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THE 1928 POSTAGE DUE ISSUE: Part I

by Mark Wilson

Introduction

This article begins a three part series on the little-discussed postage due issue of 1928. Part I explores general information about the series: artifacts of its production, printing, and perforation. Part II continues by detailing and describing the many different collectable types found in several denominations. Part III ends the series with schematic diagrams showing the location where each type of stamp may be found on pages of 1928 postage due stamps.

Series Facts

The release of the Czechoslovak Republic's second postage due issue ended a flurry of provisional postage due stamps (the overprinting and surcharging with new values of the Hradčany and other definitive stamps) used as replacements for the original Mucha postage due issue. Printed using the typographic technique common during that period by the Czech Graphics Union in Prague, the Post Office released the stamps in three separate waves. February 1, 1928 saw the largest

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THE 1928 POSTAGE DUE ISSUE: Part I

(Continued from Page 1)

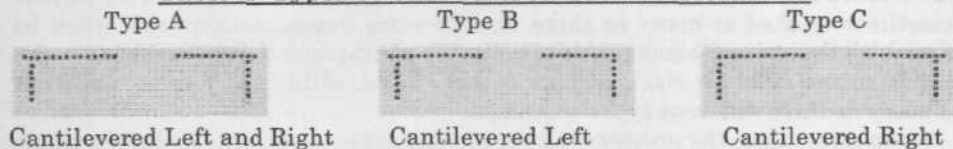
number of denominations released: the 10h, 40h, 60h, 1 Kč, and 2 Kč. Nearly two months later post offices received the second wave of stamps: the 20h, 30h, 5 Kč, 10 Kč, and the highest denomination, the 20 Kč. The final stamp in the series and its lowest denomination, the 5h, appeared on July 7, 1928. The Post Office ceased selling the stamps on November 30, 1939 and demonetized them on December 15, 1939. All in all, the series enjoyed a life span of more than a decade.

Although Josef Vlčka created the design, his name does not appear on the stamps themselves. His submission to the Post Office consisted of an oblong drawing with the word **ČESKOSLOVENSKO** at the top of the stamp and an indication of the use at the bottom: **DOPLATNÉ** [postage due]. He filled the stamp with a large central value tablet to contain the appropriate denomination numerals and surrounded it with various decorations. He placed a trefoil in each of the four corners supported by ornate vines, each wrapped around a piece of fruit. At either side, neatly dividing the design in half, he drew a stylized tulip. The Post Office selected the color red for the haléfů denominations, blue for the korun.

Perforations

Although the entire series shared a single perforation gauge and type, that is, comb perforated $13^{3/4}$ by $13^{1/2}$, its implementation employed three different styles termed by the *Monografie* as Type A, Type B, and Type C. These three styles may be identified by a cantilevering (or lack of cantilevering) of the terminal perforation holes in the selvage at either side of each pane.

Table I. Types of Cantilevered Comb Perforations



Type A, in which the terminal perforation holes at the top of each row of stamps cantilevers out into the selvage on both sides of the pane, requires a full row of stamps with both side selvages attached to identify (see **Table I**). **Types B** and **C** may be identified by a single uncantilevered stamp (again with its adjacent side selvage) from the appropriate side of the pane. **Type B**'s uncantilevered indicator is at the right edge of the pane while **Type C**'s uncantilevered indicator is at the left edge. Of course, single stamps showing a cantilevered perforation cannot be unambiguously assigned to any of the three types. The distribution of perforation types by denomination is shown in **Table II**.

Table II: Distribution of Perforation Type by Denomination.

Denomination	Perforation Types Available
5h	A, B
10h	A
20h	A, B

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30h	A
40h	A
50h	A, B
60h	A
1 Kč	A, B, C
2 Kč	A, B, C
5 Kč	A
10 Kč	A
20 Kč	A

Production Details

In order to understand why this issue is of such special interest to the specialist, one must understand the manufacturing techniques and methods used to produce these stamps. The process for producing their plates started in the normal typographic manner.

First, the printer pasted the proper denomination numerals into a copy of the design to create a master template. By photographing these templates, which typically measured 130mm by 111mm, then electrochemically transferring the negative to a metal surface, the printer created a metal die from which he could make black print images of a single stamp. In the typical process, 100 such black prints would be arranged in ten rows of ten stamps. Taking a photograph of this array reduced to the actual size of a pane, the printer would once more electrochemically transfer the negative to a metal plate, most often copper, which once etched, provided a matrix from which galvanized copies could be taken for printing.

One small variation in this production process created in the 1928 Postage Due series a most interesting philatelic difference. For whatever reason, the printer sometimes created as many as three dies for some denominations and, when he assembled the array of black prints to make the photograph to be transferred to the matrix, mixed different black prints together. Thus, within some panes, one finds as many as three different types of stamps.

In most cases, the printer used the photographic negative to produce a single copper matrix and from that matrix took the galvanized plates for each printing run. Unlike the Hradčany, the printer did not put control numbers at the bottom of each pane.

While the Postal Museum in Prague archived many (but not all) of the negatives, matrices, and galvanized plates, very little is known about the arrangement of individual plates on the printing press. Likely, the pressman used the typical two- or four-plate printing forms.

It is interesting to note that while for normal printing runs the printers employed the galvanized copies of the master matrix, some denominations were actually printed from the matrix itself. This latter process required that screw holes be drilled along the edges of the matrix in order to fasten it to the wooden printing forms on the press.

The Special Case of the 1 Kč

The production of the 1 Kč plates created another, very complex, philatelic anomaly. The printing of this denomination from galvanized plates proceeded in normal fashion until 1934. Then, two new matrices were constructed, one used for

the 1935, 1937, and 1938 printings, the other for the intervening 1936 printing.

It is known that the process began with the creation of three master dies, but none have been preserved. Because there were no apparent differences in the imprint of these three dies in preserved black prints, it is impossible to determine which was actually used. And, because no archived copy of the negatives for the plate exists, reconstruction of the manufacturing process is based upon an examination of the plate flaws in the two printed panes preserved by the Postal Museum in Prague (28/2 and 29/3). In addition, Czech philatelists reconstructed panes for the years 1928, 1936, 1937, and 1938 by crisscrossing strips of stamps. By coordinating the flaws in these reconstructions, it was possible to determine which black prints were used to produce the negatives.

This work led to the realization that each of three negatives was created from a different set of black prints. These are known respectively as the first, second, and third matrices. Most important in this determination were the plate flaws found in positions 91 and 100, the positions adjacent to the plate identifiers discussed in the next section of this paper. The most confusing aspect of the three matrices is the fact that they were not used in chronological sequence: the printers used the second matrix in 1935, the third matrix in 1937, then reverted back to the second matrix for the years 1937 and 1938.

The printers manufactured the **first matrix** in the usual manner. They used a master die to produce a set of black prints, these were arrayed in a ten by ten arrangement, then photographed and the negative transferred to the first copper matrix. Neither the negative nor the black prints were preserved. Stamps were printed from this first matrix for the most extensive period and all galvanized plates for the years 1928 through 1934 were derived from it. In addition, stamps printed with these plates are characteristically printed in several tones of a purplish-blue color. By 1934, toward the end of the plates' working life, the last stamps were more of an ultramarine color. Every plate for the years 1928-1934 has the same flaw in position 100 -- a thick diagonal line crossing the lower petal of the right tulip as shown in *Figure 1*.

By 1934, the plates from the first matrix had worn out, and as neither the negative nor the black prints used to produce it were available, to make new plates the printer required a new negative, thus new black prints had to be manufactured to create the **second matrix**. These were derived from an offprint of the 1934 plates. Thus, the plates for 1935, 1937, and 1938 (note the absence of the year 1936 when a third matrix was used) must by necessity have the same plate flaws as did the 1934 plates. This second set of black prints was used to create the second matrix. However, because the black prints taken from the 1934 offset were reassembled randomly when creating the new ten by ten array for photographing, these flaws occupy entirely different positions on a pane of stamps.

Also, it is clear that the printer made only one negative because the spacing between the stamps on every plate for the years 1935, 1937, and 1938 is exactly the same -- and this spacing was quite different in panes created from the first matrix. Thus, we can be sure that a second matrix had been created as described above.

Every plate for the years 1935, 1937, and 1938 have the same flaw in the same position -- a notch in the outer outline of the value tablet directly above the numeral



Fig. 1

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1. An additional indicator is a small circle in the stress bar imprint just below the right edge of position 91. This circle is less apparent on panes printed in 1938 as the stress bar itself was made smaller. Finally, the plate flaw from position 100 mentioned in the description was moved by the random placement of the black prints to position 70.

In 1936, the printers moved on to create a third matrix (discussed below), which was a failure. So, instead of using the 1934 offprint to produce more black prints, the Czech Graphics Union printing firm derived the next set of plates, for the years 1937 and 1938, directly from the second matrix. These plates are identical to the 1935 plates and even have the same circle in the stress bar imprint, save for the 1938 plates. In it, since the size of the stress bar was reduced, the circle is more difficult to see.

Returning to the events of 1935, we find that after the printers derived two galvanized plates from the second matrix, it was discovered that the stamps printed from them, typically in an ultramarine color, proved unsatisfactory. Just as with the negative for the first matrix, the negative used to produce the second matrix had not been preserved by the printer.

This state of affairs forced the printers to create yet a **third matrix**, using a completely new negative. To do this, they used the same black prints produced from the 1934 offprint that appeared in the second matrix, but again scrambled the order of the black prints in the ten by ten array. Thus, while every plate flaw was again preserved, each appeared in an entirely new location. The plate flaw found in position 100 on the first matrix, the same that had moved to position 70 in the second matrix, now appeared in position 16 in the third matrix. A new plate flaw is found in position 91, however: from the bottom right of the value table a white line extended downward to touch the tip of the tendril below. In addition, the stress line below positions 91 and 100 did not break at the vertical perforation line as it did for the other matrices, but instead passes unbroken through the perforations at the edge of the pane (see *Figure 4*). While the black prints were not preserved, the Postal Museum does have a single negative labeled *new*.

