



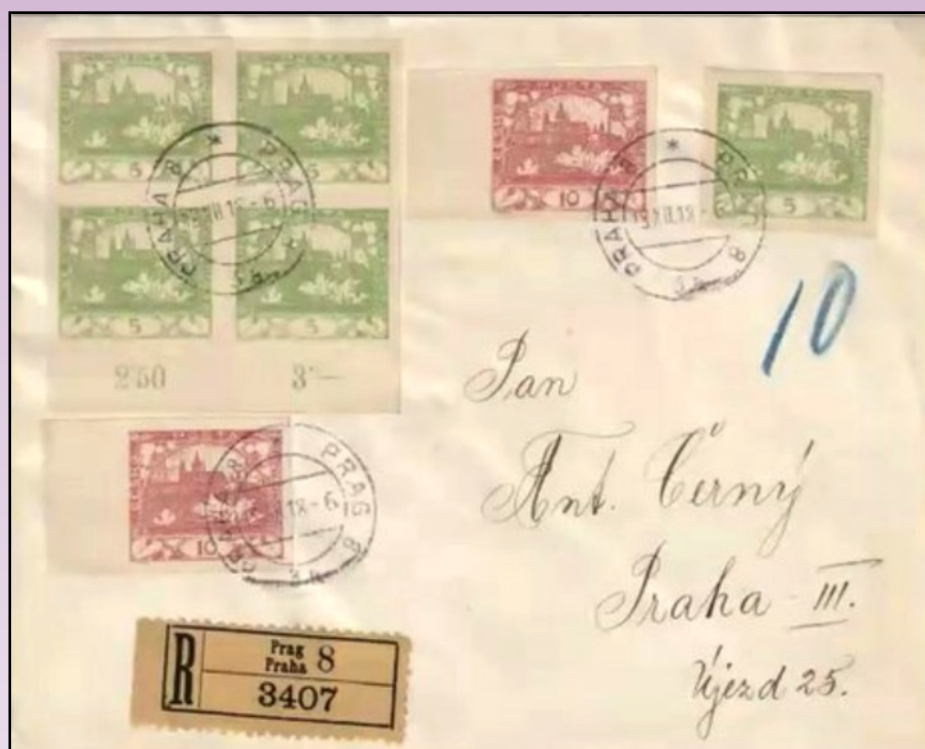
CZECHOUT

JOURNAL OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

VOLUME 43/2

JUNE 2025

WHOLE NUMBER 199



A Feast of Rarities – April Zoom (page 7)

Top, a cover posted on the first day of issue of the Hradčany design; above, gutter pairs showing combinations of Hradčany and Falcon in flight designs.

Articles elsewhere

Roger Morrell

The Czechoslovak Specialist (Society for Czechoslovak Philately, USA)

2025-1, Vol. 87, No. 1, Whole Number 679

Lauer, R., The 'liberation' of Rossbach.

Kunc, L., 50 haler personal delivery stamps.

Ištvánek, J. et al., Regional overprints of the Czech post.

Tschechoslowakei Philatelie (ARGE Tschechoslowakei, Germany)

No. 223, March 2025 (in German)

Džubák, J., The Hradčany issue and Slovakia (part 3).

Müller, T., The end after 101 years: ČSA. (Československé Státní Aerolinie.)

Lazar, P., Typology of the Bratislava 1937 block.

Pošta Česko-Slovenská (Vereniging voor Tsjechoslowakije-filatelie, Netherlands)

Nr. 43, Spring 2025 (in Dutch)

Sevenhuijsen, J., Discoveries about Czechoslovakia no. 1. (The 3 haler Hradčany.)

Anon., A new fantasy product. (First airmail overprints on the wrong stamps.)

Buckner, J. A., The printed paper overprinted stamps of 1934. (The 'OT' issue.)

Van Dooremalen, H., Post offices in the Bohemian lands – 7. (Gross Ullersdorf – Velké Losiny.)

Sevenhuijsen, J., Hradčany postal stationery – 5 haler. (The 5 haler telegram form.)

Sevenhuijsen, J., Somoskőújfalu – Šomošová border dispute between Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Austria (Journal of the Austrian Philatelic Society of GB)

No. 230, Spring 2025

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Taylor, A., The demise of the *Schilling* in 1938.

Anon., Social philately. (Extending the social connections of the sender and recipient of a WWI letter.)

Taylor, A., The Austrian Newspaper Tax, 1789–1792.

Taylor, A., The Newspaper Control Stamp of 1850–1852.

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Yamagata, H., Centenary of kronen/groschen mixed franking: official (stationery) postcards.

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Morrell, R., Interpreting postal charges on Hyperinflation mail – Part 2.

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Robisch, H., The army high-command (AOK) in Przemyśl, 17.08.1914–11.09.1914.

Kalis, K., Beware of forgeries – *k.u.k. Kriegsmarine*.

Robisch, H., The *k.u.k.* prisoner of war stations.

Robisch, H., Service book J-35. (References to a mysterious military book that is currently unknown.)

Robisch, H., Italian air route Padua–Vienna–Prague. (As on an Italian vignette on a cover sent by Italian fieldpost from Wien-Aspern airfield in 1919, and some history of the use of this airfield.)

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Anon., Poll for the most beautiful Czech FDC and handstamp of 2024.

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Erratum

My report on the November 2024 London Meeting, which appeared on page 6 of the March *Czechout*, mistakenly said that **Wojciech Kierstan** had ‘heard a judge’ commenting on the lack of birds in a display. In fact, it was ‘a member of the audience who was recounting his experience when he did a presentation to a society. It illustrated a point under discussion at a seminar hosted by the late Frank Walton at the end of a Stampex event’. As Wojciech points out, a judge would never make such a comment!

My apologies to Wojciech (and to any judges out there!) for any offence my misreporting may have caused.

Tony Holdsworth

Cooperation Agreement with the Society for Czechoslovak Philately

Check out our sister organization, the Society for Czechoslovak Philately, at their website: www.csphilately.net and through their Treasurer, Marisa Galitz at mmgalitz@gmail.com. Their publication the *Specialist* and our *Czechout* have little duplication in content. In addition, under an agreement the two societies have arranged for payment of your SCP subscription to our CPSGB Treasurer without your having to worry about foreign currency or sending it to the US. So why not have more fun? Become a member of both societies!

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News & Notices

New Members

The Society extends a very warm welcome to the following new members: **Mr Jim Campbell**, from Dundee; **Mr Jeremiah Dyehouse**, from North Kingstown, Rhode Island; and **Mr Rick Wilmot**, from Broadstone in Dorset.

Congratulations

At the National Philatelic Exhibition held in London **Wojciech Kierstan** received a Large Vermeil Medal for his exhibit 'Perfins of Czechoslovak Territories'.

Ian Bergel is the new Treasurer for the Austrian Philatelic Society.

Karl Winkleman exhibited at the *Indypex* Exhibition in the USA and *Stampa*, an exhibition in Dublin, Ireland. He was awarded a Large Gold Medal, a Medal of Excellence and the Indiana Stamp Club 20th Century Award.

At the St. Louis Stamp Expo Exhibition in the USA **Alan Hanzl** and **James Buckner** each exhibited two exhibits and as well as receiving gold medals they claimed several special prizes. The Association of Philatelic Exhibitors honoured Alan with a Gold Award of Honour and James with the Jean Benninghoff Encouragement Award and an Award of Excellence. The Society of Czechoslovak Philately presented James with the Alfons Mucha Award for the best Czechoslovak-themed exhibit at the show.

Right – Johan Sevenhuijsen receiving his award from Wout Janse, Vice-Chairman of the Dutch Philatelic Federation.



Left – the Dutch Philatelic Federation Needle.

Johan Sevenhuijsen has received the Dutch Philatelic Federation Needle for exceptional service to organized philately.

Library update from our new Librarian

Over the last few weeks, I have taken over custodianship of the Society Library from Lindy Bosworth, who has very diligently looked after the library for very many years. Having entirely filled my people carrier with material and inched my way round the M25, I have been re-shelving and sorting a cornucopia of items. There is a world of difference between a list of books and actually having them in your hands! I can report that the library is a fantastic and interesting resource which largely goes unappreciated: one of my tasks is to try and remedy that.

Philatelic societies have wrestled with what to do with libraries; many have disposed of them (including the UK Austrian and Hungarian Societies), largely through difficulties of storage and finding an ongoing custodian. In fairness, usage is generally light and the advent of digital resources has presented many more options for collectors. Our library no longer keeps journals where digital options are available, including *Czechout*, the *Czechoslovakia Specialist* in the US, and *Filatelie*. In some cases, digital and/or translated versions of published books are in course and most societies now offer digital versions of magazines and some publications.

Where does this leave things? There are many reasons to be positive: digital copy is more democratic in allowing easier dissemination of knowledge, and there are now opportunities to convert older texts and paper articles to a digital format – a start has been made on this with our own library. Equally, many larger texts will not translate easily to digital formats but language translation software offers the opportunity to access these with greater ease than in the past. Our own POD and Monograph excerpts are great examples of what can be done. In practice printed material remains invaluable and is now more accessible than ever. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of publicity about the items in our Library – though new publications are highlighted and described, the backlist tends to be out of sight and mind, which leads me to the newly planned 'Librarian Suggests' slot.

The Librarian Suggests...

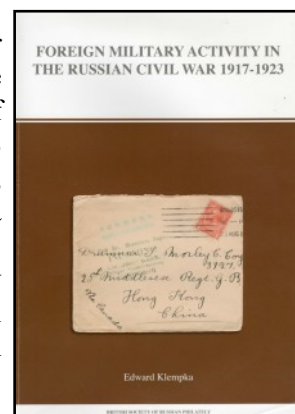
As you would expect, the library holds a comprehensive range of standard go-to Monographs and Catalogues covering key collecting areas. Beyond that, however, there is a long tail of specialist and supplementary material.

I have just finished reading *A Nasty Little War* by **Anna Reid**, a history of the West's intervention in the Russian Civil War, which I thoroughly recommend. The philatelic companion to that is *Foreign Military Activity in the Russian Civil War* by **Edward Klempka**. To quote the book:

Individual chapters covering each country and theatres of war in which its armies were engaged, illustrating the postal history of the intervention armies from the Tsar's abdication, which marked the beginning of the start of the Russian Revolution, until the formation of the USSR ...

Written in English and with many colour illustrations, it covers the Czech Volunteer Army in Ukraine (1914–18), The Czechoslovak Army in Siberia and Manchuria, The Czechoslovak Army in Ukraine (1918–20), including ship mail, and a detailed listing of FPO's and cachets. Should you be interested it also covers multiple other countries (18 in all plus a POW section) including well-known participants like the British Empire, France and the USA – but did you know that Belgium, Canada, Greece and Yugoslavia were also involved? A terrific and informative read.

Obviously, the Czechoslovak Monograph (Volume 7) is the place to go for a really detailed examination, written in Czech but with a rich array of illustrations and technical information. The library holds other related publications and further information can be gleaned from the website library listing (www.cpsgb.org/pages/library.htm).



‘Back of the book’

A phrase often used by auctioneers in a hurry but which can cover many aspects of philatelic history. In the midst of shelving, I came across a lovely publication by **Valerie Jean Kramer** entitled *Revenue Stamps of Czechoslovakia*.

