

CZECHOUT



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Editor: Alan Knight

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EDITORIAL

Facing me as I sit at my desk writing these few lines, is a copy of Bertha Ehrmann's famous "DESIDERATA" which opens thus: "Go placidly amid the noise and the haste and remember what peace there may be in silence ..." It has faced me for many years and it has been a source of inspiration and hope on many occasions. However, I am thinking now that perhaps these opening words are being taken too seriously and that the great "silence" by our readers is having an adverse affect upon this journal. However, one was greatly encouraged this Quarter, following the Query Corner questions in our last issue. The subject is one now waiting to be more deeply explored and the influx of members' replies to Ron Hollis is most encouraging. As a result, they have all been published in full herein. I hope this is the beginning of a re-awakening by all who collect this area of Czechoslovakian philately; with Bohemia and Moravia, too, we hope.

One never likes to read editors' moans and groans in society journals - and I have seen a real 'beauty' recently - it was really awful! There is no need for it because where the membership is deeply interested in its subject, there will always be those who will kindly find the time and energy to write articles for the journal in question. Well now, all that is what I really hope because we are now surely and certainly getting to the bottom of the pile in regard to new material for CZECHOUT.

Since I took over this pleasant task for the Society, members and others have been most helpful with some extremely good, basic philatelic articles. However, for quite a long time now there has been this great silence ... I don't know why but can think of some valid reasons perhaps. So, just for a change, I am asking members to please mull this over and then send me whatever they can. If you are not an expert at writing, do not let this deter you, please. Provide us with the facts and, hopefully some illustrative material and we will do the rest for you.

It could be that you simply have a very interesting cover or two that you feel members would like to see or that may be puzzling you. Send them to the Editor and see if your fellow members can help out. They will, if they can.

We wish you all happy collecting at the commencement of another philatelic 'season', so ... "Good Hunting" and you know the address!

AJK.

-SLOVAKIA-

POSTMARKS AND REGISTRATION LABELS

.....

Members' response to RON HOLLIS's questions in last issue's "QUERY CORNER" on the matter of BRATISLAVA REGISTRATION LABELS and EARLY POSTMARKINGS proved most acceptable. Not all questions were answered but sufficient information became available to assist Ron to some large degree, we feel. Furthermore, the illustrations supplied with letters are, in themselves, useful for other purposes also, so we propose to publish both the letters and the illustrations in full. So much suppression of information of Slovak posts between 1938 and 1945 has been applied by former governments of Czechoslovakia that collectors of philately of that era will welcome any new information that might emerge from such exchanges. One of the most perplexing questions is that of POSTAL RATES in general during those years and it is hoped that researchers will shortly be able to feel confident enough to publish these. This journal will welcome any authentic information for publication as indeed, it will for contributions on SLOVAKIA and THE PROTECTORATE periods between 1938 and 1945. It is this Society's view that all available information on the mails on Czechoslovakian territory, whatever the period, should be available to philatelists worldwide - we feel much will now be undertaken in that country to these ends. Now to your replies to Mr. Hollis:

From SEPPO LAAKSONEN, Helsinki, Finland.

1. ČSP Postmarks: During Spring/Summer 1939, old ČSR 1 pmks with initial Č.S.P. were used widely in the Slovak state and I have over 50 different (on letters, cards and pieces). The book mentioned below lists over 100 places using S.P. pmks in early 1945, so they must all have had Č.S.P pmks in 1939. My latest acquisition is from ZBEHY (16.1.1940) but I think most were nationalized by Autumn 1939.
2. SP postmarks: During the summer of 1939 Slovak POs were ordered to 'nationalize' the Č.S.P. pmks by removal of the 'Č' so as to read S.P. - Slovenská Pošta. Sometimes all three letters and stops were removed but normally just the 'Č.' was removed. In rare occasions the first stop or only the 'S.' were left (see my 1st illustration showing the different types). The earliest date in my collection showing "S.P." is from MATEJOVICE on 24.8.1939.

The transitional period 1944-45 from Slovak to ČSR II pmks is well treated in the book "Pošta na Slovensku po Oslobodení" (Posts in Slovakia after Liberation) written by Dr. Vratislav Pálkoskas - Hlohovec, 1975 - in Slovak only. As we know, it was forbidden in Czechoslovakia to publish anything related to the philately of the Slovak state or the Protectorate during the 40 years of the Communist regime, so written information has not been available. Now the ban has been lifted it is expected that more information will now come to hand. Already published since the 1989 revolution is a new catalogue of the stamps of the Slovak state, published in Bratislava (in Slovak).
3. Slovak-German R-Labels: I have bi-lingual BRATISLAVA-PRESSBURG labels from Bratislava 5, 6, 7 and 8 (my illust. 2) and others may well exist. They were used in areas of the city with large numbers of German speaking residents.
4. Postcard Rate to the Protectorate: In October 1942 Germany, its wartime allies and some occupied countries signed the European Postal Agreement in Vienna. Signatory countries agreed to apply inland rates between themselves for normal surface mails. Slovakia also signed the Agreement and applied the domestic rate to Germany, its allies and occupied territories from 1.4.1943. Thus, the inland postcard rate of 70h is correct to the Protectorate, as also it was to Germany, Hungary, Romania, Norway, Finland, Generalgouvernement, etc. Before April 1943, the foreign rate for PCs to nearby countries was Ks1.20. >

From Mr. Laaksonen

Čs. denné pečiatky I. typu - jednojazyčné
v jednotlivých úpravách I/s

pôvodné	1 upravené	2 upravené	3
upravené	4 upravené	5 upravené	6

SLOVENSKO SLOVENSKO VE
D 40/40
OGP/ATN/2
30.12.1942

Bratislava 5
Pressburg 5
1051

BRATISLAVSKÝ SÚD V BRATISLAVE

Listok zplatočný

Adresát (Príjemca): T. 25. I. 43 prac.
P. 1051 so žalobou.

Valeria Gógus, r. Gutai, domáca
Gka 1050/42-2, Bratislava, Vajnarska
Jedn. čís. Pošta GOSTA, NOVE HOBY B. TI.

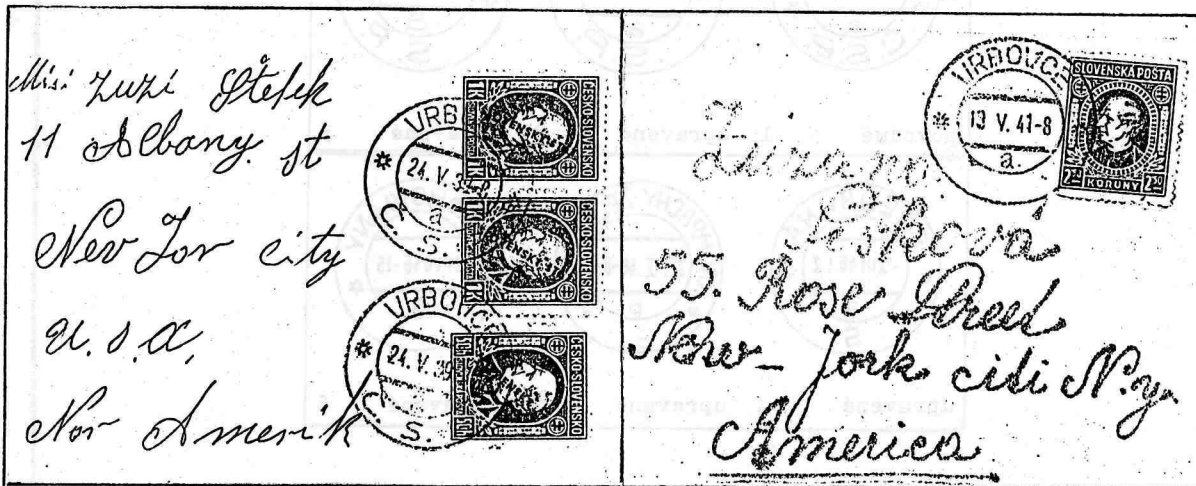
70 jedn. por. (Listok zplatočný, pre doručenie poštou, do zlatých rúk, § 163, 168 t. z. p. § 335 j. p.) (Mody)

