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1946 special first day cover only issued to extremely select members
of the Czechoslovak Government and other influential people.

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A 'POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919' FORGERY

by Robert Lauer

Back in August 2021, I went down to Toronto to help fellow SCP member Robert Pinet put together a bunch of lots for auction at Sparks Auctions, a local auction house here in Ottawa, Canada. While I was down there, Robert handed me a 102-card containing three Austrian stamps with the 'POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919' overprint on them. "Here, you have 'em, I don't collect these." These three stamps were still sitting on my stamp table when the September 2021 issue of *Czechout*, the quarterly journal of our sister society the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain (CPSGB), arrived in the mail. One of the articles in this issue was a book review by Peter William of *Hungary, 1919: Stamps and Forgeries* by Clark Souers. Peter's book review not only had me picking up Clark's book to take a look at his section on the 'POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919' overprints, but also had me talking a closer look at the three stamps that Mr. Pinet had casually tossed in my direction. Much to my delight, one of these stamps, a 15 heller Karl, turns out to be forgery. I have had a colleague at my local stamp club come to me with a really high catalogue value stamp from this issue seeking an opinion as to its genuineness (not surprisingly, it was a forgery, not a bad one, but still a fake), but this is the first time I have come across a forged copy of one of the run-of-the-mill denominations of the overprinted Austrian stamps of this series. Based on the material that he has examined, Clark concludes that forgeries of these stamps are relatively scarce; I would agree with him.



Figure 1: the 15 heller Karl overprinted 'POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919'.

The 15 heller Karl (Pofis #38 and Scott #B7) was one of the Austrian definitives from the 1916-1918 period that was overprinted with what is usually referred to as "Overprint A". Overprint A has 2 Types which are distinguished by the shape and placement of the accent over the 'S' in 'POŠTA'. In Type 1, the accent over the 'S' in 'POŠTA' is heart shaped and touches or almost touches the top of the 'S'. In Type 2, the accent has a blockier, more squared-off appearance, like a crown, and is set above the 'S'. Both Type 1 and Type 2 have the bottom curve of the last '9' in '1919' filed off at a diagonal. Type 1 and Type 2 are illustrated by the first two stamps in the Figure 1 above, respectively. Each of the denominations overprinted with Overprint A (the 3h, 5h, 6h, 10h, 12h, 40h, 50h, 60h, 80h, 90h, 1K, 2K, 3K, 4K, 10K Arms and the 15h, 20h, 25h, 30h Karl) have both Type 1 and Type 2 overprints in varying numbers (46-56 Type 1 and 40-52 Type 2) in a 100-stamp sheet, depending on the plate used to print the overprints.

The 3h, 5h, 15h, 25h and 50h also exist with sub-types of Type 1 and Type 2. These two sub-types (1a and 2a) are exactly the same as Type 1 and Type 2, except that the bottom loop of the last '9' in '1919' has not been filed-off on a diagonal. The third stamp in Figure 1 is a Type 2a. There were generally one Type 1a and three Type 2a clichés in each plate used to print these denominations; the one exception being one of the plates that was used to overprint the 15h, where there were four Type 2a clichés¹.

The last stamp on the right in Figure 1 is the aforementioned forgery. Given the heart shaped accent over the 'S' in 'POŠTA', the forger was obviously aiming to duplicate a Type 1a stamp, which is the scarcest overprint. The first thing that leaps up at one when this stamp is put next to a genuine example is that the angle of the overprint is wrong. This would definitely have been picked up using Clark's template method for checking the overprint. What initially got me looking more closely at this stamp in isolation was the shape and the placement accent

over the 'S' in 'POŠTA'. The top of the accent is heart shaped, but the bottom is flat rather than pointed and there is a space between the accent and the 'S', which should not exist on a Type 1a overprint. The accent over the 'A' in 'ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ' is also squared-off, rather than triangular in shape.



Figure 2: detail from genuine Type 2a (left) and forgery (right).

One thing, which Roy Dehn mentions in his monograph on this issue, but Clark doesn't in his book, that I always check for is the way in which the overprint was printed. The 'POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919' overprints were printed by typography, or letterpress, as it is also known. As a result, all of the letters/numerals of the overprint have a 'squeeze' of ink to the outside making for a thin outline of darker ink around each letter or numeral. This is from the plate being pressed into the paper. This is illustrated in the detail from the genuine Type 2a stamp on the left-hand side of Figure 2 vs the same detail from the forged stamp on the right-hand. On almost all mint stamps, and even many used, this also means that the letters/numerals appear in relief through the back of the stamp.

Notes:

1. At the bottom page 39 in the POFIS 2012 – Československo, 1918-1939 catalog, there are illustrations setting out the distributions of the various Types on Plates 1a, 1b and 2, the three plates that contained Types 1a and 2a, and a table indicating which plates were used to overprint which denominations. Plates 1a and 1b were used to print the 15h. There is also a note with respect to the 15h overprints, which roughly translated reads

"A small part of the 15h value was overprinted using Plate 4, which has a different distribution of types (for its scheme, see Monographs of Czechoslovak Stamps, Part II). Larger blocks from Plate 4 are rare."

In the fall 2021 CPSGB auction, I purchased the 5x5 block of the 15h "Pošta Československá 1919" overprints illustrated at left. The block is composed entirely of Types 1 and 2 and the first thing I did on receiving this purchase was to try to figure out which plate had been used to overprint it. There was no 5x5 block on either Plate 1a or 1b that matched the distribution of types contained in this block.

Not having Volume II of the Monografie on my bookshelf, I turned to Roy Dehn's monograph on this subject, which does have the schematic for Plate 4. Sure enough, this block fits the distribution of types for the lower left quarter of Plate 4 and has the Plate Flaws that Dehn identifies for positions 52, 53 and 63.

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President's Corner

Your Society convened in Portland, OR at PIPEX from May 3 through May 5, 2024. Unfortunately, just as I arrived in Portland, came the news of the passing of Ludvik "Lou" Svoboda. Lou, quite simply, was a driving force in Czechoslovak philately, on both sides of the Atlantic. Since joining the Society, Lou's service was unparalleled. To begin, Lou was on the Editorial Board from 1979 to 1988; he was Treasurer of the Society from 1983 to 1991, and President TWICE, first from 1991-1995 and more recently from 2018-2021. On top of this, Lou was Editor of *The Czechoslovak Specialist* from 1996 to 2018 and, at times, served as Sales Circuit Manager and Expertizing Chairman. He was the Society Librarian at the time of his passing. It appears that Lou served on the Board of Directors since 1980 as well – that's more than 45 years of service to the Society members, more than half the time we have been in existence.

But more than just holding offices in the Society, Lou was the "go-to" person for just about any question one might have about any area of Czechoslovak collecting. If he didn't know the answer, which was rare, he knew who did. It was however, not just his knowledge; it was the way he enthusiastically communicated that knowledge. One could see his love of anything Czech and Slovak (also Moravian as well, the land of his parents) when he talked about philately to anyone. If one was looking for a particular item for their collection, Lou probably had one (or possibly 5!). When I first got involved in the SCP, he warmly welcomed me and offered his help in any way. He helped me develop the Society's bookstore into a real asset for us. Later, Lou encouraged me to exhibit and when I began to do so, he was always on the lookout for that item that might enhance my exhibit. But more than any of this, it was his kindness and sense of humor that made him who he was. He liked to say that he was "made in Czechoslovakia but baked in the US". His parents (his mother unaware she was pregnant) came to Maryland in 1939 to open a Baťa Shoe factory, where he was born. He spoke Czech as his only language until he went off to elementary school. I, along with many others, will miss him!

