CZECHOUT

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VOLUME 43/4 DECEMBER 2025 WHOLE NUMBER 201

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From the Editor

Christmas is coming! So if you're struggling to think of a gift for your nearest and dearest philatelists – don't forget to take a look at the Society's revamped Auction and Market pages on the website (www.cpsgb.org).

Wishing everyone a happy and successful holiday season, and looking forward to another packed programme in 2026. **Tony Holdsworth**

Stop Press - News from the Auctioneer

In brief – a successful auction with many bidders, and total sales exceeding £10,000. The new format with over 500 images on the website was appreciated by members. Most popular were First Republic issues and WWII Forces Mail. Nearly 70% of lots in the main auction were sold reflecting the quality of the material on offer. The highest selling lot went for over £3,700 – many lots had bids way above the estimates, with bids from around the world. Selling prices can be seen on the website. The next auction is planned for May next year, and consignments are welcome from now onwards! **Terry Hancock**

Erratum

The Library news on page 2 of the September *Czechout* incorrectly translated the recommended book *Československé poštovní známky a jejich padělky* as being *by* someone called Padelky! In fact, the translation should have been 'Czechoslovak Postage Stamps and Their Counterfeits', and the book is by Jan Karásek. Entirely my fault (rather than the librarian's) – I must have been in a hurry! – and thanks to Wojciech Kierstan for pointing it out. **Tony Holdsworth**

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News & Notices

New Member

CPSGB extends a very warm welcome to **Mr Richard Jagielski**, from Haworth in West Yorkshire.

Congratulations

At the March 2025 Edmonton Spring National Show, **Steven Friedenthal**'s exhibit 'Czechoslovakia Krag Machine Advertising Cancels: The First Republic Period' was awarded a large gold medal and the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada's Award for Treatment.

At the Great American Stamp Show in August, **Karl Winklemann**'s entry 'The Dublin Censor Office 1939–1945' won a Gold Medal. It was also one of the most popular *prix d'honneur* entries.

The July/August 2025 copy of *The London Philatelist* contained a 16-page article by Nick Coverdale – 'The Stein Family Archive: Sudetenland 1938 to the UK, and to India and Back'. Attendees at the Central European Societies meeting have had the privilege of viewing the material contained in the article.

Slovenská pošta Update

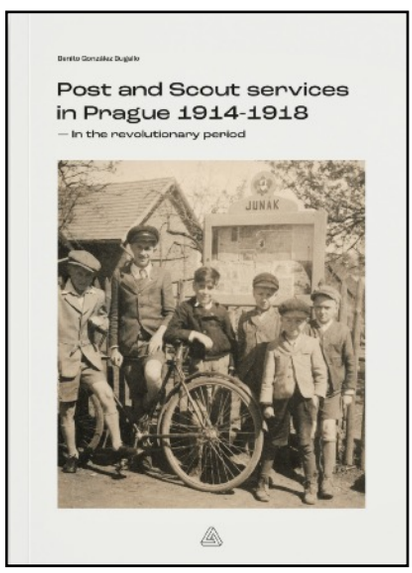
Our member **Alan Mann** has enquired whether anyone knew why Slovenská pošta had cancelled all but one of the planned six issues due to be released between 31 October 2025 and the end of the year. Another seventeen issues were cancelled from the 2026 programme.

Mark Wilson came up with the answer: Slovenská pošta has not announced a full cancellation of its 2026 schedule, but rather a series of upcoming service changes, including price increases, branch closures, and optimization efforts. Rumours of a complete service cancellation are unfounded and are probably a misunderstanding of the planned transformations.

US Consuls in the Czech lands

While searching for US Consuls in the Czech lands, **Peter Williams** has discovered the following website that other members may find useful: www.politicalgraveyard.com/geo/ZZ/EZ-consuls.html. The site describes itself as *The Internet's Most Comprehensive Source of U.S. Political Biography (or The Web Site that Tells Where the Dead Politicians are Buried)*.

Scout Post Publication by Benito González



An excerpt from *Post and Scout services in Prague 1914–1918 (in the revolutionary period)*, by **Benito González**, appeared in the March 2025 issue of *Czechout*. The book (a 500-page lavish collector's edition) has now been published and can be obtained from www.postscoutinprague.com.

US Importation Tariff Issues Resolved

An October press release from Boston 2026 World Expo has announced very welcome news for the philatelic world, including those wishing to take advantage of the Society's Market and Auction services. The following is an extract from the press release:

> Until this year, stamps and covers could be imported into the United States under Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTSUS) 9704 free of duty. However, several months ago, new country specific tariffs came into effect. This affected philatelic material, which in turn, resulted in the global philatelic community fearing that foreign participants at the upcoming Boston 2026 World Expo would experience unacceptably high costs.
>
> After close consultation with US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) over the past several weeks, the Boston 2026 Organizing Committee is pleased to announce that stamps and covers are, once again, tariff free for entry into the US. Specifically, the initial ruling letter that resulted in philatelic tariffs has now been ruled void ab initio (i.e., null from the beginning) and voided. A new ruling letter holding that philatelic material covered by HTSUS 9704 is again tariff free will be issued by the CBP in the next few weeks.
>
> Boston 2026 World Expo takes place 23–30 May 2026 at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. Full show details may be found at Boston2026.org.

August Zoom

Please remember that recordings of all the Society's Zoom meetings can be seen on the website at www.cpsgb.org/pages/zoom.htm.

Continuing the story of Czechoslovak postal history begun in May 2023 (September 2023 *Czechout*, page 6), **Lubor Kunc**'s presentation on 30 August 2025 treated 19 members to a study of the years 1919 to 1920, focusing on the Legionary stamps, the *POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ* overprints, and the typographed Masaryk stamps.

In his introduction, he reminded us of two features of his previous presentation, with new material – mixed frankings of Hradčany stamps with Austrian stamps, and lost parcel forms signed by the poet and postman Petr Bezruč. Starting with the Legionary stamps, Lubor presented a block of sixteen of the 50 haler with both Type I and Type II stamps – this included joined pairs of stamps featuring both types, a popular item with collectors today. Lubor directed members to the website run by Mark Wilson on the Czechoslovak typographic stamps – www.knihtisk.org – where further details on these stamps can be found. Even though the Legionary stamps were only valid from 27 October to 3 November 1919, Lubor was able to show some of them on non-philatelic mail. There are plenty of philatelic items with these stamps, but genuine commercial mail is much rarer – if you see it, make sure you acquire it! Other covers included the philatelic item sent by Bohuslav Rieger to himself, which featured in Lubor's article in the September issue of *Czechout* (page 12), and a letter with two cancels – a machine cancel and a TPO cancel. Another philatelic item was a cover sent to Vitězslav/Siegfried Adel, who ran a famous toy/sports shop in Pilsen. His son, Hanuš, was the leader of the only Jewish Scout Troop in Pilsen and was murdered in Auschwitz Concentration Camp on 28 April 1945.

The creator of the *POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ* overprints, Jaroslav Lešetický, was a leading light in both Czechoslovak philately and the postal administration itself. He suggested using the existing stocks of Austrian and Hungarian stamps, suitably overprinted, as a money-saving measure. In fact, the stamps were largely driven by philatelic interest, and even information on which stamps had been overprinted was difficult to establish. Lešetický produced a catalogue of the stamps in 1920 – a signed copy of which was included in the presentation – but Lubor warned it is far from reliable, including some very strange quantities for particular stamps. Lešetický's reputation suffered from the episode and even today the stamps are not popular with collectors in the Czech Republic. A registered letter was shown with a mixed franking, including a Hradčany stamp alongside three overprints. A registered express letter was shown, sent to a financial administrator of Teplá Abbey, a very wealthy institution as the monks were the first to discover the mineral water at Mariánské Lázně and were the founders of the spa. A cover with a mixed franking of three overprints with a 5 haler Hradčany was sent by Karl Herrman, a doctor in Kolešovice, to his brother Rear-Admiral Otto Herrmann in Vienna. Herrmann had been captain of a ship that fought at the Battle of Otranto in 1917 and later was instrumental in defeating the Cattaro (Kotor) mutiny in 1918.

Above – the 'high priority' letter from the organizers of the Jewish lottery.

Right – two of the overprints on this letter to an administrator at Teplá Abbey are 'joined types' (indicated by the red arrow.

Moving on to the Masaryk stamps, Lubor explained that the 125 haler stamp was introduced mainly for registered mail, as its value exactly matched the cost of registration – an example was a business postcard with a 40 haler Chainbreaker indicium, plus the 125 haler Masaryk stamp to pay the registration fee. Later, in the fourth and fifth tariff periods, postage rates increased and Lubor had examples of this. At this point, when the administration was concerned about the capacity of their service, printed matter was treated as 'low priority' and simply delivered when the opportunity arose – if you wanted it to be sent *high* priority, then an additional charge of 10

haler applied, indicated by special delivery stamps. Lubor had two of these to show us, both with the Masaryk stamp to pay for registration – one was from the organizers of the Jewish lottery, obviously keen to make sure the papers were delivered in time for the next lottery round, while the other was from one of the key founders of the Union of Czechoslovak Philatelists. This was posted in 1921, the first year of its existence, and it is extremely difficult to find such an early item from the Union.

As a warning to the unsuspecting philatelist, Lubor showed us two suspicious telegraphic forms from the České Budějovice 1 post office. These sometimes appear in auctions – always from this same post office – but they seem not to be authentic and were perhaps manufactured artificially for philatelists. Finally, Lubor pointed out that 125 haler Masaryk stamps could also be used for foreign mail – he presented examples of covers with both Type I and Type II stamps, including one with a joined pair of the two types: this was a very interesting cover, correctly franked (125 haler postage to Canada plus 125 haler registration fee) and sent by a keen Bratislava patriot who never accepted the incorporation of his city into Czechoslovakia, while the recipient was Ernest Crocker, a photographer famous for his portraits of Native American Indians. **Tony Holdsworth**

London Meeting - September

Michael Furfie gave a masterclass on *Czech and Slovak Postage Dues* at our London venue, the Dean Swift pub near Tower Bridge, on 20 September 2025. A good turnout of members gave close attention to this challenging topic – with a plethora of arcane material to illustrate the complexities of postage due penalties and how they were calculated, the presentation covered a great deal of ground.

Beginning with the period under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Michael pointed out that the General Postal Union regulations applied from 1875 until 1878, when the rapid growth in membership led to it being renamed the Universal Postal Union. Initially, there were no postage due stamps, with handstamps and manuscript markings taking their place. The penalty for underpayment on international mail was double the destination rate, less the value of the stamps that had been used. To cover the cost of postage to far flung destinations, a sea surtax was introduced. One curiosity was that Austria abandoned this in 1892 and disregarded it on mail from other countries – if postage due had been calculated to include this surtax, the Austrian postal authorities discounted it when calculating the penalty to be paid.

Another source of fascinating material was provided by the picture postcard ‘explosion’ at the beginning of the 20th century. Rules about where to write the message and where to affix the stamp were quite fluid to begin with, and different postal authorities interpreted the rules differently. One of Michael’s examples was guaranteed to ‘befuddle your brain’, as it raised issues of the sea surtax, where to place the stamp, and what the regulations for redirecting mail were.

Moving on to the creation of the Czechoslovak state, Michael had examples where Austrian stamps had to be used for postage due, as the new Czechoslovak stamps were not yet ready. In the years just after the end of WWI the situation on international mail became very complicated – currencies in some countries became unstable because of inflation, and in 1920 the UPU decided to raise the standard rates to address the problem, while allowing countries to stay with the existing rates if they wished. In early 1921 this led to considerable chaos, where letters might be sent from a country that hadn’t changed its rates to one that had, and vice versa. Examples showed where the resulting postage due charges were extremely high, or ridiculously low. Further complexity was introduced with the signing of an agreement by the Austro-Hungarian successor states at Portorož in 1921 whereby they would exchange mail at about 20% lower than the standard UPU rates.

Michael Furfie is presented with his certificate by Chairman Peter Williams after a masterful presentation on postage dues at our October meeting.

