

CZECHOUT

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CO-EDITORIAL

Our remarks concerning articles in the last issue has brought forth an excellent paper on 'Camp Mail during the period of 1939-1945' by A.J. Stoyel, which we hope to publish shortly. We seem to remember mentioning to another member the idea of a combined paper on "Airmails" so we look forward to this coming to fruition in the not too distant future?

So if there is any facet of Czech philately you feel we should include please let us know, or better still, why not attempt to put something on paper. There is a very true maxim that if you wish to obtain information, one must first write an article, then people will reply telling you what you were really seeking for.

Colin Spong Yvonne King
Co-Editors

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome into the society the following who have joined since the last issue -

M.K.Beck (London SE19); David Eastman (Bideford); B.C.Day (Rainham);
E.H.Dissen (Netherlands).

CHANGE OF MEETINGS

In order to avoid clashes with certain other functions we have had to amend our programme as published in Czechout 4.80. The Season's meetings will now be as below -

Saturday 21 March	1919 Overprints	(Cyril Wackett)
Saturday 20 June	Field Post World War 1 and 2	(Worthing)
Saturday 26 September	Members Displays (maximum of 15 sheets)	(Ernst Gorge)
Saturday 14 November	Annual General Meeting	(Irene Galloway)

The next meeting as announced will take place on 21 March in the home of our Vice Chairman, Cyril Wackett. 8 Greenway, Bishops Stortford, Herts. (Tel.0279.53840), at 2.30 pm.

Travelling by Rail: From Liverpool Street Station a fast train usually leaving No. 7 platform at 12.36 pm and arriving 13.10 pm. Please check these times, and let Cyril know if you wish to be collected from the station.

By Road: The M.11 Motorway as far as it goes (from the South). At the end is a large roundabout and take the first turning on the left which is signposted to 'Bishops Stortford' continue along this road (Dunmow Road) for approximately two miles until reaching a point where the road makes a sharp right turn. On the left is a Public House (The Nag's Head), turn left here along Haymeads Lane which leads into Linkside Road, Greenway is the third cul-de-sac which is almost at the end of Linkside Road. No 8 is the last house on the right.

EXCHANGE

Bill Dawson has a friend in Czechoslovakia who wishes to exchange -

Pan Ing Miroslav Cerny, Podskalska 29, 128 00 PRAHA 2, CSSR

Pan Cerny writes in English and wishes to receive fine used GB, France, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand and USA. If any member is interested to receive CSSR used 1918-1980 and mint 1945-1980 please either write direct or to W.A.Dawson, 55, Strafford Avenue, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex IG5 0TJ if further details are required.

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

After the meeting of 21 March (or immediately before depending on numbers present) to ratify the decision at the AGM regarding the discontinuance of the Exchange Packet and to amend the Rules accordingly. (The Rules at present refer to the Packet and this needs to be deleted.)

SOCIETY NEWS

A most successful meeting was held at Robert Kingsley's house on Saturday January 24, with twenty four members present for the Auction which realised a total sum of £519.25p, for the benefit of buyer's and seller's of czech material.

During the afternoon the Francis Pettitt Salver was on display, it is hoped to give details of this new competition shortly.

Mr L.F.H. Woodcock of Poole, has resigned due to advancing age, we wish him well, and thank him for his past interest in the Society. Ms Yvonne Gren (146 Old Shoreham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, W.Sussex BN4 5TE) has taken over the society's Library from Ms Yvonne King, who has now moved to the City of Leeds on taking up a new position there as Solicitor. Yvonne will next be in Worthing on Saturday, April 11, when Wedding Bells will be ringing at Broadwater Parish Church (St Mary) on the occasion of her marriage to Richard Wheatley. All are welcome to the service at 2.00 pm, when member John Whiteside will assist as Best Man, and the Co-Editor will act as one of the Usher's.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

Three items of interest have appeared in recent issues of STAMP COLLECTING. 'Czech Army Brigade' a letter from Francis J Field (December 11) in reply to a query on various postmarks mentions 'This was part of the pro-Allies' volunteer group at Wolverhampton, that had been attached to the French Army in 1939-1940, when it also used Czech Army postmarks and cachets.

Francis mentions that he has a file of the special mimeographed Brigade newspapers that were edited locally.'

