THE NEWS OF
HUNGARIAN PHILATELY

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January - March 2009

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ANNIVERSARIES

Tanácsköztársaság / Soviet Republic
1919 - 2009

Occupation of Carpatho-Ukraine
1939 - 2009

SOCIETY FOR HUNGARIAN PHILATELY
1920 Fawn Lane, Hellertown, PA 18055-2117 USA
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The Society for Hungarian Philately (SHP) is a non-profit organization chartered under the laws of the State of Connecticut and is devoted to the study of every aspect of Hungarian philately. SHP publishes a quarterly newsletter in March, June, September, and December. Manuscripts for publication may be sent to the Society’s address listed above. The articles published herein represent the opinions of the individual authors and the content is not to be construed as official policy of this Society or any of its officers. All publication rights reserved for SHP. Articles from this journal may be reprinted with the written permission of the Editor and the authors only. Back issues of the newsletter may be purchased for $3.00, postpaid, (when available).

Annual membership dues are $18 ($19 if paid by Paypal) for members whose addresses are in the United States. For members residing in all other countries, the dues are $25 ($26 if paid by Paypal). Dues are payable in January in advance for the calendar year. Payment of dues entitles members to receive the newsletter, to participate in the sales circuit and the quarterly auctions, and to exercise voting rights. Send dues payments to: The Treasurer, P.O. Box 802, Powell, WY 82435-0802 USA. Paypal payment may be made to treasurership@wir.net.
THE PRESIDENT’S CORNER

by H. Alan Hoover

Welcome to 2009 and to the meltdown of our financial stability! Things in virtually every business, occupation and areas of interest are being hit as a ripple effect of all the other changes occurring higher up on the food chain. The stamp world seems to be reflecting some of the same; buyers are cautious of spending extra funds as they never know if they will be employed or not in the upcoming days. Some dealers are reporting slow sales, others have closed up shop. As for me, I bought so much over the years that I think I have a lifetime of projects to still work on anyway; so I am not worried. To contradict all that, some record prices for much better material are still being reported in some of the auctions. And, our annual Treasurer’s report that shows a financially very healthy society for the SHP can also found here within this issue.

We are happy to report our election results; all candidates were elected and the by-laws change approved. See the detailed election results by our Secretary elsewhere in this issue. Just to clarify to everyone again, I will continue in the role of President for the time being. This is to train a new volunteer, Bill Wilson in the necessary skills and responsibilities of the President’s position. Bill will observe and experience all the Executive Board activities in 2009. Then, when the time appears right, Bill will transition over to the President position.

Today, I completed the application for our annual participation at STAMPSHOW which occurs August 6 to 9, 2009 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh PA. I was born and raised in Pittsburgh so it will be a different experience spending the time in town for these four days. The city of Pittsburgh has dramatically changed in the last twenty years. It is a modern city now – no longer just a dirty steel city. I again apologize for cancelling our Society participation from STAMPSHOW in 2008. We will be there this year. And, I am soliciting your participation and consideration of exhibiting at the show so that we can have representation of our society. A Prospectus and Entry form is already available; you can request a copy off the APS website, http://stamps.org/stampshow/Exhibits.htm. Please; support our society by exhibiting this year. Even if you cannot attend the actual show, they accept exhibits via the mail. And, if you are able, plan now to attend the show. It is one of the largest annual shows with lots of dealers, societies and attendees in North America.

This is a gentle reminder to any members who have not renewed their annual dues. Notices were sent out with the last mailing of The News that arrived in December. To date, we still have outstanding about one-third of our membership as unpaid. Each year we go thru the continued exercise to notify those, please help us and renew now. We offer Paypal renewal and a discount on multiyear renewals. If you have misplaced the notice, contact any board member and we will assist.

Again, we ask for your inputs on articles to support The News. Kindly submit your article, thoughts, ideas, questions or answers to the editor; I am certain he will be grateful for any material you can supply. E-mail and postal mail addresses of all of out Board members are listed on the inside of the front cover of each newsletter.

I will end here for this column; and Ray, we will as always “Keep Stampin”.

*

KUDOS & WELCOME

Congratulations to our exhibitors! Ed Waters won a gold with the single frame exhibit titled Andreas Saxlehner’s Hunyadi János Bitterquelle / A Prequel to the Coca-Cola Advertising Campaign? at NEWMEXPEX. Bob Morgan received a gold medal, the APS Research, and the Postal History Society’s ‘Best in Show’ awards at SANDICAL with his Hungarian Hyperinflation 1945-1946 exhibit.

Welcome to our newest members: Mr. Richard I. Frank of Laguna Beach, CA, and Mr. Lawrence Toomey of Upper Darby, PA.

*
SOCiETY FOR HUNGARIAN PHILATELELY TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2008

submitted by Wes Learned, Treasurer

Beginning Balance 1-1-2008  $1,629.88
(Checking - First National Bank)

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Note: The spike in SHP total assets for 2008 can be directly attributed to the many members taking advantage of the three year plan for paying dues. The prepayment of dues for years 2010 and 2011 now will result in smaller collections during those actual years.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

by Jim Gaul

Greetings, fellow SHP members. I have two matters of importance to share with you concerning our Society. The first subject is the election results which were tallied by our Treasurer, Wes Learned and sent to me by email. Thanks Wes! Here is his report as received.

The election results are in: A total of 64 votes were submitted. That is one-third of our active membership. Sixty-one were by paper ballot and three came in electronically. A number of our life members cast their votes - which is appreciated.

All officers up for election received at least 90% approval (or 58 votes). No nominations or write-in votes were received. Only one vote was received that did not approve of changing the by-laws at this time. Consequently, Bob Morgan's appointment to an At-Large position on the Executive Board was unanimously approved by all those in favor of the by-laws change allowing an additional At-Large member to serve on the Board.

In addition to the ballots, a number of members included a short note of thanks and appreciation to those currently serving the Society. Such compliments are always welcome and make our jobs more rewarding. Along with dues payments, some of our members have sent along a donation which will help off-set operating costs and allow us to maintain our current dues rate schedule.

On behalf of all the board members, I thank all of you who took the time to vote and to insure that the Society of Hungarian Philately remains a viable entity for years to come.

Thanks again Wes for an outstanding job!

The second subject I want to bring to your attention is the upcoming annual meeting of our Society. As reported to me by our President, Alan Hoover, it will take place during August 6th to August 9th at the APS StampShow to be held in Pittsburgh, PA. I, along with my wife, plan to attend and hope to meet up with a lot more of you in person at this show. More information will follow in the next issue regarding day and time of the meeting.

That’s it for now, till next issue, keep on stampin’!”

*
FERENC KÖLCSEY, AUTHOR OF THE HYMNUSZ
by Paul Richter, M.D.

I am submitting the illustration of this commemorative cover, beautifully done in 1938, honoring the 100th anniversary of the death of Ferenc Kölcsey. I learned only the first stanza of his poem Hymnusz that became the national anthem of Hungary, granted that I left the country after the fifth grade. Having googled ‘Kölcsey,’ I came up with more information about him as well as the words in Hungarian and English to the entire poem. I was also able to listen to the anthem (music by composer Ferenc Erkel) over the internet.

Kölcsey was born in Szatmárcseke in 1790. He was orphaned at an early age and handicapped by the loss of his right eye. Early on, he published poetry that was little noticed. His literary criticism of establish poets like Vitéz Mihály Csokonai rendered him quite unpopular. In the late 1820s he was able to turn his reputation around by working with Pál Szemere on a new periodical Élet és Literatúra / Life and Literature. Between 1832 and 1835 he was member of the Hungarian Diet and through his eloquence, he became a noted parliamentary leader. In 1830 he was elected to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His poem Hymnusz was written and published in 1823 with the sub-title From the Hungarian Nation’s Turbulent Centuries, the purpose of which was to throw off the imperial censors. He passed away in 1838.

Hymnusz

Isten, áld meg a magyart
Jó kedvvel, bőséggel;
Nyújts feléje védő kart,
Ha küzd ellenséggel;
Balsors, akit régen tép,
Hozz rá víg és zsetendőt,
Megbűnhödte már e nép
A múltat s jövendőt!

(Hungarian text, 1823)

Hymn

O God, bless the Hungarians
With your grace and bounty
Extend over it your guarding arm
During strife with its enemies
Long torn by ill fate
Bring upon it a time of relief
This nation has suffered for all sins
Of the past and of the future!

(literal translation)

Hymn

Bless the Magyar, Lord we pray,
Nor in bounty fail him,
Shield him in the bloody fray
When his foes assail him.
He whom ill luck long has cursed,
This year grant him pleasure.
He has suffered with the worst
Time beyond all measure.

(poetic translation by George Szirtes)
It is difficult to translate poetry into other languages and still manage to capture the sentiment that the original words carry in the original language. The above examples illustrate this in the differences between the literal and the poetic translation of the first stanza.

