclopaedia, Funk & Wagnalls Company, N.Y. 1903, Volume 6 page 299. The encyclopaedia, which was recently reissued by the KTAV PUBLISHING HOUSE, was the source of much of the background information contained in this article.
- (4) "Righteous Women".
- (5) Since ancient times the burial of the dead has been regarded by Jews as a religious duty of the highest importance.

[Ed. Note: The *SPECIALIST* is pleased to reprint the preceding article from *The Israel Philatelist*, January-February 1967 with permission of the current editor, Dr. Oscar Stadler, and the author of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.]



**AN INTERESTING LETTER FROM CIESZYN,  
IN A HISTORICAL CONTEXT**  
by Ton Welvaart and Jan Verleg

A. The historical context -- On the history of Austrian Silesia

Up to the end of World War I, the area around the now divided (Polish/Czech) town of Cieszyn/Těšín was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was known as "Österreichisch Schlesien" (Fig. 1). This former Duchy of Teschen covered about 220 square kilometers and in 1919 it was inhabited by approximately 400,000 people. The population of Cieszyn was no more than 15,000.



Fig. 1

Under Austrian rule the area was divided into four districts. In one of those Frýdek (Frystat), the larger part of the population was Czech, while in the other three areas it was the Poles who were in the majority.

"Österreichisch Schlesien" was an important coal district. In 1919 almost 1 million tons of coal were mined. In this way the mines of Teschen produced the main part of the coal used in the cities of Vienna, Prague, and Budapest.



Fig. 2



The area was also significant because of a number of important railway lines. There were, as there still are today, good railway connections with Košice, Bratislava, Prague, and Vienna. The line from Teschen to Oderberg connected this area with the German part of Silesia. It is not surprising, therefore, that shortly after World War I Czechoslovakia and Poland -- which had become sovereign countries -- began quarrelling over this ethnically divided area of great economic importance.

As early as 1914 several plans were devised in Czechoslovakia for establishing an independent nation. Masaryk managed to realize his plans; he wanted the area of Austrian Silesia to become partially Polish and partially Czech.

Towards the end of the War, representatives of Poland and Czechoslovakia reached an agreement on dividing the area along ethnic borders; Czechoslovakia was to have the district of Frystat and the other three districts were to become Polish territory. After the Austrian garrison had been disarmed on 15 November 1918 by Polish and Czech soldiers, the two countries indeed divided the area according to their agreement. However, the Czech leaders soon realized that Poland had benefitted far more from the division of the districts. In addition to now owning one third of the coal mines, the Poles also controlled the rail network. This the Czechs were not prepared to simply accept. Consequently, a story was fabricated about a communist takeover being imminent, and in January 1919 the Cieszyn area was occupied by 15,000 Czech soldiers.

The Allied forces in their turn did not accept this fabrication nor the military actions that had followed it. They demanded a cease-fire and a withdrawal of all Czech troops from nearly the whole area. An Allied military delegation was sent to



Fig. 3

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Cieszyn to supervise the execution of this demand and to ensure that the established line of demarcation was observed by both parties. Next, the Allied forces spent months studying and searching for a final solution of the conflict at hand.

At the instigation of Benes the Allied forces declared, in September 1919, that the inhabitants of Cieszyn had to decide about their own future by means of a referendum. Benes reckoned that organizing such a referendum would take up so much time that in the end it would never take place. He was proven right. In the area controlled by Czechoslovakia there were 12 post offices, from which -- in February 1920 -- stamps were beginning to be distributed bearing an SO 1920 overprint. On April 15<sup>th</sup> the Polish post followed this example (Fig. 2)\*.

According to Fischer, the Czech SO 1920 stamps were also used in the Polish area. Possibly, using both Polish as well as Czech stamps was allowed in that area, for example in Teschen.

### B. The remarkable letter from Cieszyn (Fig. 3)

On May 20, 1919, stamphouse Markenfürst sent this letter to Freiburg im Breisgau (Germany). The letter was franked with 25 heller -- at the time the correct domestic postal charge for letters up to 20 grams. All post between Austria and Germany could indeed be sent at domestic charge. It could certainly be argued that this agreement is still valid since it has never been discontinued and that it was certainly still valid in the period preceding the Versailles Peace Treaty. Such an agreement has never existed between Poland and Germany. In Poland the postal charge for letters to foreign countries had been 50 heller ever since February 25, 1919. In May 1919 the bilingual Austrian postmark was still in use.

The letter was probably intended to be taken by train from Cieszyn to Oderberg (Bohumín) and from there on towards Görlitz. However, during an inspection carried out in the Czech town of Orlova (the first stop on the way), the letter was found to be underfranked by both Polish and Czech standards. It so happened that the foreign postal rate in Czechoslovakia had been raised by 25 heller (to a charge of 50 heller) on May 15, 1919. So, the letter was returned to Cieszyn, as becomes clear from the red line in pencil around the stamps and the word "Retour" (Return to Sender) written under them. The letter was then in all likelihood taken by the sender to Orlova where it was franked with the delinquent 25 heller and postmarked with the nationalized canceler of Orlova. This postmark was originally a bilingual one (German/Polish) from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The Czechs deleted the German name "Orlau" from the upper segment and changed the Polish name (Orłowa) in the bottom segment into Orlova -- replacing the W by a V and altering the Polish Ł into L. The postmark can also be seen as a nationalized Austrian one.

### Literature:

- Richard M. Watt: *Bitter Glory -- Poland and Its Fate*, New York, 1982, pp. 160-164
- D. Perman: *The Shaping of the Czechoslovak State -- Diplomatic History of the Boundaries of Czechoslovakia, 1914-1920*, Leiden 1962, pp. 8-27, 97-120, 228-257
- *Monografie Československých Známek*, Part 5
- Fischer: *Katalog Znaków Pocztowych 2001, Bytom*, Kraków 2001, part 2, pp. 118-119

\*According to the Fischer catalogue, it was the post office Cieszyn 2 (probably the railway post office) which had been allocated to Czechoslovakia.

**DON'T MISS NAPEX! (Continued from Page 1)**

Here is the schedule of Society events:

- Thursday, May 30 -- 1 to 7 pm, SCP Board Meeting, Sully Room. SCP members invited to observe. An informal dinner after the meeting is being arranged.

- Saturday, June 1 -- 11 am to 12 noon, SCP General Meeting, Sherman Amphitheater, Pres. Palaschak presiding. 1 to 3:30 pm, SCP Lectures, Mt. Vernon Room:

1. "Postal History of Brno, Capital of Moravia", Hans van Dooremallen
2. "Postal History of the Carpatho-Ukraine", Jan Verleg
3. "Postal Stationery of Czechoslovakia 1918-1939", Milan Cernik

7 pm, NAPEX Awards Banquet at which an award for the best exhibit of Czechoslovakia selected by the NAPEX Jury will be presented.


- Sunday, June 2 -- 8:45 to 9:30 am, Society Breakfast, Hilton restaurant. 9:30 am, Society Awards presentation/meeting in Sherman Amphitheater, Society Gold/Silver/Bronze awards as well as a Best Novice award will be presented. 6 pm, Decompression Cook-Out at the Hahns, all SCP members are invited.

Times/locations might change, so upon arrival please check at the Society table. Other societies convening at NAPEX include the Society for Hungarian Philately, the American Revenue Association and the Cuban Philatelic Society.

We urge you to come to NAPEX -- but if you can't, you can purchase our souvenir cachet from Edwin Lehecka, 217 Hazel Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090. The price with postage paid is: unserviced \$1 each, 3 for \$2.50; serviced \$2 each, 3 for \$5.

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**DISCOVERY OF A TYPE VI OF THE IMPERF  
SOUVENIR SHEET "60 YEARS OF FIP" –  
SCOTT 2609/POFIS A2747A**

by J. Brožová  
trans. by F. Garancovsky, L. Svoboda

In view of the growing interest in collecting the individual types and plate positions of souvenir sheets of the Czechoslovak Republic, we decided to expand our presentation on some of the souvenir sheets of Czechoslovakia. Of course, we did not want to only examine the already published distinctions, so we once again thoroughly investigated and verified the souvenir sheets and their distinguishing signs. Admittedly this means much more work; however -- on the other hand -- it

allows for possibly finding new and interesting things.

This was a rewarding approach with respect to the souvenir sheet commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of FIP (Pof. A2747/Sc. 2609)(Fig. 1), which was issued on June 3, 1986 in three varieties: perforated (stamp and both coupons)(A2747A), imperforated (A2747B), and partially perforated (perforated along the perimeter of the coupons and center stamp, but not between)(A2747C). All three varieties of the souvenir sheet measure the same -- 110 x 82mm. The Specialized Catalog Czechoslovakia 1945-1992 (POFIS



Fig. 1

1998, pg. 217) mentions that with all three varieties there occur several types: with the perforated are noted Types I - VI, with the imperforated are noted Types I - V, and with the partially perforated are noted Types III - VI.

Imagine our surprise when we determined that one of the imperforated souvenir sheets (A2747B) was a Type VI, which according to the catalog -- and even additional available literature -- had not been seen until now! The Type VI is immediately and unambiguously determined through several characteristics. The most obvious of them are: the four scratches on the cheek of Count Paar -- one of which (the third from the left) is markedly elongated downward (Fig. 2), and also the diagonal red lines in the widening part of the horn



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

that begin at the horn brace whereas in other varieties they begin to the right of the brace (Fig. 3). We presented the souvenir sheet to expert Pavel Pazout who, after his evaluation, congratulated us on an extraordinary find.

Thus, the recognized types of the "60 Years of FIP" souvenir sheets are currently:

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| -- perforated souvenir sheet - A           | types I - VI   |
| -- imperforated souvenir sheet - B         | types I - VI   |
| -- partially perforated souvenir sheet - C | types III - VI |

Who knows, perhaps over time some lucky individual will find the yet unknown Type I and Type II partially perforated souvenir sheet versions.

In connection with this discovery I have read probably everything that has ever been written about this souvenir sheet. Unfortunately, nowhere is there an explanation for the existence of two different forms of the drawing of the Type V -- where in one case some of the souvenir sheets have five lines on the Count's cheek that are hairline thin and inconspicuous, and in the rest the lines are bold and to me appear to be engraved. This applies to both variants in which the Type V occurs customarily, i.e. the perforated and partially perforated types. I could not find other differences in the drawings, and so it is even impossible to say if it is an engraving or just a more pronounced print. Perhaps one of the specialists who have recently been involved with souvenir sheets (e.g. Mr. Hankovec or Mr. Mysliveček) will be able to explain this. Provided that this difference truly arose from engraving, it would obviously be an interesting plate variety deserving to be listed in catalogs.

✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠

## From Large to Small THE FEAST OF THE ROSARY

by An Anonymous Venetian  
trans. by Salvatore J. Rizza

I found a wonderful annotation in an old newspaper clipping, whose heading I no longer recall, but which can nicely be used in our own journal, "Dal Grande Al Piccolo" [from large to small]. I can add that from the date that the article appeared there has been a second Czechoslovak issue regarding the same postage stamp (Fig. 1). It is a 1989 sheetlet consisting of a reproduction of the entire painting and of two of its particulars: the Madonna with Child and the musical angel (Fig. 2). The panorama of this painting may be considered complete with the addition of a German postal stationery item.

A greeting and a thank you to the Anonymous Venetian who advised us of his find.

I will hasten to wager that up to this point you are asking, how could a painting, or Art itself, with a capital A, as it is always the Arts, be of interest to us, since our journal is always about history? I have not mistaken the direction, it is Art, if we want to be strict about it, but it comes in only because the postage stamp in question reproduces a painting in which it is evident that it mingles the typical Venetian character in a composition that is in the strict Venetian style (I swear to you that these are not my words, just about like all the rest, from other learned and famous publications). And now? Now for us, starved for news, this may be a tasty and exquisite tidbit, and I will show you how in the painting, the part that the postage stamp manages to display, we can recognize at least four illustrious personages that make up the joy of the enthusiasts of history and religion.

So as to not create some confusion, it would be better to follow the numeration in which the postage stamp has been divided (Fig. 3): No. 1, the Madonna of the

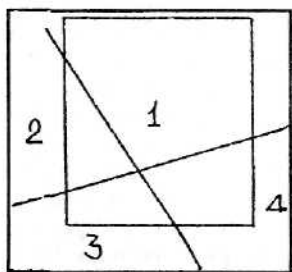


Figure 3: Dividing up the large image



Figure 4: Where the W. German image came from



Figure 1: First stamp - Sc. 1555/Pof. 1695 - taken from center of full painting.

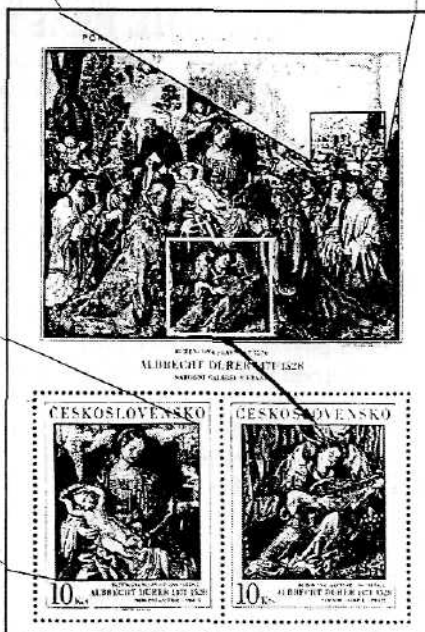


Figure 2: Souvenir sheet - Sc. 2743/Pof. A2892/93 - with full painting and two stamps taken from it.

Rosary; No. 2, Saint Dominic; No. 3 Pope Julius II, who in this particular personifies, in a manner more than eminent, the spiritual power of the Church; No. 4, Maximilian I, Emperor, and in his person represents the temporal power.

I am about ready to finish the page, but I must dutifully add that the painting is the work of Albrecht Dürer, painted during his second sojourn in Venice. The work had been commissioned by the resident German community in Venice to embellish the National Church of Saint Bartolomeo (walking from the Rialto Bridge towards San Marco, 50 paces to the right, before the Saint Bartolomeo Square: this is a classic tourist direction that does not serve us at all because those who hope to still find it there would be disappointed. Actually the work is conserved in the Národní Gallery in Prague).

Is that all? No, have patience. The postage stamp reproduces only a section of the painting. If one would take the trouble to examine the entire painting (it measures 162 x 194.5 centimeters), we can see that watching from the right is the self-portrait of the painter. To do this, one must procure the illustrated postal stationery item issued by West Germany to commemorate the Dürer Year in 1971 (Fig. 4).

All this, until a little while ago, I did not know, and certainly for you, this is old and trite news, but for myself it gives me pleasure to think that for another member of our society this bit of information is new and fresh and that is sufficient for me.

[Ed. Note: The *SPECIALIST* is pleased to reprint the preceding article from "Terrasanta", *Religious Philatelic Review*, Anno IV, n. 5-6, Rome with permission of the editor, Anna Potenza-Pontecarvo.]



## **Book Review**

### **CZECHOSLOVAKIA REVENUES**

edited by Roger Witts

*Published by John Barefoot Ltd., PO Box 8, York, YO24 4AR, England; e-mail JbarefootL@aol.com; website www.jbarefoot.co.uk. Softbound, 56 pp., A4 (perfect bound) laminated cover with a portrait of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk in stamp form. Price £7.00 (US\$10 surface, \$15 airmail) from the publisher. Available for \$14 in the U.S. from Philatelic Bibliopole, P.O. Box 36006, Louisville, KY 40233. ISBN 0-906845 59 9*

This is the first good basic catalog on Czechoslovak adhesive revenue stamps that is in the English language. It should satisfy the needs of the general revenue collector who doesn't read Czech.

This 56 page book includes: a two page Introduction that discusses revenues, their history, make-up, and specifications; a page on Austrian forerunners; eighteen pages on 30 varieties of revenues from the 1<sup>st</sup> Republic; seven pages on 14 varieties from Bohemia & Moravia; four pages on 10 varieties from Slovakia; eight pages on 13 varieties from postwar Czechoslovakia; and eight pages on Czechoslovak Municipal issues from all time periods. The Index is organized to list each issue

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under both its Czech and English name and then by time period (Cz 1919, B&M, Slov, Cz 1945) below each.

The catalog has illustrations for virtually all of the issues, gives a value in English pounds/pence for each listing (but more about these two later), and also lists perforations (and perf varieties), design types and watermarks. The vast majority of the values are quite reasonable and well within the reach of the average collector.

While this catalog is recommended for purchase by the general collector, you should be aware of the following limitations:

- the quality of the illustrations is not good enough to show the fine details of the stamps.

- there is only one value shown per item line (i.e., each stamp value within an issue has only a single price shown) and this represents a typical retail price for a good used copy. Thus, there is no value shown for a mint copy, nor for one on document, nor for mixed usage of different valued revenues on document.

- there is very little description as to the use and applicability of a given issue other than its name/title given in both Czech and English.

- the exact date of issue is not given (normally only the year or approximate year), nor is the end date of validity.

- the catalog does not deal with any of the "revenue stationery" (forms that have revenue stamps imprinted on them).

- there is no organized numbering system of the issues (only sequential numbering within a given revenue usage area).

- the Czechoslovak text does not have diacritical marks.

If a collector is interested in the revenue stationery items, Barefoot also has available the 357-page, two volume, Czech-language catalogue *Fiskální Ceniny* by Jiří Kořínek (which is also available to our members on loan through the Society library).

Ludvik Z. Svoboda

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## CLASSIFICATION OF THE APOST POSTAGE LABELS OF THE CZECH POST

by Werner Müller  
trans. by Jay Carrigan

### Preliminary Remarks

In the questionnaire regarding the status of research reports (unfortunately only minuscule returns were received), four subjects were identified as candidates for future contributions. With this article, the fulfillment of these expressed wishes will have been begun.

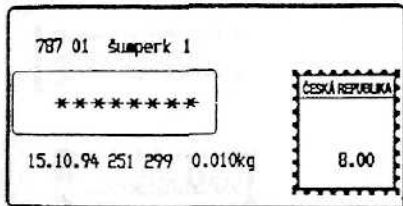
The following described classification gives a **Typology of the APOST Postage Labels** which is different from that developed by the collectors of postage labels in collaboration with the *Mechanization and Automation Section of SCF* and which was published in *Filatelie*, number 7/1997 on page 11.



Basic Characteristics

Size and Shape of the Postage Label and Color Scheme

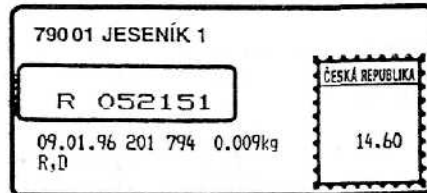
Type I



68x40 mm with rounded corners, blue border, 18x20 mm blue pseudo-stamp, 34x10 mm red border for serial number, Counter sheet format A4

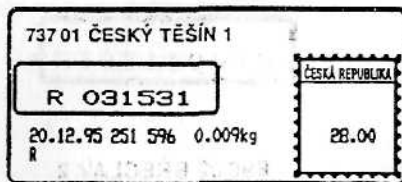
Form of the Post Office Name, and Size and Form of the Letters

Type A



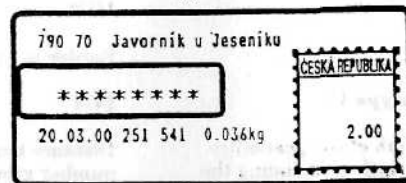
Postal code and name of post office in preprinted blue upper case letters (2.3 mm high; Type 3A also 1.5 mm high)

Type 2



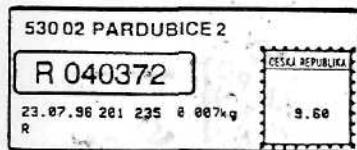
68x30 mm with rounded corners, blue border, 18x20 mm red pseudo-stamp, 34x8 mm (inside) red border for serial number, counter sheet format A4

Type B



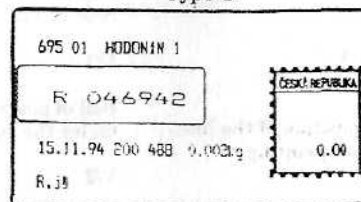
Postal code and name of post office printed at the terminal; if the first letter in the name had a diacritical mark, it would be in lower case

Type 3



60x25 mm with rounded corners, blue border, 16x17 mm red pseudo-stamp, 30x6.5 mm (inside) red border for serial number, produced in coil format

Type C



Postal code and name of post office printed at the terminal in upper case letters; when diacritical marks are required, they are placed above smaller versions of the letters

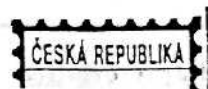
Subtypes

Subtype I

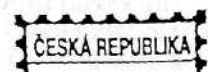
Size of the inscription "ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA" and the style of the hook above the "Č"

