

CZECHOUT

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EDITORIAL

"A new broom sweeps clean" says the old proverb, but don't look for any sweeping changes in this issue. When you have something as good and as successful as "CZECHOUT" there's no reason to make changes.

Harping back to the AGM there was talk about changing the Competition rules, because of a lack of interest in entering them. The answer, of course, is not to change the rules but to get the membership interested in entering. From my own experience I would tell anyone that it is worth entering - the amount of people who came over and offered advice, help and information after they had seen my own entry in the 1985 competition was amazing. I learnt a great deal (not the least how one should present material for a competition!), and would urge all the members who can to enter.

Twenty years I bought an L.P. by the American folk-singer Pete Seeger. The notes on the back stated that you'll never see Pete worrying about younger, up-and-coming singers who might take his place: he's too busy enjoying their singing. The competitions and the meetings remind me very much of that comment. The Society has in its members a great wealth of knowledge and expertise, but none of it is hoarded or guarded. Members are more than happy to share their knowledge with others - something again I can speak of from personal experience. CZECHOUT is a good journal, but it's no substitute for getting to the meetings, and whilst some of our members might find it difficult the results warrant the expenditure of time and effort.

A longer than normal editorial, but an indulgence for my first efforts. Hopefully through the year you'll find that CZECHOUT continues to meet the very high standards Colin set for it. Any comments or criticism would be welcome

Bob Black
Editor

MEMBERSHIP

The Society welcomes Leroy Brown from Livorno in Italy.

CZECH PERFINS

Member H. P. Punter's request for Czech Perfins appeared in "CZECH OUT" 3 -85, but the response has been disappointing. It appears that very few of us collect perfins or have any for disposal. Or perhaps there being none for disposal means that someone is gradually building the definitive collection. If anyone is, or has any information then they can pass it on either through the pages of CZECH OUT article - or through I can pass any mail on to Mr. Punter

CURRENT JOURNAL ARTICLES

AUSTRIA Winter 1985 No 74

The 1985 New Issues: J.F. Giblin; Stamps of the 2nd Republic Part 14; Hungarian Thimble Postmarks: A. Furst; The Postbus Service: First Issue of Austria According to H. Kropf: J.F. Giblin; People of Austrian Stamps: J.F. Giblin. Austrian Philatelic Literature - an Annotated Bibliography: J.F. Giblin.

(This is an excellent biography and of great potential interest to the Society. Book now with the librarian as it is sure to popular)