As mentioned, the SCP met at PIPEX for the first time ever. I want to thank the PIPEX Organizing Committee for organizing a well-run show, and for making resources available to us as we met. Your Board met on Thursday afternoon, and the discussion centered mainly around our colleague Lou. Further discussions centered around our next meeting in St. Louis Stamp Expo in March 2025, and then at Boston 2026 World Expo (the once in a decade in the US FIP show). We began to discuss where to meet after that, probably on the West Coast again. The Society had two exhibits entered in competition at PIPEX. My exhibit (at the risk of tooting my own horn), *Czechoslovakia's Newspaper Stamps 1918-1939*, won a Gold and the Alfons Mucha award, while Alan Hanzl's *The Partitioning of Czechoslovakia 1938-1939* garnered a Large Vermeil. I would certainly like to see more than two Society exhibits next year at St. Louis. If you have any thoughts of exhibiting, and getting started, I am (along with several other members) more than willing to encourage and give advice. A great thing about meeting at this year's new location was meeting many members from the area who also attended the show. It was great putting faces to what previously had been names before meeting them in person. I enjoy meeting our members and learning about what they collect.

One final piece of business. The Board recently decided to change the printer/publisher of *The Czechoslovak Specialist*. This process has been a lot longer than anticipated, and I apologize for the lack of timely journals. This situation will be rectified going forward. I want to take the opportunity to thank our long-time printer, Nancy Godfrey, for her many years of producing a great journal. It was her skill, knowledge and creativity along with her willingness to work with our Editors which helped to make *The Specialist* the asset it is. Thank you Nancy!

James A. Buckner, President

What Is A Czechoslovak First Day Cover? – And How They Came To Be Issued

by Keith Hart

So what exactly is an official Czechoslovak FDC? You would think that this would be an easy question to answer. This is definitely not the case. Hopefully this article will explain why.

It was of course entirely possible for collectors to walk into a post office on December 18, 1918, buy the two stamps that the new Czechoslovak Republic issued that day, adhere them to an envelope they had brought with them, address it to a friend, another collector, or even to themselves. Then put it carefully into a mailbox to be processed by the postal service. This indeed was a first day cover. The same could be said for all succeeding stamp issues up to March 15, 1939 (before the tragic disruption of Czechoslovak philatelic activities caused by Hitler and his cronies), then able to continue to do the same on the resumption of the Republic on June 25, 1945. But all these covers would not be considered First Day Covers (note the capitals!) by the Czechoslovak Post Office, Pofis and *Monografie 9*.

Following the end of World War II the postal authorities (and not just in Czechoslovakia) had a great idea for obtaining additional money from collectors, other than merely selling them stamps. They would provide an official first day cover and made it simple for you to buy, either through a subscription service, or by turning up and purchasing them at a central post office in your city or town. You could then have a pristine copy for your collection or mail it and have a postally used copy to add to your compendium of postal history.

Following the Treaty of Yalta it had been inevitable that Czechoslovakia would fall under the influence of the Soviet Union after the end of World War II. There was still some simmering resentment within the country with

their despicable treatment from Britain and France following the Munich Agreement in 1938, which directly led to Germany's temporary dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. Combined with the fact that the Red Army had liberated the majority of Czechoslovakia, it was always going to be hard to slow the massive enlargement of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (KSČ), which led to them becoming the largest party in the alliance that ruled Czechoslovakia after the March 1946 elections. The Soviets then pressured the KSČ to begin the bribery and blackmail of elected officials, which rapidly strengthened their power within the country. This did not have any effect on the subject matter of stamp issues in 1946 but was certainly the case soon after the beginning of 1947 onwards.

The process of issuing FDCs was developed gradually during 1946 in Czechoslovakia. On May 5th, 1946 two semi-postal stamps were issued to commemorate the **1st Anniversary of the May Uprising** [Pofis 433-434,



Fig. 1. Mailed to a stamp dealer, possibly by himself. Note that the registration sticker has "Prag 1" blacked out. A year since liberation the old dual-language stickers of the Protectorate are still being used.

Scott B156-B157]. These stamps depict St. George slaying the Dragon, a fairly obvious statement on Allied forces (and Czechoslovak patriots) defeating Nazi Germany. The cachet, in red, has the emblem of the Czech lion together with the Slovak double-barred cross, as well as blue text above and below that reads "První Den Vydání – First Day Cover" (Fig. 1). The text also mentions that it is to commemorate the "Anniversary of the Prague Revolution and Fighting on the Barricades". The cover does not say that it is officially from Československá Pošta and other covers with the same cancellation were issued at the same time from the Praha 1 post office (Fig. 2). It should be noted that the envelope size used for these two covers was not the same, although the quality/weight/color of the paper used does seem to be identical. It is likely that at this time the postal service was still developing its program for their own official first day covers and were releasing different versions of cachets/envelopes to gain concep-



Fig. 2. Lettering indicates '1st anniversary of liberation of the Czechoslovak Republic'.



Fig. 3. This cover received cancellations on the back from New York (June 18) and Cleveland's Shaker Sq. post office (June 19).

delayed for some last-minute technical reason. The 24 Kčs stamp was only postally valid for one day, although there are examples of it being used on mail after this date.

On July 5, 1946 a 1.20 Kčs stamp was issued for the writer/journalist **Karel Havlíček Borovský** [Pofis 436, Scott 315] and two first day covers were issued that day, differing only by the cancellation. One was issued at his birth-place, Borová u Příbravě. The other at his family home in Havlíčkův Brod, which had only recently been renamed



Fig. 4a. The cachet is identical to that printed as a coupon for this stamp issue.

tual experience for their program before it officially commenced at the beginning of 1947. This and the following issue are not mentioned in *Monografie 9¹* which is the 'bible' for the study of Czechoslovak FDCs.

The next issue came on June 17th and celebrated **The First Clipper Air Mail Flight from Prague to New York**. The cover features the dark-blue 24 Kčs stamp of the Prague-New York Flight issue [Pofis L16, Scott C19] (a later version was printed in violet-red) and a 16 Kčs stamp from the closely related Air Motifs issue [Pofis L21, Scott C23] on a cover that has a blue printed cachet showing the pilot František Novák (Fig. 3) who also appears on four different values of this stamp. The cover text does include both "First Flight" and "First Day of Issue". The 16 Kčs stamp was sufficient for mail within Czechoslovakia, the 24 Kčs stamp was required for international air mail to the USA. The special cancellation shows us that it originated from the 'Praha 7 Letecká Pošta' airport post office and the sheer amount of covers that are always available for sale indicates that this must have been an extremely busy office on that specific day. The particular cover shown was in fact registered and mailed onwards from the Prague 33 post office the same day. There are several other covers celebrating this first flight, both with and without cachets (Figs. 4a & 4b). These are on lighter-weight bluish air mail envelopes. The covers without cachets are nearly all mailed to offices of Pan American World Airways on stop-over points along the route of this first flight. You can also easily find examples with just the 16 Kčs or 24 Kčs stamps on their own. Eight other stamp values from this issue did not appear on any 'officially' used FDCs. One unanswered question is why the issue date was June 13, 1946, while the first flight actually took place four days later. Perhaps the flight was



Fig. 4b. This stamp was not sufficient for airmail to Newfoundland, Canada. Nevertheless, it has a receiving cancel from Gander dated June, 18, 1946

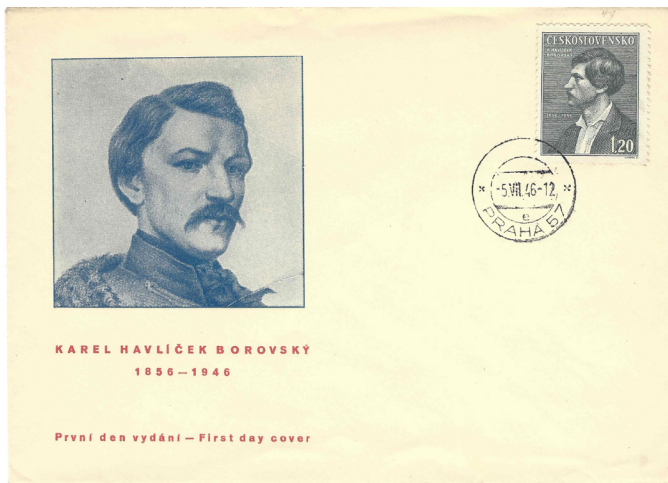


Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.

from the Germanized Neměcký Brod. Both of these covers seem to be extremely rare. I have never seen either on sale. However, I do own a version which uses the first day envelope, with cachet, which was mailed at the Praha 57 post office (Fig. 5). Two days after the official first day cancellations another cover with a black-printed private cachet mimicking the black-green stamp was mailed using the Havlíčkův Brod cancellation but was the result of an Autopošta mobile post office vehicle being in the village on that day (Fig. 6).

