



CZECHOUT

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NOTES

The Joint Meeting with the Austrian, Hungarian & Polish Societies at the Latvian Welfare Club, 5 Clifton Villas, off Manningham Lane, Bradford BD8 7BY will be on **Saturday 8 August**. Members of the Yugoslavia Study Group and the Oriental Philatelic Society of London will also be participating in the meeting. Please contact Yvonne Wheatley (0113 260 1978) for further details of this event). The next Society meeting in London will be on **Saturday 12 September** when Ian Nutley will display ***The Road to Auschwitz***.

We are sorry to learn that due to the economic downturn that is affecting us all, George Cuhaj has been unable to take up the post of editor of *The Czechoslovak Specialist*, however we are pleased that Lou Svoboda has offered to carry on until they can find a replacement.

Opinions expressed in articles in Czechout are the sole responsibility of the author(s), and are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor or the Society

NEWS & NOTICES

Meeting held Saturday 14 March 2009 at the Czech and Slovak National Club

The Chairman, Mrs Yvonne Gren, welcomed 15 members and two guests to the meeting; apologies having been received from 7 members.

Yvonne then announced the sad news of the untimely death of H.E. Jan Winkler, the Czech Ambassador in London, on 16 February. Mr Winkler took a great interest in the exhibition we staged at the Embassy in October and many of us had the privilege of speaking with him on that day. On behalf of the Society, I sent a message of sympathy to his colleagues, family and friends and Bobby Kingsley kindly travelled to the Embassy to sign the Book of Condolence later that week.

The Secretary gave details of two prospective new members:

Adrian Keppel	from Dundrennan, Scotland
John Mason	Solihull

whose applications were readily endorsed and formally accepted.

Yvonne then informed the members that unfortunately, due to ill health, the proposed speaker Geoff McAuley had had to cancel, so the Committee agreed to stand in with the following displays:

Yvonne Wheatley	<i>Provisional Newspaper stamps, including forgeries</i>
Bob Allard	<i>1920 Red Cross & Eastern Silesia issues</i>
Garth Taylor	<i>Brno Postal History Airmail Issues</i>
Tony Hickey	<i>The Civil Disturbances in the Sudetenland 21–23 September 1938</i>
Garth Taylor	<i>Matiaska Correspondence</i>
Yvonne Gren	<i>New York Fair Sheets</i>
Bob McLeod	<i>Airmail Flights and Pot-Pourri</i>
Lindy Bosworth	<i>PRAGA 78</i>

After the displays Yvonne asked Reg Hounsell to give a vote of thanks. Society members who could not get to today's meeting have missed a rare treat. Firstly, it is always good to have displays from members who rarely or have never shown material before, so special thanks should go to Bob McLeod and Bob Allard for their excellent displays.

Mentioning the displays in the order they were shown:

Yvonne Wheatley – *Provisional Newspaper stamps, including forgeries* – An interesting display covering the six-week period when 'stamp' printed labels were allowed and were paid in cash. I have not seen any of these before and especially liked the story of how Yvonne obtained the elusive Lloyd first printing.

Bob Allard – *1920 Red Cross & Eastern Silesia issues* – An extensive display of overprinted stamps, including trial printings on unissued values of the Hradčany and Chainbreaker stamps.

Garth Taylor – *Brno 1656-1860* – A great display of pre-stamp covers including very early undated and dated handstamp and registration marks. I particularly liked the large 'Court' examples. Particular note should be made of the great condition of these early items. Garth's 1930 Airmail 3rd issue of mint stamps including plate blocks, various perforations and examples of the 2kčs type 1 and type 2 varieties were outstanding.

Tony Hickey – *An insight to the 1938 Sudetenland Crisis* – Tony gave a great historical insight into the political turmoil inside the predominantly 'German' areas of the Republic, mobilisation and the pressures and manoeuvres put onto Chamberlain and the Allies by Hitler, leading up to the signing of the document which effectively dismantled Czechoslovakia. This was illustrated with a number of genuine postal used cards and commercial covers, including a 'Day of Liberation' example dated 22/9/38 and examples of early overprinting of Czech stamps and German rates.

In the second half :

Garth Taylor – *Czech Forces in GB: Matiaska Correspondence during WW2* – This is a wonderful display describing the correspondence to Cleveland, USA with use of multiple stamps on cover to cover the international postal rate. I noted the early attempt of an ‘Aerograph’ and a letter signed by several members of the Czech Field Post as nice covers to have – well they are all nice covers to have!

Yvonne Gren – *Miniature sheets overprinted for New York World Fair* – Yvonne gave the story of the fund-raising reason for these overprints and the later Official ones from Toronto. This was an extensive display which included very interesting back-stamps on covers to Ecuador and Mexico City.

Bob McLeod – *Airmail Flights and Pot-Pourri* – Bob produced an interesting selection of covers, with gem after gem being produced. In particular I liked the air covers to Shanghai and New Zealand flown via New York and Hawaii and the 1945 War Heroes issue used with emergency registration labels. Bob completed his display with some pre-stamp covers.

Lindy Bosworth – *Praga 1978* – A tour-de-force by Lindy showing the publicity (which started in 1976) special stamp issues including miniature sheets and all the special envelopes produced for different days and events including balloon flights, for what were probably the largest International Stamp Exhibition ever held. I was an Airmail competitive exhibitor at this event and spent several days in Prague, many attending the exhibition looking at the fantastic displays of Czech Philately. Whilst remembering the long queues to get into the exhibition, I never saw many of the special covers on sale or knew of the ‘Press events’ so missed those queues! The balloon covers are particularly of interest to me.

The committee have produced a wonderful range of material at short notice and should be commended for an excellent display this afternoon.

Yvonne thanked Reg and there being no further business called the meeting to a close at 4.20 pm.

Letters & e-mails to the Editor

☒ **ABPS Executive Bulletin No 14 April 2009:** Beverley Davies has accepted the role of Secretary of Stamp Active Network. The British Youth Stamp Championship will take place at the Autumn Stampex.

☒ **The British Postal Museum & Archive Spring/Summer Newsletter** contains details of changes in personnel; a programme entitled Web 2.0; Mark Crowley’s research on *Women workers in the Post Office during the Second World War*; *Gentleman on Stamps*: an Exhibition of David Gentleman’s Artwork; Post Office Services for Disabled People; BPMA signs agreement with Ancestry.co.uk to make PO appointment books from 1831 to 1960 fully searchable and online for family researchers; Meet the Neighbours at the project to create BMPA HQ in Swindon; London 2010 Festival of Stamps.

☒ **The British Library Philatelic Collections Newsletter Issue 15, Spring 2009** contains details of the Post Office Mauritius 1d ‘Ball cover’ on loan from Vickram Chand, the well-known collector of Singapore; the Universal Postal Union Collection of Postal Stationery. The Stuart Rossiter Memorial Lecture 2009 at the Royal PS, London will be given by Tom Slemens on British Country Postal History Research & Discovery at 5pm on Friday 6 November; free entry by ticket only, available from SRT c/o David Beech, The British Library Philatelic Collections, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

Publications

We have received the following journals, which will be available from the Society Library. Items of interest to members are:

- The Summer 2009 issue of *Austria* No.166.
- ▶ Payment of pre-stamp letters to and from the Austrian border (Jungwirth trl: Brandon); WWI Field & Civil Post Interchange (Taylor & Brandon); K.u.K or K.k. – the abbreviations explained (Taylor, Matthijssen & Pollak).

- The March 2009 issue of *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Tschechoslowakei*, Vol.40, Whole No. 159. Douglas Baxter has kindly translated the list of contents for us.
- ▶ A study group for the postal history of Carpatho-Ukraine is set up (-); Question 41: re Monograph on Bohemia & Moravia postal history 1939-45 (-); The 1987 summer timetable for airmail transport to foreign countries by the Czechoslovak Post Officer (Müller); The Franko Hotově cancellation of the Prague Post Office (Kobelbauer); New information about the Pilsen overprints (Holoubek); The Autopost routes in Czechoslovakia 1986-87 (Müller).
- The January/February 2009 issue of *The Czechoslovak Specialist*, Vol.71, No.1, Whole No. 613. The articles include:
 - ▶ A Guide to the types and sub-types of the 1923 Agriculture & Science issue (Wilson); New *Specialist* Index (Wilson); Rotunda of the Holy Cross in Prague (van Zenten).
- The January/April 2009 issue of *Dylizans*, No.52/53.
 - ▶ Handbook for the Detection of Forged Polish Stamps and Overprints (Blunt); Polish Post Museum in Gdańsk (-).
- No.4 2009 issue of *Filatelie*, Vol.59. The English translation of the contents does not cover all the articles.
 - ▶ Post Offices that have disappeared from maps [4] (Kratochvíl); Padělky: Forgeries Type 'K' [SO Overprints - Nightmare [4] (Beneš); Forerunners in a different way (Dusbábek); Czechoslovak. Stamp Booklets [5] (Šilhán); One-stamp postage after 1945 (Fencel).
- The 2/2009 issue of *Merkur Revue*. The English translation of the contents does not cover all the articles.
 - ▶ The 1943 London Miniature Sheet (Hauptman & Pittermann); Vouchers of the Zemská banka Království Českého [2] (Moravec); Courier Service of the American officers from Prague in 1919 (Gebauer); The truth and disputes about authorship (Fischer); Overview of the plates of the special delivery stamp 2h SO 1920 (Filipek); Pošta Československá 1919: History of the issue [1] (Stupka).
- The June 2009 issue of *Stamps of Hungary* No.177.
 - ▶ Circular Numeral Postage Due Markings (Williams & Benford); On the trail of the 1919 overprints – the Paris forgeries of the second Debrecen issue (Morrell).

Congratulations

To **Richard Beith** who was awarded the Robson Lowe Salver for Literature at the ASPS(Scottish) Competitions for his entry of the long article on 'The United States Involvement in West African Aviation and their Contribution to the Carriage of Mails 1941-45'. This was published in *Cameo* [West African Study Circle] in the issue for January 2009 and was judged to be of Gold standard (90 marks)!

OBITUARIES

Chris Dent – March 2008:

Chris worked in a solicitor's office and was a member of Burnley Philatelic Society. He attended the Czechoslovak meetings held at the Leeds Stamp Fair and also attended the ABPS exhibitions. He was a proud possessor of a pair of the National Exhibition sheets used on two covers which had been certified by the Royal as genuine.

Yvonne Wheatley

Mirko Lyn Vondra obit 17.11.2008:

When I resumed editorship of this journal in September 1994 one of the first to write to me was Mirko, and I was saddened to learn of his passing. We had a friendly correspondence during his editorship of the *Czechoslovak Specialist* and eventually met at the Praga 1998 Dinner.

He was born in New York City of Czech parents and served during WWII in Guam with the US Army Air Force Services. He retired in the 1980s after a career in insurance litigation whilst working for AIG and GEICO in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. He also taught in the Vale Technical Institute in Blairsville PA.

Mirko devoted his retirement to collecting Czech stamps, winning many awards. He also was active in the services of the Society of Czechoslovak Philately on their Board and also as President.

