



CZECHOUT

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Editor: Colin W.Spong FRPSL

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Vol. 25/4	CONTENTS	December 2007
Notes, News and Notices		93
Book Review		98
The First Multicolour Cancellations		99
Covers of Interest		100
Liberation of Czechoslovakia		101
Monograph 15 – Additions and Comments		101
Comments on 'Parcel Card Stickers'		103
Postcards and Politics		103
Universal Postal Union		104
What? When? Where?		119
New Issues (Czech)		121
New Issues (Slovak)		123

NOTES

The next London meetings are on **Saturday 12 January** when **Yvonne Gren** will be showing *East Silesia* and *Some of my Favourites* and **Saturday 15 March** when **Robin Pizer** will give a display on *Mail between Czechoslovakia & Germany 1918-1925, especially German Exchange Control and Czech Postage Dues*.

There will be two International Exhibitions in 2008 which will be of interest to our members. **PRAGA 2008 Friday 12 to Sunday 14 September 2008** will stage the competition classes of traditional philately, postal history, philatelic literature and an experimental class of one-frame exhibits. It will be held simultaneously with the 11th International Collectors Fair. **Yvonne Wheatley** has been appointed the UK Commissioner. This is followed by **WIPA 2008 Thursday 18 to Sunday 21 September 2008 in Vienna**. The UK Commissioner is **Brian Sole**.

The Editorial team send best wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Errata: The September *Czechout* en route to the printer gained two blank pages, although the correct number of pages is there [ending on page 92]; if anyone wishes to have a replacement of the last four pages please inform Rex Dixon. It was **Mervyn Benford** who gave the displays on *Hungarian folk tradition* and *Hungarian 2nd Inflation* at the Joint Meeting in Bradford; Gerry Thompson of the Austrian Society did not display.

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

NEWS & NOTICES

Postex 2007 in Apeldoorn 19–21 October Report on exhibition and visit by Reginald Hounsell

Congratulations must go to Hans van Dooremalen and his team from the Vereniging voor Tsjechoslowakije Filatelie, our Dutch sister society, on the slick organisation in mounting the tremendous display of Czechoslovakia-related materials that would not have been out of place in a full International exhibition.

With 100 frames of material ranging from early postal history of Pozsony (Pressburg) and Brno, to Airmail, Military posts, Sudetenland, 1st & 2nd World War, WW1 mail of the Czech and Slovak sailors serving in the Austro-Hungarian Navy; Hradčany printing history, President Masaryk stamps, Slovakia, Carpatho-Ukraine, Liberation overprints and postmarks; Sonderstempel 1918-39; Post 1945, Sokol, Modern Czechoslovakia, no Czech collector could have failed to find displays of interest to them. Much interest was shown by the general public resulting in the Dutch society enrolling a number of new members at the exhibition.

Congratulations to **Garth Taylor** on achieving a Gold standard for his study of routes and rates of the 3rd issue of Czechoslovakia airmails; and to **Brian Day** for a silver standard award for his display of Military Posts in Slovakia 1918-1920.

With a further 550 frames allocated to other European societies, displays of Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Russia, plus Austria, France and Germany and a number of thematic displays meant all tastes were catered for. Amongst the Austrian society section I found a very good exhibit of Prague postmarks. The German Society exhibits contained an interesting display of Bohemia and Moravia Protectorate. Some non-Czech items I also found interesting were several 'Germania' exhibits; Berlin Rohrpost; French Maritime mail; a large Russian Postal history display; Revenues of South Africa involving Border crossings; and a wide range of material in a thematic exhibit on the Peace cycle rallies started in Eastern Europe in 1948.

For non-philatelists there were a number of non-philatelic displays such as poster and card collages made from 1000s of cut-up stamps, exhibitions by the Dutch Miniature club, of submarines (one several feet long!) and tin soldiers.

50 dealer stands were centrally placed 'bourse' style, giving a wide variety of material for sale. Whilst, other than thematic, none had Czechoslovakia stamps for sale, several-stocked Czech-related postal history items. An interesting range of 1922 to Modern Airmail covers was found at one dealer.

With a number of members from the UK, together with Dutch and German members staying in and around Apeldoorn, impromptu social evenings in a local Chinese restaurant plus an informal Saturday evening dinner at the Café Paris in Apeldoorn were organised. Once again thanks go to Hans and our Dutch and German colleagues for their great hospitality and together with Rex Dixon frequently acting as chauffeurs.

(UK-based) contributing members:

Lindy Bosworth	<i>WW1 mail of the Czech and Slovak sailors serving in the Austro-Hungarian Navy</i>
Lindy Bosworth	<i>The Prague Exhibition grounds at Holesovice, Modern Slovakia</i>
Tony Bosworth	<i>Sokol</i>
Brian Day	<i>Military Posts in Slovakia 1918-1920</i>
Rex Dixon	<i>Postal history of the Hultschin / Hlučín area from 1820</i>
Rex Dixon	<i>The year following Munich</i>
Bill Hedley	<i>The Postal History of Pozsony (Pressburg) to 1919</i>
Barry Horne	<i>Watercolour covers</i>
Barry Horne	<i>What might have been (essays from 1918 and later)</i>
Colin Spong	<i>Slovak censor marks (WW2)</i>
Garth Taylor	<i>Study of the routes & rates of the 3rd issue of airmail stamps</i>

Meeting held Saturday 3 November 2007 at the Czech and Slovak National Club at 2.30 pm



Past-Chairman Richard Beith congratulating the new Chairman at the AGM held in the morning.

The newly elected Chairman, Mrs Yvonne Gren, welcomed 22 members. Apologies had been received from seven members.

Without more ado she invited **Rex Dixon** to display **Czechoslovakia from 1938**. Rex explained that he would show the progressive dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in the year following the infamous Munich Agreement of 29 September 1938.

He illustrated the liberation of the Asch and Rumburg districts even before Munich, the effects of the Agreement itself, and postmarks marking the fine tuning of the Sudeten frontier in November. He emphasised that the referendum and Reichstag elections held on 4 December were nothing to do with the plebiscite envisaged by the Agreement, the frontier commission having resolved all border issues without needing to consult the public.

The problems of the Polish and Hungarian minorities were not directly addressed at Munich. Within hours a strong Poland demanded and wrung the concession of the Teschen area, an area they termed Zaolzie (i.e. Trans-Olža). The Poles also acquired four post offices from Slovakia: two adjacent to Zaolzie, Sucha Hora in Orava and Javorina in Spiš. On the other hand the Czechs rejected the overtures from Hungary, which saw Mussolini and Hitler impose their decision on 2 November. Hungary occupied a large swathe of southern Slovakia and southern Carpatho-Ukraine. The rump of Czechoslovakia disintegrated into a federal state, with Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine both obtaining autonomy from Prague.

Under the tutelage of the German foreign minister, Slovakia declared its independence on 14 March 1939. The Carpatho-Ukraine did the same, but their independence lasted just one day when Hungarian troops marched in and occupied the territory. The Hungarians organised it as the bilingual county of Kárpátalja. A confrontation with the Slovak State saw the transfer of a small part of eastern Slovakia into Kárpátalja. On 15 March the Czech rump came under German protection – belatedly the western powers saw the true Hitler, and stood by Poland less than six months later.

In September Hitler invaded Poland. Zaolzie now became the Olsagebiet and was attached to Upper Silesia rather than to the Sudetenland. Slovak forces also moved into Poland and reclaimed the small areas lost the year before. But they moved a little further and recovered those parts of Orava and Spiš that had been lost to Poland after the First World War. Rex concluded his display with some mail, mainly commercial, from this small and difficult area.

Rex backed up his display with HMSO documents, which included the text of the Munich Agreement, and some contemporary maps, including one published in the few weeks between the initial delineation of the Sudeten frontier and its final determination.

Roger Morrell gave the vote of thanks. He remarked that seldom had a display generated so much interest from the audience, who had spent a long time examining the material displayed. He suggested that the display should be the subject of a book, to prevent the detailed knowledge acquired from being lost.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 4.20 pm.

Rex A Dixon

Northern Meeting held at Leeds Stamp Fair 17 November 2007

Six members were present together with three visitors.

Keith Brandon, a regular attendee at the joint meetings, was welcomed as a new member of the Society. He displayed Austrian Post Büchel. These are booklets in German language produced by the Postal Union and Pension Fund to be distributed by postmen at Christmas to their customers. They contained advertising as well as useful postal information. Keith would be interested in hearing from other members who have similar material and in particular would like to know whether they were produced in different languages in other parts of the Austrian Empire. Please contact him through the Editor.

Keith also showed Ungarisch Hradisch (now Uherské Hradiště) postal history. **Derek Baron** showed perfins and advertising stationery of Olomouc. A comprehensive display of Carpatho Ukraine by **Peter Cybaniak** was followed by 1919 overprints on the stamps of Austria and Hungary by **Yvonne Wheatley**.

The Society wishes to record its thanks to Leeds Philatelic Society for generously making the room available for the meeting without charge. Another meeting will take place at the same event next year on Saturday 15 November 2008 at 2.00pm.

Yvonne Wheatley

Letters & e-mails to the Editor

☒ **Tibor Reis** is looking for recent mint GB in blocks and gutter pairs. In exchange he's offering ĀSR, Czech and Slovak from 1945 to date; he can also offer Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Austria and Hong Kong. Tibor Reis, Berliner StraÙe 19, 71679 Asperg, Germany. Email: tibor_reis@yahoo.de [member of BDPH (Germany), GB & CW PS (Switzerland), CPSGB].

We suggest members answering any requests should not send any stamps until contact has been confirmed and a satisfactory form of exchange, etc, agreed upon. The Society cannot enter into any correspondence or take responsibility for any transactions entered into.

☒ The **Association of British Philatelic Societies [ABPS]** now issue an E-Bulletin regularly, containing details of actions and decisions made. Members with e-mail addresses who would like copies should send their details to abps.phil@telics.co.uk. Non-e-mail addressees may obtain five issues for £2.00 from Geoff Longbottom, Mill Close, Hickling, Norwich, NR12 0YT. The December issue of *ABPS News* has just arrived and both of these items are highly commended and give a response to "What does the ABPS do!"

☒ **Re ABPS Harrogate 2008**. Anyone wishing to enter the national competition should visit the website www.harrogate2008.org.uk for an entry form and rules concerning the competition. Alternatively contact **Richard and Yvonne Wheatley**, the joint secretaries (contact details on the inside cover). The closing date for applications is 28 February 2008.

☒ **Geoff McAuley** will be giving a display of *Masaryk's Czechoslovakia* to the North of Ireland PS on 14th March 2008. The meeting is at 19.00 at Hunterhouse College, Upper Lisburn Road, Finaghy, Belfast. Enquiries to Norman Scott on 028 90 795530.

☒ **Reg Hounsell** will be giving a display of *Aspects of Czechoslovakia* to the Peterborough & District PS on 17th January 2008. Any members of the CPSGB living in the area are invited to attend. Contact the Hon. Sec: Alan Berrisford 01733 567527 [member of CPSGB].

Publications

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

- The Winter 2007 issue of *Austria*, No. 160:
 - ▶ On being a Commissioner (Wheatley); The Mail of the First K.K. Privileged Danube Steamship Company [DDSG] (Transl: Taubei); Station Ships in the Far East, Part I: End of July 1901 – 2 November 1914, Part II: The Station Ships (Pirotte); Beginner's Guide to Decoding Austrian Pre-Philatelic Covers Part IV (Brandon).