In part two of the presentation, Michael moved on to the period from 1938 onwards, with examples from Bohemia & Moravia, the Slovak state, and post-war Czechoslovakia. The Sudetenland crisis led to some peculiarities, such as a postcard sent to Great Britain with a German stamp. At the beginning of 1945, when stamps were unavailable (other than those that had been produced by the German occupiers), mail from what had been Bohemia & Moravia was sent unfranked, to be paid on delivery at the single rate – once stamps became available, they reverted to one-and-a-half times the deficiency. In 1953, when high inflation led to monetary reform, the postal authorities briefly reverted to the use of handstamps rather than plastering the mail with postage dues. Bringing the presentation right up to the ultimate separation of Czechia and Slovakia, Michael had included examples of post-1993 covers where invalidated Czechoslovak stamps had been used, and new postage dues had been applied.

Whether this was an inspiration to the courageous, or a warning to more timid members of the audience, it was certainly a bravura performance. The material was littered with fascinating items demanding further exploration: those underpaid letters sent to the tax office, for example, where the contents had been removed and the outer returned to the sender so that *they* could pay the postage due; or the letter with a strip of Chainbreakers that included some valid stamps in the new colours, and some invalid ones in the old colours, so that the poor postman had to go through them ticking and crossing to calculate the postage due! **Tony Holdsworth**

October Zoom

Ghetto Theresienstadt 1941–1945 and Small Fortress 1940–1945 was the title of the presentation given to members by **Gerhard Hanacek** on 12 October 2025. Gerhard's extensive collection of material provided a moving and thought-provoking insight into the chilling bureaucracy behind this aspect of the holocaust.

Beginning with the start of the persecution of the Jews in Bohemia & Moravia, Gerhard showed examples of documents that had to be used for 'proof of ancestry' for those wishing to avoid persecution. This could be acquired from the Ministry of the Interior – later named *Sippenamt* ('kinship office') *für Böhmen und Mähren* – for which a 30 K fee had to be paid into a specially established postal savings account. Similarly, those choosing to emigrate (only possible before November 1941) were forced to surrender all their possessions to the authorities – even down to the bicycle identified on one of the forms displayed. The Central Office responsible for this set up a disguised commercial enterprise (HADEGA) which mailed a 'delivery certificate' confirming the confiscation of assets. Those attempting to emigrate from Prague to North or South America were helped through the formalities by organizations set up in cities such as New York, Washington and Santiago.

Ghetto mail was handled in Prague by the Jewish Community (JKG), later renamed The Jewish Council of Elders in Prague. For recipients outside Prague mail was sent in collective envelopes to the respective branch offices, receiving a branch office postmark. On 24 November 1941 the first transport of 340 Jewish craftsmen was sent to Theresienstadt to begin constructing accommodation in the ghetto – for just five days they were permitted to send mail back to Prague, but this was stopped by the SS to prevent news of the work they were doing leaking out. Gerhard displayed an extremely rare example of a card dated 28 November 1941 and delivered in Prague the following day. Outgoing mail was censored and registered by the ghetto postal authorities – incoming mail was handled by the Jewish Community in Prague.

At the beginning, the name of the barracks at Theresienstadt was used for residential addresses. From 1 July 1943 until the end of July the following year, a system based on co-ordinates, consisting of letters and numbers, was used to identify individual buildings. From August 1943 onwards street names were created for these addresses, often bearing no relation to the reality of the ghetto – 'Lake Street' for example, though there were no lakes in Theresienstadt.

Ghetto mail was subjected to strict regulations from the beginning. The Jewish Council of Elders published current guidelines, but these were frequently changed, leading to much confusion and rejected mail – two examples were shown, one marked 'Only 30 words of text are permitted on postcards in German language', and another 'Only 30 German words in block capitals are permitted'. A rare (and heartbreaking) example of mail from the German Reich to Theresienstadt was a postcard from the Weimar-Buchenwald concentration camp with the message 'A hike for two through the Beskids, a tango in the Bristol – you in your most beautiful dress, a beautifully set table with all our loved ones – just courage and a healthy 1943'.

International mail could be sent direct to the ghetto or, less frequently, via the Jewish associations. From early 1943 increasing numbers of cards with a 'return receipt' were arriving – the recipient was meant to sign and return the receipt, which would then become a kind of 'sign of life'. To try and conceal the fate of the addressees, however, the receipts were usually returned with a handwritten note stating 'departed unknown' – but, as Gerhard said, no-one 'departed unknown' from the ghetto, except through deportation to the extermination camps in the east.

As deportations increased, so the number of parcels arriving for inmates at Theresienstadt steadily rose – to regulate and control the traffic an elaborate system was created, using the parcel admission stamp. With a comprehensive range of supporting materials, Gerhard showed how applications for the stamps and their accompanying documentation were processed. The stamps themselves were printed in sheets of 25 (5×5), originally in black but (as this was deemed to be

The heartbreaking card sent from Buchenwald to Theresienstadt.

too ‘sombre’!) subsequently in green, to symbolize nature. Proofs, blocks of four, imperforate stamps and colour varieties were all included in the presentation, together with examples used on piece and a very rare example showing incorrect use on a parcel card. Souvenir blocks of four, each with a serial number, were given to delegates of the International Red Cross commission who visited the ghetto in June 1944. Probably the rarest examples of these stamps in the presentation were proofs of the souvenir sheets in black and dark green, one of which was perforated.

Forgeries of the stamps can be distinguished by differences in paper, printing, perforation, and gum. One example had been printed by offset lithography rather than letterpress. The final section of the presentation focused on the Small Fortress of Theresienstadt. Built in the 18th century primarily as a prison for political prisoners, it was used by the Gestapo as a transit camp, mostly for members of the Czech resistance on their way to Auschwitz, Mauthausen or Ravensbrück. Mail between the fortress and both the Protectorate and the Reich was permitted from the beginning of 1941 – this was mostly postcards, but letters could also be sent. These are extremely rare, and Gerhard had two examples to show. Just as with the ghetto, strict rules were introduced, with regular changes, and cards were preprinted to show the current regulations. **Tony Holdsworth**

Society Kay Goodman Trophy Competition

The last London meeting of the year took place on 1 November 2025, at the Dean Swift pub. The first session was devoted to ten-sheet displays by members on the theme of ‘the letter Č’. Five members contributed: **Roger Morrell** with foreign-rate postal stationery bearing the legend ‘Československa Pošta’; **Peter Williams** with the Czechoslovak Republic in Europe, booklets from the Czech Republic, and the ‘Political Graveyard’ website (*see page 4 above*); **Yvonne Wheatley** with the word ‘Česka’ – a Czech woman or girl; **Wojciech Kierstan** with ‘Černý tiski’ – black prints; and **Reg Hounsell** with Czechoslovak airmail.

After lunch, under the new slightly revised rules and the addition of a ‘Postcard’ class, the Kay Goodman competition was successfully held with the member judging procedure. The overall winner of the rosebowl trophy by a small margin was **Wojciech Kierstan** (*being presented with the trophy by Roger Morrell – right*) with his entry on ‘Postal Stationery from the 1970s and 1980s’ (552 points). **Roger Morrell** was second with ‘Postcards of the 1908 Prag Exhibition’ (543 points), and third was **Sandy Kerr** with ‘Junák (Scouting) – some commemorative material’ (537 points). **Tony Holdsworth and Roger Morrell**

Cover Story

Roger Morrell

The Kloster Geheimnis *advertisement on the window envelope from 1945.*

Commercial covers often come preprinted with some company text, and maybe a picture, so it’s fun to look up whether they still exist, or if they don’t what happened to the company. This simple window envelope (found for 50 pence in a dealer’s box of miscellany) caught my eye because the German commercial text has been ‘overprinted’ with Czech-ized text for continued use in 1945. The pair of 1 K 20 1945 stamps has been cancelled with the provisional style 1945 handstamp for Ústí nad Labem, with an additional linear datestamp for 1.XII.1945. The original German text reads *Spiritus: Preßhefe und Likörfabrik vom Gebrüder Eckelmann K.G., Schönpriesen, Sudetenland, Gegrundet 1847*, followed by a bottle labelled *Ein Klostergeheimnis* (‘monastic secret’), which is also in large print below. This has been overprinted in violet by *lovárna na líh, lisované droždí a likéry, Krásné Březno, (dříve Bratře Eckelmannové), komanditni společnost. Německý tiskopis používán až do vyčerpáni.* This translates as ‘distillery for alcohol, pressed yeast and liqueurs, Krásné Březno, (formerly Eckelmann Brothers), limited partnership. *German printing used until exhausted*’.

Right – the factory as it is today, still with the 1847 foundation plaque (above) on the front.

Schönpriesen, renamed Krásné Březno, lies a few kilometres to the east of Aussig/Ústí nad Labem, which explains the cancellation on the stamps. As to the history of the company, information from different sources does not entirely tie together, but I have established that the original distillery from 1847 was set up as a joint venture between the Eckelmanns and Fritz Wolfrum [1], the latter originating from Dresden in Germany and having already taken over a distillery in Vienna. A family company (an 'AG') was established in 1895 and converted to a public company (a 'GmbH') in 1906. As early as 1903, Fritz Wolfrum had taken over the Aussig-Schönpriesen spirit, compressed yeast, and liqueur factory [2] – primarily with funds from his father, Carl Friedrich, the industrialist and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Aussig-Teplitz Railway Company. In 1911, he was awarded the Commander's Cross of the Order of Franz Joseph for his economic achievements. In 1912, he also took over the spirit, compressed yeast, and liqueur factory in Teplitz-Schönau. During World War I, he served as a reserve officer at the front and was awarded the Military Merit Cross with Swords, the Signum Laudis in Silver and Bronze, and the Karl Troop Cross (*Karl-Truppenkreuz*).

Left – The monks doing their distilling are shown by the gatehouse.

The famous (infamous?) *Kloster Geheimnis* ('monastic secret') brand of liqueur stems from 1898, brewed according to the original recipe, allegedly obtained from the monks of the Ore Mountains. The basis of the taste is nineteen herbs that are infused in alcohol. These include three types of wormwood, cardamom, and cinnamon. Other liqueurs were also produced.

The company was clearly operating right through to 1945 and would have been unaffected by the German takeover of Sudetenland or the complete occupation of Bohemia/Moravia. However, when the Red Army occupied Czechoslovakia after WWII, Sudeten Germans were expelled, which would have included the Wolfrum and Eckelmann families who would have lost ownership of their distilleries. In fact, they may well have been embroiled with the Aussig massacre of Summer 1945 [3] in which the local Czech population effectively drove out the white arm-banded German population, with certainly 100 people, perhaps as many as 200, being killed or drowned in the Elbe river. It started after an explosion in a former Nazi weapons depot in Schönpriesen/Krásné Březno with a rumour spreading that it was the work of undercover Nazis. No wonder the distillery was using that choice of overprint text on the cover to explain their actions!

As the cover shows, the company continued to operate after WWII but was probably soon taken over by the State before later being sold off. It is now owned by Granette & Starorežná Distilleries. The original buildings still exist in Krásné Březno and have been located via Google Streetview.

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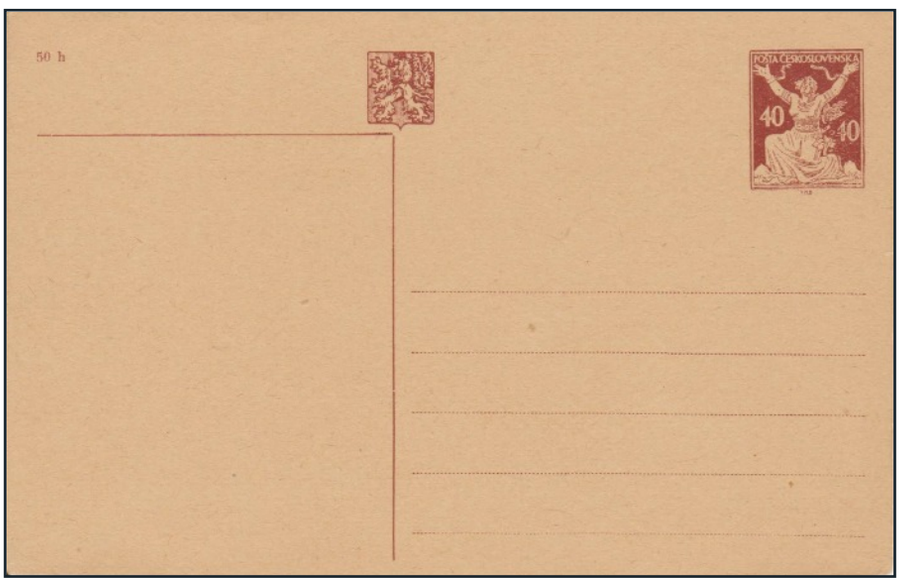
[1] www.usti.cz/images/turistum/usti-Letak_630x210_CZ_DE_nahled.pdf
[2] www.hirschstetten.info/beitrag.php?hid=2036
[3] www.dynastiemautnermarkhof.com/de/unternehmen/hefe-spiritus-malz/mautner-markhof-wolfrum/

Sales Price Varieties on the 40 haler Chainbreaker Postal Stationery Card

Peter Williams

At the Leeds Central European meeting in August, there was a display of Czechoslovak postal stationery. I remembered that at the Gillingham residential weekend some years ago, a member mentioned that the Czech postal stationery from the 1920s appeared to have a great amount of variation in the placement of the dividing lines for the text down the centre of the card and the upper left to segregate the text area. This reminded me that I had noticed a difference in the sales price shown on the 40 haler Chainbreaker postcard, which I had put to one side for future investigation.

