



# CZECHOUT

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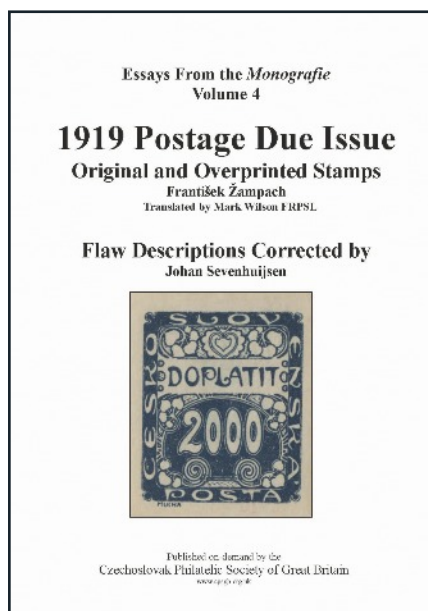
WHOLE NUMBER 191



**Peter Williams presents *Czech Slogan Postmarks* at The George Inn, Southwark, our new London venue (pages 4–5).**

## Two further translations from the *Monografie*

Two further translations are now available as Print-on-Demand titles in the series translated by **Mark Wilson** from the first four volumes of the *Monografie*. These two books describe the first two issues of Czechoslovak postage due stamps. The original *Monografie* description of flaws found in the 1919 issue was riddled with mistakes. Member Johan Sevenhuijsen, after studying the issue with colleagues, provided us with a complete set of corrections. This is the first time a translation from the *Monografie* has been corrected. The 1928 issue, on the other hand, has been overlooked by most collectors but it is rich in variations. Both series of stamps provide excellent postal history and traditional stamp collecting possibilities.



44 pages, b&w  
with some colour  
illustrations:  
£15, €17, \$18.50



24 pages, b&w  
with colour cover.  
£11.50, €13, \$14

As set out on page 2 of the March edition of *Czechout*, the books are sold at cost, which depends both on their page count and the number of books ordered from the printer. Prices range from between £11.25 and £21.00. All the usual methods of payment, including US dollars and euros, are available and invoices will be sent at the time of despatch. Orders should be sent to the treasurer at [treasurer@cpsgb.org](mailto:treasurer@cpsgb.org).

Other titles in the series include:

From Volume 1:

*Forerunners in the Initial Independence Period* by Zdeněk Kvasnička. A4. 39 pages, b&w illustrations. It discusses in great detail the use of Austrian and Hungarian stamps by the young republic.

*The Hradčany* by František Kubát. Letter-size. 224 pages, b&w illustrations. This was the first authoritative description of Czechoslovakia's classic first issue.

*Census of Territorial Post Offices* by Zdeněk Kvasnička. A4. 36 pages. A listing of Czechoslovak post offices active at the foundation of the republic.

From Volume 2:

*1919–1920: The Lost Issues* by Jan Karásek, Atonín Michele, and Bohuslav Svoboda. A4, 59 pages, b&w illustrations. Describes the Legionářské, Masaryk 1920, Husita, and Red Cross issues.

From Volume 3:

*Masaryk: The Intaglio Issues 1923–1926* by Jan Karásek and František Žampach. A4, 67 pages, b&w mixed with some colour illustrations. Studies of the issues of the Masaryk stamps produced with intaglio printing.

From Volume 4:

*Mucha Newspaper Stamps* by František Žampach. A4 28 pages, b&w. A study of the issue that was released with the Hradčany and remained in use until the end of 1939.

*Newspaper Stamps: 1925–1926 Provisionals – The 1937 Issue – The Bratislava Sheet* by František Žampach. A4, 42 pages, b&w. All of the later newspaper stamps.

*Airmail – Express – Personal Delivery* by Jan Frolík, Jan Karásek, Karel Báha, and Svatopluk Žampach. A4, 64 pages, b&w. Describes the airmail issues, express and personal delivery stamps.

In addition, the following title is also available:

*Agriculture and Science 1920* by František Žampach, Jan Karásek, and Pavel Pittermann. A4, 16 pages, b&w.

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**Cooperation Agreement with the Society for Czechoslovak Philately**

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

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## News & Notices

### London meetings at The George Inn, Southwark

The Society's London meetings have moved to a new home – the last remaining galleried inn in London. In spite of this National Trust property's popularity as a tourist venue, we have been able to meet together undisturbed, in comfortable surroundings – with excellent 'pub grub' and a wide range of beers as an added bonus.



Roger Morrell presenting Postal Stationery.

A select number of members attended the first room meeting of 2023, on **18th February**. After the usual social networking over lunch, **Roger Morrell** gave a presentation on *Postal Stationery*. However, Roger started by saying that most of his material was strictly not postal stationery as defined by FIP. Many items lacked the imprinted postage stamp, or indicium, but they were all documents that the post office had used, so that was the scope of his display.

The Austrians had brought the postal service run by Houses of Thurn and Taxis and of Paar back 'in house' in 1722 to encourage post and businesses. At first, there were two separately administered services: the *Briefpost*, solely for letters, and the *Fahrpost*, for other freight, such as parcels, people and money in the form of banknotes, gold, silver and copper coins. In 1830 the two sections were brought together. Roger showed a large A3-sized sheet showing the *Fahrpost* tariffs from August 1818 and then moved

onto *Fahrpost* consignment receipts, which initially were privately prepared by postmasters, but became more standardized from 1830. After the unrest in 1847–1849, the sole use of German was supplemented by multilingual versions for the various parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Introduced from 1850 to reduce the risks of theft, examples of money orders were shown as they developed though more informative formats to versions with printed indicia for the eight official Imperial languages. Those with indicia are widely catalogued and available for prices significantly higher than those without, but the scarcity is actually the reverse. Roger showed how the Austrian, Hungarian and Czech versions developed. The Czechs basically followed the existing pattern. Why change something if it worked? A large A4 receipt form was shown, which summarized the deliveries of money by the 'money postman' and the encashment fees received, as well as examples of the form for the swifter telegraphic money order system.

The second half started with the registered letter system of the *Briefpost* formalized in 1789. Roger clearly explained the system of sending return receipts with the letter and confirming arrival, as well as interim receipts and delivery receipts – several documents to track just one letter! Court letter receipts were a further section of the system, which occasionally reverted to provisional ones if the stock of court receipts was exhausted. Moving to parcel traffic, the collection of the 5 K parcel tax (often with the fiscal stamp attached to a 'freight letter') was explained. By 1871, the fiscal stamp became the indicium. Around 1870 cash-on-delivery parcels could be accommodated. Another large, near-A3-sized form was used to track these, one half being the return money order, but this was soon superseded by a smaller card system bringing the size down to something more manageable. Examples to international destinations were shown, as well as a customs form and a statistics form to track exports. After a change of format in 1905, some commercial companies started to use cards with postage fees prepaid by postage stamp indicia. Roger showed one where there were three indicia, which showed how the company used one card to cover three separate parcels.

On a side table, Roger displayed the numerous forms used to track lost parcels. There were two examples from WWI: a lost shirt and a lost consignment of bread. We wondered about the state of the bread as the investigation took quite some time.

Roger finished showing how the Czechoslovak authorities developed their parcel cards, with a full listing of the forms which could be found. Only a listing at this stage – he admitted not yet having all of them.

This was a fascinating display of material that is not fully catalogued, but has been built up over a number of decades. The Austrian (and successor) post office(s) have used many documents to track items through their services. This display showed how detailed the records were and how they had developed. It certainly gave me a clear insight into the administration of the postal services. Peter Williams gave thanks to Roger and presented him with his certificate.

**Peter Williams**

Our second meeting at The George took place on **22nd April** – on this occasion twelve members and two guests joined us, and it was the first outing for our new display boards. After a brief introduction with his Chairman's gavel in hand, **Peter Williams** gave a presentation on *Czech Slogan Postmarks*.

The sheets on display were the result of work done during lockdown on a bundle of covers that had been acquired a long time ago. Starting with a freely available electronic catalogue published by the Society for Czechoslovak Philately (<https://www.csphilately.net/publications/publications-for-free/cz-machine-slogan-cancels/>), Peter had sorted his material according to the catalogued slogan cancels, and then gone further with his researches to discover the whys and wherefores for each cover.

Peter explained that the original catalogue (*Czechoslovakia Machine Advertising Cancels: The First Republic Period* by Steven Friedenthal and Peter Schubert) was regularly updated to incorporate changes to dates of use in particular, and his own researches (based on the eighth edition) had discovered some necessary adjustments that had been passed on to the authors for the ninth edition. One of the members present had a cover which suggested that *another* change would be necessary, and during the meeting we discovered that the *tenth* edition is currently available!



Above left: A cover from Avenarius-Werke, who had an agreement to sell Plumbo with its Norwegian inventors. Above right: Another cover with a wealth of 'back-story' – the cancellation marks an exhibition of the works of Max Švabinský at Manes in Prague; the letter is from a 'Special factory of flower bulbs', and is addressed to Vlad. Dvořák; and the text at the foot of the cover reads A polite request. Price lists and expenses associated with distribution are a large overhead item. I would therefore like to respectfully ask that the price list, if not used, be kindly returned with the note 'Not accepted'.

Peter pointed out that most of his material was in the Czech language – examples in Slovak are rarer. A lot of them relate to banks and insurance companies, together with Sokol Slets and other sporting events. There were many examples that had been used during the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but the first fifty sheets displayed documented the period when the Czech nation was developing from this base and starting new industries within the Republic.

Part two of the presentation moved on to the 1930s, with some fascinating examples. One was a cover sent to Karel Kulik, who had set up a chain of coffee shops and used a humorous give-away calendar as a highly successful publicity campaign. In May 1938 the company held a vote amongst customers asking whether to continue with the calendars or give the money to a fund for national defence instead. They voted for the latter.

Another cover advertised *Plumbo*, a drain-cleaning product. Peter had discovered that this was the most recognizable tradename in Norway – even more widely known than Coca-Cola!

In his vote of thanks, Hans van Dooremalen observed that 'it's all about the back-stories!' He pointed out that Peter's presentation proved that you don't need lots of expensive material to conduct a fascinating philatelic study – it's not just about stamps and postal history, but about *social* history, too. After presenting Peter with his certificate, the meeting closed at 3:30 p.m.

**Tony Holdsworth**

### March Zoom Meeting

Sixteen members logged in for a zoom presentation on **18th March** given by **Robert Lauer** – *An Overview of the Hradčany Issue of Czechoslovakia, 1918–20*. In her introduction, Yvonne Wheatley pointed out that Robert has zoomed us before, has contributed several articles to *Czechout*, and has twice won the society's Bill Dawson Trophy. She was also pleased to see so many members from the US and Canada joining us for the meeting.

Before taking us through the slides, Robert admitted that this had originally been an introductory presentation for a local philatelic society – but he had enhanced it to suit a more knowledgeable audience. He said he had been drawn to these stamps as they are 'cheap but complicated' – 1.1 billion copies had been printed, and the vast majority were used. There are a number of variations to the design, and Robert favoured the approach put forward by Mark Wilson – three basic designs ('Captioned', 'Circles', and 'Abstract'), with an initial and final phase for each.



After running through the detail, including dates, for each of the six designs, he highlighted aspects of the printing, such as the presence of nail and screw marks on some printings resulting from their use to secure the printing plates. He also showed some examples of the many different types (or dies), the different perforations, some of the constant plate flaws, and provisional uses for airmails, Red Cross semi-postals, the 1920 Eastern Silesia plebiscite, and postage dues.



Some constant plate flaws: 3 haler – ‘broken branch’ (position 90/Plate II); 10 haler – ‘clock in the tower’ (91/II); 20 haler – ‘water in the oval’ (25/II).

A wide range of postal stationery cards was then shown, with variations to both the Hradčany design used and aspects of the rest of the card. Finally, Robert pointed out that the use of the Hradčany stamps and postal stationery cards reflected the postal history of Czechoslovakia in the years following independence. This included mixed frankings with Austrian or Hungarian stamps, and the use of adapted Austrian or Hungarian cancellers.

Discussion after the presentation included scarcity of different stamps – Joe Colbourne mentioned that scarcity of some Hradčany perfins seemed at odds with the numbers of the original stamp printed. In response to a question about printers’ waste, Johan Sevenhuijsen explained that these were sheets used to get a printing session started and had been bought up by the local Prague philatelic society for distribution to members.