- The September 2007 issue of *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Tschechoslowakei*, Vol.38, Whole No.153. Douglas Baxter has kindly translated the list of contents for us. The articles include:
 - ▶ Balkans Philatelic Club founded (-); The Political History of Czechoslovakia, Part 4 (Kuch); On the trail of the London Issue, Part 5 (Fischer, transl: Lehr); Variations in the stamp 6.00Kčs "30 years of the Academy of Sciences" (Ziegler); Royal & Imperial Austrian Postmarks and the languages used on them, with regard to the linguistic varieties in the Crown Lands of Bohemia, Moravia and Austrian Silesia (Stoof); The Special Postmarks from the Slovak PO, 2006 (Tischner); Introduction of bar-code labels in the Czech Republic (Fencl & Schembra).
- The September/October & November/December 2007 issues of *The Czechoslovak Specialist*, Vol. 69, Whole No.605/6 No. 5/6. The articles include:
 - ▶ Extended Arch Types on the Fifth Design 25h Hradčany [2] (Olšina); The O.J.Simpson of Czech Philately (Horvath & Svoboda); A visit to Kežmarok (van Zenten); Am I Czech or Czechoslovak? (Ruzicka); Stamp Terminology: Sheets, Panes, Souvenir Sheets and Miniature Sheets (Miller); Electronic Picture Postcards of the Czech Postal Administration (Kunc).
 - ▶ Extended Arch Types on the Fifth Design 25h Hradčany [3] (Olšina); Dr Emil Holub – Explorer/Philatelist (van Zenten, Vrtílková & Kralíček); 120th Anniversary of Organized Czech Philately (Holoubek).
- The October 2007 issue of *Dylizans*, No.47. The articles include:
 - ▶ Light Fantastic -The Challenge International de Tourisme (Negus); Fund-Raising Labels for the Society for the Promotion of Polish Education (Cariuk).
- The 9, 10 & 11/2007 issues of *Filatellie*. Vol 57. The English translation of the Contents does not cover all the articles:
 - ▶ Czech Postal Agencies for the Tenth Time (Bejsta); History of Wagons, Carriages, Stage Coaches [4] (Horák); Singular & Plural of Currency Units on Stamps (Feldmann); Coupons are also Philatelic Material (Horák); Personalised Stamps and FIP (Brendl).
 - ▶ History of Wagons, Carriages, Stage Coaches [5] (Horák); Numbers in the Names of Post Offices (Kratochvíl); Plate errors on the Czech Stamps of the first half of 2007 (Brožová & Zedník).
 - ▶ History of Wagons, Carriages, Stage Coaches [6] (Horák); Annexation of Ruthenia to Czechoslovakia in 1918-1920 [1] (Mezera); Czechs Forced Labourers in Berlin 1940-1945 (Wewer).
- The 4/5 2007 issues of *Merkur Revue*. The articles include:
 - ▶ Jubilee of BRATISLAVA 1937-2007 (-); Postmarks of the Plebiscite area [7] (Tovačovský); Typology of the issue "Fishes 1966" (-); Travelling Post Offices in Carpatho-Ukraine [2] (Vostatek); Zborov 1917-1937-2007 (Fritz); Plebiscite covers with Travelling Post Offices [1] (Kypast); Agriculture & Science 1923 [3] (Štupka).
 - ▶ Postmarks of the Plebiscite area [8] (Tovačovský); Milan Hegar, creator of Czechoslovak stamps (Fischer); Forgeries of a proof of the First Czechoslovak airmail issue (Kračmar); Interesting Czechoslovak covers 1918-1920 (Fritz); Plebiscite covers with Travelling Post Offices [2] (Kypast); Orders of the Golden Fleece (Semrad).
- No. 9/2007 issue of *NIEUWS* (Dutch Society for Czechoslovak Philately)
 - ▶ Karlsbad – 30 Turbulent Years [3]; Pofis 5 in dubbelfunctie (Trip); Een "teruggevonden" voorloper (Cernik); Postal Tariffs of Czechoslovakia [6] (van Dooremalen).
- The December 2007 issue of *Stamps of Hungary* No 171. The articles include:
 - ▶ Die Farhpost [Coach Mail Service] in Hungary, 1750-1888 (Czirók, transl: Hedley).



BOOK REVIEW

Carpatho Ukraine: Postal History and Stamps 1786–2000, compiled by Ing. Jan Verleg, published by the Vereniging voor Tsjechoslowakije-Filatelie, Netherlands, 2007, in collaboration with the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain, for whom it is Monograph No. 21. 227 A4 pages, of which a large number are in colour.

There have been previous publications on the Carpatho Ukraine, notably the 1991 book in Hungarian by Dr Simády, and our Monograph No. 4 by Juan Page in English, but this is the first time there is a fully comprehensive book on the subject in English. Making the information accessible should lead to an awakening of interest in the area. Jan Verleg has had the full co-operation of all the area's other leading collectors, and the result is a compilation of the current state of knowledge of all aspects of the philately and postal history of the Carpatho Ukraine. (This name has been adopted as that is the name most familiar to English readers.)

The story starts in 1786 as that year saw the start of the first regular mail service in the area. Year 2000 has been chosen as the end date as the tumultuous times in the early years of an independent Ukraine appear to have ended. The story has been divided into 13 chapters:

- 1 Austrian postal administration prior to first postmaster postmarks
- 2 Austrian postal administration from then to 1848
- 3 Hungarian postal administration 1848–1849
- 4 Austrian postal administration 1849–1867
- 5 Hungarian postal administration 1867–1918
- 6 Period of chaos between 1918 and 1920
- 7 Czechoslovak postal administration 1919–1938
- 8 Autonomy and independence 1938–1939
- 9 Hungarian occupation 1938–1944
- 10 Restored Czechoslovak administration during 1944
- 11 National Council 1944–1945
- 12 Soviet postal administration 1945–1992
- 13 Ukrainian postal administration 1992–2000

The book contains all the information that you would expect: the background history, maps, lists of post offices, the postmarks, the stamps pertinent to the area, and much, much more. And all this has been covered in considerable detail. It is richly illustrated, with hundreds of covers shown in full colour.

I must congratulate Jan Verleg on his scholarship and attention to detail, and our fellow Dutch society for the superb production. I can heartily recommend it to anyone with even the slightest interest in this small but fascinating area.

Rex Dixon

Obtainable in the U.K. from Rex Dixon at £25.00 plus £2.50 postage & packing – address given on inside front cover. Members elsewhere should obtain it from the Netherlands, for €35.00 plus p&p – contact Hans van Dooremalen (email cs-filatelie@home.nl).

THE FIRST MULTICOLOUR CANCELLATIONS

-Frederik D.A. Backeljauw-

We thank the author for letting us have his follow-up article to Mr W. Van Riet's paper that appeared in Czechout 2/2007, and both of which were published in the journal 'Belgaphil'.

The designer of these multi-colour postal handstamps was a well-known Czech stamp collector and inventor. His name was J. Pospisil. He submitted his design to the Czech Postal Services in 1935 and suggested they could be used on special occasions. The Handstamp was composed of several parts, one for each colour, and operated like the former numerator-handstamps used to do. This meant that each colour required a separate stamping.

As Mr. W. Van Riet mentioned, this type of handstamp was used for the first time on the occasion of the annual celebration of independence, more precisely on 28 October 1935. The colours used were blue and red.

(Figure 1) →



I found several of these multi-coloured cancellations in my own collection. A few of them you can see in these illustrations. Some of these handstamps were really bright, like this one, used on the occasion of the 20th birthday of the republic.

Figure 2



PŘEROV 1 : Central Moravian Stamp Exhibition
In use 20.6 to 16.7.1936
Colours: Blue-Green

Figure 3



TRENČIN : 80th anniversary of the death of the Slovak writer and politician Ľudovít Štúr 1815-1856.
In use 28.8 to 31.8.1936
Colours: Blue-Red

Figure 4



TURČIANSKY SVÄTÝ MARTIN
20th anniversary of the Republic
In use 21.7.1938
Colours: Red-Blue

Figure 5



PARDUBICE-ZÁVODIŠŤ
VIIIth race for the golden helmet
In use 25.9 to 27.9.1936
Colours: Green-Purple-Yellow
←

BOHDANEČ U PARDUBIC
Motor Car race meeting - In use 07.08.1938
Colours: Purple-Blue-Green →

Figure 6



>



Figure 7. To conclude my article, a design of a stamp that is not well known, even to Czech philatelists. Ing. Pospisil designed this handstamp in no less the five colours: Blue-Brown-Red-Green-Purple.

This canceller was designed to be used for another annual celebration of independence (one year after the bi-coloured one) but was not used because it would take five manipulations to complete one stamping. It is said that of this design there are only three examples in existence: one in the Postal Museum of Prague, one with the well-known philatelist Václav Nebeský (author of many books on Czechoslovak special stamps) and the other one I was so lucky to acquire from the late English philatelist Bill Dawson.

COVERS OF INTEREST

-Derek Walker-

1943 Airmail letter written in Czech from Persia [Iran] to Ing. V. Göttinger living in Gosforth [Newcastle]. With Persian/Iranian stamps, Teheran postmark and Arabic sealing censor tape and censor mark, Russian censor mark and British Opened by /Examiner 4317 PC 90 resealing tape. There is also a wavy line postal cancellation with possible Arabic characters and date 19 Oct, and a small violet cachet circling numerals x 10 – significance not known.



The Civil Censorship Study Circle Handbook *“British Empire Civil Censorship Devices World War II: Colonies and Occupied Territories in the Mediterranean Sea and Middle East”* by D.J.Little, A.R.Torrance and K. Morenweiser, published in 1996 mentions on pp 107-110 what information that is known so far.

In 1941 Britain & Russia divided this region into North and South zones, setting up Anglo-Soviet Censorship for examination of mails. The British section was controlled as part of “Middle East Network” with HQ in Cairo, allocated letters “DK” – so far not seen. The Anglo-Soviet-Persian Censorship was established 13 February 1942 at Teheran.

Russian Type 2A [Nov 41-11 Nov 45] violet, blue.

Censorship Tape: Only one type has been recorded, with reddish ink on white or off-white paper. The Arabic script reads [with different settings and printings] “Opened by Censorship Authority” .

The numbers in circle may be individual censor’s marks.
Colin Spang, Editor.

LIBERATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

-Richard Beith-

In his article 'Liberation of Czechoslovakia', *Czechout* 3/2007, p. 77, Savoy Horvath has repeated the claim that the Czechoslovak Independent Armoured Brigade (CIAB) were involved in the fighting for Cheb airport at the end of April 1945. This is not so. By VE Day in early May, nearly all of the CIAB were still investing the German garrison at Dunkirk, which only surrendered on 8 May. On 9 May the German commander, Admiral Frisius, signed the capitulation in the presence of the CIAB's Commanding Officer, General Liška. The CIAB was then involved in disarming the Germans and supervising their transport to POW camps. The main Brigade only departed for their homeland on 12 May, crossing the pre-Munich frontier at Rozvadov on 18 May. A smaller unit did precede the return of the bulk of the CIAB. This was called 'The Combined Detachment' (Kombinovaný oddíl) and consisted of about 150 men under Major A. Sítek. They left the Dunkirk area on 23 April, crossed the border near Cheb on 1 May and reached Plzeň on 5 May.

A detailed English language account of this 'Token Force', apparently based on contemporary documents, can be found on the internet at <http://www.geocities.com/czechandslovakthings/>. English language accounts of this part of the CIAB's history can be found in the three excellent volumes 'On All Fronts, Czechoslovaks in World War II' (East European Monographs, Boulder CO, 1991-2000). In particular, see Vol. I, pp.193-204 and Vol. II, pp.171-180. An even more recent bilingual volume, 'And Along Came Freedom' [A přinesli nám svobodu] (Plzeň, ZR & T Plzeň, 2005) by Zdeněk Roučka, is full of detail about the American entry into Western Bohemia and has excellent photographs.

MONOGRAPH 15 – ADDITIONS AND COMMENTS

-Richard Beith-

Hopefully this will be the first of a regular series in *Czechout* expanding on some aspects of the philatelic and postal history of the Free Czechoslovak Forces in Great Britain from 1940 to 1945.



1. Commemorative postmark C24

This mark, illustrated on page 34 of monograph 15, was the only one listed under the heading: 'Prepared for use but not introduced'. The design was described as a 'Symbolic wooden church' and it was noted that it was to commemorate the Sub-Carpathian Rus writer Alexander Duchnovic. Roman Dubyniak and Peter Cybaniak have kindly pointed out that the design was based on a specific church, the Ukrainian church in Uzhok (Užok), see the postcard which they supplied.

They also gave a short biography of Duchnovic (Oleksander Dukhnovych 1803 to 1865), which follows:

Carpatho-Ukrainian, cultural activist, teacher, writer and publisher. Ukrainian catholic priest and ecclesiastical canon of Priashiv (Prešov). Born in Priashivshchyna (Western Carpatho-Ukraine) in the village of Topolia. He dedicated his life to the defence of Priashivshchyna and Carpatho-Ukraine against Hungarian efforts to Hungarify it. By 1848 he was constantly persecuted by the Hungarian authorities. He collected Ukrainian songs, wrote patriotic poems and newspaper articles. He wrote 'The Ecclesiastical History of Priashivshchyna' in Latin which was printed in Russia in 1877. As the language he used was a mixture of Ukrainian and old Ukrainian church slavonic, the pro-Russians living in Carpatho-Ukraine from 1922 to 1938 used him as an example against efforts of the native Ukrainian population to restore Ukrainian language and culture.