Colin W Spong

Anna Jane Sterba 20.2.1924 – 3.3.2008

It was with sadness that I learnt of the passing of our member Jane Sterba on 3 March 2008, after a long illness.

When I joined the Society of Czechoslovak Philately in America Jane contacted me as she and her husband Joe were visiting London. We had a most enjoyable day in the capital and it was the beginning of a friendship lasting nearly forty years.

Jane's collecting interest was thematics, the most memorable being 'A Philatelic Tour of Prague', which formed the basis of a series of articles for the *Czechoslovak Specialist*. She contributed much to the Society of Czechoslovak Philately in America as editor, secretary and president and will be greatly missed.

Yvonne Wheatley

CZECH DEAD LETTER OFFICES

-Bret Janik-

Rex Dixon received this information about Bret Janik's exhibit on Exponet from Hartmut Liebermann and I thought members would find this of interest.

Covers that have passed through Dead Letter Offices (DLOs) represent a fascinating collecting topic where each item is a unique piece with its own history and usually with both sides full of postmarks, markings, postage stamps and seals. DLOs process letter mail that is undeliverable to the addressee and cannot immediately be returned to the sender. Such mail is officially opened and returned if a valid address is found. DLOs were established at postal directorates and existed already in the 19th century in Praha (Prague) and Brno. During the 20th century their number increased to eight in 1949, when most of them were closed and only the original two DLOs remained. Since 1952 only one DLO has existed; it was in Praha, since 1966 in Trnava and since 1993 in Brno. The usual Czech term for DLO is 'poštovní úložna', sometimes used in the form 'poštovní ohlašovna a úložna' (Dead letter and parcel office). No fees were associated with processing of mail by the DLO, but since 1937 the return postage was charged. DLOs used paper seals for closing opened covers and a large variety of manipulation, 'fee to collect' and other auxiliary handstamps to mark necessary data on the covers. The DLOs also used line handstamps, datestamps and official stamps intended for internal use that can be sometimes also found on processed mail.

The exhibit 'Czech Dead Letter Offices' presents a specialised documentation of Czech DLOs from 1901 (when the usage of paper seals for closing mail began) to 1966, examples of newer items are also included. To ensure best picture quality for the Exponet, this exhibit is derived from a completely electronic version created by combining text, scans of original items and computer-made images of the seals. Each item is presented from both sides: below the original of the front side, a (sometimes reduced) scan of the back follows. The descriptions include computer reconstructions of the pictures of the used seals that are the most collectable artifacts of DLO items.

FOOTBALL AND PHILATELY: A DANGEROUS MIXTURE!

- Hartmut Liebermann-

I had the pleasure to read the article from Lubor Kunc about 'Football and Philately', which is mainly a report about Czech football history. I would like to add some information about the early period of this history, particularly from a German point of view. During the Austro-Hungarian monarchy there was no common football association in the empire. In 1901 separate Hungarian and Bohemian football associations were founded, an 'Austrian' one followed later in 1904.

The Bohemian association represented only clubs of the Czech-speaking part of the population: Clubs of the German-speaking part joined the German football association (Deutscher Fußball-Bund, DFB), which was founded in 1900. The first president of the DFB (1900-1910) was Ferdinand Hüppe, a member of DFC Prag (= Deutscher Fußball-Club Prag). DFC Prag was founded in 1896 by German-speaking Jews, mainly people of higher (university) education.

DFC Prag became German Vice-Champions in 1903 and was a very successful European club until the twenties. Though participating in German football championships until 1914, its players were not able to represent Germany in international matches, because they didn't have German citizenship of course. But lots of them were international players for Austria and later, after the independence in 1918, for Czechoslovakia.

During the thirties, DFC Prag became more and more urged to join the movement of Konrad Henlein, even if most players as well as officials of the club were Jews; the club refused. After the German occupation of Prague in 1939 DFC Prag was liquidated as a 'Jewish club'.

FRENCH MINIATURE SHEET FEATURING PRAGUE

-Michael Chant-

Whilst in France in December 2008 I noticed this miniature sheet featuring Prague recently issued by the French Post Office in their European Capitals series. This may be of interest to members.

Michael has recently written again to say, 'I spoke to a French representative of the French Post Office at their stand at Stampex in February. He told me that they plan to bring out similar sheets for all the EU capitals but only at the rate of one per year! It may therefore be a long time before we see an equivalent sheet for Bratislava, though the same chap also told me that the series would start with capitals of Eurozone countries, which pushes Bratislava at least about

halfway up the queue. I did not think to ask why Prague had appeared so early on despite not being in the Eurozone. Can only think it is because the Czech Republic currently holds the EU Presidency.'

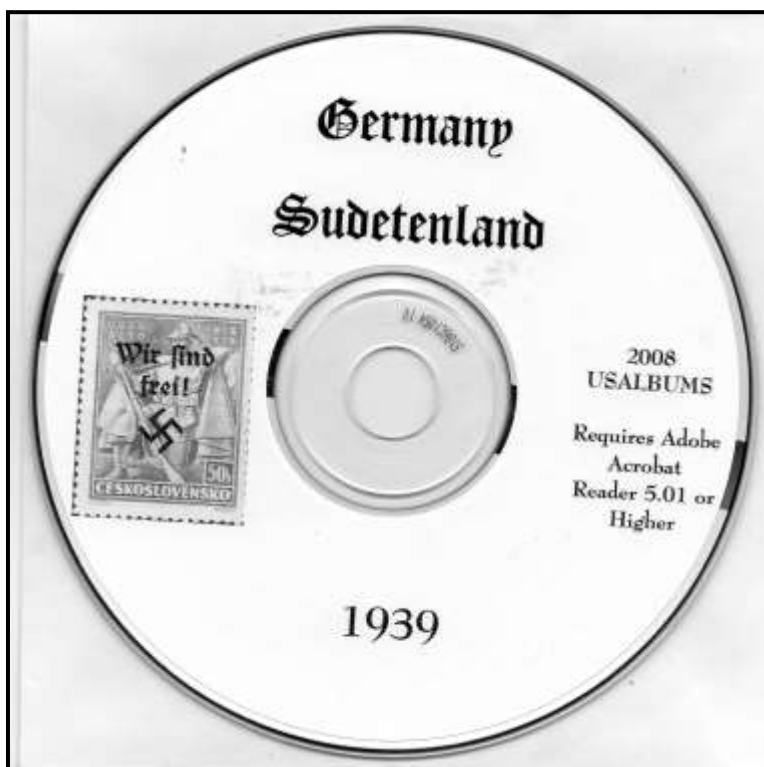


COMPACT DISC REVIEW

Germany Sudetenland Album Pages. Published by 'USALBUMS' in 2008

Last summer I discovered a disc with colour album pages for a Sudetenland collection, available on the internet direct from the U.S.A., produced by 'USALBUMS'. I sent for my copy, which arrived very quickly. The disc contains pages with spaces for all the official overprints from the Sudetenland: Asch, Karlsbad, Konstantinsbad, Niklasdorf, Reichenberg-Maffersdorf, Rumburg & Sudetendeutsches Niederland. Spaces are available for pairs, strips and sheets. Most of these are fully illustrated. Altogether there are over 100 pages included, with text in German. I printed my pages onto 160 g/m² white card and was very satisfied with the results.

Generally I was pleased with my purchase, but there are a few things that I would have changed to make life easier for the Sudetenland collector. It would have been useful to have the text in German, Czech and English, but the limited space available would probably prevent this. I would have liked to have seen the issue numbers for each stamp included on the pages. For example, most of the Konstantinsbad issue exist in incredibly small numbers. It is unlikely that the average collector will succeed in filling the pages of this particular location due to the numbers involved. It would be a useful addition to highlight the different types of overprint for each town, for example, Rumburg type 1, type 2, type 3 and type 4 etc. More information about dates of occupation would also have been appreciated.



The only critical comment that I would add, is that on the disc '1939' is mentioned in the title when this should read '1938'. So, to summarise, the disc is well worth buying for the Sudetenland specialist, especially those with an interest in individual stamps, varieties, strips, pairs and sheets. I would recommend this product – further details can be found on the internet.

Tony Moseley

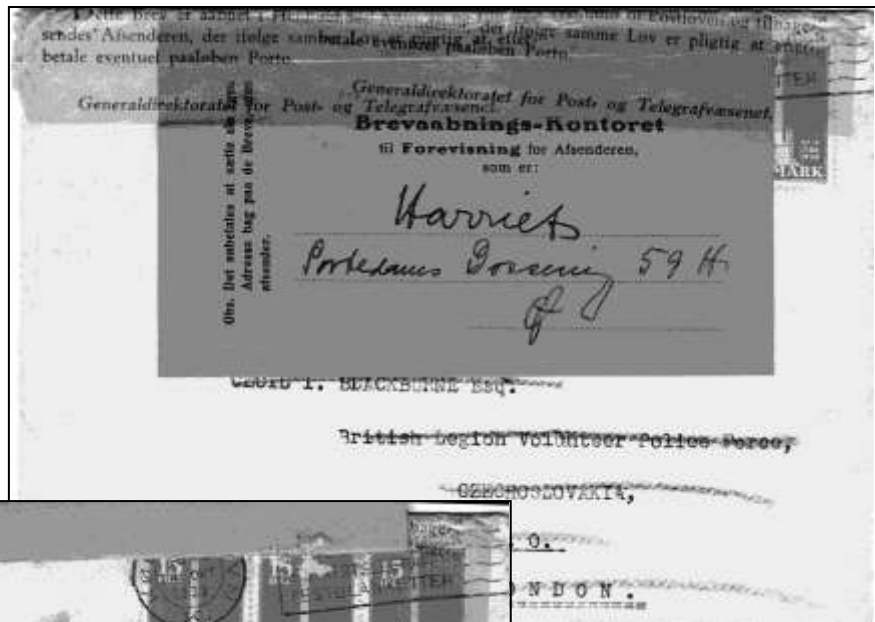
QUERIES AWAITING ANSWERS
Czechout 2/03: Richard Beith's 24Kčs 1946 Airmail Stamp
Czechout 3/03: Barry Horne's 1919 1st Anniversary Sheet perforations
Czechout 3/05: Ian McQueen's Shanghai Airmail via Czechoslovakia to Denmark
Czechout 1/06: Charles Stirton's two covers with unusual 'Red' stamps
Czechout 2/06: Bob Hill's Death of the Invaders overprints
Czechout 1/07: Bob Hill's Dezejna's Nachod stamp
Czechout 1/07: Richard Spennock's B&M Souvenir sheet
Czechout 4/07: Frederik Bacheljauw's Hrušov ve Slezku cancellation
Czechout 4/07: Tony Moseley's Sudetenland cancellation
Czechout 1/08: Derek Baron's Olomouc to Vienna pc
Czechout 2/08: Bob Hill's Andreas Haase printing house for 1919 overprints
Czechout 3/08: Shirley Kemp's Austrian postcard addresses to Angela Mucha
Czechout 1/09: Norman Hudson's Alfons Mucha Graphic, 1988.

THE BRITISH LEGION VOLUNTEER POLICE FORCE: SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1938

-Peter C. Rickenback

This article first appeared in Germania, the journal of the Germany & Colonies Philatelic Society, in November 2008. We thank the author and editors for offering this paper to us.