Two interesting discoveries were highlighted during the meeting. Mark Wilson pointed out that the ‘broken branch’ constant plate flaw on the 3 haler stamp was actually a parallelogram-shaped material of some kind, stuck either to the plate or to the negative. Robert also pointed out something that he hadn’t noticed before – the date appearing in the wrong order on a cancel from Carpatho-Ukraine.

If this short report has whetted your appetite, go to <https://www.czechout.org/pages/zoom.htm>, where you can see slides and notes from the presentation.

**Tony Holdsworth**

## A Mystery Finally Solved

### Mark Wilson

In the September 2021 issue of *Czechout* (pages 17–19) I wrote about mysterious holes punched in overprinted stamps in the earliest decade of the First Republic. I guessed that the holes somehow held the pane in place while the overprint was applied. Even then I thought this idea strange, and mentioned this in the article, because it implied that a single pane was laboriously mounted on spikes to be overprinted. As it turns out, that idea was completely wrong.

The early panes of Czechoslovak stamps – those that were to be overprinted – had outer margins that were quite different in terms of width. Had the printer simply loaded the panes onto the printing press’s paper feeder to be overprinted, the overprint would have fallen in many different places on the face of the stamps because of the random shifting the different sized margins would have caused.

To remedy this, the printer mounted the panes, one after the other, on a special frame that had two spikes. As each was mounted, he positioned the pane so that the spikes penetrated the paper at precise points – alongside certain stamps or tally numbers. Once the panes were firmly mounted on this device, he trimmed all of the irregular edges to the same width. He could then place the panes in the paper feeder of the printing press and be assured they were all the same size and the stamps would be aligned under the overprint plate.



Above: An illustration from the original article showing puncture marks on a range of SO 1920 overprints in different locations.

For this information, I have to thank Josef Chudoba for his recent article in *Zpravodaj společnosti sběratelů československých knihtoskových známek*, No. 98, February 2023: *Nápichové body u přetiskových známek* (Puncture Points in Overprinted Stamps). He goes into great detail and describes the location of these puncture points for a number of issues and denominations. Mystery solved!

## The Muses of Max Švabinský

### Part one – Allegories of the Republic

Miroslav Češelka

Maxmilian Theodor Jan Švabinský was born on 17 September 1873 in Kroměříž. His mother, Maria Švabinská, deserted by student Jan Novotný, faced the greatest test of her life at the age of sixteen, when she gave birth to a son. She was condemned by her community and scandalized the Christian morality of contemporary society. Because she was herself still a child, she was helped by her grandmother and great-aunts to bring up the boy. Even at an early age, drawing was not just a child's game for her son. Those around him began to realize that this sensitive child was gifted with outstanding skill, emotional maturity and extraordinary talent. In his drawings, he faithfully captured not only his surroundings but also its atmosphere. Little Max began to show exceptional artistic talent, and he was already exhibiting his drawings at the age of eleven [1, 15]. Regardless of whether he had the gift from God or was naturally talented, those around him began to realize that an artistic genius had been born to them – a Czech Michelangelo.

In adulthood, Max's mother struggled with a personality disorder that resulted in psychological problems at a later age. Maria was a great support for her talented son, and he showed love and care for her throughout her life. In the course of his studies in Prague, he met seventeen-year-old Eliška Vejrychová, whom he married in 1900. His 'femme fragile' [2] was a delicate and beautiful muse, to whom he devoted a significant part of his artistic work. Her portraits are also captured on postage stamps of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic. In 1930, Švabinský was married a second time, to his sister-in-law Anna Procházková. The latter became his next muse and they lived together until her death in 1942. After his wife Anna died, he was left with an adopted daughter, Zuzana, who later became a documentary film-maker and author of various publications about her stepfather. His life-long creative work and exceptional works of art also extended to the creation of postage stamps immediately after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic. He gradually became a personality who gained enormous influence in the stamp production of pre-war and post-war Czechoslovakia

On 5 October 1938, Sir Winston Churchill, in his speech to the House of Commons in the British Parliament, uttered the following words:

All is over. Silent, mournful, abandoned, broken, Czechoslovakia recedes into the darkness ... [the people] should know the truth. They should know that we have sustained a defeat without a war, the consequences of which will travel far with us along our road ... And do not suppose that this is the end. This is only the beginning of the reckoning. This is only the first sip, the first foretaste of a bitter cup [3].



Fig. 1

#### Twentieth anniversary of the first Czechoslovak stamps - POFIS 347–349

Less than three months after the Munich Betrayal, on 19 December 1938, postage stamps with the allegorical figure of the Republic were issued (Fig. 1). The author of the proposal, Max Švabinský, originally prepared them as a jubilee issue to mark the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic. The engraving for rotary steel printing was created by the engraver Bohumil Heinz, who died suddenly eighteen months later at the age of forty-six. Due to political events, this issue was only issued in December, and its purpose was changed to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the launch of the first Czechoslovak stamp [4, 5, 6]. Proof of the original intention is shown by the state coat of arms and the date 1918 28.X.1938 in the lower part of the miniature sheet, which was recess printed. The stamps were issued in two denominations, 2 K blue and 3 K brown, and also in a miniature sheet (Fig. 2). Test prints of a 50 haler green prove there were preparations for the issue of a lower value stamp as well.



The central figure is the allegorical figure of a woman, holding a branch in her right hand and a white dove of peace in her left hand. Her hands are in a pose reminiscent of the scales of justice. The national flag, taken down from the flagpole, covers the legs of the seated figure and completes the gloomy atmosphere of the time. The original celebratory motif and the perfect composition of this unique, timeless stamp were overrun by the rise of Nazism and the apocalypse facing the Czechoslovak state.



The National Memorial in the Vitkov Chapel of the Fallen is decorated with a scene designed by Švabinský and created between 1936 and 1939. On the fourth mosaic part, the central allegorical figure (Fig. 3) is surrounded by figures depicting individual countries of Czechoslovakia. The figure of the Republic with the Phrygian cap again has the lower part of the body symbolically covered with the national flag. After the end of the artistic cycle 'Harvest', the artist's symbols recrystallized into allegories celebrating his country, on state banknotes and postage stamps in 1938 and 1948.

Fig. 2 (left): The miniature sheet released alongside the stamps issued for the 20th anniversary of the first Czechoslovak stamps.

The artist filled in the lower corners of the stamp with a depiction of the Cathedral of St Vitus on the right – where he was drawing up designs for glass window frames at the time – and the church of St. Nicholas on the left.

Fig. 3 (right): Mosaic at Vitkov [8].

Fig. 4 (below right): Studio drawing.



Švabinský's female figures, until then only purely personal allegories, indeterminate, as was characteristic of the symbolists, resting on the ground or walking on it, then rise to the sky for the first time and turn from personal allegories into general allegories [7].

A working studio drawing (Fig. 4) of this jubilee stamp has also been preserved. The drawing from 1938 shows a seated naked female figure in an identical pose with the same hand position as on the postage stamp. The artist later dressed the figure in a white robe, covered it with the national flag and placed a branch and a dove in her hands

On the following enlarged scan (Fig. 5, top) we see a detail of the Republic figure's face from the postage stamp. It reveals the artist's little secret.



Comparisons suggest that the stamp may show his wife Anna (Fig. 5, bottom) aged about twenty years – at a similar age to the Czechoslovak Republic when this commemorative stamp was issued. Švabinský, as was his custom, sensitively incorporated his muse into the depicted allegorical figure. (In a similar way, we can see Rubens' face copied into

Fig. 5 (left): Comparison of the allegory of the Republic and a photo of Anna Švabinská.



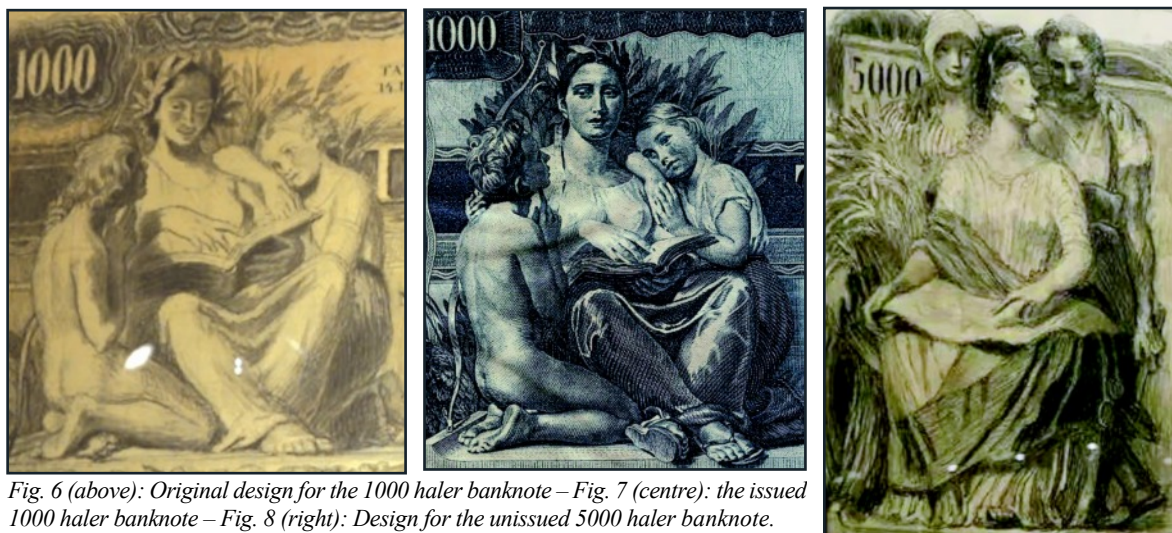


Fig. 6 (above): Original design for the 1000 haler banknote – Fig. 7 (centre): the issued 1000 haler banknote – Fig. 8 (right): Design for the unissued 5000 haler banknote.

several of *his* works.) The artist also dealt with similar motifs in the 1930s on his banknote designs. The original depicted female figure on the design of the Czechoslovak 1000 haler banknote (Fig. 6) from 1934, already has a changed face on the issued banknote (Fig. 7). The artist used a similar compositional motif of a seated figure (Fig. 8) on the draft of the prepared but unissued 5000 haler banknote.

### 11th All-Sokol Congress 1948 (POFIS 467–469)



Fig. 9

Švabinský returned later to the motif of the figure of the Republic draped in the state flag on this stamp (Fig. 9), which was issued in denominations of 1 K 50 in brown, 3 K in red, and 5 K in blue. The engraving for rotary recess printing was created by Jindřich Schmidt. The coupon with the text NI ZISK NI SLÁVU (No profit, no glory) was engraved according to the artist's design by J.A. Švengsbír. In 1948, the momentous year of the February communist coup, a postage stamp was issued on which, in addition to the original allegorical figure, there are two other figures characterizing this post-war period. The artist replaced the crown of the seated figure, adjusted the robe, repositioned the branch in the left hand, moved the dove to the stamp coupon, and added the panorama of Hradčany to the background.



The model for this postage stamp was the artist's lithograph (Fig. 10) entitled *Allegory*. When designing this stamp, the artist visibly modified the face of the seated figure from the original. The allegorical figure of the Republic holding a branch in its hand appeared on draft VII and on postcards issued alongside the stamps (Fig. 11). It also appeared on the state diploma of the Ministry of Education and Enlightenment.

Fig. 10 (far left): 'Allegory' lithograph. Fig. 11 (left): Postcard issued alongside the stamp.



Fig. 12

The face of the central character of the stamp was engraved by Jindřich Schmidt in a very striking likeness to Švabinský's wife. The detail of the main image on the stamp (Fig. 12, left) shows that Max depicted the younger face of his poor Anna (Fig. 12, right), who had already been dead for six years at that time.

The personifications of Anna Procházková Švabinská and the allegorical characters on these stamps are almost impossible to prove exactly. The master had the opportunity to present his beloved muse with an image of eternity on millions of postage stamps. The mystery of whether it actually happened probably passed away with him.