Two questions remain: a) why was the postmark not used, and b) what was the significance of the date on the postmark, 24 April 1941? Perhaps the answer to a) lies in the ambivalent attitude to Carpatho-Ukraine as a constituent of post-war Czechoslovakia exhibited by Dr Beneš in London from 1939 onwards, see Zeman and Klimek, *The Life of Edvard Beneš 1884-1948: Czechoslovakia in Peace and War* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997).

2. Inward overseas mail to Czechoslovaks in the Royal Air Force

The use of the 'undercover' address, P O Box 281, GPO London EC1, was noted on pages 39-40 of the monograph and one inward cover from the USA was illustrated. Two further covers are shown here, both from Canada, one from the end of 1944 and one from the first days of peace.

The November 1944 airmail cover posted in Quebec was correctly addressed to Box 281



and redirected from London to 'Czechoslovak Depot, RAF Cosford, Nr. Wolverhampton, Staffs'. At the top of the letter is a crayon '311', presumably added at Cosford, indicating that the addressee was a member of 311 Squadron. By this time, 311 was part of Coastal Command, flew Liberators and was based in Scotland at Tain in Ross-shire. The only mystery about this cover is the apparent 10c air mail rate, when the Canadian transatlantic rate was 30c at the time. An enquiry has been made to the Canadian Aerophilatelic Society.

The July 1945 cover, which has not been censored, is to the same addressee but he has now been promoted to Pilot Officer! There is no reference to Box 281, but the cover has been sent directly to 311 Squadron at Tain.



From there, 31 July 1945, it has been redirected to Manston in Kent. As can be seen on page 43 of Monograph 15, all four Czechoslovak Squadrons were based at Manston until sometime in August, when they began their protracted return to their homeland. The cover, franked at only 4 cents, has the sender's address on the reverse: 'Construction Department, RAF Transport Command, Dorval - Quebec'. Although it bears an airmail etiquette, the

stamps have first been cancelled in the UK with a POST OFFICE MARITIME MAIL machine cancellation. Another mystery?

COMMENTS ON 'PARCEL CARD STICKERS' BY RICHARD WHEATLEY IN *CZECHOUT 3/2007*

-Rex A. Dixon FRPSL-

S Parcel Identity stickers

Richard wrongly asserts that the number at right angles to the dispatch office is the number of that office. Instead, it is the number of the 10-km square, or *Taxquadrat*, in which the office lies. Parcels were charged accordingly to distance. The distance used was the straight-line distance between the centres of the Taxquadrats in which the dispatch and delivery offices lay. The Reichspost issued a *Paketzonenbuch* (Book of Parcel Zones) to aid the postal official calculate this distance; there is a copy in the Prague Postal Museum, but I haven't yet had a chance to look at it properly.

This is a subject worthy of a separate article. The concept was first described to me by John Whiteside. My main reference source is *Taxquadrat und Gebührenfeld 1857–1964* by Werner Münzberg, Offenbach am Main, 1969.

W Declared Value stickers

V Insurance stickers

There is no difference between these two classes. The V does not stand for *Versicherung* (insurance) but for *Valeur déclarée*, French being the international language of the UPU. An item with declared value implies that insurance has been paid for.

POSTCARDS AND POLITICS

-Roger Morrell-

Not a place for a postal history item, you might think, the British Airways *Highlife* magazine. But, between articles on "Wild about Brazil", "Affordable weekends in Vienna, New York, Paris and St Petersburg", and a string of unreal ads selling unaffordable luxuries, the November 2007 edition carried a short story by the acclaimed BBC correspondent John Simpson, entitled "A letter from Bratislava". Twenty or so years ago, he relates, this was a rather sinister place. Simpson had already been arrested more than once and thrown out of the country. Czechoslovakia was under hard-line Soviet-backed rule following the Prague Spring of 1968 when under Alexander Dubček relaxed the rules and gave people more freedom, only to have the backlash the following August when the tanks rolled in.

The story really starts when a dealer in signed documents sold Simpson a pink card purporting to bear the signature of the former leader, Alexander Dubček. This card, which unfortunately is not illustrated, appears to have been a German receipt of postal delivery card. It cost Simpson £8. What interested him more than the signature was the address, Misikova 49, Bratislava. Dubček, after being incarcerated in Moscow for some years, had been returned to Bratislava and lived there under house arrest.

In the summer of 1985, a new boat service started up on the Danube. It was possible to take a day trip from Vienna to Bratislava without needing a visa or a passport (surely some oversight), with a three-hour stopover in Bratislava, which would give Simpson and his cameraman (just a simple cine camera) time to play tourist, but actually to sneak off to see if they could interview Dubček. They were nearly shopped to the communist heavies on the boat by a loud-mouthed British couple who recognised Simpson. However, they were not intercepted, and once in the city they zig-zagged about, appearing to be sight-seeing, but ending up at Dubček's address. Unfortunately he was not in, having been given permission to visit his son, but it was a good try and the housekeeper did not call the police.

Dubček remained under house arrest for another four years. Then one night in November 1989, Simpson found himself in a building overlooking Wenceslas Square. The room was full of TV reporters and cameramen because Dubček was due to make his first public appearance for more than 20 years. But just then some reporters did something to annoy the organisers, and the press was cleared out, except for the BBC. So Simpson stayed to see Dubček, by then a frail old man, helped to the balcony by Václav Havel, himself soon to become the country's president. From the balcony, Dubček addressed the million people in the square waiting to see him. Simpson then did indeed meet Dubček in person, and shook him by the hand. It had been a long wait after the so-near-but-so-far try at the address on the postal receipt form!

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

-Robert J. Hill-

I have spent some time recently researching the issues of the Monthly Magazine published by the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union from April 1945 thru to the end of 1948 and can only recommend it as a riveting good read.

Reproduced below are some of the articles that caught my eye with original punctuation, spelling and grammar. In reading these please remember that most of these have been translated into English. With gratitude to the UPU for allowing these articles to be reprinted 60 years after they were first issued.

Volume 70 Number 8 August 1945

International Mails During Wartime.

Helen G Kelly, Telecommunications Division, Department of State, USA.

From "The Department of State Bulletin", May 6, 1945.

Is there parcel post to France? Can I write to my father in Poland? Why isn't there airmail to Italy? Can I send a book to Chungking?

Just a minute, please, while I get out my chart. Let me run down the list, turn over the pages - ah, here is France; and Poland; and Italy; and China; and most of the liberated countries of Europe.

Even the Post Office Department's Division of International Postal Service is keeping a chart these days. For not even a memory expert can keep in his mind the amounts and kinds of mail services now available to the countries of the world. For example, letters not exceeding one ounce in weight may be sent to Bulgaria and Rumania, while letters to France may weigh up to four pounds six ounces. But merchandise can be sent to France in these letter packages and not to Italy. In addition, articles of printed matter up to one pound can be sent to France. On the other hand, there is no transit mail from the Netherlands at all; Italian transit mails may include two-ounce letters. Special delivery and registered mail may go to Switzerland but not to Finland. The mails from Finland may include complete business transactions; however, those to Italy may not.

Gone are the peaceful days when a correspondent could place a 3-cent or 5-cent surface-mail stamp or a 30-cent airmail stamp on an envelope, walk to the corner post box and drop his letter in, calm in the assurance that the letter would reach its destination promptly. The war has disrupted the international mails and has caused never-ending problems involving international mails.

All mail entering and leaving the United States is subject to censorship, which naturally occasions some delay in transit. Then ships and planes, particularly those bound for a war zone, must give first priority to vital materials needed in the war effort. In addition, the ships of some countries are not anxious to carry mails, because censorship regulations may require that the ship go out of its way to discharge its mail cargo at a censorship examination station. The manpower shortage has also slowed down internal mail systems so that mail is not being handled quite so expeditiously as it was before the war. Considering the handicaps which have confronted it, the Post Office Department, as is shown by records of despatches and means of transmission, has done a remarkably good job of keeping international mails moving to their destinations.

Before the war, the Department of State had little to do with international mail problems. Occasionally, it helped collect an overdue postal debt from a country which wished to receive its mail and keep its money too. As the airmail itself grew, the Aviation Division's interest in airmail rates and routes grew also by leaps and bounds. It was not within the scope of responsibility of the State Department to do more than that, since it could neither negotiate nor interpret postal treaties or conventions. The Postmaster General is authorized by law «For the purpose of making better postal arrangements with foreign countries, or to counteract their adverse measures affecting out: postal intercourse with them... by and with the advice and consent of the President» to «negotiate and conclude postal treaties or conventions. *Provided*, That the decisions of the Postmaster General construing or interpreting the provisions of any treaty or convention which has been or may be negotiated and concluded shall, if approved by the President, be final and conclusive upon all officers of the United States.» (5 U.S.C. 372) According to section 373, the Postmaster General «shall transmit a copy of each postal convention concluded with foreign governments to the Secretary of State, who shall furnish a copy of the same to

the Public Printer for publication; and the printed proof sheets of all such conventions shall be revised at the Post Office Department».

With the beginning of the war, however, the international mails became a matter of great interest and concern to the State Department as well as to other agencies of the Government: to the Treasury, to the Office of Censorship, to the War and Navy Departments, and to the Foreign Economic Administration. Mail exchanges with Germany, Japan, Italy, their satellite states, and the occupied countries immediately ceased.

After the North African landings in 1942, when the Germans moved southward to occupy the whole of France, mail service, to Switzerland was suspended; since mails could get to Switzerland only by transiting enemy territory. This procedure was objectionable, particularly from a censorship point of view to this Government. Mails did come through from Switzerland, because, although our censorship objected to American mails transiting enemy territory, evidently German censorship did not object to traffic from Switzerland, because of the advantageous position thereby created for German control of the mail. People in this country were puzzled: They received letters from Switzerland but were advised at the Post Office that there was no mail service to that country. This state of affairs continued until late 1944, when our armies made contact with the Swiss border. Soon after that time, on November 6, 1944, the Postmaster General's order stopping traffic was cancelled, and the mails began flowing in both directions again.

When the tide began to turn and when the Germans were being rolled back, a whole new set of problems was presented. It had been comparatively simple to break off postal relations: It was a considerably more complex affair to resume them. Switzerland was a neutral country; her internal mail system was in operation, and postal services between our two countries could be resumed after an exchange of communications between our two postal administrations. But the resumption of service with a war-torn country, whose civilian government either is in exile or has collapsed with the departure of the Germans, is another matter. All the customary routine procedures of government are disrupted, and it is necessary to re-establish the internal postal system before an international service can begin.

To draw an analogy, picture our eastern coast occupied by an enemy: New York and Washington are bombed and shattered; a puppet government is in control, all our pleasantly familiar course of life is in chaos; no gray-coated postman delivers mail twice a day. Continue this condition for three or four years, then abruptly free us from enemy control. The Post Office buildings are in ruins; there is no Postmaster General; half our postmen are dead; the trains, if any, do not run on time; there are no mail sacks; the population has moved, disappeared, shifted; the Joneses don't live on Thirtieth Street any more. Mrs. Jones is a refugee in Iowa - no one knows exactly where. Her family is scattered - dead, in prison, in the Army. How can the Post Office deliver their mail? Many problems must be solved before a letter from abroad can be accepted for delivery in this country to Mrs. Jones.

Beginning with North Africa and the confusion that always accompanies the establishment of a new unprecedented procedure, and continuing through the first liberated provinces of Italy, then working north, over to France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, a pattern began to appear. All of these areas are within the zone of British and American military control. The War Department: wisely decided that the man on the spot knew more about conditions than did the man in the Pentagon Building. Therefore the theater commander - either of the Mediterranean Theater or of the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force -was notified that he was the final judge. Whenever he deemed it advisable that mail service with a particular country or provinces of a country be resumed, he was to telegraph the War Department. He was to indicate further the character and type of message, which could be sent, whether letters, postcards, airmail or surface mail, personal or business. The Civil Affairs Division of the War Department, upon receipt of such a notification, then began the job of clearing with all interested Government agencies.

The State Department considered the question from the political angle; the Treasury Department was interested in the control of funds and foreign exchange and in the exchange of business information; the Office of Censorship was concerned with the state of censorship at the other end and with the volume of mail that would have to be censored. Languages were of concern too: Censors familiar with Hungarian or Finnish are scarce. The Post Office Department was interested in the availability of transportation. There was no point in opening mail services with France if there were no planes or ships to carry mail over. Co-ordination with the British also had to be accomplished.

