

The Sub-Carpathian Messenger

Newsletter of the Study Circle
for the Postal History of the Carpatho-Ukraine

Number 10 - April 2010



A Ruthenian boy in his Sunday dress

About us and the Newsletter

The Study Circle is a loose group of persons who are interested in the postal (and general) history of the area known as Kárpátalja in Hungarian, as Podkarpatská Rus during the First Czechoslovak Republic, which had a short day of independence as Carpatho Ukraine, and later was integrated into the Ukrainian SSR in the Soviet Union as the ‘Zakarpatskaja Oblast’. Since 1991 it is ЗАКАПАТІЯ, the westernmost administrative district in the now independent Ukraine.

The Newsletter came out of a meeting of a few collectors during the PRAHA 2008, its first number appeared in November 2008. We aim at producing at least four issues per year but cannot promise regular publication intervals. As we can see from the numbers at the DocStoc web site, this newsletter is read by more than hundred people.

Change in distribution method

With the (much appreciated !) help of John Lechtanski we have found a public place where we can store all issues of our Newsletter - at no cost which is even better than expected.

Since SCM #006 you can view and download each issue (including the “old” ones) from the Web address:

<http://www.docstoc.com/collection/128/The-Sub-Carpathian-Messenger>

For downloading you will need to register with DocStoc which again is free of charge. If you encounter any problems with access to the mentioned web site, please let us know.

For those who have no Internet access and/or no e-mail, the distribution method will stay the same: you will receive a colour print-out by air/surface mail as you did in the past.

Everybody can freely access the uploaded numbers of the Newsletter but the notification service for new numbers will be limited to the members of the Study Circle. So joining us still has some advantage.

We send our best wishes and kind regards to the members of the Study Circle.

Rules and Regulations

All articles in the Newsletter carrying the name of an author are the sole responsibility of this author and should not be taken to represent the common opinion of the Study Circle. Such articles are, if not marked otherwise, copyrighted by the respective author. Free use within the Study Circle is granted.

Participation in the Study Circle is not bound to a formal membership and does not include the duty to pay a membership fee. There is a moral obligation to support the Newsletter from time to time by sending some article, some interesting piece of information, some question, some answer or whatever.

We will “print” everything even only loosely connected with our subject of interest so any contribution is certainly welcome. Please send it (as Word 2003 document, graphical elements in JPEG, 300 dpi) to our editor’s e-mail address (kb@aatc.at). His postal address, if you would need it, is:

Dr. Helmut Kobelbauer, Untergrossau 81, A-8261 Sinabelkirchen, Austria / Europe

Helmut Kobelbauer

Sale of the Georg von Steiden Carpatho-Ukraine Collection

The major auction event for our area of interest was the sale of the Georg von Steiden collection at Raritan Stamps.



Georg von Steiden was born in the Ukraine on February 28th, 1950. He received his master's degree in mathematics at the University of Lviv in 1972. In 1982 he moved to Germany where he worked in Munich at "Radio Free Europe" as supervising editor for Ukrainian programs. He presently lives in Vaduz (Liechtenstein).

His philatelic career began in 1969, when he joined the local branch of the V.O.F. (Philatelic Society of Soviet Union) in the city of Lviv. His passion was the philately of Western Ukraine and the Carpatho-Ukraine.

His move to the West gave him the opportunity to expand his knowledge and his stamp collection, which would not have been possible otherwise. Working very hard on research and adding unique material to his collection, Georg von Steiden has become a knowledgeable expert in this field. His monograph on the Carpatho-Ukraine stamps (»*Spezialkatalog Karpaten-Ukraine*«) was published in 2000 and brought him world reputation as a competent and trustworthy specialist in this area. Mr. von Steiden received BPP status from the German Association of Philatelic Experts and he also became an expert of the US-based Ukrainian Philatelic and Numismatic Society.

Raritan Stamps which is based in Dayton, New Jersey (United States of America) and specializes in Russian stamps, in their auction #42 of February 11th, 2010, sold the following Carpatho-Ukraine material from his collection:

- Seym issue (1-1)
- Mukachevo Local issue (2-2)
- Proofs printed on Hungarian Duty stamps (3-16)
- Proofs printed on Hungarian Bond stamps (17-20)
- Proofs printed on Judicial stamps (21-28)
- Proofs printed on Hungarian Fiscal stamps (29-44)
- Proofs printed on Hungarian Check stamps (45-45)
- Surcharges on Hungarian Definitive issue of 1939-44 (46-60)
- Surcharges on Admiral Horthy issue of 1941 (61-83)
- Surcharges on Szechenyi issue of 1941 (84-85)
- Surcharges on War Relief Fund issue of 1943 (86-87)
- Surcharges on Red Cross issue of 1944 (88-89)
- Surcharges on St. Stephen Definitives of 1943 (90-143)
- Surcharges on Christmas issue of 1944 (144-148)
- Surcharges on Kossuth issue of 1944 (149-164)
- Surcharges on Famous Women issue of 1944 (165-188)
- Surcharges over Khust Provisional overprints "C.S.P. 1944" (189-202)
- Surcharges on Postage Due stamps of 1941-42 (203-227)
- Surcharges on Hungarian Revenue stamps of 1934 (228-237)
- Collections (238-239)
- Uzhgorod Soviet Definitive issue - Postal History (240-245)
- Soviet Star Definitive issue - Postal History (246-258)
- Soviet Union regular stamps used in Carpatho-Ukraine (259-265)
- Carpatho-Ukraine Postal Stationery items (266-275)

The list of lots shows clearly that the collection (and therefore the auction) concentrated on the stamp issues of 1944/1945 and the corresponding postal stationery.

In addition to the electronic access by Internet (the web address being www.raritanstamps.com) there was also a printed catalogue of this auction.

It is impossible, of course, to show all 275 pieces offered for sale in our Newsletter, and each selection will probably hurt somebody's feelings. (We have downloaded the catalogue and the pictures of all offered items.) So please bear with us and our prejudices of what we think were interesting items ...

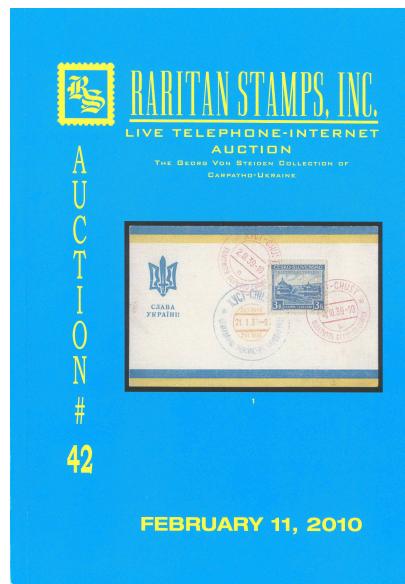
We believe it is fair to say that the majority of the auction lots were stamps of the aforementioned issues. There was a sprinkling of covers and other postal items, too. Among the stamps again there was a concentration on "extras" like inverted overprints. Nearly all the offered material came with expertizing certificates of John Bulat or Mr. von Steiden himself.

A typical example for the "postally used" items was offered as lot 74: the darkbrown 2P of the Admiral Horthy issue of 1941, overprinted in 1945 with black "Пошта | Закарпатська | Україна" and then "4.00", used on a local registered cover in Uzhgorod with red handwritten registration "118". The cover originated from the Greek-Catholic Episcopal Church of Mukachevo in Uzhgorod and has the Hungarian text blackened out. The postage stamp is cancelled by rubber stamp УЖГОРОД and has a reduced date mark "12. IV. 45" below. It is for certain that 4.00 (Pengö) was not the correct fee for such a letter. The receiver (Dr. Ivan Jaczkovits) is well-known from a number of such "used" items.



The cover offered as lot 100 is quite similar and addressed to the same person. It carries the black surcharge "40" on the 2f red orange of the St. Stephan definitive of 1943 and then some other values from the same series. The letter is described as the probably only known mailing bearing this stamp.

This registered letter also carries a date marker "10. IV. 45" and two strikes of the same rubber stamp of УЖГОРОД. There is also a handwritten red registration mark "62". The stamps add up to a fee of 180 (fillér) which seems a bit more realistic than the 4.00 (Pengö) from above. Jan Verleg in his monograph (p. 165) gives a rate of 60f for a domestic letter up to 20 gram and then a registration fee of 140f, valid from 01-03-1945 until 15-11-1945. The question of (correct) postal rates in this period is still not a fully resolved issue.