Illustration 2. [N.B. 80h 'Dues' on 30.12.1942]

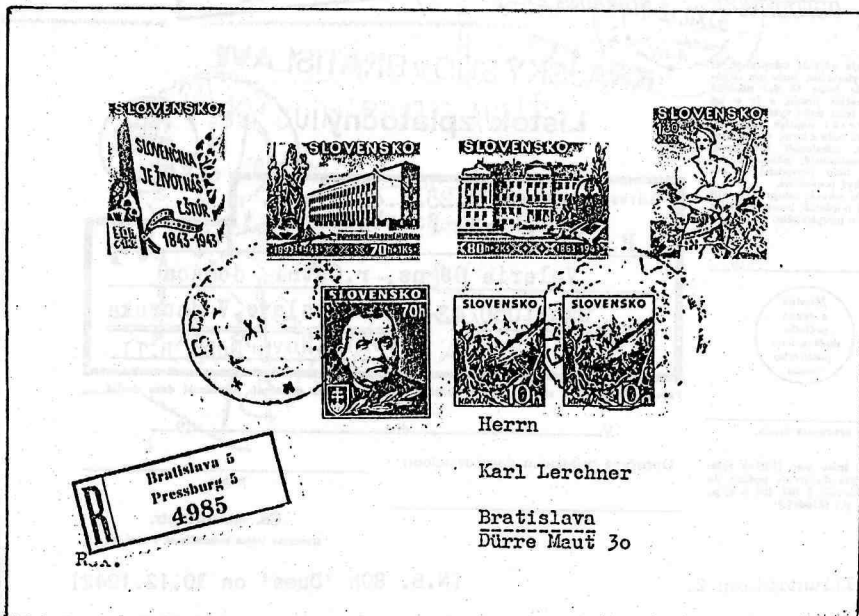
From E.SKOVBO JENSEN, Eskilstrup, Denmark:

1. The small town VRBOVCE (pop. c.3300 in 1942) under the BRATISLAVA Head Office, used the Č.S.P. in its pmk 'a' on 24.V.39 (see my illust.); this was later nationalized as seen on the letter of 13.V.41. The entire C.S.P. was removed but the haček (v) above the 'C' remains. [Ed. Not clear in this reduced copy but seen on sender's original. AJK.]

I have two R-letters from BRATISLAVA/PRESSBURG 5. One is clearly philatelic but the pmk is indistinct so that the date cannot be ascertained. The other letter is to Denmark on 1.8.42 and was censored in Slovakia (43) and in Vienna by the Germans. As the R-Label numbers are so close together, I guess the first letter is also from 1942.



[NOTE: postages paid to USA - was the earlier one overpaid?]



[Postage stamps used - total value Ks4.00 - ? excess] >



[Registered Airmail Slovakia-Denmark 1.8.42 - postage Ks6.50]

From: PAUL S. JENSEN, Oslo, Norway:

[N.B. On receipt of Paul's letter, the Editor informed him of SEPPO LAAKSONEN's reply concerning the 70h rate from Slovakia to the Protectorate and which differs in findings to Paul's. Mr. Jensen later replied with an answer. This appears as the last paragraph to these notes by Paul. [Ed.]:

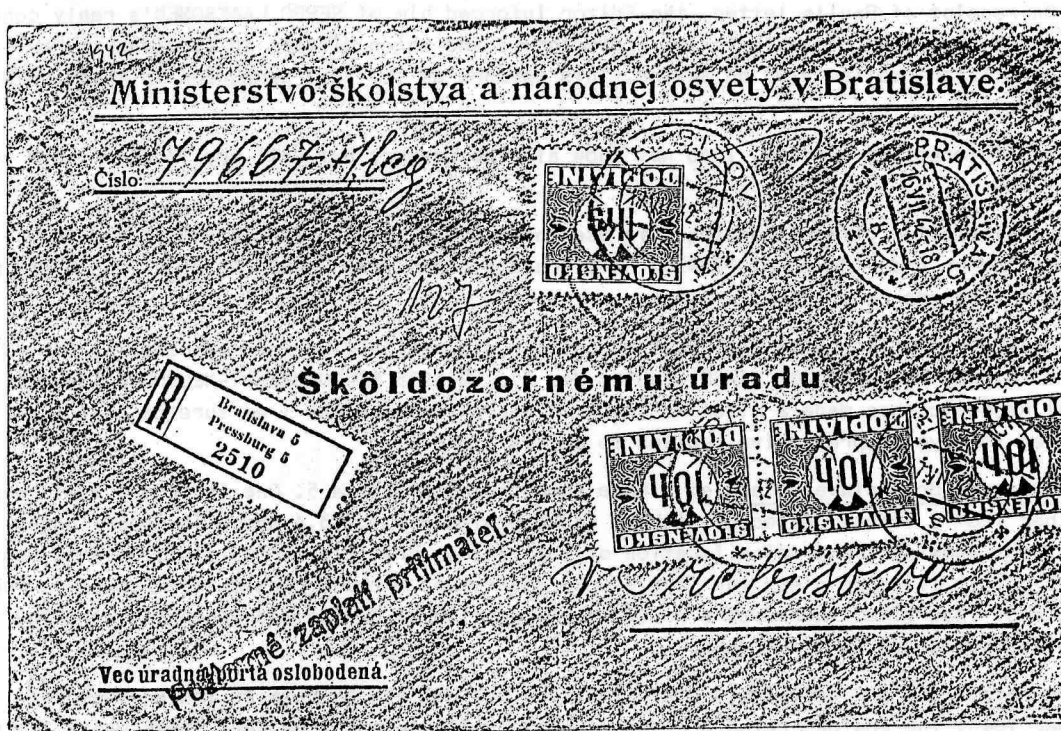
These are interesting queries. I do not know all the answers but will try to contribute some suggestions:

1. Several smaller offices continued to use their Č.S.P. pmks - if they still had them - into the Summer and Autumn of 1939. I have found a cover from RARBOK 12.8.39. There are more about but they are rare indeed.
2. A number of offices with the Č.S.P cancellers did nationalize them by removing the "Č". My good friend, Mr. SIEGBERT HAASE, Sohler Weg 35a, D-5275 BERGNEUSTADT-NEUENOTE, German Federal Republic, has made a lifetime study of Slovakian pmks and I am sure he could be persuaded to give comprehensive replies to points 1 and 2.
3. Bi-Lingual Bratislava R-Labels: I have some from Bratislava 5. One is from a state dept., the other from a German collector. I have found Bratislava 1,2,3,4 and 8 in mono-lingual issues. Not knowing the precise location of the various Bratislava POs, it is hard to venture a guess but it is quite clear that the German government exerted considerable power in the Slovakia of that time. There was a considerable portion of German and Hungarian speaking people in Bratislava in those days.
4. 70h rate: One can definitely state that 70h was NOT the Pc rate to the Protectorate in December 1943. The postage rates are not readily available but I believe there was a 1Ks rate for Pcs to the Protectorate for a period. From 1939, the Pc rate within the "Central European Postal Region" (inc. Germany with Austria and the Protectorate) was Ks1.30 (against the Ks1.50 UPU rate). The inland rate was Ks0.50. In 1943 I believe the inland rate was Ks0.70 and the rate to Germany etc. was raised to Ks1.30. The European Postal Agreement of Vienna in 1942.>

possibly had some influence on the rates but I somehow feel that Slovakia did not adopt these rates; I have never seen "Inland postage" used to Germany.

One answer may be that the card is a greetings card with five words only which has gone through on a "Printed Papers" or other special rate - or it might have been a clerical error.