For the **Stamp Exhibition BRNO 1946** the promotional department of the organizing committee prepared envelopes with three different cachets on the left side, all with the same text BRNO 1946 – CELOSTÁTNÍ VÝSTAVA POŠTOVNÍCH ZNÁMEK, PRVNÍ DEN VYDÁNÍ – FIRST DAY COVER. Postage stamps used were from the Towns series issued on August 3, 1946 [Pofis 438-439, Scott 316-317]. One cachet depicts reddish-brown printed lettering and a cachet of a medal awarded at this stamp show, shown in this case on a cover with the miniature sheet issued for the exhibition and cancelled the third day of the exhibition (Fig. 7). One cachet shows the entrance to the Old Town Hall with a blue printed image and lettering (Fig. 8a) and another with a blue image and red lettering (Fig. 8b). Another shows the Minorite Church with a red image and blue lettering (Fig. 9a). Another example has a green image and lettering (Fig. 9b). Note that the lettering in the green example is smaller. I am sure there are other variations out there somewhere. This must have been an exciting time for Czechoslovak collectors, the war had made it

a long time since the previous important stamp show. It must have felt similar to us in 2021 when shows started up again after the pandemic. Of course during the show, collectors also being philatelists, managed to get every available combination of stamps/sheets on mailed covers, often with multiples of stamps, registration stickers, and even with personal delivery stamps (Fig. 10). The official cancellation was not just used on the first day of the stamp show, which was also the first day of issuance for the stamps. The other two days of the show also used the same cancellation but with the 4.VIII.1946 and 5.VIII.1946 dates. Naturally these later day-cancellations can in no way be considered first day covers. It should also be noted that the cancellations on these covers can be found with either 'a' or 'b' noted within the cancellation, a minor variation but still thought of as being collectable by philatelists.

It should be briefly noted here that a three stamp semi-postal issue from October 15, commemorating the **Return of Czechs and Slovaks to Their Homeland** [Pofis 440-442, Scott B160-B162], following their displacement by World War II, did not have any known FDCs issued. This was the only 1946 issue without these covers.

This brings us to the final new issue of 1946. On October 28 a four-stamp issue for **Dr. Edvard Beneš** [Pofis 443-446, Scott 318-321], who was the President of Czechoslovakia but curiously not noted as such in the official literature naming this issue. The importance that the postal service saw in this particular issue can be seen by the fact that the stamps and the black cachet were designed by Max Švabinský and engraved by Jindra Schmidt, almost certainly their first choice for a stamp designer/engraver duo at that time. It seems as if by this time the Postal Service had decided how their First Day Covers were going to look – a professionally designed cachet on the left side - the stamp/stamps are neatly positioned in the top right corner - and a special cancellation accurately placed so as not to deface the stamps (Fig. 11). However the first day cover for this issue was never made public. It was issued without any note in the Postal Service Bulletin and was only made available to Government Ministers, parliamentary officials, people involved with the operation of the postal service, and I am sure, a few others who were thought influential enough to receive one. The cover used a heavier manila-like envelope, much longer than normal (220mm or 8 5/8", compared with the 160mm or 6 1/4" length used for the previous Brno stamp show covers). The red cancellation notes that the following two years would be known as an official period known as the



Fig. 7. This miniature sheet is the Type I variety.



Fig. 8a.



Fig. 9a.



Fig. 9b.

Fig. 10. Note that the registration sticker is a special one just for this Brno stamp show.

Two-Year Economic Plan, to repair and reconstruct the infrastructure that was severely damaged during the war. To show that this was an extremely limited issue it was noted as being Ministerstvo Pošt (Ministerial Post) below the cachet, and a number was stamped on the back of the envelope, in this case #393 (Fig. 12).

So are all the above-mentioned really First Day Covers? In the eyes of The Postal Service, absolutely not. These are definitely 'first day covers' but the Postal Service was now ready for their own first official First Day Covers, which were issued on the very first day of 1947. On that day, to usher in the **Two-Year Economic Plan** [Pofis 447-449, Scott 322-324], three stamps showing the Czechoslovak flag and industrial motifs were issued. The envelopes



Fig. 11.

used returned to the smaller size used for most of the 1946 issues. Two different covers were available, one with a single 2.40 Kčs stamp (Fig. 13) and the other with all three values 1.20, 2.40 and 4 Kčs (Fig. 14). The elegant cachet, printed in Venetian red, depicts a postal horn, linden leaves, and lettering/images relating to the two-year plan and "Two Steps Towards Prosperity". The cover with the single stamp is commonly found for sale or at auction and can be obtained relatively cheaply. A variation, with the cancellation underneath in-

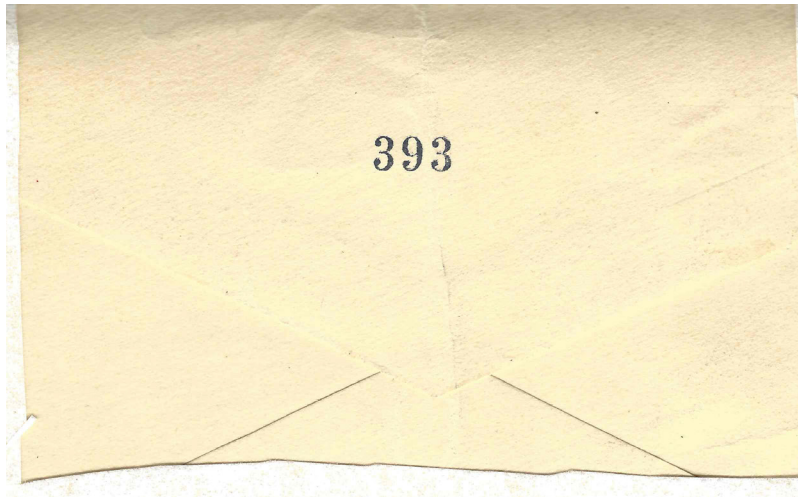


Fig. 12.

other two values having the additional numerals would have made it long enough to cover the edge of the flag. Why not have designed a slightly smaller flag to allow the design to be the same throughout? Besides these two official covers there is another similar cover that must have been authorized as it uses the same cancellation and an extremely similar cachet. This cover is not cited in the catalog within *Monografie 9*, but it is mentioned in the introduction (pages 6, 8 and 31). It uses bluish lighter airmail paper and there are usually two copies of each stamp (Fig. 16). Because it was designed exclusively for air mail use it has "By Air Mail" printed on it in four different languages. Unlike the main covers it also has První Den Vydání (First Day Cover) printed on it. The vast majority of these covers that I have seen also have printed names and addresses. These must have been subscribers and dealers who were sent these covers in the hope that their interest would be piqued and would provide the additional sales revenue desired by the postal authorities.