The card was first issued on 1 August 1920 for inland postal use. It remained valid for such use until 15 August 1928. At least 2,580,000 cards were printed.

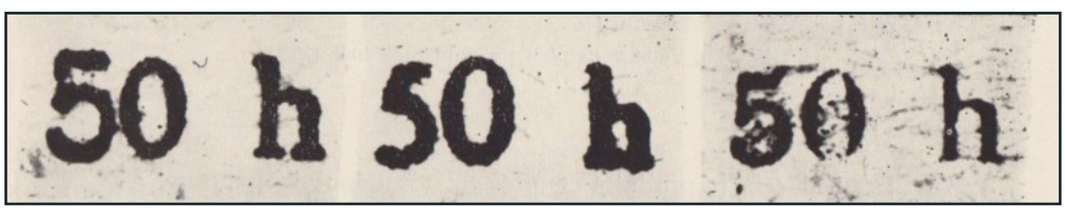


The sales price of '50 h' is shown at the upper left of the postcard.

My POFIS catalogue notes that there are plating flaws on the price and the VHB monogram under the printed stamp. Nothing is illustrated, other than the basic postcard. Turning to my *Specializová Příručka*, I found mention of three varieties which involved missing numbers or letters: just '50', '5 h' or just 'h'. None were illustrated. The text states that there are two sizes of the '50', small and large – again, no illustrations.

The Society's Library copy of *Spezialkatalog der Tschechoslowakischen Ganzsachen Part 1A (Amtliche Postkarten)* provided more information on this issue, with a written description of three types of the card's sales price, but there were no illustrations. This book showed the plating flaws on the stamp (similar to those well-known ones on the stamp) and notes the missing letters and VHB errors that POFIS mentions. The colour ranges from red-brown to brown, and dark brown.

Finally I found what I was looking for in *Monografie* 2.

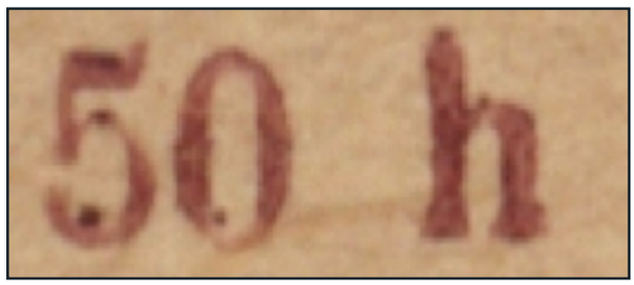


Type I *Type II* *Type III*

Type I has the number '5' 1.8 mm in height. Type II has a different shaped number '5', which is 1.7 mm in height. Type III has the number '5' 1.5 mm in height. The postcards appear to have been reprinted as required, with the stamp, national emblem and sales price placed into blocks. Each plate would have many variations in the placement of the middle vertical line and the elements on the postcard. The *Monografie* states that there are at least 3 versions of Type 1, at least 4 versions of Type II, and over 105 versions of Type III. The distance of the letter 'h' from the stamp is between 107 and 110 mm, usually between 108 and 108.5 mm.

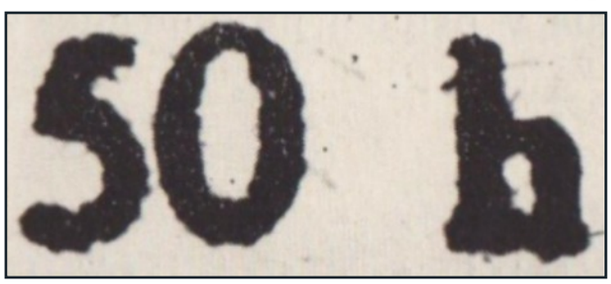
I now turn to examples from my own collection to compare them with the *Monografie* types. I have taken a scan from the *Monografie* and then cut and pasted the type for each section below. I have taken a copy of the sales price from my own postcards using a digital microscope and then resized my copies to bring them into alignment with the *Monografie* types. The two different methods of capturing the images will produce slightly differently sized results, but my conclusions will be the same.

Type I

The example in the *Monografie* is reasonably clear (*above left*). The ‘0’ is smaller than the ‘5’, but I think that this is just one of the varieties. I do not have an example in my small sample. It appears that the easiest way to distinguish it from Type III is the height of Type I, which is reportedly 1.8 mm, rather than 1.5 mm for Type III. Hans van Dooremalen has kindly sent me a copy of a postcard from his collection of Type I. This example (*above right*) has a clearly different ‘5’ and the ‘0’ is similar in size to the ‘5’. If this is one of the three Types, does any member have the third variety? Or are there more than just three varieties?

Type II




The example in the *Monografie* (*above left*) is fairly heavily inked. The ‘0’ is slightly higher and larger than the ‘5’. My example (*above right*) is close to this: the bowl of the ‘5’ appears to be larger than the *Monografie* example. The ‘0’ is slightly lower than the ‘5’, although similar in size. I think this is one of the varieties.

Another example shows a much clearer ‘5’ and ‘h’. The ‘0’ appears to be much more like a capital letter ‘O’ and is lower than the ‘5’. There is a small tick-up at one end of the ‘5’, but the lower end of the ‘5’ does not extend beyond the vertical stroke of the ‘5’ even if it is turned upright like type III. The clear slope to the ‘5’ is the key feature of this Type. I can confirm that the height of both of my Type IIs is 1.7 mm.

Including the *Monografie* example, this appears to cover three of the four Types. Does any member have an example of the fourth variety? Or are there more?

Type III

The *Monografie* example is obscured, but the ‘5’ is upright, has a bulb at one end, and a tick-up on the upper end.


My first example (*above left*) is close to the *Monografie*, with a level top, the bulb at one end more at an angle rather than curving inwards, and the clear tick-up at the other end. The next example (*above right*) is also close to the *Monografie*, with a level top, bulb at one end and less of a tick-up at the other end, with the head extending almost to the end of the bowl of the '5'. The '0' is significantly lower than the '5'. The 'h' is also deformed on the right.


The example above left has a larger base with a curved top, bulb at one end, and less pronounced tick-up at the other end. The example on the right is unclear, but the slight tick-up and full bowl suggests Type III. Note the redder colour.


These examples both have a '5' with a pronounced tick-up, rounded bowl, and bulb at one end. The bowl and bulb are fuller on the example on the right.


Another unclear example (*above left*), which looks like Type III due to the full bowl and tick-up on the '5'. The example on the right is not clear, but the '5' is clearly upright (therefore not type II) and has a flat head, with only a slight indication of a tick-up. However, the '5' is 1.5 mm in height, so it is Type III.

Finally, the '5' in this example has attributes of Type II, being sloped – Type I, not having a bulb at one end – and Type III, with a full bowl and a slight tick-up at one end. The format is clearly not Type II, so the full bowl leads me to classify this as Type III.

This type can be difficult to distinguish from Type I, but the key characteristic is the 1.5 mm height of Type III, compared with 1.8 mm for Type I. The Type is easy to measure, but the varieties are difficult to differentiate,

particularly as the printing can be unclear. Over-inking also complicates differentiation. I will leave it to others to aim for the 105 varieties. However, I will note that even my few examples do show a range of differences.

Conclusions

- Taking the Types of the sales price based on height alone, there are just three Types. The key factor is the size. Where there is a clear difference in the clarity of the printing, the unwary may classify the clearer printing to Type III rather than Type I, if not measured accurately.
- Type II appears to be more easily identifiable.
- The postcards are readily available at a reasonable cost. Overall, a small collection will display the range of Types, with some of the varieties.

Do other members have any thoughts or comments? (Or even the other Type I or Type II?)

CPSGB's New Market Page

Mark Wilson

What is the Market Page?

For the past few months the Committee has been mulling over an idea. Many members hold surplus material they no longer need but which might be of interest to another collector. A plan emerged to provide for a very broad range of members a venue for items not a good fit for the Society Auction, items valued at a just a few pounds. So, the Committee decided to set an upper limit of £50 for any one lot in this new venue; items of a higher value could be sold through the auction. Finally, because most items would be valued far below that £50 limit, the Committee decided that the Society would establish a listing fee of only £1 for each lot; no further fees would be imposed on buyers or sellers.

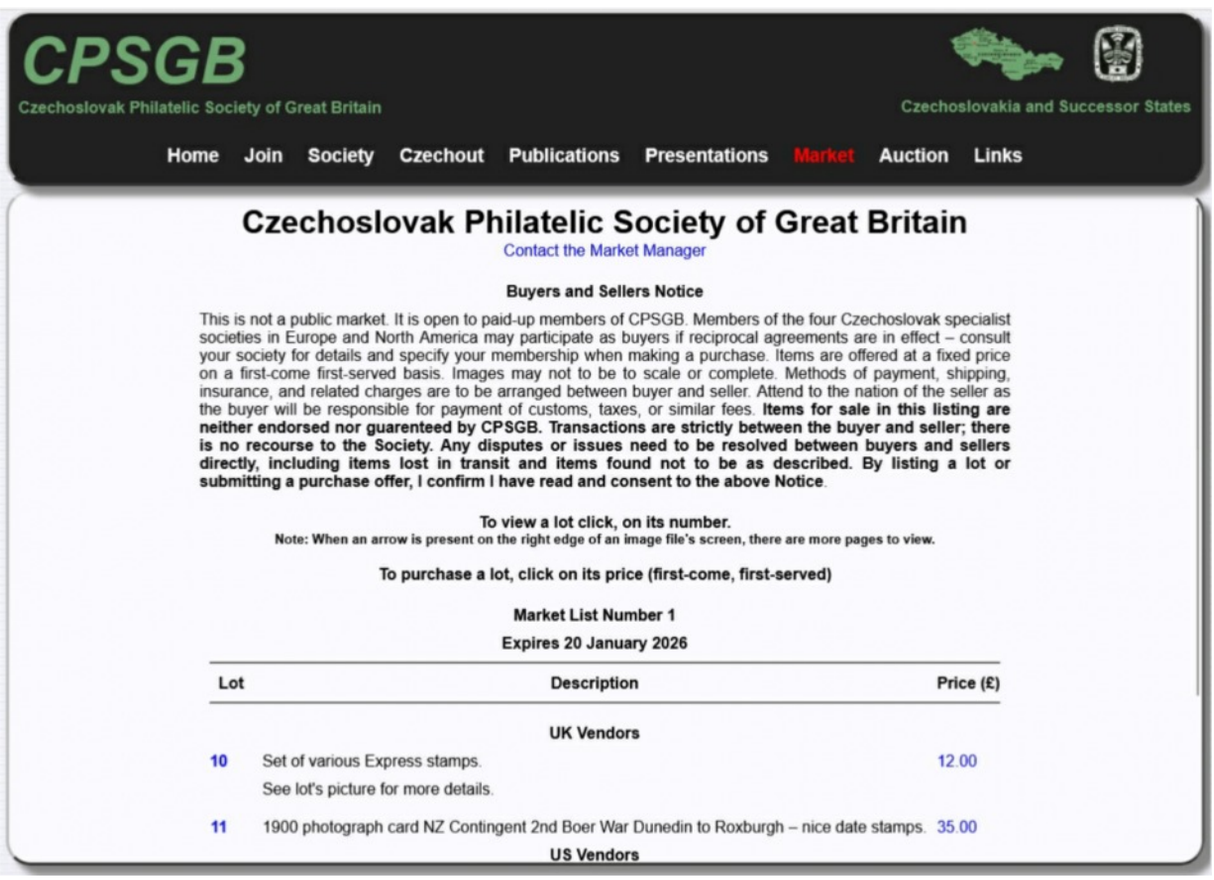


Fig 1. – mockup of the Market Page on the Society website.