Only two plates were taken from the third matrix. They bore the year identifier 36 and the sequence numbers 1 and 2. However, the stamps they produced proved even inferior to those produced by the 1935 plates they replaced. The spacing on them was regular but oversized and the contours of the stamps blurry, which made the stamps appear as though they had been printed from worn-out plates. The color for the entire release from the third matrix was in a light dirty-gray-blue tone. In desperation, the printers reverted to the second matrix the following year.

Plate Identifiers

As is described above under the heading Production Details, typically the printers took galvanized copies of the plates from the master copper matrix. Since the matrices bore no plate identification marks, the printers added these to the galvanized copies before using them to print stamps.

Table III. Plate Identifiers by Denomination

Denomination	Plate Identifiers	
	Matrix	Galvanized
5h	28/1	28/1, 28/1

10h		28/1, 28/2, 32/1
20h		28/1, 28/2
30h		28/1, 28/2, 31/1, 31/2, 33/1, 33/2
40h		28/1, 28/2, 29/1, 29/2, 33/1, 33/2
50h		28/1, 28/2, 31/1, 31/2, 34/1, 34/2
60h		1/28, 2/28, 28/1, 28/2, 30/1, 30/2, 31/1, 31/2, 32/1, 32/2, 32/3, 37/1, 37/2
1 Kč		28/1, 28/2, 28/3, 28/4, 29/1, 29/2, 29/3, 29/4, 31/1, 31/2, 31/3, 31/4, 32/1, 32/2, 33/1, 33/2, 34/1, 34/2, 35/1, 35/2, 36/1, 36/2, 37/1, 37/2, 38/1, 38/2
2 Kč		28/1, 28/2, 28/3, 32/1, 33/1
5 Kč	28/1	33/1, 38/1
10 Kč		28/1, 33/1, 38/1
20 Kč	28/1	33/1

When the printers pressed the original matrices into use to print the 5 Kč and the 20 Kč, they added identifying marks similar to those described below to the matrices. Both the *Monografie* (Volume IV, page 415) and *Novotný* (page 704) indicate that the numeral "1" in 28/1 for the 20 Kč comes in two variations, but fail to explain why.

Although the master matrix was used to print some 5h panes, it and its galvanized copies did not have different plate identifiers. Thus no 5h pane can be absolutely assigned to any matrix or galvanized printing run.

On all the other galvanized plates, the printers placed a two-digit year identifier in the selvage on one side of the pane in a space reserved for it above the lower stress bar and a sequence number in the same place on the opposite side. For most plates, they placed the year indicator to the left of position 91 (*Fig. 2*) and the sequence number to the right of position 100 (*Fig. 3*). However, as can be seen in Table III, the single exceptions were the first two plates of the 60h stamp where the year and sequence numbers were reversed (*no illustration available*). Oddly enough, later printings of the 60h used the normal indicator positions with the first two sequence numbers recycled.



Fig. 2

Fig. 3

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To balance the pressure on the plates in the press, the printer added stress bars at the top and bottom of each pane. These stress bars produced imprints of parallel, or ribbed, lines in the top and bottom selvages of each pane which broke at the perforation lines (Figs. 2 and 3). Of additional interest are variations in the imprint of the stress bar. For the 1936 printing of the 1 Kč, the normal break in the ribbed stress bar impression did not break at the perforation lines at either side of the pane but instead continued straight through them (Fig. 4).



Figure 4: (from the *Monografie*)

Concluding Remarks

A second installment of this article is planned in order to present the types for each denomination of the 1928 Postage Due issue. As was explained in the main part of this article, the use of black prints from different master dies produced as many as three different types for some denominations.

Two people assisted greatly in the preparation of this description of the 1928 Postage Due issue. Richard Palaschak provided the author with abundant scans of these stamps, all of which may be seen on my website, www.knihtisk.org. In addition, Joan Tripp of The Netherlands was kind enough to donate more than 100 of the 1928 Postage Due issue stamps in support of this work.

Special Plea to Readers

Good philatelic research is a community effort, and we all benefit by cooperating in the establishment of reference material that can be used by everyone. I would like to make a special plea for examples of two features discussed in this work. If anyone can supply examples of the reversed 60h plate identifiers, or an example of the unbroken stress bar in the 1 Kč, I would be most grateful. I would be happy to buy, borrow, or scan these examples in order to make my website more useful to everyone.

[to be continued]

CZECH FOLK TARGETS: HIDDEN AIMS

by Frederick Highland

In 1974, the former Czechoslovakian Republic issued a set of stamps replicating what the Scott Catalogue describes as "Painted Folk Art Targets," (Scott 1956-61). The curious folk art of target painting flourished during the middle of the last century in Bohemia and Moravia. Created by village artisans, the colorful wooden targets were prepared for shooting competitions sponsored by marksmen's societies and more informal contests during summer holidays and festivals. Many of these folk art targets have been preserved in Czech museums. Some bear the date of the competition and often they are riddled with bullet holes.

The targets' curious designs are striking -- they seem more than decorative. The themes for the targets may have been drawn from a variety of sources: historical events, newspapers, and magazine stories, as well as from popular literature and drama of the day. There is ironic humor at work in these images too, disclosing a hidden and sometimes satirical purpose.

The target of the 30-haleru stamp shows a soldier, dressed in a late-eighteenth-century German or Austrian uniform, presenting arms in a sentry box. Where is this soldier standing duty? Certainly not in Eastern Europe. The background, with its date palms and little white-washed town in the distance enclosing a graceful minaret, suggests a locale Eastern or possibly Indian, locale. If we assume that the design is not entirely fanciful, could it refer to a German or Austrian colonial or occupying force? What country or territory is being occupied? Historically, Germany and Austria came late to the colonial game and did not carve out colonies in the Middle East. German and Austrian troops were not assigned to Turkey until World War I. The sentry, in his Spanish-titled sentry box, might be a mercenary, part of a professional force hired by a caliph or khedive to make would-be invaders think twice and his subjects all the time.



Figure 1

I believe the answer lies in the soldier's imperial uniform and the history it suggests. Memories are long among the peasantry of central Europe and old antagonism dies hard. Bitterest of these memories for the largely Protestant people of Bohemia was the religious and political upheaval known as the Thirty Years War (1618-48) and its humiliating outcome. The struggle against the Catholic Hapsburgs of Austria, then the center of the Holy Roman Empire, began in Czech territory with the memorably named Defenestration of Prague (May 1618). Two royal officers were hurled out of a window by Protestant parliamentarians; the Kingdom of Bohemia paid a heavy price for this provocation. Imperial armies invaded the territory, occupied Prague, and torched rebellious towns and villages, depopulating the area. The Austrian triumph was followed by the virtual annexation of Bohemia and Moravia. The Czech people continued to chafe under Austrian rule until the collapse of the Hapsburg empire in 1918.

It is not so surprising, then, to find an imperial soldier at the center of this target, the bull's-eye centered on the hand that holds the gun -- a subtle but clear

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visual allusion to a Bohemia still held in thrall. The exotic locale than becomes an artful cover-up masking the subversive message. It also might suggest the Eden that a free and independent Czechoslovakia could become.



Figure 2

The 60-haleru stamp depicts a more curious target theme: an owl, whose head and heart are being framed for the marksman by a theatrical clown, holding two pointers. Planted at the base of the tall tree where the owl perches are two partially unfurled flags. In the distance looms a symmetrical mountain or mound. The owl long has been the emblem of wisdom, possibly because, as a keen-sighted nocturnal creature, it illuminates the obscure and brings light out of darkness. However, the owl also is a highly ambiguous symbol -- one that has a dark side. Its nocturnal behavior and ghostly night cry has often made it a bird of ill omen in folklore, and a companion of witches and she-demons like Lilith.

The owl's symbolic meaning in this target relates to the figure who frames it. The Scott Catalogue identifies the clown figure in the stamp as the sprite Pierrot, or "Little Peter," a pantomime figure who emerges out of early Italian theater as a precursor of Harlequin and the English Punch. Pierrot, a popular character of farce known throughout Europe, is in love with Pierrette, both of whom are invisible to mere human eyes. But, in this comic love triangle known as a *harlequinade*, there is a persistent rival for the affections of Pierrette, namely the Clown.

In this context the furtive, camouflaged owl becomes a symbol of Pierrette as an invisible, faithless lover. Made mad by jealousy, Pierrot sets up the woman he loves and seeks to guide the marksman's aim. This is consistent with the darker Pierrot of legend, the Pierrot of the Romantics -- an artistic genius who hides his love behind a sinister mark because he fears ridicule and rejection. The obsessive hero of Gaston Leroux's *Phantom of the Opera* is derived from the Romantic Pierrot.

Our Pierrot, however, may owe his motley more to German folklore, which is akin to the Czech, than to Italian farce. A legendary figure familiar to country people throughout Europe was Till Eulenspiegel, the peasant prankster who gloried in showing off native wit hidden behind the bumpkin's homely face. Till often is portrayed holding a comical owl -- as in this illustration -- as a symbol of the "sophisticated" townsfolk who hold the peasantry in contempt and become "targets" of Till's tricks. A village marksman well could have appreciated the joke.

The third stamp in this series, a 100-koruna [*sic* 1,00 Kčs or 1 koruna] contains more accessible symbolism, but at the same time reveals a perplexing visual paradox. The soldier, with a rifle at his feet, is a marksman. He kneels at the feet of a female dignitary who crowns him with what appears to be a wreath of laurel or olive, award of the ancient Greeks for artistic or athletic excellence. The



Figure 3



Figure 4: Other stamps in Czechoslovakia's "Painted Folk Art Target" Series (Scott 1956-61) feature the artistic, the familiar, and the exotic.

crescent-shaped diadem and the strung bow on the dais indicate that the dignitary is none other than the Greek goddess Artemis, the virgin goddess of the hunt, the moon, and fertility. The solar medallion of her brother, the sun god Apollo, appears at the top of her canopy. That Artemis should crown a marksman seems fitting even if this honor traditionally was reserved for Nike, the goddess of Victory. Curiously, the bull's-eye is centered over the wreath which would give the real life marksman a symbol of excellence to aspire to and destroy at the same moment. So there seems to be a whimsical parody behind this image, a target that makes fun of itself.