I have found an envelope addressed to the British Legion Volunteer Police Force from Denmark. It was marked 'DISBANDED' and returned to Denmark. There it was opened to find the address of the sender, sealed with a label giving the sender's address and then forwarded. In seventy years of collecting and dealing in philatelic material this is the only example I have seen. It stimulated me to do some research into its background.



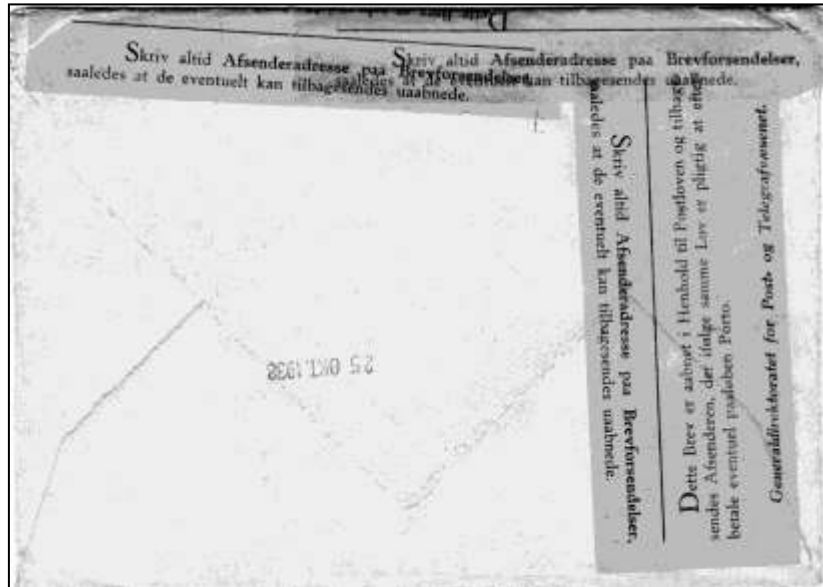
Political background

After the political success of the 'Anschluss' with Austria in March 1938, Hitler turned his attention to Czechoslovakia. In his Reichstag speech of 18 March he referred to the 'ten million unredeemed Germans.' Since the population of Austria was six and a half millions, it was clear that the next objective was the Sudetenland. Although the German Government claimed benevolence towards Czechoslovakia, the Sudeten Nazis under Henlein were busy fomenting as much trouble as possible, and the German propaganda machine and newspapers constantly referred to 'anti-German crimes.' Czechoslovakian Bohemia and Moravia were now surrounded on three sides by Germany. The integrity of the frontiers of Czechoslovakia could only be maintained if the western democracies supported her. She had a treaty of alliance with France, and Britain, whilst not having a formal alliance, supported the position of France.

Early in May 1938 a joint Anglo-French advisory team went to Prague. The Czechs under President Dr Beneš were hostile to detachment of the Sudetenland, realising that such a detachment would probably not satisfy the schemes of Hitler. Furthermore, the Sudeten mountains were the source of important mining of metal ores, coal and lignite. They were also the site of the defensive barrier, which had been rendered less effective by the Anschluss as this gave Germany a border with Czechoslovakia to the south.

On 21 May, in response to allegations that Germany was moving troops to the border, Dr Beneš mobilised 170,000 troops. Britain and France responded to the news with diplomatic notes to Germany. Actually Germany had not mobilised and the scare subsided, but Hitler considered his prestige damaged, which strengthened his desire to 'smash the Czechs.' Negotiations continued through May, June and July, when they reached deadlock. On 26 July Mr Chamberlain announced that Lord Runciman was going to Prague as an independent mediator at the request of the Czechoslovak Government.

Runciman was unable to make any headway and events were overtaken by the Nazi Party Rally at Nuremberg in September, where Hitler's speech included an aggressive demand for self-determination for the Sudeten Germans and promised them Germany's support. However, he did not set a date or demand a plebiscite. Serious trouble began in the Sudetenland and Czechoslovakia declared martial law.



On 15 September Chamberlain flew to see Hitler at Berchtesgaden. At a three-hour meeting Chamberlain agreed the principle of self-determination and the cession, without plebiscite, to the Reich of all Sudeten areas in which the population was over 50 per cent German, and this became the nub of the Anglo-French proposals presented to the Czech government on 19 September. Another meeting was held at Bad Godesberg on 22/23 September, by which time Chamberlain had secured the agreement of a very reluctant President Beneš. Hitler, blaming pressures from Hungary and Poland, demanded that the Sudetenland be evacuated of its Czech forces and police by 1 October. In the face of such action, Chamberlain withdrew. Not wishing to be seen in Germany as the cause of the breakdown of talks, Hitler signed a paper claiming to wish for friendship with Britain. Despite this, the democratic powers were warned; the French mobilised half a million men and the British fleet was mobilised.

The Four Nations' Heads of Government Munich Conference took place on 29/30 September. A Memorandum was agreed, based upon the Godesberg plan, as modified (at the suggestion of Mussolini) by the Anglo-French suggestions. It provided for:

- Evacuation between 1 and 10 October, without damage to any existing installations.
- Establishment of an International Commission of representatives of the four powers and Czechoslovakia.
- Successive occupation of five areas, with dates – the first four were defined in a map attached to the Memorandum, with the boundaries of the fifth to be defined by the International Commission ready for occupation by 10 October.
- Provision for a plebiscite to be held by the end of November in territories determined by the International Commission.
- A right of option by individuals into and out of the transferred territories.

The first meeting of the International Commission was held in Berlin on 30 September. Dr Beneš resigned and went into exile in the United States. Between 1 and 10 October 1938 the Germans occupied five ceded zones of the Sudetenland, an area of about 12,000 square miles. This was about one fifth of the area of Czechoslovakia.

There was continual disagreement on the International Commission about the borders of the areas designated for plebiscite. Faced with other problems, such as the Slovak demand on 6 October for autonomy (which was granted), the new Czech government did not want the confrontation with Germany that a plebiscite would engender. They therefore readily agreed to the German proposal on 13 October to dispense with the need for the plebiscite.

The German and Czech delegations to the International Commission continued to meet to make minor adjustments to the new frontier. On 10 October they agreed to use the Austrian maps of the area, made in 1910, which gave clarity to the areas and stopped disagreement. A Protocol was signed on 20 November recording the final determination of the frontier.

The British Legion Volunteer Police Force

On 16 September Runciman suggested to the British Cabinet an International Police Force of Volunteers to supervise the frontier situation. On the 21st Lord Halifax discussed the idea with the British Chargé d'Affaires in Prague. The suggestion was accepted and preparation for recruitment was put into effect the next day. On the 24th, according to the British Legion chairman, the Foreign Office requested 5,000 men at very short notice with a further 5,000 later, to act as neutral frontier observers. The Prime Minister agreed to this request.

On 25 September the President of the British Legion flew to Berlin to offer such a supervisory force. He arrived there at 10.30pm. On the 26th he met Hitler, who informed him that he would occupy the Sudetenland on 1 October. The 10,000 Legion volunteers would therefore not be wanted as frontier observers, but a smaller number were welcome for policing the plebiscite which Hitler was demanding.

The National Office of the Legion headed the effort to recruit throughout the country a force of 1,200 men, selected from approximately 17,000 volunteers, assembled them in Olympia, London, had them kitted out, fed them, arranged their sleeping accommodation and had them sworn in. They were kitted out with civilian blue suits, boots, badges and police greatcoats. 200 of these volunteers were transport, administration and medical units.

Of the volunteers, 50 were from the Metropolitan force, 200 from the Eastern area, 300 from the Southern, 30 from the Northern, 80 from the North Western, 40 from Yorkshire, 220 from the Midlands, 50 from Wales, 10 from Northern Ireland and 20 from Scotland. The detailed instructions pertaining to the setting up of the Force are available in the British Archives. The leaders of the volunteers were:

Major Sir Francis Fetherstone-Godley OBE DL, National Chairman of the British Legion,
Leader

Lt. Gen. Sir James W. O'Dowda, Divisional Commander

Brigadier General E. R. Fitzpatrick, Chief of Staff

Colonel Crossfield, O.C. Intelligence

Lady Edward Spencer Churchill, Chairwoman of the British Legion Women's Section, contacted the British American and Imperial Tobacco Companies, who both immediately offered very substantial quantities of cigarettes free of charge.

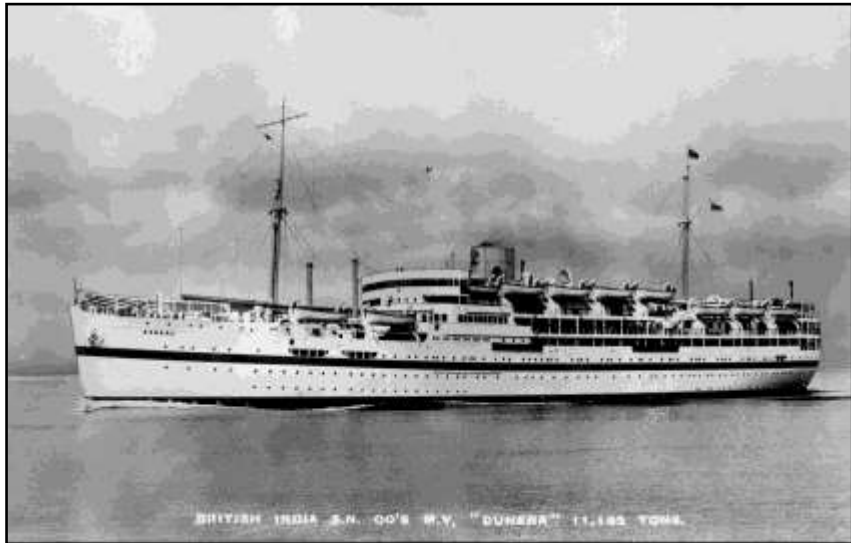
The arrangements for communications with members of the Legion were finalised. Staff had been selected and their duties defined. The well-known English postal historian Mr Edward Proud informed me that the P.O. postmark proofs were destroyed; hence the existence of a special postmark for the Legion force can only be supposed. A forwarding address for incoming mail during the formation of the Legion was established. This is the address shown on the illustrated letter.

The volunteers were collected on 6 October at Olympia, where they were accommodated, and elementary drill and a route march were undertaken. On Sunday 8 October they marched through the West End of London led by the band of the Welsh Guards. The volunteers were to be paid £3.15s per week for married men and £3 for single men.

On 12 October they embarked at Tilbury on two ships, the HM Transport *Dunera* and the SS *Naldera*. They sailed down the river destined for Bremen for onward travel by train, but anchored off Southend and Herne Bay to await further instructions.

HMT *Dunera*

Built Glasgow 1937
Twin screw steamer
Gross tonnage 11,162
Owner: British India
Steam Navigation Co. Ltd
340 men from the Legion



SS *Naldera*

Built Greenock 1917
Twin screw steamer
Gross tonnage 15,825
Owner: P&O Steam
Navigation Company
700 men from the Legion



On 8 October the assembled legionnaires were told by their president that 'no-one knows what and when and where it will happen.' However, on 13 October, while at anchor in the Thames Estuary, they heard that they would not be required, as there were to be no plebiscites. The ships returned to Tilbury on 15 October, the volunteers were paid off, disembarked and they went home.