Whilst on December 18, Harry Hayes writes "Re SC Nov. 6, p.481, the postmarks illustrated are of the Czechoslovak Forces in Exile in GB, used in 1941 and 1943. Norman Hill's book Postal Markings of the Allied Forces in Great Britain illustrates these and 26 other types of the Czech Forces in GB. Small stocks of this book still exist after 30 years, and it costs about £2 from any philatelic bookseller. Of course, the postmarks of many other exiled Governments in GB are also illustrated."

Finally on January 8, Peter Ibbotson writes on Europage, "Czech Follow-up" On May 22 last year I showed an envelope returned to its English sender from Czechoslovakia by the Customs authorities, in which the sender had enclosed a set of GB stamps as a gift for his correspondent. Not until mid-November, I understand, did the sender get round to opening the returned envelope. Along with his original letter and the GB stamps, he found, cyclostyled on a slip of poor quality duplicating paper, the explanation (in French) of return of letter and contents: L'echange des timbres poste n'est pas possible qu'avec les collectionneurs tchecoslovaques/enregistres aupres de la Federation des philatelistes tchecoslovaques a Prague/et exclusivement par l'intermediaire des Pofis-Centre de l'echange des timbres-poste avec l'etranger, Boite Postale 1025, 1121 Praha 1. Or in other words, you can exchange stamps with Czech collectors only if they are organised and registered with the Federation of Czech Philatelists; and all exchanges must be via the exchange section of Pofis. (Pofis is the state-owned enterprise which controls the official retail stamp market via its shops and the POFIS catalogue of Czech stamps.)"

PRAGA 78 - BALLOON POSTS Some observations and notes by W.A. Dawson

Regarding Czechout 4.80 I would like to make some observations and notes concerning the article by Colin Smith, on the Praga 78 Balloon Posts.

1. The 6 Kcs pre-paid envelope used with the appropriate printed blue cachet for the four balloon flights and illustrated in the article, was of the same design as that used for the special Exhibition helicopter flight Pardubice-Praha on 8 September 1978 but without the printed balloon cachet. Cancelled with hand c.d.s. "530-01 PARDUBICE 1/-8.9.78-12/4 " Arrival mark for the exhibition site P.O. PRAHA 72 with code number 11, as also illustrated in Colin Smith's article.
2. Colin mentions the five blank squares at lower right of the illustrated envelope. These were intended for the insertion of the appropriate postal code for all internal addresses, which always consists of five numbers. Similar boxes appear on all current items of internal rate postal stationery, to encourage the use of postal codes. (G.P.O. please note?)