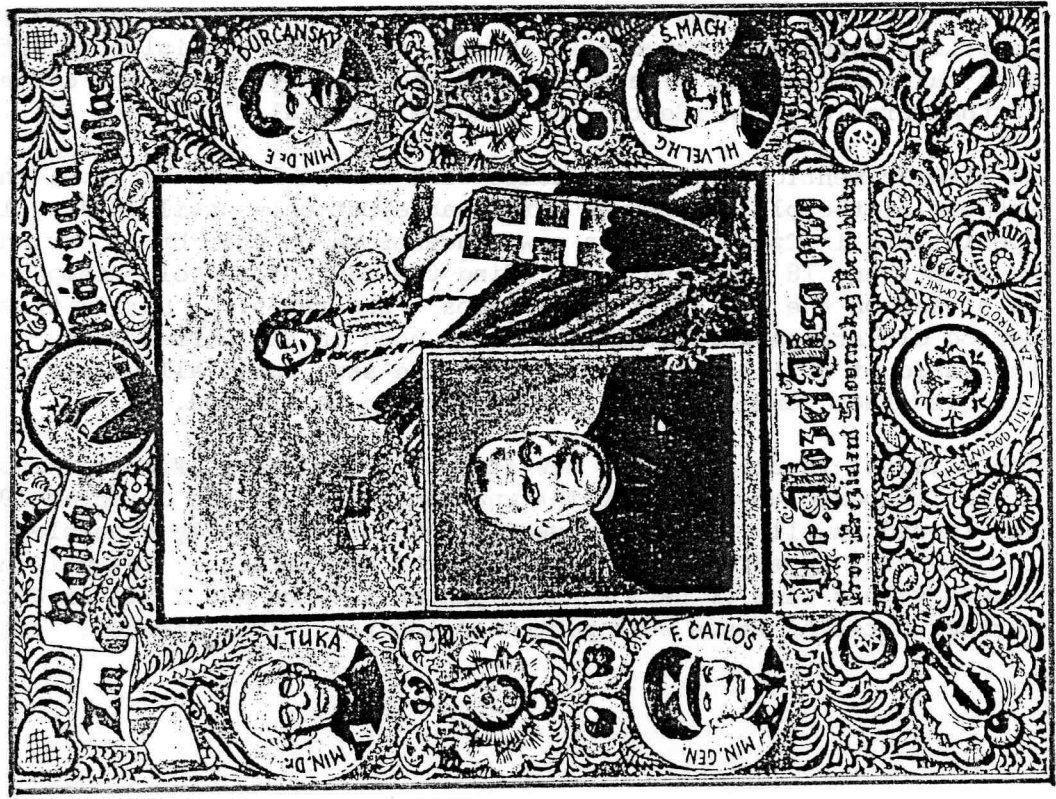
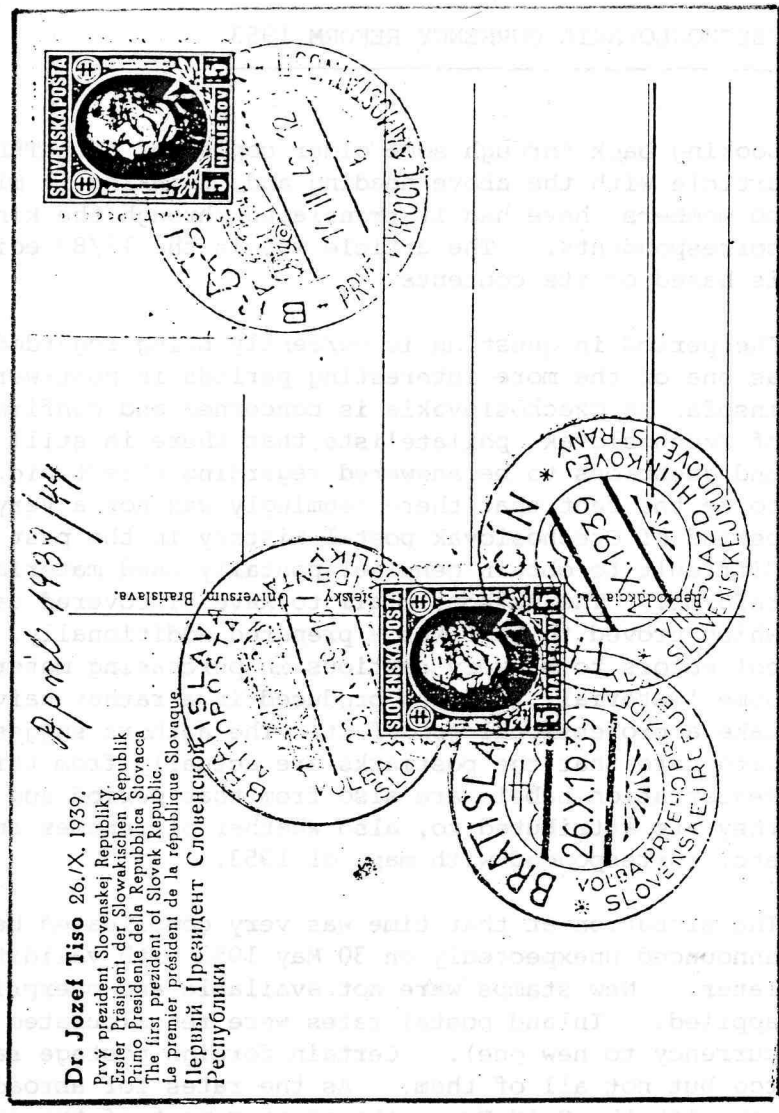