According to Sir Brunel Cohen, Hon Treasurer of the British Legion, all costs were met by the Government, so at least the Legion was not out of pocket. A Foreign Office note of 27 December 1939 states that the total expenditure of the Force to 31 March 1939 was £47,796.2.4.

Sources – I have benefited from the most generous help of:

Ms Valerie Hart from the archive of the Guildhall Library in London.
Mr Paul Johnson of the National Archives Image Library.
The staff of the British Library newspaper section in Colindale.
German Historical Institute, London.

Literature

Baker, A.W. *Ten Glorious Days with the British Legion Czechoslovakian Volunteer Police*.
Fowler, Mrs Tracey. 'Report for the North Staffs. Group of the British Legion'.
Wootton, Graham. *The Official History of the British Legion*.
'The British Legion Volunteer Police 1938'. www.britishlegion-northstaffs.org.uk/history/police_force2.htm.

A COVER STORY

Czechoslovakia 1938

-Tony Moseley-

German Occupation Of The Sudetenland

Zuckmantel über Teplitz-Schönau 2 (Cukmantl ve Čechách), now called *Pozorka*

Accounting Post Office – Teplitz-Schönau 2

German Regional Head Post Office - Dresden

Censored letter to a Sudeten German serving in **infantry regiment KHB** and returned to sender. Letter addressed to a soldier doing national service in the Czechoslovak army. All young men were required to complete two years of compulsory duty. The initials KHB **refer** to the name of the famous Czech writer, **Karel Havlíček Borovský**.

Cancelled 'Zuckmantl' by provisional handstamp using violet ink on a light blue 20 pfgr Hindenburg German adhesive. The stamp has been struck through in coloured pencil, possibly to prevent reuse(?). Censored on entry into Czechoslovakia, the item carries an additional cancel 'Polní Pošta 27 10. XI. 33-' This would certainly appear to be an error, regarding the year, which should read **1938**. It is unclear at exactly which point this cancel was applied, as this may be on the inward or return journey.



The letter could not be delivered, as by this time, the soldier had left the military and returned home. This is indicated in manuscript '**Propuštěn**' (released) and '**Zpět**' (back).

Zuckmantel is located in north west Bohemia, to the north of Teplitz-Schönau (Teplice-Šanov) and south of Dubí. This area was occupied between 8th and 10th October 1938, in Stage 5 of the German invasion following the Munich agreement.

MONUMENT TO PARACHUTISTS TO BE UNVEILED

Monument to Czechoslovakian parachutists who assassinated the Nazi Governor of Bohemia and Moravia Reinhard Heydrich is ready to be unveiled. [We thank Bob McLeod for sending us this article.]

Published and updated 18 May 2009 (Oskar Exner).

This week footpaths have been altered and statues depicting cooperation of British soldiers with Czechoslovakian parachutists and the inhabitants of the Protectorate of Bohemia & Moravia have been installed. The height and the inclination of the statues are meant to emphasise the movement of these people above an abyss which divided life and death. The statues do not have concrete faces of the parachutists as was originally planned.

All was instigated by the Barbarians

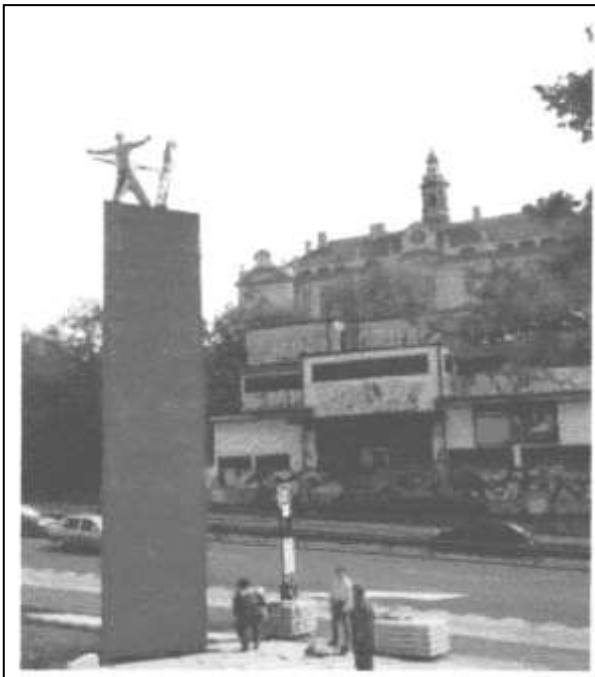
There had been long discussions about the installation of the monument instigated by a group of young people calling themselves Barbarians. On the occasion of the anniversary of the assassination in 2007, the group installed a memorial plaque in a bend in Kobylišy where the assassination had taken place with the following inscription: 'This is where on 27 May 1942 two Czechoslovakian soldiers carried out the most substantial act of the European resistance.' There was also a reproach to the politicians: 'Unlike Czech politicians, patriots do not forget.'

One year later

In 2008 Prague 8 councillors decided on the form of the monument to the parachutists. They announced an architectural competition which numbered twenty teams and was won by graduates of the Technical University in Brno, David Moješčík and Michel Smetal and their friends Miroslava Tůmová and Jiří Gulbis. They proposed to place the monument as close as possible to the spot where Gabčík and Kubiš attacked the car with Heydrich. The actual place disappeared under the layers of the new road, so it was shifted a little bit in the direction of Prosek in V Holešovičkách Street.

Unveiling ceremony

The monument will be solemnly unveiled on the day of the anniversary of the assassination, i.e. on 27 May, the day when in their act of bravery the Resistance fighters gave their lives. In the meantime, the plaques installed by the Barbarians disappeared, probably into the hands of some vandals who thought they were stealing bronze plaques. In order to prevent other acts of vandalism, the City of Prague promised that the monument will be surveilled by CCTV.



Last touches before the unveiling ceremony



Detail of the monument with until now veiled statues

The Slovak Army: 1939-1945

Part 2: The Russian Campaign 1940- 43

-David Holt-

This is the second part of a brief history of the armed forces from the end of the Polish campaign in Autumn 1939 until the end of the Slovak Russian campaign in the Spring of 1944. In addition information on details of the Field Post system that I have been able to ascertain has been included. Part 1 appeared in the December 2008 issue of 'Czechout'.

PERIOD TO JUNE 1941

In the period between the end of the Polish Campaign and the spring of 1941 the Slovak State consolidated its position and on 26 Oct 1939 Father Tiso became President. The limited recognition of the new republic meant that it became more closely tied to Germany. The role of the Hlinka Guard caused a number of problems, allowing Hitler to intervene and giving him the opportunity to shape the Slovak Government to suit the needs of Germany, leaving the Hlinka Guard separate from the army.

The army mobilised in September 1939 was too large for the new state to support and was reduced from three Divisions to two and reorganised. The First and Second Infantry Divisions were based respectively at Trenčín and Prešov with a combined manpower of about 31,500 men. In order to remedy the shortage of Slovak officers the government with German assistance set up an Officers' Academy in Banská Bystrica and a Staff College in Bratislava. In addition the Germans promised to rearm the army with modern German equipment but by June 1941 little had been achieved.

THE ADVANCE INTO RUSSIA

The Expeditionary Force

President Tiso was not aware of the details of the plan to attack the USSR until the German forces started to assemble in the vicinity of Prešov in May 1941. The mobilisation of the Slovak forces was ordered on 24 June, the day after Slovakia declared war on the USSR. This increased the strength of the Army from 33,500 in June to over 100,000 by the end of July. In order to increase Slovakia's standing with Germany by getting troops into the field before the other German allies, the Slovak Army Group commanded by the Slovak Minister of Defence, Ferdinand Čatloš, ordered Colonel Rudolf Pílfousek (a Volksdeutsch) to form a mobile unit, the Rapid Group.

This group crossed the Russian border on 26 June, initially consisting of about 1,800 men and reaching a strength of about 4,000 men by the end of July. The Rapid Group advanced through Lwów and towards Vinnitsa. Around 8 July 1941 it was upgraded to a Brigade and had advanced beyond the tactical control of the Slovak command, so control of the unit was handed over to the German 17 Army. The Group had problems in keeping up with the German advance as at times 50% of its vehicles were out of action. After the battle around Lipovets on 22 July the Brigade was in poor condition and was withdrawn from the fighting. In early July the First and Second Infantry Divisions, the remainder of the expeditionary force crossed the Russian border, but as the Rapid Brigade was given priority for transport their progress was slow and they were mainly involved in clearing up and securing the rear areas. On 25 July the Slovak High Command decided to reorganise the forces into a Rapid Division (Rychlá Divíza) and a Reserve Division (Zaisťovacia Divíza) with a combined strength of between 16,000 and 18,000 men.

The Rapid Division

On 2 August the Rapid (1st Slovak [Mobile] Infantry) Division (Rychlá Divíza), commanded by General Turanec, began to form in the area east of Vinnitsa, taking the best elements from the First and Second Infantry Divisions.

Composition of the Rapid Division:

- Divisional HQ
- 20th Infantry Regiment (1/20 & 2/20 Battalions)
- 21st Infantry Regiment (1/21 & 2/21 Battalions)
- 11th Artillery Regiment (1/11, 2/11 & 3/11 Batteries)
- 11th Reconnaissance Group
- 2nd Signal Battalion
- 11th Pioneer Battalion
- 11th Maintenance Battalion
- 11th Anti-Aircraft Battalion
- 1st & 12th Flights