The result of those deliberations became a new page on the Society's website, the Market Page. The Committee insisted the page be simple to use, that buyers could easily see pictures of items for sale, and because no one wants to be surprised by high shipping costs or custom duties, made sure buyers knew the seller's location before making a purchase. Even more importantly, in this age of ever-cleverer and nasty Internet scams, the Market Page had to ensure members' email addresses and other details remained unexposed to the world at large.

As the Society webmaster, it fell to me to design a page for the website meeting each of these criteria (Fig. 1). I had as a model the website's Auction Page. Because the Auction featured technology linking a lot

and its pictures, I simply copied that technology onto the Market Page. One need only click on a lot number to bring up a picture of some, perhaps all, of a lot's contents.

Unlike the Auction where the lots are held in one location by the auctioneer, lots on the Market Page are in the hands of the seller, that is a member who might reside in the UK, the European Union, North America, or in point of fact, anywhere in the world. In this day of rising postal rates, buyers need to know if a purchase would entail transoceanic shipping costs or customs duties. Because the Market Page lists lots under a seller's home nation, there will be no surprises in that regard.

The Committee looked at several similar schemes developed by other societies meant to provide members with a venue to buy and sell philatelic material. Many of these exposed the seller's email – an action the Committee believed unwise. To conceal both buyer's and seller's email addresses, the Market Page introduced a trusted middle-man – the Market Manager. Until a seller reacts to a purchase request, even the buyer does not have the seller's email address.

How Does One Publish a Lot on the Market Page?

Publishing a lot for sale on the Market Page involves three rather simple steps. Step 1: the seller contacts the Society Treasurer who passes the seller's email address to the Market Manager. Step 2: the Market Manager contacts the seller and requests everything needed to publish a lot on the Market Page. Step 3: The seller provides the Market Manager with the information and items requested. Let's review these three steps in detail.

Step 1: The Seller Contacts the Treasurer

A seller must first contact the Treasurer. The Treasurer confirms the seller is a paid-up member of the Society and collects a £1 listing fee for each lot to be posted on the Market Page; no other fees will be collected. Then the Treasurer notifies the Market Manager of the seller's email address and the number of lots the seller wishes to post.

Step 2: The Market Manager Contacts the Seller

Armed with the email address forwarded to him by the Treasurer, the Market Manager contacts the seller to ask for the information and items needed to post a lot. For each lot the Market Manager requires:

1. The name of the country where the material in the lot is housed.
2. The lot's price in GBP. All lots must be priced below £50; lots of a higher value should be referred to the Auction.
3. A short description of the contents of each lot for publication on the Market Page, typically one or two lines of text but it may be as long as three lines. The Market Manager will publish the lot(s) and reserves the right to amend descriptions. See *Note 1* if your lot requires a more extensive description.
4. A single picture of the lot's contents. See *Note 2* for assistance preparing a picture.

Step 3. The Seller Complies with the Manager's Requirements

While the location, price, and lot's short description will likely pose no problem when a seller fulfils the Manager's requirements, providing a picture may be a bit more difficult for some. The Market Manager wishes to accommodate sellers by accepting pictures of a lot's contents in one of two possible formats, a JPEG or a PDF. Sellers will most commonly meet the picture requirement with a scan of the material as a single JPEG (Fig. 2) or a single PDF (Fig. 3).

Fig. 2 – JPEG of multiple items.

Fig. 3 – PDF with longer description and scan of several items.

Note 1. If the material in the lot requires an extensive description, prepare a PDF containing the lengthier description and pictures of the lot's contents. Be sure to also prepare the short description mentioned above. Forward the short description and the PDF to the Market Manager. The Manager will indicate on the Market Page that more information is available in the picture. PDFs may be made up of one or more pages.

Note 2. The Auctioneer, at his discretion, may for a £3 fee offer sellers assistance in preparing a lot's picture. Contact the Auctioneer for details. This fee is for the work done by the Auctioneer; the £1 per lot fee still applies.

The Market Page

Each new Market Page will be announced in the *Newsletter*. A Market Page will be withdrawn after a period specified in the *Newsletter*. The Market Manager will then destroy all data from the now closed Market Page. Sellers wishing to re-list a lot must repeat the steps outlined above.

Sellers and The Market Page

Sellers may initiate the posting of a lot at anytime, following the steps described above. The Market Manager will not add lots to an active Market Page. Lots received after a Market Page has been activated will be published in the next upcoming Market.

If a seller detects an error in a lot listing and immediately notifies the Market Manager of its nature, the lot will be withdrawn. If the seller desires, a corrected version will be republished in the next Market. The original £1 fee will not be returned nor a second such fee imposed.

Buyers and the Market Page

Making a Purchase Offer

Click a lot number to view its picture or click on the price to purchase it (Fig. 4). The latter launches the buyer's email client, creating an email message to the Market Manager. Remember, purchases are on a first come, first served basis.

Contact Between The Buyer and Seller

The Market Manager forwards the buyer's email to the seller who will initiate correspondence with the buyer. At no time are the buyer's or seller's details revealed to anyone other than the Market Manager. Both sellers and buyers are bound to the Market Page's transaction rules. Note especially that there is no recourse to the Society regarding any dispute or failure. Resolution of all problems resides solely with the buyer and seller.

Fig. 4 – How to view a lot's picture or make a purchase (first come, first served).

Where May Sellers and Buyers Find a Concise Copy of the Market Page Regulations?

As a final note, the Market regulations are available in Section 5 of the Society Handbook. For a brief description, read the notice displayed in Figure 1.

After Validity Use of Hungarian Stamps and Postal Stationery in Czechoslovakia, 1919–1920: an Addendum

Robert Lauer

In response to my request in Note 2 to my article ‘After Validity Use of Hungarian Stamps and Postal Stationery in Czechoslovakia, 1919–1920’ in the June 2024 issue of *Czechout*, Johan Sevenhuijsen sent me scans of a dozen and a half items from his collection that illustrated the use of Hungarian stamps and postal stationery after these items had been invalidated by the Czechoslovak postal authorities. Not surprisingly, he was able to get ‘one-up’ on me with later examples of the after validity use of Hungarian postal stationery.

Uprated Hungarian Postal Stationery Cards

Fig. 1 illustrates a 10 fillér Hungarian postal stationery card uprated with two 3 haler Hradčany to pay the then current Domestic Postcard Rate of 15 haler, sent from Bratislava to Praha on 29 January 1920 and cancelled with a new ‘Č.S.P.’ canceller for Bratislava 2. While Johan suspects that this is a philatelic item, it does appear to have gone through the mail. Figure 2 illustrates an 8 fillér Hungarian postal stationery card uprated with a 10 haler Hradčany to pay the then current Domestic Postcard Rate of 15 haler, sent from Topolčany to Dobruska in Bohemia on 29 January 1920 and cancelled with a new ‘Č.S.P.’ canceller for Topolčany. In contrast to the card in Fig. 1, the back of this commercial postcard does not look the least bit philatelic.

Fig. 1 (above) – a 10 fillér Hungarian postal stationery card uprated with two 3 haler Hradčany sent from Bratislava to Praha on 29 January 1920; and Fig. 2 (below) – an 8 fillér Hungarian postal stationery card uprated with a 10 haler Hradčany sent from Topolčany to Dobruska in Bohemia on 8 March 1920 (both from the collection of Johan Sevenhuijsen).

Johan also sent me three examples of 8 fillér Hungarian postal stationery cards that had been uprated with 2 fillér Harvester stamps when the postcard rate was raised from 8 fillér to 10 fillér on 15 June 1918 and used after Hungarian stamps were invalidated on 28 February 1919 (see Figs. 3, 4, and 5).

Fig. 3 – an 8 fillér postal stationery card uprated with a 2 fillér Harvester to pay the postcard rate of 10 haler: sent from Galgocz to Prague on 29 April 1919 (from the collection of Johan Sevenhuijsen).

Fig. 4 – an 8 fillér postal stationery card uprated with a 2 fillér Harvester and a 5 haler (I) Hradčany to pay the current postcard rate of 15 haler: sent from Liptoszentmiklós to Prague on 23 May 1919 (from the collection of Johan Sevenhuijsen).

Fig. 5 – an 8 fillér postal stationery card uprated with a 2 fillér Harvester and a 5 haler (I) Hradčany to pay the postcard rate of 15 haler: sent from Szomorlovacsi to Bazin in Slovakia on 12 September 1919 (from the collection of Johan Sevenhuijsen).

In each case, the 2 fillér Hungarian Harvester stamp was required to make up the franking for the current postcard rate. It would appear that this was an exception to the general invalidation of Hungarian postage stamps on 28 February 1919. I suspect that, because these stamps had originally been applied to these postal stationery cards before sale to the public, they were considered to be part of the postal stationery card and therefore valid for postage until Hungarian postal stationery was invalidated on 15 October 1919.

Carpathian Ruthenia

Johan also sent me four examples of Hungarian stamps being used in Carpathian Ruthenia during April 1919, which also represents an exception to the invalidation of Hungarian postage stamps on 28 February 1919. When the communist government of Béla Kun came to power in Budapest on 19 March 1919, not much of the old Kingdom of Hungary remained under the control of the Hungarian government, as illustrated in the map in Fig. 6 below. The only significant part of territory which was to become the First Czechoslovak Republic that was still controlled by the Hungarian government was Carpathian Ruthenia (which later became Carpatho-Ukraine): the rest was controlled by the new Czechoslovak government in Prague.

Fig. 6 – map of the Hungarian Soviet Republic in March 1919 (Wikipedia Commons).

This situation changed at the end of April 1919, with the offensive of the Romanian Army which began on 16 April 1919. The Romanians captured Técsö and Huszt the same day. On 23 April 1919, they took Beregszász. On 26 April, the Hungarian Red Army withdrew from Carpathian Ruthenia and the Romanians met up with the Czechoslovak armed forces at Csop, near the Slovak frontier. The progress of the Romanian offensive is illustrated in the map in Fig. 7.

Fig. 7 – map of the Romanian offensive against the Hungarian Red Army in April 1919
(Source: Carpatho-Ukraine Postal History and Stamps 1786-2000 *by Jan Verleg).*

On 8 February 1919, when the Czechoslovak postal authorities decreed that Hungarian stamps would no longer be valid for postage after 28 February 1919, the writ of the new Czechoslovak government only ran through most of Slovakia. In the area still controlled by Hungary, the Hungarian postal system still functioned normally, using Hungarian stamps, postal stationery and postal rates. Unlike the post offices in the parts of the Kingdom of Hungary occupied by Entente forces, post offices in Carpathian Ruthenia were reasonably well stocked with the stamps overprinted *KÖZTÁRSASÁG* (‘Republic’) that were issued on 23 November 1918. A significant portion of the mail franked with Hungarian stamps from the territory of the first Czechoslovak Republic after 28 February 1919, originates from Carpathian Ruthenia while it was still controlled by Hungary. As such, this does not actually represent the usage of Hungarian stamps after their validity had ceased, as in most of Slovakia, but their valid use in a part of Hungary. Figs. 8, 9 and 10 illustrate examples of postal money orders used in Carpathian Ruthenia while it was still part of the Hungarian Soviet Republic.

Fig. 8 (top right) – a postal money order on a Hungarian form, for 96 Koruna and 45 fillér sent from Huszt to Vienna on 3 April 1919 (from the collection of Johan Sevenhuijsen).

Fig. 9 (above) – a postal money order on an Austrian form, for 18 Koruna and 23 fillér sent from Szent Miklós in Bereg county to Vienna on 7 April 1919 (from the collection of Johan Sevenhuijsen).