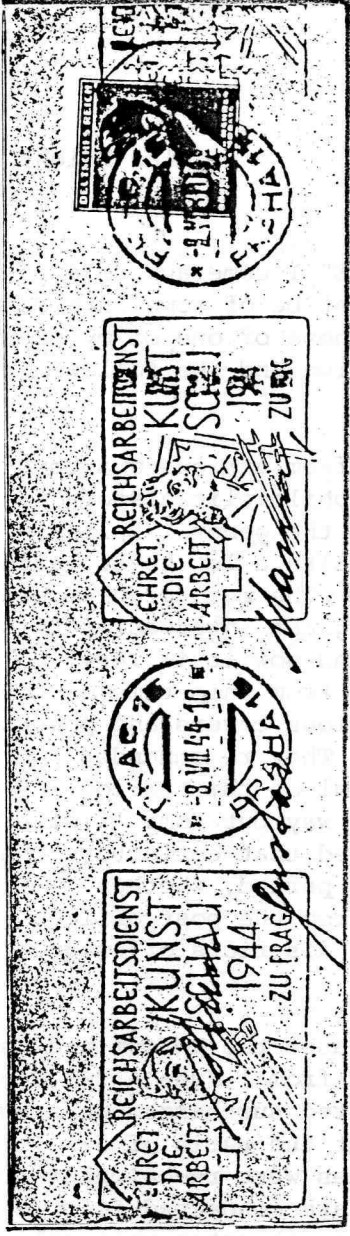
STAMPS OF HUNGARY Vol 4 No 12 December 1985

