



# CZECHOUT

JOURNAL OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

VOLUME 42/1

MARCH 2024

WHOLE NUMBER 194



**Witness to turbulent times - the History of  
Czechoslovakia through its stamps and postal  
history (pages 17–24).**

## Revisions to the 5 haler Dove Print-on-Demand title

In its day, the Czechoslovak Dove stamp design was recognized as a first-rate work of art. The 5 haler appeared in two colours, blue and violet, while two different negatives and two different technologies were used to produce its plates. This revised edition focuses upon the blue printings. It was produced to correct known errors and add new information only recently come to light. In addition, the plating guide sections have been separated out into individual supplements. The first supplement describes stamps printed with plates manufactured from the first negative, the second covers the second negative plates, and the third supplement contains visual indexes for all the plates.

The cost for these four titles is as follows (*plus* postage and packing):

POD 170 – The Blue 5 Haler Dove Revised Edition: UK – £15.00; Europe – €18; USA – \$19 (Postage rate C).

POD 171 – Supplement 1: UK – £21.00; Europe – €25; USA – \$27 (Postage rate C).

POD 172 – Supplement 2: UK – £29.00; Europe – €34; USA – \$37 (Postage rate C).

POD 173 – Supplement 3: UK – £14.50; Europe – €17; USA – \$19 (Postage rate B).

The closing date for initial orders is 31st March 2024 – orders should be sent to the treasurer, Yvonne Wheatley (treasurer@cpsgb.org).



**CZECHOUT**

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**CONTENTS**

<b>The French and Italian Military Mission in Těšínsko – Jan Kypast</b>	11
<b>Unknown Postmark of Hungarian TPO 1939 – Lubor Kunc</b>	14
<b>The Muses of Max Švabinský: Part four – Zuzana and Bright Memories – Miroslav Češelka</b>	15
<b>The History of Czechoslovakia 1918–1992 – Yvonne Wheatley</b>	17
<b>News and Notes</b>	4
<b>Czech Republic New Issues – Lindy Bosworth</b>	25
<b>Slovakia New Issues – Lindy Bosworth</b>	27
<b>Articles Elsewhere – Roger Morrell</b>	29
<b>Membership and Society Contact Information</b>	31

**Carpatho-Ukraine Catalogue**

If you are interested in this area of Czech philately, you may be interested a catalogue that accompanied a recent auction of the late Jiří Majer's material in the USA. Jiří's family has made it available free of charge in pdf format. Jiří was internationally recognized as a professional philatelist, auctioneer and dealer in Czechoslovak philately. He was a serious researcher of the Czech Corps in Siberia and the author of the *Zakarpatska Ukrajina Specializovany Katalog*, one of the most comprehensive catalogues of Carpatho-Ukraine. The catalogue was written in Czech. It is well illustrated and shows CZK prices for stamps, stationeries and postal history items. It is available via the CPSGB website at <https://www.cpsgb.org/docs-link/carpatho.html>.

**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 & Notes

### Returning Member

The CPSGB extends a warm welcome to returning-member **Mr John Shand**, from Perth in Western Australia.

### Congratulations

**Ken Dyke** has set a high standard in volunteering to hold office in specialist societies. He holds posts in the CPSGB as Auctioneer, Membership Secretary for the Hungarian Philatelic Society of Great Britain and now he has joined the Auction Team of the Austrian Philatelic Society.

**Richard Wheatley** is the new President of the Society of Postal Historians.

The recently elected officers for the Society of Czechoslovak Philately include several of our members: **James Buckner** as President and **Alan Hanzl** as Vice President; **Keith Hart** Editor of the Society's journal; **Chris Jackson** Expertising Chairman; and **Ludvik Svoboda** as Librarian. **Joe Coulbourne** has joined the Society's Board as a Director.

### London Meeting in November 2023

Fifteen members gathered at The George in London on 4 November 2023 to judge entries for the **Kay Goodman Trophy** and to enjoy **Yvonne Wheatley's** presentation on *The History of Czechoslovakia Told Through the Postal System and its Stamps*.

There were four entries for the trophy: *The German Occupation of the Sudetenland* (displayed by **Wojciech Kierstan**); *Praga 1962 World Stamp Exhibition* (**Tony Moseley**); *Parcel Post During Empire Times* (**Roger Morrell**); and *Bohemia & Moravia – Transition of Internal Postal Rates* (**Rex Dixon**). There was a very high standard of entries, so the Chairman decided that all should be in receipt of a certificate, but by the narrowest of margins the winner was Roger Morrell.

Yvonne Wheatley began her presentation by focusing on three men, who could be considered the founders of the new Czechoslovak Republic: Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, Edvard Beneš, and Milan Tástislav Štefánik, a Slovak. From the beginning the Slovaks wanted their own independence, so they joined the new republic hoping for autonomy later.



*Members pay close attention to Yvonne Wheatley at The George, as she begins her comprehensive run through the troubled history of Czechoslovakia.*

As a new nation-state a national anthem was needed – this was celebrated in 1934 with a set of stamps – the accompanying, much sought-after miniature sheets were displayed. Similarly, new currency was required, but this did not appear until April 1919. Raging inflation led to the decision to seal the borders to protect the Czechoslovak economy. Banknotes were called in and had a revenue stamp attached – subsequently, only those so marked were legal tender once the borders were reopened.

In carving up elements of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to create the new republic, other countries had lost territory. Poland was the first to complain as they had lost valuable industrial lands, and this led to the Seven Days War in Silesia. Ruthenia was originally not part of the republic, but they joined, again hopeful of achieving autonomy later on.

A wealth of material was displayed to illustrate the Sudetenland crisis, including a set of stamps prepared for the area but never issued. As part of the Munich pact, Poland and Hungary were encouraged to take back their own lost territory. This led to a large number of special cancels. The independence of Carpatho-Ukraine lasted just 24 hours – just enough time to issue an overprinted stamp! With the ‘independence’ of Slovakia

(under a puppet government), the writing was clearly on the wall, and efforts were made to evacuate Jewish children. Yvonne showed an envelope that had been sent to 'Box 506' in Lisbon. This would have contained an envelope inside with a label to a destination in England and would have been sent on from there to Thomas Cook in Bradford for forwarding.

The terrible story of Theresienstadt was also included, with a display of the parcel permit stamps and related postal history. Parcels, of course, were never delivered to the addressee, but the paperwork completed to apply for a permit provided names and addresses of others who would soon be joining them inside the camp. Material shown to illustrate the holocaust in Czechoslovakia included letters in and out of Theresienstadt, ration stamps valid for one meal per day, and a repatriation certificate for one woman who managed to survive the ordeal and was released from the camp. Stamps illustrated the men involved in the plot to assassinate Heydrich, Lidice (with before and after photographs), and Nicholas Winton. Yvonne reminded members that the late Robert Kingsley, who was a member of the Society, was one of the children rescued by Nicholas Winton.

Stamps also illustrated the continuing struggle over the future of Czechoslovakia after the war, until finally the communist party took over. Beneš resigned as President, but Jan Masaryk (Tomáš' son) remained as Foreign Minister until his death by 'suicide' in 1948. (Members puzzled over how he could have jumped from a window, however, and closed it afterwards?) Currency devaluation in 1953, the 1968 Prague Spring, the 1989 Velvet Revolution, and finally the dissolution of the country in 1993, were all illustrated through stamps and postal history.

*See the article on page 17 of this edition of Czechout for an illustrated overview of Yvonne's presentation.*

**Tony Holdsworth**

### **CPSGB Annual General Meeting**

The AGM was held via Zoom on 25th November 2023. Twelve members were present. Reports were received from committee members and the text will be available to all members via a link to the minutes of the meeting that will be included in the next *Newsletter*.

Except for the Vice Chairman, the Press Officer and the Webmaster, all Officers and Committee Members were reappointed *en bloc*. **Tony Holdsworth** was appointed to the role of Vice Chairman. **Mark Wilson** was appointed Webmaster, with Tony Holdsworth co-opted as Assistant Webmaster.

The Treasurer announced that it had been necessary to raise subscriptions by £5 for members receiving a printed copy of Czechout, and by £2 for digital only members. She explained that, according to our Constitution, this was not subject to a vote but opened the issue to views and questions from members. One member raised an objection to the increase in the digital subscription, but others disagreed. It was pointed out that our subscription rate compares very favourably with other societies.

One final issue raised was some illogicality in the marking rules for the Francis Pettitt competition. A slight alteration to the points system was agreed to, and this is now included in the revised Society Handbook (available to view on our website: <https://www.cpsgb.org/docs-link/handbook.html>).

**Tony Holdsworth**

### **Joint Meeting of the Austrian and Czechoslovak Philatelic Societies, York Stamp and Coin Fair, 20 January 2024**

While the Fair itself was lively and quite well attended, only six members were able to attend the customary joint meeting – but they were treated to fascinating and varied presentations.

Following some quick publicity for the residential weekend in July, to which both societies are invited (see page 3 of the December 2023 Czechout), and the CPSGB Zoom meeting on 27 January (featuring Keith Brandon), the meeting got underway with **Joyce Boyer's** display on the *Steyrtalbahn*, the Steyr Valley Railway. This is the oldest narrow-gauge railway in Austria, opened in 1908 and now run as a heritage line. The line ran from Garsten through Steyr, Grünburg and Molln to Klaus, with a branchline to Sierning and Bad Hall, and included the Christkindl Pilgrimage Church. Material on display included TPO cancels from the 19th century and 'personal stamps' from the line's current status as a 'railway museum'.