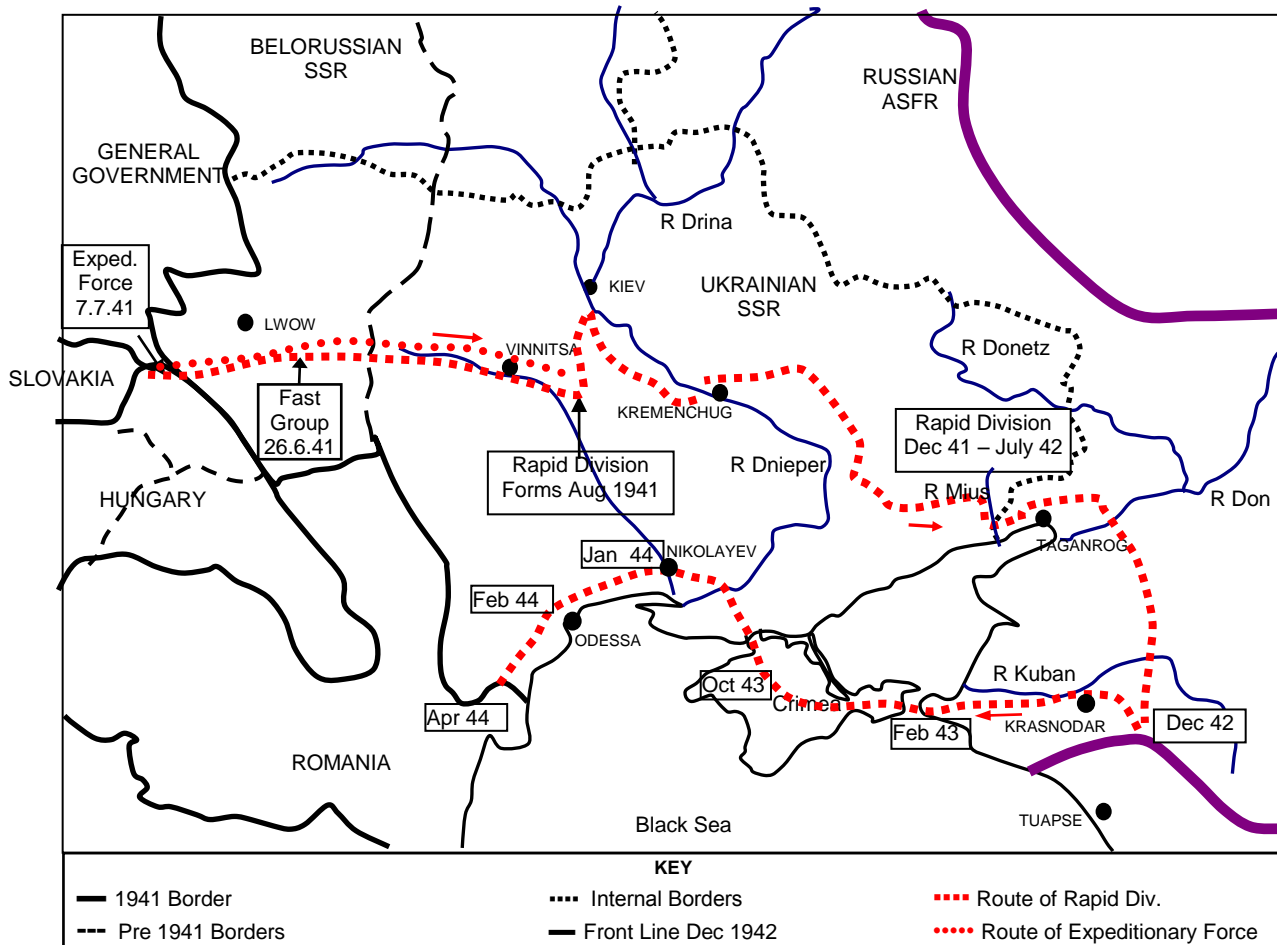


Fig. 1 – The route of the Rapid Division

By 23 August the Division had crossed the River Bug to take part in the battles around Kiev in mid September. After the fighting near Kiev ended the Rapid Division was transferred to the reserves of Army Group South. Consequently the unit moved along the Dnieper River, through Gorodishche, Kremenchug, and across the River Dnieper to Magdalynovka, where heavy fighting took place. From 1 October the Rapid Division became part of the III Panzer-Corp fighting on the eastern side of Dnieper River near the region of Golubowka and Pereshchino. The Mobile Division was then moved on to the areas of Maripol and Taganrog on the Sea of Azov, after which it spend the winter of 1941-42 in a defensive position on the Mius River. In July 1942 the Rapid Division took part in the German advance into the Caucasus Region, where it played a vital role in the assault and capture of the vital city of Rostov. The Mobile Division then crossed the Kuban River and advanced to a position north of Tuapse.

In late 1942 the 31st Artillery Regiment from the Security Division was transferred to the Rapid Division. The Command of the Rapid Division changed again in January 1943, when Lt. General Jurech took over command. The Axis forces were stalled in front of Tuapse. As the battle for Stalingrad came to a decision in the winter of 1942/1943, the entire position of the Germans in the Caucasus region became precarious. The Rapid Division pulled back to cover Krasnodar. However, the danger of encirclement meant that the forces in the Caucasus region were quickly pulled back further north. The Rapid Division was nearly encircled and trapped but managed to escape. The remaining portions of the Mobile Division were then airlifted out of the Kuban, but in so doing were forced to leave behind all their heavy equipment and weapons. The Rapid Division was then used to help cover the retreat of over the Sivash and Perkop land bridges. From here the Division's history becomes unsure for the next few weeks, as a specific record of its operations could not be located, but it was probably operating in the north of the Crimea. What is known though is that in the summer 1943 it ended up being renamed the First Infantry Division, commanded by a new commanding officer, Elemir Lendvay. It appears as if the Division was pulled from the lines for a short while, until it was again thrown into action, this time near the area of Melitopol on the mainland. Soon after, the Division was caught by a massive Soviet surprise attack that had managed to break through the German lines. The First Division was routed and over 2,000 men

were taken prisoner by the Russians. The Division, routed and disorganised, then retreated rapidly via Kherson (1 November), Nikolayev (20 January 1944), Odessa (6 February) and ended up in Tirasopol, Romania in April 1944. Finally, in June of 1944, the Division was pulled from the lines a final time and disarmed and, as a result of its continued unreliability in combat, formed into a construction brigade for use in Romania.

The Security Division

The Reserve Division initially moved forward to take part in the battles around Kiev but it arrived too late to play a significant role. In early November 1941 it was renamed the Security Division commanded by Col. Pavlov Kuna and was used mainly in security and anti-partisan operations in the rear areas of the German lines, initially west of Kiev and the beyond the River Dnieper.

Composition of the Security Division

- Divisional HQ
- 101st Infantry Regiment (1/101 & 2/101 Battalions)
- 102nd Infantry Regiment (1/102 & 2/102 Battalions)
- 31st Artillery Regiment (1/31, 2/31 & 3/31 Batteries)
- Reconnaissance Group
- Signal Battalion
- 14th Anti-Aircraft Battalion
- 13th then the 11th Flight

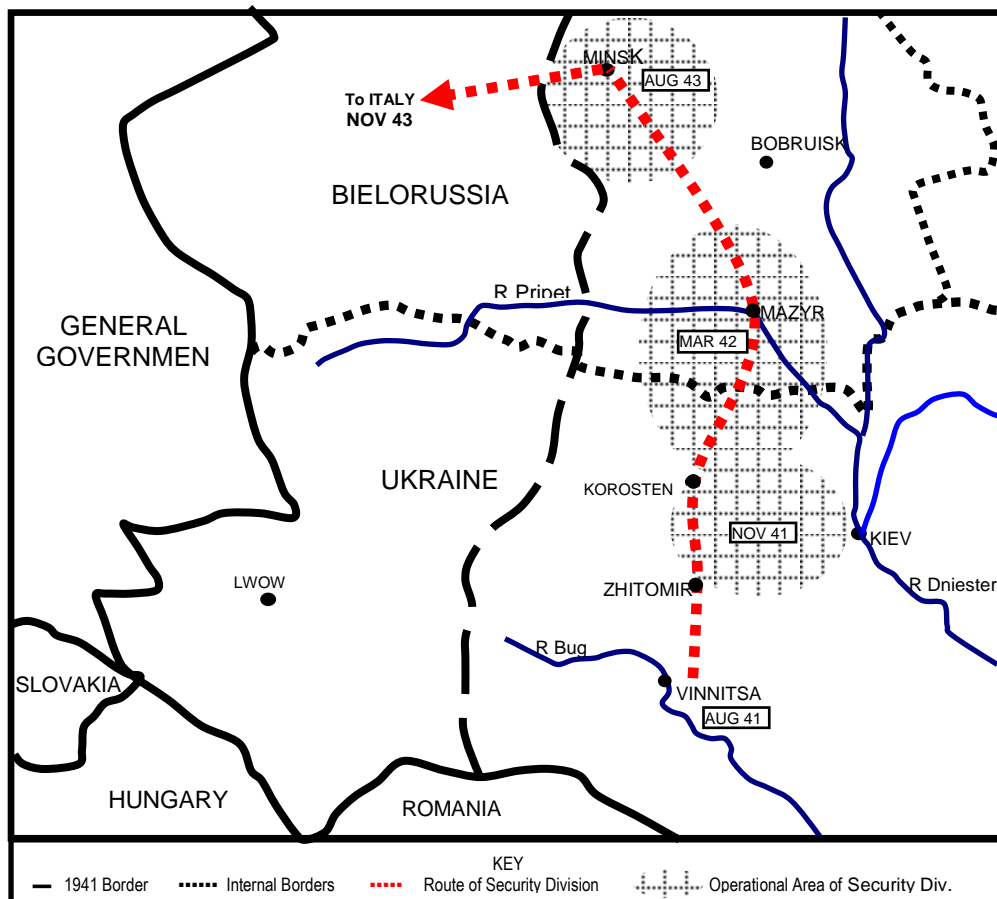


Fig. 2 – Operations of the Security Division

Originally, the Security Division was used to clean up pockets of Soviet resistance that the Germans had passed up in the advance eastwards. Later, it was used in anti-partisan operations and railway protection in the region of Zhitomer/ Mazyr. A number of the Security Division's units were removed from its ranks and transferred to the Rapid Division, including the 31st Artillery Regiment. For a time in 1943 the Security Division operated an improvised armoured train on the railways. After the defeat at Stalingrad, as the morale of the Slovak troops began to fall in 1943, it was moved to the area of Minsk, a much quieter sector of the front. Soon after, on 1 November 1943, as a result of continued problems

with desertion in the unit, the Security Division was disarmed and transferred to Ravenna, Italy to act as a construction brigade.

As a result of the heavy partisan actions against the German lines in 1943, the Slovak 12th Engineer Battalion was sent to the rear area of Army Group South, where it took part in vital rail repair operations to fix lines cut by the Soviet partisans. It was later merged with the 1st Slovak (Mobile) Infantry Division when it was formed into a construction brigade in 1944.

The Slovak Air Force

The Slovak Air Force was made up of three fighter squadrons (11th, 12th & 13th Flights) and three observation squadrons (1st, 2nd & 3rd Flights). Initially, all squadrons with the exception of the 11th Flight were deployed in support of the army in Russia, but because of the relative obsolescence of the aircraft they did not see a great deal of action. The 11th Flight was kept back at Piešťany as a precaution against any possible Russian air attacks. At the end of July the 2nd Flight was withdrawn to Spišská Nová Ves and in the middle of August the 3rd and 13th Flights were withdrawn to Nitra and Piešťany. The 13th Flight supported the Rapid Division to the end of 1941. In 1942 they were withdrawn to support the Security Division, but at the beginning of 1943 they were rearmed with Messerschmitt 109Fs and 109Gs and transferred to Maikop to support the fighting in the Caucasus and the Crimea. Although the Slovak pilots performed well, as the retreat continued morale fell and eventually they were repatriated to Slovakia in October 1943. Air support in the Minsk area was provided by the 11th Flight in 1943 up to the end of August.

THE SLOVAK FIELD POST IN RUSSIA

Before we examine the structure of the Field Post it is necessary to understand that there is little direct information and that the structure has been inferred based on information gained from the actual cards and letters and non-philatelic histories. This also seems to apply to the main sources consulted, i.e. Dr Walter Rauch and Viktor Indra (see references).

Connecting the Field Posts with particular formations is complicated by the extensive use of code names. To date I have identified about 80 different code names many of which are further extended by adding numbers, e.g. Lazar 3. This includes 49 codenames listed by Dr Rauch. A tabulation of the codenames associated with each Field Post number is given at the end of each section.

