



THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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EXCEPTIONAL COVERS

by Lubor Kunc
(lubor.kunc@seznam.cz)

The collecting of postally mailed items attracts the attention of the majority of philatelists. Not only because of the “beauty” of the covers, but also thanks to the stories behind them and the different views of the postal services provided in different countries and ages. I have selected here several postal items being franked with postage stamps of two different countries or that have been paid by the stamps normally not used on the territory of the mailing country. While the displayed items are franked with normal postage stamps having just a few cents of catalogue value, the items are exceptional covers that are only rarely found in the general philatelic material. We will go through the covers sorted by time -- so let's start our journey!

The first postcard (Fig. 1 a/b) was sent in 1899 from Indianapolis to Prague. It shows a German House in Indianapolis which is still now located at 401 East Michigan Street. The building was constructed in 1893, and the structure has been



Figure 1a



Figure 1b

declared a registered historical place. This postcard has been only franked with a 1 cent stamp sufficient for domestic mail, but not for an overseas postcard. The New York City dispatching post office therefore required 5 (French) centimes postage due being collected at the Smichov post office (now Prague 5) by affixing the 5 Kreuzer Austrian postage due stamp.

The second item (Fig. 2 a/b) demonstrates how hard it can be sometimes to deliver a piece of mail to a very busy man. The recipient of the letter was the famous American zoologist Wilfred Hudson Osgood (1875-1947) being active in both North and South America. The letter was sent in 1912 by the American

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Consulate in Trieste from a local Austrian civil post office. It was correctly franked with Austrian stamps totaling 25 heller good for overseas letter transportation. A problem arose when the letter arrived to Callao in Peru, because meantime Mr. Osgood moved to Chicago. The post office tried first to deliver the letter to a believed new destination of Salaverry (Peru), but the attempt was not successful. The American Consulate in Callao, who received the letter due to the sender's diplomatic address, marked a new destination for the recipient and affixed a 3 cent US postage stamp to pay the postal delivery from Peru to the USA. The letter reached Mr. Osgood in Chicago, and its long and complicated journey is illustrated by the postmark strikes on both sides of the envelope.



Figure 2a



Figure 2b

The third cover (Fig. 3 a/b) brings us to the times of World War I. Many Czechs living in the United States decided to join the Czechoslovak Legion in France, because they were lacking U.S. citizenship and thus were not drafted by the U.S. Army. If they accepted Masaryk's call for support, they traveled to France to join the Czechoslovak Legion as volunteers. This was the destiny of Mr. Josef "Joe" Nekvasil who was born in Prague in 1896. He entered into the Legion in Cleveland on Sept. 30, 1917. He was transferred to the 22nd Rifle Regiment fighting on the Western Front. He survived the war and was decommissioned from the Legion in 1919. His personnel file still exists at the Central Military Archive in Prague, and he is registered in the Legionary Database maintained by the archive (see <http://www.vuapraha.cz/soldier/9738435>).

A Cleveland friend of his mailed a letter to him in December 1918. He franked the letter with a standard 3 cent US postage stamp, but the sending was likely

heavy, and the NY dispatching post office prescribed 20 (French) centimes of postage due for the additional weight. The letter was addressed to a Legionary collecting office at Czechoslovak National Council in Paris, which forwarded the mail to his regiment. The regimental official marked his current stay at the military hospital in Cognac, and he affixed the regimental cachet. The local civil post office at Monthureux (Lorraine) serving the regimental command collected the postage due by affixing the French postage due stamp and forwarded the mail to

Cognac, where it finally reached the addressee.

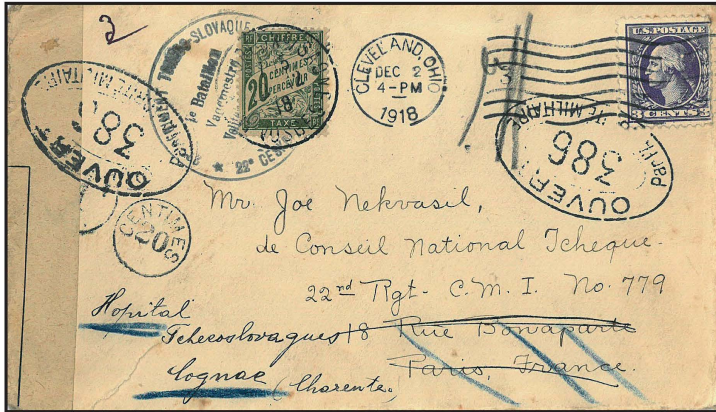


Figure 3a

The next two examples of mail (Fig. 4 a/b, Fig. 5 a/b) show items of the postal courier service operated by the Czechoslovak National Council. The main office of the courier service was situated at the Czechoslovak Consulate in Paris which maintained the courier route between Paris and Prague. The service was soon taken over by the newly established Czechoslovak Ministry of Defense, finally ceding the duty to the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Figure 3b

The authority operated the service for 1919, when

both covers were mailed. Because of the international nature of the service -- serving mainly Czechoslovak soldiers in France, diplomatic corps members participating in the Paris peace conference, as well as to the private persons residing in the city -- the courier service accepted the postage stamps of Czechoslovakia, France, and the USA on a regular basis. This was the only situation where the Hradčany stamps were used in France, but this was possible due to the fact that the consulate office was declared as Czechoslovak territory, and the courier service was operated as a diplomatic line by the official Czechoslovak authority. Of course,

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Figure 4a: The original building of the Czechoslovak National Council at 18 rue Bonaparte, Paris (2012)



Figure 4b: The new seat of the Czechoslovak National Council/Czechoslovak Consulate at 34 rue Bonaparte, Paris (2012)



Figure 5a: Private letter franked with a 25 Heller Hradčany stamp delivered in 1919 by courier



Figure 5b: Private postcard with affixed French postage stamp transported by the Czechoslovak couriers



Figure 8: The New York Herald Tribune Building in 2016

the official mail and the military mail were delivered without the payment of any postage.

The Czechoslovak Legion and Masaryk's resistance movement were importantly supported by American countrymen. A center of Czechoslovak presence in the USA was the Czechoslovak Recruitment Office operating during WW I in the premises of the New York Herald Tribune Building at 154 Nassau Street (the Financial District of New York City)(Fig. 8). The authority collected money, soldiers, and the political contacts to support the Czechoslovak National Council in Paris during WW I. It published posters and postal cards produced by Vojtěch Preissig as material promoting Czechoslovak independence among the Allied public and Czechoslovak legionnaires (Fig. 6).

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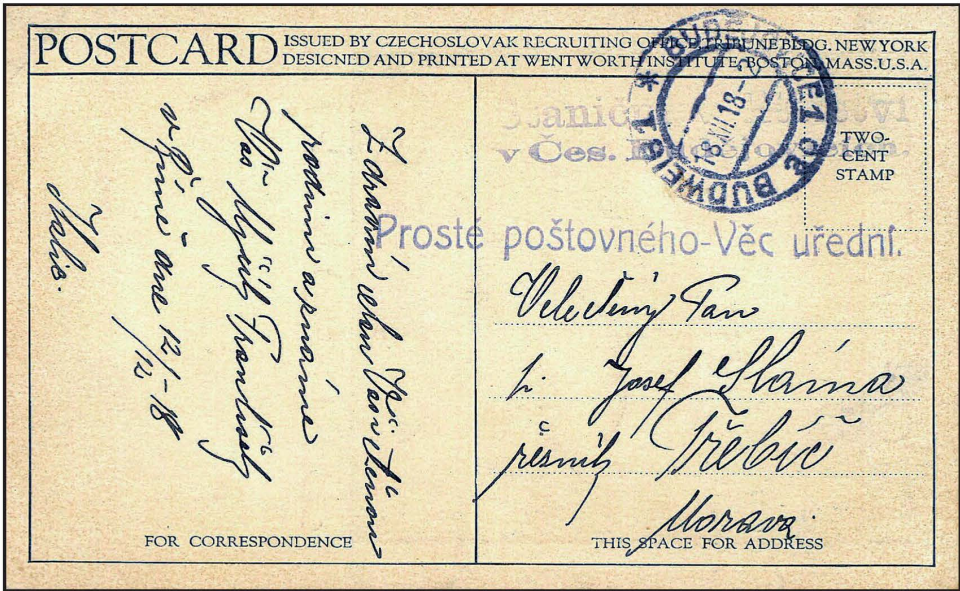