My favorite translation, shown on the left, is credited to Watson Kirkconnell, who was a master of 50 languages, including that impossible Hungarian!

Hungarians treat the national anthem with prayer-like reverence. After all, the words are a plea to the Almighty. Singing it will at times bring tears to the eyes. I had such an experience the first time I sang the anthem upon returned to Hungary after 18 years. It was August 20th 1973, St. Stephen’s day. The village church was filled to capacity and I was standing next to my grandfather, whom I adored. I felt that I had come home. Other times, singing will bring on the emotion of defiance. Under Rákosi in the 1950s, the Communist leaders longed to be rid of the anthem with its religious overtones. Having redrawn the traditional national symbols along Soviet models, Stalin’s bald pontificate tasked composer Zoltán Kodály to come up with a new anthem. Kodály wisely procrastinated.

My other emotionally-charged experience with the anthem dates from 1986. I was attending a theater version of the rock opera István a király in Budapest. At the conclusion of the performance, a Jimmy Hendrix-like guitar version of the anthem started to play (Hendrix played the US national anthem the morning after at Woodstock in 1969). Recognizing that this was the anthem, I believe that I was the first person in the theater to stand up to be followed by several uniformed officers of the Hungarian People’s Army, and, finally, he rest of the audience.

A symphonic version of the Hungarian national anthem can be found on YouTube:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19dU_q6lmGM.

This site will also bring up similar postings such as the anthem from Csíksomlyó sung by the cast and audience of István a király and another version sung by the pilgrims attending the feast of the Madonna of Csíksomlyó. Enjoy!

Thanks, Paul, for giving me this opportunity to reminisce. /Ed./

* 

THE 1918 ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ STÁTNI POŠTA OVERPRINT FROM SZAKOLCA / SKALICE

by Vojtěch Řezniček

/The following material was published in the December 2006 issue of the Szabolcsi Bélyegújság. The article was translated into Hungarian by Sándor Kosztolányi and edited for publication by Dr. Mihály Bodor. The abbreviated English translation is by Csaba L. Kohalmi./

The design of the crest is credited to Josef Rössler-Ofovsky, and initially it was used in Prague to overprint Austrian stamps. Hungarian stamps were overprinted using the coat-of-arms design and a reduced size ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ STÁTNI POŠTA text. The official issue consisted of 14 stamps: Harvesters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 15f; Károly-Zita 10, 20, 25, 40, and 50f; War Aid III 10 and 15f; and the 2f Newspaper stamp. In addition, the white-numeral 10 and 15f Harvesters as well as the colored-numeral 10, 35, and 40f stamps received the overprint because of private initiatives.

The overprinted stamps were transported to the town of Szakolca / Skalice; hence the name of the issue. Sets of 14 stamps were affixed to covers and cancelled there for philatelic marketing purposes. The central postal authority’s directive dated 13 November 1918 prohibited the use of these stamps after the 18th
of the same month. Nevertheless, on that date, the 10 and 15f Károly stamps with Köztársaság / Republic overprints were also overprinted in Prague. Hitherto, collectors did not know of the existence of these two overprints. The actual quantity of stamps prepared is not known.

All of the stamps known on cover were overprinted individually by hand. No combinations of pairs or blocks of the hand overprint are known to exist. After the November 18th deadline prohibiting the use of the stamps, a stereotype-version of the overprint was prepared and applied to blocks of four stamps. On these reprints, the text above the crest shifted slightly to the left.

Later, counterfeit overprints were produced using photographic reproductions of the design. These fakes lost a lot of the detail from the crest. In addition, the text became longer by 0.1mm and the crest became larger by 0.2mm resulting in a narrower spacing between the text and the crest.

The newspaper stamp illustrated on page 4 is a stereotype reprint. The line added to the image on the left bisecting the double-barred cross passes slightly to the LEFT of the letters ‘L’ and ‘I’ in the text. On the original hand-overprinted version, the same line passes slightly to the RIGHT of the same two letters.

* ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ FROM THE DECEMBER ISSUE

The translations of the words and phrases were taken from Robert B. Morgan’s book, The Hungarian Hyperinflation of 1945-1946.

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<th>English</th>
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</thead>
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<td>a</td>
<td>surcharge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 címer</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>coat of arms, crest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 pótdíj</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>registered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ajánlott</td>
<td>d</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 sürgős</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 frankó</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>urgent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 légiposta</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>zone</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 kék</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>parcel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 csomag</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>fee paid at mailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 postaláda</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>air-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 város</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 ellenőrizve</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>mailbox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 nyomtatvány</td>
<td>m</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 törékeny</td>
<td>n</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 postás</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>telegram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 falu</td>
<td>p</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 város</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 ujság</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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All of the entries turned in had 100% correct answers. So, the winner was determined by
conducted a drawing. Congratulations to Ed Waters who will receive the first prize, a set of first day covers illustrated on the back cover of the previous newsletter. Oliver Megadja will receive the consolation prize. Thank you to all of the participants!

*  

THE NEXT QUIZ

Please send in your entry to the editor via email or snail mail to the address listed on the inside of the front cover. The entry deadline is 1 May 2009. The prize consisting of a set of seven maximum cards of the 1968 Paintings shown on back cover page will be awarded to the person with the most correct answers. In case of a tie, a drawing will determine the winner. (Thanks to Alan Soble for his question contributions. If anyone has ideas for similar contest, please let me know.)

1. In August 1849, this town was the last seat of Lajos Kossuth’s revolutionary government:
   a) Szeged   b) Kolozsvár   c) Gödöllő   d) Lugos   e) Kőhalom
2. Which country did NOT overprint Hungarian stamps after the end of World War I?
   a) Rumania   b) Czechoslovakia   c) Croatia   d) Ukraine   e) Austria
3. In what year did ALL newly issued imperforate Hungarian stamps become valid for postage?
   a) 1955   b) 1958   c) 1964   d) 1990   e) none of these
4. When were the first Hungarian semipostal stamps issued?
   a) 1913   b) 1914   c) 1915   d) 1903   e) 1867
5. When were the first Hungarian postage due stamps issued?
   a) 1900   b) 1906   c) 1903   d) 1912   e) none of these
6. Did Hungary ever issue a COMMEMORATIVE postage due stamp?
   a) Yes   b) No
7. Which Hungarian stamp depicts a terrorist act?
   a) Scott 2076   b) Scott B113   c) Scott B138   d) Scott 1078   e) Scott 1035
8. Who was independent Hungary’s first prime minister?
   a) Kossuth   b) Károlyi   c) Rákoczi   d) Batthyány   e) Görgei
9. Which Hungarian statesman, pictured on Scott 3553, served in two Hungarian governments in 1946 and again in 1956?
   a) Dinnyés   b) Tildy   c) Maléter   d) Hegedűs   e) Németh
10. In the days of the Roman Empire, the Transdanubian part of Hungary was known as:
    a) Dacia   b) Pannonia   c) Galicia   d) Illyria   e) Cisalpine
11. Also from the Roman Empire days, Savaria was the name for which modern Hungarian city?
    a) Kőszeg   b) Győr   c) Komárom   d) Szombathely   e) Sopron
12. How many countries share a border with Hungary today?
    a) 5   b) 6   c) 8   d) 7   e) 4
13. The 1962 souvenir sheet, Scott No. 1453, depicts the flags of 16 countries participating in the Soccer World Cup in Chile. Which flag is wrong?
    a) Argentina   b) Mexico   c) Czechoslovakia   d) Hungary   e) England
14. Which country has NOT participated with Hungary in a joint stamp issue?
    a) Belgium   b) Turkey   c) China   d) United Nations   e) Romania
15. When was the last postage stamp issued by Hungary denominated in ‘fillér’?
    a) 1981   b) 1990   c) 1958   d) 1995   e) none of these

*  

ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Thanks to the efforts of our contributors, this issue of The News is the meatiest in a long time. The Quiz turned into a popular addition and, with help, I would like to continue it indefinitely. Alan Soble’s Obliterations article will be concluded in the April-May issue. While it is great that I have material in the pipeline for the next newsletter, I cannot overemphasize the need for a continuous stream of articles. Thank you for the support and I’m looking forward to more. /Ed./
**P, T, AND PORTO: PHILATELIC CREATIVITY UNLIMITED**

by Lyman R. Caswell

I recently acquired a Hungarian collection that contained a large number of stamps, both unused and used, overprinted “P,” “T,” or “Porto” in a wide variety of styles, together with some covers with these overprinted stamps. Similar material occasionally appears on eBay, and at bourses. I have not been able to find anything in English about these creations. Since they appear in the philatelic market, sometimes described as “rarities,” collectors should be better informed about them.