I/1

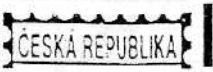

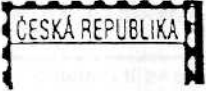
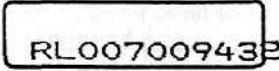
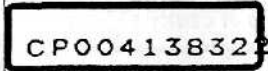
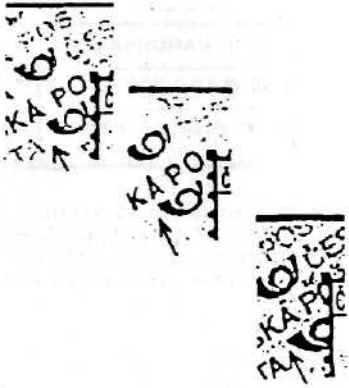
Letters 1.7 mm high; small, high hook, sometimes filled in



Letters 1.7 mm high; large, wide open hook



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	I/3	Letters 2.0 mm high; small open hook	
<b>Subtype II</b>	II/1	Corner perforation shaped like a rectangle	
	II/2	Corner perforation shaped like a square	
<b>Subtype III</b>	III/1	Border is 0.7 mm thick	
	III/2	Border is 1.0 mm thick	
<b>Subtype IV</b>	IV/1	Distance between the two number groups in the post code is small	690 02 BŘECLAV 2
	IV/2	Distance between the two number groups in the post code is wide	169 00 PRAHA 69
<b>Subtype V</b>	V/1	Bell of posthorn centered under the right leg of the "A"	
	V/2	Bell of posthorn directly under "A"	
	V/3	Left corner of the posthorn bell is under the right foot of the "K"	

**Minor Characteristics**

**1. Form of the serial numbers**

In the Typology, six forms have so far been identified, which will be represented by the following examples. The following order is arbitrary.

R 040372

Form a

RL005438629

Form b

R 031531

Form c

RL01719664

Form d

RL02339191

Form e

R 009471

Form f

**2. Height of the numerals in the serial numbers**

R 042622

1.3 mm high  
(see reference 1)

R 052151

2.5 mm high

R 040372

3.5 mm high

B 020017

4.5 mm high, used  
for packages (see  
reference 1)**Remarks regarding Minor Characteristics 1 and 2:**

For ordinary mailings the serial number is replaced by 8 asterisks.

\*\*\*\*\*

**3. Letters preceding the serial number**

These letters (R; B; V; CP; RS; RB; RL; VL; RC; RI) have been recorded in the overview in SBS 6101/024. [see also "Czech Postal Service Mechanization", *SPECIALIST* May/June 97, pp3-7]

252 63 ROZTOKY U PRAHY	
RL005438629	CESKA REPUBLIKA
18.01.01 251 361 0.086kg	64.00

**4. Code identifying the type of mailing**

This code follows the date in the first line below the serial number. A summary of the codes can be found in SBS 6101/024. [see again the above *SPECIALIST* reference]

130 04 PRAHA 34	
R 009471	CESKA REPUBLIKA
29.04.99 251 992 0.241kg	70.00

**5. Check digits**

Three check digits follow the code for the type of mailing. They are computed by the terminal from the characteristics of the mailing, using a complicated algorithm. The check digits make it possible to detect manipulation.

**6. Service abbreviations**

This abbreviation is in the last line of the label. A summary can be found in SBS 6101/025. [See again the above *SPECIALIST* reference]

Note: The abbreviation for air mail (currently PR) was LT prior to 30.6.2000.

**Additional details:**

- Date of issue Since 6.6.1994 this can be practically any date when the postal counters were open.
- Weight All weights over 0.000 kg are possible. If the label reads 0.000, then the mail item was not on the scale when operating the terminal's keyboard.

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### 7. Information in the pseudo-stamp

(regarding the type of fee remittance) [see again the above *SPECIALIST* reference]

UVER	Fee credited
PAUS	Fee paid in bulk
0,00	Items fully franked with postage stamps or postage meters, also postage-free items.
...	Fees paid by the postage label

The classification presented here only addresses the "normal" postage labels. The multitude of label varieties consisting of equipment errors, provisionals, printing shifts, corrections, etc., would be a chapter in itself. It could also be rewarding to undertake a classification of these varieties.

#### References

1. Jambor, M./Fencil, M. "Typologie cenných nálepek APOST", *Filatelie*, number 7/ 1997, pg 11
2. Langhammer, M. "Přepřazkové terminály na našich poštách -- III", *Filatelie*, number 3/1995, pg 1
3. Rautenstrauch, K. "Bemerkungen zur APOST", SBS 6101/007 ... 014

[Ed. Note: The *SPECIALIST* is pleased to reprint the preceding article from SBS 6101/ 027 of the *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Tschechoslowakei e. V.*, 2001-I with permission of the editor and the author.]

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## CZECHOSLOVAK LEGIONNAIRES IN PADOVA

by Piero Santangelo

trans. by Vladimír Kralicek

During the years of WW I the Italian city of Padova -- partially thanks to its geographic location -- was recognized by all in the know as a principal city of the conflict. On Padovan territory were concentrated important centers of operations -- from the highest command of the Italian Forces through the commands of the French and English divisions located in Italy -- and the residence of the Italian king was here. All of this brought important people to Padova, both Italian and foreign, who stayed here for the duration of the armed conflict.

Possibly the greatest gift that WW I history gave to Padova was the surrender of the enemy, signed on November 4, 1918 in Villa Guisti -- one of the many villas used for military purposes.

Padova also played an important part in the whereabouts of the Czechoslovak Legion during the transition period between the evacuation from the front and its return home.

At the beginning of October 1918, all units of the Czechoslovak Legionnaires deployed on the front -- besides the 39<sup>th</sup> Regiment which was engaged in battles at the Piava river -- were transferred to the Padova and Treviso town districts (provinces) in anticipation of the last attacks against Austria.



Figure 1: Villa San Bonifacio -- The Czechoslovak Legion HQ

At the conclusion of the conflict, during which the above mentioned 39<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment especially distinguished itself, the High Command decided to move all Legionnaire units (i.e., the VI<sup>th</sup> Division which consisted of the 31<sup>st</sup>, 32<sup>nd</sup>,



Figure 2: FPO 52 -- 2.12.1918 -- Sent by a soldier of the "28" Compagnia del campo di riordinamento" from Legnaro (Padova)

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Figure 3: FPO 52 – 19.12.1918 – Card addressed to Bohemia, posted on the last day of service of the FPO 52, at that time located in Padova

33<sup>rd</sup>, 34<sup>th</sup>, 35<sup>th</sup>, and 39<sup>th</sup> Regiments) to the Padova region. The newly established Czechoslovak State requested the Italian Government to convert the VI<sup>th</sup> Division into an Army Corps. The Italian Government obliged and in less than a month created this large military formation whose command was entrusted to General Piccione.



Figure 4: FPO 162 – 10.12.1918 – View of Padova sent to Bohemia via FPO 162, the post office attached to the Czechoslovak HQ in Padova

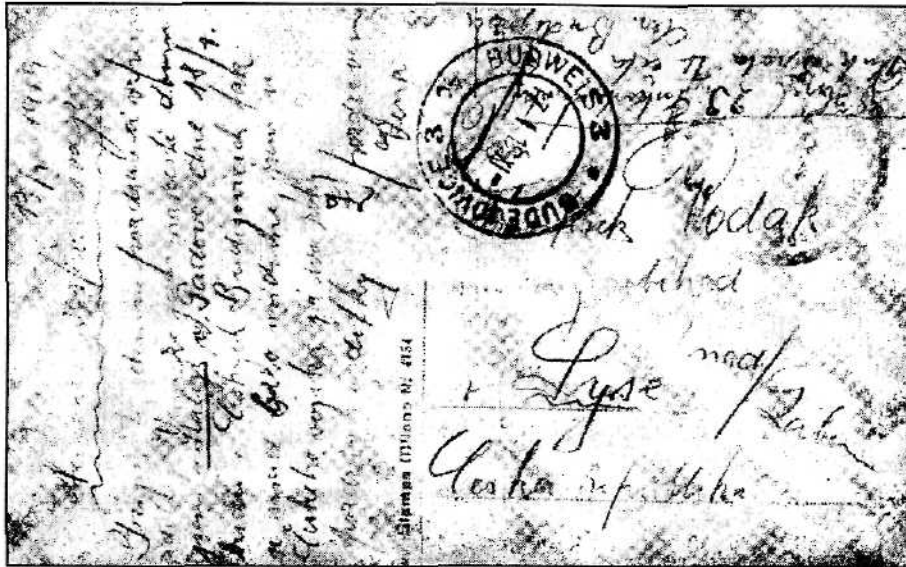


Figure 5: Card directed to Bohemia forwarded from Padova on 13.1.19, transit mark of the Budějovice Post office dated 17.1.19; the sender was in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment

In Padova on December 8, 1918, and in the presence of the Italian King Emanuele III and the Czechoslovak President T.G. Masaryk, all units of this Army swore allegiance to the new Republic.

The command of this Army Corps, which at the beginning was in the villa of the count of San Bonifacio (Fig. 1), had an Italian-Czechoslovak command staff, a branch of the Finance Office, and also a Field Post Office (FPO).

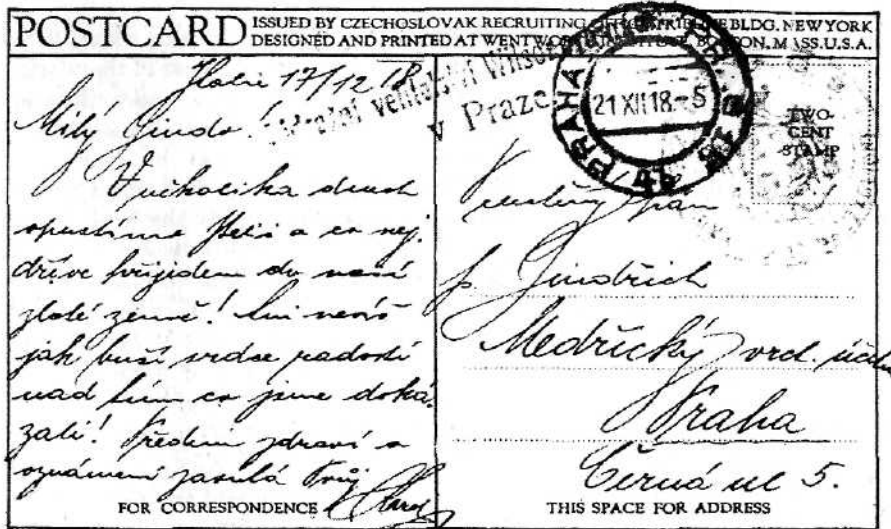


Figure 6: Franchise card dispatched from Italy on 17.12.18 – arrival postmark 21.12.18 and linear handstamp used by the "Wilson Railroad Headquarters in Prague"

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On 16.12.1918 the Army formation was composed of 1,092 ranked personnel (of which 292 were Italian) plus 23,079 soldiers (2,704 were Italian).