[ADDENDUM: It is interesting to learn that Seppo Laaksonen disagrees with me. In theory he is right. The European Postal Agreement (1942) calls for the inland rate for first weight letters and postcards for all members of the European Postal Union (i.e. countries occupied or influenced by Germany) to be used for mail to the other members of the Union. This is like the CEPT rate for EEC member countries. The trouble from my viewpoint is that even if Slovakia was a signatory to this treaty (and issued stamps to commemorate the fact), I very much doubt if the rule was implemented at all in Slovakia. I have some 300 cards and covers from this period, mainly from Slovakia to Germany (with Austria) and the Protectorate; they all show what I would call the "Central European Postal Union" rates; i.e. Ks1.20 for PCs., (Ks1.30 from mid-1943) and Ks2.00 for letters (as opposed to 0.70 for inland PCs and 1.30 for inland letters). However, the details of Slovakia's postal rates have not yet been released (secret since 1945) but I hope that a recent catalogue which is being issued in Bratislava will shed some light on this. As even German tourists in Slovakia paid the Ks1.20/1.30 rate for postcards in 1943, it seems probable that even if the Vienna Agreement had been ratified by Slovakia, nobody was told about it. With the exception of philatelic covers it is very rare to see an overpaid postal item from anywhere sent by a German].

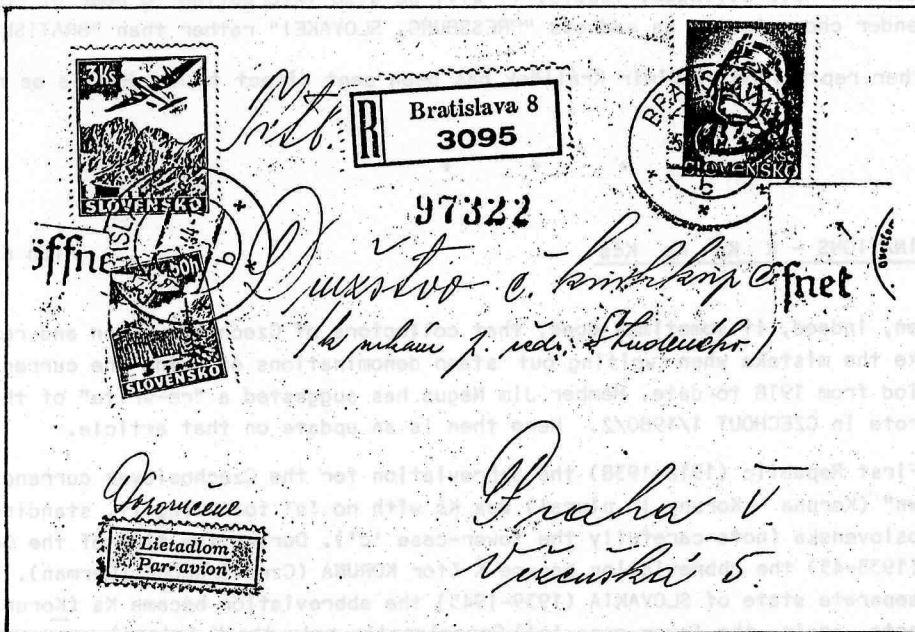


From Bratislava/Pressburg 5 (16.7.42) to Trebisov. N.B. the Ks1.30 'Dues' and the official s/l h/stamp "Postage Payable By Addressee" on this Government cover. >

From Paul Jensen cont...



BRATISLAVA/PRESSBURG 5 (1.2.43) Airmail and Registered Express cover to ZURICH. Total postage stamps affixed = Ks12.00 and comprising the Nat. Literary Soc. 150th Anniv. set of 14.12.42 philatelic!



BRATISLAVA 8 (monolingual) Registered airmail to PRAGUE. [N.B. the nationalized pmk]. Postage paid totals Ks6.50. Traces of the German censor's seals. >

From JAMES NEGUS (UK) ... concl:

I find that although I have no examples of BRATISLAVA 8, the same bilingual labels exist for BRATISLAVA 5 / PRESSBURG 5 and are in the style illustrated.

In this case there was evidently a change between 1939 and 1943. The covers I have are dated with labels reading:

BRATISLAVA 5 (monolingual)	1.4.39
BRATISLAVA 5/PRESSBURG 5	4.12.43, 26.1.44, 30.10.44, 7.12.44

Other covers show that three further districts were using non-bilingual labels on these dates:

BRATISLAVA 1	24.3.39, 23.5.39, 23.2.42
BRATISLAVA 2	28.7.43
BRATISLAVA 3	17.6.39, 27.3.41

My collection does not show if these, too, became bilingual.

By 1942-43 it could be that the pre-independence stock of (monolingual) labels finally ran out in BRATISLAVA 5 and 8. I can imagine it was simple political expediency to revise the obsolete Austro-Hungarian name of the town, PRESSBURG. It is notable that it did not supplant BRATISLAVA on the labels but occupied secondary position.

Whether this was intended to be a general policy might emerge if districts other than 5 and 8 are found to have bilingual labels. It will be also interesting to hear of covers where the sender chose to use an address "PRESSBURG, SLOVAKIE" rather than "BRATISLAVA".

[N.B. A further reply from Vladimír Králíček has been sent direct to Mr. Hollis as requested]

* * *

STAMP DENOMINATIONS - K Kč. Ks Kčs

Alan Knight

It can happen, indeed, it sometimes does, that collectors of Czechoslovakian and related material make the mistake when writing out stamp denominations of using the current Kčs for all period from 1918 to date. Member Jim Negus has suggested a "re-write" of the small article I wrote in CZECHOUT 1/1980/2. Here then is an update on that article.

During the First Republic (1918-1938) the abbreviation for the Czechoslovak currency unit of the "Crown" (Koruna - Koruny in plural) was Kč with no 's' following it, standing for Koruna československa (note carefully the lower-case 'c'). During the time of the German occupation (1938-45) the abbreviation became K (for KORUNA (Czech)/KRONE (German)). In the (then) separate state of SLOVAKIA (1939-1945) the abbreviation became Ks (Koruna slovenska (note, again, the lower-case 's') Occasionally only the K (alone) was used.

From November 1945 to date the abbreviation has been Kčs (Koruna československa). Note no capital 'C' and the final letter 's' which does not pluralize the statement but is the first letter in "slovenska" (Slovakia).

We shall, of course, keep members informed of any future change to the current usage.

* * *

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PART 1

CZECHS AND THE AUSTRIAN FIELDPOST

1914 - 1918

=====

Alan Knight

The old idea that history is as dry as dust has long since been laid to rest and this applies especially to modern philately. The days of row-upon-row on sheet-upon-sheet of stamps on our display/competition boards are gradually becoming practises of the past. It is 'postal history' that seems to be the current trend although [readily admitted by the author] what precisely can be legitimately shown as postal history is always a matter for some discussion amongst collectors at all philatelic levels. For this reason therefore, I shall try to steer clear of this 'minefield' in this short series. What I want to discuss and display here, is simply a 'facet' of my collecting habit - a period in history that had the profoundest of effects on the territories we now know as Czechoslovakia. It is not claimed, of course, to be in any way 'forerunner' material - simply Czech-related! As you read on, I hope you will agree with me that this connection between the Czechs of Bohemia and Moravia and the Austrian Fieldpost of The Great War, or World War 1 to give it its more modern title, is not only a valid one philatelically but also a highly interesting one, even

History teaches us that relatively small states can absorb and control the fate of much larger territories to their undoubted advantage. The old Habsburg empire of Austria is a notable example of this. Austria, the small state, eventually created an empire that was to cover the greater part of continental Europe - south, central and eastern. Eventually this vast empire was merged with Hungary to form the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary (1868-1918) under the sovereignty of the Habsburg monarch Francis Josef 1st until his death in 1916.