Because of problems within the Slovak field post system or the remoteness of some units, the German Feldpost system and stationery were sometimes used.

The cancellers that have been seen and have been reported to have being used are: 6a, 6b, 8a, 8b, 11b, 16a, 16b, 51a, 51b, 51c, 52a, 52b, 52c, 53a, 53b, 53c, Ustředna poľní pošta (type 1) a and (type 2) b, Sbeřna poľných pošt Bratislava and Sbeřna poľných pošt Prešov. The Field Post numbers are dealt with in the order of the first known usage. The dates shown are the earliest day of usage and the latest day of usage that I have knowledge of.

Field Post 6, used from 1 July 1941 to 30 August 1944

6a is a canceller where the 'NÍ' of 'POLNÍ' has been removed and has not been replaced, finally reading 'POL -- POŠTA 6' with three stars at the foot. 6b is a canceller where the 'NÍ' of 'POLNÍ' and the 'Č.' in 'Č.S.P.' have been removed and have not been replaced, finally reading 'POL' -- POŠTA 6' with '* -S.P. *' at the foot and is quite different to the original 6b. The unusual 'b' with a tail occurs only on the original Czechoslovak canceller for PP12b (type2) – could it be this canceller with a new number? The Czechoslovak army had originally used both cancellers in 1938.



It is clear from examination of the items that this canceller was used initially by the First or/and Second Infantry divisions and then by the Rapid Division until its disbanding in June 1944, although some units were initially using PP6. This is confirmed by information on the earliest card from Motorised Column 11 (1 July 1941), a card from the Sea of Azov (Sept. 1942) and cards from the Caucasus (on a German Feldpost card dated Dec. 1942). There are three recorded uses after the reorganisation in Romania. One feature of this Field Post Office is the use of decorative cards for Christmas and Easter and the use of decorative rubber stamps. One card from 'David 2' cancelled on 2 August has an additional Soviet postmark of Rudki in Drogov Oblast (50 miles SW of Lwów) dated 22 June 1941, probably to mark the date of Operation Barbarossa.

Code Name	Nos.	Dates of usage	Code Name	Nos.	Dates of usage
Barbora	8	23.2.43	Lazar	3	30.9.42
Berta	2	18.10/ 25.12/ 26.12.41/ 14.4.42	Lidova	3	14.9.42/ 18.1.43
Brenis	2	30.3.43	Matus	3	7.12.43
Bruno	2	13.7/ 22.12.42(2)/ 7.4/ 11.4.43	Ocel	11	7.4/ 7.6.44
Ctibor	1	? .7.43	Orel	11	7.6.44
Cyril	2	20.1/ 12.6.42	Rvita	2	13.10.41
David	-, 2, 5, 8	23.4/ 24.7/ 2.8.41/ 22.12.42/ 8.7.43	Sabla	-	13.7/ 30.7.41
Dumbier	-	4.7/11.7/ 15.7/17.7/ 22.7/27.7/12.8.41	Tiger	-	19.7.41
Dusik	5	30.8.44	Viktor	-	1.7.41
Hora	-	11.7/ 27.7/ 28.7/8.8.41	Zlato	-, 4,5	27.6/ 24.8.44
Klangon?	1	3.8.44			
Krivaň	-, 9, 10	8.1/15.2/ 11.3/ 23.6/ 16.9/ 8.11.42/ 19.1/7.4.43			



Fig. 3 – 1.7.1941, early use of PP6a from Mobile Column 11 to student in Brno with manuscript censor and large green numbers of Prague pneumatic post? Card type 2

Fig. 4 – 2.8.1941, card from 'David 2', PP6a to Ružomberok with additional Soviet canceller of Rudki, not censored. Card type 2

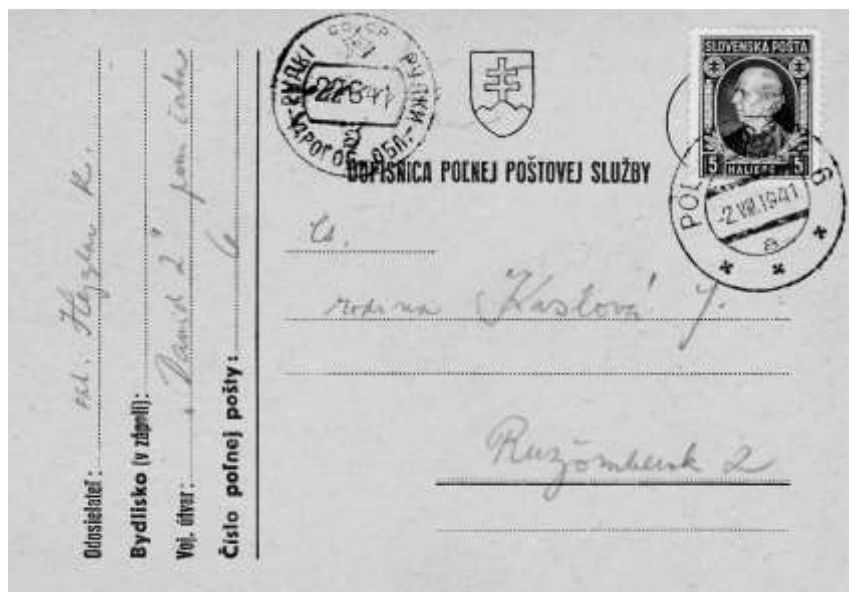




Fig. 5 – 16.9.1942, German Feldpost card from 'Krivaň 9', PP6b to Banská Bystrica, headed 'na Azovské mora' (on the Sea of Azov)

Fig. 6 – 22.12.1942, illustrated Christmas card from 'Bruno 2', PP6b, in the Caucasus, to Nové Mesto nad Váhom



Field Post 8, used from 5 July 1941 to 2 September 1943

For PP8 the 'NÍ' of 'POLNÍ' and the 'Č' in 'Č.S.P.' have been removed, the cancellers now reading 'POL -- POŠTA 8 * -S.P.' The Czechoslovak army had originally used both cancellers in 1938.



By exception, we can be fairly sure that Field Post 8 served the Security Division. There is only minimal indication of where they were used: a Soviet postal stationery card used as a field postcard (Aug. 1941) and the mention of Russia on a card (Sept. 1942). From October 1942 the cards were censored using Slovak-type censor marks. Whether this took place at the front or in Slovakia is unclear.

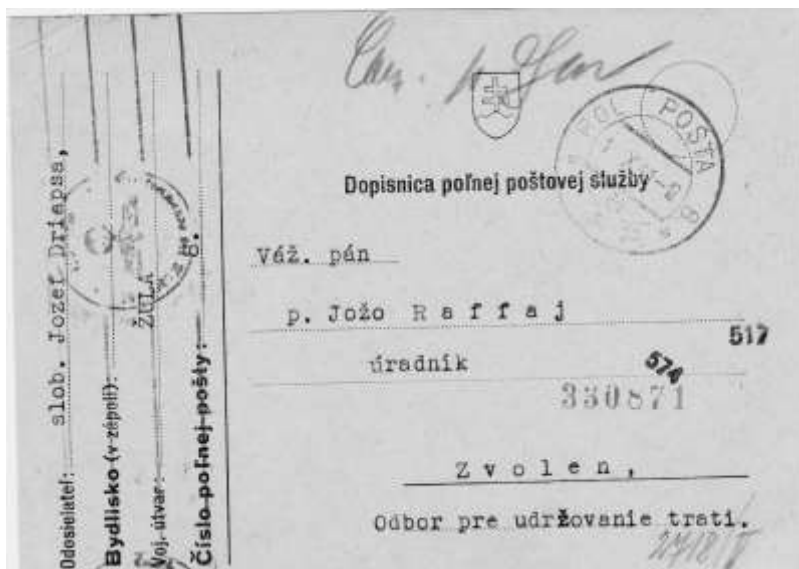
Code Name	Nos.	Dates of usage	Code Name	Nos.	Dates of usage
Alzbeta/Otto	-	28.7.41	Laponska	-, 2	3.6/ 15.12.42/ 2.4/ 2.9.43
Asfalt	3	27.9/ 16.11.41	Riviera	3	1.9/ 14.9/ 2.10/ 27.10/ 16.12.42
Barbora	6	2.10/ 14.11.42	Sahara	2	25.11.42
Blank	2	31.3.43	Sbrina	-	7.12.42
Borovica	-	7.4/ 14.4.42	Sever	-	7.8/ 10.8.42
Del.P2	-	5.7.41	Tyrril	-	15.7/ 14.8/ 15.10.42
Florida	-	15.10.42	Vah	1, 2	7.8.41
Ganges	-	2.8/ 15.10.42	Vilibald	-	10.8.42
Gobi	5	2.10 (2)/ 27.10.42	Žula	-	3.8/? 9/12.9/19.9/ 1.10/ 9.10.41
Gronsko/Zrolak	-	15.7/ 14.8.42/17.5.43	Zlato	-	21.3.42
Himalaja	-	6.8.41	-	-	10.7/ 21.9./2.1241
Kreta	-	7.8.42			

Fig. 7 – 31.7.1941, Soviet postal stationery card used from Himalaja to Prešov, PP8a & b with boxed 'POL'NÁ POŠTA 8' and boxed two-line censor



Fig. 8 – 27.9.1941, card from 'Asfalt 3', PP8b to Púchov n. Váh. with manuscript censor. Card type 3

Fig. 9 – 1.10.1941, card from 'Žula', PP8a to Zvolen with manuscript censor and OKW roller censor (Berlin?) and large green numbers of Prague pneumatic post? Card type 3



Field Post 16, used from 5 July 1941 to 18 August 1941

The 16a canceller reads 'POLNA POŠTA 16' with a single star at the foot, quite distinct from the old Czechoslovak canceller, and is probably a new canceller. 16b is a canceller where the 'NÍ' of 'POLNÍ' has been removed and has not been replaced, now reading 'POL -- POŠTA 16' with three stars at the foot. The Czechoslovak army had originally used the 16b canceller in 1938.



From examining items it would appear that this canceller was used Slovakia during the time of mobilisation, probably by the First and/or Second Infantry divisions before and during the reorganisation. Two cards were sent from Field Hospital (Pol. Nem.) 11 in Bratislava (31 July). An item from the Command of 'Dumbier' was sent from Banská Bystrica (11 Aug.). The item to the command of Infantry Regiment 'Dumbier' PP6 in Zvolen was sent from Kuzmice in the far east of Slovakia (13 Aug.) with a receiving canceller of PP16! This and the code names suggest that the units served by PP16 were later served by PP6. Items to and from 'Krivaň' and 'Dumbier', which were probably infantry regiments, use both PP6 and PP16.