Many collectors will be aware of the extensive Barefoot series covering this field. The Austro-Hungarian Empire in particular was prolific in the field of tax gathering, with everything from sugar and beer duties to general document and contract fees. The Kramer book (in English) focuses on Czechoslovakia from pre-independence to date and includes more detail than the Barefoot catalogue, including many colour illustrations – over 400 pages of material with a wealth of background information.

Not everyone's cup of tea I would imagine but personally I found it fascinating and informative, and thoroughly recommend it. The library also holds copies of *Fiskální Ceniny* (Volumes 1 and 2) which cover similar ground but for the period 1918 to 1945, in black and white and written in Czech.

If you would like more information on these books or related material, I can be contacted via email on librarian@cpsgb.org.

Terry Hancock

Members' Interests Survey

I wanted to understand what areas members are interested in, so that the Society could seek displays and articles of interest to them. I asked for feedback in recent Newsletters. The results are now in. Fourteen members replied, with selections over 19 areas of interest. The most votes received were four for ‘29 General or everything’ and ‘05 1st Republic to 1925’.

Just behind with three votes each were ‘08 Bohemia & Moravia’ and ‘13 Czechoslovakian Army in Great Britain in WWII’.

With two votes were a range of topics: ‘03 Czechoslovakian Army in Siberia’, ‘07 Sudetenland’, ‘09 Slovakia’, ‘12 Czechoslovakian Army at Home’ and ‘28 Postal Stationery’. The final areas that received just one vote were ‘01 Pre-Stamp Entires’, ‘02 Austro-Hungarian’, ‘04 East Silesian Plebiscite’, ‘06 1st Republic 1926–1939’, ‘10 Carpatho Ukraine’, ‘11 Hungary’, ‘16 Czechoslovakia - 1946 to May 1953’, ‘20 Postcards’, ‘23 Essay and Proofs’, and ‘25 Postal History’.

That means that the following received the infamous ‘nul points’: ‘14 Czech Army Abroad’, ‘15 Czechoslovakia 1945’, ‘17 Czechoslovakia June 1953 to December 1992’, ‘18 Czech Republic 1993 onwards’, ‘19 Slovakia 1993 onwards’, ‘21 Ephemera’, ‘22 Literature, Books, Magazines, Maps’, ‘24 Exhibitions’, ‘26 Printing Errors and Flyspecks’, and ‘27 Back of the Book’.

What conclusions can I draw from this poll?

- Members have a wide range of interests
- Post-1945 does not attract much interest
- Paradoxically, we do get good turnouts for recent Zoom meetings which recorded ‘nul points’, such as Printing Errors and Flyspecks and Exhibitions
- Overall, the earlier Czechoslovak periods appear to be of more interest

These are the results of the poll. If you did not vote, are you content with the overall picture? Are there any other areas we should be looking at? This is your Society. The Committee is merely here to represent your interests. We do not have a crystal ball, nor have we used AI to peer into the future (yet). Let us know what you would like to see.

Peter Williams

London Meeting, February 2025



Having been forced to move from The George, following an unprecedented hike in the booking fee, and requiring a change of date to 22 February, our first London meeting of the year was understandably not as well attended as usual. However, eight members made their way to the Dean Swift pub – almost in the shadow of Tower Bridge – for a rich and varied display by **Mark Bailey** on Expo 58, the 1958 Brussels World's Fair. This was the eleventh of its kind, and the fifth to be held in Brussels. Many of the buildings were reused, but there was also a great deal of additional construction, and some 15,000 workers spent three years building it. It was surely worth the effort, though, as 52 countries were involved in the Fair, and it welcomed 41.4 million visitors during the six months of opening.

Mark's presentation included stamp issues, Cinderellas, and other philatelic items, and told the story chronologically.

The logo for the event was the result of a competition won by Lucien De Roeck's design featuring a five-pointed asymmetrical star, with an image of Brussels Town Hall in the centre. An additional design promoted the idea of 'building the world for mankind', and both were used to create publicity labels – Mark had blocks and sheets of these, together with examples of their use.

One of the iconic features of the Fair was the 'Atomium', a giant model of an iron crystal that visitors could enter and explore using the tunnels and escalators that connected each part of the structure. It can still be visited today. This landmark naturally featured on many of the stamp issues and First Day Covers produced for the event. Mark had examples of all the stamp issues from each of the participating countries, which he presented in order of their date of issue.

Czechoslovakia was the third country to issue stamps for Expo 58: a set of five issued on 25 March 1958, just before the opening of the Fair on 17 April, which promoted the products the nation would have on show (jewellery, toys, fabrics, a Kaplan turbine, and glassware); and a stamp issued on 15 July with an illustration of the Czechoslovak pavilion. The decorative glassware won a Grand Prix, and this was commemorated with a special label. Additionally, Bohemian glass was awarded 21 prizes in total.

Many countries also produced special commemorative matchbox labels – including Czechoslovakia – as well as special cigar bands! There was a wealth of supplementary material on display, which Mark used to tell the story of the Fair – products such as loaves of bread, for example, with coupons incorporated into the packaging which could be redeemed for entry tickets, and philatelic folders used by different countries to promote their other stamp issues.

Mark received generous applause for his presentation, and in spite of competition from the rugby international downstairs and the occasional burst of noise from the coffee machine, members were pleased with the new venue – fewer stairs to climb, a convenient meeting space, an excellent range of beers, and a very acceptable menu

Tony Holdsworth

March Zoom

Eastern Silesia (1920) – A Temporary Solution was the title of the online presentation by **Alan Hanzl** on 6 March 2025. With a 22-strong audience, Alan began with the background to the Silesian problem, outlining the disputed territories that arose after WWI with the creation of Czechoslovakia and the newly constituted Polish Republic. Of the three territories – Eastern Silesia, Orava and Spiš – the first was much the most contentious. Both Czechoslovakia and Poland were keen to gain possession of the area, as it had a large population, and a wealth of resources. The initial division cut the area in half diagonally, with the city of Teschen in the middle, divided by the River Olza.

During the build-up to the plebiscite planned to decide on the issue, it was agreed that stamps used in the different parts of Eastern Silesia should be overprinted 'S O 1920'. For Czechoslovakia, this resulted in four stamp issues, each having its own design of overprint – the Hradčany stamps, two of the Masaryk issue from 1920, and the Mucha Postage Due and Special Delivery stamps.

Alan took us through each of the Hradčany values, showing the use of imperforate and perforated stamps, with variations in the setting of the overprint (wide and narrow spacing of the letters), and errors and varieties where appropriate – including broken characters and inverted overprints. While many of the stamps are freely available, Alan also included some real rarities – such as the overprinted 20 haler rose imperf.

While many of the covers on display were clearly commercially used, with the correct franking, others appeared to be philatelically inspired – understandably, given the unique event taking place in the territory.

Questions could be asked about why a 1 haler stamp should be included in the overprints, as most of the required frankings were in multiples of 5 haler – many uses of the 1 haler are in a combination such as three 3 haler stamps plus a 1 haler stamp.



Typical use of 1 and 3 haler stamps in combination to achieve multiples of 5 haler.

The Masaryk overprints – on the 500 haler in red, and the 1000 haler in blue – are something of a mystery. Hradčany stamps with these values were already available, and only 5,000 of each of the Masaryk stamps were overprinted – and then held back for so long that ultimately they were (allegedly) never distributed to post offices for use by the general public. But Alan showed us a currency transfer card with a 500 haler overprint that he has recently acquired. This is a puzzle, as it shouldn't really exist. The section of the cover with the stamps (two Masaryk stamps, one with the overprint) appears to have been cut away and then replaced,

using adhesive tape. The stamp has been cancelled, however, and the address on the card crosses one of the cut lines without any break or distortion.

Examples were shown of the special delivery, postage due, and newspaper stamps. The Polish overprints were also included, even though only two issues were affected – the Eagle and Scenery stamps. These were available later than the Czechoslovak overprints, and were used a little longer after the international border had been decided upon (without the promised plebiscite in the end!). Several covers were presented, including one addressed to Castle Hill House in Brighouse, Yorkshire.

In conclusion, Alan included a map showing the border that was decided on at the end of July 1920 – a temporary solution, of course, because Poland took the opportunity of the Sudeten crisis to grab part of the territory back again, and Germany made all these claims and counterclaims redundant when they occupied both Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1939.

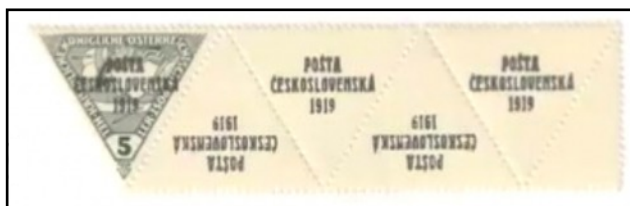
After the presentation there was much debate about the questionable Masaryk currency transfer card – members thought that it might well be genuine, and should indeed be included in an exhibit, provided it was accompanied by a note for the judges outlining the potential issues. Thanking Alan at the end of the presentation, Peter Williams said that he had been particularly interested in the covers – one of them appeared to have been sent from the Commission for the Plebiscite, for example, while the cover to Brighouse deserved some research to find out if the building still exists. (Peter has confirmed since the meeting that Castle Hill House is still there – a Grade II listed building in Rastrick, Calderdale, West Yorkshire, that was once home to 'Michael Fairless' – actually Margaret Fairless Barber – the author of a Victorian classic, *The Roadmender*.) **Tony Holdsworth**

April Zoom

'Gobsmacked!' was the reaction of one of our members to the online presentation of *First Republic* by **Pavol Lazar**. An audience of 27 members was treated to a rare display – in every sense of the word! – of the classic period of Czechoslovak philately on 9 April 2025. Beginning with a summary of the programme of stamp design, printing techniques, and policy decisions that accompanied the development of the new republic's postal strategy, Pavol illustrated his presentation with a fabulous collection of stamps, many of which are amongst the rarest items in Czechoslovak philately.

The display was divided into three sections – the period during which Austrian and Hungarian stamps were still being used (including the 'POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ' overprints), from 28 October 1918 to 31 January 1920; the Hradčany period, from 18 December 1918 to 4 April 1921; and the period Pavol called the 'general stamp issue period', from then until 14 March 1939. Beginning with forerunners, concurrent use of Austrian and Hungarian stamps, and revolutionary stamps, Pavol displayed a wonderful range of covers from the first of his three periods, followed by examples of the Prague I and Prague II overprints on full sets of Austrian Imperial Crown, Charles I, and Coats of Arms stamps. The 'POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ' overprints were introduced with a strip of five with trial overprints, a pair with one inverted overprint, and a rare block of 40 of the 12 heller Imperial Crown. Examples of Type A and Type B overprints included wide and narrow settings, double overprints, inverted overprints, and an extremely rare airmail overprint (wide format, granite paper, on

2 K Arms, violet), of which there are only ten known examples. Overprints on Austrian and Hungarian stamps included further real rarities: a Mercury 5 heller in a strip with four tabs and a section of the margin (only three pieces known), and a block of four overprinted 20 fillér Hungarian stamps (only three known examples of this stamp in a block). There was also a unique cover carrying thirteen overprinted 5 heller 'red number' Austrian postage due stamps, in a mixed franking with a 10 haler red Hradčany.



Above – overprint on 5 heller green Special Delivery, with tabs and margin – one of three known examples.

Right – airmail overprint on 2 K violet Austrian Arms stamp in the narrow format – one of ten known examples.