Painter, graphic artist and founder of Czechoslovak modern art, national artist Max Švabinský achieved almost everything possible during his active life. He became a famous, respected, and successful artist who did his work with joy. He survived democracy, capitalism, fascism, and socialism, and achieved admiration at home and abroad. He was one of the most important personalities of the visual arts of his time. More than one hundred Czechoslovak postage stamps were issued according to his designs and proposals. As WWII approached, when European history was being torn apart, Švabinský and Bohumil Heinz (who was at the peak of his engraving career at that time) also made a breakthrough in the history of the creation of Czechoslovak stamps. By producing a stamp with an allegorical figure of the Republic in 1938, they created one of the masterpieces in the history of Czechoslovak postage stamps. They have set the quality of this design and its execution for their followers at a level that is very difficult to surpass.

Švabinský's private and artistic life created a unique symbiosis. Just like Peter Paul Rubens, who had been a source of fascination for him since early childhood, when he redrew one of his pictures, Max also imitated the faces of his muses in his work. They became his inexhaustible source of inspiration. He sought and found the muses he loved and depicted them in his artworks and also on postage stamps. He left us many secrets in his stamp creation, which I have tried to reveal in part on the two postage stamps discussed here. Nature gifted him with the talent of a genius, but she cruelly denied him one gift – the greatest gift – the gift of continuing life. Childless, Max Švabinský died on 10 February 1962 at the age of 88. Although he searched for his muses all his life, he was not allowed to pass on his talent to any descendants – to educate them, to develop their artistic skills, and to give the world a successor.

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- [15] Josef Cisarovsky, *Portrétní umění Maxe Švabinského*, Prague, 1954.

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## An analysis of the bilingual postal cancellations in the German-Czech provinces of Austria-Hungary during the period 1867–1919 – Part two

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### 5.3 Why did some places use Czech/German cancellers?

Now we will look at why, in some cancellations, the German name is not on top, thus violating the ‘Müller rules’. The fact that the Czech name was quite often on top gave Müller the idea that this was possibly due to nationalistic actions of the postmasters, although he does acknowledge that some officially delivered cancellers also violated the ‘Müller rules’, as shown in Figs. 12 and 25. In the third section of Table 3 you can see the number of ‘top/bottom’ Czech/German cancellations. Bohemia had sixty-three, Moravia had four, and Silesia did not have any at all.



*Fig. 24 (left):  
Postmaster  
cancellation of Horní  
Moštěnice/ Ober  
Moschtenitz, 19-6-1880*



*Fig. 25 (right):  
Sušice/Schüttenhofen,  
1-12-1881, not mentioned  
in Klein, and  
Schüttenhofen/Sušice  
16-8-1883.*

In Bohemia, the sixty-three places with Czech/German cancellations are all dispersed in the central part of Bohemia, but especially along the border with the Sudetenland. It is certainly feasible that political/ nationalistic intentions play a role, especially since thirty-two of them have postmaster (PM) cancellers, compared with only eight postmaster cancellers out of the 734 offices with German/Czech cancellation. Until 1882, these postmasters had a large degree of freedom in designing their cancellers. All postmaster Czech/German cancellers were later replaced by the official single-circle German/Czech cancellers, except for the two villages Načeradec and Rožďalovice, which replaced their postmaster Czech/German canceller with a monolingual Czech one in about 1884. Načeradec never used another one during the period covered by this article (see Fig. 19); Rožďalovice used the official German/Czech cancellation after 1890.

In Moravia only four offices used a Czech/German cancellation and three of these had a postmaster canceller:

1. Napajedla (Czech)/Napagedl (German) – 3,769 inhabitants, 98% Czech. It was used simultaneously with the German/Czech variant until around 1890.
2. Horní Moštěnice/Ober Moschtenitz – 1,415 inhabitants, 99% Czech. Used this cancellation until around 1884, when it was replaced by the German/Czech variant. Note that in my copy the date is upside down (Fig. 24).
3. Město Přerov/Stadt Prerau – 16,727 inhabitants, 96% Czech. Used the Czech/German cancellation for only a short time – it was replaced around 1880 by the German/Czech cancellation.
4. Vracov/Wratzow – 3,594 inhabitants, 100% Czech. Did not use a postmaster canceller but an official Czech/German canceller. It was used until about 1895 and then replaced by the German/Czech variant (See Table 6 and its explanation).

For the official cancellers with the Czech name on top it is difficult to understand how they managed to break the official rule that the German language has to be on top. Often the German/Czech and the Czech/German cancellations were used in the same period, as shown by the next example.

In my collection there is a beautiful Czech/German cancellation, Sušice/Schüttenhofen, dated 1-12-1881, not mentioned by Klein [4] or Votoček [6]. Next to this is the official German/Czech cancellation (see Fig. 25, above right). This is an important District Capital in the South of Bohemia, close to the Sudeten border. The city is 98% Czech.

To get more insight in the top/bottom discussion, I divided the places with Czech/German cancellers into two groups: one that already had post offices before 1867, and another that opened an office in the years between 1 July 1867 and 1 January 1874. Analysis of Klein’s data [4] shows that offices that opened

after 1874 never used a Czech/German canceller. The surprising difference between these two periods is shown in Table 6.

During this period three types of postage stamps were issued: the emperor's head (as in Figs. 25 and 26a) between 1 June 1867 and 31 October 1884; the double-eagle type (as in Fig. 26b) between 15 August 1883 and 30 June 1891; and another emperor's head design (as in Fig. 23 – *see part one*) between 1 September 1890 and 30 September 1900. The value was in Kreuzer – after 1900 other issues had their value in Kronen.

**Table 6: Official Czech/German cancellers (X) used in postage stamp issues between 1867 and 1900 and their replacement by single-circle (S) or double-circle (D) German/Czech cancellers**

	Place name	Inhabitants	1867–1884 issue (emperor's head I)		1884–1890 issue (double eagle)		1890–1900 issue (emperor's head II)	
			Czech/German	S or D	Czech/German	S or D	Czech/German	S or D
Bohemia Post office opened before 1 June 1867	Beneschau	6,800	X		X	S		
	Chlumetz	3,700	X	S				
	Königgrätz	9,800	X	S				
	Leitomischl	8,100	X		X	S		
	Lissa	4,000	X		X		X	S
	Prag	202,000	X	S				
	Rakonitz	6,600	X	S				
	Schüttenhofen	6,700	X	S				
	Selčan	2,700	X		X		X	S
	Starkenbach	2,600	X		X	S		
	Tinischt	2,100	X			S		
	Wottitz (1)	2,100	X	S	X	S	X	S
	Bohemia Post office opened between 6 July 1867 and 11 December 1873	Čestice	531	X		X		X
Čischkau		482	X		X		X	S
Holoubkau		889			X		X	S
Hrochowteinitz		1,274	X		X		X	S
Hostiwitz		1,356	X		X		X	D
Jinetz (2)		1,338	X		X		X	L/R
Kratenau		867	X		X		X	D
Mieschitz		886	X		X		X	D
Miröschau (3)		1,957	Mono, X		Mono		Mono	S
Nemčitz		298	X		X			D
Neuschloss		727	X		X		X	D
Okroulitz		312	X		X		X	D
Raubowitz		1,851	X		X		X	D
Sazau		1,789	X		X		X	S
Swojschitz		892	X		X		X	D
Windig Jenikau		981	X		X		X	D
Wollenitz		620	X		X		X	D
Wrbno		474	X		X		X	S
Ždiretz	710	X		X			S	
Zetoraz	689	X		X		X	D	
Žižkov (4)	59,300	X	S					
Moravia	Vracov	3,594	X		X		X	D

*Notes:*

- (1) Wottitz used the Czech/German and the single-circle German/Czech simultaneously through the whole period.
- (2) Jinetz replaced the Czech/German canceller with a left/right (L/R) canceller in around 1895.
- (3) Miröschau – see text on page 13.
- (4) Žižkov opened its new post office because of a reclassification and has thus the same characteristics as the group that opened offices before 1867.



*Fig. 26a: Miröschau, 20-8-1874. This shows the monolingual canceller in use not long after the opening of the post office. (see Table 6)*



*Fig. 26b: Miröschau, 29-6-1884. Here the monolingual canceller is being used after its reintroduction. Unfortunately, the author does not have an example of the bilingual canceller it replaced.*

Table 6 shows the places which used a Czech/German canceller; in the upper half are the places which had a post office before 1 June 1867 and in the lower part those places with offices which opened after that, including the Moravian village of Vracov. The X symbol shows the period in which the Czech/German canceller was used, according to Klein. The canceller which took over after the withdrawal of the Czech/German canceller is also shown. Most often that was the official German/Czech canceller of the single-circle type (S) or the double-circle type (D) (as in Fig. 23).

In the case of Miröschau the monolingual thimble canceller was, according to Votoček [6], introduced at the opening of the post office and was used on all three issues until 6 November 1893, when it was replaced by the single-circle German/Czech canceller; the Czech/German canceller had been used for a short period during the first issue.

Surprisingly, the characteristics of the upper and lower halves of Table 6 differ a great deal. In the lower half (which shows data for post offices which opened after 1867) in most cases the non-official Czech/German canceller was used during the whole period until it was replaced by the official double-circle German/Czech canceller (D). In the upper half of the table, in most places the Czech/German canceller was withdrawn during the first or second period and always replaced by the regular single-circle canceller.

Initially, influenced by Müller's ideas, I thought that during these politically troubled times young, enthusiastic postmasters in new post offices would massively support the Czech case but that is not correct. Out of the 229 post offices that opened after 1867 in the Czech-speaking areas in Bohemia, only twenty-one (9%) used a Czech/German canceller (see Table 6). Of the 151 places that already had a post office before 1867, twelve (8%) used a Czech/German canceller. It seems that the new postmasters were politically no more active than those already in post.

The question remains: what has the date of the opening of a post office to do with the large differences between both groups in Table 6? I think that the answer is not explicitly found in the date of opening but implicitly in the number of inhabitants. In the upper half are places with a large population, in any case more than 2,000 inhabitants, whereas in the lower half all but one have a very low number of inhabitants, less than 2,000. The only exception is Žižkov, a place that is now situated in the cadastral district of Prague and had at that time 59,300 inhabitants. The point here is that Žižkov got its own post office because of a formal reclassification and has, therefore, the same characteristics as the places in the upper half. All other places in the lower group were simply not important enough before 1867 to get a post office. I can only see one explanation: the low population would not have written many letters and the canceller would not have been used very often. It would take years for the canceller to wear out – as Müller says in his article: 'It was permitted to use the cancellers until they were worn out but they had to obey the rules'; and then in brackets, 'That means that the German name has to be on top'. I think that this latter assumption is not correct. It would have been impossible for twenty places to use a canceller that is not officially allowed for twenty years. There will originally have been a rule that the German name had to be on top, and most probably a number of places (around 8%) would initially have purchased a canceller with the Czech name on top for political reasons. An official body will then have asked them to withdraw this illegal canceller and replace it with the official German/Czech one. The larger cities did indeed do this but the small ones waited for their canceller to wear out and that simply didn't happen. Vienna didn't care and turned a blind eye.

## **6. Analysis of the bilingual left/right cancellations during the period 1897–1919**

According to Müller, the introduction of this cancellation should have been the solution for the language struggle in postal cancellations until it became clear that this canceller was susceptible to fraud or error by the postmaster. Apart from the equal rights issue there was the advantage that according to Müller you could see what the dominant language was in the places concerned. The name used by the majority had to appear on the left-hand side of the cancellation (although I will challenge this assumption in this section).

Since the introduction of the double-circle left/right cancellers started in 1897, and for many places took place between 1900 and 1910, it is important to find data on the cancellations during this whole period, and Klein's data only goes up to 1900. Late in this investigation I learned about the existence of a series of catalogues in the Czech language (but luckily with a German or English summary) on cancellations in current Czechia from 1850 till 1919, entitled: *Monografie československých známek* by Emil Votoček [6]. Volumes 13, 14 and 16 contain the data I needed: Volumes 13 and 14 deal with the data up to 1918, whereas the two parts of Volume 16 cover the years 1918 to 1920. This enabled me to investigate the history of all bilingual left/right cancellations, double-circle as well as *Ringsteg*.

I will focus first on the double-circle bilingual left/right cancellations (see Figs. 14 and 15) in the period 1897–1919. Table 7 shows the number of places (with a post office in 1900) where they were used in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia.