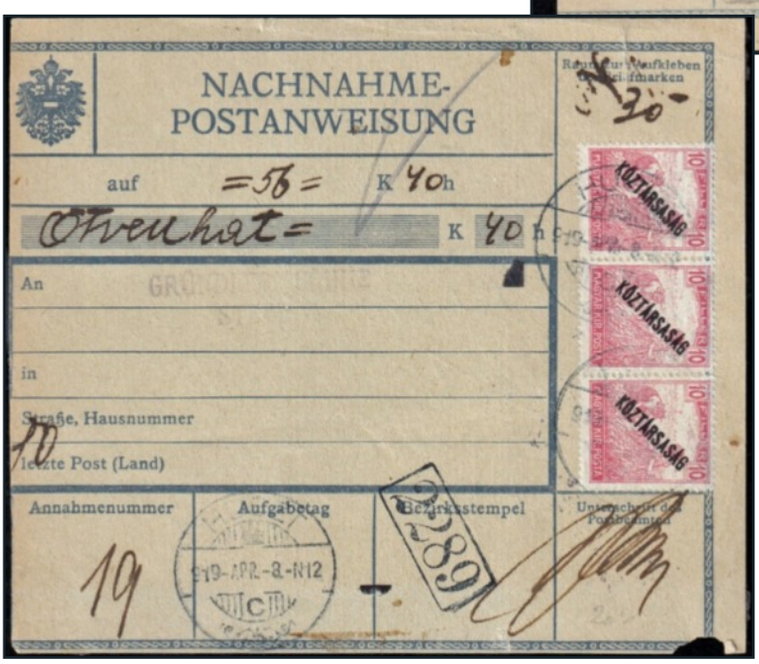
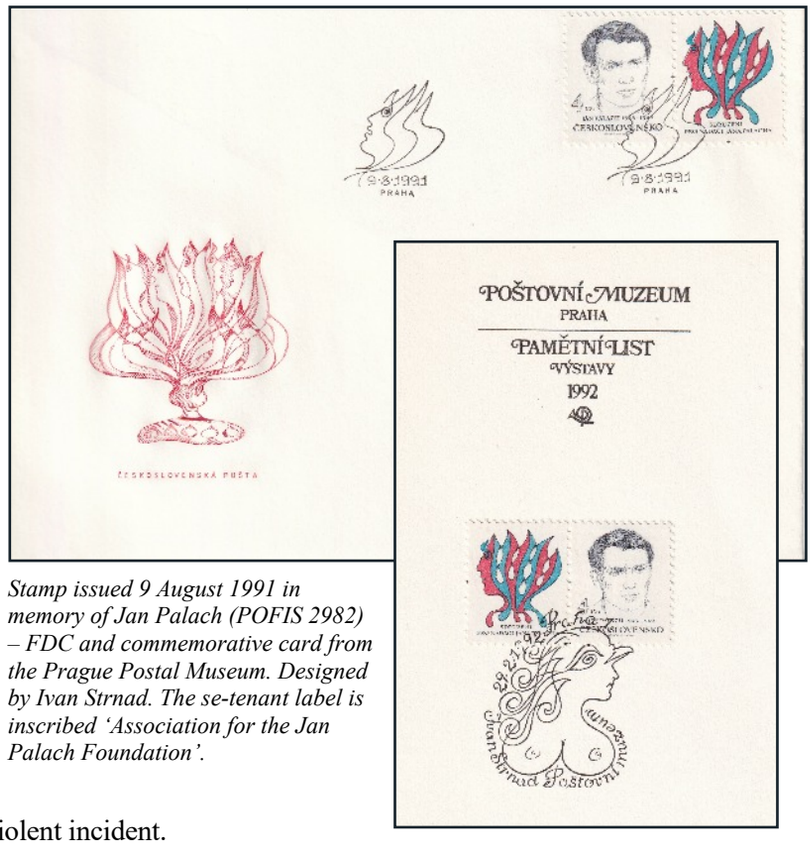


Fig. 10 (left) – a postal money order on an Austrian form, for 56 Koruna and 40 fillér sent from Huszt on 8 April 1919 (from the collection of Johan Sevenhuijsen).

The Velvet Revolution

Lindy Bosworth

January 1989 was the 20th anniversary of the death of the student Jan Palach, who set fire to himself in Wenceslas Square, in protest at the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia following the Prague Spring. The occasion was marked by a week of huge and spontaneous demonstrations – 'Palach Week'. The protestors demanded democracy but once again the police replied with tear gas, water cannon, beatings and arrests. Several dissidents were imprisoned including Václav Havel. There were international protests, with the USA denouncing Czechoslovakia for its infringement of human rights even though it was a signatory of the Helsinki Agreement. The authorities appeared to weather the storm but not for long. After the suppression of democracy in Czechoslovakia by the Nazi party in 1939–1945, and the Communists from 1948, it is remarkable that the nation achieved independence for the second time in its history with just one further violent incident.



Stamp issued 9 August 1991 in memory of Jan Palach (POFIS 2982) – FDC and commemorative card from the Prague Postal Museum. Designed by Ivan Strnad. The se-tenant label is inscribed 'Association for the Jan Palach Foundation'.

In May 1989, thanks to a petition signed by the director of the Smetana Hall in Prague, Václav Neumann, together with members of the symphony orchestra, well-known playwrights and artists, Havel was freed after serving half of his sentence. The opposition, headed by Havel, announced a manifesto on 29 June entitled *Několik vět* ('a few sentences'), appealing in vain to the authorities to open discussions.

St Anežka – detail of sculpture in St Wenceslas Chapel, St Vitus Cathedral, Prague by Josef Václav Myslbek: POFIS 2962, 27 November 1990.

Saint Anežka (Agnes of Bohemia) was canonized by Pope John Paul II in Rome on 12 November 1989. She was a medieval Přemyslid princess, a Franciscan nun, correspondent of Clare of Assisi, and had long been regarded as one of the patron saints of Bohemia. The Communist authorities wished to gain the support of the Czechoslovak Catholics and associated themselves with this patriotic event. They had allowed Catholics to travel to Rome and were officially represented at the service. Many thousands of people took part in the celebrations and millions more saw the live television broadcast. After the service there was a rally of nearly three quarters of a million people on Letná Plain at which both Václav Havel and Alexander Dubček spoke. The recent official changes were denounced as 'cosmetic' and they asked the people to put pressure on the government to accede to their demands. (Karel Urbánek, who was appointed General Secretary of the Communist Party on 24 November, announced that the Government was prepared to negotiate, and Miroslav Štěpán – with some other hardliners – resigned their posts.)

On 13 November, a new political party, Democratic Initiative, applied for registration as an independent party. This was the first since the Communist coup of 1948. In Prague and western Bohemia there were demonstrations against ecological damage and the environmental policy. The main source of fuel was brown coal – lignite – which gives off sulphur dioxide, the chief cause of acid rain. A report stated that 18 million tonnes of sulphur dioxide per square kilometer per year was produced by Czechoslovak industry. Northern Bohemia and Moravia, western Bohemia and eastern Slovakia were officially designated 'ecological disaster zones' with 30 per cent of their forests completely destroyed. Prague and Bratislava were included in the disaster category. Official organizations sounded warnings about the damage and a number of independent green movements such as 'Brontosaurus' flourished.

At a demonstration on Letná Plain in November the economist Milos Zeman stated that Czechoslovakia was a third world country in terms of economic growth, had the highest level of pollution and second highest mortality rate in Europe. Street slogans appeared including ‘clean water, clean air, clean government!’

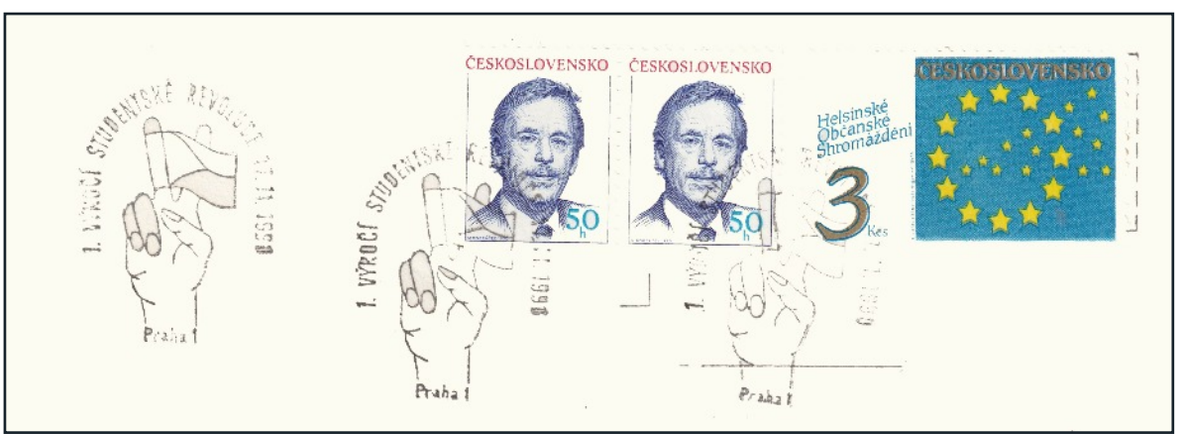
10th anniversary, Socialist Union of Youth, 9 September 1980 (POFIS 2459).

Jan Opletal – 50th anniversary of International Students Day: 10 November 1989 (POFIS 2916).

Commemorative sheet issued 13 July 1976 for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Helsinki (POFIS A2210).

The revolution proper started with a peaceful student demonstration in Bratislava on 16 November 1989 to mark International Students Day. Throughout the year student discontent and dissent had been growing. The Socialist Union of Youth had the monopoly of student organization which was patently an infringement of the higher education law of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Agreement) to which Czechoslovakia was a signatory. Tentative steps were taken to form an independent students’ organization. With the reform wing of the Socialist Union of Youth and other student bodies, the new union planned to commemorate the death of Jan Opletal – Opletal was a Prague student who had been fatally shot in October 1939 at a protest rally against the German occupation. On 17 November 1989, students gathered in Prague to officially commemorate the 50th anniversary of Opletal’s death, which had fallen on 11 November. It attracted a crowd of about 100,000 and it became a pro-democracy demonstration. It was planned that this anniversary would be something more than an anti-fascist demonstration.

About 15,000 assembled for the start of the march but were joined by thousands more in due course. Many carried flowers and candles with others bearing banners. A slogan the students had adopted at this time was ‘If not us, who? If not now, when?’ The police monitored the scene, and the students rattled their keys at them in defiance. Patriotic songs were sung. As the



Detail from a cover sent from Prague to the UK on 17 November 1990, with commemorative cancel – featuring the Victory sign and a Czechoslovak flag – for the student demonstration that started the Velvet Revolution. The 50 haler stamps (POFIS 2928), issued 9 January 1990, were the first to feature a portrait of President Havel. The 3 Kčs stamp (POFIS 2959) was issued 15 October 1990 for the Helsinki Conference held in Prague.

procession marched up Národní třída (National Avenue) towards Wenceslas Square, it was attacked by riot police, and special police known as ‘red berets’. The students held out their hands, palms upward, to show they were unarmed. Many were severely beaten up and many ended up in hospital. A monument to the victims, consisting of open, empty hands, now stands at the scene of the atrocity.

The authorities distorted the events of 17 November trying to depict the students as spoilt troublemakers. In an attempt to ‘divide and rule’, workers and intellectuals were to be kept apart. The Velvet Revolution is commonly held to have begun on this day, which had the only violent incident in the overthrow of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia.