One interesting question discussed in *Monografie 9* is the length of postal validity allowed for these and future covers. There is no mention of this in the official Postal Bulletin during this early period and it was only in 1951 that it is mentioned as being 15 days. It has been assumed that this would have also been the case for covers issued between 1947-1951 but there is no proof that this was the case.

These two covers in 1947 were the first of many issued by the Czechoslovak Postal Service. From 1947 until the end of 1992 FDCs were issued for the majority of the stamps issued. Definitive issues usually did not have FDCs. Ironically, while the pre-official covers of 1946 were marked První Den Vydání or First Day Cover, after that it was rarely noted on the cachet. The cancellation sometimes was marked as such but that gradually became less used. There are also a few specially overprinted examples that were issued during this time period.

stead of to the left of the stamp (Fig. 15) is thought quite rare. Philatelists/dealers who were already subscribers for new issues were advised with this delivery that in future they would also receive a "tastefully modified first day cover" unless they informed the Ministry of Posts that that did not require that particular service. The cover with all three stamps was not forwarded to subscribers and is rarely seen at auction. *Monografie 9* lists it as being worth more than 100 times as expensive than a cover with the single stamp. There were also special covers issued for ministers and other special individuals, similar to the previous Beneš stamps. Again these are extremely rare. One curious thing about this series is that it is only the 4 Kčs value that has the "Kčs" on the stamp. You can see why, the



Fig. 13.



Fig. 14.

SO WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL CZECHOSLOVAK FIRST DAY COVER? It can be described as complying with the following standards:-

- 1) A standard envelope, provided by the postal service, was used for the cover. Over time there were often changes in envelope size, paper quality and texture.
- 2) The stamps were arranged neatly in a specific order in the top right corner of the envelope.
- 3) The cancellation was a unique design that was only used on the first day. This was usually placed at the left edge for a single stamp, or beneath with multiple stamps. Care was given that besides cancelling the stamps it did not intrude too much on the surface of the stamp itself.
- 4) A specially designed cachet was displayed on the left-hand side of the envelope. Usually this was designed by the stamp engraver.

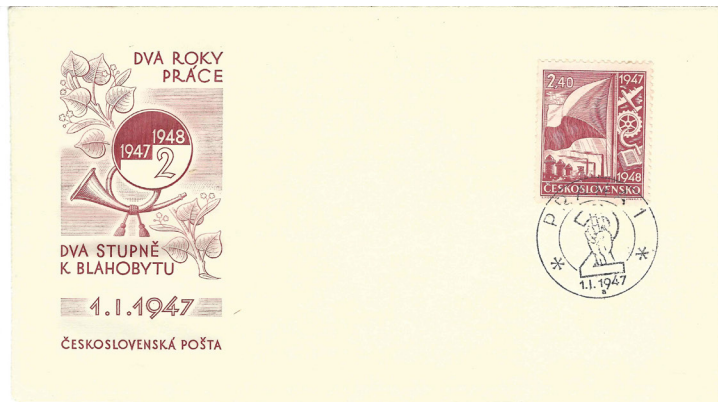


Fig. 15.



Fig. 16.

Naturally the covers could be addressed and mailed for a postally used version, and usually there is not much difference in the cost of procuring an unused or used version. It appears that collectors are more interested in obtaining covers that do not have heavily toned or yellowish envelopes. Badly dog-eared covers do not seem to find any buyers at all. The clarity of the cancellation and its accurate positioning are also important. The prices given in *Monografie 9* and the *Pofis* catalogs are for unused covers and given the fact that not many people have both of these essential volumes there is a general lack of guidance available for collectors on pricing. The quality of the cancellation seems extremely important as well. Sharp, readable and well positioned ones are highly sought after. Most dealers have an enormously inflated sense of value, which could inhibit the entrance of new collectors of FDCs into the market.

Are variants of these standard covers found? There certainly

are! In some cases the stamps could have been adhered to the envelope in a non-standard order (Fig. 17). There are also possibilities for a variation in the cancellation itself, such as the letter "a", "b". From time-to-time combinations of numbers and letters (e.g. "1b", "9h") were found somewhere within the cancel (Fig. 18). There are many other combinations of these cancellation letters and numbers to be found and these are all mentioned in *Monografie 9*. Not all issues have these numbers/letters within the cancellation and this practice ceased altogether at the end of 1975. From the beginning of 1973 all FDCs had a secondary cancel which didn't actually cancel anything (Fig. 19). This did allow collectors to get an uninterrupted view of cancellations, which generally are of interest as well. Lastly, if the stamp(s) themselves have plate or printer's errors, the different types can sometimes, but not always, be found on FDCs.

There are certainly enough differences available to form a substantial collection. From the start of 1993 both the Czech Republic and Slovakia continued (and still continue today) issuing FDCs using exactly the same high standards as Czechoslovakia had before them. Nowadays it is more common to find that the cachet is offset or digitally printed, rather than the result of an engraved image. Even so, the quality of these modern-day covers



Fig. 17.



Fig. 18.



Fig. 19.

is extremely high. With the Czech Republic there still seems to be a slight hesitation for anything more than the briefest mention for coverage of FDCs to be included in Pofis catalogs. With Slovakia, however, the Zberateľ catalog does have a separate section towards the end of their catalog which is devoted entirely to Slovak FDCs and at least shows us what they consider to be current evaluation for pristine covers.

I hope that this article has provided you with all the information needed to know what an official Czechoslovakia First Day Cover is. If anyone needs additional information or has a query on any of these covers issued from 1947-1992, they are welcome to contact me. I am certainly not a great expert, as I am acquiring new knowledge on this aspect of collecting every day, but luckily I do have the scarce sources at hand and should be able to help you. It is also quite possible that there may be errors in my text or additional text is required to add or clarify something. If so I would be delighted to hear from you and mention them in an update of this article. You can contact me at kdhart46@icloud.com.

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7. *Post World War II Czechoslovak Airmail (Part 1)*; Reg Hounsell, Czechout – September 2021.
8. *Czechoslovak Air Mail Stamps of 1946-1949*; Klement Ptačovský, Czechoslovak Specialist – June 1958.
9. *Czechoslovakian Airmail Post to USA after World War II*; Kavan Bubák, Czechoslovak Specialist – March 1983.
10. *First Flight: New York – Prague – New York*; Vladimír Bubák, Czechoslovak Specialist – July/August 1991.
11. *New and Recent Issues*; Czechoslovak Specialist – September 1946.