Table 7: Number of places using double-circle left/right cancellations			
Bohemia, 685 places	German left, 25 places		German majority, 22 places
			Czech majority, 3 places
	Czech left, 660 places		German majority, 0 places
			Czech majority, 660 places
Moravia, 129 places	German left, 115 places		German majority, 22 places
			Czech majority, 93 places
	Czech left, 14 places		German majority, 1 place
			Czech majority, 13 places
Silesia, 12 places	German left, 12 places	Czech right, 4 places	German majority, 0 places
			Czech majority, 4 places
		Polish right, 8 places	German majority, 1 place
			Polish majority, 7 places

In twenty Czech-speaking places in Bohemia and three in Moravia the initial German-left cancellers were soon replaced by Czech-left ones and are treated as such in Table 7. Our main question is: does the majority-language in a place appear at the left-hand side of the cancellation as the Müller rule claims? If we look at Bohemia, we see that of the 684 places only three places deviate from this rule (indicated in red in Table 7). Kameniček (883 inhabitants, 100% Czech), Nürschau (5,602 inhabitants, 62% Czech) and Trebnitz (1,722 inhabitants, 67% Czech) have the German name on the left-hand side.

When we look at Moravia, however, we see a completely different picture. Of the 129 places, 94 are in conflict with Müller's rule, of which 93 have a Czech majority, and yet the German name is on the left. Marienthal bei Olmütz is the only place with a German majority and the Czech name on the left. In Silesia only twelve places used this type of canceller. They all have the German name on the left-hand side, whereas only Bistrai (587 inhabitants, 54% German, 0% Czech, 46% Polish) has a narrow German majority.

In conclusion, in each of the three provinces the policy on this canceller was completely different. In Bohemia Müller's rule is obeyed with a few exceptions; in Moravia a strong tendency for the German name on the left is apparent; and in Silesia only the German name appears on the left. So it was neither Vienna nor the local postmasters that made the rules but most probably the postal officials of the individual provinces.

The second question arises from Müller's statement that it was impossible to prevent cheating by rotating the date plug in double-circle left/right cancellers. According to him only the introduction of the *Ringsteg* canceller did stop this misuse since with that type cheating was impossible. Apart from a horizontal date, the *Ringsteg* canceller had one star on the top and a serial number or letter at the bottom of the ring for certain technical postal reasons (see Figs. 16 and 17). If the date plug was rotated and you wanted to read the date then the serial number is found on top but upside-down and this makes undetected cheating impossible (see Fig. 32). But Müller didn't mention that this serial number was also used in double-circle



Fig. 27: Double-circle left/right cancellation with serial letter c. Prague 25-1-1893 (not mentioned in Klein but mentioned in Votoček). Prague was 90% Czech-speaking.



left/right cancellers! In Fig. 27 an example is shown, where no cheating is possible and where the Müller rule is not obeyed. In Table 7 all double-circle cancellers with and without serial numbers are mentioned.

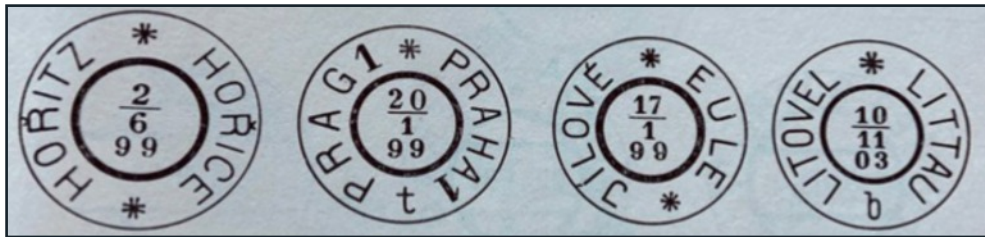


Fig 28: Double circle German/Czech      Double circle German/Czech§      Double circle Czech/German      Double circle Czech/German§

In fact, there are four main types of these cancellers, apart from (for our purpose) non-relevant varieties like the posting time as the big number '2' appearing in Fig. 27. They are shown in Fig. 28, taken from Votoček, where the sign § stands for the serial letter t and b, respectively. The first two have the German name on the left-hand side, the last two the Czech name. These cancellers were used between 1898 and 1919.

Table 8	Bohemia		Moravia	
	German majority	Czech majority	German majority	Czech majority
Double-circle German/Czech	12 places	<b>2 places</b>	16 places	<b>89 places</b>
Double-circle Czech/German	0 places	550 places	<b>1 place</b>	10 places
Double-circle German/Czech§	10 places	<b>2 places</b>	6 places	<b>4 places</b>
Double-circle Czech/German§	0 places	110 places	0 places	3 places
Ringsteg German/Czech§	17 places	0 places	16 places	<b>7 places</b>
Ringsteg Czech/German §	<b>1 place</b>	13 places	0 places	51 places

The point is this: if it had been important to the authorities to prevent cheating they only had to replace one star by an asymmetrical sign, like a number, letter or something similar. Therefore, it is interesting to see whether the left/right positions in the double-circle types with serial letter and in the two *Ringsteg* types (German/Czech§ and Czech/German§) will follow Müller's rule. From Table 8 it can be seen that this is generally true for the double-circle type but with six exceptions in the double-circle German/Czech§ cancellations out of 22 (deviations of Müller's rule are indicated in red).

In Bohemia these exceptions are Trebnitz (1,722 inhabitants, 67% Czech) and one cancellation from Prague as already shown in Fig. 27, which is not mentioned in Table 6 since all other cancellations from this big city have the Czech name at the left-hand side. In Moravia four Czech places have the German name at the left-hand side: Přerau (17,000 inhabitants, 96% Czech), Třebitsch (11,000 inhabitants, 93% Czech), Ung. Hradisch (5,000 inhabitants, 82% Czech) and Mähr. Ostrau (30,000 inhabitants, 56% Czech). This is characteristic for Moravia: these are the largest cities with a Czech-speaking majority and they show a preference for the German name on the left-hand side, as shown in Tables 7 and 8. That is also the case in the *Ringsteg* cancellations. In Moravia seven Czech-speaking places are found with German on the left-hand side. The one German-speaking Bohemian town with the Czech name on the left-hand side, Prachatitz, will be discussed after Table 9.

Table 9 - Presence of Double Circle (DC) left/right canceller, 1900–1919	DC left/right together with <i>Ringsteg</i> left/right	DC left/right without <i>Ringsteg</i> left/right	DC-left/right stopped, 1900–1919
Bohemia	208	326	135
Moravia	25	57	54
Silesia	3	5	1

When reading Müller's article, one gets the impression that the *Ringsteg* canceller was substituted for the double-circle canceller because of its ability to prevent cheating. However, it turns out that actually a large majority of double-circle cancellers were used until 1919 as shown in Table 9. That could be done simultaneously with a *Ringsteg* canceller or not.

In one case the left/right situation is different between the double-circle and *Ringsteg* cancellers, while being used simultaneously: Prachatitz in Bohemian Sudetenland (4,300 inhabitants, 22% Czech) appears as Prachatitz/Prachatice (double-circle) and as Prachatice/Prachatitz (*Ringsteg*) – see also Table 8.

To close this section, we will now concentrate on an issue that seemingly has nothing to do with the Austro-Hungarian cancellations. We will have a look into the two parts of Volume 16 of Votoček [6] which treat

the period between 1918 and 1920, the time in which Czechoslovakia became an independent state. The new country issued her first postage stamps in December 1918 but had to design her own cancellers. That took time, so meanwhile they used a procedure called 'Nationalization of Cancellations of Austrian Origin'. That meant that all German names and words had to disappear from the canceller used until then in one way or the other.



Fig. 29a: Double-circle Welehrad/ Velehrad, 13-4-1920. The 'W' has been transformed into 'V'.



Fig. 29b: Ringsteg Včelákov/ Wčelakow, 19-3-1919. Two letters 'W' transformed into the letter 'V'.



Fig. 30a Double-circle Manětín/Manetin, 27-1-1920. The e and i were transformed at the right-hand side into ě and í.



Fig. 30b The German name has been removed

An easy way to do this was to change the German name into a Czech name with a small correction. In that way two 'identical' names appeared on the cancellation. An example was changing the German letter 'W' to the Czech equivalent 'V' as shown in Fig. 29. (This and some of the other illustrations are taken from Jacques Hermann's *Czech Cancellations* [7], a very nice website with a lot of information about cancellations between 1918 and 1939.) It is clear that half of the letter 'W' has been removed, leaving a narrow letter 'V'. In Fig. 29a there is a remnant of the 'W' (indicated by an arrow). In Fig. 29b, in spite of changing a 'W' to a 'V' twice, the names are still not identical because the Czech accent on the letter Á has been overlooked on the right-hand side!

In Manětín, Fig. 30, they first tried to make the names identical by putting an accent on the í in the German name on the right-hand side, but then they also had to change the German e into the Czech ě, which was not very successful. Maybe that was why they removed the German name completely two months later. That became the most popular way to solve the problem.



Fig. 31: a year in the life of the Batelov cancel!

For us the most relevant changes can be seen in Fig. 31. Before the end of WWI in November 1918, the Czech-speaking place of Battelau in Moravia had a double-circle Battelau/Batelov canceller with the Czech name on the right-hand side (*above left*). Immediately after the end of World War I *the sequence of names was changed by rotating the date plug*. (I couldn't find a picture of that cancellation, unfortunately.) Six months later the German name was made illegible by blackening (*above centre*), and another six months later the German name was removed completely leaving just the Czech name on the left-hand side (*above right*). This even happened with cancellers with a serial letter. In the chaos of the time, they didn't worry about the fact that this letter ended up at the top of the ring in an upside-down position. In Dux, however, they made the effort to re-engrave the serial letter (*see Fig. 32, below right*).

Fig. 32.



What is the logic here? Let us see what Votoček [Ref. 6] says about this subject. He shows three examples of double-circle German-Czech cancellations where rotation took place and writes:

The rotation of the date plugs on the original German-Czech cancellers of the above-mentioned type cannot be regarded as typical for the post-Independence Day period. Similar adaptation of cancellers is known from the years preceding 1918. Then it was the easiest and, at the same time, the least conspicuous method, of securing the dominant position for the Czech language on the postmarks.

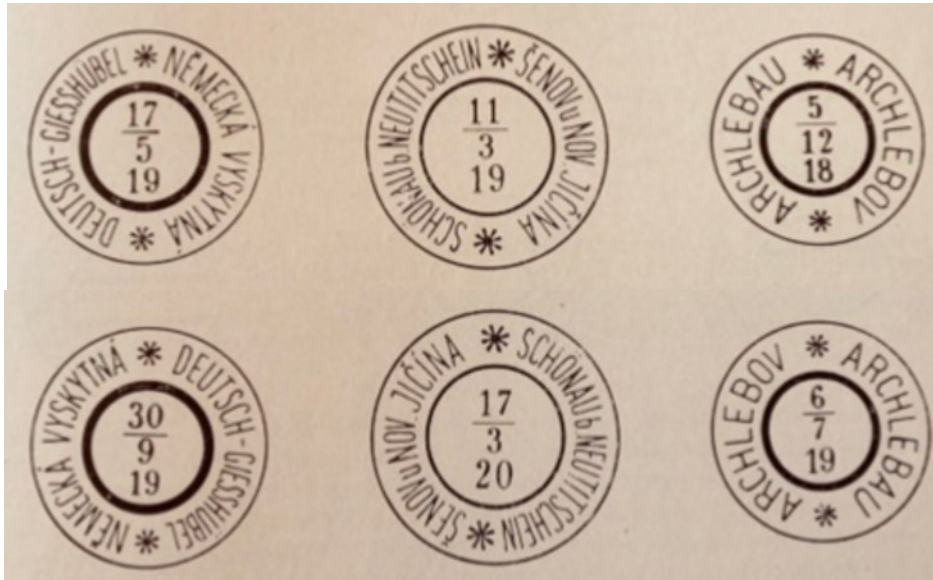


Fig. 33 'In 1919, the originally German-Czech cancellers were changed into Czech/German ones by rotation of the date plugs' (Votoček, Vol. 16 Part 2, p. 39 – caption quoted from Votoček's Fig. 54).

A very interesting case is the city of Znaim/Znojmo. This important German-speaking city was very much in favour of using the German language and their reaction can be seen in Fig. 34. They removed the Czech name! The authorities of the new Czechoslovakia were not very amused and according to Votoček they forced the postmaster to replace the Czech text, probably at his own expense! (Votoček, Volume 16, Part 2, Page 394).