The Hradčany period was introduced by a se-tenant sheet with thirteen different designs, only three of which were adopted – Mucha's Hradčany, postage due, and newspaper express designs. A First Day Cover was shown (*see the front cover*), and a gutter pair of the 5 haler and 10 haler printed together. Each value, covering each version of the Hradčany design, was presented with fascinating pieces – a unique central cross of the 20 haler, for example, taken from the place where each of the four printing plates on the forme came together. Vertical gutter pairs showed stamps printed in the same direction, and with one in the opposite direction. There were also gutter pairs showing Hradčany printed alongside newspaper stamps. The Vejprty forgery was shown, together with an extremely rare AUSSIG forgery of the 20 haler grey-blue. A detailed examination of the 'fifth drawing' of the design (the 'abstract design') was, again, packed with rare and desirable examples, showing spiral types, frame types, 'rung types' (more usually known as 'bar types'), and arc types. These included rare use on cover, and highly specialized perforations, such as a 15 haler brick-red perforated $13\frac{3}{4} \times 11\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$. This study of the Hradčany stamps finished with airmail overprints (more great rarities!), S O 1920, DOPLATIT, and Red Cross overprints.

For the general stamp period, Pavol started with a brief look at the Legionářské stamps, with their many



The legendary 50-on-50 Chainbreaker overprint – the arrows point out a cancellation which makes it even rarer than the other examples – with a 'z' identifier rather than '4a'.

different perforations, and pointed out that printing techniques were getting better and better. Staying with typography, a collection of trial printings was displayed: for the unissued 50 haler Masaryk stamp; the issued 125 haler, 500 haler, and 1000 haler; and for the unissued 1200 haler and 2000 haler. The Chainbreaker design followed – with a rare example of two imperforate pairs of the 40 haler used on cover, even though the stamp was originally only issued perforated. The 50 haler value is the most interesting – Pavol showed examples of gutter pairs, blocks including the 'egg' and 'missing head' varieties, and the legendary '50 DOPLATIT' overprint on 50 haler error – only 18 examples have been found to date, all used and with a PRAHA 14 cancellation. There were also some very rare forgeries – Vejprty, Teplice, and Košice. A brief look at the Dove type and the Agriculture and Science stamps included some wise advice from Pavol – if you see a cover with a pair of the 100 haler Agriculture and Science comprising a Type II and a Type III: buy it!

The 1925 Masaryk stamps are differentiated by perforation, watermark, and paper type. Pavol's collection includes the 60 haler violet with horizontal watermark (only two examples known), and the 50 haler green with no watermark (possibly unique). Running through the remaining stamp issues in this period, Pavol picked out more rarities for our attention: the National Anthem issue used on cover; a vertical gutter pair of the 1932 Krivoklat 3 Kč 50 purple (eight known examples); a double gutter pair of the 1 Kč Nitra red (unissued – just two known examples); and an imperforate Bratislava miniature sheet (five known examples).

Apart from a few questions to clarify some of the terms used by Pavol (translations from Slovak to English don't always match the philatelic terms exactly!) members' only comments were to express their enormous thanks for sharing such a wonderful collection with them. As ever, you can see a video of the complete presentation by following the link to our 'Zoom Presentations' page on the Society website: www.cpsgb.org/pages/zoom.htm.

Tony Holdsworth



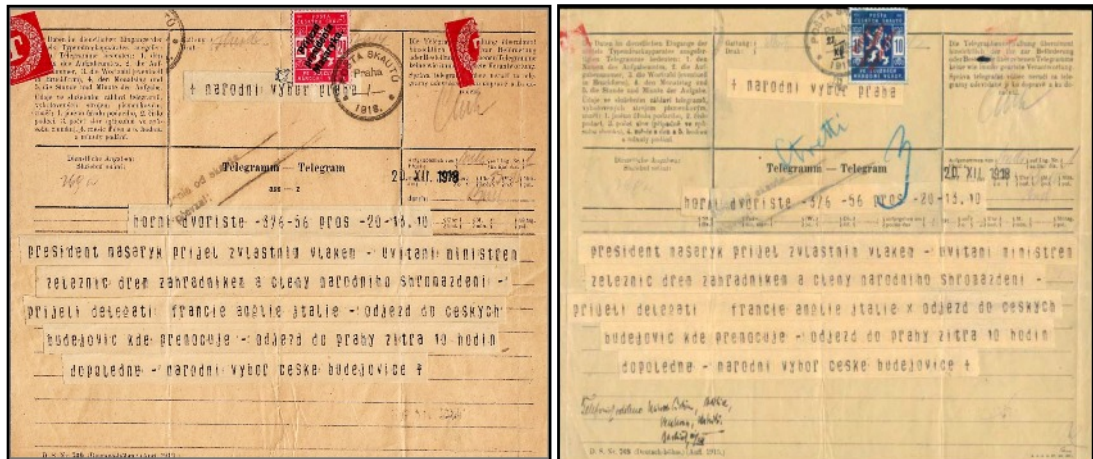
Unissued double gutter pairs, 1 Kč Nitra red – only two known pieces in this form.

[illegible]

Masaryk overprints and the Scout Post

Frederick Lawrence (the presenter on our January Zoom meeting – www.cpsgb.org/pages/zoom.htm) has contacted the Editor to point out that the illustration at the top of page 23 of the article by Benito Gonzalez in the March edition of *Czechout* is one of two copies of the same telegram. The evidence is that ‘both have the same ticker header/leader – *horni dvoriste -376 -56 pros -20 -13, 10*’.

Right – the telegram illustrated on page 23 of Benito Gonzales’ article in the March Czechout. Far right – an image from Frederick Lawrence of a telegram sold in Burda Auction number 55, on 1 October 2017, the last time this item was sold.



Frederick has provided further interesting detail on the way in which the telegram delivery system worked:

When a telegram was received in the Telegraph Department of the main Post and Telegraph Office in Prague, multiple copies were made. The original copy was delivered to the addressee, and the other copies were placed in the department records. Periodically, the record copies were purged, through sales to paper resellers. After the close of the Scout Post, enterprising individuals scoured the recycled paper from the Post and Telegraph Office for envelopes, newspapers, and telegrams to the provisional Czechoslovak National Committee of Liberation (National Council) government, which they then enhanced for collectors with the addition of genuine Scout Post stamps and strikes of the original Scout Post handstamps, which were in private hands until they were turned over to the National Council archives in the Prague City Hall about 1930. In his article, *Genuineness of Entires with Stamps*, in *The Czechoslovak Specialist*, January/February 1992 (translated from *Zpravodaj*, March 1991), Ing. Pavel Pittermann, then the Chairman of the Expert Committee of the Union of Czech Philatelists, described enhanced envelopes, newspapers, and telegrams as belonging to Category 2: genuine, but not necessarily authentic. The telegram illustrated in the article may have been a duplicate copy delivered to the National Council government by the Scout Post or a Pittermann Category 2, later enhanced copy of the original telegram.

Yvonne Wheatley has asked how many copies were made when a telegram came into the Telegraph Department of the Main Post and Telegraph Office in Prague – although we can be certain that at least one copy was made, there is no certainty about the exact number. However, Frederick points out that the telegraph equipment from that period that he has seen only ‘produced (printed) two tickers (strips) per telegram’.

Frederick agrees that the telegram in Benito’s article ‘could have been also delivered to the addressee (National Council)’ but if so, wonders why the POŠTA SKAUTŮ handstamp has not been completed with the date, and the ‘Dopis od skauta...převzal...’ handstamp has not been annotated with the name of the Scout who delivered it.

It is clear that both these examples are copies of the same telegram – whether both were delivered as addressed, however, is less clear. Benito is confident that the version in his article is genuine – it has been expertized by Ing. Jan Karásek – but its relationship to Frederick’s version of the same telegram is unclear. There are certainly mysteries surrounding each of them – why is Benito’s without manuscript completion of the handstamps, and why was Frederick’s franked with a 10 haler overprint rather than a 20 haler stamp?

Frederick has also pointed out that the name of the Scout who delivered the letter at the bottom of page 23 was ‘Stretti’ rather than ‘Strettiho’.

Strettiho is the genitive case of the name. In the handstamp ‘Dopis od skauta...převzal:...’ the preposition ‘od’ is followed by the genitive case of the name of the delivering Scout. The names of the Scouts who participated in the Scout Post were compiled by Lester A. Behnke, Dr. George V. Holland, and Dr. Velen Fanderlik ... and published in *The Czechoslovak Specialist* in January 1972 and April 1978.

The Editor apologizes for the mistake – the caption (which was intended as a transcription of the manuscript signature) should have included the hyphen: ‘Stretti-ho’.

It is fascinating that this subject continues to generate so much interest, from both the stamp and postal history points of view, so many years later.

An Analysis of the 1923 Agriculture and Science Design

Mark Wilson

The 1923 recapitulation of the 1920 Agriculture and Science issue (*Hospodářství a věda*) presents a fertile but oddly neglected area of philatelic research. For instance, multiple-die matrix typography (a recently introduced technology), was employed to produce the issue's printing plates. Because of subtle differences in the dies, that decision led to a series of consistent variations in the stamps. A specialist would find these variations quite interesting (and there are many), but they will not be examined here. Rather, that topic will be left for a future article.

Although the Postal Museum in Prague preserved bits and pieces of the issue's multiple-die plate manufacturing process, a scarcity of archived printed material obscures the number of plates produced and their arrangement. This scarcity is quite strange, as the philatelic window at the main Prague post office maintained an inventory of the issue's remainders until 1935. But because of that scarcity the research supporting this article was restricted to examining individual stamps.

Of interest here is that the issue underwent three design revisions. Catalogues list the change from the 1920 to the 1923 design as Type I, the other two alterations as Types II and III. While the literature does address the reason for the Type I design it offers nothing to explain the other two changes. This article hopes to explain the reasons behind the release of Types II and III.

The issue consisted of three denominations: 100, 200, and 300 haler. The 100 and 300 haler exist in all three types, but the 200 haler was never released as a Type I. Although this article explores the design changes in terms of the 100 haler, please keep in mind that what is said about it is also true of the other two denominations.

Type I: Refreshing the 1920 Design

Apparently the reason for retooling the design of the 1920 Agriculture and Science issue in 1923 was at times a bit of a mystery for students of the issue. For example, in the December 1965 issue of *The Czechoslovak Specialist* a pair of authors advanced the theory that because the Czechoslovak government had just assumed control of the stamps' print shop – the Česká grafická unie (Czech Graphics Union) of Prague – the differences were meant to distinguish between pre- and post-government ownership [1]. While such a theory might explain the release of Type I, it does not explain why there were three.

Alternatively, these same authors also suggested that the changes could have been done to thwart counterfeiters. On the contrary, the literature provides no evidence of the counterfeiting of these stamps to defraud the postal authorities: the only counterfeits were intended to cheat collectors [2].

There is good reason to concur with the far more persuasive argument for the first redesign made by the *Monografie* [3] and Žampach [4]. It appears that the artist, Jakub Obrovský, failed to understand that shrinking his original proposal to the size of a postage stamp would greatly distort his allegorical concept. When released, the 1920 stamps appeared mottled and dark: the public and the artist himself were greatly dissatisfied.

Because of his profound displeasure with the rendition of the 1920 version, Obrovský insisted upon removing much of its shading. In addition to his request to remove shading from the stamp, the artist also submitted revisions of his drawing of the post horn found in the stamp's upper right corner.