Postal Stationary News: M. Benford; History of Western Hungary: L.S. Ettore; A Magas Tatra: J. Dixon-Nuttall; Hungarian Postal Search Service: L. Grof; Russian F.P.O. in Hungary 1849: I.W. Roberts; Inflation Rate Covers:

NEW DISCOVERY

A new discovery is always exciting news, and Ron Hollis has sent the illustration (opposite page) to prove his point. Ron writes "as far as I can find out the cancell for the Land Army Art Exhibiton from Prag 15 is not recorded". CZECHOUT would like to hear from anyone who has details of this exhibition and cancell.

Also from Ron is the is the Slovak postcard showing Jozef Tiso (who bears a remarkable resemblance to a well-known Northern Ireland politician). This has reproduced well in black & white, but as with all these Tiso and Hlinka cards the original would be a riot of colour - every available space being filled in.



Looking back through some older copies of "FILATELIE" I came across an article with the above heading and, thinking it might be of some interest to members, have had it translated through the kindness of one of my Czech correspondents. The article was in the 13/83 edition and the following is based on its contents.

The period in question is currently being regarded from various quarters as one of the more interesting periods in post-war philatelic history insofar as Czechoslovakia is concerned and confirms the general belief of Czechoslovak philatelists that there is still quite a lot to be learned and questions to be answered regarding this topic. The main problem seems to be the fact that there seemingly was not a very great interest in this period of Czechoslovak postal history in the past and now it is very difficult to obtain genuine, postally used material from this time of the reforms. The authors claim to have discovered various covers and postcards which proved to be fakes - prepared additionally. They recommended collectors to be very cautious in purchasing material of this period. Some 'material' is being produced in a rather naive way but some 'fiddlers' make a professional job of it! The authors suggested that collectors check with care that the postmarks are actually from this period, whether Registration Labels are also from that period and from the post offices they are attributed to, also whether placenames and districts of Prague, etc. corresponded with maps of 1953.