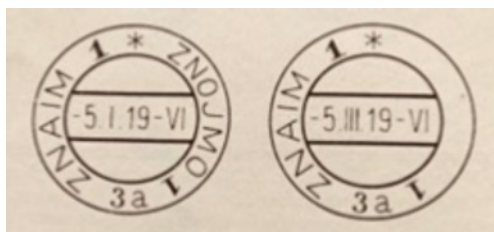


Fig. 34: The original German-Czech postmark from Znojmo and its Germanized form (caption quoted from Votoček).

Some important conclusions can be drawn from these citations. Votoček speaks about the dominant position of the left-hand side and describes them as German-Czech. Obviously he reads the left/right text in this way, with the left-hand side in the starting position which was always felt as the dominant position and which was even the reason why the Czechs wanted to get rid of the cancellers where the German language took the dominant position. Now their language could dominate if they liked by taking the left-hand side of the left/right cancellers.

This idea will have grown gradually which explains the slowly growing number of cancellers with the Czech name at the left-hand side which manifests itself especially in the *Ringsteg* cancellers. If this is true then it is not necessarily the percentage of Czech inhabitants which is decisive but the influence and power of the ethnic group. So, a place with a majority of Czech inhabitants could be dominated by a smaller group of influential Germans, leading to the German name on the left-hand side. However, this cannot explain the systematic differences between the three provinces. So the provincial authorities must have had a guiding rôle.

## 7. In conclusion

My investigation into the Austro-Hungarian postal cancellations in current Czechia proved very interesting and surprising. Although the continuous and politically motivated language struggle between postmasters and postal officials as suggested by Müller is certainly exaggerated as has been shown, there are still items where the author got excited when exploring this subject.



A number of questions were answered, but others need detailed research into the Austro-Hungarian postal archives or the help of collectors and specialists in this field, for which the author would be very grateful\*. The aim of the author was to find an answer to three main questions after reading Müller's article:

1. What conditions were required for a post office to introduce a bilingual top/bottom cancellation in 1871? Müller states that it was necessary that it should be in an important place with two clearly different names in German and Czech. I argue that for this introduction there were actually no conditions.
2. Is it a requirement that in top/bottom cancellations the German name has to be on top and, if so, why are there so many exceptions? According to Müller it *was* a requirement but some postmasters, driven by nationalistic intentions, did not obey this rule, much to the frustration of official bodies who asked the postmasters to follow the rules. I agree with Müller, but make it clear that the important cities did indeed obey the rule upon request by the authorities. However, the authorities turned a blind eye to some places with only a small number of inhabitants (less than 2,000) that opened their post offices after 1867. These offices could use their 'illegal' cancellations with the Czech name on top until the canceller wore out and that was often after 1890.
3. Müller states that the left/right canceller was introduced in 1897 to satisfy Czech wishes for replacement of the bilingual top/bottom canceller. The Czechs felt it was insulting that the German name had to be in the dominant position at the top of the bilingual cancellation and the authorities met their concern by introducing the left/right canceller where no preferred position of names existed. But then Müller adds another condition: the language of the majority of the people in the location of the post office had to appear on the left-hand side. However, because of the construction of the canceller it was possible for the postmaster to put the language he preferred on the left-hand side by rotating the date plug and this led, according to Müller, to nationalistic issues which the authorities wanted to prevent.

I would argue that the left/right canceller was indeed meant to satisfy Czech wishes, but I do not agree that there was a general rule for the majority-language to be on the left-hand side. For example, in 80% of the cancellations in Moravia before 1900 the wrong name appears on the left-hand side and it is impossible to state that 80% of the Moravian postmasters were either too stupid to understand the rules or were politically corrupt. If the position of the name had been important then the authorities would have taken care to make the left/right canceller fraud-proof. As an example, they could have put any asymmetrical symbol instead of one of the stars in the canceller, which would make cheating by rotating the date plug impossible.

In my opinion, the left/right canceller was initially not meant to indicate which language was dominant. It is clear that the policy in this respect was completely different in the three provinces of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. On the other hand, it is also clear that gradually the idea grew that the left-hand side of the canceller was the most dominant place, which explains the growing number with the Czech name on that side.

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- [5] Edwin Müller, *Handbuch der Entwertungen von Österreich und Lombardei-Venetien auf den Freimarken – Ausgaben 1850, 1858–59, 1860–61, 1863 und 1863–64*, Verlag Heinrich Geitner, Wien 1961.
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- [7] Jacques Hermann, *Czech Cancellations*, <https://czech-cancellations.com/postal-offices?page=139>

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# Petr Bezruč – a Postal Document

## Lubor Kunc



The famous Czech writer and poet Petr Bezruč (*left: POFIS 1062, issued in 1959*) was a long-serving postal clerk, who started his career as a writer during his postal employment. He was born Vladimír Vašek in Opava (Silesia) in 1867. His father, a teacher, moved a few years later to Brno because of his unpopularity in the city. Opava at that time was a regional capital with a German-speaking majority, but Bezruč's father was a Czech activist organizing the Czech community in the city.

Bezruč consequently grew up in Brno, where he applied for public service employment. He was accepted and, after passing the required examination, he was sent to Frýdek in 1891 as a junior postal clerk. He worked at the post office until 1893,

when he moved back to Brno. Bezruč worked at the Brno post offices in the periods 1893–1915 and 1918–1927. The break in his employment was caused by an allegation that he was the author of two poems published in a Czech magazine in France in 1915, which were very critical of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Bezruč was detained in military prisons in Brno and Vienna, accused of treason. Although the trial at the Vienna Military Court of Justice in 1916 stated explicitly that he was not guilty, and that the poems were written by another author, the Austrian post office declined to employ Bezruč again. He was therefore unemployed until the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, when the newly born Czechoslovak Postal Administration accepted his application and employed him as a senior postal clerk at the Brno 2 post office next to Brno Railway Station. He finished his career as a postal inspector and in 1927 he became a full-time writer and poet. He died in 1958.

One of his duties at the Brno 2 post office was the completion of postal forms documenting the search for lost parcels, insured letters or other lost mail. In March 1920 he completed the form displayed here searching for a parcel containing textiles, with a cash-on-delivery amount of 1,000 K sent in February 1920 from Brno to Sečovice. Bezruč completed the left-hand side of the form initiating the search for the postal item. He wrote

the abbreviation 'Va' next to the completion date, recalling his official family name of Vašek. The search was successful and the parcel was found just a few weeks later.

Left: the cash-on-demand enquiry form completed by Bezruč, and (right) an enlargement showing his 'signature' written 'Va'.



Collectors of British stamps might know Bezruč from the commemorative postmarks used by the Czechoslovak Field Post in Great Britain in 1940 and 1941. The cancellations emphasized Silesia as an integral part of Czechoslovakia and also marked the strong popularity of Bezruč's stories and poems amongst the Czechoslovak soldiers.

Right: Commemorative postmark used by the Czechoslovak army post office in Great Britain to celebrate Bezruč's birthday. The background illustrates Silesian industry, and the crocodile is the poet's symbol.



## Continued use of Slovak postage due stamps and postal stationery after WWII

### Roger Morrell

The legacy of war is shortages of most things, including postal materials, so it is quite natural to use up old stuff as long as it does not cause offence until such time as new materials are prepared and distributed. We see this clearly in Protectorate stamps with the Hitler head obliterated and Protectorate datestamps with the German language excised. Less commonly, it appears that Slovak Republic postage due stamps and postal stationery were still accepted, with or without being handstamped *ČESKOSLOVENSKO*. I don't think much has been mentioned before in *Czechout* about this subject. Some recent purchases led me to look into this a little more carefully.

On page 376 of the *Specializovaná Příručka* [1] is the section concerning the use of postage due stamps which I have attempted to translate. It provides the conditions for payment of postage due after Liberation in 1945.

In Bohemia & Moravia, freed in 1945, postage due stamps were not used at all until the issue of 1946. This state of affairs resulted from the fact that the use of postage due stamps in the mentioned territory was abolished even before the Protectorate of Bohemia & Moravia on 1 November 1942 and at the same time it was ordered that the settlement of underpayment should be made with postage stamps [i]. This was possible until 15 May 1945, when Protectorate stamps were revoked. For a temporary period, from 16 May 1945, postage due was settled in cash, and from November 1945 until the post offices were supplied with new postage due stamps it was done again (although not always strictly) with postage stamps.

The situation was completely different in Slovakia. There, the Postal Commission allowed the continued use of stamps issued during the period of existence of the so-called Slovak Republic (hereinafter Slovak stamps), until 30 September 1947.

In August 1945, some of the values of the temporarily used Slovak postage due stamps had already been used up, and therefore the Post Office Committee decided to replace the used lower values with other postage stamps or a combination of other low-value postage due stamps, and to use a postage due stamp worth 1 K 60, in circulation since 1 September 1945, as 1 K 50 without any modification or overprint. In a number of cases, in the absence of postage due stamps, post offices also used postage stamps, sometimes even with *Doplatné* overprints, but this was not explicitly ordered. Postal regulations in Slovakia have never prescribed any modifications or overprints of used postage due stamps. However, in connection with the compulsory and mandatory overprinting of the former Slovakian postal stationery with the *ČESKOSLOVENSKO* handstamp, the same handstamp also appeared on Slovak postage due stamps. In all cases, this is not a mandatory order, but a private initiative.

In the period after the liberation of Czechoslovakia in 1945, when the postal service has collected post-paid and other fees (for the payment of which post-paid stamps were used), we encounter the following entities.

In Bohemia and Moravia:

- a) postage due paid with Protectorate postage stamps (up to and including 15 May 1945: valid stamps were Zumstein 89–110 and 133–142 [ii]);
- b) postage due paid in cash (from 16 May 1945 to 10 September 1945 in accordance with the regulations – tolerated until 30 November 1945 – and occurring, but contrary to the regulations, after 1 December 1945);
- c) postage due paid by Czechoslovak postage stamps (after their issue it was also possible in the interim period until November 1945, as only the validity of Protectorate stamps was cancelled, not the validity of the order for the payment of postage due with postage stamps; from 1 December 1945 this method was mandatory, although it was not always implemented).

In Slovakia:

- a) postage due paid with postage due stamps of the 1939 or 1942 issues, or their combination; in the case of using 1 K 60 [iii] stamps of the 1942 issue, we distinguish between use up to and including 31 August 1945 (i.e., postage due payment for the amount of 1 K 60) or use from 1 September 1945 (i.e., postage due payment for the amount of 1 K 50 [iv]);
- b) postage due paid with postage due stamps of the 1939 or 1942 issues, or their combination, together with postage due stamps of the Czechoslovak Republic;
- c) postage due paid using the Czechoslovak Republic postage due stamps;
- d) postage due paid with Slovak postage due stamps and Czechoslovak postage due stamps of the 1946 issue (only from 1 May 1946 to 30 September 1947);
- e) postage due paid in cash.



This brings me to my latest acquisition, which is a nice example of the non-mandatory use of the *ČESKOSLOVENSKO* handstamp overprint on postage due stamps. Fig. 1 shows the front and back of a Slovak money order postman's account sheet for 24 July 1946 and 25 July 1946. Over those two days he delivered 115,112 K 15 in cash to 26 different addresses in the small town of Šurany, Nitra region. At each of them he charged the recipient 3 K for the pleasure, totalling 78 K. To account for his receipts he purchased and placed on the reverse of the form 75 K's worth of Slovak postage due stamps (7 × 10 K + 5 K) plus a 3 K Czechoslovak new postage due stamp (issued on 1 May 1946). They were postmarked on 26 July 1946. Each of the Slovak stamps has the overprint handstamp diagonally in violet ink. At least at that post office the staff seemed to be pleased to be back in Czechoslovakia!