These materials are described in the *A magyar bélyegek monográfiája* as “the 1918 emergency postage due stamps.” Other Hungarian sources provide brief paragraphs about them, which in effect summarize the information from the *Monográfiája*. The Michel catalog gives a one-sentence description followed by the advice to look for “needs covers.” (*Bedarfsbriefe sind gesucht.*) There is no mention of these materials in the Scott catalog. Collectors should be aware that the authors of the *Monográfiája* regard these materials, with few exceptions, as creations by collectors or dealers that have very little value.

War-driven increases in Hungarian postal rates led to the decree which generated the emergency postage dues. On 29 May 1918, Hungary added a war tax of 5 fillér to the postal rates for letters, and a tax of 2 fillér to the 8-fillér government-issued postal cards. Postage due was normally charged at double the franking deficiency; but, apparently, it was not doubled for failure to add franking to the war tax. This created an extra need for 2- and 5-fillér postage due stamps. On 15 June 1918 letter rates were raised from 10 to 15 fillér for a local letter, and from 15 to 20 fillér for a distance letter; and the postal card rate was raised from 8 fillér to 10 fillér. Postcard rates remained unchanged at 10 fillér. The new rates included the war tax.

The printing of 5-fillér postage due stamps had been discontinued at the end of November 1917. These stamps were already in short supply at the time the war tax was added. A decree of 15 June 1918 authorized local post offices to overprint 2-, 3-, and 5-fillér Harvesters definitive stamps with locally created handstamps with the letters “P” or “T,” or the word “Porto,” to convert them to provisional postage due stamps. (Up to this time there had been no 3-fillér postage due stamps.) It is important to note that the authorizing decree specified that: (1) the stamp to be used this way should first be applied to the mail piece; (2) only then converted to a postage due with the handstamp; and (3) then be canceled with the usual town postmark.

It is possible that some postal clerks found this to be more work than they felt necessary. Why not just apply the overprint to all the stamps in a sheet, to have them ready as needed? The directive to postmark the provisional postage due was also often ignored. The overprint was probably regarded as sufficient cancellation.

If a stamp collector wanted overprinted but unused stamps, a friendly postal clerk could be found to provide them. At the collector’s request, the overprint was applied not only to the specified denominations, but also to all other denominations on hand, and to the Károly and Zita stamps which were also current. According to the *Monográfiája*, “Unused stamps canceled with the postage due stamp are not ‘emergency postage due stamps,’ but strictly un-official favors by postal clerks, or colored pieces of paper of no value.”

Off-cover postmarked stamps with the “P,” “T,” or “Porto” overprints should be regarded with suspicion. Casual examination is not sufficient to determine whether the overprint was applied before the stamp was postmarked, as specified by the authorizing decree, or added to a canceled stamp by a creative collector or dealer, using his own handstamp. In cases where the date of the postmark is legible, it is often a date before the date of the decree authorizing the overprints, revealing faking rather than legitimate usage. It is best to avoid all off-cover postmarked stamps with the emergency overprints, even if they show a date within the authorized time period.

Overprints which include the amount due are unauthorized, as are off-cover overprinted pairs and blocks. Overprints were applied to Turul definitives, which had been invalidated at the end of the previous year, and to semipostal, postal savings, and newspaper stamps. They were even applied to postage due stamps! These overprinted stamps are fantasies produced by dealers attempting to make stamps of little value more attractive to collectors. They would have been easier to make than the “occupations” forgeries, since there were no official overprints that had to be matched.
The emergency postage due stamps were valid for only five months. Their use was forbidden in mid-November. I have not been able to find the exact date of their invalidation, but it could not have been later than 16 November 1918, when Hungary was declared a republic. The invalidation did not inhibit the creators of fantasy postage dues. The overprints are found on stamps issued after the invalidation date, such as those issued on 23 November 1918 with the “KÖZTÁRSASÁG” overprint, korona-denominated Harvesters definitives issued in 1922, and even the postage due stamps made by overprinting harvesters definitives with “PORTÓ” and a new value in 1921-1922.

Although the authorizing directive referred only to 2-, 3-, and 5-filler harvesters stamps, it did not forbid the application of the provisional overprint to other stamps for actual payment of postage due. Higher denominations in the harvesters series, with the emergency overprints, are found on cover, suggesting legitimate usage. Károly stamps with these overprints also exist on cover. Most of these covers, even in the time period of legitimate usage, are also philatelic creations, posted unfranked, with the postage due indicated by combinations of the overprinted stamps in all possible denominations, not just the authorized ones. The covers with addresses in the city in which they were posted are probably hand-back artifacts. Philatelically prepared postcards usually are blank in the message space. I interpret a “needs cover” (Bedarfsbrief) to be one with inadequate franking (not an unfranked one), with the correct postage due indicated by overprinted and canceled stamp(s) with the denomination(s) specified in the authorizing decree. Only covers meeting these requirements demonstrate fully legitimate postal use.

Among the covers in my possession, only the one shown in Figure 1 below meets these requirements. It is an Austrian 8-heller postal card (Michel P235a) with a franking deficiency of 2 heller equal to 2 filler. The postage due, double the franking deficiency, is 4 filler, as indicated by a pair of 2-filler harvesters stamps overprinted “T,” and canceled at Szentendre. There is a hand-written message on the back of the card. Although this card is collectible, it is also a philatelic creation. An identical card, except with the address written in a different hand, was recently offered in a recent auction. Unfranked cards from Austria with the same address exist with various combinations of the overprinted stamps. Evidently the addressee asked his friends in Vienna to mail post cards to him with deficient franking, so he could get items with legitimately used emergency postage dues.

Figure 1. A legitimate example of the use of 1918 emergency postage due stamps. The 4-filler postage due is indicated with a pair of the authorized 2-filler definitives, overprinted “T” and postmarked.

Figure 2 on the next page shows a cover that meets the requirements for legitimacy, except that the emergency dues are not canceled. The same auction that offered the companion to the cover
in Figure 1 offered a cover similar to this one, addressed in the same handwriting and posted on the same day to the same address. It had 15 fillér franking and an uncanceled 10-fillér stamp with the “Porto” in circle overprint. Both covers are philatelic creations.

Figure 2. A nearly correct philatelic creation. The 40 fillér postage due is indicated with 8 overprinted authorized 5-fillér definitives. The overprint ties the stamps to the cover at the left, showing that it was applied after the stamps were affixed. The postmark of the receiving office should have been applied to the stamps, however, instead of to the cover.

A more typical example of a philatelic cover is shown in Figure 3 on the next page. At bourses, I have run across other unfranked covers postmarked in Sopron, addressed with the same typewritten Sopron address, but ‘franked’ with other combinations of emergency postage dues. These covers are hand-back artifacts.

There are also covers with the emergency postage due stamps that bear postmarks with dates after the use of these stamps was forbidden. All examples that I have seen have Budapest postmarks. These covers include registered covers with the registration fee, as well as the postage due penalty, indicated by the overprinted stamps. Official mail covers, which transfer the postage charge to the addressee without penalty, occur with postmarks as late as November 1919, a year after the use of the emergency stamps was forbidden. Figure 4, also on the next page, shows a spectacular example, postmarked on 29 November 1919. The firm of Szemere és T(ár)sai itársai = partners/ is the addressee on several of these covers, and the sender of others. Interestingly, the business of Szemere és T(ár)sai was reinforced concrete, not stamps.

Since the 1918 emergency postage due overprints were to be applied only after stamps were attached to the cover, unused off-cover examples of these stamps must be regarded as “colored pieces of paper of no value,” as quoted above. The Monográfíája expresses an equally harsh opinion of covers bearing overprinted stamps other than the 2-, 3-, and/or 5-fillér denominations: “They are collectors’ and dealers’ fabrications, and therefore there is no room for them among the emergency postage due stamps.”

Acknowledgment: Grateful thanks are due to Denes J. Bogner for the translation of the Hungarian text into English.
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Figure 3. An example of a hand-back philatelic creation. The 4-6- and 10-fillér stamps were not authorized to receive the overprint, and none of the stamps was postmarked. The cover is sealed and has no contents.

Figure 4. The date of the postmark, 29 November 1919, is a year after the invalidation of the emergency postage dues. The overprints were applied to the stamps before they were affixed to the cover.

References:
THE EDITOR’S NOTES
by Csaba L. Kohalmi

Bob Tomlinson, the President of the Croatian Philatelic Society, had the sad duty to report the death of Ekrem “Eck” Spahich, the founder of the CPS. Eck was born in 1945 in Tuzla, Bosnia and was a four-month-old baby when his parents were caught up in the chaos at Bleiburg, Austria. Retreating Croatian troops and civilians were prevented from fleeing Tito’s partisans, who massacred thousands of them. Eck lost his mother and, in desperation, his father left him with Slovenian peasants, who eventually returned him to his grandmother in Bosnia. Fifteen years later Eck immigrated to the United States and was reunited with his father. He served with the US Army in Viet Nam; and, after being discharged, settled in Borger, TX. He organized the CPS in 1972 and edited its newsletter, The Trumpeteer for many years. Croatian and Bosnian philately has common threads with Hungarian philately; and, over the years, we shared such material. Eck’s death due to a brain tumor was unexpected and sudden. He leaves behind his wife Helen, two children, and two grandchildren. May he rest in peace!