The situation at that time was very complicated because the Reform had been announced unexpectedly on 30 May 1953 with validity from 1 June - two days later. New stamps were not available and overprinted surcharges were not applied. Inland postal rates were re-calculated at the ratio of 5:1 (old currency to new one). Certain foreign postage rates were re-calculated too but not all of them. As the rates for abroad are connected in some way with the Gold Franc, the greater part of the external rates were calculated at the ratio of 7:1 and not 5:1. Due to lack of proper information it sometimes happened - especially in some small, provincial post offices - that rates for abroad were calculated incorrectly, which now causes even further 'problems' in identifying genuine material.

As already mentioned, no new stamps were available at the time, therefore the use of the old stamps was permissible but only until 18 June 1953. Specialists in Czechoslovakia now concentrate on this brief period between 1 and 18 June 1953, including the day before (old stamps - old rate) and on the day after (new stamps - new rates). During this transitory period old stamps were permitted to be used on all correspondence but at the ratio of 50:1 nominal value. In the same ratio all postal stationery was 'devalued' and additional stamps had to be affixed.

The original issue plans for new stamps in 1953 were affected also. Two stamps prepared to celebrate International Year of the Children 1953 were not issued at all. The "Prague Spring" set originally scheduled for 13 June 1953 appeared on 19 June with the new values. The originally agreed values were to have been L. Janacek 1.50Kcs and J. Slavik 4Kcs. Further dates of issue were postponed and the values changed. New stamps

in addition to those originally planned appeared, including definitives with portraits of Klement Gottwald and Antonin Zapotocky plus the 5Kcs showing Charles Bridge, Prague. At the time the reforms were announced, 250 stamps and 3 miniature sheets were postally valid.

Because of the high conversion ratio of the nominal value (50:1) there was an extra high use of stamps during these days and, understandably, certain post offices were short of supplies in the last days. (Envelopes and postcards marked "Cash Paid" or "Paid" are known).

In the early days of the re-valued currency, stamps of higher value plus airmail stamps were brought into use but in the last days even combinations of low-values were used - even the use of a complete printing sheet of 100 pieces x 50 hal. stamps is known. Because the envelopes were too small for such combinations, various tags were used to accommodate them - or the stamps were fixed over each other in layers - even on both sides of the cover. It is curious that the covers most sought after today are those with a single high-value stamp probably because the probability is low (10Kcs stamps for Printed Matter; 20Kcs for local letters; 30Kcs for normal inland letter and 15 Kcs for normal postcard).

18 June 1953 was the last day the old stamps were valid, the validity date for the new stamps being 19 June. The entireties from both these dates are very much sought after. Incidentally, these 'new' postage stamps are still valid for postal use today!

Naturally, varieties are known, such as covers and postcards with new stamps used before the official 'first day' (very scarce but they do exist) and covers with 'old' stamps used after 18 June. Some mixed values of old and new stamps are known to exist.

FDC collectors are now seeking eagerly definitives with the portrait of K. Gottwald and AZapotocky with date-stamp 19.6.1953 because official FDCs were never issued. Others try to obtain postal material from each day during the period 1 and 19 June 1953. Very seldom seen are postmarks for the Sundays i.e. 7 and 14 June. Some collectors look for meter marks because machines with the highest valued print of 9,90Kcs had to print at least 9 x on registered letters where the postage was 80 Kcs in old currency.

Perhaps more material from abroad (i.e. outside Czechoslovakia) could bring additional light to bear on this subject such as meter-marks using 'new currency' stamps before 19 June 1953 or having multiple printings of values, etc. So! have a look amongst all those old boxes of covers..... you never can tell!!

CZECHOSLOVAK TPOS

Mervyn Benford, Hon Secretary of the Magyar PSGB writes asking for our assistance.

Is it possible (he writes) to identify the Czechoslovak TPOS for me - some map referances, or the nearest larger town, rail route etc.

