

The Sub-Carpathian Messenger

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

Number 22 - September 2012



The Hoverla mountain

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 *ЗАКАРПАТТЯ*, 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 public web site, this Newsletter is read by more than hundred people.

We have received the sad news that our member David Holt from the United Kingdom passed away on May 11th, 2012. He had been in not so good health for some time. Your editor last met him during the World Exhibition in London 2010, listening to David's instructive presentation of the postal history of the Carpatho Ukraine during the HPSGB meeting.

Our diligent proof-reader and reliable contributor of interesting articles, Tønnes Ore from Norway, one of the Founding Fathers of this Study Circle, has lost his struggle against his grave illness and left this world on August 18th, 2012. May he rest in peace in a better world.

Distribution method

All issues of the »*Sub-Carpathian Messenger*« can be browsed at and downloaded from the Internet address

<http://www.slideshare.net/subcarpathian>

For those who have no Internet access and/or no e-mail, the distribution method is still 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 (including an easy download web datalink) 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. We thank our authors for their much appreciated work and contribution.

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.

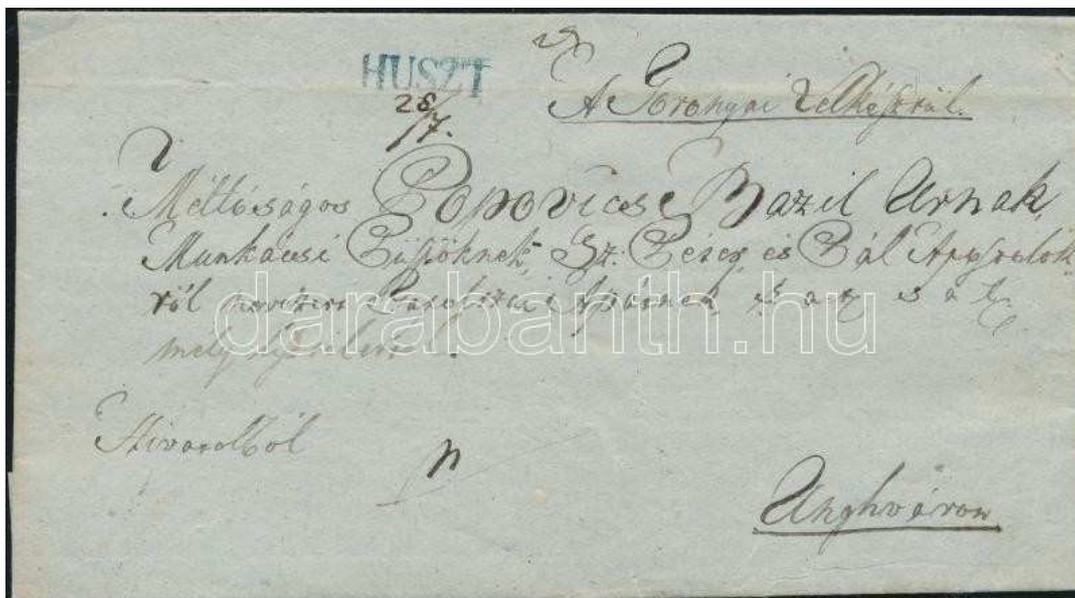
We will "print" everything even only loosely connected with our subject of interest so any contribution is certainly welcome. Please send it (as Word 2003 document, graphical elements in JPEG, 300 dpi) to our editor's e-mail address (kb@aatc.at). His postal address, if you would need it, is:

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

Helmut Kobelbauer
Auction News

The 15th International Auction of Darabanth (Budapest) took place on May 19th, 2012, and offered some very interesting and nice items from our area of interest.

Lot 283 was simply described as “1848 Ex offo blue ‘HUSZT’ (in Gudlin unknown) - ‘UNGVAR’” and started at 20.000 HUF (approx. 70 EUR or 90 USD). After 21 bids it was sold for 550.000 HUF (approx. 1937 EUR or 2477 USD, not including 17 per cent buyer’s premium) to a written bid.



Lot 283 in the Darabanth auction: Line stamp “HUSZT” in blue (1848).

This cover can be dated to July 26th, 1848, and is addressed to Bishop Popovics Bazil. The colour of the stamp is similar to the blue-green shade known for the circular stamp from the same year.



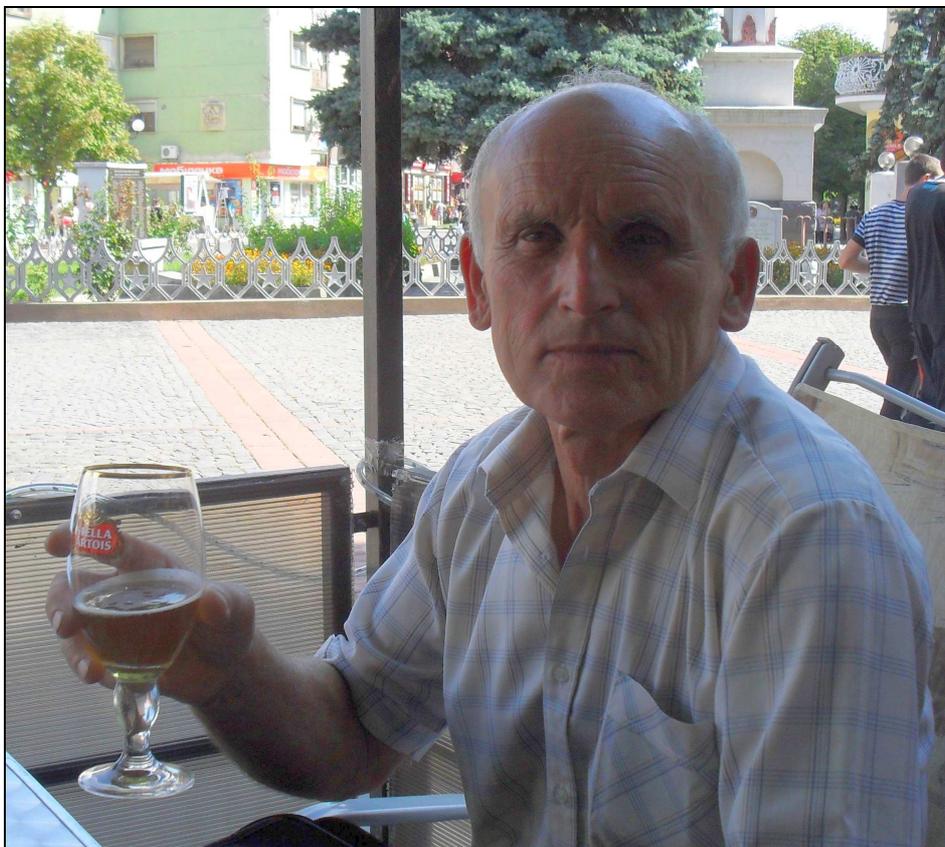
Lot 257 in this auction: Very beautiful but false “UNGVAR” in red.

Superb strikes of a T.P.O. during the Czechoslovak period (1920 to 1938/1939) can sometimes be found on eBay:



eBay #1407-4766-2160: T.P.O. "HALMEI - KOŠICE +++ | 992 | a".

During his trip to the Transcarpathian district of Ukraine in September 2011 your editor also met with Alex Popovych in Mukacheve (formerly known as Munkács):

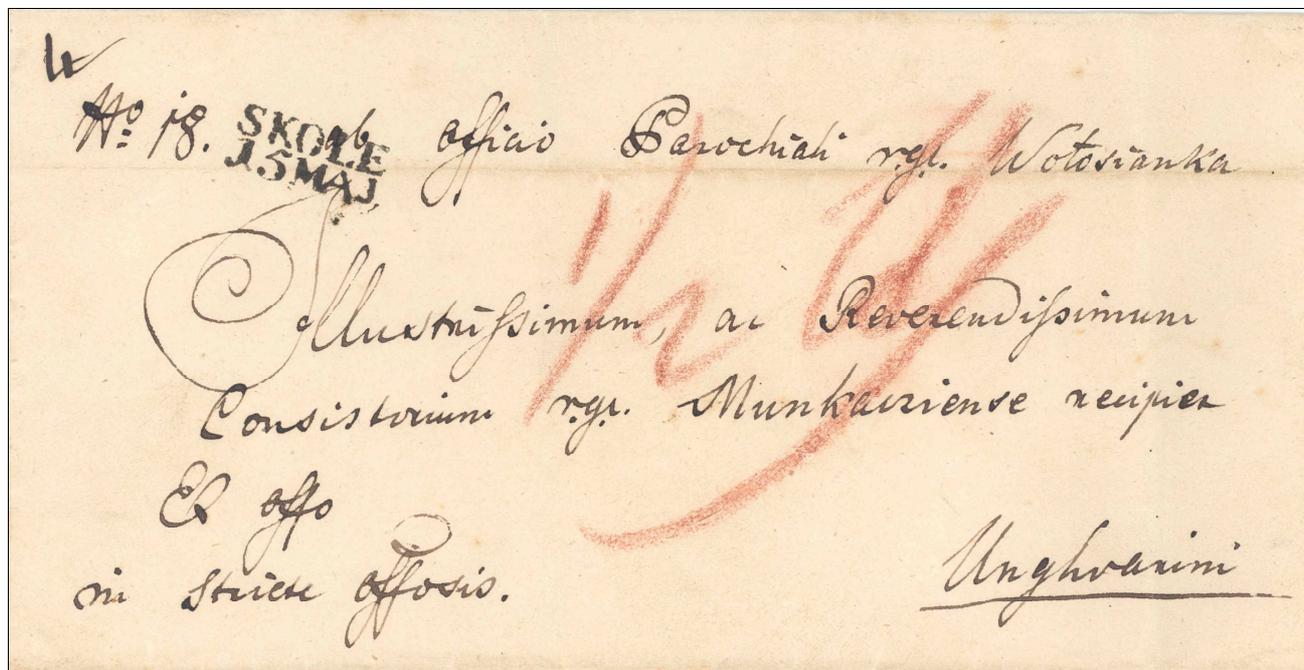


We look forward to meeting him again during our extended trip of this year with "Arge Feldpost".

Helmut Kobelbauer

Wolosianka - Galicia or Hungary ?

Each Monday a presentation is given at the „Café Zartl” in Vienna from members of the “Vindobona” Philatelic Club, the most prestigious such society in Austria. On Monday, July 30th, 2012, Josef Brosig showed some pre-stamp letters from Galicia, amongst them the following one:



Official cover from the parish in Wolosianka to the Consistorium in Unghvar, May 22nd, 1846.

A close-up of the handwritten date 'Vesp. Maji 22^{da} 846.' written in cursive.

Date as shown in the cover.

Fritz Puschmann says that the handwritten red mark is “½ Lth”, i. e., the weight of the letter was ½ Loth. Josef Brosig put the letter into his “Galicia” section because “SKOLE” is definitely a pre-stamp mark from Galicia. This post office was opened on September 1st, 1838, according to Edwin Müller’s »Handbook of the Pre-Stamp Postmarks of Austria« (page 164, number 1397); the postmark from above is listed as 1397b (type RL-R), known from 1847, 60 points.

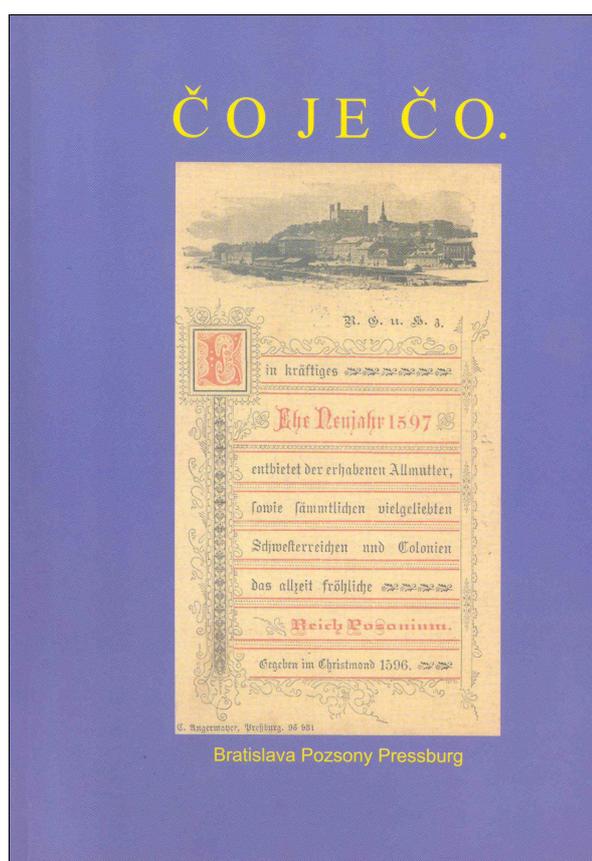
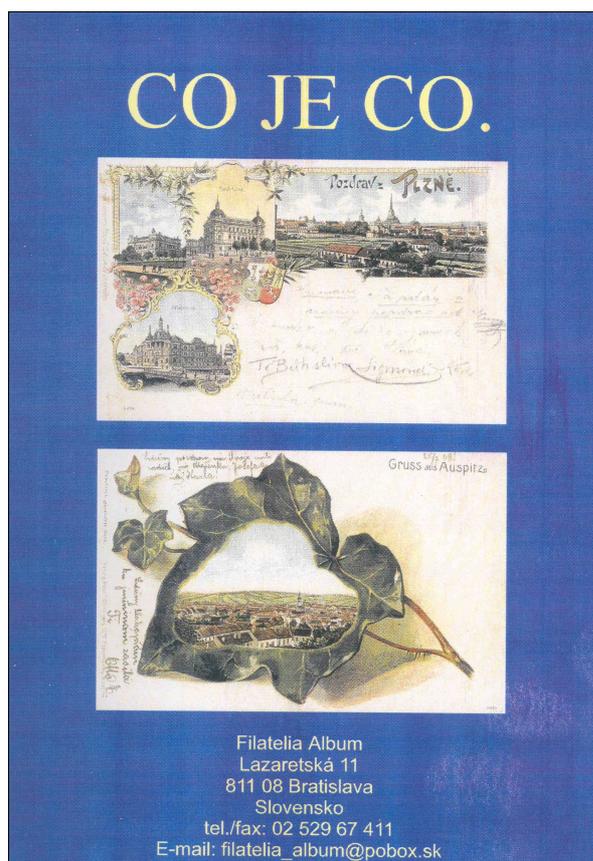
I found the letter curious because in my memory (trained by many accounts of WWI where Volosianka played a major role in the fights for the Uzsok pass) Wolosianka was equal to Hajasd, and Hajasd was a village in the Ung megye, belonging to Hungary, not to Galicia. This made the letter interesting for me, and Josef Brosig was so kind and lent it to me for scanning. (Thanks !)