As of last November, visa-free travel for a 90-day visit between Hungary and the United States became a reality. Inasmuch as visa-free travel existed between the United States and Hungary for more than a decade, the reciprocal agreement was a welcome addition to the cordial relations between the two NATO-member nations.

The December 2008 issue of the Stamps of Hungary published by the Hungarian Philatelic Society of Great Britain included a commemorative tribute to Gary Ryan, the noted Hungarian philatelist who passed away in 2007. Along with other prominent philatelists, Gary in the early 1980s espoused the cause of the 1867 issue as being the first stamps of the newly independent Hungarian Post. He also worked hard to elevate the collecting and exhibiting of revenue stamps on par with postage stamps. He was a renowned collector and exhibitor of classical Hungarian stamp issues having won numerous gold medals and grand awards in international exhibits during several decades. MAFITT honored its illustrious member with the illustrated vignettes created through the efforts of our mutual member and friend, Gábor Visnyovszki.

One of our SHP members reported that he acquired a couple of interesting items from the November 2008 SZDAukció. The first item was a previously unrecorded copy of the 4f Magyar Posta Harvesters stamps with the denomination missing from the left panel. Gábor Visnyovszki provided a certificate for the stamp stating that, in his opinion, the stamp “was an interesting rarity resulting from the numeral missing or being covered up during the application of the value. The removal of the impression of the numeral after printing can be precluded. Similar misprints of other Harvesters stamps exist, although this value has not been seen before. Its genuineness cannot be disputed. The source of the stamp was probably a normal postal sale.” Our fellow member purchased the stamp for HUF 1,300,000 plus 15% commission, a sum equivalent to about US$7,475. The second item was a 5kr black numeral envelope design stamp with doubled numeral of value. This stamp was purchased for HUF 190,000 plus commission (~US$1,092).
Several ‘gems’ appeared on the eBay market in recent months. The first item was a ‘Weinert’ postcard sent to Lemberg on July 23rd during the brief duration of the 1918 airmail service. It fetched a charming $306, your editor being the losing party in the bidding. All of the postal markings were on the face side of the card. The reverse was empty except for a single crayon mark “7A”.

The second item was a multiple-postmarked cover celebrating the centennial of the Hungarian War of Independence in 1948. The cover bore postmarks from Monok, Hungary, the birthplace of Lajos Kossuth as well as Kossuth, PA, Kossuth, MS and Liberty, ME along with the autographs of the postmasters of the American towns. This item fetched over $113, again, your editor being on the losing end of the bidding.
Four more flown mail from 1918 were also offered for sale. The first item was a cover sent to Vienna on the July 19th flight. The second was a ‘Stiasny’ cover sent to Cracow in July 10th.

1918 airmail covers to Vienna (left) from July 19th and to Cracow (right) from July 10th. The Vienna cover sold for $150 while the Cracow cover was purchased for $102.

The abundance of 1918 airmail cover offerings continued with a Weinert postcard, shown on the left, mailed on 17 July 1918. This item sold for US$64. A nearly exact duplicate of a ‘Kalmár’ cover (shown above) described in Simon Barb’s article in the October-December 2008 issue of The News sold for US$62.
The 1909 booklet, similar to the one shown on the left, containing 24 copies of the 10f Turul stamp sold for $283, again to an SHP member.

The registered, express cover sent to Switzerland shown above is a philatelic creation from 1992. It was franked with seven stamps bearing the 1956 Sopron ‘Hazádnak rendületlenül...’ overprint. Even though these stamps were declared invalid for postage in 1957, they evidently were tolerated inasmuch as all forint-denominated stamps issued after 1946 are valid for postage and favor cancelled following the fall of communism in Hungary. The cover was correctly franked at HUF 86, the registered, express foreign letter rate. This item sold for $325 on eBay.

Other interesting eBay items included a first day cover of the 1950 Five Years’ Plan definitive set that sold for $113. The cover, shown below, was a bit ratty. It was cancelled at the Stamp Museum on 12 March 1950 when the full set became available. The first four values of the set (10, 12, 20, and 40f) had already been issued on 1 January 1950. The 2006 Hungarian catalog value for such and FDC is HUF 40,000 (US$200). The imperforate 1954 Soviet Republic anniversary stamp, (Scott No. 1077) shown below on the right, was identified by sharp eyed collectors as the broken numeral ‘6’ constant plate variety. The stamp was printed in sheets of 50, so out of the 2,500 imperforate sets issued, only 50 such copies exist. This lot sold for $45.
An 1872 cover franked with a single 10kr engraved Francis Joseph stamp sold for $104. This franking represents a double-weight normal letter and is relatively scarce. The Hungarian catalog values such a cover at HUF 30,000 (US$150). Thanks to Dr. Frater, who gave me a few pointers on this franking in Chicago back in 1992!

Another listing shown on the left from Germany was a 1944 Nyíregyháza 20f local issue postal card, postally used. It sold for the opening bid of US$200. Three other similar cards were also sold individually for the same price.

Recently, eBay expanded its anonymous bidding policy so as to not identify even the winners. Nevertheless, there are occasions where a bidder can be identified by the number of feedbacks or, after the fact, by the items he/she won in auction in the previous 30 days. I am happy to report that several of the gems that I illustrated above had been acquired for the collections of our SHP members. Congratulations to all of the winners!

Another complete sheet containing the 35/50f Turul error (Scott no. 96a) sold for $660. The block of 4 Lajtabánság 50 filler porto with inverted numeral shown on the left found a buyer at $661.

Back to the November SZDAukció, a complete collection of 40 genuine 1945 Abony overprints including two postally used items remained unsold. The starting bid was HUF 4,200,000 (~US$21,000) that was probably the highest starting bid for any 20th century Hungarian rarity including the Inverted Madonna or the missing color Nagymánya.

Bob Morgan provided the answer to Judy Kennett’s query about the unusual marking ‘Fee Claimed by Office of the First Address’ on an 1941 express cover:

*The key is the “Express” (like Special Delivery) mail. At that time in the USA, the delivery post office was credited with the special delivery fee. (as to when this procedure changed is another question for which I have no answer). The “Fee Claimed by Office of First Address” marking means that the packet did not need to be forwarded. It was delivered at the address stated, and the post office that served that address got the credit.*
The ugly, fabricated post-World War I and II ‘overprints’ continue to pour out of the counterfeiting mills of Hungary. Without going into specifics, I am appalled at the IGNORANCE of the perpetrators of these ‘philatelic’ crimes. Oftentimes, stamps of the wrong period are subjected to ‘overprinting.’ For example, ‘Középsőaspágh’ overprinted stamps were never distributed in Fiume in 1918, so all of the fine, mint, never hinged INVERTED or missing ‘I’ (F_UME) overprints could not possibly be genuine. Neither are the ‘overprints’ of Southern Slovakia (towns that returned to Hungary in 1938 and were re-occupied by Soviet and Czech forces on 1944-45) using stamps that had lost their postal validity 4-5-6 years earlier. For example, the 900th anniversary of the death of St. Stephen issues from 1938 could not have been found in the post offices in 1944. Another historical incongruity is the date appearing on the overprints. Most of the towns of now southern Slovakia were in a war zone in December 1944, so who would have thought of preparing overprinted stamps under such circumstances?!!! Enough said. I did notice the bidding for such items has tapered off significantly.

Albert Fleischner sent a strongly worded note agreeing with Patrick Moore’s assessment of the state of APS and the reasons for the drop in their membership. Albert felt that the personality conflicts in the APS leadership have been detrimental to the way the organization has been run in recent years. He also criticized the poor execution and quality of scans on the APS website designed to help members sell their surplus material.

Dr. György Lőwei reviewed the July-September 2008 issue of The News in his column published in the December 2008 issue of Bélyegvilág/Filatélia Szemle.

Several of our members, me included, would like to know if anyone can confirm the existence of Scott # 1029, 1Ft Peace Congress stamp from 1952, on NON-FLUORESCENT paper? Collectively, we examined 15 copies in various formats (mint, CTO used, on FDC, and imperforate) and found ALL of them to have been printed on fluorescent paper. The Hungarian catalog lists the stamp printed on fluorescent paper as a variety.

I would like to express my thanks to Alan Soble for contributing the scholarly Obliterations essay. At the same time, I would like to express my hope that I did his article justice, having had to manipulate the placement of the illustrations in order to arrive at a point where the 32nd page of the newsletter was filled exactly and the article was partitioned at a logical break point.