- KOSICE-TERESVA 991
- KOSICE-MEDZILABORCE -82(?982)
- TATR.LOMNICA-POPRAD ?NO. & PODOLINEC-POPRAD No 955
- KOSICE-BOHUMIN 9-- ?NO

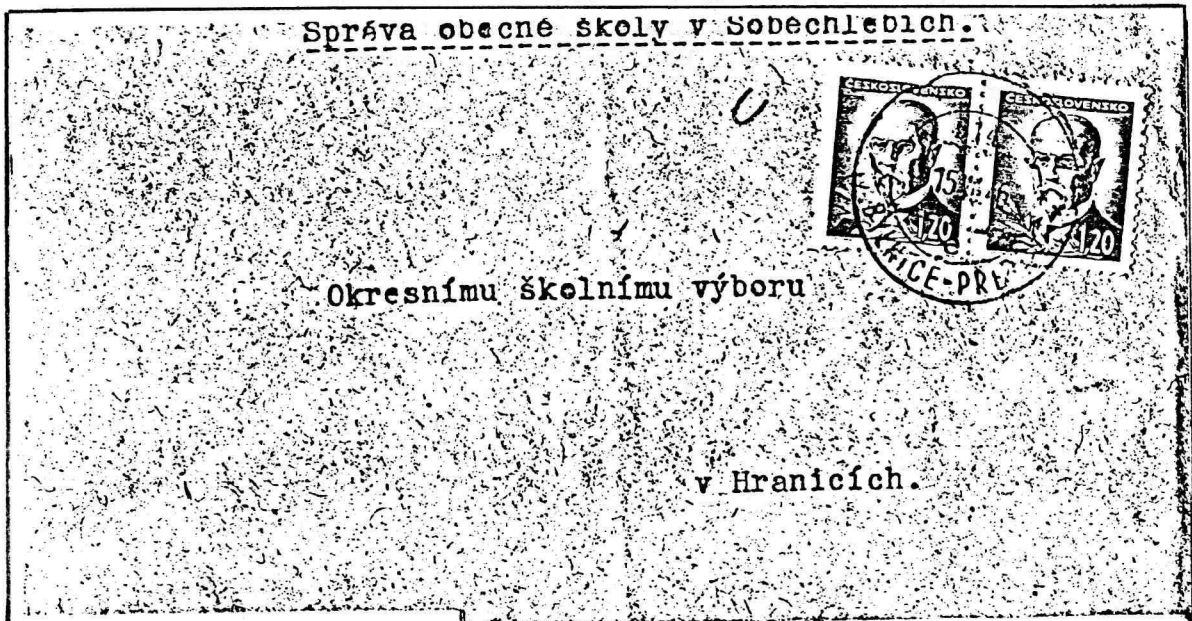
Any information on Czech TPOs and routes wouldbe very useful, especially adjustments made in 1939 when territory returned to Hungary briefly, especially on any of the above routes if they were effected.

I have a TISOVEC-FELED Czech TPO No. 826, which I can identify as TISZOLCZ-Feled on old Hungarian routes, though on Hungarian maps Feled was not a TPO terminus, and not usually shown as a station by name. However at least a part of this line came back in 1938, and I would welcome information on any change that occurred as a result within Czech railway arrangements, and again in 1946, wether this TPO route re-opened.

Thank you Mervyn Benford, Hill Cottage, Lewknor Oxford OX9 5TS

The previous editor thought that the Commerical Attache or the Tourist Section at the Czech Embassy might be able to help, but didn't have an address for them. The Embassy address is 25 Kensington Palace Gardens, London W.8. , and CEDOK, who could certainly supply modern maps, are at 17 Old Bond Street, London.

Mervyn encloses an example, and asks if anyone could indentify the route by name, as well as location.



WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

December 1985's issue of "Stamps & Foreign Stamps" carries an article by myself entitled "The Real Cost of a Stamp". It's about the dearest Czech stamp - one incidentally that neither the Czechs nor the Society recognise. Catalogued at 20p, I paid 50p for a block of four and was told by a Society member that I had been robbed. Yet it is truly the Dearest Czech Stamp. If you haven't guessed what it is, then read the article - a copy is in the library.