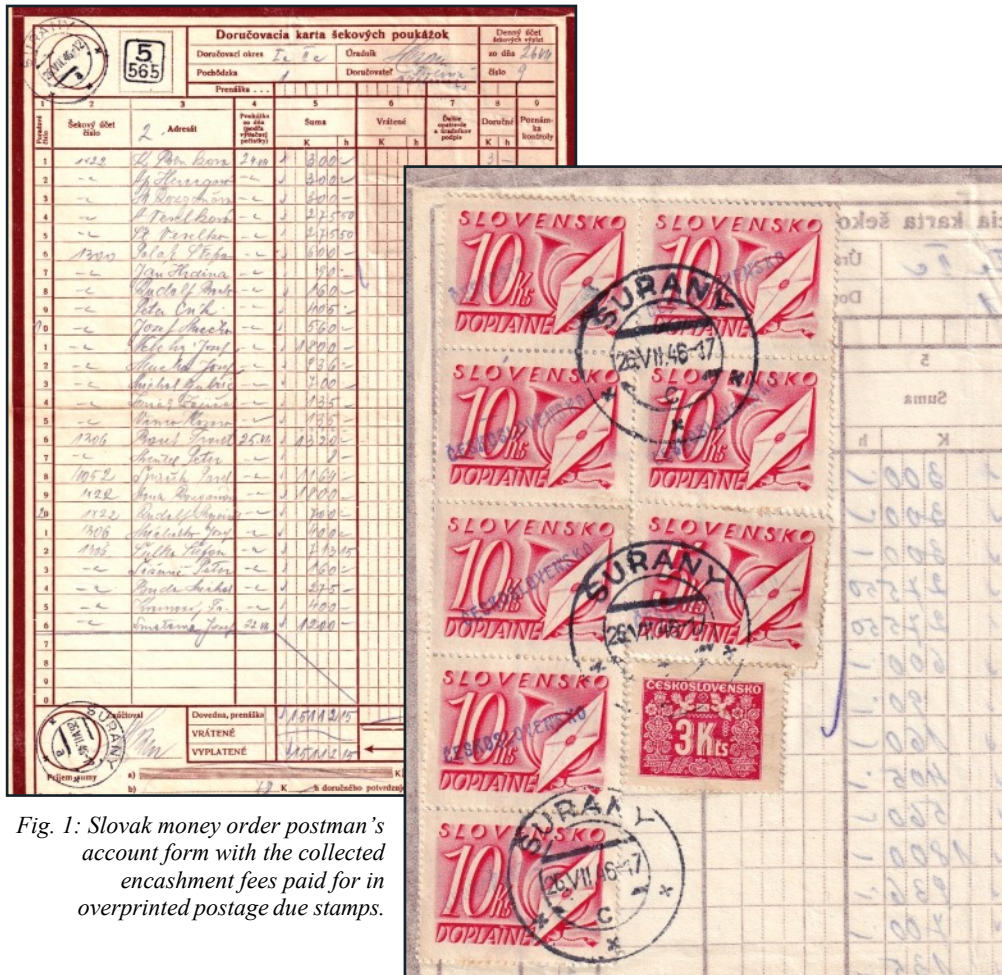


Fig. 1: Slovak money order postman's account form with the collected encashment fees paid for in overprinted postage due stamps.

Turning now to postal stationery, Fig. 2 demonstrates the invalidity of Hitler-head postal stationery postcards (and letter cards) as per the description in the catalogue. A 60 haler linden blossom stamp, first issued on 23 May 1945, has been affixed over the Hitler head indicium, and the German 'POSTKARTE' has been struck through. It is postmarked on 19 July 1945.



Fig. 2: A Hitler-head Bohemia/Moravia postal stationery card used in July 1945.

However, regarding Slovak stationery, the *Specializovaná Příručka* notes on pages 418–9 that:

Provisions on the use of postal stationery and formulars of the former Slovak postal administration were published in Slovakia in June 1945 by the Revenue of the Commission, post. no. I/4 – 1945 of 6 June 1945 published in circular no. 32/1945. Post offices in Slovakia sent part of their stock for reprinting to Bratislava and kept part of it for current routine use, with the fact that, in accordance with the certified regulation, they provided an imprint of the hand stamp *ČESKOSLOVENSKA* delivered from Bratislava. The cited document practically legalized the use of even invalid Slovak stationery provided that they were over stamped with the mentioned *ČESKOSLOVENSKA* hand overprint. This happened through the practical use of postcards coming from private sources mainly for collecting purposes. That is why all these postcards, in practice already withdrawn from postal operations, are also available with hand overprints:

- CDV I 50 haler – olive green (issued 1939, Mi P1 [v])
- CDV II 50 + 50 haler – olive green (issued 1939, Mi P2)
- CDV III 50 haler – olive green, Bradlo (Mi P3)
- CDV IV 50 haler – dark green (issued 1939, Mi P8, Tiso)
- CDV V [vi] 1 K 20 + 1 K 20 – red, misprint (1939 issue, Mi P5I)
- CDV VI 1 K 50 – crimson (issued 1939, Mi P6)
- CDV VII 1 K 50 + 1 K 50 – crimson (issued 1939, Mi P7)
- CDV VIII 50 + 50 haler – dark green (issued 1939, Mi P9, Tiso)
- CDV IX 50 haler – olive-green memorandum of the assembly of the Slovak nation on 6 June 1861 in Turčianske Sv. Martina. (Mi P4?)
- CDV X 50 haler – olive green Slovak memorandum legation in Pest 27 June 1861 (Mi P4?).

Hand-printed overprints on these and officially sold postcards, or other postal items, have different positions and orientations [vii]. Post offices used different colours for stamping: red, blue, purple, green, etc. The value of different overprints of all these colours is the same. At that time, the selling price of postcards with the overprint *ČESKOSLOVENSKA* was 1 K 10, regardless of the payment value of the indicium (as if a 1 K stamp had been stamped on it), correspondingly doubled for reply-paid cards: by the provisions of the SNR Commission for Posts and Telegraphs Number 20 571–1/4–45 of 24 July 1945, the payment value of the postcards used in Slovakia from 1 August 1945 was changed regardless of the face value shown on the overprinted stamp at 1 K with a retail price of 1 K 10 (double card with a retail price of 2 K 20). By the provisions of the same Commission Number 76 216–1/4 1945 with effect from 1 December 1945, the asking price of these postcards was again changed to 1 Kčs 20 with a selling price of 1 Kčs 30 (postcards with answer cards at double the price) as a result of the unification of postal fees in the framework of the restoration of the Czechoslovak Republic currency.

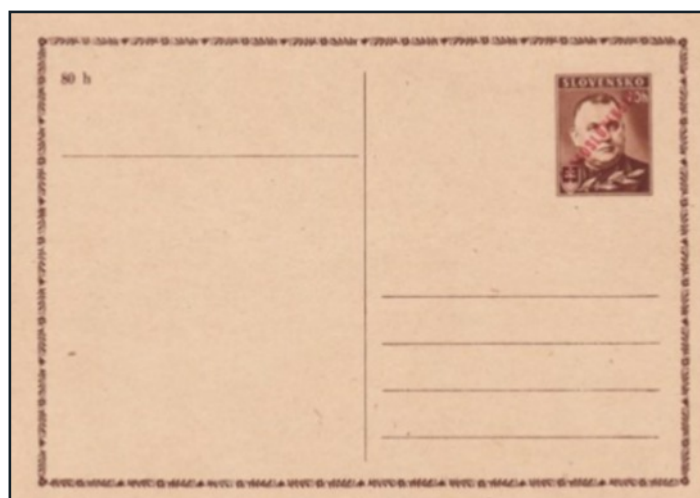


Fig. 3: The overprinted 70 haler Tiso card.

This is followed by a listing of other card series:

- CDV77, 70 haler, brown, Tiso (Mi P10) – see Fig. 3
- CDV78, 70 + 70 haler, brown, Tiso (Mi P11)
- CDV79, 1 Ks, green, Rázus, 18 picture cards (Mi P13)
- CDV80, 1 + 1 Ks, green, Rázus (Mi P14)
- CDV81, 1 Ks 20, brown, Hlinka, 36 picture cards (Mi P4)



On page 491 are letter cards:

CZL3, 1 Ks orange, letter card (Mi K1)

CZL4, 1 Ks 30, blue-violet, letter card (Mi K2)

On page 497 is the telegram receipt:

CPL5, 50 haler, golden yellow or olive green (Mi TA1, 2 and 3)

On page 500 is the postal collection form:

CPV13, 80 haler, red-violet (Mi NK1) – see Fig. 4

And not listed in the Czech catalogue is the overprinted Slovak parcel card:

1 Ks, blue, inland (Mi AP5) – see Fig. 5

Which means that other Slovak parcel stationery (UPU version, COD version) may also exist.

So, it sounds like the Czech Post Office recalled some cards, while additional Slovak ones were printed in Bratislava, all to be handstamped *ČESKOSLOVENSKO* by local post offices as a temporary means of supplying the whole country with stationery while new designs were printed. Collectors (naturally?) took advantage of this, particularly by applying this handstamp to the whole series of picture cards already in their possession. Remarkably, they are not highly priced in the catalogue, but have you ever seen them?

The image shows two parts of a postal money collection form. The top part is titled 'POŠTOVÁ VÝBERKA' and features a purple 80 haler stamp with a Slovak shield. The bottom part is titled 'POŠTOVÝ ÚRAD' and contains fields for 'Vybrat' (amount) and 'od' (from). A red handstamp 'ČESKOSLOVENSKO' is visible over the stamp.

Fig. 4 (left and below): The overprinted 80 haler postal money collection form. The money order half has the handstamp over the Slovak shield.

The image shows a parcel card titled 'POSTOVA SPRIEVODKA'. It includes fields for 'Odosielateľ' (sender), 'Príjemca' (recipient), 'Cena' (price), and 'Váha' (weight). A red handstamp 'ČESKOSLOVENSKO' is visible over the top right corner.

Fig. 5 (above): Overprinted Slovak inland parcel card.

The image shows another view of a parcel card titled 'POUKÁŽKA K POŠTOVEJ VÝBERKE'. It includes fields for 'Vybrat' (amount) and 'od' (from). A red handstamp 'ČESKOSLOVENSKO' is visible over the top right corner.



### Notes

- [i] In the Michel Deutschland catalogue it states that the Bohemia & Moravia postage due stamps were invalidated on 1 April 1943.
- [ii] These were, respectively, the Hitler head set and the Dove newspaper stamp set.
- [iii] Strictly, the currency still in use in Slovak lands was the Slovak crown – Ks – but the catalogue uses just K, which was the post-war description on the Košice and Bratislava stamp issues of Soviet-occupied Slovakia used from March and April 1945 respectively. From 1944, the Soviet Army's military vouchers also served as money in the liberated territory of Slovakia (which presumably included that previously occupied by Hungary). In March 1945, the Slovak National Council confirmed currency independence for a transitional period. In July 1945, the Slovak National Council ordered the overprinting of Slovak banknotes and military vouchers with values of 100, 500 and 1,000 crowns [2]. The Czech and Slovak currencies were unified on 1 November 1945, somewhat to the value disadvantage of the Slovaks [3], and thereafter the currency unit was the Kčs.
- [iv] The catalogue gives the dates 1 August 1945 – 30 November 1945 for the inland 20g letter rate being 1 Ks 50, which appears to be inconsistent with the statement about postage due use. From 1 December 1945 there was a unified rate for the combined lands of 2 Kčs 40 distance and 1 Kčs 60 local.
- [v] The author has added the Michel postal stationery catalogue numbers for these cards, which do not appear in the Czech catalogue.
- [vi] The catalogue is slightly confusing, using 'K' for 'Ks' when talking about Slovak card indicia values. Elsewhere the author has used 'Ks' to describe the other stationery that was overprinted.
- [vii] They also have different fonts, as shown in Figures 3–5.

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- [1] *Specializovaná Příručka pro Sběratele Českoslovenkých Známek a Celin*, Union of Czechoslovak Philatelists at the Transport and Communications Publishing House, Praha, 1988.
- [2] <https://www.muzeumkremnica.sk/en/exhibitions/two-faces-of-money/the-history-of-money-in-slovakia/>
- [3] Holec, R., 'Economic aspects of Slovak national development' in *Economic Change and the National Question in Twentieth-Century Europe*, edited by Teichova, A., Matis, H., Pátek, J., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000, pages 277–294.