The first reference to be checked was, of course, Lelkes:

HAJASD Ung vm. Nagybereznai j. 1586 Ukr és m lakos; Voloszánska <LR>, Volánszka <FE>, Voloszánska; or: Voloszjanka; szlk: Wolosánka <LR>; «Luh (Ligetes) – Luh; [Voloszjanka, U] 16

From the »Magyar Helységnev-Azonosító Szótár«, page 246.

Another useful reference book for place names is the »Čo je čo« (What is what), published by Milan Molnoši in Bratislava in the late 1990s:

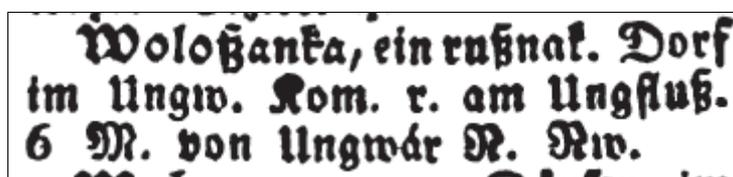


For about 80.000 place names it gives the Austrian province this location belonged to and, if the modern name is different, this current name. The similar - although thinner - volume for the place names from Hungary is recommended, too.

On page 521 of the "Austrian" volume we find

	Wołosate	Gal
→	Wołosianka	Gal
	Wołosianka Mala	Gal

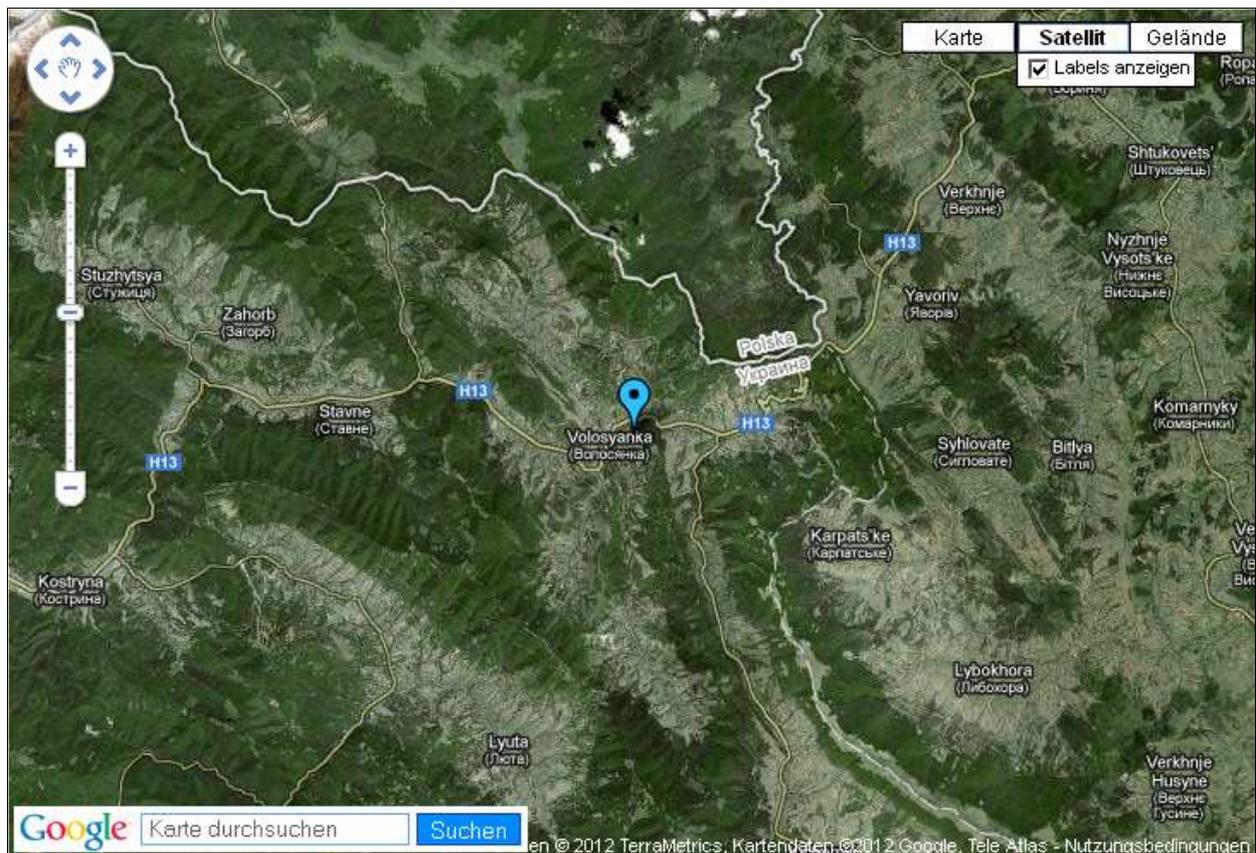
that Wołosianka belonged to Galicia. So what respectively who is correct?



J. M. Korabinsky, »Geographisch=Historisches und Produkten Lexikon von Ungarn [...]« (1786), p. 841.

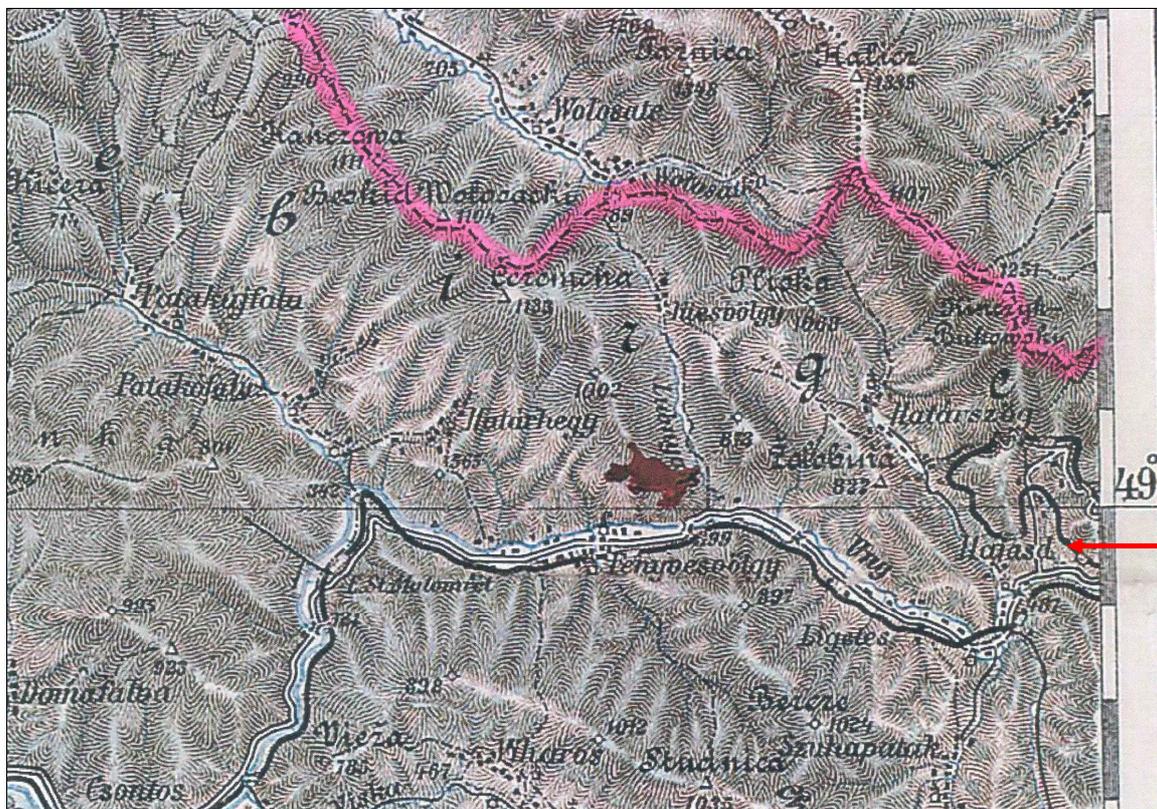
Well, Wołosianka is obviously the Polish form of the place's name. The Ukrainian form is Woloſyanka (in Cyrillic: Волосянка), written Wołosianka in the Austro-Hungarian period. There was (temporarily) also a Hungarian form Voloszánka (or even Volánszka).

For our time, as can be found out by a quick Internet search, the village belongs to the Ukraine and carries the name Volosyanka (Волосянка). Please see for yourself:



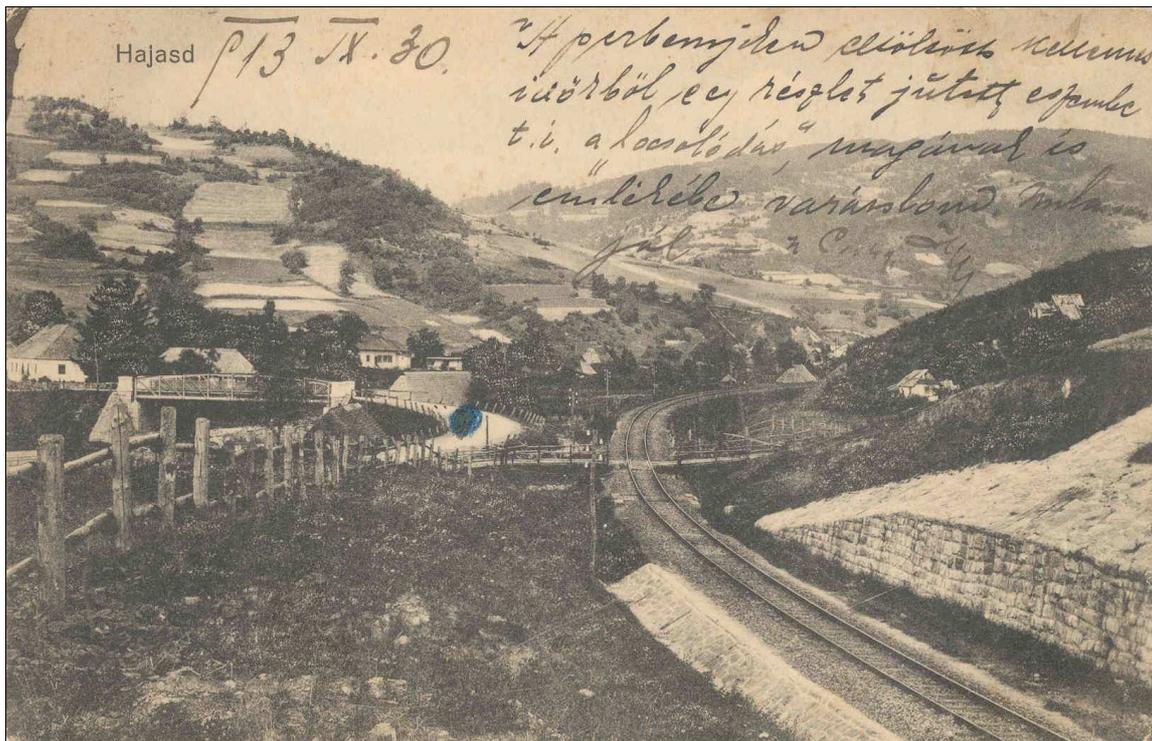
From Google Maps: Volosyanka (Волосянка) in the Ukraine.

It lies quite near to the Polish border and can be reached on the H13 road, leading from Uzhhorod (Ungvár) along the Uzh (Ung) valley up to the Uzhok (Uzsok) pass.



From the Military Maps of the 3rd Survey (about 1910), showing Hajasd (red arrow) and the Hungarian-Galician border (marked in pink).

So (in my opinion) Lelkes is right: Wołosianka is Volosyanka and was Hajasd, belonging to Hungary until at least 1918.



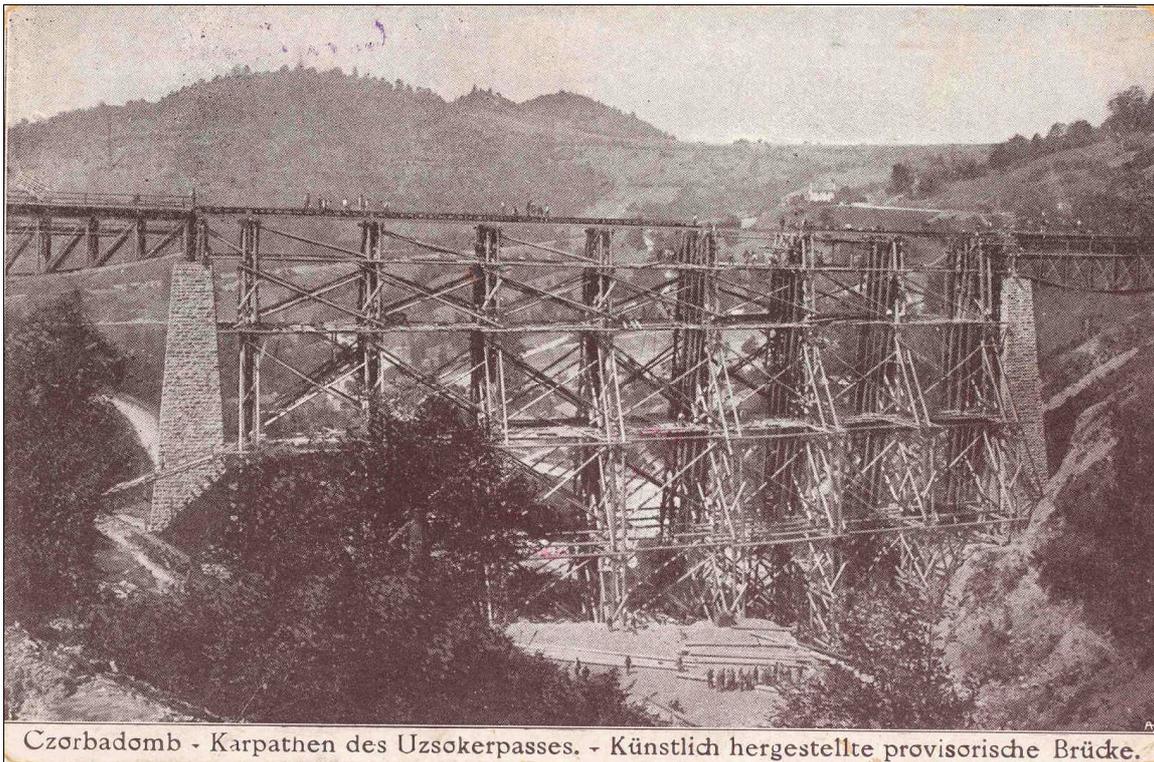
Picture postcard from Hajasd (Volosianka), September 30th, 1913.