January's "Stamps & Foreign Stamps" carries two items about Czech stamps. In an article on Registration Labels Ian Angus writes "Czechoslovak labels reflect vividly the vicissitudes of that country", and mentions Austrian, Hungarian, the Reich Protectorate labels, and even those used in Carpatho-Ukraine. Interesting article, and might prove to be the incentive for a collection of these labels.

Also a letter from Prague, dated May 1948. Nothing spectacular about the envelope, just the 5Kcs Benes stamp. But the letter gives one person's view of the change to a Socialist Republic. Entitled "The Communist Capture of Prague" the article deals with the events of May 1948 in Czechoslovakia.

Whether you agree or disagree with the title and the viewpoint expressed, it's good to see Czechoslovakia getting mentioned in the philatelic press.

POSTAL HISTORY FROM ROKYCANY

Good friend and Secretary of the Rokycany PS, Zdenek Paul has sent some illustrations from a recent exhibition of historic franking from the Post Office at Rokycany. Eight of the earlier examples are reproduced here. If you want to look the town up on the map it lies near Pilsen.

- 1) Official letter of 21.8.1827. Franked Rokitzan, type A.8, a sample from 1820 in black colour.
- 2) Registration form of the Rokycany post office for a registered letter dated 11.4.1834.
- 3) Official letter of 23.6.1838 Franked Rokitzan Type A.8, a sample in Blue colour.
- 4) A letter dated 7.5.1853 Franked Rokitzan, Type Al-h, sample 1839 in black colour. The print from this frank on the first edition of stamps has something like a reverse letter R.
- 5) Letter dated 6.9.1851 Franked Rokitzan, Type Al-h. Sample 1839 in black colour with normal correct description of the town.
- 6) Official letter dated 18.8.1865 Franked Rokitzan, Type A5-h. Sample 1864 in black.

Herrn
 dem hochw. Magister
 Simon Sollichen Magister
 in
 (Kaiserslautern)

Přední dopis ze dne 21. VIII. 1827. Razítko Rokitzan, typ A. 8, vzor 1820
 v barvě černé.

Herrn
 dem hochw. Magister
 Simon Sollichen Magister
 in
 (Kaiserslautern)

Přední dopis ze dne 23. VI. 1838. Razítko Rokitzan, typ A. 8, vzor 1836
 v barvě modré.

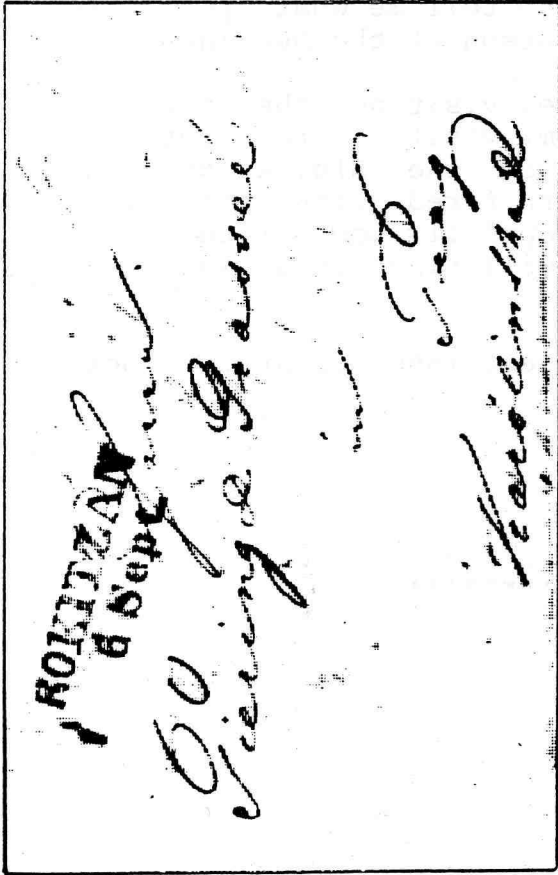
NRO.
 Aufgabs - Receipte.
 Über ein NB. rekommandirtes Schreiben an ... welches
 unter heutiger dato bei dem hiesigen ... Postamt richtig
 aufgegeben werden.
 Sig. L. K. Postamt Rokitzan am ... 183...
 Ein Porto-Budlaan ... fl. ... kr.
 — Aufwandsbegleichheit ... fl. ... kr.
 — Receipte ... fl. ... kr.
 Zusammen ... fl. ... kr.
 Fr. Kaiserl. kbn. Postamt Rokitzan.