Code Name	Nos.	Dates of usage	Code Name	Nos.	Dates of usage
Dominik	-	08.07.41	Ladislav	-	18.7.41
Dumbier	-	13.8/18.8.41	Lipa 'Celera'	-	9.8.41
Hrad	-	24.7.41	Rudolf	-	21.7.41
Jolanka	-	16.7.41	Polna Nem 1	-	31.7.41 (2)
Krivaň	-	18.8.41	None	-	5.7.41

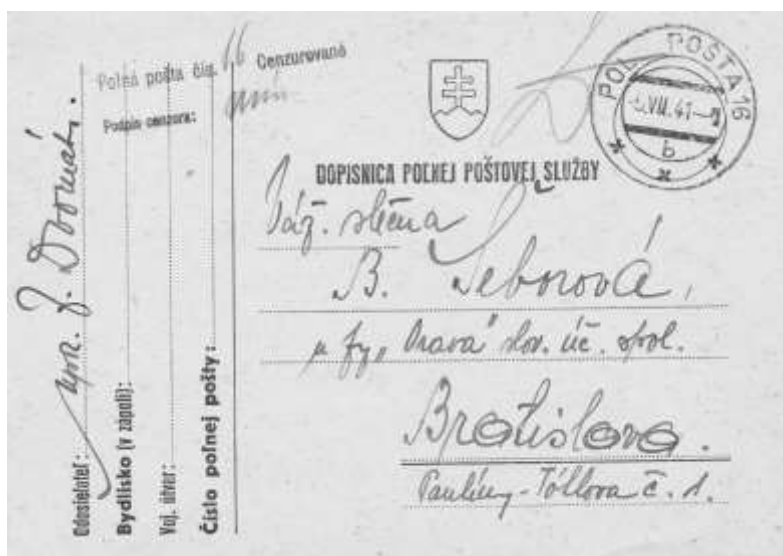


Fig. 10 – 5.7.1941, early use of PP16b to Bratislava, no sender's details, with two-line and manuscript censor. Card type 2

Fig. 11 – 9.8.1941, card (type 2) from PP16a, no censor



Field Post 11, used from 20 September 1942

For PP 11 there are a number of minor differences from the 11b used by the Czechoslovak army in 1938. It reads 'POLNÁ POŠTA 11' with one star at the foot. Only the code letter b has been seen.

One copy of this canceller was used in 1942, but it reappears in 1944 possibly used by another unit(?).



Code Name	Nos.	Dates of usage	Code Name	Nos.	Dates of usage
Fosfor	-	7.6/ 9.6.44	Ocel	-	7.6.44
Krivan	-	20.9.44	Orel	-	14.10.44
Liptov	-	20.9.42			



Fig. 12 – 20.10.1942, card (type 3) from Liptov to Žilina with manuscript censor

German Feldpost

Where Slovak units were detached from the main force use was made of the facilities of the German Feldpost. For the card shown in Figure 13 it is not possible to positively identify the origin of this card, but the date suggests that it was sent from PP 6 during the retreat from the Caucasus when the Rapid Division became somewhat fragmented. In addition covers are known using the German field air post (Luftfeldpost) stamps.



Fig. 13 – 26.6.1943, Slovak card (type 4) sent through German Feldpost Nr. 51169 to Polička B&M, with manuscript censor and date, dumb canceller and OKW roller censor (Berlin?) and large green numbers of Prague pneumatic post?

Central Field Post Office (Ústředna poľných pošt), used from 4 August 1941 to 24 August 1944

There are two types of this canceller, type 1 with text rewritten in Slovak, letter a and one star, and type 2 with altered Czech text, letter b and two stars.



Type 1	a	4.8./ 20.9.41/23.2.42/ 24.8.44	Type 2	b	23.2./6.3.42
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Figure 14 – 23.2.42 - Card (type 3) from the Central field post office to Habry (B&M) German roller censor and large green numbers from Prague pneumatic post? with CENZUROVANÉ applied in Slovakia.

Field Collection Post Office (Sberňa poľných pošt)

Rubber cachets from 'Sberňa poľných post Prešov 1' and 'Sberňa poľných pošt Bratislava' are known to have been used on mail. I have only seen two undated copies from this period, from 'Žula', FP8 cancelled at Prešov 1. A card exists with the Prešov canceller and a manuscript date 3.2.1942. It appears to have been used on uncanceled mail(?). Dates of use are unclear.



New-style field post cancellers numbered 51, 52 and 53 were issued from the middle of 1943. These, and the later use of numbers 4 and 11, will be covered in Part 3.

Censorship

Normally the mail was censored in the field with a number of different types of cachet or by hand using red ink. The cachets were usually with two or three lines of text with or without a box. From the end of 1942 most of the mail from the Field Posts was additionally censored in Slovakia using the single-line 'CENZUROVANÉ' with a number used on normal mail. Where post was carried by the German Feldpost, the normal German censorship was carried out either in addition to or instead of the Slovak censorship.

Stamps

All normal field post mail was free to Slovakia, Germany and its allies, but stamps turn up on quite a few cards and covers. These are usually Slovak stamps, but the stamps of the USSR, the General Government, Ostland and the Ukraine have been seen. I have in my collection a cover from PP6 with a complete set of the German stamps overprinted 'Ukraine'. I have not seen any item that actually required stamps; these items are either philatelic or the stamps have been added on the whim of the sender.

Card types

1. a – Large shield 31 mm from vertical line/ 4 address lines, point of shield above J. 140x94 mm
1. b – Large shield 31 mm from vertical line/ 4 address lines, point of shield between J & P. 140x94 mm
2. – Large shield 37 mm from vertical line/ 5 address lines, card description upper case. 150x106 mm
3. – Small shield 45 mm from vertical line/ 5 address lines, card description lower case. 145x103 mm
4. – Small shield 50 mm from vertical line/ 5 address lines, card description lower case smaller typeface, 2 sender lines. 145x103 mm
5. – German Feldpost Cards

During the Russian campaign most of the cards used are of types 2 and 3. The type 1 cards were leftovers from 1939. The type 4 cards were issued from the middle of 1943.

The size of the cards can vary by a few millimetres, for example the largest type 2 card measures 154x107 mm and the smallest 147x103 mm. The colour of the card also varies considerably from grey/green through cream/buff to salmon pink.

The information above is based on items from my collection and other collectors' items I have seen. I have tried to extend the article on the Slovak field post in *The Czechoslovak Specialist* published in 1970 and *Das Slowakische Militärwesen 1938-45* by Rauch. Military information is from various books including *Slovenská Armáda 1939-1945* by Kliment & Nakládal and *Axis Slovakia* by Axworthy and numerous websites. I would appreciate any additional information, references and/or comments.

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2. Dr Walter Rauch, *Das Slowakische Militärwesen 1938-45*, ArGe Tschechoslowakei, Germany, 2006.
3. Charles K Kliment & Břetislav Nakládal, *Slovenská Armáda 1939-1945*, Levné Knihy, Czech Republic, 2006.
4. Mark W A Axworthy, *Axis Slovakia: Hitler's Slavic Wedge, 1938-1945*, Axis Europa Books, New York, 2002.

UNDERCOVER MAIL – Box 601

-Ed Fraser-

There is, of course, something new always appearing, and while it may have been reported years ago, I now stand corrected in learning that there is a Box 601 cover known from Prague to Amsterdam from April 1940 addressed to a 'Herrn K. Heymann'. I don't know any sender information or whose collection it is in. Sorry that I don't have additional information.

However, since writing the above, it turns out I had the reference information about the Czech 'Box 601' cover. It was offered in a Dutch auction about 2 years ago and there is no information about who the buyer was. Before it was sold the collection was sent and posted on Exponet, where it should be shown now. Illustrated is a scan of the page from the auction catalogue from the Internet. (I only found out about the auction after the auction!) No information is available about the back of the cover.



Cover from Prague 19 April 1940 via P.O.Box 601, Amsterdam, the Netherlands [Thomas Cook for Great Britain]. Censored in Frankfurt, Germany tape type and in England P.C. 66 tape censor 2017.





PARDUBICE
-Anthony Moseley-

**90 Years Celebration of the Czech Postal Service
Special Registration Labels**

Registered letter delivered locally in **Pardubice**, from an electrical company, sent to a financial organisation in the centre of town. Dated **8.10.2008**. Postage is paid at the correct rate of **26Kč** for a 0.006kg registered letter. This example has been posted at office **530 03 Pardubice 3**, but the self-adhesive registration etiquette carries the name of the town's main Post Office **530 01 Pardubice 1** with 'POŠTA SLAVÍ 90 LET 530 01 PARDUBICE 1, 161' printed in blue, plus

DOPORUČENÉ RECOMMANDÉ 44		530 03 PARDUBICE 3	
SLOUŽÍ VÝHRADNĚ KORESPONDENCI MEZI POŠTAMI! Adresy vepisujte postupně v označeném pořadí, neplatné údaje škrtněte. V názvu pošty uvádějte vždy PSC!		POŠTA SLAVÍ 90 LET 530 01 PARDUBICE 1 161	
Denní razítko podací pošty	Adresní pošta 1 530 03 PARDUBICE 3	Adresní pošta 2 PARDUBICE 1	Denní razítko podací pošty
Denní razítko podací pošty	Adresní pošta 3	Adresní pošta 4	Denní razítko podací pošty
Denní razítko podací pošty	Adresní pošta 5	Adresní pošta 6	Denní razítko podací pošty

handwritten manuscript notation. Also present in red, a posthorn and 'ČESKÁ POŠTA 1918-2008' within a circle to mark 90 years of service. Additional hand stamp 'DOPORUČENĚ/RECOMMANDÉ' added in violet and label 'REKLAMAČNÍ LIST' in black on a red background. I have yet to see examples of this registration label for local offices other than **530 01 Pardubice 1**.

WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?

-Members' Queries-

Another selection, together with some answers, for which we are sure our enquirers will be most grateful. It would be helpful if enquirers having covers with further details on the reverse also photocopy that side to assist with any replies. First the Answers:

Re: Ron Hollis's Two Memorial Cards in Czechout 1/09 page 26

From Gerhard Hanacek & Adrian Keppel: Regarding Ron Hollis's question, the Cardinal shown on both commemorative sheets is Cardinal Karel Kašpar, Archbishop (Fürsterzbischof, Primas von Böhmen), passed away on 21.4.1941. This commemorative sheet appears with different photographs.

From Bernard Williams, Jan Dobrovolný & Bob Hill: Reference Ron Hollis's query, the Cardinal in question is **Karel Boromejský Cardinal Kašpar** (16 May 1870 – 21 April 1941), who was a Czech prelate of the Roman Catholic Church. Born in Mirošov, Austria-Hungary (later Czechoslovakia), Karel Kašpar attended the seminary in Pilsen and the Pontifical Roman Athenaeum *S. Apollinare* in Rome. He was ordained to the priesthood on 25 February 1893 and then did pastoral work in Svojšíň until 1895. In 1899 he began pastoral work in Prague and was made a canon of its cathedral chapter. On 8 March 1920 Kašpar was appointed Titular Bishop of *Bethsaida* and Auxiliary Bishop of Hradec Králové. He received his episcopal consecration on the following 11 April from Archbishop František Kordác. Kašpar was later named Bishop of Hradec Králové on 13 June 1921 and Archbishop of Prague on 22 October 1931. As Prague's archbishop he was also Primate of the Church in Czechoslovakia. Pope Pius XI

created him Cardinal Priest of *Ss. Vitale, Valeria, Gervasio e Protasio* in the consistory of 16 December 1935. For the visit of King Carol II of Romania to Prague in 1936 Kašpar allowed his flock to eat meat on Fridays [information taken from Wikipedia].