Because of the accumulated articles, the listing of new issues that appeared in the closing months of 2008 will appear in the April-June newsletter as well as the newest ones from 2009.

In the meanwhile, hope that everyone is weathering whatever winter throws our way!

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OBLITERATIONS AND THEIR ABSENCE:
The Prolonged Fate of Post-WWI Hungarian Postmarks (Part 1)

by Alan Soble


The final stages of a war and the period right after the war is over are difficult times, with multiple political, social, ethnic, economic, and personal upheavals and problems to be solved. There’s confusion, uncertainty, dislocation, homelessness, shortage of resources, governmental changes, damaged infrastructures, industry to restore and the work force to reorganize, families to be reunited, residual hostilities, and contentious treaties to be tediously worked out. In such a situation of “post-war blues,” what happens to postal services? One commonsensical thought is this: mail service is important to restore (if it has been interrupted) or to maintain – and not just important to do so, but especially important to do so, as a central part of the political, economic, and even personal rebuilding processes. But, again commonsensically, restoring or maintaining the postal service (like the restoration or maintenance of other social services, such as utilities, public transportation, and medical care) must be done economically, without scarce resources being used on unnecessary frills. What exactly would have to be done by a postal administration would depend on the condition of postal service before and during the war, the political climate in which the postal service had to do its job, and whether any stamps (adhesives, meter labels), items of postal stationery, or postal etiquette (registration and express labels) were available. We shall see that this “commonsensical” view is not quite right.

TYPES OF OBLITERATION

Figure 1 illustrates four post-war Austrian stamps. (Stamp identification numbers used in this essay are from the 2007 Scott Catalogue, the 2007 Scott Classic Specialized, and sometimes the Scott Combined Edition of 1945.) Bosnia, part of the Hapsburg empire, had been using some
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stamps displaying the countenance of Franz Josef. After World War I, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (formed when the State of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs, which came into being on October 29, 1918, joined with Serbia on December 1, 1918) issued an elaborately overprinted version of the Bosnian stamps in which the Emperor’s face is squarely obliterated. Several regions of the new S.H.S. kingdom did not yet have their own postal adhesives; they had to use whatever stamps were available. But the point is that the elaborate overprintings, which required resources and time to produce, were hardly essential for an efficient new or rehabilitated postal service. The overprints were postally a frill that had mostly an ideological purpose. They made the statement, through postal means, that political, national, and ethnic independence had been achieved, the oppressor nations had fallen, and the Emperor was, at last, no one special. The new country’s postal administration believed that making this statement was so important that the resources required for it were well spent. Hence, it was not a frill after all. Or, to be more precise, it was a postal frill, but not a political or ideological frill. Guns (or swords of images or words) might come before, or with, the butter.

Figure 1. Left to right: Franz Josef on Bosnia 69 (issued 1912-14), obliterated on Yugoslavia 1L27 (issued 1919); Karl I on Austria M63 (issued 1917-18), obliterated on Poland 38 (issued 1918-19); Austria’s imperial crown on 128 (issued May 1919); Austria 400 (issued 1945), the country’s philatelic attempt to distance itself from Hitler (Germany 510; issued 1941).

The other stamps in Figure 1 can be understood similarly. The obliteration of Karl I on the Poland stamp is less crude, more lovely, than the Bosnian obliteration of Franz Josef, but it is also a frill, from the perspective of postal service needs, that made a political statement. Western Ukraine used its Trident as an obliterating design to cover the Austrian crown. Overprinting the stamp merely with “[Західно-] Україна” or “Western Ukraine” would have been simple and efficient, and consistent with UPU regulations — yet less upliftingly nationalistic or patriotic than the Trident.1 (The Ukrainian overprints of Hungary’s 1943-45 “portraits” stamps approach this simplicity.) After World War II, Austria issued a set of stamps on which the head of Adolf Hitler was obliterated with black bars. These Adolf Hitler-head stamps were not postally necessary, but excessive, a politically-motivated frill. (By obliterating Hitler, whose face nonetheless remains, partially hidden, on a valid postage stamp, Hitler is still commemorated, as someone worthy of being obliterated.) The italicized and often high values for used copies of these Hitler-heads (in the Scott catalogue; I saw on eBay for which the asking starting bid was $116) implies that the stamps did not often see genuine (and nonphilatelic) postal service or that used copies bear fake cancels. Indeed, how often are any of the stamps in Figure 1 found on genuine covers? (How many non-obliterated Hitler-heads are found on Austrian covers during the war?) We have here four violations of the principle “bread first, philosophy much later.” Alternatively, and better, these stamps demonstrate that the principle is false: political messages, no matter how vulgar, transparent, or adolescent, are important to disseminate, even when resources are tight. They are not frills in the broader political sense; they are important pieces of propaganda.2

Obliterations also exist on Hungarian stamps (see Figure 2). The Croatian territory of the post-war S.H.S. kingdom lavishly coated the nagyon szép Queen Zita with a six-piece overprint. (What are the two hairy oblongs – Croatian bugs?) Two innocent farmers were twice obliterated for the sake of post-war politics, first with “Magyar Tanács- Köztársaság” in red, and later with a bundle
of grain. The communist postal administration in 1951 wanted to have its cake and eat it: to commemorate the 1871 Hungarian stamp (in a stamp-on-stamp design) and discommemorate the Hapsburg analogue to the Romanov Nicholas II, the aristocratic Franz Josef, by deleting his facial profile from the commemorated stamp. (At that time, the postal administration believed that the 1871 issue was Hungary’s first.) This stamp illustrates another point: obliteration need not occur by a “masculine presence” such as a Trident. A “feminine absence” also does the trick. It is arguable whether a black box covering the Emperor’s face (Figure 1, left) or omitting his face altogether (Figure 2, middle) is the more dramatic obliteration or makes a stronger political statement.3

Figure 2. Left, top: Zita, on Hungary 131 (issued 1918), obliterrated on Yugoslavia 2L27 (issued 1918); left, bottom: a Harvester, originally on Hungary 177 (issued 1919) and then 206 (Soviet Republic; issued July 21, 1919), obliterrated on Hungary 314 (issued January 26, 1920); middle: communist Hungary B208 (issued 1951) obliterrates Franz Josef on Hungary 2 (issued 1871); right: all was well again on Hungary 3763 (issued 2001). See also Hungary 3331 (issued 1991), depicting Hungary 6, and Hungary 3542 (issued 1996), depicting Hungary 10. The design of these three stamps still assumes that the 1871 issue, not the 1867 issue, was Hungary’s first.

Hungarians in 1956 did to a communist symbol (see Figure 3) what the communists had done to Franz Josef (Figure 2, middle). Not content to black-box or cross out the central shield on the current Hungarian flag, the revolutionaries obliterated it by sheer “feminine” removal.

Figure 3. Left: the “Rákosi” flag. Right: the Hungarian revolutionaries in 1956 carried out their own “feminine” obliteration. The black circle in the center is an emptiness, a hole, where the shield was cut out.

Another, but mild, type of “feminine” missing-by-absence is illustrated in Figure 4. These stamps (the Turul, the Harvesters, and St. Stephen) were issued over a long stretch of time, from well before to a decade after World War I. During that period, but increasingly after 1900, the most common Hungarian postmark (as my informal census tells me), in both large cities and tiny towns, included the crown of St. Stephen in the middle of the upper series of vertical bars under the town
Why is the crown sometimes missing? A lack or shortage of cancelling devices with the crown in Budapest post offices cannot be the explanation of these feminine “pseudo-obliterations.” Maybe an award-winning multi-frame exhibit or a seriously-researched book has already answered this question. For me, it is still mysterious why the crown would ever be left out in a Budapest (or Hungarian) postmark after 1905 or so. Hungarian history, heritage, and patriotism would all seem to discourage strongly the use of “Germanic” cancellers that failed to honor the crown. The icon should trump convenience.

Figure 4. The crown is missing on Budapest postmarks. Left to right: Hungary 52 (issued 1900), Hungary 357 (issued 1923), and Hungary 422 (issued 1928).

ABSENCES OF OBLITERATION

Nevertheless, even if the Hungarian postal service had this good reason not to omit the crown of St. Stephen, other postal administrations had a good political reason definitely to omit or obliterate this (for them) noxious symbol. Yet, as we shall see, they did not consistently do so. These failures to obliterate, or these absences of obliteration (which phenomenon is distinct from “feminine” obliteration-by-absence), can be found on post-World War I covers and stamps from Romania, Fiume, Czechoslovakia, and some of the predecessors of Yugoslavia, which included or were parts of the Kingdom of Hungary (Nagymagyarország) torn away by Trianon.