Figure 6: NY postcard used by a Czechoslovak legionnaire in Italy; written in Rome in December 1918, but mailed after one week travel at České Budějovice Railway Station being the first stop on Czechoslovak territory reached by the military transport



Figure 7a: Wife's letter to Stefan Chamaj



Figure 7b: Vyšná Revúca cover to the USA delivered through the Czechoslovak Consulate located in the same building in 1919

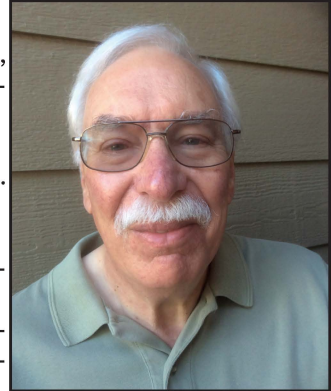
In 1919 the Recruitment Office was converted into the Czechoslovak Consulate in New York City working in addition to the Czechoslovak Embassy situated in Washington, D.C. While postal services were not usually executed by this authority, they were occasionally also involved in this area. A nice example is a letter shown in Figure 7a which was mailed from Slovakia in 1919. The sender was the wife of the famous Slovak supporter of Czechoslovak independence, Stefan Chamaj -- she was just visiting the home country. She properly paid the overseas postage of 25 heller on the backside of the envelope, and had the cachet imprint of the Kancelář Českoslováků Amerických (Office of American Czechoslovaks) placed over them. Because Mr. Chamaj was absent from Washington, the post office was unable to properly deliver the cover. They therefore asked the Czechoslovak Consulate in New York for assistance in identifying his new address. The Czechoslovak Consulate affixed the US 3 cent postage stamp and imprinted its cachet before the final delivery of the mail.

(To Be Continued)

HOW I BECAME A COLLECTOR

by Keith Hart

September 1958, London, England. I was one of a small group of 11 year olds wedged into my geography teacher's cramped office. We had all joined the International Club and Mrs. Phelps was giving an introduction as to how we would portray ourselves to the students we would be corresponding with. These fortunate youngsters would be learning how lucky we were to live in a democratic country, while they were enslaved under the yoke of communism in Kladno, Czechoslovakia. This was to be done in a subtle manner. We would allow them to see how affluent we were, but without flaunting that fact. When replying to letters from them we would not be allowed to say we were sorry to learn that they still had meat rationing, or they had to share school textbooks. That was the general gist of Mrs. Phelps instructions and our letters were to be firmly scrutinized (read as censored as we never saw any amendments) before they were sent.



Early in the New Year we received the first letters and photos. We were pleasantly surprised to find that our new friends looked just like us, dressed like us and seemed to have the same aspirations as us. Although I was pleased to have contact with new friends and enter into a growing fascination with a country less than 800 miles away, it was the envelopes that the letters arrived in that intrigued me most of all. Somebody had taken the time to get every different postage stamp they could from the post office and leave pretty much no room on the envelope for the address. I remember some beautifully drawn fungi, along with stamps that showed people, places and events I hadn't heard of. All the stamps were skillfully engraved. I was just becoming interested in art and had recently seen an exhibit of Rembrandt's etchings and engravings at the British Museum. The workmanship for the design of these stamps seemed close in quality. I took the envelope home, carefully peeled the stamps off and put them in a pile on my bedroom dresser. This of course ruined an interesting piece of postal history. In my section of the first letter sent back to Kladno I said how much I appreciated the postage stamps.

By the end of May I had about 60 different stamps and my mother was insisting on them being tidied up and put away somewhere. I was thinking of throwing them away! Then another letter arrived from Kladno and besides a few newly issued stamps on the envelope, inside were about 40 unused stamps, including a few partial sheets. Now I was determined to keep the stamps. I went to our local stamp dealer's store and asked for some blank Czechoslovakia pages and hinges to keep them safe. "Don't have any Czechoslovakia pages, I'd have to order them specially. Nobody collects Czechoslovakia", I was told. "Well I do", I replied indignantly, leaving the shop with about 10 blank pages.

Five years later, by the time I left school, my collection was kept on pre-printed KA-BE hinge less pages, in a KA-BE album and has been ever since. After a lull of 5 years London was suddenly full of Czech families, having escaped after the

violent end to The Prague Spring. A few became friends and I started to collect more stamps from their correspondence with family and friends back in Czechoslovakia. In 1973 I visited Prague for the first time, found the Pofis store and filled nearly every gap in my collection, which at that time only encompassed the years 1952-1973. It was made much easier by the fact that my British Pounds were accepted by Pofis at 20 times the 'official' exchange rate! I guess that trip was what made me a serious collector.

I have only ever been a general collector. If I was starting again I am sure I would specialize in something, as I admire the scholarship of those of you who specialize in Hradčany and Chain Breaker issues for example. However it is too late in my life to start on something like that now. I do have interest in specific subjects for stamps. Art has always been a strong interest for me and I can often remember the first time I saw the actual paintings or sculpture in a gallery in Bohemia or Slovakia.

I also like to see architecture on stamps. This is due to my working life which increasingly throughout the years was concerned with older buildings, beginning with work on the Sir John Soane Museum in London in 1968. I saw my first wooden church in Slovakia in 1982, was appalled with the almost totally derelict condition and was able to advise town authorities of the immediate steps they should take to at least prevent collapse of structures. Money for maintenance and repairs was not available at that time and it is very pleasing to see stamps and photographs of the excellent restoration being carried out today. After I emigrated to the US in 1991 I worked for the State of Colorado, in charge of the conservation, preservation and restoration of historic buildings owned by the State.

Nowadays, in retirement, I am only concerned with preservation of my own dwelling, which is not at all historic. I do not miss my working days as this has given me at least some time to spend on personal philatelic projects. There are probably about 100 of these! I always look forward to receiving The Specialist and new issues and of course still admire the superior design and workmanship that goes into the production of Czech and Slovak stamps. I know a lot about the history and culture of these two nations, which would not have been the case if I had not signed up for the International Club 58 years ago, a decision I have never regretted.



PRINTER'S WASTE OF OUR FIRST EDITIONS

by František Beneš Jr.

trans. by Lucie Harris

In the last issue was published the first part of an article "Some ethical and legal questions in our field", dealing with materials of "unclear" origin. The increased degree of tolerance that our collectors traditionally show is explained by the non-standard procedures of our forefathers -- the leading representatives of the Club of Czech Philatelists (KČF) -- who after 1918 helped to introduce many items that were not available for purchase at post offices and figuratively speaking let the genie out of the bottle and were never able to put him back.

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In the article, I said for example that the Club of Czech Philatelists purchased printer's waste from the post "in such quantities that it seems unmistakable that the post must have printed them for this purpose." To this several readers reacted with the question of whether the amount could be put more precisely. The answer is -- yes. I did not want to burden the article with numbers especially when they were already revealed by two researchers and experts, namely by dear father František Beneš Sr. and Josef Weissenstein. Both of their conclusions were published in *Filatelie* -- F. Beneš Sr. as part of his series *Small stops on the road of philately and Czechoslovak postal administration*, most specifically in the 32nd continuation in F12/2006, and J. Weissenstein half a year later in the article *All that glitters is not gold, or nothing new under the sun* in F5/2007. Both articles are interesting and worth reading. Let's briefly see what is written in them.