This number of men grew with the incorporation of ex-prisoners of war who arrived from the POW camp in Legnaro -- eventually there were more than 25,000 men. The transportation home began on 14.12.1918 and continued -- without a break -- for 16 days; altogether there were 73 trains dispatched with about 3,000 railroad cars. Simultaneously with the departure of this Army Corps, the Czechoslovak Brigade from France began to arrive in Padova. It was composed of the 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiments numbering 263 ranked personnel plus 7,159 soldiers. The transport home of these units began on January 4, 1919 and ended on January 22, 1919.

The soldiers, members of the Legion, were served by FPO's -- FPO 52 until 19.12.1918 (Fig. 2,3), and FPO 162 was also operating from 16.12.1918 until 14.4.1919 serving the Czechoslovak Command in Italy (Fig. 4). When the large number of soldiers in Padova during the above mentioned periods is taken into consideration along with the reminder that the Legionnaire's post was not subject to censure, I presume that the largest part of their correspondence heading home went by train. The sorting of that mail then took place either in České Budějovice (Fig. 5) or in Prague (Fig. 6), and the Czechoslovak Courier Post was also used. The mail of the Italian soldiers also went through FPO 52 and FPO 162.

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## ČSA and AIRMAIL POST TO ISRAEL IN 1948

by MUDr. Petr Horka  
trans. by Vladimír Kralicek

Shortly after the inception of the State of Israel, Czechoslovak Airlines (ČSA) played a significant role in the air connection of Israel with the rest of the world. This history is full of tensions and danger, but also rich in aero-philatelic documentation. A considerable part of the success of ČSA is due to the experience and courage of our pilots. So let us look closer as to how it was at that time.

The establishment of the State of Israel was legalized by the United Nations Organization on 29.11.1947 in spite of strong vocal opposition by the Arab States. As the date of the Israeli declaration of statehood (14.5.1948) drew closer, this opposition steadily grew towards military activities which from the Arab states' perspective was aimed against the territory of the future Israel. Due to these actions the postal services from Palestine were substantially endangered and on 26.4.1948 entirely stopped. Postal service to Palestine was organized by various postal administrations with the help of couriers. Only states with Peoples Democratic Constitutions continued postal contact with Palestine utilizing Czechoslovak Airlines. During this period ČSA was the only air carrier which did not cancel its air service carrying people, goods and airmail to the areas of conflict in Palestine.

Air contact of Czechoslovakia with Palestine had already commenced in November and December 1946 with: two emergency ČSA flights of Prague - Lydda,



and one trial ČSA flight of Prague - Rome - Athens - (Nicosia) - Lydda. All of these flights from the ČSR carried airmail. On New Year 1948 regular air service was begun with the first flight on the ČSA route from Prague to Lydda. On March 1, 1948, ČSA opened an office in Tel Aviv. Their representative was George P. Taussig, a man who was -- for ČSA in those stormy times -- irreplaceable in Tel Aviv. Because ČSA was anticipating a stop in Lydda during the further extension of its network to the east, it carried out on 10.2.1948 a trial flight on the route Lydda - Baghdad - Bahrain - Karachi - Bombay.

With the increase in combat activities (mainly by Egypt), the international airport at Lydda became unsafe and unable to conduct air operations. The last ČSA DC-3 aircraft flew out of Lydda on April 22, 1948. They hurriedly sought an alternative airport. The most suitable one seemed to be the Tel Aviv airport -- today known as Sde Dov. The question arose -- how will this small airport, which up to then had only been used by smaller private aircraft, cope with large aircraft such as the Douglas DC-3 of the Czechoslovak Airlines? However, because in April 1948 this airport was safely in Israeli hands, it was chosen as the alternative to Lydda.

In those hazardous circumstances where there was always the danger of enemy fighters in the air, ČSA was the only airline company maintaining services to Palestine. On May 5, 1948 the first ČSA aircraft landed at Sde Dov. The pilot in command of the flight was Jan Prehal -- who in WW II was the personal pilot of Winston Churchill -- and the navigator was G.P. Taussig, the ČSA representative in Tel Aviv. The ČSA route was Prague - Rome - Athens - Tel Aviv. Nicosia was a technical staging area.

Airmail from Bulgaria, Poland and Rumania is known from this first flight. During the whole indicated period ČSA carried airmail from ČSR, and in transit via Prague, airmail from Hungary, SSSR and Jugoslavia. Because the Israeli Postal Administration was wholly occupied with the establishment of the postal service infrastructure and the recognition of the Israeli Post by the international community, this aircraft carried no mail from Sde Dov on its return trip. Finally with the flights of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of May was airmail carried that was franked with the stamps of Palestine, which the Czechoslovak Postal Administration recognized as being valid for the franking of airmail from Israel. The last ČSA flight to the airport of Sde Dov was carried out on 14.5.48. That very day there also arrived (via Nicosia) the first Air France aircraft and company, which jealously watched the success of ČSA in the Near East. It is to the personal credit of G.P. Taussig that in the complex situation he managed to process the ČSA flight and that very day dispatched it back to Czechoslovakia. Air France ignored his warnings and announced their return flight to take place on 15.5. However, in the early morning hours of 15.5, Spitfires of the Egyptian Air Force bombed the Sde Dov airport and destroyed the Air France aircraft.

For this reason the ČSA landing place in Israel was moved once again. Haifa was chosen because it was an international airport. After the Israeli Postal Administration was established, airmail post from Israel was officially announced to commence on 19.5. The postal rate was set as 40 mils per 10g of letter parcel. The first airmail consignment was flown from Haifa by ČSA aircraft on 26.5 and was delivered in Prague to the PRAHA 7 - CIZINA post office at 1900 hours on 27.5.

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During May ČSA completed four regular and six special flights to Israel. In June ČSA continued with its flights to Haifa. On June 1<sup>st</sup> Israel joined the UPU, and thus already on June 8<sup>th</sup> ČSA carried the first official airmail post for the USA. This mail was further carried via Paris to the USA by Air France. At the end of May ČSA was already carrying airmail for the Netherlands.

As the situation became progressively normalized KLM opened the air route Amsterdam - Haifa on June 20, and Air France commenced the route Paris - Haifa on July 10. During November 24-25, 1948, the international airport in Lydda was again completely back in operation. With this ends the period of provisional postal contact with Israel in which the Czechoslovak Airlines played a substantial role. During that time they had no accidents on their route to Lydda. On 21.12.1948 a Douglas DC-3 of our airline (OK-WDN) crashed during its flight from Rome to Athens. The cause of this catastrophe was most likely fog above the Greek mountains.

For the first flight from the newly reopened Lydda airport ČSA prepared a two-languaged Hebrew-English cachet with text: "With best wishes / 1<sup>st</sup> flight from Lydda airport / State of Israel / Czechoslovak Airlines Tel Aviv". This cachet was stamped in a red color on all ČSA airmail consignments carried aboard during the above mentioned days from Lydda to the world.

*[Ed. Note: The SPECIALIST is pleased to reprint the preceding article from Filatelie 5/1990 with permission of the editor and author.]*

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## WARS, FIELD POST OFFICES and CZECHOSLOVAKS 1878 - 1921 by Lubor Kunc

*(Continued from previous issue)*

Often you can find cards with text other than "Feldpost". Those usually found are the words "Von der Arme im Felde", "Kriegsdienst", and "Militärpflege".

"Von der Arme im Felde" means the mail was sent by a soldier on the front line of battle. In this case no field or occupation post office was available to cancel the mail. To prevent giving away the location of the military unit, such mail was provided with a cancellation saying (in English translation) "From Army at Battle". An example can be seen in Figure 39. This is a card sent from a member of the 10<sup>th</sup> Landwehr-infanterieregiment (rifle regiment) of Mladá Boleslav. The label on the card is the regimental propaganda label. The cancellation "Zensuriert! . . ." shows that the message was approved by a censor of the military unit.

The meaning of the slogan "Kriegsdienst" was "War service". It was used to show that no postage should be collected for the mail (Fig. 45).

Another usage was the "Militärpflege" inscription. This one was used for soldiers in military hospitals. You can see this on a card sent from the Military Hospital in Příbram (near Prague)(Fig. 46).



Fig. 45

Many of the military hospitals were connected with the Red Cross. But this organization provided the soldiers with other services (invited or not) as well. The invited one was searching for lost soldiers. For such purposes the Central Searching Unit of the Red Cross in Vienna used a special card (Fig. 47) informing the relatives about the lost soldier. The not so popular activity was the censorship of all

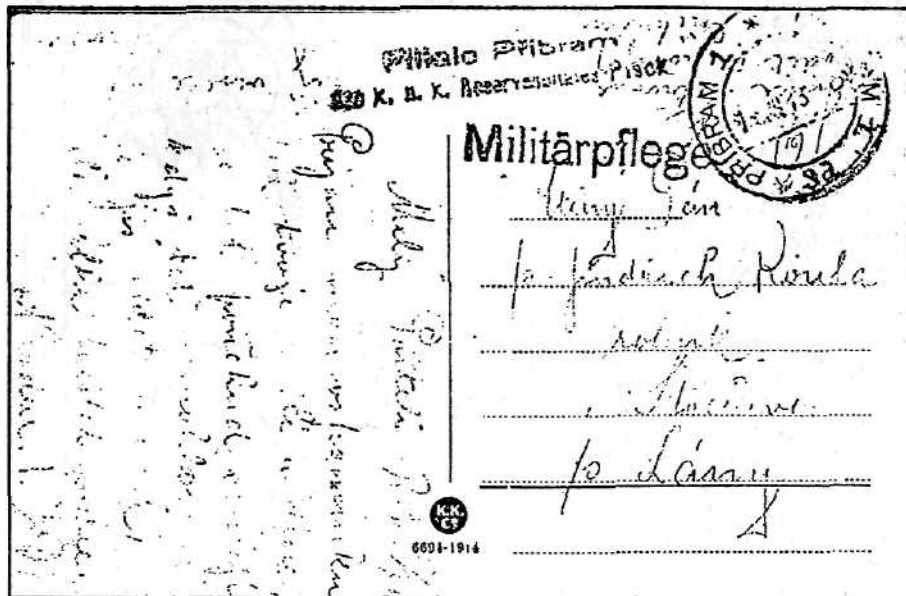


Fig. 46



Fig. 47

correspondence of Austro-Hungarian soldiers being in enemy prisoner of war camps or of the correspondence mailed to foreign persons kept in Austrian civil camps. The Red Cross Censorship Unit (Gesellschaft vom Roten Kreuze Österreich und Ungarn) was located in Vienna as well as in Budapest. It started its work immediately upon the start of WW I (Fig. 48 -- a card censored by the Rotes Kreuz -