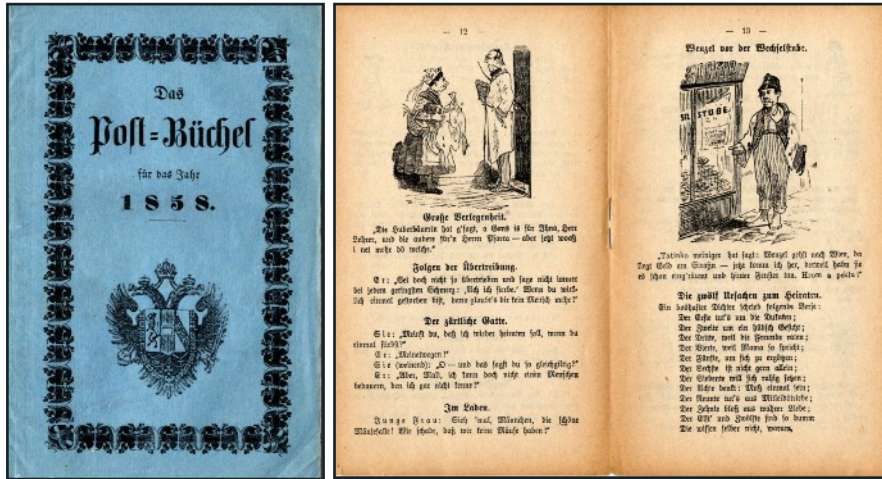
**Keith Brandon** reminded us that we are approaching the 100th anniversary of the Škoda company. To mark the occasion, he presented a letter from the Austrian parliament written by František Škoda, the father of Emil Škoda, to his wife. He also displayed two letters with a PLZEŇ 6 cancellation – this was used by a sponsored post office inside the Škoda works.

Finally, **Alan Berrisford** displayed a comprehensive collection of postmarks from Lemberg under Austrian rule. Currently known as Lviv, the city is in western Ukraine but was part of the Austrian Empire up until WWI (often referred to as 'Austrian Galicia'), and then changed its name to Lwów as part of Poland. A rich range of postmarks was on display, including bilingual Lemberg/Lwów cancels, from the 1780s up to the end of the 19th century.

**Tony Holdsworth**

### **January Zoom**

The 2024 season of zoom meetings got off to a tremendous start on 27 January. Our highest-ever attendance of 25 members, from across three continents, enjoyed a delightfully seasonal presentation by **Keith Brandon** on 'The Austrian Postman's Christmas Gift'.



Above left – an early Postbüchel from Prague. This example contained useful information, such as the Vienna–Prague–Dresden railway timetable, but was without anything of ‘entertainment’ value.  
 Above right – two pages from an edition published towards the end of the 19th century. By now, most of the content comprised jokes, cartoons, anecdotes and riddles, sometimes also household hints and general knowledge.

Cunningly devised as a method of encouraging Christmas tips for the hard-working postmen, the *Postbüchel* lasted in various guises for over 150 years. Personalized for each postman, sometimes with his name stamped on the front cover, it contained humour, whimsy, practical tips, and lottery information, as well as postal information.

By the end of the 19th century, it was being published by the Postmen’s Union and the Pension Fund. The ‘golden age’ of the *Postbüchel* arrived at the beginning of the 20th century, with colour printing and advertising. Initially, WWI did nothing to change the format, but by 1917 austerity versions were in production, with significant propaganda content on the progress of the war. After the break-up of the Austrian Empire in 1918, the tradition of the *Postbüchel* continued in the new nation of Czechoslovakia. Subsequently, editorial content declined until the ‘booklet’ was little more than the kind of leaflet you can pick up at a post office – and the tradition of delivered booklets was finally brought to an end in 2010.



Right – a Czech-language booklet, distributed in Prague at the end of 1916.

Left – a booklet printed in Brno with the inscription ‘Have a happy and cheerful New Year’.

Question-time followed the presentation – in answer to one member, Keith explained that he had seen some of the booklets on a dealer’s stand some years ago, when they were available for a few pounds each, and was drawn into a collection which is now two or three hundred strong. In fact, he believes it may be the largest such collection outside Austria. He wrote an article on them, as there is so little information available generally, and discovered that this is now part of the postal history archive in Vienna!

Roger Morrell then showed some examples of the equivalent booklets from Hungary, starting in 1893 with simple tables of postal rates and gradually increasing in editorial content and advertising. The point was made that these booklets are interesting for both social and postal historians. At one time, they were one of the few sources for detailed information on postal rates.

Much appreciation was shown by the members for a most enjoyable and informative presentation on a subject which was clearly new to many of them. Keith was thanked by the Chairman, Peter Williams, who promised that a certificate would be winging its way to him.

**Tony Holdsworth**

### A Query Resolved

In the December issue of *Czechout* (page 8), **Les Pearcy** raised a query about the use of revenue stamps on newspapers sent through the post. **Lubor Kunc** has responded:

The answer is easy: all the newspapers were used as evidence in legal proceedings at the Znojmo Court of Justice. All the items presented in the proceedings required a tax payment (normally 1 Kč), payable when the item was presented during the proceeding. This is why the revenue stamps are dated 1938, even though all the newspapers come from 1931–1937, and why the revenue stamps were cancelled at the Znojmo court. You can also find such cases on regular envelopes, field postcards and other postal/non-postal items.

I am enclosing an example from my WWI field post exhibit showing the field postcards of WWI sent by a soldier killed in action. His wife presented the pieces of mail at a court of justice, when his legacy was discussed. She proved the existing relationship with her husband and his continued communication with his family, preventing any attempt to divorce or leave the family, so the legacy might be assigned to her and to their children.



The cards were sent by Private Josef Valtera to his wife Anna during his employment in the Tyrol. Valtera went missing in Russia in 1919. The correspondence has been used to prove the close relationship between Valtera and his wife and family. As the mail became part of a judicial process, a revenue fee of 1 Kč was payable for each card. The revenue stamps are from the Czechoslovak issue of 1919. Valtera's death has been confirmed by the Czechoslovak Military Authorities, as shown in the WWI killed soldiers list.

## A Query Partially Resolved



Both sides of a postcard showing a confiscated Cossack train.

On behalf of a friend from a local society, **Peter Williams** has been investigating a postcard with a tantalizing inscription on the reverse. **Lubor Kunc** has provided a translation: *Ukoristeny vlak kozaku, stanice Sepinova* – the confiscated Cossacks’ train, at the Sepinova station. But Peter has been unable to find Sepinova on any online maps. Lubor thought it may have been an old name, as many Russian places have been renamed several times as historical events have unfolded. Can any readers help?

## Censorship during the Munich Crisis



*Commercial cover sent 3 September 1938 via surface mail from Lagos to Prague. Franked at 3d. for up to 1 ounce. Attracted a Czechoslovak unboxed ‘CENSUROVANO’ censor cachet in violet and handstamped ‘URGENT’. Posted via the S.S. Accra.*

Some time ago **Yvonne Wheatley** was asked for help with Czechoslovak censorship during the Munich Crisis. She was able to help, with the aid of an article by Lubor Kunc in *Czechout* (June 2002, pages 36 to 39). The text below is from the write-up by **Tony Plumbe** to accompany his cover.

In autumn 1938, censorship of mail in Czechoslovakia came under the defence authorities: four armies were operating in the Czechoslovakian territory; the First Army (*Havliček–Kutná Hora*) was defending Bohemia (including Prague); the Second Army (*Jirásek–Olomouc*) was defending northern Moravia; the Third Army (*Štefánik–Kremnica*) was defending Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine; and the Fourth Army (*Neruda–Brno*) was defending South Moravia. The above cover arrived in the thick of the events of September and October 1938, and was censored by the *Havliček–Kutná Hora* army at Prague. Censorship started in Czechoslovakia on 17 September 1938. The ‘CENSUROVANO’ cachet was used in the first phase of Czechoslovakian censorship that lasted between September and November 1938. Only military censorship stations located at Prague and Brno handled international mail.

In 1937 around 23% of the total Czechoslovakian population was German. Hitler had threatened to invade Czechoslovakia on 1 October 1938. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain visited Nazi Germany three times in 1938 and on 30 September he returned with the ‘Munich Agreement’ between the UK, France, Italy and Germany, that was perceived to reduce the imminent threat of war but appeased Germany by allowing the annexation of the Czechoslovak territory known as the Sudetenland. Germany had already started an insurrection on 17 September 1938 in the Czechoslovak border lands, and Polish and Hungarian forces had been moved to their borders with the country. German forces occupied the Sudetenland over the period 1 October to 10 October 1938. With the loss of the Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia lost 3.5 million people, 70% of its iron and steel industry, and 70% of its electricity generation capacity. In May 1938 there had been a partial mobilization of Czechoslovak forces. General mobilization followed on 23 September 1938. In March 1939 the Slovak Republic declared its separation and aligned itself with Germany. Within days, Germany had completed its

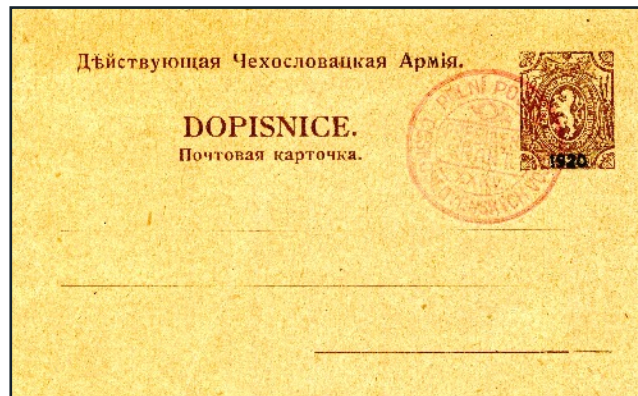


occupation of the rest of Czechoslovakia. In 1938, Czechoslovakia also ceded small pieces of territory to Poland, and through the Vienna Arbitration of 2 November 1938 4,588 square miles of southern Slovakia and southern Carpathian Ruthenia were transferred to Hungary. Czechs saw the Munich Agreement as a *Diktat* or Betrayal.

### USS *President Grant*

**Yvonne Wheatley** has been investigating the following query submitted by **Wojciech Kierstan**:

I have a question about the *President Grant* XXXV cancel of the Siberian Legion and what it refers to. I have an extract from a *Czechoslovak Specialist* article of September 1954 that says that there were 35 transports of the legion and that *USS President Grant* was the 35th and last. However, looking up the ship and its service on the internet it seems that there were only 12 transports and that the last was on the *Heffron*. So was the *President Grant* actually the 35th and last? And if not, what is the significance of the XXXV on the cancel. I have never assumed it referred to the 35th transport but I do not know what it refers to.



*Postal stationery card with the President Grant XXXV cancellation.*

An answer has been provided by **Mark Everiss**:

The USAT *President Grant* made two evacuations of Czechoslovak troops from Vladivostok in 1920. Her first, when she was the 23rd troopship to leave, departed on Thursday 22 April 1920 carrying 4,613 Czechoslovak Army officers and men bound for Trieste, Italy via Suez, Egypt, arrived at Trieste on Saturday 12 June 1920 (52-day passage).