F. Beneš Sr. discovered documents during his study of the First Republic's Department of Post and Telegraphs (MPT) showing the ties between MPT, Čs. Post, and the KČF were much closer than would appear at first sight. From the economical viewpoint it definitely wasn't a "one-way-street", that is, that the generous Department would add extra work in order to let artless philatelists to earn by way of the unprecedented sales of various philatelic materials. Not at all. As it happens, moneys were involved, and for both parties. The collectors got things otherwise unavailable, which made it worth it to sign up to the KČF (and its leading representatives, through whom the distribution passed, on the best pieces got their pockets greased). The MPT received money intended to be used outside their budget, specifically on extra support and bonuses for their officials. The business was advantageous for both sides, obviously agreed upon by the highest MPT representatives, particularly first minister Štřibrný and his successor Staňek. Over the period of one year -- in the special bank account that was opened for this purpose in the Živnostenská bank -- was accumulated almost one hundred thousand crowns (which would be about 5 million in today's money). The scheme ended in 1920 when the Ministry realized the un-sustainability of such a procedure and transferred the money to their common account, even though they still used the money for bonuses. In a detailed listing of expenses we can find items paid on May 22, 1919 to 46 Unie printery workers, and even such curiosities like "428 Kč for cigars for Unie staff while printing stamps" on October 4, 1919. The original documents give out that altogether the KČF sold a million (!) pieces of stamps, in the form of printer's waste, trial prints, blackprints, unissued, samples, "rejects", etc., for an average price of 10 then-day hellers each.¹⁾ Of course, it's only a very rough and approximate estimate, but the final number is so shocking, that what else is there to say.

Josef Weissenstein, who dealt with this problem before in the above mentioned article, compares data from the Department's archives with numbers published in Czech philatelic magazines from that time. He shows that the link MPT -- KČF continued straight to businessmen, specifically to František Šaška who immediately put up for sale the most interesting items acquired in this way (similarly as the former KČF chairman Šula and others).

It follows from the above that this was an operation of unprecedented scale, which permanently distorted the circumstances in our philately and with consequences that we are still coping with today.

¹⁾Today's rough recalculation is about 5 Kč each, which is a ridiculous price for an attractive item, but a surprisingly good one for a common printer's waste. But because ordinary KČF members received the common printer's waste, and the leaders got the attractive items, it ended up as always -- the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

[Ed. Note: *The Specialist* is pleased to reprint this article from *Filatelie* 3/2015 with the permission of the author and editor.]

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THE 1h HRADČANY – CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S STAMP NUMBER ONE

by Josef Chudoba
trans. by Patrick Moore

The first stamps of each state – which collectors have dubbed Number One – have been favorites ever since the early days of philately. There are even collections consisting only of Number Ones, in which our Czechoslovak stamp definitely has its place. Because of its low face value, it could not be used by itself and had few practical applications, so its postal use was very limited. As a result, a significant part of the large quantity issued came into the hands of collectors.

We are talking about the 1h denomination stamp (Fig. 1) which was issued on March 14, 1919, and is called Number One because of its place in the catalog and not because it was the first stamp to appear according to its date of issue. It was produced from two printing plates, which can be easily distinguished with the help of the row control number 0.90, which shows a white dot in the neck of the numeral 9 on the second plate (Fig. 2).

The *Monografie* do not mention even one flaw in the negative, as a result of which the question has been raised whether one negative or two were used in producing the printing plates. A flaw in the negative is known as a plate flaw, which occurs in the same position on most or even on all plates used for printing the same denomination. Not until 1987 were nine flaws in the negative described, and on



Figure 1: The 1h stamp



Figure 2: Distinguishing Plate 1 and Plate 2

that basis it was shown that the same negative had been used to produce both plates -- as it turned out, this method was the case with the other values in the Hradčany issue. The fact that it took so long to identify flaws in the negative shows how pains-

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takingly the work was carried out in producing it, as well as in producing this value.

It is also interesting that many positions on the first plate show a number of conspicuous plate flaws -- counting even the minor flaws, there is one position that has more than 10! The largest and most interesting flaw is the "double K in SKÁ" in position 77/1 (Fig. 3). By contrast, there are very few conspicuous flaws on the second plate.

The 1h denomination offers many possibilities for research, because many large multiples of it have been preserved, as well as complete sheets -- either mint or favor canceled. Beginning collectors can practice on this value in identifying individual positions based on the Handbook, while conversely, advance collectors can go on to use it to make further discoveries.



Figure 3:
The doubled K in the SKÁ



Figure 4: Marginal blank field

Among the most common production flaws are the so-called spurious blank fields that are approximately the size of a stamp (Fig. 4). They are caused by an additional impression of the perforational head on the vertical margin of the counter sheet and a faulty trimming of part of the printing run. In this form, these large fields occur infrequently on other values, while on the 1h they are relatively common. We do not know yet why these appear in such large numbers, but the phenomenon clearly results from variations in the process of perforating and trimming the sheets.



Figure 5: Upper margin partial row control numbers

Relatively often a partial impression of the row control numbers occurs in the upper margin of the counter sheet, but this occurs infrequently on the other values (Fig. 5).

Covers franked with this value are sought after. Of course, the 1h was produced to be added-on to other values -- such as the concurrent Austrian and Hungarian stamps (which meanwhile had ceased to be valid before the 1h was issued) -- and added to postal stationery, or in connection with the planned postal rate increases, most of which had been rounded off to the nearest five hellers.

There was never a postal rate of 1h by itself, so that the stamp



Figure 6: Postcard sent to Vienna at the 2nd Postal Rate Period franking of 15h, made up of 10+3+1+1h stamps.



Figure 7: Letter sent at the 1st Postal Rate Period franking of 20h (12 days after the stamps' first day of issue) made up of 10+5+3+1+1h stamps. This is a nice four-color franking.



Figure 8: The front and back view of a postal dispatch form for the transfer of money. This is an interesting use of the 1h during the 4th Postal Rate Period for sending amounts up to 200 Kč.



Figure 9: A letter sent by R. Gilbert franked with 25 copies of the 1h, which was published in the series about him in the August 2012 (F8/2012) issue of *Filatelie*.

occurs only in multiples or in mixed frankings with other denominations. Several articles about the used of multiples were published in *Filatelie* during the years 1992-1994. The 1h stamp occurs more frequently in combination with other values, mainly with the 3h (Fig. 6, 7). The 1h rarely occurs on postal dispatch forms where there was little space for attaching stamps, and the minimum franking for sending money was 25 hellers in the 1st Postal Rate Period (Fig. 8,9,10).

There are still some open questions regarding this value. One involves the position of the printing plate in the printing form. The *Monografie* mentions two variants wherein they were printed along with either the 5h green-blue or the 10h red. It is not mentioned which printing plate was in the upper or lower parts of the printing form. That could be determined if we had a great number of stamps having the upper margin showing a part of the row control numbers -- which, however, no one has yet investigated.

A second problem is determining the plate flaws on a 16-stamp plate made for the use of the Postal Museum, from which were printed some rarely found trial printings on chalky paper (to date there are known one complete print in red and one lower portion of a print with two rows of

Figure 10: A 10h postal card with additional franking of 2x 1h+3h sent on July 24, 1919. The two 1h stamps were provided with a perfor (which is seen relatively infrequently on this value), which in this case goes through the postal card itself.



stamps in black, which was separated later into a horizontal strip of four and four single pieces with atypical row control numbers).

Of course, it is not to be doubted that some further print was cut up into individual pieces, which might be found in collections but without being identified as being from the Postal Museum plates (although that is improbable, because the existence of single pieces with row control numbers has not been confirmed). But that does not matter because a complete print has been preserved in the collection of a well-known Czech philatelist. He has agreed with the *Státní Tiskárna Čenín* (the Prague security printer that produces currency and identity documents) in the professional making of a photographic record of it as part of a documentation project carried out by the National Museum and the POFIS publishing house, so that this material is available for comparative purposes for research.¹

The details mentioned about these prints have been communicated by the philatelic expert F. Bavel in the framework of cooperation within the Commission of Experts (SČP).



VERIFYING THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE ZÁPOTOCKÝ, TYPE II, MINIATURE SHEET – THE SO-CALLED LINED-THROUGH BERRY

Zdeněk Jindra
trans. by Lucie Harris

Probably one of the most often forged items of ČSR 1945-88 is the miniature sheet for mourning the death of president A. Zápotocký, which has the catalog number of A 957, Type II, the so-called lined-through berry [Sc. 881]. At the same time, its forgery is quite easy, since it can be done by simply "finishing" the drawing of a berry that is on the first type, but unlined. There are many abortive forgeries that were created in this way. Nevertheless, some collectors have difficulty in differentiating the authenticity of the more valuable second type.



Figure 1: Type II with the characteristic lined-through berry – it is important to remember the shape and positioning of the line-through.