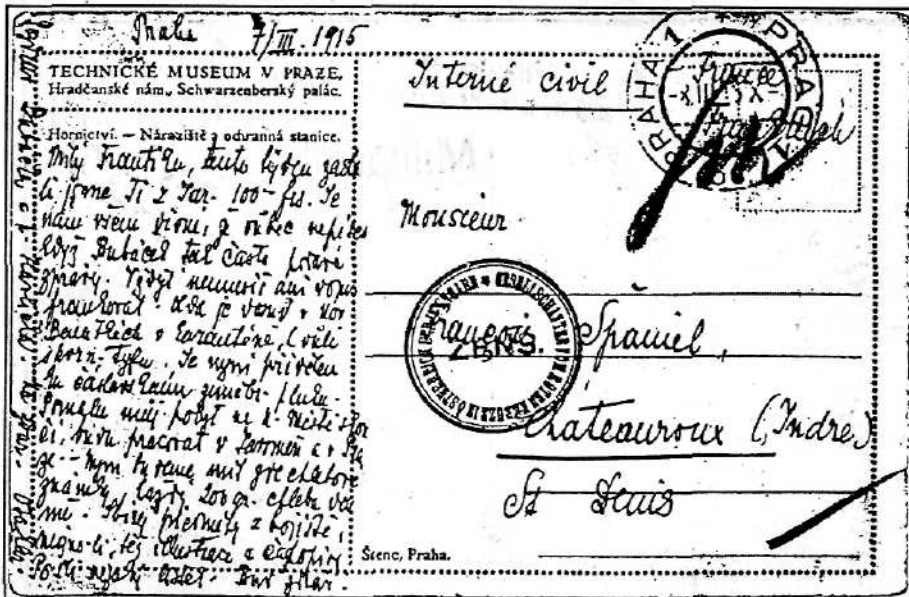


Fig. 48



Fig. 49

Red Cross). But due to diplomatic problems with censorship performed by the organization, it was decided to create a new "daughter company" of the Red Cross called "Gemeinsames Zentralnachweise Büro" which continued this activity (see its typical triangle cancellation in Fig. 49). More details can be found in the book and catalogue of H. Thielk "Zivilpost-Zensur in Österreich-Ungarn 1914-1918".

Figure 50 shows a pre-printed card saying in all the languages used in the

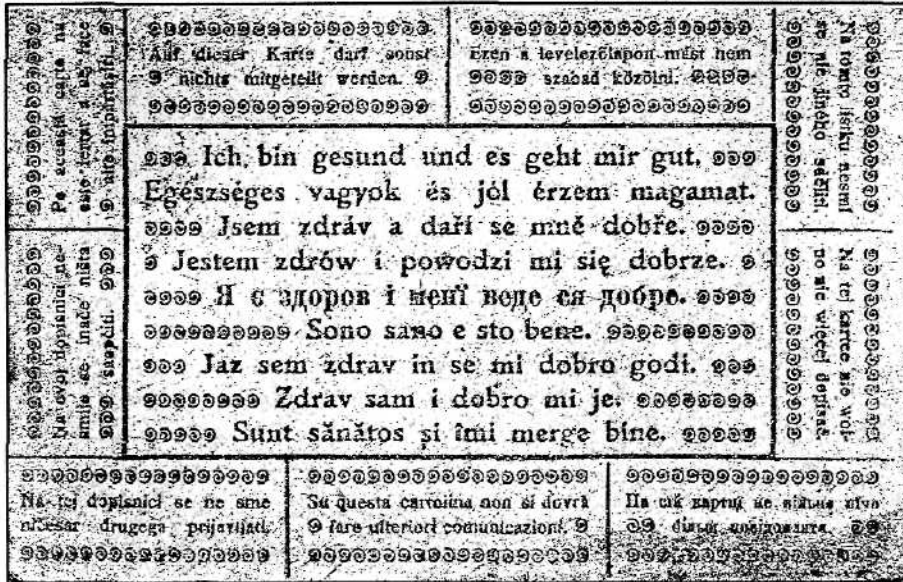


Fig. 50

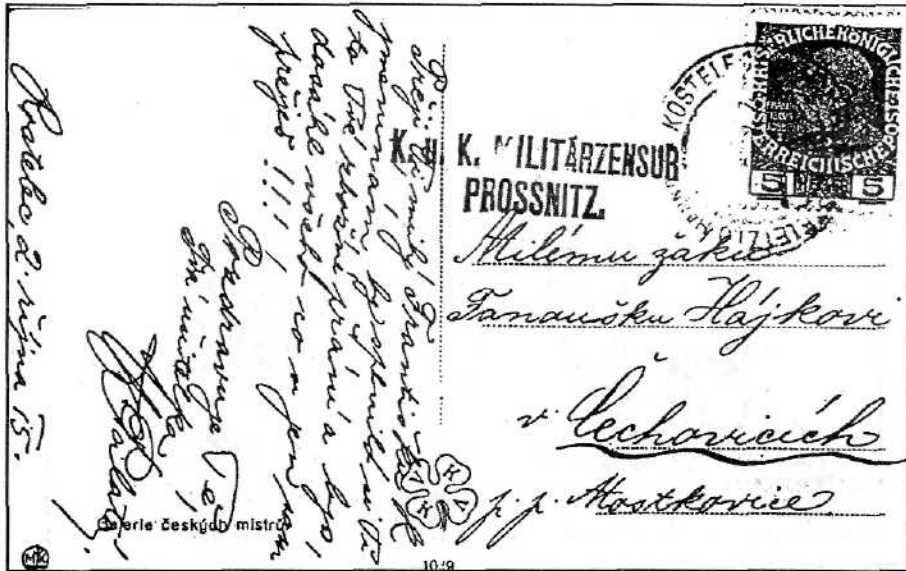


Fig. 51

Monarchy that its sender is in good health and doing well. No additional message could be written on such cards, but the cards were delivered with the highest priority.

But the Red Cross censorship of correspondence was not the only censorship in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Civilian correspondence (domestic and international, e.g. cards, letters, telegrams and parcels) was also subject to military

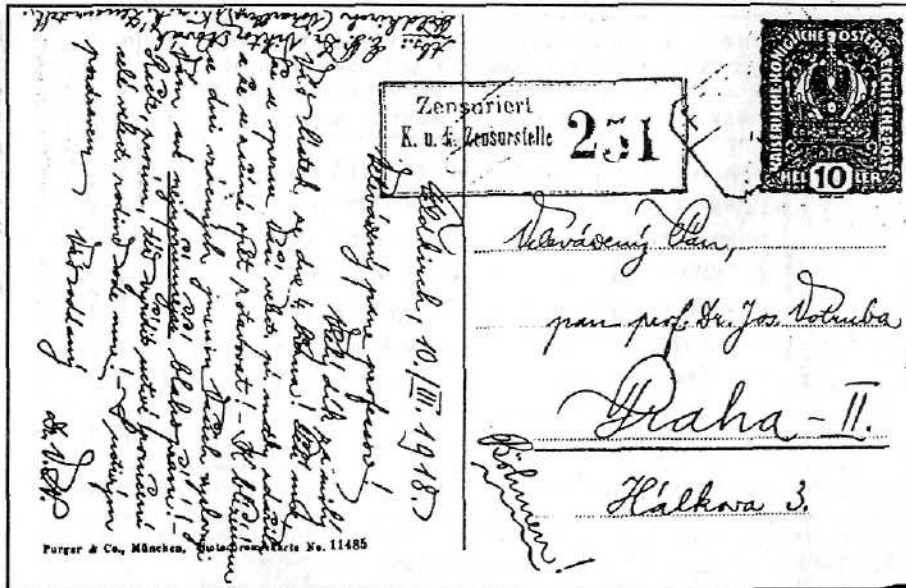


Fig. 52

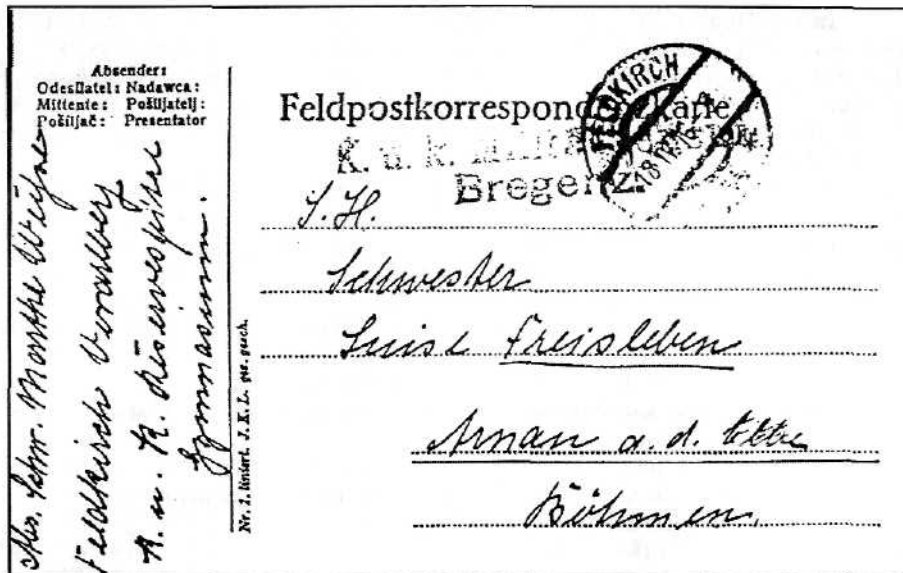


Fig. 53

ensorship. The Army established censorship stations in all areas belonging to the Austrian Monarchy for public and business correspondence. These stations operated from 1914 to 1918:

- In Bohemia they were situated in the following towns: Asch (Aš), Aussig (Ústí nad Labem), Bodenbach (Podmokly), Eger (Cheb), Jicin (Jičín), Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary), Leitmeritz (Litoměřice), Pilsen (Plzeň), Prag (Praha), Reichenberg (Liberec), and Tetschen (Děčín). Entirely are also known from Voitersreuth (Vojtanov) with local censorship cancels, but they have been forged -- see SPECIALIST No. 5/2000.