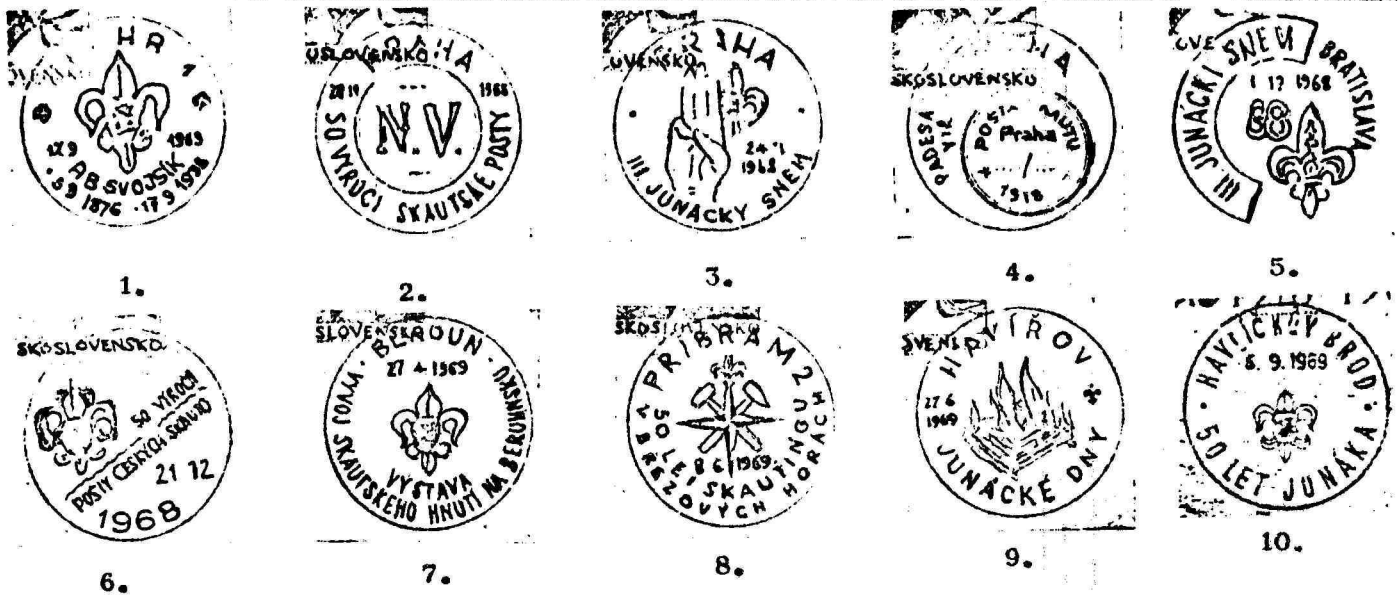
3. The exhibition handstamp as illustrated inscribed "PRAHA 72" since that was the correct district number of Greater Praha for the main exhibition site - full postal code "172 00 PRAHA 72."
4. The set of balloon flight covers in my collection show the following variations from those illustrated by Colin:
Czech balloon: Exhibition handstamp code "1." Landed 'MLADA VOZICE/16.9.78-15b' (without postal code number, with code 'b' in the handstamp.)
Austrian balloon: Exhibition handstamp code "8."
All other details as set out in the summary.

I can only hope that these brief notes are of interest to Colin Smith and other avid fans of 'balloon mail.'

SCOUT CANCELLATIONS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Before and After the World War 2

(Translated from the German text by John F Giblin) Wilhelm Otto Neuback in the Wiener Briefmarkenspiegel 1969/6; 1970/1 & 1970/2. Reprinted from the Scout Stamps Collectors Club Bulletin Vol. 12 No.1 January/February 1980 by kind permission of the Editor

Part 2 'The Prague Spring - 1968-1969.'



The political thaw, which set in, during January 1968, in Czechoslovakia and which gave rise to the 'Prague Spring' also permitted Scouts to give signs of life again. This re-awakening of the Scout Movement in the country has also found its manifestation philatelically in the form of special cancellations. Up to now there are ten of them:-

1. "30th Anniversary of the death of A.B.Svojsik the founder of Scouting in Czechoslovakia." Colour - black or green.
2. "50th Anniversary of the first Scout Post from 28th October to 25th November 1918, Scouts in Prague forwarded the post between Government offices in the newly founded state of the Czechs and Slovaks." Colour-black.
3. "3rd Congress of the Czech Scouts." Colour - black or green.
4. "50th Anniversary of the last Scout Post." Colour - black.
5. "3rd Congress of the Slovak Scouts." Colour - black.
6. "50th Anniversary of the entry of President T.G.Masaryk into the Prague Castle: Hradschin." (on this occasion in 1918, the Scouts once again took over the postal services). Colour - black.
7. "Exhibition for the development of the Scouts in the Beroun Region." Used 18-27 April 1969. Colour - black.
8. "50 years of Scout work in Pribram." Colour - black.
9. "Scout Day - Havirov." Colour - black or red.
10. "50 years of Scouting. - Havlickuv Brod." Colour - black.

Covers bearing each of these last ten 'Prague Spring' cancellations are available through the Sales Service @ 60p each. These include both black and green versions of Nos. 1 and 3, but not the red version of No.9. Additionally a cacheted cover

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is also available for the "Restitution of Activity of the Czech Scout Movement" posted March 1968 - price 45p. Please write to Peter J.Duck, 59 Gilpin Crescent, Whitton, Middlesex TW2 7BP.