Figure 2: The top left corner is also a characteristic and is crucial for authentication of the miniature sheet – mainly the frame and its five lines of which one is wavy. Another feature is the cutting out of part of the corner (be careful, the forgers will even try to scratch this cut out to make a forgery, which it is possible to easily recognize).



Figure 3: For better visibility of the characteristic signs of an authentic miniature sheet the use of a so-called illuminating digital microscope is also a proven method.

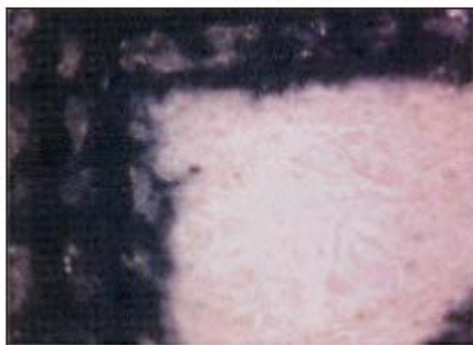


Figure 4: The said cut-out of the left corner of the miniature sheet – the frame has its own characteristic traits of authenticity.

In *Filatelie* 1/1958, Miroslav Protivenáký was most likely the first to inform that there were two types of the miniature sheet. Subsequently in *Filatelie* 21/1970, J. Karásek mentioned the possible forgery of the miniature sheet in his article "Verifying the Authenticity of Čs. Postage Stamps Issued after 1945". The first report of the discovery of forgeries was carried out in fact by J. Karásek in his article "The Forging of the A. Zápotocký, Type II, Miniature Sheet" in *Merkur-Revue* No.4-5/1971.

For the printing of this miniature sheet were used four two-plate printing forms. It is therefore easy to distinguish eight miniature sheet positions, which are

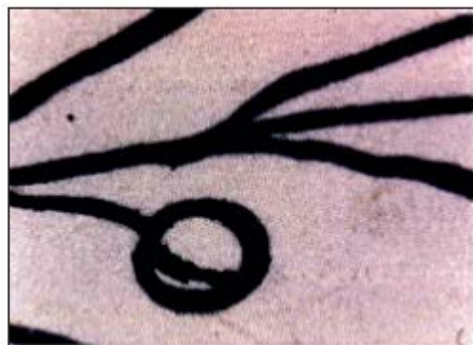


Figure 5: Some forgeries are recognizable even at smaller enlargements under a magnifier. Understandably the best course is to use a digital microscope which shows many more details. The berry with the line-through in the picture is a clear forgery.

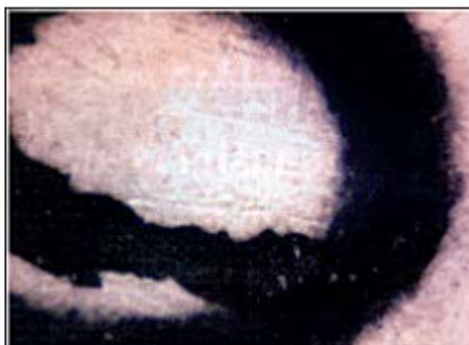


Figure 6: Under greater magnification is a wonderful way to see also the lined-through berry, that is overdrawn and has a different color from that of the original Type II. Again a forgery.



Figure 7: On the left is the genuine Type II miniature sheet with the lined-through berry. On the right is a miniature sheet which was used for the production of one of the possible forgeries.

for example described in *Ocelotisku z Plochých Desek -- Poštovní Známky a Aráčky -- 2. Díl (Recess Printing from Flat Plates -- Postage Stamps and Miniature Sheets -- Part 2)*, page 81, which is based upon the previous work of J. Kulda from *Zpravodaje Komise Československé Známky 1975, Číslo 2 (Bulletin of the Czechoslovak Stamp Committee 1975, number 2)*. The guaranteed correct Type II is found only on the plate marked H, which is the basic fact for the confirmation of the authenticity of a miniature sheet. The miniature sheet began to be verified early, because it was and still is a highly sought after object of interest of our collectors. Let us then see what steps to take to verify the authenticity of this miniature sheet. There is nothing complicated about it.

[The Specialist is pleased to reprint this article from the 5/2015 Merkur-Revue with permission of the author and editor.]

Review

SLOVENSKO 1939-1945
Známky/Celiny

This is the very latest specialized catalog on the stamps and stationery of Slovakia during World War II.

It is a terrific catalog by Bohumil Synek, 124 pages, in color, perfect bound, from Filatelia - Numizmatika Album, Bratislava 2015.

Pages 7 - 14 give all of the basic stamps that were put out during the war years with their MNH, mint, and used values IN EURO's, which of course is the currency of the Slovak Republic today.

Then, pages 17 - 124 give all of the specialized information about the above issues, PLUS all of the stationery issues, and then the postal rates during that period.

Specialization includes: varieties (imperfs, colors), unissued, tabs, plate numbers, blocks (including with plate numbers), on cover, plate errors, printing errors, unaccepted designs, watermark positions, forgeries, postal stationery, illustrations of expert marks found on the Slovak stamps, food stamps, International Reply coupons, and the postal rates.

And all of this has a Euro catalog value for each item and variety.

This catalog should be the first item in the Available Publications of this issue.

Ludvik Z. Svoboda



Letters to the Editor

1. Dobry den . . .

Glad to read that you have a co-editor and that the Specialist will continue.

I need to go back into my accumulation of "regular mail" covers (not first days, etc.) and check for the slogan cancels. That should be fun.

I have about 50 perfins pre-1939 (4 of which are on Hradčany stamps) and have been able to identify 7 different "cancels" through the section on perfins in the B&M Pofis catalog (2013 edition). Bohužel, the 4 Hradčany were not among them.

If there is someone in the club that collects a specific stamp/specific perfin, I would be happy to share. I would be keeping the Hradčany, Tyrš, and Masaryk varieties unless I have a duplicate.

How many copies was the club able to get of the 2015 Hradčany perfin catalog? I think it may be a good addition to my book collection. I will get in touch with James Buckner when I have made up my mind on a number of different publications that caught my eye this time around.

It was a good idea to group under headings. Kudos.

Ďakujem for your time and dedication to the club.

Vera Devlin

New Issues

CZECH REPUBLIC

by Keith Hart

1. On June 8, 2016 the Czech Post issued a stamp booklet, the fifth official issue of its own postage stamps, entitled 25 Years of the Police of the Czech Republic. Each booklet contains 8 different self-adhesive definitive stamps with an imprinted figure 'A' (currently a 16 Kč value). The stamp has a special atypical perforation modification used as a security feature. Each of the eight stamps bears the image of a different badge/shield of units of the Police of the Czech Republic. The back of the booklet identifies each unit (Fig. 1 shows image of the stamps inside of the booklet, with a second image showing the front and back covers). The stamps and booklet were designed by Jan Ungrád and produced by the Postal Printing House of Securities, Prague by multicolored offset.



Figure 1

2. On September 7, 2016, the Ministry of Industry and Trade issued a commemorative miniature sheet in the series Nature Protection: Zoological Gardens I. The sheet contains four stamps and two labels (Fig. 2). Graphic designers were Libuše and Jaromír Knotek, the engraver was Martin Srb. It was produced by The Postal Printing House of Securities, Prague using colored offset combined with black engraving. Four FDCs were designed and engraved by Martin Srb. They were produced by recess printing from flat steel plates. The FDCs had commemorative handstamps in each of the zoo locations. Prague Zoo has previously been shown on stamps in 1962, 1981 and 2001. This miniature sheet also introduces us to other major zoos in the Czech Republic.

16 Kč. Jihlava Zoo is located close to the city center, yet contains forested hillsides, meadows, rock and water features surrounding a small river weaving



Figure 2

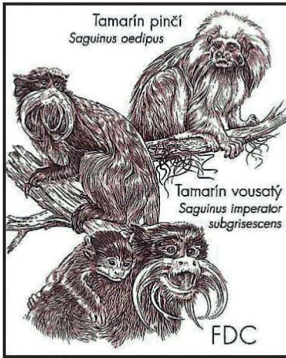


Figure 3

through the zoo. It is home to more than 200 species, with special focus on apes and felines. The stamp shows a pair of snow leopards and their offspring which the zoo has been repeatedly successful in reproducing. The zoo also has the largest collection of South American marmosets in the Czech Republic. The FDC shows two species of tamarin (Fig. 3).