Such vast states can never be defended only by the use of the indigenous population of the ruling power, so 'conscriptio' of manpower from the occupied 'provinces' is the only answer. So it was then that the people of the Austrian province of Bohemia/Moravia, like those of all the other provinces of the 'empire', were forced to serve the military and civil service requirements of the ruling power. Such actions by Austria brought with it the problem of the assimilation of at least nine different ethnic languages, about half of which belonged to Slav races (44%), Hungarian 18% with Italian and Ruthene speaking peoples contributing a further 8% and 2% respectively. It is on the connection with the Slavs of Bohemia and Moravia that we shall be concentrating our gaze but with some acknowledgement to the Hungarian forces as well.

The official and 'command' requirements gave the Austrian tongue precedence over all others and thus German predominated throughout the empire. As we examine some of the fieldpost items from that great conflict, this will become apparent. It will also become apparent that Vienna also looked to the higher educated Czechs to help fill the technical, engineering and medical posts needed to operate a modern armed service. A study of the titles of the senders of some of these items will show this to be the case.

Before turning to the Fieldpost proper, let us take a glance at just a few of the military formations provided the empire by Bohemia/Moravia as at 1914. Here is just a short list:>

In this list (in brackets) are shown the percentages of Czech speaking personnel. The place names are the relevant garrison towns:

3rd Infantry Regt.	Kremsier	(83)
8th " "	Brunn	(67)
11th " "	Prag	(79)
28th " "	Prag	(95)
5th Fd. Cannon Regt.	Brunn	(68)
8th Fd. Gun (Div.HQ)	Prag	(60)
8th Mount. Artillery	Brunn	(68)
8th Engineers Regt.	Prag	(73)

... and several others.

THE FIELD POST

In this very limited survey of the A-H Field Post, we shall not be considering the higher echelon controls of the complete system. We shall merely concentrate our gaze on the basic offices in or very close to the battle areas. It must be remembered that when trying to 'locate' these offices we must bear in mind the very fluid 'to and fro' nature of many of the battle areas of those days. Locating individual basic FPOs at any given date is an almost impossible task. Nevertheless, despite rigid censorship, clues can be seen on these cards ... but rarely. Unit censorship was usually by a junior officer seconded to the FPO.

The basic FPO mainly consisted of a senior NCO and a few men, a horse and cart (transport) and a tent with little or no other cover. When static conditions applied sometimes, then more permanent accommodation would be obtained. Often, these small units would be too close to the firing lines for comfort, resulting in them becoming casualties themselves. Where such cases are known to have occurred, the relevant FPO marks are eagerly sought after today.

The 'Fieldpost' they handled consisted of millions of buff coloured postcards (about 140x90mm) headed in German "FELDPOSTKORRESPONDENZKARTE" (Field Post Correspondence Card). As we will later see, there were some variations to this.

The main reason for postcards would have been (a) limiting the space for writing and thus the work for the censor, (b) the saving of time and materials, the latter being the more precious then. The use of envelopes was very much discouraged for these reasons, except for officer ranks. Parcel Post and Registration Services were available but we shall not discuss them here.

THE FIELD POSTMARKS

One often finds additional civil postmarks on FPO mail (occasionally solely) from the troops. This is because the mail eventually had to travel through the civil mails to its destination. However, the mark most usually seen is the basic Austrian FPO cds of about 27mm dia. with a bridged date and a specific number. The cds was inscribed "K.u.K FELDPOSTAMPT. Others to be seen are "HAUPTFELDPOSTAMP" (Head Field Post Office) and "ETAPPENPOSTAMT"(Base Post Office).

There are a number of design variations, mainly concerning the position and size of the FPO number. Hungarian marks were mainly "TABORI POSTAHIVATAL" (FPO), "TABORI FOPOSTAHIVATAL" (Head FPO) and "HADTAP POSTAHIVATAL" (Base FPO). In his publication of 1973 on this subject ('Austrian A.P.Os. 1914-1918'), Keith Tranmer lists no less than thirty-five variations on both Austrian and Hungarian pmks. On the following page are illustrated a very basic selection of these postmarks. >

SOME AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN FIELD POSTMARKS



15. Bosnian type.



16. e. Small No.



17. e. Small No. with counter letter.



18. E. Large No.



22. Base P.O. with Location.



23. Base P.O. with location & counter letter.



24. Base P.O. with location, counter letter and star.



25. Base P.O. with Location, Branch, counter letter & star.



26. Base P.O. with Location and two stars.



27. Fo. No. with side ornaments.



28. Fo. No. with large counter letter.



29. T. No. with side ornaments.

By permission

Ex: "Austro-Hungarian A.P.Os 1914-1918" (Revised Edition).

N.B. "K.u.K." (Kaiserlich und Königlich) = "Imperial and Royal", the sovereign being Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary—Imperial AUSTRIA and Royal HUNGARY.

Two small points of advice here: When viewing HUNGARIAN postmarks, the date is invariably 'reversed' to our method: e.g. 915.SEP.17 means 'September 17th 1915'. On AUSTRIAN FPO marks, February is shown as 11 and November as 11; on a poor strike, this can be a little confusing.

The Etappenpostamt mark for Base Post Office is in two forms: When the base had been established in occupied territory on a 'permanent' basis, its handstamp bears its geographical location, e.g. IWANISKA in POLEN although the name of the occupied country is not always shown. These Base Post Offices Abroad are very collectable and several command high premiums today, irrespective of the length of their operational periods. Base P.Os are to be found from locations in Albania, Italy, Montenegro, Poland, Serbia. When the Base was not a permanent one, the handstamp carried a normal P.O. number only. Many of these place names have since changed completely and today are to be located in countries bearing different names. A very good example is today's Yugoslavia which houses former territories such as Serbia, Bosnia, Dalmatia, etc. Whatever the location, one can be pretty sure that some of the troops there would have been from 'Bohemia'.

FIELDPOST STATIONERY

Quite apart from the usual official issue field post card, there is a wide variety of cards of various designs. Some were printed by the regiments themselves, others by certain Army H.Q.s, many by private commercial firms and, quite often, when paper was in short supply, by anything the troops could lay their hands upon. I have in my collection a fine 'postcard' made from dried birch bark. Even today, the cds of FPO 56a and the mauve circular regimental handstamp are clearly visible. The address and message are also visible and easy to read and that after over 70 years since it was posted in 1916! My own experience in battle (guess my age!) was that whenever there was a lull in the fighting, one's immediate instinct was to write home.

Then there was the 'patriotic' card, printed and circulated amongst the troops with the intention of raising and maintaining their morale and the morale of the folk at home! These cards took on several forms, one of the more common being where they illustrated the heads of the Emperor Josef, Kaiser Wilhelm, and other heads of state within the Central Powers. On similar lines were the cards featuring various army commanders of these states. Although there was a charge for these cards, postage was, as usual, free.

MILITARY UNIT CACHETS

Almost all the cards one is likely to find today bear regimental or other military unit cachets. Apart from often being a fine adornment to the cards, they are very important to collectors because, without them, cards were unlikely to get past the FP office. They were essential for two main reasons: (a) as proof that the item had been through the unit censorship system and (b) to validate the items for 'Postfree' service through the entire postal systems - both military and civil. But ... even here, one finds the occasional exception.