Near Volosianka there is also a famous railway viaduct that was partially destroyed by Russian troops during the battle for the Uzsok pass (January and February 1915):

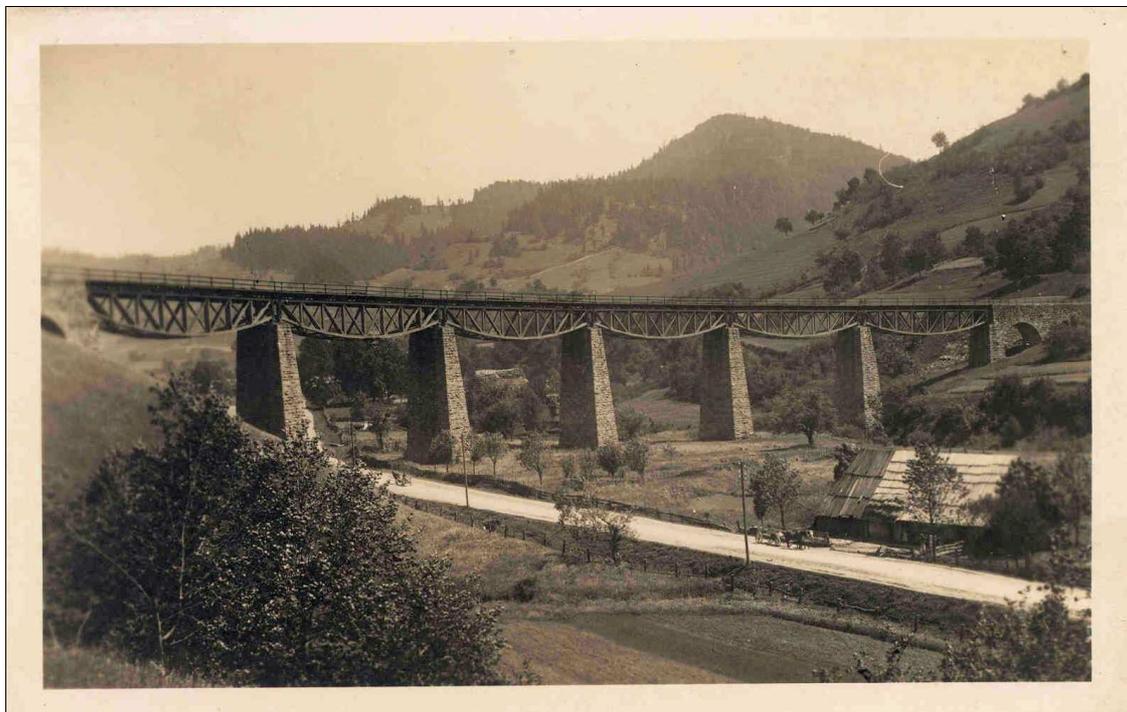


The thick black lines through the air are the rails themselves which are hanging freely over the valley.

Since the railway line from Ungvár over the Uzsok pass into Western Galicia was rather important during WWI, the damages were repaired as fast as possible:



Picture postcard (repair of the viaduct, 1917), Sianki to Budapest, August 27th, 1918.



Picture postcard of the railway viaduct, around 1928.

To come back to the original pre-stamp letter: It was obviously transported from the parish Volo-sianka to the north, over the Uzsok pass, and then some 50 kilometres to the east, to Skole, where it received the postmark. Whether it then went over Eperjes (the fastest and usual connection) or over the Verecke pass and down to Munkács, we do not know.

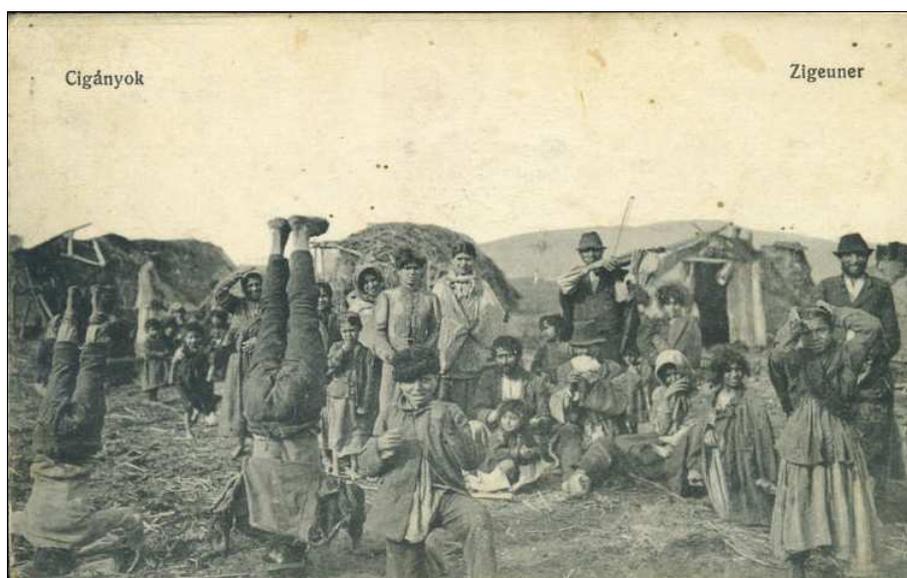
Helmut Kobelbauer

The Forgotten People - continued

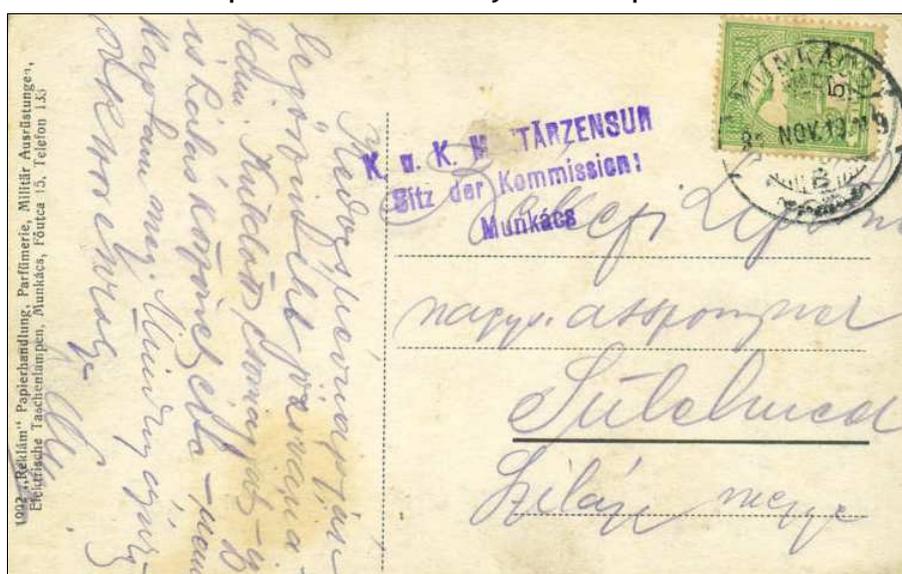
In »The Sub-Carpathian Messenger« #015 (April 2011) I have written a bit about the people in the Kárpátalja and later the Podkarpatská Rus who were called gypsies and who during WWII in their majority were murdered by the German Nazis and their Hungarian followers and helpers.

Peter Cybaniak and Roman Dubyniak, dependable as always, have confirmed that postcards with “gypsy” motifs are rare and have sent the respective cards in their possession. Otherwise the reaction of our esteemed readers was --- zero. Sometimes I wonder whether writing such articles (and investing the search and sometimes research necessary) is worth the effort if they only meet with sturdy silence.

Being rather stubborn myself, I am showing a further piece of this (seemingly unwanted) kind:



Picture and text side of eBay item #2003-9401-9461:
Motif card with “Cigányok” / “Zigeuner” (gypsies), sent
from Munkács, November 19th, 1915, with a
censorship mark of the military censorship commission.



Please continue to ignore it.

Helmut Kobelbauer
A Tribute to Independence



Vintage Sokol 1919 postcard:
The Austrian double-headed eagle has been slain.



“Yasynya: Capital of the Hucul Republic in 1918. Be greeted!”

Helmut Kobelbauer

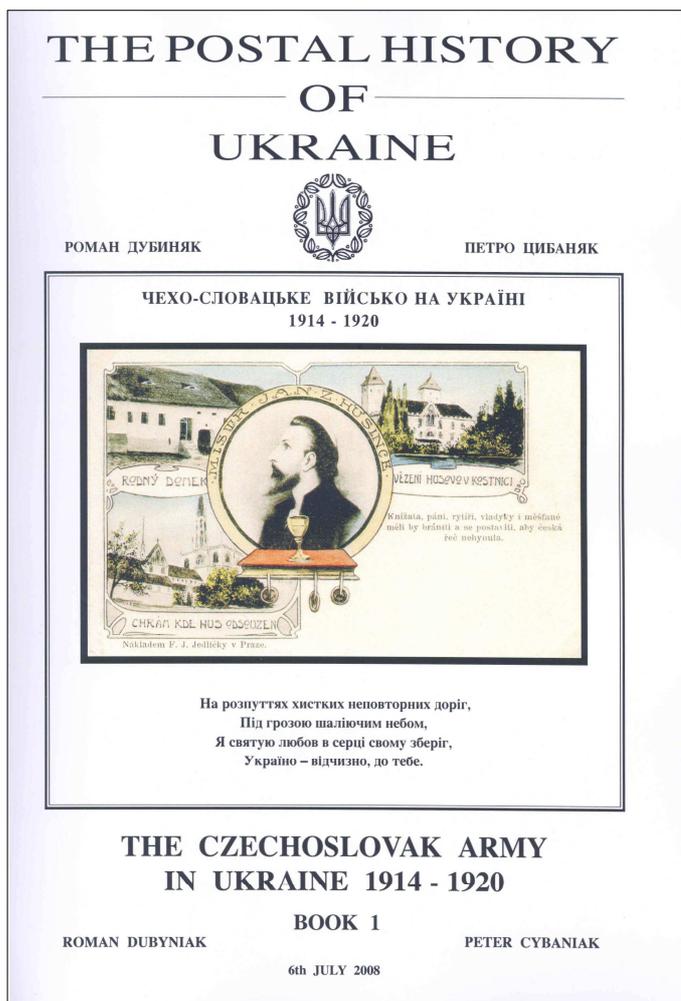
The Czechoslovak Field Post in Sub-Carpathia in 1919 and 1920

The Ruthenians that had emigrated to the United States of America took some interest, of course, in the fate of the former Kárpátalja at the end of the Great War. On October 23rd, 1918, the “Declaration of Common Aims of the Independent Mid-European Nations” was signed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and a plebiscite was held among these American Ruthenians. The result was a clear majority of 67 per cent for a union between Czecho-Slovakia and the Ruthenians of the Kárpátalja on a federative basis.

With the support of President Woodrow Wilson and of André Tardieu, the president of the powerful Committee of Five in Paris, Gregory Zatkovich and Julius G. Gardos, two representatives of the American National Council of the (Hungarian) Ruthenians, went to the former Kárpátalja; on May 8th, 1919, the Central National Ruthenian Council, at Ungvár/Užhorod, unanimously voted for a union with Czechoslovakia on a federation basis.

One may add that already on January 13th, 1919, Czechoslovak troops had reached Ungvár/Užhorod, and that by April 25th, 1919, most Subcarpathian territory was either under Czechoslovak or Romanian rule. The union with the struggling West-Ukrainian Republic was not an option anymore.

Our members and friends Roman Dubyniak and Peter Cybaniak have (in 2008) published a book of 114 pages about »*The Czechoslovak Army in Ukraine 1914 - 1920*«. Together with Brian C. Day's book »*Czechoslovak Field Post 1918 - 1921*« (2002, both books published by the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain) this gives a good basis for collecting and research.



A Czechoslovak Field Post was introduced to commence on the 1st January 1919.