The pattern which was eventually set up, although not always uniform, proceeded somewhat in the following order: Non-illustrated postcards on personal and family matters from this country to the newly reopened country; letters, usually weighing no more than one ounce, still on personal and family matters; business communications, restricted to the ascertainment of facts and the exchange of information; and last, but very rarely yet, mail carrying on complete business negotiations. The weight of the letters was increased somewhere along the line, and, in the case of France, packages weighing up to four pounds six ounces, containing merchandise, might be sent at letter rates. At five cents an ounce this runs into money; but since there is no parcel post many people find it worthwhile to take advantage of the privilege. Transit mail - that is, mail which must pass through the United States en route to another country - is usually permitted some time after the service with the United States has been resumed.

Many of the services offered by the Post Office, which heretofore have been used as a matter of course, are now denied because of the lack of facilities abroad. Airmail and parcel-post services are no longer offered, and registration service can no longer be carried on; but as quickly as equipment and personnel are available abroad these services will be resumed.

All of this the State Department, acting in an advisory capacity, approved from a political standpoint; the War Department served as the centralizing agency. However, as the countries of eastern Europe began to be freed, another problem arose: Those countries were under Soviet control; the War Department therefore had nothing to say with regard to operations there. When discussions began concerning how and when to open communications with the Baltic States, Poland, Finland, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, and Albania, the State Department became the liaison between the Office of Censorship, the Treasury and Post Office Departments, and other interested agencies, such as the Foreign Economic Administration. Officers of the British Embassy usually sit in on the conferences, since, as far as possible, the two Governments co-ordinate their actions. On occasion, however, the British have opened service ahead of the United States; but this Government has resumed mail service with Poland although the British have not. It is a loose and informal arrangement with leeway for unilateral action; it works surprisingly well.

Discussions concerning both telecommunications and postal communications have been centered in the Telecommunications Division of the Department of State. At the present time some form of mail service has been opened to the Philippines, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Greece, Belgium, Bulgaria, Rumania, Switzerland, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, and a fairly complete service is in operation with France and some parts of liberated Italy. Plans are now under consideration for the reopening of mail service with Albania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia.

The operation of the international postal service might serve as a model for that post-war Utopia of which we dream, where country works with country, without excessive nationalism or overweening ambition. It is not concerned with diplomatic quarrels: It has the same high disregard of boundaries that scientists have. It has a mission - as scientists have: the mails must go through. Even when diplomatic relations with a country are broken, the United States Post Office Department continues to correspond with the postal administration of that country on postal matters. Wars may come; Wars may go. But the mails must be moved, and, the moment the Treasury, the State Department, Censorship, and the War Department agree, the Post Office Department is ready to pick up the broken thread of communications, to knit it together almost overnight, and to send again on their way the anxious letters, the proposals of trade, and, the long awaited news from home.

Sumner Welles, in his book, *An Intelligent American's Guide to the Peace*, has expressed this same thought in speaking of the Universal Postal Union, of which this country is a member:

"The Universal Postal Union represents the first and as yet the most indicative and wholly successful example of international cooperation over a long period. Formed in 1874 by 22 countries, it has gradually extended to include the whole world. The Union is based on a convention declaring that its members agree that for the purposes of postal communications, there is only one country: The whole world. Every nation has the unlimited use of the communication facilities of every other nation for the conduct of the mails; and every signatory country must grant to the others the full use of any improvements in its postal service communications. Rates, weights, and the nature of services are internationally uniform for international services.

The agreement on ordinary mail was soon extended to registration of letters and then to money orders and parcel post, though these latter have not been made completely uniform. Many supplementary services have been arranged, and always on an amicable basis. Postal conventions are held every five years when practicable, and every member state, whatever its size, has an equal vote. The Union clears accounts among its signatories, which requires the most extensive bookkeeping, since it must keep track of the 50,000,000,000 letters that annually crisscross over 114 postal jurisdictions. The International Bureau is now located at Bern, Switzerland.

The Union has managed to function through many wars and it has successfully adjusted to *blocked currencies*. It is a seventy year old demonstration that when international cooperation must override *absolute national sovereignty* - and there is no other workable alternative - cooperation functions smoothly."

Volume 70 Number 9 September 1945
Free postage for prisoners of war and victims of war

Vicente Tuason doc. Jur., Head of Lawyer's office at PTT Berne.

I: ORIGIN.

1. The first mention of free postage in favour of prisoners of war¹ is to be found in the Regulations of the Hague Convention of 1899 concerning the laws and customs of war on land. Article 14 of these Regulations stipulates that in every belligerent country and, as the case may be, in every neutral country that has received belligerents, an information office for prisoners of war shall be opened at the beginning of hostilities. These offices, whose mission it will be to reply to all inquiries concerning the prisoners of war, will receive from the competent services all the information necessary to make a separate file-card for every prisoner. They will be kept informed of all transfers, cases of illness or death. They will likewise collect and send to the rightful owners all objects of personal use, valuables, letters, etc. found on the fields of battle or left by deceased prisoners.

With a view to facilitating the work of the information offices, article 16 grants them free postage, no restrictions being indicated. As regards the personal correspondence of prisoners of war, the same article declares that letters, money orders, etc., and parcels sent to or by prisoners of war shall be free of all postal charges both in the countries of despatch and destination as well as in the intermediate countries. Parcels containing gifts in kind for the solace of prisoners of war were also to be sent free of all charges.

The Hague Convention of 1899 concerning the laws and customs of war on land was renewed, with a few changes of little importance as to postage, at the second Peace Conference at The Hague in 1907,

With a view to «further developing the principles on which the international Conferences of the Hague were founded, and especially that concerning the laws and customs of war on land» the international Convention concerning the treatment of prisoners of war was concluded at Geneva on July 27th, 1929; it is justly called the «prisoner-of-war's, charter». It is Part VI. of this Convention that deals with the information offices concerning prisoners of war. This convention, like the Hague Convention, stipulates that these offices are to be opened at the beginning of hostilities by all the belligerents as well as the neutral countries that receive belligerent soldiers, which offices have: to reply to all inquiries concerning prisoners of war and to keep the files for every individual prisoner up to date. They shall also send to the belligerent countries concerned a weekly list of all fresh data liable to facilitate the identification of every prisoner. Article 79 also provides for the creation in neutral countries of a central information office for prisoners of war, it being left to the initiative of the International Red Cross Committee to propose the organization of such central office to the countries concerned if it is judged advisable².

The mission of this office is to collect all the information it can obtain from public or private sources concerning prisoners of war and to send it as rapidly as possible to the prisoners' native country or the country for which they serve.

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Article 80 provides for free postage for all the aid and information offices but again without any specification. Article 38 stipulates that all letters, money orders, etc. and parcels sent to or by prisoners of war, either direct or through the agency of the aid and information offices, shall be carried post free

both in the countries of despatch and destination as well as in the intermediate countries. The same facility is granted to gifts and aid in kind for the prisoners.

2. Referring to the Hague Convention of 1899, Belgium proposed at the Congress of Rome (1906) to insert in the Universal Postal Convention the provisions relating to free postage for prisoners of war. The proposal was adopted without discussion. Article 11, §4 of the Convention of Rome, induced evidently by the wording of the Hague Convention concerning the laws and customs of war on land, grants in the first place free postage "to all correspondence concerning prisoners of war despatched or received direct or through the agency of the information offices opened for them in the belligerent countries or in the neutral countries that receive belligerent soldiers into their territory". In the second place it mentioned correspondence sent direct to or by prisoners of war and for which free postage was granted in the countries of despatch and destination as well as in intermediate countries.

As an innovation on the Hague Convention of 1899, the Universal Postal Congress of Rome extended the free postage of prisoners of war to those interned in neutral countries, by inserting in article 11, §4, a clause assimilating belligerents interned in neutral countries to prisoners of war properly so-called. The Hague Convention of 1899 makes no mention of interned belligerents. It is to the honour of the Belgian delegation and those who took part in the Congress of Rome that they looked beyond purely postal interests in desiring to enable interned soldiers to benefit from the sense and the spirit of the Hague Convention concerning the laws and customs of war on land. The convention concerning the rights and duties of neutral powers and persons in case of war on land did not follow till the second International Peace Conference of the Hague in 1907, when a chapter was introduced devoted specially to belligerents interned in neutral countries. Article 11 of that convention stipulates that neutral countries that admit troops belonging to belligerent armies shall intern them as far as possible from the theatre of war. Such troops may be kept in camps or in fortresses or other places suitable for the purpose. In default of a special convention the neutral powers must provide the interned with food, clothes and whatever humanity dictates. This convention, like the others, makes no mention of free postage in favour of interned military persons.

Independent of the principal convention, the Belgian delegation to the Congress of Rome proposed the insertion of special clauses concerning free postage for prisoners of war in the agreements concerning insured letters and boxes, money orders and parcels. These proposals were also adopted in principle. The Belgian delegation even wanted to grant free postage on C. O. D. articles (letters, parcels, insured articles), maintaining that the expression «articles d'argent» as it stands in the Hague Convention also includes such articles. The French delegation was however opposed to this interpretation; it was of opinion that the term «articles d'argent» applied solely to packets containing coined money and to money orders. This opinion was shared by the Netherlands delegate who had taken part in the Conference of the Hague as technical secretary. The 1st Committee of the Congress took the same view. On this point the Belgian proposal was consequently rejected; article 11 of the Principal Convention does not however take it into account. On the other hand the Congress decided that parcels with trade charges were to be expressly excluded from free postage although the spokesman of the Belgian delegation requested that prisoners of war should not be deprived of the possibility of receiving or sending C. O. D. parcels free of cost, seeing that a prisoner of war might also want to procure some indispensable articles at his own expense. Opinions were decidedly on the side of the Spanish delegate, who observed that the motive that led to the granting of free postage to prisoners of war was precisely their lack of funds, and that it would scarcely be a happy idea to send them parcels marked with trade charges. It was evidently for the same reason, too, that Belgium's proposal to admit collection orders post free from and to prisoners of war was also rejected³.

An opportunity for putting the provisions of the Convention of Rome concerning free postage for prisoners of war presented itself sooner, certainly, than their promoters expected, for in the first world war of 1914-1918 their sphere of application was world-wide and the benefits they offered were inestimable.

No appreciable changes were made to them by the Congress of Madrid of 1920. It contented itself with excluding C.O.D. articles expressis verbis from the Principal Convention and the Agreement concerning insured letters and boxes and with adding to the Agreement concerning postal parcels that the loss, spoliation or damage of parcels carried post free to or sent post free by prisoners of war in no way entailed the responsibility of the postal administrations. A proposal was made by the Mexican delegation tending to limit free postage to the correspondence despatched by the aid and information

offices and to the correspondence sent by prisoners of war, or by members of their family who would be required at the same time to prove their identity. The proposal, the purpose of which was to prevent abuse, did not find much favour and was withdrawn.

The Chinese delegation proposed that the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union should be charged, under the auspices of the government of the country in which it exercised its activity, to communicate with the belligerent countries at the outset of hostilities with a view to insuring the uniform application of the provisions relating to free postage for prisoners of war. This proposal was likewise rejected, for such an intervention on the part of the International Bureau was considered a too delicate matter and one best left to diplomatists.

At the Congress of Madrid a request was also presented by the International Red Cross Committee to the effect that it might be granted the benefit of free postage for its correspondence. The Congress could not however decide to grant this request, the chairman having already referred to a previous decision that further extension of free postage should on no account be allowed, even to institutions of public utility, since it might easily lead to abuses and that there was no knowing where such extension, once started, might lead to. The request of the International Red Cross Committee consequently met with the same fate as a similar one presented to the same Congress⁴ by the «Bureau international du Travail».

The Postal Congress of Stockholm (1924) decided to insert in the Parcel Post Agreement and in the Agreement concerning insured letters and boxes, a clause extending free postage to such articles sent to or by prisoners of war through the agency of the information offices. A rider was also added to the Parcel Post Agreement to the effect that belligerents interned in a neutral country should be assimilated to prisoners of war in the matter of free postage.

In the successive conventions and agreements of London (1929), Cairo (1934) and Buenos Aires (1939), the provisions relating to free postage for prisoners of war, interned soldiers and aid and information offices underwent so to say no alterations.