Postage with order please - Inland 14p (1st class) or 11½p (2nd class)

POFIS CATALOGUE SUPPLEMENT for third quarter of 1980 (July - September)

Priced in Czechoslovak Crowns = Kcs-For comparison purposes approx £1 = 20Kcs

Flowers (Exhibitions:Flora at Olomouc - Floral at Bratislava)

<u>POFIS CAT.No.</u>	<u>FACE VALUE:</u>	<u>MINT:</u>	<u>USED:</u>	<u>QUANTITIES</u>
2445	0.50	0.50	0.30	1,290,000
2446	1.00	10.40	1.00	471,000
2447	2.00	2.00	1.00	1,421,000
2448	4.00	4.00	2.00	866,000

"Cut Graphic" - Embroideries, Laces, Tapestry, etc., cut from paper, = old china and japan art.

2449	0.50	0.50	0.30	12,420,000
2450	1.00	1.00	0.50	9,920,000
2451	2.00	2.00	1.00	10,205,000
2452	4.00	19.60	4.00	505,000
2453	5.00	5.00	2.50	6,090,000

Czechoslovak Population Census

2454	1.00	1.00	0.50	24,000,000 +
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+ the largest issue in recent years.

Alan J.Knight

CZECHOSLOVAKIAN MILITARY POSTS IN SLOVAKIA - 1918-1920: by John L. Whiteside

Czechoslovakia became a republic on 28th October 1918. While the western provinces of Bohemia and Moravia were readily established as the kernel of the new state, the eastern provinces of Slovakia and Ruthenia caused great problems. These provinces had been administered by Hungary, the boundary lines were not well defined and the Slovaks were by no means happy about their relationship within the new state to the more prosperous and numerous Czechs. In addition, Hungarian army units stationed in Slovakia formed a focus for resistance.

Czech troops entered Slovakia on 2nd November 1918. These units were largely volunteer battalions hastily formed in various Bohemian and Moravian towns. On 25th November 1918, the Peace Commission in Paris established a provisional border line between Slovakia and Hungary. By mid-December 1918, about 8,000 Czech troops had been sent into Slovakia. Then the number was greatly increased by the arrival of Czech Legions formed in Italy from Czechs in the old Imperial armies there and numbering about 19,000 men. Early in 1919, further increases occurred with the arrival of the Czech Legion from France.

During November and December 1918, soldiers' mail was passed through the civilian post offices. A collecting system was operated from the various units and most of the mail was forwarded through the post office at Trencin, where it was cancelled with the old Hungarian datestamps inscribed Trencsen.

Soldiers' mail was carried free of charge. It had to be endorsed Polni Posta (= Field Post) and further authenticated by the application of the cachet of the unit from which it originated. This practice continued throughout the period. The unit cachets are usually of straight-line pattern, either of one or two lines, but some circular ones are met with.

On 18th December 1918, an order was issued stating that soldiers' mail should be handstamped "From Czech Legion, postage free." The usual wording was "Od Cs.Legii, Postovneho prosta." Future developments made these very short-lived and they are

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seldom encountered.

On 1st January 1919, the first Field Post Offices were established to serve the increasing numbers of troops. A Field Post Sorting Office was set up at Uherske Hradiste and three Field Post Offices were initiated, numbers 22, 46 and 75. In these early stages of the setting up of the system and for some months to come, the Field Post Offices were assigned to different Brigades or Divisions and as these moved, so the F.P.O.'s moved with them. On 13th January, the locations were-
No. 22 - Trencis. No. 46 - Kezmarok. No. 75 - Kosice.

On 20th January 1919, these were still the locations of these three F.P.O.'s, but a further one had been introduced, No. 50 which was at Nitra.

The Czech Legion from Italy had brought with it an Italian Field Post Office - Posta Militare 52. This was used in Slovakia. It was laid down that it was to be used for two purposes, firstly for mail addressed to Italy (a number of Italian officers and men were assigned to the Legion) and secondly for mail of the Chief Command of the forces in Slovakia, which was that of the Italian Legion, General Piccione, its commander being Commander-in-Chief in Slovakia until 1st June, 1919, when the French Generals Mittelhauser and Hennoque took over. Despite these instructions, items may be found bearing this datestamp on ordinary items addressed to Czechoslovakia. These probably occurred either as a result of ignorance on the part of the postal clerks or as favours to friends. Four distinct types of the Posta Militare datestamp may be distinguished. Until 8th March 1919, it was located at Kromeriz, but it was then transferred to Bratislava together with the Army Headquarters. On the 1st June 1919, this Field Post Office returned to Italy.