For the Record:

Results of Raritan Stamps Auction #42 (Georg von Steiden's Carpatho-Ukraine Collection)

Lot	USD										
1	270	51	90	101	1300	151		201	3250	251	650
2	1200	52	4500	102	1200	152	600	202	8000	252	120
3	625	53	625	103	220	153	2600	203	425	253	220
4	350	54	400	104		154	2600	204		254	150
5	1350	55	625	105		155	2700	205	575	255	140
6	130	56	600	106	2100	156	240	206	130	256	220
7	280	57	2700	107	650	157	375	207	550	257	260
8	230	58	190	108	110	158	950	208	1700	258	220
9	240	59	1800	109	1150	159	325	209	350	259	
10	375	60	1300	110	2300	160		210	110	260	
11	850	61	1800	111	2600	161	425	211	1600	261	
12	450	62		112	1450	162	375	212	850	262	
13	800	63		113	230	163	525	213	3000	263	
14	2800	64	2000	114	3000	164	3000	214	1600	264	220
15	1300	65	240	115	1800	165		215	1700	265	900
16	1150	66	725	116	725	166	2700	216	400	266	4000
17	350	67	625	117	1600	167	2400	217	600	267	1900
18	600	68	325	118	1600	168	600	218	600	268	375
19		69	375	119	475	169	250	219	160	269	550
20	550	70	550	120	475	170	290	220	200	270	1000
21	325	71	280	121	300	171	1000	221		271	650
22	850	72	2700	122	1050	172	950	222	375	272	525
23	200	73	3250	123	950	173	750	223	1900	273	150
24	190	74	2000	124	375	174		224	1500	274	550
25	2600	75		125	1500	175	525	225		275	3000
26	675	76		126	900	176	350	226	1600		
27	650	77	2300	127	950	177	950	227	1600		
28	1400	78	2600	128	850	178		228	200		
29	600	79	3000	129	850	179		229	375		
30	200	80	2100	130	1400	180	2900	230	400		
31	160	81	2500	131	950	181	450	231	7500		
32	280	82	2500	132	2000	182	1150	232	1350		
33	1250	83	2300	133	1300	183	950	233	450		
34	1400	84	1000	134	450	184	3250	234	525		
35	950	85	1150	135	550	185	100	235	800		
36		86	950	136	1150	186	900	236	675		
37	1000	87	625	137	1700	187	2700	237	525		
38	850	88	950	138	1400	188	1000	238	1050		
39	900	89	1000	139	1700	189	1500	239	140		
40	950	90	1700	140	2200	190	1600	240	500		
41	1050	91	1000	141	625	191	1100	241	425		
42	1350	92	180	142	425	192	4000	242	375		
43	1900	93	1200	143	1600	193	3250	243	675		
44	1800	94	2000	144	210	194	8500	244	750		
45	725	95	2600	145	130	195	3250	245	550		
46	1050	96	425	146	1250	196	1800	246	350		
47	950	97	475	147	1050	197	3500	247	130		
48	950	98	725	148	2400	198	3500	248			
49	190	99	950	149	240	199	3500	249	130		
50	100	100	4000	150	450	200	3250	250	325		

Prices given are without buyer's premium (12.5 per cent). The total of this reference auction was more than USD 300,000. Congratulations to Georg von Steiden and the auction house !

Helmut Kobelbauer

The Development of Postal Connections in Hungary: Snapshot from 1780

Maps from Historical Hungary date back to the late 1520s and - as Tønnes Ore has mentioned in his beautiful overview in SCM #004 - there are plenty of them.

But if you look amongst them for maps showing postal routes and stations and the distances between the stations, the field gets much sparser.

The earliest such map I have been able to find is from the year 1780. It is a hand-coloured map from the respective collection of the Austrian State Archive in Vienna (part B IXc, number 624) and carries the hand-written title “Post Karte von einem Theil Hungarns” [Postal Map of a Part of Hungary]. The map-maker’s name is neither given nor known.



Fig. 1: Postal map of Hungary from 1780.

Part of this map is a list of postal routes, their stations, and their distances.

You will probably know that at this time the distance was measured in “Posten”. The nominal unit “Posten” was equal to the average distance between post stations and equivalent to 2 “Postmeilen” or about 15 kilometres. One “Postmeile” was equal to 4000 “Wiener Klafter” or 24,000 “Wiener Fuss”, equivalent to 7.5859 kilometres [see Dr. Rüdiger Wurth, »Österreichisches Jahrbuch 1979 für Postgeschichte und Philatelie«, p. 32]. It was still considered to be “1 Posten” when the real distance was 25 per cent smaller or larger; above that distance one had “1½ Posten” or even “2 Posten”. Later years introduced “¼ Posten” and even “⅛ Posten”.

Again Tønnes Ore has described this system in more detail in his article “Challenging prephilatelic letters” in SCM #007.

What the map does not tell us is whether the postal stations were stations of the postriders only or also stations for the mail coaches. If in doubt, I would assume just the first.

Having said all that, I continue with a transcription of the given lists. Since the names given in the lists and drawn on the map are not always the same (nobody cared about orthography then), I have sometimes added an alternate name in parentheseses.

#	Name on the map	Posten	Sum	Hungarian name	Current name
1	Fischament	1½	1½	---	Fischamend (AT)
2	Teutsch Altenburg	1½	3	---	Bad Deutsch-Altenburg (AT)
3	Jährndorf	1½	4½	---	Deutsch Jahrndorf (AT)
4	Wiselburg	1½	6	Moson	Moson (HU)
5	Hochstraß	1½	7½	Öttevény	Öttevény (HU)
6	Raab	1	8½	Győr	Győr (HU)
7	Göny	1	9½	Gönyű	Gönyű (HU)
8	Comorn	2	11½	Komárom	Komárom (HU)
9	Nesmühl	1	12½	Neszmély	Neszmély (HU)
10	Neudorf	1	13½	Nyergesújfalu	Nyergesújfalu (HU)
11	Dorog	1	14½	Dorog	Dorog (HU)
12	Vörösvar	1½	16	Pilisvörösvár	Pilisvörösvár (HU)
13	Ofen	1½	17½	Buda	Budapest (HU)

Table 1: Postal route from Vienna to Ofen.

#	Name on the map	Posten	Sum	Hungarian name	Current name
1	Fischament	1½	1½	---	Fischamend (AT)
2	Teutsch Altenburg	1½	3	---	Bad Deutsch-Altenburg (AT)
3	Presburg	1	4	Pozsony	Bratislava (SR)
4	Cseklesch (Csekletz)	1	5	Cseklesz	Bernolákov (SR)
5	Sarffö	1	6	Pozsonysárfő	Blatné (SR)
6	Tyrnau	1	7	Nagyszombat	Trnava (SR)
7	Freystadl	1½	8½	Galgóc	Hlohovec (SR)
8	Reppeny (Repény)	1	9½	Nagyrepény	Veľké Ripňany (SR)
9	Tapolcsan	1	10½	Nagytopolcsány	Topoľčany (SR)
10	Nitra Szambokret	1	11½	Nyitra Szambokret	Žabokrety nad Nitrou (SR)
11	Vestenitz (Vesztenitz)	1	12½	Alsóvesztény	Dolné Vestenice (SR)
12	Baymotz (Baimocz)	1	13½	Bajmócz	Bojnice (SR)
13	Rudna	1	14½	Turócrudnó	Rudno (SR)
14	Turocz Szambokret	1	15½	Zsámbokret	Žabokreky (SR)
15	Nolleschova	1	16½	Nolcsó	Nolčovo (SR)
16	Rosenberg	1½	18	Rózsahegy	Ružomberok (SR)
17	Bertalan (Pentendorf)	1	19	Dechtár	Dechtáre (SR)
18	Okoliesna	1	20	Okolicsnó	Liptovský Mikuláš (SR)
19	Vihodna	1	21	Vichodna	Východná (SR)
20	Lucsivna (Leutschburg)	1	22	Lucsivna	Lučivná (SR)
21	Horka	1	23	Ládzsásötfalu	Hôrka (SR)
22	Leutschau	1	24	Lócse	Levoča (SR)
23	Piaczowecz (Piaczovez)	1	25	Beharócz	Beharovce (SR)
24	Berthot (Bertodt)	1½	26½	Bertót	Bertotovce (SR)
25	Eperies	1	27½	Eperjes	Prešov (SR)
26	Lemeschan	1	28½	Lemes	Lemešany (SR)
27	Caschau	1	29½	Kassa	Košice (SR)

Table 2: Postal route from Vienna to Caschau.

#	Name on the map	Posten	Sum	Hungarian name	Current name
1	Sina (Szinna)	1	1	Abaújszina	Seňa (SR)
2	Vilmany	1	2	Vilmány	Vilmány (HU)
3	Tallya (Talija)	1	3	Tállya	Tállya (HU)
4	Tokay	1	4	Tokaj	Tokaj (HU)
5	Nanas	1	5	Hajdúnánás	Hajdúnánás (HU)
6	Beszermenye	1½	6½	Hajdúböszörmény	Hajdúböszörmény (HU)
7	Debreczin	1	7½	Debrecen	Debrecen (HU)

Table 3: Postal route from Caschau to Debreczin.