5 Czechoslovak Field Post Offices served in Priashivshchyna and Carpatho-Ukraine.

Field Post Office No.12	(25.6.1919 - 29.10.1919)
Field Post Office No.14	(26.8.1919 - 8.7.1920)
Field Post Office No.22	(1.1.1919 - 10.11.1919)
Field Post Office No.46	(1.1.1919 - 29.5.1920)
Field Post Office No.75	(1.1.1919 - 5.9.1919)

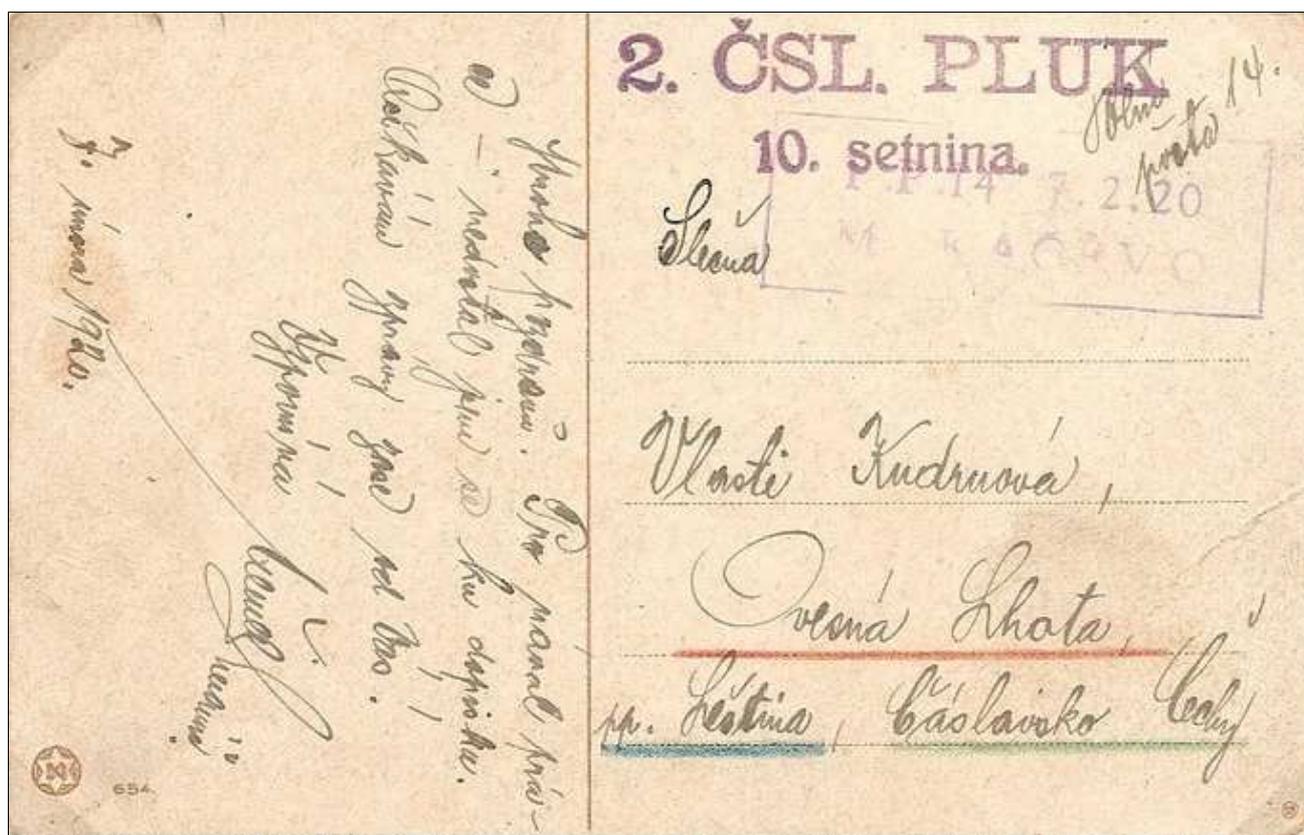
From »*The Czechoslovak Army in Ukraine 1914 - 1920*«, page 37.

If the term “Priashivshchyna” is unfamiliar to you: This is the Ukrainian name for the region around the town Prešov (Eperjes in Hungarian) in Eastern Slovakia which still holds a substantial Ruthenian (Ukrainian) minority.

Please be aware that the times given above for the Field Post Offices 12, 14, 22, 46, and 75 do not indicate their presence in Sub-Carpathia proper. The Field Post Office 22, e. g., probably never was there - it operated in Eastern Slovakia, especially for the troops in the Tatra mountains, i. e., on the Polish “front”.

As far as I can say from the pieces in my collection, Field Post Office 12, too, never was within the former Kárpátalja - its most eastern location was Michalovce (Nagymihály). Dubyniak and Cybaniak in their book show a few picture postcards from Čop (Csap), Mukačevo (Munkács), Užhorod (Ungvár) and Velké Berezné (Nagyberezna) from soldiers who gave their address as PP 12 (polní pošta - field post) but all these cards were cancelled by civil post offices. These items are from July to September 1919.

Brian Day has Field Post Office 14 opened on August 26th, 1919, has it assigned to Užhorod (Ungvár) and the 10th Infantry Division, and has it closed on July 8th, 1920. For this field post office we have sufficient prove that it really operated within the Podkarpatská Rus. Dubyniak and Cybaniak show pieces from end of September 1919 until mid of June 1920 from the area of our interest.



From the EXPONET: Walter Rauch collection, sheet 67:
Card with (rare) boxed canceller “P.P. 14 7. 2. 20 | MUKAČEVO”.

Examples of this boxed canceller are also known from the Hanus and Verleg collections, with dates “14. 2. 20” and “26. 2. 20” respectively.

The peace treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye (September 10th, 1919) officially incorporated the Carpatho-Ukraine into the Czechoslovak Republic, and the Romanian military forces started to retreat from the towns and villages that they had occupied in April 1919.



Picture postcard (Ungvár, hotel Korona), written in Užhorod, March 18th, 1920. Sent from Polní Pošta 14, March 19th, 1920, to Stará Boleslav (Bohemia).

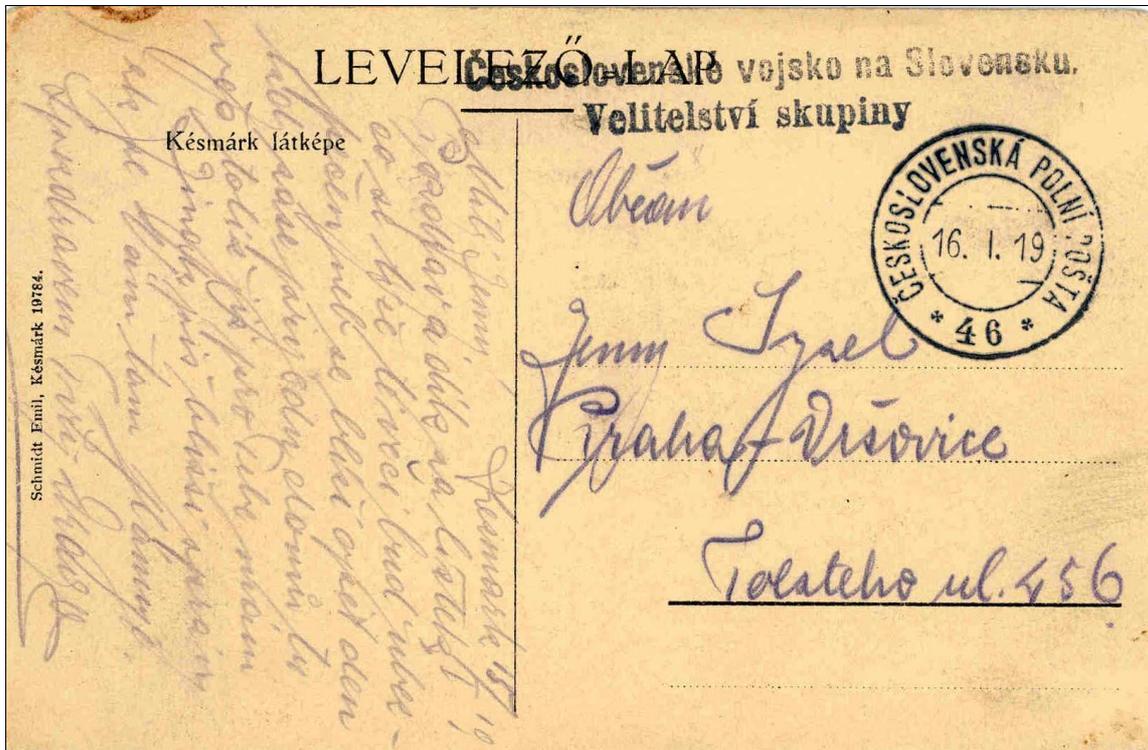


Field Post Office 46, according to Brian Day, already opened on January 1st, 1919, but moved to Užhorod/Ungvár only by April 30th, 1919. This office was closed May 29th, 1920 (although Matějka states June 13th, 1920).

On a card in my collection, cancelled April 25th, 1919, the sender gives Bardejov (Bartfá) as his location. Another card from May 7th, 1919, shows Nagymihály (Michalovce) but has Čop/Csap as the sender's location. So we may assume that field post office 46 was within the Kárpátalja by beginning of May 1919. (Some say early April 1919 but I have no proof of that.)

By end of July 1919 this Field Post Office had obviously moved back to Košice/Kassa where it stayed until the end of its function period.

Field Post Office 46 used two different cancellers, a smaller one with 27 mm diameter, and a larger one with "Č. S. P." in its text and 30 mm diameter.



Picture postcard (Késmárk). Sent from Polní Pošta 46, January 16th, 1919, to Prague.



Picture postcard (Vág valley), written in Košice. Cancelled Polní Pošta 46, July 28th, 1919.

The second card shows that the famous greenish-blue colour of the (smaller) P.P. 46 canceller was used also after the field post office had left Užhorod for Košice in July 1919.

This colour is “famous” because of the events described by Brian Day as follows (sorry for the shadow on the left - not all books are scanned easily):

Owing to the occupation of Bardejov (SL-S4) Košice (SL-S5), and Prešov (SL-S5) by the Hungarian army in June 1919, which separated the Eastern Army in two; one part situated to the west of Košice and the other part to the east situated in Carpatho-Ukraine, it was impossible to arrange surface mail delivery so airplanes were used to overcome the problem. The Supreme Czechoslovak Army Command in Slovakia established an air route between Spišská Nová Ves (SL-Q5) and Užhorod (PR-U5), using FPO No. 46 located there to continue its postal services to the military units in the area and to help handle the postal link between the two parts of the Eastern Army.

- 13 Jun. 1919 The first flight flown from Spišská Nová Ves to Užhorod, pilot K. Janhuba, carried supplies and 2 bags of post.
- 15 Jun. 1919 The return flight from Užhorod to Spišská Nová Ves, pilot K. Janhuba, carried 2 bags of post .
- 19 Jun. 1919 The second flight from Spišská Nová Ves to Užhorod, pilot K. Janhuba, carried 2 bags of post .
- 20 Jun. 1919 The second return flight from Užhorod to Spišská Nová Ves, pilot K. Janhuba, carried 3 bags of post.

The Czechoslovak army soon re-occupied the territory and surface delivery of mail was restored so there were only four flights flown, thus the mail delivered via them are among the rarest known to the Czechoslovak Field Post 1918-1921 .

Identification of flown mail is difficult; the cards and letters sent from Spišská Nová Ves to Užhorod cannot be identified unless by chance the sender mentioned the air delivery in his written text.

The cards sent by return flights from Užhorod to Spišská Nová Ves can be identified; they only bear the cancel P.P. 46 and are dated between 6th and 19th June 1919. See figure 148 on preceding page 105; copied from the *Catalog Československá letecká pošta 1918-1939*.

Copy from Brian Day's »Czechoslovak Field Post 1918 - 1921«, page 107.

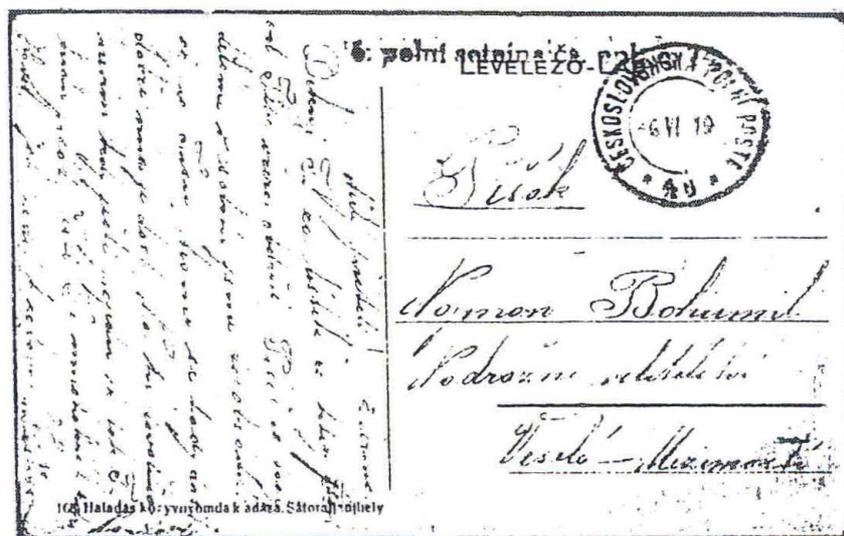


Fig. 148 of the referred book:
 Postcard bearing P.P. 46 cancel dated “-6. VI. 19”
 and cachet of the 6th Field Company, carried on the
 return flight from Užhorod to Spišská Nová Ves.

You may remember the discussion about postal items carried on these flights in the SCM #012 and #013, or the write-up in Jan Verleg's monograph, page 59.

Finally we have Field Post Office 75: Brian Day says it was opened January 1st, 1919, was located in Košice, assigned to the 6th Infantry Division, and was closed September 5th, 1919 (or September 18th, 1919).

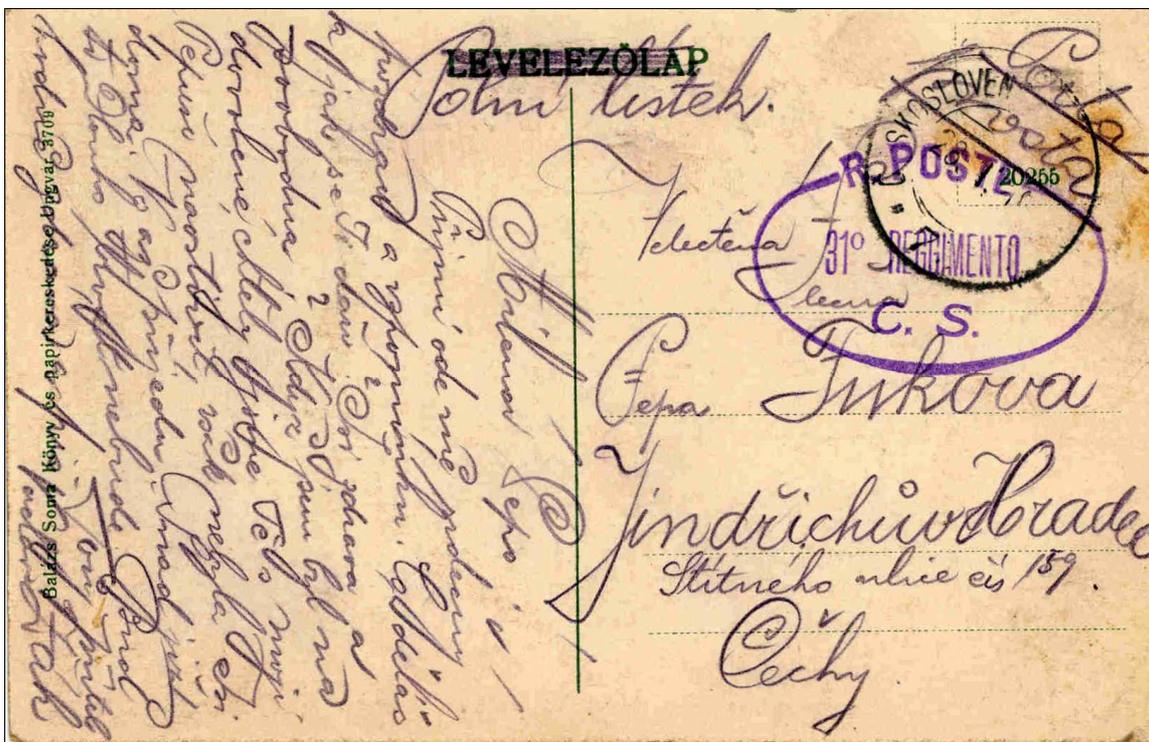


Picture postcard (Kassa). Sent from Polní Pošta 75, January 14th, 1919, to Moravia. With cachet of the Italian 6th Division, built from Czech and Slovak volunteers.