Whatever the sources for the imagery in these targets, there is no denying the originality of this folk art and the richness of its symbolism. The merry nineteenth-century marksmen of Bohemia were shooting at more than bull's-eyes, it would seem, for theirs was a sport with hidden aims.

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 Haslova, Vera, and Jaroslav Vajdis. *Folk Art of Czechoslovakia*. New York: Arco Publishing Co., 1974.
 "Till Eulenspiegel." Benet, William Rose, ed. *The Reader's Encyclopedia*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1965.

The Author

Frederick Highland is a regular contributor to the philatelic press. His book, *The Mystery Box*, a collection of fiction and nonfiction inspired by postage stamp imagery and symbolism, was published by Ana Libri Press in 1998. A lifelong philatelist, he hosts a website devoted to stamps, history, and the mystery at www.themysterybox.com.

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JAROSLAV LUKAVSKÝ

11.3.1924 - 12.12.1984

by Gerald M. van Zanten



Fig. 1

Jaroslav Lukavský was born on March 11, 1924 in Prague (Fig. 1). He studied at the State School of Graphics in Prague during 1942-43, and after the end of WW II he began special advanced graphics training at the Academy of Graphical Arts in Prague, from which he graduated in 1950. He was a member of the HOLLAR Creative Group, with which he was a regular participant in their yearly national and foreign exhibitions since 1948. While mainly interested in woodcuts, a large part of his work is represented by small graphics, ex libris, as well as postage stamps, but also full size sheets and book illustrations. He illustrated a large number of publications for Mladá Fronta, Our Army, Soviet World, Czechoslovak Writers, Orbis, People Democracy, and State Publishers of Fine Literature/Political Literature/Children's Literature, and also a large number of books for various publishers.

His awards include:

1957 Moscow - bronze medal for graphics

1958 Barcelona - 1st prize for woodcuts

1962 Prague - Mladá Fronta year prize for illustrations

1963 Prague - 2nd prize for the best Czechoslovak stamp

1964 Prague - Honor award for the best Czechoslovak stamp

1965 Prague - 3rd prize for the best Czechoslovak stamp

His individual exhibitions include 1963 in Leipzig and 1964 at the Regional Gallery in Prostějov.

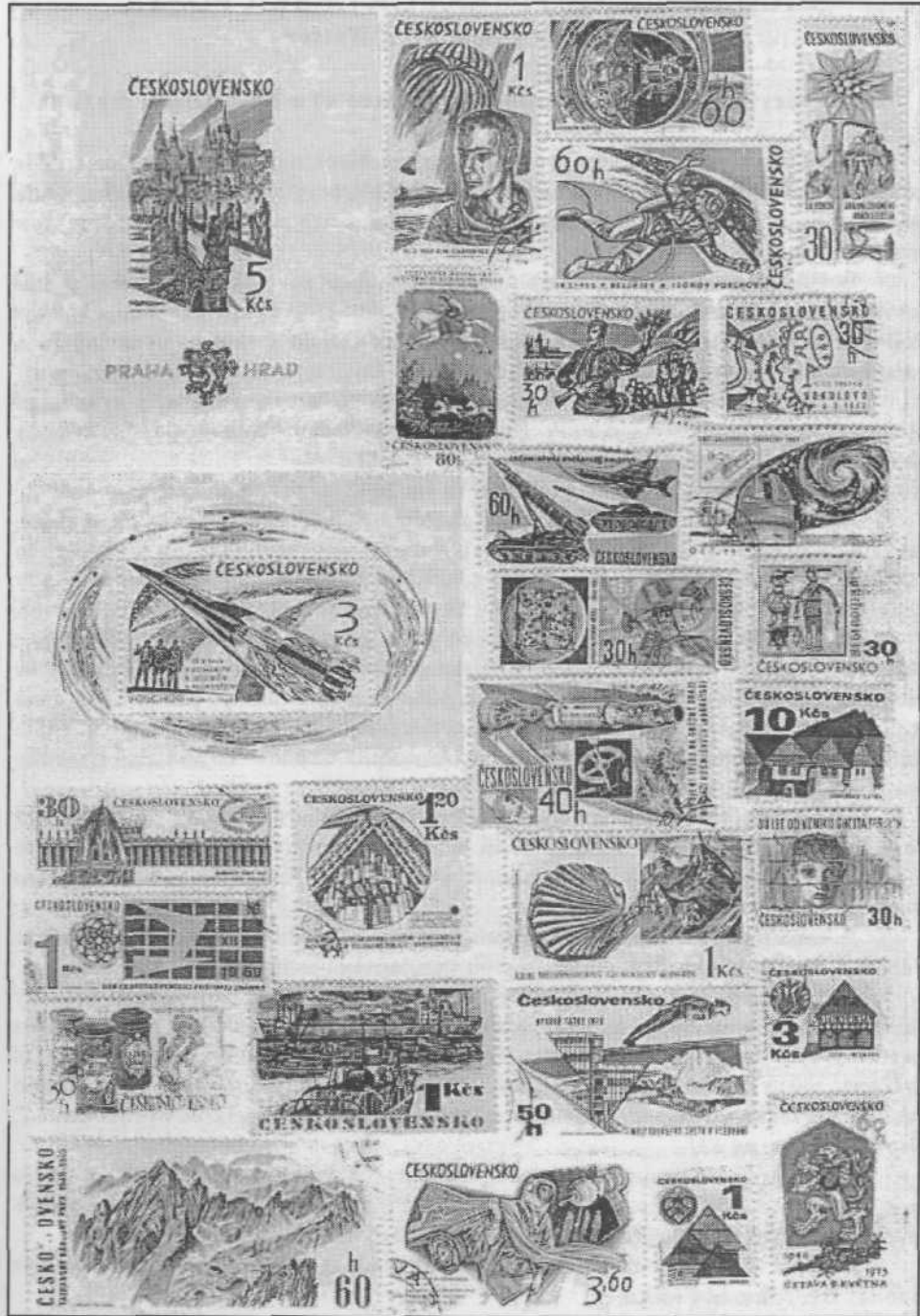
Jaroslav Lukavský was also a philatelist. In particular he collected airmail stamps and covers, and records of the Apollo space research projects and others (documents, cachets, and cancellations from the various satellite tracking stations of NASA such as the ones in Australia and New Zealand, and the activities surrounding the Skylab satellite).

As a designer of stamps, his efforts spanned 16 years, 30 series/issues (from his first on May 26, 1960 through February 25, 1976), and 3 souvenir sheets -- of these, 10 had space themes. To give you a flavor of his designs, look through the examples shown in the full-page Figure 2. Among those you will find familiar are the space themes (such as the American/Soviet astronauts of 1965), geology themes (the Tatra mountains series of 1969), and the basic house architecture series of 1971/2.

Resources:

-- *Jaroslav Lukavský*, ROH - Klub Školství a Kultury, Praha 1966

-- Personal letter from Jaroslav Lukavský to the author, Jan. 23, 1973



CHALLENGING TIMES FOR ČESKÁ POŠTA

by Viktor Velek, Staff Writer

Postal service searches for identity in face of a liberalized market

Traditional postal service providers are experiencing challenging times. The golden age of mail is gone, killed by the advent of electronic communications, while postal operators in the Czech Republic and abroad are pushing to discover new rationales for their existence.

Besides the blow posed by the communications revolution, national postal service providers are losing their old privileges. As of 2011, their monopoly over delivery of letters weighing less than 50 grams should dissolve, ushering in a competitive and level postal services market.

Originally, the European Commission, the EU's executive arm advocated opening the postal markets in 2009. However, in the face of strong opposition among some members states, a compromise was reached earlier this year, with the European Parliament expected next year to set 2011 as the deadline.

Although Česká Pošta (ČP), the Czech Republic's state-owned postal provider, and its counterparts in 10 other EU member states have won another two years to prepare for liberalization, deferring the deadline to 2013, the company has already set about preparing for the future's stiff competition and Internet-era peculiarities.

As of 2009, ČP will be transformed into a joint-stock company. *[Ed. Note: Another periodical "Pravo" recently announced that early in 2009 Czech Post will be changed from a government enterprise to a public one, and will be called Czech Post AS (Akciová Společnost).]* This should make the company more competitive, flexible and customer-friendly, according to the government. The move could also clear the way for a future privatization, observers say.

Apart from this inner change, ČP must cope with outward pressures. Recent research has shown that further switching from traditional postal services to electronic communications is still ahead, said Gabriel Pleska from the ČP press department.

"Česká Pošta is aware of the fact that there will be fewer regular letters to deliver," Pleska noted. "We've focused on developing e-services for some time."

For example, the company offers a digital version of registered mail delivery service -- registered electronic post, which can be compared with document services performed by notaries. ČP serves as a mediator guaranteeing the privacy of delivery, assuring the electronic document can be accessed only by the authorized recipient, Pleska explained. *[See also the article "Electronic Pictured Postcards . . .", Sep/Oct issue, pg 31]*

There are also projects under way to turn ČP's extensive network of offices into joint contact points to state authorities. At 3,400 branches nationwide, people can order certified excerpts from the business and land registries, Pleska said.

ČP has also strived to fill the niche opened up by transforming consumer habits, according to Pleska.

"This transformation of lifestyle is reflected by our 'post office in a shopping

mall' strategy," Pleska said. ČP has set about establishing offices in shopping centers, and people busy during the week can redirect their package deliveries there, picking up their mail while shopping on the weekend, he said.

ČP will release more details about its strategic plans for the future at the end of the year, said ČP spokeswoman Dita Václavíková.

Frozen competition

Earlier this year, the Finance Ministry approved a hike in postal fees proposed by ČP, which will take effect Jan. 1. The price of delivery of a standard letter, for example, will increase from 7.5 to 10 Kč and sending a priority registered letter of up to 20 grams will cost 26 Kč instead of today's 19 Kč. The hike was criticized both by other Czech postal operators and some economists.

"In light of the recent EU liberalization deferment, it can be seen as an inappropriate strengthening of Česká Pošta's position," said Miroslav Ševčík, chairman of Liberální Institute, an independent think tank advocating ideas of classical liberalism.