#	Name on the map	Posten	Sum	Hungarian name	Current name
1	Horzupal	1½	1½	Hosszúpályi	Hosszúpályi (HU)
2	Nagyleta	1	2½	Nagyléta	Nagyléta (HU)
3	Szekely	1	3½	Székelyhíd	Săcueni (RO)
4	Margitta	1½	5	Margitta	Marghita (RO)
5	Deda	1	6	Berettyódéda	Ghida (RO)
6	Kemer	1	7	Kémer	Camăr (RO)
7	Somlyo	1	8	Szilágyszomlyó	Şimleu Silvanei (RO)
8	Szillah	1½	9½	Zilah	Zalău (RO)
9	Bred	1	10½	Beréd	Brebi (RO)

Table 4: Postal route from Debreczin to the borders of Siebenbürgen.

#	Name on the map	Posten	Sum	Hungarian name	Current name
1	Kerepes	1½	1½	Kerepes	Kerepes (HU)
2	Bagh	1½	3	Bag	Bag (HU)
3	Hatvan	1	4	Hatvan	Hatvan (HU)
4	Gyöngyös	1½	5½	Gyöngyös	Gyöngyös (HU)
5	Kapolna	1½	7	Kápolna	Kápolna (HU)
6	Erlau	1½	8½	Eger	Eger (HU)
7	Keresztes	2	10½	Mezőkeresztes	Mezőkeresztes (HU)
8	Onod	1½	12	Ónod	Ónod (HU)
9	Szerencs	1½	13½	Szerencs	Szerencs (HU)
10	Tokay	1	14½	Tokaj	Tokaj (HU)

Table 5: Postal route from Ofen to Tokay.

#	Name on the map	Posten	Sum	Hungarian name	Current name
1	Horzupal	1	1	Hosszúpályi	Hosszúpályi (HU)
2	Nagyleta	1½	2½	Nagyléta	Nagyléta (HU)
3	Körtvelyes	1½	4	Érkörtvélyes	Curtuişeni (RO)
4	Nagy Karol	1	5	Nagykároly	Carei (RO)
5	Bagos	1	6	Csengerbagos	Boghiş (RO)
6	Szatmar (Zatmar)	1	7	Szatmárnémeti	Satu Mare (RO)
7	Medies	1	8	Aranyosmeggyes	Medieşu Aurit (RO)
8	Illova	1	9	Iloba	Ilba (RO)
9	Nagybanya	1	10	Nagybánya	Baia Mare (RO)
10	Bayfalu	1	11	Bajfalú	Dăneşti (RO)
11	Kapnik	1	12	Kapnikbánya	Cavnic (RO)
12	Budfalú	1	13	Budfalva	Budeşti (RO)
13	Szigeth (Zigeth)	1½	14½	Máramarosziget	Sighetu Marmaťiei (RO)

Table 6: Postal route from Debreczin to Szigeth.

#	Name on the map	Posten	Sum	Hungarian name	Current name
1	Szimand	1	1	Alsósímad	Şimandu de Jos (RO)
2	Nagy Szerend	2	3	Nagyzerénd	Zerind (RO)
3	Rimete	1	4	Remete	Remetea (RO)
4	Gyapja	1	5	Gyapjú	Gepiu (RO)
5	Großvardein	1	6	Nagyvárad	Oradea Mare (RO)
6	Bokay	1½	7½	Pocsaj	Pocsaj (HU)
7	Horzupal	1½	9	Hosszúpályi	Hosszúpályi (HU)
8	Debreczin	1	10	Debrecen	Debrecen (HU)

Table 7: Postal route from Arad to Debreczin.

I do apologize if I have deciphered something in the wrong way. For mapping the old names (and routes) to modern names, I have been using the reference works

BÉR Andor, MAKKAI László, MAKKAI Éva, SURÁNYI László, Heribert DRÖGE:
 »A Magyar Posta Bélyegelőtti Bérmentesítéseinek és Bélyegzőinek Kézikönyve«
 [Handbook of the Hungarian Pre-Stamp Mail], TÉKA, Budapest [without year].

and, of course,

LELKES György:

»Magyar Helységnév - Azonosító Szótár« [Hungarian Lexicon of Place Names],
 Talma, Baja, 1998.



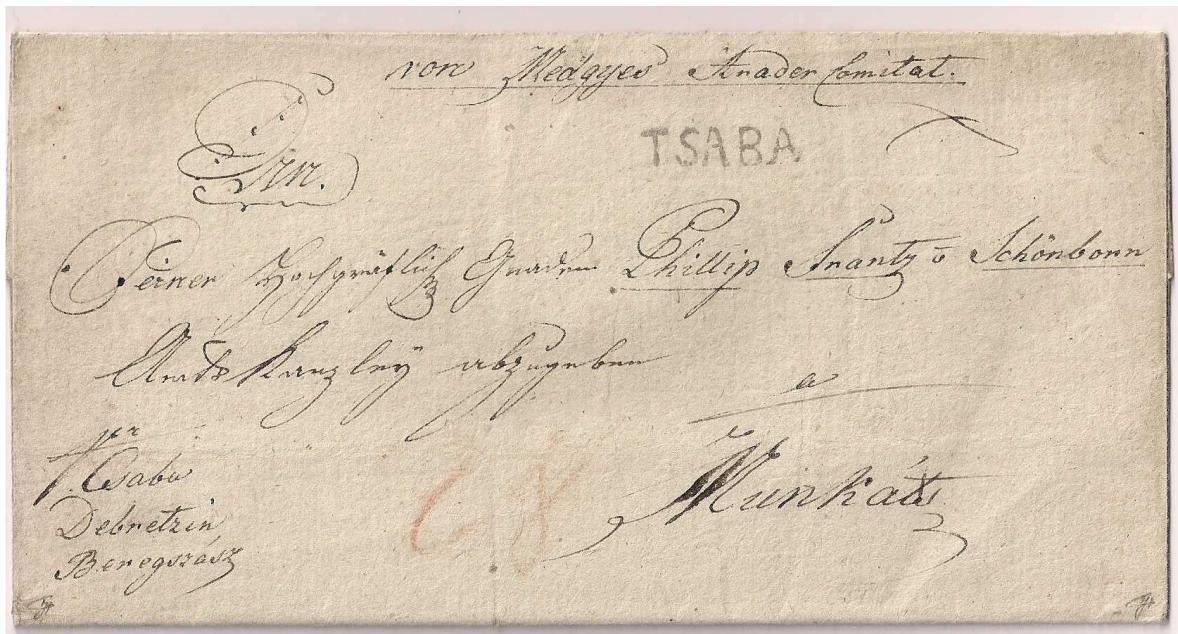
From the detail of the map reproduced above one can see that already in 1780 there was a postal route from Debrecen through Nagykároly, Szatmár(németi), and Nagybánya to (Máramaros)Sziget but the eastwards connection from Kassa (Caschau) through the Ung, Bereg, and Ugocsa counties was not yet established.

Jan Rompes

Some more Schönborn covers

After reading the interesting article "From Gróf Schönborn to the Sanatorium KARPATY" by Alex Popovych and Helmut Kobelbauer I went through my collection of Hungarian prestamp letters and found some covers referring to the name Schönborn.