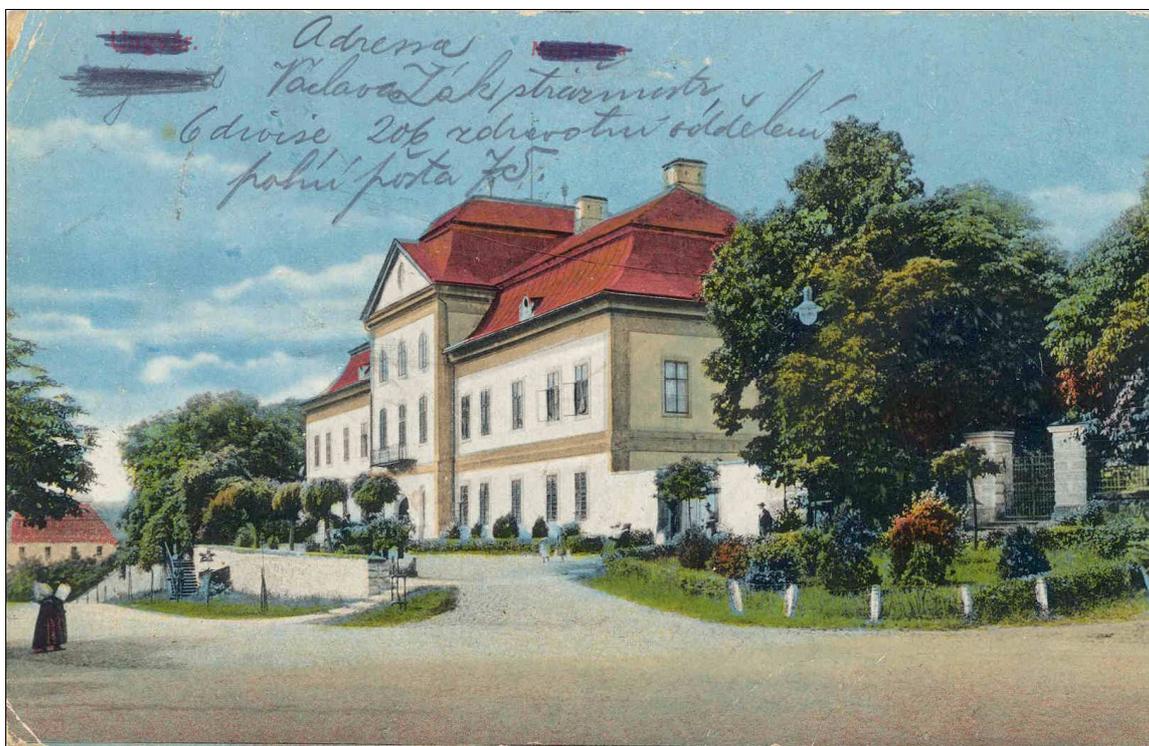


Although, as written earlier, the first Czechoslovak troops had reached Užhorod/Ungvár by January 13th, 1919, their "home" field post office was obviously still in Košice/Kassa.

By end of January 1919 the field post office 75 had moved to Užhorod/Ungvár where it stayed until early April. In May 1919 it supported troops involved in the (short-lived) occupation of Miskolc (Miškovec in Czech); later it was back in Košice and was assigned to troops in Eastern Slovakia.

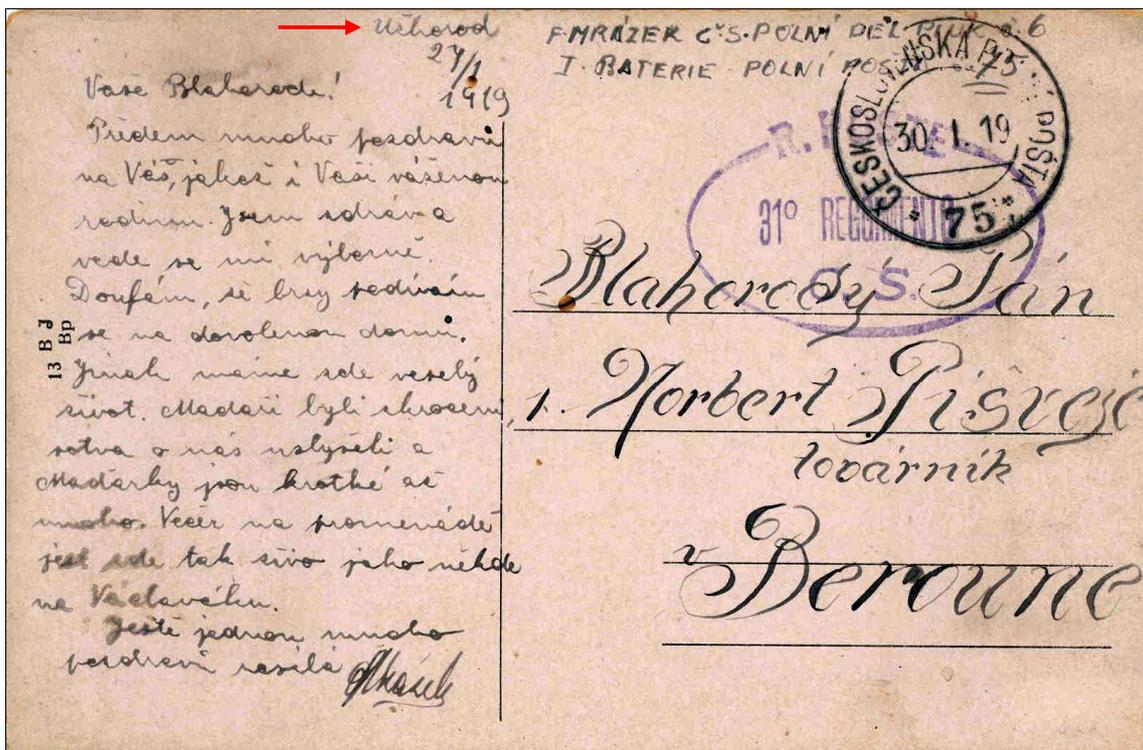


Picture postcard (from Ungvár - name crossed out), Polní Pošta 75, January 28th, 1919, to Jindřichův Hradec (Bohemia). Italian cachet.



The above item is not full proof, only indication; the next card was written in Užhorod according to the sender, a soldier serving in one of the “Italian” units. Such volunteer units of Czech and Slovak prisoners of war had been created in France, Italy and, of course, Russia (the well-known “Czech Legion”). The Italian units were amongst the first coming back into their now independent

hometown and continuing to fight against Hungarian forces, first in Slovakia and later in what was then called Carpatho-Russia.

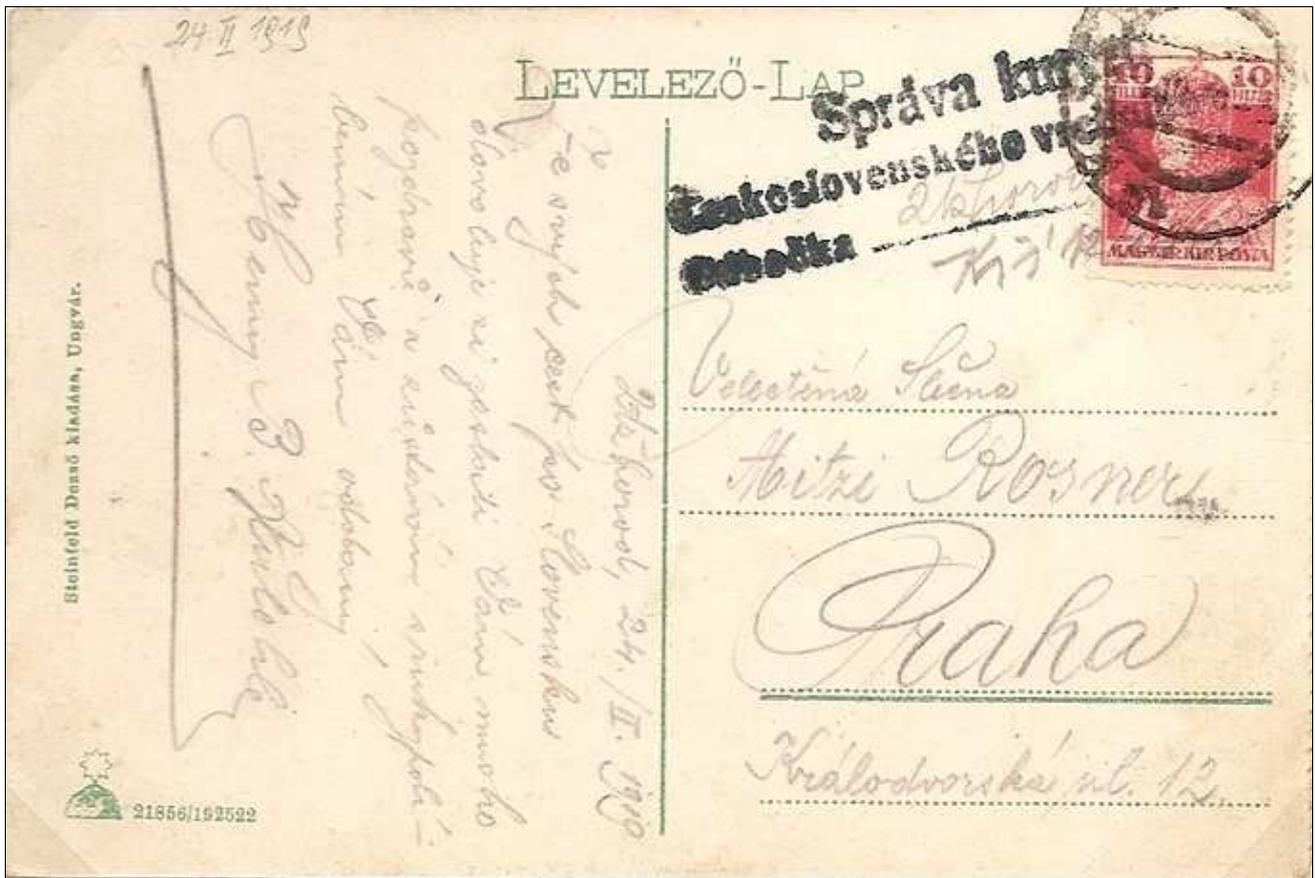


Picture postcard (theatre in Ungvár), written in Užhorod, January 27th, 1919. Polní Pošta 75, January 30th, 1919, to Beroun (Bohemia). With Italian cachet.



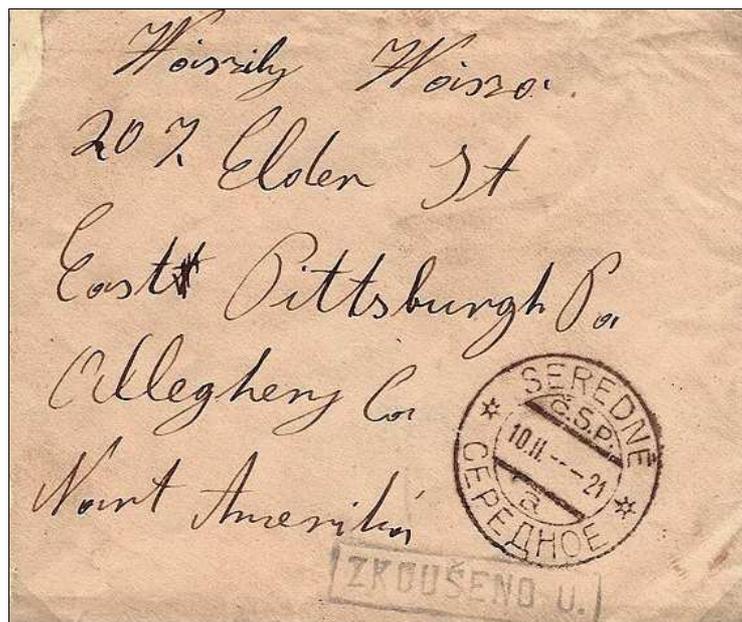
Taken all together, we have first Field Post Office 75 (end of January until early April 1919), then Field Post Office 46 (maybe April, certainly May until July 1919), and finally Field Post Office 14 (September 1919 until June 1920) in the later Carpatho-Ukraine. These rough dates may be used as a guideline, the research into details is still going on.

Aside of this, there existed also a special Courier Service for correspondance between Paris and Prague (for details please see Jan Verleg's monograph »Carpatho Ukraine. Postal History and Stamps 1786 - 2000«, page 58). This courier service extended to Užhorod:



From the EXPONET: Walter Rauch collection, sheet 77.
Courier card, written in Užhorod, February 24th, 1919.

The last piece has nothing to do with the Czechoslovak field post but is very nice in its own:

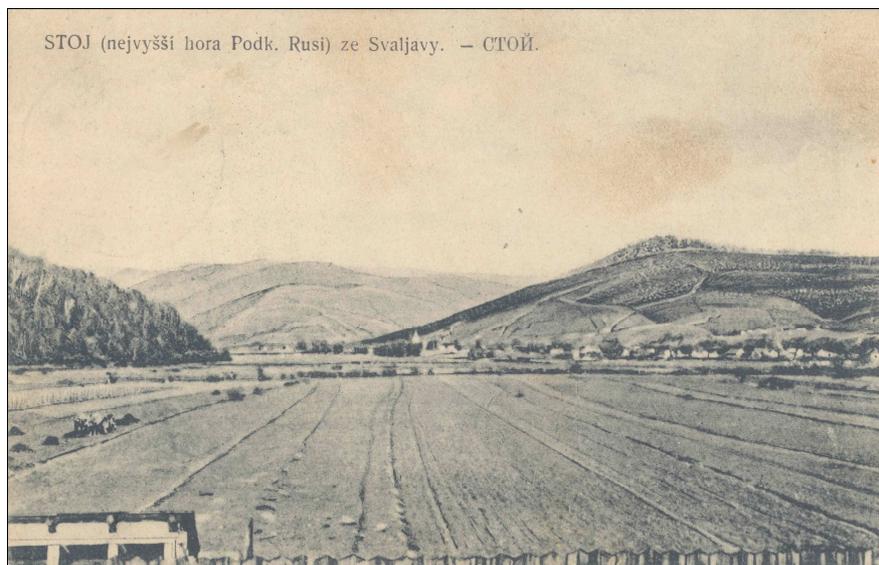


From the EXPONET: Walter Rauch collection, sheet 82.
Letter from Seredné (Szerednye) to the U. S. A.
with rare civil censorship mark "ZKOUŠENO U[ŽHOROD].".