These cachets took on a multitude of design patterns - most being 'official' with some others, although officially frowned upon, being accepted by the military hierarchy. The most common is the circular mark bearing the unit's title around the State Arms. >

SOME VARIATIONS OF THE BASIC FIELDPOSTCARD IN GERMAN



1914 style used by 2nd Cavalry Divisional Headquarters (28.XII.14)

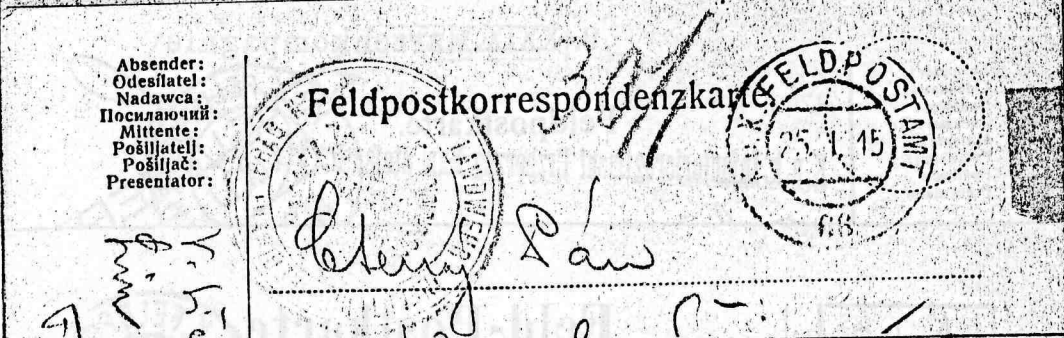
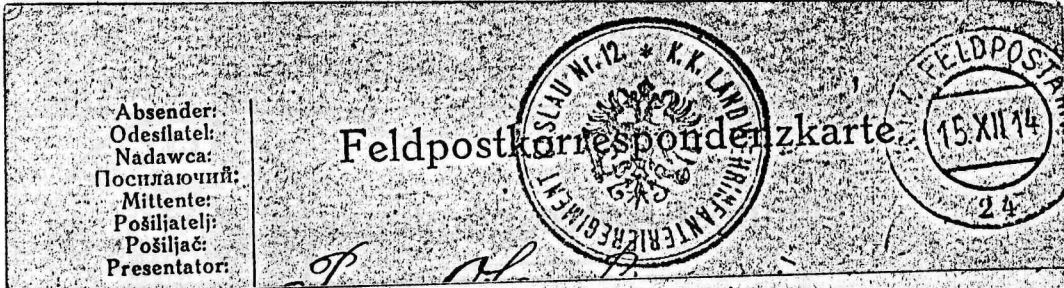
1915 style used by 22nd Field Gun Regt. (10.IV.16)

Small typestyle used 8th Inf. Regt.'s 29th March Company on 15.IX.17.

Large (hyphenated) typestyle used by Field Artillery No. 105 Regt. (5.VIII.18)

This last card was printed in Czernowitz by publisher Blumenthal. From the Ukraine to MÍSTEK, Moravia. This place is today's FRÝDEL MÍSTEK, near TĚŠÍN.

REGIMENTAL CACHETS FROM BOHEMIA



Three examples of BOH/MOR. regiments' cachets (1914-1916):

TOP: 12th Infantry Regt. (ČASLAV) with 87% Czech troops.

CENTRE: 8th (PRAG) LW (Reserve) Inf. Regt; 97% Czech.

BELOW: 3rd Archduke Carl's Inf. Regt. (TESCHEN) with 83%.

For collectors wishing to relate their philatelic material with historical/military events, e.g. any of the great Eastern Front battles, the combination of cds information, any known location of senders, unit cachets, etc. can be of great additional value. In addition to any 'postal' history, they all serve useful purposes for the researcher.

A surprising factor soon observed by any newcomer to this field of collecting is the huge number and variety of military unit cachets (handstamps) used by the A-H forces during this combative period. It appears to be a fact that from Imperial Headquarters in Vienna right through to the humblest of units - even down to e.g. a 'Reserve Vehicle Park', all, without fail, possessed their own unique cachet. Some will be looked upon today as miniature works of art, with others appearing as though they had been prepared with a child's printing set. The main important fact for us to remember about them however, is that they ALL served their own purpose in the military mails system of Austria-Hungary of those times and, therefore, rightly take their places in today's postal history requirements.

Absender: *Josef Bukaric*
 Name: *Zugsführer* K. U. K. B. H. I. R. G. T. No 1
 Adresse: *Feldpost No 16* 2. MARSCHKOMP

FELDPPOST-BRIEF 8 15

Name: *Josef Bukaric*
Libertin No 6
Post Kleinskál b. Turnau
Röhmer



 Bosn-Herz. type

Commercially produced Fieldpost Letter-Sheet

Whilst the vast majority of fieldpost items were the ubiquitous buff-coloured postcards, several types of commercially and privately produced cards and letter-sheets can be seen in collections. Here is one such example:

The sender describes himself as "Zugsführer" (Platoon Leader) in the Imperial and Royal Bosnia-Herzegovina Infantry Regiment No.1 (second marching company). The cds is of the B-H type (see inset illust.) from FPO 16 on 19 September 1915. The term - Marschkompanie or Marschbaon (marching battalion) is quite common. The reason was simply that most Infantry movement was, literally, on foot, as mechanised transport was then in its infancy in the A-H army. Horse-drawn transport was the norm throughout the war, with few motor vehicles.

The entire is addressed to c/o: the post office at KLEINSKAL (should have read Klein Skál) near TURNAU, Bohemia - today MÁLA SKALÁ near TURNOV. A tiny reference (8.15) underneath the handwritten "16" at the top, suggests the letter-sheet was produced in August 1915. >

EXAMPLES OF FIELDPOST CARDS IN BOTH GERMAN AND CZECH

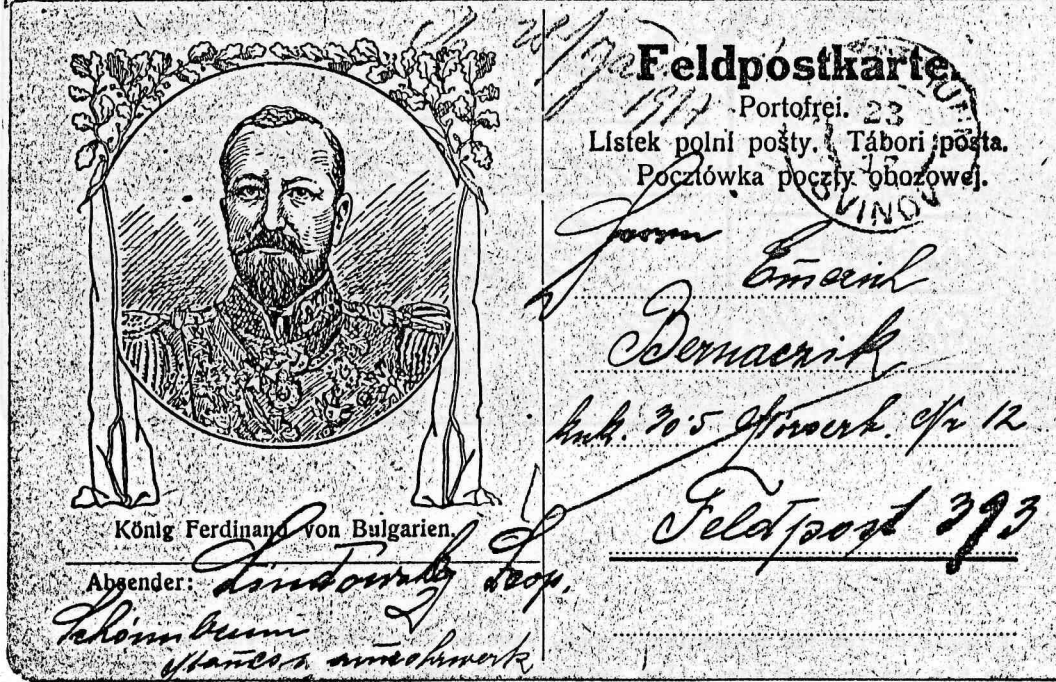
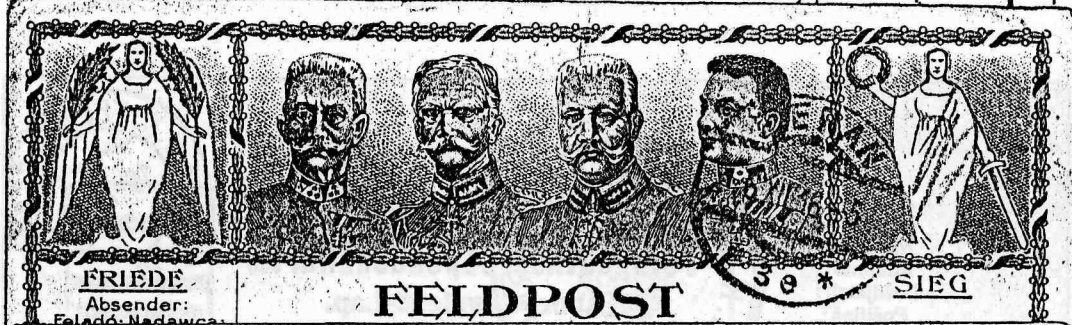


Top: FELDPPOSTKORRESEONDENZKARTE now followed by the Czech equal to "Field Post Card"

CENTRE: Two cards now reading in Czech as simply "Field Post"

BOTTOM: Czech now takes precedence over German.