- In Moravia: Brünn (Brno), Mährisch Ostrau (Ostrava), Neutitschein (Nový Jičín), Olmütz (Olomouc), Prerau (Přerov), and Prossnitz (Prostějov -- see the domestic card in Figure 51 sent from Kostelec na Hané to Čechovice in October 1915).

- In the current Czech part of Silesia: Oderberg (Bohumín), Teschen (Těšín), and Troppau (Opava).

- In Slovakia: Eperjes (Prešov), Iglo (Spíšská Nová Ves), Kassa (Košice), Komarom (Komarno), Liptoszentmiklos (Liptovský Mikuláš), and Zsolna (Žilina).

- In Carpatho-Ukraine: Huszt (Chust), Munkacz (Mukačevo), Szolyva (Svalava), and Ungvar (Užhorod).

Some of the stations were aimed at international correspondence sent to specified countries, while others served domestic mail. Figure 52 shows an interesting card -- it was sent by the Czech censor of the censorship station Feldkirch in Vorarlberg (a state of Austria). The station was used for censoring the correspondence sent to or through Switzerland. The censorship cancel of the station for domestic mail was not used very often, because the domestic mail from Vorarlberg was to have been censored by the station in Bregenz (Fig. 53 -- following the correct rules, this card was sent by a nurse serving in a military hospital in Feldkirch via the Bregenz censorship station to Bohemia).

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In addition to the military censorship of civil correspondence there existed police censorship of the correspondence of individuals under police observation, military censorship of business correspondence of strategic plants of the Monarchy, etc. Again, this is a subject too extensive for this article. You can see more information in the catalogue on censorship cancels in Mr. Thielk's book "Zivilpost-Zensur in Österreich-Ungarn 1914-1918".

I would like to draw your attention to a special area of prisoner's of war -- the so-called interned citizens. Interned citizens were people having citizenship of another state, who stayed in an enemy country at the moment of declaration of war between the two countries, and because of their citizenship they were interned. As an example we have the card in Figure 48. It was sent by the famous Czech sculptor Otakár Spaniel to his brother František, who was kept in France in 1914. Because of his Austrian citizenship, he was interned as a member of an enemy country by the French authorities (but later he joined the Czechoslovak legion). All of his correspondence was censored through the same procedure as the correspondence of military prisoners of war.

But interned persons were not just Czechs. The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy also used this same procedure for the citizens of enemy countries. As an example Figure 54 shows an Italian postal card sent on April 28, 1917 from the town of Udine to Giuseppe Toffolo, a man interned in Prague. The card was censored 3 times: the first censorship was done in Italy (see the "star shine" cancel CENSURA / CORRISPONDENZA / PRIGIONIERI / DI GUERRE); the second one in Vienna by "Gemeinsames Zentralnachweise Büro (an organization belonging to the Austrian Red Cross -- see its triangle cancel); the last was done by Prague police, because all the correspondence of the persons interned in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was forwarded to the local police before its final delivery. The police censorship is documented by the cancel "St.P." (the letters mean -- St. = Staats or State, and P. = Polizei or Police), which is a typical censorship cancel of the Prague police at that

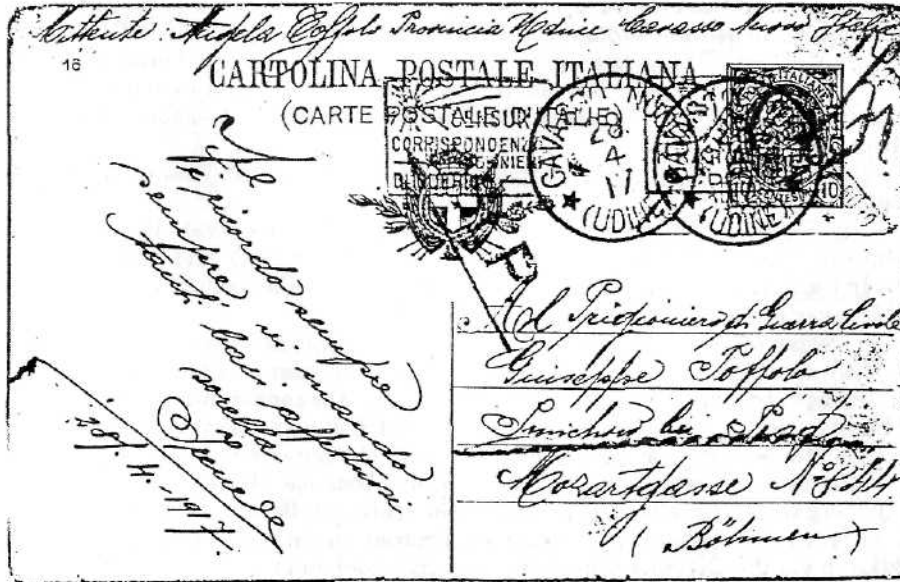


Fig. 54



time. You can find more information on this theme in Mr. Thielk's book as well.

The police censorship of civil correspondence is known from the following towns:

- Located in Bohemia: Asch (Aš), Eger (Cheb), Hohenmaut (Vysoké Mýto), Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary), Leitmeritz (Litoměřice), Podebrad (Poděbrady), Prag (Praha), Rakonitz (Rakovník), and Teplitz (Teplice).
- Located in Moravia: Brünn (Brno), Mährisch Ostrau (Moravská Ostrava), and Prerau (Prerov).
- Located in Slovak territory: Pozsony (Bratislava).
- Located in Carpatho-Ukraine: not known.

(To Be Continued)

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**THE FIRST ARTWORK BY A CZECH ARTIST  
ON A POSTAGE STAMP**

by Gerhard Batz, Hausen, Germany  
trans. by Peter Z. Kleskovic

For several years now, I am highly preoccupied with Czech and Slovak postage stamps and especially with the artists who designed and engraved them. During this time, I have accumulated a great deal of information -- the result of which is my very extensive Internet page. Provided someday you have enough time, it would please me a great deal if you would visit my page *Postage Stamp Gallery of Czech and Slovak Graphic Art* -- <http://home.t-online.de/home/batz.hausen/czres.htm>

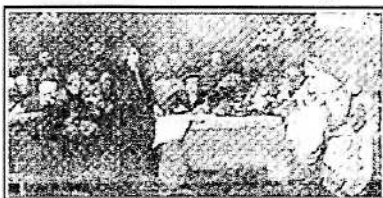


Fig. 1

While searching for information, I was interested in Czech and Slovak art history in general and especially about the most significant artists of both nations. Also, because the artwork of the most important Czech and Slovak artists is regularly displayed on many of the Czechoslovak postage stamps (e.g., on the stamps of the "Art" sets). Also, I was interested in finding out when Czech or Slovak art first appeared on postage stamps. Among Czechoslovak stamps it is probably the picture of St. Wenceslas by Mikuláš Aleš (Trojan no. 243) from the year 1929. The stamp

is from an issue with four values commemorating the 1000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wenceslas' death and was issued on May 14, 1929.



Fig. 2

I do not think that it is very well known that more than 30 years earlier the artwork of a Czech artist had already appeared on a postage stamp -- that is, a long time even before the existence of the independent Czechoslovak state. The stamp was issued by the postal service of the United States of America and is from 1893! Figure 1 shows the painting of the great Czech painter Václav Brožík (Fig. 2) having the title "Columbus Soliciting Aid of Isabella". As far as I know, this painting is almost certainly the first work of art by a Czech artist that appears on a postage stamp.

This postage stamp (Fig. 3) -- with a value of 5 cents, chocolate brown in color, printed by the recess printing process, Mi. 77, Scott 234, Yvert 85 -- is a part of a set with a total of 16 different values by which the American postal service commemorated the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus. The issue was printed by the American Bank Note Company. Among collectors of American postage stamps, the issuance of this set is considered as the first American



Fig. 3

commemorative stamps. The first day of its issue was January 1, 1893. The official reason for this issue was the World Exhibition of 1893 in Chicago, which was attracting millions of visitors. With this set, the American postal administration began a long tradition of issuing a special set of postage stamps (having a low volume of printing) on the occasion of world exhibitions. This set also had a very low printing volume because it was out of reach for many people. The cost of the whole set -- with values from 1 cent to 5 dollars -- was at that time \$16.34. Consequently, this was more than the average weekly wage of the ordinary American of that time. Today, in the United States, you have to pay up to \$11,000 for a complete mint set.

In 1992, on the occasion of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of America, the WORLD COLUMBIAN STAMP EXPO took place in Chicago. On the occasion of this exhibition the American postal administration issued -- on May 22, 1992, 100 years after the first set -- a new set of the legendary stamps (Mi. 2219-2234, block 25-30). The new issue was encapsulated entirely on six souvenir sheets. On them are -- besides the \$5 stamp on the first souvenir sheet -- three stamps from the original issue of 1893. Of the original stamp design, only the year "1892" was changed to "1992". A detailed description of this issue with illustrations of the souvenir sheets can be found on my Internet page "Columbus sets sail again". Joint issues of these stamps came out in Italy, Spain and Portugal.

Václav Brožík, whose painting served for the design of the 5 cent postage stamp, is considered the greatest Czech painter of historic subjects. He is a member of a group of artists from the so-called "Generation of the Czech National Theater", a group which actively participated in the decoration of the National Theater in Prague. You can find additional information about the creation of this decoration on one of the pages at my gallery. Brožík was born on March 5, 1851 in Železné Hamry u Třemošné. He died on April 15, 1901 in Prague. The subject stamp was thus issued while Brožík was still alive. The best known historic paintings of that generation were, among others, "John Hus facing the Konstanz Council" from 1878 and "The Election of George of Poděbrady as King" from 1897. Both paintings are

typical examples of important scenes from Czech history.

Brožík's picture on the postage stamp "Columbus Soliciting Aid of Isabella" is painted in the tradition and style of these historic paintings. On this picture is depicted a scene in which Columbus is asking King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain for help after King John II of Portugal refused his request to support his intention to go by the western route to India. On the original monumental picture the figures are painted life sized. Today the picture is in the entrance hall of the Manoir Richelieu Hotel in Quebec, Canada.

Currently, here is the most important information regarding the issuance of this stamp. I am still missing some information to be able to fully document the background and the facts of this historic stamp. Therefore, I hope that there are among the readers of this article some individuals who can answer some of my questions.