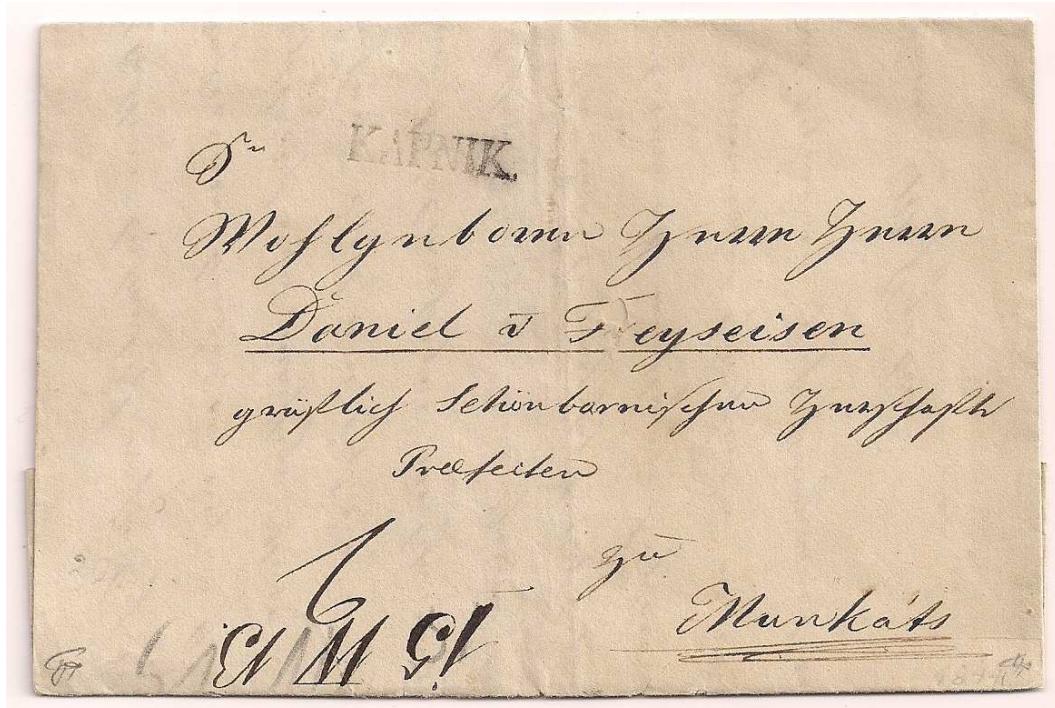
The first concerns a letter from Tsaba-Bekescsaba in present Hungary addressed to "Phillip Frantz v[on] Schönborn / Amtskanzley in Munkáts" from the year 1828. The letter was written in Medgyes and sent via the post office in [Bekes]csaba, Debreczin and Beregszász to Munkáts. It is a double weight letter with postage due of 28 kr. Zone 7. Weight 1 loth.



The second letter is from the year 1827 and posted in Késmárk (Kežmarok in present Slovakia). This town had a letter collecting agency [Briefsammlung]. From there it went to the main post office in Leutschau/Löcse to the prefect Daniel von Freiseisen of the "Gräflich Schönbornischen Oberamt in Munkats". Postage due 8 kr. Zone 4. Weight ½ loth.



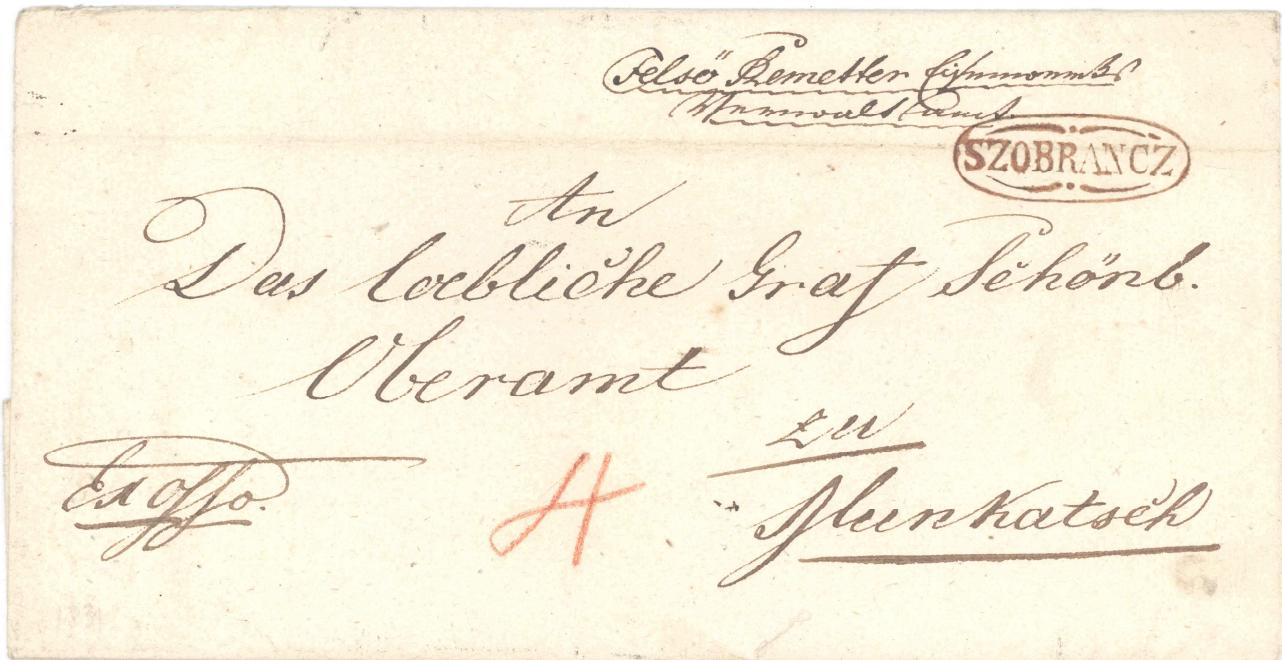
The third letter is addressed to the same person Daniel v[on] Freyseisen and mailed in the year 1844 from Kapnik (Cavnic in present Romania) without postage indication.



There were also two letters from Késmárk and Leutschau in the last Profila auction sent to the prefect in Munkács from the years 1829 and 1836.

How much more these letters ‘live’ when you know some background of the addressee involved.

Another “Schönborn” cover – from the collection of Andrew Cronin:

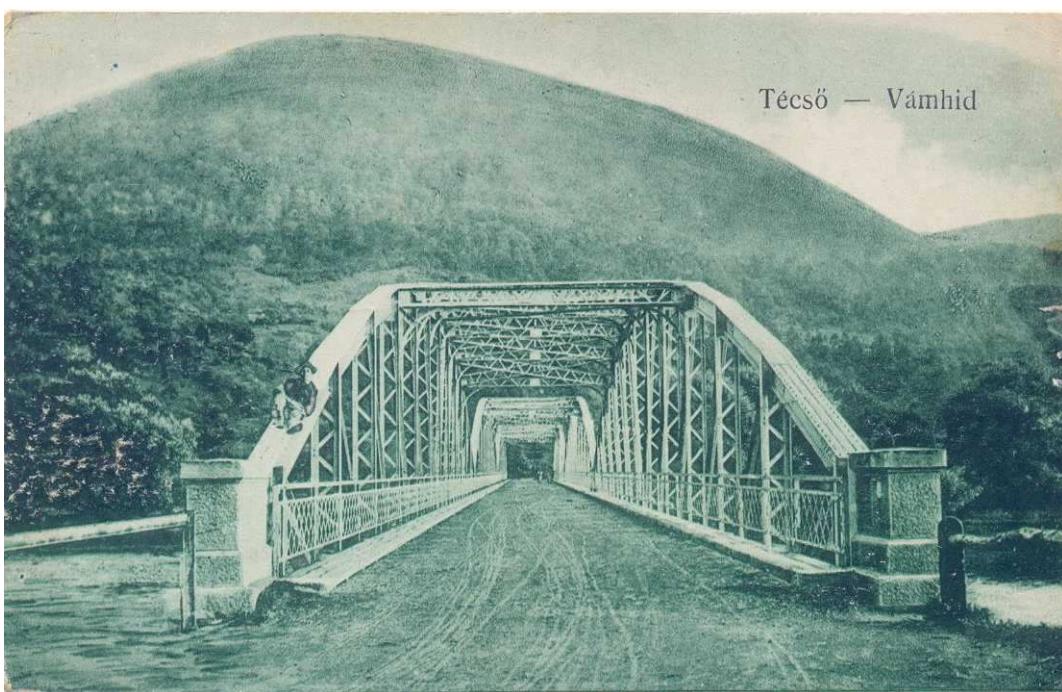
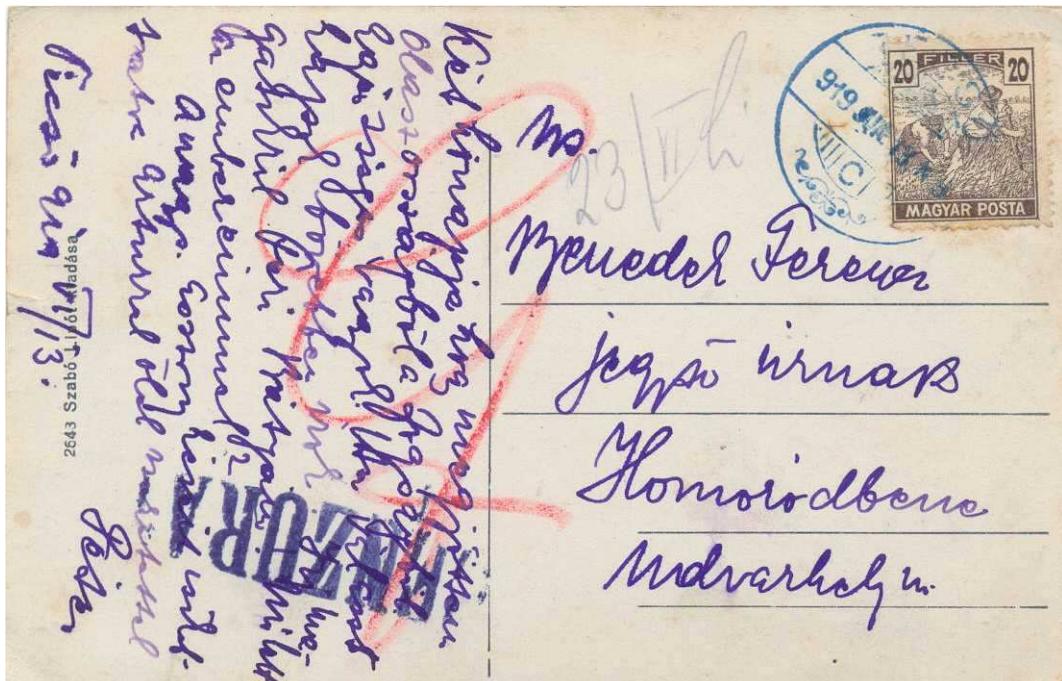