II. PRESENT REGULATIONS.

1. In conformity with its origin, free postage for prisoners of war, interned belligerents and the aid and information offices established for them is still based on three different international conventions, viz. the Hague Convention of October 18th, 1907 concerning the laws and customs of war on land, the Conference of Geneva of July 27th, 1929, relating to the treatment of prisoners of war, and the Universal Postal Convention of May 23rd, 1939, and the Agreements pertaining thereto.

It might be argued from a legislative point of view, that free postage being a postal matter it has only to do with postal legislation and should be regulated by that alone. When however we consider that it was the Hague Conference that created this really humane institution and that the aim of the Conference of Geneva was expressly the improvement in every way of the condition of prisoners of war, we must acknowledge that the presence of the provisions relating to free postage in the said conventions is fully justified. It must be regarded as more than a symbol that the men who have to conduct war, those who promote Christian charity and who organise the worldwide institution of the post should extend a hand over and beyond all the barriers of countries and continents to uphold the ideals of true humanity amid the misery and suffering brought about by the war furies. It is none the less true that the regulation, by the Universal Postal Convention, of free postage in favour of prisoners of war and the aid and information offices organized for their benefit, is especially noteworthy, seeing that the Universal Postal Convention is in force in every country, which is not the case with the Hague Convention and the Convention of Geneva. It is consequently correct to give precedence to the postal prescriptions and to arrange the said free postage in question according to them.

2. What are the legal regulations actually valid? We will give them in the English version of the original French wording of the principal condition as contained in article 49, §2, of the Universal Postal Convention, which reads:

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«With the exception of articles marked with a trade charge, correspondence intended for prisoners of war or despatched by them is also exempt from all postal charges, not only in the countries of origin and destination, but in intermediate countries.

The same privilege is accorded to correspondence concerning prisoners of war, despatched or received, either directly by, or through the agency of Information Bureaux established on behalf of such persons in belligerent countries or in neutral countries which have received belligerents on their territories.

Belligerents received and interned in a neutral country are treated like prisoners of war properly so called in so far as the application of the above mentioned rules are concerned.»

According to the terms of art. 13 of the Agreement concerning insured letters and boxes, «Insured letters and boxes... with the exception of Trade Charge packets, sent or received in accordance with the provisions of article 49, §2, of the Convention are exempt from all postal charges».

The Parcel Post Agreement stipulates in article 18 that, «unless subject to trade charges, parcels sent to or by prisoners of war are exempt from all charges prescribed by the present Agreement, whether in the country of origin, in the country of destination or in the countries of transit. These parcels give rise neither to a credit nor to the payment of compensation in case of loss, abstraction or damage». The second and third paragraphs have the same tenure as those of article 49, §2, of the Principal Convention.

Lastly, article 6 of the Agreement concerning the Money Order Service grants free postage to money orders for prisoners of war sent or received in accordance with the provisions of article 49, §2, of the Convention.

3. As a matter of fact, free postage for prisoners of war is applied to letter-post articles (letters, post-cards, commercial papers, articles printed in relief for the use of the blind, samples of merchandise, small packets and phonopost articles) not marked with trade charges, to insured letters and boxes not marked with trade charges, to parcels not marked with trade charges and to money orders. A comparison with the Conventions of the Hague and Geneva shows that the postal prescriptions are more explicit as regards the articles that can be sent post free for or by prisoners of war but at the same time do not limit the volume of the free postage granted in their favour.

The experience gained during the world war of 1914-1918 and of this last one has made it possible to better discern the practical needs of the prisoners of war and interned persons and, especially in the interest of the postal service, to somewhat limit the kinds but not the volume of articles which in principle are exempt from postal charges. The articles actually sent post free are: unregistered⁵ letter-post articles, uninsured parcels not exceeding 5 kg in weight, indivisible objects and parcels not exceeding 10 kg in weight addressed to a camp or to a person of confidence in a camp for discretionary distribution⁶ money orders, insured letters and boxes. Articles marked with trade charges or for express delivery as well as urgent or insured parcels are not accepted even on payment of the corresponding charges.

4. The persons who have a legal right to free postage are prisoners of war, belligerents interned in a neutral country and the information offices for prisoners of war.

a) What do we understand by “prisoners of war”? The postal prescriptions as well as the Convention of the Hague of 1907 are silent on the subject. The Convention of Geneva of 1929 concerning the treatment of prisoners of war, however, contains the desired information. It declares that its provisions are applicable to all the persons mentioned in articles, 1, 2 and 3 of the Convention of the Hague who have been captured by the enemy. Such are consequently, under the law of nations, the persons considered as prisoners of war.

Articles 1 to 3 of the Convention of the Hague deal with the parties at war, as which are considered not only the armies but also the militia and volunteer troops which in the countries concerned form part of the army or fulfil the following conditions: 1. that they have at their head a person responsible for his subordinates; 2. that they wear a distinctive badge recognizable at a distance; 3. that they bear their arms openly; 4. that in their operations they observe the laws and customs of war (art. 1). The population of a non-occupied territory, which spontaneously takes up arms at the approach of the enemy to fight the invading, troops without having had time to organize in conformity with art. 1 is considered a belligerent if it bears arms openly and if it complies with the laws and customs of war (art.

2). The armed forces of the belligerents may be composed of combatants and non-combatants. In case of capture by the enemy, both have the right to be treated as prisoners of war (art. 3). Persons that follow an army without directly forming part of it, such as war correspondents and journalists, sutlers and purveyors, and that fall into the hands of the enemy may, if the latter finds it worth while to detain them, claim the right to be treated as prisoners of war on condition that they possess a voucher from the military authority of the army they accompany (art. 13). The treatment as prisoner of war carries with it the right to free postage.

b) A second group of persons that have a right to free postage is composed of belligerents received and interned in a neutral country. It has already been pointed out that the Convention of the Hague of 1907 concerning the right and duties of neutral powers and persons in case of war on land, regulated the position of interned military persons without however expressly giving them a right to free postage. The Postal Convention of Rome (1906) filled the gap, being evidently of opinion that the military persons interned in a neutral country ought not to be less well treated than prisoners of war in an enemy's country.

A difference must be made between interned belligerents and prisoners of war who have escaped into neutral countries. A neutral power is not bound to receive the latter; if it does so it can assign them a place of residence. It is the same for prisoners of war brought by troops seeking refuge on the territory of a neutral power (Convention of the Hague concerning the rights and duties of neutral countries, art. 13), and which have no claim to free postage. When - as is the case in Switzerland - they nevertheless enjoy that privilege, it is thanks to a benevolent decision of the postal administration concerned.

c) Civilians of enemy nationality interned in belligerent countries are not prisoners of war and have hitherto been protected by no international legal regulations. At the 15th International Red Cross Conference held at Tokyo in 1934, the draft of a convention was presented relating to the conditions and the protection of civilians of enemy nationality on the territory of a belligerent or on a territory occupied by him. Article 17 of this draft prescribes that the treatment of interned civilians shall in no case be worse than that afforded to prisoners of war by the Convention of Geneva⁷. At the beginning of the second world war the Red Cross Committee invited the belligerent countries to apply, by analogy, to interned civilians, the Convention of Geneva concerning the treatment of prisoners of war. The Swiss Postal Administration on its part, as in the first world war, proposed to the Postal Union Administrations through the agency of the International Bureau, that civilians of enemy nationality detained by military orders in prisoners' camps or in civil prisons be assimilated, as concerns free postage, to prisoners of war or interned belligerents. The proposal met with full approval, so that from the beginning of 1940 civilians interned in belligerent countries now enjoy the same free postage as prisoners of war.

Civilians who from one reason or another have taken refuge in a neutral country are excluded from the privilege of free postage, even when they are detained in camps like interned belligerents.

d) We must call to mind that in virtue of the Convention of Geneva, every belligerent country shall on the outbreak of hostilities establish an official information office for the prisoners of war on his territory; that he shall inform this office with the least possible delay of all prisoners captured by its armies, with all the information it possesses as to their identity, and also that a central information office for prisoners of war shall be organized in neutral countries. As is well known, it is the «Agence centrale des prisonniers de guerre» in Geneva, dependent on the International Red Cross Committee that functions as such. This Agency is in constant communication with the information offices of the belligerent and neutral countries; from these it receives the lists of the prisoners of war and interned persons, photocopies of which it sends to the countries of origin of the prisoners and interned concerned. On the other hand this Agency daily receives thousands of requests for information concerning soldiers and civilians who are reported missing. No replies can as a rule be given before supplementary information has been obtained from the national information offices, and, as the case may be, before laborious search has been made in official and private sources, among men of confidence in the prisoners' camps, comrades of the missing soldiers, and even private persons. To these enormous mails⁸ must be added the numberless parcels of food, clothes, books, etc. sent to the prisoners of war and the interned persons of the different countries. From 1940 - the beginning of this service - to the end of 1943, 19,034,100 such parcels weighing 232,000 tons and valued approximately at 1,823 million Swiss francs had been forwarded⁹.

The totalitarian war with its devastating effects on the civilian population has placed the International Red Cross Committee before a new task, namely that of seeking missing civilians and of helping to reunite scattered families. With this end in view it has organized a special service and introduced a postcard by means of which persons who have been obliged to leave their place of residence can easily inform the Red Cross of their new address and the former address of the members of their family with which they wish to get into communication. The object of another service is to succour civilian populations that have suffered by the war, by sending them medicines, food, etc. As these persons are neither prisoners of war nor interned prisoners there is no legally recognized free postage in their favour; thanks however to the initiative of the Swiss Postal Administration which, through the agency of the International Bureau submitted a proposal to the Postal Union Administrations, the Agency for prisoners of war in Geneva now enjoys for this humane service the same benefits of free postage as for prisoners of war.

The aid and information offices for prisoners of war and interned prisoners have alone a right to free postage. Neither the national institutions of the Red Cross nor the International Red Cross Committee has a right to this privilege¹⁰.

For reasons of form, the role of which is in questions of free postage more important than anywhere else, it is consequently necessary that articles sent post free to prisoners of war and interned soldiers should be addressed either to the national information offices for prisoners of war or to the Central Agency for Prisoners of War in Geneva, or else bear a corresponding indication of the sender.

III. FUTURE.

Free postage in favour of prisoners of war and victims of war will not lose its value until the last prisoner has returned home, until all the families scattered by the war are re-united, and until the Central Agency in Geneva has brought its benevolent labours to an end¹¹. Does that mean that after the war it will be but a reminiscence, a thing of the past? Let us rather say that, having laid aside its active labours it will resume its potential nature. In the consciousness of the stern realities and the destructive forces that human passions can unhappily let loose, it will be well for the experience gained in this war in the matter of aid to prisoners of war and victims of the war, to be collected and put to profit by it for the benefit of future organizations.

It may however be already asserted that the international regulation for free postage in all that concerns prisoners of war and interned belligerents have stood the test. It is possible on the other hand that one of the chief preoccupations of the Red Cross will be the position of civilians of enemy nationality in the countries at war, so that such persons may receive not only de facto but also de jure the same treatment as prisoners of war. If in this respect the proposal of Tokyo were adopted as internationally legal, free postage would have to be accorded not only to prisoners of war but also to interned civilians and to the aid organizations of the Central Agency for Prisoners of War instituted for their benefit. The situation of the civilians of belligerent countries seeking refuge in neutral countries would also be a subject for discussion at international Conferences. It is still a doubtful question whether the International Red Cross Committee, in the event of a renewal or its demand, would as a permanent institution be accorded the favour of free postage for its official correspondence in time of peace, the Universal Postal Congresses being rather reserved in this respect.

¹ As a matter of fact it existed already to a certain extent, so in the Franco-German war of 1870-1871.

² The International Red Cross Committee took its rise in the "Committee of Five" which, at the instigation of Henri Dunant, was in 1862 charged by the Public Utility Society of Geneva to examine the feasibility of founding societies of aid for the wounded on an international basis. The first non-official conference, at which delegates of 16 countries took part, was held in 1863. It was followed in 1864 by a diplomatic conference convoked by the Swiss Federal Council and which led to the Convention of Geneva of 1864 for bettering the condition of the wounded soldiers of armies in the field. This convention was the forerunner of the Convention of Geneva of 1929. (The work of the International Red Cross Committee, 1944, p. 5.)

³ See Documents of the Congress of Rome, vol. II, pp. 138, 400 and 507.

⁴ Documents of the Postal Congress of Madrid, vol. II, pp. 173, 326/327, 56/67, 235, 272, 774 to 776.

⁵ According to the Postal Convention, registered correspondence is also post free, but no need for it has been evident; there are moreover some administrations that do not accept registered articles for or from prisoners of war in any way.