- Who was the engraver of this postage stamp?
- Did Brožík know about the use of his artwork on this stamp?
- Did he influence the design, and if yes, how did he do so?
- Are there in existence any statements from Brožík through which one could deduce what he thought about the use of his artwork on this stamp?
- Through what means was the original painting created, and how did it get to Canada?
- Is Brožík's painting really the first artwork of a Czech artist used on a postage stamp or are there some older examples?

I would be very grateful for any answers, as well as other comments regarding my article.

Please send me an e-mail: [batz.hausen@t-online.de](mailto:batz.hausen@t-online.de)

[Ed. Note: The *SPECIALIST* is pleased to reprint the preceding article from [sber@tel](mailto:sber@tel), No. 2(2), April 2000 with permission of the editor.]

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## JAN KARÁSEK REACHES 75<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY, PAVEL PITTERMANN REACHES 60<sup>TH</sup> by Henry Hahn

The two pillars of Czech and International expertizing services reached important birthday milestones in February, during the course of my visit to the Czech Republic. I was fortunate to have been invited to both parties -- Pavel Pittermann's in Prague on February 20<sup>th</sup> and Jan Karásek's in Brno on February 21<sup>st</sup>.

Since most of our readers are familiar with these two gentlemen, at least by name, I'll avoid listing their philatelic achievements in detail. However, Jan Karásek is a recent winner of the Hunziger Award by FIP, is an AIEP (FIP) expert and accredited FIP judge. Pavel Pittermann is currently the head of the Czech Expert Committee, an AIEP (FIP) expert and accredited FIP judge. Both are members of our Society and have visited us at US shows and lectured a number of times.

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Both gave birthday parties to which the cream of Czech philately were invited.

Pittermann's party in Prague took place at a lovely restaurant -- famous for excellent food and a friendly atmosphere. Present among the guests were Fred and Jana Hefer, Fred being the winner of the National Grand Award at PRAGA'88. Fred's state of health is not the best, having lost most of his eyesight and having trouble walking. He has sold his collection -- but maintains contact with his philatelic friends. Also present was Bretislav Janik, former Secretary of PRAGA'88 and now publisher of the JAPHILA web pages which have reached 200,000 collectors all over the world. Other collectors and close friends were present, each of whom expressed his congratulations and best wishes to Pavel. I spoke on behalf of our Society, wishing Pavel many more years of top philatelic activity and presented him a bottle of good American bourbon.

The Karásek party took place on the eve of the following day in Brno at the SLAVIA restaurant/cafe. I counted some twenty+ guests, all who came to celebrate this "greatest" of Czech experts and functionaries. The party was festive and yet joyous. I recognized just a handful of the guests -- many previously met at BRNO'00. There was Dr. Gebauer, Prof. Ustohal (our frequent translator), Mr. Štupka (frequent Allegory exhibitor) and his brother, Dr. Okáč (one of the BRNO'00 committee), Jan Klim (well known dealer), Pavel Pittermann, Mr. Šablatura (Slovak expert and judge), Mr. Blaha, Ing. Škaloud (expert) and others. Ing. Karásek was presented with personal congratulations and gifts, the most spectacular of which was by Mr. Štupka of a huge (about 2 gal.) bottle of liquor with Karásek's picture on the label. I congratulated Jenda and wished him continued health and top notch activity on behalf of our Society, and presented him with some good Moravian wine. Prior to the party an informal group of Czech experts met in the cafe to discuss the recently discovered Plate 7 of the 15h Hradčany, which has not as yet been fully reconstructed. Present were Messrs. Karásek, Šablatura, Pittermann, Škaloud and I (as a guest).

The food and drink at the dinner were first class. Unfortunately, Pavel Pittermann and I had to leave during the lavish desert in order to return to Prague in time for my return flight home.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *Letters to the Editor*

1. Dear Ludviku:

In the Jan/Feb 2002 SPECIALIST [*"News & Views"*, pg. 34] I asked for your help to find out which machines are available in the Czech Republic to print the "automated" stamps.

I was contacted by Mr. Backeljauw of Belgium, who visited the BRNO 2000 exhibition and used the machine located there. Based on his report, the machine used by the public at the exhibition was afterward moved to Prague - Holešovice. This means that the second machine (used at the exhibition only by the postal staff) was subsequently moved in 2000 to the Brno 1 post office.

The Czech philatelic journal *Filatelie* 12/2001 stated that the Czech Postal

Administration bought new machines in 2001 and installed them in the following post offices: Prague - Main Post Office, Usti/Labem 1, Karlovy Vary 1 and Opava 1. I hope that we can look forward to the installation of these machines at other post offices as well so that the "automated" stamps would finally change their image from a "philatelic" item to stamps used by the public.

Z pozdravem,  
Lubor [Kunc]

✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻

### *Philatelic News and Views*

From Richard Palaschak:

-- The International Postage Stamp Exhibition **SLOVENSKO 2002** will take place in Bratislava during the days of July 4 - 10, 2002. This first exhibition supported by the Federation of European Philatelic Associations (FEPA) and under the auspices of the Ministry of Transport, Post and Telecommunications of the Slovak Republic will take place in the Slovak National Museum, Vajanského nábr. 2, SK-814 36 Bratislava, where the first Czechoslovak philatelist exhibition was held in 1937. The exhibition is organized by the Union of Slovak Philatelists, Slovak Post and Slovak National Museum. Our Society has not yet decided the extent of our participation.

From Jaroslav Verner:

-- We have been contacted that our Society website is not working. When we got our own domain name we also moved to another provider where we could have more space for less. I suspect this individual was going to the old site which is currently being dismantled. For a time we had them linked, that is, when you went to the old address ([www.erols.com/sibpost](http://www.erols.com/sibpost)) it automatically sent you to the new site. This connection no longer works. Also, check your "Favorite Places" or other similar tool area to make sure that it has the new address: [www.czechoslovakphilately.com](http://www.czechoslovakphilately.com).

From Savoy Horvath:

-- I had three pieces of missent mail again in just one week recently (Fig. 1 ex). But this time I sort of have an explanation. The postal workers at the east coast forwarding center looked at my envelopes, and even though a sorting machine sprayed 00155+2000 plus bar codes for the Czech Republic, the USPS clerks saw the "VIA AIR MAIL" at the end of each address, thought to themselves that by AIR to MAIL was short for MAILAISHA, so it went to MALAYSIA.

-- Anyone interested in receiving a cover or card carried by the Hradec Králové's Sky of Balloons in the Czech Republic in August, your request must arrive there between July 24 and August 4. Send a standard sized self-addressed cover or a self-addressed sticker (which will be placed on a card that they provide) along with \$1 to: Královohradecké Balónové Nebe, Box 120, CZ 501 01 Hradec Králové, CZECH REPUBLIC.

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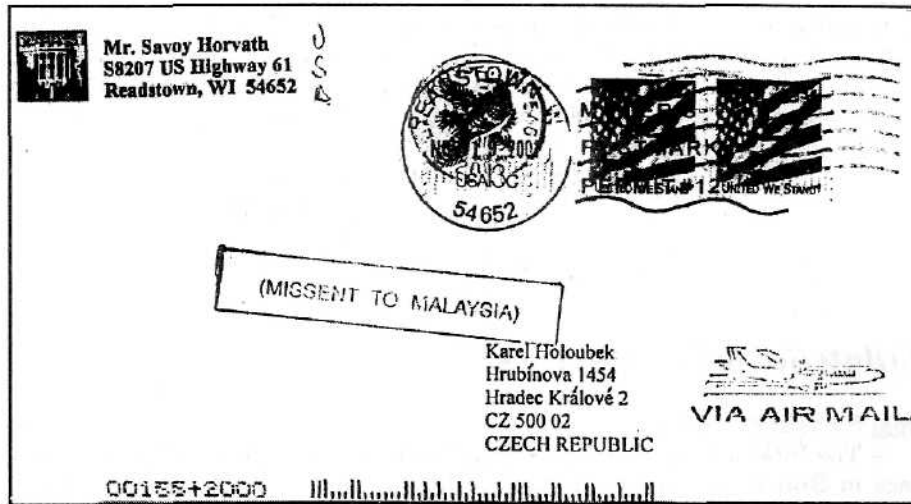


Fig. 1

-- After raising some postal rates in January 2002, the Czech Post is preparing a substantial across the board rate hike this fall. According to a spokesperson for the Czech Ministry of Finance, Jana Vargová, the basic rate will jump from 5.40 Kč to 6.40 Kč -- overall approximately a 20% hike. The money is needed for reconstruction of Post Offices. Last year's income dropped by 150 million Kč. The Czech Post has 39,629 employees, 3,400 post offices, and the average postal wage in Czechia is 12,540 Kč, which amounts to about \$348 per month.

-- The ballots are in on "The Most Beautiful Czech Stamp of 2001". A total of 9,739 votes were cast with hundreds coming from foreign countries. The vote was on 33 stamps issued in the Czech Republic in 2001. It wasn't really a race, but rather a duel between the stamp from the 50 Kč souvenir sheet picturing angels, "Czech Baroque Art", by V.V. Reiner (coming in first) and the 26 Kč art stamp picturing a young girl, "The Goose Keeper", by V. Brožík (coming in second) -- these two stamps received two-thirds of all the ballots cast. The 17 Kč art stamp placed third and the 12 Kč art stamp fourth.

From Lubor Kunc:

-- The Czechs do not miss an opportunity to advertise their heroes. Here is a commemorative cancel (Fig. 2) used already on March 1, 2002 honoring Aleš Valenta's gold medal win in the freestyle skiing aerials at the XIX Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City. Parked in fifth place after his first jump, Valenta announced he would try to accomplish what no Olympian had ever done before: three back flips while at the same time spinning through five full twists. His accomplishment of this feat left his opposition stunned and earned him the gold medal. The cancel is being used at the PRAHA 1 and ŠUMPERK post offices through March 15. Valenta comes from Šumperk.