The *Monografie* and Žampach offer identical evidence demonstrating Obrovský's influence on the Type I changes. They provide notes in Obrovský's own hand as documentation. Both sources also claim that a 400 haler die from 1920 served as the template for the revision, with their assertion backed up by a trial print of a 400 haler with much of its shading removed. These revisions, to lighten the stamps' appearance and add a broad oval mouthpiece to the post horn, the first imposed on the 1920 design, were implemented in 1923 as Type I.

Below – implementation of Obrovský's suggestions to improve the appearance of the Agriculture and Science design.



400 haler 1920 –
the original version's dark aspect.



Modified 400 haler die –
much shading removed.



100 haler 1923 –
Type I's lighter aspect.

Why was Type I abruptly replaced by Type II?

One might believe that Type I's debut would have satisfied Obrovský's misgivings. The stamp was lighter, less mottled, and far more pleasant in appearance, improvements for which Obrovský had petitioned the postal administration. Obviously, this was not the case: in mid-March 1923 Type II entered circulation *mere weeks* after the February 1923 release of Type I. Clearly, to issue a design's second revision immediately after the release of the first, the postal administration must have been under considerable pressure. The literature is oddly silent about this event. Let's try to shed some much-needed light on the matter.

As with Type I, production of this revised design required a template. Žampach claims that a Type I die was used for the Type II template. The *Monografie*, on the other hand, declares that the engravers used another 1920 die, as they had done for Type I. Resolving this controversy is important. Determining the correct template theory will also help uncover the reasons for the abrupt Type II replacement, reasons that clearly reside in the differences between the Type I and II designs. However, to understand these differences one must first revisit the 1920 design.

The Czech Graphics Union employed two different methods to produce the 1920 plates. For the two higher values – the 500 and 600 haler – they used the same technique as was employed to produce the Hradčany: they transferred a 50% reduced photographic negative of a ten-by-ten array of double-stamp-size auxiliary prints to a metal plate, etched the plate, and used it to print stamps. For the four lower denominations the firm used multi-die typography, involving the cutting and soldering together of strips of individual metal dies.

These two production methods resulted in subtle differences in the stamps' appearance. The higher denominations had a well-formed white thumb-scroll attached to the right side of the oval (the upper images below). The right side of the oval in all the lower denominations was quite different. There the thumb scroll was rendered unrecognizable as it became a thin horizontal line (the lower images below).



The two higher denominations of the 1920 issue have well-formed thumb scrolls on the right side of the oval.



The four lower denominations of the 1920 issue have thumb scrolls on the right side of the oval reduced to a thin line.

Type II Corrected Mistakes Found in the 1920 and Type I Designs

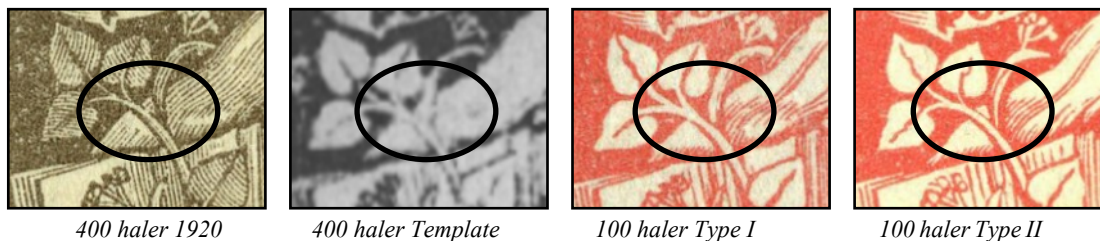
As has been pointed out above, a 400 haler 1920 die served as the template for Type I. Its unrecognizable thumb scroll was carried forward to the Type I design (below left) as a small dot to the right of the oval. Its removal from the Type II stamps (below right) was clearly a deliberate fix. As this does not make certain whether a Type I die from 1923 or a 1920 die served as the template for Type II, let's look at some obvious Type I problems.



The 1920 mistake corrected – Type I (left) carried forward a mistake found on the 1920 400 haler die. This mistake was corrected in the 1923 Type II design (right).

The engraver made three mistakes in Type I: a missing piece of the sleeve, an inconsistent tip on the banner near the oval, and a deformed book buckle. If these mistakes were deliberately repaired for Type II, Žampach is correct. But if these Type I mistakes never existed in Type II, because a new 1920 die lacking them served as the template, then obviously the *Monografie* is correct. Let's examine each of the three mistakes in detail.

The first mistake in the Type I design was the absence of part of the allegorical figure's sleeve above the twig and below the upper leaf (the so-called *triangle* sometimes mentioned by catalogues as a Type identifier). The original 1920 stamps and Type II stamps have this part of the sleeve, but it is absent from the Type I design, likely accidentally removed during erasure of the 400 haler's shading.



A 400 haler 1920 die (left) had its shading removed (centre left) – during the removal of the shading part of the sleeve was lost. It is absent from Type I stamps (centre right) but returned in Type II (right).

The engraver's failure to replace the lines within the left tip of the inscription banner properly gave rise to the second mistake. In the 1920 design, the banner above and below the inscription has closely spaced lines (below left). Type I, on the other hand, has widely separated lines in the upper part paired with an unaltered closely-spaced set in the tip (below centre). These mismatched lines were removed from the banner's tip on Type II stamps, save as tiny remnants at its upper edge (below right).



Above – mismatched copying of the banner's internal lines.

The third and final mistake in Type I was the rendition of the book's buckle. The 1920 release (left) had a point at the centre left of the clasp. It is missing from Type I (centre) but reappears in Type II (right).

Below – incorrect left edge on the buckle.



1920

Type I

Type II

Which is more probable? Was the engraver working on the Type II template directed to repair these tiny details on a Type I die or did he select a new 1920 die that needed no correction? That is, was he simply more careful with his removal of its shading lines? Let's muster just a bit more evidence.

Examine the tag at the banner's right-hand end: in 1920 it contained a single shading line (left): for Type I it was reduced to a small bump (centre left) or completely disappeared (centre right), but with Type II the original shading line is once again back within the tag (right). That an engraver inserted this line on a Type I die seems quite improbable.

Below – loss or retention of the right tag's line.



1920

Type I – bump

Type I – smooth

Type II

Another instance where the removal of the original 1920 shading differs between Types I and II is within the cluster of linden leaves on the book (not the upper leaves cited so often by catalogues as type markers). In removing the lines from the 1920 die (left) the engraver did an excellent job for Type I (centre) but left tiny remnants of the lines in the Type II template (right). There appears to be no other reasonable explanation for the appearance of shading remnants in Type II that were absent from Type I, save that the former was created anew from a 1920 die that still had shading lines. That fact, coupled with the handling of the other so-called ‘corrections’ described above, strongly supports the theory that the *Monografie* is correct and Žampach mistaken: the Type I and the Type II templates both had 1920 dies as their source.



Above – shading remnants in the Type II stamps.

Artistic Improvements to Types I and II

From the above we may conclude that the use of a new 1920 die for Type II most likely means that Obrovský was upset with Type I's clumsy rendition and insisted the engraver make a better job of it. The changes to Type II were not corrections to a Type I die but the consequence of more carefully removing the shading from a 1920 die.

There are, like the pre-release removal of the shading lines and change in the shape of the mouthpiece on the post horn, three obvious post-1920 design improvements. Rather than repairs, these changes appear to be gradual improvements to the design. For these changes, the Type I version resembles but does not match the 1920 version: the Type II rendition shows yet further improvement.

The first of these improvements is where the sleeve joins the figure's shirt just above the book. The original 1920 stamps (left) and their Type I copies (centre), while not identical, are equally dark, but this part of the shirt is much lighter and simpler in Type II (right).



The same is true of the upper leaf cluster. The dark 1920 rendition (left) is lighter in Type I, as explained earlier, but its veins were accurately copied over from 1920, remaining thick and dark (centre). In Type II (right) the leaves have a bit more shape, while their veins are slender and graceful, making the cluster brighter.

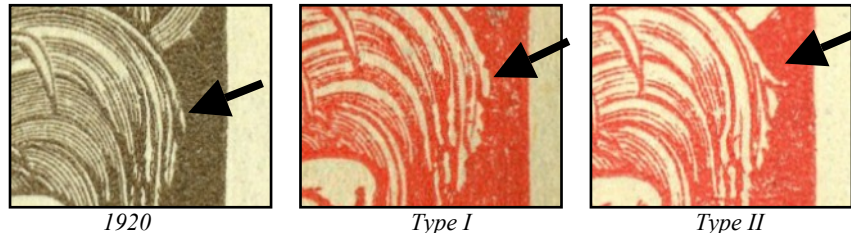


The buds on the book were also improved. Their thick outlines are much thinner, and their centres brighter.

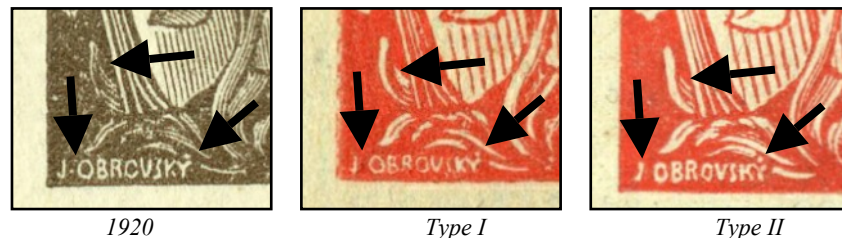


Arbitrary Alterations to Types I and II

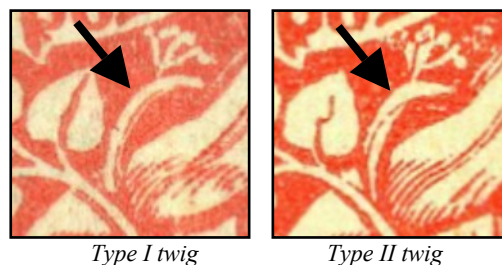
Then there are four other changes – these appear arbitrary. The first is a small change to the sheaf's right-hand side. In the 1920 version the right side's outer straw continued the general curve of the sheaf as it passed over an open area (left). The Type I drawing forced the tip of that same straw into the opening, thus tightening the outer curve of the sheaf (centre). The Type II design changed the shape of the sheaf's right-hand side by filling in the open area from 1920 and redirecting the tip of the straw towards the edge of the stamp (right).



The second and third arbitrary changes occur near the lower left corner of the stamp. The long leaf to the left of the book has the same outline for the 1920 (left) and Type I versions (centre). Type I merely lacks shading, but for Type II the leaf has been straightened. Next, the signature is very near the bottom in the 1920 stamp, about the same for Type I, but considerably higher in Type II. At the same time, in the Type II design the accent mark has been centred over the *Ý* and is closer to some enlarged leaves.

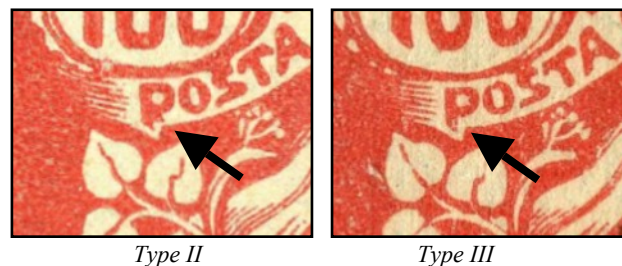


Finally, note the twig supporting the flower under POŠTA. The shading line in Type I clings to the right edge but Type II's starts on the left and crosses to the right. One is left to wonder about these arbitrary alterations. Did Obrovský order these changes? Or did the engraver simply insert his ideas into the design? I suspect we shall never know the real reasons behind them.