Helmut Kobelbauer

A Curious Postmark on a Curious Picture Postcard

Some time ago I bought the shown picture postcard on eBay. It is a pity that it cannot be dated:



Picture postcard of Stoj, issued by the “Sokol” club in Svaljava.



The stamp (“Liberation of the Republic”) with a face value of 50h in green was issued January 23rd, 1922, and was valid until January 15th, 1926 (see »*ČESKOSLOVENSKO 1918 - 1939. Specializovaný katalog známek a celistvostí*« of Jan Klim and Vladimír Schödelbauer, Praha, 2002, pages 149 and then 159).

The tariff of 50h for a postcard (domestic use) was applicable from January 1st, 1922, until February 28th, 1937 (see »*SPECIALIZOVANÁ PŘÍRUČKA*«, Praha, 1988, page 531).

And finally the postmark “SVALJAVA * СВАЛЈАВА * | Č. S. P. | b” was applied from the year 1920 till 1929 according to the »*Monografie Československých Znánek*«, vol. 17, part 2, page 371.

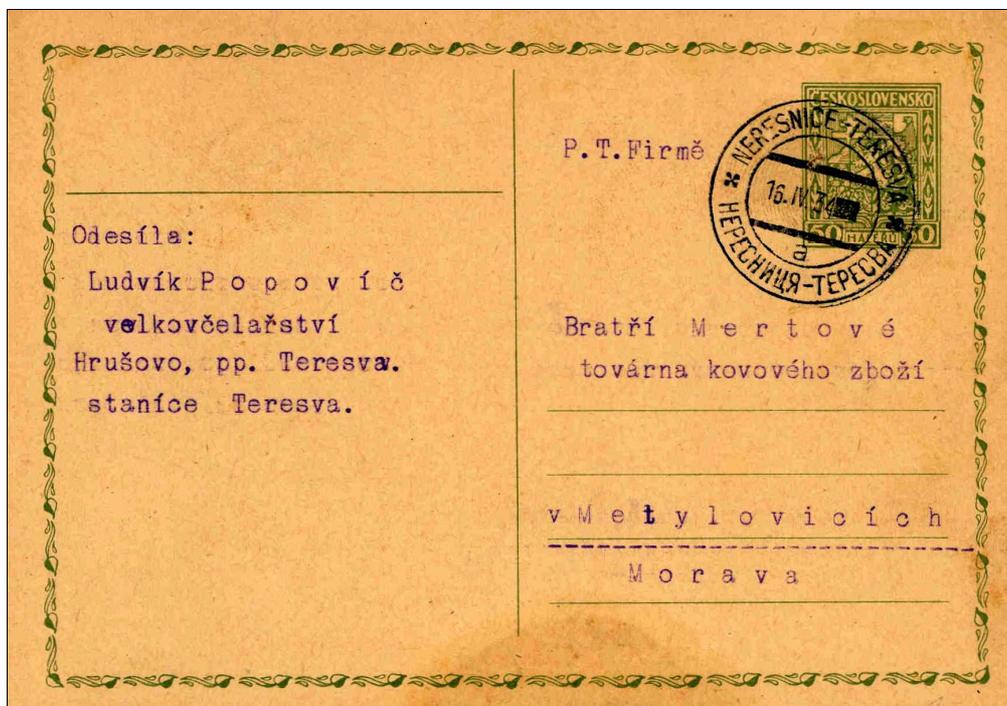
We can therefore deduce that the above picture postcard was cancelled with the bluish-black postmark of Svaljava some time between January 1922 and January 1926.

Further information is welcome.

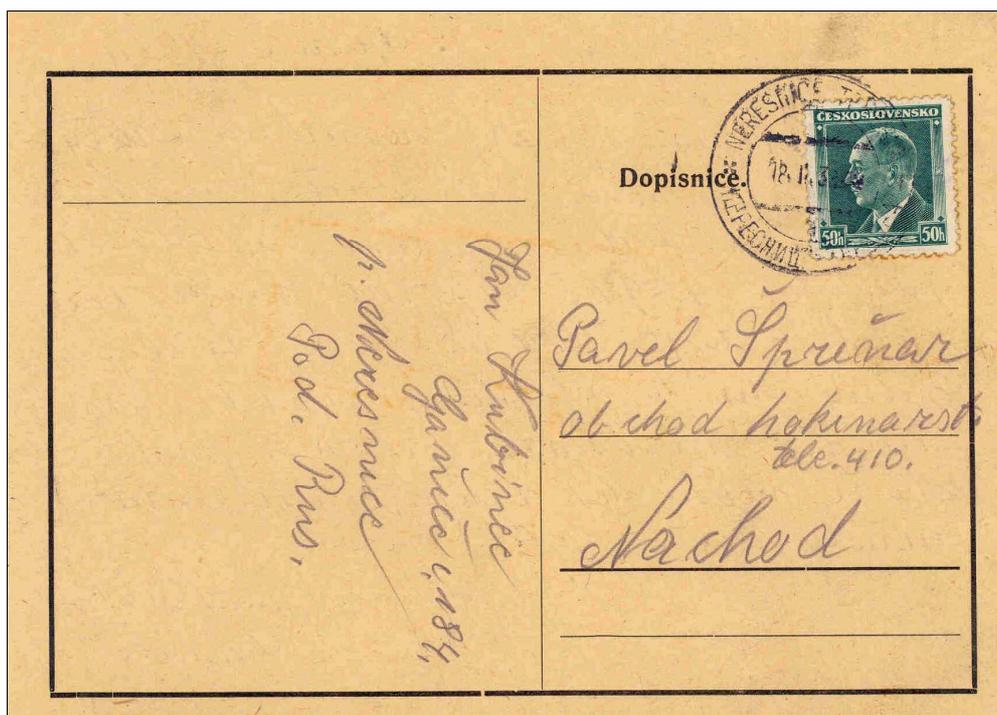
Helmut Kobelbauer

The Teresva - Neresnice Railway: Another Unlisted T. P. O. Stamp

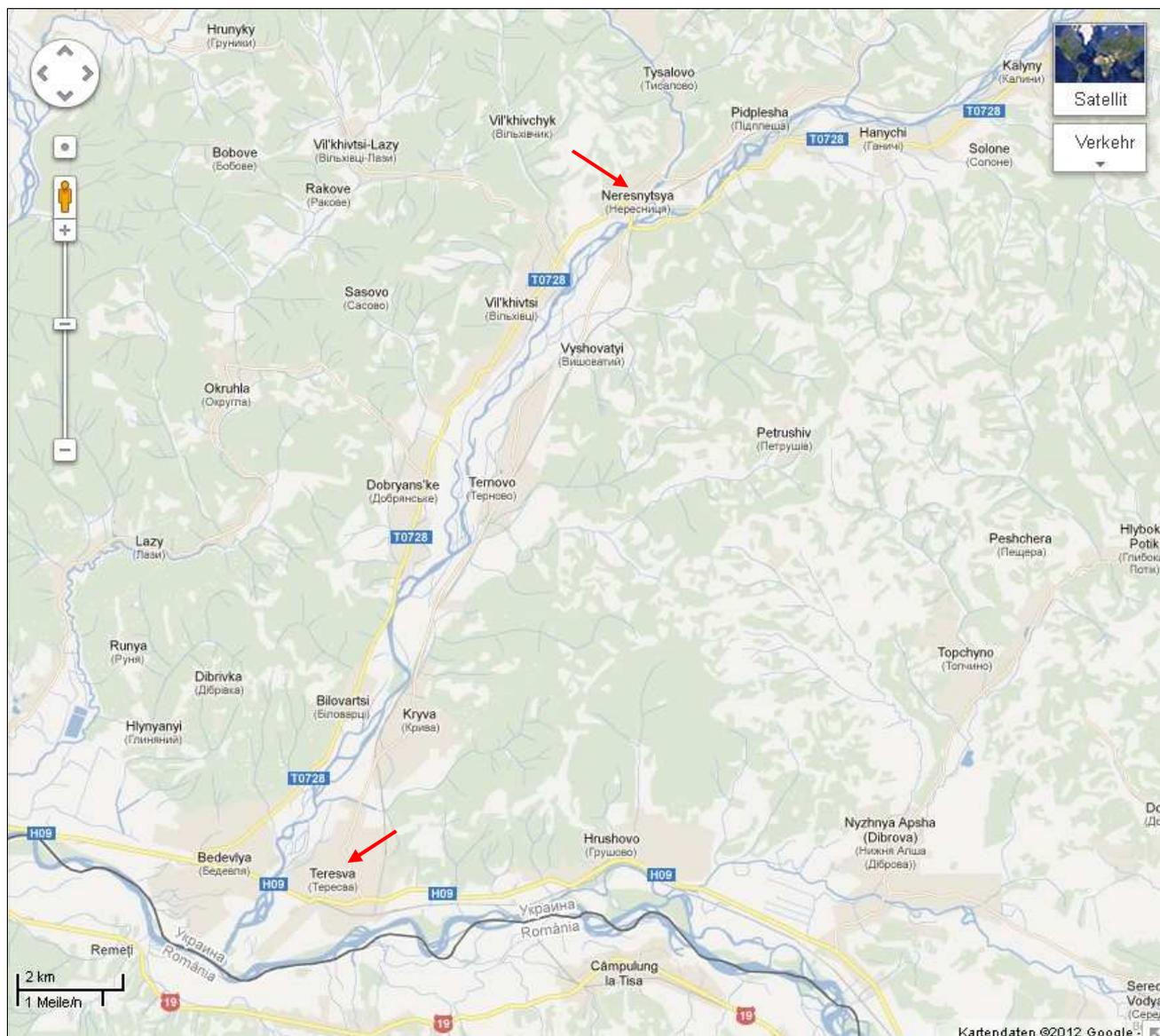
From Josef Dočkal in Olomouc, a good friend of many years and one of the most knowledgeable collector-dealers in the current Czech Republic, I bought the following postal stationery card some time ago:



It carries the (quite rare) T. P. O. stamp “NERESNICE - TERESVA | + НЕРЕСНИЦЯ - ТЕРЕСВА + | a” from April 16th, 1934. This T. P. O. is neither listed in the »*Monografie Československých Známek*« nor in Jan Verleg’s monograph. Another (not so clear) strike of this canceller can be seen on the following card (its date is February 18th, 1938):



Since the railway line from Teresva up to Neresnice and then further on to Ust'čorna is not much known, I have invested the effort and brought together the few pieces of information that are available.



From Google Maps: Road T0728 from Teresva to Neresnytsya up the Teresva valley.

The Teresva river flows from the crest of the Carpathians down to the Tisza/Tisa lowlands, i. e., from an area of rich and wide forests to the main traffic “road” of the rafters. Therefore already during Hungarian times a railway was built and opened in this valley. I have found a very instructive text on the Internet (<http://home.zonnet.nl/p.engelbert/UA-IND.html>, copyright © Paul Engelbert 2003 - 2009) which I reprint here with many thanks to the author:

The history of the Teresva forestry railway dates back to the time when this part of the Carpathian Mountains was still a part of the Hungarian Empire. On 23rd June 1887 a 750-mm gauge local railway was opened from the standard gauge railway station of Taracköz (Teresva) via the village of Nyéresháza (Neresnice) to Kobilá. The line was 34 kilometres long and operated both freight and passenger trains. The latter only commuted between Teresva and Neresnice.

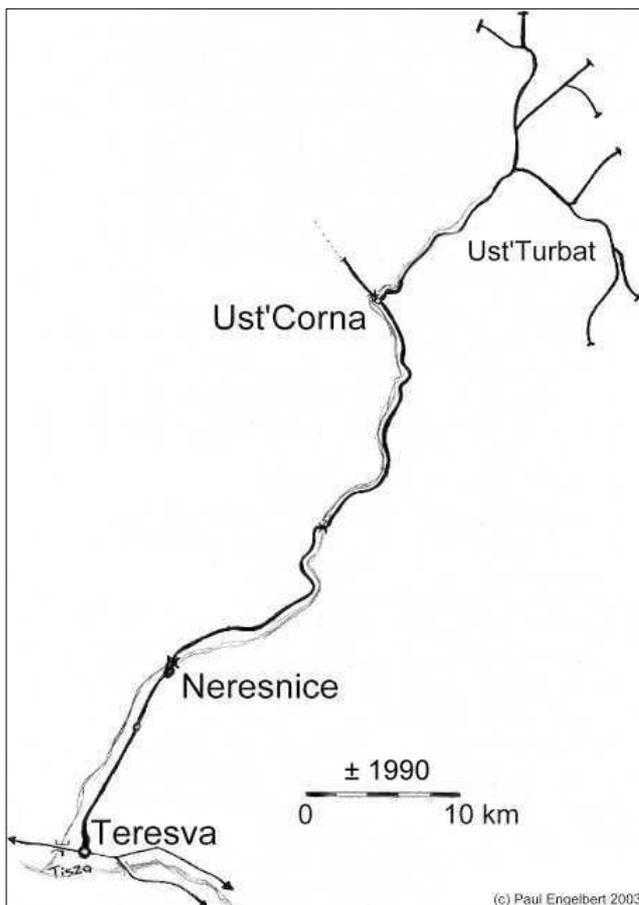
Between the two World Wars the region was a part of Czechoslovakia. The ČSD [Czech State Railways, the editor] took over the line and converted it to 760-mm gauge. In 1922 the 15 kilometres long line from Teresva to Neresnice was reopened. The rest of the line was abandoned.