Written October 22nd, 1831, from Szobrancz (now in Slovakia) to Munkatsch. Cholera had probably stopped by then - no traces of fumigation treatment. Distance 4½ Posten, weight ½ Loth - 4 kr.

Helmut Kobelbauer

Another Piece from the Romanian Occupation

In July 2009 Dan-Simion Grecu, the famous specialist for Romanian postal history and especially censorship in the transitional areas, has forwarded us the scan of an interesting card in his collection:



This card was written in Técső on June 13th, 1919, and sent to Homoródbene in Udvarhely county. Técső - according to available information - was taken by Romanian troops in mid April 1919 and was released to Czechoslovak administration in July 1920. Therefore this card originates from the period of Romanian "occupation". It is franked with a Hungarian 20f stamp from the harvesters' series of 1919 which is cancelled with a blue "TÉCSÓ | C" mark. The card also carries a violet "CENSURAT" censorship mark from Sibiu and a red "Cf" initial.

Helmut Kobelbauer

The 9th Company of the »Pěší Pluk 45 “Rumunský“ in Výlok

Coming back to the question of Martin Jurkovič in “The Sub-Carpathian Messenger” #008, I think I can prove that - at least on a certain day - part of the Czechoslovak 45th Infantry Regiment was stationed in Výlok.

Please remember that on November 2nd, 1938, German, Hungarian, and Italian diplomats in Vienna decided in the so-called First Vienna Arbitrage that the Czechoslovak Republic would have to cede part of its territory to Hungary. This included the main towns of Košice, Užhorod, Mukačevo and Berehovo. On the other hand, the Czechoslovak military troops had been activated in September 1938 and were spread all over the country to defend the borders of their republic.

The British and French governments had been asked (as written down in the Munich dictate) to participate in the Vienna negotiations but had declined; nevertheless, they accepted the outcome of this single-sided diplomatic event and put pressure on the government in Prague to accept it, too. Which the government finally did.

On November 5th, 1938, the Czechoslovak troops withdrew from the area under dispute; Hungarian troops marched in and took over the military and civil power.



Fig. 1: Letter from Třinec/Trzyniec to Hust, forwarded to Výlok

An item bought at eBay is from this critical period. The letter was written to a soldier of the 45th Infantry Regiment, 9th Company, in Hust. The date of the respective postmark is a bit unclear; it is certainly from October 1938. On October 28th, 1938, a (transit) mark of “POLNÍ POŠTA 24 | b” was added to the cover; and then on November 2nd, 1938, a (second transit or reception) mark of “POLNÍ POŠTA 24 | a”. The destination “Hust” was crossed out in red pencil, instead the new destination “Výlok” was added.

According to Jan Verleg’s monograph (page 100b), the PP 24 was in Mukačevo until October 20th, 1938, and then moved to Svaljava as per October 21st, 1938. This movement makes sense because it went north, out of the later Zone 1. Possibly the real transition date was later in October or even in the beginning of November - the Czechoslovak troops may have changed their positions only when the outcome of the Vienna negotiations had become clear.

Taking this into account, it becomes quite improbable that the second mark of the PP 24 is a reception mark - the field post office was either in Mukačevo or in Svaljava, certainly not in Chust or in Výlok. So we have two different transit marks from this field post office.

This (simple) letter does not carry an indication of having been sent back. Did it eventually reach its recipient?

The final destination given is Výlok. But it went there after November 2nd, 1938, in the period of confusion and turbulence following the First Vienna Arbitrage. The Hungarian name of Výlok was Tiszaújlak and - this town was included in the ceded territory of Zone 1! Whatever part of the 45th Infantry Regiment was there, they would have to leave quickly and move out of Zone 1.

In earlier numbers of our Newsletter we have seen that the 9th Company in late November was concentrated in Chust. There was also the headquarters of the 45th Regiment. But we also think that parts of this company were in Vary (3. XI. 1938) and in Rachov (21. XI. 1938) - see SCM #002, page 13.

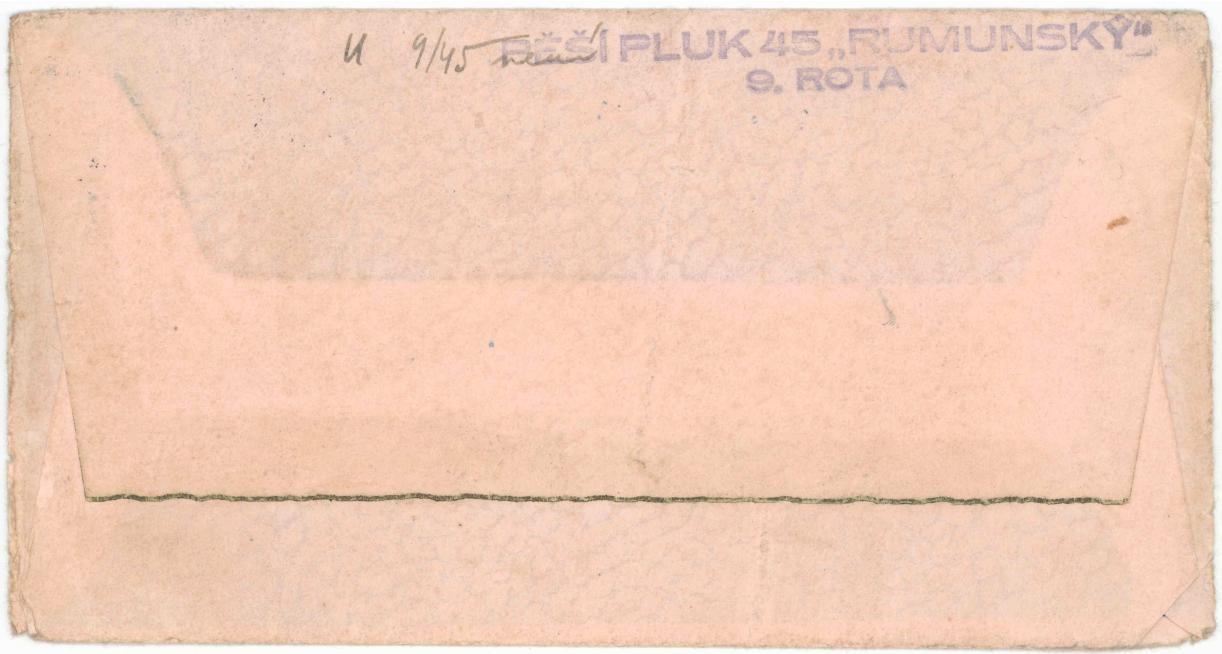


Fig. 2: Reverse of this letter with troops' mark

Let us assume that this letter was forwarded to Výlok/Tiszaújlak. It went to the military troops there - and they could not find the recipient!

So they added "U 9/45 nemú" [At 9/45 unknown] in handwriting plus the troops' mark PĚŠÍ PLUK 45 "RUMUNSKÝ" | 9. ROTA (in violet, 86x8 mm, character height 3,0 mm).

My reasoning now goes as follows: If this mark had been added in Chust, the forwarding destination "Výlok" would not make any sense; therefore we have to assume that it was added in Výlok. Which proves that (at least at this day, just before leaving the town) part of the 9th Company of the 45th Infantry Regiment was stationed in Výlok. I say "part of" because I think that other parts of this company may have been somewhere else, e. g., in Vary.

The curious thing is that the cover is cut open at its left side, and the letter inside the cover has been removed. Has the recipient been found at some other location of the 9th Company?

By the way: this item has attracted 18 bids, driving up the price from USD 9,99 to USD 108,50.