"The rise is excessive and quite unjustified," Ševčík noted, adding that it will harm the most loyal and frequent users of postal services: older people at odds with electronic communication.

Other postal operators were also critical. The combination of the price hike and the liberalization postponement is bad news for customers, according to Petr Dušek, marketing director of TNT Post, a Netherlands-based postal operator and the largest distributor of commercial leaflets in the Czech Republic.

"Had the postal market opened as originally planned, postal service prices would have never reached such highs," Dušek said.

Today, TNT Post focuses on corporate clients. But, once the market is open to fair competition, TNT Post will offer fully fledged postal services, Dušek said.

There has been visible progress in CP's services over the past five to seven years, at least in large cities, Ševčík said.

"However, the improvement could have been better, had the liberalization of postal services proceeded in a faster pace," he added.

Clearly, there is much room for improvement. The Czech Telecommunications Office (ČTÚ), the state regulator in the field of postal services and electronic communications, has repeatedly criticized ČP in its evaluation reports for numerous shortcomings -- customer neglect, early closings of post offices or failed or mistaken deliveries.

Last year, the ČTÚ imposed fines worth 7 million Kč on ČP.

[Ed. Note: The SPECIALIST is pleased to reprint the above article which first appeared in the November 21-27, 2007, edition of The Prague Post, with the approval of the author and The Prague Post. www.praguepost.com Viktor Velek can be reached at velek@praguepost.com]

A POLITICIAN AND AN ECONOMIST

by Piero Santangelo
trans. by Peter Z. Kleskovic

Many celebrated personalities that influenced the political events of the 1920's are a gratifying theme for philatelic works -- space was given in the past, for example, to T.G. Masaryk, M.R. Štefánik, E. Beneš, and others.

One of the personalities who, until this day, is still awaiting recognition in this arena is Alois Rašín (Fig. 1).

Alois Rašín

October 18, 1867 - February 18, 1923

Alois Rašín, a Czech politician and economist, one of the most important representatives of the first Czechoslovak Republic, was born on October 18, 1867, in Nechanice near Hradec Králové as the ninth child in the family of a baker. He studied at the gymnasiums in Nový Bydžov, Broumov and Hradec Králové, and after his graduation in 1886 he left for Prague to study at the medical faculty. However, due to health reasons he had to switch to the legal faculty.

At the beginning of the 1890's, Rašín actively joined the radical student movement. He became one of the leaders of the group called *Omladina*, and in the *Omladina* court case he was sentenced on February 14, 1894, to jail for the next two years. In these draconian times, Emperor Franz Josef was in power (Fig. 2). However, in November 1895, Rašín was pardoned, released from jail, and even had his doctoral title returned to him.

After his release, Rašín returned to an active political life -- he participated in co-founding the radical constitutional party, and it was his effort that changed the radical paper into a daily newspaper.

In 1901, after his unsuccessful attempt at election to the Parliament in Vienna, he temporarily gave up his political activity -- and he devoted himself to private legal practice and also became the legal advisor of *Živnobanka*. He returned to political life in 1907, became allied with Karel Kramář, and became involved in the reorganization of the National Liberal Party (*Mladočeši*) becoming its vice-chairman.

During World War I he became involved in illegal anti-Austrian activities, participating in the founding of the resistance organization called *Mafia*.

He is arrested in July 1915 -- as is Kramář and many others -- and in June 1916 is sentenced to death for his anti-Austrian activities (Fig. 3).

After the accession of Karl I. Habsburg (the last emperor) to the throne (Fig. 4), the sentence of death was changed to ten years of hard labor -- and finally, in 1917 when Austria was striving to achieve understanding with the opposition, the sentence is repealed, and Rašín is pardoned along with the others that were condemned.

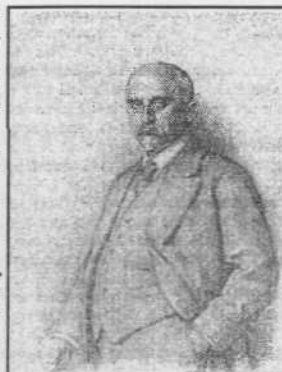


Figure 1: Alois Rašín by Viktor Stretti



Figure 2: Emperor Franz Joseph I.

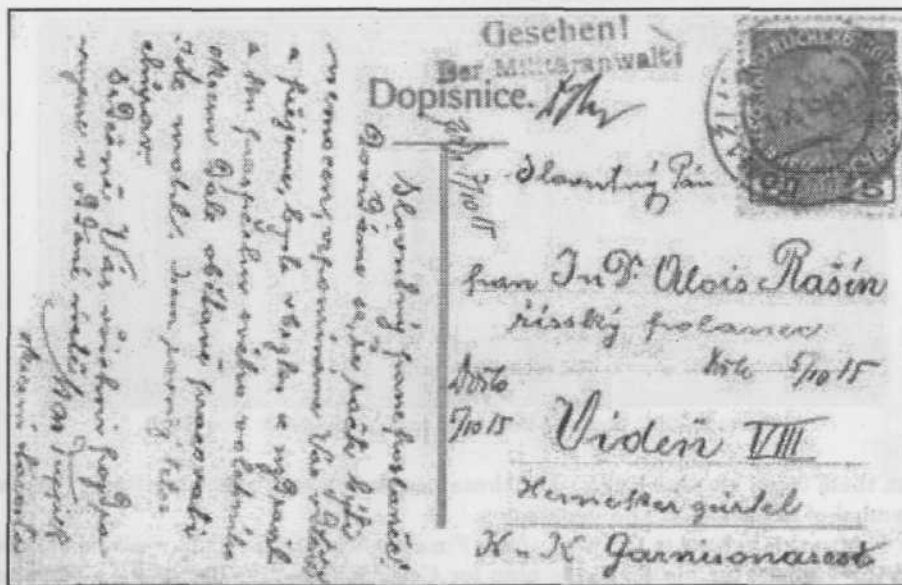


Figure 3: Post card addressed to A. Rašín in Vienna with a hand scribed note "Došlo 5/10 15" (arrived October 5, 1915).

He then immediately returns to his political activities -- participating in the unification of the Czech middle-class parties into the Constitutional Democracy (1918), and becomes its leading representative. He then also becomes a member of the presidium of the National Committee -- and in the function of acting chairman he then announces on 28 October 1918 the independence of the free Czechoslovak nation (Fig. 5).

After 1918, Alois Rašín is active in the Czechoslovak Parliament representing the Czechoslovak National Democratic Party, and in the years of 1918-19 and 1922-23 serves as the Minister of Finance in the Czechoslovak Government. During his first



Figure 4: Karel I. Habsburg



Figure 5: Československo 1918

term as the Minister of Finance, Rašín is very active in stabilizing the Czechoslovak economy -- during the period February 26 to March 9, he arranges for the Czechoslovak borders to be closed, followed by the printing of the entire range of currency while compulsorily reserving part of it as State Loan. After establishing the Czech Crown, then Rašín launches the policy of deflation which leads to the progressive strengthening of the Crown, which soon becomes one of the strongest and most stable currencies in the European market (Fig. 6).

It is however necessary to point out that Rašín belonged among those politicians who placed the interests of the state before social and societal problems. His economic policies were promoted at the expense of the socially weakest classes --



Figure 6: 20 Kč banknote from 1926 having a portrait of Alois Rašín

from them came also his killer. For these poorest classes of society Rašín became a symbol of exploitation and oppression.

After his return to the seat of the Finance Ministry in 1922, Rašín no longer had the support for his economic plan for Czechoslovakia and became a target of criticism.

In January 5, 1923, Alois Rašín became a victim of assassination while leaving his house on Žitná Street in Prague when Josef Šoupal, an anarchist, shot him with a revolver (Fig. 7). Rašín's condition is hopeless; however, the finance minister resists his wounds until February 18th, when he dies.

A few words about the assassin. Josef Šoupal (1903-1959) became a member of the Social Democratic Party, but immediately upon the founding of the KSČ (Communist Party) he became a Communist. He had been preparing himself for the



Figure 7: Memorial on his home: "Here fell Dr. Alois Rašín in service to his country"

assassination for a long time, and he made no secret that he believed the fact that to attain a goal it was necessary to carry out "*an individual action*".

Josef Šoupal was sentenced to 18 years of hard labor, and due to his constant transgressions of the prison rules his sentence was extended an additional 2 years.

Rašín Embankment

In recent times a portion of Prague's embankment was named after A. Rašín -- previously it was named after Friedrich Engels. Along the right side of the Vltava



Figure 8: The Dancing House on Rašín embankment

river watercourse, on its embankment, we find several unique buildings, both historic and also modern. Let's start with the modern -- Tančící Dům (The Dancing House)(Fig. 8).

Many residents of Prague will remember that for almost a half century there was a large vacant lot at the corner of the Rašín Embankment and Jirásek Square. There used to be a building there that was damaged by a U.S. air raid on Prague, February 14, 1945. It was partially demolished in 1946 and completely removed in 1960.

The list of the parties that were interested in developing the lot was very long, but finally at the end of 1992 it was purchased by a Dutch insurance company, Nationale Nederlanden. To implement the development, they selected an avantgarde architect of Slovenian origin, Vlada Milunič. He then contacted the world renowned American architect, Frank O. Gehry. The Dancing House got its name thanks due to its towers -- they were named Ginger and Fred after the legendary dancing pair Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire. The Dancing House was completed in June 1996. The new building was awarded a prestigious evaluation by the American TIME magazine -- winning in the category Design of 1996.

At the end of the Rašín Embankment we encounter another interesting building, a witness to Prague's past.

The Podskali Customs House at Vyton

The Podskali customs house is the last witness of the former Podskali -- a village of swimmers, fishermen, raftsmen, and lumber merchants -- that existed here at the end of the 12th century. Here the timber brought to Prague by rafts had duty imposed upon it, wherein customs duty was collected also in kind -- in the form of wood, which was "cut out" (vytínat) from that on the raft -- from which evolved the name "at Vyton" which has been perpetuated until today.