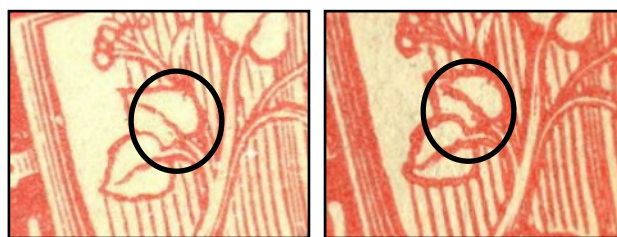


Type III: A Long-Needed Correction Paired with Three Arbitrary Changes

One might believe that replacing the Type I design with Type II would have satisfied Obrovský, as Type II stamps corrected all but one of Type I's shortcomings. Indeed, the Type II release served unchanged from early 1923 to mid-1924, more than a year. But about halfway through the life of the stamps, someone finally noticed the spur on the P in POŠTA (present in every version from 1920 onwards). Type III removed it.



It is also clear that a Type II die served as the template for Type III as the shading line remnants in the lower cluster of leaves – these first appeared in Type II – were carried forward to Type III. In addition to removal of the spur, three other somewhat arbitrary changes were made. The long leaf left of the book became thicker and pointed leftwards; the 100 haler oval now resembled Types II and III in the other two denominations; and the scallops around the oval, save for the top one, became fully separated.



Type II

Type III

Shading line remnants



Type II



Type III

Long leaf's thickness and direction.



Type II



Type III

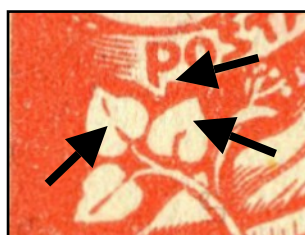
Scallops

Most catalogues have seized upon an untrustworthy Type III detail to differentiate between it and Type II. Approximately 99% of Type III stamps lack a vein resembling a bayonet in the upper cluster's rightmost leaf. Many catalogues *correctly* suggest the lack of a bayonet identifies a Type III stamp but *falsely* claim that the presence of one identifies a Type II stamp. Not true! About 1% of Type III stamps actually have a bayonet vein.

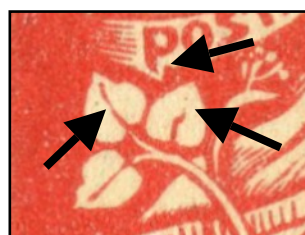
Žampach erroneously identifies Type III stamps with a bayonet vein as Type IV. In truth, the presence or absence of the bayonet depends solely upon the pressure applied by the printing cylinder on the press. There is no Type IV: the bayonet appears randomly on Type III stamps [7]. The lack of a spur on the P and the long leaf are the best identifiers for Type III. I repeat: while the presence of a bayonet does not necessarily identify a Type II, stamps with a short vein lacking a bayonet in the upper right leaf are always Type III.



Type II



99% of Type III



Versions found in 1% of Type III



Mixed Types

While repairing an unknown Type III plate, a mistake was made in replacing a set of its dies: a strip of five Type II dies was mounted in Positions 81 to 85. This produced very interesting Type II and Type III joined stamps in both vertical and horizontal arrangements. The Type II stamp positions (81–85) can be accurately determined by their Type II or the surrounding Type III subtypes (see CPSGB POD 187/188 for subtype details).

Type III
Position 71Type II
Position 81Type III
Position 91

Identifying the Three Types

Most catalogues cite perhaps three differences between each type and place these differences in an area near or within the word POSTA. Actually, there are many differences. While most are on the left side of the stamp, others are found near its centre and on the right: the latter are not shown here but appear in this article’s arbitrary alterations discussions.



True of all three denominations (100, 200, and 300 haler)

	Type I (no 200 haler exists)	Type II	Type III
1	Spur on the P (but does identify a 200 haler Type II)		No spur on the P
2	Long straight veins. Veins are thick.	Bayonet present. Other veins solid.	Bayonet usually not present. Upper left leaf’s vein often broken
3	Twig’s shading line on the right.	Shading line crosses the twig.	
4	Part of sleeve missing.	Part of sleeve present.	
5	Buds have thick outlines.	Buds have thin outlines.	
6	Buckle has a smooth left edge.	Buckle has a pointed left edge.	
7	Long leaf bends inwards.	Long leaf is straight.	Thicker long leaf bends outwards.
8	Signature close to bottom.	Signature is further from the bottom.	
9	Ý’s accent offset.	Ý’s accent centred.	

The long leaf may be used to quickly and uniquely determine a stamp’s type.
Greyed-out entries (except as noted below) fail to uniquely identify a type.

A missing bayonet in the upper right leaf uniquely identifies a Type III. A spur on the P uniquely identifies a 200 haler Type II.

Type I (no 200 haler exists)

Thick digits
Open scallops.

Thin digits

For the 100 haler its combination of scallops and digits determine the type. Save for the 300 haler Type I, the scallops are less useful in identifying the 200 and 300 haler types.

Open scallops –
3’s top turned right

Type II

Flat bottomed zeros –
open scallops.

Raised left zero.

Closed scallops –
wide gap.

Type III

Sharp base on 1 –
closed scallops.

Zeros aligned.

Closed scallops –
narrow gap.

Additional Information about the Issue

For Types II and III, the remnants in the 200 and 300 haler are identical, or all but identical, to the 100 haler's.



Type II



Type III



Type I



Type II



Type III

Papers

Papers occur in yellow, pale yellow, and white colours. Thin, translucent, and thick papers are not uncommon. There is a good deal of folding, wrinkling, and missing printing.

Colour

The primitive printing conditions of the time naturally gave rise to colour shades. They range from light red to deep red, sometimes to near pink or brick. Also commonly found are stamps with an orange cast.

Tally Numbers

Tally numbers are not found on any 1923 Agriculture and Science stamps.

Printing

Látal [6] claims the printing of 11,000,000 Type I stamps began on 24 January 1923. He says further that 130,000,000 Type II stamps and 240,000,000 Type III stamps were printed. The number released into circulation for all three types is not known.

Perforations

Two types of perforations were used, a $13\frac{3}{4} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ comb perforation and a $13\frac{3}{4}$ line perforation. Rarely stamps are found imperforate.

Retouches

Early Czech philatelists were always eager to find instances where the printer repaired clichés. In doing so, many times they deemed dramatic flaws *retouches*. Modern experts regard such claims with suspicion and demand evidence, such as trial prints or stamps circulated with and without the claimed retouch. Some valid retouches do exist.

Circulation

POFIS [5] reports the Post Office announced the new design on 1 February 1923. By the end of the month the 100 and 300 haler Type I stamps were available, but not the 200 haler. The revised 100 and 200 haler Type II stamps followed in March, the 300 haler not until July. I suspect the printer knew the Type I stamps were a failure but released them anyway because their two values – but not the 200 haler – were urgently needed. Why else would the Type II stamps have been ready to release a few weeks after Type I? For Type III, the 100 haler appeared in May 1924, the 300 in August, and the 200 haler in January 1925. The precise release dates for all types and denominations are unknown. All the stamps were withdrawn on 31 December 1925.

Cutting Guides and Spacers

Typographic lines of varying lengths, thickness, and locations are sometimes found in the top and bottom selvedge of Type II and III panes, but they are not present on Type I panes.



Cutting guide



Spacers

Press Position Numbers

Press position numbers, often erroneously reported as plate numbers, appear in the selvedge of Types II and III panes – they are not found on Type I panes. They indicate a plate's position in the printing forme. Press position numerals 1, 2, 3, and 4 are found on the left edge next to positions 41 or 51, or on the right edge next to positions 50 or 60.



Type II – press position number.

Postal Use

The 1923 Agriculture and Science 100, 200 and 300 haler were valid only during the fifth tariff period. During that period most domestic and foreign mail, excepting that to favoured nations, required franking in multiples of 1 Kč, starting with a 1 Kč domestic 20 g letter rate. Because of this, these stamps saw much service and are quite common in single, multiple, and mixed frankings.

Sources

- [1] Kosik and Pierce, 'The Redrawn Agriculture and Science Issue of Czechoslovakia', *The Czechoslovak Specialist* (December 1965), pages 175–179.
- [2] Karásek, Jan, *Československé poštovní známky a jejich padělky (1918–1939)*, Česky Těšín (1998), pages 152–155.
- [3] Karásek, Jan *et al*, *Monografie československých známek: Díl II*, Prague (1971), pages 398–413.
- [4] Žampach, František *et al*, *Hospodářství a věda 1923*, Brno (1990).
- [5] Beneš, F., *Československo 1918–1939*, Prague (2015), page 87.
- [6] Látal, Jindřich., *Hospodářství a věda 100 hal červená* [manuscript copy, gift from Mr Látal].
- [7] Látal, Jindřich *et al*, 'K tzv. IV typu známek Hospodářství a věda 1923', *Filatelie* (2001/7), page 13.
- [8] Wilson, Mark, The 1923 Agriculture and Science Issue (Hospodářství a Věda), CPSGB Monograph 23 (2010). [Much of this article relies upon theories first advanced in that monograph.]

Auction Update and call for consignments

It is some while now since the Society had an Auction for members. The plan is to organize an Auction during the autumn and to that end I would be grateful if members could consider items that might be consigned. This is an excellent opportunity to both buy and sell items of common interest whilst clearing out your stock books and drawers! The society web site describes the process for submitting lots here: www.cpsgb.org/pages/auction.htm. But feel free to contact me directly – at auctioneer@cpsgb.org – to discuss suitability and options.

Terry Hancock

The Birchington Volunteers

Tony Holdsworth

This article is based on text and photographs provided by the late **Heinz Vogel**, and is published with the kind permission of his son, **Martin Vogel**.



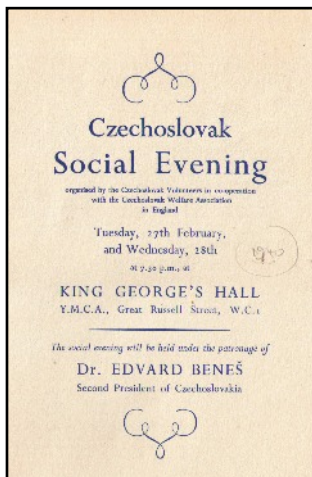
Heinz Vogel (*left*) was born in 1928, in Moravská Ostrava. When the Germans invaded Czechoslovakia in 1939, the Vogel family made an obvious choice: as well as being Jewish, Heinz' father Alfred was a known socialist, so they would have been prime targets for the Nazis. Travelling via Poland, they eventually landed in Dover on 20 June 1939. After a brief stay in London, they moved to Montrose Camp in Margate, and then on to Beaconsfield House in Birchington-on-Sea.

With the assistance of the Czechoslovak Welfare Association in England, this had been set up by a group of Czechoslovak refugees who were anxious to volunteer for the army or air force, so as to join the fight against Germany. They named the house '1. Československý Domov – 1st Czechoslovakian Home'. Arriving in March 1940, Alfred joined the volunteers, while his wife Ethel set up home with Heinz in rented rooms just up the road, at 72 Station Road.