⁶ Article I of the Parcel Post Agreement of Buenos Aires admits parcels up to 20 kg. in weight, the contracting countries are however not obliged to accept parcels exceeding 10 kg.

⁷ See. *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, 1934, p. 649.

⁸ On December 31st, 1943, the Agency was using 60 different national file-racks with a total of 20 million file-cards; up to the same date the French service had asked information from 570 000 prisoners of war concerning their missing comrades, and the Italian service has received and transmitted 8'5 million messages, (*L'Œuvre du Comité International de la Croix-Rouge*, 1944, p. 29/30.)

⁹ *L'Œuvre du Comité International de la Croix-Rouge*, 1944,

¹⁰ Even the Swiss Red Cross has no right to free postage in the Swiss inland service except in so far as it is looked upon as a military office (Physician-in-chief of the Red Cross). It has however been granted the privilege for certain public collections.

¹¹ After the first world war the Red Cross had until 1923 to superintend the return home of the Russians imprisoned in Germany and of the prisoners of the central powers detained in Russia and Siberia.

Volume 71 Number 8 August 1946

Announcement: **“A special arrangement concerning the Postal and telecommunications services has been concluded between Poland and Czechoslovakia; it will come into force on 1 July 1946.”**

Volume 71 Number 11 November 1946
Special Agreement between Poland and Czechoslovakia.

As announced in No 8 of «L'Union Postale» of the current year a special Agreement has been concluded concerning the post, telegraph and telephone service between the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Czechoslovakia. We give hereunder, as far as the postal, service is concerned, a summary of the provisions of this Agreement, which came into force on the 1st of July 1946.

The Agreement in question covers the regular exchange both in direct and transit mails, of articles of correspondence, insured letters; parcels, money orders and Cash on Delivery article. Especially interesting are the general provisions made for the exchange of mails, of which these are the most important: The contracting administrations jointly designate the Post Offices authorised to dispatch direct closed mails and mails à découvert. All transit facilities are granted to the staff of both countries on duty in Railway trains travelling between the two countries. In corresponding with each other the two Administrations and their Post Offices will use the French Language and adopt the forms already in use in the international service. Correspondence (including parcels) exchanged between the two Administrations and their respective Post Offices which refers to official matters will be transmitted free of postage. The accounts will be drawn up on the basis of the gold franc of 100 centimes, of a weight 10/31 of a gramme and 0,900 «titre» (about 21. carat). The resulting balances will be converted into United States dollars at the current rate of exchange (Articles 1-9).

Correspondence exchanged between the two countries will be franked at the internal rate of the country, or origin. Letters to Poland cannot contain articles subject to customs duty. Samples of low commercial value will be admitted. Each of the Contracting Administrations will allow mail in transit to pass over its territory free of charge provided they contain only correspondence originating in the other country, but when the interests of the international service require it, it will be permissible to enclose a moderate amount of mail from a third country, especially correspondence sent by air (Articles: 10-13).

In the Insured letter service the maximum insured value is fixed at 1,000 gold francs. Objects subject to customs duty are not allowed.

Ordinary, insured, cumbersome and express delivery parcels are allowed up to a weight of 20 kilograms, urgent parcels up to a weight of 10 kilograms. The terminal fee due to the Contracting Administrations in the reciprocal service is that fixed in art. 3 of the International Agreement for parcels.

The fee payable to the Contracting Administrations on parcels in transit originating in either of the two countries is 20, 30; 40, 80, 120 and 160 centimes: respectively for parcels weighing 1, 3, 5, 10, 15 and 20 kilograms.

The Contracting Administrations agree not to collect in their reciprocal service their share of the insurance fee on insured parcels whose declared value does not exceed 100 gold francs. Special provisions set forth to the manner in which Way Bills are to be filled up and in which the parcels and their documents are to be handed over {Articles:J5-19).

As regards Money Orders and Cash on Delivery the maximum value is that laid down in the internal service of the Contracting Administration. Nevertheless if these amounts differ in the two countries, the lower of the two is to be considered the maximum. Subject to contrary arrangement, the amounts will be expressed in gold francs and the equivalent amount in the currency of the country of payment will be paid to the recipient {Art. 20).

The Air Mail Fee is fixed according to the cost of the service to the contracting Administrations (Art. 21).

No responsibility is accepted in cases beyond control.

A Final Protocol determines the conditions on which the Travelling Post Office Staff of each country may travel in the territory of the other Contracting Administrations. Offices which used in their service correspondence their own language may continue to do so, Slovak being regarded as having equal status with Polish and Czech. The exchange of «petits paquets», which was already in force in the direction Czechoslovakia - Poland, will be extended. It will suffice to affix to them a green label inscribed «Douane» (Customs). Customs declarations are not necessary.

Special Agreement between Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

In order to restore the provisions of the special agreements of Portorose (1921) and to facilitate and develop postal relations, a special arrangement has been concluded between the administrations of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. We give here the chief points of the new Agreement which came into force on the 1st of August 1946.

The contracting Administrations have set up a regular exchange, both in direct mails and mails in transit, articles, of correspondence, insured letters, parcels, money orders and cash on delivery articles. The provisions of this special arrangement are, in the main, the same as those of the Polish - Czechoslovak Agreement, of which we have given a summary. On the other hand there are certain differences which will form the subject of later comment.

The general provisions concerning the exchange of closed mails and à découvert dispatches, the facilities accorded to the staff of each country which travel on the mail trains, the points at which mails are handed over, the reduced customs formalities; the use of the French language, the freedom from postage on official communications and parcels, the manner in which the balances are to be drawn up correspond to those of the agreement between Poland and Czechoslovakia which has been already described. Nevertheless, the balance of the payments resulting from the general accounts, which is expressed in gold francs, will be converted into United States dollars or Swiss francs at the prevailing rate of exchange (Arts. 1-9).

Mail matter exchanged between the two countries is subject to the postage rates in force in the country of origin.

Letters and sample packets are allowed to contain objects subject to customs duty. Sample packets containing objects of low commercial value are allowed.

Registered articles are entered in bulk on the waybill.

Each of the contracting Administrations waives its claim to transit charges in respect of the conveyance of mails over its territory, provided that these mails contain correspondence originating in the other country only. But when the interests of the international service require it, it is allowed to add a small quantity of mails from countries which are not parties to the agreement, especially air mails (Arts 10-14).

As regards insured letters, the insurance rate is that in force in the country of origin. There is no limit to the insured value. Insured letters can contain small amounts of money which do not exceed the monetary unit. Objects subject to customs duty are allowed.

Ordinary parcels, insured, cumbersome, express and urgent parcels are allowed up to a weight of 20 kilograms. The weight of official parcels can reach 50 kilograms. There is no limit to the insured value.

The terminal charge in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, as well as the transit charges are fixed at 20, 30, 40, 80, 120 and 160 centimes for the 1, 3, 5, 10, 15 and 20 kilogram points in the weight scale.

The insured rate for insured parcels is the same as in the international service. In, the service between the two countries no claim is made in respect of their share of the insurance fee on parcels insured for less than 100 gold francs.

Several ordinary parcels can be entered on a single waybill accompanied by the customs declaration required for a single parcel {Arts 15-16}

The conditions which rule readdressing, transfer between offices of exchange, entries in waybills, special treatment of ordinary parcels and those insured up to a value Of 100 gold francs are stated in Articles 17-19 of the special agreement.

The maximum amount for a Money Order or a Cash on Delivery order is that in force in the internal services of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The amounts, unless special arrangements to the contrary are made, are expressed in gold francs and the equivalent amount in the money of the country of destination is paid to the recipients, which equivalents are communicated by each Administration to the other (Art. 20).

The Air Mail fee is calculated according to the cost of the service to each of the Contracting Administrations. These inform one another of the Air Mail fees they charge, as well as the information concerning the Air Lines or those sections thereof which are used in transporting all kinds of correspondence on which no Air fee is charged (Art. 21).

Responsibility for loss in cases beyond control is not admitted (Art. 22).

The final provisions (Art. 23) are followed by a final protocol. Among its provisions we mention:

The exchange of small packets is allowed. These articles are charged at the international service rate. Small packets, as well as other correspondence containing objects subject to customs duty must bear a green label marked «Douane» (Customs) on which is shown all necessary information concerning the nature of the object, the weight and its value. Customs declarations are not necessary.

In order to meet the urgent requirements of their public, Hungary and Czechoslovakia have the right to allow in their reciprocal services correspondence up to the maximum weight allowed by the Universal Postal Convention. This correspondence is charged at the rate in force for correspondence in the international service in the country of origin.

The maximum insured value for letters and parcels is provisionally fixed at 10,000 gold francs.

As the terminal fees of the Hungarian Administration for parcels sent in the international service have been increased by 100%, this Administration feels itself compelled to charge provisionally in respect of parcels exchange with Czechoslovakia the following terminal fees in respect of parcels sent and received: 30, 40, 50, 100, 150, 200 centimes for the 1, 3, 5, 10, 15 and 20 kilogram points respectively in the weight scale.

Volume 72 Number 4 April 1947
Special Agreement between Austria and Czecho-slovakia.

A special agreement has: also been concluded between Austria and Czecho-Slovakia. This agreement came into force the 1st of January 1947. The general provisions of this agreement are the same as those in the agreement between Austria and Hungary, of which we have recently given a summary. We shall only bring out the points in which the two agreements differ from each other.

In their mutual correspondence concerning the postal service the two contracting administrations, as well as their subordinate offices, will use the French language and the forms employed in the international service (art. 4).

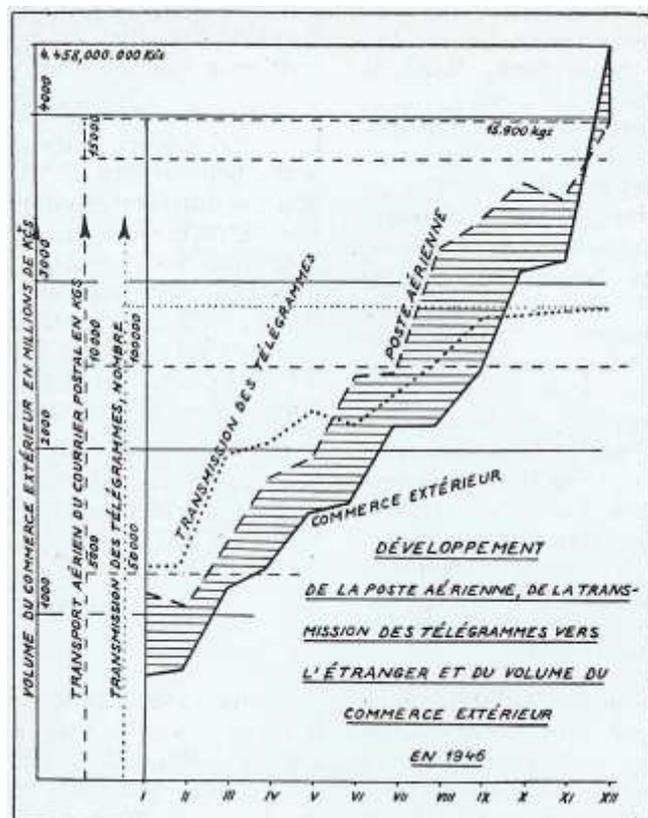
Each of the contracting administrations renounce transit rates in respect of the conveyance over its own territory: of the other administration's letter mails, as long as these mails only contain correspondence of its own country. But when the interests of the international service demands it, a small number of letters from third countries, and especially air mail letters, can be enclosed in these mails (art. 8), >
 This agreement also contains provisions analogous to those of the agreement between Austria and Hungary, as regards: Reduction of the postage on letters and postcards to 75 % of the postage in force in the Universal Postal Union; the acceptance of parcels up to 20 kilograms; the reduction of the

postage basic rate for postal parcels to 25 % and the reduction of the transit rates in respect of parcels originating in one of the contracting countries by 25%.

Volume 72 Number 6 June 1947
The Air Mail and Foreign Trade of Czecho-Slovakia in 1946
Josef Uher, Senior Secretary of Posts, Prague.

After Czecho-Slovakia had been freed, postal connections with the outside world were non-existent for about two months. Little by little, however; air communications were re-established; thus, at the end of the year 1945, it was possible to carry air correspondence up to the weight of 10 grams and, later, 20 grams and, at the beginning of 1946, up to the limit of weight fixed for the foreign service. At this time air communications were very few; that is why foreign trade employed chiefly, in order to knit up again relations with abroad, the telegraph. The number of telegrams for abroad increased steadily up to March 1946, when air communications between Czecho-Slovakia and other countries improved. But, as the weight of air mails increased, the development of the telegraph traffic slowed down.