The customs house is originally late gothic, has several times been rebuilt, in 1671 had the great seal of Prague's Nové Město (New City) placed above the gate

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(Fig. 9), and has the gratitude of the people for the gallant defense before the Swedes in 1648.

In 1939 the Museum of Old Podskali was established in the customs house. In a small park near the building is a memorial for swimmers and raftsmen who have died that was designed by J. Jiříkovský from 1971.

Sources:

- Noviny Prahy 2 - www.praha2.cz - February 2007, April 2007
- Zivotopisyonline.cz/alouis--rasin.php
- Emanuel Poche - Prahou krok za krokem, nakladatelství. Panorama 1985



Figure 9: The seal of Prague's Nové Město



Book Review

REVOLUTIONARY AND LIBERATION OVERPRINTS AND LOCAL ISSUES OF 1944-45 CZECHOSLOVAKIA

by Karel Holoubek

If you are a collector of or interested in the Revolutionary and Liberation Overprints and Local Issues of 1944/45 Czechoslovakia, then there is a new source of information for you.



Fig. 1

Our member in the Czech Republic, Karel Holoubek, has developed a catalog and monograph on the subject. It is available only as a CD (Fig. 1) since the cost of publication (for the relatively small number that would sell) would be too high. It is well illustrated in b+w with detailed descriptions of individual issues, including written permissions of local National Councils, city governments, or either the U.S. Army or Soviet Army military administrations. Its biggest drawback is that it is exclusively in Czech.

The catalog lists all the issues starting with the 1944 liberation of Chust, moving westward through

Slovakia, Rimavská Sobota, Rožnava, and Skalica, into Moravia and Bohemia with all legal overprints and new issues listed. The catalog also lists the overprints created in later months and even years after WW II ended in May 1945. These later overprints are considered fantasies or forgeries.

See the Available Publications section at the end of this issue for pricing and ordering information.

Savoy Horvath

Charley's Corner

I will try to write a column for every issue of the SPECIALIST providing space will be available.

One of the most interesting areas of collecting Czechoslovakia is the region of the Carpatho-Ukraine. This area was ceded to Czechoslovakia in 1919 and another smaller portion to Poland.



Fig. 1

Shown here are two past cards from the Czechoslovak region. The first card (Fig. 1) shows a Ukraine church "Huklivý" showing a bi-lingual cancel and posted at "Slatinsky Doly, 3.XI.38" sent to Prague, received on 8.XI.1938.

The second card (Fig. 2) was posted at a sub-station Sélce near Iršava. Note the rectangle postmark at the left side in violet which is bi-lingual (Fig. 3). The card was then taken to Iršava and posted on a train. The Carpatho-Ukraine railroad cancel which is bi-lingual reads "Kusnice-Berehovo 20.IV.38". This combination is quite rare.

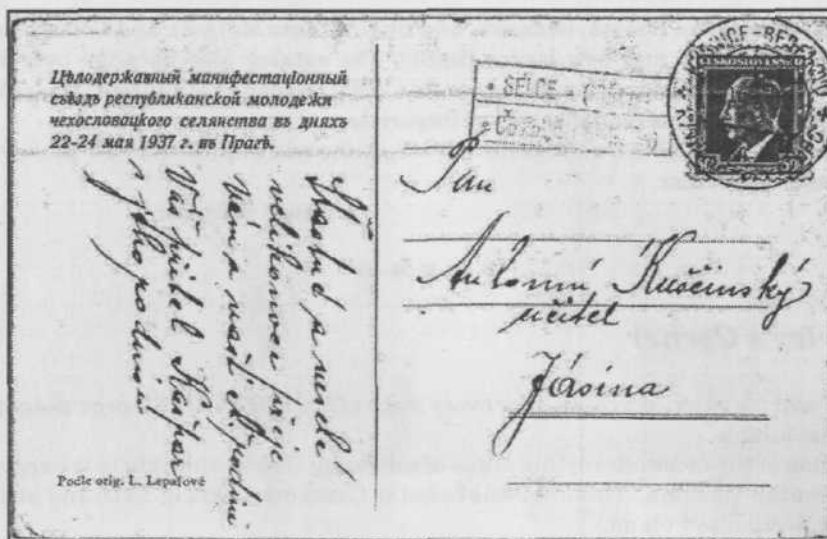


Fig. 2

Watching the auctions in the Czech Republic, these cards are bringing between 1500-2000 Kč a piece. There are now 20 Kč [sic 16.5 Kc] to the dollar.

Charley Chesloe

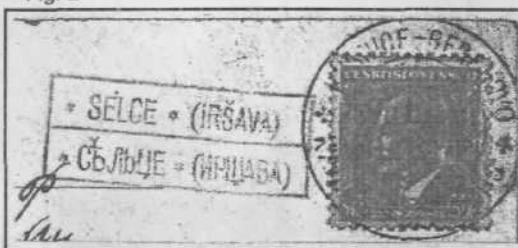


Fig. 3

Book Review

THE CZECHOSLOVAK ARMY IN UKRAINE (PART 1)

by Roman Dubyniak and Peter Cybaniak

Published 2007 by the Roman Dubyniak Ukrainian Museum Foundation, 16 Bexley Avenue, Leeds, LS8 5LU. This book is FREE to members of the Austrian, Czechoslovak and Ukrainian Societies but p/p £5.00 would be appreciated. Price on application to the Foundation for non-members.

The Czechoslovakian Army in Ukraine, Book 1 covers the period 1914-1920, when independence was being sought and fought for by the Czechs and Slovaks in several theaters of war. In particular the events leading up to the forming of the new state of Czechoslovakia incorporating Carpatho-Ukraine and the border clashes with Hungary are covered in some depth.

The first Czechoslovakian battalion called Czechoslovak Družyna was raised in September 1914 in Kiev within the Imperial Russian Army, with 540 Czech colonist volunteers, soon to be joined by many others including Czech prisoners of

war and deserters from the Austro-Hungarian Army, all nicely illustrated with pictorial and field postcards, and relating to battles against Austro-Hungarian and German armies. Other postcards show how the Czechoslovak Legion units, initially raised in France, fought in the homeland. Following independence in 1918, the Legion's Battle Groups and the Unification of Carpatho-Ukraine together with the Hungarian invasion which cut off the Eastern Army, have broad coverage. Field posts, unit cachets and civilian postal services sometimes used in the region and nearby Slovakia are extensively covered.

The book is partly written in Ukrainian Cyrillic but otherwise in English. The illustrated field postcards have the military units' Czech names' equivalent in both English and Ukrainian and the writers' texts where they are of some interest are translated into English. Printed on 100 pages liberally containing full size color reproductions should please readers, and collectors of the material will find invaluable a listing and translation of lesser known military terms, ordinarily not found in some dictionaries or lexicons. All in all well researched and 'a good read'.

Brian C. Day

[Ed. Note: I received a copy of this book as the editor -- to then be forwarded to our library. I sent out a request to several members for information as to what this book was, and where it fit in with others which have already appeared or were soon to appear. I received quite a bit of information (from Jay Carrigan, Colin Spang, and Brian Day who provided the book review above which was published in the September Checkout), which I pass on here.

The authors are UPNS members who put out various catalog series relating to Ukrainian post cards. They mail the book to UPNS members who request them for free (but ask for funds to cover postage; about \$10) and also to various related philatelic organizations and libraries. As to the other books on the Ukraine, Monograph 20 by Otto Hornung is on the very early postal history of the Carpatho-Ukraine, from his personal recollections and collection. The Dutch book by Jan Verleg that is being published jointly with the British society (who are also members of the GB society) will cover the Carpatho-Ukraine from the beginning until its transfer to the Ukraine Republic.

I would like to add to the above review these personal comments: the vast majority of the publication is in English, to include English translations of the contents of the numerous postcards illustrated; there is an extensive 3 page detailed chronology of the formation and history of the Czechoslovak Army in the Ukraine, 1914-1918; a history of the Czechs in the Ukraine; the fact that there were 5 Czechoslovak Field Post Offices in the Carpatho-Ukraine (No. 12, 14, 22, 46, and 75 -- this book seems to cover the first two so I assume that the subsequent two will cover the other three); and the very extensive list of military terms (compiled by Brian Day) is very impressive -- in Czech, English and Ukrainian Cyrillic. My only regret -- the introduction is only in Cyrillic.

This book is not available through us, it must be sent for through the address in the review above. Make sure that you identify yourself as a member of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately. It would be nice if you sent more than the \$10 for postage to help offset the printing costs.]

Letters to the Editor

1. Dear Lou:

I received the pictured cachet from Czechia last month (Fig. 1). It is from the 1966 Brno national stamp show. The commemorative postal cancel is from the Union of Czechoslovak Philately. Beside the date and location, it says "VIETNAM NENÍ SÁM" = Vietnam is not alone.

This made me wonder, was this stamp show attended by any philatelic fellow travelers from the United States, and did they use this cachet to mail home a memento?



Fig. 1

I also wonder if anyone realizes what really "Vietnam is not alone" meant in 1966 Czechoslovakia. During the Vietnam conflict, Czechoslovakia was second only to the Soviet Union in supplying armaments to North Vietnam. Comrades in arms is a nice slogan, but there was no free lunch in the Eastern Block. North Vietnam paid for the arms in cheap labor. Thousands of North Vietnamese "volunteers" came to Czechoslovakia to work at half regular -- and even less than -- wages to pay off the debt. Most of the Vietnamese took root in Czechoslovakia, sent for their families, and became Czechoslovak citizens.

In today's Czech Republic, almost every open air market is Vietnamese. One of their biggest enterprises was the purchase of the ESKA bicycle factory and turning it into pirated CD and DVD manufacture.

Savoy Horvath

2. Dear Lou:

I enjoyed Alan Hoover's account and photos of the movement of the Society's Library to its new home in Baltimore [*Jan / Feb 2008, pg15*].

One additional thanks is in order. Alan noted that the Library materials were all boxed by Mark Wilson. What was not mentioned was that Mark had labeled each box, designating whether it held periodicals, books, or duplicate Specialists. Several months later, when the Verners (Lois and Jerry) and the Palaschaks (Joyce and me)

began the unpacking of the boxes, we were able to easily distinguish which boxes to open, an enormous time and effort savings, thanks to Mark's work and foresight.