I began collecting stamps as a kid, and collected the whole world. Eventually I decided to focus on Austria and Hungary (as a result of living for a while in both countries and marrying a native Hungarian) and sold off, on eBay, nearly everything else. Exceptions included the early stamps I had collected (and continue to collect) from Bosnia, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Fiume, Poland, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia. The reason was that my understanding of the geopolitics of Austria and Hungary and my comprehension of Austro-Hungarian philately would be incomplete unless I paid attention to three things: the whole Hapsburg empire, World War I, and Trianon (June 4, 1920). That requirement meant expanding my collecting interests and study patterns beyond Austria and Hungary, narrowly construed. (There was insufficient reason, thank St. Stephen, to include Germany and Italy. Hence, for example: Eastern Silesia, yes; Upper Silesia, no.) While collecting stamps from these other areas, I noticed an intriguing phenomenon: some stamps of these countries (not Hungarian or Austrian stamps) were postmarked with Hungarian cancellers and were thereby adorned, incongruously, with the crown of St. Stephen. They are sometimes called “surviving” cancellers. I devoted a “back of the book” section of my Magyar albums to these stamps, which Leslie Ettre might have classified merely as “Hungarica.” I prefer a less nebulous appellation.

Regardless of what name they are given, Hungarian postmarks on the stamps of Croatia, Slovenia, Fiume, Czechoslovakia, and Romania pose challenging questions. Perhaps Hungarian postmarks on the covers and stamps of Czechoslovakia, Fiume, and parts of early Yugoslavia can be explained, to some extent, this way: None of these three political entities had indigenous stamps. Their immediate concern was to use suitably overprinted stocks of Hungarian and/or Austrian stamps. Then, later, but as soon as possible, they would produce their own stamps and postal stationary. In this situation, also trying to manufacture their own cancelling devices (or radically reconfiguring
Hungarian cancellers) might have been too great a strain, an unsatisfiable physical and economic task. Thus, “stamps first, then cancellers” was their strategy. However, Romania already had for many years its own indigenous stamps. Yet the post-war Romanian postal service continued to use Hungarian cancellers. So “stamps first, then cancellers” does not explain the Hungarian postmarks found on stamps and covers from expanded (+ Transylvania) Romania. Further, the other countries quickly produced their own indigenous stamps, yet lagged behind with cancellers. Are we to believe that producing cancellers is much more expensive or difficult than producing stamps?

I now proceed to provide a more detailed account of the use of “surviving” Hungarian cancellers, beginning with Romania and Slovakia (in Part 1 of the essay) and ending with Fiume and early Yugoslavia (in Part 2). One central point is that despite powerful patriotic and ethnic reasons for doing so, the crown of St. Stephen – the holy icon of the Kingdom of Hungary from which these countries had recently freed themselves to become autonomous and from which they had obtained their “rightful” territory – was not obliterated in the postmarks these countries used on their own stamps. This failure to obliterate the crown yields what I call “ideologically incongruous” philatelic items: a combination of the indigenous stamps issued by and used in these countries, which proclaimed their significant national and ethnic autonomy, and the continued use of a symbol, the crown of St. Stephen, which undermined the stamp’s proclamation of the country’s momentous national and ethnic status. (“Ideologically incongruous” might be seen as a euphemism for “politically and postally schizophrenic,” another reason for not calling these items “Hungarica.”)

ROMANIA AND TRANSYLVANIA

Consider the two Romanian stamps in Figure 5. Both were postmarked with “surviving” Hungarian cancellers in post-war Transylvania, one with the town name “Topánfalva” (then in Torda-Aranyos megye; now Câmpeni, Alba county, Romania), the other with “Erzsébetváros” (then in Szeben megye; it had been Ibaşfalău, but is now Dumbrăveni, in Sibiu county). Both postmarks bear the crown of St. Stephen, and the Erzsébetváros cancel has the Hungarian-style date: 922 FEB 20. These postmarks are “ideologically incongruous.” Assuming that Romania was overjoyed by acquiring Transylvania, why as late as 1922 was it still using “surviving” Hungarian cancellers that retain the crown of St. Stephen? Think of the oddness of smacking, with black ink, stamps depicting the Romanian kings Carol I and Ferdinand with the crown of St. Stephen, as if Romanians were saying “Hungary [still] rules!” Post-war postal administration poverty cannot be blamed for this (for Romania continued to churn out lots of stamps of different designs), nor is the explanation a lack of ingenuity in manufacturing new or radically modifying old cancellers. The obliteration of the icon trumps convenience was disregarded. This I find inexplicable and cannot easily brush off. Was the long-continued use of “surviving” cancellers meant to be consolation for, or an ameliorating concession to, the large Hungarian population of Transylvania? Were ethnic Hungarians in control of the post offices in Transylvania and used “survivors” for as long as they could get away with it?

![Figure 5. Crown of St. Stephen on (left to right) a “Topánfalva” postmark (on Romania 227; issued 1919, depicting Carol I) and an “Erzsébetváros” postmark (on Romania 259; issued 1920-22, depicting Ferdinand), postmarked in 1922. (The stamp on the right is not imperforate, just badly cropped.)](image)

Postmarks like those in Figure 5 are plentiful, not anomalous or unusual. I have seen covers franked with Romanian stamps postmarked, for example, “Szentandrás,” “Bázias,” and “Lugos” (dat-
ed February 1921 through October 1921). And I have seen loose stamps postmarked “Gyertyámos,” “Bályok,” “Magyarpécska,” and “Mehádia,” all dated 1922. In Figure 6, see the excellent “Temesvár” postmark dated, Romanian-style, 6 JAN 922 – long after the war. All the postmarks I have mentioned are adorned with the icon of the purported enemy, the crown of St. Stephen. Consider, too, the crown in the postmarks displayed in Figures 7 and 8: “Szentágota” (then in Fehér megye; now Agnita, in Sibiu county, Romania), “Borszék” (then in Csk megye; now Borsec, in Harghita county), “Körösbánya” (then in Hunyad megye; now Baia de Criș, in Hunedoara county), and “Sebes” (then in Bihar megye). The Körösbánya postmark with the crown of St. Stephen is especially “ideologically incongruous” (and ironic). The crown covers the features of a postage stamp that was issued specifically to celebrate Romania’s acquisition of Transylvania, an event as vitally meaningful for Romania as the Visszatért, 1938 and beyond, was for Hungary. (How long after parts of Transylvania were re-absorbed on August 30, 1940 were Hungarian cancellers again available?) Note that the crown of St. Stephen on the stamp on the far right of Figure 8 punches out Ferdinand’s face (“socked on the nose” is literally true).

A splendid, even superb, example of an “ideologically incongruous” cover is shown in Figure 9, postmarked “Besztercze” (then in Besztercze-Naszód megye; now Bistrița, in Bistriţa-Năsăud county). The Romanian postal administration took postal and political charge over an in-stock Hungarian post card by (1) obliterating the Hungarian coat of arms with the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Romania (upper left), (2) adding “Cartă Postală” and “România” (upper center), (3) obliterating “Levelező-lap” with a long black horizontal bar (upper center),9 (4) overprinting the Hungarian postal imprint with a new denomination, “10 Bani” (upper right), (5) obliterating, with a long thin black horizontal bar, “M. kir. állami nyomda. Budapest, 1918” (lower left), and (6) replacing that information with “Tipografia „Uj Világ” Cluj.”10 After going to all this trouble to guarantee that the signs of the card’s Hungarian genealogy were trampled on, it is remarkably “ideologically incongruous” that the Romanian postal service put clearly on view, on this used specimen of postal stationary, the crown of St. Stephen in the postmark. If the Romanian postal service had the resources and gumption to carry out steps (1)–(6) on this card, why did it not take the next two logical steps: (7) change the date format from Hungarian to Romanian and (8), which seems mandatory, obliterate (remove, grind out, mutilate, or cover up) the crown of St. Stephen? More evidence of Romanian postal resources: the postal service manufactured special commemorative cancellers for Cluj as early as February, 1920.11 Think, too, of all the swanky “Regatul României” overprints that were prepared for Hungarian stamps. No mean feat. Thus, we need a better explanation than “post-war blues” (disorganization, lethargy, lack of resources), especially for the 1921 and 1922 postmarks with the crown of St. Stephen.
Figure 8. Top: Crown of St. Stephen on (left to right) a “Borszék” postmark (on Romania 249) and a “Körösbánya” postmark, on Romania 246, issued on November 8, 1919 (according to the 2007 Scott Classic Specialized catalogue), and which commemorated the “recovery” of Transylvania. (Why is the stamp postmarked “19 SEP 15” – is this an early [pre-release] usage, or a fake?) The left date format is Romanian; the right is Hungarian. Bottom: the crown on a “Sebes” postmark (on Romania 213, issued 1908-18). The date format (“920”) is Hungarian.