The next Field Post Office to be established was No. 38. This was set up on 1st March 1919 at Zilina, but it was transferred on the 20th March to Zvolen. New FPO's were established as more troops were sent to Slovakia and the troops concentrated into Brigades and Divisions. On 20th April, No. 63 was established at Zilina, but a week later it moved with the Brigade to which it had been assigned to Banska Bystrica. Two days later, on 22nd April, a further F.P.O. was set up, probably again at Zilina, where it was certainly assigned at the end of the month.

Zilina appears to have been a place of great activity, possibly as a site for the concentration of new military formations. At some time between January and April, The Field Post Sorting Office had been transferred there from Uherske Hradiste.

Movements of the Field Post Offices continued. For example, F.P.O. 46, which in January had been at Kezmarok, subsequently transferred to Presov, but by April it had again moved to Uzhorod. On the 30th April 1919, the locations of the F.P.O.'s were :-

No. 22 - Poprad	No. 38 - Zvolen	No. 44 - Zilina
No. 46 - Uzhorod	No. 50 - Nitra	No. 63 - Banska
No. 75 - Kosice		BystERICA
Posta Militare 52 - Bratislava. Sorting Office - Zilina.		

The months of May and June 1919 were the period of the heaviest fighting. On 20th May, the Hungarian Red Army invaded in force and almost succeeded in splitting the Czech Army into two. After this initial period of success, however, the offensive was stopped and on 24th June, the Hungarians withdrew to their previous lines following an armistice.

Following the armistice and after the change from Italian to French overall command of the Czech Forces, which occurred on 1st June, the Army in Slovakia was completely reorganised into new Divisions. Each of these had a Field Post Office assigned to it, resulting in the opening of several new offices.

F.P.O. 12 was opened on 25th June at Spisska Nova Ves. On 18th July, it moved to Velke Michalovce. The 26th June saw the opening of two more offices, No. 10 at Uherske Hradiste and No. 25 at Hulin.

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During July three more F.P.O.'s were brought into use. On the 11th., No. 35 was set up at Poprad, on the 16th., No. 8 was established at Bratislava and on the 30th., No. 5 appeared at Nova Zamky.

At Bratislava, after the Italian Posta Militare 52 left on 1st June and until F.P.O. 8 was set up on 16th July, an interesting happening occurred. A Czech officer who had been attached to the Italian post office, continued to provide a service and used a provisional boxed rubber handstamp "Cs. polni posta, Bratislava and the date. Examples are naturally quite elusive.

It is more than likely that the various changes in location of these F.P.O.'s given in the foregoing paragraphs do not represent all the moves of these units during this early and eventful period. Whether the full story can be established is uncertain, unless sufficient archival material remains in Czechoslovakia.

From 1st August 1919, however, the position appears to have become much more stable. The re-organisation of the army had been virtually completed and the new Divisions established Headquarters at permanent locations. Two more F.P.O.'s were opened, No.14 on 30th August and No. 20 on 20th October 1919.

As the political situation began to stabilise following the collapse of the Bela Kun Communist regime in Hungary and the reaching of some measure of understanding with the new government there, several of the Czech Divisions were transferred away from Slovakia, resulting in the closure of seven F.P.O.'s between September and December of 1919.

The final closure of the remaining Field Post Offices in Slovakia took place in June and July 1920 and much of the Army was demobilised. From the latter part of June, no further outward mails were accepted and after a short period to process the items on hand, each office closed down, all having done so by 8th July. The Field Post Sorting Office at Zilina functioned until 30th July to deal with any residual material in the system and any inward letters addressed to F.P.O.'s.

Those troops remaining in Slovakia then used the civil mail system and additionally the free franking privilege for personal mail ceased. It is worth noting that throughout the period the Field Posts operated soldiers mail could still be forwarded through the civilian post offices, post free if endorsed and stamped with an army unit cachet and such items may be fairly often found.

The table that follows shows a summary of some of this data. The dates of the opening and closing are shown together with the Divisions to which the F.P.O. was attached after 1st August 1919 and the probable location of the office from that date.