She then returned for a second evacuation, when she was the 35th and final troopship to leave Vladivostok, departing on Thursday 24 August 1920 carrying 1,944 Czechoslovak Army officers and men again bound for Trieste, Italy via Suez, Egypt, arrived at Trieste on Wednesday 13 October 1920 (51-day passage).

Since USAT *President Grant* was the 35th and final troopship to leave Vladivostok carrying Czechoslovak soldiers this was indeed commemorated by the XXXV indicium in her handstamp. To gain passage on board this final evacuation a person had to qualify as entitled to do so and was issued with a travel pass by the Czechoslovak consulate in Vladivostok which itself remained open for several days after USAT *President Grant* had left on 24 August 1920. There are known forgeries of these travel passes but genuine ones should never be numbered above #1,944 and all should carry a BRITISH MANUFACTURE watermark in the paper.

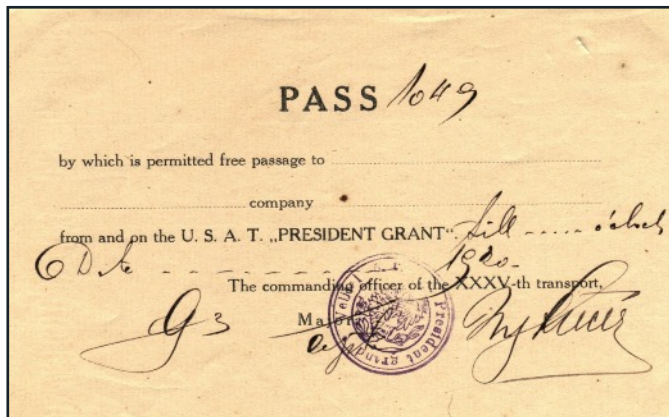


*USAT President Grant anchored in Vladivostok harbour during one of its evacuations of Czechoslovak military personnel in 1920.*

There was indeed a 36th transport to leave. This was the American ship USAT *Heffron*, that departed 2 September 1920, this vessel having made a previous evacuation of Czechoslovak military personnel from

Vladivostok on 13 August 1919. However, although the *Heffron* left nearly a week after the *President Grant*'s departure on 24 August 1920, should *Heffron* be considered the final transport to leave? I think most people would say yes, simply on the basis of dates, but I would tend to disagree for the following mitigating reasons:

- *President Grant* was the only transportation for which travel passes were issued by the Czechoslovak consulate in Vladivostok, suggesting some sort of finality;
- *President Grant* was the only evacuation vessel to use a 'commemorative' handstamp; and
- *Heffron* only carried a total of 1,171 Czechoslovak military evacuees on 2 September 1920, which suggests these were the 'hangers on' – that is, the consulate staff and guard detachments, medical orderlies etc. who would have remained behind in Vladivostok to conduct the 'general housekeeping' in closing the consulate.



*A travel pass issued by the Czechoslovak consulate in Vladivostok entitling the bearer to passage aboard USAT President Grant during the evacuations of Czechoslovak military personnel in 1920.*



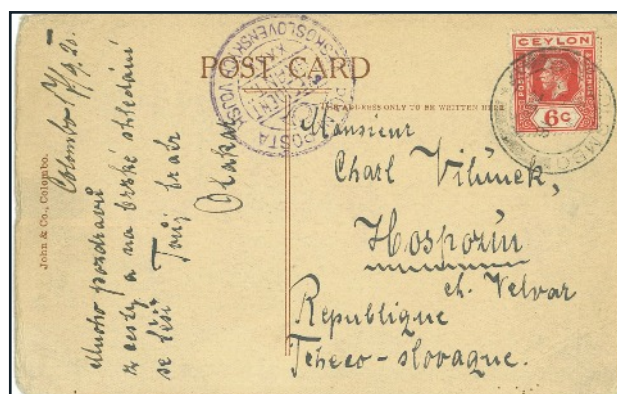
*The handstamp used by the President Grant during the 35th evacuation of Czechoslovak military personnel from Siberia in 1920.*

The following further detail has been provided by Mark Everiss:

Built in Belfast by Harland & Wolff the *Servian* was launched on 19 February 1903 for Wilson & Furness before being laid up in Musgrove Channel, Belfast prior to her purchase by the *Hamburg-Amerikanische Paketfahrt-Aktien-Gesellschaft* (HAPAG, the Hamburg-America Line) in 1906, when she was renamed *President Grant*. At 18,072 gross tons she had a length of 599 feet and a beam of 68.2 feet, one funnel, six masts and a top speed of 14 knots. She made her maiden voyage, Hamburg (Germany) – Boulogne (France) – Southampton (England) – New York (United States of America), on 14 September 1907. With the outbreak of WWI she took refuge in New York and was interned at Hoboken, New Jersey on 4 August 1914 before being seized by the authorities in 1917 and transferred to the United States Army. Thereafter, she operated as a transport ship and was deployed to Vladivostok, Siberia in 1920 to undertake the repatriation of Czechoslovak Army troops via Suez, Egypt to Trieste, Italy. With accommodation for 200 1st class, 150 2nd class, 704 3rd class and 2,300 4th class passengers, she made two successful voyages during these repatriation duties between January and November 1920 before being handed over to the United States Shipping Board in 1921, when she was laid up and renamed *President Buchanan*. Throughout 1923 she was rebuilt by the Newport News Shipbuilding Co., during which time her masts were reduced to four, and her accommodation reduced to 1,200 cabins. Relaunching in 1924 under the new name of *Republic* she was operated by United States Lines and sailed between New York (United States of America) – Plymouth (England) – Cherbourg (France) – Bremen (Germany) for the next 15–16 years. During WWII she served variously as a United States transport or hospital ship before being laid up again in 1946 and ultimately scrapped in 1951.

**M. W. Everiss  
FRPSL**

*A postcard posted in Colombo, Ceylon, on 18 September 1920, carrying the President Grant XXXV cancellation. The card presumably joined the vessel during its second trip from Vladivostok (August to October 1920). From the collection of Yvonne Wheatley.*



## The French and Italian Military Mission in Těšínsko

### Jan Kypast

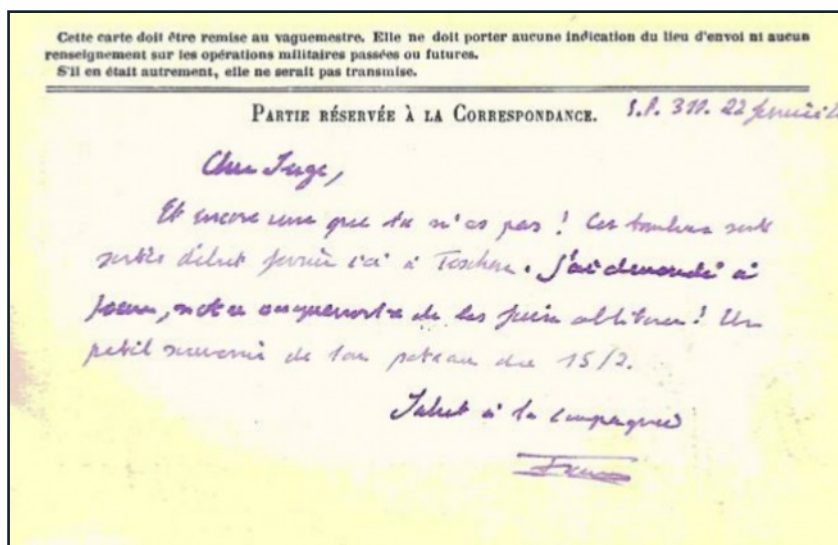
The dispute over Těšínsko between the newly formed states – Czechoslovakia and Poland – culminated in the ‘Seven Days War’ (24–30 January 1919). After the armistice was signed on 3 February 1919, the first foreign military units arrived in Těšín on 12 February 1919 with the aim of preventing further possible riots, which eventually did occur. From Upper Silesia came the 20th battalion of French chasseurs and a detachment of the 12th hussar regiment, and from Italy an infantry battalion of Alpini, intended primarily for guarding the mines. No postal-history was available during the preparation of *Monografie No. 5 – SO 1920* (by Oldřich Tovačovský, Vladimír Schödelbauer, and Jan Kypast), so it contains no mention of these military units.

### French troops

Most of the soldiers were housed in Karviná, at the Schloss Roy (Ráj) castle near Fryštát and in the surrounding area. The French unit used a single circle handstamp TRESOR ET POSTES \*311\* with the date, and a single line SECTEUR POSTAL \*311\*. There is also a one-line handstamp MISSION MILITAIRE FRANÇAISE. All these handstamps are evidenced on a rarely used postcard of the French field post, which is commemoratively franked with Czechoslovak plebiscite stamps: a 50 haler violet Hradčany and two newspaper stamps (2 haler and 30 haler) all overprinted SO 1920. The stamps were cancelled on 22 February 1920, shortly after their issue. There is interesting information from the text that is difficult to read (and translate), including ‘here in Těšín’ (Fig. 1 and 2).



Fig. 1 (right)  
& Fig. 2  
(below)



The text on the reverse appears to read:

‘Cher Serge, Et encore une que tu n’as pas! Ces timbres sont sortis début février ici à Teschen. J’ai demandé à xxxx, notre vaguemestre de les faire oblitérer! Un petit souvenir de ton patron du 15/2. Salut à la compagnie.’ Assuming this is, at least in part, correct it would read:

‘Dear Serge, And another one you don’t have! These stamps came out at the beginning of February here in Teschen. I asked xxxx, our postman to have them cancelled! A little souvenir of your boss of 15 February.

Greetings to the company.’

In the French Army, a ‘vaguemestre’ (originally a ‘wagon master’) was in charge of the postal service (Editor – with help from his brother, and his brother’s French in-laws)

French soldiers used civilian mail, franked mostly with Czechoslovak stamps with the SO 1920 overprint. Interesting usage is demonstrated by the following examples.



Figs. 3 & 4 (left and below): Postcard Freistadt (Österreichisch-Schlesien or Austrian-Silesia); Bad Darkau, dated in Karviná on 24 June 1920 and sent on 28 June 1920 to Paris; bilingual Czechoslovak postmark KARWIN \* KARWINA – b – Č.S.P.; postage 30 haler (perforated 25 haler and 5 haler with SO 1920 overprint).