PATRIOTIC CARDS

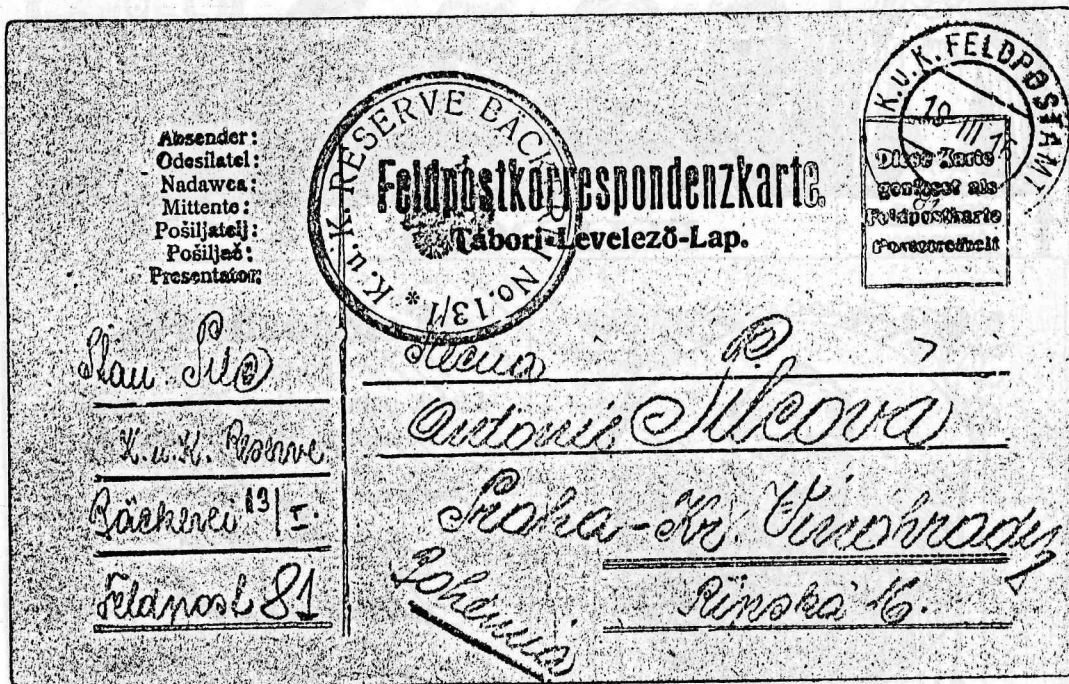


TOP: Heads of State of The Central Powers, with 'lifebelt' for Franz Josef by courtesy of south Bohemian town of Kardašova Rečice.

CENTRE: Multi-colour Images of Central Powers military leaders.

BOTTOM: King Ferdinand of Bulgaria on F.PC printed in German, Czech, Hungarian and Polish. From Schönbrunn/Svinov 23.1.17 to Fieldpost 393 (Italy).

FROM A CZECH IN A HUNGARIAN UNIT
(To Prague)



Example of fpc for Hungarian troops, used by Czech soldier when writing to his sister in Prague. (The 'message' is described elsewhere in this issue). Sub-heading in Hungarian reads FIELD POST CARD.

FPO 81 (19.III.16) was at that time, serving the H.Q. of the 5th Army.

UNIT CACHET: RESERVE BAKERY No. 13/1 with Hungarian Royal Arms central.

Addressee: Miss Antonie Pilcová, Praha-Kr. Vinohrady, Řínská 16. Bohemia.

TELEPATHY?

Feldpostkarte.




Absender:
 Odesílatel:
 Nadawca:
 Посылающий:
 Mittente:
 Pošiljatelj:
 Pošiljač:
 Presentator:

Leut. *Rfr. Hllv.*

Marie Vondráčková
Dasice v Čechách.

Leut. Vondráček
liquist. Rechnungsführer d. Autotruppen
d. Bus. Abt. No. 6

K. u. k. Feldpost Nr. *468*

Postanweisung Nr. <i>1214</i>	Betrag			Absender
an <i>Marie Vondráčková</i> in <i>Dasice v Čechách</i>	K	h		<i>Leut. Vondráček</i> <i>Autotruppen</i> <i>On art 6.</i>
Anmerkung	150 =			
Beamter <i>[Signature]</i>				

Fieldpost card for 'postfree' civilian use to members of the forces from the wife of a Czech Leut. serving abroad. It is addressed to him as being the Accounts Officer In charge of the affairs of Motorised Troops Quartermaster Detachment No. 6. FPO 468.

The civilian pmk in Czech/German reads: DAŠICE v ČECHÁCH/DASCHITZ IN BÖHMEN and is dated 16.V.18.

By coincidence, Leut. Vondráček was also thinking of his wife the same day. We see below the card, a receipt for a Money Order in the sum of 150K. (Austrian 'krone') (No. 1214) with the names of addressee on the left and the sender at right. Business was transacted by Fieldpost Office No. 468. This FPO was raised late in the war, in March 1917 and lasting until, at least, 14 October 1918, although Tranmer states it closed after '18 months'.

WHAT OF THE MESSAGES?

Some of us enjoy having the messages translated in order to glean what little historic or domestic information they might contain. Most however remain rather bland and parochial, thanks to a fairly efficient censorship system. Nevertheless, one can occasionally glean a hint of the senders' thoughts when, for example, examining the 'message' side of a field postcard such as this one. A tiny piece of propaganda seems to have missed the censor's eye. This illustration is from the card from the 13/1 Reserve Bakery unit shown a couple of pages back. Let us look closely at the contents:



Written by a Czech in a foreign unit to his sister in Prague, both the mood of the script and the drawing do show a mild contempt for authority. The drawing shows an army baker in his kitchen, surrounded by implements of his trade and fruits of his labour. But - have you observed the 'notice' on the wall? It reads something akin to "Long Live Prague!" ... and the censor either missed or ignored it.

The message includes the following: "... Here is a drawing of myself as a baker but the chimney won't fit in. We have a clerk here from *PRAVO LIDU who says I ought to send it to the Editor. Please show it to Mother but not to anyone else; it's not very good. Thanks for your card and my regards to Auntie and Uncle." Love ... Stan.

Items such as this tend to brighten up any album page or display as well as affording the viewer a brief insight of the writer's thoughts at the time.

*PRAVO LIDU: "People's Justice" - a political organ.

* * * *

Thus we come to the end of this brief glimpse into the Austro-Hungarian Army Fieldpost of 1914-18, as it directly concerned the Czechs of that period. Although we have dealt only with the Army here, there was an Air Force but the Czech involvement was very small, so we shall not dwell on that angle of the Fieldposts. This cannot be said, however, in regard to the A-H "KRIEGSMARINE" (War Navy) which boasted a substantial percentage of Czechs of officer and other ranks, mainly in engineering and gunnery. We shall discuss this aspect of Czech participation in WW1 in a future issue. ::

VELICHOVKY 1945 (Were the Americans THAT far to the East?)