Richard Palaschak

3. Dear ALL:

Last night, Jiří Majer appeared at our place lugging 26.5 pounds of new books for the Society. Since many of you were not on the Board ten-plus years ago when Jiří and I started this program, I thought this might be an opportune time to review it for you.

At that time Jiří agreed to bring me books that we needed for our book sales program when he came to the United States on business, which was several times a year. He purchases books in quantities we request, bring them here, I pay for them, and Ed [*Lehecka, treasurer*] reimburses me as soon as I submit a bill. I mail the books to our books chef [*book sales manager*]. Simple procedure.

But the story does not end there. Since he is a dealer, Jiří normally is able to purchase the books at a discount, usually about 20%, and passes the savings on to us. In addition he brings the books over as part of his luggage (he has always absorbed any overcharges) saving us postage from Europe.

Because of all this, we are able to offer our members books at reasonable prices, often cheaper than one would have to pay in Prague, at the same time generating good income for the Society.

Regards,
Jerry [Verner]

[Ed. Note: Thanks to such efforts on Jiří's part, the Society has had a positive return in the book sales area throughout the time that he has been assisting us. Bringing the books in his baggage means that we do not have to pass on the expense of the books being mailed from Europe -- this alone would practically double the cost of the books to our members. For those of you who may not know, Jiří is the dealer/owner of Jiří Majer Auctions (all aspects of Czech and Slovak philately) which periodically runs an ad in the SPECIALIST.]

Farewells

It is with the deepest regret that we must announce the passing of our member Dr. Bruce Sebek (member 1587) of Shaker Heights, Ohio. Bruce was a long time member and past director of the Society. When we had our annual stamp exhibition and convention at STAMPSHOW'99 in Cleveland, we enjoyed the hospitality of Bruce and his wife Peggy, to include a wonderful Czech dinner at a local restaurant -- Cleveland being a hotbed of Czech and Slovak organizations and activities for over a century. Bruce was the show organizer for us and handled all of our activities held there. His wife informed us that he had a difficult battle with cancer and passed away last year. Bruce was well liked and will be missed. We extend our sincerest sympathies to Peggy and the Sebek family.

Philatelic News and Views

1. From Peter Z. Kleskovic:

-- The following information is taken from a flyer put out by the Slovak Post. They can be reached through the following means: Slovenská Pošta, a.s., Pofis, Nám. Slobody 27, 817 98 Bratislava, SLOVAK REPUBLIC; www.pofis.sk; pofis@slposta.sk.

Forever Stamp!

"In 2007 the Slovak Post issued its first stamp with a descriptive face value having the title Congratulations Stamp -- Bouquet. The descriptive face value on the stamp is T2 50g (Fig. 1), and it corresponds to a franking of 10 Sk for a second class letter up to 50 grams in weight.

In 2008 the Slovak Post is issuing a stamp for the 15th year of the Slovak Republic with a descriptive face value of T1 50g corresponding to a postal rate of 16 Sk (see the *New Issues* section of this issue). [The letter T signifies domestic correspondence. The numeral 1 signifies priority delivery of the consignment, in this case First Class. The last numeric value 50g indicates the weight category of the consignment, for example, up to 50g, to 100g, to 500g, or to 1000g.]



Fig. 1

Possible Descriptive Values in 2008

<u>Descriptive Face Value</u>		<u>Postal Rate</u>
T1 50g	First Class letter up to 50g	16 Sk
T2 50g	Second Class letter up to 50g	10 Sk
T1 100g	First Class letter up to 100g	18 Sk
T2 100g	Second Class letter up to 100g	14 Sk
T1 500g	First Class letter up to 500g	19 Sk
T2 500g	Second Class letter up to 500g	15 Sk
T2 1000g	Second Class letter up to 1000g	31 Sk

The descriptive face value on the postage stamp has several advantages. Its main advantage is that it will be possible to use it for its designated service even after a change in the Slovak Post rates, i.e., when they adjust the cost for the delivery of postal consignments. The stamps will never lose their validity even after the transition of the Slovak Republic to EURO currency and after the end of the validity of the postage stamps with the Sk designation."

2. From Lubor Kunc:

-- Shown here (Fig. 2) is the special cancel used at the PRAHA 012 - HRAD post office to commemorate the election of the Czech president on February 15, 2008. The actual election process began the week before (conducted within and by the



Fig. 2

Czech equivalent of the US Congress and Senate), but because of internal dissension and very “undignified” bickering among and within the political parties, it took this long and several votes to re-elect Václav Klaus as president.

New Issues

CZECH REPUBLIC

by G.M. Van Zanten

1. On January 20, 2008, the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic issued a 10 Kč stamp in the Tradition of Czech Postage Stamp Production series to commemorate significant designers of postage stamps -- in this case František Hudeček and the engraver Bohdan Roule (Fig. 1). The painter, graphic artist and illustrator František Hudeček (1909-1990) studied at the school of applied art in Prague. His creation developed from his phantasy images up to a geometrical constructive order. His pursuit to find new relationships between reality and virtuality found its expression also in stamp design in the form of subordination of the form to the given theme. Hudeček applied his art also to poster and textile design. Bohdan Roule (1921-1960) also studied at the school of applied art in Prague. He started



Fig. 1

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engraving postage stamps in the early 50's. During his short life he created circa 60 stamp engravings. [Almost his last work was on the two sets of two stamps commemorating the International Postage Stamp Exhibition at Bratislava, Sep 24-Oct 9, 1960, which were issued on July 11, 1960 (Sc. 988-89) that illustrated stamps, and on September 24, 1960 (Sc. C49-50) which were airmail stamps depicting means of mail delivery.] The pictured stamp (in an original face value of 10h) shows the steam engine "Zbraslav" from 1846. The stamp was issued in 1956 in the series "Engines". František Hudeček designed that entire set of 6 stamps. Today's stamp was both designed and engraved by Bedřich Housa, and was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague using rotary recess print in black combined with

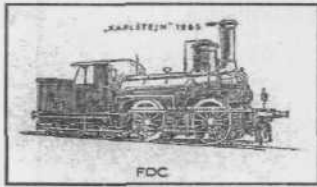


Fig. 2

photogravure in ocher, red and gold in printing sheets of 30 pieces. Besides the stamps in sheet arrangement, philatelic booklets of 8 stamps and 4 labels showing Hudeček's drawing of the engine from 1841 are issued. The labels are printed in black (recess print), ocher and gold. A FDC in black depicts a drawing of the engine "Karlštejn" from 1865 from the 30h stamp issued in another "Engines" set of 1966 (Fig. 2).

2. On January 20, 2008, the Ministry issued a set of two commemorative stamps in the Personalities series. The stamps were designed by Jan Kavan, engraved by Václav Fajt, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print combined with photogravure in printing sheets of 50 pieces.



Fig. 3

-- 11 Kč: Karel Klostermann (1848-1923)(Fig. 3) in black (recess print), light orange, brown-green, brown, and red. The stamp commemorates the 160th anniversary of his birth. Karel Klostermann, the writer, representative of provincial realism and the so-called country-novel was born in Haag in Austria. His father was a doctor there; later, the entire family moved to Sušice. Klostermann studied at the secondary grammar school in Klatovy and Písek; he left the medical faculty in Vienna before finishing the studies. For many years he was a French and German teacher at the German Realschule in Plzeň. He started

writing in German, later on in Czech. He devoted the whole of his literary work to his beloved, although harsh Šumava Mountains and the lives of the local population. His stories and novels describing masterfully the life and traditions are largely based on real events. He put a great emphasis on depicting the Šumava landscape and wildlife. Klostermann is one of the most fruitful of Czech writers; he wrote circa 160 stories and novels -- some of which are still published. His supreme work was the novel "Mlhy na Blatech" (The Fogs on Blata). He concluded his life in Štekeň near Strakonice, where he died. A FDC in black-



Fig. 4

green depicts a still life with a book, pen, glasses, and things commemorating the Sumava Mountians (Fig. 4)

-- 14 Kč: Josef Kajetán Tyl (1808-1856)(Fig. 5) in black (recess print), black, red, ocher, and violet-pink. The stamp was issued to commemorate his 200th birth anniversary. Josef Kajetán Tyl, Czech playwright, actor, journalist, writer and critic was one of the personalities dominating Czech theater and literature at the period of the National Revival and was representative of the sentimental-socially engaged wing of Czech romanticism. He wrote the play "Fidlovačka" including the song "Where is My Homeland?" on the music by F. Škroup. The song became popular and later became the Czech national anthem. The most popular and still staged are Tyl's fairy tales, especially "Strakonický Dudák", "Jiříkovo Vidění", "Lesní Panna", and also the historical play "Kutnohořští Havíři" and contemporary



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

plays "Paní Marjánka, Matka Pluku" and "Paličova Dcera". He was also the author of contemporary successful tales, e.g. "Rozervanec" a caricature of the poet K.H. Mácha and the novel "Poslední Čech" winning the prize of the Czech ethnographic institute Maticе Česká and critical comments by K.H. Borovský. J.K. Tyl was the chief editor of the Květy magazine which attracted the largest readership at that time and is still published. He devoted his whole life to theater, as an author, actor, script editor and director. From 1851, when the Austrian state authorities canceled the ensemble of the Theater of Estates, he lived a poor life outside the boundaries of Prague as an itinerant actor. The FDC in brown-red depicts a composition of theater costumes and music instruments (Fig. 6).

3. On January 30, 2008, the Ministry issued a 10 Kč definitive stamp with labels for additional printing (Fig. 7). This stamp was previously issued on January 26, 2005 in a face value of 7.50 Kč in a different color. The stamp bears a decorative gate with a peacock sitting on its top with a trumpeter on its back. The gate being ajar and the other symbols evoke the "way to glory". The stamp was designed by Karel Zeman and produced



Fig. 7

by Victoria Security Printing, a.s., by multicolored offset. The stamp will be issued in arranged printing sheets with 9 stamps and 12 labels. The right upper label bears an ornamental detail from the stamp, the other 11 labels -- tiny motifs related to the stamp. A part of the sheets will be issued with blank labels for additional printings in accordance with the wish of the customer.