Juan E. Page

How many “Red Bears” exist ?

During 2009 several interesting pieces of postal history of Carpatho Ukraine appeared on sale in different auctions. They came from some of the most important collections formed during the second half of the 20th century and it was the first time that many of them appeared in the market. I want to refer here to those showing the unissued postmark prepared to commemorate the opening of the first session of the Parliament of Carpatho Ukraine with date 2. III. 39, showing the national coat of arms, the bear and the seven strips, and found, till now, in red ink.

The information about this postmark is confused. Ota J. Brikcius, present in Chust during the first days of March 1939, wrote in *Česke Slovo* (April 12th, 1939) about the issuing of the stamp and he comments that there “... will be two postmarks, one without counter letter and the other with letter b” but that is obviously too vague. In the same period *Tribuna Filatelistů* published many references to the issue of the Parliament stamp. On page 130 of number 8/1939 we can read “... three postmarks were used, two with fixed date 2. III. and the third with variable date ...” so again the information is rather imprecise. And I have not found any mention of it in the literature till more than 25 years later!

The *Czechoslovak Specialist* no. 263 (May 1966) included a paper by Viktor Indra reprinted from *The Journal of Russian Philately* (date unknown) that describes the postmark as “A pictorial type with a diameter of 33 mm, showing the coat of arms of Carpatho Ukraine, the name Хуст - Chust at the top in the Ukrainian and Czech languages, and at the bottom the Ukrainian inscription ВІД-КРИТТЯ ПЕРШОГО СОЙМУ, meaning Opening of the First National Assembly. It bears the fixed date 2. III. 39 - 10 with subscript a ...”. However, there is no photographic reproduction of a real postmark but probably a handmade drawing.

The first true reproduction I have found of the “red bear” appeared in the booklet [1] of R. Richet which is not dated but was probably issued in 1965. Over a photograph of the Parliament stamp cancelled with this special mark a description appears: “For the opening of Parliament a special postmark was prepared in two colours: red and black(?)”. It seems that black ink was never used in this case.

It is curious that when I bought the collection of Carpatho Ukraine of Viktor Indra (nearly 25 years ago) I found the same picture, reproduced here as a curiosity. I used it to prepare the front cover of the Monograph no. 4 of the *Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain* and Jan Verleg included it in his magnificent book. I will return to this image later.



František Táborský included again in his booklet [2] a hand-drawn reproduction of the postmark (p. 10, fig. 8). He describes a first postmark with identification letters “a” and “b” and continues: “... in a second postmark with the same text were included the coat of arms of the territory with the bear on the right side and yellow and blue strips on the left” (?). It is clear that he doesn’t refer to the colour of the postmark but to the real colours of the strips. But it is not clear if we have to interpret that the reference to letters “a” and “b” applies to the second postmark, too.

Walter Rauch [3] used again a hand-drawn reproduction and mentions the existence of three postmarks “the third with 33 mm and same text showing the coat of arms of the territory, date 2. III. and identification letter a”.

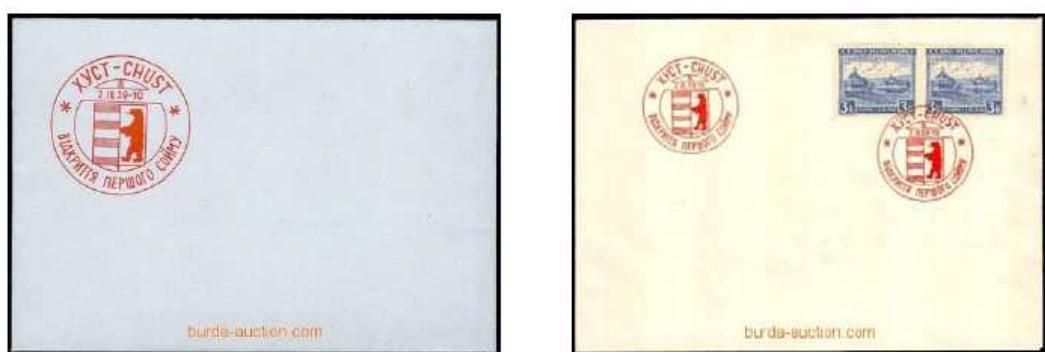
Finally Miroslav Blaha in his book [4] uses once more the hand-drawn reproduction (p. 67, fig. 4) and writes “There were prepared four special postmarks with letters a and b ...” introducing the only clear reference to the possible existence of a ‘red bear’ with letter b.

And now let us return to the auctions. The first piece appeared in Jiří Majer’s auction of September 15th, 2008 (lot 846). It is a cover with the stamp and postmark (letter a) of the Parliament, addressed to Josef Pluhář in Olomouc. On the front side it is signed by M. Blaha and on the back side there are two texts: one from Karel Basika dated 14. 9. 1958 “First postmark prepared for the opening of the Parliament of Carpatho Ukraine. Picture with original engraving” and the other from Jan Mrnák dated 12. IX. 1959 “I agree with the opinion of K. Basika. The address on the cover was added”.



It is obvious that the picture found by me in Viktor Indra’s collection was taken from this cover before the cover was signed by Miroslav Blaha.

The second document, a piece of paper with a postmark (letter a), appeared in the Burda auction of March 5th, 2009 (lot 497), and the third again in the Burda auction of March 28th (lot 275). This one shows a pair of stamps and a pair of postmarks (letter a).



And now the two fundamental questions: Are there other documents showing the ‘red bear’ postmark? How many? Does the ‘red bear’ with letter b exist? I hope that one of our dear colleagues in our Study Circle can add information about that interesting aspect of our common collection area.

References:

- [1] R. Richet: »Les diverses émissions et oblitérations de la Russie Subcarpathique et de la Slovaquie du Sud (1860 - 1965)«, p. 21
- [2] F. Táborský: »Zakarpatská Ukrajina«, Brno 1968, p. 10
- [3] W. Rauch: »Anmerkungen zur Postgeschichte der Karpaten-Ukraine«, Teil 1, 1975, p. 22
- [4] M. Blaha: »Zakarpatsko«, Praha 1989, p. 67

Helmut Kobelbauer

The meeting of Hungarian and Polish forces in 1939 - continued

In issues #001, #002, and then #006 of our Newsletter I have written about the meeting of Hungarian and Polish forces in mid of March 1939 at the Carpathian passes and a series of Hungarian picture postcards celebrating this event.

In the meantime additional cards of this type have come to my knowledge, and the current count is: six cards from Uzsok, three cards from Verecke. One curious thing is that for Verecke cards there are two different dates: some are marked "1939.III.16" and some "1939.III.17":



Fig. 1: eBay 2004-1837-0428
Postmark of "MUNKÁCS | D", May 20th, 1939



Fig. 1a: Picture side of this card

Mr. Géza Melzer from the German "Arbeitsgemeinschaft Ungarn" has added another piece of information: The Hungarian officer (at the far left in the picture) was General Staff Officer Alajos Béldy, leader of the Cavalry Brigade (in Hungarian: vitéz Béldy Alajos, vezérkari ezredes lovasdandár parancsnok). Thank you very much!

One picture postcard that I had mentioned in the original article (in SCM #001, page 10) has since come into my fold, too ("soldiers on bicycles in deep snow") - you will find it also mentioned in the next article (in this issue) by Mervyn Benford:



Fig. 2: Another picture postcard from the meeting in mid March 1939

One just has to be patient ... long enough.

I have also mentioned that the border of a thousand years did not hold out for very long, even less than the Empire of thousand years did. It makes one think whether the political dreams of today are any better than the political follies of about 70 years ago.



Fig. 3: A bit later - The Hungarian-Polish border has become the Hungarian-Soviet border (eBay 2003-7949-2526)

Probably not.

Mervyn Benford

On the Question of Hungarian Field Posts in 1938 and 1939

When I prepared my text »*The Visszatérő Period in Hungarian Philately*« which treats the restored Hungarian territories 1938 to 1941 (lost again in 1946 if not *de facto* before) I met a leading expert on these matters, Dr. Palotás Zoltán. He had no knowledge of Field Post activities or provision in 1938 restored Northern Hungary plus parts of Kárpátalja but only in the 1939 campaign.

In my fairly substantial collection of material from this first phase of restoration I have not a single example where a Field Post Office has been part of the postal involvement. The hypothesis [that there was no Hungarian Field Post in the November 1938 campaign] seems correct. Dr. Palotás was very authoritative and helpful on almost all aspects of this subject.