Dr. M. Vostatek raises the Question - V. Králiček translates

If, during this year we are able to learn some real facts concerning the year 1945, then we will be enabled to clarify much of what has been buzzing around in our heads for decades! So much has been concealed and suppressed between then and now. Philatelists have had to face many problems with postal documents and stamps indicating to them that much needs now to be thoroughly researched in order that the truth may be discovered on many issues.

One such example is the illustrated 'revolutionary overprint' on one from a set of four Protectorate stamps from LÁZNÍ VELICHOVEK with the text* "Předvoj USA ve Velechovkách 8.5.1945". Prior to last winter it was not possible to write about this matter and if it was possible to read something relevant, then it was misrepresented. So, what were the facts? How was it possible for US troops to be in Velichovky as early as 8 May 1945 - over 200Km from Pízeň where the American units were known to be at that time?

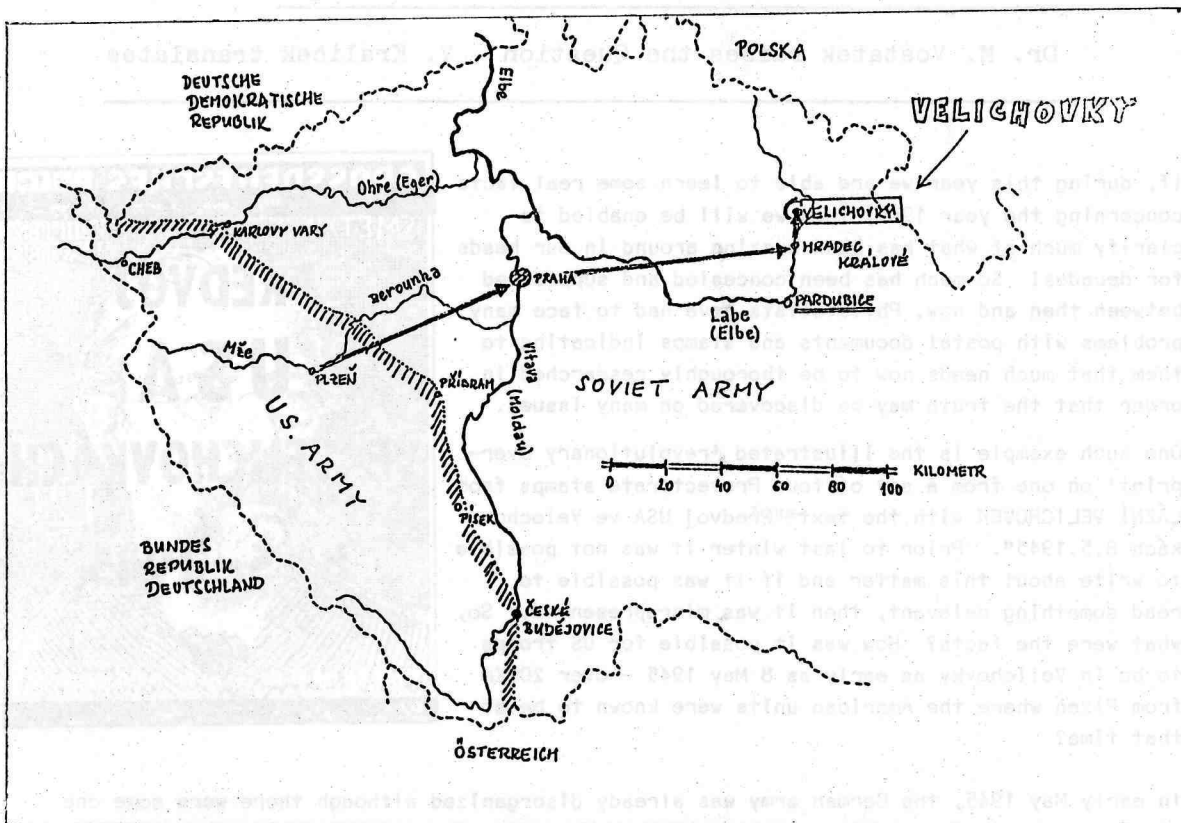


In early May 1945, the German army was already disorganized although there were some one million soldiers in relatively full battle order under the command of the 52 year-old Marshal Ferdinand Schörner, with headquarters in Velichovky. Blindly loyal to Hitler, his orders were brutal and unscrupulous - and much depended upon him. Because the Prague Uprising was of much greater significance than was hitherto thought, something happened in the 'Bohemian Area' which was construed as a 'stab in the back'. That is why the Döenitz government in Flensburg had to assess the situation in a new light. Urgent reinforcements needed to hurry to face the US lines as quickly as possible but it was then realized that there was no radio contact with the Schörner forces. Therefore, on 7 May 1945, the German Colonel Mayer-Detring flew to the American sector at Pízeň with capitulation orders for Schörner. The Americans assembled a group of armoured vehicles and officers and with the German colonel, travelled to Velichovky. After an eventful journey the party arrived at Velichovky in good order. It is known that soon afterwards Schörner left by plane for Bavaria, where he surrendered to the American Army who, in turn, passed him over to the Russians who kept him in captivity until 1955. Understandably, the entire situation of that time was very complicated and, in recent years, has been interpreted in all sorts of ways.

However, one fact emerges and remains: there were American soldiers in Eastern Bohemia, albeit probably only as courier/escorts. Later, of course, came the people's general euphoria of liberation - as with the Red Army, so it was with the American forces. >

[* Translation: U.S.A. Vanguard in Velichovky 8.5.1945]

VELICHOVKY 1945 (cont...)



The so-called 'revolutionary overprints' were issued in scores of locations. Local enthusiasts, philatelists, postal officials and others requested the agreement of the local commanders or of the revolutionary national committees for the production of overprints on the stamps of the Protectorate - it was simply revolutionary enthusiasm. The postal services were not functioning during this period but commemorative souvenirs were produced with these overprints. As soon as the situation calmed down to some sort of normality (around 16 May), the postal administration promptly prohibited the usage of these 'souvenirs' but one sure fact remains: A huge number of these items were produced and each one has some history attached to it even today.

Of the Velichovky overprint, it is now known that it was not issued on 8.5.1945 but some days after the liberation and, therefore, its significance is speculative. It appeared during the time when everything had been decided but it does remain 'an issue of that time'. Furthermore, in view of the Velichovky situation and the general military situation at that time, it may well evoke wonder and questions between collectors and laymen. Finally, it all adds just a little more to the now known history of 1945 and that is both necessary and useful::

* * *



REVOLUTIONARY ISSUES 1944-45

[A FURTHER COMMENTARY]

W.A. Page

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In our last issue (June/p.28), there was a review of the 4th edition of Juan Santa Eugenia Grau's book on the Revolutionary Stamps and Overprints of Czechoslovakia 1944-1945. By chance, this coincided with the donation by the author of a copy of his work to our Society library for which, the Society is very grateful. It is perhaps, therefore, appropriate to add a few further comments to that review upon an area which is looked upon by many to be of doubtful status. However, as the author comments, the existence of the stamps and overprints cannot be denied. Nevertheless, it is for the collector to decide whether they form a rightful place in the post-occupation period of Czechoslovakian territory and the bids made in order to demonstrate the return of the freedom that the country once cherished.

Right from the founding of the First Republic in 1918, the Czechoslovaks have always used the postage stamp and philately as publicity and propaganda tools - in good and bad times. Many such emissions have originated from National Revolutionary Committees, political and youth organizations, philatelic clubs; even local postmasters, etc. This applies equally to the 1944-45 activities although the speculative nature of many issues should not be overlooked. Likewise, a number of fraudulent overprints were made after the period quoted.