### Articles Elsewhere Roger Morrell

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- Norbjerg, M. Plate flaws of Czechoslovakia 1945–1992.  
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##### **No. 39, Spring 2023** (in Dutch)

- van Loo, F. An analysis of the double-ring postmarks in the German-Czech provinces of Austria-Hungary in the period 1867–1919, part 2.  
 Sevenhuijsen, J. A letter from 1863. (Reconstructing the postal route from Römerstadt via Freudenthal to Friedland.)  
 Heijs, J. Czechoslovakia to Austria 1919: letter returned due to use of city name in wrong language. (Linz, not Linci!)  
 van Dooremalen, H. Post offices in the Bohemian Lands.  
 Sevenhuijsen, J. The 'General Svoboda Army'. (The story of this Czech General during WWII and his rôle in the Russian advances to free Europe.)  
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##### **No. 222, Spring 2023**

- Anon, A Vienna local post?  
 Brandon, K. Parliamentary Post Offices.  
 Brooks, A. WWI hand-drawn illustrated fieldpost cards of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.  
 Brandon, K. Mail from Edwin Müller. (But was it THE Edwin Müller of postal history fame?)  
 Brandon, K. The 1910 Emperor's Birthday Issue.  
 Brandon, K. An interesting item of law-court mail. (Lwów, 1916.)  
 Jorissen, F. In search of Bitinja. (Scarce 1871 cancel of this Krain village.)  
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- Morrell, R. On the trail of the 1919 overprints, Part 20: 'The Villány overprint – a spoof?'
- Morrell, R. The humble receipt, Part 1 – The early days.
- Lauer, R. The 1994–1999 Népművészet series: Some additional details.
- van Weenen, P. de Leeuw. The start of postal stationery cards of 1874.

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- Lauer, R. The postal history of Baja in South Hungary, 1918–21.
- McDermott, T.P. A series of Christmas postcards from Lajos Márton.
- Brainard, C., Kohalmi, C.L. New insights into the 1919 Szeged National Government overprint issue (Part I).

**Vol. 54, No. 4, October–December 2022**

- van Weenen, P. de Leeuw. Letter to the Editor, 1947 Paris Peace Conference. (Concerning agency cancellers in the three villages on the south side of the Danube that were handed over by Hungary to Czechoslovakia to form the Bratislava Bridgehead.)
- Brainard, C., Kohalmi, C.L. New insights into the 1919 Szeged National Government Overprint issue (Part II).
- Szücs, K. Specimen albums, reprints and complete sheets made for the World's Fair with special attention to the deceptive marketing of specimen items.

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- Kobelbauer, H. August 1914. (Further fieldpost covers and cards cancelled from this time.)
- Kalis, K. Perfin stamps used by the K.u.k. Kriegsmarine.
- Robisch, H. What can be made out of an (auction) description. (An enormous buying price for an Austrian POW card from Aonogahara camp, Japan, 1918.)
- Kalis, K. Italian attack on Porto Buso on 24 May 1915. (Naval attack on the Austro-Hungarian Naval station and border post on this island at the mouth of the Marano-Grado Lagoon.)
- Sifferling, N.A. Museum ship *Sava* in Belgrade, the former K.u.k. Danube monitor *Bodrog*.
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- Bliersbach, A. The cultural work of POWs in Russia (part 2). (Hand-illustrated POW cards.)

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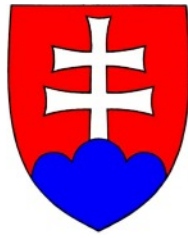
- Anon. Memoirs of a stamp dealer: Herman Herst, Nassau Street, New York.
- Kána, V. Diamonds found in the trash: 60h Liberated Republic find. (English translation by Mark Wilson.)
- Beneš, F. Pofis Czech Republic Catalogue 2022 issues. (8-page pull-out supplement.)

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- Beneš, F. 85 years since the death of TGM – and the 1930 issue.
- Madl, T. Eighty years of the London Sheet 1943.
- Ježek, J. Philately and picture postcards Part 5.
- Pofis. Czech Private Stamps 2022. (Pull-out pages 80–96 supplement catalogue.)

**No. 3/2023 (March)**

- Beneš, F. Too good to be true!
- Anon. Did the Trautenau cancel belong to the station post office?
- Folprecht, P. The story of the Stolen Stamp (part 2).
- Okáč, Z. Courier services in Brno and surroundings.
- Kveton, R. Pofis 2023 Catalogue: Austrian Merkurs 1851. (Pull-out 16-page supplement.)



## New Issues – Slovak Republic Lindy Bosworth

Images and text adapted from  
[www.pofis.sk/en/catalog/products](http://www.pofis.sk/en/catalog/products)

2 January 2023

### The Honour Guard of the President of the Slovak Republic – NVI ‘T1’ (POFIS 784)

This stamp issue is a reminder of the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Slovak Republic in 1993. The Castle and Honour Guard Regiment was formed after 1993 with a battalion performing the duties of the presidential and honour guard. On 1 August 2001 this battalion was given separate unit status within the army, whose supreme commander is the President of the Republic. Although the Honour Guard is today symbolic, such guards have protected sovereigns and important persons throughout history. The uniform worn by today’s Honour Guard is modelled on those worn in 1848 by Slovak volunteers and reflects the Slovak national colours with cord ornaments based on Slovak folk costume themes.



27 January 2023

### Personalities: Krista Bendová (POFIS 785)



Krista Bendová (1923–1988) was a Slovak writer of poetry and prose, a playwright and journalist, and is best remembered for her books for children and teenagers. She studied at Bratislava University joining the editorial team at the *Pravda* publishing house after graduating. Between 1958 and 1964 she was an editor for the daily newspaper *Pravda* until retiring to concentrate on her own writing projects. The first book of her collected poems appeared in 1948 (*Letters to my Loved One*) with a collection of children’s poems published the following year. Her poems for children appeared over subsequent years with an emphasis on humorous situations as a learning tool. She was married to the Slovak writer Ján Kostra, and was awarded the title of Merited Artist in 1983.



17 February 2023

**Personalities: Ján Gotčár (POFIS 786)**

Ján Nepomuk Gotčár (1823–1883) studied philosophy at Trnava university, then theology at Banská Bystrica before an appointment in the town at the Royal Grammar School, teaching geography, history and languages. In 1856, whilst at the school, he initiated the creation of an association to support poor children, but then moved to Užhorod as director of the grammar school there for two years before becoming an education administrator and chief school inspector at Oradea (now in Romania). He was titular abbot of Koblán from 1860 and an advisor to the bishop of Banská Bystrica. He was a founding member of Slovak Matica and, after retiring in 1867, spent his remaining years working for them, and organizing and procuring funding for the establishment of a Catholic grammar school in Kláštor pod Znievom.



24 February 2023

**Easter 2023: Slovak Woodcarving – NVI ‘T2’ to 50g (POFIS 787)**



This issue portrays the work of a naïve woodcarver from the village of Babín in the Horná Orava region. Štefan Siváň senior (1906–1995) lived in the village all his life as a farmer and wheelwright. As a young man he carved figures for the portable cribs which were carried by carol singers who went round villages during Christmas and New Year festivities. His work is representative of all those who continued traditional handcrafts. Siváň had an affinity with wood carving, beginning with small figures for crib scenes, but he also carved larger figures relating to rural occupations, folk stories, the family and motherhood, and religious motifs. His work is displayed in the Orava Gallery. The stamp depicts a pietà, and a stamp booklet containing ten stamps was issued (POFIS 103 ZZ787/23) together with a pictorial card showing Christ on the cross with two mourning female figures.

28 February 2023

**Joint issue with Armenia: Saint George’s Church, Nitrianska Blatnica (POFIS 788) and the Tatev Monastery, Armenia (POFIS 789)**

This joint issue commemorates the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Slovakia and Armenia.

Saint George’s Church, Nitrianska Blatnica (*above right*), a rotunda deep in the forest behind the village, was thought to be a Renaissance chapel from 1541. However, archaeological research from 1976 onwards revealed the building to be from an earlier date with a cemetery and belfry from the 11th century. Restoration work in 2009 revealed pre-medieval brickwork and a Romanesque window. Later scientific analysis from wood samples within the masonry dated the original building between 830 and 840, during the time of the Great Moravian Empire. It is the oldest preserved church in Slovakia.

The Tatev Monastery in Armenia (*below right*) is situated on a rocky bluff near the village of Tatev. It is one of the oldest and most famous Armenian monasteries, and since 1995 has been cited by UNESCO on the World Cultural Heritage List. The main church of the monastery, dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul, was constructed between 895 and 906 but probably replaced an earlier church. It was funded by the ruler, Prince Ashot, and his wife Princess Shushan, whose images are in niches in the eastern façade. A cross-shaped cathedral was also built and later in 930 decorated with frescoes. The fortified monastic complex includes the Church of the Holy Mother of God, which was completely destroyed by an earthquake but reconstructed during the 20th century. Two similar stamps of each site were issued simultaneously by Slovakia and Armenia.





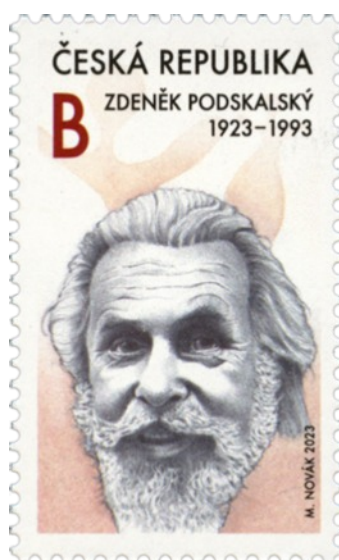
## New Issues – Czech Republic Lindy Bosworth

Images and text adapted from  
[www.postaonline.cz/eshopfilatelie/listProducts.html?request\\_locale=en](http://www.postaonline.cz/eshopfilatelie/listProducts.html?request_locale=en)

15 February 2023

### Personalities: Nicolaus Copernicus – NVI ‘B’ (POFIS 1188)

Copernicus’ model of the universe, which placed the sun not the earth at the centre of the universe, was published in *De orbium coelestium* in 1543, the year of his death. These ideas laid the foundations for modern astronomy. He was born on 19 February 1473 in Toruń (Thorn), then part of the Kingdom of Poland, the youngest son of a successful copper trader. Originally known as Mikolaj Kopernik or Koppernigk, he is remembered by the Latinized form of his name. After studying at Krakow University, he went to Italy studying mathematics, canon law, and astronomy at the universities of Bologna, Padua, and Ferrara. In 1505 he returned to his homeland as a canon at Frauenberg and a physician to his uncle, the bishop of Ermland. During this time he worked until his death on the hypothesis that the motion of the earth was responsible for the apparent movement of heavenly bodies, a radical theory in medieval times.



### Personalities: Zdeněk Podskalský – NVI ‘B’ (POFIS 1189)

Zdeněk Podskalský (1923–1993) was an actor, stage, film and radio scriptwriter, and film director. During the 1940s and 1950s he was an actor but, as he suffered from stage fright, he changed career. After studying in Prague and Moscow, he focused on films and produced TV programmes, but gained fame for scripts for musicals, the most famous of which was *Men About Town*. His work within the Czech New Wave Movement brought a fresh, innovative style to Czech cinema. As he opposed the communist regime, he was excluded from film work for several years but continued to write and direct, finally retiring in 1987. The stamp commemorates the centenary of his birth.

### Beauties of Our Country: Kozel Castle – NVI ‘E’ (POFIS 1190)



Kozel Castle, at Štáhlavy near Plzeň, was built in the neo-Classical style between 1784 and 1879, designed by Václav Haberditz for Jan Vojtěch of Czernin. The style was influenced by Jean Jacques Rousseau’s idea of ‘a return to nature’. The building is only one storey around an inner rectangular courtyard, which included living quarters, chapel of the Holy Cross, Riding Hall, servants quarters, and stables. In the 19th century, a 40-hectare park was acquired and in more recent times another four buildings have been added to accommodate cultural events, weddings, and public visitor access and facilities. The property is state owned.



## Easter – Definitive ‘B’ (POFIS 1191)

Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ but is also associated with many folk traditions to welcome spring. The egg, a symbol of new life, is humorously depicted on this stamp issue. No First Day Cover was issued.