I was able to find from friends such as him and John Whiteside information about FPOs in the 1939 annexation/restorations. In my book I noted FPO numbers 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 24, 26, 27, 28, 31, 40, 42, 43, 44, 47, 52, 53, 56, 57, 62, 66, 67, 68. All except 24, 40, 53, 62, 66, and 67 also appeared with a letter 'A'. Number 61 appeared only with a letter 'A'; numbers 66 and 67 appeared with a letter 'b'.

Béla Simády's principal interest was postal stationery of Hungary but with a strong specialist interest in Carpatho-Ukraine stamps and postal history. I shared both interests and the correspondence ensued as a result of my co-operating with him on his first-ever Hungarian Postal Stationery catalogue.

He told me that on March 10th, 1939, the Teleki Cabinet met and decided that if Slovakia became independent then Hungary would occupy Carpatho-Ukraine regardless of German attitude. The decision was advised to both Rome and Warsaw noting that if Slovakia became independent and subsumed within the German sphere of influence then the absence of a direct Hungarian-Polish border could be difficult and embarrassing for both countries.

On March 12th Germans advised that Czechoslovakia was on the brink of collapse, that Slovakia would get independence but that this would not extend to Ruthenia. On March 14th came the well-known declaration of independence in the Carpatho-Ukraine with a similar hope of German Reich endorsement and protection.

The next day - as is well documented - the Hungarian army moved in, meeting some resistance from Ukrainian nationalists who hoped to force German intervention thereby ... to no avail, and by March 18th the occupation was complete and Hungarian sovereignty restored completely. Some had been restored by the 1938 Vienna Accords.

On 23rd March the Hungarian Army Command ordered the protection of the Uzsok railway line and key positions west of the Ung river valley. Slovakian ground and air forces resisted. On 3rd April the Hungarian and Slovak Border Commission agreed a 400 km² section of territory to stay under Hungarian control.

Army Post Office services began but exactly how soon after March 15th is unknown, as are the exact locations of these FPO offices. There was a main centre (Tábori Posta Hadtap Hivatal) but other information must be sought from actual material and documents of this period. We know only the cancellers used and their control letters. The list of numbers was known from 16th March and the last FPO ceased operation in the territory on 30th April 1939. There were altogether 25 FPOs and 44 cancellers.

This does not absolutely agree with my published list above but is very close. One assumes all were used but just within those 46 days so presumably surviving examples are scarce. Most of this information was published in »*Philatelica*« issue 82/1. [This article has been re-printed as a translation in SCM #003 - the editor].

I illustrated my book with an example of an official Field Post Office envelope sent to Budapest free of course but cancelled with FPO 47 on 7th April 1939 but no indication from where. It had a numerical reference 33/939. I also illustrated sample cancellations for numbers 17, 57A and 68. The designs were similar to those recorded by Tekel' for the 1919 Hungarian-Czech military actions but have no background lines in the design but do of course have the Hungarian Crown which came back in the post-war Regency era.

In my general collection I have only four other mailed examples, surprisingly all from FPO 21 and, if the pictures on the postcards are to be believed and from other indications this was located at Técső. The Simády information updates my book, arriving after publication, and as one day I plan a re-print I would be interested in any further information on this subject. I realise much of it may already be well known to members [of this Study Circle].

The 1938 restorations were long discussed and the Hungarian postal authorities had good time to prepare. The population affected by the decision would in 1938 still have been strongly Magyar. Military enforcement would have seemed an unlikely pressure. The special 1938 St. Stephen's anniversary 'right hand' processional tour was easily extended to include the restored territories. In Ruthenia direct military action was involved so field post services would have been a natural corollary. In Romania in 1940 the political ground was long prepared but large parts of a very substantial piece of historic Transylvania returned which still had substantial pockets of concentrated Romanian ethnic settlement and some keeping of the new peace might have seemed wise. FPO marks are better known. In Yugoslavia in 1941 Hungary re-occupied a small pocket she strongly regarded as pure Magyar, but in the wake of German armies marching eastwards and the greater likelihood of local difficulties again.

As a postscript I should mention that as a result of the 1939 annexations a very small slice of original pre-Trianon Hungarian-Polish border was restored and a special commemorative ceremony arranged to inaugurate this. Soldiers in the black and white commemorative photographs used for postcards, taken still with heavy snow around, had bicycles [see picture on page 18 - the editor] and skis! The illustrations tells the story. The card with the commemorative imprint and sender's message shows two officers drinking wine to toast the new situation there in public!!

In my book, which is still available at GBP 8 plus postage, I report the story of an aerial conflict between Hungarian and Slovak planes (Fiats versus Avias) during the period and if this interests members I could reproduce it in this journal.

I still seek further evidence from any of the four restored territories of the use of the short-term temporary CDS marks of post offices newly under Hungarian authority. These should have been identified by the postmasters in some way to show the name.



Manuscript and rubber stamp devices are the more usual. This rule was not always observed. Philatelic examples exist to Budapest dealers but, as we say, beggars cannot always be choosers! The temporary postmarks were in use for a rather short time until new permanent cancellers had been delivered. Usage might be a day, a month or longer but none were used beyond 1939. In the smaller, more rural territories these are very difficult to find.

In Kárpátalja Hungary later decided to acknowledge Ruthenian ethnic roots by introducing bi-lingual CDS marks and bi-lingual versions of other postmarks such as TPOs, stations and postal agencies as well as in the wording on stationery. In the smaller places these are also difficult to find, not least any with earlier monolingual versions. Most remained in use into the autumn of 1944 and a few into 1945 and Soviet occupation, though these had the Hungarian name removed and date order changed.

One might in passing mention in view of our current article on the recent auctions [in SCM #009] that I bought three postcards from Profila carried on restored TPOs in Kárpátalja each of which happened also to be a picture of a station. With charges and post each cost me just under GBP 50. Literacy was not a universal skill by far and the amount of material posted on these TPOs, and on the smaller lines with just a single railway clerk to cancel them must indeed be minimal. I have well over 200 picture postcards of Hungarian stations but until now just one from the region - Munkács. Four suddenly seems a flowering!

A (minor) addition by the editor:

Hungarian field post from 1939 is certainly scarce. The following piece indicates that there may have been a (short) period where some of the respective cancellers were not yet available:



Picture postcard, Ungvár to Somogyhárság, March 27th, 1939

This card was sent without franking and has a handwritten "Tábori posta" [Field post] which was obviously sufficient to be accepted by the civil mail. The sender gives his address as "Tábori posta 19" and then some code for a military unit. In his monograph Jan Verleg tells us (p. 147) that the postmarks from "Tábori posta 19" were in use from March 25th until April 18th, 1939. I confess to never have seen such early cancellations - most material I know is from the early days of April.

Please contribute to my (and our common) education if you have or know dates in March 1939.

Helmut Kobelbauer

The Holocaust for the Jews from Ruthenia

In SCM #006 I have reported about two books by Oleksandr Voloshyn, showing a wealth of picture postcards from Munkács/Mukačevo and Ungvár/Užhorod.

The Hungarian publishing house *Aposztróf* in 2009 has brought out a similar book with the title »*Nagyszőlős, the Centre of the World*«, edited by Milada Nagy, in the four languages Hungarian, English, Ukrainian, and Hebrew.

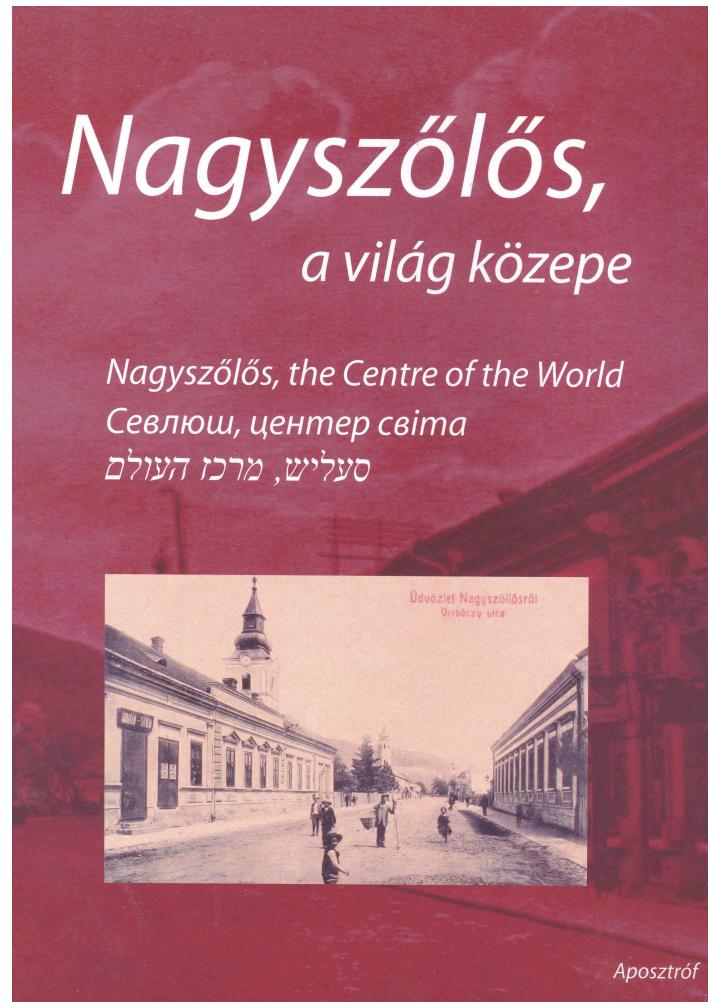
In the introduction one of the contributors writes:

"A few years ago, I came across a bilingual (Hungarian and Ukrainian) postcard album about the town of Munkács. One of the authors wrote an introduction to the book, however, there was not a single word about the year when the town lost nearly half of its population. Not a word."