Figs. 5 & 6 (above & right): A letter sent from Karviná on 6 August 20 to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Arrival stamp on the reverse LUXEMBOURG – GARE, 11.8.20 (poste restante) then sent on to METZ (France) with an arrival stamp 12.8.20 (again, poste restante), and issued to the recipient, the artist, on 1 SEP 1920 (line date stamp). The sender franked only 20 haler, which which he thought was the rate for a postcard until 31 July 1920. Note T (TAXE) – surcharge was eventually ignored.



All postal history documenting the presence of French troops in Těšín are sought after and rare. They ended up in France or Luxembourg and only sporadically returned intact to the Czechoslovak territory.

Participation in the mission was not without loss of life. On the night of 9 March 1920, a four-man patrol of French soldiers, housed at the town hall in Karviná, was sent to the Hohenegger Pit, where unknown persons had gathered. When the patrol passed the workers' association house in Karviná, there was gunfire. A French soldier named Delile was killed on the spot.

### Italian troops

The infantry battalion of Alpini numbering 750 men was quartered in sections of roughly fifty men each in the larger towns of Orlová, Karviná, and Těšín. Correspondence was transported by military couriers to the Italian field post No. 1, stationed in Udine. A rare example of this use is shown in Fig. 7. A postcard of the Italian field post, addressed to Parma, was sent from Karviná on 28 June 1920. The sender lists as his section *Batt.*

*Alpini Monte Baldo, 142. Comp. Teschen*, which can be translated as Monte Baldo Alpini Battalion, 142nd Company, Těšín. The arrival stamp of the Italian field post is dated 8 July 1920.

Italian soldiers mostly used the services of the civilian post office, as in Fig. 8. The postcard is dated in Orlová 24 March 1920, franked with a mixed franking of a perforated 20 haler Hradčany (POFIS 8D) and a perforated 5 haler with overprint SO 1920 (POFIS SO 3B). It was sent on 24 March 20 from the Main Post Office in Těšín 1 (the Polish sector), but the hand-stamp was placed outside the Czechoslovak stamps. They were cancelled only at the place of delivery with the stamp GUASTALLA/(Reggio Emilia) 6.4.1920.



Fig. 7



Figs. 8 & 9 (left and below)



The text of the Italian soldier on the postcard is interesting:

Orlová, 24.3.20

I was transferred from Orlová to the headquarters of the detachment. I send my heartfelt wishes for a happy Easter and loving greetings. Pietro

P.S. Just replace the address with Bielitz-Orlová

Easter Sunday was on 3 April in 1920.



Figs. 10 and 11 – a postcard of Bohumín (the square with the post office to the left of the church), franked with a 20 haler Hradčany stamp overprinted SO 1920, dated 2.VI.20 with the destination Torino (Turin).

All items sent by Italian soldiers are sought after and rare. They ended up in Italy and only a minimum returned to the Czechoslovak territory.

With this article, I have filled in a blank space in the plebiscite period in Těšín. Thanks are due to Ing. Dušan Cabák and Zdeněk Filípek for providing rare postal documents, and to my daughter Olga for providing the translation from Italian.

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## Unknown Postmark of Hungarian TPO 1939

Lubor Kunc

A study of Hungarian railway post offices 1871–1945 by Lutz Ihnken was published in 2015 in the form of a pdf file by the TPO & Seapost Society ([http://www.tpo-seapost.org.uk/tpo2/downloads/BP\\_Handbuch\\_I\\_2-1\\_Lutz\\_Ihnken.pdf](http://www.tpo-seapost.org.uk/tpo2/downloads/BP_Handbuch_I_2-1_Lutz_Ihnken.pdf)). This is a catalogue of all the known postmarks used by the Hungarian railway post offices operating in the Hungarian territory as defined at that particular time. An updated version can be seen as an Internet book at <https://www.yumpu.com/de/document/read/65173500/die-bahnpoststempel-der-ungarischen-post-1871-1945>.



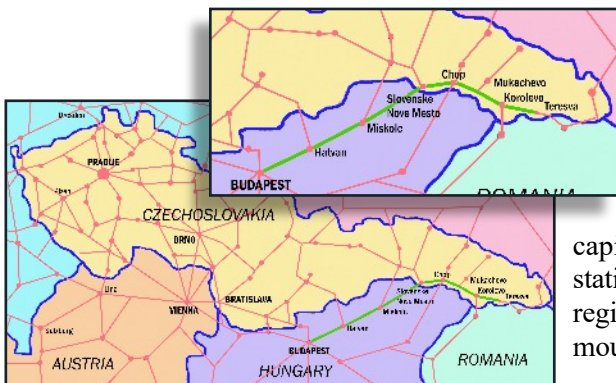
*Above left: the two types of postmark, as illustrated in Ihnken's catalogue. Note the gap between the crown and the horizontal bar on type G 3.04, which is absent on G 3.03. Centre: the postcard with the irregular postmark. Above right: a close-up of the postmark showing the MARYÁR error.*

My interest was attracted to the handstamp of TPO Number 39 used on the route Budapest–Taracköz/Teresva, probably in 1939–1943. The catalogued postmark should correspond with type G 3.03, but the example shown on the postcard illustrated here is clearly a type G 3.04.

In addition, this different postmark shows an error, which might explain its short time of use and its consequential absence from Mr Ihnken's great book. The postmark's text reads MARYÁR KIRÁLYI/MOZGÓPOSTA instead of the correct MAGYÁR. It's reasonable to believe that the postmark was used for just a short time in 1939 before being quickly replaced by the new one with the correct inscription.

The postmark is interesting for a Czech collector, because the Taracköz/Teresva destination was located in the Carpatho-Ukraine (Ruthenian) territory. The Budapest–Teresva train route (shown in green on the map left) was 400 km long, connecting the Hungarian capital with the East Carpathian region. Teresva was the final station before the train reached the Carpathian Mountains (the region known as Bukowina was the area situated beyond the mountains).

I am indebted to Václav Hromádka of Prague for his kind loan of the postcard used to illustrate this article.



*Above: railways in and around Czechoslovakia in 1930 – the Budapest–Teresva railway line is shown in green.*

## The Muses of Max Švabinský: Part four – Zuzana and Bright Memories

Miroslav Češelka



Apart from his first wife Eliška and the love of his life Anna, another woman played an important role in Max Švabinský's life. She was Zuzana, the daughter of Rudolf Vejrich and Anna Procházková, and later Max's adopted daughter. Zuzana was born on 15 March 1912 in Prague and lived to the age of ninety-two. She did not just inherit her mother Anna's physical beauty. Whoever reads her biography *Světla paměti* ('Bright Memories') will recognize in it the young, beautifully naive, daughter of a great man – later in life becoming wise, sensitive and (in her older age) experienced and devoted. Her most famous portrait (Fig. 1) is a lithograph from the spring of 1942 [1]:

He added a little more to the wavy hair falling back from under the wreath, and he really put something extra in my face – we both acknowledged that he had succeeded in making me prettier than I am ... when I saw the first prints. The smell of oleander lingered in them.

Fig. 1 – Zuzana with oleander wreath.

Hana Frankensteinová stated in her book:

Among the group of lithographs made in the 1940s, the one that stands out for its charm is Zuzana (the author's daughter) with an oleander wreath (1942), a kind of Muse in profile. [3]

As was Max's custom, the personification of Zuzana's face was carried over into the creation of his postage stamp designs.



Fig. 2 – POFIS 1032, issued in 1958 to mark the 40th anniversary of the first Czechoslovak postage stamp.

The 60 haler stamp shown in Fig. 2 was issued on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the issue of the first Czechoslovak stamp. Wearing a lime wreath, the Muse is holding a lime branch and looking at the image of Hradčany on the first Czechoslovak stamp, designed by Alfons Mucha. Because the figure is depicted in profile, her identification with Zuzana cannot be considered indisputable.

Max played around with gradually rotating the face of the Muse (Fig. 3, left). In the next picture (Fig. 3, right), Zuzana is already easier to identify. The long hair, the lime wreath, and the smile on her face, reveal the mystery of this figure.



Fig. 3 – comparison of portraits shown in POFIS 1032 (left) & 1041.

A series of three stamps issued for the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, included two stamps showing a face that bears a striking resemblance to Max's adopted daughter (fig. 4). On the 60 haler stamp, Equality of the Races, the artist has placed a girl of Asian appearance holding the hand of the smiling female figure of Peace. The 1 Kčs stamp depicts this figure frontally. In addition to a wreath and a linden branch, following the pattern of the previous year, Max also placed a white dove on her right hand. This dove is also the subject of an amusing story. When a pigeon-fancier from Chodov brought a beautiful exhibition dove with 'shoes and slippers' to be used as a model, a horrified Max refused it and asked for a simple dove instead [5].



Fig. 4 – POFIS 1041 & 1042, issued in 1959 to mark the 10th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (60 haler Equality of races, and 1 Kčs World Peace).

In her biographical novel, Zuzana states:

I was also a constant changing model - as captured, for example, by the two Human Rights Day stamps. Every now and then Mr Zavřel from the Ministry of Posts came, with the order for stamps, and more often the engraver Jindra Schmidt appeared with proofs of the engravings. Engrossed in their work together, they enjoyed friendly and sociable conversation. [1]



Fig. 5 – Zuzana and Max in 1955.

This personal testimony of Zuzana clearly confirms that she was the model of the characters on the stamps.

Zuzana was the artist's everyday helper. In her memoirs, she also recalls many frequently amusing stories and experiences while driving. Max did not have a driver's licence, and due to his advanced age Zuzana had to transport him regularly, even with his heavy lithographic stones. Their first vehicle was a Russian Pobeda; then the minister's gift of a luxurious Tatra 613; and finally an English Hillman. Her slight feminine figure caused her daily problems. Sometimes she couldn't reach the pedals in the car, and at other times she could hardly even be seen driving the car. Zuzana accompanied Max (fig. 5.) through much of his creative life. She was not only his closest companion and caregiver but also his artistic Muse. Max personified her face into a figure symbolizing Peace, on several postage stamps from the late fifties. Thus, he circulated the image of his beloved daughter to millions of people.

With 'Zuzana and Bright Memories', my efforts to do justice to the artistic Muses of one of the most important designers of twentieth-century Czechoslovak postage stamps, come to an end. I apologize for any mistakes I may have made. It has been an honour for me to read hundreds

of pages about the artist's life and work and to try to identify some of the characters depicted on the stamps. In honour of the memory of this artistic genius, Max, and on behalf of philatelists – many thanks.