One of a series of five postcards published in 1989 by ČTK (the Czech News Agency – Česká tisková kancelář). The caption translates: ‘We have found out in practice that you can scare the people, but not the nation’. The logo in the top right corner is for Občanské fórum

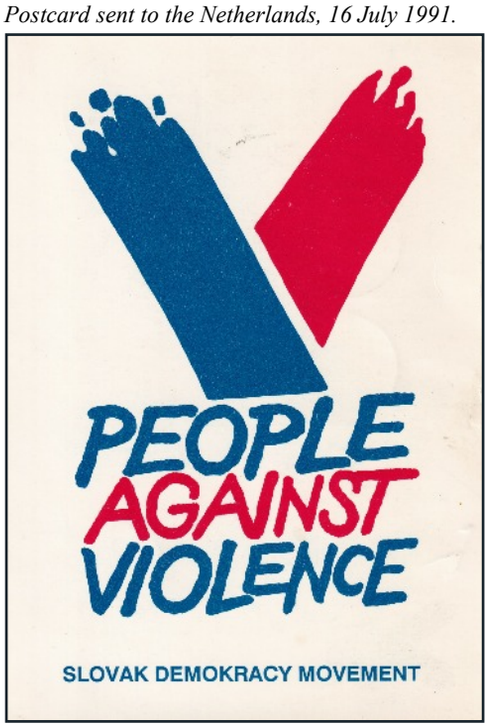
On 18 November, the students went on strike, occupying university buildings and asking for a sign of popular solidarity in the form of a general strike planned for 27 November. The actors of Prague occupied the theatres for political discussions, so joining the student protest. Actors from the provinces arrived in Prague and strike notices appeared in cities across the country.

Občanské fórum (Civic Forum) was formed on 19 November 1989, as an umbrella organization for opposition groups and individuals. Its founding document named many high ranking officials as responsible for the years of ‘normalization’, and for the police action against the students on 17 November.

There were mass demonstrations in Prague on 19 and 20 November calling for democratic reforms. The majority of the crowd were university and high school students. As they marched past newspaper offices on Wenceslas Square they taunted the journalists for writing lies, and demanded an end to censorship. The Communist authorities still kept control of television in the provinces and prevented the delivery of non-Communist papers outside Prague.

Civic Forum recruited an engineer and a miner to its leadership to demonstrate that they wanted the workers to join the movement for change. For years, to create a divided society the Communist authorities had depicted intellectuals and students as indolent troublemakers and enemies of the working class.

Postcard sent to the Netherlands, 16 July 1991.



There were protests in other Czech and Slovak cities including Brno, Olomouc, Ostrava and Bratislava on 19 and 20 November. The Czech and Slovak Republican governments threatened to ‘restore order’, but the threat was never carried out by violent methods. ln Bratislava the Velvet Revolution was as orderly and peaceful as in Prague. An attempt was made to intimidate the students of Komensky University. A deputation of four students appeared before the faculty of 200 staff but the staff applauded instead of sanctioning them.

Alexander Dubček made his first public appearance for 20 years at a rally in Bratislava on 22 November. A crowd of 80,000 acclaimed him as a victim of the repressive normalization, and as the politician who had tried to create ‘socialism with a human face’. The connection between the Velvet Revolution and Prague Spring was made. Dubček then went on to Prague to talk with the leaders of Civic Forum.

The continuing protests unsettled the Slovak Communist Party, who released without charge the Catholic dissident Ján Čarnogurský. He had been held for publishing an unofficial journal. After his release he joined the leadership of Verejnosť proti násiliu (Public Against Violence) – this organization was formed on 20 November

Stamp and FDC issued 17 November 1999, for the 10th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution (POFIS 195). The text on the FDC cachet translates: 'We promised each other love'.

1989 in Slovakia by the actor Milan Kňažko. It was a parallel organization to Občanské fórum, and drew support from groups and individuals from differing political and social circles. He became one of its leading spokesmen. The authorities also showed they were willing to negotiate with the students in universities across Slovakia.

On 24 November, the opposition in Slovakia had published the demands of the Citizen's Initiatives, Public Against Violence, and the coordinating committee of Slovak universities. There were twelve demands including free elections to the Slovak national council, and abolition of the 'leading' role of the Communist Party. Other demands concerned legal reforms, civil liberties, the separation of church from state, independent student organizations, and freedom of speech.

On 26 November, government representatives headed by the prime minister met a delegation from Civic Forum led by Havel. The meeting place was at Obecní dům (the Municipal House) where in 1918 the document declaring Czechoslovak independence had been signed. Further talks were agreed and both parties addressed a crowd of 500,000.

Civic Forum and Public Against Violence decided to go ahead with preparations for the general strike planned for Monday 27 November. There was little trust between the government and the independent organizations. Civic Forum published its manifesto on 26 November with the title 'What We Want'. The main demands were: radical change in the spheres of law, the political system, foreign policy, the economy, social justice, the environment, and culture.

The general strike took place on 27 November between noon and two o'clock. It was estimated that 80 per cent of the people stopped work. Many strikers worked overtime later so that production was not lost. Throughout Czechoslovakia church bells rang, motor horns and sirens wailed, and people rattled their keys in order to create as much noise as possible.

Two covers with imprinted 1 Kčs stamp showing President Gustav Husák, originally issued on 15 February 1987. The upper envelope has been overprinted with a cachet in red that reads: '10 December 1989 – the Gustav Husák era finished at last'. The registration fee on the lower cover (3 Kčs) has been paid using 50 haler stamps with Havel's portrait. They were cancelled at Brno 1 Post Office on 9 January 1990, the first day of issue.

A registered letter sent to the UK on 15 January 1990. The stamps include the first stamp depicting Václav Havel, the ninth President of Czechoslovakia, and one with a portrait of Tomáš Masaryk, the first President – both were issued on 9 January 1990 (POFIS 2922 and 2928).

The media, including state controlled television, gave extensive favourable coverage of the events. Within the Communist Party a reform group – Democratic Forum of Communists – demanded a number of changes to the party and condemned the Warsaw Pact invasion of 1968.

The People's Militia in Prague and Brno were by now ignoring the authorities' instructions to mobilize. The law students publicized that individual members of the militia could be accountable for their actions in court. Gradually units began to dissolve themselves.

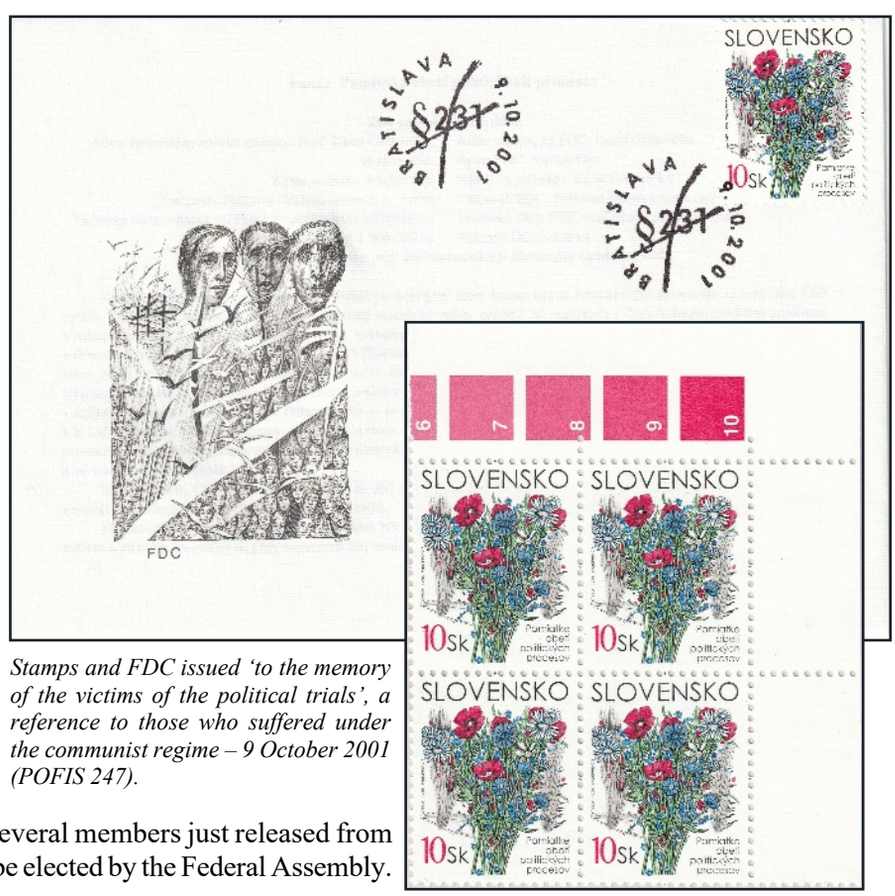
Representatives of the government and Civic Forum met again on 28 November. There were to be changes to the constitution. There were public cries for Husak to resign as president.

The final days of November saw Civic Forum negotiating directly with the Communist Party for the first time. On 30 November, a delegation from Public Against Violence met with the Slovak authorities in Bratislava to discuss leadership changes. At the meeting it was announced that the border fence between Czechoslovakia and Austria would be dismantled. The frontiers with Austria and West Germany were formally cut by dignitaries on 17 and 23 December 1989.

The Czechoslovak Communist Party met on 1 December and denounced the Warsaw Pact invasion of 1968, and on 3 December the politburo announced a new provisional government – but only 5 of 20 ministerial posts were to non-Communists. Civic Forum called for demonstrations the next day and another strike for a week ahead. There were massive demonstrations in Wenceslas Square on Monday 4 December, to demand a more representative government.

In the cabinet reshuffle the next day the Communist ministers were outnumbered 9:8. The writing was on the wall. Events moved rapidly with the prime minister Ladislav Adamec resigning on 7 December, to be replaced by a the deputy prime minister, Marián Čalfa, a Slovak Communist.

Negotiations between Civic Forum and the government continued and on 8 December it was announced that half the ministerial posts would be filled by non-Communists. On 9 December, President Husak granted an amnesty for political prisoners and announced his resignation. He resigned on 10 December after swearing in a new cabinet, which contained several members just released from prison. The new president would be elected by the Federal Assembly.



Stamps and FDC issued 'to the memory of the victims of the political trials', a reference to those who suffered under the communist regime – 9 October 2001 (POFIS 247).

Immediately, there was a triumphant rally in Wenceslas Square and on 11 December throughout the country a five-minute demonstration of popular satisfaction took place, with church bells ringing, motor horns blaring, and the inevitable key-jangling.

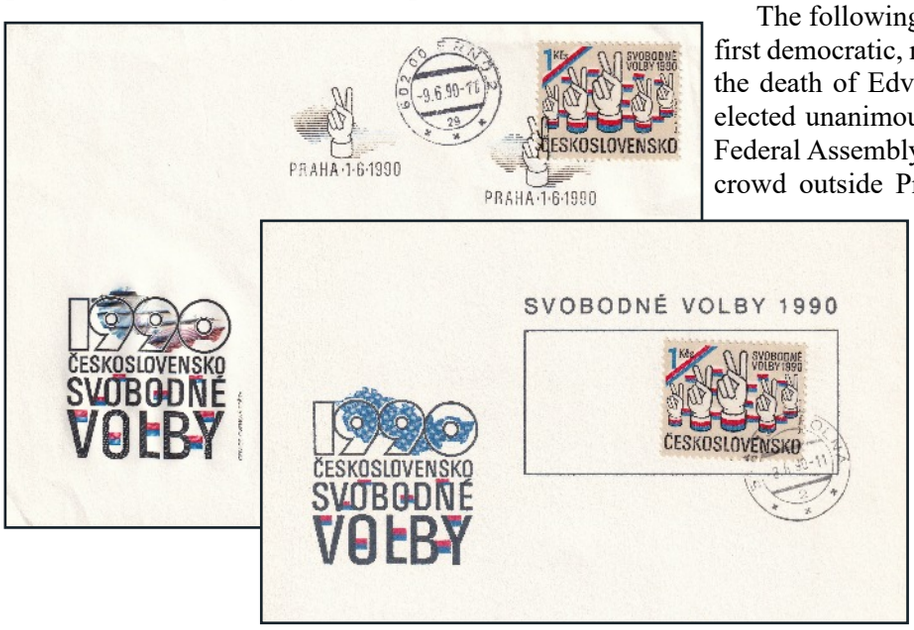
There were several potential presidential candidates including Havel and Dubček. By 16 December they had come to an agreement – Havel (a Czech) would stand for president with Dubček (a Slovak) by his side, on condition that no attempt was made to divide either himself from Dubček or Czechs from Slovaks. Civic Forum requested the election take place before Christmas with the ballot being televised. Both men were aware of Slovak grievances and wished to maintain a united front and allay Slovak distrust with Prague.