Fig. 8

4. On January 30, 2008, the Ministry issued a 17 Kč definitive stamp with labels for additional printing (Fig. 8). This stamp was previously issued on February 22, 2006 in adjusted colors. The stamp bears a still life of grapes, a cup of red wine, and flowers. The stamp was designed by Libuše and Jaromír Knotek and produced by Victoria Security Printing, a.s., by multicolored offset. The stamp will be issued in arranged printing sheets with 9 stamps and 12 labels. The

right upper label bears a twig with three ripe peaches, the other 11 labels show a drawing of a grape. A part of the sheets will be issued with blank labels for additional printings in accordance with the wish of the customer.

5. On January 30, 2008, the Ministry issued a 10 Kč definitive stamp in The Beauty of Flowers series entitled The Rose (Fig. 9). The stamp bears a flower with a bud. The stamp was designed by Anna Khunová, engraved by Bohumil Šneider, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in black combined with photogravure in green, yellow, and pink in printing sheets of 100 pieces. The drawing of the stamp is underprinted by iridescent color with tilting effect.



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

6. On February 20, 2008, the Ministry issued an 18 Kč stamp commemorating the International Year of Planet Earth declared by the United Nations for the year 2008 (Fig. 10). This initiative should commemorate the omitted importance of geosciences for global sustainable development, limitation of natural risks, rationalization of the construction industry, and optimum utilization of natural resources. It is also designed to motivate young people to study geological sciences at universities and colleges. The International Year of Planet Earth will culminate at the 33rd International Geological Congress in Oslo 2008. The stamp features the Earth stylized as

a fresh green tree with the trunk in colors of the interior of our planet. The stamp was designed by Jaroslav Chadima, engraved by Jaroslav Tvrdoň, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by multicolored offset in printing sheets of 35 pieces. A FDC in black-green depicts a graphic composition completing the drawing of the stamp.

7. On February 20, 2008, the Ministry issued a 12 Kč stamp commemorating the 550th anniversary of the election of Jiří of Poděbrady as king of Bohemia (Fig. 11). The King, Jiří of Poděbrady (1420-1471) came from a leading Czech noble family of

Kunstát and Poděbrady, partisans of the moderate Hussite wing. In 1444 he became the leader of the united Czech Ultraquists and in 1448 he conquered Prague controlled by the Catholic lords of South Bohemia. In 1452 he was elected land administrator of the Bohemian Kingdom; he stayed in the office also during the rule of the boy king Ladislaus the Posthumous (1453-1457). Jiří succeeded in ending the power strifes and stabilizing both the political and economic situation in the country. On March 2, 1458, after the death of King Ladislaus, he was unanimously elected King of Bohemia. He aimed at religious tolerance between the Czech Ultraquists and the Catholics. He made the country economically prosperous and internationally respected. His effort to create a peace union of European Christian rulers (1463-4) intended to solve conflicts by a peaceful diplomatic way found its way to the world history. His political supporters were towns and lower aristocracy. Although he was the father of four sons, he offered the succession to the throne to the Polish Jagellos in order to win their support in the fight against the rebellious Catholic lords and foreign crusaders led by the Hungarian King Matthew Corvin. Jiří of Poděbrady was the last Czech on the Bohemian throne. The stamp features his portrait in profile. The stamp was designed by Oldřich Kulhánek, engraved by Miloš Ondráček, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in red-violet combined with photogravure in pink, blue-green, gray-green, and blue-violet in arranged printing sheets of 8 stamps with a coupon in the middle. The label (in the size of the stamp) showing the seal of the King Jiří of Poděbrady and a facsimile of his signature has been printed in red-violet (recess print) and in gray-green. A FDC in red depicts the royal crown of Jiří of Poděbrady and the initial G.



Fig. 11



Fig. 12

8. On March 5, 2008, the Ministry issued a 10 Kč stamp to commemorate Easter (Fig. 12). The postage stamp designed for Easter correspondence features the "Mourning of the Dead Christ", a detail from the panel altar painting created by the Master of the Vyšebrodský Cycle. This anonymous artist who belongs to the founders of Czech Gothic panel painting is named after the altar in the South Bohemian Cistercian monastery at Vyšší Brod. The work on canvas mounted on lime wood panel is the property of the National Gallery in Prague. The stamp was designed by Otakar Karlas, engraved by Bohumil Šneider, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in dark-brown combined with photogravure in blue, red, yellow, and dark-blue in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in silver depicts Christ's monogram composed of two Greek letters of Christ's name. At the sides the symbol is completed by the Greek letters alpha and omega.

9. On March 5, 2008, the Ministry issued a 10 Kč commemorative stamp showing a mural by J. Navrátil from the Postal Museum in Prague (Fig. 13). This issue is designed to promote the World Stamp Exhibition PRAGA 2008 which is to be held

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on September 12-14, 2008 at the Prague-Holešovice Exhibition Grounds. Josef Navrátil (1798-1865) got trained in house painter by his father, then he studied at the Academy in Prague (1819-23). He was the most famous Prague decorative painter dominating in murals for town-houses and houses for aristocrats and the emperor. The stamp is also issued to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the foundation of the Postal Museum in Prague (18.12.1918). The seat of the Postal Museum is the



Fig. 13

original residential part of the former mill located at this site. In the 19th century it was the property of a rich miller and art benefactor Michalovic who asked his friend Navrátil for its decoration. The so-called Theater Saloon displays 16 scenes from historical legends and theater plays, e.g. Oldřich and Božena, Libuše's Judgement, Vilém Tell, or Bath Servant Zuzana Carrying the King Wenceslas IV Over the Vltava River. We can admire the last one on the postage stamp. The stamp is designed by Otakar Karlas, engraved by Bohumil Šneider, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in dark-brown combined with photogravure in blue, red, yellow, and orange-red in printing sheets of 30 pieces. Besides the stamps in sheet arrangement there will also be philatelic booklets with 8 stamps and 4 labels. A FDC in brown shows Navrátil's self-portrait in front of the easel from the Theater Saloon of the Postal Museum along with Czech words for the 90th anniversary of the Postal Museum.



Fig. 14

10. On March 5, 2008, the Ministry issued a 21 Kč definitive stamp in The Beauty of Flowers series entitled The Gerbera (Fig. 14). The stamp bears a flower with a bud. The stamp was designed by Anna Khunová, engraved by Bohumil Šneider, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in black combined with photogravure in violet-pink, orange-pink, and green in printing sheets of 100 pieces. The drawing of the stamp is underprinted by iridescent color with tilting effect.

Stationery

11. On January 20, 2008, the Ministry issued a postal card with imprinted 17 Kč stamp for commercial and promotional purposes with a free left portion for additional printing (without lines for the sender)(Fig. 15). The imprinted postage stamp is created by a typographical arrangement of its face value. The postal card was designed by Jan Solpera and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by multicolored offset. The selling price of the postal card is 18 Kč.

12. On March 5, 2008, the Ministry issued a postal card with imprinted 10 Kč stamp to commemorate Architect, Master Builder, and Patron Josef Hlávka (Fig. 16). Josef

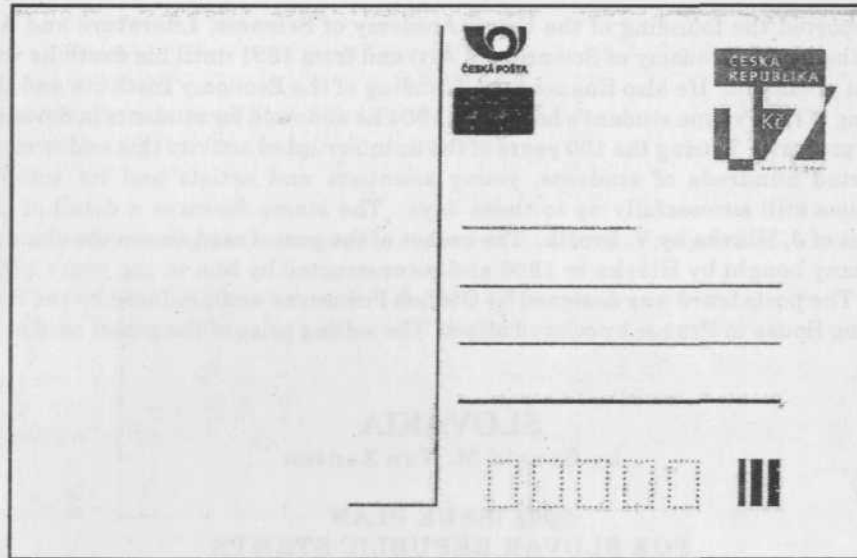


Fig. 15

Hlávka (1831-1908) graduated from the Academy of Graphic Arts in Vienna where he later developed his own firm. The most significant of his works are the Court (later the State) Opera in Vienna, the project and the building of the Greeks-Catholic area in the Ukraine, the Land maternity hospital in Prague, Vienna palaces, endowment houses in Prague, etc. During his long illness he pursued a professional and theoretical activity in saving and renovation of historical monuments. In 1890

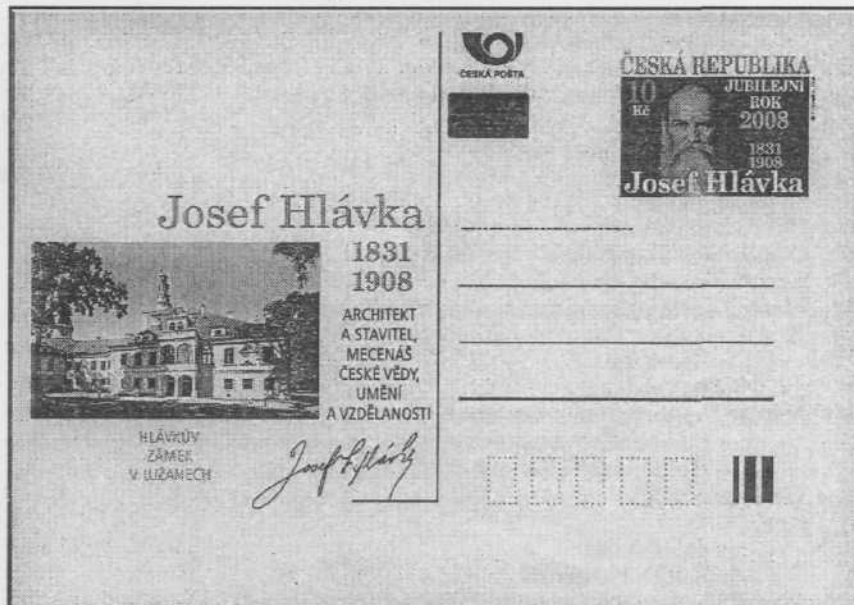


Fig. 16

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

he supported the founding of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Literature and Art (later the Czech Academy of Science and Art) and from 1891 until his death he was its first president. He also financed the founding of the Economy Institute and the building of the Prague student's hostel. In 1904 he endowed for students in devising all his property. During the 100 years of the uninterrupted activity this endowment supported hundreds of students, young scientists and artists and its activity continues still successfully up to these days. The stamp features a detail of the portrait of J. Hlávka by V. Brožík. The cachet of the postal card shows the chateau in Lužany bought by Hlávka in 1866 and reconstructed by him in the years 1886-1887. The postal card was designed by Oldřich Pošmurný and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by colored offset. The selling price of the postal card is 15 Kč.