Left and above – Beaconsfield House in 1939/1940. Below – the Birchington volunteers with some family members at Beaconsfield House in 1940. Heinz is second from the right in the front row, and Alfred and his wife, Ethel, are behind him.





The cover of the programme for the Czechoslovak Social Evening in February 1940.

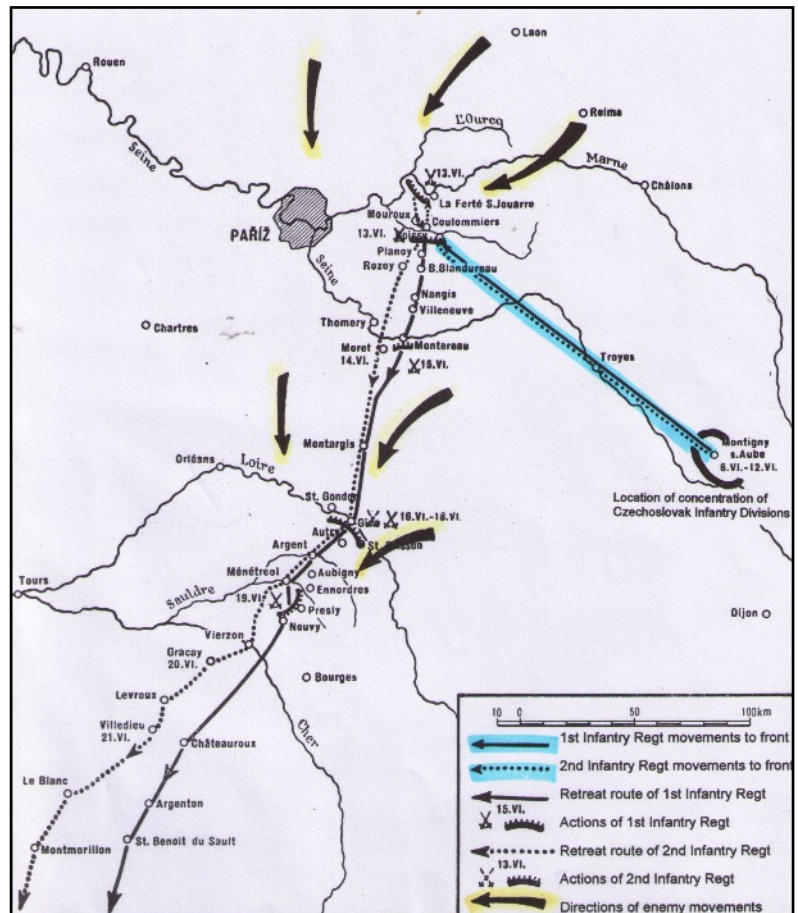
Under the leadership of Richard Pollak, the Czechoslovak soldiers kept themselves fit while waiting for the call to action, and did their best to serve the local community. Their male voice choir, gymnasts and actors took part in various publicity and fundraising events. On 27 and 28 February 1940 they had taken part in a Czechoslovak Social Evening at the King George's Hall in London, under the patronage of Dr Edvard Beneš, the second President of the Republic, who was living in exile in Putney.

The call finally came, and on 7 May 1940 they left Birchington for France, to join their comrades who had been forming a brigade in the French Army in Agde, near Béziers in the south of France. Two infantry regiments were forming there, with a total of nearly 5,000 officers and men: 2,262 in the First Regiment, and 2,593 in the Second Regiment. On 5 June, two days after the last men of the British Army had left Dunkirk, these two regiments were called upon to enter the war with the French Army as it took rearguard action on its retreat to the south. Their orders were to try and hold the enemy at every major river on the way.

Alfred was serving with the First Infantry Regiment, and on 7 June the first of their troops left Camp Agde for Autricourt on the Côte-d'Or, about 20 km south-east of Troyes and 10 km north of Châtillon-sur-Seine. All the troops arrived by 9 June, and on 10 June they were ordered to join the 23rd (French) Infantry Division on the retreat from battles at the Seine and the Aisne rivers. The Division was put in reserve, with its headquarters in Oissery, north of Meaux, while the rest of the tired, ill-equipped, and outnumbered men of the 7th Army took up defensive positions along the Oise, Nonette, Ourcq and Marne.

By 12 June the First Infantry Regiment had retreated to the Coulommiers area, owing to developments elsewhere. The following day, two battalions were positioned at Coulommiers to defend the Grand Morin river, with one battalion being kept back in reserve. This was their first encounter with the enemy, putting up resistance for the whole day, until obliged to retreat late in the evening.

From then onwards, the pattern was set, with repositioning and retreat for the next ten days, until they reached Nontron in the Dordognes on 23 June – nearly a week after the French surrender (*continued on page 24*)



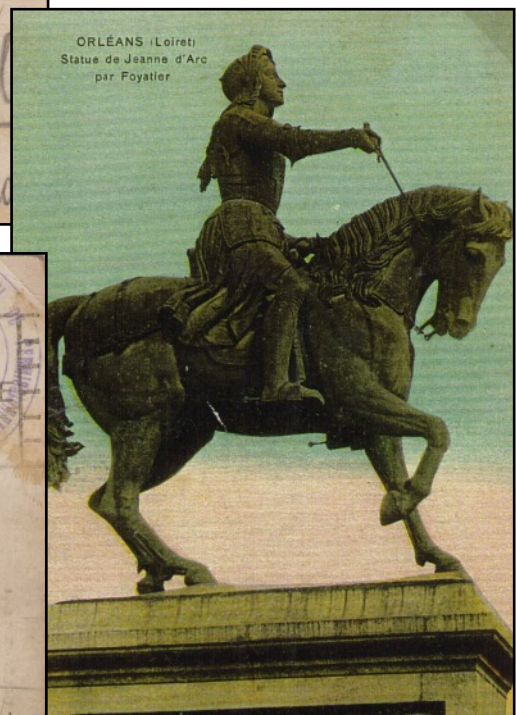
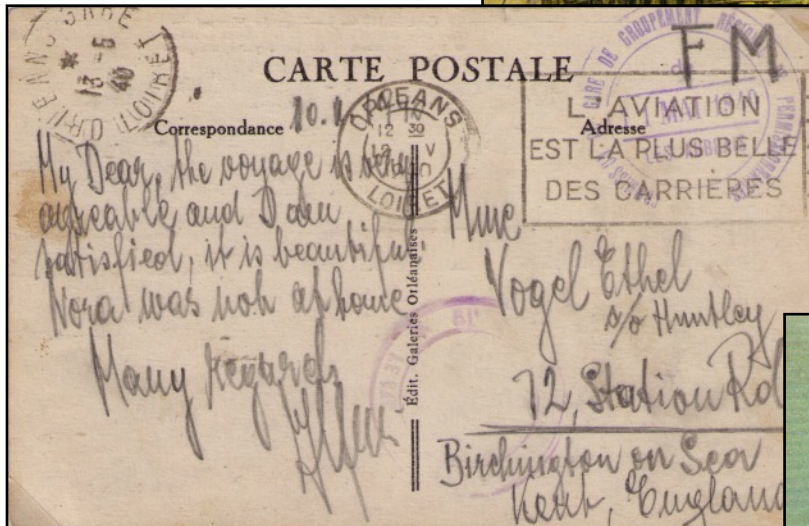
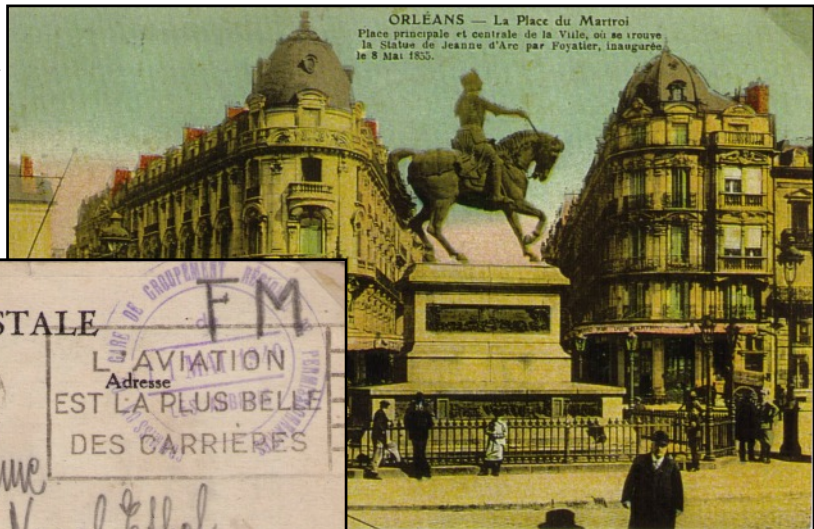
Top left – Sokol gymnasts at Birchington.

Centre left – somewhere in France: Alfred (on the left) with his comrades on the way to join forces with the French army.

Above left – the Czechoslovak base at Camp Agde.

Above right – the route taken by the retreating Czechoslovak military units in France during June 1940.

Postcards sent from Orléans on 10 May 1940 by Alfred to Ethel (below) and Heinz (bottom), on his way to Agde. Both carry the cachet COMMISSION DE GARE DE GROUPEMENT REGIONAL DE PERMISSIONNAIRES DE 11 May 1940 les AUBRAIS (Regional grouping station commission of permitholders of 11 May 1940 Aubrais: Fleury-les-Aubrais is a suburb of Orléans).

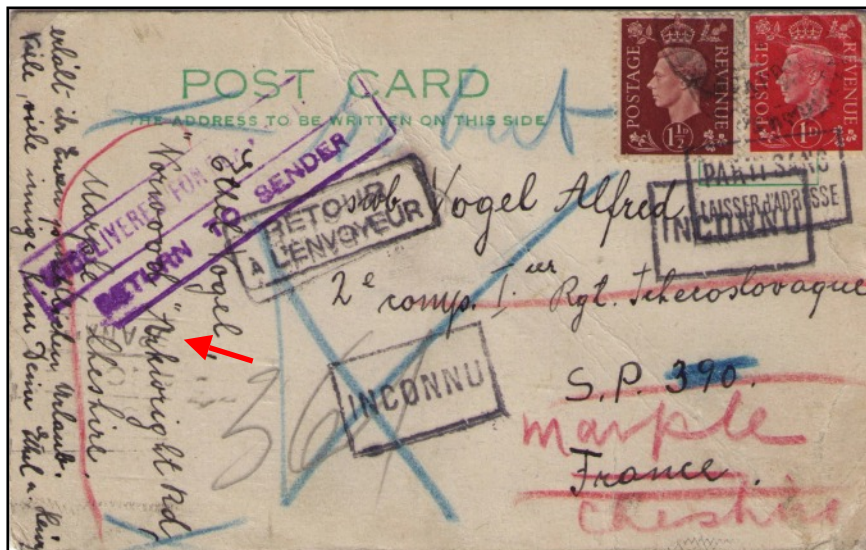
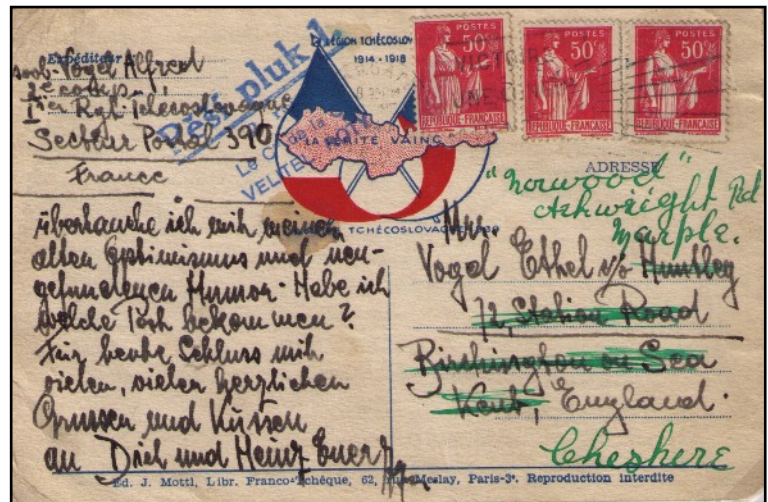


In Paris Alfred was able to use one of the military cards published by J. Mottl. Showing the flags of Great Britain, France, Czechoslovakia and Poland, the card is inscribed 'Il faut en finir – VAE GERMANIA L'HEURE DU CHÂTIMENT APPROCHE' ('It must be ended – woe to Germany – the hour of punishment approaches'). Postcard dated 15 May 1940 (on reverse) and postmarked PARIS VII 24? MAI 40 – LA VICTOIRE EST UNE LONGUE PATIENCE. Cacheted Pěší pluk 1. 2 rota (1st Infantry Regiment 2nd Company) and VOJENSKÁ CENZURA/CENSURE MILITAIRE (Military censor).