Figure 9. Romanian post card (a 10-bani overprinted Hungarian post card) postmarked “Beszterce,” Sept. 1920. This is illustration 21 from László Szegedi, “The 10 Fillér Hungarian Postal Card with Romanian Overprint ’10 Bani’ Issued in Kolozsvár/Cluj, 1919,” The News of Hungarian Philately 39:1 (January 2008). Another question: Is the “T” stamp Hungarian or Romanian?

Of course, there are cases in which major changes were made (see Figure 10). The Boros-Jenő (in Arad megye; now Ineu) postmark not only exhibits the Romanian date format (day-month-
year) instead of the Hungarian (year-month-day), but the crown of St. Stephen is missing; instead, vertical bars have been positioned under the town name. The decorative ornament at the bottom of the postmark is still Hungarian, but it carries little if any political or ethnic clout. The question remains: If the Romanian postal service could make these significant changes here, why not elsewhere, and consistently? Perhaps the town of Boros-Jenô had not been earlier supplied with Hungarian cancellers that included the crown of St. Stephen, so that there weren’t any that could have “survived” after the war. However, even though the standard Boros-Jenô postmark did not include the crown up to 1911, it did include the crown starting in 1911. Further, the remaining Hungarian decorative script in this postmark implies that the canceller used was a radically altered “survivor.” I do not know whether it was a pre-1911 or post-1911 survivor, although someone more clever than I am should be able to figure it out.

Figure 10. “Boros-Jenô” crown-less cancel (on Romania 276, issued 1920) with “21 DÉC 921” Romanian date format.

The question (if changed here, why not elsewhere?) also arises when viewing the stamp in Figure 11. A “post-war blues” explanation for the continued use of Hungarian “surviving” cancellers does not work. This 1919 Transylvanian stamp is postmarked with a purely Romanian canceller. The Hungarian “Nagyvárád” (Bihar megye) postmark with the crown of St. Stephen was eschewed. The Romanian postal service had the wherewithal to scorn that device in favor of an indigenous Romanian “Oradea Mare” canceller, which must have already been on hand. Then why did it not make replacing Hungarian with Romanian cancellers elsewhere or everywhere a high priority? Maybe it did, but the regulations were ignored.

Figure 11. Romanian canceller “Oradea Mare” postmark on Hungary 122 (later 163), overprinted to become the “Second” Transylvania issue, 6N37 (issued in Nagyvárád, i.e., Oradea, in 1919). Perhaps this stamp is a fake. /It is genuine. Ed./
SLOVAKIA

As a result of the demise of the Hapsburg Empire after World War I, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia, and (later) Carpatho-Ukraine, or Ruthenia, were thrown together as the new nation of Czechoslovakia. It was declared a country on October 28, 1918, and Tomáš Masaryk was recognized as the head of its provisional government. Only the Slovakian part of the new nation came from a truncated Hungary, hence the postal apparatus of this area concerns us the most. Towns in Bohemia, for example, had used Austrian stamps and cancellers while Bohemia was part of the empire; towns in Slovakia had used Hungarian stamps and cancellers, which included Hungarian town names, the Hungarian date format, and the crown of St. Stephen.

Unlike post offices in Romania, Czechoslovakian post offices lacked indigenous stamps and postal stationary at the inauguration of the new country. This was also true for parts of the S.H.S. kingdom and Fiume; at first, then, Fiume and Croatia overprinted Hungarian stamps. The new Czechoslovakia overprinted both Hungarian and Austrian stamps. However, it is arguable whether the overprinted stamps were postally significant in these three areas. In Czechoslovakia, the overprints were sold only as semi-postals/charity stamps which, further, were not available until 1919, after Czechoslovakia already had its own indigenous stamps. (The cover in Figure 12, franked with overprinted Austrian stamps, is dated “191920” and was postmarked with a new Czechoslovakian “C.S.P.” canceller, available in Bohemia; it bears a Czech registration etiquette as well. The cover is in several ways “ideologically incongruous.”) According to Scott, at least 123 face-different Austrian and Hungarian stamps were overprinted “Pošta Československá 1919.” Why all that work on mere remainders? By the end of 1918, Czechoslovakia had its own indigenous stamps, the Hradčany (German, “Hradčany”) issue. Why bother making overprints? The resources, the expense and labor, used for them could have gone to making new cancellers to accompany the new stamps. They were – and they weren’t.

Figure 12. Czechoslovakia B11 and B16, postmarked “C.S.P.” and bilingually with the Bohemian “Jablonné” and the German “Deutsch-Gabel.” The date format (191920) is Czechoslovakian.

Even though Czechoslovakia did not have indigenous stamps in October, 1918, it was quick to produce them, and they were available by late 1918.15 (This might be one reason the 1919 overprints were underused.) Designed by Alfons Mucha (1860-1939), the first Hradčany issue was a rush job, and it shows. Looking at the castle from the direction depicted on the stamp, the partial sun in the background is setting, not rising, the wrong metaphor for the birth of a new nation.16 The foliage in the foreground is bright, as if the plants are reflecting sunlight, but that is geometrically impossible. These mistakes are corrected on later versions of the Hradčany issue. The stamps were at first printed without perforations and exhibit nearly uncountable plate flaws. The stamp is hardly the beauty we would have expected in honor of a new country. The 3 haleru is one of the cheapest #1s in the Scott catalogue (unless we count the Prague Scout local issue, Scott OL1 and OL2).
Nevertheless, the new stamps were efficiently and plentifully produced and were used throughout the entire country. Indeed, the early Czechoslovakian postal service designed, printed, and issued a slew of postage stamps, in many designs, denominations, and colors. Yet it was tardy or lax – waiting until 1920 – in supplying Slovakia (but not Prague and its environs, which had them in 1919) with indigenous cancellers. Treating Slovakia as the poor cousin or black sheep of the new nation thereby caused “ideologically incongruous” philatelic specimens, as found in Romania.

Czechoslovakia followed the principle “stamps first, cancellers later,” and relatively soon made its own cancellers, yet many examples exist of the continued use of Hungarian “survivors” in Slovakia. But even if Hungarian cancellers had to be used in Slovakia, because nothing else was available, why didn’t the postal service or postal workers obliterate the obsolete crown of St. Stephen? Either replace the crown with vertical bars, or grind or file off the crown, or cover it up or blot it out (for example, by filling in that portion of the canceller with an adhesive, cement, or chewing tobacco), so that the crown would not appear on the postmarked cover. Even if these “surviving” cancellers were forced by circumstance on posts workers, the workers were not forced to use them properly. Why did the Slovaks relent or acquiesce, and nullify the national and ethnic pride declared by the new stamps, by postmarking covers and stamps with the crown of St. Stephen? These “ideologically incongruous” items carried a mixed message. Yes, “wir sind frei,” yet also “wir sind nicht frei.”

Examples of Hungarian “surviving” cancels in Slovakia bearing the crown of St. Stephen (and Hungarian town names) are illustrated in Figures 13–18. Figure 13 shows “Breznóbánya” postmarks on a Hungarian stamp (pre- or mid-war) and an early Czechoslovakian stamp (post-war); figure 14 shows “Breznóbánya” postmarks on a left-over Hungarian post card franked with three Hradčany stamps that actually paid the postage.
On Slovakian post cards like the card in Figure 14, the Hungarian coat of arms in the upper-left corner was sometimes (but not always) covered over by an etiquette, crossed out with ink, or obliterated by a nationalistic label or sticker or a postage stamp. These specimens show that senders or postal workers felt and expressed enough nationalism to attempt to deflate the contrary political impact of the postmark’s crown of St. Stephen. The wonder is that these “masculine” obliterating maneuvers were not more commonly used on the post cards or on the postmarked crown of St. Stephen itself. *The obliteration of the icon trumps convenience* was sometimes followed, but also disregarded.


*Figure 15.* Left to right: the crown of St. Stephen on a “Németpróna” postmark (on Czechoslovakia 5) and a “Kisszeben” postmark (on Czechoslovakia 10). Both date formats, “919 AUG 25” and “920 JUN 28,” are Hungarian.

*Figure 16.* Crown of St. Stephen on (left to right) a “Szenicze” postmark (on Czechoslovakia 2), a “Misérd” postmark (on Czechoslovakia 3), and a “Vilke” postmark (on Czechoslovakia 30; dated June 19, 1920). All date formats are Hungarian.

*Figure 17.* Crown of St. Stephen on (top, left to right) a “Léva” postmark (on Czechoslovakia 6), a “Rozsnyó” postmark (on Czechoslovakia 2), and a “Zsolna” postmark (on Czechoslovakia 4); also (bottom) a “Szepesófalú” postmark (on Czechoslovakia 5). All date formats (“919”) are Hungarian.
Figure 18. Left to right: a 1919 “Kassa” postmark with crown of St. Stephen and Hungarian date format (on Czechoslovakia 8); “Kassa” postmark, without the crown, on Austria newspaper stamp P9B (issued 1876). It looks like post offices in Kassa might have had old crown-less cancellers around that could have been used. Maybe they were already worn out.