Podací lístek (Receipte) pošty v Rokycanech na doporučený dopis
 datovaný dnem 11. IV. 1834.

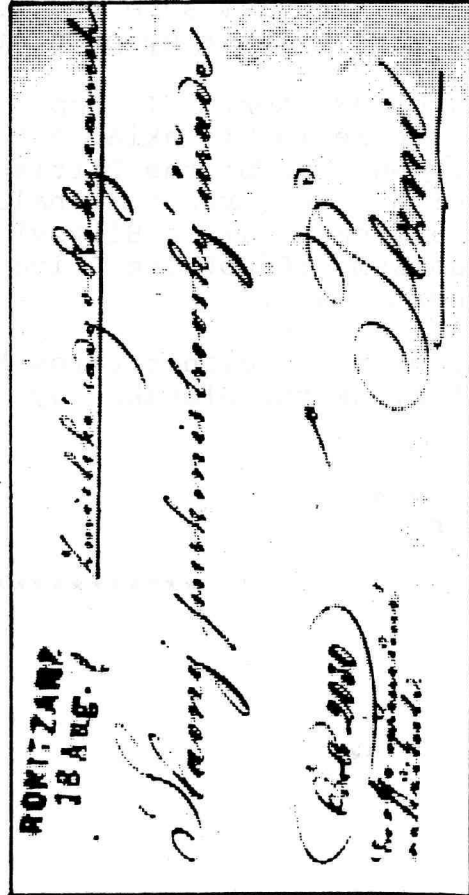
ROKITZAN
 7 Mail

...
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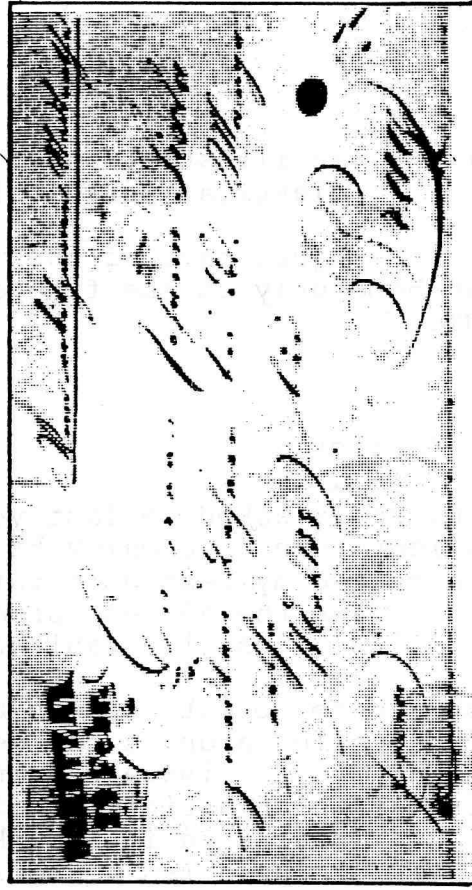
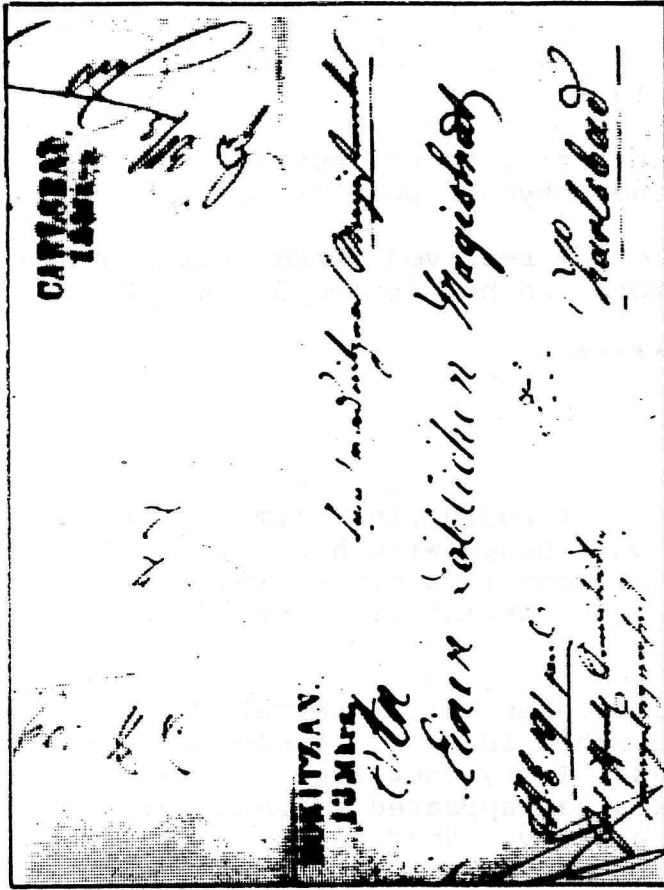
Dopis ze dne 7. V. 1853. Razítko Rokitzan, typ A. 1-h, vzor 1839
 v barvě černé. Otisk tohoto razítka na prvním vydání známek má jakoby
 zkromolené (obrácené) písmeno R.



Dopis ze dne 6. IX. 1851. Razítko Rokitzan, typ A. 1-h, vzor 1839 v barvě černé s normálním, správným zněním města.



Úřední dopis ze dne 18. VIII. 1865, razítko Rokitzan, typ A. 5-H, vzor 1864 v černé barvě.



Ukázka dalších dopisů odeslaných v klasickém období na poště Rokycany.

7) & 8) An illustration of further letters posted in the classical period of the Rokycany post office.

This was just part of the material received from Rokycany, and hopefully in the future more can be included in CZECH OUT.

TAIL PIECE

Paul Kelly asked me last year if I could find him a stamp collector in Czechoslovakia to exchange with him. Typically I excelled my best expectations, and if there is anyone who would like the address of a Czech philatelist or 2 (or even 100!) just let Paul know.

Nothing to do with stamps but perhaps of interest to the Czechophiles amongst the membership is an article on the legendary Jan Jiskra z Brandysa. To my knowledge it is the first time an article on Jiskra has appeared in English. If you're interested in Slovak history, and can't read the Slovak or Hungarian histories then you should find the story of this mercenary who kept faith with his long-dead employer fascinating. It can be found in Febuary's "Military Modelling", or in the Society's library.

So ends my first attempt as editor of CZECH OUT - bear with me, and together we'll keep our journal as good, informative and interesting as it was under the previous editor. Don't hesitate (and I'm sure you won't) to tell me what you like or dislike, either by post or in person at the meetings.

In March or April I hope to be visiting the town of Partizanske in Slovakia. Although my visit is to meet and interview some of the Partisans from the Slovak National Uprising I am certain I shall return fired with enthusiasm (and a great deal of Slivovice). Hopefully some of that enthusiasm, if not the Slivovice, will find it's way into the next issue.

Until we meet, either through the next issue or at the next meeting, as the Slovaks say
AJQJ

Bob Black
Editor