SLOVAKIA

by Gerald M. Van Zanten

2008 ISSUE PLAN FOR SLOVAK REPUBLIC STAMPS

Date of Issue	Name of Issue	Number in set	Value Sk
Jan 1	15 th Anniversary of the Slovak Republic	1	T1 50g
Feb 28	Easter 2008	1	T2 50g
Mar 6	Cities -- Krupina	1	T2 100g
Mar 20	Flowers -- Dahlia: Stamp with personalized coupon	1	T2 50g
Apr 3	Constitutional Court of Slovak Republic 1993-2008	1	25
Apr 17	Personalities	2	
	-- Masa Halamová		T1 100g
	-- Eugen Suchoň		T2 500g
Apr 30	Technical Monuments -- Fire Fighting Equipment	2	T1 500g T2 1000
May 5	EUROPA 2008 -- Writing of Letters	1	21
May 29	Stamp for Children -- Pavol Dobsinský	1	T2 50g
Jun 4	Olympic Games -- Peking 2008	1	25
Jun 6	Paralympic Games -- Peking 2008	1	30
Jun 30	Discoveries from Bojná -- Nitrafila 2008	1	33
Sep 12	Joint Issue with Czech Republic -- Karol Plička	1	40
Sep 25	Matej Korvín -- Renaissance and Humanism	1	20
Oct 9	Beauties of Our Country -- Wooden Churches	2	
	-- Hervartov		18
	-- Dobroslava		18
Oct 23	Nature Conservation -- Orchids	2	
	-- Crievičnik Papučkovitý		30
	-- Hmyzovník Vcelovitý		33
Nov 13	Christmas 2008	1	T2 50g
Nov 27	Art	2	
	-- Jozef Baláž		34
	-- Zoltán Palugyay		34
Nov 27	Day of the Postage Stamp -- 1 st Postal Train	1	
	-- Bratislava - Ružomberok - Košice		29

13. On January 1, 2008, the Ministry of Transport, Posts, and Telecommunications issued a commemorative stamp for the 15th Anniversary of the Slovak Republic with face value of T1 50g (responding to the rate of postage of the 1st class up to 50g - domestic service)(Fig. 17). The independent and sovereign Slovak Republic is one of the youngest countries in the world, although Slovaks are among the oldest European peoples. Due to unfavorable geopolitical and historical circumstances, Slovaks achieved their sovereign and independent statehood only 15 years ago, on 1 January 1993. The territory of the present Slovakia was compactly and continuously populated by the ancestors



Fig. 17

of the present Slovaks, most probably since the end of the 5th century. In the 9th century, they created a powerful early-feudal state, in which the foundations of the statehood of several Central European nations were laid along with the foundations of Slavonic culture and literature. This state ceased to exist at the beginning of the 10th century, but generations of Slovaks have acknowledged it as the fundamental element

and origin of the national state-forming history. For a further near-millennium Slovaks lived in the Kingdom of Hungary, where, at the end of the 18th century, after the origination of modern nationalism, they strived for autonomy and self-government. As the central government of the Kingdom of Hungary rejected such claims and, on the contrary, aimed to create an ethnic Hungarian state, at the end of World War I in 1918, Slovaks created a common state with the Czechs -- the Czechoslovak Republic. As the Czech and Slovak Republic was not able to resolve all issues concerning their mutual relations, in 1992 Czech and Slovak politicians decided to separate the state peacefully and calmly, creating two independent states. The previous common state ceased to exist on 31 December 1992, and the independent Slovak Republic was declared on 1 January 1993. The stamp depicts the map of the Slovak Republic highlighted by the Slovak national tricolor. Inside the borders are the symbols of eight central towns of the self-governing regions into which the Slovak Republic is subdivided. In the background of the stamp is a stylized emblem of the European Union, which the Slovak Republic joined in 2004. The FDC shows the location of the Slovak Republic in Europe (Fig. 18). The motif on the FDC stamp is Mount Kriváň, which is the unofficial symbol of Slovakia. The stamp was designed by Peter Augustovič and produced by PTC Praha, a.s., using offset printing in sheets of 50 stamps.

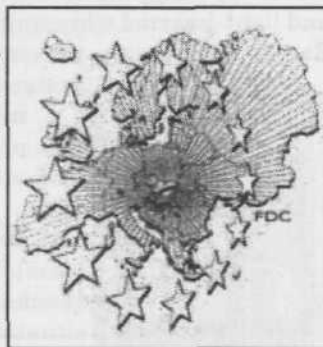


Fig. 18

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

14. On February 28, 2008, the Ministry issued a stamp commemorating Easter 2008 with face value of T2 50g (rate of postage of 2nd class up to 50g)(Fig. 19).

Easter, or the Feast of Easter (also referred to as Pascha in Latin and Pessah in Hebrew), is the principal Christian feast which commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ as observed by Christians globally. According to Christian tradition, Jesus was resurrected on the third day after crucifixion, some time between 27 and 22 A.D. In the Catholic liturgical calendar, the Easter cycle begins on the eve of Easter Sunday and lasts fifty days until Whitsunday, i.e. the Descent of the Holy Ghost. Interestingly enough, it is a 'movable' Christian feast, this means that the Church annually determines its exact date by means of the lunar rather than the solar calendar. Thus, in the Western



Fig. 19

tradition, Easter falls somewhere between 22 March and 25 April (inclusive). This was based on the rule of the first Sunday after the first full moon which follows the spring equinox (21 March). The first written record of the celebration of Christ's resurrection dates to the 2nd century AD. The meaning of this Christian feast is associated with the original Jewish feast of Pessah, which commemorates the Old Testament story of the passing of Israel from Egypt across the Red Sea under the guidance of Moses. The principle symbol of Easter is the lamb. In Christian tradition, this symbolizes Jesus Christ -- the Lamb of God -- who by His act of sacrifice "takes away the sins of the world". Other Easter symbols include the Cross (commemorating the crucifixion), fire (symbolizing victory over darkness and death), and a candle (symbol of resurrection). In the Slavic milieu, many archaic traditions associated with the feast of spring and fertility remain in the symbolism of Easter. Folk customs observed in Slovakia include feasting, painting eggs, and braiding wicker whips. The Easter Monday tradition of "bathing" is prevalent in Eastern Slovakia, whilst in Central and Western Slovakia, 'whipping' is commonly practiced (i.e. the symbolic and light-hearted whipping of girls and women with Easter whips). The current Easter 2008 stamp presents folk customs mentioned above. The stamp was designed by Katarina Vavrová and produced by PTC Praha, a.s., using offset printing in sheets of 50 stamps. A FDC was produced showing Slovak shepherds in native dress with a sheep (Fig. 20).



Fig. 20



Fig. 21

15. On March 6, 2008, the Ministry issued a definitive stamp having a face value of T2 100g in the City series to commemorate Krupina (Fig. 21). The town of Krupina is situated in the Krupina uplands, 279 meters above sea level, on an ancient road connecting the valleys of the Ipel'

river and the Hron river, in the wider European context the area of the central Danube river with southern Poland. The origins of the permanent settlement of the region date back to the New Stone and Bronze Ages. Approximately from the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 6th century, the majority of the population comprised Slavs, the ancestors of the present day Slovaks. The first written record of the Krupina region originates from the 12th century. In the 13th century, following the discovery of precious metal deposits, Saxons settled in Krupina, introducing new technology and developed municipal law ("Magdeburg Law"). The privileges of a free royal town were awarded to Krupina in approximately 1238. However, the original deed did not survive the Tartar plundering of 1241. The privileges were reinstated by King Belo IV in 1244. After the depletion of precious metal reserves in the Middle Ages, the town went



Fig. 22

into a period of decline. It regained its significance after 1540, when Ottoman Turks occupied the present region of Hungary, and Krupina was developed into a fortification against Turks in order to defend south-eastern access to rich central Slovakia mining towns. After the end of the Turkish wars and nobles' uprisings (1711), the importance of Krupina waned once more. New development impulses only arose in the second half of the 19th century and especially in the 1920s when Krupina was connected to the rail system. Today, Krupina is a district town predominated by engineering and food industries. The stamp shows the oldest town building, the Romanesque-Gothic church of the Birth of the Holy Mary, with an old fortification gate in the foreground. The stamp also features the town's coat of arms originating from the 13th century. The theme of the FDC is the unique vartovka (watchtower) from the period of the battle against the Turks (Fig. 22). The stamp was designed by Marián Čapka and produced by PTC Praha, a.s., using offset printing in sheets of 100 stamps.

16. On March 20, 2008, the Ministry issued a definitive stamp in the Flower series entitled Dahlia with a coupon for personalization and having a face value of T2 50g (Fig. 23). Some of the coupons are blank for personalization and some commemorate 60 years of the Slovak National Gallery showing artwork by Laco Teren called *Žatva* from 1988.



Fig. 23

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