Figure 19. “Ringelshain” Austrian-style postmark on Czechoslovakia 7.

Figure 20. “Plzeň” 1919 postmarks, Czech name and date format, on Czechoslovakia 2 and 3.

Figure 21. One “Karlín” (February 7, 1919) postmark and two receiving “Žebrák” postmarks on a pair of Czechoslovakia 2.

Even though post offices in Bohemia and Moravia used “surviving” Austrian cancellers (see Figure 19; postmarked “Ringelshain” [Rynoltice], April 24, 1919), they seem to have had crudely modified “surviving” or indigenous cancellers well before Slovakian post offices did. The cancellers
also printed Czech language town names, not German. Figures 20 and 21 show monolingual postmarks (many Czech-Austrian pre-war postmarks were bilingual)\textsuperscript{24} with the Czech town names “Plzeň” (dated 20 V [19]19), “Karloyn” (dated 7 II [19]19), and “Žebrák” (dated the 8th, a receiving strike). An especially noteworthy cover (cropped; see Figure 22) was postmarked “Vinohrady” (a district of Prague) on 4 I [19]19 (January 4, 1919), an early use of a modified or indigenous canceller very soon after the release of the Hradčany stamps.\textsuperscript{25}

![Figure 22. “Vinohrady” postmarks on Czechoslovakia 2, 3, 4, and 5.](image)

NOTES

1. Universal Postal Union regulations softly required the Roman name of the country on stamps or cancels. See the Universal Postal Union Convention of Rome (26 May 1906), p. 40: “Correspondence dispatched from countries of the Union is impressed with a stamp indicating as far as possible in Roman characters the place of origin and the date of posting. Moreover, all the valid postage stamps should be obliterated.” (This text is available at <http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&id=V1cNAAAAYAAJ&dq=Universal+Postal+Union+Convention+of+Rome&printsec=frontcover&source=web&ots=hoqhAlroJR&sig=5IWDo67WaNhYgoH2IVsjuEn0s&sa=X&oi=book_resul t&resnum=1&ct=result>.) The Ukraine was not a member of the UPU in 1906.

2. The cover of the paperback edition of Philip Roth’s novel The Plot against America (New York: Vintage, 2004) displays this Cinderella (the basic stamp is United States 240, issued 1934, shown on the right):

3. The notions of the masculine presence and the feminine absence can be found in Sigmund Freud and, more recently, his French psychoanalytic descendents Jacques Lacan and Luce Irigaray. It is, bluntly, a way of talking about the genital difference between the sexes (tangible, external existence vs. a void or emptiness); its more sophisticated deployment is in referring to gender differences in social power (or perceived differences in power).

4. The crown of St. Stephen “was the dominant part of the design on Hungarian stamps between 1874 and 1916. It was the exclusive watermark of Hungarian stamps from 1898 to 1913. Also, it was an integral part of most of the steel cancellers of the Hungarian Post for 60 years” (Csaba Kohalmi, The Holy Crown in Philately, The News of Hungarian Philately 29:2 [April-June 1998], p. 15). Of course, the crown has also appeared on paper currency and coins, such as this 1 fillér coin from 1894 (approximately 1.7 cm in diameter) and the exquisite (in color) kétezer forint bank note from 2000:
5. Here (on Hungary 71, shown on the right) is a beautifully fashioned crown of St. Stephen worthy of having been used more frequently:

6. See, for example, the use of the term “surviving” by László Szegedi, *The 10 Fillér Hungarian Postal Card with Romanian Overprint ‘10 Bani’ Issued in Kolozsvár/Cluj, 1919*. *The News of Hungarian Philately* 39:1 (January 2008), pp. 3, 6, 7, and 8. I dislike the term “surviving” canceller. A survivor is someone who has been attacked by a person (as in, for example, rape) or by an animal or a disease (e.g., breast cancer) and has come through the dangerous or threatening experience successfully and has avoided the status of “victim.” By contrast, Hungarian “surviving” cancellers were not attacked. They were deliberately preserved, protected, and used nonchalantly or even subversively.


8. Throughout, I use phrases such as “postmarked with the town name X” or “postmarked X,” instead of “postmarked in X,” to be safe, because the fact that a cover or stamp bears a postmark with town name “X” does not necessarily mean (for various reasons) that the cover or stamp was actually postmarked in town X. (First-day covers of the United States are nowadays routinely postmarked in Kansas City, even if they bear town names such as “Bogalusa, L.A.”)

9. On the postal card below, a patriotic Hungarian (or maybe someone intolerant of the multiethnic, polylinguistic composition of Central Europe and adjacent areas) went overboard in obliterating various words for “postal card” (the item has a photograph on its other side) and inscribing his own favorite words: “Levelező Lap.” I wonder if he noticed that he crossed out his favorite words at the same time he was crossing out the entire offensive list *en masse*.

10. This is what the Hungarian post card, mauled by the printer in Cluj, normally looked like, except that this specimen is *modestly* overprinted “Fiume”:
The News of Hungarian Philately


12. In his advertisement for the lot “Romania 1920-22, 26 Hungary cancels on Rumanien Stamps” (listed on eBay in late December, 2008), the seller “Peckman797” wrote that “The Hungarian style cancellers were used on Romanian stamps until they could be replaced by Romanian cancellers.” This vague generalization, I have been arguing, can’t be, whatever it is supposed to mean, the whole story or even most of it. (The lot sold for $93.00, leaving me well behind in the bidding.) URL: <http://cgi.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&rd=1&item=300280054454&ss PageName=STRK:MEDW:IT&ih=020>.

13. Csaba Kohalmi found these dates for me in the *Monograph*, volume 6.

14. See also the “Oradea” postmark, from a Romanian canceller, in illustration 12 of Szegedi, *The 10 Fillér Hungarian Postal Card*. It is dated 23 FEB 921.


16. I do not know whether the overprinted sun on this stamp is rising (symbolizing Fiume and Yugoslavia) or setting (symbolizing Italy and Germany). The star does not help us disambiguate the image, for a star can be seen in a morning sky and an evening sky (e.g., the star-like Venus). According to the eBay seller “diman55,” the stamp is a Yugoslavian occupation-of-Fiume issue. The “Buy It Now” price was $299.99. Jay Carrigan claims, on his web site, that the stamp/overprint is genuine, not a forgery; see <http://www.jaypex.com/Yugo/@rijeka.htm>.

17. The Hradčany stamps were made by the United Czech Printing Company, in Prague, according to the *Gibbons* catalogue, the 1940 Centenary Edition, p. 267.


20. My darkly sarcastic or ironic reference (I admit, a hyperbolic analogy) is to the overprinted Czechoslovakian propaganda stamps issued in 1938 under German occupation (shown on the right):

21. Hungarian “surviving” postmarks used on left-over Hungarian imprinted post cards that were also franked with the newly-printed Czechoslovakian stamps (Hradčany and other stamps) are nicely exhibited by László Filep: *Ungarische Ganzsachen-Postkarten mit Zusatzfrankatur tschechoslowakischer Briefmarken von 1919*. URL: <http://www.japhila.cz/hof/0060/index0060a.htm>.
Shown on the bottom of the previous page is one attractive example, franked with Czechoslovakia 3 (bottom) and 32 (top), and postmarked with the crown of St. Stephen, the town name “Ruttka” (in Túróc megye; Slovakian, “Vrútky”), and the Hungarian date format (1919). Austrian imprinted post cards were also franked with the new Hradčany stamps, as the second image shows. Czechoslovakia 2 franked the card, and both the stamp and imprint are postmarked “Rumburg” (Bohemia), May 18, 1919. The town name is German (for Rumburk).

22. The Universal Postal Union Convention of Rome recommended that stamps be affixed only in the upper-right corner of the address side, but did not forbid affixing them elsewhere, even on the back (p. 38). On a few post cards displayed in Filep’s exhibit, the Hungarian coat of arms in the upper-left corner was obliterated in some way. Here is an example of obliteration (although the crown of St. Stephen remains, so the cover is “ideologically incongruous”):

23. After examining Hungarian postmarks on Czechoslovakian stamps used in post-World War I Slovakia, we might (later) study the Hungarian postmarks on Czechoslovakian stamps used in Slovakia after the 1938 Visszatért. For example (the souvenir sheet shown on the right is Czechoslovakia B152, issued 1938):

24. For example, “Prag”/“Praha” (on Austria 36, issued 1874-80), “Prag”/“Praha” (on Austria 60, issued 1890-96), and [Prag] “Hradchin”/“Hradčany” (on Austria 54, shown above).

25. This stamp cropped from a cover, postmarked “Marienbad” (in Bohemia), is a Hradčany, Czechoslovakia 1, and is postmarked “31 XII 18.” However, the Czech town name (Mariánské Lázně) did not yet make its appearance.

/to be continued/

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