Czech Republic New Issue Plan 2024

Date	Description	Price in Kčs	Sheet layout
1/20/2024	Tradition of Czech Stamp Design: Zdeněk Mězl	B	TL, ZZ, k
1/20/2024	Personalities: Josef Suk	31	TL
1/20/2024	Biathlon World Championships in Nové Město na Moravě	E	TL (2x25)
2/14/2024	Bedřich Smetana's works	A, E, Z	Block of 3
2/14/2024	Karel Loprais	E, Z	Block of 2
2/14/2024	Personalities: Jiří Šlitr	27	TL
2/14/2024	Definitive stamp: Valentine's Day	B	MS of 7
3/13/2024	Mariánské Lázně	B	TL, ZZ, k
3/13/2024	Beauties of Our Country: Locket Castle	27	UTL
3/13/2024	National Technical Museum: Letná Carousel	B	TL
4/10/2024	Botanic Garden, Prague	27, 31, 34	Block of 3
4/10/2024	Works of Art on Postage Stamps: Jiří Rathouský	31	MS of 4
4/10/2024	Personalities: Immanuel Kant	E	TL
4/10/2024	Theater and Film: Brothers Oldřich and Lubomír Lipský	42, 48	Block of 2
5/7/2024	EUROPA: Water Fauna and Flora	E	MS of 7
5/7/2024	Personalities: Eduard Petiška	B	TL
5/7/2024	Works of Art on Postage Stamps: J.E. Ridinger – hunting graphics	72	Block of 2
5/7/2024	Definitive stamp: Emoji	B	TL (10x5)
6/7/2024	Postcard – Bratislava Collector Days 2024	E	CDV
6/12/2024	Litovel Pomerania	42, 48	Block of 2
6/12/2024	For Children: The Oddsocketeers	B	ZZ
6/12/2024	Definitive stamp: Olomouc	B	MS of 7
6/12/2024	Postcard: House of Artists in Hodonín	B	CDV
6/12/2024	Postcard: Moldavian Railroad	A	CDV
9/4/2024	Animals With Their Young	27, 31, 34, 38	Block of 4, CM
9/4/2024	Chapel of the Annunciation in Klementinum	80	MS of 1
9/4/2024	Czech Footprints in the World: Josef Škvorecký	Z	MS of 1
9/4/2024	Definitive self-adhesive stamp: Drop	B	UTL
9/4/2024	Postcard: Praga Piccola 2024	B	CDV
9/4/2024	Postcard: Collector 2024 – Legends	B	CDV
10/9/2024	150 th Anniversary of Universal Postal Union	Z	TL
10/9/2024	Works of Art on Postage Stamps: Vladimír Tesař	34	Block of 4
10/9/2024	Construction of Racecourse and First Pardubice Grand Steeplechase	27, 31, 35	Block of 3
10/24/2024	Postcard: Ulm Fair 2024	E	CDV
10/30/2024	Beauties of Our Country: Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou	A	MS (2x4)
10/30/2024	Renaissance Murals	38, 44	Block of 2
10/30/2024	Definitive self-adhesive stamp: Christmas	B	TL
11/13/2024	Historic Town Hall and Squares	B	TL
11/13/2024	Technical Monuments: Dolní Vitkovice	B	TL. ZZ

LEGEND: CDV: Postal card with imprint; CM: collection sheet; k: coupon; MS: miniature sheet; TL: sheet; UTL: sheetlet; ZZ: stamp booklet

New Issues

CZECH REPUBLIC by Keith Hart

[Ed. Note: Unless otherwise stated all issues from both countries are produced by Tiskárna Hradištka, s.r.o. using multi-color offset. Images are taken from the respective websites of both postal authorities. Some Information for stamp descriptions has also been provided by PostFila and Pofis.]

1. On October 10, 2023 the Ministry of Trade and Industry issued a stamp with a 'B' (27 Kč) value to commemorate **Palacký University in Olomouc** [Pofis 1235]. The stamp was designed by Josef Dudek and was produced in sheets of 50. It shows a figure wearing a virtual reality headset extending his arms from a pile of books on the left, through a panorama of Olomouc in the center and a spiral nebula on the right, symbolizing the evolution of study from books to the scientific technology of today (Fig. 1). The university celebrated its 450th anniversary in 2023 and is the second largest university in the Czech Republic and the largest in Moravia. It has 23,000 students from 99 different countries, divided into 8 faculties and also the Sts. Cyril and Methodius School of Theology which traces the university's roots to a Jesuit college. The FDC cachet features three modern-day students (Fig. 2) and the cancellation is the logo of the university.



Figure 3

2. On October 10, 2023 the Ministry issued a 5 Kč definitive stamp depicting the **Silver-Washed Fritillary Butterfly** [Pofis 1236]. It was designed by Jaromír and Libuše Knotek and produced in sheets of 100 stamps. This butterfly (Fig. 3) is found throughout Europe and even in Japan and Algeria. In the Czech Republic it is most commonly found in South Bohemia. The female lays her eggs in crevices of tree bark, always close to violets, which are the caterpillars main food source. Adults feed on the nectar of thistles, knapweed and bramble.

3. On November 8, 2023 the Ministry issued a 34 Kč stamp in the series **Works of Art on Postage Stamps: Ladislav Sutnar** [Pofis 1237]. Graphic design of the stamp was by Kamil Knotek and shows a work from Sutnar's *Venus* series, a girl wearing a cowboy hat (Fig. 4). The stamp was produced in a miniature sheet of 4 (2x2) with a blank central label. Sutnar (1897-1979) was a graphic designer, typographer and artist. By 1932 he was in charge of publication design for a Prague publishing house, Director of the State School of Graphic Arts and had become known as a designer for foreign expositions. In 1939 he was in America executing his design for the Czechoslovak Pavilion at New York's World Fair. While there the Nazi's invaded Czechoslovakia. Because of earlier anti-Nazi activities he was unable to return. He made a career for himself as an art director, also designing porcelain and glass products. Although he could return to Czechoslovakia after 1945 his style of work was not approved by the communists, and he spent the remainder of his life working in both the USA and Czechoslovakia. To share his knowledge he wrote three influential textbooks on design. The FDC cachet shows a stripper from his *Strip Street* series (Fig. 5) and the cancellation is an image of bent legs.



Figure 4



Figure 5

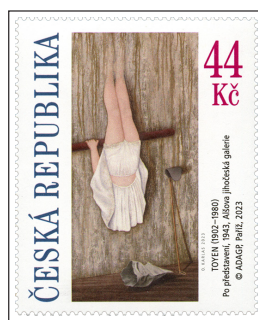


Figure 6

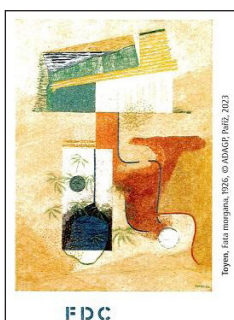


Figure 7

4. On November 8, 2023 the Ministry issued a 44 Kč stamp in the series **Works of Art on Postage Stamps: Toyen** [Pofis 1238]. Graphic design was by Otakar Karlas and shows the work *After the Show* from 1943 (Fig. 6). The stamp was produced in a miniature sheet of 4 (2x2) with a blank central label. Toyen (1902-1980) born Marie Čermínová, was a leading painter in the Surrealist Movement. Between 1920 and 1928 she worked in Paris, before returning to Prague. She became a leader of the Czech Surrealist Group and was known for her strangely erotic works. She was also known for her illustrations, completing work for over 500 books. Forced underground during the Nazi occupation, she relocated to Paris before the communists

took over in 1948, remaining in France for the rest of her life, returning only sporadically to Czechoslovakia. The FDC cachet shows her design *Fata Morgana* (Fig. 7) and the cancellation is a graphic containing her name. Another work by Toyen was featured in the 1992 Art on Postage Stamp series (Pofis 3027) and was in fact the final artwork from that series in the Czechoslovakia era.

5. On January 20, 2024 the Ministry issued a 'B' value stamp in the series **The Tradition of Czech Stamp Design: Zdeněk Mězl** [Pofis 1239, ZSL 74]. The stamp was designed by Marina Richterová and produced in sheets of 50. A stamp booklet with 8 self-adhesive stamps and 2x2 different coupons was also issued. The stamp shows a head and shoulders portrait of Mězl seemingly shying away from having a figure from one of his Greek illustrations placing a wreath on his head (Fig. 8). Mězl (1934-2016) studied at The Fine Arts Academy in Prague and while there became intrigued by creating woodcut blocks which remained his favorite medium for working in. He created illustrations for more than 70 books, designed 3 postage stamps, and a large number of graphic prints, especially of Greek Myth subjects. The booklet covers and coupons display more scenes from his Greek woodcuts. The FDC cachet is a fragment of a 1984 woodcut illustrating Shakespeare's play *As You Like It* (Fig. 9) and the cancellation is from the artwork *Sirens* from his Greek Mythology Cycle.