I would like to thank Miloš Hauptman for his cooperation on this article: he knew Zuzana personally and provided me with valuable advice.

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*This article is the fifth and final in a series published by Merkur-Revue ([merkur-revue.eu](http://merkur-revue.eu)) and appears in this English translation by Tony Holdsworth with kind permission of the author. (The third article in the original series has not been published in Czechout as it concerns banknotes rather than philately.)*



## The History of Czechoslovakia 1918–1992

Yvonne Wheatley

This is an overview of the display given to members at our London meeting in November 2023. It demonstrates how the history of a country is reflected in its stamps and postal history.

### The Men Who Fought For & Achieved Independence

**Thomas G. Masaryk** devoted himself to achieving freedom for the Czechs and Slovaks from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He worked closely with **Dr Edvard Beneš** and the Slovak **Milan Rastislav Štefánik**, who died in a plane crash on 4 May 1919.

**April 1918:** Masaryk went to the USA to gain the support of President Wilson, who declared that on the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire the different nationalities should have their own countries.

**28 October 1918:** Independence declared for the Czech State.

**29 October 1918:** Slovakia reluctantly joined to form the Czecho-Slovak State.

### A Multinational State

According to the census of 1921, the Czechs accounted for 51.5% of the population; the Slovaks 14%; Germans 23.4%; Hungarians 5.6%; Ruthenians and Ukrainians 3.5%; and Poles and others 2.1%. The Czechs made a grave mistake ignoring minority ethnic groups and enforcing the Czech language (Fig. 1).

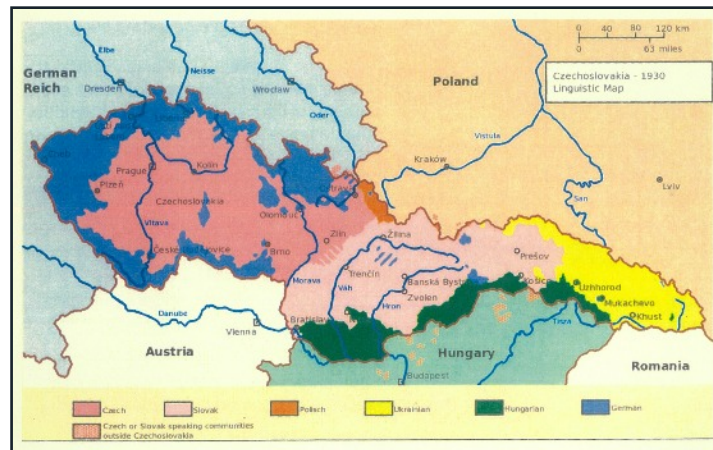


Fig. 1 – Czechoslovakia 1930 linguistic map (Wikimedia commons:  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Czechoslovakia\\_1930\\_linguistic\\_map\\_-\\_cz.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Czechoslovakia_1930_linguistic_map_-_cz.svg))

### East Silesia

**29 October 1919:** The Poles proclaimed the Teschen (Czech *Těšín* /Polish *Cieszyn*) Region (which is a major industrial region of Poland) as its territory and its army occupied Těšín, Fryštát and Frýdek (Fig. 2).

**23 January 1919:** The 2nd Infantry Regiment entered the disputed area under the command of Lt. Col. Šnejdárek. The Poles retreated, taking with them old Austrian cancels from four post offices (Fig. 3).



Fig. 2 (above left) – Local letter within Teschen 1, 26 January 1919 sent during the campaign by Lt. Col. Šnejdárek – Kraków provisional stamps. The new Polish letter rate from 7 January 1919 was 25 halerzy up to 20g and 15 halerzy for each 20g in excess. Express fee 60 halerzy. Franked with two 25 halerzy stamps (one inverted), a 6 halerzy stamp, and a 5 halerzy postage due stamp repurposed as a postage stamp: total paid, 61 halerzy. Postage should be 55 halerzy for a letter up to 60g. Therefore 6 halerzy paid in excess. The Express fee has not been paid and the label was crossed through.

Fig. 3 (above right) – Postcard from a soldier in a combined battalion, an infantry squadron with the Czechoslovak Lancers Regiment No. 11, with the rare provisional cancel of Hnojník (Czech)/Gnojnik (Polish) Poštovní úřad (Czech) and Urząd pocztowy (Polish) post office. Undated.

**13 February to 11 August 1920:** Stamps of Czechoslovakia and Poland in the disputed area overprinted S.O. (*Silésie Orientale* – East Silesia), where a plebiscite was due to take place. At a Peace Conference convened at Spa, the plebiscite was cancelled and the boundary drawn through Teschen along the Olsa River, splitting the town.



Fig. 4 (left) – Printed stationery card sent 28 February 1919 from Prague to Budapest with handstamp ‘No Service Return’. Message reads ‘since the export of drugs and chemicals to your country is not permitted your order will be delayed’.  
Fig. 5 (right) – 1 Koruna control stamp on a 100 Koruna Austro-Hungarian banknote, Hungarian side (1% of face value).

### Currency Reform

**26 February to 9 March 1919:** The frontiers were closed unexpectedly and foreign mail services were suspended. Alois Rašín, Minister of Finance, was concerned about Hungarian inflation – Austrian/Hungarian notes were used as the new currency was not issued until 10 April 1919. Bank notes within the country were recalled, and stamped with revenue stamps on the Hungarian face. The notes were returned, less a small percentage which paid the clerks carrying out the work (Figs. 4 and 5).

### Ruthenia

**8 May 1919:** Ruthenia was considered an unofficial part of Czechoslovakia, and the situation was regulated by the Trianon Peace Treaty on 4 June 1920. It was never contemplated that Ruthenia would form part of Czechoslovakia, as it used the Cyrillic alphabet, and the religion was Eastern Orthodox. The area wanted to join Czechoslovakia with the aim of autonomy. This, unfortunately, worked out differently.

**29 February 1920:** The National Assembly recognised the existence of a Czechoslovakian Union, and changed the spelling of Česko-Slovensko to Československo.

**12 December 1935:** President Masaryk resigned and Dr Edvard Beneš became the new President.

**14 September 1937:** President Masaryk died.



Fig. 7 – proof of German stamp from set of three prepared for use in the Rumburg area but not released. Inscribed ‘Sudeten-German Lowland liberated by Adolf Hitler on 22.9.1938’.

Fig. 6 – 30 September 1938: AŠ/ASCH 1 cancel on 50 haler stamp overprinted 1K 20 for use in Asch, with liberation cachet ‘We have borne the yolk, now we are free and remain free! Post Office Asch 1, on 21 September 1938’.

### Everything Changed in 1938: Adolf Hitler and the Munich Agreement

Czechoslovakia was a stable democracy until 1939. The strong German minority in the Sudeten area did not accept the Czech government, and Hitler wanted to add the area to the German Reich (Figs. 6 & 7).

**29 September 1939:** Hitler met with Heads of Government from Great Britain, Italy and France (Fig.8) in Munich. He forced the state representatives to sign the Munich Agreement in the early hours of the following morning. Although no Czechs were present at the meeting, they were forced to witness the signing. Hitler said ‘This is my last territorial demand’– Chamberlain flew back to England and, standing on the tarmac, waved the infamous piece of paper proclaiming ‘Peace for our time’.

The Munich Agreement also contained a declaration that the problems of the Polish and Hungarian minorities should be settled within three months.

Fig. 8 (below left) – Double postcard with four heads of government: Chamberlain, Great Britain; Daladier, France; Mussolini, Italy; and Hitler, Germany.

Fig. 9 (below right) – 5 February 1859: HAÏDA cancel last used in 1864 when the spelling was changed to HAIDA.

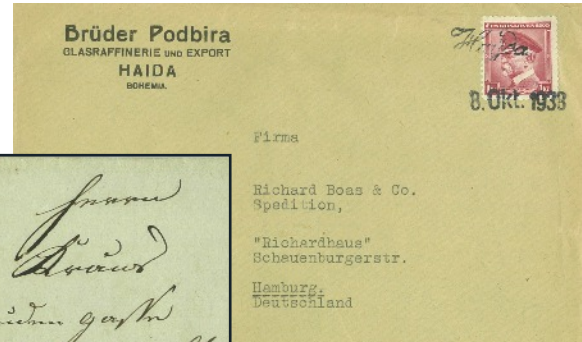
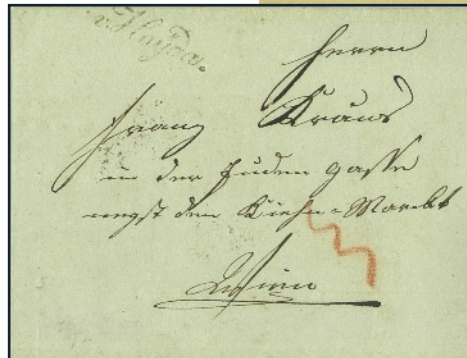


Fig. 10 (above) – 8 October 1938: HAÏDA cancel pressed into emergency use for short period at the beginning of October 1938.

**30 September 1938:** Poland issued an ultimatum announcing territorial claims on the Teschen region (Polish Zaolzie). Prague acceded.

**1–10 September 1938:** Cession of Sudetenland completed. 300,000 Czechs were expelled from the area. The Czech postal clerks took their handstamps and, as Germany had made no preparation, provisional handstamps were in use for a short period (Figs. 9 and 10).



Fig. 11 – 6 October 1938: Slovak Post sought designs to commemorate the autonomy agreement. Overprinted trial stamps were produced by M. Brzonsky but were not issued.

**Events following the Munich Agreement**

**5 October 1938:** President Beneš resigned and two weeks later went into exile in England.

**6 October 1938:** Agreement reached to grant Slovakia and Ruthenia autonomy (Fig. 11).

**2–11 October 1938:** Zaolzie (the Teschen area) was ‘liberated’ by Poland (Fig 12).

**2 November 1938:** Czechoslovakia was forced to hand over parts of southern Slovakia (Fig. 13), which included Košice (Hungarian *Kassa*), and southern Ruthenia (Fig. 14) with the three main towns, Ungvar/Užhorod, Munkács/Mukačevo and Beregszasz/Berehovo. This is known as the First Vienna Award (Fig. 15).

**30 November 1938:** Dr Emil Hácha elected President.

**22 November 1938:** A federal state is created with autonomous parliaments for Slovakia and Ruthenia (now renamed Carpatho-Ukraine). Monsignor Jozef Tiso was elected as Prime Minister of Slovakia.