The year was 1944: In April, about 144,000 Jews had been rounded up in 17 ghettos in Ruthenia, and starting May 15th, 1944, each day thousands of Jews from these ghettos were sent by train to Auschwitz, until June 7th, 1944, when the deportation stopped. By then at least 90,000 Jewish children, women and men had been murdered in the gas chambers of the Third Reich.

This bare fact still makes me speechless.

The book is the remembrance of a few survivors, born or grown up in Nagyszőlős, of their families, their childhood, simply of their life there. Its nearly 200 pages hold a multitude of detailed stories and many reproductions of picture postcards.



From a different source:

There are not that many pictures from the concentration camps because the murderers from the SS were, of course, very reluctant to leave traces. This is one of the few, from May 26th, 1944: The Jews from the Subcarpathian village Bilke have just arrived at Auschwitz and are going into the "selection".

A few hours later nearly all of them were dead - corpses in the gas chambers or smouldering ash in the ovens of Auschwitz.

*"[...] dein goldenes Haar Margarete /
Dein aschenes Haar Sulamith [...]"*

Helmut Kobelbauer

Another Special Catalogue for the 1944/1945 Issues

In the year 2000, Georg von Steiden published his well-known “*Spezialkatalog Karpaten-Ukraine*” in German and Ukrainian language in Munich. In very rich detail this catalogue described first the blue 3 crowns stamp of March 1939 and then the many overprinted provisionals and definitive issues of the years 1944 and 1945. During this period the Carpatho Ukraine nominally still was part of the Czechoslovak Republic but had already come under strong Soviet influence.

Jiří Majer, the famous auctioneer from Prague, in 2008 has published a similar special catalogue in Czech language with prices given in Czech crowns (CZK). This catalogue was just printed in 500 pieces and I hear that it is already sold out. The price of this book was 450 CZK or 20 EUR.

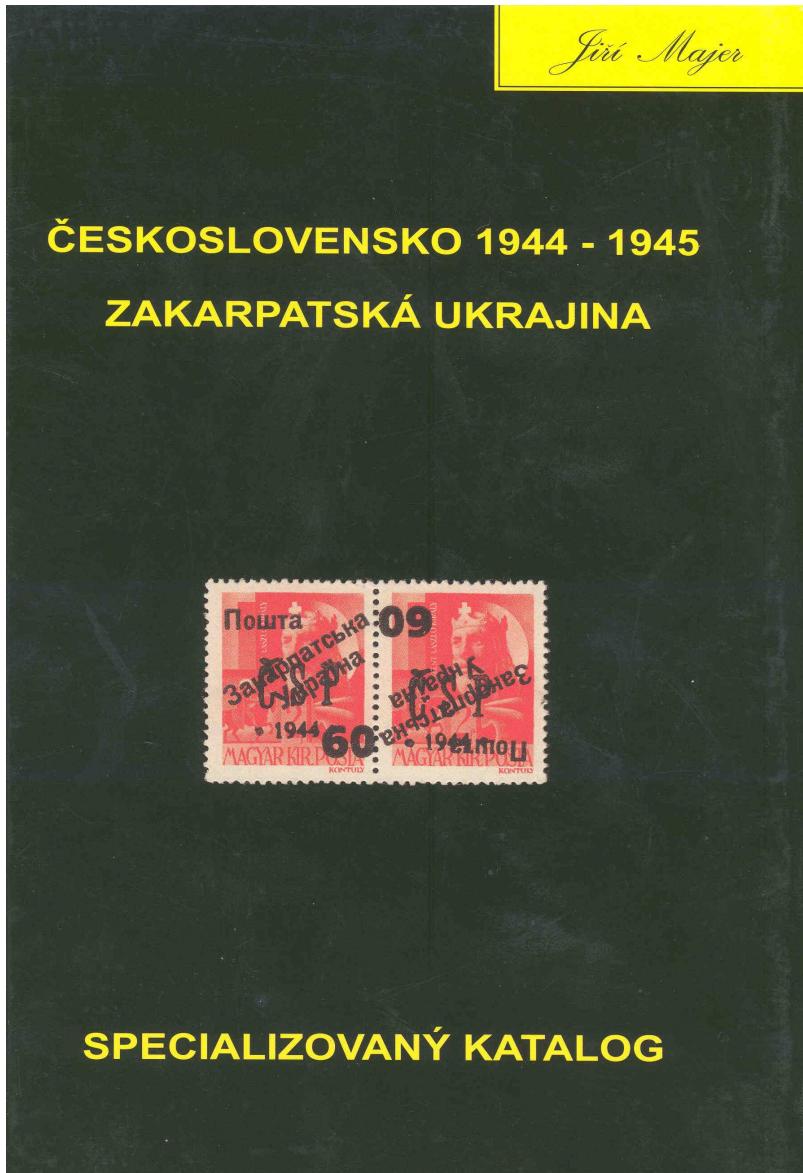
On about 160 pages, all in colour, Mr. Majer lists the provisional stamp issues of Berehovo, Chust and Mukačevo and their many specialities and then the first and second NRZU issues, although not to the same depth as Mr. von Steiden did. Most of the prices he gives are higher than the prices of the earlier catalogue.

The treatment of postal stationary and especially overprinted Hungarian postal forms is even more detailed. Again prices are given for all material, including the provisional and regular postmarks as far as they have appeared on the market.

Many pictures of nice (and often - as far as one can say - genuinely used) covers and cards round off this well-prepared and valuable book. We shall see in the coming years whether the steady (and partially dramatic) growth in prices for Carpatho Ukraine material will continue - but probably Mr. Majer from his auctions has sufficient experience of what can be expected to be paid.

For the specialized collector of this area the described catalogue is certainly a “must” although I think (and write once more) that such a catalogue would gain much in acceptance if at least the general texts would be available in English, too. Our fellows from Canada and the United States of America who have (amongst others) a long and rich tradition in collecting the issues from these two turbulent years have once more to tolerate one of those remote Central-European languages.

Maybe a second edition will improve on this ...



Jan Verleg

A hilarious little mistake

When I saw the cover pictured below, hidden in a huge stock of a stamp dealer at one of our stamp bourses, I was attracted because of the destination mentioned but also due to the appearance of a date stamp of a traveling post office, which are not so very common.

When at home, I started to have a better look at the cover and was a bit puzzled by the Belgian date stamp of "MELLE" at the reverse. When however I noticed the way the young lady was addressed to, the penny dropped.

As you can see, the cover was addressed to "Melle Myriam Dupont" - Melle being the misspelled abbreviation for the French word Mademoiselle. The correct abbreviation is "Mlle". The mistake led to the cover being sent to MELLE in Belgium, ignoring the clearly mentioned destination of Elisabethville in the Belgian Congo.

In MELLE they probably had a good laugh and redirected the cover to the correct destination.



Line section Solotvino-Uzhgorod
(СОЛОТВИНО-ЧЖГОРОД)



Backstamped Melle 05-09-57

There is another little mystery with regard to the applicable postage. The pictured cover was sent on 31-08-57. During the tariff period from 01-09-1957 until 01-01-1961 the postage amounted to 160 kop for an international airmail letter. This is also the total amount of postage stamps on the cover. The date in the date stamp is however 31-08-57. Probably the date in the TPO date stamp was not adjusted in time.

Remark of the editor:

Most periods of the (long and convoluted) postal history of the Subcarpathian region get ample coverage in the available literature (and auctions). The Soviet period, lasting from 1945 to 1992, is an exception, although it was more than double the duration of the Czechoslovak period. Jan Verleg is the exception from the exception. Still I would like to point out that - at least in scarcity of material - the Soviet period is as interesting as the other ones are. Therefore I kindly ask you to consider whether you have some item(s) in your collection from this period to be presented in this Newsletter. Thank you.