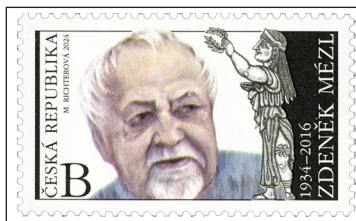


Figure 8

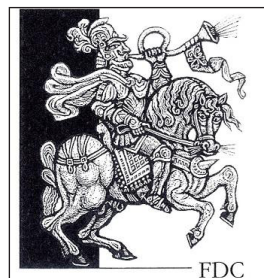


Figure 9

6. On January 20, 2024 the Ministry issued a 31 Kč stamp in the series **Personalities: Josef Suk** [Pofis exhibition1240]. The stamp was designed by Zdeněk Netopil and produced in sheets of 50. The stamp features a head and shoulders portrait of Suk, with music notation of a fragment of Suk's *Love Song* for violin and piano (Fig. 10). The stamp celebrates the 150th anniversary of Suk's birth (1874-1935). Suk was a composer and violinist who was mentored by Antonín Dvořák and eventually became his son-in-law. Unusually, the music he wrote went with two entirely opposing themes, melancholy and romance. He even wrote a funeral march for himself, as well as a funeral symphony *Asrael*. His romantic work includes *Radúz a Mahulena*. As a well-respected violinist he played with the famous Czech Quartet for many years. His son, also Josef Suk, became a world-famous violinist. The FDC cachet depicts Suk's hand composing a work (Fig. 11) and the cancellation is a facsimile of his signature.



Figure 10

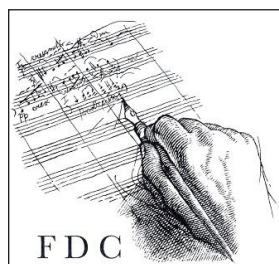


Figure 11

7. On January 20, 2024 the Ministry issued two 'E' (44 Kč) value stamps to commemorate the **Biathlon World Championships 2024 in Nové Město na Moravě** [Pofis 1241, 1242]. They were designed by Filip Heyduk and produced in sheets of 50 (se-tenant 2x25). One stamp shows a female biathlete skiing within a blue target (Fig. 12) and the other stamp shows a male biathlete shooting within a green target (Fig. 13). The placement of the stylized targets intersects on each stamp, continuing onto adjacent stamps to form a complete target. The BMW IBU World Biathlon Championships were held on February 7-18, 2024. It is the second time that these championships have been held in Nové Město na Moravě, having been there in 2013. There will be 12 events, including two mixed relays. The two FDC cachets are similar in that the athlete image from each stamp is placed inside a grid (Figs. 14 and 15) and the cancellation is a line of five targets.



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

Postal Stationery

8. On September 6, 2023 the Ministry issued a pre-paid postcard with additional printing [Pofis CDV197] to celebrate the **2023 Autumn Sběratel Collectors Fair**, held from September 8-9 in the PVA exhibition grounds in Letňany. The printed image (Fig. 16) has a menu with an image by Alfons Mucha, combined with a collage of stamps with gastronomic motifs.



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18

9. On September 6, 2023 the Ministry issued a prepaid postcard with additional printing [Pofis P240] to celebrate **Legends: Ondřej Moravec**. The printed image (Fig. 17) has a portrait of Ondřej Moravec, the most successful biathlete in Czech history.

10. On October 26, 2023 the Ministry issued a pre-paid postcard with additional printing [Pofis P241] to celebrate the **Internationale Briefmarken-Börse-Ulm Messe 2023**, held from October 26-28. The printed image (Fig. 18) shows an angler who has hooked a postage stamp.

SOCIETY FOR HUNGARIAN PHILATELY

*If you are a collector/enthusiast of that period when Czechoslovak and Hungarian philately overlaps, as well as the earlier shared postal history, you should consider joining the **Society for Hungarian Philately (SHP)**. Annual membership includes four*



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**SCP, c/o Marisa Galitz
PO Box 646
Owing Mills, MD 21117**

SLOVAKIA 2024 NEW ISSUE PLAN

Date	Description	Price in €	Sheet layout
1/12/24	Personalities: Ján Chryzostom Korec and Jozef Tomko	1.40	UTL
1/26/24	200 th Anniversary of the Publication of the Poem Daughter of Sláva	2.60	UTL, PaL
2/23/24	Easter 2024: The Altars of Basilica Minor of St. Giles, Bardejov	0.90	TL, CP, ZZ
3/21/24	800 th Anniversary of Establishment of the Benedictine Abbey at Skalka	1.20	TL, PaL
4/5/24	Personalities: Anna Jurkovičová (1824-1905)	2.20	TL
4/26/24	EUROPA 2024: Fauna and Flora of the Lakes of the Tatra Mountains	2.10	UTL, ZZ, NL
4/30/24	20 th Anniversary of Slovak Republic's entry into the EU	-	TL
5/3/24	100 th Anniversary of Launch of the Praha-Bratislava-Košice Airline Route	1.20	TL, PaL
5/24/24	90 th Anniversary of Foundation of Chemosvit	0.90	TL
6/7/24	Nature Protection: The Vihorlat Mountains – The Short-Toed Eagle	3.40	HA, CM, Pt
6/28/24	Sport: Games of the XXXIII Olympiad – Paris 2024	1.50	TL, NL
6/28/24	Sport: The Paralympic Games – Paris 2024	1.50	TL, NL
7/26/24	Personalities: Monk Cyprian (1724-1775)	3.00	HA, Pt
8/28/24	80 th Anniversary of Slovak national Uprising	-	TL
8/28/24	80 th Anniversary of Carpathian-Duklian Operation: Duklias Battlefield	-	TL
9/6/24	Beauties of Our Homeland: Hričov Castle	2.30	UTL, CM
10/4/24	100 th Anniversary of the Košice Peace Marathon	2.50	TL
10/9/24	150 th Anniversary of Universal Postal Union (UPU)	1.60	TL, PaL
10/18/24	Personalities: Jozef Gregor Tajovský	1.80	TL
31/10/24	Christmas 2024: The Altars of Basilica Minor of St. Giles, Bardejov	0.90	TL, CP
10/31/24	The Christmas Mail 2024	0.90	TL, ZZ
11/15/24	ART: Theodor Mousson	2.60	UTL
11/15/24	ART: Franz Anton Maulbertsch	2.60	UTL
11/25/24	Personalities: Janko Jesenský	2.40	TL
12/5/24	Postage Stamp Day: Universal Postal Union	0.90	TL, k, CP
12/18/24	Postage Stamp Day: Postcrossing	-	CDV

LEGEND: CDV- Postal Card with imprint. CM – Cartes Maximum. HA – Miniature Sheet. K – Coupon. NL – Collection sheet. PaL – Commemorative Sheet. Pt – Black Proof. TL – Sheet. UTL – Sheetlet. ZZ – Stamp Booklet

SLOVAKIA



Figure 1

1. On October 26, 2023 the Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications issued a commemorative sheet in the series **ART: The Gothic Route** [Pofis 805 & 806]. The miniature sheet contains two copies each of two € 2.60 stamps with a central coupon depicting the head of God and the text *Gotická cesta* (Fig. 1). The Gothic Route is a 171 mile (276km) circle which itself is divided into four smaller circles. It passes through 9 towns and 24 villages. Mostly in Slovakia, short sections are within Poland in the north and Hungary to the south. The route mainly tells tourists about famous Gothic cultural and historic structures within the route, but which also contains areas within several national parks and UNESCO World Heritage sites. The upper stamp on the sheet features a mural from the **Church of the Holy Trinity in the village of Rákos** (Fig. 1) which was constructed in the middle of the 13th century and although Romanesque in layout, has early Gothic features such as narrow semi-circular windows and an arched



Figure 2

aisle separating the nave from the interior apse. In the later 14th and early 15th centuries, the Bubek family who were local landowners had the walls covered with murals painted by imported Italian artists. On the wall of the triumphal arch is an unusual, seated figure of Christ with three faces and four eyes. This survived being irradiated by the Council of Trent as the church was in the control of Protestants at the time. They had painted over the murals to save them. They were only recently restored to the condition that can now be seen. The FDC cachet has a mural showing the Virgin Mary (Fig. 2) and the cancellation is the Madonna and Child. The lower stamp features a detail of from the altar in the **Church of The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary in Chyžné**. The church is a complex example of a Gothic structure, combining 13th century architecture with 14th century murals and a 16th century altar. In the early 16th century the Bubek family commissioned a carved altar with double-sided wings, which was carried out by the workshop of Master Pavel of Levoča. The figure of St. George slaying the Dragon (Fig. 3) almost certainly depicts a member of the Bubek family as St. George. The FDC has a detail of the central panel of the altar showing the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (Fig. 4) and the cancellation is the top of the same panel featuring intertwined tree branches. A black proof was issued at the same time.