Above left – stamp issued 18 September 2001 to mark the 80th anniversary of the birth of Alexander Dubček. The illustration below the stamp includes the date 1968, together with flags of both Czechia and Slovakia.
Above right – miniature sheet issued 5 October 1996 (POFIS A124) to mark the 60th birthday of Václav Havel. Beneath the stamps the State Arms appears, with its motto 'Truth Prevails', together with Havel's signature.

On 19 December, the prime minister, Marián Čalfa, announced fundamental changes in government policy, with the security forces to be disbanded and Czechoslovakia joining the world economy once more. He endorsed Havel as the only presidential candidate. The federal assembly was reconstituted on 28 December, with Alexander Dubček elected chairman (he last held the post in 1969). Dubček was awarded the Andrei Sakharov prize for human rights by the European Parliament.

The following day Václav Havel became the first democratic, non-Communist president since the death of Edvard Beneš in 1948. Havel was elected unanimously by the 323 deputies of the Federal Assembly. He made a short speech to the crowd outside Prague Castle promising not to betray the people's confidence and to lead the country to free elections. He then went to St Vitus Cathedral where a Te Deum and Mass were celebrated by the 90-year-old Archbishop of Prague, Cardinal František Tomášek.

Czechoslovakia was swept by a wave of euphoria as 1989 drew to a close and the New Year began.



Stamp issued 1 June 1990 to commemorate the forthcoming elections. Designed by R. Vanek, and engraved by V. Fajt, it uses the Victory sign used by protestors during the Velvet Revolution. The cachet on the cover and the commemorative card includes an outline of the Republic and the text '1990 – Czechoslovakia – Free Elections'.

This article was created by Tony Holdsworth using text and materials taken from the collection of Lindy Bosworth.

New Issues – Slovak Republic
Tony Holdsworth

Images and text adapted from
www.pofis.sk/en/catalog/products

22 August 2025

500th Anniversary of the Miners' uprising 1525–1526 (POFIS 851)

The Miners' Uprising that took place from 1525 to 1526 was the greatest socio-political movement of miners in what is now Slovakia (then part of feudal Hungary). The uprising was mainly caused by changes to the pay stamp (the coin used to pay miners), harsh working conditions, and increases in taxes and fees. After the suppression of the earlier revolt led by Juraj Dóža, the working classes concentrated around the mining areas erupted in open warfare. Issues with wages were added to by problems with food supplies and sickness benefits. The largest mining company in Europe, the Thurzó-Fugger Company, based in Banská Bystrica, began to pay miners with devalued copper pay stamps in 1523. On 16 May 1525, armed miners held a demonstration asking for higher wages in Banská Bystrica. The miner's movement spread to Kremnica, Banská Štiavnica and Hodruša. In the autumn of 1525, the Miners' Union was established to defend the interests of miners, with its headquarters in Špania Dolina. At the end of February 1526, it began an armed uprising. Miners from Špania Dolina stormed into Banská Bystrica, burning down houses and occupying the town for more than ten days. Failing to conquer the castle grounds, however, they backed down and the leaders fled to Moravia and the surrounding mountains. Some of the rebels were captured and executed in Banská Bystrica in September 1526.

12 September 2025

The Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava 2025 – NVI 'T2' (POFIS 852)

The international competitive exhibition of original illustrations for children's books, the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB), is the most important event organized by BIBIANA, the international house of art for children in Bratislava. The Biennial is held under the auspices of UNESCO and the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY). It is supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic and BIBIANA is the main organizer. This year is special: first awarded in 1967, this is the 30th BIB.

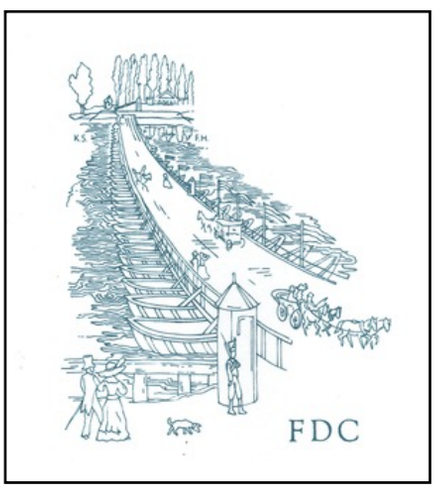
The stamp features an illustration by Paloma Valdivia from *The Book of Questions*, by Pablo Neruda, for which she received the BIB Grand Prix in 2023. Paloma studied graphic design at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and completed her postgraduate studies in creative illustration at EINA, the Barcelona School of Art and Design in Spain. Her greatest passion is children's picture books. Her books have been translated into twelve languages. She is a professor at the Catholic University of Chile, teaching 'Illustration and Autobiographical Narrative'. According to Paloma, '[books are] a museum, a window. They are also the fireworks that illuminate us during childhood. They are moments of peace, contemplation, joy, and provide views of other worlds that exist alongside ours that we do not know... yet'.

25 September 2025

The 200th Anniversary of the Coronation of Caroline Augusta of Bavaria (POFIS 853)

Caroline Augusta of Bavaria (1792–1873), from the House of Wittelsbach, was the daughter of the Bavarian King Maximilian I Joseph (1756–1825), and his first wife, Augusta Wilhelmine of Hesse-Darmstadt (1765–1796). In 1816, she married the widowed Austrian Emperor, and King of Hungary and Bohemia, Francis I of Habsburg-Lorraine (1768–1835) – as the last Holy Roman Emperor from 1792 to 1806 he had been Francis II – and became his fourth wife. Although her political role was relatively insignificant, she exercised great influence, particularly through her charitable activities, and her support of social and Church institutions, and art within the Habsburg monarchy.

On 25 September 1825 in Bratislava she was crowned Queen of Hungary. The Hungarian royal crown, also known as the Crown of St Stephen, was brought to Bratislava from Buda on 9 September 1825. It was to be held over the right shoulder of the Queen Consort during the ceremonial Mass. On its journey to Bratislava for the coronation, the Empress and her retinue crossed the Danube via a recently built pontoon bridge, in the area of what is today Ľudovít Štúr Square. On the morning of coronation day, the Emperor and Empress dressed in Hungarian clothes set off in a magnificent procession from the Primate's Palace, moved through the town to the Main Square, continuing to Merciful Brothers Square, and thence to St Martin's Cathedral, where the ceremony was held.



The pontoon bridge, also called Caroline's Bridge, was constructed specially for the occasion, and is the main motif of the FDC (left). The structure, made of thirty-two ships, had to be completely dismantled before the onset of winter. The centre of the bridge could be opened to allow ships to pass along the Danube. On the centre of the bridge was a small wooden chapel with a statute of St John of Nepomuk. For a long time this was the only traffic connection with the southern bank of the Danube: it was replaced by a permanent bridge, the Bridge of Francis Joseph (today the Old Bridge), constructed near Šafárik Square between 1890 and 1891.

31 October 2025

Christmas Mail 2025 (POFIS 854)

The highly popular 'Christmas Mail' has been organized by Slovak Post for 26 years. Christmas wishes sent to '999 99 Ježiško' and marked with a return address all get a reply from Baby Jesus' assistants, together with a small gift. Last year, a record-breaking number of letters arrived at the project's mailbox in Rajecká Lesná – mostly from places in Slovakia, but also from other countries across the globe. This year's stamp in the Christmas Mail series was inspired by 'Christmas Tree with a Present', drawn by Adam Teicher of Nová Dubnica. Michael Nagy of Komárno provided the themes for the FDC motif and the FDC postmark. More information on the Christmas Mail is available at www.vianocnaposta.sk.

New Issues – Czech Republic
Tony Holdsworth

Images and text adapted from
www.postaonline.cz/eshopfilatelie/listProducts.html?request_locale=en

3 September 2025

European Animals with their Young – miniature sheet (POFIS A1324): stamps – 31 Kč (POFIS 1324); 35 Kč (POFIS 1325); 36 Kč (POFIS 1326); and 40 Kč (POFIS 1327)

This miniature sheet is dedicated to European animals with their young and follows the previous sheet featuring native Czech species (see *Czechout* 197, December 2024). The chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*), which features as part of the miniature sheet, ceased to be a native species after the division of Czechoslovakia – and so did the marmot (*Marmota marmota*) shown on the 35 Kč stamp. The flying squirrel (*Pteromys volans*) shown on the 31 Kč stamp is native to the forests of northern Europe, while the genet (*Genetta genetta* – also shown on the miniature sheet) inhabits those of southern Europe. Common bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus,* illustrated with yellow-legged gulls – *Larus michahellis* – on the 40 Kč stamp) can be seen along the coasts of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, while spotting the elusive Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*) on small islands is a rare miracle. Illustrated on the 36 Kč stamp, the Alpine ibex (*Capra ibex*) lives in steep, rough terrain and open alpine meadows.

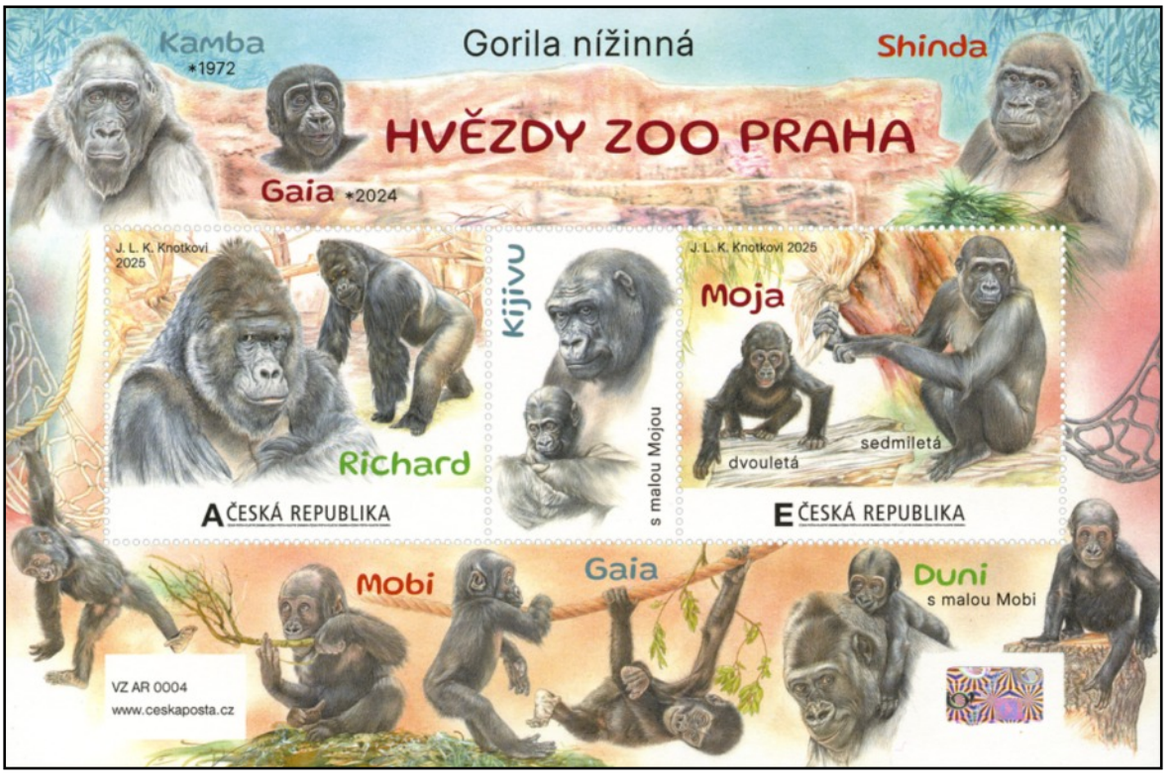
Personalities: Soňa Červená (POFIS 1328)

The opera singer Soňa Červená (1925–2023) is illustrated at the time of her return from exile to her beloved Prague after 1989. The rose symbolizes her lifelong role as Carmen, which she performed more than 150 times on all the world's leading opera stages. Daughter of the well-known cabaret artist Jiří Červený, she began her singing career with the role of Káča in *Divotvorný hrnec* (The Magic Pot) at the Liberated Theatre of J. Voskovec and J. Werich in Prague. This was adapted from the 1947 Broadway musical *Finian's Rainbow*, by Burton Lane, Edgar Yip Harburg, and Fred Saidy. Červená's first opera engagement was with the Brno Opera. After emigrating from Berlin to the West in 1958, she appeared on all the major opera stages of Europe and America, where she also helped bring the works of Leoš Janáček to wider recognition.