The local railway opened up the first part of the valley, but the rich timber supplies in the Carpathian Mountains were not reached. Therefore the State Forestry decided to build a forestry railway, based in Ust'čorna [Királymező], which was to be connected to the narrow gauge local railway in Neresnice. Via the forestry railway and the local railway the timber could be transported to Teresva, where it could be loaded onto standard gauge wagons for further transportation. The first part of the forestry railway was opened in 1928. In the following years more and more lines were built, opening up the forests north of Ust'čorna.

In 1936 the local railway Teresva – Neresnice was incorporated into the forestry railway network. The whole system was 138 kilometres long, making it the most extensive forestry railway in Czechoslovakia.

After the Second World War the railway found itself on Ukrainian territory. Some years after the War the whole network was converted (back) to 750-mm gauge. Also many new lines were built. In 1965 the forestry railway reached a length of 250 kilometres. Apart from the timber traffic also a public passenger service was operated on the Teresva – Neresnice – Ust'čorna section.

[...] [Special information on the railway engines used – not reproduced here. The editor.]



The railway remained in service until 1998. In that year large parts of the already much neglected railway were washed away by a flood. The damage was too heavy and it was decided not to reopen the forestry railway system.



Railway engine TU2-266 in an unknown station somewhere on the Teresva - Ust'čorna line in 1982.



Railway engine MÁV 389.001 (“Taracsvölgy”) from the Teresva - Ust'čorna forestry railway, since 1920 in the railway museum in Sibiu (Romania).

Railway enthusiasts have gathered an amazing amount of information on such hidden and little-known branches of the overall freight and passenger railway network, and these sources are valuable also to us postal (and general) history enthusiasts.

As our deceased friend Tønnes Ore once wrote: “Used with care, the Internet is an infinite source of information” [»*The Sub-Carpathian Messenger*« #004 (May 2009), page 12].

Helmut Kobelbauer (with the help of Miroslav Bachratý)

Civil (and Military) Censorship in Czechoslovakia 1938

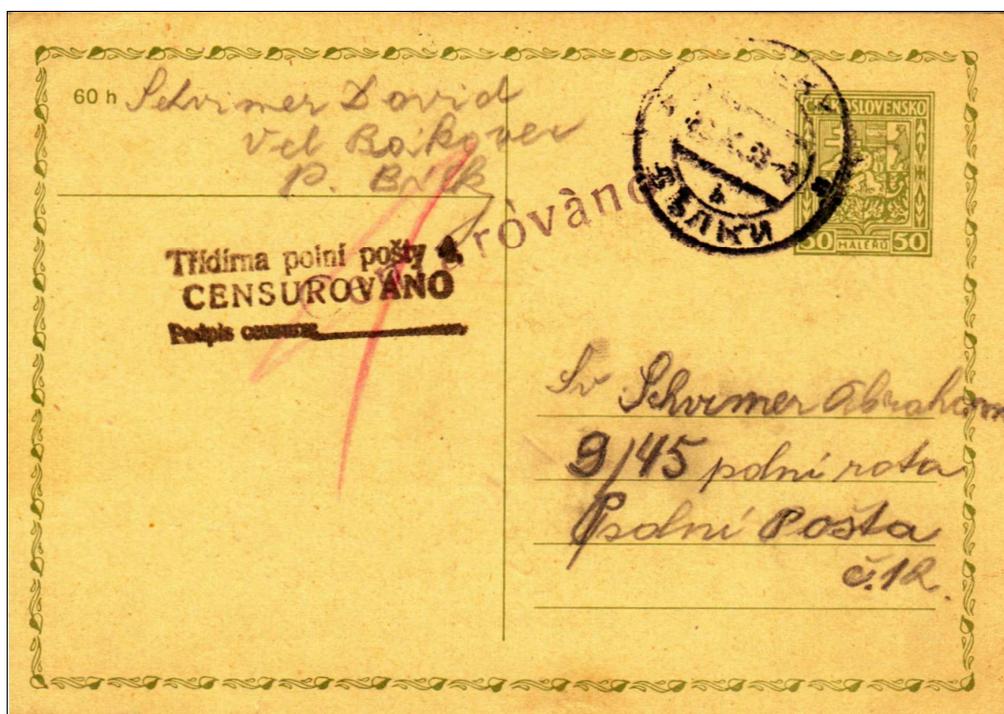
After the German Third Reich had overrun and occupied Austria in April 1938, the Czechoslovak Republic had more or less hostile neighbours on all sides. In the summer of this year the threats from Berlin got undertones of a possible military invasion. The Munich conference of September 29th, 1938, finally showed that none of the old allies, neither France nor the United States of America nor Great Britain, was ready to go to war with Reichskanzler Adolf Hitler and his fanatic followers.

In reality, the German Armed Forces were not yet ready for an invasion, and Bohemia was well-protected by a ring of mountains and defenses placed there. But President Beneš feared the Germans, and feared their “Fifth Column” that had become a real political factor by hidden nurturing with money and arms from the North. On September 15th, 1938, he wrote a letter to his Minister Nečas with proposals how to defuse the German powerplay. On September 17th, 1938, he ordered civil censorship to become active, abolishing the constitutional right of the privacy of the post for a period of three months. And on September 23rd, 1938, this was followed by a general mobilization of the Czechoslovak Armed Forces.

Our friend and member Miroslav Bachratý from Bratislava has found and published the corresponding instruction for the civil censorship under the title “Cenzúra v roku 1938” [Censorship in the Year 1938] in the magazine »*Filatelie*«, number 9/1998, pages 21 to 24.

Censorship commissions were organized in Prague, Brno, and Trenčín. Their activities concentrated on mail from and to abroad, although one can occasionally find censorship marks on domestic mail. Civil cards and letters sometimes also were treated by military censorship commissions.

In the following I would like to show some examples of this censorship on mail from the Podkarpatská Rus.



Czechoslovak postal stationery card (50h), written to a soldier in the 9th company of the 45th regiment (Polní Pošta 12), with civil and military censorship marks.

The above card was written in Vel. Rakovec, a small village near Bílky (Bilke), and was posted in Bílky. The date is not real clear but may be October 20th or 22nd, 1938. It was addressed to field

post office 12 which was in Užhorod at that time. So the item went from the civil to the military mail system somewhere. We do not know where the distinctive “CENSUROVÁNO” mark was added but certainly not in one of the three major civil censorship centres. Another (military) censorship mark was added by applying the stamp “Třídírna polní pošty 4. | CENSUROVÁNO | Podpis cenzura” by the sorting office number 4 (located in Poprad, Slovakia).



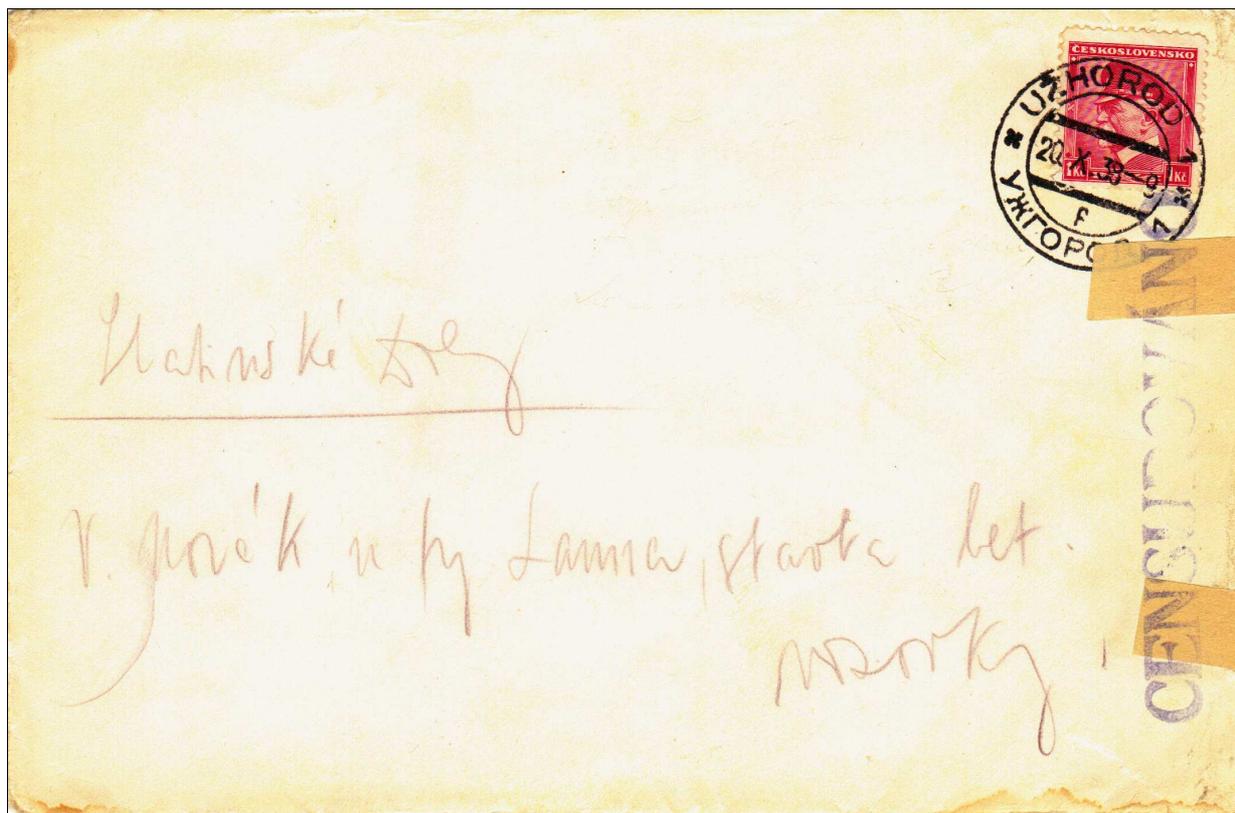
Romanian postal stationery card, Pitești, September 27th, 1938, to Užhorod.
Civil censorship mark “cenzurované” in red (Trenčín).

The above card from Romania went to Trenčín where it was checked and marked by the civil censorship commission and then went “back” to Užhorod. Such detours were typical for the treatment of mail.

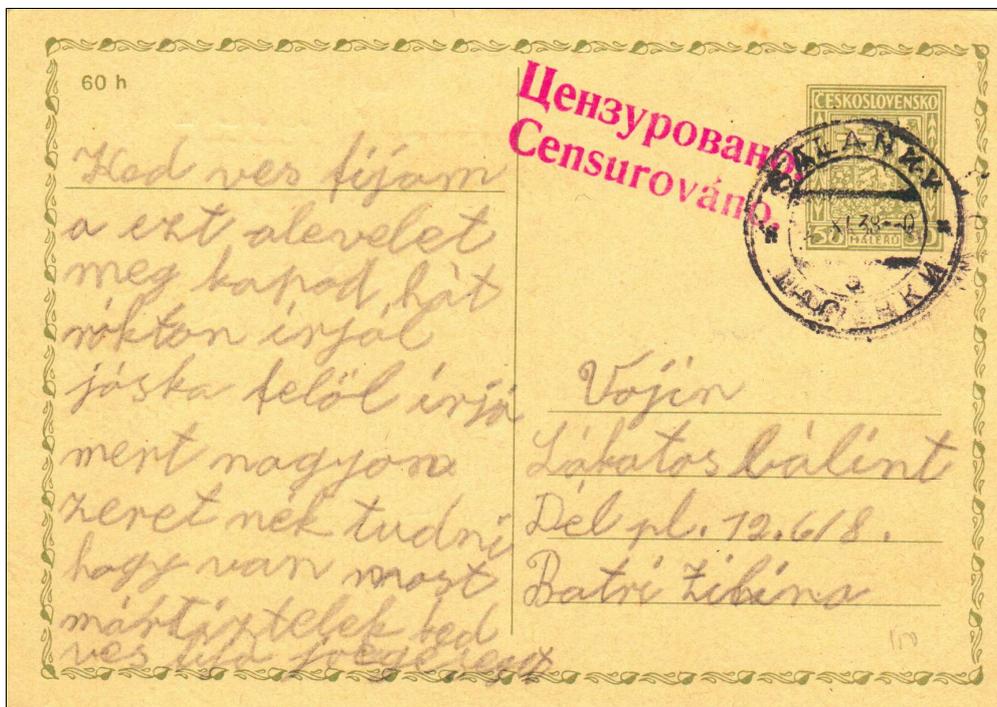


Letter from Dravci, cancelled Užhorod 1, October 20th, 1938, to Brno.
Civil censorship mark “CENSUROVÁNO” in violet, with provisional sealing strips.

The letter shown on the opposite page was addressed to Brno but was censored somewhere else (we do not know where). Such curiosities exist.



Letter, Užhorod 1, October 20th, 1938, to Slatinské Doly.
Civil censorship mark “CENSUROVANO” in violet and sealing strips (as above).



Czechoslovak postal stationery card (50h), Šalanky, November 1st, 1938, to a soldier in Žilina, with censorship mark “Цензуровано. | Censurováno.” in red.