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

2. On November 16, 2023 the Ministry issued a T2 50g (0.90 €) stamp in the series: **The Christmas Mail 2023** [Pofis 807]. The stamp was graphically designed by Jakub Tóth based on a drawing by Alexandra Horváthová from Kmeťovo. This year was the 10th anniversary of the Christmas stamp being designed by the winner of the competition for school children organized by Slovenská pošta. The stamp's theme is "Two Snowmen" who are frolicking in a winter landscape, with a nearby fir tree decorated with ornaments (Fig. 5). The FDC cachet, designed by Livia Sedláčková of Strečno shows a snowman delivering presents (Fig. 6) and the cancellation of a sleigh bearing a Christmas present is the work of Ramónka Uňatinská from Okoličná na Ostrove.



Figure 6

3. On November 16, 2023 the Ministry issued a T2 50g stamp in the series: **Christmas 2023: Slovak Folk Woodcarving** [Pofis 808]. The stamp, designed by Adrian Ferda, shows the Holy Family (Fig. 7) and is from the collections of the Orava Gallery. It was carved by Štefan Sivák the elder (1906-1995) who lived in the village of Babín his entire life. As a child, working with his father as a wheelwright, he started carving figures depicting Orava folk traditions, later adding religious works to his oeuvre. The cachet of the FDC depicts the Madonna and Child (Fig. 8) and the cancellation is a detail of the same sculpture. A stamp booklet containing 10 self-adhesive stamps was issued the same day, as was a pictorial postcard.



Figure 7

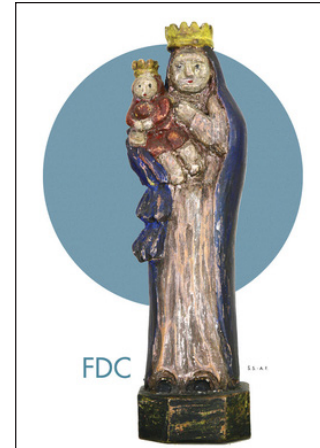


Figure 8

4. On December 5, 2023 the Ministry issued a 1.20 € stamp in the series: **Postage Stamp Day – Jozef Baláž (1923-2006)** [Pofis 809]. The stamp was designed and engraved by Martin Činovský and features a portrait of Baláž alongside a detail from his lithograph depicting a scene from the Ján Kollár's poem *Daughter of Sláva* (Fig. 9). A coupon shows a mailman which is a detail from the stamp issued for Postage Stamp Day 1998. The mailman's image is reversed from that on the original stamp. The stamp was produced in sheets of 30 using offset combined with serigraphy. The stamp also celebrates the centenary of Baláž's birth. His work as a designer of postage stamps covers 49 years, starting with stamps for Czechoslovakia which usually had a Slovak theme. After Slovakia became independent his stamp production became prolific as he designed many stamps for anniversaries of historic events and the depiction of famous Slovaks. He was also Slovakia's first Chair of the Postage Stamp Design Commission and has been an inspiration for current Slovak stamp designers. The FDC etched cachet is another illustration from *Daughter of Sláva* (Fig. 10) and the cancellation is a motif from his work *Girl From An Oasis*. A collection sheet was also issued the same day.

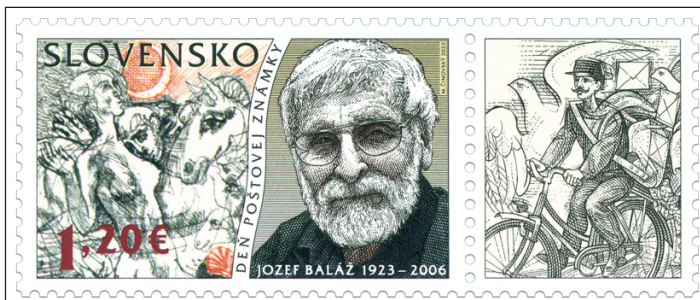


Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11

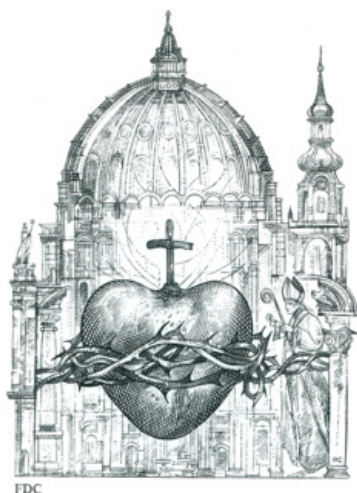


Figure 12

5. On January 12, 2024 the Ministry issued a T2 100g (1.60 €) stamp in the series **Personalities: Ján Chryzostom Korec and Jozef Tomko** [Pofis 810]. The stamp, which celebrates the centenary of both Cardinals' birth, was designed and engraved by Rudolf Cigánik. It depicts head and shoulders portraits of the two Cardinals and was produced using recess printing from a flat plate combined with multi-color offset, in a modified sheet of 3x2 stamps separated by a central image of a crucified Christ (Fig. 11). Ján Chryzostom Korec (1924-2015) was a Catholic clergyman and Cardinal. In 1950 the communist regime forcibly liquidated the Society of Jesuits and interned Korec in a concentration camp. After his eventual release he worked as a laborer until 1960. He had been covertly consecrated as a Bishop in 1951 and he had secretly carried out his priestly duties until 1960 when he was arrested and sentenced to 12 years prison for treason. Following his release in 1968 he worked in various blue-collar occupations until his retirement in 1984, still clandestinely his priestly ministry. Following restoration of Catholic duties 1990 he was made a Cardinal in 1991. Late in life he was publicly criticized for showing acceptance of Jozef Tiso and the First Slovak Republic (1939-1945) and for celebrating a memorial Mass for Tiso on the 50th anniversary of his execution. Jozef Tomko (1924-2022) was born in Udavské. In 1943, after studying theology in Bratislava, he was sent to Rome to study at the Pontifical Gregorian University, being ordained to the priesthood in 1949. In Rome he carried out pastoral duties as well as involvement in establishing the Slovak Institute of Saints Cyril and Methodius. For decades he addressed Slovak Catholics on Vatican Radio and Catholic TV Lux. In 1985 he was created a Cardinal and continued his obligations until dying from COVID-19 complications in 2022 at the age of 98. The FDC cachet is the Sacred Heart of Jesus surmounting a silhouette of St. Peter's Basilica (Fig. 12). The cancellation is a motif from his work *Girl From An Oasis*. A numismatic collection sheet was issued the same day.