Fig. 12 (above) – 12 April 1939: flown cover to India via Athens where it was censored. Stamps of Poland cancelled FRYSZTAT.



Fig. 14 (left) – 19 November 1939: VISSZATÉRT handstamp used for BEREGSZASZ.



Fig. 13 (above left) – 11 November 1938: VISSZATÉRT (‘returned’) handstamp with town name used to cancel stamps for the major towns. Steel datestamp for KASSA applied alongside. Postmark prepared in advance of occupation. Internal rate for internal letter, Kassa to Kecskemét up to 20g, 20 filler. Overfranked by 2 filler.

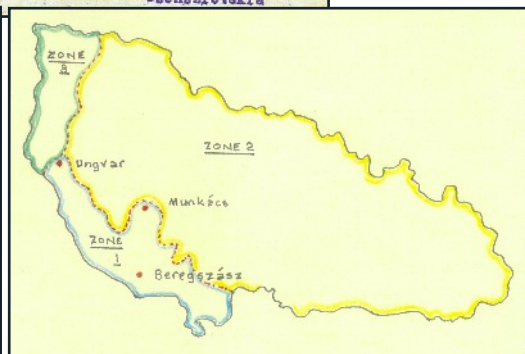


Fig. 15 (above right) – Map showing the three zones of Carpatho-Ukraine transferred to Hungary.

**4 December 1938:** Germany arranged a vote to ratify the annexation of the Sudeten Districts but as the Czech population had been expelled from the area it was a foregone conclusion (Figs.16 and 17).



Fig. 16 (above left) – 1 December 1938 cover for the flight of Graf Zeppelin II LZ 130 on 2 December 1938, flying over Sudetenland where mail was dropped over Reichenberg. Backstamp (top right) – ‘On 4 December Your “Yes” for the Fuhrer’(the date 2.12.38 is because this is the date of the flight itself).

Fig. 17 (lower right) – One of two stamps issued 2 December to mark the incorporation of the Sudeten-German area into the Reich.

### Independence for Slovakia

**1 January 1939:** Parliament of the autonomous Czech-Slovakian province convened.

**14 March 1939:** Slovakia declared independence with Hitler’s encouragement. Slovakia had always wanted to be an independent state. Father Andrej Hlinka, Chairman of the Slovak People’s Party, worked hard to achieve it, and died on 16 August 1938. Tiso succeeded him as party leader and became the first President of the Slovak Republic. In reality, it was a puppet state of Germany (Figs.18–21).



Above – Two stamps were prepared with a portrait of Father Hlinka showing the separation of the states ČESKO-SLOVENSKO and SLOVENSKÁ POŠTA (Fig. 18) but events prevented its release. The printing was done before Slovakia became independent. After independence the stock was overprinted **SLOVENSKÝ ŠTÁT** (Slovak State) and released on 1 April 1939 (Figs. 19 & 20). The design was modified by moving Slovenská Pošta and replacing it with the currency Halierov (Fig. 21).

### Independence for Carpatho-Ukraine

**14 March 1939:** Independence declared for Carpatho-Ukraine.

**15 March 1939:** First session of parliament held in the capital, Chust, after being delayed from 2 March 1939. Hungarian troops entered the region having decided the area should be under Hungarian administration – Zone 2 in Fig. 14 (Fig. 22).



Fig. 22 (far left) – Cover from Nagyberezná with rubber handstamp 118 to Budapest, 6 April 1939. Franked with 1 Kč stamp, uncanceled because Czechoslovak stamps were allowed only until 19 November 1938. Internal letter rate up to 20g – 20 filler and 20 filler postage due stamp attached but no penalty. Late use of rubber hand stamp as it was replaced by a metal one on 27 March 1939.

Fig. 23 (left) – Stamp with portrait of President Masaryk reissued 23 April 1939 to show the Federal nature of the country with Česko-Slovensko and 1K (equal to the Czech Koruna and Slovak Koruna).

### Protectorate of Bohemia & Moravia

**14 March 1939:** Hácha, the newly appointed President of the rump of Czechoslovakia, was summoned to Berlin and told Prague would be destroyed from the air unless he surrendered the remaining Czech territories to Germany.

**15 March 1939:** German troops crossed the border and the Protectorate of Bohemia & Moravia was established. Hitler gained the prize of the Škoda armaments works. Occupation by Germany was complete (Fig. 23 and 24).

**23 March 1939:** Hungarian troops invaded eastern Slovakia after Slovakia refused the demands of Hungary to hand over Zone 3 (see Fig. 14).



Fig. 24 – Postcard from Mähr. Schönberg/Šumperk in Moravia with swastika banners.



Fig. 25 (above) – 19 April 1941: registered cover Teschen to Prague. Standard German datestamp TESCHEN OBERSCHLES (Upper Silesia). Letter rate 20–250g, 24 pfennig – registration 30 pfennig.

Figs. 26 & 27 (right) – Cover from Prešov (9 February 1942) to Post Box 506, Lisbon, Portugal. Censor 75 handstamp in Slovakia. Cenzurovane label tied Cenzor 55. Backstamp Lisbon 19.2.1942. Onward transmission to London. Opened by examiner 1121 whose label covers the Cenzurovane label. One stamp carefully removed, probably by the censor in Slovakia looking for a hidden message.

**1 September 1939:** Germany invaded Poland, and the 36 offices taken over by Poland from Czechoslovakia in October 1938 were taken by Germany. (Fig. 25)



**1940:** Thomas Cook & Son Ltd was authorized by the British Government to act as intermediary for the transmission of private letters to and from enemy territory, through the undercover address Post Box 506 Lisbon (Fig. 26 and 27).

**7 July 1941:** The Czechoslovak Government in Exile moved from France to London.

**21 July 1941:** The Czechoslovak Government in Exile was recognized as the legitimate government of Czechoslovakia (Fig 28).



Fig. 28 – President Benes in his London office.

### Reinhard Heydrich

**27 September 1941:** Reinhard Heydrich was appointed Acting *Reichsprotektor* (governor) of Bohemia & Moravia in place of Konstantin von Neurath, who Hitler regarded as not tough enough on the population, and who was put on ‘garden leave’. Hácha had no powers and Heydrich ran the Protectorate.

**November 1941:** Heydrich established Terezín/Theresienstadt as a Jewish ghetto. He was commissioned with the ‘final solution to the Jewish question’. Many of the inhabitants died in the ghetto or were transported to the extermination camps, including Auschwitz (Figs. 29–32).



Fig. 31 (right) – Circular letter to a relative of an inmate living in Prague informing them that they could collect a Permit label to use to send a parcel to their relative by attaching the label.

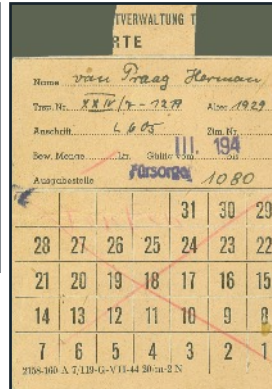
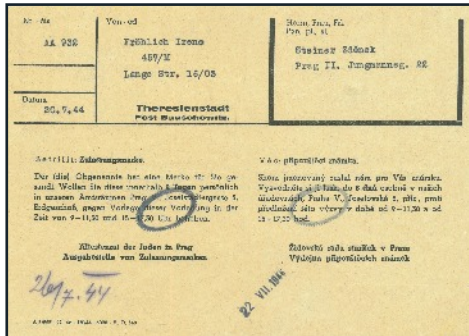


Fig. 29 (above left) – 50 Kronen note designed by inmates to pay for their labour in the camp.

Fig. 30 (above) – Food ration coupons. The fact that the dates are crossed through tells its own story.

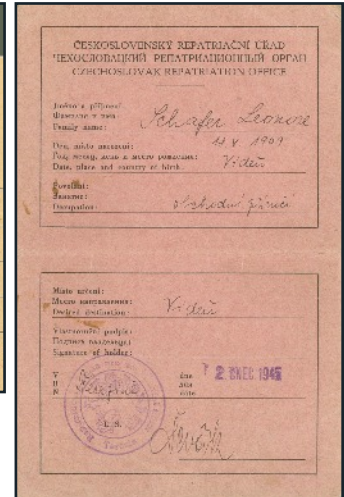


Fig. 32 (above) – 2 July 1945: Repatriation Certificate for Schafer Leonore.

**27 May 1942:** Jozef Gabčík and Jan Kubiš, trained in Britain to jump with parachutes, carried out a planned assassination on Heydrich. Heydrich was wounded with a hand grenade thrown at his official car in Prague.

**4 June 1942:** Heydrich died from his injuries and reprisals followed.

**9 June 1942:** German forces carried out the Lidice massacre. This was followed by the murder of the inhabitants of the Czech village of Ležáky.

### Liberation

Most of Czechoslovakia was liberated by the Soviet Red Army, sealing its fate as a satellite state of the Soviet Union. The rest of the country was liberated by the US Army.

**1944:** Slovakia was the first area to be liberated (Fig. 33).



Fig. 33 (left) – Hungarian stationery with Chust overprint by the provisional Czechoslovak authority. Political events prevented the card being used.

Fig 34 (right) – Cover from Olomouc to Boskovice 25 May 1945, at internal letter rate of 1 K 20 plus 3 K registration, using the liberation issue of Olomouc. A printing set-up error occurred on the plate with the stamp in position 21 showing 120+120 instead of 420+420 haler. A hole was punched though these stamps, before leaving the printer, so they could not be used. Handstamp ‘Liberation of Olomouc by Red Army 8.5.1939’.

**27 September 1944:** Soviet Red Army started the liberation of Carpatho-Ukraine.

**6 May 1945:** Pilsen was liberated by the US Army.

**9 May 1945:** Prague was liberated by the Soviet Red Army, and the rest of Bohemia and Moravia was liberated (Fig. 34). All of the 1937 borders were restored to Czechoslovakia.



Fig. 35 (left) – registered cover from Berehovo to Prague December 1947 at foreign letter rate of 1.30 roubles. Transit date stamp on reverse for letters sent abroad (Fig. 36, right). These letters were handled by PO of Uzhorod. Handstamp registration cachet for international mail and name of post office. Registration number usually filled in manually. Additional marking in French for international use.