A love letter – NVI 'B' (POFIS 1329)

The stamp and central coupons on the miniature sheet depict the theme of a love letter. The artist, with a distinctive mid-twentieth century style, expresses personal childhood memories of writing and receiving dozens of love letters as a young boy.

24 September 2025



Stars of Prague Zoo – miniature sheet, NVI ‘A’ & ‘E’ (POFIS VZ ČP AR 0004)

The miniature sheet depicts the story of the Prague Zoo’s gorilla group, which began after the floods of 2002. Once the pavilion was repaired, the question arose of who should return and who should be its new resident. The new leader chosen was a ten-year-old male, Richard (NVI ‘A’), brought from Paignton Zoo in England. Only the female Kijivu and her half-sister Shinda remained from the original group. It soon became clear that Kijivu was expecting a baby, which was born shortly before Christmas 2004. The baby was named Moja – meaning ‘First’ (NVI ‘E’). Kijivu, with newborn Moja, is the motif of the stamp’s coupon. Moja’s birth was a major event, attracting crowds of visitors. At the end of 2011, aged seven, Moja left for her new home at Cabárceno in Spain, where she met a male named Niki and became pregnant the following year. Her daughter, Duni, later returned to Prague, where she met her grandmother Kijivu in the new Dja Reserve pavilion. Today, the main attractions are two new arrivals – Mobi, daughter of Duni, and the youngest, Gaia, another daughter of Kijivu. In the upper left corner of the miniature sheet, the group’s oldest member, Kamba, watches over them all. Now more than fifty years old, she was taken from poachers in Cameroon. Next to this elder is a symbolic portrait of the youngest, Gaia, who has recently turned one year old.

8 October 2025

Beauties of our country: Hluboká Castle – NVI ‘B’ (POFIS 1330)

Hluboká Castle, above the Vltava River, is considered one of the most beautiful castles in the Czech Republic. Originally a 13th-century fortress, it was gradually rebuilt, acquiring its present Neo-Gothic form in the 19th century under the Schwarzenberg family (the coat of arms of the last owner of the château, Adolf of Schwarzenberg, is shown in the lower left-hand corner of the stamp). The castle is surrounded by a splendid park in the English style and features richly furnished interiors with historic furniture, paintings, tapestries, and weapons. The Schwarzenbergs obtained the castle in 1661 and lived in Hluboká until the end of 1939, when Adolf emigrated overseas to escape the Nazis. Hluboká Castle is now a National Cultural Monument of the Czech Republic.

8 October 2025

Personalities: Tadeáš Hájek of Hájek (POFIS 1333)

Tadeáš Hájek of Hájek (1525–1600) was the personal physician of the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II, and the stamp marks the 500th anniversary of his birth in Prague. He had three wives, three sons, and one daughter. He studied in Vienna, Bologna, and Milan, returning to Prague in 1555 as a professor of mathematics at the Charles University. The details on the frame symbolize his scientific and cultural versatility – ranging from medicine, astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, and botany to translation work, and his involvement in preparing the Bohemian Confession (a Protestant doctrinal statement that unified various Protestant groups, including Lutherans, Reformed, and Bohemian Brethren, under a common faith). The coat of arms in the text section was granted to Hájek for his merits as the emperor's personal physician.

Works of Art on Postage Stamps: Václav Hollar Ship Engravings (POFIS 1331 & 1332)

Depicting ships was not the main focus of Václav Hollar's work, but since he occasionally had to spend time on these Baroque ships during his travels, he created charming illustrative, and documentary engravings dedicated to them. The stamps on the miniature sheet are placed against the background of an engraving featuring a windmill, created after a design by J. Brueghel. All the engravings of ships on the stamps and first-day covers are cropped details from larger works: *Galley and other ships in a sea storm* (POFIS 1331), and *Fleet off the Irish coast* (POFIS 1332).

For other examples of Hollar engravings used in Czechoslovak and Czech philately, see the presentation by Wojciech Kierstan on the Society website: www.cpsgb.org/pages/displays.htm.

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Meetings	Four London meetings in 2026, two joint meetings in Yorkshire, and five Zoom meetings.
Newsletters	Members receive regular newsletters with updates on Society business.
Publications	Members receive the quarterly journal *Czechout* which includes articles of interest on Czech and Slovak philately and helps members to keep in touch with Society affairs. The Society publishes *Monographs* and Print-on-demand titles on wide-ranging topics containing original research.
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Auctions & Market Page	Regular auctions, with a varied range of reasonably priced items, together with a Market Page, are both accessible through the Society website (www.cpsgb.org/pages/auction.htm and www.cpsgb.org/pages/market.htm).
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Accessories at Trade prices	Members may order accessories, album leaves, and philatelic books at a substantial saving. Delivered direct. Contact the Treasurer.
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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, or by PayPal. Please contact the Treasurer for details.

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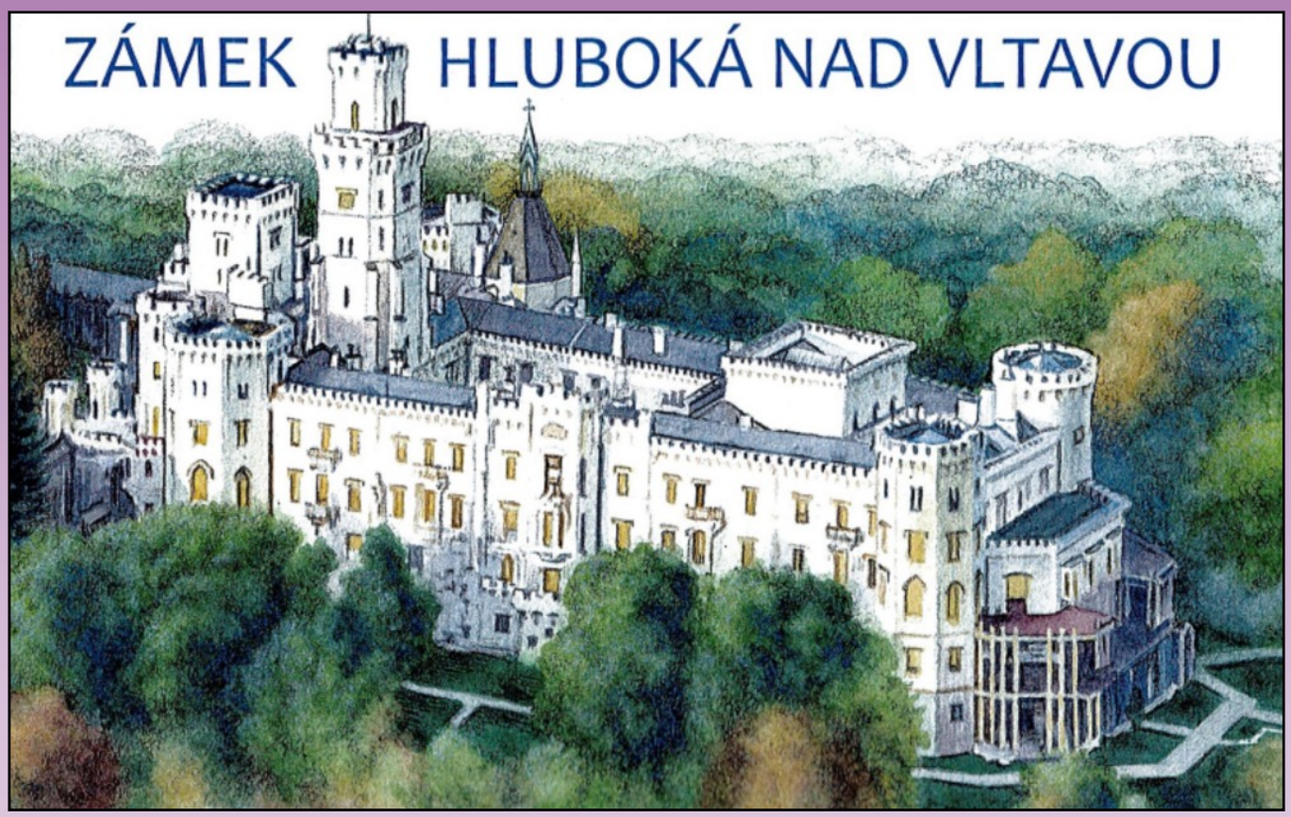
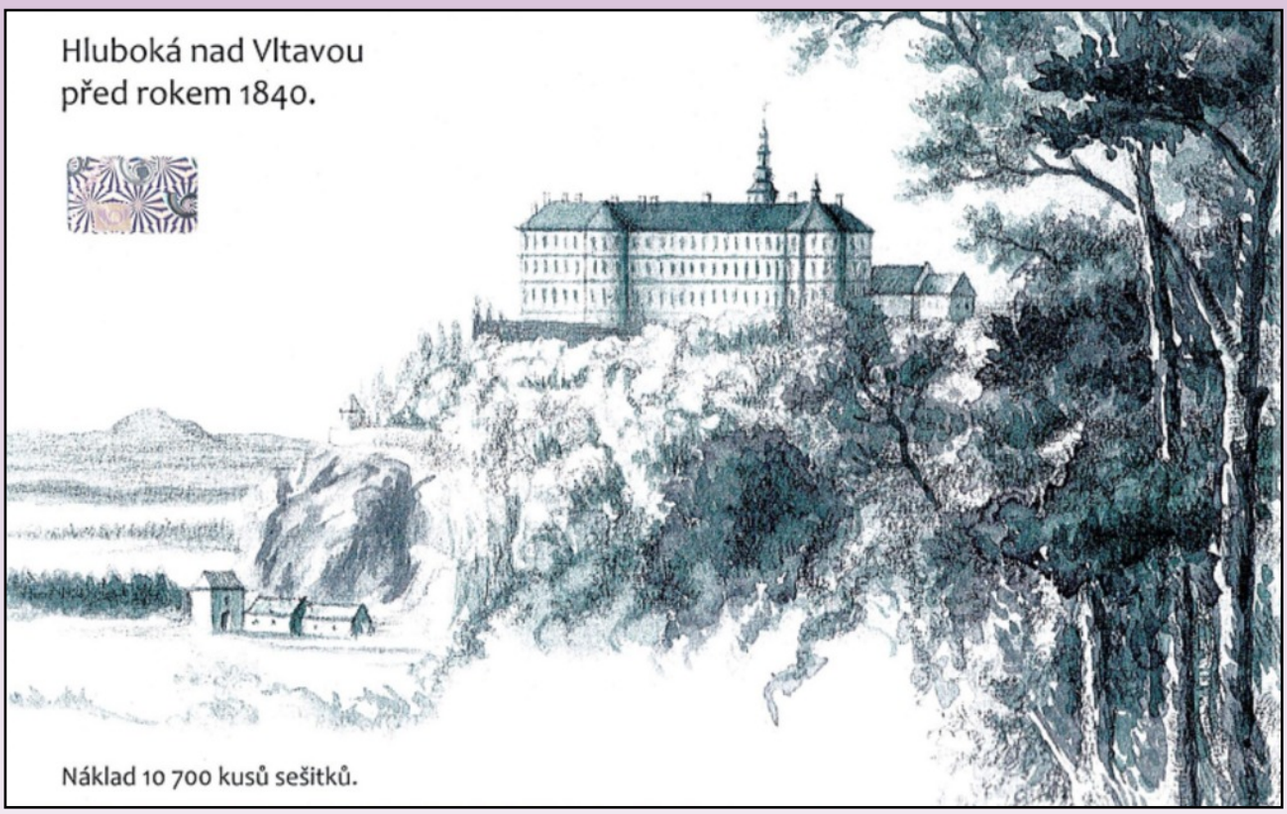
Cooperation Agreement with the Society for Czechoslovak Philately

Check out our sister organization, the Society for Czechoslovak Philately, at their website: www.csphilately.net and through their Treasurer, Marisa Galitz at 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 join both societies?





Hluboká Castle – front and back covers of the commemorative booklet
(POFIS ZSL80 – page 29)