15 March 2023

## Personalities: Jan Janský (POFIS 1192)

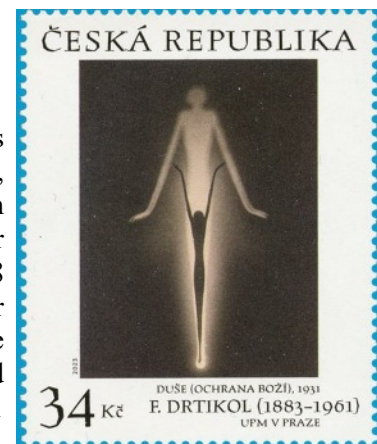


Jan Janský (born in Prague, 30 March 1873 – died in Prague 8 September 1921) was a neurologist, psychiatrist, and serologist. He studied medicine at Charles University, then from 1899 worked in a psychiatric clinic and was appointed professor in 1914. When war broke out, he served in the army as a doctor but was discharged in 1916 after a heart attack. After his recovery, he became head of the Department of Neurology and Forensic Psychiatry at the Central Military Hospital, Prague, researching to find a correlation between mental and blood diseases. His paper *Haematological Study of Psychotics*, published in 1907, concluded there was no correlation, but did classify four different types of blood (types I, II, III and IV). This was the first time that blood types had been classified. The types were later amended to A, B, AB, and O, the familiar terminology in use today. Janský suffered with angina pectoris and died from coronary artery disease before being recognized for his pioneering research. *The Secret of Blood*, a 1953 film produced in Czechoslovakia, tells the story of his discovery. He was a proponent of voluntary blood donations for medical use. In the Czech and Slovak Republics this is recognised even today, by the award of a Janský medal to regular blood donors.



## Works of Art on Postage Stamps: František Drtikol (POFIS 1193)

František Drtikol (1883–1961) studied photography in Munich, opening his own successful portrait studio in Prague in 1910. His best-known works, however, are studies of nudes combining the late Art Nouveau style with dramatic lighting effects, reflecting his interest in Buddhism and other philosophical ideas. A selection of these photographs appeared in his 1938 book, *Woman in the Light*. During the 1930s he organized courses for amateur photographers and wrote *Eyes Wide Open*, a book dedicated to the art of photography. After selling his studio he concentrated on painting and graphic art until his death. The issued stamp design is from one of his 1931 photographs, *The Soul*.



## Beauties of Our Country: Český Šternberk Castle – NVI ‘A’ (POFIS 1194)



Standing on a granite cliff on the west bank of the River Sázava, the castle was founded by Zdeslav z Divišova in about 1241. His coat of arms (shown on the stamp – an eight pointed star), gave the family name Sternberk (stern – star in German; berk/berg – mountain) and its motto ‘The star that never falls down’. Throughout its history the castle has been continuously owned by members of the Sternberk family, with the exception of the 1949–1989 communist era. Over the centuries the original Gothic structure has been reconstructed, buildings added and refurbished. Today the interior of the castle is in the Baroque and Rococo styles, and has a unique collection of 545 copper engravings depicting the history of the 30 Years War (1618–48), as well as a collection of historical weapons. The castle is open to the public.



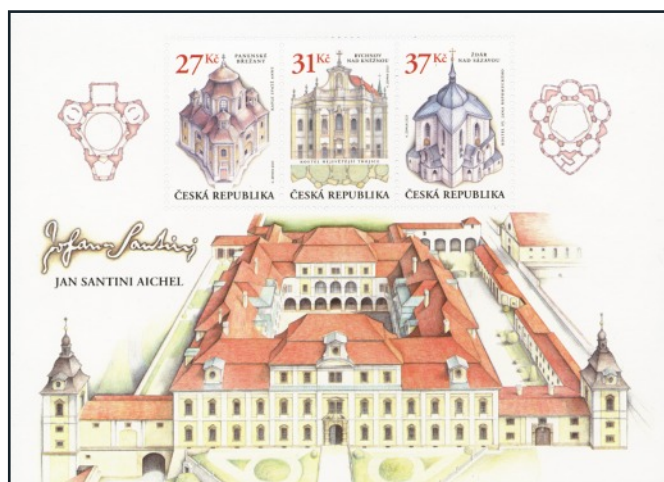
### Definitive : Cycling – NVI ‘B’ with labels for additional printing (POFIS 1195)

Originating in the 19th century, bicycles can now be found worldwide. They have been used for transportation, recreational, and sports activities, with many variations in styles including unicycles, tricycles, quadricycles, recumbent cycles and tandems. The stamp shows a bicycle with two hearts instead of wheels. The printing sheet has seven stamps, eight labels and six coupons. The eight labels, which can be used for personalized printing, tell the story of a trip through a vineyard with a glass of wine. The six coupons form a composite picture of the meeting of two cyclists (*see the back cover*).



5 April 2023

### Jan Blažej Santini Aichel and his Buildings (POFIS A1196; 1196, 1197 & 1198)



Jan Blažej Santini Aichel (Giovanni Battista Santini Aichel, 1677–1723) was the eldest son of a Prague stonemason, whose family originally came from Italy in 1630. Jan was apprenticed as a stone mason but was born partially paralysed, so instead he studied painting with the court artist Christian Schröder. Then he went travelling: in Rome he met and was influenced by the work of the radical Italian architect Francesco Borromini. By 1700 Jan had returned to Prague, was designing and building, and had his own construction business. His designs were light and airy in the Baroque Gothic style based on mathematical ideas and geometric shapes.

The commemorative souvenir sheet depicts a bird's-eye view of Rychnov nad Kněžnou Chateau, with the 31 K stamp showing the façade of the Church of the Holy Trinity. The chateau was originally built in 1676 as a four-winged manor house with an arcade yard. Aichel re-designed and rebuilt the complex. The 27 K stamp shows Saint Anna Chapel in Panenské Břežany with its triangular-shaped ground-floor plan at the left, in the sheet margin. The chapel, designed by Jan Aichel, was built in 1705–1707 in the grounds of the summer quarters of the Prague Benedictine nuns. The 37 K stamp shows Saint Jan Nepomuk Pilgrimage Church, Žďár nad Sázavou, with the five-pointed ground-floor plan at the right, in the sheet margin. Saint Jan Nepomuk was a 14th-century martyr canonized in 1729. The pilgrimage church, designed by Jan Aichel on a theme of five, was built in 1719–1727. The five-star layout refers to the five stars in the halo of Saint Jan Nepomuk, representing his five virtues. Within the church are five altars, with five chapels and five gates in the grounds. The complex is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

### Dendrological Garden in Průhonice (POFIS A1199; 1199, 1200 & 1201)

The Dendrological Garden of the Silva Tarouca Research Institute for Landscape and Ornamental Gardening is the formal title of this 180-acre UNESCO World Heritage Site, lying within a 620-acre park which includes Průhonice Castle. Some 15 km from Prague, it is a popular recreation area with about 25 km of footpaths, a Romanesque church, several ponds, and a stream dividing the area. The Gardens were designed and laid out to reflect the natural countryside by Count Arnost Emanuel Silva-Tarouca in 1885. The property has belonged to the state since 1927. The castle complex is the centre for botanical scientific research, closed to the public although some rooms of the Neo-Renaissance building are open to visitors. The Research Institute holds scientific seminars, and a varied programme of educational events for children and adults throughout the year. The commemorative souvenir sheet gives an overview of a section of the garden with inset stamps – the 27 K shows a branch from a Blue Emperor variety of Korean fir tree, the 31 K a variety of rhododendron in full bloom, and the 34 K a snake spruce tree.



## Membership Benefits

<b>Meetings</b>	Four London meetings in 2023, two joint meetings in Yorkshire, and five Zoom meetings.
<b>Publications</b>	Members receive the quarterly journal <i>Czechout</i> which includes articles of interest on Czech and Slovak philately and helps members to keep in touch with Society affairs. The Society publishes <i>Monographs</i> and Print-On-Demand titles on wide-ranging topics containing original research.
<b>Library</b>	The Society maintains a comprehensive library of books, journals, and reference materials available to UK members only. Postage both ways paid by the borrower.
<b>Auctions</b>	Regular auctions with a varied range of reasonably priced items. Prospective vendors should contact the Auctioneer.
<b>Circulating Packets</b>	Stamp and postal history packets available to members in the UK only. Apply to the Packet Manager.
<b>Free Small Adverts</b>	Members are permitted free small adverts in <i>Czechout</i> . Contact Advertising Manager.
<b>Accessories at Trade prices</b>	Members may order accessories, album leaves, and philatelic books at a substantial saving. Delivered direct. Contact the Treasurer.
<b>Data Protection Act</b>	Members are advised that their details are stored electronically for use on Society business only, e.g. for address label printing.

## Payments

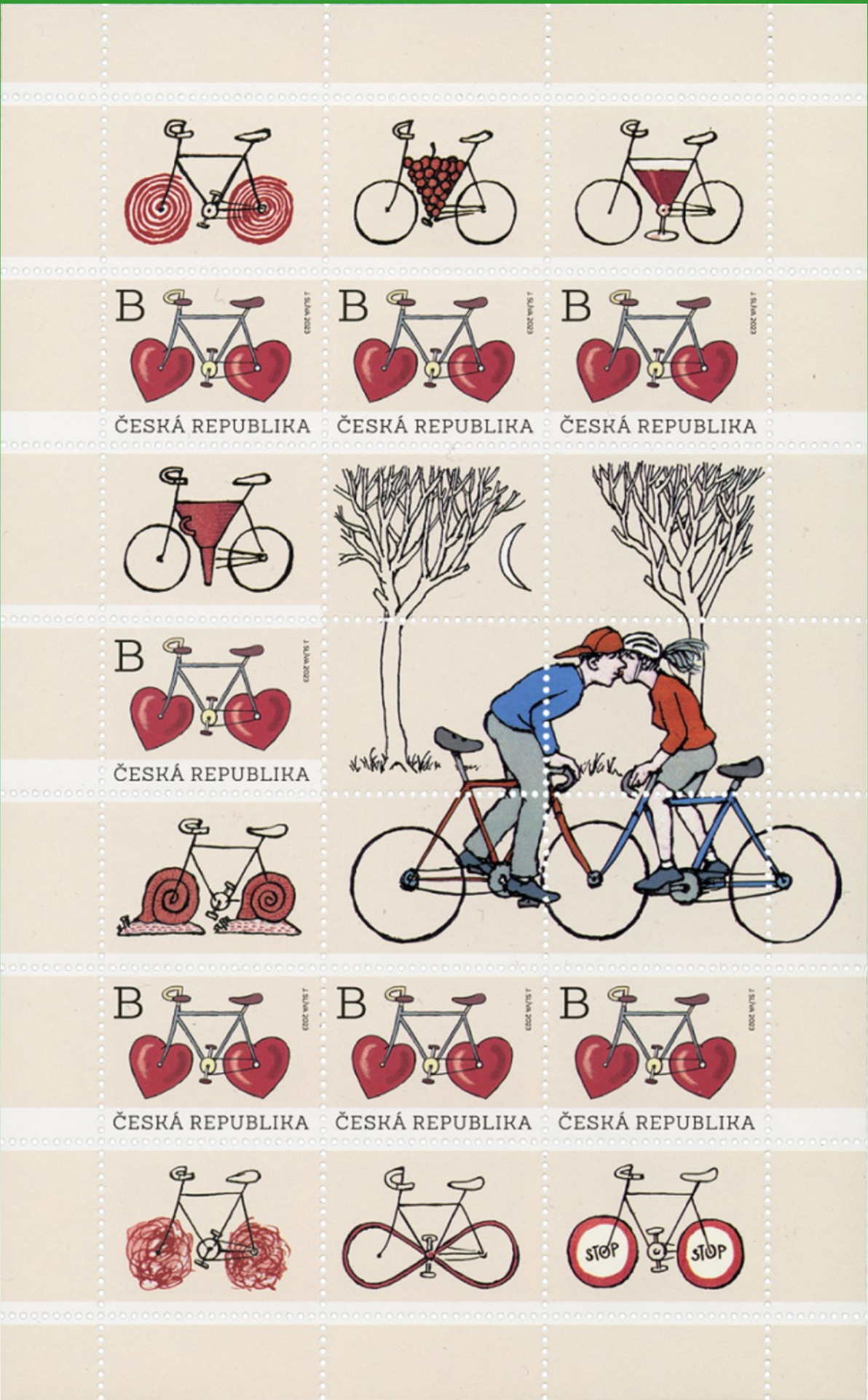
Sterling cheques drawn on a UK bank payable to the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain (CPSGB); current bank notes in pounds sterling, US dollars, or Euros. Payments may also be made by US dollar cheques or paid to a Euro bank account, by credit card, or PayPal. Please contact the Treasurer for details.

## Officers and Committee

All Officers and Committee members serve the Society voluntarily and without compensation.

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Bicycles - POFIS 1195 (see page 30).