The Minister of Trade has stated it clearly: foreign trade is the destiny of Czecho-Slovakia. The country has adopted this device in its full consciousness. Like Great Britain, the Czecho-Slovak people is forced to limit its own consumption in order to be able to buy raw materials and export manufactured articles. In its effort it has mobilized every auxiliary service, and, above all, transport by road, rail and air.



The importance of the part played by the air mail in the development of foreign trade for the reconstruction of the country is represented by the annexed graph, which shows, on one hand, the development of the transport of foreign mails by air and on the other the increase in the volume of foreign trade in 1946. The two curves, which represent the weight of the air mails in kilograms and the volume of foreign trade, are nearly parallel; In the case of some months one can see that the transport of air mails left behind the trade development achieved. The variation in the weight of mails' carried are shown, during the later months, by oscillations corresponding to those in the foreign trade.

Czecho-Slovakia has sent, in 1946, 123,000 kg of air mails to countries abroad. During the same period the foreign trade has been as follows: exports: 14,343,000,000 of Czecho-Slovak crowns; imports: 10,238,000,000 of Czecho-Slovak crowns. The swift and continuous increase in the weight of mails carried by air is remarkable. In the month of December 1946, four times as much mail was carried as in January. The volume of foreign trade has increased even in larger proportion.

The greater part of the air mails has been sent the following countries: United States of America (17,000 kg), Great Britain (14,700 kg), France (10,300 kg), Sweden (6,400 kg), Switzerland (5,600 kg), Netherlands (5,200 kg) and USSR (4,700 kg). One might think that foreign trade has been most flourishing with the countries to which most mails have been sent. In reality, as far as foreign trade is concerned, the order of importance of countries was as follows: Switzerland, USSR, Sweden, United States of America, Netherlands. The transport of air parcels has developed in 1946 in a very satisfactory manner. In all 27, 500 kg of air parcels have been carried (250 kg in January, 1,850 kg in July and 7,500 in December). The greater part of these parcels has been sent to Sweden (11,900 kg) and Great Britain (5,000 kg).

In addition to its own mails, the Czecho-Slovak Postal Administration has forwarded in 1946, over the air lines calling at Prague 40,000 kg of mails from abroad. In fact, the geographical situation of Czecho-Slovakia has imposed on it the role of country of transit.

In order to assure a successful development, trade is trying to lower production and distribution costs. It is in its interest that industrial production be as economical as possible and that its products should be sold as cheaply as possible. In the same way, the efforts of the postal Administration, coordinated with the interest of commerce; tend, not only towards an acceleration of the time taken in transport, but towards a lowering of its costs and consequently of air surtaxes.

Volume 73 Number 3 March 1948
The Post in Czecho-Slovakia after the Liberation

J Husák of the Ministry of Posts of the Czecho-Slovak Republic

It was not only the Czecho-Slovak economy, which suffered considerable damage during the six years of the occupation, the Czecho-Slovak Post also suffered considerably. After the expulsion of the army of occupation, the Post of Czecho-Slovakia had, in fact; at its disposal neither sufficient staff acquainted with the service nor the establishments required to enable it to fulfil its obligations to the same extent as before the country's occupation. Several skilled officers had been subjected in Germany to forced labour, and a number of them, who were subjected to bombing, have not come back. Others returned crippled or exhausted. Besides, a good many officers in the executive and administrative services died in horrible circumstances at the hands of the SS. Nor was the Central Administration spared.

The same happened to the buildings and the material. During the occupation it was not possible to renew fittings or to carry out extensions; on the contrary, the postal Czecho-Slovak staff destroyed its working equipment to prevent its being used by the occupying enemy for war purposes.

As regards the organization of the service, the situation of the Czecho-Slovak Post after the occupation was, in a word, lamentable. As during the occupation the territory of the Republic had been divided into four parts, the nature of the administration and the tariffs differing in each case, the restoration of postal connections within the country itself could only be realized after intensive measures. By way of explanation, German methods and rates were in force in the Czecho-Slovak territory annexed by Germany after Munich; the documents of the period preceding Munich were, in addition, destroyed by the German authorities. In the territory called the «Protectorate» the old German regulations and rates were applied in part and the old Czecho-Slovak regulations and rates, very much altered, in part. Within the limits of Czecho-Slovak State the regulations were, on the whole; those of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, but the rates were very much higher. Finally, in the part of Slovakia occupied by the Magyars, in accordance with the resolution of Vienna, Hungarian regulations and rates were in force.

In these circumstances, the Czecho-Slovak Postal Administration and its staff were faced by heavy tasks and great administrative and technical difficulties. Nevertheless, as these had been foreseen, and thanks also to the complete understanding and the active enthusiasm of the executive staff, they were overcome in an incredibly short time.

Several restrictions imposed by the occupying authorities on the post in the interest of that total war which they were carrying on could only be abolished by stages, as means of communications destroyed during the war were replaced. For example, where the Germans during their retreat had blown up railways and bridges, postal dispatches had to be sent by road, by motor vehicles, when there were any, or by any other suitable means. Where connections could be set up, the transport of parcels was gradually organized. No restriction was imposed on the transport of letters. Only the exchange of money articles could not be restored at first with places in the frontier regions, which were still inhabited by Germans. The object of this restriction was to prevent the transmission through the post of German paper money from these regions to the Republic's territory, where large quantities of this paper money were still to be found after the occupation. But as soon as the measures taken by the financial authorities had been successful, this service was entirely restored.

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It was in the autumn of 1945 that, on the basis of the Government's decision concerning the stabilization of Czecho-Slovak currency, the post of Czecho-Slovakia was able to formulate and publish the new rates which were already in force throughout the country. Since then, the Czecho-Slovak postal territory has become an indivisible whole. These new rates came into force on 1st December 1945. Although

Czecho-Slovak currency had been stabilized at three times its value in 1938, in several cases the postal rates did not reach this level: the basic rates have only increased about 2½ times.

A little later the complete unification of the Czecho-Slovak postal service was taken in hand. In the spring of 1946 appeared the new postal regulations, which laid down in a uniform manner for the whole territory the relations of the post with the public and the treatment of postal dispatches. In the autumn of the same year the unification of the postal service was realized. All the regulations had been considered and drawn up already during the occupation, and nothing remained to be done after the liberation than to discuss them with the proper authorities in order to get them approved and published. That is why these regulations could be published without delay.

At the same time, the installation of technical equipment was pursued. As far as financial means and materials allowed the destroyed and used up equipment was replaced, repaired and renewed. Already in 1946 the new staff, which was not yet trained, was taught in special courses the new regulations by means of manuals published by its professional organization, with the help and cooperation of the postal Administration.

Thanks to these efforts; in which the postal Administration and the staff had an equal share, the Czecho-Slovak post was able to attain in certain branches results in no way inferior to those of 1937. For instance, in the registered; articles service it obtained those results at the end of one year. As regards the parcel post and the money order service, the figures exceed those of 1937.

The activity of the postal Administration in the international service, as for instance its numerous special agreements and its intermediary services in air mail transport, is a sufficient testimony of the oration of the, Czecho-Slovak postal service. The volume of the international mail carried depends, of course, on international trade. That is the Postal Administration endeavours also by timely action to prepare conditions favourable to the development of international trade relations, in as much as these come within its sphere.

The public has recognized and expressed its satisfaction with these efforts of the Czecho-Slovak Post. Its users appreciate above all the service, which the post has rendered during the occupation in transporting by means of its staff, who were in the know, many food parcels from the country to the hungry towns, and that in spite of the efforts of the occupation authorities to prevent it.

Great tasks still confront the Czecho-Slovak Post in the near future. In order to overcome the difficulties due to the general lack of labour, it has to mechanise its services to a very large extent. It will also have to reorganize its offices in conformity with the new tendencies, which have manifested themselves in public administration; and this will enable it to satisfy a general desire for administrative decentralization.

QUERIES AWAITING ANSWERS
Czechout 2/02: John Hammonds' American Aid for German POWs card
Czechout 2/03: Richard Beith's 24Kčs 1946 Airmail Stamp
Czechout 3/03: Barry Horne's 1919 1st Anniversary Sheet perforations
Czechout 3/05: Ian McQueen's Shanghai Airmail via Czechoslovakia to Denmark
Czechout 3/05: Richard Beith's Undercover Letters?
Czechout 1/06: Charles Stirton's two covers with unusual "Red" stamps
Czechout 2/06: Bob Hill's Death of the invaders overprints
Czechout 1/07: Dezejna's Nachod stamp
Czechout 1/07: Richard Spennock's B&M Souvenir sheet
Czechout 3/07 Frederik Backeljauw's cancellation Hrušov ve Slezku

WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?

Another selection; at present we have a fair number outstanding awaiting answers. We would be grateful if members would see if they could reply to some of these queries, as it is a pity to write these off as unknown! It would be helpful if inquirers having covers with further details on the reverse also photocopy that side to assist with any replies.

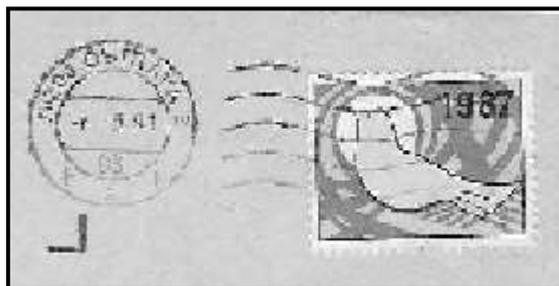
Answers to Queries

Re Frederik Backeljauw's Hrušov ve Slezku C.S.P. cancellation in *Czechout 2/2007* page 58

Freddie replies: I thank John Pojeta Jr for his comments concerning my query. However, this is not what I asked for, as I am very well aware of the contents of Monografie 5, but the question was "Has anyone seen the cancellation Hrušov ve Slezsku together with the letters C.S.P.?" [as illustrated by the letter in *Czechout 2/2007*]; also I have mentioned the Hrušov cancels that I have in my collection but NO Hrušov ve Slezsku together with the letters C.S.P. On page 110 figure 22 of the Monografie 5, this is NOT an Hrušov Slez cancel with C.S.P., but type c 22. On page 126 under Hrušov you can indeed find the description of the Hrušov ve Slezsku together with the letters C.S.P. cancel (Type c 33) but this is only a description, and we [Jan Kypast and myself] will confirm about the existence of this cancellation because we have doubts about it even with the picture of the letter S.O. 1920 in *Merkur Revue* 06/2006. So maybe my query was not clear enough: Have some of our members in their possession anything with the Cancel "Hrušov ve Slezsku together with the letters C.S.P."?

Re Bob Hill's Cover with 70200 OSTRAVA cancellation on a Picasso Dove Label in *Czechout 3/2007* page 85

From Lubor Kunc: Here is my answer to query raised by Bob in *Czechout 3/2007*. In my opinion this is a label prepared by Czechoslovak communist authorities to support anti-war movement. You will remember for sure that socialist states supported this movement very much – because of their superiority in conventional weapons. Removal of these weapons from Europe would open the door to entering Western Europe by Warsaw Pact armies. Maybe you think I am too pessimistic and anti-communist to believe that.



If you see current newspapers (e.g. *Mlada fronta Dnes*), you will find there extensive articles about the role of Czechoslovak army in WWII given by Soviet Politburo to us. The Czechoslovaks should attack Southern Germany and go through Munich and Stuttgart, cross the Rhine and continue via Strasbourg to Dijon. This "trip" was scheduled for 8 days containing also beating of German, US and British troops in Germany and French army at Rhine. However, some Czechoslovak generals saw this plan as unrealistic; Czechoslovak military and political authorities officially approved it.

Picasso's dove (Dove of Peace) became an official symbol of communist policy. It was used on every occasion, e.g. during various conferences, protest marches etc; you can see them, for example, on Czechoslovak stamps of 1983 (World summit for peace and against nuclear war, *Pofis* 2596) and 1985 (10th Anniversary of Helsinki Act, *Pofis* 2704). It was also used on the 1986 issue celebrating "Year of Peace", scheduled by UNO for that year (*Pofis* 2730).