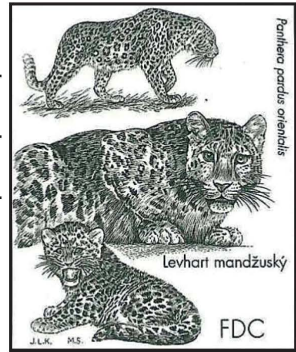


Figure 4

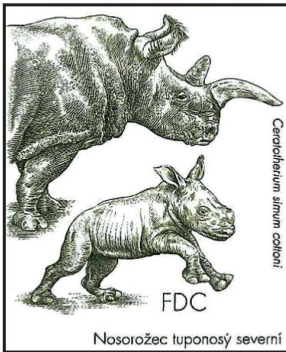


Figure 5

20 Kč. Olomouc Zoo is in a forested landscape in the foothills of the Lower Jeseník Mountains and celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. The stamp shows a pair of Barbary lions with their cubs. In the background are several South African oryxes. The zoo has the largest herd of these in the Czech Republic. The zoo has also been successful in breeding the Amur leopard, which is critically endangered

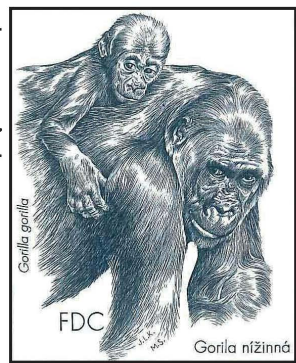


Figure 6

in the wild today. This leopard is shown on the FDC (Fig. 4).

24 Kč. Dvůr Králové is famous for being the first safari park in the Czech Republic. It is the second largest Czech zoo and celebrates its 70th anniversary this year. Its focus on African animals was the brainchild of Josef Vágner, the zoo director between 1965 and 1983. He organized several expeditions to Africa, which resulted in many animals being brought into the collection. The stamp portrays a rare black rhino, with a baby, with two hyenas in front of them. The FDC depicts the rarest and most critically endangered mammal in the world, the northern white rhino (Fig. 5). In 2000 a huge event occurred at the zoo when a baby northern white rhino was born. It was called “The Baby of the Millennium”.

27 Kč. Prague Zoo celebrates the 85th anniversary of its foundation in 2016. It is regularly ranked among the best zoological gardens in the world. Przewalski’s horses are the signature species of the zoo and the stamp shows a herd of them grazing. The zoo has the longest uninterrupted history of breeding these horses in the world and is at the forefront of efforts to reintroduce them in the wild. In 2011 it started a program of transporting horses to be released into the wild in Mongolia. The latest transfer took place in 2015. Partnered with the Czech Army, four horses were taken to the Takhin Tal reserve, part of the Gobi B Nature Reserve near

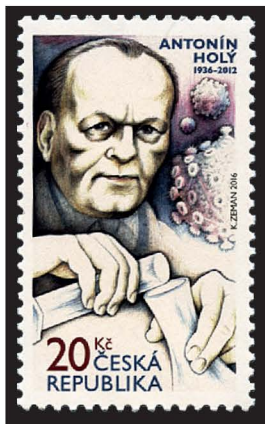


Figure 7

Bulgan, Mongolia. After a period of acclimation they joined the wild herd. The FDC depicts a lowland gorilla and baby (Fig. 6).

3. On September 7, 2016 the Ministry issued a 20 Kč commemorative postage stamp from the series Personalities. The stamp portrays Professor Antonín Holý holding a measuring cylinder and a conical flask, with an enlarged image of the human immunodeficiency virus in the background (Fig. 7). The graphic designer was Karel Zeman and the stamp was printed at the Postal Printing House of Securities, Prague by multicolored offset in printing sheets of 50 stamps. Antonín Holý (1934-2012) was a pioneering Czech scientist of the 20th century. He specialized in the field of chemistry and cooperated on the development of many important antiretroviral drugs used in the treatment

of HIV and Hepatitis B. After studying at the Faculty of Sciences, Charles University, Prague, Prof. Holý trained at the Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry (IOCB) of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Prague. He was head of the Institute from 1994 until 2002. He was also professor of organic chemistry at Palacký University, Olomouc after 2005. From 1976 he collaborated on the development of antiretroviral drugs with Erik De Clercq at the Rega Institute for Medical Research at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. Together they are the co-authors of 15 major patents. Important drugs developed by Holý's team at the IOCB include Duviragel for oral herpes and Vistide as a treatment for cytomegalovirus retinitis, herpes zoster and smallpox. Viread was used as a treatment of HIV and later for hepatitis B. Truvada is a fixed dose combination of two antiretroviral drugs used originally for treatment of HIV/AIDS and later for the prevention of HIV infection. Atripia is a fixed dose combination drug for the treatment of HIV infection. Complera and Evipler is a fixed dose combination of antiretroviral drugs again used for treatment of HIV. The IOCB has received almost CZK 2 billion annually for license fees and patents resulting from Prof. Holý and his team's work. The graphic design and engraving of the FDC is the work of Miloš Ondráček. The cover design shows the formula of a chemical compound, with the building of the IOCB in the background (Fig. 8). The commemorative handstamp cancellation features a hand holding a medi-

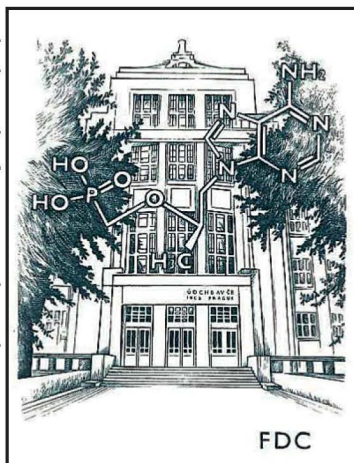


Figure 8



Figure 9

cation for use against a virus portrayed in the background and the text- PRAHA 7.9.2016 (Fig. 9).

4. On September 7, 2016 the Ministry issued a 27 Kč stamp as a joint issue with The Principality of Liechtenstein. The stamp features a painting by Gerrit Dou, “Young Woman on a Balcony” (Fig. 10). The engraving based on the painting was carried out by Václav Fajt. The stamp was produced by the Postal Printing House of Securities, Prague by a five-color recess print from flat plates, with four stamps per sheet. This work of art was donated by Prince John II of Liechtenstein to the then private Society of Patriotic Friends of the Arts, which directly preceded today’s National Gallery. Gerrit Dou (1613-1675) was a painter of the Dutch Golden Age. He studied with engraver Bartholomew Dolend, painter Peter Kouwoorn, and eventually in Rembrandt’s painting workshop where he spent three years. Although he began as a portrait painter, he became famous as a painter of landscapes with a great sense of detail. He used a magnifying lens, concave mirror and specially designed miniature brushes to create his paintings. The FDC, designed and engraved by Václav Fajt, shows a fragment of Karel Škréta’s painting “Holy Family with St. Catherine and St. Barbara” (Fig. 11). This painting was also donated to the National Gallery, Prague by

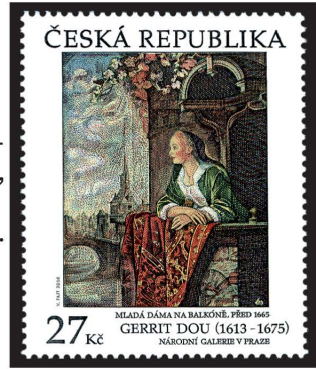


Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12

Prince John II of Liechtenstein. The commemorative handstamp cancellation shows artistically designed initials of the artist (G D) within an arched opening and the text- PRAHA 7.9.2016 (Fig. 12).