The Czech primate was one of the cardinal electors who participated in the 1939 papal conclave that selected Pope Pius XII. Kašpar died in Prague at age 70. He is buried in St. Vitus Cathedral. Jan Dobrovolný writes that the sheets with different stuck photographs were issued to commemorate his death. One of them is pictured in catalogue of Beda Minder: *Protectorate Sonderstempeln*.

New Query

From Richard Beith:

The CENSUROVÁNO handstamps from 1938. Straight line CENSUROVÁNO handstamps, both plain and boxed, are relatively common from the weeks either side of the Munich crisis in 1938, see the 22 September 1938 cover illustrated. Do readers know of any articles describing the operation of this short-lived censorship scheme? For example, were the markings restricted to international correspondence? Never having seen a letter with a cancel seal, did letters have to be submitted unsealed for inspection? Were all outgoing letters forwarded to Prague for inspection or did censorship take place at a number of centres?



Other than Lubor Kunc's article 'Censorship in Czech Lands 1938-45' in *Czechout 2/2002* can any member point me in the direction of any articles describing the use of these handstamps? I now have 17 cards and covers from this period bearing these handstamps. They all appear to be used on international mail, and I would summarise their characteristics as follows:

- A) The group is divided into six inward items and eleven outward items.
- B) The earliest inward cover I have was sent airmail from India (22.9.38) and received a Prague transit for 2.10.38, i.e. immediately after the Munich edict came into force. The last inward item, from Germany, was dated 1.11.38.
- C) The earliest outward covers were both posted on 19.9.1938, i.e. during the crisis period. These were from Olomouc to Geneva and from Prague to Hamburg. The last handstamp seen was used on 28.10.38, on a letter to Mexico City.
- D) I had wondered if actual censor seals were used. Plain seals can be found on three of the above, one inward and two outward. Two were tied with the censor handstamp.
- E) Two designs are known, a plain upper case handstamp and a boxed *Censurováno*, italic lower case example. Examination of the 17 cards and covers suggest that the CENSUROVÁNO mark was used in Bohemia/Prague and that the boxed *Censurováno*, was used in Brno/Moravia.



What can members tell me? Have I just reinvented the wheel?

NEW ISSUES

- Lindy Bosworth -

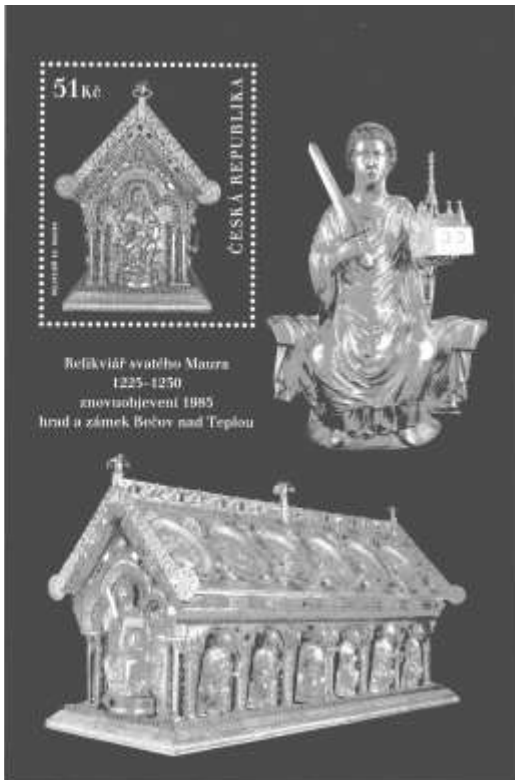
Unless otherwise stated, Post Printing House, Prague prints the stamps and stationery for the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Printing: RD – rotary die stamping with multicolour photogravure
DS – die stamping from flat plates

Czech Republic

8 April 2009

Reliquary of Saint Maur at Bečov nad Teplou



Designer: Zdeněk Ziegler **Engraver:** Václav Fajt
Printing: DS in a souvenir sheet of one stamp **Design:** the front face of the reliquary (stamp); enlarged statuette from the reverse face of the reliquary and the side view of the reliquary (on the sheet margins) with the text in Czech 'Reliquary of Saint Maur 1225 - 1230, rediscovery 1985, the Castle and Chateau Bečov nad Teplou'. **FDC:** printed DS in brown with a commemorative Bečov nad Teplou cancel. The cachet is taken from a relief on the roof of the reliquary depicting St Maur at the baptism of St Apollinarius.

The reliquary has had an interesting history. It was probably made between 1225 and 1230 by request of the Benedictine Abbey in Florennes, Belgium for relics of Sts Maur, Timothy and John the Baptist. In the late 18th century it was withdrawn from use because of wear and in 1838 sold to an aristocrat owning land in today's Czech Republic. It was repaired and exhibited in Brussels in 1888 then brought to Bečov nad Teplou. After the 2nd World War the family fled Czechoslovakia as they had been loyal to the Germans. They hid the receptacle in the chateau chapel where it lay forgotten until the early 1980s. A request to export 'an art object' led to a search by the Federal Criminal Central Office who found it in November 1985. It was taken to Prague and only after

1989 when ownership was established was an eleven-year conservation programme carried out. From May 2002 the reliquary, which contains bone fragments, textile and leather fragments, can be seen at the chateau in Bečov nad Teplou near Karlovy Vary. It is the only object of its kind in the Czech Republic.

22 April 2009 75th Anniversary of the Building of the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade



Designer: Zdeněk Ziegler **Engraver:** Václav Fajt **Printing:** RD in sheets of 50 **Design:** a view of the north front of the building with the main entrance and text in Czech. The building is still used today for its original purpose in spite of the political changes since 1928 when construction commenced. The design of the building and the Patent Office was by Josef Fanta, a leading Czech Art Nouveau architect. The original entrance to the Patent Office, on the western side of the building, was decorated with statues of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Engineering. The whole

building is decorated with 120 statues.

FDC: printed DS in brown with a commemorative Praha cancel. The cachet shows the entrance at the eastern front of the building with the figures of Enterprise, Invention, Perseverance and Truth.

22 April 2009

**150th Anniversary of the Former Pardubice–Liberec
South-North German Junction Line.**



Designer: Jiří Bouda **Engraver:** Bohumil Šneider **Printing:** RD in sheets of 50 stamps.

Design: a train pulled by a locomotive of the 1857 series IIa SNDVB leaving the tunnel in the Jizera valley between Železný Brod and Semily. This line is the third oldest in Bohemia and today is 160km long. Originally it was called the South-North German Junction Line (in German SNDVB: Süd-Norddeutsche Verbindungsbahn).

FDC: printed DS in brown with a commemorative Pardubice cancel. The cachet shows a steam locomotive with carriages travelling over the viaduct near Sychrov in the Mohelka river valley.

6 May 2009 Europa: Astronomy – 400th Anniversary of Kepler’s Laws: *Astronomia Nova*



Designer: Jan Ungrád **Engraver:** Bohumil Šneider **Printing:** DS and multicoloured offset in sheets of 6. **Design:** a portrait of Kepler and a schematic drawing of his first and second laws about the elliptical orbit and speed of a planet round the sun. 2009 has been declared International Year of Astronomy by UNESCO. It is the 400th anniversary of the use of an astronomical telescope by Galileo Galilei.

Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) was a mathematician, physicist and astrologer who came to the court of Emperor Rudolf II in Prague. After Tycho Brahe’s death in 1601 he was appointed the Emperor’s mathematician and astronomer. Kepler formulated his first two laws using data obtained by Brahe and published them in 1609 in his book *Astronomia Nova*. He left Prague for Linz in 1618.

FDC: printed DS in dark-brown with commemorative Praha cancel. The cachet is a representation of the goddess of astronomy, Urania, taken from Kepler’s book *Astronomia Nova*.

6 May 2002

Beauties of Our Country



Designer: Jan Kavan **Engraver:** Václav Fajt **Printing:** DS in sheets of 8 stamps

Designs: **12Kč** – the exterior of the Cistercian Monastery Church of the Holy Virgin at Vyšší Brod. The monastery was founded in 1259 by Vok of Rožmberk and became the family monastery endowed with land. Ten generations of the Rožmberk family are buried there. It is the most well preserved monastery in the Czech Republic. The cycle of paintings by the Master of Vyžší Brod and the double-arm Závěš cross are the most valuable items. A community of Cistercian monks have moved back to the monastery to

restore the building. The permanent exhibition in the abbey, ‘Postal History in the Czech Lands from 1526 to date’ is a branch of the Postal Museum in Prague. **FDC:** printed DS in grey-green with a commemorative Vyšší Brod cancel. The cachet is the tympanum of the doorway to the sacristy of the Church of the Holy Virgin.

14Kč – part of the chateau Horšovský Týn with the main entrance gate and a drawing of the ribbed vault of the castle chapel behind. After a fire in 1547 the original early Gothic bishop’s castle was reconstructed into a Renaissance chateau of the Lobkowitz family. The chapel with its ribbed vaulting and wall paintings from the 13th century survived. During the late 19th century some small rebuilding in the rear courtyard was made but no further alterations have been undertaken. The Knights’ Hall contains a unique gallery of portraits of Czech rulers. **FDC:** printed DS in brown with a commemorative Horšovský Týn cancel. The cachet is of the entrance doorway of the castle chapel.

Slovakia

As from 1 January 2009 only Euro denomination stamps and postal stationery items will be sold by the Slovak Postal Authority.

Stamps and postal stationery items in Sk will cease to be valid as from 31 December 2009.

During the first three months of 2010 the remaining stocks of stamps and stationery with Sk will be recalled and destroyed by the Slovak Postal Authority.

13 March 2009

Sports – Martial Arts



Designer: Igor Piačka **Printing:** Heidelberg Speedmaster **Design:** a karate sportsman and in the background seven typical techniques of the sport. Martial arts developed in Japan during the early 17th century when it was forbidden to bear or own weapons. Karate – to kill with the hands – developed as a fighting system. Since early times other cultures developed their own forms of combat without weapons – Greek City states, India and China. Today these various forms of martial arts have developed into a sport. There are a number of different schools of karate.

FDC: Designer: as stamp **Engraver:** Rudolf Cigánik **Printing:** DS by TAB Printing House, Bratislava in black. The cachet shows two contestants engaged in a modern karate combat. There is a commemorative Bratislava cancel.

17 April 2002

Personalities – Aurel Stodola



Designer: Ivan Schurmann **Printing:** Heidelberg Speedmaster **Design:** portrait of Aurel Stodola with turbines in the background. He was born in Liptovský Mikuláš in 1859 and died in Zurich in 1942. He gained a scholarship to study at the Polytechnic Institute, Zurich after studying at the Technical University, Budapest. From 1892 until 1929 he lectured at Zurich University in the Machine Construction Department. His greatest achievements were in the field of steam and gas turbine construction. He wrote authoritative books on the subject, which were translated into several languages. He was awarded the James Watt Gold Medal from England in 1940.

FDC: Designer: as stamp **Engraver:** Arnold Feke **Printing:** DS in blue-grey with commemorative Liptovský Mikuláš cancel. The cachet depicts a mountain landscape and water turbines.