Fig. 37 (below) – banknote control stamp 'K' added to 100 Ks Slovakian Koruna note to authorize use in Czechoslovakia after 1 November 1945. Perfin Specimen.

**29 June 1945:** Czechoslovakia ceded the Carpatho-Ukraine lands to the Soviet Union (Figs. 35 and 36) and they were absorbed into the Ukraineian SSR.

**1945:** After liberation, the territories were returned to the Czechoslovak Republic under the Presidential Decree (VMP No. 29). The currencies had to achieve parity (Fig. 37).

**10–16 May 1945:** President Beneš and the Czechoslovak government returned to Prague.

**19 June 1946:** The National Assembly unanimously re-elected Beneš as president of the republic.

**2 July 1946:** President Beneš appointed Klement Gottwald, leader of the communist party, Prime Minister.



Fig. 38 (left) – 30 July 1940 cover addressed to Jan Masaryk, in London from French Guiana.

On Gottwald's instructions, Beneš appointed a new National Assembly; Jan Masaryk, son of Tomáš Masaryk, was the only member to retain his position in the National Assembly.

**10 March 1948:** Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk died in suspicious circumstances, after falling from a window of his apartment in the foreign office building (Fig. 38).

**2 June 1948:** President Beneš resigned after refusing to sign a new constitution approved by the reorganized National Assembly that would, in effect, turn the country communist.

**14 June 1948:** Klement Gottwald was elected President – thus the Czechoslovak Communist Party took power. Antonín Zápotocký, a trade union leader, became the new Prime Minister.

**14 March 1953:** Klement Gottwald died and Antonín Zápotocký was elected President on 21 March.



## Currency Reform

**1 June 1953:** When the Communist Party came to power it began to focus on heavy industry, especially armament production, to the detriment of agriculture. Prices, especially of food, increased and inflation stood at 28%. The Party implemented a monetary reform policy and fifty old Koruna were equal to one new Koruna (Figs. 39 and 40).

Figs. 39 & 40 – 4 June 1953 cover from Jablonec nad Nisou to Cologne British Zone. Foreign letter rate increased from 5 Kč for up to 20g, to 50 Kč.



## Prague Spring of 1968

**13 November 1957:** President Zápotocký died and Antonín Novotný was elected President on 19 November.

**5 January 1968:** Novotný was forced to step down as First Secretary, and Alexander Dubček, a Slovak and a reformist, was appointed in his place.

**4 March 1968:** Czechoslovakia attempted to introduce liberalizing reforms and end censorship; the Prague Spring of 1968 began (Fig. 41).

**22 March 1968:** Antonín Novotný resigned as President, and Ludvík Svoboda was elected in his place on 30 March.

**21 August 1968:** Armed forces of Warsaw Pact countries occupied Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovak leaders were kidnapped and taken to Moscow, where they were forced to sign an act of submission, called the Moscow Protocol. The reforms carried out during the Prague Spring were quashed.

**17 April 1969:** Dubček was removed from office and replaced by Gustáv Husák.

**28 May 1975:** Ludvík Svoboda was forced to retire and Gustáv Husák became President the next day.



Fig. 41 (above left) – 30 September 1968: Czechoslovak Resistance handstamp ‘We stand at your side’. Linden leaf with names of four leaders: Svoboda, President of Czechoslovakia; Dubček, First Secretary of the Communist Party; Černík, Prime Minister and Smrkovský, Chairman of the National Assembly.

Fig. 42 (above right) – 30 January 1990: machine cancel with the logo of the Civic Forum.

### Velvet Revolution

**10 November 1989:** President Gustáv Husák resigned.

**17 November 1989:** An officially approved commemorative march of Prague students, to mark the 50th Anniversary of the German crackdown on Czech Universities in 1939, was brutally attacked by riot police.

**November to December 1989:** Mass protests followed, the Civic Forum (*Občanské fórum* – OF) criticized the Republic’s failure to honour human and civil rights contained in the Czechoslovak Constitution (Fig. 42).

**29 December 1989:** A new government was formed with a non-communist majority; Václav Havel was elected President, and Alexander Dubček President of the National Assembly.

**24 April 1990:** The name of the state was changed from ‘Czechoslovak Socialist Republic’ to ‘Czech and Slovak Federal Republic’.

**23 July 1992:** The citizen’s movements in both parts of the country split, and Slovakia wanted independence. The Czech and Slovak Prime Ministers agreed to divide the country peacefully on 31 December 1992.

**1 January 1993:** The country separated; Václav Havel was elected President of the Czech Republic, and Michal Kováč was elected President of the Slovak Republic.

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I am also indebted to several CPSGB Monographs, Wikipedia, and material being prepared by Rex Dixon for a society zoom presentation on 28 August 2024, on The Dismemberment of Czechoslovakia 1938/1939.





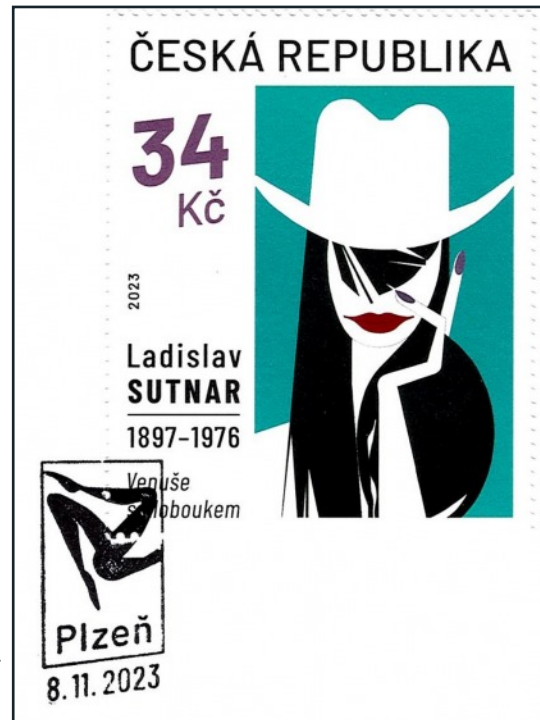
## New Issues – Czech Republic Lindy Bosworth

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

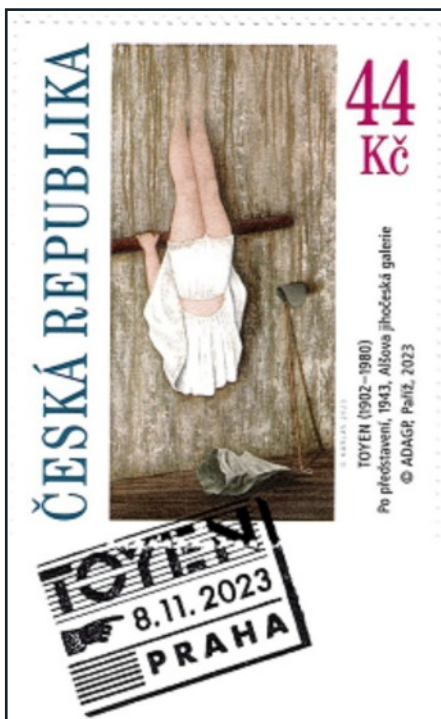
8 November 2023

### Works of Art on Postage Stamps: Ladislav Sutnar (POFIS 1237) and Toyen (POFIS 1238)

Ladislav Sutnar (1897–1976) was born in Plzeň, and was a graphic designer, typographer, avant-garde artist and an early leader in the field of applied graphics. After studying painting at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design, Prague, architecture at Charles University, and mathematics at Czech Technical University, he taught at the State School of Graphic Arts from 1923 until 1936. During these years he contributed to exhibition, book, magazine, porcelain and textile designs and was head of publication design for a Prague publisher. At Expo Barcelona in 1929, Sutnar was awarded a gold medal for his exhibition design. He went to New York to work on designs for the Czechoslovak contribution to the New York World Fair in 1939. With the onset of WWII, and subsequent political change in Czechoslovakia, he remained in the United States until his death. Between 1941 and 1960 he was the art director for a company producing trade and manufacturing catalogues, but he also pursued his own work as an artist privately. The stamp (right) illustrates one of his designs from a series entitled *Venus*. The design is typical of Sutnar's work, with bold colours and simple design but showing movement. In 2014, the Faculty of Design and Art of the University of West Bohemia, Plzeň, was named after him.



*Sutnar's 'Venus with a hat' – with the special first day cancel.*



*Toyen's 'After the show' – with the special first day cancel.*

Marie Čermínová (1902–1980) adopted the professional pseudonym Toyen in 1923, possibly derived from the French *citoyen* or a play on the Czech expression *to je on*, which is a gender neutral mononym. Toyen studied decorative arts at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design, Prague. Here she met fellow art and poetry student Jindřich Štyrský (1899–1942), working closely with him until his death. They were both members of the avant-garde Devětsil group from 1923 and participated in their exhibitions. The years 1920 to 1928 were spent in Paris, where the pair formed an alternative movement to Surrealism and Abstractionism, which they called Artificialism. Returning to Prague in 1934, they founded (with fellow artists, writers, musicians and thinkers) the Czech Surrealist Group. After the difficult war years, Toyen relocated permanently to Paris in 1947 to evade the Communist regime. Toyen's



*'Mirage' – illustration from the First Day Cover.*

gender fluidity led her to focus on themes of gender, politics, and eroticism in art. *Asteroid 4691 – Toyen* was named in her memory.

20 January 2024

### The Tradition of Czech Stamp Design: Zdeněk Mězl – NVI ‘B’ (POFIS 1239)



Zdeněk Mězl (1934–2016) was a graphic artist and illustrator. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague and became interested in woodcut printing techniques. During his career he illustrated more than one hundred books, with varying themes from tales of Ancient Greece to modern topics. His work has been exhibited in Europe, Japan and the Republic of South Africa, gaining international awards including the accolade ‘one of the best wood engravers of the 20th century’. The stamp with his portrait shows a detail from his illustrations of Greek myths. A stamp booklet was

issued with eight stamps and 2 × 2 different labels: the Czech water nymph Rusalka, and ancient warriors. Mězl described himself as a ‘critical realist’. He designed three postage stamps – POFIS 0173, 0224 and 0247.