Fig. 2

## New Issues

## CZECH REPUBLIC

by G. M. van Zanten



Fig. 1

1. On January 20, 2002, the Ministry of Transport and Communications issued a 5.40 Kč commemorative stamp in the Tradition of Czech Stamp Production series (Fig. 1). This year's stamp is in honor of the Czech painter and graphic artist Max Švabinský (1873-1962), who was the creator of many beautiful Czechoslovak stamps. Švabinský attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague and studied under J. Pirner and J. Mařák. His early work was influenced by the atmosphere of symbolism and art nouveau, which he contributed to creating. Later he returned to the classical legacy and historical tendencies of 19<sup>th</sup> century Czech art. Švabinský was a remarkably prolific artist and worked in a wide range of fields, from paintings and monumental works to graphic work for postage stamps, banknotes, etc. He excelled as a painter of portraits of personalities from Czech political and cultural life, but he also worked on illustrations and his graphic work is particularly significant. The work selected for this year's "stamp on a stamp" is Švabinský's stamp (engraved by B. Heinz) with the allegorical figure of the Republic, issued on 15 December 1938 to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Czechoslovak Republic, already tragically cut in size after the Munich dictate. The original stamp was issued in miniature sheet and sheet arrangements. Now, in addition to stamps in sheet arrangement, the issue includes philatelic booklets with 8 stamps and 4 coupons bearing a floral motif by M. Švabinský and a facsimile of his signature. The current multicolored stamp was both designed and engraved by Bedřich Housa. It was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in brown-black combined with photogravure in ocher, red and blue in printing sheets of 30 pieces. A FDC in brown depicts a detail of a figural composition designed by J. Švabinský (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

2. On January 30, 2002, the Ministry issued a 12 Kč commemorative stamp on the occasion of the XIX<sup>th</sup> Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City (Fig. 3). The theme of the stamp is aerials (acrobatic jumps), one of the disciplines in acrobatic skiing, which is a relatively new winter sport. It developed in the fifties and sixties in North America from original performances by former professional racers, especially downhill skiers. Three completely different disciplines developed, each with its own rules: ballet, aerials and mogul skiing, also sometimes known as "riding the bumps". In the first half of the seventies, competitions of this kind spread to Europe, Australia, Japan and other

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skiing areas. The first world championship was held in 1986 and since then they have been held regularly in the same years as world championships in other skiing disciplines. Mogul skiing was included in the events at the Winter Olympics in 1992; aerials were added in 1994, while the ballet discipline did not make it to the program of the Olympics and so disappeared. The most difficult figure at present in the aerial jumping discipline is a triple somersault with four rotations; quadruple somersaults are not currently allowed. In this country, acrobatic skiing began in the first half of the eighties; Czech acrobatic skiers have taken part in international competitions since 1990. The multicolored stamp was designed by Zdeněk Netopil and engraved by Miloš Ondráček. It was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in black combined with photogravure in yellow, red, blue and brown in printing sheets of 35 stamps. A FDC in black depicts an acrobatic skier performing an aerial (Fig. 4).

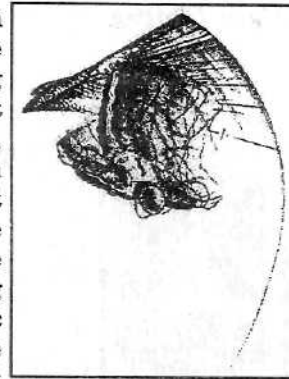


Fig. 4

3. On January 30, 2002, the Ministry issued a 5.40 Kč commemorative stamp on the occasion of the Winter Paralympic Games in Salt Lake City 2002 (Fig. 5). The theme of the multicolored stamp is downhill skiing. The Paralympic Games are the world's top competition for disabled sports people, organized by the International Paralympic Committee. It is held in the same year and in the same venue as the summer or winter Olympics. This year's 8<sup>th</sup> Paralympic Games were held on 7-16 March 2002 and involved 1100 competitors and team workers from 35 countries. The first games were held in 1960; the name Paralympics has been used since 1992. The motto of the Paralympics is "To awaken the mind, free the body and inspire the spirit" and their aim is to encourage physically handicapped men and women to strive to overcome their shortcomings, to reach for excellent performance within the bounds of their possibilities and thus to share the collective joy of victory over their handicaps. The theme of downhill skiing on the stamp commemorates the Czech paralympic team's good results in this sport. The stamp was designed by Pavel Hrach and engraved by Bohumil Šneider. It was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in blue combined with photogravure in dark blue, light blue, green and red in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in blue depicts a pictographical composition of three competitors (Fig. 6).



Fig. 5

overcome their shortcomings, to reach for excellent performance within the bounds of their possibilities and thus to share the collective joy of victory over their handicaps. The theme of downhill skiing on the stamp commemorates the Czech paralympic team's good results in this sport. The stamp was designed by Pavel Hrach and engraved by Bohumil Šneider. It was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in blue combined with photogravure in dark blue, light blue, green and red in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in blue depicts a pictographical composition of three competitors (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6

4. On March 6, 2002, the Ministry issued a 9 Kč commemorative stamp entitled Personalities in Czech Popular Music and Their Work (Fig. 7). In March of this year, it is 100 years since the birth of three prominent composers, largely of dance music,





Fig. 7

whose popularity extended far beyond the borders of this country. The stamp shows three portraits -- of K. Vacek, J. Vejvoda, and J. Poncar, who were linked not only by their age but first and foremost by their love of music and their talent as composers and conductors. Their songs for enjoyment and for dancing are in the repertoires of many orchestras.

-- The composer, player of wind and stringed instruments and singer Karel Vacek (1902-1982) was initially involved in a military band; he later played in R. A. Dvorský's dance orchestra and in 1935-38 was a member of the Liberated Theater orchestra. In 1940 he founded his own orchestra, which he led until 1947. Its performances in Prague and elsewhere had great patriotic significance under the Nazi occupation. His work primarily consists of dance and march songs such as *Šumařinka*, *Čtyři páry bílých koní* (*Four Pairs of White Horses*) and *Zůstaň tu s námi, muziko Česká* (*Stay Here With Us, Czech Music*), many of which have become popular as folk songs. His song *Cikánka* (*The Gipsy Girl*) became a worldwide hit in the thirties and is still played in Europe, the USA and Japan. Vacek also wrote his own lyrics to the songs, as well as the operetta *Nade mlejnem, pode mlejnem* (*Over the Mill, Under the Mill*) and several instrumental marches.

-- The bandmaster and composer Jaromír Vejvoda (1902-1988) began with a military band, playing the flugelhorn. For his own band, which he took over from his father in 1926, he mainly composed polkas, such as *Kdyby ty muziky nebyly* (*If There Were No Music*), *Zbraslavská polka* (*The Zbraslav Polka*), *Já ráda tancuju* (*I Love Dancing*). He usually played the violin in the band. The world-famous *Škoda lásky* (now known in English-speaking countries as *Roll Out the Barrel*) has an interesting history. Vejvoda composed it in 1927 in Zbraslav where he lived, and it was played without lyrics under the title of *Modřanská polka* (*The Modřany Polka*). The Czech lyrics were written seven years later by V. Zeman. It travelled the world in 1938 as *Rosamunde* and, after it was published by Shapiro Bernstein in New York a year later as the *Beer Barrel Polka*, it accompanied the Allied forces on their marches throughout Western Europe. Today it has lyrics in thirty foreign languages and is played throughout Europe, the United States and Japan. *Škoda lásky* was deservedly awarded the title of "Hit of the Century".

-- The composer and bandmaster Josef Poncar (1902-1986) also wrote many well-known tunes of this type. He trained as a joiner, but worked until his retirement as a railwayman at Smíchov station in Prague. There he played the double bass for 29 years with the Prague Railwaymen's Symphony Orchestra under the leadership of Šejna, Stárek and Neumann. He was still young when he began leading string and wind bands, first in Chodouň and later in Zdice where he lived. He could play all wind instruments and the violin and cello. Poncar is the composer of a great many polkas and waltzes, e.g. *Přes dvě vesnice* (*Through Two Villages*), *Karlíčku můj* (*My Little Karl*), *Vy zvonky v Lorete* (*You Bells of the Loretto*). He wrote the charming polka *Andulička* at the age of 17, and the mazurka *Eluška* is one of his most pleasing compositions. Poncar's works are still popular and are played and sung in this country and abroad.

This multicolored stamp was designed by Karel Dvořák and engraved by Jaroslav Tvrdouň. It was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in brown-black combined with photogravure in red and violet in printing sheets of 50 stamps. A FDC in red-brown depicts a graphic composition of three musical instruments (Fig. 8).

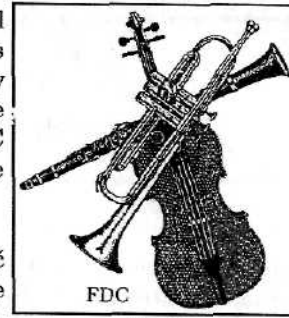


Fig. 8

5. On March 6, 2002, the Ministry issued a 5.40 Kč commemorative stamp entitled Easter (Fig. 9). The multicolored stamp depicts a little girl with an Easter egg, a boy with an Easter switch, and a group of chicks. Easter



Fig. 9

is the most important festive occasion in the year besides Christmas. The most significant day associated with the traditional Easter switches and feasting is Easter Monday. Boys and even men braid switches from four to twelve supple, young willow branches that have been soaked in salty water for a few days. Usually they are tied off at the "business" end with a colorful ribbon. They seek out girls and women to hit with their switches. In return they receive eggs -- usually gaily colored or decorated, but they can be just white. This very old custom -- often called "mrskačka" (a whipping) -- probably originated in pre-

Christian times as a "pagan" ritual designed to instill the strength and vitality of the new-growth sprouts to humans, especially girls and women, and to help ensure fertility in the coming year. With the advent of Christianity, some transferred the significance of the whipping to signify the scourging of Christ, in this way allowing for the custom to continue. The stamp was designed by Jidřich Kovařík, who mostly works on illustrations for children's books, dominated by dynamic drawings and humor, and it was engraved by Pavel Kovařík. It was produced by the Post Printing House of Prague by rotary recess print in black combined with photogravure in yellow, pink, red and blue in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in violet depicts an illustration of a sign from a popular smithery (based on a doubled cross), which was replaced by an ironworks at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 10).

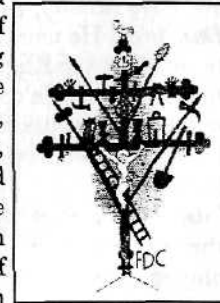


Fig. 10



Fig. 11

6. On March 8, 2002, the Ministry re-issued the 12 Kč commemorative stamp celebrating the XIX<sup>th</sup> Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City (originally issued January 30), but this time with an added diagonal overprint in blue reading "ALEŠ VALENTA / ZLATÁ MEDAILE" (Aleš Valenta / Gold Medal)(Fig. 11). The overprinting was performed by the Post Printing House in Prague on part of the original stamps that remained in stock. There was no FDC. [See the item from Lubor Kunc in the Philatelic News and Views column of this

issue for more details on the Olympic event as well as a commemorative cancel being used.]

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