5. On September 7, 2016 the Ministry issued a stamp in the series World Heritage: The Lednice-Valtice Area, a common theme joint issue with the United Nations. The 16 Kč stamp shows a scene of the most prominent part of the Lednice-Valtice landscape taken from a photograph by L. Sváček (Fig. 13). The stamp was produced by the Postal Printing House of Securities, Prague by multicolored offset with 25 stamps on each sheet. The Lednice-Valtice area is located in southern Moravia



Figure 13

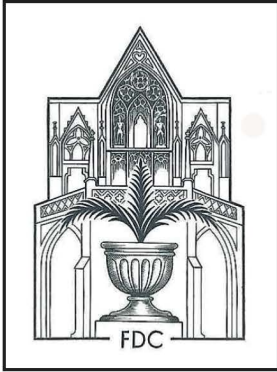


Figure 14



Figure 15

where a massive 12th century border castle used to stand. The Liechtenstein family gained ownership from the 14th century, beginning their long-time development of the entire area, culminating in the present striking landscape. It married Baroque architecture and the classical and neo-Gothic style of the castles of Lednice

and Valtice with countryside fashioned according to English Romantic principles of landscape architecture. At almost 120 square miles it is one of the largest artificial

landscapes in Europe. UNESCO designated it a World Heritage Site in 1996. The designer of the FDC is Jan Kavan, featuring engraving by Miloš Ondráček (Fig. 14). The engraving shows a combination of landscape and building architecture. The commemorative handstamp cancellation depicts a fragment of the main FDC engraving and the text LEDNICE 7.9.2016 (Fig. 15).



Figure 16

6. On September 7, 2016 the Ministry issued a stamp in the series World Heritage: Prague, a common theme joint issue with the United Nations. The 27 Kč stamp shows a scene of Prague showing Hradčany and Charles Bridge based on a photograph by L. Sváček (Fig. 16). The stamp was produced by the Postal Printing House of Securities, Prague by multicolored offset in sheets of 25. The continuous settlement of the Prague area dates from the Lower Paleolithic period. The Celts arriving in the late 2nd century BC started to build proto-urban spaces in the area.



Figure 17

The first Slavic tribes came in the second half of the 6th century. In the 9th century, the ruling Přemyslid dynasty transferred their seat here, which laid the foundation for a place playing the role of the capital for the princes and later kings of Bohemia. Prague is a significant urban conservation area whose historical core of 2140 acres includes the unique urban set of Prague Castle and its surrounding neighborhood, the Lesser Town and Charles

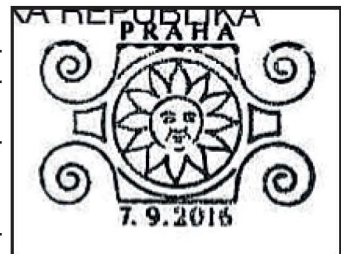


Figure 18

Bridge, the Old Town with Josefov and the preserved area of the former Jewish Town, the New Town, Vyšehrad, and other sites. Prague was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1992. The designer of the FDC is Jan Kavan, featuring engraving by Miloš Ondráček (Fig. 17). The engraving depicts major architectural highlights of Prague. The commemorative handstamp cancellation shows a fragment of the decorative façade of a Prague building and the text PRAHA 7.9.2016 (Fig. 18).

7. On September 7, 2016 the Ministry issued a definitive postage stamp with the imprinted figure 'A'. The stamp shows a tree frog (Fig. 19) of the species *Hyla arborea*. The stamp was designed by Jaromír and Libuše Knotek and produced by the Postal Printing House of Securities, Prague by multicolored offset in sheets of 100. These small tree frogs are the sole representative of the Hylidae family in the Czech Republic. They are also found in most other mainland countries of central and southern Europe. They live mostly in lowlands up to 2500ft above sea level, preferring moist deciduous forests where they climb to the upper branches of trees.



Figure 19

8. On September 21, 2016 the Ministry issued a set of two 16 Kč commemorative stamps in the Historical Vehicles series. The stamps were produced by the Postal Printing House of Securities, Prague using multicolored offset in a printing sheet of 50 pieces in a checkerboard pattern providing 25 pieces of each stamp.

Tatra Car (Fig. 20). The stamp features the high-class Tatra 87 car built by Czechoslovak manufacturer Tatra from 1937-50. The aerodynamic luxury car was the successor to the T 77A model. A 1941 Tatra 87 won a New York Times reader's poll of collector's cars in 2010, beating strong competition from 651 cars. The T 87 was officially launched in 1937 with mass production started in 1938. After World War II, mass production of the T 87, with minor modifications, was continued until 1950. In 1948 the front body was modernized, with headlights more deeply embedded in the fenders to the level of the glass cover. The new fenders formed a more compact unit with the bodywork. The standard version of this model had a sliding section of roof above the front seats. This version was built until 1950, exclusively for top politicians and Communist Party leaders. The car was much lighter (by 728lbs.) than competitors and the engine capacity was increased, resulting in a higher maximum speed and acceleration. The T 87 was also shorter and narrower, with a shorter wheelbase. The weight was reduced mainly by using lightweight materials and alloys, such as Elektron, an extremely light magnesium alloy used to cast the engine, gearbox, and other components. The engine was installed under the rear



Figure 20

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

body, which also had a stabilizing fishtail. Its maximum speed of 100mph made the Tatra 87 one of the fastest cars of its time, while the competitors in its class used engines with nearly twice the capacity. Its fuel consumption was approximately a third less than its competitors. The car was successfully exported to many countries. The stamp was designed by Václav Zapadlík. The FDC was designed and engraved by Bohumil Šneider. The FDC motif shows a view from the left rear part of the car (Fig. 21). The special cancelation shows a front view of the car with its typical headlights, together with the text KOPŘIVNICE 21.9.2016. A Carte maximum was also released on the same day.

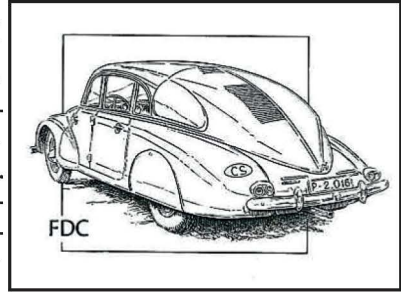


Figure 21

Aero Ab-11 Biplane. The stamp shows a view of the Aero Ab-11 biplane shown from behind the rear tail assembly (Fig. 22). It was a single-engine biplane used for multiple purposes. The first prototypes built in 1924 immediately drew the interest of the Czechoslovak defense ministry. In 1925 and 1926 airplanes of this type won prizes in Presidential speed contests and were used for several international trips to represent the Czechoslovak Air Force abroad. The Aero Ab-11 was built in several variants- bomber, reconnaissance, night training, and hydroplane versions. After its withdrawal from front-line use, the remaining Ab-11s were rebuilt as training Aš-11s. A Hispano-Suiza 8Fb-powered 300hp



Figure 22

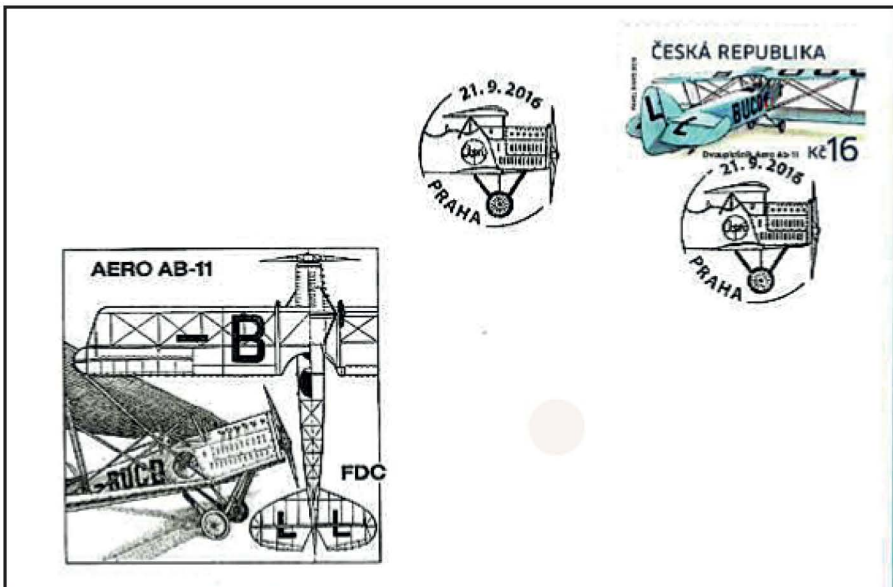


Figure 23

version, the Ab-11HS-s was built for the Finnish Air Force, the only foreign operator of the aircraft. This type was used to develop the Aero A-29 equipped with floats and used as a target tug for training anti-aircraft gunners in the Bay of Kotor. During the nun moth (also known as the black arches moth) infestation in the summer of 1926, the military sent two Aero A-29s with crew and ground personnel to help fight the invasion by chemical spraying. The aircraft treated 370 hectares of forest in about 14 days. This was one of the earliest instances of aerial application of chemicals in Europe. The stamp was designed by Pavel Sivko. The FDC was designed and engraved by Bohumil Šneider (Fig. 23). The drawn part of the cover shows a view of the aircraft from the right wing and the special cancelation has a drawing of the front part of the bi-plane and the text PRAHA 21.9.2016. A Carte maximum was also released the same day.