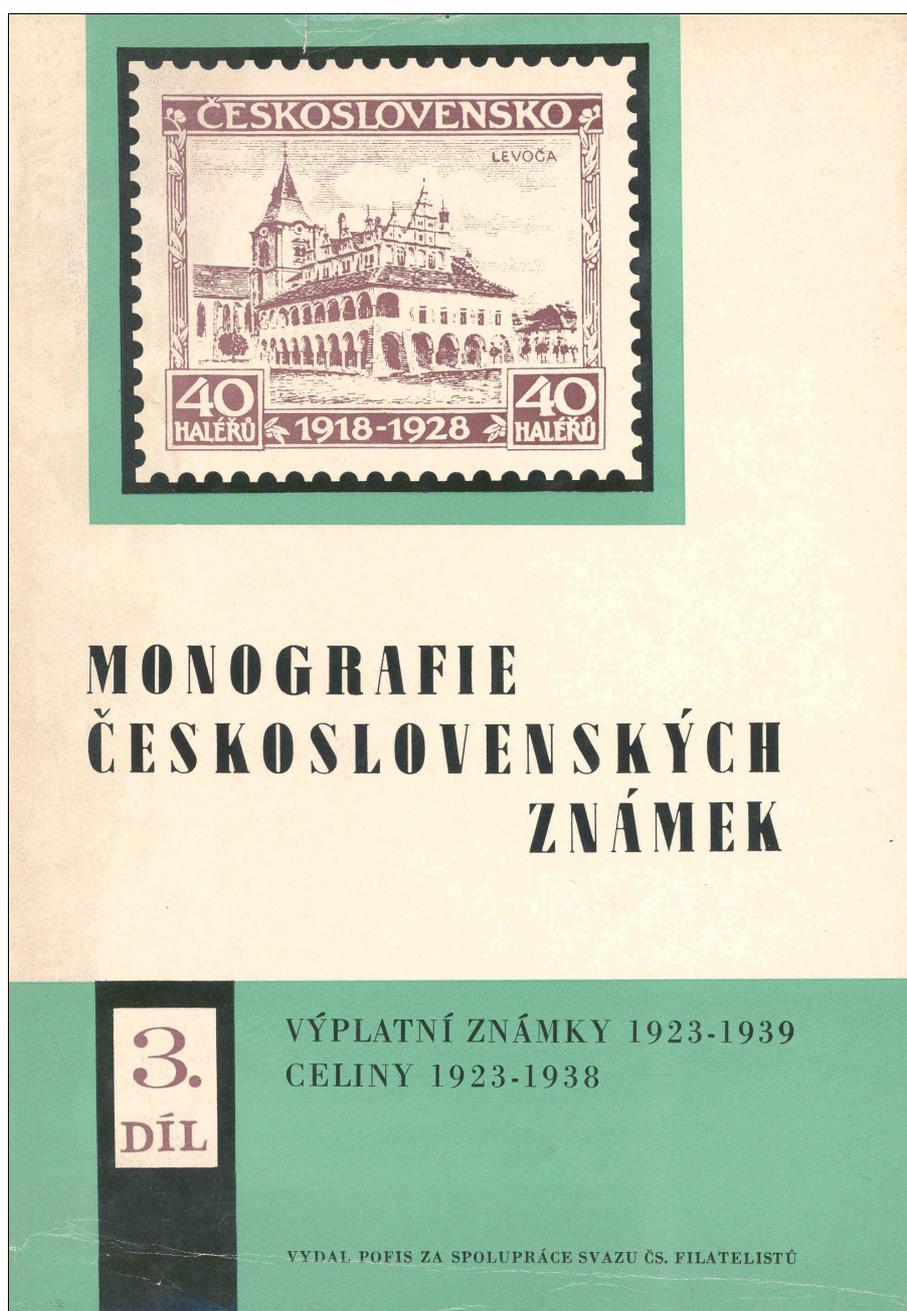
The last shown card is a curiosity of its own, carrying a (probably military) bilingual censorship mark. It is the only one that Mirko and I have ever seen. Congratulations to Mirko!

Helmut Kobelbauer

The “Monograph of Czechoslovak Stamps” on the 1939 Jasiňa 3K Stamp

Between 1968 and 1988, the POFIS publishing house in Prague prepared and sold a series of volumes of the »*Monograph of Czechoslovak Stamps*« which until today are the fundamental books for each stamps (and postal history) collector of this country. (Some additional volumes were published after the 1993 breakup of the Czechoslovak Republik.)

Volume 3, published in 1979, treated the regular stamps from 1923 to 1939 and was edited by Ing. Jan Karásek and František Žampach. On pages 316 to 318 of this volume one can find basic facts on the 3K stamp issued in 1939 for the (then autonomous) Podkarpatská Rus with the picture of the wooden church in Jasiňa.



Title page of volume 3 of the »*Monograph of Czechoslovak Stamps*« on regular stamps 1923 - 1939 and postal stationery 1923 - 1938.

The "Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Tschechoslowakei" from Germany years ago provided a translation of the original Czech text to German, and I have translated further to (my sort of) English ...

Karpatoukrajinský sněm

VZNIK ZNÁMEK

K připravovanému sněmu Karpatské Ukrajiny bylo mezi ministerstvem dopravy v Praze a poštovním resortem ministerstva hospodářských správ v Chustu dohodnuto vydat pamětní známku.

Stalo se tak v době dramatických událostí, které osudově zasáhly naši Československou republiku.

Vzhledem k značnému spěchu při vydání známky, které bylo nutné z hlediska politických událostí, bylo rozhodnuto, že známka bude vytištěna v Praze za použití motivu již dobře známého — Jasiňa — z jubilejní série z r. 1928.

Rytinu známky při použití původní rytiny 60 h jubilejní z r. 1928 po příslušných úpravách provedl K. Seizinger.

Vydání známky

Vydání známky bylo ohlášeno ministerstvem dopravy v Praze dne 28. 2. 1939 pod č. j. 19151 — V/1/1939. Před tímto datem však bylo vydání známky ohlášeno poštovním resortem ministerstva hospodářských správ v Chustu dne 18. 2. 1939 pod č. j. 8907/VI.

Z původního oznámení se dovídáme, že známka měla být dána do prodeje 2. března 1939. V dalších odstavcích uvádíme skutečnosti, které byly zjištěny z dokladových materiálů, které prostudovali někteří příjímáři dramatických událostí v březnu 1939 v této části Československé republiky.

Ze zprávy lze konstatovat, že údaj o datu vydání známky nebyl správný. Skutečné datum vydání známky byl 15. březen 1939.

Předloha známky (původní předloha obr. 371) byla upravena tak, že hlavní nápis byl rozdělen podle ústavního zákona z r. 1938, ČESKO-SLOVENSKO. Pod tímto



Obr. 371. Fotografie, která byla podkladem pro známku

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nápisem je ukrajinsky: КАРПАТСЬКА УКРАЇНА (Karpatská Ukrajina). Ve spodní části rámečku je text 1. COHM 2. III. 1939 a v obou rozích označení 3 K s novým označením měny K místo Kč.

Z dosažitelných pramenů bylo možno zjistit, že poštovní resort v Chustu přijímal do 2. března 1939 subskribce známek, pamětních obálek i dříve ohlášených tzv. aršíků. K vydání aršíků však nedošlo a pošta v Chustu si vypomohla malými kartičkami o velikosti 13 × 8 cm.

Kromě vydání vlastní známky byly dány do prodeje tři druhy kartónových lístků formátu A6 s textem malorusko-českým (dva druhy) a jeden druh jen s textem maloruským. Jsou známy zvláště obálky zmenšeného formátu A5 a textem ukrajinským (text maloruský je začerněn) a také dvojzajzčné podlouhlé obálky v barvě bílé a okrové.

Náklad známek byl 900 tisíc kusů. Celkový náklad známek byl podle tehdejších pramenů rozdělen následujícím způsobem: 2000 přepážkových archů obdržela z Prahy pošta v Chustu již 1. března 1939 a dalších 1000 přepážkových archů ještě před 15. březnem 1939. Zbytek nákladu zůstal v Praze.

Platnost známek, původně stanovená, byla změněna náhlými politickými událostmi, o čemž se zmiňujeme v závěrečné části RAZÍTKA, POŠTOVNÍ POUŽITÍ.

TISK ZNÁMEK

Známky byly vytištěny rotačním ocelotiskem ve státní tiskárně v Praze na stroji Stickney. Bylo použito velkého formátu ve známé úpravě s nepotištěnými kupóny (vždy 6 kupónů v horní a dolní vodorovné řadě). Formát známky je nepatrně menší. Pro tisk bylo použito jedné dvoudesky s označením deskové značky 1 nebo 1A na posledním kupónu spodní řady.

Barvy, papír, zoubkování

Známka je modré barvy. Významnější barevné odstíny nejsou známy. Papír je světle žlutý, lep nažloutlý s vodorovným pruhováním.

Zoubkování rádkové 12½.



Obr. 372.



Obr. 373. Původní pamětní razítko s datem 2. III. 39

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Pages 316 to 318 of vol. 3 of cited monograph.

RAZÍTKA, POŠTOVNÍ POUŽITÍ

Z dochovaných dokladů bylo zjištěno následující:

Na původně stanovené datum vydání, 2. 3. 1939, byla připravena čtyři pamětní razítka s pevnými mřístky a a b (obr. 374) a jedno razítko s pohyblivým mřístkem. Při skutečném použití bylo však toto poslední uvedené razítko nastaveno na 15 hodin (otevření sněmu) a tak všechny otisky na poštu prošlých dopisech jsou časově nastaveny na 15. 3. 1939 — 15.

S prodejem známek bylo však započato v Chustu u přepážek již v 11 hodin.

Z čísel R — nálepek se dá identifikovat, že k poštovní přepravě bylo použito asi 2000 kusů a dalších 10 tisíc kusů (odhadem) bylo použito pro pamětní listy.

Známky byly oficiálně platné na Karpatské Ukrajině od 11 hod. 15. 3. 1939, kdy přišly u poštovních přepážek k prodeji. Poštovní úřad byl otevřen do pozdních večerních hodin. Večer bylo již známo ultimatum, které vydal maďarský ministr zahraničí, hrabě Czaky (15. 3. 1939 v 15,45 hod.). Poštovní úřad v Chustu obsazen maďarským vojskem příští den, 16. 3. 1939 v 16,30 hod. Pošta ukončila svoji činnost pod správou Národní rady Karpatské Ukrajiny v 16 hod. a tím také prakticky byla ukončena platnost této známky.

Protože přímé poštovní spojení s Prahou bylo přerušeno, byly poštovní zásilky dopravovány do Budapešti a odtud dále. Je známo, že např. do Brna přišly dva poštovní pytle dne 23. března. Zde byly orazítkovány příchozími razítky tehdejší protektorátní pošty s daty 23. nebo 24. března 1939.



Obr. 374. Razítko Chust



Obr. 375. Pravý, původní dopis s razítkem Chust, zasláný těsně před obsazením maďarským vojskem

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Proof for this stamp.

The Carpatho-Ukrainian Parliament

Cause for the Stamp

Between the Traffic Ministry in Prague and the Post Division of the Economy Administration Council in Chust it was agreed to issue a memorial stamp for the Parliament in the Carpatho-Ukraine which was in preparation at that time.

This happened in a period of dramatical events that fatefully shook our Czechoslovak Republic.

According to the special urgency for issuing the stamp, which was necessary for political reasons, it was decided to have the stamp printed in Prague, making use of the already established picture – Jasiňa – of the jubilee issue of 1928.

The engraving of the stamp was done by K. Seizinger, using the original engraving of the 1928 stamp.



Issuing the Stamp

The issue of the stamp was published by the Traffic Ministry in Prague on February 28th, 1939, under the reference 19151-V/II/1939. Even earlier the Post Division of the Economy Administration Council in Chust had announced the stamp on February 18th, 1939, under reference 8907/VI.

According to the original announcement the stamp was planned to be available to the public by March 2nd, 1939. But facts have been found, substantiated by corresponding evidence, that have been processed by contemporaries of the dramatical events in March 1939 in this part of the Czechoslovak Republic.

From these informations we can see that the issuing date was wrong. The factual issue of the stamp was only on March 15th, 1939. The draft of the stamp (first draft see picture 371) was prepared in such a way that – in agreement with the law of 1938 – the main text was divided into “ČESKO-SLOVENSKO”, then below the text in Ukrainian (“Karpatská Ukrajina”). In the lower part of the frame we find the text “1. СОЇМ 2. ІІІ. 1939”, in both corners the face value “3K” in the new currency abbreviation “K” instead of “Kč”.

From existing sources it is possible to state that the Post Division in Chust accepted ordering in advance for stamps, memorial covers and so-called blocks (but these blocks were never issued). Instead of the blocks the post in Chust issued smaller cards in size 13 x 8 cm.

In addition to the issue of the memorial stamps three types of cardboard items in DIN A 6 size, two with Ruthenian-Czech text and one with only Ruthenian text, were offered for sale. Also known are special envelopes in downsized DIN A 5 format with Ukrainian text (the Ruthenian text blackened out) and bilingual covers in landscape format in white or ochre.

The number of printed copies of the stamp was 900.000. This overall number was (according to sources at the time) divided as follows: 2000 selling sheets were sent from Prague to the post office in Chust already on March 1st, 1939, and further 1000 sheets before March 15th, 1939. The rest stayed in Prague.

The originally planned period of validity for the stamp was changed by the unexpected political events. Please see the chapter “Cancellations, Postal Use”.

Printing of the Stamp

The stamps were produced in the State Printing Works in Prague, using rotary steel engraved printing on the Stickney machine. The sheet was in large format in the known layout with empty auxiliary fields (six empty fields in the topmost and bottommost row, horizontally) [Sheet layout: 16 rows of 7 stamps = 112 stamps, minus 12 empty fields: 100 stamps.]

For printing a double plate with plate numbers 1 and 1A was used – these marks were put onto the last auxiliary field of the lower row.

Colour, Paper and Perforation

The stamp was printed in blue. Deviating colour nuances are not known. The paper is bright yellow. The gum is yellowish and shows horizontal rippling. The stamps were line perforated 12½.

Cancellation, Postal Use

From existing sources the following facts can be stated: For the originally planned issuing date, March 2nd, 1939, four different special cancellers had been prepared: two cancellers with fixed date bridge and distinguishing marks "a" and "b" plus a canceller with changeable date bridge [adding up to three, not four. The editor]. The last canceller was positioned at "15.00" hours (opening time of the Parliament). Therefore all items that have been cancelled at the post office in Chust show the date "15. III. 1939 – 15".

Irrespective of this setting the sale of the stamps at the counters of the post office in Chust already started at 11.00 hours.

From the numbers on registration labels one can say that about 2000 pieces were sold and given to the mail for transportation. A further number of 10.000 pieces (estimate) were used in the preparation of memorial cards and covers.

Officially the stamps were valid in the Carpatho-Ukraine from the time of their sale, i. e., March 15th, 1939, 11.00 hours. The post office was open until late in the evening. At that time the ultimatum of the Hungarian Minister of the Exterior, count Czáky, was already known (March 15th, 1939, 15.45 hours). The post office of Chust was occupied by Hungarian armed forces on the next day, March 16th, 1939, at 16.30 hours. The office under the control of the Administration of the National Council of the Carpatho-Ukraine had stopped at 16.00 hours. This also ended the validity of the stamps.

Since the direct mail connection to Prague was interrupted, the bags with the mail were transported to Budapest and then passed on. It is known, e. g., that on March 23rd, 1939, two mail bags arrived in Brno. These items were backstamped with a respective canceller of the Protectorate with dates of March 23rd and 24th, 1939.



Letter with 3K Parliament stamp, from Prague 31 (!), March 15th, 1939, to the U. S. A.



Užhorod acclaims the liberators -- The end of the Czechoslovak period.