Now to revert to Sen. Grau's book. The author has spent some thirty years collecting and researching the many aspects of these issues. His book records over seven hundred different overprints on the adhesives and postal cards of Bohemia and Moravia, Germany, Hungary and Slovakia, together with some twenty local stamp issues. The overprints are all illustrated; the majority from actual examples, whilst the basic stamps are also illustrated, complete with cross-referenced catalogue numbers: Yvert, Zumstein, Michel and Scott.

Chapters on 'unidentified' overprints [i.e. not linked to specific areas] number 83; fantasy and fraudulent overprints - over 100; bogus cancellations and covers all add further to the very comprehensive nature of this publication.

The author specifically requests the assistance of fellow collectors everywhere in the identification of the mentioned 'unknown' items and their usage.

Although the main text is in Spanish, the volume contains a five language lexicon in Czech, Spanish, French, German and English, all contributing to making the use of the book very easy.

[NOTE: I would remind readers that our member Cyril Wackett produced a study on this subject in 1988. This dealt in much greater detail with some forty of the revolutionary issues with a wealth of background information on their origins. Cyril kindly donated a copy of this work to the Society library]

* * *

[Edit. Note: Alec raises some important points of view concerning this particular subject. We would welcome readers' comments and views for future publication. AJK.]

STOP PRESS! Members wishing to purchase a copy of Sr. Grau's book should order from our Publications Officer, Mr. W.A. Page, 138 Chastilian Rd., Dartford, Kent. DA1 3LG. Please enclose a self-addressed label (don't forget to add GREAT BRITAIN) ... and £28 cheque or postal orders. This will include postage/packing direct from the Spanish publishers.

A RECENT ISSUE"VICTIMS OF INJUSTICE"

Ján Gronský

Dr. MILADA HORÁKOVÁ



JuDr. Milada Horáková (née Kralová), a Doctor of Law, was born on Christmas Day in 1901. She was an important and respected representative of the Czechoslovak National Socialist Party (the party of President Dr. Eduard Beneš) and of the Czechoslovak Women's Movement; she was, at the same time, a Member of Parliament (The National Assembly).

During the Second World War Dr. Horáková joined an underground movement but was caught by the Germans and later sentenced to death. This was eventually commuted to imprisonment for eight years which she served up to 1945. Following her release, Dr. Horáková became one of the best known MPs for her party.

Following the political upheavals of early 1948, Dr. Horáková, along with other members of her party, refused to co-operate with the new government. This eventually led to her being arrested and imprisoned along with twelve other colleagues, including two more women MPs, mainly from opposition parties. There then followed several months of psychological and physical tortures until the authorities finally were enabled to produce (fabricated) confessions from the prisoners of their direct involvement in acts of terrorism, sabotage and espionage.

On 8 June 1950 Dr. Horáková and three of her friends were sentenced to death. Three others received sentences of life imprisonment and the remainder to between fifteen and twentyfive years in gaol.

On 27 June 1950, Dr. Milada Horáková, a mother of a sixteen year old girl, was forced to be near the scene whilst her three friends were hanged. Her last words before she, too, was dispatched to eternity was a cry for freedom for her country - then silence!

By this act, Dr. Milada Horáková became the first and only women to be judicially executed by hanging in Czechoslovakia. To her memory, a main road in Prague was recently renamed "Třída Dr. Horákové" (Dr. Horáková Road) and a club has been created bearing her name "Klub Milady Horákové". It was at the suggestion of this new club that the stamp shown at the top of this page was created. It seems that this will be the first of a series, although there has been no such confirmation yet received. The plural "Victims..." in the title published would seem to confirm such an opinion however.

* * *

THE STAMP:

Issued 25.6.1990 and bearing the title "Památka Oběti Bezpráví", it is inscribed "Milada/ Horáková/ † 27.6.1950" with face value of 1Kčs. The designer was O. Pošmurný and the engraver was Miloš Ondráček. Dr. Horáková's portrait is based on a 1945 drawing of her by her husband Bohuslav Horák. An approximate translation of the Czech title would read: "To the Memory of Victims of Injustice".

"BELGICA 1990"



CZECHOSLOVAKIA was represented at the "BELGICA 90" International Philatelic Exhibition held in Brussels from 2 to 10 June 1990, with ARTIA of Prague providing the various souvenirs of that occasion.

The motif of the main souvenir (above) is a small bronze statuette - the "Manniken Pis" fountain, a Brussels tourist attraction, dating from 1619 and described as "the oldest citizen of the City". It represents a young hero from Brussels' folklore. The Manniken Pis also 'owns' a varied wardrobe, ranging from Japanese armour to a Georgian dancer's costume - all kept in the Communal Museum.

The souvenir, engraved by Josef Herčík, was in two styles: a perforated miniature sheet in blue, gold and black as illustrated and also printed on art card 20x14cm. but in red, gold and black. Both items were cacheted with a suitably inscribed 'cancellation'.

Additionally, there was a small engraving of the Rubens painting 'Cleopatra' which appeared in the 1977 "Art on Stamps" issue, the original of which is in the National Gallery, Prague.

We are most grateful to Mr. F. Backeljauw (Belgium) for providing us with examples of these 'BELGICA 90' souvenirs. W.A.Page.

- NOTICE BOARD -

MEETING OF SATURDAY, JUNE 16 1990

Holidays and a fresh venue probably contributed to a smaller than usual attendance at the British Philatelic Centre, London, where Mr. Gary Ryan, RDP., FRPS,L. entertained the Society on the topic "THE FIRST ISSUE OF HUNGARY 1867-1871".

Opening his lecture, Mr. Ryan briefly explained why these stamps, the Franz Josef "Coarse Beard" issue of 1867 should be considered Hungary's first issue. Then followed a display of the Hungarian cancels of offices A-0 on the 1867 issue. All were complete strikes on pieces, supported by many fine covers and details of the POs., their present locations and populations served were given on the sheets. This was a portion of the collection on which Mr. Ryan's book on these cancellations was based. Also shown was a superb collection of money orders bearing stamps of this issue, followed by covers from the offices in Romania that were under Hungarian Postal control until March 1869.

Part two comprised the highlights of the collection: Mixed franking covers with the 5th issue of Austria (possibly for only about six weeks) - with the 1871 Hungarian issue being shown. Also shown were examples of postal rates with large multiples of the lower values and rare useage of higher values. Coloured cancels were also strongly represented.

Finally, a magnificent collection of Czechoslovakian documentary revenue stamps - mint, used, on piece and documents - was provided for our delight. The rare first issue of 1918, perf. 11½ was of special note as was the range of printing shades of the 2nd printing, perf. 14 - all beautifully demonstrated. JLW.

[Ed: In his Vote of Thanks, John Whiteside, FRPS,L. commented that we had been given a rare privilege of seeing some of the fine material collected by an International Grand Prix winner.]

* * * *

CONGRATULATIONS!

It is with great pleasure that we report Mr. Otto Hornung's election to the Presidency of the Association Internationale des Journalistes Philatéliques (AIJP) at their Congress at STAMP WORLD 90 on Friday, May 11 1990. We congratulate our member and wish him every possible success in this very important international journalistic office. WAP.

* * * *

NEW SLOVAK CATALOGUE (1939-1945)

Published by "PRAMENE" (Bratislava) @ Kčs20 in paperback format, contains information hitherto not available from official sources in Czechoslovakia. If only for this reason, it will certainly be welcomed by Cz. collectors. However, for western collectors it contains nothing new over what has already been published in English. Certainly our hope for some detail on postal rates during the period covered has not yet materialized.

There is a one page introduction in English and other languages and the entire volume covers stamps and stationery. It is substantially illustrated throughout although some of these are of sub-standard quality. Prices are in Kčs in the usual three columns. Its compilation is credited to Messrs. B. Synek and M. Zika. A copy is now in our library.

[Ed. note: One of the best Slovak/Bohemia & Moravia English language catalogues I have used is that published in 1958 by the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of North America. Although now out of print, it will be worth any effort to 'beg or borrow' but unhappily, not from our library! AJK.