Postal Stationery

9. On September 7, 2016 the Ministry issued a postal card with additional printing commemorating The International Trade Fair- Sbératel-Sammler-Collector Prague 2016. This trade fair is for collectors of all kinds- stamps, coins, postcards, banknotes, and minerals for example. It features 230 exhibitors and was held this year from September 8-10 at the Letňany Exhibition Grounds, Prague. The postcard has an imprinted postage stamp (historic postal horn) with the letter 'A' (Fig. 24). The additional print shows the motif of Jan Weber's movie poster for Rambo I with the text- Sylvester Stallone, 70 years, Gallery of Classics. 4400 postcards were printed by the Postal Printing House of Securities, Prague for purchase at the cost of 21 Kč, including the daily cancelation 22 Kč.

10. On September 7, 2016 the Ministry issued a commemorative postal card celebrating The International Trade Fair- Sbératel-Sammler-Collector Prague 2016 and in particular the program Praga Piccola. This is a separate part of Collector Prague and is designed to inspire new members of the public to become collectors. This year shows the latest trends in the collection of vinyl records and stereo equipment such as jukeboxes. The imprinted literal postage stamp shows the logo of the International Trade Fair with the letter 'A'. The additional print was designed by Petr Jirásek and the motif shows a traditional jukebox for the imaginary dedication of a song, designed as a bridge between collectors of stamps and collectors of vinyl records (Fig. 25). 5000 postcards were printed by the Post Printing House, Prague for purchase at a cost of 21 Kč, or 22 Kč if including the daily cancelation.

SLOVAKIA
by Keith Hart

11. On August 3, 2016, the Ministry of Transport, Posts, and Telecommunications issued a 1.00€ commemorative sheet to celebrate the cyclist Peter Sagan being named 'The Most Combative Cyclist of Tour de France 2016'. The sheet published is the same as the commemorative sheet issued on April 21, 2016 (see Spring 2016 Specialist pages 35-36).



Figure 26

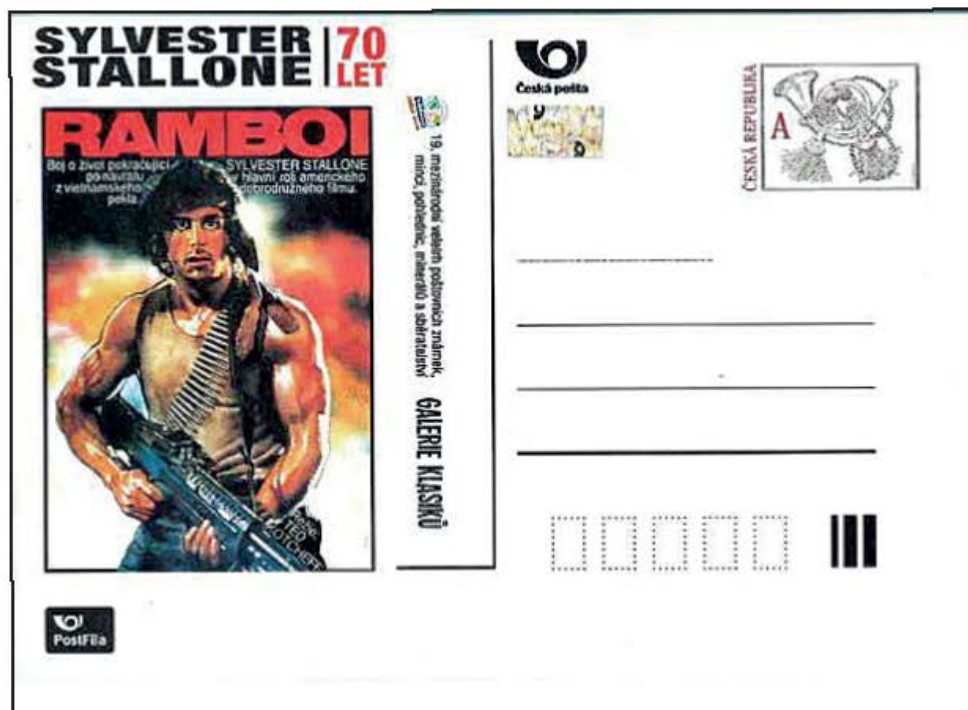


Figure 24



Figure 26

The only difference is that the 1.00€ stamp has a special cancelation (Fig. 26). Circulation for this sheet is 2500. During the recent race Sagan won the second stage, which also gave him the overall lead in the race, in addition to leading the points classification. He wore the leader's yellow jersey for the next three stages. Sagan also won the 11th and 16th stages, strengthening his lead in the points classification (green jersey), finally winning that classification, which is for riders finishing among the leaders in each stage, as well as in intermediate sprints during a stage. Peter Sagan has now won this classification in five successive Tour de France races, which are the only five Tours he has competed in.



Figure 27

12. On September 19, 2016 the Ministry issued a stamp from the series Beauties of our Homeland, The Geyser of Herlany. The 0.80€ stamp shows an eruption of the geyser (Fig. 27). The designer and engraver was Martin Činovský. The 27.2 x 44.4mm stamp was printed at the Postal Printing House of Securities,

Prague by recess printing from a flat plate, com-

combined with offset, in sheets of 10 stamps. The village of Herlany is situated in eastern Slovakia, 15 miles from Košice. It is the site of the abandoned Herlany-Rankovce spa. In 1872, hoping to increase the yield of the mineral springs, a new well was drilled which resulted in a geyser, which uniquely is cold-water, having a temperature ranging from 58-62° F. Drilling was stopped in 1875 at a depth of 1325ft. The current eruptions last about 26 minutes, with intervals ranging between 32 and 36 hours. The height of the outflow is between 25 and 50ft., with the flow rate approximately 1000ft³/second. This man-made geyser is unique in the European natural world, being declared a Slovak National Monument in 1987 and a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2002. The FDC shows the geyser erupting, with blue recess

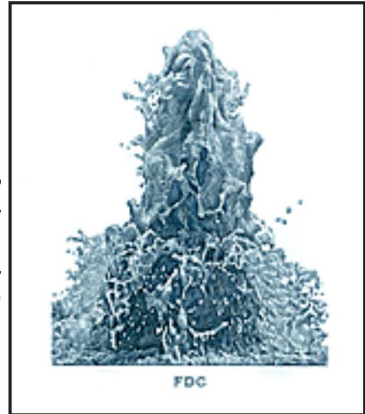


Figure 28

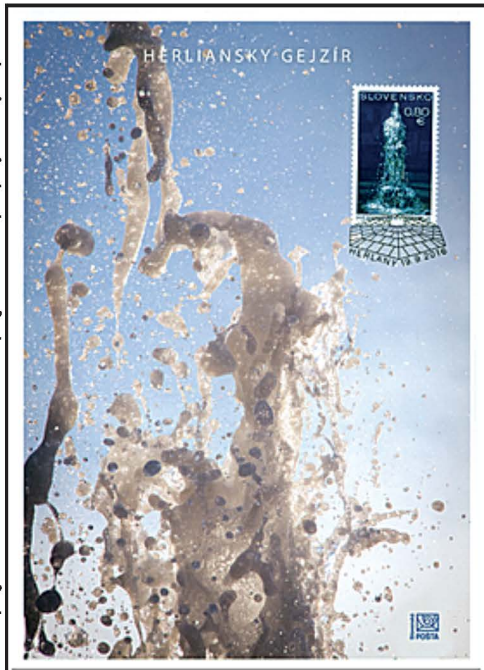


Figure 29

printing from a flat plate (Fig. 28) and a collection sheet designed by Robert Klik, shows a close-up photograph of the geyser's eruption (Fig. 29).