<u>F.P.O.</u>	<u>Opened</u>	<u>Division served from August 1919</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Closed</u>
5	30/7/19	11th Infantry Division	Nove Zamky	1/7/20
8	16/7/19	Western Group Command	Bratislava	8/7/20
10	27/6/19	8th Infantry Division	Uhereske Hradiste	23/9/19
12	25/6/19	1st Infantry Division	Velke Michalovce	30/6/20
14	30/8/19	10th Infantry Division	Uzhorod	30/6/20
20	20/10/19	12th Infantry Division	Trnava	1/7/20
22	1/1/19	Eastern Group Command	Kosice	10/11/19
25	26/6/19	9th Infantry Division	Trnava	3/10/19
35	11/7/19	5th Infantry Division	Poprad	28/10/19
38	1/3/19	2nd Infantry Division	Zvolen	8/7/20
44	22/4/19	4th Infantry Division	Zilina	30/6/20
46	1/1/19	3rd Infantry Division	Uzhorod	29/5/20
50	20/1/19	7th Infantry Division	Nitra	15/9/19
63	20/4/19	Western Base Command	Trencin	8/12/19
75	1/1/19	6th Infantry Division	Kosice	5/9/19
Tridirma	1/1/19	Field Post Sorting Office	Zilina	30/7/20

to be continued....

As Bohemia is world-renowned for its glass industry, so is Slovakia for its production of ceramic artware. This fact was highlighted on December 5th, 1978 with five stamps devoted to the theme of Ceramics. Of the five stamps, I draw readers' particular attention to the 40 hal. stamp (Zena v kroji - Woman in national costume) designed by Michal Polasko (1883 - 1956) and produced by the pottery centre at POZDISOVCE, located in the Zemplin District of Eastern Slovakia.



Of all man's occupations surely, ceramics must be one of his oldest, stretching back to almost the dawn of human history. Yet in all that time, no machine has ever been devised to replace man's aesthetic eye or highly sensitive fingertips without which none of the beautiful works of art we today call CERAMICS could have ever been produced. Pottery in Pozdisovce goes back many centuries which is why today, this centre is one of the best known Ceramic centres in the whole of Slovakia. For hundreds of years without interruption, the folk of this region have handed down the skills and knowledge required to produce such greatly appreciated works of art that have become renowned throughout the entire Republic and in demand from many countries abroad.



Pozdisovce ceramics, both decorative and practical, enjoy honoured positions in a number of museums throughout Czechoslovakia and abroad, where they appear in the form of various folk products. Both utilitarian and figural Pozdisovce ceramics with their distinctive and traditional motifs suit both the practical and aesthetic requirements and needs of today's society and are a natural selection for many Czechoslovak household requirements.

Although Slovakia is well-known for its many branches of folk-art creativeness, its ceramic products, especially from Pozdisovce, have their own unique character displaying the expressive traits of a national culture, being very carefully preserved as an important cultural heritage for both present and future generations - a legacy of the ancestors of today's craftsmen and women.

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Following the publication of my notes in the Czechout issue of 1.80, further valuable information has been highlighted in correspondence from Mr Roy A. Dehn, with his kind permission and appreciative that the details provided may well stimulate the interest and further the knowledge of this stamp and, other values in the series.

Commenting on my notes Mr Dehn reminds readers, "that there is a more recent source-book for the Prague Castle issues than Velek. It is Vol 1 of the marvellous Czech monograph (Monografie Ceskoslovenskych Znamek). This lists four not three plates for the 5h. The fourth plate is identified by the figure 2.50 in the lower margin, the 0 of which is chipped at the bottom. Although Velek does not list any flaws in Plate III, MCZ lists and illustrates no less than 20. This compares with 16 for Plate I, 11 for Plate II and nine for Plate IV. Users of MCZ may like to be warned that its numbering of plates is often different from Velek's; some plates which Velek thought existed are not listed in MCZ. I think where possible, when the plates are printed two up, the top set of 100 subjects is called Plate 1 and the bottom set Plate 11. But since some of the sheets were printed sideways or upside down relative to the same or other values, there may be difficulties in logical numbering.

Anyone who has say the section of Plate II with stamp No 27 in it and a similar section without the error will see that the restoration is quite perfect. It is exactly as it should be. Now it is impossible to restore a white patch perfectly. First you have to raise the white patch to printing level by carefully hammering the tin plate from the back, then you have to reingrave with a burin and the engraving will look quite different (you could put in a type-high plug rather than hammer from the back; subsequent operations would be the same).