The label was pictured in very small size in *Czechout* (whilst showing a large scan of the postal cancel, when querying the label?), but I saw the digits "1987". This would mean the label was prepared to celebrate the 3rd Reagan – Gorbachev summit (Washington, DC), where some types of missiles were agreed to become forbidden weapons. Using similar Cinderellas for franking of correspondence is nothing unusual. From the *Czechout* illustration we see the letter was put into a pillar-box in Ostrava and later cancelled at the central sorting office. The flow of mail at the sorting machinery is so huge that items franked by such "stamps" are usually not discovered and they are delivered without penalty. I saw similar items franked with invalid stamps, stamps cut from newspapers or with labels. This is quite a normal cover without any special value.

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Re Maurice Tyler's French Cover with Czech Markings in *Czechout 2/2005* page 52

From Michael Chant: I have no idea what the design represents but Alena Pascual must be on the wrong track in suggesting that it is Croatian. Whilst it is true that 'pozdrav' means 'greetings' in Croatian (as in Czech), the rest of the wording ('z Ameriky') is not Croatian but Czech. In Croatian the phrase would be 'Pozdrav iz Amerike'. It is not Slovak either.

I note that the cover was postmarked at St. Briec in Brittany. It is not obvious why a printed propaganda envelope probably emanating from the USA should have been posted on the northern coast of France to an uncertain addressee at an unclear address in Switzerland. Perhaps the answer to the riddle could be unearthed at St. Briec, the chief town of the Côtes du Nord (now called Côtes d'Armor) Department.

New Queries

From Yvonne Wheatley: Can any member give me details of the rates for Czech literature for the blind or direct me to an article or table on the subject please.

From Barry Horne: At the Lewes weekend earlier this year I showed an engraving by J. Herčík and



Engraving by Josef Herčík

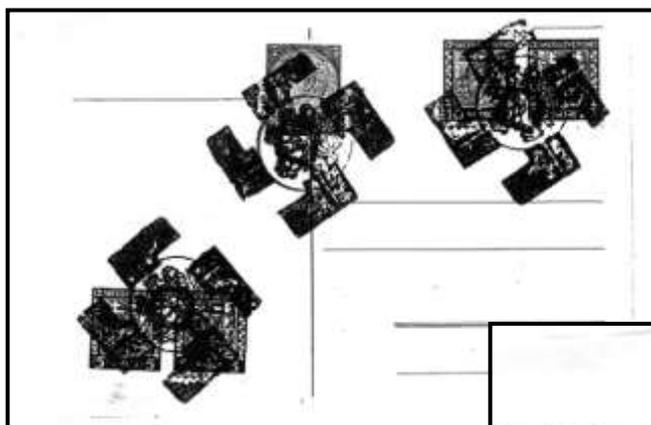
asked what building it was. No one could say what it was. When I got home I found a copy of *Fakes Forgeries Experts* No. 9 had just arrived and lo and behold there was a photograph of that same building. It is the Philatelic Museum, Tokyo! Now the query is "Why and When?"



Fig. 3: The Philatelic Museum, Tokyo

The Philatelic Museum was founded in 1989 and its expertising service started in January 2001.

From Tony Moseley: Whilst at the Lewes weekend I purchased from the dealer, Trevor Pateman, three Sudetenland propaganda cards. I assume these different examples are locally produced and certainly contrary to postal regulations; no place of posting is shown, and only one item has a date – 17.X.1938.

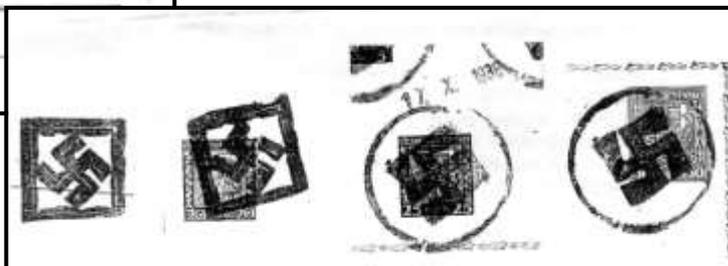


None of the postcards have been postally used.

Example 1) Large swastika, using an official handstamp [not post office issue] with the Lion of Bohemia as its centre.

Example 2) Small swastika with thick border, set within a square. Locally produced from wood or rubber?

Example 3) Similar to 2) but larger swastika inside circular border. Date added separately – 17.X.1938. There are several questions to answer.



As none of these items are listed in the usual works on the Sudetenland, where did they originate? Were the cancels ever used in the post or are they purely propaganda souvenirs? Are these postcards genuine? And do any of our members have similar examples? I would be delighted to hear from anyone who can help solve the mystery of these unusual postcards.

NEW ISSUES

-Lindy Bosworth-

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

Stamps and stationery for the Slovak Republic are printed as indicated for each issue.

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

Czech Republic

3 October 2007 160th Birth Anniversary of the Explorer Emil Holub



Designer: Oldřich Kulhánek **Engraver:** Miloš Ondráček
Printing: RD in sheets of 50.

Design: portrait of Emil Holub (1847-1902) with one of his drawings from his traveller's notebook. Dr Emil Holub studied medicine but was also interested in the natural sciences, geography and land surveying. After graduating he travelled to practise medicine in South Africa. In 1873 he made the first of a number of expeditions in southern Africa. He returned to Prague after seven years and began lecturing and writing his first book. The next expedition to Africa was cut short after a battle with natives and he spent the remainder of his life writing, lecturing and giving exhibitions of the artefacts he had collected. **FDC:** printed DS in dark brown with a commemorative Holice v Čechách cancel. The cachet drawing is a portrait of a native girl.

3 October 2007 Technical Monuments – Water Towers



Designer: Jan Kavan **Engraver:** Václav Fajt

Printing: RD in sheets of 50.

Designs: **7.50Kč:** the water tower at Karviná. This six-storey circular building is 39.4m high and 11.4m in diameter, probably built about 1928. The tower is no longer in use but part of the original pumping equipment is preserved. **FDC:** printed DS in dark green with a commemorative Karviná cancel. The cachet drawing shows part of the pumping system of the works.

18Kč: the listed water tower of the Pilsener Urquel Brewery. This Pilsen water tower began operating in 1907 using water from the local springs and river to fill two tanks for distribution of the water throughout the brewery. The water tower was closed in 2005 but the distribution network underground is still in use. **FDC:** printed DS in dark green with a commemorative Plzeň cancel. The cachet drawing shows a 1910 blowpipe from Káraný.

7 November 2007

Christmas



Designer: Otakar Karlas **Engraver:** Bohumil Šneider **Printing:** RD in sheets of 50.

Design: The Crib (1928) taken from an Indian ink drawing with watercolour by Josef Lada (1887-1957). He was a painter, graphic designer and author whose distinctive style was based on typical Czech village life. **FDC:** printed DS in blue with a commemorative Praha cancel. The cachet drawing is one of the illustrations from a book *Zeměklíč* published in 1940.

7 November 2007

Works of Art on Stamps

Designers and Engravers: (from original art works in the National Museum, Prague) 22Kč – Martin Srb; 25Kč – Václav Fajt; 28Kč – Miloš Ondráček. **Printing:** DS in sheets of 4.



Designs: **22Kč:** Vrbičany Castle (1846) by Amálie Mánesová (1817-1883). She was the daughter of Antonín Mánes who encouraged her to paint landscapes although she had a gift for figure work. She was a teacher and had a small art school in Prague. She joined her brothers Josef and Quido on their expeditions to record the folk costumes of the Czech Lands.

FDC: cachet, in black grey, is taken from her pencil drawing "Cottage Amongst the Trees".



25Kč: Path to Bechyně (1899) by Otakar Lebeda (1877-1901), a landscape painter who studied in Prague and then Paris, where he was influenced by Impressionism. He suffered from severe depression and tragically died whilst still young.

FDC: cachet, in black green, from his ink drawing of 1893 "Jerabek's Farmyard."



28Kč: Montmartre (1856) by Soběslav Hippolyt Pinkas (1827-1901). He was a painter, graphic designer, journalist, caricaturist and political cartoonist. After studying in Munich and Paris he eventually returned to Prague and became an active member of a number of organisations including the artists' association, *Umělecká beseda*. **FDC:** cachet, in black, is from a sketch in black chalk of two workmen for his painting "Workmen at Montmartre".

All FDCs were printed DS and have commemorative Praha cancels.

All the original works of art are in the National Museum, Prague.

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Slovak Republic

27 June 2007

Bratislava Castle

Designer: Dušan Kállay

Engraver: František Horniak

Printing: DS in sheets of 1 stamp with decorative surround by Post Printing House, Prague. FDC printed DS by TAB Ltd, Bratislava.

Design: stamp – Bratislava Castle, c.1100, in the background, with defenders of the castle drilling holes in the river vessels of Emperor Henry III in 1052 in the foreground. The original work is from the Vienna Illuminated Chronicles of the 14th century. The decorative surround to the stamp shows various views of Bratislava Castle through the ages from 1563 to 2007 with the coat of arms of the city and its various names from 907.

FDC: cachet drawing from a woodcut dated 1562 shows a medieval Bratislava with the town's coat of arms and a commemorative Bratislava cancel.



1 September 2007

Famous Personalities – J M Hurban



Designer: Vladislav Rostoka **Printing:** offset by Post Printing House, Prague.
FDC: offset by TAB Ltd, Bratislava.

Design: portrait of Jozef Miloslav Hurban from the 1981 portrait by Dušan Kállay. Jozef Miloslav Hurban (1817-1888) was born in Beckov, became a Lutheran pastor, theologian, political writer and literary critic. With L. Štúr and M. Hodža he codified the final version of the Slovak language which is in use today.

FDC: the cachet has a portrait of Hurban with his facsimile signature. The commemorative Bratislava cancel symbolises the unity of his work as priest, National politician and writer.

5 September 2007 Technical Monuments – Kráľová Bridge at Senec

Designer: Marián Čapka **Engraver:** Juraj Vitek **Printing:** RD by Post Printing House, Prague. **FDC:** DS by TAB Ltd, Bratislava.

Design: Neo-Baroque style bridge over the Čierna Voda river built in 1904 with a detail of the stone balustrade in the foreground. The bridge on the Pálffy estate replaced an earlier wooden structure.

FDC: shows the 1780 Baroque stone bridge over the Sikenica brook in Bátovcie.

22 September 2007 Museum Treasures – The Gospel Book of Nitra

Designer: Pavel Choma **Engraver:** Martin Činovský **Printing:** RD by Post Printing House, Prague. **FDC:** DS by TAB Ltd, Bratislava.

Design: the crucifixion of Christ with figures of Madonna and St John in gold and silver-plated relief and a patriarchal cross. This forms a decoration, which was added to the wooden covers of the gospel in 14–15th century. Of the original 54 parchment pages 50 have been preserved. Although the pages date from 1130 the wooden covers lined in purple velvet are from 14–15th centuries. It is the oldest preserved Gospel in Slovakia.

FDC: has a commemorative Nitra cancel. The cachet drawing is a decorative letter.

26 October 2007 Famous Personalities – Prof. R W Seton Watson

Designer: Ivan Schurmann **Engraver:** Vierošlav Ondrejčička (FDC cachet only) **Printing:** stamp – offset by Post Printing House, Prague. **FDC:** DS by TAB Ltd, Bratislava.

Design: portrait of Seton Watson and a red rose. Robert William Seton Watson (1879-1951) was an historian interested in the racial problems of the Habsburg Empire, advocating the independence of the Czechs and Slovaks. After the Černová tragedy (1907) he publicised the plight of Slovaks under the Hungarians. He was Masaryk Professor of Central European History at London University and the first professor of Czechoslovak studies at Oxford University 1945-49. Bratislava and Prague Universities awarded him honorary degrees. The red rose is associated with the Slovak city of Ružomberok and symbolises his support for Slovaks. **FDC:** with a commemorative Ružomberok cancel and cachet drawing of Černová church.

Postal Stationery**Promotional Postcards**

31 August 2007 (144CDV 078/07) Riccione 2007. International Stamp Fair held 31 August – 2 September 2007 in Italy. Cachet shows a map of the area with flags of various nations rising skyward with relevant text.

14 September 2007 (145CDV 078/07) Sbĕratel, Prague 2007. Collectors Fair held 14-16 September 2007. Cachet design shows the castles of Bratislava and Prague with a magnifying glass, stamps and paper money.

19 October 2007 (146CDV 078/07) 6th Slovak – Polish Exhibition, Bratislava 2007.

26 October 2007 (147CDV 078/07) Sindelfingen 2007. International Stamp Fair held 26-28 October 2007. Cachet shows three stamps with text of the event and a red cancel.