Booklet cover

### Personalities: Josef Suk (POFIS 1240)

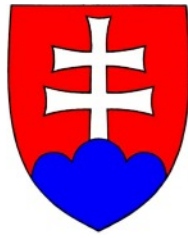
The stamp portrays the composer, violinist, and teacher Josef Suk (1874–1935), with notation from his composition *Love Song* for violin and piano. Suk was a fine violinist, and a student and friend of Dvořák, whose daughter he married in 1898. He began composing at an early age and in 1922 became professor of composition at the Prague Conservatoire, becoming its director four years later. Much of his music was influenced by his personal experiences: his wife died in 1905, a year after the death of Dvořák. Suk continued playing with the world-famous Bohemian String Quartet (which he co-founded at the age of 17) until his death.



### The Biathlon World Championships 2024 in Nové Město na Moravě – NVI ‘E’ (POFIS 1241 & 1242)

The two stamps are issued in se-tenant pairs, with a blue target representing a female athlete, and a green target for a male athlete. The event was held from 7 to 18 February 2024. The Biathlon World Championships have been held annually since 1958 at various suitable venues to accommodate team and individual shooting, and cross-country skiing events. Until 1989, the championships were just for men, but from 1984 to 1989 a parallel event was held for women biathletes. Today the event includes both genders, with mixed events. The number of events has also increased over the years. This year’s venue was hosted by the historic town of Nové Město, a winter sports centre in the Křižanov Highland area of Moravia.





## New Issues – Slovak Republic Lindy Bosworth

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

26 October 2023

### Art on Stamps: The Gothic Road – Gothic Church Art (POFIS 805 & 806)



The two stamps were issued as a 2 × 2 sheetlet, depicting works of art from two small Gothic churches in villages in the Banská Bystrica region. From archaeological evidence, metals and other ores (including iron, magnesite, and mercury) were found and worked in the area from ancient times. Today most ores are no longer found in sufficient quantity for mining to be commercially viable.

The stamp depicting a detail of the unusual seated figure of God with three faces (top left), representing the Holy Trinity, is a wall painting from the triumphal arch in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Rákoš, near Jelšava. The church, which has a horseshoe-shaped apse and slit Romanesque windows, was built in the late 13th century. The wall paintings from the late 14th to early 15th centuries were the gift of the wealthy local land-owning Bubek family. On the outside southern wall of the church there are painted fragments of the Madonna and Child, St Christopher and a kneeling St Rufus, the patron saint of stone masons and miners.

The church of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, Chyžné, near Jelšava, was also built in the late 13th century with a single nave, but has a square presbytery and attached sacristy. The wall murals date from the later 14th century. In 1508 a rare carved wing altar from the workshop of Master Paul of Levoča adorned the church. The central painting is the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary with other paintings of the Visitation, the Nativity, and the Adoration of the Kings. The

final painting is the subject of the stamp (above): St George killing the Dragon. Restoration work to preserve and maintain these important works of art has been on-going since 1991 at both churches.

16 November 2023

### Christmas Mail 2023 (POFIS 807)

The *Christmas Mail to Baby Jesus* has become a traditional project organized by Slovenská pošta since 1999 for children to write their secret wishes and greetings to Baby Jesus using a special address. Letters are received from all over the world, and each one receives a reply from Baby Jesus with a small gift in the envelope. A jury appointed by Slovenská pošta chooses the children's drawings from the previous year as the topic for the current year's stamp, cancel, and first day cover cachet. Most Slovak primary schools take part in the competition. This year there are five different commemorative cancels with the theme 'Christmas tree decorations', and another (showing a sleigh) for the first day of issue.



**Christmas 2023: Slovak Folk Woodcarving – NVI T2 50g (POFIS 808; Stamp Booklet 105 ZZ 808/23; Postal card 036 CP 808/23)**

Folk woodcarving has a long tradition in Slovakia, especially for marking festive occasions. During the 18th and 19th centuries, portable nativity scenes with wooden figures accompanied carol singers travelling from village to village at Christmas. The stamp has three figures, representing Mary, Joseph, and the Infant Jesus, carved by Štefan Siváň (1906–1995), a wheelwright from the village of Babin. He began working with wood at an early age, making small figures and household items using traditional motifs in the style typical of the Orava region. The three figures are held in the Orava Gallery in Dolný Kubín.

**5 December 2023**



**Postage Stamp Day: Jozef Baláž (POFIS 809)**



Jozef Baláž (1923–2006) was a painter, graphic artist, illustrator, and designer of some 150 postage stamps for Czechoslovakia, and later Slovakia. His first three designs to be issued were for Czechoslovakia in 1957, commemorating the Tatra National Park. His designs covered many different subjects and styles. The stamp to commemorate his work has his portrait with a montage of figures used on his stamp designs to the left, and a tab to the right showing a cycling postman, which was used as part of the Slovak Postage Day issue in 1998. Baláž received many awards for his work, both national and international, and was the first chairman of the Postage Stamp Design Commission.

**12 January 2024**

**Personalities: Ján Chrysostom Korec and Jozef Tomka (POFIS 810)**

The stamp has a portrait of each in their clerical dress. Ján Chrysostom Korec (1924–2015) was born in the village of Bošany and entered the Jesuit Order in 1939. With the closure of religious orders and monasteries in 1950, he was interned briefly and returned to civilian life. He was secretly ordained a bishop but could not openly practise his faith. After his arrest in 1960 he was sentenced to 12 years in prison, but he was released in 1968 with his health broken. As the state did not authorize his work as a pastor, he became a labourer (often referred to as the *Bishop in Overalls*). After the political changes of 1989 he was appointed Bishop of Nitra, then consistory cardinal. He wrote several books, and received a number of honorary doctorates and state awards. He died in Nitra and was buried there in St Emmeram's Cathedral. Jozef Tomka (1924–2021) entered the seminary in 1943, studying in Bratislava, but was sent to Rome in 1945 to continue studying. After the political changes



of 1948 he could not return to Slovakia. He held various posts in Rome, and also continued studying. From 1960 to 1963 he was involved with building the Slovak Institute of Ss Cyril and Methodius in Rome. Further appointments included serving on the Vatican Council, general secretary to the Synod of Bishops, and duties as a cardinal. He died in Rome and is buried in the Cathedral of St Elizabeth, Košice.

26 January 2024

200th Anniversary of *Slávy dcera* – NVI T2 500g (POFIS 811)



*Slávy dcera*, one of the pioneering poetic works of Czech and Slovak literature, was written by Ján Kollár (1793–1852). He was a Lutheran pastor, professor of Slavonic archaeology at Vienna University from 1848, a writer, and an advocate for Pan-Slavism. *Slávy dcera* (*Daughter of Sláva*) is a lyrical, epic poem in five sections, with 615 sonnets. The first section of love poems is written to Mina, who is depicted as the ideal Slavic maid, daughter of the goddess Sláva. In the following sections, journeys through Slavic lands are described with the author's sadness at their loss to other countries, his disillusion on returning to his impoverished homeland, and his fear for the future of Slovaks. Finally, Mina changes into a fairy and takes the author to Slavic heaven. The poem was written initially in the Czech language, so is not easily accessible to a wide audience. At the time a start was being made towards Czech becoming the language of the Czech lands, while Slovak was being established as a written, recognized language.

**Articles elsewhere**  
**Roger Morrell**

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**Autumn 2023 Vol. 85, No. 3, Whole Number 673**

- Lawrence, F., Scout stamps bring extraordinary prices.
- Buckner, J., Essential literature for collectors of Czechoslovak philately.
- Duchoň, T., Karel Hujer: postcards from the realm of stars.

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**No. 40, Autumn 2023 (in Dutch)**

- Kareš, J., Malovík, V., Hauzrvan, M., Newspaper stamps 'Falcon in Flight' – part I.
- van Dooremalen, H., Post offices in the Bohemian lands. (The office in Redhoscht/Ředhošť.)
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- Morrell, R., Meeting report: ‘A Hungarian Rhapsody’ at the Royal Philatelic Society London.  
 Lendon, M., The transition to Romanian Postal Services in Arad – 1918–22.  
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 Anon, The post offices of the Hungarian Bolshevik Army, 1919.

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- Kohalmi, Cs.L., The colorful background of the local issues of Medimurje and Prekmurje.  
 Burlingame, M.J., A survey of auction sale prices for the 1871–74 Franz Josef engraved issue.

**Rundbrief** (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Feldpost Österreich-Ungarn, Austria)**No. 149, 2023/3 (in German)**

- Graf, O., Albania – five stories concerning the Austrian fieldpost.  
 Egger, M., From Stanley to Emma – on the story of the English occupation troops in Imst, 1918–1919.  
 Bliersbach, A., The botanist Dr. Hermann-Josef Cammerloher, 1885–1940. (Correspondence as a POW in Russia and Serbia in WWI.)  
 Wirtl, W., The enemy forces in WWI – China.  
 Kalis, K., The aeroplane cachet of Przemyśl.  
 Abfalter, G., From the POW camp Spratzern (in lower Austria).  
 Robisch, H., Letters tell stories. (Card from member of the K.u.k. Fliegerkompagnie Nr 4.)  
 Robisch, H., If you think there's nothing left, a letter comes along from somewhere... (A study of parcel forms and money orders to/from the Austro-Hungarian forces in WWI.)  
 Robisch, H., The field post 1914–1918, precursors to the general field post issues. (Money letters, orders and postcards from the early days of the war.)  
 Robisch, H., POWs in Portuguese India.  
 Bliersbach, A., Money letters from Tientsin.

**Filatelie** (POFIS, Czechoslovakia)**No. 10 /23, October 2023**

- Beneš, F., 100 Years Since the introduction of intaglio printing for our stamp production.  
 Příkazský, M., Plate numbers of the second printing of Protectorate service stamps.  
 Anon, Podyji National Park (POFIS A1222) – An interview with the designers – L. & J. Knotkovi.  
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**No. 11 /23, November 2023**

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 Kunc, L., Czechoslovak soldiers 1939–1945 (part 20).  
 Kratochvíl, J., Changes to Offices of the Czech Post.  
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**No. 12 /23, December 2023**

- Schenk F., Russian Post Offices in China.  
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 Kunc, L., Czechoslovak soldiers 1989–1945 (part 21).  
 Vrba, M., Czechoslovakia: Revolutionary overprints 1918. (POFIS 2024 booklet 56-page supplement.)

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**The front cover of a Postbüchel from 1912 (see page 5).**

*(A large version of this illustration is on display at the Postal Museum in Prague, with a hole where the face should be so that budding posties can have their picture taken!)*