Figure 30

13. On October 7, 2016 the Ministry issued a commemorative miniature sheet from the series Nature Protection: National Nature Reserve Šúr, near Svätý Jur. The sheet contains three 0.65€ stamps (Fig. 30). Stamp size is 27.2 x 44.4mm and they were designed and engraved by Rudolf Cigánik. Printing was by The Postal Printing House of Securities, Prague by recess printing from flat plates, combined with offset. The notes below are based on text by Igor Kokavec, originally in Slovak.



Figure 31

Alnus Glutinosa (Fig. 31). The black alder (also known as the common or European alder) is a widely found species, occurring in low-lying lands near rivers, swamp forest, marshlands, and also along the shore. Away from water, it occurs at locations with high rainfall and also does well in acidic soils. Thus, it depends on water because its leaves do not have a mechanism to control transpiration. It ranges from the plains, up to mountainous regions and can grow to a height of 65-100ft. A characteristic is its smooth bark which is, however, cracked at the base of the trunk. Catkins appear before the leaves sprout from March to April. The male catkins grow in pendulous groups of 2-3 and are purple in color.

The fertile female catkins are woody, brown and reminiscent of small cones. The black alder dominates the forest of Šúr, near Svätý Jur, north east of Bratislava, where it creates a genuine alder forest. Regular surface floods lasting for more than six months are typical of these forests giving optimal conditions for the growth of alder. Due to the high level of moisture and presence of mud, the root system is closely connected to the soil attributes, thus being relatively shallow. In addition, the black alder can grow in poor soils due to the symbiosis of roots with nitrogen fixing bacterias. The lower part of the alder trunk is sometimes studded with pores, which accelerate the total gas exchange. This is especially important with soils that contain stagnant water low in oxygen. The alder in Šúr rejuvenates quickly and fast growing young trees can absorb tree stumps that decompose quickly and disintegrate. In general however, the restoration of alder forest is a problem since the seedlings are very susceptible to drought.

Frangula Alnus (Fig. 32). The glossy blackthorn is a typical shrub that occurs in the marshlands of the alder forest in the Šúr National Nature Reserve. The shrub tends to coexist with gray willow, guilder rose, European white elm, and bird cherry. It grows most luxuriantly in damp and very bright places. The opposite is true as regards places with large alders and a dense connection of tree crowns. The glossy blackthorn can grow to a height of 15ft., occasionally up to 28ft. The bark is smooth, black and brown, with white dots. The appearance of the bark is caused by numerous white, oval breathing pores. Ramnatoxine, a red pigment, is obtained from the bark. In addition, the bark contains a substance used for medical purposes and after being processed, it has laxative and anti-oxidative effects. The leaves are staggered on easily breakable branches. They are broad at the top and the tip is short and pointed. Flowers are small, green with pink spots, and grow as a compound flower. Its fruit is violet and black when ripe, green or red when unripe. Consumption of the fruit by birds such as jays, starlings, thrushes, and robins leads to a relatively effective distribution in the surrounding area. Distribution by flowing water is also possible, as the fruit can float on the surface for 7-19 days. This is significant, particularly in areas where autumn and winter floods occur. While the glossy buckthorn originates in Europe, Asia and Africa, in America it is one of the introduced and invasive species that threaten the native marshlands and swamps.

Dryopteris Carthusiana (Fig. 33). The narrow buckler fern is a quite abundant species growing predominantly in humid, damper marsh forest in



Figure 32



Figure 33

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

the plains and up into mountainous regions. It also thrives in peat, sand or loamy soils, and in partially shady places. It can also be found growing on living or dead trees, in the shrub layer, the banks of streams, rocky slopes, or old walls. The fern is susceptible to decreased humidity and probably for that reason, it prefers habitats with a high level of groundwater, which is important for optimal growth and reproduction. It is primarily found in forests with a dominance of black alder, gray alder, European white elm, and beech. Being part of the herb layer in the forest of Šúr, it also grows on alder prop roots, above the level of the flooded soil. It grows out of a rhizome from which long stalks with 2 or 3 pinnate compound leaves that have a light green blade and a lanceolate shape. They are 6-30 inches long. They are saw-tooth edged with long tips. The spores on the lower side of leaves are small in diameter.



Figure 34



Figure 35



Figure 36

An FDC, designed by Adrian Ferda was issued for each of the three stamps and shows further details of each plant (Figs. 34-36) which is mirrored in the commemorative handstamp on each cover, together with the text SVĚTÝ JUR 7.10.2016. A carte maximum for each of the three stamps, designed by Jaromír Kučera, was also issued on the same day.

Postal Stationery

14. On September 8, 2016 the Ministry issued a pre-paid postal card with imprinted T2 stamp showing an historic post horn. The postcard commemorates the collector's show Sběratel 2016, held in Prague. The additional print, designed by Adrian Ferda, shows Charles Bridge and other historic buildings, with the text SBĚRATEL 2016 and 8.-10.9.2016 PRAHA (Fig. 37). 1800 postcards were issued.

15. On September 9, 2016 the Ministry issued a pre-paid postal card with imprinted T2 stamp showing an historic postal office. The postcard celebrates the Piešťany Phenomenon of Cycling. The town has been promoting public cycling for more than 115 years. The area has many cycling paths/tracks,



Figure 37

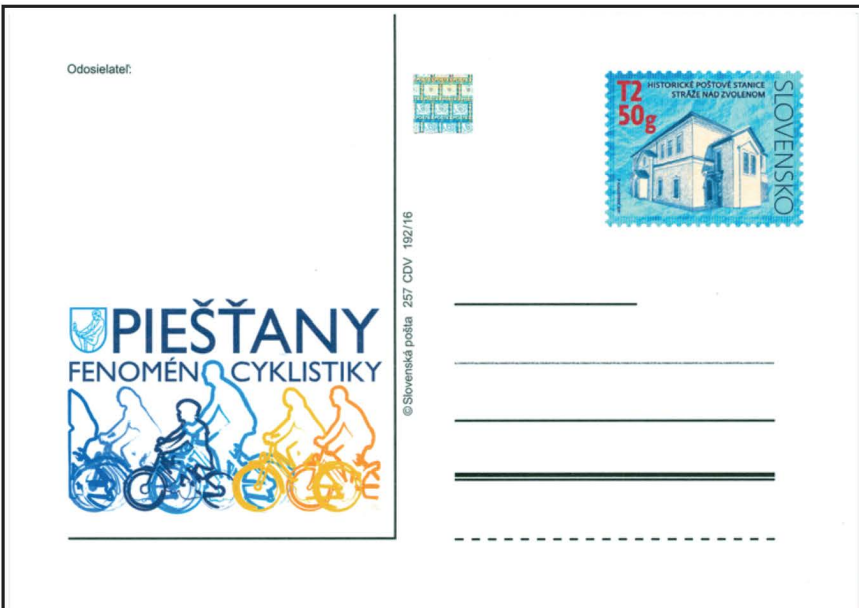


Figure 38

enabling cyclists of any standard the possibility of differing trips. The additional print, designed by Agentura RePublic, Piešťany, shows a group of cyclists with the text **PIEŠŤANY FENOMÉN CYKLISTIKY** (Fig. 38). 1800 postcards were issued.



Figure 39

16. On October 8, 2016 the Ministry issued a pre-paid postal card with imprinted T2 stamp showing an historic post horn. The postcard celebrates the award for the Most Beautiful Postage stamp of 2015, which has been awarded to the stamp showing Alfons Mucha’s painting from the Hotel Thermia Palace in Piešťany (Fig. 39). The additional print, designed by Adrian Ferda, shows the stamp, which was reviewed in the Winter 2016 issue of the Specialist, page 36. 3000 postcards were issued.

COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH THE CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Check out our sister organization, the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain, at their website: www.cpsgb.org.uk, and through their new Membership Secretary, Hans van Dooremalen at cpsgb1@gmail.com.

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