Does anyone know in what order the white and coloured zeppelin shape defects occurred? It is easier to explain if the coloured version occurred first. The sequence might then have been as follows. An oval spot of grease, gum or dirt get attached to stamp. This takes the ink and prints up in colour. After some time this is noticed and the dirt is carefully removed. (+ Incidentally raised dirt will print in colour, but with a white halo round it.) The printing pressure is very great and a raised portion of dirt will do two things, or one of two things. It will push down the metal below the dirt and it will push a hollow in the make-ready at that position. The make-ready is composed of pieces of paper and card applied to the cylinder which presses the paper onto the printing plate. If there is a hole in the make-ready the area under it will usually not print up. Stage two has now been reached. The make-ready has been compressed and is not forcing the plate to print up at this point; the area is also not type high because of the earlier damage, so this is not printing up. The remedy is to tap the area up from behind the plate - a mere fraction of an inch and to restore the make-ready by putting on a piece of paper. A very thin piece may make all the difference. For simplicity I have assumed that two things resulted from the dirt. In fact one of the two would be enough to explain the defect.

Those who illustrate plate flaws of the Prague Castle issue have so many to choose from, since almost every stamp in every plate can be identified without very great difficulty, that making a selection of the most important is difficult. Collectors may disagree in what they think most interesting or striking. I do however think that it is helpful to illustrate or emphasise those positions where the flaws are the same in all plates, since this usually provides evidence for believing that Plates I and II were electros or steros from a single master plate. For example at position 100 (Row 10 No 10), in all the printings I have seen, there is an extra chimney on the roof in the area between the linden branch and the arch on the right-hand 'Slovenska' side of the stamp. At position 47 there is always a little white spot just above the right-hand of the two NW spirals. At position 23 there is a small white swelling low down in the branch of the left-hand linden branch."

In a later communication refers again to MCZ "which logically makes a clear distinction between alterations made before the plate is cast or used for printing and those which occur later. MCZ takes as standard the first sheets of the press, not the master die or even the composition from which the stereotypes or electros are made. The 'errors' are divided into 'retouches' (very few), 'reductions' (more frequent, because you can cut away bits of a letterpress setting often without difficulty), and printing flaws. The latter can be caused by many things including dirt and underinking. MCZ suggests that the Zeppelin flaw was due to wax or 'gelatine' on the printing plate. I think zelatina must have another sense in Czech, since I would imagine this would have dispersed quite quickly. Wax is more reasonable. To begin with it would have printed black with a halo, then as it grew smoother it might have failed to take the ink leaving a white area. Finally after its removal the subject would print up properly, as intended."

It is therefore perhaps appropriate to quote the relative passages from MCZ, the translations of which have been kindly prepared by Mr M.Mirtl. Firstly from page 176 which deals with the so called "zeppelin" flaw on the 5h value.

From the spots the most expressive are "zeppelin". On the stamps of the 5h value I., on the 27th field of the I printing plate and the 46th field II printing plate from which the first one is size 6 x 3 mm; in the first part of the printing the spot is coloured, in the subsequent part is white and gradually is getting smaller until it diminishes. From the lack of knowledge of the matter, we do consider this spot often by mistake as a fault of the printing plate and its retouch.

The MCZ devotes a fair amount to the 'retouches' and "reductions" referred to above pages 153 and 158 viz :-

a) Retouching (Page 158)

There are very few retouchings on the Hradcany stamps. The left hand corner closed spiral or closed contours of the fan right hand dove are not retouches. Also the variations of numbers of the value 75h, because the plates of these stamps have been repaired before the commencement of printing. Therefore, there is no existence of the previous printing of this stamp. (Non-preparatory prints). From this printing with original drawing, white spots, so-called "zeppelin" of the value of 5h I, on the 46th field I, printing plate and 27th field II, printing plate are not retouches, because coloured spots of this shape, which did proceed, have not been the fault of the plate, but imprints of foreign bodies (gelatine and wax), as it shows from the white rings or contours on their perimeters.