Another Mottl postcard, this time showing the flags of France and Czechoslovakia, and inscribed 'LÉGION TCHÉCOSLOVAQUE 1914-1918/LA VÉRITÉ VAINC / L'ARMÉE TCHÉCOSLOVAQUE 1939' (Czechoslovak Legion 1914-1918/Truth conquers / Czechoslovak Army 1939).

Dated 26 May 1940 (on reverse) and postmarked PARIS VII ? ? /40 ? Forwarded in June to Ethel's new address in Marple.



A postcard sent by Ethel to Alfred which he never received. Dated 9 June 1940 (on reverse) it is postmarked in Stockport, Cheshire, and carries multiple cachets: INCONNU (unknown); PARTI SANS LAISSEZ d'ADRESSE (left without leaving a forwarding address); RETOUR A L'ENVOYEUR (return to sender); UNDELIVERED FOR REASON STATED - RETURN TO SENDER; ? ESPAÑA? (indicated by the red arrow). It also carries a pencilled '361' and 'Rebut' (sent to a dead-letter office for further processing) in blue crayon. On the reverse there is a very faint postmark with MADRID and the date 11 December 1940.

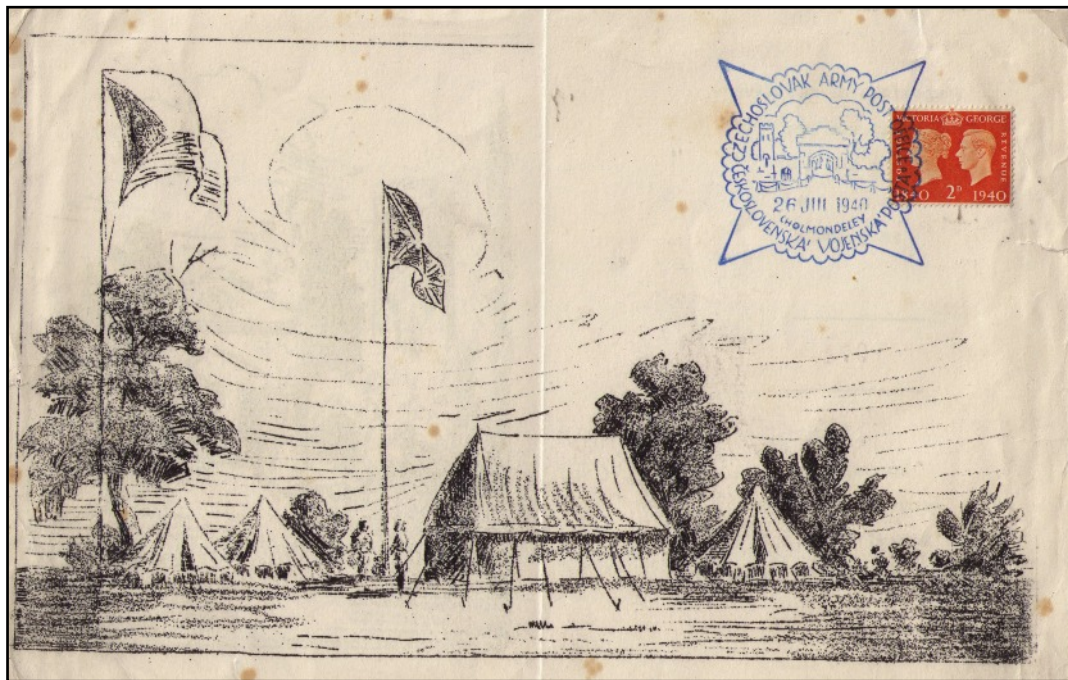


The long journey back to England – the march from Narbonne to Sète (above left), on board the last boat from Sète (above), and arriving in Liverpool.



Left – Czech troops at the gate to Cholmondeley Park.

Below – a special handstamp and card to commemorate the visit of President Beneš to Cholmondeley, 26 July 1940.



and the establishment of the Vichy puppet government on 17 June. Luckily, they were able to entrain for Narbonne, covering the last 65 km to Agde and Sète on foot. They were eventually evacuated on 27 June in some of the last boats to leave for England, travelling via the Middle East and Gibraltar to arrive in Liverpool on 13 July.

By now, the south coast of England had been declared a 'Protected Area', and all non-essential 'visitors' (particularly aliens), were obliged to find somewhere else to live. Ethel and Heinz moved to Marple in Cheshire. The returned soldiers were re-assembled in a camp set up in Cholmondeley Park near Malpas in Cheshire, which was only about 40 miles from Marple. Alfred and the remnants of the Czechoslovak Army in France were now peacefully installed in England and would be given time to recuperate, re-form and re-arm before being called once more to return to the mainland of Europe to liberate Czechoslovakia.

Heinz Vogel was an active member of the CPSGB, writing several articles for *Czechout*, including 'The Vogels' Escape from Ostrava' (www.cpsgb.org/journal/152.pdf#page=19). He died peacefully on 18 November 2024, aged 95, a father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Further information about the family is available on a website entitled 'Vogel Vault' (www.vogel.org.uk), which is maintained by his son Martin.

Further reading

Vogel, H., *A Certificate to Prove It*, www.vogel.org.uk/memoirs/ – Heinz Vogel's memoirs on the 'Vogel Vault' website.

Vogel, H., 'The Vogels' Escape from Ostrava', *Czechout*, September 2013, Number 152 (Vol. 31/3).

Kralicek, V. J., and Page, W. A., *Military Cards of the Exiled Czechoslovak Forces in France and Great Britain (1939–1945)*, CPSGB Monograph 12 (1999).

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New Issues – Slovak Republic Tony Holdsworth

Images and text adapted from
www.pofis.sk/en/catalog/products

2 January 2025

The 250th Anniversary of the Theresian Schooling System (POFIS 837)

The reign of Maria Theresa, Empress and Queen (1740–1780), is associated with many reformative steps, including the educational and schooling system, which was becoming a political issue. In December 1774, the General School Ordinance (*Allgemeine Schulordnung*) for all German schools in all the imperial and royal hereditary lands was issued in German in the Austrian (and thus also the Czech) part of the Habsburg monarchy. Three years later, in 1777, the Method of Education and Instruction for Hungary and its incorporated provinces (better known in its abbreviated form as *Ratio educationis*) came into force in the Kingdom of Hungary. The Theresian School Regulations were the first step towards the unification and nationalization of education in both parts of the Empire.

The stamp shows the Empress Maria Theresa late in her reign with her symbols of power – the Bohemian royal orb and the Hungarian crown and sceptre. She is leaning over with her hand resting against the state emblem in the form that was printed in the General School Ordinance. The FDC was inspired by a simple aid used to teach children to read, named *Kohútík* after its depiction of a young cockerel. It was a small, home-made, wooden board with a sheet showing the alphabet, numbers and the Lord's Prayer glued on both sides – a simple form of alphabet book.



20 January 2025

Sport: The 100th Anniversary of the European Ice Hockey Championship in the High Tatras – NVI 'T2 50g' (POFIS 838)

An unexpected thaw in January 1925 prevented the 10th European Ice Hockey Championship from being held on the frozen Vltava River in Prague and the Jordán Reservoir, near the city of Tábor. As Czechoslovakia had no artificial ice rink, the teams (Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, and Czechoslovakia) had to move to the High Tatras and play on a frozen lake, Štrbské pleso. Without losing a point or conceding a goal, Czechoslovakia won their second European title. The Czech team had already achieved similar success in hockey back in 1911 and 1914. Their team included several players who got to the top in other sports. Apart from his hockey achievements (a bronze medal at the Olympic Games in Antwerp and three European Championship titles), Karel 'Káďa' Pešek was a three-time winner of the Czechoslovak national title as a footballer at AC Sparta Praha. The duo of Koželuh and Maleček also played tennis at Wimbledon. The four-time European champion Josef Maleček, who played for Czech ice-hockey club LTC Prague, played 107 matches for the A team and scored 114 goals. From 1943 he was a player/coach at OAP Bratislava, where he helped to lay the foundations of Slovak ice hockey.

21 February 2025



Easter 2025: Sacral Motifs of Historical Manuscripts from the Public Library of Johannes Bocatius, Košice – NVI ‘T2 50g’ (POFIS 839)

The Johannes Bocatius Public Library in Košice, which celebrated its centenary last year, has a rich collection of old prints from the 18th and 19th centuries. It also includes religious literature, such as prayer books, hymnals, catechisms, sermons, and hagiographies. The stamp design uses a Pietá based on an image from the monastery of Poor Clares in Bratislava. The woodcut is part of the *Ragská Růže* (Rosa Rugosa) prayer book, illustrated with devotional images of the Virgin Mary. In 1846, the book was issued in Slovak by the printing press of Johann Werthmüller and Son in Levoča. It was re-issued many times, and in addition to hymns and a calendar of saints it contained numerous illustrations with religious and iconographic themes from pilgrimage sites in Hungary, Bohemia and Austria. The greatest emphasis was placed on images of the Virgin Mary which, from the 17th century, played an important role in the Counter-Reformation. The printer Johann Werthmüller was established in 1815 – he was joined by his son in 1845, and the press continued until 1895, playing an important

role in the Štúr movement in Levoča. Between 1848 and 1849, important historical works such as *Žiadosti slovenského národa* (Requests of the Slovak Nation) were printed here.

28 February 2025

Personalities: Viliam Figuš-Bystrý (POFIS 840)

The composer, teacher, pianist, conductor, and collector of Slovak folk songs Viliam Figuš-Bystrý (1875–1937) was a significant character in the history of Slovak music from the first third of the 20th century. He was closely connected with his home town, Banská Bystrica, where he spent most of his life. He studied at the teachers' institute in Banská Štiavnica (1889–1893) and later briefly worked as a teacher in various places. In 1907, he returned permanently to Banská Bystrica.

His musical style was largely Romantic. He was an enthusiastic admirer of Slovak folk songs and many of his adaptations of folk songs for voice and piano have been published. He collected songs from the areas around Zvolenská Slatina and elsewhere. His greatest work was a folk opera, *Detvan* (The Man from Detva), based on a libretto inspired by the poem of the same name by A. Sládkovič (premiered in 1928). The extensive compositional legacy left by Figuš-Bystrý also includes choral, cantata, and sacred music, as well as orchestral, chamber, piano and organ instrumental works.