6. On January 26, 2024 the Ministry issued a 2.60 € stamp celebrating **The 200th Anniversary of the Publication of the Poem *Daughter of Sláva*** [Pofis 811]. The stamp has a portrait of the poet Ján Kollár and a depiction of the mythical subject of the epic poem. Designed by Charles Felix and engraved by František Horniak it was produced in a modified sheet containing 2x2 stamps separated by an image of clasped hands, with the sun rising over the Tatra Mountains behind them (Fig. 13). Ján Kollár was a Lutheran pastor whose poetry became a master work of Slavic literature. Kollár was afraid that Slovaks would disappear from their lands, as other Slavic tribes had. There is a pun in the title as *Sláva* in Czech means fame. The Slovaks consider themselves a people of fame rather than the slaves they were considered to be in Western Europe at that time. The epic poem has 645 verses and is written in the form of a sonnet. In it the daughter of *Sláva* is a maiden whom the poet meets upon the banks of the river Zála and to whom, as the ideal of womanly perfection, he dedicates his heart. Severed from her by a cruel stroke of fate, he wanders disconsolately through the regions of the Labe, Ren and Vltava rivers, and at length, beside the Dunaj, he learns of her death. This very slender erotic thread is skillfully used by Kollár to link great memories of the Slavic race and its departed glories. The poem also parallels the poet's own unfulfilled love for Friederika Schmidt (Mina) who married another man. The FDC cachet shows hands clasping a Great Moravian jewel (Fig. 14) and the cancellation is a quill and a facsimile of Kollár's signature. A commemorative sheet was also issued.



Figure 13

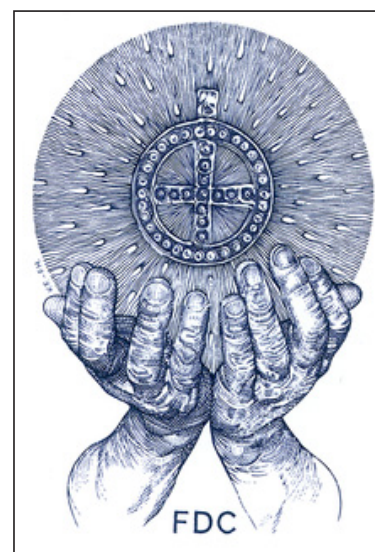


Figure 14

Postal Stationery

7. On October 26, 2023 the Ministry issued a prepaid Postcard with additional Imprint [Pofis 329CDV214/23] to acknowledge the **Internationale Briefmarken-Börse Ulm-Messe 2023** held from October 26-28. The printed image (Fig. 15) shows images of the historic center of Ulm as a background to the show's logo.



Figure 15



Figure 16

8. On December 12, 2023 the Ministry issued a prepaid postal card (0.98 €), with additional imprint to celebrate **The Day of Postage Stamps and Philately 2023** [Pofis 330 CDV 214/237]. The imprint, designed by Adrian Ferda, shows a view of Bratislava from across the Dunaj (Danube) with an envelope placed across the bottom of the image which bears an Alfons Mucha Hradčany stamp (Fig. 16).

Philatelic News and Views

by Keith Hart

1. As details of this issue were being finalized we learnt of the death of **Ludvik (Lou) V. Svoboda** our longtime member, President and Editor of this journal. He also served as a member of our Board for more than 40 years. The loss of a personal friend (as he was to so many others) who encouraged, or castigated, and sometimes applauded my efforts as an editor has left a hole in my life. Our regular lunchtime meetings at the Perfect Landing restaurant are sorely missed already. The next issue will contain a full obituary of this remarkable man.

2. Lou's lengthy illness had meant that I did not have the benefit of his Assistant Editorial comments and knowledge for the previous three issues of *The Specialist* and I think that his notes on my initial draft have been greatly missed. He added that final polish of the details that I admired so much. I have needed an Assistant Editor for more than six months and I am pleased to say that fellow Board member **Chris Jackson** has agreed to take on this task and his work will commence immediately. You have had to put up with my British way of saying things for years and now we add the Canadian accent as well! Welcome aboard Chris and once aboard the gangplank will be swiftly raised and there is then no possibility of escape as we sail the sometimes rough seas of the Philatelic Ocean.

3. We have also had to change our printer/publisher. I welcome **Wilcox Printing** of Madrid, IA and it has been wonderful to experience their thoughtfulness and patience as we put together this issue. Seeing the rough draft of the first five pages has relaxed me a lot as I can see that they have got immediately into the style and layout of the *Specialist*. I am also extremely sad at the departure of **Nancy Godfrey** as our printer/publisher who was so easy to work with and an absolute stalwart when we changed the format to the larger size paper just a few years ago. I will recall her time with us in a few paragraphs in this section of the next issue.

4. James Buckner mentions the delays to publishing the past few issues of the *Specialist* in his Presidential Corner elsewhere in this issue. I would just like to add my own apologies. The delays have definitely been beyond our control as Lou, Nancy and I suffered devastating personal losses in the past 18 months. I respect the support of the Board as I have labored to get back on schedule. I am as confident as I can be in this volatile and uncertain world that by the end of this year we will have published all four copies of the 2024 *Specialist*.

5. By the time you receive this issue it will probably only be nine months away from the Society's next annual meeting. The **2025 St. Louis Stamp Expo** will take place from March 21-23 and that means that our Board meeting will be the day before on March 20. The show takes place at the **Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel** which is literally right next to the airport. The hotel does have a free shuttle to and from the airport. If you are driving, as I will be doing, it is as close to I-80 as it can get. Its address is 9801 Natural Bridge Rd., St. Louis, MO 63134 and their telephone number is (314) 429-1100. The special room rate for visitors to the show is obviously not known at present but this year it was a reasonable \$116 per night. Admission to the show is \$5, which covers all three days and this purchase also allows free parking onsite. Under 16 visitors to the show can enter free.

6. Lastly a quick mention of **GASS 2024** which is being held at the Connecticut Convention Center from August 15-18. It has proved to be extremely popular as all three hotel room blocks are already full. There are several other hotels in the area within walking distance of the Conference Center. However, the APS has warned that members trying to book rooms have received offers from organizations unaffiliated with the APS claiming to offer booking services for other hotels. These offers may look legitimate, but they are not. The APS does not work with any outside companies for special offers on hotels. Please be aware of this and if still attending without an existing reservation you should look at the show website at www.stamps.org to see what other hotels are in the area, but at this time there are no others that offer a special show rate.

SPECIAL CATALOG SALE

The listed catalogs are all used but in good to excellent condition and are offered at low prices on a first-come, first-served basis. The buyer will pay their choice of method of shipping. Please contact James Buckner at wellseats@hotmail.com with questions and to inquire about multi-volume discounts!

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Assorted:

- Seznam Revolučních Přetisků 1944-1945 by Karel Holoubek (published 2011) - \$5
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A few copies of recent bound Specialists have become available on a first come, first served basis.

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4 copies of the 2013-14 volume are available

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FREE

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 Keith Hart, 4336 Las Lunas Ct.,
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Web Site: www.csphilately.org

Editorial Staff

EDITOR: KEITH HART

4336 Las Lunas Ct., Castle Rock, CO 80104
 Email: kdhart46@icloud.com Phone: 303-594-0697

ASSISTANT EDITOR: CHRIS JACKSON

458 Scenic Dr., St. George ON, Canada ON NOE INO.

Articles represent the opinions of the individual authors and content should not be considered as official policy of the Society or its officers.

Elected Officers

PRESIDENT: JAMES BUCKNER

322 Woodhaven Drive, Athens, GA 30606
 706-255-6823

VICE-PRESIDENT: ALAN HANZL

6776 Hickory Hill Dr., Mayfield Village, OH 44143

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: MARISA GALITZ

PO Box 646, Owings Mills, MD 21117

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY: BILL SLANKO

1412 Poseidon, West Covina, CA 91790

TREASURER: MARISA GALITZ

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Appointed Officers

BOOK SALES: JAMES BUCKNER

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LIBRARIAN PRO-TEM: KEITH HART

4336 Las Lunas Ct., Castle Rock, CO 80104

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322 Woodhaven Drive, Athens, GA 30606

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