Faulty shape of the zero of the value 20h I on the field (70th) I printing plate has been caused by gradual crumbling off by the faulty segment, as it has been proved by the changing of this fault. Imaginary retouch is therefore the original state. The probability is that it has been done simultaneously with reduction of the dot behind the number (78th field). The proof of this, is the colour, paper and the gum, the characteristic of the first printing, also the fact that this fault in this shape has been known in January 1919 whilst the retouches have come to being in June the same year.

The retouch of the "broken branch" on the 90th field II, printing plate, 3h value has been done towards the end of 1919 in the printings prepared for overprint SO 1920. The whole surrounding of this fault has been filled with metal, re-ground and re-engraved. The vast majority of these stamps has been overprinted by SO 1920, part of the remainder has been utilised on postage due overprints 1922-26. Into the normal circulation of 3h of this printing came only in minute quantity, because this value had not been desirable in the postal need. The retouch, often with a characteristic veil in letters OS comes mostly from the spoilt prints, and from the sheets so called ministerial perforations.

5 HELLER HRADCANY c'td

The stamps with the retouch without overprints are very much sought after.

The retouch "clocks" of the value 10h I, on the 91st field I, IV printing plate is interesting in its being. In the first plate the dimple has been filled with metal which has not been properly ground off or has become loose and gradually come off and therefore in its place there were created light spaces. In subsequent two printing plates in whose dimples have been partially filled and leveled by compression of both towers, remained again light spaces, but smaller. From the direction of compression, deformation was created, which was shown in the narrowing of the shape of the towers or their shifting from the end of the building. In the fourth printing plate, the fault has been removed by hard compression of the tower which caused of their deformation into the shape of 'scissors.' The identification marks of this printing fault and its retouch are in the I printing plate, cut in the fan of the left dove. In the II printing place, faulty frame above letters CE, in III printing plate a wedge above the right hand top spiral; and the IV printing plate is without recognition mark.

The printing plate fault, which is so-called "sibenicka" (gallows), of the 20h I value, on the 28th field II printing plate, has been retouched by a simple prick, so that in the place of the fault, it remained in the shape of a post. The retouch of the dot after the value of 20h I, on the 78th field I, IV printing plate, has been done only in the II and III printing plates, by the very significant indent, after which remained two parallel lines of different shapes and angle. The I' plate came into use with the fault repaired, but on the IV plate the fault remained.

Recognition marks of this printing fault and their retouches are in the I printing plate (reduced fault), a hillock and above a broken frame, in the II a wedge in the frame, in the letters ST, and the III is without any recognising mark, whilst the IV (not retouched) has rounded corners.

The retouches in the values 10h and 20h have been in the full printing period and therefore are common.

(b) Reduction (Page 153)

The reduction of plate fault (dot behind the figure) came to the 20h value, in the 78th field of printing plate I. This fault, which had been transferred from the glass negative into all four printing plates of this value, has been in printing plate I amended before commencing printing, by digging it out, and therefore it is not known on the stamps printed from this plate. To prove the fact that it has been done by the engraver, it shows a hillock in the place where originally there was a dot, and also damage of the frame of the value above. This is different from the similar damage found in the frame of the retouched III printing plate. It seems that by adding metal, it has rectified a damaged segment of the zero on the 70th field, although the method of this repair has been proven futile.

In the same circumstances and consequences we meet with stamps of the 20h value, (10th field) of the I printing plate, typical for joint spiral type. In the right-hand frame of the 120h value, on the 64th and 74th field of the I printing plate, by adding metal, a repair to the damaged left hand top corner was made, most likely when it has been milled space between stamps. Also in this instance, soon after the printing the metal dropped out again. More interesting is the reduction (twice broken) of the fan of the right dove in all the V values. This fault was caused by insignificant overdrawing of both places. (In the original sketch of the idea those places were without blemish.) Into the pattern of the 25h, from which it has automatically been transferred to the preparatory and consequently all other aiding combinations.

(The above texts have been marginally edited and it is recommended that interested readers make use of the translation in using those chapters of MCZ appropriate to the issues. I am indebted to both Messrs R.Dehn and M.Mirtl for adding greatly to my knowledge of Czechoslovakia's first definitives and hope that publication of these details will be of interest and value to others. W.A.P.)