13 March 2025

Naïve art from Kovačica in Vojvodina (POFIS 841)

Naïve art is closely associated with the municipality of Kovačica in Vojvodina (an autonomous province in northern Serbia), where its foundations were laid and the number of practitioners is highest. Kovačica has become a synonym for this authentic style, which has earned global recognition. It was included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2024. The roots of naïve art in Kovačica date back to the 1930s, when its inhabitants began to depict their everyday life, traditions, folklore, and the beauty of the

surrounding countryside on canvas. The stamp features *Ideme do práce* (Off to work) by Zuzana Chalupová – full of colour and childlike honesty, the works display a positive view of the world – while the FDC cachet is a design by Pavel Hajko, and the FDC cancellation by Zuzana Vereski, all practitioners of Kovačica naïve art.

14 March 2025

Sport: 100th Anniversary of Table Tennis in Slovakia (POFIS 842)

Table tennis was brought to Europe by the English in the 1880s. The first World Table Tennis Championship was held in London in 1926. Table tennis was recognized as an Olympic sport in 1977 and first included in the Olympic programme in 1988, in Seoul.

Table tennis spread to Slovakia early on, within the time of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, especially in Bratislava and Košice. Further development took place after 1920 with the first clubs founded between 1922 and 1926. The Czechoslovak Table Tennis Association (ČsTTA) was founded on 22 October 1925, in Prague. The organizational and technical management of the ČsTTA appointed trustees for Slovak clubs and counties. The first international Slovak table tennis championship took place from 11 to 18 December 1927 in Bratislava. Historical milestones in the management and organization of table tennis include the establishment of the Slovak Table Tennis Association (SSTZ) on 10 December 1939, and the founding of the independent Slovak Table Tennis Association on 3 October 1993.



21 March 2025

950th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Abbey at Hronský Beňadik (POFIS 843)

The Benedictine Abbey at Hronský Beňadik was founded in 1075 (or possibly even a little earlier) by King Géza I of Hungary. The core of the abbey was the church and monastery buildings around the so-called ‘paradise courtyard’. The original Romanesque church, dating back to the establishment of the monastery, consisted of a large three-nave building with three semicircular apses on the eastern end, and a pair of towers on the western end. In spite of the restoration in the 1880s of the Gothic church that replaced it, built on the same site in the 14th century, the church still has a relatively coherent High Gothic form. It is a partial copy of the original layout – on the western side,

the layout is supplemented by a *matroneum* (a gallery supported by columns, opened to the interior of the church). A richly decorated main portal is set in the central axis of the western façade. Apart from the church, the most valuable medieval parts of the monastery include the chapel above the sacristy. This became the place of safekeeping for the precious relic of Christ’s blood donated to the monastery by King Matthias Corvinus in 1483. Monastic life ended in Hronský Beňadik in the 16th century, after which the complex was converted into an anti-Turkish fortress.

11 April 2025

Technical Monuments: Bratislava Propeller Ferry (POFIS 844)

At Bratislava, the River Danube creates a natural barrier which has been overcome in various ways since ancient times. In 1891, when the old pontoon bridge dating from 1825 was replaced by the first steel bridge in Bratislava – the Franz Joseph I Bridge – an entrepreneur named Heinrich Hörnes asked the city leaders for permission to operate a steam ferry crossing. The ferry crossing was opened in 1893, between Ľudovít Štúr Square and Janko Kráľ Park, operated by two steamboats, *Frigyes* and *Izabella*. The name ‘Propeller Ferry’ was coined to refer to the propeller-driven ships that provided the service. The postage stamp depicts the last passenger ferry, the *Kamzík*. It ran the service from 1978 to its closure in 2003, providing many Bratislavans with their first unforgettable ‘Danube cruise’.





New Issues – Czech Republic Tony Holdsworth

Images and text adapted from
www.postaonline.cz/eshopfilatelie/listProducts.html?request_locale=en

20 January 2025

Tradition of Czech Stamp Design: Bohumil Heinz – NVI ‘B’ (POFIS 1303)



Bohumil Heinz (1894–1940) was a Czech graphic artist and engraver who made a significant contribution to the artistic and technical quality of steel-engraved postage stamps. From the 1930s onwards, he designed and engraved dozens of Czechoslovak stamps. His engraving artistry was highly regarded both in his home country and abroad. Throughout his life, he created remarkable works that were appreciated by both experts and the general public. The design of this stamp contrasts the watercolour portrait of the engraver with an intricate detail from one of his engravings (from POFIS 292–4), with the enlargement highlighting Heinz’s exquisite craftsmanship.

Numismatic anniversaries: 700 years of the gold florin and 725 years of the Prague groschen – NVI ‘A’ (POFIS 1304 & 1305)



The stamps depict both sides of the coins, with Latin inscriptions referencing the text from the respective coins. Bold typography lends the stamps a fitting sense of dignity and majesty. The designer of the issue drew inspiration from artifacts associated with Václav II – specifically, the Prague groschen (National Museum, H5-15918) – and John of Luxembourg’s florin (National Museum, H5-12053 and H5-15919).

The discovery of silver at Kutná Hora during the reign of Václav II was one of the factors leading to the minting of the silver Prague groschen from 1300 onwards. It became a very common coin across the whole of medieval central Europe.

John of Luxembourg was King of Bohemia from 1310 to 1346. He was succeeded on the throne by his son, Charles IV, later to become Holy Roman Emperor. He famously fought and died at the battle of Crécy in 1346, despite having lost his sight through ophthalmia in 1336.

12 February 2025

Wallachian Open Air Museum, Rožnov pod Radhoštěm – 82 Kč (POFIS A1306)



The Wallachian Open Air Museum is in the Zlín region of the Czech Republic, and is the second oldest and largest such museum in the country. It seeks to preserve the culture and traditions of Moravian Wallachia. The museum's Little Wooden Town is the oldest part of its exhibition. It was established in 1925 by the Jaronek brothers, by moving several traditional stave houses from Rožnov Square into the present-day museum area, including the wooden Town Hall. Gradually new buildings were added including Vašek's Pub, the Mayor's House from Velké Kralovice, and the Church of St Anne. The Wooden Town is the central image on the sheet, against a background of Wallachian flowers and vegetation, with objects emerging from two newer visitor circuits. The technical ingenuity of the local people is represented by heritage sites from the Mlýnská dolina, while the life of farmers and shepherds is illustrated by the Wallachian Village.

Personalities: Matěj Kopecký – NVI 'B' (POFIS 1307)



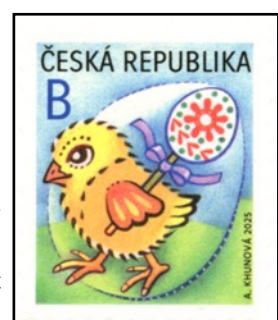
Matěj Kopecký (1775–1847) was a Czech puppeteer, whose father had been a poor travelling puppeteer, and whose descendants followed the art for six generations. After serving in the army he settled in Mirovice and his puppet theatre was, for many in the Czech lands, the only contact with theatrical culture, and with ideas of enlightenment and the Czech National Revival. He became one of the most well-known Czech puppeteers in the middle of the nineteenth century, when his son published a collection of his plays. His marionettes were up to 60cm tall, and alongside his portrait the stamp includes

images of the heads of four original marionettes from the Kopecký family collection – a jester, an acrobat, a princess, and a devil.

19 March 2025

Easter – NVI 'B' (POFIS 1312)

The stamp design features a chick with an Easter egg, a symbol of Spring which is now also associated with the religious festival celebrating the Resurrection of Christ. With its date changing every year, as it always falls on the first Sunday after the full Moon that occurs on or after the spring equinox, Easter Sunday was on 20 April in 2025.



19 March 2025

Botanical Garden in Brno – miniature sheet (POFIS A1308): stamps – 31 Kč (POFIS 1308); 35 Kč (POFIS 1309); 36 Kč (POFIS 1310); 40 Kč (POFIS 1311)

The Mendel University Botanical Garden is renowned for its orchid collection, boasting around 2,000 native species and over 3,500 cultivated varieties, making it one of the largest and most significant collections in Europe. Established in 1919 as the University of Agriculture, the Mendel University is the oldest agricultural college in the Czech Republic. Renamed in the mid-1990s in honour of the founder of the modern science of genetics, the university has developed a wide range of research activities in the fields of agriculture, forestry and horticulture. The orchids illustrated on the stamps are *Cattleya forbesi* (31 Kč), *Phalaenopsis fuscata* (35 Kč), *Phalaenopsis cornu-cervi* (36 Kč), and *Cattleya aclandiae* (40 Kč).



16 April 2025

Expo 2025 Osaka – Czech Pavilion: NVI ‘Z’ (POFIS 1313)



This special edition commemorates Czechia’s participation at EXPO 2025, held on the artificial island of Yumeshima in Osaka, Japan, from 13 April to 13 October 2025. As well as the Czech National Pavilion, the stamp features a linden leaf, a symbol of Czech national identity, and the mascot of Czech participation – René the Exponaut – inspired by a glass sculpture by the renowned Czech glass artist René Roubíček.

Under the theme Talent and Creativity for Life, Czechia showcases to the world Czech glass, music, and art, which the Japanese have admired for generations, plus innovative Czech technologies and regional talents. The pavilion, built from modern CLT (cross-laminated timber) wooden panels and glass, pays tribute to a centuries-old glass making tradition while

highlighting Czech innovation. As the first CLT wooden structure of its kind without a steel framework in Japan, it continues the legacy of the award-winning Czechoslovak Pavilion at EXPO 1970, also held in Osaka.

Expo 2025 Osaka – Alfons Mucha: NVI ‘Z’ (POFIS 1314, 1315, 1316 & 1317)



The second Czechia stamp issue to commemorate EXPO 2025 features Mucha’s first series of decorative panels, *The Seasons*, released in Paris in 1896. These were posters without text, intended for artistic use or interior decoration. The set of four panels depicts the seasons as ethereal nymphs, with appearances and moods capturing the essence of each season.

- Summer, with red poppies on her head evoking the heady perfume of summer’s heat, sits by a riverbank, dipping her feet in the cooling water.
- Spring is portrayed as a gentle fair-haired girl playing a lyre fashioned from a branch and her own hair.
- Autumn, with a wreath of chrysanthemums in her hair, celebrates the harvest against the rich autumn colours.
- Winter is a more mature woman wrapped in a cloak, warming a small bird stiff from the cold.

Membership Benefits

Meetings	Three London meetings in 2025, two joint meetings in Yorkshire, a meeting at EuroPhilEx in Birmingham, and five Zoom meetings.
Publications	Members receive the quarterly journal <i>Czechout</i> which includes articles of interest on Czech and Slovak philately and helps members to keep in touch with Society affairs. The Society publishes <i>Monographs</i> and Print-on-demand titles on wide-ranging topics containing original research.
Library	The Society maintains a comprehensive library of books, journals, and reference materials available to UK members only. Postage both ways paid by the borrower.
Auctions	Regular auctions with a varied range of reasonably priced items. Prospective vendors should contact the Auctioneer.
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EXPO 2025 Miniature Sheet – *The Seasons* by Alfons Mucha
(see page 30)